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FOUNDATION FOR
ANCIENT RESEARCH &
MORMON STUDIES

INSIGHTS

AN ANCIENT WINDOW

"...by study and also by faith." D&C 88:118

AN ANCIENT AMERICAN SETTING FOR THE BOOK OF MORMON

As this newsletter goes to press, John Sorenson's book, *An Ancient American Setting for the Book of Mormon* is in publication at Deseret Book Company. This landmark volume should be out the beginning of next year. This book has been long-awaited; it sets a new benchmark for Book of Mormon studies. Dr. Sorenson, Chairman of the Anthropology Department at Brigham Young University, has been working on these materials for thirty-five years. He has developed much of this research in connection with several innovative classes he has been teaching at BYU.

"This book will become required reading for all people interested in the antiquity of the Book of Mormon. Those who comment on the historicity of Book of Mormon accounts henceforth are irresponsible or uninformed if they ignore or neglect Dr. Sorenson's present work," say Leonard Arrington, Truman Madsen and Jack Welch in the Foreword to this book.

A sample of Dr. Sorenson's work can be found in the most recent September and October issues of the *Ensign*. His articles there, entitled "Digging into the Book of Mormon," are also now available from F.A.R.M.S. as Reprints. (See the order form.)

Watch for details in the next issue of *Insights* telling you how you can order your copy of this exciting new book. As F.A.R.M.S. Manager Kirk Magleby remarks, "This has the potential of becoming the most effective and significant series ever dedicated to the Book of Mormon."

Also watch for other F.A.R.M.S. titles to be published by Deseret Book Company. With John Sorenson's book, the Foundation and Deseret jointly launch a new series focusing on LDS scripture.

Several other titles are now in preparation.

Jewish Festivals in Zarahemla

The recent discovery of evidence in the Book of Alma of an observance of a Feast of Passover is likely to be remembered as one of the most significant finds of the year. On August 15, a good sized group met at a special F.A.R.M.S. research meeting. The discussion was led by Gordon Thomasson. The purpose was to rethink many Book of Mormon passages in light of ancient Israelite festivals, and some very striking results emerged.

There is, of course, general evidence that the Nephites celebrated the feasts required by the Law of Moses, since Alma 30:3 says that they were strict in the observance of the Law of Moses. But where does the Book of Mormon ever mention the observance of any feast by name?

While no festivals are ever mentioned explicitly, many unmistakable clues of specific festivals were found. For example, "We've known for several years that a strong case can be made that Benjamin is observing a Feast of Tabernacles in Mosiah 1-6," states Thomasson. See, for example, John Tvedtnes' paper entitled "A Nephite Feast of Tabernacles" (available as a F.A.R.M.S. Preliminary Report).

But the evidence was found to run even deeper. For example, each Jewish festival begins with a prayer, traditionally spoken on the first night of the celebration. It is called the Shechehyanu, and begins: "Lord God, King of the Universe, who has kept us and preserved us to reach this season." If the Nephites had just uttered words such as these at the beginning of Benjamin's festival, think how very potent the words of King Benjamin must have sounded as he told those people that they were still unprofitable servants, even though one might "render all the thanks and praise which your whole soul has power to possess, to that God who has...kept and

Continued on page 6

The Foundation for Ancient Research and Mormon Studies is a non-profit research and educational organization dedicated to the study of ancient Scripture. Your tax deductible contributions enable F.A.R.M.S. to sponsor and coordinate a wide range of research projects that enhance our understanding of these sacred writings.

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President's Message

We have been thrilled to hear from so many of you recently. Please feel free to drop us a note. If anything is unclear or unsatisfactory, be sure to let us know. Your ideas on how we can be of better service to you are very important to us! Keep them coming!

Q: Is this Newsletter, Insights, free?

A: Yes, for the first four issues. If you want to stay on the list for 1985, however, we will need to hear from you. A minimum \$10 contribution will guarantee keeping you on the list.

Q: How did I get on the F.A.R.M.S. mailing list?

A: Our list (15,000 people) is entirely self-generated. Your name is on our list either because you requested it or because one of your friends told us they thought you would be interested.

Q: How often is the Newsletter published?

A: Approximately four times a year.

Q: How can I get in touch with F.A.R.M.S.?

A: By mail, P.O. Box 7113, University Station, Provo, UT 84602; or by phone, (801) 378-3295.

Q: Can I order materials by phone?

A: If you wish to charge your order to a VISA or Mastercard, yes, we welcome telephone orders during business hours.

Q: Can I also use my VISA or Mastercard for making contributions?

A: Yes. We can even set things up to charge your account once a month if you would like to spread your annual contribution out over the year.

Q: How long does it take to fill orders?

A: Usually a couple of weeks, but if the item is out of stock it may take quite a bit

longer. Let us know if your order needs to be rushed to you. We appreciate your patience.

Q: Can I help F.A.R.M.S. where I live?

A: Yes! See the article in this newsletter about how you can become a Local Volunteer.

Q: Who can contribute papers to F.A.R.M.S.?

A: Anyone!

Q: What criteria are used in deciding which papers will be published as Preliminary Reports?

A: Papers are reviewed and edited by several readers in our research group. We publish papers which contain "substantial research and documentation."

Subsequent researchers should not have to re-invent the wheel; if good work has been done on a subject, we want to make it available, even if the results are still "preliminary." Every paper submitted will be kept in the F.A.R.M.S. archive.

Q: Does F.A.R.M.S. need papers, books and magazines for its library?

A: Yes. If you would like to contribute any published or unpublished materials that you think would help build the F.A.R.M.S. Book of Mormon Library, write us a letter telling us what you have and we will tell you whether we already have it or not.

Q: Is the Book of Mormon available on diskette for my home PC?

A: Not quite yet, but a committee has been organized to get this done in the best possible way.

Q: Is F.A.R.M.S. a business?

A: No. F.A.R.M.S. is a non-profit, volunteer organization sponsoring, coordinating and distributing research about the Book of Mormon. No directors or advisors get paid anything. We try to make our materials available as

inexpensively as possible, so that everyone who wants them can afford to get them.

Q: Does F.A.R.M.S. need money?

A: Yes. What we can accomplish is directly related to the amount of money we receive. We rely entirely on donations to fund further research projects and media presentations. We match each dollar contributed with many hours of volunteer support. This makes your contribution go as far as possible.

Q: Is F.A.R.M.S. an independent organization?

A: Yes, but it coordinates closely with many other groups. F.A.R.M.S. is particularly appreciative of the key support given by Brigham Young University. Valuable cooperation exists with CES, Church magazines and many other organizations. F.A.R.M.S. does not speak for nor represent any other organization.

Q: What does F.A.R.M.S. plan for the future?

A: We have many more Reprints and Preliminary Reports on the way. We are working on several book length manuscripts to be published by Deseret Book Company. We would like to get some Book of Mormon lectures on audio tapes. We would like to sponsor several summer research internships. We are working toward creating a massive Book of Mormon computer data base and toward completing a Book of Mormon encyclopedia, and many other exciting projects. We plan to hold a two-day Book of Mormon study conference in Provo next summer; let us know if you would be interested in coming.

Hope this is helpful. We appreciate all your support, enthusiasm and interest. We always enjoy hearing from you.

John W. Welch

Nephi's Arrows Create Solid Bulls-eye

Three times in 1 Nephi 16 we are told that Nephi broke his steel bow. Never does it say that he broke any arrows. Yet when Nephi makes a new wooden bow, the text also says that he made "out of a straight stick, an arrow." (1 Ne. 16:23). Why would he need to make new arrows when he apparently still had a quiver full of old ones?

David S. Fox, a F.A.R.M.S. participant, has suggested a very intelligent answer. From archers, Fox has learned how important it is for a bow to be perfectly matched in weight and stiffness with its arrows. If the arrow is too soft, it will stray or fall short or behave erratically. If the arrow is too stiff, it is probably too heavy. "Trying to use a wooden bow to shoot

the heavy arrows which would have matched Nephi's strong steel bow," says Fox, "would be like trying to shoot telephone poles."

Undoubtedly, Nephi's hand-made wooden bow would have had nowhere near the strength of his treasured metal bow. He would have needed new arrows. Hence, it is accurate that Nephi should say that he made an arrow as well as a bow.

Fox also finds that very little was known of archery in Joseph Smith's day. As a means of self defense or as a serious method of hunting, archery had gone out of vogue many years before. As a sport, it would not emerge for another 50 years. A solid bulls-eye for the Book of Mormon.

"No member of this Church can stand approved in the presence of God who has not seriously and carefully read the Book of Mormon."

*President Joseph Fielding Smith
Conference Report, October 1961.*

Professional Fund-raiser Joins Farms

F.A.R.M.S. is pleased to welcome aboard Ken Porter. With over sixteen years of fund-raising experience, including head of Church Educational Development, Porter is well qualified to assist in the building of F.A.R.M.S.

Father of nine, he and his wife, Anne, recently completed a mission at the Los Angeles Temple Visitor's Center.

F.A.R.M.S. Tours: Here We Go Again!

Our premier tour this summer was such a rewarding experience, we have decided to conduct two more in 1985!

Tour 1984. For two weeks in June 1984, 35 F.A.R.M.S. enthusiasts enjoyed the privilege of touring many fascinating sites in Mexico and Guatemala which were occupied during Book of Mormon times.

"What a thrill. Truly the chance of a lifetime." John and Evelyn Archer (Palos Verdes, CA).

"The finest trip we have ever taken." Nat and Caletta Muzumdar (Parowan, UT).

"We had no idea the Book of Mormon would come alive so beautifully with such a wealth of rich detail," Mel and Illa Atwood (Albany, OR).

"I was surprised that the food and hotels were so luxurious." Diane Wirth (Aurora, CO).

John Sorenson, the dean of New World Book of Mormon archaeology, was the traveling guest lecturer. His comments at every site and locale (Kaminaljuyu as the City of Nephi, the Grijalva River as the River Sidon, La Venta as the City of Mulek, the Central Depression of Chiapas as the Land of Zarahemla) brought insightful and unforgettable associations to Book of Mormon texts.

The scenery was breathtaking. A spectacular sunset over Lake Atitlan. Pre-dawn stillness at Lake Catemaco. Towering volcanos. Steep mountain valleys. Ruins of epic proportions.

The people were marvellous. Tears came as the group met with a humble branch president who lost a wife and three children in the Guatemalan earthquake of 1976 in Patcizia. While the shopping and other distractions were superb, this group eagerly spent most of its time in out-of-the-way museums and discussing scripture studies. Everyone contributed. For example, imagine the insights of sculptor Stan Johnson (Mapleton, UT) and jeweler Pearse Labrum (Salt Lake City, UT) commenting on the treasures of the famed Monte Alban Tomb 7.

"This was one of the most beautiful experiences of my life," says Richard Jones (Salt Lake City, UT). "When do we go again?"

Tours for 1985. Now is the time to let us know if you would like to travel with F.A.R.M.S. in 1985. *To Mexico and Guatemala:* This tour will be the first to have the benefit of using John Sorenson's book (see the lead article in this newsletter) as a handbook! Departs June 7, 1985, for 16 days. Guides and lecturers will be Dr. Bruce W. Warren of the BYU Anthropology Department (he is a specialist in Mayan and Mesoamerican archaeology), and Kirk Magleby. Supplemental study materials provided.



Pictured left to right: Kirk Magleby, John Sorenson, and John Welch during June '84 Tour.

Cost will be around \$1700. Reserve your space now by sending a \$200 deposit per person to F.A.R.M.S., P.O. Box 7113, University Station, Provo, UT 84602. Space is limited!

To Israel and Egypt: We are seriously considering taking a tour to the Near East around the end of May or first of June (for about 17 days). This would be the first tour ever dedicated to investigating ancient Israelite and Near Eastern backgrounds of the Book of Mormon!

Reprints and Preliminary Reports

Where did Jesus go after His Resurrection?

Does the Book of Mormon stand alone when it says that Jesus taught important gospel messages after his resurrection? "No," answers Hugh Nibley, as he surveys the "40 day literature" in his 1966 article entitled *Evangelium Quadraginta Dierum*. Although modern biblical scholars tend to discount the early Christian accounts of the post-resurrection ministry of the Savior, Nibley argues for a literal, historical interpretation. From this, an interesting perspective on 3 Nephi can emerge.

Finding the Fragments

It is a well known fact of Church History that the original manuscript of the Book of Mormon was deposited in the cornerstone of the Nauvoo House in the 1840s. There much of it decayed from moisture and exposure. Some years later, the cornerstone was opened, and Major Bidamon and Emma Smith gave fragments of the manuscript to friends and relatives who visited them at their home in Nauvoo. Part of the F.A.R.M.S. Book of Mormon Critical Text project has involved an analysis of all known surviving fragments of this original manuscript. The Original Manuscript Register lists each one of these surviving

Guides and lecturers would be John W. Welch, Stephen Ricks, and other scholars as can be arranged. Total cost from Salt Lake City is roughly estimated at this point at about \$2900. Please let us know immediately if you would go on such a tour.

All F.A.R.M.S. tours are oriented toward giving you detailed archaeological and academic understanding, with Book of Mormon perspectives especially in mind.

pieces, their current location, and the chapters and verses which they cover.

Order Out of Chronology?

We have long known that the Book of Ether, like most of its counterparts from antiquity, is a lineage record rather than a history in the modern sense. Nevertheless, it is possible to reconstruct a rough chronology from that text that permits some tentative comparisons with dated events known from the Old and New Worlds. In his *The Years of the Jaredites*, John L. Sorenson proposes a chronology that helps place Ether's writings in a clearer historical context.

Continued on page 4

F.A.R.M.S. Manager's Report As of June 30, 1984

Newsletter Frequency: quarterly
Newsletter Circulation: 15,000 (50 states and 28 foreign countries)
Reprints and Preliminary Reports Distributed to Date: 48,000
Financial Contributors to Date: 2,200
Volunteer Service Donated to Date: 45,000 hours
Research Projects Funded to Date: 38

Reprints and Preliminary Reports

Continued from page 3

B. H. Roberts Speaks for Himself

B. H. Roberts was an inquisitive man, and the penetrating study of the Book of Mormon was one of his lifetime works. His rigorous questioning and probing, however, has led some critics to doubt Roberts' personal belief in the historicity of that scripture, especially after 1923. One way to find out what Roberts believed is to let him speak for himself. To do this, F.A.R.M.S. offers an extensive collection of statements made by Roberts from 1923 to 1933 about the Book of Mormon and compiled by Truman Madsen. Consider, for example, Roberts' words in 1928: "Now tell me in what

church or cathedral in the world, in what sacred grove, in what place among the habitations of men, will be found a more glorious Easter vision of the Christ than this? And the world would have lost this if it had not been for the Book of Mormon coming forth; and there are a hundred more rich glorious things that have come to the world in that book to enlighten the children of men, all of which would have been lost had not this American volume of scripture been brought forth."

John L. Sorenson Digs into the Book of Mormon

LDS discussions of the Book of Mormon in its New World context have

typically been flawed on two counts. The authors generally have not paid enough attention to the nuances of the text itself, nor have they been sufficiently critical in their handling of New World sources and data.

John Sorenson gives us two articles that offer us a refreshing new look at these subjects. This author is well equipped to discuss both the text and its Mesoamerican setting. His intelligent treatment highlights a number of satisfying points of convergence between a careful appraisal of the text and the most recent conclusions of the Mesoamericanists. "Digging into the Book of Mormon" offers a brief introduction into the materials that Dr. Sorenson treats more extensively in his forthcoming book.

Continued on page 5

I Know Joining F.A.R.M.S. Benefits An Important Work and Me!

I Would Like To Join F.A.R.M.S. Liahona Club As A . . .

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I understand I will be making a tax deductible contribution of \$50 annually
As a special benefit, I will receive Hugh Nibley's five favorite Book of Mormon articles.

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I understand I will be making a tax deductible contribution or pledge of \$100 annually (\$10 monthly).
As a special benefit, I will receive *all* of the Friend benefits plus the informational Monthly Update of exciting new research developments and 50% OFF all Doubleday Books in Print.

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I understand I will be making a tax deductible contribution or pledge of \$500 annually (\$50 monthly)
As a special benefit, I will receive *all* of the Friend and Associate benefits *PLUS* copies of all new Reprints and Preliminary Reports introduced that year *and* Copies of all hardbound books published by the Foundation that year.

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I understand I will be making a tax deductible contribution of \$1,000 annually (\$100 monthly)
As a special benefit, I will receive *all* of the Friend, Associate and Contributor benefits *PLUS* copies of all media shows produced by F.A.R.M.S. that year, 20% OFF all F.A.R.M.S. tours sponsored that year *and* 10% OFF other selected tours not sponsored by the Foundation.

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I understand I will be making a \$15,000 contribution within a 3 year period.
I will receive all of the currently available benefits for the rest of my life.

* The outlined benefits apply only to the person making the contribution.

ORDER FORM

REPRINTS

- Hugh Nibley, "Evangelium Quadraginta Dierum: The Forty Day Mission of Christ—The Forgotten Heritage" (from *Vigiliae Christianae* 1966) 12 pp **\$1.50**
- Hugh Nibley, "There Were Jaredites" (from *Improv. Era* 1956-57) 45 pp. **\$1.75**
- B. H. Roberts, "His Final Decade: Statements About the Book of Mormon" (1924-33, Collected by Truman G. Madsen) 125 pp **\$3.75**
- John L. Sorenson, "Digging into the Book of Mormon" (from *Ensign* 1984) 26 pp **\$1.00**

PRELIMINARY REPORTS

- Stephen D. Ricks, "Joseph Smith's Means and Methods of Translating the Book of Mormon," 8 pp **\$1.50**
- John L. Sorenson, "The Years of the Jaredites," 10 pp **\$1.50**
- F.A.R.M.S. Staff, "Original Manuscript Register" (Book of Mormon Critical Text Project) 8 pp **\$1.50**
- John A. Tvedtnes, "Was Lehi a Caravaneer?" 15 pp **\$1.75**
- John W. Welch, "Longevity of Book of Mormon People and the 'Age of Man'" 24 pp **\$1.00**

RESEARCH TOOLS

- Critical Text of the Book of Mormon*, 3 volumes looseleaf format, approximately 1100 pages. Volume 1 (1 Nephi to Words of Mormon) now available. Volumes 2 and 3 will appear later. Available only as a set. Sample pages available on request. Will also be available on magnetic media. Subscription now is important. **\$55.00**
- Gary Gillum, *Hugh Nibley: An Index to his Modern Sources—Books and Periodicals* (a listing of all sources cited by Hugh Nibley in any of his writings, classified and indexed to the article and page where the work was cited). A-K now available (228 pp); L-Z will be completed in 1985. **\$8.75**

Index to the Doctrinal Statements of Joseph Smith, approximately 1,000 pages. Compiled by Truman G. Madsen. We are accepting pre-publication reservations only. Send no money yet. Anticipated price will be \$30 to \$35. One-time, limited offering. **CHECK FOR RESERVATION.**

BOOKS

- James H. Charlesworth, ed., *Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, Volume 1 (Doubleday, 1983, retail \$35.00) **\$25.00**
- James H. Charlesworth, ed., *Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, Volume 2 (Doubleday, 1984 just released, retail \$35.00) **\$25.00**

Continued

Reprints and Preliminary Reports
Continued from page 4

How long did King Mosiah live?

Fortunately, we know enough about the lineages of Lehi, Mosiah and Alma to calculate fairly accurately how long people like Nephi, Benjamin or Helaman must have lived. In his paper on the *Longevity of Book of Mormon Peoples*, Jack Welch presents this information with some interesting results. For example, it turns out that Nephi, the son of Helaman, must have been very young when he became Chief Judge in 39 B.C., thus accounting in part for his inability to cope with the pressures of the Gadianton

robbers. The ages of many other figures can also be approximated at important times in Nephite history. Ideal ages for taking charge of records (age 24), for assuming political responsibility (age 30), for retiring from public service (age 50), and for a complete life (age 72) also seem to emerge. By comparison, the ancient Greeks and Hebrews also had ideal ages for the stages of a man's life.

background to the Book of Ether.
Continued on page 6

What Manner of Translation?

In a valuable and brief survey, Stephen Ricks reports what Joseph Smith and his companions say about how the Book of Mormon was translated. Much remains unclear, especially since the Prophet Joseph spoke very little about the process—one which he considered sacred. In 1831 he said, "It was not intended to tell the world all the particulars." From the available evidence, Ricks concludes that while supernatural instruments were used to aid in the translation process, the English words were not just mechanically read off by the Prophet, but were formulated by him as a translator.

There Were Jaredites

Also offered on the order form accompanying this newsletter is the 1956-57 series by Hugh Nibley entitled *There Were Jaredites*. In a humorous dialogue, Nibley describes the epic milieu which existed 2000 B.C. in Egypt and Babylonia, the world from which the Jaredites came. This makes fascinating reading as

CES Research Grants

Summer research grants are available to CES instructors through the Church Education System. Applications to CES are due soon for the summer of 1985. F.A.R.M.S. invites people looking for research topics about the Book of Mormon to check with John Sorenson or Jack Welch for a list of suggestions. Also, F.A.R.M.S. will be happy to share its library and archives with summer

researchers working on Book of Mormon projects.

Call for Local Volunteers

Until now, it has been difficult for people living outside of the Salt Lake and Provo areas to render volunteer service to the Foundation. That has changed. We have established a system of local volunteers who promote projects in their areas. Once every three months, local volun-

teers handle a project (set up a fireside, place literature in a public library, help us keep the mailing list current, etc.) In exchange for this service, local volunteers receive a Monthly Research Update, a couple of free papers every three months and the satisfaction of knowing that they have helped further an important work. If you would like to volunteer in your area, send your name and the name of your LDS stake to Shannon Magleby, local volunteer coordinator, at the F.A.R.M.S. office in Provo.

Order Information

Janet Twigg F.A.R.M.S. Office (801) 378-3295
 Items for the Newsletter Shannon Magleby American Fork, UT (801) 756-4763
 Research Proposals and Paper Stephen Ricks 449 CB, BYU (801) 378-5428
 John Sorenson 940 SWKT, BYU (801) 378-6108



Do you have a question or comment? Please write or call the following individuals. All correspondence should be addressed to F.A.R.M.S., P.O. Box 7113, University Station, Provo, Utah 84602.

Promotion, and Salt Lake Business
 Constance Denning Salt Lake City, UT (801) 583-6094

Grants and Contributions

Ken Porter F.A.R.M.S. Office (801) 378-3298
 Nibley Archive Gary Gillum 6210 HBL, BYU (801) 378-6118
 Mailing List Kirk Magleby American Fork, UT (801) 756-4763
 Volunteer Service Jan Cook Provo, UT (801) 224-6606

MEDIA PRODUCTIONS

Lands of the Book of Mormon (113 slides, 22 minute cassette sound track) **\$35.00**
 Lands of the Book of Mormon 34 minute video (VHS only). **\$30.00**
 Chiasmus in the Book of Mormon. Teachers may want to use this especially in discussing Alma 36. Chiasmus is a beautiful ancient literary art form which appears in ancient writings, including the Old Testament and the Book of Mormon. 45 minute video. VHS only. **\$30.00**

GOSPEL DOCTRINE

Full set of 83 articles complementing the 1984 Gospel Doctrine Lessons; 1700 pp. **\$75.00**

CATALOGS

1984 Nibley Archive Catalog (lists articles and cassette tapes). **\$.25**
 Book of Mormon Study Catalog complementing the 1984 Gospel Doctrine Lessons (free if you send a stamped, self-addressed envelope) **\$.25**
 Complete F.A.R.M.S. Catalog **\$.25**

PRIOR NEWSLETTERS (circle choices)

June 1984	March 1983	April 1982	
March 1984	October 1982	November 1981	
October 1983	July 1982	July 1981	\$.50 each

I have decided to join F.A.R.M.S. Liahona Club as a . . . (circle one)
 Friend Associate Contributor Benefactor Lifetime Benefactor
 Pledge Amount _____ Amount Enclosed _____
 Yes, I am interested in attending the two-day Book of Mormon Study Conference to be held summer '85 in Provo. Yes, I would go on tour in Israel if such a tour was organized by F.A.R.M.S.
 Yes, I would like to be included with F.A.R.M.S. Mesoamerican Tour scheduled for summer '85. Enclosed is my deposit of at least \$200. **Amount enclosed** _____
 Yes I am interested in being a Local Volunteer for F.A.R.M.S. I am a member of _____ Stake Yes, I am interested in translating various F.A.R.M.S. papers. I am capable of doing so in _____ (list languages).

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DETACH HERE

Pseudepigrapha: Now Volume 2 Available

The second and concluding volume of Charlesworth's monumental collection entitled *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha* (pronounced "soo-da-PIG-rapha") has just been released by Doubleday. One of the services offered to you by F.A.R.M.S. is making good scholarly works like this one available to you at the lowest price around. This volume contains materials on Old Testament Expansions and Legends, Wisdom Literature, Prayers, Psalms Odes, and Lost Judeo-Hellenistic Philosophical Writings. For anyone interested in Jewish and Christian studies between 200 B.C. and 200 A.D., these two volumes are a treasure trove of reference material and are nothing less than essential. Both volumes can be ordered on the attached order form. The price includes postage and handling. Your books will be shipped from Doubleday directly to you.

Reprints and Preliminary Reports

Continued from page 5

Were Lehi and Nephi Blacksmiths?

Years ago, Hugh Nibley concluded that Lehi was a caravaner or traveling merchant. John Tvedtnes, however, now offers an alternative view. "I believe that there is evidence to show that Lehi and his family were craftsmen and artisans—probably metalworkers," Tvedtnes concludes in his paper *Was Lehi a Caravaner?* This intriguing paper points to several facts to buttress this claim. For example, Nephi appreciated the fine craftsmanship of the sword of Laban; he was skilled in making tools (the Lord told Nephi how to make the ship, but it seems that Nephi needed no instruction on how to make the tools); he taught his people how to work with metals (2 Ne. 5:14); and his brothers appear to discount the Lia-

hona believing that Nephi had made it (1 Ne. 16:38). These, and many other interesting details, make a plausible case that Lehi and Nephi were blacksmiths.

Unto Every Nation: Translators Needed

Those who have spent time abroad know how difficult it is for Saints in foreign lands to acquire Church-related reading material. The need is particularly acute in non-English speaking countries, since only a small fraction of Church literature ever gets translated. After repeated requests from members in other countries, F.A.R.M.S. has decided to coordinate the translation of the more important Reprints and Preliminary Reports into several foreign languages. If you have language skills that you would like to donate to this worthwhile project, please write or call and make yourself available. Financial contributions to the translation project are welcomed also.

Jewish Festivals in Zarahemla

Continued from page 1

preserved you... that ye might live." (Mos. 2:20-21)!

The evidence became even more astonishing when the attention shifted to the possibility that Alma was observing a Feast of Passover at the time he instructed his three sons, Helaman, Shiblon and Corianton, in Alma 36-42. Plentiful Passover themes and phrases were readily found: "crying out" (compare Dt. 26:7 and Alma 36:18) for "deliverance" from "affliction" (Dt. 26:6, Al. 36:3, 27) and from "bondage in Egypt" (Al. 36:28), from the "night of darkness" (Ex. 12:30, Al. 41:7) At Passover, as well as in Alma's account, a destroying angel figures prominently, as do the three days and three nights of darkness (Ex. 10:22, Al.

36:16).

The clinching piece of information involves the three sons themselves. At Passover, Ex. 10:2 counsels fathers to gather their sons (compare Al. 35:16). Traditionally, three sons would each in turn ask their father a question. The first son asked a question about the statutes and ordinances of the Lord. The father then spoke to that son about the meaning of the law especially for future generations. For his question, this son was praised as a wise son. This could not describe any better Alma's words in Alma 37 to his wise son Helaman. The second son would ask another question, and for asking such a question tradition said he was a wicked son. The father was then to

berate him for excluding himself from the community; he was to correct the son's belief in false doctrines, and was to teach the son (in a way that would set his teeth on edge) that he will be accountable for his own sins. Are these not Alma's precise words to Corianton?

Many other festivals and Book of Mormon accounts were discussed with highly promising results. Obviously, the meeting on August 15 was just a beginning. Much work remains. As a result, a new committee has been formed to search out other such links between the Book of Mormon and Israelite festivals. Watch for news as this important work progresses.



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