



Type: Book Chapter

Background to Jaredite Geography

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Source: *The Swords of Shule: Jaredite Land Northward Chronology, Geography, and Culture in Mesoamerica*

Published: Provo, UT; Challex Scientific Publishing, 2018

Pages: 93-97

Chapter 10

Background to Jaredite Geography

One purpose of this book is to build on prior work and provide new insights into Jaredite geography. Currently, there is virtually no specificity to Book of Mormon Jaredite geographic sites in the land northward, since the Book of Ether is not extensive and contains few directions or overt indications of geographic features that are easily discernable. Sorenson, in his model in *Mormon's Codex*, provides conjectured locations, but he acknowledges that most of the locations that are known to be in the land northward are just based on reasonable inference, since the text contains only few specific details regarding geography. The conceptual geography in Sorenson's model, as extracted from previous publications, is identified in figure 27, which is followed by a legend of locations. A map of uniquely Jaredite locations as applied to the Isthmus of Tehuantepec was extracted from previous publications and is shown in figure 28.



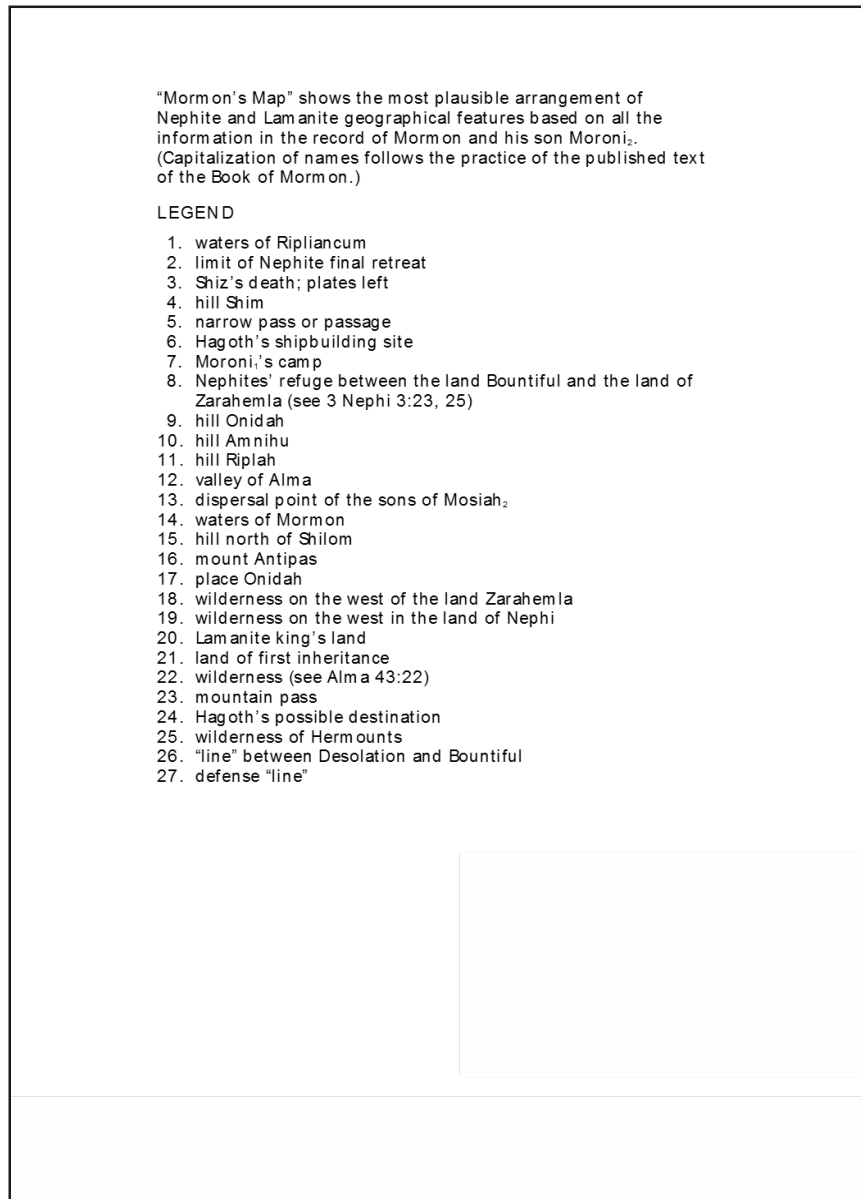


Figure 27. Conceptual Book of Mormon geography from *Mormon's Map* and legend. (Grover, 2014)



Figure 28. Conceptual Jaredite geography from *Mormon's Codex*. (Grover, 2014)

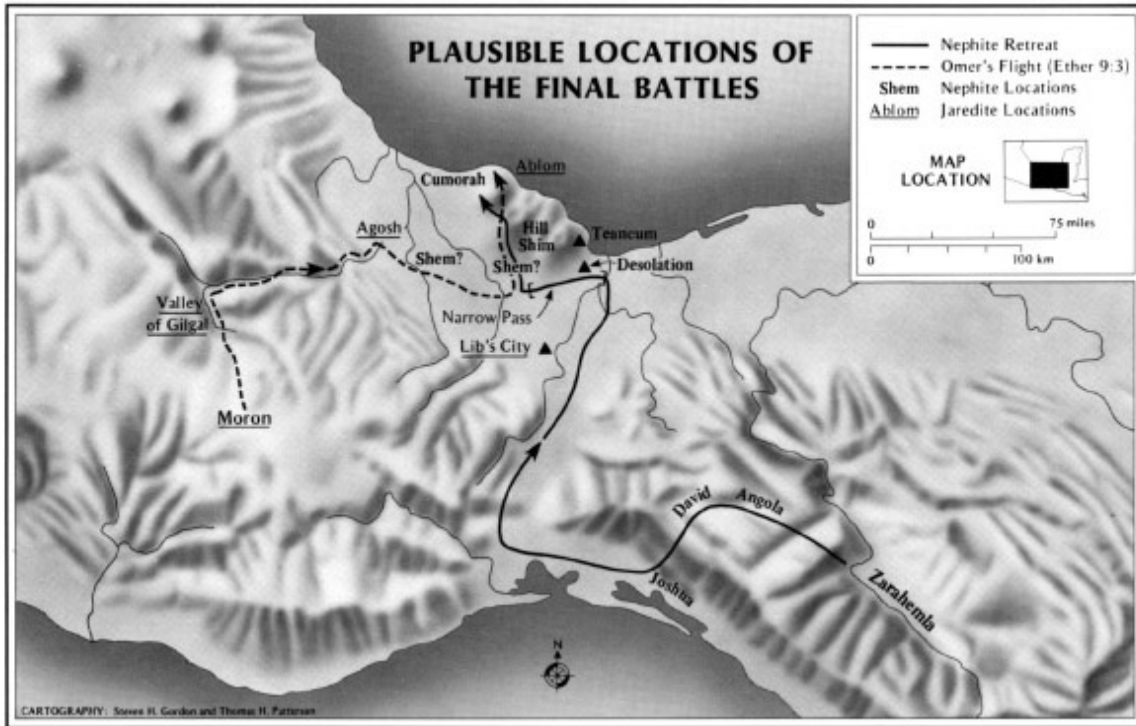


Figure 29. BYU Studies map of some locations in the land northward. (BYU Studies 2015a)

Jaredite Directions

The issue of directions and the relative skew of Mesoamerican models has confused some readers of the Book of Mormon. In the Jaredite area, the terms *northward* and *southward* are relatively easy to accommodate *northward* essentially means “in a northwesterly cardinal direction” and *southward* is “in a southeasterly cardinal direction.” The term *north countries* is different but is consistent with the general terminology of the *land northward* and the *land southward*. The term *eastward* is used twice in the book of Ether, with both journeys eastward ending up at the sea. There is no mention of a west direction in the book of Ether. The directional system used in the Book of Mormon utilizes, at least in part, a form of the Egyptian system, which relied on the directional flow of the river system to determine north and south (Grover 2015). Since the Jaredite plates were translated during the Nephite period where the river utilized was the upper Grijalva River as the River Sidon (according to the Sorenson model), the “east sea” is consistent with the Gulf of Campeche (Gulf of Mexico), and so the translation into the Nephite language of traveling eastward would also be consistent.

