

GLYPH

Notes

PRE-COLUMBIAN STUDIES INSTITUTE • MARCH/APRIL 2011 • VOLUME 18 NUMBER 2

Journey with PSI Tours to Lands and Ruins of The Book of Mormon

by Eighteen Travelers;
main text by Sherrie Kline Smith

Ready for an adventure? Do you want The Book of Mormon to come alive? Then hop on Pedro's bus and join PSI's tour of Mesoamerican ruins, even if it is vicariously through this photo essay.



Sherrie Kline Smith

From February 3rd to the 13th, 18 explorers enjoyed the camaraderie of new friendships, the intrigue of mysterious ruins, the pleasure of beautiful, exotic flora, and fun fauna. Tour members sent in their favorite photos and told why they selected them. Their comments are intertwined with this commentary and other photos that were chosen to help you experience the tour from the comfort of your favorite armchair.

Tulum

Our first stop is Tulum, a beautiful site that sits high on the bluffs overlooking white sands and the aquamarine waters of the Caribbean. We visit this small ruin because of its spectacular setting. Although it was a city at the time of the Conquest and therefore much later than the account in The Book of Mormon, the site has numerous stucco frieze examples of the "descending god." The belief that a god descends or descended from heaven is prevalent in the Maya area. Perhaps this represents ancient memories of Christ's visit to his people in the New World as described in 3 Nephi 5:9-10 [LDS 11:8].

Abandoned long ago, the ruins' only inhabitants now are numerous iguanas!

Cont. on Page 2



Shirley Wilson makes friends with one of the iguanas.

Ron Wilson



Tulum

Lyle L. Smith



Journey with us as we share our memories of this year's PSI tour of Book of Mormon lands through our notes and beautiful photography.



Sherrie Kline Smith



Dzibanché

I found Dzibanché very peaceful and enjoyed the quietness, but also enjoyed the howler monkeys who broke into their chorus.

— Liz Combs, Independence, MO



Liz Combs

ourselves, except for howler monkeys.

An incensario (for burning copal incense) in the form of the descending god, so similar to the stucco friezes at Tulum, was found at Dzibanché. It matches the same timeframe as Tulum, around AD 1250.

Although in the middle of the sparsely settled lower part of the Yucatan peninsula, we fortunately have a marvelous place to spend the night — the Chicanna Ecovillage. We see a fox in the adjacent forest and rise early to catch a glimpse of a vast array of tropical birds.

Calakmul

Calakmul sits far off the highway deep in the Maya rainforest. Excit-

PSI Tour (Cont. from page 1) Dzibanché and Kohunlich

The second day takes us to two sites about 19 miles apart: Dzibanché and Kohunlich. Archaeological evidence indicates these cities began during the timeframe of The Book of Mormon and may be part of the line of cities built along the east seacoast referenced in Alma 23 [LDS 51]. A vast difference from Tulum where tourists descend in the thousands each day, these two sites are quiet and peaceful. We have the place to

Kohunlich

Structure 1 at Kohunlich is noted for its beautifully preserved stucco "masks" that flank the central staircase on either side. Each one of the four is different.

A descending god incensario is found at Dzibanché.



Don Beebe

Sherrie Kline Smith

ing discoveries have come from this enormous site including numerous jade masks (displayed at the museum in Campeche), a mummy, wall paintings, and more than 100 stelae. The

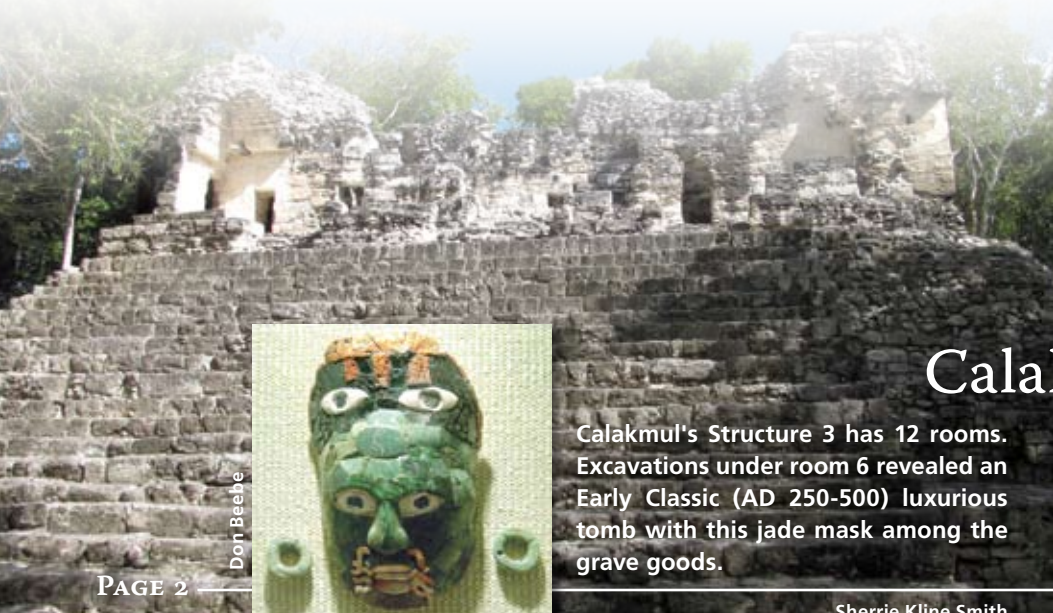
highest part of massive Structure 2 dates to the Late Preclassic (250 BC-AD 250), clearly in existence at the time of The Book of Mormon.



Susan Meddaugh

Emily, Katy and me at the top of Structure 2 at Calakmul. This height was breathtaking, in that we had the opportunity to look out over the entire rainforest and distant structures.

— Barb Allinder, Independence, MO



Calakmul

Calakmul's Structure 3 has 12 rooms. Excavations under room 6 revealed an Early Classic (AD 250-500) luxurious tomb with this jade mask among the grave goods.

Calakmul's Structure 1 rises behind the Allinders. It is almost as high as Structure 2.



Don Beebe

Sherrie Kline Smith

Sherrie Kline Smith

Becan



Class taught by Lyle L. Smith. Left to right: Colleen Rakiewicz, Emily Allinder, Susan Meddaugh, Diane Scharnowske, Barbara Allinder, Lydia Brady, Bonny Briggs, Ron Wilson and Ted Combs.



Along with classes given by Lyle, Sherrie gave a class on reading the glyphs, and then, at the sites or museums, helped tour members find and recognize some of these, especially the many "and it came to pass" glyphs.



Leigh Briggs

Becan

The following day we drive a short mile to Becan, a small but fun site to explore. Covered passageways, inside stairways, and multi-story buildings lure the adventurous. The deep moat that surrounds Becan, remains of the site's fortifications still visible today, dates from The Book of Mormon period and confirms Chief Captain Moroni's warfare tactics (Alma 24:52-57 [LDS 58:2-5]).

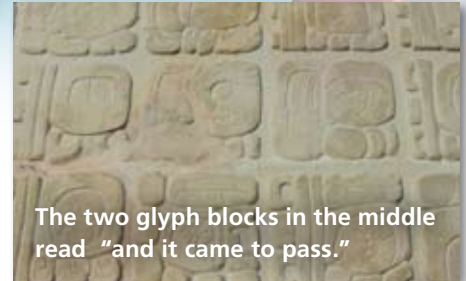
Palenque

After a long drive we arrive at Palenque for the night. The next morning it begins to rain. And rain. And rain! This is supposed to be the dry season! We postpone our scheduled trip to Yaxchilán. Hoping the rain will stop, we hold a class after breakfast. The rain begins to abate, and we decide to go

first to the Palenque museum. It is filled with stunning stucco friezes and hieroglyphic panels. We see many "and it came to pass" glyphs, a witness that the Maya employed some of the same language patterns found in The Book of Mormon and Bible.

Fortuitously the rain stops as we finish the museum, and we go into the site of Palenque. The clouds and mist contribute to the beauty and mystery of this place, one that many declare to be their favorite. Its ethereal beauty is unsurpassed in Maya ruins.

Although the visible ruins date to the sixth and seventh centuries, many parallels exist with The Book of Mormon people and record. The famous "Cross Group" of three temples is a visible manifestation of the creation of the heavens, earth, and sea. The Temple of the Cross and



The two glyph blocks in the middle read "and it came to pass."

Sherrie Kline Smith

Temple of Foliated Cross are so called because the central motifs in the back wall panels are crosses. Rising behind the Temple of the Foliated Cross is a small mountain that epigraphy expert David Stuart believes the Maya called "Descending Quetzal Mountain." Part of the inscription in the Temple of the Cross describes God GI descending.

We go to bed that night praying for a clear day on the morrow.

Cont. on Page 4

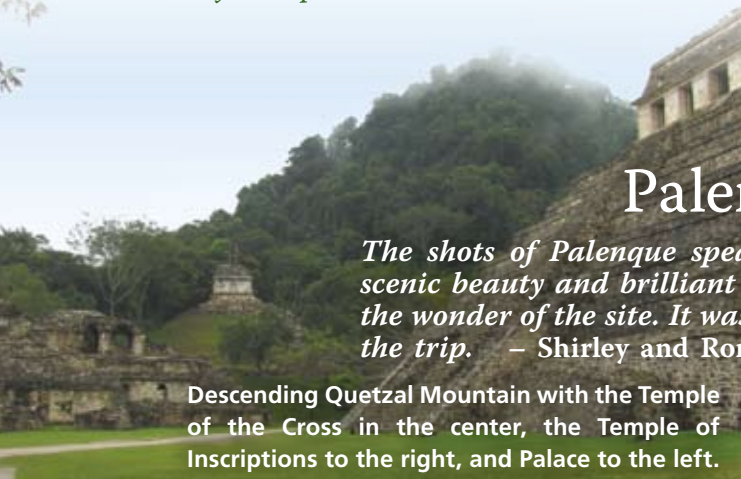
At right is one of my favorite photos from the tour because of its pastel colors and marvelous stucco details that exemplify the great skill of the Maya sculptors and scribes. – Sherrie Kline Smith, Grain Valley, MO



Sherrie Kline Smith

Palenque

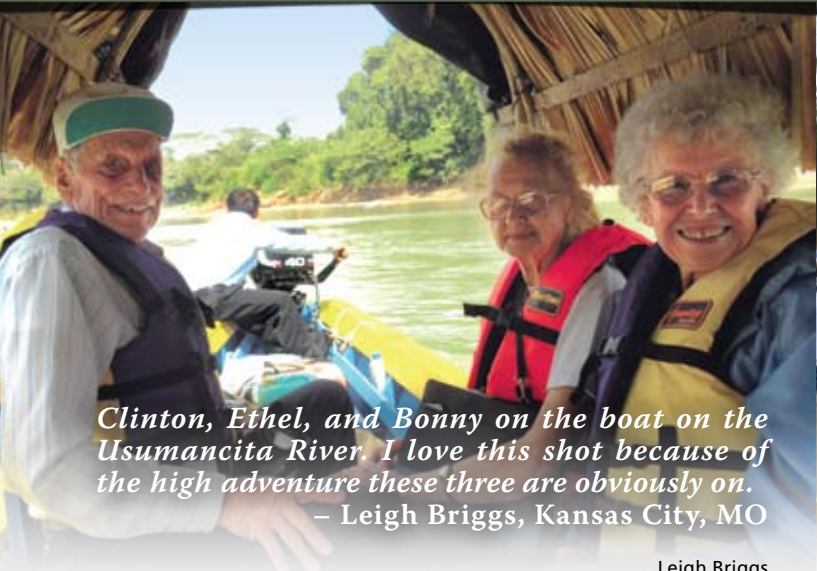
The shots of Palenque speak to your heart with their scenic beauty and brilliant color, and show so perfectly the wonder of the site. It was one of our favorite stops on the trip. – Shirley and Ron Wilson, Lee's Summit, MO



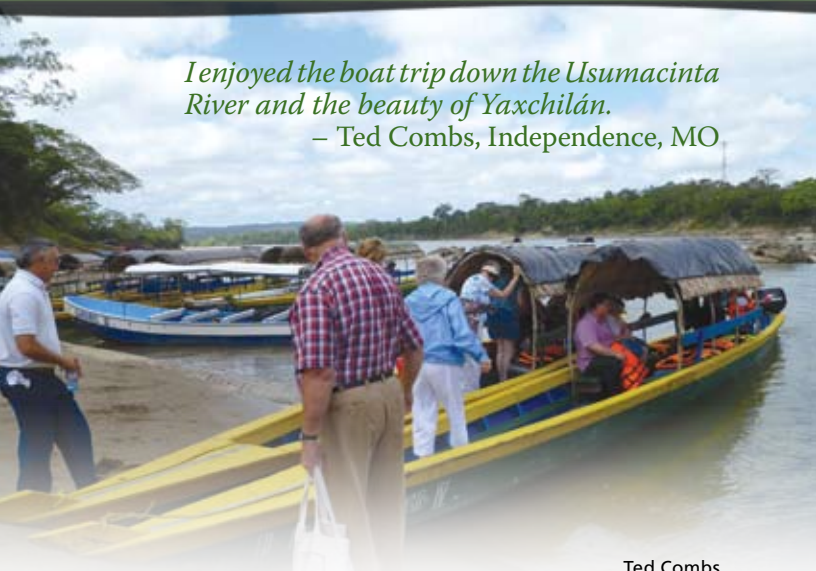
Descending Quetzal Mountain with the Temple of the Cross in the center, the Temple of Inscriptions to the right, and Palace to the left.



The Cross Group: Temple of the Sun far left, Temple of the Cross behind Kristen Briggs who is standing on the front of the Temple of the Foliated Cross (not shown).



Clinton, Ethel, and Bonny on the boat on the Usumacinta River. I love this shot because of the high adventure these three are obviously on.
 – Leigh Briggs, Kansas City, MO



I enjoyed the boat trip down the Usumacinta River and the beauty of Yaxchilán.
 – Ted Combs, Independence, MO

PSI Tour (Cont. from page 3)
Yaxchilán

Our prayers are answered, and we embark early in the morning for a three-hour ride to Frontera Corozal stopping along the way for breakfast at a unique restaurant in the jungle. At Frontera Corozal we board our boats for a 45-minute ride on the Usumacinta River to the ruins of Yaxchilán. We always look for crocodiles, and we are not disappointed!

After a climb up the steep and slippery concrete stairs from the river, visitors have a choice to go either right, which takes one up to the high

I had a really great time on our trip. Thank you so much.
 – Susan Meddaugh,
 Oak Grove, MO

Leigh Briggs

Ted Combs

hills, or the left which leads into the main plaza. We go left and need flashlights to navigate through Structure 19 to enter the grand plaza.

Yaxchilán is famous for its numerous carved lintels, stelae, and hieroglyphic stairs. All visible remains date to the seventh and eighth centuries,

far past The Book of Mormon era. No real deep archaeological excavations have taken place, but ceramic finds indicate it's possible the site goes back as early as 300 BC. The dynastic history appears to begin about AD 359, at the same time kings are reinstated in The Book of Mormon (Mormon 1:31, 68 [LDS 2:9 & 3:4]). We find to our delight many “and it came to pass” glyphs.



GLYPH *Notes*
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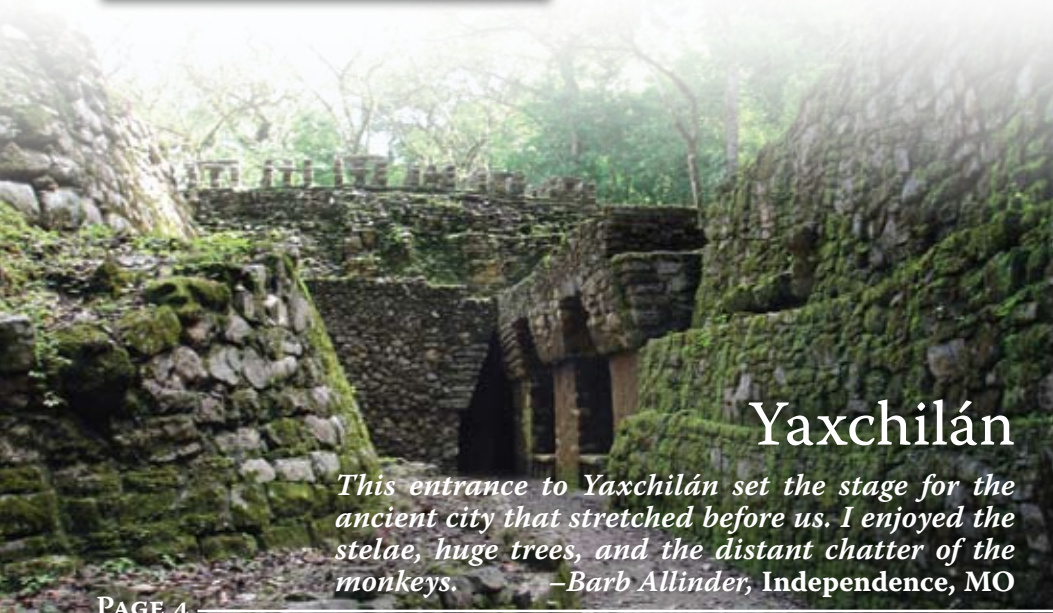
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Yaxchilán

This entrance to Yaxchilán set the stage for the ancient city that stretched before us. I enjoyed the stelae, huge trees, and the distant chatter of the monkeys.
 – Barb Allinder, Independence, MO



The beautiful carved Stela 35 is of Lady Evening Star, the mother of King Bird Jaguar IV. She was originally from Calakmul. The back wall once was brilliantly illustrated with seated figures painted in red and the traditional Maya blue.

La Venta Park



Sisters, Diane Scharnowske (left) and Susan Meddaugh, in front of the Olmec head in La Venta Park.

Here is my funniest picture from the trip. It is at Fort San Miguel. Since it was so hard to see inside the museum due to the lack of electricity, when I was upon the roof, I noticed that the canons at the fort were still standing guard ... not against pirates, but against the "evil tour buses" that now invade the site. I thought you might enjoy sharing with the readers about how the trips are not only inspirational, but also have a lighter side to them.

– Susan Meddaugh, Oak Grove, MO

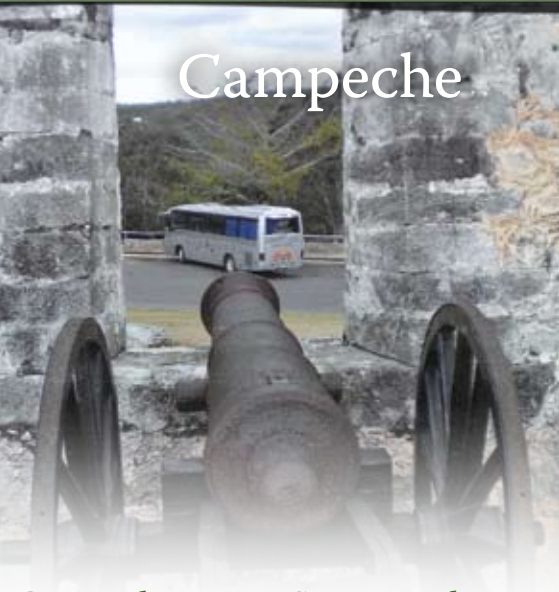
Lyle L. Smith

Susan Meddaugh

La Venta Park—Villahermosa

Today we stop at La Venta Park where Olmec (Jaredite) monuments from the site of La Venta are attractively displayed in a lush tropical nature trail and small zoological park in Villahermosa. Everyone has their photo taken with the most famous of the 17 discovered Olmec "heads." We find the "Ambassador" or "Walker" monument, carved with a man holding a "flag" and three iconographic elements plus the outline of a foot, which indicates walking or taking a journey. Epigraphers don't agree on the meaning of the other elements. Although among Olmec ruins, this appears to fit the account of Chief Captain Moroni and his "Title of Liberty" remarkably well (Alma 21:41-42 [LDS 46:12-13]).

A Dairy Queen next to a Kentucky Fried Chicken grabs our attention and we stop for lunch!



Campeche

Campeche — Fort San Miguel

Early evening finds us at one of my favorite places in Mexico, Campeche. In the morning we visit Fort San Miguel, one of two forts built by the Spanish to repulse pirates. The canons are still in place, but the main attraction is the Maya Culture Museum. We are wowed by artifacts like the superbly crafted jade masks and "mummy" from Calakmul, as well as magnificent pottery and ceramics.

Uxmal

We continue on to Uxmal, a site many believe represents one of the architectural high points of the Maya. It flourished about AD 850-925. Numerous unexcavated buildings lie beyond the doorway of what is called the Pigeon House group because the roof combs resemble pigeon houses.

Cont. on Page 8

Thank you so much for a wonderful trip. It really has changed my life. I can't wait to share some of the things that I learned with all the kids at Mountain Camp in June!!!
– Emily Allinder, Independence, MO

Kristen Briggs



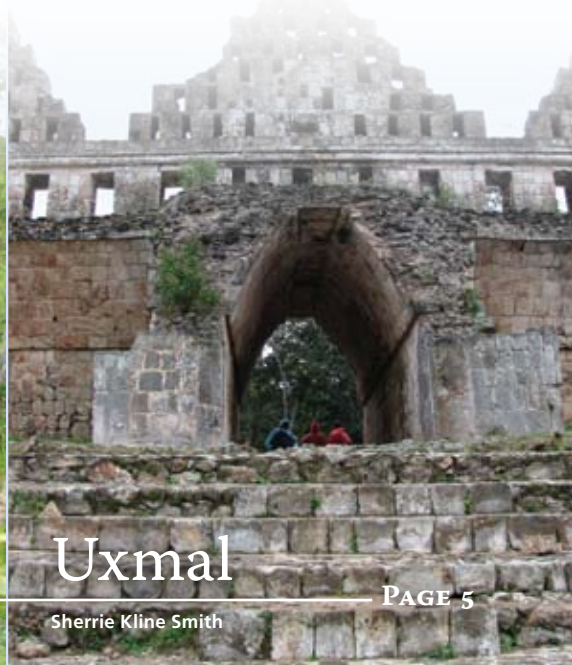
This is just a humorous shot. I am known to all that know me as a huge DQ fan. So I was very happy to see this one.

– Leigh Briggs, Kansas City, MO

Plan now to join PSI Tours tour in 2012!

Villahermosa

Sherrie Kline Smith



Uxmal

Sherrie Kline Smith

Welcome to Dwellers!

Dwellers - to live and have a home in a particular place



Hi guys!
So much has happened since I last saw you! Remember how Lehi and his family had to flee from Jerusalem? Well, Nephi and his brothers had to go back! I know... It was crazy!

The Adventures of Beezrom

by Mindy Mulheron

We were several days from Jerusalem when the Lord told Lehi that we needed to go back and get the Plates of Brass. Well, I was pretty scared because those plates were in Laban's house and he is a scary guy, but Nephi said that God would never tell us to do something without making sure we could do it. So, Nephi, Sam, Laman, Lemuel, and I all went back to Jerusalem.

Nephi was so brave! With the Lord's help, he got the plates all by himself. Mean old Laban was no match for God and Nephi! We even met a new friend! Zoram decided that he should come with us to the Promised Land. And later on, Ishmael and his family also decided to come with us. So there we were - Lehi's family, Zoram, Ishmael's family and me - traveling toward the Promised Land, when the Lord gave Lehi another vision.

This time, Lehi saw a tree with beautiful, white fruit. Beyond the tree, was a narrow path that led to the tree. There was also a rod of iron along the path. Lehi looked in the distance and saw that there were many people walking on the path, trying to reach the tree. Unfortunately, there was a mist of darkness (which is like fog) that fell over the path - so unless they held on to the rod of iron, they got lost. Many, many people were lost and took other paths. Only the ones who held on tight were able to reach the tree.

Nephi began to wonder what his dad's vision meant, so he asked the Lord to help him understand. God told Nephi that the tree with the beautiful delicious fruit was a symbol for the love of God. (Like the yellow arches are a symbol for McDonalds.) So when everyone was trying so hard to get to the tree to eat the delicious fruit, it was because they wanted to experience God's love! And the only way to safely get there was to hold on to the rod of iron - which is a symbol for the word of God. That's what got them through the dark fog.

Isn't that great?! God loves us so much and wants us to be with Him so much, that He gave us the Scriptures to help us find our way to Him! When we study our Scriptures and pray, we are holding on to the rod of iron - which means we'll make it to the tree. And we now know that the tree is a symbol for God's love, so when we make it to the tree that means that we are then resting in God's loving arms. What a great place to be!

Im so glad that God helped Nephi understand,

because then Nephi helped me understand - and I wouldn't have wanted to miss out on hearing how much God loves me! So don't let go of that rod of iron! Study your Scriptures and pray, and you will make it to the tree and feel God's amazing love. And if you're ever scared while walking through the dark, foggy parts of the road, don't forget that He's given you parents, grandparents, aunts, uncles, and friends to help you keep hold onto the rod of iron and keep you on the right path. What a great God!

Well, I better get back and see what's going on! See ya next time!

Word Search by Beezrom

O T H G I T N O D L O H I T X
 E N A B A L R O D O F I R O N
 S V I S I O N J I B R A V E K
 S S A R I A H M A R O Z X H L
 D O G J X K H U K Q N A H A A
 P R O M I S E D L A N D W C M
 S S E N K R A D F O T S I M A
 C J A F N L E H I M U V J Q N
 H O L E M U E L E A M H S I F
 R U I I L E F I L F O E E R T
 R R L U T R U S T I N G O D T
 C N O D O G N I E V E I L E B
 Q E S A M P X H M O R Z E E B
 V Y T A J E R U S A L E M P K
 L N O I T C E T O R P Z K E Z

Word Search Terms

- | | | |
|------------|--------------|----------------|
| TREEOFLIFE | ZORAM | PROTECTION |
| RODOFIRON | LABAN | MISTOFDARKNESS |
| JOURNEY | ISHMAEL | LOST |
| LEHI | BEEZROM | HOLDONTIGHT |
| SAM | PROMISEDLAND | BRAVE |
| LEMUEL | VISION | BELIEVEINGOD |
| LAMAN | JERUSALEM | TRUSTINGOD |
| SARIAH | GOD | |



PROPOSED ITINERARY:

Organized and led by Lyle and Sherrie Smith

We arrive at Ben Gurion Airport in Tel Aviv. From there we will drive north along the Mediterranean Sea, visiting Caesarea and Mt. Carmel where Elijah challenged King Ahab. Then on to Megiddo which shows 20 levels of civilization. Moving on to the shores of the Sea of Galilee, we stay in the modern city of Tiberius. In Galilee we visit sites such as Bethsaida and Capernaum where many of Christ's miracles were done. We visit the Jordan River, Cana, Nazareth and the Mount of Beatitudes, followed by a visit to a Kibbutz and a relaxing boat cruise on the Sea of Galilee. Leaving Tiberius we will visit Beit-Shean, the most magnificent archeological site in Israel displaying astounding Roman ruins, then head for Jerusalem.

We do a tour of Qumran, where the Dead Sea Scrolls were discovered, as well as a visit to Masada, the mountain top fortress. In Jerusalem we visit Mount Moriah, Mount of Olives, Garden of Gethsemane, House of Caiaphas, Wailing Wall and the Rabbinical Tunnels, the Judgment Hall of Pilate, Pool of Bethesda, Gihon Springs, and walk through Hezekiah's Tunnel and see Stephen's Gate. We will walk the Via Dolorosa on our way to the Church of the Holy Sepulcher, the Garden Tomb and Southern Wall Excavations where Peter preached on the Day of Pentecost. And yes, a visit to Bethlehem.

Questions are welcome; call Lyle Smith, 816 838-5192 or E-mail at: smith.lyle@usa.net

REGISTRATION FORM

COSTS: Expected cost per person \$3,550 based on at least 16 people traveling. Airline fuel surcharges can change. **Single Room Supplement — additional \$649**

INCLUDES: Roundtrip AIR from Kansas City, hotels, breakfast and dinner in Israel, English speaking tour escort, guides, entrance fees, local transportation (bus), baggage handling tips at hotels (one large bag per traveler), tips to driver, guides and hotel staff.

NOT INCLUDED: Things like lunches, telephone, optional travel insurance, and laundry and additional air taxes and fuel charges if they rise before we travel.

LIQUOR or TOBACCO: Please refrain from using either when our group is together.

TRAVEL INSURANCE: We urge you to purchase trip insurance. Call us and we will suggest easy ways to do so.

PAYMENT SCHEDULE: A \$500 deposit is due by June 15, 2011 along with a completed registration form and a photocopy of your passport. Deposit refundable until August 15, 2011 when final payment is due. No refunds possible after August 15.

***** PASSPORTS REQUIRED *****

RESPONSIBILITY: *Cherry Tree Travel, LLC and Lyle and Sherrie Smith act only as agents for other tourist agencies, and accept no responsibility, or shall not become liable for delays, losses, damage or injury to persons or property, theft, mechanical defects or failure of any equipment, or substitution of hotel or carrier equipment beyond their control, and shall not be liable for any additional expenses incurred thereby.*

Please photocopy this form, fill in, sign, and mail with a photocopy of your passport and your deposit to: Lyle Smith, 32701 E. Pink Hill Rd., Grain Valley, Missouri 64029

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Deposit of \$500 (each person) is enclosed. Deposit total is \$ _____

Payment of tour costs described here-in, and signature below, signify acceptance on the part of the purchaser to the limits of liabilities.

***** EACH TRAVELER MUST SIGN *****

Signature

Signature

Date

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NAZARETH TO JERUSALEM
November 4-13, 2011
Israel Tour*

GLYPH *Notes*

PRE-COLUMBIAN STUDIES INSTITUTE

MARCH/APRIL 2011

VOLUME 18 NUMBER 2

PSI Tour (Cont. from page 5)

Chichén Itzá

Our last stop is Chichén Itzá, one of the most famous ruins in the world and visited by thousands of tourists each day. This large site has a small building called the Temple of the Bearded God at one end of the biggest Maya ball court, a large stone box with lid sitting at the base of the Castillo or Kukulcan Pyramid, and hundreds of examples of feathered serpents representing Quetzalcoatl.

Time to say good-bye and express our thoughts and feelings about the past ten days.

What a wonderful trip. Thank you for the fabulous experience and the education!

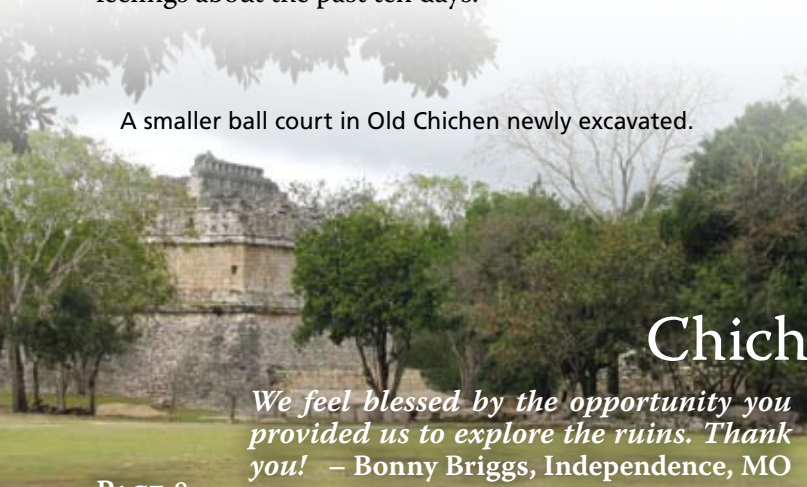
– Leigh Briggs, Kansas City, MO

I am so thankful that I was able to go on this trip ... And I feel very fortunate going now while I was still young enough to climb all those pyramids! What fun! Thank you so much for offering this fantastic opportunity to explore The Book of Mormon lands and ruins!

– Colleen Rakiewicz, Sierra Madre, CA 

Look for "glyph clips" and "glyph notes" to return in the next issue.

A smaller ball court in Old Chichen newly excavated.



Chichén Itzá

We feel blessed by the opportunity you provided us to explore the ruins. Thank you! – Bonny Briggs, Independence, MO



Feathered Serpent stairway of the Kukulcan Pyramid with stone box and lid at the base of the stairway. The small door in the stairway leads to the top of an earlier pyramid inside.