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The Book of Mormon (Concluded)

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THE BOOK OF MORMON.

BY DANIEL TYLER.

(Concluded.)

HAVING in our previous articles proven conclusively from the Bible that the branches of Joseph were to inherit the continent of America, and that they were to keep an inspired record held by the Lord equally sacred with the Jewish scriptures; having also shown that the book spoken of in the 29th chapter of Isaiah was to fill the same mission as the stick of Joseph, spoken of in the 37th chapter of Ezekiel, and that the book spoken of must have been kept on this continent, we might also mention the fact that both Isaiah and Ezekiel speak of it as a strange work. The first calls it a marvelous work and a wonder. The other as being so remote or so concealed that, it being out of the power of man to find or bring it forth, God announces the fact that He will bring forth the record of Joseph and put it with that of the Jews, and they shall be one in His hand. Another very pointed scripture referring, undoubtedly, to the same book, says: "I have written to Ephraim the great things of my law and they are counted a strange thing."

As the Book of Mormon is the subject of these articles it remains for us to show in conclusion whether that is the record spoken of or "whether we look for another." The book itself tells us that the writers were Israelites of the tribe of Joseph. It also tells us that this was a land of promise to them. It also tells us that they crossed the great waters westward from Jerusalem to get here. It further informs us that they kept a record of their proceedings and the revelations of God to them. It further states that the Lord commanded them thus to keep said record. It also says that the last writer hid it up in a certain mound called by them the Hill Cumorah. It further states that it should remain there until God should bring it forth as one of the agents to gather scattered Israel in the latter times. It also informs us that soon after it comes forth "among the Gentiles" the descendants of the writers will begin to return unto the Lord and to a knowledge of their forefathers (of course this must be by receiving their record), that the Jews will begin to return and rebuild Jerusalem, and the lost tribes be gathered to their own land. That the Gentiles as nations will reject their record, saying, "A Bible, a Bible; we have a Bible and we need no more Bible." All these things have been fulfilling during the forty-eight years since the Book of Mormon was first published in the year 1829. (See date of first edition printed by Mr. Grandin, of Palmyra, New York.)

If the Book of Mormon be not the divine record spoken of by the prophets we have referred to, is it not very remarkable that it should be published in the same country, and that events foretold centuries previous should transpire so rapidly immediately after its publication? Is it not also very strange that some three or four years after the Book of Mormon was published Stephens and Catherwood should find the ruins of a great city, with idols carved in the solid rocks on the walls of the ruins of one of their temples, where this book tells us a great city of idolaters once stood? That book also says when Christ was crucified at Jerusalem, many cities were sunk. Is it not remarkable that since that book was published so many cases should be found of sunken cities which must have been built above ground? Is it not remarkable that a volume of collateral circumstances might be collected in proof of that

book? But we refrain from further testimony of that kind, for if the book be not true we must reject it and wait the Lord's time to bring forth just such a record as the Book of Mormon purports to be, and the many signs spoken of in this article must be repeated. There now remains but one point to prove. That point is not, must such a book come forth by the interposition of divine providence—that is clearly shown or the Bible must fall to the ground. It is not whether it must be found on the American continent, for that stands on the same footing. But the point is, is the Book of Mormon that book? To reach this point we have only to find whether that book is true; for every other point is made. And if that point is not made also, no point can be made by scripture evidence alone.

There are eight unimpeachable witnesses who testify that Joseph Smith showed them certain plates with characters on them, which had the appearance of gold and of ancient and curious workmanship. Their testimony is as follows: "Be it known unto all nations, kindreds, tongues and people unto whom this work shall come, that Joseph Smith, Jun., the translator of this work, has shown unto us the plates of which hath been spoken, which have the appearance of gold; and as many of the leaves as the said Smith has translated, we did handle with our hands; and we also saw the engravings thereon, all of which has the appearance of ancient work, and of curious workmanship. And this we bear record with words of soberness, that the said Smith has shown unto us, for we have seen and hefted, and know of a surety that the said Smith has got the plates of which we have spoken. And we give our names unto the world, to witness unto the world that which we have seen; and we lie not, God bearing witness of it. Christian Whitmer, Jacob Whitmer, Peter Whitmer, Jun., John Whitmer, Hiram Page, Joseph Smith, Sen., Hyrum Smith, Samuel H. Smith."

As to the truth of what these witnesses have stated no person without prejudice who knew them personally or by reputation could reasonably doubt the truth of their statement. They were men whose reputation was above suspicion. All of them were personally known to the writer, after they became Latter-day Saints. But their evidence alone would be insufficient to establish the divinity of the work, their testimony being merely to the existence of the plates with characters that had an ancient appearance, etc., which were shown to them by Joseph Smith. If this was all the evidence on the subject we might suppose that the young man had found them by some accident and be left to our own speculations as to the contents of the strange book. As they say nothing about the nature of the record it contained, we might suppose it to be an uninspired family history of some renowned tribe of the "mound builders." But we are not left in the dark on this most material point. Three men of just as good moral character as the eight already quoted testify as follows:

"Be it known unto all nations, kindreds, tongues and people, unto whom this work shall come, that we, through the grace of God the Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ, have seen the plates which contain this record, which is a record of the people of Nephi, and also of the Lamanites, their brethren, and also of the people of Jared, who came from the tower of which hath been spoken; and we also know that they have been translated by the gift and power of God, for His voice hath declared it unto us; wherefore we know of a surety that the work is true. And we also testify that we have seen the engravings which are upon the plates; and they have been shown unto us by the power of God, and not of man. And we declare with words of soberness, that an angel of God came down from heaven, and he brought and

laid before our eyes, that we beheld and saw the plates, and the engravings thereon; and we know that it is by the grace of God the Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ, that we beheld and bear record that these things are true; and it is marvelous in our eyes, nevertheless the voice of the Lord commanded us that we should bear record of it; wherefore, to be obedient unto the commandments of God, we bear testimony of these things. And we know that if we are faithful in Christ, we shall rid our garments of the blood of all men, and be found spotless before the judgment seat of Christ, and shall dwell with Him eternally in the heavens. And the honor be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost, which is one God. Amen.

"Oliver Cowdery, David Whitmer, Martin Harris."

This is the crowning evidence. It touches every point; it removes from the unbiased mind the last doubt. The writers were of the seed of Joseph, according to their own statement. A holy angel brought the plates down from heaven in the sight of these three men. The voice of God from heaven bore record to them that the translation was correct. These witnesses bear record that the work is true, and on examination we find it to be just such a record as the Bible predicts shall come forth by the power of God. We find it on the same land spoken of, and written by the same nation or tribe, and it is taken out of the ground and speaks in plain, familiar language. The people of whom it speaks were brought down like unto the Jews. Those who received this divine record no longer murmur that they cannot tell the right from the wrong doctrine, but they learn the doctrine of Christ. The descendants of the writers receive it by the hundreds and by the thousands, as predicted by the writers. The Jews begin to return and build the waste places of Jerusalem. As stated in a previous article, "the poor among men rejoice in the Holy One of Israel." In fact, take the evidence altogether, the Book of Mormon proves every prediction we have quoted to be true, and many others not mentioned, and the predictions prove the Book of Mormon; each proves the other to be inspired of God, thereby they have "become one in His hand." And the prophecies in both which have not been will be fulfilled.

I stated in my introductory remarks that whatever we proved from the Bible would be that much more evidence in favor of the Book of Mormon than those prophet books had to sustain them; hence we find when we come to external evidence the Book of Mormon has much the advantage of the Bible, although, as Latter-day Saints, we have not only scriptural evidence but many living witnesses to testify to the same fact. With such a cloud of witnesses, and the Holy Spirit within us testifying of its truth, what reasonable person can doubt the truth of the Book of Mormon.

SMALL MEANS.—We think the power of money is, on the whole, over estimated. The greatest things which have been done for the world have not been accomplished by rich men, or by subscription lists, but by men generally of small pecuniary means. The greatest thinkers, discoverers, inventors and artists have been men of moderate wealth, many of them little raised above the condition of manual laborers in point of worldly circumstances. And it will always be so. Riches are oftener an impediment than a stimulus to action; and in many cases they are quite as much a misfortune as a blessing. The youth who inherits wealth is apt to have life made too easy for him, and so grows sated with it, because he has nothing left to desire. Having no special object to struggle for, he finds time too heavy on his hands; remains mentally and morally asleep; and his position in society is often no higher than that of a polypus over which the tide floats.

THE WATER DOG.

BY J. L. BARFOOT.

THERE is found in some of our lakes a singular looking animal, known by many as the "water dog," and by others as the "fish with legs," according to its state when observed. This creature begins its life as a water animal, in which state it has three branch-like processes, somewhat resembling gills, proceeding from its sides at the back of the head. These are in reality external gills, by which the animal absorbs oxygen from the water in which it lives. Under favorable circumstances the creature will go to the side of the lake or well in which it lives and breathes; by continuing to do so the lungs are gradually brought into action, and it becomes amphibious. An acute observer reports having seen the "water dogs" enjoying themselves at the side of our canyon lakes, with their heads out of the water, basking in the sun.

The distinguished naturalist, Professor O. C. Marsh, has written the natural history of this animal, which he calls "Siredon," and he proves that it changes into amblystoma; in fact, that the "fish with legs," so well known among us, is only the undeveloped form of a species of salamander.

At our museum this creature has been exhibited in both forms, first as a water, and afterwards as a land animal.

There is nothing more remarkable in this than in the changes of the "pollywog," or tadpole, which develops into a frog, or batrachian. The only difference is in the form. The "pollywog" develops into a reptile without a tail; the "fish with legs" becomes a reptile with a tail, both being the perfect form of two separate varieties of batrachians.

The axolotl of Mexico greatly resembles our "fish with legs," or water dog, and it is capable of living first in the water and afterwards on land. Professor Semper, a zoologist of Germany, states that "all the transformations of this curious animal have been carefully noticed by naturalists in that country," and it is fully established that the mysterious little creatures which we find in our wells, brine springs and lakes are only "the larva of creatures destined to become land animals." Then, again, it appears that they can remain permanently aquatic, or water animals, when they are born in water from which it is impossible to emerge, as, for instance, in some of the deep waters in fissures of the Wahsatch range of mountains, and in similar places.

WHY THEY OFTEN FAIL.—Young men often fail to get on in this world because they neglect small opportunities. Not being faithful in little things, they are not promoted to the charge of greater things.

A young man who gets a subordinate situation sometimes thinks it is not necessary for him to give it much attention. He will wait till he gets a piece of responsibility, and then he will show people what he can do. This is a very great mistake. Whatever his situation may be, he should master it in all its details, and perform all its duties faithfully.

The habit of doing his work thoroughly and conscientiously is what is most likely to enable a young man to make his way. With this habit, a person of only ordinary abilities would outstrip one of greater talents who is in the habit of slighting subordinate matters.

But, after all, the mere adoption by a young man, of this great essential rule of success, shows him to be possessed of superior abilities.