

# PROPHECIES PROMISES



*The Book of Mormon*  
*&*  
*The United States of America*

**BRUCE PORTER**

**ROD MELDRUM**

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&  
THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA**

BRUCE H. PORTER  
and  
ROD L. MELDRUM



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Dedicated to the late Dr. Robert J. Matthews who,  
upon learning of the imminent publication of this  
book, announced with a twinkle in his eye:  
*"I'm a one-hill man. I've always been a one-hill man; just  
like the Prophet Joseph Smith was and if I'm wrong...  
I'm in good company!"*

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# FOREWORD

By Kieth Merrill

Before I confess that *Prophecies and Promises* provoked a personal “paradigm shift” about Book of Mormon geography, I should thank Steve Covey for making the notion of changing our “mental maps” a proactive idea. What I have so easily accepted, embraced and believed about a Central American setting for the Book of Mormon—my Mesoamerica paradigm—has shifted.

Before *Prophecies and Promises*, I did not profess to *know* where the events described in the Book of Mormon took place. I still don’t *know*. What I do *know* is that the Book of Mormon is an authentic ancient record. What I do *know* is that the characters identified were living, breathing human beings. What I do *know* is that their world was in an actual place. *Prophecies and Promises* is a wonderful exploration of *what if*. I find it fascinating, enlightening and even persuasive in a very positive way.

What I *know* for sure about the Book of Mormon does not come from architectural remnants, internal references to geography, hypothetical maps or the myriad scholarly efforts in quest for evidence of place. I *know* the book is authentic through spiritual conviction. That is a process understood only by those who have experienced it. My clear conviction about *what* it is does not include any sure knowledge of *where* it all took place.

That said, I must confess, looking north instead of south has reignited my fascination, added to my testimony and allowed me to “see” the players and places in a whole new and exciting way. If you’ll excuse a lowbrow metaphor of popular culture, rereading the Book of Mormon with my new mental map is like watching a favorite and familiar movie remade in a different time and place. As the movie in my mind unwinds, I find it a magnificent new epic of unexpected proportion.

It has been eleven years since President Hinckley asked me to create a motion picture for the Joseph Smith Memorial Theater that presented our belief in Jesus Christ. The film was to replace *Legacy*, the first of the motion pictures I wrote, produced and directed for the theater and the film that gave the theater its name.

I met with the First Presidency in the room once used as the office of President Heber J. Grant. As always, President Hinckley went right to the heart of our purpose. “We are here to discuss a replacement film for *Legacy*.” He said the time had come to create a new motion picture about the Savior. The First Presidency wanted every visitor to Temple Square, members, nonmembers, Christians and non-Christians, to understand that Latter-day Saints believe in Jesus Christ. He emphasized the importance of the film. He admonished that the portrayal of the Savior be of singular importance and then he added, “We wish to portray him from the perspective of the Book of Mormon.”

The biggest challenge for me was to avoid being paralyzed by the importance of the project and the gravity of the responsibility. The prophet’s charge plunged me into the domain of Book of Mormon scholarship; people and places, players and geography. If the film was to portray the Savior from the perspective of the Book of Mormon we had to choose a setting for Book of Mormon lands. The overwhelming favorite at the time, of course, was ancient Central America.

The year I graduated from BYU I played tennis with noted Book of Mormon archaeologist, Tom Ferguson. In later years I would be in business with his son. I was a good friend of Paul Chessman, who focused much of his life in search of Zarahemla. I roamed the jungles of the Yucatan and imagined Lamanites and Nephites in cities I supposed must have looked something like the stone cities abandoned—five centuries too late. I gave casual thought to “where” it might have taken place but it was never an issue of driving importance. Like other readers of those Books of Mormon, illustrated by Arnold Friberg, it was his cast of characters I imagined. It was the ancient world of his creation that I saw.



[And I, like every other Elder in the Church, wished I looked like Friberg's Stripling Warriors.]

In writing the script for *Testaments*, assembling the team and envisioning the film requested by President Hinckley, there was only one very brief discussion at any level about "where" the events took place. I'll share that in a moment. The magnificent books by John Sorenson, Dr. Joseph Allen and others—all of them persuasively arguing in favor of a Mesoamerica setting—became my standard works. Within ten days of the First Presidency edict, I was tromping the jungles of the Yucatan, scouting locations in and around Palenque, the Mayan City State in southern Mexico that flourished in the seventh century. Having been there several times, I could easily envision the remnants of the Mayans as a fitting backdrop to the movie sets to be constructed. I carried pictures of those ruins when I was a missionary in Denmark and driven by more zeal than knowledge, declared them as "evidence." I am not alone.

I returned to Salt Lake and reported my plan to President Faust. I have never forgotten what happened. A clear recollection of that moment rushed up from memory the first time I saw Meldrum's DVD, the first time I attended Porter's presentation and once again as I read *Prophecies and Promises*.

President Faust shook his head. His face softened into one of his inimitable smiles. He put a hand on each of my shoulders, looked me in the eye and said, "Kieth, Kieth, Kieth." He always addressed me that way when I was too zealous, excessively stressed or forgetting the principal of counselors. "We don't want you to include any existing or recognizable landmarks in the film," He said and in essence explained that to do so would be like saying "this is where it happened." Then he said, "We do not know where it all took place."

The authors of this work begin their engaging book with a clear affirmation of what I heard a member of the First Presidency say to me in person.

“The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints has made no official statement on the geography of the Book of Mormon. Therefore, every theory proposed for a geographical setting for the events described in that book is exactly that, theory.”

In making *Testaments*, I was influenced by the most popular, prevailing theory. The film was made on the island of Kauai. The city of Zarahemla was the largest set ever built in the state of Hawaii. The production designers used their imaginations, my vast collection of books by Sorensen, Allen and others, the abundant collection of art from the talented LDS community of artists, my own sketches and the jungle setting of the islands to re-create the world of the Book of Mormon. Every choice supported the prevailing theory. As a result, the setting of the movie implies a Mesoamerica setting in every way—jungles, pyramids, a curious and creative mix of remnant cultures that included Mayan, Aztec, Olmec and Toltec.

Movies demand making decisions about time and space. They demand choosing or creating a world in which the drama plays out. The world of *Testaments* was clearly influenced by the prevailing theories, popular opinion and the remnants of Mayan monuments that post-dated the final days of the Book of Mormon, some by as much as 500 years.

I’m not sure why I was honored by an invitation to write a foreword to this important work. Probably because of the many among us who have some sort of *vested interest* in keeping the Book of Mormon lands in Guatemala, I am perceived as one who jumped ship early and swam north. When I sent an e-mail to the authors and scolded them for writing their book ten years too late, they must have figured that in me they had an open-minded friend... and they do. Life is filled with woulda, coulda and shoulda, but I do wish I had had cause to evaluate the Hopewell culture, consider the North American perspective, examine an alternative theory and explore the exciting “evidences” herein proposed.

Having made the biggest film the church has ever produced and being—I'm afraid to confess—singularly responsible for the choice to set the Book of Mormon segments of that movie in a Mesoamerica setting, one might imagine my “vested interest” would prompt me to preserve the status quo. One might ask, “Why rock the boat or get excited about the buffalo?”

There are three reasons why I actually feel *compelled* to rock the boat of “prevailing orthodoxy:” First, no one *knows* for certain where the events of the Book of Mormon took place. President Faust doesn't know (or if he did he promised not to tell). I don't claim to know and the authors of this book don't claim to *know*. Second, this book took me back to Primary where I could hear the soft-spoken voice of Sister Hess asking, “What would Jesus do?” The writers have caused me to ask, “What would Jesus say?” Which has caused me to wonder, “what *did* Jesus say about the lands of the Book of Mormon?” Then third, as night follows day, comes the question, “What did Joseph Smith know and what did he say?”

A reexamination of what Jesus said as he stood on this land is remarkable in its clarity. What Joseph Smith said as he walked across what he called the “Plains of the Nephites” is likewise suddenly monumental. The words of Christ are scripture. The words of Joseph Smith have been called by some “mistaken.” Really?

When I was asked to rewrite the Oakland temple pageant in 1986, I reframed the script with a narration by Lucy Mack Smith, mother of the prophet Joseph. I immersed myself in her recollections. History of the prophet Joseph Smith by his mother is arguably one of the most insightful and authentic accounts in our vast library of other historical documents. I remember reading it for the first time. A few of the things she said etched their way into my memory.

“During our evening conversations, Joseph would occasionally describe the ancient inhabitants of this continent, their dress, mode of travelings, 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” (Lucy Mack Smith, *History of Joseph Smith by his Mother*).

From that day to this I have believed Joseph Smith knew more than was ever recorded. I do not think he was mistaken and that has opened my mind to all sorts of previously disregarded possibilities.

Zealous as they have the right to be, Porter and Meldrum take a steady, objective and straightforward approach to their theory and supporting indications. It is void of pitching or proselytizing. Conversely, I have been surprised by the vigor of the criticisms thrown their way. There is nothing at stake here but the exploration of new possibilities, enlightenment and a likely increase in faith. Who knows, we might be on a path that may yet lead to unexpected evidences for the “most correct of any book on earth.”

Read *Prophecies and Promises*. Open your mind to the possibilities. Reread The Book of Mormon and see if you discover a wondrous new movie of the mind unreeling in your imagination. Enjoy those tempting, tantalizing thoughts—what if this *was* the place it happened?

Kieth Merrill—Filmmaker

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# PREFACE

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints has made no official statement on the geography of the Book of Mormon; that is a well known fact. Therefore, every theory proposed for a geographical setting for the events described in that book is exactly that, theory. The authors of this work maintain that any intellectual attempt to determine a physical geography must be founded first within the text of the Book of Mormon and secondly from inspired statements of its translator, the Prophet Joseph Smith. The purpose of this study is to provide insight and information based primarily upon those two criteria. In doing so, the authors acknowledge that when using those two pillars as the basis, the resulting evidence seems to point time and again to a more traditional geographical setting for the Book of Mormon within the boundaries of a particular nation state, even The United States of America.

Much of the information presented here has hitherto been the subject of relatively unsympathetic review by an array of scholars who maintain that geographically speaking the only correct setting for the Book of Mormon lies in Mesoamerica. The authors of this work acknowledge that the information set forth within these pages does not necessarily harmonize with that view. However, in publishing this work, the authors by no means seek to diminish or impugn the monumental achievements and insights that have emerged from the Mesoamerican Book of Mormon research. In fact, to quote the Prophet Joseph Smith, "...in proving contraries the truth is made manifest."

All of the sciences must continue to pursue their respective hypotheses to its logical conclusion, even when such study and cultivation fails to yield the desired outcome. The documented study is in itself a constructive advancement if for no other reason than to prove that a certain path does not yield. Indeed, that is the

time-tested nature of the scientific method. The annals of science are littered with theories that were once deemed *sine qua non*. We stand upon the shoulders of those who labored that we might be free to pursue an alternate course.

This work is not written to “correct” any theory or organization in their conclusions on a Book of Mormon setting, but rather seeks to expand the scope of research and to offer a more traditional and prophetically harmonious setting for the historical text. The content is not a response to critics, nor would it be practical to take up time, space, or continuity for the sake of argument. The information presented here is given for the purpose of informing those who might be interested in exploring the *possibility* of a North American setting for the Book of Mormon.

All words or portions of the text and quotes from other sources, including scriptures that are *italicized*, should be understood by the reader as “emphasis” applied solely by the authors of this work. Scriptures quoted within a sentence or paragraph will have the reference following the quote, as well as the more extensive and indented scriptural passages. All sources other than scriptures will be found as “End Notes” at the back of the book.



# INTRODUCTION

This work focuses on the 36 prophecies and promises that have been found through extensive research in the text of the Book of Mormon. The study of these passages has lead to a re-evaluation of the methods used to determine the strength of any theory or model proposing a geographical setting for the Book of Mormon. Discussion will center on the current research model that has been used, and offer an alternative system that offers a fundamentally more powerful solution to the challenge of establishing a geographic model.

The proposed methodology presented in this book utilizes four highly corroborative sources that assist in coming to an understanding of the lands described in the Book of Mormon text. These four sources are: 1) the prophetic evidence found in scriptures; 2) the prophetic statements of the inspired translator, Joseph Smith; 3) the physical evidences; and 4) the geographical passages.

This method will begin with the firm foundation of scripture and build from there as each source becomes a “witness” of the others, each supporting and confirming the conclusions that are reached. These “witnesses” are ranked in order of importance and strength, or hierarchy. They may be narrowed down into two primary sources: the spiritual or prophetic evidences, and the physical evidences.

The prophetic evidences include the Book of Mormon’s prophecies and promises and the revealed statements of the Prophet Joseph Smith. The *Physical Evidences* include scientific evidence such as anthropological and archaeological records, genetic or DNA evidences, along with the geographical indicators within the text that must be reviewed and applied. Each of these sources, used together, form the basis of the larger research model used in this (and subsequent) book in the search for a prophetic, historical and geographical setting for the Book of Mormon.

The purpose of this book is to provide an overview of and application for this new research model in the presentation of what we call the “Heartland Model,” a newly proposed geographic name and setting for the Book of Mormon. It is not intended to be an all-encompassing work, but rather to establish a foundation for further research on the subject. This work will confine itself to the *Prophetic* or *Spiritual Evidences* of this methodology, while future publications will seek to address in more detail the *Physical Evidences* of the four sources outlined above.

The authors assert and maintain that key to any study of Book of Mormon geography lies within the text itself. The scriptures, which include the Book of Mormon, the Doctrine and Covenants, the Pearl of Great Price, and the Bible, must be consulted for references and information that might give insight into the research. John L. Sorenson, an influential author of several books on Book of Mormon geography addressed the importance of the scriptural text by quoting Joseph Fielding Smith:

Anything that Church authorities—including Joseph Smith—have said about ‘Book of Mormon geography’ is irrelevant if it conflicts with what is in the Book of Mormon itself. Joseph Fielding Smith soundly taught, ‘It makes no difference what is written or what *anyone* has said, if what has been said is in *conflict* with what the Lord has revealed, we can set it aside. *My words, and the teachings of any other member of the Church, high or low, if they do not square with the revelations, we need not accept them.* Let us have this matter clear.’<sup>1</sup>

All scriptures, whether ancient or modern, must be used as a filter in the search of truth to establish a foundation upon which any and every model of Book of Mormon geography should be based and tested. The use of the *Prophetic* and *Physical Evidences* within all the standard works will influence our knowledge and faith in the truthfulness and historic reality of the Book of Mormon. Using this process will also help identify the “Promised Land” in a way that is often neglected in the search to discover the lands of the Book of Mormon.

## Chapter One

# BOOK OF MORMON GEOGRAPHY

The search for a setting for the Book of Mormon has taken countless hours of exhaustive study and research. As unimportant as the geography of this scripture may be for individual salvation, it continues to spark a lively interest for the student of the Book of Mormon. There is something unsettling about not knowing, at least in general terms, where events described in scripture have taken place.

The quest for Biblical archaeology has led to the verification of many historical accounts found therein. Not that it should be needed, but there is a natural desire in the hearts of many believers to walk where Jesus walked or to stand on Mars Hill where Paul taught. To stand on the Mount of Transfiguration or the Temple Mount in Jerusalem can provide many with spiritual experience and a mental picture that is not soon forgotten.

The popularity of known sites in Church history, such as the birthplace of Joseph Smith, the Sacred Grove, the Grandin Press where the first copies of The Book of Mormon were printed, and other historical sites serve as a witness and testimony of this desire to know and see these places. Even the LDS Church has spent

untold millions erecting monuments, preserving land and buildings that mark sacred events that combine to preserve and revive key aspects of our historical heritage and modern scripture.

There is an emotional and sometimes a spiritual exhilaration that can be felt when standing in the Sacred Grove or on the top of the Hill Cumorah contemplating the scriptural events that happened there. For some reason a physical location will often awaken a spiritual conviction of the reality of a recorded event, and will cause the reality of these sacred events to come alive.

Because of these feelings, the search for a geographical setting for the Book of Mormon will never end. Every researcher and author applies his or her best judgment in the examination of scripture and physical evidence. The goal is to connect the spiritual witnesses (the prophets) and the physical witnesses (the secular evidences) together in such a way that will identify a geographical setting for this seminal book of scripture. This search then becomes an informal, yet scientific quest of connecting evidence. The association of a physical setting with recorded history becomes a process of research and therefore requires a “system and method” for answers that will have confirmable conclusions.

## ***The Current Method***

In any scientific research endeavor the need to evaluate the effectiveness of the system or methodology being employed must be addressed. The first questions to ask are: Is the current system producing the desired results? And then: Are the results conclusive? If the system is working, one should expect to see the same result, each time a substantiated premise is repeated. This should continue to hold true when exposed to all relevant evidence and witnesses. Once these questions are answered, (regardless of the outcome) a conscientious student would still ask if the system or method of research could not be improved in any way. On the other hand, if an adopted methodology is not producing desirable or consistent results, the student must then of necessity ask if perhaps the entire method or approach cannot be replaced with a better system?

Because of the many maps and locations espoused in the search for a Book of Mormon setting, a comprehensive evaluation of the current *methods* should become a primary concern. Such an evaluation may lead to a re-thinking of the methods and processes being used to match geographical passages with physical landscapes. The purpose of this book is to do just that. This evaluation will first, briefly assess the current method being used to determine the placement of Book of Mormon events and the results of this method, and second, suggest a new methodology using specific hierarchical criteria to identify a location for the physical setting for the Book of Mormon history.

The approach or methodology used to determine such a setting for the Book of Mormon has been the frequent subject of discussion by students of scripture. However, over the last few years the majority of geographical theorists has reached a consensus on how to begin the development of a map for Book of Mormon geography. John L. Sorenson describes this consensus by stating what “logically would seem to be one of the first steps in any systematic investigation—to construct a map of the ‘land of promise’ based solely on statements in that scripture.”<sup>2</sup>

The first step in this method is to extract from the Book of Mormon those passages involving geographical references and create or develop an “internal” or hypothetical map. Such maps have been made by many able individuals, each map using the many passages having to do with geography. As of the year 2009, over 150 different hypothetical maps have been produced.

Geographical scriptures or passages are those verses that give some specific information or relationship to a landmark, city, or distance that might give a general idea of direction or location. These geographical types of passages are usually found as a passing reference for contextual clarity throughout the Book of Mormon. Examples of such passages are found in Alma:

Now, the more idle part of the Lamanites lived in the wilderness, and dwelt in tents; and they were spread through *the wilderness on the west*, in the land of Nephi;

yea, and also *on the west of the land of Zarahemla*, in the *borders by the seashore*, and *on the west in the land of Nephi*, in the place of their fathers' first inheritance, and *thus bordering along by the seashore*.

And also there were many Lamanites *on the east by the seashore*, whither the Nephites had driven them. And thus the Nephites were nearly surrounded by the Lamanites; nevertheless the Nephites had taken possession of *all the northern parts of the land bordering on the wilderness, at the head of the river Sidon, from the east to the west, round about on the wilderness side; on the north*, even until they came to the land which they called Bountiful.

Alma 22:28-29

The use of geographical references as a primary or first source would imply that the system and process being used is an overlay method. This system would use the geographical passages to draw a hypothetical map that could then “overlay” existing geographical features, landscapes and shorelines in the hope of finding a match. This hypothetical map, however, can only be constructed through private interpretation of the geographical texts, which often conflicts with other proposed theories, maps and even other scriptural passages. There simply are no (as in not one) geographical passages in the Book of Mormon that can be considered so perfectly clear and unambiguous as to leave no doubt regarding its identification with an actual known physical location.

One of the more popular efforts to establish a hypothetical map was accomplished by John L. Sorenson and called by him *Mormon's Map*.<sup>3</sup> This small book offers the reader several guidelines, established by Sorenson, as well as assumptions used in analyzing his proposed geography for the Book of Mormon.

While most of these internal maps have some basic elements in common, like a “narrow neck of land,” they are often highly inconsistent with each other in their conclusions. This difference exists because each author takes a particular scripture or passage and then applies his or her own interpretation or understanding. This personal interpretation is not unlike the fable of the blind men and the elephant. Each party has a fractional part of a

larger picture but no one has view of the whole beast. Reading into the text private musings about archeology, geography or culture, interpreting the wording of various passages in differing ways, and a host of other challenges often plagues the researcher. In addition, group-think, consensus views, conventional wisdom and undue trust in the "arm of flesh" frequently serves to thwart rather than aid in the search for truth.

John L. Sorenson noted in particular the difficulties both he and others encountered while undertaking the task of using scripture to determine a setting for the Book of Mormon.

Of course it is [a] truism that studies of an ancient text should begin with the text itself. Yet most studies in fact neither begin nor end so . . . My own book [from 1955] cites Book of Mormon verses over 960 times. But even so many citations does not mean the text is "speaking for itself." For *who can doubt that I chose those verses and the interpretations I provided for them while omitting others. Other people too have chosen their verses and their interpretations.* We cannot get far if mere opinion determines which set of verses we rely on, whether it is 1000 or 10.

We need instead to use the entire scripture, without exception. Selectivity should be avoided like the plague. We must understand, interpret and deal successfully with every statement in the text, not just what is convenient or interesting to us. That can only be done, I believe, by doing our level best to approach the words of the Book of Mormon having to do with geography without preconceptions. I admit that my own (1955) model was tainted by preconceptions. So has everybody else's been.<sup>4</sup>

Dr. Sorenson correctly concludes in the statement above that the researcher should *"use the entire scripture without exception"* and review *"every statement in the text."* However, he then limits those passages to just those *"having to do with geography,"* a determination that can only be based on a personal decision and a personal interest, by any researcher in the discovery of a setting for the Book of Mormon.

Every researcher has their own individual set of “filters” through which they view things. These filters restrict the ability to see and process new information and analyze new concepts. The filters, whatever they might be, tend to prejudice the thinking and interpretation of everything encountered, including passages of scripture. This may explain why investigators reading the same geographical passages have differing conclusions for their proposed geographies. Using this method, proposed Book of Mormon theories have ranged from North to South America, from Granada across an entire ocean to find a home on the Malay Peninsula of Southeast Asia. They have ranged in extent from the entire western hemisphere to a geography encompassing a restricted distance of less than two hundred miles. Each investigator applied the same method of using Book of Mormon geographic passages, and each came to a completely different conclusion.

John L. Sorenson stated above that we need “to use the entire scripture, without exception.” This advice should not be selective to just geographical passages, but should extend to the prophetic passages also contained in “the entire scripture, without exception” and without limitation. There needs to be a system or methodology, with intrinsic value and authority added to the current system, to qualify the conclusions reached for a setting of the Book of Mormon.

Even after many attempts, still there exists no unanimous internal map, and no definitive positions. There is not even a clear general location or map upon which research might be based. Why not?

### ***An Effective System?***

The method of using the geographical passages from the Book of Mormon as a primary source to create a hypothetical map has resulted in multiple theories and conflicting interpretations. The geographical passages lack enough clear information to make a determination, or the method of using these selected passages must be viewed as having severe shortcomings or even insurmountable



flaws. If the Book of Mormon had sufficient geographic information to positively produce a cohesive internal map, why would there exist so many different geographies? It should be apparent that the geographical sources in the Book of Mormon, by themselves, are incomplete, and non-conclusive to come to any clear understanding without having additional information to support a final conclusion.

Because these passages are incomplete, many researchers try to add strength and support to their conclusion and interpretation of a geographical passage by external data such as archaeological remains, stories and traditions. In the search for truth, the supporting evidence should become just that, supporting, and a second witness to the strongest evidence. The strongest evidence should be able to stand-alone. It is without question that the geographical passages cannot stand alone as conclusive evidence for geographical determination for a setting for the Book of Mormon.

The explanation for the failure of this system could lie in the fact that the Book of Mormon was never intended to be a geographical primer, but rather a spiritual and prophetic record. This problem was recognized as far back as 1890 when George Q Cannon a member of the First Presidency wrote the following in the *Juvenile Instructor*.

. . .the brethren who lecture on the lands of the Nephites or the geography of the Book of Mormon are not united in their conclusions. *No two of them, so far as we have learned, are agreed on all points, and in many cases the variations amount to tens of thousands of miles.* . . How is it that there is such a variety of ideas on this subject? *Simply because the Book of Mormon is not a geographical primer. It was not written to teach geographical truths.* What is told us of the situation of the various lands or cities of the ancient Jaredites, Nephites and Lamanites is usually simply an incidental remark connected with the doctrinal or historical portions of the work; and almost invariably only extends to a statement of the relative position of some land or city to contiguous or surrounding places, *and nowhere gives us the exact situation or boundaries*

so that it can be definitely located without fear of error.<sup>5</sup>

The text of the Book of Mormon itself testifies of the fact that it cannot contain all the temporal [physical] elements and evidence as a “hundredth part of the proceedings of this people, cannot be contained in this work” (Helaman 3:14). Therefore, the sacred space on the plates was reserved for the more important prophecies and promises. Nephi records that he “received a commandment that the ministry and *the prophecies*, the more plain and precious parts of them, *should be written upon these plates*” for the purpose of “*the instruction of my people, who should possess the land*” (1 Nephi 19:3).

An important statement in this scripture is that the record is made for “the instruction of my people, who should possess the land.” There is a connection between the record, the people and the Promised Land. The Book of Mormon teaches the Gospel of Jesus Christ and contains specific instructions for a specific people on a specific land. And that record, like the Bible, becomes a witness of Jesus Christ and His gospel.

Because of the limited space on the plates, the prophetic authors were inspired to include the more spiritual teachings of “prophecies” and “instruction” that would be pertinent to our day, rather than the historical, geographical, or physical accounts. The absence of conclusive geographical evidence is a first order problem in the search for a geographical setting. If there is not enough clear and concise physical information in the record, how could any solid conclusion be reached? It would appear that any method using only “passages having to do with geography” as the first or primary witness is going to end up falling short of any definite conclusions, being fundamentally flawed.

The Book of Mormon was specifically written and compiled by the ancient prophets to be brought forth in the latter-days, and was “*Written by way of commandment, and also by the spirit of prophecy and of revelation*” (Title Page, Book of Mormon). The Prophet Mormon adds that the plates “*contain these prophesyings and*

*revelation,”* (Words of Mormon 1:5 – 7) that *“they might come again unto the remnant of the house of Jacob, according to the prophecies and the promises of the Lord.”* (4 Nephi 49) The Book of Mormon is a comprehensive record of the gospel of Jesus Christ and the “prophecies and the promises” to and for those who are led by the “hand of the Lord” to the land of promise. It was not written nor intended as a geographical text.

After decades of attempts to produce a comprehensive geography, it is clear that the current method has failed to produce the desired results. This failure does not imply that the geographical texts or passages are in and of themselves flawed, but simply incomplete for the determination of a geographical location. This has led to a methodology that is ineffective. Still there are many important geographical relationships that can and should be established through the use of these passages that might pertain to directions and distances.

The reason for the failure of this accepted methodology is a neglect to first identify and establish a source that would be more reliable than the geographical passages. A comprehensive system should be founded on more than one approach or set of parameters. Rather than relying on these unclear and inconclusive passages, researchers should seek to establish multiple and faithful witnesses that provide keener insights. These witnesses must then be arranged in an order to establish a hierarchy of strength.

Research in any discipline or court of law should begin with the strongest or the “primary” and most reliable witnesses available, to be followed by “supporting” witnesses that provide testimony that will strengthen the primary evidence. Because these geographical passages are so incomplete and non-conclusive it would logically imply that it is upon archaeological evidences that most theorists must rely to establish a scriptural setting.

The main question then becomes one of fact or theory. Can archaeological evidence sustain a geography that is not clearly defined in scripture? Or are the interpretations of the geographical

scriptures made to support the archaeological findings? Which is the primary evidence, the geographical passage in the text or the archaeological evidence on the ground? Occasionally primary evidence is ignored for the sake of supporting a theory and the reverse is also true. Using the geographical passages first as a method of discovery has produced over 150 maps for a Book of Mormon setting. An effective method of discovery should tend to limit the number of possible solutions to a problem, not encourage more of them, yet this is what has happened by using the current method. The questions that must be asked in all research and theory are: What are the primary witnesses that are foundational and cannot be ignored? And finally, what are the secondary witnesses that support the primary evidence and testimony?

## Chapter Two

# THE LAW OF WITNESSES

A solid foundation in any research requires more than a single witness. The substantiation of any discovery of science, or even a decision or judgment in a court of law requires multiple testimonies. The gospel and the scriptures declare that “in the mouth of two or three witnesses shall every word be established” (D&C 6:28). Multiple witnesses give a firmer foundation for the presentation of any proposed theory, or premise. The truthfulness of the claim that the Book of Mormon was written on gold plates was established through the testimony of multiple witnesses, as recorded in scripture and church history. The Lord gives counsel and prophecy through Nephi about the Law of Witnesses, declaring that He will “*bring forth the words of the book; and in the mouth of as many witnesses as seemeth him good.*” (2 Nephi 27:14).

Likewise, any discussion of Book of Mormon geography must also include multiple witnesses. These witnesses should fall into the categories of both internal and external testimonies. By the testimony of multiple witnesses the truths and falsehoods of a given theory become apparent, independently and without a biased commentary. When these testimonies agree, there is verifiable strength

in the conclusions that might be reached. When multiple witnesses do not agree, then a reevaluation of: 1) the conclusion, 2) the theory and 3) the methods used must come under scrutiny, and possibly at the expense of all three. Multiple witnesses, internal (from the text) and external (from other sources), should be used in the development of any theory about the geography of the Book of Mormon.

## ***A New Standard***

The fact that the geographical passages contained in the Book of Mormon are incomplete and inconclusive establishes the need to reconsider the methods that have been used in the past. The current system of using the geographical passages as a primary or first witness has not limited the number of proposed geographies, but rather has increased the number of possibilities. Therefore, it would seem that the system might be improved upon, or a new method proposed.

A hierarchy of authoritative witnesses must be established to qualify and narrow the choices of acceptable geographical settings for the Book of Mormon. This proposed “hierarchy” of multiple witnesses is listed below, beginning with the most important, the most clear and concise witnesses in the identification of the “Promised Land” to which Lehi and his family were led, and upon which the entire Book of Mormon history took place.

Identify:

1. Book of Mormon prophecies and promises testified of in relation to the Promised Land and the people associated with it.
2. Inspired and revealed statements of the Prophet Joseph Smith on geography
3. Physical “real world” evidence, such as correlating civilizations in the correct time frame, archaeological findings as described within the text, cultural lifestyles, genetic relationships and linguistic ties.

4. Geographical indicators or passages contained within the Book of Mormon.

The combined agreement of each of these four witnesses should generate a possible location for the Book of Mormon that could be easily verified. Every theory should be tried against the authority of these faithful witnesses, rather than relying on a single type of scripture such as the geographical passages alone. These witnesses should be viewed in an order of credibility and strength to qualify as a viable source to determine a setting for the "Promised Land" described in the Book of Mormon.

There are two types of witnesses in the four that are listed; the spiritual and the physical. The first are of a spiritual and prophetic nature, and therefore more sure. This first type of spiritual witnesses includes the prophecies and promises within the text of the Book of Mormon about the land of promise written by inspired prophets. This prophetic witness should also include the words of the inspired translator of the text, the Prophet Joseph Smith. The second type of witnesses consist of the more temporal or physical evidences that cannot be as sure as the inspired witnesses. These physical or scientific witnesses would include archeology, genetics, geography, and other physical markers or indicators that would become secondary witnesses to the more spiritual indicators in the scriptures and statements by the Prophet Joseph Smith.

The secondary physical evidences such as archeological remains and inconclusive geographical "overlays" are often used first and foremost for the identification of possible sites while neglecting the prophetic sources. For many years the archaeological ruins of Central America have been espoused as physical proof of the Book of Mormon. This is often the case as many well-meaning defenders of the faith are looking for the "gold plate" evidence. This means that some type of physical or archaeological "match" is earnestly sought with the hope that it will provide clear evidence of the record's truth. In some cases, it is hoped that the archaeological evidence will help verify the proposed geographical theory.

The order or hierarchy of witnesses to be used are not the author's arbitrary selection but are rather determined by the Book of Mormon itself. The Lord, through the Prophet Moroni has revealed in the first paragraph of the Title Page of the Book of Mormon:

Wherefore, it is an abridgment of the record of the people of Nephi, and also of the Lamanites—Written to the Lamanites, who are a remnant of the house of Israel; and also Jew and Gentile—Written by way of commandment, and also by the spirit of prophecy and of revelation—Written and sealed up, and hid up unto the Lord, that they might not be destroyed—To come forth by the gift and power of God unto the interpretation thereof—Sealed by the hand of Moroni, and hid up by way of the Gentile—The interpretation thereof by the gift of God.

BoM: Title Page

This first paragraph reveals:

*To whom it was written:*

"The Lamanites, who are a remnant of the  
House of Israel"

"To Jew and Gentile"

*How it was written:*

"By way of commandment"

"By the spirit of prophecy and of revelation"

*How it was preserved:*

"Sealed up"

"Hid up unto the Lord"

*How revealed:*

"Come forth by the gift and power of God unto the  
interpretation"

"By way of the Gentile"

The second paragraph teaches what the Book of Mormon is and the purpose the record was written, preserved and revealed.

An abridgment taken from the Book of Ether also, which is a record of the people of Jared, who were scattered at the time the Lord confounded the language of the people, when they were building a tower to get to heaven—Which is *to show unto the remnant of the House of Israel what great things the Lord hath done for their fathers; and that they may know the covenants of the Lord, that they are not cast off forever—And also, to the convincing of the Jew and Gentile that JESUS is the*



*CHRIST, the ETERNAL GOD, manifesting himself unto all nations—And now, if there are faults they are the mistakes of men; wherefore, condemn not the things of God, that ye may be found spotless at the judgment seat of Christ.*

*The Purpose of the Book of Mormon:*

1. "To show unto the remnant of the House of Israel what great things the Lord hath done for their fathers"
2. "That they may know the covenants of the Lord"
3. "That they are not cast off forever"
4. "To the convincing of the Jew and Gentile that JESUS is the CHRIST"
5. "Manifesting himself unto all nations"

The Title Page sets the primary standard for the witnesses to be used in the research for a geographical setting for the Book of Mormon. These primary sources are first to be found within the actual textual passages. The Title Page states that it was written to the Lamanite "remnant" and to "Jew and Gentile" which are major themes discussed in the record. This would imply that the prophecies and promises within the text have been chosen, revealed and recorded by divine will and shall all be fulfilled. Therefore, these prophecies about "remnant" and "Gentiles" upon this land become a primary witness and testimony that should supersede any geographical passage in the search for a setting for the Promised Land.

These prophecies and promises about the remnant and Gentiles upon this land should be coupled with the purpose of the Book of Mormon found in the second paragraph.

- *First:* The Past – It is a History, to show "what great things the Lord had done for their fathers."
- *Second:* The Present – The prophetic promises or covenants that the "fathers" have received and how they relate to those to whom it was written.

- *Third:* The Future – That the remnant and Gentiles may know that there are prophecies and promises that pertain to them, and that they are not cast off forever.
- *Fourth:* This record contains the fullness of the Gospel of Jesus Christ and is to be used for the work of the ministry.
- *Fifth:* That Christ will manifest himself unto all nations, indicating that Christian concepts, doctrines, traditions, symbols and myths should be found among “all nations.”

Nephi, upon landing in the New World writes, “*after we had sailed for the space of many days we did arrive at the promised land; and we went forth upon the land, and did pitch our tents; and we did call it the promised land*” (1 Nephi 18:23). The “promised land” motif is intimately connected with each of the five purposes listed above. This connection is apparent throughout the Book of Mormon as the “land of promise” theme and the prophecies and promises about this land are found from the beginning to the end of the record. These prophecies and promises are about: (a) the people who were led to this *land of promise*, their righteousness and wickedness, which led to prosperity or destruction; (b) the fullness of the Gospel of Jesus Christ that was taught and will be taught upon the *land of promise*; and (c) the prophecies and promises recorded therein specifically about the *land of promise* and those who lived upon it and those who will in a time to come.

The scriptural text begins with the promise of families being led to a land choice above all other lands (i.e., the Promised Land) and the prophecies and promises about this land become a major theme throughout the text. The Book of Mormon authors conclude with a review of these prophecies and promises and issue a warning to the “Gentile nation” that will inhabit and inherit *the same land*. The Book of Mormon is a record for the “remnant” and for the “Gentiles” that will be upon this land of promise in the latter days. Therefore, the prophetic sources – the Prophet Joseph Smith and the Book of Mormon itself – should become the first witnesses to be studied to determine a geographical setting for the prophetic place and location of fulfillment.

## Chapter Three

# THE IMPORTANCE OF THE STANDARD WORKS

The Standard Works of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints consist of the Bible, the Book of Mormon, the Doctrine and Covenants, and the Pearl of Great Price. These four canonized volumes comprise “scripture” and set the standards of truth and doctrine, to which even latter-day Prophets are accountable. The Prophet Joseph Smith declared to “all Saints . . . that you do not betray the revelations of God, whether in the Bible, Book of Mormon, or Doctrine and Covenants, or any other that ever was or ever will be given and revealed unto man . . .”<sup>6</sup>

Referenced by John L. Sorenson are the statements of Joseph Fielding Smith about the importance of the scriptures.

It makes no difference what is written or what *anyone* has said, if what has been said is in *conflict* with what the Lord has revealed, we can set it aside. *My words, and the teachings of any other member of the Church, high or low, if they do not square with the revelations, we need not accept them.* Let us have this matter clear.<sup>7</sup>

President Harold B. Lee warns that if anyone teaches a “doctrine that can't be substantiated from the standard church works . . . then you may know by that same token that such a teacher is but expressing his own opinion.”<sup>8</sup> He continues to explain that if a doctrine contained within the scriptures is to be changed or understood differently, that it is only “the President of the Church, who alone has the right to declare new doctrine.”<sup>9</sup> President Lee again explains the importance of the Standard Works:

I don't care what his position is, if he writes something or speaks something that *goes beyond anything that you can find in the standard church works*, unless that one be the prophet, seer, and revelator—please note that one exception—you may immediately say, “Well, that is his own idea.” And *if he says something that contradicts what is found in the standard church works*, you may know by that same token that it is false, regardless of the position of the man who says it.<sup>10</sup>

The statements above inform and teach that the scriptures become the Standard of truth and doctrine for all in the Church. Every individual, general authority, and even the Prophet and President of the Church, are held responsible and accountable to this standard we call the scriptures. The President and Prophet “alone,” not apostle or any other individual, has the authority to change scripture or declare new doctrine.

There exists in the church three degrees of public statements on accepted doctrine. They are:

- *Revelation.* This is scripture to which all leaders, even the Prophet must adhere.
- *Declaration.* This is the change of a doctrine or scripture, or the declaration of new revelation. The “Declaration” can only be done by the Prophet and President of the Church. An official Declaration begins by the sustaining of the Prophet as President of the Church and a Prophet, Seer and Revelator, and the reading of the new doctrine, or revelation, and the acceptance of this doctrine as the word and will of

the Lord by common consent. These Declarations are then considered canonized and added to our Standard Works.

- *Proclamation.* A Proclamation is an official statement of church policy and accepted doctrine on a given subject or current issue based on existing revelations and scriptures. It is not a change of scripture or declaration of new doctrine, it defines the belief and doctrine of the church on the subjects addressed within the proclamation.

The scriptures themselves are the best commentary on the scriptures and any search for truth must include the witness of the words within the “standards” that are written by the spirit of prophecy and revelation. A textual study of Book of Mormon geography should include an unbiased review of *all passages that might pertain to this subject*. Scriptural research must be done without trying to redefine the words and statements in the scriptures for the purpose of any personal agenda. The Standard Works are the standards of truth and, therefore, supersede any and every personal or hypothetical interpretation.

### *The Book of Mormon*

The Book of Mormon, written by “way of commandment and also by the spirit of prophecy and revelation,” is one of the four Standard Works of the Church. This book, Joseph Smith declares, is “the most correct book on the earth” and he continues by stating that a “man will get nearer to God by abiding by its precepts than any other book.”<sup>11</sup> Experience teaches that the test of value within any type of literature is always internal rather than external; the place where a book is written or the character of the author does not diminish the value of the content. The test of value of the written word is always internal rather than external. Likewise truth is to be found in the pages that are written by prophecy and revelation, rather than in the external evidences.

The geographical search of Book of Mormon lands must begin within the text, an internal search, rather than external. To

begin this search based on geographical features of a physical landscape that can only be determined by hypothetical conjecture is not a sound procedure. The many maps of scriptural lands begin their search or base their theories by presenting as external proofs, a real or imagined landscape and map with a "narrow neck of land." The Book of Mormon is an ancient record set in a real place in real time and real space as the text declares. It is a "tour de force," it is a real history, and was written by prophets of God that were inspired to include those words, doctrines, and concepts to restore those plain and precious truths for the remnant of Joseph.

A study of the prophecies and promises within the text of the Book of Mormon for which the record was preserved is the most solid foundation to begin a search for the geographical evidence of a setting for this sacred volume. The statements in the passages of scripture more than just hint at a geographical location for the events of the Book of Mormon, they actually define it, as will be seen later. As these scriptures are examined it must be remembered that these passages are inspired, they are the words the Lord would want us to read and understand. Some may believe that the book does not contain the information necessary to determine its setting and therefore an understanding of the text of necessity requires the theories, hypothetical maps and interpretations by highly educated, learned and wise men, rather than giving proper heed to the text itself, or the translator.

## ***A Hebrew Text***

The Book of Mormon is generally considered to be written originally in "reformed Egyptian" and founded in a Hebrew or Semitic based language and/or grammar. Because of this premise there have been a number of popular articles and even books written on "Hebraisms" in the Book of Mormon. John A. Tvedtnes writes:

Though the Book of Mormon expressly states that it is written in the "language of the Egyptians," (1 Ne. 1:2), nevertheless, it quite clearly reflects a number of

Hebrew idioms and contains numerous Hebrew words. This is no doubt due to the fact that the Nephites retained the Hebrew language, albeit in an altered form (See Mormon 9:35). Moreover, it is not impossible that the plates themselves contained Hebrew words, idioms, and syntax written in Egyptian cursive script<sup>12</sup>

These “Hebraisms” run from single words to complete phrases that are mostly found in ancient Semitic writings. The study of Hebrew words and grammar in the Book of Mormon is often used in an apologetic way to substantiate this scripture as an ancient text of Semitic origins. This type of study would then verify that the Book of Mormon, though inspired by prophecy and revelation, could only have been written by a Hebrew or Semitic language-based people in an ancient setting. John Welch, founder of FARMS writes that “If chiasmus can be convincingly identified in the Book of Mormon, then specific Hebraisms will testify of its origin, because there existed no chance that Joseph Smith could have learned of this style through academic channels.”<sup>13</sup>

## *A Controlled Translation*

These “Hebraisms” in the Book of Mormon are considered so controlled that it becomes apparent that the text itself could only come by the power of God. Royal Skousen, an LDS scholar, writes about this control as proof of the divine nature of the text:

In fact, the occurrence of non-English Hebraisms such as the *if-and* construction strongly suggests that the text was tightly controlled, down to the level of the word at least. And the spelling of names such as *Coriantumr* suggests that control could be imposed down to the very letter.

All of this evidence (from the original manuscript, witnesses' statements, and from the text itself) is thus consistent with the hypothesis that Joseph Smith could actually see (whether in the interpreters themselves or in his mind's eye) the translated English text—word for word and letter for letter—and that he read off this revealed text to his scribe. . . the evidence suggests that Joseph Smith was not the author of the Book of Mormon, not even its English language translation,

although it was revealed spiritually through him and in his own language.<sup>14</sup>

This quote observes that because the text was inspired and translated by the power of God, the “text was tightly controlled down to the level of the word at least” and is proof that Joseph Smith “was not the author.” As was written in 1840 by M. L. Davis who, quoting Joseph Smith, stated that the translation of the Book of Mormon was “direct from heaven” and that Joseph “penned it as dictated by God.”<sup>15</sup> This being the case, the words used within the text scripture are not Joseph’s, but the Lord’s choice of words and the Lord’s translation for us. Therefore; a study of “textual geography” (the theoretical determination of geography by scriptures) should also look at the language and grammatical context, especially of the words of direction and specificity. In other words, the “demonstratives” that gives “*definiteness*,” “*direction*” and “*distance*” within the text.

It is the responsibility of the author to make his message clear so that it requires the least amount of personal interpretation to come to an understanding. The Lord through the Prophet Joseph has used words and phrases that are simple and easy to understand; as Nephi declares, his “soul delighteth in plainness” (2 Nephi 25:4). These words and phrases are not meant to cloud understanding or cause division but provide clarity within the text. Contention most often arises because of private interpretation rather than relying on the clear and simple meaning. The Lord has discussed this problem as many “do err, for they do wrest the scriptures and do not understand them” (Doctrine and Covenants 10:63), sometimes for the sake of personal or popular interpretation.

## ***The Demonstrative “THIS”***

There exists in the Hebrew language words that are called *demonstratives*. In viewing statements in the Book of Mormon, these demonstratives become very important to the study of Book of Mormon geography as these words give direction, proximity, and



answer the question “which” by directly pointing to a noun or pronoun. This same grammatical concept also exists in the English language and should be understood within the same context.

Hebrew like English, and many other languages, uses the demonstratives to directly point at and indicate something, to answer the question of *which*? The answer of “which” will fall into two main classifications:

- *number*, meaning singular or plural, and
- *proximity*, indicating near or remote.

The Hebrew language would also divide the words used into masculine and feminine, which does not necessarily transfer into English usage. *Gesenius’ Hebrew Grammar* states that “the singular Demonstrative pronoun always points out a person or thing that is *present*.”<sup>16</sup>

The Demonstratives are:

	Singular	Plural
Near	<b><i>This</i></b>	<b><i>These</i></b>
Remote	<b><i>That</i></b>	<b><i>Those</i></b>

A simple way of understanding the demonstrative singular is a straightforward cliché: “*this*” is where I am at, and “*that*” is where I’m not. Another example might be: “*This*” dog (pointing to *which* dog) is near me, and “*that*” dog (pointing to *which* dog) is not near. Generally speaking, when object equals are discussed, the singular and plural are related in an odd sort of way. “*This*” may be part of “*These*” (and will be mentioned as such when it is); however “*These*” are not part of “*This*.” For an equal example: “*This*” apple is mine among all “*these*” apples. However, it cannot be the reverse, as in: “all *these* apples are part of *this* apple.” Conversely,

non-equals are different; therefore “*these* seeds may be in *this* apple.”

The important concept to understand is that: the meaning of the demonstrative “*this*” is *singular* (among the plural)—*definite* (within the group)—*specific* (among many) and *always in the proximity of the speaker*; it also must be *intimate* in the knowledge and understanding of the speaker and listener for the word “*this*” to answer the question of which. The word “*that*” is *singular, definite and specific, but it is remote in difference or distance in respect to the speaker*. When equals are discussed and the singular and the plural are used together, the singular is always: more definite, more specific and closer in proximity to the speaker. The use of the demonstrative “*this*” demands that the speaker and the listener both have an intimate knowledge of the specific object of discussion or “*this*” could not be understood by the listener.

There are in the Book of Mormon a few verses that give an interesting example of the singular demonstratives discussing the record of the Book of Mormon “*this*” [which you have] and the Bible or “*that*” [which you don’t have]. The separation seen below is the difference of distance in time and space.

Therefore repent, and be baptized in the name of Jesus, and lay hold upon the gospel of Christ, which shall be set before you, not only in *this record* but also in *the record* which shall come unto the Gentiles from the Jews, which record shall come from the Gentiles unto you.

For behold, *this* is written for the intent that ye may believe *that*; and if ye believe *that* ye will believe *this* also; and if ye believe *this* ye will know concerning your fathers, and also the marvelous works which were wrought by the power of God among them.

Mormon 7:8-9

Notice the singularity, the definiteness, the specificity and the proximity. The very nature and use of the demonstrative, and especially the word “*this*” in the singular form, is that it takes the “guess” out of the conversation, as both the speaker and those spoken to are near and intimate with the object of discussion; as

“this apple” is the one I can see and the one you can see. This grammatical discussion becomes very important if the “Lord had control to the very word” that was used in the text of the Book of Mormon.

Simple generalities, [distance in time and space might be that generality] can and are often found with or without a “definite article.” However, demonstratives are *not* used as a *generality* and therefore they are not meant to be *all inclusive*. One example in Mosiah is worth taking a look at.

And behold, *the king of the people* who are in *the land of Zarahemla* is *the man* that is commanded to do *these things*, and who has *this high gift* from God.

Mosiah 8:14

The *direct object* of the Hebrew sentence is always definite in nature and will generally have the definite article “the” connected to it with the object marker “*et*” attached in the Hebrew. The object marker has no English translation but the definite article will usually remain within the text. This would mean that the direct object should have “the” connected to it. In the verse above “the man” is the direct object *of the sentence*. However, closer observation reveals the *objects of discussion* by the demonstratives, “these things” we are talking about (plural, definite, and the object(s) of discussion). To narrow it down to the most specific item, of “these things” we read of “*this high gift*.” “This high gift” is the most definite, specific and intimate object of the discussion.

Demonstratives are seen as pointing to something specific, therefore even more definite than the article, because they point at “*the which*” at the same time. For example, “the people” is definite but “this people” is definite *and* specific among many. “The land” is definite, yet general or distant, but, “*this land*” is specific among [plural] lands, and intimate in relationship to the speaker and the listener, and always at the point or place of action or speech. The demonstrative “this” cannot be construed or even suggested as a generality. This demonstrative linked with its noun or adjective is

always definite, specific and must be as close to the speaker and listener as possible to be understood correctly.

## ***“This Land”***

The further removed from the speaker in time or in space, the more general and less definite the noun or object becomes. Nephi first learns about *a land* of promise, and when the noun “land” is the subject of discussion it may become *“the land”* of promise. Also if “land” is the direct object of the sentence, in Hebrew it will become “the land” with the definite article. An example of separation of time and space can be seen as Nephi learns of “a land of promise” in 1 Nephi long before he arrives there.

And inasmuch as ye shall keep my commandments, ye shall prosper, and shall be led to *a land of promise*; yea, even *a land* which I have prepared for you; yea, *a land* which is choice above all other lands.

1 Nephi 2:20

Having arrived at “the land of promise” when *the land* becomes the object of discussion, it becomes more definite and specific in nature because of proximity or intimacy. In other words: “this land is where they are at” and “this land” cannot become more definite, or more specific and cannot become any closer to the speaker because it is under his feet. Now, standing on the land of promise it becomes the object of Lehi’s discussion in the first ten verses of 2 Nephi chapter one. Because of the use of the demonstratives, even the prophecies and promises, mentioned below and throughout the Book of Mormon, can only be fulfilled at the same location, (i.e. “this land”) from which the prophets speaks. As Lehi speaks of the events that brought them to the Promised Land he states:

. . . we have obtained *a land of promise, a land which is choice* above all other lands; a land which the Lord God hath covenanted with me should be *a land for the inheritance* of my seed. Yea, the Lord hath covenanted *this land* unto me, and to my children forever, and also

*all those who should be led out of other countries by the hand of the Lord.*

... none come into this land save they shall be brought by the hand of the Lord.

Wherefore, *this land* is *consecrated unto him whom he shall bring*. And if it so be that they shall serve him according to the commandments which he hath given, *it shall be a land of liberty* unto them; wherefore, they shall *never be brought down into captivity*...

... it is wisdom that *this land* should be *kept as yet from the knowledge of other nations*...

... I, Lehi, have obtained a promise, that inasmuch as those whom the Lord God shall bring out of the land of Jerusalem shall keep his commandments, they shall prosper upon the face of *this land*; and they shall be *kept from all other nations*, that they may possess *this land* unto themselves. And if it so be that they shall keep his commandments they shall be blessed upon the face of *this land*, and *there shall be none to molest them*, nor to take away the land of their inheritance; and they shall dwell safely forever.

2 Nephi 1:5-9

The same perception also appears in Jacob's inspired words below as it can be seen that "this land" is the land where he is physically located. The manifestation and definition of the demonstrative is imperative in the understanding of the passage:

But behold, *this land*, said God, shall be a land of thine inheritance, and the Gentiles shall be blessed upon the land.

And *this land* shall be a land of liberty unto the Gentiles, and there shall be no kings upon the land, who shall raise up unto the Gentiles.

And I will fortify *this land* against all other nations.

2 Nephi 10:10-12

The phrase "this land" in the passages above, and all others, must be intimate to the speaker and the listener, or the prophet writing the text. "This land" must then be definite, specific, and under the feet of the listener to answer the question of "which land." The demonstrative solidifies the understanding of which land is "this land," the land where they are. Because of these

demonstratives the land where they are must be the same land where the specific prophecies and promises are to be fulfilled.

Another clear example of the use of the demonstrative “this land” by the Lord is found in Section 101 of the Doctrine and Covenants wherein it states, “And for this purpose have I established the Constitution of *this land*, by the hands of wise men whom I raised up unto this very purpose, and redeemed the land by the shedding of blood. (D&C 101:80) The Lord’s use of the phrase “this land” could only mean the United States of America in this context, because it was the nation for which the Constitution was established, and was the same land under the feet of the Prophet, Joseph Smith at the time he received this revelation. The demonstratives always answer the question of “which.”

## ***Church Established in This Land***

The Savior teaches in 3 Nephi 21 about the Gentiles that will inhabit this land of promise. As reviewed above, Chapter Twenty one of Third Nephi and Section 10 of the Doctrine and Covenants have parallels that cannot be ignored. An important declaration by the Lord to the Nephites and then to Joseph Smith is about *the work that the Gentiles will do upon this land of promise*. That work is the establishment of the Church of Jesus Christ.

### ***3 Nephi 21***

*22 But if they will repent and hearken unto my words, and harden not their hearts, I will establish my church among them, and they shall come in unto the covenant and be numbered among this the remnant of Jacob, unto whom I have given this land for their inheritance;*

### ***D&C: 10***

*53 And for this cause have I said: If this generation harden not their hearts, I will establish my church among them.*

Notice that Christ states in Third Nephi that “I will establish my church among them” speaking of the Gentiles in this

Promised Land. Similarly in Doctrine and Covenants 10:53 above, the Savior reveals the same to the Prophet Joseph Smith about the Gentiles upon the same Promised Land, saying, that “I will establish my church among them.” This Promised Land, He reveals in the prior verses, will be a “land of freedom” (3 Ne. 21:4, and D&C 10:51) that they might take the Gospel and His words He taught in Third Nephi to the remnant that remain in the land which they (the Gentiles) now possess. This is fulfilled, in part, in 1830 shortly after the Church was organized and established by the Gentiles in the Gentile nation that occupies the same Promised Land.

Because of specifics and generalities, the only way that the words “this land” (the singular among the plural) found in the Book of Mormon could be forced to mean the entire western hemisphere, is for the Nephite writers to be intimate and familiar with the entire extent of the land from north to south, and from east to west before the statements were made. The use of the phrase “this land” would indicate that there were other lands that were not part of “this land” indicating within the text, a non-hemispherical setting. The phrase “this land” can only be defined as *singular* within “lands” around the speaker to even warrant the need of the demonstrative. If the discussion was meant to include all the lands within the hemisphere that are connected at the point or place of discussion, the text would not require the demonstrative “this” but only the definite article. One would not say “this chair” in a room full of chairs to mean all chairs. Nor would one say “this land” in a hemisphere of many lands.

The words “this land” is *definite* and *specific* because it cannot be confused with any other land or lands, because of its understood proximity to the speaker, as it cannot get any nearer, and must be the very land upon which they stand, speak, and live. An example of this concept is clearly visible in the Book of Mosiah as Limhi speaks to Ammon and his brethren stating: “I am Limhi, the son of Noah, who was the son of Zeniff, who came up out of *the land* of Zarahemla to inherit *this land*, which was the land of their fathers, who was made a king by the voice of the people” (Mosiah 7:9). In this example the use of this demonstrative phrase “this

land” can only mean “where they are at” and cannot to be confused with any other part of the lands that might be near.

The quote above by Royal Skousen stated that “the occurrence of non-English Hebraisms . . . strongly suggests that the text was tightly controlled, down to the “level of the word at least” believing this should then inform the reader that even the use of the “demonstratives” indicating “singular and plural” as well as “near or remote” is inspired and controlled by divine intervention. The use of the demonstrative paradigm and the Hebrew “zeh” can easily be found in almost any Hebrew Grammar. Suffice it to say, the demonstratives used in Classical Hebrew are without question evident in Book of Mormon passages. This important grammatical and “inspired” use of the demonstrative often seems to be ignored within the Book of Mormon text, or redefined and forced to fit generalities that are not intended by the author/translator; ancient, modern or divine.

The scriptures themselves are the best commentary on the scriptures. The Book of Mormon loudly declares a geographical setting when viewed in context with the Doctrine and Covenants, as will be demonstrated. The witness of the Standard Works and the words of the prophet translator, Joseph Smith, will provide insights into the geography of the Book of Mormon that have too often been purposefully neglected for the sake of supporting a particular theory, often based on consensus and/or monumental ruins. As noted above, the scriptures are the standard, the Iron Rod to which all must hold fast.



## END NOTES

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<sup>1</sup> John L. Sorenson, Review of Books on The Book of Mormon 6, no. 1 (1994): 304; Joseph Fielding Smith, *Doctrines of Salvation*, 3:203 emphases in original. See also: Harold B. Lee, *Stand Ye in Holy Places* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1974), 109-110; 162-163.

<sup>2</sup> John L. Sorenson, *Mormons Map*, (Provo; FARMS, BYU, 2000), 4.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>4</sup> John L. Sorenson, *The Geography of Book of Mormon Events*, (Provo; FARMS, BYU, 1990), 209-210.

<sup>5</sup> George Q. Cannon "The Book of Mormon Geography," *Juvenile Instructor*, 25:1 (1 January 1890), 18-19.

<sup>6</sup> *History of the Church*, 3:385. Hereafter cited as: *H.C.*

<sup>7</sup> John L. Sorenson, "Review of Books on The Book of Mormon" 6, no. 1 (1994): 304; Joseph Fielding Smith, *Doctrines of Salvation*, 3:203. Emphases in original.

<sup>8</sup> Harold B. Lee, *Stand Ye in Holy Places* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1974), 109-110;

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.* p.162-163.

<sup>11</sup> *History of the Church*, 4:461.

<sup>12</sup> John A. Tvedtnes "Hebraisms in the Book of Mormon: a Preliminary Survey," *BYU Studies*, vol. 11 (1970-1971), Number 1 - Autumn 1970, 50.

<sup>13</sup> John W. Welch "Chiasmus in the Book of Mormon," *BYU Studies*, vol. 10 (1969-1970), Number 1 - Autumn 1969, 75.

<sup>14</sup> Royal Skousen. "Translating the Book of Mormon, Evidence from the Original Manuscript," in: *Book of Mormon Authorship*

*Revisited: The Evidence for Ancient Origins*, Ed. by Noel B. Reynolds, [Provo: Foundation for Ancient Research and Mormon Studies, 1997] Chapter 4, Conclusion.

<sup>15</sup> Andrew F. Ehat and Lyndon W. Cook, *The Words of Joseph Smith: The Contemporary Accounts of the Nauvoo Discourses of the Prophet Joseph*, [Provo: BYU Religious Studies Center, 1980], 34.

<sup>16</sup> *Gesenius' Hebrew Grammar*, (1982) p. 442. § 136  
"Demonstratives"

<sup>17</sup> Joseph Fielding Smith, *Answers to Gospel Questions*, 5 vols. (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1957-1966), 2: 105. "In the day of regeneration, when all things are made new, there will be three great cities that will be holy. One will be the Jerusalem of old which shall be rebuilt according to the prophecy of Ezekiel. One will be the city of Zion, or of Enoch, which was taken from the earth when Enoch was translated and which will be restored; and the city Zion, or New Jerusalem, which is to be built by the seed of Joseph on this the American continent.

<sup>18</sup> Heber J. Grant, *Conference Report, April 1930*, 7.

<sup>19</sup> Alvin R. Dyer, *Conference Report, October 1968*, Third Day — Morning Meeting 110.

<sup>20</sup> Hugh W. Nibley, "Scriptural Perspectives on How To Survive the Calamities of the Last Days," *BYU Studies*, vol. 25 (1985), Number 1 - Winter 1985

<sup>21</sup> John L. Sorenson and Matthew Roper, "Before DNA," *Journal of Book of Mormon Studies* (Provo, Utah: FARMS, 2003), 3. Reprinted and available on fairlds.org

<sup>22</sup> John L. Sorenson in, *Book of Mormon Authorship Revisited: The Evidence for Ancient Origins* (Provo: Foundation for Ancient Research and Mormon Studies, Ed. by Noel B. Reynolds, 1997)

<sup>23</sup> 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: Joseph Smith Jr., "The Wentworth Letter," *Ensign*, Jul 2002, 27.

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<sup>24</sup> Joseph Smith, *Discourses of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, compiled by Alma P. Burton [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1977], 275 – 276.

<sup>25</sup> 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: Joseph Smith Jr., "The Wentworth Letter," *Ensign*, Jul 2002, 27.

<sup>26</sup> *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, Joseph Fielding Smith [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1976], 85.

<sup>27</sup> *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, Joseph Fielding Smith [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1976], 85.

<sup>28</sup> Brigham Young, *Discourses of Brigham Young*, John A. Widtsoe, Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1954, 119.

<sup>29</sup> *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, p. 157. See also, Mark E. Petersen, *Adam: Who Is He?* Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1976, 11 - 12.

<sup>30</sup> Brigham Young, *Discourses of Brigham Young*, John A. Widtsoe [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1954], 122.

<sup>31</sup> *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, p. 158. See also, Mark E. Petersen, *Adam: Who Is He?* [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1976], 12.

<sup>32</sup> Doctrine and Covenants Section 116. *H.C.*, Vol. 3 p. 148.

<sup>33</sup> John Taylor, *Mediation and Atonement* [Salt Lake City: Deseret News, 1882], 69 - 70. "It was stated by the Prophet Joseph Smith, in our hearing while standing on an elevated piece of ground or plateau near Adam-ondi-Ahman fn (Davis Co., Missouri), where there were a number of rocks piled together, that the valley before us was the valley of Adam-ondi-Ahman; or in other words, the valley where God talked with Adam, and where he gathered his righteous posterity, as recorded in the above revelation, and that this pile of stones was an altar built by him when he offered up sacrifices", See also: Robert J. Matthews, *A Bible! A Bible!* [Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1990], 29. According to Wilford Woodruff, President Brigham Young once said: "Joseph, the Prophet, told me that the Garden of Eden was

in Jackson County, Missouri. When Adam was driven out he went to the place we now call Adam-ondi-Ahman, Daviess County, Missouri. There he built an altar and offered sacrifices."

<sup>34</sup> Doctrine and Covenants 107:40-53.

<sup>35</sup> Doctrine and Covenants 107:54

<sup>36</sup> Moses 6:17, 41, 42; Moses 7:9-20

<sup>37</sup> 3 Nephi 11:1-8.

<sup>38</sup> H.C. 3: 34-35. "We arrived at Colonel Lyman Wight's home. He lives at the foot of Tower Hill (a name I gave the place in consequence of the remains of an old Nephite altar or tower that stood there), where we camped for the Sabbath. In the afternoon I went up the river about half a mile to Wight's Ferry, accompanied by President Rigdon, and my clerk, George W. Robinson, for the purpose of selecting and laying claim to a city plat near said ferry in Daviess County, township 60, ranges 27 and 28, and sections 25, 36, 31, and 30, which the brethren called "Spring Hill," but by the mouth of the Lord it was named Adam-ondi-Ahman, because, said He, it is the place where Adam shall come to visit his people, or the Ancient of Days shall sit, as spoken of by Daniel the Prophet."

<sup>39</sup> Joseph Fielding Smith, *Doctrines of Salvation*, 3 vols. edited by Bruce R. McConkie [Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1954-1956], 3: 66. "There are many references in the Bible to Zion, a land or place separate and distinct from Jerusalem. Two such passages are found in the 2nd chapter of Isaiah and the 4th chapter of Micah. It would be foolish to say that these references to Zion were to the hill in Jerusalem where David dwelt. Through modern revelation the Lord has made it known that the American continent is Zion. It is to be on this land that the city Zion, the New Jerusalem, shall be built. These predictions are clearly stated in the Book of Mormon and are in perfect accord with the writings of the Bible. . . This western continent is known as the land of Joseph and is also designated as the land of Zion. The holy city which is to be built upon this land is sometimes called the City of Zion. We should keep in mind that these terms (City of Zion, and New Jerusalem) have reference to the same

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sanctified place from whence shall go forth the law, with the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. Enoch's city was also called Zion, which means by interpretation, the pure in heart."

<sup>40</sup> Moses 7:62-64; See also: Monte S. Nyman and Charles D. Tate, Jr., eds., *Fourth Nephi through Moroni: From Zion to Destruction* [Provo: BYU Religious Studies Center, 1995], 217 - 218. Speaking of verse 62, Nyman and Tate state "This verse clearly refers to our time—the dispensation of the fulness of times. Where will the elect be gathered? That gathering, said the Lord, is "unto a place which I shall prepare, an Holy City . . . for there shall be my tabernacle, and it shall be called Zion, a New Jerusalem" (Moses 7:62). To Enoch, the archetypal Zionist prophet, the Lord continued: Then shalt thou and all thy city meet *them there* [that is, Enoch's city Zion, meets Zion, the New Jerusalem, in this land],'

<sup>41</sup> *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, p. 157. "Daniel in his seventh chapter speaks of the Ancient of Days; he means the oldest man, our Father Adam, Michael, he will call his children together and hold a council with them to prepare them for the coming of the Son of Man. He (Adam) is the father of the human family, and presides over the spirits of all men, and all that have had the keys must stand before him in this grand council. This may take place before some of us leave this stage of action. The Son of Man stands before him, and there is given him glory and dominion. Adam delivers up his stewardship to Christ, that which was delivered to him as holding the keys of the universe, but retains his standing as the head of the human family." See also: Mark E. Petersen, *Adam: Who Is He?* [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1976], 11 - 12.

<sup>42</sup> Daniel 7:9-22.

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*, See also: *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, p. 157. "The Priesthood was first given to Adam; he obtained the First Presidency, and held the keys of it from generation to generation. He obtained it in the Creation, before the world was formed, as in Gen. 1: 26-28. He had dominion given him over every living creature. He is Michael, the Archangel, spoken of in

the Scriptures. Then to Noah, who is Gabriel; he stands next in authority to Adam in the Priesthood; he was called of God to this office, and was the father of all living in his day, and to him was given the dominion. These men held keys first on earth, and then in heaven. . . . Daniel in his seventh chapter speaks of the Ancient of Days; he means the oldest man, our Father Adam, Michael, he will call his children together and hold a council with them to prepare them for the coming of the Son of Man. He (Adam) is the father of the human family, and presides over the spirits of all men, and all that have had the keys must stand before him in the grand council. This may take place before some of us leave this stage of action. The Son of Man stands before him, and there is given him glory and dominion. Adam delivers up his stewardship to Christ, that which was delivered to him as holding the keys of the universe, but retains his standing as head of the human family. . . ."

<sup>44</sup> Ezra Taft Benson, "Our Divine Constitution," *Ensign*, Nov 1987, 4. See also Marion G. Romney, "America's Destiny," *Ensign*, Nov 1975, 35, President Marion G. Romney, in "America's Destiny," *Ensign*, Nov 1975, 35, like President Benson makes it clear that the United States of America is the land of promise prophesied about in the Book of Mormon. He adds testimony to the Prophecies and Promises listed that they refer to the land of the United States of America. President Romney states: "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'.

<sup>45</sup> Marion G. Romney, "America's Destiny," *Ensign*, Nov 1975, 35. See also an explanation of the Promised Land in: N. Eldon Tanner, "If They Will But Serve the God of the Land," *New Era*, Jul 1977, 36.

<sup>46</sup> Mark E. Petersen, *The Great Prologue* (1975) pp5-6.

<sup>47</sup> See: 2 Nephi 10:18; 3 Nephi 16:13; 21:6; 30:2. Each prophecy records that the Gentiles brought to this Promised Land will be numbered among the House of Israel.

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<sup>48</sup> See: Joseph Fielding Smith Jr., *Doctrines of Salvation* (1955), 3 vols. 3:248, 253.

<sup>49</sup> Spencer W. Kimball, *The Teachings of Spencer W. Kimball*, edited by Edward L. Kimball [Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1982], 403

<sup>50</sup> B. H. Roberts, *A Comprehensive History of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, 6 vols. [Salt Lake City: Deseret News Press, 1930], 6: 567.

<sup>51</sup> *H.C.* 3:331

<sup>52</sup> Newel Knight, *Autobiography and Journal*, ca. (1846-1847), 133-136. Church Archives.

<sup>53</sup> *Ibid.* 198-206,

<sup>54</sup> Lucy Mack Smith, *History of Joseph Smith by His Mother* (Salt Lake City: Stevens & Wallis, Inc., 1945), 82.

<sup>55</sup> *H.C.* 1: 120.

<sup>56</sup> The writers of the articles of 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) accessed 3/4/2009.

<sup>57</sup> Autobiography of Parley P. Pratt, pp. 56-61. See also, Andrew Jensen, *The Historical Record*, Vol. 7, p389, 1888.

<sup>58</sup> Andrew Jensen, *The Historical Record*, Vol. 7, p387, 1888

<sup>59</sup> Joseph Smith, *Discourses of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, compiled by Alma P. Burton (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1977), 275 – 276.

<sup>60</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>61</sup> 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: H.C. 1:301. 2. Doctrine and Covenants 87:1.

<sup>62</sup> *Ibid.* 275 - 276. See also HC 1:326.

<sup>63</sup> The Joseph Smith Papers, Journals, Volume 1 page 88

<sup>64</sup> H.C. 2: 79 - 80.

<sup>65</sup> *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



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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."

<sup>66</sup> Donald Q. Cannon, *Church History Regional Studies*, BYU Department of Church History and Doctrine, Regional Studies, Illinois, "Zelph Revisited," 97-109.

<sup>67</sup> Joseph Smith, *The Personal Writings of Joseph Smith*, comp. and ed., 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.

<sup>68</sup> Andrew Jenson, *The Historical Record*, Vol. 7, 601.

<sup>69</sup> Joseph Fielding Smith, *Doctrines of Salvation*, edited by Bruce R. McConkie, 3:239.

<sup>70</sup> *H.C.* 4: 401.

<sup>71</sup> Joseph Smith, *Diary*, kept by Willard Richards, 23 May 1844, LDS Church History Library.

<sup>72</sup> *The Diaries and Journals of Joseph Smith*, ed. Scott H. Faulring, p. 51, 1989.

<sup>73</sup> Dallin H. Oaks, Speech before the Foundation for Ancient Research and Mormon Studies (FARMS), Provo, Utah, October 29<sup>th</sup>, 1993

<sup>74</sup> Jason A. Eshleman, Ripan S. Malhi, David Glenn Smith, "Mitochondrial DNA Studies of Native Americans: Conceptions and Misconceptions of the Population Prehistory of the Americas," *Evolutionary Anthropology*, Vol. 12 pp7-18, 2003,

<sup>75</sup> Hugh Nibley, *Since Cumorah*, 2nd ed. [Salt Lake City and Provo: Deseret Book Co., Foundation for Ancient Research and Mormon Studies, 1988], 214. Quoted in, *The Book of Mormon and DNA Research*, ed. by Daniel C. Peterson (Provo, Utah: The Neal A. Maxwell Institute for Religious Scholarship, 2008), ix.

<sup>76</sup> Joseph Smith, *Encyclopedia of Joseph Smith's Teachings*, edited by Larry E. Dahl and Donald Q. Cannon [Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1997], under "Scriptures"

<sup>77</sup> *The Book of Mormon and DNA Research*, ed. by Daniel C. Peterson (Provo, Utah: The Neal A. Maxwell Institute for Religious Scholarship, 2008), 225.

<sup>78</sup> *Ibid.* p. 225.

<sup>79</sup> *Ibid.* p. 227.

<sup>80</sup> Josephus, Flavius, *Complete Works of Josephus: Antiquities of the Jews, The Wars of the Jews, Against Apion, etc. etc.*, p22-27.

<sup>81</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>82</sup> Joseph Smith, *Encyclopedia of Joseph Smith's Teachings*, edited by Larry E. Dahl and Donald Q. Cannon [Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1997], p. 614.

<sup>83</sup> David Glenn Smith, Distribution of mtDNA Haplogroup X Among Native North Americans, *American Journal of Physical Anthropology* 110:272 (1999)

<sup>84</sup> Virginia Morell, "Genes may link ancient Eurasians, Native Americans," *Science*, Vol. 280, Issue 5363, 1998

<sup>85</sup> David Glenn Smith, Distribution of mtDNA Haplogroup X Among Native North Americans, *American Journal of Physical Anthropology* 110:272 (1999)

<sup>86</sup> Virginia Morell, Genes may link ancient Eurasians, native Americans, *Science*, Vol. 280, Issue 5363, 1998

<sup>87</sup> David Glenn Smith, Distribution of mtDNA Haplogroup X Among Native North Americans, *American Journal of Physical Anthropology* 110:272 (1999). Smith states: "Bailliet et al. (1994) suggested the possibility of a fifth haplogroup, defined by a C = T transition at np 16278 and the absence of the mutations that characterize haplogroups A, B, C or D. Haplogroup X is also characterized by Dde I site losses at np 1715 and np 10394, mutations that are otherwise rare in North America."

<sup>88</sup> Virginia Morell, Genes may link ancient Eurasians, native Americans, *Science*, Vol. 280, Issue 5363, 1998

<sup>89</sup> Virginia Morell, Genes may link ancient Eurasians, native Americans, *Science*, Vol. 280, Issue 5363, 1998. Morell writes: "Haplogroup X was different: It was spotted by Torroni in a

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small number of European populations. So the Emory group set out to explore the marker's source. They analyzed blood samples from Native American, European, and Asian populations and reviewed published studies. "We fully expected to find it in Asia," like the other four Native American markers, says Brown. To their surprise, however, haplogroup X was only confirmed in the genes of a smattering of living people in Europe and Asia Minor, including Italians, Finns, and certain Israelis. The team's review of published mtDNA sequences suggests that it may also be in Turks, Bulgarians, and Spaniards. But Brown's search has yet to find haplogroup X in any Asian population. "It's not in Tibet, Mongolia, Southeast Asia, or Northeast Asia," Schurr told the meeting. "The only time you pick it up is when you move west into Eurasia."

<sup>90</sup> David Glenn Smith, Distribution of mtDNA Haplogroup X Among Native North Americans, *American Journal of Physical Anthropology* 110:272 (1999)

<sup>91</sup> Ripan S. Malhi and David Glenn Smith, Brief Communication: Haplogroup X Confirmed in Prehistoric North America, *American Journal of Physical Anthropology* 119:84–86, 2002

<sup>92</sup> <sup>92</sup> Joseph Smith, History of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 7 vols., introduction and notes by B. H. Roberts [Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1932-1951], 2: 79 - 80.

<sup>93</sup> Jason A. Eshleman and Ripan S. Malhi, Mitochondrial DNA Studies of Native Americans: Conceptions and Misconceptions of the Population Prehistory of the Americas, *Evolutionary Anthropology* 12:7-18, 2003

<sup>94</sup> Maere Reidla and Toomas Kivisild, Origin and Diffusion of mtDNA Haplogroup X, *American Journal of Human Genetics*, Vol. 73:1178-1190, 2003. "Haplogroup X is an exception to this pattern of limited geographical distribution. It is found, generally at low frequencies, in both West Eurasians and some northern groups of Native Americans, but, intriguingly, it is absent in modern north Siberian and East Asian populations, which are genetically and geographically closest to those of

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Native Americans. Among Siberians, haplogroup X mtDNAs have only been detected in some Altaian populations of southwestern Siberia.”

<sup>95</sup> Maere Reidla and Toomas Kivisild, Origin and Diffusion of mtDNA Haplogroup X, *American Journal of Human Genetics*, Vol. 73:1178-1190, 2003

<sup>96</sup> Elena B. Starikovskaya, Mitochondrial DNA Diversity in Indigenous Populations of the Southern Extent of Siberia, and the Origins of Native American Haplogroups, *Annals of Human Genetics*, vol. 69, Issue 1 p67-89, January 2005. “Several “west” Eurasian haplogroups, including H, V, J, U4, U5, W, and X, were also detected. Their confinement to the south-west part of Siberia might be indicative of an Upper Paleolithic dispersal from the Middle East/southeastern Europe, the traces of which have not been erased by subsequent migrations and gene flow. Alternatively, a relatively recent gene flow mediated by women of European/West Asian ancestry could have occurred at the time of the expanding Mongolian Empire.”

<sup>97</sup> Miroslava V. Derenko, Tomasz Grzybowski, The Presence of Mitochondrial Haplogroup X in Altaians from South Siberia, *American Journal of Human Genetics*, 69:237-241, 2001. “To extend the survey of Asian mtDNAs for the presence of haplogroup X, we screened the mtDNAs of a total of 790 individuals for the RFLP markers that define this lineage.

Haplogroup X mtDNAs were detected only in Altaians, at a frequency of 3.5%.

It should also be noted that none of the Altaian X mtDNAs harbored the 225A variant, which is a marker for a major part of haplogroup X. However, the X mtDNAs that we detected in the Altaian sample do not bear the 16213A and 200G variants that are characteristic of most American Indian haplogroup X mtDNAs.”

<sup>98</sup> Ugo A. Perego, Distinctive Paleo-Indian Migration Routes from Beringia Marked by Two Rare mtDNA Haplogroups, *Current Biology* 19, 1–8, January 13, 2009

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- <sup>99</sup> Maere Reidla and Toomas Kivisild, Origin and Diffusion of mtDNA Haplogroup X, *American Journal of Human Genetics*, Vol. 73:1178-1190, 2003
- <sup>100</sup> Jason A. Eshleman and Ripan S. Malhi, Mitochondrial DNA Studies of Native Americans: Conceptions and Misconceptions of the Population Prehistory of the Americas, *Evolutionary Anthropology* 12:7-18, 2003
- <sup>101</sup> Ugo A. Perego, Distinctive Paleo-Indian Migration Routes from Beringia Marked by Two Rare mtDNA Haplogroups, *Current Biology* 19, 1–8, January 13, 2009
- <sup>102</sup> Mann, Charles C. 1491, Vintage Books, 2006, p. 41.
- <sup>103</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>104</sup> Cla'udia L. Dornelles, Is Haplogroup X Present in Extant South American Indians?, *American Journal of Physical Anthropology* 127:439–448 (2005).
- <sup>105</sup> Cla'udia L. Dornelles, Is Haplogroup X Present in Extant South American Indians?, *American Journal of Physical Anthropology* 127:439–448 (2005).
- <sup>106</sup> Cla'udia L. Dornelles,, Is Haplogroup X Present in Extant South American Indians?, *American Journal of Physical Anthropology* 127:439–448 (2005)
- <sup>107</sup> Cla'udia L. Dornelles,, Is Haplogroup X Present in Extant South American Indians?, *American Journal of Physical Anthropology* 127:439–448 (2005)
- <sup>108</sup> Resendez, Andres, Genetics and the History of Latin America, *Hispanic American Historical Review*, Vol. 85(2):p283-298, 2005. Resendez continues by stating in the article: "Studying genetic markers in narrower regions has much to add to our understanding of history. Some tantalizing patterns emerge in the case of Greater Mexico, for example. In the core regions of Mexico—roughly coterminous with the extent of Mesoamerica — haplogroup A predominates, with additional but smaller percentages of the other haplogroups. DNA studies conducted among Nahua, Maya, Mixe, Zapotec, and Mixtec populations show significant genetic similarities. The similarity of
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haplogroup frequencies across these groups is remarkable if we bear in mind that they represent all four major linguistic families of Mesoamerica—Uto-Aztecan, Mayan, Mixe-Zoquean, and Otomanguean, respectively.”

<sup>109</sup> Sorenson, John L. and Roper, Matthew, “Before DNA” in *The Book of Mormon and DNA Research*, Ed. Daniel C. Peterson, The Neal A Maxwell Institute for Religious Scholarship, 208, p. 32. The authors, Sorenson and Roper write that “DNA scientists can be confident that all or part of Mesoamerica was where the Nephite and Lamanite peoples took on their historical identities and where their history recorded in the Book of Mormon was played out”

<sup>110</sup> Shlush LI, Behar DM, Yudkovsky G, Templeton A, Hadid Y, et al. The Druze: A Population Genetic Refugium of the Near East. *PLoS ONE* 3(5): e2105. May 2008

<sup>111</sup> Eurasian and African mitochondrial DNA influences in the Saudi Arabian population, *BMC Evolutionary Biology*, Vol. 7 pp32, 2007, Khaled K Abu-Amero, Ana M. Gonzalez, Jose M. Larruga

<sup>112</sup> Shlush LI, Behar DM, Yudkovsky G, Templeton A, Hadid Y, et al. The Druze: A Population Genetic Refugium of the Near East. *PLoS ONE* 3(5): e2105. May 2008

<sup>113</sup> Shlush LI, Behar DM, Yudkovsky G, Templeton A, Hadid Y, et al. The Druze: A Population Genetic Refugium of the Near East. *PLoS ONE* 3(5): e2105. May 2008

<sup>114</sup> Shlush LI, Behar DM, Yudkovsky G, Templeton A, Hadid Y, et al. The Druze: A Population Genetic Refugium of the Near East. *PLoS ONE* 3(5): e2105. May 2008

<sup>115</sup> Shlush LI, Behar DM, Yudkovsky G, Templeton A, Hadid Y, et al. The Druze: A Population Genetic Refugium of the Near East. *PLoS ONE* 3(5): e2105. May 2008

<sup>116</sup> Feder, Jeanette, Differences in mtDNA Haplogroup Distribution Among 3 Jewish Populations Alter Susceptibility to T2DM Complications, *BMC Genomics*, Vol. 9:198, April 2008. Feder writes: “Results: A total of 1,179 T2DM [Type 2 Diabetes]

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patients comprised of three populations (762 Ashkenazi Jews [Ash], 191 non-Ashkenazi European Jews [Seph], and 226 North African Jews [NAF]), were genotyped and assigned to different mtDNA haplogroups. Almost 90% of the subjects belonged to one of the 12 most prevalent mtDNA haplogroups in Ashkenazi Jews, i.e., K1, K2, U (non-K), H, V, J1, J2, T, N1b, I, X, W.”

<sup>117</sup> Behar, Doron M., Counting the Founders: The Matrilineal Genetic Ancestry of the Jewish Diaspora, *PLOS ONE*, Vol. 3(4):1-16, 2008

<sup>118</sup> Behar, Doron M., Counting the Founders: The Matrilineal Genetic Ancestry of the Jewish Diaspora, *PLOS ONE*, Vol. 3(4):1-16, 2008. Behar states: “One X2b Moroccan Jewish putative founding lineage was analyzed using 2 complete mtDNA sequences. One putative founding lineage in Hg T2 was shared by Iraqi and Iranian Jews, and was assessed by two complete mtDNA sequences. Two putative founding lineages (one in Hg H and one in Hg X2e) were shared by Libyan and Tunisian Jews, and were assessed by the same complete mtDNA information.” And continues by writing: “The Libyan and Tunisian Jewish communities shared among them an X2e1a1a lineage as the most frequent . . . The maternal founding event in Libyan Jews is evident, as 39.8% of their mtDNAs could be related to one woman carrying the X2e1a1a lineage, supported by an earlier observation, where ten out of twenty Libyan Jews were found to share this haplotype.” See also: Shen, Peidong, Reconstruction of Patrilineages and Matrilineages of Samaritans and Other Israeli Populations From Y-Chromosome and Mitochondrial DNA Sequence Variation, *Human Mutation* Vol. 24:p248-260, 2004 “One-half of the Libyan Jews belong to a rare subclade of haplogroup X2e, defined by a transition at np 15310, that is widespread in the Caucasus and Central Asia.”

<sup>119</sup> Behar, Doron M., Counting the Founders: The Matrilineal Genetic Ancestry of the Jewish Diaspora, *PLOS ONE*, Vol. 3(4):1-16, 2008

<sup>120</sup> Thomas, Mark G., Founding Mothers of Jewish Communities: Geographically Separated Jewish Groups Were Independently

Founded by Very Few Female Ancestors, *American Journal of Human Genetics*, Vol. 70:1411-1420, 2002

<sup>121</sup> *The Latter-day Saints' Millennial Star*, "History of Joseph Smith," Vol. 16, page 296, May 13, 1854 "The camp passed through Huntsville, in Randolph County [Missouri], which has been appointed as one of the Stakes of Zion, **and is the ancient site of the City of Manti....**" [Sept. 1838]

<sup>122</sup> History of the Church Vol. 2:79-80, June 3, 1834, 1948 edition

<sup>123</sup> The Personal Writings of Joseph Smith, by Dean C. Jessee, Salt Lake City, Deseret Book, 1984, p324, original document held by the Community of Christ (formerly RLDS) Church

<sup>124</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>125</sup> Charles C. Mann, 1491, *New Revelation of the Americas Before Columbus*, (Vintage Books, New York, 2005), 41.

<sup>126</sup> Shook, Beth Alison Schultz, Smith, David Glenn, "Using Ancient mtDNA to Reconstruct the Population History of Northeastern North America,) *American Journal of Physical Anthropology*, Vol. 137:14-29, 2008

<sup>127</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>128</sup> Charles C. Mann, 1491, *New Revelation of the Americas Before Columbus*, Vintage Books, New York, 2005, 41, 290-291.

<sup>129</sup> James E. Talmage, *Diary*, May 20, 1917. See also Wayne N. May, *This Land*, Vol. 4, (Hayriver Press, Colfax, Wisconsin, 2009), p. 259.

<sup>130</sup> Hugh Nibley, *The Prophetic Book of Mormon* (Salt Lake City and Provo: Deseret Book Co., Foundation for Ancient Research and Mormon Studies, 1989), p. 272.

<sup>131</sup> Hugh Nibley, *An Approach to the Book of Mormon*, 3rd ed. (Salt Lake City and Provo: Deseret Book Co., Foundation for Ancient Research and Mormon Studies, 1988), p. 412.

<sup>132</sup> Beth Alison Shook, Schultz, Smith, David Glenn, "Using Ancient mtDNA to Reconstruct the Population History of Northeastern North America," *American Journal of Physical Anthropology*, Vol. 137:14-29, 2008



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<sup>133</sup> John A. Tvedtnes, documentary produced for FAIR (Foundation for Apologetic Information and Research) entitled: *The Book of Mormon and New World DNA*

<sup>134</sup> At the time of this publication this quote was found on the FAIR (The Foundation for Apologetic Information and Research) web-site: [fairlds.org](http://fairlds.org) with the following address, [http://en.fairmormon.org/Lamanites in the Doctrine and Covenants](http://en.fairmormon.org/Lamanites_in_the_Doctrine_and_Covenants) FAIR states: "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 would be strange if Joseph saw them as 'direct quotes'; not so strange when we understand how he saw the matter.

This means that "Lamanites" to describe the American Indians was Joseph's word choice. 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.'" There is nothing in the statements of Joseph Smith to indicate that he held a "hemispheric" view and it would have to be just an assumption that the words in the cannon of scripture are not the Lord's nor inspired.

<sup>135</sup> This quote of John L. Sorenson, in *Mormon's Map*, is referred to by himself and Matthew Roper, in their article "Before DNA" included in. *The Book of Mormon and DNA Research*, ed. by Daniel C. Peterson (Provo, Utah: The Neal A. Maxwell Institute for Religious Scholarship, 2008), 32.

<sup>136</sup> John L. Sorenson and Matthew Roper, in their article "Before DNA" in. *The Book of Mormon and DNA Research*, ed. by Daniel C. Peterson (Provo, Utah: The Neal A. Maxwell Institute for Religious Scholarship, 2008), 32.

<sup>137</sup> Dr. David Stewart, *DNA and the Book of Mormon*, from personal communication, April 2004 with Martin Tanner.

<http://newsroom.lds.org/ldsnewsroom/eng/commentary/dna-and-the-book-of-mormon> accessed 05.04.09.

<sup>138</sup> Thomas J. Parsons, A High Observed Substitution Rate in the Human Mitochondrial DNA Control Region, *Nature Genetics*, Vol. 15, April 1997 "Thus, our observation of the substitution rate, 2.5/site/Myr, is roughly 20-fold higher than would be predicted from phylogenetic analyses. Using our empirical rate to calibrate the mtDNA molecular clock would result in an age of the mtDNA MRCA [most recent common ancestor] of only ~6,500 y.a., clearly incompatible with the known age of modern humans."

<sup>139</sup> Thomas J. Parsons, A High Observed Substitution Rate in the Human Mitochondrial DNA Control Region, *Nature Genetics*, Vol. 15, April 1997.

<sup>140</sup> Thomas J. Parsons, A High Observed Substitution Rate in the Human Mitochondrial DNA Control Region, *Nature Genetics*, Vol. 15, April 1997.

<sup>141</sup> Laurence Loewe, Mitochondrial Eve: the Plot Thickens, *Trends in Ecology & Evolution (TREE)* vol. 12, no. 11 November 1997.

<sup>142</sup> Ann Gibbons, Calibrating the Mitochondrial Clock, *Science*, Vol. 279. No. 5347, p28-29, 2 January 1998.

<sup>143</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>144</sup> Dr. David Stewart, *DNA and the Book of Mormon*, from personal communication, April 2004 with Martin Tanner.

<http://newsroom.lds.org/ldsnewsroom/eng/commentary/dna-and-the-book-of-mormon> accessed 05.04.09.

<sup>145</sup> For an in-depth discussion of this subject, and others, see Rod Meldrum's, *Discovering the Book of Mormon Remnant through DNA* on the web-site: [www.bookofmormonevidence.org](http://www.bookofmormonevidence.org)

<sup>146</sup> "Did Christ Visit Japan?" by Spencer J. Palmer, *BYU Studies*, vol. 10 (1969-1970), Number 1 - Autumn 1969.

<sup>147</sup> Joseph Fielding McConkie and Robert L. Millet, *Doctrinal Commentary on the Book of Mormon*, 4 vols. [Salt Lake City:

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Bookcraft, 1987-1992], 2: 56. State: "Likewise, we may discover one day that numerous righteous individuals and groups- as with Lehi and his family- were led to other "lands of promise" by an omniscient and all-loving God. What does seem apparent from the allegory is that the gospel has been enjoyed among many nations on earth to a greater extent than is generally realized (see, for example, 2 Nephi 29:12; Joseph Smith Matthew 1:31)."

<sup>148</sup> George Q. Cannon, *Gospel Truth: Discourses and Writings of President George Q. Cannon*, by Jerreld L. Newquist [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1987], 199.

<sup>149</sup> Truman G. Madsen, ed., *The Temple in Antiquity: Ancient Records and Modern Perspectives*; Provo: BYU Religious Studies Center, 1984, p. 61. Madsen discusses the temenos in these words: ". . . traditions make it clear that it was necessary to sink the foundations of the temenos or temple platform deep into the *abzu* or primordial abyss. The temple was thus founded in and rose up out of the primordial waters of creation.

<sup>150</sup> Michael Crichton, *Aliens Cause Global Warming*, (Lecture at California Institute of Technology, Pasadena, CA, January 17, 2003)

<sup>151</sup> Wayne G. Walker PhD., private correspondence, July 12, 2008, Copy in possession by author.