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### Are the Jaredites An Extinct People?

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## ARE THE JAREDITES AN EXTINCT PEOPLE?

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The antiquities, mythology and traditions of the American Indians, have always been interesting studies to the writer; and, in his investigations, many corroborative evidences of the divine authenticity of the Book of Mormon have been encountered.

It is a well-established fact that the Indians of Mexico, at the time of the conquest, had a written language, and that many manuscripts were found among them which were preserved with the most jealous care, and which, if still in existence, might throw great light on the history of the Aztecs, which is now shrouded in darkness.

Unfortunately, in their zeal to obliterate the Mexican civilization, which was in some respects in advance of their own, and to bury in oblivion every memory of the past, Cortez and his followers gathered all of the Aztec writings, and, piling them in the public square in the City of Mexico, burned them. A decree was promulgated making it a capital offense to retain in one's possession any written manuscript of Aztec origin; and thus, almost the entire written history of the people was destroyed. In isolated places, however, manuscripts were preserved, some of which may now be seen in the National Museum, at Mexico.

Prof. August Le Plongeon, whose researches have probably been more elaborate and thorough than those made by any other man, tells us that the Mayas of Yucatan had a written language; and what is of greatest interest to us, he says, "The ancient Maya hieratic alphabet discovered by me is as near alike to the ancient hieratic alphabet of the Egyptians as two alphabets can possibly be." (See *Sacred Mysteries among the Mayas and Quiches*,

page 113.) Moroni tells us that the engravings on the plates from which the Book of Mormon was translated were written in reformed Egyptian. (See *Book of Mormon* ix: 32, 33.

While searching for facts which relate to the early history of the Indians, the writer recently encountered the following: "Don Francisco Munoz de la Nega, bishop of the diocese of Chiapas, certifies that an ancient manuscript, of the primitive Indians of that province, was in his record office, which states that the father and founder of their nation was named Te-po-na-hu-ale, which signified, 'Lord of the Hollow Piece of Wood,' and that he was present at the building of the great tower, and beheld with his own eyes the confusion of languages, after which event, God, the Creator, commanded him to come to these extensive regions and divide them among mankind."

Was the writer of this manuscript a Jaredite? Jared was present at the building of the Tower of Babel, and witnessed the confusion of languages. God did call him to come to America, and the long sea voyage which was necessary to reach this continent was made in a hollow piece of wood, or rather two hollow pieces of wood, fitted together so that they were tight like a dish.

Coriantumr was found by the people of Zarahemla, and lived for the space of nine moons among them. During this period, he may have begotten children; in fact, more so, when we consider the high estimate placed upon posterity by the ancients, and the further fact that Coriantumr, being the last of his race, he would be desirous that his name be perpetuated; and would take wives and beget children, thus preserving the race of which he was the sole representative.

His descendants would undoubtedly teach their children the story of the origin of their fathers, and thus preserve the tradition to which reference has been made.

These were the reflections which forced themselves upon the mind of the writer, when he read the interesting statement of Father Munoz, which is here quoted. Would the Lord permit a nation like the Jaredites to be left without a representative? Can anyone answer the question,—Are the Jaredites an extinct people?