

by the command of the Lord they collected seeds and grain of every kind, and animals of almost every description, among which, no doubt, were the elephant and the curelom and the cumom, very huge animals that existed in those days, and after traveling and crossing, we suppose, the sea that was east of where the Tower of Babel stood, and traveling through the wilderness many days, with their flocks and herds, their grain and substance, they eventually came to the great Pacific ocean, on the eastern borders of China or somewhere in that region. They were commanded of the Lord to build vessels. They went to work and constructed eight barges. They did not understand the art of Navigation as we do in these days. They had no astronomical instruments by which they could ascertain the altitude of the sun, or the altitude of the moon and stars, by which they could determine their position on the great and mighty ocean. But the same God who had led them from the Tower of Babel and had gone before them in a bright cloud by day, and had hovered over their camp and had directed them in their journey through the wilderness, was their navigator in crossing the ocean. They entered these eight barges, about the construction of which it may be well to say a few words. A great many opposers of the Book of Mormon, in reading the account of these vessels, have really supposed that there was an insurmountable difficulty connected with the building of these barges because there happened to be a hole in the top, and another hole constructed in the bottom to enable the beings shut up in them to be watertight. These vessels were built, not in the form of a tea saucer as has been represented by some "anti-Mormons" in their discussions; but

the Book of Mormon informs us that they were peaked at the ends, and enlarged as they came to the middle, and they were tight like a dish on the water, and were very light, like to the lightness of a fowl. They were exceedingly strong, and the length of a tree. This is a phrase very similar to one used by Isaiah who says, "the age of His people shall be as the age of a tree." Isaiah does not say what kind of a tree. It was simply a way the ancients had of comparing a great many things. Now these vessels were so constructed that when furious winds should blow upon the face of the great deep, and the waves should roll mountains high they could without imminent danger plunge beneath the waves, and be brought up again to the surface of the water during tremendous hurricanes and storms. Now to prepare them against these contingencies, and that they might have fresh air for the benefit of the elephants, cureloms or mammoths and many other animals, that perhaps were in them, as well as the human beings they contained, the Lord told them how to construct them in order to receive air, that when they were on the top of the water, whichever side up their vessels happened to be, it mattered not; they were so constructed that they could ride safely, though bottom upwards and they could open their air holes that happened to be uppermost. Now all our ships at the present day are constructed with holes in the bottom as well as in the top. I have crossed the ocean twelve times, but I never saw a ship yet that did not have a hole in the bottom for the convenience of passengers, and it is one of the simplest things in the world to have holes in the bottom of a ship if you only have tubes running up sufficiently high above the general water