



Palenque Is Bountiful By David B. Brown

On a northeast slope of a hill where the Maya Lowlands meet the foothills of the Hermounts lies the ancient Maya city of Palenque. This remarkable archaeological site has provided some amazing evidences that identify this site as the Book of Mormon city of Bountiful. One of the first items to present is the Maya city glyph. When inscribing on stela and monuments the Maya gave each city a unique glyph or emblem by which it is identified. One of the first publications to announce the name of the Palenque city glyph translated it as “bountiful,” but apparently it was soon changed to an interpretation of “abundant.” Regardless of the semantics the meaning is the same.

The main plaza of the site contains the Palace, the Temple of the Inscriptions and the Temple of the Red Queen. These edifices are large and impressive and it is the Temple of the Inscriptions that houses a tomb where the sarcophagus has etchings all

around that indicates Pakal is a member of one of the ten lost tribes of Israel and that he looks to *Corn Incarnate* (Christ) as his provider for life eternal.

From the plaza one can turn east to cross a small river to the next level of temples known as the Cross Complex. Located here are three temples; the Temple of the Sun, the Temple of the Cross and the Tem-



The Tower and Palace Complex of Palenque as viewed from the plaza in front of the Temple of the Inscriptions..

Mary Todd Testimony By Neil Steede ©

The June 22, 1940 Saint’s Herald published a testimony that I found extremely interesting. That testimony mentions several aspects that support the validity of the experience in spite of it being very unusual. If I had known about this testimony as recently as ten years ago I might have doubted its veracity, but recent developments now indicate that Mary Ellen Todd was given insight that very few have experienced.

In Mary Ellen’s experience she was visited by a personage who was “carrying a *frame* in which were a set of plates.” He handed the frame to her which she accepted while in a sitting position on her bed. Interestingly, she describes how the man who brought the plates did not let go of them until they were set upon her lap. She later states that the plates held within the frame were extremely heavy. This detail is supportive of the truth of her testimony, but there is much more ahead.

As Mary looks into the frame she sees the set of plates which have “the appearance of gold” are about one inch thick or a little more and they are round. Round? All of the descriptions of the plates that Joseph Smith Jr. had described them as square and about six to eight inches thick. Therefore, it would seem probable that if this testimony is true, it certainly is not the plates had by Joseph Smith Jr.. Another statement is that the plates are bound on one side by two rings. This experience sounds strange. As these strange comments are more fully explored, several possibilities emerge.

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Palenque Is Bountiful continued

ple of the Foliated Cross. These temples seem to be designed to teach lessons for the newly initiated believer. Crossing over the river is symbolic of the rite of baptism, then on to each temple to learn an aspect of living and balancing the temporal and the spiritual. And each temple has an inscription that is unique to the message given in its teaching.

The Temple of the Sun teaches about the spiritual war between good and evil, and provides the initiate with weapons that will help him win the spiritual war. The Temple of the Cross teaches of the history of the spiritual church. It speaks of the Wisemen that visited Christ after his birth, and the prophecies of Christ from the beginning of time to the coming of Christ and His appearance in the Americas. The Temple of the Foliated Cross teaches about the appearance of Christ after His resurrection and how he provided the transformation for the Three Nephites.

Heading south from the plaza of the Cross Complex one can walk up a narrow path to another series of temples that teach about Christ, but one in particular is most

Temple of the Sun at Palenque



amazing; Temple XIX. This temple houses the most compelling inscriptions at Palenque. The Throne Room here contains a throne that is larger than any known throne in the Maya world. It is nearly nine feet long and carved from a white stone that is thought to be marble, at the very least a very fine limestone. In this room are two panels that have important bas-relief images that tell an impressive story through symbolism.

The first panel shows how Quetzalcoatl (Christ) offers his gifts to all mankind, but there are those who accept and



Temple of the Cross at Palenque

there are those who turn away from His offering. Those who accept His offerings are lifted from their burdens and the consequences of their actions are absorbed by Quetzalcoatl through mercy. But those who turn away the gift from Quetzalcoatl are stifled by the burdens they bear and they are left to suffer the demands of justice and the full weight for the consequences of their actions. It is a lesson of the Maya “give and take” theme that is utilized throughout their iconography.

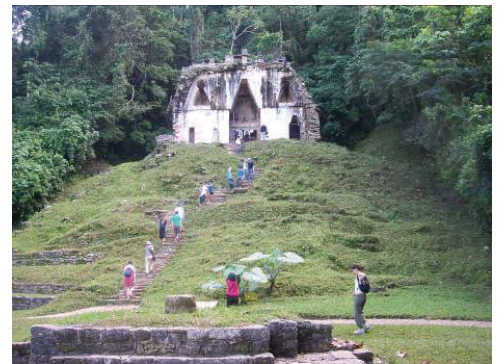
The next panel has a total of seven figures displayed with Quetzalcoatl in the center, three on the right, and three on the left. The three on the left are all facing Quetzalcoatl and have symbols that identify them as the three Wisemen who visited Christ and brought gifts to Him shortly after his birth. Through the use of the symbols provided for each figure and comparing them to stories found in the Book of Mormon we can deduct their names. They are Nephi, his brother Lehi, and Samuel the Lamanite. Perhaps the fact that Samuel traveled all the way around the world to worship the Christ child is one reason why Christ was so adamant that Samuel’s prophecies were added to the records of the Nephites. The body of Quetzalcoatl is leaning toward the three figures on the right as if he is presenting them with something, but he is looking back to honor the three that came to visit Him.

The three on the right are receiving a gift from Christ that appears to be the gift of life. This seems to be the Three Nephites, who also have names that can be associated by deduction through the

Book of Mormon; Nephi, Timothy, and Jonas. The Nephi name is almost absolute as it is the same name as one of the figures on the left and we know that Nephi the disciple was the son of Nephi who disappeared and was never heard from again.

This panel again shows a remarkable Maya concept of “give and take” in that Christ received gifts from three spiritual leaders who traveled half a world to find Him, therefore Christ gave the gift of life-to-serve to three disciples in the Americas. And this panel displays this event very profoundly.

One last thing to mention is the huge throne that is in Temple XIX. No one knows how long Christ was in the Americas teaching before He ascended back to the Father, but was it long enough for this temple to be built and for Christ to sit upon this throne? Who knows? But, it certainly would be a personal experience to stand in this room and read the panels



Temple of the Foliated Cross at Palenque

and know that Christ was here. Did Christ sit on a throne in the Americas? There is a throne located in a strange place at Palenque; it is in one of the lower passages of the Palace. Is this the throne upon which Christ sat when He came to Bountiful? Perhaps some day we will know for sure, but for now we can only speculate.



Mary Todd Testimony Continued

In recent years artifacts of supposed Jaredite origin have been located and are now under study. Those artifacts date from Jaredite times and consist of several stone discs. Those discs have several interesting parallels to Mary Ellen's visual experience. Though there are fourteen partial discs of different sizes, the average diameter is ten to eleven inches as described some forty years before they were found. Even the fact that these stones are discs would seem to be significant. While the discs referred to are of stone and about one-quarter inch thick, they are plated with pyrite on the reverse side. The obverse sides are carved.

The carvings on these discs are not in a script, but are bas-relief illustrations. Seemingly all of them are referring to different aspects of Quetzalcoatl. Their messages have not yet been fully deciphered and this is why there is still no publication over these objects.

Having seen these objects before reading Mary Ellen's testimony has made that testimony more meaningful to me. This is because not only are these inscribed objects discs, but they also have

Fool's Gold (pyrite) covering the reverse sides which give them the "appearance of gold." And there is more. Each of these discs is perforated by four holes on one edge. This is very similar to Mary Ellen's vision. Is it possible that the discs were made this way so as to replicate original plates?

In my book Book of Mormon Archaeology: Artifact by Artifact I theorize that Jaredite plates had no binding rings, and while I still believe this to be basically true it is still possible that some were bound. Once the Jaredites came into contact with the Nephites the innovation of binding rings could well have been adopted. However, this may not be the specific case seen by Mary Ellen. Though the following is mere speculation it seems to be a valid possibility to put forward at this time.

If one supposes that the personage visiting Mary Ellen was Moroni, then it is likely that the plates that she saw were Ether's twenty-four gold plates that were translated by Moroni. I believe that the title of those plates were the *twenty-four* gold plates because they were not bound

by rings, but were loose. Therefore by putting the number twenty-four into the title one could count them to make sure that one had a complete set. Moroni being accustomed to bound plates may have added the two rings for his convenience. Now I do suspect that it was Moroni that Mary Ellen envisioned as opposed to Ether. The reason for this was the physical description of the personage.

Being a personage described as wide, muscular, and with a large head is very interesting. This sounds particularly Maya in description. Especially the wide-face and large head is even fodder for Mexican comedians even today (i.e. the late Loco Valdez). The reference is commonly made to the *Cabazon Yucatecos*—"big-headed" people from the Yucatan peninsula of Mexico. I cannot believe that aspect of Mary Ellen's description would include these details as coincidence.

It will be most interesting to see what is found in the future. By the way, I expect those plates to have a blank plate about halfway through as Mary Ellen described. Mary Ellen, I trust you.

The Importance of Testimony By Tim Brown

I have a testimony of the Book of Mormon. That's great for me but what does it do for you or anyone else? It can reinforce a testimony that you already have or it can encourage you to seek your own, but it cannot replace or act as a substitute for your personal experience. You can accept someone else's testimony on faith and use it as a bridge to move you forward in your faith journey, yet too many people have relied on someone else's testimony without seeking their own and have since lost their way in regard to the Restoration movement.

I was afforded the opportunity of time to read the Book of Mormon during the summer of 1972 while riding to and from work with my employer Lynn Cox. I've never doubted the divinity of the stories surrounding the Book of Mormon, but I had never sat down and read it from cover to cover until then. My testimony is very simple,

not really the way I asked for it. I had read of angels appearing to some and others hearing an audible voice declaring the truth of the book. These types of grand manifestations were what I wanted. I thought I was entitled to tell God how to reveal Himself. In James 1:1-5 we read:

You can accept someone else's testimony on faith and use it as a bridge to move you forward in your faith journey, yet too many people have relied on someone else's testimony without seeking their own and have since lost their way in regard to the Restoration movement.

"James, a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, to the twelve tribes which are scattered abroad, greeting. My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into many afflictions; Knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience. But

let patience have its perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing. If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him." If God is no respecter of persons and if He did that for others He should do that for me.

God is a great teacher. He gives us what we need not necessarily what we want. I needed patience and humility. I didn't receive the grand lightning and thunder testimony. What I did receive was much better for me. Countless times as I was reading the Book of Mormon the Spirit would rest on me and tears would begin to flow. It wasn't a very macho thing to be in construction and have your boss look over and see you crying. How can you explain your tears? It was a feeling that touched the depth of my soul and I felt totally unworthy, and yet at the same time I was given to understand that the God of heaven and

The Importance of Testimony Continued

earth loved me and accepted me for who I am; a part of His creation. No lightning or thunder, no angels or visions, no voice from heaven, just the quiet assurance that He was fulfilling the promise given in Moroni 10:4-5 *“And when ye shall have received these things, I would exhort you that ye would ask God, the eternal Father, in the name of Christ, if these things are not true; and if ye shall ask with a sincere heart, with real intent, having faith in Christ, He will manifest the truth of it unto you, by the power of the Holy Ghost; and by the power of the Holy Ghost, ye may know the truth of all things.”*

When you have your own testimony from God through the Holy Spirit nothing else matters. The voices of the world may talk about the Solomon Spalding book, or the Sidney Rigdon influence, or the 19th century writings of a man with an overactive imagination (although “inspired”). There are conflicting stories about how the record was translated; with the interpreters behind a curtained wall, or a stone in a hat, or a peep stone; it matters not to me. Those voices just melt away into irrelevance. I can neither confirm nor deny these stories because I wasn’t there and neither was anyone else now living. But I know the book is true because of the presence of the Holy Spirit. Thousands upon thousands have had similar experiences as mine. Whether any church associated with the Book of Mormon is teaching the true gospel of Christ may be questioned, but the book itself cannot. It’s one of God’s promised revelations in these latter days as told by Ezekiel in the 37th chapter verses 15-20: *“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. And when the children of thy people shall speak unto thee, saying, Wilt thou not show us what thou meanest by these? Say unto them, Thus saith the Lord God; Behold, I will take the stick of Joseph, which is in the hand of Ephraim, and the tribes of Israel his fellows, and will put*

them with him, even with the stick of Judah, and make them one stick, and they shall be one in mine hand. And the sticks whereon thou writest shall be in thine hand before their eyes.”

Upon going to the woods to pray with Oliver Cowdry, David Whitmer and Martin Harris and seeking a testimony to be the three witnesses Joseph Smith wrote: “When immediately afterwards, we heard a voice out of the bright light above us saying, ‘These plates have been revealed by the power of God, and they have been translated by the power of God; the translation of them which you have seen is correct and I command you to bear record of what you now see and hear.’” Church History Vol 1 page 46.

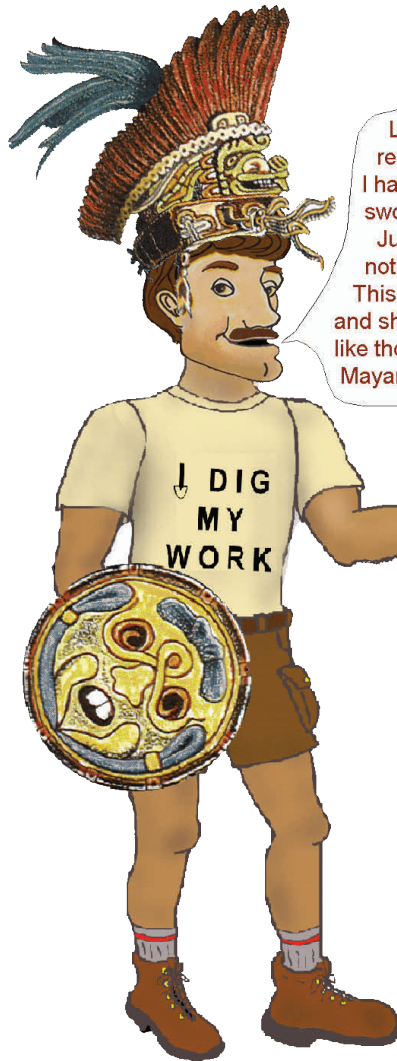
The testimonies of the three and eight witnesses have stood for 180 years. Although they stand as strong as ever they cannot replace our own. The promise given in Moroni 10:4-5 is to all who

Whether any church associated with the Book of Mormon is teaching the true gospel of Christ may be questioned, but the book itself cannot.

seek the truth. Once we have received a witness we are no longer subjected to the voices of doubt. It then becomes our responsibility to pass the torch of truth to others just as the three and eight and thousands of others have done for us. And the reason we need that spirit of testimony is so that our God can move His work forward to complete the promises He has made with Israel in the manner He showed to Ezekiel, from the 37th chapter again, verses 6-14: *“Again he said unto me, Prophecy upon these bones, and say unto them, O ye dry bones, hear the word of the Lord. Thus saith the Lord God unto these bones; Behold, I will cause breath to enter into you, and ye shall live; And I will lay sinews upon you, and will bring up flesh upon you, and cover you with skin, and put breath in you, and ye shall live; and ye shall know that I am the Lord. So I prophesied as I was commanded; and as I prophesied, there was a noise, and behold a shaking, and the bones came together, bone to his bone. And when I beheld, lo, the sinews*

and the flesh came up upon them, and the skin covered them above, but there was no breath in them. Then said he unto me, Prophecy unto the wind, prophecy, son of man, and say to the wind, Thus saith the Lord God; Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe upon these slain, that they may live. So I prophesied as he commanded me, and the breath came into them, and they lived, and stood up upon their feet, an exceeding great army. Then he said unto me, Son of man, these bones are the whole house of Israel; behold, they say, Our bones are dried, and our hope is lost; we are cut off for our parts. Therefore prophecy and say unto them, Thus saith the Lord God; Behold, O my people, I will open your graves, and cause you to come up out of your graves, and bring you into the land of Israel. And ye shall know that I am the Lord, when I have opened your graves, O my people, and brought you up out of your graves. And shall put my Spirit in you, and ye shall live, and I shall place you in your own land; then shall ye know that I the Lord have spoken it, and performed it, saith the Lord.”

Through the Book of Mormon God is bringing to pass one aspect of Ezekiel’s experience. The tribe of Joseph kept many records of their faith journey and Moroni abridged those records to create what we have today in the Book of Mormon. This record is the “bare bones” of their history, but every archaeological evidence that is found begins to develop the sinew and muscle tissues. These evidences still being uncovered provide the connections that are only hinted at in the Book of Mormon and with each piece of added knowledge the mystery of these ancient people begins to take form. The key to understanding the Maya has been the Book of Mormon, and the archaeological evidences revealed through that spiritual context is providing the finer understandings of the philosophical tensions within the Maya culture that eventually ripped it apart. The tribe of Joseph is finally being fleshed out and will soon be ready for the command *“Thus saith the Lord God; Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe upon these slain, that they may live. So I prophesied as he commanded me, and the breath came into them, and they lived, and stood up upon their feet, an exceeding great army.”*



Look at Me! I'm a real Mayan Warrior. I have a Mayan helmet, sword and shield. Just kidding, I'm not really Mayan. This helmet, sword and shield really are like those used by Mayan warriors.

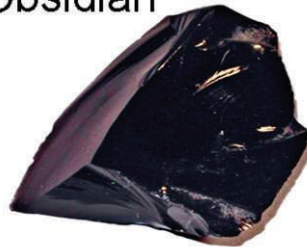
Mayan Weapons of War

Mayan weapons were made from wood, flint or obsidian stone. These stones were very hard and the sides were chipped away until a thin, sharp, jagged edge remained.

1. **Arrows**- Bows and arrows tipped with stone.
2. **Knives** -They were made completely of made of stone, both the blade and handle were created by chipping away excess stone.
3. **Spears** - Lances or long spears tipped with stone heads. They could be thrown or used for stabbing.
4. **Darts** - Stone darts were flung at great speed with a throwing stick called an Atlatl by the Aztecs who also used them.
5. **Sword** - They were made of wood, edged with sharp stones. They were called Maquahuitl.
6. **Clubs** - Their handles were made of wood with heavy stone heads. Some were made completely of stone.
7. **Slings** - A leather strap was used to fling stones; much like David used against Goliath in the Bible.
8. **Axes** - They had wooden handles with stone or copper cutting heads, although some have been found made completely of stone.
9. **Armor** - The armor was made from heavy quilted cotton.
10. **Shield** - They were made from reeds. (dried plant stalks) Intricate designs were painted on them and often brightly colored bird feathers were attached.
11. **Helmet** - These were made of leather, topped with feathers and colorfully painted and might include gold leaf. (thin gold overlay) Their battles consisted of hundreds or even thousands of warriors locked in combat until one side appeared to be winning and the other side surrendered. Captured enemy warriors were often made slaves, while their leaders were sacrificed.



Obsidian



Flint



Flint is a hard mineral quartz, a variety of chert. Flint was used as far back as the stone age for tools and weapons. When struck by a hard object, parts of it flake off and can be shaped into a cutting edge.

Obsidian is a naturally occurring volcanic glass. Obsidian can be chipped like flint and a cutting edge can reach almost molecular thinness, leading to its ancient use for tools and weapons.

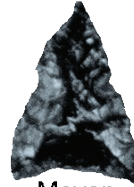
Shown below are typical weapons used by Mayan warriors



Mayan flint Ax



Mayan Club



Mayan Obsidian Arrowhead



Mayan Shield

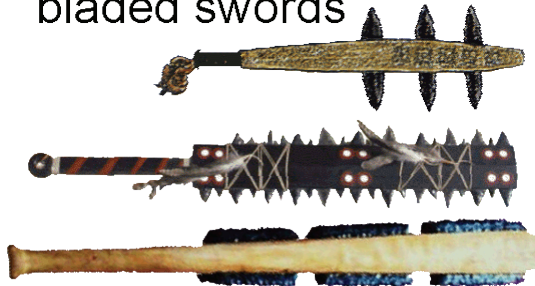


Mayan Spear heads
top-flint bottom-obsidian

Mayan Obsidian bladed swords



Obsidian Knives



Mayan Knives
2 from Jade
1 from Bone

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

WORD SEARCH

Find and circle the Mayan battle words listed below:

- Arrow
- Attack
- Battle
- Bow
- Capture
- Club
- Dart
- Defend
- Helmet
- Knife
- Mayan
- Sacrifice
- Shield
- Spear
- Sword
- Warrior
- Surrender

http://www.teach-nology.com/teachers/lesson_plans/science/archaeology/

http://research.history.org/Archaeological_Research/KidsPage.cfm

<http://www.smm.org/sln/ma/index.html>

<http://www.nationalgeographic.com/pyramids/>

<http://archaeology.la.asu.edu/teo/>

<http://www.digonsite.com/drdig/mesoamerica/15.html>

<http://www.precolumbianweapons.com/>

A Testimony From The Cumorah Valley By Chris Scott

I had the privilege of traveling to Jalapa de Diaz, Mexico with the Hill Cumorah Expedition Team this year. The trip was filled with fun and companionship and I was glad to be able to accompany the group on their annual expedition. I would like to include a scripture from the Doctrine and Covenants to describe what the spiritual part of the journey was like for me.

D&C Sec. 158:11a. *Therefore, continue to be strong in faith. To you who hear my voice and know my promises I will reveal myself and give my peace, even in the midst of your uncertainties.*

We shared in morning and evening devotions each day during the expedition. The faith that was exhibited by the members of the group bonded us together in a common purpose of seeking God's guidance on a daily basis. This helped us to learn to live in community together, even when there were discouragements, such as car breakdowns, or too high a fee being asked for by the guides, etc. We felt God's guidance and peace despite our uncertainties of what lay ahead during the trip.

D&C Sec. 158:11b. *Indeed, I am longing to pour out greater blessings than you have ever known if you, my people, will open yourselves through preparation, study, and prayer.*

Our desire for this project is to do the will of God in bringing blessings to humankind. The relationships that have

been established by the group in the area around "The Hill" were impressive. Everywhere we went people were hospitable and happy to see us, friendships were renewed and strengthened, laughter and stories were shared, and a general sense of well being was felt. Despite the language barriers there was a sense of being welcomed once again into their community.

"Indeed, I am longing to pour out greater blessings than you have ever known if you, my people, will open yourselves through preparation, study, and prayer."

D&C Sec. 158:11b

D&C Sec. 158:11c. *Look especially to the sacraments to enrich the spiritual life of the body. Seek for greater understanding of my purposes in these sacred rites and prepare to receive a renewed confirmation of the presence of my Spirit in your experiences of worship.*

We shared in a communion service at the home of Isabel, Moises, and Martha early in the trip. As the service began, I felt an abundance of the Spirit present among us and it continued throughout as we sang "The Spirit of God Like a Fire is Burning." It seemed as if the locusts were singing along with us as they became very loud at that point. It was very appar-

ent that Martha was touched by the Spirit because she began to cry. It is always hard to put into words the warmth that is felt when being in the presence of God and his Holy Spirit.

Another sacrament that we shared in was the "Laying on of Hands" in administration. Guadalupe asked for administration for pain after gallbladder surgery. This is the wife of the mayor of Piedra Ancha. As the scripture suggests it was an enriching experience and a witness of our faith to those of another culture.

Sitting throughout the entire administration, was another lady from the village. She was waiting to thank the group for the donated clothes she had received. She was very appreciative and showed us that her little girl had benefited by a pair of shorts we brought.

The last day of our trip to "the hill" we were again invited to the home of Isabel, Moises and Martha. There we were served chicken soup made from scratch. Chicken soup will never have the same meaning again for me, because it was made from such a sacrifice of the little that they had to offer. Also, there was a great deal of effort put into the pastries and bread that were also offered. It was all prepared with much love by Isabel.

I will always value the memories of this trip and continue to pray for the success of future trips of the Hill Cumorah Expedition Team.

Cumorah Team Supported Through Prayer By David B. Brown

Peggy Johanness stepped up to the plate this year and offered to coordinate the Prayer Warrior program that Randall Lawrence initiated last year. With Randall traveling with the team this year he was not able to oversee the prayer coordination, so I stepped Peggy.

The Prayer Warrior initiative that Randall put together last year was accomplished by getting a photograph of each traveling member and placing it on a business card, then distributed to volunteers throughout the area. Last year the team enjoyed support from approximately 175 people. This year the team was supported by approximately 300 prayer supporters not only from the immediate re-

gion, but from congregations as far away as Texas and Ohio. We even had an unknown number of participants from Mombasa, Kenya. Charles Mwanda of Kenya wrote: *Dear Peggy, I know and understand the difficult task ahead of you but we are keeping you and the team in prayers. It is not an easy mission and it is a calling that many would like to endure. I thank God for being part of the recipient of the updates and I would not delay to be with you in prayers. I also believe that many are the many missions ahead of you not only in America but also in Kenya where I am. Please let us know of every moment. God bless you...Thank you so much Servant of God for the extra*

work of Christ you are doing. My team is always with you in prayers and I also send to other prayer teams in our country. I am a national coordinator of Bride of Christ Foundation prayer team. Pastor Charles Mwanda, King Jesus Worship Center, Mombasa, Kenya.

The effort that Peggy has put forth in arranging this support for the team has been a blessing all around. She has taken the groundwork laid by Randall the previous year and through god-incidences she has pushed this around the world so that Kenya was praying for our success. Thank you Peggy for stepping up and taking the risk to try...and praise God that we are able to be a part of this work!

**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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2009 Spring Expedition By David B. Brown

In late March of this year the Hill Cumorah Expedition Team traveled to Mexico for their 8th annual trip to the region they believe to be Cumorah. The driving team consisted of Tim Brown, Jerry Stoner, Neil Steede, and David Brown; and the flying team was Mike Brown, Carol Brown, Chris Scott and Randall Lawrence. Once the crew was united and rested in Puebla they traveled on to Tuxtepec.

The team was able to meet again with old acquaintances in the family of Moises and with former Mayor Alvaro Rubio. Donated clothing was delivered to the towns of Jalapa de Diaz and to new friends in Piedra Ancha.

On the way to Piedra Ancha the group meet with a stone that punctured the oil pan of the van they were driving and that delayed the visit to our new friends. Once the team was able to reach the town and got reacquainted the team went about surveying Cumorahcita once again, showing the top portion to Neil



The members of the HCET 2009 Spring Expedition. From left back; Neil Steede, David Brown, Randall Lawrence, Tim Brown, Jerry Stoner. From left front; Mike Brown, Chris Scott, Carol Brown.

Steede who had not yet been to the top. Once at the top Neil's theories were reinforced that this was certainly a pivotal location from which to command a war.

One of the hopes of the trip was to climb to the Mixtec Outlook located on the west end of the valley, but the group was not able to arrange for the climb this year.

But, the individuals who were our contacts for the climb did present for our viewing a remarkable collection of pottery they claimed came from a cave. Neil was very excited to view this and identified it as a collection of Mixtec funerary pottery—he believes it to be from a person of royalty.

An additional find was discovered on the land of Moises. There the team was shown a collection of obsidian and other items that were identified as mostly Nephite. The conclusion drawn here was that this location was a Nephite forward outpost and is helpful in filling in the map of the valley and setting a stage for the layout of the final battle.

This find along with the Mixtec pottery made this a very fruitful venture. The sharing of spiritual moments with our long-distance friends, making new friends, and the gathering of yet more evidence makes this annual venture truly a fulfilling endeavor. Our God is an awesome God!