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Skinner Concludes Museum of Art Lecture Series

On March 21 Andrew C. Skinner, executive director of the Maxwell Institute and professor of ancient scripture at Brigham Young University, addressed the topic of “Crucifixion and Resurrection” in the Museum of Art lecture series on the life of Christ. Skinner began by saying that “the crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus of Nazareth are the lynchpin of everything we believe and everything we do in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.”

First, Skinner carefully detailed and expounded upon the events leading up to the crucifixion and resurrection. For example, Skinner noted that Pilate’s act of washing his hands at the trial of Christ was actually an ancient custom, “a symbolic demonstration of absolving oneself of guilt or responsibility for the shedding of another person’s blood,” but it was also a prescription of the Mosaic law “performed over the carcass of a sacrificed heifer as a sign that their city was not responsible for the death of a slain man” (see Deuteronomy 21:6–8). Thus, Skinner instructed, even in the trial before his death, Christ’s life fulfilled all statutes of the law of Moses.

New Documentary to Premier at Education Week


Journey of Faith: The New World, a new Maxwell Institute documentary, is set to premier at BYU Campus Education Week in August.

The Maxwell Institute has again teamed with award-winning Latter-day Saint filmmaker Peter Johnson to produce a documentary that will explore the Book of Mormon in the New World.

Johnson directed the Maxwell Institute’s DVD documentary *Journey of Faith* on the travels of Lehi and Sariah. He previously worked as an executive producer with the Audiovisual Department of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and before that as director of the BYU Motion Picture Studio, which under his direction became one of the top-rated university film studios in the world. He has directed such films as *A More Perfect Union* (winner of a regional Emmy award and nominated for a national Emmy) and the highly acclaimed *Mountain of the Lord*.

Skinner also explored several possible meanings of the tearing of the temple veil after the crucifixion of Christ, as recorded in the Gospels. For example, this event signified and symbolized the end of the Mosaic dispensation of animal sacrifices. Instead, with the opening of the new dispensation, Christ’s atonement would provide a way for all to enter into the presence of God and “not just the high priests on the Day of Atonement” in the Holy of Holies in the temple.

Describing it as “the most dramatic and remarkable moment in the history of Creation,” Skinner also expounded upon the extreme significance of Christ’s resurrection. “It is true that He inherited *the power* to take up His body again from His Father (Elohim) at the time of His mortal birth. But He received *the keys* of resurrection only after His own resurrection.” The angels rolled away the stones to reveal the miracle of Christ’s empty tomb; likewise, Skinner concluded, through his resurrection Christ could open the spirit world so “all the righteous [could] enter the presence of God.”

The Museum of Art’s display of *Beholding Salvation: Images of Christ* concluded on June 16. 

“The success of the film *Journey of Faith* has almost required that we create a film that follows the story of Lehi and Sariah into the New World,” said S. Kent Brown, director of FARMS and the Willes Center and one of the lead historical consultants on the documentary. The new documentary will follow the same format, with commentary from Latter-day Saint scholars and others, and stunning artwork by Joseph Brickey.

Brown also noted that “scholarship on ancient America has gone far enough to begin to match the Book of Mormon’s description of life and societies. Only now can we say enough to create a statement in a film. In a real sense, a film freezes research where it is. On the other hand, such a film will serve as a stimulus for further careful work.”

Journey of Faith: The New World can be viewed in the Joseph Smith Building Auditorium, August 21–24, Tuesday through Friday, from 4:30 to 6:45 p.m. Registration at Education Week will be required to attend. 