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## A Sacred History: External Evidences of the Truth of the Book of Mormon, Chapter XVII

Author(s): Thomas A. Shreeve

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**Abstract:** Uses historical, linguistic, and archaeological evidence to prove the truthfulness of the Book of Mormon. Basing his facts on research done by noted linguists and archaeologists of the time, the author writes concerning the god Quetzalcoatl, religious customs and ruins of advanced civilizations, comparisons between the Hebrew and Mayan languages, and the Egyptian hieroglyphic writings. Shreeve also tells of similarities in biblical beliefs between early people of both the western and eastern hemispheres and explains why Joseph Smith was incapable of writing the Book of Mormon without divine aid.

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highly-prized ornament to give to the white man who has shown him kindness.

Alas and alack! The American cheap jewelry has commenced to corrupt the Hawaiian vanity, and hideous rings and earrings of dull green and red stones surrounded by dingy brass settings quarrel for supremacy on the swelling bosom of the native woman with the delicate *lei* of rosebuds or the heavy chain of *kukui* nuts. Thou, American enterprise!

HOMESpun.

A SACRED HISTORY.

External Evidences of the Truth of the Book of Mormon.

BY THOMAS A. SHREEVE.

Chapter XVII.

IN continuation of the subject of present archaeological researches in Arizona, as reported in the San Francisco *Examiner*, I quote as follows from successive issues of that paper:

The work of excavation is progressing with renewed energy since the trip of the officials of the archaeological expedition to the Superstition mountains in search of sacrificial caves. Every hour some new find is reported among the ruins. The work of securing the skeletons has been very trying to the patience of Drs. ten Kate and Wortman. Dr. Wortman, who has had over thirteen years' experience in removing skeletons from their burial-places in America, declares that they never before met with skeletons like these. Dust they were and to dust they have returned. It is almost amusing to watch the chagrin of the scientific gentlemen of the expedition as they are compelled to witness Nature claiming her own. Whenever a skeleton is reported there is a solemn progress to the ruin in which it has been found. Doctor Wortman jumps into the trench with his jar of silica grasped firmly in his hand and proceeds to administer to the specimen a thorough scientific dose. Soluble glass is infiltrated into every nook and cranny of the decaying bone. Not infrequently the skull is given a good sound coat of shellac. At night the men of science leave the object of their care to return the next morning only to find their skeleton a heap of ashes. "It is discouraging," said Dr. ten Kate, "to work with such material. It seems impossible to give permanency to these skulls. As for the entire skeleton, I really despair of getting out even one. The worst of it is we are in a dilemma. If we attempt to remove the bones, as soon as they are exposed to the air they fall to pieces in our hands. If we leave them *in situ*, treat them with what preservatives we may, they crumble all the same. Certainly these remains must be of great antiquity."

"But, Doctor," asked the correspondent, "of what possible importance can the recovery of these old skeletons be to science? Once conceded that they are here, buried in great numbers with their heads to the east, and their good bowls and water-jars at their side, prepared for their long journey, what further deduction can be made? It is obvious that from these burial accoutrements we can learn something about the civilization of this particular tribe or nation, but what can science tell us from these skulls about the human race?"

Mr. Cushing's labors have been unusually fruitful in results, but at every stage of the investigation they have been necessarily intimately connected with that great and absorbing problem, the ethnology of the American continent. The preliminary work was, from the nature of the case, experimental. The scientific men were feeling their way. Naturally a few mistakes were made before the excavations could proceed with certainty and system. While the work was going on Mr. Cushing was able to make many interesting inferences from the various features of the architecture, the arrangement of

the building and the character of the pottery. However, it had never been hoped that any important generalization connecting the ruined cities with the the chain of cultures extending from Arizona into the plains of Mexico could be made at the initial stage of the work. That the *Examiner* is able to-day to give such very important conclusions to the world, is owing largely to Mr. Cushing's definite experience for many years in the Zuni Pueblo and the peculiar nature of the case.

The ruined cities are situated in the Salt River valley. On one side rise the Sierras de l'Encantacion, the Superstition mountains, beyond which again rise the Pinal mountains and the majestic Four Peaks. To the east, the valley loses itself in the gorges and canyons of the Salt river. To the west it widens into an extensive plain, watered by the Gila and its tributaries. The city of Phoenix, with its gardens and cultivated fields, sufficiently attests the present fertility of the section. Mention has been made of the vast irrigating system of the inhabitants of Los Muertos. Let it now suffice to say that this system is represented topographically by a series of ancient dams about two or three miles apart, from which, on both sides of the river, ran the ancient canals, connected by tributary *Acequias* into a vast network of waterways extending over an area fifteen by twenty miles square. In the interstices of these canals were situated the ancient cities of the Salt river system. These cities were built on both sides of the river and there was the same irrigating system for all the cities. In countries where the rainfall is sufficient for the purposes of cultivation the entire valley of a watershed is available for settlement. In the case of these primitive cities the river is the main thing, and being the artery of the life-giving water, is utilized practically as a great irrigating canal. From the river above the dams ran the ancient ditches, sometimes twenty feet wide; from these ditches ran smaller supply canals, used to irrigate the fields. There were other ditches, also, running from the main canals which carried the water into the heart of the city, where it was stored in reservoirs and used for domestic purposes. It has also been demonstrated that the reservoirs had a religious as well as a practical purpose, for it was on the edge of a reservoir that the ancient inhabitants cremated their dead. When Cushing first began his work he was under the impression that he was dealing with but one city. In need of a name, he called it Los Muertos. But as the settlers, attracted by his investigations to the fertility of the valley, began rapidly to clear their land, the discovery was made that with not one, but with many cities the investigator had to deal. By the time this fact was thoroughly ascertained, the essential character of the first city excavated, Los Muertos, was determined. It presented, indeed, a singular appearance. It consisted of an aggregation of large pueblos, or blocks, closely grouped together around a central temple or citadel building. Each pueblo was capable of accommodating from 1,000 to 4,000 souls, according to its size. The term pueblo has been applied to that type of building in which those Indians who are the descendants of the ancient inhabitants of Los Muertos now reside. The ancient pueblo differs very little from the modern pueblo of the Zunis; indeed, the latter is as nearly as possible an imitation of the former. It consists of a huge building many stories in height and covering an extended area. Many of them are very much larger than one of our city blocks. The rooms are small, mere closets, so that with many stories the capacity of these pueblos is much greater than their external appearance would seem to indicate. The rooms are arranged in suites to accommodate separate families who belong to the greater family, or class, occupying the pueblo. An entrance to the pueblo is effected from small doors on the ground floor and from the roof by means of ladders. The corridors are so narrow that no two persons can pass each other in them. It is probable that each pueblo, or block of an ancient city, was occupied by a separate clan. There are fifteen such clans among the Zunis, distinguished by peculiar devices, such as the bear, the coyote, the deer, etc. It is true that among the Zunis they are now huddled together in the same pueblo, but the Zuni is a mere fragment of the ancient race, 1,600 souls in all. In the Salt River valley the inhabitants numbered at least 200,000.

(To be Continued.)