

THE LATTER-DAY SAINTS'

MILLENNIAL STAR.

"For the Lord shall comfort Zion: he will comfort all her waste places; and he will make her wilderness like Eden and her desert like the garden of the Lord; joy and gladness shall be found therein, thanksgiving and the voice of melody."—ISAIAH.

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DIVINITY OF THE BOOK OF MORMON.

The divine authenticity of the Book of Mormon has been confirmed to this generation by a multiplicity of evidence. It is not our intention, in this article, to examine this evidence in detail, but merely to set forth a new kind of proof, which, I believe, has never been referred to, by any former writers. This evidence is derived from certain great events mentioned in the Book of Mormon, which happened upon the Western Continent, at the precise time of the crucifixion of Christ, and during the three days in which his body slept in the tomb. The following is the description of these events:—

"And now it came to pass that according to our record, and we know our record to be true, for behold, it was a just man who did keep the record; for he truly did many miracles in the name of Jesus; and there was not any man who could do a miracle in the name of Jesus, save he were cleansed every whit from his iniquity. And now it came to pass, if there was no mistake made by this man in the reckoning of our time, the thirty and third year had passed away, and the people began to look with great earnestness for the sign which had been given by the Prophet

Samuel, the Lamanite; yea, for the time that there should be darkness for the space of three days over the face of the land. And there began to be great doubtings and disputations among the people, notwithstanding so many signs had been given.

2. And it came to pass in the thirty and fourth year, in the first month, in the fourth day of the month, there arose a great storm, such an one as never had been known in all the land; and there was also a great and terrible tempest; and there was terrible thunder, insomuch that it did shake the whole earth as if it was about to divide asunder; and there were exceeding sharp lightnings, such as never had been known in all the land. And the city of Zarahemla did take fire; and the city of Moroni did sink into the depths of the sea, and the inhabitants thereof, were drowned; and the earth was carried up upon the city of Moronihah, that in the place of the city thereof, there became a great mountain; and there was a great and terrible destruction in the land southward. But behold, there was a more great and terrible destruction in the land northward: for behold, the whole face of the land was changed, because of the tempest, and the whirlwinds, and the thunderings, and the lightnings, and the exceeding great quaking of the whole earth; and the high-

ways were broken up, and the level roads were spoiled, and many smooth places became rough, and many great and notable cities were sunk, and many were burned, and many were shook till the buildings thereof had fallen to the earth, and the inhabitants thereof were slain, and the places were left desolate; and there were some cities which remained; but the damage thereof was exceeding great, and there were many in them who were slain; and there were some who were carried away in the whirlwind; and whither they went, no man knoweth, save they know that they were carried away; and thus the face of the whole earth became deformed, because of the tempests, and the thunderings, and the lightnings, and the quaking of the earth. And behold, the rocks were rent in twain; they were broken up upon the face of the whole earth, insomuch that they were found in broken fragments, and in seams, and in cracks, upon all the face of the land.

3. And it came to pass that when the thunderings, and the lightnings, and the storm, and the tempest, and the quakings, of the earth did cease—for behold, they did last for about the space of three hours; and it was said by some that the time was greater; nevertheless, all these great and terrible things were done in about the space of three hours; and then behold, there was darkness upon the face of the land.

4. And it came to pass that there was thick darkness upon all the face of the land, insomuch that the inhabitants thereof who had not fallen, could feel the vapour of darkness; and there could be no light, because of the darkness, neither candles, neither torches; neither could there be fire kindled with their fine and exceeding dry wood, so that there could not be any light at all; and there was not any light seen, neither fire, nor glimmer, neither the sun, nor the moon, nor the stars, for so great were the mists of darkness which were upon the face of the land.

5. And it came to pass that it did last for the space of three days, that there was no light seen; and there was great mourning, and howling, and weeping among all the people continually; yea, great were the groanings of the people, because of the darkness and the great destruction which had come upon them."

Nephi, in the former part of this book, informs us that the night before Jesus was born was as light as mid-day: this being a sign given to the ancient Israelites of America, that they might know the precise time of his

birth. Nephi also informs us, that they commenced reckoning their time from this great event. Therefore, according to the above extract, Jesus must have been about thirty-three years and four days old when he was crucified. It appears that thick darkness did not come over the land, during the three hours that Jesus was on the cross, but followed immediately after, and lasted for three days. In the eleventh paragraph, in reference to the three days of darkness, Nephi says, "thus did the three days pass away. *And it was in the morning*, and the darkness dispersed from off the face of the land, and the earth did cease to tremble, and the rocks did cease to rend," &c. From this short extract, we have a clue to the time of day when the darkness commenced; for as it ended in the morning, it must also have begun in the morning: and therefore the three hours of the crucifixion, which preceded the darkness, must have also ended in the morning: that is, it was *morning* in that particular part of America where Nephi was writing. And we have the strongest reasons for believing that he, at that time, resided in the north-western portions of South America, near a temple which they had built in the land Bountiful, which the record informs us was not far south of the narrow neck of land, connecting the land south with the land north; but which we, in these days, call the Isthmus of Darien. Nephi, the historian, and Prophet of God, was present with the multitude who had gathered around this temple, at the time that Jesus descended from heaven among them, which was only a few months after the crucifixion; hence, there is the strongest probability that he dwelt on that part of the continent when he wrote.

The four Evangelists, in the New Testament, have plainly told us, what time of day it was in Jerusalem, during which the Savior was on the cross: they all agree that it was "from the sixth to the ninth hour:" their time was kept according to Jewish reckoning; the sixth hour with them, is the same as mid-day or noon; and the ninth hour was the third hour after noon, which corresponds to three-

o'clock in the afternoon, according to English time. This was the time of day at Jerusalem when Christ was taken down from the cross. But the Book of Mormon states, as we have already quoted, that on the western continent "it was in the morning." To one unlearned, these statements will appear contradictory; but every well informed person can see, at once, that the difference of longitude would produce a difference of time. The north-western part of South America is about one hundred and twelve degrees west of Jerusalem, which is equivalent to about seven and one-half hours of time. This subtracted from the time at Jerusalem, will show that the crucifixion ended, by American time, in the morning, between one and two hours after sun rise; or according to our reckoning, at about 7h. 30min. in the morning.

As the Prophet, Joseph Smith, never referred to this, it is evident that the difference of time, alluded to, resulting from the difference of longitude, never entered his mind; and that he, by the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, translated the item, "*And it was in the morning,*" without fully comprehending, why it should be in the morning rather than in the afternoon, as recorded in the New Testament. Indeed, it is quite evident that this young man, unlearned as he was, had

never been instructed in regard to longitude, and the effect it has upon time, and was, therefore, quite incapable of designedly introducing the correct American time for the sake of deception. When this important truth is pointed out and clearly explained, it is easy enough for all people, whether enemies or friends, to perceive; but before attention was called to the matter, who thought of it? If it was a matter, that the learned when reading the Book of Mormon did not, for more than a quarter of a century, discover, how then can it, for one moment, be supposed that an unlearned youth could think of a fact, apparently so foreign, and only incidentally mentioned with other subjects, and for the sake of deception designedly incorporate it in the volume? No candid person could come to any such absurd conclusion. There never was a revelation given to man, substantiated with a greater amount of evidence, than what accompanies the Book of Mormon. Evidences, both external and internal, are continually accumulating, and have already become innumerable. These evidences will continue to increase, until the Lord, himself, shall be revealed in all the fulness of his glory and power; this will be a revelation which the wicked cannot abide, but must perish as the dry stubble, before the devouring flame. O. P.

PLURALITY OF WIVES—CAUSES OF OPPOSITION.

(From the *Deseret News*.)

The visible lack of reasoning and argument in every thing that has yet been advanced against plurality of wives, naturally leads the honest, reflective mind to inquire what are the causes of opposition to the principle? There are many of them, but they range themselves under a very few heads. [The first and chief one is found in the enmity which Satan, and all who permit themselves to be influenced by him, have ever manifested against the work of God on the earth, and against every principle of truth which he has revealed. That such

enmity has existed, and does exist, is no empty assertion, but one which all sacred and much secular history sustains. That enmity killed the Prophets, crucified the Savior, and persecuted the people of God in all ages.

Another cause of opposition, which grows out of the previous one, having its root in ignorance and drawing its strength from error, is traditional prejudice. Corrupt men who, reckless of consequences, would trample every truth under foot to carry their object, no matter how unjust and unrighteous it may be, stir up the prejudices of the