

A Book of Mormon Companion

Witnesses to its Validity

by Donald E. McIndoo

BOOK OF MORMON INSERT SET

The enclosed pages are condensed excerpts from selected chapters of *A Book of Mormon Companion: Witnesses to its Validity*, written by Donald E. McIndoo and published by the Church of Christ, River & Lexington, Independence, Missouri. *Proceeds from the sale of these insert sets go to the Church of Christ, Yucatan, Mexico, Missionary Fund*, administered by the Phoenix, Arizona, local Church of Christ.

This insert set is intended primarily as a companion to Apostle McIndoo's book, since brief inserts cannot tell the whole story behind the particular evidence being discussed. These *will* be helpful, however, as incidental references to tangible evidences of the divinity of the Book of Mormon as you happen upon any particular insert in your reading or studies. They may also be used as a source for a more complete study by following the chain of references listed on each insert, starting at I Nephi 1:1. For the *most* complete study of the subject, it is recommended that you purchase the book.

INSTRUCTIONS: Cut out each separate section, separated by a boldface scripture reference. It would be helpful if you look at each page in the Book of Mormon where each insert would be placed, before you cut each section out — in this way, you may be able to leave a wider margin on the edge that will be inserted into the binding. It is suggested that you place each insert directly beneath, above or across the page from the actual verse or verses to which the insert refers. Also, it may prove helpful if you mark your Book of Mormon at each referenced verse, indicating, "See Insert" (and underline the key words). You may choose not to use all inserts, but the chain reference will be broken if you don't. In that case, you may wish to mark the corrected "Previous" and "Next" references at the conclusion of each insert you decide to use.

Carefully put a tiny amount of paper glue (gluestick or mucilage) on the edge to be inserted in your Book of Mormon binding. Only a couple spots are necessary, rather than trying to glue an entire edge. **The less glue, the better**, as the book's binding will do a good job holding the insert by itself. As you begin placing the inserts, try to place an equal number on the top half of a page as on the bottom half. Due to the use of very thin paper, these inserts should not harm the binding of your Book of Mormon, nor should you notice a bulge.

Book of Mormon Reference Insert Series

containing excerpts from:

***A Book of Mormon Companion
Witnesses to its Validity***

by Donald E. McIndoo. Published by the Church of Christ, River & Lexington, Independence, Missouri.

I Nephi 1:1 — “learning of the Jews”

The writing on the plates making up the Book of Mormon is said to be written in the language of Nephi’s father, which consisted of the learning of both Jews and Egyptians. A study of Aztec and Mayan dialects compared to Hebrew indicates a relationship of approx. 20% between the two native dialects and Hebrew, an extraordinarily high figure in view of geographic and time factors.

One false impression derived from this Mayan-Hebrew connection is that no pre-Columbian inscription in any Old World script or language has ever been found in America. However, A Smithsonian Institution excavation in Loudon County, Tennessee, in the late 1800’s laid this myth to rest. Uncovered, was an ancient text, professionally excavated in an unbroken archaeological context. The Bat Creek inscription is in the Hebrew language and in Old Hebrew script of about A.D. 100.

Within the narrative of the Book of Mormon itself, are numerous instances of ancient Hebraic forms of writing and expression. Find detail about this evidence in various chapters of the above referenced book.

See ch. 3 of *A Book of Mormon Companion: Witnesses to its Validity*, by Donald E. McIndoo

Next: I Nephi 1:3

I Nephi 1:3 — “first year of the reign of Zedekiah”

Lehi’s epic journey begins in the first year of Zedekiah’s reign, circa 600 B.C. Now let’s see what research has to say about the sudden appearance of a people in the New World.

Herbert J. Spinden, in *Ancient Civilizations of Mexico and Central America*, indicates that “With their calendrical system already in working order, the Mayas appear on the threshold of history 600 years before the Christian Era”

A. Hyatt Verrill, the noted archaeologist, says their coming was “... an abrupt and entirely revolutionary order of things, exactly as though the laws, customs, arts, sciences, industries and social organization of the new regime had been brought, ready-made and fully developed, from another sphere or unknown land.”

See ch. 5 of *A Book of Mormon Companion:*

Witnesses to its Validity, by Donald E. McIndoo

Start: I Ne 1:1. Previous: I Ne 1:1. Next: I Ne 1:33

I Nephi 1:33 — “when he had traveled three days”

Opponents of the Book of Mormon point to this verse and say it would have been impossible to have traveled from Jerusalem with all their belongings to the Red Sea in three days, a distance of roughly 150 miles.

The important point is that Nephi’s account does not say they traveled from Jerusalem to the Red Sea in three days. Verse 29 states they took their provisions and left behind their homes, their wealth and the land of their inheritance. They left the area of Jerusalem and went southward into a wilderness where they eventually came down by the borders near the shores of the Red Sea. — v.30. We are not told how long it took to make this journey.

Once they had arrived in the vicinity of the Red Sea, they began their three-day journey (verses 31-33) to the place where they established their camp. In other words, this camp is located in a valley which is a three-day journey south of the place where they first arrived in the borders of the sea.

See ch. 6 of *A Book of Mormon Companion:*

Witnesses to its Validity, by Donald E. McIndoo

Start: I Ne 1:1. Previous: I Ne 1:3. Next: I Ne 1:120

I Nephi 1:120 — “... I did obey the voice of the Spirit, and took Laban ... and I smote off his head with his own sword.”

This is the same God who told Nephi’s ancestors to “smite every male thereof with the edge of the sword: But the women, and the little ones and the cattle, and all that is in the city, even all the spoil thereof, shalt thou take unto thyself ... thou shalt save alive nothing that breatheth: But thou shalt utterly destroy them” — Deut. 20:13-17. This harsh command was given to save His people from spiritual death.

The Mosaic law of excusable homicide as defined in Exodus 21:12-14, requires if a man smite a man so that he die, he shall surely be put to death. And if a man lie not in wait but God deliver him unto his hand; “then will I appoint thee a place whither he shall flee.”

Nephi states that as he went back into the city of Jerusalem late that night he went “not knowing beforehand the things which I should do.” He was not lying in wait, as the statute forbids. Second, the Spirit told Nephi to “Slay him,” — and why? “for the Lord hath delivered him into thy hands.”

See ch. 10 of *A Book of Mormon Companion:*

Witnesses to its Validity, by Donald E. McIndoo

Start: I Ne 1:1. Previous: I Ne 1:33. Next: I Ne 3:25

I Nephi 3:25 — "... Messiah which should come"

Hundreds of years after the prophecy was revealed to Nephi, Jesus Christ did appear here in the New World. Such a momentous event should be clearly identified in the traditions of Native Americans throughout the Western Hemisphere and, indeed, it is; only the tribal name for Him differs.

Sejourné, in *Thought and Religion of Ancient America*, states that just as our era began with Christ, "that of the Aztecs and their predecessors began approximately at the same time with Quetzalcoatl No other name, even the most powerful emperors is even distantly comparable to his Quetzalcoatl is ... the greatest figure in the history of the New World"

See ch. 14 of *A Book of Mormon Companion: Witnesses to its Validity*, by Donald E. McIndoo
Start: I Ne 1:1. Previous: I Ne 1:120. Next: I Ne 3:58

I Nephi 3:58 — "the virgin ... the mother of the Son of God"

Just as Indian traditions tell of the coming of Jesus Christ to America, many of their legends tell also that He was born of a virgin.

L. Taylor Hansen, in *He Walked the Americas* (a compilation of American Indian legends about an ancient bearded, white visitor to this continent), tells us that to a city in ancient Oklahoma ... came the Healer. Here He once more changed the temples, chose from the priesthood His twelve disciples, and lectured to all the people. "He told them that He was born across the ocean, in a land where all men were bearded. In this land He was born of a virgin on a night when a bright star came out of the heavens and stood over His city. Here, too, the heavens opened and down came winged beings singing chants of exquisite beauty."

See ch. 15 of *A Book of Mormon Companion: Witnesses to its Validity*, by Donald E. McIndoo
Start: I Ne 1:1. Previous: I Ne 3:25. Next: I Ne 3:68

I Nephi 3:68 — "... the Tree of Life"

It is important to note that the Tree of Life seen in visions by Lehi and Nephi, is widely depicted, in varying form, in the religious art of many American Indian tribes. Of equal interest, is the fact that its presence is also wide-spread in the religious thought and art of the Old World.

Warren & Ferguson, in *The Messiah in Ancient America*, states that, in 1943, the Smithsonian Institution of the Bureau of American Ethnology published a photograph of a cast of a large ancient stone monument discovered at the ancient ruin of Izapa ... in the state of Chiapas, Mexico. This monument, now called the Izapa Stela 5, "is possibly one of the most important graphic depictions of the Tree of Life ... dated to ... about 300-50 B.C.

See ch. 17 of *A Book of Mormon Companion: Witnesses to its Validity*, by Donald E. McIndoo
Start: I Ne 1:1. Previous: I Ne 3:58. Next: I Ne 3:87

I Nephi 3:87 — "... lifted up upon the cross"

Paul M. Hanson, in *Jesus Christ Among the Ancient Americans*, observes that, "the greatest surprise experienced by the first missionaries to Mexico was when they discovered the cross as a sacred symbol among the people of this far-off land. Juan de Grijalva, in command of four vessels in 1518, found on the island of Cozumel and in Yucatan, buildings of stone, and evidences of a civilization far superior to anything he had before seen in the New World. He was astonished also, at the sight of large stone crosses, evidently objects of worship, ... in various places."

See ch. 18 of *A Book of Mormon Companion: Witnesses to its Validity*, by Donald E. McIndoo
Start: I Ne 1:1. Previous: I Ne 3:68. Next: I Ne 3:147

I Nephi 3:147 — "... a man among the Gentiles"

This man among the Gentiles who was separated from the ancient people of America by the many waters was none other than Christopher Columbus. The description given here by Nephi states clearly that this man was directed by the power of the Holy Ghost in his discovery of the New World. This is certainly not something we read in our textbooks. Here is one of several insights we have now received from historians that lend support to this vision of Nephi:

Peter Marshall & David Manuel, in *The Light & the Glory*, quote from an obscure volume written by Columbus himself: "It was the Lord who put into my mind (I could feel his hand upon me) the fact that it would be possible to sail from here to the Indies. All who heard of my project rejected it with laughter, ridiculing me. There is no question that the inspiration was from the Holy Spirit, because He comforted me with rays of marvelous inspiration from the Holy Scriptures"

See ch. 20 of *A Book of Mormon Companion: Witnesses to its Validity*, by Donald E. McIndoo
Start: I Ne 1:1. Previous: I Ne 3:87. Next: I Ne 3:150

I Nephi 3:150 — "... and they were scattered before the Gentiles, and they were smitten."

We can find ample evidence that the leaders of the three great tribes of ancient America (Aztec, Maya and Inca) were well aware of this prophecy peculiar to the Book of Mormon.

Archaeologist, A. Hyatt Verrill, speaking of Aztec legends about their white, bearded God, tells us, "Among other things he prophesied that long after his departure white strangers would arrive from oversea and would overthrow the Aztec kings and enforce another religion"

See ch. 21 of *A Book of Mormon Companion: Witnesses to its Validity*, by Donald E. McIndoo
Start: I Ne 1:1. Previous: I Ne 3:147. Next: I Ne 3:169

I Nephi 3:168-169 — “many parts which are plain and most precious; And also many covenants of the Lord have they taken away.”

One good example of this is found when comparing Matthew 5:22 to III Nephi 5:70. The Book of Mormon reference renders this statement of Christ as “... whosoever is angry with his brother, shall be in danger of his judgement.” The equivalent verse from the Bible from this Sermon on the Mount, includes the words “without a cause” after the word “brother,” which is not appropriate. There is *no* cause which would allow a Christian to be angry with his brother.

W. E. Vine, in *Vine's Expository Dictionary of the Old and New Testament Words*, published in 1981, states that the words “without a cause” are not in the most authentic manuscripts of the Bible. Quite simply, Jesus never said these words. They were added by an overzealous scribe many years later. Those involved in the translation of the Book of Mormon in the 1820's could not have known of such a “human” insertion.

See ch. 22 of *A Book of Mormon Companion: Witnesses to its Validity*, by Donald E. McIndoo
Start: I Ne 1:1. Previous: I Ne 3:150. Next: I Ne 4:1

I Nephi 4:1 — “And it came to pass that”

This phrase seems to be one of the most widely used phrases within the pages of the Book of Mormon.

A. Crowell, in an article published in *Recent Book of Mormon Developments*, states that “This phrase in the idiom of King James English is a rendering of the Hebrew word ‘vayehee’... Its frequent use in the Book of Mormon is consistent with the frequent use of ‘vayehee’ in the Old Testament Hebrew text. This phrase, ‘and it came to pass,’ and the frequent use of ‘and’ are two of the most important proofs of Hebraic language structure found in the Book of Mormon.”

To illustrate this point, compare the 13 verses on this page of the Book of Mormon with the first 13 verses of I Samuel 18. Four verses in Nephi begin with “and it came to pass” and nine of the 13 verses begin with the word “and.” In Samuel, three verses begin with the expression, “and it came to pass,” while eleven of the first 13 verses begin with the word “and.” This striking similarity to ancient Hebraic expression is found throughout the Book of Mormon.

See ch. 25 of *A Book of Mormon Companion: Witnesses to its Validity*, by Donald E. McIndoo
Start: I Ne 1:1. Previous: I Ne 3:169. Next: I Ne 5:11

I Nephi 5:11 — “... a round ball, of curious workmanship; and it was of fine brass.”

Throughout their journey they were guided by this unusual instrument. It is referred to as the “ball or director” in Mosiah 1:24, and as the “liahona, which is, being interpreted, a compass” in Alma 17:71. Certainly it was no compass as we know it, nor was it anything constructed by man.

Archaeologists have found among the Tarascan Indians an ancient textile tapestry depicting a “most significant event ... the presentation to the group leader of a ball suspended from a chain. An authority has stated that “the bird just above them represents a god, so its inclusion emphasizes the religious importance of the event. This special ball had an important role in the migration to the Tree of Life.”

See ch. 28 of *A Book of Mormon Companion: Witnesses to its Validity*, by Donald E. McIndoo
Start: I Ne 1:1. Previous: I Ne 4:1. Next: I Ne 5:169

I Nephi 5:169 — “And the Lord did show me ... after what manner I should work the timbers of the ship”

Pierre Honoré tells of his discovery of inscribed stones while on a tributary of the Amazon river in South America: “For hours I stood up to my belly in the mud of the bank and scrutinized the symbols on the stones, line for line, page for page - a great stone picture-book which lay open in front of me. ... [Some] showed several boats and ships ... which were not known to the Indians of the Amazon.”

See ch. 32 of *A Book of Mormon Companion: Witnesses to its Validity*, by Donald E. McIndoo
Start: I Ne 1:1. Previous: I Ne 5:11. Next: I Ne 5:181

I Nephi 5:181 — “We did put forth into the sea”

The Book of Mormon tells us that the ancestors of many Native Americans came to this land by crossing the sea. Following is one of many references to such an origin:

In an original text written by 16 Maya nobles in 1553 A.D., this statement was found: “Now on the 28th of September of 1554 we sign this attestation in which we have written that which by tradition our ancestors told us, who came from the other part of the sea, from Civan-Tulan, bordering on Babylonia.”

See ch. 33 of *A Book of Mormon Companion: Witnesses to its Validity*, by Donald E. McIndoo
Start: I Ne 1:1. Previous: I Ne 5:169. Next: I Ne 5:216

I Nephi 5:216 — "... beasts in the forests of every kind"

Do archaeological records show this statement about "every kind" of beast to be merely fanciful thinking, or can Nephi's statement be substantiated?

The presence of herds of horses is attested to by the numerous remains of these mammals found at Rancho La Brea in southern California. On some ancient inscribed stones along the Amazon river in South America, the head of an ox with horns turned up.

M. Coe, in his book *Mexico*, says, "The New World must have been an untouched paradise ... herds of large grazing animals such as mammoths, mastodons, camels, horses, and giant bison roamed through both subcontinents."

See ch. 34 of *A Book of Mormon Companion: Witnesses to its Validity*, by Donald E. McIndoo
Start: I Ne 1:1. Previous: I Ne 5:181. Next: I Ne 7:3

I Nephi 7:3-4 — "... they were made manifest unto the prophet, by the voice of the Spirit: For by the Spirit are all things made known unto the prophet"

The unusual wording of these verses proves of great interest and importance to those who believe in the divine origin of the Book of Mormon.

Only in recent times has the discovery of an ancient literary form called *chiasmus*, been brought to the attention of scholars. In this style of writing there is a rendering of words in a certain order, followed immediately by a repetition of those words in an inverted order. To illustrate this style of writing, let us consider a simple passage from the 22nd verse of Isaiah 22:

"so he shall **open**, and none shall **shut**;
and he shall **shut**, and none shall **open**."

Numerous examples like this, many being much more complex, are found throughout the Bible. Why is this so important to readers of the Book of Mormon? Because the Book of Mormon is filled with this ancient Hebraic style of writing! This style, and the people who would have been familiar with it, were not to be found after 1580 A.D.

John Welch, the author of *Chiasmus in Antiquity*, states of Nephi: "His use of parallelism, balance, and particularly chiasmus is that of a sophisticated literary technician. ... No one seriously contends that Joseph Smith or anyone associated with him knew or could have known of chiasmus or had the training to discover this principle for himself. The evidence is overwhelming against such a claim."

See ch. 37 of *A Book of Mormon Companion: Witnesses to its Validity*, by Donald E. McIndoo
Start: I Ne 1:1. Previous: I Ne 5:216. Next: II Ne 4:19

II Nephi 4:19 — "Nephi ... did make many swords"

That the Indian of ancient Mesoamerica used such weapons made of metal, there can be no doubt. Archaeologist A. Hyatt Verrill, speaking of the Chimus of ancient Peru, writes, "Their weapons were wooden clubs, copper knives, daggers, spears, and swords, as well as battle axes and maces, slings, and bows and arrows." Now numerous artifacts made of wood, copper, bronze, gold and silver have been discovered and are on exhibit in museums throughout the world.

The inclusion of iron (such as the swords used here by Nephi) brings some concern. Most think early Americans had no knowledge of iron. Verrill states that implements of steel or iron have yet to be found among the remains of these prehistoric civilizations, "for steel and iron soon vanish and leave no trace." We now know that the ancient Egyptians possessed fine iron implements, despite the fact that none had ever been discovered until King Tut's tomb was found.

See ch. 42 of *A Book of Mormon Companion: Witnesses to its Validity*, by Donald E. McIndoo
Start: I Ne 1:1. Previous: I Ne 7:3-4. Next: II Ne 4:35

II Nephi 4:35 — "white, and exceeding fair"

The Book of Mormon claims that two of the migrations which came to the New World were from Jerusalem and that the people "were white, and exceeding fair" The book also prophesies that descendants of these people would remain upon the land until the coming of Gentiles from Europe.

One evidence, among many, is from explorer Pedro Pizarro: "The ruling class in the kingdom of Peru was fair-skinned with fair hair about the color of ripe wheat. Most of the great lords and ladies looked white like Spaniards. In that country I met an Indian woman with her child, both so fair-skinned that they were hardly distinguishable from fair, white men."

See ch. 43 of *A Book of Mormon Companion: Witnesses to its Validity*, by Donald E. McIndoo
Start: I Ne 1:1. Previous: II Ne 4:19. Next: II Ne 11:45

II Nephi 11:45 — "... we keep the law of Moses"

The ancient inhabitants of this land looked forward to the coming of the Messiah, but they kept the law of Moses. If this were true, one would expect to find physical evidence of Jewish practices of worship among the artifacts of ancient America.

Deut. 6:8 refers to a mosaic law requiring male Jews to wear a *tephillin* during worship. The "phylactery stela" from Tepatlaxco, Veracruz (now located in the National Museum of Mexico City), depicts an ancient bearded resident of Mesoamerica having such an ornament on his right forearm and hand.

See ch. 49 of *A Book of Mormon Companion: Witnesses to its Validity*, by Donald E. McIndoo
Start: I Ne 1:1. Previous: II Ne 4:35. Next: Jacob 2:2

Jacob 2:2 — "... I come up into the temple"

The words we find Jacob speaking here describe perfectly the structure of the ancient temples of Mesoamerica. These temples were most frequently placed on top of imposing pyramids. Often the temples and buildings of a city were formed in quadrangles enclosing a large courtyard where people could be gathered for special ceremonies and occasions. In order to be heard by the multitude it was necessary for the priest to go "up into the temple."

See ch. 53 of *A Book of Mormon Companion: Witnesses to its Validity*, by Donald E. McIndoo
Start: I Ne 1:1. Previous: II Ne 11:45. Next: Jac. 2:36

Jacob 2:36 — "For there shall not any man among you have save it be one wife"

The Book of Mormon is very explicit concerning the evils of adultery and polygamy. With such direct teaching concerning this subject, it is hard to imagine that believers in the Book of Mormon would in any way be associated with polygamy. Sadly, though, entrance of this practice is recorded not long into the early history of the restored church in the 1830's.

Many assume that, because of his position in the church, if Joseph Smith was privy to the private teaching of polygamy at Nauvoo, he was also party to it. In later years, Joseph's wife, Emma, was interviewed and denied that Joseph ever participated in the practice and "no one had a better chance and way of knowing this than myself." Of one thing we can be certain: No matter when nor how polygamy was introduced into the early church, the fact remains that Joseph Smith spent the last year of his life in direct opposition to it, endeavoring to forever root it out of the [church].

See ch. 54 of *A Book of Mormon Companion: Witnesses to its Validity*, by Donald E. McIndoo
Start: I Ne 1:1. Previous: Jacob 2:2. Next: Mos. 5:35

Mosiah 5:35 — "one half of our corn, and our barley"

This declaration that barley was known and used in ancient America has been noted by opponents of the Book of Mormon as purported evidence that its origin was human, since archaeologists have maintained that barley was unknown in the New World. Now a recent discovery in the Salt River Valley of Arizona, may turn this simple statement into strong testimony about the inspired origin and nature of the book.

Daniel Adams, in his book, *Last Ditch Archaeology*, [tells] about the Hohokam Indians of Arizona, and a startling discovery on their land in 1982: "... salvage archeologists found preserved grains of what looks like domesticated barley, the first ever found in the New World. ... Nearly half the samples from one site yielded barley."

See ch. 56 of *A Book of Mormon Companion: Witnesses to its Validity*, by Donald E. McIndoo
Start: I Ne 1:1. Previous: Jacob 2:36. Next: Mos. 6:19

Mosiah 6:19 — "... and with cimeters, and with clubs"
v21 — "... For I and my people"

More Hebraic writing styles! Earlier insertions discussed *chiasmus* (I Nephi 7:3-4) and the Hebraic habit of beginning sentences, paragraphs and even books with the word "and" or "and it came to pass" (I Nephi 4:1) just as we find here in Mosiah.

AND — Gesenius, in *Hebrew Grammar*, states: "Contrary to English usage, which in lengthy enumerations uses the *and* to connect only the last member of the series, in Hebrew *polysyndeton* is customary." This is where *and* stands before each word or phrase in a series, as in Exodus 28:5: "**And** they shall take gold, **and** blue, **and** purple, **and** scarlet, **and** fine linen."

COMPOUND SUBJECT — Angela Crowell: "In biblical Hebrew, when the compound subject consists of different persons, the first person — i.e., the person speaking — precedes any others. In proper English usage, the order is reversed: the speaker always comes last. We say, 'My father and I' instead of 'I and my father', as in Hebrew."

Compare a few examples from the Bible to v.21 and numerous other Book of Mormon examples: "I and the lad" — Genesis 22:5; "I and my son" — I Kings 1:21; "I and this woman" — I Kings 3:17

See ch. 57 of *A Book of Mormon Companion: Witnesses to its Validity*, by Donald E. McIndoo
Start: I Ne 1:1. Previous: Mos. 5:35. Next: Mos. 7:16

Mosiah 7:16 — "... built a tower near the temple"

Many a student of archaeology has been impressed with the architecture found in the ancient cities of America. One of the singular things about them is their close resemblance to buildings and temples of the Old World.

G. Elliott Smith, referring to stelae such as those found at Copan, a Mayan city in Honduras, says that "pyramids presenting similarly peculiar features were being built in Mesopotamia as long ago as 2,400 B.C. ... and in association with these Babylonian monuments were walled courts just as at Copan."

Prominent archaeologist, A. Hyatt Verrill, speaking of ruins in Asia Minor, writes, "No one comparing photographs of the two can believe that they were merely a coincidence, that two races, separated by thousands upon thousands of miles of ocean, could have chanced upon the unique type of masonry, so identical in every respect that the structures in Peru and these in Asia Minor might well have been planned and erected by the same artisans."

See ch. 58 of *A Book of Mormon Companion: Witnesses to its Validity*, by Donald E. McIndoo
Start: I Ne 1:1. Previous: Mos. 6:19. Next: Mos. 11:3

Mosiah 11:3 — "... they fled eight days' journey"

To the **eight day** journey described here, add (from v. 69) that they traveled **all one day** before they made camp. The next morning (v. 73) they broke camp and traveled in the wilderness **twelve more days** and arrived in the land of Zarahemla.

The story of Alma's journey from the highlands of Lehi-Nephi through the wilderness, gives us a definite clue as to the distance between the original home of the Nephites and the land of Zarahemla. Their time of travel amounted to eight days, one full day and then twelve more — **twenty-one in all**. To imagine them covering more than 200 miles would be preposterous. Two hundred miles — roughly the distance between the highlands of Guatemala and the great lowlands of southern Mexico. This story of Alma's journey is the glue that cements together the fragments of geographical data found in the Book of Mormon.

The hypothesis most consistent with such geographical clues, identifies the "narrow neck of land" to be the Isthmus of Tehuantepec in southern Mexico. This places the bulk of Book of Mormon geography in Mesoamerica. Alma's journey would identify the southern reaches to extend into Guatemala, El Salvador and Honduras, while the desolate cities of the Jaredites stretch northward into central Mexico.

See ch. 59 of *A Book of Mormon Companion: Witnesses to its Validity*, by Donald E. McIndoo
Start: 1 Ne 1:1. Previous: Mos. 7:16. Next: Mos. 13:62

Mosiah 13:62 — "... judges to rule over them"

In the preceding years, the people of Nephi had been ruled by a king who was also responsible for their spiritual well-being. Now we find the sons of King Mosiah being interested in missionary work among the Lamanites. Unwilling to take upon themselves the responsibility of the temporal rule of the kingdom, a new form of government was instituted.

There was no separation of state and government such as we think necessary today. Alma served both as the chief judge of the temporal government and was in charge of "all the affairs of the church." Did such tradition carry on in the governing of the Lamanite peoples who were their contemporaries in the land at that time and whose culture survived until the coming of the Spanish conquest?

The answer is, "yes!" One case in point comes from Herbert Spinden, speaking of the great civilization of the Maya: "The rulers and priests are hard to distinguish from each other, perhaps because the government was largely theocratic and the ruler was looked upon as the spokesman of divinity."

See ch. 60 of *A Book of Mormon Companion: Witnesses to its Validity*, by Donald E. McIndoo
Start: 1 Ne 1:1. Previous: Mosiah 11:3. Next: Alma 1:8

Alma 1:8 — "... support him and give him money"

Critics of the Book of Mormon are quick to point out that there have been no coins found in context with ancient Americans such as are found in Israel and other parts of the ancient Mediterranean world.

First, there were no coins known to the Israelites prior to 522 B.C. Among the Jews there were no stamped coins until the Macabbean Period, about 135 B.C. The Nephites left Israel prior to 587 B.C., so they knew nothing of coins. This is not to say the Hebrews had no money, for they did have a monetary system.

Second, the ancient inhabitants of Mesoamerica did have a monetary system, although they didn't use coins as we think of them. Diego de Landa tells of a burial urn found among the Maya: "... inside were the ashes of a burned body ... together with three fine pieces of good stone of the kind which the Indians used for money."

See ch. 61 of *A Book of Mormon Companion: Witnesses to its Validity*, by Donald E. McIndoo
Start: 1 Ne 1:1. Previous: Mos. 13:62. Next: Alma 1:44

Alma 1:44 — "silk and fine twined linen"

The identification of these two textiles as being present in America appears to be a problem. Book of Mormon critics point out that linen is a cloth made from flax, an Old World plant which was not found in the Americas. The fact that this plant has not been found in the New World is a negative type evidence that has often been misleading.

The Conquistador-historian, Bernal Diaz, recounts seeing linen in the clothing worn by Indians of the New World. The fact is that many species of plants and animals have been transported to new environs where they grew for a while and later, for a variety of reasons, disappeared naturally or were abandoned. Some day, some archaeologist's spade may find the tangible evidence that flax had been carried to the New World, only to later disappear.

See ch. 62 of *A Book of Mormon Companion: Witnesses to its Validity*, by Donald E. McIndoo
Start: 1 Ne 1:1. Previous: Alma 1:8. Next: Alma 1:109

Alma 1:109 — "... out of the land of Jerusalem"

This expression is criticized, as when they point to Alma 5:19, where it states that Jesus would be born "of Mary at Jerusalem," saying this is proof the book is not inspired [since it was actually the city Bethlehem]. Dr. Hugh Nibley points out that the expression, *land of Jerusalem*, is a perfectly valid usage, for "we read of 'the land of Jerusalem' as an area larger than the city itself It was a rule in Palestine and Syria ... for a large area around a city and all the inhabitants of that area to bear the name of the city."

See ch. 63 of *A Book of Mormon Companion: Witnesses to its Validity*, by Donald E. McIndoo
Start: 1 Ne 1:1. Previous: Alma 1:44. Next: Alma 12:77

Alma 12:77 — "... prepare his horses and chariots"

Many tasks performed by the ancient inhabitants of Mesoamerica, the land where the Book of Mormon narrative unfolds, are seemingly impossible without utilizing the principle of the wheel. Did early Americans, understand and use this principle?

Jack West, author and archaeologist, described wheels nine feet in diameter and 16 inches wide. "We brought back pictures of hardened copper cog-wheels, perfectly machined to fit on round shafts and showing signs of tooth wear There can be no question that these people had ... the use of the wheel"

See ch. 65 of *A Book of Mormon Companion: Witnesses to its Validity*, by Donald E. McIndoo
Start: 1 Ne 1:1. Previous: Alma 1:109. Next: Alma 14:47

Alma 14:47 — "... they buried the weapons of peace, or they buried the weapons of war, for peace."

Certainly Alma recognized he had made an error as soon as he saw the contradictory words, "weapons of *peace*." He couldn't erase his error nor could he afford to throw away a valuable metal plate. The only sensible solution is the course taken by Alma and other authors of the Book of Mormon — to correct the erroneous words or thought by following it with a phrase to clarify the thought just recorded. Read where Jacob (3:1-3) discusses the difficult task of engraving on metal plates.

Had Joseph Smith or his scribes made such errors they would simply have removed the offending words; hence, these awkward corrections found throughout the Book of Mormon are evidence of an authentic ancient record laboriously engraved upon metal plates.

See ch. 66 of *A Book of Mormon Companion: Witnesses to its Validity*, by Donald E. McIndoo
Start: 1 Ne 1:1. Previous: Alma 12:77. Next: Alma 16:55

Alma 16:55 — "planets ... move in their regular form"

The early Americans described in the Book of Mormon without doubt possessed a marvelous knowledge of astronomy and mathematics uncommon in the world of that day. Ancient astronomical observatories have now been discovered in places like Chichen Itza in Mexico.

Joseph Gardner, Editor of *Mysteries of the Ancient Americas*, makes these observations: "Probably no other people except perhaps the ancient Egyptians and Babylonians have been so preoccupied with time as the Maya. They plotted the movements of the planets, sun, and moon with remarkable accuracy, often timing war and other important events of their lives according to celestial cycles. ... The Maya ... determined the seasonal year to an equivalent of 365.2420 days; contemporary science calculates it as 365.2422 days."

See ch. 67 of *A Book of Mormon Companion: Witnesses to its Validity*, by Donald E. McIndoo
Start: 1 Ne 1:1. Previous: Alma 14:47. Next: Alma 21:156

Alma 21:156-157 — "... they supposed [to] ... subject their brethren to the yoke of bondage ... But behold, to their uttermost astonishment, they were prepared for them, in a manner which never had been known among all the children of Lehi."

Archaeologists have at last uncovered a defensive network in the homeland of the ancient Maya that so fits Helaman's description recorded in Alma 21, it could have been copied from these very pages.

The fortifications unearthed at Becan are about 1.2 miles long, and over 117 thousand cubic meters of fill were taken from the ditch during its original construction. The bank on the inner side of the ditch contained 80,000 cubic meters of fill. The width of the ditch varies from about 40 to 90 feet with an average depth of about 17 feet.

See ch. 69 of *A Book of Mormon Companion: Witnesses to its Validity*, by Donald E. McIndoo
Start: 1 Ne 1:1. Previous: Alma 16:55. Next: Hel. 2:7

Helaman 2:7 — "expert in the working of cement"

David Palmer, in his book, *In Search of Cumorah*, has this to say about the use of such building materials as cement: "The use of cement and concrete spread throughout Mesoamerica in a time span from at least as early as 100 B.C. through 400 A.D. The tourist sees it in great abundance at Teotihuacan. At Kaminaljuyu the concrete mix was similar. An early manifestation of the use of cement is at Chiapa de Corzo, where it was used to surface the temple known as Mound 1. This can also be seen at Monte Alban."

See ch. 70 of *A Book of Mormon Companion: Witnesses to its Validity*, by Donald E. McIndoo
Start: 1 Ne 1:1. Previous: Alma 21:156-7. Next: Hel. 2:129

Helaman 2:129 — "... for the Lord did bring Mulek into the land north"

This reference to Mulek, one of the sons of King Zedekiah, often elicits laughter from critics of the Book of Mormon, for the Biblical account of King Zedekiah refers to the death of his sons. This story is found in 2 Kings 25:1-7.

One important question remains unanswered: Were all the sons of Zedekiah with him at the time of this account? Verse four gives an important clue to explain the seeming discrepancy: "... and all the men of war fled by night" Only those sons of Zedekiah who were old enough to be numbered among the men of war were captured and carried to Syria where they were slain. King Zedekiah evidently had sons (Helaman 3:56 indicates one) who had not yet reached the age to qualify them as "men of war."

Deuteronomy 20:13-14 explains an exception to the demand for killing "every male."

See ch. 71 of *A Book of Mormon Companion: Witnesses to its Validity*, by Donald E. McIndoo
Start: 1 Ne 1:1. Previous: Hel. 2:7. Next: Hel. 2:130

Helaman 2:130 — "... did work all kinds of ore"

In the years prior to the first publication of the Book of Mormon, the people of western New York, Pennsylvania and Virginia lived on the American frontier. They had undergone years of suffering and most whites at that time viewed Indians as mere savages. That the American Indian could have developed a highly sophisticated culture wherein artistic achievement and metallurgy blossomed, was inconceivable.

Do recent studies of ancient Indian craftsmen substantiate the Helaman account or do they uphold the viewpoint held by the average American of the 1820's?

Christopher Donnan, in an article appearing in *National Geographic*, writes, speaking of a Peruvian Indian tribe, "... the Moche flattened and smoothed metal into sheets of uniform thickness and then pounded these to create objects in low-relief and three-dimensional sculpture. They excelled at joining metal pieces by edge welding, crimping, and bending tabs that projected through slits on adjacent pieces. They were sophisticated at alloying metals, using gold, silver, and copper in various combinations. Their technology embraced lost-wax casting, with which they created complex three-dimensional sculptures, some with interlocking, moveable parts."

See ch. 72 of *A Book of Mormon Companion: Witnesses to its Validity*, by Donald E. McIndoo
Start: I Ne 1:1. Previous: Hel. 2:129. Next: Hel. 3:78

Helaman 3:78 — "burial of the great chief judge"

The subject of burials brings to mind one of the greatest discoveries made in Mesoamerica some years ago. Since there were strong cultural ties between ancient Israel and Egypt, one would expect to encounter some Egyptian influences carried to America by Israelite settlers. Although one finds numerous stepped pyramids in both America and Egypt, opponents of the Book of Mormon argued that the similarity was superficial since pyramids in America were not used as places of burial as were those in Egypt.

This argument was silenced in 1952 when Mexican archaeologist, Dr. Alberto Ruz L. and his workmen found a stairway descending into the depths of the pyramid ... and eventually a small room at the bottom containing a huge stone box weighing about 20 tons ... and in the red-painted sepulcher below this sarcophagus were the remains of a Mayan king who ruled Palenque just 250 years after the narrative of the Book of Mormon closes.

See ch. 73 of *A Book of Mormon Companion: Witnesses to its Validity*, by Donald E. McIndoo
Start: I Ne 1:1. Previous: Hel. 2:130. Next: Hel. 5:68

Helaman 5:68 — "... another sign I give unto you; yea a sign of his death"

Is there any evidence that major disasters took place in Mesoamerica during the time of Christ's crucifixion? The early historian, Ixtlilxochitl, an Aztec-Spanish noble who wrote the *Historica Chichimeca*, states that it was "166 years since they had adjusted their years and times with the equinox, and 270 since the ancient ones had been destroyed, when the sun and moon eclipsed, and the earth trembled, and the rocks broke, and many other things and signs took place, although there was no calamity whatever toward men. This happened in the year of *ce Calli*, which, adjusting this count with ours, comes to be at the same time when Christ our Lord suffered"

See ch. 74 of *A Book of Mormon Companion: Witnesses to its Validity*, by Donald E. McIndoo
Start: I Ne 1:1. Previous: Hel. 3:78. Next: III Ne 3:8

III Nephi 3:8 — "highways cast up ... roads made"

To suggest, in 1829, that pre-Columbian America had great cities connected by highways and roads would take considerable courage, but Joseph Smith was not composing a book — he was translating an already written history. What do investigations show about the existence of highways and roads in America 2000 years ago — many years after the Book of Mormon was published?

Here is a description of one of many such highways that have since been discovered: The trail ran from the rail stop in the Yucatan jungle to the ancient Maya city of Mayapan. We had to walk a dirt path overgrown with grass and weeds. As we walked the rough trail we could catch occasional glimpses of the ancient limestone roadbed — usually obscured now by the encroaching jungle — which connected this capital city with other cities in the region. Inspection showed it to be about twelve feet wide and set 12 to 15 inches above the ground. The stones appeared to be grouted with a mortar-like material and to have been paved in earlier times.

See ch. 75 of *A Book of Mormon Companion: Witnesses to its Validity*, by Donald E. McIndoo
Start: I Ne 1:1. Previous: Hel. 5:68. Next: III Ne 5:61

III Nephi 5:61 — "... to be the light of this people."

Critics of the Book of Mormon frequently point to quotes or near quotes it makes from the Bible. Believers in the Book of Mormon are also believers in an unchanging God who speaks the same message to His children wherever they be found. The doctrine Christ brought to Galilee was the Father's doctrine (John 7:16) and that same doctrine of the Father would be brought to all the lost sheep of Israel (III Nephi 5:32).

But even in something as universally appropriate for all people as the Sermon on the Mount, we find changes from the words as quoted by Matthew. The differences seem slight, but they prove to be significant. It is hard to imagine an unlettered youth like Joseph Smith inventing the hundreds of such subtle, yet significant, differences as are contained in this record.

Use this scripture in III Nephi as one example: To the disciples in Galilee the Master said, "Ye are the light of the world." — Matthew 5:14. Indeed, they were to be the light of the world as the gospel went to the gentiles, to the Romans who would carry it across their vast domains into all the *known* world. But His disciples in America were isolated from all contact with the rest of the world. They were to be a light only to the people of their own land in their day.

See the next insert and one at I Nephi 3:169, for another striking difference.

See ch. 77 of *A Book of Mormon Companion: Witnesses to its Validity*, by Donald E. McIndoo
Start: I Ne 1:1. Previous: III Ne 3:8. Next: III Ne 5:70

III Nephi 5:70 — "... whosoever is angry with his brother, shall be in danger of his judgement."

The equivalent verse from the Bible (Matthew 5:22) from this Sermon on the Mount, includes the words "without a cause" after the word "brother," which is inappropriate. There is *no* cause which would justify a Christian being angry with a brother. See the previous insert and one at I Nephi 3:169 about such imperfections in Biblical verses.

See ch. 22 of *A Book of Mormon Companion: Witnesses to its Validity*, by Donald E. McIndoo
Start: I Ne 1:1. Previous: III Ne 5:61 Next: III Ne 8:9

III Nephi 8:9 — "... he did heal them every one"

An early Indian historian, in his history, *An Account of the Antiquities of Peru*, wrote the following: "... there arrived in these territories of the Tahuantinsuyu a bearded man of medium height and long hair dressed in a rather long cloak. He walked with a staff and addressed the natives with love, calling them his sons and daughters. As he traversed all the land he worked miracles. He healed the sick by his touch."

See ch. 80 of *A Book of Mormon Companion: Witnesses to its Validity*, by Donald E. McIndoo
Start: I Ne 1:1. Previous: III Ne 5:70. Next: III Ne 10:2

III Nephi 10:2 — "... that they may build a city"

This prophecy of Christ given to these ancient people lives on in the traditions of their descendants, bearing witness to the divinity of this ancient record.

Karena Shields is an anthropologist who grew up with the Maya near the ancient city of Palenque in southern Mexico. She narrates their traditions as related to her: "Itzamná has not forgotten us. The promise that buried with his hand, the torch, will live. We will build cities of stone once more, build them upon the bodies and promises of those who walk with Hunab Ku (God, the father), and there will be beauty and laughter on earth, and sorrow we will not, not again."

See ch. 83 of *A Book of Mormon Companion: Witnesses to its Validity*, by Donald E. McIndoo
Start: I Ne 1:1. Previous: III Ne 8:9. Next: III Ne 11:30

III Nephi 11:30 — "until ... he should come in his glory"

A. Hyatt Verrill: "Probably the best known and most famous of the Aztecs' gods was the 'Plumed Serpent' or Quetzalcoatl There are many myths and legends connected with Quetzalcoatl, but all agree that he was a white stranger with a flowing beard. Among other things he prophesied that long after his departure white strangers would arrive from oversea and would overthrow the Aztec kings and enforce another religion, but that eventually he would return to reestablish the Aztecs and their faith."

See ch. 84 of *A Book of Mormon Companion: Witnesses to its Validity*, by Donald E. McIndoo
Start: I Ne 1:1. Previous: III Ne 10:2. Next: Morm. 1:26

Mormon 1:26 — "... drive us out of the city."

The Short Age of Mayan Cities — After the destruction of the Nephites, the last writer in this narrative (Mormon 4:10) told what followed: "... the Lamanites are at one with another; and the whole face of this land is one continual round of murder and bloodshed; and no one knoweth the end of the war."

Decades after the Book of Mormon was published, archaeologists have uncovered one great ancient city after another. But unless one reads of such events as described here by Mormon, these discoveries would be puzzling. Historian Paul Radin states that "The history of Mayan culture is dominated by one outstanding fact, namely, the small period of time during which any city was occupied. Cities and even regions were abandoned apparently without any cause that can now be assigned. It seems to have come to an end suddenly. An overwhelming catastrophe seems apparently to have swept over all the cities where this civilization had flourished. Some scholars have invoked a tremendous civil war, others a devastating epidemic, and still others social decadence."

See ch. 85 of *A Book of Mormon Companion: Witnesses to its Validity*, by Donald E. McIndoo
Start: I Ne 1:1. Previous: III Ne 11:30. Next: Morm. 2:43

Mormon 2:43 — “seed of this people ... more fully believe”

When Clarence and Angela Wheaton, 20th century Church of Christ missionaries to Yucatan, made their first visit among the Maya, they found a people who knew of Christ, but that hungered for a more complete revelation of His gospel. They had no Bibles, many could not read, but they had a witness — given years before by a green-eyed, golden-haired, white prophet — that one day someone would come among them, bringing the Gospel of Christ. And they were found ready to *more fully believe* that Gospel.

See ch. 87 of *A Book of Mormon Companion: Witnesses to its Validity*, by Donald E. McIndoo
Start: 1 Ne 1:1. Previous: Morm. 1:26. Next: Morm. 3:16

Mormon 3:16 — “ten ... did fall ... with their ten thousand”

Mormon later reckons the number of dead to be 230,000. Book of Mormon critics scoff at figures of a population so large. Even archaeologists underestimated the populations of early Mesoamerica until more recently. Consider the make-up of Mormon’s 230,000 dead. Mormon had spent several years gathering *all* his people — not just his armies — into this last refuge. Next, consider estimated populations of ancient Mayan cities: Neighboring cities Calakmul and Tikal are just two of more than 60 known sites in one tiny portion of the Maya homeland — together these two were once home to 115,000 residents.

Historian Ixtlilxochitl wrote of Cortes’ Indian allies in his battle for the conquest of Mexico City in the 1500’s: “In the whole army were two hundred thousand men and fifty thousand laborers to prepare bridges ... and Cholulans also reviewed their troops ... there were more than three hundred thousand men.”

See ch. 88 of *A Book of Mormon Companion: Witnesses to its Validity*, by Donald E. McIndoo
Start: 1 Ne 1:1. Previous: Morm. 2:43. Next: Ether 1:7

Ether 1:7 — “... from the great tower”

In Genesis 11:1-9, read of the “tower of Babel,” from which these Jaredites came. It seems odd that the Book of Mormon never refers to it as the tower of Babel, but simply “the tower” or “the great tower.” There is good reason for this. About 400 years after the the great dispersion at “the tower,” the Sumerians were replaced by Semitic tribes who made this the center of the kingdom of Babylon. Centuries later, the inhabitants refurbished the city of *Babili* and its great tower and palace buildings. It was they who named it *Babel*, and thus its great tower became the *tower of Babel*. ***That the Book of Mormon did not assign it this popular name, common in Joseph Smith’s time, is another internal evidence of its authenticity.***

See ch. 89 of *A Book of Mormon Companion: Witnesses to its Validity*, by Donald E. McIndoo
Start: 1 Ne 1:1. Previous: Morm. 3:16. Next: Ether 1:22

Ether 1:22 — “into the valley which was northward”

The Journey of the Jaredites — There is but one ancient culture which fits the Ether’s description of the Jaredite civilization: The Olmecs, mother culture of the Americas. Of them, Frank Waters gives this description: “Who the Olmecs were, where they came from, and what happened to them is not known. ... their culture appeared fully formed and well-organized from the very start, as if it had been transplanted from somewhere else.” He adds: “... [the] ancient Chinese classic, Shan Hai King, compiled about 2,250 B.C. ... describes a voyage across the ‘Great Eastern Sea’ and a two-thousand-mile journey down the length of the land beyond. Long regarded as a book of myth, it is now asserted to be an accurate geographic description of various landmarks in America”

Even after many years of significant finds of the Olmec culture, the beginning time of their arrival on this continent varied from the Book of Mormon account by hundreds of years. Recent investigations in Mesoamerica have pushed this date back. George Stuart, in a National Geographic article, describes this: “Within a narrow strip along the coast that stretches from Chiapas into El Salvador lie a dozen important sites ... whose histories of occupation extend back to around 2000 B.C.”

See ch. 90 of *A Book of Mormon Companion: Witnesses to its Validity*, by Donald E. McIndoo
Start: 1 Ne 1:1. Previous: Ether 1:7. Next: Ether 1:77

Ether 1:77 — “Behold, I am Jesus Christ.”

Opponents of the Book of Mormon are aghast that this record would indicate there had been such an early revelation of Christ. Earlier inserts show that Jesus Christ was known to the Indians of Mesoamerica by the name of Quetzalcoatl (among others), the bearded, White God who visited America. But was He known to the ancient Olmec (see insert at Ether 1:22) civilization, which had disappeared before Christ’s visit to the Americas? If so, it would be a corroborating witness to the experience of the brother of Jared.

One of several indications of this early revelation of Christ, comes from the discoveries of Mexican scholar, Jose Diaz-Bolio, in a small temple in Yucatan. In his book, *La Serpiente Emplumada*, he states that the original Quetzalcoatl did indeed appear in Olmec times.

Once again we see a vindication of the Book of Mormon narrative by archaeological discoveries long after it was published.

See ch. 92 of *A Book of Mormon Companion: Witnesses to its Validity*, by Donald E. McIndoo
Start: 1 Ne 1:1. Previous: Ether 1:22. Next: Ether 3:13

Ether 3:13 — "... were driven forth, three hundred and forty and four days upon the water"

The craft made by the people of Jared were unlike vessels with which we are familiar. They had no sails, no means of propulsion save the currents, and could be sealed entirely in rough seas.

Critics of the Book of Mormon claim that 344 days is much too long a period for the voyage they made, pointing to the crossing of such explorers as Columbus, whose journey took about 34 days. Remember that the voyage of Columbus across the Atlantic was less than a third the length of the Jaredite trip across the Pacific, and Columbus was under sail.

Two instances of survivors of ship disasters where traveling was similar to that of the Jaredites, find they were able to travel roughly 20 miles a day, and 24 miles a day, respectively. The Jaredite route from Asia, probably following the Kuroshio Current, took them between 8,000 and 11,000 miles, which, at the average speed of the two examples above, would have taken between 363 and 500 days to make their great sea crossing. Thus, rather than being a trip of excessive duration, we see they made the trip in record time.

See ch. 93 of *A Book of Mormon Companion: Witnesses to its Validity*, by Donald E. McIndoo
Start: 1 Ne 1:1. Previous: Ether 1:77. Next: Ether 3:46

Ether 3:46 — "... he gave battle unto his brother Corihor, by which means he obtained the kingdom"

The Asiatic culture brought to America by the Jaredites had many characteristics unique to other ancient cultures of Asia. As well, our hypothetical journey has the Jaredites traveling across the steppe of central Asia, perhaps leaving behind members of the party. In this text, the occasion of fratricide — the act of killing family members to obtain power — was typical of many Asian cultures. The formation of powerful, secret societies (Ether 3:81-92), the offering of money to gain power (Ether 4:12), having many wives and concubines (Ether 4:48), intrigue and assassination (Ether 4:94) were all common in the ancient cultures of central Asia.

Unfortunately, these Asian traits were rather unsavory. However, *the fact that this knowledge was unknown at the time the Book of Mormon was published, is a testimony, not only of its divinity, but of its integrity and its adherence to truth, no matter how unpopular.*

See ch. 94 of *A Book of Mormon Companion: Witnesses to its Validity*, by Donald E. McIndoo
Start: 1 Ne 1:1. Previous: Ether 3:13. Next: Ether 4:21

Ether 4:21 — "horses, and asses, and ... elephants"

Many domesticated animals common to man are listed by Moroni as being useful to the ancient Jaredites. Two animals listed are not identifiable by the names given them. The listing is somewhat controversial, since many of these animals were not known to be in America, at least in modern times nor in a domesticated state, until brought here by Europeans.

Based partly on the discovery of elephantine stone carvings on various ancient Mesoamerican structures, archaeologist A. Hyatt Verrill made this observation: "... there is no doubt that the people who built this temple and reached such heights of culture in Panama in prehistoric times had either seen elephants, had domesticated some species of mastodon, or were in direct or frequent communication with the Orient"

See ch. 95 of *A Book of Mormon Companion: Witnesses to its Validity*, by Donald E. McIndoo
Start: 1 Ne 1:1. Previous: Ether 3:46. Next: Ether 6:53

Ether 6:53 — "... he did overthrow many cities ... and he did burn the cities thereof"

The Book of Mormon gives us the time-frame for the demise of the Jaredite civilization (about 300 B.C. when Mosiah went into the land of Zarahemla), as well as the geographical area where it took place. George and Gene Stuart, in a National Geographic article, confirm this approximation: "Almost as suddenly as they appeared, the Olmec vanished around 400 B.C."

Author and historian, Michael Coe, estimates that the "deliberate" final destruction of the Olmecs occurred about 400-300 B.C.

See ch. 96 of *A Book of Mormon Companion: Witnesses to its Validity*, by Donald E. McIndoo
Start: 1 Ne 1:1. Previous: Ether 4:21. Next: [End of Series](#)