Nephite and Mesoamerican History

	Book of Mormon		Mesoamerica		
	Land Northward	Land Southward	North of Isthmus of Tehuantepec	South of Isthmus of Tehuantepec	
a.d. 600		view: wars, nations"	Various States Teotihuacan influence	"Classic Maya" e declines Maya stelae cease	LATE CLASSIC PERIOD
500					
400		ong non-Nephites	Teotihuacan groups s Militarism increasing	;; cults abound	LASSIC DD
	Nephites exterminate Nephites retreat nort			Chiapas abandoned	EARLY CLASSIC PERIOD
300	War, turme Widespr Cults, pries	ead trade	Peak in cultur Priests fl Surge in class s	ourish	ш
200	•	sperous society reappear			
100	Classless, theoc	ratic-led society	Stable socioeco	nomic growth	PROTO-CLASSIC PERIOD
a.d. 1	Class distinct Migrations	ocial catastrophe ions, state rule northward shite and Lamanite	Hesitation Volcanic Precursors of C Monte Alban, G	action lassic at Tikal,	PROT
100 в.с.		d influence	Izapan influen	ces go north	LASSIC D
200					LATE PRE-CLASSIC PERIOD
300					LATE
400		Small tribes	Small sociopolit	ical chiefdoms	E SIC
500					MIDDLI PRE-CLASS PERIOD
600	Approximate e of Jaredite		Approxima Olmec civ		PRI

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Key Scripture 2 Nephi 5:33

Explanation Archaeologist John L. Sorenson has found interesting correlations between Book of Mormon events and pre-Columbian American history in Mesoamerica (central and southern Mexico and northern Central America). As depicted in this chart (which, like other archaeological time lines, is oriented with the most recent date at the top), Sorenson suggests that Olmec and Jaredite civilizations correspond historically, while the civilization existing in the Mexican state of Chiapas in highland Guatemala can roughly represent the Nephite and Lamanite peoples. In addition, the dates of Izapan influences spreading northward correspond with the people of Nephi finding the land of Zarahemla and joining with the Mulekites. Because the peak Izapan development occurred between the second century B.C. and the fourth century A.D., Izapans are believed to have been Nephites, although the exact association is unclear. While the Teotihuacans were not related to the Lamanites directly, existing probably as a remnant group of the Jaredites, they are believed to have allied themselves culturally and possibly militarily with the Lamanites near the end of Nephite civilization. These chronological and geographic correlations offer secondary evidence supporting the ancient origin of the Book of Mormon.

John L. Sorenson, An Ancient American Setting for the Book of Mormon (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1985), 135; and John L. Sorenson, Images of Ancient America: Visualizing Book of Mormon Life (Provo, Utah: Research Press, 1998), 193.