

GLYPH

Notes

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Book of Mormon Geography Remains a “Hot” Topic

by Shirley R. Heater

The geographical setting for The Book of Mormon continues to be a topic of interest to believers. Beginning in the 1830s theories predominantly identified Panama as the Narrow Neck, Cumorah in New York (the hill south of Palmyra), and the River Sidon as the Magdalena in South America. Louis E. Hills was the first to place the setting solely in Mesoamerica, purely through his detailed study of internal requirements, and presented in his groundbreaking 1917 map.

Over the years various theories have come and gone as evidences continued to accumulate relating to Mesoamerica (see Sorenson 1992). Recent attention by a few has returned to North America, centered once again around Cumorah in New York, but also placing all the history of The Book of Mormon in the US, rejecting resoundingly all Mesoamerican evidences.

It is our desire to respond to the words in 1 Peter 3:15 to “be ready always to give an answer with meekness....” This issue of *glyph notes* begins a series of articles to specifically provide abundant evidences that parallel The Book of Mormon through nearly 3,400 years of history in a Mesoamerican setting. Lyle Smith begins with “An Account of Those Ancient Inhabitants: Nephites.” Glenn Scott then takes up the cause with numerous archaeological correlations that can only place The Book of Mormon in Mesoamerica. In the final article I will recap these evidences and conclude by addressing some specific details of what is called “The Heartland (or Great Lakes) Model.” I might say that the evidences that will be presented in this series reflect the long-term commitment of Pre-Columbian Studies Institute to always bring a positive, uplifting report to encourage all believers in their faith in this wonderful book and turn faith into knowledge.

“Come now, and let us reason together” (Isaiah 1:18).

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An Account of Those Ancient Inhabitants: Nephites

by Lyle L. Smith

Many believers in The Book of Mormon want to know about the civilizations that once lived in the Americas. Is there evidence that these pre-Columbian peoples are those found in The Book of Mormon?

To answer this question, three major requirements must be met:

1. The area must show evidence of phonetic writing that functions like Egyptian and Hebrew.
2. The archaeological record must agree with The Book of Mormon timeline.
3. Major cultural aspects need to match.

The right geography is another requirement, but it will be defined by answering the three questions above.

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John the Revelator foretold that another angel would “fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth” (Revelations 14:6). This angel, Moroni, gave Joseph Smith ancient records written in an unknown script, which contained this everlasting gospel. Joseph translated these records by the gift and power of God and published them as The Book of Mormon. Could anyone in 1830, without God’s help, have written a thousand-year history that matches current archaeological evidence of the Maya in event, date, and sequence?

Account (Cont. from page 1)

After many years of research, I believe that only one area of the Americas matches all three of these requirements. And that is the area commonly called by the archaeologists Mesoamerica. Keep in mind that many diverse groups of Native Americans have lived in the Americas. *The Book of Mormon is not a history of all of them.* The promise in The Book of Mormon is that only those who are led by the hand of the Lord will come to the Promised Land (2 Nephi 1:8-10). This promise was given after the Flood. There may have been other groups led to the Americas by the hand of the Lord other than the Jaredites and the people of Lehi and Mulek.

Archaeology often uncovers major events in the cultural/linguistic/geographical history of an area and its people. By using today’s proven methods correctly, archaeologists throw light on authentic cultural history of the period in question. Many evidences from archaeology and epigraphy strongly support this thesis that the account of the Nephites in The Book of Mormon occurred in the area of Mesoamerica.

Our search for these three requirements mentioned above—writing, historical timeline, and culture—begins with The Book of Mormon because it is our *primary source*—not what others have written about it.

The Nephite civilization described in The Book of Mormon covers 1,000 years, from 600 B.C. to A.D. 420. The Nephite/Lamanite group and the Mulekites both migrated from Jerusalem to the Promised Land just after 600 B.C. (1 Nephi 3:4; 5:211-213 and Omni 1:26). Fifty years after arriving they had begun to be numerous (Jacob 2:67). Lehi and his family came across the Pacific Ocean and landed on the south coast near what is now Guatemala or El Salvador, and the people of Mulek came across the

Atlantic and landed on the north coast of the Isthmus of Tehuantepec, and after their first landing, came “up into the south wilderness” (Alma 13:74), which was the lowlands.

Working with these premises, let’s look at the history of the Nephites as written in The Book of Mormon—our *primary source*—and compare it with major events that took place in Maya history as found in current archaeological textbooks and literature. To do this, *we will build a comparative timeline between the Nephites and the Maya.* See page 8.

These archaeological references come from well-known, current archaeologists and epigraphers. These are *not* my theories or ideas. I will show that the archaeologists tell the same account as that related in The Book of Mormon, even though they do not acknowledge it or even realize it. Remember that the study of archaeology is based on the theory of evolution and disregards belief of God and His dealings with mankind. This means that most archaeologists will never see or agree with the information presented here as supporting the belief that the history of The Book of Mormon took place in Mesoamerica. Don’t expect them to!!

This material is primarily for the believer, *to help us understand that The Book of Mormon is intellectually true* and that it describes authentic history of real people. When we correlate the evidence, we *convert our minds* as well as our hearts by understanding that *current archaeology is telling the same history as found in The Book of Mormon.*

Arrivals and Population Explosion

Let’s begin by noting a great archaeological mystery.



Lyle Smith and Aaron Presler

“One of ancient Mesoamerica’s great mysteries is the absence of significant human populations in Yucatan, Belize, and the Guatemalan Peten before 800 BC. Earlier remains have been identified at various places in the northern Peten and Belize, but the entire area was very lightly settled until 600/500 BC” (Diehl 2004:150).

“All available evidence would have the evolution of Classic Maya civilization from diverse and intermeshed origins in both the southern (highlands and Pacific plain) and northern (lowland) settings” (Sharer 1989:166).

“Slow, uneven population growth occurred from 1000 to 500 B.C. (Middle Formative), resulting in the proliferation of small farming communities throughout the peninsula. There are indications that *this erratic population growth became an explosion after 550 B.C.* The reasons for the apparent jump in numbers are obscure” (Adams 2005:132; emphasis added).

“Scattered evidence of people in the Maya area previous to 600 B.C. has been found . . . but Maya urban life came into existence in the 6th century B.C. The Maya appear to have arrived on the scene without too much antecedent.... Maya civilization banged into existence in its own way and time.... It is unsettling.... It violates the tacit rules of diffusion and . . . of gradual evolution espoused by modern archaeology” (Robertson and Freidel 1986:Preface:x).

“The Late Preclassic . . . (400 BC-250 AD) was characterized by ‘a rapid growth in population and in the development of stratified organizations...’” (Bricker 2008:164).

“The Late Preclassic (400 B.C.-A.D. 300) witnessed a population explosion in the San Bartolo-Xultun territory as well as in other parts of the Maya lowlands...” (Garrison and Dunning 2009:538).



Lyle Smith

Of the multitude of Maya ruins in the lowlands, Yaxchilán is one of the most beautiful.

These eight well-known, well-published archaeologists quoted above report that there was light population in the Maya area prior to 600 to 500 B.C. and, beginning about 550 B.C., population exploded—the Maya seemed to have “banged into existence” without much antecedent.

The Book of Mormon provides the answer to this great mystery. First, we know that Lehi’s colony and the Mulekites both arrived at the time archaeologists say population exploded in the Maya area. This fits but we also know from our *primary source*, The Book of Mormon, that another great migration occurred. The Jaredites came to the Promised Land much earlier and settled north of the narrow neck of land. “And they did preserve the land southward for a wilderness...” (c.1500 B.C., Ether 4:68-69).

Think about the United States. It began with 13 States. Then with the Louisiana Purchase it formally increased its size greatly. This is what the Jaredites did not do. They did not formally include the territory south of the narrow neck, but it does not mean that individual families and even small groups did not move into the area, especially along the Pacific coast of Mexico and Guatemala. So there was light population in the Maya area before 600 B.C. One example comes from the current dig at Ceibal on the Passion River in Guatemala. It shows evidence of occupation as early as 1000 B.C. but the artifacts are Olmec, whose heartland was the Gulf Coast of Mexico between Veracruz and Villahermosa, not Maya. (See “Glyph Clips” in the May/June 2011 issue of *glyph notes*, p. 8.)

Writing and Language

The Book of Mormon

Nephi wrote, “I make a record in the language of my father, which consists of the learning of the Jews and the language of the Egyptians” (1 Nephi 1:1). This means a combination of literary style, patterns and grammar (Hebrew, learning of the Jews), and script and language (Egyptian hieroglyphs). Both Egyptian and Hebrew were phonetic languages at 600 B.C. The most often used phrase in The Book of Mormon—“and it came to pass”—and its variations, is a Hebrew literary style or cultural language pattern.

Archaeology

“Salama Valley monuments . . . dating to an era (ca. 500- *Cont. on Page 4*)

This short passage of writing from San Bartolo is one of the earliest examples of writing found in the lowlands. Archaeologists are confident that radiocarbon dates of material in the same context with this writing put it between 300 and 100 B.C. The forms are different from later glyphs, and deciphering them at present eludes epigraphers.



Glenn Scott

Account (Cont. from page 3)

200 B.C.) in the Maya highlands . . . almost surely saw the emergence of the earliest Mesoamerican writing systems..." (Sharer 1989:169).

"The San Bartolo block achieves importance because it narrows the time in which writing first appears in Mesoamerica. Most early finds, regardless of region, now come close to the midpoint of the first millennium B.C." (Houston 2006:1250).

These statements agree with the emergence of writing occurring in the Maya area at the same time as the arrival of the Nephites. As for phonetics, it wasn't until the late 1970s that epigraphers began to accept and understand that the glyphs were phonetic; that they represented sounds and were not simply pictographs. Once this understanding caught on, decipherment progressed quickly (Coe 1992). In the 1983-84 academic year, David Stuart deciphered a group of glyphs frequently used in the inscriptions as *and it came to pass* (Coe 1992:239-241), the exact same phrase found extensively in The Book of Mormon.

Once the phonetics of the script was accepted and a great deal of decipherment had taken place, epigraphers began examining grammar or linguistics (style and patterns). Kathryn Josserand and Nick Hopkins, pioneers in recognizing the poetry of the inscriptions, proposed that most of the inscriptions use repetitive couplets and chiasmus (Josserand 1991). These same literary patterns are prevalent in The Book of Mormon (Welch 1981; Smith 1995:2-3).

Of more importance was the realization that although the Maya hieroglyphs do not look much like Old World scripts, *the writing system functions in most ways like Old World writing systems such as Egyptian*. See Coe (1992) and Smith (2002).



Lyle Smith

These colorful stucco glyphs, molded about A.D. 709, are part of the upper portion of a large pier in Temple XIX at Palenque. The Maya blue color is still very visible against the red background. Three of the ten glyph blocks are calendar glyphs, but the translation of some of the other glyphs remain obscure.

Mosiah to the Lowlands

The Book of Mormon

The Book of Mormon account relates that King Mosiah left the mountainous land of Nephi to go down to the lowland of Zarahemla (Omni 1:23, 48-49). He took written records, the Brass Plates, and the Plates of Nephi, and a religion new to the people of Zarahemla.

Mosiah "had established peace in the land of Zarahemla, and . . . had taught them to keep the commandments of God, that thereby they might rejoice, and be filled with love towards God, and all men" (Mosiah 1:32).

"And their [Mulekites] language had become corrupted; and they had brought no records with them.... But it came to pass that Mosiah caused that they should be taught in his language" (Omni 1:30, 32).

Archaeology

"Their [David Freidel and Linda Schele] hypothesis is that the Lowlanders borrowed certain Highland religious concepts, along with iconographic elements and the idea of hieroglyphic writing" (Willey and Mathews 1985:4)

"It is strange that . . . figurines are not found, from which it may be supposed that there was a change in popular cults" (Coe 2011:80).

According to Muriel Weaver Porter, El Mirador, Tikal, Uaxactun, Nakbe, and other close cities show a major ceramic transition around 250 B.C. Small figurines disappear. See Weaver 1981:141-145.

King Mosiah taught the people of Zarahemla his language and religion and to keep the written commandments. One of these commandments was to have no graven images. Archaeology indicates that prior to Mosiah's arrival each household had small clay figurines representing the gods they worshiped, but after 250 B.C. they disappear.

Fortified Cities

The Book of Mormon

"Moroni had fortified or had built forts of security for every city in all the land round about.... Now behold the Lamanites could not get into their forts of security . . . because of the highness of the bank which had been thrown up, and the depth of the ditch which had been dug round about, save it were by the entrance" (Alma 21:164, 170).

Archaeology

"Late Formative Maya built more formal fortifications than nearly any other group in Mesoamerica.... All of these fortifications date to the Late Formative [time period of Chief Captain Moroni].... The Maya Lowlands are littered with fortifications and true fortresses" (Adams 2005:170).

After more than 2,000 years, the moat at the site of Becan is still more than 20 feet deep. Many other ruins have moats around them, but most are not as obvious as Becan's.

Migrations Northward

The Book of Mormon

“And it came to pass in the forty and sixth year . . . there were an exceeding great many who departed out of the land of Zarahemla, and went forth unto the land northward, to inherit the land” (Helaman 2:3).

“And it came to pass that there were many of the people of Ammon who were Lamanites by birth, did also go forth into this land” (Helaman 2:11).

Archaeology

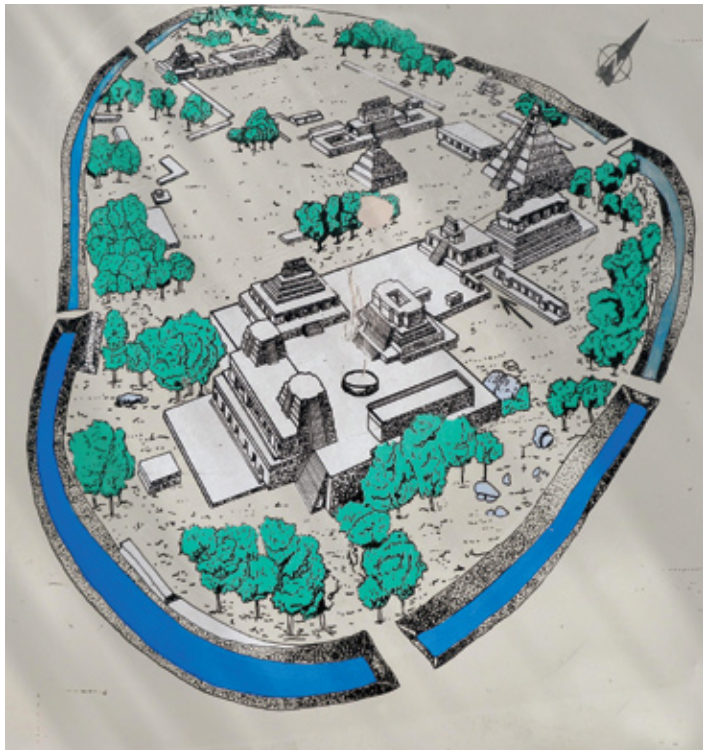
“While Teotihuacan may have been in existence earlier, during the last century B.C. its population grew very rapidly” (Castro, Sugiyama, and Cowgill 1991:77-92).

When populations change there must be something that causes the increase or decrease. In this case the population of the city of Teotihuacan near present-day Mexico City grew rapidly in the 100 years before the time of Christ. It is not hard to see that the migrations of people moving north of the narrow neck in that period of time, detailed in the history of The Book of Mormon, were the cause of this city’s rapid growth.

Notable Cities Disappear

The Book of Mormon

“And it came to pass in the thirty and fourth year, in the first month, in the fourth day of the month, there arose



Lyle Smith

This illustration on a sign at the site of Becan shows the moat and entry ways into this heavily fortified city in the lowlands.

a great storm.... And the highways were broken up . . . and many great and notable cities were sunk, and many were burned . . . and the inhabitants thereof were slain, and the places were left desolate” (3 Nephi 4:6-11).

Archaeology

“For reasons not yet understood, many of these cities [those in the lowlands or northern regions of Guatemala] failed during the second half of the first century A.D.” (Schele 1991:6).

Archaeologist Richard Hansen in an October 14, 2009, CNN video, indicates that El Mirador, the largest Maya city ever built, was in existence from 500 B.C. to A.D. 100.

Children of Christ Era

The Book of Mormon

“In the thirty and sixth year, the people were all converted unto the Lord.... There was no contention in the land because of the love of God which did dwell in the hearts of the people” (4 Nephi 1:3, 17).

Archaeology

It appears that all of Mesoamerica (not just the Maya area) was more closely tied together religiously before A.D. 250 than afterward. Pasztor notes parallels between Maya art and the early art of Teotihuacan. They are the use of triadic temple/pyramid construction, the use of large heads modeled in stucco as decoration on buildings and, third, the building of colossal temple platforms such as found at El Mirador and Teotihuacan (Pasztor 1988:75).

Religion was of enormous importance at Teotihuacan during the first 150 years A.D. and society was characterized as theocratic (Castro, Sugiyama, and Cowgill 1991:78).

“Typical also of this intriguing period in Maya culture history is the ‘triadic’ pattern of archi- *Cont. on Page 6*



Glenn Scott

The Tigré pyramid at El Mirador is one example of the cultural trait of building in a “tradic” pattern.

Account (Cont. from page 5)

ecture found here and at other similarly early lowland sites: this consists of a principal pyramid, plus two other ones which face each other, with all stairs leading from a central plaza. Richard Hansen suggests a mythological basis for the pattern, perhaps a triad of gods such as we find much later at the Classic city of Palenque” (Coe 2011:84).

The three gods at Palenque are called God G1, God G2, and God G3 because the real names of the gods have not been deciphered. In a *glyph notes* article, Smith points out that there is great similarity between God G1 and Jesus Christ (Smith 2006:1-5).

I suggest, not the archaeologists, that these three pyramid/temple complexes may represent God, His Son Jesus, and the Holy Spirit. Yet other archaeologists suggest the three temples may reflect “the Maya worldview, symbolizing the three-stone place of creation” (Brown and Garber 2005:48). The three stones signify heaven, sea, and earth.

The Book of Mormon account tells us the same concept—all the people were converted in A.D. 36 and became the “children of Christ” until A.D. 194 when they began to break up into different churches. “Therefore there began to be Lamanites again in the land” (A.D. 194, 4 Nephi 1:23-24).

Major Transitional Period

The Book of Mormon

A major cultural transition is described in The Book of Mormon, our primary source, for the years between A.D. 150 and A.D. 300 (4 Nephi 1:21-53).

- A.D. 150 All were the children of Christ
- A.D. 210 Many different churches, i.e. denominations, arose
- A.D. 231 Great division occurred; once again there were Nephites and Lamanites
- A.D. 244 Wicked part of the people became exceeding more numerous
- A.D. 260 People began again to use the secret oaths and combinations of Gadianton
- A.D. 300 Both Nephites and Lamanites became exceedingly wicked

Archaeology

“The transition from the Late Preclassic to the Early Classic [A.D. 150-300] was an undeniable turning point for many regions of the Maya lowlands and represents the first major transitional period for which there is significant archaeological data. There is evidence for either *site abandonments or settlement pattern shifts for a number of regions...*” (Garrison and Dunning 2009:545; emphasis added).

“Though the significance of the Preclassic-Classic divide can be overstated, the distinction does seem to reflect a *transformation from one social and political order to another*” (Martin and Grube 2008:17; emphasis added).

Kings

The Book of Mormon

“And now the Lamanites had a king, and his name was Aaron.... And three hundred and thirty years had passed away” (Mormon 1:31, 33).

Archaeology

In the Maya area kings begin about the same time-frame: Tikal, c. A.D. 290; Piedras Negras, c. A.D. 300; Caracol, c. A.D. 350; Yaxchilán, c. A.D. 370; Naranjo, Palenque, Copan, and Quirigua, all around A. D. 430. See Martin and Grube (2008:22-23).



Don Beebe

Lintel 41 from Yaxchilán depicts King Bird Jaguar IV preparing for a battle fought on A.D. 5 May 755. The king’s name, Bird Jaguar, is clearly discernible as the second from the bottom in the column near his headdress. Kings began at Yaxchilán c. A.D. 370.

High Population

The Book of Mormon

“And it came to pass that I, being eleven years old, was carried by my father into the land southward, even to the land of Zarahemla; the whole face of the land having become covered with buildings, and the people were as numerous almost as it were the sand of the sea” (about A.D. 320, Mormon 1:7).

Archaeology

Patrick Culbert postulates, “Based on settlement pattern analysis, archaeologists estimate that by the Late Classic, ca. A.D. 600, Maya population had reached a *density of 600 people per square mile* across a 36,000-square-mile area in the forested lowlands of northern Guatemala and adjacent parts of Mexico and Belize. This is a *staggering figure*, comparable to the most heavily populated parts of rural China today” (Culbert 2003:6; emphasis added).

The Book of Mormon tells us that the people were almost as numerous as the sand of the sea at A.D. 320. And even though by A.D. 386 about one third to one half of their total population was destroyed (the Nephites), there was still an astonishing population of 600 people per square mile just 200 years later. This indicates there had to have been a dense

population at A.D. 320 to have such staggering numbers only 200 years later.

Conquest Warfare

The Book of Mormon

“And it came to pass in this year [A.D. 321], there began to be a war between the Nephites . . . and the Lamanites...” (Mormon 1:8).

“After the great and tremendous battle at Cumorah [A.D. 385], behold, the Nephites who had escaped into the country southward, were hunted by the Lamanites, until they were all destroyed...” (Mormon 4:2).

“The Lamanites are at war 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” (A.D. 400, Mormon 4:10).

Archaeology

“While the impact of warfare on Maya commoners remains to be elucidated archaeologically, there is positive epigraphic and iconographic evidence to identify the *advent of conquest warfare among these people at the close of the fourth century A.D.*” (Schele and Freidel 1990:442; emphasis added).

“In A.D. 378, the Maya learned the art of conquest” (Schele 1991:6).



Don Beebe

Mural painting was a major tradition in Mesoamerica. Three murals of interest are at Bonampak, Cacaxtla, and Chichen Itza, all painted after the end of *The Book of Mormon*. They show battle scenes between lighter and darker skin people. The example above, a replica of a portion of the murals from Bonampak in the National Museum of Anthropology and History in Mexico City, dates to A.D. 790.

Conclusion

These twelve major events between the Nephite and Maya cultures cover 1,000 years. The Comparative Timeline on page 8 shows the history found in *The Book*

of Mormon on the left and Maya history, documented by current archaeologists, on the right. These twelve major events match not only in *what happened*, but *at the right time* and *in the correct sequence*. Current archaeological evidence from Mesoamerica agrees with the record in *The Book of Mormon*.

These twelve major events match not only in *what happened*, but *at the right time* and *in the correct sequence*.

Recently I spoke with a current, well-acknowledged and published archaeologist, a former chairman of the Anthropology Department of a major university in the US. He reaffirmed that when archaeological evidence, over a period of years, compares with another source that gives the history of the period, one can always have, by chance, a few areas of correspondence. But when that number is much larger, such as the twelve areas of correspondence listed above, chance is very unlikely.

How did Joseph Smith know that the account in *The Book of Mormon* would eventually be matched by Maya archaeology so accurately? *He could not have known*. None of the archaeological information we have today about the Maya culture was known when he was alive. Because the timelines match in major ways, only one logical explanation remains. Joseph translated the record—“an account of those ancient inhabitants”—by “the gift and power of God” in 1829-30. I see no other way for history to be written in 1829-30 that now matches archaeological evidence 180 years later.

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Account (Cont. from page 7)**COMPARATIVE TIMELINE**

The Book of Mormon	Dates	Maya History
Lehi and Mulek colonies arrive at the Promised Land	600-500 B.C.	Maya cities appear
Lehi and Mulek colonies become numerous	600-500 B.C.	Population begins to explode
Nephites write and keep written records	600-500 B.C.	Writing first appears
Nephites migrate to the lowlands, bringing written records and a new religion	c. 250 B.C.	People in the lowlands borrow religious concepts, iconographic elements, and the idea of hieroglyphic writing from highlands
Moroni fortifies cities	c. 200 B.C.	Maya fortify cities
Major migrations northward	50-30 B.C.	Teotihuacan population grows rapidly
Great destruction	c. A.D. 50	Many cities disappear
Children of Christ era lasts from A.D. 36-194	A.D. 100	All Mesoamerica is more closely tied together religiously before A.D. 250 than afterward
Children of Christ era ends and a major change in religion and society occurs	A.D. 150-300	Maya society reflects a transformation from one social and political order to another
Lamanites begin to have kings	A.D. 290-330	Maya Classic kingship begins
People are numerous as sands of the sea	A.D. 320	Population is dense
Nephites destroyed	A.D. 320-385	Conquest warfare identified

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GLYPH *Quotes*

by Clyde Noren

They humbled themselves, and put their trust in the true and living God. — Alma 3:25-26

Many of today's youth as well as some adults place their everyday trust in beliefs or life styles generated by their environmental surroundings. This trust may be placed in the strength of their own abilities, popular people of their times (heroes), or beneficent government programs. These trusts are all physical sources and come from the arm of flesh with no promise of enduring value.


Trust in these forms exclude belief in a spiritual trust found exclusively in God and His Son Jesus. Total trust in these two divine personages will result in eternal salvation. Alma spoke of the experiences of the people in the land of Mormon in Alma 3:25-26. "And they humbled themselves, and put their trust in the true and living God. And behold, they were faithful until the end; therefore they were saved."

The looseness of moral standards and the inclusion of unwholesome lifestyles in our country undermine trust in God and Jesus Christ's teachings exhibited by a decrease in Christian worship attendance. Parents are encouraged to train their children in the way they should go in worship experiences and the social responsibilities in life (Proverbs 22:6 and 2 Nephi 3:11). Peer pressure upon children and time restraints encountered by parents have hindered them in teaching their children to have total trust in Jesus and live by His life-touching examples. Teachings such as love, stewardship of time and money, and healthy living styles cannot be fully taught by sporadic examples. Children need to see and hear their parents pray, make sacrificial offerings, and help the poor, the handicapped, and the needy, before they will trust the words of God

and Jesus. The words must become real and meaningful in their lives.

The Book of Mormon has many examples about people who trusted in the Lord, and they stated their position as Nephi did as written in 2 Nephi 3:61. "O Lord, I have trusted in thee, and I will trust in thee for ever." Another stalwart who trusted the Lord was Moroni, who from his youth to his older age, trusted in God and Jesus even though he lived some 400 years after Christ's earthly visit.

Moroni was given the awesome responsibility of guarding The Book of Mormon plates and seeing that they were deposited in a hill in upper New York state. His journey was, no doubt, beset with many physical challenges besides those of the pursuing Lamanites. Moroni's earlier deeds and exploits in life were accomplished only by his complete trust in God and Jesus Christ. His life was steeped in oral history and the historical records. He was convinced of the truthfulness of the teachings of Jesus Christ. Moroni's final message and challenge to mankind was, "Yea, come unto Christ, and be perfected in him, and deny yourselves of all ungodliness..." (Moroni 10:29).

After all these many witnesses before us in the Scriptures who professed complete trust in God and Jesus, this question must be asked, "In whom do you trust?" 

GLYPH *Clips*

by Sherrie Kline Smith

Smithsonian Magazine (May 2011)

"Lost City of the Maya," photographs and article about El Mirador, one of the largest Maya cities from circa 500 B.C. to 100 A.D.

This article is well worth reading even though nothing new is reported. It tells a little of the history about the discovery of El Mirador and the work there as well as information about Richard Hansen, the director of the Mirador Basin Project. El Mirador is an important site for believers in The Book of Mormon because it covers the same time frame as the Nephites and Mulekites. Your local library should have a copy of this issue.

DNA and Joseph Smith

Deseret News out of Salt Lake City, Utah, posted an article online called "DNA Solves a Joseph Smith Mystery." It reports that DNA testing of five or six men believed to be descendants of Joseph Smith via a polygamous marriage


proved they were NOT. The belief or suggestion that

these men descended from Joseph Smith came from Fawn Brodie's book *No Man Knows My History: The Life of Joseph Smith*. The scientist who carried out the studies, Ugo Perego, said, "Through DNA we will not be able to test 100 percent of the cases. But if we test 70 percent of them and they are all negative, does that provide some insight on the topic that we did not consider before?" <http://www.deseretnews.com/article/700150651/DNA-solves-a-Joseph-Smith-mystery.html?pg=2> (July 14, 2011)

New Books

The Maya, Michael D. Coe, Thames & Hudson, 2011

Early in 2011, the eighth edition of *The Maya* was published. Written by Michael Coe, a pre-eminent Maya archaeologist, the book targets the general public instead of professional archaeologists. The eighth *Cont. on Page 12*



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Chichicastenango • Quirigua • Tikal • Uaxactun • Antigua • Copan . . . and much more

The Land Southward

Annual Book of Mormon Archaeological Tour

January 26 – February 5, 2012



Sponsored By: **Pre-Columbian Studies Institute**, Lyle Smith, President
Tour Presented by PSI Tours, LLC, Lyle and Sherrie Smith, Tour Leaders

REGISTRATION FORM

Our annual tour goes to Guatemala, land of eternal spring and *alma de la tierra*, or soul of the earth. We will explore archaeological ruins, museums, and the ancient towns of Antigua and Chichicastenango. A large newly excavated site, Yaxha, will be included in the itinerary. Many will remember it as the venue for the filming of the television show *Survivor* in 2005. And of course, Tikal, Uaxactun, Copan, Kaminaljuyu and Quirigua are also in the itinerary. Classes will be held in the evenings. And, not only will we have fun together, we'll worship together.

Join us for an adventure you won't forget and let The Book of Mormon come alive for you! BUT, remember! We travel where the unpredictable happens. It's part of the adventure! Questions call Lyle Smith, 816 867-5057 or Don Beebe, 816 796-4094.

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Single Supplement — additional \$600

INCLUDES: All airfare from Kansas City; all ground transportation; hotel accommodations based on two persons in a double room; breakfasts and dinners in Guatemala/Honduras. Entrance fees, service charges, and tips.

NOT INCLUDED: Personal items such as a-la-carte orders, room service, laundry, and meals and other items not specifically mentioned as included.

LIQUOR or TOBACCO: Please refrain from using either when our group is together.

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Deposits refundable until Dec. 1, 2011, when final payment is due.

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Signature

Date

Glyph Dwellers

Dwellers - to live and have a home in a particular place

The Adventures of Beezrom

by Mindy Mulheron

Illustrations by Aaron Presler



We've been in the Promised Land for a while now, and we've been working hard! We built homes and have begun to settle in. I helped plant the gardens and tagged along on the hunts for fresh meat, and we also found gold and silver and other metals for making tools and items we need. This is such an amazing place! It is truly a land of promise. Nephi and his family are so happy here!

Not long after we settled in, the Lord asked Nephi to write down all the stories of his people on metal plates. It was neat to hear the history of Nephi's ancestors – he went way back in time and told how God had blessed his family from the beginning, even from the time of Abraham.

When Nephi finished writing, he shared it with his family, and they talked for a long time about all the things he recorded. Nephi reminded them how much God loved them and that they would never be lost as long as they followed the Lord.

God is so good! As long as we choose to follow Him and do our best, He is always with us and blesses us. And you know what the coolest part is? God told Nephi that someday, way in the future, people would read the record he wrote and be blessed by it! Isn't that neat?!

Well, I guess I should get back to work – there's always a lot to do around here, and I'm in charge of the flower beds by myself. Next time you have a free minute, see if you can remember all the times God has blessed you.... I bet you have enough blessings to start your own record of how God blesses you! Maybe you can even share it with your family!

See ya next time!

Scripture reference: 1 Nephi 5:214-264

Word Search

by Beezrom

H O M E S T S G N I S S E L B M
 O O S U S E V O L D O G G A B S
 Z J B O G N I T N U H S B D Y Z
 J K O D R O C E R N E T T I R W
 U O D S E T A L P S S A R B U A
 B U B N F C R O A M L J M J N N
 I E L K A I W F S E I R O T S C
 H W E R B L N E P H I F H A Q E
 E Q G Z M G D Y Z F I Y C G N S
 L Z N C R P I E A I L K B N W T
 E K I L W O E M S Z R O F R X O
 U L T D M U M X P I G E W S N R
 A K N Y X P K Z Y D M T V E I S
 O H A P D L O G K C W O O L R P
 C R L Z K G U M Y P M X R Y I S
 O L P Y H H V E T J Q J B P R S

Find these words in the Word Search above.

ANCESTORS
 BEEZROM
 BLESSINGS
 BRASSPLATES
 FLOWERS
 GODLOVESUS
 GOLD
 HOMES

HUNTING
 LEHI
 NEPHI
 PLANTING
 PROMISEDLAND
 SILVER
 STORIES
 WRITTENRECORD

My Written Record

I remember a time when God blessed me! _____

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*Book of Mormon Geography
Remains a "Hot" Topic*

*An Account of Those Ancient
Inhabitants: Nephites*

GLYPH Quotes

*GLYPH Clips:
Smithsonian Magazine (May
2011)*

DNA and Joseph Smith

New Books

*Southern Methodist
University Reports on a New
Site, Holtun, Discovered in
the Early 1990s*

*GLYPH Dwellers:
The Adventures of Beezrum*

GLYPH *Notes*

PRE-COLUMBIAN STUDIES INSTITUTE

JULY/AUGUST 2011

VOLUME 18 NUMBER 4

GLYPH Clips (Cont. from page 9)
edition is much like the seventh, but
has been updated with new material
from new discoveries.

*Reading Maya Art: A Hieroglyphic
Guide to Ancient Maya Painting and
Sculpture*, Andrea Stone and Marc
Zender, Thames & Hudson, 2011

After the introduction that gives an overview of Maya art and writing, the book is organized like a dictionary or as they call it, a catalog of signs. Each sign is on a page with explanatory text with examples found in Maya art and sculpture on the facing page. It's a handy reference tool and helps us better understand what sometimes appears most strange to us when looking at Maya art.

SMU (Southern Methodist University) Reports on a New Site, Holtun, Discovered in the Early 1990s

"Mapping of Maya's 'Holtun' site in Central Lakes region of Guatemala locates triadic pyramid, astronomical observatory, ritual ball court, residential mounds, plazas" (April 12, 2011)

Holtun, a small Preclassic site about 22 miles south of

BOOK OF MORMON CLASSES COMING THIS FALL

**South Crysler Restoration Branch
All classes begin at 7 p.m.**

- Sept. 29
- Oct. 20
- Oct. 6
- Oct. 27
- Oct. 13

Tikal in Guatemala, dates from 600 B.C. to 250 A.D. Archaeologists estimate it had a population of about 2,000. Of the 100 structures mapped, several are typical of those found in other Preclassic Maya sites, like the E-group (a group of

pyramids serving as an astronomical observatory), the triadic pyramid group dating 300 B.C. to A.D. 300, a ball court, and giant stucco masks flanking stairways. During the Classic period, kings were typically buried in Maya pyramids, but during the Preclassic they were buried in their residences. The head archaeologist at the dig, Brigitte Kovacevich, stated, "Little is known about how kingship developed, how individuals grabbed political power within the society, how the state-level society evolved and why it then was followed by a mini-collapse between 100 A.D. and 250 A.D." <http://blog.smu.edu/tempresearch/2011/04/12/3-d-map-of-guatemalas-head-of-stone-confirms-ancient-buildings/>

National Geographic News also ran a story about the work at Holtun (April 26, 2011) <http://news.nationalgeographic.com/news/2011/04/110426-maya-lost-city-holtun-science-guatemala-ancient/> 