

Cumorah Messenger

Unexpected Treasure

By Tim Brown © 2021

Lately I have been reflecting on the expeditions from years past. The information we have gathered since our first trip in 2001 and the adventures we have experienced traveling in Central America have been breathtaking. But for me the most memorable was our expedition in 2005. There was incredible anticipation for our success of finally gaining access to the records hidden by Mormon in Hill Cumorah. After finding the "Proclamation Tablet" the year before, all the stars seemed to be aligning for the next big event. We had planned, prayed, fasted, sacrificed and some did Native American sweat

lodge services. We had a service of dedication and a special evangelist blessing before leaving for our trip.

We arrived in Tuxtepec, Oaxaca on Saturday afternoon April 2, 2005. Knowing the awesome responsibility once the records were obtained, we planned to go to the Hill on Sunday to pray and com-

mune with our Lord to ask for direction and dedicate ourselves to His will. We quickly found out when you ask for that, you may as well throw your scheduled plans out the window. The purpose of this article is not to focus on succeeding events, but suffice it to say it was one miracle after another. Our hu-



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One Door Closes, Another Opens

By Carol Brown © 2021

The Hill Cumorah Expedition Team began our ministry to the communities around Hill Cumorah and Jalapa de Diaz in 2006. Because of the experience we had in 2005, we asked the mayor of Jalapa if there were needs within the community where we could assist. They indicated there was a need for clothing, especially children's clothes. Since then, the Cumorah team has endeavored to bring clothing to Jalapa every year. We began to branch out to other

communities as well. We now have about five communities where we have developed relationships through some form of assistance.

In 2013, we met Sergio who agreed to travel with us to these communities and assist us in translation since we speak very little to no Spanish. Sergio enjoyed traveling with us and meeting our friends. He commented on how deep and meaningful the relationships were with our Jalapa friends. He has become an integral part of our

team.

We were on our way to these Mexico communities to deliver the clothes in 2018 when we tried to cross the border at Laredo and told it was forbidden to take used clothing into Mexico. It didn't matter that we had done it for the last eleven years. We felt we needed to

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Unexpected Treasure *continued*



man nature compelled us to continue executing our plan for the trip. I mean after all; we spent a whole year planning and now God was trying to change everything. Sometimes we are very slow learners.

As the week progressed on the Hill, our expedition plans were hitting roadblocks. However, God was continually placing us in situations for ministry in several different communities. Throughout the week we were given multiple opportunities to testify of Him and why we were there. By Saturday, all of our efforts to access the cave where we were to find the records had come to a dead end. We were extremely

disappointed. We now realized we would be going home empty handed. We would be packing up and leaving the Hill Camp on Monday with nothing to show for it but stinky clothes, blistered hands, thorns in various places and heavy hearts.

Before we left for our trip, a dear friend Evangelist John Gorker handed me a sealed envelope. He said "If you come to the point when you're feeling down, you might want to share this with the group". Late Saturday afternoon my backpack and medical pack were stolen from my tent by local thieves. I was weary and exhausted. Fortunately

for me I still had my Book of Mormon. It was then I saw the envelope Brother Gorker had given me. It was still sealed. Remembering what he had told me I opened the envelope and began to read. As I read it, tears began to flow freely and then a flood. We had planned a communion service for the next day on the Hill. I shared the letter with the group at that service. This is what it said:

I your Lord walked this earth as your servant, always in the shadow of death. I know of your desires to serve me this day... You believe you wish to go for me. Remember this is my work and glory, as well as my cross to bring forth my work of salvation, that all mankind may receive my Father and live in his presence. The Plates you search for are cared for and protected. They exist as evidence of my ministry on earth. Unless your work here carries my cross, then your work is for naught.

You stand before me now, as did my disciples when I sent them forth into the world. I promised them the gift of my Fathers Spirit as I sent them forth. They shared their testimony to the world in my name.

Now it is today, this is your hour, knock with the Spirit's guidance, and know doors will open unto you, if you are of one heart and one mind.

Remember my counsel to my disciples that they love each other as I have loved them. Success in your mission does not rest in searching, witnessing or finding, but in fulfilling my Fathers will, as his spirit reveals it to you... As I sent my disciples of old, so send I you. Go in the peace of my Spirit.

So Saith the Spirit.



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CUMORAH MESSENGER

One Door Closes, Another Opens *continued*

try to find a crossing that would allow us to cross with our gifts. We chose to attempt another crossing at Rio Grande City and were told the same thing. We were disappointed and wondered what God's plan was for us. Fortunately, the gentleman in the US tollbooth said he knew a pastor who had a congregation on the US side and an orphanage on the Mexico side. The orphanage could use our clothes. We dropped off our clothes at the church grateful that God led us to children we could help even if it wasn't our Jalapa communities. But God had led us to this city, the man in the tollbooth who happened to be on duty



when we needed him and his pastor. God was putting everyone in place and everyone was where they needed to be.

We traveled on to visit our friends, sad that our purpose of providing clothing wasn't happening, but still excited to see our friends. Over the next two days we visited in the various villages around the hill. Their reaction was the same everywhere we went. As nice as it would have been to receive the clothes, they all were genuinely excited to see us. We were made aware that we were woven together like family. At our final devotion before heading back home, Sergio spoke with tears in his eyes and said his life was forever changed because we come. And he said if we never are able to come back that he wanted us to know that he would continue our work.

Our team was going to visit again in the spring of 2020, but then the Covid virus hit and everything shut down. We realized that the Jalapa communities were probably suffering. In July of 2020, Tim Brown contacted Sergio and they discussed how we might be able to help. Sergio went to the communities and visited with them, asking what their needs were and he discovered they were having difficulty getting some food items.

Since August of last year, our team has been sending money to Sergio who then shops for items each community needs such as rice, beans, oil, sugar, soup, pasta and toilet paper. His team then bags the items into individual family packages. In addition, he now has people in Tuxtepec that are donating clothing for the Jalapa communities as well. Every other month Sergio travels the hour drive to the Hill communities. He delivers the items to each location. The designated leaders in those communities then

hands them out to the families within their community. Sergio's son, Joshua, is also traveling with him and assisting in this service.

We often wondered what God had planned for us because we weren't able to bring clothes anymore, but God has opened a new avenue for service. And it has now expanded from the Hill Cumorah Team doing the service to include Sergio and Joshua; and from them to others donating clothing and the communities actually handing out the packages to their own people. If you would like to assist us in help-



ing these communities, you can donate to the Hill Cumorah Expedition Team and designate the Jalapa Relief Fund.

We are learning to trust God that He has this. He works in mysterious ways and in His own timing. We are grateful that God continues to guide us even though at times we don't understand where that path is headed. He only gives us little snippets where He wants us to go. We only know this sacred path we walk with Him is exciting and filled with joy and adventure. Join us as we walk together with the Savior.

The Commodity of Water

By David B. Brown © 2021

In continuing the research concerning the “Snake People” of Mesoamerica as descendants of Mino-Mycenean seafarers, I have come across a 600-plus page 2017 dissertation entitled The Hydraulic Systems of Uxul—Origins, Functions, and Social Settings by Nicolaus Paul Seefeld. This tome is excellent and sadly mis-titled. While the title states it is about Uxul, it is actually a comprehensive overview of all water conservation systems employed throughout the Central Mayan region. And, what it explains concerning cultural development is absolutely amazing.

One critical necessity of all human existence is the availability of fresh-water sources. And, subsequent to that is the necessity for water to sustain agriculture. The geological make-up of the Peten and Yucatan is such that there is only a thin layer of humus soil available for the sustenance of crops above the limestone karst that is the platform base of this area. The rainwater that falls here is quickly absorbed into the limestone layers beneath it. The only way it is accessed after this is through openings in the limestone which are called *cenotes*. Very large Mayan cities were built around these *cenotes* for the very reason listed above; fresh water is necessary for sustaining life and growing crops.

The dissertation by Seefeld goes into great detail on how the ancient Maya utilized the available rainfall through methods of capture in reservoirs, and then utilizing the contours of the land to methodically place terracing, channels and canals that were systematically used to conserve the commodity of water. The question is this, “Did the Maya develop this technology on their own, or was it part of the cultural baggage introduced through trans-oceanic contact?”

In the December 2020 Cumorah Messenger Newsletter, I proposed that the “serpents” referenced in the Book of Ether Jaredite story were not reptiles, but were in fact a cultural migration of “serpent people” that were Middle-Eastern seafarers who were displaced from the cultural up-

heavals occurring in the 15th Century BC. And, that it was about 1,000 BC when King Lib pushed the serpents out of the region that again provided access to the wilderness area that was Zarahemla (Usumacinta River basin). Additionally, I proposed that the serpent people merely relocated to Belize, the Peten of Guatemala and the southern areas of Mexico such as Campeche and Quintana Roo. This placed them in the elevated region between two natural ports into which rivers flowed from the interior. One port had access from the Caribbean and the other from the Gulf of Mexico. This is the very region where the



first major evidences of Maya civilization begin to develop and oddly enough, they are referred to as the “Snake Kings.”

Notice how the waterways of this region empty into these two bays. This region is prime for commercial development. Being descendants from seafarers, the Serpent People already possessed the knowledge for watercraft and navigation, but this region has issues with seasonal droughts. They needed technologies for capturing water, channeling water and delivering water. Who could provide that information or technology for them? It seems that these same people may have possessed this knowledge as well.

The Mediterranean Islands suffered many of the same problems that the early Maya encountered; rocky substrate with thin layers of humus



from which to grow crops for sustenance. Archaeologists have determined that the early Minoan and Greek cultures learned how to make the most of the potential agriculture on their rocky soil. Terracing was the key. There was lots of rock available to build small walls across the downslopes of the islands, thereby trapping the topsoil runoff and creating beds of rich soil for planting. Hence, the islands became terraformed in a manner that was able to provide sustenance for its inhabitants.

This same technology can be found employed in the Azores and also in Ireland; two critical island stopping points in the Mycenean connection to the New World as documented by Manolis Kautlis in his book entitled, In the Shadows. It appears that the Myceneans systematically peopled the islands beyond the Strait of Gibraltar (Pillars of Hercules) and brought with them the technologies for creating civilization at each of these stopping points. If the Myceneans are indeed at least part of the Snake People migration, then it makes sense that they are also carry-



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Adventures In Scriptures

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Nephite Missionaries and the Lamanites

Ammon was not the only missionary that went to the Lamanites to tell of God's great Love. Aaron, Omner, Himni, Muloki, Ammah and others also went to the Lamanites to help them believe in God. Aaron, Muloki, and Ammah were unlucky. They were sent to prison for their efforts to convert the Lamanites. They suffered greatly in prison. They were hungry, thirsty and their hands were bound causing them great distress. Their friends managed to run away and continue to spread the Word of God to the Lamanites.

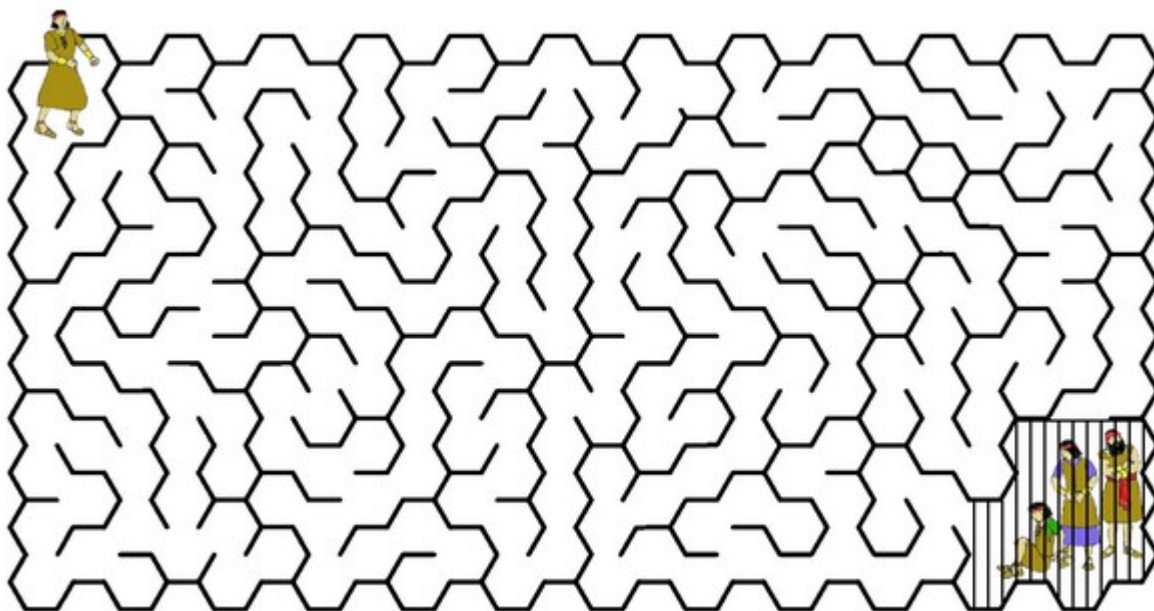
Ammon was led by the Spirit to go to the land of Middoni, where his brothers were bound and in prison. King Lamoni, who had been converted, went with Ammon. As they were traveling they met Lamoni's father who was King over all the land. King Lamoni's father was angry with Lamoni for missing a feast that he had planned for his sons and his people. He was also angry because Lamoni was with Ammon, a Nephite. All Nephites were considered enemies of the Lamanites.

Lamoni and his father began to fight, but Ammon stepped in and saved Lamoni from being killed by his father. Lamoni's father then turned on Ammon, but Ammon got the upper hand. Ammon told King Lamoni's father that if he allowed Aaron, Muloki and Ammah to go free that he would spare his life. He also asked that King Lamoni be able to retain his kingdom.

King Lamoni's father agreed and Ammon spared his life. King Lamoni's father saw the great love that Ammon had for King Lamoni and the father's heart was softened toward Ammon and he freed Aaron, Muloki, and Ammah from prison. King Lamoni and his father agreed to allow the missionaries freedom to preach throughout the Lamanite lands. The Lord blessed the efforts of the Nephite missionaries and many Lamanites were converted to the Lord.

The Lamanites that were converted took upon themselves a new name. The new name was Anti-Nephi-Lehis. They were anti (against) their old life and no longer considered themselves Lamanites.
Alma 12:182- 14:19

Help Ammon find his way to free Aaron, Muloki and Ammah from prison.



J	Q	Z	R	Y	S	X	O	K	A	H	C	M	T	L	B	N	E	V	D	G	I	W	P	U	F
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26

Use the key above to find the puzzle message

14 11 18 15 8 4 20 21 10 19 18

14 11 18 23 8 4 20 21 4 18 10 14

23 10 6 14 11 18 12 8 13 24 10 17 5

8 26 14 11 8 6 18 14 11 10 14

24 25 16 15 22 6 11 18 20 22 14

24 6 10 15 13 68:11

WORD SEARCH

Find and circle the words from the story:

D	K	B	O	P	D	L	M	I	B	A	V	Y	K	L	S	M	N
C	B	L	E	P	O	S	A	I	C	O	A	D	K	R	O	P	E
I	O	W	A	L	R	Z	F	M	S	A	U	R	A	L	F	R	P
H	A	N	L	M	I	E	S	G	O	S	M	N	O	V	T	I	H
S	H	M	V	B	A	E	A	R	G	N	I	M	D	N	E	S	I
E	O	I	M	E	L	N	V	C	H	X	I	O	O	G	N	O	T
A	M	N	M	A	R	E	I	E	H	L	V	O	N	N	E	N	E
E	N	W	V	N	H	T	S	T	O	I	O	L	T	A	D	P	S
R	E	H	K	M	I	L	E	S	E	R	V	Z	A	R	A	V	
F	R	E	E	D	O	M	T	D	E	S	V	N	E	N	T	Y	F
H	E	A	R	T	B	B	M	W	J	D	W	D	Q	N	P	M	T
B	I	D	H	B	M	U	L	O	K	I	C	G	J	E	V	M	X

- AARON
- AMMAH
- AMMON
- BELIEVE
- BLESSED
- BOUND
- CONVERTED
- FREEDOM
- HEART
- HIMNI
- LAMANITE
- LAMONI
- LOVE
- MISSIONARY
- MULOKI
- NEPHITE
- OMNER
- PREACH
- PRISON
- SOFTENED

The Commodity of Water *Continued*

ing with them the technologies to create fertile soil beds from thin humus layers sitting over thirsty limestone rock.

The methods employed in the region are ingenious. There are swamp and marshlands terraformed with raised beds and canals all around the beds. This not only provides water to the crop beds in the midst of the drought season, but it also provides quick access to harvesting of the crops and delivery to centralized stations along the waterways that all make their way to the natural ports.

The map below illustrates the areas where canals were anciently built to support the commercial level of crop development. Note how the primary area of development is found on the river systems emptying into the Chetumal Bay that is accessed from the Caribbean. Think of the potential access immediately to the east



and south; the host of Caribbean Islands, Central and South America. There is a potential for extensive commerce for anyone who is able to navigate the seas.

There was extensive research done at Caracol in Central Belize where there was an incredible amount of terracing employed to reduce the amount of erosion and create soil beds for crops. While Caracol is not connected to the upper Chetumal Bay system, it does connect by river di-

rectly to the southern Caribbean access to Chetumal Bay. It is speculated that the Caracol system provided both

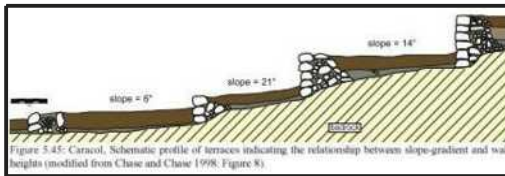


Figure 3.45: Caracol. Schematic profile of terraces indicating the relationship between slope-gradient and wall heights (modified from Chase and Chase 1998, Figure 8).

vegetable crops and forestry for export. Above is a profile of the typical terracing systems found employed at Caracol.

As these Peten-centered riverway cultures began to flourish, and the support system surrounding their industry began to expand, it was only a matter of time until the Yucatan would begin to be developed. But, this would require another form of technology that is employed in multiple places throughout the Yucatan; rainwater capture in reservoirs. I have yet to complete my research in these areas, but at this point I will not be surprised if this is yet another connection to Middle East/Mycenean cultural baggage.

The map to the right is an illustration of the water basins found in the Maya region. Because of the critical need for water to sustain life, and the political associations resulting from water access, both fresh water for consumption and waterway for commerce, these basins are foundational to regional polities found in the Mayan (Book of Mormon) record.

The Mayan Highlands are the bulk of the early Book of Mormon record from 600-275 BC. The next 600 years of the Nephite record in Zarahemla takes place in the lowlands and the water basins are indicative of the sub-cultural groups within the Nephite historical record. For example, Antiparah, Antionum, Bountiful, Manti, and so on. Comprehending the cultural powers involved with riverway access and water basins is pivotal to understanding the political powers of the Book of Mormon.

The Book of Mormon provides us with only peripheral cultural details concerning the Nephites as it is a record of their spiritual journey. But,

there are remarkable clues that when overlaid on the archaeological record, we are able to begin piecing together the cultural record to discover the more comprehensive story of cultural development. It is beginning to appear that the Judeo-Christian concepts of spirituality was introduced into a culture that originated from migrant seafarers. These seafarers developed an incredible culture of commerce using technologies that were handed down over centuries,



and they were enslaved in the power struggle to maintain those systems. But, it was the infusion of the gospel that transformed their culture into the powerhouse that became known as the Maya.

The technology that began as water-capture systems for sustaining life expanded to become a means for industrial-size exports. The advances that expanded this to commercial applications then became pressurized water delivery systems such as that found in Palenque and reservoir capture and filtering systems such as found in Chichen Itza and Uxmal. In all of these cases, the political powers found a means to harness the commodity of water and then exploit it to the advancement of their social order. Is it not ironic that water is unlocking the secrets of the Book of Mormon even as entering into water opens the door for our spiritual awakening?

**We're on the web at
www.hceti.org**

The Hill Cumorah Expedition Team, Inc is a Missouri not-for-profit corporation dedicated to the study, research and dissemination of information as it pertains to the Book of Mormon. Our primary focus is to research and assemble archaeological and other related information to help establish the historical feasibility of the Book of Mormon.

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Unexpected Treasure *Continued*

That was what God had been trying to tell us. "The records are protected. They will be revealed in His time. In the meantime, this is what I want you to do: care for my people in this valley (that was where He had been taking us all week): testify of my Son and His salvation: this is our time and as we knock doors will open (this happens all the time): be of one heart and mind: love one another: He is sending us forth as he sent his disciples."

I can't tell you how this has impacted my life. I fall short every day. We all do. The guidance the Lord gave us in 2005 still brings tears to my eyes. I want to do all I can to fulfill the commission He gave us. It changed the direction of our group from obtaining the treasure in Cumorah to include searching for the testimonies of Christ our ancestral brothers had written in stone centu-



ries before. We have found they are everywhere in Central America. We are continually looking for opportunities to share the testimonies left by them. And we are just beginning.

The treasure of Cumorah is safe. It is yet to be revealed to the world. We failed to find the treasure of Cumorah in 2005; instead, we found unexpected treasure in the words of divine counsel given to us. I would not trade the experiences of that year for anything. God Bless

