

# Winged Warriors at Ek Balam

By Joanie Glandon © 2018

*On the ground in the Yucatan with the Hill Cumorah Expedition Team 2015.*

Was it really going to rain? I stood under the wooden awning of the ticket booth at Kabah, praying that the sky would clear. In answer to my prayer the scattered drops soon became a steady rain that showed no signs of stopping.

It was June of 2015 and the Hill Cumorah Expedition Team was in Mexico gathering information on sites in the Yucatan peninsula. We had spent the majority of the day at Uxmal and planned to see Kabah (eleven or twelve miles southeast of Uxmal) in the afternoon.

A hurricane/tropical system was moving along the west coast of Mexico, and rain had been predicted in the

Yucatan for the entire time we planned to be there. Most days we had seen clouds on the horizon; at times it had rained all around us, but whenever we were outside the sky had cleared overhead, beginning with a rainbow that appeared the first day we arrived at our motel. It had not rained on us at all...till now.

Other team members stood silently in small clusters under any shelter they could find. I knew they were praying, also. When we realized that the rain had settled in for the afternoon we decided to go

back to the motel and try Kabah again the next morning. After we finished seeing Kabah we planned to find and explore a local cave that was reported to have evidences of Maya presence.

The next morning was misty and even rainy at times, but we were still able to see Kabah and climb the stone stairways to look at the structures and get pictures. We saw the sacbe (Maya "white road") connecting Kabah and Uxmal, as well as the arch at the beginning of the sacbe.

I had been to Kabah thirty years previously and remembered both the sacbe and the Codz Pop, or Palace of the Masks, which is covered with rows of images of a divinity. Some archaeologists consider the images to represent Itzamnah, the creator god, and others consid-

*Continued on Page 2*



# The Light Is Changing

By Neil Steede (edited by David B. Brown) © 2018

About 20 years ago, I experienced a very vivid dream while visiting near the Hill Cumorah in Jalapa de Diaz. In my dream I saw a very large valley that extended for miles until the terrain rose and met with the distant mountains. The geography of the valley was littered with several small hills. Upon closer examination, I realized that the mounds in the valley were not hills, they were stacks and stacks of books, all sitting spine-down, face-up and open. The books varied in size and color. The pages of the books were a variety of colors as were also the fonts printed in the books. There were red pages with

the font printed in green; there were yellow pages with font printed in purple and so on. The day was overcast, however as it got closer to noon, the sun began to burn off the cloud cover and beams of light began to penetrate. With the added light, the colors became more vivid. And, as the beams of light began to hit the pages of the books, I saw a remarkable transformation take place. The red pages with font written in green became green pages with font written in red. The yellow pages became purple with the purple font changing to yellow. It happened as the direct sunlight hit all of the books. All colors were pre-

sent; blues, yellows, oranges, purples, pinks, reds—colors without end. What I understood from this experience is that at the present there are countless records with understandings that are dim and cloudy, but there will come a day when the records will be fully brought to into the light and the light will complete-

*Continued on Page 4*

### Inside This Issue

Winged Warriors <i>Cont.</i>	2 - 3
The Light Is Changing <i>Cont.</i>	4
Adventures in Archaeology	5 & 6
A New Path	7 & 8

# Winged Warriors at Ek Balam *continued*

er the images to be Chac, the god of rain...whoever he was, he was certainly making his presence felt.



*A wall of Chac god images at Kabah.*



*Terry Scott at Kabah.*

There were very few other visitors at Kabah that morning, and as the team gathered to leave, we struck up a casual conversation with a man and his wife who had arrived to see the ruins. The man was an archaeological excavator and familiar with the sites in the area. He knew of the cave and said it really was not very interesting, but he did recommend a site that had been developed for tourists relatively recently.

The name of the site was Ek Balam, and the man said we could see “winged warriors” there. None of us had heard of Ek Balam, but I could see everyone’s antennae rising at the mention of winged warriors. Not being a huge fan of spelunking, I thought Ek Balam pre-

sented a great alternative to exploring the cave. The team members consulted and decided...we were off to Ek Balam.

Ek Balam is situated in a beautiful area surrounded by jungle. We made our way through the site, seeing the arched gateway, the inner walls of the city, an oval pyramid and a ball court, and eventually arriving at the Acropolis. It was the largest pyramid on the site



*Pathway to Ek Balam.*



*Sacbe entrance to Ek Balam.*



*Ballcourt at Ek Balam.*



*Acropolis at Ek Balam.*

and contained a tomb guarded by the winged warriors.

The tomb and its elaborate stucco decorations were protected from the rain and sun by huge thatched awnings which also blocked the structure from sight until I had climbed halfway up the pyramid and stepped onto the walkway in front of them. The entire tomb area was amazingly beautiful, with complex



*Mouth entrance to tomb at Ek Balam.*



*Joanie Glandon at tomb entrance.*

artwork suggesting layers of symbolic imagery.

The entrance to the tomb was shaped like a huge mouth lined with teeth, like a jaguar or earth monster mouth...possibly portraying an entrance to the underworld or spiritual realm. The winged warriors, with sacred crosses on their belts, presided over the tomb. The artistic style of the stucco sculptures reminded me of Asian/Indian art, some having mudra-like hand gestures.

*Continued on Page 3*



## Winged Warriors at Ek Balam *continued*



*Ek Balam Winged Warriors.*



*A figure of a celestial Deity stepping into the terrestrial realm.*



One section of the painted images seemed very Egyptian in style. So much to see...I just wanted to stay and look at the details of the artwork, but we had to go. At least I could take pictures to help recall the images and analyze their meanings.

During the following week, as the team discussed our trip experiences, we all recognized that God had moved for our benefit. It was not lost to me that while at Kabah, the Creator God, the God of Rain, demonstrated His power and presence when He caused the rain to continue. Because the rain continued the afternoon we visited Kabah, we returned the next morning and met the excavator who directed us to Ek Balam.

God reminded me that when Jesus hung on the cross His followers and friends did not understand what was happening, but God was moving to put

a better plan in place. When God answers my prayers with a rain storm I can be encouraged and trust that He is moving to put a better plan in place.



*Egyptian images on the tomb doorway.*

## The Light Is Changing *Continued*

ly change our comprehension of what is written. A brighter light bringing greater understanding will come forth and shine upon the ancient records of the past. This brighter light will reveal errors in our perception that will reverse many of our dim notions we hold as truths. These “notions as truth” are merely our mortal attempt to comprehend eternal concepts through experiences we have in the temporal and profane world. But many are in error and need correction. They must be corrected when we receive the greater light shone directly from the celestial realm.

Over the years, the Hill Cumorah Expedition Team and I have experienced this “new light” on several occasions. Every time we travel on a research trip with specific goals of what we expect to find, we return with understandings so different from how we began that it can’t be boiled down to just one concept or a few sentences. Almost without exception, the formerly held concept has exploded because it was far too narrow. With the new understandings we have received through the years, we understand how huge the impact of the gospel was to our ancient brothers and sisters of the Book of Mormon. We understand that when we gaze upon the ruins of the Mayan temples and their artwork, we are literally looking at the handywork of the Golden Age people who loved their Risen Savior so much that they memorialized their testimony of him in stone that it might speak to us today. They dedicated their lives to erecting these testimonies for you! They saw you and their heart went out to you. Because of their love for Jesus who revealed to them celestial understandings, they erected these temples of light on foundations of love to call latter-day Israel home to its Creator and to gather together at His temple for the feast to receive the Bridegroom. At the moment, the world is perceiving these testimonies in the dimness of human understanding, but there is a light coming that will change everything.

In May of this year, while I was recovering from a broken femur bone, I had a series of experiences that has opened my understanding to what needs to happen next. It is time to dig at Cumorah. It is time for this greater light to be shone over the ancient records that we might be able to correct our dim

notions and witness the transformation that greater light can have on this tumultuous world.

Digging at Cumorah South is not an easy task, but it has been one that is 40 -years in the making. Additional understandings have been provided through the years that has prepared us to receive this added light, and very important relationships have been fostered and strengthened through the years. One of those relationships is with Dr. Alejandro Sarabia who has just completed 25-plus years’ experience as Mexico’s lead archaeologist at its premier ancient site—Teotihuacán. He is presently assisting us in our endeavor. In early 2019, David Brown and I will be traveling to Mexico to meet Dr. Sarabia and begin assessing the perspective dig site. He will assist us in developing the scope of work, the submission of proposals, and then directing the project as lead archaeologist. At this time, we have collected \$22,000 in donations for what we expect will be at least a need of \$100,000 to begin the project. This funding will include salaries for professionals such as Dr. Sarabia, laborers for the dig, security for the site and the artifacts found, and calls to other professionals to process the artifacts.

Because the anticipated find materials will be written records, we are drafting plans on how to receive, process, record and report the findings. This is where the Mexican Epigraphic Society (MES) comes into play. The records will be written in ancient script. And, not just one language. We already have indications from the Book of Mormon that there are Egyptian, Reformed Egyptian, Hebrew, Reformed (altered) Hebrew, and most likely others. This will take coordination and cooperation throughout multiple disciplines in archaeology and epigraphy. Most importantly, it will need to be peer-reviewed multiple times before a final translation is released so that the work performed is above reproach. The Mexican Epigraphic Society will play the role of coordinating the epigraphic oversight of the project.

Why are we planning to engage secular professionals for translating sacred records? Because it is time. God is the Creator of all life and all

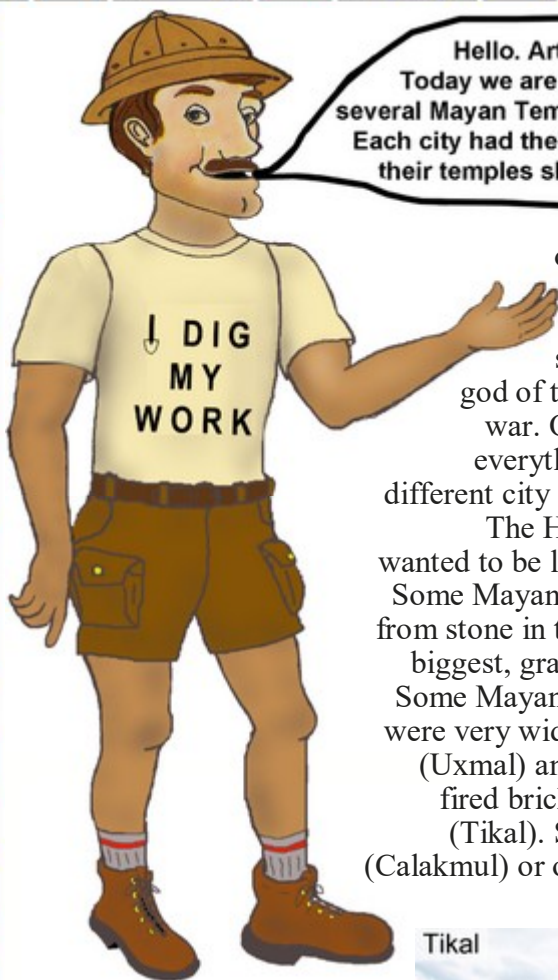
sciences. For too long, man has used science to justify being at odds with God and His creation. Now is the time, through scientific processes, to demonstrate that a belief in God and service to Him is not at odds with reason and science. In fact, one perspective actually encourages and validates the other.

Understand, the records buried at the Cumorah battle site are not the “sealed portion” of the abridgement Joseph Smith Jr. used to translate the Book of Mormon. That is for another time and another prophet to reveal. These records are the library Mormon used to create his abridgment. We anticipate there will be at least 30 or more ancient manuscripts to translate. This is a record storage of unimaginable size. Perhaps not in volume, but certainly in comprehension of ancient cultures.

Imagine, the top archaeologists of our day, sitting in conference with the top epigraphers of our day, all of them pouring over these ancient texts and discovering one remarkable find after another. How the Western Hemisphere has always been in contact and connected to the Old World in transoceanic travel over both the Atlantic and Pacific. How the anticipation of a Messiah was experienced in both the Old and New World. How the Three Kings (Wisemen) were from the New World. How ancient scripts from the Middle East were actually the root of the Mayan Classical writing system. On and on will be the discoveries and the validation of the faith document called the Book of Mormon will be shouted from the housetops around the world. Through these scientific processes, God will “make bare His holy arm” and reveal how He has been working with all of humanity throughout all of known time.

We live in exciting times. Light will begin to burn away the clouds that dim our understanding. While the profane world squabbles over issues that captivate political powers and the media, God is working behind the scenes with His remnant people to further His strange and marvelous work to bring His kingdom into fruition; Zion manifested on Earth. God is preparing to bring His Creation into greater light, completely change our perspective, correct the errors of our understanding and bring forth in us a new creation as the brilliance of His light increases.





Hello. Arty here again.  
Today we are going to look at  
several Mayan Temples built for worship.  
Each city had their own ideas on what  
their temples should look like.

## Mayan Temples

To the Maya, religion was part of their culture. They built huge pyramids to their God or gods depending on whether they believed in one God or many. Throughout history, around the world, some cultures have believed in many gods, such as the god of the sky, god of agriculture, god of the sea or the god of war. Other people have believed in only one God, creator of everything. The Maya, as we believe, were made up of many different city states. Some believed on one god, others several gods. The Hebrews in the Bible, believed in one God, but at times wanted to be like their neighbors and started worshiping many gods. Some Mayan cities worshiped several gods and placed idols carved from stone in their temples. Each city tried to make their temples the biggest, grandest buildings they could to honor their God or gods. Some Mayan temples were very tall and steep (Tikal), while others were very wide and low (Teotihuacan). Some built rounded temples (Uxmal) and one city (Comalcalco) even built their temple out of fired brick. Most of these large temples rose above the tree tops (Tikal). Some were so large we have only uncovered their tops (Tikal). Some were so large we have only uncovered their tops (Calakmul) or one side (Tonina). If you were going to build a temple to honor God what would your temple look like?

Teotihuacan



Tikal



Tikal



Calakmul



Uxmal



Tonina

Chichen Itza



Coba



Comalcalco



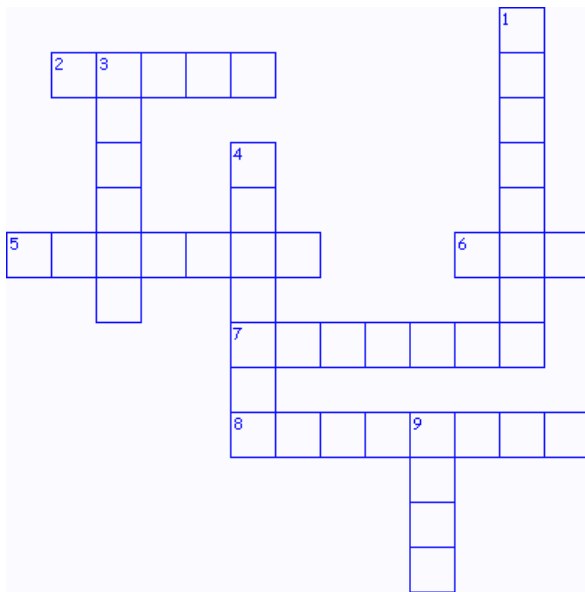


# WORD SEARCH

Find and circle the words from the story:

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

- Bible
- Biggest
- Culture
- God
- Grandest
- Hebrews
- Idols
- Large
- Maya
- Pyramids
- Steep
- Stone
- Tall
- Temple
- Treetops
- Wide



Solve the Crossword puzzle using information from the story.

**Across**

- 2. Hard Rock
- 5. How People Live
- 6. Creator Being
- 7. Bible People
- 8. Stone Temples

**Down**

- 1. High in Forest
- 3. Place to Worship
- 4. Activity in a Temple
- 9. Central American People

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  - [http://research.history.org/Archaeological\\_Research/KidsPage.cfm](http://research.history.org/Archaeological_Research/KidsPage.cfm)
  - <http://ngm.nationalgeographic.com/2007/08/maya-rise-fall/map-interactive>
  - <http://www.digonsite.com/drdig/mesoamerica/15.html>
  - <http://www.smm.org/sln/ma/index.html>
  - <http://archaeology.la.asu.edu/teo/>
- For questions e-mail me at [tscott75@sbcglobal.net](mailto:tscott75@sbcglobal.net)

## A New Path *By Tim Brown*

In September of this year, seven members of the Hill Cumorah Expedition Team embarked on another trip to Mexico. The purpose was two-fold: First, to deliver a trailer packed with used clothing to five different communities in central Mexico; and second, was to strengthen the bonds of friendship developed from prior years. The plan was the same as previous clothing trips. The driving team would leave on Wednesday. The flying team leaves Thursday while the driving team crosses the border and heads south. Thursday night both teams meet in Puebla, Mexico to spend the night and drive the next day to Tuxtepec. For the next several days the team delivers clothes and



*The Fall Expedition group for HCETI. From left to right: Mike Brown, Joanie Glandon, Carol Brown, Tim Brown, Barbie Jones, Jim Jones and Ron Kuhn.*

then turns to north to head back to the States. Those were our plans; apparently God was working from a different script.

Wednesday's drive was uneventful. There was a wonderful thunder storm on the way to Laredo, Texas where we spent the night and prepared to cross the border the next day. Thursday morning we had prayer at the car before we left the motel. I mentioned in my prayer, "Thank you for the challenges of the day." Where did that come from? We crossed the international bridge around 5 AM and proceeded to the inspection area for immigration. We opened the trailer and showed the inspector the paperwork we had from Jalapa De Diaz DIF (social services) requesting the used clothing.

The inspector went to her supervisor. The supervisor came over, looked in the trailer, checked our paperwork, and said, "No, you cannot bring used clothing into Mexico. It is forbidden. You can only bring new clothing." It didn't matter that we had done it for the last 14 years. Anyway, all the pleading and begging and crying (Carol and Joanie, just kidding) didn't change anything. She did tell us we could contact DIF in Mexico City and try to arrange something with them, but that would take two or three days. We had no inside contacts with the government officials in Mexico City and besides, two or three days could be two or three weeks, months or most likely NEVER.

We went back across the bridge to the US and decided to find another place to cross. The closest border station was Rome, Texas. Unfortunately, it appeared the word had been passed down the line from Laredo. It didn't take long and we were denied for the second time. Back we went to the US determined to try one more time. Rio Grande City seemed a likely spot (not to mention it was next in line). It is a small crossing. It is only open from 8 AM to 6 PM and no high-volume traffic, so no lines. This was our last attempt and Joanie had been praying for guidance. We pulled up to the toll booth on the US side (you have to pay a toll to cross the border on both sides) and we mentioned our plight to the gentleman in the booth. Since there were no lines, we were able to share information. He wished us luck, but said if for some reason we can't get the clothes across he had a pastor friend who has an orphanage just across the border in Mexico. They could use the clothes. He provided us with the pastor's information and directions to his church.

Armed with new options across we went. After about 45 minutes it was

determined that no, we could not enter with the clothes. There seemed to be a message here. They sent us back to the US. We tried another contact provided us by the officials in Mexico, but to no avail.

We were extremely disappointed; it was becoming painfully obvious that we would have no clothes for our friends in Jalapa. How can we make all these plans, spend a year collecting children's clothes, drive all this way only to "dump" the clothes? Was it all for nothing? God had a greater blessing for us as we were about to find out.

We followed the lead provided by the border agent and found the pastor's church in Rio Grande City. In the process of unloading, the pastor and several ladies came to help. The clothing was now passed off into another's care. Amazingly for the same purpose we had originally intended just not the same children. Apparently, they had a greater need. God was directing the clothes where He wanted them to go.



*Tim and Carol Brown with Pastor Padre who supplies clothing for Mexican orphanages.*

The pastor thanked us for providing for the children. I asked him if he would pray for us. As we joined hands and he started to pray, the Holy Spirit descended in all of its power and love. After the "amen", we were all wiping the tears away as we said goodbye.

We crossed the bridge at Rio Grande City and went to get our visas and permit for the car and trailer. After

*Continued on Page 8*

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## A New Path *Continued*

another 1 ½ hours (more problems, but that's another story) we were finally on our way only find the pastor pulled off on the side of the road waiting for us to make sure we were safely across. He then helped us exchange our dollars for pesos. He then showed us a short-cut to the auto-pista (toll road). By 3:30 PM we were finally heading south to Puebla with a mostly empty trailer. There were still a few things we were able to salvage from our load; several pairs of crutches, a few bags of stuffed animals and toys and soccer balls along with some backpacks and pencils. We always take some snacks and fruit drinks to share with the children. This was all we had to share with our friends.

We joined the rest of the team at Puebla in the early morning hours on Friday. We slept for a few hours then drove to Tuxtepec. The team arrived at the hotel Friday afternoon. Over the next two days we visited our friends in the various villages around the hill and told them the bad news. We explained

the situation that their government would not let us help them. The reaction was the same everywhere we went. As nice as it would have been to have the clothes, they were genuinely excit-



*Our expedition team with our long-time friends in Jalapa de Diaz.*

ed to see us. We laughed together, shared photo albums, played with the children, took polaroid pictures, raced the kids down the street, shared what we had, shared meals together and cried when we said goodbye. It was God's way of telling us the sacrifices

we've made in the past have changed lives; our Southern friends and our own. The clothes were only a tool to develop those relationships. But He was showing us that now, it isn't about "things," It is about family. Sergio, our interpreter friend from Tuxtepec, said as much at our closing devotion together. Through tears He said his life is forever changed because we come. He said we are his family from the North. And so it is with all those we shared with this year.

God had woven His miracle by bringing us together, to try to help, but ultimately, we found He molded us together as a family. Each of us forever changed. It seems taking clothes to our Southern family is no longer an option. We are still waiting to see where God's new path will lead us. Please pray with us for His direction so we can fulfill the purposes He has for our team.

May God bless us all as we witness of Jesus and look forward to the coming of Zion.