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Fulfilment of Book of Mormon Prophecies

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Abstract: The Book of Mormon accepts the Bible to be a true record. Christ's teachings are similar in both because he visited America. Among the future events named in the Book of Mormon are the gathering of Israel, the awakening of Mexican Indians, and the removal of the "scales of Darkness" from the eyes of the Native Americans.

THE LATTER-DAY SAINTS'
MILLENNIAL STAR

ESTABLISHED IN 1840

“These scriptures, which ye had not with you, the Father commanded that I should give unto you; for it was wisdom in him that they should be given unto future generations.” BOOK OF MORMON, 3 NEPHI 26: 2.

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FULFILMENT OF BOOK OF MORMON PROPHECIES*

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THROUGHOUT the civilized world, the members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints are known generally as “Mormons.” As the name “Christian” was originally applied to the followers of Jesus of Nazareth in derision, so the name “Mormon” was applied to the followers of Jesus of Nazareth in this day—the Latter-day Saints—by those who deride them. In recent years, however, it has come to be a recognized designation to indicate them as distinct from other religious organizations. The name is adapted from the Book of Mormon, a record of sacred scripture connected with the history of ancient America, and which is accepted by the Latter-day Saints as the word of God, in similar sense to their acceptance of the Bible as the word of God.

SACRED RECORDS

So far as relates to history, the Bible and the Book of Mormon consist of records of portions of the Hebrew race to whom were committed the oracles of God at certain periods of the world's history. The Bible also contains history prior to the time of Eber, from whom the Hebrews sprang; this period reaching back to the first peopling of this earth by Adam and his descendants. The Book of Mormon accepts this prior record as true, and adapts to its use lessons contained therein, as these were included in the

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writings of prophets and historians of Israel. By later revelations at the time of the coming of Jesus of Nazareth as Saviour, in His visit to the American continent, there also is incorporated in the Book of Mormon teachings found also in the New Testament.

In some particulars, the Book of Mormon expresses in the English language Bible teachings more clearly than does the authorized version of the Old and New Testaments, for the reason that affecting the latter are disagreeing translations of a restricted number of Bible passages, while in the Book of Mormon there are no disagreements or discrepancies as to translation. It is in this sense that the eighth of thirteen Articles of Faith expressing views of the Latter-day Saints or "Mormons" is made to read as follows :

"We believe the Bible to be the word of God, as far as it is translated correctly ; we also believe the Book of Mormon to be the word of God."

THE MIRACLE OF TRANSLATION

Joseph Smith, who was born at Sharon, Vermont, December 23rd, 1805, and was martyred by a mob of ruffians at Carthage, Illinois, on June 27th, 1844, translated the Book of Mormon from plates on which it had been inscribed more than fifteen centuries ago, the language then used being unfamiliar to men of this day, hence its translation was of necessity "by the gift and power of God." As had been the case anciently, some of Israel's prophets were entrusted with a divinely utilized Urim and Thummim ; Joseph Smith also was entrusted with such an instrument. The Book of Mormon was translated from an unsealed portion, or about one-third, of a set of gold plates delivered to him by an angelic messenger, and taken away again when the translation was completed. The whole transaction savours of the miraculous, in that there was direct divine interposition involved, above ordinary human ability to accomplish. From the description given by the Prophet Joseph Smith of the dimensions of the entire set of plates and utensils accompanying it, expert comparison shows that the whole weighed from sixty to seventy pounds ; this weight being consistent with the statements of the Prophet relative thereto.

A common and conclusive test of the divine inspiration of the Bible in the claim that it is the word of God is that of the truly prophetic nature of its predictions and the sublime moral character of its teachings. The same rule can be applied effectively to the Book of Mormon. If its claim to divine inspiration holds good in these respects as it does with the Bible, of necessity the account of its miraculous bringing forth as a translated record is conclusively proved in its minutest detail. Logically this is indis-

putable. It cannot be true as to the one fact and untrue as to the other, since both are inescapably woven together.

With internal evidence of its divine authenticity, the volume is amply provided. It presents a code of ethics whose purity and godliness are unexcelled by any publication that has seen the light of day. In its pages there are no anachronisms and no contradictions. The various writers are in perfect accord. Compared with the great truths of science and nature, there are no absurdities and no inconsistencies. Between it and the Bible there is complete harmony in doctrine and in prophecy. It is a book that would be profitable reading to any thoughtful person. No intelligent, honest and sincere seeker after truth can give it thorough examination and consideration, with an understanding of the circumstances under which it was brought forth, without being convinced that in giving to the world the Book of Mormon, a miracle truly has been wrought by the gift and power of God.

Respecting that portion of Israel called in the Bible the House of Judah—the Jews—the Book of Mormon has some pointed predictions of events in this latter-day dispensation. It tells that a strongly representative body of Jews is to be gathered to “the land of Jerusalem, which is the promised land unto them forever,” and that the time will come “when the fulness of my gospel shall be preached unto them; And they shall believe in me, that I am Jesus Christ, the Son of God, and shall pray unto the Father in my name.” (3 Nephi 20:29-31).

GATHERING OF THE SCATTERED JEWS

Among the events therein named, especial attention is called on this occasion to the prediction first referred to, that when the Jews shall come to the knowledge of their Redeemer, they shall be gathered again to the lands of their inheritance; and the prediction later recorded, that they shall be restored to the true church and fold of God. This gathering of the Jews to the land of their inheritance—Palestine—has been instituted, and is now going on in a small way under British control; but the restoration to “the true church and fold of God” is still an event of the future, destined to come with the fulfilment of associate prophecies now in process of accomplishment as present occurring facts.

The Book of Mormon (2 Nephi 30:7) has further detail of this achievement now commencing and yet to come, wherein it says that “It shall come to pass that the Jews which are scattered also shall begin to believe in Christ,” and that “as many as shall believe in Christ shall also become a delightsome people.” There is here a classification of the gathering Jews and of those who remain “scattered” so far as Palestine is concerned. In past ages, individual Jews have embraced Christianity, but the reference

here is to a more extended application, the results of which are set forth but not yet existent. This action of beginning to "believe in Christ" has taken much more definite form since the great war than previously, among "the Jews which are scattered." This belief is devoid of the excessively bitter antagonism which once characterized unbelieving Jews toward those who believed. At a recent meeting of four hundred missionary Jews in Hamburg, Germany, it was announced that in Russia in the past seven years, eight hundred thousand Jews had accepted belief in Christ. All of this number were Protestant, chiefly to the Church of England, no reference being made to either Roman or Greek Catholic churches. It is being facilitated and even hastened in connection with a great movement which is now sweeping through the Anglo-Saxon nations, as illustrated by this announcement by a well known Jew in London, England, which incident is in strict accord with Book of Mormon prophecy :

I, Cyrus Leach, a Jew of pure extraction, write, testifying to the great light given me by British-Israel Truth, and how, through this wonderful key to the Bible, I came to the belief that Jesus Christ is of a truth the Son of God and the Redeemer of Israel.

The action of the recent non-Zionist conference held in New York gives further evidence of the removal of bitterness among the Jews themselves, which Hebrew papers describe as "A United Jewry," pointing out the abandonment of the idea of a strictly Jewish nation politically, and uniting on plans to "rebuild Palestine and make it a spiritual shrine" which will "stress the religious aspect of the Jewish people and effect a strengthening of Jewish culture and Jewish spirituality."

PROPHETIC AS TO AMERICAN INDIANS

There is the prophecy (2 Nephi 30: 4-6) concerning the American Indians, who are descendants of the house of Israel, and whose ancestor Lehi was of the tribe of Manasseh (1 Nephi 5: 14; Alma 10: 3), son of Joseph who was sold into Egypt. The tribe of Manasseh was one of the ten tribes assigned to the nation Ephraim or Israel, when that body broke away from the kingdom of Solomon's son Rehoboam, which Jewish kingdom retained only two of the twelve tribes of Israel (1 Kings 11: 30-37, etc). The Book of Mormon says of those descendants, whom latterly we designate as American Indians :

And then shall the remnant of our seed know concerning us, how that we came out from Jerusalem, and that they are descendants of the Jews. And the gospel of Jesus Christ shall be declared among them; wherefore, they shall be restored unto the knowledge of their fathers, and also to the knowledge of Jesus Christ, which was had among their fathers. And then they shall rejoice; for they shall know that it is a blessing unto

them from the hand of God; and their scales of darkness shall begin to fall from their eyes; and many generations shall not pass away among them, save they shall be a white and delightsome people. (2 Nephi 30:4-6).

Let us take Mexico for illustration, since that nation is composed largely of American Indians. I quote from an extended statement made in the *New York Independent* before the outbreak of the recent rebellion, giving a resume of historical and present conditions in Mexico:

"Crushed by defeat, despoiled by the white conqueror, the Indian of Mexico has suffered for four hundred years from a depressing inferiority complex. Peon means the 'flattened-out man.' The Spanish conqueror of Mexico crushed a civilization which, in many respects, was superior to his own. The communal lands of the Indians furnished food for all; so that the Indian could truthfully say: 'We had no beggars until the Spaniards came.' Reduced from a self-respecting, land-owning son of the soil, the Indian became the slave of a hard, white master. The white man not only deprived the Indian of his material possessions, but endeavoured to erase his civilization as well. A four hundred years' cultural struggle followed.

AWAKENING OF THE MEXICAN INDIAN

"In spite of the inferiority complex which kept him submissive, obeying the will of masters which he outnumbered twelve to one, the Mexican Indian has never lost hope. He lived in misery, squalor, ignorance, and moral degradation, forced to work from daylight to dark; and at night, utterly exhausted from unrewarded toil, he crawled into a grass shelter. In a land of plenty, thousands of workers died from starvation or from disease due to under-nourishment. During the first ninety years of the Spanish occupation of Mexico, the Indian population was reduced three-fourths by the white man's inhumanity. The sordid mercenary practices of the white man became within a century a blighting curse to Mexico.

"Suddenly, like one of those mighty convulsions of nature which ages ago pushed the Mexican mesa up nearly two miles above the sea, the revolution thrust the twelve million Indians up to a higher plane of social and political importance than they had ever dreamed of occupying. They have become the dominant race in the land of their fathers. Like some mighty volcano silent for centuries, at last bursting forth, so the slumbering soul of the Mexican Indian has awakened.

"The few thousand whites who have dominated the Indians for so long are dismayed by this display of independence. This is especially true in ecclesiastical circles. Roman Catholic ecclesiastics claim that ninety per cent. of the entire population of Mexico are members of their church. In a sense this claim is

probably correct. The only church that ninety per cent. of the people ever heard of is the Roman Catholic.

“Few, however, have any real love for that church. There are two reasons for this: First, the Indians accepted the Roman Catholic faith at the muzzle of Spanish cannon. The white man's religion and civilization were literally shot into those who for four hundred years have lived in dread and terror of the white man's God. As evidence of this, consider the fact that within twenty years after the landing of Cortez, Torquemada wrote: ‘Five million Indians have been converted and baptized.’ This claim of seven hundred converts a day for a period of twenty years, shows not only the superficial character of the conversion of the Indians, but also the terror that sent them in droves to receive baptism at the hands of their conquerors. In spite of the lurid hell preached by the priest of the white man, the Indians clung tenaciously to their old tribal gods. Facts confirm the claim that only a small minority of the Indians ever really accepted the Christian religion in spirit. For the most part, the Indians have lived and died as pagan as their fathers. While outwardly accepting the white man's religion, observing its imposed penances and forms, at heart they hated a religion that brought them no material or moral benefits.

NEW INDIAN PSYCHOLOGY

“The background must be kept in mind by anyone who would understand the new Indian psychology in Mexico. This new Indian psychology is not a dream, but an aggressive spirit in Mexico. It demands action. The Indians do not expect help from anyone. They are determined to work out their own salvation. Neither will they permit outside interference in their internal affairs. During a recent disaster the Red Cross of the United States attempted prompt relief. The Mexican people requested them to withdraw, saying they could take care of their own destitute people. They have a carefully thought-out program into which they are trusting the thought and passion of their souls. In no country in the world has such an effort been made to educate a people concerning their past as represented in art and architecture as in Mexico to-day.

“For four hundred years the barefooted Indian, bent almost double beneath his heavy burden, trotted along the streets of Mexican cities and over the mountain trails. During all of these terrible centuries the Indian was only a beast of burden in the eyes of his white master. And because of his inferiority complex, the Indian regarded himself as little better than did his master. Formerly, only the white who wore shoes walked on the smooth sidewalks. To-day the Indian, in many cases barefoot as of old, often staggering under his heavy load, has come up on the sidewalk. The old inferiority complex is giving place to a new self-

confidence. They point to the pyramids and ancient temples, which show that more than a thousand years before the Christian era the Indians had made extensive progress in astronomical science as well as in other arts of civilization.

“One evening it was my privilege to spend two delightful hours with a few fellow Americans in the studio of Tota Nacho, the Indian composer, who claims direct descent from Montezuma. Standing straight as an arrow, his black hair thrust back from his forehead above his gleaming eyes, with one sweeping gesture Tota Nacho said: ‘I love my Indian blood; I hate the few drops of Spanish blood that stain my life!’ This is the slogan of the new Indian psychology which one hears everywhere in Mexico, from the crowded streets of the capital to the remote Indian pueblo. No man can visualize the future of Mexico without studying the new Indian psychology. The Indian child is imbued with the idea that he is a member of a great race.”

REMOVING THE “SCALES OF DARKNESS”

Truly the “scales of darkness” are beginning to “fall” from the eyes of those people, as the Book of Mormon predicts, and will continue to fall throughout the entire body of Indians from Mexico to Argentina, until they have opportunity to unite with “the true church and fold of God.” The prediction is divinely made, partially fulfilled in recent events, and that fulfilment will continue to final consummation.

This same prophetic announcement foretells of the American Indians that “many generations shall not pass away among them, save they shall be a white and delightsome people.” In April, 1929, the United States Government took a further official step in its friendly policy toward the Indians, by which this native race is to “be absorbed into the white race;” Secretary of the Interior Wilbur makes the declaration that “the Indian has demonstrated well his capacity for citizenship and that he is the heir to a great estate.” It is a notable fact that while with some other races there is for them no assimilation in blood with the Anglo or Celto-Saxon race, the American Indian is readily assimilated therein, as is shown in numerous instances in American and Canadian history, of which many prominent illustrations might be given, such as the widow of the late President Woodrow Wilson, descended in line from Pocahontas, and the present Vice-President of the United States, Charles Curtis, whose grandmother was a full-blooded Indian of the Kaw tribe. Thus the physiological process of absorption adopted by the American Government is furnishing one means of making the Indians “a white and delightsome people” in fulfilment of the Book of Mormon prediction in 2 Nephi 30:6; for American Indian origin is identical with Anglo-Saxon origin.