

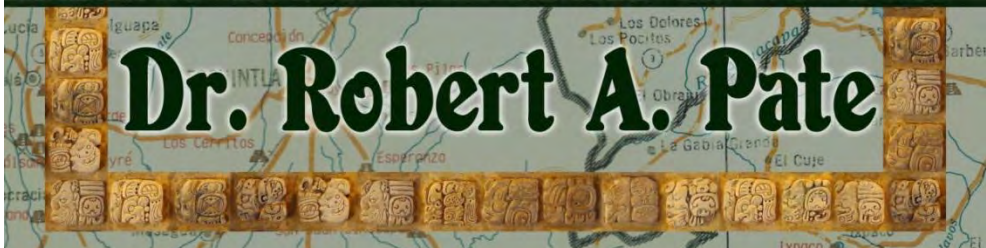


Mormon Footprint



in

MESOAMERICA



Dr. Robert A. Pate

MORMON
FOOTPRINT
IN
MESOAMERICA

BY

ROBERT A. PATE PH.D.

To my father, Alma Jacob Pate, who loved the Scriptures and taught us where blessings come from.

To my mother, a most loyal lady to her husband and family.

To my wife Elaine who made President Ezra Taft Benson's admonition to study the Book of Mormon a beloved reality in our home.

To our children who responded to the Prophets' admonitions.

To the great prophet historian Mormon and his faithful son Moroni for their history and witness of Jesus Christ.

And, to the beloved Prophet Joseph Smith and the day when men will know his history.

MORMON

FOOTPRINT

IN

MESOAMERICA

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First Printing:
February 2012

Printed in the United States of America

ISBN-10: 0985151919

ISBN-13: 978-0-9851519-1-1

Cover design by Adam R. Hopkins

Published by the Alma Jacob Pate Family
2222 West 600 South
Logan, Utah 84321

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Mormon's Footprint in Mesoamerica is a continuation of discovery that follows publication of *Mapping the Book of Mormon: A Comprehensive Geography of Nephite America*; *Mormon Names in Maya Stone*; and *Mormon Key to Maya Code*. The ten years since the first publication have brought many more discoveries which provide additional confirmation of most of the findings and bring into better focus areas that needed correction. Corrections have been found and incorporated in each subsequent book. The Nephite geography is now very well defined. The Jaredite geography, while occupying essentially the same footprint, is much more difficult because of the additional 1600 years and the subsequent reoccupation by the family of Lehi.

In my research it seems that every stone I turn over has gold on the underside. I recognize my weaknesses -- I am not that good. Something is going on and the time must be right for this information to become available.

As Joseph was promised, "I will cause the earth to testify of the truth of these things." And so He has. We are being flooded with information that can be appreciated by those seeking to know. If one is ignorant, it is by choice. Thanks to everyone with integrity who has been willing to share their findings – for dictionaries and lexicons, and readily available internet sources. Special thanks to FAMSI and their website www.famsi.org for Maya glyphs and dictionaries.

Many good friends have provided books, computer resources, ideas, language skills, encouragement, and enthusiasm. Each has served not only as a source but also as a sounding board to question and test the findings.

Thanks to my traveling partners Fred Perkins, Jess Thompson, and Dan McGough. Thanks to Chris McGinty and David Dickey for graphics assistance. Thanks to Joan Smith, Donna Galloway, and Maran Pate for editing help.

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Born in Arizona, Dr. Robert A. Pate lived his early years among the Hispanics and Indians of the southwest desert. His father shaped his love of the scriptures and his interest in antiquities, which were advanced during his mission in the Andes and Colombia-Venezuela Missions. There he learned Spanish, a skill supplemented later with additional classes.

In addition to his language studies, Dr. Pate has a powerful sense of spatial relationships, essential for any geographer. He received his Ph.D. in Mechanical Engineering from Utah State University, and works in research and development. He is no stranger to complex problem investigation, and knows how to draw on every aspect of his background and training and the complementary skills and knowledge of others to solve them. Driven by a deep interest in the subject matter led him to address the problem of identifying the geography of the Book of Mormon. After finding most of the cities and lands, his interest turned to the glyphs and other writings.

Such solutions do not permit parochialism, which inevitably boxes researchers out of the proper solution space. Thus, the most important skill Dr. Pate brings to this field of study is his willingness to follow where the research leads and to keep an open mind and redefine paradigms as discovery dictates.

PREFACE

For the first time since the initial publication of the Book of Mormon in 1830, it is possible to read the entire book and know where all of the important cities and lands are located. The present text is written as a study companion to show the geography of the Book of Mormon in the sequence provided by Mormon and Moroni. The Global Positioning System (GPS) coordinates are provided in parentheses for most locations. This will permit the reader to follow on the global maps and satellite imaging databases presently available. While the text concentrates on the Nephite locations, some Jaredite locations are also mentioned. The Jaredite geography, while occupying essentially the same footprint, is much more difficult because of the additional 1600 years of archaeological destruction. Both are included at the end of the book as an alphabetic listing of all geographic locations mentioned in the Book of Mormon.

The initial findings were documented in a previously published book, *Mapping the Book of Mormon: A Comprehensive Geography of Nephite America*. Additional information on individuals and their names was presented in *Mormon Names in Maya Stone*. The lineages of many of the Book of Mormon families have also been identified in the native literature and the influence of Chinese in names and glyph writing has been established in *Mormon Key to Maya Code*. Even more recently the significance of Sanskrit in the Maya culture has been observed.

The original text was a trail of discovery. After more years of research and many more trips to Mesoamerica, the places and peoples of the Book of Mormon have been more firmly established. Previously there was always a level of uncertainty and ambiguity that could not be avoided. The intervening years of research have been very productive. More dictionaries, lexicons, books, and internet resources now have become

available and most of the ambiguities are now gone.

Much of the previous texts was written to justify every step. The confidence level has greatly increased with the additional findings. The additional findings permit the presentation of the strongest proof and deletion of the speculations that were wanting for better evidence. The less significant ramblings have been deleted.

The elegance of a proof is in the brevity not the volume. Some of the strongest evidence is presented in the present text but this text is presented to be a “guide” and not a “defense.” The bulk of the evidence in the discovery process is presented in the previous texts. The present text is just for the joy of knowing where the Book of Mormon happened and is written for those who want to know.

The results of the research are far beyond the author’s expectations. The presentation is intended to be very readable and very brief. The present text brings forward the geographic findings with the latest and strongest evidence, but without the intimidating mass.

Ancient languages have been of paramount importance in solving Mormon’s geographic puzzle. The ancient writings of the native chroniclers have been most helpful also. Evidence was drawn from many sources and disciplines.



INTRODUCTION

Paradigm Shifts

After the fact, it can be seen that the solution technique begins with “pattern recognition.” To prove any premise that appears to form a pattern of facts, one simply needs to array all available evidence to see if it corroborates or contradicts the premise. No contradictions are allowed. None remained in the final solution to the puzzle. Unresolved ambiguities are allowed.

A friend Eric Rasmussen stated, “The fact that others have spent so much money, resources, and time and not found a single Book of Mormon city is a good indication that they may have started with some improper assumptions.” They possibly have been restricted by paradigms that are not correct.

The findings on the trail of discovery identified the need for some very important paradigm shifts to correct some of the possibly incorrect assumptions. These shifts are mentioned up front for clarity and to eliminate the need to address them throughout the text.

We all see things through our own eyes and interpret them based on our personal database. Paradigm shifts may be required when one realizes his preconceived prejudices do not fit the evidence that his eyes are seeing. Does one have the intellect to recognize the need for change and then have the integrity and strength to make the changes?

Our perception of our world does not matter; it is their perception of their world we are trying to understand. Paradigm shifts are necessary to map their perceptions into our understanding. The author's extensive research has led to the need for several paradigm shifts. The identified paradigm shifts are as follows:

Paradigm Shift 1 -- Myopic Vision

Often the writers in scripture write about their place in space and time as if it were the whole world for all times. We do not govern how they wrote; we govern only how we perceive. With satellite imagery, digital recording, and our grasp of world history we view things differently.

The more subtle and more insidious part of the "I am everything" myopic view is the implied part that "there is nothing more." Writing was painful for the ancients and they did not include peoples, places, and events outside their limited focus. As Mormon stated, "the hundredth part I have not written." Paradigm Shift 1 requires a more open vision of what else was around that they did not bother to mention – the other 99 parts.

Paradigm Shift 2 -- The Whole Land

Each city had a name. The "land" of that same name was just the very limited area around that city and ended when approaching the land associated with another city. The "whole land" does not a continent make. The "lands" tended to be divided by rivers. The rivers on the south coast of Guatemala can be very difficult to cross in the wet season. Cities were positioned where daily crossings were not required.

Thus, Paradigm Shift 2 requires a much narrower interpretation of "the whole land."

Paradigm Shift 3 -- The Narrow Neck of Land

Our global perspective kept the Book of Mormon lands

hidden for 172 years. The narrow neck of land is nothing more than a bridge across the Samalá River. It may have been a lava land bridge at one time that has now collapsed. When the Spaniards arrived it was a narrow wooden bridge. Spanish accounts would indicate that it was like a pontoon bridge with large logs tied together.

Paradigm Shift 4 -- Jaredite Survivors

Ether uses the myopic reference frame when describing the final battle between Coriantumr and Shiz. The destruction of the kingdoms and the kings was quite complete, but there were many survivors. The Jaredites had been scattering for about 1600 years. They did not undo 1600 years of scattering just for the privilege of dying at Cumorah. Pregnant women and children hide and do not go to battle. The dominant Sumerian roots in the Maya languages are clear evidence of surviving Jaredites. From the present language classifications, it appears that Lehi's Hebrew, "accusative nominative" (Hebrew, English, and others), died out and was replaced by the Jaredites Sumerian, "ergative absolute" (Sumerian, Nahuatl, Mayan, Tibetan, Basque and more), thus indicating that the Sumerian roots outnumbered the Hebrew roots.

Paradigm Shift 5 -- Nephite Survivors

Just as there were Jaredite survivors, there were many Nephite survivors for the exact same reasons. Additionally, the Lord promised Nephi that not all of his seed would be destroyed.

Paradigm Shift 6 -- Seashore

The word "seashore" is used to describe the water's edge of any body of water, be it an ocean, sea, lake, pond, river, stream, or tea cup. Additional confusion enters because the Guatemalan mountains are very seismically active. Four volcanos were actively blowing on a previous visit. The ash is not stable and

hurricanes cause great landslides. There are several documented lakes (seas) in the mountains that have now drained. One was near Quetzaltenango (fortress city Lehi) and another was at Guatemala City (Ammonihah).

Paradigm Shift 7 -- Sea Divides the Land

This is an extension of Paradigm Shift 6. The place where the “sea divides the land” is nothing more than the Samalá River on the South Coast of Guatemala which divides the land northward (Desolation) from the land southward (Bountiful).

Paradigm Shift 8 -- Direction Reference Frame

To the Hebrew standing on the Mediterranean shore facing eastward (toward Jerusalem), East was forward; North was to the left hand; South was to the right hand; and West was to the rear, back out to sea. It appears that Mormon may have used this same reference frame on the south coast of Guatemala. Even today in Quiché Maya, left hand is ceremonial North, and right hand is ceremonial South. This rotates the “common” directions by as much as about 45-degrees counter-clockwise from the “cardinal” directions. The amount of rotation depends on the contour of the Pacific coastline locally. They understood and used the “cardinal” directions also.

North and south were relative terms for Mormon. Bountiful was the land southward when discussing Desolation as the land northward (Alma 22:32). Zarahemla was the land southward when discussing Bountiful or Desolation as lands northward (Mormon 1:6 and Ether 9:31). The land of Mulek (Zarahemla) was called the land North when discussing the land Lehi as the land south (Helaman 6:10).

The most enlightening reference is the following, but it must be studied to be understood:

“And they began to know that the Son of God must shortly appear; yea, in fine, all the people upon the face

of the whole earth from the west to the east, both in the land north and in the land south, were so exceedingly astonished that they fell to the earth.” (3 Nephi 1:17)

Notice the sentence structure. “From the west to the east” should be followed by “from the north to the south” for geometric completeness, but it is not. Instead, following Hebrew tradition, it is repeated for emphasis and clarity. “From the west to the east” is exactly “in the land north and the land south.” This would include Bountiful/Zarahemla as the land north and the land of Lehi/Nephi-I as the land south.

Paradigm Shift 9 -- Rapidity of Language Change

When a young buck steals a wife from a neighboring tribe and heads over the mountain to start a new life, the language that will evolve will consist of a combination of the two juvenile vocabularies. As new thoughts and needs arise, new words will be fabricated and added to the growing vocabulary. As young children arrive, the combined vocabulary will continue to grow. The wife’s language will dominate with the children. As existing peoples are encountered in the new land, the language will be further modified. There were many Jaredite survivors. These language changes occur in less than a generation. There are many references in the Book of Mormon about changed languages and the need to teach previously connected peoples their new forms of the languages. See Omni 1:18, Mosiah 1:2, Mosiah 1:4, Mosiah 9:1, and Mosiah 24:4 for examples.

Paradigm Shift 10 -- Place Names Survive

The author continues to be surprised at how well place names survive for thousands of years. Place names can change by translation to a new language. They can change by maintaining the original phonetic representation and incorporating a new language meaning to the old word phonetic value. The Catholic priests used both of these approaches and then added a saint’s

name to the root name. A name change that does not leave linguistic tracks is rare and is often a result of modern archaeologists who don't do their homework to find the original name. Some place names, as used in the Book of Mormon, may be translations into Mormon's recording language and in reality may never have been used in the actual area.

Paradigm Shift 11 -- The Chinese Influence

In recent days the author has finally become aware of how involved the Chinese were in the affairs of the Maya. The principal languages of interest in these investigations, in addition to Maya, have been Hebrew, Sumerian, and Nahuatl, with only superficial Chinese and Sanskrit mixed in. The author has come to realize that the actual glyphs carved in stone and recorded in surviving codices are heavily influenced by Chinese intrusions. The "paraphernalia" associated with the "silk industry" are the big driver in the defining of many of the glyphs.

Paradigm Shift 12 -- The Chroniclers

The conquering Spaniards taught the Spanish language and writing to the natives. Many of the natives were very quick learners. Most of the ancient American texts were burned by Diego de Landa who considered them to be of the devil.

The lecherous conduct of many of the priests let the natives know who was of the devil. The natives started to rewrite their histories and traditions in their native languages using Spanish alphabet characters. Much of this had to be done in secret; and, for safety, authorship is not mentioned on some documents. Several of these documents have survived and been translated, but the translations are not without problems. There were many good Catholic priests who recorded what the natives told them.

The writings by the natives are very helpful, but they are very scrambled and confused. The stories run together, like the time Moses was thrown into the lion's den and the time he slew 1,492

terrorists with the jawbone of an ass while working on the pyramids at the Babylonian space station.

They take great historic events of their past and apply the story line to more recent events. Their great ancestors live too long and appear to be present for many generations. Heroes' accomplishments are applied over again to more recent battles.

There are several surviving documents. Two documents have been most helpful to the author, *Title of the Lords of Totonicapán* and *The Annals of the Cakchiquels*. The first was written by the Quiché Maya (Nephites) and the second by the Xahilá (Mulekites) branch of the Kakchiquel Maya. The author has identified the Quiché as the four Nephite tribes. The three Kakchiquel tribes appear to be a mix of Zoramites, Mulekites, Jaredites, Ishmaelites, and Lamanites. While these groups captured most of the author's attention, these peoples continued spreading and eventually covered all of North and South America.

Paradigm Shift Conclusion

If these paradigm shifts bother you, walk the walk and discover them for yourself. Paradigm shifts were made only after the research data indicated they were necessary. They were not a tool, they were the result.

The Mayanists have made tremendous progress in converting the rocks and pottery into understanding – but they continue to shun any connection with the Book of Mormon. Even Mormon Mayanists choose to distance themselves from the Book of Mormon to achieve credibility.

There are too many gaps in the recorded history to form a rigorous deductive proof of Mormon's writings. The next best option is an inductive proof. The quality of the proof can be seen from the quality of the data fit. Does every piece of this puzzle match all of the known data with no contradictions? You be the judge as to the quality of the fit.

These people and place identifications come from their histories and legends as well as their present locations – they each appear to occupy the same territories where the Book of Mormon left them. When the Spaniards arrived at the hill Cumorah (*K'umarkáh*), the Quiché families, Nehib (Nephi), Tamub (Sam), Ilocab (Jacob), and Cavekib (Joseph) were still archenemies of the Kakchiquel and Tz'tuhil (other Book of Mormon peoples).

The events actually recorded in the Book of Mormon are restricted to a very small central location near the south coast of Guatemala. The smallness has helped hide the actual locations for so many years -- and this because the Book of Mormon uses such grandiose, all inclusive, descriptions (see Paradigm Shifts mentioned above).



CHAPTER 1

OLD WORLD DEPARTURE

Nephi was born of goodly parents and was therefore taught in all the learning of his father, Lehi (1Nephi 1:1). We know that Lehi was a faithful man of resources and understanding. The records that form the Book of Mormon were started by Nephi and abridged and compiled by Mormon. Moroni completed the task, sealed the records, and facilitated the delivery of the plates to young Joseph Smith Jr.

In the first year of the reign of King Zedekiah, the Lord appeared to Lehi while he was praying. Later he received a vision of many things that included the destruction of Jerusalem if the inhabitants did not repent of their abominations. At the Lord's command, Lehi went about Jerusalem prophesying and calling the people to repentance. The people rejected the message, they mocked him, and even sought his life (1 Nephi 1:18-20).

Lehi had faithfully delivered the Lord's message and then, for his protection, he was commanded to leave Jerusalem, with his family, and travel into the wilderness. Lehi had lived all his days in the Jerusalem area, but the land of his inheritance was some distance down from Jerusalem (1Nephi 3:16) – very possibly

Khirbet Beit Lei, which is an archaeological site twenty two miles southwest of Jerusalem. Archaeologists and historians identify a natural spring about one half mile away as Samson's well at Ramah Lehi, written as Ramah Lechi in the Catholic bibles.

In the year 600 BC, Lehi and his family departed into the wilderness as the Lord commanded. Lehi left behind his house, the land of his inheritance, and his gold and silver and precious things – taking only his family, provisions, and tents (1 Nephi 2:4).

Their general course is well defined, but it is the specifics that capture our interest. Lynn and Hope Hilton have written, “The history of Arabia is written with water, not ink. Where there is water there is life – that is the inescapable fact of Arabian life – and the great oases of the Arabian Peninsula do not move from place to place.” They also stated, “As we traveled through the Middle East, we never saw a fresh water source devoid of people; where water is so precious, it is unlikely that many waterholes are unknown” (Hilton 1976, 28 and 38). They mention that there are 118 known water wells spread along the well-traveled Incense Road. It should be noted that man-made wells do not provide water for wildlife. There is also no wildlife where there is no water. Wildlife is quickly depleted or driven off when one pitches his tent near a natural water hole.

They traveled down toward the Red Sea. The time required to arrive at the borders is ambiguous. Scholars have identified extensive use of chiasmus in the Book of Mormon. This can confound the ability to resolve time because the order of events can be switched. To travel from Jerusalem to the Gulf of Aqaba on the Red Sea in three days, would require the use of camels, a standard mode of travel for the time and area. This pace, in excess of 30 miles per day is too fast for unconditioned people carrying provisions and tents. A single tent can weigh 500 pounds (Hilton 1976, 52). This pace and the expected loads would require the use of camels.

There is some ambiguity and question as to whether the three-days travel in the wilderness was to arrive near Aqaba or, after arriving near the Red Sea, to travel an additional three days into the wilderness. Regardless of the pace, camels were the only viable transportation though that area at the time. Lehi was very prosperous and would have had camels available.

The author will go by the order actually written in the Book of Mormon because that is the order that appears to have resulted in the possible discovery of the actual place names. Thus, with the above interpretation, the specific duration is not mentioned for the trip from the Jerusalem area to the borders of the Red Sea. The borders of the Red Sea are where the Gulf of Aqaba opens into the Red Sea. The right arm of the Red Sea is the Gulf of Aqaba. (See Figure 1)

They would have camels and would be following the Frankincense Road that had been functional from the time of Solomon and the Queen of Sheba. This road extended from Gaza on the north to the port city Cana on the south coast of what was the Queen of Sheba's realm -- now the land of Yemen.

The objective of the Queen of Sheba's visit to King Solomon was to maintain this land route open and functional when Solomon more easily could have bypassed it with ships. Trains of 3000 camels routinely traversed this road in just 62 days at 20-25 miles per day. The route was functional in Solomon's day (about 1000 BC) and it remained functional until about the time of Jesus Christ. In 600 BC when Lehi's family fled Jerusalem, the Frankincense Road was in its full glory.

Nabataean tribesmen maintained the route and charged tariffs. Some traveled through the rugged mountains, while others kept closer to the desert to avoid inhabited places where thieves or taxes were a threat. The Frankincense Route was not fixed. As towns or kingdoms tried taxing the caravans passing through them, the merchants would switch their routes, using different passes or treks through the desert. As a result, towns along the route would wax and wane, depending on the route that the caravans took (Nabataea 2010). Many of these stops were cities

or towns while others were simply watering locations or dry encampments in the desert. They averaged between 20 and 25 miles apart.

The route did not follow the coastline because there is too much sand and virtually no vegetation. The route went more inland and was governed by water availability and provender for the camels. It was virtually the only viable route through a very inhospitable land. If there were a better route, they would have used it.

The accounts and the ruins make it clear that in ancient times water was more abundant than it is today. There were many natural springs, wells, large dams, aqueducts, and even canal systems.

Starting at the Mediterranean there was the port city Jenysos (near Gaza), Elusa, Ruheiba, Obadat (possibly 'Oboth in Numbers 21:10, now Avdat), Wadi Fiqreh (several wells along the way), Wadi Arabah (the dry river bed from the Dead Sea to Aqaba), Sela (cliff or rock, anciently reservoirs were strategically located so that the water could be released to wash away any attackers), Rekem (known as Petra), Ayl, Gryn (artesian wells still flow), Hawara (now Humeima), Wadi Ramm, (made famous by the movie Lawrence of Arabia), Al Uyaynah (now Al-Bid), Northern Desert Trek (a stretch of desert with very little water and fodder), Tayma (Tema in Isaiah 21:14-17, large desert oasis around B'ir Haddaj), Meda'in Saleh (Al-Hijr archaeological site, anciently called Hegra also), Dedan (now Al Ula, Isaiah 21:13), Khaybar (a 135-meter by 20-meter dam still stands), Yathrib (now Medina), Southern Desert Trek (another desert stretch with very little water and fodder), Al-Ukhdood (now Najran, oasis), Sa'ada (also Sa'dah), Yathul (now Baraqish), Marib (had a dam one-quarter of a mile wide and canals to irrigate 25,000 acres, the capital city of Sheba), Timna (Qataban Kingdom) and finally port city Cana (Qana', now B'ir 'Ali, Yemen). Prior to the opening of the seaport at Cana, the road went on into the Hadramat district (Nabataea 2010). Hilton states that some of the wells are as much as 65-miles apart in this stretch of the original road. There

would be no game to eat in such an area. Some have selected Salalah in western Oman as the location for Bountiful. Once Cana was established, this cut out the most miserable stretch of the Frankincense Road and Salalah was no longer relevant. The caravans required 62 days of travel, but only 24 towns are identified. There were many camps, and even many dry camps required along the way.

The complete route of the Frankincense Road was presented to show the connections to Lehi's trip as documented by Nephi. Nephi mentions only the River Laman (Valley Lemuel), Shazer, Nahom, and Bountiful. These have all been found by name and will be presented in order.

It should be remembered that there was not one unique route because the routes changed to avoid taxes and thieves. The Liahona would point the way they should go to find food and water, as well as to avoid taxes and thieves (probably there was no distinction between taxes and thieves).

Lehi's family would have joined the Frankincense Road somewhere south of Jerusalem and continued to the Wadi Arabah, possibly near Sela (Rock). The next major stop was Rekem which is an ancient name for Petra (also meaning rock) in Jordan. Ayl was the next major stopping area followed by Gryn and Hawara, which is now named Humeima. They would not follow the shoreline of the Gulf of Aqaba because there are large regions of rough mountains going right down to the shoreline in some places and barren sand in other places.

It should be noted that the route from Jerusalem to Aqaba was a major highway. The biblical cities of Elath and Ezion-gaber at the top of the Gulf of Aqaba were passed by Moses and the Israelites and later this region was a copper mining and processing center for Solomon. There were inns, water, and fodder at the many towns along this route.

Before reaching the Gulf of Aqaba the traveler would need to decide which side of the mountains he wanted to follow. There are mountains east of the Gulf of Aqaba. The Al Hijaz Mountains reaching 6000-feet in elevation are east of the

northern part of the Red Sea and the Asir Mountains reaching 10,000-foot elevation are parallel to the southern half of the Red Sea. Hijaz means “barrier” in Arabic and Asir is from a root word meaning “difficult.” The preferred route was to Wadi Ramm (also spelled Rum and Rumm). The movie, Lawrence of Arabia, was filmed in the Wadi Rum area. This was an inland passage that paralleled the Gulf of Aqaba and the Red Sea.

It is seen from the discovered ruins along the Frankincense Road that the preferred commercial route was east of the mountains except for a mountainous region through Khaybar to Medina. Leaving Medina, it appears that the preferred route was still through the desert on the east side of the Al Hijaz and Asir Mountains all the way to Marib. The water drainage is toward the east in this region, not toward the Red Sea. This was probably the faster route for commercial caravans that could buy feed and afford to pay taxes.

Lehi’s group would have avoided the Gulf of Aqaba by staying on the east of the rugged mountains in the region. After bypassing the Gulf of Aqaba, they probably crossed the drainage divide and went on the west of the Al Higaz Mountains. This is where they first approached the Red Sea. They came down by the borders **near** the shore of the Red Sea and then traveled in the wilderness in the borders which were **nearer** the Red Sea (1 Nephi 2:5).

This is where the clock starts. They then traveled three days in the wilderness and pitched their tents for the first time mentioned (1 Nephi 2:6). This was where the River Laman is mentioned. Pitching multiple 500-pound tents is not a small chore. It appears that they did this only when they wanted to rest for a time and find game. A *wadi* that meets these requirements is named Wadi Azlam and the oasis of significant size in the area is named Shaghab. It is in a location where the *wadi* they were traveling crosses perpendicular to Wadi Azlam. It appears to be in a canyon of significant size and rock structure which drains to the Red Sea. Hilton says that these *wadis* are sand cushioned “superhighways” with gently sloping gradients and comfortable

passageways through rough and otherwise impenetrable hills (Hilton 1976, 38). Just don't be there when the annual rain comes. The key to efficient travel would be to find the *wadis* that run parallel to the Red Sea. This is best done with a Liahona, but Google Earth works well also. It is like connecting the path in a "rat maze." Every tree in the wadi is visible. This is easier done with satellite imagery than on foot or camel back, but still there is no substitute for being there on foot for verification once the path has been selected.

River Laman and Valley Lemuel – Wadi Azlam

The exact route followed by Lehi is not known. They may have stayed to less traveled parts or routes of the Incense Road for safety – they were wanted men in Jerusalem. After approaching the borders of the Red Sea, they traveled into the wilderness three days journey and pitched their tents near a river that Lehi called Laman in a valley he called Lemuel. Lehi lamented (1 Nephi 2:9), "O that thou mightiest be like unto this river, continually running into the fountain of all righteousness!"

A river (*wadi* in Arabic) that meets all these constraints is named Wadi Azlam. It even has half of Laman's name. What does the name convey? First, Laman's name has to do with the verb "to shine" in Arabic, Sumerian, and Ch'ol Maya. In Hebrew no such connection was found. The closest root of interest is found in the Hebrew word *'owlam*, which again has half of Laman's name in it and means: everlasting, forever, perpetual, or long duration. Is this the meaning of Laman's name, or was Lehi just playing on the words?

Let's see what Wadi Azlam may mean. First, examine the word as if it were Hebrew. Compare *'owlam* and *azlam*. These two renditions are very similar phonetically. The slight variation may be from an Arabic rendition of a Hebrew word.

Switching to Arabic, what roots can be found? A Romanized Arabic Dictionary lists only three words beginning with "az",

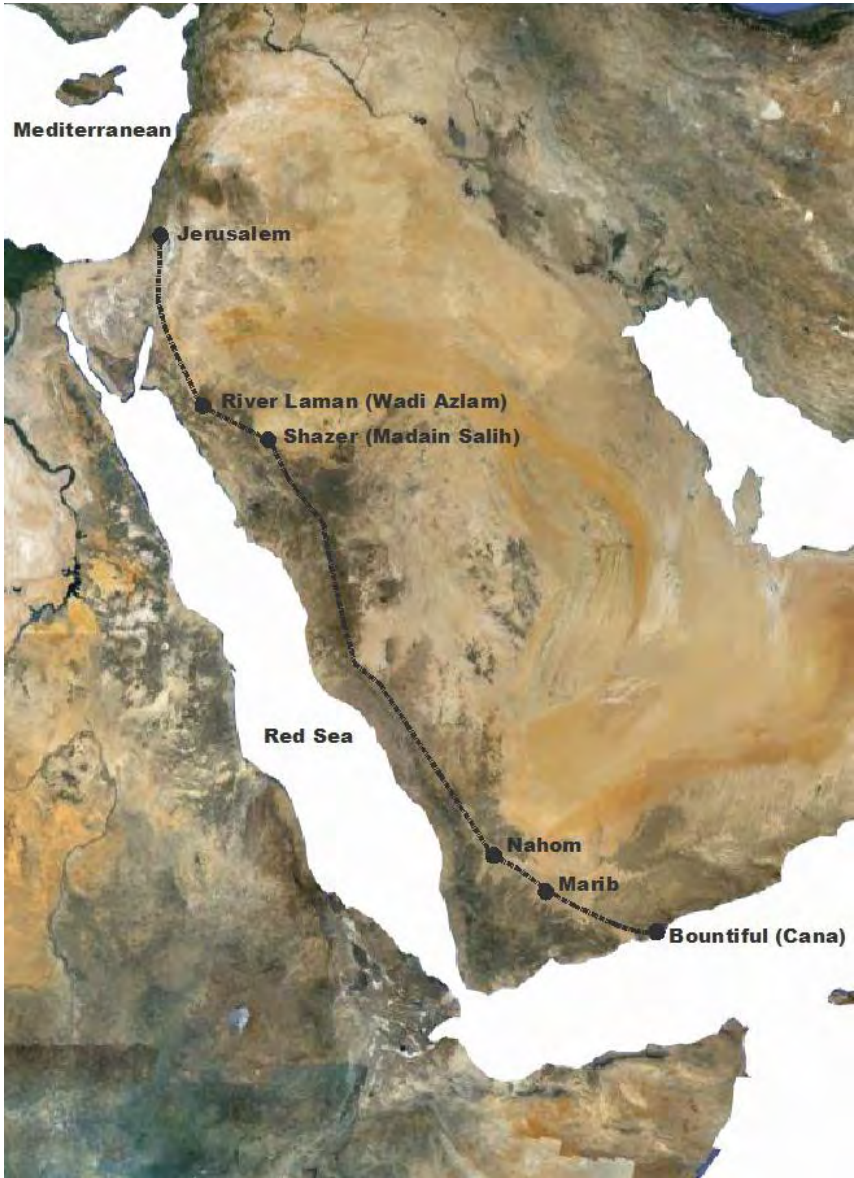


Figure 1. Lehi's trip through desert.

two are of interest. One is *azraq* meaning blue, which shares roots with the Spanish word *azul* and the English word azure, both meaning blue. The second word is *azali* meaning “eternal,” which is identical to the Hebrew definitions of “everlasting” or “perpetual,” and Lehi’s use of “continually.” The Arabic word for water is *ma’*. Can we combine *azali* and *ma’* to get *Azlam* or “eternal water”? Such combinations are common in many languages including Hebrew, Arabic, Sumerian, Spanish, and Maya.

Critics would say that Wadi Azlam does not run continually. Remember that the archaeological evidence indicates that there was more moisture anciently. Also note that Lehi may have been traveling in the rainy season to improve water availability and fodder availability. The rainy season is between November and May. To travel in the heat of the summer might mean death. The Asir region in the south does have summer monsoons.

Lehi did not stay at the river long enough to determine if the river flowed all year, every year – nor does the analogy require that it flow every year, all year. There is a wide spot in the road, or rather an oasis in this *wadi*, at this location named Shaghab (27.2617, 36.4684). Lehi twice sent his sons back to the Jerusalem area -- first for the Brass Plates of Laban and second for Ishmael’s daughters.

The Liahona was given to Lehi while in this location. This brass ball of curious workmanship having two spindles within was essential for their land travels and voyage. It is mentioned among the Maya by the Quiché and Kakchiquel chroniclers. It is mentioned in the Nahuatl dictionary as the *tlayacana*, which means “it leads.”

Lehi and the families packed their tents, crossed the river, and headed into the wilderness. They traveled four days and arrived at a place they called Shazer (1 Nephi 16:13).

Shazer -- Split Stone

Going four days down the trail, or about 100 miles, one arrives at a Frankincense Road stop now named Meda'in Saleh (26.8100, 37.9646) or Cities of Rock (26.7877, 37.9713). This is Shazer, as we will see. At Shazer they hunted and rested (1 Nephi 16:13-14).

Meda'in (or Mudun) is plural, Medina is singular. The location of the land of Midian, where Jethro, the father-in-law of Moses lived, is uncertain to biblical scholars but is thought to be the mountainous region east of the Gulf of Aqaba. May we propose that it extended to include some of the mountainous region east of the Red Sea also – say possibly to the Meda'in Saleh area? Compare Midian and Meda'in. Midian is not lost; they just did not look close enough to find it.

Sela in Hebrew means “the rock” and also “crag” and “cliff.” Another Hebrew word for rock is *zur*, as in *Shazur* or *Shazer*. Another Hebrew word adds well to *zur*. It is *shaca'* (pronounced *shaw-sah'*). Combine the two words *sha-sa-zur* and remove the stutter and one has *shazur* or “split rock”; but why all the verbal mayhem? The answer is *siq*.

Al-Siq is the main entrance to the ancient city of Petra (Rekem). The dim, narrow gorge, or slot canyon is a *siq* and it winds approximately one mile to Petra and opens at an elaborate ruin (see Figure 2). Indiana Jones traversed this path in *Raiders of the Lost Ark*. The ruin (tomb or treasury) was built by the Nabataens. Nabatea, mentioned in Assyrian texts, is south of Edom. The Nabateans occupied the land of Midian. The Nabateans occupied Meda'in Saleh -- so this possibly was part of the land of Midian. The Nabatean's name may have descended from Nebat (2 Chronicles 13:6). Jeroboam, of the tribe of Ephraim, led a tax revolt and split part of Solomon's old kingdom from Solomon's son Rehoboam. Nebat was the son of Jeroboam who was the servant of Solomon. In this position, there may have been some connection with the Incense Road. Recall that

the Nabateans controlled the Frankincense Road for many centuries.

There is another much shorter *siq* near Meda'in Saleh. The ruins are now called *Al-Hijr* meaning “the stone.” An older name was *Hegra*. Compare *Hijr* and *Hegra* with *hagar* (stone in Egyptian Arabic), *hajar* (stone in Syrian Arabic), and *hjar* (stone in Arabic), and one realizes that they are just different orthographic renditions used to Romanize or transliterate the Arabic word for “stone.”

The *siq* at *Al-Hijr* or Meda'in Selah is the “split stone” for which Lehi used the Hebrew combined word Shazur, or Shazer. The *siq* is shown in Figure 3.

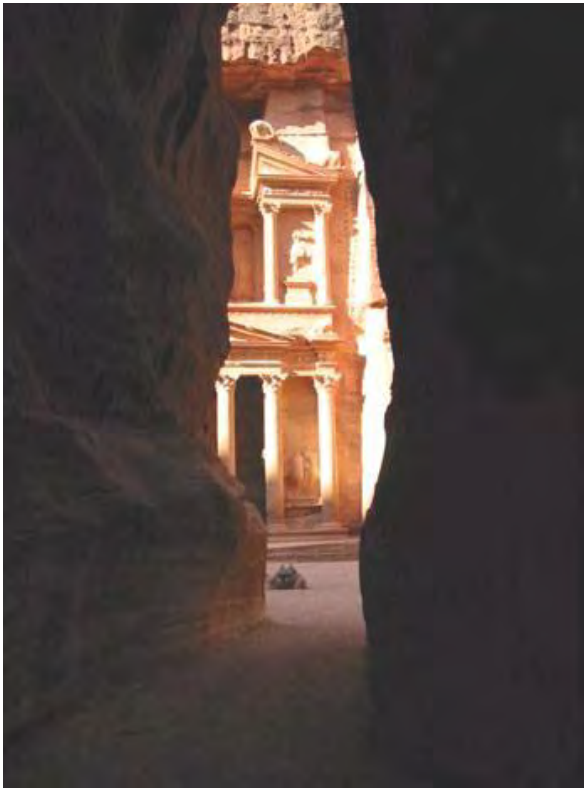


Figure 2. Al-Siq at Petra (Rekem).



Figure 3. *Siq* at Meda'in Saleh.

Nahom

Again they started traveling, this time for many days, in the same direction and staying to the more fertile parts of the wilderness, which were in the borders of the Red Sea (1 Nephi 16:14). The more fertile parts were along the Frankincense Road where provender and water was commercially available for the many camel trains. They again stopped for a time to rest and obtain food. Nephi mentions that at this stop they decided to “tarry for the space of a time” (1 Nephi 16:33). No additional clues were given since the previous stop. Ishmael died and was buried at the place that was called Nahom. The wording is different. This was not the land which “we did call,” but was the land which “was called” Nahom (1 Nephi 16:34). This was an established village.

They had suffered much affliction, hunger, thirst, and fatigue (1 Nephi 16:35). All are very understandable complaints for that

very inhospitable part of the world. No newborn babies were mentioned at this stop. At the place that was known by all as Nahom they did not just follow the trail, but they turned eastward. These are the clues we have from the Book of Mormon, the rest come from the Frankincense Road map as recorded in history and archaeological remains.

There are many transliterations of the name Naham such as Nehm, Nahm, and Nihm. It appears to be tribal lands. There is a place in the area where the road forks. The right fork goes to Sana'a (15.38, 44.21) and the left fork goes to Marib (15.468, 45.326). The village that appears to be most relevant is Furdat Naham (15.762, 44.721). Furdat is a trilateral verb form meaning "to fork." So, Furdat Naham would be "to fork" or "to separate" in the road at Naham. Some have reported that Furdat means "stony hills." It does not. Stony is *hajari* and hills is *tulut*. The difference between Naham and Nephi's Nahom is not significant.

Bountiful -- Cana -- Qana

Leaving Nahom, they again traveled in the wilderness. For the remainder of the time they traveled mostly eastward (1 Nephi 17:1). Newborn children are first mentioned after leaving Nahom, not before. They waded through much affliction and sand. The final stretch was some of the sandiest and most barren. Fire wood was not available. They lived on raw meat (1 Nephi 17:2). The women were able to provide plenty of breast milk for their newborn babies while they were eating the raw meat. The women became strong like the men and traveled without murmuring.

As for the lapsed time, Nephi mentions three days travel, then four days travel, then many days travel, then tarrying for the space of a time (no babies mentioned), and then babies being born as they journeyed, and then sojourning in the wilderness. He then mentions that they sojourned in the wilderness for a total of eight years. The next verse, (1 Nephi 17:5), mentions that they arrived at a land which they called Bountiful. The author is of

the opinion that almost all of the eight years sojourning in the wilderness was in the land Bountiful. The problem with the order of events may have been a chiasmus issue.

Ishmael and his daughters joined the group at the River Laman. The river was flowing well so they were in the rainy season. No babies are mentioned until after they leave Nahom. The author would speculate that they traveled to Nahom within the first season – less than nine months. They may have waited at Nahom for the next rainy season. From Nahom to Bountiful (Cana) was about 300 miles or 15 travel days at 20 miles per day. They had to stop to hunt food – but they also had to keep moving to hunt food. In such barren land, the game and the forage are quickly depleted. They had to move on. The stretch from Marib to Cana (now B'ir 'Ali, Yemen) was possibly the most barren and most miserable. Initially, in Solomon's day, the port city of Cana was not part of the Frankincense Road, but it was added some unknown time later.

Cana (14.023, 48.3447) is the land Bountiful and there is no doubt. The author has identified the name in Hebrew, Sumerian, Quiché Maya, Cakchiquel Maya, Nahuatl, and the Maya glyphs, which are principally Ch'ol Maya. The name for Bountiful in the New World was Cana also and it remains so in the native literature.

The native literature of Mesoamerica makes it very clear that they came from Pa Tulán, Pa Civán, near Babylonia (Recinos 1953, 194). *Pa* is just a preposition meaning “in,” “at,” or “from” and some refer to it as “land of.” *Civán* is possibly Sheba, which, in addition to being the land of the Queen of Sheba (presently Yemen) also means the number “seven” and “oath” in Hebrew.

To the Nahua of Mexico, it is called Tollantzinco. The name of this land from which they set sail takes on many forms including: Tulán, Tulan, Tullán, Tollan, Tullum, Tulum, and Tula – all of which are from the Sumerian form of the name which is *Tul-lum*, meaning both “abundant lowland” and “high cistern.”

The name is known to mean “reeds” in Maya and Nahuatl. One of the names for “reeds” in Hebrew is *kanah* or Cana as in

the port city in Yemen. The port was called Cana or Qana and the village is now called B'ir Ali, Yemen. It was only called Tollan in America and that was due to Jaredite (Sumerian) influence. Also, Canaan means “lowland” and the name comes from the “reeds” or “canes” in the “abundant lowland.” A direct translation into Sumerian would be *Tul-lum* – *túl* meaning lowland, well, and cistern; and *lum* meaning full, abundant, and productive.

The Hebrew, Sumerian, Nahuatl, and Maya words are equivalent and appropriately define a land Bountiful. There is more to the definitions. What does the current name, B'ir 'Ali mean? B'ir is “well” in Arabic and Hebrew. 'Ali means “high” in Arabic. Thus, B'ir 'Ali means “high well or cistern” just as the Sumerian roots mean “full well or cistern.” A review of the satellite image of B'ir 'Ali, Yemen shows a freshwater lake (14.027, 48.381), one half mile in diameter, in the cone of a volcano just east of the town. This formed the basis for the Maya glyph for Tollan (T854) as shown in Figure 4. It shows a basin or bowl (cistern) full of water and reeds on the bottom half and the sky with stars and rain on the top half. Bowl in Quiché is *tol*. The Maya epigraphers say the glyph means reed, cattail reed, and bulrush. The epigraphers say that it is the proper name for Tollan, the overseas origin of the Maya; but then they give it the absolutely ridiculous phonetic value of *pu*. But that is all right, *pú* in Sumerian means well and cistern also, just as it does in Chortí Maya.



Figure 4. Glyph T854 PU/PUJ meaning “reed” and *Tollan*.

Thus, Bountiful, Cana, and *Tul-lum* share the same roots. But place names are not always unique. Cana is found all over the world, as is Tula. It is not only the linguistic connections for the

names, but it is the freshwater lake in the crater of the volcano at B'ir 'Ali (previously Cana) that gives meaning to the Maya glyph T854 for *Tollan* that makes the solution unique. In a mathematical proof, existence of a solution alone is not sufficient; one must also show uniqueness of the solution.

Critics will complain about the lack of trees for timbers. Conditions may have changed. Remember that Cana was a seaport. Timber could be shipped in as needed. Not once does Nephi mention cutting down or drying a tree. He only mentions working timbers (1 Nephi 18:1-2). Once he did mention dried reeds (1 Nephi 17:48), which are readily available in the area. *Tul* means reed in Quiché Maya and *tula'* means "reed boat."

The land Bountiful as a departure point is firmly established. When we find the land Bountiful that Captain Moroni had fortified, it will also be called Cana.

Irreantum – Many Waters

Bountiful was by the sea Irreantum which being interpreted is "many waters." Today it is called the Gulf of Aden (also written as Adan). In Spanish *Adan* is Adam. The Pearl of Great Price states: And the first man of all men have I called Adam, which is many (Moses 1:34).

The Nahuatl language and most of the Maya languages do not use the letter "R"; instead they use the letter "L". Moroni's name in the Nahuatl dictionary is exactly *Moloni*. If that "L" for "R" switch did apply for Irreantum, does it create any root word possibilities? It does in Sumerian, where *illu* means "high water" or "flood." This also could have reference to B'ir 'Ali where 'Ali is very similar to *illu*, or as cast in Maya with the "L" for "R" switch Irruantum.

Irreantum means "many waters" and today it is called the Gulf of Aden (48.6, 13.7).

Sojourn in the Wilderness

Lehi and his family sojourned in the wilderness for about eight years. Sojourn does not mean to travel but rather it means to stay as a temporary resident. At the rate of their initial travel, the total travel days would be around 60 days. The rest of the time would be sojourning. Most of the time was probably spent in the Bountiful or Cana region where life was more abundant.

Nephi went into the mountain to find ore to smelt and make tools. Nephi and his brothers built a ship following the instructions of the Lord.

The Voyage

After loading with supplies, they set sail. They were driven forward by the wind. The craft was not just a drift boat, but had steerage that could be operated to pursue the course indicated by the Liahona. During one instance of irreverent partying, the ship was driven back three days. While Laman and Lemuel needed an attitude adjustment, the ship may have needed a course adjustment to get into the desired ocean current flow. Fear-induced repentance permitted the Liahona to again function properly and Nephi guided the ship to the Promised Land.

Their course probably followed the eastward flowing Equatorial Countercurrent. The more southerly possibility would take much longer. After many days they arrived at the place they called the Promised Land.



CHAPTER 2

THE ARRIVAL

Land of Lehi

After many days they arrived at the land they called the Promised Land. The place they landed is today named Acajutla, El Salvador (13.5883, -89.8328). The early writings and legends of the people say they landed at Acajutla (Brewerton 2011). This land of many legends and many beautiful beaches also means “canes” and “reeds” in the Nahuatl language of El Salvador just as Canaan does in Hebrews. *Acatl* meaning “reed” (as does *toli*) is the noun form of the first part of the name, but the second part is uncertain because the name had various spellings in the early days and the local historians are not in agreement as to what the rest means. Ixtlilxóchitl called it *Acayúcatl* (Recinos 1952, 89). Of the “reeds,” they are sure.

The land is beautiful with lush green everywhere, excellent soil, tall volcanoes, and beautiful volcanic lakes. The land is wet, very wet -- possibly too wet for the Nephites. Some refer to this as the land of Lehi, but there is only one reference to this as the land of Lehi. “Now the land south was called Lehi and the land north was called Mulek, which was after

the son of Zedekiah; for the Lord did bring Mulek into the land north, and Lehi into the land south (Helaman 6:10). Any other references to a land Lehi are references to the mountain fortress city Lehi (Xelahu, Quetzaltenango).

Some National Geographic maps refer to this region as the land of Lenca. Lenca is one of the forms that the name Lehi took as the various peoples diverged and their languages changed. Lehi is alternately spelled Lechi in some translations of the Bible.

The apparent “ch” for “h” switch is neither. It should be the eighth letter of the Hebrew alphabet *heth*. In transliterated Romanized texts it takes the phonetic form of “c”, “h”, “ch”, or “k”, but none of these is correct phonetically. It should be pronounced as in *Hanukkah* or *Chanukah* as spoken by a true Jew.

The more common name in the Book of Mormon for this general region is the land of Nephi, or the land of their first inheritance.

First Land of Nephi – Nephi I

Landing at Acajutla and traveling inland a few miles they appear to have founded a city of Nephi that now goes by the name Nahuizalco. It is known archaeologically to be very old and very significant in the Late Preclassic Maya time (400 BC 250 AD). Likewise, as the various peoples diverged and their languages changed, the name Nephi took various forms.

The Book of Mormon name Nephi takes two forms in Mesoamerica. As we will see, the most common form is Nahua among the Nahuatl speaking peoples. There is a form closer to Nephi among the Quiché of K’umarkáj (Cumorah) and possibly the North American Indian tribes of the eastern United States and Canada. Among the Quiché, the name is *Nihay* or *Nihai* and among the Plains Cree, they call their language *nēhiya-wēwin*.

Repetition of a specific place name four or five times in a rather confined geographical area proved very beneficial when identifying the locations of the original Book of Mormon cities.



Figure 5. Mormon lands in Mesoamerica

A very important case in point is the extensive use of the root name Nahua in many place names in the very fertile piedmont of Guatemala, known as the Costa Sur. When the author was looking for the first land of Nephi, there was Nahuizalco. When looking for the third land of Nephi (Alma 22:28, and Alma 53:6)

there was the Nahualate River and three villages with Nahualate in their name. There is also a cluster of three archaeological sites in this immediate region. When looking for Nephihah, there was Nahuala'. Each was found in the exact location to satisfy all the geometric constraints found in the Book of Mormon. In later times we know the Nahua people as the Aztecs of central Mexico who spoke the Nahuatl language.

This land was still populated by Jaredite descendants and possibly others forming what are now called the Pre-Olmec and Olmec civilization. The Mam branch of the Maya are referred to as the "ancient ones" and the name Olmeca was applied because they cultivated the "rubber tree." Their name means "Rubber People." The Olmecs spread northward into central Mexico and flourished in the Vera Cruz area.

The whole region of the land southward was called Lehi and has taken the name form Lenca, but the main city in the area was named Nephi after its original founder.

In ancient Hebrew the u, v, w, and f were represented by the same semivowel *w* or *vav*. To the Aztecs and other speakers of the Nahuatl or Nahuatl language, Nephi appears to have been written and spoken as Nahua.

Two towns in the area still bear the name: Nahuizalco (13.7799, -897380) and Nahuilingo. In later years many of the wars and much of the hatred against the Nephites emanated from this region of El Salvador. This area is the First Land of Nephi which we will call Nephi-I.

Nephi lived in the area for possibly 10 to 20 years until Lehi died. The Lord warned Nephi that he should leave with those who would go with him and flee into the wilderness. Traveling with Nephi and his family were Zoram and Sam and their families, as well as Jacob, Joseph, two sisters, and all others who would go with him (2 Nephi 5:5-6). We are told nothing of who the others were that would go with him. Implicit in Nephi's words is the indication that some of the invited people chose not to go with Nephi. This grouping became known as the Nephites. All others, regardless of their ethnic origins, were called

Lamanites. This includes the residual Jaredites and others in the area. They became a darker people. The Lord probably accomplished this by mixing with the natives (Ishmaelitic women, Alma 3:7).

Other Cities in the Area

This area was the first land of Nephi, the land of their first inheritance. Throughout the Nephite history this land of Nephi-I was really occupied by Lamanites, Zoramites, and apostate Nephites. Other ancient cities in the area with which Nahuizalco was politically connected were Ahuachapán, Chalchuapa, Cara Sucia, and Atquizaya – all of which were near the western end of El Salvador. This was the southern end of the Nahua habitations. These are known to be part of the Cozumalhuapa Culture. The Cotzumalhuapa culture was centered in Zarahemla (Santa Lucía Cotzumalguapa, Guatemala) and extended from Palo Gordo (Nephi-III) on the northwest to Jutiapa (Judea) on the east.

Cara Sucia is known to have had two phases, the first, from 900 BC to 250 AD (Late Preclassic) and the second, from 650 AD to 950 AD (Late Classic). The first years, i.e. around 900 BC would be Jaredite times and then Lehi's family arrived in the area about 590 BC. The civilization in this area ended abruptly in about 250 AD when the volcano Ilopango erupted and buried under ash everything within a 60 kilometer radius. The accuracy of the date is uncertain – it may have happened at the time of the Crucifixion. This prompted a mass evacuation of survivors and many would have fled to the Nephite lands near Zarahemla. The lands of Antionum, Jershon, and Melek would be overrun. The author is of the opinion that this influx of refugees into the Zarahemla area and the subsequent crowding and ethnic strife caused the loss of Christ's post-visitation "peace."

Other Book of Mormon lands in this general area, that were relevant later included Ani-Anti (Atiquizaya), Ishmael (Iguatepec), Midian (Metapán), Onidah (Sonsonate), Sirin, and mount Antipas or the "Place of Arms" (Mountain Apaneca).

Bordering the land of Nephi-I on the west was the Zoramite land Antionum, and just north of that was the land of Jershon where the converted people of Ammon lived.



CHAPTER 3

SECOND LAND OF NEPHI

Nephi II – Lehi-Nephi

Nephi and his followers left the land of Nephi-I (Nahuizalco) and traveled mostly eastward for many days in the wilderness and settled in what is now the Comayagua Valley in western Honduras. The Comayagua Valley (14.446, -87.639) is about 50-miles northwest of the capitol Tegucigalpa, Honduras. The time traveling would be close to 12 days. They again called this land Nephi. This becomes the Second Land of Nephi and is later called the land of Lehi-Nephi. Again, this region was well populated from 1000 BC on. The archaeological evidence indicates the presence of the Olmeca first and then an abrupt transition to a later culture. Archaeologists have identified a second civilization that entered the area about 600 BC. (Sanchez, personal communication). These would correspond to the Jaredite culture first and then a Lehite culture that followed.

Sahagún records legends of an event that sounds familiar:

The wise men, they of the book did not remain long. Soon they went. Once again they embarked and carried off the writings, the books, the paintings; they carried away all the crafts, the casting of metals. Our lord the “protector” of all (*Naoaque* -- *Naoa* was Sahagún’s spelling of *Nahua* which we have identified as Nephi) said we shall remain. But we go with him: we go following him whither he goeth. Thereupon departed those who carried the god on their backs; they carried him wrapped – wrapped in a bundle. It is said that their god went advising them. And as they went, they traveled to the east. They carried the writings, the books, the paintings. They carried the knowledge; they carried all – the song books, the flutes. But four remained of the old men, the wise men. He is gone; they carried away the writings. How will the common people dwell? What will lead? What will show the way? They devised the book of days, the book of years, the book of dreams. And thus was time recorded during all the time the Toltec reign endured (Dibble 1961, 191).

Nephi’s followers founded another city, Nephi-II, on the west side of the valley -- west of the La Humuya River, up against the base of the mountains. The town is today called Leja-mani which means “those of Lehi.”

This is a beautiful valley – it looks like Arizona but with enough water. Arriving after dark on the author’s first visit, it became obvious seeing that first sunrise why the people of Nephi would have loved this area. They were “desert rats” recently arrived from the Arabian Desert and coastal El Salvador may have been much too wet for their liking. In Colombia, the author’s shoes would grow mold solid to the floor within a week.

Flocks and herds were possibly the main source of their livelihood. This new land, Nephi-II, is excellent cow country. It is excellent vegetable and grain country also – a year-round growing season with no snow or bitter cold.

The Nephites lived and prospered in this area for many years. At some later time the Lamanites followed and gave the Nephites much grief. The Book of Mormon would indicate that the Lamanites must have maintained a presence in the original land of Nephi-I while also taking up the attack and residency near the new land of Nephi-II.

It becomes very apparent that there were other people (left over Jaredites, possibly Chinese, some Sanskrit speakers, or some aboriginal peoples) who were enlisted to take up the sword. As Nephi's younger brother Jacob wrote of his beloved brother Nephi: "The people having loved Nephi exceedingly, he having been a great protector for them, having wielded the sword of Laban in their defense, and having labored in all his days for their welfare (Jacob 1:10). The author has wondered how many times swords can be brought to a family reunion of a family so small and still have a family left?

As Jacob wrote, "We being a lonesome and a solemn people, wanderers, cast out from Jerusalem, born in tribulation in a wilderness, and hated of our brethren, which caused wars and contentions; wherefore, we did mourn out our days." (Jacob 7:26)

The Lamanites must have followed promptly from the land of Nephi-I because they were present to give Jacob and the people grief for all of his days. There is still a village named Lamani, Honduras in this valley.

The only city named in the Book of Mormon in this region at this early time was Nephi-II. We are told little of their struggles in the land of Nephi-II, but eventually King Mosiah is warned that he and those that would hearken to the warning should flee (Omni 1:12). They did so and traveled west about 21 days journey to Zarahemla.

Other Towns

No other towns are mentioned initially. Later when Zeniff and his group return to inhabit this area they rebuilt Nephi-II and it was subsequently called only Lehi-Nephi. They also rebuilt the

walls of Shilom which is now La Paz, Honduras. The name change may have resulted from the Catholic priests that thought Shilom sounded like *Shalom* which means “peace” in Hebrew and so applied the Spanish name for “peace” which is La Paz.

Just a couple of miles east of the present town, adjacent to the La Humuya River, sit the temple and the tower that the wicked king Noah made famous. The author has walked where king Noah and Gideon had their sword fight – and yes, from that high vantage point, the land of Shemlon is clearly visible on the east side of the river (Mosiah 19:6). Both the tower and the temple are still in place. The tower is significantly higher than the temple. A “tower” was a mount of earth to the natives (*monticulo* in Spanish). These ruins are identified by the name Lomo de Vaca (hill of the cow) The name Shilom is probably not from the Hebrew word “peace” but probably from *Xe-ilom* or “under the ox” as in “cow pasture.”

The name shows up on the National Geographic maps as Lo de Vaca. Not understanding what *Lo de Vaca* meant, the author asked the boy who was leading us to the site and he said it was not *Lo* but *Lomo*. It was not recognized that *Lo* was just an abbreviation for *Lomo* or “hill.” So, he went on to say, the locals call *Lomo de Vaca* or “Hill of the Cow” by the slang name equivalent to “Cow Pie.”

The Waters of Mormon are a geothermal hot springs located near Cané, Honduras just seven miles away to the southwest of Shilom. Today it is a small private resort/retreat and the water is used for a tilapia fish farm.

On Zeniff’s return the land of Shemlon is mentioned. Later the missionaries mentioned the city of Shimnilom. The animal *shimnilom* is the tapir, known in Maya as the *tzimin*. It is referred to today as the “mountain cow.” This is the Jaredite animal known as the *curelom* which is from the Sumerian words *kur* meaning “mountain” and *alim* meaning “wild ram, bison, aurochs, or powerful.” Possibly it could be from the word *kiri* meaning “nose.”

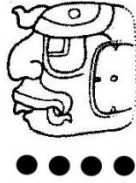
A large ruins site is located in the west mountains. It is

known today as Tenempua. It is a mountain fortress or a “robbers’ stronghold.” It is not well situated for an agricultural town.

Later the Lamanites, Amalekites, and the people of Amulon built a great city in the area named Jerusalem (Alma 21:1-2). The town of Jerusalem is the present town of Yarumela, Honduras (14.3396, -87.6395). Note the phonetic similarity in the two names using the Hebrew pronunciation -- Yarumela and *Yerushaláyim*. The earthen walls are still in place in the northeast part of town just north of the cemetery. The river is within a few hundred yards which would explain: “Yea, ... and the city of Jerusalem and the inhabitants thereof; and waters have I caused to come up in the stead thereof, to hide their wickedness and abominations from before my face, that the blood of the prophets and the saints shall not come up any more unto me against them.” (3 Nephi 9:7)

When the Spaniards arrived in this area the people were bilingual speaking both Nahuatl (Nephi) and Lenca (Lehi). Recall that the Lamanite king had Amulon and the remaining priests of King Noah teach his people in their language (Mosiah 24:4). The languages diverged very rapidly -- probably because of mixing with other peoples including Jaredite remnants and Chinese immigrants. The Chinese sailing is well documented (Rees 2008).

The largest town in the area is Comayagua, Honduras. It was the Spanish capitol of Honduras until 1880 when the capitol was moved to Tegucigalpa.



CHAPTER 4

ZARAHEMPLA

The 21 Day Trip

Warned of the Lord, Mosiah and his people fled the land of Nephi-II and headed toward Zarahemla. He took with him “as many as would harken unto the voice of the Lord” (Omni 1:12-13). Implicit in this is that some chose not to go. They had lived there possibly 400 years. Many in such situations will not move. When the Teton Dam broke above Sugar City, Idaho in 1976, several would not leave their homes even after being informed of the break. It is tough to leave the place you have lived all your life. Likewise, the very old would not be up to the trip. They traveled west about 21 days journey to Zarahemla (14.3657, -91.0083). Zarahemla is in the piedmont on the south coast of Guatemala. The city today is named Santa Lucía Cotzumalguapa.

Several routes are possible for this long journey. The author has traveled three of the possible routes and the two remaining would dip too low into El Salvador which would be Lamanite country and would require crossing the very large Lempa River (Limhi River?). They would have traveled where the roads are

today. To do otherwise is too rough in this very mountainous region.

Most Probable Route

The preferred route is rather easy to identify from satellite maps, but it appears however, that over the years several different routes were taken. The documented trips include: 1) Nephi's original trip; 2) Mosiah's flight to Zarahemla; 3) Zeniff's two trips; 4) the escape of Alma and his people; 5) Limhi's searching expedition; 6) Ammon's rescue of Limhi's people; 7) the wandering lost of the Lamanite army searching for the people of Limhi; and 8) the missionary trips. It is apparent that there were multiple routes where one group could travel without encountering another.

The only clue to the path taken is the reference in Mosiah 11:13: "And it came to pass that he caused many buildings to be built in the land Shilom; and he caused a great tower to be built on the hill north of the land Shilom, which had been a resort for the children of Nephi at the time they fled out of the land; and thus he did do with the riches which he obtained by the taxation of his people." It appears they went up the little canyon just west of Nephi-II and then straight up and over the mountain – and it is quite a large mountain range. North of La Paz (Shilom) and south of Lejamani (Lehi-Nephi) is a hill that protrudes eastward from the main North/South range. They would not have gone up anywhere else in the region because it is a large face where the refugees would be visible from the valley for the whole day's climb.

Once through the first range they would go toward what is now La Esperanza, then to what is Gracias (possibly Helem), then to Santa Rosa de Copán, then towards Nueva Ocotepeque, then Esquipulas, then Jutiapa (Judea), then Cuilapa (Cumeni), then Amatitlán (Manti), and then dropping down through Palín (Melek), Esquintla (Atacat -- Antionum) and on into Santa Lucía Cotzumalguapa (Zarahemla).

At Santa Rosa de Copán they could have dropped down to Copán and Zacapa and then followed the Motagua River up to Guatemala City (Ammonihah) before dropping down into Amatitlán (Manti) and on into Zarahemla.

It is not Kansas. Parts are dry, parts are rocky, nothing is level, all is desolate, all is beautiful, and all would be hard for fleeing families. There would not be early snows on Rocky Ridge. Natural food would be quite abundant, not like the Arabian Desert. Water would be adequately plentiful except in the Jutiapa (Judea) stretch. A possible reason the Lamanite army did not take Judea (Jutiapa) in the days of Antipus (Alma 56) was that they knew better. The region south of Jutiapa toward Asunción Mita and beyond to Lake Qüija is the most hot, dry, miserable region -- good only for scorpions and calabash trees. J. Golden Kimball would have some appropriate comments about that place. The people were nice and the restaurant was good.

Zarahemla – Santa Lucía Cotzumalguapa

They were lead through the wilderness to the land of Zarahemla (14.3657, -91.0083). on the south coast of Guatemala. This is the region surrounding Santa Lucía Cotzumalguapa, Guatemala. Archaeologists have shown that this land stretched from Palo Gordo (Nahualate) on the northwest and extended to Jutiapa (Judea) on the east.

The people of Zarahemla were descendants of Jerusalem who fled at the time of the destruction about 589 BC. The infant son of King Zedekiah was among the refugees and the people were called Mulekites. Their language had become corrupted as they merged with the remaining Jaredites. The Jaredite influence dominated as the language was converted from Hebrew to the structure known as “ergative absolute.” This linguistic grouping includes Sumerian (Babylonian), Maya, and Nahuatl, among a few others. English and Hebrew are classified as “nominative accusative.”

Lacking a recorded history, they denied the existence of the Creator. Mosiah taught the people of Zarahemla in his own language. The combined peoples lived in this area for many years. Combined, they fought the Lamanites many times.

Archaeologists Contribution

The author was first drawn to the place Santa Lucía Cotzumalguapa, Guatemala while studying the National Geographic Society map “The Ancient Maya World.” Each of the known ruins in Mesoamerica is identified as a red dot. The population of these red dots makes it clear where the sustained action occurred. The centers of Izapa, Kaminal Juyú (Ammonihah), K’umarkáh-Utatlán (Cumorah), Takalik Abaj (Moron), Retalhuleu (Desolation-Teancum-Lib), Cuyotenango (Bountiful), Palo Gordo (Nahualate, Nephi-III) Monte Alto/Esquintla (Antionum) and Cotzumalguapa (Zarahemla) are readily identifiable as population centers and match exactly the spatial relationships defined in the Book of Mormon. It is not just that the dates and places matched the evidence. An equally important part of the proof is that no other place had an archaeological “footprint” of the appropriate size within the appropriate time frame. This was the only region that matches the size and time. As Mormon said this was “the most capital parts of the land” (Helaman 1:27) and as Fuentes y Guzmán stated: “This part of Guatemala is the best of the land in fertility, pleasure, and climate; for these reasons it is so coveted.” (Zaragoza 1882 Vol 1, 19)

A disappointment is that where the Book of Mormon was played out was in “the most capital parts of the land” and in such places civilization continues uninterrupted. This, as Clark indicated, leads to destruction of the archaeological story (Clark 2004). The stones from the Temple Bountiful and the Zarahemla City Center have been stripped to make bridges and churches. The mounds are still there and their story is waiting to be retold. The oldest known dated stone monument was found in this area – 36 AD long count date. This would be just a few years after

Christ's visit to the area. Also, "potbellied" stone carvings (*barigones*) are found in the area. This is evidence of the Olmec culture. Everything is consistent with a Jaredite occupation, followed by a Nephite occupation and expulsion.

The Quiché, Kakchiquel, and Tz'utuhil (then in the Altiplano) were conquered by the Spaniards and the city center they controlled in the piedmont below was largely abandoned; but, there is also evidence of continuous occupation at a reduced level.

Lee Allen Parsons has documented the extensive archaeological investigation of the Cotzumalguapa Region in his two volumes of *Bilbao, Guatemala* (Parsons 1969). An expanded region of his map of the Maya regions is shown in Figure 6. Note the three ovals in the map in Figure 6. The upper oval VII is Late Classic Maya, the middle oval VI is Lowland Classic Maya, and the lower oval V is the Cotzumalguapa Culture which extended from Early/Middle Preclassic through Late Postclassic without interruption. Most of the Book of Mormon occurred in Late Preclassic which is quite exclusively limited to the bottom oval in the displayed regions. Archaeologists are finding that even the later Maya sites had some evidence of very modest habitation in the earlier eras also. The Lehite, Mulekite, and Jaredite civilizations were the biggest and best civilizations in this area from the Middle Preclassic through Late Preclassic. This being the case, the only credible Book of Mormon civilization center was in the greater Cotzumalguapa region. No sites in the Grijalva or Usumacinta river basins show the proper extent of activity in the time interval appropriate for the Book of Mormon.

Santa Lucía Cotzumalguapa

While the present name Santa Lucía Cotzumalguapa is used, the students of antiquities refer to the central region as being part of the Cotzumalhuapa Culture. In the early Spanish colonial period there were many different spellings of this name. We will stay with the current Cotzumalguapa spelling. One of the

principal archaeologists involved was Lee A. Parsons who makes this very revealing statement that is consistent with the Book of Mormon:

“Preliminary examination of the pottery coming from the field during the first season indicated that we were getting ceramic types at Bilbao (Cotzumalhuapa central area) reflecting an extraordinarily long and complete chronological sequence, ranging from Early or Middle Preclassic through Late Post Classic. However, it was also obvious that several time periods were far more numerous represented than others; namely, Late Preclassic and Protoclassic through Late Postclassic (Ilusiones) and Middle and Late Classic (Laguneta and Santa Lucía).”

Protoclassic is an obsolete term that refers to the transition period between Late Preclassic (when Mormon’s people were decimated) and the Middle Classic (when the surviving peoples got their civilization growing again).

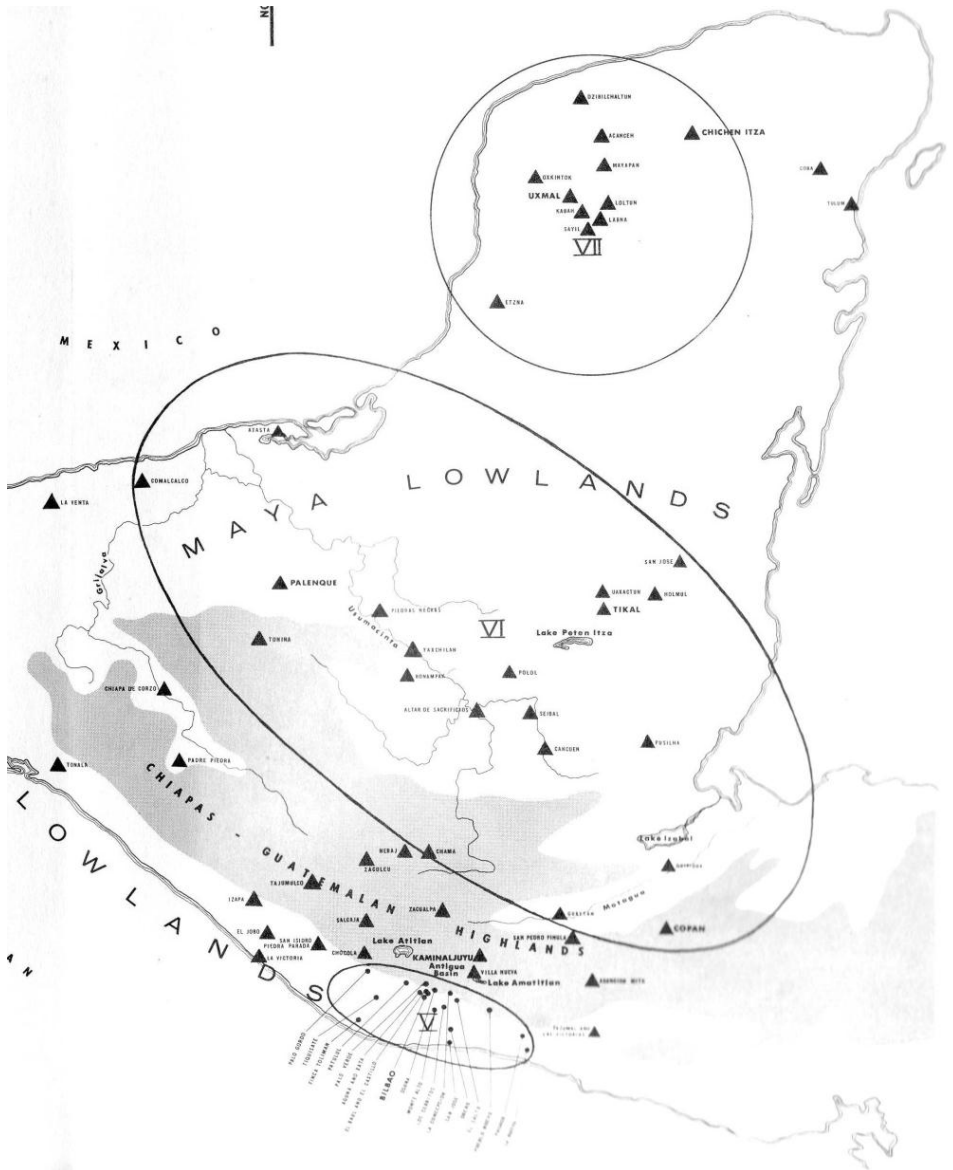


Figure 6. Parsons' map expanded for the Maya lands.

The Peoples

Archaeologists think the site at Cotzumalguapa was occupied by the *Pipil* (*Nahua*) until the Quiché and Kakchiquel drove them out at some unknown date. The Anthropologists indicate the *Pipiles* (*Nahua*) were expelled, but early conquest evidence indicates a coexistence of the Kakchiquel and the Pipil people and languages. Oswaldo Chinchilla Mazariegos indicates that the peoples were possibly bilingual (Chinchilla 1998, 156) -- the two principal languages being Nahuatl and Maya, Maya being the dialects/languages of Quiché, Kakchiquel, and Tz'utujil. They are now considered separate languages but are very similar.

The Quiché have been identified as the Nephite tribes Nephi (Nihayib), Sam (Tamub), Jacob (Ilocab), and Joseph (Cavekib). There are four branches of the Kakchiquel: the Zotzils (Zoramites), the Xahilá (Mulekites), the Tukuchés (Ishmaelites), and the Akahals (local Jaradite residual). The Tz'utujil has two branches: the Tz'ikina (Eagle – Gadianton) and Saq'bin (Weasel/*Cux/Sak'bin* – Kishkumen) (Pate 2012).

Ruud VanAkkeren has made the following observation:

“The Maya people were the majority, and they belonged to two ethnic groups: the Mam and the Achi’, this latter a branch of the K’ichean family. During the Late Classic and the Early Post classic periods, there was an abandonment of the Coastal centers, and a migration of the noble lineages to the Altiplano. There, they joined the local Maya and other Maya groups that had come from the Lowlands. These three groups were to give birth to the Postclassic confederations, namely K’iche, the Mam, the Tz’utujil, etc. Because there was a larger presence of Maya groups, the Pipils lost their Mexican identity to such a degree that they changed their names from Nahua to Maya” (Van Akkeren 2005, 1001).

Thus, it would appear that the Nahuatl speaking people of the piedmont were not expelled but merged with the Maya culture, of

which they were already a part, and changed, or rather translated, their names into Maya. Van Akkeren is doing a great work tracking family names (*Chinamits*) throughout Mesoamerica. He can tell where the peoples went by where their family names spread.

The archaeological sites at Cotzumalguapa include Bilbao, Finca Las Ilusiones, El Castillo, Los Tarros, and El Baúl. The ruins are very extensive. This was the seat of a powerful state that politically controlled a vast region along the Pacific Coast. Archaeologists have shown that this land stretched from Palo Gordo (Nahualate) on the northwest to Jutiapa (Judea) on the east. Carving similarities extended down to *Cara Sucia* (land of Nephi-I) in El Salvador.

Many often are not aware that 90-percent of the natives died from the small-pox brought by the Spaniards. The small-pox epidemic spread faster than the conquering army. Yaqui (Mexican) messengers from Moctezuma II arrived on July 4, 1510. On October 3, 1520 the smallpox plague started among the Kakchiquel as documented in the *Annals of the Cakchiquels* (Recinos 1953, 112-115). Were it not for the smallpox population decimation, the conqueror Pedro de Alvarado would not have succeeded with his small force. The conquering armies were also assisted by the hatred that existed between warring tribes. When one tribe was conquered, they would fall in line and help defeat their neighboring old enemies. The second question Alvarado asked of the Kakchiquel king was what enemies they had (Recinos 1953, 121). He named two, and they were the next two peoples attacked by Alvarado. (The first question was, where is your gold?)

In 1860 Pedro de Anda was clearing ground in the Cotzumalguapa area for a coffee plantation and unearthed some stone monuments. Between 1877 and 1883 the Germans extracted, cut up, and shipped to Germany many large stone carvings. Modern archaeologists (Lee A. Parsons) started working the sites in 1962. The author has his excellent two-volume report on the findings. Many of the monuments are of

excellent workmanship and display extraordinary realism in the stone carvings. It was thought by archaeologists that some of these may have been their kings. The author has seen these carvings and would state that if you knew the person, the carvings are good enough that you could recognize the person by his stone image. Some of these are bearded, a physiologic characteristic that is lacking in many of the surviving genetic remnants.

The city glyph has been identified for Santa Lucía Cotzumalguapa. Figure 7 and Figure 8 show the Zarahemla city symbol (Pate 2012).



Figure 7. Trefoil -- Zarahemla City Glyph.



Figure 8. Bilbao Monument 33. Note six trefoil glyphs.



CHAPTER 5

RETURN TO LEHI-NEPHI

Return Trip

Amaleki was born in the days of Mosiah and lived to see his death. Having no seed, Amaleki gave the records to King Benjamin. Amaleki's last entry was about a group of Nephites who desired to return to the land of Nephi-II to inhabit the land of their inheritance (Omni 1:27). Many left in the first attempt. In the hills overlooking the land of Nephi-II they had a contention as to whether to enter the land peacefully or to wipe out the people and take the land. All but fifty were killed in the argument.

The survivors returned to Zarahemla and convinced more to come with them to try again. Amaleki's brother was among that number. Amaleki's father was Abinadom and the great prophet Abinadi was probably Amaleki's brother. This would fit because Abinadi would have a copy of the records and understand them; and his age would be appropriate – an old man in the days of Zeniff's son Noah.

In the days of Benjamin's son, Mosiah (about 121 BC), he was desirous to know the fate of those who returned to live in the

land/city of Lehi-Nephi. This is the first use of the name Lehi-Nephi. Previously, it was called just the land of Nephi. We refer to it as the second land of Nephi or Nephi-II.

Ammon and fifteen other strong men were assigned to return and discover the fate of those who had left. After 40 days of wandering, they arrived at the hill between Shilom and Nephi-II. Nephi-II or Lehi-Nephi is the present day town of Lejamani, Honduras (14.3670, -87.7075) and it means “those of Leja” in the Lenca language. Leja or Leha is the form of the name Lehi used in this area. Likewise, Lenca is exactly the language of Lehi. When the Spaniards arrived in this valley the natives were still bi-lingual speaking both Lenca (Lehi) and Nahua (Nephi).

This is the first mention of the land Shilom. Apparently, it also was a Nephite city because the returning Nephites with Zeniff rebuilt the walls. Today the largest city in the land of Shilom is La Paz, Honduras (14.3204, -87.6792).

At some time in the past it was called the “city of rocks.” In the village square there is an old Spanish gun tower next to the museum. It is apparent that the cut stones used to make the gun tower were salvaged from some previous structure – possibly Nephite.

The Mountains in the immediate area are west of La Paz (Shilom) and Lejamani (Lehi-Nephi), but there is a protruding ridge that extends eastward between La Paz and Lejamani. This would be the hill north of Shilom and south of Lehi-Nephi. The whole Comayagua Valley is visible from this point, provided there is no haze in the air. The Comayagua Valley runs north and south. It is surrounded by a mountain range to the west and a mountain range to the east. It is split down the middle by the La Humuya River that flows northward to the Caribbean Sea.

The king at the time was named Laman (Mosiah 7:21). No city named Laman is mentioned until the time of the Crucifixion, when it was burned (3 Nephi 9:10). The city Laman that was burned was mentioned with cities Gad, Josh, and Kishkumen which are in the Altiplano above the land of Zarahemla. There is a village named Lamani (14.1962, -87.6204) in the area but this

is possibly a different one. Lamani is just ten miles south-southeast from La Paz (Shilom).

Zeniff's People

Receiving permission of the Lamanite King Laman, Zeniff's people repaired the walls of Lehi-Nephi and Shilom and started tilling the ground and they prospered in the land. They raised flocks of the various animals. Their crops were corn, wheat, barley, and all manner of fruit. They had "*neas*" and "*sheum*" (Mosiah 9:9). Today three of the main native foods are corn, black beans, and squash. Squash and pumpkin are *ch'um* in the neighboring Chortí Maya language. Sheum would be *ch'um*. *Neas* would be *nissa* which are greens and vegetables in the Sumerian (Jaredite) language.

This is an arid area and taking flocks to water was a necessity. During such feeding and watering of the flocks the Lamanites attacked "away on the south of the land Shilom" (Mosiah 9:14). South is the direction to the town of Lamani.

Shemlon

The next place name mentioned is the land of Shemlon, no city is mentioned. Shemlon is thought to be all of the Comayagua Valley (14.446, -87.639) on the east side of the river La Humuya. *La* is the Spanish definite article "the." Stripping it from the river name leaves just Humuya and the Spanish "h" is silent. The author prefers to leave it on suspecting that the original name was Lemuel or *Laumuya*.

The next Lamanite attack came from the north of the land Shilom. The Lamanites had shaved heads and were naked except for a leather girdle. They had probably just crossed the river.

Noah

Zeniff conferred the kingdom upon one of his sons Noah and then died. Noah did wickedly, he did not keep up the defenses, and he had a very indulgent life style. His next building project mentioned was a very high tower near the temple that overlooked the land of Shilom and the land of Shemlon. Towers were large mounds of earth or pyramids (*montículos*). This large earthen tower still stands (14.36398, -87.65070). Some cemented over foundation rocks are still visible on top. It is much higher than the Shilom temple (14.3639871, -87.64773) and does indeed overlook the land of Shilom and the land of Shemlon. This tower would provide the defining views for locating the land of Shilom to the west and the land of Shemlon across the La Humuya River to the east.

The town of La Paz (Shilom) today is positioned against the mountains to the west (14.32650, -87.68351). The temple ruins are located about two miles to the east (14.3639871, -87.64773), within about 40-yards of the river which is about 40-feet below. Noah's tower is immediately west of the temple about 300-yards.

Lomo de Vaca

The ruins of the Shilom temple and Noah's tower are identified on the National Geographic maps as *Lo de Vaca*. Only upon visiting was it discovered that the name is really *Lomo de Vaca* meaning "hill of the cow." It was a Spanish abbreviation on an English map.

Second Tower

The building project next mentioned was another tower on the hill between Shilom (La Paz) and Lehi-Nephi (Lejamani). The location has not been found with certainty but some possibilities exist. Shilom had its tower and Lehi-Nephi needed its tower also for protection. It would have to be close to town to

be effective and to keep the guards fed. Just up the street from the Catholic Church is a trail that goes up the mountain where the name Leja-Mani is on the mountain in twenty foot white letters (14.3634, -87.7140). It was noticed when studying the photographs after a trip to the area that there was a large Catholic cross in one of the photographs of the name on the mountain. It is suspected that this was the location of Noah's second tower. Possibly the white letters on the mountain were made of the stones from the tower. The Catholic cross on the mountain was to cover some native shrine. The natives go to all these little sacred locations and burn sacrifices (flowers, tobacco, chickens) and incense. Part of the Catholic conversion process was to cover all the sacred shrines. That is how the Catholic Church works. In spite of it all, the descendants of Lehi still do their native rituals. The author was surprised at K'umarkáj (Cumorah) to stumble onto a Shaman performing burnt offerings while talking on a cell-phone.

This possible tower location is only a few hundred yards up the mountain, but high enough to provide the needed view, yet close enough to be practical. The hill appears to be called Cerro de la Cruz.

Iron in the Area

There is a gravel road that climbs all the way up the mountain just above the present town of La Paz. About a mile and a half up the road on the inside of a hair pin turn is a steel smelter (blast furnace). The top is level with the road on the uphill side (14.33119, -87.70833). On the Google Map site (satellite image) at the coordinates provided one can see the black circle which is the smelter. It is very old. Just up the hill is some deep red, almost purple, iron ore in the hillside (14.33063, -87.71153). A sample was obtained and placed under a SEM (Scanning Electron Microscope). The EDAX system indicated that the sample was 78 percent iron. The actual percent would be less than this

because the EDAX system does not include the elements and oxides of molecular weights less than carbon.

To make carbon steel requires a reducing or smelting process. Limestone is the reducing material that removes the oxides and leaves elemental iron. The coke provides the fuel and the carbon for the process. Just up the hill around the corner from the iron deposit is a limestone deposit (14.32853, -87.71243). Nephi had steel regardless of what the skeptics claim.

Abinadi and Alma

The next events involved the great prophet Abinadi and his lone convert Alma. Abinadi delivered his message, Alma fled, and Abinadi earned his place in eternity. These events probably occurred at Shilom rather than Lehi-Nephi.

Waters of Mormon

Alma fled to the Waters of Mormon seven miles away to the southwest (14.26358, -87.64044). This is about a mile and a half beyond the village of Cane, Honduras.

The Waters of Mormon are hot, very hot. The geothermal hot spring is very near the boiling temperature. Today it is a small private resort. There are some small concrete pools and some large cooling ponds where tilapia fish are raised. It is just 50 yards from the La Humuya River but the waters run parallel for a ways. There are thickets of small trees in the area (Mosiah 18:5). It does not seem to support large trees in the immediate area except along the river.

In this area Alma preached to the people, many were baptized. Alma avoided the daily searches of the king for a while, but eventually the king was apprised of the activities in the area and planned to attack. Alma was also apprised of the king's army coming so he and his 450 followers fled into the wilderness with their tents and families.

The wilderness was the mountains to the west. Presently, there is a paved highway that goes over the pass in the mountains to the west. The pavement soon turns to dirt.

Helam

They fled 8-days into the wilderness (mountains). They found a very beautiful and pleasant land with pure water (Mosiah 23:4). They named the place Helam. Many of the Book of Mormon sites are certain, this one is possibly not as certain. Having driven the roads, it is proposed that the town they founded, Helam, is presently called Gracias, Honduras (14.5913, -88.5818). The Spanish name *Gracias a Diós* was given by Cortes' troops who after tromping through so many mountains were delighted to find a flatter spot and gave thanks to God.

Pure water is often taken for granted in the Intermountain West, but when the La Humuya River runs mud red much of the year, a fresh drink of water is appreciated. In addition to clear streams in the area of Grácias, there is also a very pleasant geothermal hot spring on the southeast end of town.

Alma's group lived and prospered in the area; but they were eventually discovered by a lost Lamanite army chasing Limhi and his people who had escaped with Ammon leading the way.

The people of Alma were subjugated for some years but were eventually liberated by the Lord and they fled to Zarahemla, another 12 days away. Mosiah greeted them with joy (Mosiah 24:25).

Limhi's People

After Alma's departure Noah continued to reign in wickedness. The people became divided with contention – part supported the king and a smaller part did not. Gideon chased Noah up the tower, sword in hand, to slay him. From the top of the tower Noah noticed that a Lamanite army was within the land. The sword play ended. Noah told the men to leave their

wives and children and to flee from the Lamanite army (Mosiah 19:11). Noah was burned to death by the men when they revolted and returned to their families. The priests escaped.

Limhi reigned and they paid tribute to the Lamanites. There were additional wars and suffering. Limhi sent out a search party to find Zarahemla. They were not successful but did find many bones and the 24 gold plates of the Jaredite account. Soon Ammon and his scouting party from Zarahemla arrived and Limhi's people were led back to Zarahemla (Mosiah 19-22).



CHAPTER 6

MISSIONARY TRAVELS

The Four Sons of Mosiah

Alma and his people and Limhi and his people joined the people of Mosiah in Zarahemla. There was great prosperity, many years of peace and many wars. After the angelic visitation to Alma the younger and the sons of Mosiah, the sons of King Mosiah decided to go on a mission to the Lamanites. They went to the borders of the Lamanite lands and split up. Many new cities are named in their travels.

Ammon to Ishmael

Ammon went to the land of Ishmael and served the king of Ishmael who was named Lamoni and who was a descendant of the sons of Ishmael (Alma 17:19).

The town of Ishmael is thought to be near the village of Belen Güijat, El Salvador (14.2446, -89.4840). The ruins in the area are identified as *Igualtepec*. The name is half Spanish and half Nahuatl. One of the very old Nahuatl dictionaries had the word *Ixmani* and said that it means “something that is equal, plain,

even, level, smooth, or flat.” *Igual* in Spanish is “equal” in English. Remember that the “x” is pronounced as “sh” in English. The other four Nahuatl dictionaries had only the “level” aspects of the word. The general region is hilly or even mountainous, but in the Lake Güija area there is a large more flat expanse. Above the lake to the northwest is a volcano named Ixtepeque. At the southern shore of the lake is the archaeological site named *Igualtepec* which would be *Ixmanitepec* if the Spanish part were replaced by the Nahuatl language equivalent.

Ixmani would be the third name of that form we have seen -- *mani* meaning “those of” in Lenca. First there was *Leja-mani*, meaning “those of Lehi.” Next, was *La-mani*, meaning “those of Laman.” Now there is *Ix-mani*, meaning “those of Ishmael.”

The island immediately adjacent to shore is named *Igualtepec*. The only archaeological evidence the author has seen are the many petroglyphs in the area. In the depths of the lake are much more extensive ruins of buildings with columns. The lake was formed or greatly enlarged by a volcanic closure of the outlet. There are approximately 20 archaeological sites in the immediate area that are well preserved and none have been professionally excavated. They are dated to between 400 BC and 200 AD. After volcano Ilopango blew in about 250 AD, the area was left unoccupied for a very long time. The next dated ruins in the area are in the Postclassic times.

Identification of this place as the land of Ishmael is less certain but the relationships to other cities fit.

Waters of Sebus

The waters of Sebus are mentioned as the place where King Lamoni’s servants watered the flocks. The land of Ishmael is at a significantly higher elevation and is a bit more arid than the very wet coastal region of Nephi-I (Nahuizalco). Taking the livestock to water would be necessary. Lake Güija (14.260, -89.511) is Waters of Sebus.

The name Güija is Spanish meaning “pebbles, gravel, or

cobblestones.” Fuentes y Guzmán called it *Guijar* back in the 1600’s. We have no name connection with the lake and the city of interest is under water.

What would Sebus mean? There is a kind of reed named *sibac* in Quiché Maya. The pith of this reed was used to make sleeping mats according to Recinos (Recinos 1953, 78). Recall that it is the pith of a reed from which papyrus paper was made in ancient Egypt. Lehi would be aware of the technology. Recinos spells the reed as *zibak* which gives a clue. The Maya word for “letter” or “writing” is *tz’ib*. Reed in Quiché Maya is both *ac* and *äj*. The Spanish “j” used in Maya transliterations is pronounced as the English “h”. Thus *sibac* or *zibak* could be *tz’ibah*. We do not have the “tz” sound in English and Joseph Smith used just the “s” for the “tz” sound. The author has seen this before with the name Sam in the Book of Mormon being *Tzam* in Nahuatl and *Tam* in Hebrew and Quiché Maya.

It would appear that the Waters of Sebus may have been the “waters of the papyrus reeds.”

Abish

During the conversion experience of King Lamoni and his wife, there is the rare mention of a woman’s name – Abish (Alma 19:16). She had previously been converted because of a remarkable vision had by her father. The name Abish (*abix*) means “corn plant” or “corn field” in Quiché Maya.

Middoni

After his conversion Lamoni desired that Ammon go with him up to the land of Nephi to see his father who was king over all the land. The Lord had warned Ammon not to do so and that his brethren Aaron, Muloki, and Ammah were in prison in Middoni. Lamoni decided to go with Ammon down to Middoni because Antiomno, the king of Middoni, was his friend.

Rather than going up to Nephi, they went down to Middoni and on the way down to Middoni they met Lamoni's father. As Middoni was down from the land of Ishmael we know where to look. The area of Ahuachapán, El Salvador (13.9239, -89.8469) is thought to be where the land of Middoni was located.

The name Ahuachapán means the "Place of the houses and oak trees" in Nahuatl. The *Ahuatl* is the oak tree in Nahuatl and the Hebrew equivalent is *Elah* or '*allah*. This symbolism should be recognized as God. The Hebrews were sensitive about speaking the names of God the Father (*Elohim* plural for *El* or *Eloah*) and his Son Jehovah (Jesus Christ). A reverential name used was *Adonai* meaning "My Lord." This is thought to be the name connection for the land of Middoni.

Which Land of Nephi?

To this point we have two lands of Nephi and care must be taken to identify which is appropriate in each reference – the land of Nephi-I, Nahuizalco near where they landed, or Nephi-II near Shilom and Lejamani. In the case of the missionary travels, Aaron provides the discriminating clues.

Aaron Travels to Jerusalem

When they parted on the borders of the Lamanite lands, Aaron went towards the land of Jerusalem. That makes it easy – Jerusalem was away joining the borders of Mormon (Alma 21:1).

After the people of Limhi had left the lands of Shilom (La Paz) and Lehi-Nephi (Lejamani), the Lamanites, the Amalekites, and the people of Amulon built a great city Jerusalem. This great city Jerusalem is today Yarumela, Honduras (14.33963, -87.63953) located just a mile and a half south of the temple Shilom on the La Humya River. The remains of the central city walls are still in place. They are mounds about five feet tall and 25-feet wide extending around what is about four of their city blocks. On the east side of the walls the level drops an additional

30-feet down to the river that is about 400 feet away. At this location there is a confluence of the Guangololo and La Humuya rivers.

At the time of Christ's Crucifixion: "and the city of Jerusalem and the inhabitants thereof; and waters have I caused to come up in the stead thereof, to hide their wickedness and abominations from before my face, that the blood of the prophets and the saints shall not come up any more unto me against them" (3 Nephi 9:7).

This prophet's blood would be from Abinadi who was slain by Amulon and the priests of wicked King Noah just a mile and half north in Shilom. The land is rather flat in this region and there is a very large drainage basin coming from the south that "caused the water to come up in the stead thereof." Notice how when the geographic fit is correct, everything else also fits.

The people of Jerusalem were of the Order of Nehors. They rejected Aaron's message of the atoning blood of Christ and so he departed.

Ani-Anti

Departing from Jerusalem, Aaron "came over" to a village called Ani-anti (Alma 21:11). "Came" means he was returning back closer to Zarahemla and "over" means he crossed back over the mountains between Honduras and El Salvador. Thus, he was leaving the land of Nephi-II and returning closer to the land of Nephi-I.

At Ani-Anti Aaron met Muloki, Ammah, and his brethren. Ani-Anti could be Santa Ana, but the ancient town of Atiquizaya (13.9737, -89.7547) seems more likely. Santa Ana is clearly a more modern Spanish name. There are many very large ruins clustered in this part of El Salvador. Here they were rejected also and he "came over" even closer to the land of Middoni where they were put in prison and later liberated through the efforts of King Lamoni and Ammon. Middoni (Ahuachapán) and Ani-Anti (Atiquizaya) are only about seven miles apart.

Nephi-I

After Aaron and his brethren were liberated from the Middoni prison, they were led by the spirit to the land of Nephi to the house of the king who was over all the land (Alma 22:1). This would be the land of Nephi-I (Nahuizalco). It is up over the pass in the Apaneca mountain range (Mount Antipas – Onidah the place of arms Alma 47:1-13).

Recall that after his conversion Lamoni discussed going **up to the land of Nephi** to see his father or **down to Middoni** to free Ammon's brethren. Lamoni decided to go with Ammon **down** to Middoni. Now Aaron and his brethren must by default **go up** to the land of Nephi. Up and over to the northeast would be the land of Nephi-II – Aaron had already been there and done that. Up and over mount Apaneca (Mount Antipas 13.860, -89.803) to the southeast would take them to Nephi-I (Nahuizalco 13.7799, -89.7380).

Ishmaelite/Lamanite Split

The author has wondered how in the early going there were enough Lamanites to fight in the land of Nephi-II and still maintain a presence that was very significant in later times from Nephi-I. A possible answer has been found.

Recall that Lamoni was a descendant of Ishmael (Alma 17:21). And, who was king over all the land? That was Lamoni's father who also would probably be a descendant of Ishmael. Now, jumping to Ammonihah, who was this Amulek who befriended a hungry prophet Alma? "I am Amulek; I am the son of Giddonah, who was the son of Ishmael, who was a descendant of Aminadi; and it was the same Aminadi who interpreted the writing which was upon the wall of the temple, which was written by the finger of God." (Alma 10:2) We are missing some parts to that story. May it be suggested that possibly Amulek was a descendant of Ishmael also. We have nothing that would indicate otherwise.

The fact that Lamoni was a descendant of Ishmael and that his father was king over “all” the land would indicate that the Ishmaelites were in leadership over the land of Nephi-I. No kings named Laman are ever mentioned from the land of Nephi-I. Likewise, the name Ishmael is never mentioned in conjunction with the land of Nephi-II. There was a Nephite soldier named Laman from Nephi-I who was a servant to the king and witnessed Amalickiah’s servant kill the king. He fled to Jershon and eventually ended up in Moroni’s army (Alma 55:5).

May it be suggested that there may have been a partial split very early with mostly Laman’s and Lemuel’s families following after Nephi and his people to the land of Nephi-II and the families of the sons of Ishmael remaining in the land of Nephi-I. There are clear references to the blood of Laman and Lemuel being in the land of Nephi-I (Alma 47:35), but there are no such references of Ishmaelites being in the land of Nephi-II.

Ishmaelitish Women

In searching the dictionaries of the ancient world, a connection began to be apparent locally in the El Salvador and Guatemala border area with the Sanskrit language. All the words with *ani* and *anti* appear to have connections in Sanskrit. The Michatoya River is the “fish river” in Nahuatl – *michi* being “fish” and *atoya* being one of the root words for “river.” A word for “water” in Sanskrit is *toyam*. *Toya* is a rather complicated sound to be just coincidence. Even the Maya word for “house” *ja* pronounced as *ha* is possibly from Sanskrit where *griha* is “house.” There are many more connections to the Sanskrit language. Possibly the most universal word is *tata* meaning “father.” *Tata* or some form of it is “father” in Sanskrit, most Maya languages, Nahuatl, Xinca, Quichua (Ecuador), Quechua (Perú), Guaraní (Brazil, Paraguay, Argentina, Bolivia), Cherokee, Navajo, Purepecha (Mexico), Hopi, and Basque (Spain). It is not in Hebrew, Sumerian (Jaredite), or the Mam branch of the Maya (Jaredite).

Sailors from the Indian subcontinent and the eastward islands could reach the Americas by following the equatorial counter-current, probably as did Lehi and the Mulekites.

Laman and Lemuel's families appeared to have followed after Nephi and his people to the land of Nephi-II, while the families of the sons of Ishmael remained in the land of Nephi-I. It would thus be the children of the sons of Ishmael that would be mating with the natives. And those natives appeared to have linkages (linguistic and DNA) to the very dark peoples from the Indian subcontinent (Alma 3:7).

It is beginning to appear that the Nephites had some linkage with Chinese and the Lamanites had some linkage with Sanskrit. This needs further investigation.

Missionary Success

The missionaries tabulated their success in Alma 23:8-15. In general the people in the lands of Ishmael, Middoni, and Nephi-I were converted. In the greater land of Nephi-II, the people in Shilom, Shemlon, Lemuel, and Shimnilom were converted.

We were told of the activities and successes in the greater land of Nephi-I, but we were only told of Aaron's failure to convert in the land of Nephi-II. Possibly the brothers later returned to Aaron's old stomping ground and had significant success.

After Aaron and his brethren converted Lamoni's father, the king over all the land, he issued a proclamation (Alma 22:1-7) that opened the door throughout the whole land for missionary work. Aaron and his brethren traveled from city to city, from one house of worship to another.

The people in the land of Shilom, the land of Shemlon, the city of Lemuel, and the city of Shimnilom were converted and they were all Lamanites (Alma 23:12-13). The apostate Nephites, Order of Nehors, and Amulon and the priests of King Noah who occupied the lands of Amulon, Helam, and Jerusalem and all the land round about would not repent.

We now appear to have all the significant cities or lands in and around the land of Nephi-II. We know of Shilom, and Shemlon across the river, but now Lemuel and Shimnilom are mentioned as believers.

Cities Lemuel and Laman

There is just this single reference to a city Lemuel (Alma 23:12) and only one reference at the Crucifixion destruction to a city Laman (3 Nephi 9:10).

In the Comayagua Valley there are some ruins named Calamuya on a National Geographic map (*Land of the Maya A Traveler's Map*, 1989). They are located just southwest of the hill town Humuya (14.2548, -87.6697). *Ca* is the Maya number two. *Ca-Lamuya* could be a second town of Lemuel. Possibly the town name Humuya may have once been *Lamuya* and then changed to *La Humuya* and then just *Humuya* without the Spanish definite article *La*.

A town of Laman is mentioned at the time of the destruction as being one of four cities burned. (3 Nephi 9:10) The others are Josh, Gad, and Kishkumen from the Altiplano above Zarahemla. A village of Lamani (14.1963, -87.6213) today is about 10-miles south-southeast from La Paz, Honduras.

Shimnilom

The people in the city of Shimnilom were also converted. This is the only reference to the "city of Shimnilom" (Alma 23:12). There are two sets of ruins in the area that have not been identified. The first is named Las Vegas and the second is named Tenempua. Tenempua is just off the road back to Tegucigalpa. But it is up a steep mountain. It is a fortified flat top mountain. Each ravine is blocked off with stone walls. The rock structure at the main gate is quite impressive. There is water available on top. It looks more like a robber's stronghold than a city. The surrounding slopes are too steep for agriculture sufficient to

support this hilltop fortress. It has a view down a canyon looking straight towards La Paz and Yarumela. The name Tenempua is not Shimnilom. Shimnilom has relevant meaning and that meaning is known.

The ruins at Las Vegas are probably what remain of Shimnilom. It is very near the city of Comayagua, Honduras where the Spaniards set up their capitol for Honduras until 1880. Las Vegas appears to be on the west side of the river across from Comayagua.

The name Shimnilom is the name of an animal. To the Jaredites it was called the Curelom (Ether 9:19). In Sumerian the name comes from *kur* meaning “mountain or highland” and *alim* meaning “wild ram, bison, aurochs, and powerful.” Together it is *kuralim* or *curelom* meaning “mountain ox.” Today the animal in Honduras known as the “mountain cow” is the Baird’s Tapir. The tapir was very important to the Maya peoples. Some of the Maya call it the *t’ix* and some call it *tzimin*. The *tzimin-alim* is the *shimnilom* -- part Maya and part Sumerian. The Xinca word for tapir is *kiri* which is closer to the Jaredite *curelom*. *Kiri* is identical to the Sumerian word meaning “nose” – thus “nose ox.”

The name Las Vegas in Spanish means a “level fruitful ground usually on the bank of a river.” That describes the place along the La Humuya River. The Tapir is known to prefer such a place. They enjoy the water and indeed must live near water.

Cureloms and Cumoms

There are only two large, mammals of the Americas with which Joseph Smith would not have been familiar in 1830 -- the tapir and the llama. The tapir (curelom) has just been covered above. Now, what are the cumoms?

There are four species of llama-like animals. There are the large wild *guanaco* and the small wild *vicuña*, and there are the domestic *llama* and the domestic *alpaca*, which are thought to have been derived through selective breeding from the *guanaco* and *vicuña*, respectively. The word *guanaco* comes from the

Quechua *huanacu*. *Llama* is directly from the Quechua word *llamincu*. *Vicuña* is from the Quechua name *wikuña*. *Alpaca* is from the Aymara name *alpachu*. In Aymara the llama is *garwa* and *qawra*. In Quichua the name for *guanaco* is *huanacu*, which is also the name for the heavy wool poncho typical of the Andes region.

Looking for roots, *huan* is the preposition “with.” The *acu* root is not obvious, but it is part of the words for “fat, water, and shirt.”

Since the objective is to find the Jaredite word *cumom*, the Sumerian dictionary is an appropriate source. The closest root of interest is *gu* which is pronounced like *ku* and means “string, thread; wool yarn; flax; or hemp.” Could *huanacu* mean “with wool”? The better fit might be with the Quiché word *k’u’* which means “blanket, covering, robe, or poncho.” That would make it the animal “with a blanket or coat,” which is probably the best etymology and fits a llama perfectly.

Since the llama is of the camel family, the countries and languages along the Jaredite trail should be examined for the word “camel.” Surprisingly, it shows up in Mongolia and Manchuria. In Manchu the word for camel is *temen*. This is close enough to suggest that the Jaredite animal *cumom* was possibly a camel. However, if that were the case, Joseph Smith would have been able to translate the word. Therefore, given all of the *cu*, *ku*, and *qu* connections to blanket, cloth, or coat, it appears that the best connection we have suggests that *cumoms* are a reference to the llama family -- the “camel with a coat.”

Examine the Quechua word *llamincu*. The double “LL” sound is Spanish and sounds like “ya” in English. This is transferred into the Quechua orthography to produce the same “ya” sound. So *llamincu* would be *yaminicu*. Switching the syllable order gives *cu-ya-min* or as Joseph Smith cast it, *Cumom* – the camel with a coat.

The llama family *is* known to be extremely useful to man. They have ranged over a much larger region in the past. Llama fossils have been found in Florida and California.

Land of Amulon

The priests of wicked King Noah were led by Amulon and were called the Amulonites. They left their families and fled into the wilderness. Shortly thereafter they stole 24 daughters of the Lamanites and took them into the wilderness to be their wives.

About 25-miles northwest of Comayagua is a city of possible relevance. It is called Siguatepeque or “hill of the women.” This may be from when the priests of Noah stole the 24 daughters of the Lamanites. Assuming this to be the case, Siguatepeque would be the land of Amulon (14.598, -87.831).

Midian

The mission for the sons of King Mosiah had an end. They had many converts who took an oath to not take up arms. Now the more wicked part of the Lamanites, being stirred up by the Amulonites and Amalekites, were seeking to destroy the Anti-Nephi-Lehies. When Ammon and his brethren saw the preparations for destruction, they came forth (returned closer to Zarahemla) to the land of Midian where Ammon met all his brethren.

Midian would be the current city of Metapan, El Salvador (14.3312, -89.4424) just 10 miles up the mountain from Ishmael (Igualtepec, Belen Güijat). Metapan supposedly means “maguey river.” *Midian* means “strife” in Hebrew.

Anti-Nephi-Lehies

They then came (yet closer) to the land of Ishmael that they might council with King Lamoni and Lamoni’s brother Anti-Nephi-Lehi.

Lamoni’s father had died within the year after bestowing the kingdom upon his son, who at the time the king apparently re-named Anti-Nephi-Lehi. The name Anti-Nephi-Lehies was the

result of the king, Aaron, and the priests consulting as to a distinguishing name they should take upon themselves (Alma 23:16).

The name continues to baffle. *Anti* does mean “copper” and the Andes Mountains means the “copper mountains” among the Quechua and Quichua. The token of their promise or oath was that their swords would be kept bright as a witness. It is mentioned five times (Alma 24:12-16). They were to be kept “bright” as a “testimony to our God” at the last day (Alma 24:15).

In the Florentine Codex Vocabulary the word *tepoztlī* means: axe, copper, iron, and hard metal. There is no distinction between copper and iron or any other hard metal. Likewise, there is no distinction between the tool “axe” and the material “copper or iron.” Could *anti* have referred to the copper or hard metal axe or sword in a similar fashion? The word “bright” did not appear in the dictionaries, but the word “shine” did. In the Nahuatl language a root word in the word “shine” usually took one of three forms: *tona* meaning “sun,” *tlaca* which we recognize as both the Nahuatl word for “people” and a form of Lehi, and *tlahua* which we recognize as a Mayan form of Lehi. It would thus appear that Lehi on the end of Anti-Nephi-Lehi may have had a double meaning – both Lehi and “to shine.” There is a Sanskrit word *pratijaanihi* meaning to “declare” and a very similar word meaning “I promise” *pratijaane* that look like they could have Anti and Nephi in them.

There is what appears to be a silver coin mentioned in the land of Ammonihah called the *onti* (Alma 11:6-13). What is the phonetic difference between *anti* and *onti*? May it be said that there is not a nickel’s difference?

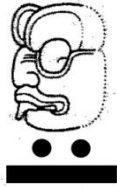
Now jump to Perú where the coin when the Spaniards arrived was called *inti* and means “sun” in Quechua. You have it -- is there not a nickel’s difference between *inti* and *onti*. *Inti* also means both “sun” and “day” just as the root *tonati* does in Nahuatl. These people were all related – their languages still show it.

May it be suggested that Anti-Nephi-Lehi is more than just a couple of names with an untoward adjective but has multiple meanings, now lost, having to do with “maintaining their swords bright as a testimony to their God.”

Xinca

The Xinca are a people that occupied the land east and south east of present day Guatemala City (Ammonihah 14.6322, - 90.5482). The Akateco Maya refer to Guatemala, the capitol city, as *Xeeq'a* -- very close to Xinca. The Xinca people are a remnant of the Anti-Nephi-Lehies and are the people of the “oath” (Pate 2012). They occupied the land of Jershon and expanded as they grew.

Ammon led his “converts,” his people, the Anti-Nephi-Lehies back toward Zarahemla.



CHAPTER 7

MISSIONARIES RETURN

The Trip Home

The trip home had to be a “bitter sweet” event. The success had been much greater than they ever could have imagined, but the missionaries were returning with thousands of exiled refugees who had suffered greatly for their new religion.

From the land of Ishmael (Belen Güijat) Ammon and his people probably took the easiest and best route back to Zarahemla. In these areas one travels where the mountains, volcanoes, and rivers will permit. After the council meeting at Ishmael, when the Lord told Ammon to get the people, the people were gathered with their flocks and headed for Zarahemla. From Nephi-I there is a preferred and rather easy route to the northwest to Ammonihah (Guatemala City). This was the route followed by the Lamanite armies for years to come. From Ishmael (Lake Güija), the easiest route would be straight west, but the first few days would be very hot and dry. If ever the travelers complained of thirst, they must have been passing from Lake Güija to Asunción Mita to Jutiapa (Judea). This is the driest and most miserable part of Guatemala. All other routes have rivers and

water at appropriate intervals. Those traveling from Nephi-II had a much longer trip -- beautiful country but very mountainous. Did they travel together or as two or three separate groups? We are told nothing of their travels other than they traveled through the wilderness (mountains) that divide Zarahemla from the land(s) of Nephi (Alma 27:14).

Happy Reunion

Alma was traveling from the land of Gideon **southward away** to the land of Manti when he met the sons of Mosiah returning. Gideon is thought to be the land where Antigua Guatemala is located today (14.5574, -90.7342). Manti is thought to be Amatitlán, Guatemala (14.4854, -90.6157). There is a mountain pass to the east of Antigua that connects the two. One must climb the mountain **away** to the east before dropping down **southward** to reach Amatitlán (Manti).

The mind of the people was sampled and it was decided that the exiled Anti-Nephi-Lehies could have the land of Jershon for their inheritance. They had great joy and went down to the land of Jershon and settled (Alma 27:26).

Bloody Battle

One of the bloodiest battles ever fought by the Nephites happened somewhere in this sequence. Some time later, after the people of Ammon were settled in Jershon, after the church was also established, and after the armies of the Nephites were placed around the land of Jershon, the Lamanites attacked (Alma 28:1-3). The Lamanite armies had followed their brethren into the wilderness. There must have been some delay in this "following their brethren into the wilderness" because there was time to get all the above mentioned events and logistics in place. This would require many weeks.

The battle was tremendous. Never had such a battle been known since leaving Jerusalem. There was great slaughter but

eventually the Lamanite armies were driven out and scattered. The Nephite armies returned to their lands and there was much mourning for the family losses (Alma 28:1-6).

Manti

The land of Manti is around the outlet of Lake Amatitlán. This is part of the headwaters of the Sidon River which is today the Michatoya or “Fish River” in Nahuatl. But, the feeder river (Río Plátanos) to this lake is also considered part of the river Sidon (Alma 16:6-7).

6 And it came to pass that Alma inquired of the Lord concerning the matter. And Alma returned and said unto them: Behold, the Lamanites will cross the river Sidon in the south wilderness, away up beyond the borders of the land of Manti. And behold there shall ye meet them, on the east of the river Sidon, and there the Lord will deliver unto thee thy brethren who have been taken captive by the Lamanites.

7 And it came to pass that Zoram and his sons crossed over the river Sidon, with their armies, and marched away beyond the borders of Manti into the south wilderness, which was on the east side of the river Sidon.

We have from these verses that Manti is on the Nephite edge of the south wilderness. The south wilderness is the mountains through which the Anti-Nephi-Lehies traveled. And, the Sidon River forms the boundary with the south wilderness. The south wilderness is closer to the east wilderness (Paradigm Shift 8).

Jershon

Jershon is on the east of Zarahemla by the sea (Alma 27:22) – that sea is the Lake Amatitlán. The people of Ammon camped in

the wilderness while Ammon and his brethren went for permission (Alma 27:15). They met Alma on his way to Manti. That tells us exactly where they were when they met within about a mile. After receiving permission, the people went down into the land of Jershon (Alma 27:26). We can tell the confines of the land of Jershon by the locations of the fortress cities set up by the Nephites to protect the land of Jershon. Jershon was a buffer land between Zarahemla and the land of Nephi-I. It was part of the south wilderness, but there are some nice valleys in the area.

Starting at the top (true north) the west boundary of Jershon is formed by Ammonihah, Manti, and Melek. The true south boundary is Antionum. The true east boundary is more wilderness and then the Lamanite lands. The true north boundary eventually appears to be Lamanite lands. The fortress cities that completely surround the exposed border include Manti (Amititlán), Ammonihah (Guatemala City), Noah (Chinautla), Cumeni (Cuilapa), Judea (Jutiapa), and Antiparah (Atquipaque – 14.09426, -90.57753). Zeezrom (Utzumasate) was later added (Alma 56:14-15).

The land of Jershon is the land of the Xinca people, the “people of the oath.” It is principally the Department of Santa Rosa and part of the Department of Jutiapa (Judea). The Pacific Coastal region appears to be part of Antionum in Book of Mormon times.

Initially, the land of Jershon was probably much smaller. The fortress cities mentioned above may have been built some ten years later. Moroni kicked the Lamanites out of the south wilderness and then probably built the fortress cities. The Zoramite battles are not commensurate with the large land of Jershon but a much smaller land (Alma 43).

Cumeni

The town of Cuilapa (14.2755, -90.2989) was selected as a possible fortress city, Cumeni, because of location and current importance in the Santa Rosa Department. Knowing where

Antiparah (Atquipaque) and Manti (Amatitlán) were and studying the topographical maps to see how it would be best to block the travel corridors through the mountains, Cuilapa was selected as a possible Cumeni. There were no ruins shown at this exact location on the available maps.

Then a very special breakthrough occurred. A former name of Cuilapa was observed in a translated Wikipedia site “Santa Rosa (Guatemala) la enciclopedia libre.” The site could not be reached through English, only Spanish, which could then be automatically translated. The previous name of the Santa Rosa Department capitol city Cuilapa was Cuajiniquilapa. We can ignore the last half of the name; it is just Quilapa or Cuilapa. The first half was the jaw dropper – *Cuajini*. That is Cumeni as close as it comes 2077 years later. The Spanish “j” is pronounced as the English “h”. So *Cuajini* is *Cuahini* and very close to Cumeni.

Do not think this was a lucky guess out of 47 possible candidates. No, there were no other candidates within the critical stretch of highway. The topography limited the candidates to just one. This is typical of the geographic and topographic tightness of the fit for Mormon’s puzzle.

And the author continues to be frustrated because the “scholars” are fighting over which of two wrong rivers in the wrong country is the Sidon River when such inconsequential little Book of Mormon towns such as Cumeni are found with such exactness and fidelity.

Fine Tuning Judea

Many years ago the author was very excited finding Jutiapa or Jutia-pa and recognizing it as Judea. Today there is a Department Jutiapa and Department capitol city named Jutiapa. The visit to the city of Jutiapa was very memorable – the heat, the agricultural smoke, the cats fighting all night, the electric shock in the shower.

We had a very pleasant restaurant dinner with a school teacher friend of my traveling partner Fred Perkins from his

missionary days. She said that Jutiapa had at some time in the past been named something else. The author was not put off by this statement because Guatemala in modern times went through many years trying to disenfranchise the ethnic culture. After the revolution it became more politically expedient to promote or preserve the indigenous heritage. At the time of the Spanish conquest and colonization a similar cycle was experienced. The soldiers were trying to destroy and some of the priests were trying to protect the Indians rights. Old names in an area can be resurrected and applied later.

A more careful study of the topography, as it relates to protection, yielded a very small agricultural village with the name Jutiapa also. Strategically, it is much more appropriate. It is where travelers from the lake Gúija area would join travelers from the Ahuachapán area on the way to Guatemala City. It is about 1200 feet higher than the valley floor and only two miles off the main road to Ahuachapán, which is only 30 miles away to the southeast. The current highway (Carrera 8) through this valley follows the River Pulula and goes straight to Ahuachapán, El Salvador (Middoni), up over the mountain named Apaneca (Antipas) and then drops down to Nahuizalco (Nephi-I). This would be the main highway for the attacking Lamanite armies. They would go up to the Manti area and then drop down into Zarahemla. Going **up** to the land of Nephi means going **up** and over the mountains in the Manti area and then dropping **down** into Nephi-I some 80 miles away as the crow flies or **down** into Nephi-II some 220 miles as the crow flies of much more rough mountainous terrain.

Recall when Amilickiah's guards killed the Lamanite king. An army was sent to chase the king's guards who fled toward Zarahemla and joined the people of Ammon. The guards escaped and on the morrow Amalickiah entered the city Nephi-I (Alma 47:24-31). This quick chase shows the proximity to the land of Jershon – Judea was the closest fortress city.

Judea, as Jutiapa the Department Capitol, is too far away from the Nephite lands and too isolated to be relevant. Judea as

the small agricultural village also named Jutiapa, twenty miles west of the Department Capitol Jutiapa would be the much more strategically significant location and will therefore become the leading candidate for Judea (14.2002, -90.0516) until more information would dictate otherwise.

Alma, Amulek, and Zeezrom

The Zoramites in Antionum were perverting the ways of the Lord and so Alma put together a mission trip. He took Ammon and Aaron as well as Amulek and Zeezrom, who were in Melek, and two of his own sons, Shiblón and Coriantón (Alma 31). They were rejected, but had limited success among the poor. Alma was preaching on the hill Onidah (Alma 32:4).

The missionaries and the poor converts were kicked out of Antionum by the Zoramites so they went to Jershon among the Anti-Nephi-Lehies or the people of Ammon. This angered the Zoramites so they started making preparations for war against the people of Ammon (Alma 35). The Zoramites started to mix with the Lamanites and stir them up to anger.

Alma counseled his son, Coriantón, for departing the work and going into the land of Siron, among the borders of the Lamanites, after the harlot Isabel. Siron is possibly the ruins named Cara Sucia, El Salvador (13.7812, -90.0342).

Antionum

Before Moroni's wars breakout, let's locate the new places mentioned. The best reference about Antionum is Alma 31:3 which states: "Now the Zoramites had gathered themselves together in a land which they called Antionum, which was east of the land of Zarahemla, which lay nearly bordering upon the seashore, which was south of the land of Jershon, which also bordered upon the wilderness south, which wilderness was full of the Lamanites.

This very cumbersome sentence tells it all. Antionum was east of Zarahemla (Cotzumalguapa). Antionum lay nearly bordering on the seashore. This seashore would be the Pacific Coast. Antionum was south of Jershon. Both Antionum and Jershon bordered on the south wilderness which wilderness was full of Lamanites. Later Moroni cleared the south wilderness of Lamanites nearly bordered on the seashore.

This is very clear except the “South Wilderness” was not true south; it was almost true east and just a little south. South was the name, not the direction. Recall Paradigm Shift 8 about the Hebrew reference frame being rotated counter-clockwise in Mormon’s lands. Consider the land North was called Mulek (Zarahemla) and the land South was called Lehi (Helaman 6:10). They were separated by the South Wilderness. The South Wilderness was considered by Moroni to be Nephite land and “Moroni caused that his armies should go forth into the **east wilderness**; yea, and they went forth and drove all the Lamanites who were in the **east wilderness** into their **own lands**, which were **south of the land of Zarahemla**.” (Alma 50:7) “And he also placed armies on the **south**, in the **borders** of their possessions, and caused them to **erect fortifications** that they might secure their armies and their people from the hands of their enemies (Alma 50:10). These fortifications included Antiparah, Cumeni, and Judea.

The land of Antionum extended almost to the Pacific Ocean seashore but not quite. “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 (Alma 22:28). It appears that Lamanite tent people lined the Pacific Coast.

The Zoramites were perverting the ways of the Lord and were bowing down to dumb idols (Alma 31:1). That would be Monte Alto near the present town of La Democracia, Guatemala

(14.22960, -90.94735). The dumb idols are still there and yes they do look very dumb. Monte Alto means “tall hill” and probably has reference to the Rameumptom. The actual archaeological site is to the west of town a couple of miles in a sugar cane field. The remaining stone carvings are in the town square. The better and more elaborate stone carvings were taken to Germany many years ago.

Antionum is mentioned only as a land, but invariably a city is involved somewhere. The actual city thought to be Antionum was called Panatacat or just Atacat which was destroyed May 9, 1524 by Pedro de Alvarado during the conquest of Guatemala. It is supposedly about a league north of Escuintla (14.3010, -90.7859). There are some ruins in the area named Concepción and María Santísima. South of Escuintla are many sets of ruins.

The land of Antionum extended toward the southeast all the way to Lamanite lands. The land of Siron was “among the borders” of the Lamanites. The most relevant ruins possibly would be Cara Sucia, El Salvador (13.7812, -90.0342). The hill Onidah and the land Siron could be within El Salvador, but at this point in time the Anti-Nephi-Lehies had rather recently left and the very bloody battle had occurred. The Lamanite lands were no place for a Nephite to go. We will leave Onidah for later discovery. Panatacat or just Atacat is thought to mean “eagle.” *Cot* is “eagle” in many of the Maya languages.

Antionum – The Name

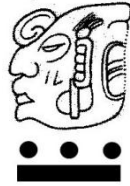
Finding place name references has been the principal method of verification that a city was correctly identified. It was disturbing that Antionum was lacking – especially since the Kakchiquels occupied the land of Antionum and the Kakchiquels had a more continuous history in the area than did the Nephites (Quiché) who were displaced from the Zarahemla area.

Sahagún provided the answer (Dibble 1961 Vol. 10, 185). The place “where the water was crossed” was called *Pantla* or *Panutla*. Those who settled this land “came in boats; they

crossed over the sea.” We know of three landings – the Jaredites’, the Mulekites’, and the Lehites’; all of which were in the Pacific coastal region of Guatemala and El Salvador. The Papantla and Panotla names are repeated in the Veracruz area of Mexico.

The first half of the name Anti-onum has to do with the verb “to cross” (from Sanskrit) and the second half is Jaredite (Sumerian) *a-num* with *a* meaning “water” and *num*, an adverb meaning “above.” Combined it is “crossing over water.” For the Nahuatl translation, *Pantla* or *Panutla*, we will trust Sahagún.

The Catholic saint name selected for the area was Pantaleón, which shares similarity with *Pantla* and Antionum. There are ruins and a river named Pantaleón just east of Santa Lucía Cotzumalguapa. The colonial city of possibly more relevance might be Escuintla which was previously named Panatacat.



CHAPTER 8

MORONI'S WARS

Limits of Land of Jershon

It is apparent that the people of Ammon (the Xınca), the people of the “oath,” in later years expanded into the entire Department of Santa Rosa and part of the Departments of Jutiapa and Jalapa. But, the initial battle with the Zoramites severely restricts the initial size and location of the land of Jershon.

The Zoramites and Lamanites came to battle against the people of Ammon and the Nephites. The people of Jershon came over into the land of Melek for safety to give the Nephite armies room for fighting. (Alma 35:13) The Nephite army was led by a young 25 year old Chief Captain named Moroni (Alma 43:17).

Melek

It is beneficial to locate the land of Melek first – in part because it is easily done and in part because the neighborhood is starting to get more crowded. Melek was important to Alma and usually only mentioned as relating to Alma. MLK is the Hebrew root for king but that does not appear relevant in any of the native

literature. It is also the god of the Phoenicians, Molech, to which some Hebrew children were sacrificed by fire. Possibly more relevant is an Arabic definition of *melek* meaning “angel” with *melâ’ika* as the plural form. In Hebrew it is *mal’ak* pronounced as *mal awk*. This possibly could be where Alma the younger and the sons of Mosiah had the visitation of the angel.

The names Amaleki, Amalekites, and Amalickiah may have their origins in *melek* possibly from the Hebrew word *amelak* meaning “dweller in a valley.” It possibly may be related to Abimelech or Abimelek meaning either “my father is king” or “son of Molech.” Abimelek apparently was a common name for Philistine kings. It is very possible there is a Phoenician connection at Melek. Phoenicians were Philistines. Recall that Sidon was a Phoenician coastal city.

Alma gives us the location of Melek in Alma 8:1-6. Leaving Zarahemla, Alma went toward the east to Melek which was on the west side of the Sidon River. The people came to hear him preach from the borders of the land on the wilderness side (South/East Wilderness). From thence he traveled three days northward to the land of Ammoniah (Guatemala City). That locates Melek very clearly in the Sidon River valley at about Palín, Guatemala (14.4034, -90.6926).

Moroni and the Armor

Moroni, with his men in full Nephite armor, met the Zoramite/Lamanite army in the borders between Antionum and Jershon as they were preparing to enter Jershon. Surprised by the armor and all manner of weapons, the Lamanite army decided it was better not to fight that day – clothed only in breechcloths.

The Lamanite army left Antionum and went into the wilderness and took their journey in the wilderness completely around Jershon to the headwaters of the Sidon River to try to take the fortress city Manti (Alma 43:22). Moroni sent spies to follow as well as messengers to the prophet Alma for inspired directions.

The word of the Lord came to Alma that they were going to attack at Manti. Moroni left part of the people to guard the “city”

in Jershon and took the major part straight to Manti. There are two sets of ruins about five to six miles straight east of Escuintla named Coyol (palm tree) and Dos Pilas (two pools) that might be relevant.

The initial limits of the land of Jershon were possibly just the piedmont valley area south and west of the Volcano Pacaya (14.3821, -90.6021). There is a town in this area named Patrocinio which means "protection, patronage, or favor." It was some ten years later that Moroni kicked the Lamanites out of the east and south wilderness and built the fortress cities of Antiparah, Cumeni, and Judea. This would include the Santa Rosa area where the Xinca live today.

Circling Around to Manti

The Lamanite/Zoramite army would circle to the east in the wilderness (mountains) around Jershon and approach Manti from the east. This would be at the west end of Lake Amatitlán. The battle described in Alma 43 fits very well in this area. It has been thought that the Volcano Pacaya (14.3821, -90.6021) would be the hill Riplah, but the largeness of its base would not fit the battle topography. The much smaller hills and valleys on the south side at the west end of Lake Amatitlán (14.4628, -90.6101) fit the story exactly.

Next Would Be King -- Amalickiah

Lacking the vote to unseat Helaman and fearing a lack of commitment as to the justice of the cause on the part of his followers, Amalickiah took those who would and went to the land of Nephi (Alma 46:29). This would be Nephi-I. Amalickiah convinced the Lamanite king to go to war against the Nephites. The king sent out a call for his people to prepare for war, but his people did not want to go. Those refusing to fight fled to a place Onidah, the place of arms, up on top of mount Antipas. Lehonti was selected as their leader.

Mount Antipas

The large mountain range just up to the north of Nephi-I (Nahuizalco) is today named Apaneca which means “river of wind.” The Book of Mormon calls it the place of arms. Frey Bernardino de Sahagún back in the mid 1500’s mentions a noun called *apanecaiotl*. Dibble leaves the word un-translated in the sentence: “in ancient times they used the shields, the devices, those called *apanecaiotl*, which were their exclusive property” (Dibble 1964, Vol 10, 167). Sahagún was talking of war paraphernalia. The connection between wind and water and exclusive property sounded like the fiber or cotton armor used by the natives when Pedro de Alvarado arrived and as the padded clothing used for armor in captain Moroni’s day.

The *otl* was thought to be just a noun ending, but further study indicated it probably was not. The linkage with *otlatl* as cane and reed made the “river-wind-cane” sound like a blow-gun. The linkage between some war paraphernalia and the place of arms helped identify the mountain range Apaneca as mount Antipas (13.864, -89.801).

Place Onidah

There is a town Sonsonate and a Department Sonsonate. The name has been spelled many ways over the centuries. It means many waters in Nahuatl. Walter Monge-Cruz of the El Salvador Civic Democratic Committee stated that *Centzunat* is a Pipil toponym which means Rio Grande and literally "Four Waters." A possible Sumerian word could be *An-ida* or “water above river.” Onidah (*An-ida*) is probably a Jaredite word and the present name **Sonsonate** probably evolved from Jaredite (Sumerian).

The city of Sonsonate is just below Nahuizalco (Nephi-I) which may seem to be the wrong direction to be relevant for Lehonti’s story. Since the Department is also named Sonsonate,

the name is in the area and the exact location of the “place which was called Onidah” is uncertain.

Amalickiah’s Army Attacks

Amalickiah stayed home with the queen but sent his army to take Ammonihah (Guatemala City). Ammonihah had been rebuilt and strengthened. The Lamanite army chose not to fight there and went on to the city of Noah. This had also been strengthened. Because of their oath they decided to fight anyway and did so until all of their chief captains were dead. When they realized their leaders were dead they fled into the wilderness and returned to Nephi-I to tell the king (Alma 49).

The fortress city Noah is thought to be the ruins at Chinautla (14.70287, -90.50010), just about ten very winding miles north of Guatemala City. Chinautla was significant and there are many of its artifacts in the National Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology in Guatemala City.

East Wilderness

Moroni next clears the east wilderness and drives the Lamanites back to the south. New fortress cities are built and people are sent to occupy them (Alma 50).

13 And it came to pass that the Nephites began the foundation of a city, and they called the name of the city Moroni; and it was by the east sea; and it was on the south by the line of the possessions of the Lamanites.

14 And they also began a foundation for a city between the city of Moroni and the city of Aaron, joining the borders of Aaron and Moroni; and they called the name of the city, or the land, Nephihah.

15 And they also began in that same year to build many cities on the north, one in a particular manner which they called Lehi, which was in the north by the borders of the seashore (Alma 50:13 - 15).

New Fortress Cities

Several new fortress cities are mentioned as being by the east sea. In this case the east sea is Lake Atitlán. The new fortress cities include Moroni, Nephihah, and Lehi. An old city, Aaron, is also mentioned

City Aaron

Aaron was a Jaredite king, but to this point in the Book of Mormon the city Aaron has never before been mentioned. Alma was rejected in Ammoniah and left the city heading toward the city Aaron. The same angel who had delivered the first message from the Lord returned to give Alma another message (Alma 8:13-18).

Alma quickly returned to Ammonihah, went around the city, and entered by the south gate where he met Amulek. The city Aaron would not be on the south; it would not be on the east (Lamanite country). Because of the other fortress cities and subsequent information from the battles it is apparent that Aaron is in the mountains to the west by northwest from Ammonihah (Guatemala City). The index in the current copies of the Book of Mormon states that there may be two different cities of Aaron. Apparently, the Book of Mormon did not match someone's paradigm. There is need for only one city Aaron, but a second city Aaron might be warranted – when in doubt, always trust the Book of Mormon.

The fortress city Nephihah (Nahualá) was between fortress Moroni and a city, Aaron-I (Alma 50:14). Knowing where it is and actually being able to find it in this very mountainous region are two very different propositions.

The fortress city Moroni is a bit uncertain. There was a city Moroni (Ciudad Vieja/Aguas Calientes) just south of what is presently Antigua Guatemala. It was mentioned in *The Annals of the Cakchiquels* and *Title of the Lords of Totonicapán* (Recinos 1953, 127n, 192). The Nahuatl, Quiché, Kakchiquel, and

Spanish forms are all listed in the text (*Moloni*, *Mek'ina'*, *Bulbux-yá*, and *Almolonga*, respectively). But, as it means a geothermal hot springs, it could show up in many places. "Moroni have I caused to be sunk in the depths of the sea, and the inhabitants thereof to be drowned (3 Nephi 9:4)." We will assume that the original fortress Moroni (*Samabaj* 14.667, -91.134) is in the bottom of Lake Atitlán and possibly another Moroni started later at Ciudad Vieja (14.5235, -90.7654) by those who could swim.

With Moroni in the bottom of Lake Atitlán the location of Aaron is much easier. The separation distance just got a lot shorter. There are ruins named San Jerónimo just north of Quetzaltenango, Guatemala (fortress Lehi) at the highway intersection today called Cuatro Caminos. The ruins on the map (*Mapa Arqueológica de la República de Guatemala*, 1991) appear to be about a half mile east (14.9189, -91.4257) of the intersection (Cuatro Caminos) on the road to Totonicapán (Moronihah).

Examining the name *Jerónimo* (pronounced as *Hair-ó-nimo* in English), one could easily see that the Hebrew pronunciation for Aaron could easily be hiding. This of course assumes that the archaeologist did her homework and found the local name for the ruins rather than just naming them after some cute boy she met. In colonial times the Catholic priests applied the closest sounding saint's name to the native name so that every village had a Christian name.

As for a second city Aaron-II (Alma 8:13), a very hungry prophet Alma, rejected at Ammonihah (Guatemala City), headed "towards" the city called Aaron. The city Aaron already identified is over 65 miles away. There is a second possibility only 18 miles away on the mountain route back to Zarahemla. That would be the ruins named Girón (pronounced as He-row-n) which could easily phonetically hide the Hebrew name Aaron. The ruins named Girón are just a half mile east of Saragoza, Guatemala (14.6512, -90.8626).

Fortress Nepihah

The fortress city Nepihah is appropriately named Nahualá (14.8430, -91.3187) today. The ruins, by the same name, appear to be about a mile southwest (14.8282, -91.3294) of the present town. They are possibly on a point overlooking the Nahualate River below. Amalickiah would not attack, but possibly laid siege by keeping his men down by the seashore i.e. river bank (Alma 51:25).

Fortress Lehi

The fortress city Lehi is in the Quetzaltenango area. The ancient name is Xelahuh which means “under the number ten.” We know the number ten is exactly Lehi. Xelahuh would be under the command of Captain Lehi. Today the natives, and indeed the whole country, call it by the beautiful name Xela (pronounced as *shay-la*).

“And they also began in that same year to build many cities on the north, one in a particular manner which they called Lehi, which was in the north by the borders of the seashore” (Alma 50:15). Fortress Lehi was one of many new cities on the north; it was built in a particular manner; and it was by the borders of the seashore.

What seashore? There are two possibilities. Atitlán, no that is too far away. Many years ago the valley at Quetzaltenango was a lake. In about 930 AD the volcano Cerro Quemado erupted and filled the lake (Conway 1992, 303-323). The volcano has at times dammed the Samalá River. In the area there are road cuts etc. where can be seen ash deposits several hundred feet thick.

Additionally, as noted in Paradigm Shift 6, any river bank could be called a seashore in the old Hebrew.

The exact location of the fortress is not known, but several ruins have been identified in the area. As for the “particular manner” (Alma 50:15) in which fortress Lehi was built we can only guess, but Pedro de Alvarado stated in his first letter to

Cortés that it was “situated in a very strong position” (Ejercito 1963, 190).

Morianton

Morianton and Lehi were both on the borders by the seashore which was either the Samalá River or the now filled lake (Alma 50:25). Morianton is a Jaredite name and probably a Jaredite city in Moroni’s time. Morianton had built many cities (Ether 10:12).

There was an incident between the people of Lehi (Quetzaltenango) and Morianton (Ostuncalco) in which the people of Lehi fled to the camp of Moroni (Almolonga). The people of Morianton feared that the army of Moroni would come and destroy them (Alma 50:25-36). Nephites had no need to fear Moroni. These people of Morianton were surviving Jaredites of the Mam branch of the Maya.

A servant girl was beaten by Morianton and she fled to the camp of Moroni for safety, or rather she “came over” to the camp of Moroni. “Come” shows the direction of travel and “over” means there was a mountain in the way. She informed Moroni of Morianton’s plan to flee into the land northward.

The land or city of Morianton is thought to be the ruins near Ostuncalco (14.8680, -91.6219) named San Antonio Los Cerritos (14.8684, -91.6127). *Mor* in Mayan languages as a noun means “pile or hill” and *mori* as a verb means “to gather up or pile up or hill up.” *Anton* would be tucked into Antonio by the Catholic priests and *mori* would have to do with the hills of earth or the *Cerritos* in Spanish.

“And they did work in all manner of ore, and they did make gold, and silver, and iron, and brass, and all manner of metals; and they did dig it out of the earth; wherefore, they did cast up mighty heaps of earth to get ore, of gold, and of silver, and of iron, and of copper” (Ether 10:23).

Camp of Moroni

We now have a Camp of Moroni also. How fortunate there is one so named tucked into a beautiful small canyon just over the hill to the south of Lehi (Quetzaltenango) and Morianton (Ostuncalco). Again the Spaniards called it Almolonga (14.8158, -91.4952) but Recinos tells us that the Nahuatl form was *Moloni* (Recinos 1953, 127n). The Nahua do not use the letter “r” but use the letter “l” to replace it where necessary.

Again, as the name indicates, there are hot springs and steam bath houses on the lower edge of town. The valley is a beautiful little box canyon full of fantastic vegetable farms. There are two sets of ruins (14.8024, -91.4831) identified on the map in the valley, which the author has not yet located.

Land Bountiful

To this point in the Book of Mormon story the land Bountiful has been mentioned seven times in conjunction with describing Nephite lands as a whole, but nothing has yet happened there and not many specifics have been mentioned. Now we have Teancum chasing Morianton towards Bountiful to get into the land northward (Alma 50:25-36).

Now we get to see how a mistake is made and then corrected in the Book of Mormon. Erasing on gold plates is difficult. “Now behold, the people who were in the land Bountiful, or rather Moroni, feared that they would hearken to the words of Morianton and unite with his people, and thus he would obtain possession of those parts of the land, which would lay a foundation for serious consequences among the people of Nephi, yea, which consequences would lead to the overthrow of their liberty” (Alma 50:32). A thought was put in print and then corrected.

Morianton was not headed to Bountiful that was Nephite land – he was headed to the land northward (Desolation) which was inhabited by other residuals Jaredites (Mam Maya). Moroni did not fear the people of Bountiful; he feared the damage that

Morianton would do by uniting the people in the land northward against the Nephites. It does appear that there was not a clear line between the residual Jaredites (Mam) and the Nephites. The Mam and the Nephites were probably mixed in the area. Moroni knew what he feared.

Morianton was heading from the land of Morianton (Ostuncalco) toward the land “northward” and did so by heading “southward” toward Bountiful and the borders of the land northward and the narrow pass which lead by the sea into the land northward (Alma 50:29-34).

The land northward in this instance is everything west and north of the Samalá River. This was the land occupied by the residual Jaredites, the Mam branch of the Maya – the “ancient ones.” This land is today still occupied by the Mam Maya.

Morianton and his people were fleeing down the canyon from Quetzaltenango (fortresses Lehi and Morianton) toward Retalhuleu (Desolation). Teancum was able to head them as they approached the narrow pass by the sea. “They did not head them until they had come to the borders of the land Desolation; and there they did head them, by the narrow pass which led by the sea into the land northward, yea, by the sea, on the west and on the east” (Alma 50:34).

The land Bountiful is centered around Cuyotenango, Guatemala (14.5410, -91.5714) and Mazatenango, Guatemala (14.5336, -91.5032). The temple and fortress are one-half mile north of the west end of the city (14.55318, -91.57842). Bountiful is mentioned in the *Annals of the Cakchiquels as Canalakam*. *Cana* is Bountiful and *lakum* is “fortification” in Hebrew. *Cana* is the Hebrew form just as the port city *Cana* in the land of Sheba where Lehi and his family set sail. The very poor village near the temple site is today called Cantón Iacán El Delírio (14.5506, -91.5794).

Fortress Mulek

This narrow passage was a very strategic point. It was where the fortress city Mulek was built. It is where there was a narrow

wooden bridge across the Samalá River when the conqueror Pedro de Alvarado arrived. He called it *río mal paso* because of the very bloody battle as they tried to cross. The “narrow neck of land” as a “bridge” is Paradigm Shift 3.

The town of Mulek is today called Santa Cruz Muluá (14.5811, -91.6248). The fortress is closer to the river crossing. The “U” shaped fortress (14.57921, -91.62979) is still visible even from satellite images.

The ancient name that shows up in *The Annals of the Cakchiquels* is *Mukulicya*. Recinos translates it as “hidden water” (Recinos 1953, 60fn). Christenson’s Quiché dictionary would render it as “covered water.” Recinos’ translation states, “They went down to *Mukulicya* and *Molomic-chée*” (Recinos 1953, 60). This translation with the capitalization and the coordinating conjunction “and” would indicate two distinct place names. The original handwritten Cakchiquel text is comma punctuated and has commas between lists of cities. The original text (of which the author has a copy from Ted E. Brewerton) does not have a comma or coordinating conjunction “and” -- only *mukulicya molomic chée*. Recinos in a footnote states that *molomic-chée* means “trees together.” Going with Christenson’s “covered water” and Recinos’ “trees together” we have a “wooden bridge.” This location name in the Book of Mormon was translated by Joseph Smith Jr. as the fortress city Mulek. Today this village adjacent to the Samalá River crossing is called by the Spanish name Santa Cruz Muluá – Muluá being short for *Mukulicya*.

Error in Book of Mormon

Don’t bet on it. Mormon writes that “Moroni had thus gained a victory over one of the greatest of the armies of the Lamanites, and had obtained possession of the city of Mulek, which was one of the strongest holds of the Lamanites in the land of Nephi” (Alma 53:6).

Knowing exactly where Mulek is located and also exactly where Nephi-I and Nephi-II are located, it would appear that

Mormon or Joseph Smith made a mistake. Those are two individuals the author will not point a finger at.

It is very possible that a mistake could have been made – how would one distinguish the possessive “Nephites’ land” and “land of Nephi.” Because of the crudeness of many of the relevant languages and the greater crudeness in writing/reading the Maya glyphs for instance, the translator would see a shorthand version of two Maya glyphs T4 and T1008 as shown in Figure 9. Individually they are *Na* and *Wa*, respectively. Combined they form *Nawa* which is *Nahua* or Nephi. But in shorthand it is just the first glyph *Na* simplified as two bow-shaped curved lines. With a horizontal straight line through them as in the Anthon Transcript (which is the introduction to Book of Mormon -- probably as it was on the lost 116 pages) it becomes the “record of Nephi.”

So what does the “bow” shaped character represent? It means Nephi; it means people of Nephi; it means Nephites; it means lands of Nephi I, II, and now III. How does a translator put this very cryptic code into understandable English? The same way Joseph Smith did. Joseph Smith, the man, did not translate the plates. They were translated as he said “by the gift and power of God” – better known as the Holy Ghost.

From what the author has observed, the writings would be nothing more than pneumatic reminders, mostly nouns, upon which one could overlay the memorized story line; or, as Joseph did, rely upon the Holy Ghost to fill in the blanks.

Does the author agree with John Sorenson that Mulek in the land of Nephi is an error? Not after a third land of Nephi was found.



Figure 9. T4.1008, the Nephi name glyph – Nahua.



Figure 10. Glyph T23, *Nah*, and Bryant's A13 and A26.

Third Land of Nephi

Everyone knows of the un-named land mentioned between Zarahemla and Bountiful. “And the land which was appointed was the land of Zarahemla, and the land which was between the land Zarahemla and the land Bountiful, yea, to the line which was between the land Bountiful and the land Desolation (3 Nephi 3:23). Also “they succeeded in obtaining possession of the land of Zarahemla; yea, and also all the lands, even unto the land which was near the land Bountiful” (Helaman 4:5). That is correct, it is the third land of Nephi.

Starting on the left (northwest) side of the Pacific coastal piedmont of Guatemala there is Desolation, Bountiful, Nephi III, Zarahemla, and Antionum, with Nephi-I in the west end of El Salvador. Now compare that with Alma 22:28.

“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.”

One does not need to be a mathematician to recognize this sequence. The first **west in the land of Nephi** is Nephi-III, then comes **west of the land of Zarahemla**, and the final **west in the land of Nephi**, the place of their fathers first inheritance, is clearly Nephi-I.

The verse in Helaman states that the un-named land was near Bountiful. Starting at Nahualá (Nephihah) in the mountains is the Nahualate River. It runs down south and a little bit west to

the Pacific Ocean. It goes through the region of San Antonio Suchitepéquez (Antum). Several ruins have been identified in the area including Palo Gordo (Nephi-III). The area where the ruins are is thought to be the land of Nephi-III. Three more miles downriver is a present day village named, Nahualate.

The Battles with Amlici

There was a battle with the followers of Amlici (Alma 2) that was skipped because it was necessary to develop more of the geography first. More importantly it was delayed because of difficulty reconciling the data as presented in the Book of Mormon.

Amlici was another apostate Nephite who “would be king” (Alma 2). Amlici was of the Order of Nehors and therefore probably from Ammonihah. The Order of Nehors followed the Chinese philosophy known as Legalism. Basically it is the way the devil runs hell.

Amlici wanted to be king. A vote was taken and he lost. Not being satisfied, he rallied his followers and prepared them for war.

River Sidon

Almost all of the references relating to the river Sidon appear to be self-consistent except those relating to the battles with Amlici in Alma 2. Was it “east **of** the river Sidon” or was it “east **by** the river Sidon”? The languages in the area as well as Hebrew and Sumerian are very ambiguous in their use of prepositions, often not distinguishing among them and often not even having discriminating prepositions in their languages. In English “east **of** the river Sidon” or was it “east **by** the river Sidon” are very distinct in meaning. This is not always the case in other languages.

Tightening up a preposition or two does not fix the apparent inconsistencies. Making available a second Sidon river would fix the problems. We know of Manti at the headwaters of the Sidon

River. But that is 40 miles away from Zarahemla and there are the lands of Antionum and Melek in the way before reaching it. After the battles with Amlici there was much mourning and conversion and many were baptized in the river Sidon. Alma 4:4 is the only reference to baptizing in the river Sidon. Would they go 40 miles from Zarahemla to be baptized when there are literally 20 rivers much closer?

So what does Sidon mean? One form has to do with “fishing” with Bethsaida meaning “house of fishing” or Poseidon being the Greek god of the sea. There is another Hebrew word much closer which is *zeydown* (pronounced as *zay-dohn*) meaning “churning, raging, and turbulent.” This description could apply to all of the rivers as they approach and pass through the piedmont toward the Pacific Ocean. Even permitting the ambiguity in the name Sidon, it does appear that it is only used to identify two rivers – one with Manti at the headwaters and bordering on the southeast wilderness and the other running just east of Zarahemla. The two would be respectively, the Michatoya and the Pantaleón (*Zacayán*).

Dr. Chinchilla informed the author that from Cortés y Larraz's late eighteenth-century *Descripción Geográfico-Moral de la Diócesis de Goathemala 1768-1770*, it appears that the Pantaleón River was called the *Zacayán*, which is still the name of a diversion that brings water from the river to Los Tarros and El Baúl (Chinchilla 2012 personal communication). *Zacayán* is very close phonetically to Sidon.

The Battles

The invaders came upon the hill Amnihu. The hill Amnihu is thought to be the hill *Hunahpu* which is today the Volcano Agua (14.4664, -90.7423). They came “upon” the hill Amnihu which probably means they came from the Ammonihah area (Guatemala City), around the skirt of the hill on the southeast side where they started fighting. “The hill Amnihu, which was east of the river Sidon, which ran by the land of Zarahemla, and there they began to make war.” (Alma 2:15). The hill Amnihu

was east of the Sidon River. Which Sidon River? He qualifies -- The one which ran by Zarahemla as opposed to the one from Manti.

They fought for some time and eventually the army of Amlici started to flee. They fled up the closest canyon which is between volcanos Fuego and Agua into the land and city of Gideon (14.5574, -90.7364) which is today the region around Antigua Guatemala.

Alma's army pitched their tents as Amlici's army continued to flee. They probably would have stopped nearer Ciudad Vieja where the hot springs of Moroni (*moloni*-Almolonga) are located.

The spies returned in the morning with word that Amlici's army had met with a large Lamanite army and was attacking the people in Minon. This was not a region for a Lamanite army to be casually wandering through. This meeting of armies was probably by prior arrangement. Amlici was probably to hit with the left while the Lamanite army was to hit with a right by dropping down on top of Zarahemla. The Lamanite army was possibly a day late or possibly they waited to see if Amlici would really do it.

The land of Minon would be around the present city of Acatenango, Guatemala (14.5551, -90.7364). Minon was above Zarahemla and it was in the course to the land of Nephi (Alma 2:24). This would probably be the land of Nephi-III -- none other would make sense in this location. There is however, a small village in this exact area named San Antonio Nejapa (14.56715, -90.93077). Nejapa could be a village of Nephi -- but it won't be given a number by the author.

The Lamanite army did not reverse their direction on their way to Nephi-I or Nephi-II. The army of Amlici just "joined them" and continued down toward Zarahemla from the west side of Volcano Fuego (*Chi-Gag*).

Alma's army dropped back down the canyon from Gideon and then headed straight to Zarahemla. In so doing they would go around the south of volcano Fuego and across the piedmont toward the west. Alma's army got to the Sidon river crossing first and then the Amlici/Lamanite armies came upon them

(Alma 2:27). This river crossing would have been within just a few miles of Zarahemla (Cotzumalguapa), possibly as close as one mile. Coming down from Acatenango is a very direct route along the Pantaleón River.

After a very bloody river crossing the Amlici/Lamanite armies, minus Amlici, headed back into the wilderness which was north and west of Zarahemla. They fled away beyond the borders of the land in the northwest direction until reaching the wilderness named Hermounts (Alma 2:36-37).

The Nephite army returned, piled up the dead. Many bodies were thrown into the river where convenient. They mourned their losses. Many women and children and flocks and herds were killed. Their fields of grain were trodden down by the hosts of men (Alma 3:2-3). The extent of the damage was commensurate with a Sidon river crossing within a mile of Zarahemla and not off in some wilderness many miles away.

This battle has bothered the author for ten years because it was not fitting the body of data. Only with a second river Sidon did it come together. And the fit was again perfect as can be seen on the satellite images of the battle field. Everything must fit the very rugged volcanic terrain; and it does.

Wilderness of Hermounts

Another name, Wilderness of Hermounts, shows up to the northwest beyond the borders of the land. The armies had been engaged and fighting for over forty rough miles in apparently only two days when they arrived back at the Sidon River crossing near Zarahemla. After the defeat at the crossing, the enemy was chased for what must have been several days.

There is a wilderness to the northwest that is today called the Cuchumatanes Mountains. It is 70 miles away as the crow flies, but much further as the Indian walks. Could this be the wilderness of Hermounts? The name Cuchumatanes supposedly means “coming together by force” in the Mam Maya language. The root *cheman* was found meaning “join or unite”; the “force” could not be found in the three Mam dictionaries available to the

author. The first syllable Cu or Ku was missing from the published definitions. A root which is nearly phonetically equal was found, *q'ooj* meaning "war" or "fight" (remember the Spanish "j" is pronounced as the English "h". With "war" and "come together," all that is lacking would be "people, country, or nation." That would be the Mam word *tanmi*. That would make *Q'oo-cheman-tanmi* or Cuchemantanmi or Cuchematanmi. The "es" on the end of Cuchumatanes could be just the Spanish plural form so let's drop it. A town on the west end of these mountains is named Todos Santos Cuchumatan with no "es" ending.

The author would propose that the name Cuchumatan means where "people came together for war." Joseph Smith called it Hermounts for which there are Hebrew roots. There is a mountain named Mount Hermon. *Hermon* or *chermon* or *chermown* are all renditions for one of the Hebrew words for "destruction."

The Mam people provided the Maya name and they should know. They were the leftover Jaredites that survived. They did not go to Cumorah – hill Ramah to them. Cumorah (K'umarkáh) is just 25 miles straight south of the current Parque Nacional los Cuchumatanes. In the days of Coriantumr and Shiz it was not a national park. The whole region north and west of the coastal piedmont is a very mountainous wilderness. Its boundaries are not defined in the Book of Mormon. Ripliancum, which is the "waters to exceed all" is the largest river in Central America and it is just five miles south of the park. The river locally is named Nimala', which means the "greatest river." It is an upper reach of the Usumacinta River (Ether 14-15).

Joseph Smith's name Hermounts from the Hebrew and the Mam name Cuchumatanes are not equivalent in their etymology, but the end result is the same – the death of the Jaredites. The Nephites provided an encore.

How far north did Amlici's fleeing army go? The whole region was a wilderness. The name was in the area. We only have the National Park boundaries today. Hermounts was Joseph Smith's rendition and Cuchumatanes was the Mam's and the Book of Mormon tells us the rest of the story.

Amalickiah and Ammoron

Most of the place names have now been mentioned and we are just starting with Amalickiah and his brother Ammoron. Watch the order of attack, the order of conquering, and the order of retreat relative to the many new fortress cities. The order is imposed by the geography – there is a string of volcanos running end to end above the lands of Zarahemla and Bountiful. If you can't move it, you must go around it.

In spite of Moroni's great preparations, the Nephites were weakened by political intrigues. Amalickiah again excited the Lamanites and they attacked fortress Moroni. It fell and the people fled to Nephihah (Nahualá). Nephihah fell and they fled to Lehi (Quetzaltenango). Then Morianton (Ostuncalco), Omner, Gid, and Mulek (Santa Cruz Muluá) fell. We haven't yet got Omner and Gid but they are somewhere in the canyon between Quetzaltenango and Retalhuleu along the Samalá River.

Omner

Omner is never mentioned again. Just up the canyon five miles from Santa Cruz Muluá is San Felipe and El Palmar. El Palmar means "palm tree plantation." Suspecting Omner being Jaredite, the Sumerian dictionary was checked for "palm trees." The name of interest was *mis immer* meaning "date palm tree." *Mis* means tree and that leaves just *Immer* which is Omner (14.6464, -91.5560).

A captain named Teomner is also mentioned at this time. *Te'* is a word for tree in Maya and Nahuatl. Thus, *mis* meaning "tree" in Sumerian, was replaced by *te'* meaning "tree" in Maya and Nahuatl, changing *mis immer* to *Teimmer* or Teomner. It has only been about 2612 years since the Jaredites walked this area and their tracks are still visible.

Gid

Gid is mentioned several times. Gid appears to be between Omner and Mulek (Alma 51:26). Amalickiah stored some of his Nephite prisoners there (Alma 55:7). Moroni was able to free the prisoners from Gid without exposing his troops to the Lamanite armies still in Mulek. The great missionaries Nephi and Lehi visited Gid by traveling from Bountiful to Gid and then on to Mulek (Helaman 5:15). That would put Gid at San Andrés Villa Seca or at San Martín Zapotitlán.

“And thus he went on, taking possession of many cities, the city of Nephiah, and the city of Lehi, and the city of Morianton, and the city of Omner, and the city of Gid, and the city of Mulek, all of which were on the east borders by the seashore” (Alma 51:26). This is interpreted as “east bank of the Samalá River” which was on the western borders of the land.

The strategy to retake Mulek and the later liberation of the prisoners in Gid make it apparent that San Andrés Villa Seca would be too vulnerable for recapture by the Nephites. The prisoners were herded (fled) down the canyon as the Lamanite army approached. Gid must have been on the river also. Therefore, San Martín Zapotitlán is selected as the probable city of Gid (14.6082, -91.6063).

Re-taking the Fortress Cities

The retaking of the fortress cities gets a bit confusing but it can be unraveled. We will not do so here. It is left as an exercise for the student. Moroni, Lehi, and Teancum retake Mulek. That is a fun battle to follow now that the geography has been identified. A letter from Helaman on the southern front with his 2000 sons is inserted so the chronology is mixed. Moroni goes to Gideon to help Pahoran. Together (with their armies) they go back through Zarahemla to clean up the kingmen mess and then on to retake Nephiah. Moroni and Pahoran approach from the east while Teancum and Lehi advance up the Samalá River taking fortress Morianton and fortress Lehi and then heading east

to join Moroni and Pahoran who had just taken fortress Nephihah.

They all come together at fortress Moroni where Teancum sneaks in at night and kills Ammoron and is then killed himself. The Lamanite army flees and doesn't come back for many years. This war had lasted 13 years – all because of one evil Zoramite named Amalickiah.

Helaman's Wars

Helaman was fighting on the southern front at the same time Lehi and Teancum were on the north western front. Helaman's battles involve Antiparah (Atquipaque), Cumeni (Quilapa) and Judea (Jutiapa) which we identified when defining the greater land of Jershon. Jershon appeared to be just in the shadow of volcano Pacaya (14.3821, -90.6021), but as Moroni cleared the east and south wilderness and established the fortress cities of Antiparah, Cumeni, and Judea, the people of Ammon appeared to expand into all of Department Santa Rosa and beyond.



CHAPTER 9

FATE OF THE CITIES

Migrations Northward

In the years that followed, many people started moving northward. Hagoth built multiple ships and took multiple voyages (Alma 63:5-10). Others went by land. The lands northward would include Mexico and all of North America. It included the Yucatan. There appears to have been connection with Hawaii and the Polynesian Islands. Undocumented people also went southward. Some Lenca (Lehites) went to Colombia. Some went to Ecuador, Peru, and Bolivia. Their dictionaries prove it. There was extensive sailing of the Pacific Ocean. The Chinese were in the Americas as their own documentation and the Maya glyphs prove (Pate 2012). So were dark peoples from the Indian subcontinent, as linguistic evidence proves. There was also a reverse migration that put some limited Nephite blood into Japan and China. The scattered Nephite blood did not regroup for the privilege of dying at Cumorah. They were beyond reach and their locations uncertain.

Starving Gadianton Robbers

The Gadianton robbers became intolerable in the days of Lachoneus (3 Nephi 3). The Nephites, with the local Lamanites, gather in Bountiful, Zarahemla, and the land which was between. This we now know as Nephi-III. They gathered their crops and animals for a seven year siege.

Where were the robbers? They were in the mountains and the mountain fortress cities. They were plunderers not workers. They did some hunting but shunned field work. The game was quickly depleted. The predator needs prey – be it biological, commercial, or political.

Other than those who had scattered over the years, Mormon's world was reduced to three cities spanning only forty miles on the piedmont of the Pacific Coast of Guatemala. Not much to show for almost 600 years of "progress." At least we now know where these cities are – Bountiful (Cuyotenango), Nephi-III (Palo Gordo-Nahualate), and Zarahemla (Santa Lucía Cotzumalguapa).

The siege worked; the robbers were slain or converted. Zemnariyah was hanged (3 Nephi 4:28). This hanging is documented in *The Annals of the Cakchiquels* (Pate 2012). Peace followed for a few years.

Jacob the Anti-Christ

The lands were now prepared for the coming of Christ except for Lucifer's front man, Jacob the anti-Christ (3 Nephi 7). The chief judge was murdered and the people divided into tribes.

Jacob and his secret combination regrouped and formed a league of tribes (3 Nephi 7:3-9). The local historians and scholars in Guatemala refer to these as "confederations" (Pate 2012). Jacob's confederation would later be called the Kakchiquel Maya. Lacking sufficient strength to take over the land, they fled into the extreme north of the land and founded a city named Jacobugath (3 Nephi 7:12 and 9:9).

Jacobugath was in the Chimaltenango (14.6590, -90.8242)

area. This is a high flat valley with excellent agriculture. Chimaltenango was previously called *Boco'* or *Bokob*. This is Jacobugath. *Gath* means winepress in Hebrew. There are many ruins identified in the immediate area. The name *Chimalli* means “shield” in Nahuatl; *tenango* is the way the Spaniards messed up the Nahuatl word *tenamitl* meaning defensive wall.

This defines the “northern most part of the land.” There is much more land to the north, but it appears to have been being settled by children of Lehi in later years. When Alma said the Nephites were nearly surrounded by Lamanites he was quite accurate (Alma 22:29). The land to the north was considered wilderness – no man’s land. Eventually it was all settled. It appears that most of the hatred was propagated by apostate Nephites and Zoramites and emanated from Nephi-I. Nephi-II was too far away to run a war from there. This appears to be true through Mormon’s day.

Destruction at Crucifixion

After starving out the Gadianton robbers the people spread back out. The Nephites were strong enough to reject Jacob the Anti-Christ. Within a very few years the people were again wicked and seeking to kill the believers.

The Nephites oscillated back and forth between being righteous and wicked. This is probably not accurate. Recall that in the larger sense, Nephite meant non-Lamanite. But, counting the converts within the Nephites, the tribes of Nephi, Sam, Jacob, Joseph, Zoram, Mulek, Ishmaelite, Laman, Lemuel, and Jaredite were all still present as separate entities. Also, the family of Kishkumen was a separate family with the family name *Kux* (*Kush*) meaning “weasel.”

The society went as the swing vote went. Recall several times the righteous Nephite judges were voted out of office by the voice of the people. The swing vote oscillated more than Nephites did – Just as the Democrat or Republican president is elected by the swing vote and not by the party faithful.

Physical Destruction

The tempests, earthquakes, upheavals, volcanic eruptions, fires, and whirlwinds followed by three days of darkness got their attention. Oh, that we had repented was their cry (3 Nephi 8:24-25). Pacific coastal Guatemala and El Salvador is one of the most seismically active areas in the world. On a recent visit four volcanos were still blowing. Volcanic ash can build up several hundred feet thick from a single eruption. Skies are blackened; rivers are filled with floating ash (pumice), roofs and buildings collapse; flooding is everywhere; eruptions cause great electrical disturbances and there is much lightning. When coupled with a hurricane, it becomes even worse. Having visited just five days after Hurricane Stan, (that is what you do when you have non-refundable tickets) the author has seen the damage that can result. The volcanic soil becomes saturated and then flows like water. The mountains are all scarred by the great landslides. Roads and bridges are gone. Whole villages slide into Lake Atitlán. It is very ugly.

Cities Lost

In the darkness the voice of the Lord Jesus Christ is heard and he gives an account of the damage in the local area. He does not appear to state the damage for places outside of the Book of Mormon area.

1. And it came to pass that there was a voice heard among all the inhabitants of the earth, upon all the face of this land, crying:
2. Wo, wo, wo unto this people; wo unto the inhabitants of the whole earth except they shall repent; for the devil laugheth, and his angels rejoice, because of the slain of the fair sons and daughters of my people; and it is

because of their iniquity and abominations that they are fallen (3 Nephi 9:1-2)!

Zarahemla was burned. Moroni was sunk into the depths of the sea. Moronihah have I covered with earth. Gilgal sank into the earth. Onihah, Mocum, and Jerusalem had water come up in the stead thereof. Gadiandi, Gadiomnah, Jacob, and Gimgimno sank in the earth and hills and valleys replaced them. Jacobugath was burned because their wickedness was above the wickedness of the whole earth because of their secret murders and combinations. It was they who destroyed the peace of the people and the government of the land. Laman, Josh, Gad, and Kishkumen, were burned with fire. The survivors were saved because “ye were more righteous than they” (3 Nephi 9:3-13).

Zarahemla (Santa Lucía Cotzumalguapa) we know. Fortress Moroni appears to still be in Lake Atitlán (ruins named Samabah). Moronihah was covered with earth. This is a new town for us. It is Totonicapán near fortress city Lehi. *Totoni* has a meaning similar to *Moloni* in Nahuatl – both having to do with hot geothermal water. Gilgal was probably in the high country because those are the cities that sank into the earth. Onihah may be the same as Onidah but we do not know. It was along a river and was flooded.

Mocom is a new city which was probably along the Mocá River which starts on the south slope of Volcano Atitlán and flows southwest. It joins the Río Bravo which then joins the Nahualate River. There is a wash labeled Zanjón del Muerto (Wash of Death) that leaves the Nahualate River in high water and crosses over to the east into a different river drainage and joins the Río Moca about two miles before the Moca joins the Río Bravo. There is a farm in the area named Finca Rosario Mocá. A small un-named village is very near (14.4105, -91.3623). The valley goes very flat in this area and would be a region of flooding during hurricanes. The flood channel named “Wash of the Dead” earned that name some time in the past. The city Mocom was probably in this area because other ruins are in

this area.

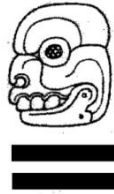
Jerusalem we have located as Yarumela in Honduras near Shilom and Nephi-II. It is along the La Humuya River in a flat region with a very large drainage area above it. Flooding was the destruction of choice.

Gadiandi, Gadiomnah, Jacob, and Gimjimno would be in the Alti-Plano between Guatemala City (Ammonihah) and Quetzaltenango (fortress Lehi) as this is where the hills and valleys traded places.

Jacob and Jacobugath were both settled by the followers of Jacob the Anti-Christ. Both are in the Alti-Plano near Chimaltenango. One was buried and one was burned.

Laman, Josh, Gad, and Kishkumen were burned. Laman may be the Lamani in Honduras near Jerusalem and Shilom. It is not in a flood prone area. Josh may be Yoxajá three miles northwest of Santo Tomás la Unión. Gad – we have no clue. Kishkumen would probably be near Zarahemla. The family name is *Kux* (*Kush*) meaning weasel. It is also translated as *Sak'bin* in the area. There were several villages with “weasel” in their names shortly after the conquest (Chinchilla 1998). This family name is part of the Tz'utujil branch of the Maya and was present in the region between Cotzumalguapa and Lake Atitlán when the Spaniards arrived.

About a year later, the resurrected Lord Jesus Christ appears at the temple Bountiful as the people were discussing the marvelous changes (3 Nephi 11:1).



CHAPTER 10

MORMON'S BATTLES

Young Mormon

The Nephites and Lamanites experienced many great years after Christ's visit. In the year 320 AD Ammaron hid up all the records. Mormon was born about 310 AD. By age ten he was beginning to be "learned after the manner of the learning of his people." At age ten and probably as Ammaron hid the records Mormon was given the sacred charge of the records. Mormon's father was also named Mormon and Ammaron was probably his father. At about age 24, Mormon was to return to the land Antum to the hill Shim and start recording the events he had witnessed (Mormon 1:1-4).

The land Antum is the slope above the San Antonio Suchitepéquez to the north and west (14.5396, -91.4169). The name Shim (nose hill) is in the name Samayac (14.5822, -91.4629) in both Quiché (*tz'am*) and Nahuatl (*iyac*) for *Tz'am-ayac*.

Carried to Zarahemla

At age eleven Mormon's father "carried" him to Zarahemla. This would indicate some animal drawn conveyance. Fathers are through with piggyback rides by age eleven. Mormon was surprised that buildings covered the whole land. Mormon was raised in the more rural hill country above Bountiful (including Antum) (Mormon 1:6-7).

War broke out that year in the borders of Zarahemla, by the waters of Sidon. This Sidon river would be the close one (Pantaleón River). The enemy was no longer in Nephi-I. They were within the land and within their own government. After several defeats, the Lamanites withdrew their designs (Mormon 1:8-12). Wickedness prevailed. Gadianton robbers infested the land among the Lamanites. Four years later war began again. Mormon at age 15 was placed over an army – not just an army, it was all their armies. Mormon was more than a big kid – he was probably the son of the king. He was the one wielding the sword of Laban. By this time he had been "visited of the Lord and tasted and knew of the goodness of Jesus" (Mormon 1:15).

Ilopango Blow

The name of the "Land of Nephi" is never used again after the great missionaries Nephi and Lehi made their trip (Helaman 5:20). The volcano named Ilopango (13.672, -89.048) blew in about 250 AD and sterilized the land in a 60 kilometer radius. This was a very big explosion as volcanos go. The crater-lake is today six miles in diameter. This would wipe out the entire western end of El Salvador for at least 150 years. All of the land of Nephi-I would be gone. Did it happen in 250 AD or did it happen at the time of the Crucifixion? The author doubts the fidelity to within 250 years 2000 years ago. This Ilopango blow was larger than anything that happened in Guatemala. The Lake Atitlán, if it is indeed a crater, did not participate in any great blow since the time of Christ. The Late Preclassic ruins under

water in Lake Atitlán named Samabaj are proof that nothing of the magnitude of Ilopango has happened locally since the Nephites arrived. Ilopango may have been the cause of the three days of darkness.

The blow of Ilopango would have caused a mass migration of any survivors to the Nephite lands. This would eventually cause crowding and contention. This is mentioned because the grief that faced Mormon appeared to be from very local sources. Additionally, the distributions of the various peoples in the lands as Mormon left them appear to be exactly as the conquering Spaniards found them. Most of the surviving tribes now have been identified by name and place (Pate 2012).

Final Wars Begin

The Lamanites came in great force; Mormon's army was afraid and fled "northward" all the way to Angola. Angola is the present area of Chocolá (14.6168, -91.4285). This appears from what the archaeologists are saying to have been a head of government center. This is probably where Mormon was born and raised to the age of ten -- a summer center away from the heat of Zarahemla. This is also the place where Zemnarihah was hanged as recorded in *The Annals of the Cakchiquels* (Pate 2012).

The enemy arrived and they were driven to David and then on to Joshua which was near the west seashore. David would be Santo Tomás la Unión (14.6325, -91.4109). Joshua would be the ruins named Pasac in the village of Yoxajá (14.6492, -91.4349). Yoxajá was found first because of location and second because of name. Some maps listed it as Xojolá others as Yoxajá. Recall that the "x" is pronounced as "sh" and the "j" as "h" in English.

Joshua was near the west borders of the land by the seashore (Mormon 2:6). Yoxajá or Xojojá is six miles from the Samalá River and 10 miles from Lake Atitlán.

Apparently Mormon's armies held at Joshua and they continued to gather in their people. The year was now 330 AD – five years since being driven out of Zarahemla. Mormon was

now 20 years of age. There was one complete revolution throughout all the face of the land (Mormon 2:8). Note that it was a revolution and not an invasion. No further specific battles are mentioned for 15 more years. In this 15 year period, Mormon had visited the hill Shim and recorded a full account of the abominations and wickedness (Mormon 2:18).

In the year 345 AD they fled to Jashon which was near the hill Shim (Mormon 2:16-17). There is a river Ajaxá and a very small village of the same name. Jashon and Ajaxá are quite similar phonetically. The next stop is the land Shem and its location is known so Ajaxá (*A-ha-sha*) is the most probable site for Jashon (14.5941, -91.6015).

Land Shem

The Nephites were again hunted and driven in this year (345 AD). They were driven to the land Shem. Shem is in the land northward, the Jaredite lands, the land now occupied by their descendants the Mam Maya. The land Shem to the Nephites is the great city that Lib built (Ether 10:19-28). It was by the narrow neck of land that joined the land Desolation and the land Bountiful.

Lib means “mutton fat” in Sumerian. The Nahuatl root is *cham*. The Quiché word for “fat” is *cham*. *Cham* is exactly Mormon’s name Shem. Two Hebrew words for “fat” are *shemen* and *hashem*.

We know where city Lib is because we know where the narrow neck of land is located. But, to find the place name today we go to the Spanish where the name for animal fat or tallow is *sebo*. The first town on the west (northward) of the bridge across the Samalá River is San Sebastián. When the Catholic priests imposed a Christian name on the place they knew the native name was *Cham* meaning “fat” so they used the Spanish word *sebo* and tucked it into the name Sebastián. There is a highway that goes through San Sebastián and Retalhuleu and then straight on to the Pacific Coast. At the coastal end is a town named

Cham-perico. San Sebastián is the land Shem (14.5632, - 91.6481).

Mormon's army held at Shem and then forced the Lamanites and Gadianton robbers to retreat. They regained the lands of their inheritance (Mormon 2:27). By this time the Nephites were foreigners in Zarahemla. The lands of the Nephite inheritance at this time appear to be limited to the Bountiful area. That is where the prophets were; that is where Christ appeared; that is where the records were. That is where the temple was and still is. Mormon was probably raised for the first ten short years in the Bountiful, Shim, or Angola area.

In the year 350 AD a treaty was made. Their lands were divided. "And the Lamanites did give unto us the land northward, yea, even to the narrow passage which led into the land southward. And we did give unto the Lamanites all the land southward (Mormon 2:29).

The obvious interpretation of this would be that the Nephites got everything northwest of the Samalá River and the Lamanites got everything to the southeast of the river. But, this does not make sense. Mormon's army had just retaken the greater land Bountiful. Why give it up in a treaty? The author would speculate that the division was somewhere between Bountiful and Zarahemla and the reference to the narrow passage was the upper limit not the southern limit. Mormon had yet to compile the Book of Mormon and he had not yet retrieved all the records from the hill Shim – that happened some 25 years later. "And now I, Mormon, seeing that the Lamanites were about to overthrow the land, therefore I did go to the hill Shim, and did take up all the records which Ammaron had hid up unto the Lord" (Mormon 4:23). The record retrieval occurred some time between 375 and 380 AD.

There is yet another interpretation. Four terms are used: the narrow neck of land, the narrow neck, the narrow pass, and the narrow passage. Each has qualifiers following to help distinguish which of two locations is appropriate. In addition to the narrow bridge that crossed the Samalá River, there is a topographic

feature up the canyon of interest. It is a very narrow passage with almost vertical walls about 200 feet straight up. Today the road is blasted into the mountain way above on the north side of the river (14.7357, -91.5169). Anciently this would have been a very defensible passage. From the highway above, it looks like there is room for only an eight foot wide path between the vertical wall on the north side and the river. This would be the “narrow passage which led into the land southward” (Mormon 2:29). Compare all the references.

Mormon 2:29 -- The Lamanites did give unto us the land northward (Bountiful), yea, even to the narrow passage which led into the land southward (Bountiful). And we did give unto the Lamanites all the land southward (Zarahemla). No sea or Desolation is mentioned.

Alma 50:34 -- borders of the land **Desolation**, by the narrow pass which led by the sea into the land northward, yea, by the sea, on the west and on the east. This refers to the Samalá River crossing. The land northward is Desolation and the land southward is Bountiful.

Alma 52:9 -- fortify the land **Bountiful**, and secure the narrow pass which led into the land northward, lest the Lamanites should obtain that point and should have power to harass them on every side. This must refer to the narrow passage in the canyon between fortress Lehi on the north and fortress Mulek on the south.

Alma 63:5 -- **Desolation**, and launched it forth into the west sea, by the narrow neck which led into the land northward. The land northward is Desolation and the land Southward is Bountiful.

Mormon 3:5 -- they should gather themselves together at the land **Desolation**, to a city which was in the borders,

by the narrow pass which led into the land southward. This refers to the Samalá River crossing. The land northward is Desolation and the land southward is Bountiful.

Ether 10:20 -- Lib ... built a great city by the narrow neck of land, by the place where the **sea divides the land**. This refers to the river crossing where Desolation is divided from Bountiful by the Samalá River.

After the Treaty

How do you win when you are playing with a cheater? Don't play. Mormon didn't have that option. The treaty lasted ten years. The Lamanite king sent an epistle to Mormon informing him that they were preparing to again come to war against them. Since when do Kings communicate with the opposing Generals? Since Mormon was their King. Notice that they scheduled this war. What is the use of going to war if no one is there to fight against? By scheduling war, it avoided troop damage to the surrounding villages. The place and date were set and there was no fighting until they reached the stadium.

"I did cause my people that they should gather themselves together at the land Desolation, to a city which was in the borders, by the narrow pass which led into the land southward (Mormon 3:5).

Mormon gathered his people from the hill country above Bountiful and had them assemble across the river Samalá in the land of Desolation and the City of Desolation.

The City Desolation is the northern part of the present city of Retalhuleu, Guatemala (14.5388, -91.6740). *The Annals of the Cakchiquels* mentions two cities below the volcano Gagxunal (Naked Volcano now named Santa María) named Zakihuyú and Teyocumán. These are Desolation (white earth) and Teancum. These cities received Christian names and were later combined into one city and given the Quiché name Retalhuleu meaning

“boundary land.” This was the boundary of the Quiché confederation at the time. The Quiché confederation at the time Pedro de Alvarado arrived at K’umarkáh (Cumorah) in 1524 AD was composed of four family names: Nehaib (Nephi), Tamub (Sam), Ilocab (Jacob), and Cavekib (Joseph).

Wars at Desolation and Teancum

In 361 AD the Lamanites came down for battle. Mormon’s armies did well and the Lamanites returned to their own lands again (Mormon 3:7). They returned the following year and the same thing happened.

Mormon’s armies began to boast of their power and swear by the name of everything sacred that they would kill the Lamanites from off the face of the land (Mormon 3:10). Recognizing that vengeance is the Lord’s, Mormon refused to be their leader and stood by as an idle witness to manifest these things unto the world (Mormon 3: 11, 15, 16).

In 363 AD the Nephite armies started taking the offensive and went up out of Desolation after the Lamanites. The Nephites were defeated and retreated to Desolation. While they were yet weary, a fresh army of Lamanites arrived and drove them back to the city Teancum, just a short distance to the south. The Lamanites continued and drove them out of Teancum. This time many women and children were taken captive and sacrificed to their idol gods (Mormon 4:14).

Being angry with the Lamanites because of the sacrifices of their women and children, the Nephite armies attacked in the year 367 AD and drove the Lamanite armies out of their lands (Mormon 4:15). The Lamanites did not come again until 375 AD. They then came with an even greater army and the Nephites were swept away. They fled to Boaz. At this time Mormon retrieves all the records from the hill Shim (Mormon 4:23). Mormon repented of his oath and started to lead them again. The Nephites were driven to Jordan where they held off the first attack and the second attack. The Lamanite armies started a “scorched earth”

policy burning and killing all. In the year 380 AD they came again and the survivors scattered.

Two new cities were mentioned but the author is losing interest. It is a very sad story. Mormon is no longer a spry fifteen year old but now a 70 year old man who has lived his life in extreme sadness. One could pity him, but respect and love might be better for this great man and the role he was called to play.

Boaz means "fleetness" in Hebrew and Jordan means "descender." Whether these were really the names of the cities or just descriptions of events is not known. The direction of escape appears to have been toward the Pacific Coast. There are identified ruins in the area named Bolas that might be Boaz and Gerardo that might be Jordan, but there is nothing except proximity to support it. There are actually many ruins identified in this area.

Jordan and Jared

Seeking the meaning of Jared, it was discovered that Jared in Hebrew means "descent" and Jordan means "descender." Searching Sumerian for Jared roots one finds *gi*, *ge*, and possibly *gir* meaning "to act justly" and *èd* meaning "to descend." Sumerian does not use the "J", only the "G". According to Halloran, Sumerian was like French in omitting certain amissible final consonants except before a following vowel. Jared could be Gired.

Jordan to Gerardo is a stretch, but *Gered* to *Gerardo* is not. The implication is that the Hebrew name Jordan used by Mormon may have been a direct translation from Sumerian (Jaredite) Gired. Assuming this to be the case, Jordan would have been a city previously named Gired (Jared). This would have been possibly the first Jaredite city after landing near the mouth of the Samalá River. Jordan may be the ruins named Gerardo near the present village of Nueva Candelaria (14.374, -91.740). The

climate in this area would be quite similar to where they came from.

Gathering at Cumorah

Mormon wrote an epistle to the king of the Lamanites with a request to permit the Nephites to gather in the land of Cumorah by a hill named Cumorah and there to give them battle (Mormon 6:2). The request was granted. Mormon's armies and people gathered to Cumorah. Mormon made "this record" out of the plates of Nephi and hid up in the hill Cumorah all other records that had been entrusted to him; and "these few plates I give unto my son Moroni" (Mormon 6:6).

Mormon began to be old – 75 years old. In the year 385 AD the Lamanite armies arrived. The battle lasted one day. The account is also recorded in *The Annals of the Cakchiquels*.

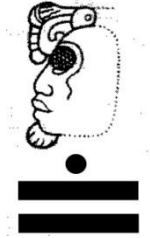
By the order of the warriors, the thirteen tribes gathered in, to repair and make ready their bows and their shields, and they went to conquer all the small towns and the large towns, the countries as well as the cities. But the Quichés did not do this alone, the warriors of the thirteen divisions conquered the towns and in this way augmented the glory of King Quikab (Recinos 1953, 91).

When the sun rose on the horizon and shed its light over the mountain, the war cries broke out and the banners were unfurled; the great flutes, the drums, and the shells resounded. It was truly terrible when the Quichés arrived. They advanced rapidly, and their ranks could be seen at once descending to the foot of the mountain. They soon reached the bank of the river, cutting off the river houses. They were following the kings Tepepul and Iztayul who accompanied the god. Then came the encounter. The clash was truly terrible. The shouts rang out, the war cries, the sound of flutes, the

beating of drums and the shells, while the warriors performed their feats of magic. Soon the Quiché were defeated, they ceased to fight and were routed, annihilated, and killed. It was impossible to count the dead (*The Annals of the Cakchiquels*, Recinos 1953, 103).

The slain armies included thirteen: Mormon, Moroni, Gidgiddonah, Lamah, Gilgal, Limhah, Jeneum, Cumenihah, Moronihah, Antionum, Shiblom, Shem, Josh – each with their 10,000. And there were ten more who did fall, each with 10,000 (Mormon 6:12-15).

The hill Cumorah was called *K'umarkáj* in the most recent orthography. It has had many other representations including *Gumarcaah*. It means “rotten reeds” or “rotten bones.” *Kumar* means “rotten” in Quiché Maya, which comes from Sumerian where *ku* means “to lie down” and *mar* means “worm.” “To lie down with worms” means “rotten.” “Reeds” and “bones” are equivalent in many ancient languages of the world. The Mexican warriors with Pedro de Alvarado called it by a Nahuatl name *Uatlán* meaning “land of the reeds.” The state of Utah is named after the “reeds” in Utah Lake by the same Nahua speaking people (Uto-Aztec).



CHAPTER 11

WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

New Jerusalem

The Mesoamerican peoples referred to their land of origin as *Tullum*. This is a Sumerian (Jaredite) word which has the exact meaning as Canaan. Thus, the natives used the generic name Canaan for referring to Jerusalem. To them, Utah would be equivalent to Tullum or Jerusalem.

The name Deseret was sought for the Mormon state but was rejected by Congress. To pass the Enabling Acts, the size was greatly reduced and the Aztec name Utah was imposed. For this we can only thank them.

And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband (Revelation 21:2).

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

What Mormon Left

Mormon's account is very grim. Not many survivors are documented. We know of Nephi's promise from the Lord that his seed would not be completely destroyed. We know of Lehi's promises to his sons. Mormon leaves undocumented all the people that scattered – and they were many.

What the Spaniards Found

The Spaniards found a very great and literate population in Mesoamerica. The Spanish diseases and wars decimated the population. About ten percent survived.

Where Are Lehi's Seed Today?

The most direct and identifiable bloodlines of Lehi are found in Guatemala, with some pockets in El Salvador and Honduras. All others are those that scattered outside of "Mormon's world," and they are many. Mexico is full of Nephi's blood. Everyone in the Uto-Aztec language group descended from Mormon's peoples. The identifiable linguistic links drop off very quickly with distance from Guatemala. They went both north and south and back across the Pacific.

Recall that in the larger sense Nephite meant non-Lamanite. But, counting the converts within the Nephites, the tribes of Nephi, Sam, Jacob, Joseph, Zoram, Mulek, Ishmael, Laman, Lemuel, and Jared were all still present as separate entities. Also the family of Kishkumen was a separate family with the family name *Kux/Sakb'in (Kush)* meaning "weasel." Also Gadianon

was the “eagle” clan and together with the “weasels” they formed the Tz’utujil branch of the Maya.

By the time the Spaniards arrived some redistricting appeared to have occurred. Further study shows that the redistricting occurred during Mormon’s day. There was one complete revolution throughout all the face of the land (Mormon 2:8). Note that it was a revolution and not an invasion.

The land of Nephi-I was destroyed by Volcano Ilopango. After the coming of Christ, all the people were united – united but still maintaining separate familial lineages.

When the Spaniards arrived at Cumorah (K’umarkáh) the families of Nephi (Nehib), Sam (Tamub), Jacob (Ilocab), and Joseph (Cavekib) were still present as discrete entities and were in the confederation of the Quiché.

Of equal importance is that no other bloodlines appeared to have been present at Cumorah. The absence of the Zoramites (Zotzils), Mulekites (Xehilá), Ishmaelites (Tukuches), people of Ammon (Xinca), and residual Jaredites (Mam and Akahals) was noted.

It becomes obvious that the redistricting occurred in Mormon’s day as each of the tribes took sides. The Zoramites had long sided with the Lamanites against the Nephites.

The confederation of the Kakchiquels included four clans: Zotzil (Zoramites), Xahilá (Mulekites), Akahals (Jaredite residual), and Tukuches (Ishmael).

An enemy of the Kakchiquel was the Tz’utujil confederation composed of the Tz’ikinaja (Eagle clan -- Gadianton) and the Saqb’in (*cux*, Weasel clan -- Kiskumen).

These three confederations lived in the highlands (alti-plano) and controlled the piedmont below. To the northwest was the Mam confederation (residual Jaredites) and to the southeast were the Xinca (Anti-Nephi-Lehies).

Because of the alignment when the Spaniards arrived, and based on Mormon’s statement that “there was one complete revolution throughout all the face of the land” (Mormon 2:8), the author will propose that the redistricting occurred due to the

revolution, not invasion, that occurred after young Mormon and his armies were driven out of Zarahemla. The tribes all hated each other, but they hated the Nephites even more. The Nephites were the common enemy and they were the ones to go. The others eventually made peace and survived to see the arrival of the Spaniards.

The Quiché ruled from K'umarkáh (Cumorah), the Kakchiquel ruled from Iximché (Tecpan-Guatemala), and the Tz'utujil ruled from Lake Atitlán. Each governed a piece of the piedmont.

Your Turn

If you have had fun following the Nephite travels on Google Map and Satellite images, it is nothing compared with visiting the places. Standing on King Noah's tower, seeing the stone faces in Zarahemla, feeling of the Temple Bountiful where the resurrected Christ appeared, and sensing the depression of Cumorah are enlivening. Then, re-reading the Book of Mormon after having walked the land is beyond comparison. It will never be the same.

ALPHABETIC NAME LISTING

The following information is presented here as an aid in understanding the geographical relationships between the place names given in the Book of Mormon and the maps based on the proposed geography. This information must correlate to all the locations identified, and perhaps the strongest evidence for the proposed geography is that it does. Any alternative geography would need to fit the same geographical information.

Aaron-I and II: A Nephite city westward of the city of Ammonihah in a direction different from Gideon and Melek (Alma 8:13). It may have been a Jaredite (Mam Maya) city (Ether 1:15, 16; 10:31). It is near the city of Nephihah in a direction opposite from the city of Moroni (Alma 50:14). The ruins identified as San Jerónimo (14.9189, -91.4257) between Quetzaltenango and Totonicapán are thought to be where the city Aaron-I was located.

As for a second city Aaron-II, a very hungry prophet Alma, rejected at Ammonihah (Guatemala City), headed “towards” the city called Aaron. The city Aaron already identified is over 65 miles away. There is a second possibility only 18 miles away on the mountain route back to Zarahemla. That would be the ruins named Girón (pronounced as He-row-n) which could easily phonetically hide the Hebrew name Aaron. The ruins named Gíron are about a mile east of Saragoza, Guatemala (14.6512, -90.8626).

Ablom: A Jaredite city by a seashore (any body of water) many days eastward of the hill Shim and the land of Cumorah (Ether 9:3). The ruins identified as El Bongo may possibly be the

region (14.6185, -89.1928). They appear to be north of La Ensenada and east of El Boquerón (15.6158, -89.2349). There is linguistic connection with topographic feature Boquerón in Spanish (large hole, wide opening) and Ablom (Ab-lum or Ab-lam) in Sumerian with *ab* meaning: window, opening, sea, and lake.

Agosh: A Jaredite plains region near the wilderness of Akish and westward from the Corihor, Shurr, and Comnor area (Ether 14:15-28).

Akish: A Jaredite wilderness (possibly a mountainous region) near a seashore and next to the plains of Agosh (Ether 14:3-14). A-kish can mean “totally water” in Sumerian.

Alma: A valley one day’s journey from the land of Helam. This would be eleven days travel from Zarahemla and nine days from Shilom (Mosiah 23:3; 24:21, 25).

Ammonihah: Possibly a Jaredite city known as the city of Nehor that was later an apostate Nephite city (Ether 7:4, 9; Alma 15:15). Located three days north of Melek (Alma 8:6) and surrounded by Gideon, Aaron, Noah, and Sidom. It was on the edge of Nephite lands and like Noah was vulnerable to attack (Alma 16:2, 3). Ammonihah is a ruined city now called Kaminal Juyú (14.6322, -90.5482) by archaeologists. It is within Guatemala City on the southwest end of town.

Amnihu: A hill (probably a volcano) near the Sidon River that was along the attack path between the Lamanite lands and the Zarahemla area (Alma 2:15). This would place it near Melek and Manti at the headwaters of the Sidon River. Amnihu is thought to be the volcano *Hunapu* now called Agua (14.4664, -90.7423).

Amulon: A city founded by the apostate Amulonites who were the priests of wicked King Noah (Mosiah 23:31). It was located

relatively near the city of Helam founded by Alma and his followers (Mosiah 23:35, 39). This was near a city named Jerusalem and therefore near a land named Mormon (Alma 21:1, 2). Siguatepeque (hill of the women), Honduras is thought to possibly be land of Amulon (14.598, -87.831).

Angola: A Nephite city near David and Joshua that was in the path of Mormon's retreat from Zarahemla in the northwest direction toward the lands of Bountiful and Desolation (Mormon 1:10; 2:4-6). It is thought to be Chocolá, Guatemala (14.6168, -91.4285) and to be the place where Zemnarihah was hanged.

Ani-Anti: A Lamanite village thought to be Atiquizaya, El Salvador (13.9737, -89.7547) (Alma 21:4, 11).

Antionum: A rather large Zoramite land southeast of Zarahemla and south of Jershon (Alma 31:3). The ruins near La Democracia (14.22960, -90.94735) are part of the land of Antionum, but the ancient city of Atacat (Panatacat) is thought to be the actual city Antionum. The ruins are about a league north of Escuintla, Guatemala (14.3010, -90.7859). The River Pantaleón without the "P" or Antaleón is very close to Antionum. Pantaleón is the name of a Catholic Saint. The pre-colonial name of the river appears to be *Sacayá* (Sidon).

Antiparah: A Nephite fortress city southeast of Zarahemla established to protect the Anti-Nephi-Lehies in the greater land of Jershon (Santa Rosa). This is the furthest southeast of the fortress cities mentioned. It is between a city on the seashore and Cumeni (Quilapa) (Alma 56:14 to 57:2). The ruins identified as Atquipaque (14.09426, -90.57753) are the remnant of Antiparah.

Antipas: A mount in the Lamanite territory of Onidah that was on the interface between the original land of Nephi-I (Nahuizalco) and the land of Jershon. It was within about a one-day march from the original city of Nephi-1 where Nephi first

lived after they landed (Alma 47:5, 7, 20, 29-31). It was where the Lamanites with Lehonti fled for safety from Amalickiah. Also, after the king was killed by Amalickiah's guards, the king's guards fled to the people of Ammon for safety (Alma 47:29). The Mount Antipas is the mountain range named Apaneca (13.864, -89.801) in southwest El Salvador.

Antum: A Nephite land that included the hill Shim (Mormon 1:3). It was near the land of Jashon (Mormon 2:17). It was on Omer's path from Moran by Shim, past Cumorah to Ablom by the seashore (Ether 9:3). The name root shows up in Jaredite names such as Coriantum, Coriantumr, and Morianton and the Nephite names of Morianton and Moriantum (Ether 1:14, 22; 12:1; Moroni 9:9). These citations would place Antum in the mountainous country above Bountiful (Cuyotenango) and in the present Department of San Antonio Suchitepéquez (14.5396, -91.4169). The name Antum is tucked inside the name António.

Boaz: A Nephite/Jaredite city in the greater land of Desolation that was part of the retreats from Desolation to Teancum to Boaz and on to Jordan (Mormon 4:1 to 5:3) before Mormon wrote his famous epistle changing the venue to Cumorah (Mormon 6:2). It is in the Mam Maya area and would therefore have been populated by Jaredite remnants. The ruins named Bolas located near Las Pilas (14.4435, -91.7101) may be the location of Boaz.

Bountiful-I: The land on the southeast shore of the Arabian Peninsula where Nephi and his brothers built a ship and set sail to the Americas with the families of Lehi and Ishmael (1 Nephi 17:1, 5-8). Bountiful is the ancient sea port Cana (Gana) now called B'ir 'Ali, Yemen (14.023, 48.3447).

Bountiful-II: A Nephite temple-city and land northwest of Zarahemla and adjacent to Desolation. This was the most northwesterly part of the Nephite lands before crossing the "narrow neck of land" into the land of Desolation. It is one-half

mile north of Cuyotenango, Guatemala (14.55318, -91.57842). The walls of the fortress are in the corn field and the temple is just to the north of the fortress, across the fence in the trees. The altar is about 50-yards east of the temple. (Alma 22:31, 32; 51:28, 30; 52:9, 17; 63:5; Helaman 1:23; 4:5; 3 Nephi 3:23; 11:1)

Comnor: A Jaredite hill adjacent to the valleys of Shurr and Corihor. Shurr was very near hill Comnor and Corihor was within trumpet-sound of Comnor (Ether 14:28) – all thought to be in the Guatemala City area.

Corihor: A Jaredite land and valley near the hill Comnor and the valley of Shurr (Ether 14:27, 28). This region is eastward from the wilderness of Akish and the plains of Agosh (Ether 14:3, 26). Corihor is similar to Korihor and is linked with the land of Nehor, the Desolation of Nehors, and Ammonihah (Ether 7:4; Alma 16:11). Corihor is thought to be the ruins identified as Cotio, possibly Lomo de Coy (14.6208, -90.6070).

Cumeni: A Nephite fortress city east of Zarahemla situated to defend the Anti-Nephi-Lehies in the greater Jershon area. It is on the southeastern frontier close to the Lamanite lands and is situated between Antiparah and Zeezrom (Alma 56:14). Cumeni is today named Quilapa, Guatemala (14.2755, -90.2989). Previously it was named Cuajiniquilapa.

Cumorah-I: A Nephite hill and land full of rotten bones left from the Jaredite destruction. Known as hill Ramah to the Jaredites. Located one day's battle south of Ripliancum, the waters to exceed all. The hill Cumorah is east of the hill Shim, and west of Ablom by the seashore. It is the location of the Nephites' final battle also. It is the place where Mormon deposited the records of the Nephites before giving the few plates containing the Book of Mormon to his son Moroni. (Mormon 6:6; Ether 15:7-11; Mosiah 8:8; Words of Mormon 1:5). The hill Cumorah was still called *K'umarkáh* (Rotten Canes or Reeds)

when the Spaniards arrived. The hill and extensive ruins are located just west of the town Santa Cruz del Quiché, Guatemala (15.02357, -91.17183). Today the ruins go by the Nahuatl name Utatlán. That is Utah land brother and it means “Land of the Reeds.”

Cumorah-II: A hill in upstate New York adjacent to Manchester and Palmyra from which, following Moroni’s instructions, Joseph Smith Jr. extracted the golden plates of the Book of Mormon, which were translated by the gift and power of God using the Urim and Thummim. The naming of the hill was due to a misunderstanding of the verse in Mormon 6:6. All the records were stored in the original hill Cumorah except the few that Mormon gave his son Moroni. Some 36 years later Moroni was still writing in the plates (Mormon 6:5; Moroni 10:1).

David: A Nephite land near the city of Angola and just southeast of the land of Joshua (Mormon 2:4-6), which was near the seashore (which could include a river) that divided the land southward (Bountiful) from the land northward (Desolation) (Ether 10:20). David is the ruins at Santo Tomás la Unión, Guatemala (14.6325, -91.4109).

Desolation: A Nephite name for a city and a land previously occupied by the Jaredites. This land was just west of the sea (river) that divided the land southward from the land northward. Bountiful, the land southward, was reserved by the Jaredites for hunting. The two lands were connected by a very narrow neck of land (Alma 63:5; Ether 10:20). That narrow neck was nothing more than a bridge across the Samalá River. The Mulekites first landed in Desolation but chose to move southward to start the land of Zarahemla (Alma 22:30). Later a city of Teancum was built adjacent to Desolation (Mormon 4:3). The city Desolation was named Zakijuyú. Today it is the northern half of the city of Retalhuleu, Guatemala (14.5388, -91.6740).

Ephraim: A Jaredite hill where iron ore could be obtained and smelted to make steel swords (Ether 7:9). It was somewhere closer to Moroni's writing desk than the land of Nehor, probably above in the Altiplano between Guatemala City and Quetzaltenango.

Gad: A Nephite or Gadianton robber city burned at the time of the Crucifixion (3 Nephi 9:10). The name has the same Hebrew root as *Gid*, meaning band, group, or troop. See *Gid*, *Gadiandi*, *Gadiomnah*.

Gadiandi: A Nephite or Gadianton robber city buried at the time of the Crucifixion (3 Nephi 9:8). The name has the same roots as *Gadianton* and therefore is assumed to have some affiliation. See *Gid*, *Gad*, *Gadiomnah*.

Gadiomnah: A Nephite or Gadianton robber city buried at the time of the Crucifixion (3 Nephi 9:8). The name shares the same roots as *Gid*, *Gad*, and *Omner*.

Gid: A Nephite fortress city near the city *Bountiful* and the fortress cities of *Mulek* and *Omner* (Alma 51:26). *Gid* is thought to be San Martín Zapotitlán (14.6082, -91.6063). It could possibly be San Andres Villa Seca. See *Gad*.

Gideon: A Nephite city and valley settled by and named after the great defender of the faith, *Gideon* (Alma 1:1-15; 6:7). The city was located in a mountain valley between *Zarahemla* and *Ammonihah* where the *Nehors* were located. Southeast of *Gideon*, in the direction away from *Zarahemla*, is the city of *Manti* at the headwaters of the *Sidon River* (Alma 17:1; 61:5). *Gideon* is the valley where *Antigua Guatemala* is located today (14.5575, -90.7346).

Gilgal: A Jaredite valley near the plains of *Heshlon* (Ether 13:27-29). Later there was a Nephite city identified as *Gilgal* and

it is assumed to be the same location. This city was buried at the Crucifixion (3 Nephi 9:6).

Gimgimno: Probably a Gadianton robber city buried at the Crucifixion. Mentioned with Gadiandi and Gadiomnah, and therefore possibly in the same general area (3 Nephi 9:8).

Helam: A Nephite city founded by Alma and Helam eight days from the Waters of Mormon and twelve days travel from Zarahemla (Mosiah 23:3,19-20; 24:25). Helam is thought to be the town of Gracias, Honduras (14.5898, -88.5816).

Hermounts: A wilderness (probably a mountain range) north and west of Gideon and Zarahemla (Alma 2:24-37). The Wilderness of Hermounts is the Cuchumatanes mountain range (15.49, -91.13). The exact boundaries in Alma's day are uncertain. Today it is a national park north of the Hill Cumorah.

Heshlon: A plains region in Jaredite history that was very near the valley of Gilgal (Ether 13:27-29).

Ishmael: A Lamanite land near the waters of Sebus (Alma 17:21, 26). This was part of a rather isolated tri-city complex that included Middoni and Midian (Alma 20:2; 24:5). These three cities appear to be closest to the Lamanite village of Ani-Anti (Alma 21:11, 12). They were near the very first land of Nephi, Nephi-I (Alma 22:28), and more than eight days travel away from the second land of Nephi, Nephi-II or Lehi-Nephi as it was later called (Mosiah 23:3). Ishmael is thought to be the ruins named Igualtepec that are under water in Lake Güija. The closest village is today called Belen Güijat, El Salvador (14.2451, -89.4846).

Jacob: A Nephite or possibly a Gadianton robber city buried at the time of the Crucifixion (3 Nephi 9:8). Possibly founded by the apostate Nephite named Jacob who was made king over a

secret combination (3 Nephi 7:9). After he found that he was outnumbered, he commanded his followers to leave the greater Zarahemla area and move to the northernmost part of the land where they founded the kingdom and city of Jacobugath (3 Nephi 7:12; 9:9). This is thought to be near Chimaltenango, Guatemala (14.6590, -90.8242) which was previously named Bokob.

Jacobugath: A Gadianton robber or secret combination city founded in the northernmost part of the land by the apostate, Jacob (3 Nephi 7:12; 9:9). The city was burned at the Crucifixion for destroying the peace and the government, and for killing the prophets. Even though this city was in the northernmost part of the land, it was still within striking distance of Zarahemla. This is thought to be Chimaltenango, Guatemala (14.6590, -90.8242) which was previously named Bokob. The separation or distinction between Jacob and Jacobugath is unknown but thought to be minimal.

Jashon: A Nephite city in the highlands above Bountiful near the land of Antum and the hill Shim (Mormon 2:16, 17). Preceding and subsequent battles might possibly place it between Joshua/David/Angola and Shem/Desolation (Mormon 2-3). Jashon is thought to be Ajaxá (*A-ha-sha*) (14.5941, -91.6015).

Jershon: A large Nephite land east of Zarahemla that was given to the Anti-Nephi-Lehies (Alma 27:22; 31:3). The land was between Zarahemla and the land of Nephi-1 and served as a buffer until the people were extremely wicked in Mormon's day (Alma 27:23; Mormon 1:10). Initially, it appeared to be the valley (14.036, -90.6817) on the southwest of volcano Pacaya (14.3821, -90.6021). Later it appeared to grow to include all of the Department of Santa Rosa and beyond. Today the Xinca, who are descendants of the Anti-Nephi-Lehies, live there.

Jerusalem: A Lamanite city built by the apostate Amulonites and the Amalekites (Alma 21:1-4). This was near the land of

Mormon and the waters of Mormon in the land of Shilom (Mosiah 18:4, 5). Jerusalem is the present village named Yarumela, Honduras (14.3396, -87.6395).

Jordan: A Nephite/Jaredite city in the greater land of Desolation that was part of the retreat from Desolation to Teancum to Boaz and on to Jordan (Mormon 4:1 to 5:3) before Mormon wrote his famous epistle changing the venue to Cumorah (Mormon 6:2). Jordan may be the ruins named Gerardo near the present village of Nueva Candelaria (14.374, -91.740).

Josh: A wicked Nephite city destroyed by fire at the Crucifixion (3 Nephi 9:10). Possibly near Gad. Josh is a variant of Joshua and may be the same or a neighboring city. *See* Joshua.

Joshua: A Nephite mountain village near David – also near the west seashore (Samalá River). David would be Santo Tomás la Unión (14.6325, -91.4109). Joshua would be the ruins named Pasac in the village of Yoxajá (14.6492, -91.4349).

Judea: A Nephite fortress city placed in the south wilderness beyond the land of Jershon to protect the Anti-Nephi-Lehies (Alma 27:23). It was near, but outside of the fortress city sequence of Manti, Zeezrom, Cumeni, Antiparah, and the unnamed city by the sea (Alma 56:14 to 57:2). Judea is Jutiapa, but there are two possibilities – the capitol city of the Jutiapa Department (14.2922, -89.8996) and a small agricultural area named Jutiapa (14.1989, -90.0513) which appears more strategically important.

Kishkumen: A wicked Nephite city burned at the Crucifixion (3 Nephi 9:10). Possibly named after Kishkumen, who with Gadianton, started the secret combination known as the Gadianton robbers (Helaman 6:18). When they were discovered, they fled into the wilderness by a secret way and may have founded the city of Kishkumen (Helaman 2:11). There are too

many possibilities with Kish (*Cux, Cozama, Saqb'in* – weasel). Following the conquest there were many villages in the immediate vicinity of Cotzumalguapa with “weasel” in their names. Chinchilla thinks that Cotzumalguapa was actually named *Saqb'in (Cozamatl)*, previously. He may be correct, it became a Gadianton and Kishkumen robber town after the young Mormon and the Nephites were driven out.

Laman: A city burned at the Crucifixion (3 Nephi 9:10). Laman is thought to be the village of Lamani, Honduras (14.1962, -87.6204) just ten miles south-southeast from La Paz (Shilom). There were probably other cities with this name.

Lehi-I: This is the land of their first inheritance where Lehi’s family first landed. It is referenced as the land southward (Helaman 6:10). No city was mentioned in this region by the name of Lehi. Their children scattered with their own families to start their own towns. The city where Lehi died was probably Nephi-I (Nahuizalco, El Salvador).

Lehi-II Fortress City: This was a Nephite fortress city active in the days of captain Moroni (Alma 50:15; 51:24). It is in the mountains near Morianton and above the land of Bountiful, which was in the piedmont below (Alma 50:32; 51:26). Other city/lands in the area included Nephiah, Gid, Omner, Mulek, and the Camp of Moroni. Fortress Lehi is in the Quetzaltenango, Guatemala area (14.83423, -91.51837) but the closest ruins shown in the area have been given the name Río Seco (14.85, -91.50).

Lemuel: A Lamanite city in or near the land of Shemlon, which was adjacent to Shilom and Lehi-Nephi (Alma 23:12). The ruins at Ca-Lamuya or Humuya (14.2548, -87.6697), Honduras are thought to be Lemuel.

Manti: A Nephite fortress city, part of the fortresses that

protected Jershon and Zarahemla (Alma 43:22). It was located east of Zarahemla in the mountains near the headwaters of the Sidon River (Alma 22:27). It was also southeast of Gideon, but on the main road that connected the greater land of Zarahemla with the Lamanite lands (Alma 17:1). It was between the hill Amnihu and the hill Riplah (Alma 2:15; 43:31, 32). The fortress city Manti is today Amatitlán, Guatemala (14.4854, -90.6157).

Melek: A Nephite city near Manti and the Sidon River (Alma 8:3). It is located three days south of Ammonihah on the road from Ammonihah, through Manti and Melek, and on to Zarahemla. At Manti is a fork in the road that goes toward the Lamanite lands. Melek is northwest of the land of Jershon (Alma 35:13). Melek is thought to be Palín, Guatemala (14.4034, -90.6926).

Middoni: A Lamanite city between Ishmael and Nephi-I. Also near Ani-Anti and Midian (Alma 20:2; 24:5). Middoni is thought to be Ahuachapán, El Salvador (13.9239, -89.8469).

Midian: A Lamanite city, part of the isolated tri-city complex that included Ishmael and Middoni (Alma 20:2; 24:5). They were near the very first land of Nephi-I (Alma 22:28). Midian is today called Metapan, Honduras (14.3312, -89.4424).

Minon: A Nephite city that was less than one day's travel from Gideon (Alma 2:20-24). Minon is thought to be in the Acatenango, Guatemala area (14.5551, -90.7364). Minon was above Zarahemla and it was in the course to the land of Nephi (Alma 2:24). This would possibly be the land of Nephi-III. There is, however, a small village in this exact area named San Antonio Nejapa (14.56715, -90.93077). Nejapa could be a village of Nephi (Alma 2:24).

Mocum: A city that was flooded at the Crucifixion (3 Nephi 9:7). The village of Mocum is along the Mocá River somewhere.

There is an un-named village that may be Mocum (14.4105, -91.3623).

Moriancumer: A camp or town, probably in eastern Asia on the Pacific Coast, where the Jaredites lived for four years and built their eight barges that transported them to the land of Moron, and what the Nephites later called the land of Desolation (Ether 2:13; Alma 22:30). Ocean and wind currents indicate that this might be near the mouth of the Amur (as in *Morianc-amur*) River, a 2800-mile-long river in the Russia, Mongolia, Manchuria area north of China. The current city is Nikolayevsk-on-Amur (53.140, 140.726).

Morianton: A Nephite/Jaredite mountain city that became a fortress to help protect Bountiful below. It was adjacent to fortress Lehi and near the camp of Moroni (Alma 50:26-32; 51:26). Morianton appears as a Nephite city but the name Morianton first appears in Jaredite history (Ether 1:22). It is therefore, very likely that Morianton was a Jaredite city. Today it is still occupied by the Mam (Jaredite) branch of the Maya. The ruins of Morianton are thought to be near Ostuncalco, Guatemala (14.8680, -91.6219) at the site named San Antonio Los Cerritos (14.8684, -91.6127).

Mormon: The Waters of Mormon, the Forest of Mormon, the Place of Mormon, and the land of Mormon were near a fountain of pure water (Mosiah 18:5) located close enough to Shilom for gospel lessons taught by Alma (Mosiah 18:1-5) and daily searches of the king. The waters of Mormon are a geothermal hot springs (14.26358, -87.64044) near Cané, Honduras (14.2760, -87.6561).

Moron: A Jaredite city where the king dwelled that was very near Desolation (Ether 7:5, 6). This would place it in the piedmont within about two day's journey from Bountiful and Hill Shim. Cumorah and Ablom are up and over the mountains to the

east (Ether 9:3), many days travel. Moron is the ruin today known as Takalik Abaj (“standing stone” – a name given by Suzanne Miles). The fantastic ruins (14.6368, -91.7321) are located about two and a half miles north of El Asintal, Guatemala (14.5993, -91.7296).

Moroni: A Nephite fortress city in the mountains that was sunk in the depths of a sea at the time of the Crucifixion (3 Nephi 8:9). The closest fortress to the northwest was Nephihah (Alma 50:14) and the closest fortress to the southeast was Ammonihah (Alma 49:10-14). Amalickiah’s troops first approached Ammonihah then stepped to the side and attacked Noah. Failing in these two attempts he reorganized his troops and led them personally in taking the city Moroni. He then stayed in the highlands and took many cities including the following in order: Nephihah, Lehi-3, Morianton, then on down the canyon to Omner, Gid, and Mulek, which was near Bountiful (Alma 51:26-30). Moroni is thought to be the ruins deep in Lake Atitlán named *Samabaj* by the researchers. The actual identity is being kept secret to prevent looting (guess 14.667, -91.134). There is another Moroni possibly started later at Ciudad Vieja (14.5235, -90.7654) by those who could swim.

Moroni, Camp of: A camp where Moroni stayed during the Morianton incident (Alma 50:27). It was located near both fortresses Lehi and Morianton (Alma 50:25-28), which were in the mountains above Bountiful and Desolation (Alma 50:32, 34). The Camp of Mormon was located at the southern end of the beautiful vegetable farming valley named Almolonga, Guatemala (14.8155, -91.4951), at an archaeological site also named Almolonga (14.8033, -91.4833).

Moronihah: A Nephite mountain city, named after captain Moroni’s son, which was buried at the time of the Crucifixion (3 Nephi 8:10, 25). Most likely it is in the mountains near fortress Lehi and the Camp of Moroni. Moronihah is the present town of

Totonicapán, Guatemala (14.9169, -91.4399). The original ruins will be under some volcanic cinder pile close by.

Mulek: A very strong Nephite fortress within a one-half-day march of Bountiful (Alma 51:26-28; 52:22-31). The town of Mulek is today called Santa Cruz Muluá (14.5811, -91.6248). The fortress is closer to the river crossing (14.57921, -91.62979). The “U” shaped fortress) is still visible even from satellite images.

Narrow Neck of Land: It is mentioned by the chroniclers as *mukulicya*. Recinos translates it from the *Annals of the Cakchiquels* as “hidden water” (Recinos 1953, 60fn). Christenson’s Quiché dictionary would render it as “covered water.” The original text has only *mukulicya molomic chée*. Going with Christenson’s “covered water” and Recinos’ “trees together” we have a “wooden bridge.”

Today this village, adjacent to the Samalá River crossing, is called by the Spanish name Santa Cruz Muluá – Muluá being short for *Mukulicya* in the Maya writings. The “narrow neck of land” is nothing more than a “narrow wooden bridge” across the Samalá River (14.5795, -91.6323)

Nehor: A Jaredite city inhabited by Corihor (Ether 7:4). This became the name of a wicked group in the Ammonihah area who practiced what was called by the Nephites the “profession of Nehor” (Alma 16:11). The name connections between Corihor, Korihor, Nehor, the land of Nehor, and the Desolation of Nehors, suggest that there was some residual Jaredite influence in the area of Ammonihah. Nehor is in the Guatemala City area probably at the ruins of Kaminal Juyú (14.6322, -90.5482).

Nephi-I: The town started by Nephi in the land of Lehi-1 after they first landed. This area had been occupied by Nephi and his followers for possibly 15 to 20 years, when Lehi died and Nephi fled to start a new land, Nephi-2, in the Shilom/Lehi-Nephi area. (2 Nephi 4:12; 5:5-8). After Nephi’s departure, this location was

still called the land of Nephi among the Lamanites and many of their kings lived there. Nephi-I is the very old town of Nahuizalco, El Salvador (13.7799, -89.7380).

Nephi-II: An isolated land and city founded by Nephi after he and his followers fled the original land of Lehi and Nephi-I (2 Nephi 5:5-8). After Mosiah's people fled, it was called the land of Lehi-Nephi, possibly to distinguish it from Nephi-I.

Nephi-III: A third land of Nephi was found, but only after all other major city centers were discovered. It is the "un-named" land mentioned twice (3 Nephi 3:23 and Helaman 4:5). It is on the Nahualate River in the region of the Palo Gordo ruins (14.4959, -91.3951) and Nahualate (14.4419, -91.3781).

Nephihah: A Nephite fortress city built between the lands of Aaron and the fortress Moroni (Alma 50:14). This would place it in the mountains between fortress Moroni and fortress Lehi. There was also a plains region in the area (Alma 62:18). There appears to be no direct route to Zarahemla as the major fortress cities formed a loop and are only referenced in sequence. That loop is Zarahemla, Gideon, Ammonihah, Moroni, Nephihah, Lehi, Morianton, Omner, Gid, Mulek, Bountiful, the unnamed land, and back to Zarahemla (Alma 51:26-28; 3 Nephi 3:23). It appears that Ammonihah could actually be bypassed in this loop. Nephihah is the present town of Nahualá (14.8430, -91.3187). The ruins by the same name appear to be about a mile southwest (14.8282, -91.3294) of the present town.

Noah: Possibly a Jaredite city and land near Ammonihah that later became a Nephite fortress (Ether 7:20; Alma 16:3). This land was isolated and exposed on the Lamanite frontier. Noah is the ruins at Chinautla, Guatemala (14.70287, -90.50010).

Ogath: An isolated Jaredite place just south of the Jaredite hill Ramah, also known as the Nephite hill Cumorah (Ether 15:11).

Ogath and the hill Ramah were about one day's battle south of Ripliancum (Ether 15:8-11). Ogath is the town of Chichicastenango, Guatemala (14.9423, -91.1112). Previous name was *Chiauar Tzupit-agah*. Other names include *Chuilá* and *Chigüilá*. The names have to do with "nettle" in Nahuatl, Maya, and possibly Hebrew (*sarpawd'*) and Sumerian (*ugag*).

Omner: A Nephite fortress city near Gid and Mulek that was also located in the canyon between fortress Lehi in the highlands and Bountiful in the piedmont (Alma 51:26). See also Gad and Gadiomnah (3 Nephi 9:8-10). Omner is the present town of El Palmar, Guatemala (14.6464, -91.5560).

Onidah, Hill: A hill near the interface between the southeastern extreme of Jershon/Antionum and the northwestern extreme of the land of Nephi-I (Alma 32:4; 47:5; 47:29-31). This may have been the same place as Onihah (3 Nephi 9:7). The location is unknown. Onidah is possibly in the name Sonsonate, El Salvador.

Onidah: A place mentioned in Alma 47:5. The place of arms was within Onidah. The name Onidah is possibly within the present name Sonsonate (13.7175, -89.7230). The location is near Nahuizalco, El Salvador (Nephi-I). See mount Antipas.

Onihah: A city that was flooded at the time of the Crucifixion. May have been the same place as Onidah. Location not known.

Ramah: The hill where the Jaredites were destroyed as a nation (Ether 15:11). Also known to the Nephites as the hill Cumorah where the Nephite nation died in battle (Mormon 6:6). This hill was the repository for the voluminous Nephite records, excepting the few plates given to Moroni, which were later deposited in upstate New York and translated by Joseph Smith Jr. into the Book of Mormon. The hill Cumorah was still called *K'umarkáh* (Rotten Canes or Reeds) when the Spaniards arrived. The hill

and extensive ruins are located just west of the town Santa Cruz del Quiché, Guatemala (15.02357, -91.17183). Today the ruins go by the Nahuatl name Uvatlán which means “Land of the Reeds.”

Riplah: A hill (possibly a volcano) near Manti at the head of the Sidon River. It was along the attack path between the Lamanite lands and the Zarahemla area (Alma 43:31-42). It has been thought that the Volcano Pacaya (14.3821, -90.6021) would be the hill Riplah, but the largeness of its base would not fit the battle topography. The much smaller hills and valleys on the south side at the west end of Lake Amatitlán (14.4628, -90.6101) fit the story exactly.

Ripliancum: A very large body of water (river, lake, sea, or ocean) in Jaredite times that was about one day’s battle north of Ramah/Cumorah and Ogath (Ether 15:8-12). The waters of Ripliancum are the Usumacinta River. This is the largest river in Mesoamerica. The Quiché name Nimalá River means the “biggest, greatest, and most powerful river.” Today the Nimalá is called Chixoy or Negro River and it forms the headwaters of the Usumacinta River.

Sea Divides the Land: The Samalá River divides the land Northward (Desolation-Zakajuyú) from the land Southward (Bountiful and Zarahemla). The city at this river is named Retalhuleu, Guatemala which means “Boundary Land” in Quiché.

Sebus: A body of water in the Lamanite land of Ishmael where the king’s flocks were watered (Alma 17:21, 26). This was also near Middoni and Midian. Lake Güija is Waters of Sebus (14.260, -89.511).

Shem: A Nephite city/land in the southeast part of the northern land near the land Desolation. *Shem* was the Nephite/Hebrew name for the Jaredite city of Lib (Ether 10:19-20 and Mormon

2:20,21). The Maya name was *Cham*. The Spanish name today is San Sebastián, Guatemala (14.5632, -91.6481).

Shemlon: A Lamanite land so close to Shilom that troop movements in Shemlon could be observed from a tower in Shilom (Mosiah 11:12). It was also near the Lamanite cities of Lemuel and Shimnilom (Alma 23:12). The land of Shemlon is in the valley near Comayagua, Honduras (14.446, -87.639). It is thought to be the half of the valley on the east of La Humuya River. The Nephites had the west half.

Sherrizah: A Nephite tower mentioned in Moroni 9:7, 16, 17. This tower may have been the chimney to a charcoal oven, a limestone kiln, or a smelter, since biblical usage of the term “tower” occasionally refers to chimneys (Nehemiah 3:11; 12:38). The ending *izah* or *isaj* in Quiché is an infinitive verb-form ending. The root *sher* or *xere* means “root” and also “lower jaw” (mandible) in Quiché. Lehi also means “lower jaw” or “mandible.” Mormon may have written in code to not disclose his location while the battles were raging. “And the armies of the Lamanites are betwixt Sherrizah and me” (Moroni 9:17).

Shilom: A Nephite city/land adjacent to Nephi-2 (Lehi-Nephi), the Waters of Mormon, and Shimnilom (Alma 23:12). This isolated complex was eight days travel from Helam and the other Lamanite lands. It was also a distant 20 days from Zarahemla (Mosiah 23:3; 24:25). Many references appear to indicate that this was the land of Nephi where the Lamanite civilization was centered. However, the great distance suggests that the much closer Nephi-I in the original land of Lehi was a more appropriate distance to travel for the many battles that are recorded. Shilom is the present town of La Paz, Honduras (14.3204, -87.6792). The temple is a couple of miles to the east by the river (14.3639871, -87.64773). The steps on the north half of the west side are visible in the satellite image.

Shim: A Nephite hill in the land of Antum that was in the mountains above Bountiful (Mormon 1:3). It was also near the land of Jashon (Mormon 2:17) and it was in the course of Omer when he traveled eastward past Shim and Cumorah to Ablom by the seashore (Ether 9:3). Shim is the present town of Samayac, Guatemala (14.5822, -91.4629). The hill has not been located but may be near Chisamayac (14.6071, -91.4763).

Shimnilom: A Lamanite city in the greater land of Lehi-Nephi (Nephi-2). It was near Shemlon, Lemuel, and Shilom (Alma 23:12). Shimnilom may be the ruins named Las Vegas (14.4536, -87.658 ?) just west of Comayagua, Honduras (14.446, -87.639).

Shurr: A valley in Jaredite times, possibly a steep walled valley since *shur* means “wall” in Hebrew (Ether 14:28). Shurr was very near the hill Comnor, which in turn was within trumpet sound of the valley of Corihor. This combination may have an Ammonihah connection because of the similarity between Corihor and Korihor. Korihor is thought to be the ruins identified as Cotio, possibly Lomo de Coy (14.6208, -90.6070).

Sidom: A Nephite town near Ammonihah (Alma 15:1). It may be the same as Sidon. It appeared to be on the route out the south gate (Alma 8:18) toward Manti and then on to Zarahemla. There is a Sumerian (Jaredite) word *sidim* meaning “mason” (to bind plus to make). There are several limestone or Portland cement sites west of the highway from Guatemala City to Amatitlán. There are ruins shown on the map named Solano (14.5511, -90.5847). This is thought to possibly be the village of Sidom. There is a ready-mix concrete plant just up the road to the west.

Sidon-I: Sidon of *Zaydohn*’ (*Zeydown*) means “churning, raging, or turbulent” in Hebrew. The “raging” River Sidon-I is a river in the Nephite lands on the east borders of Zarahemla. It is mentioned in Alma Chapters 2, 3, 4, and 6 and in Mormon 1:10. This River Sidon-I is the Río Pantaleón just three miles east of

Zarahemla (Santa Lucía Cotzumalguapa). The older name was *Zacayán* (very phonetically similar to Sidon).

Sidon-II: The “raging” River Sidon-II is a river also in Nephite lands but to the east of Antionum, Melek, and Manti and about 20 miles east of Zarahemla. It formed the west borders of the east/south wilderness. The headwaters were near Manti and it flowed between the hills Amnihu and Riplah. It is mentioned in Alma 8, 16, 22, 43, 50, and 56. This River Sidon-II is the Michatoya River.

Siron: A Lamanite city in the borders of the original land of Nephi-I (Alma 39:3). The author has been told that the Río Sucio in the Santa Ana, El Salvador area was previously called Siron, but this has not been verified. The most relevant ruins possibly would be Cara Sucia, El Salvador (13.7812, -90.0342).

Teancum: A Nephite fortress city very near the city of Desolation (Mormon 4:3), which was across the narrow passage to the northwest of Bountiful. The city Teancum was called Teyocuman in the native literature. Today it is the southern half of Retalhuleu, Guatemala (14.5388, -91.6740) and the city Desolation (Zakajuyú) is the northern half.

Zarahemla: A large Mulekite city and land later shared by the Nephites (Omni 1:14, 15; Mosiah 25:2). Zarahemla had been occupied by the Mulekites for roughly 400 years before they were joined by the Nephites. Most of the Nephites appear to have settled on the perimeter because Zarahemla was already occupied. The Zoramites settled to the southeast in Antionum (Alma 31:3). North of Antionum, the Anti-Nephi-Lehies settled in Jershon (Alma 27:22). Many Nephites may have settled north and west of Jershon in Melek, Minon, Manti, and Gideon (Alma 2:24-25; 8:6, 17:1). Ammonihah was probably still inhabited by Jaredite remnants. Completing the loop north of Zarahemla between Ammonihah and Bountiful were Moroni, Nephiah,

Lehi-II, Morianton, Moronihah, Camp of Moroni, Omner, Gid, and Mulek (Alma 50:14; 51:26-28). Zarahemla was down in the piedmont between Antionum/Jershon and Bountiful.

Zarahemla was the center of what is called the Cotzumalguapa Culture which extended from Palo Gordo to Jutiapa. Santa Lucía Cotzumalguapa, Guatemala is the land/city of Zarahemla. Most of the ruins tend to join the city on the uphill side (north). These include Bilbao, Las Ilusiones, El Baul, El Castillo, and Los Tarros. Archaeologists are now coming to the conclusion that it represented its own “home grown” culture and was not imported from the Nahua of Mexico.

Zeezrom: A Nephite fortress city that was in a position to help protect the lands of Jershon and Zarahemla (Alma 56:14). It was located between Manti and Cumeni. The candidate ruins would be Utzumazate (14.2959, -90.3503).

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