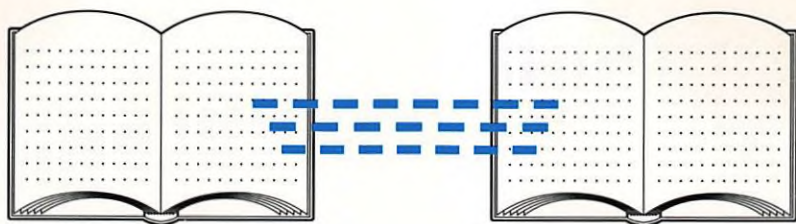


The Bible And The Book Of Mormon

– Connecting Links –

THE BIBLE
Old Testament
and
New Testament

THE BOOK OF
MORMON
Another Testament of
Jesus Christ



Second Edition

by
John E. Enslen

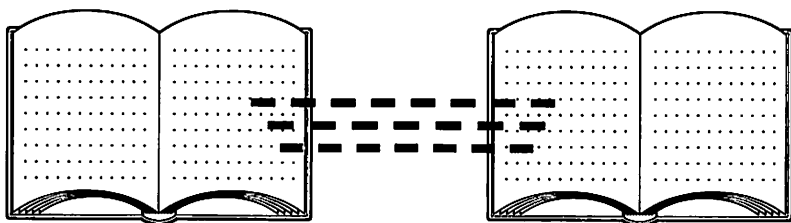
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This book is dedicated
to my beautiful wife, Dianne B. Ensen,
and our six wonderful children:

Georgia Brown Ensen Pinkston

John Jacob Ensen

Joshua Alma Ensen

Jessica Louise Ensen Slade

Jenny Sue Ensen

Joseph Ephraim Ensen

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About the Author

John E. Enslen was born in Montgomery, Alabama, in 1946 because there was no medical facility in his small hometown. He was reared in nearby Wetumpka, Alabama, where he continues to live to this day. He is a fifth generation Wetumpkian and thus a fifth generation Alabamian.

The author's roots sink deep into southern soil. Among his ancestors are (1) revolutionary soldiers from Virginia and North Carolina, (2) a companion to Daniel Boone in Kentucky, (3) the first white settler on the north side of the Tallapoosa River in Montgomery County, Alabama, (4) Native Americans, and (5) the founder of both Atlanta and Norcross, Georgia.

Educationally speaking, he was co-valedictorian of his Wetumpka High School Class of 1965 and a member of the National Honor Society. Among many other high school honors, he served as president of the student government association.

He obtained a bachelor of arts degree in history from Clemson University in South Carolina in 1969. At Clemson University he was a member of the freshman basketball and varsity football teams, served as prosecutor on the student honor court, and was graduated a distinguished military graduate in the Army R.O.T.C.

He obtained a doctor of jurisprudence degree from the University of Alabama School of Law in 1972. Law school honors included being awarded the Dean William Hepburn Scholarship, serving on the editorial board of the law review, serving as a justice on the student honor court, and being graduated Order of the Coif.

After a state-side tour of honorable active duty as a first lieutenant in the U.S. Army during the Vietnam War, he returned to his hometown of Wetumpka, Alabama, and began a general law practice that has continued to this day. He is presently the senior member of the law firm of Enslen, Johnston and Pinkston, L.L.P. He has served as president of the Elmore County Bar Association and president of the Montgomery Federal Bar Association. He has been awarded Martindale-Hubbell's highest attorney rating of "AV." He has practiced before the Alabama Supreme Court, the 11th Circuit U.S. Court of Appeals, and the United States Supreme Court.

He has served his local community in several capacities, including

president of the Wetumpka Rotary Club, president and co-founder of the Wetumpka Area Chamber of Commerce, and president and co-founder of the Elmore County Children's Home. He has also held numerous volunteer positions with the Boy Scouts of America, the YMCA, and other youth organizations.

John E. Enslen was reared as an active member of The First Baptist Church of Wetumpka where he attended primary, Sunday school, Sunday worship services, training union, and vacation Bible school. He sang in the primary choir and as a youth was active in the Royal Ambassadors program. He was baptized at age 11 in 1958. At the age of 12, he won the Baptist state-wide Junior Memory Drill and Bible Drill Contest held at Shocco Springs, Alabama. He remained an active member of The First Baptist Church of Wetumpka until 1973.

In 1973, at age 26, married, the father of two young children, and starting a new law practice, John E. Enslen became the first person living in Wetumpka, Alabama, to be baptized into The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. His wife Dianne, also a life-long active Baptist, was the second person to do the same. Because there was no LDS Church facility in Wetumpka, he was "born again" in Montgomery, Alabama, and attended a small branch of the church there. He and his wife have remained active members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints since their joining the church in 1973. As Latter-Day Saints, they have never forsaken or been required to forsake a single truth which they had learned from their Bible-oriented, family-centered, protestant upbringing. They maintain a deep appreciation for many devoted teachers who had a part in their early Christian training.

John E. Enslen penned the following letter to his Sunday school classmates on April 28, 1973, one week prior to his baptism into the LDS Church:

The purpose of this letter is to advise you that I wish to humbly withdraw my name from the roster at The First Baptist Church of Wetumpka. I address this to you because I feel I owe you an explanation for my forthcoming absences. I have given countless hours of consideration to my decision to join The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, and it is a direct result of intense praying and studying.

Everything earthly has pulled at me to remain with your church. It is the church in which I was reared. It is the church in which I attended Bible school and Royal Ambassadors, and the church in which I first came to know Jesus Christ. It is the church in which I

have found sincere fellowship and loyal friendships. It is the church in which I could most easily maintain my social and economic security within the community. But I am now free from those earthly pressures which would prevent my following truth as I have found it.

Were I to remain I could only use your church as a personal forum to express the belief in doctrines which are fundamentally new and different from those taught by your denomination, and I would not do such.

I challenge each of you to embark upon a diligent search for answers to these three questions: (1) Where did I come from? (2) What is the purpose for my being on this earth? (3) Where am I going?

If the answers I have found are true, then you will witness a change in my life. If the answers I have found are a hoax, then I will return to your church without shame, for I am convinced at present with all of my heart, mind, and soul that new dimensions of truth have been revealed to me of which you have not yet heard, and God calls me to grow in it.

If you be truly secure in your religious beliefs, then fear not the teachings of another. Listen and search with an open mind for the truth shall prevail. And hear the whole, for half a truth is no truth at all. "He that answereth a matter before he heareth it, it is folly and shame unto him" (Proverbs 18:13).

I remain the friend of each of you.

In Christian witness,

John E. Enslen

John E. Enslen has served in various leadership capacities in the LDS Church. He has successively held the positions of Sunday school president, branch mission leader, branch president, stake seventies quorum president, counselor to a stake president for eight years, stake president for nine years, and is presently serving as a counselor to a mission president. He was ordained in The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints to the priesthood offices of elder in 1973, seventy in 1975, and high priest in 1978. He has personally participated in the formation of 11 new congregational units of the LDS Church in central Alabama: Alexander City, Clanton, Demopolis, Grove Hill, Greensboro, Greenville, Montgomery III, Opelika, Prattville, Tuskegee, and Wetumpka. He was also present at the organizational meeting of the Alabama Birmingham Mission.

Family wise, John E. Enslen began courting Dianne Brown of Hartwell, Georgia, in 1967 while both of them were undergraduate students attending Clemson University. They were married in 1968 at the First Baptist Church of Hartwell, Georgia. They are the parents of six children: Georgia, Jacob, Joshua, Jessica, Jenny, and Joseph.

Preface

For 26 consecutive weeks beginning on January 2, 1997, I was privileged to author a series of newspaper articles in *The Wetumpka Herald* (circulation 4,400) entitled, “The Bible and the Book of Mormon – Connecting Links.” This book is an outgrowth of those articles. Thus, the first 26 chapters are called “articles.” Each article originally contained exactly 114 lines of double column newspaper print. This book’s cover reflects the heading which appeared as the title to each of the newspaper articles.

The purpose of the newspaper articles was repeated each week in the first two introductory paragraphs:

The primary purpose of this weekly article is to increase public understanding of two ancient scriptural records – the Bible and the Book of Mormon. Each of these compilations was written by a separate set of prophet-authors. Each set of prophet-authors lived in a separate hemisphere. The prophet-authors of both hemisphere testified to the divinity of Jesus Christ.

The articles give particular attention to textually connecting links between the Bible and the Book of Mormon. These textually connecting links provide evidence of a single revelatory source for both volumes of holy writ. (All Bible references are to the King James Version.)

These connecting links demonstrate that the Book of Mormon supports and fulfills Bible prophecy. Instead of being mutually exclusive contradictions, the Bible and the Book of Mormon are actually corroborative witnesses for the same divine cause – the cause of Christ.

Another purpose for the articles was simply to motivate people to read the Book of Mormon for themselves. **If the proof of the pudding is in the eating, then it would seem that the proof of the writing would be in the reading.** What is it about the Book of Mormon, a book which has spiritually uplifted millions of people throughout the earth by bringing them closer to Christ, that causes such vehement opposition and antagonism from those who, as pup-

pets of ignorance, have never actually read the Book of Mormon? When one sincerely studies and ponders the doctrinal teachings of the Book of Mormon, that person will be led to a much greater understanding of and appreciation for Jesus Christ. (At the time of publication, a free copy of the King James Version of the Bible could be secured from The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints by telephoning 1-800-453-1119; and a free copy of the Book of Mormon could be secured by telephoning 1-800-453-2900.)

Decade after decade, since 1830, there have been unrelenting waives of criticism leveled against the Book of Mormon by countless critics and detractors. They have searched in vain for some fatal flaw that would discredit or destroy that most remarkable book. The Book of Mormon has weathered and survived these attacks, actually arising from them each time with greater credibility than before. The number of devoted adherents to the Book of Mormon has steadily and dramatically increased on a world-wide scale. On the other hand, the critics, one by one, continue to fade quietly into obscurity.

As an attorney, I have written during the past 25 years a considerable number of trial and appellate briefs. I decided that before I left the earth I would like to write a brief in support of the truthfulness of the Book of Mormon. Using the contents of the Bible as accepted truth, i.e., a reliable witness, I have gathered a collection of corroborative connections between the text of the Book of Mormon and the text of the Bible. Next to the Book of Mormon being its own best witness, I feel that the Bible is the greatest **written** witness for the truthfulness of the Book of Mormon that has ever been published and vice-versa. If one truly loves the Bible, then he or she will truly love the Book of Mormon (and also vice-versa). Of course, the Book of Mormon's, as well as the Bible's, greatest witness is the spiritual witness of the Holy Ghost. (See Moroni 10:4 and 1 Cor. 2:11-14)

I am very much aware that I cannot "prove" the truthfulness of the Bible or the Book of Mormon through evidence, logic, or reason. I fully realize that I cannot convince others through scholarly studies that the Bible and the Book of Mormon contain the true religion of Christ. Even in temporal matters, evidence, whether verbal, documentary, or forensic, rarely proves with total certainty.

Evidence merely **tends** to prove a truth.

Unlike the Bible, most people have not seriously considered the Book of Mormon and assume that the claims associated with the Book of Mormon are simply too fantastic to be true. But is the Book of Mormon historically and doctrinally true or false? Is the Book of Mormon the product of revelation? The non-spiritual evidence will probably remain sufficiently insufficient for yet a while so that mankind is free to exercise agency on the issue. There is no mortal judge or jury on this issue other than each individual who is his or her own fact-finder. One must only satisfy himself or herself personally in these spiritual matters. But keep in mind that the quality of our conclusions are directly proportional to the quality of the effort we put into the investigation. I hope you will take the time to look up and read the Bible and Book of Mormon references which are cited in this book.

A man's search for true religion must ultimately rest upon faith, as that faith is confirmed through the feelings emanating from the Holy Ghost. The information I have obtained by study, reason, logic, and observation through my five senses is less important to me in the final analysis than the witness of the Spirit. I deem spiritual proofs to be of superior reliability. (However, it has been my personal experience that some amount of academic inquisition and resultant knowledge precedes the witness of the spirit. An even surer witness of the spirit has come to me only with increased knowledge and the practical application of that knowledge to the way I live my personal life.) Although my faith extends beyond my ability to reason, my faith remains consistent with my ability to reason.

I firmly believe that religious faith and keen intellect are not mutually exclusive. Faith in large part is the "evidence" of things not seen (Hebrews 11:1). I believe it to be each individual person's responsibility to "prove all things" to his own satisfaction "and hold fast to that which is good" (1 Thes. 5:21). I find nothing wrong with supporting my faith with "evidence" to the extent it can take me. The more "evidence" I can find, the further I can extend my faith. Frankly, I would have difficulty determining exactly where "evidence" ends and "faith" begins. It often seems to me that the same spirit which confirms the logic and reason within my mind, also

bears witness to my heart.

Yes, faith in the Lord Jesus Christ is the overriding principle, the first principle, the foremost principle, because we do not and cannot have a perfect knowledge of all the facts at this stage of our existence. But faith does not exist in a factual vacuum, and it cannot be true faith if it is inconsistent with the true facts. The way I see it, the following is one very important true fact which greatly influences my faith: The Bible and the Book of Mormon are factually supportive of one another in a very complex way. In my opinion, they are factually supportive of one another in a divinely predetermined way.

I am confident that this book will not “convince,” “prove,” or “convert.” Hopefully, it will inform and create genuine interest. Hopefully, it will successfully point out that we should not ignore what the Bible and the Book of Mormon say about one another. Hopefully, the reader will conclude that both these sacred records are worthy of our most sincere, honest, open-minded, and careful consideration. Hopefully, neither record will ever again be summarily dismissed by the reader without a fair hearing.

I am inclined to believe that this book is by far the most important “brief” I have ever written. It is written in a plain style which will allow the common man, as well as the amateur scholar, to learn something about the intertwined relationship between the Bible and the Book of Mormon. Although a few of the insights are my own, and a few others are of fairly recent origin, on the whole I have merely pointed out “connecting links” which were known to the very earliest adherents of the Book of Mormon.

This second edition adds three concluding chapters not contained in the first edition. The first of these new chapters is entitled “Public Reaction.” This chapter examines the public’s reaction to the 26 newspaper articles. The second of these new chapters is entitled “They Deny the Power of God.” This chapter expands upon the theme which is contained in Article No. 16 regarding “no revelations, no prophets, no miracles, no scriptures, and no angels.” The final new chapter is comprised of some concluding comments about the Bible and the Book of Mormon and the importance of actually reading them.

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mercial newspaper publication of any or all articles so long as (1) the copyright statement is properly included under the author's name, (2) the article being printed is reprinted in its entirety in a double-column format so that the quoted material is appropriately indented and blocked, and (3) each article contains the disclaimer of authority contained at the end of this preface. Any questions about the use or re-publication of the articles may be directed to myself, John E. Enslen, 499 South Main Street, Wetumpka, Alabama 36092. My e-mail address is ej-plaw@mindspring.com. I welcome comments from readers, especially comments regarding other "connecting links."

This book is not intended to be a money-making project for the author. This is the second edition, and to date there has been no paid advertising for the book. It was originally written primarily to gratuitously satisfy a growing number of requests from friends for copies of the newspaper articles. Approximately 50% of the first-edition copies of the book were given away. However, copies of this book may be purchased by the general public from the author at the above address for \$9.95 each, plus applicable sales tax for Alabama residents. Shipping and handling costs will be added.

Disclaimer of Authority

This author is solely and individually responsible for the contents of this book (or article), and the views expressed herein do not necessarily represent, nor are they necessarily consistent with, the official position of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints on any particular point. However, the author is not personally aware of any conflicts or inconsistencies with the doctrines or teachings of the LDS Church.



John E. Enslen and Dianne B. Enslen
1997

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Article 1

THE FIRST MIGRATION

(published on Jan. 2, 1997)

The Book of Mormon contains a record of three separate ocean-crossing migrations of peoples from the Holy Land to the Western Hemisphere long before the time of Columbus. (The Book of Mormon does not claim that these three voyages by ship or watercraft were the only pre-Columbian migrations.) The first or oldest of these three migrations occurred more than 2000 years before Christ. This first group of immigrants departed the Old World shortly after the confusion of tongues associated with the construction of the Tower of Babel as recorded in the Bible. (Gen. 11)

According to the Bible (Gen. 10:25), the earth was divided during the days of a man named Peleg prior to the building of the Tower of Babel. This division of the earth's land masses created separate continents divided by expansive oceans.

Is there evidence in the Bible to support the Book of Mormon's claim that God sent a people to the Western Hemisphere following the confusion of tongues at the Tower of Babel? We read in Genesis 11:5-9:

And the Lord came down to see the city and the tower, which the children of men builded.

And the Lord said, Behold, the people ... have all one language;

Go to, let us go down, and there confound their language, that they may not understand one another's speech.

So the Lord scattered them abroad from thence upon the face of **all** the earth: and they left off to build the city.

Therefore is the name of it called Babel; because the Lord did there confound the language of all the earth: and from thence did the Lord scatter them abroad upon the face of **all** the earth. (Gen. 11:5-9)

If the Lord scattered the children of men "abroad upon the face of **all** the earth" as the Bible says, then should we not assume that

men came to the New World of the Western Hemisphere?

According to the Book of Mormon, a colony from Babel crossed the ocean to the New World in eight unique vessels. These people were known as Jaredites, called such after the leader among them named Jared.

The Book of Mormon reports the following:

Jared came forth with his brother and their families, with some others and their families, from the great tower, at the time the Lord confounded the language of the people, and swore in his wrath that they should be scattered upon **all** the face of the earth; and according to the word of the Lord the people were scattered. (Ether 1:33)

The Jaredite immigrants brought with them their scriptural records (see Ether 1:3; 8:9), to which was added over time their own religious history. The Jaredite record brought from the Old World contained an account of the earth's creation and God's dealings with Adam and his posterity down to the time of the Tower of Babel. This account of the creation and Adam was written long **before** the time of Moses. This Jaredite record of the creation and Adam, although separately authored, is consistent with the subsequent biblical record of Moses covering the same events.

The Jaredite record was engraved upon thin sheets of metal called "plates." Approximately A.D. 400, the last Book of Mormon prophet-author, a Native American whose name was Moroni, translated and condensed the Jaredite record onto a new set of plates. Moroni, who had in his day access to a separate Israelite record containing the five books of Moses (1 Ne. 5:10-11; 1 Ne. 19:3), described one of the steps he took in condensing the Jaredite record:

And as I suppose that the first part of this [Jaredite] record, which speaks concerning the creation of the world, and also of Adam, and an account from that time even to the great tower, and whatsoever things transpired among the children of men until that time, is had among the Jews – [Genesis of the Bible]

Therefore I do not write those things which transpired from the days of Adam until that time, but they are had

upon the [Jaredite] plates; and whoso findeth them, the same will have power that he may get the full account.
(Ether 1:3-4)

God's dealings with the Jaredite nation in the Americas as set forth in the Book of Mormon can be summed up as follows: The Americas were a land of promise held in reserve by the Lord. The Jaredites who inhabited the Americas were taught the true gospel of Jesus Christ by prophets of God who were called from among them. These prophets authored scriptural records relating to the forthcoming Christ. The Jaredites enjoyed conditions of prosperity and happiness so long as they were obedient to the prophets of God. As recorded in the Book of Mormon:

Behold, this is a choice land, and whatsoever nation shall possess it shall be free from bondage, and from captivity, and from all other nations under heaven, if they will but serve the God of the land, who is Jesus Christ, who hath been manifested by the things which we have written. (Ether 2:12)

Unfortunately, because of widespread wickedness and evil conspiracies for power and gain, the Jaredite peoples annihilated themselves through prolonged civil wars prior to the year 300 B.C., approximately two millennia after their migration to the Western Hemisphere from the Tower of Babel.

The Book of Mormon specifically verifies and corroborates the biblical account of the Lord's scattering of the Mesopotamian people abroad upon the face of **all** the earth. The Book of Mormon also supports and sustains the Bible by acknowledging the existence of a consistent, yet separately authored, account of the creation and Adam as the first human flesh.

Next week's article will deal with the Book of Mormon's claim of a second migration from the Holy Land to the Americas.

Article 2

THE SECOND MIGRATION

(published on Jan. 9, 1997)

The Book of Mormon contains a record of three separate ocean-crossing migrations of peoples from the Holy Land to the Western Hemisphere long before the time of Columbus. Last week's article dealt with the first of these migrations which began shortly after the Lord confounded the language of the people during their construction on the Tower of Babel. This week's article deals with the second migration to the Americas which began about the year 600 B.C. from the Jerusalem area.

The Book of Mormon gives an account of an Israelite prophet by the name of Lehi who lived in Jerusalem 600 years before Christ. Lehi was a contemporary of the biblical prophet Jeremiah. Like Jeremiah, Lehi prophesied of the impending destruction of Jerusalem, and his warnings went unheeded. The Lord instructed Lehi to depart from Jerusalem with his family and others. By fleeing Jerusalem, Lehi and his followers were able to avoid the cruel invasion of their Jerusalem homeland by Nebuchadnezzar, King of Babylon.

Lehi and his small band escaped into the desert wilderness and embarked on an eleven-year journey which ultimately led to their arrival in the Americas about 589 B.C. Lehi gave patriarchal leadership to his group as they traveled overland to the shores of the Indian Ocean, and then by ship to the Americas. Over time, they mixed with others and became in the New World a populous people which we now modernly refer to as Native Americans.

The Book of Mormon provides the following information about Lehi's ancestry:

I am a descendant of Joseph who was carried captive into Egypt. And great were the covenants of the Lord which he made unto Joseph. (2 Ne. 3:4)

* * *

Lehi ... came out of the land of Jerusalem, [and] was a descendant of Manasseh, who was the son of Joseph

who was sold into Egypt by the hands of his brethren.
(Alma 10:3; see also 3 Ne. 15:12)

Are there any references in the Bible to support the Book of Mormon's claim that Joseph, who was sold into Egypt, had many descendants through his son Manasseh, and that a branch or remnant of those descendants in time migrated to a choice land in the Western Hemisphere?

We read in the Bible that about 1800 years before Christ, Joseph's father Jacob (or Israel) gave a joint patriarchal blessing to Joseph's two sons, Ephraim and Manasseh, blessing them that their descendants would "grow into a multitude in the midst of the earth" (Gen. 48:16). Could the "midst" of the earth include the Western Hemisphere?

On another occasion, Jacob called Joseph and his brothers together for the express purpose of telling them that which would befall their posterity "in the last days" (Gen. 49:1). Joseph's special blessing as set forth in the Bible, stated in part the following:

Joseph is a fruitful bough [large branch of a tree],
even a fruitful bough by a well; whose branches run over
the wall.... (Gen. 49:22)

Could the fruitful branches be symbolic of Joseph's many descendants? Could the well be symbolic of a body of water, like the ocean? Could the running over the wall be symbolic of crossing the body of water or ocean? Could Joseph's separation from his brothers during Joseph's lifetime be prophetically symbolic of God's separating a branch of Joseph's descendants from the descendants of Joseph's brethren? Could both separations be for the purpose of bringing about the ultimate salvation of Joseph's Israelite brethren and their descendants? Could the stored bread of Old World Egypt be symbolic of the stored "bread of life" as set forth in the New World scriptures, the Book of Mormon? (See Ether 13:6-8)

According to the Bible, the blessings going to Joseph's descendants would follow them "unto the utmost bound of the everlasting hills" (Gen. 49:26). If God were speaking to Joseph in the Eastern Hemisphere, would not the "utmost bound" be in the opposite hemisphere?

Moses, when he blessed the tribe of Joseph, described as follows

a special land of promise for Joseph's descendants:

Blessed of the Lord be his **land**, for the precious things of heaven, for the dew, and for the deep that coucheth beneath, and for the precious fruits brought forth by the sun, and for the precious things put forth by the moon, and for the chief things of the ancient mountains, and for the precious things of the lasting hills, and for the precious things of the earth and fullness thereof.... (Deut. 33: 13-16; see also Gen. 49:25)

Could such a choice land be the Americas? Could a land blessing which included the blessings of "the deep that coucheth beneath" mean that Joseph's descendants would obtain the land blessing by safe travel over the deep oceans that would serve as a barrier to keep them free for a time from the oppression of Old World nations? Could a land blessing which included "the precious things put forth by the moon" mean that Joseph's descendants would have favorable tides, as affected by the moon, to assist them in their ocean travels?

Then follows the Bible's prophetic statement regarding the migration of Joseph's descendants:

[H]e shall push the people together to the **ends of the earth**: ... and they are the thousands of Manasseh. (Deut. 33:17)

The Book of Mormon supports and sustains the Bible. The Book of Mormon records the literal fulfillment of the Bible prophecies which foretold that Joseph of Egypt would have many descendants through his son Manasseh, and that a branch or remnant of those descendants would migrate to a choice land in the Western Hemisphere.

Next week's article will deal with the Book of Mormon's claim of a third migration from the Holy Land to the Americas.

Article 3

THE THIRD MIGRATION

(published on Jan. 16, 1997)

The Book of Mormon contains a record of three separate ocean-crossing migrations of peoples from the Holy Land to the Western Hemisphere long before the time of Columbus. Last week's article dealt with the second of these migrations which was led by a man named Lehi. This week's article deals with the third migration to the Americas which began about the year 587 B.C., following the invasion of Jerusalem by the Babylonians under Nebuchadnezzar.

According to the Book of Mormon, there was a migration about the year 587 B.C. from the Jerusalem area which was led by a man named Mulek. Mulek was the son of the Jewish King named Zedekiah. (See Mosiah 25:2; Helaman 6:10; Helaman 8:21) Mulek's group made their way across the ocean to the New World. The descendants of Mulek's group, modernly referred to as "Mulekites," founded a city in the New World which they called Zarahemla.

About the year 200 B.C., the Mulekites of Zarahemla were discovered by descendants of the second-migration group. (See Article No. 2) At the time of this discovery, the king-leader of the descendants of the second-migration group was named Mosiah. In the Book of Mormon, we find the following entry relating to Mosiah's discovery of the Mulekites who lived in the 400-year-old city of Zarahemla:

Behold it came to pass that Mosiah discovered that the people of Zarahemla came out from Jerusalem at the time that Zedekiah, king of Judah, was carried away captive into Babylon. And they journeyed in the wilderness, and were brought by the hand of the Lord across the **great waters**, into the land where Mosiah discovered them; and they had dwelt there from that time forth. (Omni 1:15-16)

The Book of Mormon further reports that this nation of people which had descended from the original Mulekite immigrants had

experienced “many wars and serious contentions, and had fallen by the sword from time to time; ... and they had brought no [scriptural] records with them; and they denied the being of their Creator” (Omni 1:17).

Are there any prophetic references in the Bible to support the Book of Mormon’s claim that God banished to the Western Hemisphere a wicked group of idol-worshiping Jews about the time of the sacking of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar during the reign of King Zedekiah?

The Lord’s prophet during the reign of King Zedekiah was Jeremiah. Prior to the sacking of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar, Jeremiah received the following prophetic revelation which is recorded in the Bible:

Then shalt thou say unto them, because your fathers have forsaken me, saith the Lord, and have walked after other gods, and have served them, and have worshiped them, and have forsaken me, ... and ye have done worse than your fathers; ... Therefore will I cast you out of this land into **a land that ye know not, neither ye nor your fathers**; and there shall ye serve other gods day and night; where I will not show you favor. (Jeremiah 16:11-13)

Many prophecies of the Bible have multiple fulfillment. Could at least one of the unknown places referenced in Jeremiah’s prophecy include land in the New World? Could the land Jeremiah described as unknown to the inhabitants of Jerusalem and their ancestors be the Americas?

Are there any other references in the Bible which speak of this banished group of Israelites that were led by the King’s son to the Americas, the same land that had been inhabited for over 1500 years by the first migration group, the Jaredites? (See Article No. 1) The Lord’s successor prophet to Jeremiah was Ezekiel. Ezekiel was prophet during and immediately following the time that the king’s son Mulek and his band migrated to America. Ezekiel, by use of a riddle (Ezek. 17:2), wrote of a migration by the king’s son to an inhabited land. After making specific reference to the seed of King Zedekiah (Ezek. 17:13), Ezekiel recorded:

[T]hey that remain shall be scattered toward **all**

winds: and ye shall know that I the Lord have spoken it.

Thus saith the Lord God; I will also take of the highest branch of the high cedar [symbolic for the sons of the king], and will set it; I will crop off from the top of his young twigs a tender one [symbolic for separating a young son], and will plant it upon an high mountain and eminent [Zarahemla]: (Ezek. 17:21-22)

In his riddle, Ezekiel had described the place of planting:

He cropped off the top of his young twigs, and carried it unto a **land of traffick**; he set it in a city of merchants [the Jaredite civilization]. (Ezek. 17:4)

It was planted in a good soil by **great waters** [the New World].... (Ezek. 17:8; see Omni 1:15-16 for a connecting reference to **great waters**)

The Book of Mormon's description of the Jaredite civilization in the Americas matches the "**land of traffick**" described in the Bible by Ezekiel:

And the whole face of the land northward was covered with inhabitants.

And they were exceedingly industrious, and they did buy and sell and **traffic** one with another, that they might get gain. (Ether 10:21-22; see also Mosiah 8:8)

The Book of Mormon records that the Lord had forewarned the first-migration Jaredite people in the New World that except they repent, another people would possess their land. This other people would be brought by the hand of the Lord across the **great waters** in the same manner as the Jaredites had been brought to the New World. (Ether 11:20-21) This prophecy was fulfilled when the third-migration group, the Mulek-led colony, immigrated to the New World, inhabited the land of the Jaredites, and buried the last Jaredite survivor. (See Ether 13:21)

The Bible and the Book of Mormon support and sustain one another as they independently testify to the banishment of a wicked group of Jewish inhabitants in Jerusalem, led by the king's young son, to an unknown land across the great waters which was already inhabited by another civilization.

Next week's article will deal with the two scriptural records that the Old Testament prophet Ezekiel saw in vision.

Article 4

TWO STICKS

(published on Jan. 23, 1997)

Last week's article dealt with the migration of a group of Jews from Jerusalem to the Americas almost 600 years before Christ. This week's article deals with the two separate scriptural records that the Old Testament prophet Ezekiel saw in vision.

Ezekiel was a biblical prophet of many visions and spoke much about the future restoration or gathering of Israel. He prophesied during the 22-year period between 592 B.C. and 570 B.C. One of his most significant visions related to the uniting of the Judaic record (the Bible) with the Josephite/Ephraimite record (the Book of Mormon). With regard to the uniting of these two scriptural records, the Bible sets forth the word of the Lord to Ezekiel as follows:

The word of the Lord came again unto me, saying,
Moreover, thou son of man, take thee one stick, and write upon it, For Judah, and for the children of Israel his companions: then take another stick, and write upon it, For Joseph, the stick of Ephraim, and for all the house of Israel his companions:

And join them one to another into one stick; and they shall become one in thine hand. (Ezekiel 37:15-17)

In the days of Ezekiel, it was common to write on parchment that was rolled onto a stick, thereby making a scroll. It was also common to write on wax-coated wooden tablets, and the Hebrew word "ets" from which the word "stick" was translated, could also be translated "wood" or "boards." Thus, in either event, the commandment to write on a stick was a commandment to keep a written scriptural record.

Note that the Lord commanded the keeping of two separate records which would ultimately unite and become one record in the hand of its reader. It was the record of Judah (the Bible) that would commence first. The Bible contains a religious history of the ancestors of Judah and the descendants of Judah (Adam, Noah, Abraham,

Isaac, Jacob, David, and others), having a primary focus on our Saviour Jesus Christ, whose maternal and foster paternal lineage was through Judah.

The other record which would subsequently join the record of Judah was the record of Joseph of Egypt and his son Ephraim (the Book of Mormon). Joseph was the younger brother of Judah. The Book of Mormon is an account of God's dealings with Joseph's lineage as opposed to Judah's lineage. Both books have a primary focus on our Saviour Jesus Christ.

The engraved record from which the Book of Mormon was ultimately translated and printed was commenced by a direct lineal descendant of Joseph of Egypt named Nephi. Nephi began his record shortly after his immigration to the New World in 589 B.C., at the **same exact time** that Ezekiel was prophet in the Old World.

A new nation was founded in the Western Hemisphere by Nephi and his kin. The people of this Native American Nephite nation were descendants of the biblical Joseph of Egypt. (See Article No. 2) Nephi brought genealogical records with him from the Old World to the New World, and he was personally aware of the fact that he descended from Joseph of Egypt. Nephi's aged father, Lehi, wrote these words to Nephi's youngest brother Joseph who was named for their common ancestor Joseph of Egypt:

For behold, thou art the fruit of my loins; and I [Lehi] am a descendant of Joseph who was carried captive into Egypt. And great were the covenants of the Lord which he made unto Joseph.

Wherefore, Joseph truly saw our day. And he obtained a promise of the Lord, that out of the fruit of his loins the Lord God would raise up a righteous branch unto the house of Israel; not the Messiah, but a branch which was to be broken off, nevertheless, to be remembered in the covenants of the Lord that the Messiah should be made manifest unto them in the latter days, in the spirit of power, unto the bringing of them out of darkness unto light – yea, out of hidden darkness and out of captivity unto freedom. (2 Ne. 3:4-5)

According to the Book of Mormon, Nephi and his father Lehi descended from Joseph's son Manasseh. (See Alma 10:3; see also

1 Ne. 5:14; 1 Ne. 6:2; 3 Ne. 15:12) If Lehi and his posterity were descendants of Joseph through Joseph's son Manasseh, then why does the biblical prophet Ezekiel refer to the Book of Mormon as the "stick of Ephraim" instead of the "stick of Manasseh?"

The original **maternal** line of the Nephite nation in the Americas was through Ephraim because Nephi and his brothers married the daughters of a man named Ishmael who was an Ephraimite. Thus, all of the Native American descendants of Nephi and his brothers had in them the blood of Ephraim. It was not uncommon for an Israelite to reckon an esteemed ancestry through the maternal line. It is noteworthy that Mary, the mother-to-be of Jesus, was of the lineage of David of the Tribe of Judah. Since Jesus was born of Mary and not begotten by her husband Joseph, the blood of David's posterity was given to the body of Jesus through Mary only, his maternal line. (See Acts 2:30; Acts 13:23; Romans 1:3; see also Luke 1:32) It is further noteworthy that Native Americans most often traced their tribal leadership and heirship claims through their maternal line.

These two records, the Bible and the Book of Mormon (the stick of Judah and the stick of Joseph or Ephraim), are now published in a single binding which is held in one hand, constituting a complete and literal fulfillment of Ezekiel's biblical prophecy. The "stick of Ephraim" has been translated into more than 85 languages. It can now be read by more than 95% of the earth's literate population. Who could object to God's doing precisely the thing he promised to do as recorded in the Bible?

The Bible and the Book of Mormon support and sustain one another in regard to Ezekiel's prophecy concerning two separate scriptural records, one of Judah and one of Joseph, that would be joined. (See 2 Ne. 3:12 and 2 Ne. 29:8) Each of these two separate scriptural records testifies that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, the Messiah, and the resurrected Saviour of all mankind.

Next week's article deals with the Book of Mormon's claim that Christ visited the Americas following his resurrection.

Article 5

OTHER SHEEP

(published on Jan. 30, 1997)

Last week's article dealt with the two "sticks" or records that the Old Testament prophet Ezekiel saw in vision. This week's article deals with the Book of Mormon's claim that Christ visited the Americas following his resurrection.

During his earthly ministry, Jesus ministered primarily to the Israelites. (See Matt. 10:5-6) Except on rare occasions, he did not personally minister to the Gentiles. (See Matt. 15:24; Mark 7:25-27) While on the earth, the Saviour ministered especially to those who were of the tribe of Judah. The compilation of writings known as the Bible came forth through the tribe of Judah. The Bible records great promises to the tribe of Judah or the Jewish nation. The tribe of Judah is one of God's covenant people. (See Acts 3:25-26) After his crucifixion and resurrection, the Saviour sent his apostles unto the Gentiles. (See Matt. 28:19)

The Bible also records many great promises that God made to the tribe of Joseph. (See Articles No. 2 and 4) Joseph, the younger brother of Judah, was blessed with a separate land of promise for his descendants. One of the Bible scriptures which describes the choice land to be inherited by the tribe of Joseph is found in Deuteronomy:

And this is the blessing, wherewith Moses the man of
God blessed the children of Israel before his death.

* * *

And of [the tribe of] Joseph he said, Blessed of the
Lord be his **land**, for the precious things of heaven, for
the dew, ... [a]nd for the precious fruits brought forth by
the sun,

* * *

... [a]nd for the precious things of the earth and fulness
thereof, ... let the blessing come upon the head of
Joseph, and upon the top of the head of him that was
separated from his brethren.

[H]e shall push the people together **to the ends of the earth**: and they are the ten thousands of Ephraim, and they are the thousands of Manasseh. (Deut. 33:1; 13-14; 16-17)

Other Bible scriptures support the establishment of a remnant of the tribe of Joseph in the New World. Jacob, the father of Joseph, blessed Joseph's two sons, Ephraim and Manasseh, that their descendants would "grow into a multitude **in the midst of the earth**" (Gen. 48:16). On another occasion, Jacob symbolically blessed his son Joseph that his descendants would cross a body of water. (See Gen. 49:22)

According to the Book of Mormon, the resurrected Saviour visited the descendants of Joseph of Egypt in the New World. Are there any references in the Bible to support the Book of Mormon's claim that the resurrected Saviour visited this remnant of the tribe of Joseph which lived in a separate special land of promise we now call the Americas? In his great Sermon of the Good Shepherd (John 10), Jesus spoke of sheep other than those to whom he ministered in the Holy Land. As recorded in the Bible, Jesus told the "sheep" of his Jewish fold that they alone did not comprise his chosen people:

Other sheep I have which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold and one shepherd. (John 10:16)

Who were these "other sheep" that Jesus promised to visit? In fulfillment of his New Testament declaration, the resurrected Saviour visited a nation of Native Americans who were descendants of Joseph of Egypt and were thus also descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. (See 2 Ne. 3:4) The Saviour taught these Native Americans his gospel and organized his church among them, including calling twelve disciples to govern the affairs of his church in the New World.

As recorded in the Book of Mormon, in speaking to these Native Americans, the resurrected Saviour made specific reference to his prior statement given in the Old World regarding "other sheep":

[T]his people ... are a remnant of the house of Joseph.

And behold, this is the land of your inheritance; and the Father hath given it unto you.

And not at any time hath the Father given me commandment that I should tell it unto your brethren at Jerusalem.

* * *

This much did the Father command me, that I should tell unto them:

That other sheep I have which are not of this fold; them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd.

And now, because of stiffneckedness and unbelief they understood not my word; therefore, I was commanded to say no more of the Father concerning this thing unto them.

* * *

And verily I say unto you, that ye are they of whom I said: Other sheep I have which are not of this fold; them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd.

* * *

[B]ehold, ye have both heard my voice, and seen me; and ye are my sheep, and ye are numbered among those whom the Father hath given me. (3 Ne. 15: 12-14; 16-18; 21; 24)

The Saviour instructed these Native Americans to make a written record of his words so that they might come forth through the Gentiles to the scattered seed of the tribe of Judah in the latter days to bring them to a knowledge of their Redeemer. (See 3 Ne. 16:4-5) The Saviour's instructions were followed, and the written record of the Saviour's words to these Native Americans is set forth in the Book of Mormon.

The Bible and the Book of Mormon support, sustain, and corroborate one another in regard to the Saviour's New Testament declaration that there were "other sheep" of another fold who would hear his voice.

Next week's article deals with a prophecy contained in the Book of Mormon which foretold of the objections which sincere but misguided people would have against the uniting of the Bible and the Book of Mormon as companion witnesses to the divinity of Jesus Christ.

Article 6

A BIBLE! A BIBLE!

(published on Feb. 6, 1997)

Last week's article dealt with Christ's visit to the Americas following his resurrection. This week's article deals with a prophecy contained in the Book of Mormon which foretold of the objections which sincere but misguided people would have against the uniting of the Bible and the Book of Mormon as companion witnesses to the divinity of Jesus Christ.

Almost 600 years before the coming of Christ in the flesh, there was a prophet living in the Western Hemisphere named Nephi. Nephi engraved on thin sheets of metal the words which the Lord inspired him to write. A long line of successor Native American prophets followed Nephi. These successor prophet-authors continued Nephi's engraved metal record for approximately one thousand more years. In time, a shortened abstract or abridgment of this 1000-year scriptural record and other related records were translated into English. This translation was printed in 1830 and given the title the Book of Mormon.

The Saviour revealed to Nephi how men would react at a future time when the Saviour's words as contained in the Book of Mormon would be sent forth unto the ends of the earth. Nephi engraved the Saviour's words on this subject into his record. The literal fulfillment of the Saviour's words occurs throughout the world on a daily basis. We read in the Book of Mormon, now available in more than 85 different languages, the following:

And because my words shall hiss forth - many of the Gentiles shall say: A Bible! A Bible! We have got a Bible, and there cannot be any more Bible.

But thus saith the Lord God: O fools, they shall have a Bible; and it shall proceed forth from the Jews, mine ancient covenant people. And what thank they the Jews for the Bible which they receive from them? Yea, what do the Gentiles mean? Do they remember the travails, and the labors, and the pains of the Jews, and their dili-

gence unto me in bringing forth salvation unto the Gentiles?

O ye Gentiles, have ye remembered the Jews, mine ancient covenant people? Nay; but ye have cursed them, and have hated them and have not sought to recover them. But behold, I will return all these things upon your own heads; for I the Lord have not forgotten my people.

Thou fool, that shall say: A Bible, we have got a Bible, and we need no more Bible. Have ye obtained a Bible save it were by the Jews?

Know ye not that there are more nations than one? Know ye not that I, the Lord your God, have created all men, and that I remember those who are upon the isles of the sea; and that I rule in the heavens above and in the earth beneath; and I bring forth my word unto the children of men, yea, even upon all the nations of the earth?

Wherefore murmur ye, because that ye shall receive more of my word? Know ye not that the testimony of two nations is a witness unto you that I am God, that I remember one nation like unto another? Wherefore, I speak the same words unto one nation like unto another. And when the two nations shall run together the testimony of the two nations shall run together also.

And I do this that I may prove unto many that I am the same yesterday, today, and forever; and that I speak forth my words according to mine own pleasure. And because that I have spoken one word ye need not suppose that I cannot speak another; for my work is not yet finished; neither shall it be until the end of man, neither from that time henceforth and forever. (2 Ne 29:3-9)

It was prophesied by the Lord through Nephi that many would reject the Book of Mormon on the ground that they already had a Bible and would not need "another Bible." The Lord reminded them that they had not received the Bible with gratitude to the Jews through whom it came. If Christians were truly devoted to an understanding of the Bible, would they not have greater feelings of love, brotherhood, and appreciation toward the Jews? The Lord also explained that the Book of Mormon is not a substitute for the Bible,

but rather a corroborative witness of another nation for the same divine cause.

The Bible has been a near perfect tool to support almost any conceivable doctrinal view of Christianity. Does not the most compelling evidence that the Bible needs divine revelatory assistance consist in the simple fact that there are countless conflicting doctrinal views of Christianity which are all based upon the exact same biblical wording? Who can reasonably deny the need for an additional scriptural witness clarifying that which is ambiguous and unanswered in the Bible?

If Christ has caused inspired writings to be given to men at any time, should we not expect him to do so again when he deems it necessary for their guidance since he is the same yesterday, today, and forever? Does man have the power to limit God's capacity to speak to men with his own voice when and where he pleases? **Whenever a man makes the declaration that there will be no further revelations from God, would that not of itself constitute a self-contradicting "revelation?"**

For substantially more than one and one-half centuries, the Book of Mormon has undergone the closest scrutiny and examination by friend and foe alike. The ancient New World prophets and their modern translator, Joseph Smith, are vindicated by the passage of time and events. And what does the Book of Mormon do above all else? It testifies to the divinity and singular greatness of Jesus Christ. It is, as its official subtitle declares, "Another Testament of Jesus Christ," corroborating the Old and New Testaments of Jesus Christ.

Next week's article will be the first of two articles that deal with a widely misinterpreted Bible scripture which is erroneously relied upon for the proposition that all scriptural revelation ended with the completion of the Book of Revelation in the Bible.

Article 7

IF ANY MAN SHALL ADD, PART I

(published on Feb. 13, 1997)

Last week's article dealt with the Saviour's prophecy in the Book of Mormon that foretold of the objections which people would have against the uniting of the Bible and the Book of Mormon as companion witnesses to the divinity of Jesus Christ. This week's article deals with a Bible passage that contains a textual **non**-connection to the Book of Mormon as opposed to a textually connecting link. This article is the first of a two-article series that deals with perhaps the most misinterpreted scripture in all of holy writ - Revelation 22:18-19, which reads:

For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, if any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book:

And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book. (Rev. 22:18-19)

Many have claimed that "these things" which are not to be added unto, refers to the entire Bible. Based upon that assumption, the position is then taken that God has forever terminated his use of non-biblical prophets and apostles to bring forth additional revelatory scripture to mankind. This is called the "closed canon concept." To the naive reader, this "closed canon concept" might appear on first impression to be supported by the fact that the scripture relied upon to uphold the concept is found in the very last chapter of the Bible. The idea that the word of God has been complete since the completion of the Book of Revelation in the Bible pervades much of Christian thinking today.

Logic and reason dictate that this "closed canon concept" could not possibly have been the meaning intended by the author of Revelation, John the Beloved. Two of four reasons will be discussed in this week's article. These are they:

1. When John the Apostle, the author of the Book of Revelation, referred to “these things” and “this book” and “book of this prophecy,” he was referring only to his own personal writings which would come to constitute the Book of Revelation. We know that he was not referring to the entire Bible because several books of the Bible had not yet been written. In fact, the Bible as we now know it did not come into existence as an accepted single collection of sacred writings, i.e. canonized scripture, until many centuries after John had written his Book of Revelation. Of all the various manuscript collections known to have existed prior to A.D. 1,000, not a single one of them contained the Bible as we now know it. There is no mention in the Bible of the word “Bible.” Thus, the word “Bible” is not biblical. It was not until the 5th century that the Greek Church Fathers applied the term “Biblia” to the total collection of Christian scriptures.

2. It is certain that the author of Revelation did not personally ascribe to Revelation 22:18-19 the “closed canon concept” that much of the Christian world has traditionally ascribed to it. We know for a surety that John did not believe that his Book of Revelation foreclosed the possibility of any future scripture. We know this simply because John himself authored the Gospel of John **after** he had authored Revelation. Bible scholars and historians of all religious persuasions are united on this point. Centuries later, the Bible was organized with the Book of Revelation placed last purely because it was the only New Testament Book which was apocalyptic in nature, i.e., looking toward future events. The books in the New Testament are **not** arranged chronologically as to the date of authoring. For instance, Paul’s letters are arranged according to their **length**, excepting Hebrews which was earlier thought to be authored by someone other than Paul.

What are the final words left to posterity by John the Beloved? As if John had some premonition that his words in Revelation might be misinterpreted, he closed out his testimony with these words as contained in the last verse of the last chapter of the Gospel of John:

And there are also many other things which Jesus did, the which, if they should be written every one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books

that should be written. Amen. (John 21:25)

In reality, God's curse is not against prophets who bring forth additional scriptures, but rather those who reject the additional scriptures of the prophets are cursed of God. The Book of Mormon contains a statement of the curse which shall follow those who reject additional scriptures from God:

And in fine, wo unto all those who tremble, and are angry because of the truth of God! For behold, he that is built upon the rock receiveth it with gladness; and he that is built upon a sandy foundation trembleth lest he shall fall.

Wo be unto him that shall say: We have received the word of God, and we need no more of the word of God, for we have enough!

For behold, ... [they] that shall say, We have enough, from them shall be taken away even that which they have. (2 Ne. 28:28-30; see also Alma 12:10-11; 3 Ne. 21:11; 3 Ne. 29:6; Ether 4:8)

How is the Bible taken away from those who refuse God's words as contained in the Book of Mormon? Faith in the Bible continues to erode as a result of the onslaught of secular attacks against the Bible. This erosion of faith is not experienced by those whose belief in the Bible is fully sustained, supported, buttressed, and reinforced by the Book of Mormon which is another testament of Jesus Christ.

Another manner in which the Bible is taken away from those who have it is through the Bible's distortion and dilution resulting from multiple uninspired translations in the same language. This faith-destroying phenomenon of "transfiguring the holy word of God" was prophesied by the Native American prophet Mormon about A.D. 400. (See Mormon 8:33; see also Alma 12:10-11)

Next week's article deals with two additional reasons why the "closed canon concept" is clearly the product of a misinterpretation of Revelation 22:18-19.

Article 8

IF ANY MAN SHALL ADD, PART II

(published on Feb. 20, 1997)

Last week's article dealt with perhaps the most misinterpreted scripture in all of holy writ - Revelation 22:18-19. This week's article continues with that same subject.

Revelation 22:18-19 reads:

For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, if any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book:

And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book. (Rev. 22:18-19)

Many have claimed that "these things" which are not to be added unto refers to the entire Bible. Based upon that assumption, the position is then taken that God has forever terminated his use of living prophets and apostles to bring forth additional revelatory scripture to mankind. This position is referred to as the "closed canon concept." This concept pervades mainstream Christianity today.

In addition to the two reasons set forth in last week's article, there are two more reasons why the "closed canon concept" is a misinterpretation of Revelation 22:18-19:

3. It was not until the middle of the 15th century that Gutenberg invented the first printing press. Prior to that time, all original writings and copies thereof were done by hand. There were no copyright laws providing protection to an author's works, and it was natural for an author to be concerned about copy-scribes altering his writings, especially sacred writings. Thus, it was not uncommon for an author to warn against altering the original of the author's personal writings. Moses, for instance, followed this same practice:

Ye shall not add unto the word which I command you,
neither shall ye diminish ought from it.... (Deut. 4:2)

Has anyone ever illogically argued that Moses actually meant there

should be no more prophetic, inspired sacred writings beyond his authorship of Deuteronomy? (Or beyond the authorship of Proverbs 30:5-6?)

4. The Bible itself refers with approval to more than eighteen (18) other writings which we do not now have. These other writings were considered to be authentic and valuable by various authors of the Bible. If any of them or other ancient writings are discovered in the future, does God want us to totally ignore them because of the warning contained in Revelation 22:18-19? For instance, the Dead Sea Scrolls are twice as old as the oldest previously known biblical manuscripts covering the same subject. Should we re-bury the Dead Sea Scrolls? Or should we re-bury only those portions of the Dead Sea Scrolls containing varying or heretofore unknown texts?

Some of the missing writings to which the Bible makes specific reference are Book of the Wars of the Lord (Num. 21:14); Book of Jasher (Josh. 10:13; 2 Sam. 1:18); Book of the Acts of Solomon (1 Kings 11:41); Book of Samuel the Seer (1 Chr. 29:29); Book of Gad the Seer (1 Chr. 29:29); Book of Nathan the Prophet (1 Chr. 29:29; 2 Chr. 9:29); Prophecy of Ahijah (2 Chr. 9:29); Visions of Iddo the Seer (2 Chr. 9:29; 12:15; 13:22); Book of Shemaiah (2 Chr. 12:15); Book of Jehu (2 Chr. 20:34); Sayings of the Seer (2 Chr. 33:19); An Earlier Epistle of Paul to the Corinthians (1 Cor. 5:9); An Earlier Epistle of Paul to the Ephesians (Eph. 3:3); An Epistle of Paul to the Laodiceans (Col. 4:16); Prophecies of Enoch (Jude 1:14); The Book of the Covenant (Ex. 24:7); The Manner of the Kingdom (1 Sam. 10:25); and The Acts of Uzziah by Isaiah (2 Chr. 26:22).

John was simply warning against adding to (or taking from) the revelations he had personally received and was then writing while exiled on the Isle of Patmos. In other words, John was warning against making changes to his "book" of Revelation. He was not referring to a future collection of books bound together in one volume, the product of the printing press many centuries later.

John's warning in Revelation 22:18-19 does not take away God's power to add new revelations to those previously received by his prophets. In truth, the Bible contains no scriptural passage stating that the Bible or what was to become the Bible contains all religious truth and that there will be no more scriptures coming from God.

The Book of Mormon is a direct challenge to the “closed canon concept.” Some say: Don’t read it because Revelation 22:18-19 declares that God will not bring forth any additional scriptures. Therefore, it must be the work of a mere man. Others, more enlightened, say: Read it, study it, ponder it, pray about it, and learn for yourself whether it be true or false. Only within its pages can one find the evidences, both spiritual and empirical, of its true character and nature. It should be remembered that the Jews of the early Christian era were incensed at the fact that Christians were adding new books to the previously accepted canon of scripture - the Old Testament.

In reality, God’s curse is not against prophets who bring forth additional scriptures, but rather those who reject the additional scriptures of the prophets are cursed of God. The Book of Mormon contains a statement of God’s curse which shall follow those who reject additional scripture from God:

And he that will contend against the word of the Lord,
let him be accursed; and he that shall deny these things,
let him be accursed; for unto them will I show no greater
things, saith Jesus Christ, for I am he who speaketh.
(Ether 4:8; see also 2 Ne. 28:28-30; Alma 12:10-11; 3
Ne. 21:11; 3 Ne. 29:6)

The Bible, when studied in conjunction with the Book of Mormon, or vice-versa, is God’s perfect antidote to the poisonous doctrinal heresies that pervade modern, pluralistic Christianity, including the heretical doctrine that God is somehow not capable of providing additional scriptures to mankind. (See 2 Ne. 3:12)

Next week’s article will be the first of nine articles (Articles No. 9-17) which deal with the 29th Chapter of Isaiah wherein the Old Testament prophet Isaiah prophesies of the coming forth of the Book of Mormon.

Article 9

ISAIAH'S VISION, PART I

(published on Feb. 27, 1997)

Last week's article was the second of two articles which dealt with the meaning of Revelation 22:18-19. This week's article is the first in a series of nine articles which deal with the 29th Chapter of Isaiah wherein the Old Testament prophet Isaiah prophesies of the coming forth of the Book of Mormon.

Nephi was a young Israelite prophet who immigrated from Jerusalem to the New World almost 600 years before the birth of Christ. Nephi brought with him to the New World the 100-plus-year-old writings of the Old Testament prophet Isaiah. Nephi was a dedicated student of the writings of the biblical prophet Isaiah.

Nephi commenced the inscribed metal records which were ultimately condensed, translated into the English language, and printed as the Book of Mormon. In his personal writings, Nephi engraved onto his thin sheets of metal many of the writings of the seer Isaiah. Nephi particularly studied and recorded the writings of Isaiah as now contained in the 29th Chapter of Isaiah because these writings foretold of Nephi's and his brothers' descendants. These writings of Isaiah also foretold of the coming forth of their scriptural record (the Book of Mormon) that Nephi himself would originate.

Nephi declared:

Yea, and my soul delighteth in the words of Isaiah....

[F]or I know that they shall be of great worth unto [the children of men and mine own people] in the last days; for in that day shall they understand them; wherefore, for their good have I written them.

[B]ehold I say unto you, that as these things are true, and as the Lord God liveth, there is none other name given under heaven save it be this Jesus Christ, of which I have spoken, whereby man can be saved.

Wherefore, for this cause hath the Lord God promised unto me that these things which I write shall

be kept and preserved, and handed down unto my seed,
from generation to generation.... (2 Ne. 25:5; 8; 20-21)

Nephi's primary purpose in quoting to his people and recording for his posterity the words of Isaiah was the same as the primary purpose for which Isaiah had originally written his words — to testify of the divine mission of Jesus Christ. Nephi laboriously engraved the following words on his metallic record:

[T]hat I might more fully persuade [my brethren] to believe in the Lord their Redeemer I did read unto them that which was written by the prophet Isaiah.... (1 Ne. 19:23)

* * *

I will send [Isaiah's words] forth unto all my children, for he verily saw my Redeemer, even as I have seen him.

Behold, my soul delighteth in proving unto my people the truth of the coming of Christ. (2 Ne. 11:2; 4)

What did the Old Testament prophet Isaiah write to preface his advance account by 2,500 years of the coming forth of the Book of Mormon? Verses 1-2 of the 29th Chapter of Isaiah commences Isaiah's prophecy regarding the people of the Book of Mormon:

Woe to Ariel, to Ariel, the city where David dwelt!
Add ye year to year; let them kill sacrifices.

Yet I will distress Ariel, and there shall be heaviness and sorrow: and it shall be unto me as Ariel. (Isaiah 29:1-2)

Isaiah forewarned of the destruction of "Ariel," another name for the city of Jerusalem and its Israelite people. This destruction came to pass during the reign of King Zedekiah, less than 150 years after Isaiah's prophecy. The Chaldeans under the leadership of Nebuchadnezzar destroyed Jerusalem with great cruelty and took its surviving inhabitants captive. Isaiah chose Jerusalem and its pending destruction as the subject for the introduction to his prophecies relating to the coming forth of the Book of Mormon. Isaiah's choice of this introduction is perfectly consistent with the Book of Mormon itself. The historical setting for the beginning of the Book of Mormon is also Jerusalem and the prophecy given by Nephi's father, Lehi, of this **very same** pending destruction. (See 1 Ne. 1:4; 13; 18)

Isaiah's vision then moved further into the future as indicated by his words "add ye year to year." Isaiah next prophetically viewed the descendants of this Israelite people who had lived in "Ariel" or Jerusalem. These descendants would include the descendants of two men named Lehi and Mulek who would separately flee Jerusalem in the days of King Zedekiah. (See Articles No. 2 and 3) Lehi and Mulek became the major progenitors of two Native American-Book of Mormon nations which later merged.

Isaiah's words, "let them kill sacrifices," probably have a deeper meaning than the killing of animals in religious ordinances. The descendants of these two men of Jerusalem, Lehi and Mulek, were Native Americans, and it is now well known, and the Book of Mormon so records (see Mormon 4:14; 21; Moroni 9:10), that these ancient Native American cultures degenerated to the extent that they practiced human sacrifice. Perhaps Isaiah was shown the single most depraved practice to point out the ultimate apostate condition of these Native American Israelites. It appears that Isaiah saw not only the horrible scenes associated with the destruction of the Israelite people of Jerusalem at the time of Zedekiah, but also the equally horrible New World scenes associated with the destruction of their Lehi-Mulekite descendants, including sacrificial killings - people slain as animals upon an altar. Whatever the exact scene, it saddened the Lord the same "as Ariel."

The Book of Mormon and the history of its people verify the biblical prophecies of Isaiah as contained in Isaiah 29:1-2. These verses from Isaiah provide the beginning of a preface to Isaiah's prophecies regarding the coming forth of the Book of Mormon.

Next week's article will be the second in a series of nine articles which deal with the 29th Chapter of Isaiah wherein the Old Testament prophet Isaiah prophesies of the coming forth of the Book of Mormon.

Article 10

ISAIAH'S VISION, PART II

(published on March 6, 1997)

Last week's article was the first of nine articles which deal with the 29th Chapter of Isaiah wherein the Old Testament prophet Isaiah prophesies of the coming forth of the Book of Mormon. This week's article is the second article in that series.

The written record which has come to be known as the Book of Mormon was originally engraved on thin metal sheets or "plates" for preservation purposes. The engravings were made by a successive line of prophet-authors living in the Western Hemisphere.

The Book of Mormon record contains, among other things, a limited religious history of the descendants of an Israelite prophet named Lehi. About 600 B.C., Lehi fled his Jerusalem homeland and came to the New World. Of the twelve tribes of Israel, Lehi was of the tribe of Joseph of Egypt. Lehi was a major progenitor of the Native American nations in the Western Hemisphere. (See Articles No. 2 and 4)

The biblical prophet Isaiah saw in vision the descendants of Lehi and the coming forth of their scriptural record. Last week's article covered the beginning of Isaiah's preface to his account of the coming forth of the Book of Mormon. Isaiah continued his preface to his account of the coming forth of the Book of Mormon with prophecies relating to the fate of Lehi's Native American descendants. This includes the fate of Native American Jews, descendants of Mulek, with whom Lehi's descendants merged about 200 years prior to the coming of Christ:

And I will camp against thee round about, and will lay siege against thee with a mount, and I will raise forts against thee. (Isaiah 29:3)

After referring to the Native American descendants of Lehi and Mulek who would be destroyed "as Ariel" (See Article No. 9), Isaiah next described their fate as a nation besieged by cavalry and then made the victim of a system of forts. Isaiah perfectly prophesied of the Gentile conquest and domination of the Native

American descendants of Lehi and Mulek.

First came the Spanish conquistadors with their “mounts” or horses. History records that entire nations of Native Americans on two continents were besieged and slaughtered without the slightest mercy. Following the Spanish atrocities, the United States Cavalry systematically invaded, decimated, and scattered this remnant of Israel which had totally forsaken and forgotten the God of their ancestors, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Judah, and Joseph. Finally, in complete fulfillment of Isaiah’s prophecy, forts were raised to enforce the Gentile domination of the conquered peoples who were relegated to reservations.

More than two millennia prior to the destruction of these Native Americans by “siege,” “mount,” and “fort,” their ancestor Nephi, a son of Lehi, had prophetically written these words on the metal plates which would come to constitute part of the Book of Mormon record:

And it came to pass that I beheld many multitudes of the Gentiles upon the land of promise; and I beheld the wrath of God, that it was upon the seed of my brethren; and they were scattered before the Gentiles and were smitten. (1 Ne. 13:14; see also 1 Ne. 22:7)

* * *

Wherefore, my beloved brethren, thus saith our God: I will afflict thy seed by the hand of the Gentiles.... (2 Ne. 10:18)

* * *

[B]ehold, I prophesy unto you concerning the last days; concerning the days when the Lord God shall bring these things [the Book of Mormon] forth unto the children of men.

After my seed and the seed of my brethren shall have dwindled in unbelief, and shall have been smitten by the Gentiles; yea, after the Lord God shall have **camped against them round about, and shall have laid siege against them with a mount, and raised forts against them**; and after they shall have been brought down low in the dust, even that they are not, yet the words of the righteous [the Book of Mormon] shall be written, and

the prayers of the faithful shall be heard, and all those who have dwindled in unbelief shall not be forgotten. (2 Ne. 26:14-15)

Additionally, about A.D. 380, the Native American record-keeper Mormon engraved these words upon the metal plates:

[T]he Lord hath said [the Gentiles] should scatter this people, and this people should be counted as naught among them.... (Mormon 5:9; see also 3 Ne. 16:8-9)

Volumes of historical records and books, and scores of television documentaries now testify to the fulfillment of Nephi's, Mormon's, and Isaiah's prophecies concerning the scattering and destruction of Lehi's and Mulek's descendants by "siege," "mount," and "fort" at the hands of the Gentiles. The history of the Native Americans in the Western Hemisphere is a tragic story of great persecution and suffering.

Misnamed "Indians" by early European explorers, the Native American descendants of Lehi of the tribe of Joseph and Mulek of the tribe of Judah were repeatedly uprooted from their homelands and forced to relocate in less desirable areas. A private-ownership economy was imposed upon them which ran directly counter to their religious and cultural beliefs about the earth and its communal resources. They suffered plagues from multiple European diseases for which their bodies had built no resistance. They were introduced by white men to vices not previously known to them. They witnessed solemn treaties, one after another, time and time again, violated and replaced with less favorable conditions. (See 2 Tim. 3:3) They were subjected to the attempts of paternalistic do-gooders to destroy their heritage, traditions, and culture. As a people, they barely survived to see the advent of the 20th century.

The religious history contained in the Book of Mormon and the subsequent modern history of the book's Native American peoples sustain, support, and corroborate the biblical prophecies of Isaiah as set forth in Isaiah 29:3.

Next week's article will be the third in a series of nine articles which deal with the the 29th Chapter of Isaiah wherein the Old Testament prophet Isaiah prophesies of the coming forth of the Book of Mormon.

Article 11

ISAIAH'S VISION, PART III

(published on March 13, 1997)

Last week's article was the second in a series of nine articles which deal with the 29th Chapter of Isaiah wherein the Old Testament prophet Isaiah prophesies of the coming forth of the Book of Mormon. This week's article is the third article in that series.

Verse 4 of the 29th Chapter of Isaiah is a continuation of Isaiah's preface to his prophecy regarding the coming forth of the Book of Mormon. In verse 4, the biblical prophet Isaiah provides additional information about the Book of Mormon peoples and their scriptural record. In referring to the Native American remnant of the Josephite/Judaic branches of the House of Israel, Isaiah wrote:

And thou shalt be brought down, and shalt speak out of the **ground**, and thy speech shall be low out of the **dust**, and thy voice shall be, as of one that hath a familiar spirit, out of the **ground**, and thy speech shall whisper out of the **dust**. (Isaiah 29:4; see also Isaiah 45:8 and Psalms 85:11)

Naturally, over the course of time, a conquered people like the deceased Native American nation of ancient America would return to the dust of the earth. The deceased have no living voice with which to speak. The only manner in which that deceased nation can speak "out of the ground" or "low out of the dust" is by way of their written records which have been hidden and stored by them in the ground or earth.

The tone of their ancient scriptural writings would seem familiar to the readers of a later time because the later readers would have studied the writings of the biblical prophet Isaiah, the same prophet who was regularly studied and quoted by the scriptural record-keepers of the deceased Native American nation. The ring of familiarity in their respective writings would also result from the same spirit giving utterance to the prophet-authors of both hemispheres.

The engravers of the record from which the Book of Mormon

was ultimately translated and printed were well aware that their writings were to be preserved and brought forth “**out of the ground**” and “**out of the dust**” for the benefit of future readers. These ancient Native American authors repeatedly testified of this fact in their own writings; and they had been foretold of such by earlier prophetic Old World writings which were in their possession.

One of those earlier Old World writings came through their direct lineal ancestor, Joseph of Egypt. The Lord spoke the following words to Joseph of Egypt as contained in a scriptural record which was brought to the Americas 589 years before Christ. This Josephite record was brought from Jerusalem by the Lehi immigrant family group who were direct lineal descendants of Joseph of Egypt. To Joseph the Lord had said:

And the words which he [a latter-day seer] shall write shall be the words which are expedient in my wisdom should go forth unto the fruit of thy [Joseph of Egypt's] loins. And it shall be as if the fruit of thy loins had cried unto them from the **dust**; for I know their faith.

And they shall cry from the **dust**. (2 Ne 3:19-20)

The major writers of the Book of Mormon record, including (1) Nephi who began the engraved metallic record, (2) Mormon who was the most prolific writer, and (3) Moroni who concluded the record and hid it in the earth, all made prophesies similar to those of Isaiah as contained in the Bible.

Nephi concluded his portion of the record with these sobering words:

And now, my beloved brethren, all those who are of the house of Israel, and all ye ends of the earth. I speak unto you as the voice of one crying from the **dust**: Farewell until that great day shall come.

And you that will not partake of the goodness of God, and respect the words of the Jews [Bible], and also my words, and the words which shall proceed forth out of the mouth of the Lamb of God [Book of Mormon], behold, I bid you an everlasting farewell, for these words shall condemn you at the last day. (2 Ne. 33:13-14)

The last of the Book of Mormon prophets, Moroni, who in A.D.

421 buried the accumulated records in what is now western New York State, wrote these words as he hid from pursuing enemies:

Therefore I will write and hide up the records in the **earth**;

* * *

[Y]ea, it shall be brought out of the **earth**, and it shall shine forth out of darkness, and come unto the knowledge of the people; and it shall be done by the power of God.

* * *

Search the propheties of Isaiah. Behold, I cannot write them. Yea, behold I say unto you, that those saints who have gone before me, who have possessed this land, shall cry, yea, even from the **dust** will they cry unto the Lord; and as the Lord liveth he will remember the covenant which he hath made with them.

* * *

And no one need say they shall not come, for they surely shall, for the Lord hath spoken it; for out of the **earth** shall they come, by the hand of the Lord, and none can stay it, and it shall come in a day when it shall be said that miracles are done away; and it shall come even as if one should speak from the dead. (Mormon 8:4; 16; 23; 26; see also Mormon 9:30 and Moroni 10:27; as to the prophet Mormon, see Mormon 5:12; 6:6)

The Book of Mormon supports, sustains, and fulfills the biblical propheties of Isaiah concerning speech from the **ground/dust** as contained in Isaiah 29:4.

Next week's article will be the fourth in a series of nine articles which deal with the 29th Chapter of Isaiah wherein the Old Testament prophet Isaiah propheties of the coming forth of the Book of Mormon.

Article 12

ISAIAH'S VISION, PART IV

(published on March 20, 1997)

Last week's article was the third in a series of nine articles which deal with the 29th Chapter of Isaiah wherein the Old Testament prophet Isaiah prophesies of the coming forth of the Book of Mormon. This week's article is the fourth article in that series.

Verses 5-6 of the 29th Chapter of Isaiah are a continuation of Isaiah's preface to his prophecy regarding the coming forth of the Book of Mormon. In verses 5-6, the biblical prophet Isaiah prophesies of the catastrophic events which would befall the Native American civilization whose religious history is chronicled in the Book of Mormon. Isaiah wrote about the destructive events that would occur in the Americas at the time of the Saviour's crucifixion in the Old World.

Moreover the multitude of thy strangers shall be like small dust, and the multitude of the terrible ones shall be as chaff that passeth away: yea, it shall be at an instant suddenly.

Thou shalt be visited of the Lord of hosts with thunder, and with earthquake, and great noise, with storm and tempest, and the flame of devouring fire. (Isaiah 29:5-6)

The prophet Isaiah saw in vision the sudden destruction of a large portion of the New World's combined Josephite/Judaic branch of the House of Israel. Isaiah saw the various ways in which that destruction would be accomplished by the Lord. Isaiah prophetically witnessed the great Native American civilization which, through long-term sin and disobedience, would become ripe for destruction at the time of the Saviour's crucifixion.

The "strangers" or outsiders of the gospel culture, those who would refuse to give heed to the words of the prophets among them, would be destroyed and returned to "small dust." The "terrible ones," i.e., the evil and powerful leaders of this unrighteous people, would become as "chaff" in the wind. This destruction would take

place quickly "at an instant," and would be accomplished through natural disasters that are associated with electrical thunderstorms, fires, tempests with high velocity winds, and earthquakes.

The Book of Mormon supports and sustains the biblical prophecies of Isaiah on all of these points. The Book of 3 Nephi in the Book of Mormon contains the following record of the speedy destruction and total extinction of sixteen New World cities at the time of the Lord's crucifixion in the Old World:

And it came to pass in the thirty and fourth year, in the first month, on the fourth day of the month, there arose a great storm, such an one as never had been known in all the land.

And there was also a great and terrible tempest; and there was terrible thunder, insomuch that it did shake the whole earth as if it was about to divide asunder.

And there were exceedingly sharp lightnings, such as never had been known in all the land.

* * *

And the highways were broken up, and the level roads were spoiled, and many smooth places became rough.

And many great and notable cities were sunk, and many were burned, and many were shaken till the buildings thereof had fallen to the earth, and the inhabitants thereof were slain, and the places were left desolate.

* * *

And there were some who were carried away in the whirlwind; and whither they went no man knoweth, save they know that they were carried away.

And thus the face of the whole earth became deformed, because of the tempests, and the thunderings, and the lightnings, and the quaking of the earth.

And behold, the rocks were rent in twain; they were broken up upon the face of the whole earth, insomuch that they were found in broken fragments, and in seams and in cracks, upon all the face of the land.

And it came to pass that when the thunderings, and the lightnings, and the storm, and the tempest, and the

quakings of the earth did cease - for behold, they did last for about the space of three hours; and it was said by some that the time was greater; nevertheless, all these great and terrible things were done in about the space of three hours - and then behold, there was darkness upon the face of the land. (3 Ne. 8:5-7; 13-14; 16-19)

The New Testament records that in the Old World there were three hours of darkness. Perhaps the three hours of darkness in the Old World was simultaneous with the three hours of multiple natural disasters in the New World:

And it was about the sixth hour and there was a darkness over all the earth until the ninth hour.

And the sun was darkened, and the veil of the temple was rent in the midst. (Luke 23:44-45)

* * *

[A]nd the earth did quake, and the rocks rent; (Matt. 27:51)

Isaiah's biblical prediction of the future destruction of a large portion of the combined Josephite/Judaic Native American branch of the House of Israel by sudden "thunder," "earthquake," "great noise," "storm," "tempest," and "fire" found literal fulfillment more than 750 years later as recorded in the Book of Mormon. The Book of Mormon record verifies the fulfillment of Isaiah's biblical prophecy concerning the quick and massive catastrophic destruction of a great portion of the Josephite/Judaic remnant of the House of Israel living in the Americas. The Book of Mormon also lends support to the New Testament's report of earthquake-like occurrences and darkness over all the earth.

Next week's article will be the fifth in a series of nine articles which deal with the 29th Chapter of Isaiah wherein the Old Testament prophet Isaiah prophesies of the coming forth of the Book of Mormon.

Article 13

ISAIAH'S VISION, PART V

(published on March 27, 1997)

Last week's article was the fourth in a series of nine articles which deal with the 29th Chapter of Isaiah wherein the Old Testament prophet Isaiah prophesies of the coming forth of the Book of Mormon. This week's article is the fifth article in that series.

Verses 7-8 of the 29th Chapter of Isaiah are a continuation of Isaiah's preface to his prophecy regarding the coming forth of the Native American Book of Mormon record in our day. Verses 7-8 prophesy of the frustration and disappointment that will be suffered by those who oppose the Lord's covenant-keeping people. These verses point to the ultimate triumph, through righteousness, of both the Jewish branch of the House of Israel and the Native American Josephite remnant branch of the House of Israel. Each of these two branches of the House of Israel had a common origin in "Ariel" or Jerusalem, and each is promised a separate land of gathering - Jerusalem for the descendants of Judah and New Jerusalem in America for the descendants of Joseph. (See Isaiah 2:2-3; 11:12; Ether 13:6) These gathering places are often referred to as Zion or Mount Zion. Isaiah writes:

And the multitude of all the nations that fight against Ariel, even all that fight against her and her munition, and that distress her, shall be as a dream of a night vision.

It shall even be as when an hungry man dreameth, and, behold, he eateth; but he awaketh, and his soul is empty; or as when a thirsty man dreameth, and, behold, he drinketh; but he awaketh, and, behold, he is faint, and his soul hath appetite: so shall the multitude of all the nations be, that fight against mount Zion. (Isaiah 29:7-8)

A Native American prophet named Jacob wrote in the Book of Mormon record similarly to Isaiah:

Wherefore, they that fight against Zion and the

covenant people of the Lord shall lick up the dust of their feet; and the people of the Lord shall not be ashamed.

* * *

[F]or the Mighty God shall deliver his covenant people. For thus saith the Lord: I will contend with them that contendeth with thee - (2 Ne. 6:13; 17)

The Book of Mormon supports and sustains the biblical prophecies of Isaiah regarding the yet eventual favorable destiny of both the Jewish branch of the House of Israel and the American Josephite remnant of the House of Israel. The latter includes those of Native American ancestry, such as Indians, Hispanics, and Latin Americans.

Writing approximately 550 years before Christ, an ancient American prophet named Nephi engraved upon his metallic record prophecies which are in the very process of fulfillment as we witness the gathering of the Jews to Jerusalem on the one hand, and, on the other hand, the emergence in the Western Hemisphere of an influential and powerful people the world variously describes as Indians, Hispanics, and Latin Americans. These people of Native American lineage are being converted to the gospel of Jesus Christ in ever-increasing numbers by the power of the Book of Mormon scriptures which were authored by their ancestors of old. Nephi wrote:

And then shall they [descendants of Joseph of Egypt] rejoice; for they shall know that it [the Book of Mormon] is a blessing unto them from the hand of God; and their scales of darkness shall begin to fall from their eyes; and many generations shall not pass away among them, save they shall be a pure and a delightsome people.

And it shall come to pass that the Jews which are scattered also shall begin to believe in Christ; and they shall begin to gather in upon the face of the land; and as many as shall believe in Christ shall also become a delightsome people.

And it shall come to pass that the Lord God shall commence his work among all nations, kindreds,

tongues, and people, to bring about the restoration of his people upon the earth. (2 Ne. 30:6-8)

The Saviour himself foretold of the yet eventual favorable destiny of the righteous descendants of Joseph of Egypt. The Saviour spoke these words to the Native American people in the New World shortly after his resurrection:

And my people who are a remnant of Jacob shall be among the Gentiles, yea, in the midst of them as a lion among the beasts of the forest, as a young lion among the flocks of sheep, who, if he go through both treadeth down and teareth in pieces, and none can deliver.

Their hand shall be lifted up upon their adversaries, and all their enemies shall be cut off.

* * *

But if they [the Gentiles] will repent and hearken unto my words, and harden not their hearts, I will establish my church among them, and they shall come in unto the covenant and be numbered among this the remnant of Jacob, unto whom I have given this land [America] for their inheritance:

And they [the Gentiles] shall assist my people, the remnant of Jacob, and also as many of the house of Israel as shall come, that they may build a city, which shall be called the New Jerusalem. (3 Ne. 21:12-13; 22-23)

The Bible and the Book of Mormon corroborate one another. Each testifies of the great promises that the Lord has made to both the covenant-keeping descendants of Judah in Ariel (Jerusalem) and the covenant-keeping remnant of Jacob or Israel (descendants of Joseph of Egypt), which remnant also originated in Ariel but now inhabits the Western Hemisphere which is to be the site of the New Jerusalem.

Next week's article will be the sixth in a series of nine articles which deal with the 29th Chapter of Isaiah wherein the Old Testament prophet Isaiah prophesies of the coming forth of the Book of Mormon.

Article 14

ISAIAH'S VISION, PART VI

(published on April 3, 1997)

Last week's article was the fifth in a series of nine articles which deal with the 29th Chapter of Isaiah wherein the Old Testament prophet Isaiah prophesies of the coming forth of the Book of Mormon. This week's article is the sixth article in that series.

Verses 9-11 of the 29th Chapter of Isaiah contain a portion of Isaiah's vision of the coming forth of the Book of Mormon. In verses 9 and 10, Isaiah describes the apostate condition of the world which would foreshadow the time when this new book of scripture would be brought forth. Isaiah saw in vision a dark period of time when the Lord's prophets could not be found among the people. God had taken his prophets from the earth because the people had rejected their guidance and direction. Pointedly, Isaiah describes the people as being in a spiritually drunken and blind condition as a result of the absence of continuing revelation from God through living prophets. Isaiah wrote:

Stay yourselves, and wonder; cry ye out, and cry:
they are drunken, but not with wine; they stagger, but not
with strong drink.

For the Lord hath poured out upon you the spirit of
deep sleep, and hath closed your eyes: the prophets and
your rulers, the seers hath he covered. (Isaiah 29:9-10)

The Old Testament prophet Micah wrote similarly to Isaiah:

Therefore night shall be unto you, that ye shall not
have a vision; and it shall be dark unto you, that ye shall
not divine; and the sun shall go down over the prophets,
and the day shall be dark over them. (Micah 3:6)

After describing this condition of great apostasy, Isaiah then commences to write of a restoration of truth through the coming forth of a book. Words from this book, not the book itself, would be delivered to a learned man who would state that he could not read the book because **it was sealed**. In the words of Isaiah, verse 11:

And the vision of all is become unto you as the words

of a book that is sealed, which men deliver to one that is learned, saying, Read this, I pray thee: and he saith, **I cannot; for it is sealed:** (Isaiah 29:11)

A literal fulfillment of this biblical prophecy took place in 1828.

Perhaps some background information about the physical characteristics of the ancient record possessed by Joseph Smith would be helpful in understanding the fulfillment of Isaiah's prophecy. This engraved metal record produced by Native American prophet-authors was seen by eleven reputable witnesses whose signed testimonies are printed in all editions of the Book of Mormon.

Each of the engraved metal sheets or plates from which the Book of Mormon was translated by Joseph Smith measured approximately 6 inches wide and 8 inches long. The entire record was approximately 6 inches thick and was bound together by three rings on one side. The record weighed about 50 pounds. Each gold-like sheet or plate was about the thickness of common tin. One-third of the plates could be easily turned from plate-page to plate-page, but two-thirds of all the plates were "sealed" or tied together with a band so that the engravings upon them could not be examined.

Joseph Smith copied some of the ancient characters or "words of a book" from the unsealed portion onto a piece of paper. Joseph gave the paper containing the characters and his translation of them to a 44-year-old gentleman farmer by the name of Martin Harris. Martin Harris, with Joseph's consent, took the characters to Professor Charles Anthon of Columbia College in New York City in order to obtain a scholarly opinion about the authenticity of the characters. Professor Anthon was well known for his literary attainments. He had served as professor of classical studies at Columbia College for 8 years at that time. He was also a prolific writer and had great influence upon the study of the classics in the United States and Europe.

When shown the characters, Professor Anthon stated to Harris that the characters were true characters and that in his opinion the translation of such of them as had been translated was also correct. Professor Anthon presented Harris with a written statement certifying such. In response to Anthon's parting question regarding the origin of the gold plates from which the characters were taken, Harris told Professor Anthon that an angel of God had revealed the

plates to Joseph Smith. Upon receiving this answer, Professor Anthon retrieved his certificate and tore it to pieces, stating that there was no such thing now as the ministering of angels. Professor Anthon then proudly boasted that he would translate the gold plates if they were brought to him. Harris informed Anthon that the larger portion of the plates were sealed and that Harris was forbidden to have possession of them. The learned Professor Anthon, to whom had been delivered the words of the book that was sealed, replied, **“I cannot read a sealed book.”**

Here is the question for all who strongly believe in the truthfulness of the Bible: If the above described event did not precisely and literally fulfill Isaiah’s biblical prophecy as contained in Isaiah 29:11, then to what past or future event must the Christian world look for its precise and literal fulfillment?

After visiting Professor Anthon and at least two other scholars, Harris returned to his home thoroughly convinced that the characters were genuine. Martin Harris, thereafter, donated his time and money, and pledged his personal assets toward the publication of the Book of Mormon. Martin Harris died a member of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in northern Utah in 1875, eight days short of his 92nd birthday, never wavering from his personal account of the foregoing events.

The facts surrounding the coming forth of the Book of Mormon sustain, support, and corroborate the Bible and verify the truthfulness of Isaiah’s prophecies as contained in Isaiah 29:9-11.

Next week’s article will be the seventh in a series of nine articles which deal with the 29th Chapter of Isaiah wherein the Old Testament prophet Isaiah prophesies of the coming forth of the Book of Mormon.

Article 15

ISAIAH'S VISION, PART VII

(published on April 10, 1997)

Last week's article was the sixth in a series of nine articles which deal with the 29th Chapter of Isaiah wherein the Old Testament prophet Isaiah prophesies of the coming forth of the Book of Mormon. This week's article is the seventh article in that series.

In verse 12 of the 29th Chapter of Isaiah, we read about a book being delivered to an unlearned man:

And the book is delivered to him that is not learned,
saying, Read this, I pray thee: and he saith, I am not
learned. (Isaiah 29:12)

Young Joseph Smith was but 17 years of age on September 22, 1823, when he was first shown by an angel named Moroni the record from which the Book of Mormon would ultimately be produced. Joseph Smith, like others who lived and manually labored on the western frontier of the United States, had very little formal education. As compared with the academic credentials and experience of Professor Anthon, Joseph's educational status could accurately be described as "unlearned." (See Isaiah 29:11 and Article No. 14.)

Joseph Smith's wife, Emma Hale Smith, acted temporarily as a scribe for her husband as he worked on an early part of the translation of the engraved metal plates. (The original Book of Mormon manuscript is not in the handwriting of Joseph Smith; rather it is in the handwriting of the various scribes to whom Joseph dictated the wording.) Emma Hale Smith described in her own words the unlearned status of her husband Joseph who was 22 years old at the time he first began to translate the ancient record. In a letter to a friend she mentioned:

Joseph Smith could neither write nor dictate a coherent and well-worded letter, let alone dictate a book like the Book of Mormon, and though I was an active participant in the scenes that transpired, was present during the translation of the plates, and had cognizance of

things as they transpired, it is marvelous to me - a marvel and a wonder - as much as to anyone else.... For one so ignorant and unlearned as he was, it was simply impossible.

Approximately 589 years before Christ, an Israelite prophet named Nephi immigrated from Jerusalem to the New World while yet a young man. Nephi brought with him to the New World a scriptural record containing the writings of Isaiah which were more than 100 years old at that time. Nephi inscribed on thin metal sheets or plates many of the writings of Isaiah which Nephi had brought with him from the Old World. Nephi's record became the basis for a substantial portion of the Book of Mormon. Thus, the Book of Mormon quotes Isaiah more frequently than it quotes any other biblical prophet. It is noteworthy that in the New Testament, Jesus and his apostles also quote Isaiah more frequently than they quote any other prophet.

Nephi commenced or originated the ancient scriptural record from which the Book of Mormon was ultimately produced. Nephi was privileged to understand the future events about which Isaiah had written regarding the coming forth of the Book of Mormon. After studying and pondering Isaiah's prophecies, Nephi engraved on thin metal sheets or plates his revelations on the coming forth of the Book of Mormon. Nephi wrote for the benefit of his posterity and the people of a later time:

Wherefore it shall come to pass, that the Lord God will deliver again the book and the words thereof to him that is not learned; and the man that is not learned shall say: I am not learned.

Then shall the Lord God say unto him: The learned shall not read them, for they have rejected them, and I am able to do mine own work; wherefore thou shalt read the words which I shall give unto thee.

* * *

For behold, I am God; and I am a God of miracles; and I will show unto the world that I am the same yesterday, today, and forever; and I work not among the children of men save it be according to their faith. (2 Ne. 27:19-20; 23)

Miraculously, it took the unlearned Joseph Smith only approximately 75 days (from early April to mid-June, 1829) to translate the inscriptions on the metal plates into English. As Joseph Smith mentally translated, he simultaneously dictated to his scribe, without cross-out or revision or re-write, and without research, the entire manuscript for the Book of Mormon. The original manuscript was used to produce a duplicate security manuscript which was delivered for printing to E.B. Grandin, a printer in Palmyra, N.Y. The printing of the Book of Mormon was completed in March of 1830. The original edition of the book consisted of 588 pages. The duplicate security manuscript and approximately 25% of the original manuscript still exist today.

During this same 75-day period in which the translation work was accomplished, Joseph Smith engaged in numerous other time-consuming activities. He traveled from Harmony, Pennsylvania to Fayette, N.Y., to avoid intense persecution; he sought employment and worked for a time to provide the financial means to support himself and his family; he and his scribe received heavenly manifestations relating to baptism and priesthood authority; he traveled to Colesville, N.Y. and baptized relatives; he received and recorded thirteen other revelations now contained in a separate book; he participated in two other heavenly manifestations which verified the existence, nature, and authenticity of the gold plates to three witnesses and then eight additional witnesses; and he applied for a copyright on the forthcoming book.

The Book of Mormon fulfills all the details of Isaiah's biblical prophecies about the coming forth of a book through an unlearned man. Had the Lord, through Isaiah, been any more specific than he was, such as providing the specific, proper name identities of Moroni, Joseph Smith, and the Book of Mormon, then how many imitation "Moronis," imitation "Joseph Smiths," and imitation "Book of Mormons" would there have been by now?

Next week's article will be the eighth in a series of nine articles which deal with the 29th Chapter of Isaiah wherein the Old Testament prophet Isaiah prophesies of the coming forth of the Book of Mormon.

Article 16

ISAIAH'S VISION, PART VIII

(published on April 17, 1997)

Last week's article was the seventh in a series of nine articles which deal with the 29th Chapter of Isaiah wherein the Old Testament prophet Isaiah prophesies of the coming forth of the Book of Mormon. This week's article is the eighth article in that series.

In verse 13 of the 29th Chapter of Isaiah, we read the following:

Wherefore the Lord said, Forasmuch as this people
draw near me with their mouth, and with their lips do
honour me, but have removed their heart far from me,
and their fear toward me is taught by the precept of men:
(Isaiah 29:13)

Here Isaiah describes the apostate condition of the world which would exist at the time that this new book of scripture would be brought forth and proclaimed among the inhabitants of the earth. (See also Article No. 14) That condition would be one of great hypocrisy. The people would give lip service to God and then betray their verbal allegiance to God with conduct, behavior, and lifestyles which are contrary to the ways of God.

The apostate condition would also involve great doctrinal heresy. Such fear of God as would exist among the people would be the product of uninspired religious leaders who would threaten the people with condemnation for their failure to heed doctrines and teachings which, in reality, consisted of the false precepts of men.

What are these false precepts of men that would pervade Christianity in that day when the Book of Mormon would come forth? Are not these they?

1. The heavens are closed, and there will not be any more revelation from God. (But see Mormon 9:7-8)
2. There will be no more prophets and apostles. (But see 1 Ne. 22:2 and Amos 3:7)
3. Miracles have ceased, and God is no longer a God of miracles in our day. (But see 2 Ne. 27:23 and Mormon 9:18-19)

4. There will never be any more scripture beyond that which is contained in the Bible. (But see 2 Ne. 29:9-10)

5. There is no longer any such thing as the ministering of angels to the inhabitants of this earth. (But see Moroni 7:36-37)

This same condition of hypocrisy and heresy was described by the Lord himself to 14-year-old Joseph Smith in the spring of 1820, just three years prior to Joseph's first introduction to the inscribed metal record from which the Book of Mormon would be translated:

[T]hey draw near to me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me, they teach for doctrines the commandments of men, having a form of godliness, but they deny the power thereof. (Joseph Smith - History 1:19)

The pure doctrines of Christ which are contained within the Book of Mormon effectively counter each of the five (5) false doctrinal precepts of men which deny the power of God (1) to give new revelation, or (2) to call living prophets and apostles, or (3) to perform great miracles, or (4) to bring forth additional scripture, or (5) to send angelic messengers to the earth. Furthermore, the Book of Mormon itself, by virtue of the very manner in which it historically came into existence, forthrightly refutes each and every one of those five (5) enumerated doctrinal precepts of men. How does the book do that? The Book of Mormon consists of (1) divine revelation to mankind brought forth through (2) a living prophet who (3) miraculously translated by the gift and power of God (4) a scriptural record after having received the scriptural record from (5) an angelic messenger. In the Book of Mormon, history and doctrine join hands to manifest the power of God.

The Native American prophet Moroni, approximately A.D. 400, wrote about the same degeneracy of Christianity which Isaiah declared would exist at the time the Book of Mormon would come forth:

Yea, it shall come in a day when the power of God shall be denied, and churches become defiled and be lifted up in the pride of their hearts; yea, even in a day when leaders of churches and teachers shall rise in the pride of their hearts, even to the envying of them who belong to their churches.

Yea, it shall come in a day when there shall be heard

of fires, and tempests, and vapors of smoke in foreign lands;

And there shall also be heard of wars, rumors of wars, and earthquakes in divers places.

Yea, it shall come in a day when there shall be great pollutions upon the face of the earth; there shall be murders, and robbing, and lying and deceivings, and whoredoms, and all manner of abominations; when there shall be many who will say, Do this, or do that, and it mattereth not, for the Lord will uphold such at the last day. But woe unto such, for they are in the gall of bitterness and in the bonds of iniquity.

Yea, it shall come in a day when there shall be churches built up that shall say: Come unto me, and for your money you shall be forgiven of your sins. O ye wicked and perverse and stiffnecked people, why have ye built up churches unto yourselves to get gain? Why have ye transfigured the holy word of God, that ye might bring damnation upon your souls? Behold, look ye unto the revelations of God; for behold, the time cometh at that day when all these things must be fulfilled.
(Mormon 8:28-33)

The biblical prophecies of Isaiah are verified and confirmed by the coming forth of the Book of Mormon at this particular time in the earth's history. As the Book of Mormon continues to go forth to the nations of the earth, it confronts an apostate world filled with hypocrisy and false doctrines, just as the biblical prophet Isaiah said it would.

Next week's article will be the ninth and final article in a series of nine articles which deal with the 29th Chapter of Isaiah wherein the Old Testament prophet Isaiah prophesies of the coming forth of the Book of Mormon.

Article 17

ISAIAH'S VISION, PART IX

(published on April 24, 1997)

Last week's article was the eighth in a series of nine articles which deal with the 29th Chapter of Isaiah wherein the Old Testament prophet Isaiah prophesies of the coming forth of the Book of Mormon. This week's article is the ninth and final article in that series.

Verse 14 of the 29th Chapter of Isaiah reads as follows:

Therefore, behold, I will proceed to do a marvelous work among this people, even a marvelous work and a wonder; for the wisdom of their wise men shall perish, and the understanding of their prudent men shall be hid.
(Isaiah 29:14)

In verse 14, Isaiah reports the Lord's declaration that he would proceed to do a marvelous work and wonder among the people. The coming forth of the Book of Mormon and the other important events associated with the restoration of the gospel of Jesus Christ in its fullness constitute the very "marvelous work and a wonder" of which Isaiah spoke in the Bible. This "marvelous work and a wonder," i.e., the restoration, is a stumbling block to the worldly wise and prudent men who have built up followings after their own wisdom and learning. The philosophies and precepts of men are being exposed and replaced by the simple, yet profound, doctrines of Christ which are set forth in plainness in the Book of Mormon.

In verse 18 of the 29th Chapter of Isaiah, we read further concerning the book which was foreseen by Isaiah:

And in that day shall the deaf hear the words of the book, and the eyes of the blind shall see out of obscurity, and out of darkness. (Isaiah 29:18)

It was revealed to Isaiah that in the day the Book of Mormon would be brought forth, those who had been "deaf" to the call of the Lord and those who had been "blind" to a correct understanding of the gospel of Jesus Christ and its principles would be enlightened by the fullness of the gospel as contained in the Book of Mormon.

Fittingly, Isaiah closes out his prophetic truths relating to the coming forth of the Book of Mormon with the Lord's pronouncement of the effect which the Book of Mormon would have on its sincere, truth-seeking readers:

They also that erred in spirit shall come to understanding, and they that murmured shall learn doctrine.

(Isaiah 29:24)

Amazingly, by way of perspective, there is more in the 29th Chapter of Isaiah about the coming forth of the Book of Mormon than there is in the entire Old Testament about the future coming forth of the New Testament.

The Book of Mormon records that a young man named Nephi immigrated to the New World from Jerusalem. Nephi was a direct lineal descendant of Joseph of Egypt. When Nephi and his family left Jerusalem around 600 B.C., they brought with them inscribed brass plates which contained the Hebrew scriptures to the time of Jeremiah. (See 1 Ne. 5:13) Contained within the brass plates were the writings of the biblical prophet Isaiah. Nephi was a scholar of Isaiah's writings:

Now I, Nephi, do speak somewhat concerning the words which I have written which have been spoken by the mouth of Isaiah. For behold, Isaiah spoke many things which were hard for many of my people to understand....

* * *

[T]he words of Isaiah are not plain unto you, nevertheless they are plain unto all those that are filled with the spirit of prophecy.

Yea, and my soul delighteth in the words of Isaiah....

(2 Ne. 25:1; 4-5)

One of the descendants of the Nephi immigration group was a Native American named Mormon. Mormon lived 1,000 years after Nephi. As an archivist, compiler, abridger, editor, and author, Mormon had more man-hours involved in the production of the Book of Mormon than any other mortal person. Thus, the Book of Mormon is aptly named for Mormon. Mormon counseled his readers:

Search the prophecies of Isaiah. (Mormon 8:23)

Just as Isaiah tied his biblical writings into the Josephite/Nephite/New World nation and their scriptural record (the Book of Mormon), so likewise Mormon tied his Book of Mormon writings into the Judaic/Old World nation and their scriptural record (the Bible):

Therefore I write unto ... you, house of Israel, when the work shall commence, that ye shall be about to prepare to return to the land of your inheritance;

* * *

And these things doth the Spirit manifest unto me; therefore I write unto you all. And for this cause I write unto you, that ye may know that ye must all stand before the judgment-seat of Christ, yea every soul who belongs to the whole human family of Adam; and ye must stand to be judged of your works, whether they be good or evil;

And also that ye may believe the gospel of Jesus Christ, which ye shall have among you [Bible]; and also that the Jews, the covenant people of the Lord, shall have other witness [Book of Mormon] besides him whom they saw and heard, that Jesus, whom they slew, was the very Christ and the very God.

And I would that I could persuade all ye ends of the earth to repent and prepare to stand before the judgment-seat of Christ. (Mormon 3:17; 20-22)

The coming forth of the Book of Mormon precisely fulfills the biblical prophecies of Isaiah as contained in the 29th Chapter of his writings. The writings of Nephi and Mormon in the Book of Mormon further support, sustain, and corroborate Isaiah's biblical writings.

Next week's article will deal with a passage in the Book of Mormon which prophesies of the "growing together" of the Bible and the Book of Mormon.

Article 18

GROWING TOGETHER

(published on May 1, 1997)

Last week's article was the final article in a series of nine articles dealing with the 29th Chapter of Isaiah wherein the Old Testament prophet Isaiah prophesies of the coming forth of the Book of Mormon. This week's article deals with a passage in the Book of Mormon which prophesies of the "growing together" of the Bible and the Book of Mormon. This article also deals with a passage in the Book of Mormon which directly testifies to the truthfulness of the Bible.

A scriptural record inscribed on thin sheets of brass was brought from Jerusalem to the Americas about 589 years before Christ. These thin brass sheets or "plates" contained, among other things, prophecies of the biblical Joseph who was sold into Egypt. The writings on the brass plates revealed that Joseph, like the Old Testament prophet Isaiah (See Articles No. 9 through 17), knew of the future coming forth of the Book of Mormon. All of the prophet-authors of the Book of Mormon record had direct access to these writings of Joseph of Egypt which were set forth on the brass plates.

A Book of Mormon prophet-author named Nephi engraved onto his separate set of metal plates the words of his dying father Lehi. Lehi's words were a quotation from the imported brass plates record. Lehi quoted Joseph of Egypt's prophetic vision relating to the future coming forth of the Book of Mormon:

Yea, Joseph [of Egypt] truly said: Thus saith the Lord unto me:

* * *

[A] seer will I raise up out of the fruit of thy [Joseph of Egypt's] loins; and unto him [the seer, Joseph Smith] will I give power to bring forth my word unto the seed of thy loins [Native American descendants of Joseph of Egypt] and not to the bringing forth my word only [the Book of Mormon], saith the Lord, but to the convincing

them [Native American descendants of Joseph of Egypt] of my word [the Bible], which shall have already gone forth among them.

Wherefore, the fruit of thy loins [Book of Mormon prophets] shall write; and the fruit of the loins of Judah [biblical prophets] shall write; and that which shall be written by the fruit of thy loins [the Book of Mormon], and also that which shall be written by the fruit of the loins of Judah [the Bible] shall **grow together**, unto the confounding of false doctrines and laying down of contentions, and establishing peace among the fruit of thy loins [Native American descendants of Joseph of Egypt], and bringing them to the knowledge of their fathers in the latter days, and also to the knowledge of my covenants, saith the Lord. (2 Ne. 3:7; 11-12)

We witness with amazement the continuous fulfillment of this prophecy in our day as we consider (1) the ease with which the Book of Mormon puts to rest enduring doctrinal disputes which the Bible alone leaves unanswered (i.e., infant baptism and the redemption of little children, the proper manner of baptism, the nature of the pre-mortal Christ, the effect of the fall of Adam, the status of man between death and the resurrection, etc.), and (2) the combined impact of the Bible and the Book of Mormon on the post-1830 conversion to the gospel of Jesus Christ of literally millions of Native Americans, Hispanics, and Latin Americans in North America, Central America, and South America, all seed of the loins of Joseph of Egypt.

Before Nephi re-recorded the prophecies of Joseph of Egypt onto his separate scriptural record, Nephi engraved on his metal plates the following words of his own pertaining to the Bible and the Book of Mormon. These words were written almost 600 years before Christ:

And it came to pass that I beheld the remnant of the seed of my brethren [Native Americans], and also the book of the Lamb of God [Bible], which had proceeded forth from the mouth of the Jew, that it came forth from the Gentiles [Americans of European ancestry] unto the remnant of the seed of my brethren [Native Americans].

And after it had come forth unto them I beheld other books [the Book of Mormon, the Doctrine and Covenants, and the Pearl of Great Price], which came forth by the power of the Lamb, from the Gentiles unto them, unto the convincing of the Gentiles and the remnant of the seed of my brethren; and also the Jews who were scattered upon all the face of the earth, **that the records of the prophets and of the twelve apostles of the Lamb [Bible] are true.**

And the angel spake unto me, saying: These last records [the Book of Mormon, the Doctrine and Covenants, and the Pearl of Great Price], which thou hast seen among the Gentiles, **shall establish the truth of the first [the Bible]**, which are of the twelve apostles of the Lamb, and shall make known the plain and precious things which have been taken away from them; and shall make known to all kindreds, tongues, and people, that the Lamb of God is the Son of the Eternal Father, and the Saviour of the world; and that all men must come unto him, or they cannot be saved. (1 Ne. 13:38-40)

The Book of Mormon testifies to the truthfulness of the Bible. Perhaps the greatest single piece of tangible evidence to come forth on the face of the earth to prove that the Bible is truly an authentic scriptural record of ancient Hebrew prophets is nothing other than the Book of Mormon, an interrelated companion scripture of the same divine source. The Book of Mormon, as its subtitle reads, is "Another Testament of Jesus Christ." The Bible and the Book of Mormon have begun to "grow together" for the accomplishment of the Lord's stated purposes.

Next week's article will deal with the Bible prophecies which were quoted by the angel Moroni to young Joseph Smith on the occasion when Joseph was first told of the engraved metal plates from which the Book of Mormon would be translated.

Article 19

MORONI'S BIBLICAL QUOTES

(published on May 8, 1997)

Last week's article dealt with the "growing together" of the Bible and the Book of Mormon as prophesied by Joseph of Egypt. It also dealt with a passage in the Book of Mormon which directly testifies of the truthfulness of the Bible. This week's article deals with the Bible scriptures that were quoted by an angel named Moroni to young Joseph Smith. Moroni quoted these scriptures on the occasion when Joseph was first told of the engraved record from which the Book of Mormon would be translated.

On the evening of September 21, 1823, 17-year-old Joseph Smith prayed fervently to his Heavenly Father. Joseph was alone in the bedroom loft of his parents' small log house located in a rural area near Palmyra, New York. Joseph, in his prayer, earnestly sought forgiveness for all his sins and youthful follies, and he desired to know his status and standing before God.

In response to this prayer, there appeared a heavenly messenger who identified himself as Moroni, a resurrected being who had lived in the Americas 1400 years earlier. In mortality, Moroni had been the last prophet-author and last custodian of the Native American records from which the Book of Mormon would ultimately be translated.

Joseph was told by the angel Moroni that he, Joseph, had been chosen to be an instrument in the hands of God to bring to pass a marvelous work and a wonder, and that the time would come when both good and evil would be spoken about Joseph throughout the entire earth. According to the angel, the simple name of this unknown and obscure teenage farm boy would ignite intense feelings of one extreme or the other in the hearts of men everywhere.

Moroni further informed Joseph of a record that was engraved upon thin sheets of metal, which record contained (1) an account of some of the former inhabitants of the western hemisphere and (2) the fullness of the everlasting gospel as revealed by the Saviour to these ancient inhabitants who were once an enlightened and intelli-

gent people. Joseph learned that he would be responsible for translating this record containing the “**everlasting gospel**” into English.

As recorded in the Bible, the apostle John had experienced a vision of Moroni’s future, post-New Testament visit to the earth:

And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the **everlasting gospel** to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people. (Rev. 14:6)

The **everlasting gospel** as taught by Jesus in its fullness had been lost and was not found among any nation, kindred, tongue or people at the time of Moroni’s visit. The Saviour sent forth his angel, Moroni, flying through the midst of heaven having the **everlasting gospel** as contained in the Book of Mormon to be preached unto the inhabitants of the earth. (See D&C 133:36-40)

On the occasion of his first visit to Joseph Smith, Moroni quoted various prophecies of the Bible. He quoted the Old Testament prophet Malachi. (See next week’s Article No. 20 dealing with the prophecies of Malachi.) Moroni next quoted the 11th Chapter of Isaiah:

[T]he earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord,
as the waters cover the sea.

* * *

And it shall come to pass in that day, that the Lord shall set his hand again the second time to recover the remnant of his people, which shall be left....

And he shall set up an ensign for the nations, and shall assemble the outcasts of Israel, and gather together the dispersed of Judah from the four corners of the earth. (Isaiah 11:9; 11-12)

Moroni referred to a passage of the Bible which is contained in the Book of Joel, explaining that this prophecy would be fulfilled shortly:

And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, and your young men shall see visions: (Joel 2:28)

Great biblical prophets like Isaiah (See Articles No. 9 through

17), Ezekiel (See Articles No. 3 and 4), Jeremiah (See Article No. 3), Moses (See Articles No. 1 and 2), and others saw in vision the Book of Mormon peoples and their records which would be brought forth in the last days. The Book of Acts declares that **all** of the prophets spoke of a restitution or restoration of truth that would take place before the Saviour's second coming. Moroni repeated to Joseph Smith the following words of Peter as recorded in the Book of Acts. This Bible passage explains that the resurrected Saviour's second coming in great power and glory would be preceded by a restitution or restoration of all things as prophesied by **all** of God's prophets:

Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord;

And he shall send Jesus Christ, which before was preached unto you.

Whom the heaven must receive until the times of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of **all** his holy prophets since the world began. (Acts 3:19-21)

Moroni concluded his first visit to Joseph Smith by quoting the prophet Isaiah who had prophesied of a sealed book that would be delivered to an unlearned man to read. (See Articles No.14 and 15) Moroni declared that this prophecy of Isaiah concerning the sealed book must be fulfilled. (See Isaiah 29:11-12)

These biblical prophecies quoted by Moroni to the teenager Joseph Smith on this occasion, and Moroni's explanation of them, constituted the Lord's first introduction of the Book of Mormon record to Joseph Smith. The coming forth of the Book of Mormon and the restoration of the gospel of Jesus Christ in its purity fulfill the biblical prophecies quoted by the angel Moroni to young Joseph Smith.

Next week's article will deal with the prophecies of the Old Testament prophet Malachi which were quoted to Joseph Smith by the angel Moroni on the occasion of Moroni's first visit.

Article 20

MORONI AND MALACHI

(published on May 15, 1997)

Last week's article dealt with certain Bible prophecies that were quoted by the angel Moroni to young Joseph Smith on the occasion when Joseph was first told of the engraved metal record from which the Book of Mormon would be translated. This week's article deals specifically with the Bible prophecies of the Old Testament prophet Malachi which Moroni quoted to Joseph Smith on that same occasion.

Joseph Smith reported that on the evening of September 21, 1823, when he was 17 years of age, an angel whose name was Moroni appeared to him. About 1400 years earlier, Moroni had been the last prophet-author and custodian of the Book of Mormon record:

[Moroni] first quoted part of the third chapter of Malachi; and he quoted also the fourth or last chapter of the same prophecy, though with a little variation from the way it reads in our Bibles.... [H]e quoted it thus:

For behold, the day cometh that shall burn as an oven, and all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly shall burn as stubble; for they that come shall burn them, saith the Lord of Hosts, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch.

Behold, I will reveal unto you the Priesthood, by the hand of Elijah the prophet, before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord.

And he shall plant in the hearts of the children the promises made to the fathers, and the hearts of the children shall turn to their fathers. If it were not so, the whole earth would be utterly wasted at his coming. (Joseph Smith-History 1:36-39; see Malachi 4:1; 5-6)

These prophecies of Malachi which close out the Old Testament record were written by Malachi about 430 years before Christ. In the Bible, Malachi speaks of the return of Elijah to the earth prior to the second coming of the Lord in great power and glory. (See

Mal. 4:5) Malachi further declares in the Bible that this visit by Elijah to the earth would have the effect of turning the hearts of fathers to their children, and the hearts of children to their fathers. This heart-turning process would avoid a great curse. (See Mal. 4:6)

When Joseph Smith was translating the Book of Mormon record more than five years after the angel Moroni's visit, Joseph learned that these same Bible prophecies of Malachi were quoted by the Saviour to a Native American nation in the Western Hemisphere shortly after the Saviour's resurrection. The ancestors of this Native American nation had immigrated from the Old World approximately 170 years prior to Malachi's prophecies. Thus, these Native Americans did not have access to Malachi's important writings. The Book of Mormon contains the following account:

And it came to pass that he [the Saviour] commanded them that they should write the words which the Father had given unto Malachi, which he [the Saviour] should tell unto them. And it came to pass that after they were written he [the Saviour] expounded them. (3 Ne. 24:1)

The Saviour quoted, among other writings of Malachi, Malachi 3:1 and Malachi 4:5-6. (3 Ne. 24:1; 25:5-6) Malachi 3:1 reads:

Behold, I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me: and the Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple, even the messenger of the covenant.... (Malachi 3:1)

After the publication of the Book of Mormon and the official organization of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, and after the construction of a temple through much sacrifice, the Lord Jesus Christ came suddenly to his temple in Kirtland, Ohio, in fulfillment of Malachi's biblical prophecy. (Malachi 3:1) On that same day, April 3, 1836, Elijah appeared in the temple and spoke these words to Joseph Smith:

Behold, the time has fully come, which was spoken of by the mouth of Malachi — testifying that he [Elijah] should be sent, before the great and dreadful day of the Lord come —

To turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the children to the fathers, lest the whole earth be smit-

ten with a curse — (D&C 110:14-15)

The appearance of the Saviour and Elijah in the Kirtland Temple in 1836 fulfilled Malachi's prophecies contained in both the Bible and the Book of Mormon, being the same prophecies that the angel Moroni had quoted to Joseph Smith in 1823.

On the occasion that Elijah came to the temple in Kirtland, Ohio, he restored the priesthood authority to perform family-binding temple ordinances for both the living and the dead. The process of binding families together eternally by temple ordinances fulfilled Malachi's Bible prophecy that the hearts of the fathers (both living and dead) would be turned to their children, and the hearts of the children would be turned to their fathers (both living and dead).

Ordinances for deceased ancestors had been performed by Christ's followers in New Testament times as reported in the Bible:

Else what shall they do which are baptized for the dead, if the dead rise not at all? why are they then baptized for the dead? (I Corinthians 15:29)

Baptisms and other ordinances for the dead were authoritatively reinstituted among men through Elijah's visit. Had Elijah not restored these family-binding temple ordinances, the human family would have been smitten with a curse. (See Mal. 4:6) That curse would consist of being eternally cut off from one's "roots" or ancestors and being eternally cut off from one's "branches" or posterity. (See Mal. 4:1)

The Book of Mormon supports, sustains and corroborates the truthfulness of Malachi's prophetic biblical writings.

Next week's article will deal with a unique literary art form known to Israelite prophets and which is found abundantly in both the Bible and the Book of Mormon.

Article 21

CHIASMUS, PART I

(published on May 22, 1997)

Last week's article dealt with the prophecies of the Old Testament prophet Malachi which were quoted to Joseph Smith by the angel Moroni. This week's article is the first of two articles which deal with a unique and distinctive literary art form known to ancient Israelite prophets. This literary art form is modernly referred to as "chiasmus." Chiasmus is found in both the Bible and the Book of Mormon.

Chiasmus is a literary art form which utilizes inverted parallelism. A chiasm is formed when the first element in a phrase reappears at the end of the same phrase as the last element; the second element reappears as the next to last element; the third element reappears as the third from the last element inclusive; and so forth to the center of the phrase. A complex Hebrew chiasm may continue in this manner for several lines. The result is an ordered reversal of the original sequence – two halves tied to a center point or axis.

Chiasmus is best understood by seeing a chiasm outlined. One way to outline a chiasm is to place the individual parallel elements of the phrase in separate lines. The matching lines are identified by the same letter of the alphabet, except the letters preceding the second half of the parallel are marked with a prime or accent mark.

The following chiasm happens to be taken from the Bible prophet Moses, but chiasms are common to almost all of the authors contributing to the Bible, especially the Old Testament authors. The following quotation is in the same word order as it appears in the Bible:

(Continued on next page)

- a. And all flesh **died** that moved upon the **earth**,
- b. Both of **fowl**,
 - c. And of **cattle**, and of beast, and of every **creeping thing** that creepeth upon the earth,
 - d. And every **man**:
 - e. All in whose **nostrils** was the breath of **life**, of all that was in the **dry land**, **died**.
 - e'. And every **living** substance was **destroyed** which was upon the **face** of the **ground**,
 - d'. Both **man**,
 - c'. And **cattle**, and the **creeping things**,
 - b'. And the **fowl** of the heaven;
- a'. And they were **destroyed** from the **earth**: (Genesis 7:21-23)

Note the parallel elements in the first line (a) and the last line (a'): died/destroyed; earth/earth. Note the parallel element in the second line (b) and the next to last line (b'): fowl/fowl. Note the parallel elements in the third line (c) and the third from the last line (c'): cattle/cattle; creeping things/creeping things. Note the parallel element in the fourth line (d) and the fourth from the last line (d'): man/man. Note the four parallel or matching elements in the fifth line (e) and the fifth from the last line (e'): nostrils/face; life/living; dry land/ground; died/destroyed.

The Book of Mormon, like the Bible, contains an abundance of chiasms. The following typical example is taken from the Book of Mosiah in the Book of Mormon:

(Continued on next page)

- a. [Men] drink damnation to their own souls except they
humble themselves
- b. And become as little **children**,
- c. And believe that salvation was, and is, and is to come,
in and through the **atoning blood of Christ, the Lord**
Omnipotent.
- d. For the **natural man**
 - e. Is an enemy to **God**, and has been from the fall of
Adam,
 - e'. And will be, forever and ever, unless he yields to
the enticings of the **Holy Spirit**,
 - d'. And putteth off the **natural man**
 - c'. And becometh a saint through the **atonement of Christ**
the Lord,
 - b'. And becometh as a **child**,
- a'. Submissive, meek, **humble**, patient, full of love....
(Mosiah 3:18-19)

Nephi was a young Israelite who lived in Jerusalem. Nephi immigrated to the New World with his family and others, arriving in 589 B.C. The immigrant prophet Nephi wrote in the Americas that he was keeping his record according to "the learning of the Jews" (1 Ne 1:2) after having been taught "in all the learning of [his] father" (1 Ne 1:1) who was an Israelite prophet of Jerusalem.

Nephi's father was named Lehi. As an Israelite prophet of Jerusalem, Lehi was familiar with the literary art form modernly referred to as chiasmus. It appears that Lehi passed along to his son Nephi a knowledge of this distinctive writing style of ancient origin which was peculiar to Hebrew prophets of the Old Testament.

Although it is now obvious from his writings that Nephi understood chiasmus, neither Joseph Smith nor anyone else in America was aware of the existence of chiasmus when the Book of Mormon was first published in 1830. In fact, it was not until 1967 that a college student named John Welch discovered chiasmus in the Book of

Mormon. On the whole, people still remain unaware of the existence of chiasmus. Chiasmus is virtually destroyed by those unknowing persons who retranslate the Bible into so-called simpler, easier-to-understand versions.

The presence of complex chiasms in the Hebraic style in both the Bible and the Book of Mormon demonstrate that the writings in these two works of scripture are the product of ancient Israelite prophets. This eloquent phraseology of early Hebraic origin now known as chiasmus demonstrates a strong connecting link between the Bible and the Book of Mormon, both of which were authored by Israelite prophets. This connecting link provides compelling evidence of a single revelatory source for both volumes of holy writ.

Next week's article will be the second of two articles that deal with chiasmus, a unique literary art form known to both the Bible prophets and the Book of Mormon prophets.

Article 22

CHIASMUS, PART II

(published on May 29, 1997)

Last week's article dealt with chiasmus, a unique and distinctive literary art form known to ancient Israelite prophets. Chiasmus has now been discovered in both the Bible and the Book of Mormon. This week's article is the second of two articles which deal with that same subject.

Chiasmus is a literary art form which utilizes inverted parallelism. (See Article No. 21) In a chiasm, there is an ordered and balanced reversal of the original sequence – two halves tied to a center point or axis. A complex Hebrew chiasm may consist of several lines.

The following chiasm is a quotation from the Saviour as contained in the New Testament. Note that it twice contains a chiasm inside of a chiasm. (See parallel lines "d" and parallel lines "f.") The quotation is in the same natural word order as it appears in the Bible:

(Continued on next page)

- a. Therefore speak I to them in **parables**:
 - b. Because they **seeing** see not: and **hearing** they **hear** not,
neither do they understand.
 - c. And in them is fulfilled the **prophecy** of Esaias, which
saith,
 - d. By hearing ye shall **hear**, and shall not understand;
and seeing ye shall **see**, and shall not perceive:
 - e. For this people's **heart** is waxed gross,
 - f. And their **ears** are dull of **hearing**,
 - g. And their **eyes** have closed; lest at any time
 - g'. They should see with their **eyes**,
 - f'. And **hear** with their **ears**,
 - e'. And should understand with their **heart**, and
should be converted, and I should heal them.
 - d'. But blessed are your eyes, for they **see**: and your
ears, for they **hear**.
 - c'. For verily I say unto you, That many **prophets** and
righteous men
 - b'. Have desired to **see** those things which ye **see**, and have
not seen them; and to **hear** those things which ye **hear**,
and have not **heard** them.
 - a'. Hear ye therefore the **parable** of the sower.
- (Matthew 13:13-18)

Note that the word "parables" in the first line (a) parallels the word "parable" in the last line (a'). Note that the second line from the beginning (b) parallels the second line from the end (b') with these matching elements: seeing/see; see/see; hearing/hear; hear/hear and heard. This type pattern continues to the center of the phrase.

The Book of Mormon, like the Bible, contains an abundance of chiasms. The following typical example is taken from the Book of Mosiah in the Book of Mormon:

- a. And now it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall not take upon him the **name** of Christ
 - b. Must be **called** by some other name;
 - c. Therefore, he **findeth** himself on the **left hand of God**.
 - d. And I would that ye should **remember** also, that this is the **name** that I said I should give unto you
 - e. That never should be **blotted out**,
 - f. Except it be through **transgression**;
 - f'. Therefore, take heed that ye do not **transgress**,
 - e'. That the name be not **blotted out** of your hearts.
 - d'. I say unto you, I would that ye should **remember** to retain the **name** written always in your hearts,
 - c'. That ye are not **found** on the **left hand of God**,
 - b'. But that ye hear and know the voice by which ye shall be **called**,
 - a'. And also, the **name** by which he shall call you.
- (Mosiah 5:10-12)

The Book of Mormon contains two consecutive chiasms that speak prophetically of the joint possession of the Bible and the Book of Mormon, as well as other scriptures, by both the Judaic branch and the Native American Josephite branch of the House of Israel. The Native American descendants of Joseph of Egypt are referred to in this passage as “Nephites,” called such for their ancestor Nephi:

(Continued on next page)

- a. And it shall come to pass that the **Jews**
 - b. Shall have the **words**
 - c. Of the **Nephites**, [Book of Mormon]
 - c'. And the **Nephites**
 - b'. Shall have the **words**
 - a'. Of the **Jews**; [Bible]

- a. And the **Nephites and the Jews**
 - b. Shall have the **words**
 - c. Of the **lost tribes of Israel**; [yet to be revealed]
 - c'. And the **lost tribes of Israel**
 - b'. Shall have the **words** of
 - a'. The **Nephites** [Book of Mormon] **and the Jews** [Bible].
(2 Nephi 29:13)

Although it is now obvious that the prophet-authors of the Book of Mormon understood chiasmus, neither Joseph Smith nor anyone else in America was aware of the existence of chiasmus when the Book of Mormon was first published in 1830. In fact, it was not until 1967 that a college student named John Welch discovered chiasmus in the Book of Mormon.

The presence of complex chiasms in the Hebraic style in both the Bible and the Book of Mormon demonstrate that the writings in these two works of scripture are the product of Israelite prophets. This eloquent phraseology of ancient Hebraic origin modernly known as chiasmus provides compelling evidence that the Bible and the Book of Mormon have a common revelatory source.

Next week's article will deal with an ancient instrument known as the Urim and Thummim which was used by Joseph Smith in the process of translating the engraved metal record from whence came the Book of Mormon.

Article 23

THE URIM AND THUMMIM

(published on June 5, 1997)

Last week's article dealt with chiasmus, a unique and distinctive literary art form known to ancient Israelite prophets and which is found in both the Bible and the Book of Mormon. This week's article deals with a revelatory instrument known as the Urim and Thummim. The Urim and Thummim was used by Joseph Smith in the translation process which produced the Book of Mormon in the English language.

On the night of September 21, 1823, an angel named Moroni appeared to 17-year-old Joseph Smith. In mortality 1400 years earlier, Moroni had been the last prophet-author to have custody of the Book of Mormon record. The angel Moroni, a resurrected being, told Joseph that the following items were contained with the engraved metal record from which the Book of Mormon was to be translated:

[Moroni said] that there were two stones in silver bows - and these stones, fastened to a breastplate, constituted what is called the Urim and Thummim - deposited with the plates; and the possession and use of these stones were what constituted "seers" in ancient or former times; and that God had prepared them for the purpose of translating the book. (Joseph Smith - History 1:35)

The Urim and Thummim was a physical device that facilitated Joseph Smith's translation of the ancient Native American record, as well as the obtaining of other revelations. Joseph Smith reported that "through the medium of the Urim and Thummim [he] translated the record by the gift and power of God." (Millennial Star, 18:118)

During the translation process, Joseph Smith learned that a Urim and Thummim was had in ancient America. Approximately 100 years before Christ, a Native American prophet-king named Mosiah translated the record of an older New World civilization by

the aid of “two stones which were fastened into the two rims of a bow” (Mosiah 28:13). (See Article No. 1 regarding the Jaredite civilization)

The Book of Mormon contains yet another account of a Urim and Thummim, the same one which ultimately came into the possession of Joseph Smith. The Book of Mormon records that an Old World prophet referred to only as the brother of Jared immigrated to the New World more than two millennia before Christ. (See Article No. 1) The brother of Jared authored an account of a New World visitation from the pre-mortal Christ who gave the brother of Jared the following instructions along with a Urim and Thummim:

And it came to pass that the Lord said unto the brother of Jared: Behold, thou shalt not suffer these things which ye have seen and heard to go forth unto the world, until the time cometh that I shall glorify my name in the flesh; wherefore, ye shall treasure up the things which ye have seen and heard, and show it to no man.

And behold, ... ye shall write them and shall seal them up, that no one can interpret them; for ye shall write them in a language that they cannot be read.

And behold, these two stones will I give unto thee, and ye shall seal them up also with the things which ye shall write.

[W]herefore I will cause in my own due time that these stones shall magnify to the eyes of men these things which ye shall write. (Ether 3:21-24; see also D&C 17:1)

Is there any biblical support for Joseph Smith's claims regarding his and others' use of a revelatory instrument called the Urim and Thummim which was fastened to a breastplate? The Bible specifically references the Urim and Thummim in seven (7) different scriptures which are in seven (7) different Old Testament books. They are as follows:

1. And thou shalt put in the breastplate of judgment the Urim and the Thummim; and they shall be upon Aaron's heart, when he goeth in before the Lord: (Exodus 28:30)

2. And he [Moses] put the breastplate upon him

[Aaron]: also he put in the breastplate the Urim and the Thummim. (Leviticus 7:8)

3. And he [Joshua] shall stand before Eleazer the priest, who shall ask counsel for him after the judgment of Urim before the Lord: (Numbers 27:21)

4. And of Levi he [Moses] said, let the Thummim and the Urim be with thy holy one.... (Deut. 33:8)

5. And when Saul enquired of the Lord, the Lord answered him not, neither by dreams, nor by Urim, nor by prophets. (I Samuel 28:6)

6 and 7. And the Tirshatha said unto them, that they should not eat of the most holy things, till there stood up a priest with Urim and with Thummim. (Ezra 2:63 and Nehemiah 7:65)

Another Bible scripture probably references a Urim and Thummim which is to be given to each of those who inherit the celestial kingdom. (See Rev. 2:17)

A Urim and Thummim is an ancient instrument prepared by God and used to reveal knowledge and truth through the righteous possessor of it. In Old Testament times, a Urim and Thummim was placed in the breastplate which was worn by the presiding high priest. It was used by the presiding high priest to ascertain the revealed will of the Lord in important matters. The Urim and Thummim was also evidence of an ecclesiastical leader's true priesthood authority.

The Bible and the Book of Mormon support and sustain one another in testifying to the actual existence of a revelatory instrument known as the Urim and Thummim. Also, the Bible and the Book of Mormon corroborate one another as they both witness of God's special use of these clear stones to reveal certain truths to mankind.

Next week's article will deal with the Book of Mormon's claim that the original words of the Jewish authors of the Bible contained the fulness of the gospel of Christ in its purity.

Article 24

THE FULNESS OF THE GOSPEL

(published on June 12, 1997)

Last week's article dealt with a revelatory instrument known as the Urim and Thummim which was used by Joseph Smith in the translation process that produced the Book of Mormon. This week's article deals with the Book of Mormon's claim that the original words of the Jewish authors of the Bible contained the fulness of the gospel of Jesus Christ in its purity.

In the early part of the Book of Mormon, Chapters 11-14 of First Nephi, there is a record of a vision which was experienced by a man named Nephi who was approximately 21 years of age at the time. He experienced this vision in the Old World, prior to his immigration to the New World. Nephi's vision occurred almost 600 years before Christ:

[A]s I sat pondering in mine heart I was caught away in the Spirit of the Lord, yea, into an exceedingly high mountain, which I never had before seen, and upon which I never had before set my foot.

* * *

And it came to pass that I saw the heavens open; and an angel came down and stood before me; and he said unto me: Nephi, what beholdest thou? (1 Ne. 11:1; 14)

Nephi was then allowed to see in vision the birth of Christ; the baptism, ministry, and crucifixion of Christ; the ministry of the original 12 apostles; the Americas as a land of promise for Nephi's descendants, the visit of the resurrected Christ to them, the calling of 12 Native American disciples from among them, and the degeneration of this Native American civilization after four generations as a result of widespread pride and wickedness; the establishment of an oppressive church among the Gentile nations of the Eastern Hemisphere, the colonization of the New World by Gentiles seeking religious freedom, the destruction and scattering of the Native American seed of Nephi's brethren by the Gentiles, and the establishment of independence by the Gentile immigrants from their

mother countries.

The vision then turned to a subject which relates directly to the Bible:

And it came to pass that I, Nephi, beheld that they [the Gentile immigrants and their seed] did prosper in the land; and I beheld a book [the Bible], and it was carried forth among them.

And the angel said unto me: Knowest thou the meaning of the book?

And I said unto him: I know not.

And he said: Behold it proceedeth out of the mouth of a Jew. And I, Nephi, beheld it; and he said unto me: The book that thou beholdest is a record of the Jews, which contains the covenants of the Lord, which he hath made unto the house of Israel; and it also containeth many of the prophecies of the holy prophets;... [and] the covenants of the Lord, which he hath made unto the house of Israel; wherefore, they are of great worth unto the Gentiles.

And the angel of the Lord said unto me: Thou hast beheld that the book proceeded forth from the mouth of a Jew; and when it proceeded forth from the mouth of a Jew **it contained the fulness of the gospel of the Lord**, of whom the twelve apostles bear record; and they bear record according to the truth which is in the Lamb of God. (1 Ne. 13:20-24).

Jesus Christ is that very Jew out of whose mouth we received both the Bible and the Book of Mormon. It is he alone who inspired his prophet-authors to write as they were moved upon by the Holy Ghost.

A Native American prophet named Mormon was a devoted historian and record-keeper. He was a literal descendant of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph. In about A.D. 385, he wrote the following words to the future descendants of the people of his day, the so-called American Indians, to come forth as a scriptural record out of the earth in our day:

Therefore repent, and be baptized in the name of Jesus, and lay hold upon the gospel of Christ, which

shall be set before you, not only in this record [the Book of Mormon] but also in the records [the Bible] which shall come unto the Gentiles from the Jews, which record [the Bible] shall come from the Gentiles unto you.

For behold, this [the Book of Mormon] is written for the intent that ye may believe that [the Bible]; and if ye believe that [the Bible] ye will believe this [the Book of Mormon] also; and if ye believe this [the Book of Mormon] ye will know concerning your fathers, and also the marvelous works which were wrought by the power of God among them.

And ye will also know that ye are a remnant of the seed of Jacob; therefore ye are numbered among the people of the first covenant; and if it so be that ye believe in Christ, and are baptized, first with water, then with fire and with the Holy Ghost, following the example of our Saviour, according to that which he hath commanded us, it shall be well with you in the day of judgment. Amen. (Mormon 7:8-10)

One of the great purposes of the Book of Mormon is to increase our belief in and understanding of the Bible. When studied together, the Bible and the Book of Mormon jointly testify with greater power to the divinity of Jesus Christ and his wonderful atoning sacrifice. One's faith in Jesus Christ as Saviour and Redeemer is expanded through the study of **two** scriptural records. In fact, one's faith is expanded far beyond that faith which would result from the study of only one of these two scriptural records, regardless of which one of the two were studied.

Next week's article deals with the Book of Mormon's claim that some plain and precious parts of the writings of the original Jewish authors of the Bible were deleted.

Article 25

PLAIN AND PRECIOUS THINGS

(published on June 19, 1997)

Last week's article dealt with the Book of Mormon's claim that the original words of the Jewish authors of the Bible contained the fulness of the gospel of Jesus Christ in its purity. This week's article deals with the Book of Mormon's claim that many of the plain and precious parts of the gospel of Christ as contained in the original writings of the Jewish authors of the Bible were subsequently taken away.

In the Book of Mormon, there is a record of a vision which was experienced by a young man named Nephi. He experienced this vision in the Old World, prior to his immigration to the New World. Nephi's vision occurred almost 600 years before Christ.

A portion of his vision related to both the future New Testament record and the future Book of Mormon record:

And the angel spoke unto me, saying: These last records [the Book of Mormon and other latter-day scriptures], which thou has seen among the Gentiles, shall establish the truth of the first [New Testament], which are of the twelve apostles of the Lamb, and shall make known **the plain and precious things which have been taken away from them**; and shall make known to all kindreds, tongues, and people, that the Lamb of God is the Son of the Eternal Father, and the Saviour of the world; and that all men must come unto him, or they cannot be saved.

And they must come according to the words which shall be established by the mouth of the Lamb; and the words of the Lamb shall be made known in the records of thy seed [Book of Mormon], as well as in the records of the twelve apostles of the Lamb [New Testament]; wherefore they both shall be established in one; for there is one God and one Shepherd over all the earth. (1 Ne. 13:40-41)

In an earlier part of the same vision Nephi had learned that the original writings of the Jewish authors of the Bible would contain the fullness of the gospel of Jesus Christ, and that their writings in the beginning would go forth in purity from the Jews to the Gentiles. (See 1 Ne. 13:24-25; see also Article No. 24) However, some time thereafter, deletions occurred in the writings from which the Bible was ultimately produced. The angel explained the process in this manner:

And after they [words containing the fulness of the gospel] go forth by the hand of the twelve apostles of the Lamb, from the Jews unto the Gentiles, thou seest the formation of that great and abominable church, which is most abominable above all other churches; for behold **they have taken away from the gospel of the Lamb many parts which are plain and most precious; and also many covenants of the Lord have they taken away.**

And all this have they done that they might pervert the right ways of the Lord, that they might blind the eyes and harden the hearts of the children of men.

Wherefore, thou seest that after the book hath gone forth through the hands of the great and abominable church, that **there are many plain and precious things taken away from the book**, which is the book of the Lamb of God.

And after **these plain and precious things were taken away** it [the Bible] goeth forth unto all the nations of the Gentiles; and after it goeth forth unto all the nations of the Gentiles, yea, even across the many waters which thou hast seen with the Gentiles which have gone forth out of captivity, thou seest – because of **the many plain and precious things which have been taken out of the book**, which were plain unto the understanding of the children of men, according to the plainness which is in the Lamb of God – because of **these things which are taken away out of the gospel of the Lamb**, an exceedingly great many do stumble, yea, insomuch that Satan hath great power over them. (1 Ne. 13:26-29)

Nephi was blessed to learn that the Lord would ultimately restore **the plain and precious parts that were lost** through the writings of the descendants of Nephi's father:

Neither will the Lord God suffer that the Gentiles shall forever remain in that awful state of blindness, which thou beholdest they are in, because of **the plain and most precious parts of the gospel of the Lamb which have been kept back** by that abominable church, whose formation thou hast seen.

And it came to pass that the angel of the Lord spake unto me, saying: Behold, saith the Lamb of God, after I have visited the remnant of the house of Israel - and this remnant of whom I speak is the seed of thy father - wherefore, after I have visited them in judgment, and smitten them by the hand of the Gentiles, and after the Gentiles do stumble exceedingly, because of **the most plain and precious parts of the gospel of the Lamb which have been kept back** by that abominable church, which is the mother of harlots, saith the Lamb - I will be merciful unto the Gentiles in that day, insomuch that I will bring forth unto them, in mine own power much of my gospel, which shall be plain and precious, saith the Lamb.

For, behold, saith the Lamb: I will manifest myself unto thy seed, that they shall write many things which I shall minister unto them, which shall be plain and precious; and after thy seed shall be destroyed, and dwindle in unbelief, and also the seed of thy brethren, behold, these things shall be hid up, to come forth unto the Gentiles, by the gift and power of the Lamb. (1 Ne. 13:32; 34-35)

Next week's article deals with the common primary purpose of both the Bible and the Book of Mormon.

Article 26

ANOTHER TESTAMENT OF JESUS CHRIST

(published on June 26, 1997)

Last week's article dealt with the Book of Mormon's claim that many of the plain and precious parts of the gospel of Jesus Christ as contained in the original writings of the Jewish authors of the Bible were subsequently taken away. This week's article is the final article in the six-month/26-article series. This article deals with the common primary purpose of both the Bible and the Book of Mormon.

The Book of Mormon mentions a total of more than 240 separate people by their proper names. One of those 240, and the one by far most mentioned in the Book of Mormon, is Jesus Christ. In fact, Jesus Christ is mentioned by name or by title, or is specifically referred to, more than 3,900 times in the 531 pages of the Book of Mormon.

Like the Bible, the Book of Mormon is replete with references to Jesus Christ by his many titles. The Book of Mormon refers to Jesus Christ as Redeemer, Saviour, Messiah, Lord, Mediator, Jehovah, Creator, Good Shepherd, Holy One of Israel, Son of God, Eternal God, King, Lamb of God, Immanuel, Light of the World, Only Begotten, Rock, Comforter, Lord of Hosts, the Christ, Alpha and Omega, and many other titles. There is hardly a page in the Book of Mormon that does not contain multiple references to Jesus Christ. This fact is consistent with the book's title page which was authored by a Native American prophet named Moroni about A.D. 421. Moroni was the last prophet-author and last custodian of the Book of Mormon record. His final engraving set forth the book's primary purpose:

to the convincing of the Jew and Gentile that JESUS is
the CHRIST, the ETERNAL GOD, manifesting himself
unto all nations - (Title Page of the Book of Mormon)

Like the Bible, the Book of Mormon testifies of the divine sonship and mission of Jesus Christ. Both books are Christ-centered.

Nephi was an Israelite prophet who immigrated as a young man

to the New World almost 600 years before Christ. Nephi was the original leader of the Native American Josephite branch of the House of Israel. Nephi began the engraved metal records from which the Book of Mormon was later translated and printed. Nephi closed out his portion of the record as now contained in the Book of Mormon with these words written more than 500 years before Christ:

And now, my beloved brethren, and also Jew, and all ye ends of the earth, hearken unto these words [the Book of Mormon] and believe in Christ; and if ye believe not in these words believe in Christ, and if ye shall believe in Christ ye will believe in these words, for they are the words of Christ, and he hath given them unto me; and they teach all men that they should do good.

And if they are not the words of Christ, judge ye - for Christ will show unto you, with power and great glory, that they are his words, at the last day; and you and I shall stand face to face before his bar; and ye shall know that I have been commanded of him to write these things notwithstanding my weakness.

And I pray the Father in the name of Christ that many of us, if not all, may be saved in his kingdom at that great and last day.

And now, my beloved brethren, all those who are of the house of Israel, and all ye ends of the earth, I speak unto you as the voice of one crying from the dust: Farewell until that great day shall come.

And you that will not partake of the goodness of God, and respect the words of the Jews [the Bible], and also my words [the Book of Mormon], and the words which shall proceed forth out of the mouth of the Lamb of God [the Bible, the Book of Mormon, and other Christ-given scriptures], behold, I bid you an everlasting farewell, for these words [all of Christ's scriptures] shall condemn you at the last day. (2 Ne. 33:10-14)

A Book of Mormon prophet named Mormon spent much of his life safeguarding the numerous sets of metal plates which contained the inscribed writings of a long successive line of Native American

prophets. Mormon not only served as a caretaker of these scriptural records, but he also abstracted, abridged, condensed, edited, and organized many of them under the inspiration of God. Mormon expressed his feelings about the multiple records which bear witness of Jesus Christ. Mormon wrote specifically to the future generations of the Native American Josephite branch of the House of Israel:

And [these records] were handed down ... from generation to generation until they have fallen into my hands. And I, Mormon, pray to God that they may be preserved from this time henceforth. And I know that they will be preserved; for there are great things written upon them, out of which my people and their brethren shall be judged at the great and last day, according to the word of God which is written. (Words of Mormon 1:11)

Therefore repent, and be baptized in the name of Jesus, and lay hold upon the gospel of Christ, which shall be set before you, not only in this record [the Book of Mormon] but also in the record which shall come unto the Gentiles from the Jews [the Bible], which record [the Bible] shall come from the Gentiles unto you.

For behold, this [the Book of Mormon] is written for the intent that ye may believe that [the Bible], and if ye believe that [the Bible] ye will believe this [the Book of Mormon] also; and if ye believe this [the Book of Mormon] ye will know concerning your fathers, and also the marvelous works which were wrought by the power of God among them. (Mormon 7:8-9)

The Bible and the Book of Mormon jointly testify to the cause of Christ. As companion scriptures, they support and sustain one another in their singular purpose which is to bring souls unto Christ.

PUBLIC REACTION

During the 26 weeks that the articles were published in the newspaper, I had casual conversations with approximately 75 non-LDS local residents who personally knew me. In these conversations, they reported to me that they were enjoying reading the articles. These discussions regarding my articles were unsolicited and were initiated by my acquaintances. No doubt some of the people were merely being socially polite. The majority, I am convinced, genuinely enjoyed reading and learning more about the supportive connections between the Bible and the Book of Mormon. None of these local residents with whom I had these discussions ever sent a letter of any type, positive or negative, to the editor of the newspaper.

Sometime around the 24th week of my articles, my married daughter Georgia, age 27 at the time, walked into a local restaurant. Seated at a table in the restaurant were several protestant ministers conferring with one another. Georgia was acquainted with some of them. Upon her entry into the restaurant, a theretofore lively discussion at the ministers' table turned immediately into stark silence. It was the type of silence that follows the cat's swallowing of the canary. She exchanged pleasantries with them in passing.

A few days later, an 800-plus word "Letter To The Editor" was printed in *The Wetumpka Herald*. The letter was sent to the newspaper by Rev. Jim Veazey, a local Baptist minister who had been with the group of ministers in the restaurant. Rev. Veazey's "Letter To The Editor" and my 26th and final article appeared in the same issue of the newspaper. Rev. Veazey's "Letter To The Editor" is reprinted in its entirety later in this chapter. (See pp. 98-99)

I did not make a newspaper reply to Rev. Veazey's article, and his article seemed to die a quiet, inconspicuous death. My only response to his "Letter To The Editor" is the written response which I will now make in this book. I wish to reply as an advocate in a professional manner. I wish to "contend..., and let [my] warning voice go forth" (D&C 112:5). But I do not wish to be contentious. As you read my response, please imagine that I am **not** raising my voice.

Rev. Veazey's "Letter To The Editor" is a typical anti-Mormon publication. Here in the South, this type of publication has normally followed any accurate public presentation about the Book of Mormon. His letter was divided into two basic sections. The first section sought to point out the "vast" differences, as Rev. Veazey viewed it, between Mormonism and Christianity. The second section personally lambasted Joseph Smith, the "author" of the Book of Mormon, and the authenticity of his translation work.

The most noticeable aspect of Rev. Veazey's comments was the total absence of any critique of the 25 articles which had already been published at that time. There was no mention whatsoever of the actual contents or accuracy of a single article. Were the 25 weeks of biblical quotes accurate? Were the assigned meanings reasonable in light of the context? What about the biblical promises regarding Joseph of Egypt's posterity, or the "two sticks" of Ezekiel, or the Saviour's "other sheep" as reported by John, or Isaiah's vision of the coming forth of the Book of Mormon, or chiasmus in both the Bible and the Book of Mormon, or the Urim and Thummim, or any number of other connecting links between the Bible and the Book of Mormon?

The minister's response to my articles was a total deflection, seeking to distract the readers from the only issue raised by my articles – the truthfulness or not of the asserted connecting links between the Bible and the Book of Mormon. Rev. Veazey **completely by-passed** the matters contained in the articles which prompted his "Letter To The Editor." I can only assume that such a tactic was by design.

Although Rev. Veazey began his letter by stating that there are "significant" differences between the Bible and the Book of Mormon, strongly implying that there are many direct contradictions, he did not support his bold claim with a single difference or contradiction. There are, of course, many differences which would relate to authorship, time of authorship, and place of authorship. But the same can be said of Genesis and Revelation, or any other two separately authored books of the Bible. There are many differences of this type, but the differences do not amount to contradictions in gospel doctrine. If both books are correctly understood, there is no basic doctrinal teaching about Jesus Christ and his

gospel plan in the Book of Mormon which would constitute a contradiction of the Bible. Can one point to any teaching about Jesus Christ in the Book of Mormon that would be offensive to a **sincere** Christian? The Book of Mormon **supports and supplements**, as opposed to counters and contradicts, the Bible.

In his attempt to demonstrate that Mormons (I prefer the term Latter-day Saints) are non-Christians, Rev. Veazey, in a very skewed and unbalanced manner, wrote exclusively of the deeper tenets of our faith. These tenets are easily mischaracterized and easily misunderstood. The tenets which Rev. Veazey addressed are correctly understood only after a careful study of the foundational concepts which precede and support them. He portrayed the fringes of LDS doctrine as the core, and he omitted the core altogether. To spice the deeper tenets with sensationalism, he threw in an inaccuracy here and there to insure that the reader **misunderstood** our doctrines. His comments regarding LDS doctrine were a total distortion.

I would probably be one of the first to admit that the LDS religion differs widely from Rev. Veazey's brand of Christianity. His Christian doctrines have evolved over the centuries into what is now considered by the protestant world to be "traditional." But the "traditions" do not extend back to the primitive church. Instead, present-day "traditional" protestant Christianity is derived from the positions taken by the "orthodox" victors of the doctrinal skirmishes of a turbulent post-primitive Christian history. "Traditional" protestant Christianity is the product of doctrinal percolation. Admittedly, protestantism was definitely an inspired preparatory movement in the course of human events. The protestant reformation helped to put the Bible in the hands of the common man, spurred a yearning for gospel truths and religious freedom, and fostered the colonization of the new world. The benefits of the protestant reformation are immeasurable. But protestantism has never been doctrinally pure. Protestantism has always been tainted by apostate, heretical, non-biblical doctrines of men such as three-in-one trinity, saved-by-grace-alone, play-the-harp-forever-heaven, and all-heathen-to-hell philosophies. I choose not to be **that** kind of "Christian." (I hope I do not sound like a charter member of "Ex-Protestants For Jesus.")

On the other hand, LDS Christianity derives exclusively from the latter-day restoration of pure and undefiled truth to the earth via the revelations of Jesus Christ to his modern living prophets, beginning in 1820 with Joseph Smith. Yes, there are definitely distinct differences between other Christian religions and what the world calls "Mormonism." Otherwise, there would have been no need for a restoration of truth to mankind in preparation for the Saviour's triumphant return. The Book of Mormon, Another Testament of Jesus Christ, is a powerful evidence of that glorious restoration.

There is actually a severe problem with making doctrinal comparisons between LDS beliefs and the beliefs of any of the protestant sects. There is no authoritative source for official protestant doctrine to which one may look for accurate doctrinal comparison. Protestants claim the "authority of the believers," but the believers believe differently. Protestants claim the "authority of the Bible," but the protestants interpret the Bible differently, even within the same sect. The protestant sects are filled with changing doctrinal pluralism. Defining "official" protestant doctrine is like shooting at a multi-divided moving target. Protestants are strangers to a "unity of the faith" (Ephesians 4:13). Having been founded on a concept of reformation to a past ideal, protestantism has ever been in a "reforming" mode. I have seen many of their beliefs and practices gravitate toward LDS beliefs and practices. No doubt much of this re-alignment is done with the hope that protestantism might acquire the same vitality as the fast-growing LDS Church.

In the final analysis, informed Latter-day Saints are not the least bit concerned about whether or not we meet some other religion's current Phariseetical definition of being "Christian." It is our Saviour and Redeemer, Jesus Christ, who will make the only judgment of importance regarding whether or not any of us are "Christians." He alone will judge perfectly the quality of our Christianity on an individual basis. In that judgment process, I strongly suspect that the Saviour will be less concerned about the finer points of our professed doctrinal beliefs and more concerned about the manner, according to our knowledge, in which we have lived our lives. I am reminded of the words of the Apostle James: "Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep him-

self unspotted from the world” (James 1:27).

Speaking of differing brands of Christianity, there is a modern southern phenomenon I think worth mentioning. In my teen years (1960's), much excitement and controversy erupted amongst the white community in my small hometown if a member of the baptist church joined the methodist church or vice-versa. However, over the past 20-plus years I have personally observed the increased interdenominational mobility of southern protestants. Baptists become methodists. Methodists become presbyterians. Presbyterians become baptists, and so forth. All of this changing is done with ease, and there is hardly any notice taken by the leadership and membership of these churches, or by the community at large. This is true notwithstanding the respective doctrines and ordinances of these separate protestant churches are drastically different or even diametrically opposed on major issues. Little effort is made to study doctrinal positions prior to the switch. Based upon my personal visits through the years, at all of these protestant churches the preaching is primarily generic, general, and non-controversial (unless the lesson is on the evils of “Mormonism”). Social and economic reasons seem to predominantly motivate the switches.

In contrast, if any of these southern protestants learn that one of their fellow members is studying the teachings of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, much agitation ensues. The protestant who is considering the LDS religion may have been totally inactive in his protestant church for many years, yet his immediate family members in company with his protestant minister will suddenly take great interest in the inactive's “spiritual welfare.” Unconcerned if he were to make a switch to another southern protestant church in the same town, and previously unconcerned about his inactivity, the family, the minister, and perhaps a couple of deacons or elders will visit the prospective LDS and deluge him with misleading anti-Mormon propaganda, both verbal and written. Family, social and even economic pressure (“you’ll lose all your customers”) is often applied. Much more often than not, the prospective LDS who has insufficient knowledge and experience to discern the truth, abruptly abandons his investigation of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

Such is all part of the probationary, proving process of earth life. God wants it to be challenging and Satan wants it to be extremely difficult to join The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. But they each have entirely different motives. Satan wants to keep people from the truth. "And it came to pass that from this time forth there began to be lyings sent forth among the people, by Satan, to harden their hearts, to the intent that they might not believe" (3 Ne. 1:22). God wants to make sure people understand the truth and are committed to it for a lifetime before allowing them to enter into eternal, sacred, binding ordinances. God needs valiant, truth-loving sons and daughters who have practiced real courage in mortality. Thus, God the Father allows for the opposition. His Son, although the Prince of Peace, declared in respect to this opposition:

Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword.

For I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law.

And a man's foes shall be they of his own household.

He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me: and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me.

* * *

He that receiveth a prophet in the name of a prophet shall receive a prophet's reward: (Matt. 10:34-37; 41)

I now return to Rev. Veazey's "Letter To The Editor." In describing LDS doctrine, Rev. Veazey failed to write anything regarding the official Thirteen Articles of Faith which have set forth the basic beliefs and teachings of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints since 1842. In order to convince others that Mormons are non-Christian, Rev. Veazey totally omitted any basic LDS beliefs regarding our Saviour Jesus Christ, his life's pattern of perfection, his sacred atoning sacrifice, and his triumphant resurrection. Christ is central to every doctrine that is taught in The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. To anyone who is reasonably informed, it would seem that Rev. Veazey's description of the LDS religion was intended to mislead. (By the way, it's actually quite easy to distinguish Christians from non-Christians. **The Christians, who are**

falsely labeled as non-Christians, are the ones being burned at the stake by the non-Christians, who falsely self-label themselves as Christians.)

I wish to note here that opposition to the Book of Mormon often comes from persons or groups who self-identify and promote themselves as “Christian.” I have learned to beware of such persons or groups. They use a “Christian” label to facilitate personal gain. It is difficult to place confidence in people who brag that they are the most humble or the most loving or the most “Christian.” When other Christians and their churches use their resources and efforts to oppose the Book of Mormon, Another Testament of Jesus Christ, they betray and abandon whatever Christ-centered foundation they may otherwise possess. Their un-Christian conduct in this respect erodes away their own Christianity.

When misinformation is regularly printed and taught from church pulpits and pastors’ studies, it produces a certain warped mind set about “Mormons.” Even an absurd falsehood which is regularly repeated will eventually take on the appearance of truth. I have had friends (using the term somewhat loosely) tell me, after severely mischaracterizing my religion, that what they described was precisely what I believed whether I believed it or not! Frankly, I consider myself to be the only expert on the subject of what I personally believe. It is truly sad and tragic when one cannot recognize his own religion from another’s description of it.

There is a distinct difference between, on the one hand, a frank and fair discussion of the truthfulness of the respective claims of different religions, a legitimate enterprise, and, on the other hand, the vilification and maligning of another’s religion with false, misleading, and distorted information. The latter is simply hatemonogering. None of my 26 newspaper articles contained direct attacks on other religions. In self-defense, I have perhaps approached doing so in this book. I apologize if you feel that I have crossed the line. I know that words which attack are from the adversary, and words that unite are from the Saviour.

The following statement is an excellent statement of principle which relates to this subject. It was unanimously adopted by the Virginia Regional Board of the National Conference of Christians and Jews on February 4, 1994:

It is the position of the National Conference of Christians and Jews that the First Amendment right...to freely exercise one's own faith is fundamental and inviolate. The right of any group to practice their faith in whatever manner consistent with public health and safety cannot and must not be infringed.

We further recognize that with every right there are also responsibilities that are equally part of our democratic process. Religious freedom is not the right to condemn, impugn, ridicule, or attack the beliefs of others. The responsible exercise of religious freedom includes...according the same right to all others and a tolerance for the differences between and among all faiths.

The National Conference is particularly concerned with the growing number of attacks on religious beliefs and practices by a number of groups and individuals within our society. Such attacks, that utilize false or misleading information that is intended to promote religious bigotry, are acts of intolerance and prejudice. They are both irresponsible and anti-democratic in nature.

* * *

This kind of behavior needs to be identified and condemned for what it is: religious intolerance and blatant bigotry.

Joseph Smith, who met a premature death at the hands of religious intolerance, made these statements regarding religious tolerance:

If I esteem mankind to be in error, shall I bear them down? No. I will lift them up, and in their own way too, if I cannot persuade them my way is better; and I will not seek to compel any man to believe as I do, only by the force of reasoning, for truth will cut its own way. Do you believe in Jesus Christ and the gospel of salvation which he revealed? So do I. Christians should cease wrangling and contending with each other, and cultivate the principles of union and friendship in their midst. (*Documentary History of the Church*, Vol. V, p. 499)

* * *

It is one of the first principles of my life, and one that I have cultivated from my childhood, having been taught it by my father, to allow every one the liberty of conscience. I am the greatest advocate of the Constitution of the United States there is on the earth. In my feelings I am always ready to die for the protection of the weak and oppressed in their just rights. (*Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, selected and arranged by Joseph Fielding Smith. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1976, p. 326)

* * *

The saints can testify whether I am willing to lay down my life for my brethren. If it has been demonstrated that I have been willing to die for a "Mormon," I am bold to declare before Heaven that I am just as ready to die in defending the rights of a Presbyterian, a Baptist, or a good man of any other denomination; for the same principle which would trample upon the rights of the Latter-day Saints would trample upon the rights of the Roman Catholics, or any other denomination who may be unpopular and too weak to defend themselves. (*Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, selected and arranged by Joseph Fielding Smith. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1976, p. 313)

Rev. Veazey's article next followed longstanding, standard anti-Mormon *modus operandi*. If one cannot successfully attack the message of the Book of Mormon, then attack the messenger. From the very beginning, even before the Book of Mormon came off the press in 1830, those who felt threatened by the Book of Mormon fabricated and circulated the most amazing and often competing tales about the book's origin and about the character and intellect of its translator Joseph Smith. However, the amazement produced in the minds of people who read these incredulous stories can never equal the amazement of a different kind which is produced in the hearts of truth-seeking people who prayerfully read the Book of Mormon for themselves. Just think about it, from an evidentiary standpoint, **the more devoid of character and intellect one**

attempts to paint Joseph Smith, the more amazing and miraculous becomes the Book of Mormon.

If someone published a pamphlet containing slanderous material against Matthew, Mark, Luke, or John, we would likely ignore it because we have felt the beneficial influence of their biblical writings in our personal lives. If we read such slanderous material, wouldn't it cause us to defend Matthew, Mark, Luke, or John by encouraging others to simply read the New Testament gospels for themselves. Since we have the book here before us that we can read and study, why not judge the book by the book's content, instead of prejudging the book by the slanderous statements against the authors who are not here to defend their good name and character? Those who slander the Book of Mormon and its translator Joseph Smith rarely cause a defection by one who has actually read the Book of Mormon for himself or herself. It is the Book of Mormon non-readers, both LDS and non-LDS, who are at risk to such slander.

I feel compelled to respond more directly to one portion of Rev. Veazey's attack on Joseph Smith. I strongly disagree with Rev. Veazey's use of the word "plagiarism" in describing Joseph Smith's translation of the Book of Mormon record. Plagiarism occurs when one dishonestly uses another's writings as if they were his own creation, failing to acknowledge the true author as the actual source.

The prophet-authors of the New Testament had access to the writings of the Old Testament prophet Isaiah. The New Testament prophet-authors quoted from 32 separate chapters of Isaiah. Are these New Testament writers guilty of plagiarism? Of course not, and neither are the Book of Mormon prophet-authors who had access to, and quoted from, the writings of the prophet Isaiah as contained on the brass plates. The brass plates were a collection of Hebrew scriptures to the time of Jeremiah, including some of Jeremiah's writings. The brass plates were brought to the New World by the Lehi colony in 589 B.C. The Book of Mormon prophet-authors expressly acknowledged that they were quoting the words of Isaiah from the brass plates.

Joseph Smith, as the translator of these Isaiah quotes which were transferred to the Book of Mormon record by its prophet-authors, was not guilty of plagiarism. In fact, Joseph Smith never claimed to

be the original author of any of the Book of Mormon record. The false accusation of plagiarism has persuasive power only with those who are personally unfamiliar with the contents and origin of the Book of Mormon. If one were to read the Book of Mormon and then fairly study the available scholarly materials on the authorship and origins of the Book of Mormon, he or she would be overwhelmed by a sense of its authenticity and ancient origin, as well as the prophetic calling of its inspired translator Joseph Smith.

For instance, 234 verses (54%) of the 433 verses of Isaiah in the Book of Mormon differ in wording from the King James Version. This is true notwithstanding Joseph Smith likely made use of the King James Version in translating or proofreading the Isaiah portions of the Book of Mormon. Where the King James Version reasonably carried the meaning of the older brass plates/Book of Mormon version of Isaiah's writings, it seems obvious that Joseph Smith opted at some point in the process to use the King James Version with which people were familiar. (Why shouldn't he use the King James Version to assist him in the translation? The King James scholars used existing translations when they produced the King James Version of Isaiah's writings!) When the King James Version of Isaiah varied from the older/brass plates/Book of Mormon version of Isaiah, Joseph Smith retained the older/brass plates/Book of Mormon version which he had previously dictated to his scribe.

Joseph Smith had no access to the pre-King James versions of the writings of Isaiah, such as the Septuagint (Greek), Syriac, and Latin versions. Furthermore, Joseph Smith did not understand the languages of these ancient versions. Yet, the Septuagint (Greek), Syriac, and Latin versions of Isaiah lend strong support to the correctness and antiquity of the brass plates/Book of Mormon version of many of the Isaiah passages which vary from the King James Version. The brass plates/Book of Mormon version of Isaiah is actually superior to the King James version simply because the brass plates/Book of Mormon version is closer in time to the original writings of Isaiah and thus less corrupted by subsequent copying and subsequent language translations. Besides standing up to a careful comparison with ancient versions of Isaiah's writings, the Book of Mormon contains Hebrew idioms and compound Hebrew

prepositions which would naturally flow from a genuine translation of an authentic Hebrew-based text.

Joseph Smith, the 23-year-old farm boy who performed the translation work, had little formal training in English, much less foreign languages. The only logical explanation for his miraculous translation work is the single explanation which he consistently and solemnly declared to all who inquired. The Book of Mormon came into being because God caused a scriptural record to be (1) written and preserved by prophet-authors over a long period of the earth's history extending back at least to the Tower of Babel, and (2) miraculously translated in these latter days by the direct intervention of his marvelous power.

It would have been totally impossible for even a group of the world's most learned experts on ancient Palestinian culture to have written the Book of Mormon in 1830. The fact that Joseph Smith, a lone man, was unlearned merely adds to the mortal impossibility. In retrospect, we can now discern that it was actually less of a miracle for Joseph Smith to have translated the Book of Mormon by the use of the Urim and Thummim than it would have been for Joseph Smith to have concocted it on his own. This truth is now evident and will become more evident with the passage of time.

Early critics sought to attribute the authorship of the Book of Mormon to various contemporaries of Joseph Smith. That tactic, too, had as its design discouraging people from actually reading the Book of Mormon for themselves. In other words, just don't take the Book of Mormon seriously. My response to the alternate-author theory is this: Placing the authorship in another person does not in my mind destroy the miraculous nature of the Book of Mormon. Even if the source of authorship were questionable, I must nevertheless conclude that **whoever** authored or translated the Book of Mormon was a prophet of God. As far as I know, no one at its controversial inception or at any later time was willing to take the dubious "credit" for producing the Book of Mormon other than Joseph Smith. He paid dearly for his life-long refusals to deny his claim of having translated the anciently inscribed metal plates to produce the Book of Mormon.

If a man were going to plagiarize, why would he choose to plagiarize from the most commonly possessed and commonly read

book in his society? If it is so easily seen that the Book of Mormon is the product of imbecilic plagiarism of the Bible in 1829, as Rev. Veazey claims, then why is the Book of Mormon still attracting a phenomenal number of adherents from amongst intelligent peoples throughout the entire earth who take the time and effort to actually read it? Something just doesn't jive, does it? The critics of the Book of Mormon do not say, "Read the book for yourself and you'll easily see that it is a fraud." Instead, they use tactics directly aimed at discouraging one from ever picking up a Book of Mormon. Do you think it might be a good idea for a person to simply read the Book of Mormon for himself or herself?

Rev. Veazey is critical of the LDS Church position which states: "We believe the Bible to be the word of God **as far as it is translated correctly**." Since this 1842 statement of belief by Joseph Smith, there have been more than two hundred new and different translations of the Bible in the English language alone. One can hardly recognize quotes from the "Bible" when tuned to the radio. Now add to the multiple-translations phenomenon the post-1842 discoveries which clearly demonstrate that many errors crept into the biblical record through the centuries. (These subsequent discoveries of errors, by the way, result from credible biblical scholarship conducted by persons of many Christian and some non-Christian faiths.) Now add to those two factors the destruction of original literary art forms, like chiasmus, resulting from the re-translation process. With only those three factors in mind, what fault can logically be found with Joseph Smith's prophetic pronouncement? Would Rev. Veazey prefer us to state: "We believe the Bible to be the word of God as far as it is translated **incorrectly**?" Joseph Smith explained his position: "I believe the Bible as it read when it came from the pen of the original writers." (*Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, selected and arranged by Joseph Fielding Smith. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1976, p. 327) Christianity should be more concerned with the contradictions between the King James Version and all of the so-called "easier to understand" modern versions of the Bible, and less concerned about the assumed, but non-existent, contradictions between the Bible and the Book of Mormon.

The limitation "as far as it is translated correctly" does not apply

to the original English translation of the Book of Mormon simply because this single translation with the assistance of the Urim and Thummim was accomplished under the direct inspiration of God. Perhaps “as far as it is translated correctly” is an appropriate limitation for subsequent translations of the Book of Mormon into more than 85 non-English languages, although extreme care and modern electronic technology now make such translation errors very minimal.

Rev. Veazey repeats one of the most common and yet most non-meritorious arguments against the authenticity of the Book of Mormon: If the Book of Mormon is so “correct,” as Joseph Smith said, then why have there been more than 4,000 changes made to it? Joseph Smith’s complete statement about the correctness of the book, made in 1841 to the Quorum of the Twelve, reads, “I told the brethren that the Book of Mormon was the most correct book on earth, and the keystone of our religion, and a man would get nearer to God by abiding by its precepts, than by any other book.” In speaking to the Twelve, Joseph Smith was obviously referring to the doctrines of Christ contained within the book. He was speaking of principles relating to the salvation of man. He was speaking of revealed eternal truths. He was speaking of precepts contained in the fulness of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

In making the foregoing statement, Joseph Smith was not speaking to a national association of English grammar teachers. He was not referring to commas, periods, paragraph structure, verb conjugation, the spelling of words, and minor grammatical matters. The 4,000 changes, an average of less than eight per page or approximately one change every sixty-six words, were necessitated by errors made by scribes as the scribes wrote down Joseph Smith’s dictation from the ancient record. Changes to the original manuscript were required due to (1) spelling errors resulting from the phonetic spelling of words; (2) the lack of paragraphing, (3) the absence of punctuation marks from the beginning to the end of each chapter, and (4) short-hand writing, such as “&” for “and.” Thus, correcting misspellings, paragraphing the text, and adding punctuation accounts for the overwhelming part of the 4,000 “changes” to the Book of Mormon. By the way, Joseph Smith did not participate in the grammatical corrections between the original manuscript and

the security manuscript delivered to the printer.

A significant part of the 4,000 changes would consist of re-dividing the chapters and adding verse numbers in the 1879 edition of the Book of Mormon. In comparison, the Bible was not divided into present-day chapters until the 13th century. The Old Testament was not divided into verses until the 15th century. The New Testament was not divided into verses until the 16th century. William Barclay, a noted non-Mormon Bible scholar, reports that 24,000 differences were found between six different editions of the King James Version in a study conducted by the American Bible Society. (William Barclay, *Introducing the Bible*, p. 134.) These types of biblical “changes,” just like the “changes” to the Book of Mormon, have a minimal impact on the meaning of the scriptures. **Would you refuse to eat any part of a fresh baked cherry pie because a gnat had touched a tiny edge of it?** (Could this be the same gnat at which others have strained?)

I have never read where a detractor of the Book of Mormon, in pointing out the thousands of changes, has ever given his reading audience a single example of the type of “change” to which he referred. To do so would expose the groundless nature of the criticism. There have been no significant doctrinal changes to the original manuscript of the Book of Mormon. Furthermore, the changes to the Book of Mormon are minuscule compared to the changes made to the Bible through the years.

Hear ye the parable of the poets. Once upon a time, there were two poets who wrote value-based poetry. One poet was an older, professional poet who had enjoyed a long and successful career. The other poet, much younger, was a mere amateur. The amateur poet had written a poem which he freely gave to all who would read it. The amateur poet claimed that his poem was quality, value-based poetry which would supplement the reader’s appetite for value-based poetry.

At first, not many people took the time to read the amateur’s poem, but the few who actually read the amateur’s poem declared that they were inspired by it, that it uplifted and strengthened them in their pursuit of life. Reading the poem, they declared, actually increased their appreciation for and understanding of the older value-based poetry. Over time, as more people made the effort to

read his poem, the amateur poet attracted considerable public attention.

The older, professional poet began to feel threatened by what he perceived to be the potential loss of a part of his paying audience. What could he do? He decided to protect his territory at virtually all cost, abandoning many of the principles contained in his own value-based poetry. Without actually reading or pondering the amateur's poem with open-mindedness, the older, professional poet became extremely agitated and critical of the amateur and his work. His criticisms and arguments against the amateur and his poem included the following:

- A. Publishing reports that all amateur poets lack necessary formal training and fail to attract and hold followers, and no amateur poet has ever written an authentic, value-based poem.
- B. Publishing reports that the amateur poet had been convicted of shop lifting and child molestation.
- C. Publishing reports that those who had read the amateur poet's poem suffered from satanic delusions and eventually developed mental illness.
- D. Publishing reports that the original draft of the amateur's poem contained a "their" where there should have been a "there," and that there was a period where there should have been a comma.
- E. Publishing reports that an opinion poll taken of all professional poets and their followers in the same state indicated that 100% of them felt no benefit could be gained from reading the amateur poet's poem.
- F. Publishing reports that the amateur poet had plagiarized 5% of his poem from a deceased professional poet.

Whenever a truth-seeking member of the public suggested that the proof of the writing was in the reading, the older poet would insist that it would not be worth a person's time and energy to read the amateur poet's poem. Further, the older poet would represent that reading the amateur poet's poem would destroy a person's ability to appreciate traditional value-based poetry. In his concluding comments the older poet would add some or all of the foregoing criticisms and arguments (A-F) in support of this position.

It is not my purpose in this book to cover point by point all of the various claims, accusations, and distortions contained in Rev. Veazey's "Letter To The Editor." (Although I admit I am tempted.) It is rather my purpose in this book to motivate the reader to simply read the Book of Mormon for himself or herself. Rev. Veazey says nothing new or original, but merely parrots the deceptive works of the professional anti-Mormons. Rev. Veazey recycles the same half-truths that were long ago dismissed in the minds of those who have fairly studied the available evidence, especially the Book of Mormon itself. After reading the Book of Mormon for yourself, if you are still interested in Rev. Veazey's criticisms, then you have a veritable intellectual smorgasbord of scholarly works which effectively counter and nullify each of his criticisms. The best resource to consult for such a purpose is the following annotated bibliography with 3,200 entries: Donald W. Parry, Jeanette W. Miller, and Sandra A. Thorne, eds. *A Guide to Publications on the Book of Mormon: A Selected Annotated Bibliography*. Provo, Utah: FARMS, 1996. vii+403pp. Therein one may find more than a lifetime of commentary reading, but I respectfully submit that one's time is better spent first prayerfully reading the Book of Mormon itself.

With those introductory remarks, I present here Rev. Jim Veazey's entire "Letter To The Editor" which appeared in the June 26, 1997, issue of *The Wetumpka Herald*.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

To the Editor:

For the past 25 weeks, *The Wetumpka Herald* has published an article by John Enslen entitled "The Bible And The Book of Mormon." The author's stated purpose is "to increase public understanding" of the Bible and the Book of Mormon, and to bring attention to "textually connecting links" between the two, in order to "provide evidence of a single revelatory source." In other words, Mr. Enslen seeks to present both the Bible and the Book of Mormon as the inspired Word of God, when in fact there are significant differences in the two, just as there are vast differences between the beliefs of Christianity and Mormonism. In the interest of fairness, allow me to highlight a few Mormon beliefs as they differ from Christianity:

1. Mormonism teaches that there are an infinite number of gods in the universe, each of whom is god of his own planet. The god of our planet, Elohim, or God the Father, was once a mortal man before he attained "godhood." He came here from a distant star named Kolob.

2. Mormonism denies the virgin birth of Jesus Christ, teaching instead that God the Father had a sexual union with Mary, from which Jesus was born. Mormonism also teaches that Jesus had several wives, among them Mary and Martha, the sisters of Lazarus, and fathered children by them.

3. Just as Mormonism teaches that God was once a man, it also teaches that men may become gods. Mormon women may become wives of gods. If the couple has been married in a Mormon temple, they will receive their own planet to populate, as God the Father did before them.

4. Mormonism teaches the practice of baptism for the dead, in which present-day Mormons are baptized in proxy for their ancestors, in order that the ancestors might attain exaltation. It is for this reason that Mormons operate the world's largest genealogical center, located in Salt Lake City, Utah.

In regard to the Book of Mormon itself, and its author, Joseph Smith:

1. As a young man, Smith gained a reputation as a "seer" of lost or hidden treasures. He did this by using a magic stone or "seer stone," which he placed in his hat and used like a fortune-teller's crystal ball. Chenango County, New York court records indicate that Smith was arrested and convicted in March 1826 of pretending to find buried treasure by "glass-lookng." It was only a year later that Smith claimed that he was led by the angel Moroni to the golden plates buried in the hill of Cumorah, from which he translated the Book of Mormon.

2. The Book of Mormon contains at least 25,000 words taken directly from the King James Bible. In some cases, entire chapters were copied, including the verse and chapter

divisions. While some might see this as a "connecting link," several problems arise from Joseph Smith's plagiarism. Portions of the Book of Mormon which were allegedly written in 600-500 B.C. contain hundreds of quotations from the New Testament, which was not written until the first century A.D. Also questionable is the fact that Joseph Smith's gold plates, under translation, came out in King James English approximately a thousand years before the King James Version was written in 1611.

3. The King James Version of the Bible is the Mormon Church's official version, but is accepted as the Word of God only "as far as it is correctly translated." Joseph Smith made more than 600 "corrections" to the KJV text, including an insertion into Genesis 50 in which his own future appearance is predicted. The Book of Mormon is considered to be superior to the Bible, and is called "the most correct of any book on earth," although over 4,000 changes have been made since it was first published in 1830.

4. Joseph Smith's incredible tale of finding the buried gold plates is nothing more than a re-

telling of the ancient Masonic legend of Enoch, which is used in the ceremonies of the 13th, 14th, and 21st degrees of Masonry. This fact was attested by Dr. Reed Durham, President of the Mormon History Association, in 1974. Joseph Smith was deeply involved in Masonry, and according to Dr. Durham, "Masonic influences upon Joseph Smith in the early church history were significant." Smith even referred to Mormonism as the "true Masonry."

Limited space does not allow me to discuss many other aspects of Mormonism as it differs from Christianity. Suffice to say that the above items represent only the tip of the iceberg. There is no intent here to call into question Mr. Enslen's character or sincerity. I am sure both are above reproach. My only intent is to show the differences between Mormonism and Christianity. Jesus said "You shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." It is up to us as individuals to decide what is truth and what is falsehood.

**Jim Veazey
Elmore, Ala.**

In his concluding paragraph, Rev. Veazey tosses me what my sweet mother was apt to refer to as a "back-handed compliment." My character is above reproach, says Rev. Veazey, but the product of a sincere belief in ridiculous non-Christian doctrines. This compliment reminds me of the theme which is found in a considerable amount of anti-Mormon propaganda. The theme usually goes something like this: The Mormons are all wrong about the true his-

tory of Christianity, both ancient and modern; also, the Mormons are all wrong about true Christian doctrines; nevertheless, Mormons as a whole actually display a high degree of Christian virtue in the way they live their lives – exemplifying chastity, morality, family solidarity, honesty, industry, health consciousness, humanitarian service, patriotism, educational achievement, evangelism for their cause, and other recognized Christian virtues.

A business friend of mine gave me a magazine article with just such a theme. The magazine was published by his protestant church. My business friend invited a response from me. I accommodated him with the following reply:

The Mormon Tabernacle Choir does not truly understand musical timing. The choir doesn't really know the difference between a 2/4 and a 4/4 timing pattern; or the difference between an upbeat and a downbeat; or the difference between a quarter note and a whole note. Furthermore, the Mormon Tabernacle Choir does not truly understand musical sounds. The choir doesn't really know the difference between the bass clef and the treble clef; or the difference between a soprano and a tenor; or the difference between a sharp and a flat. Nevertheless, the Mormon Tabernacle Choir sings some of the most beautiful music in the world. Please do not be misled my dear friend. "Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them" (Matt. 7:20).

(Continued on next page)

On July 10, 1997, there appeared in the "Letter To The Editor" section of *The Wetumpka Herald* the following letter from a gentleman named Sam Holley of Prattville, Alabama:

To the Editor:

To your readers who might be enticed by the columns that you print on Mormonism, I impart the following truths:

The Christian Bible (Genesis through Revelation) is the only recognized divinely inspired word issued by God to mankind. Jesus did not visit the inhabitants of ancient America and declare the Christian Bible to be inaccurate and he did not inspire the writings claimed in the Book of Mormon. Rather, Joseph Smith disagreed with the lifestyle God requires by His Word that humanity must live,

so he wrote a work of fiction, the Book of Mormon, to fit his desired lifestyle and probably was amazed that people actually believed it and followed his false teachings and still do so today.

False teachers are like carriers of disease and if one becomes infected with their false teachings (diseases) they will suffer spiritual death (eternity in Hell) just as the body suffers physical disease. Look to Jesus for salvation—it can come from no other source.

**Sam Holley
Prattville, Ala.**

The above letter reveals Mr. Holley's total unfamiliarity with the contents of the Book of Mormon and the life of its translator Joseph Smith. Yet he does not let that fact stand in the way of expressing an irresponsible opinion about the Book of Mormon. Unfortunately, this phenomenon is very common in the South. The prevailing rule of "Christian" duty has been as follows: Never let ignorance of the Book of Mormon prevent you from taking a strong stand against it, and you are always free to vaguely cite the Bible as a whole in opposition to the Book of Mormon.

Those who have read the Book of Mormon for themselves well know that the Book of Mormon does not contain a record of Jesus "visit[ing] the inhabitants of ancient America and **declar[ing] the Christian Bible to be inaccurate....**" Mr. Holley falsely implies that the Book of Mormon reports that the Saviour made a wholesale condemnation of the Bible. Mr. Holley thus implies that the Book of Mormon is a confrontational contradiction to the Bible. To the contrary, the resurrected Saviour visited the righteous inhabitants of America and expressly ratified, reaffirmed, approved, and quoted many teachings contained in the Hebrew scriptures which later became a part of the Bible. Biblical prophet-authors the

Saviour identified by name include Isaiah (3 Ne. 16; 3 Ne. 20; 3 Ne. 23), Moses (3 Ne. 20), Abraham (3 Ne. 20), and Malachi (3 Ne. 24; 3 Ne. 25). In addition to directly quoting the words of these biblical prophet-authors, the Saviour (1) confirmed a host of biblical teachings (3 Ne. 9-28), (2) redelivered the Sermon on the Mount (3 Ne. 12), and (3) prayed in their presence the Lord's prayer (3 Ne. 13).

Mr. Holley misrepresents the motivations of Joseph Smith with regard to the production of the Book of Mormon. Joseph Smith had no "disagree[ment] with the lifestyle God requires by His Word." If one were to read the Book of Mormon, he or she would readily comprehend that the standard of Christian living placed upon mankind by the teachings of the Book of Mormon is the same as the standard of Christian living advocated by the Bible. The following is but a small sampling from the Book of Mormon. The resurrected Saviour, in speaking to his followers in the New World, taught:

I would that ye should be perfect **even as I**, or your Father who is in heaven is perfect. (3 Ne. 12:48)

Therefore blessed are ye if ye shall keep my commandments, which the Father hath commanded me that I should give unto you. (3 Ne. 18:14)

And no unclean thing can enter into his kingdom; therefore nothing entereth into his rest save it be those who have washed their garments in my blood, because of their faith, and the repentance of all their sins, and their faithfulness unto the end. (3 Ne. 27:19)

Verily, verily, I say unto you, this is my gospel; and ye know the things that ye must do in my church; **for the works which ye have seen me do that shall ye also do; for that which ye have seen me do even that shall ye do;**

Therefore, if ye do these things blessed are ye, for ye shall be lifted up at the last day.

* * *

Therefore, what manner of men ought ye to be?

Verily I say unto you, **even as I am.**

(3 Ne. 27:21-22; 27)

Do the foregoing scriptures from the Book of Mormon create a less demanding Christ-like lifestyle than that which is fostered by the Bible? Can there exist a higher standard than the perfect life of love, obedience, and sacrifice that was lived by the Saviour? Whose desired lifestyle do these words from the Book of Mormon fit, God's or man's?

If a man wanted to abandon and forsake biblical teachings in favor of a non-Christian lifestyle, then it certainly would not be necessary for him to write a book to justify his choice of an evil way of life. Joseph Smith must be the only person in the world ever accused of writing to himself only a deceptive book for the sole purpose of justifying a personal lifestyle of evil, believing at the time of writing the book that no one else would ever accept the book as true. One does not need to climb a tree just to tell a lie.

Was Joseph Smith surprised or "amazed," as Mr. Holley asserts, when others accepted the Book of Mormon as true scripture from God? Absolutely not. To the contrary, he well knew by revelation that the Book of Mormon would be accepted throughout the earth despite the opposition it would generate and the scorn that would be heaped upon those who would accept it. Of all mortal men, Joseph Smith was the one person who was **least** "amazed" that the Book of Mormon was actually believed. Joseph Smith knew that the Book of Mormon was written and disseminated from the beginning for the very purpose that it would be believed as true scripture. Joseph Smith also knew that its value to mankind rested exclusively in its truthfulness.

In 1823, when Joseph Smith was 17 years of age, the angel Moroni told Joseph Smith about the Book of Mormon record and revealed to him the following:

He [Moroni] called me [Joseph Smith] by name, and said unto me that he was a messenger sent from the presence of God to me, and that his name was Moroni; that God had a work for me to do; and that my name should be had for good and evil **among all nations, kindreds, and tongues....** (Joseph Smith – History 1:33)

In 1830, the same year that the Book of Mormon was published, the following revelation was received by Joseph Smith:

God ministered unto him [Joseph Smith] by an holy

angel [Moroni]....

And gave him [Joseph Smith] power from on high, by the means which were before prepared, to translate the Book of Mormon;

Which contains a record of a fallen people, and the fulness of the gospel of Jesus Christ **to the Gentiles and to the Jews also**;

Proving to the **world** that the holy scriptures [Bible and the Book of Mormon] are true, and that God does inspire men and call them to his holy work in this age and generation, as well as in generations of old;

Thereby showing that he is the same God yesterday, today, and forever. Amen. (D&C 20:Preamble; 6; 8-9; 11-12)

The next year, 1831, Joseph Smith recorded the following words of the Saviour regarding the extent to which the Book of Mormon and other latter-day revelations would be proclaimed throughout the earth:

Hearken ye **people from afar**; and ye **that are upon the islands of the sea**, listen together.

For verily the voice of the Lord is unto **all men**, and **there is none to escape**; and **there is no eye that shall not see, neither ear that shall not hear, neither heart that shall not be penetrated**.

And the voice of warning shall be unto **all people**, by the mouths of my disciples, whom I have chosen in these last days.

And they shall go forth and none shall stay them, for I the Lord have commanded them.

Wherefore the voice of the Lord is **unto the ends of the earth**, that **all** that will hear may hear:

That the fulness of my gospel [Book of Mormon] might be proclaimed by the weak and the simple **unto the ends of the world**, and before kings and rulers.

And again, verily I say unto you, O **inhabitants of the earth**: I the Lord am willing to make these things known unto **all flesh**.... (D&C 1:1-2, 4-5; 11; 23; 34)

In 1842, Joseph Smith sent the following statement to the edi-

tor and owner of the *Chicago Democrat*:

In this important and interesting book [the Book of Mormon] the history of ancient America is unfolded.

* * *

The remnant [of the Book of Mormon people] are the Indians that now inhabit this country. This book also tells us that our Saviour made his appearance upon this continent after his resurrection; that he planted the Gospel here in all its fulness, and richness, and power.... [T]hat the last of their prophets who existed among them was commanded to write an abridgment of their prophecies [and] history...and to hide it up in the earth, and that it should come forth and be **united with the Bible** for the accomplishment of the purposes of God in the last days. For a more particular account I would refer to the Book of Mormon....

As soon as the news of this discovery was made known, false reports, misrepresentations and slander flew, as on the wings of the wind, in every direction; ... but the power and blessing of God attended me, and several began to believe my testimony.

* * *

Persecution has not stopped the progress of truth, but has only added fuel to the flame, it has spread with increasing rapidity. [T]he Elders of this Church [have] gone forth, and planted the Gospel in almost every state in the Union; it has penetrated our cities, it has spread over our villages, and has caused thousands of our intelligent, noble, and patriotic citizens to obey its divine mandates, and be governed by its sacred truths. It has also spread into England, Ireland, Scotland, and Wales.

Our missionaries are going forth to different nations, and in Germany, Palestine, New Holland, Australia, the East Indies, and other places, the Standard of Truth has been erected; no unhallowed hand can stop the work from progressing; persecutions may rage, mobs may combine, armies may assemble, calumny may defame, but the truth of God will go forth boldly, nobly, and

independent, till it has **penetrated every continent, visited every clime, swept every country, and sounded in every ear**, till the purposes of God shall be accomplished, and the Great Jehovah shall say the work is done. (Letter to John Wentworth from Joseph Smith, March 1, 1842)

Contrary to Mr. Holley's claim, there is absolutely no evidence to indicate that Joseph Smith was "amazed that people actually believed" the Book of Mormon. Joseph Smith knew that all the things which God had ordained and decreed would in time be fulfilled.

Contrary to the negative implication of Mr. Holley's letter, Latter-day Saints **do** look exclusively to Jesus Christ for salvation. The Book of Mormon reads: "[B]ehold I say unto you, that as these things are true, and as the Lord God liveth, there is **none other name** given under heaven save it be this Jesus Christ, of which I have spoken, whereby man can be saved" (2 Ne. 25:20). (See also 1 Ne. 10:6; 2 Ne. 2:6; Mosiah 16:6)

Ironically, in the same issue of *The Wetumpka Herald* in which the Sam Holley letter was printed, there also appeared the following "Quote of the Week from the Book of Mormon." After publication of the 26th and final article, I began to publish Book of Mormon quotes weekly as a means of allowing the readers to feel for themselves the power, the truthfulness, and the Christ-centeredness of the Book of Mormon. When we accurately inform others about our religious beliefs, the truth carries its own persuasive power independent of our urgings:

Quote Of The Week
From The Book of Mormon
No. 2

Approximate date: 545 B.C.

Person quoted: Nephi

For we labor diligently to...persuade our children, and also our brethren, to believe in Christ, and to be reconciled to God; for we know that it is by grace that we are saved, after all we can do.

And we talk of Christ, we rejoice in Christ, we preach of Christ, we prophesy of Christ,...that our children may know to what source they may look for a remission of their sins.

And now behold, I say unto you that the right way is to believe in Christ, and deny him not; and Christ is the Holy One of Israel; wherefore ye must bow down before him, and worship him with all your might, mind, and strength, and your whole soul.... (2 Ne. 25:23-26; 29)

Another "Letter To The Editor" was sent to *The Wetumpka Herald* for publication. The writer of this letter lived in Pensacola, Florida. She stated that she and everyone else were "infuriated" by Article No. 15 dealing with the 29th Chapter of Isaiah and the sealed book. Her letter was so acidic and illogical that the editor of *The Wetumpka Herald*, to her credit, refused to publish it.

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints stands or falls on the Book of Mormon. It is the keystone of our theology. Whether or not God has restored to the earth prophets and apostles with revelatory authority depends on whether or not the Book of Mormon is what it purports to be. If Joseph Smith told the truth about the angel Moroni and the translation of the gold plates, then there is no escaping the fact that Joseph Smith was the Saviour's chosen prophet, sent to prepare the way for the Saviour's return in great power and glory. In my mind the issue is just that simple. I have had friends tell me, "I believe everything about your church except Joseph Smith and the Book of Mormon." My response has sometimes been this: "To me, that is like saying you believe everything about the ocean but the water."

Joseph Smith cannot be separated from the translation of the Book of Mormon, and the Book of Mormon cannot be separated from the Saviour as its true author, and the Saviour cannot be separated from the restoration of The Church of Jesus Christ to the earth in these latter days. If those precepts are true, then should we not expect the adversary to strenuously attack Joseph Smith and the Book of Mormon? Should we not expect the adversary to do all that he can to prevent God's children from reading the Book of Mormon, Another Testament of Jesus Christ?

God in his perfect wisdom has placed before the world a choice, and he knows exactly what he is doing. That choice is this: Either the Book of Mormon is God's true scripture or it is not. There can be no middle ground. Neutrality on the subject is not possible. On this question there can be no compromise. This issue is calculated to sift, to divide, to separate. Ultimately, all of the human family will be

brought to a decision regarding the Book of Mormon and its translator Joseph Smith, even those who are misled into ignoring this profound subject for the time being. The issue is not going away.

“THEY DENY THE POWER OF GOD”

Two and one-half millennia before Moroni’s delivery of the gold plates to Joseph Smith, the Old Testament prophet Isaiah was privileged to see in vision the coming forth of the Book of Mormon. (Isaiah 29:11-12; see Articles No. 14 and 15) An important part of that sacred vision included the Lord’s description of the apostate and degenerate condition of Christendom as it would exist when the Book of Mormon would be proclaimed as scripture among the inhabitants of the earth:

Wherefore the Lord said, Forasmuch as this people draw near me with their mouth, and with their lips do honour me, but have removed their heart far from me, and their fear toward me is taught by the precept of men: (Isaiah 29:13; see Article No. 16)

The Lord’s far-in-advance description to Isaiah of early 19th century Christian society primarily involved two mutually reinforcing conditions – hypocrisy and heresy. The Lord revealed to Isaiah that the people would give lip service to God and His power, but betray their verbal allegiance with conduct, behavior, and lifestyles which emanated from a distant heart. Such fear of God as would exist among the members of modern-day Christian churches would be the product of uninspired teachers who would threaten the people with condemnation for their failure to heed doctrines which, in reality, consisted of the false precepts of men.

In New Testament times, the apostle Paul described in a letter to Timothy the focus of these false precepts which would be adhered to by those living in hypocrisy and heresy in the “last days” (2 Timothy 3:1):

Having a form of godliness, but **denying the power thereof**: from such turn away. (2 Timothy 3:5)

Just as he had similarly described to Isaiah and Paul 25 and 18 centuries earlier respectively, the Lord spoke directly and in person to the boy prophet Joseph Smith in 1820 and described the condition of hypocrisy and heresy then prevailing in the traditional Christian churches:

[T]hey draw near to me with their lips, but their hearts

are far from me, they teach for doctrines the commandments of men, having a form of godliness, but **they deny the power thereof.** (Joseph Smith–History 1:19)

Nine years after the Lord’s First Vision description of the existing churches, Joseph Smith was studying the inscribed metal plates from which the Book of Mormon would be translated and printed. As he translated, Joseph read of Nephi’s and Moroni’s prophetic descriptions of the apostate and degenerate condition of Christianity which would exist in the world at the time the Book of Mormon would come forth. Here are the words of Nephi approximately 550 years before Christ, describing the religious leaders of Christian churches in that forthcoming day when the Book of Mormon would be revealed:

And **they deny the power of God**, the Holy One of Israel; and they say unto the people: Hearken unto us, and hear ye our precept: for behold there is no God today, for the Lord and the Redeemer hath done his work [i.e., no more revelations, prophets, miracles, scriptures, or angels], and he hath given his power unto men;

* * *

[I]n many instances [the people of the churches] do err because they are taught by the precepts of men.

* * *

Yea, wo be unto him that hearkenth unto the precepts of men, and **denieth the power of God**....(2 Nephi 28:5, 14, 26)

Here are the words of Moroni approximately 400 years after Christ describing that same future day when the Book of Mormon would be brought to light:

Yea, it shall come in a day when the **power of God shall be denied**....(Mormon 8:28)

What are these false precepts of men that **deny the power of God**? What are the prevailing and pervading doctrines of mainstream Christianity in our day that **deny the power of God**? In addition to the mischaracterization of the Godhead, what are the traditional **power-denying** creeds of men that the Saviour declared to be an “abomination in his sight” (Joseph Smith–History 1:19)?

As the Book of Mormon goes forth in this day, it confronts five

basic creeds or precepts of men that **deny the power of God**.

1. THERE WILL BE NO REVELATIONS FROM GOD SUBSEQUENT TO THE BIBLICAL REVELATIONS.

The Book of Mormon directly confronts and counters this false doctrine which **denies the power of God** to speak to mankind. Moroni, for instance, clearly teaches that those who promote this false doctrine do not know the true gospel of Jesus Christ:

And again I speak unto you who **deny the revelations of God**, and say that they are done away, that there are no revelations, nor prophecies....

Behold I say unto you, he that **denieth these things** knoweth not the gospel of Christ; yea, he has not read the scriptures; if so, he does not understand them.
(Mormon 9:7-8)

2. THERE WILL BE NO PROPHETS OF GOD SUBSEQUENT TO THE BIBLICAL PROPHETS.

The Book of Mormon directly confronts and counters this false doctrine which **denies the power of God** to raise up prophets. The overwhelming majority of the final Book of Mormon record was written by post-New Testament-period prophets. The abridgment of the Large Plates of Nephi by Mormon and the writings of Moroni, both of whom lived approximately 400 years after Christ, constitute more than 70% of the Book of Mormon.

In explaining to his brothers the future gathering of Israel in the last days, Nephi declared:

[B]y the Spirit are all things made known unto the prophets, which shall come upon the children of men according to the flesh. (1 Nephi 22:2)

3. MIRACLES CEASED WITH BIBLICAL TIMES, AND GOD IS NO LONGER A GOD OF MIRACLES IN OUR DAY.

The Book of Mormon directly confronts and counters this false doctrine which **denies the power of God** to perform a miracle. The Lord spake in plainness on the subject of miracles:

For behold, I am God; and I am a God of miracles; and I will show unto the world that I am the same yesterday, today, and forever.... (2 Nephi 27:22-23)

Moroni, who saw in vision our day, also wrote to the subject of miracles:

And now, O all ye that have imagined up unto yourselves a god who can do no miracles,... [b]ehold I say unto you,...God has not ceased to be a God of miracles.

* * *

And if there were miracles wrought then, why has God ceased to be a God of miracles and yet be an unchangeable Being? And behold, I say unto you he changeth not; if so he would cease to be God; and he ceaseth not to be God, and is a God of miracles. (Mormon 9:15; 19)

4. THERE WILL NEVER BE ANY MORE SCRIPTURES BEYOND THOSE WHICH ARE CONTAINED IN THE BIBLE.

The Book of Mormon directly confronts and counters this false doctrine which **denies the power of God** to bring forth new scriptures. The Lord spoke powerfully on the subject of additional scriptures in connection with the coming forth of the Book of Mormon:

Wherefore murmur ye, because that ye shall receive more of my word?

I am the same yesterday, today, and forever; and I speak forth my words according to mine own pleasure. And because that I have spoken one word ye need not suppose that I cannot speak another; for my work is not yet finished; neither shall it be until the end of man, neither from that time henceforth and forever.

Wherefore, because that ye have a Bible ye need not suppose that it contains all my words; neither need ye suppose that I have not caused more to be written. (2 Nephi 29:8-10)

5. THE MINISTERING OF ANGELS TO THE INHABITANTS OF THE EARTH CEASED WITH THE CONCLUSION OF THE BIBLICAL RECORD.

The Book of Mormon directly confronts and counters this false doctrine which **denies the power of God** to send ministering angels to the earth. Moroni wrote eloquently to the subject of angels:

[H]ave angels ceased to appear unto the children of men? Or has he withheld the power of the Holy Ghost from them? Or will he, so long as time shall last, or the

earth shall stand, or there shall be one man upon the face thereof to be saved?

Behold I say unto you, Nay.... (Moroni 7:36-37)

Why would the Lord declare these five religious creeds relating to the **denial of his power**, along with other false creeds, to be “an abomination in his sight” (Joseph Smith—History 1:19)? He would do so because the teaching of these five creeds literally destroys the Christian faith of the people who hear and believe them. The destruction of their faith in this manner then results in the absence of the beneficial influence of revelations, prophets, miracles, scriptures, and angels in their personal lives. Blessings which reveal the power of God work only through the faith of the people:

I work not among the children of men save it be according to their faith. (2 Nephi 27:23)

* * *

And the reason why he ceaseth to do miracles among the children of men is because that they dwindle in unbelief, and depart from the right way, and know not the God in whom they should trust. (Mormon 9:20)

* * *

[F]or it is by faith that miracles are wrought; and it is by faith that angels appear and minister unto men; wherefore, if these things have ceased wo be unto the children of men, for it is because of unbelief, and all is vain.

[A]nd awful is the state of man, for they are as though there had been no redemption made. (Moroni 7:37-38)

In these latter-days particularly, it is tragic that the false doctrine of **denied power** becomes a self-fulfilling truth in the personal lives of those who unfortunately believe in the doctrine. It is “as though there had been no redemption made” by Christ as to them (Moroni 7:37-38).

The pure doctrines of Christ in the Book of Mormon effectively counter each of the five abominable creeds of men which **deny the power of God** (1) to give new revelations, or (2) to call living prophets, or (3) to perform miracles, or (4) to bring forth additional scriptures, or (5) to send angelic messengers to earth. Not only does the Book of Mormon directly confront and counter these false

precepts of men with the written doctrines of Christ contained within its pages, but the Book of Mormon, by virtue of the very **manner** in which it historically came into existence, forthrightly refutes each of these same five false precepts of men. Ignoring for the moment the book's doctrinal content, how does the mere existence of the Book of Mormon itself completely refute the **denial of God's power** to reveal, raise up a prophet, perform a miracle, bring forth scripture, or send an angel? This is how: The Book of Mormon was (1) revealed in our day (2) to a living prophet who (3) miraculously translated by the power of God (4) additional scriptures which were (5) delivered to him by an angel. In the Book of Mormon, history and doctrine join hands to **manifest the power of God**.

Moroni's words of warning speak from the dust to the people of our day:

[W]herefore I would exhort you that ye **deny not the power of God**; for he worketh by power, according to the faith of the children of men, the same today and tomorrow, and forever.

* * *

[I]f by the grace of God ye are perfect in Christ, ye can in nowise **deny the power of God**. (Moroni 10:7; 32)

The Saviour's words to the unbelievers of his day ring true today:

Ye do err, not knowing the scriptures, nor **the power of God**. (Matthew 22:29)

As Paul declared to the members of Christ's former-day church in Rome:

[T]he gospel of Christ ... is the **power of God** unto salvation to every one that believeth.... (Romans 1:16)

CONCLUSION

For many decades, the people of the United States and the southeast in particular have rarely received anything but misinformation about the Book of Mormon. It is analogous to the general population having to rely on an AT&T representative to explain MCI's long distance plan. You're not going to get a very accurate description of MCI's long distance plan from one of its competitors, and you're not going to get a very accurate explanation of the Book of Mormon from a non-Mormon, especially if he is going out of his way to "warn" you about the Book of Mormon.

One way people go out of their way to "warn" others about the Book of Mormon is by paying money to outside "professional experts" who come in and prejudice the public to the extent that the public shuns the Book of Mormon without giving it a fair hearing. It is through this means that many people of the southeast have developed such a strong opinion about a book they have never read. This prejudging is rather easy to successfully foster when the claims associated with the Book of Mormon (revelations, prophets, miracles, scriptures, and angels) run directly counter to the long-held traditional beliefs of most of the people in the southeast. The blindness and prejudice produced by multiple generations of incorrect traditions, "inherited lies" if you will (D&C 123:7), are very powerful forces with which to be reckoned.

One major purpose of my newspaper articles (and this book) was simply to correct some of the false impressions which people have about the relationship between the Bible and the Book of Mormon. I have pointed out some of the verses in the Bible which, in my opinion, plainly and directly speak to the coming forth of the Book of Mormon which is a record of a remnant branch of the House of Israel through the loins of Joseph of Egypt. We now call these mixed descendants of Joseph such names as Indians, Native Americans, Latinos, and Hispanics.

Another major purpose of my newspaper articles (and this book) was to motivate intelligent people of all persuasions everywhere to merely read the Book of Mormon for themselves, as opposed to allowing others, who also have never read it, to mislead them. It

seems to me that truth's greatest enemy is ignorance, and its second greatest enemy is probably laziness or apathy. (Outright falsehood, although an enemy to truth, merely makes the truth shine brighter and brings people more quickly to a decision point.) To express a personal opinion about the Book of Mormon without actually reading it is to engage in speculation and conjecture of the highest order. I am a strong believer in this simple truth which I repeat from my preface: **The proof of a pudding is in the eating, and the proof of a writing is in the reading.**

During the manuscript stage of this book, I visited a bookstore in Montgomery, Alabama, to see if the store would be willing to stock this book for sale once it was printed. I asked the cashier if the store had a favorable policy about marketing locally authored books. She responded, "Yes," and asked what type of book I had written. I replied that it was a religious book entitled *The Bible and the Book of Mormon*. The lady standing in line immediately behind me said to me, with a scowl on her face, "Is it for or against?" I quickly replied, "It is **for both** of them." I then interrupted the silence: "Have you actually ever read the Book of Mormon?" She admitted that she had not. I then said: "There are a lot of outlandish statements made about the Book of Mormon which are obviously false to those who take the time to read it." I was blessed with her quiet confoundment for the balance of my pleasant conversation with the bookstore cashier.

Consider this irony. On the whole Latter-day Saints, who are regularly accused of blindly following false creeds without thinking for themselves, make their decision about the truthfulness of the Bible and the Book of Mormon based upon a reading of **both** these books. On the whole non-Latter-day Saints, who level the accusation of blindness against the Latter-day Saints, make their decision about the truthfulness of the Bible and the Book of Mormon based upon a reading of the Bible only. Where does the blindness truly lie?

Wouldn't it be nice if literate people of all persuasions everywhere prayerfully read the Book of Mormon for themselves, and the world simply let the chips fall where they may? In reality, the world can keep the Book of Mormon bottled up only so long anyway. There is nothing more powerful than a hidden truth whose

time of revelation has come.

It is indeed a shame if a man's perception of the Book of Mormon is derived exclusively from the national newspapers and magazines, or even worse, from the literature of the critics. Only an inaccurate, distorted view is portrayed by such. Many of the critics are either intellectually insolvent as a result of shallow investigation and research, or they have allowed themselves to be misled by those who fit in that category. Of course, one cannot rule out the distinct possibility that absolute religious prejudice often overpowers any rational thought process. A man or woman will never really know much of value about the Book of Mormon unless he or she prayerfully reads the Book of Mormon for himself or herself. Lacking that fundamental, indispensable effort, he or she is at the mercy of ignorance and those who take advantage of this ignorance.

I was asked by a newspaper reporter: "Since we already have a Bible, why do we need a Book of Mormon?" Two thoughts came to mind that clearly demonstrate that the Bible alone is insufficient to gather unto Christ the people from the four quarters of the earth.

1. Despite the time frame in which the Bible has been available throughout the world, a majority of the earth's population, by far, remains non-Bible-believing and non-Christian. Not even the Jewish people who descend from the Bible's authors have accepted the Christ of the New Testament. Thus, a wise God has given the Bible a powerful collaborative, companion witness to the divinity of his Son, Jesus Christ, his mission, and his gospel.

2. Secondly, even where the Bible is generally accepted, its adherents have divided themselves into countless, ever-changing groups where doctrines and teachings differ from one another in drastic ways. These people have now been given a clarification, a correction to the Bible's misinterpretations, an explanation of the Bible's ambiguities, a restoration of some of the plain and precious parts that are no longer found in the Bible.

To ask me the original question, "Why do we need a Bible **and** a Book of Mormon?", is almost like asking me: "Why do we need two eyes, or two hands, or two legs?" The Bible and the Book of Mormon make perfectly good sense. Each is made more credible by the existence of the other. The beautiful truths of the Bible find powerful confirmation in the Book of Mormon, and the beautiful

truths of the Book of Mormon find powerful confirmation in the Bible.

One of the great purposes of the Book of Mormon is to increase our belief in and understanding of the Bible. When studied together, the Bible and the Book of Mormon jointly testify with greater power to the divinity of Jesus Christ and his wonderful atoning sacrifice. One's faith in Jesus Christ as Saviour and Redeemer is expanded through the study of **two** scriptural records. In fact, one's faith is expanded far beyond that faith which would result from the study of only one of these two scriptural records, regardless of which one of the two were studied.

The Book of Mormon is the New World's witness for Jesus Christ, just as the Bible is the Old World's witness for Jesus Christ. The Book of Mormon is a testament of Christ issuing primarily from the tribe of Joseph, just as the Bible is a testament of Christ issuing primarily from the tribe of Judah. The Bible is an ancient, prophetic scriptural record which proves that the Book of Mormon is true. The Book of Mormon is an ancient, prophetic scriptural record which proves that the Bible is true. The only thing which is modern or even post A.D. 421 about the Book of Mormon is its miraculous translation which occurred in a 75-day period in 1829 through the use of a biblical instrument known as the Urim and Thummim.

The Bible is the strongest written evidence available to mankind that the Book of Mormon is true. The Book of Mormon is the strongest written evidence available to mankind that the Bible is true. The Bible and the Book of Mormon, two very old scriptural records, are knit together in a manner which, in my opinion, far exceeds human capacity to fraudulently create such intertwined relationships. I believe that many other intertwined relationships are yet to be discovered. Fraud wouldn't make any sense anyway, even if it were possible. Why would someone be motivated to perpetrate a fraud which increases faith in, devotion to, and love of Jesus Christ, heaping upon himself, his family, and those who follow him nothing but severe persecution, poverty, and misery in the process?

What are some of the specific ways in which the Book of Mormon collaborates the Bible? The Book of Mormon testifies that

the Saviour is the fulfillment of the prophecy by Moses found in Deuteronomy 18:15; 18-19 (3 Ne. 20:23; 3 Ne. 21:11; 1 Ne. 22:20-21; see Acts 3:22-23). The Book of Mormon confirms that Moses indeed authored the first five books (Pentateuch) of the Old Testament (1 Ne. 5:11). The Book of Mormon is another witness of Adam and Eve and the accuracy of the creation narrative in Genesis (2 Ne. 2). The Book of Mormon corroborates the great Noahic flood as an actual event (Alma 10:22; 3 Ne. 22:9; Ether 6:7). The Book of Mormon affirms the confusion of tongues event at the Tower of Babel (Ether 1:33; Omni 1:22, Hel. 6:28). The Book of Mormon attests to the historical existence and covenant-making of the Old Testament patriarch Abraham (1 Ne. 15:18) and the high priest Melchizedek to whom Abraham paid tithes (Alma 13:14-19). The Book of Mormon substantiates the reality of Joseph of Egypt and the biblical promises given him and his posterity (1 Ne. 5:14-16; 2 Ne. 3:4-21; 2 Ne. 4:1; Alma 10:3; Alma 46:24; Ether 13:7). The Book of Mormon authenticates the existence of the Old Testament prophet Jeremiah (1 Ne. 5:13; 1 Ne. 7:14). The Book of Mormon lends powerful support to the historical existence of the Old Testament prophet Malachi and his prophecies (3 Ne. 24; 3 Ne. 25).

The Book of Mormon is a compelling witness of the Old Testament prophet Isaiah whose ancient writings were incorporated into the Book of Mormon record from a separate Old World record which was imported to the New World. Twenty one full chapters of Isaiah and portions of others were engraved into the Book of Mormon record by its prophet-authors. Quotations from the following chapters of Isaiah are found within the Book of Mormon: 2-14 (2 Ne. 12-24); 29 (2 Ne. 27); 48-49 (1 Ne. 20-21); 50-51 (2 Ne. 7-8); 52 (3 Ne. 20); 53 (Mosiah 14); 54 (3 Ne. 22); 55 (2 Ne. 26:25).

There are a total of 45 biblical characters who are verified by name in the Book of Mormon, excluding Jesus Christ who is mentioned most. Of these 45 persons, 18 are contained within the writings of Isaiah which were copied from the plates of brass record. These 18 "repeats" are Ahaz (2 Ne. 17:1); Ammon (2 Ne. 21:14); Amoz (2 Ne. 12:1); Edom (2 Ne. 21:14); Jeberechiah (2 Ne. 18:2); Jesse (2 Ne. 21:1); Jotham (2 Ne. 17:1); Maher-Shalel-Hash-Baz (2 Ne. 18:1); Moab (2 Ne. 21:14); Pekah (2 Ne. 17:1); Remaliah (2 Ne. 17:1); Rezin (2 Ne. 17:1); Sarah (2 Ne. 8:2); Shearjashub (2 Ne.

17:3); Tabael (2 Ne. 17:6); Uriah (2 Ne. 18:2); Uzziah (2 Ne. 61:1); and Zechariah (2 Ne. 18:2). This list excludes the non-mortal Lucifer who is mentioned in an Isaiah writing in the Book of Mormon (2 Ne. 24:12). Lucifer is referred to by the name of Satan in numerous non-Isaiah scriptures in the Book of Mormon (1 Ne. 13:29; Alma 8:9; Hel. 6:21; 3 Ne. 1:22; Morm. 5:18; Ether 15:19).

Of the total of 45 biblical characters who are mentioned by name in the Book of Mormon, there are multiple references to the Old Testament prophet Jeremiah (1 Ne. 5:13; 1 Ne. 7:14; Hel. 8:20) and the king of Judah in Jeremiah's day, Zedekiah (1 Ne. 1:4; 1 Ne. 5:12-13; Omni 1:15; Hel. 6:10; Hel. 8:21). There are 22 **pre-Jeremiah/Zedekiah** persons who were known by name to the second migration group – the Lehi/Nephi colony. These immigrant descendants of Joseph of Egypt knew of biblical persons through oral tradition (1 Ne. 19:22-23; Mosiah 1:3; 5) and through the partial Old Testament-like scriptural record had among them called the plates of brass. These 22 **pre-Jeremiah/Zedekiah** biblical persons whose historical existence is confirmed by the Book of Mormon are Abel (Hel. 6:27); Abraham (2 Ne. 8:2); Adam (1 Ne. 5:11); Cain (Hel. 6:27); David (2 Ne. 19:7); Elijah (3 Ne. 25:5); Ephraim (2 Ne. 19:21); Eve (1 Ne. 5:11); Isaac (1 Ne. 6:4); Isaiah (1 Ne. 15:20); Jacob or Israel (1 Ne. 5:14); Joseph (1 Ne. 5:14); Judah (2 Ne. 3:12); Levi (3 Ne. 24:3; made known through the Saviour's quoting of Malachi); Manasseh (2 Ne. 19:21); Melchizedek (Alma 13:14); Moses (1 Ne. 4:2); Nimrod (Ether 2:1); Noah (Alma 10:22); Samuel (3 Ne. 20:24); Satan (1 Ne. 13:29); and Solomon (2 Ne. 5:16).

There are 3 **post-Jeremiah/Zedekiah** biblical personalities referenced in the Book of Mormon by name. These 3 persons are Malachi, Mary, and John the Beloved. One of these persons was made known to the prophet-authors of the Book of Mormon by the resurrected Saviour during his visit to the New World, and the other two were made known by angelic revelations. The resurrected Saviour referred to Malachi (3 Ne. 24:1). Mary, the mother of Jesus (Mosiah 3:2;8) and John who is called John the Beloved or John the Revelator (1 Ne. 14:27) were made known to prophet-authors of the Book of Mormon by angels. Another **post-Jeremiah/Zedekiah** biblical personality, John the Baptist, is referenced in the Book of Mormon, but not by name (1 Ne. 10:7-10). Lehi, a prophet of

Jerusalem who came to the New World, was familiar with Old World prophecies relating to a prophet who would prepare the way for the Messiah. Lehi's son Nephi engraved this and other Old World prophecies known to his father Lehi onto the metal plates which were ultimately translated and printed as the Book of Mormon. (1 Ne. 10).

The Book of Mormon, like the Bible, is Christ-centered scripture. The Saviour is referred to in 3,925 of the 6,607 verses in the Book of Mormon.

The Book of Mormon, in a marvelous and wonderful way, will in time increase respect and appreciation for the Bible to a higher level than it has ever before enjoyed in the earth's history. The Bible sustains the Book of Mormon, and the Book of Mormon sustains the Bible. They are in harmony one with the other. They do not contradict one another. Each teaches to believe in the other. Chiasmatically speaking:

- a. God's
 - b. curse
 - c. is not against prophets
 - d. who bring forth additional scriptures, but
 - d'. rather those who reject the additional scriptures
 - c'. of the prophets
 - b'. are cursed
- a'. of God.

As Rev. Jim Veazey once wrote, "It is up to us as individuals to decide what is truth and what is falsehood." May I be so bold as to suggest that we should prayerfully read and study **both** the Bible and the Book of Mormon for ourselves before we make the decision of "what is truth and what is falsehood." I have some very valuable advice for any person who wants to make sure that he or she never understands or joins The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, and that advice is this: You must at all costs avoid prayerfully reading the Book of Mormon.

The Book of Mormon is more relevant to our life than any week-

ly periodical at the newsstand. Why? Because it was written specifically for our day by a God who knows the beginning from the end. The Book of Mormon is spiritually exciting. It is internally consistent, despite its complex, multi-author origin and occasional flash back chronology. It is filled with originality, yet remains true to the revealed doctrines of Christ. It is free of contradiction and incoherence. It is a book worth reading over and over again, for one never gets to the bottom of it. The Book of Mormon may be plain and simple, but it is not light. There are layers upon layers of undiscovered meaning. Casually reading it will not get the job done. It is more profound than any human mind that ponders it. Most importantly, it has the power to change our lives for the better. I know because it has dramatically changed mine. I encourage you to give it a fair chance. It can effect your life for the better, regardless of your present circumstances.

I have read **both** the Bible and the Book of Mormon, and the spirit has born witness to me on many occasions that the Bible and the Book of Mormon are true. Without the slightest reservation or hesitation, I am willing to stake my eternal destiny on the truthfulness of the Bible and the Book of Mormon and the one and only atoning Saviour of whom both these sacred scriptural records jointly and powerfully testify. These records jointly teach us that it is in the Saviour's name that we pray, by his atonement that we are cleansed, by his grace that we are saved after all we can do, by his example that we understand perfection, and by his resurrection that we in the flesh shall again see God. The Bible and the Book of Mormon are divine gifts, proving that Heavenly Father and his son Jesus Christ are concerned and close, and that they love and care for us.

For those with biblical backgrounds who have an interest in reading the Book of Mormon with understanding, I hope that my newspaper articles and this book have served as a good introduction to that most important personal undertaking. If you have found anything in this book to be logical, uplifting, edifying, and inspiring, then it came through the spirit and was the product of much prayer. Seek after it. If you have found anything in this book to be otherwise, it merely came from me as a mortal man. Ignore it.

I thank you for reading my book, and I thank you in advance for reading the Bible **and** the Book of Mormon.

John E. Enslen

This hymn was composed for the celebration of the 150th anniversary of the 1839 visit by LDS missionaries to Montgomery, Alabama.

♩ = 70-82

fervently and majestically

Behold, A Marvelous Work

1. Be - hold, a mar - ve - lous work has come forth A - mong the children of
 2. There - fore, if ye have de - sires to serve God Then ye are called to this
 3. Be - hold, the field is all white as ye see To reap and store with our

men. There - fore, O ye that em - bark in this work To serve our God and our
 work To bring to pass the great plan of our Lord True Saints our la - bor not
 might. And lo, come thrust in your si - cle with me, Bring forth the lat - ter day

Friend. See that ye serve Him with all your heart, Your might, your mind, your strength That be -
 light.

fore Him ye may blame - less stand, And re - joice in His pre - sence at length.

- | | |
|---|--|
| 4. For with an eye single to His great name
Qual - fy him for this great work.
With faith, hope, charity, love, pure
unfeigned,
And truth his loins are girt.
(Chorus) | 5. Thus, ask and ye shall receive of His
word
And knock, it opened shall be.
Restored to earth is the Kingdom of God,
Fulfilled, the prophets' decree.
(Chorus) |
|---|--|

About This Book

Can there any good thing come out of Wetumpka, Alabama? The answer is a resounding “yes!” For 26 consecutive weeks beginning on January 2, 1997, there appeared an accurate and informative series of newspaper articles in *The Wetumpka Herald* entitled “The Bible and the Book of Mormon – Connecting Links.” This book is an outgrowth of those articles and the public reaction which the articles engendered.

The primary purpose of this book is to increase public understanding of two ancient scriptural records – the Bible and the Book of Mormon. Each of these compilations was written by a separate set of prophet-authors. Each set of prophet-authors lived in a separate hemisphere. The prophet-authors of both hemispheres testified to the divinity of Jesus Christ.

This book gives particular attention to textually connecting links between the Bible and the Book of Mormon. These textually connecting links provide evidence of a single revelatory source for both volumes of holy writ. (All Bible references are to the King James Version.) These connecting links demonstrate that the Book of Mormon supports and fulfills Bible prophecy. Instead of being mutually exclusive contradictions, the Bible and the Book of Mormon are actually corroborative witnesses for the same divine cause – the cause of Christ.

This book may be purchased on [Amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com)

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