

Izapan Art Style

By Neil Steede © 2016

Izapa, Chiapas is one of the more interesting archaeological sites found in Mesoamerica. The site is considered to be very early and is generally accepted to be Classic Formative. It has occupation dates as early as 1500 B.C.E. (BC). Generally speaking, the more accepted dates for its influential period are from 600-150 B.C.E. (BC). This latter date happens to fit the Book of Mormon story almost perfectly. Izapan Art Style is a testimony of the Mosiah Boys (sons of Mosiah—Ammon, Aaron, Omner and Himni) and their journey into Lamanite territory. I believe that Aaron and his brothers taught the gospel at this site.

To put Izapa and its stelae into context, we must remember the Mosiah Boys' experience. Aaron and his brothers traveled from town-to-town preaching the gospel. How would they convey the stories of the written word to a culture that has no written language? We believe that the Mosiah Boys employed the use of images as "story boards" to convey the foundational concepts of the gospel. The original media was tree bark or animal skin, and later preserved on plaster codi-

ces or carved into wood. It is doubtful that they carved stone images while preaching. Moreover, within 10 to 20 years of being converted to the new gospel, the Anti-Nephi-Lehi's moved to Jerushon (Belize). Therefore, it is my opinion that the stone images found at this site were created during the Golden Age, the period of time from 50-250 AD. They were done in this style, using the same metaphoric images that Aaron and his brothers would have used when they first introduced these images.

If all of the above is true, then, all of the stelae found at Izapa date to the Golden Age, but were created as historical markers to commemorate the gospel mission of the Mosiah Boys.

It is also important to understand that the gospel as taught by the Mosiah Boys, is demonstrated fully in these stelae and are invaluable to comprehend how our ancient brethren understood the gospel. Moreover, since most archaeologists and epigraphers do not understand the unique concepts and symbolism of the Restoration gospel, they cannot reliably translate the iconography present on the stelae.

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Exploring Maya Numbers

By Frank Stribling © 2016

The Hill Cumorah Expedition Team continues to find clues supporting our theory that many Book of Mormon accounts correlate nicely with Mayan his-
Numerical sequence on Stela 5 at Takalik Abaj



tory. There is a preponderance of evidence to confirm the validity of the Book of Mormon record pertaining to Christ's mission in the Americas.

Another clue was discovered when I saw a picture of Stela 5 located in Takalik Abaj in northwest Guatemala. This reminded me of the Maya mathematical vigesimal number system based on the number of fingers and toes (20 units going from 0 to 19) instead of the 10 units (0-9) of the decimal number system that we use today. The Maya appear to have

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Izapan Art Style *continued*

There are other aspects of Izapa that are important, but will not be touched on in this series. Things such as Izapa's role in the creation of the 260-day calendar are both important and suspect. The layout of the city of Izapa is also important, but requires much more space than this article will allow. There are a myriad of such things to ponder.

This site was excavated by Garth Norman in the 1960s. Garth is from Brigham Young University (BYU) in Utah, which automatically makes his work suspicious to many in the archaeological field. I was introduced to his work by my mentor, Dr. Alexander von Wuthenau. Since that time I have had occasion to associate with Garth who has become a personal friend and valued colleague.

I have visited Izapa several times over the years and find most of Garth's conclusions impeccable. I also strongly believe that some of his conclusions do not go far enough. On the other hand, authors such as M. Wells Jakeman and John Sorenson have attempted to destroy the validity of Norman's work, though probably not intentionally. As far as I am concerned, the integrity of Garth's work could not be higher.

One of the most notable artifacts at Izapa is Stela 5, which many believe is a rendition of Lehi's dream. Some are so completely sold on the concept of Stela 5 as Lehi's dream that they can't consider any other possibility. However, it is my belief that Lehi's dream cannot be considered as a possible translation. There is no "rod of iron" by which people are being held fast to the pathway. To me, this aspect of the Lehi story is too central to be omitted from its illustration. Very few of the renditions of Stela 5 made in Salt Lake City are reliable. It suffices to say that, small changes were made to the drawing to justify the Lehi dream scenario. Simply check Norman's original publication with any other later rendition.

We can see on the Mesoamerican site map how Izapa is located on the Pacific coastline of Mexico, very close to the Guatemala border. Both Izapa and Ta-



kalik Abaj were clearly stops along the overland trade route from Central Highland Mexico to Kaminaljuyu.

Here is also an illustration of the layout of the site. I strongly doubt that the city's modern-day layout is what it was in Aaron's time. While it is feasible that the converted Lamanites could have reconstructed the earthen mound center of their city in a space of 10-15 years, it appears to me that it is more likely that the whole site was revamped during The Golden Age. And, as mentioned, I feel the same way about the stelae.

Garth Norman performed a brilliant



move by publishing the stelae in a variety of ways. He has published very good photography, line drawings and photos with line drawings superimposed upon them. All of this promotes very detailed study of the many metaphoric images found here. Basically, Norman uses three styles in his depictions. They are: nighttime photography, nighttime photography with line drawing superimposed and line drawing. All of these are very helpful in deciphering the stelae. There is a fourth line drawing style that has been introduced during the last several years. It is where the line drawings have been colored. These portrayals are not helpful in that color was not apparent on the original stones. I personally do not care for the colored ones.

The Izapan art style is very unique, and a study of the evolution of Mesoamerican art styles indicate that this early art formative period in Izapa, Takalik Abaj, and Kaminaljuyu, was influential in the San Bartolo Mural art style. How did that happen? Archaeologists are at a loss for making this connection, but it is the Book of Mormon that answers it for us. The newly converted Lamanites moved into the Maya Lowlands for their own safety. They were being protected by the Nephites since the Lamanites could not use their weapons for defense. When they moved, they brought their art style with them. Isn't it amazing how the puzzle pieces fit together?

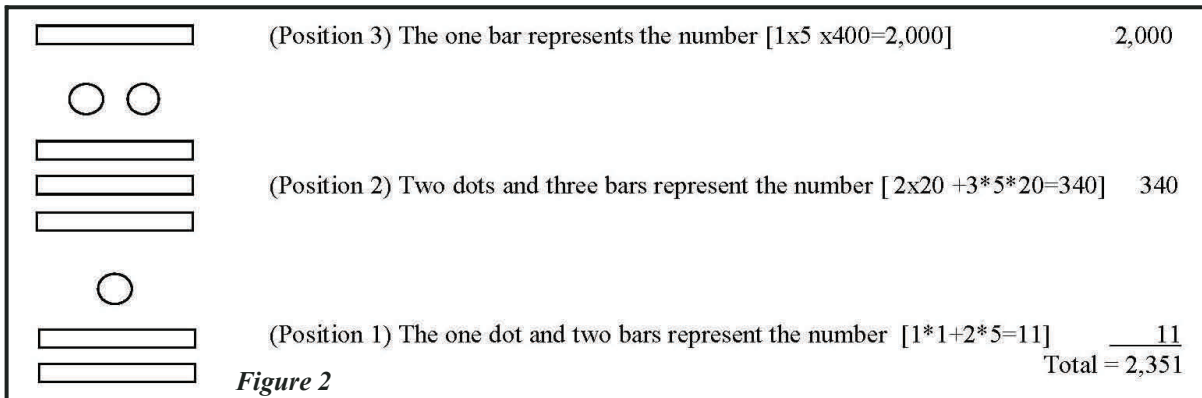
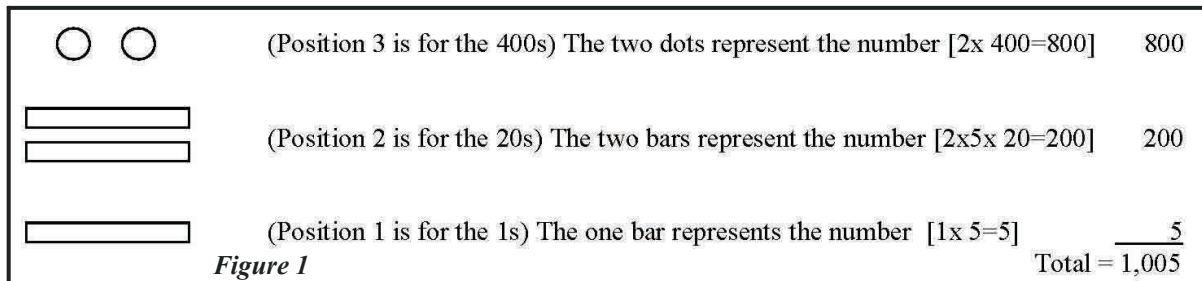
Look for more information about specific Izapan stelae in future issues of the Cumorah Messenger—more light and truth is coming forth.

THE FOUR STYLES OF IZAPAN STELA PRESENTATION



THE FIRST THREE WERE PRESENT IN NORMAN'S FIRST STUDY, THE COLORIZED VERSIONS APPEARED LATER.

Exploring Maya Numbers *continued*



the Book of Mormon record is that the number of converts was greater than 1,005. The information in Figure 2 does not prove or disprove anything. However, when we consider the context of this stela, it supports our idea that the Stela 5 numerical information seems to support the events recorded in the Book of Mormon.

utilized a number positioning system when recording the historical event on Stela 5. This system stacks numbers one on top of the other.

The numerical sequence shown in Figure 1 is found in the second column on Stela 5. Figure 1 illustrates the stacking with the lowest value placed at the bottom and as you move upward each layer factors by an additional 20. Each dot has a value of one (1) while each bar has a value of five (5).

An account given in the Book of Mormon in Alma Chapter 14 tells us there were converts to the gospel known as the Anti-Nephi-Lehi, and they refused to take up arms against their brethren the Lamanites. Their determination to faithfully hold to the terms of their conversion resulted in them being killed by an invading army instead of risking the loss of their salvation. 1,005 of the converts who had made a vow to never again use their weapons to kill, allowed themselves to be killed. When many of the attacking Lamanites saw the murders they had committed, they threw down their weapons and would not use them again. We read in the Book of Mormon that there were more attackers who repented and were converted to the church than the number of those who were killed.

On the immediate left of the dots and bars representing the number 1,005 on Stela 5, there is another set of dots and bars that represent the number 2,351. Could this number represent those who had repented? All we know for sure from

Line drawing of Stela 5 at Takalik Abaj



Could the number 2,351 being greater than the number 1,005 refer to those who repented after being engaged in such a horrible slaughter of people who were willing to give up their lives rather than slay their brethren?

We still have a lot of research to do on this stela and other architectural structures at Takalik Abaj. But, to find these two numbers next to one another and flanked by opposing figures is certainly compelling. These figures are both repentant with “reversed hands,” they demonstrate that they are receiving blessing from the celestial realm, and the dot on the nose indicates their speech concerns the fruits of the spirit. The figure on the left who we assume to represent the attackers has “X”s on his legs as an indication of sanctification—by their repentance, they are sanctified—their sin will not be counted against them. Additionally, Takalik Abaj is in the right area and of the right sub-culture to be a city of Lamanites who were converted by Ammon and Aaron prior to their migration to Jerushon.

I asked myself if there was anywhere else I could find as a link or relationship that would support a hypothesis of Book of Mormon numbers being re-

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Exploring Maya Numbers *Continued*

lated to the Maya numbering system? To establish a comparative base, I discovered some clues in Alma Chapter 8. Using the relationships in the table displayed in figure 3, I proceeded to investigate by looking for a pattern where I could find Book of Mormon money value ratios similar to the Maya system.

The Book of Mormon states that until the reign of the Judges the following system of "reckoning" or exchange system was not established. Up until that time "they altered their reckoning and their measure, according to the minds and the circumstances of the people." Taking the information given

strated in Figure 5. The ratios developed from Book of Mormon information produce the following relationships:

For gold we have:
 $D = A + B + C$ or $D = A + 2A + 4A$
 providing the numerical pattern of 1, 2, and 4.

For silver we have:
 $Z = W + X + Y$ or $Z = W + 2W + 4W$
 providing the numerical pattern of 1, 2 and 4.

While we have yet to make a clear correlation of money exchange patterns with items found in Mesoamerica, we are confident that it will be found.

enough to have a sophisticated monetary system. We know that this ratio of monetary values will be found, it is just a matter of where and when.

This is what we do! We gather information from articles, journal submissions, conference white papers, archaeological discussion boards, and so on. We visit museums, take thousands of pictures, talk to people, travel, etc. We are detectives gathering evidence to proclaim the validity of the Restoration gospel and the events recorded in the Book of Mormon. We begin with faith. As we travel along this endless path, faith turns to knowledge which requires and compels us to ask more questions and exercise even more faith.

Alma 16:163 *"And now behold, after ye have tasted this light, is your knowledge perfect? Behold, I say unto you, Nay; neither must ye lay aside your faith, for ye have only exercised your faith to plant the seed, that ye might try the experiment, to know if the seed was good."*

Alma 16:169 *"And thus it is if ye will not nourish the word, looking forward with an eye of faith to the fruit thereof, ye can never pluck of the fruit of the tree of life. [170] But if ye will nourish the word, yea, nourish the tree as it beginneth to grow, by your faith with great diligence, and with patience, looking forward to the fruit thereof, it shall take root; and behold, it shall be a tree springing up unto everlasting life;"*

This is the faith we choose to demonstrate in these latter-days, that when we make every reasonable effort to uncover the testimonies of our ancient brothers and sisters, then we will be rewarded with confirmation of their written testimony; and even greater knowledge will be revealed. As more pieces of the puzzle are gathered, the world will discover that the Book of Mormon is for all people and it relates a true testimony of a risen Jesus Christ who appeared to the ancient people of America.

Position	Standard Decimal Number System	Maya Vigesimal Number System
1	1s	1s
2	10s [1x10]	20s [1x20]
3	100s [10x10]	400s [20x20]
4	1,000s [100x10]	8,000s [400x20]

Gold Units	Silver Units	Silver Units Lesser for reckoning
A = senine	W = senum	E = shiblon
B = seon	X = amnor	F = shiblum
C = shum	Y = ezrom	H = Leah
D = limnah	Z = onti	
J = antion		

in Alma Chapter 8, I categorized the monetary ratios as shown in Figure 4.

From those same passages in the Book of Mormon we have the monetary value relationships further demon-

strated in Figure 5. The more pieces that are gathered the more focused the picture becomes. We have a clue here that when the reign of the Judges commenced that the society was developed

A (gold senine)	= W (silver senum)
A (gold senine)	= Measure of barley, or a measure of any kind of grain
A (gold senine)	= Judge's wages for a day
A (gold senine)	= 1 W (silver senum) <i>Note: gold to silver relationship established here</i>
1 B (gold seon)	= 2 A (gold senines)
1 C (gold shum)	= 2 B (gold seons)
1 D (gold limnah)	= 1 A (gold senine) + 1 B (gold seon) + 1 C (gold shum)
1 J (gold antion)	3 E (shiblons) = 1/2 measure of barley
1 X (silver amnor)	= 2 W (silver senums)
1 Y (silver ezrom)	= 4 W (silver senums)
1 Z (silver onti)	= 1 W (silver senum) + 1 X (silver amnor) + 1 Y (silver ezrom)
1 W (silver senum)	= 2 E (silver shiblons) = 1/2 measure of barley
1 E (silver shiblon)	= 2 F (silver shiblums)
1 F (shiblum)	= 2 H (silver leahs)

Figure 5

Adventures In Scriptures

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The Church Prospers

The people of the church believed that God was their leader. They were all of equal worth in His eyes. They believed that God was generous, merciful, loving and forgiving. Because they felt the love of God in their hearts, they treated each other with kindness and took care of each other.

The priests and teachers and people would leave their labors and learn of God's ways. The people learned that the things of this world are temporary or, in other words, would not last forever. They learned that what was important and eternal was the love of God for everyone. The people did not set their hearts on riches but shared out of their abundance. There were no poor or needy among them. The sick and suffering were comforted and cared for. The people worked together and had love for one another and were blessed with an abundance of all things. The promise found in Luke 6:38 was fulfilled in them: Give and it shall be given unto you, good measure, pressed down, shaken together, and running over...

Sharing your abundance

Some times we have more than we need and other times we need something.

Mary, John, David and Sarah each have extra of some foods and none of other foods.

Mary	0 - bread 4 - meat 3 - corn 1 - fruit	John	4 - bread 0 - meat 2 - corn 8 - fruit
David	7 - bread 6 - meat 0 - corn 4 - fruit	Sarah	3 - bread 1 - meat 5 - corn 0 - fruit

Write down who could share bread with Mary and how much

Write down who could share meat with John and how much

Write down who could share corn with David and how much

Write down who could share fruit with Sarah and how much

Solve the scripture puzzle using the crosses below.

4 = T 2 = V 3 = U 10 = H 14 = B

9 = i 13 = D

11 = G 12 = E

7 = N 8 = L

6 = O 5 = S 1 = Y 15 = A

11 9 2 12 15 7 13

9 4 5 10 15 8 8 14 12

11 9 2 12 7 3 7 4 6

1 6 3 Luke 6:38

Y	W	L	C	F	W	O	Y	E	K	C	I	B	L	N
G	I	T	F	O	K	L	S	H	A	R	E	D	U	F
C	G	J	L	R	F	P	E	S	L	L	E	M	F	T
K	D	L	N	G	J	Z	E	A	I	C	B	R	I	Z
U	S	T	O	I	V	H	A	E	R	Z	A	G	C	Y
C	N	S	C	V	C	H	V	W	V	N	G	R	R	U
P	O	Q	E	I	U	E	S	U	O	R	E	N	E	G
R	S	M	R	N	D	O	H	K	E	J	K	D	M	D
O	G	M	F	G	D	C	V	H	S	T	R	A	E	H
M	M	N	D	O	H	N	T	B	L	E	S	S	E	D
I	H	T	I	U	R	E	I	U	F	L	M	B	O	E
S	V	L	R	V	G	T	J	K	A	P	T	S	S	U
E	G	C	Z	O	O	A	E	T	Y	O	H	Z	K	Q
L	H	A	T	B	U	L	C	D	B	E	K	N	Y	P
A	B	U	N	D	A	N	C	E	P	P	R	O	X	L

Word search

Find and circle the Caring words from the story:

- Abundance Believed
- Blessed Cared
- Church Comforted
- Forgiving Generous
- Hearts Kindness
- Learned Loving
- Merciful People
- Promise Riches
- Shared Together

My Personal Testimony *By Elrey Goheen*

I grew up on a farm in Michigan. My family was very poor. We rented and took care of the livestock. Most of the people in those days was very poor also. We had a large family of eight kids, our mother stayed at home and our father worked when there was work available. It was difficult keeping eight kids fed and clothed.

When I was about fifteen, I decided that I needed to find employment to help pay for my clothes and food while going to school. Fortunately I found a job with the brother of the owner of our house and land. I worked on his dairy farm while going to school. I caught the early school bus in front of his house every morning.

I had recently become a member of the RLDS (now Community of Christ). I wanted to know about the Book of Mormon so I decided to read it all the way through. Each night after chores I read a few chapters until I had read the entire book. God's spirit was with me and assured me that the book was true. This has been my stability in life, and from that time on in my endeavor to serve Him. Indeed I found He was available to me in times that I needed Him, He was always there. I have had many testimonies of God working in my life, many times seeming to go ahead of me preparing and smoothing the way for me.

I left Michigan in 1962, married a girl from Arizona and was married for

five years and divorced. God helped me pick out my next mate. I prayed to God and said I had given up hope on finding someone for me. He answered my prayer and I married a lady with three daughters. We will be married forty-seven years in August.

Throughout my life I have felt God leading my life to something, but I didn't know what that was.

During our marriage Dorothy and I moved to Independence, MO. I met and became friends with Neil Steede. During one of our conversations he asked if I wanted to be involved with his archaeological group. I have gone with several of the members to Hill Cumorah in 2001 and 2003. In March of 2013, Neil asked if I wanted to go to Teotihuacán with him and three others, so I decided to go.

We flew into Mexico City, met with Edd DeTray and his daughter, we then got a taxi to take us to our site where we stayed in a motel where we could see the pyramids.

That night Terry Scott, Neil Steede, Gary Woods and I had our evening devotions as we do each evening. The next day Sergio, the archeologist in charge of the tunnel was to come and talk with us. We waited all day but he never showed up. He said he would be there the next day. That evening we had our devotions once again. I asked Neil if I could visit the pyramids and spend some time learning about them. Terry said he would go with me.

The next morning at breakfast, I was touched by the Holy Spirit, assuring me that this site was indeed holy. I was so overwhelmed by the Spirit that I couldn't eat, tears filled my eyes. I was not hungry all that day and ate very little.

Terry and I set out early that morning after breakfast, it was so awesome to realize that indeed our ancestors lived and worshipped here. I had a lot of questions and Terry answered them all. We spent about six or seven hours walking from place to place. We climbed to the top of the pyramids, visited different buildings and did a lot of talking to each other.

When we arrived back, Neil, Gary and Sergio were winding up their meeting. Later that day I asked Neil if I could relate my testimony to the group at our evening devotions. That evening I bore my testimony I had experienced about the site. Each one there had their own experience to relate to the group.

The Lord is working to bring to us His will and as we experience these things we testify that He is working to bring to us a better life, a life of love and peace with us and with each other.

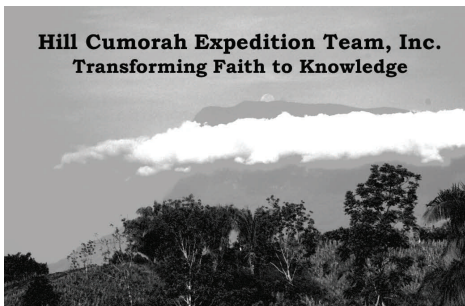
I cherish the time spent at the Teotihuacán site and the Holy Spirit that witnessed to me. My prayer is that I shall always be ready and willing to bear my testimony.

New Home for HCETI Library *By David B. Brown*

Last year the Hill Cumorah Expedition Team, Inc received notice that we will be receiving the Neil Steede Library of archaeological research materials. This is a wonderful opportunity we have to create a research library for the specific purpose of furthering the effort to draw parallels between the Book of Mormon record and the cultures of ancient America.

For the last year and a half we have been searching for a location to house this library. Thanks to the generosity of Restoration families, it appears that we

will be fulfilling this dream with a brick-and-mortar location on East Truman Road. As the fall months progress we will be setting up the office for library



operations with the file cabinets, shelving, conference tables and other miscellaneous items we have received in donation from dedicated saints.

Do you have a talent that you would like to put to use in library operation and research? There are so many theories that we need to research and further. Continue to watch for future articles concerning the call to labor for this very important expression of latter-day faith. We will be needing researchers to complete the task set in motion by Mormon and Moroni.

**We're on the web at
www.hceti.org**

The Hill Cumorah Expedition Team, Inc is a Missouri not-for-profit corporation dedicated to the study, research and dissemination of information as it pertains to the Book of Mormon. Our primary focus is to research and assemble archaeological and other related information to help establish the historical feasibility of the Book of Mormon.

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Early Mayan Art Styles By David B. Brown © 2016

The Pinturas pyramid at San Bartolo houses the earliest known Mayan murals in Mesoamerica. Radiocarbon and art style dating clearly places this mural construction at a period from 100 BCE to 100 AD. This is exactly the time frame of the gospel missions to the Lamanites by the Mosiah Boys and Alma.

Archaeologists have been studying the art styles, images and symbols found at this site and they have made some very interesting observations. The bulk of the art styles found here are closely related to murals found at Uaxactun and Tikal, but the mural style itself is prolifically used at Izapa, Takalik Abaj and Kaminaljuyu. We have identified these cities as three of the cities converted by the Mosiah Boys.

Metaphoric images from this southern Mayan region are also found at San Bartolo in the use of the conch shell, serpents, and breath scrolls. Professionals note that the earliest blend of these three symbols occurs on Stela 9 at Kaminaljuyu at about 500 BCE.

We have identified Kaminaljuyu as the City of Lehi-Nephi—the original settle-

ment of the Lehi Expedition at approximately 590 BCE. To find the first introduction of this Mayan symbolism at this site seems to be a validation.

We know that Lehi was a practicing minister who had prophesied to the inhabitants of Jerusalem concerning their impending destruction. The rejection of Lehi's message led to their exodus from the region and their relocation to the Americas.

Lehi and his family were practicing the Hebrew faith which always included the observation of Feasts. One feast of primary importance is the Feast of Trumpets which is a call to repentance for all of Israel.

The conch shell is considered to be a trumpet for the people of Southeast Asia and South Pacific Islands. It represents strength and truthful speech. Is it possible that the Lehi Expedition adopted the conch shell symbol as a replacement for the shofar trumpet traditionally used by Hebrews? If so, then the use of the conch shell symbol is calling its listeners to a

truthful assessment of their life and then followed by repentance.

How does the serpent factor into this? When the Hebrews were bitten by the fiery flying serpents, Moses raised a serpent on a rod and those who looked upon the serpent were healed and would live. Therefore, a serpent not bound to the ground is a symbol for life and healing.

Now, blend these images together. A feathered serpent speaking with breath scrolls in the shape of a conch shell might represent a life-giving being speaking truth and a warning for repentance. A conch shell with a feathered serpent emerging from it might be true speech about a life-saving and healing being.

The development of these religious images that parallel Hebraic practices and theology from the region where Lehi first settled and at the right time period seems more than coincidence. While there will certainly be more to research needed to flesh out this theory, it appears that we are onto something.