

**The Three Nephites**  
**Compiled By Glen W. Chapman – Updated Jan. 2006**

HISTORY OF THE THREE NEPHITES

In the *Book of Mormon*, produced by Joseph Smith in 1830, the story of the Three Nephites is given its scriptural foundation. Perhaps a brief explanation of the substance of the *Book of Mormon* is necessary in order to clarify the setting and substance of the Nephite stories. The *Book of Mormon* begins with the account of a certain good man named Lehi, who lived at Jerusalem during the reign of Zedekiah. In about the year 599 B. C. according to Biblical chronology. Lehi left his native land because of the evils that existed there, and with his family came by boat to a new land, which was South America. There the descendants of Lehi disagreed and there arose two great factions. The first group was called Nephites the follower of Nephi, who was a son of Lehi, and whose descendants were a 'white and delightsome people." They lived in South and Central America for several centuries, and finally pushed into North America. They were eventually exterminated by the other great faction, the Lamanites, who were the descendants and followers of Laman, another son of Lehi. The Lamanites are said to have been cursed with a dark skin because of their sinful ways, and it is they who according to the *Book of Mormon*, were the ancestors of the American Indians.

When Christ was resurrected, after having established His church in the Old World, He came to the Nephites on this Continent. according to the *Book of Mormon*, and established His church here also. He preached to the Nephites, who were gathered together in the land of Bountiful, and chose from among his followers twelve disciples whose calling was similar to that of the Twelve Apostles of the Old World.

"And it came to pass that on the morrow, when the multitude was gathered together behold, Nephi and his brother whom he had raised from the dead, whose name was Timothy, and also his son, whose name was Jonas, and also Mathoni, and Mathonihah, his brother, and Kumen, and Kumenonhi, and Jeremiah, and Shemnon, and Jonas, and Zedekiah, and Isaiah now these were the names of the disciples whom Jesus had chosen. And it came to pass that they went forth and stood in the midst of the multitude." (3 Nephi 19:4).

Jesus preached to the people and blessed them. And finally speaking to the chosen disciples one by one, he said, "What is it that ye desire of me, after that I am gone to the Father?" All but three expressed the desire that they might continue in the ministry until they reached a reasonable old age, and then in due time be received into God's kingdom. And Jesus promised them that when they were seventy-two years old they should come to His kingdom and find rest. Then they turned to the three who had not ventured to voice their wishes.

"And he said unto them, Behold, I know your thoughts, And ye have desired the thing which John, my beloved who was with me in my ministry, before that I was lifted up by the Jews desired of me. Therefore more blessed are ye, for ye shall never taste of death but , shall live to behold all the doings of the Father, unto the children of men even until all things shall be fulfilled, according to the will of the Father when I shall come in my glory, with the power of heaven And ye shall never endure the pains of death; but when I shall come in *my* glory, ye shall be changed in the twinkling of an eye from mortality to immortality; and then shall ye be blessed in the kingdom of my Father." (3 Nephi 28: 1-9)

The three disciples, whose names are purposely, withheld from the world, were assured that in the course of their prolonged life they should not suffer pain. For their desire to labor in

bringing souls unto Christ as long as the world should stand, they were promised an eventual fullness of joy similar to the fullness of joy given to Jesus himself, Jesus touched each of the nine who were to live and die, but the three who were to tarry he did not touch. And then He departed.

The *Book of Mormon* chronicler explains that a change was wrought in the bodies of the Three.

"And now, whether they were mortal or immortal, from the day of their transfiguration, I know not; but this much I know, according to the record which hath been given, they did go forth upon the face of the land, and did minister unto all the people . . ." ( 3 Nephi 28:17)

Later, Nephi inquired of the Lord and learned that there must needs be a change wrought upon their bodies, or else it needs be that they must taste death; therefore, that they might not taste death there was a change wrought upon their bodies, that they might not suffer pain nor sorrow save it were for the sins of the world." (3 Nephi 28: 37-38)

In commenting on this miracle, Apostle Erastus Snow in 1860 said, ". . . that change was in itself equivalent to death and the resurrection. whether the complete change took place in that day, or whether a still greater change remains to take place with them, we are not informed positively." (JD VII :356)

The Three were caught up into heaven and saw and "heard unspeakable things." But it was forbidden that they should utter the things they had learned there. Then they returned to preach and baptize and confer the Holy Ghost upon all who gave heed to their words; their enemies were powerless to do them injury. More than two hundred years later, "a campaign of persecution was waged against the Three. For their zeal in the ministry they were cast into strong prisons, but the prisons would not hold them."

"And thrice they were cast into a furnace and received no harm.

And twice were they cast into a den of wild beasts; and behold they did play with the beasts, as a child with a suckling lamb, and received no harm." ( 3 Nephi 28:21-22, 4 Nephi 1: 27-33 )

The fiery furnace motif in this story reminds one immediately of the three Hebrews and Daniel, as does also the exposure to wild beasts' Christian Saints. Legends abound in instances of similar protection from death. The other tortures these three were subjected to are slightly reminiscent of the persecutions endured by Saint George at the hands of Diocletian.

For over three hundred years, the Three Nephites ministered visibly among their fellows. But as the wickedness of the people increased, these special disciples were withdrawn from circulation, and thereafter manifested themselves to the few who were righteous. Moroni, the last prophet of the Nephites, completed the chronicle begun by his ancestor. Of the Three, he says:

"[They] did tarry in the land until the wickedness of the people was so great, that the Lord would not suffer them to remain with the people; and whether they be upon the face of the land no man knoweth. But behold, my father and I have seen them, and *they* have ministered unto us." (Mormon 8:10-11 )

Their ministry was to be extended to Jews and Gentiles, amongst whom they were to labor unrecognized. They were to be sent "unto all the scattered tribes of Israel, and to all nations, kindred's, tongues and peoples."

Joseph Smith himself confirms the status of such personages.

"Many have supposed that the doctrine of translation was a doctrine whereby men were taken immediately into the presence of God, and into an eternal fullness, but this is a mistaken

idea. Their place of habitation is that of the terrestrial order, and a place prepared for such characters He held in reserve to be ministering angels unto many planets, and who as yet have not entered into so great a fullness as those who are resurrected from the dead.

This distinction is made between the doctrine of the actual resurrection and translation: translation obtains deliverance from the tortures and sufferings of the body, but their existence will prolong as to the labors and toils of the ministry, before they can enter into so great a rest and glory." (Joseph Smith DHC IV: 210 )

That the phenomenon of deathlessness, or the state of being which transcends mortality, interested Joseph Smith early in his career is evidenced by the following revelation:

"REVELATION given to Joseph Smith the Prophet and Oliver Cowdery, at Harmony, Pennsylvania, April **1829**, when they inquired through the Urim and Thummim as to whether John, the Beloved disciple, tarried in the flesh or had died The revelation is the translated version of the record made on parchment by John and hidden up by himself." See *History of the Church*, Vol. I, pp.35, 36.

"And the Lord said unto me: John, my beloved, what desirest thou? for if you shall ask what you will, it shall be granted unto you.

And I said unto him: Lord, give unto me power over death, that I may live and bring souls unto thee.

And the Lord said unto me: Verily, verily, I say unto thee, because thou desirest this thou shalt tarry until I come in my glory, and shalt prophesy before nations, kindreds, tongues and people.

And for this cause the Lord said unto Peter: If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee? For he desired of me that he might bring souls unto me, but thou desiredst that thou mightest speedily come unto me in my kingdom.

I say unto thee, Peter, this was a good desire; but my beloved has desired that he might do more, or a greater work yet among men what he has before done.

Yea, he has undertaken a greater work; therefore I will make him as flaming fire and a ministering angel; he shall minister for those who shall be heirs of salvation who dwell on the earth.

And I will make thee to minister for him and for thy brother James; and unto you three I will give this power and the keys of this ministry until I come.

Verily I say unto you, ye shall both have according to your desires, for ye both joy in that which ye have desired.

Thus does Joseph Smith confirm the scriptural promise to John the Beloved (John, 21:20-25) and establish the belief that the beloved disciple still tarried in the flesh. And thus also does Joseph, through a revelation from God, authenticate a similar gift to the Three Nephites, who are also translated beings and not angels. At a later date, the Prophet Joseph again pointed out the difference between an angel and a translated body.

Parley P. Pratt in 1853 depicts the joys and the glory in communion with angels and departed spirits.

"They could declare glad tidings if we were only prepared to commune with them. What else? Peter, James, Joseph, Hyrum, Father Smith, any, or all of those ancient or modern Saints . . . could not these teach us good things? Yes, if they were permitted to do so.

If this be the case, what then do we wish, in communicating with the eternal world, by visions, angels, or ministering spirits? Why, if a person is sick they would like to be visited, comforted, or healed by an angel or spirit! If a man is in prison, he would like an angel or spirit to visit him, and comfort or deliver him. A man shipwrecked would like to be instructed in the way of escape . . . from a watery grave. In case of extreme hunger a loaf of bread brought by an angel would not be unacceptable.

If a man were Journeying and murderers were lying in wait for him in a certain road, an angel would be useful in telling him of the circumstance and to take another road" ( Parley Pratt JD 1:12-13 )

But it was Apostle Orson Pratt who was the first, as far as Church records indicate, to call the attention of the whole Church membership to the possibility of an appearance of the Three. In a sermon delivered in Conference to the Saints assembled in the New Bowery on April 7, 1855 Pratt said:

"How pleasant-how glorious it would be, if we had proved ourselves in all things; if we had become pure in heart. . . . Yes; how pleasing-how glorious it would be, could we see those three old Nephites whose prayers have ascended up, for something like 1800 years, in behalf of the children of men in the last days, and have them return to their old native land, and find the kingdom of God prepared and pure to receive them, and could we hear their teachings, and their voices lifted up in our midst.

Then let us wake up, and be assured that just as soon, as we prepare ourselves for these blessings, so soon they will be upon our heads. Do you suppose that these three Nephites have any knowledge of what is going on in this land? They know all about it; they are filled with the spirit of prophecy. Why do they not come into our midst? Because the time has not come. . . . The very reason they do not come amongst us is, because we have a work to do preparatory to their coming; and just as soon as that is accomplished they are on hand, and also many other good old worthy ancients that would rejoice our hearts could we behold their countenances, and hear them recite over the scenes they have passed through, and the history of past events, as well as prophecy of the events to come. How great and how precious are the promises of the Lord, contained in ancient revelation" (Orson Pratt JD II :263-264)

Since the Nephite stories are usually testimonies of the subject's religious faith, they should be treated with the utmost seriousness. The collector must keep in mind that, as the President of the L. D. S. Church has said. "These Stories are regarded as sacred by those who have them. and while they may on occasion repeat them, generally speaking . . .they are for the individual who receive them."

At another time Orson Pratt in 1875 spoke concerning these three.

"Now; having read these things, let us come back again to this spiritual 'movement that we hear of among the remnants of Jacob, in these western deserts, in the northwest hundreds of miles, in the west and in the southwest. It is not confined to hundreds, but thousands testify that men have appeared individually in dreams, speaking their own language and, as Brother Hyde said last Tuesday, these men tell their descendants what their duties are, what they should do, and how they should hunt up this people, repent of their sins, be baptized? etc. And the parties who have been thus instructed time and time again, have fulfilled the commandments that they received, and some of them have come hundreds of miles to be baptized, and they are now desirous of laying aside their savage disposition, their roaming habits, and they want to learn to cultivate the earth, to lay down their weapons of war, cease stealing and to become a peace-able good people. (Orson Pratt, J.D. 18:2-22, 1875)

"It seems that the Lord is working among that people, and that He is determined this prophecy shall be fulfilled whether we take it in hand or not. . . what do my ears hear? What do we all hear? Messengers are visiting these wild tribes in the basin, and in the region round about it hundreds of miles apart. These messengers. come to them, and they speak in their own language in great plainness, and tell them what to do. They tell them to repent of their sins and to be baptized for the remission thereof; tell them also to cease roaming over the country and to cultivate the land; and tell them to go to the Elders of, this Church and receive the ordinances under their hands.

Who are these messengers? Read the Book of Mormon and you will. find what God promised to do for the remnants of Joseph fourteen hundred years ago, about the time that most of them were becoming wicked and corrupt. The Lord said when their record should come forth in the latter days that He would send his messengers to them, and. among these messengers He mentioned three persons who lived some eighteen hundred Years ago, three of the Twelve who

were chosen on this land. The Lord made a promise to these. three that they should administer; as holy. messengers in the latter days, for and in behalf of the remnants of the house of Israel, which should fall into a low and degraded condition in consequence of the great wickedness and apostasy of their ancient fathers; that they should be instruments in His hands in bringing these remnants to the knowledge of the truth. We hear that these messengers have come, not in one instance alone, but in many instances Already we have heard of some fourteen hundred Indians, and I do not know but more, who have been baptized. Ask them why they have come so many hundred miles to find the Elders of the Church, and they will reply: "Such a person came to us, he spoke in our language, instructed us and told us what to do, and we have come in order to comply with his requirements." (J.D., Vol. 17:299-300, Feb. 7, 1875)

### *Strangers To Teach Us*

Brigham Young

(Brigham Young, who recognized the ministry of the Nephites, said in 1859:)

"Pretty soon you will see Temples reared up, and the sons of Jacob will enter into the Temples of the lord. . . there will be strangers in your midst walking with you, talking with you; they will enter your houses and eat and drink with you; go to meeting with you, and begin to open your minds, as the Saviour did the two disciples who walked out in the country in the days of old.

They will expound the Scriptures to you, and open your minds, and teach you the time of Salvation; they will use the keys of the holy Priesthood, and unlock the door of Knowledge, to let you look into the place of truth. You will exclaim. That is all plain: Why did I not understand it before? And you will begin to feel your hearts burn within you as they walk and talk with you."

*(Brigham Young, "Strangers to Appear," JD 6:44-45)*

### **Reported Cases**

#### **David Whitmer Interview With Orson Pratt (September 1878)**

Before I knew Joseph, I had heard about him and the plates from persons who declared they knew he had them, and swore they would get them from him. When Oliver Cowdery went to Pennsylvania, he promised to write me what he should learn about these matters, which he did. He wrote me that Joseph had told him his secret thoughts, and all he had meditated about going to see him, which no man on earth knew, as he supposed, but himself, and so he stopped to write for Joseph.

Soon after this, Joseph sent for me (D. W.) to come to Harmony to get him and Oliver and bring them to my father's house. I did not know what to do, I was pressed with my work. I had some 20 acres to plow, so I concluded I would finish plowing and then go. I got up one morning to go to work as usual, and on going to the field, found between five and seven acres of my ground had been plowed during the night.

I don't know who did it; but it was done just as I would have done it myself and the plow was left standing in the furrow.

This enabled me to start sooner. When I arrived at Harmony, Joseph and Oliver were coming toward me, and met me some distance from the house. Oliver told me that Joseph had informed him when I started from home, where I had stopped the first night, how I read the sign at the

tavern, where I stopped the next night, etc., and that I would be there that day before dinner, and this was why they had come out to meet me; all of which was exactly as Joseph had told Oliver, at which I was greatly astonished. When I was returning to Fayette, with Joseph and Oliver all of us riding in the wagon, Oliver and I on an old fashioned wooden spring seat and Joseph behind us, while traveling along in a clear open place, a very pleasant, nice-looking old man suddenly appeared by the side of our wagon and saluted us with, "good morning, it is very warm," at the same time wiping his face or forehead with his hand. We returned the salutation, and by a sign from Joseph, I invited him to ride if he was going our way. But he said very pleasantly, "No, I am going to Cumorah." This name was something new to me, I did not know what Cumorah meant. We all gazed at him and at each other, and as I looked around enquiringly of Joseph, the old man instantly disappeared, so that I did not see him again.

J. F. S. Did you notice his appearance?

D. W. I should think I did, he was, I should think, about 5 feet 8 or 9 inches tall and heavy set, about such a man a James Vancleave there, but heavier, his face was as large, he was dressed in a suit of brown woolen clothes, his hair and beard were white, like Brother Pratt's, but his beard was not so heavy. I also remember that he had on his back a sort of knapsack with something in, shaped like a book. It was the messenger who had the plates, who had taken them from Joseph just prior to our starting from Harmony. But they "could see nothing of him, all around was clear." Oliver and David promptly implored Joseph Smith to "ask the Lord about it." So the young seer sought an answer from God (apparently with the aid of a seer stone). And, according to Whitmer, the Prophet's face became "pale, almost transparent" while in supplication . Presently, the Prophet informed them that the stranger was, in fact, "one of the Nephites," disguised as an elderly looking man and that "he had the plates in the knapsack"

Soon after our arrival home, I saw something which led me to the belief that the plates were placed or concealed in my father's barn. I frankly asked Joseph if my supposition was right, and he told me it was. Sometime after this, my mother was going to milk the cows, when she was met out near the yard by (the same old man judging by her description of him) who said to her, "You have been very faithful and diligent in your labors, but you are tired because of the increase of your toil, it is proper therefore that you should receive a witness that your faith may be strengthened." Thereupon he showed her the plates. My father and mother had a large family of their own, the addition to it therefore of Joseph, his wife Emma and Oliver very greatly increased the toil and anxiety of my mother. And although she had never complained she had sometimes felt that her labor was too much, or at least she was perhaps beginning to feel so. This circumstance, however, completely removed all such feelings and nerved her up for her increased responsibilities.

Elder O. P. Have you any idea when the other records will be brought forth?

D. W. When we see things in the spirit and by the power of God they seem to be right here-the present signs of the times indicate the near approach of the coming forth of the other plates, but when it will be I cannot tell. The three Nephites are at work among the lost tribes and elsewhere. John the Revelator is at work, and I believe the time will come suddenly, before we are prepared for it.

(Report of Elders Orson Pratt and Joseph F. Smith to John Taylor and Council of the Twelve-  
From Book

David Whitmer Interviews By Lyndon W. Cook 1991 )

**TESTIMONIES FOR THE  
THREE Disciples  
By BENJAMIN BROWN**

I was born on the 30th day of September, in the year 1794, in the town of Queenbury, Washington county, state of New York.

About the age of twenty-five, I married, and settled on a small farm of my own.

Five years more passed, and I was still unconnected with any religious party. At this time, what were called "Protracted Meetings," or religious services, continuing for days and sometimes weeks, were very popular in America. In common with the rest of the "Universalists," I felt unfavorable to these meetings, but such magnificent reports of their results - the wholesale "conversion of souls" - led me to attend one. I humbled myself and determined to divest my mind of all prejudice and put myself at least in a position to receive all the good that could be obtained. Before going, I covenanted with the Lord, that if He would reveal *His* mind and will unto me, whatever sacrifice or duty He might require at my hands, I would do it. Little did I think of the way my truthfulness would be tried, or possibly I might have shunned such a contract. (~1834)

As soon as I began to attend, I felt the Spirit of the Lord operating upon me, so that I seemed filled to overflowing with its teachings, a continual stream of glorious truths passed through my mind, my happiness was great, and my mind was so absorbed in spiritual things, that all the time the meeting lasted, which was about fifteen days, I scarcely ate or drank anything. At other times, that which I subsisted on during these fifteen days could not possibly have sustained life, but the Spirit of the Lord so operated on my system that I felt full at the time, and had no desire to eat or partake of anything.

About a day previous to the close of this meeting, I received a more important communication than either of the previous ones. A knowledge was given me that the ancient gifts of the Gospel - speaking in tongues, the power to heal the sick, the spirit of prophecy, &c. were just about to be restored to the believers in Christ. The revelation was a perfect knowledge of the fact, so sure and certain, that I felt as though the truth had been stereotyped upon me. I knew it from the crown of my head to the sole of my foot in the whole of my system, being filled with the Holy Ghost! I can compare it to nothing better than the change made on a clean sheet of paper by a printing press, leaving an indelible impression behind.

As the Spirit did not tell me to *whom* these things were to be restored, I at first fancied, in my ignorance, that the people with whom I had been meeting were about to be blessed with these things, so I joy-fully visited the minister of the meeting, and laid before him the intelligence I had received. But, to my great astonishment, I met with an utter repulse. He told me, "It was all of the Devil, for such things have ceased forever!" Had anyone knocked me down with a beetle, I could not have felt more sensibly the opposition between the spirits by which we were actuated. I soon found, by the bold and determined way in which he fought against the principle of present revelation, &c., that it was not to him or his people that these gifts would be given. So I sought for them elsewhere. A few days later, curiosity led me to visit the Latter-day Saints, amongst whom I witnessed a fulfillment of the prediction, for I beheld a manifestation of the gifts of prophecy and tongues, and received the latter myself.

Notwithstanding that the above confirmation which I received of the truth of the Church of the Latter-day Saints was very great, I did not feel sufficiently convinced to be induced to join

them at once. I had experienced the Spirit of the Lord in a similar way elsewhere, so that when the Elders of the Church, at this meeting, urged upon me to yield obedience to the Gospel they preached, which possessed such evidences as the manifestations of the ancient gifts, I treated the Elders very lightly, and replied that as for the gift of tongues, I could speak in tongues as well as any of them. So I could, for directly one of them manifested this gift, the gift of tongues rested upon me, and gave me the same power. Thus did the Devil seek to blind me, and turn that testimony which the Lord had given me for the truth, almost into an evidence against it! However, I procured a *Book of Mormon* and took it home to read, determined to investigate until I was fully satisfied. But I had scarcely begun to read before I felt greatly to dislike the book. Ere I had perused ten pages, I rejected it altogether. Acting in this bigoted manner, I had resigned myself to the evil influence that was gaining power over me so that, directly after, I felt a similar dislike seize me *towards* the Bible.

Its statements of miracles, &c., appeared to me to be compounds of the grossest absurdity possible. I could see no light or good in it at all! And actually resolved never to read it again! But, oh! the darkness that seized me as soon as I had made this resolution! The light that was in me became darkness, and how great it was no language can describe. All knowledge of religious truth seemed to forsake me, and if I attempted to quote Scripture, my recollection failed, after the first word or so. So remarkably was this, that it excited reflection, and caused me to marvel, and finally I determined to repent of my resolve respecting the Bible, and I commenced to read again. The book was hardly in my hand when, as in a moment, my light and recollection returned as usual. This made me rejoice, and immediately the idea flashed across my mind, "What have you done with the *Book of Mormon*? Behave as fairly to that." I soon re-procured it. But, even this time I felt prejudiced against the book. I resolved, however, to read it through, and I persevered in its perusal, till I came to that part where Jesus, on visiting the continent of America, after his resurrection, grants the request of three of the twelve whom he had chosen, to permit them to live until his second coming on the earth (like unto John spoken of in the Bible). Here my mind half yielded to the belief which arose within me, that perhaps it might be true, whereupon I took the book and laid it before the Lord, and pleaded with Him in prayer for a testimony whether or not it was true or false, and, as I found it stated that the three Nephites had power to show themselves to any persons they might wish, Jews or Gentiles, I asked the Lord to allow me to see them for a witness and testimony of the truth of the *Book of Mormon*, and I covenanted with Him, if He complied with my request, that I would preach it even at the expense of my life, should it be necessary.

The Lord heard my prayer, and, about five days after, two of the three visited me in my bedroom. I did not see them come, but I found them there. One spoke to me for some time, and reproved me sharply on account of my behavior at the time when I first attended the meeting of the Saints, and treated so lightly the gift of tongues. He told me never, as long as I lived, to do so again, for I had grieved the Spirit of the Lord, by whose power that gift had been given. This personage spoke in the Nephite language, but [understood, by the Spirit which accompanied him, every word as plainly as if he had spoken in English. I recognized the language to be the same as that in which I had heard Father Fisher speak at the meeting. Such a rebuke, with such *power*, I had never had in my life before or since, and never wish to have again. I was dumb before my rebuker, for I knew that what he *said* was right, and I felt deserving of it.

*How* these men went, I do not know, but directly they were gone, the Spirit of the Lord said to me, "Now you know for *yourself*! You have seen and heard! If you now fall away, there is no forgiveness for you." Did I not know, then, that the *Book of Mormon* was true, and that Joseph Smith was a Prophet of the Lord? Sure!y I did and I do now, as surely as I know that I live.

(From the book Faith Like The Ancients by Lundwall)

## THE PROPHET JOSEPH IDENTIFIES THE STRANGER

It was a cold night in the latter part of November, and in the home of William Huntington the family gathered around the big fire place in the spacious kitchen. After the evening meal, when all the evening work was done, it was the habit of this family to get their instruments of music and sit around the blazing logs and play the old fashioned tunes and hymns, also tunes of more cheerful air, although they did not dance.

"Grandfather Huntington played the bass viol, his daughter Zina the cello, William, the cornet, and Dimick, the drum. There were five sons and two daughters, the oldest daughter, Presenda, being married, lived some distance from them. It was a happy New England family and they lived the clean, pure life of the Puritan stock. After the music ceased a hush fell on the group and a knock was heard on the door and as it opened a strange old gentleman of medium weight, dressed in old fashioned clothes and carrying a bundle on his arm, appeared and stepped into the room and said: 'I usually bend my steps to some sequestered vale. May I find lodging here tonight?'"

"With cordial welcome he was invited in and given a place by the fire, in an old easy farm chair, and mother Huntington asked if he would like some supper and modestly he said he would. Then a good New England meal was spread before him, with milk, honey, maple syrup, cold meat, delicious home-made bread and butter. He partook of a light supper while the family spoke in soft tones. It was the custom to read a portion of the scriptures before going to bed. He again joined the circle, and father Huntington began to read from the Holy Bible, a portion of the New Testament, to which they all listened attentively. Grand-mother Huntington made some comment on the fact that they would like to hear the Gospel in its fullness as explained and taught by the Saviour. The stranger immediately took up the subject and began explaining the scriptures and quoting the sayings of the Saviour in what seemed to them a new light and greater beauty than they had ever thought of before. They sat in rapt attention listening to every word. Both father and mother Huntington agreed with his explanations while the boys exchanged glances of admiration and the daughter Zina was spellbound and sat and gazed upon the stranger with admiration and reverence.

After one hour spent in conversation upon this sacred subject, father Huntington had prayers, mother Huntington prepared a comfortable resting place for the stranger and he bid them good night, the boys going upstairs, father and mother Huntington to their bed room which led from the kitchen, and Zina in her little bed heard her parents talking in low tones about the wonderful stranger and discuss the things he said. The stranger had filled them with awe and reverence, such as they had never felt before. In the morning every one was astir bright and early as is usual on a farm when so much work has to be done, both outside and in.

"The stranger sat placidly watching the remarkable family with whom he took breakfast. The family invited him to stay but he said he had other places to visit and he left them standing in a group as he closed the door softly. When father Huntington saw the stranger depart, he sent Dimick after him to tell him to come again. He immediately opened the door and they all looked out to see and call the stranger back but he was no where to be seen. When looking on the door step where the snow had fallen the night before, no trace of a footstep could be seen and the boys running from all directions said that he had vanished and could not be found. Father Huntington remarked that he was the strangest person that ever was and he could not understand where he went, but he had shown them the Gospel in a new light.

"Mother Huntington felt that this stranger was some messenger from heaven and all the family were deeply impressed with his wonderful influence and beautiful way of explaining the Scriptures.

"When the Gospel of life and salvation was brought to them by Hyrum Smith and other Elders,

they seemed to coincide with what the stranger had told them concerning the Bible and the restoration of the Gospel. All the family but one accepted the Gospel and prepared to emigrate in a few years to Kirtland; here they met the Prophet of God, Joseph Smith, and became his faithful and loyal followers and friends.

"On an occasion when the Prophet Joseph was speaking of the three Nephites, Brother Huntington related this little incident to him. He laid his hand on his head and said: 'My dear brother, that man was one of the three Nephites who came to prepare you for the restoration of the Gospel and its acceptance.'

"Many incidents of a similar nature occurred, but those were days when the children of men were seeking for guidance in the new and enduring faith which is as old as the world but had been forsaken by men and it was again brought forth by the power of God through His humble servant Joseph Smith."

( From the Book Faith like the Ancients By N.B Lundwall)

## THE TWO WHITE STRANGERS

Elder Milton R. Hunter

I toured the Central American Mission in January, 1956, in the company of President and Sister Edgar Wagner. We were on a train coming from Guatemala City to Quirigua, Guatemala.

Riding in the same car with us was a very lovely Indian woman, a Quiche Maya from Quezaltenango, Guatemala. She was accompanied by her husband. President Wagner introduced them to me, stating that the Indian woman was the Relief Society president in Quezaltenango. I sat in the adjacent seat and had a conversation with them. The woman told me the following story:

"When I was a girl," she said, "a marvelous thing happened in my home town. One day, two strangers came to Quezaltenango. They were tall men-much taller than the Indian men of our country-and their skin was white in color. They were handsome men; their clothing differed greatly from that worn by the Quiche Mayas. Nobody had any idea as to who they were or whence they came. They just suddenly arrived in the middle of the city and began to preach to the people. A large group of Indians soon assembled in the street to listen to the instructions given by these strangers. Many of the things they told us were predictions of what would occur in the future.

"The thing that impressed me most," she said, "was the statements they made regarding our ancestors once having had the true gospel of Jesus Christ. They had lost it through wickedness and apostasy, resulting in the gospel being taken from the earth. They then said that God had caused the true gospel to be restored to earth again, and that in the near future that gospel would be brought to our people. Those two messengers said that we would be able to recognize the true gospel of Jesus Christ when it came, and the sign by which we would know it would be that young men, traveling two by two, would bring it to us."

A few years passed, and, she had grown to womanhood. Finally Mormon missionaries came to Quezaltenango. As she observed them and listened to them preach, she recalled the things that were predicted by the two messengers when she was a girl. She recalled that the bearers of the true gospel were to be young men, traveling two by two, and these Mormon missionaries completely fitted the predictions. Thereupon she invited them to her home and received the gospel from them.

This Indian woman bore a very strong and fervent testimony to me that she knew that these missionaries had brought her the true gospel of Jesus Christ. She said: "I know that God sent those two strangers, his messengers, to Quezaltenango to prepare the hearts and the minds of the Quiche Mayas in this part of the country to receive the gospel of Jesus Christ. I, and a number of others of our people who saw those messengers and listened to their predictions, are now Mormons."

I asked her to give me' the' names of other Lamanites who were present when the two messengers visited Quezaltenango This she did. I had one of the missionaries, the supervising elder, check with them for the purpose of verifying her story These other Indians also gave similar accounts of those two tall white strangers visiting Quezaltenango some years ago

Milton R. Hunter, *Improvement Era* December 1959, p.928.

### **Wilford Woodruff Tells of a Visit by the Three Nephites**

Wilford Woodruff related an experience he had while on a mission in England in which three divine messengers protected him and his missionary companions when they were attacked by hordes of evil spirits:

"When Brother Heber C. Kimball, Brother George A. Smith, and myself went to London, we encountered these evil spirits. They sought to destroy us. The first house that was opened to us was filled with devils. They had gathered there for our destruction, so that we could not plant the Gospel in that great city. Brother Kimball went to Manchester on some business, and left Brother George A. Smith and myself there. One night we sat up till 11 o'clock, talking Mormonism, and then we went to bed. We had only just laid down when these spirits rested upon us, and we were in a very fair way of losing our lives. It was as if a strong man had me by the throat, trying to choke me to death. In the midst of this a spirit told me to pray. I did so, and while praying, the door opened, the room was filled with light and three messengers came in. Who they were I know not. They came and laid their hands upon us, and rebuked those powers, and thereby saved our lives. Not only so, but by the power they held they rebuked the whole army of devils that were in that great city, and bound them so they had never troubled any elder from that day to this."

*The Deseret Weekly*, Vol. 53, No. 21, p. November 7, 1896.

### **Jacob Hamblin and the Three Nephites**

There are very few accounts where all three of these ancient apostles make an appearance at the same time. One such instance, however, occurred in the life of a young Indian boy. The labors of his life and mission were presented to him by these "three friends."

Knowing how greatly interested children are in Indian stories I venture to write them this one about Albert, an Indian boy the adopted son of Jacob Hamblin the great pioneer and Indian interpreter. In the year 1850, Hamblin and his family with other Saints settled in Tooele Valley which was at that time inhabited by a band of Indians led by a chief called Old Big Foot Old Big Foot was a bad Indian and he and his followers caused the white settlers a great deal of trouble by their depredations, which, despite the efforts of the people of Salt Lake and Tooele to quell them, continued to last about three years.

Finally Hamblin, who was then lieutenant, asked that a company be given him with which to make a raid on the Indians; he succeeded finally, not in killing them, but in effecting a peace with them. During his raid against them he had become convinced by the manifestations of the Holy Spirit in many instances that his calling was not to fight and kill the Indians, but it was to be a messenger of love and peace to them, and by this same spirit it was also made manifest to him that if he would not thirst for their blood he should never fall by their hands. This precious promise of the Almighty through His spirit to Hamblin was a source of great strength and assurance to him in after years, and enabled him while among the Indians to pass through scenes unmoved which caused some of the bravest of other men to tremble.

Soon after his return from trailing after Old Big Foot he dreamed that he was on a friendly visit to the Indians they had been so long trying to destroy, and while walking and talking with them he picked up a stone. This on being touched, diffused a bright phosphorescent light, and as he handled it, the light stuck to his fingers, and as he tried to brush it away it continued to spread over him.

This dream made a great impression upon him and was repeated to him for three successive nights. At the third repetition of it he arose from his bed, saddled his horse and taking his gun and blankets went alone into the Indian country. He entered the valley where their lodges had

stood when he was there before but saw no Indians, but a smoke curled up near the center of the valley. He directed his way to it and found there sitting on a rock near by a little Indian boy about ten years old, who was crying bitterly. The spirit said to Hamblin as he addressed the boy, "This is the bright stone you saw in your dream; take the lad home with you." He asked the boy the cause of his grief; he replied by pointing to an old lodge nearby where an Indian woman, the boy's mother, lay dying. The other Indians, according to their custom at such times, had gone away and left her to die alone. He asked the boy if he would like to go home with him; he replied that he would, but added, "I want you to come and heal my mother first." Hamblin went with the boy to where his mother lay and administered to her by laying hands upon her and she soon after sat up and conversed with him. Though he knew very little of their language yet by the gift of tongues he was enabled to understand them and to make himself understood. They told him they had known all day that he would come to them, and the boy afterwards said, when Hamblin asked him why he was so willing to go with him, the first white man he had ever seen and a stranger, that three *men having white hair and beard* came and told him of his (Hamblin's) visit and advised him to go home with the white man when he came.

The fire had been built to attract the- expected visitor's attention to the spot. Though the mother had readily given her consent when Hamblin first asked for the boy to go with him, yet when about to depart and the little fellow picked up his bows and arrows, she set up such a wail that Hamblin's heart was touched and he told the boy to go back and remain with her; but the lad refused to do so and followed his guardian. That night, the mother, still anxious about her son, came to the camp and told Hamblin she willing for him to take her boy, for she believed he was a good man, but exacted the promise from him that he would always be a father to him and own him for a son. Hamblin gave the promise and was always faithful to the trust.

The boy Albert was-very much attached to his adopted father who was his only confident and friend, and he was an obedient and faithful son to him. As he grew older the care of his father's flocks was given him and they increased rapidly while under his management

He manifested a great love for the gospel and its teachings, had many dreams and visions but had also many trials and temptations. One day after having made some remark\_about his mission on the earth he was questioned by his father when he confessed to him that he had many times met with and received counsel from his "three friends" as he called them; he had been reticent about speaking of it to his father for fear of his displeasure, but when he found he was to receive only encouragement from him, his pleasure knew no bounds. He seemed imbued with the idea that he had a mission to perform among his race in the spirit world; he was ordained to the offices of the lower priesthood and when he had arrived at the age of manhood he told his father one day that the time had come for him to receive his endowments, for he was soon to go on his mission, and it was necessary that he should receive his blessings first. For some cause it was not convenient for him to go in the House of the Lord at that time; when his father told him he would have to wait awhile he said, "Then I shall have to suffer." Soon after he was stricken with erysipelas in his eyes and face and was not healed until his father started with him from Santa Clara, where he then lived for Salt Lake City, where he received his endowments.

In 1863, twelve years from the time when Albert picked up his bows and arrows and left his Indian haunts for the home of his white friends, as Hamblin was leaving home on a mission to the Moquis Indians he approached him and said, "Father, I shall be on my mission before you get back again." His father asked him what he meant and he said, "My time has come to go and I shall be dead and buried before your return." When Hamblin returned at the expiration of two months he found Albert's place vacant; he had passed away as he had, the morning of his father's departure, predicted. (Juvenile Instructor, Vol. 22:332.)

#### **Jacob Hamblin often Visited By the Three Nephites**

"I had always heard of the peculiar ways of Jacob Hamblin . . . which gave me troublesome thoughts. It was that of laying his works suddenly whether in the field or at home, gathering anything edible he could find and throwing it into a flour sack and hasten away into the Indian country many miles away; and I heard he had never made a trip in vain. There was sure to be trouble brewing when he reached his destination. It seemed to me that Brother Hamblin's manner of missionary work was out of harmony with regulation of the church. I mentioned the fact to him

and asked him if his mission was not under the direction of the church. He answered me that his mission was an independent mission and yet under the authority and supervision of the church - that the Three Nephites mentioned in the Book of Mormon were his personal directors. When one appeared told him he was needed for some distance or in some Indian territory it was his duty to lay everything aside and go out immediately on his mission."

*Biographical Record of Martha Cragun Cox, pp.104 Unpublished manuscript.*

### **Jacob Hamblin Visits The Hopi Tribes Who Know the Three Nephites**

President Brigham Young firmly believed in sending the Gospel to all the Lamanites, and sent a group of missionaries to the Hopi as well as to the other tribes. In 1859 he sent Jacob Hamblin with a company that consisted of Marion J. Shelton, Thales Haskell, Taylor Crosby, Benjamin Knell, Ira Hatch, and John Wm. Young.

They reached the Hopi villages November 6, talked with the Indians three days and then left the work of possible conversion on the shoulders of Shelton and Haskell, who returned to the Santa Clara the next spring.

The Indians were kind, but unbelieving and <sup>11</sup>could make no move until the reappearance of the THREE PROPHETS who led their fathers to that land and told them to remain on these rocks until they should come again and tell them what to do."

The trust placed in Mormon visitors to the Hopi was shown by exhibition to them of a sacred stone. On one of the visits of Andrew S. Gibbons, accompanied by his sons, Wm. H. and Richard, the three were guests of old Chief Thba in Oraibi.

Tuba told of this sacred stone and led his friends down into an underground kiva, from which Tuba's son was dispatched into a more remote chamber. He returned bringing the stone. Apparently it was of very fine-grained marble, about 15 x 18 inches in diameter and a few inches in thickness. Its surface was entirely covered with hieroglyphic markings, concerning which there was no attempt at translation at the time, though there were etched upon it clouds and stars. The Indians appeared to have no translation and only knew that it was very sacred. Tuba said that at one time the stone incautiously was exhibited to an army officer, who attempted to seize it, but the Indians saved the relic and hid it more securely.

The only official record available about the stone is found in the preface of Ethnological Report No. 4, as follows:

"Mr. G. K. Gilbert furnished some data relating to the sacred stone kept by the Indians of the village of Oraibi, on the Moki mesas. This stone was seen by Messrs. John W. Young and Andrew S. Gibbons and the notes were made by Mr. Gilbert from those furnished him by Young. Few white men have had access to this sacred relic, and but few Indians have enjoyed the privilege. The stone is a red-clouded marble, entirely different from anything found in the region." ("Mormon Settlement in Arizona," McClintock, see pages 65 and 81.)

(Also found in book *The Three Nephites* pp. 47-48 By Ogden Kraut)

### **One of The Three Nephites Appeared to Torbuka Chief of the Gosiute Indians**

*Torbuka, a chief of the Gosiute Indians, was sitting alone in his tent when a stranger with a gray-white beard and a most impressive face entered. The stranger announced that the time had come for the Indians to be baptized, that the Mormons were their friends, and that they possessed a book which gave a true story of Indian origins. He assured Torbuka that Brigham Young had communion with the Great Spirit.*

The stranger stepped out of the tepee and Torbuka, desiring to know the direction which he had taken, looked everywhere but could see no one. He walked over to the edge of the bluff thinking that he might possibly have had time to reach it, but there was no one in all the open country that could be seen from this point. Shortly thereafter two strangers resembling the first visited Torbuka and told him the same things and departed in the same miraculous way. Still later, one of the three returned and repeated the message.

*So Torbuka gathered his tribe and took them to Deep Creek, where they were baptized.*

### **Manifestations of Faith by Joseph Heinerman**

## THE THREE DISCIPLES AS MISSIONARIES

Deep Creek, Utah; June 2, 1874

"One hundred Indians were submerged and confirmed into the 'Mormon' faith here yesterday, by Indian Interpreter Lee, from Grantsville, and three others whom he deputized as assistants; sixty minutes were consumed in the operation, a heavy rain prevailing at the time."

The interpreter mentioned in the foregoing is Elder William Lee, of Grantsville, and the assistants alluded to were Elders William H. Lee of Tooele (not a relative of the other), Edwin Tadlock, President of the Deep Creek Branch of the Church, and James Worthington, of the latter place.

The circumstances which led to the sending of that dispatch to the *News* should be interesting to every Latter-day Saint, as showing plainly that the Lord is working visibly among the remnant of His people, in fulfillment of the predictions concerning them, and in confirmation of His promises to their fathers. The writer will give them, as accurately as his memory will serve him, as he received them from the lips of Elder William Lee, and he assured him he had received them from the lips of Torbuka, a leading chief of the Goshutes. The narration has also been confirmed to the writer by other parties more or less acquainted with the incidents.

It appears that some time last spring Torbuka and the greater portion of his band were encamped some distance west of Deep Creek, and that one night he had a singular and very pleasant dream, in which he thought he saw a beautiful meadow, through which flowed a fine stream of clear water. He thought he saw Elder Lee, who told him that himself and people must wash in that stream. In the morning when he awoke he had very pleasant feelings. He arose, and, as there was creek near by, he told his people they must go and wash themselves in it, and they did so, he doing the same himself. Subsequently Torbuka was sitting alone in his tent, when a man entered, whom he afterwards described as having a white or rather a grey beard, and a very handsome countenance. As may be imagined, he had peculiar feelings on seeing this stranger enter so suddenly. He gazed at this personage for a few moments, when he, the stranger, addressed Torbuka, the substance of his words being that the time had come for the Indians to be buried in water, baptized; that the "Mormons" were their friends; that they had a book which told about their fathers, that Brigham held communion with God, and they must hear him. He also told Torbuka that the enemies of the Indians had driven, robbed, plundered and abused them, but that the time when their enemies could do that was nearly past, that the time had almost arrived when those who had wronged them would be like the "dry wood upon the mountains, that would be consumed, and they," the Indians, "would walk over the ashes."

The stranger then left, and Torbuka, being curious to know in what direction he had gone walked towards the corner of a bluff, around which the personage had turned, but when he reached that point, so that he could see the open country, the stranger had disappeared, but in what manner Torbuka did not know.

After this two personages together visited Torbuka in the same manner, and, after repeating what the first Visitor had said, word for word, departed in the same manner. Torbuka said that one of the two was considerably taller than the other.

Subsequently one of the personages appeared again to Torbuka, making the third Visitation, and the things that had been uttered at the two previous Visits were exactly repeated.

The writer understood from Brother Lee that the most of the foregoing was related by Torbuka himself, in the vestry of the Grantsville Meeting House, in the presence of several brethren, Brother Lee interpreting.

Those were the incidents that led to the subsequent circumstances which caused the sending of the dispatch to the *News*; for after those plain manifestations Torbuka soon made up his mind as to how he would act. He gathered as many of his people together as he could reach and started for Deep Creek. On arriving there, about the latter end of May he caused a dispatch to be sent to Interpreter William Lee at Grantsville, asking him to come to him, as himself and people were waiting to hear what he had to say, and to do as he should advise.

By counsel of Bishop John Rowberry, Brother William H. Lee took his team and wagon and went with Brother William Lee (interpreter) to Deep Creek, where they found Torbuka and his people awaiting their arrival.

Interpreter Lee preached the gospel to them explaining the principles thereof in as simple a manner as he could, to meet their capacities. At the conclusion of his remarks he said to them: "All you who wish to do as I have told you, according to the commands of the Great Spirit," or

words to that effect, "follow me'." and he walked off towards a stream about half a mile distant, and was followed by all the members of the tribe present, men, women, and children.

On arriving at the stream one of the brethren went into the water while the others stood on the bank, and while he in the water baptized the Lamanites in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost by authority of Jesus Christ, as they went forward, those who stood on the bank confirmed them by the ordinance of the laying on of hands, those confirmed being seated on a chair, which had been taken them for the purpose, while the ordinance was attended to.

So much in earnest were these poor Lamanites that the women actually held out their little children to the Elder who was in the water that he might baptize them also and were only satisfied when they were informed that children were not to be baptized until they were eight years old, but that they could be blessed by *the* servants of God, and afterwards the little ones were taken in the arms of those Elders and blessed.

While the baptisms and confirmations were proceeding, as stated in the dispatch the rain commenced to pour down, but this *was* not heeded, and the good work went on until all had been brought into the *fold* by the door of baptism, after the likeness of the burial of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, and coming up out of the water after the likeness of his resurrection.

Those Lamanites rejoiced, as did also the brethren who administered to them the sacred ordinance of the gospel, a Spirit of peaceful unity resting upon all.

Besides the baptizing and confirming of over a hundred of those people, as above described, seven of the most intelligent of the men were *ordained Elders*, and instructed in the duties of the calling of that office, and subsequent events give every indication that they have been very industrious and zealous in telling their brethren in various parts of the things they had received.

As Elders William Lee and William H Lee were passing through *Scull Valley* on their return home on the 7th of June, they met with fifteen others of the tribe, whom they then baptized and confirmed, administered the sacrament of the Lord's supper to them, and blessed their children. (Juvenile Instructor, Vol. 9:224)

### **Bear River Indians Converted**

In a former article I gave an account of my first day's work at baptizing the Indians on Bear River, after they had applied to me so many times to do so. I then promised to give the readers of the *Instructor* something more on the Indian question, and I shall now tell the reason those Lamanites were impelled to ask for baptism.

Four years ago last summer some of those Indians were encamped on the south side of Salt Lake, west of Skull Valley, when one day three strange men came into the lodge of the chief, whose name was Ech-up-wy, and after seating themselves commenced talking to him on religious matters. This seemed so strange to him that he turned and scrutinized them closely. The visitors were evidently Indians, as they had the Indian complexion. One of them was a very large, broad shouldered man, quite good looking; the other two were rather below the medium size. The large one was spokesman. They told him that the "Mormons" God was the true God, and that He and the Indian's Father were one; that he must go to the "Mormons," and they would tell him what to do, and that he must do it; that he must be baptized, with all his Indians; that the time was at hand for the Indians to gather, and stop their Indian life, and learn to cultivate the earth and build houses and live in them. They then said to him, "Look!" He turned his head, and, although he was sitting in his lodge, he saw all this northern country about Bear River and Malad. He saw also that these were Indians' houses, and that there were a great many Indians at work, and apparently feeling first rate. He noticed also a few white men there showing the Indians how to work, one of whom he recognized as myself. What seemed more strange than anything else was that he could see down the canyons on both sides of the mountains, as he might do if he occupied a position in the air above them. After viewing this scene for some time, he turned his eyes in another direction, but not being satisfied he looked around to see more of it, when, to his surprise there was nothing visible before him but the bare side of the lodge. The visitors then told him that when he got his house built and got to living in it, they would come again to see him; they also said something he did not understand, when he turned to ask them an explanation, but lo! they were gone. His buffalo robes were lying just as they had been, but no visitors were there.

The Indians immediately broke camp and came after me, and wanted me to baptize them, saying that their women and children wanted to be baptized as well as the men, and that it was not

good for them to come to Ogden to have the ordinance attended to. They kept importuning..for baptism, coming after me as often as once in every week or fortnight until the following spring, when I went and did my first day's work.

Ech-up-wy did not tell me at the first about this vision, nor in fact, any one else; nor could he be made to believe that the place where they are now located was the proper place for them to make farms, although President Young directed that they should locate there, until, when work on the irrigating canal was commenced, he viewed from an eminence the very scene that was shown him in his vision. After that he was satisfied that he was at work in the right place, and told me of his vision, and his reason for demanding baptism.

As to whom the men were who visited Ech-up-wy, the readers can form their own conjecture; but one thing I can say, he has tried as hard to carry out the instructions given him as any man I ever saw. He has now got his house built, as have quite a number of others, and they feel like getting up out of the dirt.

(G.W. Hill, *Juvenile Instructor*, 12:11)

### HEAVENLY MESSENGERS INSTRUCT INDIANS

President Joseph Y. Card, of the Presidency of the Alberta Temple, in speaking in the Alberta Temple on July 21, 1932, gave some interesting facts. "This temple", he said, "is built within a thousand feet of the largest Indian reservation in Canada. It is within 14 miles of one of the largest reservations in the United States. It is just 25 miles south of the great Peigan Indian reservation. Why should the temple be placed here in the midst of these reservations, where there is such a large Indian population? Is it not for a purpose?"

"Ernest Braverock is, an Indian of the Blood tribe. He left the reserve and went south. There he was taken ill and came back on his horse. He grew worse until he was sent to the hospital and treated for pneumonia. Hearing of his condition, his brother came, expecting to bid him a last farewell. It looked like Ernest would die. The doctor said there was not a chance in the world for him to live, and no power or skill could save him.

"Yet the next morning when the brother came in, expecting to find him worse, Ernest was somewhat improved. To his surprise on each morning for the three following days he found Ernest growing stronger. He said, 'Ernest, what has happened to you?'

"Ernest answered, 'Brother, here is my bed. Lying here I can look out and see that temple. A strange man came to my bedside, anointed my chest, and promised me I should not die. He came to me three nights, one after another. He said, 'Ernest, you see that white church up there? The people who built that are the only true Church in the world. They are the Church of God, That is the Church you should join. Promise me that when you get well, you will tell all the Indians you see what I have told you.'"

"Ernest promised, because his life had been spared. when he -recovered he went out on the reservation and related what had happened as he mingled with his friends. There was quite a commotion on the reservation. The Indians listened and believed. Then suddenly the whole thing was stopped by the priests. The Indian agents sent word to Braverock to stop that silly story. He said, 'I know it is true.' Then came the priests and the ministers. They told him he was crazy. When he still persisted in it, they' put him in jail,' and kept him there several weeks. Finally a delegation waited on him, and made him promise not to tell the story again, before they would let him out. The poor fellow's mouth is sealed." (*Junior Genealogical Text*, 1937)

### *Indian Chiefs And The President*

Chief Tabiona

In the year 1873 Bishop A.K. Thurber and George W. Bean were authorized to appoint a small company to explore Rabbit Valley and visit and make treaty with the Indians inhabiting that region. William Robertson and William Jex were appointed to serve in this capacity with Bishop Thurber and Mr. Bean. They left in June of that year to fill their appointment, being equipped with riding horses and pack animals. They had with them as their guide and interpreter an Indian chief by the name of Tabiona. They went by way of Nephi, Warm Creek through Salina, and

thence to Glenwood. From here they made their way through King's Meadows and on to Fish Lake. At the latter point they found a band of Indians with Poganeab as their chief better known, perhaps, as "Fish Lake Chief."<sup>1</sup>

After supper on the evening of the first day they had a long talk with the Indians. Both Thurber and Bean understood the Indian language and they acted as interpreters. The Indians were told briefly the history of their forefathers as contained in the Book of Mormon, and were presented with a volume of this record. They were intensely interested and related many of the happenings of their tribe. Chief Tabiona, the Indian guide, related a circumstance that happened when he and other Indian chiefs went to Washington, D.C., to talk with the "Big Chief." He said that while they were talking to the President of the United States and some of the officials, that they, the Indians, saw three persons of fine appearance, dressed in white robes, enter the room. The "white men"<sup>1</sup> did not see them, but the Indians saw them and were convinced that the heavenly messengers were friends of the Indians.

This circumstance made a great impression on the Indians, and led them to believe that the "Great Chief" was their friend and was looking after their interests. Mr. Jex and the other visitors surmised that these three personages were the Three Nephites spoken of in the Book of Mormon, who were to remain on earth until the second advent of the Savior.

The journey continued to the lower end of Rabbit Valley, and explorations were made of the mountains and district to the south. Having completed the work assigned them, the party started on the homeward journey, going by way of the east fork of the

Sevier River. It had been arranged to have all the settlers of Grass Valley district, as well as the Indians in the vicinity, meet in a "Peace Talk" at Cedar Grove.

A large number of Indians gathered from the surrounding country. To them were distributed gifts, and explanation was made of the friendly attitude of the white man and his purpose in making settlements in the country. From all appearances a good impression was made on the Indians and the exploring party felt that it had accomplished its mission. Return was made by way of San Pete County and Thistle Valley. Here Chief Tabiona met his squaw awaiting his return.

*William Jex, Pioneer and Patriarch. Spanish Fork Press. 1920. pgs. 46-50.)*

### **One of The Three Nephite Beings Reports on His Visit to California**

On the morning of the 19th of March, 1940, at about 7 o'clock in the morning, I was going out into the yard taking care of some of the duties of the household, and upon opening the door an elderly man stood about four feet from the kitchen door from which I had just come... His hair was not entirely grey but it had streaks of grey. He was about five feet eleven inches in height, was not especially heavy set, but weighing about one hundred sixty pounds. He wore a beard but no mustache, trimmed, and was tidily dressed with a dark suit. He wore a light grey overcoat of lightweight. He looked very kind,. His eyes were. greyish blue, and he wore a light Grey hat.: Upon seeing me, he took off his hat and :said: "Good morning, My Dear, can you spare time to fix me a bit of breakfast." I at first thought I would say "no" but. he looked so kind and clean that I said: "Sure, come in," both of us walking toward the kitchen door and he following me. I set a chair before him and invited him to sit down which he did, this being in the kitchen. I

immediately started to fix breakfast for him. He sat and watched me and soon he said: "It has been many years since I have been in this part of the Lord's vineyard. I was amazed at the growth of Mesa." I made some reply which I do not now recall. He went on to ask: "Is the Church growing rapidly? to which I answered., "Yes, it is, especially here.. My father came with the early pioneers and I can remember as a child there were such a few, but now there are ten wards in this stake " He. said: "My dear your father was very fortunate to be called as one of the pioneers.. I have been in Mexico for many years laboring in that branch of the Church." (It struck me at the time as peculiar when. he called it a branch.) "You will live to see the day when that part of the Lord's vineyard and this part will be as brothers. I visited with the Saints in California last week The Lord is not pleased with His people there; they are living too fast. They let the real things of life slip behind while they take up the unimportant things. They are like the most of the people now; they pray with their lips and have no faith in their hearts."

Continuing he said: "The condition of the world is dreadful. In Germany there are many of the Lord's choice people, and in no other way could the gospel be spread only through this dreadful war."

All this was said while I was preparing the meal, after which I set it down before him. While he was eating I washed the morning dishes. I asked him if he would have anything else and he said: "Thank you, my dear." When I was fixing his breakfast, I said: "Do you like your eggs poached hard or soft," to which he replied: "My dear, even as you have done it unto the least of these you have done it unto me." During the entire visit I felt a very serene, peaceful and quiet feeling. After finishing his breakfast, he arose, took his overcoat which he had put over a chair, and as he reached the door, he turned and said: "You may not think much of this coming from me, but I promise you that through your faith, you nor yours shall never want."

Before going to the door I handed him his hat. He then said: "Good morning," and I replied, "Good morning," and he was gone. All the while my son, Robert Shill, was in the adjoining room from the kitchen and after the stranger had left, he immediately came into the kitchen and said: "Mom, who was that man? He was the queerest talking man I ever heard." To which I replied: "I don't know, son, but he was dressed so well and looked so well kept to be asking for breakfast."

We both walked out of the house, not more than a minute from the time he left the kitchen door, going clear to the road which was about three hundred feet from the kitchen, but could see no one. He could not be seen in any direction, the road going straight for two miles in either direction. I have wondered and pondered about it so much and feel assured in my own heart and mind it was one of the Three Nephites. It would have taken at least a few minutes to go to the road and we went out immediately after he had left.

This incident occurred in the settlement of Lehi, Maricopa County, Maricopa Stake) Arizona, on our twenty acre farm. The Latter-day Saint church is located about one thousand feet from our home and the school house about the same distance.

Signed the 7th day of April, 1940.

Signed: Hazel L. Shill

Signature witnessed by:

N. B. Lundwall

Wm. F. Gollaher

Alice Gollaher

(Assorted Gems of Priceless Value, p. 22-24)

### **A Three Nephite Being with a Genealogy Message**

And another saint, Mrs. May E. Edwards, gave the following account of a conversation she had with one ,who said he was one of the Three Nephites:

December 23rd, 1908. About 9 o'clock a.m. the door knob shook. I opened the door. A man stood there. The first word he spoke was, "There is an unhappy spirit on the other side who wishes to mingle with those who have their robes; but he cannot until his temple work is done." He said, "Do you know who that is?" I said, "No sir, unless it is my husband's father, Mr. Edwards?" He said, "That is who it is." He said, "Do you know who I am?" I said, "No sir, unless you are one of the Nephities." He said, "I am one of the Three." I asked him why he came to me. He said, "It was here to you that I was sent. You have had a desire and always

wanted logo to the Temple." He said, "Will you see that this Temple work is done within the next three years." I said, "Yes sir, I will." I asked him if he could go to my husband and tell him what he had told me and what his message was. He said, "No, I can only go where I am sent."

Unpublished manuscript, *Wilford M. Poulsen*  
bx. 10, fd. 25, BYU Library Special Collection

### **Charles O. Card has a visit from A Three Nephite Being**

Charles O. Card once conversed with one of those translated beings:

It was on the occasion of his (Card's) first visit to the Cardston country in 1886. He had pitched his tent for the night and was sitting inside looking out into the twilight. The wind was blowing a flurry of snow. He was pondering upon his mission to Canada and what was going to come of it. Presently he felt, more than he actually perceived that there was someone in the tent with him. He looked up and there stood a man dressed in Indian garb. This garb was immaculately clean. The man and he talked into the night, at least three hours, and dwelt upon the possibilities of this country and what was to come. Suddenly the man left as mysteriously as he had come. Card got up and went to the door of the tent and looked out. There were no tracks in the snow - not a sign to indicate that a mortal man had walked out of the tent. President Card said that he thought the man was one of the Three Nephites.

(Mrs. David Wilcox, cited in *Ethnic Groups in Western Canadian Provinces*, pp.263-264.)

### **Another Briefer Account**

Mary Harriet Burgess Bullard was born in Nauvoo, Illinois, in 1842. When she was six years old, she came to Utah with her parents. The following story is taken from her autobiography.

"Early in my married life I was very ill. No hope was held out for my recovery. We could not afford any help so I was in the house alone most of the time.

"One day, while I was lying in bed, a man came to the side of my bed and took hold of my hand and said to me, 'My dear sister, you are very sick. **YOU** think you are going to die.' I answered 'yes.' Then he shook his head and said, 'No, the Lord has a great work for you to do. You will live and raise a large family. You shall have power over the Evil One to save the lives of your children and many of the Saints lives. If you only had faith enough, you could get up right now and dress yourself. Be careful and take care of yourself and you will soon be well and stout."

"I was weak. I closed my eyes and when I opened them he was gone. I rose, put on my clothes and was sitting in the chair when my husband came in. He was surprised and asked, 'Who has helped you dress?' 'Nobody,' I said, 'I've just made up my mind to get well, and I am going to. I am not going to lie in that bed any longer, only when I want to rest."

"At that time, I did not tell anyone of the stranger's visit except my father. He told me it was one of the Three Nephites and that from my description of him, it was the same Nephite which had visited him once when he was ill." (*Heart Throbs of the West*, by *Kate B. Carter*. *Daughters of Utah Pioneers*. 1941. Vol. 3, pg. 357.)

### **AN EXPERIENCE OF MRS. LYDIA ABBOTT SQUIRES**

"It was on a hot summer day in the year 1874 at Wa Wa Springs in the state of Utah.

The springs being an oasis in the desert and nothing only sage and bunches of grass and hot sand it was here in a little lumber shack on their homestead Mr. and Mrs. Edwin Squires lived with their 3 small daughters. They owned horses and cattle and Mr. Squires had 2 or 3 men hired to help to take care of these.

And it was on this day in 1874 they had gone on a round up leaving Mrs. Squires and the children alone and they were miles from any one else and her husband had told her he would be back at a certain time and to have dinner ready for them And from the house they could see for miles in all directions.

And it being about time for them to come she went to the spring for water and looked in every direction to see if they were coming but there was nothing in sight and she took the water into the house and set it down and turned around and to her amazement was a man standing in the door and he asked her if she would kindly give him a bit to eat and although she was frightened she set the table. It was humble but a good meal

I remember there was cheese bread butter cold milk and an apple pie and she told him to eat and that he was welcome and he did eat as though he was hungry. And while eating he conversed with her and he said "Sister you are not well" and she said No I have had a pain in under my shoulder which bothers me a great deal and he said that is your liver but you won't be bothered any more with that. Then he got up and started off and thanked her for her kindness and fine meal and said Got bless you sister you will never want for any thing you will always be blessed with plenty and he left. As soon as she thought he had had time to turn the corner of the house she went out to see in what direction he had gone and there was no sign of him any where. This worried her more than ever. She went back in the house and to her surprise the table was just as she had set it And she had seen him eat and drink the milk. But it was there and she thought how he looked and how he was dressed so neat and his eyes were so bright and just twinkled when he talked and he had long white beard his hair was gray.

She was still worrying when her husband and the men came and she asked them if they had seen him but they hadn't. She told them the story but she couldn't get it off her mind and it went on for about three months and her Mother Mrs. Abigail Abbott came to make her a visit and she told her the story and she smiled and said Why Lydia have you forgotten about your Patriarchal Blessing. You were promised that one of the Three Nephites would dine at your table. That's who it was.

Well, she never had any more trouble with her liver lived a good old age and always had plenty and her husband died first and when she died she left a good start to her children and we have right here in our town a family of grand-children their mother being a daughter. And dying before her mother her children got her share and it set them all up in business

When she died she was 89-years old.

This story was told to me by my mother it was her father's sister and she heard her tell it and also Mr. Bowman he is the father of the family here in our town a son in law of Mrs. Squires. And he also tells the same story. ( This story was written in 1947 by Mrs. Eliza Robison of Bunkerville Nevada)

### **A Three Nephite Assistance**

One of the more unique stories of Nephite assistance to the missionaries is the following story. It portrays the comfort and aid given to both a missionary in the field and also to his wife at home. It illustrates the profound knowledge, speed, and scope of these three disciples in accomplishing their missionary labors.

"At the time of the first settlement of Payson, Utah, a man. . . was sent on a mission to Germany, while the wife was left in Payson to manage their rather isolated farm land. One winter morning. . . a tall elderly gentleman knocked at the door. Not a little surprised at seeing a stranger in this sparsely populated region she invited him in. He told her he had traveled far and was very hungry. Food was never plentiful in that household, and the fact that it was midwinter

caused a greater scarcity than ever. However, the good woman, wrapping part of a loaf of bread in an old bit of peculiarly patterned cloth, offered it to the stranger. The old man thanked her and went his way. The woman followed him to the door and found he had disappeared without leaving a single track in the snow. This incident took place one day before Christmas, and that fact, together with the strangeness of the whole proceeding, caused the young woman to remember the date.

Several years later, the day after her husband's return, she was helping him to unpack his belongings when she found carefully folded in a corner of his trunk, the same odd piece of cloth in which she had wrapped the stranger's bread. Her husband related to her this story: "It was on the day before Christmas. . . . The money which was to pay my expenses was many days overdue, and I was alone and penniless in a strange city. I had not eaten for two days. . . . Upon looking up I perceived a tall, elderly gentleman walking toward me. I turned aside to allow him to pass, but he took me by the arm, and removing a package from his pocket wrapped in this piece of cloth, placed it in my hand. He then said, 'Go to the post office. Even now your money awaits you there.' Without another word he turned and disappeared around a nearby corner. . . . I opened the package and found it contained a half loaf of fresh bread. Later I went to the post office and found the money, just as he had said."(From an anonymous manuscript in the files of the WPA Writers' Project, Utah State Historical Society, Salt Lake City.)

**THE DESIRE OF YOUR HEART  
SHALL BE GRANTED**  
**Twentina Jensen Larsen**

We had been married three years and, up to that time, had no children. It was late fall, probably late October or early November (1887), and it had just started to snow, the first snowfall of the season. I was alone mending stockings when someone knocked at the door. I opened it and saw a man who looked to be about sixty years old; he was dressed in a dark gray suit and carried a walking cane and a small bundle. He asked if I would give him something to eat. I invited him in, and then took out a plate with some ham on it and he told me he didn't eat meat. I thought it very unusual for a man of this type (as I thought him to be) not to eat meat. I then asked him what he would like to eat, and he said a bowl of bread and milk. He asked if I had any objection to his sitting by the stove with his bowl on the back of the stove. I told him I had no objection and went on with my mending.

When he had finished eating, he came around to the side of the stove where I was sitting and extended his hand to thank me, then he blessed me. I was so surprised I could hardly understand what he was saying until I heard him say that the desire of my heart should be granted that I should have children. I wondered how in the world he knew the desire of my heart and that I didn't already have children.

Then he left, and I thought how unusual it was that he should bless me. While he had been in the house it had snowed about an inch. In a moment, I went out onto the porch to see which way he had gone, but could see no footprints anywhere leaving the place; in fact, no footprints in the new-fallen snow, and no sign of a man.

Thinking maybe he had gone into grandmother's home (the door to her apartment was from the same porch) I went in there to see, but she was sitting alone humming a song. I asked her if she had seen which way the man had gone that was in my place for dinner and she said she had not seen anyone come or go and she had been sitting by the window. Neither had Mrs. Keller, my next door neighbor, seen anything of a man either coming or going. I could not forget him for a long time, wondering who he was.

About eight years later (and I had three children then), I was at Young Ladies' officers meeting in Brigham City, and a member of the General Board spoke in tongues and said that

there were women right before her who had fed one of the Three Nephites and didn't know it. That is the first it occurred to me who my mysterious visitor was-one of the Three Nephites.

"Alexander A. and Twentina (Jensen) Larsen," *Mads Christian Jensen-Ancestors and Descendants, 1600-1960. Family history pp 231-232*

### **THE ANGEL OF THE LORD WILL GO BEFORE YOU J. Bert Sumsion**

In discussing my missionary labors, my patriarchal blessing states, "The angel of the Lord will go before you and prepare the way." This promise was remarkably fulfilled while I was laboring in Bracebridge, Canada, in March of 1917. My companion, Elder Torgersen, and I had walked from Toronto to Bracebridge, a distance of about 130 miles, through the melting snow, carrying our suitcases, overcoats, and the big black hats that were standard attire for preachers in those days. We were tired from having carried our heavy loads such a long distance and were hoping the Lord would open up the way for some kindly soul. to provide us with hospitality.

At the first home we came to we found an old gentleman sitting in a rocking chair on his front porch. As soon as we approached, he motioned to us to join him on the porch, and after a few pleasantries, he invited us to have dinner with his family.

While his wife prepared dinner, we were invited into the parlor, where I was delighted to find an organ. I played a few tunes, then Elder Torgersen joined me in singing, "Nearer My God To Thee," and several other songs that were favorites of mine.

We were having a most pleasurable time when our hostess came in and announced that dinner was ready.

The meal was simple, but most enjoyable, as perhaps only those who have traveled without purse or scrip can appreciate. During the course of the dinner, our host remarked that several days earlier, another man had come to their home and had also partaken of a meal with them. He was an elderly gentleman with a neat, tidy beard, who spent the evening discussing religion. This visitor also told them that soon two young preachers would come. They would play on the organ, sing some songs; and he and his wife were to pay attention to everything the young men told them. Then all of a sudden he got up, went to the door and raised both hands to heaven and said something in an unknown tongue. He then went across the porch, down the front steps, and left. They quickly ran after him, but he was not to be seen; only his footsteps in the melting snow to the corner of the house where they ceased, was all that remained.

Our host had come to the conclusion that this elderly gentleman might have been some heavenly personage going before us. In that I could only agree with him.

Then, as he had been admonished by his visitor, he anxiously listened as we explained the truths of the restored gospel to him and his wife.

Truly the Lord and his angel had prepared the way before me, just as he had promised he would when he spoke through the patriarch and gave me a blessing.

### **A MYSTERIOUS VISITOR**

While not a believer in ghosts, in the Common use of the term, I am a firm believer in the presence around us of innumerable spirits, good and bad, who occasionally manifest themselves to humanity; the good to comfort and bless, the bad to tempt and distress.

Equally firm is my belief in the old adage, "Truth is stranger than fiction." Probably there is no community whose history affords so many examples of the tragic, the romantic, the heroic and the mysterious, as that of the Latter-day Saints. The following story, which occurred in the early history of the Church, will serve to illustrate these principles:

The bitter winds of an early winter were already moaning around the humble cottages of Saints residing in Cambridge, England; the most of whom, rich as they were in spiritual gifts of the gospel, were poorly furnished with earthly comforts. A substantial breakfast or an extra shawl would be considered luxuries.

It was Conference time. All the Saints from the surrounding region and a number of Elders, were gathering in the humble homes of the Saints of Cambridge. The Saints soon found that a great many more visitors had gathered than was anticipated. The scantily filled cupboards and slender purses could not care for them all; though the visitors could not be allowed to go hungry and shelter-less; even if the Cambridge Saints' own families went hungry. The President of the branch, during the last hours of the meeting before Conference, had sat upon his seat trying to think of a solution. When the closing hymn was finished, he arose to his feet, knowing he must say something, he hardly knew what.

He opened his mouth, however, and feeling inspiration, spoke these unpremeditated words to the multitude: "Brothers and sisters, if each of you will agree to invite one or two of the Elders to your houses, I promise you, in the name of the Lord, that food shall be provided in abundance."

A moment or two of profound silence followed this declaration. Then a sister, Elizabeth Kemp arose and said, "I will invite three of the brethren to my house." Her husband, William Kemp, sitting in another part of the house, felt a shock pass through him as he thought of the empty cupboards at home, and the eight hungry little mouths waiting to be fed. When he joined his wife to walk home, his first words as she took his arm, were, "Lizzie, how could you think of making that promise, when you know we haven't a full meal of food in the house'."

"I could not help it, William," was the reply, "the President promised food would be provided, and I doubt not such will be the case."

As Brother Kemp and his wife took their way homeward in the deepening shadows of the English twilight, these words passed through the husband's mind, "Be not fearful of entertaining strangers, for many have entertained angels unawares."

At that moment they were passing a private house. Upon the top step, and knocking loudly at the door, stood a man, dressed in a long cloak, and having the appearance of a traveler. His knocks on the door were unanswered. Thinking this strange, Brother Kemp stopped, and asked the man what he desired. "To get lodgings for the night," replied the stranger. Brother Kemp explained to him that it was a private house, not an inn and it was useless to ask for lodgings there. However, he was welcome to go home with them. The man immediately acquiesced, and they proceeded on their way. Arriving at the Kemp's home, and being comfortably seated, Brother Kemp said, "I cannot offer you supper, for we have not got it, but you are welcome to lodge beneath our roof, if it pleases you.

In the morning, while washing and dressing himself with care, the stranger renewed his conversation. Among other things he asked his listener if he had ever heard of Joseph Smith, and if he believed his doctrines. Being answered in the affirmative, he said, "And so do I." A little later he surprised the family by saying, "You have eight children; here is a shilling for each of the seven who are home, and one for the absent one."

Nothing had been said about the size or condition of the family before. The stranger then invited Brother Kemp to walk with him. He led the way straight to the business part of town. They entered a flour shop, where he paid for a barrel of flour and ordered it sent at once to Brother Kemp's address. At the first meat market half a small pig, a leg of mutton and a large piece of beef were sent on the same road. From the grocer's: sugar, spices, currants, and various other necessaries and luxuries followed.

"Now," said the stranger, "we will go into a public house and wait there until your wife has a good breakfast ready for us."

Too wonder-stricken for words, Brother Kemp followed his mysterious companion

mechanically wherever he led. The attention of the people thronging the public house was soon attracted to the newcomers, and soon he began to speak to them. A spiritual discourse on the principles of the everlasting gospel flowed from his lips as naturally and smoothly as water from a living spring. No word was said, however, indicating to what church he might belong. Deepest attention was paid to all he said, and evident satisfaction manifested on the faces of his hearers. Yet, two weeks before, Brother Kemp had been mobbed from the same place for advocating the same principles.

After the stranger ceased speaking, they walked out unmolested. Reaching the Kemp home, they found a sumptuous breakfast awaiting them, of which all freely ate. After breakfast the stranger again invited Brother Kemp to walk. A little barefooted child of the family followed them along the icy pavement for some distance, unnoticed. The child had no shoes, and had been told by his father to pray for some. Hearing the pattering of the little feet behind them the stranger turned and asked, "Is this your little child?"

"Yes," was the reply.

"Hem! my little fellow, you need some shoes, don't you? Well, come in here with me," he said leading the way into the shoe shop. The little lad was soon supplied with the needed shoes. "Now, my boy, is there anything else you would like?"

"Yes, sir," was the naive reply of the child, "a slate pencil and a pocket knife." They were soon bought and the little fellow sped homeward with the good news, convinced of the efficacy of prayer, and the overwhelming goodness of Heavenly Father to whom his childish petitions had been made.

During this second walk they entered public houses, in each of which the stranger preached as before, being listened to with respectful attention, although many of these people had previously shown much rancor toward the Saints.

Finally, the stranger, turning to Brother Kemp, said, "It is now time for me to proceed on my journey, and I must not miss the train."

Persuasions to remain with them another day being ineffectual, Brother Kemp walked with him to the station. During the walk the stranger several times evinced a desire to leave his companion, but Brother Kemp, did not want to lose sight of one he had come to consider as a benefactor and friend, and kept close at his side.

Before leaving, the stranger took the hand of Brother Kemp in a hearty grip, saying, "I was sent to you, and I might travel a long distance before finding another such man. Peace be with you. God bless you forever and ever."

Before Brother Kemp could recover from his astonishment, the stranger had vanished so completely as though swallowed up in the earth, and never again did he see or hear of his strange companion.

The next day a grand feast was given at the home of Brother and Sister Kemp, at which all visiting brethren and sisters were welcomed. Great was the wonder and astonishment of them all when they heard the story of the mysterious visitor, and many the guesses as to who he might be.

Some thought him to be some rich but eccentric Englishman who wished to do good incognito; others some new Elder from Zion. Some thought of the three Nephites who never tasted death, while the more spiritual minded thought of angelic visitors. The mystery, however, remained unsolved, as it does to this day.

In telling the story, Brother Kemp always spoke of the thrill which passed through his body when the stranger took his hand, which he described as unlike anything he ever experienced before or after.

Brother and Sister Kemp have long since passed away; but during their mortal lives they never forgot to acknowledge the goodness of God to them in giving them this testimony of His power and mercy.

"Therefore, be ye not fearful of entertaining strangers, for many have entertained angels unawares."

Susa Young Gates, ed., *Young Woman's Journal*, Vol. 3 (Salt Lake City: The Young Ladies' Mutual Improvement Associations of Zion, 1892), pp. 14-18.

### ***Her Child Was Healed***

Matilda Y. S. Staker

In the year 1859, Thomas and Matilda Stoiworthy were called from Parowan to Salt Lake City by Brigham Young. Their only child, a little girl, lay sick with a high fever - no doctor, no one to help but a kind neighbor. The mother felt as though she could not give her up, so falling on her knees, she poured out her heart and asked help from her Heavenly Father.

While she was still kneeling by the cradle, she felt a breeze come through the house, and she turned towards the door to see who had come in, and there stood a stranger in the room. He had a long white beard and wore a suit of light clothes. He had such a kind yet firm face and seemed to bring peace into the room as soon as he entered it. As Grandmother gazed Upon his face, she asked him to have a chair, and was Very astonished to hear him say, "No, I just came to see Your sick child." Then turning to the baby he laid his hands on her head and murmured some words that they could not understand. Turning to Grandmother, he said: "Sister Stolworthy, you have had great sorrow and trouble, but you have been true and *faithful* through it all. God will bless you, and your little girl will grow to womanhood and raise a family of ten children, and I *promise* you that *you* will yet raise a family to manhood and womanhood." He then went to the door and went out, closing it behind him. As grandmother turned to the baby, she saw the child was sleeping.

The two women hurried to the door to ask the man who he was, but there was no one in sight. They followed his footsteps to the gate, but there they vanished. They inquired of the neighbors but no one had seen the stranger around. Grandmother always felt as though he was one of the Three Nephites that was left here on earth, as his promises were fulfilled to the letter, as Elizabeth is still alive and she had ten living children. (*Heart Throbs of the West*, by Kate B. Carter. *Daughters of Utah Pioneers*. 1941. Vol 3. pg. 349.)

### ***A Translated Being Prescribes***

My father's name was William Cooke Prows and my mother's name was Louisa M. R. James. I was born in Kanosh, Millard County, Utah, on the 17th of June, 1877. I was the 5th child of a family of eight of my father's second wife. In the spring of 1893, my father, with my mother and children and one of the first wife's grandchildren, were going from Mesa, Arizona, to Juarez, Mexico, for the purpose of establishing a home. We had lived in Mesa but a few months prior to this. In the company were J. Orson Barney (who later became my husband), Isaac Miller, Mrs.

Osborne Colley and family, and the members of the family as before mentioned. We had passed through El Paso, Texas, and had traveled several days out into the desert. There were three wagons and one buggy in this caravan. The trip from Mesa to Mexico took about a month. After several days journey from Tucson, my mother became very sick which continued to increase in intensity as time went on. She had hemorrhage after hemorrhage. Her hands had been cold and blue for two days. It was then my father desired to get out of the sand belt into a country where gravel could be located, for the purpose, as he later stated, to find a suitable place to bury mother, as he feared that she would pass on any minute, and as he went about that morning tears were seen in his eyes, but he never revealed why he felt sorrowful. On this certain day, he started very early in the morning in order to make as much distance as possible, but, after travelling a few hours, my mother stated that she could not stand the jarring any longer, in her weakened and desperately sick condition. So camp was made and preparations were started for making breakfast. While thus preparing things for breakfast, a man suddenly appeared in camp not more than ten or twenty feet away and upon coming up he stated: "Good morning." To which my father answered: "Good morning." The stranger said: "How are you?" To which my father replied: "I have a mighty sick wife." The stranger inquired: "Where is she?" Father said: "She is over here in the wagon," at the same time both of them started toward the wagon, which upon reaching, father raised the wagon cover and both looked in, father introducing the stranger with: "Eliza, here is a man who has come to see you." The stranger extended his hand and placed it on her forehead and gently rubbed her head, saying: "How are you feeling, sister?" To which my mother replied: "I sure don't feel very good." While at the wagon, they all three had a short conversation. I was standing on the wagon wheel all this time, paying careful attention to all that was said and done. After talking but a few minutes, he said:

"Come out here and I will show you something to give your wife and she will be all right and you can be on your way within an hour." A short scrubby tree with some green berries on it was near, which the stranger called "Juniper Berries." After taking a few of these he went a short distance and told father to gather the leaves from a small shrub growing in the desert at this particular place but which was not noticed at other places along the road. He told my father to, "take some of the Juniper berries and the leaves from the bush," he showed him, "and mix them together, steep them and give them to your wife and you can be on your way within an hour." After making this statement the stranger said: "I must be going."

My father replied: "Man, you must stay and have breakfast with us. There will be many miles before you can get a drink of water or a bite to eat. I have been over this road many times and know it." Father insisted that he stay and have breakfast but he raised his cap and said: "I must be on my way. Your wife will be all right," and at saying this he smiled and said "Good-day." At the time he placed his hand upon my mother's forehead she felt like a new person, the touch of his hand was soothing and healing. One of the children at the breakfast fire did something which drew our attention to them and upon looking up, the stranger had suddenly vanished and father said: "Where did he go?" They all walked out to see if he could be seen but no trace of him was visible. My father exclaimed: "Gracious! Golly! where could that man have

gone?" Nothing but the desert road was before them and small scrubby desert growth extended all around as far as the eye could see. The tea was made and given to my mother who soon revived. She ate breakfast and helped to prepare supper that evening for the group, assisted by me. The stranger was of medium size, dressed in a grayish blue suit, and wore a grayish beard, some three or four inches long. He looked very intelligent and clean cut. His voice was soft and mild and his eyes penetrating but beautiful to behold. There was something about his personality that caused us to look at him with intent and earnestness.

Upon arriving in Mexico, we rented a lot with a small house on it from a Brother Thompson whose wife and two sons had been killed by the Indians but a short time before. My father put in a garden but died within two months after arriving, but before passing he said to my mother one day: "Eliza, I want you to go back to Utah and see that my father is sealed to my mother and their children sealed to their parents,"

Elizabeth J. Barney  
J.Orson Barney  
Witnessed by - William N. Stevens

(Assorted Gems of Priceless Value, by NB. Lundwall. 1944 pgs. 28-30.)

***Mrs. Fisher's Voice Was Restored***

Mrs. Irvin Fisher

Oh, I'm seventy-two. I've been married going on fifty-two years. And I've lived in Utah all my life. I was born in Utah, and lived here all my life. But I had a real hard trial in my life, on account of which I whispered one third of my life. And the other two-thirds it was hard to talk. Because I had to use so much force, you know, to talk. And Mother took me to doctors and had me blessed by wonderful men, and I never got one bit of help from them. And I thought there was no hope; yet I got a blessing from a patriarch in 1899, and he told me of a great work that I was to do. And I thought that would be in another life and not this one. So I said, "Grandma, that can't come true." She says, "Oh, yes it can, every bit of it," she says. "I know what our Heavenly Father can do." She says, "He can bless you, and I'm going to pray for you *as* I've never prayed in my life."

And so she started right in to praying, and she prayed. And she prayed one month, and I thought maybe she'd get weak. And she prayed another month; and then she prayed another month. And when that month was up and it was just the last day, a knock came at my door. And I went to that door and pulled the curtain up a little way and saw it was a man with a gray beard and right white hair. A little frocktail coat and dark pants and a light shirt. I knew he couldn't hear my whispers, so I took hold of his hand and brought him into the house, because it came to me, "He's a Nephite of the living God! Let him in quick or he'll be gone!" And I knew it was one.

And then I set him down and he says, "Go get the dear old lady,"<sup>19</sup> he says, "that has prayed three solid months for your blessing." So I went and brought Grandma into this room, and she began to cry: "I've lived to be eighty-eight years old to behold a Nephite of the living God! "Ah," she said, "how wonderful!" I kissed her on the forehead and whispered, "Don't cry." And

then I asked him if he'd like a glass of milk. And he said, 'You can go and pray.' And I went into the other room to pray. When I came back then he told me he had a prayer to offer that no human being had ever heard or ever would hear because it was given to him in Heaven. But he says, "It'll be literally fulfilled, every word of it." And I says, "Oh, I'm glad!" He said, "Set right down here." And I set right down by him. And he put his right hand on my head, and his left hand on my throat, and I shouted "Hosanna to God!"

The feeling that filled my soul! I pray that the ones that are listening to this will be thrilled with the same feeling. And then he blessed me; he blessed our home. Then he bid us goodbye and we went right out onto the porch - I took Grandma right with me. And he walked out of the gate just as spry as a young man, and walked along. When he came to the big gate, he didn't disappear, but he went right out of sight. He wasn't in the fields nor along the road nor any place. So I set Grandma down and ran where I could see along this road a mile and a half, and no signs of him. And I said to a lady, "Did you see a man pass here?" She said, "If a butterfly had gone by, I could a-seen it." She says, "There was no man passed here." So then I made myself quite contented.

And I pray with all my heart that the one that hears this will know that I testify unto it, and it is true as the sun rises in the east and sets in the west. And I've never whispered once since I got it. Never since my blessing, I've never whispered once. Nobody is going to realize what a great joy I get, being able to sing, to holler, to laugh, and make a noise. And I thank God with all my heart for this wonderfiil experience in my life. Amen! (*The Three Nephites, by Hector Haight Lee. The University of New Mexico. 1949. pgs. 140-142*)

### ***The Three Nephites and the American Revolution***

Prophecies about the American Revolution and the founding of America as recorded in the Book of Mormon were part of the ancient Nephite record. (1 Nephi) The Three Nephites would have had a great interest and perhaps a helping hand in this great work. The stranger" who appeared and be-came committee speaker? and designer of the first flag has all of the earmarks of one of the Nephites.

The Committee of Three, with Franklin as chairman, was appointed by the Colonial Congress on Sept. 13, 1775, to design a flag. They met on Dec. 13, 1775, at that certain Cambridge secret home, including its host and hostess.

There they found a stranger, or professor, who looked to be over 70 years of age, who had a curious box filled with ancient writings which he closely guarded. He knew all details of the past 100 years of American history.

George Washington, the fourth and honorary member, and Benjamin Franklin made him the 6th member of this committee. The "Stranger then requested that their hostess be made the 7th member.

The "Stranger" also asked to be the first speaker. He then submitted a drawing of this flag. It was accepted at once and the "Stranger disappeared.

This flag was made. George Washington personally hoisted it on Jan. 1, 1776, over his camp and army

on a specially prepared, pole his camp and army,, and both his and the English army at a distance, saluted it with 13 cheers and 13 guns. It is called the "Grand Union" also the Cambridge flag, and has the Union Jack in place of the stars.

The "Stranger" stated that in order to unite the 13 colonies in their separation from their

mother country, the Union Jack was necessary to begin with, and later on could be changed. This Union Jack was replaced June 14, 1777, with a blue field having 13 stars in a circle, which became our second national flag, and was designed by Elizabeth (Betsy) Ross.

Now it was apparently this same "Stranger" who again appeared at Philadelphia on July 4, 1776. Speaker after speaker had failed to rally the delegates (who feared for their lives) to sign the prepared Declaration of Independence. The old bell man finally said, "No, they never will sign it."

When one o'clock came, a penetrating voice rang out, ringing with holy zeal. The debating stopped and everyone listened. It was not the voice of mortal man--for it stirred their inner souls. His divine counsel and commanding voice strengthened their faith and gave them courage to back it up. The speaker ended with these words: "God has given America to be free."

The immediate signing of the document began, and the prepared bell of liberty, at 2 p.m., sent their decree around the world. A child, a nation, destined for God's greatest blessings, was born--their Declaration of Liberty was signed--but the "Stranger" was gone. (From the book, *America's Thirteen Colonial States*)

An interesting experience of William Derby in which he tells while coming from Council Bluffs, Iowa, with a load of merchandise for his store either in Salt Lake or Parowan. He had left Council Bluff traveling along the dirt road, it was mid-day when he came across a man walking along the road. William Derby Sr. stopped and the man climbed up beside him. The stranger said to him, "you are planning on camping at this certain spot to-night", and he told William Derby not to camp there as he had planned, but to change his plans as there would be trouble with the Indians that night. He also gave him some other advice. The stranger got down from the wagon, he bid him good day. When he turned back to the stranger to inquire as to his name or where he had come from or where he was going, to his amazement he was nowhere in sight. He had disappeared as suddenly as he had come. Later he found out that the very spot he had planned to camp himself that night, but following the stranger's advice had camped elsewhere. The immigrants who had camped there that night were all slaughtered and burned out by the Indians.(From The Family History of William Derby Sr. )

William Derby Sr. was ordained a High Priest in Diaz, Mexico on the 27th of March, 1894. He was ordained a Patriarch on the 22nd of December, 1895 by Francis M. Lymon in Colonial Diaz, Mexico. He had been given a most wonderful patriarchal blessing by John Smith on March 4th, 1844. The original copy is in family.

### **Fifty Years Before**

"Some years ago, in 1959, with my wife, I came up from South and Central America to Mexico City and heard a testimony borne here. One of our elders told of meeting a woman seventy years of age in Tapachula in the state of Chiapas. When she was first visited by the elders, she almost immediately declared that she knew that what they taught was the truth. When she was asked how she knew, she declared that fifty years before, three elderly white-skinned men came into her hometown, and these three men preached the same doctrine that these elders were now preaching. These same men declared that in years to come other whites-skinned missionaries would come and bring the true gospel of Jesus Christ and they should accept it. I had previously listened to missionaries in Mexico, who reported that they had likewise found

people in their land who said the same thing.” (President Harold B. Lee, Mexico Conference Report, August 27 1972, p.118) ( From The Book The Three Nephites And Other Translated Beings by Bruce E. Dana, 2003, BONNEVILLE BOOKS, Springville Utah )

### **“IT WILL TROUBLE YOU NO MORE”**

“Among the many interesting incidents connected with our little home on the hillside,” Elder Orson F. Whitney says, “there is one that should always be cherished by the members of my family. It will be better understood after reading what the Book of Mormon has to say upon the subject of the Three Nephites (3 Ne. 28:4-30). My wife thus relates the incident:

It happened many years ago. My husband was away, and the only members of the family in the house besides myself, were three of our little boys. It was early spring, and I was busy house-cleaning. Hearing the door-bell ring, I opened the door, and there stood an elderly man, with white hair and beard, clean, neatly dressed, straight as an arrow, and altogether respectable in appearance and respectful in manner. He carried a cane and held his hat in hand. He asked me if I could help him. I told him that I had no money, but if he needed food, I would gladly give him some. Said he: ‘I would be very grateful.’

The unusual answer somewhat surprised me, but being much occupied, I paid slight attention. Showing him down into the dining room on the basement floor, I spread before him what food I had, and left him sitting at the table. The little boys were playing there at the time, and I told them to stay with the stranger and wait on him, while I returned to my work on the floor above.

After awhile I heard the patter of feet running up the stairs, and here came the boys, all breathless and excited, the oldest (Murray) exclaiming: ‘Mama, I bet that was one of the Three Nephites!’

What makes you think so?’ I inquired. Here spoke up the second boy (Bert), who had had a toothache when the stranger arrived: ‘I was holding my hand to my face, and he said,

‘Son, what is troubling you?’ ‘My tooth aches,’ I said. ‘It will trouble you no more,’ said he. And it stopped right then and hasn’t ached since.’

The boys told me that the visitor, when departing by a back door, spoke these words: ‘Peace be unto you and your house.’ They likewise related how they rushed out after him, not seeing him pass the windows, and looked up and down the street and through the back yard, but could catch no glimpse of him. . . I have never been able to entirely banish the thought that possibly the boys were right.”

(Elder Orson F. Whitney, Council of the Twelve, *Through Memory Halls*, an autobiography of Elder Whitney, Zion’s Printing and Publishing Company, Independence, Missouri, 1930, pp. 260-261.

From this narrative, we may safely suppose that this elderly man was one of the Three Nephites who visited the Whitney home. By removing pain from a young boy suffering with a toothache, by simply saying, “It will trouble you no more,” verifies the words written in the Book of Mormon: “Yea even among the Gentiles shall there be a great and marvelous work wrought by them, before that judgment day” ( Ne. 28: 32).

( From The Book The Three Nephites And Other Translated Beings by Bruce E. Dana, 2003, BONNEVILLE BOOKS, Springville Utah )

### **A Three Nephite Gives Comfort**

Reported by Helen Dolores Clinger Jensen

I must relate an experience that Aunt Seph had in about the year 1922. She told me this shortly before she died, because she wanted people to know.

This experience was so personal and so real that she could never bring herself to publicly testify or record it.

Shortly after her husband, uncle Johnny, died with extensive burns, her financial condition collapsed. She sat in her rocking chair in her beautiful home wondering how she could cope. Thoughts of "ending it all" crept into her mind. She had never been in such despair. She heard a knock at her door, she opened it and there stood a stranger. He asked, "May I come in?" In those country living days we never turned anyone away. After visiting for a few minutes, the stranger asked, "Are you having troubles?" Her answer was, "I certainly am." Then he solemnly promised, "Don't be discouraged. Time will heal your troubles and you will enjoy a long life." With that promise he asked her if he could play her piano. His whole attitude had been so comforting she gave consent for a longer visit. He sat down to the piano and played harmonious chords, she said that it sounded like angels from heaven singing. She looked him over as his hands played up and down the keyboard. His clothes were strange. He wore leather sandals. She was sure she had never seen him before. He was a total stranger in that country community of LaBelle Idaho where she knew everyone. Uncle Johnny was the Bishop there when he died. When the chording was over, the visitor went to the door and left. She followed him to the door to see what his mode of transportation was. No horse, wagon, or seldom seen car was in sight. The man had disappeared.

She felt spiritually lifted and knew that she could carry on. Aunt Seph said that she was impressed to know that she had been visited by one of the three Nephites.

(From Zobell Family History on Internet )

### **One of The Three Nephites Blesses a Family**

Sometime prior to June 1837, the Child's had been contacted by a missionary named Charles Blakely. Alfred evidently was sufficiently convinced of the truthfulness of the message that he was willing to sell his farm in Greenfield, pile his belongings into a wagon and suffer hardships of a 1,500 mile journey to Missouri.

Polly's statement: "My father came the entire route with one pair of horses and a wagon and ten in family."

It takes little imagination to fill in the blanks in Polly's statement.

Carrying food, clothing, bedding, cooking utensils and a few meager spare parts in the wagon; thus, most of the 1500 miles would have been traversed on foot, sleeping in tents, or under the wagon at night in this sparsely settled and often savage wasteland. One must admit that a journey of this sort required a great deal of courage and fortitude, courage and fortitude that would be tested to the breaking point within a few short months.

On the way to Kirtland a man neatly dressed, having a white beard, stopped the wagon and came over to them and laid his hands on each member of the family and blessed them. He then came back and blessed Warren G. again and then disappeared and later Alfred told the Prophet Joseph Smith about the incident. He was told that the man was one of the three Nephites.

(From The Life of Alfred B. Child on Internet)

## **A Strange Visit in 1837**

During the years 1835-36, some Elders, representing the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, labored in this part of the country and a number of people joined this church, among them being my grandfather who was baptized in 1836. Grandfather had never belonged to any church but seemed to get the spirit of the gathering, fitted up an outfit, and with neighbors and relatives started for Zion. They left Hatley 20 Jul 1837, and traveled through the state of New York where they found a number of the Fish family who were cousins. Part of the company traveled by water up the Great Lakes, but grandfather and family followed the roads along the southern border of Lake Ontario and Lake Erie. My mother said they could distinctly hear the roar of the Niagara Falls when not far from the Niagara River. As they were passing through the state of Ohio, as I recall it, they were visited by a man whom they afterwards supposed to be one of the three Nephites who were to remain. They were camped near a grove of trees when a man who was hatless, came out of the grove and walked up to their campfire. My mother was only eight years old at that time and, of course, would be unable to remember very much of the conversation but says she remembers him speaking of helping to run the line between the United States and Canada. Grandfather said, "that was a long time ago" and the man said "yes, it was, but I am a very old man and you have no idea how old I am." He then told them that the Saints would be driven out and drew on the ground a rough map and marked out the route the Saints would follow before their return to Jackson County, Mo. He then left and was out of sight immediately after his departure.

From Horace Fish Family History (Internet)

### **A stranger Sets a Broken Leg**

The Hyer families lived on Main Street in Richmond. One of Ellen's sisters broke her leg when she was a little girl and a doctor set it, but not correctly. She suffered with the leg for some time. One day a strange man came to the door and asked what was wrong with the little girl that he had heard crying. After telling him what had happened, the man said, "It is set wrong. May I re-set it?" They gave him permission. He re-broke it and set it properly and as soon as he did, she had no more pain. After the man left, the parents wondered why they had given permission to a stranger to do this thing. Christian went outside immediately to talk with the man, expecting to see him walking down the street of the little community. He was amazed to see no one in sight. Christian, who was a Counselor in the Bishopric of Richmond Ward, called on Bishop Burnham. The two of them went from house to house to see if the stranger had been there or had been seen by anyone. No one else had seen him. It was their belief that one of the three Nephites had visited them and performed this wonderful, merciful deed.

**FREDRICK ROBBINS TITENSOR and ELLEN HYER Family History**

( From The Internet )

## A Healing by One of Three Nephites

By Miriam B. Adair

( From The Internet )

The following stories are those told to me by my Grandmother while she was living with us in Tropic, Garfield County, Utah.

Grandmother and Grandfather were living in, what is now called Sugarhouse, and of course there were no neighbors close enough to call on, especially when the snow was deep.

The snow was very deep but the fires had to be kept burning so grandfather had gone off to replenish the woodpile. While he was away one of the children became very ill. Grandmother did all she could for the child but the child continued to get worse so grandmother did as she always did when a crisis came, to get down on her knees and ask her Heavenly Father to send her aid. After doing all that her knowledge prompted her to do, she heard a knock at the door-on opening it there stood a man who asked her if she would like him to administer to her child. Never doubting that the answer to her prayer had come, she got the oil, which she always had on hand, and the man administered to her child. Her attention was turned to the child for the moment so when she turned to thank him for coming, he had left without saying anything. She hurried to the door to see if she could call him to give her thanks, but there was no one in sight nor were there any foot steps or prints in the snow. Grandmother always concluded that it was one of the three Nephites, that we read about in the Book of Mormon, had visited her on that stormy night. Her child was healed and was perfectly well when her husband returned.

## A Three Nephite Speaks of Book of Mormon

Jim was a deeply religious man, being converted to the Gospel through reading the Book of Mormon and by having his eyesight restored by being administered to by Robert Gardner. He read the Scriptures constantly and was well versed in them. He was methodical in paying his debts and tithing to the Church and owed no man.

He owned a winter home in St. George and Lorena and the children would come to town for school each winter. This left him at the ranch alone for considerable periods of time and would go down only to take supplies needed by the family. He had livestock that needed to be taken care of so he kept busy while he was without his family.

One day as he was returning from St. George in his wagon, he met a man walking on the road before he reached Pine Valley. He always drove a good team of horses and they would usually get upset over anything along the roadside but they didn't seem to see this man as Jim stopped and offered to give him a ride. The stranger accepted the offer and as they rode along, they were soon conversing about the Book of Mormon. The stranger's abundant information struck Jim, as being must usual but they continued on their way going through Pine Valley where Jim waved and spoke to several people along the way. Jim invited the stranger to stay at the ranch with him for a few days if he would like but the stranger replied that he had other business and should be about it. It was just evening when they reached the forks of the road in the upper part of Grass Valley that led to Pinto, which was nine miles away and to the Ranch. As the stranger climbed down from the wagon a covey of quail distracted the horses and after Jim got the horses quieted down, he turned to bid the stranger 'good-bye' but found that he had vanished completely. In

speaking about this incident later, Jim said: “My, what marvelous things that man told me about the Book of Mormon and I believe he was one of the Three Nephites who are still on the earth.” He later inquired of those people in Pine Valley who had seem him go through, if they had seen the stranger with him and to his surprise, not one of them had. This further convinced him that this was one of the Three Nephites. This incident was a vivid memory and an inspirational reward for the courage of his convictions.

(James Grandison Rencher, Sr history compiled by Barbara Truman Price, Oct 2000)  
( From The Internet )

### Three Nephite Story from Costa Rica

I heard of this story from a bishop in San Jose, Costa Rica while I was sitting with him waiting for lunch on a Sunday afternoon. The story begins when this bishop was very young and living in Mexico. We talked in 1993 and he must have been 40+. So the story probably occurred around the 1960's or late 1950's. Back then he had never known of any LDS missionaries in the greater part of Mexico. One day three white 'gringos' came walking up the dirt road to his village. These men were dressed in a white shirt, tie, and slacks. The "missionaries" taught some people of the village. After visiting with the "village" the missionaries claimed that they needed to leave, but thier "companions" would return to finish what they had started.

Sure enough, sometime in the future two missionaries arrived in the same village and began to talk with people. The missionaries were told that three other missionaries preceeded them. The two missionaries were confused. They were confused because they were the first missionaries to ever "open" this area. This bishop told me this story of his own accord.

- Dale Offret Jr.-- May 02, 2000

(From The Internet)

### From **HISTORY OF JOSEPH HAMBLIN**

“My mother was living in Pinto, Utah (which is on the California trail) when I was born. Father had another place at Gunlock where Aunt Betsy and her family lived. She was Father's other wife and Mother's younger sister. The place was named for my Father by George Albert Smith, who after spending the night with him asked him what they called the place and he told them it was known as upper Santa Clara Creek. "We will name it officially after you since everyone calls it Gunlock Hamblin's place anyway." That was in August 1857 when Apostle Smith came down to warn them of Johnston's army. My half sisters, Elmira and Annie were born in Gunlock and Duane while Eliza, Vernon, and Tom were born at the Santa Clara. Then we moved to Pinto. My Grandmother, Sarah Sturtevant Leavitt was with mother when most of the children were born. It was only about 23 miles from there to Pinto. While we were here Father was gone for over 3 years. Two of my sisters were out looking for the cows. They had been gone for sometime and they began to cry when a Man with a long white beard appeared and told them the cows were over the next draw and their father was on his way home. They were so happy they started running to the draw when they stopped to thank the gentleman and could find no trace of him, but the cows were where he said and their Father came home as he said. After talking it over we thought it must have been one of the three Nephites, who were given the same promise as John the Beloved that he should not taste death until the Savior comes again” (as dictated to his daughter, Aloha)

( From the Internet)

## **One recorded story involving the Nephites occurred in April 1852**

One recorded story involving the Nephites occurred in April 1852, after a long period of hardship for the Mormons. One day, an old man knocked at the door of a local family and asked if he could eat with them. There was little food but the woman shared what they had, bread, water and onions. When the man finished, he asked what he could pay the woman for the food and she would take nothing. With that the man blessed her and walked out of the house. The woman asked a neighbor, who had been visiting, to look out and see where the man had gone, but he had vanished. After that, the woman's family survived the famine and when her neighbors were starving, she had more than enough to feed them and her family too. She was convinced that she was being repaid for her kindness toward the old man, which legend holds was one of the Three Nephites.

In the summer of 1874, another Utah woman was alone at home and turned around suddenly to find an old man with a white beard standing in her kitchen. He asked her for food and she prepared something for him. As they talked, and the old man ate, the woman mentioned that she had not been feeling well. The old man replied that her illness was caused by her liver, but that it would not be bothering her any longer. After eating, the old man blessed the woman and left. She looked out moments after he went through the door, but the man was gone. She came to believe the man was one of the Three Nephites. Her health problems ceased soon after and her family began to prosper. When the woman died at age 89, her wealth was enough to provide for all of her children's families for life.

( From The Internet )

## **1944 THE THREE NEPHITES MINUS TWO**

. And one of the strangest took place in the Escalante Valley back in December of 1944.

Sam and Ella Mortensen were driving north on Highway 130, heading home after a Christmas shopping trip to Cedar City. With everybody using gasoline ration stamps during World War II, such trips were a rarity, and the Mortensons had to buy food and other necessities along with toys for their grandchildren.

As their black 1940 Ford pickup truck rumbled along, Sam spotted a figure standing on the roadside. An old man with lengthy white hair and a long white beard and wearing a work fleeced-lined denim jacket, patched corduroy pants and a battered broad-brimmed felt hat.

"Who do you suppose that is?" his wife asked.

"Some old prospector, probably," Sam said, slowing the truck. "There's a whole passel of 'em up there in the Mineral range."

As the truck rolled to a stop, Ella slid over on the seat and pushed open the passenger-side door. The old man climbed in and offered a thankful smile. "Appreciate it."

"Where you headed, mister?" Sam asked.

"Oh, just up the road a piece."

He was, Ella thought, "somewhat vague about his destination" but "he was most knowledgeable about current events. He knew a lot about the ongoing World War II."

Fascinated, Sam and Ella listened to his stories.

"You're worried about your boy," the old man said, "Don't be. He'll be fine. The Germans are going to send their Panzers into the Ardennes next week, but it's Hitler's last gasp. German will surrender next May. The war with Japan will be over in August."

This really startled the Mortensens because they hadn't even mentioned their son, who was serving in the U.S. Army overseas.

"The war will end in August!?" Sam echoed.

The old man nodded. "Right now there's a bunch of scientists down in New Mexico working on a top-secret project. A kind of bomb. They're going to test it down in the Jornada del Muerto next July. Then they're going drop two of them on Japan." All at once, his expression turned somber. "That Oppenheimer's a damned fool. He's toying with forces he only barely understands."

"Two bombs...: murmured Ella, "And the war's over. Just like that?"

"Just like that," he echoed.

Sam added, "I guess President Roosevelt will be glad to see that."

"He won't be here to see it. He'll die in Warm Springs, Georgia on April 12. He has a cancer, but he'll die of...something else." The old man sat up sharply. "Well, I do believe that's my stop up yonder. Thank you kindly."

Looking out the windshield, Sam saw a desolate stretch of desert dotted with sagebrush and ocotillo sweeping toward the far-off Sevier Mountains.

"'Surely not here,' the driver said, 'Why, there's no house or building in sight.' 'The wind was picking up and blowing sand and tumbleweeds across the hood of the truck.'"

"'This is the place,' insisted the odd passenger."

(Editor's Comment: Curious. Brigham Young used the exact same words when the first Mormon wagon train arrived in Emigration Canyon, just east of Salt Lake City, in 1847.)

"Since he couldn't be persuaded to ride on to the next town, the driver let him out."

"The old man thanked the couple, then wagged a finger at them."

"'On your way back, you'll be hauling a dead man. And the war will end in August,' he prophesied before disappearing from sight."

"The couple soon came upon an automobile accident in which a young man was killed. They hauled the body back to the nearest town."

"Even though World War II did not end until August of 1945, the man and his wife said the rider had been a Nephite." (See the book *Haunted America* by Michael Norman and Beth Scott, Tor Books, New York, N.Y. 10010, page 371.)

( From The Internet )

### **Three Nephite Stories**

In December 1895, a party of Mormon pioneers made a pilgrimage from a settlement in Mexico to St. George, Utah. The trip across the frozen winter-lands was arduous and slow. Thirst and hunger plagued the people. With nothing but bleak, icy plains in sight, the men, women, and children in the traveling party pushed onward, longing to reach a desert watering place they had heard lay ahead. But when they discovered the site, their hopes were dashed still further--there was only enough water to fill one five-gallon keg and a bucket for the horses.

Despite having traveled during the cold of winter, every member of the group felt near death from thirst. A baby was racked with convulsions from dehydration. At the height of their anguish, a man suddenly appeared ahead of them on the path. He greeted them, and when they asked where they might find water, he pointed out a small patch of green on the mountain. "If you will camp near there," he said, "you will find enough water to supply all of your needs, until you reach the next spring, which is forty miles away."

The owner turned away to comment to one of his employees, and when he turned back, he saw that the The pioneers advised the stranger not to head in the direction they had come, for there was no water that way. He seemed unconcerned, walked past one wagon, then disappeared before reaching the second. "He's gone!" one man exclaimed. "He was one of the Three Nephites!"

In a similar story told in recent times, the owner of an A & W Restaurant near the Brigham Young University campus in Provo, Utah, was working in the drive-in one summer afternoon when a bearded old man approached him and asked for something to eat. Nothing that the old man seemed to be both hungry and poor, the owner offered him an ice-cream cone. After finishing the treat, the old man said, "You'll always have all that you need if you share what you have and live righteously." and the man had disappeared. Rushing out of the store toward the street, he searched for but could not find the stranger. Looking in very direction, he realized there was no way for the man to vanish so quickly from the open space that surrounded the freestanding drive-in. He concluded that his visitor was one of the Three Nephites.

( From The Internet )

## **The Three Nephites** **BY LINDA DUNNING**

"For 150 years these holy men, the devout believed, have roamed the towns, villages, and isolated settlements of this intermountain state; there's scarcely a locale that has not been touched in some way by the Three Nephites with their bone white feet, their long flowing white hair and beards. They travel singly by most accounts, arriving unseen, unbidden, often seeking a meal or simply a place to stay the night. They come on foot, usually, less often by a rickety cart pulled by an ancient nag. They cure the sick, bring prosperity to the poor. The host who shelters a Nephite never learns his true identity until after he has left. After the stranger vanishes, leaving no earthly trace whatsoever, the Mormon family believes they have been touched by the hand of God. The Nephites remain on earth voluntarily. Although the earliest reports of their encounters with

faithful Mormons came from Utah, later stories started coming from all over the world as the Nephites supposedly followed Mormon missionaries who sought converts in every part of the globe."

**FROM "HAUNTED AMERICA"**

**BY MICHAEL NORMAL & BETH SCOTT (1994)**

Nephite stories have been told since the very beginning of the LDS church. They were more prevalent in the 1800s than they are today, but while everyone else has angel stories, the Mormons have the three Nephite stories. Most of them are usually told about only one of these old men with long white beards and a staff and hat, though occasionally someone was lucky enough to have two or even all three of them show up at once. And sometimes, especially in more modern times, they were not old with a beard but appeared in any particular human form that would fit the occasion. Sometimes they were no more than a warning voice that one hears in one's head, or an invisible hand or hands which catch the person or do work for them, etc. But in the 1800s the Nephite was always a bit like Father Christmas in the Black Forest of Germany. There are so many stories that I am only going to relate just a few here, to give you an idea of what sorts of things the Nephites did for people.

When the Nephites were seen, they were described in this fashion. A mother alone with her dying baby in a log cabin, waits for her baby to die having done everything that she can for it. There is a knock on the door and an older man wearing a long white beard and wearing light colored clothes with a kind, firm face walks in. He places his hands on her children, talks to her about her faithfulness, hands the child to her and walks out the door. The next day there are no signs of his having been there, but the woman has a new attitude and goes about her duties cheerfully. Another pioneer woman, hungry and ill and alone with her children hears a knock on the door. A tall thin man with a long black beard and pioneer style clothing walks in. He is kindly but serious and talks to her about her bravery for bringing her children to Zion alone. When she turns to get him a chair, he vanishes. She runs to the door but there is no sign of his having been there. There are many such stories of a visitor coming for dinner when the family is in dire straits and then leaving without having eaten his meal. After which the family enjoys some measure of prosperity over that of their neighbors whom they are then obliged to help.

These Nephite stories were told and experienced for decades, but they did not reach their peak until the '40s and '50s. Two tales from this period involve a man and his wife traveling by truck across a desolate stretch of highway in 1944. They pick up an old man who stands by the roadside who appears to be very knowledgeable about world events. In a little while the man suddenly asks them to let him out of the truck out in the middle of nowhere. They ask him if he is sure he wants to get out at that particular spot. "This is the place," the old man says and then proceeds to tell them that on the way back they will be hauling a dead man and also that World War II will end in August. Sure enough the couple comes across an automobile accident where a young man has been killed and they have to haul his body back to the nearest town. World War II ended a year later in August. In the other story, the driver of a convertible picks up an old man hiking on the road and the old man proceeds to have a religious discussion with the driver knowing more about the Book of Mormon than the driver does. When the driver of the car lets the old man out a few miles later, he looks back and the man has disappeared. He asks his

neighbors later if they had seen the old man in the car since they were outside at the time. They say, "What old man? There was no one sitting beside you!"

( From The Internet )

## He Disappeared from the Back Seat

The story concerns some people who were driving on Highway 91 from Nephi to Cedar City. They picked up an elderly man who was hitchhiking. He rode in the back seat and conversed with them. Somewhere near Parowan they turned to speak with him but he had disappeared from the back seat of the car, which had not been stopped. They inquired about him a Parowan and were told that a person of the same description had previously appeared from nowhere and asked a lady for food and then had disappeared in open country when anyone might easily have been seen. It was thought by some that he was a Nephite.

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- Source: Hector Lee, *The Three Nephites: The Substance and Significance of the Legend in Folklore* (Albuquerque: The University of New Mexico Press, 1949), p. 161.
  - Lee's source: An interview with Mr. Harrison, Helper, Utah, March 9, 1946.

( From The Internet )

## The Old Man on the Road

Seems like I did hear a story about one of the Nephites once. Don't know if I can remember it or not, though. It was along time ago when I heard it. It was out there on the road between Lyndal and Delta. You know what kind of country that is -- just flat desert for about forty miles. Well, this feller -- I think it was old John Rogers -- was goin' along and he saw an old man on the road. So he stopped and asked him if he wanted a ride; but he said no, he didn't want any ride. And seems like they talked there for quite awhile, and when old John Rogers had drove off -- maybe forty yards down the road -- he looked around and couldn't see the old feller nowhere.

Q: Did the old man give him any advice or help or did he prophesy anything?

A: Seems like he did. I think it was my Grandmother Melville told the story a long time ago. Maybe it was in church. Seems like she said he predicted something, but I can't remember what. Maybe it was that Delta would have the third largest population in the state. And when you count Topaz [Japanese relocation center] that almost makes it come true.

Q: Did Rogers think it was one of the Nephites?

A: Oh, yes. He said he was sure it was.

Source: Hector Lee, *The Three Nephites: The Substance and Significance of the Legend in Folklore* (Albuquerque: The University of New Mexico Press, 1949), pp. 160-161.

Lee's source: An interview with Sheldon Trimble, Fillmore, Utah, September 16, 1945.

( From The Internet )

## They Helped Her

I used to know a woman who knew she had seen the three Nephites. That was old Sister Ashby. She was living alone at the time. They were all alone and the baby was awfully sick, and she couldn't get help of any kind.

She said these three men came into the room. They didn't open the door at all, but just appeared in the room. And they administered to the sick child and prayed with her and helped here there a little. And then they left the same way. She was sure they were the Nephites, and I've heard her tell it.

Q: And there were three of them all together?

A: Yes, all three of them.

Q: Where did this take place?

A: That was in Holden. Of course Mrs. Ashby has been dead a long time now, but she told me about this herself.

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- Source: Hector Lee, *The Three Nephites: The Substance and Significance of the Legend in Folklore* (Albuquerque: The University of New Mexico Press, 1949), p. 156.
  - Lee's source: An interview with Mrs. E. B. Theobald, Fillmore, Utah, September 18, 1945.

( From The Internet )

## The Hitchhiking Ghost Nephite

This story came from Clyde Trammel, of Grand Junction, and I haven't had an opportunity to check with him about it, but it seems that a friend of his and his friend's wife were driving by truck from Montrose to Grand Junction when they picked up an old man. They hauled him for a long way and he seemed to be very much read-up on the current events; he knew a great deal about the war, and he talked very interestingly. They came to a long, desolate stretch of road, and the old man wanted out, and they tried to dissuade him and told him that he should go on down to more civilization, but he insisted on being let off. And they let him out on this long stretch of road. As he got out of the truck he thanked them, and he said, "On your way back you will be hauling a dead man." And then he says, "I suppose there's something you want to know?"

"Well, maybe the end of the war."

He said, "The war will end in August." This was in 1944.

Well, they went on, and they talked about the old man. And on the way back they picked up a dead man from a car wreck. There had been a wrecked car, and one of the fellows was killed, and they hauled the corpse back into Grand Junction. And of course it lent more credence to the old prediction of the end of the war. But August, '44, came and went, and the war still didn't end. However, in August, '45, the war ended, and they decided that the old man had been a Nephite.

Q: They didn't decide that he was a Nephite until after the end of the war?

A: Oh, yes. When they hauled the corpse back, they decided that he must have had some foreknowledge; and some of their friends had told them about the Nephites, and so they made up their minds that he was a Nephite. However, they began to doubt it when the war didn't end in August.

Q: When did you first hear this story?

A: This spring, 1946. And I heard it from Mrs. MacDougall, of Green River, Utah.

Q: Was Mrs. MacDougall one of the persons concerned?

A: No, she had heard the story from Clyde Trammel, who is a railroad man. And he, himself wasn't concerned in the story. It was some friends of his that had had the experience.

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- Source: Hector Lee, *The Three Nephites: The Substance and Significance of the Legend in Folklore* (Albuquerque: The University of New Mexico Press, 1949), pp. 147-148.
  - Lee's source: A recorded interview with Pearl B. Baker, Green River, Utah, June 3, 1946.

( From The Internet )

I know I saw a Nephite! I was herding sheep one day by my grandmothers canyon. A stray goat wandered off to a small ravine, close to the canyon ledge and I slipped and was holding on to dear life when this white man came from out of nowhere and he pulled me up and then at that same time disappeared from my sights. He was a burly, hairy man with dark brown hair and brown eyes. He was very pleasant and seem to have a sense of peace to him, I will never forget what happened.

## **An Experience of Mrs. Alyda Abbott Squires**

It was on a hot summer day in the year 1874 at WaWa Springs in the state of Utah.

The springs being an oasis in the desert and nothing only sage and bunches of grass and hot sand it was here in a little lumber shack on their homestead Mr. and Mrs. Edwin Squires lived with their 3 small daughters. They owned horses and cattle and Mr. Squires had 2 or 3 men hired to help take care of these.

And it was on this day in 1874 they had gone on a round up leaving Mrs. Squires and the children a alone and they were miles from any one else and her husband had told her he would be back at a certain time and to have dinner ready for them And from the house they could see for miles in any direction.

And it being about time for them to come she went to the spring for water and look in ever derrection to see if they were coming but there was nothing in sight and she took the water in and set it down and turned around and there to her amazement was a man standing in the door and he ask her if she would kindly give him a bit to eat and altho she was frightened she set the table it was humble but good meal.

I remember there was cheese bread butter cold milk and an apple pie and she told him to eat he was welcome and he did eat as though he was hungry. And while eating he conversed with her and said Sister you are not well and she said No I have had a pain in under my shoulder. Which bothered me a great deal and he said that is your liver but you wont be bothered any more with that. Then he got up and started off and thanked her for her kindness and fine meal and said Got bless you sister You will never want for any thing you will always be blessed with plenty and he left. As soon as she thought he had had time to turn the corner of the house she went out to see in what direction he had gon and there was no sighn of him where. This worried her more than ever. She went back in the house and to her suprize the table was just as she had set it And she had seen him eat and drink the milk. But it was there and she then thought how he looked and he was

dressed so neat and his eyes were so bright and just twinkled when he talked and he had long white beard his hair was gray.

She was still worrying when her husband and the men came and she ask them if they had seen him but they hadn't. She told them the story but she couldn't get it off her mind and it went on for about 3 months and her Mother Mrs. Abigail Abbott came to make her a visit and she told her the story and she smiled and said Why Lyda hove you forgote your Patriarchal Blessing. You was promised that one of the Three Nephites would dine at your table that's who it was.

Well, she never had any more trouble with her liver lived a good old age and always had plenty and her husband died first and when she died she left a good start to her children and we have right here in our town a family of grand-children there mother being a daughter. And dieng before her mother her children got her share and it set them all up in business.

When she died she was 89 years old.

This story was told to me by my mother it was her fathers sister and she heard her till it and also Mr. Bowman he is the father of the family here in our town a son in law of Mrs Squires. A he also tell the same story.

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- Source: Hector Lee, *The Three Nephites: The Substance and Significance of the Legend in Folklore* (Albuquerque: The University of New Mexico Press, 1949), pp. 17-18.
  - Lee's source: An account written in 1943 by Mrs. Elzina Robison, Bunkerville, Nevada. The story is reproduced here exactly as the informant wrote it.

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# **ANGELS ON THE TRAIL**

## The Three Nephites & the Gadianton Robbers

### **BY LINDA DUNNING**

"For 150 years these holy men, the devout believed, have roamed the towns, villages, and isolated settlements of this intermountain state; there's scarcely a locale that has not been touched in some way by the Three Nephites with their bone white feet, their long flowing white hair and beards. They travel singly by most accounts, arriving unseen, unbidden, often seeking a meal or simply a place to stay the night. They come on foot, usually, less often by a rickety cart pulled by an ancient nag. They cure the sick, bring prosperity to the poor. The host who shelters a Nephite never learns his true identity until after he has left. After the stranger vanishes, leaving no earthly trace whatsoever, the Mormon family believes they have been touched by the hand of God. The Nephites remain on earth voluntarily. Although the earliest reports of their encounters with faithful Mormons came from Utah, later stories started coming from all over the world as the Nephites supposedly followed Mormon missionaries who sought converts in every part of the globe."

**FROM "HAUNTED AMERICA"**

**BY MICHAEL NORMAL & BETH SCOTT (1994)**

Nephite stories have been told since the very beginning of the LDS church. They were more prevalent in the 1800s than they are today, but while everyone else has angel stories, the Mormons have the three Nephite stories. Most of them are usually told about only one of these old men with long white beards and a staff and hat, though occasionally someone was lucky enough to have two or even all three of them show up at once. And sometimes, especially in more modern times, they were not old with a beard but appeared in any particular human form that would fit the occasion. Sometimes they were no more than a warning voice that one hears in one's head, or an invisible hand or hands which catch the person or do work for them, etc. But in the 1800s the Nephite was always a bit like Father Christmas in the Black Forest of Germany. There are so many stories that I am only going to relate just a few here, to give you an idea of what sorts of things the Nephites did for people.

When the Nephites were seen, they were described in this fashion. A mother alone with her dying baby in a log cabin, waits for her baby to die having done everything that she can for it. There is a knock on the door and an older man wearing a long white beard and wearing light colored clothes with a kind, firm face walks in. He places his hands on her children, talks to her about her faithfulness, hands the child to her and walks out the door. The next day there are no signs of his having been there, but the woman has a new attitude and goes about her duties cheerfully. Another pioneer woman, hungry and ill and alone with her children hears a knock on the door. A tall thin man with a long black beard and pioneer style clothing walks in. He is kindly but serious and talks to her about her bravery for bringing her children to Zion alone. When she turns to get him a chair, he vanishes. She runs to the door but there is no sign of his having been there. There are many such stories of a visitor coming for dinner when the family is in dire straits and then leaving without having eaten his meal. After which the family enjoys some measure of prosperity over that of their neighbors whom they are then obliged to help.

These Nephite stories were told and experienced for decades, but they did not reach their peak until the '40s and '50s. Two tales from this period involve a man and his wife traveling by truck across a desolate stretch of highway in 1944. They pick up an old man who stands by the roadside who appears to be very knowledgeable about world events.

In a little while the man suddenly asks them to let him out of the truck out in the middle of nowhere. They ask him if he is sure he wants to get out at that particular spot. "This is the place," the old man says and then proceeds to tell them that on the way back they will be hauling a dead man and also that World War II will end in August. Sure enough the couple comes across an automobile accident where a young man has been killed and they have to haul his body back to the nearest town. World War II ended a year later in August. In the other story, the driver of a convertible picks up an old man hiking on the road and the old man proceeds to have a religious discussion with the driver knowing more about the Book of Mormon than the driver does. When the driver of the car lets the old man out a few miles later, he looks back and the man has disappeared. He asks his neighbors later if they had seen the old man in the car since they were outside at the time. They say, "What old man? There was no one sitting beside you!"

On the flip side of the three Nephites are the Gadianton robbers. They were an evil tribe of Israel, roaming the earth through eternity and doing their various evil deeds. Thank goodness they are not as well known, nor did they last as long as the Nephite stories have; possibly because there is enough evil in the world as it is and we do not need to add any more to it. Near the town of Modena on the Nevada-Utah border just past St George, a sort of Union Pacific flag stop; reports by freighters going to the mining camps in Nevada, were numerous. Hauling to Pinoche and Panaca, freighters went through a rocky gorge there that was said to be haunted by the terrorist brotherhood of the Gadianton robbers. Huge rocks were supposed to have tumbled down right in front of them, a few crushing others on the trail. But most important were the ways in which the rocky cliffs on either side of them would close in around them, keeping some trapped forever in the gorge to die of the heat and of starvation. Many others narrowly escaped these cliff rocks as they attempted to close in around them, watching for the supernatural Gadiantons who were suppose to swoop down upon them when the rocks closed and kill and rob those whom they entrapped. Either way, through supernatural apparitions being allowed to remain on the earth forever, or through simply being shut in by the rock cliffs apparently guided by these same forces; some freighters supposedly never made it home.

One such story tells of a certain unnamed settlement where a series of events were blamed on the Gadianton robbers who were evil spirits of Satan trying to prevent the establishment of the Mormon Church. Tools disappeared, women would set their bread out to raise and when they went back to check on it, all the bread would be turned upside down. Irons would disappear from ironing boards when the women turned their backs and the sawmill would run at night all by itself and yet cease whenever the men came out to check it. All of these strange events went on for several months and then suddenly ceased as suddenly as they had begun. The town blamed all of this on the spirits of the Gadianton robbers in the area.

Besides around the St. George area, the Gadianton robbers were suppose to haunt Red Creek in the Uintah basin. They became quite a famous band of robbers in the area and rode down the canyon on phantom horses. They would rumble down the old Red Creek road at night, robbing and plundering as they did and re-enacting actual events as ghosts and spirits from more ancient times. People saw them as they rode past, their dark shapes pounding past them in the darkness. Little boys that were being bad were

threatened with being stolen or kidnapped by the Gadianton robbers from their beds at night. Whenever it was thought that wickedness was being built up somewhere, it was the fault of the Gadiantons who were calling up their secret oaths and combinations from the earth where they had been hidden. At one point even the Lord could not hold them back or restrain them from finding the treasures of others hidden in the land.

In the modern world now, the Gadianton robbers have totally disappeared. Media moguls, big business, technology giants, environmental pollutants, threats of nuclear and bio-terrorism, huge political machines and worldwide terrorist groups have replaced them. They would be nothing in comparison to what we deal with in our world today, both visible and invisible to us. It is interesting to me that the Nephites have survived through time while the Gadianton robbers are nothing more than a name that many Mormons don't know much about. Yet most that I have talked to know exactly who the three Nephites are or at least what they are supposed to symbolize: all that is good in the world. Angels, saints, spirit guides and Nephites, all carry out the same work, God's work. They guide us in our lives, sometimes even stopping long enough to heal us either spiritually or physically. They guide us in our spiritual work on earth, to treasures not so much hidden from us but hidden within us.

They teach us to take the right road, to fill our flour bins for others, to see those less fortunate than us rather than to pass them by. They warn us about impending dangers and come to us in dreams, to give us information about our lives and futures. They tell us where to find the healers just right for us, and what we should be doing in the world. The biggest hope to me is that out of the two polar opposites, it will be the Nephites and angels, which will withstand the test of time.

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Mom often told me the story of when my dad was in Montana working (a ranch hand) while, she and her kids (3 at the time) were at home near Cardston Alberta in the winter time. There was little food in the house, so mom said she fed the little ones (I'm the sixth in line, so I wasn't there) not eating herself, and then put the kids to bed. She said she knelt down to pray for help, telling Heavenly Father that she had paid her tithing on anything that dad had sent home, and now she needed His help, for the kids were hungry, and no food for breakfast. In the morning there was a box of groceries on the table, but no foot prints in the snow. I have often wondered if one of the Nephites had helped mom with the food in the night, or if it was an angel. I guess it really doesn't matter. I've always been a full tith payer because of that.

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