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153.0 **SAN LORENZO AS THE JAREDITE CITY OF LIB.** By V. Garth Norman. Revision of a paper entitled "Book of Mormon Archaeology, Alive and Well," presented at the Twenty-fourth Annual Symposium on the Archaeology of the Scriptures, held at Brigham Young University on October 26, 1974.

IN A PAPER ON "Mormons and Archaeology; An Outside View,"¹ Michael D. Coe, a professor of anthropology at Yale University and a leading authority on the archaeology of Mesoamerica, states that

The picture of this hemisphere between 2,000 BC and AD 421 presented in the Book [of Mormon] has little to do with the early Indian cultures as we know them, in spite of much wishful thinking.

The bare facts of the matter are that nothing, absolutely nothing, has ever shown up in any New World excavation which would suggest to a dispassionate observer that the Book of Mormon, as claimed by Joseph Smith, is a historical document relating to the history of early migrants to our hemisphere.²

Coe suggests that Book of Mormon students should

forget the so-far fruitless quest for the Jaredites, Nephites, Mulekites, and the lands of Zarahemla and Bountiful: there is no more chance of finding them than of discovering the ruins of the bottomless pit described in the book of Revelation.³

In his article Dr. Coe strives to be free from bias against claims of the LDS church and has made some honest effort to become informed. He proceeds to qualify himself to speak as an outsider on the subject

by taking care to "warn readers" that he is not like most outside critics, who have never read the Book of Mormon. Nevertheless, Coe recognizes there might be in his paper "errors of fact and opinion."

SACRED HISTORY VS. SECULAR SCHOLARSHIP

First of all, it should be noted that Coe's discussion of the Book of Mormon is based upon the mistaken view that

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Even the most casual student will know that the LDS ethic is only slightly based upon the Book of Mormon, which has very little in it of either ethics or morals; rather its ethic is heavily dependent upon such post-Book of Mormon documents as the Doctrine and Covenants.⁴

Every serious student of the Book of Mormon knows that it is predominantly religious and highly ethical and moral in content. It is also common knowledge that the Book of Mormon, as Joseph Smith declared,⁵ is the “keystone” of the Mormon religion. He also said, “Take away the Book of Mormon and the revelations, and where is our religion? We have none.”⁶ Consequently, Coe’s well-meaning suggestion to forget what he calls “fruitless quests,” such as Book of Mormon archaeology, “that have been, are now, and always will be unproductive,” will doubtless spur some Mormon scholars on in search of the so-called “bottomless pit,” as he characterizes Book of Mormon archaeology efforts.

In spite of such pessimism Coe is objective in recognizing that Book of Mormon archaeology “is still a viable field of study,” which he defines as “an attempt by Mormons to establish the historicity of the Book of Mormon by means of ‘dirt archaeology,’ or by analysis of archaeological findings made by non-Mormons.”

Coe, like most scholars, has difficulty in dealing with historical topics in the life of Joseph Smith that are so intertwined with the supernatural: “There is . . . little doubt in the minds of non-Mormon scholars that Joseph Smith had no ability whatsoever to read

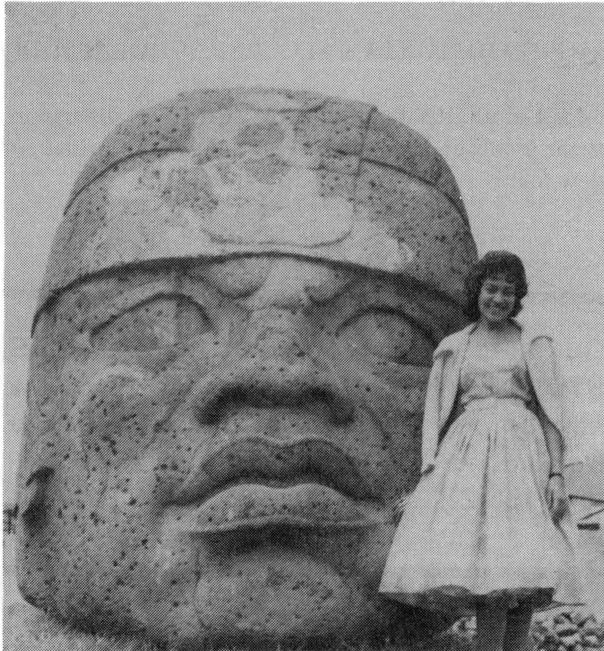
‘Reformed Egyptian’ or any other kind of hieroglyphs.”⁷ This is, of course, purely academic; it reflects no conception of the Prophet Joseph’s claim to divine inspiration and revelation as his means of translating, rather than acquired knowledge from such men as Champollion, who deciphered the Egyptian script.

We can understand such academic judgment of Joseph’s seemingly “outrageous claim to be able to translate ‘Reformed Egyptian’ documents.” But such judgment is of little value to most Mormon scholars, except to confirm to them that Joseph *had* to accomplish the task with divine help. This does not mean that either view is irrational. These are just different approaches to seeking truth. To the Mormon, the often changing and theoretical search for historical truth is inconclusive, while much of the so-called “mysticism,” if revelation, is empirical truth. The supernatural will always be a matter for scholarly debate. We should not be driven to apologetic defenses of the Book of Mormon because of its mystical roots. Our greatest challenge in Book of Mormon research is to comprehend it as a sacred history from ancient America.

MISCONCEPTIONS AND WEAK OBJECTIONS

If one automatically rejects a divine origin of the Book of Mormon, then he is forced to construct logical alternatives. Many have considered a possible Book of Mormon origin in Joseph Smith’s getting the inspiration to write it from the Mound Builders (see Editor’s Note, below). Coe points out that the ancient mounds became a popular topic of interest in the early part of the past century, especially in western New York State, where young Joseph produced the Book of Mormon. Therefore, “it is certain that he was fully acquainted with the speculative literature on the subject.” It is true, however, that “among white Americans, the belief was widespread that they [the mounds] had been built by a fair and intelligent race that had been overwhelmed by the dark-skinned and savage Indians.”⁸

This speculative origin for the Book of Mormon assumes two things: first, that savage, dark-skinned Lamanites killed off the Nephites in the last wars of the Book of Mormon account, and second, that the Nephites occupied the territory of the Mound Builders, with the last battle of Cumorah occurring at the name-site of the hill in Manchester, New York, where Joseph Smith reportedly obtained the Book of Mormon gold plates.



A giant stone head of the Olmec civilization found at San Lorenzo and now located at the Universidad Veracruzana, Jalapa. About nine feet tall, this head is typical of others found in the southern Gulf Coast region. Photograph by M. Harvey Taylor.

The Book of Mormon makes no such claims, but on the contrary states flatly that the last Nephite-Lamanite wars were between strictly politico-religious divisions of the people with no dark-skinned savages entering into the picture whatsoever. Dark skin is mentioned only by way of prophecy as a physical trait developed “many generations” (hundreds of years) later, after degeneracy had set in with a decline in the civilization after the period covered by the Book of Mormon (1 Nephi 12:12–23). This fact correlates nicely with the fall of Classic Mesoamerican cultures after AD 800.

Furthermore, Joseph Smith never claimed that the hill in Manchester was the Hill Cumorah of the Book of Mormon. Neither does the Book of Mormon lead to such a conclusion, although many Mormons have naturally assumed this to be the case. On the contrary, to my knowledge, all serious students of Book of Mormon history and archaeology now agree that the Hill Cumorah of the Book of Mormon is located in Middle America.⁹

As one becomes more deeply acquainted with the Book of Mormon, it becomes increasingly evident that only careful and ponderous examination reveals its extreme complexities. The more one learns of it, the more one becomes aware of its profound depth. There are no authorities on the Book of Mormon, only serious students. Unfortunately, far too few students diligently scrutinize the historical parts of the book. Consequently, when Coe discredits “the Book of Mormon as an accurate, historical account of the New World peoples between about 2,000 BC and AD 421,” one may be justifiably skeptical. Even though all professionally trained non-Mormon archaeologists agree there is no “scientific justification for believing” such, and that the “picture of this hemisphere” presented in the Book of Mormon has little to do with Indian cultures of that period, one who knows the Book of Mormon can only conclude that these opinions are unfounded. It would be fairer to say that these individuals do not see any scientific justification in the Book of Mormon because they have not yet seriously looked for it.

The view of the Book of Mormon as a “historical account of the New World peoples” across “this hemisphere” is a mistaken assumption that some Mormons have held that has misled non-Mormon scholars. The Book of Mormon is not a continental history of the Americas or a complete history of any part of it. It is also true that a great many of the antiquities of the Americas during Book of Mormon times do *not* relate to it in any way. It is significant in this regard that the Jaredites, Mulekites, and Nephites

may have been living in close proximity within tropical Mesoamerica for well over a hundred years with little or no contact with each other.¹⁰

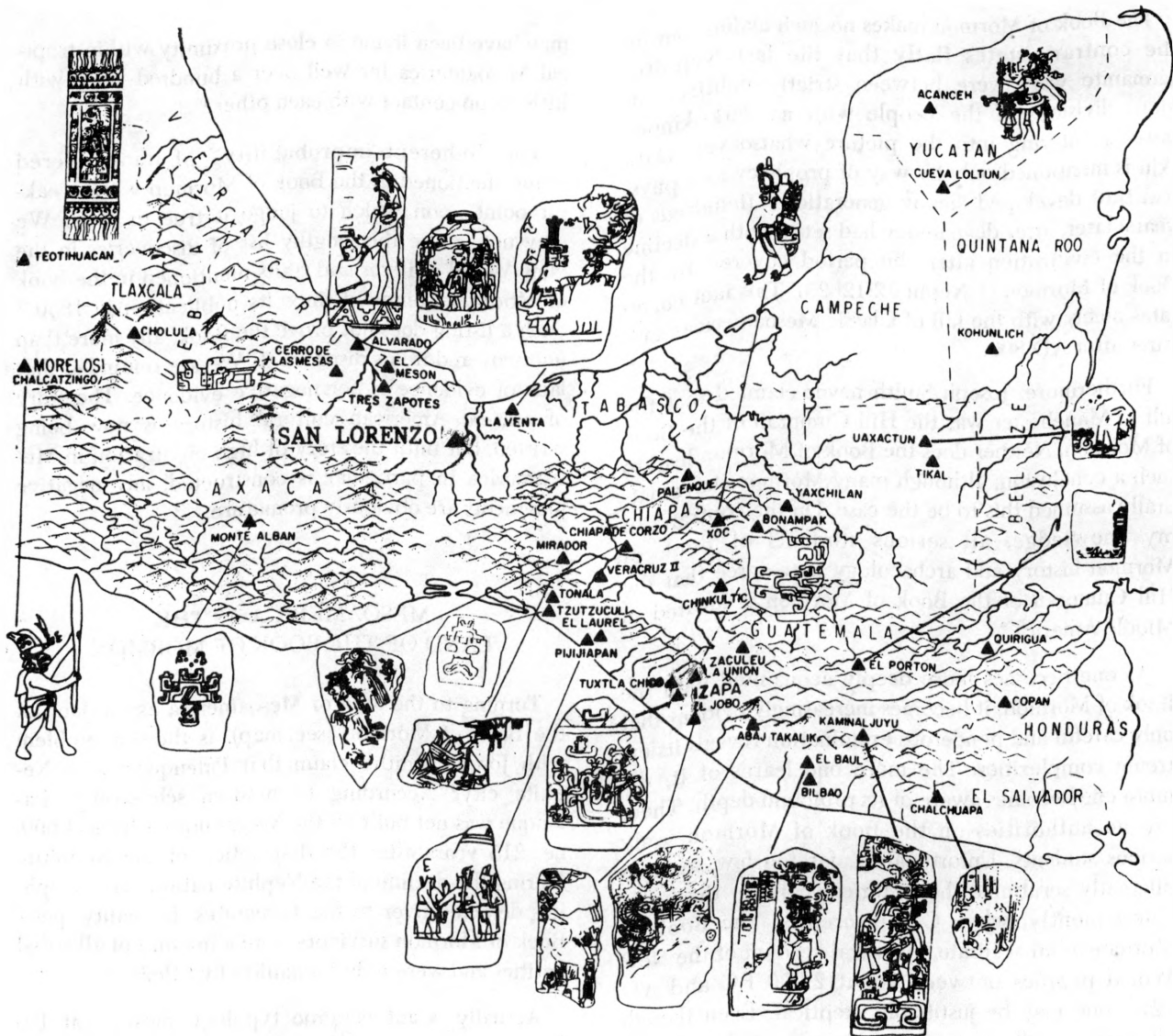
The “inherent improbability” of undiscovered items mentioned in the Book of Mormon is the weakest point upon which to judge it true or false. We may not ignore the lengthy list of discoveries in the New World of items and traits mentioned in the Book of Mormon, compiled since its publication in 1830.¹¹ Such a listing does not prove the Book, any more than undiscovered items disprove it. We are reminded that lack of evidence is not negative evidence. The story of ancient American cultural history is now being written, but until the story of high civilization in Mesoamerica in particular is constructed, any negative judgments are obviously premature.

MESOAMERICA AS THE LAND OF THE BOOK OF MORMON

Turning to the area of Mesoamerica as the land of the Book of Mormon (see map), is there a problem with Joseph Smith’s claim that Palenque was a Nephite city? According to modern scholarship, Palenque was not built by the Mayas until after AD 600, i.e. 215 years after the destruction of the Nephites. During the decline of the Nephite nation many Nephites defected over to the Lamanites. In reality, post-Book of Mormon survivors were a mixture of all tribal entities and were only Lamanites by title.¹²

Actually, scant ceramic typology shows that Palenque was occupied during Book of Mormon times, even though the great flowering seen in the surviving ruins occurred after AD 600. Some Book of Mormon cities were of perishable materials, as indicated by destruction of cities by fire (3 Nephi 9:3, 9, 10), and this may explain widespread Late Preclassic ceramics in the lowlands to the north of Palenque, with very few architectural remains.¹³ Could the Classic growth of Palenque have been inspired by descendants of Nephite survivors who were previous inhabitants of the Palenque area?

But the argument is really pointless. Joseph Smith’s statement was not a prophetic identification of a specific Nephite city, but rather an observation that Palenque was within the Nephite region of the land southward of the Book of Mormon. He went on in the same editorial comment to refer to the geography of the Isthmus as it might apply to the narrow neck of land of the Book of Mormon. In the October 1, 1842, *Times and Seasons* he explicitly outlined Central



Southern Mexico and northern Central America. Important archaeological sites with Olmec-derived or Izoapan-style sculpture. Adapted from Norman, 1976, Fig. 1.1 (see Note 23, below). Author believes San Lorenzo on the Isthmus of Tehuántepec is the city of the Jaredite king Lib on the “narrow neck of land” of the Book of Mormon.

America and Guatemala between the Isthmus of Tehuántepec and the Isthmus of Darien, or Panama, as the land southward of the Book of Mormon.

Palenque was the topic of the September 15, 1842, issue of the *Times and Seasons*, and it seems from the next issue on October 1 that his observation was speculative rather than prophetic, because Quiriguá was similarly identified as the possible ruins of Zarahemla. He did *not* declare positively this identification but merely speculated.¹⁴ In the same sense, if the identification of Palenque were prophetic, he likely would

have given us its specific Book of Mormon name.

Actually, all Joseph Smith’s observations about Stephens’ discoveries were of post-Book of Mormon ruins of the Mayas. No one knew in that day when they had been built. But ruin after ruin among the Mayas has now been found to be built on top of earlier structures that *do* date to Book of Mormon times. Joseph Smith made only one flat statement, i.e. that “the city of Zarahemla . . . stood upon this land” of Central America or Guatemala,¹⁵ which Stephens had explored, and it remains to be seen whether that statement was prophetic.

EVIDENCE THAT OLMECS ARE JAREDITES AND THAT SAN LORENZO IS THE CITY OF LIB

The main focus of Coe's challenge to Book of Mormon historical claims may be answered by considering in some detail possible Olmec-Jaredite correspondences from his own research. This will be a test of the viability of Book of Mormon archaeological research in general through a contextual analysis of the Jaredite city of Lib, including its geographical location and archaeological evidence, for its identification with the ruins of San Lorenzo.

Coe has developed a keen interest in the earliest Mesoamerican civilization, the archaeological Olmec. He has made a very significant contribution in his excavations at the great Olmec site of San Lorenzo (see map).¹⁶ The main focus of many Mesoamerican students has turned in recent years from the Mayas to the earlier and more obscure Olmecs, in attempts to trace the origin and development of Mesoamerican civilization.

Book of Mormon archaeology students are agreed that the Olmecs fit into the Jaredite civilization. Coe denounces these claims by stating that research by himself and others into Olmec remains "has failed to reveal any basis for this assertion." Is this the simple conclusion of the whole matter, or is it rather a case of scholars not yet having examined the archaeological data carefully in terms of possible Olmec-Jaredite connections? If one is going to say there is no basis from archaeological investigations that would lead one to believe the Olmecs were the Jaredites of the Book of Mormon, the question must first be *investigated in the Book of Mormon!*

Others as well as I have speculated on the possible identity of San Lorenzo with the Jaredite city of Lib, on the basis of its geographical location and early date. I now find definite indications from archaeological data that San Lorenzo very well could be the city of Lib.

The site of San Lorenzo is located on the Isthmus of Tehuántepec, in southern Veracruz near the western bank of the Chiquito River, formed by a prominent island in the Coatzacoalcos River, located about 30 miles inland from the Gulf Coast. Coe's excavations have led him to believe that San Lorenzo was the principal governing Olmec center of the Gulf Coast region, exceeding the famous sister site of La Venta in size, and probably importance as well.¹⁷

The occupation of San Lorenzo began around 1700 BC.¹⁸ Construction of temple ceremonial mounds began with a great influx of people about 1450 BC. This period continued to 900 BC and was characterized by the greatest population, stone monuments, stone

drains, artificial ponds, and foreign trade, as seen in figurines from the Valley of Mexico, all of which reflects a highly developed religious ideology.

About 900 BC there was a massive destruction. Olmec monuments were put away following a take-over by Nacaste-phase invaders.

After a hiatus, about 750 BC, the occupation at San Lorenzo between 600–400 BC was like the Chiapa III or Escalera phase in the Central Depression of Chiapas to the south and like the Maya-lowland Mamóm phase.

A final abandonment of Olmec cities occurred about 500 BC, corresponding to a hiatus at La Venta and other areas, such as Central Chiapas and the Guatemala and Chiapas coast, as well as at Monte Albán (Oaxaca) and Zacatenco (Valley of Mexico).

One who knows the Book of Mormon is immediately struck with the coincidence that the widespread hiatus observed by Coe corresponds to the destruction of the Jaredite civilization in the same period. Also, from the investigation of San Lorenzo one cannot help but reflect upon the great Jaredite city of Lib, which was built at the narrow neck of land. What do we know about that city from the Book of Mormon that might correspond with San Lorenzo?

Lib was of the third generation of kings to rule over the Jaredites in a continuous period of righteousness and of the seventeenth generation from Jared, one of the original ancestors. During Lib's reign, he and his people "built a great city by the narrow neck of land, by the place where the sea divides the land" (Ether 10:20), believed by many Book of Mormon students to be in the Isthmus of Tehuántepec area.

Could this distinctive place "where the sea divides the land" refer to the location of San Lorenzo, where the Rio Coatzacoalcos divides the land, forming an island? This great navigable river appears as though the sea cuts into the land and could have been equated with the sea in its lower course, especially during the rainy season when vast areas adjacent to the river lowlands are inundated. Also, in the Book of Mormon the plural for "water" was used in reference to large bodies of water, including the sea and large rivers, so that if the original text stated that "the waters divided the land," it could have been translated "sea," even if it had reference to a river. For instance, the ocean at Bountiful was named Irreantum, meaning "many waters" (1 Nephi 17:5). Cumorah was in a land of "many waters, rivers, and fountains" (Mormon 6:4), evidently a reference to the "waters" of Ripliancum, a large body of water on the north side of Cumorah, as well as to streams and springs (Ether 15:8–11). The river

**SOME CORRESPONDENCES BETWEEN OLMECS AND JAREDITES
AND BETWEEN SAN LORENZO AND THE CITY OF LIB (Ether 10:19-22; 11:5-7)**

| Approximate Date | Olmecs, San Lorenzo | Jaredites, City of Lib |
|---------------------|---|--|
| 2400-2500 BC | Earliest possible antecedents of Olmec ceramics in highlands of Mexico. | Jaredites arrive in Mexico. |
| 1450 BC | San Lorenzo built on Isthmus of Tehuántepec on large, navigable river. | City of Lib built on narrow neck of land where sea divides the land. |
| | San Lorenzo is principal governing Olmec center. | “Great city” of Jaredite king Lib. |
| | San Lorenzo is a political center for extended trade. | City of Lib is a southern political center of land northward, which is covered with people; extensive trade. |
| | Olmecs of lowland tropics of southern Veracruz for unknown reasons do not spread southeastward into lowland tropics of Petén. | Poisonous serpents prevent southward expansion of Jaredites for five generations to Lib, who continues to preserve land southward for wild game. |
| 900 BC | Massive destruction; religious monuments put away following take-over by Nacaste-phase invaders. | Take-over by brother of Shiblón; prophets killed; great destruction by war and famine. |
| 750 BC | Hiatus at San Lorenzo. | Ongoing conflict and long-term captivity of kings. |
| 600-400 BC | Cultural ties southeastward, evidenced by ceramics, with Chiapa III (Escalera) phase in Central Depression of Chiapas and Mamóm phase in Maya lowlands. | Possible Jaredite interaction with Mulekites in land southward. |
| 400 BC | Widespread Olmec hiatus, including at San Lorenzo. | Distintegration of Jaredite nation through war. |

Sidon was also referred to as the “waters” of Sidon (Alma 4:4).

The city of Lib probably became an important religious center under his righteous rule and would have had its temple structures and monuments as at San Lorenzo.

Lib was a “great hunter,” and his city could have had some connection with a game industry that had developed to provide meat from the wilderness of the land southward (tropical region of southeastern Mesoamerica) for the people who covered “the whole face of the land northward” (central Mexico; Ether

10:21). If so, it seems logical it would have been located either within or at the edge of the wilderness area on a major river, such as the Coatzacoalcos, where it would have been accessible to the hunting territory and in turn useful for transporting the game meat by water, as well as overland, to regions northward.

The Book of Mormon does not give us a chronology of Jaredite history, but best estimates agree that the 30 generations of kings from Babel to the Jaredite destruction covered a period of very nearly 2000 years. This gives us an average of approximately 65 years

per generation.¹⁹ Lib was of the seventeenth generation from Jared and the thirteenth before Ether, when the Jaredites were destroyed. This is approximately 1100 years from Babel and the confusion of tongues (roughly 2700–2600 BC), placing Lib between 1600–1500 BC, or, calculating from the other direction, about 850 years before the destruction of 550–450 BC, which would put him between 1400–1300 BC.

The Book of Mormon does not indicate that the city of Lib had been previously occupied, as appears to be the case at San Lorenzo, but the greatest development of the latter city, judging from the archaeological evidence, would have taken place sometime near the range of 1600–1300 BC, i.e. the two extremes of these time ranges. The date 1450 BC, shown on the chart as the building date of San Lorenzo, is midway between these two dates.

Other requirements of San Lorenzo are that it would show signs of extensive destruction about 450 years (seven generations) after Lib's settlement of the city, in the days of Shiblón (Ether 11; chart shows 550 years), and also, of course, a complete abandonment with the Jaredite destruction of 550–450 BC, in Middle Preclassic times.

In the days of Shiblón, his brother rebelled and put all the prophets to death. There were "wars and contentions," "many famines," and "great calamity in all the land." This resulted in "a great destruction . . . as never had been known upon the face of the earth." As a climax to these events, Shiblón was slain and his son taken into captivity.

The following generations of Ahah, Ethem, Moron, etc., continued in a state of conflict and rebellion to the final destruction of the Jaredites sometime between 550 and 450 BC (chart shows 400 BC).

If the destruction of the city of Lib in the days of Shiblón occurred about 900 BC, as at San Lorenzo, then its construction began about 450 years earlier, or 1350 BC, strikingly in line with Coe's dating for the beginning of the massive construction of that city, which initiated the Bajío phase.

While Jaredite dates can only be tentative, the above are instances of obvious and striking correspondence between San Lorenzo and Lib. One might dismiss such parallels as isolated coincidence were it not for a number of other significant Olmec-Jaredite correspondences now known to most serious students of the subject. These can be observed in recent Olmec research summarized in articles in the *SEHA Newsletter and Proceedings*, No. 133, August, 1973, especially in the paper by Fred W. Nelson, "Recent Developments in Olmec Archaeology," 133.0, pp. 1–9. Correlatable data include the following:

1. Possible Olmec-Jaredite origins, as reflected in the beginnings of Olmec-type pottery from Tehuacán, Puebla, and Guerrero in the Central Highlands of Mexico, ca. 2400 BC.
2. Possible location of the highland Jaredite capital of Moron in the highlands of Tehuacán, Guerrero, or Oaxaca, as evidenced by early Olmec ceramics, figurines, and sculptural remains.
3. Concentration of early Olmec civilization northward from the Isthmus of Tehuantepec, as with the Jaredites in the land northward.
4. Probability of transoceanic origin of the highly developed Olmec culture, which has no developmental antecedents in known artifacts over a sufficiently long period of time—a necessary condition to sustain the isolationist theory.
5. End of the Olmec civilization at the close of Middle Preclassic times, corresponding to the time of the Jaredite destruction, as observed above.

Incidentally, a transoceanic origin of the Olmecs is not entirely at variance with some of Coe's views. Coe believes that the original legendary Tamoanchán may have been located in the Gulf Coast region of the Olmecs.²⁰ This would seem more in line with certain origin accounts that relate that the first ancestors came from across the sea and established a city called Tamoanchán or Tulán as their New World Mecca or Holy City.

The Book of Mormon comes to bear upon still another perplexing problem confronting Olmec researchers. The earliest Petén monuments have little in common with Olmec stelae.²¹ Coe and others are unable to explain this peculiar situation.²² What kept the highly developed Olmec civilization on the Gulf Coast from spreading beyond the lowland tropics of southern Veracruz into the Petén—a region almost identical ecologically?

The Book of Mormon relates that, before the days of Lib, poisonous serpents prevented movement into the lowland tropics of the land southward for a period of seven generations (over 400 years). Lib's people succeeded in destroying the serpents and settled by the narrow neck of land, but they still preserved the forested land southward as a great game refuge (Ether 10:21). This would help account for possible isolation of the Mulekites "up in the south wilderness" (Alma 27:31) for a significant period of time before the Jaredite destruction. Corruption and warfare ended in the destruction of the Jaredite civilization, quite possibly in the days of the Mulekite king Zarahemla, when his people found a surviving Jaredite king, Coriantumr, and a stone monument he had carved telling the story of the end of his people (Omni 14, 20, 21).

During the later centuries of Olmec civilization in Middle Preclassic times, when lowland-Maya Mamóm-phase occupations were developing, there was still little or no influence from the Olmec zone outside of ceramic style. Why not? There is good evidence from the Book of Mormon that the Mulekites, who founded Zarahemla sometime near 580 BC, had themselves become a great and warring people during the time of the Jaredite climax and decline, so that they could have resisted Jaredite penetration. We can only speculate on the nature of Olmec-Mulekite contacts before Coriantumr, as evidenced by ceramics.

POST-OLMECS AND THE JAREDITE-NEPHITE-MULEKITE TRANSITION

Evidences continue to accumulate at an accelerated rate that Mesoamerica is the land of the Book of Mormon. The assertion that research “has failed to reveal any basis for identifying the Olmec with the Jaredites” can no longer stand. This is not a mere isolated coincidence. All the above Olmec-Jaredite correspondences need to be validated by an equally impressive development of a post-Olmec civilization that will ultimately prove to have Near Eastern (Nephite) roots. Has there been any progress in that direction? This is a subject for future research, but a preview is in order.

In a recently completed work of the New World Archaeological Foundation on Izapa sculpture from southern Chiapas, Mexico,²³ I have concentrated on the Izapan transitional period between the earlier Olmec and the later Maya civilizations, in the interest of finding specific relationships, as well as differences, between Izapan culture and the Olmec and Maya cultures. This is a critical period in relationship to Book of Mormon history, when the surviving Jaredite, Mulekite, and Nephite-Lamanite cultures blended.

One of the most recent scholarly summaries of what occurred during the decline of Olmec and the rise of post-Olmec civilization, especially the Izapan culture, succinctly proposes what we have already been seeing for some time in the development of later Nephite civilization through cultural influences of Jaredite survivors and Nephite-Mulekite-Lamanite interaction.

We believe that the spread of the Olmec [-influenced] art style [Izapan art] and the beginning of the Late Preclassic period in approximately 500 to 300 BC signals the period during which a common religious system and ideology began to unify large areas of Mesoamerica. A powerful priesthood congregated in spectacular ceremonial centers,

commemorating potent and widely recognized deities. Distinctive art and architecture went with the new religion, the practice of which required precise measurements of calendar years and of longer cycles of time. Writing and mathematical calculations were developed to affirm religious practices, a unifying political force in the sense that they welded scattered village communities into larger political units.²⁴

Robert J. Sharer has also recently summarized this era as follows:

It would appear that Olmec interaction had a catalytic effect on the cultural development of the Preclassic societies along the Pacific plain, for the growth of these societies continued at an accelerated pace after the waning of Olmec connections in the region. In the wake of the Olmec, the Pacific coastal plain was host to a rich sculptural tradition in the Late Preclassic, known as the Izapan style, and the earliest examples of Maya hieroglyphic texts and calendrical notations. These appear to represent the direct ancestors to the dynastic monuments that characterize lowland Maya civilization during the subsequent Classic period.²⁵

I believe that the Olmec culture of Jaredite survivors combined with that of the Mulekites and subsequently with the “powerful priesthood” and “religious system and ideology” of the Nephites. This cultural interaction above all else was the catalytic effect that produced the distinctive and rich cultural tradition known as Izapan civilization, that had spread across much of Mesoamerica by the time of Christ. Much research will be required before any concrete identification of Nephite culture might emerge, but the very real prospect is before us.

We look with increased anticipation to the archaeological unfolding of Book of Mormon history and culture within Mesoamerica.

NOTES

1. *Dialogue*, Vol. 8, No. 2 (Spring, 1973), pp. 40–48.
2. Coe, pp. 42, 46.
3. Coe, p. 48.
4. Coe, p. 47.
5. *Documentary History of the Church*, Vol. 4, p. 461.
6. Joseph Fielding Smith, *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith* (Deseret Book Co.: Salt Lake City, 1938), p. 71.
7. Coe, p. 42.
8. Coe, p. 41.
9. Thomas Stuart Ferguson has outlined the textual evidence for this location in his work, *Cumorah—Where?* (Zion’s Printing and Publishing Co.: Independence, 1947). See also Sidney B.

- Sperry, *Book of Mormon Compendium* (Bookcraft: Salt Lake City, 1969), pp. 447ff; and David A. Palmer, *In Search of Cumorah* (Horizon Book Co.: Bountiful, 1981). Dr. Palmer argues the location of Cumorah in southern Veracruz, Mexico.
10. The Nephites lived within 20 to 22 days travel from the Mulekites (Mosiah 23:3; 24:25) for over 300 years until Mosiah led the Nephites north to discover the Mulekites about the middle of the third century BC. Limhi's expedition into the land northward about 121 BC discovered rusted swords, breastplates, and bones of destroyed Jaredites still exposed on the ground (Mosiah 8:8–11); this argues for a date somewhat later than 600 BC for the Jaredite destruction.
 11. See for example Franklin S. Harris, Jr., *The Book of Mormon Message and Evidences* (Deseret News Press: Salt Lake City, 1961), pp. 87–93 on pre-Columbian extinction of animals, and pp. 73–79 on cultural items.
 12. In the first century AD all tribal segregations were done away and the people became one, with all things in common (4 Nephi 3, 17). After about 150 years of mixture, a political division occurred, with religious apostates distinguishing themselves as Lamanites (4 Nephi 35–38). At this time those of the Church adopted the name Nephites. These titles had nothing to do with a supposed resegregation of Nephite-Lamanite descendants. At the time of the last battles the two warring factions were not racially distinctive. Following destruction of the Nephite nation, the Lamanites continued the warfare among themselves for "many generations" and eventually "dwindled in unbelief," after which "they became a dark" and "loathsome" people (1 Nephi 12:19–23).
 13. Robert L. Rands, "The Rise of Classic Maya Civilization in the Northwestern Zone: Isolation and Integration," pp. 159–80 in *The Origins of Maya Civilization*, edited by Richard E. W. Adams (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1977). See esp. p. 171.
 14. *Times and Seasons*, Vol. 8, Nos. 22, 23, pp. 914–915, 927.
 15. *Ibid.*, p. 927.
 16. Michael D. Coe, "The Archaeological Sequence at San Lorenzo Tenochtitlán, Veracruz, Mexico," *Contributions of the University of California Archaeological Research Facility*, No. 8 (Berkeley, 1970), pp. 21–34. For a full report of San Lorenzo excavations see Michael D. Coe and Richard A. Diehl, *In The Land Of The Olmec; The Archaeology of San Lorenzo Tenochtitlán* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1980).
 17. Coe, *op. cit.*
 18. This chronological sequence of San Lorenzo reflects John L. Sorenson's bristle-cone-pine adjustments to Coe's radiocarbon dates.
 19. Sidney B. Sperry, *Book of Mormon Chronology* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1970). These dates follow Sperry's earliest estimate of 65 years per generation in the Jaredite king list, which is more in line with an early date for Babel and the confusion of tongues. Possible time gaps in the king list have been questioned where "descendant" replaces "son." Sperry (p. 24) points out that "descendant" implies the meaning of "son," rather than indicating a generation gap. For example, the king list says, "Shez was the son of Heth" (Ether 1:25), but the text says Shez was a "descendant" of Heth (Ether 10:1). Sperry places the Jaredite destruction at about 550 BC in one estimate, but recognizes the Jaredites may have continued contemporary with the Mulekites for well over a century (pp. 23, 25).
 20. Michael D. Coe, *Mexico* (New York: Praeger, 1962), p. 84.
 21. Titiana Proskouriakoff, "Olmec and Maya Art: Problems of Their Stylistic Relation," pp. 119–30 in *Dumbarton Oaks Conference on the Olmec*, edited by Elizabeth P. Benson (Washington: Dumbarton Oaks, 1968). See p. 125.
 22. Benson, 1968, discussion comment, p. 112, following paper by Kent V. Flannery.
 23. V. Garth Norman, *Izapa Sculpture* (Part 1, Album; Part 2, Text). Papers of the New World Archaeological Foundation, No. 30 (Brigham Young University Press: Provo, 1973, 1976).
 24. Brian F. Fagan, *Peoples of the Earth: An Introduction to World Prehistory* (Little, Brown, and Co.: Boston, 1983, 4th ed.), p. 392.
 25. Robert J. Sharer in *Journal of Field Archaeology*, Vol. 9 (1982), p. 257.
- Editor's Note.** Because of time limitations, the summary of the panel discussion on the location of the river Sidon of the Book of Mormon—featured at the Annual Symposium held October 8 and 9, 1982, and originally planned for this number of the *Newsletter and Proceedings*—has had to be postponed until a future issue.
- The identification of the ruins of San Lorenzo with the city of the Jaredite king Lib (Ether 10:20) goes back to classes taught by M. Wells Jakeman at Brigham Young University in the 1950s. As far as we know, he was the first to propose this identification. It was developed from an examination of the internal geographical requirements of the Book of Mormon and conceived as a test case for later archaeological excavation.
- A brief account of a visit to San Lorenzo in 1960 by two BYU scholars with this view in mind may be read in *Progress in Archaeology*, pp. 156–158.
- John H. Wittorf treats at length the question whether Joseph Smith could have derived inspiration for writing the Book of Mormon from the Mound Builders. See his paper, "Joseph Smith and the Prehistoric Mound Builders of Eastern North America," *Newsletter and Proceedings of the SEHA*, 123.0, October, 1970, pp. 1–9. RTC.

153.1 SYMPOSIUM CHAIRMAN POSTPONES DEADLINE.

Exciting preparations for the Society's Annual Symposium are continuing, according to Clark S. Knowlton, chairman (*Newsl. and Proc.*, 152.3).

The Thirty-second Annual Symposium on the Archaeology of the Scriptures has been set for Saturday, October 22, at Brigham Young University, Provo. Dr. Knowlton has postponed until September 1, the deadline for receiving one-page abstracts from those wishing to participate. Full instructions, together with a form for returning the abstract, are enclosed with this mailing.

A Friday-evening panel-discussion on the "documentary hypothesis" of the origin of early books of the Old Testament is planned. Included will be William J. Adams, John L. Sorenson, John A. Tvedtnes, and Benjamin Urrutia.

Bruce W. Warren has been appointed a member of the Symposium Committee to be in charge of local arrangements. Dr. Warren was chairman of the Twenty-ninth Annual Symposium, held in 1980

(*News. and Proc.*, 146.5). He has also read nine papers at the Symposium, 1952–82, and has served as a member of the Committee a number of times over the years.

Other members of the 1983 Symposium Committee besides Dr. Warren are Esther Phelps Parks, John A. Tvedtnes, and Benjamin Urrutia. RTC.

153.2 BOOK-OF-MORMON GEOGRAPHER SPONSORS ISSUE OF NEWSLETTER AND PROCEEDINGS. Charles Stuart Bagley of Alamo-gordo, New Mexico, has paid for the printing of the present issue (No. 153) of the *Newsletter and Proceedings*. This was done by means of a gift to Brigham Young University restricted to the use of the SEHA (see *News. and Proc.*, 152.9).

Mr. Bagley has been an avid student of Book of Mormon geography since the mid-1920s. As far as we know, he was the first in the western United States to adopt the Tehuán-tepec theory and support his views with systematic research. Janne M. Sjodahl summarized them briefly in 1927 in his *An Introduction to the Study of the Book of Mormon* (Deseret News Press, Salt Lake City), pp. 415–418. (We understand, however, that Louis Edward Hills and others in the Midwest had also investigated the Tehuán-tepec view during the decade preceding that date.)

Mr. Bagley has been a member of the SEHA since 1953 and a Life Member since 1973. He has also been a frequent contributor to the Society's Research Fund.

In 1963 Mr. Bagley read a paper, "A New Approach to the Problem of Geography of the Book of Mormon," at the Society's Annual Symposium (published, 1963, by the BYU Department of Extension Publications in *Papers of the Fourteenth Annual Symposium on the Archaeology of the Scriptures*, pp. 70–86). In 1976 he read a further paper at the Twenty-fifth Annual Symposium, entitled "Yucatan as the Land of Nephi."

The SEHA expresses its warm thanks to Mr. Bagley for his generous and timely gift and hopes that other members will wish in like manner to lend their support to the Society in its unique work. Sponsors for the next several issues of the *Newsletter and Proceedings* are needed. The March, 1983, issue (Article 152.9) explains how uncomplicated it is to make funds available to the Society through a tax-exempt donation to BYU. Simply send your check, payable to BYU, to the LDS Foundation, A-285 Smoot Building, BYU, Provo, Utah 84602, and ask that the gift be restricted to the use of the Society for Early Historic Archaeology. RTC.

153.3 NEW "PUBLICATIONS FOR SALE" MAILED. A new price list entitled "Publications for Sale by the Society for Early Historic Archaeology" (blue list) was mailed in May to all Society members and is now in effect.

As explained in the March issue of the *Newsletter and Proceedings* (152.5, 152.6), the long standing, free-past-publications privilege of five per year has been eliminated and prices assigned to each of the titles on the former "green list." Thus, 57 additional titles have been transferred to the newly printed "Publications for Sale." The prices formerly on the "blue list" continue unchanged on the new printing.

In all cases, there is a price advantage for SEHA members over what the public is required to pay. Also, as many copies as desired may be ordered. An order form is appended to the new list. RTC.

153.4 "GARDEN TOMB, JERUSALEM," RE-PRINTED IN ENSIGN. A paper first published in the Easter Issue, April, 1982, of the *Newsletter and Proceedings of the SEHA* (article 148.1) has been reprinted in the April, 1983, issue of the *Ensign of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*.

"Archaeological Evidences for the Garden Tomb, Jerusalem," by John A. Tvedtnes, was originally read as a paper at the Society's Thirtieth Annual Symposium on the Archaeology of the Scriptures, held in 1981. The author favors the Garden Tomb as the most likely spot in Jerusalem for the burial and resurrection of the crucified Jesus (John 19:41–42; 20:1–17). Appearing on pp. 8–14 of the *Ensign* under the title, "The Garden Tomb," the article was slightly reduced from the *Newsletter and Proceedings* version, although a paragraph was added near the end recalling LDS church president Harold B. Lee's impressions upon visiting the Tomb. RTC.

153.5 IN THE NEXT ISSUE. Present plans call for the next issue (No. 154) of the *Newsletter and Proceedings* to be organized by Bruce W. Warren as Guest Editor. Included will be papers by Dr. Warren himself on an ancient Quiché Maya sacred book, the Popol Vuh, and how linguistic and archaeological evidence helps us place its narrative in a correct historical setting; and by Benjamin Urrutia on the Genesis account of Eden as compared with early Mesoamerican accounts and the writings of the modern novelist, J. R. R. Tolkien. RTC.