

# Mercury Testimony

By David B. Brown © 2023

The impact that the Zarahemla princes Ammon, Aaron, Omner and Himni had on the Lamanite culture cannot be overstated. The angel visit that compelled the change in cultural direction for Alma and the sons of Mosiah was heavenly intervention that set in motion an incredible series of events. The sons of Mosiah all forsook their rightful claim to the throne of Zarahemla, instead asking permission to travel into enemy territory to share the gospel with their lost brethren—the Lamanites. Something profound took place in that angelic visit that is not fully conveyed in the Book of Mormon account. Whatever it was, it fundamentally changed these five men and consequently sent shouts of salvation to hundreds of thousands.

In the 12th Chapter of Mosiah, the sons of Mosiah make the request of their father (King Mosiah) to travel to Lamanites territory and share the gospel. Mosiah must not only consider the potential loss of all his sons, but, like Zedekiah, he must also consider the issue of the Nephite kingdom be-

ing left without a rightful heir should all his sons be killed by the Lamanites. This is a huge decision. Mosiah takes this to God in prayer and receives an assurance from the Holy Spirit that they will be protected if he lets them go. The success of their mission was beyond anything they had ever imagined.

The first conversion occurred when Ammon found himself before King Lamoni in the Land of Ishmael. We have identified the modern-day site of El Tazumal in El Salvador as the City of Ishmael.

When Ammon arrived in the Land of Ishmael, he was taken prisoner, interrogated, and then placed in a role to tend the king's flocks. The implication is that he was being set-up because the previous security details were put to death when they failed to secure the flocks. However, Ammon not only passed the test, but by killing seven and severing the arms of others, he turned the tables in such a way that no one would dare to mess with the

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## 2023 Spring Expedition Planned

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After a three-year hiatus, the Hill Cumorah Expedition Team is planning to return to Mexico late this spring to continue performing research at selected sites in the Yucatan.

We are presently planning to fly into the Yucatan during the first week of June to tour a total of nine sites; Coba, Ek Balam, Chichen Itza, Mayapan, Oxkintoc, Uxmal, Dzibilanche, Ichbakal and Tulum. Some of these we have visited before, however it has been several years and we have discovered new insights about these locations that need to be further confirmed as we seek to solidify our

theories concerning the sites found in the Yucatan.

In our present understanding of the Book of Mormon archaeology in Mesoamerica, the Yucatan Peninsula does not contain any sites that are described in the text of the Book of Mormon. However, we do understand that as the Golden Age provided the opportunity for cultural advances and an explosion in population, late Classical sites influenced by the Book of Mormon culture began to emerge in the Yucatan. We find the same stories and symbolism in this region as we find in the heart of the

Book of Mormon area further south.

It is our hope that these sites can help us unlock the mysteries surrounding how the culture dispersed at the end of the Golden Age and thereby better identify the connecting cultures found throughout the North American continent. We appreciate all the prayers you can send our way as we strive to move this work forward.

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## Mercury Testimony *continued*

king's possessions again. Ammon demonstrated his faithfulness to King Lamoni in a princely fashion—now he had King Lamoni's attention. From there, Ammon was able to introduce the gospel.

Aaron's trek into Lamanite territory was different. He and his entourage met with a graceless ruler who placed them in prison to suffer in a manner that reflected the perspective of the King of all the Lamanites. *By virtue of the fact they were Nephites, and even princes of the Nephite nation, they should suffer the wrath of the Lamanites because they were thieves and liars.* Aaron and his brethren were tested by imprisonment and torture. They passed their test. God heard their prayers, moved upon Ammon through the Holy Spirit, who then used his influence to have his brethren released from their suffering.

Both Ammon, Aaron and others had their faith put to the test, and as they endured their circumstance, God was able to be seen working in the process to bring salvation to the Lamanites. However, like Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, it was only by passing through the "heat of the testing fire" that God could be glorified and His work moved forward. This is where the testimony of the Mesoamerican mercury begins to make sense.

Several of the offering caches found in Mesoamerica contain mercury, also referred to as quicksilver. The questions that are properly asked are these, "Why was mercury used in their offerings? What does it symbolize?"

Mercury is a unique metal. It has a melting point of -38 degrees Fahrenheit. Therefore, we almost always observe mercury in its liquid state. The most prominent method for harvesting mercury is by heating cinnabar, capturing the fumes and condensing those gases from which the liquid mercury is collected.

Once collected from the cinnabar, mercury is used for many things. It is used to bind with precious metals

such as gold and silver, and once bound, it is then reheated until the mercury goes back into gas form and the gold or silver is left in its purified state. Mercury was traditionally used for thermometers, although that is now discouraged. In modern processes, mercury is used in several electrical lighting devices.

In its liquid form, when a human attempts to poke at a puddle of mercury, it repels human touch and from thence gets its nick-name of quicksilver, because it moves so fast to avoid human contact. Finally, being a bright metal, it has reflecting properties so that a large enough collection of it can provide a mirror-like reflection.

From these listed properties I distill the following observations that could serve as the symbolism our ancient brethren were intending to convey:

1. Mercury can only be observed when the earthen mineral of cinnabar is placed "into the fire" causing the mercury to "weep" out. (tears)
2. Mercury in liquid form is averse to human touch.
3. Once mercury is collected in large enough volume, it provides a mirrored reflection of its surroundings and the observer is able to observe himself.
4. Mercury is poisonous to the physical body.

Because of these properties, I believe that our ancient brothers and sisters were using mercury to illustrate the processes that purifies spirits, refines the expression of virtues and provides a reflection of Heaven on Earth.

The Lamanites did not know Ammon, Aaron and their brethren, except for the fact that they were Nephites and worthy of their contempt. Once put to the test of their real intent (fire), their true spiritual character was observed, much in the same manner that liquid mercury is distilled from the earthen elements in cinnabar. The inner mettle

(metal) of the spirit is now observable in the physical. However, what is observed is not something that can be physically "touched" or controlled in much the same manner as virtues and characteristics unique to the spirit cannot be produced by a physical mimicking. Motivations always reveal their true nature when put to the test. The revealing of the true inner nature provides a mirror of the soul for people to observe.

Therefore, I believe that the mercury found in the Mesoamerican caches are testifying to us that the people who left these offerings were "put to the test" of their spiritual character and their true nature was revealed. That true nature was the refinement of their souls and their spiritual mettle (metal) was revealed for all to see. The example of testing the spirit was first set by Ammon, Aaron and the brethren who brought the witness of Jesus to the Lamanites. But the converted Lamanites took it to another level.

Once the seven Lamanite cities had converted to the gospel, they began to experience contention from their brethren who had not converted. This new way of seeing the world through the eyes of the gospel was disrupting the status quo for the powers that ruled the governments and commerce among the Lamanites. The Book of Mormon states it very subtly with this passage from Alma 14:21 "*And it came to pass that the Amalekites, and the Amulonites, and the Lamanites who were in the land of Amulon, and also in the land of Helam, and who were in the land of Jerusalem, and, in fine, in all the land round about, who had not been converted and had not taken upon them the name of Anti-Nephi-Lehi, were stirred up by the Amalekites and by the Amulonites to anger against their brethren; [22] And their hatred became exceeding sore against them, even insomuch that they began to rebel against their king, insomuch that they would not that he should be*

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CUMORAH MESSENGER

## Mercury Testimony *continued*

*their king; therefore, they took up arms against the people of Anti-Nephi-Lehi.” The Lamanites who had not been converted were angry; they rebelled and wanted to remove King Anti-Nephi-Lehi because he was disrupting their way of life. Here is where the faith of the converted Lamanites was put to the test.*

Alma 14:41 *“And now, my brethren, if our brethren seek to destroy us, behold, we will hide away our swords; yea, even we will bury them deep in the earth, that they may be kept bright, as a testimony that we have never used them, at the last day; and if our brethren destroy us, behold, we shall go to our God and shall be saved. [42] And now, it came to pass that when the king had made an end of these sayings and all the people were assembled together, they took their swords and all the weapons which were used for the shedding of man’s blood, and they did bury them up deep in the earth; [43] And this they did, it being--in their view--a testimony to God and also to men that they never would use weapons again for the shedding of man’s blood; [44] And this they did, vouching and covenanting with God that rather than shed the blood of their brethren, they would give up their own lives;”*

The archaeology of Mesoamerica tells us that King Anti-Nephi-Lehi was beheaded, probably by his eldest brother. The hieroglyphic stairway at Dos Pilas tells that the king of that city went to Tikal and created piles of bodies and pools of blood as he became victorious and ascended the throne.

This event sent the converted Lamanites to eventually relocate in the Land of Jershon which the Nephites were happy to provide. We have discovered that Jershon is the modern-day country of Belize and the easternmost region of the Peten of Guatemala.

Certainly, the converted Lamanites were being tested as to their resolve and ultimate faithfulness to

the covenant they made with God to maintain the brightness of their swords. So, how does this fit with the mercury offerings found in Mesoamerica?

The Mesoamerican mercury offerings are found at Kaminaljuyu, Izapa, Quirigua, Copan, Lamanai, and Caracol. All of these are either the original Lamanite cities that converted, or they are cities that were built by the converted Lamanites in Belize. These offerings are demonstrating the location of these converted Lamanites at the time of their spiritual testing. Some of them were in the land of their origin, others were in the land of their supposed protection. But, I believe all of them are witnessing to God that these faithful maintained their covenant and passed their test of faith in a manner that was parallel to the characteristics of the mercury.

1. Their earthen vessel was put to the test by the blind anger of their brethren, causing their spirits to “weep” in virtuous acts of love.
2. Their submission to the spiritual laws cannot be touched or understood by the physical man.
3. The act of the 1,005 who allowed themselves to be killed created a pool of reflective blood that exposed the reality of their crime to the ones who were committing it.
4. The weeping of virtue from the spiritual body placed the physical body in jeopardy, even to its death.

In each of the points listed above, the exposure of virtuous actions was caused by the fiery pressures of injustice and hatred. Those who chose love allowed the virtuous mettle (metal) of their soul to be exposed.

The locations of the mercury offerings implies that Kaminaljuyu, Izapa, Copan and Quirigua were highland Lamanite cities that were part of the mass-conversion event and who experienced attacks on the

Lamanites who had converted. It also implies that Lamanai and Caracol where Jershon cities that experienced the same type of attacks.

Almost every other ancient city in this region has offerings that are covered in cinnabar. Being a reddish color, I believe cinnabar symbolizes the converts who were covered in the “blood sacrifice” of Jesus. But, only the few mercury offering cities listed above were places where the pressures of the test caused the spiritual mettle to “weep” out in their purest form as blood flowed out in faithfulness to their God.

To further support that this is how the symbolism of the mercury offerings should be understood, the other content of the Lamanai offering cache was an oyster shell. The oyster produces pearls, but only through a process of agitation. Sand or parasites that are unable to be cleansed from the tissue of the oyster is isolated and coated to protect the surrounding tissue from the constant irritation of the intruder and a pearl forms. Hence, spiritual beauty is often alluded to being produced in the same manner; a coping mechanism to deal with continual irritations. Often the pearls allude to the development of cultural graces.



A similar offering was found at the site of Caracol where a stone box contained a jade mask covered in cinnabar inside of a spondylus shell and sitting in a pool of mercury. In addition to the shell, cinnabar and mercury symbolism already discussed, the jade mask is a symbol of a

new persona; one that is often seen in Maya art as being presented to an individual who is converted to the gospel, taking upon themselves a new identity. I believe the hardness of the jade stone alludes to the spiritual indestructibility of the Chris-

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# Unexpected Finds at Chaco Canyon

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In June of 2022, four members of the Hill Cumorah Expedition Team ventured to Farmington, New Mexico to spend several days researching the Pueblo Culture in the region and specifically the site at Chaco Canyon.

Chaco Canyon came onto our radar several years ago because there are three major sites in the Yucatan that provide an indication of a connection between Chaco Canyon and the Yucatan. When drawing a line from the Temple of the Diving God at Tulum, then through the Temple of the Diving Gods at Coba, then through the three-kings stela platform at Ek Balam, it creates a trajectory that hits directly on the main kiva at Pueblo Bonito in Chaco Canyon. Believing that there may be something to this connection, we began investigating Chaco Canyon's history. It revealed a lot of interesting information.

inhabitants were developing farming in the region with corn as the primary crop. Housing was mostly nomadic and primitive.

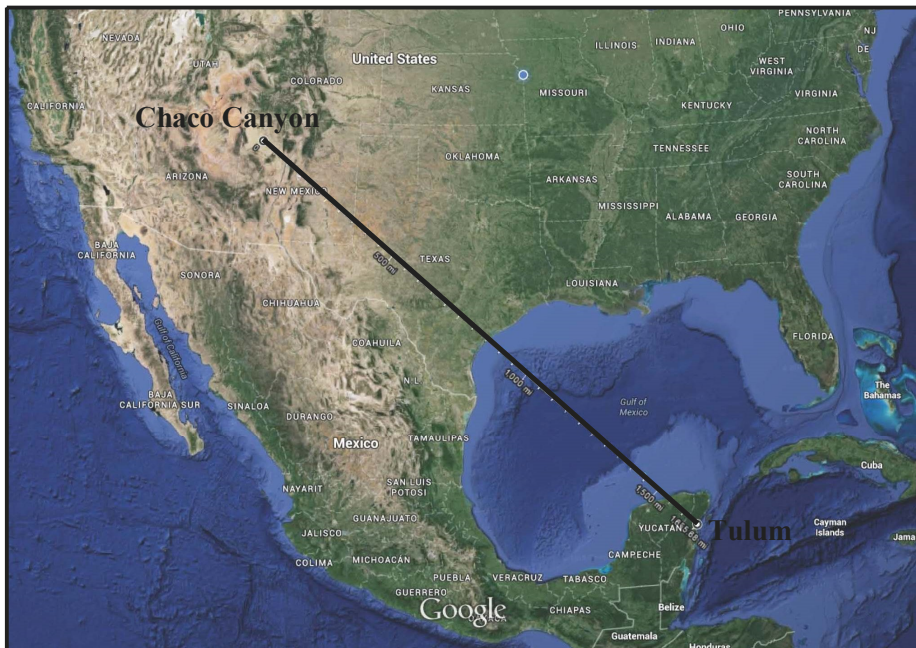
It was in the period between 500 and 750 AD that major changes took place with beans and squash being introduced as crops, and the people began building more permanent housing with pit-houses. These were unique structures dug about four feet into the ground with wood framing for a roof that is covered with soil. Access to the hut came either through a hole in the top and down through a ladder or by way of a secondary access tunnel that went out a few feet to the side. This design has features that are descriptively similar to the barges that the Jaredites built for their trek across the Pacific. The barges were built "tight like unto a dish" with a hole in the top for air and a hole in

means that they were probably Book of Mormon Jaredite-culture refugees who were escaping all the wars taking place in the Central Mexico region such as Teotihuacan which was overrun and burned in the same period. The 400 AD description Moroni provides us tells how the cultural hatred was prolific throughout all the regions. It just makes sense that there would be a migration of refugees out of the warring regions as families look to escape certain death. We believe these Jaredite-heritage people moved north through the Colorado River basin and became the Hohokam and the Anasazi cultures.

It is during the 750 to 900 AD timeframe that another change occurred at Chaco Canyon, and stone structures became an important development. These structures were two and three stories tall with thin, flat, stacked-stone walls two-feet thick and very little if any mortar. Additionally, polychrome pottery became a part of the culture and they began terraforming the landscape for water conservation.

All of these had been done for centuries in the Yucatan and Belize region of Central America. This 750-900 AD time period is when many of the larger sites of the Yucatan began to reduce in size which indicates there are people leaving the region. We believe that like the 500 AD exodus out of the Central Mexico Highland region, there was another power struggle occurring in the Yucatan at about the 750 AD timeframe, causing many to leave the region with their families and relocate to other places. It is likely that these Yucatan refugees would have ventured up the Rio Grande and made their way to the Chaco Canyon region, bringing with them the technologies to build structures with stone, produce polychrome pottery and practice terraforming to conserve water.

It is during this 750-900 AD time period that Chaco Canyon developed into its most notable function—a centerpiece for gathering of the Anasazi people. The archaeologists who have worked here indicate that this was not



Chaco Canyon sits on a high plateau in northwestern New Mexico. It is very close to the continental divide. While its streams eventually empty into the Colorado River, just a few miles to the east brings you enter the region where streams empty into the Rio Grande River Basin. Therefore, this area is equally assessable to both the Pacific and the Gulf of Mexico.

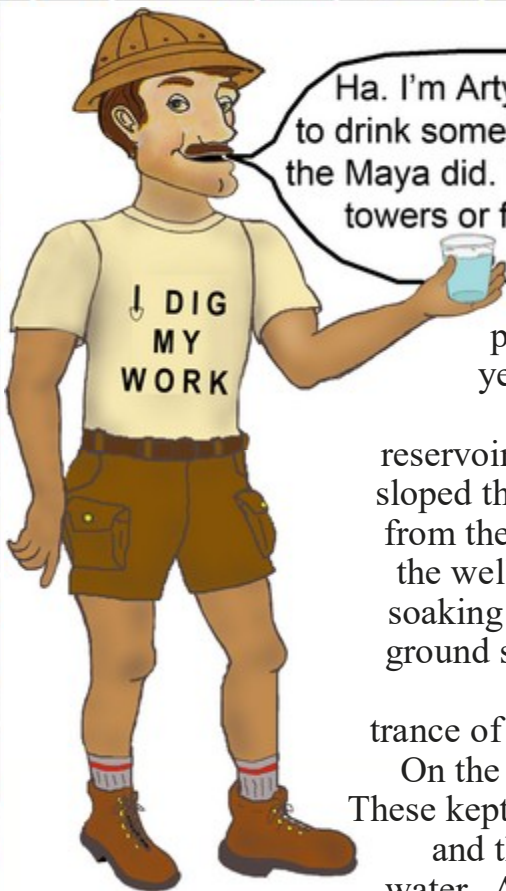
For 2,000 years beginning at about 1,500 BC, Chaco Canyon's earliest

the bottom for water. It is our opinion that these pit-house builders were using this style because it was reflective of their Jaredite heritage. This occurring in the 500 AD timeframe



Diagram of pithouse showing construction design.

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Ha. I'm Arty and I am going to drink some rain water, just like the Maya did. They had no water towers or faucets to get water from.

### Clean Drinking Water

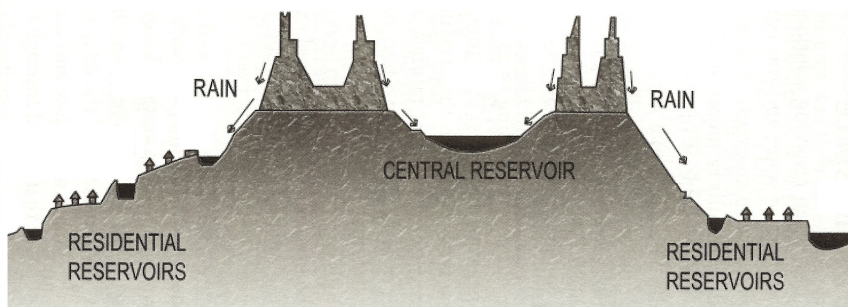
Few cultures controlled and preserved water better than the Maya. Many areas had heavy rain part of the year and little or no rain the part of the year. They either had a lot of water or not enough.

They solved this problem by the use of wells and reservoirs (large pools of water). They dug their wells and sloped the ground toward each well to catch the rain water from the heavy rains. They even paved the ground around the wells so the water would run into the wells instead of soaking into the ground. They also dug out large areas of ground so rain water would fill these reservoirs.

At Tikal they used sand filtration boxes at the entrance of each reservoir to filter out sticks, leaves, and dirt.

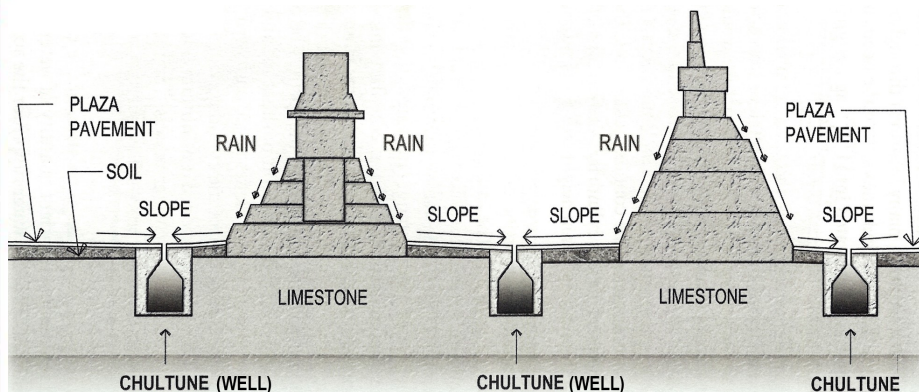
On the surface of these small lakes they grew Lilly pads. These kept down the algae (green scum floating the surface) and the roots of Lilly pads filtered out the germs in the water. At Chichen Itza they dripped water onto limestone cylinders.

Water slowly filtered through the limestone to come out very clean.



RAIN WATER COLLECTION

Image by James O'Kon



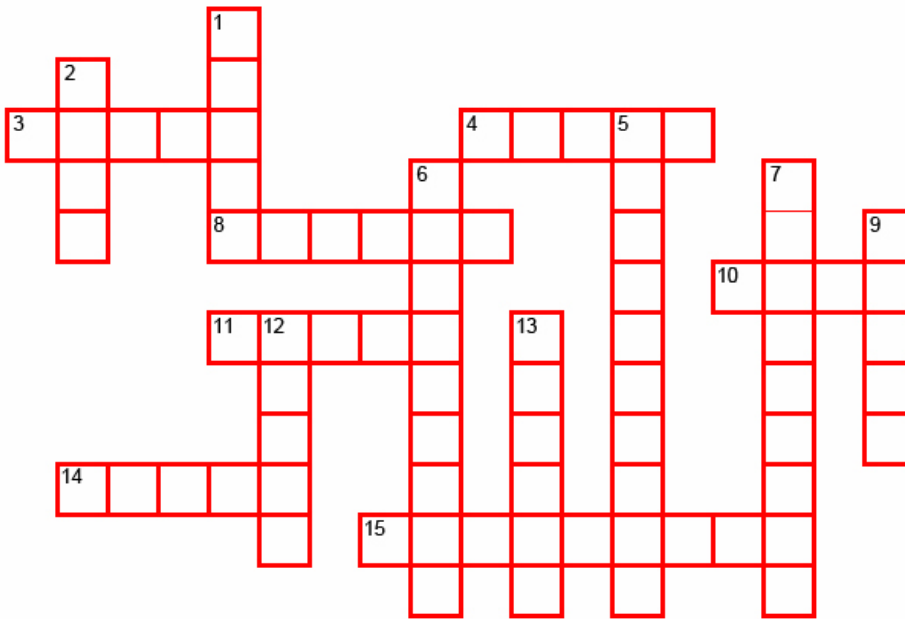
RAIN WATER COLLECTION INTO WELLS

Image by James O'Kon



Lilly pads on water

All words used in puzzle come from the story **ACROSS**



- ACROSS**
- 3. clear liquid
  - 4. receive ball
  - 8. not level
  - 10. pit for water
  - 11. pond scum
  - 14. reservoir located
  - 15. stone filter
- DOWN**
- 1. make you sick
  - 2. found at beach
  - 5. limestone used
  - 6. storage lake
  - 7. keep fresh
  - 9. not dirty
  - 12. cleaning plant
  - 13. remove impurities

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

- WORD SEARCH**
- Find and circle the words from the story:
- Algae Catch
  - Chichen Itza
  - Clean Filters
  - Germs
  - Heavy Rains
  - Lillypad
  - Limestone
  - Maya Preserved
  - Reservoirs
  - Runoff Sand
  - Sloped Tikal
  - Water Wells

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For questions e-mail me at [tscott75@sbcglobal.net](mailto:tscott75@sbcglobal.net)

## Unexpected Finds at Chaco Canyon *Continued*

a place that was populated on a full-time basis, but only during certain times of the year. It was a gathering place for sacred rituals and conducting trade.

The description made us think of modern-day reunion grounds where people gather to renew their familial connections, share their rituals of common belief and their harvested bounty. It appears that just as our modern reunion grounds remain mostly empty during the off-season, so too was Chaco Canyon only a year round residence for a small group of people, ballooning in size during certain seasonal gatherings.



**The primary kiva at Chaco Canyon. This once had a huge wooden roof and was used as a worship center.**

The design of the buildings at Chaco Canyon further speak to the usage of the site. It appears that all of the structures are either grain storage rooms, sacred meeting rooms, or teaching centers. During the 900 AD period, it appears that this also became a place of commerce. Trade items such as Mexican copper, cacao, quetzal feathers and macaws have been found at Chaco Canyon.

Then beginning about 1050 AD, a cultural change began to make its way into the region. Many of the windows and doorways in the structures were blocked with stone as if there was a defensive posture that had to be taken. The researchers have found some disturbing evidence that the culture began practicing cannibalism. A forensic investigator produced an in-depth study demonstrating that many in the region were indeed eating human flesh. The interesting part is that this is occurring at the time that Chaco Canyon is being abandoned and the cliff-dweller culture

began rising in the mountains just north of Chaco. From these evidences we have deduced a solid theory:

That Chaco Canyon was initially used as a reunion ground and cultural center for refugee Christians, but as commerce with other regions began to increase, a warring force from the south made its influence in the region; not by use of an army, but more by infiltration into the decision-making classes. Eventually a small group of warriors took over, forcing many to relocate in the cliffs of the mountains to the north. Those who remained behind probably experienced something similar to the atrocities that Mormon described as his culture was falling apart.

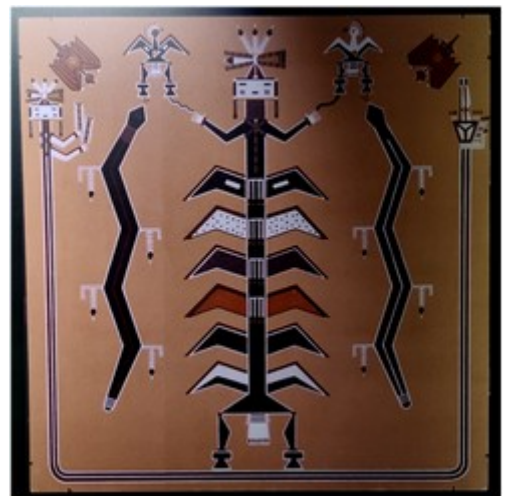
Moroni 9:8-11 *“For according to the knowledge which I have received from Amoron, behold, the Lamanites have many prisoners which they took from the tower of Sherizah; and there were men, women, and children. [9] And the husbands and fathers of those women and children they have slain; and they feed the women upon the flesh of their husbands, and the children upon the flesh of their fathers; and no water, save a little, do they give unto them. [10] And notwithstanding this great abomination of the Lamanites, it doth not exceed that of our people in Moriantum. [11] For behold, many of the daughters of the Lamanites have they taken prisoners; and after depriving them of that which was most dear and precious above all things--which is chastity and virtue--and after they had done this thing, they did murder them in a most cruel manner, torturing their bodies even unto death; and after they have done this, they devour their flesh like unto wild beasts because of the hardness of their hearts; and they do it for a token of bravery.”*

It appears that this same practice was continued centuries later (1100 AD) as this warring tribe determined to take over the region and push the Anasazi north into the cliffs of the Rocky Mountains.

The cliff dwellings of southern Colorado display the same structural design as those at Chaco Canyon; mostly storage rooms and ceremonial gathering rooms (*kivas*). It was about 1300 AD that the cliff dwellers were again moved out of their region, and it is supposed that these warring tribes moved northward to displace the cliff dwellers.

It is accepted by all researchers that the current Navajo and Hopi tribes of the region are not direct descendants of the Anasazi. The Navajo and Hopi eventually filled the void left by the Anasazi migration northward. However, we did discover a painting done by the Navajo which depicts interesting aspects of their tribal heritage.

The picture below shows the people as a corn stalk planted between two rivers that are symbolized by the snakes on each side. We believe the snakes are representing the two migrations that populated the area, one of refugees that came to the area by means of the Colorado River, and the second of the refugees who came by way of the Rio Grande. Eventually, these people fled (flew) northward.



All of this is taking place within an offering bowl which indicates that the existence of their people and heritage is an offering to the creator. We believe the people of Chaco Canyon are Christian Book of Mormon-land refugees. More needs to be researched on this to solidify the connections. We will be heading to the Yucatan this spring to research these connections.

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

**HILL CUMORAH EXPEDITION TEAM, INC**

***Searching for Truth***

c/o David B. Brown  
311 N Lee Street  
Buckner, MO 64016

Phone: 816-651-6974  
E-mail: dbb92558@yahoo.com

Contributors and Editors  
David Brown

Children's Page by Terry and Chris Scott  
Photos by:  
David Brown  
Joanie Glandon  
Doug Smith

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## Mercury Testimony *Continued*

tian persona, and the color green indicates the mid-point of the color spectrum—moderation in all things. It may allude to the *chakra* where the color green coincides with the human heart, inferring that the heart (love) has become the predominant face of the convert's motivations.

The mercury, cinnabar, and oyster shell offering at Lamanai was found underneath a ball court marker on the plaza in front of the site's tallest pyramid. As we have indicated in prior newsletters, we believe that Mesoamerican ballcourts indicate where very important spiritual battles occurred. Therefore, this testimony of conversion being placed beneath a ballcourt marker indicates that this was the result of a spiritual battle that took place in the region.

Now to add even further, we

believe Lamanai was where King Lamoni and his converted City of Ishmael relocated as they moved into Jerushon. Stela 9 speaks of a "ruler over the entire eastern quarter" of the region who had two names; we believe one name refers

to King Lamoni's Lamanite kingly heritage and the second one refers to his new identity as a converted Anti-Nephi-Lehi. This stela further states that Lamanai paid "tribute" to Yaxchilan which we believe is the Lamanites providing support to the

Nephite armies of Zarahemla as they provided protection from the angered Lamanites who wanted to kill the converts.

All of these items found in the Mesoamerican offerings establish a solid argument concerning their gospel conversion experience and it testifies to us that their spiritual transformation was a very powerful event. They left their testimony in stone, and in the tell-tale items they placed in their sacred offerings we find their mettle (metal) tears of mercury. It is their spiritual legacy.



***The mercury testimony offering was found beneath this ballcourt marker at Lamanai.***