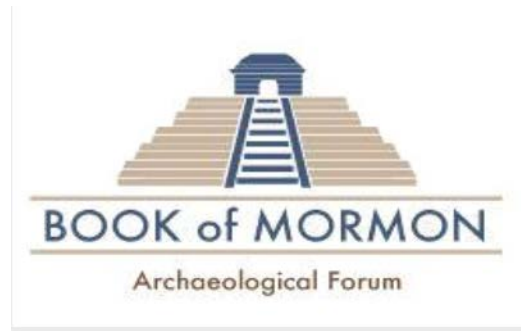




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The Geography of the Jaredites

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Abstract: While the debate still burns as to where in Mesoamerica the Nephites and Lamanites resided, few have attempted to create and identify an internal map of the geography of the Jaredites. Although the body of work that is dedicated to the history and account of the Jaredite people is only a fraction of the overall text of the Book of Mormon, cardinal directions, descriptions of specific locations, and references to Nephite locations are used throughout the brief body of work. These specific mentions of the geography, which may seem minute with a casual read, cumulatively amount to an internal map of the Jaredite people. Further, because the geography of the Jaredites corresponds with some Nephite locations, the internal map can reasonably be placed in Central America near the previously proposed Nephite location. By constructing an internal map and identifying a probable physical location of the Kingdom of the descendants of the Jaredites, it follows that archeological evidence should be able to relatively identify a possible descendant culture of the Jaredite people.



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The Geography of the Jaredites

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While the debate still burns as to where in Mesoamerica the Nephites and Lamanites resided, few have attempted to create and identify an internal map of the geography of the Jaredites. Although the body of work that is dedicated to the history and account of the Jaredite people is only a fraction of the overall text of the Book of Mormon, cardinal directions, descriptions of specific locations, and references to Nephite locations are used throughout the brief body of work. These specific mentions of the geography, which may seem minute with a casual read, cumulatively amount to an internal map of the Jaredite people. Further, because the geography of the Jaredites corresponds with some Nephite locations, the internal map can reasonably be placed in Central America near the previously proposed Nephite location. By constructing an internal map and identifying a probable physical location of the Kingdom of the descendants of the Jaredites, it follows that archeological evidence should be able to relatively identify a possible descendant culture of the Jaredite people.

From the geographical evidence within the text of the Book of Ether, a systematic examination of the above claims will be made through a careful reading of the terminology and events of the Jaredites. It is first and foremost the highest priority to remain true to the intentions and authenticity of the Book of Mormon. With this said, it is necessary to establish a language to analyze the text. The first part will establish the definitions used to analyze the geography of the Jaredites and touch on some of the important relevant historical background within the Book of Ether before exploring the main focus of this article. The article will proceed as follows:

- A. Establishing definitions
- B. Creating a basic combined Nephite/Jaredite internal map
- C. Establishing an expanded internal map of the geography of the Jaredites
- D. Placing the internal maps within Mesoamerica

By connecting the landmarks between the Nephites and Jaredites, a more concise map of the geography and locations of the Book of Mormon lands can be established. All Book of Mormon quotations will be italicized.

A. Understanding the Language and History Within the Book of Ether

It is important to note that the Book of Ether is an abridgement of an abridgement and thus may explain what can be considered as limited geographic descriptions within the account as compared to the rest of the Book of Mormon. The Book of Ether is mainly a history of the descendants of Jared. Many times during the Book of Ether there existed at least 2 kingdoms, but Ether and the writers before him only recorded the events central to those loyal to the rule of the posterity of Jared and perhaps the brother of Jared¹. The history of the expansion and contraction of the kingdom ebbs and flows as much as the tides on the seashores that surround the area. In

the end, Ether observes and records the destruction of the entire kingdom and fulfillment of prophecy.

After 344 days at sea, the brother of Jared and approximately 22 other adults were led to the “Land of their inheritance” and landed on “the shore of the promised land” (Ether 5:12) and started their kingdom. Four times the term *seashore* is used in Ether, and in each occasion it references a sea as in ocean and not a lakeshore or river shoreline. This conclusion is initially established as the family expresses gratitude for not encountering any whales or sea monsters during their travels (Ether 5:10). Whales and sea monsters would only be present in an ocean and not a lake or any other freshwater body. Since the only time the word shore is used is in reference to the sea or as part of the word *seashore*, it is concluded that the context and use of the word is consistent throughout the scriptures and thus refers to an ocean. In comparison Ripliancum, which is considered the largest body of water (Ether 15:8), is called “waters of Ripliancum” instead of seashore. The special designation of the waters of Ripliancum as large in comparison to others indicates that the overall size must have been ascertainable in some way and not endless, as the ocean would appear. It is from this distinction that gave rise to the use of *seashore* to specifically mean the shore of an ocean.

Just before Jared and his brother died they counted all their people. The brother of Jared had 22 children and Jared had 12 (Ether 6:20). If the other 11 couples also had an average of 17 children, then there would have been about 200 children and many grandchildren by the time Jared and his brother died approximately 50 years after landing². This exponential increase in population illustrates how the Jaredites and also the descendants of the other eleven couples could have quickly populated many areas and established many cities (and perhaps the beginnings of several independent cultures) by about 2000 BC.

Moron was the first city and kingdom established in the Promised Land under the reign of Orihah, son of Jared, around 2100 BC³ and was continuously occupied during the reign of the Jaredites. As the site of the first kingdom and the place “where the king dwelt” (Ether 7:5), the phrase *the kingdom* refers to the physical land of Moron and surrounding cities that fall under Jaredite reign. The precedence for such an interpretation is established in Ether 7:9 when Ephraim fought against his brother Corihor, “. . . *And after he had armed them with swords he returned to the city Nehor and gave battle unto his brother Corihor, by which means he obtained the kingdom and restored it unto his father Kib.*” Kib had previously been king of Moron until his son usurped his power and dethroned him. For all other instances when Moron is not the intended kingdom, the scriptures specifically state the title of the alternate kingdom as, “the kingdom of Cohor,” or sometimes it states “half of the Kingdom” (see Ether 7:20).

B. Establishing an internal map of the geography of the Jaredites

The references to the Nephite lands within the record of the Jaredites provide many key locations that help construct an internal Jaredite map. Many of the same geographical markers are used within the narrative of the Jaredites and the Nephites/Mulekites/Lamanites narrative, thus it is necessary to understand the physical locations of these landmarks relative to each other. The following is a list of all the intersections of the geography of the Jaredites and the people throughout the rest of the Book of Mormon. In all of these instances the geographic location

exists in both time periods, providing the necessary information in establishing a link between the timeline and geography of the two periods:

1. The Jaredite hill Ramah and the Nephite hill Cumorah were the same hill (Ether 15:11).
2. Hill Shim (place where Ammoron hid the Nephite records) was “passed by” by Omer when he fled Moron and traveled many days (Ether 9:3).
3. The Land and city Desolation were located in the land northward and northward of and adjacent to the Nephite west-sea land Bountiful, which was located within the land southward (Andersen⁴).
4. Ramah/Cumorah was located northward of Desolation and Moron.
5. Moron was located near but not in the land Desolation (Ether 7:6). The land Desolation was located adjacent to and northward of Bountiful, which was part of the land southward (Alma 22:30-32).
6. There was a small neck of land, that included the “line” between Desolation and Bountiful, and it divided the land northward (Jaredite) from the land southward (Nephite) (Alma 22:32).
7. King Lib resided in Moron about 800 to 900 BC. This was about the same time the serpent plague was removed, permitting hunting in the land Bountiful (Alma 22:31) and perhaps in other parts of the land southward (Ether 10:19).
8. King Lib built a new city near the entrance into the land southward to preserve Bountiful as the hunting area for loyal subjects, for food, and commerce (Ether 10:21-22).
9. City “Lib” must have been near the west-sea land Bountiful (Ether 10:20-21 & Alma 22:31), near the Nephite west sea (Ether 10:19 & Alma 32:31), near a place where the Nephite west sea divided the land, and near the narrow neck leading by the west sea into the lands northward/southward (Ether 10:19-21 & Alma 63:5).
10. In 345 AD Mormon fled Joshua (Mormon 2:16) into the land northward to Jashon, near hill Shim, then northward to city Shem, and then eventually back to Joshua in the land southward (Mormon 2:27).⁵
11. Coriantumr, the last survivor of those people participating in the final Jaredite civil war (about 250 BC), lived “nine moons” in Zarahemla (Omni 1:20-22).
12. The Jaredite land Northward was the same as the Nephite north country (Hel 4:7-8, Hel 6:8, Hel 7:1, Hel 3:3-12, Omni 1:22).

The information above establishes that the land of the Jaredites overlaps in some areas with the land of the Nephites. Not only were the two groups initially separated by about 1500 years, each was led by the Lord to each one's separate promised land, however, they were both located in the same general area. This means that the maps that Book of Mormon scholars have determined as likely geographic matches previously can also be used to determine the whereabouts of the Jaredites. A generic map can now be developed based on the understanding of the placement of locations in the rest of the book of Mormon to determine the position of the overlapping Jaredite sites.

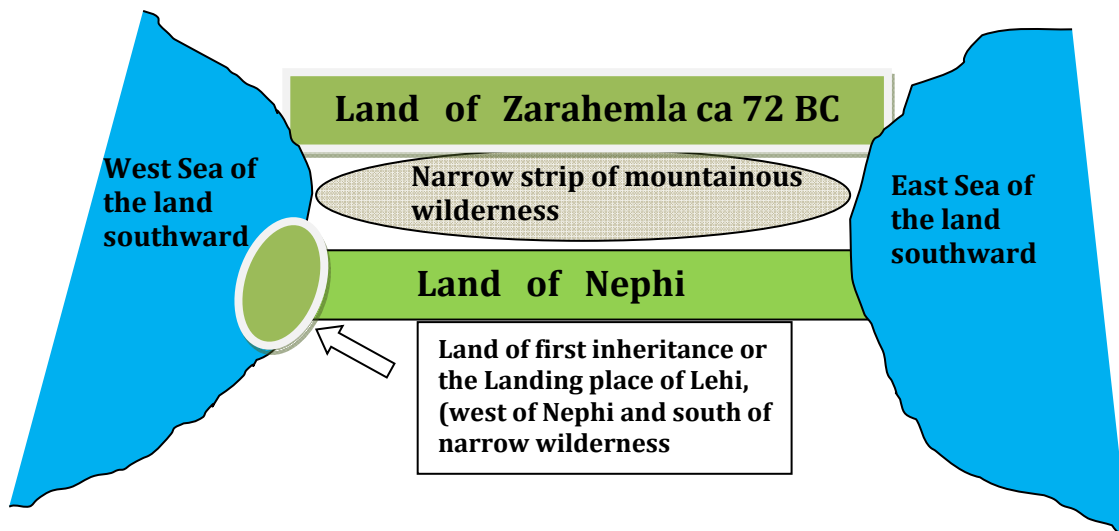
The first step in determining the succinct placement of landmarks between the Jaredites and Nephites is understanding the placement of seas surrounding the land. The following scriptures show the relationship between the Nephite east and west seas and the Jaredite south and north seas and how the lands in between are connected according to the Book of Mormon.

As of about 72 BC, the Land of Nephi and the land of Zarahemla were divided by a narrow strip of mountainous (Andersen)⁶ wilderness that extended to the east and west seas with the land of Nephi south of the wilderness and the land of Zarahemla north of the wilderness:

*[the Lamanite lands] ...were in all the regions round about, which was bordering even to the sea, on the east and on the west, and which was divided from the land of Zarahemla by a narrow strip of wilderness, which ran **from the sea east even to the sea west...**and thus were the Lamanites and the Nephites divided. (Alma 22:27)*

Both the land of Nephi (south of the wilderness) and the land of Zarahemla (after 72 BC) (north of the wilderness) extended from the same east sea to the same west sea. Some Lamanites lived near the place where Lehi and his sons' first arrived along the same sea that bordered west of the land of Nephi, [Some idle Lamanites lived within the narrow strip of wilderness and also] *on the west in the land of Nephi, in the place of their fathers' first inheritance, and thus bordering along by the seashore (Alma 22:28).*

The “place of their fathers 'first inheritance” refers to the location of Lehi’s arrival on the promised land. He landed on the west seacoast, which was west of the land of Nephi, in about 588 BC (1 Nephi 18:23) and called it the promised land.



For several years following 72 BC, the Nephites possessed all of the land northward from the narrow strip of wilderness, which specifically included all the land bordering on the west-sea land Bountiful, until it came northward to the line between Bountiful and Desolation.

The Nephites had taken possession of all the northern parts of the land bordering on the [narrow strip of] wilderness...from the east to the west, round about on the wilderness side; on the north, even until they came to the land which they called Bountiful.

And it [Bountiful] bordered upon the land which they called Desolation, it [Desolation] being so far northward that it [Desolation] came into [therefore not the same as] the land which had been peopled and been destroyed. (Alma 22:29-30)

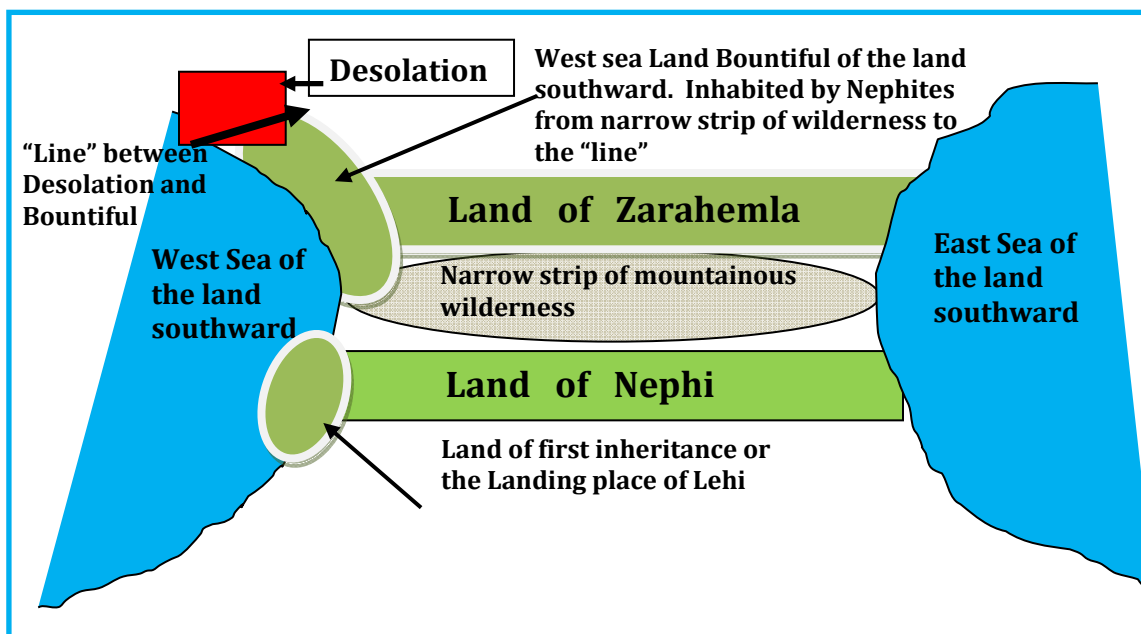
The west-sea land Bountiful bordered Desolation. West-sea land Bountiful is the same area to where all of the animals fled from the Jaredite land northward when the poisonous serpents and drought depleted the land northward.

And thus the land on the northward [from the line] was called Desolation, and the land on the southward [from the line] was called Bountiful, it [Bountiful] being the wilderness which is filled with all manner of wild animals of every kind, a part of which had come from the [Jaredite] land northward for food (Alma 22:31).

A key part to understanding this verse is in understanding the pronouns that determine the relationship between the different lands. *It* or *the wilderness* refers to that part of the land southward which was called Bountiful. The line between Bountiful and Desolation that was controlled by the Nephites, separated these two places.

It was only the distance of a day and a half's journey for a Nephite, on the line [between] Bountiful and the land Desolation, from the east to the west sea; ... Thus the land on the northward [of the line] was called Desolation, and the land on the southward [of the line] was called Bountiful (Alma 22:29-33).

It is important to note that the distance from the “east to the west sea” is only a day and a half. This means that a Nephite would have been able to complete the journey from an eastern point (not a sea) to the west sea in the specified amount of time.



The length of the line from the east to the west sea was the same as the distance across the narrow neck of land—also known as the small neck of land between the lands Northward/southward—that led from the land Bountiful into the land northward. The length of this defensive line was only about 12-20 miles.⁷ Therefore, Bountiful was located adjacent to the west sea, hereafter called the west-sea land Bountiful. West-sea land Bountiful was located northerly of the narrow strip of wilderness and bordered on the west sea until it came to the “line” between Bountiful and Desolation hereafter denoted *line*. Desolation was located northward from the *line* and was part of the land northward. It also bordered the same west sea where the *line* started. Desolation then went northward from that *line* until it came into the land where the Jaredites were destroyed (see Alma 22:30).

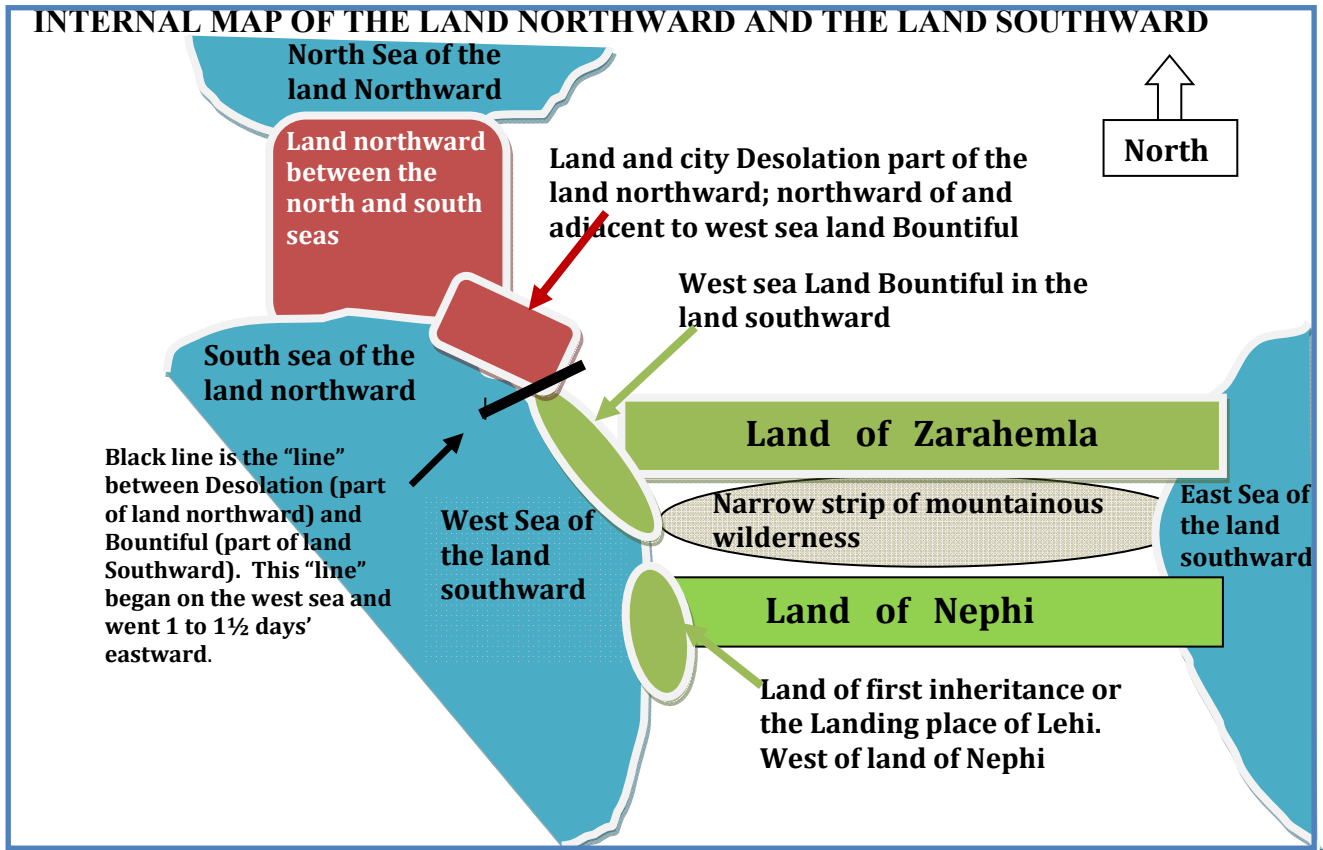
By 72 BC the Nephites possessed all of the land northward from the narrow strip of wilderness and had started to possess the Jaredite land northward including the land of Desolation. By 46 BC these migrations were accelerating:

3 An exceedingly great many...departed out of the land of Zarahemla. And went forth unto the [Jaredite] land northward to inherit the land.

8...They did multiply and spread, and did go forth from the land southward to the land northward, and did spread insomuch that they began to cover the face of the whole earth, from the sea south to the sea north, from the sea west to the sea east. (Hel 3:3,8)

The “sea south and sea north” reference the Jaredite lands. The Nephites eventually populated all the Jaredite land northward from the *line* between Bountiful and Desolation northward from the Jaredite south sea to the Jaredite north sea.

All of these scriptures help in adding to the description of the topography of the land. The west-sea land Bountiful bordered the west sea, extended northward from the narrow strip of wilderness, and was located south from and adjacent to Desolation. Desolation was located on the southern part of the land northward and bordered the same Nephite west sea. The land northward extended from the Jaredite south sea (from Desolation also located on the Nephite west sea) to the Jaredite North Sea. From these conclusions, the following internal map connects the land of the Jaredites with the land of the Nephite/Lamanites.



D. Expanding the internal map of the geography of the Jaredites

Now that the outline for the overall geography of the two time periods has been established, it is possible to place the rest of the geographic descriptions throughout the book of Ether according to the locations shown on the following cohesive map. Through a careful reading of the Jaredite text, it is apparent that specific relationships between locations are established throughout the migration of battles and people that indicate requirements for many of the geographic locations mentioned in connection with the Jaredites, thus providing the information necessary to establish the region's geography.

The analysis will begin by identifying landmarks that are associated with Desolation and Bountiful and moving outward. After establishing possible locations for the many sites mentioned in the book of Ether, then a valid analysis can be made of the migration of battles and people from Moron to Ramah.

When Jared and the rest of his family first landed upon the shore, they deemed the area the *promised land*. The city of Moron was established as the place where the king of the land reigned, and Moron remained the principal capital city. Since Moron was the first city established, it is reasonable to surmise that the land of Moron is near the shore where Jared and

his family first landed but also in a defensible position. Additionally, when Coriantumr chased Lib from Moron, Lib retreated to the seashore, illustrating that Moron is close enough to a seashore that the seashore would be the next natural line of defense (Ether 14:12-14). Moron was also located near, but not in, the Nephite-designated Desolation⁸ (Ether 7:6) in the Jaredite land Northward. Moron could not have been located southward of the land Desolation because the Nephites designated that area as the land Southward, which included the land Bountiful. It is reasonable to suspect that Moron would have been located west from Desolation. The aforementioned determination of Moron's location and proximity relative to Desolation shows that the sea that bordered Desolation (the west sea) was most likely the same sea nearest Moron.

Nehor⁹ is the next city mentioned after the city of Moron. When Corihor rebelled against his father, the king, he "...went over and dwelt in the land of Nehor..." (Ether 7:4). Later when Corihor desired to battle the king, it states, "...he came up unto the land of Moron where the king dwelt" (Ether 7:5). The use of *went over* creates a relational link between the two cities seeming to imply that they are close in proximity to one another. The use of *came up* implies another geographic relationship. *Up* denotes elevation. If Corihor had to go *up* from the land of Nehor, then Moron must be higher in elevation than Nehor. This same reasoning applies when understanding the location of the wilderness of Akish in relation to Moron. Coriantumr who was living in the wilderness with his army "*came up unto the land of Moron, and gave battle unto Lib*" (Ether 14:11). Again, the use of the word *up* shows that Moron was higher in elevation than the wilderness of Akish. Both of these examples support defense tactics that would have logically compelled the Jaredites to initially choose an area to settle that was higher in elevation than the surrounding areas. The vantage point would have made Moron easier to defend. Chapter 9 sheds further light on the initial area of the Jaredites when King Omer had to flee from Moron:

Wherefore Omer departed out of the land [of Moron] with his family, and traveled many days, and came over and passed by the hill of Shim, and came over by the place where the Nephites were destroyed, and from thence eastward, and came to a place which was called Ablom, by the seashore.... (Ether 9:3)

The fact that Omer had to travel many days with his family and then continue onward passing Cumorah and Shim, suggests that Ablom was not located near the same seashore as Moron. The above scripture also establishes that Ramah, which is the place where the Nephites were destroyed, is west of the sea near Ablom and thus north of Desolation. This is the only location in the book of Ether where the distance between two areas is quantified by a number of days. The distinction signifies that the location to which Omer took his family was a lot farther away from Moron than all the other locations mentioned in conjunction with Moron throughout the book of Ether.

When the Jaredite kingdom started to disintegrate into the destroying of people and lands, the overall route took a circular but decidedly northern progression starting from the west of Moron in the valley of Gilgal where Coriantumr and Shared met to battle. Coriantumr left Moron to battle in the valley of Gilgal. After battling for three days, Coriantumr pursued Shared farther away from Moron, "*And it came to pass that Coriantumr beat him, and did pursue him until he came to the plains of Heshlon*" (Ether 13: 28). From the plains of Heshlon Shared drove

Coriantumr back to the valley of Gilgal (Ether 13: 29) where Coriantumr killed Shered but not before Coriantumr was wounded, and they suspended battle for two years. Then Coriantumr chased Gilead into the wilderness of Akish where Gilead did an end around capturing Moron and keeping Coriantumr in the wilderness of Akish for two years.

Assuming that the scriptures mention all the locations that the troops would have crossed in pursuit of battle, then it is safe to say that the locations that are mentioned in relation to one another are in fact adjacent. This means that the valley of Gilgal is on the western side of Moron because Desolation is to the east and the sea to the south. It also implies that the plains of Heshlon are on the side of Gilgal opposite from Moron. If Heshlon was not on the side of Gilgal opposite of Moron, then it would have been possible for the battle to have progressed to Moron instead of back into Gilgal.

It is not until chapter 14 in the book of Ether that the extent of the Jaredite geography is fully illuminated due to the route of the numerous battles. During the first part of chapter 14 the wilderness of Akish becomes the geographic focal point as Coriantumr and Lib fight back and forth. Coriantumr builds up his army for two years in the wilderness of Akish and then attacks Lib in Moron (Ether 14:7,11). The following route unfolds as the battle leaves Moron for the last time:

12...the armies of Coriantumr did press forward upon Lib, that he fled to the borders upon the seashore.

13 And it came to pass that Coriantumr pursued him; and Lib gave battle unto him upon the seashore.

14 And it came to pass that Lib did smite the army of Coriantumr that they fled again to the wilderness of Akish. (Ether 14:12–14)

After Coriantumr and Lib leave Moron they battle on the seashore, which has previously been established as the same seashore that borders Desolation. From the seashore they go directly to the wilderness of Akish and continue to battle, thus the wilderness of Akish is located near the same seashore as Moron and Desolation. The fact that the route starts in the wilderness of Akish, moves to Moron, then to the seashore, and back again to the wilderness of Akish, demonstrates a triangular relationship with Moron and the wilderness of Akish adjacent to one another, forming the base, and the seashore forming the point of a triangle. In any case, the route depicted in the scriptures shows that all three locations can be accessed from any of those points making them relatively close together.

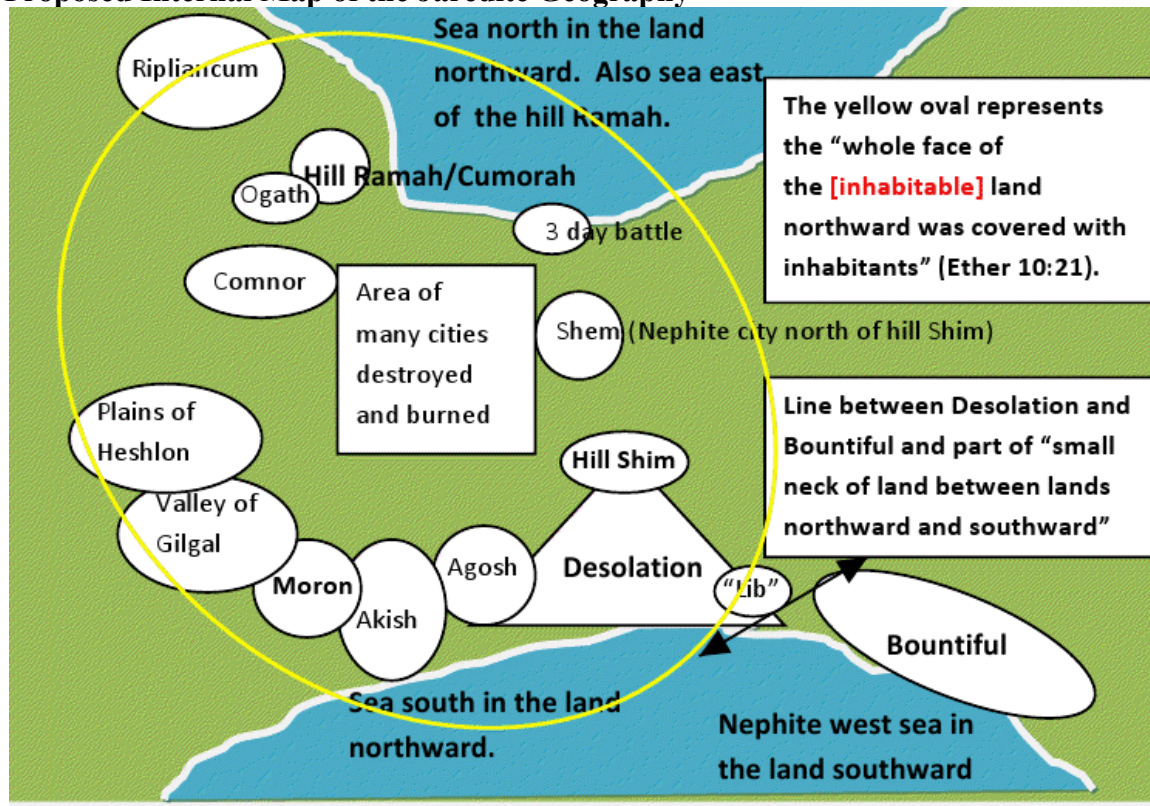
The battle leaves the wilderness of Akish and continues into the plains of Agosh, which is located, at least partially, within the Nephite-designated land of Desolation. Since the wilderness of Akish is located between Moron and Desolation and since the seashore is southerly, then the plains of Agosh could only have been located to the north, east, or some combination thereof from the wilderness of Akish. It is in the plains of Agosh that Coriantumr slays Lib and the war proceeds in a northerly direction from the Jaredite south sea northward towards the Jaredite north sea and an irreversible path of destruction.

With Shiz determined to avenge his brother's death, Coriantumr flees from city to city and from "the shedding of blood to the shedding of blood" (Ether 14:22) until finally arriving at the north seashore where a three-day battle ensued. Coriantumr gained the advantage and chased Shiz westward to the valley of Corihor. Coriantumr camped nearby in the valley of Shurr. Both of these valleys were located near a hill called Connor. Hill Connor must have been located near the vicinity of Ramah and Ripliancum because the war was entering its final phase and the major part of the population of the Jaredite people had already been killed and the inhabited areas decimated. Therefore, hill Connor must have been located just southward and maybe even westward of Ramah/Cumorah. Three consecutive battles occurred on the hill Connor and after the third one, Shiz prevailed.

At this point Coriantumr admitted the destruction of over six million of his people and repents. Shiz then chased Coriantumr northward to Ripliancum and continued the battle that led to the wounding of Coriantumr. Following this battle, Coriantumr's army chased Shiz southward to Ogath, which was located near Ramah/Cumorah. About 14 years after the last civil war started at Moron, the final battle occurred near the hill Ramah/Cumorah wherein all the remaining Jaredites participating in that civil war were killed except Coriantumr.

The following is a proposed internal map of the Jaredite geography. It incorporates all of the above imperatives.

Proposed Internal Map of the Jaredite Geography

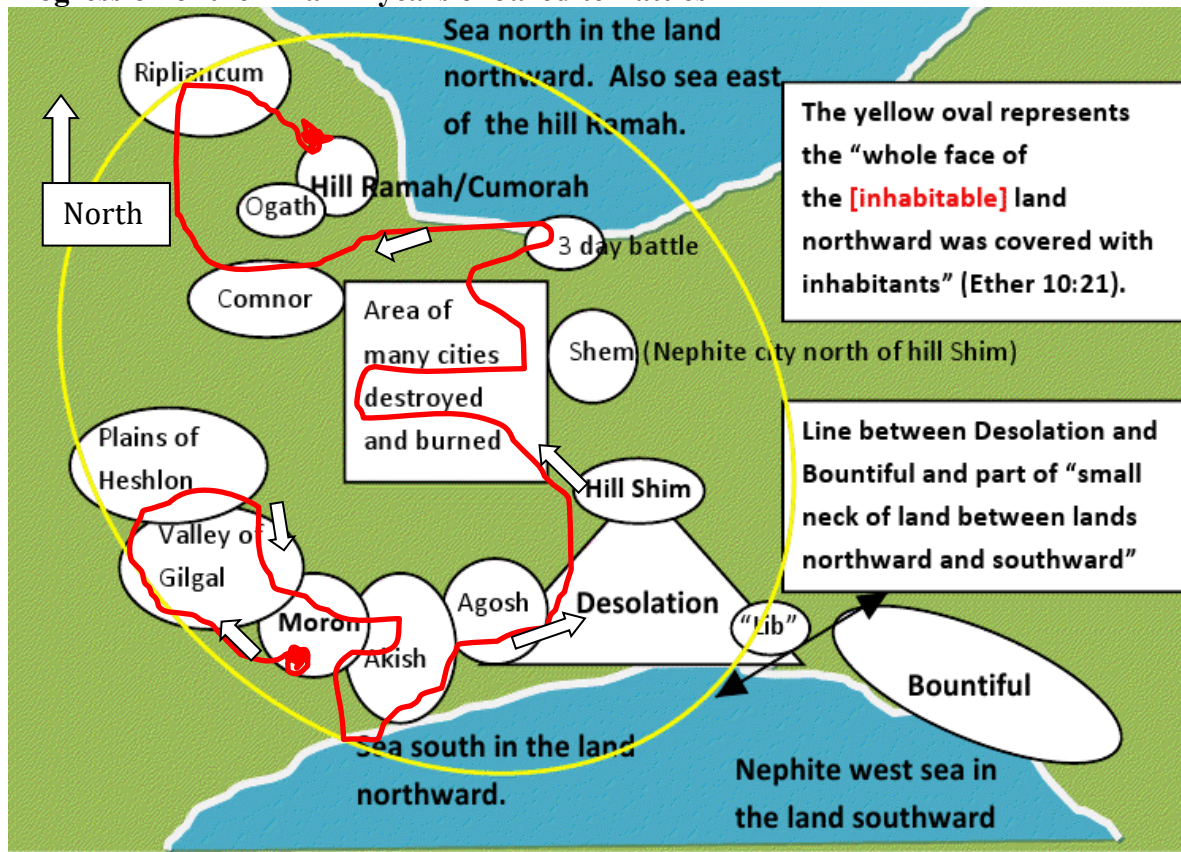


In the above map, Ramah/Cumorah is situated northward from Desolation and Moron; Desolation eastward of Moron; and the sea adjacent to the land of Moron labeled as the Jaredite

south sea, which is the same sea as the Nephite west sea. Some may question the exact directions and locations used for these geographical points, but as seen from the analysis above, these locations are limited to the relative and possible positions based on the scriptures. In section four, it will become more evident why these specific placements have been chosen.

A second version of the proposed Jaredite geography indicates the northward progression, in red, that the final 14-year civil war followed, as described in Ether 13-15.

Progression of the Final 14 years of Jaredite Battles



The red line shows the approximate route of the final 14-year war beginning at Moron and ending at Ramah/Cumorah about 250 BC. The war starts in the southern kingdom and follows a northward progression into the second kingdom until both kingdoms are destroyed.

D. Placing the internal maps within Mesoamerica

Even though the Jaredites started with a little more than a couple dozen adults, the long life span aided in the number of progeny, exponentially increasing the growth of the population. The population was greater than six million before the battle at Comnor, and this only accounts for the lineage of Jared and his brother. So where on earth, or more correctly, on the Western Hemisphere, is there any evidence of such a massive population that also had a written language having existed between about 2000 to 250 BC? The only place currently known is within the Olmec/early Pre-classic Zapotec people of Southern Mexico. The Olmec heartland and

surrounding areas meet all the requirements necessary to be the most likely and reasonable candidate for the Jaredite people. Most of the Mesoamerican proponents are in agreement that the Olmec, or at least the Heartland Olmec were where the majority of Jaredites resided.

Some may suggest that a remote possibility would have been within the Maya mainly in the area of the Mirador Basin, Guatemala, where millions of Maya lived about that time period. However, the Maya in the Mirador Basin could not have been the Jaredite people described in the Book of Mormon because, even though they also had a written language, the Pre-classic Maya in the Peten were at their apex from about 300 BC to about 100 AD¹⁰, whereas the Olmec precipitously declined in population about 300 BC and ceased to be a recognizable culture by about 250 BC¹¹ consistent with the demise of the Jaredites.

The following geographic map is proposed according to what is believed that the Book of Mormon requires. The large yellow circle is the approximate Olmec Heartland. The large red circle is the proposed area of the Jaredites. The blue circle shows the Jaredite heartland of the north kingdom. The smaller red circles represent the Jaredite south kingdom in the area of Oaxaca. The red triangle indicates the land Desolation, which was also where the plains of Agosh were likely located. The proposed west-sea land Bountiful is shown by the small yellow oval. All Nephite names and locations are in white.



Not only do the Olmec fit the growth in population, the decline in population, and the evidence of a written language, as required by the Book of Mormon, but they also had settlements similar to the internal Jaredite map. By seeing the entire Isthmus of Tehuantepec as the Jaredite land northward from the north sea to the south sea instead of as the narrow neck of land, then it is possible to plausibly fit the rest of the Jaredite landmarks within this area coinciding with the Olmecs and early pre-classic Zapotec.

Dr. Richard Hauck is probably correct in his 1988 assessment that the "narrow neck of land" could not have been the Isthmus of Tehuantepec but that the "narrow neck of land" and the "place where the sea divides the land" were most likely located on the southeastern periphery of the Isthmus of Tehuantepec and on the Pacific coastal shelf (Hauck, 1988). The narrow neck of land that led into the land northward had to have been located southward of the land northward, or at least southward of the principal part of the land northward and near the southern part of the Isthmus of Tehuantepec. It would then follow that the Pacific Ocean would have been the Jaredite south sea/Nephite west sea. Desolation would have bordered the Pacific Ocean as would the greater land of Moron to the west of Desolation. This configuration places Moron somewhere

within the Oaxaca valley, which possibly comprised the major early Jaredite population in the southern part of the kingdom.

It must be emphasized that the Isthmus of Tehuantepec could not have been the narrow neck of land leading into the land northward because the entire isthmus was the Jaredite land northward from the south sea to the north sea and it "*was covered with inhabitants*" (Ether 10:21). It was the narrow neck of the land bordering along the Pacific at the *line* between the land Desolation and west-sea land Bountiful that led into the Isthmus of Tehuantepec, the Jaredite land northward.

During the final civil war it appears that most of the Jaredites lived within the lower elevations surrounding and including the area of the Olmec heartland, which would have been the northern part of the Jaredite kingdom. There is agreement with Andrew Hedges who astutely describes this point in time as the place where a change in theatre occurred. After leaving the wilderness of Akish for the last time, the Jaredites never returned to the destroyed areas again, but instead continued northward to a more populated area (Hedges, 2009), however Hedges is mistaken when he claims that that change in theater was either the area of northern Mexico and/or the United States, because Alma 22:30 says they were destroyed in the same area where they lived.

The Jaredite land northward, as described in the Book of Mormon, did not extend into the Mexico City area and probably not even into the Veracruz area. Apparently that last civil war did not extend northward from Ripliancum (Papaloapan Basin). Over 5 million people had been killed by the time the three battles on the hill Comnor had ended. Resources were dwindling and the soldiers and people were injured and weakened. It appears that at this time the war had covered the principal areas of the Jaredite populations and they were now ready to make their final stand at Ripliancum and then back eastward at Ramah. The sparse numbers and dwindling resources due to the burning of all the major cities would have made it nigh impossible to rebuild and start over elsewhere.

Despite the self-annihilation of the Jaredite people, there were still other people outside of the Jaredite kingdom lineage who inhabited and cultivated the areas surrounding the Isthmus of Tehuantepec. The book of Ether only records Jared's lineage, but it is known that perhaps as many as eleven other families came to the *promised land* at the same time. These other people would have also exponentially increased their population over several generations and could have formed their own cultures in areas such as Abaj Takalik; Izapa; Pijijiapan; Ocos; Monte Alto etc. Some, from these families, could have eventually extended into southern Mesoamerica and northward past the Mexico City area. They could have been the foundational culture of the Mixtec people around Puebla. It is probable that some of these families migrated southward into the Yucatan area and mixed with the emerging Maya.

Concluding Thoughts

By corroborating Jaredite landmarks with the landmarks and locations mentioned throughout the rest of the Book of Mormon a reasonable theory of the approximate geographic locations of these landmarks has been established. The proposed maps, while not exact in precision, will provide a guideline for further research and study of these areas. It is believed that by narrowing

the focus of the search, resources will best be used in directing continued efforts on the areas mentioned above.

Interestingly enough, a good friend of Book of Mormon research, named Rolando Amado, president of the Archeological Research institute in Mesoamerica (ARIMA), agrees with Richard Hauck and the authors, in an email in June 2011 where he says,

"Joe: I don't know if you have already located the only place in America where "the narrow neck of land, by the place where the sea divides the land..." does exist as a natural geographical and geological feature. Every time I was reading the B o M I asked myself where this particular place could be... In fact, as the B of M says and as you assume, this place is located in the land southward of the proposed Jaredite area...It could be very interesting from the B of M archaeological point of view to find a great ancient city buried by this place. Some years ago, I was walking on this narrow neck of land, where the sea divides the land. I was trying to collect genealogical data from my paternal family. In fact this is the place where my paternal ancestors once lived. Check Google for satellite maps of Oaxaca, find Salina Cruz and go to the southeast. You will find this very place: the narrow neck of land and the place where the sea divides the land. All contained in a 100-120 km. landstrip.

While some may view this as simply anecdotal, it is felt that any additional authentication only gives further credence to a theory that is fully supported by the weight of the Book of Mormon.

The many convergences of Book of Mormon locations and statements with geographical, archeological, and anthropological evidence, as shown in this article and others, confirm the Book of Mormon and its location in Mesoamerica.

Joseph Smith also believed that the events of the Book of Mormon occurred in Central America. In 1842 the Prophet Joseph Smith gave his latest statements of his personal beliefs regarding the geography of the Book of Mormon. They are found in *Times and Seasons*, of which he was editor and manager and for which he had personally assumed complete responsibility. These statements confirm that, regardless of any prior statements he may have made, to the contrary notwithstanding, he believed, at the time of his death, that Central America was the location of the events recorded in the Book of Mormon. He explicitly states that the narrow neck of land is in fact located in Central America:

"...They lived about the narrow neck of land, which now embraces Central America, with all the cities that can be found..." (Times and Seasons, September 15, 1842). Joseph Smith additionally states, "...we have found another important fact relating to the truth of the Book of Mormon. Central America, or Guatemala, is situated north of the Isthmus of Darien and once embraced several hundred miles of territory from north to south. The city of Zarahemla stood upon this land..." (Times and Seasons, October 1, 1842). He concludes this new find with asserting its importance, "It is certainly a good thing for the excellency [sic] and veracity of the divine authenticity of the Book of Mormon, that the ruins of Zarahemla have been found..."

While it is one thing to be able to establish the location with modern technology, it is quite another, some might even say, revelatory, for Joseph Smith to have established the same thing during his time. Not only does the above theory rely on the Book of Mormon, it also aligns with the personal beliefs of Joseph Smith.

Some of the conclusions and speculations in this article, although interesting and probative, may, nonetheless, be susceptible to debate, which is certainly welcomed and encouraged. After all, everyone is looking to establish the same thing: Where did the Book of Mormon actually and literally take place? However, there is one final conclusion that is absolute:

The “veracity and divine authenticity of the Book of Mormon” absolutely proves the reality and divinity of Jesus Christ of which we attest.

Appendix A (Jaredite Generations (only of Jared) in the promised land (Joe Andersen 2008))

The following estimated chronology is only of the lineage of Jared and probably included his brother's family. The term “exceedingly old” means about 142 yrs. (see Ether 9:24) or an assumed reign of 100 yrs.

1. **Jared:** No information how long he lived after arriving: Assumed. **(about 2100 BC)**
50 yrs
2. **Orihah:** Son of Jared; Days “were exceedingly many”.
100 yrs
3. **Kib:** Son of Orihah when he was very old; When exceedingly old Kib begat Shule.
100 yrs
4. **Shule:** Exceedingly numerous kingdom; 2 kingdoms; many children.
100 yrs
5. **Omer:** Son of Shule in his old age; exceedingly many days old; inhabited north sea.
100 yrs
6. **Emer:** Son of Omer in his old age; Moron reduced to only 30; Many children; Saw Christ. 62 yrs
7. **Coriantum:** Son of Emer; Built many mighty cities; Exceedingly old age =142 yrs.
100 yrs
8. **Com:** Son of Coriantum; murdered by son Heth at age 49 plus 30(?)
80 yrs
9. **Heth:** Son of Com; killed prophets; All household died in serpent plague except Shez.
50 yrs
10. **Shez:** Son of Heth; He Built many cities; Exceedingly old age. **(about 1500 BC)**
100 yrs
11. **Riplakish:** Son of Shez; Many wives; Whoredoms; Taxed people; Killed by rebellion.
42 yrs
12. **Morianton:** Descendant of Riplakish; Many years without a king. Morianton fought many years and became king. Built many cities; Lived to an exceedingly great age.
100 yrs
13. **Kim:** Son of Morianton; Wicked; Died in captivity in old age.
50 yrs

14. **Levi:** Son of Kim; 42 yrs. captivity; Righteous; Lived to a “good old age”.
75 yrs
15. **Corom:** Son of Levi; Reigned many days; Righteous.
50 yrs
16. **Kish:** Son of Levi; no indication of age.
50 yrs
17. **Lib:** Son of Kish; Righteous; great hunter; Built a great new city “Lib”. (ca 800 BC)
50 yrs
18. **Heathrom:** Son of Lib; Reigned 24 yrs plus about 36 years in captivity.
50 yrs
19. **Heth:** Son of Heathrom; Lived In captivity all of his days.
50 yrs
20. **Aaron:** Son of Heth; Lived in captivity all of his days.
50 yrs
21. **Amnigaddah:** Son of Aaron; Lived in captivity all of his days. (about 600 BC)
50 yrs
22. **Coriantum:** Son of Amnigaddah; Lived in captivity all of his days.
50 yrs
23. **Com:** Son of Coriantum; Ruled ½ kingdom 42 yrs. Then all the kingdom of Moron;
Protected the prophets; Ruled many years after obtaining all the kingdom of Moron.
75 yrs
24. **Shiblom:** Son of Com; Civil war between he and his brothers. Pestilences.
50yrs
25. **Seth:** Son of Shiblom; Lived in captivity all his days.
50 yrs
26. **Ahah:** Son of Seth; Obtained kingdom; Wicked; “Few were his days”; Bloodshed.
10 yrs
27. **Ethem:** Son of Ahah; Wicked all of his days.
50 yrs
28. **Moron:** Son of Ethem; Wicked; Rebellion and ½ kingdom lost for many years.
50 yrs
29. **Coriantumr:** The only descendent of brother of Jared to rule; He put Moron in captivity;
Coriantor, son of Moron lived in captivity all his days, was father of Ether who lived in
days of Coriantumr, who ruled entire life of Coriantor; part of Moron's life; and about 15
years during the final civil war for an estimated rule of about.
70 yrs. (ca 250 BC)

Summary: From Jared to righteous King lib about 1250 yrs. From Lib to Coriantumr about 600 years: From Coriantumr to Christ about 250 years. Therefore, the Jaredites probably landed in the Promised Land about 2100 BC give or take a couple of hundred years. (Lib to Christ about 800 years)

Appendix B

Reasons Why Desolation was Located East of Moron

Moron could not have been located southward from the “line” because that is where Bountiful and the land southward were located. Moron could not have been located northward from the “line” because that is where Desolation, Boaz, Joshua, Shem and Ramah/Cumorah were located. Therefore, Moron could only have been located eastward or westward from Desolation.

The following will show that the land Desolation must have been located easterly from Moron, and between Moron and Bountiful:

- a. Since the Nephites fled northward from Desolation, and since Desolation bordered upon the Nephite west sea and Nephite land Bountiful, and since Desolation was in the land northward, then the Nephite west sea (in that area of the land northward) must have been the same as the “Jaredite” south sea. Therefore, the south sea where Lib and Coriantumr fought had to have been the same Nephite west sea.
- b. Since the “north sea” had to have been north of the “south sea” and since Ramah/Cumorah was located northward from Desolation, then the Jaredite “north sea” would have been that sea that was just eastward of Ramah/Cumorah.
- c. Since Moron could not have been located adjacent to Bountiful, and since Bountiful was located adjacent to Desolation, and since Moron was also located near the south sea and near Desolation, and since Moron could not have been located northward from Desolation then, Desolation must have been located eastward of Moron.

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Endnotes

1. Coriantumr was a descendant of the brother of Jared (Ether 7:20 & 8:2, & 10:32 & 11:15).

2. See appendix A for a detailed approximate chronology of the history of the Jaredite people.
3. See appendix A
4. See my articles located at BMAF.org entitled: "*Why City Desolation could not have been located near the Gulf of Mexico*" and "*Why city Lib was not located at La Venta or anywhere near the Gulf of Mexico.*"
5. In the year AD 345 Mormon fled from Joshua, located on the Nephite west sea (Mormon 2:6), and fled "even to Jashon [hill shim]" in the land northward. From there he fled farther northward to the city of Shem where Mormon mounted a defense and then pursued the Lamanites and Robbers all the way back to at least Joshua in the land southward. This forced the treaty of AD 350 wherein the Nephites received all the Jaredite land northward of the Line and the Lamanites received everything southward of the Line including Joshua and the west-sea land Bountiful.
6. For a discussion proving that the narrow strip of wilderness was mountainous see my article at BMAF.org entitled '*Footprint of Zarahemla*', Article two.
7. The Allens postulate this to have been about 12 miles (Exploring the Lands of the Book of Mormon, 119).
8. See appendix B for information explaining why Desolation was east of Moron.
9. F. Richard Hauck proposes Nehor as the valley of Corihor in his book *Deciphering the Geography of the Book of Mormon* pg. 158 and that this could possibly have been the birthplace of the order of the Nehors as well.
10. "At its peak around 250 BC, the Maya built at least 27 large cities and countless smaller ones in the Petén. About 150 AD they suffered their first collapse as a society" (*AuthenticMaya:MayaCulture*).
11. On the internet at Civilizations in America, Richard Hooker states: "Around 300 BC, the Olmec vanished for reasons that vanished with them. We do know, however, that much of their culture and social structure was absorbed by other peoples."