

FOREWORD BY KIETH MERRILL

# PROPHECIES PROMISES

## WHAT DID JOSEPH KNOW?



E-BOOK

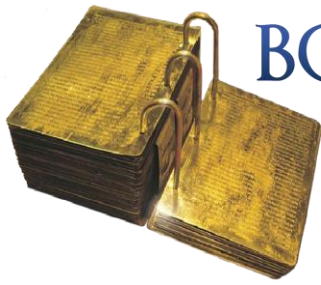
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W/PAGES  
FROM THE ANNOTATED  
BOOK OF MORMON

SPECIAL E-BOOK

THE NORTH AMERICAN INDIANS  
ARE THE LAMANITES OF  
THE BOOK OF MORMON!

BRUCE H. PORTER  
ROD L. MELDRUM



# BOOK OF MORMON EVIDENCE

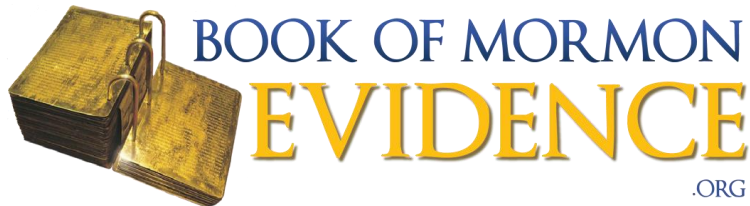
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Dedicated to the late Dr. Robert J. Matthews  
who, after reading this manuscript,  
said with a twinkle in his eye—

*“I am a one-hill man. I’ve always been a one-hill man just  
like the Prophet Joseph Smith was, and if I’m wrong...well, at  
least I’m in good company!”*





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# Prophecies and Promises

By Bruce C. Porter and Rodney L. Meldrum E-Book 3

## What Did Joseph Know?

What the Prophet Joseph Smith knew of the geography of the Book of Mormon can be learned from his statements that are recorded in journals and accounts prepared and published by him and later by the Church as well as a study of his actions in these regards. These published accounts give substantial clues to his knowledge on this matter. There are two key concepts that need to be understood pertaining to the statements of Joseph Smith, particularly regarding the extensive amount of geographical discussion that has taken place over the years by Mesoamerican theorists. Their concepts are one, Joseph simply didn't know, was unaware, or was speculating about the geography of the Book of Mormon early in his prophetic calling; and two, he never claimed inspiration on the matter of geography.

This book is dedicated to the historically documented fact that the Prophet Joseph Smith did, in fact, know about the geographical setting for the Book of Mormon and that he did, in fact, claim inspiration for the statements he made about its geography. Joseph Smith's published accounts and his claim of revelation on the matter of geography mentioned in the following chapters of this book will stand on their own, as authoritative statements from a prophet of God. This chapter is not meant to be an exhaustive study of the Prophet's statements that might outline arguments for or against any one geographical theory. Nor is it intended to debate the implied meaning or authorship of the accounts reviewed. Such an in-depth review of these arguments is reserved for a separate text that will follow in due time.

The "authority" of scripture—prophet, person or law—in an individual's life is completely dependent on the person's acceptance or rejection of that authority. The Standard Works have no authority or power in anyone's life unless that person allows scripture that authority. Nor do the words of a prophet—modern or ancient—have any specific authority in someone's life unless they decide to accept the prophet and his words as authoritative. If individuals consider their education, knowledge, or beliefs more authoritative and correct than scripture or revealed prophetic statements, they are placing their trust in the arm of flesh. The decision must be made by the individual to accept or reject the statements of Joseph Smith as inspired. Often training and tradition will condition and influence an individual in his acceptance of an "authority" in his life. That is an individual decision and choice.

## "This Continent"

The prior discussion about the demonstrative "this" must be kept in mind as a word that is used to indicate the defined noun within proximity of the speaker. First, look at the words of Moroni as described by Joseph Smith and found in the canonized scriptures. The Prophet Joseph writes that Moroni appeared and taught him about a book "written upon gold plates." Joseph was told by this angelic messenger sent from God, that this record gave an account of the "former inhabitants of this continent" (Joseph Smith-History 1:34). The interpretation of the phrase "former inhabitants of this continent" must, for clarity of understanding, have one of two meanings or conclusions. Either this refers to "this continent" or it does not. If it does not refer to the United States, a person would have to ignore the demonstrative "this" and then redefine "this continent" into a generality of hemisphere or continent(s). To assume the latter would mean that either Joseph or Moroni made a mistake in the description and the use of the demonstrative in pointing to the "which" continent. The inspired text should be able to be understood as correctly in 1830 as well as 2030 by reading the words chosen by the Lord.

# LAND OF CAINAN NEW JERUSALEM

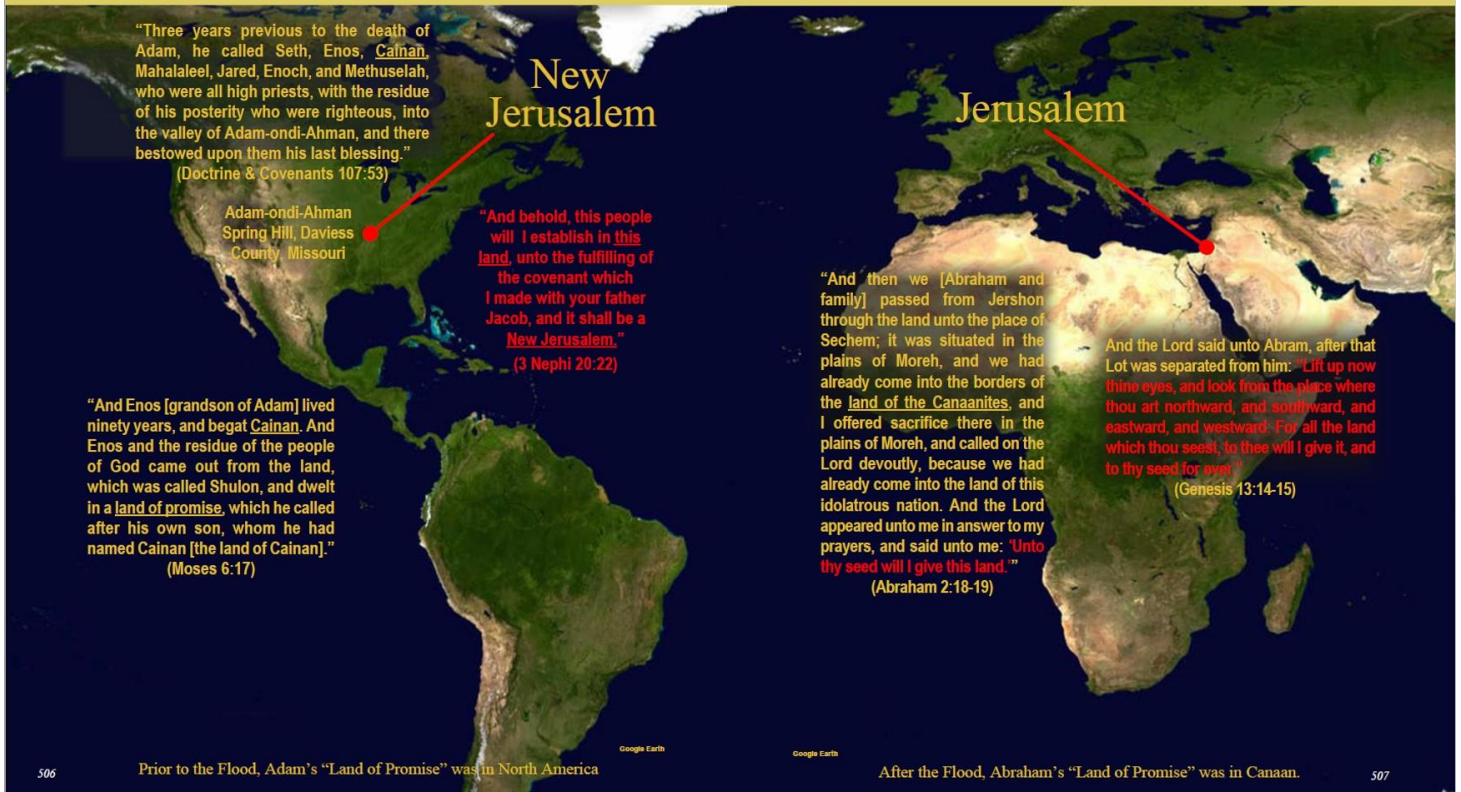
# LAND OF CANAAN JERUSALEM

ADAM'S "LAND OF PROMISE"

ABRAHAM'S "LAND OF PROMISE"

## Land of Cainan

## Land of Canaan



The interpretation of the phrase "former inhabitants of this continent" must, for clarity of understanding, have one of two meanings or conclusions. Either this refers to "this continent" or it does not. If it does not refer to the United States, a person would have to ignore the demonstrative "this" and then redefine "this continent" into a generality of hemisphere or continent(s). To assume the latter would mean that either Joseph or Moroni made a mistake in the description and the use of the demonstrative in pointing to the "which" continent. The inspired text should be able to be understood as correctly in 1830 as well as 2030 by reading the words chosen by the Lord.

Even though in the early 1800s the American continent was defined by Noah Webster's dictionary to be all of North and South America, later refinements divide North America from South America as two distinct and separate continents. If a North American geographic setting is applied, then Joseph's statement remains true both then and now, but if a South American setting is used, then Joseph's statement was true only during his time, and is no longer true because Joseph was never on the South American continent. The Lord knew what the best definition of "this land" and "this continent" would be and inspired Joseph Smith accordingly. The statements are as correct then as they are now.



## Lucy Mack Smith

The earliest account of the life of Joseph Smith and the events that surrounded the Smith family during the prophet's youth is recorded by his mother. Lucy Mack Smith, the mother of Joseph Smith, described the family gatherings as young Joseph rehearsed those things that he had learned from the Lord and the messengers sent to teach him of this great work. Remember that this is in the time frame between the "First Vision" and the retrieval of the plates by Joseph from the Hill Cumorah.

"From this time forth, Joseph continued to receive instructions from the Lord, and we continued to get the children together every evening for the purpose of listening while he gave us a relation of the same. I presume our family presented an aspect as singular as any that ever lived upon the face of the earth—all seated in a circle, father, mother, sons and daughters, and giving the most profound attention to a boy, eighteen years of age, who had never read the Bible through in his life: he seemed much less inclined to the perusal of books than any of the rest of our children, but far more given to meditation and deep study.

During our evening conversations, Joseph would occasionally give us some of the most amusing recitals that could be imagined. He would describe the ancient inhabitants of this continent, their dress, mode of traveling, and the animals upon which they rode; their cities, their buildings, with every particular; their mode of warfare; and also their religious worship. This he would do with as much ease, seemingly, as if he had spent his whole life among them.<sup>52</sup> *Lucy Mack Smith* **"This was before he received the plates. He must have received this by revelation, for he knew the whole story of the content of the record that is now the Book of Mormon. He had had five long visits with Moroni, and his mother says he received many revelations."** *Eldred G. Smith, Conference Report, October 1967, pp. 82-84*

This description of the first family home evenings in this dispensation gives insight into his revelations and learning as Joseph Smith's mother states that he "continued to receive instructions from the Lord." She describes that his insights and inspiration were as though "he had spent his whole life among" those who were the "ancient inhabitants of this continent." Again the records are clear as to the inspiration Joseph received, that he knew the land where these things happened. Joseph's knowledge and understanding of this culture was broad and comprehensive, according to his mother.

There is not another person, anthropologist or archaeologist, then or now, who would know more about the details of the day to day life of the Nephite and Lamanite cultures, than Joseph Smith. Joseph is the only prophet who has, in confidence declared, where places and events took place that were recorded in the Book of Mormon.

McGavin and Bean explain their point of view concerning the identity of the Hill Cumorah as an ancient battlefield. The authors conclude that the scholars "need not search for [Cumorah] in Mexico or Yucatan" E. Cecil McGavin and Willard W. Bean "Cumorah-Land, An Ancient Battlefield," in *The Improvement Era* 44, September 1941, 526, 571-72.

# “The Book of Mormon...a record of the origin of the aborigines of America” – Lucy Mack Smith.



“As Hyrum, my eldest son, was directed to go to Missouri by the way of Detroit, I thought it good opportunity to visit the family of my brother, General Mack. Accordingly, my niece, Almira Mack, Hyrum, brothers Murdock, Lyman Wight, and Corril and I, set out together for Detroit. When we first went on board the vessel which took us across the lake, we concluded to keep perfectly still upon the subject of religion; but it was afterwards proposed by Hyrum, that Mother Smith should say just what she pleased, and if she got into difficulty, the Elders should help her out of it. Shortly after this, I was sitting at the door of the cabin, reading *The Book of Mormon*, when a lady came up and inquired of me what book I was reading. ‘*The Book of Mormon*,’ I replied. But the title of the book was no advantage to her, for she had never heard of there being such a work in existence. By her request I gave her a brief history of the discovery and translation of the book. This delighted her, and when I mentioned that it was a record of the origin of the aborigines of America, she said, ‘how I do wish I could

get one of your books to carry to my husband, for he is now a missionary among the Indians” – Lucy Mack Smith, “Lucy Mack Smith, History, 1845,” pp. 208-209, *The Joseph Smith Papers*, accessed January 15, 2018. (<http://www.josephsmithpapers.org/paper-summary/lucy-mack-smith-history-1845/216>; emphasis added.)



“During our evening conversations, Joseph would occasionally give us some of the most amusing recitals that could be imagined: he would describe the ancient inhabitants of this continent; their dress, mode of travelling, and the animals upon which they rode; their cities, and their buildings, with every particular; he would describe their <mode of> warfare, as also their religious worship. This he would do with as much ease, seemingly, as if he had spent his whole life with them” – Lucy Mack Smith, “Lucy Mack Smith, History, 1845,” p. 87, *The Joseph Smith Papers*, accessed Feb. 5, 2019. (<https://www.josephsmithpapers.org/paper-summary/lucy-mack-smith-history-1845/94>)



(<https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:HailStoneCrowIndian1883.jpg>)

Top painting: Artist unknown—painted prior to death of Lucy Mack Smith on May 14, 1856, per Joseph Smith Birthplace Memorial records.

Left photo: Hail Stone—Crow, 1883; photo by Frank Jay

Right photo: Seneca, 1906, BAE GN 00933B, Smithsonian Institution

Below: Te Ata—Chickasaw; White Bear—Kiowa; Carries the War—Crow



Hyan-Jar-No-Onh



“The greatest moments of Native history lie ahead of us if a great Spiritual renewal and awakening should take place. The Native American has been a sleeping giant, he is awakening. The original Americans could become the evangelists who will help win America for Christ! Remember these forgotten people” – Billy Graham, March 1975.

(<https://www.azquotes.com/quote/585966>) Photo: [wiki/File:Billy\\_Graham\\_bw\\_photo\\_April\\_11\\_1966.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Billy_Graham_bw_photo_April_11_1966.jpg).



## Mission to the Lamanites

As described in the Title Page of the Book of Mormon written by Moroni, this record is to be taken to the “remnant” of the seed of Lehi, to convince them that Jesus is the Christ. Almost as soon as the church was organized, the Lord instructs Oliver Cowdery, through Joseph, that this gospel is to be taken to the Lamanites. The Lord through the Prophet Joseph instructs Oliver Cowdery to “go unto the Lamanites” and that he will receive revelations about this important mission to the Lamanites but that he is not to write them down as part of the latter-day commandments. It would appear from the references below that the Lord knows where the Lamanites are located and also that they are a “remnant” of Lehi that remain upon the land.

"And now, behold, I say unto you that you shall go unto the Lamanites and preach my gospel unto them; and inasmuch as they receive thy teachings thou shalt cause my church to be established among them; and thou shalt have revelations, but write them not by way of commandment." *D&C 28:8*

The Lord later instructs these brethren that the city of Zion shall be built on the border by the Lamanites. And that they are to take their journey among the Lamanites.

"And now, behold, I say unto you that it is not revealed, and no man knoweth where the city Zion shall be built, but it shall be given hereafter. Behold, I say unto you that it shall be on the borders by the Lamanites.

"And thou shalt assist to settle all these things, according to the covenants of the church, before thou shalt take thy journey among the Lamanites." *D&C 28:9, 14*

In the same month the Lord instructs Peter Whitmer and Oliver Cowdery to be the first missionaries to take the gospel and words of the record to the Lamanites as declared by Christ in Third Nephi. The exact location of this mission is given by instruction a revelation from the Lord a short time later.

"Behold, I say unto you, Peter, that you shall take your journey with your brother Oliver; for the time has come that it is expedient in me that you shall open your mouth to declare my gospel; therefore, fear not, but give heed unto the words and advice of your brother, which he shall give you."

"And be you afflicted in all his afflictions, ever lifting up your heart unto me in prayer and faith, for his and your deliverance; for I have given unto him power to build up my church among the Lamanites;" *D&C 30:5-6*

In October of 1830 two more missionaries are called to assist in the teaching of the Lamanites. This first missionary force will now have the addition of Parley P. Pratt, Ziba Peterson, and the Lord as they go among the Lamanite remnant to teach.

"And now concerning my servant Parley P. Pratt, behold, I say unto him that as I live I will that he shall declare my gospel and learn of me, and be meek and lowly of heart.

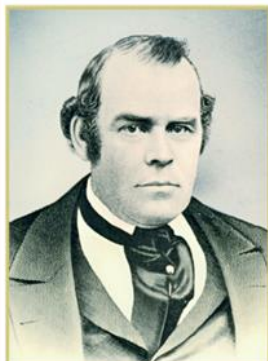
"And that which I have appointed unto him is that he shall go with my servants, Oliver Cowdery and Peter Whitmer, Jun., into the wilderness among the Lamanites."

"And Ziba Peterson also shall go with them; and I myself will go with them and be in their midst; and I am their advocate with the Father, and nothing shall prevail against them."

"And they shall give heed to that which is written and pretend to no other revelation; and they shall pray always that I may unfold the same to their understanding." *D&C 32:1-4*

# MISSION TO THE LAMANITES

**“And now, behold, I say unto you that you shall go unto the Lamanites and preach My gospel unto them”** (Doctrine and Covenants 28:8, September 1830).



Parley P. Pratt, ca. 1845  
C. R. Savage collection  
Harold B. Lee Library,  
Digital Collections, BYU, Provo, UT  
([wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Parley\\_P\\_Pratt.gif](https://www.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Parley_P_Pratt.gif))

Six months after the Church of Christ was organized in April 1830, the Lord revealed through the Prophet Joseph Smith a commandment to Oliver Cowdery to have him preach the gospel to the Lamanites living near them. Subsequently in October 1830, a revelation given through Joseph Smith commanded Parley P. Pratt and Ziba Peterson to accompany Oliver Cowdery and Peter Whitmer, Jr. to go **“into the wilderness among the Lamanites”** (Doctrine and Covenants 32:2).

Parley P. Pratt would later write, “Thus ended our first Indian Mission, in which we preached the Gospel in its fulness and distributed the record [The Book of Mormon] of their forefathers among three tribes, viz.: the Catteraugus Indians [Iroquois], near Buffalo, NY, the Wyandots, of Ohio [Iroquois] and the Delawares west of Missouri [Algonquian]” – *Autobiography of Parley P. Pratt*, Russell Brothers, New York, [1874], 61, posthumous. (See also p. 378 and Appendix, pp. 524, 526; 548-49.)

(Representative images of “Lamanite” tribes he visited are shown below.)



A photograph of William Walker (1800-1874)  
(Source: The Provisional Government of Nebraska Territory)

He was a leader of the Wyandot Indians and a prominent citizen in early-day Kansas.

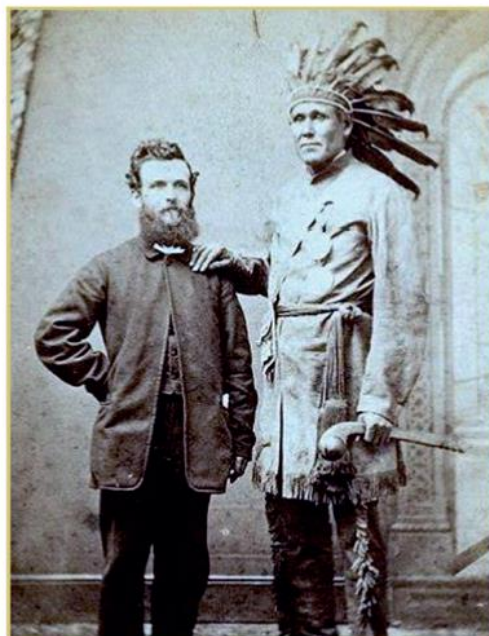
The last Wyandot to live in Ohio was Bill Moose (1836–1937).

([https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:William\\_Walker\\_\(Wyandot\\_leader\).jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:William_Walker_(Wyandot_leader).jpg))



Portrait of Black Beaver (Suck-tum-mah-kway) (1806–1880)  
Delaware Tribe

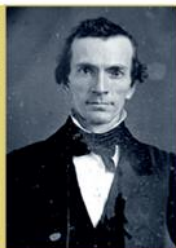
(Records of the Bureau of Indian Affairs. Photo by Alexander Gardner (1821–1882). Photo from National Archives, photo no. 75-ID-118A.)



Iroquois Tribe: on right, John Wampum – 1870s  
(Note his tall height)

(<https://indianspictures.blogspot.com/2016/03/favorite-photos-of-iroquois-indian-tribe.html>)

MANCHESTER, Oct. 17, 1830.  
I, Oliver, being commanded of the Lord God, to go forth unto the Lamanites, to proclaim glad tidings of great joy unto them, by presenting unto them the fulness of the Gospel, of the only begotten son of God; and also, to rear up a pillar as a witness where the Temple of God shall be built, in the glorious New-Jerusalem; and having certain brothers with me, who are called of God to assist me, whose names are Parley, Peter and Ziba, do therefore most solemnly covenant before God, that I will walk humbly before him, and do this business, and this glorious work according as he shall direct me by the Holy Ghost; ever praying for mine and their prosperity, and deliverance from bonds, and from imprisonments, and whatsoever may befall us, with all patience and faith.—  
AMEN. OLIVER COWDERY.



Oliver Cowdery's statement on his “being commanded of the Lord God, to go forth unto the Lamanites,” Manchester, NY, Oct. 17, 1830, Ohio Star.  
(Daguerreotype in the Library of Congress. DAG, no. 1363)



**The four missionaries**—Parley P. Pratt, Oliver Cowdery, Peter Whitmer, Jr., and Ziba Peterson—left immediately upon the Lord’s instruction and commenced the very first mission of the church west of New York. The History of the Church describes the events of this Lamanite mission in these words:

"Immediately on receiving this revelation, preparations were made for the journey of the brethren therein designated, to the borders of the Lamanites, and a copy of the revelation was given them. They bade adieu to their brethren and friends, and commenced their journey, preaching by the way, and leaving a sealing testimony behind them, lifting up their voice like a trumpet in the different villages through which they passed. They continued their journey until they came to Kirtland, Ohio, where they tarried some time, there being quite a number in that place and vicinity who believed their testimony and came forward and obeyed the Gospel. Among the number was Mr. Sidney Rigdon, and a large portion of the church over which he presided." 53

The Mission to the Lamanites as declared and described by the Lord in the Doctrine and Covenants clearly reflects that Joseph sent the missionaries to the areas revealed and directed by the Lord. The scriptures imply that not only were they to preach to the Native Americans on this North American continent, but that they are a remnant of the seed of Lehi and “Lamanites” as described in the Book of Mormon and Doctrine and Covenants. 54

Parley P. Pratt also speaks of this first mission to the Lamanites in these words as he describes and names the Native American tribes to whom he was sent to preach the gospel.

"Thus ended our first Indian Mission, in which we had preached the gospel in its fulness and distributed the record of their forefathers among three tribes, viz: the Catteraugus Indians, near Buffalo, N.Y., the Wyandots of Ohio, and the Delawares west of Missouri. We trust that at some future day, when the servants of God go forth in power to the remnant of Joseph, some precious seed will be found growing in their hearts, which was sown by us in that early day." 55

Elder Pratt walked about “fifteen hundred miles” and preached the “gospel to tens of thousands of Gentiles and two nations of Indians.”<sup>56</sup> It must be realized and accepted that the Lord knew, and therefore Joseph knew, where the Lamanites were located and that a remnant was left in fulfillment of the Prophecies and Promises that are revealed in the Book of Mormon. These first missionaries to the Lamanites were sent to where the Lord commanded and meant them to go. There is no indication in Church History of dissatisfaction by the Lord in their mission, nor is there any reason to think that they did not preach to the “Lamanites” as directed by the Lord, who indicated that He would go with them and be in their midst.

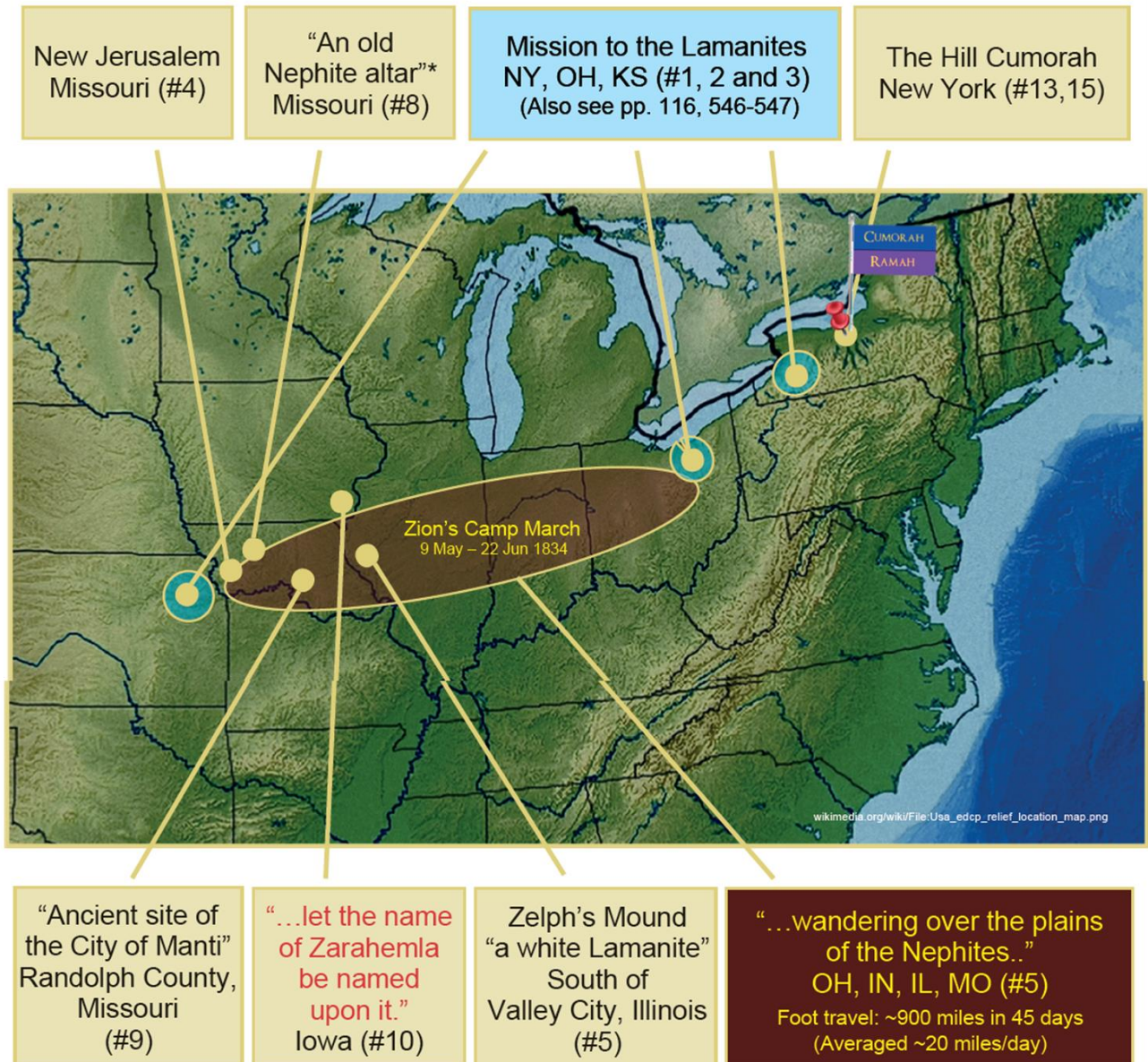
Following the loss of the 116 pages of manuscript, when the Lord requested something from Joseph, the Prophet began immediately to try to accomplish it. This mission to the Lamanites is an example of Joseph’s dedication to the requirements established by the Lord. It was 117 years later that the gospel was taken to Guatemala. The promises of the Savior at Bountiful to those who gathered there emphatically stated that when the Gentiles received “these things” [the Book of Mormon] they would then be taken to the Lamanite remnant. This objective was a major concern of Joseph Smith until his death according to church historian Ronald W. Walker in his article Seeking the Remnant; the Native American in the Joseph Smith Period. He writes:

**"RECENT SCHOLARS HAVE** largely set aside the Native American as an important force in early Restoration history, 1830-44. After telling the familiar story of Oliver Cowdery's 1830-31 Lamanite mission, most writers either grow quiet on the topic or say that Joseph Smith and other Mormon leaders became preoccupied with more pressing things. But the evidence supports another view. First-generation leaders, while not always having the freedom to interact with the Indian as they wished, consistently sought the Native American "remnant" of Jacob. This argument, more than revising a familiar historical tenet, provides a window through which to view early Mormonism. It shows the millennial spirit of the movement's first years, helps to explain the intensity of early anti-Mormonism, and reveals one of the reasons why the Mormon hegira took the path it did. Finally, it suggests that the Book of Mormon, which lay at the heart of the original disciples' view of the Indian, was more than a theoretical handbook. It actually affected how Mormons thought and what they did.

There is no mistaking the importance of the Indian during the earliest part of Joseph Smith's ministry. His first and greatest revelation was the Book of Mormon, which was not just a record of the "Lamanite" or Native American people, but a highly unusual manifesto of their destiny.” 57

# CONNECTIONS BETWEEN CHURCH HISTORY AND THE BOOK OF MORMON

This map provides an overview of those locations from those References on pp. 524-525 that have been recorded in the history of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints regarding either places, events or peoples related to the Book of Mormon.



Zion's Camp March provided statements on Book of Mormon geography as revealed by the Prophet Joseph Smith and were recorded by future President of the Church Wilford Woodruff and Apostle Heber C. Kimball, (see p. 555). Maps shown throughout the text will use these geographic connections between Church history and the Book of Mormon as reference points. However, there are no other known locations of specific lands, cities, rivers or other landmarks that have yet been revealed. A list of Zion's Camp participants can be found online at: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List\\_of\\_Zion%27s\\_Camp\\_participants](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_Zion%27s_Camp_participants).

\*Nephite Altar: <https://www.josephsmithpapers.org/paper-summary/history-1838-1856-volume-b-1-1-september-1834-2-november-1838/251>



## The Wentworth Letter

In 1841, at the request of John Wentworth, Joseph Smith wrote a letter describing the rise of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and a proclamation of the basic beliefs that distinguish the Church from other religions. It is from this inspired letter that the 13 Articles of Faith are gleaned that so many Latter-day Saints have memorized as children. The Wentworth Letter was written in Joseph's own words and signed by him personally. The following statement clearly relates "this country" [that is where Joseph is at] to "this continent" and the inhabitants and Prophets that lived there. It is important to note that the statements of Joseph contained in this letter boldly testify of his inspiration and the revelations on matters pertaining not only to the record and the history of the people, but also the land where it took place.

"On the evening [of] the 21st of September, a.d. 1823, while I was praying unto God and endeavoring to exercise faith in the precious promises of scripture, on a sudden a light like that of day, only of a far purer and more glorious appearance and brightness, burst into the room. Indeed the first sight was as though the house was filled with consuming fire. The appearance produced a shock that affected the whole body. In a moment a personage stood before me, surrounded with a glory yet greater than that with which I was already surrounded. This messenger proclaimed himself to be an angel of God, sent to bring the joyful tidings that the covenant which God made with ancient Israel was at hand to be fulfilled; that the preparatory work for the second coming of the Messiah was speedily to commence; that the time was at hand for the gospel in all its fulness to be preached in power unto all nations, that a people might be prepared for the millennial reign. I was informed that I was chosen to be an instrument in the hands of God to bring about some of His purposes in this glorious dispensation.

I was also informed concerning the aboriginal inhabitants of this country [America] and shown who they were, and from whence they came; a brief sketch of their origin, progress, civilization, laws, governments, of their righteousness and iniquity, and the blessings of God being finally withdrawn from them as a people, was [also] made known unto me; I was also told where were deposited some plates on which were engraven an abridgment of the records of the ancient prophets that had existed on this continent. The angel appeared to me three times the same night and unfolded the same things. After having received many visits from the angels of God, unfolding the majesty and glory of the events that should transpire in the last days, on the morning of the 22nd of September, a.d. 1827, the angel of the Lord delivered the records into my hands.

*\*In this important and interesting book the history of ancient America is unfolded, from its first settlement by a colony that came from the Tower of Babel at the confusion of languages to the beginning of the fifth century of the Christian era. We are informed by these records that America in ancient times has been inhabited by two distinct races of people. The first were called Jaredites and came directly from the Tower of Babel. The second race came directly from the city of Jerusalem about six hundred years before Christ. They were principally Israelites of the descendants of Joseph. The Jaredites were destroyed about the time that the Israelites came from Jerusalem, who succeeded them in the inheritance of the country. The principal nation of the second race fell in battle towards the close of the fourth century. The remnant are the Indians that now inhabit this country. This book also tells us that our Savior made His appearance upon this continent after His Resurrection; that He planted the gospel here in all its fulness, and richness, and power, and blessing; that they had apostles, prophets, pastors, teachers, and evangelists—the same order, the same priesthood, the same ordinances, gifts, powers, and blessings, as were enjoyed on the eastern continent; that the people were cut off in consequence of their transgressions; that the last of their prophets who existed among them was commanded to write an abridgment of their prophecies, history, etc., and to hide it up in the earth; and that it should come forth and be united with the Bible for the accomplishment of the purposes of God in the last days.*

# CHURCH HISTORY—THE WENTWORTH LETTER

construction and much skill in the art of engraving. With the records was found a curious instrument, which the ancients called “Urim and Thummim,” (see p. xvi) which consisted of two transparent stones set in the rims of a bow fastened to a breastplate.

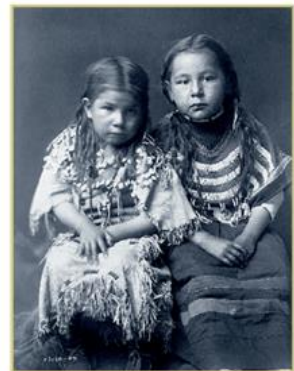
Through the medium of the Urim and Thummim I translated the record by the gift and power of God.

In this important and interesting book the history of ancient America is unfolded, from its first settlement by a colony that came from the Tower of Babel at the confusion of languages to the beginning of the fifth century of the Christian era. We are informed by these records that America in ancient times has been inhabited by two distinct races of people. The first were called Jaredites and came directly from the Tower of Babel. The second race came directly from the city of Jerusalem about six hundred years before Christ. They were principally Israelites of the descendants of Joseph. The Jaredites were destroyed about the time that the Israelites came from Jerusalem, who succeeded them in the inheritance of the country. The principal nation of the second race fell in battle towards the close of the fourth century. The remnant are the Indians that now inhabit this country. This book also\* tells us that our Savior made His appearance upon this continent after His Resurrection; that He planted the gospel here in all its fulness, and richness, and power, and blessing; that they had apostles, prophets, pastors, teachers, and evangelists—the same order, the same priesthood, the same ordinances, gifts, powers, and blessings, as were enjoyed on the eastern continent; that the people were cut off in consequence of their transgressions; that the last of their prophets who existed among them was commanded to write an abridgment of their prophecies, history, etc., and to hide it up in the earth; and that it should come forth and be united with the Bible for the accomplishment of the purposes of God in the last days. For a more particular account I would refer to the Book of Mormon, which can be purchased at Nauvoo, or from any of our traveling elders.

As soon as the news of this discovery was made known, false reports, misrepresentation, and slander flew, as on the wings of the wind, in every direction; the house was frequently beset by mobs and evil designing people. Several times I was shot at, and very narrowly escaped, and every device was made use of to get the



MISSIONARIES TEACHING LAMANITES (no date)  
SAMUEL JEPPELSON (1855 – 1931)  
Oil on canvas, 79<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub> x 50<sup>3</sup>/<sub>8</sub> inches.  
Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah.



Library of Congress, Prints & Photographs Division,  
Edward S. Curtis Collection.  
Above left: Arikara girl—Curtis no. 2901-08;  
Above right: Bull Shoe's children—Curtis no. 3100-09.

\*Highlighted areas omitted from *Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Joseph Smith*, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Salt Lake City, Utah, [2011] Chapter 38, p. 441; first paragraph: “. . . This book. . . tells us. . .”



For a more particular account I would refer to the Book of Mormon, which can be purchased at Nauvoo, or from any of our traveling elders." 58

It is common knowledge that when Joseph prepared something for publication, he was overtly concerned about being so correct in his choice of words that there could be no misunderstanding in the intended meaning by the reader. This is a prophetic responsibility to make sure there would be no mistake in comprehension which might lead to false information or doctrine. The Prophet reveals in the above quote that the remnants of the people in the Book of Mormon are the "Indians that now inhabit this country," [not all natives in the western hemisphere]. The Prophet Joseph then continues with the statement that "This book also tells us that our Savior made His appearance upon this continent after His resurrection; that He planted the Gospel here."59

Joseph used again the demonstrative that is singular and points to "which" country and "which" continent and correctly pronounces "this continent" which is where he stands when making the statement. He states that the Savior appeared on "this continent" as recorded in the Book of Mormon. This should clearly indicate that the continent of South America is not included. Central or Mesoamerica is considered to be a part of the North American continent, but not a part of Joseph's "this country" which unmistakably refers to the area and "country" in which he lived.

Joseph Smith knew and was shown, as he testifies, who exactly the Book of Mormon people were, where they came from, their origins, how they and their civilization progressed. He also knew them so intimately as to understand their very laws and governmental system, as he recorded in the Wentworth Letter and as recorded by his mother. In the summer of 1828, following the loss of the 116 pages of the Book of Mormon manuscript, the Lord speaks to the Prophet Joseph about the Nephite record, the land and nations that will be upon "this land." These statements directed to Joseph Smith from the Lord do not imply a land other than where Joseph is receiving the revelation. To try to stretch the meaning of "this land" in this revelation to include Central or South America is beyond comprehension. This revelation is directly from the Lord to Joseph Smith and about the Gospel and the land where Joseph received the revelation. The verses below become important in understanding the location of "this people" and "this land" that will be free unto all, because this passage is not from the Book of Mormon and cannot be construed to have a hemispherical setting.

"And, behold, all the remainder of this work does contain all those parts of my gospel which my holy prophets, yea, and also my disciples, desired in their prayers should come forth unto this people. And I said unto them, that it should be granted unto them according to their faith in their prayers; Yea, and this was their faith—that my gospel, which I gave unto them that they might preach in their days, might come unto their brethren the Lamanites, and also all that had become Lamanites because of their dissensions.

Now, this is not all—their faith in their prayers was that this gospel should be made known also, if it were possible that other nations should possess this land;

And thus they did leave a blessing upon this land in their prayers, that whosoever should believe in this gospel in this land might have eternal life; Yea, that it might be free unto all of whatsoever nation, kindred, tongue, or people they may be." *D&C 10:46-51*

The United States is the promised land foretold in the Book of Mormon—a place where divine guidance directed inspired men to create the conditions necessary for the Restoration of the gospel of Jesus Christ." *Elder L. Tom Perry Ensign Dec. 2012*

# PRESIDENT JOSEPH SMITH'S REMARKS: "THE WHOLE OF AMERICA IS ZION"

History of the Church, Volume 6, Chapter 15, p. 318.

General Conference for April, 1844, Concluded — The Announcement that the Whole Land of America is Zion — Instructions to Elders Set Apart for Missions — A General Conference in England.

Monday, April 8, 1844.  
[Conference Report Continued]

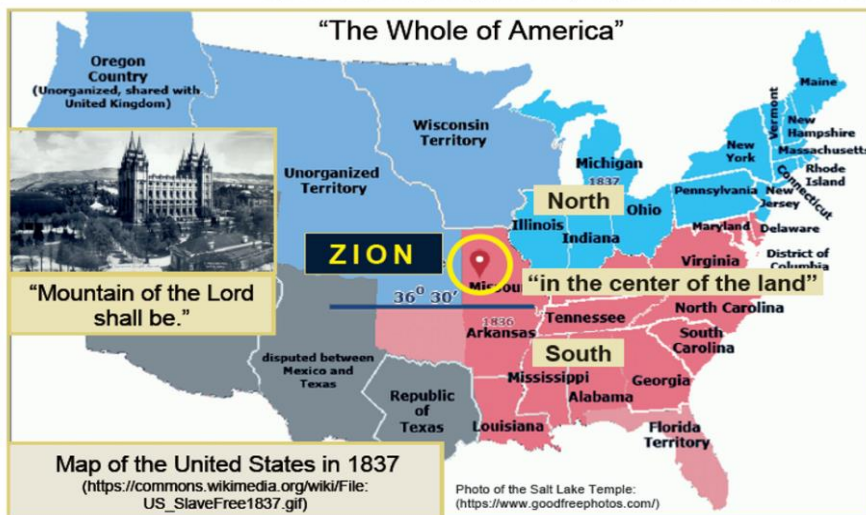
At three-quarters past 9 A.M., President Joseph Smith took his seat on the stand and requested the choir to sing a hymn. He called upon Elder Brigham Young to read 1st Corinthians, 15th chapter, as his own lungs were injured. Elder Brigham Young said—to continue the subject of President Smith's discourse yesterday, I shall commence by reading the 15th chapter of 1st Corinthians, from an old Bible; and requested W. W. Phelps to read it.

Prayer by Elder Brigham Young, after which the choir sang a hymn.

President Joseph Smith's Remarks—The Whole of America Zion. President Joseph Smith said:

"It is just as impossible, for me to continue the subject of yesterday as to raise the dead. My lungs are worn out. There is a time to all things, and I must wait. I will give it up, and leave the time to those who can make you hear, and I will continue the subject of my discourse some other time. I want to make a proclamation to the Elders. I wanted you to stay, in order that I might make this proclamation. You know very well that the Lord has led this Church by revelation. I have another revelation in relation to economy in the Church—a great, grand, and glorious revelation. I shall not be able to dwell as largely upon it now as at some other time; but I will give you the first principles. You know there has been great discussion in relation to Zion—where it is, and where the gathering of the dispensation is, and which I am now going to tell you. The prophets have spoken and written upon it; but I will make a proclamation that will cover a broader ground. **The whole of America is Zion itself from north to south, and is described by the prophets, who declare that it is the Zion where the mountain of the Lord should be, and that it should be in the center of the land.** When Elders shall take up and examine the old prophecies in the Bible, they will see it." (Emphasis added.)

("History, 1838–1856, volume E-1 [1 July 1843–30 April 1844].," p. 1982, *The Joseph Smith Papers*, accessed March 1, 2019, <https://www.josephsmithpapers.org/paper-summary/history-1838-1856-volume-e-1-1-july-1843-30-april-1844/354>)



- ### Where is Zion?
- "The prophets have spoken and written upon it."
  - "The whole of America is Zion itself from north [Northern States forming the Union] to south [Southern States forming Confederacy]." (See Doctrine and Covenants 87:3; revelation given on December 25, 1832.)
  - "Described by the prophets."
  - "Where the mountain of the Lord shall be."
  - "Should be in the center of the land."

"I have received instructions from the Lord that from henceforth wherever the Elders of Israel shall build up churches and branches unto the Lord throughout the States, there shall be a stake of Zion; in the great cities as Boston, New York, &c. there shall be stakes" – Joseph Smith.

("History, 1838–1856, volume E-1 [1 July 1843–30 April 1844].," p. 1983, *The Joseph Smith Papers*, <https://www.josephsmithpapers.org/paper-summary/history-1838-1856-volume-e-1-1-july-1843-30-april-1844/355>)



Without doubt it is intended by the Lord that “this land” meant “this land” as it would be a land “free unto all of whatsoever nation...or people they may be.” This is a discussion between the Prophet Joseph and the Lord, not a passing reference in the Book of Mormon of “a land” or “the land” meant to be general and inclusive of the entire western hemisphere. “This land” in this context and in this discussion with Joseph Smith would mean the very land upon which Joseph Smith stands and declares that the land of the Nephites and the land where Joseph receives this revelation are one and the same.

Current thought and consensus of scholarly opinion on Book of Mormon geography nearly demands a belief in a Mesoamerican setting for the Book of Mormon. If the realities were so distant and general the Lord would not have been so specific to Joseph about “this land.”

A common explanation offered by Mesoamerican theorists is that all of the statements by Joseph Smith include the entire western hemisphere. However, this premise cannot be construed from the documented statements and personal letters of the Prophet Joseph. The Prophet is clear and concise in his statements about Book of Mormon geography, yet the allure and enticement of Mesoamerican ruins and a desire for physical proof seems to determine the interpretation and interpolation of the words of the Prophet Joseph Smith. It is regrettable that so many cannot simply take Joseph Smith at his word.

### **The American Revivalist Account**

Joseph Smith sent the following letter to N. C. Saxton, the editor of a Rochester, New York newspaper written, as Joseph Smith later indicated, "by the commandment of God." Kirtland 4th Jan. 1833—

"Mr. Editor Sir,

Considering the Liberal principles upon which your interesting and valuable paper is published and myself being a subscriber and feeling a deep interest in the cause of Zion and in the happiness of my brethren of mankind I cheerfully take up my pen to contribute my mite at this every [very] interesting and important period.

The Book of Mormon is a record of the forefathers of our western Tribes of Indians, having been found through the ministration of an holy Angel translated into our own Language by the gift and power of God, after having been hid up in the earth for the last fourteen hundred years containing the word of God, which was delivered unto them, By it we learn that our western tribes of Indians are descendants from that Joseph that was sold into Egypt, and that the land of America is a promised land unto them, and unto it all the tribes of Israel will come. with as many of the gentiles as shall comply with the requisitions of the new co[v]enant. But the tribe of Judah will return to old Jerusalem. The City of Zion, spoken of by David in the 102 Psalm will be built upon the Land of America and the ransomed of the Lord shall return and come to it with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads, and then they will be delivered from the overflowing scourge that shall pass through the Land But Judah shall obtain deliverance at Jerusalem see Joel 2:32. Isaiah 26, 20 & 21, Jer. 31:12, Psalm 50:5, Ezekiel 34, 11, 12 & 13.“

(Signed)

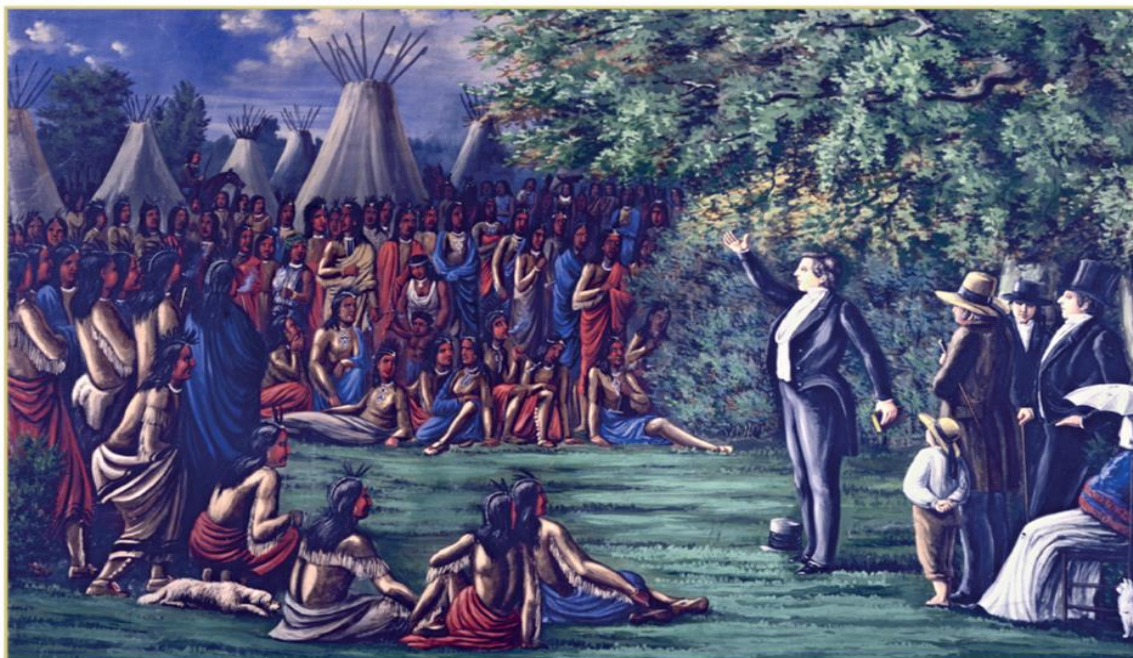
*Joseph Smith Jr. 60*

“I do not believe that there were two Hill Cumorahs, one in Central America and the other one up in New York, for the convenience of the Prophet Joseph Smith, so that the poor boy would not have to walk clear to Central America to get the gold plates.” *Elder Mark E. Petersen, General Conference Address, April 1953*



JOSEPH SMITH PREACHING TO THE INDIANS, C. 1870  
 BY WILLIAM ARMITAGE (1857–1940)

“The Book of Mormon is a record of the **forefathers** of our **western tribes of Indians**...containing the word of God, which was delivered unto them... By it, we learn that our western tribes of Indians are descendants from that Joseph that was sold into Egypt, and that the land of America is a promised land unto them...” – Letter to Noah C. Saxton, 4 January 1833, from Joseph Smith Jr.; written “by the commandment from God” in “Mormonism,” *The American Revivalist, and Rochester Observer*, Rochester, New York, [2 Feb. 1833]; emphasis added. (“History, 1838–1856, volume A-1 [23 December 1805–30 August 1834],” p. 261, The Joseph Smith Papers, accessed June 13, 2019, <https://www.josephsmithpapers.org/paper-summary/history-1838-1856-volume-a-1-23-december-1805-30-august-1834/267>.)



JOSEPH SMITH PREACHING TO THE INDIANS, C. 1878  
 BY C.C.A. CHRISTENSEN (1831-1912)  
 Tempera on muslin, 76 ½ x 112 ¾ inches.  
 Brigham Young University Museum of Art; gift of the grandchildren of C.C.A. Christensen, 1970.



Noting that the letter he had sent on January 4 to the Rochester newspaper editor had appeared in abbreviated form, Joseph again addressed Mr. Saxton on February 12 urging the importance of publishing the document in its entirety. The Prophet realized his responsibilities to make sure that his published statements are to be doctrinally sound so that the information would convey a correct understanding that could not be misconstrued. Because of this responsibility the Prophet Joseph writes again to Mr. Saxton.

"Dear sir

I was somewhat disappointed on receiving my paper with only a part of my letter inserted in it. The letter which I wrote you for publication I wrote by the commandment of God, and I am quite anxious to have it all laid before the public for it is of importance to them, But I have no clame [claim] upon you, neither do I wish to urge you beyond that which is reasonable to do it. I have only to appeal to your extended generosity to all religious societies that claim that Christ has come in the flesh and also tell you what will be the consequence of a neglect to publish it."

—Joseph Smith Jr. 61

The reply of Joseph to Mr. Saxton leaves no room to doubt that the explanation that was first sent to the newspaper was inspired. The declaration of the Prophet Joseph to Mr. Saxton was that it was written by "commandment of God" and therefore, revelatory in nature. It cannot be claimed that Joseph had no knowledge about geography or that he never claimed any inspiration on the matter as has been done by many who support a setting contrary to the words of Joseph Smith.

The Prophet Joseph describes a visit by Robert Matthews, a preacher who was traveling through the area and stopped for a visit. This visit prompted Joseph to write a "brief history" of the restoration of the Church wherein he records the following.

"...all at once the room was illuminated above the brightness of the sun an angel appeared before me, his hands and feet were naked pure and white, and he stood between the floors of the room, clothed purity inexpressible, he said unto me I am a messenger sent from God, be faithful and keep his commandments in all things, he told me of a sacred record which was written on plates of gold, I saw in the vision the place where they were deposited, he said the Indians, were the literal descendants of Abraham he explained many of the prophecies to me..." 62

Joseph Smith was given, by revelation from a messenger of God (Moroni), the knowledge that the American Indians are the actual descendants of the house of Israel through Abraham. There are a number of documented occurrences of the prophet Joseph claiming to have had revelation on this matter, and each time he clearly indicated that the Native Americans in North America are the literal descendants, or "remnant", of the Book of Mormon history.

"The Lord gave a divine promise to the ancient inhabitants of this favored country (the United States): 'Behold, this is a choice land, and whatsoever nation shall possess it shall be free from bondage, and from captivity, and from all other nations under heaven, if they will but serve the God of the land, who is Jesus Christ' (Ether 2:12). "Our Heavenly Father inspired the leaders of...the United States of America, that they might together, under His direction, having been raised up by God for the purpose, establish the Constitution of this country and...Bill of Rights, that by the year of our Lord 1805 [there would be] a climate where our Heavenly Father could send into this period of mortality a choice spirit who would be known as Joseph Smith, Jr." *Monson, Thomas S., Teachings of Thomas S. Monson, 2011, pp. 14-15, 157-158* 15

## Zion's March and Zelph

The statements of the Prophet Joseph Smith about Zelph are important events in church history and should not be overlooked or forgotten. While on Zion's March the Prophet rehearsed some of the final events of the Book of Mormon that had taken place at or near the banks of the Illinois River, where he and the brethren were standing. The Prophet not only indicated his inspiration and revelation but also taught important facts that pertain to the geographical setting of the Book of Mormon.

This event will be reviewed here as it is directly related to the discussion above about the Prophet's inspiration and his discussion about "this country," "this continent," and "this land." These sources have been and will continue to be a point of difficulty and dispute for those espousing a Mesoamerican setting for the Book of Mormon. Several articles have been written that question or attempt to discredit the inspired words of Joseph Smith and to cast doubt on the validity of these statements and the inspiration claimed by the Prophet. The Zelph account and the events pertaining to it give legitimacy to the inspiration and knowledge of Joseph Smith, the Wentworth Letter, the Doctrine and Covenants, and the Book of Mormon.

On June 2, 1834 Joseph Smith Jr., along with several members of Zion's Camp, crossed the Illinois River and camped on the west bank. The next morning, June 3, 1834, Joseph, with several other brethren, visited a prominent mound on top of the bluffs overlooking the river which had been located the previous day by a reconnaissance party. This location today is approximately a mile south of Valley City, Illinois, and is now known as Naples Russell Mound number 8.

While standing atop the mound a marvelous event took place that surely must have impacted all those present. Joseph's experience is historically recorded as follows:

"...on top of the mound were...stones which presented the appearance of three altars having been erected one above the other, according to the ancient order; and the remains of bones were strewn over the surface of the ground." 63

Joseph then requested a shovel be brought in order that the mound might be dug into.

"The brethren procured a shovel and a hoe and removing the earth to the depth of about one foot, discovered the skeleton of a man, almost entire, and between his ribs the stone point of a Lamanitish arrow, which evidently produced his death. Elder Burr Riggs retained the arrow...the visions of the past being opened to my understanding by the Spirit of the Almighty, I discovered that the person whose skeleton was before us was a white Lamanite, a large, thick-set man, and a man of God. His name was Zelph. He was a warrior and chieftain under the great prophet Onandagus, who was known from the hill Cumorah or eastern sea to the Rocky Mountains. He was killed in battle by the arrow found among his ribs, during the last great struggle with the Lamanites and Nephites." 64

Wilford Woodruff, Heber C. Kimball, Reuben McBride, Moses Martin, Levi Hancock, George A. Smith and other men all bore record in their personal journals of this event and each gave similar accounts. The journal of Joseph Smith records the event in the same way and same words as do the journals of those who were there. It is known that Joseph's journal was not always written by him personally; however, it would be reviewed and approved by the Prophet. One congruent fact in all these journal accounts is the inspiration attributed to Joseph as a revelation. The Prophet states that the "visions of the past being opened to my understanding by the Spirit of the Almighty."





"During our travels we visited many mounds thrown up by the ancient inhabitants, the Nephites and Lamanites. This morning, June 3rd, we went on to a high mound near the river. From the summit we could overlook the tops of the trees as far as we could see. The scenery was truly beautiful. On the summit of the mound were stones which presented the appearance of three altars, they having been erected, one above the other, according to the ancient order of things. Human bones were seen upon the ground. Brother Joseph requested us to dig into the mound ; we did so ; and in about one foot we came to the skeleton of a man, almost entire, with an arrow sticking in his backbone. Elder Milton Holmes picked it out, and brought it into the Camp, with one of the leg bones, which had been broken. I brought the thigh bone to Missouri. I desired to bury it in the Temple Block in Jackson County; but not having this privilege, I buried it in Clay County, Missouri, near the house owned by Col. Arthur and occupied by Lyman Wight." **The arrowhead referred to is now in the possession of President Joseph F. Smith, Salt Lake City, Utah.** *History of the Life and Labors of Wilford Woodruff* [Click GPS Here](#) of Joseph.com





Zelph a Man of God by Ken Corbett (Notice this is the same location in Valley City, Illinois as the last picture of Zelph 1,400 years before).



Joseph received a revelation from God and a vision of the past indicating precisely where particular events of the Book of Mormon took place. This man (the prophet Onandagus or Zelph) was known from “the Hill Cumorah or eastern sea to the Rocky Mountains.” This information may also help to establish a location for the “eastern sea” mentioned in the text of the Book of Mormon. Also Joseph declares that this was the area of “the last great struggle with the Lamanites and Nephites” (not the last battle) which would exclude Mesoamerica as Limited Geography Theory (LGT) would demand.

NOTE: The LGT is the supposition that the geography of the Book of Mormon must have been limited in size to several hundred miles in scope as a result of the study of the travel times and distances found within the text, such as the number of days travel between principle cities and lands. These indicate quite clearly that the distances were not on a hemispheric scale, but on a more restricted regional scale on the order of from three hundred to a thousand miles.

The Lord, through Joseph, could not have been any clearer that this very mound was within the boundaries of the Book of Mormon lands. Even though these statements cannot be reconciled with the accepted Mesoamerican LGT geography, they should not be cast away as frivolous statements. There are multiple witnesses that testify of Joseph’s inspiration on this occasion. The rejection of Joseph’s statements about Zelph is required by Mesoamerican proponents to maintain a belief in their geographical inclinations. This rejection indicates that the conclusions reached are flawed, especially since they must discard the statements of Joseph Smith for the acceptance of their proposed theories. Donald Q. Cannon, a recognized church historian and scholar, has expressed similar feelings about the statements of the Prophet Joseph Smith. Cannon addresses how some LDS scholars have attempted to discredit or dismiss Joseph Smith’s statements about the Zelph accounts.

"The journal accounts of Joseph Smith's activities and his letter indicate that he believed that Book of Mormon history, or at least a part of it, transpired in North America. What does one do with such a prophetic statement? Some have dismissed it as a joke or playful exercise of Joseph's imagination. Others have chosen to emphasize discrepancies and possible contradictions in the source accounts, thereby discrediting what Joseph Smith said. It seems to me that either approach carries heavy risks. When one chooses to state that Joseph Smith can't be taken seriously on this issue, the door is opened to question his statements on other issues. Where does it stop? Does the First Vision, with the discrepancies in the primary source accounts, also come under the doubt and skepticism applied here to Zelph? Why can't we simply take Joseph Smith at his word?" 65

### **Letter to Emma**

While on Zion’s Camp march just two days after the vision regarding Zelph on the mound above the Illinois River, Joseph Smith recorded the experience in a four-page letter to his wife Emma. This letter, written by the Prophet in his own handwriting (he usually used scribes), closed with his personal signature. This letter dated 4th of June 1834 reveals his feelings and understandings about Book of Mormon geography that may have come from the vision and inspiration two days before at the Zelph mound.

"The whole of our journey, in the midst of so large a company of social honest and sincere men, wandering over the plains of the Nephites, recounting occasionally the history of the Book of Mormon, roving over the mounds of that once beloved people of the Lord, picking up their skulls & their bones, as a proof of its divine authenticity, and gazing upon a country the fertility, the splendour and the goodness so indescribable, all serves to pass away time unnoticed." 66



*“Wandering Over the Plains of the Nephites” by Ken Corbett (Notice the huge thigh bone of Zelph in Wilford Woodruff’s wagon and the letter Joseph wrote to Emma. This event on the Mississippi/Sidon River, happened just two days after the Zelph skeleton was uncovered). “The thigh bones and the arrowhead were taken back to camp and placed in Wilford Woodruff’s wagon. The skeleton was unusually large . It was estimated to be over eight feet tall.” James L. Bradley, Zion’s Camp 1834:*

This personal letter and the Zelph account, which he and others bore record was received by him through revelation and inspiration, testify to the knowledge that Joseph Smith had about Book of Mormon geography. In this written account by the Prophet he claims that they had been on plains previously occupied by the Nephites of the Book of Mormon. Joseph also clearly states that the Nephites, that “once beloved people of the Lord,” also built mounds. Although the Prophet surely had no question about the validity of the Book of Mormon, he was still interested in finding physical evidences of what he already knew by revelation to be true.

The statements above give no indication that the Prophet was confused or unaware where the history of the Book of Mormon took place, or that he had “no inspiration on the matter.” Proper research should not ignore or dismiss these statements made by the Prophet Joseph. To claim that these documented accounts are flawed, uninspired and are insufficient evidence of Joseph’s knowledge about Book of Mormon geography is at best dismissive. At worst, to say Joseph did not know, demonstrates a profound disregard of the Prophet’s revelatory knowledge in favor of a personally held hypothetical theory. Joseph Smith is clear, concise, and inspired, leaving no doubt about his thoughts as to the setting of this sacred history. This being the case, these statements cannot be set aside as they become a primary witness along with the scriptures. These two witnesses should be used in every theory or methodology for the determination of a geographical setting for the Book of Mormon.



## Ancient Manti in Huntsville, Missouri

According to journal accounts, the Prophet Joseph also declared that the Book of Mormon city of Manti was not far from this area. In 1836, the Prophet Joseph Smith, Brigham Young, and others, found it best, on account of apostasy and bitterness, to leave Kirtland and go to Far West, Missouri where the Saints were endeavoring to establish themselves. On September 25, they passed through Huntsville, Randolph County, Missouri and it was reported that the prophet told the brethren that this place, where a stake of Zion had been established, was "the ancient site of the city of Manti." 67

The camp passed through Huntsville, in Randolph County, which has been appointed as one of the stakes of Zion and is the ancient site of the City of Manti, and pitched tents at Dark Creek, Salt Licks, seventeen miles. It was reported to the camp that one hundred and ten men had volunteered from Randolph and gone to Far West to settle difficulties."

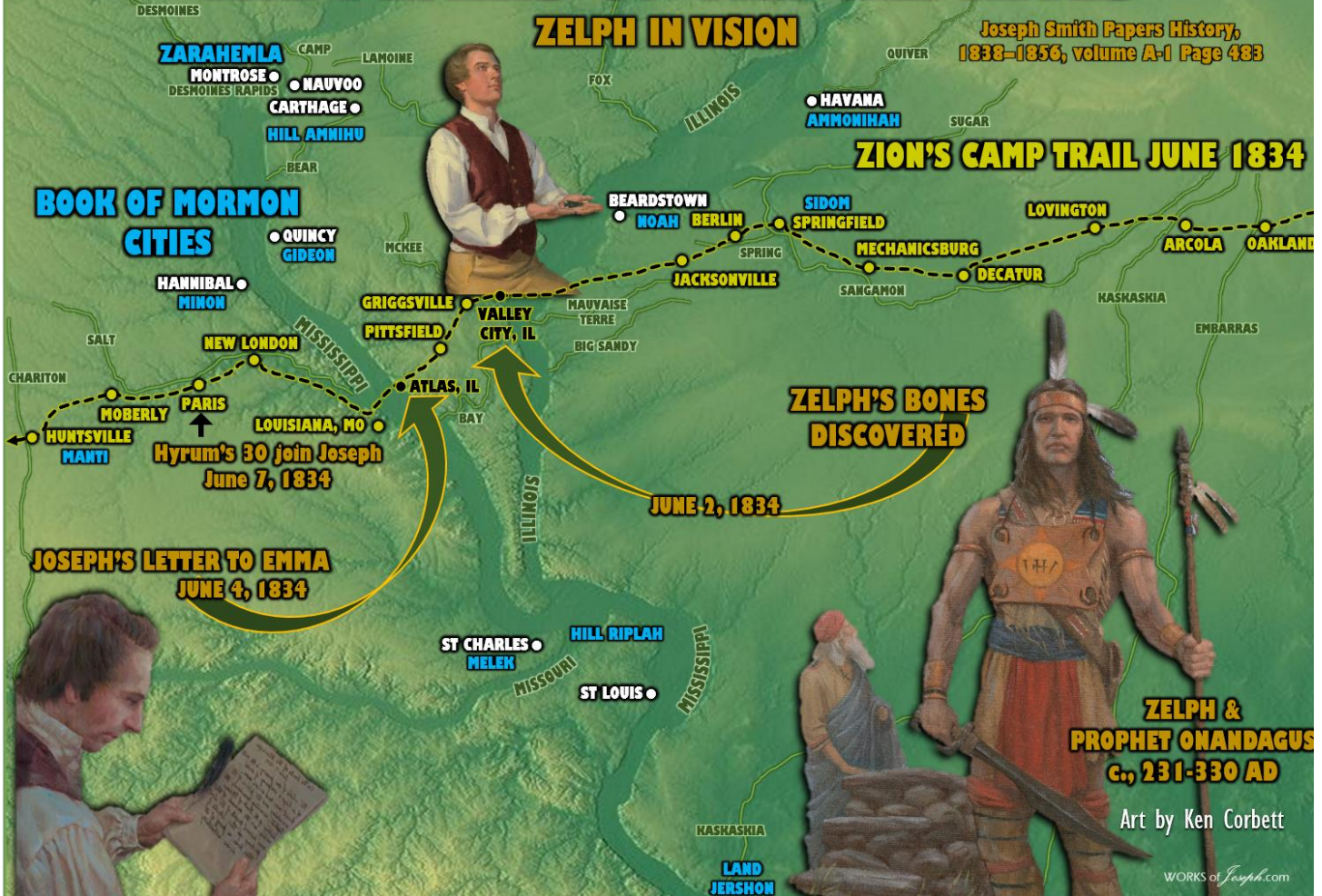
The following account of the same event is taken from the daily journal of the Kirtland Camp and was written by Samuel D. Tyler:

"September 25, 1838. We passed through Huntsville, Co seat of Randolph Co, Pop. 450, and three miles further we bought 32 bu, of corn off one of the brethren who resides in this place. There are several of the brethren round about here and this is the ancient site of the City of Manti, which is spoken of in the Book of Mormon and this is appointed one of the Stakes of Zion, and it is in Randolph County, Missouri, three miles west of the county seat." 68

The Prophet Joseph, according to these diary accounts, revealed where the Book of Mormon city of Manti was located. This is not the only ancient city mentioned in this dispensation that has a link to the Promised Land in the Book of Mormon. The Lord in the Doctrine and Covenants told the Prophet Joseph Smith that a city was to be built opposite the city of Nauvoo on the west bank of the river. However, speaking of "new" cities and "old" cities, the scriptures record in Ether:

"I plead with you this evening to pray for this country, for our leaders, for our people, and for the families that live in this great nation founded by God... this country was established and preserved by our founding fathers and mothers who repeatedly acknowledged the hand of God through prayer... We must stand boldly for righteousness and truth, and must defend the cause of honor, decency, and personal freedom espoused by Washington, Madison, Adams, Lincoln, and other leaders who acknowledged and loved God... We must stand boldly for righteousness and truth, and must defend the cause of honor, decency, and personal freedom espoused by Washington, Madison, Adams, Lincoln, and other leaders who acknowledged and loved God... Please look for the Lord's hand in your lives and in the lives of your family, as I do in the lives of my ancestors and family," he said. "Expect it. Do not dismiss it. Do not relegate the experiences in your lives to coincidences. From the signing of the Declaration of Independence in July 1776 through the signing of the U.S. Constitution in September 1787, the "wise men" whom the Lord "raised up unto this very purpose... As an apostle of the Lord Jesus Christ, I have a solemn duty to face the Lord and deliver His message," said President Ballard. "His words often include words of encouragement and expressions of love. They also include words of warning. America and the nations of the earth, as in times past, "are at another crossroad... Let it begin today that we take leadership and reach out in our own prayers and encourage our neighbors, our friends, our families ... to pray for this country that we all love much." President Ballard pleads with Latter-day Saints to 'pray for this country' as United States is at 'another crossroad by Sarah Jane Weaver church News. Link here: <https://www.thechurchnews.com/leaders-and-ministry/2019-10-21/pray-for-the-united-states-its-leaders-and-its-family-president-ballard-pleads-164797>

# THE PLAINS OF THE NEPHITES



“In the face of this evidence coming from the Prophet Joseph Smith, Oliver Cowdery, and David Whitmer, we cannot say that the Nephites and Lamanites did not possess the territory of the United States and that the Hill Cumorah is in Central America. Neither can we say that the great struggle which resulted in the destruction of the Nephites took place in Central America. If Zelph, a righteous man, was fighting under a great prophet-general in the last battles between the Nephites and Lamanites; if that great prophet-general was known from the Rocky Mountains to "the Hill Cumorah or eastern sea," then some of those battles, and evidently the final battles did take place within the borders of what is now the United States. There were no righteous prophets, save the Three Nephites, after the death of Moroni, and we learn that Zelph was slain during one of these battles during the great last struggle between the Nephites and Lamanites and was buried near the Illinois River. In the Book of Mormon story the Lamanites were constantly crowding the Nephites back towards the north and east. If the battles in which Zelph took part were fought in the country traversed by the Zion's Camp, then we have every reason to believe from what is written in the Book of Mormon, that the Nephites were forced farther and farther to the north and east until they found themselves in the land of Ripliancum, which both Ether and Mormon declare to us was the land of Ramah or Cumorah, a land of "many waters," which "by interpretation, is large, or to exceed all." This being true, what would be more natural than that Moroni, like his father Mormon, would deposit the plates in the land where the battles came to an end and the Nephites were destroyed? This Moroni says he did, and from all the evidence in the Book of Mormon, augmented by the testimony of the Prophet Joseph Smith, these final battles took place in the territory known as the United States and in the neighborhood of the Great Lakes and hills of Western New York. And here Moroni found the resting place for the sacred instruments which had been committed to his care.” [Joseph Fielding Smith, Doctrines of Salvation Vol. 3 Ch. 12](#)



## New Jerusalem/Zarahemla

"Behold, Ether saw the days of Christ, and he spake concerning a New Jerusalem upon this land.

And he spake also concerning the house of Israel, and the Jerusalem from whence Lehi should come—after it should be destroyed it should be built up again, a holy city unto the Lord; wherefore, it could not be a new Jerusalem for it had been in a time of old; but it should be built up again, and become a holy city of the Lord; and it should be built unto the house of Israel.

And that a New Jerusalem should be built up upon this land, unto the remnant of the seed of Joseph, for which things there has been a type". *Ether 13:4-6*

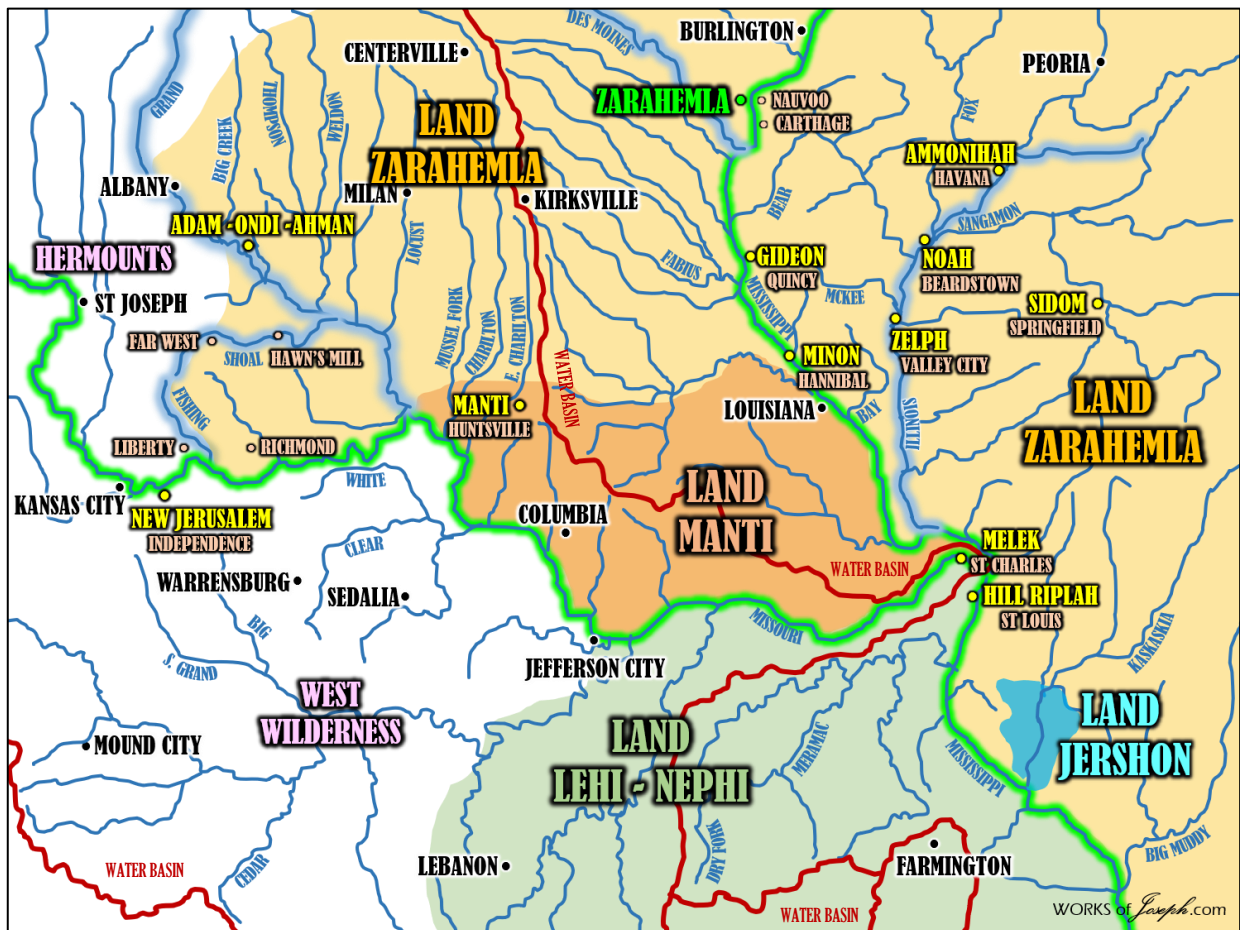
These verses imply that if a city existed previously and was acknowledged or named by the Lord and that should another city be built by the same name; it should be called “New” as in the case of Jerusalem. Thus a city that is to be built named Jerusalem in a different place than the original city must be called “New Jerusalem” according to the Lord because there was another city by that name in another time and place. Likewise, it could be understood that if there were to be a new city built using the ancient name of Zarahemla, and it is to be built in a different place than the original city, it should naturally be called “New Zarahemla.” In the Doctrine and Covenants the Lord declares that “Zarahemla” should be built across the river from Nauvoo. “Let them build up a city unto my name upon the land opposite the city of Nauvoo and let the name of Zarahemla be named upon it” (*D&C 125:3*). This Zarahemla should be a “New Zarahemla” if it was to be built in a different location from the old location. The Lord’s instructions for the naming of cities with the same name would at least imply that the ancient city of Zarahemla might have been in the area of Montrose, Iowa, west of present-day Nauvoo. That this was in fact the area where Joseph was told to build up a city named Zarahemla can be seen in the map on page 394 of the Joseph Smith Papers, Journals Vol. 1 which shows the many tracts of land purchased by the saints on the western side of the Mississippi River across from Nauvoo, even though they were in relatively desperate financial condition.

There exists no direct or positive statement that would leave without doubt that the ancient city Zarahemla was west of Nauvoo; however, it is clear that it could be, and the Lord gave no indication that it was not the location of the ancient Zarahemla. The Lord named this new city Zarahemla for a reason. There is no indication that He named it for any other purpose than to establish an understanding of where the ancient city may have stood.

There are other considerations that may provide additional support for the possibility of this location being the ancient city of Zarahemla. The city of Zarahemla was one of the most important and largest cities in Book of Mormon history. The Nephites and Mulekites, who were “exceedingly numerous” (*Omni 1:17*), joined together in Zarahemla, and the city was destroyed by fire (3 Nephi 8:8, 8:24, 9:3) at least once and rebuilt (4 Nephi 1:8). Zarahemla was a “great city” that was in the “heart of their lands” (Helaman 1:18) and was the “strongest hold in all the land” (Helaman 1:22). It was also their “capital city” (Helaman 1:27) and had at least one “highway” (Helaman 7:10) that ran into it.

The final wars between the Nephites and Lamanites “began to be among them in the borders of Zarahemla by the waters of Sidon” (Mormon 1:10) and in many of the wars it seemed to be a very strategic location to hold or possess. Location and physical surroundings would make this an ancient city of strategic importance both militarily as well as economically. It would have most likely been in an area that had a military advantage in some way and that also enjoyed an important geographic location for trade and commerce.

# Cities of the Book of Mormon



“Millennia ago he declared: “There shall none come into this land [he was speaking of America] save they shall be brought by the hand of the Lord... In the western part of the state of New York near Palmyra is a prominent hill known as the “hill Cumorah.” (Morm. 6:6.) On July twenty-fifth of this year, as I stood on the crest of that hill admiring with awe the breathtaking panorama which stretched out before me on every hand, my mind reverted to the events which occurred in that vicinity some twenty-five centuries ago—events which brought to an end the great Jaredite nation... Thus perished at the foot of Cumorah the remnant of the once mighty Jaredite nation, of whom the Lord had said, “There shall be none greater ... upon all the face of the earth.” (Ether 1:43.)... This second civilization to which I refer, the Nephites, flourished in America between 600 B.C. and A.D. 400. Their civilization came to an end for the same reason, at the same place, and in the same manner as did the Jaredites... The tragic fate of the Jaredite and the Nephite civilizations is proof positive that the Lord meant it when he said that this “is a land of promise; and whatsoever nation shall possess it shall serve God, or they shall be swept off when the fulness of his wrath shall come upon them. And the fulness of his wrath cometh upon them when they are ripened in iniquity.” (Ether 2:9.) his information, wrote Moroni, addressing himself to us who today occupy this land, “cometh unto you, O ye Gentiles” (now, Gentiles is the term used by the Book of Mormon prophets to refer to the present inhabitants of America and to the peoples of the old world from which they came)... Now my beloved brethren and sisters everywhere, both members of the Church and nonmembers, I bear you my personal witness that I know that the things I have presented to you today are true—both those pertaining to past events and those pertaining to events yet to come. The issue we face is clear and well defined. The choice is ours. The question is: Shall we of this dispensation repent and obey the laws of the God of the land, who is Jesus Christ, or shall we continue to defy them until we ripen in iniquity? That we will repent and obey and thereby qualify to receive the blessings promised to the righteous in this land, I humbly pray in the name of Jesus Christ, our Redeemer. Amen.” [America's Destiny Marion G. Romney Oct 1975](#)



## The Des Moines River Rapids

The Des Moines rapids on the Mississippi River spanned the river from the west bank to the east bank and existed prior to the building of dams and locks which have today raised the water levels some 19-20 feet. These dams and locks were constructed to raise the river level so that riverboats plying the Mississippi could pass these shallow rapids between Nauvoo and the city of Keokuk to the south. The river above and below these rapids was historically about 2500 feet across, with the rapids widening to almost 4500 feet as a result of a hard limestone shelf that crosses the area. (These rapids are clearly shown on the map on page 394 of **The Joseph Smith Papers, Journals Vol. 1 that divides Commerce [Nauvoo] on the eastern bank from Zarahemla on the western side of the river.**) The ancient city of Zarahemla was on the western side of the Sidon River (Alma 6:7) just as the revelation from the Lord to Joseph Smith put this latter-day Zarahemla on the western side of the river.

Historical records state that the mean depth of the Des Moines Rapids was a mere 2.4 feet (about mid-thigh level for most people), with most of the crossing being more shallow, especially during dry spells or fall seasons. This rapid was the first location upstream from the Gulf of Mexico where the Mississippi River could be crossed on foot. The rapids were so shallow that riverboats in the early 1800s could not pass them and their cargo had to be portaged by wagon or flat-bottomed barge past the rapids and reloaded onto other riverboats.

Certainly, the depth of the river, prior to control measures that are in place today, was subject to great fluctuations. However, the fact remains that this rapid would make this particular location one of the most important and strategic in all of ancient North America because this is where the river could be crossed without the necessity of boats at certain seasons of the year. This also means that whoever could maintain control of the land area bounding these rapids could effectively thwart any large army from attacking one side of the river or another, thereby providing control of nearly all of the lands of the eastern United States from the western lands and vice versa.

It also would provide a naturally strategic location for trade coming from all areas of North America to cross this great natural barrier dividing and separating the heartland of America without the aid of boats. Certainly this was one of the most important and strategic locations both in ancient times and in modern times for this very reason. It would make sense that if this were the ancient site of Zarahemla, it would be one of the largest and most important cities in the Book of Mormon.

“The most common question that is asked about mounds is, “How many exist?” In the 1800’s the Smithsonian sponsored many expeditions to identify mound sites across America. A map (shown below) was produced by Cyrus Thomas in 1894 in a Bureau of Ethnology book. They found approximately 100,000 mound sites, many with complexes containing 2 to 100 mounds. The figure of 100,000 mounds once existing— based on Cyrus Thomas map revealing 100,000 sites—is often cited by others, but that estimate is far, far too low. After visiting several thousand mounds and reviewing the literature, I am fairly certain that over 1,000,000 mounds once existed and that perhaps 100,000 still exist. Oddly, some new mound sites are discovered each year by archaeological surveys in remote areas. But in truth, a large majority of America’s mounds have been completely destroyed by farming, construction, looting, and deliberate total excavations”  
– Gregory L. Little, Ed.D., *The Illustrated Encyclopedia of Native American Mounds & Earthworks*, Eagle Wing Books, Inc., Memphis, TN [2009]. See Cyrus Thoms Map on page

## Landing of the Mulekites

*(From Moroni's America by Jonathan Neville pg. 99-101)*

"A key point here is that they [Mulekites] were led by the Lord "into the land where Mosiah discovered them, and they had dwelt there from that time forth." [Omni 1:17]. How would they have reached Iowa directly? And why would they have remained there for hundreds of years?

Figure 17 depicts their course across the Atlantic Ocean. Figure 18 shows their route up the Mississippi to Iowa, across from Nauvoo.

There is a good reason why the Mulekites would have stopped in Iowa, across from Nauvoo. It is the first place up the Mississippi river from the Gulf Coast that, historically, was impassable for large ships, due to the Des Moines rapids located just south of there. Even in the 1840s, riverboats had to stop at the rapids, unload cargo, and then be dragged over the rapids before progressing north. (Now, a series of dams and locks makes the river navigable for barges and other large ships.) Lewis and Clark noted the rapids on their 1814 map. In 1837, Robert E. Lee made a map showing the rapids by Fort Des Moines, where Montrose, Iowa, is today.

Figure 18 shows another key point. The Mulekites could have easily sailed up the river without encountering the Nephites or the Lamanites, who were several hundred miles east. Furthermore, the Mulekites would have sailed right past other civilizations that likely existed in the area, descendants of Jaredites or other groups who had come to the continent.

The Zarahemla location in Iowa, across from Nauvoo, is ideal from several perspectives. First, being on the river provides plentiful water and facilitates commerce. Second, it is upriver from the Des Moines rapids, which provide a defensive barrier against river-borne invaders from the south. Third, the area has productive agricultural land. Ultimately, of course, it's where the Lord led them.

This geography helps clarify why the Nephites never encountered Zarahemla until Mosiah was prompted to flee from the land of Nephi. In our day, we might think people would explore freely, but anciently, the wilderness was dangerous. There were wild beasts, unpredictable weather, the potential of getting lost, sicknesses, and no way to communicate over long distances. You were on your own in the wilderness. By contrast, there was safety in numbers and community. Farms provided food. Why risk leaving a safe, productive and favorable location?

It required great faith for Lehi and his family to leave Jerusalem, let alone cross the ocean (which is why Nephi faced such resistance from his brothers). In the new world, it required great faith for Nephi to flee from his brothers into the wilderness. Mosiah exercised great faith to leave the land of Nephi.

The prominence of Zarahemla—it is by far the most-often mentioned place in the Book of Mormon, the capital of the Nephites—shows it was wise for the people of Zarahemla to stay put." *(From Moroni's America by Jonathan Neville pg. 99-101) Some Heartlanders still believe the Mulekites may have entered through the St. Lawrence Seaway and west through the Great Lakes which is a great option as well.*



Figure 17 Mulekites across the Atlantic

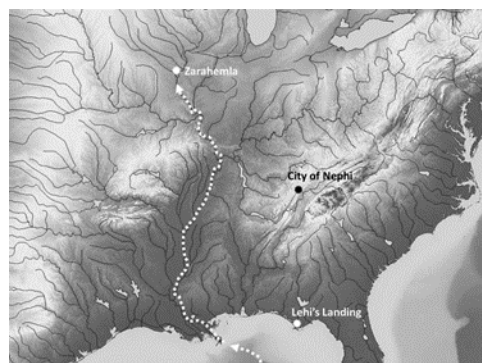


Figure 18 Mulekite route up Mississippi



## "The Sac and Fox Indians at Nauvoo

Late in the summer of 1841 a group of Native Americans of the Sac and Fox tribes (who had been displaced from their homelands in Michigan and were now west of the Mississippi in present-day Iowa and Missouri) came to visit the Prophet Joseph Smith. The meeting was recorded in the History of the Church. Joseph writes of this meeting on August 12, 1841:

"Thursday, 12.—A considerable number of the Sac and Fox Indians have been for several days encamped in the neighborhood of Montrose. The ferryman brought over a great number on the ferryboat and two flat boats for the purpose of visiting me. The military band and a detachment of Invincibles [part of the Legion] were on shore ready to receive and escort them to the grove, but they refused to come on shore until I went down. I accordingly went down, and met Keokuk, Kis-ku-kosh, Appenoose, and about one hundred chiefs and braves of those tribes, with their families. At the landing, I was introduced by Brother Hyrum to them; and after salutations, I conducted them to the meeting grounds in the grove, and instructed them in many things which the Lord had revealed unto me concerning their fathers, and the promises that were made concerning them in the Book of Mormon. I advised them to cease killing each other and warring with other tribes; also to keep peace with the whites; all of which was interpreted to them." 69

This account of the visit of the Sac and Fox tribes to Joseph teaches two important concepts: first, that the Lord had revealed things to the Prophet concerning "their fathers," and second, that the Book of Mormon promises were made concerning them. Respectively, these concepts let us know of the inspiration and revelation that Joseph Smith received and that he knew that these Lamanite remnants were recipient heirs of the promises of the Book of Mormon.

Some claim that Joseph Smith's understanding of the setting for the Book of Mormon changed or evolved as he supposedly learned more about Central American ruins near the time of his death. Contrary to this view, however, just days before his martyrdom, the Prophet repeated again his understanding in relation to who the remnant Lamanites were. His views and understanding had in fact not evolved but had remained steadfast and constant. In May of 1844 the Prophet records another visit by the Sac and Fox in his personal journal wherein he again restates what the Lord told him.

"23 May 1844 Thursday

1 P.M. held council with the Indians Sac & Fox &c in my back kitchen. They told me (Joseph) "You are a big chief. We are sons of big men, and Priests as ever inhabited this land. You preach a great deal so say Great Spirit. You be as great & good as our fathers that will do. Our worship is different, but we are good as any other men.

I [Joseph Smith] Replied. Great Spirit wants you to be united & live in peace. [I] found a book, (presenting the Book of Mormon) which told me about your fathers & Great Spirit told me. you must send to all the tribes you can, & tell them to live in peace, & when any of our people come to see you treat them as we treat you." 70

Joseph explained to the Sac and Fox that the Book of Mormon taught about "their fathers." Joseph then taught them that the Lord (Great Spirit) "told me" that the book must be given to all the tribes. In making such a statement Joseph again reinforces his previous claim to have been given this knowledge through revelation. Just a few days before his death, the Prophet Joseph reaffirms his testimony and previous statements that the Native North Americans were a Lamanite remnant prophesied of in the Book of Mormon.

It is evident that the Prophet Joseph Smith had revelations and inspiration about the "ancient inhabitants of this continent" as Moroni declared in the Pearl of Great Price. Joseph Smith also states "He [the angel] said that the Indians were the literal descendants of Abraham." 71

## Joseph with Keokuk painted on the wall inside the Mesa, AZ Temple



Does God really want to speak to you? Yes! “As well might man stretch forth his puny arm to stop the Missouri river in its decreed course ... as to hinder the Almighty from pouring down knowledge from heaven upon the heads of the Latter-day Saints.”

You don't have to wonder about what is true. You do not have to wonder whom you can safely trust. Through personal revelation, you can receive your own witness that the Book of Mormon is the word of God, that Joseph Smith is a prophet, and that this is the Lord's Church. Regardless of what others may say or do, no one can ever take away a witness borne to your heart and mind about what is true.

I urge you to stretch beyond your current spiritual ability to receive personal revelation, for the Lord has promised that “if thou shalt [seek], thou shalt receive revelation upon revelation, knowledge upon knowledge, that thou mayest know the mysteries and peaceable things—that which bringeth joy, that which bringeth life eternal.” [\*Revelation for the Church, Revelation for Our Lives by President Russell M. Nelson\*](#)



The words that Joseph and others used to describe his inspiration specifically about a Book of Mormon setting in North America are listed below. Each of these phrases, from historical documents containing the statements made by Joseph Smith about the geographical setting of the Book of Mormon, declare that he received this knowledge by inspiration and revelation.

- “things which the Lord had revealed unto me”
- “the visions of the past being opened to my understanding by the Spirit of the Almighty”
- “this publication I wrote by the commandment of God”
- “We are informed by these records”
- “It was [also] made known unto me”
- “I was also told”
- “the angel said”
- “I was also informed concerning the aboriginal inhabitants of this country [America] and shown”
- “I was informed”
- “Joseph continued to receive instruction from the Lord”

It is disappointing that many of the statements made by Joseph Smith about his inspiration and revelations on this matter are frequently ignored for the sake of a pet theory, especially when his statements appear to conflict with a particular consensus or scholarly tradition. History has shown repeatedly that those who dismiss the prophet Joseph Smith in any degree do so at their own peril. Should his statements on this matter be taken any less seriously than other statements for which he claimed divine inspiration? Did he in fact make these statements? The unflinching answer: Yes, he did. Can each of these statements be backed up with historical documentation to establish beyond reasonable question their authenticity? Again, the answer is a resounding yes.

Once they are established as documented fact, one need not question the Prophet’s statements further, but rather more appropriately ask oneself: Do I believe him, or do I try to find reasons not to believe him? Do I question and/or dismiss his words as some have done writing, “he never claimed inspiration on the matter” [of Book of Mormon geography], for example.

What message is sent to those unfriendly to the Church and Mormonism when recognized scholars within the Church openly disagree with (or reject) the words and claimed inspiration of the founding prophet of this dispensation? Joseph Smith’s prophetic statements blend in perfect harmony with every one of 36 prophecies and promises found in the Book of Mormon about a new Gentile nation that would be established in the latter days that would become a mighty nation, above all other nations, where the gospel would be restored and where the New Jerusalem will be built.

Only one nation on earth can fulfill all of these scriptural injunctions and also stand in full agreement with Joseph Smith’s inspired statements and actions regarding the latter-day nation that was and is the Promised Land of the Book of Mormon. Joseph Smith knew. Despite the much confusion and perplexity that has dogged this subject over the ensuing years, Joseph himself was clear and concise in his declaration of inspiration and in his knowledge of the geographical setting for the Book of Mormon.

The Prophet Joseph himself made multiple claims of being informed through direct revelation from heavenly messengers and the Lord of things pertaining to the locations where the Book of Mormon actually occurred. Either we can believe his prophetic words or reject him in favor of pursuing locations based on hypothetical maps. Those who choose to reject the prophet’s revelatory words cannot then also claim to be “defending Mormonism” in the pursuit of their own agendas, which occasionally run contrary to his words. Such actions demonstrate a casual disregard for Joseph’s prophetic calling and an espousal of the ‘theories of men’ over his inspired and historically documented statements." *End of Chapter 9 – What Did Joseph Know?*

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## Notes from Chapter 9

52 [Lucy Mack Smith, History of Joseph Smith](#) by His Mother [Salt Lake City: Stevens & Wallis, Inc., 1945], 82.

53 History of the Church 1:120.

54 The writers of the articles at fairlds.org have concluded that perhaps these revelations were not directly from the Lord but just Joseph's choice of words and therefore cannot be taken at face value without secondary interpretation. FAIR writes: "Many readers assume that revelations in the Doctrine and Covenants in which Joseph Smith speaks in "God's voice" are direct "quotations" from God. Joseph didn't claim to be hearing a voice, and he didn't claim to be quoting God or "taking dictation." Rather, impressions would come to him, which he would put into words. Joseph clearly did not consider them "direct quotations" from God, since he was quite happy to revise them, edit them later, etc.... This means that "Lamanites" to describe the American Indians was Joseph's word choice." It would appear that there is a need by FAIR to maintain a legitimacy for the Limited Geography Theory (LGT) by also writing "The few personal statements he made on Book of Mormon geography indicate that he believed it took place on a hemispheric scale, so it would be natural for him to believe that all Native Americans were pure descendants of Laman, and hence were literal "Lamanites." See also [http://en.fairmormon.org/Lamanites\\_in\\_the\\_Doctrine\\_and\\_Covenants](http://en.fairmormon.org/Lamanites_in_the_Doctrine_and_Covenants)

55 Autobiography of Parley P. Pratt, 56-61. See also Andrew Jensen, The Historical Record, (1888), Vol. 7, 389.

56 Andrew Jensen, The Historical Record, (1888), Vol. 7, 387.

57 Ronald W. Walker, "Seeking the 'Remnant': The Native American During the Joseph Smith Period," Journal of Mormon History, Vol. 19 No. 1, (Spring 1993), 1-33.

58 Joseph Smith, Discourses of the Prophet Joseph Smith, compiled by Alma P. Burton, [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1977], 275-276.

59 Ibid.

60 Joseph Smith, The Personal Writings of Joseph Smith, compiled and edited by Dean C. Jessee, [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1984], 273-274. See also History of the Church 1:301 and D&C 87:1.

61 Ibid., 275-276. See also History of the Church 1:326.

62 Joseph Smith, The Joseph Smith Papers, Journals, Volume 1 (1832-1839), compiled and edited by Dean C. Jessee, Richard L. Bushman, and Ronald K. Esplin, [Salt Lake City: Church Historian's Press, 2008], 88.

63 History of the Church 2:79-80.

64 Ibid. See also in Joseph Fielding Smith, Doctrines of Salvation, 3:239-240. Heber C. Kimball is quoted in his journal as saying: "While on our way we felt anxious to know who the person was who had been killed by that arrow. It was made known to Joseph that he had been an officer who fell in battle, in the last destruction among the Lamanites, and his name was Zelph. This caused us to rejoice much, to think that God was so mindful of us as to show these things to his servant. Brother Joseph had inquired of the Lord, and it was made known in a vision." Joseph Fielding Smith goes on to state in the same reference that: "In the face of this evidence coming from the Prophet Joseph Smith, Oliver Cowdery, and David Whitmer, we cannot say that the Nephites and Lamanites did not possess the territory of the United States and that the Hill Cumorah is in Central America. Neither can we say that the great struggle which resulted in the destruction of the Nephites took place in Central America. If Zelph, a righteous man, was fighting under a great prophet-general in the last battles between the Nephites and Lamanites; if that great prophet-general was known from the Rocky Mountains to 'the Hill Cumorah or eastern sea,' then some of those battles, and evidently the final battles, did take place within the borders of what is now the United States."

65 Donald Q. Cannon, "Zelph Revisited," Church History Regional Studies, BYU Department of Church History and Doctrine, Regional Studies, Illinois, 97-109.

66 Joseph Smith, The Personal Writings of Joseph Smith, compiled and edited by Dean C. Jessee (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1984), 324. The original letter from the prophet to his wife is held today by the Community of Christ (formerly RLDS) church.

67 Andrew Jensen, The Historical Record, Vol. 7, 601.

68 Joseph Fielding Smith, Doctrines of Salvation, 3:239.

69 History of the Church 4:401.

70 Joseph Smith Diary, kept by Willard Richards, 23 May 1844, LDS Church History Library.

71 The Diaries and Journals of Joseph Smith, edited by Scott H. Faulring, (198)



## Canassatego Great Iroquois Diplomat and Chief

“The common wisdom among historians is that the people who wrote the Constitution had no concept of the Indian way of life,” said John Mohawk, a Seneca from the Cattaraugus Indian Reservation near Buffalo, and the organizer, with Professor Lyons, of the project. "But what made the colonists American as opposed to English was their experiences with the Indians."

As proof, they cite records kept by the colonists. An Onondaga named Canassatego suggested that the colonists form a nation similar to the Iroquois Confederacy during a meeting of the Provincial Council of Pennsylvania in Lancaster on June 25, 1744.

According to the director of the Historical Society of Pennsylvania, Peter J. Parker, the council minutes show that Canassatego urged the colonists to "receive these your brethren with open arms; unite yourselves to them in the covenant chain and be you with them as one body and one soul." *Iroquois Constitution: A Forerunner to Colonists' Democratic Principles, New York Times June 28, 1998.*

“The Iroquois Confederacy had been a functioning democracy for centuries by Benjamin Franklin’s day. Sometime between 1000 and 1450, the Cayuga, Mohawk, Oneida, Onondaga, and Seneca Nations came together to become the Iroquois Confederacy, and in the early 18th century they were joined by the Tuscaroras. Referred to as the Six Nations by the English, and the Iroquois by the French, the Confederacy called themselves the Haudenosaunee, or People Building a Long House.” *By Cynthia Feathers and Susan Feathers*

IROQUOIS INDIAN CHIEF	BORN	PLACE
DEGANAWIDA-Huron/ Onondaga/Mohawk	12 <sup>th</sup> Century	Near Lake Huron
HIAWATHA- Onondaga/Mohawk	12 <sup>th</sup> Century	Onondaga, NY
TADODAHO- Onondaga	12 <sup>th</sup> Century	Onondaga, NY
JIGONHSASEE- Haudenosaunee	12 <sup>th</sup> Century	Cohoes Falls, NY
CANASSATEGO- Onondaga	1684-1750	Onondaga, NY
SAYENQUERAGHTA- Seneca	1707-1786	Geneva, NY
GUYASUTA- Seneca	1725-1794	Conawagus, NY
SKENANDOA- Susquehannock/Oneida	1706-1816	Conestoga, PA
CORNPLANTER- Seneca	1732-1836	Canawaugus, NY
HANDSOME LAKE- Seneca	1735-1815	Conawagus, NY
GOVERNOR BLACKSNAKE - Seneca	1737-1860	Romulus, NY
RED JACKET- Seneca	1750-1830	Canoga, NY
JOHN BRANT- Mohawk	1794-1832	Brant, Ontario
JESSE CORNPLANTER- Seneca	1889-1957	Cattaraugus, NY

“Contrary, then, to widespread assumptions during Joseph Smith's lifetime that the Onondaga migrated to the New York region, it becomes clear that they originated here as a small, narrowly localized amalgamation of a few villages near Onondaga Lake, during the century before Columbus' discovery of America” *Beauchamp's Aboriginal Place Names of New York*; Joseph Smith during his life more than likely knew about many of these Indian chiefs below who were from the same vicinity as him. Joseph may have also spent time with many of them. “On the one hand, there are parallels between Handsome Lake’s teachings and Book of Mormon, economic and social interactions between Iroquois and white settlers at the time were still extensive during the early decades of the 19th century, and Lucy Mack Smith wrote that Joseph talked about Indians “as if he had spent his whole life among them.” *Lucy Mack Smith, Biographical Sketches of Joseph Smith, the Prophet, and His Progenitors for Many Generations (Liverpool: S.W. Richards, 1853.* “Joseph Smith was interested in the people who lived around him.

Young Joseph was a member of the juvenile debating club in Palmyra during 1822 when Red Jacket, arguably the most widely-known Seneca of this period, delivered a speech in town. Joseph also liked to hang out on Ganargua Creek (Mud Creek) in the area where Iroquois travelers camped. He had interest and access.” *Joseph Smith and the Code of Handsome Lake Lori Taylor, Ph.D.*

The Onondaga Nation at the great white pine tree in Syracuse NY on the shores of Onondaga Lake is where the message of peace was planted, and the hatchets were buried according to many researchers. Similarly, the Lamanites , “...buried the weapons of war, for peace.” Alma 24:19 (“a peacemaker crossed Onondaga Lake in a stone canoe, how he convinced warring nations to bury their weapons beneath a tree of peace.”) *Sean Kirst Syracuse.com*

“The Onondagas: These have special interest... this warrior, Zelfh, was an Onondaga, as well as a "white" Lamanite, and that the Onondagas (of New York), consequently must be of Lamanite lineage.” *J.M. Sjodahl, An Introduction to the Study of the Book of Mormon.*

“How America Was Discovered is a story told by Handsome Lake (Seneca Prophet), and documented by Arthur C. Parker, about a young minister who meets the one he perceives to be the Lord, who then asks him to go to a new land and bring with him cards, money, a fiddle, whiskey, and blood corruption. In return the young minister will become rich. The young minister sought out Christopher Columbus, and with the help of his crew, traveled to the Americas. They turned back to report what they had seen, which caused an immigration of people from Europe to the Americas. Along with the people came the five things that aided in destroying the natives. The end reveals that the "Lord" in the gold castle was actually the devil, and that even he knew what he had caused was wrong.”

*Rudes, B. Tuscarora English Dictionary Toronto.*

Canassatego said, “Our wise forefathers established Union and Amity between the Five Nations. This has made us formidable; this has given us great Weight and Authority with our neighboring Nations. We are a powerful Confederacy; and by your observing the same methods, our wise forefathers have taken, you will acquire such Strength and power. Therefore, whatever befalls you, never fall out with one another.” *Canassatego, Lancaster Treaty Council, 1744.*

**Finding the Temple Records**

Rod Meldrum said, “The deep understanding of the proper role and procedures in good government exemplified by Canassatego in his discourses with many of the Founding Fathers may have contributed to his being included in a little-known account in the history of the Church. I have recounted many times this story of how a Native American chief by the name of Canassatego had instructed some of the Founding Fathers during a particularly difficult negotiation, thereby being an instrument in establishing the inspired Constitution of the United States.

Many Latter-day Saints are aware that in August 1877 at St. George, Utah, Wilford Woodruff, the temple president, and his recorder received visions that vicarious temple ordinances for the Founding Fathers and other eminent men and women were to be performed. On August 21, 1877, temple ordinance work was undertaken for them. However, few church members are aware that baptisms by proxy were also performed for 85 Native American Chieftains. That was done August 29, 1877, only a few days following the ordinance work that had been done for the Founders. One of the historically significant chieftains of that illustrious group was Canassatego. The death of President Brigham Young on that same day resulted in the temple presidency leaving for Salt Lake City with only the chieftains' baptismal work accomplished. Their remaining temple work seems to have been accidentally forgotten until I showed images of the temple registry during a presentation at St. George. In that audience was Delores Kahkonen, a Cayuga of the Six Nations/Iroquois. She literally jumped from her chair exclaiming, "Those are my people!" During the next two years she would be instrumental in researching each of those chieftains and facilitating the completion of their temple ordinance work including sealings to their spouses.” Rod had the pleasure of doing the temple work for Canassatego. (April 6, 2015) For more see “*Joseph's Remnant*” by Allen C. Christensen.

1866	Name of the Dead	When Born	Where Born		How Died
		in Capt.	Spain	County	
	Mrs. Bradley				Eng.
	Sophia Richards Russell				"
	Ann Drinkwater				"
	Sarah Lodge				"
	Jemima Aubrey				"
	Ann Smith Lodge				"
	Lucy Thomas				"
	Ann Chapman				"
	Mrs. James Elliot Rice				"
	Joseph Brant	Algonquin Chief			N.A.
	Red Jacket	"			"
	King Phillip	"			"
	Pohliac	"			"
	Accumick	"			"
	Black Hawk	"			"
	Powhattan	"			"
	Ope-Chan-ee-nough	"			"
	Uncas	Michigan			"
	Samuel	Wampansag			"
	Squanto	"			"
	Massasoit	"			"
	Canonicut	Manassett			"
	Be-can-ee-see	Onondaga			"
	Ca-ra-gu-la	"			"
	Kan-ah-ye-a-gah	"			"
	Ca-as-ee-ta-go	"			"
	Co-wi-di-a-ga	"			"
	Co-ni-tan-yoo	Seneca			"
	Be-la-hin-ta	Onondaga			"
	King Sah-to-tah 1	"			"
	King Sah-to-tah 2	"			"
	King Sah-to-tah 3	"			"
	King Sah-to-tah 4	"			"
	King Sah-to-tah 5	"			"
	King Sah-to-tah 6	"			"

Page 196, St. George Temple Records August 29, 1877, LDS Church Archives, Copy 1 of 3 Copied by Rod Meldrum



# 36 PROPHECIES AND PROMISES ABOUT THE LAND, THE REMNANT, AND THE GENTILES

#	#Scriptures	Prophecies and Promises	Book of Mormon Scripture References
1	32	Land of Promise	1 Nephi 2:20; 4:14; 5:5, 22; 7:1, 13; 10:13; 12:1; 13:12, 14; 14:2; 17:13; 18:8, 22, 23, 25; 2 Nephi 1:3, 5, 10, 24; Jacob 2:12; Mosiah 1:7; Alma 37:44, 45; Helaman 7:7; Ether 2:7, 8, 9; 6:8, 12, 16; 7:27.
2	20	Land obtained and consecrated for an inheritance	1 Nephi 13:30; 2 Nephi 1:3, 5; 3:2; 4:11; 10:10, 19; Jacob 2:12; Enos 1:10; Mosiah 28:2; 3 Nephi 15:13; 16:16; 20:14, 22; 21:22; Ether 1:38; 2:15; 13:7, 8, 21.
3	13	Land <i>choice</i> and precious above all other lands	1 Nephi 2:20; 13:30; 2 Nephi 1:5; 3:2; 10:19; Alma 46:17; Ether 1:42; 2:7, 10, 12, 15; 9:20; 13:2.
4	12	Land will be cursed because of wickedness	2 Nephi 1:7, 12; Jacob 2:29; 3:3; Enos 1:10; Jarom 1:10; Mosiah 29:27; Alma 37:25, 28; 45:16; Helaman 13:17; Ether 14:1.
5	8	Land is consecrated and holy to those led by the Lord	2 Nephi 1:5, 7; Ether 2:7, 8, 9, 10; 9:20; 13:2.
6	7	Land of prosperity and security	1 Nephi 13:15; 2 Nephi 1:31, 32; Jarom 1:9; Mosiah 1:7; Alma 9:13; 48:15.
7	6	Land shall be a land of liberty	2 Nephi 1:7; Mosiah 29:32; Alma 46:10, 16, 17; Ether 2:12.
8	5	The New Jerusalem will be built upon this land.	3 Nephi 21:23; Ether 13:3, 4, 6, 8.
9	4	Land where all shall worship God or be destroyed	2 Nephi 10:19; Ether 2:8, 9, 10.
10	3	Land prepared for those led to it by the hand of the Lord	1 Nephi 13:13; 17:13.
11	2	Land never to be brought into captivity	2 Nephi 1:7; Ether 2:12.
12	3	Land fortified against all other nations	1 Nephi 13:18; 2 Nephi 1:9; 10:12.
13	1	Land only for those brought by the Lord	2 Nephi 1:6.
14	1	Land kept from the knowledge of other nations	2 Nephi 1:8.
15	1	Land where none shall molest or remove their inheritance	2 Nephi 1:9.
16	2	Land not to be governed by kings or kings of Gentiles	2 Nephi 10:11, 14.
17	1	Seed of Lehi to be visited by Christ on this land	1 Nephi 13:35.

Research by Rod Meldrum and Bruce H. Porter

# 36 PROPHECIES AND PROMISES ABOUT THE LAND, THE REMNANT, AND THE GENTILES

#	#Scriptures	Prophecies and Promises	Book of Mormon Scripture References
18	2	The Record to be kept about those having possessed the Land	1 Nephi 19:3; Mosiah 28:15.
19	13	Gentiles to scatter and afflict remnant	1 Nephi 13:14, 30, 34; 22:7; 2 Nephi 10:18; 3 Nephi 16:4, 8; 20:15, 27, 28; Mormon 5:15; 20.
20	10	Gentiles to bring forth a “Marvelous Work” (The Book of Mormon)	1 Nephi 13:35, 40; 22:8; 3 Nephi 16:4; 21:2, 3, 4, 6, 9, 11.
21	8	Gentiles shown mercy by the Lord and receive the Gospel	1 Nephi 13:33, 34; 14:1; 3 Nephi 16:7; 20:15, 27; 21:6; Mormon 5:15.
22	6	Gentiles to bring the Gospel to the remnant	1 Nephi 22:8; 3 Nephi 16:4; 21:3, 4, 5, 6.
23	5	Gentiles to obtain this land of promise for an inheritance	1 Nephi 13:15; Mosiah 12:8; 3 Nephi 16:8; 21:4; Mormon 5:19.
24	4	Gentiles to be blessed and prosper on this land	1 Nephi 13:15, 20; 14:2; 2 Nephi 10:10.
25	3	Gentiles to become a mighty nation upon the land	1 Nephi 13:30; 22:7; 3 Nephi 20:27.
26	3	Gentiles not to remain in blindness	1 Nephi 13:32, 34; 14:1.
27	2	Gentiles come out of captivity to this land	1 Nephi 13:13, 30.
28	2	Gentiles upon this land are protected by God	1 Nephi 13:19, 30.
29	2	This land to be a land of liberty to the Gentiles	2 Nephi 10:11; 3 Nephi 21:4.
30	2	Gentiles to become multitudes upon the land	1 Nephi 12:1; 13:14.
31	2	Gentiles not to destroy the remnant	1 Nephi 13:31; 2 Nephi 10:18.
32	2	The Lord’s servant to be among the Gentiles	3 Nephi 21:10, 11.
33	2	Gentiles to have other books of truth	1 Nephi 13:39, 40.
34	1	Gentiles to bring Bible to the remnant	1 Nephi 13:38.
35	1	Church to be established among Gentiles of this land	1 Nephi 13:36-37.
36	1	Mother Gentiles to battle against Gentiles who came out of captivity	1 Nephi 13:17.

Research by Rod Meldrum and Bruce H. Porter



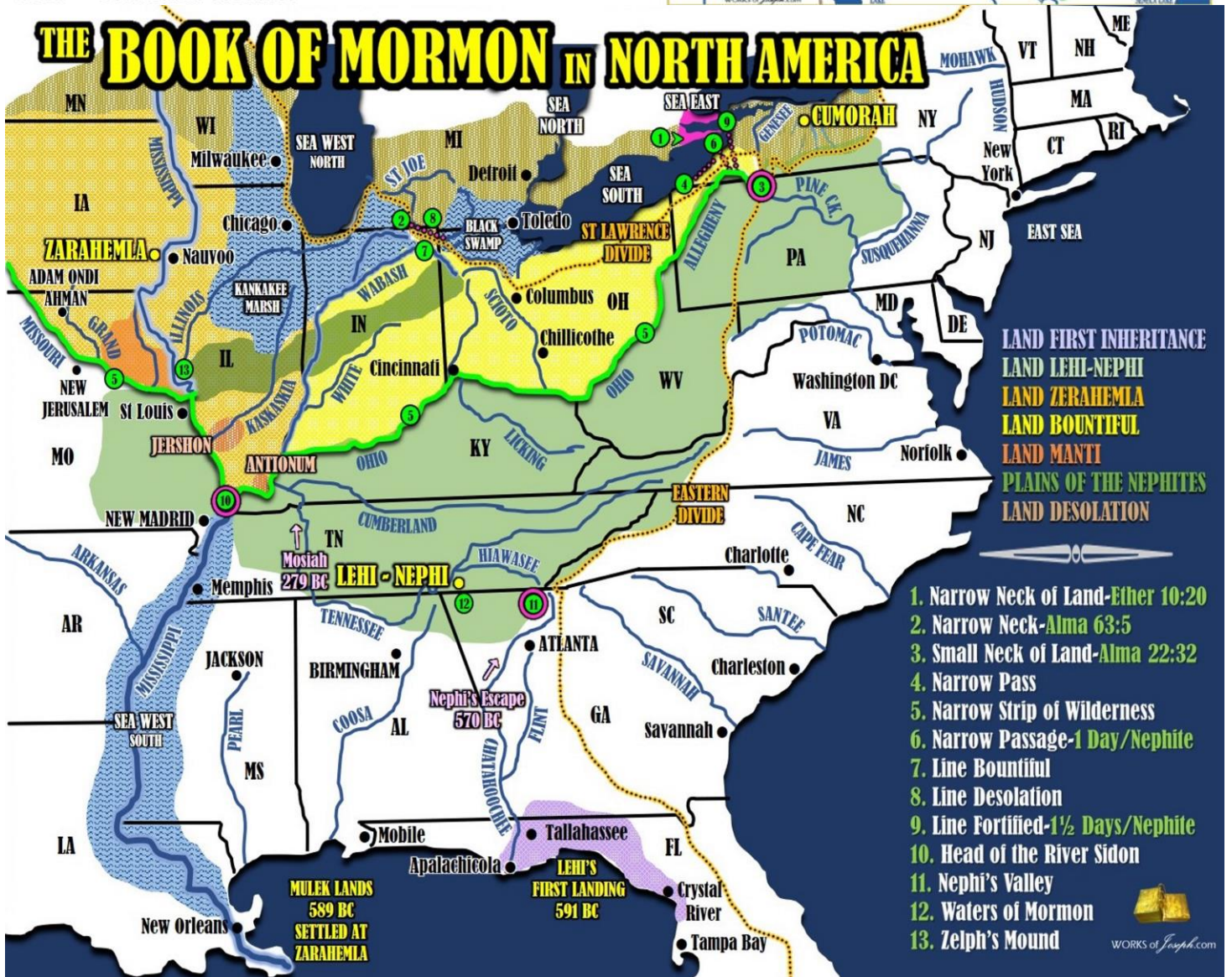
# INTRODUCTION TO THE MAPS

## “Pin in the Map”

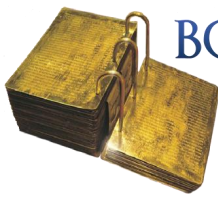
“The New York Cumorah doesn’t answer other questions about Book of Mormon geography, but it is a firm “pin in the map” given to us by Joseph and Oliver, who knew Cumorah was in New York because they personally visited Mormon’s depository there (Mormon 6:6). Every prophet and apostle who has commented about Cumorah since then, including members of the First Presidency speaking in General Conference, have affirmed what Joseph and Oliver taught. In my view, no legitimate geography can reject what they said was a fact” – Jonathan Neville.



## THE BOOK OF MORMON IN NORTH AMERICA



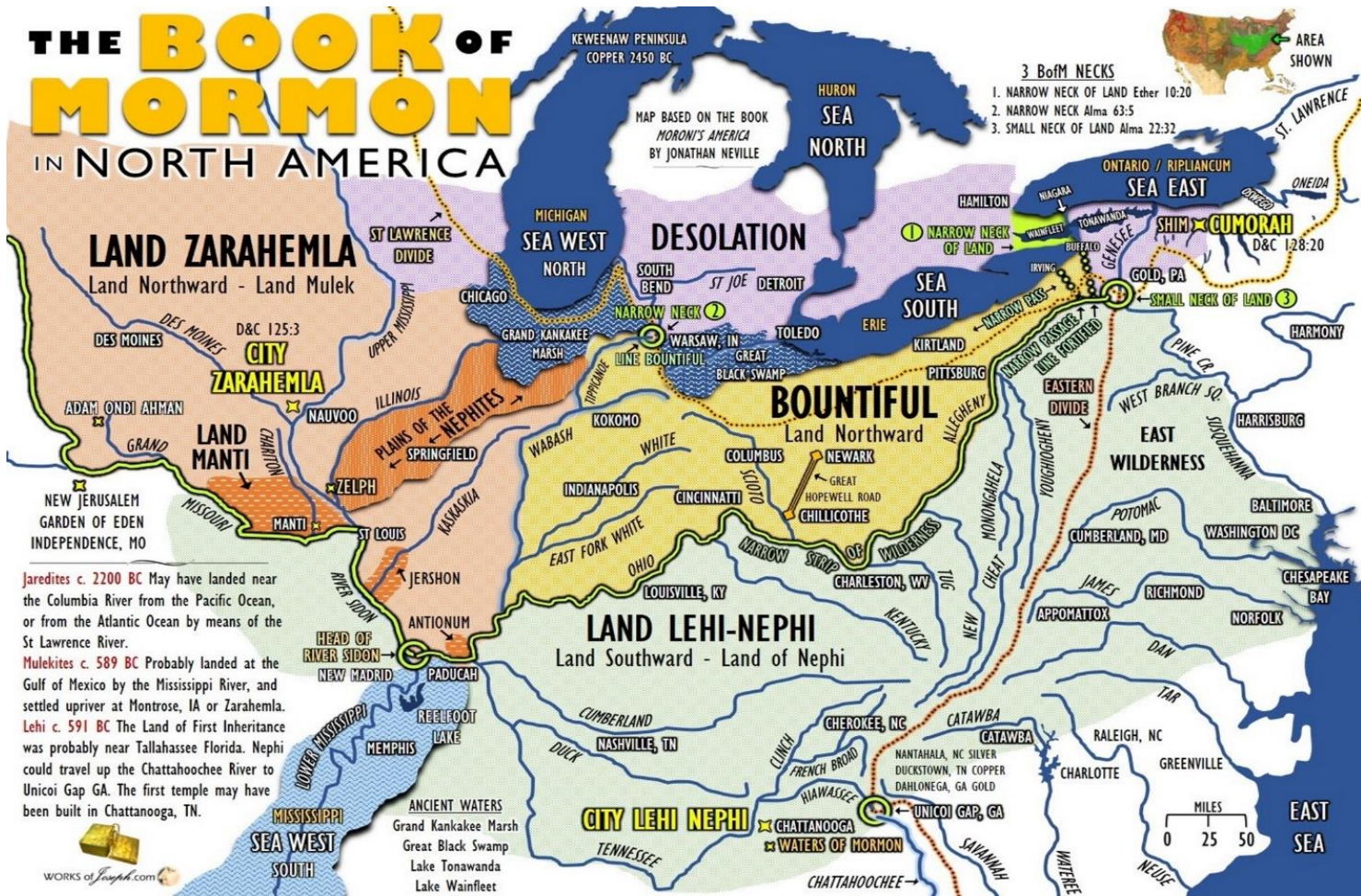




# BOOK OF MORMON EVIDENCE

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## THE BOOK OF MORMON IN NORTH AMERICA



Jaredites c. 2200 BC May have landed near the Columbia River from the Pacific Ocean, or from the Atlantic Ocean by means of the St Lawrence River.

Mulekites c. 589 BC Probably landed at the Gulf of Mexico by the Mississippi River, and settled upriver at Montrose, IA or Zarahemla.

Lehi c. 591 BC The Land of First Inheritance was probably near Tallahassee Florida. Nephi could travel up the Chattahoochee River to Unicoi Gap GA. The first temple may have been built in Chattanooga, TN.



“I will give you a lesson today that the Lord has taken great pains to bring to us... In the western part of the state of New York near Palmyra is a prominent hill known as the “hill Cumorah” (Mormon. 6:6). [There] perished at the foot of Cumorah the remnant of the once mighty Jaredite nation, of whom the Lord had said, ‘There shall be none greater... upon all the face of the earth’ (Ether 1:43, p. 461). “As I contemplated this tragic scene from the crest of Cumorah and viewed the beautiful land of the Restoration as it appears today, I cried in my soul, how could it have happened?... This second civilization to which I refer, the Nephites, flourished in America between 600 B.C. and A.D. 400. Their civilization came to an end for the same reason, at the same place, and in the same manner as did the Jaredites... I bear you my personal witness that I know that the things I have presented to you today are true—both those pertaining to past events and those pertaining to events yet to come.” ([President Marion G. Romney of the First Presidency 145th Semiannual Conference, Saturday Morning Session, October 4, 1975; emphasis added.](#))

# Does the Geography of the Book of Mormon Matter?

“Does the geography of the Book of Mormon matter? The book is true no matter where it happened. Right? This is a response I have heard many others say and one I have said myself many times. But reading in 3 Nephi this morning made me change my mind. I think the Book of Mormon geography does matter.

When Christ appeared to the Nephites as the resurrected Savior, He blessed them, He taught them He prayed with them and for them. He also quoted to them the words of Isaiah. He reminded them that they had been given **THIS LAND** for their inheritance and were warned that they would not be allowed to remain on **THIS LAND** if they did not remain faithful. This emphasis shows the significance of the **LAND** to the Book of Mormon people, and the people who would be brought by the hand of God to **THIS LAND** and now occupy **THIS LAND**.

Christ himself said, “great are the words of Isaiah” and He commanded the Nephites and all who read the Book of Mormon to search his words. If the words of Isaiah are great and we are commanded to read them and study them and ultimately understand them, then I believe we most certainly should understand where **THIS LAND** is and we should understand who the Lord is taking to when he talks about the inhabitants of **THIS LAND**. Because he is in fact talking directly to those who are on **THIS LAND** and if you don’t know where that is you can’t fully understand the message.

Does the geography of the Book of Mormon matter? With over 1400 references to “this land” in the Book of Mormon I’m not sure how the Book of Mormon prophets could have made it clearer. **THIS LAND** matters. Geography matters. Those of us on **THIS LAND** the “promised land,” the Land of Liberty, the Land of the New Jerusalem need to know who we are. America is **THIS LAND**. America is a covenant land. I live on **THIS LAND**. Even the chapter heading of 3 Nephi also confirms this truth.

Israel will be gathered when the Book of Mormon comes forth—The Gentiles will be established as a free people in America—They will be saved if they believe and obey; otherwise, they will be cut off and destroyed—Israel will build the New Jerusalem, and the lost tribes will return.

I am learning more each day about what the prophecies say about me, my fellow Gentiles and my House of Israel sisters and brothers on **THIS LAND**. I desire to understand my covenant that I have made with the Lord and the Book of Mormon is the “voice crying from the dust” helping me understand it. The geography of the Book of Mormon matters to me.”

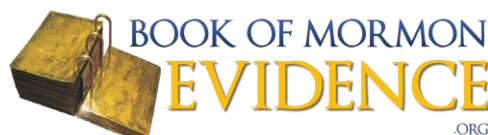
*Rod Meldrum FIRM Foundation President*

[Read The Scriptural Basis for Book of Mormon Geography](#)

[Read Historical Prattle or Competent Testimony – Method of Translation](#)

[Recent Symbolic Events and “Signs of the Times”](#)

[Where did the idea come from that the Book of Mormon originated in Central America?](#)





# One Hill Cumorah!

As BYU Professor John L. Sorenson, a leading scholar, wrote in Mormon's *Codex (Deseret Book, 2015)*, p. 688: "There remain Latter-day Saints who insist that the final destruction of the Nephites took place in New York, but any such idea is manifestly absurd. Hundreds of thousands of Nephites traipsing across the Mississippi Valley to New York, pursued (why?) by hundreds of thousands of Lamanites, is a scenario worthy only of a witless sci-fi movie, not of history."

We believe the following leaders of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, who have said the final battles did happen in North America at Hill Cumorah in New York.

"The final struggles between Nephites and Lamanites were waged in the vicinity of the Hill Cumorah, in what is now the State of New York, resulting in the destruction of the Nephites as a nation, about 400 A.D. The last Nephite representative was Moroni, who, wandering for safety from place to place, daily expecting death from the victorious Lamanites, wrote the concluding parts of the Book of Mormon, and hid the record in Cumorah. It was this same Moroni who, as a resurrected being, gave the records into the hands of Joseph Smith in the present dispensation." *James Talmage Articles of Faith*

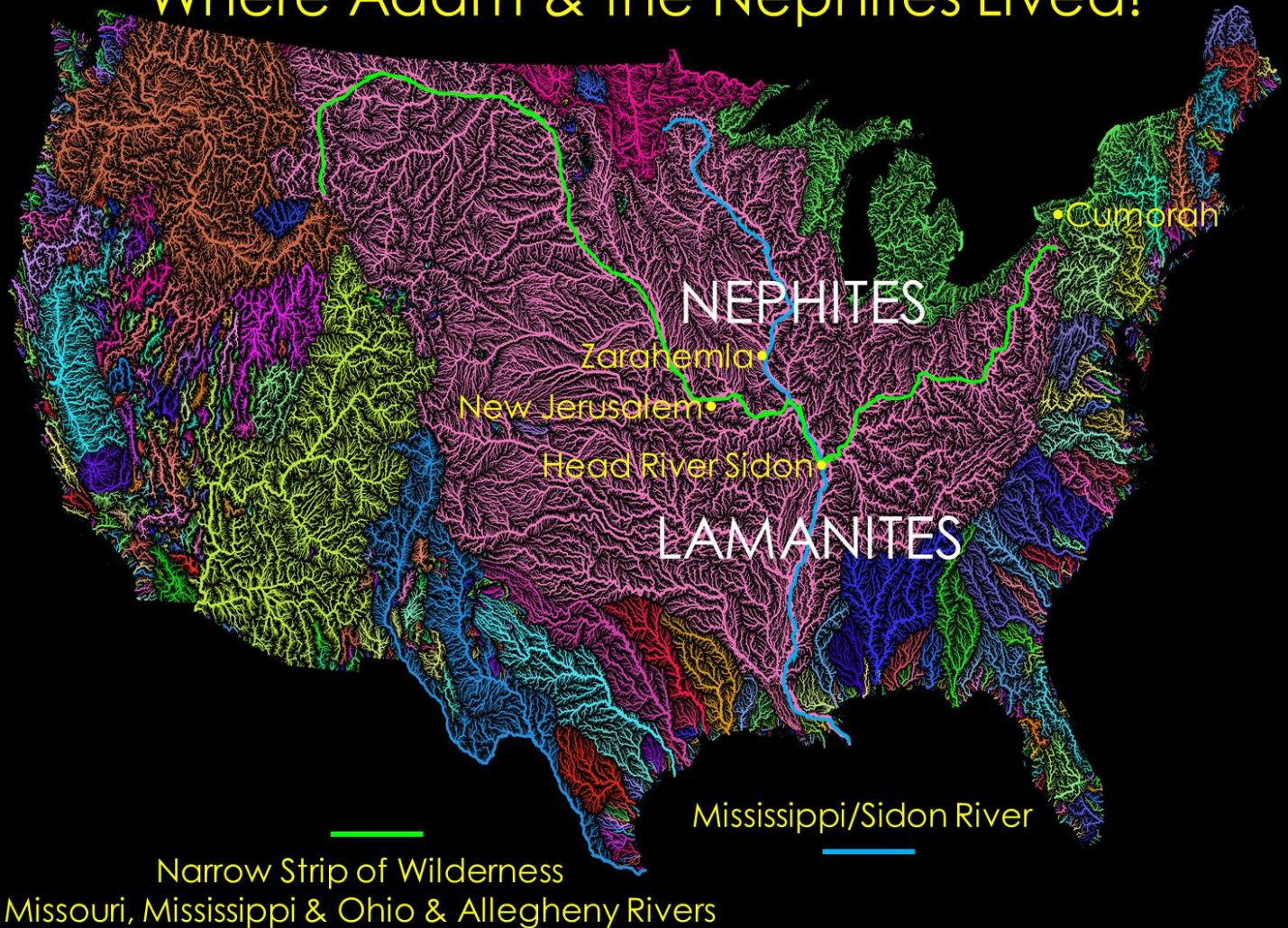
"Both the Nephite and Jaredite civilizations fought their final great wars of extinction at and near the Hill Cumorah (or Ramah as the Jaredites termed it), which hill is located between Palmyra and Manchester in the western part of the state of New York. It was here that Moroni hid up the gold plates from which the Book of Mormon was translated. (Morm. 6; Ether 15.) Joseph Smith, Oliver Cowdery, and many of the early brethren, who were familiar with all the circumstances attending the coming forth of the Book of Mormon in this dispensation, have left us pointed testimony as to the identity and location of Cumorah or Ramah." (*Doctrines of Salvation, vol. 3, pp. 232-241.*) (*Bruce R. McConkie, Mormon Doctrine "CUMORAH," 1966, p. 175*)

"The passages which I have quoted from the Book of Mormon and the more extended discussion of this subject by Elder B. H. Roberts which was published in The Deseret News of March 3 definitely established the following facts: That the hill Cumorah, and the hill Ramah are identical. That it was around this hill that the armies of both the Jaredites and Nephites fought their great last battles. That it was in this hill that Mormon deposited all of the sacred records which had been entrusted to his care by Ammaron, except the abridgment which he had made from the plates of Nephi, which were delivered into the hands of his son, Moroni. We know positively that it was in this hill that Moroni deposited the abridgment made by his father, and his own abridgment of the record of the Jaredites, and that it was from this hill that Joseph Smith obtained possession of them. *Anthony Ivins Improvement Era June 1928*

"[In regards to the hill Cumorah in New York] At about one mile west rises another ridge of less height, running parallel with the former... between these hills, the entire power and national strength of both the Jaredites and Nephites were destroyed... By turning to the 529th and 530th pages of the Book of Mormon you will read Mormon's account of the last great struggle as they were encamped round this hill Cumorah. In this valley fell the remaining strength and pride of a once powerful people, the Nephites--once so highly favored of the Lord, but at that time in darkness, doomed to suffer extermination by the hand of their barbarous and uncivilized brethren. From the top of this hill, Mormon, with a few others, after the battle, gazed with horror upon the mangled remains of those who, the day before, were filled with anxiety, hope, or doubt. A few had fled to the south, who were hunted down by the victorious party... This hill, by the Jaredites, was called Ramah; by it, or around it, pitched the famous army of Coriantumr their tents. Coriantumr was the last king of the Jaredites. The opposing army were to the west, and in this same valley, and near by, from day to day, did that mighty race spill their blood . . . In this same spot, in full view from the top of this same hill, one may gaze with astonishment upon the ground which was twice covered with the dead and dying . . ." [\*Letter VII\*](#) and [\*Oliver Cowdery Latter Day Saints' Messenger and Advocate, October 1835\*](#)

This Pink section is the Heartland of the United States River System:  
Mississippi, Upper and Lower with the Missouri and Ohio Rivers, just like in Genesis.

## Where Adam & the Nephites Lived!



### **THIS IS THE PLACE OF THE NEPHITES**

WORKS of Joseph.com

- THE "HILL CUMORAH" IS ONLY IN MANCHESTER, NY
- THE "PLAINS OF THE NEPHITES" ARE IN IL, IN, & OH
- ZELPH'S MOUND IS NEAR VALLEY CITY, IL
- ZARAHEMLA IS NEAR NAUVOO AT MONTROSE, IA
- NEW JERUSALEM CENTERED AT INDEPENDENCE, MO
- ADAM-ONDI-AHMAN IS IN DAVIESS COUNTY, MO
- MANTI IS IN RANDOLPH COUNTY HUNTSVILLE, MO



# MOUND EXPLORATIONS

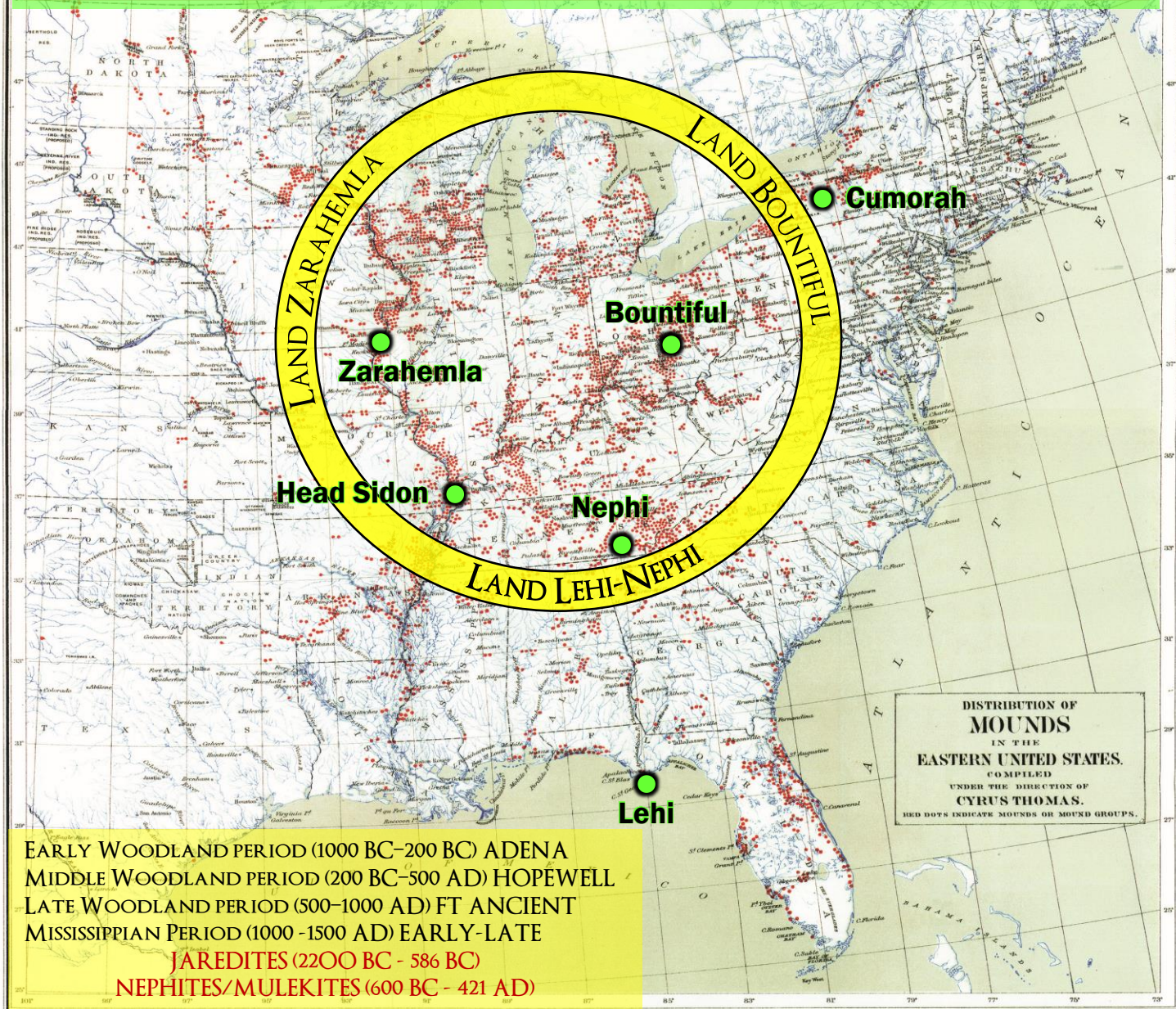
BUREAU OF ETHNOLOGY, 12TH ANNUAL REPORT, 1890-91

BUREAU OF ETHNOLOGY

TWELFTH ANNUAL REPORT, PL. XX

“..OVER 1,000,000 MOUNDS ONCE EXISTED...PERHAPS 100,000 STILL EXIST.”

GREGORY L. LITTLE, ED.D., THE ILLUSTRATED ENCYCLOPEDIA OF  
NATIVE AMERICAN MOUNDS & EARTHWORKS, EAGLE WING BOOKS, INC., MEMPHIS, TN [2009].



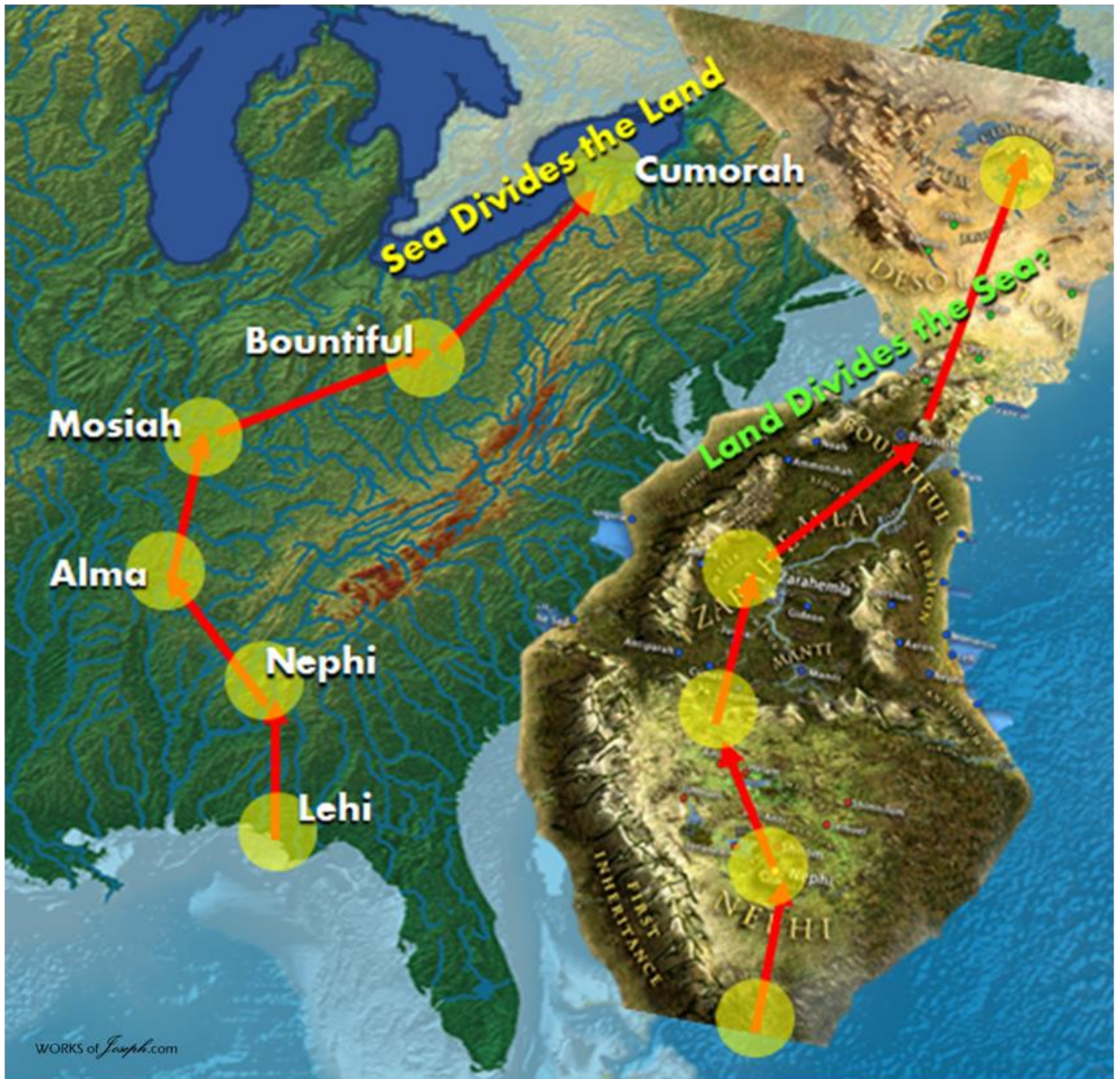
CYRUS THOMAS, 1894

WORKS of Joseph.com



# THE MESOAMERICAN FANTASY MAP

ETHER 10:20



**LOOKS JUST LIKE THE REAL-WORLD HEARTLAND MAP**

**Truth: I did rotate map 10 degrees east just because I wanted to rotate it**



# JOSEPH SMITH'S FIRST-HAND ACCOUNT

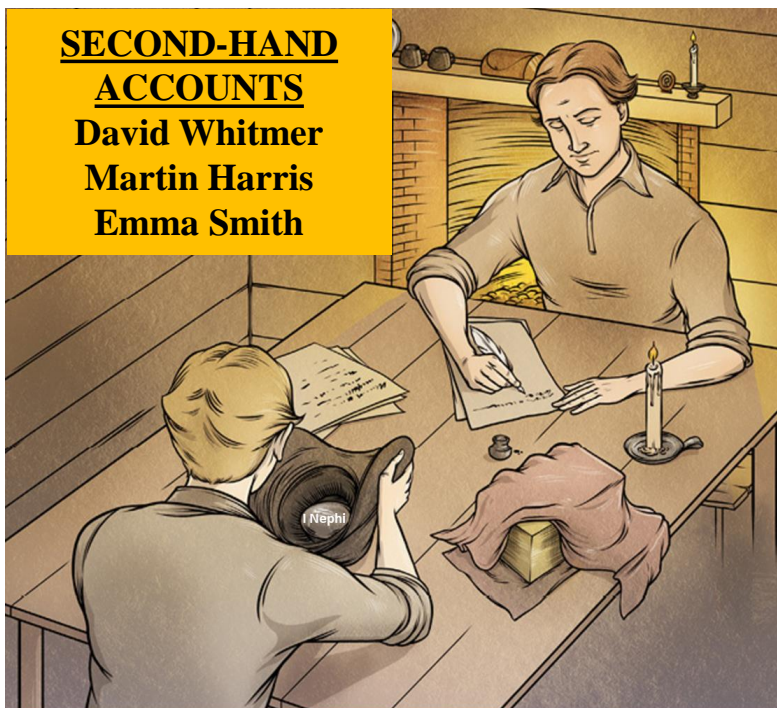
“With the records was found a curious instrument, which the ancients called “Urim and Thummim,” which consisted of two transparent stones set in the rims of a bow fastened to a breastplate. Through the medium of the Urim and Thummim I translated the record by the gift and power of God.” *Joseph Smith Wentworth Letter*



WORKS  
of Joseph.com

## SECOND-HAND ACCOUNTS

David Whitmer  
Martin Harris  
Emma Smith



"While the statement has been made by some writers that the Prophet Joseph Smith used a seer stone part of the time in his translating of the record, and information points to the fact that he did have in his possession such a stone, yet there is no authentic statement in the history of the Church which states that the use of such a stone was made in that translation. The information is all hearsay, and personally, I do not believe that this stone was used for this purpose. The reason I give for this conclusion is found in the statement of the Lord to the Brother of Jared as recorded in Ether 3:22–24. These stones, the Urim and Thummim which were given to the Brother of Jared, were preserved for this very purpose of translating the record, both of the Jaredites and the Nephites. Then again the Prophet was impressed by Moroni with the fact that these stones were given for that very purpose. It hardly seems reasonable to suppose that the Prophet would substitute something evidently inferior under these circumstances. It may have been so, but it is so easy for a story of this kind to be circulated due to the fact that the Prophet did possess a seer stone, which he may have used for some other purposes" (*Joseph Fielding Smith, "Doctrines of Salvation," Vol. 3, 225-26*).



## TODAY'S VICTIM MENTALITY AGAINST MAN & CHRIST

**Mosiah 10:12** They were a wild, and ferocious, and a blood-thirsty people, believing in the tradition of their fathers, which is this—Believing that they were driven out of the land of Jerusalem because of the iniquities of their fathers, and that they were wronged in the wilderness by their brethren, and they were also wronged while crossing the sea;

**13** And again, that they were wronged while in the land of their first inheritance, after they had crossed the sea, and all this because that Nephi was more faithful in keeping the commandments of the Lord—therefore he was favored of the Lord, for the Lord heard his prayers and answered them, and he took the lead of their journey in the wilderness.

**14** And his brethren were wroth with him because they understood not the dealings of the Lord; they were also wroth with him upon the waters because they hardened their hearts against the Lord.

**15** And again, they were wroth with him when they had arrived in the promised land, because they said that he had taken the ruling of the people out of their hands; and they sought to kill him.

**16** And again, they were wroth with him because he departed into the wilderness as the Lord had commanded him and took the records which were engraven on the plates of brass, for they said that he robbed them.

**17** And thus they have taught their children that they should hate them, and that they should murder them, and that they should rob and plunder them, and do all they could to destroy them; therefore they have an eternal hatred towards the children of Nephi.



# BOOK OF MORMON EVIDENCE

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## IMPORTANT LIVE LINKS

### THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS

[ChurchofJesusChrist.org](http://ChurchofJesusChrist.org)

[Online Scriptures and Helps](#)

[JosephSmithPapers.org](http://JosephSmithPapers.org)

### FIRM FOUNDATION-ROD MELDRUM

**Main Website:**

[BookofMormonEvidence.org](http://BookofMormonEvidence.org)

[About Us:](#)

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[Tours 2020-21](#)

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[Come Follow: Me Video Podcasts](#)

[Come Follow: Me Audio Podcasts](#)

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[Speaker Biographies](#)

### SOCIAL MEDIA

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### RESEARCH MATERIAL

[Book of Mormon Answers:](#)

[Book of Mormon Maps:](#)

[Gospel Articles:](#)

[Scriptural Basis Geography:](#)

[Best Geography Article](#)

[Letter VII](#)

[Leader's and Prophet's Geography Quotes:](#)

[Why Book of Mormon Geography Matters:](#)

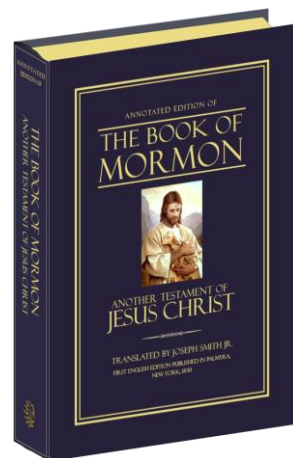
[Geography Packet:](#)

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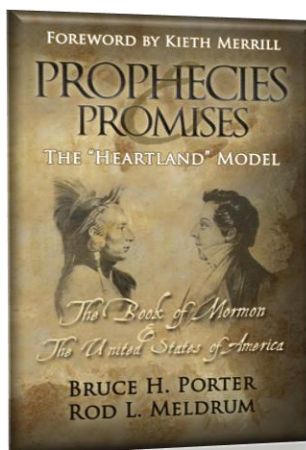
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## THIS IS THE PLACE OF THE NEPHITES



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# Prophecies and Promises

By Bruce C. Porter and Rodney L. Meldrum Chapter 9

"The Book of Mormon reveals that Joseph, the son of Jacob who was once sold into Egypt, foresaw the Prophet Joseph Smith and his day and noted that there would be many similarities in their lives. Centuries later, the Prophet Joseph stated, "I feel like Joseph in Egypt." The Book of Mormon reveals that the inheritance of Joseph, son of Israel, was not forgotten when land was distributed to the tribes of Israel, as promised in the Abrahamic covenant. Joseph's inheritance was to be a land choice above all others. It was choice not because of beauty or wealth of natural resources, but choice because it was chosen to be the repository of sacred writings on golden plates from which the Book of Mormon would one day come. It was choice because it would eventually host the world headquarters of the restored Church of Jesus Christ in the latter days. And it was choice because it is a land of liberty for those who worship the Lord and keep His commandments." *President Russell M. Nelson, President of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, addresses new Mission Presidents June 22 through June 26, 2016*

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*President Russell M. Nelson by Ken Corbett*

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