

they failed to point out some particular points that tend, in my mind, to make their presentation at least out of date. For example, they start with a quotation from John Taylor, who described the Latter-day Saints as being “open to truth of every kind, no matter whence it comes, where it originates or who believes in it. . . . A man in search of truth has no particular system to sustain, no particular dogma to defend or theory to uphold” (85). This is clearly behind the times. President Boyd K. Packer, a leading candidate for becoming a future president of the Church, has on many occasions said that Mormons should say only things that are faith-promoting. He stated: “In the Church we are not neutral. We are one-sided. There is a war going on, and we are engaged in it.” He proceeded by calling objective, impartial, and scholarly writing the evil that should be fought in this “war” (“The Mantle Is Far, Far Greater Than the Intellect,” *BYU Studies* 21, no. 3 [Summer 1981]: 267). He frequently states that scholars and intellectuals are a danger to the Church. Messers White and Thomas did not point this out. In my opinion they should have done so.

As another example, White and Thomas justify the holding of a variety of beliefs by Mormons concerning the historicity of the flood story: “As authors, we choose to follow the general rule apparent in the LDS Church which is to acknowledge respectfully the freedom of expression of, and tolerance for, those with differing conclusions regarding the flood. We consider this approach part of our joint Latter-day Saint quest to find the truth”

(99). That particular point of view is not possible for believing Latter-day Saints. The problem is that the story of Noah and the flood is told virtually the same as it appears in the Bible in LDS scriptures as well, including the Book of Mormon and the book of Moses. White and Thomas seem not to be impressed by that point. But Mormon readers of the scriptures must certainly be.

And finally, White and Thomas say, in essence, that slavery was abolished in the United States because of the strong religious values held by many abolitionists (101). Although true enough, this statement should not stand alone. It should be accompanied by mention of the fact that Brigham Young was not one of these abolitionists. In an interview with Horace Greeley on July 13, 1859, he told Greeley that slavery is of “divine institution.”¹ Brigham, perhaps the greatest colonizer this nation ever produced, as governor of Utah Territory supported slavery of both blacks and Indians. Flake Green, the driver of Brigham’s carriage when he entered the Salt Lake Valley, was a slave.

1. Andrew Love Neff, *History of Utah, 1847–1869*, edited by Leland H. Creer (Salt Lake City: Deseret News, 1940), 618.

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The Lesson of Noah’s Flood

I thought that the article by Clayton White and Mark Thomas, “On Balancing Faith in Mormonism with Traditional Biblical Stories: The Noachian Flood Story,” (40, no. 3 [Fall 2007])