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The Book of Abraham - Its Genuineness Established, Chapter VIII

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Abstract: Abraham on Pharaoh's Throne. He makes a Treaty ending a One Hundred years' war. The true system of Astronomy, Governing Planets, Kolob.

THE LATTER-DAY SAINTS MILLENNIAL STAR.

“HEAR THE WORD OF THE LORD, O YE NATIONS, AND DECLARE IT IN THE ISLES AFAR OFF, AND SAY, HE THAT SCATTERETH ISRAEL WILL GATHER HIM, AND KEEP HIM, AS A SHEPHERD DOTHS HIS FLOCK.”—*Jeremiah xxxi, 10.*

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THE BOOK OF ABRAHAM—ITS GENUINENESS ESTABLISHED.

BY ELDER GEORGE REYNOLDS.

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CHAP. VIII.

Abraham on Pharaoh's Throne. He makes a Treaty ending a One Hundred years' war. The true system of Astronomy, Governing Planets, Kolob.

Considerable ridicule has been needlessly expended on the statement that the sitting figure in plate III, of the Book of Abraham, represents that patriarch “sitting upon Pharaoh's throne by the politeness of the king.” It has been scoffed at as an idea entirely too silly to be met with calm argument. To imagine that the great and mighty ruler of Egypt would invite an “Arab Shiek,” at best a shepherd prince, to sit upon his throne, was altogether too absurd for a moment's serious consideration; such extraordinary condescension would shame a Chesterfield. But we all know that it is often as easy to ridicule as it is difficult to disprove; so we will let the scoffer jest whilst we

bring forward our “strong reasons” for believing this, as well as all other portions of Abraham's divinely inspired record. Josephus writes (Book I, chap. viii) that when Pharaoh discovered that the woman, Sarah, whom he desired to take into his household, was the wife of Abraham, he made, as an excuse for his action, that, believing her to be the Patriarch's sister, he wished to marry her, from his desire to be related to so distinguished a personage as Abraham. This could not be irony; Pharaoh was not in a condition to be ironical with his guest. It must have been an excuse that bore upon its face the probability of truth, and one that would be accepted as genuine by the powerful visitor from Canaan. Had it been otherwise, it would have been adding insult to injury, and instead of Abraham remaining in Egypt to become a teacher to its people, we should probably learn that in anger he returned to his own land. Then, accepting Pharaoh's own statement to be true, is it diffi-

cult to believe that he who wished to be so nearly allied to Abraham, would, in the fulness of Eastern politeness, think it any too great a condescension to ask him to sit upon his throne, whilst he explained to him and to his court the wonders of the numberless creations of God.

Nor is this all, we have yet other testimony of how powerful a man was Abraham amongst the children of the Nile. Our readers will probably recollect that we have already drawn attention to a statement of Josephus, that at the time the Patriarch visited Egypt, the people of that country despised each other's sacred rites, and were very angry one with another on that account; further, that Abraham proved to them that their various reasonings were vain and void of truth. Modern research has shown that Abraham did more than this. It appears that somewhat more than one hundred years before Abraham's advent into Egypt, one of its monarchs, Mencheres, attempted to establish the worship of Osiris over all Egypt. As a result, a great religious war ensued, which continued for a century. The history of the country at this time becomes involved and obscure in the highest degree, but one fact is absolutely certain, and that is, that this civil war was fierce, long-continued and with varying success. A late British historical text-book states that in the year 1934 B.C. (according to the best chronology, which is, however, far from satisfactory,)* Abraham visited and aided Achthoes (Pharaoh) in forming a treaty with his rival to terminate the religious war. Then, if it be true that Abraham was so great a power in his day, that by his aid a civil war of one hundred years' duration was brought to an amicable close, is there anything incongruous in the idea that he, by politeness, sat upon the throne of the ruler to whom he had been of so great service.

About this time, as near as can be told, a great change was effected in the religion of the Egyptians, which we ascribe to the preaching, in their midst, of the Gospel, by the Father of

the Faithful. It appears from Herodotus, that according to the story of the idolatrous Egyptian priests of his day, when Cheops ascended the throne, he "closed the temples of the false gods and prohibited their sacrifices."† Cheops is said to have reigned fifty years, and was succeeded by his brother Chepren, who also kept the temples closed. In the succeeding reign the temples were again opened, and the people returned to their old modes of worship. So hated were these two sovereigns by the heathen dwellers of the Nile, of later years, that Herodotus states they would not even mention their names. Mr. John Taylor, author of "The Great Pyramid. Why was it built and who built it?" from various evidences brought to his notice, infers that these kings "might have been pre-eminently good, or were at all events of different religious faith" from those who told the story to Herodotus. Putting the various facts before stated together, that Abraham taught holy principles to the Egyptians, that his teachings so wrought upon them that they brought to a close a civil war of one hundred years duration, and that near this time the idolatrous temples were closed, all forming parts of one harmonious whole, we are irresistibly drawn to the conclusion that these changes were brought about by the proclamation of the Gospel, more especially are we led thereto by the hatred shown to the kings who accepted this message, and carried out these reforms, by the worshipers of Osiris in succeeding generations. It so much resembles the course pursued by others in like circumstances in other lands and at other times. Cheops is usually credited with being the builder of the great pyramid, and to that mighty structure we shall by and by appeal for testimony to prove that whoever its builders were, they were acquainted with the sublime system of astronomy revealed by Jehovah to Abraham, with instructions to teach it to the Egyptians.

Abraham tells us that there were three ways by which he received his knowledge of astronomy.

* Facts and Dates by Rev. A. Mackay, Edinburgh, 1870.

† Hartcourt's Doctrines of the Deluge.

1st. Through the records handed down to him from the anti-deluvian patriarchs.

2nd. By the use of the Urim and Thummim, which he received from the Lord in the Ur of Chaldea.

3rd. By direct communication with the Almighty, who face to face, and with His own voice, explained to him the laws that governed His countless creations.

The system of astronomy revealed by God to Abraham is so vast, so grand, so comprehensive, that no uninspired man ever searched out its depths or ascended its heights. Occasionally a patient searcher after truth caught a faint glimmer of its glory, but that was all. But they none learned as Abraham learned, nor did the profoundest astronomers of forty years ago have aught but the most meagre and vague conception of the truths given to the world by Joseph Smith, in his inspired translation of Abraham's record. Indeed, the truths there set forth are, to-day, scarcely recognized by the more conservative schools of astronomy; it is only the more daring minds that accept them, even in part.

The great truths told by Abraham regarding the starry hosts of heaven are recorded thus: "I saw the stars that they were very great, and that one of them was nearest unto the throne of God; and there were many great ones that were near it; and the Lord said unto me, These are the governing ones; and the name of the

great one is Kolob, because it is near unto me, for I am the Lord thy God; I have set this one to govern all those which belong to the same order of that upon which thou standest. And the Lord said unto me, by the Urim and Thummim, that Kolob was after the manner of the Lord, according to its times and seasons in the revolution thereof, that one revolution was a day unto the Lord, after his manner of reckoning, it being one thousand years according to the time appointed unto that whereon thou standest. This is the reckoning of the Lord's time, according to the reckoning of Kolob."

In other words, these great governing planets control all others in their revolutions, or are the centres around which the others revolve. As the moon revolves round the earth, and the earth with the other primary and secondary planets belonging to this solar system revolve round the sun, so has the sun a centre around which it, with all its earths and moons, revolves, while this grand centre has a governing planet also, a sun or world around which it, with its attendant systems of suns and worlds, revolve, and so on until we come to Kolob, the "nearest to the celestial or the residence of God," which is the grand centre which governs all the suns and systems of suns "which belong to the same order" as our earth, and those that move with it.

The consideration of these sublime ideas must be our next duty.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

HOW CONVERSION IS PRODUCED.

BY ELDER B. F. CUMMINGS, JR.

The various denominations of Christendom entertain different opinions regarding the nature and cause of the event in a man's life, which they call "conversion to Christ;" and these opinions differ from the truth as widely as they do from each other. The generally received opinion among the more prominent sects is to the effect

that when a man's feelings, emotions, and fears have been wrought upon and excited, by the sensational or emotional preaching, he begins to groan, and shout, and weep, and goes to the anxious seat or mourners' bench to be prayed for, he is converted, or, as the phrase is, has "experienced religion." Many so-called Christians think that