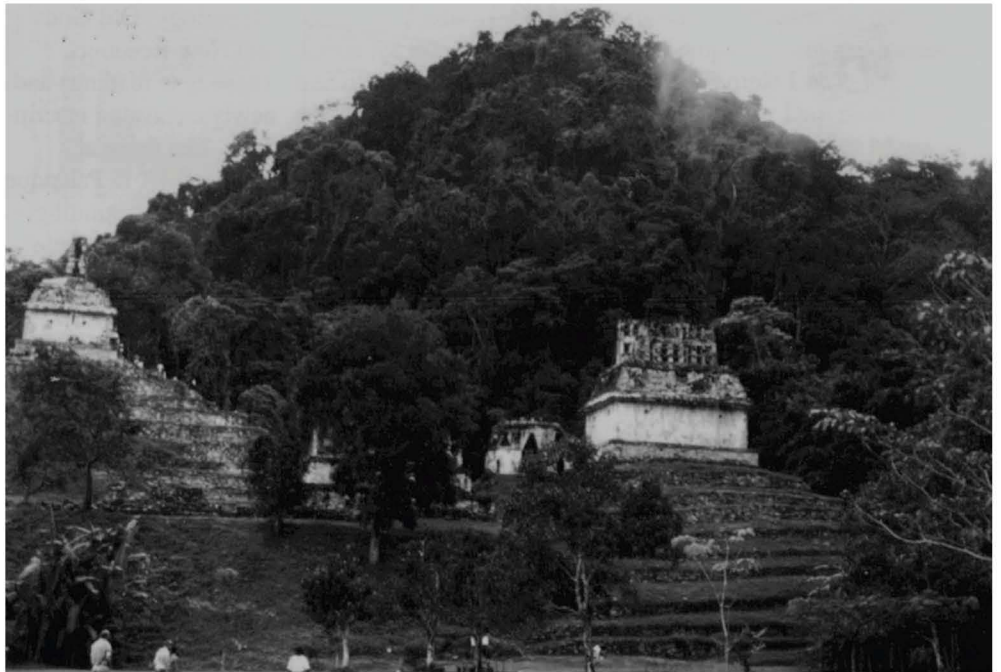


## Maya Meetings at the University of Texas-Austin “The Palenque Mythology: Old Gods and New Readings”



The Cross Group at Palenque is considered the most sacred space in the Maya world. It includes the Temple of the Cross (left), the Temple of the Foliated Cross (middle), and the Temple of the Sun (right). The building in the center, hiding behind the trees was not part of the original design of the space, being added much later.

“Old Gods and New Readings” in commemoration of the first meeting in 1976 that also focused on Palenque. The meetings evolved over the years and recently began to include a one-day symposium prior to the weekend event where invited specialists in the field of archaeology, epigraphy, and anthropology present new findings.

The last issue of *glyph notes* included a

report from this year’s meetings and a short article by Shirley R. Heater about one of the presentations given on Friday. This issue will focus on some of the new understandings suggested for the Palenque texts as well as include an article contributed by Gaylord Shaw about a new reading on a standard glyph found on ceramics that was presented at last year’s meetings.

Read more about the Maya Meetings at <http://www.utmaya.org/>.

The topic for next year’s meetings (March 10-15, 2007) will be “The River Cities: Archaeology and History at Yaxchilan, Piedras Negras, and Pomona.”

**T**hirty years ago, in 1976, the late charismatic art historian Linda Schele initiated the Maya Meetings at the University of Texas–Austin. The meetings, led by Schele, generally consisted of a weekend workshop of discussion and exploration of readings for the Maya hieroglyphs followed by what was called the long workshop where participants selected specific texts to “translate.” Schele’s lively and non-judgmental approach to the meetings created an environment that allowed all who attended to contribute ideas and possible readings. This yearly event provided the single most important stimulus for the advancement of the decipherment of the glyphs. Astonishing results have come forth from these meetings that fit the language and linguistic patterns found in The Book of Mormon.

The theme of this year’s weekend workshop was “The Palenque Mythology: Old

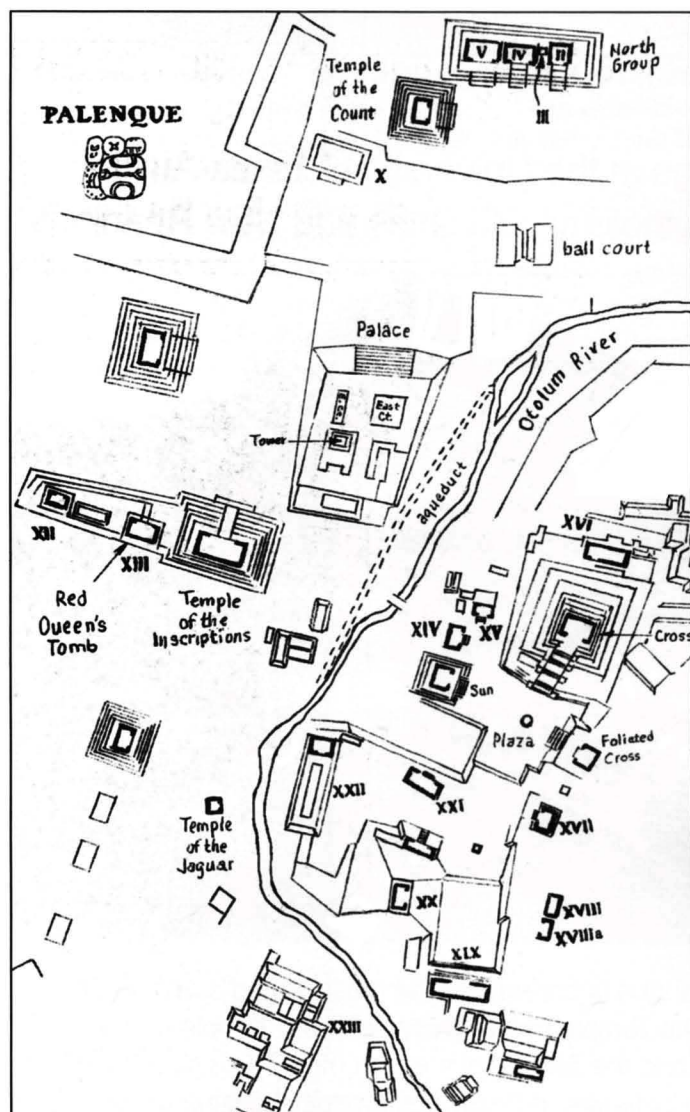


# Could God GI be Christ?

By Sherrie Kline Smith

Photographs by Don Beebe

Drawings by Glenn Scott



## Introduction

After attending the 2006 Maya Meetings at the University of Texas-Austin led by David Stuart, I can't wait to take one of our

tour groups back to Palenque! I learned so much about the religious beliefs of the Maya and buildings at Palenque. The theme for the 2006 meetings was "The Palenque Mythology: Old Gods and New Readings."\* These new readings and newly excavated inscriptions, like those at Temple XIX at Palenque, along with continuing decipherment, enlarge and enrich and sometimes cause revision of previously held views. What's faith strengthening is that the new interpretations strongly suggest that the Maya had a Judeo-Christian heritage.

## Palenque

Nestled against the steep and thickly forested green hills of the Chiapas mountains, Palenque sits like a shimmering jewel. The rushing Otolum River, channeled in ancient aqueducts, courses through the city. The

fine limestone pyramids and sprawling temple complexes, decorated with sculptures in bas relief once painted in brilliant colors and hieroglyphic inscriptions, retain vestiges of their past glories. A lacy mist often shrouds the ruins. Palenque is one of the most beautiful archaeological sites in the whole world. Many astounding archaeological discoveries have been made there.

According to authorities, though, Palenque had only traces of habitation during Book of Mormon times. Most of the buildings and structures seen today date from around AD 550-750, although, archaeology indicates that the city began about AD 250.

One of the most important areas at

Palenque is the Cross Group, a triadic temple complex. During the workshop, Stuart focused on the Cross group and the mythological portion of the inscriptions from these three temples. Most of the texts in the three buildings have been fairly well deciphered and understood, but not completely.

Until 1998, Temple XIX was simply one of many mounds in the jungle directly south of the Cross Group. But recent excavations show that it "is one of the major ritual structures at Palenque and among the city's richest sources of hieroglyphic inscriptions" (Stuart 2005:11). These additional inscriptions provide new and enlightening information. Stuart elaborated and shared in the weekend what he has gleaned from these new readings, weaving them in with what was known before.

## Cross Group

The Cross Group has three pyramidal mounds topped by the Temple of the Cross, the Temple of the Foliated Cross, and the Temple of the Sun. The names given to the buildings reflect the main motifs—cross, foliated cross, sun—on the inscribed panels of the inner sanctuaries. Most believers in The Book of Mormon will be cognizant of these temples, especially the Temple of the Cross. A replica of the inscribed panel on the back wall of this temple once adorned a wall in the Auditorium in Independence, Missouri.†

The Palenque king K'inich Kan B'ahlam commissioned and caused these three temples to be built in AD 692. The Temple of the Cross stands the highest, followed by the Temple of the Foliated Cross, which is a little lower, and then the Temple of the Sun. All of the buildings originally had the same floor plan, an outer court and an inner sanctuary. On the back wall of the inner sanctuary are lengthy hieroglyphic inscriptions on either side of the main motif. The left portion on each temple relates religious beliefs or the "mythology" of the Palenque Maya, and the right portion provides actual historical information about K'inich Kan B'ahlam and other Palenque kings. Two figures face each other on either side of the center motif. Both are portraits of the king,

\*See Editorial Comments on page 1.

† Inquiries as to its whereabouts elicited the response, "It's safely in storage."

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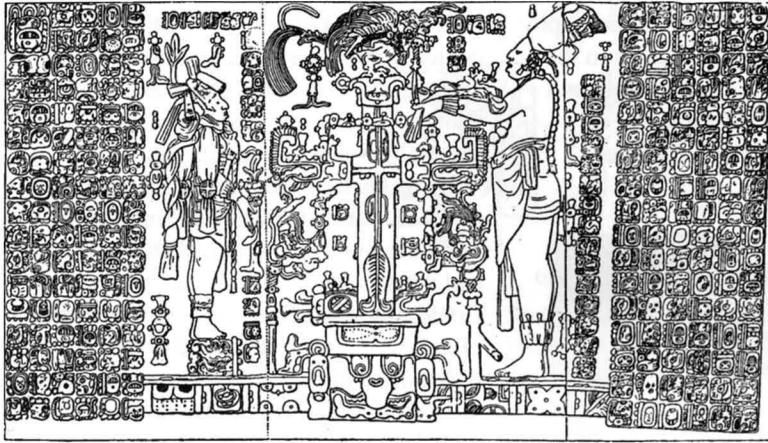
## Could God GI be Christ?

From page 2.

K'inich Kan B'ahlam; the smaller image portrays the king as a youth.

### Temple of the Cross

The central image set between the two facing figures on the Temple of the Cross is the cruciform tree that emerges from the "solar bowl," an image associated with offerings and sacrifice. According to Stuart,



Drawing of the inscribed panel of the inner sanctuary wall of the celestial Temple of the Cross. The band below the figures represents the heavens. The two figures are portraits of the king K'inich K'an Bahlam; the smaller one is the king as a youth.



Temple of the Foliated Cross. The ruins lack much of

the overarching theme for this temple is ancestral resurrection. The inscription tells about creation of the world and the gods and includes the widely known creation date among all the Maya found in many places and on many objects and stelae, 4 Ahau, 8 Kumku (a day and month that equates to August 13, 3114 BC in our calendar). The king's figures stand on the "celestial band," symbols that represent heaven. The Temple of the Cross and its inner sanctuary are a visual representation of the celestial location of creation.

### Temple of the Foliated Cross

"As the next station down in the triadic cycle after the celestial Temple of the Cross, the Foliated Cross orients the viewer to the world of the living, where water and maize are the core elements" (Stuart 2006:140). Stuart described the central portion of the Tablet of the Foliated Cross as a fruitful maize tree growing out of primordial waters,

or the "tree of life." The bottom portion is a water band that forms the foundation for the tree of life. The small *kan* cross motif, that has close aquatic association and has the meaning of yellow or precious, decorates outer portions of the temple and helps to establish the symbolism

described by Stuart as "the precious pool maize plant." One could also suggest "abundant" or "bountiful" for this tablet.

### Temple of the Sun

The Temple of the Sun is the best preserved of the temples. Roy Weldon frequently used a comparison drawing of the floor plan of the Temple of the Sun with that of Solomon's Temple in Jerusalem to demonstrate that they are the same; the Temple of the Sun simply has a shorter outer

court. The central motif is in reality an ornate shield with military implications. The temple's inner "sanctuary is a representation of a *ch'en*, a space that is inside a sacred mountain, and therefore, in direct contrast to the celestial regions represented by the Temple of the Cross" (Stuart 2006:161). The figures on the back panel stand on the iconographic band that represents the earth or caves.

The whole architectural complex

of the Cross Group, the low platform in front of the pyramidal mounds topped with its temples and the inscriptions and ornamentation of the outer walls of the temples, embodies the act of creation. The temples themselves each represent one of the spheres or dominions of creation, i.e. the heavens (Temple of the Cross), the sea (Temple of the Foliated Cross), and the earth (Temple of the Sun).

The Palenque Maya viewed this triadic temple complex as holy ground or sacred space. Just as the Golden Temple in Amritsar, India, is sacred space for the Sikhs, the mosque in Mecca for the Muslims, the Temple Mount in Jerusalem for the Jews, the Temple Lot in Independence for Latter Day Saints, the Cross group clearly exemplifies Maya sacred landscape.

### God GI of the Palenque Triad

In 1963 Heinrich Berlin identified three major deities in the hieroglyphs at Palenque. Because the glyphs could not be "read," Berlin simply designated them GI, GII, and GIII. Today, the name glyphs still cannot be read, except for GII. The three gods are commonly called the Palenque Triad.

Each of the Palenque Triad is associated with one of the temples. The most prominent temple, the Temple of the Cross, features god GI; the Temple of the Foliated Cross, god GII; and the Temple of the Sun, god GIII. According to Stuart, each temple probably once held an actual effigy of its associated god. The inscriptions tell of the gods' births, or arrivals. The platform inscription in the newly excavated Temple XIX also commemorates the births of the

*Continued on page 4.*



Temple of the Sun. All of the buildings originally had the same floor plan, an outer court and an inner sanctuary. The Temple of the Sun is the best preserved of the three buildings.



## 4 glyph notes

### Could God GI be Christ?

From page 3.

Triad, literally translated as “earth-touching” or, on the Tablet of the Cross inscription, simply as “arrivals.”

The celestial Temple of the Cross is the “house” of GI, and thus his realm is the heavens. Some of the new information from the inscriptions of Temple XIX corroborates and amplifies the ideas held about GI. Stuart explained these in the meetings, and further study of the sourcebook and his new text resulted in the following list of attributes or events associated with GI.

- GI existed before he was born. His “birth” is described in the text in the Tablet of the Cross and Temple XIX. Stuart says, “The birth of GI, and perhaps those of his two lesser companions, can best be understood as re-births of already existing gods...” (Stuart 2006:104). Two other authorities wrote, “GI’s birth is the most confused, for he is named as both father (born in 3122 BC) and son (born in 2360 BC) on the Temple of the Cross...” (Miller and Taube 1993:129-130).
- Before his “birth” GI became a ruler “in the heavens” under the auspices of Itzamnaaj, a major deity in the heavens directing the creation.
- GI seems to be a major participant in a sacrificial event. (The current explanation has GI taking part in the “beheading of a cosmological entity called the Starry Deer Crocodile” as a sacrificial offering).
- The center motif on the back wall panel of a “tree-cross” emerging from the “solar bowl” is an important symbol for GI. “Here the motif serves to reference that deity by highlighting his associations with the sun, the sky, and an overarching theme of ancestral resurrection” (Stuart 2006:116).
- A segment of the glyphs on the left portion of the Tablet of the Cross says that GI descends from the sky. After he descends, a temple is dedicated.
- GI has strong connections to water. One of the visual representations of GI includes a water bird, perhaps a heron, with a fish in its beak atop the head of the god. (See photo for a beautiful example from Copan.)
- GI’s “birth” date was 9 Ik’ 15 Keh. Because 9 Ik’ or Nine Wind is associated with Ehecatl-Quetzalcoatl of central Mexico, a connection between the two may be possible; it has not yet been

confirmed. Stuart says “that it is difficult to draw close parallels between specific deities or supernatural characters in the Maya and Central Mexican religions, yet it seems entirely possible that GI and Ehecatl-Quetzalcoatl could both be reflections of an old idea or character from Preclassic mythology, and thereby share a common cultural origin” (Stuart 2005:168).

- GI is found throughout the Maya area. “He is depicted and mentioned in numerous inscriptions and iconography throughout the Maya region from the beginnings of the Classic period, and he seems to have been a figure of major cosmological importance” (Stuart 2005:163).



One of the attributes of God GI is the bird, believed to be a heron, with a fish in its mouth. It is found in artistic representations of him as part of GI’s headdress. This example is from Copan.

The other gods, GII and GIII, are “brothers” of GI as Stuart said and could be considered triplets because their “birth” or arrival dates were within days of each other. GII’s “house” is the Foliated Cross, or the world of the living, and GIII is associated with fire and the sun. His “house” is the Temple of the Sun, and he bears the title *yahaw k’ahk*, “Lord of Fire.”

During the weekend presentation, when Stuart was trying to define for the participants at the workshop how GI existed before he “was born” and how the other two are an integral part of GI, Stuart said it was as hard to describe as the Christian belief in the Trinity.

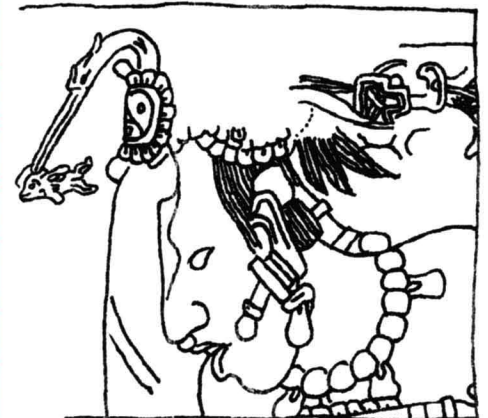
### Possible Correlations

The correlations to our Scriptures seem so obvious! The three dominions of creation—heaven, sea, and earth—embodied in each of the temples respectively, calls to mind, “For in six days the Lord made **heaven and earth**, and the **sea**...” (Mosiah 7:118 and Exodus 20:11, emphasis added) and “In the beginning I created the **heaven**, and the **earth**. . . and my Spirit moved upon the face of the **waters**...” (Genesis 1:3 & 5, IV, emphasis added).

Several weeks after the meetings, while contemplating the observations about the Temple of the Foliated Cross and its abundant tree of life growing out of the waters, I suddenly remembered Psalm 1, verse 3. “And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper.” Could this tablet be a visual representation of this scripture? The people of The Book of Mormon had the Brass Plates, the scriptures up to the time of Jeremiah, thus including the Psalms. Or could this represent the tree in Lehi’s vision? “I beheld that the rod of iron which my father had seen, was the word of God, which led to the fountain of living waters, or to the tree of life; which waters are a representation of the love of God; And . . . the tree of life was a representation of the love of God” (1 Nephi 3:68-69).

Perhaps, though, in light of the information presented above in relation to GI, the most striking similarity is the possible interpretation of GI as Jesus Christ. The evi-

*Continued on page 5.*



K’inich Ahkal Mo’ Nahb follows K’inich Kan Bahlam as king. This drawing of a section of the bench in the newly excavated Temple XIX at Palenque shows Ahkal Mo’ Nahb as he impersonates or takes on the aspects of God GI. Note the bird with fish in its beak as part of the headdress.



## Could God GI be Christ?

From page 4.

dences to date seem quite convincing that GI of the Palenque Triad represents Christ.

- GI existed before he was born; he was the father and son, and was a creator god. "Behold I am Jesus Christ, the son of God. I created the heavens and the earth, and all things that in them are. I was with the Father from the beginning. I am in the Father, and the Father in me..." (3 Nephi 4:44-45).
- GI seems to be a major participant in a sacrificial event. Christ was to be the infinite sacrifice. "And behold, this is the whole meaning of the law, every whit pointing to that great and last sacrifice; and that last and great sacrifice will be the Son of God" (Alma 16:215).
- The tree cross and solar bowl represent resurrection and sacrifice. Christ was crucified and rose from the dead on the third day. "They shall consider him a man . . . and shall crucify him. And he shall rise the third day from the dead" (Mosiah 1:104-105).
- GI descends from the sky followed by the dedication of a temple. Christ appears to the Nephites near the temple in Land Bountiful after his resurrection and ascension into heaven. "They saw a man descending out of heaven . . . and he came down and stood in the midst of them. . . . He stretched forth his hand, and spake unto the people, saying, Behold I am Jesus Christ, of whom the prophets testified should come into the world. . . (3 Nephi 5:9-11).
- GI has strong connections to water. Baptism is a major principle of the doctrine of Christ. "I give unto you power that ye shall baptize this people. . . . On this wise shall ye baptize them: Behold, ye shall go down and stand in the water, and in my name shall ye baptize them" (3 Nephi 5:21-25).

Having suggested these correlations, however, I feel it only fair to point out that many times Stuart would say, "It's not certain, but seems likely;" or, "It's hard to decipher, but. . . ." Future decipherment may change some of these current understandings, and we may have to shift our conclusions. While Stuart claims 90-95 percent of the glyphs can be recognized, ongoing explorations and workshops, like the Maya

Meetings, sometimes present new readings, causing different interpretations.

The five correlations between God GI and Jesus Christ, though, provide strong evidence that they are one and the same.

### Problems with the Inscriptions

During the meetings I marveled how closely the Palenque Cross Group imagery and texts match the teachings found in the Scriptures, i.e. act of creation, Christ as the

The three glyphs of the Palenque Triad



Son of God and creator, and the tree of life. But one generally concludes, or at least I did, that both Nephites and Lamanites rejected the gospel during the final battles. If so, why do we find so many evidences that imply the Maya retained knowledge of the gospel three hundred years after the last battle?

Also there is much that does not reflect Christian teachings: the decapitation of two crocodiles, the "dressing of effigies" housed in each of the three temples, and the existence of many other gods besides the Triad. This extraneous material disturbed me.

In the past, when giving a presentation about the Maya creation story to help explain in some way the other "stuff," I have made a comparison to Catholicism: Mary and saints have been deified; effigies (idols) created and placed throughout cathedrals; priesthood adorned in elaborate clothing; rituals reminiscent of the original gospel are conducted; and during the Inquisition many were tortured and killed, all in the name of the Lord.

But, I was still troubled by the heathen aspects accompanying the mythology of the Palenque inscriptions and prayed for light.

Several days after the workshop, I came across a little pamphlet called *The Priesthood Journal*, a quarterly magazine for the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints. This particular issue entitled "Use and Abuse of Spiritual Gifts" was written by Elbert A. Smith (April 1940). On the second page I found something that quite satisfied me.

Smith related that the restoration movement restored the Christian church in its

organic form with its doctrines, gifts and blessings of the gospel as enumerated by the Apostle Paul. He quotes Calvin, who laments the loss of these gifts, and then John Wesley, who wrote:

It does not appear that these extraordinary gifts of the Holy Ghost were common in the church for more than two or three centuries. We seldom hear of them after that fatal period when the Emperor Constantine called himself a Christian. . . . From this time they almost entirely ceased. . . . The cause of this was not as has been commonly supposed, because there was no occasion for them, by reason of the world becoming Christian. This was a miserable mistake, as not a twentieth part was at that time even nominally Christian. The real cause was that "the love of many had waxed cold," and the Christians had no more of the Spirit than the heathen. . . . This was the real cause why the gifts of the Spirit were no longer retained in the church, because the Christians had turned heathen again, and had only a dead form left" (sermon 94).

Eureka! This helped me understand that the Lamanites who had turned heathen again had retained the form, but it was dead and embellished with strange "fruit"—evident in the imagery of other gods of Maya mythology (see 2 Tim 3:1-5). When we look beyond this extraneous material, we see vestiges of the Scriptures and Jesus Christ in the inscriptions at Palenque, providing support that the Maya are descendants of people in The Book of Mormon.

I would like to thank Lyle Smith and Shirley R. Heater for their invaluable help in critiquing and providing suggestions, additions, and amendments.

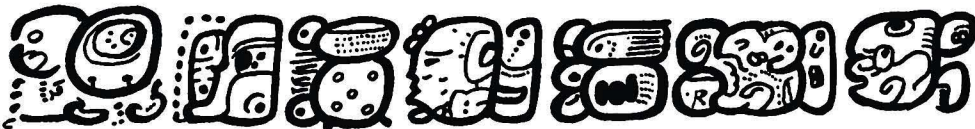
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6 **glyph notes****“Behold” Among the Maya**

Alay [here, now, behold, or lo]



This text follows the standard sequence for the “dedicatory formula” found on pots, plates, drinking cups, jewelry, and even buildings. It translates loosely as “Behold... is the painted drinking cup for cocoa of [person’s name].”

By Gaylord Shaw

**A**s I was looking at information about the Maya Meetings to be held in Austin, Texas, in 2006, I came across a report stemming from the 2005 meetings that I found very interesting! It gave a review of a few of the presentations and one of those especially caught my attention.

The theme for the meetings was “Glyphs on Pots.” The texts on pottery follow a specific pattern called a dedicatory formula. Two prominent Maya epigraphers, Barbara MacLeod and Yuri Polyukhovich, independently came to the conclusion that a glyph identified as the “Initial Sign of the Dedicatory Formula” should be translated as *alay*. The word *alay* is a demonstrative particle translated into English as “here is” or “now.” Apparently the arguments they put forward were very persuasive, and as the author of the article pointed out, “the stories of how they each arrived at the same reading independently proved to be a fascinating demonstration of the mechanics of

decipherment and the fun of decoding Maya glyphs.”

So what about this word “alay” and its meaning? First it is an “initial sign” of a “dedicatory formula.” That is, the beginning of something important obviously meant to focus the reader’s attention on what is being written.

Second, the meaning, arrived at independently by both of the epigraphers, may be either (or perhaps both) “here is” or “now.” These words serve as an attention getter and introduce the material that follows. The writer here uses the words to define the function of the word *alay* as “a demonstrative particle.”

Doesn’t the frequent use of the word “behold” in the Scriptures, and particularly in The Book of Mormon, convey the same meaning?

It may be that this is a word which MacLeod may not have, and most certainly Yuri Polyukhovich from the Ukraine would not have, used as a meaning for *alay*, but it appears that “behold” fits just as well.

If they did think of the word “behold,” they may not have wanted to use it, much like the initial use of the deciphered phrase “and then it came to pass” by David Stuart. This phrase has now been changed by those who translate the glyphs to phrases like “it happened” or “it took place.” This alternate use may very well be to get away from the Biblical or Book of Mormon phrase with which we are so familiar. This of course distances “science” from “religion.”

According to *Strong’s Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible*, “behold” is given another synonym of “lo.” It appears then that the word *alay* can also be used as “behold” or “lo.”

Another Mayanist observed that the first letter “a” of the word “alay” may have come from the Chol Maya dialect. In the Yucatec dialect it would have been spelled with an “i.” Although this is a minor difference, the geographic location of origin for the word, if in fact it could be translated into English as “behold” or “lo,” could give us added insight into the people in Mesoamerica who first used it.

As the hymn says, “The Lord has yet more light and truth to break forth from His word.”

This is especially true for The Book of Mormon right now as greater research interest in the peoples of the Americas, particularly the Maya of southern Mexico, prompts new discoveries which support it.

**PSI Sponsors Series of Lectures**

Beginning in February of 2006 and running for 12 weeks, members of PSI presented a series of lectures, covering a wide range of subjects. They were held at the South Chrysler restoration branch with attendance ranging from 30 to 70 people. Attendees indicated they liked the variety. Samplings from comments are: “liked all of it!” “especially liked video/pictures, new info;” “knowledgeable instructors;” “information on current topics;” the variety of speakers.”

<b>Presenter</b>	<b>Title</b>
Don Beebe	“Evidences from Mesoamerica that Change Faith into Knowledge”
Lyle Smith	“Arad, With Power and Great Glory”
Lyle Smith	“Can History be Faked? Comparison of Olmec and Jaredite Timeline”
Lyle Smith	“Can History be Faked? Comparison of Maya and Nephite/Lamanite/Mulekite Timelines”
Don Beebe	Film: “DNA Verses The Book of Mormon”
Don Beebe	“Book of Mormon—Fact or Fiction”
Glenn Scott	“Easy Assumptions”
Tim Raffety	“Metal Plates and Stone Boxes”
Glenn Scott	“Recent Archaeological Evidences Supporting The Book of Mormon”
Sherrie Kline Smith	“Maya Creation Text”
Shirley Heater	“Book of Mormon Archaeology and Faith”

If you would like to request any of these speakers and/or topics, please contact Don Beebe at (816) 796-4094, Lyle Smith at (816) 229-5192 or write to PSI at PO Box 477, Independence, MO 64051.



## the Joy line as shared with Joy Muir

### Testimony of Warren Bennett

I was asked to write some questions for the Senior High Quarterly using Glenn Scott's book *Voices From the Dust* as the study guide. Sometimes I write questions without knowing the answers and then, I have to spend time looking for the answer. Not always an easy task.

One of the chapters covered in this quarterly was the "Messiah in the New World." I read the material about Christ's visit. The Nephites saw him, they heard him, and they touched him. The question that came to me was, "Why did Jesus invite everyone to come forward and touch the wounds in his hands and his side?" True, touching his

wounds would be a testimony that he was the Messiah that the prophets had written about, but was that all there was to it?

I think I have found a little more of the answer in the writings of Apostle John. He wrote, "That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you...." The Nephites saw and heard him, too, and had a tremendous testimony. "That ye also may have fellowship with us...." The Nephites now had fellowship with each other in an even more spectacular and wonderful way, but the best part is, "And truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ" (1 John 1:1-3).

Now the Nephites could also say with John and the other apostles that "our hands

have handled." Their witness wasn't secondhand. They could give an unshakable witness that Jesus came and visited them. Most importantly, they had a personal fellowship with Jesus Christ. When they prayed they knew to whom they were praying. They personally knew of his great sacrifice, having touched his very wounds—a very humbling experience.

Warren serves as a priest, lives in Independence, and attends the Waldo Avenue restoration branch. He is retired from a career with the U. S. Customs Service and has three children and six grandchildren.

## glyph clips

### ◆ Stone Box

*National Geographic News* reported May 5, 2006, about the theft of a 1,500 year-old stone box from a cave near Cancuén, Guatemala. Many stone boxes have been found in Mesoamerica dating to the time of The Book of Mormon, but this is the first connected with "housing" a book. Guatemalan hieroglyphic expert Federico Fahsen believes that the symbols or glyphs carved on the lid of the box indicate "that the stone vessel may have originally contained a Maya codex, or ancient book." Before the box was stolen, good drawings and photos had been made.

[http://news.nationalgeographic.com/news/1006/05/0505\\_060505\\_maya\\_2.html](http://news.nationalgeographic.com/news/1006/05/0505_060505_maya_2.html)

### ◆ Mirador Basin

The May 2006 issue of the *Institute of Maya Studies Newsletter* (from the Miami Museum of Science, <http://www.mayastudies.org/index.html>) featured an update about the work in the Mirador Basin. Located in the northern Peten of Guatemala and extending into the southern Yucatan Peninsula of Mexico, it is home to the largest ancient Maya city found to date, El Mirador. Currently it takes three days on mule to get to El Mirador, but Dr. Richard Hansen, archaeologist who has worked in the area for many years, is trying to

change that and create a protected archaeological and environmental zone, making access for tourists easier.

The primary settlement of the major sites in the Basin dates to between 1000 BC and 350 BC, and then 350 BC to AD 150. The largest structures date to 350 BC to AD 150 when the whole Mirador Basin appears to have been abandoned. It was never resettled until about 500 years later. The timeframe of this area fits squarely into The Book of Mormon era.

One of the unique architectural forms found at El Mirador is the triadic style that dominates the major structures.

Three structures sit on the top of large pyramidal platforms. The central structure is the dominant building with the other two on either side facing each other. The architectural pattern is pervasive and seems to have made "its appearance relatively suddenly about 300 BC. It is believed to reflect a dramatic new emphasis in political, economic and religious ideology...."

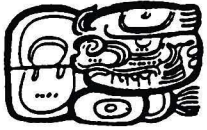
The work at the Mirador Basin holds much promise for more supporting evidences and information to flesh out the story told in The Book of Mormon. We need to continue to watch for news about El Mirador and its surrounding sites.

### ◆ Fortifications at Tikal

A short report was given in *Mexicon* (February 2006) about work being done by a project called the Study of Archaeological Fortifications at Tikal. In February 2005 the project discovered that the fortifications surround the whole city of Tikal. A portion of the wall has been known since 1960, but it wasn't until recently that it was confirmed that the embankment and ditch completely surround the city. It's approximately eight meters high and five meters wide and extends for 35 kilometers. It dates to the late Preclassic period (350 BC to AD 150).

# glyph quotes

*They shall consider him a man....* — Mosiah 1:104



By Sherrie Kline Smith

**T**he *Da Vinci Code*, promoted as “one of the bestselling novels of all time,” proposes that Jesus secretly married Mary Magdalene. This fictional, action-packed thriller is a worldwide bestseller with more than 60.5 million copies in print (as of May 2006) and has been translated into 44 languages. It is thought to be the sixth biggest selling book of all time. The author, Dan Brown, thinks that Jesus was simply “a great and powerful man, but a *man* nonetheless.”

This belief and teaching is nothing new. Approximately 125 years before the birth of Jesus, an angel came to King Benjamin and told him to awake because he had wondrous things to tell him, “glad tidings of great joy.” Foremost among these tidings was that the “Lord Omnipotent who reigneth, who was, and is from all eternity to all eternity, shall come down from heaven, among the children of men, and shall dwell in a tabernacle of clay” (Mosiah 1:97). The angel went on to say, though, that those living at the time when the Lord would come to the earth would simply “consider him a man” and would crucify him.

Part of the underlying doubt of Christ’s divinity comes because of the way the Bible was put together. As Collin Hansen, editor of *Christianity Today*, points out, “Indeed, the Bible’s composition and consolidation may appear a bit too human for the comfort of some Christians.” (www.Christianitytoday.com)

The Book of Mormon, however, brings an added witness that Jesus was God incarnate. And while some will disbelieve because of the manner in which it came forth, there is no doubt that the teachings of the book proclaim Jesus’ divinity.

It does make a difference whether Jesus is divine or not. Regardless of the proposal in *The Da Vinci Code*, we know, because of the testimony in the Scriptures, that Jesus is the Christ, the son of the living God, the Holy One of Israel.

## glyph calendar

MAY - JUNE

2nd  
Tuesday

PSI Meeting  
7:00 pm.

Call Don Beebe  
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8-18

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