

The Mystic Symbol - Ancient American Monogram for Christ

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Unique to ancient America is what researcher Henriette Mertz called "*the Mystic Symbol*, a Christ-centered motif found on thousands of artifacts in the Mississippi Valley area of North America, home of the "Mound Builders." The Mound Builders are a group of caucasian, pre-columbian Christians who settled in North America in the 3rd and 4th century AD. Their use of *the Mystic Symbol* is Atonement-centered. This monogram of Christ is found atop nearly every clay, slate, or copper tablet unearthed by early 19th century American farmers. And there are thousands of them. The symbol is made of *five* nails (with heads) serving as the cuneiform letters "I H S". It is often found inside a sun symbol with rays of light extending from it. The letters "I H S" are the first three letters of the Greek name for "*Jesus*" (Iota, Eta and Sigma), or in *Latin* "**Jesus, Savior of Men.**" *The Mystic Symbol* bears testimony of Jesus Christ in its five nail-shaped letters. It does so frequently inside a sun-centered oval. Many of them also feature a nearby "*all-seeing eye*," centered within the shining sun motif. Others feature a portrait of Christ.



This three-part symbol in gold features the Mystic Symbol at center (the five nails motif). All three symbols together reads, "Jehovah (the pre-mortal Christ), Jesus - Savior of Men, Son of the Right Hand (of Power)." The Hebrew letters at left form the phrase, "Jehovah". The Mystic Symbol at center forms the first three cuneiform letters of the Greek I H S, or "Jesus, Savior of Men" (Latin). And at right we see cuneiform symbols representing "Son of the Right Hand." The two designations for Christ at center and right are found on many clay tablets unearthed throughout the Mississippi Valley area of the midwest, thought to be created by ancient Coptic Christians fleeing to this land under persecution. Some believers today use the Christ-centered characters on a brass plate as a protection tool, marking the entrances to their homes. For small gold plates with these figures (like that above), contact Kerri at <http://www.kerrisartkreations.com>



The Doctrine of the Two Ways

Hundreds of clay tablets created by the Mound Builders also feature stories from the Old and New Testaments on them, often illustrating conflict between two groups of people in connection with the leadership of two opposing brothers. There is the "*son of the right hand*" (a younger, bruised Messiah [to the *right* side of the Mystic Symbol – our left]) and the "*son of the left hand*" (an evil older brother [*left* hand of the symbol – or our right], see next page). Cuneiform letters often designate them as Christ (or Yahweh) and Satan (or Azazel). This coincides with the ancient pattern of two brothers, in Abel and Cain, Isaac and Ishmael, or Jacob and Esau. A modern translation of the figures atop the tablet at left reads:

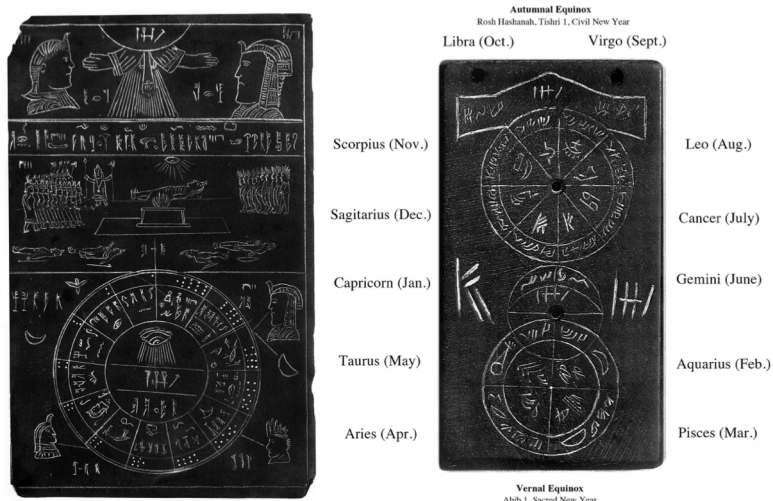
"Yahweh has created two paths for you to choose...on the right of his throne, the rulership of the good, younger, bruised Messiah, and on the left the rulership of the evil, elder Messiah. For seven thousand years the competing rulerships will contend, the majority of which time the evil Messiah shall dominate the earth. The people, nations, and tongues shall see, coming in the clouds of heaven, the chariots of the Elohyim (dieties or mighty ones) from one end of heaven to the other, to judge the house. A rulership of abundant life shall descend. But the wicked servants shall be judged along with the wicked lord, by the precious lord Messiah. The Great Lord and ruler, who alone judges in righteousness, is Yahweh, he shall establish a righteous mountain (kingdom) of his son of the right hand, and shall make an eternal covenant day and night. The son of the left hand, the great evil lord will be imprisoned one thousand years. People in the clouds of heaven shall see war and the Holy One descending in a cloud, the Great Lord and King one thousand years shall be his great Lordship."

Near the top of many tablets, and near the Mystic Symbol, we see the two brothers right and left facing each other (next page). They illustrate "*the doctrine of the two ways*." A shepherd's crook is typically placed before each of their names ("son of the right or left hand"). God gave this doctrine to Moses in the book of Deuteronomy. There, Moses instructed Joshua to rehearse this

doctrine periodically to the children of Israel (every 7th year). The first time this occurred was just after they crossed the Jordan River, entering into *the Promised Land*. There, Joshua divided the Twelve Tribes Israel, placing six of them on two opposing mountains. Six of the tribes were to be on a mount of *blessing* (the west mountain) and six on a mount of *cursing* (the east mountain). Standing in the valley in-between them, Joshua then spoke aloud God's covenant Law, doing so at the end of each 7th, *Sabbatical Year of Release* (see Deut. 30:19; 31:10-11). The choice between right and wrong, blessing and cursing in this doctrine, is found throughout scripture. It was and is a covenant pattern tied to choice, and was established anciently upon two mountains east and west, as illustrated in the sacrifices offered up by (1) **Abraham** at Bethel (in the mountains *Bethel west and Hai east*, Gen. 22:2; Gen. 12:6; JST Gen. 12:6; Abr. 2:18); (2) by **Joshua** at Shechem (in *Mt. Gerizim west & Mt. Ebal east*, Joshua 17); And finally (3) by **Christ** at Jerusalem (in *the Ophel west* - the setting of the temple - *and the Mt. of Olives east* (the setting for the atonement, resurrection, ascension, second coming, etc.). Each of these three settings featured two opposing mountains, where covenants were made in connection with a special "*sin*" offering, made at the "*appointed place*" on the *higher east* mountain. Christ's freewill offering in Gethsemane was at this appointed place, the place of the rare "*red heifer*" sacrifice directly across from the temple on the Mount of Olives, the highest mountain in the Jerusalem area. The opposing mountain pattern appears to have begun with Abraham's blood-trail vision, where the divided sacrifices of a female heifer and goat, along with a male ram were offered up on the *two opposing sides of a ravine* (see JST Gen. 15).

Escape to a Promised Land

Why is a Greek or Latin-influenced Christian motif, illustrated in cuneiform letters, found on so many tablets unearthed in the Michigan area of North America? And why are their Egyptian, Phoenician, and European influences? Henriette Mertz believes these particular "mound builders" were primarily *Coptic Christians* who came to this land as refugees, escaping great persecution in the third and fourth century AD from the Mediterranean area of Europe. She states that they were "fleeing from Decian or Diocletian (Roman emperors), who sailed from the harbors of Rome, Naples, Alexandria, Carthage and other Eastern Mediterranean ports and were assumed lost in the turbulent waters of the North Atlantic" (Mertz, *The Mystic Symbol*, p. 234). These Christians may have been escaping great religious persecution, including being fed to lions in the the Roman games, as well as the later Catholic programs (instituted under Constantine) to eliminate evil heresies. This free western land was apparently a safe haven for those who loved the Lord and who were escaping oppression.



Heavenly Markers

Exact dating for some of the tablets has been accomplished via heavenly signs recorded on them, including specific, identifiable eclipses, some of which were accompanied by periodic meteor showers. One of these was on July 27th of 352 AD. Other tablets showcase a 13-month lunar calendar (Hebrew), complete with zodiac constellations and equinox markers. Sadly, knowledge of these and other pre-columbian peoples in the Midwest has been suppressed by the academic community. Two of a number of reasons for this include their support for the land-bridge theory of John Wesley Powell and a desire to control lands held here by early Native Americans. The evidence for the existence of early Christians here is overwhelming, however.

Modern IHS Symbols

Many historic Catholic churches in Europe and America feature similar Christ-centered motifs. Some of them have a gold sun symbol inscribed at top with the three letters "I H S". They have rays of light extending from a golden sun-like orb. The sun is a primary symbol for Christ in and on early LDS temples at Kirtland, Nauvoo and Salt Lake, and is comparable to "the rising sun on the horizon" motif of ancient Egypt. At the Tabernacles celebration in Jerusalem 6 months prior to his crucifixion, Christ said that He was the light of the world (John 8:12). Many suggest that five nails were driven into His body (one each into His hands and wrists, and another through both feet). In scripture the number 5 has consistent connection to our LORD's *grace*, supplied in the Atonement.

For more on "The Mystic Symbol," see Henriette Mertz, *The Mystic Symbol: Mark of the Michigan Mound Builders*, Global Books, 1986. See also Wayne N. May, Ancient American, "The Mystic Symbol: Migration and Diffusion," vol. 4, number 13, 2003, and Wayne N. May & Edwin G. Goble, *This Land-Zarahemla and the Nephite Nation*, Colfax, Wisconsin, 2002.