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Abstracts of papers presented in the Society's Fifth Annual Symposium on the Archaeology of the Scriptures appear below. It is hoped that some will appear in full in a future issue of the Bulletin. Papers or addresses are abstracted in the order of their listing in the program.

- 4.0 Dr. Harrison Val Hoyt: The speaker reported some features of a recent trip through the Holy land. The life of the common people, both desert and agricultural, is hard and poor. Banditry and disorder are common, and due to the current Jewish-Arab tension free travel is impossible if it involves Israeli. Fortunately Arab Jerusalem contains most of the Christian sites of interest. Also described was the desolation of modern Mesopotamia even where ruins and abandoned canals show once dense habitation.
- 4.1 Dr. M. Wells Jakeman: Though generally viewed as fictional by the world, the flood story of Genesis is important, especially to one interested in the archaeology of the scriptures. A study of this story involves understanding of the scriptural account itself, comparison of parallel accounts from other sources and archaeological and physical evidence of such a flood. The location of the flood's beginning is not clear from scripture, but the geographic terms of Genesis seem to point to Babylonia. The "earth" of the flood is a Hebrew term which didn't necessarily mean the whole planet as we use "earth" today, but probably only the region known to the Genesis people (i.e. "the dry land". Also cf Moses 1:28-29) Babylonian accounts found on clay tablets offer remarkable parallels to the Bible. The Epic of Gilgamesh has Utnapishtim, the Babylonian Noah, leaving ancient Shuruppak in his boat and landing in the Urartu (Zagros) mountains (the "mountains of Ararat" of Genesis?) to the immediate east, not modern Mt. Ararat in Armenia. This epic was known by 2000 B.C. and supposedly happened many generations before. Archaeological and physical evidence of a great flood in Babylonia (one of several such attested) consists of a silt deposit or deposits at Uruk, Shuruppak and Kish. These date to about 3100 B.C. which is not far from present datings of the biblical flood. The silt also separates one type of cultural remains below from a different culture above. Thus archaeology can support a limited flood in Mesopotamia at about the time of the Genesis flood, but has nothing indicating a planetary deluge at that time.
- 4.2 H. Thayne Johnson: The idea long held on the origin of the Hebrew people was that they had come of the Arabian desert with a long background of nomadism. Now the trend of thought is toward a location of their ancestors in the area of Haran in northwestern Mesopotamia. Here they may go back to a very early period. Their ancestry is very probably tied up with that of the Amurru and later Aramaeans of the same region.
- 4.3 Thomas Stuart Ferguson: Only a few "best-sellers" can match the record of the Book of Mormon of having over two million copies printed. Of the authors of these few only Joseph Smith was maligned for his work. The book's continuing popularity is an enigma, especially since over half the Book of Mormon is rather "heavy" description of history, geography and culture. American archaeology was not yet in existence in 1830 when the Book of Mormon was published. The first scientific digging in Mesopotamia was in 1842. John L. Stephens unveiled the Maya ruins to the world beginning in 1839. Although the Book of Mormon is not a work of scholarship, its historical, geographical and cultural claims can be tested by archaeology. In the

Valley of Mexico has been revealed a civilization having agriculture, textiles and pottery on about the level we should expect for the Jaredites. The date for this level is now set as early as 1600 B.C. Southward in Southern Mexico and Guatemala has come to light evidence of a race with "Semitic" noses and beards and a very high cultural level. A trend has started among some experts to admit that not all "Indians" were Mongoloid. In addition the writings of the early Spanish conquerors show that native tradition expressly links some of their ancestors with ancient colonies from across the sea. Thus all lines of evidence begin to contribute evidence in support of the Book of Mormon claims. In 1830 readers of the book could rely on faith alone, now external evidence amplifies our faith.

- 4.4 John L. Sorenson: Despite some attempts by Church members to compare culture traits mentioned in the Book of Mormon with traits found in ancient America, no consistent, reliable comparison of the fundamentals has yet been made. Julian H. Steward, writing in volume 2 of Handbook of South American Indians (Bureau of Amer. Ethnology Bull. 143), gives a list of traits which he feels were characteristic of an early "Formative" culture common to both Mesoamerica and the Andean region, judging by the widespread distribution and early time occurrence of the traits. His list of twenty three was compared with features revealed by the Book of Mormon text as well as the Palestinian background of the American Israelite peoples. Agricultural pattern, settlement pattern, political units, class tendency, religious paraphernalia, priesthood, warfare, slavery, human sacrifice, human trophies, worship of varied deities, engineering works, weaving and other features did exist and most were characteristic of both Book of Mormon peoples and "Formative" peoples according to Steward. Still other features listed by Steward probably occurred, on the basis of inferential evidence from the scripture. None of Steward's list is ruled out by the Book of Mormon but a large majority occur either occasionally or characteristically. (Steward's list could be criticized on a number of points, but was chosen for use without any modification since he has been a critic of the Book of Mormon claims.)
- 4.5 Dr. Franklin S. Harris, Jr.: The importance of metals in our civilization may exaggerate our view of the importance of iron in ancient times. Its absence in most of ancient America has been a point frequently made by Book of Mormon critics. We now have plenty of evidence that the Nephites had a background of iron metallurgy in the Old World. The New World yields some evidence; DeRoo, Priest, Baldwin, Molina, Poindexter, Means, Nadaillac, Forbes and Verrill were cited. Much of the iron referred to was meteoric, not smelted. However the occurrence of words in at least two South American languages referring to iron, plus refining sites and mines in a few places, is suggestive. Yet virtually no evidence is available for the important Mesoamerican area. (For the Oriental background of the Jaredites it was mentioned that smelted iron has been found at Tell Asmar in Mesopotamia dating around 2800-2500 B.C., about the time of the Jaredite departure.) A recent book of Milery, Lost America, claims the discovery of smelting furnaces in the Ohio valley which show resemblances to European smelting sites of the Middle Ages. The Book of Mormon claims of iron-working still remains a major problem, however.
- 4.6 John L. Sorenson: The claim of the Book of Ether that the earliest Jaredites found "elephants" in this land has not in the past been supported by good evidence. Elephants (mastodons or mammoths) have long been known in North America (including Mexico), but until recently the remains have been dated no later than about 8000 B.C. Now the carbon-14 method of dating provides data on the early Cochise food-gathering culture of southern Arizona, showing that the stage of their development contemporaneous with elephants extends down to at least 4000 B.C. and possibly later. In the moist lands of Central America elephants and other large Pleistocene animals certainly lived later than in the drying Southwest. In fact recent discoveries show that the camel, sloth, extinct buffalo and perhaps others lived much later

in Mexico and Central America than had been supposed. Since the larger part of this probably Book of Mormon area is virtually unknown to paleontologists we may feel confident that future work (by Latter-day Saint scientists?) will definitely confirm the presence of the animals credited to that area in the time of the Jaredites and Nephites.

- 4.7 Dr. M. Wells Jakeman: Ancient American religious art generally took the form of either (1) conventionalized religious symbols, or (2) naturalistic religious scenes. Some important religious symbolisms were: (1) the feathered serpent (symbolic of the god, Quetzalcoatl; the serpent was probably a symbol of water and life in ancient America, rather than of evil); (2) the tapir (also a symbol of water and life); (3) the double-headed earth-monster (which has a death sign in one mouth, a life symbol in the other, signifying resurrection?); (4) the feline (the jaguar or puma forms were also probably symbols of the Rain- or Life-God); (5) the Tree of Life. Book of Mormon symbolisms include: (1) the brazen serpent of Moses, a sign of life (and since mounted on a pole, perhaps thought of as flying or winged); (2) the feline (the Lion of Judah); (3) the Tree of Life (with the basic sense of "life-giving," exactly as in America).

A stela (monument) discovered a few years ago in southern Mexico, incorporating the Tree of Life symbol in a naturalistic religious scene, may be a representation of Lehi's vision of the Tree of Life. Elements of the scene seem to depict the Tree, Lehi and his wife and Nephi and Sam facing the Tree, Laman and Lemuel turning their backs to it, the river of water nearby, the rod of iron, and other features. (To be published in more detail.)

- 4.8 Ross T. Christensen: Latter-day Saints should be interested in archaeology primarily for the study of the scriptures. Since the Book of Mormon is our great missionary scripture, it is most closely connected with that science. Joseph Smith was himself enthusiastic about the discoveries made in his day. In 1900 BYU sent an expedition to Colombia, only six years after the first PhD in anthropology (including archaeology) had been granted in this country. The intense interest on the part of the members of the Church continued to grow, but only recently has there been Church representation in professional ranks. Our interest is justified by our love of enlightenment and the D; & C. injunction to "study all nations" and the things "under the earth." One view in the Church is that the book cannot be disproved, hence American archaeology is nothing to be concerned with. Yet it could conceivably appear to be disproved if long excavation filled in the gaps in time and space in the Americas leaving no room to account for the Book of Mormon peoples. Still others say their faith is so strong that external evidence could add nothing to it. They have forgotten their obligation to do missionary work by every available means. We believe in anointing the sick, but also favor medical treatment and research. In addition, more information on the culture of Book of Mormon peoples will make the record more understandable even to the firmest in the faith. Two main reasons emerge for Book of Mormon archaeological studies: (1) to reinforce our claims of the book's truthfulness; (2) to aid our understanding of it. There are in addition good reasons why archaeologists ought to examine the Book of Mormon. In conclusion, the BYU with its Department of Archaeology, is the logical place to center this type of study, where the priesthood can have the advantages of both science and the Spirit. It will be to our shame if non-Mormons find first what we should have been looking for.

- 4.90 Annual Business Meeting: At the annual business meeting of the Society, Dr. M. Wells Jakeman was reelected Chairman of the Executive Council. Irene B. Woodford was released as General Secretary and Treasurer. John L. Sorenson was elected to fill that vacancy and to be a General Officer of the Society.

- 4.91 Note: The General Sec. is interested in receiving from any member the name and address of any LDS (or other interested) student or faculty member at any university or college who is interested in archaeology or anthropology, particularly if trained in those fields.