

The OLD TESTAMENT and the LATTER-DAY SAINTS

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CHAPTER THREE

Noah, the Ark, the Flood: A Pondered Perspective

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Introduction

The nature, extent, purpose, and historicity of the biblical Flood are matters of little concern for many Latter-day Saints. Most are oblivious to the problems that such an event or series of events pose, being satisfied that it occurred and that Noah and his family were saved along with two or fourteen of all God's creature creations.

Among the few who give this subject serious consideration, there are at least two points of view. The one holds that the Flood was a regional phenomenon with no more than local impact, leaving the remainder of the earth relatively undisturbed. Those taking this position point to the archaeological and geologic record and to the vast number of living and extinct species of animal life as evidence supporting their position. A nearly opposite stand is taken by those who declare for a total immersion or baptism of the earth, the extinction of all but the ark-secured men and land-based animal life and, following withdrawal of the waters, a totally new beginning on a cleansed earth for the survivors.

This paper will examine the story of the Flood in light of what the scriptures actually say on the subject, hopefully clarifying some problems of interpretation separating the two groups while maintaining the integrity of the Word of God as man has received it from time to time.

What Do We Know For Sure?

For those prepared to acknowledge the validity of scripture as an expression of revealed truth and the leaders of the Latter-day Saint Church as inspired men of God, some aspects of the Flood story are inescapably exact; certain people, things, and events cannot be rationalized or reasoned aside. Important among these are Noah, a truly historic figure, and Adam, his original ancestor; the ark, a bonafide vessel, an architectural masterpiece some 450 feet long, 75 feet wide and 45 feet high; the Flood, an actual event, worldwide in scope and of sufficient duration that at some time our planet was completely immersed in water. In addition, except for the eight persons aboard the ark, the whole of humankind was destroyed by the Flood, and all men who have inhabited the earth from that time to the present are the posterity of Noah (JST Genesis 7:52, 80).

Scriptural verification and the words of living prophets attest to the validity of these conclusions.¹ Nowhere in scripture or in the statements of those who represent the Lord is any reservation expressed as to their authenticity. If one accepts them as facts, these items become a foundation upon which to build a hypothesis for explaining some of the events associated with the Flood. A dialogue can then develop which might shed further light on the whole concept. If, however, the verity of scripture and the veracity of statements by living prophets are not conceded, no common ground for discussing the Flood as an event in human history is possible. Human logic and the absence of suitable terrestrial evidence both preclude any possibility of agreement. Without the teachings of the scriptures and the words of living prophets on this subject, the answer to the question, "What do we know for sure?" would be, "Very little, if anything!"

How long the Flood?

How deep the water?

How high the mountains?

How divided the earth?

According to the Genesis account, God opened the heavens and caused the fountains of the deep to be broken up. The Floods began to encompass the earth on the 17th day of the 2nd month. If, as Josephus suggests, the calendar began with 21 September, the first day of the autumnal equinox, then Noah entered the ark on or about the 8th of December in the year 1656 after the fall.² For forty days and nights the rains from heaven combined with the waters on the earth to produce a flood that bore up the ark and carried it away from Noah's homeland. For an additional one-hundred and ten days, until the 17th day of the seventh month (8 May), the waters prevailed upon the earth. Toward the end of this period, the rains stopped, the fountains of the deep were stilled, and a wind came up that calmed the flood and hastened its retreat. On that day, the 17th day of the seventh month, the ark grounded on a mountain called Ararat.

Thereafter, the waters continued to recede until the first day of the tenth month (22 July), when Noah and his family saw the tops of the mountains for the first time (Genesis 7:17–24); 8:1–5). The fact that the ark was situated on a mountain side and had been for some ten weeks due to the abatement of the waters and their subsequent withdrawal from the face of the earth (JST Gen. 8:48–49) suggests that the heights now visible were previously obscured by clouds, heavy vapors or perhaps by snow, but not by water.

Noah and his family spent three months and twenty days on the water and at least five months in the ark. The fact that the covering of the ark was not removed until ten and one-half months after the door closed behind them does not mean that Noah and his family did not venture forth prior to that time. The record simply states that at the time the cover was removed, the first day of the eleventh month, the waters no longer reached beyond their natural bounds, and some seven weeks later, the part of the earth from which the water had receded was completely dried out. (JST Genesis 8:55–56) The subsequent directive to the Flood's eight survivors to leave the ark, they and all that were with them, might simply have meant that they should now go into the world and no longer use the ark as a home or shelter (JST Genesis 9:1–19).

That Noah was anxious to discover the extent and duration of the Flood is evidenced by his sending forth a raven eighty days after the stay on the ark began. The releasing of the bird did not occur following the grounding of the vessel as a casual reading of

the text might imply. The verses detailing this part of the story must be a recapitulation of earlier events; otherwise, the raven and, sometime later, the dove would have found a place to land. It appears that the raven was sent out on a regular basis for some seventy days before and for a period of time after the ship landed, while the dove was loosed at one-week intervals beginning sometime prior to the subsiding of the water and the early recovery of vegetation (Genesis 8:6-12).

We read in Genesis and in the Joseph Smith Translation that the water reached a depth and dominated the landscape to a height of twenty-three feet (fifteen cubits) which would have varied depending on the proximity of a landmass to the seas breaking beyond their bounds as they were fed by the "fountains of the deep" and the rains from the open "windows of heaven." As for the "high hills" and the mountains, the text indicates only that they were covered. Just what *covered* means is open to interpretation. If the rains were torrential and the clouds dispensing them engulfed the mountains and hills, then, as anyone who has experienced such a storm knows, the earth's surface was immersed in a sheet of water, and the heights were, in a very real sense, covered. Or, as the season of the year might suggest, if the valleys were deluged with water, then the high hills and mountains were most likely receiving an indescribable amount of snow. Perhaps a snow covering does not amount to an immersion in water; once the snow began to melt, however, given the quantities that must have accumulated, the awesome runoff would have served such a purpose.

The few Latter-day Saint scholars who have written on the subject have generally assumed that pre-Noahchian geography was comparatively uniform, not given to extremes, and that the mountain-building processes were stimulated and subsurface. The Flood plus the subsequent division of the earth in the days of Peleg is said to account for the forces necessary to produce the vast mountain ranges that today embrace the globe to heights well above 30,000 feet.³

Before assenting to such a hypothesis, however, we need to consider the fact that the time frame being considered is well within the realm of history, not prehistory. Such a startling series of events would have been indelibly imprinted in the history, folklore, or traditions of antiquity. At present, though there are numerous references to a flood, there are, among the

earliest accounts of human history, few, if any, allusions to the eruption of mountains from the surface of the earth.

Actually, there is no need to take a stand on the question of mountains and their origins. All the evidence indicates that, with a few exceptions, they are very ancient, reaching well back into the life of a very old planet. When they erupted from the earth's surface is totally unrelated to and independent of the existence of Noah and the reality of the Flood. If the earth was covered by water, then they were immersed along with everything else. To what depth or degree is not considered by the author of the scriptures, who found it sufficient simply to state that the mountains were covered (Genesis 7:19-20).

As for the division of the earth in the days of Peleg, (Genesis 10:25 and JST Genesis 10:16) the text merely states that in his day, the earth was divided. To suggest that this means the earth's surface was composed of a solitary land mass on the one hand and a single gigantic ocean on the other during the time prior to and for several hundred years after the Flood, is a position that goes beyond the content of the scripture. It can be more readily and reasonably assumed that the division of the earth culminated in the days of Peleg, resulting in the separation of the continents into a pattern equivalent to the current arrangement. The division referred to was not the movement of whole continents in a relatively short period of time, but, at most, the sinking of specific land bridges which connected the major land segments of the earth. Logical examples of such displacements are the subcontinents that once filled the Bering Strait, the contiguous series of islands that at one time connected Australia with the Asiatic mainland and a similar chain that may have bound Antarctica and South America together. As the scriptures indicate and scientists currently agree, there was a time deep in the past when all the continents were represented by a single megacontinent that in time divided into a northern and southern hemisphere.⁴ It is not at all certain, however, what the continental configuration was at the time of Adam, not to mention the time of Noah. The earth before the fall was surely radically different in its geographic composition from what it was thereafter, and the world of Noah could have been totally unlike that of Adam, whether viewed before the Flood or after.

A division of the continents that started in pre-Adamic times may have culminated in the days of Peleg, making the statement

"like it was in the days before it was divided" (D&C 133:24) a relative expression. If such were the case, the process of separation was most likely an ongoing event, so there is really no way of knowing what the earth was like at any given point in time except as we know it today and as it has been known historically.

The terms of the statement, "like it was in the days before it was divided" are met as much by an earth tied together with land bridges as by one drawn together into a single massive continent. A related statement declaring that "the land of Jerusalem and the land of Zion shall be turned back into their own place" may be totally unrelated to the question of earth geography (D&C 133:24). It reads as if this were an event separate from the eventual cozying up of the continents, being one in a series of four dramatic happenings that will impact the earth during the closing scenes of the latter days.

Since there was no specific location carrying the designation "Land of Jerusalem" in pre-flood times and the only Zion was that of Enoch, it stretches the imagination to understand how the realigning of the continents would return either one to its place. On the other hand, if *place* means *former status*, then the return of the City of Enoch to whatever and wherever it formerly was and Jerusalem to the level of significance it enjoyed as the seat of government for the kingdom of Judah would be an interpretation fully compatible with other prophecies dealing with the same subject.

Making Room on the Ark

Though few details are given, Noah's ark was certainly an unusual vessel. Constructed of gopher wood (Genesis 6:14–15), thought to be a type of water-and-insect-resistant cedar, the scriptures further indicate that the ark was coated with pitch or tar both inside and out, and from the Book of Mormon we learn that, like the boats made by the Jaredites (Ether 6:7), it was tight like a dish, capable of floating either on or under the water.

Not counting the deck, the ship was divided into three separate levels partitioned into variously sized areas which served as rooms, cages, or nests, and as compartments for food storage. According to the scriptural text, the vessel was designed to house Noah, his family and two of every unclean and fourteen of every

clean land-based animal, including fowl. In addition, Noah was to "take thou unto thee of all food that is eaten, and thou shalt gather it to thee; and it shall be for food for thee and for them" (Genesis 6:21). Since this instruction concerning food is explicit, it appears that Noah was not dealing with animal infants or with a cargo of species conveniently placed in a state of hibernation.

The problems posed by the charge given Noah to place aboard his ark such a vast array of animal life and a sufficient quantity of food to keep them alive for an indeterminate period are not merely spatial. There are also questions of time and distance as well as challenges concerned with matters such as compatibility and comprehension.

Even if the many life forms came voluntarily to Noah, thereby eliminating the problem of seeking them out, the numbers of individual species involved are staggering. The 4,000 mammal species, the 8,600 species of birds and fowls, and the 6,500 species of reptiles are dwarfed by nearly 1,500,000 species of land-dwelling arthropoda, including spiders, centipedes, and insects.

As one reflects on the above figures and multiplies them by either two or fourteen, perhaps the question to ask is not whether God could accomplish such a task through Noah if he wished to, but rather whether he did, in fact, ever intend to. The answer to the first interrogative is plainly yes, knowing that nothing which is right is impossible with God, and that His actions will always be in accordance with His laws and in perfect harmony with eternal truth. This assurance to the contrary, one of our most serious errors as Latter-day Saints is a penchant to ascribe to God the unnecessary and the foolish, simply by saying "If He wants to, He can."

The response to the question of whether God ever intended to populate the ark in this manner might be *no*. Justification for such a rational approach to the Flood may be more obvious than the general mindset of some students of the scriptures has allowed them to perceive.

Beginning in the first chapter of Genesis, there is a recurrent series of statements which, when taken together, may resolve questions vital to both scientists and religionists regarding the Flood. Listed in sequence, but out of context, the following verses of scripture draw attention to an obvious distinction between creations that are distinctively alive due to their having been

granted "the breath of life" and pseudo-life forms found in the "lone and dreary world" that do not possess "the breath of life."

And God said, Let the waters bring forth abundantly *the moving creature that hath life* (Genesis 1:20).

And God created great whales, and *every living creature that moveth* (Genesis 1:21).

And God said, *Let the earth bring forth the living creature after his kind* (Genesis 1:24).

And God blessed them and said "*have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth*" (JST Genesis 1:31).

And *to every beast of the earth, and to every fowl of the air, and to every thing that creepeth upon the earth, wherein I grant life* (JST Genesis 1:32).

And I God saw every thing that I had made, and behold, *all things which I had made were very good* (JST Genesis 1:33).

And *on the seventh day, I God, ended my work, . . . and all things which I had made were finished. And I, God, saw that they were good* (JST Genesis 2:2).

For *I, the Lord God, created all things of which I have spoken* (JST Genesis 2:5).

And *I, the Lord God, formed man from the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul; the first flesh upon the earth, the first man also* (JST Genesis 2:8).

And out of the ground made I, the Lord God, to grow *every tree naturally, that is pleasant to the sight of man . . . and it became a living soul . . . yea even all things which I prepared for the use of man; and man saw that it was good for food* (JST Genesis 2:11).

And out of the ground, *I the Lord God, formed every beast of the field, and every fowl of the air . . . And they were also living souls; for I, God, breathed into them the breath of life and commanded that whatsoever Adam called every living creature, that should be the name thereof* (JST Genesis 2:25–26).

Now *the serpent was more subtle than any beast of the field which I, the Lord God, had made . . .*

And *Satan put it into the heart of the serpent, for he had drawn away many after him; (JST Genesis 3:6–7)*

And *I, the Lord God, said unto the serpent . . . thou shalt be cursed above all cattle and above every beast of the field* (JST Genesis 3:20).

Cursed shall be *the ground* for thy sake . . . *Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth* to thee . . . (JST Genesis 3:23, 24).

And behold, I, even I, do *bring a Flood of waters* upon the earth, to *destroy all flesh, wherein is the breath of life*, from under heaven; and *every thing that liveth on the earth shall die* (JST Genesis 8:22).

And of *every living thing of all flesh*, two of every sort shalt thou *bring into the ark, to keep them alive* with thee (Genesis 6:19).

And *they went unto Noah, into the ark, two and two of all flesh, wherein is the breath of life* (JST Genesis 7:15).

For yet seven days, and I will cause it to rain upon the earth forty days, and forty nights; and *every living substance that I have made will I destroy* from off the face of the earth (JST Genesis 8:32).

And all flesh died that moved upon the face of the earth, both of fowl, and of cattle, and of beasts, and of every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth, and every man.

All in whose nostrils the Lord had breathed the breath of life, of all that were on the dry land, *died*.

And *every living substance* was destroyed, which was upon the face of the ground, (JST Genesis 8:42–44).

And *God remembered Noah, and every living thing*, (Genesis 8:1).

Bring forth with thee *every living thing* that is with thee, of *all flesh* . . . that they may breed abundantly in the earth, and be fruitful, and multiply upon the earth, (Genesis 8:17).

Neither will I smite any more every thing living, as I have done, (Genesis 8:21).

Every moving thing that liveth shall be meat for you, (Genesis 9:3).

And it shall come to pass, *that every living creature that is with you* . . . *shall not altogether perish*, (JST Genesis 9:15).

And God said, *This is the token of the covenant* which I make *between me* and you and *every living creature* that is with you, for perpetual generations, (Genesis 9:12).

And *I will remember my covenant*, which is *between me* and you and *every living creature of all flesh*: and the waters shall no more become a Flood to destroy all flesh, (Genesis 9:15).

And the bow shall be in the cloud, and *I will establish my covenant* unto thee, *which I made between me and thee*, for every

living creature of all flesh that shall be upon the earth, (JST, Genesis 9:24).

This series of statements, taken together, might well contain the following messages:

First: By repeated use of the words, "living creature," "of every living thing," "moving creature hath life," "wherein I grant there is life," "all flesh in which is the breath of life," "living souls," "everything that liveth on the earth," "all in whose nostrils the Lord had breathed the breath of life," "every living substance," "and every moving thing that liveth," the Lord is perhaps informing us that there are in the world those plants and animals for which he is responsible, forms of life that merit the designation of being living souls, eternal not only in the sense that all matter is eternal. In contrast to these are plants and animals that are alive but are not living souls because their independent existence terminates with death. It can be postulated that entities possessing "the breath of life," were placed here to beautify, to nourish, to sustain, and to complement the existence of Adam and his posterity both in time and in eternity, while those not possessing this gift, existing for reasons both positive and negative, are of mortal duration only and will not know a resurrection.

Second: Life forms having eternal existence are addressed by such statements as "And I, God, saw everything that I had made, and behold, all things which I had made were very good." "Yea even all things which I prepared for the use of man . . ." "And on the seventh day all things which I had made were finished and they were good." All things were good and made by God in comparison to what? The conclusion might be drawn that there were present on the earth both plants and animals that were not worthy of being called good since they were not created by God and, therefore, they did not possess the "breath of life." An example of such are the thorns and thistles brought forth by the earth after the fall which were not a part of the original creation (Genesis 3:17-18). The same is hinted at in the declaration that "The serpent was more subtle than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made" and in the subsequent condemnation, "Thou shalt be cursed above all cattle, and above every beast of the field which I, the Lord God, have made" (JST Gen. 3:20). By not

classifying the serpent as the most subtle of the beasts which God had made and by cursing him above those which God had made, the scripture suggests that the serpent was, indeed, something separate from those specific life forms gifted with "the breath of life." Perhaps this is the reason the serpent was allowed to tempt Eve, since, at this point in the creation story, God's creations, which had been declared *good*, would not and could not have done so.

Third: If the above comes across as something of a mystery, we need only contemplate our own experience for the last several decades in the area of human and animal transplants. During this period, we have been amazed and to a degree entertained by the ability of scientists to successfully transplant hearts, kidneys, livers, eyes, severed limbs, ovaries, bone marrow, hair, blood, sperm, skin, and cells of many kinds. In every case, the object being implanted is removed from the donor, whether living or dead, and is kept viable and alive totally independent of the original host. In this way, living cells, individually, or as whole organs, are kept alive long after the death of the body and the departure of the spirit. Blood and sperm, especially, have been kept alive for years before being made available to a totally unrelated recipient and have been as functional as when part of the man or animal from which they were taken.

What such a phenomenon tells us is that we experience two levels of existence every day of our lives; the familiar life of the spirit, which is eternal and the life of the cell, which begins and ends with mortality. And so it may be in nature where there are life forms which God specifically created, "wherein is the breath of life," and also those which, like the thorns and thistles brought forth by mother earth in a "lone and dreary world" after the fall, are a product of the earth and are no more than an extension of it in the same way that the hair, the skin, the blood, the sperm and the anti-bodies produced by its immune system are an extension of the human body. Though able to continue for a time functional and viable independent of the body, they are, individually, not living souls and have meaning only as they are associated with a host that is.

Knowing as we do that the earth, itself, is a living entity capable of certain life-giving and life-preserving responses and

endowed with eternal as well as mortal capacities, it should not surprise us if our planet were capable of bringing forth life of various kinds, whether it be animal or vegetable, to meet the needs of its inhabitants and carry out its eternal purposes. Some of what it produces would be positive and result in the production of such essentials as coal, oil, natural gas, oxygen and carbon dioxide drawn from the abundant forests and animal life which were brought forth for just such a purpose but for no other. Or they may be negative in response to improper use of its resources, the pollution of its air, the spoilage of its waters or the evils and contrary actions of its inhabitants. In the case of the Fall, the response of the earth was appropriate to its status as the home of telestial beings. Analogously, the human body reacts both positively and negatively to various conditions and stimuli. While some of its reactions are obvious and easily understood, others are extremely complex, foreign and, like some human viruses and bacteria, enigmatic.

Once it is acknowledged that the earth itself is a living organism, the whole equation of life and life processes, both those that preserve and those that beget life, are changed. So viewed, the planet is more than rock and water. It is, like any successful, functional entity, whatever it needs to be in order to fulfill its current mission as a suitable habitation for telestial man. As such, it is the single most important piece of real estate in the known universe. Its exotic role as the mortal home of God's own offspring, plus all plants and animals essential to man's happiness and well-being both in time and eternity, is carried out with near perfection. Gases, liquids, soils, energy sources, flora and fauna essential to the ecosystem wherein man and all life forms possessing "the breath of life" can flourish, are present and in place as they were during the seventh time when all that God created arrived in the scene.

Anything that the earth produces, whether on purpose or by accident or as a result of simply being mortal, either has in its genes the capacity to become whatever it was intended to be or, as in our own lives, the unexpected, the unusual and even the harmful may result. So viewed, much of the mystery of earth history can be explained and understood. This is not evolution. The earth is one of God's creations and is, therefore, a living soul. That which the earth has the capacity to produce is part of it,

is without "the breath of life," and will only return to the earth from which it came.

To be specific, it is quite possible that the dinosaurs and all else that belonged to pre-Adamic epochs were alive only in an earth-related sense. During the dinosaur's 150,000,000-year reign on earth, both plants and animals lived and died, and in doing so achieved the full measure of their reason for existing. And so it was in other distant eras leading up to the time when the earth was finally readied for God's crowning creations, distinct because they were not only good, but also eternal, living souls possessing "the breath of life."

What this means in relationship to the ark is that all life forms that now exist and those whose fossils attest to their existence in the past did not need to have place on board. They were not all alive in an eternal sense and many had ceased to exist long before the advent of the flood. Whether or not some survived was really immaterial. Since they did not possess "the breath of life," were not living souls, were not essential to a man's well being, either to beautify, to nourish, or to serve, there was no critical need for their being present in a post-Flood world.

Only animals of an eternal nature needed to accompany Noah aboard the ark. Only they, along with mankind, were the object of the flood's death-dealing force. Those not meant to die may have survived the Flood in numbers and kinds that allow for their existence past and present throughout the earth. As exemplified by the fish of the sea that were not aboard the ark, it was never intended that *all* animal life should die. Such a possibility may account for the unusual and sometimes singular species found in areas to which they alone are native: Australia, the Galapagos Islands and South America being examples. That this may be true is attested to by the declarations that God had finished the work of creation on the seventh day and that those of His creations that disembarked from the ark should "not altogether perish" (JST, Genesis 9:16). The many extinct species might, therefore, be classed as no more than products of the earth while those "in which is the breath of life" will not experience extinction until the end of the world as we know it and even then, they will, as man and the earth, live on in the spirit and eventually experience a resurrection of their bodies.

The ideas presented in this paper are an attempt to show how the Flood, a historic reality, might have occurred without viola-

ting some long-held and scientifically defensible views of the earth's geographical, biological and anthropological history. Granted that there are areas of disagreement between science and religion that no amount of reasoning at our present level of understanding will resolve; still it is neither wise nor necessary to create barriers of misunderstanding where they need not exist.

The multiple responses to the Flood story are a classic example of divergent views that appear almost irreconcilable. This lack of accommodation is an expression of how combatants on both sides of the line reason beyond the mark when dealing with the brief account of Noah, the ark, and the Flood and with what the body of available scripture maintains as to what occurred and why.

The views discussed in this paper represent another perspective on the biblical flood. They are not given "tongue in cheek," but as an expression of what might be an answer to a number of very real questions which tug at the credibility of the Flood narrative when it is confronted by the alleged facts of earth history. It is hoped that the ideas presented here will act as inspiration to further in-depth pondering of the scriptures as part of the quest that all should undertake to better understand the word of God as revealed by his spokesmen in this and every dispensation.

NOTES

¹In addition to the Genesis account of Adam, Noah, and the Flood, (Genesis 1:26–28; 2:18–22; 3:16–24; 5:28–32; 6:9–22; 7; 8; 9;) the Joseph Smith Translation of the Bible, the Book of Mormon, the New Testament, the Doctrine and Covenants and the Book of Abraham (See Topical Guide and the Bible Dictionary under appropriate headings) all bear similar and expanded testimony. Joseph Smith, (*History of the Church* 6: 251, 254; *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, 12, 157, 171, 251.) Brigham Young, (*Journal of Discourses* 1:274; 8:83; *Discourses of Brigham Young*, 603.) John Taylor, (*Journal of Discourses*, 26:74–75; 11: 17–18, 174–175.) Orson Pratt, (*Journal of Discourses* , 20:9–10) John A. Widtsoe, (*Evidences and Reconciliations*, pp. 126–128.) and others all bear unequivocal testimony that Noah truly existed, that the ark was real and that the earth was baptized by a world-wide flood.

²Josephus, *Antiquities of the Jews*, Book I, 3:5. Also Rodney Turner, *The Footstool of God*, (Orem, Utah: Grandin Book Co., 1983).

³Rodney Turner, *The Footstool of God* (Orem, Utah: Grandin Book Co., 1983). Joseph Fielding Smith, *Man, His Origin and Destiny* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1954); and Cleon Skousen, *The First 2000 years* (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft Inc., 1953).

⁴Parley P. Pratt taught, and subsequent Church authorities have agreed that the earth was originally divided into a single body of water and a single land mass. (Parley P. Pratt, *A Voice of Warning*, p. 85.) This original continent eventually separated, forming Gondwanaland which further divided into Antarctica, Australia, South America, India, and Africa; and Laurasia which became North America, Greenland, Europe and much of Asia. One other ancient, unnamed continent collided with Asia ahead of the Indian subcontinent and was responsible for the emergence of the Himalayan chain of mountains. It was most likely associated with Gondwanaland.