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## America: Is It a Book of Mormon Name?

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**Abstract:** This article attempts to link the name “America” with a cognate form of the name Mulek, a pre-Christian traveler to the western hemisphere. The author rejects the concept that America was named in honor of Amerigo Vespucci, as has been often assumed.

# America

## Is it a Book of Mormon Name?

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*By J. M. Sjodahl*

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The immortal name by which the great continents on our western hemisphere are known is generally traced, as to its origin, to Amerigo Vespucci. By the historic accounts as written an impression has been created to the effect that Martin Waldseemueller, early in the sixteenth century, moved, as it were, that the name "America" be given to the recently discovered "new world," in honor of the famous Florentine, and that the motion was carried after having been duly seconded and discussed.

Is this the truth—the whole truth, and nothing but the truth?

Amerigo Vespucci, born in Florence, 1452, in his younger days, was a student of geography and astronomy and became an ardent collector of maps, charts, and globes. As for business, in 1495, he was connected with a ship-brokerage firm at Seville, and it may be supposed that he became acquainted with Columbus who had become famous on account of his transatlantic voyages.

It was a time of great excitement. The occupation of Constantinople by the Ottoman Turks, 1453, had thrown an obstacle across the common trade routes to the Orient, and leading commercial nations in Europe were eagerly searching every nook and corner of the world for new highways to Asia, where immense wealth beckoned them in the form of spices, gold, and precious stones. Columbus, in 1492, had discovered what he believed to be a western passage, across the Atlantic, to the fairy land of the East, and others were feeling their way along the western coast of Africa and round the Cape of Good Hope. By the stories and rumors that came from across the ocean—then known as "the sea of darkness"—people were aroused, and adventurous spirits were irresistibly drawn toward the mysterious unknown, as Polar explorers have been in our day. Vespucci, by natural inclination, study, and business training, well equipped for the life of a sea-farer, was one of those in quest of adventure and fame.

In 1497 an expedition for the west was being fitted out at Cadiz. This was Vespucci's first opportunity. He secured the position of pilot. Vincente Yanez Pinzon, who commanded the *Nina* in 1492, was in charge. De Solis was second in command. This expedition proceeded somewhat farther west than Columbus had gone and explored the northern coast of Honduras, the Gulf of Mexico, Florida, and the Bermudas.

On May 20, 1499, another expedition with Vespucci as pilot left Spain. Alonzo de Ojeda had charge of it, and Juan de la Cosa was second in command. Both these sturdy mariners had sailed with Columbus. De la Cosa had been both the owner and captain of the *Santa Maria*, the ill-fated flagship of the admiral. This expedition explored the South American coast from some point in Brazil to the gulf of Maracaybo, in Venezuela. A part of this coast line had already been visited by Columbus on his third voyage.

On May 14, 1501, an expedition set out from Lisbon for the new world. Who the chief commander was is not known for certain. It is supposed to have been Nuno Manuel. Vespucci was the pilot. The explorers this time followed the Brazilian coast as far south as latitude  $34^{\circ}$ , and then turned southeast. Now they encountered a terrible storm and were driven to the inhospitable coasts of the island of South Georgia, about 1,200 miles from Terra del Fuego. Here the sailors turned homeward and arrived in Lisbon, Sept. 7, 1502.

Vespucci embarked in three more voyages of discovery, but it is not necessary to enter into further details. Enough has already been said to show the part he played in the enterprises by means of which the existence of a new world was gradually revealed. The third voyage, 1501-2, is generally considered second in daring and historical importance, only to that of Columbus in 1492.

Amerigo Vespucci was not only a master pilot, he was also a good writer, and he had, moreover, a high and, as it turned out, correct estimate of the value of publicity.

Consequently, in 1503, he wrote a letter to Lorenzo di Pier Francesco de' Medici, in which he described the third voyage. The following year he addressed an epistle to a former schoolmate, Piero Soderini, giving an account of his first four voyages. Other letters are also attributed to him.

In the official records the various expeditions are, of course, named after the respective chief commanders, and not after the pilots, or any of the subordinate officers, but historians have, for the obvious reason of accounting for the name "America," followed the rule of referring to any expedition in which



Vespucci took part, as *his*. That this is due chiefly to his interesting letters goes without saying. They were circulated, and became known among the people while the official records were slumbering in the archives, and thus he became the most popular figure of the adventures he described.

Nestling in one of the peaceful valleys of the Vosges, there was a little village, Saint-Dic. There was also a college equipped with a small, primitive printing press. Connected with the school were two gifted young men, Matthias Ringman, and Martin Waldseemueller.

The Soderini letter, mentioned in a previous paragraph, or rather a French version of it, in due time found its way to Saint-Dic. It had been obtained in Portugal by Duke Rene and was by him handed over to his friends, Ringman and Waldseemueller.

This was a godsend to them. They and their associates in literary work, Duke Rene and his secretary, Walter Lud, had just matured plans for the publication of a new edition of Ptolemy, with such additions and changes as recent discoveries in the domain of geography called for. Waldseemueller had written an introduction to this work, called *Cosmographiae Introductio*, and it had been decided to print this separately on the college press. As the Soderini letter was, naturally, a welcome source of information of great value for the new edition, Waldseemueller incorporated in his *Introductio* a few lines relating to Amerigo and "America." This was in 1507.

It will now be of interest to learn just what Waldseemueller did say in his famous little pamphlet. John Fiske, in his excellent work on *The Discovery of America*, Vol. II., p. 136, gives a photographic reproduction of the passage in question, and a good translation of the Latin text. We read:

But now these parts have been more extensively explored and another part has been discovered by Americus Vespucius (as will appear in what follows): Wherefore I do not see what is rightly to hinder us from calling it Amerige or America, i. e., the Land of Americus, after its discoverer Americus, a man of sagacious mind, since both Europe and Asia have got their names from women.

This is held to be the first suggestion on record that the country visited by Vespucci be named after him. From this the conclusion is drawn that Waldseemueller was the first to propose the name which was eventually adopted.

It will be seen, at a glance, however, that the language Waldseemueller uses is hardly that of one who has a *new* proposition to make and to explain. It has not the right ring or force for that. What he says is that, as far as he knows, there

is no valid objection to calling the fourth part of the world after Americus, its discoverer. It sounds more as if the name had already been brought to public attention somehow and met with opposition, which, in Waldseemueller's opinion, was not justified.

As a matter of fact, there was a valid objection to the adoption of the name for the reason he gives for it, if anyone cared to object. In what sense could Vespucci, who was only a subordinate officer in the expeditions, be said to be *the* discoverer? That honor belongs to the commander-in-chief. Columbus' pilot on the first voyage was Sancho Ruiz; would anyone dream of calling him, instead of Columbus, the discover of the West Indies in the 15th century? Or, would that honor go even to the captains of the fleet? Magellan's pilot was Estevan Gomez; did anyone ever propose to call the Straits after him instead of after that great commander? This objection would have been easy to raise, and it would have been unanswerable.\*

There was another objection. Vespucci, or rather De Ojeda under whose command he sailed on the second voyage, 1499-1500, was not the first explorer to visit the part of the new world said to be named after him. Columbus, on his third voyage, 1498-1500, had explored the country called by the Indians Paria, and the Pearl Coast, as far west as Cubagua. This was the year previous to the arrival there of Vespucci. In what sense, then, could the latter be said to be *the* discoverer of a country already discovered?

It may be thought that Waldseemueller, in 1507, did not know that the coast visited by Columbus was a northern extension of the long stretch of land followed by Vespucci on his third voyage, 1501-2; but that would be to underestimate the geographical knowledge of the Saint-Die school teacher. Columbus, himself, at any rate, knew that he had struck a continent with "infinite extension toward the south," for he so reported to the government. He knew, because it was evident that a river with such a mighty flow of water as the Orinoco carried to the ocean could not drain a small island area. And on his own map in the 1513 Ptolemy, Waldseemueller has the coast line of South America as far as 35° south and under the equatorial

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\*Emerson, it seems, resented, almost as a personal insult, the naming of this glorious country after Vespucci. He is quoted as follows: "Amerigo Vespucci, the pickle-dealer at Seville, who went out in 1499, a subaltern with Ojeda, and whose highest naval rank was boatswain's mate in an expedition that never sailed, managed in this lying world to supplant Columbus and baptize half the earth with his own dishonest name." (Emerson, *English Traits*, 1856; p. 148 of the Riverside Edition, 1883; quoted by Fiske, *The Discovery of America*, Vol. 2, p. 162.)



line appears the statement that this country, with adjacent islands, had been discovered by Columbus, the Genoese, by mandate from the Castilian regent. Furthermore, in 1512, on Stobnicza's map, the entire transatlantic coast, north and south, was made one continuous line. Waldseemüller must have known the facts as far as they were public property in his day, and yet he saw no objection to giving the honor of discovery to Vespucci! Is there not a tangle here that needs straightening out?

Waldseemüller must have felt the force of these or similar objections, for he introduced another line of thought when he said that Amerigo was a man, and moreover, a man of sagacious mind. It seems that the brilliant author revolved some such thought as this in his mind: "You may not accept my statement that Amerigo was the actual discoverer of 'the fourth part,' although made twice in half a dozen lines, but you cannot deny that he was a sagacious man."

This is, of course, perfectly true; but, was he the only man of sagacious mind in the expeditions in which he served? If not, what is the point in that abrupt assertion?

Waldseemüller seems to have realized that not much of a "showing" could be made, in favor of the author of the Soderini letter, and so he finished up by a little bit of humor. "We need not hesitate"—that seems to be the underlying thought of his closing words—"to name the newly-discovered part of the world in honor of a sagacious *man*, though only a pilot, since both Europe and Asia are named after *women*."

The author of that remark evidently, did not have the very highest estimate of the fair sex, though he lived in the age of chivalry.

Be that as it may, he is as unfortunate in his humor as in his serious logic, for he was certainly mistaken about the derivation of the names of Europe and Asia. Neither of these was named after a woman; nor even after a man of sagacious mind. "Europe," it has been suggested, is derived from a Semitic word, *eber*, meaning "the setting," or "the west;" and "Asia," it has been thought, is related to *jazu*, or *azu*, "the rising," or "the east." Both words, it is supposed, were used by Phoenician sailors, to designate the opposite sides of the sea that separated Europe and Asia.

At first each of the names stood for only a very small part of the two continents. As late as the days of the first apostles of our Lord, "Asia" meant the district of Asia Minor of which Ephesus was the capital; hence, when Paul was forbidden to "preach the word in Asia" (Acts 16:6), he felt free to begin mis-

sionary work in Bithynia, another province of Asia Minor. See also Acts 2:9, where "Asia" is among the various provinces enumerated. It was only later, as geographical knowledge increased, that the name was extended to the entire continent. The same remark applies to "Europe." Waldseemueller might have said with more accuracy that certain fair females, famous in mythology, had been named after the two continents, or happened to have been given the same names, but that, though true, would not have served his purpose. Or, he might have thought of another argument just as convincing, or equally humorous, as the one he did offer. He might have said something to this effect: "I do not see what is rightly to hinder us from calling the fourth part 'America,' since both 'Asia' and 'Africa' begin with a capital 'A,' as does 'Amerigo,' or 'Alberigo.'" But he may not have thought of that!

On the whole, as already stated, when the famous passage in Waldseemueller's *Introductio* is closely scrutinized it does not give the impression that the author was seriously arguing for the adoption of an idea which he had just conceived and which was, therefore, new to all the world. Had that been the case, he would have tried to show from documentary evidence that Amerigo was *the* discoverer; he would not have trusted to a mere assertion not supported by official records. What seems a more probable inference from the passage in question is this, that the name "Amerige" or "America" had already taken form somewhere, somehow, and that Waldseemueller had jumped to the conclusion that Vespucci's first name accounted for it. Considering the publicity the great pilot had obtained by his letters, this was natural. The author of a journal generally seems to be the central figure in the history he writes, unless he is gifted with an unusual portion of modesty. For the same reason Vespucci, notwithstanding his subordinate position in the expeditions he piloted, appeared as the main hero in the discoveries made. It is, therefore, natural that his admirers should, from the first, regard the name "America" as a form of "Amerigo." But that is not a sufficient proof of the soundness of the theory. Waldseemueller was mistaken in his derivation of "Europe" and "Asia." He may also have been in error concerning "America." It is very difficult to trace words to their source. They come unheralded. It may be less difficult to point out the first appearance of any given word in writing or in print; but most words existed before they were ever recorded, and there is no known reason why "America" should be regarded as an exception in that respect. Everything considered, the probability is that Waldseemueller really did no more toward the adoption of the name "America" than to throw his influ-



ence in favor of one name out of several, already current, to select from.

That name, I venture to say, would have been adopted in time even if Waldseemüller had never penned a word. Consider some of the other names available. Vespucci referred to the regions visited by him, as "a new world," and this expression was subsequently made into a proper noun. But America is not a "new world." Waldseemüller himself called that "world" *Terra Incognita*, which is rather strange in view of what he says in his *Introductio*, for even if his map was made before he had thoroughly digested the Soderini letter, some explanatory note might have accompanied it when published. *Sancte Crucis sive Mundus Novus* is another suggestion which appears on maps of 1508 and 1510. On Leonardo da Vinci's map, 1514, "America" is written across South America. Schoener's map, 1520, gives three names: "America, or Brazilia, or Land of Paroquets." The last name was suggested because the country had an abundance of parrots. On Agnese's map, 1536, "America" does not appear; South America is *Mundus Novus* and *Brazil*; but Muenster's map, made for the 1540 edition of the Ptolemy has this legend: "*Novus Orbis*, the Atlantic island which they call Brazil and America." South America was still, in the opinion of some map makers, an island. But about that time the truth concerning the new world had dawned upon the most advanced minds, and Mercator, in 1541, drew a map on which North America and South America are connected by an isthmus, and he boldly named the whole of it "America." It took some time before this innovation was generally adopted, but it was almost inevitable that "America" as a name should be preferred to "Terra Incognita," "The New World," "Sancta Cruxis," "Novus Orbis," or even the "Land of Parrots."

But if "America," the name, was not given to the continents of our hemisphere in honor of Vespucci, at the suggestion of Waldseemüller, what, then, is its origin?

Professor Jules Marcou, in an article published in the *Atlantic Monthly*, March, 1875, answers that question by a line of reasoning altogether different from that generally followed. He holds that it is a good, genuine American word which early explorers learned from the natives with whom they came in contact. According to him a certain part of what is now known as Nicaragua was by the Indians called *Americ* or *Amerique*. "America" is, according to this, the modern form of that word.

To be sure, this theory has not as yet been accepted by the learned students and doctors of American history; in fact, it has been laughed at as absurd, as was Rumsey's clever efforts



at making a steamboat, or Galileo's defense of the Copernican philosophy as against that of Ptolemy; but to me it appears to be good, common sense and well worthy of consideration.

Undoubtedly, the readers of this article will peruse with interest the salient points of Professor Marcon's discussion of this question. He says, in part:

The controversy as to the priority of discovery and the honor of bestowing a name on the New World has been so long undecided—almost three centuries—that any light thrown upon this intricate problem may help its true solution, if the truth be discoverable at this late day; and with this hope I offer the following contribution.

*Americ*, *Amerrique*, or *Amerique* is the name in Nicaragua for the high land or mountain range that lies between Juigalpa and Libertad, in the province of Chontales, and which reaches on the one side into the country of the Carcas Indians, and on the other into that of the Ramas Indians. The Rios Mico, Artigua, and Carca, that form the Rio Bluefields; the Rio Grande Matagalpa, and the Rios Rama and Indio, that flow directly into the Atlantic; as well as the Rios Comoapa, Mayales, Acoyapa, Ajocuapa, Oyale, and Teopenaguatapa, flowing into the Lake of Nicaragua, all have their sources in the *Americ* range. (See public documents of the Nicaragua government; and *The Naturalist in Nicaragua*, by Thomas Belt, 8 vo, London, 1873.)

The names of places, in the Indian dialects of Central America, often terminate in *ique* or *ic*, which seems to mean "great," "elevated," "prominent," and is always applied to dividing ridges, or to elevated, mountainous countries, but not to volcanic regions: for instance, Nique and Aglasinique in the Isthmus of Darien. \* \* \*

The question to be decided is, whether the word *Americ* or *Amerrique*, designating a part of *terra firma* discovered by Cristoforo Colombo, on his fourth and last voyage to the New World, was known to the great navigator, and consequently could have been repeated by him, or by the companions of his voyage. There is no certainty of this; for the word is not found in the very brief account he has left us. But as the origin of the word *Americ* has been until now an enigma, in spite of the different interpretations of it that have been given, and as Vospuchy had nothing to do with this name, entirely unknown to him—the inventor of the word *Americi* or *America* being a printer and bookseller in a small town hidden in the Vosges mountains—it is perhaps well to review the facts, and to show where lies the greatest probability for a true solution of the origin of this word *America*, which dominates alone a hemisphere.

In the *Lettera Rarissima* of Cristoforo Colombo giving an abridged description of his fourth voyage, 1502-3, he says that after he passed the Cape Gracias a Dios, on the Mosquito coast, he reached the Rio Grande Matagalpa, which he called the Disaster River, and after remaining anchored there for several days, he stopped some time for repairing his ships and giving rest to the crews, between the small island La Huerta (the Garden Quiribiri) and the continent, opposite the village Cariai, or Cariay. Cariai is so like Carcai, or the dwelling-place of the Carcas Indians, who still live in that neighborhood, that it is possible the variation is caused by an error in reading the manuscript letter of Colombo, the *c* having been mistaken for an *i*.

\* \* \* \* \*

What was the geographical position of Cariai (Carcai), Carambaru, and

Veragua? Veragua is known to be in the great bay of Chiriqui (Costa Rica): Colombo says in his narration, "It is the custom in this territory of Veragua to bury the chief men with all the gold they possess;" and in these last years gold has been found in the tombs of the aborigines of that country. Carambaru was at least twenty-five leagues distant from Veragua (Chiriqui), which brings us a little to the north of the Rio San Juan and Greytown. Cariai must have been a little farther north, in the neighborhood of the mouth of the Rio Bluefields (of which the Rio Carca is one of the affluents), where are several islands, and this accords with the narrative of Colombo. The Carcas Indians inhabit all this region, and work today in the gold mines of Santo Domingo and Libertad, on the Rio Mico, another affluent of the Bluefields, at the foot of the Americ (or Amerique) range. \* \* \*

It is well known with what tenacity the Indians attach themselves to all their surroundings; and the Americ or Amerrique range forms the highest chain of mountains in the country of the Carcas and Ramas Indians, the average being 3,000 feet; making a dividing line between the waters flowing directly into the Atlantic, and those that empty into the Lake of Nicaragua. According to travelers who have visited certain places in the neighborhood of Libertad, Juigalpa, and Acoyapo, this mountain range is very conspicuous. \* \* \*

There is the strongest evidence that this word, denoting the range and the rocks of Amerrique, Amerique, or Americ, is an indigenous word, the terminal *ique* or *ic* being common for the names of locality, in the language of the Lenca Indians, of Central America, a part of Mexico; and that this name has been perpetuated without alteration since the discovery of the New World, by the complete isolation of the Indians who live in this part of the continent, who call their mountains by the same word today as they did in 1502, when Colombo visited them, Amerrique, Amerique, or Americ. These mountains are auriferous. \* \* \*

Colombo says the Indians named several localities rich in gold, but he does not give the names in his very curtailed account, contenting himself with citing the name of Ciamba; but it is highly probable that this name Americ or Amerrique was often pronounced by the Indians in answer to the pressing demands of the Europeans of the expedition. The eagerness for gold was such among the first navigators that it formed their chief preoccupation everywhere; and it is almost certain that to their continued questions as to the place where the gold was found that the Indians wore as ornaments, the reply would be, from Americ, this word signifying the most elevated and conspicuous part of the interior, the upper country, the distinguishing feature of the province of Ciamba.

It does not follow that Colombo was ignorant of the word Americ because he has omitted it in the Lettera Rarissima, which was addressed by him to his Catholic Majesty, the powerful king of Spain. It is evident, from his mention of several places where gold was to be found, as the Indians had told him, without giving their names, that he did not tell all he knew. \* \* \*

We may suppose that Colombo and his companions on their return to Europe, when relating their adventures, would boast of the rich gold mines they had discovered through the Indians of Nicaragua, and say they lay in the direction of Americ. This would make popular the word Americ, as the common designation of that part of the Indies in which the richest mines of gold in the New World were situated.

The word Americ, a synonym for this golden country, would become known in the seaports of the West Indies and then in those of Europe, and would gradually penetrate into the interior of the continent, so that



a printer and bookseller in Saint Die, at the foot of the Vosges, would have heard the word *Americ* without understanding its true meaning as an indigenous Indian word, but would become acquainted with it in conversations about those famous discoveries, as designating a country in the new Indies very rich in mines of gold.

"Hylacomylus\*" of Saint Die, ignorant of any printed account of these voyages but those of Albericus Vespucius—published in Latin in 1505 and in German in 1506—thought he saw in the Christian name Albericus the origin of this, for him, altered and corrupted word, *Americ* or *Amerrique*, and renewing the fable of the monkey and the dolphin, who took the Piræus for a man, called this country by the only name among those of the navigators that had reached him, and which resembled *Americ* or *Amerrique*.

In order to accomplish this it was necessary to change considerably the Christian name of Vespucius, and from Albericus, Alberico, Amerigo,† and Morigo—which are the different ways of spelling the first name of Vespuzio, or Vespuchy, or Vespucci,—he made *Americus*! Thus, according to my view, it is owing to a grave mistake of Hylacomylus that the aboriginal name of the New World, *Americ* or *Amerique*, has been Europeanized and connected with Vespuzio.

Had this mistake occurred in Spain, Portugal, or the West Indies, evidently it would have been corrected; for Vespuzio and many of the companions of Colombo were still living. But in the little town of Saint Die, unknown to Colombo or Alberico Vospuzio, distant from any seaport, this little pamphlet of the bookseller Hylacomylus was restricted to a small circle; and in truth it is around this limited area that the error was propagated and prolonged by the publication of a new edition of the pamphlet of Hylacomylus at Strasburg in 1509, and by the appearance at Basle, in 1522, of the first map upon which was seen *America provincia*.

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There can be little doubt that the word *Americ* was not only known but popularized to a certain extent, in the seaports of Spain, Portugal and the Indies, or it would not have been thus at once accepted by universal consent, without discussion. \* \* \*

The Christian name of an ordinary man is never used to designate a country, but only that of an emperor, king, queen, or prince; thus we say Straits of Magellan, Vancouver's Island, Tasmania, Van Diemen's Land, etc., while we have on the other hand, Louisiana, Carolina, Georgia, Maryland, Filipinas, Victoria, etc. There is no exception to this rule in the case of Cristoforo Colombo, for no one has thought of giving the name of Cristoforia to a country, and that of Cristoforo to a town; while at several epochs many names of Columbia, Colombia, Columbus and Colon have been given. Furthermore, in giving to Vespuzio the honor of naming the New World, Hylacomylus, using the Christian name contrary to all precedent, should have named it Albericia, or Amerigia or Amerrigonia or Morigia, and not *America*.

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\*This teacher, bookseller, and printer of Saint Die (Vosges) is so little known that even his name is not exactly known; it is thought to have been Martin Waldseemueller, or Waltzemueller. \* \* \*

†It is important to remark that Hylacomylus knew only the names Albericus and Alberico, which renders the creation by him of the name *America* still more improbable, if he had not heard the indigenous name *Americ*. The first name of Vespuzio was only spelt Amerigo and Morigo in Spanish documents that remained unpublished until many years after the death of Hylacomylus.



The only way to explain this name, reached with such difficulty, is that Hylacomylus had previously heard pronounced the name Americ or Amerique.

Accepting the view of Professor Marcou that "America" is an American word, I believe it can be shown from the Book of Mormon—that marvellous volume to which the scholarship of the world will yet have to come for information—what its origin and true meaning are, and I may as well say, before going any farther, that I believe it is derived from "Mulek" or "Melek," words from a Semitic root, meaning "king."

It is a well-known fact that words change form as they pass from mouth to mouth, from one country to another, for years or for generations. The vowel sounds are generally first modified, as being less essential parts of a word than the consonants, but even these change within certain limits. There is a long way between the familiar word "father" and its origin, "pitr," but between them lie the forms that bridge the chasm: "pater," "padre," "athir," "fader," "faedir," "vader," "vater," etc. The tender word "mother" would hardly be recognized in some of its related forms: "matr," "muotar," "mati," "mutter," "moder," "mater," etc. Popular names especially are subject to changes. "Johanan" becomes "Johannes," "Johann," "Janne," "John," "Juan," "Ivan," etc. If we keep this fact in mind, we will understand that "mulek," during the course of centuries, might well become "Amerique"—the last syllable pronounced almost like the final "ca" in "America." For words do not change at random. They follow rules and laws by which they may be traced to their origin, in spite of the strange forms they may have assumed by vowel changes and the addition of prefixes and suffixes.

According to the Book of Mormon, about the time of the destruction of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar, a small company left that city and, eventually, landed somewhere on the coast of what is now called the American continents. In the company was a son of King Zedekiah, whose name was "Mulek." The company evidently consisted of persons closely connected with the royal court, and they, separated from their wonted associations, naturally, regarded the young boy as their king and gave him a name expressing that idea.

"Mulek" is from the Hebrew *Malach* (Arabian *Malaka*), "to possess," to "rule," etc.; hence the noun *Melech*, king, and "Malkoth," kingdom. In the Old Testament the word occurs in many combinations and variations, such as "Malcham," "Malchiel," "Milcom," "Moloch," "Molech," "Meleketh," "Malchiah," and, with the definite article, "Hammelech" and "Hammoleketh." In the English version the final letter of "Melech" is

represented by "ch," except in "milcom" where a "c" is used and in "hammoleketh," where a "k" takes its place, as in the Book of Mormon. But all are from the same root and have the same primary meaning.

In course of time, the region where the colony of Mulek settled was called after him, *Mulek*. Gradually this became a popular name. There was a country called *Melek*, west of the river Sidon, and a city called *Mulek* supposed to have been located by the sea shore in the northern part of South America (George Reynolds' *Concordance*.)\*

There was a Nephite elder called *Amaleki*, which name should not be considered identical with that of *Amalek*, the son of Esau. The prophet Alma met another prominent citizen in the city of Ammonihah, whose name was *Amulek*, so called, I believe, after Mulek. And, finally, as we proceed in our reading of the Book of Mormon, we meet that striking character, *Amalickiah*, whose name deserves our attention in this connection.

I am of the opinion that the first "a" in "Amaleki," "Amulek," and "Amalickiah" is an abbreviated form of the definite article "ha," as found in "hammelech" and "hammoleketh" in the Old Testament. The suffix "i" in "Amaleki" and "iah" in "Amalickiah" are the shorter forms of "Jehovah," common in Bible names. The meaning of these names given to, or perhaps assumed by, two so different characters is, "The king of Jehovah." It is conceivable that Amalickiah, whose every effort was bent on the destruction of the republican government of his country and the establishment of a greater kingdom on its ruins, should assume such a high-sounding name in order to deceive his intended victims,—a title which others honored in humility as the servants of God. Within historic times, a Peruvian Inca, who conquered and annexed a neighboring country inhabited by a kindred people, the Aymaras† assumed a name of one of their deities, Viracocha.

We have now endeavored to follow the development of the word *Mulek*, as given in the Book of Mormon, until we find it in *Amalickiah*. With the sealing up of the Book of Mormon record the history of the western continents is temporarily covered by darkness, and the name by which a large part of it was known is lost sight of until we find it in Central America in the

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\*There is in Venezuela a lake, *Maracaibo*, a city, *Maracay*, and another *Maraca*. I am inclined to think that these words may be related to the Nicaraguan "Amerique" and the Book of Mormon "Amalickiah."

†In the Book of Mormon there is a character known as Ammeron, a brother of Amalickiah. Note the similarity between *Ammoron* and *Aymara*.



form of *Amerique*. It will be noticed that these words *Amalickiah* and *Amerique*, are almost identical in sound, particularly if the accent is placed on the antepenultima, as in "America," and the final vowel is sounded: "A-malick-yah, A-merique-e, A-meric-a.

The difference between the "l" and the "r" is no objection to this explanation.

Somehow, the difference between the sounds represented by those letters is not so well marked in some ancient or primitive languages as in modern vernaculars. A Chinaman invariably speaks of our country as *Amelica*, or even *Melica*, which is a close approach to the original "Amalickiah." Words common to the Hawaiian and Maori tongues illustrate this rule. The Hawaiian *aloha* (love) becomes *aroha* in Maori; *lano* (heavens) is *rangi*; *luna* (above), *runga*; *hele mai* (come here) *haere mai*. The name William, when transplanted in New Zealand soil, comes out in full bloom as *Wiremu*. The old Indian *Tsalagi* has become the modern *Cherokee*.\* A well known word in a more civilized language is "morro." It comes from "moles" and is found in English as "mole," meaning a structure erected for the protection of a harbor. In *Gibraltar*, from the Arabian *djebel-el-tarik*, the "l" in *djebel* has been changed to "r" in "gibr." Such modifications are as old as human history. In II Kings 15:19, the name of an Assyrian king, probably Tiglath-Pileser, is given in the abbreviated form *Pul*. In Babylonian inscriptions, we are told, it is written *Porus*. Such instances are, we may say, innumerable. It is, therefore, entirely consistent with etymological facts to assume that *Americ* or *Amerique* is the modern form of *Amalickiah*,† the stem of which is the Book of Mormon name *Mulek*, or *Melek*.

In the Book of Mormon we are told that, "The land north was called *Mulek*,‡ which was after the son of Zedekiah; for

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\*This name is instructive on the subject under consideration, illustrating how ancient American words change in course of time. In its modern, Anglicized form, *Cherokee*, it was first used, it is said, in 1708. Early French writers spelled it *Cheraqui*. The Spaniards rendered it *Chelaque* and *Achelaque*. But none of these forms is the original. The Cherokees have been identified, as Brinton holds, with a people once inhabiting the Lake regions and the banks of the Ohio river, called *Allegewi*, *Tallegewi*, *Tallegwi*, or *Tallike*. When we have noticed the etymological metamorphosis of this word from *Allegewi*, and *Tallike* to *Cherokee*, we can find no difficulty in following the gradual change of *Mulek* or *Melek* into *Amaleki*, *Amalickiah*, *Americ* or *Amerique*, and finally *America*.

†The correct pronunciation of the "i" in "iah" is as the "y" in Yaweh, and not as a vowel, or as the "j."

‡As the Sandwich Islands were settled by colonists from America, familiar with the name "Mulek" as a geographical name, it is not surprising that one of those islands bears the name "Molokai."



the Lord did bring Mulek into the land north" (Hel. 6:10). The "land north" is still especially known by that glorious name, which, in a broader sense, covers, as on Mercator's map, two great continents. And thus, that name, in its modern form, *America*, is an omnipresent, unimpeachable witness for the truth of the Book of Mormon.



JONATHAN HEATON AND HIS FIFTEEN SONS

It is doubtful whether anywhere in the country, except among the Latter-day Saints, a picture such as the above can be produced. It is a photo of Jonathan Heaton and his fifteen sons, taken in 1905-6. Mr. Heaton is a resident of Moccasin, located in the Arizona strip. The names, commencing with the father, who stands at the head, to the right are: Jonathan Heaton, William H., Jonathan B., Israel H., Charles C., Ira H., Fred C., Junius, Christopher C., Edward C. Front: Daniel H., Lynn, Sterling, Harold, Gilbert and Tomiltz, H. Tomiltz died about three years ago, that is, in 1917, as the result of a horse falling on him, and William H. was killed while cutting wheat two years ago.

One remarkable characteristic of the whole family is that not one of them has tasted tea, coffee, tobacco or liquor of any kind. A number of them have filled missions and some of them are counselors to stake presidents and bishops, and all are workers in the stakes and wards of the Church, in the places where they live. All of them, except Tomiltz, were registered in the last world war.