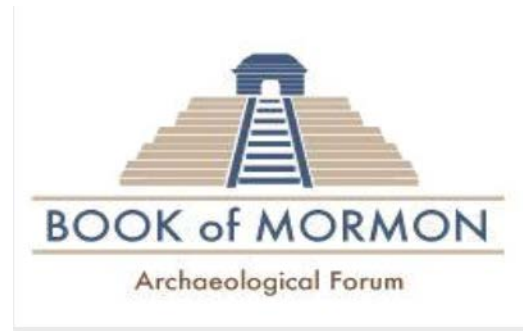




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Joshua Near the Pacific, the Final Key in 'Deciphering the Geography of the Book of Mormon'

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Abstract: It has become evident that there are at least 14 key concepts contained in the Book of Mormon that together give a clear map of the principle locations of where the main events took place. This article will begin with a summary of thirteen of these key concepts and related locations. The fourteenth key, dealing with the location and importance of Joshua, will be the focus of the balance of this article.



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Joshua Near the Pacific, the Final Key in 'Deciphering the Geography of the Book of Mormon'

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These past 8 years I have been engaged in an intensive study of the many theories of the geography of the Book of Mormon. My articles have attempted to show many of the erroneous assumptions, conclusions, misstatements or non-statements, and even omissions contained in many of the relevant books and articles. It soon appeared that the most consistent, logical, and accurate book and theory, that satisfied most of the requirements of the geography of the Nephites, as stated in the Book of Mormon, is the book written by Dr. F. Richard Hauck, *Deciphering the Geography of the Book of Mormon*. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Company. 1988. Print, hereafter referred to as *Deciphering*.

Thereafter, a concerted effort was made to independently confirm or refute each location proposed in *Deciphering*, by principally applying the precise wording of the Book of Mormon and by not making inappropriate assumptions. Most of Hauck's proposed locations in Guatemala and Mexico have been visited and studied by the author. It has been confirmed, to the satisfaction of this author, that Dr. Hauck still has the most accurate and complete understanding of the geography of the Nephites of anyone. It is probable that he is the first person to identify that the land of Joshua was in fact located near the Pacific, near Izapa, and that this concept is critical to the understanding of the overall geography of the Book of Mormon. It is believed that Dr. Richard Hauck agrees with the following concepts and proposed locations because most of them are indicated in his book. The main exception is that we both now believe—with substantial evidence to support it—that the city/land of Nephi should be Salama, Guatemala, instead of Mixco Viejo or Kaminaljuyu (Guatemala City).

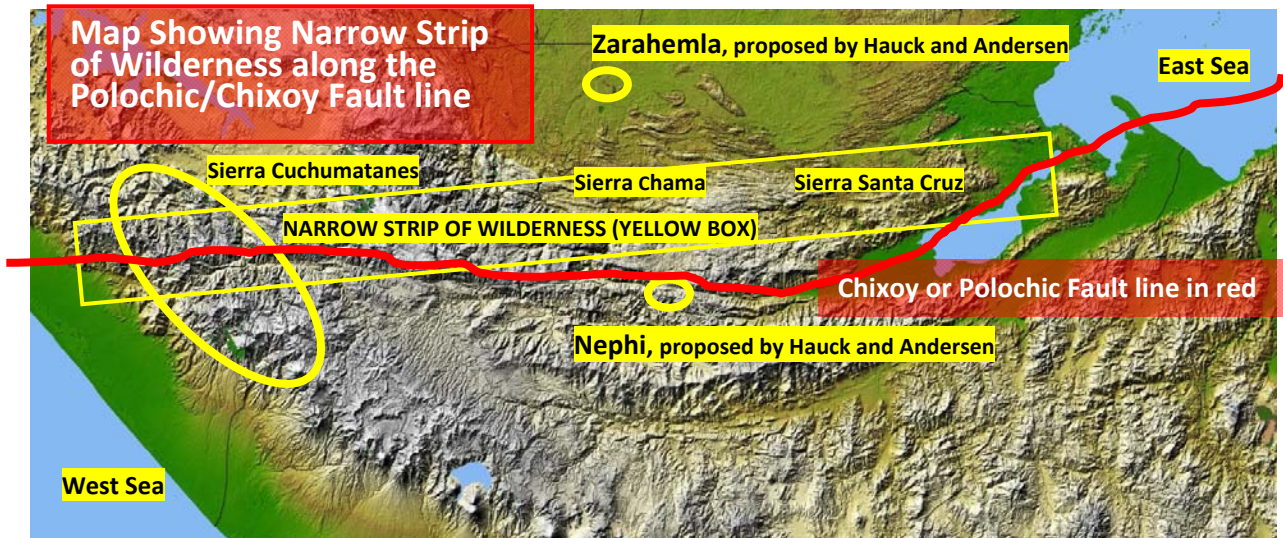
During this study it became evident that there are at least 14 key concepts contained in the Book of Mormon that together give a clear map of the principle locations of where the main events took place. This article will begin with a summary of thirteen of these key concepts and related locations. The fourteenth key, dealing with the location and importance of Joshua, will be the focus of the balance of this article. All Book of Mormon scripture will be italicized and all emphasis by bolding is the author's.

Summary of the First Thirteen Key Concepts and Proposed Locations

1. The First Key—The narrow strip of wilderness was a series of mountains that extended from the east sea (Gulf of Honduras) to the west sea (Pacific Ocean) that included the Cuchumatanes, The Chama, and the Santa Cruz chain of mountains located in Guatemala.

The land of Zarahemla was located on the north of, and the land of Nephi was located on the south of this narrow mountainous wilderness.¹ The river Sidon began up in these mountains and flowed northward down past Manti, then continued northward down between Gideon on the east and Minon on the west of the river Sidon— Gideon and Minon could not have been more than half a night's march apart (See Alma 2:22-23).² Sidon then flowed down northward past Zarahemla— located west of the river. Surrounding this mountainous narrow strip of wilderness were many

cities where a written language was used before and after the time of Christ. This Chain of mountains follows the Chixoy Fault (also known as the Polochic Fault) from the Pacific Ocean to the Gulf of Honduras (see map below).



2. The Second Key— The city/land of Nephi was located within eyesight of, within a very few miles of, and just south of the narrow strip of wilderness.

Therefore, the city of Nephi could not have been located in Kaminaljuyu—Guatemala City—, which is located much too far—about 60 air miles— from the narrow strip of wilderness. The city of Nephi was also located at a higher elevation than Zarahemla. The valley of Salama satisfies more than 30 criteria required by the Book of Mormon.³ No other proposed location even comes close. There are a multitude of reasons why Kaminaljuyu (Guatemala City) could not have been the city of Nephi. As one example, no part of the Chuacus Mountains, as shown by Magleby on his maps,⁴ meets the requirements of the hill north of Shilom.⁵ There is no hill north of Guatemala City that can qualify. (Also see Appendix “A” at Footnote No. 52 for a summary of six of these criteria proving that Kaminaljuyu could not have been the city/land of Nephi).

3. The Third Key—The city/land of Zarahemla was located just north of the narrow strip of wilderness and in BC 124 the maximum size of the city and the Land of Zarahemla could not have been greater than about the size of the Salt Lake Valley.⁶

*Mosiah¹ stated: My son, I would that ye should make a proclamation **throughout all this land** among all . . . the people of Zarahemla, and the people of Mosiah who dwell in the land [of Zarahemla], that thereby they may be gathered together; **for on the morrow** I shall proclaim unto this my people out of mine own mouth that thou art a king and a ruler over this people, whom the Lord our God hath given us. . . (Mossian1:10) And they also took of the firstlings of their flocks, that they might offer sacrifice and burnt offerings according to the law of Moses; . . .when they came up to the temple, they pitched their tents round about, every man according to his family, consisting of his wife, and his sons, and his daughters,*

and their sons, and their daughters, from the eldest down to the youngest, every family being separate one from another. (Mosiah 2:1–5)

The significant point here is that all the Nephites and all the people of Zarahemla had not more than one day to assemble to the temple in the city of Zarahemla with their families, tents, and sacrificial animals in tow. Thus, the size of the city and the land of Zarahemla about the year 124 BC was about a radius of ten to twelve miles from the temple at Zarahemla. Perhaps that area was comparable to the size of the Salt Lake Valley from North Salt Lake to Draper and from Magna to Mount Olympus.

4. The fourth Key—There were no Nephite settlements northward of the east-sea city Bountiful.⁷

*Helaman's sons "Teach the word of God among **all the people of Nephi**, beginning at the city Bountiful... And from thenceforth [southward] to the city of Gid; and...to the city of what Mulek...even from one city to another, until they had gone forth among **all the people of Nephi who were in the land southward.**" (Helaman 5:14–16)*

Therefore, it is reasonable to conclude that no Nephite lived north of the city Bountiful because Helaman's sons did not go north of the city Bountiful. There is no evidence in the Book of Mormon that the "Lamanites" ever conquered the east-sea city Bountiful—prior to 35 BC— or succeeded in traveling north there from. After ca. 35 BC the Lamanites conquered all of the land southward. There is no support in the Book of Mormon for the proposition that the Nephites ever lived in (let alone controlled) northern Peten, northern Belize, or the Yucatan, which were all located northward from the east-sea city Bountiful. Moroni and the Nephites did not have the military capacity to have taken on the million plus Maya in the El Mirador basin area or in the Lamanai area in Belize. Both these areas were established about 1500 BC and were continuously occupied by the Maya until after AD 150 (See endnote 19). In about the year 67 BC, the entire Nephite nation was in a most "*precarious and dangerous*" situation when the dissident Amalickiah conquered all of the east-sea cities except city Bountiful and then his brother Ammaron tried to conquer the Nephite west-sea cities.⁸ About 67 BC Moroni had stretched his armies to the maximum and he almost lost the line of defense (narrow strip of wilderness). Therefore, it would have been impossible for Moroni, or his son Moronihah, to have conquered, occupied, converted or controlled the Yucatan, Campeche, Palenque, La Venta, Coatzacoalcos and the northern half of the Isthmus of Tehuantepec, as claimed by some scholars.

5. The Fifth Key— The closely associated east-sea cities were important defensive locations for only about 40 years, until ca. 29 BC.

The east-sea cities, including the city Bountiful, did not exist until about 72 BC. They were all built new as defensive cities to help keep all of the Lamanites (who had been chased out of the east sea wilderness) in their own lands south of the narrow strip of wilderness— aka "*line of possessions of the Lamanites*"— which wilderness ended near the Gulf of Honduras. These military/defensive cities would have been useless if located more than about 4 or 5 miles apart from each other or in total about 30 miles or so northward from where the extension of the narrow strip of wilderness intersected with the east sea (Gulf of Honduras). This is where most scholars

place the city of Moroni. Therefore, they could not have been located in such remote areas as the Yucatan or in northern Belize.⁹ These east-sea cities were not a significant factor in the geography of the Nephites after about 29 BC. After about 40 years (29 BC), when the Lamanites were more righteous than the Nephites, there was no longer a military need for those defensive cities because there was free intercourse between the Nephites and Lamanites living north and south of the narrow strip of wilderness (Helaman 6:1-9).¹⁰ After 16 BC, nothing more is ever mentioned about any city east of the river Sidon. The only exceptions are (1) at Christ's crucifixion when the Lord stated that the city Moroni was sunk into the depths of the east sea, and (2) in 6 BC where it says "*...wo be unto the city of Gideon, for the wickedness and abominations which are in her...and unto all the cities...round about, which are possessed by the Nephites, because of the wickedness and abominations which are in them* (Hel. 13:15-16)." It is therefore proposed that after 6 BC, the wickedness and abominations of the Nephites in all the cities east of the Sidon, including east-sea city Bountiful, were so great that nothing more of these cities is ever mentioned again in the Book of Mormon.

6. The Sixth Key—There are three separate and relatively small lands Bountiful described in the Book of Mormon.¹¹

These are the Arabian Land Bountiful; The east-sea city/land Bountiful (a part of the land southward); and the west-sea land Bountiful (a separate part of the land southward). The term "Bountiful" or "land Bountiful" is never used to mean the same thing as the greater land of the Nephites/Lamanites, also known as the land southward. These two areas called Bountiful were not directly connected. In fact, they were located over 250 air miles apart and separated by rugged mountainous terrain and three large rivers, the Passion, the Usumacinta, and the Grijalva. The east-sea city/land Bountiful was the northeastern most military location that was occupied by the Nephites and it diminished in importance after 29 BC. The west-sea land Bountiful was the northwestern most location of the Nephites (before about 65 BC) which ended at the "line" between Desolation and Bountiful.¹² Most of this west-sea land Bountiful area (the pacific corridor) was continuously occupied by the Nephites and gained in importance throughout most of the history of the Nephites. This is part of the same area described by Ted Stoddard as the "only reasonable route" from the Guatemala City area to the Gulf of Mexico (see footnote no. 31).

7. The Seventh Key—Until about AD 34, almost all of the activity of the Nephites, as discussed in the Book of Mormon, occurred in the land southward of the "line" between Desolation and Bountiful and in the areas immediately to the north and south of, and including within, the narrow strip of wilderness.

The only time a Nephite prophet lived in the Jaredite land northward (until after Christ's crucifixion) was when Nephi served a most unsuccessful mission there from about 29 BC to about 23 BC, after which he returned because they "*did reject all his words insomuch that he could not stay among them but returned again to the land of his nativity* (Helaman 7:3)." Except for the book of Ether, very little is discussed about the Jaredite land northward until about AD 345.¹³ Therefore, because the Gadianton robbers are described in great detail in the Book of Mormon from Helaman through Third Nephi, then it can be assumed that they were not located in the Jaredite land northward or in the Peten/Belize (lowland Maya) area.¹⁴ They were centralized in the narrow strip of mountainous wilderness area from where they adversely impacted both the

Nephites and the Lamanites in the lands just north and just south of the narrow strip of wilderness.¹⁵

8. The Eighth Key—The “line” between Bountiful and Desolation began on the west-sea (the Pacific) as did the west-sea land Bountiful and as did the land and the city Desolation.

The length of this “line” was a day to a day and a half distance and extended in an eastward direction from the west sea. No part of the land southward could have been located in that part of the Jaredite land northward that was north of the “line.” This line extended from the Pacific Ocean eastward to the Sierra Madre Mountains, about 12 to 20 miles.¹⁶ Therefore, the continental divide could not have been the location of the “line” between Bountiful and Desolation because (1) the continental divide does not begin on the west sea, (2) it is certainly much longer than 15 miles, and (3) it does not run in an east to west direction from the west sea. There is a late Preclassic man-made defensive wall spanning the narrow pass at or near Horcones (about 10 miles southeast of Tonalá, Mexico) that was probably part of the strategic 'line' of division and of defense. No part of the Isthmus of Tehuantepec could have been part of the land southward because all of it is located northward of the 'line.' The location of this 'line' is very important in understanding the geography of the Book of Mormon because so many events occurred near there.¹⁷

9. The Ninth Key—At the time of Christ’s crucifixion, the greatest damage occurred in the land of Zarahemla north of but near the narrow strip of wilderness and not in the Jaredite land northward:¹⁸

In fact, the Jaredite land northward (including all of the Isthmus of Tehuantepec) suffered little damage if any. There are no witnesses within the Book of Mormon as to any earthquake activity in the Jaredite land northward at the time of Christ’s crucifixion (See also appendix B at footnote No. 53). Nor are there any witnesses within the Book of Mormon of the two days without a night at His birth or of the three days of darkness at the time of His crucifixion having been witnessed in the Jaredite land northward. King Jacob’s flight from the city/land of Zarahemla to the “*northernmost part of the land*” in the end year AD 30 is not evidence of any activity in the Jaredite land northward. His flight was not to the Jaredite land northward but he relocated to the northernmost part of the land southward, close enough so that he could have awaited and attracted more defectors and then have tried to retake Zarahemla. His great city only lasted a little over 2 years until the first part of the year AD 33. This could not have happened, for example, from Teotihuacan some 500 air miles northward—and at an elevation of over 7000 Ft.—from the city of Zarahemla.¹⁹ Clearly the land of Nephi—in the land south of the narrow strip of wilderness, where the more righteous Lamanites were living at the time of Christ's crucifixion,—suffered less damage than the Nephites in the land of Zarahemla located in the land north of the narrow strip of wilderness:²⁰

“...there was a great and terrible destruction in the land southward [of the narrow strip wilderness]. But behold, there was a more great and terrible destruction in the land northward [of the narrow strip of wilderness]; for behold, the whole face of the land [north of the narrow strip of wilderness] was changed. (3 Nephi 8:11-12)

The greatest damage was described by the Lord citing the burning of the city of Zarahemla, the east sea swallowing up Moroni, and a great mountain covering up Moronihah. None of these cities

were located in the Jaredite land northward and therefore, the terms land north/northward and land south/southward in this scripture must reference the narrow strip of wilderness and not to the ubiquitous "narrow neck of land."

10. The Tenth Key—Christ came to His temple located in the west-sea land Bountiful and to the righteous survivors of the Nephites and Lamanites who had been living north and south of the narrow strip of wilderness.

The Nephites living in the Jaredite land northward were so unrighteous that they did not have the privilege of being involved in this initial event.²¹ The location of this event was most likely at the temple complex at Izapa. Christ did not initially appear in Belize or the east-sea city Bountiful. The Book of Mormon never states that there was a temple built there. City Bountiful was the north easternmost Nephite city/land—military outpost— located on the east-sea coast. There is no evidence that it continued to exist much after about 29 BC. Why would there have been a temple built in the most remote of the cities of the Nephites? This was a defensive military city, not a religious center. Remember that Nephi, the son of Helaman, began his missionary journey at city Bountiful in the year 30 BC and then proceeded from city to city southward (Helaman 5:14-16). Because verse 14 says that Nephi preached to “**all the people of Nephi**” and because he started at city Bountiful and traveled southwestward from there toward Zarahemla, then **there were clearly no Nephites living north of city Bountiful**. The prophet Nephi never lived there. Therefore, the headquarters of the church was never located at the remote east-sea military-outpost city Bountiful (See endnote No. 5). Surely Christ would have come to where his prophet was living at the temple located at the west-sea land bountiful at or near Izapa where the tree of life monument was located.

11. The Eleventh Key—The only reasonable route between Central Guatemala and the Isthmus of Tehuantepec was the pacific coastal route.

Since the Nephite-described land Desolation was part of the Jaredite land northward (and it began on the west sea); and since the west-sea land Bountiful was part of the land southward (and it also began at the same spot on the west sea); and since there was a 'line' between them that ran in an easterly direction from the west sea about 12 miles or so, then that 'line' between them must have been located within the "*small neck of land*" that divided the Jaredite land northward from the Nephite/Lamanite land southward as described in *Deciphering* at page 145-147. This 'line' must have been the gateway that connected the "narrow neck/narrow pass" leading by the west sea into the Jaredite land northward with the narrow pass/passage that led by the west sea into the greater land southward. Ted Stoddard identified this west sea corridor as the main commercial and “only reasonable” passageway from the narrow strip of wilderness area to the Jaredite land northward (see endnote No. 39). Hauck agrees with Stoddard on this point and first identified the fact that the only reasonable route from Guatemala to the Isthmus of Tehuantepec during Book of Mormon time periods was through the Pacific corridor (*Deciphering* at pages 12 & 32) entering into the Jaredite land northward via Desolation at the “gateway” located at the “line” which is believed to be the manmade Preclassic wall located near Horcones, Mexico.²²

12. The Twelfth Key—The “line” between Desolation and Bountiful was the same as the “treaty line” of AD 350.^{23, 24} (see proposed map at endnote 16).

This treaty line was located near Horcones, Mexico. The city/lands of Desolation and Teancum were also located near thereto but north of the 'line' and right on the west sea coast. This was the area where the dead bodies of the Lamanites were tossed into the west sea, AD 362.²⁵ They could not have been tossed into the Gulf of Mexico, located some 30 miles away from the area of San Lorenzo, proposed by some to be the city of Desolation. This "line" is not only the same area as the treaty line of AD 350 and the line between Bountiful and Desolation but it is also the area to where Lachoneus retreated in AD 18; where Teancum intercepted and killed Morianton; where Moroni's son, Moronihah, took refuge when he was evicted from the entire land southward in the year 35 BC by the Lamanites; near where Hagoth launched his ships into the west sea in the year 55 BC; and the area where Mormon was able to repel the Lamanite/Gadianton Robbers at least 4 times at city Desolation, located just north of the "line," during the years AD 361 to 375.

13. The Thirteenth Key—The term “*narrow neck of land*” could not have been the Isthmus of Tehuantepec.²⁶

This term is mentioned only one time and it is not associated with the east sea or the north sea. This scripture is identifying the location of the city of "Lib" at the entryway into the land southward.

And they built a great city by [not in] the narrow neck of land [that led by the west sea into the land southward], by [not in] the place where the sea divides the land.... And they did preserve the land southward [that began at the 'line' that started on the west sea] for a wilderness to get game. And the whole face of the land northward [that began at the same 'line' that started on the west sea] was covered with inhabitants. (Ether 10:20–21)²⁷

The only other similar term, “[Hagoth]...launched it forth into the west sea, by [not in] the narrow neck which led [by the west sea] into the land northward,” is also only associated with the west sea where Hagoth launched his ships (Alma 63:5). Therefore, the terms “narrow neck of land” and “narrow neck” must be associated only with the west sea. Therefore, the term “*by the place where the sea divides the land*” must also be associated only with the west sea or perhaps the Jaredite south sea, the Pacific, as claimed by Hauck.²⁸ If one could possibly claim that the Gulf of Mexico is the sea that divides the land,²⁹ then, *a forciori*, the Gulf of Tehuantepec would be the more likely location because it is more narrow and could more likely be viewed as the place where the sea divides the land. In fact, however, the “*place where the sea divides the land*” is not a gulf at all but it is located in the south part of the Isthmus of Tehuantepec where there are many sea-level lagoons and estuaries³⁰ (another land of many waters and the more probable land of many waters that the scouts of Limhi first discovered).³¹ To the best of my knowledge, this was first identified by Richard Hauck shortly after publishing his book, *Deciphering*, and confirmed to me in personal conversations.³²

14. The Fourteenth and Final Key—Where was Joshua located?

If Joshua was located near the west sea coast and if the west sea was the Pacific Ocean, then, according to the Book of Mormon, the cities of Desolation, Teancum, and Boaz would have to have been located near the Gulf of Tehuantepec, just northerly of the “line” between Desolation and Bountiful.³³ The sea that divided the land would then have to have been the Nephite west sea, also known as the Jaredite south sea (the Pacific). The location of hill Shim and of Jashon/Jordan

would then have to have been located northward from those cities near the Chivela Pass within the Isthmus and not near the Gulf of Mexico. It then follows that the city Shem would have to have been located “**northward**” from the Chivela pass toward the Gulf of Mexico right in the middle of the Jaredite land northward (Olmec Heartland) where the Nephites in the year AD 346 (Mormon 2:22-27) had sufficient resources (30,000) to repel the Lamanite army (50,000) and chase it all the way back to Joshua/Izapa. Therefore, the following is the critical and final question, and the answer to it is the final key, that puts the overall geography of the Nephites into perspective and into its correct geographical context.

Was the City/land of Joshua Located Near the Pacific? Yes.

There is only one scripture that names the land of Joshua ca. AD 328:

And we marched forth [from Zarahemla, then Angola and then from David] and came to the land of Joshua, which was in the borders west by the seashore (Mormon 2:6).

The land of Joshua was located by a seashore. That seashore was located west from where? The sixteen-year old General Mormon and his Nephite people were fleeing from the Lamanite armies, for the last time from the city/land of Zarahemla. Mormon 2:3 states that “*they began to retreat towards the north countries.*” Since the “north countries” is the same as the Jaredite land northward, then they must have been traveling their normal route toward the Jaredite land northward which was the pacific coastal route. Therefore, they went west from Zarahemla to Joshua located near the west seashore and then north “*towards the north countries* [the Jaredite land northward].” This was the normal and “only reasonable” route into the Jaredite land northward.

This march began about the year AD 327 when the Lamanites chased all of the Nephites out of the city of Zarahemla for the last time. There can be no doubt that the land of Joshua was located by “a” west sea. Garth Norman places it near Tonalá (north of the “line”) close to the Pacific Ocean and near the Gulf of Tehuantepec.³⁴ Richard Hauck places it at or near Izapa near the Pacific Coast.³⁵ ³⁶ The Allens and Magleby have placed Joshua within a radius of about 30 miles of the Gulf of Mexico along with Teancum, hill Shim, Jashon, Shem, Boaz and city Desolation.³⁷

In *Exploring*, the Allens mistakenly state that the cities of Joshua, Angola, and David were identified after the AD 350 treaty³⁸ and that is the basis for claiming that they were located near the Gulf of Mexico. The Book of Mormon identifies these cities in the year AD 327 (Mormon 2:3) about 15 years **before** the Nephites were chased out of the land southward. *Exploring* is clearly mistaken because Angola, David, and Joshua were located in the land of Zarahemla south of the “line” between Desolation and Bountiful (See endnote 17).

Magleby disagrees with Norman on this issue and places Joshua near the Gulf of Mexico about where La Venta is located.³⁹

In order to justify the placement of these cities near the Gulf of Mexico, it is believed that the Allens had to find another west sea. They did that by assuming that the Gulf of Mexico formed the “*place where the sea divides the land*”⁴⁰ and therefore, to the people living on the west side of the

Gulf, it was the east sea; And to those living on the east side of the Gulf of Mexico (the Yucatan Peninsula) it was the west sea. Therefore, according to the Allens, when Morianton fled west toward the Jaredite land northward, he would have traveled through the El Mirador complex ⁴¹ (see map on page 622 of *Exploring*) which was populated by millions of Maya people. Then Morianton would have crossed the huge Usumacinta River passing through the impassable territory (according to Ted Stoddard);⁴² then across the then separate Grijalva River to the “sea that was west” of the Yucatan Peninsula; then crossed the huge Coatzacoalcos river to the Isthmus of Tehuantepec. There he would have stopped near San Lorenzo (city Desolation) located about 30 miles inland from the Gulf of Mexico (within the Jaredite land northward and west of the Coatzacoalcos River).⁴³ This is just an impossible scenario and violates what the Book of Mormon requires. According to the Book of Mormon, Morianton was stopped by Teancum just before he got into the land Desolation which was located near the west sea.

Morianton was stopped by the west sea just south of the “line” between Bountiful and Desolation.

*Therefore Moroni sent an army with their camp, to head the people of Morianton, to **stop their flight** into the land northward ...they did not head them until they had come to [not in] the borders of the land Desolation: and there they did head them, by [near but not in] the **narrow pass which led by the [west] sea into the land northward, yea, by the sea on the west.** (Alma 50: 33-35)*

Nowhere in the Book of Mormon does it associate the land Desolation with the east sea or the north sea. The only sea ever directly associated with the land or the city Desolation is the west sea. If the “*sea on the west*” was the same as the Gulf of Mexico, then the bodies of the dead Lamanites would have to have been carried over 30 miles from San Lorenzo/Desolation to be dumped into the “*sea on the west*” being the Gulf of Mexico. The Book of Mormon does not support such a proposition. Also note that if Dzibanche was the city Bountiful and if they had traveled southward along the Gulf of Mexico (the Allens' sea on the west) then they would have been traveling southward to get to the land northward. How does that make any sense?

Moroni’s objective was to stop Morianton’s flight into the Jaredite land northward. They were successful and stopped them just before they got to the narrow pass that led by the west sea into the land Desolation, right at the “line.” Land Desolation began on the west sea. On the other hand, San Lorenzo was located in the middle of the Olmec heartland (within the Jaredite land northward) thirty miles from the Gulf Coast. Therefore, the San Lorenzo area as the city of Desolation cannot be correct.⁴⁴

Another question that must be asked is, where was the narrow pass located that bordered the Gulf of Mexico that also led by Allen's west sea in a **northward** direction into the Jaredite land northward as required by the Book of Mormon? It could only have been southward along the Gulf of Mexico and therefore the west sea of the Book of Mormon could not have been the Gulf of Mexico. ⁴⁵ If the Allens did not intend this meaning to include a second west sea, then city Desolation must be located near the Pacific where the only entrance to the Jaredite land northward is ever described in the Book of Mormon.

The Book of Mormon does not allow for two different west seas. The sea that was “*in the borders west [of Zarahemla] by the seashore*” must have been the same west sea that bordered the land Desolation where the narrow pass was located that “*led by the [west] sea into the land northward, yea by the sea on the west*”. This was the same sea that was west of the narrow strip of wilderness where Lehi landed. Therefore, Joshua must have been located near the Pacific coast.

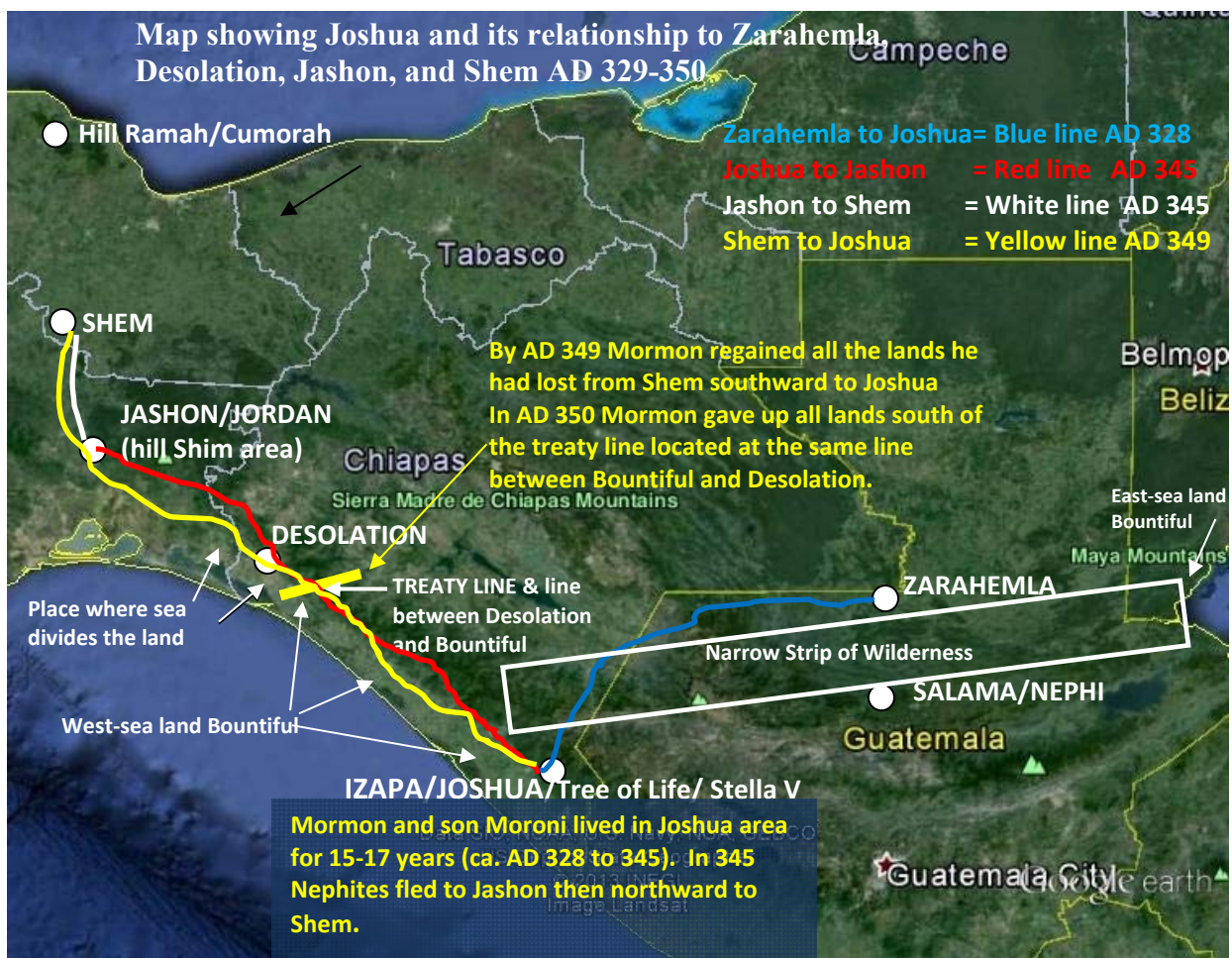
Why was Joshua being located in the Pacific corridor so important?

Joshua was very important in the lives of Mormon and Moroni. Mormon was carried by his father (following Stoddard’s pacific coastal route, “the only reasonable route”) from the Jaredite land northward to the city of Zarahemla at age 11 (AD 322). At age 15 he became general of the Nephite armies at the city of Zarahemla. When he was 16, the Nephites feared the Lamanite/Gadianton armies so much that they fled (with their families) to Angola where they set up defenses but did not prevail. They fled to David and then they fled west to Joshua located by the west sea where Mormon brought his people together and raised an army of 42,000. Mormon defeated the Lamanite/Gadianton army of 44,000 near Joshua at the end of the year AD 330. These events took place over a period of less than 3 years. The Lamanites and Robbers then controlled all of the land of Zarahemla, the narrow strip of wilderness, and the land of Nephi from the east sea to the west sea, **except** for Joshua and northward from Joshua (the west-sea land Bountiful/west sea corridor). Mormon resided in the area of Joshua for a total of about 17 years until AD 345. It was in the Joshua area that Moroni was reared and from where he was sent on his mission (Moroni 8:1), presumably to the Jaredite land northward, as there was no other place where the Nephites were then located except Joshua and northward along the Pacific Corridor into the Jaredite land northward.

Fifteen years later, in the year AD 345, the Lamanites gained the upper hand and sent the Nephites fleeing from Joshua northward “*even to the land of Jashon, before it was possible for Mormon to stop them in their retreat* (Mormon 2:16).” This Jashon/Jordan/hill Shim area ⁴⁶—located within the Jaredite land northward, and probably near the Chivela pass— is where they paused briefly while Mormon retrieved the plates of Nephi from the hill Shim, leaving the remainder of the records as instructed by Ammaron. Apparently he did not fear losing the remaining records at that time. Within that same year, AD 345, the Lamanites came again against the Nephites at Jashon/Jordan and they fled “***northward to the land which was called Shem***” where Mormon established a defense (Mormon 2:20).

The next year, AD 346, Mormon amassed an army of 30,000 at Shem and beat the Lamanite army of 50,000. Not only did he beat them but within three years Mormon **recovered all the lands they had lost, or**, in the words of the Book of Mormon, “***had again taken possession of the lands of our inheritance***” in the year AD 349 (Mormon 2:27). This must have included chasing the Lamanites **southward from Shem** back to Jashon/Jordan and then farther southward to the Nephite west sea—the then future city Desolation area— and then even farther southward at least to Joshua, located near the west sea coast. Notice that they did not go northward from Shem toward the Gulf of Mexico where *Exploring* places the cities of Jashon/Jordon and Desolation and the hill Shim all about 30 miles from the Gulf of Mexico.⁴⁷ Mormon chased the Lamanites southward from Shem, retaking all the lands they had lost, all the way southward to at least Joshua on the west sea coast near Izapa.

Because they had fled from (and had abandoned the cities of) Zarahemla, Angola, and David (all in the land southward) and because they had not been there for more than 18 years, then they probably did not count those cities as part of their inheritance any longer. Certainly the area of Joshua, which they had just recently lost, was recovered.⁴⁸ Mormon was residing at least in Joshua on the west sea coast at the time that he entered into the AD 350 treaty. If he had not been in possession of some of the land southward, then how could he have given up any land southward of the line between Desolation and Bountiful? If Joshua was located near the Gulf of Mexico, as claimed by the Allens and Magleby, then Mormon and his army would have been located in the Jaredite land northward and he could not have given up any of the land southward. This is another factor indicating that Joshua had to have been located south of the “line” between Desolation and Bountiful, and not near Tonala—as claimed by Garth Norman—which is located north of the “line.”



CONCLUSION

There can be no doubt that the cities of Angola, David and Joshua were located in the land southward, and therefore, could not have been located near the Coatzacoalcos River or the Gulf of Mexico. In the AD 350 treaty the Nephites gave up the areas of Joshua and the west-sea land Bountiful to the “line” between Bountiful and Desolation. It is also interesting to note that this area

of Joshua/Izapa is the southernmost boundary of the Epi-Olmec culture (which included the Nephites until ca. AD 350). This culture occupied all of the Isthmus of Tehuantepec and along the Pacific corridor to Izapa from about 100 BC to ca. AD 500.⁴⁹

Since Joshua was located near the Pacific south of the “line,” then city Desolation, Teancum, and Boaz and “*the place where the sea divides the land*” must have been located just north of the “line.” These locations bordered the Nephite west sea—the Jaredite south sea) located near the Gulf of Tehuantepec—and not at, or even near, the Gulf of Mexico.

The saga of the Nephites began on the west sea coast (The Pacific) west of the land of Nephi and just south of the narrow strip of wilderness somewhere near the area of Joshua/Izapa. This was their promised land where they landed. This was also part of the later-described west-sea land Bountiful which the Nephites had occupied from the west sea to the east (Sierra Madre Mountains). This was the same area which Moroni and Helaman and his 2000 warriors so valiantly defended, “*the west sea south.*”⁵⁰ This is the same area where the “tree of Life” monument is located at the temple at Izapa. This temple is the temple, according to Hauck, that is identical to the size of Solomon’s temple times fifteen.^{51 52 53} This is the area where 2,500 righteous Lamanites and Nephites, including the prophet Nephi, gathered about a year after Christ’s crucifixion and witnessed his advent and resurrection in the Americas. It is also interesting to note that the temple at Izapa would have been more central to all the Nephites and Lamanites then living in the land southward and to the Nephites living in the Jaredite land northward during the more than 150 years of peace following Christ’s appearance in America.

This was the last area given up by the Nephites in the land southward according to the AD 350 treaty. This area near Joshua/Izapa was where the Nephite history in America began, and where the most important event in the history the world was first witnessed in the Americas. This is also where the final chapter of the Nephite existence in the Americas began. It was not just a coincidence that the only place where Mormon and his son Moroni could have called home was Joshua and that the name of Joshua means “Jehovah is Salvation.” These are the reasons why the Joshua/Izapa area, being located on the west coast, is so important. It was **not** located near the Gulf of Mexico or the Gulf of Tehuantepec but south of the “treaty Line” near Izapa near the Pacific coast, where the tree of Life monument and temple were located and where Christ made his first appearance to the seed of Lehi.

Notes

1. See my article "The Narrow Strip of Wilderness Was Mountainous" (http://www.bmaf.org/narrow_strip_wilderness_mountainous—andersen)
2. See my article "Usumacinta River is the River Sidon" (http://www.bmaf.org/Usumcinta_river_sidon__andersen) and see Appendix B.
3. See Richard Hauck’s BMAF presentation given on February 26, 2010 in Salama, Guatemala.
4. See *Book of Mormon Resources*, map 4 of 35. One cannot stand on the Chuacus Mountain (Magleby’s proposed hill north of Shilom, 30 miles away) and see anything in Guatemala City/Nephi/Kaminaljuyu! This is in contravention of the Book of Mormon. Ammon could look down and see the people in Shilom. The people in Nephi could look up and see Noah’s tower on the hill north of Shilom. King Mosiah₁ had his people congregate on the hill north of Shilom

before crossing the narrow strip of wilderness. The hill north of Shilom could not have been located 30 miles away from Kaminaljuyu, elevation 5000 ft. Mosiah would have to have gone down into very rough and steep terrain 20 miles to the Motagua River (elevation 2000 ft.) and then up the very rough terrain to the top of Chuacus mountains (elevation 6000 ft) another 10 miles or so. How does that make any sense at all? (See my article entitled "Usumacinta River is the River Sidon" (http://www.bmaf.org/Usumacinta_river_sidon_andersen).

5. See Andersen "Usumacinta River is the River Sidon," This article gives many reasons why Kaminaljuyu could not have been the city of Nephi. See appendix B at Endnote No. 53 for a summary of 6 of those reasons.

6. See Andersen "Zarahemla; Its Size and its Rise and Fall," (http://www.bmaf.org/Zarahemla_size_rise_fall_andersen).

7. Helaman 5:14-15 States "...they went forth, keeping the commandments of God, to teach the word of God among all the people of Nephi, beginning at the city Bountiful; 15 and from thenceforth [southward] to the city of Gid; and from the city of Gid to the city of Mulek; 16. And even from one city to another, until they had gone forth among all the people of Nephi who were in the land southward; and from thence into the land [city] of Zarahemla, among the Lamanites [living in the Zarahemla area]. 20. ...Nephi and Lehi did proceed from thence to go to the land of Nephi. [Therefore the land northward of the city Bountiful was not part of the Nephite land southward. It also proves that there was a different land Bountiful located at the "line" on the west sea because all of the Jaredite land northward (where many Nephites had migrated) was located northward of the west-sea land Bountiful and not northward from east-sea city Bountiful].

8. Alma 46:7 "And there were many in the church who believed in the flattering words of Amalickiah, therefore they dissented even from the church; and thus were the affairs of the people of Nephi exceedingly precarious and dangerous, notwithstanding their great victory which they had had over the Lamanites, and their great rejoicings which they had had because of their deliverance by the hand of the Lord.

5. See my article, "Why City Bountiful was not Located in the Yucatan, the Peten or Northern Belize" (http://www.bmaf.org/city_bountiful_not_yucatan_andersen).

10. Helaman 6:3-9 "3...they did have fellowship one with another...4...the Lamanites did come down into the land of Zarahemla...and did exhort them to faith and repentance 8...the Lamanites did also go whithersoever they would, whether among the Lamanites or among the Nephites; and thus they did have free intercourse one with another to buy and to sell and to get gain according to their desire." There should be no doubt that when it talks about the Lamanites between the years 30 BC to AD 34, unless specifically stated otherwise, it is talking about the Lamanites living in the land of Nephi south of the narrow strip of wilderness.

11. See my article "Three Separate Lands Bountiful. Where Located? What size? To which Bountiful did Christ appear?" (http://www.bmforg/articles/three_bountifuls_christ_appear_andersen).

12. See Hauck, Richard F. *Deciphering the Geography of the Book of Mormon*. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Company. 1988. Print at page 31-33.

10. Until about AD 345 the Book of Mormon only mentions the Jaredite land northward regarding the following events: (a) Limhi's scouts traveled to the Jaredite land northward in search of Zarahemla but returned believing Zarahemla had been destroyed; (b) About 55 BC Hagoth took ships into the Hagoth land northward (not the Jaredite land northward) but no mention of where; (c) Beginning about 72 BC and specifically about 46 BC, a migration took place of Nephites and Lamanites moving into the Jaredite land northward but the Book of Mormon does not follow them; (d) In 29-23 BC Nephi and Lehi served an unsuccessful six year mission in the Jaredite land northward but the Book of Mormon does not explain or elaborate, only that they could not stay there. Until after AD 345 no mention of **any city** located in the Jaredite land northward is made, except as stated in the Book of Ether; (e) In 68 BC Morianton and his followers attempted to flee to the Jaredite land northward but did not make it. Teancum stopped them at the "line"; (f) About AD 17, Lachoneus took the righteous Lamanites and Nephites to reside 7 years near, but not in, the borders of the Jaredite land northward. He did not go into it; (g) About AD 321 Mormon's father took young Mormon

from the Jaredite land northward into the city of Zarahemla; (h) and then AD 345 the Lamanites/Gadianton robbers chased most of the surviving Nephites to Jashon located in the Jaredite land northward. The Gadianton Robbers did not come from the Jaredite land northward but from the land southward.

14 . See my article, "Geography of the Gadianton Robbers," (http://www.bmaf.org/articles/geography_gadianton_robbers—andersen)

15. See my response to Ted Stoddard's Lowland Maya article, entitled *Response to Stoddard's "Maya Problem"* (http://www.bmaf.org/articles/response_stoddard's_maya_problem—andersen)

16. See my article "City Desolation could not have been San Lorenzo or near the Gulf of Mexico"(http://www.bmaf.org/articles/desolation_not_sanlorenzo_gulf_mexico—andersen)

17. The 'line' between Desolation and Bountiful is central and controlling in understanding the Geography of the Book of Mormon.

Following are all the Book of Mormon references and associated events that geographically relate to that "line:"

- It began on the west sea and ran eastward a distance of about a day and a half—about fifteen miles or so (Alma 22:31–33, Helaman 4:6–7).
- It never bordered any other sea.
- It was located northward from Joshua, which was also located near the west sea (Mormon 2:6).
- It divided Desolation from Bountiful, both of which also began on the west sea (Alma 22:31–33).
- It did not lead into Desolation or Bountiful because the 'line' went from the west sea eastward to the Sierra Madre mountains. Desolation was located northward from that line and Bountiful was located southward from that line (Helaman: 4:6–7).
- Desolation was part of the Jaredite land northward beginning at the 'line' (Alma 22:32).
- Bountiful was a part of the Nephite land southward and it began at the same 'line' (Alma 22:32)."
- The 'line' was not the same as the "narrow neck of land," or the "small neck of land," or the pass, or passage, or narrow neck as discussed above because the line only led from the west sea 15 miles or so to an undisclosed identifiable geographical feature.
- The 'line' was not the same as the two passes, the passage, or the narrow neck, all of which did not divide anything but each of which led into the lands northward/southward:
 - *"the narrow pass which led by the [west] sea into the land northward"* (Alma 50:34).
 - *"the narrow pass which led into the land southward"* (Mormon 3:5).
 - *"the narrow passage which led into the land southward"* (Mormon 2:29).
 - *"the narrow neck which led into [did not divide] the land northward"* (Alma 63:5).
- It was the entrance or gate into the land southward which began at the 'line'; *"And they did preserve the **land southward** [from the 'line'] for a wilderness, to get game. And the whole face of the land northward [from the 'line'] was covered with inhabitants."* Lib built his city by the entrance into the land southward to preserve the land bountiful (Alma 22:31)"*to hunt food for the people of the land"* (see Ether 10:19–22). The dividing 'line'—as opposed to a pass or passage leading into something—between the land northward/southward was always the same 'line' that began on the west sea and ran eastward.
- it was near where Morianton was "headed" and killed by Teancum ca. 67 BC **by "the borders of the land Desolation...by the sea on the west..."**(Alma 50:33–36);

- It was the area where Moronihah, son of Captain Moroni, took refuge with his armies for two years, ca. 35 BC, while the Lamanites controlled all the land southward, including Zarahemla and all the east-sea locations (Helaman 4:5–10).
- It was a defensive line or a strategic feature that Moronihah “*did fortify against the Lamanites from the west sea even unto the east: it being a day’s journey for a Nephite, on **the line** which they had fortified and stationed their armies to defend their north countries* (Helaman 4:7; emphasis added). [This line clearly ran almost perpendicular to the west sea and surely not parallel to the west sea.]
- It was near where Lachoneus and his people (together with the Lamanite and Nephite armies (3 Nephi 3:14) took refuge for 8 years (3 Nephi 6:1) while the Gadianton Robbers controlled all of the land southward ca. AD 17–26 (3 Nephi 3:22–26, 4:1–5); “*yea, to [not beyond] the line which was between the land Bountiful and the land Desolation.*”
- It was near where Hagoth built and sailed his ships in the years ca.55–54 BC (Alma 63:4–10); “*on the borders of the land Bountiful by the land Desolation, and launched it forth into the west sea...*”
- It was the treaty ‘line’ of AD 350 which treaty gave the Lamanites/Robbers all the land southward, including the pass and/or passage that led from the treaty 'line' into the land southward.
- And, of course, it was the same ‘line’ in which the treaty gave the Nephites all the land northward, from the ‘line’ where “*the narrow pass which led by the [west] sea into the land northward*” began (Mormon 2:28–29);
- It was adjacent to, and to the south of, the place where the “*sea [only one sea] divides the land*” (Ether 10:19–21), therefore, the sea that divided the land was the west sea; “*They did preserve the land southward [from the line] for a wilderness to get game.*”
- It was also near the place where the Nephites beat the Lamanites in AD 362 and dumped the dead bodies of the Lamanites into the west sea (Mormon 3:5–8).
- It was also near the city Desolation and the city Teancum (Mormon 3:5, and 4:3).
- It was also near the place where the “*sea divides the land*” (Mormon 10:20–21) because it was located near the entryway into the land southward, which entryway into the land southward was always at the 'line.'
- It was the defensive area near, and to the south of, where the city Desolation was located, where the Lamanites, between AD 360 to AD 375, took fifteen years and five major assaults to permanently force Mormon and the Nephites out of Desolation northward to Jashon/Jordan (the Chivela Pass area) in the year AD 375.
- The length of the 'line', according to Alma 22:32, “*from the east to the west sea*” was also the width of the small or narrow neck of land—about 15 miles or so. This is about the same distance as the width of the west-sea land Bountiful which was “*inhabited*” according to Alma 22:33, “*even from the east unto the west sea.*” Notice that it does not say that the land Bountiful was inhabited from the east sea to the west sea—a distance of 250 air miles. And notice also that this inhabitation was exclusively by the Nephites because after 72 BC, to which this event is referencing—“*all*” of the Lamanites had been chased out of the north to the south of the narrow strip of wilderness (Alma 22:34).

17. See my article. "Three Lands Northward: Where Located? How large? " (http://www.bmaf.org/articles/three_northward_where_large_—andersen)

18. Andersen, "Three Lands Northward"

19. Andersen, "Three Lands Northward"

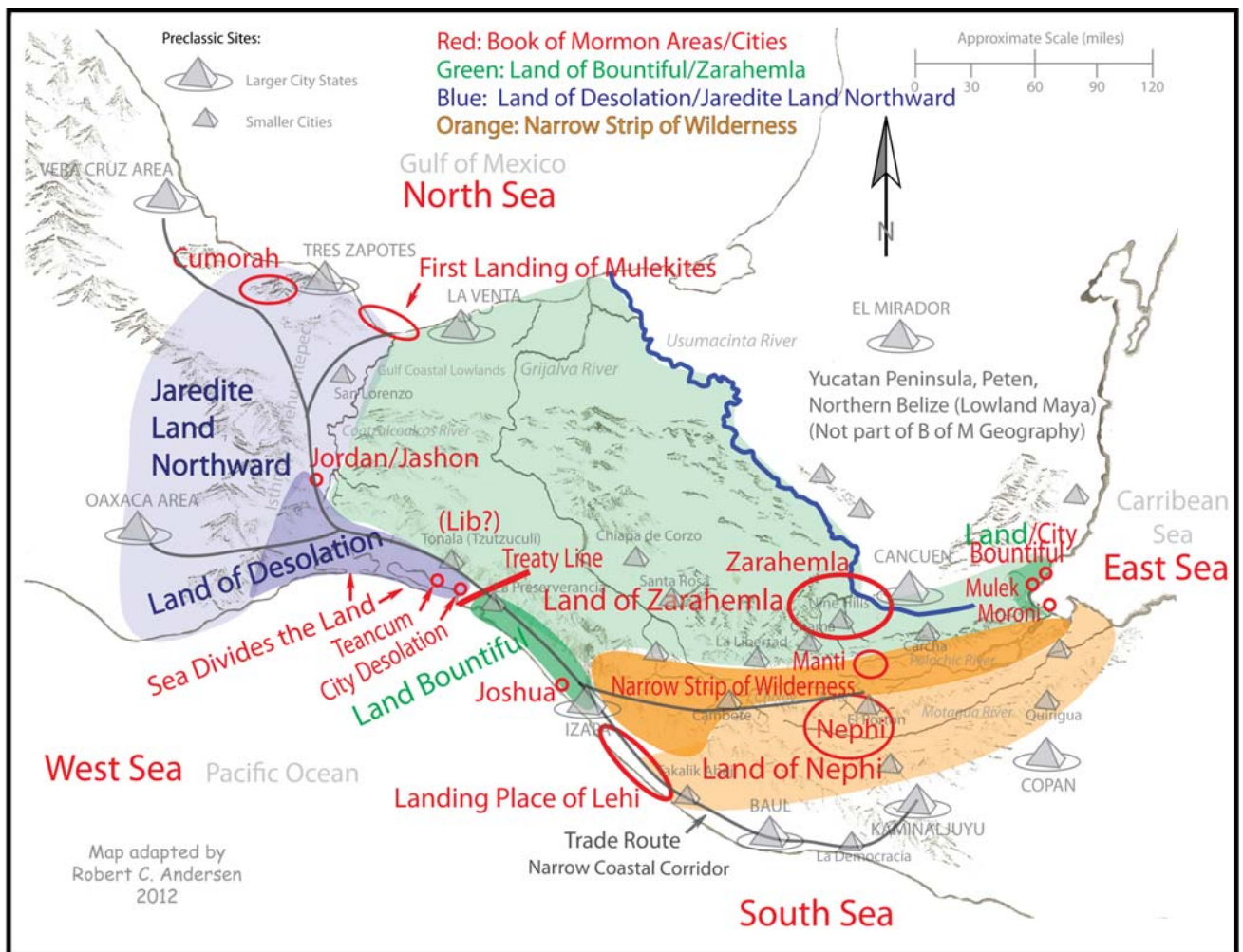
18. See my article The Land North always means north of the narrow strip of

21. Helaman 7:3.

22. See my article "Three Separate Lands Bountiful. Where Located? What size? To which Bountiful did Christ appear?" (http://www.bmforg/articles/three_bountifuls_Christ_appear—andersen).

c

23. See my article "Why City Lib cannot be La Venta or anywhere near the Gulf of Mexico" (http://www.bmaf.org/articles/lib_cannot_near_gulf_mexico—andersen). The following map proposes a more likely area for the city of Lib just north of the treaty "line." The areas in green and orange represents the area that I believe was nearly surrounded by water.



21 . See my article, The Treaty Line of AD 350: its Paramount Geographic Importance.

(http://www.bmaf.org/article/treaty_line_importance—andersen)

25. See Hauck, *Deciphering* at page 188.

22. See my article, The Isthmus of Tehuantepec: Cannot Be the Narrow Neck of Land,

(http://www.bmaf.org/articles/isthmus_cannot_be_neck_land—andersen)

27. The Nephite terms of "Desolation" and "land Bountiful" and the "line" between them had not been coined yet. We know from Ether 9:31 that the term "*land southward, which was called by the Nephites Zarahemla*" was adjacent to the city of Lib. Clearly there was something that denoted, distinguished and connected the Nephite land southward with the Jaredite land northward. The Nephites called it the "line" between Desolation and Bountiful—located within the "Small neck of land"—which line started at the west sea and extended eastward for a day to a day and a half distance to some undesignated but distinguishable point. Ether described it as the entrance into the land southward from the great city which Lib built from which to hunt game for his people who inhabited the "*whole face of the land northward.*" This city was built new by Lib about 900 BC "*by the place where the sea divides the land.*" Therefore, it was located by a sea. This sea was either the Gulf of Mexico or the Gulf of Tehuantepec. How did they go into the land southward to get game? By the "narrow neck of land" that led into the land Bountiful and the land southward. Since all of the land northward was *inhabited from that 'line'*, and since Lib built the new city at the entrance into the land southward "*by [but not in] the narrow neck of land,*" then the narrow neck of land was not populated and therefore must have been on the south of the dividing line between the inhabited land northward and the then uninhabited wilderness of the land southward. Therefore, that Nephite line between Desolation and Bountiful was the same line as the "area" between city Lib and the narrow neck of land that led into the wilderness of the beginning of the land southward, known by the Nephites as the west-sea land Bountiful. From this the reader can reasonably conclude that the sea that divided the land must have been the west sea or the Pacific. This conclusion is corroborated by the fact that Desolation, Bountiful and the Line separating them, all began on the west sea.

28. Ibid at page 12-13.

29. See Allens, Exploring at pages 552 & 629.

30. See Andersen, *Why City Lib was Not Located at La Venta or anywhere Near the Gulf of Mexico*. Note also that the "line," and west-sea Bountiful, and Desolation are always directly associated only with the west sea.

Alma 63:5 And it came to pass that Hagoth, he being an exceedingly curious man, therefore he went forth and built him an exceedingly large ship, on the borders of [within] the land Bountiful [south of the "line"] by [close but not in] the land Desolation [north of the "line"], and launched it forth into the west sea, by [close to but not in] the narrow neck which led into the land northward. [The Jaredite land northward including the entire Isthmus of Tehuantepec. This narrow neck started at the "line" and went by the west sea into the Jaredite land northward. This same narrow neck of land (pass) started at the same "line" and went by the west sea into the land southward (at Bountiful) See also Mormon 2:29 and 3:5].

Ether 10:20 And they built a great city by [near but not in] the narrow neck of land, [which led into the land southward (at Bountiful)] by the place where the sea divides the land. [This city must have been built just north of the "Line" between Bountiful and Desolation because all of the land southward was preserved as a wilderness to get game and it was all the land north of the "line" that was populated by the Jaredites. Therefore, the "sea that divides the land" had to have been the Nephite west sea or the Jaredite south sea. And it had to have been located just northward of the "line"].

31. The land initially found by the scouts of Limhi was probably not the Hill Cumorah area. These scouts found a land with "dry bones" (See Mosiah 21:26) and in a "land of many waters" (See Mosiah 8:8). This appears to be a different land than Cumorah which is described as in a "land of many waters, rivers, and fountains." The main difference seems to be that here there were dry bones found by the scouts. The proposed land of Cumorah is located in a land with over 150 inches of rain per year where there could not have been any "dry bones" on the surface of the land some 100 plus years after the final Jaredite battle. Whereas the area of the Gulf of Tehuantepec receives only about 40 plus inches of rain per year and for much of the year it is very dry except along the rivers that drain from the Sierra Madre Mountains located in the center of the land.

32. See *Deciphering* at page 92.

33. See Andersen, *Why City Desolation could not have been Located near the Gulf of Mexico*.

34. See Garth Norman's study map 2005.

35. See *Deciphering* at page 150.

36. See *Deciphering* at pages 84-89.

37. See *Exploring* at page 395 and 552.

38. *Exploring* at page 395 states "We learn the names of some Nephite-occupied cities after the AD 350 treaty with the Lamanites. These cities were located in the land northward near the narrow neck of land. Perhaps a couple of these cities extended south, near to the Gulf of Tehuantepec. Most, however, were probably on the Gulf of Mexico side in the present day states of Veracruz and Tabasco. These include the cities of Desolation, Boaz, Teancum, Shem, Jashon, Joshua, Angola, and David all of which were probably in the land Desolation (land northward)." This is clearly mistaken since the cities of Joshua, Angola, and David are discussed in the year 329 when Mormon and the Nephites were permanently chased out of the city of Zarahemla. Mormon finally located his army and lived in Joshua, near the Pacific coast south of the "line" between Bountiful and Desolation, for about 17 years.

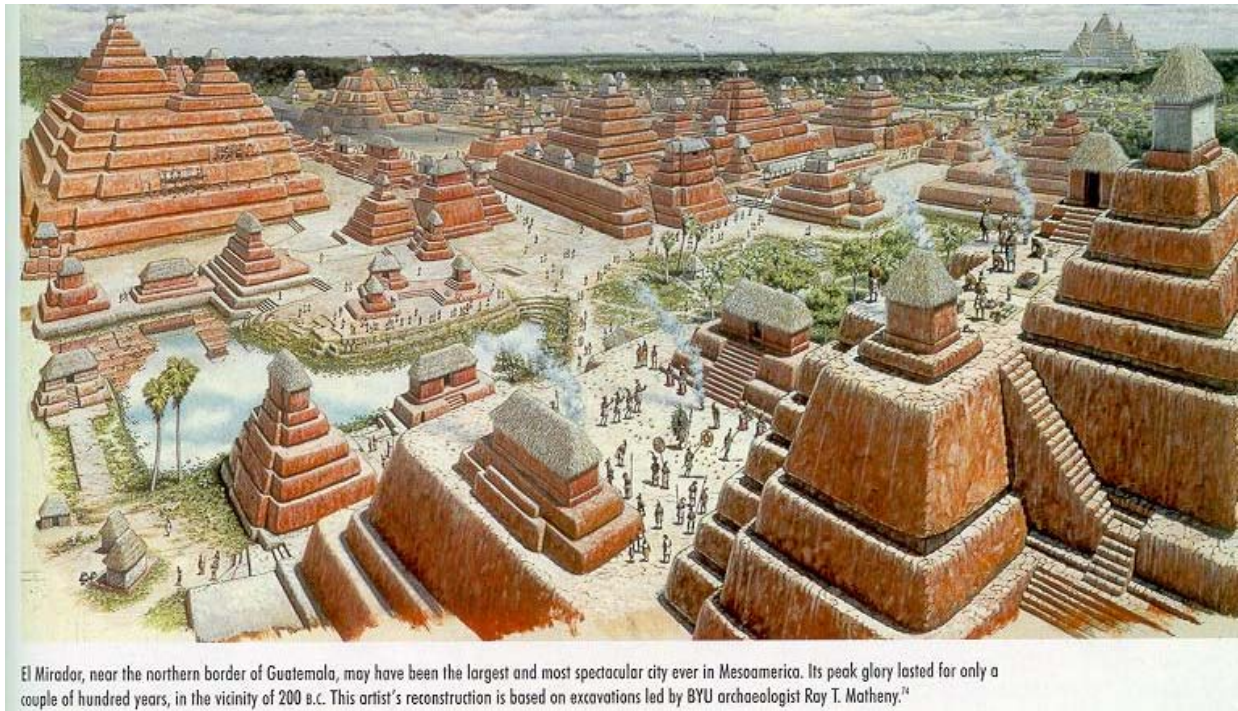
39. See Magleby's Book of Mormon Resources map on the Home page.

40. An E-mail sent me 11-18-10 wherein Dr. Allen clarified, stating:

"We thank you for calling our attention to this paragraph because we DO NOT believe that the Gulf of Mexico and the Coatzacoalcos River together form the "place where the sea divides the land." The word "obvious" in this paragraph is not intended to proclaim that the Coatzacoalcos River and the Gulf of Mexico together are the obvious location of the "place where the sea divides the land." We were trying to convey the concept that the descriptions outlined in Ether 10:20 "obviously" refer to a gulf and an isthmus.

In summary, we do not believe that the Coatzacoalcos River is part of the Gulf of Mexico.... We would appreciate it if you would make it clear that we believe that the "place where the sea divides the land" is only the Gulf of Mexico as reflected on our maps in figures 11-5, 19-12, 23-23, 26-1, 26-3, 26-22, as well as in other statements in *Exploring the Lands of the Book of Mormon*."

41. Moroni did not conquer this city of El Mirador ca. 72 BC. This was the center of a huge complex of about 27 cities encompassing more than a million Maya. This was not part of the land of Zarahemla It was not part of the Nephite land southward. The pyramid La Danta, upper right corner, is the largest and highest pyramid in the world, built about 300 BC many years before there was a designated land northward/land southward.



42. Ted Stoddard explained this so very well in an Email he sent to me August 2, 2010:
 "For centuries, the only reasonable way to get from Chiapas or Guatemala to Veracruz, Oaxaca, or the Mexico valley was to end up on the Pacific coast and go north through the Isthmus of Tehuantepec. about Fifty miles into the isthmus, the topography opens up, permitting travelers to continue to Veracruz or to follow trails into the mountains and thence to the Oaxaca or Mexico areas. In a similar vein, travelers from the east wilderness (lowland jungle area of the Peten and Belize) or from the east sea (Caribbean off the coast of Belize) could not travel due west to go through the top of the isthmus because of (1) the mountainous terrain, especially in the Hermounts region at the top of and east of the isthmus, or (2) the marshy lagoons and rivers of Tabasco that made east-west travel almost impossible until the arrival of modern highways."
43. *Exploring* at page 622.
44. See my article located at BMAF.org entitled *Why City Desolation could not have been Located near the Gulf of Mexico*.
45. See maps at pages 622 and 552 of *Exploring*.
46. [Jashon/Jordan]. [In Joseph Smith's manuscript the word used was Jashon not Jordon. There was a transliteration error in the printer's manuscript (See Royal Skousen's article entitled *Piecing together the original Manuscript* located in the May 1992 issue of *BYU Today*)].
47. See *Exploring* at page 457.
48. *Deciphering* at page 186.
49. See my article, titled, *Nephites and the Epi-Olmec*.
50. Alma 53:22 22 And now it came to pass that Helaman did march at the head of his two thousand stripling soldiers, to the support of the people in the borders of the land on the south by the west sea.
Alma 53:8 8 And now it came to pass that the armies of the Lamanites, on the west sea, south, while in the absence of Moroni on account of some intrigue amongst the Nephites, which caused dissensions

amongst them, had gained some ground over the Nephites, yea, insomuch that they had obtained possession of a number of their cities in that part of the land.

51. Personal communication with F. Richard Hauck, 2009.

52. APPENDIX “A”

If the answer to any one of the following questions is “no,” then, according to the Book of Mormon, that would mean that Kaminaljuyu could not have been the city of Nephi:

1. Is there a “hill north of Shilom” visible from Kaminaljuyu (Mosiah 11:1-13 7:3-15)? No. This is evidenced by the following two maps:

(a) The first is a topographical relief map showing the Kaminaljuyu plateau (5000 ft. in elevation) in brown. The light color shows the ravines and areas below 5,000 ft. The green area shows the mountains to the west and southeast, however, to the north there is not even a small hill that rises above the elevation of about 5,150 ft. at Kaminaljuyu.

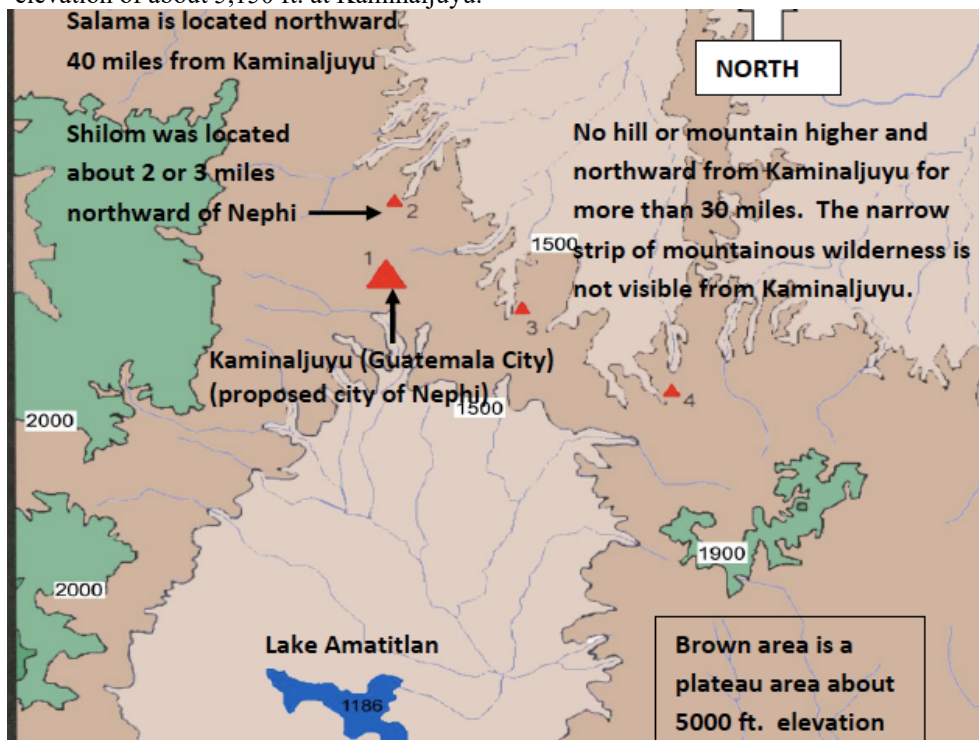
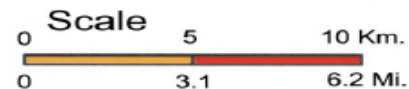


Figure 5: Relief Map of the Kaminaljuyu Region



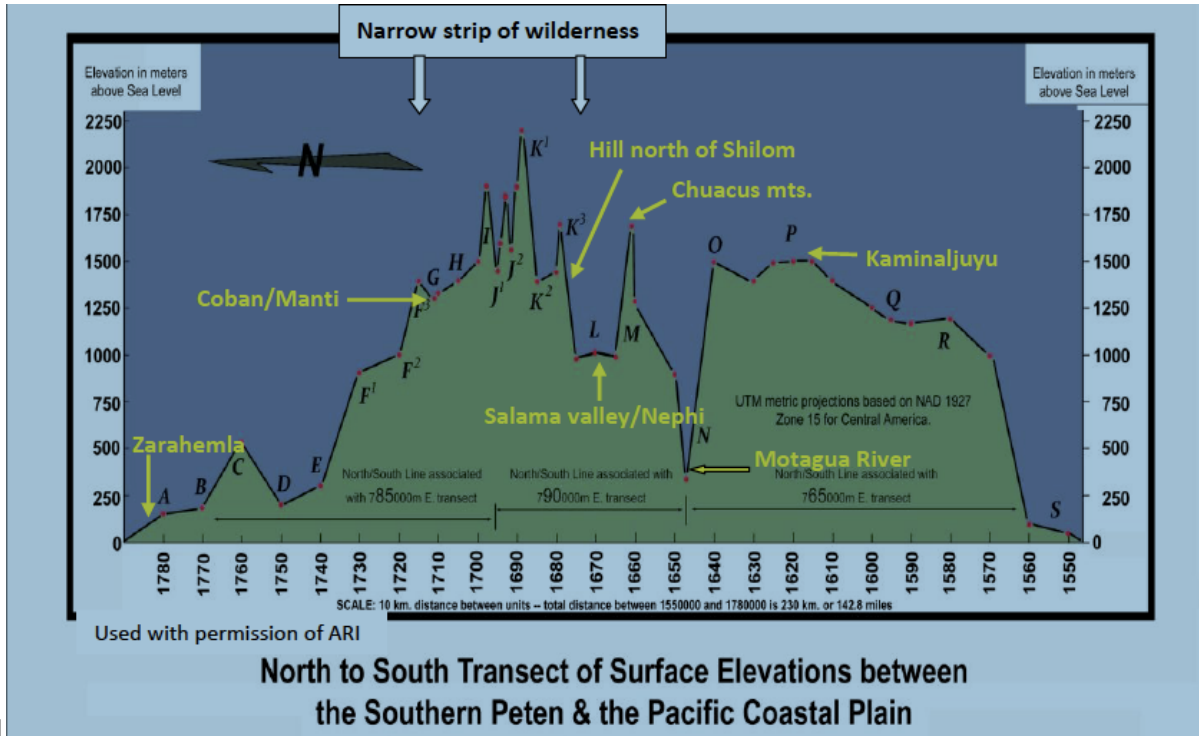
Notes:
 1. Elevations shown on contours indicate meters above sea level.
 2. Map compiled from the 1:250,000 scale ND 15-B Base Map (series F503)

Used with permission of ARI



(b) Next is a cross-section of the actual elevations from the Pacific coast northward through Kaminaljuyu, then northward through the Salama valley, then through the Santa Cruz Mountains, and then down to the Usumacinta River. Notice on the high plateau where Kaminaljuyu is located there are no hills higher than the plateau northward from Kaminaljuyu (Guatemala City).

There is no hill or mountain higher and northward from Kaminaljuyu for more than 30 miles. The narrow strip of mountainous wilderness is not visible from Kaminaljuyu until one comes to the Chuacus mountain range some 30 miles away. One cannot see Kaminaljuyu from this mountain. (Used with permission of ARI)



Legend

A. Rio San Roman	FI-3. Sierra de Chama Range	J2. Cahaboncito River	O. Chuarrancho Ridge
B. Rio San Roman Valley	G. Coban Valley	KI-3. Sierra Chuacus & Sierra de Las Minas connection	P. Guatemala City (Kaminaljuyu)
C. Sierra de Chinaja karst	H. San Juan Chamelco	L. Salama Basin	Q. Lake Amatitlan
D. Chisec Valley	I. La Cumbre Peak	M. Sierra de Chuacus	R. Pueblo Nuevo Vinas Volcano
E. Rio Candelaria Valley	J1. Tactic Valley	N. Motagua River Depression	S. Pacific Coastal Plain

2. Can one see the Cuchumatanes/Santa Cruz Mountains from Kaminaljuyu? No
The 6000 ft. Chuacus Mountain prohibits one from seeing the narrow strip of wilderness from Kaminaljuyu. The distance of about 40 or more air miles from Kaminaljuyu also limits the visibility of this range of mountains.

3. Is Kaminaljuyu located about midway between the east and west seas as required by the Book of Mormon? No.
Kaminaljuyu is located about 50 air miles from the Pacific and about 140 miles from the Gulf of Honduras.

4. Did Kaminaljuyu have Preclassic defensive walls around it as required by the Book of Mormon (Mosiah:6-8)? No. Kaminaljuyu was the dominant culture and had no need to have defensive walls. From about 1500 BC this community was in the process of expanding its borders, taking prisoners, and enslaving or killing the conquered leaders (AuthenticMaya.com).

5. Was there a late Preclassic ruin (Shilom) about one mile or so north from Kaminaljuyu that had defensive walls around it as required by the Book of Mormon (Mosiah 9:6-8 & 7:3-15)? No. There is no evidence of a late Preclassic ruin (possibly the city of Shilom) located about 2 miles north of Kaminaljuyu and none containing evidence of a defensive wall around it.

6. Was Kaminaljuyu a safe place for Nephi to have taken his family about 585 BC? No. The heavy population of the area of Kaminaljuyu (about 20,000 by about 585 BC) precluded it from being the city of Nephi. Let's expand on the answer to question number 6.

(a). What did Kaminaljuyu look like when Nephi landed about the year 588 BC?

This artist's illustration below shows what the beautiful city of Kaminaljuyu probably looked like about the time Lehi landed in the Promised Land. About 20,000 people inhabited the area at that time.



The settlement at Kaminaljuyu started about 1500 BC. By about 750 BC the Lake Miraflores had been developed, and temples were being built around it. It had an extensive irrigation system and farm lands in place. It was constantly expanding its borders, sacrificing the conquered leaders and using slaves to build their large adobe-type structures. By about 580 BC Kaminaljuyu had become one of the largest Preclassic city/states in Central America with only El Mirador and the Olmec heartland larger in size (AuthenticMaya.com).

Can the reader imagine Nephi walking into Kaminaljuyu with his 4 men, 5 or 6 women, and about 20 children under the age of 12 (2 Nephi 5:6)? Taking over Kaminaljuyu? Becoming “King of Nephi” (Jacob 1:15-16)? Building a temple after the manner of Solomon’s Temple (2 Nephi 5:16)? Making all of the 20,000 Maya live the law of Moses? Making Jacob and Joseph “priests and teachers” over the land of Kaminaljuyu (2 Nephi 5:26)? And within 20 years be one big happy family of “20,000 Nephites” (2 Nephi 5:27)? No. This scenario would not have been possible. He did not have the manpower, capacity or disposition to conquer the city/state of Kaminaljuyu and become its king. It would not have been a safe place for Nephi and his family to have settled.

When Christ was crucified and the discussions were taking place about the destruction in “the land,” it was talking about the destruction that occurred in the lands north and south of the narrow strip of wilderness. It was not talking about the Jaredite land northward. How could the Nephites and Lamanites have known about the destruction in the land northward? This is confirmed by carefully reading chapters 8 and 9 of third Nephi.

The destruction **initially described by the Lord** was in the area of the greatest destruction; the city of Zarahemla was burned, the city of Moroni was sunk into the sea, and the city Moronihah was buried with earth and a "great mountain" was raised up in its place (see 3 Nephi 8:8-10 & 9:3-5). This greatest and most terrible destruction took place in the land northward of the narrow strip of wilderness. It was not in the Jaredite land northward because the cities of Zarahemla, Moroni, and Moronihah were not located in the Jaredite land northward. And the greatest destruction was not in the land south of the narrow strip of wilderness either:

11. And there was [also] a great and terrible destruction in the land southward [of the narrow strip of wilderness]. 12. But behold there was a more great and terrible destruction in the land northward [of the narrow strip of wilderness], for behold the whole face of the land [northward of the narrow strip of wilderness] was changed because of the tempest and the whirlwinds, and thundering and the lightnings, and the exceedingly great quaking of the whole earth. (3 Nephi 8:11–12

There is nothing in the Book of Mormon that indicates that the area of the Jaredite land northward (the Isthmus of Tehuantepec, or the area north of the Isthmus of Tehuantepec), suffered substantially more damage than the land southward from the Isthmus of Tehuantepec about 34 AD. The term "whole earth" did not include China, The United States, or the Jaredite land northward. The term "whole earth" in verses 6, 12, 17, & 18 must have meant the area where the Nephite and Lamanite cities were located. Verse 17 states; *"the face of the whole earth became deformed because of the tempests, and the thunderings, and the lightnings and the quaking of the earth."* Rome was not deformed. These tempests, thunderings and quaking of the earth were not happening all over the globe. Nor was the entire earth covered in darkness for 3 days. Verse 23 says that *"not any light seen, neither fire, nor glimmer, neither the sun, nor the moon, nor the stars, for so great were the mists of darkness which were upon the face of [all, see verse 20] the land."* This did not happen in Jerusalem.

In Chapter 9 of third Nephi it says in verse one *"...there was a voice heard among all the inhabitants of the earth..."* and the voice said *"3...that great city Zarahemla have I burned...4 ...that great city Moroni have I caused to be sunk in the depths of the sea....* These were Nephite cities located on the north of the narrow strip of wilderness. Then verse 7 continues *"...and the city of Jerusalem [located south of the narrow strip of wilderness] and all the inhabitants thereof..."* Did the inhabitants in Rome hear this voice? Did the Apostles in Israel hear this voice and message? Was the Jerusalem in Israel buried under water? clearly this was a message to the Nephites and the Lamanites in all of their areas (the whole earth to them) north and south of the narrow strip of wilderness. In each scripture one must look to all possible referents.

Notice that the term “whole earth” here could not have included Australia but *clearly* it meant the whole area being discussed in verse 12 being the land northward of the narrow strip of wilderness. The land southward of the narrow strip of wilderness is likewise not included in verse 12 as being part of the “whole earth” that was so completely devastated. This is so because that part of the "whole earth" (the land southward of the narrow strip of wilderness) was declared to have suffered less damage.

The entire area of the narrow strip of mountainous wilderness is located directly on the Chixoy fault line which was created when three massive tectonic plates collided. See the map on page 2.