

Heartland Handbook

WORKS of *Joseph*.com 



Rod Meldrum & Rian Nelson

What Did Joseph Know?

**The North American Indians *are* ...
the Lamanites of the Book of Mormon!**

HEARTLAND HANDBOOK

featuring the 26-page exclusive -

“MOTHER... I HAVE GOT THE KEY”

“From Laman our Indians have descended”

Lucy Mack Smith to Solomon Mack, 6 Jan 1831

**“I said that it [Book of Mormon] was a record of the
Indians”** *Joseph Smith Papers*





BOOK OF MORMON EVIDENCE .ORG

Special Thanks to:

Prophecies & Promises

Bruce H. Porter & Rod L. Meldrum

The Annotated Edition of the Book of Mormon

David Hocking and Rod Meldrum

Heartland Handbook Edited by Rian Nelson

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Thanks also to Dave and Kendra Burton for finding our great artist.

Thanks to Hannah and the Late James Stoddard and to Russ & Heidi Barlow for suggestions about the design and concept of the art.

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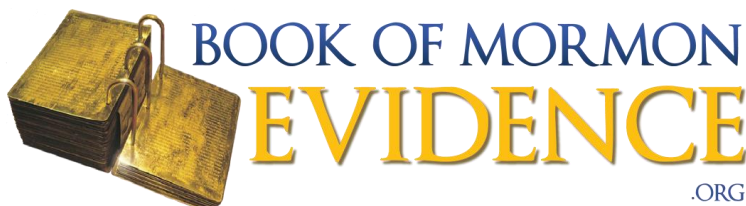
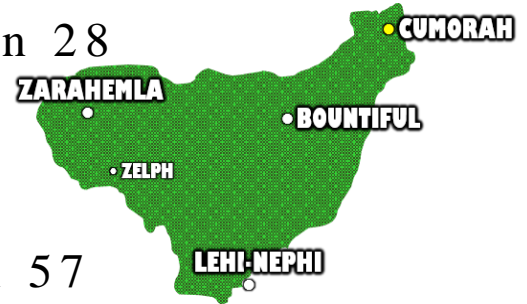


“Joseph Smith Bringing Light In,” by Kendra Burton

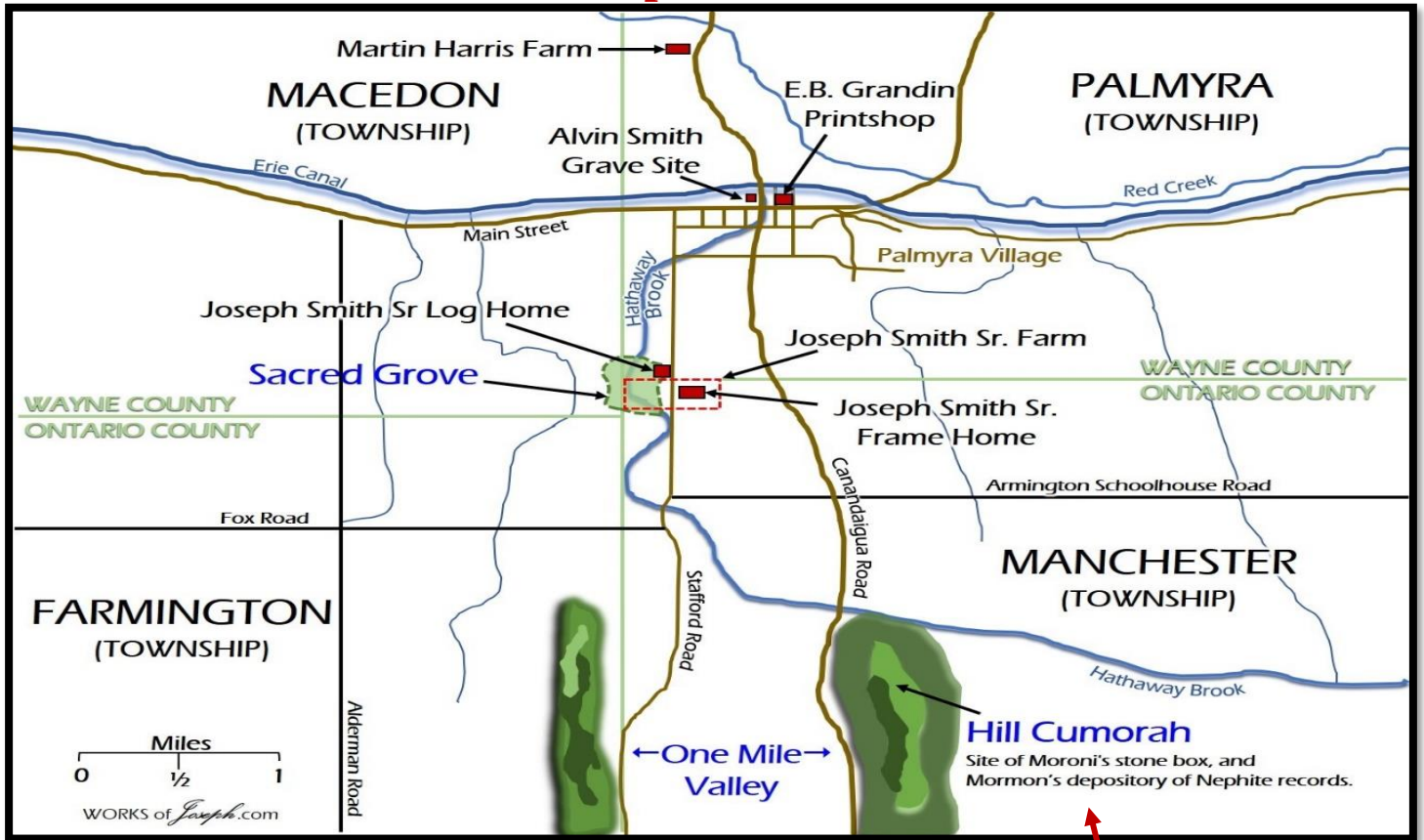
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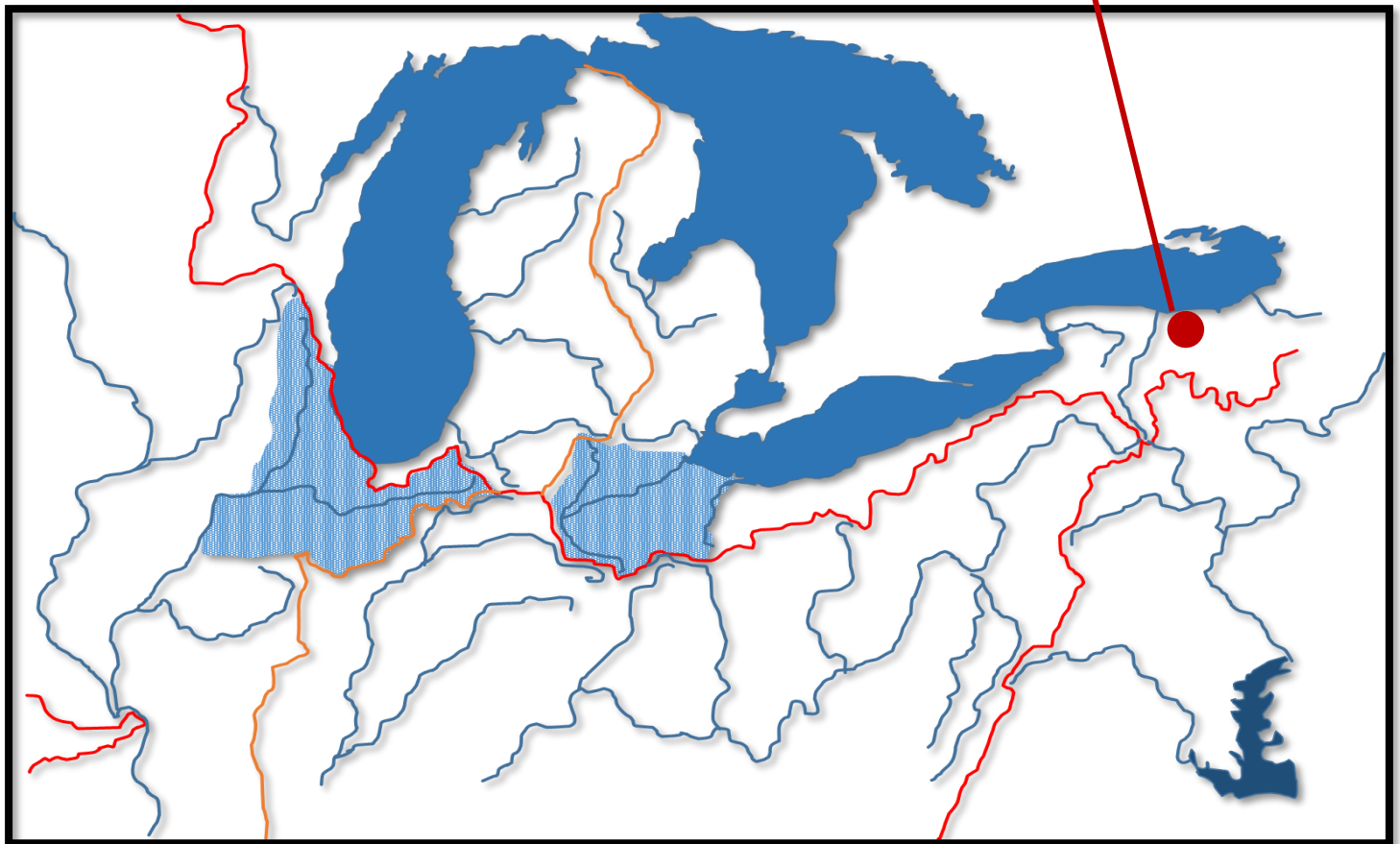
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Land of Joseph Smith/Cumorah



Land of Joseph, the Heartland





“THE FORCE OF FACT AS WELL AS THE FORCE OF FEELING...”

Truly rock-ribbed faith and uncompromised conviction comes with its most complete power when it **engages our head as well as our heart**. . . Truth borne by the Holy Spirit comes with, in effect, **two manifestations, two witnesses if you will—the force of fact as well as the force of feeling**. . . I believe God intends us to find and use the evidence He has given—reasons, if you will—which affirm the truthfulness of His work. . . —we still need that spiritual confirmation in the heart of which we have spoken—but **not to seek for and not to acknowledge intellectual, documentable support for our belief when it is available is to needlessly limit an otherwise incomparably strong theological position and deny us a unique, persuasive vocabulary in the latter-day arena of religious investigation and sectarian debate.**” *The Greatness of the Evidence By Elder Jeffrey R. Holland August 16, 2017*

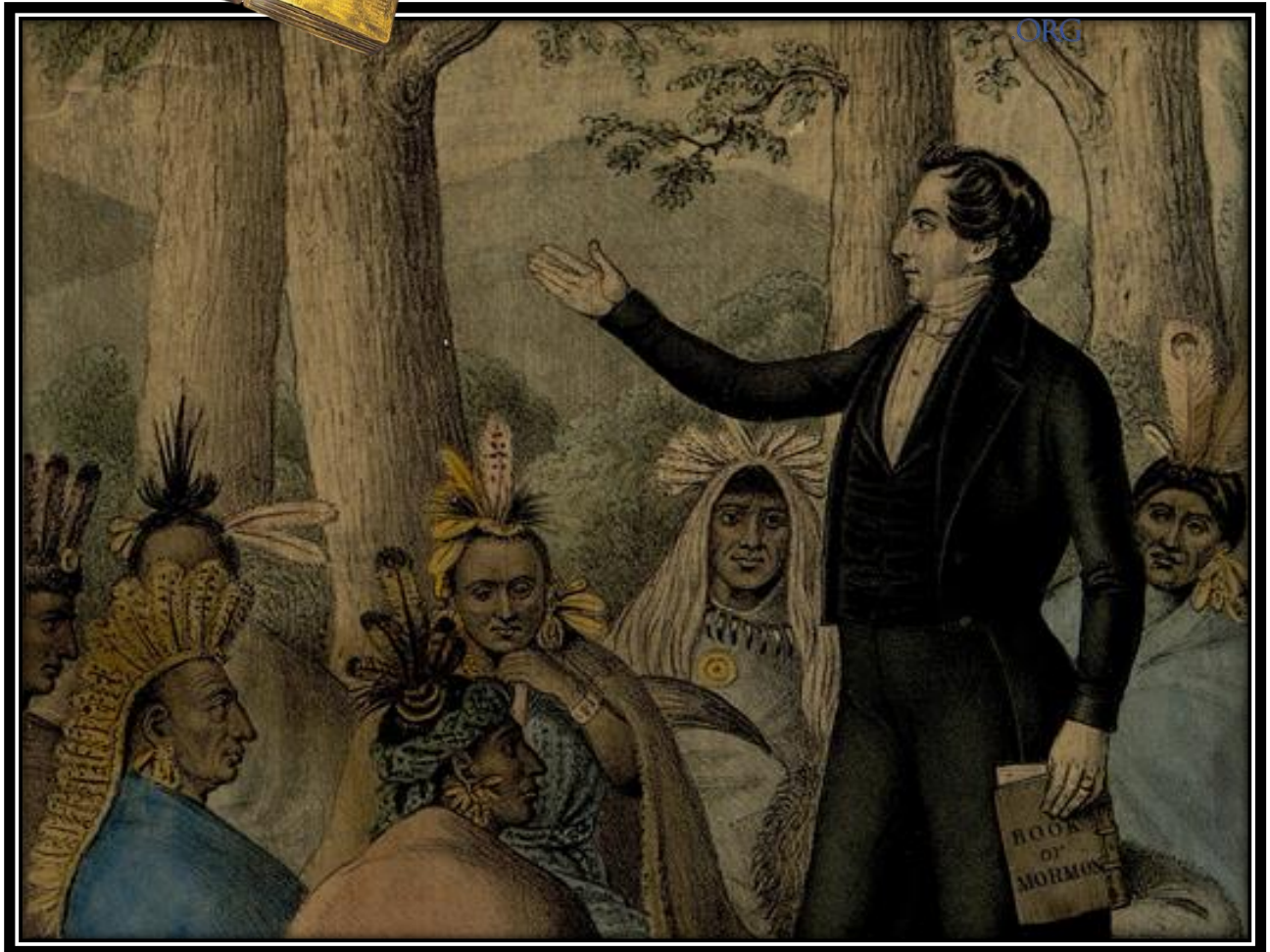


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BOOK OF MORMON EVIDENCE



From the Editor- Dedicated to Rod Meldrum

Who, as a great friend, mentor, and colleague I have learned and grown to love the Book of Mormon more than ever.

“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!”

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 21 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.

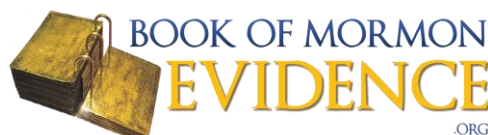
I am learning more each day about what the prophecies say about me, my fellow Gentiles and my House of Israel sisters and brothers on **THIS LAND**. I desire to understand my covenant that I have made with the Lord and the Book of Mormon is the “voice crying from the dust” helping me understand it. The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



MY OPINION ON NEUTRALITY

brethren being neutral on Geography, Evolution and other difficult issues. They want us to have every information. They have given us sound doctrine and that is what we should focus on. The Book of Mormon is true. However, I love to seek for other truth and as Moroni has said "I know the truth of all things".

One of the things mentioned in the Book of Mormon is the United States of America. The Constitution was written here and Eve were placed on this same land and the New Jerusalem will be on this same land. I love America anymore as I did for 40 years.

We know we came from an ape, and I know that matter cannot come from nothing. I don't have a doubt, but by the witness of what the scriptures tell us.

I would like to speak right out and tell me where the Book of Mormon events happened or if we came from Africa. I would like to hear the answer that makes most sense to me. Now if the Brethren say otherwise, I will listen. In my opinion the Church is neutral on difficult issues that exist to help each of us find the "truth of all things" as promised in the Book of Mormon. I don't need to be

convinced by the Brethren and those before them and from the Prophet Joseph Smith are to be taken as the standard. I leave one example on believing that the United States is the Choice and the land of promise when he was President of the Quorum of the Twelve who said, "The Book of Mormon is the word of Jacob who was once sold into Egypt, foresaw the Prophet Joseph Smith and his descendants. He knew that there would be many similarities in their lives. Centuries later, the Prophet Joseph Smith said, "The Book of Mormon" (The Personal Writings of Joseph Smith, ed. Dean C. Jesse, Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Company, 1982, modernized.) The Book of Mormon reveals that the inheritance of Joseph, son of Israel, was the land promised in the Abrahamic covenant, land was distributed to the tribes of Israel. Joseph's inheritance was the land above all others. (See Ether 13:2, 8.) It was choice not because of beauty or wealth of the land, but because it was chosen. It was to be the repository of sacred writing on plates of gold from which the scriptures should one day come, choice because it would eventually host world headquarters of the Church in the latter days." A TREASURED TESTAMENT By Elder Russell M. Nelson Of the

Prophet, "Whenever I hear anyone, including myself, say, "I know the Book of Mormon is true, but it is not enough!" We need to feel, deep in "the inmost part" of our hearts, that we have received the word of God. We must feel it so deeply that we would never want to live without it. I paraphrase President Brigham Young in saying, "I wish I had the voice of seven angels to bear witness of the truth and power of the Book of Mormon." President Russell M. Nelson The Book of Mormon: How to Be Like without It? *Rian Nelson*

There is a priesthood remark that they would do anything they were told to do by those who were in authority, even if it was wrong; but such obedience is worse than folly to us; it is slavery in the eyes of God. Thus willingly degrade himself, should not claim a rank among intelligent beings, for the Father of God would despise the idea. Others, in the extreme exercise of their almighty obedience was necessary, and that no matter what the saints were told to do by their superiors, they should ask any questions. When Elders of Israel will so far indulge in these extreme notions of obedience, the people, it is generally because they have it in their hearts to do wrong themselves." *The Millennial Star, Vol 14, # 38, pages 593-595)*

The ^{first} Book of Nephi his reign & ministry. An account
of Lehi & his wife Sarah & his four sons being called preparing at
the eldest) Laman Lemuel Sams & Nephi. the Lord commands Lehi to depart
out of the land of Jerusalem because he prophesieth unto the people con-
cerning their iniquity & they seek to destroy his life he taketh three days for
his journey into the wilderness to the land of Gennesareth. they take their
families & depart in the wilderness - the
Nephi's brethren receive a ship - they
depart into the promised land on other words I
born of goodly parents
arriving of my father
I say nevertheless having been highly favored of the Lord in all my
days yet having had a great knowledge of the goodness & the mysteries
of God therefore I make a record of any proceedings in my days & I
make a record in the language of my father which consisteth of the
learning of the Jews & the language of the Egyptians & I know that
the record which I make to be true & I make it with mine own
hand I will make it according to my knowledge for it came to pass in
the commencement of the ^{first year} reign of Zedekiah King of Judah my
father



Foreground: "THERE INDEED" BY CLARK KELLEY PRICE
Background: The Printer's Manuscript in Oliver Cowdery's handwriting.
(Courtesy of Community of Christ Archives)

Prophecies and Promises

By Bruce C. Porter and Rodney L. Meldrum *See Notes 52-71 on Page 94*

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 Choice Land"

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" (Continued) (Joseph Smith-History 1:34).

"We see through the light of revelation that the wicked of this nation will someday be destroyed in that very area, repeating the same pattern over and over again. The Nephites were destroyed there. The Jaredites were destroyed there. Will our nation go to Mexico to be destroyed at Cumorah? Of course not. Can there be any doubt that these lakes referred to are the Great Lakes? Brigham Young said: This book, which contained these things, was hid in the earth by Moroni, in a hill called by him, Cumorah, which hill is now in the state of New York, near the village of Palmyra, in Ontario County. " *Cheesman, Paul R., 1978, The World of the Book of Mormon, Horizon Publishers, Bountiful, Utah, p. 24*

Land of Cainan New Jerusalem

Land of Canaan Jerusalem

ADAM'S "LAND OF PROMISE"

Land of Cainan

"Three years previous to the death of Adam, he called Seth, Enos, Cainan, Mahalaleel, Jared, Enoch, and Methuselah, who were all high priests, with the residue of his posterity who were righteous, into the valley of Adam-ondi-Ahman, and there bestowed upon them his last blessing."
(Doctrine & Covenants 107:53)

Adam-ondi-Ahman
Spring Hill, Daviess
County, Missouri

New
Jerusalem

"And behold, this people will I establish in this land, unto the fulfilling of the covenant which I made with your father Jacob, and it shall be a New Jerusalem."
(3 Nephi 20:22)

"And Enos [grandson of Adam] lived ninety years, and begat Cainan. And Enos and the residue of the people of God came out from the land, which was called Shulon, and dwelt in a land of promise, which he called after his own son, whom he had named Cainan [the land of Cainan]."
(Moses 6:17)

Prior to the Flood, Adam's "Land of Promise" was in North America

ABRAHAM'S "LAND OF PROMISE"

Land of Canaan

Jerusalem

"And then we [Abraham and family] passed from Jershon through the land unto the place of Sechem; it was situated in the plains of Moreh, and we had already come into the borders of the land of the Canaanites, and I offered sacrifice there in the plains of Moreh, and called on the Lord devoutly, because we had already come into the land of this idolatrous nation. And the Lord appeared unto me in answer to my prayers, and said unto me: 'Unto thy seed will I give this land.'"
(Abraham 2:18-19)

And the Lord said unto Abram, after that Lot was separated from him: "Lift up now thine eyes, and look from the place where thou art northward, and southward, and eastward, and westward: For all the land which thou seest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed for ever."
(Genesis 13:14-15)

After the Flood, Abraham's "Land of Promise" was in 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 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.

A Choice (Carefully Selected) Land

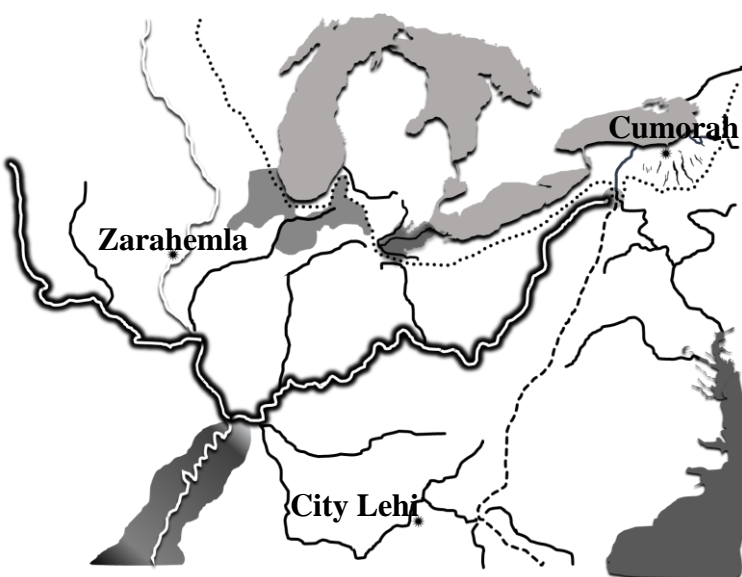
“I should like to say a few words about America... No land is without its beauty, no people without their virtues, and I hope that you who come from elsewhere will pardon my saying a few words concerning my own native land, America...surely this is a good land, a choice land, a chosen land. To me it is a miracle, a creation of the Almighty.” Gordon B. Hinckley *Let Not Your Heart Be Troubled*”, *BYU Speeches of the Year*, October 29, 1974, pp. 267-68)

We read in the *Annotated Book of Mormon* by David Hocking and Rod Meldrum the following by Jonathan Neville on page 509.

“Choice” can mean excellent or superior, but it can also mean carefully selected for a righteous people to dwell and prosper. The Book of Mormon uses it in the last connotation: ‘ And the Lord would not suffer that they should stop beyond the sea in the wilderness, but he would that they should come forth even unto the land of promise, which was choice above all other lands, which the Lord God had preserved for a righteous people’ (Ether2:7; emphasis added).“

This does not mean that the land of North America is ‘superior’ to all other lands. However, it was ‘carefully selected’ for a special purpose. For the Jaredites it was a land chosen for a ‘righteous people.’ For the Nephites, it was ‘carefully selected’ as a land of promise and a covenant land for a remnant of the House of Israel.“

The covenant land can be a blessing and also a cursing in that, if the people don’t keep the covenant, they are worse off than had they never entered the covenant in the first place. In this sense, America has been carefully selected not only as a promised land for the Jaredites and the Nephites, but as the central place for the Lord’s marvelous work and a wonder in our day. America has been chosen to host a) the restoration of the Gospel, b) the translation and publication of the Book of Mormon, c) the establishment of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints; and d) the restoration of Priesthood authority and keys for the gathering of Israel and the salvation of the dead. These blessings come with great responsibilities. America is not “superior” to any other land created by God.“



Heartland of the United States (Chosen By God)

This is consistent with the basic principle that God is no respecter of persons, that He speaks to all His children wherever they live: ‘Know ye not that there are more nations than one? Know ye not that I, the Lord your God, have created all men, and that I remember those who are upon the isles of the sea; and that I rule in the heavens above and in the earth beneath; and I bring forth My word unto the children of men, yea, even upon all the nations of the earth?’ (2 Nephi 29:7; emphasis added).“

In this sense, every land can be a promised land for the people who live there. We should appreciate all respective homelands for every nation or peoples in every continent. Understanding the history of Book of Mormon connections may help us recognize that all people can develop their own spiritual connections and traditions with their respective homeland.” – *Jonathan Neville. Annotated Book of Mormon*

Isn't it Clear that the USA is the "Carefully Selected" Promised Land?

"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." Teachings of Thomas S. Monson by Thomas S. Monson 2011 (Ordained an Apostle, 1963; ordained President of the Church, 2008)

Carefully Selected as no other land had such Liberal Institutions

"...in culmination of the grand scheme of schemes, this great nation, the Republic of the United States, might be established upon this land as an asylum for the oppressed; a resting place, it might be said, for the Ark of the covenant, where the temple of our God might be built; where the plan of salvation might be introduced and practiced in freedom, and not a dog would wag his tongue in opposition to the purposes of the Almighty. We believe that this was His object in creating the Republic of the United States; the only land where his work could be commenced, or the feet of his people find rest. No other land had such liberal institutions, had adopted so broad a platform upon which all men might stand. We give glory to those patriots for the noble work they did; but we give the first glory to God, our Father and their Father, who inspired them. We take them by the hand as brothers. We believe they did nobly their work, even as we would fain do ours, faithfully and well, that we might not be recreant in the eyes of God, for failing to perform the mission to which He has appointed us." Bishop Orson F. Whitney, delivered in the Tabernacle, Salt Lake City, Sunday Afternoon, April 19, 1885. Reported by John Irvine. Journal Discourses Volume 26 Page 201

Don't be Jealous of Carefully Selected Land

Mark E. Petersen said: "You from other lands don't need to become jealous of America. Who is jealous of Palestine, where Jesus was born? We are not jealous of the country; we merely recognize the hand of God in sending him there. We must also recognize the hand of God in sending the gospel to this land. We learn to love America because it is God's land!"

"The most sacred of places...will always be those locations which God has designated for holy and eternal purposes, locations where He is the "doer of the deed." These places are revered forever by His faithful children wherever they may be....America is such a place, but of course it wasn't always called America, nor has it always been identified by a distinctive continental shape. Originally it was simply a portion of that large, single land mass which God in His creative process called "Earth" and which, when completed, was pronounced "good." (Gen. 1:10.) Whatever its name and geographical configuration, however, it was from the beginning a land of divinity as well as a land of destiny... Temporally we call it America. But it began with a single, primeval, continent of Genesis, and the miracle of Millennial healing will bring that unity again. "The choicest part of this earthly creation was a garden "eastward in Eden" where God placed our first parents, Adam and Eve. This resplendent place filled with paradisiacal glory was located on that part of the land mass where the city Zion, or the New Jerusalem of the earth's last days, would eventually be built. (See D&C 57:1-3, D&C 84:1-3; and Joseph Fielding Smith, *Doctrines of Salvation*, 3:74.) After Adam and Eve were driven out of the Garden, they dwelt at a place called Adam-ondi-Ahman, located in what is now Daviess County, Missouri. In that region this first family lived out their days, tilling the soil, tending the flocks, offering sacrifices, and learning the gospel of Jesus Christ from on high. There Adam prophesied concerning all the families of the earth and, three years before his death, called together the righteous remnant of his posterity and bestowed upon them his last blessing" – *Elder Jeffrey R. Holland, "A Promised Land," Ensign [Jun. 1976].*

The Prophecies and Promises of This Land

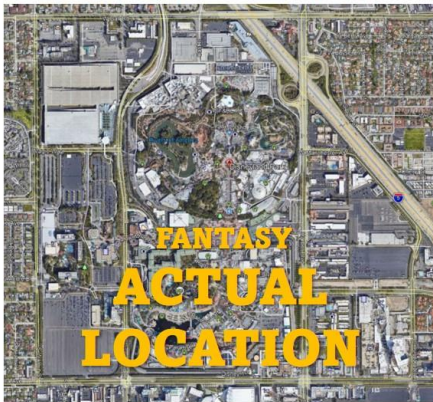
“The current presumption embraced by the majority of Mesoamerican theorists concludes that the Book of Mormon geography was limited in its scope to an area that includes most of the Yucatan peninsula. This is a result of speculation based on a physical location that seemed to fit a theoretical map deciphered from geographical passages, as well as the remains and ruins that are in the area of the proposed map. Using geographical passages and landmarks to begin a search for a place that “might” fulfill the prophecies and promises of “this land” in the Book of Mormon is a flawed methodology that has led to over 150 proposed Book of Mormon settings. The numerous hypothetical maps that are based on this system of “map first” and “theory second” are inconsistent with the specific and detailed prophecies about “this land” that are contained in the text of the Book of Mormon and the inspired statements of the Prophet Joseph Smith.

To focus on geographic passages of the Book of Mormon in the creation of a hypothetical map is to espouse a belief that these passages are of more import and of greater consequence than that of inspired prophetic utterances. For example, is it not more important to know that the New Jerusalem will be built upon “this land” by prophecy than debating what constitutes a wilderness, or how far a Nephite can walk in a day? The Doctrine and Covenants provides us with a clear and specific place for the New Jerusalem, making a scriptural connection for the geographic location of the land of which Christ and Moroni speak.

There is purpose for the prophecies that are specifically about the Promised Land and therefore they are more reliable when coupled with latter-day scripture than any geographical passages. The Book of Mormon is a spiritual text rather than a geographical primer. Therefore, the prophetic record is specific and inspired about the Promised Land and must take precedence over all physical and geographic descriptions. That said, when physical and geographical passages are clear, they will match the more important descriptions set forth by the prophecies and promises in the text, thus establishing an internal consistency within the Book of Mormon.” *Prophecies and Promises* page 73-74

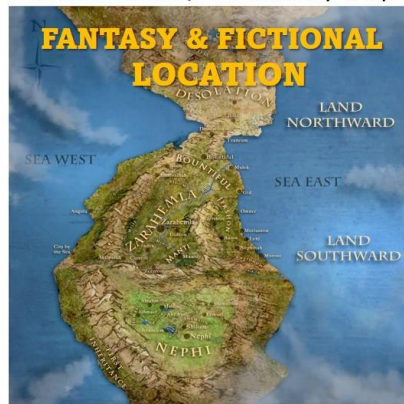
WHAT IS THE MAJOR DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THESE THREE MAPS?

Disneyland, Anaheim, California
Magic Kingdom Fantasy Land



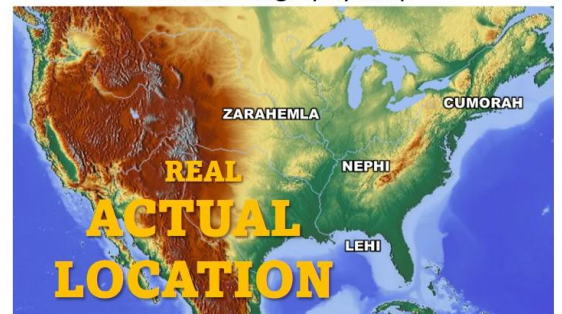
Concept by Kevin Price

Book of Mormon Central's
Mesoamerica/CES Fantasy Map



**Wow, Mesoamericanists
make this complicated.
Just dream, I guess.**

USA Heartland Model Book of Mormon
Actual Geography Map



“The Lord gave a divine promise to the ancient inhabitants of this favored country (the United States)...” *Teachings of Thomas S. Monson* by Thomas S. Monson 2011

TWO OF THE MAPS REPRESENT ACTUAL GEOGRAPHIC LOCATIONS. EVEN THE DISNEYLAND LOCATION CAN BE FOUND ON A REAL MAP WITH REAL GEOGRAPHIC COORDINATES.

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

The New Jerusalem: The City of Zion

“Writing for publication, the Prophet Joseph stated that the New Jerusalem or “The City of Zion, spoken of by David in the 102 Psalm will be built upon the Land of America.”²³ The Lord reveals exactly where this New Jerusalem or the City of Zion will be built in the Doctrine and Covenants stating that “the city Zion shall be built... on the borders by the Lamanites” (D&C 28:8-9).

And where are the “borders of the Lamanites”? The Lord answers: “And thus you shall take your journey into the regions westward, unto the land of Missouri, unto the borders of the Lamanites” (D&C 54:8). The revelation giving the exact spot is given by the Lord Himself. In D&C 84:1-4 we read:

A revelation of Jesus Christ unto his servant Joseph Smith, Jun., and six elders, as they united their hearts and lifted their voices on high. Yea, the word of the Lord concerning his church, established in the last days for the restoration of his people, as he has spoken by the mouth of his prophets, and for the gathering of his saints to stand upon Mount Zion, which shall be the city of New Jerusalem. Which city shall be built, beginning at the temple lot, which is appointed by the finger of the Lord, in the western boundaries of the State of Missouri, and dedicated by the hand of Joseph Smith, Jun., and others with whom the Lord was well pleased. Verily this is the word of the Lord, that the city New Jerusalem shall be built by the gathering of the saints, beginning at this place, even the place of the temple, which temple shall be reared in this generation. D&C 84:1-4

The city of the New Jerusalem will be built “on the borders of the Lamanites” and “in the western boundaries of the State of Missouri” beginning at the “temple lot.” Further instruction comes from the Lord in D&C 57:1-3. Notice the definite articles and demonstratives used in these two verses. In verse 1 it can be seen that “this land” is definite, near and so specific that the Lord reaffirms the demonstrative and answers again the question of “which” by stating the “land of Missouri.”

Hearken, O ye elders of my church, saith the Lord your God, who have assembled yourselves together, according to my commandments, in this land, which is the land of Missouri, which is the land which I have appointed and consecrated for the gathering of the saints. Wherefore, this is the land of promise, and the place for the city of Zion. And thus, saith the Lord your God, if you will receive wisdom here is wisdom. Behold, the place which is now called Independence is the center place; and a spot for the temple is lying westward, upon a lot which is not far from the courthouse. D&C 57:1-3



The Elders have assembled in “this land” (which is singular and points to ‘which’ land), “which is the land of Missouri,” the Lord continues, “which is the land” He has appointed for the gathering. The Lord then declares “this is the land of promise” and “the place for the city of Zion.” The city of Zion is the New Jerusalem as declared by the Lord in the Pearl of Great Price: “...I shall prepare, an Holy City,...and it shall be called Zion, a New Jerusalem” (Moses 7:62). The Tenth Article of Faith asserts the same by stating: “We believe in the literal gathering of Israel and in the restoration of the Ten Tribes; that Zion (the New Jerusalem) will be built upon this the American continent; that Christ will reign personally upon the earth; and, that the earth will be renewed and receive its paradisiacal glory” (Articles of Faith 10).” Chapter 6, *The New Jerusalem: The City of Zion; Prophecies and Promises* page 51-53

The Promised Land of the United States of America

The United States of America has been and is truly great. Today it is receiving relentless attacks from some very unpatriotic people. We are in a battle, and it is time to stand up and applaud the goodness of these United States. We know this land will not be possessed by a disobedient people. We have time to save our land, but it is becoming a challenge. Today's headlines say it all. Which side are you on?

Gordon B. Hinckley

“I should like to say a few words about America...No land is without its beauty, no people without their virtues, and I hope that you who come from elsewhere will pardon my saying a few words concerning my own native land, America...surely this is a good land, a choice land, a chosen land. To me it is a miracle, a creation of the Almighty.” Gordon B. Hinckley *Let Not Your Heart Be Troubled*”, *BYU Speeches of the Year*, October 29, 1974, pp. 267-68)

“I would that all men could believe in the destiny of America as did the early pioneers: that it is the land of Zion; that the founders of this nation were men of inspired vision; that the Constitution as written by the inspiration of heaven must be preserved at all costs. “I make a further plea that the citizens of this favored land live righteously that they might enjoy the fruits of their righteousness in this land of promise.” *Let Not Your Heart Be Troubled* Gordon B. Hinckley of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles Oct. 29, 1974, • *Devotional Zion and Jerusalem* By Joseph Fielding Smith *Improvement Era* Vol. XXII JULY 1919 No. 9

The following question is from a reader of the *Improvement Era*, in the Southern States: Referring to Isaiah 2:2-3, please explain whether it is the New Jerusalem that is to be built in the land of Zion, or Jerusalem that is to be built on the eastern continent, from whence the word of the Lord will go forth in the last days.”

Mountain of the Lord's House

The scripture in question is as follows: “And it shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the Lord's House shall be established in the top of the mountains and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it.

And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem.

The statement is very clear that two separate cities, or centers, are mentioned by Isaiah. In modern revelation this is confirmed, and we are informed just where the city of Zion — which is the New Jerusalem — shall be built.

In order to get a proper understanding of this question, it is necessary to explain the fact that Palestine is to be the gathering place of the tribe of Judah “and the children of Israel his companions,” after their long dispersion as predicted by the prophets. America is the land of Zion. It was given to Joseph, son of Jacob, and his descendants to be an everlasting inheritance. The children of Ephraim (son of Joseph) “and all the house of Israel his companions,” will be gathered to Zion, or America.

In the blessing given by Jacob to his son Joseph the inheritance of America is foreshadowed and predicted in the following words: Joseph is a fruitful bough, even a fruitful bough by a well; whose branches run over the wall:

The blessings of thy father have prevailed above the blessings of my progenitors unto the utmost bounds of the everlasting hills: they shall be on the head of Joseph, and on the crown of the head of him that was separate from his brethren.”

America is the Promised Land

We have Learned from the Book of Mormon and Modern Revelation America is the Promised Land. “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). Zion and Jerusalem By Joseph Fielding Smith Improvement Era Vol. XXII JULY 1919 No. 9

“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.” Teachings of Thomas S. Monson by Thomas S. Monson 2011 (Ordained an Apostle, 1963; ordained President of the Church, 2008)

President Monson believes the United States is the Promised Land of the Book of Mormon. Why do Mesoamericanists believe the entire continent of the Americas is the Promised land? You mean Greenland, Guatemala, and the Northwest Territories are the Promised Lands? I love all of God’s children in the entire world and God loves us all the same, but seriously? If a person from Greenland comes to the United States legally as a citizen that person can also live in the Promised Land, correct? I’m sure Greenland has much beauty on its own, but it is not the Promised Land, is it? I am not belittling other lands. I’m just making a factual statement. Why is the United States and Israel the two Promised Lands? Because Christ said so. See 3 Nephi 20:22,29 Rian Nelson Read blog Titled “A Choice Carefully Selected Land”

Joseph Fielding Smith continues, “Because of his faithfulness and integrity, Joseph received greater blessings than the progenitors of Jacob, and was rewarded with the land of Zion. His brothers, with malicious intent, separated him and cast him out from among them. The Lord, in rewarding him, separated him from his brothers — the other tribes of Israel — and gave him an inheritance in a land that is choice above all other lands, which, we have learned from the Book of Mormon and modern revelation, is America.

Great Day of Gathering

In this great day of gathering, the Lord has commanded that those of the house of Israel who are scattered among the Gentiles should flee unto Zion, and those who are of the house of Judah should flee unto Jerusalem, “unto the mountain of the Lord’s house,” which is their gathering place. (Doc. and Cov.133:12,13.)

In each land a holy city shall be built which shall be the capital from whence the law and the word of the Lord shall go forth to all peoples. The Savior said to the Nephites: “Behold, this people will I establish in this land, unto the fulfilling of the covenant which I made with your father Jacob; and it shall be a New Jerusalem. And the powers of heaven shall be in the midst of this people; yea, even I will be in the midst of you” (3 Nephi 20:22).

Moroni, writing of the Jaredites, has said: “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.”

We are informed in the revelations given to Joseph Smith the Prophet, that the city of Zion and the New Jerusalem is one and the same. In a number of revelations, the Lord speaks of the New Jerusalem which is to be built. (See sections 28, 42, 45, 84.) In Sec. 45:66, 67, we read: “And it shall be called the New Jerusalem, a land of peace, a city of refuge, a place of safety for the Saints of the Most High God; and the glory of the Lord shall be there, and the terror of the Lord also shall be there, insomuch that the wicked will not come unto it, and it shall be called Zion” (See also sections 57:2 and 58:7).

In section 84:2, we read: “Yea, the word of the Lord concerning his Church established in the last days for the restoration of his people, as he has spoken by the mouth of his prophets, and for the gathering of his Saints to stand upon Mount Zion, which shall be the city of New Jerusalem.”

Jerusalem of old, after the Jews have been cleansed and sanctified from all their sin, shall become a holy city where the Lord shall dwell and from whence, he shall send forth his word unto all people. Likewise, on this continent, the city of Zion, New Jerusalem— shall be built, and from it the law of God shall also go forth. There will be no conflict, for each city shall be headquarters for the Redeemer of the world, and from each he shall send forth his proclamations as occasion may require. Jerusalem shall be the gathering place of Judah and his fellows of the house of Israel, and Zion shall be the gathering place of Ephraim and his fellows, upon whose heads shall be conferred “the richer blessings.”

“Because of his faithfulness and integrity, Joseph received greater blessings than the progenitors of Jacob, and was rewarded with the land of Zion. His brothers, with malicious intent, separated him and cast him out from among them. The Lord, in rewarding him, separated him from his brothers — the other tribes of Israel — and gave him an inheritance in a land that is choice above all other lands, which, we have learned from the Book of Mormon and modern revelation, is America... We are informed in the revelations given to Joseph Smith the Prophet, that the city of Zion and the New Jerusalem is one and the same. In a number of revelations, the Lord speaks of the New Jerusalem which is to be built...” Zion and Jerusalem by Joseph Fielding Smith, Improvement Era Vol. 22 JULY 1919

The Land of Joseph [of Egypt] is the United States of America

“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 June 23, 2016. Seminar for New Mission Presidents*



The Land of Joseph

Book of Mormon is a record of the forefathers of our western tribes of Indians

The Book of Mormon is a record of the forefathers of our western tribes of Indians; having been found through the ministrations of an holy angel and 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 which 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 covenant. But the tribe of Judah will return to old Jerusalem. The city of Zion spoken of by David, in the one hundred and second Psalm, will be built upon the land of America, "And the ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads" (Isaiah 35:10); 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; Jeremiah 31:12, Psalm 1:5; Ezekiel 34:11-13. These are testimonies that the Good Shepherd will put forth His own sheep and lead them out from all nations where they have been scattered in a cloudy and dark day, to Zion, and to Jerusalem; besides many more testimonies which might be brought.

And now I am prepared to say by the authority of Jesus Christ, that not many years shall pass away before the United States shall present such a scene of bloodshed as has not a parallel in the history of our nation; pestilence, hail, famine, and earthquake will sweep the wicked of this generation from off the face of the land, to open and prepare the way for the return of the lost tribes of Israel from the north country. The people of the Lord, those who have complied with the requirements of the new covenant, have already commenced gathering together to Zion, which is in the state of Missouri; therefore I declare unto you the warning which the Lord has commanded to declare unto this generation, remembering that the eyes of my Maker are upon me, and that to him I am accountable for every word I say, wishing nothing worse to my fellow-men than their eternal salvation; therefore, "Fear God, and give glory to Him, for the hour of His judgment is come." Repent ye, repent ye, and embrace the everlasting covenant, and flee to Zion, before the overflowing scourge overtake you, for there are those now living upon the earth whose eyes shall not be closed in death until they see all these things, which I have spoken, fulfilled. Remember these things; call upon the Lord while He is near, and seek Him while He may be found, is the exhortation of your unworthy servant. *HC 1:301-315*

Beautiful Desolation

"This beautiful region of country is...the land of Joseph or the Indians, as they are called...The world will never value the land of Desolation, as it is called in the Book of Mormon, for any thing more than hunting ground, for want of timber and mill-seats: The Lord to the contrary notwithstanding, declares it to be the land of Zion which is the land of Joseph, blessed by him, for the precious things of heaven, for the dew... Thou [Jerusalem] shalt no more be termed Forsaken; neither shall thy land [Zion] any more be termed Desolate." *The Evening and Morning Star Vol. 1 No. 5 October 1832 Page 71 Editor WW Phelps*

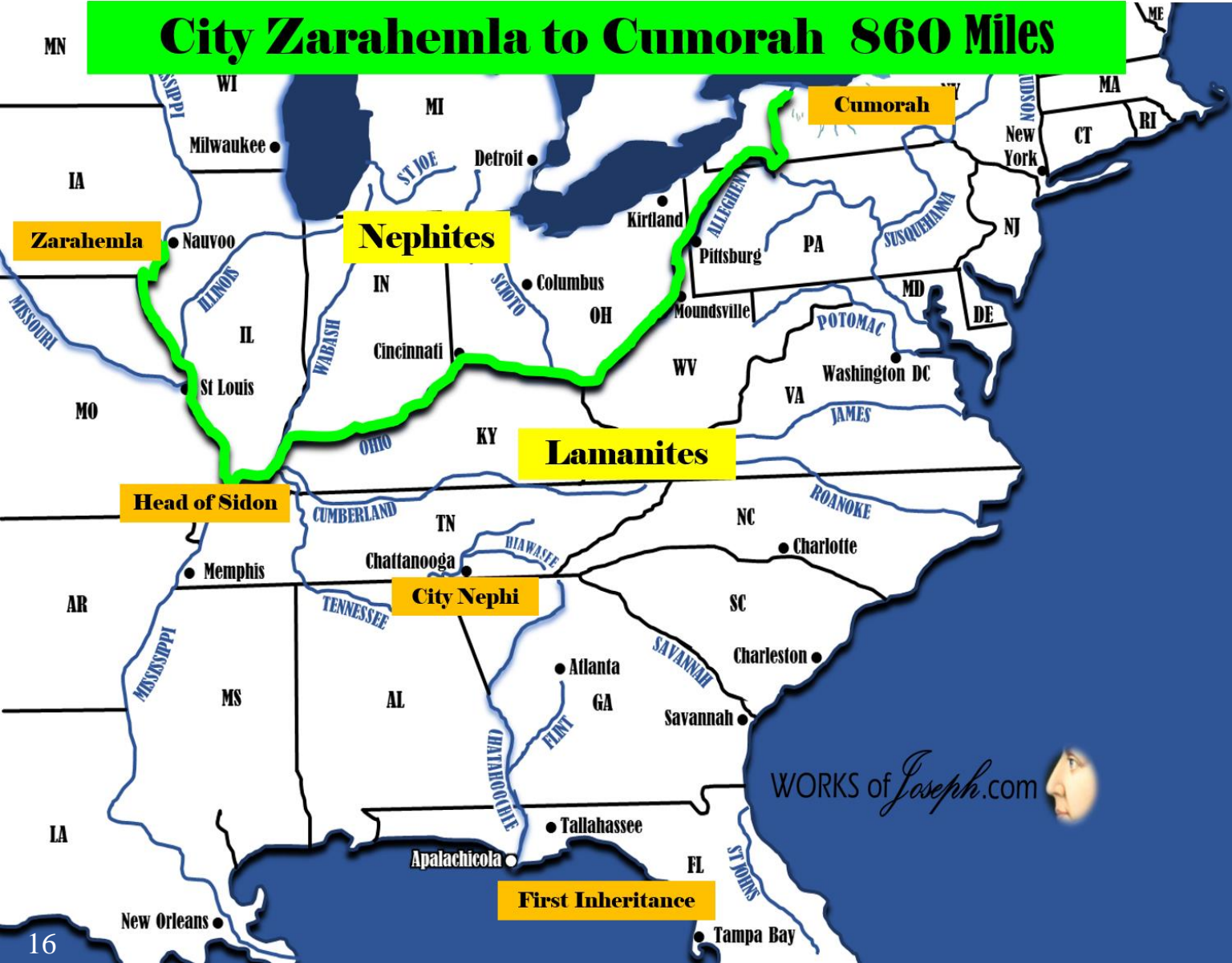
"To his steady drum roll about the Indian and his destiny, Phelps added his view of the land west of the Missouri settlements, which he called the "Far West." Wasn't this, the editor wondered, the land of the covenant, where the Book of Mormon Jaredites and Nephites had once roamed before meeting their destruction? While the world would never prize the area because of its want of timber and mill seats, Deity had a different view. This land was Zion, he argued, the land of Joseph, the receptacle of "the chief things of the ancient mountains, and for the precious things of the lasting hills." In a few sentences, Phelps wove together some of the images that Joseph Smith had been using when speaking of the western Zion and the soon-to-be redeemed Indian" Quoted in *Seeking The "Remnant": The Native American During The Joseph Smith Period* by Ronald W Walker: *Evening and the Morning Star 1 (October 1832): 137*] Phelps was citing Deuteronomy 33:13-17 The editor later would help select Mormon settlement sites in Daviess County and may have had a role in choosing the name of the region's most prominent town, Far West, thus giving another expression to his fascination with the western region.

Certain lands were given to Israel for an inheritance in time and in eternity. America is the land of Joseph; it was the home of Nephite Israel, who were of Joseph, for a thousand years, and it is the headquarters of the Church in this final dispensation in which the church and kingdom of God are in the lands of Ephraim." (*McConkie, Bruce R., A New Witness for the Articles of Faith [1985], 511.*)

A New Land in the Utmost Bowels of the Everlasting Hills

“The Book of Mormon tells us that America is a land of promise, a land choice above all other lands. Nephi said that whosoever should possess it must serve the God of the land or they would be swept off. And we have read in the Book of Mormon of the nations that have been swept off because they ceased to worship the God who had led them and their forefathers here to this land. We have a great responsibility as citizens in this land, for the Lord said that he would fight its battles and be its king, if we will just serve him. So, it’s appropriate at this time that we express our appreciation for this great land. I like the words Moses used when he gave a blessing to the twelve tribes of Israel. When he blessed Joseph, he promised him a new land in the utmost bowels of the everlasting hills (see Deut. 33:15). Now that isn’t in Jerusalem because they don’t have everlasting hills over there, and the prophets have never predicted a regathering of all nations to the land of Israel. But they have predicted the gathering of Israel to this land of America, which is the land of Joseph. And we are the only people in the world who know what that land is that Moses promised to Joseph. It was so great in his eyes as he received the revelations of the Holy Spirit that in describing the land, he used the word “precious” five times in just four verses... We have so much to be grateful for. We are not here by chance. We are here because of the sacrifices of our pioneer fathers who came to this choice land that the Lord, according to the Book of Mormon, had hidden away from the eyes of the world that it should not be overrun. He preserved it for us, for the day and time in which we now live here in these valleys of the mountains.” *LEGRAND RICHARDS of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles Nov. 18, 1980, • Devotional*

City Zarahemla to Cumorah 860 Miles



OLD WORLD SUMMARY AND LANDING OF THE LEHITES

1 Nephi 18:23. " And it came to pass that after we had sailed for the space of MANY DAYS we did arrive at the Promised Land.

How many day is "many days?" Well, it has a huge range in the BofM. Anywhere from about a week to - I think it's in Omni - it mentions someone who lived "many days" and then he died, so an entire lifetime is within the realm.

We know they left in the Fall of the year because they gathered fruit and honey in abundance and we know when they arrived, they planted their seeds which only makes sense they arrived in the spring, so the total voyage would have been within about half a year or six months.

In my DVD SET, Book of Mormon Evidence #2, there is on Disc #1 of 6 a two-hour presentation on the voyage begun in 2009 by non-Mormons in a 600 BC replica ship called the Phoenicia that literally proved Lehi's voyage so completely that we can estimate within a few short weeks how long the entire voyage took, based on actual observation. *Rod Meldrum*

The Phoenicia voyage of 2009 left Oman Oct 26, 2009, and Departed Comoros Islands Dec. 20, 2009, and Departed Cape Town, South Africa Mar. 22, 2010, and arrived at Most Westerly Point in Expedition June 12, 2010, about 400 miles from Florida, but they were making nearly 100 miles a day, so they were only 4-5 days from landfall in Florida

WHY APALACHICOLA FLORIDA IS PLAUSIBLE FOR THE LAND OF LEHI'S LANDING

Navigational Proof: Phoenicia 2009 Expedition

Length of voyage: 4-6 months vs. 14-18 months

Time of Year: Leave in Sept or Oct. Land in March or April?

Archaeology: 500-700 BC Mounds and Relics

Bees and Honey: Only place in the world for Tupelo Honey

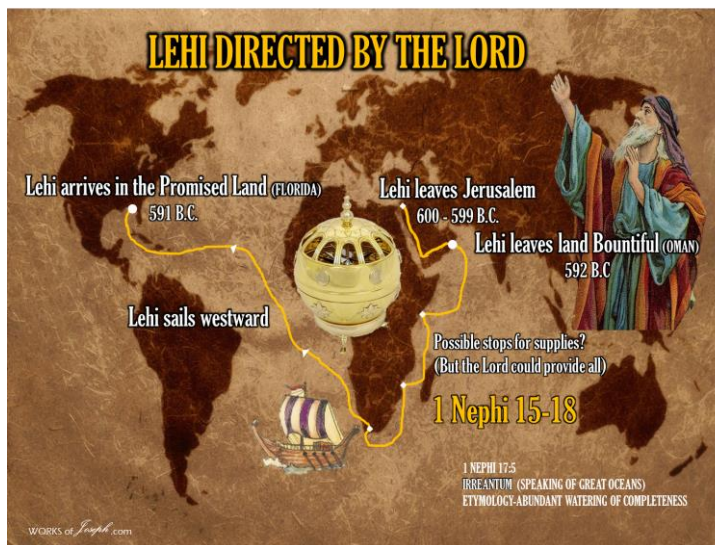
Similar Latitude: Seeds would grow. 30° 26' 17" N (Tallahassee, FL)

30° 04' 42" N (Cairo, Egypt)

31° 46' 48" N (Jerusalem)

19° 43' 26" N (Mexico City)

15° 30' 0" N (Guatemala)



Mostly Unoccupied Area: 2 Nephi 1:8/Not overrun.
Nephi=King

Wind Currents: Leaving Oman in Sept (honey & fruit ripe), wind currents flow toward horn of Africa.

Promised Land: Book of Mormon speaks of a Land of Liberty. (36 others) USA, not Mesoamerica

Abundance of Food: Oman and Florida both called "A" Land Bountiful

Same Land as Jaredites: [Cumorah and Ramah]

Food prehistoric people needed: Deer, small mammals, Turtles. Bison, Mammoths, Bear, Elk further north.

Signs of Hebrew writing or relics: Bat Creek Stone, Holy Stones, Hebrew Earthworks, etc.

Access to Rivers: Chattahoochee only river source brings ice into the gulf.

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

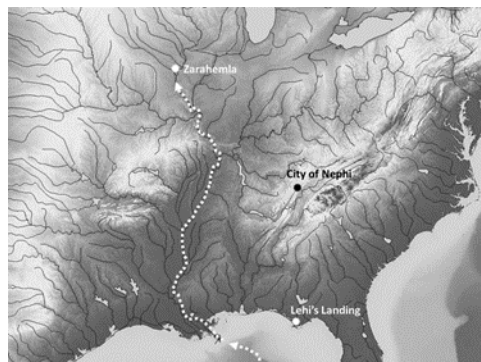


Figure 18 Mulekite route up Mississippi

Brief Nephite Timeline in North America

NORTH AMERICAN SUMMARY AND JOURNEY OF THE NEPHITES

Book of Mormon Evidence.org believes The Book of Mormon events in the New World occurred in North America. The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is neutral on this subject. Our information is based on archaeology, anthropology, text of the Book of Mormon, distances, geology, and we believe the many rivers were the highways of the ancients including the Nephites.

We believe Lehi landed in Florida near Tallahassee about 589 BC. Later, after Lehi dies, Nephi escaped north possibly using the Chattahoochee River to Unicoi Gap, GA, and then traveling on the Hiwassee River which connects to the Tennessee River then, settling near Chattanooga, Tennessee which area became the land of Nephi and also called the Land Lehi-Nephi

Mosiah was told by the Lord to leave Tennessee (about 323 BC) and he traveled the Tennessee River west then north to the Ohio River then traveling north on the Mississippi River, to the land of Zarahemla (modern Illinois, Iowa, Missouri). Eventually Mosiah made his way to the city of Zarahemla at Montrose Iowa (D&C 125:3), where the Mulekites already lived.

Shortly after Lehi left Jerusalem for the new World, in about 586 BC the Mulekites (Descendants of King Zedekiah) came from Jerusalem by way of the Atlantic Ocean and ascended the lower and upper Mississippi Rivers until they stopped at the Des Moines river rapids near Nauvoo. They lived along the Mississippi river (the land of Zarahemla) until Mosiah arrived from the land of Nephi. Mosiah meets the people of Zarahemla and translated Coriantumr's stone. (Read Omni 1:17, 21).

Zeniff left Zarahemla (Montrose, Iowa) about 200-187 BC to possess the land of first inheritance near Chattanooga Tennessee. Zeniff's son, King Noah reigned in wickedness about 160 BC in Tennessee or the Land Lehi-Nephi. (Mosiah 9-22).

Abinadi taught the 10 Commandments and Isaiah to Noah (Zeniff's son) and his court and was then killed. Alma the older was one priest in Noah's court who heard and believed the words of Abinadi. When the wicked priests of Noah found out about Alma, they attempted to kill him. Alma and his followers visited the Waters of Mormon which was probably in northern Georgia close to Chattanooga. (We like Catoosa Springs, GA and Crawfish Springs, GA as possibilities 12-18 miles south of Chattanooga). Eventually Alma the older and his people escaped to Helam and Amulon (near the Pinson Mounds) in Eastern Tennessee and then later joined the Nephites in Zarahemla using the Mississippi River north.

King Limhi the son of wicked Noah in about 130 BC sent 43 men from Tennessee to find Zarahemla. They got lost, probably by going up the Ohio River towards the land they found bones and breastplates, near West Virginia, Pennsylvania, or near Cumorah, instead of traveling the Mississippi River directly to Zarahemla in Iowa. Eventually they returned from Cumorah area to Tennessee with the Jaredite records.

Ammon left Zarahemla (121 BC Iowa) to teach the Lamanites and with his fellow missionaries and they met King Limhi, in Tennessee who put Ammon in prison. Ammon converts Limhi who tells Ammon about the Jaredite records. Ammon eventually led Limhi and his people back to Zarahemla so Mosiah could baptize Limhi. Mosiah translated the Jaredite records.

Nephite Timeline Continued

Mosiah has Alma the older organize seven churches. Around 100 BC Alma's son (Alma the younger) and the four sons of Mosiah rebel and seek to destroy the Church. An angel intervenes, they are converted.

Mosiah sets up a system of judges. He and Alma die. Alma the younger becomes chief judge and high priest. He leads a battle against the Amlicites around 87 BC along the Mississippi River near Nauvoo, Illinois. (Alma 2)

Alma resigns the judgment seat to work full time as high priest and teaches all over Illinois and possibly Indiana. He preaches to the Nephites. The sons of Mosiah preach to the Lamanites in Tennessee and Kentucky from about 91-77 BC.

A big battle between the Nephites and Lamanites occurs near 77-76 BC in the Land of Zarahemla. Alma teaches his sons, etc.

Around 74 BC, the Lamanites cross the Ohio river and attack the Nephites in Illinois. Wars ensue and last through about 50 BC.

Nephites have wars and government corruption. There's a famine around 20 BC.

Samuel the Lamanite cried repentance to the Nephites from the wall at Zarahemla in 6 BC. Some are converted and are baptized

The Lord Jesus Christ appeared to the Nephites and some Lamanites near Newark (or Kirtland) Ohio in 34 AD.

The Land Bountiful was mostly the state of Ohio and peaceful for nearly 200 years. The Newark Ohio Earthworks. portions which exists today, is dated to have been built between 100 BC to 100 AD and would probably be built during a time of peace.

Young Mormon with his father (Mormon 1:6), traveled from Cumorah (NY) to Zarahemla (Iowa) in 321 AD at age 10 and later Mormon became the leader of the Nephites at age 15 in 326 AD. The first battles of the last war began in the Land Zarahemla.

Here we will consider a possible scenario of where Zelph may fit into the history of the Book of Mormon, by using information from journals, scriptures and other quotes. (This is only speculation with our belief of Heartland Geography)



Zelph a Man of God by Ken Corbett

Zelph fought for the Nephites and died in one of the last battles with the Lamanites. This battle would have had to be in the Land of Zarahemla, near present day Valley City, Illinois as this is where Zelph was discovered. Men of Zion's camp found Zelph buried where Joseph Smith said he was..

The beginning battle of the last battles between the Nephites and Lamanites began in Zarahemla near the Sidon River in 322 AD (Mormon 1:10). The last battle in the Land of Zarahemla was probably in 328 AD near the borders of the west sea. (Possibly Lake Michigan or Lake Erie. Mormon 2:6)

Nephite Timeline 3

According to Joseph Fielding Smith, “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 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.”

In 327 AD, Mormon was 16 years old and chosen to be the Nephite leader. (Mormon 2:1) In Mormon’s first battle, his army was afraid and headed toward the north countries to the city of Angola, which was probably still in the land of Zarahemla. Zelph may have been a contemporary of Mormon while together in the Land of Zarahemla.

The possible conclusion of where Zelph may fit into the historicity of the Book of Mormon is either, Zelph may have died in 322 AD before Mormon became the Nephite leader or, Zelph may have died in 327 AD in Mormon’s first battle against the Lamanites in the City of Angola before the Nephites went even farther north and east toward Cumorah. The reasoning is because Joseph Smith said that Zelph fought in one of the last battles of the final battles, or in a final battle between the Lamanites and Nephites.

Mormon and his son Captain Moroni fought all the way from Illinois east by northeast through Indiana, Ohio, Pennsylvania and to Cumorah for the last battle of the Nephites and Lamanites in 385 AD. Mormon abridged the records of the Nephites and gave his abridgment to his son Moroni. The Hill Ramah, named by the Jaredites is the same as Hill Cumorah named by the Nephites in upstate New York, where each battle had its ending. See Ether 15:11

See many quotes verifying the last battles at Cumorah visit here <https://bookofmormonevidence.org/quotes/>

Moroni avoided the Lamanites and recorded some information on the plates after his father left him. He deposits the plates in upstate NY in the Hill Cumorah and died about 421 AD.

It is interesting that a Book of Mormon Chiasmus occurred here. The Nephites begin the battles at Zarahemla and traveled northeast where their lives ended at Cumorah. The gospel in the latter days began in the east at Cumorah and traveled southwest over the same lands to Kirtland and back to Zarahemla.

The Richest Place in the World

“Have any of them built forts? Tell of one settlement, if you please, excepting they commenced one in Iron County which remains unfinished yet. The Indians are now upon us, and our brethren are scattered off, three, four, and five families in a place, away off in this and in that direction, exposed to the Lamanites. They have been called into the city that they might be safe, and they are now teasing us, and wanting to go back again, and live in those exposed locations without a fort... I have lived in the State of New York, town of Bloomfield, Monroe County, right in the heart of the country where the ancient Lamanites, and other veterans, destroyed each other, root and branch; where the Book of Mormon was discovered in the hill of Cumorah. From among those rich hills the people are flocking to these mountains. Why? Because this is the richest place in the world.” *A Discourse by President Heber C. Kimball, Delivered at the Special Conference in the Tabernacle, Great Salt Lake City, August 13, 1853*

Hinterlands

How many “Carefully Selected” Promised Lands are there?

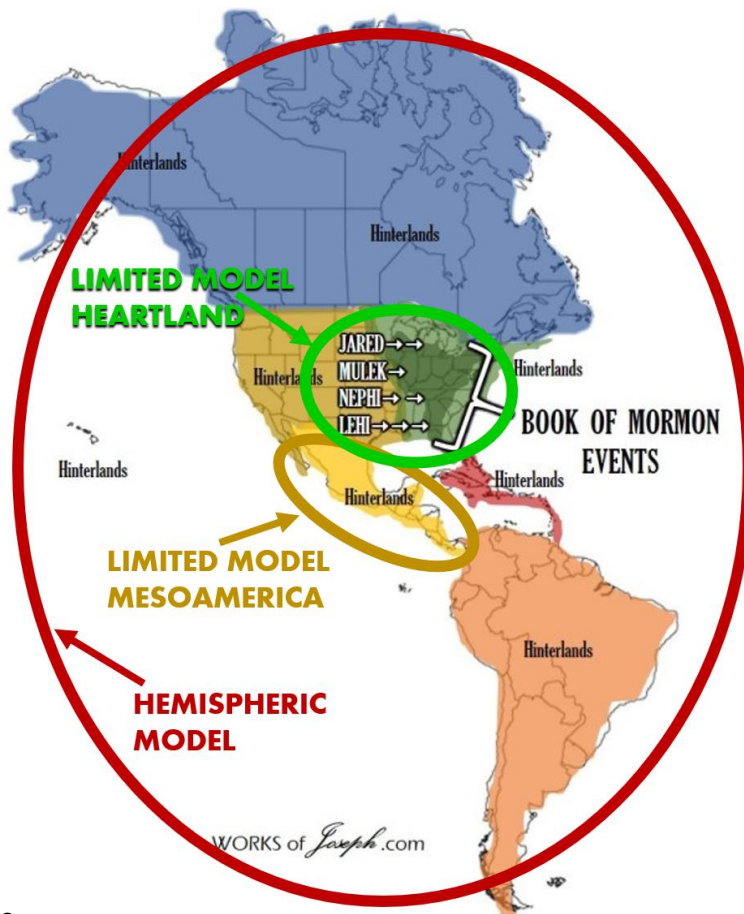
There can be beautiful lands and lands of promise and country’s that are beautiful etc, but the Lord said there are only two “Promised Lands”, the New Jerusalem and Jerusalem of old, according to scripture. 3 Nephi 20:22,29

“Carefully Selected” for God’s Purposes.

There are many Beautiful Lands and People in North and South America!

“In the last few weeks, I have had the glorious privilege of visiting eleven of our Latin American countries... I found they like to be referred to as Americans... I found they were very happy to learn that to the Latter-day Saints the Promised Land, the land of Zion, includes all of North and South America.” President Ezra Taft Benson April 1955 General Conference:

As Pres Benson said above, I think it is awesome the Latin Americans like to be called Americans. We members in North America are also happy to refer to them as wonderful people who have a promised land of their own. The only difference is no city in Latin America has been chosen by the Lord to be the Garden of Eden, New Jerusalem, Cumorah, Zarahemla, Plains of the Nephites, headquarters of the Church, Manti, Kirtland, Nauvoo, etc. Latin America was chosen to be a beautiful land for a beautiful people just as any other country was. I hear Greenland is beautiful and so is Ontario and Chile, but they weren’t chosen for the Lord’s purpose for a Constitution or to gather the Saints or to reveal the plates. Those things happened in cities in the United States of America. Just understand we in the USA are not better than anyone, we were only allowed to live in the USA where the covenant was made as the “Carefully Selected” Land of the Book of Mormon.



Cumorah, NY Heartland, Not Hinterland

“Mormon lived in that age of the world, and was a Nephite, and a Prophet of the Lord. He, by the commandment of the Lord, made an abridgment of the sacred records, which contained the history of his forefathers, and the Prophecies and Gospel which had been revealed among them; to which he added a sketch of the history of his own time, and the destruction of his nation. Previous to his death, the abridged records fell into the hands of his son Moroni, who continued them down to A. D. 420; at which time he deposited them carefully in the earth, on a hill which was then called Cumorah, but is situated in Ontario County, township of Manchester, and State of New York, North America. This he did in order to preserve them from the Lamanites, who overran the country, and sought to destroy them and all the records pertaining to the Nephites. This record lay concealed, or sealed up, from A. D. 420 to September 22, 1827, at which time it was found by Mr. Joseph Smith, jun., he being directed thither by an angel of the Lord.” A Voice of Warning, page 96 Parley P. Pratt

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.⁵² *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>)

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



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



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).

I HAVE GOT THE KEY“

Joseph Smith Jr. by Lucy Mack Smith



"Mother," said he. "Do not be uneasy. All is right. See here,"
said he, "I have got the key."

“Does it Really Matter? By James and Hannah Stoddard

Some may wonder, “Does it really matter how Joseph Smith translated the Book of Mormon? What difference does it make if he used the Urim and Thummim or a seer stone?” Upon closer inspection, however, the implications have a far greater impact than we might realize. If we accept that Joseph Smith dictated the Book of Mormon using a dark occultic seer stone he presumably found from an alleged career in treasure digging, scrying, and magic, this means the Book of Mormon was revealed through an occultic instrument and not by revelation and instruments provided by God. No true Christian can accept as God’s word, a book which came from this “bitter fountain.”¹³ The very foundations of our faith crumble.

Additionally, if we accept that Joseph Smith dictated the Book of Mormon from words magically appearing on a seer stone, even a stone that was not occultic, Joseph Smith’s character and integrity are shattered and our history is not viable.

Consider the following:

- If Joseph Smith never used the plates, why did the Lord burden generations of Nephite prophets with the painstaking recording and preservation of their history? Why was Moroni doomed to spend years on the run, hunted by the Lamanites, while he finished his father’s abridgment and hid the record from those who were seeking to destroy it? Why was Joseph Smith warned by Moroni that he would be “cut off”¹⁴ if he lost the plates, if he never used them? Was the Lord just wasting everyone’s time?
- If Joseph Smith never used the plates, relying instead on words that appeared on a stone, to what degree does the Book of Mormon text we read today correspond with the original Nephite plates, if there is any correlation at all? Is the Book of Mormon even an historical text? Why not simply an inspired parable with heart-warming lessons “for our day”? How can we know the book’s validity, the book’s authenticity, and the book’s truth, if this is our foundation
- The “seer stone in a hat” narrative contradicts the testimonies of the only legitimate mortal eyewitnesses, Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery. Were Joseph and Oliver lying? Whom should we trust?” *Seer Stone vs Urim and Thummim* by James and Hannah Stoddard Page 4-5

Seer Stones and the New Narrative

<https://www.timesandseasons.org/harchive/2015/08/seer-stones-and-the-new-narrative/>

by Dave Banack August 10, 2015

A week ago, the Church released a suddenly iconic photograph of Joseph Smith’s favorite seer stone, and also posted at LDS.org an article by three LDS historians, “Joseph the Seer,” to be published in the October 2015 Ensign. It seems clear that the image plus the content of the article are going to rewrite the standard (“official”) LDS narrative concerning Joseph Smith’s translation of the Book of Mormon text. **I’m concerned it may also bring folk magic back into that narrative and even back into mainstream LDS culture.** That seems like a step in the wrong direction....

The new narrative raises this tricky question: Does this seer stone and others like it actually have supernatural power, whether occult or divine? This wasn’t a stone or interpreter delivered by an angel, it was just a stone Joseph found while digging Willard Chase’s well (see *Rough Stone Rolling*, p. 48-49)... The mainstream LDS response to these disclosures seems to be, “A photo of Joseph’s seer stone, isn’t that wonderful?” Wait a year and see how wonderful it is. If we welcome seer stones into the official narrative, what else might follow?

Translation-Theory vs Revelation

1- Theory= Single Seer stone in a hat to translate BofM

2- Revelation= Spectacles and Breastplate used to translate BofM

1- Theory=Seer Stone was the same instrument as the Urim and Thummim

2- Revelation= Spectacles and Breastplate are the same as the Urim and Thummim

"Historians seem to take great pride in publishing something new, particularly if it illustrates a weakness or mistake of a prominent historical figure. For some reason, historians and novelists seem to savor such things. If it related to a living person, it would come under the heading of gossip. History can be as misleading as gossip and much more difficult—often impossible—to verify. The writer or the teacher who has an exaggerated loyalty to the theory that everything must be told is laying a foundation for his own judgment. He should not complain if one day he himself receives as he has given. Perhaps that is what is contemplated in having one's sins preached from the housetops."
The Mantle Is Far, Far Greater Than the Intellect Elder Boyd K. Packer

Where did the Spectacles and Breastplate come from?

Ether 3:23-34 And behold, these two stones will I give unto thee, and ye shall seal them up also with the things which ye shall write. For behold, the language which ye shall write I have confounded; wherefore I will cause in my own due time that these stones shall magnify to the eyes of men these things which ye shall write.

Ether 4:5 Wherefore the Lord hath commanded me to write them; and I have written them. And he commanded me that I should seal them up; and he also hath commanded that I should seal up the interpretation thereof; wherefore I have sealed up the interpreters, according to the commandment of the Lord.

Daily Blog Here
bofm.blog



Mosiah and Alma and Handed Down

11 Therefore he took the records which were engraven on the plates of brass, and also the plates of Nephi, and all the things which he had kept and preserved according to the commandments of God, after having translated and caused to be written the records which were on the plates of gold which had been found by the people of Limhi, which were delivered to him by the hand of Limhi;

12 And this he did because of the great anxiety of his people; for they were desirous beyond measure to know concerning those people who had been destroyed.

13 **And now he translated them by the means of those two stones which were fastened into the two rims of a bow.**

14 Now these things were prepared from the beginning, and were handed down from generation to generation, for the purpose of interpreting languages;

15 And they have been kept and preserved by the hand of the Lord, that he should discover to every creature who should possess the land the iniquities and abominations of his people;

16 **And whosoever has these things is called seer, after the manner of old times.**

17 Now after Mosiah had finished translating these records, behold, it gave an account of the people who were destroyed, from the time that they were destroyed back to the building of the great tower, at the time the Lord confounded the language of the people and they were scattered abroad upon the face of all the earth, yea, and even from that time back until the creation of Adam.

18 Now this account did cause the people of Mosiah to mourn exceedingly, yea, they were filled with sorrow; nevertheless, it gave them much knowledge, in the which they did rejoice.

19 And this account shall be written hereafter; for behold, it is expedient that all people should know the things which are written in this account.

20 And now, as I said unto you, that **after king Mosiah had done these things, he took the plates of brass, and all the things which he had kept, and conferred them upon Alma, who was the son of Alma; yea, all the records, and also the interpreters, and conferred them upon him, and commanded him that he should keep and preserve them, and also keep a record of the people, handing them down from one generation to another, even as they had been handed down from the time that Lehi left Jerusalem.** *Mosiah 28:11-20*

"The Prophet Joseph Smith used the same Urim and Thummim that was "given to the brother of Jared upon the mount, when he talked with the Lord face to face" (D&C 17:1). President Joseph Fielding Smith wrote a brief history regarding the Urim and Thummim: "**King Mosiah possessed 'two stones which were fastened into the two rims of a bow,' called by the Nephites Interpreters,** with which he translated the Jaredite record [Mosiah 28:11–14], and **these were handed down from generation to generation for the purposes of interpreting languages. How Mosiah came into possession of these two stones or Urim and Thummim the record does not tell us, more than to say that it was a 'gift from God'** [Mosiah 21:28]. Mosiah had this gift or Urim and Thummim before the people of Limhi discovered the record of Ether. They may have been received when the 'large stone' was brought to Mosiah with engravings upon it, which he interpreted by the 'gift and power of God' [Omni 1:20–21]. **They may have been given to him, or to some other prophet before his day, just as the Brother of Jared received them—from the Lord. "That the Urim and Thummim, or two stones,** given to the Brother of Jared were those in the possession of Mosiah **appears evident from Book of Mormon teachings.** The Brother of Jared was commanded to seal up his writings of the vision he had when Christ appeared to him, so that they could not be read by his people. ... **The Urim and Thummim were also sealed up so that they could not be used for the purpose of interpreting those sacred writings of this vision,** until such time as the Lord should grant to man to interpret them. When they were to be revealed, **they were to be interpreted by the aid of the same Urim and Thummim** [Ether 3:21–28]. ... "Joseph Smith received with the breastplate and the plates of the Book of Mormon, the Urim and Thummim, which were hid up by Moroni to come forth in the last days **as a means by which the ancient record might be translated, which Urim and Thummim were given to the Brother of Jared [D&C 17:1]"** (*Joseph Fielding Smith Doctrines of Salvation, 3:223–25*). *The Prophet inquired of the Lord, and D&C Section 17 was given in answer through the Urim and Thummim.*

Alma the Younger tells Helaman to Preserve Interpreters & Director

21 And now, I will speak unto you concerning those twenty-four plates, that ye keep them, that the mysteries and the works of darkness, and their secret works, or the secret works of those people who have been destroyed, may be made manifest unto this people; yea, all their murders, and robbings, and their plunderings, and all their wickedness and abominations, may be made manifest unto this people; yea, and **that ye preserve these interpreters.**

24 And now, my son, these **interpreters** were prepared that the word of God might be fulfilled, which he spake, saying:

25 I will bring forth out of darkness unto light all their secret works and their abominations; and except they repent I will destroy them from off the face of the earth; and I will bring to light all their secrets and abominations, unto every nation that shall hereafter possess the land. *Alma 37:21, 24 (The word Directors was changed to Interpreters in the 1920 version of the Book of Mormon)*

38 And now, my son, I have somewhat to say concerning the thing which our fathers call **a ball, or director**—or our fathers called it **Liahona**, which is, being interpreted, **a compass**; and the Lord prepared it.

39 And behold, there cannot any man work after the manner of so curious a workmanship. And behold, it was prepared to show unto our fathers the course which they should travel in the wilderness. *Alma 37:38-39*

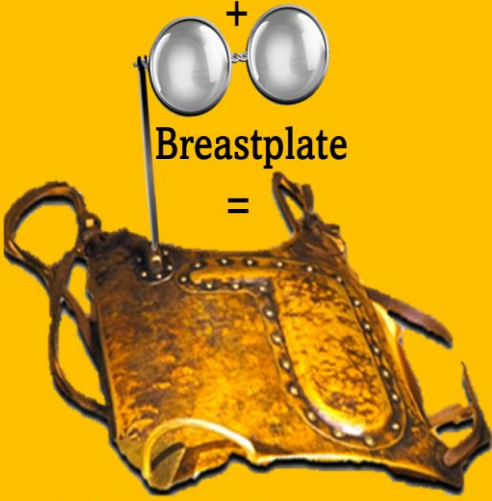
47 And now, my son, see that ye **take care of these sacred things**, yea, see that ye look to God and live. Go unto this people and declare the word and be sober. My son, farewell. *Alma 37:47*

Conferred upon Helaman, before the death of Shiblon.

Alma 63:12 Now behold, all those engravings which were in the possession of Helaman were written and sent forth among the children of men throughout all the land, save it were those parts which had been commanded by Alma should not go forth.

13 Nevertheless, **these things were to be kept sacred, and handed down from one generation to another**; therefore, in this year, they had been conferred upon Helaman, before the death of Shiblon.

Two Stones in Silver Bows



Breastplate

=

**Urim and Thummim/
Interpreters**

“Also, that there were two stones in silver bows—and these stones, fastened to a breastplate, constituted what is called the Urim and Thummim—deposited with the plates; and the possession and use of these stones were what constituted “seers” in ancient or former times; and that God had prepared them for the purpose of translating the book . . .

“Again, he told me, that when I got those plates of which he had spoken—for the time that they should be obtained was not yet fulfilled—I should not show them to any person; neither the breastplate with the Urim and Thummim; only to those to whom I should be commanded to show them; if I did, I should be destroyed.”

(Joseph Smith History 1:35,42)

“And the things *are called interpreters*, and no man can look in them except he be commanded, lest he should look for that he ought not and he should perish. And whosoever is commanded to look in them, *the same is called seer.*” *Mosiah 8:13*

It was not Intended to tell the World all the Particulars of the Coming Forth of the Book of Mormon,

The matter of how the Book of Mormon was translated has been of considerable interest and discussion virtually from the time the book became public. This is illustrated in an exchange that took place between the Prophet and his brother Hyrum in a conference of the Church held 25 October. On that occasion Hyrum said, "that he thought best that the information of the coming forth of the book of Mormon be related by Joseph himself to the Elders present that all might know for themselves." In response, Joseph Smith said that "it was not intended to tell the world all the particulars of the coming forth of the book of Mormon, & also said that it was not expedient for him to relate these things &c" (Cannon and Cook, *Far West Record*, 23).

Proper Translation Inquire for Yourself of Truth

"Suppose a leader of the Church were to tell you that you were supporting the wrong side of a particular issue. Some might immediately resist this leader and his counsel or ignore it, but I would suggest that you first apply the fourth great civic standard for the faithful Saints. That standard is to live for, to get, and then to follow the promptings of the Holy Spirit." Elder Ezra Taft Benson of the Council of the Twelve. *Civic Standards for the Faithful Saints*. Ensign, July 1972, 59.

Said Brigham Young: "I am more afraid that this people have so much confidence in their leaders that they will not inquire for themselves of God whether they are led by Him. ... Let every man and woman know, by the whisperings of the Spirit of God to themselves, whether their leaders are walking in the path the Lord dictates, or not." (JD, vol. 9, p. 150.)

Why are they called Interpreters and where did they come from?

The Interpreters are holy and came from God. How do we know this? Where did the Interpreters come from and why is it so important that the Prophet Joseph Smith used them to translate the plates? Remember one of the greatest stories about faith is when the Brother of Jared (Mahonri Moriancumer) saw the finger of the Lord and could not be kept outside of the veil. Jesus Christ showed himself unto Mahonri and told him to write the doings of his people and also the Lord touched **two additional stones** for Mahonri to seal up until after Christ would appear in the flesh. **These two stones** were also given to Mosiah with the same promise of being kept secret. Then **these two stones** were given back to Moroni who finally sealed up the Interpreters with the plates for the last time before Joseph Smith received them.

With this spiritual background of the Interpreters, it is essential to understand the significance of Joseph using these "two stones" to translate the plates. In Ether we read, "*And behold, **these two stones** will I give unto thee, and ye shall seal them up also with the things which ye shall write. For behold, the language which ye shall write I have confounded; wherefore I will cause in my own due time that **these stones shall magnify** to the eyes of men these things which ye shall write.*" Ether 3:23-24.

It was "**these two stones**", not A seer stone, not A stone, not A stone found in a well, but "**these TWO stones**" that were sealed up to come forth to Joseph the Prophet to translate the plates. Remember the translation was done "by the Gift and Power of God", not by any other means. Not with one stone for convenience, or because I left the Interpreters home, or I just can't carry two stones, so I will only use one; these things did not matter because the Prophet was to do the translation "by the Gift and Power of God", only! **Joseph's single stone he found in a well was not THAT spiritual method that the Lord planned** from the beginning. Man's way is not the Lord's way. Joseph Smith the Prophet of the Lord translated the records of the Nephites and Jaredites with the spiritual means the Lord intended with the Interpreters (two stones and a breastplate) that were provided inside that most sacred stone box on Cumorah's hill. Joseph said, "*there were two stones in silver bows—and these stones, fastened to a breastplate, constituted what is called the Urim and Thummim—deposited with the plates; and the possession and use of these stones were what constituted "seers" in ancient or former times; and that God had prepared them for the purpose of translating the book.*" (Joseph Smith—History 1:34–35) The Urim and Thummim is the tool those in the Old Testament and many of the saints in Joseph's day spoke of but was only called "Interpreters" in the entire Book of Mormon. Hence the Urim and Thummim or the Interpreters are that singular spiritual instrument called by two various names combined for translation, not the single stone, or a stone I found somewhere. To equate the two is not "by the Gift and Power of God.

What led up to the discussion between whether the Urim and Thummim or the Seer Stone were used for translation?

5 Names of the same Instrument used to Translate the Book of Mormon

- 1- Interpreters (Word found in the Book of Mormon, PGP)
 - 2- Directors (Alma 37:21, 24. In 1920 "Interpreters" was changed to "Directors" in the Book of Mormon)
 - 3- Urim and Thummim (Word found in the D&C, PGP, and the Old Testament, 4 times in THE TESTIMONY OF THE PROPHET JOSEPH SMITH in the preface of the BofM)
 - 4- The Key
 - 5- Two stones in silver bows, fastened to a breastplate
 - 6- Two stones which were fastened into the two rims of a bow (Words found similar in many places)
- Words that aren't defined as the named instruments above:

- 1- Peep Stone
- 2- Seer Stone
- 3- Seer Stones
- 4- Seer's Stone
- 5- Stone in the hat
- 6- Stone

7+ Firsthand witnesses who saw this Instrument.

- 1- Christ
- 2- Brother of Jared
- 3- Moroni
- 4- King Benjamin, Mosiah, Alma, Helaman and each following generational leader
- 5- Joseph Smith
- 6- Oliver Cowdrey
- 7- Lucy Mack Smith
- 8- William Smith?

Everyone else not listed above is a second or third hand witness to seeing THIS Instrument, including Emma Smith, Martin Harris, David Whitmer, etc. Some helped translate but Joseph was commanded to not show the plates and the Interpreters to anyone unless advised or he would be utterly destroyed.

HOW DID JOSEPH TRANSLATE THE PLATES?



Christ Said,

"Now behold, I say unto you, that because you delivered up those writings which you had power given unto you to translate by the means of the Urim and Thummim, into the hands of a wicked man, you have lost them. And you also lost your gift at the same time, and your mind became darkened. Nevertheless, it is now restored unto you again; therefore, see that you are faithful and continue on unto the finishing of the remainder of the work of translation as you have begun." *D&C 10:1-3*

"Behold, I say unto you, that you must rely upon my word, which if you do with full purpose of heart, you shall have a view of the plates, and also of the **breastplate, the sword of Laban, the Urim and Thummim, which were given to the brother of Jared upon the mount**, when he talked with the Lord face to face, and the miraculous directors which were given to Lehi while in the wilderness, on the borders of the Red Sea." *D&C 17:1* Now here is the witness by the Lord of Joseph's translation. "And he has translated the book, even that part which I have commanded him, and as your Lord and your God liveth it is true." *D&C 17:6*

Brother of Jared

Do you realize the 16 stones touched by Christ for the Brother of Jared were for the 8 barges, but the Lord also touched two separate stones to be sealed up for the Prophet Joseph Smith later for translation?

1 And it came to pass that the brother of Jared, (now the number of the vessels which had been prepared was eight) went forth unto the mount, which they called the mount Shelem, because of its exceeding height, and did molten out of a rock **sixteen small stones**; and they were white and clear, even as transparent glass; and he did carry them in his hands upon the top of the mount, and cried again unto the Lord, saying: *Ether 3:1*

6 And it came to pass that when the brother of Jared had said these words, behold, the Lord stretched forth his hand and touched the stones one by one with his finger. [16 stones] And the veil was taken from off the eyes of the brother of Jared, and he saw the finger of the Lord; and it was as the finger of a man, like unto flesh and blood; and the brother of Jared fell down before the Lord, for he was with fear. *Ether 3:6*

13 And when he had said these words, behold, the Lord showed himself unto him, and said: Because thou knowest these things ye are redeemed from the fall; therefore, ye are brought back into my presence; therefore, I show myself unto you. *Ether 3:13*

17 And now, as I, Moroni, said I could not make a full account of these things which are written, therefore it sufficeth me to say that Jesus showed himself unto this man in the spirit, even after the manner and in the likeness of the same body even as he showed himself unto the Nephites. *Ether 3:13,17*

20 Wherefore, having this perfect knowledge of God, he could not be kept from within the veil; therefore, he saw Jesus; and he did minister unto him.

21 And it came to pass that the Lord said unto the brother of Jared: Behold, thou shalt not suffer these things which ye have seen and heard to go forth unto the world, until the time cometh that I shall glorify my name in the flesh; wherefore, ye shall treasure up the things which ye have seen and heard and show it to no man.

22 And behold, when ye shall come unto me, ye shall write them and shall seal them up, that no one can interpret them; for ye shall write them in a language that they cannot be read.

23 And behold, **these two stones** [different than the previous 16 stones] will I give unto thee, and **ye shall seal them up also with the things which ye shall write**.

24 For behold, the language which ye shall write I have confounded; wherefore I will cause in my own due time **that these stones** [2stones] shall magnify to the eyes of men these things which ye shall write. *Ether 3:20-23*

Moroni

4 Behold, I [Moroni] have written upon these plates the very things which the brother of Jared saw; and there never were greater things made manifest than those which were made manifest unto the brother of Jared.

5 Wherefore the Lord hath commanded me to write them; and I have written them. And he commanded me that **I should seal them up**; and he also hath commanded **that I should seal up the interpretation** thereof; wherefore I have **sealed up the interpreters**, according to the commandment of the Lord. *Ether 4:4-5*

Joseph Smith Quotes

"34 He said there was a book deposited, written upon gold plates, giving an account of the former inhabitants of this continent, and the source from whence they sprang. He also said that the fulness of the everlasting Gospel was contained in it, as delivered by the Savior to the ancient inhabitants;

35 Also, **that there were two stones in silver bows—and these stones, fastened to a breastplate, constituted what is called the Urim and Thummim—deposited with the plates; and the possession and use of these stones were what constituted “seers” in ancient or former times; and that God had prepared them for the purpose of translating the book.**" (*Joseph Smith—History 1:34–35*)

"With the records was found a curious instrument, which the ancients called "**Urim and Thummim,**" which consisted of two transparent stones set in the rim of a bow fastened to a breast plate. Through the medium of the Urim and Thummim I translated the record by the gift and power of God" (*History of the Church, 4:537*).

Again, he told me, that when I got those plates of which he had spoken—for the time that they should be obtained was not yet fulfilled—I **should not show them to any person; neither the breastplate with the Urim and Thummim; only to those to whom I should be commanded to show them; if I did, I should be destroyed.** While he was conversing with me about the plates, the vision was opened to my mind that I could see the place where the plates were deposited, and that so clearly and distinctly that I knew the place again when I visited it. *Joseph Smith—History in the Pearl of Great Price or History of the Church, 1:2–79.*

"By this timely aid was I enabled to reach the place of my destination in Pennsylvania; and immediately after my arrival there I commenced copying the characters off the plates. I copied a considerable number of them, and by means of the Urim and Thummim I translated some of them, which I did between the time I arrived at the house of my wife's father, in the month of December, and the February following." *JSH 1:62*

The Prophet Joseph Smith stated, "On the west side of this hill not far from the top, under a stone of considerable size, lay the plates, deposited in a stone box." "Having removed the earth, I obtained a lever, which I got fixed under the edge of the stone, and with a little exertion raised it up. I looked in, and there indeed did I behold the plates, the Urim and Thummim, and the breastplate..." (*Joseph Smith-History 1:51-52*)



Urim & Thummim used to Translate other things

Joseph Smith said, "I inquired of the Lord through the Urim and Thummim and received from him the following." (Note: See the preface to the Doctrine and Covenants 3,6,7,11,14,15,16,17) (History of the Church V.1p.45)

Words of Edward Stevenson:

"During the Prophet's visit [to Michigan, fall 1834], he came to our house. My heart swelled with love as I selected and presented him with some of our choice apples. While looking over our copy of a large English Book of Martyrs, he expressed sympathy for the Christian martyrs and a hope for their salvation. He asked to borrow the book, promising to return it when he should meet us again in Missouri. On returning it he said, "I have, by the aid of the Urim and Thummim..., seen those martyrs. They were honest, devoted followers of Christ, according to the light they possessed. They will be saved." (Hyrum L. Andrus and Helen Mae Andrus, comps., *They Knew the Prophet*, p. 85)

Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery finally solved the issue through an appeal to the Lord. The Prophet Joseph Smith recorded: "During the month of April [1829, at Harmony, Pennsylvania,] I continued to translate, and he [Oliver Cowdery] to write, with little cessation, during which time we received several revelations. A difference of opinion arising between us about the account of John the Apostle, mentioned in the New Testament, as to whether he died or continued to live, we mutually agreed to settle it by the Urim and Thummim." (History of the Church, 1:35–36.) The result of their inquiry is given in the heading of section 7. It is not known whether Joseph saw the parchment referred to and was given power to translate it, or if its contents were revealed to Joseph without his seeing the original source. It makes no difference, since the material was given by revelation to the Prophet.

"In this respect the testimony of Lorenzo Brown about the preparation the Prophet made for his translation of the Bible may be instructive. He records the Prophet as saying: "After I got through translating the Book of Mormon, I took up the Bible to read with the Urim and Thummim. I read the first chapter of Genesis and I saw the things as they were done. I turned over the next and the next, and the whole passed before me like a grand panorama; and so, on chapter after chapter until I read the whole of it. I saw it all!" (as cited in Matthews, *Plainer Translation*, 25)." *The Process of Translating the Book of Mormon Joseph Fielding McConkie (Professor of Ancient Scripture, BYU) Craig J. Ostler (Assistant Professor*

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Metal work by Steve Ross

What was actually in the Stone box?

The reason the Mesoamericans say the Liahona and the Sword of Laban were in the stone box is so they can dispute the fact that there was a Cave at Hill Cumorah in NY as Orson Pratt said.

“The hill Cumorah, with the surrounding vicinity, is distinguished as the great battlefield on which, and near which, two powerful nations were concentrated with all their forces. Men, women and children fought till hundreds of thousands on both sides were hewn down and left to molder upon the ground. . . .

These new plates were given to Moroni to finish the history. And all the ancient plates, Mormon deposited in Cumorah, about three hundred and eighty-four years after Christ. When Moroni, about thirty-six years after, made the deposit of the book entrusted to him, he was, without doubt, inspired to select **a department of the hill separate from the great depository** of the numerous volumes hid up by his father. The particular place in the hill where Moroni secreted the book, was revealed, by the angel, to the prophet Joseph Smith, to whom the volume was delivered in September, A.D. 1827. But the **grand repository of all the numerous records of the ancient nations of the western continent, was located in another department of the hill**, and its contents under the charge of holy angels, until the day should come for them to be transferred to the sacred temple of Zion.” [1866 Orson Pratt Millennial Star \(28 \(27\): 417\)](#)

Mesoamericanists say the last battle of the Nephites and Lamanites happened in Mexico somewhere and we say it happened at the same Hill in New York.



Heartlanders say, “Mormon’s depository and Moroni’s stone box are in the same hill Cumorah in New York in different locations.” [One Hill Cumorah only in New York]

Mesoamericanists say, “Mormon’s depository is at some hill in Mexico, and Moroni’s stone box is in New York” [Neither one was necessarily called Cumorah. See “Saints” Vol. 1]

The Plates, Breastplate, & Spectacles!

"On the west side of this hill not far from the top, under a stone of considerable size, lay the plates, deposited in a stone box." "Having removed the earth, I obtained a lever, which I got fixed under the edge of the stone, and with a little exertion raised it up. I looked in, and there indeed did I behold the plates, the Urim and Thummim, and the breastplate..." (Joseph Smith-History 1:51-52)



Art by Val Chadwick Bagley

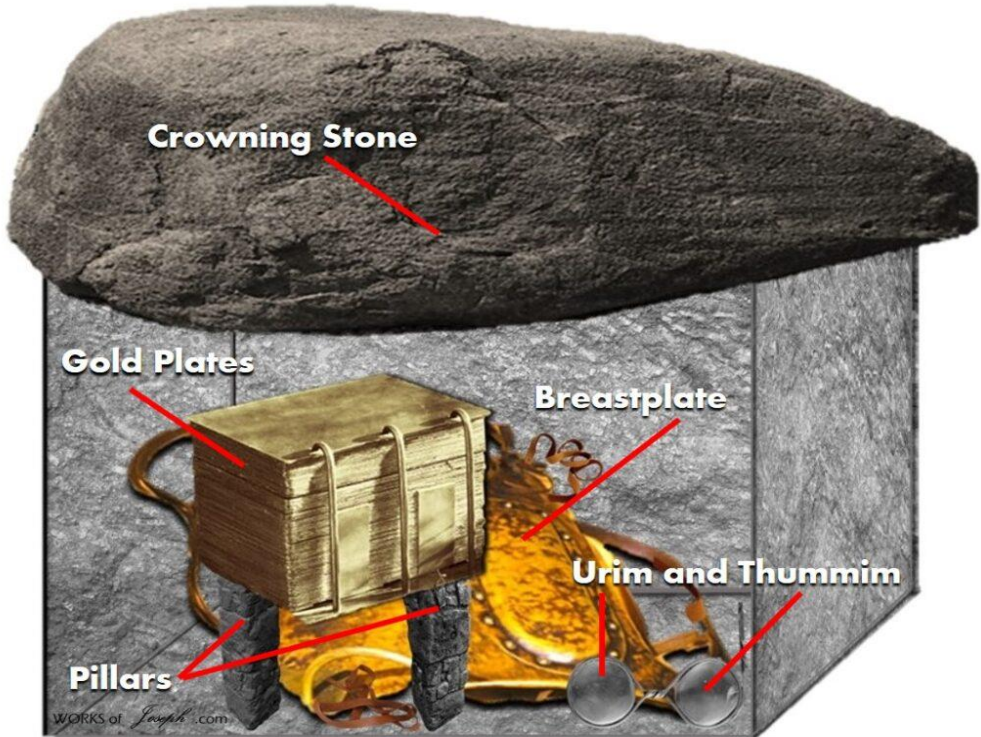
Oliver Cowdery A View of the Contents of the Stone Box

“The manner in which the plates were deposited: First, a hole of sufficient depth, (how deep I know not) was dug. At the bottom of this was laid a stone of suitable size, the upper surface being smooth. At each edge was placed a large quantity of cement, and into this cement, at the four edges of this stone, were placed, erect, four others, their bottom edges resting in the cement at the outer edges of the first stone. The four last named, when placed erect, formed a box, the corners, or where the edges of the four came in contact, were also cemented so firmly that the moisture from without was prevented from entering. It is to be observed, also, that the inner surface of the four erect, or side stones was smoothe. This box was sufficiently large to admit a **breast-plate**, such as was used by the ancients to defend the chest, &c. from the arrows and weapons of their enemy. From the bottom of the box, or from the breast-plate, arose **three small pillars** composed of the same description of cement used on the edges; and upon these three pillars was placed **the record of the children of Joseph**, and of a people who left the tower far, far before the days of Joseph... I must not forget to say that this box, containing **the record was covered with another stone**, the bottom surface being flat and the upper, crowning. **But those three pillars were not so lengthy as to cause the plates and the crowning stone to come in contact.** I have now given you, according to my promise, the manner in which this record was deposited; though when it was first visited by our brother, in 1823, a part of the crowning stone was visible above the surface while the edges were concealed by the soil and grass, from which circumstances you will see, that however deep this box might have been placed by Moroni at first, the time had been sufficient to wear the earth so that it was easily discovered when once directed, and yet not enough to make a perceivable difference to the passer-by.” *Oliver Cowdery, “Letter VIII,” October 1835*

Oliver Cowdery Canonized Scripture

Oliver Cowdery describes these events thus: “These were days never to be forgotten—to sit under the sound of a voice dictated by the inspiration of heaven, awakened the utmost gratitude of this bosom! Day after day I continued, uninterrupted, **to write from his mouth, as he translated with the Urim and Thummim, or, as the Nephites would have said, ‘Interpreters,’** the history or record called ‘The Book of Mormon.’ *JSH 1:75**

The most factual statement we have is the scripture above. You can't find any scripture that explains using a seer stone anywhere.



THE CAVE AT CUMORAH

The first time they went there the sword of Laban hung upon the wall; but when they went there again it had been taken down and laid upon the table across the gold plates; it was unsheathed, and on it was written these words: "This sword will never be sheathed again until the kingdoms of this world become the kingdom of our God and his Christ." Heber C. Kimball, in *Journal of Discourses*, 4:105.



Just two months and twelve days before his death in 1877, Brigham Young was establishing a new stake in Farmington, Utah. In his discourse, he said the following: "Orrin P. Rockwell is an eyewitness to some powers of removing the treasures of the earth. He was with certain parties that lived nearby where the plates were found that contain the records of the Book of Mormon. There were a great many treasures hid up by the Nephites. Porter was with them one night when there were treasures, and they could find them easy enough, but they could not obtain them. When [Porter] tells a thing he understands, he will tell it just as he knows it; he is a man that does not lie. He said that on this night when they were engaged hunting for this old treasure, they dug around the end of a chest for some twenty inches. The chest was about three feet square. One man who was determined to have the contents of that chest took his pick and struck into the lid of it and split through into the chest. The blow took off a piece of the lid, which a certain lady [Lucy Mack Smith, Joseph's mother] kept in her possession until she died. That chest of money went into the bank. Porter describes it so he says this is just as true as the heavens are." [Brigham Young Journal of Discourses \(Liverpool, 1878\), vol. 19:36-39.](#)

"[Joseph] went [into] a Cave in the Hill Comoro with Oliver Cowdry & deposited those plates upon a table or shelf. In that room were deposited a large amount of gold plates containing sacred records... Joseph Smith said that cave contained tons of choice treasures & records." (*Spelling not Corrected*) [Wilford Woodruff Journal, 11 December 1869](#)

"Joseph and others... went into a cave in the hill Cumorah, and saw more records than ten men could carry... There were books piled up on tables, book upon book. Those records this people will yet have, if they accept of the Book of Mormon and observe its precepts and keep the commandments." [Heber C. Kimball](#)

Oliver Cowdery's Return

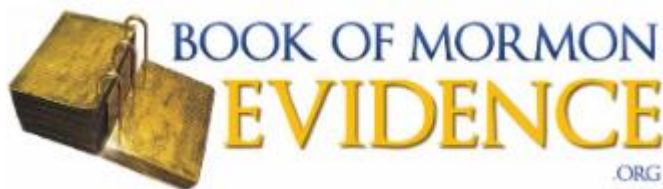
"This testimony written while Oliver Cowdery was out of the Church is now in my keeping. It is a letter in his own handwriting. In October 1848, he made his way from Tiffin, Ohio, his residence, to Kaneshville, Iowa, to take up again his association with the Latter-day Saints. At a conference held there, October 21st, 1848, presided over by elder Orson Hyde, Oliver Cowdery asked for the privilege of speaking, and he said:

Friends and Brethren: My name is Cowdery, Oliver Cowdery. In the early history of this Church, I stood identified with her, and one in her councils. True it is that the gifts and callings of God are without repentance; not because I was better than the rest of mankind was, I called, to fulfill the purposes of God. He called me to a high and holy calling. **I wrote with my own pen, the entire Book of Mormon (save a few pages) as it fell from the lips of the Prophet Joseph Smith, as he translated it by the gift and power of God, by means of the Urim and Thummim, or, as it is called by the book, "holy interpreters." I beheld with my eyes, and handled with my hands, the gold plates from which it was translated. I also saw with my eyes and handled with my hands the "holy interpreters." The book is true. Sidney Rigdon did not write it; Mr. Spaulding did not write it; I wrote it myself as it fell from the lips of the Prophet.** It contains the everlasting gospel and came forth to the children of men in fulfillment of the revelations of John, where he says he saw an angel come with the everlasting gospel to preach to every nation, kindred, tongue and people. It contains principles of salvation; and if you, my hearers, will walk by its light and obey its precepts, you will be saved with an everlasting salvation in the kingdom of God on high. Brother Hyde has just said that it is very important that we keep and walk in the true channel, in order to avoid the sand-bars. The Holy Priesthood is here. I was present with Joseph when an holy angel from God came down from heaven and conferred on us, or restored, the Lesser or Aaronic Priesthood, and said to us at the same time, that it should remain upon the earth while the earth stands. I was also present with Joseph when the higher, or Melchizedek Priesthood was conferred by holy angels from on high. This Priesthood we then conferred on each other, by the will and commandment of God. This Priesthood, as was then declared, is also to remain upon the earth until the last remnant of time. This holy Priesthood or authority, we then conferred upon many, and it is just as good and valid as though God had done it in person. I laid my hands upon that man, yes, I laid my right hand upon his head (pointing to Elder Hyde) and he holds that Priesthood now. He was also called through me, by the prayer of faith, an apostle of Jesus Christ.

One month later in November 1848, at another meeting Oliver Cowdery said:

Brethren, for a number of years I have been separated from you. I now desire to come back. I wish to come humbly and to be one in your midst. I seek no station. I only wish to be identified with you. I am out of the Church. I am not a member of the Church, but I wish to become a member of it. I wish to come in at the door. I know the door. I have not come here to seek precedence. I come humbly and throw myself upon the decisions of this body, knowing, as I do, that its decisions are right, and should be obeyed.

His request was granted, and he was baptized and again was received in full fellowship in the Church, and in this fellowship, he continued to witness to the day of his death." *Restoration of All Things by Joseph Fielding Smith*
CHAPTER TWELVE, A TESTIMONY AGAINST THE WORLD Address delivered Sunday, August 20, 1944



Oliver Under Oath

The principal scribe, Oliver Cowdery, testified under oath in 1831 that Joseph Smith “found with the plates, from which he translated his book, two transparent stones, resembling glass, set in silver bows. That by looking through these, he was able to read in English, the reformed Egyptian characters, which were engraved on the plates.” In the fall of 1830, Cowdery visited Union Village, Ohio, and spoke about the translation of the Book of Mormon. Soon thereafter, a village resident reported that the translation was accomplished by means of “two transparent stones in the form of spectacles thro which the translator looked on the engraving.” [Gospel Topic Essays](#).

During an 1830 trial **Oliver Cowdery testified under oath, that “said [Joseph] Smith found with the plates, from which he translated his book, two transparent stones, resembling glass, set in silver bows. That by looking through these, he was able to read in English, the reformed Egyptian characters, which were engraved on the plates.”** ,

(A. W. Benton, "Mormonites," *Evangelical Magazine and Gospel Advocate* n.s. 2:15 April 9, 101)

William Smith

With these quotes below, I am assuming William Smith saw the Urim and Thummim and maybe even the translation process. He gives an amazing description of the entire process. I am also intrigued by William being quoted as saying, "[Joseph] *always used it in connection with the breastplate when receiving official communications, and usually so when translating as it permitted him to have both hands free to hold the plates.*"

William Smith’s description: **“A silver bow ran over one stone, under the other, around [sic] over that one and under the first in the shape of a horizontal figure 8...[T]hey were much too large for Joseph and he could only see through one at a time** using sometimes one and sometimes the other.” These stones, he continued, **“were attached to the breastplate by a rod which was fastened at the outer shoulde[r] edge of the breastplate and to the edge of the silver bow.”** (*Tyrell Givens, By the Hand of Mormon, p.22*)

Another account from William Smith: “Among other things we inquired minutely about the **Urim and Thummim and the breastplate**. We asked him what was meant by the expression “two rims of a bow,” which held the former. He said **a double silver bow was twisted into the shape of the figure eight, and the two stones were placed literally between the two rims of a bow. At one end was attached a rod which was connected with the outer edge of the right shoulder of the breast-plate. By pressing the head, a little forward, the rod held the Urim and Thummim before the eyes much like a pair of spectacles.** A pocket was prepared in the breastplate on the left side, immediately over the heart. When not in use the Urim and Thummim was placed in this pocket, the rod being of just the right length to allow it to be so deposited. This instrument could, however, be detached from the breastplate and his brother said Joseph often wore it detached when away from home, but **always used it in connection with the breastplate when receiving official communications, and usually so when translating as it permitted him to have both hands free to hold the plates.**” (*J. W. Peterson in The Rod of Iron I:3 (February 1924), 6—7.*)

Wilford Woodruff

Elder Wilford Woodruff recorded in his journal that the Prophet Joseph Smith, showed him the Urim and Thummim. "December 27, 1841: The Twelve or a part of them spent the day with Joseph the Seer and he unfolded unto them many glorious things of the kingdom of God, the privileges and blessings of the priesthood, etc. I had the privilege of seeing for the first time in my day the Urim and Thummim." (Wilford Woodruff, Journal)

Orson Pratt Sealed Part

Orson Pratt in talking about the sealed part of the Book of Mormon said; *"I expect that the same Urim and Thummim which the Lord gave to Joseph Smith will come forth with these plated, and they will be translated, but by whom I know not" "Also the 24-gold plated of the record of the Jaredites."* (J. of D. Vol.19 p. 216 & 217)

The Earliest Mention of the Translation

"The earliest mention of the translation that we have is from August 11, 1829, just six weeks after the translation was completed. The *Palmyra Freeman* published an article that said this: By placing the **spectacles in a hat**, and looking into it, Smith could (he said so, at least,) interpret the characters.

This article was promptly republished in several newspapers, including the *Painesville Telegraph* on September 22, 1829. Another article published in Rochester on September 5, 1829, directly attributes the account to Martin Harris. "A man by the name of Martin Harris was in this village a few days since endeavoring to make a contract for printing a large quantity of a work called the Golden Bible. He gave something like the following account of it... By **placing the spectacles in a hat** and looking into it, Smith interprets the characters into the English language."

These accounts predated the publication of the Book of Mormon and the organization of the Church. Martin Harris was hardly an apostate at the time, and he certainly was not trying to denigrate Joseph Smith. That's the last thing he would do because he was mortgaging his farm to pay for the publication.

This is only one of the reasons why I disagree with those who insist the stone in the hat is a fabrication or lie. The error, IMO, is that people (including Martin Harris, David Whitmer, and Emma) who witnessed the demonstration in the Whitmer home inferred they were witnessing the actual translation instead of a demonstration. The demonstration downstairs was rapid and consisted of the Isaiah chapters in 2 Nephi (**assuming that what Joseph dictated became part of the manuscript**); the translation, which took place upstairs, was laborious and consisted of 1 Nephi and the non-Isaiah material from the small plates. We can see all of this in the original manuscript, as I showed in detail in *A Man that Can Translate. Jonathan Neville*. I also blogged about this a bit today :<http://www.bookofmormoncentralamerica.com/2021/06/witnesses-sith-and-tipping-point.html>"

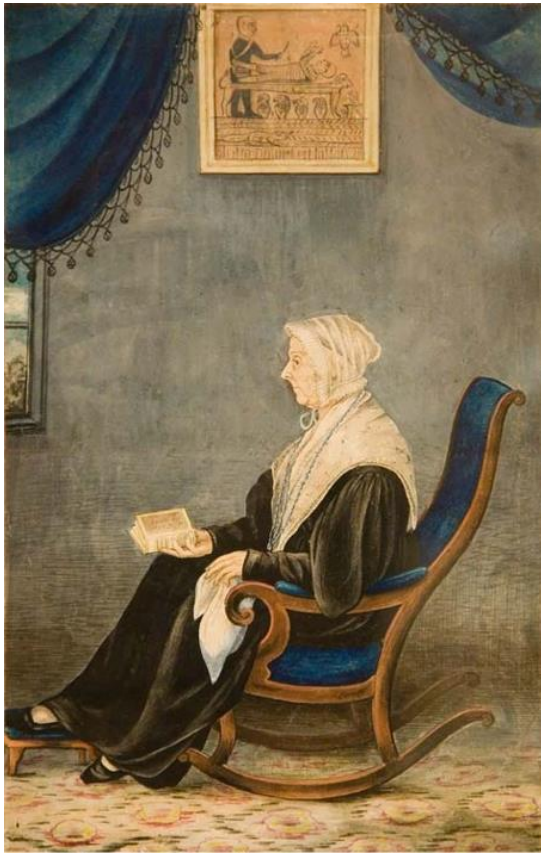
There is a big difference between saying he put the spectacles (plural meaning two) in the hat. Martin was not recorded as saying he put the stone or seer stone or a stone into the hat. Big difference.

What is wrong with this picture?



If a stone had words appear, that means someone is having Joseph dictate, not translate. The Intellectuals also say Joseph never looked at the plates while translating. Then why did Nephi and Mormon keep and protect the records?

Lucy Mack Smith



The Key Joseph Kept Constantly About His Person

Joseph kept the "Key" 'Constantly about his person'. **Little room for seer stones.** Joseph used the "Key" to translate the Book of Mormon, not the seer stone. I believe Lucy Mack and not Martin, David or Emma in there very late and conspicuous testimony.

Lucy Mack Smith said, "I trembled so much with fear lest all might be lost again by some small failure in keeping the commandments, that I was under the necessity of leaving the room to conceal my feelings. Joseph saw this and followed me. **"Mother," said he. "Do not be uneasy. All is right. See here," said he, "I have got the key."**

"I knew not what he meant, but took the article in my hands and, examining it with no covering but a silk handkerchief, found that **it consisted of two smooth three-cornered diamonds set in glass, and the glasses were set in silver bows connected with each other in much the same way that old-fashioned spectacles are made.** He took them again and left me but did not tell me anything of the record....

That of which I spoke, which Joseph termed **a key**, was indeed nothing more nor less than **a Urim and Thummim** by which the angel manifested those things to him that were shown him in vision; by which **also he could at any time ascertain the approach of danger, either to himself or the record,** and for this cause, **he kept these things constantly about his person.**" (*History of Joseph Smith, Revised and Enhanced*, p. 139, 145)

Lucy Mack Smith About the Breastplate

"After bringing home the plates, Joseph now commenced work with his father on the farm in order to be as near as possible the treasure that was committed to his care. Soon after this, he came in from work one afternoon, and after remaining a short time, he **put on his great coat and left the house.** I was engaged at the time in an upper room in preparing some oilcloths for painting. When he returned, he requested me to come downstairs. I told him that I could not leave my work just then, yet upon his urgent request, I finally concluded to go down and see what he wanted, upon which **he handed me the breastplate spoken of in his history.**

It was wrapped in a thin muslin handkerchief, so thin that I could see the glistening metal and ascertain its proportions without any difficulty. **It was concave on one side and convex on the other** and extended **from the neck downwards as far as the center of the stomach of a man of extraordinary size.** It had four straps of the same material for the purpose of fastening it to the breast, two of which ran back to go over the shoulders, and the other two were designed to fasten to the hips. They were just the width of two of my fingers (for I measured them), and they had holes in the end of them to be convenient in fastening. The whole plate was worth at least five hundred dollars. After I had examined it, Joseph placed it in the chest with the Urim and Thummim." (*History of Joseph Smith, Revised and Enhanced*)

"I have myself seen and handled the golden plates; they are about eight inches long, and six wide; some of them are sealed together and are not to be opened, and some of them are loose. They are all connected by a ring which passes through a hole at the end of each plate and are covered with letters beautifully engraved. **I have seen and felt also the Urim and Thummim.** They resemble two large bright diamonds set in a bow like a pair of spectacles. My son puts these over his eyes when he reads unknown languages, and they enable him to interpret them in English. **I have likewise carried in my hands the sacred breastplate.** It is composed of pure gold and is made **to fit the breast very exactly.**" *Lucy Mack Smith (in Henry Caswall, The City of the Mormons; or, Three Days at Nauvoo, in 1842, 2nd ed. revised and enlarged, (London: J. G. F. & J. Rivington, 1843), 26)* [Other source](#)

The Lord's Instrument

“We are awed by the perspicacity and discernment of the scientists, whose accumulated knowledge is great, but there is still greater knowledge; there are more perfect instruments; there is much more to learn. Most of us can but imagine how the great truths have been transmitted through the ages. Exactly how this precious instrument, the Urim and Thummim, operates we can only surmise, but it seems to be infinitely superior to any mechanism ever dreamed of yet by researchers. It would seem to be a receiving set, or instrument. For a set to receive pictures and programs, there must be a broadcasting set. The scripture above quoted indicates that the abode of God is a master Urim and Thummim, and the synchronization of transmitting and receiving apparatus of this kind can have no limitation.” (Spencer W. Kimball, Faith Precedes the Miracle, Pg.52 - Pg.53)

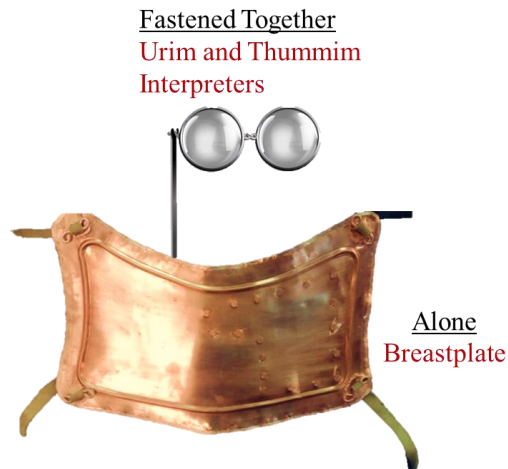
“In a short period, man has so improved his communication techniques as to hear voices around the world. A few years ago, even with earphones, we could decode only part of the static over the newborn radio. Our first television pictures were very local and very amateurish. Today, we see in our homes a fight in Madison Square Garden, a football game in the Cotton Bowl, the Tabernacle Choir in Chicago, an astronaut on his way to the moon. Is it hard to believe that with such accomplishments by puny man Omnipotent God has precision instruments with which to enlarge the knowledge of those who have the skill to use them? Is it difficult to believe that the Urim and Thummim could be such a precision instrument to transmit messages from God to his supreme creation -- man? Can God have limitations? Can atmosphere or distance or space hold back his pictures? Would it be so difficult for Moses or Enoch or Abraham or Joseph to see a colorful, accurate, moving picture of all things past and present, and even future? The Creator said to Moses, “. . . look, and I will show thee the workmanship of mine hands; but not all, for my works are without end.” (Moses 1:4.) Spencer W. Kimball

Lucy Mack Smith Quotes

- 1- “Joseph termed a key... nothing more nor less than a **Urim and Thummim**”
- 2- “I have likewise carried in my hands the sacred breastplate. It is composed of pure gold and is made **to fit the breast very exactly.**”
- 3- “**I can see anything**; they are marvelous.“
- 4- “He kept these things **constantly about his person**”

FASTENED TO A BREASTPLATE

“And these stones, **fastened** to a breastplate, constituted what is called the Urim and Thummim” JSH 1:35



FASTENED TO A BREASTPLATE

Heaven and Earth

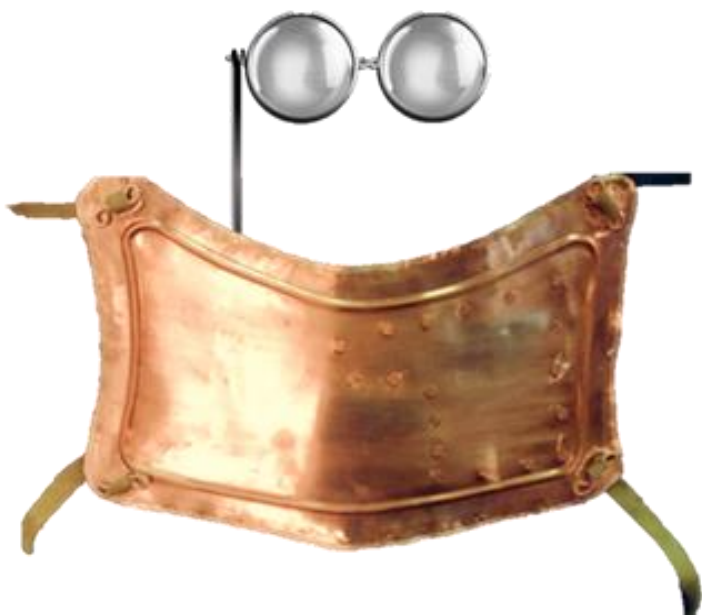
JSH 1:35 Also, that there were two stones in silver bows—and these stones, **fastened** to a breastplate, constituted what is called the Urim and Thummim—deposited with the plates; and the possession and use of these stones were what constituted “seers” in ancient or former times; and that God had prepared them for the purpose of translating the book.“

The breastplate and the spectacles **fastened** to each other and made the Urim and Thummim

The breastplate could represent the heart, protection, and sincerity and the spectacles may represent the mind, intellect, and understanding. Together with the spectacles and the breastplate fastened together, they represent what we could call the “Gift and Power of God”. It’s a statement that is hard to explain, but easy for the power of the Lord who can do all things. The Prophet Joseph Smith with these “constantly upon his person” and the breastplate fitting exactly over his breast, Joseph can at any time refer to these objects to receive an answer to prayer, see danger, receive revelation, call on protection or any other gift the Lord could help him with.

Since the glasses fit nicely in a pouch in the back of the breastplate, Joseph could wear the breastplate constantly under his shirt and vest, not to be seen by others. At any time, the glasses could be fastened quickly to the breastplate and available to receive revelation or translate the Book of Mormon.

I feel the connection of the breastplate and the spectacles represents an ultimate connection between earth and heaven and between the physical heart and the intellectual mind and eyes. As Joseph said to his mother, “I can see anything.” Lucy Mack Smith said, Joseph seemed to like the spectacles more than the plates. That would be understood as Joseph Smith like Prophets of old, could see the entire world as it was, as it is, and as it is to become. What a blessing and what a wonderful Prophet over the dispensation of the Fullness of Times. Joseph leads the eternities in his special mission.



"Mother," said he. "Do not be uneasy.



All is right. See here," said he,

"I have got the key."

Joseph's Description

"These records were engraven on plates which had the appearance of gold, each plate was six inches wide and eight inches long and not quite so thick as common tin. They were filled with engravings, in Egyptian characters and bound together in a volume, as the leaves of a book with three rings running through the whole. The volume was something near six inches in thickness, a part of which was sealed. The characters on the unsealed part were small, and beautifully engraved. The whole book exhibited many marks of antiquity in its construction and much skill in the art of engraving. With the records was found a curious instrument which the ancients called 'Urim and Thummim,' which consisted of two transparent stones set in the rim 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."

Times and Seasons, 1 March 1842," p. 707, The Joseph Smith Papers, accessed February 13, 2021, <https://www.josephsmithpapers.org/paper-summary/times-and-seasons-1-march-1842/5>

JSH 1:35 Also, that there were two stones in silver bows—and these stones, fastened to a breastplate, constituted what is called the Urim and Thummim—deposited with the plates; and the possession and use of these stones were what constituted "seers" in ancient or former times; and that God had prepared them for the purpose of translating the book." The breastplate and the spectacles attached to each other and made the Urim and Thummim.

THIS ↓



NOT THIS ↓



Has anyone asked about the Breastplate?

Where did Joseph hide the breastplate and spectacles each day?

If Joseph used a seer stone to translate, where did he keep the breastplate and spectacles

Joseph was commanded to not show the plates or the breastplate or spectacles to anyone, did he obey that command?

Why was the breastplate and spectacles in the same stone box with the gold plates?

Who put the breastplate and spectacles in the stone box?

Who was the first one who possessed the breastplate and spectacles?

Why does it seem that the breastplate and spectacles were always mentioned together?

What are other names for the breastplate and the spectacles as one unit?

Interpreters

Urim and Thummim

Directors

Instruments

Is there any scripture that says Joseph translated with a single seer stone? **NO!**

Why would Joseph need a hat to block out light to see words if the Interpreters were made by God?

“Why do we not have more disclosure concerning the process of translation of the Book of Mormon? Perhaps the full process was not disclosed because we would not be ready to understand it, even if given. Perhaps, too, the Lord wanted to leave the Book of Mormon in the realm of faith, though it is drenched with intrinsic evidence. After all, Christ instructed Mormon, who was reviewing the Savior’s own teachings among the Nephites, not to record all of them on the plates because “I will try the faith of my people” (3 Ne. 26:11). Perhaps the details of translation are withheld also because we are intended to immerse ourselves in the substance of the book rather than becoming unduly concerned with the process by which we received it.” Elder Neal A. Maxwell

<https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/study/ensign/1997/01/by-the-gift-and-power-of-god?lang=eng>

“Joseph Smith received the same Urim and Thummim had by the Brother of Jared for it was the one expressly provided for the translation of the Jaredite and Nephite records. (D. & C. 10: 1; 17:1; Ether 3:22- 28.) It was separate and distinct from the one had by Abraham and the one had by the priests in Israel. The Prophet also had a seer stone which was separate and distinct from the Urim and Thummim, and which (speaking loosely) has been called by some a Urim and Thummim.” Mormon Doctrine page 576 under title Urim and Thummim and (Doctrines of Salvation, vol. 3, pp. 222-226.)

How Could Joseph keep the breastplate, spectacles, and plates from not being seen by a scribe during translation?



- 1- A curtain was hung between them
- 2- The scribes back would be towards Joseph
- 3- Joseph translated while the scribe was in an adjoining room
- 4- Joseph kept the plates wrapped in a cloth and the spectacles in the hat
- 5- The scribe promised to keep their eyes closed during translation
- 6- Joseph kept the plates covered on the desk and the breastplate and spectacles he kept in the box made by Alvin, hidden.
- 7- Joseph kept all three items on the table but covered with a cloth or blanket
- 8- Joseph Translated from under the table?

Why did no one discuss ever seeing the unwrapped breastplate?

How would Joseph hide the breastplate?

Was the breastplate hidden in an area or box that no one noticed?

Was the breastplate even necessary to complete the translation?

Oliver's Actual Scripture-Canonized

“These were days never to be forgotten—to sit under the sound of a voice dictated by the inspiration of heaven, awakened the utmost gratitude of this bosom! Day after day I continued, uninterrupted, to write from his mouth, as he translated ... (After the ellipsis it should say, “with the Urim and Thummim, or, as the Nephites would have said, ‘Interpreters,”) This was left out of the ellipsis part of the quote) the history or record called ‘The Book of Mormon.’” (JS—H 1:75)

Oliver's Ellipsis-ized Scripture Quote

“These were days never to be forgotten—to sit under the sound of a voice dictated by the inspiration of heaven, awakened the utmost gratitude of this bosom! Day after day I continued, uninterrupted, to write from his mouth, as he translated ... the history or record called ‘The Book of Mormon.’” (JS—H 1:75)

An ellipsis is a set of three periods (. . .) indicating an omission

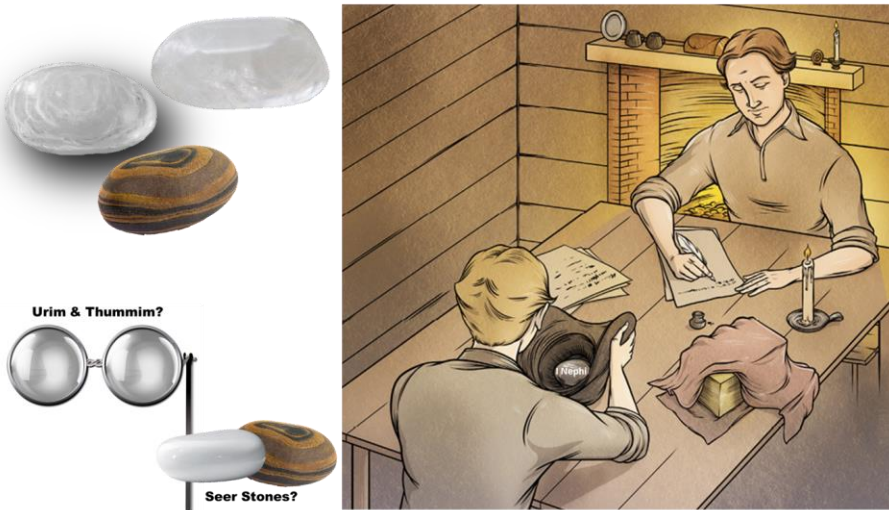
Edited Quotes?

Of course, I love President Nelson and all the Apostles, and I am not accusing them of doing anything wrong. I am just commenting on a quote in the Scriptures that I think has more value without the ellipsis. That's it! I am trying to make the point that some trusted historians, intellectuals and editors, have their own agenda and maybe at times they may undermine the work of the Lord, whether intentionally or not.

Here are some conference talks that were given that may have been edited by a historian or other person that left the key words off the quote here: “with the Urim and Thummim, or, as the Nephites would have said, ‘Interpreters,”) and maybe nothing happened, and I am wrong.

- 1- 1992 A Treasured Testament By Elder Russell M. Nelson Twelve Apostles
- 2- 1993 A Treasured Testament By Elder Russell M. Nelson Twelve Apostles
- 3- 1995 The Translation Miracle of the Book of Mormon By Robert K. Dellenbach First Quorum Seventy
- 4- 1997 A Treasured Testament By Elder Russell M. Nelson Twelve Apostles
- 5- 2016 Seminar for New Mission Presidents By Elder Russell M. Nelson Twelve Apostles
- 6- 2020 The Coming Forth of the Book of Mormon By Elder Ulisses Soares of the Twelve Apostles

Joseph had other stones, but never used them for Translation



David Habben, Translation of the Book of Mormon (2011), commissioned by Michael Hubbard MacKay.

My Email to a Wonderful Artist- Anne Marie Oborn- Proper Translation

"I am absolutely impressed that in just a few days you can create what I feel in my heart your beautiful artwork. Seriously, I have prayed and prayed for just a small answer as I was prepared to do my presentation without artwork. It comes down to a feeling I had to call Kendra Burton for a last opportunity, but I had resigned myself to say it just isn't possible with only two weeks left. I sent all the pictures to your brother Dave, and he called me back and suggested you Ann Oborn, do this project. At first, I thought well I don't know this lady and I would have to know her art etc., but I took a leap of faith and called you.

A few days later, when you called me Sunday Sept. 12th at 3:17, (I looked at my phone), and you said can you come right over as you had models coming to your home in a few minutes. I was shocked and quickly gathered up my replica gold plates, a stove pipe hat and a farmer's hat, a seer stone, a pair of rag tag hanger wired white crystals made to look like the crystals in a bow, my turkey feather, an old journal made by my friend Steve Blake, and an old 1830 replica Book of Mormon created by Steve as well. With these articles I hurried over to your home only about 4 miles from my home in Bountiful. I came to your home that Sunday and met you and Garth and soon Eliza Thompson and her husband came over. He had on a blue shirt and you, and Garth asked him if he had a white shirt. (Honestly, I felt, what does it matter, as Anne could paint any color shirt why she has to see a white one?) Garth wanted you to set up the table and chairs and he wanted to get right at taking pictures. I explained to Garth I have to tell you the story first as it will add the spirit to the art, as I feel is appropriate. Garth patiently let me spend about 20 minutes explaining and then I said, "ok I'm done, take the pictures. You and Garth hurriedly took many pictures. I still had a little doubt, but I put it in the Lord's hands and asked Him to help Anne and myself. I left your home with Garth and you, and I had a lot of hope in my heart. When I didn't hear from you in 3 or 4 days to answer my questions or to let me see where you were in the process, I thought, well maybe she just couldn't do it that quickly and I was fine to go forward without the art.

When you texted me today Sept 17 and said you had something for me to see, I said to myself, wow, she couldn't be done yet, so she just wants me to come over and see the progress you were making. When I walked into your home and from about 100 feet away, I saw the painting you had done, and I immediately saw what Lucy and I call "The Key." From a distance I saw the spectacles, but I also immediately saw Martin Harris sitting across from Joseph and as I walked toward the art, I could see, no that isn't Martin, that is Emma, and I was so happy. Then I looked at the Gold Plates partially covered with a very fine twined linen cloth covering a small part of one of the three rings of the plates so Emma couldn't see them, and I thought. Wow, that image of the plates is perfect in proportion to the spectacles.

Lastly, I looked at Joseph and he looked wonderful as he held his farmers hat over the front of the spectacles so Emma couldn't see them as the Lord had instructed that no one see the plates, the spectacles, or the breastplate, and all three of those issues were taken care of. I could see the spectacles were attached to a rod on Joseph's right side and you could tell they were being held up with the breastplate that Joseph had tightly on his person and under his shirt. You can't see the front of Joseph which is perfect as none of us know what, "by the gift and power of God" means, but the one thing I do know through the spirit, is that the spectacles and the breastplate had to be connected as the scriptures say in order for Joseph to receive the proper translation of that most sacred record. They must be attached or connected.

Just as Elder Holland said, there was heart and head in this painting, you knew by both feelings that the breastplate and the spectacles represented this head and heart feeling that the translation was indeed from the Lord. I know through the powerful words of my now favorite woman in the church, Lucy Mack Smith, that these, (meaning the spectacles and the breast plate) "remained constantly on his person." as the quote in Lucy's book says." *Rian Nelson*

Martin Harris' Divine Displeasure

Harris declares, that when he acted as amanuensis, and wrote the translation, as Smith dictated, such was his fear of the Divine displeasure that a screen (sheet) was suspended between the prophet and himself.

“Gold Bible, No. 6.” *The Reflector (Palmyra, New York) 2, no. 16 (19 March 1831): 126–27.*

What's Under the Hat?



NO CURTAIN

What's Under
Joseph's Shirt?
A Jaredite Breastplate

“Joseph, after repenting of his sins and humbling himself before God, was visited by an holy angel whose countenance was as lightning and whose garments were white above all whiteness, who gave unto him commandments which inspired him from on high; and who gave unto him, by the means of which was before prepared, that he should translate this book.” *TESTIMONY OF LUCY MACK SMITH* Source: *Lucy Mack Smith to Solomon Mack, 6 Jan 1831, cit. Elders' Journal (1 Nov 1906):60-62. Waterloo, January 6, 1831, <http://www.boap.org/LDS/Early-Saints/BOM-Witn.html>*



Mike and Betty LaFontaine grabbed an Elder in Florida to try on the new breastplate just made from scratch by Mike's great friend, Steve Ross, from Florida. Steve does amazing metal work

Never a Curtain

There was a curtain between Joseph and Martin Harris when Joseph copied some characters from the plates for Martin to take to Charles Anthon. Joseph had to look directly at the plates, and Martin was not authorized to view them, so a curtain was necessary. During the actual translation, however, the only time a curtain was used was in a doorway on those occasions when they wanted to keep visitors from disturbing the prophet and scribe as they worked. By Amy Joi O'Donoghue@Amyjoi16 Nov 9, 2009, 12:15am MST
Elizabeth Ann Whitmer Cowdery (eyewitness)

"I cheerfully certify that I was familiar with the manner of Joseph Smith's translating the book of Mormon. He translated the most of it at my Father's house. And I often sat by and saw and heard them translate and write for hours together. Joseph never had a curtain drawn between him and his scribe while he was translating. He would place the director in his hat, and then place his [face in his] hat, so as to exclude the light, and then [read] to his scribe the words as they appeared before him." [3] Elizabeth Ann Whitmer Cowdery, "Elizabeth Ann Whitmer Cowdery Affidavit, 15 February 1870," in Dan Vogel (editor), *Early Mormon Documents* (Salt Lake City, Signature Books, 1996–2003), 5 vols, 5:260.

"I know Mormonism to be the truth; and believe the Church to have been established by divine direction. I have complete faith in it. In writing for your father, I frequently wrote day after day, often sitting at the table close by him, he sitting with his face buried in his hat, with the stone in it, and dictating hour after hour with nothing between us." Emma Smith

"With regard to the physical circumstances of the Prophet Joseph Smith and his scribe, Martin Harris was quoted as saying there was a blanket or curtain hung between himself and Joseph during the translation process. If Martin is accurately quoted, perhaps this occurred when the Prophet was copying characters directly from the plates in the sample to be taken to Professor Charles Anthon, since the dates mentioned are several months before Martin Harris's brief scribal duties began. I say this because although David Whitmer mentions a blanket being used—it was only to partition off the living area in order to keep both the translator and scribe from the eyes of visitors (see *David Whitmer Interviews: A Restoration Witness*, ed. Lyndon W. Cook, [1991], 173).

I believe Martin Harris was very superstitious and nervous and scared of the Lord. The way he acted would seem to me that he made Joseph put a curtain between them as Martin wanted no chance of himself accidentally seeing the plates, breastplate or spectacles as he was afraid that he may meet his utter destruction as the Lord said to Joseph, if Joseph showed them to anyone.



In fact, Elizabeth Anne Whitmer Cowdery, Oliver's wife, said, "Joseph never had a curtain drawn between him and his scribe" (quoted in John W. Welch and Tim Rathbone, "The Translation of the Book of Mormon: Basic Historical Information," F.A.R.M.S. report WRR-86, p. 25). Emma likewise said of her days as scribe, early on, that Joseph dictated "hour after hour with nothing between us" ("Last Testimony of Sister Emma," 289).

Of course, the real revelatory process involved Joseph's mind and faith, which could not be seen by others in any case... By Elder Neal A. Maxwell

Curtain, Screen, Blanket Quotes

[Martin Harris] says he wrote a considerable part of the book, as Smith dictated, and at one time the presence of the Lord was so great, **that a screen was hung up between him and the Prophet; at other times the Prophet would sit in a different room, or up stairs**, while the Lord was communicating to him the contents of the plates. He does not pretend that he ever saw the wonderful plates but once, although he and Smith were engaged for months in deciphering their contents.[33]:14 [34] Eber D. Howe, *Mormonism Unveiled* (Painesville, OH, 1834) Based on reports by Doctor Philastus Hurlbut. **Eber D. Howe (non-eyewitness), paraphrasing Martin Harris (eyewitness) in *Mormonism Unveiled***

Remember the people quoted below are people who listened to Martin Harris who had never seen the translation and so how could he ever know what was going on? Most of these quotes below are from Newspapers, Apostates, Authors and other people who seemed to have an animus towards the Prophet. The book *Mormonism Unveiled* was printed in 1834 and had all kinds of scandalous things about Joseph and he was even said to be a part of the occult. These ideas permeated the entire area near where Joseph lived. I doubt highly the words of Martin Harris and David Whitmer about the rock in the hat story.

1841-45

Gold Bible, No. 6," *The Reflector* (Palmyra, New York) 2, no. 16 (19 March 1831),

Charles Anthon (non-eyewitness), in *Mormonism Unveiled*

John A. Clark (**hostile non-witness**; quoting Martin Harris) *Episcopal Recorder*

Charles Anthon, quoting Martin Harris (witness) *Gleanings by the Way* (letter of 3 April 1841, not published until 1842)

John A. Clark (non-eyewitness), *Gleanings by the Way*

Henry Caswall, **hostile non-witness** *Prophet of the Nineteenth Century*

James Hunt, **hostile author**; citing Martin Harris (witness) *Mormonism*

1846-1900

Robert Baird, **hostile account** *Religion in the United States*

Pomeroy Tucker (non-eyewitness), *Origin, Rise, and Progress of Mormonism*

John Gilbert (**non-eyewitness**), *Detroit Post and Tribune*

William S. Sayre (non-eyewitness)

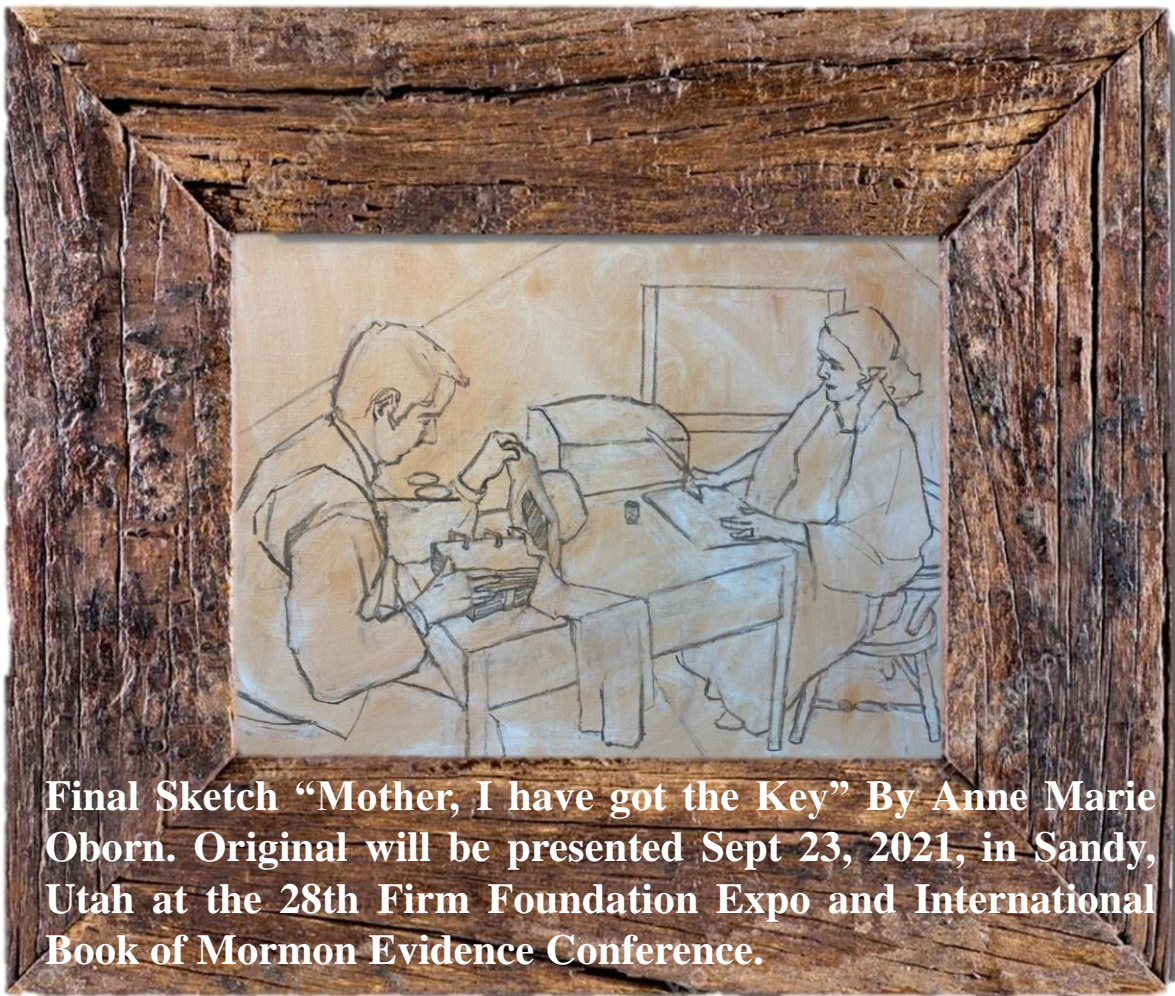
Sallie McKune, widow of Joseph McKune and mother of Sheriff [Benjamin] McKune,

Frederick G. Mather (non-eyewitness)

1907

Samuel W. Richards (non-eyewitness)





Final Sketch “Mother, I have got the Key” By Anne Marie Oborn. Original will be presented Sept 23, 2021, in Sandy, Utah at the 28th Firm Foundation Expo and International Book of Mormon Evidence Conference.



**See What’s Under the Hat?
Spectacles, and Plates; No Seer Stone**

Other Props to Hide Spectacles?

Tremendous Supporters

Pillow?



Cookie Sheets?



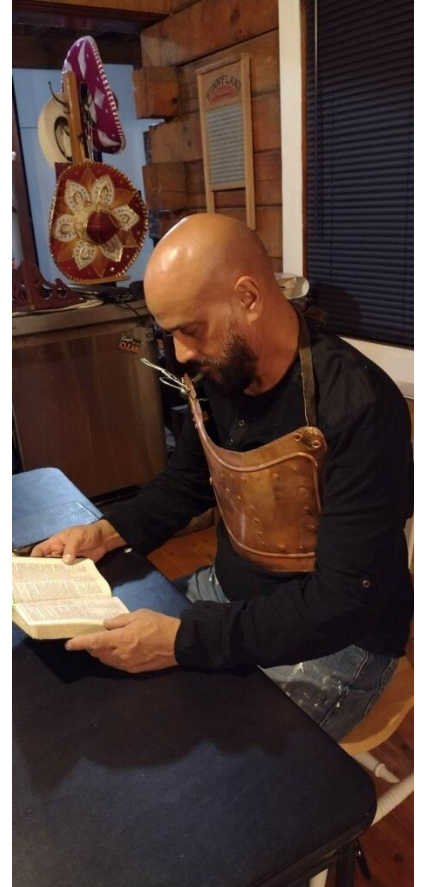
Mike LaFontaine



Frying Pan?



Ann Marie Oborn



Steve Ross

With his Shirt, his Hat, and a Linen

Hat = Prop

The hat was nothing more than a prop to block out Emma's vision so Joseph could keep his promise to not show the breastplate (under his shirt), or the spectacles hidden from view and not in the hat, and the plates lay partially covered as Emma could not see them at all from her angle. Yes, the Prophet of the Lord kept his promise not to show anyone these articles the best way he knew how with his shirt, the hat, and the linen; these became special articles of the translation and a special part of the "gift and power of God". How marvelous are these spectacles as I can see "everything" as Joseph said to Josiah Stowell as written by Lucy and written by her transcribers, Brother, and Sister Coray.

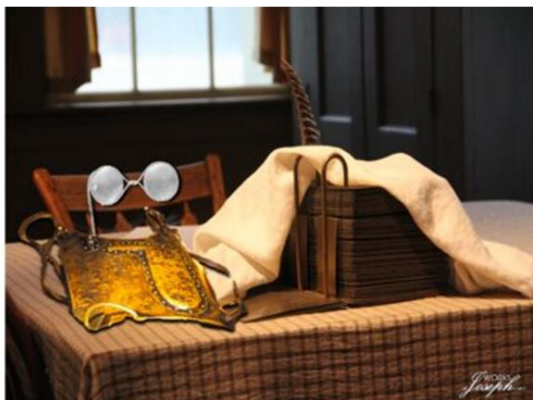
I know the tile of the art for me is, "Mother, I have got the Key" and as Lucy continued to say, "Joseph seems to like the glasses far more than the plates." Joseph said, Mother, I can see anything!

This Key (Spectacles) unlocked the Heart (Breastplate) so Joseph by the "Gift and Power of God", could translate this special book for the world to enjoy. How I love the Book of Mormon, another witness of Jesus Christ.

There are NO scriptures that say anything about a stone in a hat as the method of translation. Only the words of Martin Harris, David Whitmer, Emma Smith in 1879 and William McLellin, who all had either made it up, or embellished, or heard from someone else this seer stone method, as none of them ever saw the translation. I trust Oliver Cowdery and Joseph Smith who are the only firsthand witnesses that saw the translation. Oliver wouldn't need the be blocked with the hat, as he saw the plates, the spectacles and the breastplate. See many quotes in this Handbook.

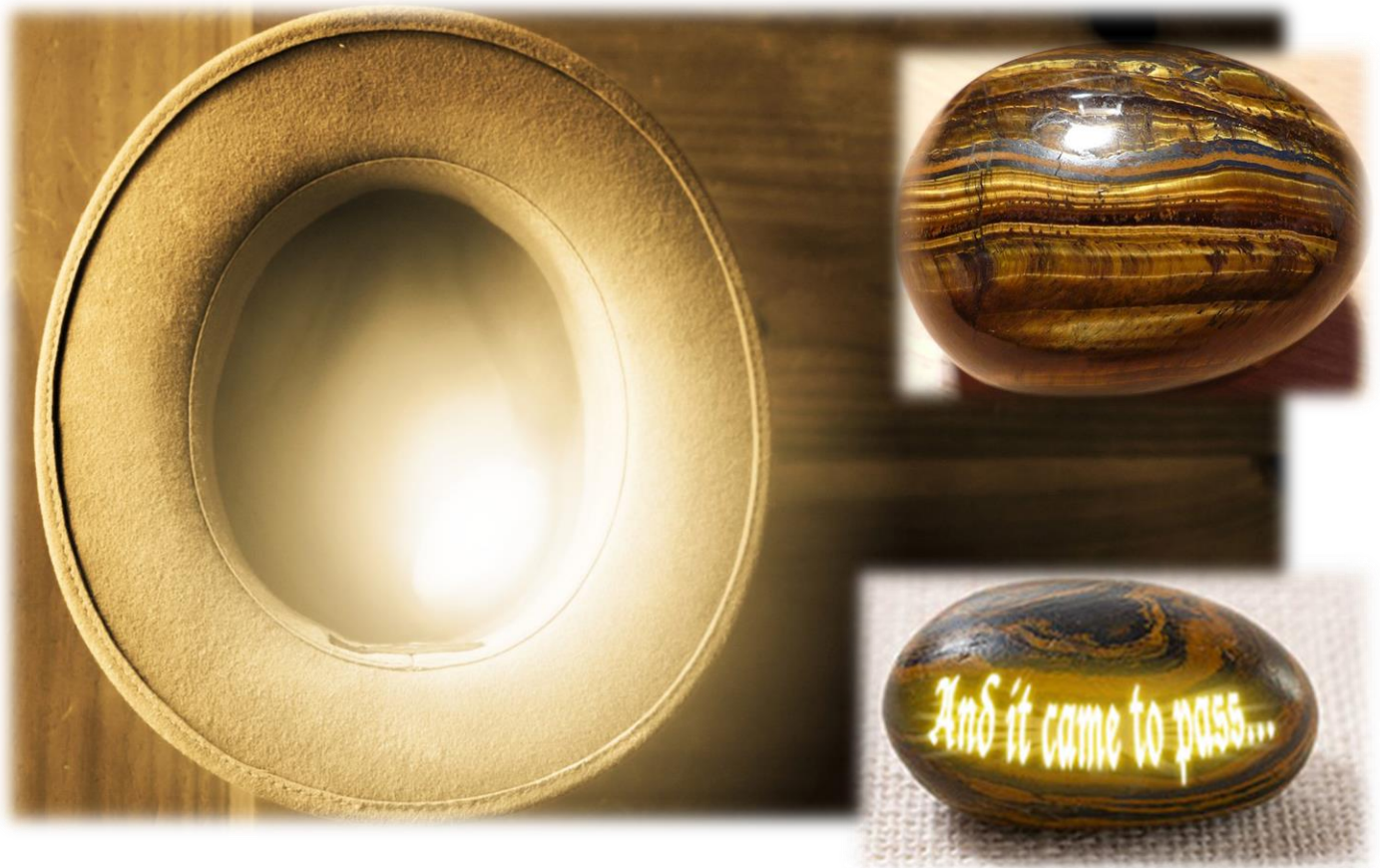
Joseph's Hat?

- Farmers Hat
 - Top Hat
 - Prop Only to Hide Spectacles
- Lord Creates Specs with Full Lighting





Urim & Thummim & Interpreters - Scriptural



Stone in the Hat - Not Scriptural



Book of Mormon "Hard Evidence" - Proper Translation

"That there were two stones in silver bows—and these stones, fastened to a breastplate, constituted what is called the Urim and Thummim...

God had prepared them for the purpose of translating the book." *Joseph Smith*

Scripture - Numbers in Red

- 1- "He said there **was a book deposited, written upon gold plates**, giving an account of the former inhabitants of this continent, and the source from whence they sprang. He also said that the fulness of the everlasting Gospel was contained in it, as delivered by the Savior to the ancient inhabitants; Also, **that there were two stones in silver bows—and these stones, fastened to a breastplate, constituted what is called the Urim and Thummim—deposited with the plates; and the possession and use of these stones were what constituted "seers" in ancient or former times; and that God had prepared them for the purpose of translating the book.**" (*Joseph Smith—History 1:34–35*)
- 2- I looked in, and there indeed did I behold the plates, **the Urim and Thummim, and the breastplate, as stated by the messenger**. The box in which they lay was formed by laying stones together in some kind of cement. In the bottom of the box were laid two stones crossways of the box, and on these stones lay the plates and the other things with them.: *JSH 1:52*
- 3- "With the records was found a curious instrument, which the ancients called "Urim and Thummim," which consisted **of two transparent stones set in the rim of a bow fastened to a breast plate**. Through the medium of the Urim and Thummim I translated the record by the gift and power of God." (*History of the Church, 4:537 Wentworth Letter*).
- 4- "I commenced copying the characters off the plates. I copied a considerable number of them, and **by means of the Urim and Thummim I translated some of them**, which I did between the time I arrived at the house of my wife's father, in the month of December, and the February following." *JSH 1:62*
- 5- Joseph Smith said, **"I inquired of the Lord through the Urim and Thummim** and received from him the following." (*Note: See the preface to the Doctrine and Covenants 3,6,7,11,14,15,16,17*) (*History of the Church V. 1p.45*)
- 6- "I continued to translate, and he [Oliver Cowdery] to write, with little cessation, during which time **we received several revelations**. A difference of opinion arising between us about the account of John the Apostle, mentioned in the New Testament, as to whether he died or continued to live, **we mutually agreed to settle it by the Urim and Thummim.**" (*History of the Church, 1:35–36.*)
- 7- **"I have, by the aid of the Urim and Thummim..., seen those martyrs**. They were honest, devoted followers of Christ, according to the light they possessed. They will be saved." (*Hyrum L. Andrus and Helen Mae Andrus, comps., They Knew the Prophet, p. 85*)
- 8- "After I got through translating the Book of Mormon, **I took up the Bible to read with the Urim and Thummim**. I read the first chapter of Genesis and I saw the things as they were done. I turned over the next and the next, and the whole passed before me like a grand panorama; and so, on chapter after chapter until I read the whole of it. **I saw it all!**" (*As cited in Matthews, Plainer Translation, 25.*) "The Process of Translating the Book of Mormon Joseph Fielding McConkie (Professor of Ancient Scripture, BYU) Craig J. Ostler (Assistant Professor of Church History and Doctrine, BYU)
- 9- "These were days never to be forgotten—to sit under the sound of a voice dictated by the inspiration of heaven, awakened the utmost gratitude of this bosom! Day after day I continued, uninterrupted, **to write from his mouth, as he translated with the Urim and Thummim, or, as the Nephites would have said, 'Interpreters,'** the history or record called 'The Book of Mormon.' *JSH 1:75**
- 10- "I wrote with my own pen, the entire Book of Mormon (save a few pages) as it fell from the lips of the Prophet Joseph Smith, as he translated it by the gift and power of God, **by means of the Urim and Thummim, or, as it is called by the book, "holy interpreters."** I beheld with my eyes, and handled with my hands, **the gold plates from which it was translated. I also saw with my eyes and handled with my hands the "holy interpreters."** The book is true. Sidney Rigdon did not write it; Mr. Spaulding did not write it; I wrote it myself as it fell from the lips of the Prophet." *Restoration of All Things by Joseph Fielding Smith CHAPTER TWELVE, A TESTIMONY AGAINST THE WORLD Address delivered Sunday, August 20, 1944*
- 11- During an 1830 trial **Oliver Cowdery testified under oath, that said, "[Joseph] Smith found with the plates, from which he translated his book, two transparent stones, resembling glass, set in silver bows. That by looking through these, he was able to read in English, the reformed Egyptian characters, which were engraved on the plates."** (*A. W. Benton, "Mormonites," Evangelical Magazine and Gospel Advocate n.s. 2:15 April 9, 101*)
- 12- **"And now he translated them by the means of those two stones which were fastened into the two rims of a bow..."** *Mosiah 28:13* "And whosoever has these things is called seer, after the manner of old times." *Mosiah 28:16* "And now, as I said unto you, that after king Mosiah had done these things, he took the plates of brass, and all the things which he had kept, and conferred them upon Alma, who was the son of Alma; yea, **all the records, and also the interpreters, and conferred them upon him**, and commanded him that he should keep and preserve them, and also keep a record of the people, handing them down from one generation to another, even as they had been handed down from the time that Lehi left Jerusalem." *Mosiah 28:20*
- 13- "And now, I will speak unto you concerning those twenty-four plates, that ye keep them, that the mysteries and the works of darkness, and their secret works, or the secret works of those people who have been destroyed, may be made manifest unto this people; yea, all their murders, and robbings, and their plunderings, and all their wickedness and abominations, may be made manifest unto this people; yea, **and that ye preserve these interpreters...**" "And now, my son, these **interpreters** were prepared that the word of God might be fulfilled, which he spake, saying: I will bring forth out of darkness unto light all their secret works and their abominations; and except they repent I will destroy them from off the face of the earth; and I will bring to light all their secrets and abominations, unto every nation that shall hereafter possess the land." *Alma 37:21, 24-25 (The word "Directors" was changed to "Interpreters" in the 1920 version & forward of the Book of Mormon)*
- 14- "He [Moroni] then proceeded and gave a general account of the promises made to the fathers, and also gave a history of the aborigenes of this country, and said they were literal descendants of Abraham. He represented them as once being an enlightned and intelligent people, possessing a correct knowledge of the gospel, and the plan of restoration and redemption. He said this history was written **and deposited not far from that place**, and that it was our brother's privilege, if obedient to the commandments of the Lord, **to obtain and translate the same by the means of the Urim and Thummim, which were deposited for that purpose with the record.**" *Letter IV Oliver Cowdery*
- 15- "And behold, **these two stones [different than the previous 16 stones]** will I give unto thee, and **ye shall seal them up also with the things which ye shall write**. For behold, the language which ye shall write I have confounded; wherefore **I will cause in my own due time that these stones [2stones] shall magnify to the eyes of men these things which ye shall write.**" *Ether 3:23:24 (Parenthesis Added)*
- 16- Wherefore the Lord hath commanded me to write them; and I have written them. And he commanded me that **I should seal them up**; and he also hath commanded that I should **seal up the**

57 interpretation thereof; wherefore I have sealed up the interpreters, according to the commandment of the Lord." *Ether 4:5 (Parenthesis added)*

<https://www.bofm.blog/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/Book-of-Mormon-Hard-Evidence-Proper-Translation-1.pdf> ©BookofMormonEvidence.org

Oliver's Quote

"Friends and Brethren: My name is Cowdery, Oliver Cowdery. In the early history of this Church, I stood identified with her, and one in her councils. True it is that the gifts and callings of God are without repentance; not because I was better than the rest of mankind was, I called, to fulfill the purposes of God. He called me to a high and holy calling. **I wrote with my own pen, the entire Book of Mormon (save a few pages) as it fell from the lips of the Prophet Joseph Smith, as he translated it by the gift and power of God, by means of the Urim and Thummim, or, as it is called by the book, "holy interpreters."** I beheld with my eyes, and handled with my hands, the gold plates from which it was translated. I also saw with my eyes and handled with my hands the "holy interpreters." The book is true." *Oliver Cowdery*

Joseph's Quotes

"34 He said there was a book deposited, written upon gold plates, giving an account of the former inhabitants of this continent, and the source from whence they sprang. He also said that the fulness of the everlasting Gospel was contained in it, as delivered by the Savior to the ancient inhabitants;

35 Also, **that there were two stones in silver bows—and these stones, fastened to a breastplate, constituted what is called the Urim and Thummim—deposited with the plates; and the possession and use of these stones were what constituted "seers" in ancient or former times; and that God had prepared them for the purpose of translating the book.**" (*Joseph Smith—History 1:34–35*)

"With the records was found a curious instrument, which the ancients called "**Urim and Thummim,**" which consisted of two transparent stones set in the rim of a bow fastened to a breast plate. Through the medium of the Urim and Thummim I translated the record by the gift and power of God" (*History of the Church, 4:537*).

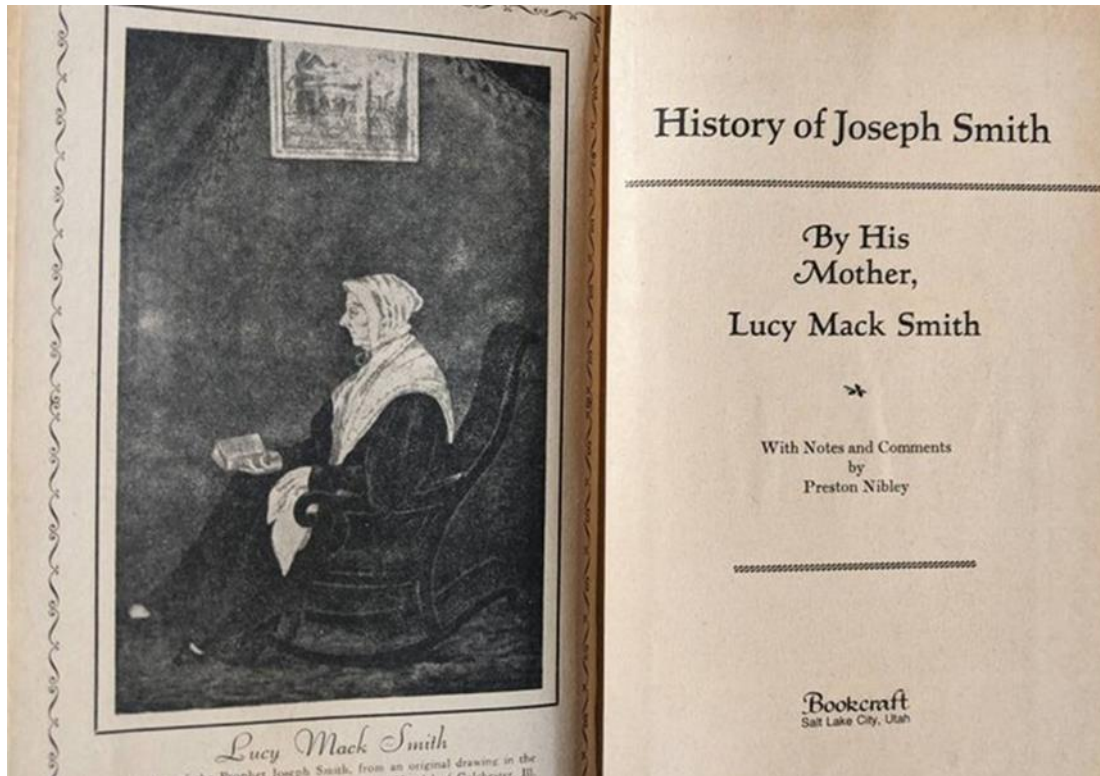
Again, he told me, that when I got those plates of which he had spoken—for the time that they should be obtained was not yet fulfilled—I **should not show them to any person; neither the breastplate with the Urim and Thummim; only to those to whom I should be commanded to show them; if I did, I should be destroyed.** While he was conversing with me about the plates, the vision was opened to my mind that I could see the place where the plates were deposited, and that so clearly and distinctly that I knew the place again when I visited it. *Joseph Smith—History in the Pearl of Great Price or History of the Church, 1:2–79.*

"By this timely aid was I enabled to reach the place of my destination in Pennsylvania; and immediately after my arrival there I commenced copying the characters off the plates. I copied a considerable number of them, and **by means of the Urim and Thummim I translated some of them,** which I did between the time I arrived at the house of my wife's father, in the month of December, and the February following." *JSH 1:62*

The Prophet Joseph Smith stated, "On the west side of this hill not far from the top, under a stone of considerable size, lay the plates, deposited in a stone box." "Having removed the earth, I obtained a lever, which I got fixed under the edge of the stone, and with a little exertion raised it up. I looked in, and **there indeed did I behold the plates, the Urim and Thummim, and the breastplate...**" (*Joseph Smith—History 1:51-52*)

The only two firsthand witnesses know the proper method of translation!

History of Joseph Smith by His Mother, Lucy Mack Smith



“Much of the value of [Lucy Mack Smith](https://www.josephsmithpapers.org/paper-summary/lucy-mack-smith-history-1844-1845/1)’s account lies in her offering a wife and mother’s perspective on her family’s role in the early church. She illuminates the family setting that fostered the birth of Mormonism and retells incidents and interactions recounted nowhere else. Though there are errors in the dating of some events and occasionally in place and individual names, overall, her account is of inestimable value, providing a rarely heard woman’s voice as it traces JS’s life from beginning to end.” JSP <https://www.josephsmithpapers.org/paper-summary/lucy-mack-smith-history-1844-1845/1>

When Lucy Mack Smith stood before a congregation of the Saints in Nauvoo, Illinois, in October 1845 at the invitation of Brigham Young, she presented three related messages, all of them centered around family... To save her lungs, she said, and at the invitation of the Twelve, she invited Martha Jane Knowlton Coray to record her memoirs. Lucy’s dictations during the winter of 1844–45 resulted what is now called the preliminary manuscript of her history. Lucy identified it as “The History of Lucy Smith. . . .” <https://byustudies.byu.edu/article/the-revised-and-enhanced-history-of-joseph-smith-by-his-mother/>

In June 1844, the church suffered the loss of its president and prophet, JS, and his brother, church patriarch [Hyrum Smith](#). The Smith family, already devastated, endured another heartbreak a few weeks later with the death of JS’s brother [Samuel](#). That fall their widowed mother, [Lucy Mack Smith](#), perhaps in part as a salve to her grief, began recording her family’s story. Writing to her only surviving son, [William](#), on 23 January 1845, Smith informed him, “I have by the council of the 12 [Apostles] undertaken a history of the family, that is my Fathers Family and my own.”

She added:

People are often enquiring of me the particulars of Joseph’s getting the plates seeing the angels at first and many other thing which Joseph never wrote or published I have told over many things pertaining to these matters to different persons to gratify their curiosity indeed have almost destroyed my lungs giving these recitals to those who felt anxious to hear them I have now concluded to write down every particular as far as possible and if those who wish to read them will help me a little they can have it all in one piece to read at their leisure—

<https://www.josephsmithpapers.org/paper-summary/lucy-mack-smith-history-1844-1845/1>

The Breastplate and Spectacles and the Plates

“He kept these things **constantly** about his person”

Spectacles

“I have seen and felt also the Urim and Thummim.”

“Joseph termed a key, was indeed nothing more nor less than a Urim and Thummim”

“My son puts these over his eyes when he reads unknown languages”

“After I had examined it, Joseph placed it in the chest with the Urim and Thummim.”

“I can see anything; they are marvelous.”

Breastplate

“he handed me the breastplate spoken of in his history.”

“is made to fit the breast very exactly.”

“The whole plate was worth at least five hundred dollars”

Gold Plates

“I have myself seen and handled the golden plates”

“he put on his greatcoat”



Lucy Mack Smith

“The necessity of leaving the room to conceal my feelings Joseph saw this and followed me **Mother said he do not be uneasy all is right see here Said he I have got the key** I knew not what he meant but took the article in my hands and examined it with no covering but a silk handkerchief, found consisted of two smooth three-cornered diamonds set in glass, and the glasses were set in silver bows connected with each other in much the same way that old-fashioned spectacles are made. He took them again and left me but did not tell me anything of the record.... That of which I spoke, which Joseph termed a **key**, was indeed nothing more nor less than a **Urim and Thummim**.”

A snippet of handwritten text in cursive script, likely from a diary or letter. The text is written on aged, yellowed paper. It begins with "leaving the room to conceal my feelings" and continues with a detailed account of Joseph's discovery of the spectacles, including the words "found" and "both" written above the main text. The text ends with "(with no covering but a silk handkerchief)".

leaving the room to conceal my feelings.
Joseph saw this and followed me mother said
he do not be uneasy all is right see here said
he I have got the key I knew not what he
meant but took the article in my hands and
upon ~~the~~ examining it ^{found} that it consisted of 2 ^{both} sm
3 cornered diamonds set in glass and the glass was set in silver bows
(*with no covering but a silk handkerchief)

“He took them again and left me but did not tell me anything of the record. Soon after he came again and asked my advice what it was best to do about getting a chest made. I told him to go to a cabinet maker who had been making some furniture for my oldest daughter and tell the man we would pay him for making a chest as we did for the other things viz half money and half produce, he said he would but did not know where the money would come from for there was not a shilling in the house.”

Book of Mormon Central, critics of the Heartland Theory and of the use of the Urim and Thummim to translate, have some very strange rhetoric in my opinion

.Why Were the Plates Present During the Translation of the Book of Mormon? Post contributed by BMC Team September 21, 2017, KnoWhy #366

“People are sometimes surprised to discover that the plates of the Book of Mormon were not regularly used during the process of its translation. 1 While translating, Joseph Smith would typically place his face into a hat to block out ambient light. 2 He would then, according to witnesses, read aloud the words which miraculously appeared in a seer stone or in the interpreters, and a scribe would record them. 3 As for the plates themselves, Emma Smith reported that they “often lay on the table without any attempt at concealment, wrapped in a small linen tablecloth.” 4 Other witnesses recalled that on a few occasions they were kept “in a nearby box under the bed or even hidden in the Whitmer’s barn during translation.” 5 **This has caused some to wonder why the plates were necessary at all.** If Joseph Smith wasn’t actively consulting them during the translation, then why were they covered with a cloth and placed in some nearby and usually visible location? “*BMC*

President Ezra Taft Benson offered this advice, “Sometimes room behind the pulpit, in our classrooms, in our Council meetings and in our church publications we hear, read or witness things that do not square with the truth. . . . Now do not let this serve as an excuse for your own wrong-doing. The Lord is letting the wheat and the tares mature before he fully purges the Church. He is also testing you to see if you will be misled. The devil is trying to deceive the very elect.” *Ezra Taft Benson, “Our Immediate Responsibility” (BYU Devotional, Provo, October 25, 1996), https://speeches.byu.edu/talks/ezra-taft-benson_immediateresponsibility.*

In this case I believe some of the historians and scholars are being deceived. The Brethren have hired them and trusted them, and in some cases I believe they have given the Brethren the wrong advice. Also, Book of Mormon Central, FairMormon, The Interpreter, Meridian Magazine and others claim they are neutral like the church says when it comes to geography, but I believe they are not neutral but one-sided towards Mesoamerica. I am not neutral as I believe geography of the Book of Mormon occurred in the USA and the Heartland, but I don’t pretend I am neutral like many of the apologists. I also believe the Prophet Joseph never used a seer stone to translate. Why didn’t the Lord put the silly seer stone in with the gold plates? Because the Lord gave Joseph the Spectacles and the breastplate to properly translate.

“The plates often lay on the table without any attempt at concealment, wrapped in a small linen tablecloth, which I had given him [Joseph Smith, Jr.] to fold them in. I once felt of the plates, as they thus lay on the table, tracing their outline and shape. They seemed to be pliable like thick paper and would rustle with a metallic sound when the edges were moved by the thumb, as one does sometimes thumb the edges of a book. . . . I did not attempt to handle the plates, other than I have told you, nor uncover them to look at them. I was satisfied that it was the work of God, and therefore did not feel it to be necessary to do so. . . . I moved them from place to place on the table, as it was necessary in doing my work.” (The Saints’ Herald, 1 Oct. 1879, p. 290; spelling modernized.)



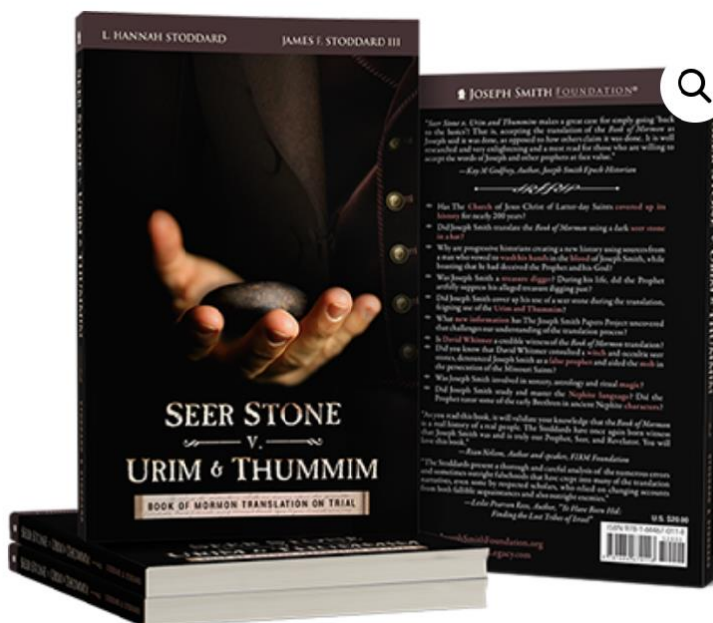
Alvin’s Box to store plates, spectacles and breastplate.



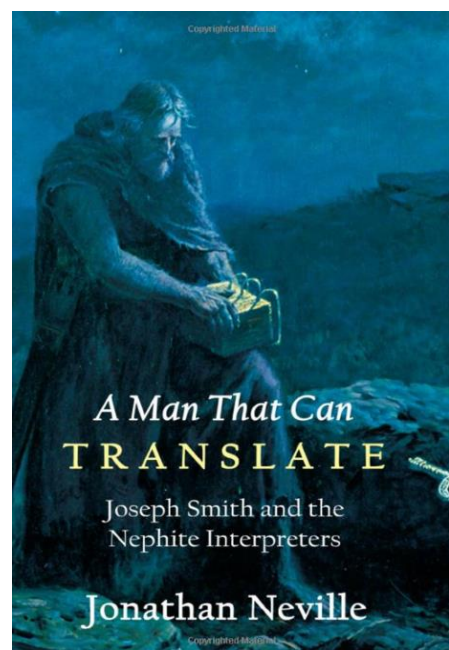
My inciteful friend LR, in regard to the spectacles said,

"The thought came into my mind that I should think of them as having qualities somewhat like a computer. Perhaps after looking at a section, the "stones" in the device retained large portions of the writing at a time, and it was these retained characters that Joseph had to "study out in his mind" to be able to translate them into English. This would have allowed the plates to be covered for periods of time to keep them from the view of others, and also the Urim and Thummim to be kept from view when someone was present. Remember, these sacred "stones" were prepared by God Himself-to whom our modern computers would be very elementary. After all, Joseph could see visions in them. He saw the coming of David Whitmer. He received revelations- as those recorded in the Doctrine and Covenants. Those stones prepared by God himself, had, I now believe, far more ability than the instantaneous translator I sometimes envisioned.

Two Fantastic Books Purchase at [bookofmormonevidence.org /bookstore](http://bookofmormonevidence.org/bookstore)



By James and Hannah Stoddard



By Jonathan Neville

Was the Urim and Thummim Ever Returned?



During this period Joseph made a short visit to his parents in Manchester, New York, and then returned again to Pennsylvania. "Immediately after my return home," he recounted, "I was walking out a little distance, when, behold, the former heavenly messenger appeared and handed to me the Urim and Thummim again for it had been taken from me in consequence of my having wearied the Lord in asking for the privilege of letting Martin Harris take the writings, which he lost by transgression and I inquired of the Lord through it, and obtained the following [section 3]" (*Smith, History of the Church, 1:21-22*).

Urim and Thummim Returned By Lucy Mack Smith

[Note: The essay doesn't explain what "lost the ability to translate" means, but Lucy Mack Smith explained that Joseph had to give up the Urim and Thummim after losing the 116 pages.

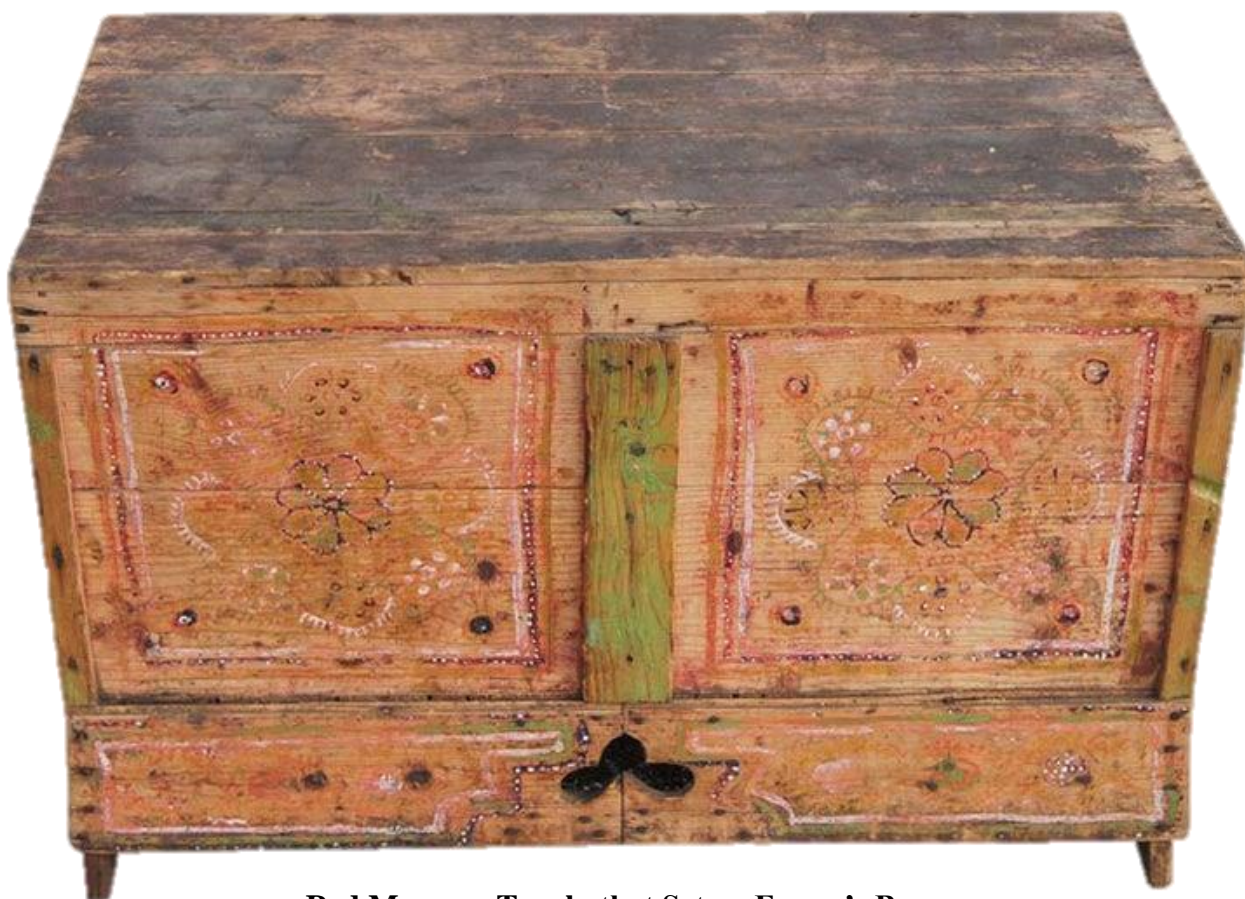
Later, Joseph told her that "on the 22d of September [1828], I had the joy and satisfaction of again receiving the Urim and Thummim; and have commenced translating again, and Emma writes for me; but the angel said that the Lord would send me a scribe, and I trust his promise will be verified. He also seemed pleased with me, when he gave me back the Urim and Thummim; and he told me that the Lord loved me, for my faithfulness and humility.

"Soon after I received them, I inquired of the Lord, and obtained the following revelation": "Now, behold I say unto you, that, because <you> delivered up those writings, which you had power given you to translate, by the means of the Urim and Thummim into the hands of a wicked man, you have lost them; and you also lost your gift at the same time, and your mind became darkened;"[11] [11] D&C 10:1-2; Lucy Mack Smith, History, 1845, online at <https://www.josephsmithpapers.org/paper-summary/lucy-mack-smith-history-1845/143>

RED MOROCCO TRUNK

When he met us, his countenance wore so pleasant an aspect, that I was convinced he had something agreeable to communicate, in relation to the work in which he was engaged. And when I entered his house the first thing that attracted [p. 135] **my attention was a red morocco trunk, that set on Emma’s bureau; which trunk Joseph shortly informed me, contained the Urim and Thummim and the plates.** In the evening he gave us the following relation of what had transpired since our separation: “After leaving you’ said Joseph, “I returned immediately home; and soon after my travel which, I commenced humbling myself in mighty prayer before the Lord; and, as I was pouring out my soul to God, that, if possible I might obtain mercy at his hands, and be forgiven of all that I had done contrary to his will, an angel stood before me and answered me, saying, that I had sinned in delivering the manuscript into the hands of a wicked man; and, and as I had ventured to become responsible for his faithfulness, I would of necessity have to suffer the consequences of his indiscretion; and must now give up the Urim and Thummim into his (the angels) hands. This I did as I was directed. As I handed them to him, he said, ‘If you are very humble and penitent, **it may be you will receive them again; if so, it will be on the 22d. of next September.**”[1828]

“After the angel left me’, said he, “I continued my supplications to God without cessation; and, **on the 22d of September, I had the joy and satisfaction of again receiving the Urim and Thummim; and have commenced translating again, and Emma writes for me;** but the angel said that the Lord would send me a scribe, and I trust his promise will be verified. The angel He also seemed pleased with me, when he gave me back the Urim and Thummim; and he told me that the Lord loved me, for my faithfulness and humility. *Lucy Mack Smith (Quote shared with me from my good friend Hannah Stoddard)*



Red Morocco Trunk, that Set on Emma’s Bureau

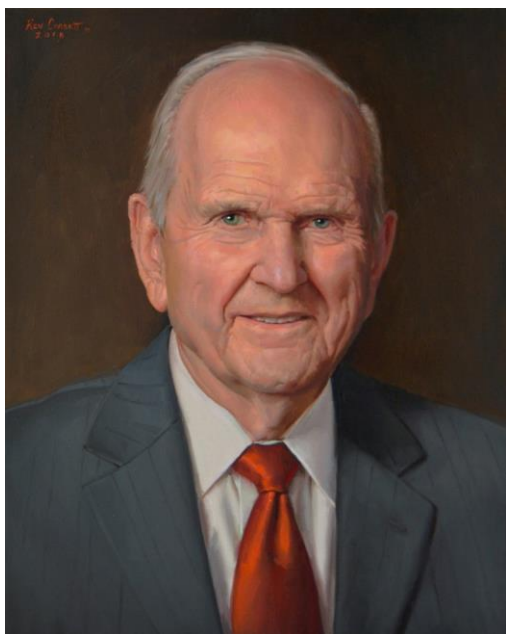
“THE DETAILS OF THIS MIRACULOUS METHOD OF TRANSLATION ARE STILL NOT FULLY KNOWN”

-Russell M. Nelson 1993, 2002 A Treasured Testament

I believe Joseph Smith used the Interpreters and by the power of the Lord translated the Book of Mormon. Even though I believe Joseph had a seer stone or two, I don't believe he used them to translate the plates. There are quotes from church leaders that say Joseph may have used various methods to translate including using a seer stone or the Urim and Thummim or both, and as it is said, if we pray with real intent, we can know the truth of all things. I just feel the Interpreters were prepared by the Lord during the time of the Brother of Jared and sealed up for Joseph to find with the plates. That's why I feel strongly that Joseph used the Interpreters (*spectacles attached to the breastplate*) to translate.

“Wherefore the Lord hath commanded me to write them; and I have written them. And he commanded me that I should seal them up; and he also hath commanded that I should seal up the interpretation thereof; wherefore I have sealed up the interpreters, according to the commandment of the Lord.” *Ether 4:5*

“A testimony of the Book of Mormon must of necessity embrace the understanding that it came as a “gift” of God, by the “power of God.” It is both the foundation upon which the modern Church is to rest and a miracle. To suppose that in its origin the Book of Mormon is less than a miracle is to attempt to build the house of one's understanding upon something other than the foundation upon which the Lord placed it. It is not expected that miracles be explained...



*President Russell M. Nelson
Art by Ken Corbett*

The testimony of David Whitmer simply does not accord with the divine pattern. If Joseph Smith translated everything that is now in the Book of Mormon without using the gold plates, we are left to wonder why the plates were necessary in the first place. It will be remembered that possession of the plates placed the Smith family in considerable danger, causing them a host of difficulties. If the plates were not part of the translation process, this would not have been the case. It also leaves us wondering why the Lord directed the writers of the Book of Mormon to make a duplicate record of the plates of Lehi. This provision which compensated for the loss of the 116 pages would have served no purpose either. Further, we would be left to wonder why it was necessary for Moroni to instruct Joseph each year for four years before he was entrusted with the plates. We would also wonder why it was so important for Moroni to show the plates to the three witnesses, including David Whitmer. And why did the Lord have the Prophet show the plates to the eight witnesses? Why all this flap and fuss if the Prophet didn't really have the plates and if they were not used in the process of translation? **What David Whitmer is asking us to believe is that the Lord had Moroni seal up the plates and the means by which they were to be translated hundreds of years before they would come into Joseph Smith's possession and then decided to have the Prophet use a seer stone found while digging a well so that none of these things would be necessary after all.** Is this, we would ask, really a credible explanation of the way the heavens operate?

When asked how the labor of translation was accomplished, the Prophet declined to answer, saying, “It was not intended to tell the world all the particulars of the coming forth of the book of Mormon” (Cannon and Cook, *Far West Record*, 23). Surely, we do not look to the world or the understanding of the world for an answer. **We would expect to find that understanding only as we come to understand in greater measure the operations of the Spirit of revelation.**” *The Process of Translating the Book of Mormon by Joseph Fielding McConkie (Professor of Ancient Scripture, BYU) and Craig J. Ostler (Assistant Professor of Church History and Doctrine, BYU)*

Joseph was not a money digger as some anti-Mormons like to say, and he was and is a Prophet of the Lord today. Much of the information about the translation process is written by people who didn't have the best of intentions towards Joseph. (David Whitmer, Martin Harris, Newspapers, Apostates etc.). The story of being a money digger and only using a seer stone was started by Eber D. Howe in his book called *Mormonism Unveiled* in 1834, and I surely don't take much stock in that anti-Mormon book.

What is your Opinion about a Demonstration vs a hidden breastplate and spectacles?

My good friend and associate Jonathan Neville believes it is possible that Joseph Smith showed many of the Whitmer's a demonstration of the stone in the hat. It is a very interesting possibility and in no way will I say if it is correct or not. In my opinion I have a question about Joseph showing a demonstration to appease their curiosity and I don't think that was necessary. I don't think Joseph was obligated to show anyone a sneak preview so to speak. As you read my idea about the breastplate under Joseph's shirt and the spectacles hidden with the hat as a prop only, I think it is a better possibility. As usual, you all can decide for yourself, and you can also contribute what you feel happened. None of us know for sure. Thanks for your consideration.

“True, there are plenty of accounts of the stone-in-a-hat process, but as I've pointed out, a careful reading of these accounts is consistent with a demonstration, not the actual translation of the plates...

To summarize, David was never a scribe; he could only have witnessed a demonstration, not the actual translation with the plates and Urim and Thummim. He didn't even see the plates until after the translation was complete and he became one of the Three Witnesses.

Martin Harris' statements are consistent with the demonstration explanation. He, too, never saw the plates or the interpreters until he became one of the Three Witnesses. If he knew those objects weren't even used for the translation, why would he have been so insistent on seeing them?

Emma's statement is not believable for several reasons that I'll discuss in part 3.” *Jonathan Neville*

<http://www.moronisamerica.com/peep-stones-vs-urim-and-thummim-part-2/>

Why I don't believe Joseph did a Demonstration

- He wouldn't allow the perception that his demonstration was the actual demonstration if it wasn't
- As he was told to not show the plates, or the Breastplate or the Spectacles, none of those in the demonstration saw any of that. Maybe they saw the rock and the hat, but that is it.
- I don't believe the Whitmer article from the Chicago Tribune that a blanket covered the front of the first story room so others could not see if they came to the door. Just how long did this demonstration last?
- The Chicago quote says that each time they would open with a prayer. How many times did they do the demonstration and how much time did the Whitmer's lose on their farm work?
- Why would Joseph have unauthorized scribes to actually write down some of Isaiah that he had memorized, and have it become part of the book of Mormon? How can we trust those scribes?
- Why would Joseph have to show the demonstration and have it include sacred writings that the others could hear?
- The demonstration says nothing about the breastplate. Where was it and didn't Joseph need it to translate every time.

William Smith, A Secondhand Witness

With these quotes below, I am assuming William Smith saw the Urim and Thummim and maybe even the translation process. He gives an amazing description of the entire process. Of course, we don't know about the authenticity, but I am intrigued by William being quoted as saying, “[Joseph] *always used it in connection with the breastplate when receiving official communications, and usually so when translating as it permitted him to have both hands free to hold the plates.*” *Tyrell Givens, By the Hand of Mormon*

William Smith's description: “**A silver bow ran over one stone, under the other, around [sic] over that one and under the first in the shape of a horizontal figure 8...**[T]hey were much too large for Joseph and he could only see through one at a time using sometimes one and sometimes the other.” These stones, he continued, “**were attached to the breastplate by a rod which was fastened at the outer shoulder edge of the breastplate and to the edge of the silver bow.**” (*Tyrell Givens, By the Hand of Mormon, p.22*)

Another account from William Smith: “Among other things we inquired minutely about the **Urim and Thummim and the breastplate**. We asked him what was meant by the expression “two rims of a bow,” which held the former. He said **a double silver bow was twisted into the shape of the figure eight, and the two stones were placed literally between the two rims of a bow. At one end was attached a rod which was connected with the outer edge of the right shoulder of the breast-plate. By pressing the head, a little forward, the rod held the Urim and Thummim before the eyes much like a pair of spectacles.** A pocket was prepared in the breastplate on the left side, immediately over the heart. When not in use the Urim and Thummim was placed in this pocket, the rod being of just the right length to allow it to be so deposited. This instrument could, however, be detached from the breastplate and his brother said Joseph often wore it detached when away from home, but **always used it in connection with the breastplate when receiving official communications, and usually so when translating as it permitted him to have both hands free to hold the plates.**” (*J. W. Peterson in The Rod of Iron I:3 (February 1924), 6–7.*)

“The Maxwell Institute rates Emma’s “Last Testimony” so highly that its Study Edition of the Book of Mormon places her testimony right after the testimony of the Three and Eight Witnesses—and before the Testimony of the Prophet Joseph Smith from JS-H.

I find this emphasis on Emma’s “Last Testimony” astonishing.

The revisionist historians accept this testimony without question, but when considered in its historical context, Emma’s “Last Testimony” has all kinds of problems that would ordinarily give historians pause. If not for bias confirmation (because her testimony supports their stone-in-a-hat theory), the revisionist historians would at least qualify their embrace of this testimony.

The interview with Emma was conducted in February 1877, a couple of months before she died. She never signed it. It was published six months after she died so she never saw it in print.

(You can see the original here: <http://www.mormonthink.com/files/emma-interview-1879.pdf>.)

Worse, the questions were prepared by RLDS leaders who were in an ongoing ecclesiastical battle with the LDS leadership in Utah. In a section of the interview that the Maxwell Institute and the Gospel Topics Essay omitted, Emma insists Joseph Smith never taught or practiced polygamy, never had another wife, and never received a revelation on polygamy. ..

The revisionist Church historians who embrace Emma’s “Last Testimony” for the stone-in-a-hat theory all reject the rest of her testimony that deals with polygamy. It’s a strange but unmistakable case of cherry picking.

It’s also important to recognize what Brigham Young said about Emma in the October 1866 General Conference. “To my certain knowledge, Emma Smith is one of the damnedest liars I know of on this earth; yet there is no good thing I would refuse to do for her, if she would only be a righteous woman; but she will continue in her wickedness.” See

<http://www.eldenwatson.net/1860s.htm#14>

In October 1863, Brigham Young commented on Joseph Smith III. “You have heard that Young Joseph Smith, the son of Joseph Smith the Prophet, has presented himself as the leader of the Latter-day Saints. I will take this for my text. In the first place I will say to the saints that I know more about Joseph Smith, the prophet of the last days, and his family, than all the apostates that ever did or ever will leave this church.... Joseph Smith that now is living in the state of Illinois, the son of Joseph the Prophet, will never lead the Latter-day Saints: he may lead apostates, and will lead them to hell.”

Brigham Young had a lot more to say about Emma and Joseph Smith III, but you get the idea from these quotations...

There are other reasons to doubt Emma’s “Last Testimony,” such as the absence of her handwriting on any extant portion of the Original Manuscript. True, she might have written part of the 116 pages, but she also claimed that Joseph used the Urim and Thummim to translate those pages, and only after they were lost did he use the seer stone.

If her testimony is accurate—if she wrote while Joseph read words off a stone-in-a-hat—then she could only have been writing after the 116 pages were lost. But then we would expect to see her handwriting somewhere on the Original Manuscript. (To be sure, the extant portion starts with Alma 22, a point I discuss below.)

We have to also wonder, if Emma was writing “day after day,” why did Joseph need Martin Harris or Oliver Cowdery to serve as scribes?

When we look at her “Last Testimony,” Emma is not even sure who baptized her, a normally memorable event that took place after the translation of the plates. When asked if Joseph forbid her from examining the plates, she replies “I do not think he did.” She says she felt of the plates and thumbed them, but “was not especially curious about them.” Although she moved them from place to place, she never uncovered them to look at them...” *Jonathan Neville*

Many have wondered what became of the golden plates following the translation and publication of the Book of Mormon. The plates were deposited in Cumorah's cave, *Cameron J. Packer* wrote in an article for [Journal of Book of Mormon Studies](#).

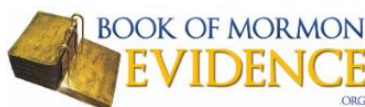
“When I was returning to Fayette, with Joseph and Oliver, all of us riding in the wagon. Oliver and I on an old-fashioned wooden spring seat and Joseph behind us — while traveling along in a clear open space, a very pleasant, nice-looking old man suddenly appeared by the side of the wagon and saluted us with, ‘Good morning, it is very warm,’ at the same time wiping his face or forehead with his hand. We returned the salutation, and, by a sign from Joseph, I invited him to ride if he was going our way; but he said very pleasantly, ‘No, I am going to Cumorah.’ This name was something new to me; I did not know what Cumorah meant. We all gazed at him and at each other, and as I looked around inquiringly of Joseph, the old man instantly disappeared, so that I did not see him again.” Whitmer described his appearance and added, **it was the messenger who had the plates [of the Book of Mormon], who had taken them from Joseph just prior to our starting from Harmony**” (Andrew Jensen, Historical Record, p. 209). *1950 Revised Edition of the Doctrine and Covenants Commentary page 508*

“When Joseph got the plates, the angel instructed him to carry them back to the hill Cumorah, which he did. Oliver says that when Joseph and Oliver went there, the hill opened, and they walked into a cave, in which there was a large and spacious room. He says he did not think, at the time, whether they had the light of the sun or artificial light; but that it was just as light as day. They laid the plates on a table; it was a large table that stood in the room. Under this table there was a pile of plates as much as two feet high, and **there were altogether in this room more plates than probably many wagon loads; they were piled up in the corners and along the walls.** The first time they went there the sword of Laban hung upon the wall; but when they went again it had been taken down and laid upon the table across the gold plates; it was unsheathed, and on it was written these words: ‘This sword will never be sheathed again until the kingdoms of this world become the kingdom of our God and his Christ. I take this liberty of referring to those things so that they will not be forgotten and lost. Carlos Smith was a young man of as much veracity as any young man we had, and he was a witness to these things. Samuel Smith saw some things, Hyrum saw a good many things, but Joseph was the leader.

Now, you may think I am unwise in publicly telling these things, thinking perhaps I should preserve them in my own breast; but such is not my mind. I would like the people called Latter-day Saints to understand some little things with regard to the workings and dealings of the Lord with his people here upon the earth. I could relate to you a great many more, all of which are familiar to many of our brethren and sisters.” *Brigham Young Journal of Discourses IXIX., p. 38).* *1950 Revised Edition of the Doctrine and Covenants Commentary page 47-48*

Summary of the actual Translation process only one or two scenarios are possible considering these key factors.

- 1- Plates and Interpreters not allowed to be seen by others unless the Lord authorizes. (Those known to see both articles are Joseph, Oliver, and Lucy Mack but only through the linen they were wrapped in. DC 5:3)
- 2- Most reports say Joseph sat on one end of a table and the scribe on the other facing one another.
- 3- It is never mentioned in the Book of Mormon that anything other than "The Interpreters" were used for translation.
- 4- There are 9 scriptural quotes that Joseph translated only using the Urim and Thummim
- 5- Joseph could not translate unless he was in tune with the Lord and had all the proper equipment about him.
- 6- The Translation was accomplished only "By the Gift and Power of God" which none of us can fully understand.
- 7- The three witnesses saw the plates as Moroni turned the pages in front of them
- 8- The eight witnesses saw Joseph hand the plates to each of them and each of the 8 handled and hefted the plates.



Joseph viewed the Plates, they weren't just a prop

The above statements are concise but bear eloquent testimony to divine aid. Joseph Smith evidently did not try to explain the complex process of inspired translation. At one point he felt that it was not wise “to tell the world all the particulars of the coming forth Of the Book of Mormon.” Yet some details and outlines emerge in his writings, one of which suggests his direct use of the plates. On occasion the Prophet spoke of the ancient script: “**I translated the Book of Mormon from hieroglyphics, the knowledge of which was lost to the world.**” Or he would comment that the plates “were filled with engravings in Egyptian characters.” **But the most detailed glimpse of the original is Joseph Smith’s report of the title page,** which was translated from the “very last leaf, on the left-hand side of the collection or book of plates ... the language of the whole running the same as all Hebrew writing in general.” Referring to a particular page while mentioning the right-left script throughout “the whole” **shows that the Prophet claimed knowledge of the plates themselves, not merely a vision of individual characters in the stone interpreters.** **Richard Lloyd Anderson**

<https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/study/ensign/1977/09/by-the-gift-and-power-of-god?lang=eng>

“He represented **Joseph as sitting at a table with the plates before him, translating them by means of the Urim and Thummim, while he (Oliver) sat beside him writing every word as Joseph spoke them to him.** This was done by holding the ‘translators’ over the hieroglyphics, the translation appearing distinctly on the instrument, which had been touched by the finger of God and dedicated and consecrated for the express purpose of translating languages. Every word was distinctly visible even to every letter; and if Oliver omitted a word or failed to spell a word correctly, the translation remained on the ‘interpreter’ until it was copied correctly.” *Richard Lloyd Anderson*

<https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/study/ensign/1977/09/by-the-gift-and-power-of-god?lang=eng>

I can see anything; they are marvelous (Joseph)

After breakfast [on the day he received the plates and the urim and thummim] Joseph [Smith] called me into the other room and he set his foot on the bed and leaned his head on his hand and says,... “it is ten times better than I expected.” Then he went on to tell the length and width and thickness of the plates, and said he, “they appear to be gold.” **But he seemed to think more of the glasses or the urim and thummim than he did of the plates,** for, says he, **“I can see anything; they are marvelous.”**

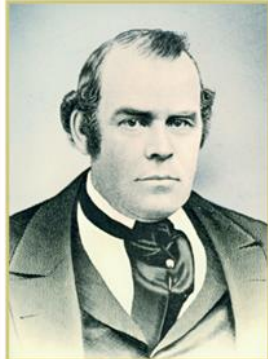
(“Joseph Knight’s Recollection of Early Mormon History,” BYU Studies, Vol. 17, No. 1; spelling modernized Joseph Knight’s Recollection of Early Mormon History Dean Jesse

By Elder Neal A. Maxwell Of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles

“With regard to the physical circumstances of the Prophet Joseph Smith and his scribe, Martin Harris was quoted as saying there was a blanket or curtain hung between himself and Joseph during the translation process. If Martin is accurately quoted, perhaps this occurred when the Prophet was copying characters directly from the plates in the sample to be taken to Professor Charles Anthon, since the dates mentioned are several months before Martin Harris’s brief scribal duties began. I say this because **although David Whitmer mentions a blanket being used—it was only to partition off the living area in order to keep both the translator and scribe from the eyes of visitors** (see *David Whitmer Interviews: A Restoration Witness*, ed. Lyndon W. Cook, [1991], 173). In fact, Elizabeth Anne Whitmer Cowdery, Oliver’s wife, said, “Joseph never had a curtain drawn between him and his scribe” (quoted in John W. Welch and Tim Rathbone, “The Translation of the Book of Mormon: Basic Historical Information,” F.A.R.M.S. report WRR–86, p. 25). Emma likewise said of her days as scribe, early on, that Joseph dictated “hour after hour with nothing between us” (“Last Testimony of Sister Emma,” 289). Of course, the real revelatory process involved Joseph’s mind and faith, which could not be seen by others in any case...
By Elder Neal A. Maxwell

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

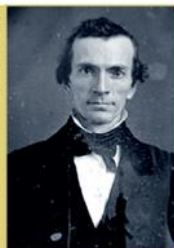
(Records of the Bureau of Indian Affairs. Photo by Alexander Gardner (1821–1882). Photo from National Archives, photo no. 75-ID-118A.)



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)

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*

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.”⁵⁶ 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.

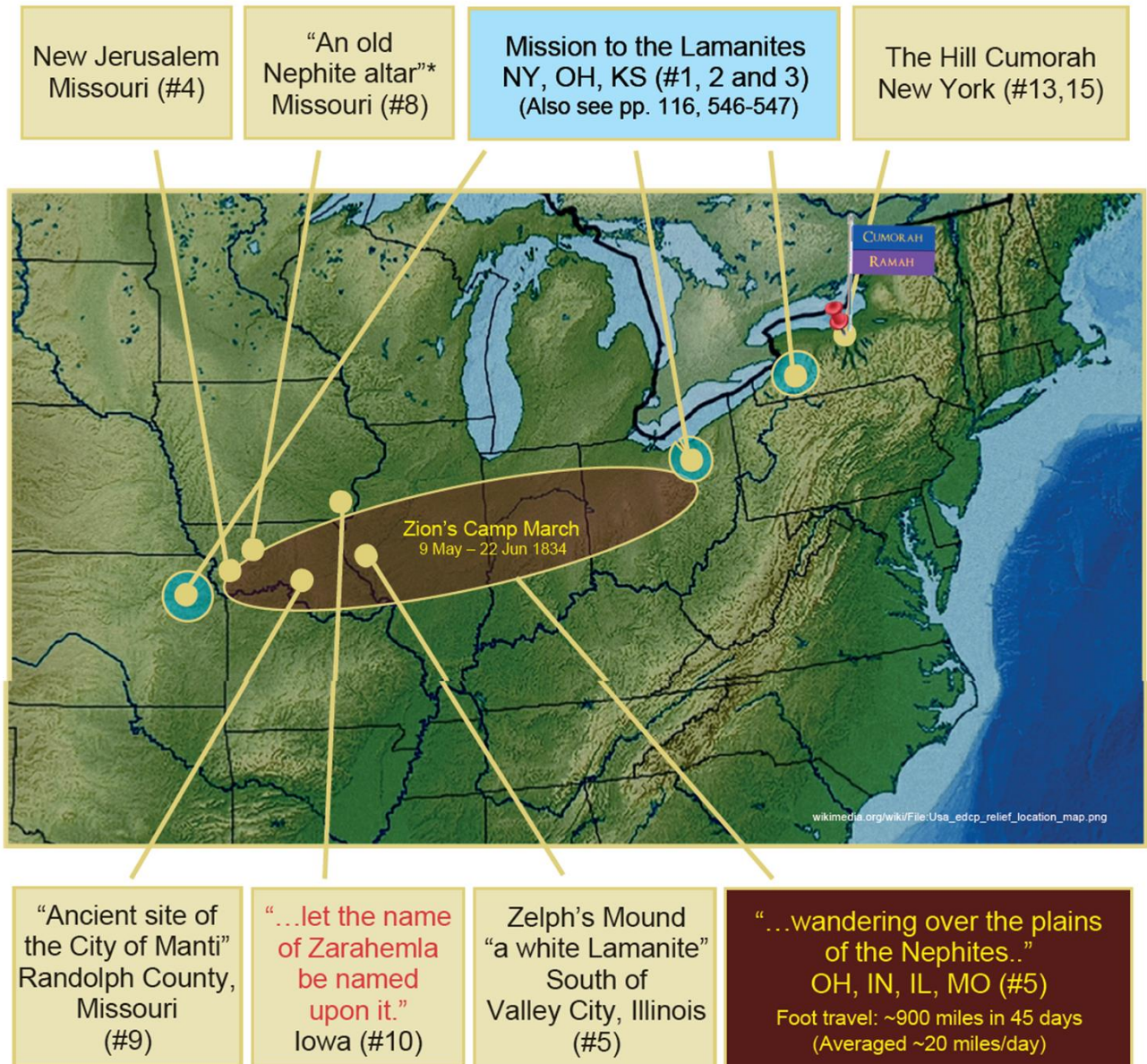
Following the loss of the 116 pages of manuscript, when the Lord requested something from Joseph, the Prophet began immediately to try to accomplish it. This mission to the Lamanites is an example of Joseph’s dedication to the requirements established by the Lord. It was 117 years later that the gospel 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.

*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.

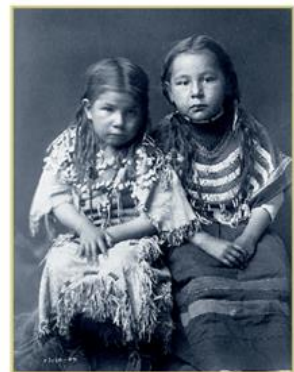
Through the medium of the Urim and Thummim I translated the record by the gift and power of God.

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, 79¹/₄ x 50³/₈ 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 "Prophecies and Promises*

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]

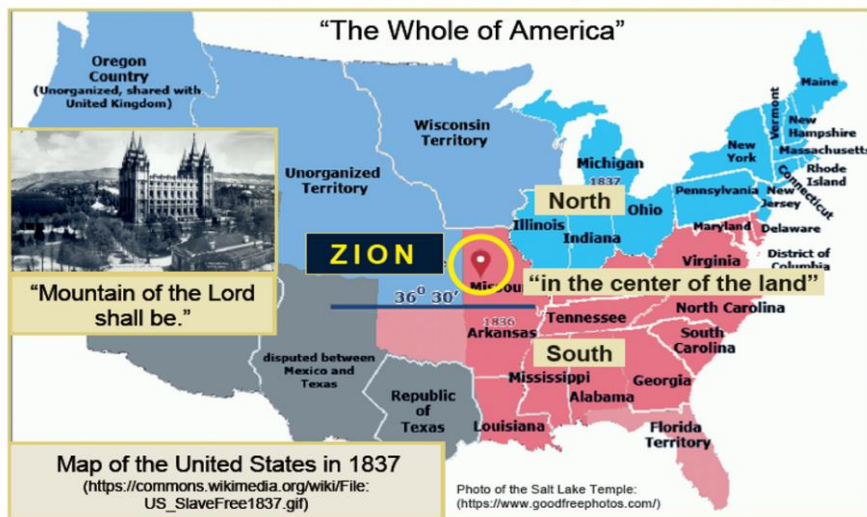
At three-quarters past 9 A.M., President Joseph Smith took his seat on the stand and requested the choir to sing a hymn. He called upon Elder Brigham Young to read 1st Corinthians, 15th chapter, as his own lungs were injured. Elder Brigham Young said—to continue the subject of President Smith's discourse 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 you're 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)

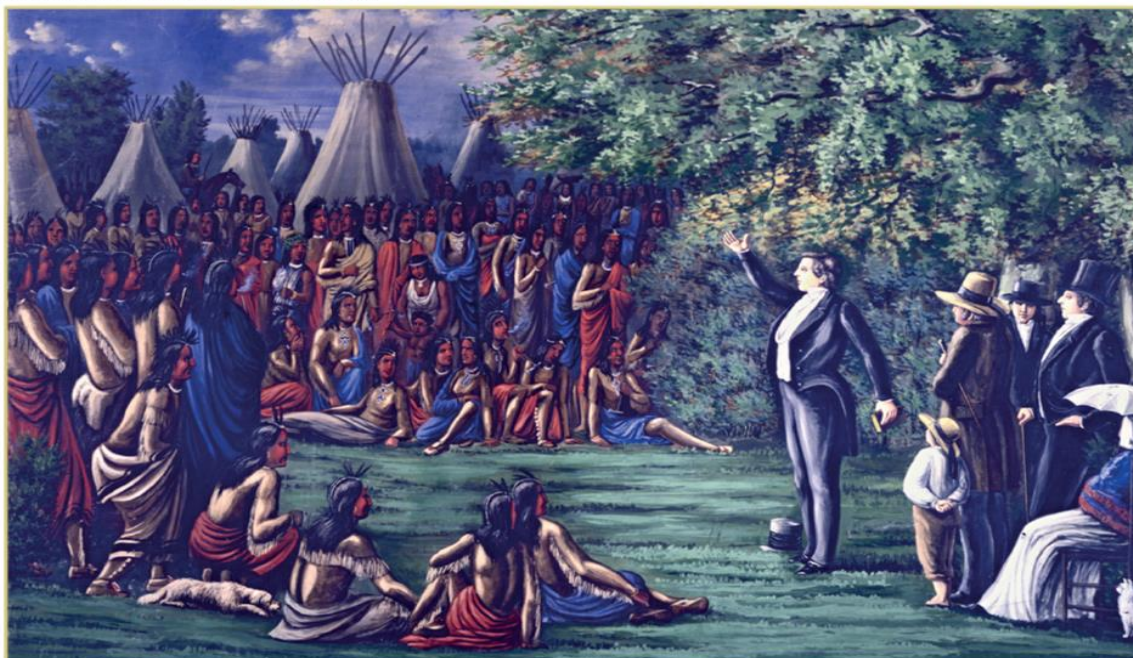
Joseph Smith Jr.

“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*

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 in Vision by Ken Corbett (Notice Altar & Zelph unburied near Valley City, Illinois)



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 principal 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.

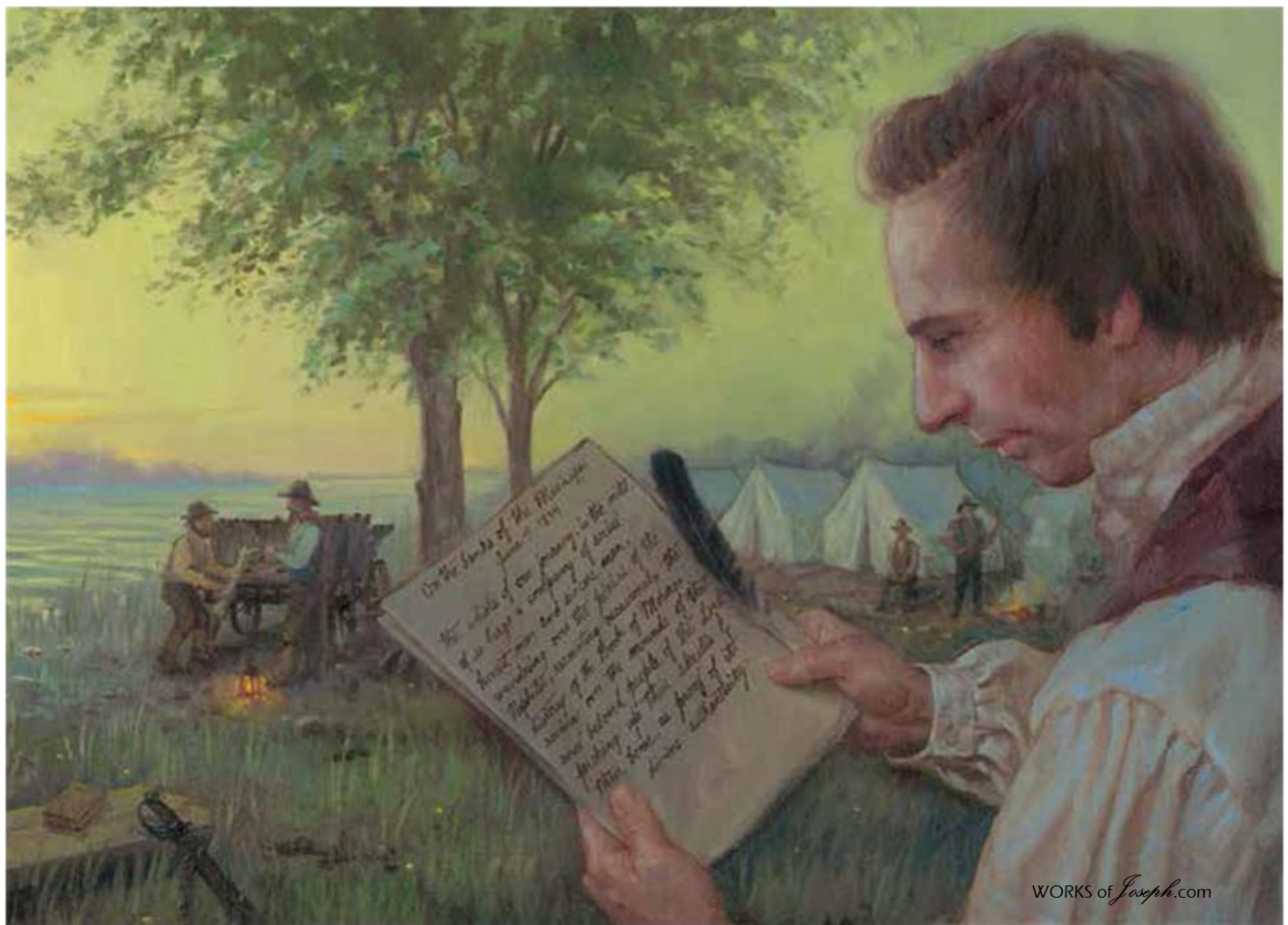
The Lord, through Joseph, could not have been any clearer that this very mound was within the boundaries of the Book of Mormon lands. Even though these statements cannot be reconciled with the accepted Mesoamerican LGT geography, they should not be cast away as frivolous statements. There are multiple 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."



“Wandering Over the Plains of the Nephites” by Ken Corbett (Notice the huge thigh bone of Zeph 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 Zeph 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 Zeph 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."

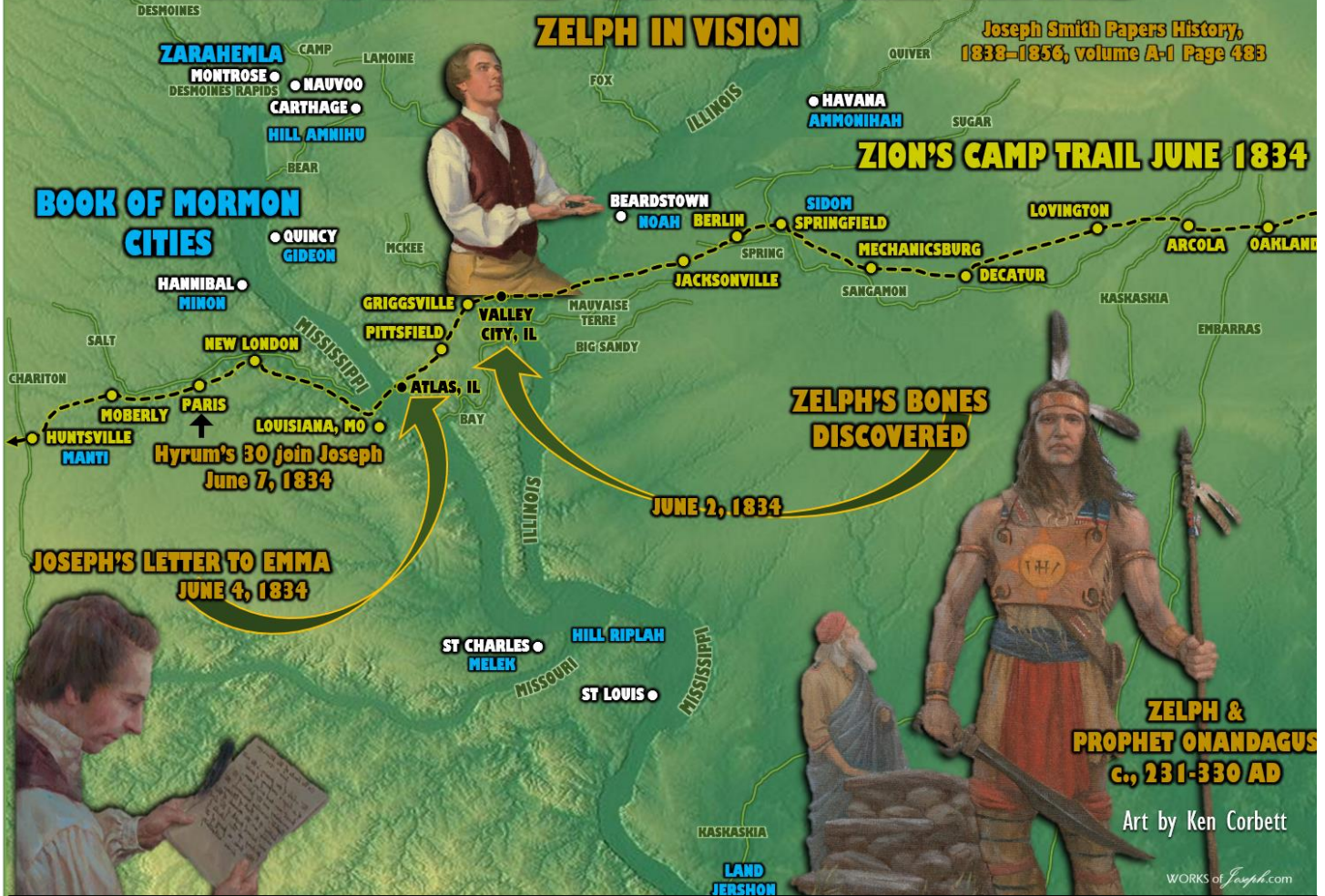
The following account of the same event is taken from the daily journal of the Kirtland Camp and was written by Samuel D. Tyler:

"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 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*

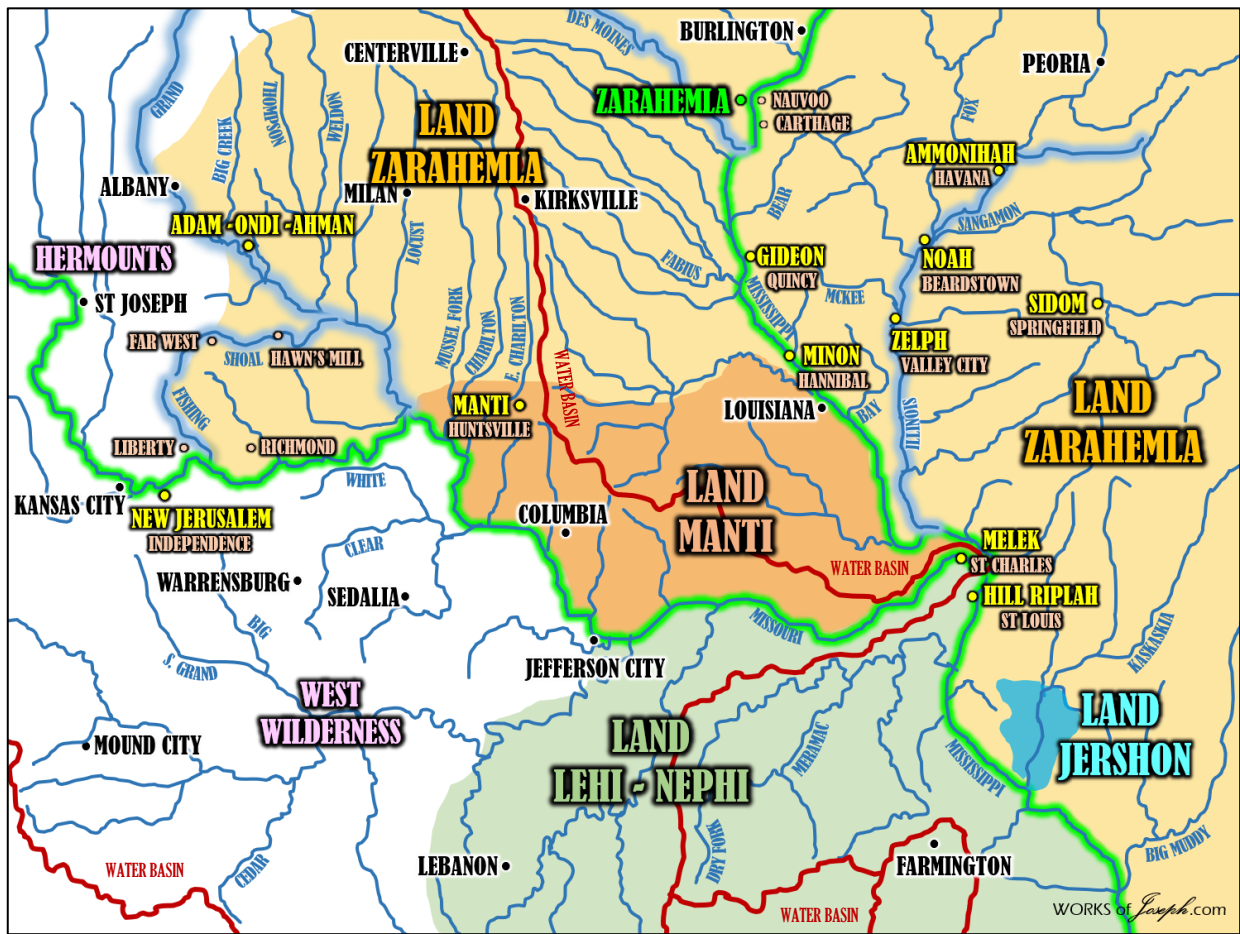
These verses imply that if a city existed previously and was acknowledged or named by the Lord and that should another city be built by the same name; it should be called “New” as in the case of Jerusalem. Thus, a city that is to be built named Jerusalem in a different place than the original city must 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 shallower, 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 Thomas Map on page

"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."

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?*

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

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 th Century	Near Lake Huron
HIAWATHA- Onondaga/Mohawk	12 th Century	Onondaga, NY
TADODAHO- Onondaga	12 th Century	Onondaga, NY
JIGONHSASEE- Haudenosaunee	12 th 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.

186	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			"
	Samoset	Wampansag			"
	Squanto	"			"
	Massasoit	"			"
	Canonicus	Manassett			"
	Be-can-ee-sera	Onondaga			"
	Ca-ra-gu-la	"			"
	Kan-ah-ye-a-gah	"			"
	Kan-as-ee-ta-go	"			"
	Qu-di-a-ga	"			"
	Con-ta-lan-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

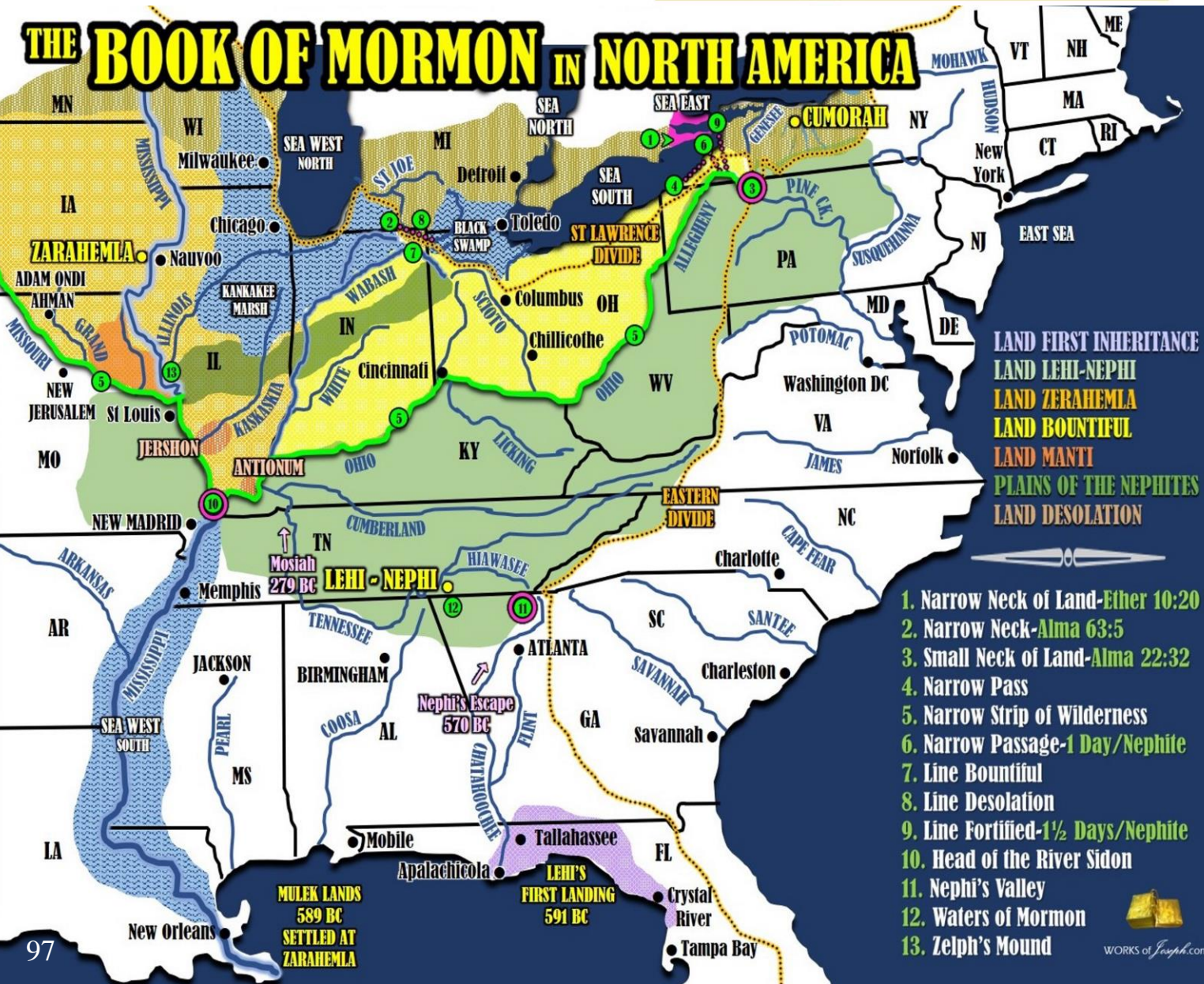
INTRODUCTION TO THE MAPS

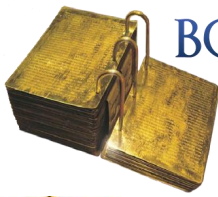
“Pin in the Map”

“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

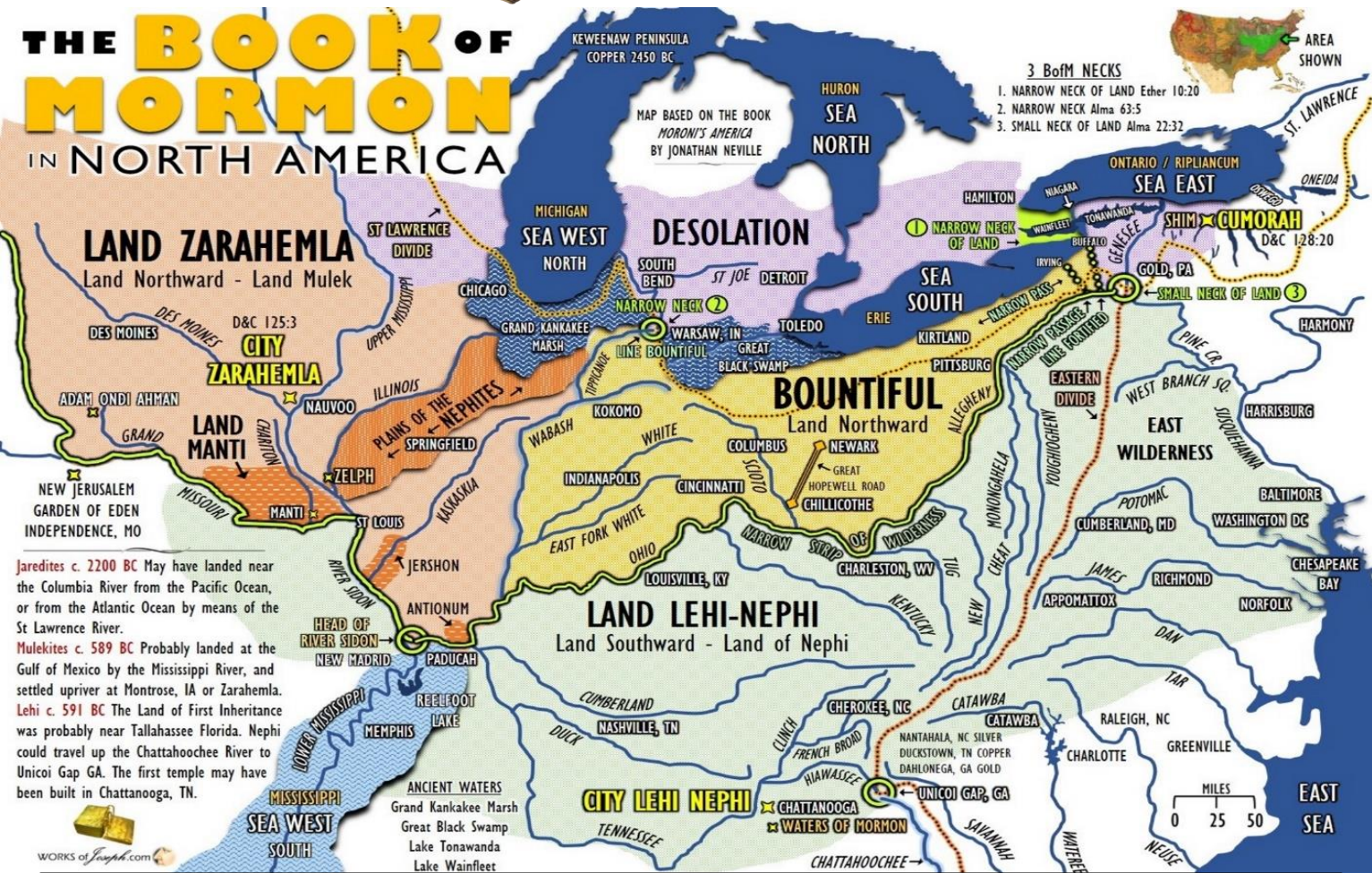




BOOK OF MORMON EVIDENCE

.ORG

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.](#))

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*

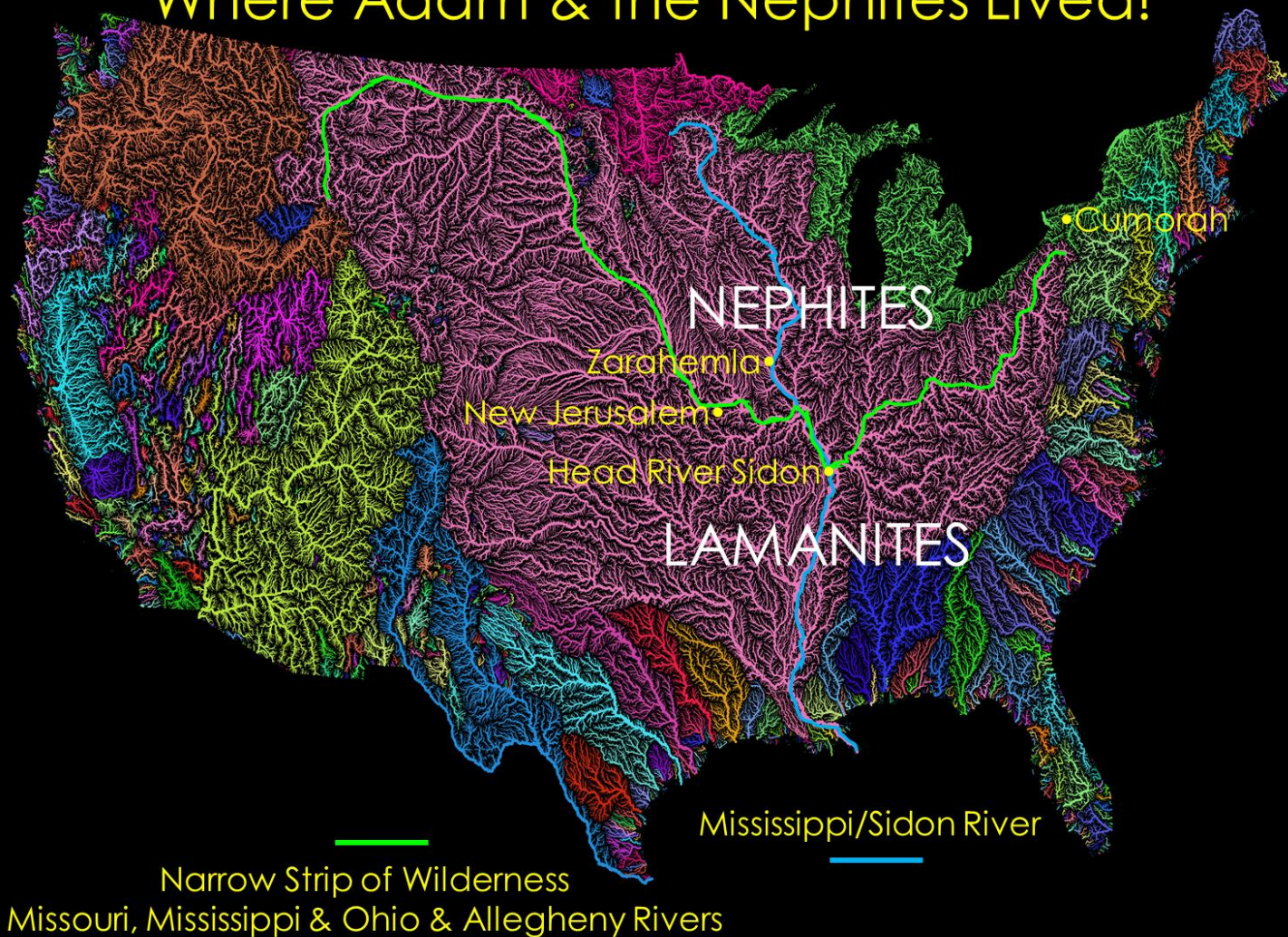
"Both the Nephite and Jaredite civilizations fought their final great wars of extinction at and near the Hill Cumorah (or Ramah as the Jaredites termed it), which hill is located between Palmyra and Manchester in the western part of the state of New York. It was here that Moroni hid up the gold plates 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 regard 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**

- 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

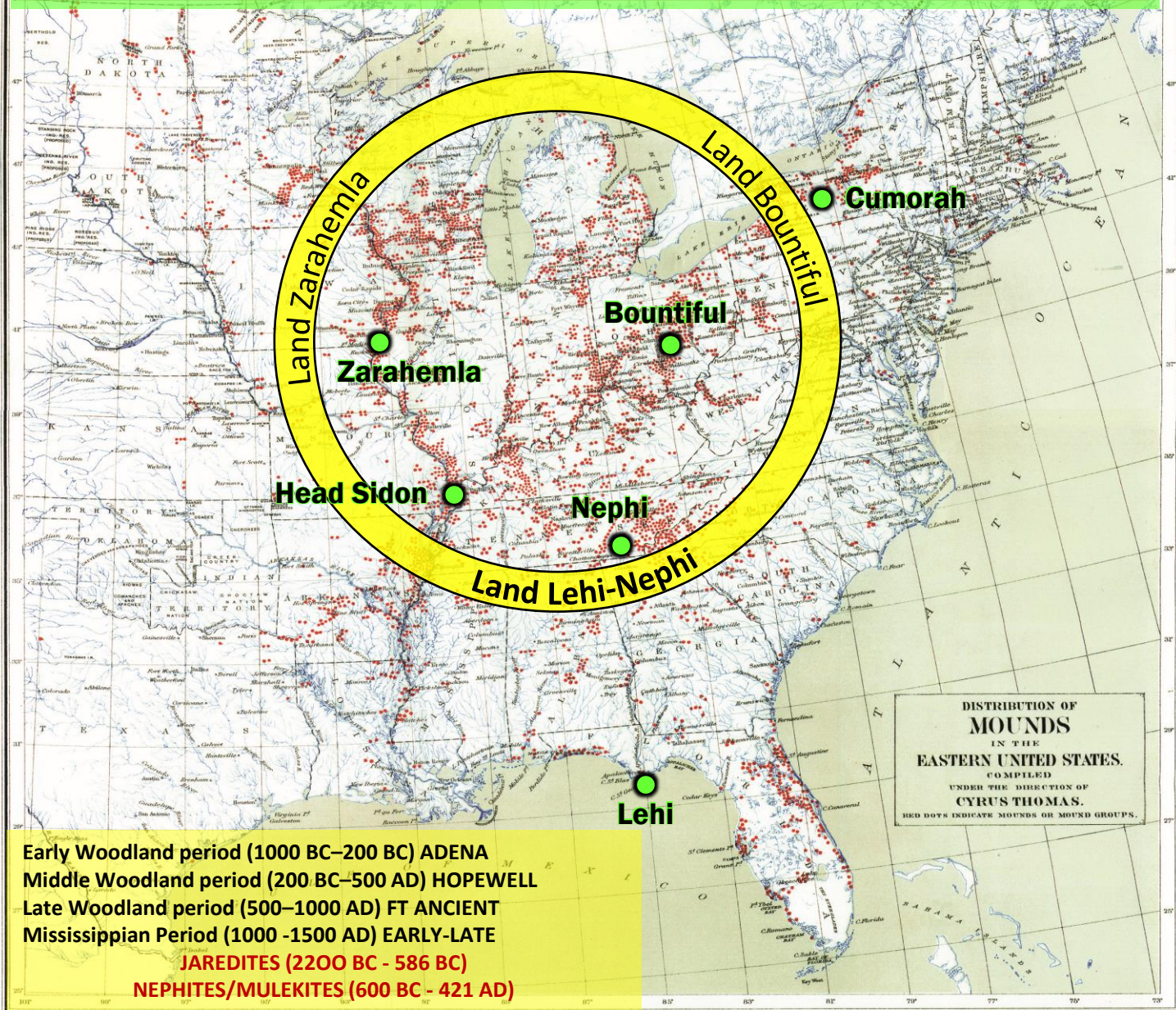
BUREAU OF ETHNOLOGY, 12TH ANNUAL REPORT, 1890-91

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].

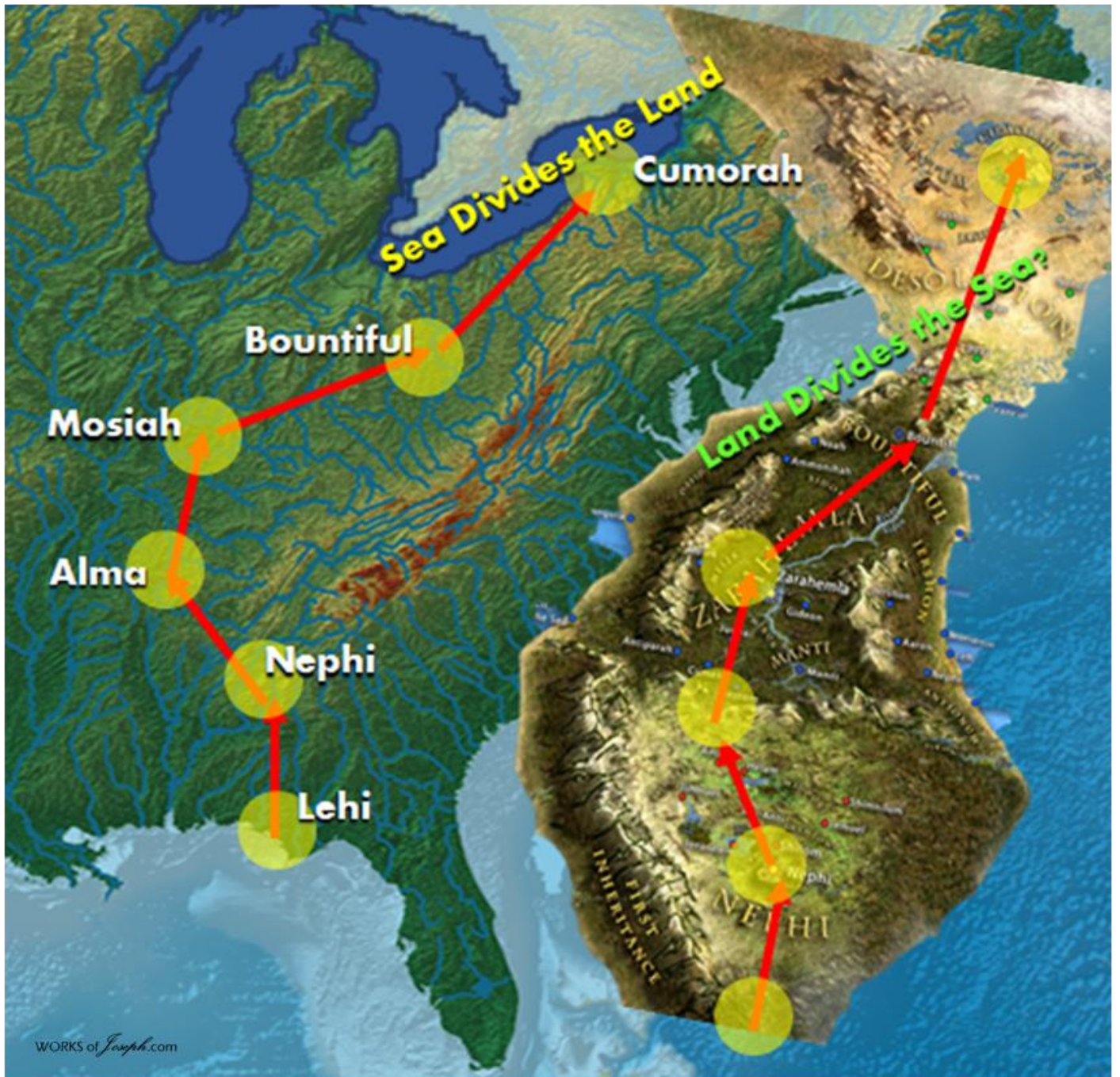


CYRUS THOMAS, 1894

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

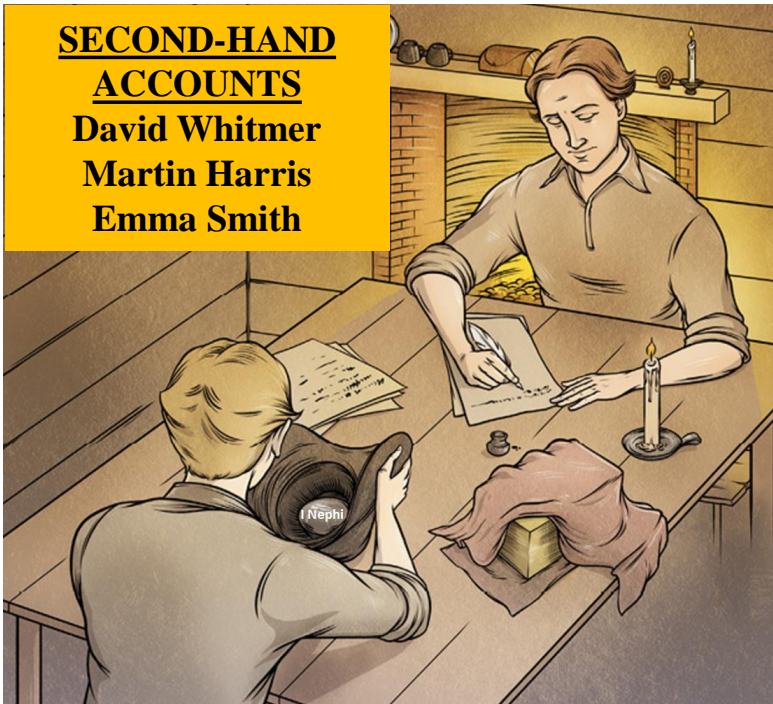
“With the records was found a curious instrument, which the ancients called “Urim and Thummim,” which consisted of two transparent stones set in the rims of a bow fastened to a breastplate. Through the medium of the Urim and Thummim I translated the record by the gift and power of God.” *Joseph Smith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

“...When...first commanded to testify of these things they [The Three Witness] demurred and told the Lord the people would not believe them for the book concerning which they were to bear record told of a people who were educated and refined, dwelling in large cities; whereas all that was then known of the early inhabitants of this country was the filthy, lazy, degraded and ignorant savages that were roaming over the land. The Lord told us, in reply that He would make it known to the people that the early inhabitants of this land had been just such a people as they were described in the book, and he would lead them to discover the ruins of great cities, and they should have abundant evidence of the truth of that which is written in the book...” – *David Whitmer, Interview with James H. Hart (Richmond, Mo., 21 August 1883), as printed in Deseret Evening News, Salt Lake City, Utah*

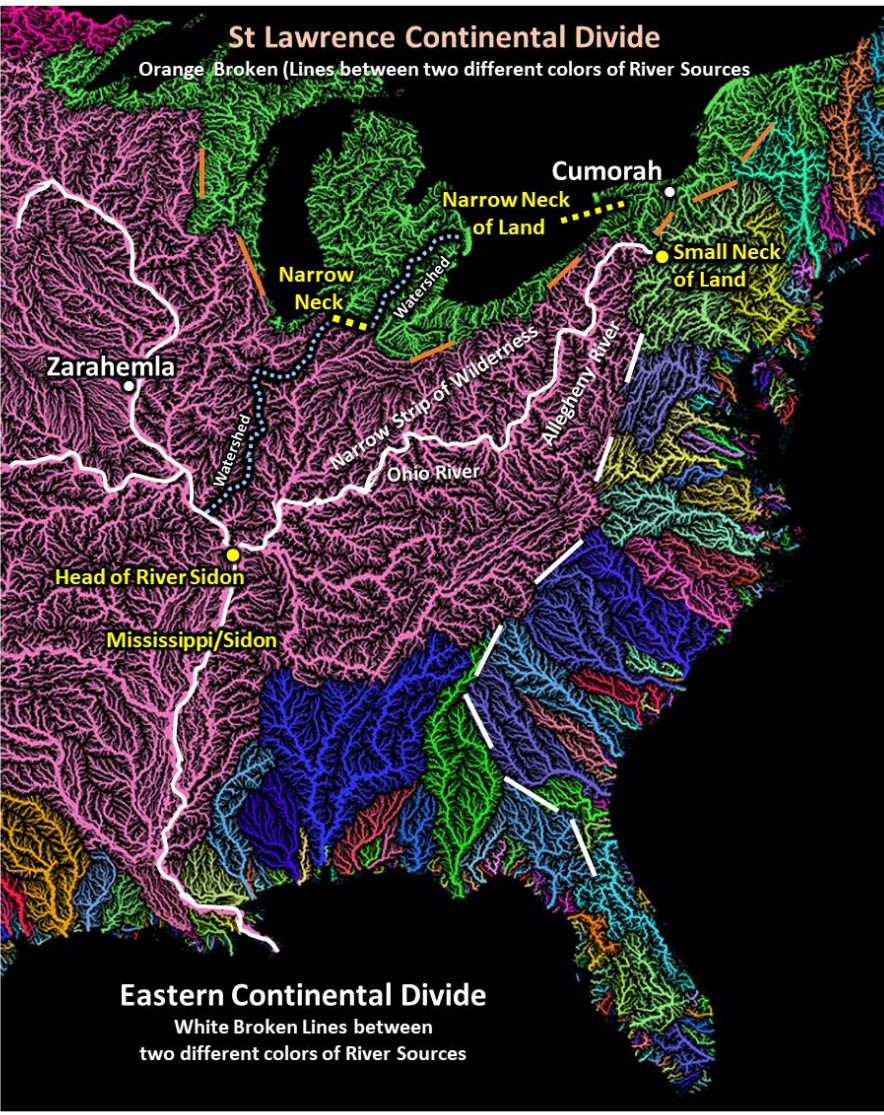
“THE LAMANITES. -- The work of the Lord among the Lamanites must not be postponed, if we desire to retain the approval of God. Thus far we have been content simply to baptize them and let them run wild again, but this must continue no longer; the same devoted effort the same care in instructing, the same organization of priesthood must be introduced and maintained among the house of Lehi as amongst those of Israel gathered from gentile nations, As yet, God has been doing all, and we comparatively nothing. He has led many of them to us, and they have been baptized, and now we must instruct them further, and organize them into churches with proper presidencies, attach them to our stakes, organizations, etc. In one word, treat them exactly, in these respects, as we would and do treat our white brethren.” -- *MS, 44:733: a letter from Salt Lake City dated October 18, 1882. The Gospel Kingdom: Selections from the Writings and Discourses of John Taylor page 224*

The Small Neck of Land ◉

Triple Divide – 3 River Sources

- Susquehanna Flows to the Atlantic
- Allegheny/Ohio Flows to the Gulf of Mexico
- Genesee Flows to the Gulf of St Lawrence

“... I propose that the narrow strip of wilderness is a major river—or system of rivers—that serves as an effective border. Here is my rationale. First, Moroni tells us it is a border. The “narrow strip” element suggests a feature that is visible and obvious to people on the ground; i.e., narrow enough that observers can see how wide it is, and long and thin enough that it is not mistakable. It is a definite border, not a vague region. Second, the definitions of the terms offer similar connotations. Narrow suggests a vale, valley, or river bed. Strip suggests something that is long and thin—like a river... In the past, however—in Book of Mormon times—the Ohio River often dried up in late summer. This left the riverbed as an expanse of silt and mud. In that state, it could not be called a river. But it could still be a border, and it could still be called a narrow strip of wilderness.” Jonathan Neville Moroni’s America page 23, 51-5 (See page 6 for detailed descriptions of each item on the map to the left)



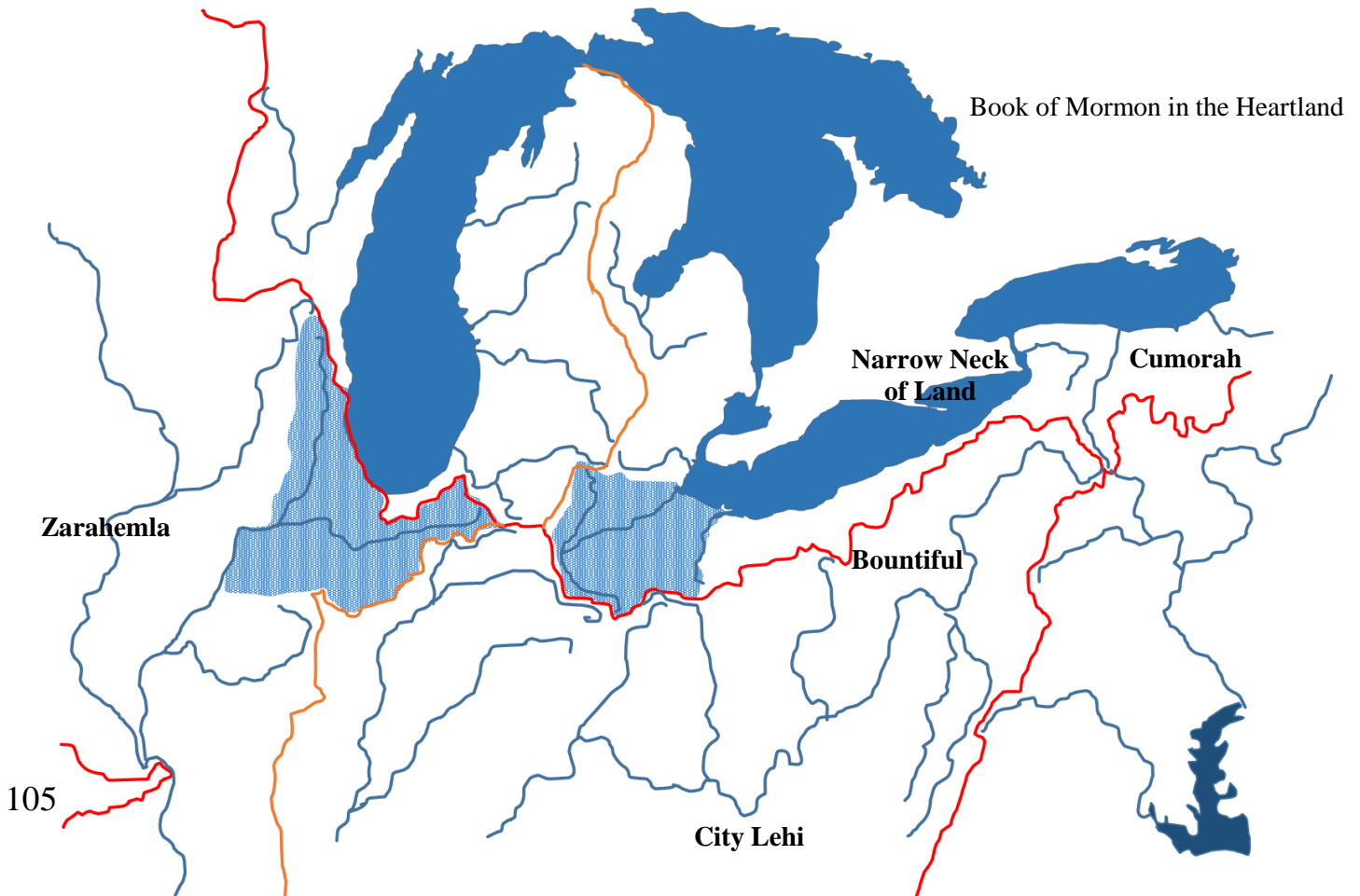
Find Your Geography

I think there is importance in the Brethren being neutral on Geography, Evolution and other difficult issues. They want us to gain our own witness to secondary information. They have given us sound doctrine and that is what we should focus on. I know through the Spirit that the Book of Mormon is true. However, I love to seek for other truth and as Moroni has said "I may know the truth of all things".

I believe the Land of Promise spoken of in the Book of Mormon is the United States of America. The Constitution was created by the Lord, that Adam and Eve were placed on this same land and the New Jerusalem will be on this same land. No need for me to check out Mesoamerica anymore as I did for 40 years. Just like Evolution. I don't believe we came from an ape, and I know that matter cannot come from nothing. I don't have to look into science to figure this out, but by the witness of what the scriptures tell us.

I don't expect Pres Nelson to come right out and tell me where the Book of Mormon events happened or if we came from an ape, I know through sound reasoning the answer that makes most sense to me. Now if the Brethren say otherwise, I will always listen to them first, but in my opinion the Church is neutral on difficult issues that exist to help each of us individually come to a knowledge of the "truth of all things" as promised in the Book of Mormon. I don't need to be commanded in all things!

The Book of Mormon reveals that the inheritance of Joseph, son of Israel, was not forgotten when, as promised in the Abrahamic covenant, land was distributed to the tribes of Israel. Joseph's inheritance was to be a land choice above all others. (See Ether 13:2, 8.) It was choice not because of beauty or wealth of natural resources, but choice because it was chosen. It was to be the repository of sacred writing on plates of gold from which the Book of Mormon would one day come, choice because it would eventually host world headquarters of the restored church of Jesus Christ in the latter days." A TREASURED TESTAMENT By Elder Russell M. Nelson Of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles



Choose your method of translation

Daily Blog Here
bofm.blog



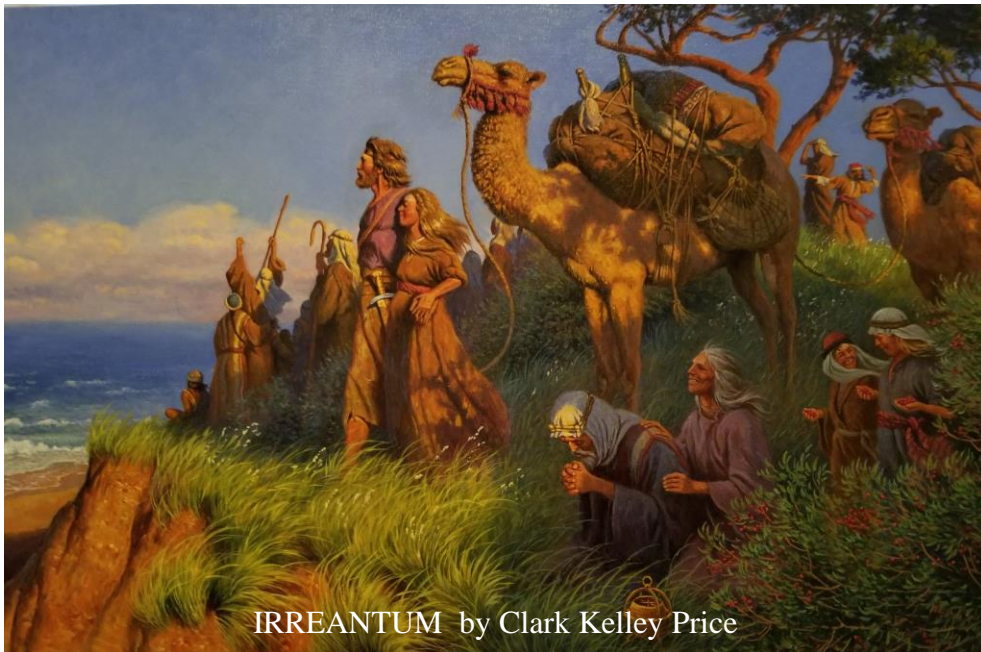
Why do Intellectuals conflate when Joseph Smith does or does not have a revelation?

“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.” *Rod Meldrum Prophecies and Promises*

“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)” *Note 54 by Rod Meldrum Prophecies and Promises*

Latter-day Saint Thomas Stuart Ferguson was the founder of BYU’s archaeology division (New World Archaeological Foundation). NWAFA was financed by the LDS Church. NWAFA and Ferguson were tasked by BYU and the Church in the 1950s and 1960s to find archaeological evidence to support the Book of Mormon. After 17 years of diligent effort, this is what Ferguson wrote in a February 20, 1976, letter about trying to dig up evidence for the Book of Mormon: “...you can’t set Book of Mormon geography down anywhere – because it is fictional and will never meet the requirements of the dirt-archaeology. I should say — what is in the ground will never conform to what is in the book.” <https://www.bookofmormoncentralamerica.com/2021/09/fair-lds-again-and-skousen-on-witnesses.html>

"In recent years there has been a tendency among certain students of the Book of Mormon to orientate Book of Mormon cultures far to the south.... These students think it unlikely that the Jaredites or Nephites were in North America, and that they surely did not push northward as far as New York State... Most students who accept this theory do not consider the Hill Cumorah in western New York as the hill where the gold plates were originally deposited, nor the area immediately south of the Great Lakes as the site of the Jaredite and Nephite battlefields. This theory leads to the assumption that... The hill where they [the plates] were finally concealed was named Cumorah in honor of the original hill far to the south where they were first deposited.... The following pages are a plea in defense of the old theory--the interpretation of Joseph Smith, Oliver Cowdery, Orson Pratt, and a countless number of the Authorities of the Church..." *Book of Mormon Geography in Search of Cumorah-Ramah by Willard Bean & Cecil McGavin*



THE BOOK OF MORMON IN NORTH AMERICA - QUOTES FROM APOSTLES AND PROPHETS - ONE CUMORAH

1. "...Here, 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 of his people, 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." [*Oliver Cowdery's Letter VII Joseph Smith Papers "Letter VII," LDS Messenger and Advocate, July 1835, 1:155–159.*](#)

2. "And again, what do we hear? Glad tidings from Cumorah! Moroni, an angel from heaven, declaring the fulfillment of the prophets—the book to be revealed. A voice of the Lord in the wilderness of Fayette, Seneca county, declaring the three witnesses to bear record of the book! The voice of Michael on the banks of the Susquehanna, detecting the devil when he appeared as an angel of light! The voice of Peter, James, and John in the wilderness between Harmony, Susquehanna county, and Colesville, Broome county, on the Susquehanna river, declaring themselves as possessing the keys of the kingdom, and of the dispensation of the fulness of times!" [*D&C 128:20*](#)

3. "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... During our travels we visited several of the mounds which had been thrown up by the ancient inhabitants of this country—Nephites, Lamanites, etc." [*Joseph Smith Papers Letter to Emma Smith, 4 June 1834 Page 56*](#)

4. "I do not believe that the classrooms or the pulpits of our Church are for laboratory purposes in which to experiment with new doctrines and speculative notions. They are exclusively for the use of those who are willing to convert men and women and boys and girls to the truth. . . . I do not believe we should give credence to the highly speculative theories about Book of Mormon geography. 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. I do not believe we can be good Latter-day Saints and question the integrity of Joseph Smith. I do not believe we can be good Latter-day Saints and question the testimony of the eleven witnesses of the Book of Mormon. I do not believe you have a testimony of the truth if you question the accuracy of the translation of the Book of Mormon." [*Mark E. Petersen LDS Conference Reports, Sunday afternoon, April 5, 1953*](#)

5. "...This modernistic theory of necessity, in order to be consistent, must place the waters of Ripliancum and the Hill Cumorah some place within the restricted territory of Central America, notwithstanding the teachings of the Church to the contrary for upwards of 100 years. Because of this theory some members of the Church have become confused and greatly disturbed in their faith in the Book of Mormon. It is for this reason that evidence is here presented to show that it is not only possible that these places could be located as the Church has held during the past century, but that in very deed such is the case... It is known that the Hill Cumorah where the Nephites were destroyed is the hill where the Jaredites were also destroyed. (Continued)

This hill was known to the Jaredites as Ramah. It was approximately near to the waters of Ripliancum, which the Book of Ether says, "by interpretation, is large, or to exceed all...It must be conceded that this description fits perfectly the land of Cumorah in New York, as it has been known since the visitation of Moroni to the Prophet Joseph Smith, for the hill is in the proximity of the Great Lakes and also in the land of many rivers and fountains. Moreover, the Prophet Joseph Smith himself is on record, definitely declaring the present hill called Cumorah to be the exact hill spoken of in the Book of Mormon. Further, the fact that all of his associates from the beginning down have spoken of it as the identical hill where Mormon and Moroni hid the records, must carry some weight. It is difficult for a reasonable person to believe that such men as Oliver Cowdery, Brigham Young, Parley P. Pratt, Orson Pratt, David Whitmer, and many others, could speak frequently of the Spot where the Prophet Joseph Smith obtained the plates as the Hill Cumorah, and not be corrected by the Prophet, if that were not the fact. That they did speak of this hill in the days of the Prophet in this definite manner is an established record of history." [*Doctrines of Salvation Joseph F. Smith Chap.12*](#)

6. "On the 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. 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 contemplation of the scenery around us produced peculiar sensations in our bosoms; and subsequently 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. The curse was taken from Zelph, or, at least, in part-one of his thigh bones was broken by a stone flung from a sling, while in battle, years before his death. He was killed in battle by the arrow found among his ribs, during the last great struggle of the Lamanites and Nephites." [*Joseph Smith Papers History, 1838–1856, volume A-1 \[23 December 1805–30 August 1834\], Page 483*](#)

7. "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*](#)

8. "Here it was that Moroni, commanded by the Lord, hid up the sacred records of his people. Here it was, 1,400 years later, that he, then a resurrected being, came to Joseph Smith and committed these same records to the young man's care. At the time of the Prophet's first visit to the hill, it was covered with trees; today (1923) it is stripped and bare, save for the grass which grows abundantly. This former scene of strife and bloodshed, where two nations perished, later the sacred repository of ancient records, today is the abode of peaceful cattle, reclining and chewing the cud. The many millions of inhabitants of the land, who, because they love darkness rather than light, will not believe, and although an angel has declared it unto them, they appear to have no more thought concerning the wonderful events that have taken place near and on the Hill Cumorah, than have these cattle." [*Joseph F. Smith Rel. Soc. Mag., vol. 10, pp. 586-587.*](#)

9. 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*](#)

Haplogroup X has been found in Modern Native North American Tribes

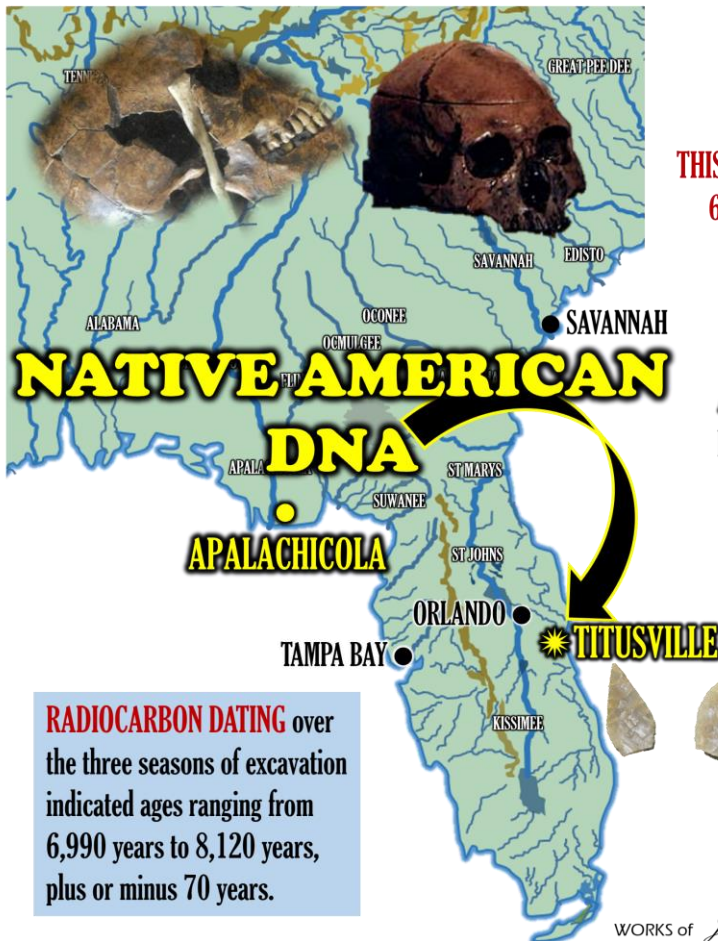
"Now that haplogroup X has been found in specific modern Native North American tribes, it must be determined from which civilizations or cultures in antiquity they descend. There are three key cultures of antiquity found within the North American continent and they are centered in the river valleys of the Mississippi, the Ohio, and the Great Lakes regions.

These cultural periods associated with these civilizations are designated as Early Woodland, Middle Woodland, and Late Woodland. Each period is represented by the Adena, Hopewell, and Mississippian cultures respectively. These civilizations and their accepted cultural periods correspond closely with those detailed in the Book of Mormon.

The oldest or Early Woodland "cultural high" period dates from 1200 BC to about 100 BC. This Adena culture corresponds well with the Jaredite timeline and lies within the proximity of the Hill Cumorah in New York, USA. This same hill was named by the Jaredites as the 169 hill Ramah, which Moroni states was one and the same (Ether 15:11). The sphere of influence of this culture ranged from the Ohio River valley to the East Coast, with settlements found in Virginia, Kentucky, Pennsylvania and New York. The Adena culture ceases to exist at the same time as outlined for the Jaredites in the Book of Mormon as the people of Zarahemla find the last survivor Coriantumr (Omni 1:21, about 130 BC).

The time period for the descendants of Lehi in the Book of Mormon falls between 600 BC and 400 AD. This might not be considered the classical period of the scriptural text, as the expansion of the culture developed from a small group. About 200 BC the Nephite and Mulekite cultures unite, creating a mass expansion of the building of cities and even their religion. These two cultures, even though consisting of different languages, become one culture and one language at this time (Omni 1:14-19).

The ancient Native American culture that corresponds with the timeline of the Lehites is the Middle Woodland or what is known as the Hopewell culture. The classical period of the Hopewell ranges from 300 BC to 400 AD. This civilization was highly advanced, with knowledge of astronomy, metallurgy, construction of large cities, and crop production. They built massive geometric earthworks oriented toward astronomical alignments that are the largest on earth." Prophecies and Promise Chapter 13 page 169



WINDOVER ARCHAEOLOGY SITE BREVARD COUNTY, FL

THIS WAS ONE OF THE MOST INTACT CEMETERIES OF 6,000 B.C. THAT HAD EVER BEEN DISCOVERED.

HAPLOGROUP X is found in approximately 7% of native Europeans, and **3% of all Native Americans from North America**. Overall, haplogroup X is found in around 2% of the population of Europe, the Near East and North Africa. It is especially common among Egyptians inhabiting **El-Hayez Oasis**. (14.3%) References at Wikipedia

SACRED WOODEN TURTLES



ARTIFACTS-FABRIC ATLATS, POINTS



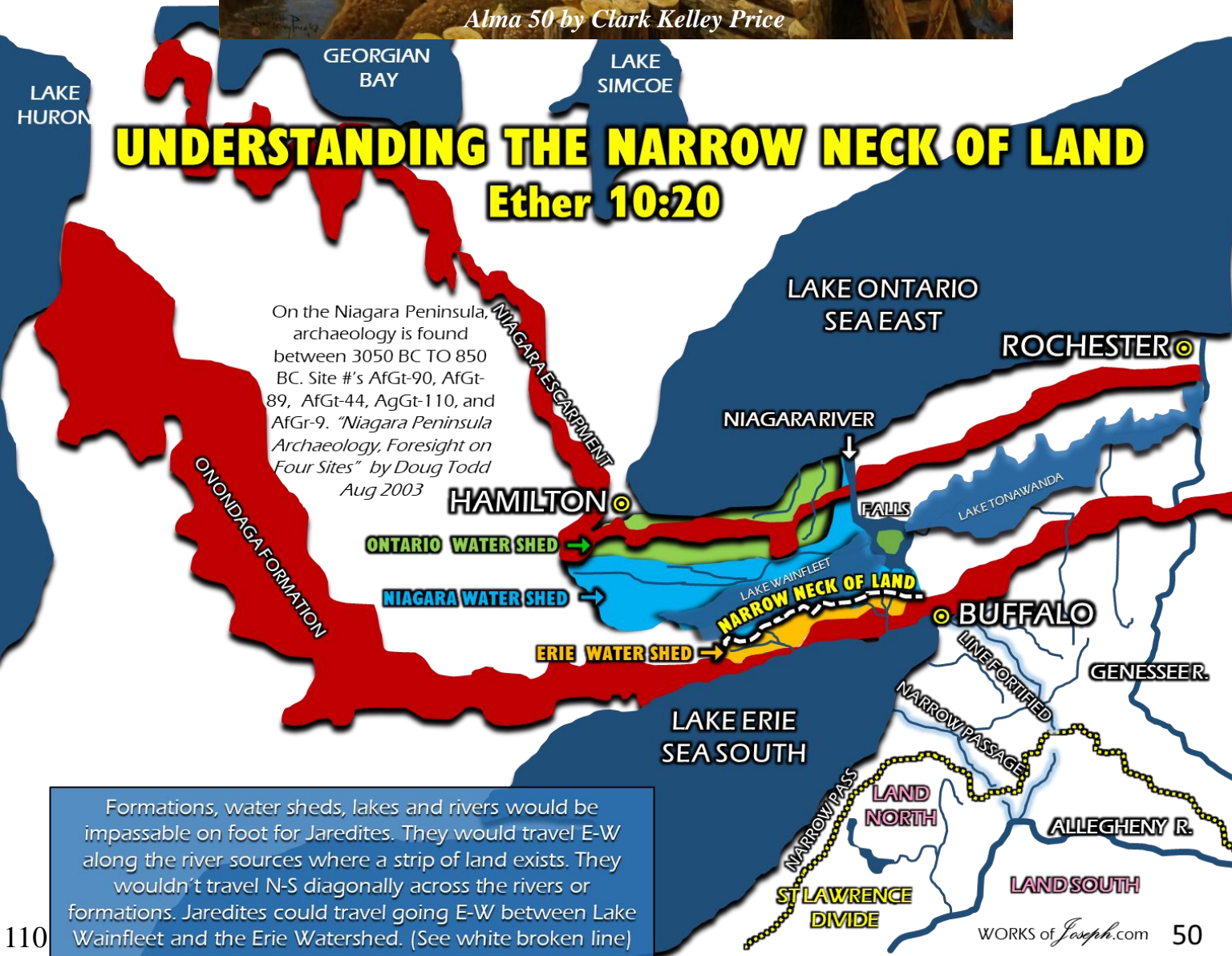


Alma 50 by Clark Kelley Price

UNDERSTANDING THE NARROW NECK OF LAND

Ether 10:20

On the Niagara Peninsula, archaeology is found between 3050 BC TO 850 BC. Site #'s AfGt-90, AfGt-89, AfGt-44, AgGt-110, and AfGr-9. "Niagara Peninsula Archaeology, Foresight on Four Sites" by Doug Todd Aug 2003



Formations, water sheds, lakes and rivers would be impassable on foot for Jaredites. They would travel E-W along the river sources where a strip of land exists. They wouldn't travel N-S diagonally across the rivers or formations. Jaredites could travel going E-W between Lake Wainfleet and the Erie Watershed. (See white broken line)

3 DIFFERENT NECKS IN THE BOOK OF MORMON

When you understand that the Narrow Neck of Land is a huge talking point of the Mesoamericanists, you will understand that they truly have the argument all backwards. THE SEA DIVIDES THE LAND, not the Land Divides the Sea.

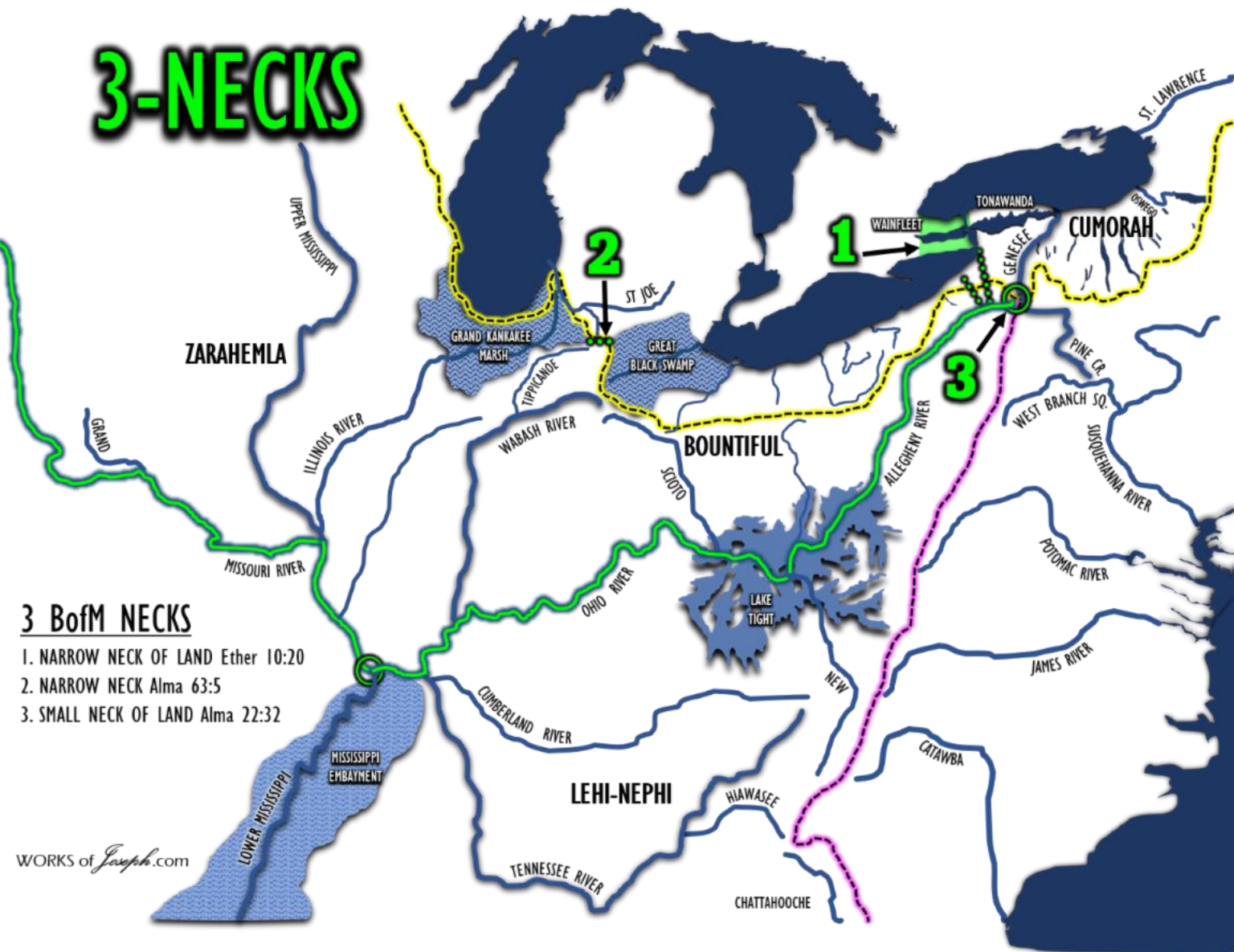
Ether 10:20 And they built a great city by the narrow neck of land, by the place where the sea divides the land.

(Isthmus of Tehuantepec is LAND that DIVIDES the Sea!!)

They also think the 3 different NECKS we list are all the same Neck. See below.

Be Nice, Teach a Friend Who is Backwards!

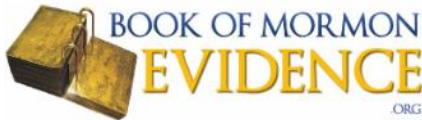
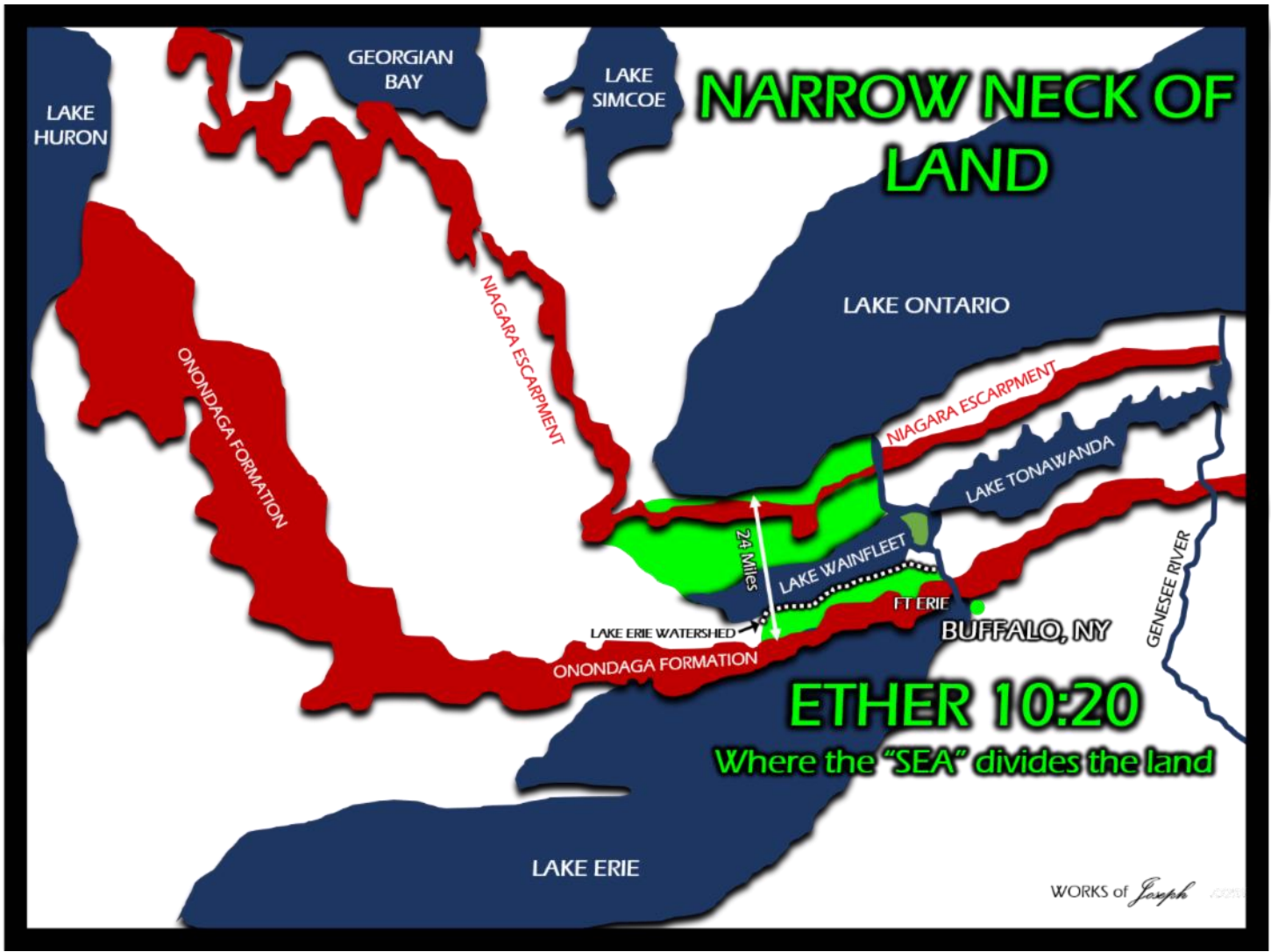
I'll send them a map! riannelson@aol.com



The Narrow Neck of Land in 3 Maps

(Not the Narrow Neck, and not the Small Neck of Land)
See the Green Number 1 Above

NARROW NECK OF LAND- Lake Ontario divides the land at Hamilton, OT Canada, and Lake Erie divides the land at Buffalo, NY, and at Toledo, OH. In Central America the "land divides the sea". (Isthmus of Tehuantepec) Lake Ontario and Lake Erie are seas, where the "sea divides the land" as quoted in Ether. Ether 10:20. The N/S distance from Lake Erie to Lake Ontario is only about 24 miles wide.

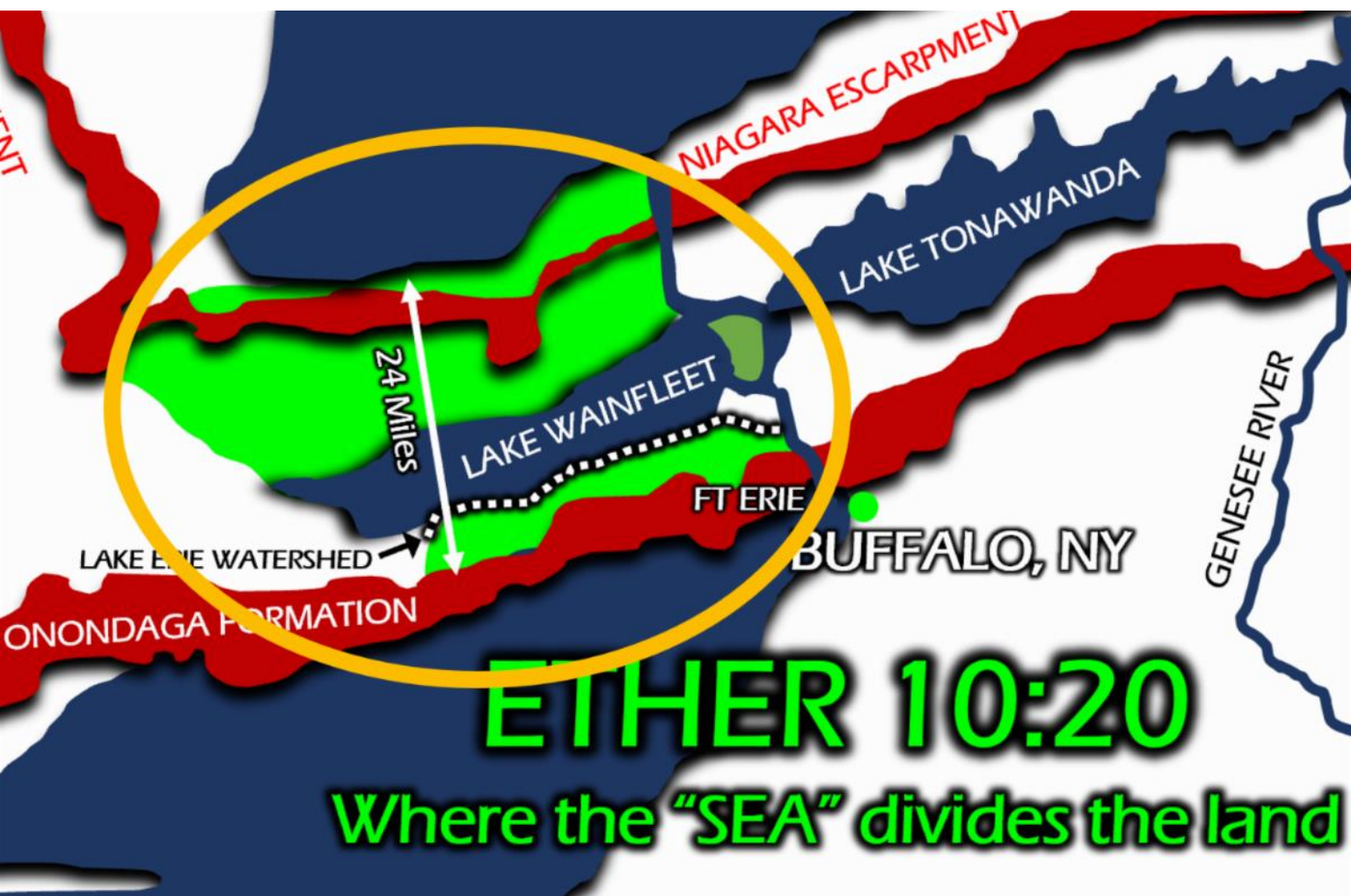


NARROW NECK OF LAND is defined below:

Lake Ontario (a sea) divides the land at Hamilton, OT Canada, and Lake Erie (s sea) divides the land at Buffalo, NY.

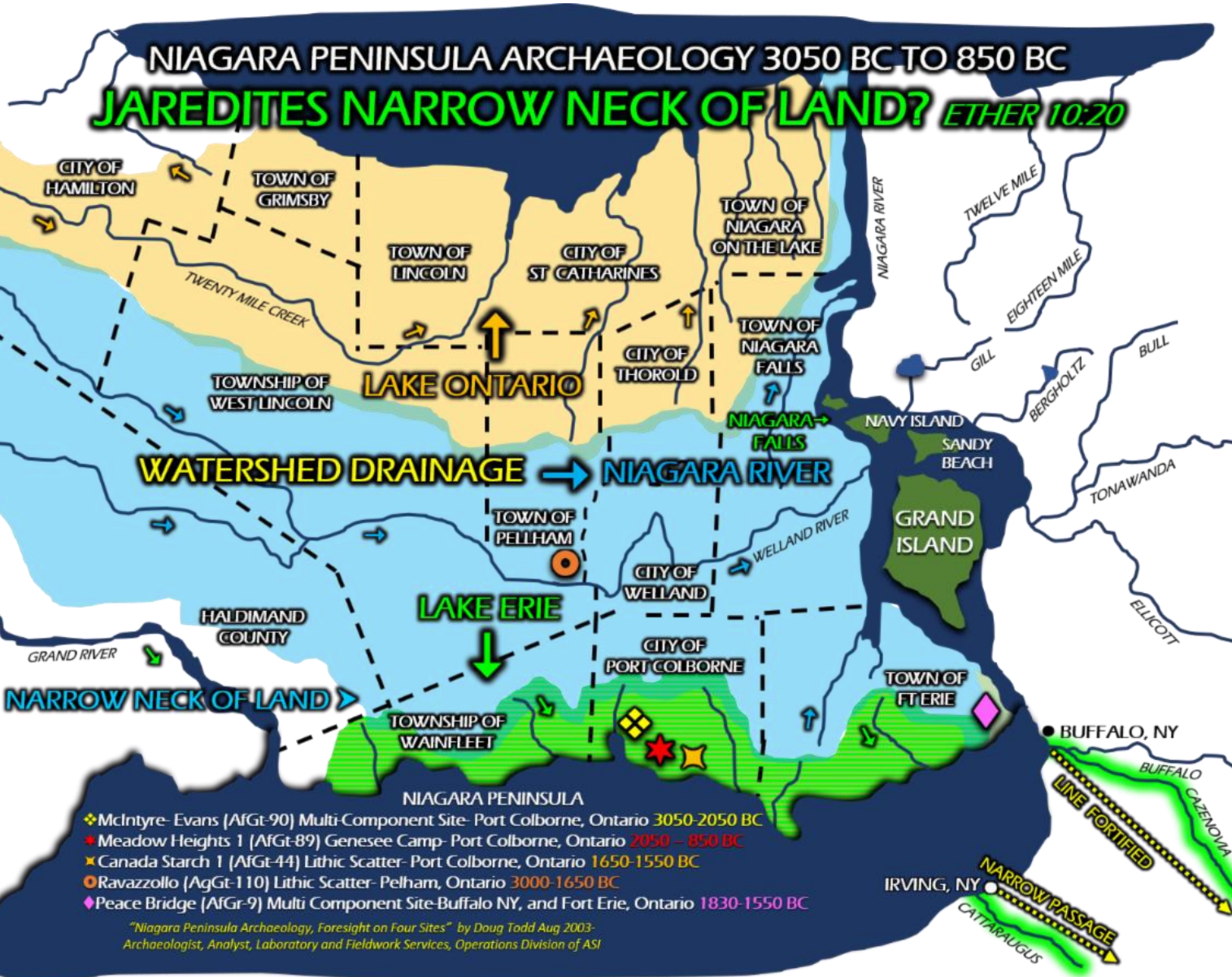
In Central America, the "land divides the sea". (Isthmus of Tehuantepec) which is opposite of what the scripture says about the "sea divides" the land.

Lake Ontario and Lake Erie are seas, where the "sea divides the land" as quoted in Ether. Ether 10:20. The N/S distance from Lake Erie to Lake Ontario is only about 24 miles wide and in Central America it is 140 miles, which doesn't sound very narrow to me. In the Book of Mormon the Narrow Neck of Land is only described in the Book of Ether, so the Jaredites used it, not the Nephites. There is archaeological verification at the Niagara Peninsula that dates from 800 BC to 3000 BC which is the time of the Jaredites.



The Narrow Neck of Land (Closeup Below)

Notice the narrow strip in bright green which is only 3 miles wide. From the green area through the light blue and through the yellow ending at the dark blue water of Lake Ontario is 24 miles the entire width of the Narrow Neck of Land. The Mesoamerican Narrow Neck is 140 miles but read Ether 10:20 carefully. In Central America, the "land divides the sea". (Isthmus of Tehuantepec) which is opposite of what the scripture says about the "sea divides" the land as Lake Ontario and Lake Erie divide the Land or the Niagara Peninsula. [Buy Over 200 Maps Here](#) or bookofmormonevidence.org/bookstore



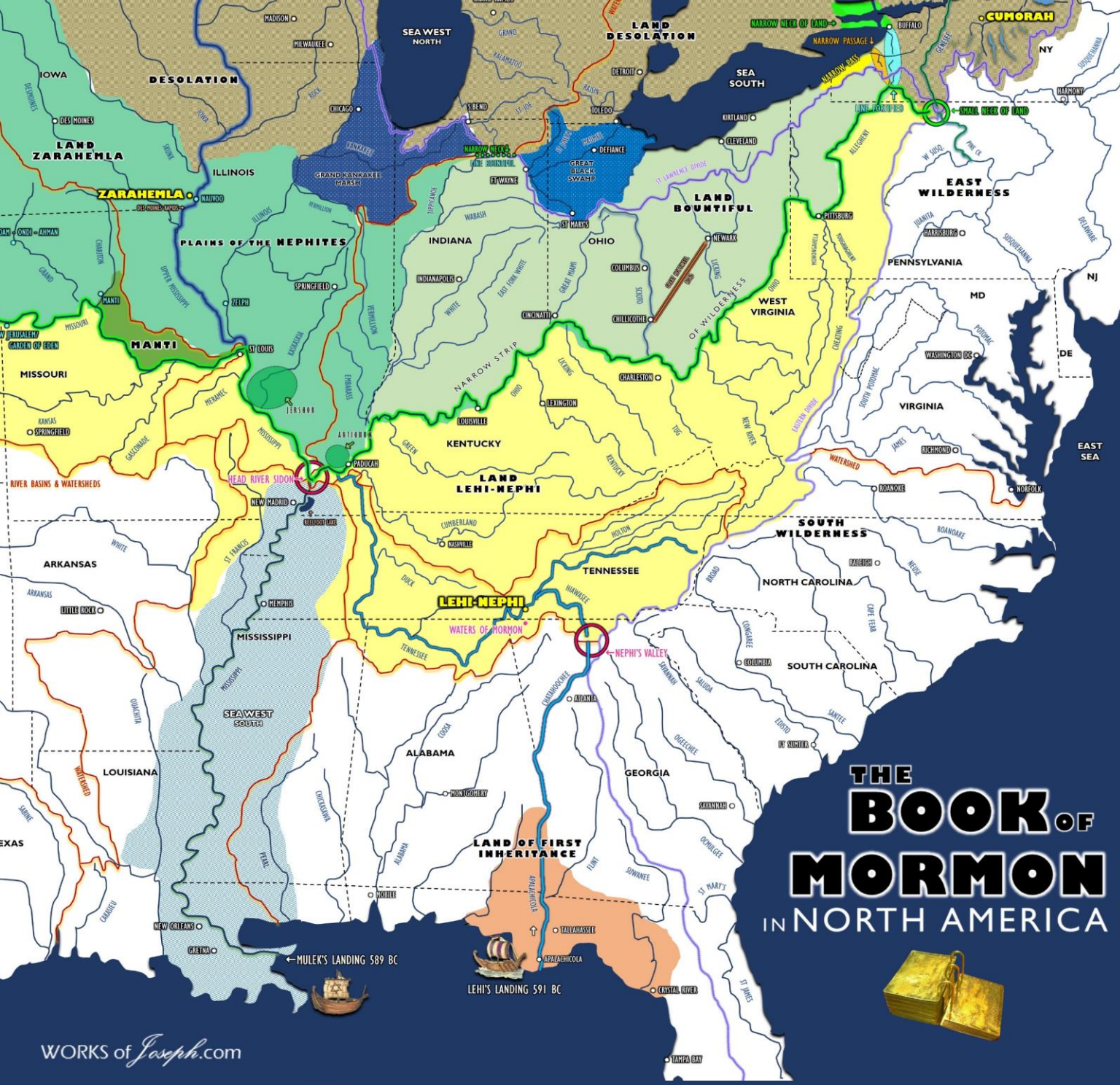
BOOK OF MORMON IN NORTH AMERICA



Hills upon the Tops of which were Entrenchments and Fortifications

"From the time Father Bosley located near Avon, he found and plowed up axes and irons, and had sufficient to make his mill irons, and had always abundance of iron on hand without purchasing. In the towns of Bloomfield, Victor, Manchester, and in the regions round about, there were hills upon the tops of which were entrenchments and fortifications, and in them were human bones, axes, tomahawks, points of arrows, beads and pipes, which were frequently found; and it was a common occurrence in the country to plow up axes, which I have done many times myself.

I have visited the fortifications on the tops of those hills frequently, and the one near Bloomfield I have crossed hundreds of times, which is on the bluff of Honeyoye River, at the outlet of Honeyoye Lake. In that region there are many small deep lakes, and in some of them the bottom has never been found. Fish abound in them. The hill Cumorah is a high hill for that country and had the appearance of a fortification or entrenchment around it. In the State of New York, probably there are hundreds of these fortifications which are now visible, and I have seen them in many other parts of the United States. Readers of the Book of Mormon will remember that in this very region, according to that sacred record, the final battles were fought between the Nephites and Lamanites. At the hill Cumorah, the Nephites made their last stand prior to their utter extermination, A. D., 385. Thus was Heber preaching the Gospel to the Gentiles, above the graves of the ancients of Israel, whose records with the fullness of that Gospel, and the relics of their prowess and civilization, were now whispering from the dust." *Life of Heber C. Kimball by Orson F. Whitney Mounds at Cumorah*



Hill Cumorah, and the Hill Ramah are Identical

“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

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;

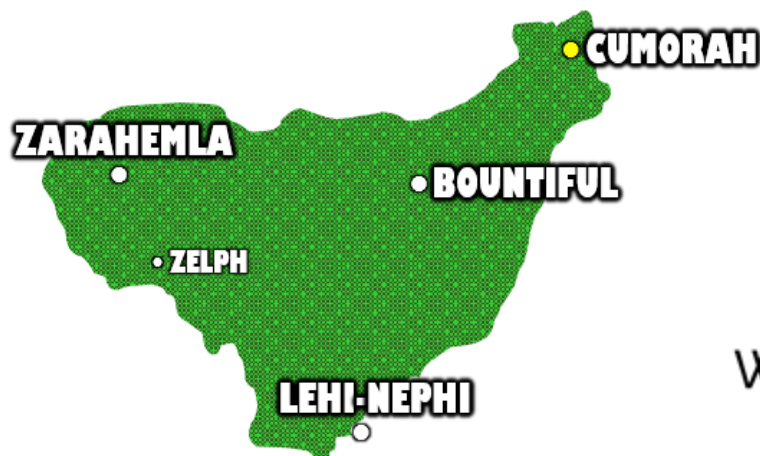
13 And again, that they were wronged while in the land of their first inheritance, after they had crossed the sea, and all this because that Nephi was more faithful in keeping the commandments of the Lord—therefore he was favored of the Lord, for the Lord heard his prayers and answered them, and he took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



WORKS of *Joseph*.com 

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The Urim and Thummim: Interpreters of "Doctrine and Covenants"

Joseph Smith relates that when Mormon first appeared to him, he was given the contents of the stone box that contained the plates... that there were two stones in silver bow—and these stones... constituted what is called the Urim and Thummim... with the plates, and the possession and use of these stones... consulted them in ancient or former times, and that God had... for the purpose of translating the book... (JS-History 1:30)

Joseph arrived for Joseph to obtain the ancient records, he removed the earth, laid down a lever, which I got fixed under... and with a little exertion raised it up... I looked in, and... behind the plates, the Urim and Thummim and the brazen... The box in which they lay was formed by iron... in some kind of cement, in the bottom of the box were laid the... and the other things with them... (JS-History 1:30)

4 the box, and on these stones lay the plates and the other things... (JS-History 1:30)

The first creation of the Urim and Thummim is recorded in Exodus 28:30... (JS-History 1:30)

...before the Lord: and Aaron shall bear the judgment of Israel upon his forehead continually... (See also Deut. 33:8; Ezra 2:63; emphasis added.)

Urim (עֹרִים) traditionally has been taken to derive from a root meaning lights, these devices... the High-priest of the Massoretic Text. (George F. Moore, "Urim and Thummim")

KEYSTONES: THE BOOK OF MORMON AND THE HILL CUMORAH

The Lehi colony was directed to flee Jerusalem before it was to be overrun by the Babylonian Empire. Lehi, a descendant of the tribe of Manasseh, and Ishmael, a descendant of the tribe of Benjamin were overrun by a host of the Northern Kingdom where the majority of Israel and Judah lived... (JS-History 1:16)

MAJOR CHANGES BETWEEN THE 1920 AND 1981 BOOK OF MORMON TEXT

Scripture	1920 Edition Text	1981 Edition Text
Alma 18:7	the Lamanites	these Lamanites
Alma 29:4	men according	men, yea, decreed unto them as are unalterable according to the commencement of the sex
Alma 30:5	the seventeenth	always
Alma 30:52	also	infidelity
Alma 31:20	iniquity	35 words added at the end
Alma 32:30		temptations
Alma 34:39	temptation	preserve
Alma 37:18	reserve	let all thy thoughts cut
Alma 37:36	let thy thoughts	out with his tents
Alma 38:1	cast	out
Alma 46:31	out into	with
Alma 40:18	were	whither
Alma 42:36	whether	the commencement of the
Alma 54:1	the twenty	have once rejected
Alma 54:8	have rejected	went
Alma 55:16	sent	joy
Alma 57:25	foes	shall again be
Helaman 15:13	shall be	they saw that
Helaman 16:3	they saw this,	that day
3 Nephi 1:12	the day	the chief captains
3 Nephi 3:18	the captains	Zarahemla and the land
3 Nephi 3:23	Zarahemla and	enemies
3 Nephi 3:26	enemy	And because
3 Nephi 4:19	Because	land
3 Nephi 6:3	band	thy head
3 Nephi 12:36	the head	gospel and shall reject the
3 Nephi 16:10	gospel	peace
3 Nephi 22:10	people	revile
3 Nephi 22:17	rise	their own strength
Mormon 4:8	their strength	have
Mormon 9:30	hear	life
Ether 3:14	light	deserted; desert
Mormon 9:24	dissented, dissent	

KEYSTONES: THE BOOK OF MORMON AND THE HILL CUMORAH

"A keystone [as shown within the yellow circle in the photo below] is the central stone in an arch. It holds all the other stones in place, and if removed, the arch crumbles."

"There are three ways in which the Book of Mormon is the keystone of our religion:

- [1] It is the keystone in our witness of Christ.
- [2] It is the keystone of our doctrine.
- [3] It is the keystone of testimony.

"Our beloved brother, President Marion G. Romney, who celebrated his eighty-ninth birthday last month and who knows of himself of the power that resides in this book, testified of the blessings that can come into the lives of those who will read and study the Book of Mormon. He said: 'I feel certain that if, in our homes, parents will read from the Book of Mormon prayerfully and regularly, both by themselves and with their children, the spirit of that great book will come to permeate our homes and all who dwell therein. The spirit of contention will increase; mutual respect and consideration for each other will be more prominent; their children in greater love and wisdom. Children will be more responsive and submissive to the counsel of their parents, bringing in their hope and charity—the pure love of Christ—will abound in our homes and lives, bringing in their peace, joy, and happiness.'" (Ensign, May 1980, p. 67) — Ezra Taft Benson, President of the Church. "The Book of Mormon — Keystone of Our Religion," General Conference, 1986.

In a similar way, the geographic location of the Book of Mormon, known as the Hill Cumorah, is the keystone to the historical truth of the Book of Mormon. It is the location unambiguously identified by modern prophets as a "touchstone" between the narrative in the Book of Mormon and the real world in which we live.

President Marion G. Romney of the First Presidency stated: "I will give you a lesson today of the state of New York near Palmyra is a keystone. 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, and I cried in my soul, How could it have happened?... This second civilization in 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.'" (145th Semiannual Conference, Saturday Morning Session, October 4, 1975; emphasis added.)

"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



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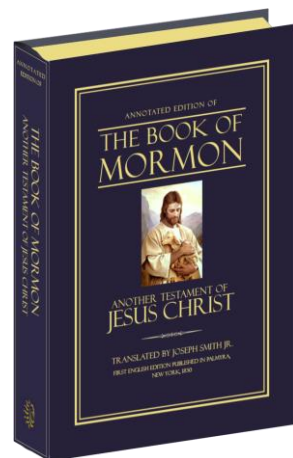
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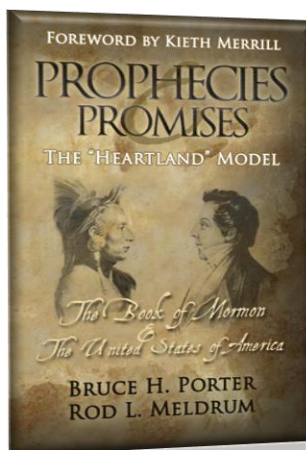
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KEN CORBETT ©
2018



"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*



President Russell M. Nelson by Ken Corbett



“Behold, I say unto you that none of the prophets have written, nor prophesied, save they have spoken concerning this Christ.”
(Jacob 7:11)

Lost Lamb by Del Parson

Heartland Handbook

by Rod Meldrum & Rian Nelson

“Joseph the Prophet Addressing the Lamanites,” Lithograph by H. R. Robinson, 1844

“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.” *Joseph Smith Papers Letter to Emma Smith, 4 June 1834 Page 56*

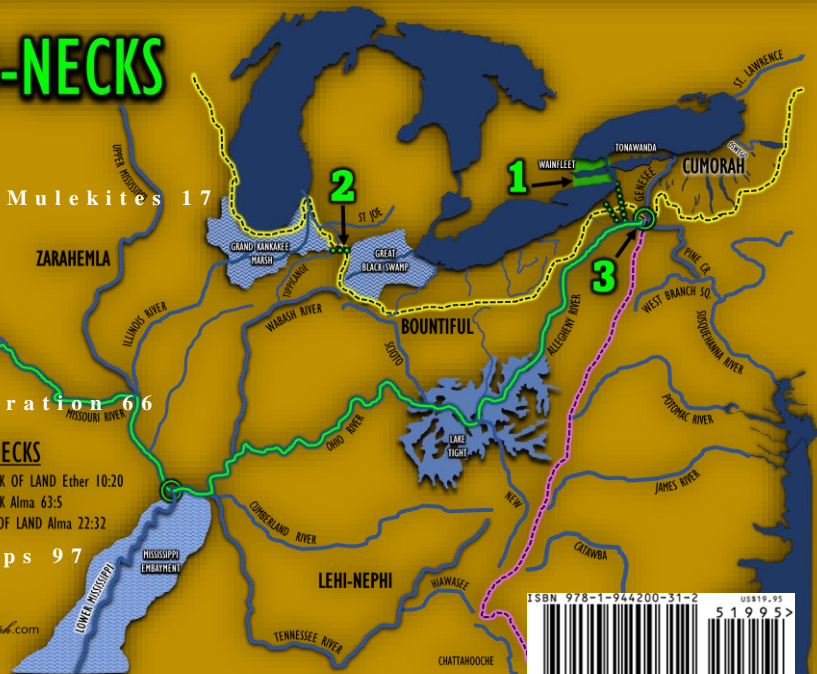
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1. NARROW NECK OF LAND Ether 10:20
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3. SMALL NECK OF LAND Alma 22:32



BOOK OF MORMON
EVIDENCE

