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Twelve Reasons Why I Believe

—THE—

..Book of Mormon..

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TWELVE REASONS WHY I BELIEVE THE BOOK OF MORMON.

ELDER CHARLES FRY.

WHAT IT CLAIMS TO BE.

The Book of Mormon claims to be a historical and doctrinal record of two nations which in ancient times inhabited the continent of America; written mainly by holy men preserved in the earth through centuries of barbarism, brought to light and translated by the power of God to aid in the salvation of souls in the last days.

BELIEF NOT WITHOUT CONSISTENT REASONS.

Proportionately but a few people have acknowledged these claims, the masses, often without any investigation, rejecting them as being unworthy of credence. All sorts of evil things have been told against the book, and upon these evil reports, people generally have passed judgment upon it as being bad; and in the same way, those who have believed in it have been classed as evil and as being without good reason for such belief. The writer is a believer in it, and not without, to him, consistent reasons. This article is written that they who have not yet become acquainted with, nor accepted the book, may know why he and others of like faith have accepted it, and that the book is not evil, nor are its true believers. Of necessity, I shall confine myself mainly to a brief statement of

facts, leaving out so far as can be done consistently, all matters of detail.

I believe and accept the Book of Mormon

1. BECAUSE IT TEACHES PURE MORALS.

It is said by our Lord that "a corrupt tree cannot bring forth good fruit." (Matt. 7:18). If it can be shown that the moral teachings of the Book of Mormon are good, it will go far to prove that the book came from a good source. If on the other hand it can be shown that its precepts are bad, or even a single one of them pernicious to good morals, it will be sufficient cause for assigning its origin to an evil source. That the book should be largely good, though containing some evil, would be no proof of its divinity, but to the opposite, for Satan invariably uses much that is good in order to deceive and give force to the error, but God's work will be perfect. "Every good gift, and every perfect gift is from above and cometh down from the Father of lights." (James 1:17). If therefore this book is found to contain only that which is good, it will be conclusive evidence that it came from the Author of good.

(a) *Virtues Required.*

The Book of Mormon requires me to be meek, humble, patient, longsuffering, temperate, diligent, peaceful, pure, neat and comely. If I follow its teachings in my social life, I will be loving and labor to serve my fellow beings, merciful, liberal to the needy, mindful of the sick and afflicted and

just in my dealings. I will teach my children and support public education. As a citizen I will work, and if necessary, fight, to preserve the liberties of the people. I will abide by the will of the majority, and support the government in enforcing the law. In my religious life I will be prayerful, thankful, watchful, having faith, hope and charity, abounding in good works.

(b) *Vices Condemned.*

It forbids me to lie, deceive, rob, steal, plunder, be angry, murder, use vengeance, be boastful, commit adultery, take the name of God in vain, use strong drink, oppress the poor, or shut my eyes to their needs. It condemns pride, envying, strife, malice, persecution, love of money, love of costly apparel, covetousness, idleness, evil associations, evil thoughts, lasciviousness, filthiness, sensuality, carnality, stubbornness, sacrilege, idolatry, hypocrisy, reviling, whoredom. It is strongly against unbelief, infidelity, priestcrafts, secret combinations, inequality, the costly adorning of churches to the neglect of the poor and needy, war—except for self preservation—slavery, office-seeking, using illegal means for obtaining office, supporting royalty and titled aristocracy, showing favor to wealthy criminals by judges and other public officials, divorcement save for one scriptural cause and polygamy.

The characters of the Book of Mormon are approved when these virtues were followed, and con-

demned when they followed the vices. National virtues brought national peace and prosperity, and national evils brought trouble and disaster. I find in it no teachings but which if followed will make me better as a husband, father, neighbor, citizen and as a child of God; and hence, so far as morals are concerned, I can well afford to accept the book, follow it in my daily life, and teach its precepts to others.

2. BECAUSE IT PRESENTS TO ME CHRIST AS MY REDEEMER AND THE REDEEMER OF THE WHOLE WORLD.

Contrary to the assertions of some and the belief of many, the Book of Mormon has Christ for its central figure and represents him in the fullness of his attributes. The first chapter of the book tells that the prophet Lehi, 600 B. C. saw in vision the coming of the Son of God to the earth, with twelve apostles, and the things he saw and heard "manifested plainly the coming of a Messiah and also the redemption of the world." Nephi, another prophet, was commanded to bear record that Christ "is the Son of God." Again he says, "And I, Nephi, have written these things unto my people that perhaps I might persuade them that they would remember their Redeemer." "If the day shall come that they will reject the Holy One of Israel, the true Messiah, their Redeemer and their God, behold the judgments of him that rest upon them." "Wherefore, redemption cometh in and

through the Holy Messiah, for he is full of grace and truth." Lehi while instructing his sons said, "And now, my sons, I would that ye should look to the great Mediator and hearken unto his great commandments; and be faithful unto his words and choose eternal life according to the will of his Holy Spirit and not choose eternal death according to the will of the flesh and the evil which is therein."

After this manner do the various writers hold Jesus Christ as the Savior and Redeemer of the world. He is held as the Creator of the world, as the Author of light and life, the great teacher of mankind as an example, loving, compassionate and impartial.

The book tells that after his resurrection he appeared in the flesh to his children in America, who were a branch of Israel and instructed them in the way of life and salvation, giving to them the gospel as he gave it to his people at Jerusalem and ordained ministers to preach it and administer in its ordinances. The last writer upon the closing page of the book says: "And again I would exhort you that ye would come unto Christ, and lay hold upon every good gift, and touch not the evil gift nor the unclean thing. * * * Yea, come unto Christ and be perfected in him, and deny yourselves of all ungodliness."

The Christ of the Book of Mormon is not a different one than the Christ of the Bible. He is the

Jesus of Nazareth who was born of the Virgin Mary and who was crucified and rose again for the saving of the *whole* world. It presents him to me in his true character—as he is in the Bible, a perfect ideal, a living example worthy of my acceptance and of my best efforts to come up to his standard as taught there.

3. BECAUSE ITS DOCTRINE IS IN FULL HARMONY WITH THE DOCTRINE OF THE BIBLE.

Some of Its Principles.

It teaches faith in God the Father, and in his Son, Jesus Christ, and in the operation of the Holy Spirit. It teaches repentance from all sin and baptism by immersion for the remission of sin by a minister authorized of God, as necessary steps to bring men into acceptance with God. It promises the baptism of the Holy Ghost to them who obey. The ordinance of laying on of hands is taught for the giving of the Holy Ghost, healing the sick and ordination to the ministry. The second coming of Christ to reign on the earth for a thousand years, the resurrection of the righteous at his coming to live with him; resurrection of the wicked at the end of the thousand years, the judgment of all men and the giving of reward or punishment according to their works are strongly held. It teaches the gathering of Israel from their dispersion and their conversion to Christ in the last days. In other matters besides these, I find a perfect harmony existing between this book and the Bible, and as I be-

lieve the latter book, I cannot reject its principles when found in the former. Hence from a doctrinal view point I cannot but accept the Book of Mormon.

4. BECAUSE ITS HISTORY IS IN HARMONY WITH THE HISTORY AND PROPHECIES OF THE BIBLE.

(a) *A Nation From Babel.*

The book gives the history of a nation who came as a colony from the confusion of tongues at Babel. The Bible says of those people "So the Lord scattered them abroad from thence upon the face of *all the earth.*" (Gen. 11:8). This being true, a part of those people must have come to America, which the Book of Mormon affirms.

(b) *A Nation of Israelites.*

The book tells of a second colony of Israelites which came from Jerusalem about 600 B. C., and grew to be a great nation. The Bible says: that Israel would "spread *abroad* to the west and to the east, and to the north, and to the south." (Gen. 28:14). "And the Lord shall scatter thee [Israel among all people, *from the one end of the earth even unto the other.*" (Deut. 28:64). "My sheep [Israel—see verse two] wandered through all the mountains and upon every high hill: yea, my flock was scattered upon *all the face of the earth*, and none did search or seek after them." (Ezek. 34:6).

The book says that the founder of this nation was of the lineage of Joseph who was sold into Egypt. The Bible says that "Joseph is a fruitful bough by a well whose branches *run over the wall*"

and that his promised inheritance should reach *"unto the utmost bound of the everlasting hills."* (Gen. 49:22, 26). The history of one confirms the prophecy of the other.

The Book of Mormon says that the time in which the colony of Israelites left Jerusalem (600 B. C.) was a time of great wickedness among the Jews, and that the Lord sent many prophets, including Lehi, who became the head of the colony, warning the people of their impending destruction, and commanding them to repent. The condition of these times (which was in the reign of Zedekiah, king of Judah), is confirmed by the Bible. Read 2 Chronicles 36:11-21. "Moreover all the chief of the priests and the people transgressed very much after all the abomination of the heathen; and polluted the house of the Lord which he had hallowed in Jerusalem. And the Lord God of their fathers sent to them by his messengers, rising up betimes and sending; because he had compassion on his people and on his dwelling place: but they mocked the messengers of God, and despised his words, and misused his prophets, until the wrath of the Lord arose against his people till there was no remedy." (verses 14-16).

This nation of Israelites in America though having been greatly enlightened, ultimately turned against God and forgot him and the true worship, and have continued until the present time in heathendom. This is in harmony with the Bible which

says that Israel "forgettest the Lord thy Maker" (Isaiah 51:13), and "My people have forgotten me, days without number" (Jer. 2:32) and they "stumble in their ways from the ancient path," etc. The remnant of Israel known as the *Jews* have not entirely forgotten their God, they have never turned to idolatry, and hence these prophecies of the Bible must refer to some other part of Israel. The Book of Mormon proves their fulfillment.

Again, this book says that Christ after his resurrection appeared to his people in America and taught them the gospel. Jesus said, "I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel" (Matt. 15:24). "And other sheep I have which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice: and there shall be one fold and one shepherd." (John 10:16). Other sheep of Israel besides those belonging to the fold at Jerusalem were to hear Christ's voice, and he was to go after them to bring them to him. The Book of Mormon proves this true.

These are but a few of the historical features of the book, that are found to accord with the Bible; all the way through, even in details, the same harmony exists, and adds another proof of its divinity.

5. BECAUSE THE CIVILIZATION OF THE NATIONS
WHOSE HISTORY IT IS, HAS BEEN CONFIRMED
BY RECENT ARCHÆOLOGICAL DISCOVERIES
THROUGHOUT AMERICA.

To give all the proofs of this statement would require a volume and we cannot but mention a few

things and leave the proof to the researches of the reader.

(a) What the Book of Mormon and Explorers Both Tell Us.

The Book of Mormon became public before very much was known of the ancient remains of America. It tells its own story in its own way and it is self-evident to the reader of the book that whatever references it makes to the character and civilization of the ancient people were not based on any of the discoveries or theories of modern explorers. While our knowledge of the past as learned from the ruined cities and other remains and from the traditions of the native tribes must be very vague and limited, and present many difficult problems, yet there are some things that can be, and are, established beyond all reasonable doubt. The nature and extent of the ancient remains tell unquestionably of an advanced civilization, confirming the Book of Mormon. Scientists tell us that there are evidences of the two distinct and successive civilizations on this continent; the Book of Mormon, years before, told us of two successive civilizations. This book and scientists both tell us that the first nation attained its strength in Central America and extended into North America. Both tell us that the second occupied in South America and extended northward building upon the ruins of its predecessors. Both tell us of a people who lived in the mountains, in secret and almost inaccessible

places, in a state of enmity with their neighbors, called by one *Gadianton Robbers*, and by the other *Cliff Dwellers*. Both give us evidences that Christ and Christianity were known to the Americans. Both tell us of a state of semi-civilization which followed the decline of the last nation. Both tell us of people who were idolatrous and who offered human sacrifices. Both tell us of the civilization of the nations was indigenou—developed upon this land. In many other minor things scientific researches agree with the Book of Mormon.

(b) *Book of Mormon Spoke First.*

When we reflect, that practically all these things were told *first* by the Book of Mormon, the evidences are strong in favor of that book and certainly warrant a belief in it. Should the reader desire to investigate this part of the subject for himself, we would refer him to a useful little book entitled, "The Divinity of the Book of Mormon Proven by Archæology," also "Report of the Committee on American Archæology," both on sale at the Herald Publishing House, Lamoni, Iowa, and at the Ensign Publishing House, Independence, Missouri. Also such works as Baldwin's "Ancient America," Short's "North Americans of Antiquity" and similar ones found at most book stores.

6. BECAUSE IT IS IN PERFECT HARMONY WITH ITSELF.

A lie is always out of harmony with the truth. A false story though embodying much truth will

be out of harmony with itself. I am safe in saying that a deception as big as the Book of Mormon is thought to be, would never stand a searching test, for its disagreements would be so apparent as to be easily found. But in the seventy-five years that this book has been before the world, its bitterest opposers have failed to show any legitimate disagreements in it. A beautiful harmony exists throughout.

(a) *In Its Chronology.*

This book has a chronology of its own, intricately woven through its chapters from the beginning to the end and covering a period of more than a thousand years. This chronology is complete in itself; there is no contradiction and no serious discrepancy. The author of fiction does not give dates for the things which he relates, nor would the author of fraudulent work be so careful to give the dates and periods so minutely as does the Book of Mormon, or if he should the inevitable discrepancies would expose its character.

(b) *In Its Geography.*

Likewise it has a geography of its own. It follows the history of two nations (briefly) in their travels and settlements throughout the entire continent of America. The geography, like the chronology, is an incidental part, but in its account of the form and relative positions of various parts of the land, of mountains, valleys, rivers, seas, lakes, plains and isthmuses and of the character of

the different parts of the land as to climate, fertility, products, etc., we find a complete harmony. So far as these places are identified we also find the geography to agree with the geography of the present time.

As has been stated in regard to chronology, the writer of fraud would not risk exposure by embodying so much of the fraud. The fact that the Book of Mormon is so particular to give so many of these details and that through them all a perfect harmony exists, is certainly a strong point in favor of its truthfulness.

(c) *In Its Religion.*

In the matter of religion, too, which involves a transition of one of the nations from a system of government based upon the law of Moses to one based upon the gospel of Christ; and which involves a knowledge of Christ being held by another nation centuries before Moses' time; there is a wonderful harmony throughout, besides harmonizing with the Bible which we have before observed. We find this same close harmony existing in every feature of the book.

7. BECAUSE ITS MANNER AND TIME OF COMING TO LIGHT IS IN FULFILLMENT OF BIBLE PROPHECIES.

(a) *How It Came.*

Messengers of God came to a young man—Joseph Smith—(he was but eighteen years of age) and told him of a sacred record of a fallen nation which was buried in the earth, and that if he was

faithful he should be permitted in due time to bring it to light, which he afterward did. He obtained this record in 1827, and received a special gift from God by which he was enabled to translate it. .

Some of the strange characters were transcribed and sent to a professor of languages in New York who admitted they were genuine, but confessed his inability to read the book. It was while making the translation that, by angelic hands, the authority to administer in the ordinances of the gospel was given to this young man and his associate, Oliver Cowdery, by which they were authorized to baptize men and women unto Christ according to the Scriptures. On April 6, 1830, the Church of Jesus Christ was organized and afterward built up according to instructions given of God.

(b) *What the Bible Says About It.*

For the sake of brevity we cannot give the quotations in full, but we ask the reader to look up the passages and carefully read them.

We notice Isaiah 29:9-24. This describes a class of people who are spiritually drunk and spiritually asleep, at a time when the prophets and seers are covered, or removed (verse 10). Then follows an account of a "book that is sealed." The *book* is delivered to an unlearned man and he is asked to read it, but he says "I am not learned." The *words* of the book are delivered to a learned man, and he is asked to read them, but he says "I cannot; for it is sealed." Then the Lord says that

because the people worship with their mouths and not with their hearts, and that the precepts of men have taken the place of the truth, he will proceed to do a marvellous work and a wonder, for the wisdom of their wise men shall perish, etc. (verse 14). "Is it not yet a very little while and Lebanon [or Palestine] shall be turned into a fruitful field and the fruitful field shall be esteemed as a forest?" (verse 17). "In that day shall the deaf hear the words of the book and the eyes of the blind shall see out of obscurity and out of darkness" (verse 18). "Therefore thus saith the Lord, who redeemed Abraham concerning the house of Jacob, Jacob shall not be ashamed, neither shall his face now wax pale." (verse 22). "They also that erred in spirit shall come to understanding, and they that murmured shall learn doctrine" (verse 24).

The leading points in this prophecy agree with the history of the coming forth of the Book of Mormon, we note the following:

At the time the book came forth there were no prophets among the people, and a condition of spiritual sleep prevailed.

A sealed book was given to an unlearned man. It was a *sealed* book (in a dead language).

The *words* of the book were given to a learned man. The learned man could not read the book.

The Lord *began* a marvelous work in which the book was to play a part.

He did not choose the wise men to do it—"The wisdom of their wise men shall perish."

It was not long after this work began that Palestine was restored to fertility (1852).

The unlearned man read (translated) the book. Through the means of this book, *doctrine* is again taught instead of the precepts of men.

Blessings have come upon Jacob, (Israel), and favors and equal rights are granted them in nearly all countries.

Another prophecy on this subject is found in Psalms 85; verse 11 says: "Truth shall spring out of the earth; and righteousness shall look down from heaven." This was to be at a time when the Lord would *speak peace unto his people*, (verse 8). When the *Lord* is to give "*that which is good*;" and when "our land shall yield her increase," (verse 12). Verse 13 says, "Righteousness shall go before him; and shall set us in the way of his steps."

The Apostle Paul says that the righteousness of God is revealed in the gospel. (Rom. 1: 16, 17). The righteousness that is to come down from heaven, and that is to go before him and set the people in the way of his steps, must certainly then be the gospel. If God speaks to his people, that which he speaks must be a revelation. A careful reading of this will show that these events are to take place in the last days, at a time when peace and favor are to come to scattered Israel.

We call attention here to Revelation 14:6: "And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell upon the earth and to every nation, kindred, and tongue and people, saying with a loud voice, Fear God and give glory to him; for the hour of his judgment is come." This shows that the gospel was to be brought from heaven *by an angel* and at the hour of God's judgment, the time of the end or last days.

The events associated with the Book of Mormon in modern times confirm the following points in the above prophecies: (a) That truth should spring out of the earth. (b) That righteousness (in the gospel) was at the same time to come down from heaven. (c) That it was to come by an angel of God. (d) That it should be at a time when God would speak, (give revelation). (e) When the land of Israel shall again be fertile. (f) At the time of God's judgment. (g) That these revealments should set the people right before God.

These with a number of prophecies of the Bible have had, or are having, their fulfillment in the latter-day work. It will be impossible in this short statement to consider to any extent all the Bible evidences, but we refer the reader to a valuable work on this subject entitled "The Book of Mormon Vindicated" which may be obtained of the publishing houses already named.

BECAUSE OF THE TESTIMONY OF WITNESSES.

(a) Human Testimony Not To Be Ignored

Some consideration must be given to human testimony in anything. In the civil courts the testimony of two or more persons is sufficient to condemn or deliver one charged with crime. It sometimes happens that persons bear false testimony, but it is not often but what it is discovered, and especially if a number of persons enter into a conspiracy and bear false testimony. A case of the latter kind *cannot* escape detection when properly examined.

(b) One Witness.

The Book of Mormon has at least twelve witnesses. First, Joseph Smith, to whom it was first revealed. His whole life was a testimony of its truthfulness, and he sacrificed that life in its prime, in confirmation of that testimony. His testimony was that the book was a true record, and that the power to translate it was a gift from God. He never varied nor contradicted that testimony.

(c) Three Witnesses.

Second, Three witnesses: Oliver Cowdery, David Whitmer and Martin Harris. These men did not depend upon humanity for what they testified of, but they testified "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 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." (Read their full testimony in the Book of Mormon.) There is no uncertainty or hidden doubt in this testimony, but a plain, positive statement of fact as they knew it. These men lived long enough to see difficulties and disruption in the church, and some of them became estranged from Joseph Smith and the church, but each one repeatedly affirmed the former testimony until the time of his death. Strong pressure was brought to bear upon them to induce them to deny their testimony, but in vain.

(d) *Eight Witnesses.*

Third, eight witnesses. These men were shown the plates with the engravings, not by the power of God, but by Joseph Smith, and they handled and examined them—so they testified. (Their full testimony may also be found in the Book of Mormon.)

These twelve men bore witness to the divinity of the Book of Mormon; if that witness was false they had formed a conspiracy that could not have escaped exposure in the distressing times that followed. But no exposure came. They became divided in other matters, but stood together in that testimony. Some of them for nearly sixty years continued to affirm it; not one denied it. If they had testified falsely, and had not cared to renounce it because of the reflection on their characters, they certainly would have kept silent about it in after years; but not so. As many as history gives

us knowledge of, were very positive in re-affirming their testimony even on their deathbed. Can such a number of witnesses be "turned down" or such testimony rejected as of no consequence? We think not. Their testimony must be impeached, or we must stand condemned if we reject it.

9. BECAUSE IT FILLS AN URGENT NECESSITY FOR SUCH A BOOK.

(a) *A Second Witness With The Bible.*

The Bible has been given for the instruction and guidance of the world in the way of salvation. It teaches the religion of Jesus Christ and sets forth the organization of his church. It clearly teaches *one faith, one way, one church*. But has the world understood? Have men held to the *one faith*? Have they preserved the integrity of the *one church*? A score of creeds, and a hundred churches answer "NO." Why all this difference, confusion and division then? The answer can only be that men have not understood, or if having understood, are unwilling to do according to that which is written. Is there not a need then that God should speak again and make plain his will? The Book of Mormon comes as a revelation from God, teaching the same doctrine as the Bible, calling mankind to a belief in the simple truths of the gospel, and a perfect obedience to its ordinances. If men have not understood before, they are now without excuse, for this book has made clear and confirms the truths of the Bible. It is a second witness coming from

another nation, and bearing the same testimony of God and his truth. From a religious standpoint the need of such a book is evident.

Aside from doctrine and matters of organization, there are many prophecies and promises in the Bible that cannot be fully understood from the Bible alone. Prophecies relating to the scattering and gathering of Israel, and many other subjects enlarged upon and made more clear by the Book of Mormon.

(b) Of Importance to the Heathen.

Again, this is a missionary age, and efforts are being made to carry a knowledge of Christ into every land and to every people. Proportionately but few of the heathen have accepted him. The Book of Mormon makes a second witness for Christ, and used with the Bible, will have far greater weight in converting the heathen than either one alone. This is one of the main purposes the Lord had in giving the book (see preface), and though the book has not been used very much in this way in the past, the need exists, and the future is before it in which to supply that need.

(c) Gives Information of America's Past.

America has a great past. This is told by the many remains found upon the land in all parts:—the mounds of endless variety upon the plains; the artificial caves and cliff-dwellings among the mountains; the ancient copper mines of the lake regions, and the ruined cities of Mexico, Central and South

America. The walls of temples and other buildings, the ruined archways, images, and tablets are marked with the ancient writing. Men of learning have labored long to decipher these writings and unfold the mystery of America's past, but in vain. We know great nations lived here, but we do not know who they were or whence they came. We know they had a high degree of civilization, but we do not know what form of government they had, or what their laws were. We do not know the extent of their arts and sciences, their manufactures and commerce, their religion or their social development. All these things and many more are almost entire mysteries, and the world would now give fortunes to learn them.

But the Book of Mormon tells this story. It tells of the great nations who lived here, where they came from, how they developed into greatness, and the cause of their decline. It tells of their education, laws, governments, commerce and religion. It unfolds America's past; it supplies this great need.

(d) Why the World Does Not Accept It.

Its claims for divinity however, are the cause of its prompt rejection by the world at large. But why object to that feature of the book? We know the people have been taught that God would not reveal himself any more to mankind, but the Bible warrants no such teaching. It is only by the providential act of God that we could ever know these

mysteries of America's past. All efforts of humanity to find out have resulted in no true knowledge; they are vain, and to all present appearances, must forever remain so; and if men are to ever know America's past it can only be by the revelation of God. Ancient nations of the old world wrote history, but only that written by men of God, and preserved by his power, has come down to us as the Bible. All other records except a few fragments have perished. Ancient history of the old world comes to us by the hand of Divinity, and is it consistent to deny the same means in the preservation and restoration to us of the history of the new world? The Book of Mormon was written by men of God and preserved by them, by his command, until the destruction of the righteous part of the nation, when the last writer was commanded to bury it in the earth. The only way it could be restored to men was by a revelation from God, showing some one its resting place, and after possession of the record was gained, it would be of no value as a record (because no one could read it—the language being unknown) except God should miraculously provide for its translation. A great need for "Divinity" then in learning America's past, and the Book of Mormon not only supplies the need for knowledge, but claims the divine part as well, and to have come in the *only way that was possible and consistent*, under the circumstances. The religious feature of the book, or its claims for

divinity, do not stand in the way of our acceptance of it.

10. BECAUSE MANY OF ITS PROPHECIES HAVE BEEN FULFILLED.

(a) *Prophecy a Sure Test.*

A prophetic work provides its own judgment. So long as its prophecies are being fulfilled it may stand, but as soon as its prophecy fails it must go down—condemned. No man apart from the inspiration of God can give a series of prophecies that time will fulfill. The fulfillment of Bible prophecies is the strongest evidence we have today of its inspiration, though all of them are not yet fulfilled. The Book of Mormon is a prophetic book, and so far as time has permitted, its prophecies have been fulfilled; some remain for the future. Its enemies have never pointed out to us yet one prophecy in it that has failed. A few that have had fulfillment since the publication of the book in 1830 may be referred to briefly.

(b) *America to be Delivered From Other Nations By the Power of God.*

On page 24 there is a prophecy that the people of this land (in the last days) should be delivered by the power of God out of the hands of all their enemies. This has been true before and since 1830. One after another the American colonies have risen up against their mother countries, and notwithstanding their weakness and the great strength of other nations who held rule over them, their bon-

dage has been broken and they have become free. These same mother-nations have held their colonies in other parts of the world, and have conquered and ruled smaller nations, but not in America. The decree of God went out thousands of years ago that the people (gentiles) of this land should be free from other nations. It is true that foreign nations hold a few sections of the land yet, but time may change even this, besides, these colonies mostly have "home rule."

(c) *A Land of Liberty—No Kings.*

Another prophecy on page 76 says that "this land shall be a land of liberty unto the gentiles: and there shall be no kings upon the land, who shall raise up unto the gentiles—for he that raiseth up a king unto me shall perish." This has had a continual fulfillment until now. The prophecy implies however, that some might attempt to establish themselves as kings, but if so it says they shall perish. During the Civil War in the United States, Maximilian sought to establish his throne in Mexico, but he had scarcely begun to rule as a king when he was taken by the armies of his own country and executed.

(d) *America to Be Protected From All Other Nations.*

This prophecy also says, "I will fortify this land against all other nations," and on page 50 it says, "the Lord God will raise up a mighty nation among the gentiles, yea, even upon the face of

this land." (America.) These two have been, and are being fulfilled. The United States have grown to be a mighty nation, and is still growing. By the principle known as the "Monroe doctrine," first stated in the message of President Monroe in 1823, but enlarged upon from time to time, the United States now occupy the position of a mighty sentinel over the whole continent of America. This nation forbids the acquisition of land in any part of America, either by purchase or conquest, by any foreign nation. Nations have looked with greedy eyes upon the rich lands of America, but they also see the United States standing guard, and hear the words, "Hands off, No Trespassing, America is for Americans." So America is protected, and the Book of Mormon prophecy is fulfilled.

(e) *The True Church to Be in all Parts of the World, Though Small in Number.*

The Book of Mormon on page 28 speaks of the establishment of the Church of God, and states that its number would be few because of wickedness, nevertheless the church would be upon all the face of the earth, and the dominions of the Saints would be small because of the great wickedness in the world. Following the publication of the Book of Mormon, and in the same year, the Church of Jesus Christ was organized by his command, and a ministry commissioned to preach the gospel. The church has been spreading slowly against the great

opposition until now it occupies in many parts of the world, though its numbers are few, according to the prophecy. The future is still before it to spread into every part.

We might refer to many other prophecies of similar character, which the years of fulfillment that have followed have proven true. This, then, is one of the strong proofs of the divinity of the book, and so far as "the eternal years of God" have passed judgment upon it, we are placed under the obligation of believing it.

11. BECAUSE IT PROVES THE FATHERHOOD OF GOD
OVER THE WHOLE WORLD.

(a) *A Bible Doctrine.*

The Bible presents God to us as the God of the whole earth, "The earth is the Lord's and the fulness thereof." (Psalms 24:1). "From the place of his habitation he looketh upon all the inhabitants of the earth. (Psalms 33:14.) "He giveth to all life, and breath, and all things; and hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation; that they should seek after the Lord, if haply they might feel after him, and find him." (Acts 17:25-27.)

(b) *Historical Proof Not In Bible.*

These statements are very clear, and we believe them *because they are in the Bible*; but the fact that they are in the Bible, does not give us the proof of

their fulfillment. The Bible does not give us historical proof of other nations than the one in Canaan, having their places appointed of God. It gives us no historical proof of other nations seeking after God and finding him, except individual gentiles who came to God through the preaching of the apostles, and these would not be the fulfillment of the prophecy.

(c) Book of Mormon Gives Proof.

The Book of Mormon tells of at least two nations upon whom the Lord looked, besides Israel in Canaan; it tells that God appointed their habitation, that they sought after the Lord and found him. It gives historical proof that God is no respecter of persons, and that other nations received light and salvation from him. In its teachings it also confirms the Bible testimony of the character of God, and of his regard for all men of every nation who will serve him. "He denieth none that come to him, black and white, bond and free, male and female; and he remembereth the heathen, and all are alike unto God, both Jew and Gentile." Page 99.

In this as in all other attributes, it truly represents God, and establishes his universal Fatherhood.

12. BECAUSE THE HOLY SPIRIT CONFIRMS ITS DIVINITY.

Without this, my reasons for believing the Book of Mormon would not be complete. Divine truth in the willing believer is attended with the confirming testimony of the Spirit of God. Jesus

said to his disciples: "Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth." (John 16:13.) "The Spirit of truth whom the world cannot receive." (John 14:17.)

The work of this "Spirit of truth" is to confirm the truth, and how often has it been, that in reading the Book of Mormon there come the peaceful assurances, confirming our belief in it. Nor are we alone in this testimony. Hundreds of true Latter-day Saints have borne testimony to the same thing.

God Promises to Confirm.

The last prophet who wrote in the book, in writing a farewell statement to the remnants of his people in the last days (the Indians), says: "And when ye shall receive these things, I would exhort you that ye would ask God, the eternal Father, in the name of Christ, if these things are not true; and if ye ask with a sincere heart with real intent, having faith in Christ, he will manifest the truth of it unto you by the power of the Holy Ghost; and by the power of the Holy Ghost ye may know the truth of all things." (Page 544.) As God is no respecter of persons, the promise stands true to all. Those who may not be able to search out the evidences and satisfy themselves thereby, but truly desire to know with a sincere heart, may go direct to God. The Book of Mormon promises a reply; it says, "He will manifest the truth of it unto you by the power of the Holy Ghost." The Bible says:

“If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him.” (James 1:5.) So God can, and will, answer for his own work, if men will go to him with sincere purpose of heart. Many who have so done, have testified that God has been true to his word, and has manifested unto them the truth of the book.

CONCLUSION.

Other reasons might be given, but these are sufficient. My faith in the Book of Mormon has grown strong through a study of its pages. There was a time when I did not believe it, but it was because I did not know what it was. I was still skeptical in regard to it when I entered the church, and the testimony of my brethren was not sufficient to convince me. It was only through reading and study when the real character of the book was unfolded to my mind, that my prejudice faded away like snow under the summer sun. My testimony may not convince you, dear reader, but if it arouses your interest and causes you to investigate and search until you receive the same satisfaction that I have received, in an unreserved belief of the book, my highest purpose in writing will be fulfilled. In this short paper I have not been able to give much more than a mere statement of things, as to supply all the proofs would require no small volume. We invite a careful reading of the book to see if these things are not so.

The Evidences Sufficient.

To me these evidences are convincing. The divinity of the Bible itself rests on no stronger, nor more numerous evidences than what we have stated of the Book of Mormon. Internal and external evidences, testimonies of believers and unbelievers, of friends and foes, of man and of God, of the relics of ancient times, and of the Holy Scriptures, all unite in confirming the truthfulness and sacredness of that volume. If true, can any one *afford* to disbelieve or reject it, for in doing so will he not reject the God who gave it, and the Christ it teaches? Will any one be justified in the day of judgment, in rejecting it without having investigated and found out for themselves? We have been taught to "reject that which is evil, and cleave unto that which is good," and no one can do that without a proper investigation.

The fact that the book is "everywhere spoken evil against," or that it has been brought under reproach by some of its professed but false followers, is no evidence against it, for all good things that have ever come to the world from God, have passed through like conditions.

May the Lord help every true soul to see the full light of the gospel, and enter into the true fold of God, that he may be saved in his kingdom.

