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Why the Plates of the Book of Mormon Were Not Shown to the World

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Abstract: The gold plates were not/are not available for inspection because acceptance of the Book of Mormon is a matter of faith. Those predisposed to disbelieve the Book of Mormon would not be converted to the Gospel even if they saw the plates.

come more competent to handle all the affairs of our lives.

When so much is at stake, will it not pay each girl to set to work to-day to see if she cannot improve in this matter that may so vitally affect her future happiness? If she has learned to do this as a girl, she can meet her future mate on a more even footing, and can say to him, "I am prepared to look out for my side of this partnership and I can promise you that none of the means

that come into my hands will be spent unwisely, so far as I am able to judge of the wisdom or the folly of expenditure. In return, will you not take me into your confidence in regard to your affairs, that we may work more together?" The woman who begins her married life in this manner can well be promised that she will have no difficulty in providing for her home the things that will make her own work light and her family happy.

Why the Plates of the Book of Mormon Were Not Shown to the World.

By William A. Morton.

The question has often been asked, "Why was Joseph Smith not permitted to show the plates of the Book of Mormon to the world?" The Lord has answered this question for us. This is His answer: "Behold, if they will not believe my words, they would not believe you my servant Joseph, if it were possible that you could show them all these things which I have committed unto you." (Doctrines and Covenants, Sec. 10:7.) Therefore, according to the word of the Lord; the reason why the people of the world were not permitted to see the sacred records was because of their unbelief and wickedness. So unbelieving and hard of heart were they that the Lord declared they would not believe even if Joseph were to show them the plates. We presume it was for the same reason that Christ did not show Himself to the world after His resurrection.

It was the Lord who said, "Cast not your pearls before swine," and for the Lord to have permitted

Joseph Smith to show the sacred record to "a wicked and unbelieving generation," to a people who would not have believed even if they had seen the plates, would have been a violation of His own commandment. When Joseph Smith announced to the world that he had received, through the ministration of an angel, a history of the early inhabitants of America, how did the world receive the announcement? As good news, as "glad tidings of great joy," with hope and prayers that he spoke the truth? No, indeed, but with scorn and derision, denouncing it as false before they had taken a single step to prove whether it were true or false. Were such people fit subjects to view the plates? Were they in a condition to believe if they saw the plates? No, they were not. To have permitted such people to view the sacred records would simply have been to add to their condemnation.

Martin Harris entertained the belief that if people could only see

they would believe. So he went to the Prophet Joseph and asked permission to show to a few friends the 116 pages of manuscript the Prophet had translated. Twice the Prophet asked the Lord if he should accede to Martin's request, and the answer he received was that he should not. The Lord evidently knew what the result would be; He knew the people a great deal better than either Joseph Smith or Martin Harris knew them. Martin, however, kept importuning the Prophet, and finally permission was granted Mr. Harris to show the manuscript to a few relatives and friends. What was the result? Did the exhibiting of the manuscript lead men to believe in the Book of Mormon? No, it simply made their unbelief and wickedness more clearly manifest. Wicked men got possession of the manuscript; they altered the reading of it, so that if the Prophet translated it again and it were presented to the world, they could show the difference between the manuscript they had altered and the Prophet's second translation, and thus prevent people from believing in the Book of Mormon. Yet it was just such characters as these wicked, unbelieving, dishonest men—who were clamoring all the time for Joseph Smith to show them the plates of the Book of Mormon.

But the Lord in His infinite wisdom frustrated the scheme of these wicked men and brought their evil purposes to naught. Had Joseph Smith been an imposter he would most assuredly have fallen into the trap which his enemies laid for him at that time. The fact that he was saved proves that the Lord was with him.

Finally the Book of Mormon was published and presented to the world. In the front of the volume

appeared the testimonies of eleven witnesses. Three of these declared in all soberness that they had seen the plates, that they had seen the angel, and that they had heard the voice of God declaring unto them that the record was true and that it had been translated by the gift and power of God. The other eight witnesses testified that Joseph Smith had shown them the plates; that they had handled them with their hands and had beheld the engravings upon them. These testimonies were never denied by one of the witnesses. One would naturally think that all these things would have caused people to stop and think and investigate? Did they? No, they had no effect upon the world except to arouse them to stronger efforts to prove the Book of Mormon false. The Solomon Spaulding myth was invented and sent broadcast in order to prevent people from believing in the Nephite record. In this the opponents of the Book of Mormon have been very successful, for while there is a world of the most incontrovertible evidence to prove the Divine authenticity of the Book of Mormon, and not a scrap of authentic evidence to prove the Spaulding story true, the latter has been accepted by the world and cherished by them as a veritable fact. In this we see the fulfillment of the scripture, which says, "And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: that they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness." (II Thessalonians 2:11, 12.) Also the word of the Lord to the Prophet Joseph Smith, "Behold, * * they would not believe you my servant Joseph, if it were possible that you could show them all these things which I have

committed unto you." Yet notwithstanding their unbelief, notwithstanding the contempt they have shown for the Book of Mormon, notwithstanding they have rejected all the evidence the Lord has brought forth to prove the Divine authenticity of this ancient volume of Scripture, notwithstanding all the falsehoods they have circulated concerning it, the world has asked, "Why were the plates of the Book of Mormon not shown to us?" This the world has yet to learn: that the Lord works according to the faith of people and not according to their unbelief, according to their truthfulness and not according to their falsehoods, according to their righteousness, and not according to their wickedness. Let the world show faith in the Lord; let them show a love for truth instead of for falsehood; let them practice righteousness instead of iniquity; let them do these things first, they will be much more profitable to them than a view of the plates of the Book of Mormon.

If we were to ask the question, "Which would be the more convincing to the heart of man—a view of the plates of the Book of Mor-

mon or the testimony of the Holy Ghost, one of the Godhead?" the answer of every professing Christian would be, "The testimony of the Holy Ghost, of course." Yes, and that is the testimony the Lord has promised to every honest-hearted person who desires to know if the Book of Mormon is true. Here is the promise: "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 shall 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." (Book of Mormon, Moroni 10:4, 5.) It is the testimony of thousands of good, honorable, upright men and women that in answer to fervent prayer the Lord has revealed to them, through the Holy Ghost, that the Book of Mormon is a true record.

The world will never know the truth of the Book of Mormon by rejecting it and by believing falsehoods concerning it.

City and Lake.

By Maud Dobson.

O City! Set in a hundred hills, whose regal heads are snow-encrowned,
Made mystical with sun and shade, with pine and sagebrush belted round:
O Lake! lowlying west to form a jewel for the city's feet,
Were both more fair a thousand fold, for Him the offering were but meet.

A hundred streams that cross the vale make music all their devious ways,
A hundred poplars in a row lift up green hands in silent praise;
While on the lake the peaceful waves arise and bow to worship Him,
Who fashioned them, and Who is served by seraphim and cherubim.

O Holy House, whose six grey spires rise proudly from the sacred pile,
The sight of thee brings thoughts of One of old, in Whom there was no
guile;
And I could wish with all my heart—where sins are often hid unseen—
That in the waters of the lake we too might wash our souls as clean.