

Mesoamerican King Lists and the Book of Mormon

By Neil Steede © 2010 Fourth Article in a Series

In the first three parts of this series the Book of Mormon king lists given seem to match known Mesoamerican king lists fairly well. However, not all of the kings mentioned in the Book of Mormon have been reviewed yet. There are several “odd” kings and apparent “would be” kings mentioned that should also be examined.

Some of these men are referred to in the Book of Mormon as kings while others are not. Some of the men considered here do not use the title “king,” but appear to be trying to create a position for themselves that is equivalent to a king and the list of these types in the Book of Mormon is fairly long. I will only touch upon some of the more important ones here.

There are several assumptions being made during the writing of this article. Those assumptions are necessary for the reader to comprehend so that it is clear to point out the importance of this article. The first assumption is that the Book of Mormon is a true and accurate record. While the author, along with most of the readers accept this assumption, it must be understood that by far and large most of the

world assumes the opposite; namely, that the Book of Mormon is not based on anything that can be verified as truth.

The second assumption is not shared with any other Book of Mormon scholar that I know. This assumption states that if the Book of Mormon is what it claims to be then its account is giving the reader a rendering of what the authors considered to be the most important historical events. Moreover, if I am to accept the Book of Mormon as it is written, then I must also assume that it not only covers the geographical area known as “Mesoamerica,” but it also covers the peaks and valleys of cultural history for that same area.

In particular, this article is dealing exclusively with Nephite history. This history occurred south of Jaredite lands with the single overlap being the City of Desolation (LaVenta),¹ in my opinion. This firmly locates the main body of Book of Mormon history into the area of the Mayan culture. For these “odd” kings to have been mentioned in the Book of Mormon means that not only were those kings important to the Book of Mormon story, but that archaeo-

DNA and the Book of Mormon

By Chris Scott Fourth Article in a Series

“And it came to pass, as the voice was still speaking, he [Moses] cast his eyes and beheld the earth; yea, even all the face of it; and there was not a particle of it which he did not behold, discerning it by the Spirit of God. And he beheld also the inhabitants thereof, and there was not a soul which he beheld not, and he discerned them by the Spirit of God, and there numbers were great, even as numberless as the sand upon the seashore.” D&C 22:19

The population on earth today is nearing 7 billion people. Each person has close to 16,500 mtDNA building blocks or base pairs of genetic material. In addition, each male also carries close to 60 million base pairs of genetic material on the Y-chromosome. One base pair constitutes a haplotype. These very large numbers seem as “numberless as the sand upon the seashore” just as Moses beheld in his vision.

In order to manage such large numbers it is mandatory that we apply statistical analysis to the populations of the areas in

question. In this case the applied study concerns mtDNA markers and Y-chromosome markers and their relationship to the historicity of the Book of Mormon. Statistics is considered an art because of the manner in which it is applied and when it is applied to genetics it becomes a mathematical science that can trace the probable characteristics of a population group. Any statistical analysis claiming certain outcomes is required to

Inside this issue:

Mesoamerican King Lists <i>Cont.</i>	2 & 3
DNA and the Book of Mormon <i>Cont.</i>	4
Even Greater Things	5, 6 & 7
Did Ancient People Truly Write on Metal Plates?	8 & 11
Adventures in Archaeology	9 & 10
Hill Cumorah Expedition Team, Inc. Now 501 (c) (3)	11
2010 Fall Expedition	12

Mesoamerican King Lists and the Book of Mormon *continued*

logical evidences of those kings should be found. That is to say, if the kings and pseudo-kings that are about to be discussed actually existed, then I maintain that archaeological evidences of such do exist. It should simply be a matter of searching. As in the last three articles, my assumption is that major Maya cities are also major Book of Mormon cities, and that assumption also includes timelines² and the existence of the Bountiful Historical Society.³ So, with these assumptions clarified, a partial list of odd Book of Mormon kings and archaeological evidences of their existence will now begin.

King Laman

The King Laman to which I refer here is the king that suppressed King Lemhi.⁴ That king was mentioned in the last part of this series. There I stated that he was probably a vassal king under the unnamed Lamanite king located in the City of Lehi-Nephi (Kaminaljuyu).⁵ This king would have been located at the pre-

sent-day Maya site of Canajasta which indeed supports this concept.

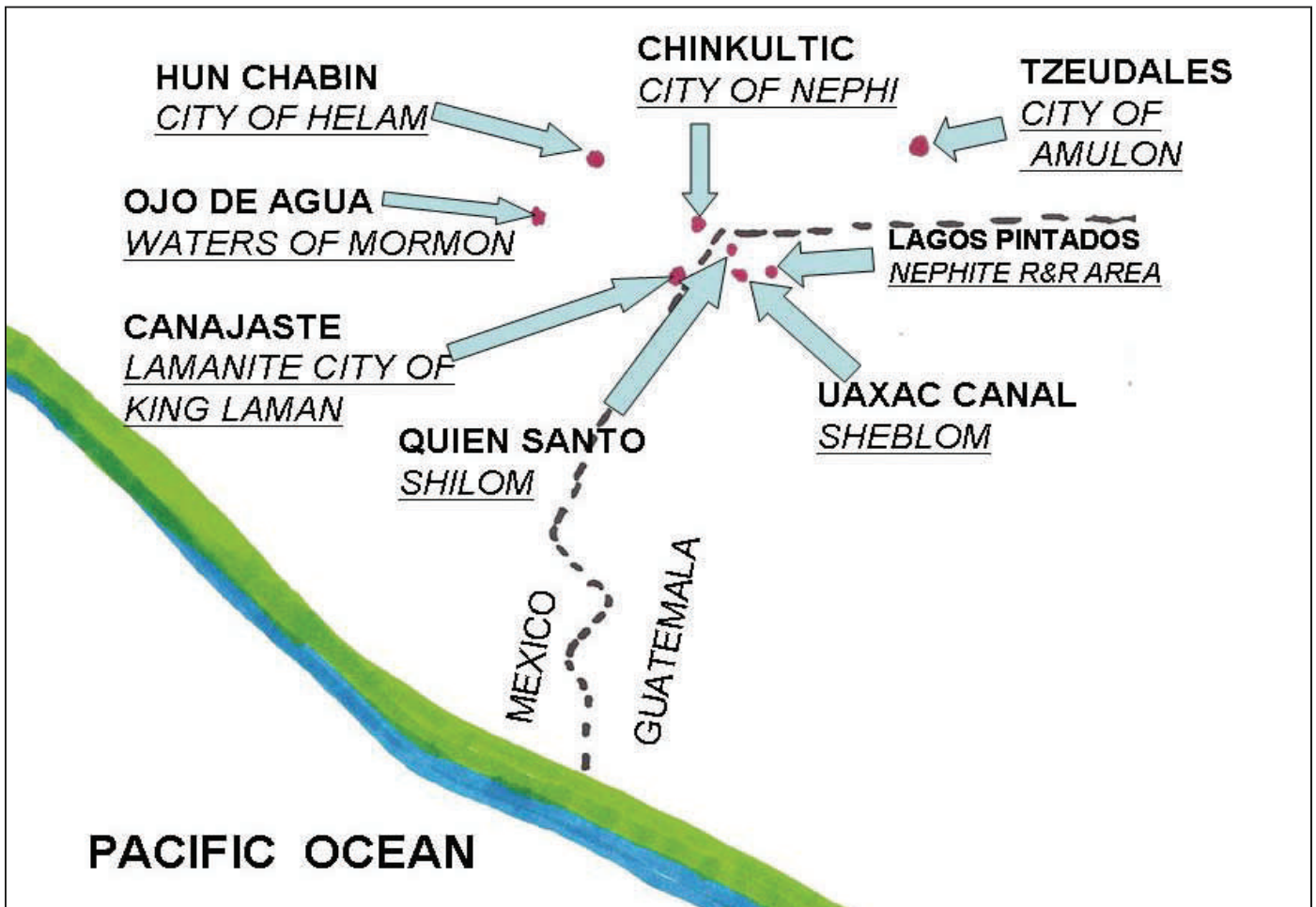
Some of the archaeologists working at that site now believe that the city of Canajasta did subjugate the site of Chinkultic (City of Nephi) for several generations.⁶ This is new information from the INAH center at Comitán, Chiapas and it is why this king is being revisited from our last installment of this series. The existence of this new view is important in that it strongly supports the assumptions I have made.

King Mormon

This is one of my favorite lost kings in the Book of Mormon. He is only mentioned once and that single mention occurs when Alma escapes from the City of Nephi (Chinkultic) to the ancient dead kingdom of King Mormon.⁷ Just that one single statement infers a tremendous amount of information. What can be discovered about this ancient forgotten kingdom? There seem to be two possibilities; either it is an ancient Nephite city or an

ancient Jaredite city. Both of these are possible, though on the surface it seems that the Nephite city is far more probable. The question exists because of the available evidence.

Geographically, I believe that Chinkultic is the City of Nephi and that Canajasta is the City of Laman. I also believe that the Lamanites are southward of Chinkultic and that King Laman represents the probable northernmost Lamanite outpost located to the west of Chinkultic. If all of this is true, then Alma had to escape northward. In this direction are two possible archaeological sites; one is Olmec (Jaredite) while the other is Pre-Classic Maya (Nephite). The Maya site shows evidence of a very short late Pre-Classic Maya occupation after it had been abandoned for several centuries.⁸ This short “blip” in occupation of the site fits the description of the arrival and later abandonment by Alma and his people. The Olmec (Jaredite) site simply has not been fully explored, but analytical think-



Mesoamerican King Lists and the Book of Mormon *continued*

ing can provide more.

If King Mormon was an early Nephite king living between the times of...oh, let's say King Jacob (son of Lehi) and Mosiah the elder, then it seems that King Mormon might be either a usurper to the Nephite throne during those early times or the real name of an early King Nephi.⁹ If so, Alma might have known his true name. But, even if Alma didn't know that king's name one must remember that this piece of history is being "edited" by General Mormon at about 360 AD, and he has the advantage of hindsight with the records that he has in his possession. As stated, the argument can be made that Alma and his people went to the Jaredite site, in which case, the ancient king's name would have been unknown to them. However, with the historical knowledge that General Mormon had the Jaredite name could have been included in our present Book of Mormon text.

"Mormon" has the appearance of being a Nephite name, and there are those who stand by that argument. (I must at least admit that they might be right). However, there are some Jaredite names that have similar characteristics to the name "Mormon." So, until the Jaredite (Olmec) site is fully excavated, I choose the Maya city over the Olmec city to be the location for King Mormon's Kingdom. The names of those two archaeological sites are Hun Chabin and Xoc.

King Jacob

Just before Christ visits the Book of Mormon lands in the Americas, a man by the name of Jacob establishes a kingdom up northward of the pass.¹⁰ He did not have much time to build much of his kingdom because his namesake city Jacobugath was destroyed by fire in the Great Destruction just before Christ's arrival. The location of that city is presently placed at San Miguel. This placement is tentative as no reports are known to exist of any excavations at the site. However, a personal cursory visit did show charred remains at the proper soil levels.

Pseudo-King Amlici

This was the founding father of the group known as the Amlicites.¹¹ Though it is not mentioned that he was ever named king by his people, all of the trap-pings of that position seems to be present;

i.e. he went off from Nephite territory to found his own land. There are two aspects of the Amlicites worth mentioning. First, they painted their faces. Artifacts have been from late Pre-Classic times that support this and it is the correct time period. Therefore, this becomes another archaeological evidence of the Book of Mormon story. Second, it is described that the Amlicites move up to live in the highlands northward.¹² If true, then they should be linguistically distinguishable. And, as has been shown elsewhere¹³ they can be found on a linguistic map (see illustration). This provides yet another evidence for the Book of Mormon.

Pseudo-King Amaleki

Long after the Amlici event the scriptures imply that a man by the name of Amaleki also broke away from the Nephites.¹⁴ Interestingly, his group went to the same geographical area that the Amlicites had gone. I believe that Amaleki also desired to be king. His very name says it. The consonants from the name Amaleki are M-L-K which spells "king" in ancient Hebrew, just as Mulok and Mulek.¹⁵ Thus, Amaleki could be a title that he took rather than a historical person's real name.¹⁶

The King-men

King Kushkumen has already been discussed in a previous article, however it needs to be pointed out that he was one of the King-men. The King-men are mentioned in the Book of Mormon and archaeologically have been demonstrated to be the Maya Sun Kings.¹⁷ Lists of those kings do not appear in the Book of Mormon, but can be found in several varying lists at Maya sites, particularly Piedras Negras and Calakmul.¹⁸ Simply the fact that the Sun King list varies from place to place in and of itself shows that contention existed within their ranks. Since none of the known Sun Kings (King-men) lists are given in the Book of Mormon, there is no reason to recite them here. The real point for discussing them is because the Book of Mormon does state that they exist and that Captain Moroni does battle with them at sites already reported.¹⁹

Pseudo-King Morianton

Finally, there is Morianton whom Teancum chased down and cut off at the pass leading northward. Though the Book of Mormon gives no reference to him

being a king, he is mentioned here because at the site from which he was fleeing modern epigraphers see his name as a king's name. Those inscriptions can be found at the modern-day site of Orange Walk in Belize.

So, there is quite a story within the Book of Mormon story referring to those who were overambitious and put their desires over the needs of their people. And, those stories have just as much archaeological evidence as the rest of the Book of Mormon.

Footnotes

1. Steede, Neil; Book of Mormon Archaeology: Artifact by Artifact, ESRS 2008.
2. One of the larger problems with the Book of Mormon timeline versus the Mesoamerican timeline is the use of the GMT Calendar Correlation of the Maya Calendar to the Christian Calendar. In my opinion this problem was resolved in the work cited above. The Steede Correlation shifts the GMT timeline 890 years earlier.
3. The Bountiful Historical Society (BHS) Theory has been demonstrated to be feasible on several occasions. One of the clearest but more complex examples is the Ogam-like inscriptions from LaVenta. For more details see work cited above.
4. Mosiah 5:33
5. Opinion cited.
6. Ibid.
7. Mosiah 9:32.
8. Information gathered from INAH Center in Comitán, Chiapas.
9. Jacob 1:10-11.
10. III Nephi 3:44-49.
11. Alma 1:53-89.
12. Steede, opinion cited.
13. Steede, opinion cited.
14. Alma 13:2-5.
15. Steede, opinion cited.
16. Just as it is now known that Mulek's name was "Benjamin" (See Steede, opinion cited).
17. Steede, opinion cited.
18. Steede, Neil; Calakmul as a Possible Identification for the City of Judea, ESRS, 2008.
19. Steede, opinion cited.

DNA and the Book of Mormon *continued*

also show how the study was performed so that the applied judgment can be considered in relation to the validity of the study. The purpose of this article is to consider three features of statistics that are important to a study in our search for truth. The three features I want to focus on are sample size, sampling bias, and the possibility of systematic errors.

In any statistical analysis the sample size is critical so that as much pertinent information as possible is gathered for a valid study. If we were to conduct a study concerning mtDNA and Y-chromosome markers as it related to the history of the Book of Mormon we might start in the countries of Mexico, Guatemala, Honduras and Belize (See Figure 1). These are the countries that many Book of Mormon scholars consider the location where the actual events took place. The combined population of these countries is close to 128 million people. If we were to break this down into manageable numbers for a statistical study we could use the chart given in Figure 2 to determine how many people need to be tested for our study. A larger population requires a smaller percentage of people to survey because of duplications, while a smaller population requires a larger percentage of people surveyed due to the possibility of certain characteristics being left out. In either case, larger sample sizes produce greater precision in the results and there is less chance for error. In our case, we would want as many markers as possible represented.

Sampling bias is the introduction of errors into a study due to a lack of using random samples. This is where the art of applying the science of statistics is most needed. One example of sampling bias occurs when "convenience" samples are



Figure 1

used. Convenience samples for mtDNA studies are often collected from clinics in order to reduce the cost of the study and are small sample sizes in comparison to the total population. By their nature these samples are biased because they are samples collected from populations being treated for ailments and diseases; a high percentage of healthy people are absent from this sample. Certain diseases tend to run in families and a high percentage of those families can then be represented in the study. Another possible sample bias occurs in the human genome studies being conducted throughout the globe. These samples are often contributed by those who can afford and are willing to pay to have a swab of their DNA tested. This excludes entire sections of the population that were neither interested nor could afford the expense.

Random sampling is statistically the best. Simple random sampling means that individuals are chosen by chance with each candidate having an equal probability of being chosen. This can be difficult in such large populations. Statisticians sometimes use what is called cluster sampling and/or multi-stage sampling to try and keep costs down.

One example of cluster sampling is to test certain segments of the population according to "natural" groupings evident within the population, such as age, gender or geographic region fol-

lowed by a process to randomly choose the population within the cluster to be tested. This method is called multi-staged sampling which is a technique of gathering data by separating the test population into groups, that are then separated into subgroups again and again until the final sample criteria is met. If you wanted to compare the Middle East to Central America or wanted to expand the study to North

America the same rules would apply. Random sampling in the Middle East would be very important. The history of the Middle East and all the occupations over the years would lead one to believe that there is the potential for a large variety of mtDNA markers. Here we have an entire new set of statistical formulas called correlation studies that needs to be applied in comparing the populations of Central America and the Middle East if similar markers were found in both populations.

Systematic errors can occur in any kind of statistical study. These are errors that can occur if something important is left out or if something is wrong with the test systems. One example of a systematic error that occurs in our study concerning the mtDNA markers is if a haplogroup was completely left out. This occurs if a marker relating to our population in Central America or the Middle East has not yet been discovered. If the only testing going on is for the known A,B,C,D or X haplogroups there is the potential for something undiscovered to be left out by not testing for it because those conducting the test are unaware of the "missing" marker(s). Other systematic errors or sampling bias can occur if segments of the population did not want to be tested for any reason.

Human migrations have occurred since the beginning of time just as the process of the ocean churning up sand and laying it to rest on the shore. The mtDNA and Y-chromosome markers are like grains of sand that need to be sifted into some sort of order to make the picture of our historical populations complete.

Size of Population to be tested	Sample size for 5% error	Sample size for 3% error	Sample size for 1% error
100	79	91	99
500	217	340	475
1,000	278	516	906
5,000	357	879	3388
10,000	370	964	6239
50,000	381	1045	8057
100,000	383	1056	8762

Figure 2

“And these things have I written, which are a lesser part of the things which he [Christ] taught the people; and I have written them to the intent that they may be brought again unto this people, from the Gentiles, according to the words which Jesus hath spoken. And when they shall have received this, which is expedient that they should have first, to try their faith, and if it shall so be that they shall believe these things, then shall the greater things be made manifest unto them. And if it so be that they will not believe these things, then shall the greater things be withheld from them, unto their condemnation. Behold I was about to write them all which were engraven upon the plates of Nephi, but the Lord forbid it, saying, I will try the faith of my people; therefore I, Mormon, do write the things which have been commanded me of the Lord.” III Nephi 12:2-5

These are the words of Mormon as he was concluding the story of Christ’s visit in the resurrected flesh here in the Americas. In this passage Mormon had just recited the events concerning the Great Destruction, the visitation of Christ, His calling of the twelve disciples, the establishment of the sacraments of baptism and communion, the ring of heavenly fire around the children while angels ministered to them, and the translation of the three disciples into perpetual beings who we now refer to as the Three Nephites. Mormon had told us all these things and then he states that he was about to reveal all, but the Spirit constrained him because we had yet to be tested before we could receive. Have you ever considered what more could be revealed to us? After telling us all these things Mormon states that there are greater things to tell; what could those greater things be? Whatever they are we are given the keys to unlock those mysteries; it is our expression of faith.

Today we live in a world of information. We are constantly bombarded with information; statistics, polls, scientific theory, scientific fact, mathematical expressions that have revealed some of the most fascinating aspects of our universe such as black holes, pulsars, and a universe that is expanding on one edge and perhaps collapsing on the other. Informa-

tion that has developed a type of medical care that is truly providing substantially prolonged lifetimes; medications for managing blood pressure, cholesterol, sodium, blood sugar, energy levels, emotional depression; we have knee replacements, hip replacements, organ transplants, bone marrow transplants, and on and on. The extension of life and the pursuit of eternal youth is a burgeoning field of scientific and medical breakthroughs. Who can deny that countless lives have been extended through all of this new technology? But, for all the advances in promoting improved physical health what advances have we made to promote better spiritual health? Have we made any advancement in our expressions of faith?

A person may argue that it takes faith to change lifestyles and trust that those changes in conjunction with medications will affect a difference and extend life. I believe that is true. But, in whom are we placing our faith? There is no doubt that mankind has benefited from the advancements of technology. But, have we focused and trusted too heavily on the intelligence of man, what many call trusting in the “arm of flesh?” Many of us spend substantial amounts of time everyday on promoting better health; walking, running, physical workouts, visits to doctors, visits to pharmacies, laying out our daily medications, adjusting our schedules and making countless mental notes to remember to take our medication. Do we invest that same

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amount of time or more to promoting the spiritual health of ourselves and others? “For bodily exercise profiteth little; but godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come” (I Timothy 4:8). The scriptures remind us time and again that it is our deeds or actions that reveal our true priorities. What do your

actions say about you? Do you give your spiritual health the same attention as your physical health? How much time each day do you dedicate to reading scripture, writing letters of hope, sharing a good word to increase someone’s faith in God, or visiting someone who is sick or in prison?

We tend to rely heavily on all this information we are receiving. We tend to be swayed by polls and statistics without regard for how a poll was taken, or how the information was gathered and refined in order to provide the final numbers being displayed before us in a manner that appears to represent fact. I have heard religious officials recite statistics in an effort to sell member participation in church financial programs. I have heard religious historians treat church history with a skeptical and disconnected approach that was devoid of spiritual perspective all in the name of being “intellectually accurate.” But, the truth of the matter is that all information is conveyed through perspective—it is skewed. All of it. Even that which is presented to us in the form of accepted scientific dogma and fact. So in the final analysis, who is telling the truth and how can you discern what information is good and true? I believe the only way be certain about the truth of an issue is to accept God’s challenge when he says, “...and prove me now herewith...” (Malachi 3:10). And that act requires faith.

Early in my adult life when I faced financial trials with unpaid taxes I spoke with a person who owned their own business who said, “Get a tax man to work up your taxes, it will save you money.” I went to the tax professional. When all was said and done I still had to pay the taxes I had originally figured on my return, plus I now had to come up with the \$296 to pay the tax man for telling me something I already knew. This is just one of many pieces of good advice I received from well-intended people who wanted to help me over the years. There were times when the advice I was given was good advice, but my point is that when I trusted in man; professional, intellectual, trade-experienced or otherwise, it was like playing the numbers at a poker table—I was betting against the odds for success.

By contrast, during the last several years I have found that when I have taken the challenge that God has laid before me to “prove me now herewith,” and I have chosen to accept His word as a loving parent and follow His laws, without fail He has provided me a Father’s guidance. I no longer have to play the odds when facing a life issue by trusting in the arm of flesh or even the intellect or technology of man. Even with medical procedures I am able to enter into those circumstances in partnership with God and know that I can follow where God’s spirit is leading me when accepting the advice given by a physician. It is the Holy Spirit that provides guidance and direction for my life. That is how I know what is true. That is how I can find my way through the remarkable accumulation of knowledge we have today. God is my guide and He directs my paths.

The abundance of knowledge we have received during the last 150 years has created a body of knowledge that acts like an elixir for our modern ego. We tend to believe that we are the cream-of-the-crop; that no society has ever achieved such intellect as we now enjoy. This perspective tends to produce a lack of honor and respect for our brothers and sisters from the past who bequeathed to us beautiful stories of God revealing himself through the gospel. But our lack of honor for our past creates a disconnect between our present and our past. We tend to believe that those in the past were mentally challenged and that their perceptions and decisions were flawed because they “just didn’t understand the things that we understand today thanks to the amount of knowledge we have acquired.” Man’s intellectual teaching over the last half century has tended to create a perspective in our Restoration faith membership that the Book of Mormon is a curious book of questionable beginnings with many wonderful stories of how a beneficent God works among His creation. It is presented as accepted sacred scripture, but because there are no apparent remains from those ancient cultures it is not taught as an accurate or factual record. What was once accepted as sacred in both spiritual and historical truth is now often presented as a good moral lesson much like the fables of Aesop. But, where is the expression of faith?

How will we receive the greater things if we do not give full expression to our belief in the scriptures?

I am a member of several organizations who consistently make the point that I will only receive satisfaction from my membership to the extent that I am willing to participate. It is like a proportional investment equation; only when you commit to having both feet in and fully participate will you truly understand the intrinsic value of the organization to which you belong. It is also a give and take equation; if you give the widow’s mite then you will receive the bounty of the harvest. But, if you find a multitude of reasons to limit the portion of your giving, then you will receive the same lukewarm return.

Mormon’s words require that if we are to receive the “greater things” then we must invest a belief in what we have received; both feet in and no more riding the fence. We must be committed to trusting that Holy Spirit when it burns in our bosom and we KNOW that the word of God we read in the Book of Mormon is true. God said this is part of the fullness of the gospel being revealed in the latter days and as Enos states, “*And I, Enos, knew that God could not lie...*” (Enos 1:8). That expression requires us to believe, otherwise we are not fully trusting in His word and are not good stewards—we will suffer the condemnation of having received the fullness and not believing.

This is not a treatise on how terrible modern knowledge is; quite the contrary. I believe that God-directed knowledge is incredibly effective. As a matter of fact, that is the theme of this article. It is beyond a doubt the most incredible experience of my life to witness how God has revealed remarkable understandings. And I am convinced that this has happened because I and my fellow members of the Hill Cumorah Expedition Team have made a mutual commitment to actively demonstrate our faith. I am convinced that it is the demonstration of faith that has produced the results we have found thus far.

Hill Cumorah Expedition Team began as a small group who caught a vision of a budding theory put forth by Neil Steede concerning the location of the Nephite final battleground in Mexico.

Catching hold of that vision a team of people have repeatedly traveled to that location over the last ten years and on each occasion new insights have been provided allowing us to further develop and refine this theory. But, it goes beyond a theory concerning this battleground. It has developed into a perspective that now drives all of our research. That perspective is based on a few foundational principles. They are:

1. The events recorded in the Book of Mormon are historically accurate from the perspective of the Nephites who are keeping the record.
2. The Book of Mormon is not only provided to us so that we can spiritually benefit and enjoy a hope for eternal life, but it also provides important clues for those who want to research and prepare to receive insights that unlock historical proofs for faithful believers. (D & C 9:3a-e)
3. A society as complex in structure as that recorded in the Book of Mormon must be able to be traced even 2,000 years later. The prime suspect for this culture is the Mayan culture.
4. The cities described in the Book of Mormon were places of central government and were the locations of pivotal clashes of both armies and philosophies. Those cities should be identifiable today in Mayan ruins.
5. The complete history of the Book of Mormon is discoverable through research and expressions of faith.

This model of approach has produced an incredible amount of information that is beginning to increase our understanding of the people of the Book of Mormon. Neil Steede began a series of classes in 2004 that eventually led to the publishing of a book on the historical aspects of the Book of Mormon. Much of that original publication was merely a collection of various research subjects that Neil had produced through his 30 years of Mesoamerican archaeology. That provided a basis for an epic publication that came two years later called [Book of Mormon Archaeology: Artifact by Artifact](#). This publication took the chronological approach to the Book of Mormon and as Neil began gathering as much research evidence as he could find on each era and aspect he was absolutely amazed as the preponderance of evi-

Even Greater Things *continued*

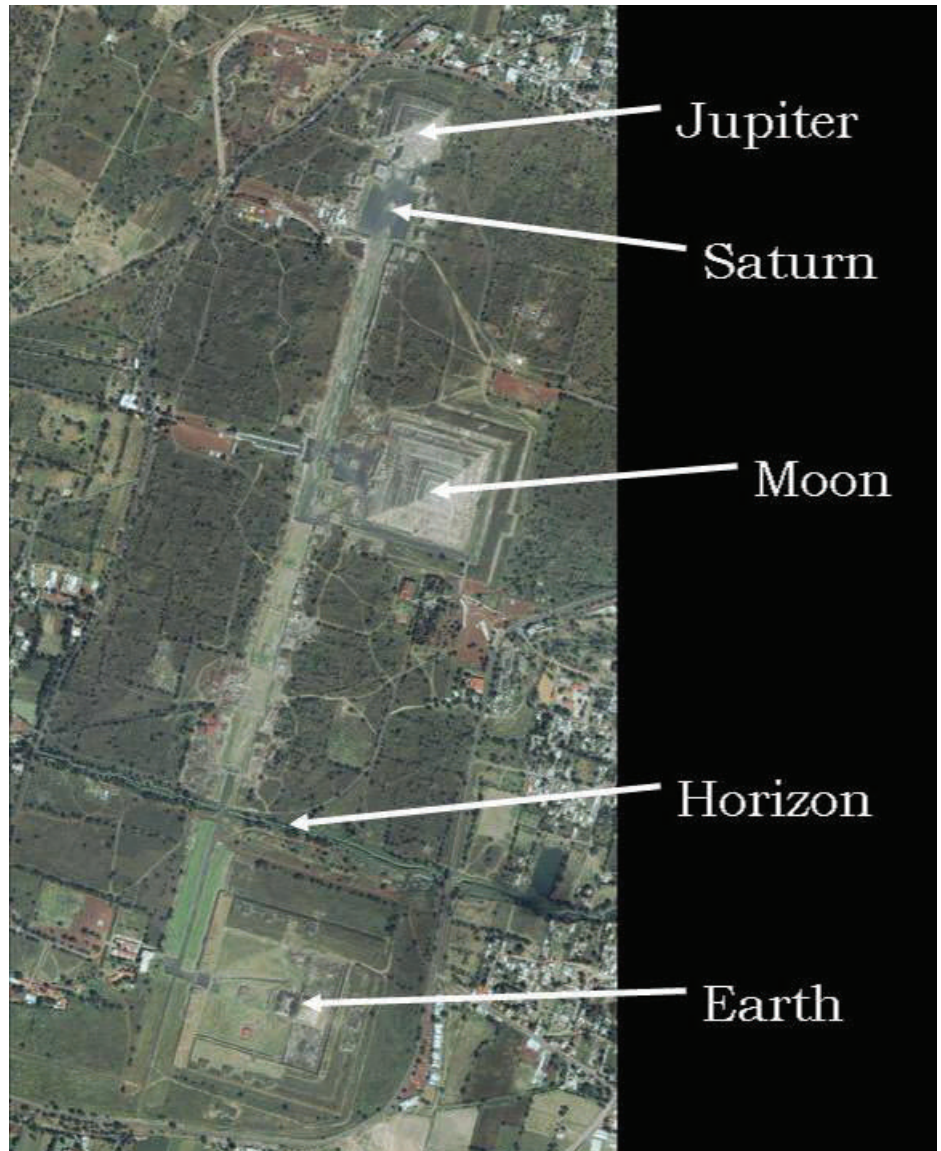
dences that actually support the stories found in the Book of Mormon.

After the completion of that 88 chapter book, Neil began to focus on the correlation of Enoch to the pyramids in Ancient Egypt. He then approached that subject from the same perspective that there should be evidences to support the supposition that Enoch was the architect of that ancient culture. Again, without a conclusion drawn, Neil moved forward on the supposition that Enoch was the founder and that the pyramids were testaments to his philosophy. Once the research was gathered, the support for this was again amazing. The architecture of the buildings provided a relational blueprint to his philosophy of life after death and to his testimony of his Messiah.

After this project Neil then began studying the Bethlehem Star on the notion that something would reveal a connection with the Americas. That expression of faith has been paid in full with a revelation of exactly what celestial event came to be known as the Bethlehem Star, and there is an incredible tie of this event to the pyramids at Teotihuacán. These structures mark the positions of the planets involved in that event on the night before Christ was born; it is the western hemisphere testimony of the day, night and day as if it was one day and there was no night. (See photo on right)

The most recent project embarked upon is the translation of the glyphs found in Palenque on the Temple of the Sun, Temple of the Cross, Temple of the Foliated Cross and Temple XIX. This is a project that has enjoyed new life because of the discovery of the celestial event that is the Bethlehem Star. This event is recorded in the glyphs on these temples along with the individuals who are now known as the three wise men and the Three Nephites. And this study will undoubtedly lead to more revelations.

All of this has been revealed through a lot of hard work and countless expressions of faith that the scriptures God has provided are true in every respect. It has brought all of us working on the projects to a point of reverential awe for the faith our ancestors demonstrated to build their belief systems into such massive structures on the hope that we would one day unlock their secrets. Expressing our faith in God's work has provided the key to



unlock those doors and our hearts are filled with joy that our God loves us enough to be patient and bring us to this understanding. And, we are humbled to realize that our ancient brothers and sisters were truly no different from us; they loved God and testified to His eternal love for humanity. In fact, they apparently knew more than we do because Mormon was warned not to reveal certain things as God first needed to try our faith while providing us a promise of greater things. Is it possible that we are just now catching up to the level of spiritual development our brothers and sisters enjoyed some 2,000 years ago?

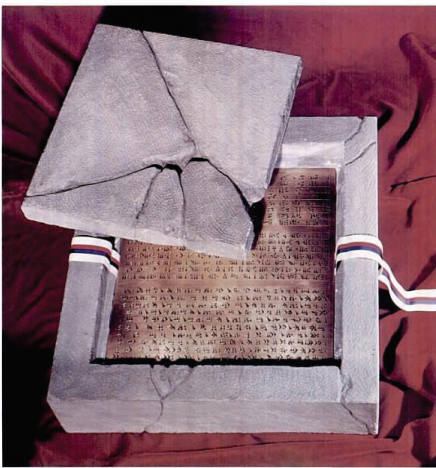
Do you want to be involved? I believe the revelation of the Bethlehem Star

and its connection to Teotihuacán is only one of the many things that God was holding back while waiting for us to demonstrate our desire to discover more. There is so much that needs to be done with further research to be completed and subsequent papers to write. There is room for all of us to express our faith and demonstrate our modern-day belief in the word we have received. Knowledge is a tremendous tool when it is engaged in the effort to bring people to eternal salvation; information is invaluable when it is infused with God's purposes in mind. This type of revelation is truly a "marvelous work and a wonder." Only through this kind of faithful expression can we ever hope to receive the "greater things."

Did Ancient People Truly Write on Metal Plates? by Terry Scott

There has been much criticism over the years concerning the Joseph Smith claim of the golden plates. Was this a common practice in ancient times? How much was known about ancient world cultures in the 1830s? Was it common practice to make records on metal or are the critics right? Was Joseph claiming something that no ancient culture practiced? We have the luxury of living in a time where much more is known about the world. We have made and continue to make discoveries about how other cultures lived and kept records.

In 1938 the Plates of Darius were found in Persia. They consisted of one gold tablet and one silver tablet buried in a stone box at the corner of his temple. The same information was written on each tablet in three different languages; ten lines in Old Persian, seven lines in Elamite and eight lines in Akkadian. They give a brief genealogy, listed the boundaries of his kingdom and ended with a prayer that he and his house will be protected. These plates date from around 518 to 515 BC¹ (see figure 1). Here is a point of interest; this Darius was probably the same King Darius that had Daniel cast into den of lions (Daniel 6:7-24).



Darius Persipolis Gold and Silver Plates (figure 1)

Ten copper plates held together by a ring were found dating from the Parantaka Nedunjadaiyan period in India circa 769 AD² (see figure 2). In the same time period, at a South Indian Temple of the Rajaraja, small copper plates were engraved with invocations to the gods, Siva and Visnu. Larger Layden copper plates



Copper Plates with a Ring (figure 2)

were found at Ranjavur Temple and refer to the commander of the Rajaraja.³

In 1853 Victor Price found six plates of Sargon II. The six plates were made of gold, silver, lead, tin, alabaster and copper. The cuneiform inscriptions tell of Sargon's accomplishments and curse anyone who would attack his reputation. Two of the plates were lost in a ship wreck in 1855. The rest reside in the Louvre museum in Paris. These plates date



The Sargon II plate is of gold (figure 3)



Gold Plate from Peru (figure 4)

from around 714 to 705 BC⁴ (see figure 3).

Closer to home in the Western Hemisphere a highly ornate gold plate was found in Lampyque, northern Peru. It now resides in the Hugo Cohen collection at the Central Reserve Bank Museum in Lima, Peru (see figure 4).

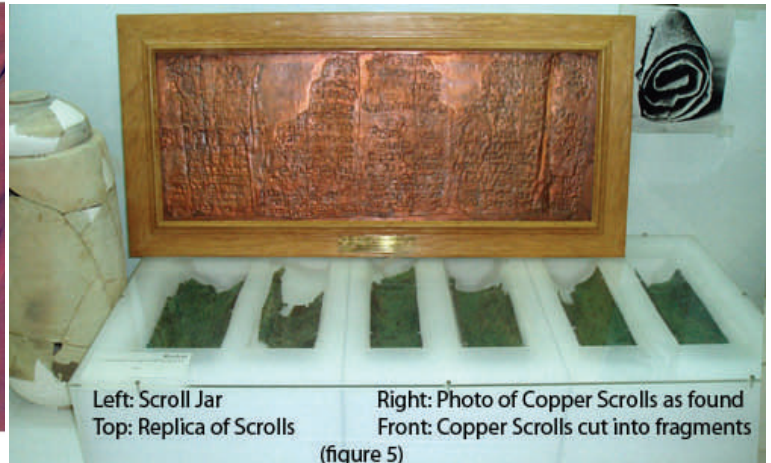
Recently the Dead Sea Scrolls exhibit has been touring the world and made a stop at Union Station in Kansas City, Missouri. It was my privilege to see the exhibit and of special interest were the copper scrolls found in Cave 3 at Qumran⁵ (see figure 5).

Seven bronze tablets called the "Tavole Eugubine Tablets" contain religious instructions for the Atiedian brothers during Roman times. Five of the tablets are written in the rare Umbrian language and date between 300-100 BC. The remaining two are in Latin and were found by a farmer in an underground chamber of the Roman theater in Gubbio, Italy in 1444.⁶

According to C.F. Cunningham in ASR Vol. II, pp.129-30, "a book of 24 thick golden leaves bound together by a copper wire was found from the Dhamdaha tank and was melted down."⁷

A small gold plate of significance named 'Djokha Umma' was discovered in the foundation of a temple in Djokha Umma, Iraq in 1895. It is written in Akkadian and dated from 2450 BC, making it the oldest writing on metal to date. The Louvre museum in Paris acquired it shortly after its discovery. It is kept in the Department of Oriental Antiquities (see figure 6).

A Baekje Kingdom (18 to 660 AD)

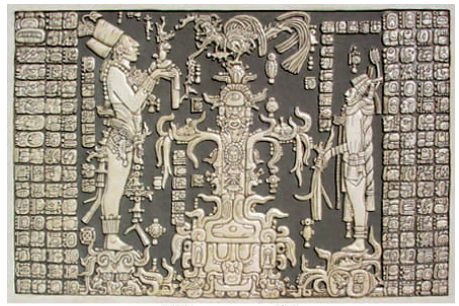


Left: Scroll Jar
Top: Replica of Scrolls

Right: Photo of Copper Scrolls as found
Front: Copper Scrolls cut into fragments (figure 5)



Hello again. Today I'm ready to write in Mayan. I have my chisel and my paint brush. The Mayans wrote by carving in stone with copper or hard stone chisels. They also painted on plaster covered walls or in a book called a codex.



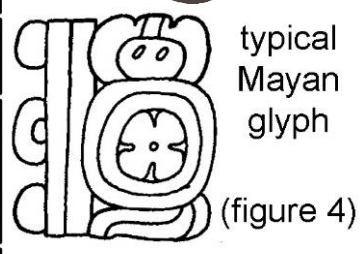
(figure 1)



(figure 2)

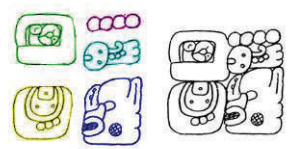


(figure 3)

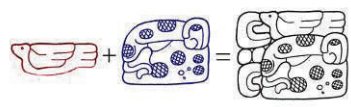


typical Mayan glyph (figure 4)

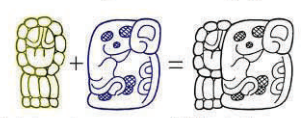
Mayans did not use letters of the alphabet to spell out words like we do. They used pictures called glyphs (figure 4) to share their ideas. Each glyph was made up of smaller pictures that represented a syllable or word. (figure 5a) These smaller pictures were added together to make more complex words or ideas. (figure 5b) When several glyphs are grouped together, you start at the top left and read the first two, then dropped down to read the next pair and continued until the end of that column. You go back to the top of the next column and repeat the same steps. (figure 6) Reading Mayan glyphs are very time consuming. All the parts of each glyph must be considered to understand what they are saying. Sometimes glyphs described a scene, usually one or more figures doing something.



(figure 5a)



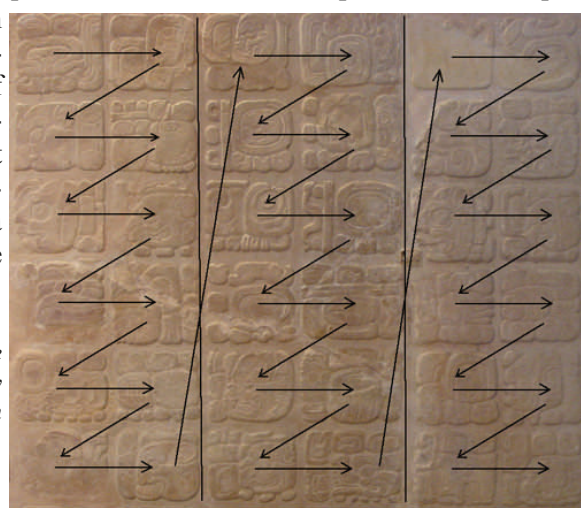
Bird + Jaguar = Birdjaguar



Shield + Jaguar = Shieldjaguar

(figure 5b)

Several copper chisels were found when a cenote (a very large natural well) at Chichen Itza was drained by Edward H. Thompson around 1907.



(figure 6)

Fill in the names of the glyphs to the right from the list provided below:

- | | |
|-----------|--------|
| Alligator | Bird |
| Dog | Fish |
| Jaguar | Macaw |
| Monkey | Owl |
| Rabbit | Rat |
| Scribe | Skull |
| Snake | Turtle |
| Vulture | Woman |

Hint - two of the glyphs are named in the article.



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

Find the hidden words in the Word Search Puzzle to the left.

- | | |
|---------|----------|
| Book | Mayan |
| Brush | Paint |
| Carve | Pictures |
| Chisel | Plaster |
| Codex | Pottery |
| Copper | Stone |
| Glyph | Words |
| Letters | |

(all words used in story)

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/>

Did Ancient People Truly Write on Metal Plates? Continued



gold plate - Djokha Umma
(figure 6)

pagoda was excavated in January of 2009 in North Jeolla Province, South Korea and a golden plate or 'bongangi' was found. The writing was in ancient Chinese and contained 193 words on eleven lines⁸ (see figure 7).

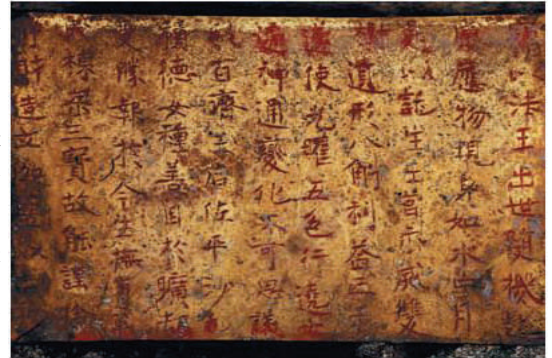
In 1957 Franklin S. Harris created a table of Old World Writing on Metal Plates. In his table he showed 62 plates that had been discovered by 1957.⁹

It therefore seems apparent from the long list of metal plate discoveries that people from various cultures throughout the ages obviously felt that writing important information on metal plates was an excellent way to preserve knowledge for future generations. It has been done many times over the last 4400 year ago.

We continue to discover more and more from the ancient civilizations of our past. As our knowledge grows, I expect we will continue to find that many of the claims made by Joseph Smith Jr. that were "unbelievable" in 1830 were really common place in ancient times.

Footnotes

1. Cheesman, Paul R., *Ancient Writings on Metal Plates*, Horizon Publishing, Bountiful, Utah, 1985.
2. Sastri, Rao Bahadur H. Krishna, ed. *Epigraphia Indica*, Vol. XVII (1923-24), (reprint 1983).
3. Geeta Vasudevan, *The Royal Temple of RajaRaja*, Abhinav Publishing, Ashok Veihar, Delhi, 2003.
4. Cheesman Paul R., *Ancient Writings on Metal Plates*, Horizon Publishing, Bountiful, Utah, 1985.
5. Qumran is an ancient Hebrew city found in 1945. It was located about a



Korean 'bongangi' golden plate
(figure 7)

mile from the Dead Sea on a rocky plateau. The Dead Sea Scrolls were found in several nearby caves. It was abandoned in 68 BC while the Romans were putting down the Jewish rebellion.

6. Lombardi, Mathew, *Fodor's Italy*, Random House Inc., 2006, p.504
7. Sircar, D. C., *Indian Epigraphy*, Shri Jainendra Press, Delhi, India, 1965, p. 78
8. The Buddhist Channel, www.buddhistchannel.tv/index.php?id=45,7666.0.0.1.0
9. Harris, Franklin S. Jr., *Others Kept Records on Metal Plates Too*, The Instructor, Vol.92, No. 10, 1957

Hill Cumorah Expedition Team, Inc. Now 501 (c) (3)

In February of 2010 the Hill Cumorah Expedition Team, Inc. became a nonprofit corporation registered in the State of Missouri that is exempt from Federal income-taxes under section 501 (c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code. Contributions to our organization are now tax deductible under section 170 of that same Code. This designation also makes our organization qualified to receive tax deductible bequests, devises, transfers, or gifts under sections 2055, 2106 or 2522 of the Code.

This accomplishment for the team now opens the door for larger possibilities in the sense of funding for major projects. The Board and members have already funded a \$1,400 Stone Tablet Project at Teotihuacán that now places our organization in a position to work directly with the archaeological commu-

nity in Mesoamerica. This funding only covered expenses for the labor and authorization paperwork to set up our project—all the traveling team members still cover their own expenses because they are dedicated to the cause at hand.

The Hill Cumorah Expedition Team, Inc. is a Missouri Nonprofit Corporation dedicated to the archaeological and historical research and distribution of information that relate to the Book of Mormon. If you are interested and feel so led to support our efforts through a membership then you can send the membership fee in check or money order made out to: **Hill Cumorah Expedition Team, Inc.**

The annual fee for membership is \$100, and \$50 for seniors and students. This helps us to maintain our ongoing efforts to research and distribute the information such the this newsletter which

is published quarterly.

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311 N Lee Street
Buckner, MO 64016

If you prefer to purchase your membership with a credit card, then you can access our website and send your funds through PayPal. Donations are always welcome. And, with our latest 501 (c) (3) designation we are able to provide our givers the benefit of tax credit for the gifts we receive.

The success of our effort is greatly enhanced when there is sufficient funding. All of this can only happen with God's blessing, but we feel that we must prepare ourselves to be ready when God says, "It's time!"

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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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2010 Fall Expedition By David B. Brown

2010 is quickly becoming a very unusual year. The Hill Cumorah Expedition Team typically travels to Mexico once a year during the spring or perhaps gaining a second small expedition in the winter. This year we ventured a small yet productive expedition in the spring and as it has developed unexpectedly we are conducting another expedition this fall.

On September 15th Neil Steede, Don Beebe and Gary Woods are flying to Mexico City to continue some of the work on the Stone Tablet Project at Teotihuacan. This follow-up is an effort to provide the officials at the site with a completed Stone Tablet Catalogue Report that was gathered over the last several years with a photographic record that was obtained during the spring expedition. Additionally, the team at Teotihuacan is anticipating gathering more information on other projects being conducted at the site such as the tunnel



The Fall Expedition to Jalapa de Diaz will include the renewal of acquaintances developed over the last 10 years. God has given us these precious friends

beneath the Citadel of Quetzalcoatl and the prospect of a Luminol Study in the tunnel beneath the Pyramid of the Sun. It is anticipated that this visit will last through the 25th of September.

But, that is not the only representa-

tion that the Hill Cumorah Expedition Team will have in Mexico this September. There is another group of team members who are traveling from the Independence region on September 19th through the 27th. This group will be traveling directly to the Tuxtepec and Jalapa de Diaz area. The purpose of this visit is to continue the connection we have developed with the people of the Santa Domingo River valley. There are clothes that need to be delivered, people to greet, hands to shake and some continued surveys of the regions already discovered. While we presently have no new reports of areas to research, we have never been left empty in that regard; God has always found ways to have avenues opened for us to explore and we travel in faith believing that whatever God has to reveal at this time will be the very place to which we are directed. This is the faith walk of the Hill Cumorah Expedition Team.