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Prophecies and Truth of the Book of Mormon

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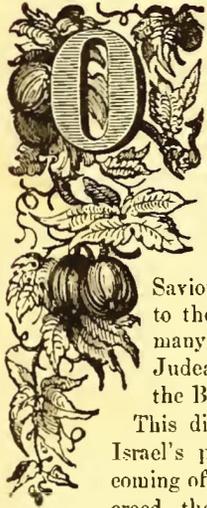
Abstract: Points out that plain and precious truths lost from the Bible are included in the Book of Mormon, specifically truths concerning the mortal ministry of Jesus Christ. Quotes the teachings of Nephi and King Benjamin regarding the Messiah's earthly advent.

The Juvenile Instructor.

GEORGE Q. CANNON, - - - - - EDITOR.

SATURDAY, JANUARY 23, 1875.

EDITORIAL THOUGHTS.



OUR young friends who carefully read the sacred pages of the Book of Mormon cannot but remark the great plainness with which the truths of the gospel are taught therein, and with what precision the ancient prophets of this continent foretold the history of ages and generations to them unborn. This is especially noticeable in the prophecies uttered with regard to the life and ministry of our Savior, which stand out in remarkable contrast to the vague and ambiguous language in which many of the utterances of the prophets of Judea are clothed in our present translation of the Bible.

This difference does not arise from the fact that Israel's prophets were ignorant of the glorious coming of the Messiah. The whole tenor of their creed, the sum of all their rites and ceremonies pointed directly to His advent. But it must be attributed to the fact that many precious truths have been withheld from mankind through the ignorance or wilfulness of translators, and that the Bible we have to-day, precious as it is, would be far more so had it been translated but once, and that once by the power of God, as was the Book of Mormon.

The Book of Mormon itself bears record that ancient Israel in the land of promise, were well acquainted with many details that would mark the sojourn of the Redeemer here on the earth. Jacob, the son of Lehi, writes:

"For, for this intent have we written these things, that they may know that we knew of Christ, and we had a hope of his glory many hundred years before his coming; and not only we ourselves had a hope of his glory, but also all the holy prophets which were before us. Behold they believed in Christ, and worshiped the Father in his name, and also we worship the Father in his name. And for this intent we keep the law of Moses, it pointing our souls to him; and for this cause it is sanctified unto us for righteousness, even as it was accounted unto Abraham in the wilderness, to be obedient unto the commands of God in offering up his son Isaac, which is a similitude of God and his only begotten Son. Wherefore, we search the prophets, and we have many revelations, and the spirit of prophecy; and having all these witnesses we obtain a hope, and our faith becometh unshaken, inasmuch that we truly can command in the name of Jesus, and the very trees obey us, or the mountains, or the waves of the sea."

Nephi, speaking of Isaiah, says, "My soul delighteth in his words. For I will liken his words unto my people and I will send them forth unto all my children for he verily saw my Redeemer as I have seen him."

None of us can doubt but that Abraham had the gospel preached to him, for the Bible tells us so. Jacob, his grandson, prophesied of the coming of Shiloh, the Messiah. The Israelites, in the wilderness, had the doctrine of the redemp-

tion taught to them, but it did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it. We might ask what would be the use of Solomon building his beautiful temple, if the gospel were not understood at that time? What could be done therein towards the salvation of the world if the laws by which the world is saved were not then comprehended, and the name unknown which is the only name given under heaven by which mankind can be saved. But listen to the detail with which the ancient servants of God on this land taught the people of the coming and work of Christ. Nephi says: "And my soul delighteth in proving unto my people, that save Christ should come, all men must perish. For if there be no Christ, there be no God, and if there be no God, we are not; for there could be no creation. But there is a God, and he is Christ, and he cometh in the fullness of his own time."

Again, he records that his father prophesied that "even six hundred years from the time that my father left Jerusalem, a prophet would the Lord God raise up among the Jews, even a Messiah; or in other words, a Savior of the world. And he also spake concerning the prophets, how great a number had testified of these things concerning this Messiah of whom he had spoken, or this Redeemer of the world. Wherefore, all mankind were in a lost and in a fallen state, and ever would be, save they should rely on this Redeemer."

Still more minutely did King Benjamin narrate the incidents of the life of Christ, to the assembled thousands of his people, whom he had called together before his death to listen to the word of the Lord. He declared:

"For behold, the time cometh, and is not far distant, that with power, the Lord Omnipotent who reigneth, who was, and is from all eternity to all eternity, shall come down from heaven, among the children of men, and shall dwell in a tabernacle of clay, and shall go forth amongst men, working mighty miracles, such as healing the sick, raising the dead, causing the lame to walk, the blind to receive their sight, and the deaf to hear, and curing all manner of diseases; and he shall cast out devils, or the evil spirits which dwell in the hearts of the children of men. And lo, he shall suffer temptations, and pain of body, hunger, thirst, and fatigue, even more than man can suffer, except it be unto death; for behold, blood cometh from every pore, so great shall be his anguish for the wickedness and the abomination of his people.

"And he shall be called Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the Father of heaven and earth, the creator of all things, from the beginning; and his mother shall be called Mary. And lo, he cometh unto his own, that salvation might come unto the children of men, even through faith on his name; and even after all this, they shall consider him a man, and say that he hath a devil, and shall scourge him, and shall crucify him. And he shall rise the third day from the dead; and behold, he standeth to judge the world; and behold, all these things are done, that a righteous judgment might come upon the children of men. For behold, and also his blood atoneth for the sins of those who have fallen by the transgression of Adam, who have died, not knowing the will of God concerning them, or who have ignorantly sinned. But wo, wo unto him who knoweth that he rebelleth against God; for salvation cometh to none such, except it be through repentance and faith on the Lord Jesus Christ. And the Lord God hath sent his holy prophets among all the children of men, to declare these things to every kindred, nation, and tongue, that thereby whosoever should believe that Christ should come, the same might receive remission of their sins, and rejoice with exceeding great joy, even as though he had already come among them."

With what minuteness must God have revealed the future history of his Son, to have enabled King Benjamin to tell his people almost as much of the life of our Savior as we know, after he has accomplished the mighty work that the righteous Nephites then looked forward to with such sweet anticipations.

KING HENRY AND THE MILLER.

It has been always the fashion with story-tellers and ballad-makers to represent favorite kings as putting on various disguises, and playing clever, good-humored jokes on the humblest of their subjects. Nearly all of the English kings are so represented, and there were no stories that the people loved to tell better than these. They were the old Christmas stories, told by the Yule-log in the bleak old days of the English barons, when swords and hemlets were thick and books were few. Thus we have the tales of King Henry VIII. and the Miller of Dec; of good Duke Philip of Burgundy and Sly the Tinker; of James I. and the Tinker; of William III. and the Forester, and so on all through the reigns of the Scottish James and English Georges. Some of the stories were fiction, like that of

"Old King Cole.
That jolly old soul."

But most of them were true. The wandering harpers used to relate them in verse; and as delightful as the bringing in of the Yule-log and the mistletoe, the fiery sport of the "snap-dragon," or the rollicking play of "blind man's buff," were the holiday tales of the funny doings of these merry old English kings.

One of the oldest of these ballads relates to King Henry and the Miller, and starts off briskly with:

"Henry, our royal king, would ride a hunting
To the green forests so pleasant and fair."

The forest was Sherwood, where once lived Robin Hood and his merry men. King Henry (Plantagenet) was young then, and he took with him a great retinue of young princes and nobles. So the horses cantered over the hills of Nottingham, and plume after plume danced out of sight among the green leaves. The king separated himself from the gay party, and dashed off into the heart of the forest.

At last the day began to decline, and shadows grew long and thick in all the forest. The king blew his horn. There was no answer. He was lost.

He rode on. As the forest grew dark, he heard the flow of water, and discovered a cool stream just reflecting the light of the rising moon. Presently he heard a mill-wheel. Then his heart took courage. He soon reined his horse before the door of the mill.

"Good miller," said the king, "is this the road to Nottingham?"

"I guess you know as well as I," answered the miller. "You look as though you had been there before."

"What do you take me for?" asked the king in astonishment.

"For some gentleman thief or other; no honest man, sure."

"But I must lodge with you to-night. I have gold at hand."

At the word "gold" the miller began to prick up his ears. Just then the miller's wife, a large, fat, brawling woman, looked over her husband's shoulder. She, too, had heard the word "gold," but was still cautious.

She delighted in the sweet name of Bymybroth. No one delights in that name now.

"Are you sure you are no runaway?" piped Bymybroth.

"I am no runaway," said the king.

"Then show us your passport," said Bymybroth, who had a very logical turn of mind.

"From whom?"

"From the king."

The king had no passport, and still finding Bymybroth suspicious and defiant, he began to flatter her, and he bowed so politely that she was at last induced to say:

"You may come in."

Bymybroth became very much pleased with the king, so much so, that she told him that, if he was tidy enough, he might sleep with her own son.

"If the king would never hear of it, I would get you some venison for supper," said Bymybroth. "We do rob the king's forest of venison sometimes. Will you promise?"

"Yes, on my word," said the king; "the king shall never know any more about it than he knows now."

The king was very hungry after his anxiety and long ride, and as his poor, weak human nature was quite like that of some other men whose heads were never topped with a crown, he made a large supper off the unlawful venison.

"You will never tell about this?" said the cautious Bymybroth, looking keenly at her guest.

"The king shall be none the wiser for this from me," said the king, looking very profound.

With this strong assurance, Bymybroth slept very comfortably that night, but was awakened in the morning by a right royal retinue at the door. The miller and his wife then began "shaking and quaking," to use the graphic language of the old songs; and the poor miller kneeled down and shut his eyes, we suppose, in order to decently make his last prayer. But—how charmingly it all ends!—the king,

"His kind courtesy for to requite,
Gave him a living and dubbed him a knight."

The above story was in its day very popular, because the game laws of England at that time were very severe and very hard on the poor. It showed what the king himself would do when he was hungry, and it seemed a concession to the cause of the suffering poor.—*St. Nicholas.*

IDLENESS.—Many young people think an idle life must be a pleasant one, but there are none who enjoy it so little and are such hurdens to themselves as those who have nothing to do. Those who are obliged to work hard all day enjoy their short periods of rest and recreation so much that they are apt to think that if their whole life were spent in rest and recreation it would be the most pleasant of all. But this is a sad mistake, as they would soon find out if they made a trial of the life they think so agreeable. One who is never busy can never enjoy rest, for rest implies relief from previous labors; and if our whole time were spent in amusing ourselves, we should find it more wearisome, than the hardest day's work. Recreation is only valuable as it unbends us; the idle can know nothing of it. Many people leave off business and settle down to a life of enjoyment, but they generally find that they are not nearly so happy as they were before, and are often glad to return to their old occupation to escape the miseries of idleness.

SOUND ADVICE.—Never owe any man more than you are able to pay, and allow no man to owe you more than you are able to lose.