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## Confirmatory Evidences of "Mormonism": The Calendar in America

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**Abstract:** The calendar developed by the Maya Indians began somewhere between 613 and 580 B.C., though it dates back to 3373 B.C., and was arranged by the deity Quetzalcoatl. The Book of Mormon people reckoned their time from the Savior's birth. The date when Mayan history began and the correlation with the sign of the birth of deity are evidence of the authenticity of the Book of Mormon.

ment. The facts are that up to November 8th thirty-seven American states had voted for the repeal. One of these states was Utah. The law required thirty-six states to ratify the repeal amendment before it became effective. It was a coincidence that Utah happened to be the thirty-sixth state to ratify. Utah is called a "Mormon" state because members of the Church are slightly in the majority, and the headquarters of the Church are in Salt Lake City, the state capital. But the Church was in no sense an advocate of repeal. Undoubtedly a few members of the Church voted for repeal. But they did this in the exercise of their liberty as American citizens, which the Church is careful not to infringe. In matters political the Church leaves its members free to act according to the dictates of their conscience, provided, however, that in doing this they act within the law. It should be understood that many non-drinkers voted for repeal, due to the fact that prohibition laws were not well enforced.

And now attention is specially called to the last paragraph of the Message: "That the Spirit of Christ may pervade this Christmastide, and incline the hearts of men the world over to peace, fraternity and love, is our earnest prayer for all." This prayer breathes the Spirit of Christ and is uttered by brethren who truly represent Him and are in very deed His authorized agents to stand at the present time at the head of His Church here on earth. This prayer is one more notice to the world that the Church stands for universal peace and international goodwill. Would that all men everywhere, especially professing Christians, would sincerely utter a similar prayer and then go out to effect an answer to their prayers. Then our present situation in which many men and nations are talking of and preparing for "the next war" would not exist. Satan, however, is not yet bound. And until he is we shall continue to hear of "wars and rumours of wars." Saints, however, will pray for and work for peace.

May the spirit of the Message of the First Presidency encourage every Latter-day Saint and fill the heart of every seeker after truth!—M.

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## CONFIRMATORY EVIDENCES OF "MORMONISM"

### THE CALENDAR IN AMERICA

ONE of the true marvels of the intellectual world is the calendar developed by the Maya Indians in Yucatan.\* So accurate was the calendar that it lasted for centuries without the total error amounting to a day—a preciseness that made it greatly superior to any contemporaneous or previous calendars. This calendar was used not only by the Maya in Yucatan but

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\*For a description of the Calendar see *Encyclopedia Britannica*, article, Calendar,

also by other Central American peoples, in similar forms.\* In speaking of the calendar, Dr. Herbert J. Spinden, the eminent scholar, said :

The invention of the Central American calendar in the seventh century before Christ may be described with all propriety as one of the intellectual achievements in the history of man. This calendar solved with conspicuous success the great problem of measuring and defining time, which confronts all civilized nations. Moreover, it required the elaboration of one of the four or five original systems of writing the parts of speech in graphic symbols, and it conjoined with this supplementary invention of hieroglyphs the earliest discovery of the device of figures with place values in the notation of numbers.

This time machine of ancient America was distinctly a scientific construction, the product of critical scrutiny of various natural phenomena by a master mind among the Mayas. It permitted a school of astronomer priests to keep accurate records of celestial occurrences over a range of many centuries." (*Reduction of Mayan Dates*, Peabody Museum, Cambridge, Mass., Papers, vol. 6, No. 4, p. v, 1924.)

Dr. Spinden has worked out a correlation between the Maya and Christian calendars that makes possible the statement of Maya dates in terms of our Christian chronology.† He states :

The thirty-three years between August 6, 613 B. C. and December 22, 580 B. C., witnessed perhaps the first admirably conceived and patiently completed piece of systematic science anywhere in the world. . . . The Mayan Calendar ran without the loss of a day for 2,148 years and controlled the religious and civil life of several nations. (*Reduction of Mayan Dates*, p. 157.)

Michael Mok, in the *Popular Science Monthly* for January, 1930, asks :

Why on August 6, 613 B. C.? Where were the Mayas on August 5? Had they lived, tilled the soil, developed their wonderful astronomy and admirable architecture, pursued their other arts and sciences on this (American) continent before they carved that first inscription? If so, for how long? Nobody knows.

Although to distinguish one day from another over a longer period, and for longer calculations, the Maya people used a system reckoning from a date 3373 B. C., supposed to be a date of re-creation of the world (Gann and Thompson, *History of the Maya*, p. 209), yet 613 B. C. was the date when their history begins. This date, 613 B. C., is of remarkable interest. Book of Mormon students will find it especially so; for, according to Book of Mormon chronology, Lehi and his group left Jerusalem during the reign of King Zedekiah, about 600 B. C. (1 Nephi 1 : 4; 3 Nephi 1 : 1), from which time their history as a people began. And they not only kept historical records, but also carefully recorded the passage of time. (Enos 1 : 25; Jacob 1 : 1.)

Another interesting point about the calendar is that, according to Aztec legend, it was made among the Aztecs by Quetzalcoatl. J. C. Mneller says : "Quetzalcoatl arranged the calendar."‡ Tor-

\*Bancroft, *Native Races*, vol. 2, pp. 762, 766; Hastings' *Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics*, article, Calendar.

†For more recent evidence supporting Dr. Spinden's correlation see his *Maya Dates and What They Reveal*, Museum of the Brooklyn Institute of Arts and Sciences, Science Bull., vol. iv, No. 1, 1930.

‡Bancroft, *Native Races*, vol. 3, p. 274.



quemada says: "It is held for certain that Quetzalcoatl made the calendar."\* Readers may remember that in the last issue of the *Star* (p. 11) Elder Pierce mentions that the making of the calendar was attributed to Quetzalcoatl. Others have made similar statements.†

As mentioned in the December 21st issue of the *Star*, Quetzalcoatl had many characteristics and did many things which are explained in the Book of Mormon by the knowledge of Christ among the Nephites. Attributing the Calendar to Quetzalcoatl may well be another parallel between legend and history. The Book of Mormon tells us :

Now the Nephites began to reckon their time from this period when the sign was given, or from the coming of Christ. (3 Nephi 2 : 8.)

In the course of time, this practice might easily have caused the calendar itself to be attributed to Christ.

These two items—the date when the Maya history began, as recorded on their calendar, and correlated by Spinden ; and the calendar's attribution, by legend, to Quetzalcoatl—are confirmatory of the Book of Mormon, and aid in establishing its authenticity.—FRANKLIN S. HARRIS, JR.

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## HAVE A GOAL

ELDER G. HOMER DURHAM

TWO men went to visit the Science Museum in South Kensington, London. There in the Valhalla of Display Land were vast resources of rich materials for intelligent research. One man entered the building knowing what he wanted. Armed with pen and note-book, he proceeded directly to the airplane models, made his notes, observed carefully the fine points of the exhibit, then went his way, refreshed and enriched. The other, having nothing particular in mind, wandered aimlessly from group to group, gallery to gallery, and went his way muttering, "What does anyone see in all that junk?" Sadder, he was, without a doubt, but not wiser for the afternoon's experiences.

The Mutual Improvement Association of the Church of Jesus Christ aims first, to impress youth of all ages with a testimony of the Gospel of Jesus Christ ; second, to aid them in obtaining all true knowledge which will light the way toward complete living.

The accomplishment of these aims is a process of years. And yet, what finer objectives could one have in mind for a life of service? Suppose that all the members of to-day's organizations had an honest, living testimony of the Gospel of Jesus Christ!

A complete survey of the Kensington Museum is not the work of a single afternoon, nor yet of a week, nor a year. A thorough knowledge comes through the exercise of will and choice, and persistent striving towards an end. In short, one must set up his goal posts, or else become hopelessly lost in the maze of life. So it is in building individuals through a powerful organization.

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\*Bancroft, *Native Races*, vol. 3, p. 259.

†Brinton, *Myths of the New World*, p. 180 ; Bancroft, *Native Races*, vol. 5, pp. 190, 192.