

GIMPH Mates

PRE-COLUMBIAN STUDIES INSTITUTE • NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 2011 • VOLUME 18 NUMBER 6

Why is Mesoamerica the Site of Book of Mormon Lands? Part 2

By Shirley R. Heater, Lyle L. Smith,
Sherrie Kline Smith

his article continues a discussion of the geographical setting for The Book of Mormon in light of recent attention on a U.S. setting as opposed to Mesoamerica.

The foundation for this series of articles began with an introduction by Shirley Heater, "Book of Mormon Geography Remains a 'Hot' Topic," and the article "An Account of Those Ancient Inhabitants: Nephites" by Lyle Smith (both July/August 2011 *glyph notes*), followed by "Why Is Mesoamerica the Site of Book of Mormon Lands?" by Glenn Scott (Sept./Oct. 2011 *glyph notes*). Taken together, these articles by Smith and Scott provide good evidence for Mesoamerica as the setting, leading to the only conclusion possible, that the hill in New York State where the angel Moroni took Joseph Smith to find the plates which became The Book of Mormon is not the Hill Cumorah talked about in The Book of Mormon.

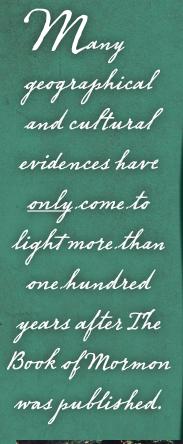
As we continue the series, we will follow Smith's format by examining our primary source—The Book of Mormon. If you believe this book is a true record written by ancient peoples who once lived in the Middle East area and came to a Promised Land, then you cannot ignore the geographical and cultural references made in the book. Simply put, they are either true or not. In the last issue, Scott quoted Louis Hills as saying, "After years of teaching and defending the Book, I am convinced that the geography, taken from a close study of location as *found in the record itself*, is the very best evidence that can be furnished to authenticate the record" (emphasis added; Hills 1917:[3]). We also are convinced of the wisdom of this approach.

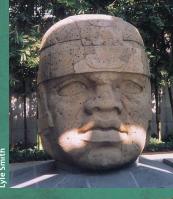
Discussed below is more support for Mesoamerica as a setting for The Book of Mormon; many such evidences *only* coming to light more than one hundred years after The Book of Mormon was published. The Book of Mormon requirement is presented first, because if the book is true, we have to use it as our foundation for any evidence to support its validity. The validation from Mesoamerican archaeology of The Book of Mormon requirements follows. Only a few of possible topics are discussed.

Cont. on Page 2



Far left: One of the 17 basalt heads found to date in the Olmec area, believed to be portraits of real people, is displayed in the museum in Jalapa, Mexico. Left: The Olmec people created tools and ceremonial items from jade, a commodity highly prized both by the Olmec and the Maya. Top of page: Found in Tlapacoya, an early site near Mexico City, this plate dates to sometime around 1000-600 B.C.







the Jaredite account as found in The Book of Mormon. The evidence includes the correct timeframe, culture, and a great nation all during the right three thousand years' period and in the right location—north of a narrow neck (Isthmus of Tehuantepec) of land.

MAYA—NEPHITE/LAMANITE/ MULEKITE CIVILIZATION

Smith's article in the July/August 2011 issue of *glyph notes* gives abundance evidence from Mesoamerican archaeology to support the advent of these groups of people in The Book of Mormon with the Maya. Below are a few other correlations.

Mesoamerica (Cont. from page 1)

EARLY CIVILIZATIONS/JAREDITES

The Book of Mormon

The book of Ether describes a civilization much earlier than the people of Lehi and the Mulekites. They were led by the hand of the Lord to the Promised Land from the great tower at the time of the confusion of languages. During a period of their history, they were to be a mighty nation, "And there shall be none greater than the nation which I will raise up unto me of thy seed, upon all the face of the earth" (Ether 1:20 [43]). Their land was next to the land occupied by the Nephites/Lamanites/Mulekites and northward of a narrow neck of land. Their civilization lasted almost 3,000 years, until a couple of centuries before the time of Christ.

Mesoamerican Archaeology Correlation

Archaeologists have discovered that there were people and a great civilization in Mesoamerica during Jaredite times. They call them the Olmecs. The Olmecs and their predecessors date back to around 3000 B.C. Pottery first appears in Mesoamerica around 2900 B.C. (Adams 2005:45). The archaeologists call these early people the predecessors of the Olmec.

Between 2000 and 1500 B.C., however, in the central portion of Middle America, there began to emerge a distinctive cultural pattern that would define the culture area of Mesoamerica (Pool 2007:3).

The name *Olmec* also refers to an archaeological culture that flourished in the tropical lowlands of present-day Veracruz and Tabasco between 1800 and 400 B.C.... (Berrin and Fields 2010:19).

Because of their early achievement in art, politics, religion and economics, the Olmec stand for many as a kind of 'mother culture' to all the civilizations that came after, including the Maya and the Aztec (Stuart 1993:92).

The archaeological finds of Mesoamerica support

CEMENT IN THE LAND NORTHWARD

The Book of Mormon

The Book of Mormon states that the people in the land northward were experts in the working of cement.

And there being but little timber upon the face of the land, nevertheless the people who went forth became exceeding expert in the working of **cement**: therefore they did build houses of **cement**, in the which they did dwell.... And the people who were in the land northward, did dwell in tents, and in **houses of cement** ... and thus they did enable the people in the land northward, that they might build many cities, both of wood and of **cement** (emphasis added; Helaman 2:7-10 [3:7-10], circa 45-50 B.C.).

Mesoamerican Archaeology Correlation

Discoveries made by archaeologists in Mesoamerica strongly support this Book of Mormon requirement. Excellent examples come from the ruin of Dainzu in the Oaxaca area and from the ruins of Teotihuacan outside Mexico City. Dainzu displays cement walls and platforms dating before the time of Christ. The great plaza at Teotihuacan, measuring more than 400 meters by 400 meters surrounding the Temple of Quetzalcoatl,



Don Bee

Grass covers the many layers of cement on the plaza in front of the Pyramid of Quetzalcoatl.

was cemented over several times during the years of its occupation (100 B.C. to A.D. 700). These are only two of the hundreds of examples of cement work in Mesoamerica north of the narrow neck of land or the Isthmus of

Tehuantepec (Scott 2002:179; Smith 1992:10; Cabrera, Sugiyama, Cowgill 1991:78; Hyman 1970).

MULEK AND LAMAN

The Book of Mormon

Two well-known names in The Book of Mormon are Mulok/Mulek and Laman. Mulek came with or led a group of people to the Promised Land when Zedekiah was King of Judah. About 400 years later King Mosiah, a Nephite, was led by the hand of the Lord down from the Land of Nephi to the City of Zarahemla, named for the current king, Zarahemla. The people of Zarahemla, descendants of Mulek and those who came with him, are called the Mulekites. (The word Mulekites is not found in The Book of Mormon.) They were one of three major groups of people identified in The Book of Mormon beginning about 600 B.C.

Laman is the name of the oldest son of Lehi. Shortly after arriving in the Promised Land, about 585 B.C., the colony of Lehi divided into two groups. Some of the people followed Laman and some followed Nephi, his younger brother. The followers of Laman became the Lamanites, the largest group, in fact more numerous than the Mulekites and Nephites combined (Mos. 11:78-79 [25:2-3]. Both Mulek and Laman were the start of major groups of people in The Book of Mormon.

Support from Mesoamerican **Epigraphy**

Transliterating personal names from one language to another "depends on the ability of the new language to duplicate all the nuances of sound found in the word spoken and written in the originating tongue" (Salonimer 1995:viii). And sometimes the sound in one language is not in the other, so epigraphers try to make it as close as possible. In this process, names can be spelled in different ways. For instance, Nephi could be rendered Nefi. The Eygptian name Nefertiti has been transliterated with an "f" instead of a "ph," which would result in Nephertiti.

In addition, words and pronunciation in languages "change with time, with usage, with the influence of other languages upon them, and with the transliteration of them from one language to another" (Salonimer 1995:vii).

Only recently, as the phonetics of the Maya glyphs became known, have some names of the kings and places been "translated" or "transliterated" (matching sounds from one language to another). So when we find Maya names that match Book of Mormon names we pay attention.

Muluc is a day name in one of the Maya calendars. As such, this name would have been known in all cities, towns and villages; a very famous name indeed. It's also possible that it is one of the city names for the Maya ruined city known today as Yaxchilan. If so, the original name of Yaxchilan may have been Mulek, named after the founder of the Mulekites (Scott 2002:164-165).

Almost none of the Maya cities between 600 B.C. and A.D. 400, the time period for The Book of Mormon, were in existence when the Spanish arrived. Nearly all had been abandoned and lost to the jungle. One exception is the city of Lamanai, located in Belize. It had been continuously occupied from the Late Preclassic (approximately 300 B.C. to A.D. 25) until after the Spanish arrived, so there is no doubt about the city's name.

Additionally, glyphs painted on a vessel showing a palace scene give the name of the king as Laman. "We know that [the] Maya king of Motul de San Jose was named K'inich Laman Ek" (emphasis in original; Scott 2002:230; Grube 2001:156).

Coincidence? It is possible that names from different languages can sound alike, but with two names in Mesoamerican archaeology matching names of two of the major groups of people from The Book of Mormon, coincidence appears unlikely.



Drawing of Yaxchilan Lintel 21. The muluc day sign is highlighted in yellow. Below: Close up of a muluc day sign.





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ROADS AND HIGHWAYS

The Book of Mormon

And it came to pass that there were many cities built anew, and there were many old cities repaired, and there were many highways cast up, Cont. on Page 4



A 2,000-year-old sacbe ("white road") is still clearly visible today right in the middle of this aerial shot of the jungle-covered ruins of El Mirador in Guatemala.

Mesoamerica (Cont. from page 3)

and many **roads** made, which led from city to city, and from land to land, and from place to place (emphasis added; 3 Nephi 3:8 [6:7]).

Mesoamerican Archaeology Correlation

One of the exciting finds from Mesoamerican archaeology is the recognition of extensive road systems built by the Maya civilization. They crisscrossed the whole Maya area. One excellent example is the road from the ruin known today as Coba to the ruin of Yaxuna in the Yucatan peninsula. This road is 67 miles long and averages 32 feet wide. (See Scott 2002:190-193.)

TESTIMONY OF JESUS CHRIST

The Book of Mormon

And verily, verily, I say unto you, that *I have other sheep, which are not of this land;* neither of the land of Jerusalem; neither in any parts of that land ... But I have received a commandment of the Father, that *I should go to them,* and they shall hear my voice, and ... be numbered among my sheep, that there may be one fold, and one shepherd... (emphasis added, 3 Nephi 7:24-26 [16:1-3]; Scott 2002:198).

The main purpose of The Book of Mormon is to bear witness that Jesus Christ is the Son of God and our Redeemer and that he rose from the dead after being crucified. The authors of The Book of Mormon testify that Christ came to the Promised Land after his resurrection.

Support from Epigraphy

Much of the recent excitement in Mesoamerica is due to breaking the Maya hieroglyphic code and being able to read and understand the history of the Maya as written by them. This has brought considerable new knowledge about their civilization.

At the 2006 hieroglyphic workshop at the University of Texas—Austin, new understanding and information were presented and discussed about the Maya God identified as God GI (G-one) because epigraphers do not yet know his name (Stuart 2005 & 2006). The hieroglyphs, carved by the Maya three to four hundred years after the end of the Nephites/Book of Mormon history, still show remarkable consistency with the description of Christ as portrayed

in The Book of Mormon engraved on metal plates three or four hundred years earlier. See the chart below for a comparison between the testimony of Jesus Christ in the New World and the Maya God GI.

Comparison of Attributes of Jesus Christ and Maya G		Jesus Christ and Maya God GI
	Jesus Christ	Maya God GI
	Abode is in heaven	Abode is in heaven
	Existed before his birth on Earth	Existed before birth
	Both Father and Son	Both father and son
	Creator with God	Co-creator
	He taught baptism of water and the Spirit	Associated with water and wind
	He was the great and last sacrifice	Associated with a sacrificial event
	He rose from the dead (resurrected)	Resurrected
	He descended from the sky to the people in The Book of Mormon	Descended from sky

THE HEARTLAND THEORY AND GEOGRAPHY OF THE BOOK OF MORMON

Thus far in this series we have focused on providing a solid basis for correlating Book of Mormon requirements in a Mesoamerican setting. The evidences from Mesoamerica also strongly confirm the pioneering work of Louis E. Hills in identifying the narrow neck of land as the Isthmus of Tehuantepec which divided the land southward from the land northward (Hills 1917; Scott 2011) and thus Mesoamerica as the place The Book of Mormon events unfolded. Since its inception in 1994, *glyph notes* has presented innumerable articles validating the truth of The Book of Mormon through the growing abundance of archaeological, linguistic, and cultural evidences. Here we have selected only a few, yet significant, points to reinforce the correctness of this correlation.

You will see in the next article of this series that the U.S./ Heartland theory opposes this correlation. Shirley Heater will continue by introducing some of the foundational points on which the Heartland theory is based. She will also clarify why this theory, in their rejection of Mesoamerica in general and specifically in their alternate identification of the narrow neck of land, location of Cumorah, the narrow strip of wilderness, and the River Sidon, falls short of the truths in The Book of Mormon.

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Answers to Beezrom's Crossword



Dear Friends,

Thank you for your ongoing support and commitment to helping PSI provide current information and evidence from archaeology and related areas that witness of the truth of The Book of Mormon. Your contributions have made this a rich endeavor. So much new information pertinent to The Book of Mormon has come forth in the last 20 years.

We have been publishing glyph notes since 1994, and if we are to continue publishing the good news, we need your donations. About 97% of the funds contributed go toward publishing glyph notes. All of us working with PSI are volunteers who strive to provide you with current information. Much has been accomplished this way. Our research activities—classes, seminars, workshops, as well as subscriptions to magazines and reports and purchase of new archaeology books—all have been paid with our personal funds, not PSI funds.

We invite you to join with us and help us continue this good work by making a contribution to PSI to help spread the word about the truth of The Book of Mormon. Your assistance will be greatly appreciated.

May God bless and thank you!

Lyle Smith, President, Pre-Columbian Studies Institute

NOTICE: We have had a 501c3 tax status since 1994. Laws changed that we were unaware of, and therefore we may not be able to give a 501c3 tax receipt for the year 2011. We are working to correct this situation.

By Sherrie Kline Smith

Tombs at Nakum

National Geographic News (September 22, 2011) and the journal Antiquity (September issue) reported on the discovery of a Maya royal crypt at Nakum, Guatemala.



Two burials of rulers were found, one may have been a woman. The upper burial dated to 700 A.D. and the other, which was underneath, was 2,000 years old. The skull of the older one had been placed in a beautiful bowl adorned with the scroll wing motif, a symbol of the feathered serpent. Nakum was densely populated during the times of The Book of Mormon and is part of what archaeologists call

the Cultural Triangle with Yaxha and Naranjo. Nakum, on the banks of the Holmul River, is approximately 15 miles east of Tikal. National Geographic News has photos. http://news.nationalgeographic.com/news/2011/09/ pictures/110922-rare-mayan-female-ruler-tomb-foundguatemala/?now=2011-09-22-00:01

New Defensive Wall

Archaeology, September/October 2011

Archaeologists have known for many years that many Maya cities were fortified



ARCHAEOLOGY

with defensive walls. In the past few years, though, archaeologist Charles Golden and his team have discovered a series of stone defensive walls between the sites of Yaxchilan and Piedras Negras indicating that Yaxchilan was defending its "kingdom" from Piedras Negras. Near the newly discovered walls are small settlements believed to have been occupied by warriors sent to protect the border. While these particular walls date after the end of The Book of Mormon, it shows the Maya/Lamanites continued a practice instituted by Chief Captain Moroni around 72 B.C. (Alma 21:129, 150, 164) [48:8; 49:2, 13]. http://www. archaeology.org/1109/features/maya_warfare_yaxchilan_ piedras negras.html

Dead Sea Scrolls Online

BBC News, September 26, 2011

The Israel Museum in Jerusalem in partnership with Google has digitized five of the Cont. on Page 8

GLYPH Luote By Clyde Noren

People of today associate the advent of the New Year with the making of new resolutions for changes in their life. Some resolutions may be trite while others may be of a serious nature. Many resolutions end up in humanity's great scrap pile of "good intentions."

Observing an individual's reverting to a selfish life style, continuously pursuing activities of momentary pleasure, neglecting things which have a lasting value, illustrates good intentions gone astray.

We fail to realize how short our life span is compared to eternity. This is pointed out in 2 Peter 3:8, "One day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day." The "three score and ten years" of life expectancy as recorded in Psalms 90:10 shows how infinitesimal our lifetime is. Expressed mathematically, God views our life as a panoramic video lasting one hundred minutes of time! God's purpose in granting us a period of time in this earthly life is expressed in modern revelation as "This is my work and my glory to bring to pass the immortality and eternal life of man" (D&C 22:23b).

The time we are allotted on Earth becomes a window of opportunity for us to work toward our salvation as *Be wise in the days of your probation...*

-Mormon 4:94 [9:28]

promised by Jesus. Our time on earth then becomes one of probation. Moroni, one of God's servants, counseled, "Be wise in the days of your probation" (Mormon 4:94 [9:28]).

In his autobiography Sent Forth to Witness, Brother Z. Z. Renfroe relates a window of opportunity opened only after he overcame smoking and playing semi-pro baseball on Sundays. After making these necessary changes in his life, he was able to make the pledge, "Lord, if there is anything I can do for you, you can count on me." The Lord did count on him and his faithfulness because Brother Renfroe labored for the Lord in the mission field for 49 years.

The ultimate purpose for living is stated very clearly in Alma 16:230.

For after this day of life, which is given us to prepare for eternity, behold, if we do not improve our time while in this life, then cometh the night of darkness wherein there can be no labor performed.

At the beginning of this new year of 2012, it is time for us to transcend good intentions and choose worthwhile activities that will prepare us to meet God who grants salvation for eternity.

Hi guys!
So much has happened since I
last talked with you! We have been working
hard to continue to follow the Lord's direction and
make a home for ourselves here. We want to raise
our children in peace and teach them the
ways of the Lord.

The Adventures of Beezrom

by Mindy Mulheron

llustration by Aaron Presler

Laman and Lemuel and their friends are far away now, and we rarely see them. It has been hard, because we miss them and wish they would want to live more righteously, but all of us have been given our agency – the right to choose how we want to live and act. We continue to pray for them, because Jesus tells us that we should pray for our friends and family – and even our enemies! (And sometimes, they are our enemies. Sometimes they try to hurt us!) It is our hope that someday we will all reunite and serve God together. We just have to keep trusting in God. He knows best.

After we had been in the Promised Land for a time, nearly 400 years, we met a new group of people. They called themselves the "People of Zarahemla." We became good friends with them, and learned a lot of cool things from them. Like that there was a group of people here way before us! Isn't that neat? They were called the "Jaredites." I don't know all the details yet, but I'm looking forward to hearing all about those people!

I was thinking the other day about what I could tell you that would be really cool, besides updating you on what's been happening here, and I think I'd like to share a few of my favorite scriptures with you... These scriptures mean a lot to me and I hope they will help you like they help me.

The first one is from Jacob 3:9-10 [4:8]. It says. "Behold. great and marvelous are the works of the Lord. How unsearchable are the depths of the mysteries of him: and it is impossible that man should find out all his ways." Isn't that amazing?! How great is our God! He always knows what's going on and what's going to happen and we just have to trust Him. He loves us. He wants good things for us. We can depend on Him.

The second one is from Enos 1:24 [1:15]. "Whatsoever thing ye shall ask in faith, believing that ye shall receive in the name of Christ, ye shall receive it." Isn't that so cool?! God says that if we ask Him something, and listen for an answer. He'll speak to us! It might not always be the answer we want, like I may not have a huge beehive palace show up one morning just for me, but He will always respond and take care of my needs. (I guess a one room beehive is sufficient for a single bee. ③)

And this last one is from Omni 1: 46-47 [1:6]. "And now, my beloved brethren, I would that ye

Glyph Dwellers

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

should come unto Christ, who is the Holy One of Israel, and partake of his salvation, and the power of his redemption. Yea, come unto him, and offer your whole souls as an offering unto him, and continue in fasting and praying, and endure to the end; and as the Lord liveth, ye will be saved." What a promise! Continue to pray

and try your best to live righteously my friends, and you will be blessed!

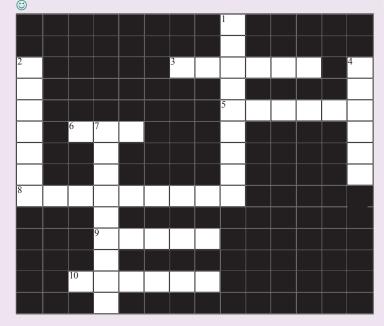
Well. I better get back to my friends. Maybe I'll find out some more about those Jaredites. See ya next time!

Scriptural reference: 2 Nephi 13-15 [31-33] and the books of Jacob. Enos. Jarom. and Omni.

Beezrom's Crossword!

by Beezrom

See if you can solve the puzzle using the things I told you in my report! Good luck! (Answers on Page 5)



ACROSS

- 3. Come unto _____ who is the Holy One of Israel.
- 5. We can _____ on Him! (Don't go it alone!)
- 6. If you _____ in faith, you shall receive it.
- 8. Great and _____ are the works of the Lord!
- 9. We have to Him! (The opposite of doubt!)
- 10. _____ the Lord's direction! (The opposite of ignore!)

DOWN

- An ancient people we found out about from the People of Zarahemla.
- 2. This bee is your number one news source for all things Nephite!
- 4. This word means to keep fighting unto the end.
- 7. God wants you to partake of His _____.
 (Jesus died so that you would have it!)

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GLYPH Notes PRE-COLUMBIAN STUDIES INSTITUTE NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 2011 VOLUME 18 NUMBER 6

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Dead Sea Scrolls.

- The Temple Scroll lays out plans for the construction and operation of the Temple.
- The War Scroll, one of the first scrolls to be found, outlines an end of days time where the archangel Michael leads the "Sons of Light" against the "Sons of Darkness."
- The Community Rule Scroll, also known as the manual of discipline, outlines a comprehensive guide for the "community," whose identity remains uncertain, although is believed to be the Jewish sect the Essenes.
- The Great Isaiah Scroll, the best preserved of all the biblical scrolls, is a Hebrew version of the book of Isaiah.
- The Commentary of Habakkuk Scroll interprets the first two chapters of the book of Habakkuk. http://dss.collections.imj.org.il/

Toucan Trademark Dispute Settled

Detroit Free Press, November 15, 2011

Kellogg's sued the Maya Archaeological Initiative of San Fransciso (http://mayaarchaeology.org/) for infringing on their Fruit Loops cereal trademark Toucan Sam mascot. In November the suit was settled amicably with Kellogg's

donating a \$100,000 to "help launch one of the MAI's priority projects to improve the lives of the Maya people in C e n t r a l America."



"Kellogg's important contribution to the Maya Archaeology Initiative will help us achieve our goal of building a Maya Cultural Center in Peten (Guatemala), the cradle of Maya history, so children, families and visitors can learn about the Maya and their rich heritage," said MAI President Dr. Francisco Estrada-Belli. Kellogg's is also going to feature major Maya accomplishments and a link to MAI's website on Kellogg's Froot Loops cereal boxes next year. http://www.freep.com/article/20111115/BUSINESS06/111115060/Kellogg-s-Toucan-Samtrademark-dispute-ends-charitable-partnership