

Book of Mormon Geography

By

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Although a map of Palestine does nothing to prove the authenticity of the events recorded in the Bible, it gives us a sense of assurance that the people and the culture of the Bible actually existed. Knowing that there is a road from Jerusalem to Emmaus does not prove that the resurrected Jesus appeared to his disciples on that road but it does give us a sense of reality that this event occurred in a real place among real people.

It is not unreasonable that for those of us who have a testimony of the truthfulness of the doctrine contained in the Book of Mormon, that there should also be a desire for an assurance that the events recorded in the Book of Mormon took place in a real world location among a real world culture.

This Interest in the culture and geography of the Book of Mormon began as soon as Joseph Smith told his family about his first visit to the hill near his home. His mother, Lucy Mack Smith, in her History of Joseph Smith, gives us the following description of this interest

During our evening conversations, Joseph would occasionally give us some of the most amusing recitals that could be imagined. He would describe the ancient inhabitants of this continent, their dress, mode of traveling, and the animals upon which they rode; their cities, their buildings, with every particular; their mode of warfare; and also their religious worship. This he would do with as much ease, seemingly, as if he had spent his whole life among them.ⁱ

Once the Book of Mormon was published this interest blossomed both among members and critics. The members of the Church saw everything that came out or had been published about the pre-Columbian cultures of the Americas as somehow proof of the truthfulness of the Book of Mormon while the critics saw everything as evidence that it was a fabrication of Joseph Smith aided by his coconspirators. One of the first events that spoke of the possible location of Book of Mormon events occurred in May of 1834 during the march of Zion's Camp. This is commonly referred to as the Zelph story and has been used by many to support a North American location for the Book of Mormon culture. As pointed out by Ken Godfrey in his article in *BYU Studies* volume 29/2, there was much discussion at the time as to what happened and what Joseph Smith's comments were concerning this event. As to be expected there were various opinions, even among those that were eyewitnesses to the event, however everyone was in agreement that this was important evidence for the authenticity of the Book of Mormon.

To add fuel to the fire, in 1841, John L. Stephens published his book “Incidents of Travel in Central America, Chiapas and the Yucatan”. Knowing Joseph’s interest in ancient America, a copy of the book was sent to Joseph Smith by Bishop Bernhisel. In his Thank you letter to the Bishop, he said the following:

“received your kind present by the hand of Er Woodruff & feel myself under many obligations for this mark of your esteem & friendship which to me is the more interesting as it unfolds & develops many things that are of great importance to this generation & corresponds with & supports the testimony of the Book of Mormon; I have read the volumes with the greatest interest & pleasure & must say that of all histories that have been written pertaining to the antiquities of this country it is the most correct luminous & comprehensive.—ⁱⁱ

Joseph then gave the volume to John Taylor as indicated by a note found inside the cover in John Taylor’s writing.

Taylor as coeditor of *The Times and Seasons*, under the editorship of Joseph Smith then published a series of abstracts from the book along with editorial comments comparing locations visited by Stephens

with the locations and cities spoken of in the Book Mormon, indicating the high probability that some of them were the same.

Unfortunately, the discussion provoked by these articles soon died out and by the time the Saints were established in the Rocky Mountains interest in the culture and geography of the Book of Mormon was minimal as reflected by the absence of any significant published material. Shortly before the beginning of the 20th century interest began to pick up with the publication of George Reynolds external hemispheric model. Since then over 150 different models of Book of Mormon geography have been published.

It was not, however, until the publication of John Sorenson's "An American Setting for the Book of Mormon" that extensive use of cultural concepts in conjunction with the textual descriptions were used to propose a model for Book of Mormon geography that better coincided with the text. Using cultural concepts, travel times mentioned in the text and descriptions of the terrain involved, he suggested a model that depicted a limited geographical area for Book of Mormon events as opposed to the formerly accepted hemispheric model. My purpose today is not to discuss the merits of the various models for Book of Mormon geography but to show some of the convergences between ancient cultural concepts and the geography described in the text of the Book of Mormon. My personal studies of the textual description of geographic features in the Book of Mormon have convinced me that a model centered in

The Grijalva River valley in Chiapas Mexico, as suggested by Sorenson, best fits the textual data and I will therefore use that model as a basis for my comparisons.

This slide shows this model as modified by my studies and interpretation of the Book of Mormon text and the real world three-dimensional geography of Mesoamerica.

Convergence

Two years ago Brant Gardner introduced this conference to William Dever's concept of convergence as it relates to the Bible and Biblical Archeology.

Whenever the two sources or "witnesses" happen to converge in their testimony. A historical "datum" (or given) may be said to be established beyond reasonable doubt. To ignore or to deny the implications of such convergent testimony is irresponsible scholarship, since it impeaches the testimony of one witness without reasonable cause by suppressing other vital evidenceⁱⁱⁱ

In an Internet discussion, Brant extended that definition to include geography in addition to archeology.

The concept of a convergence is much more useful because it understands that there is no single geographic feature or location that really shows anything. What is required are multiple points of simultaneous and interconnect comparisons. The more you have multiple geographic features that are unique and interconnected in non-random ways, the more likely that there is a connection.

In other words

Convergence between geography and the Book of Mormon story is a necessary requirement in order for any definition of Book of Mormon geography to be useful and/or convincing.

Directional Concepts

In order to interpret textual descriptions of geography one must have an understanding of the directional terms used in the textual descriptions.

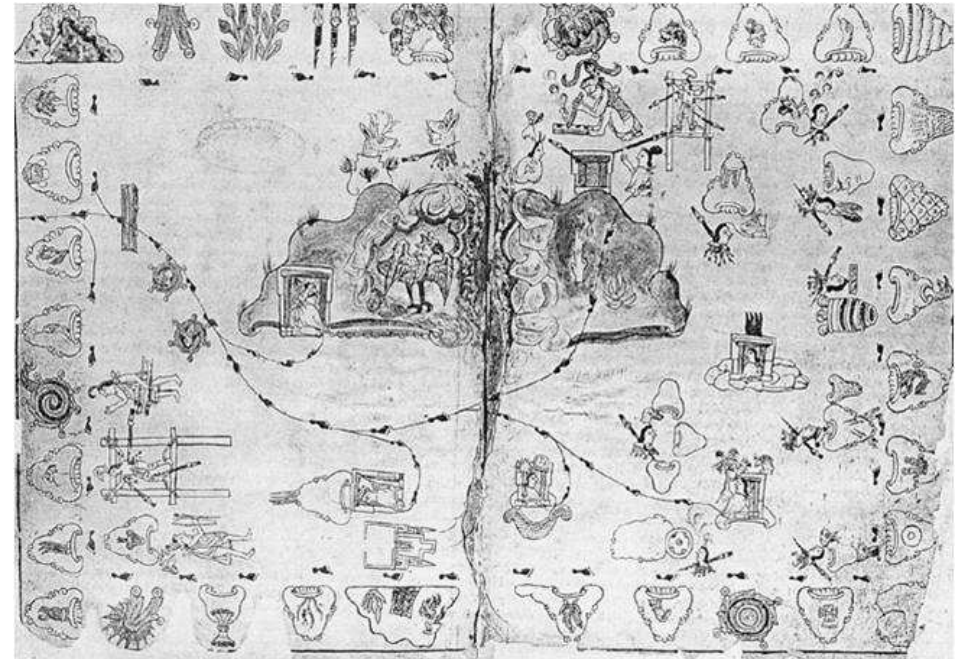
In order to do this we must examine the differences between modern and ancient concepts of directionality and geography.

In the following table, important concepts related to geography are listed in the left hand column. The modern interpretation is listed in the middle column and the ancient interpretation is listed in the left hand column.

Comparison between modern and Mesoamerican concepts of direction

Concept	Modern Map oriented	Ancient Individual oriented
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Up and down •East •West •North •South •Quarters of the Land 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •North and South •East on a Map •West on a Map •North on a Map •South on a map •Based on Longitude and Latitude 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Up Hill and Down Hill •Where the Sun Rises •Where the Sun Sets •To the Sun's Right •To the Sun's Left •Based on diagonal lines drawn between corners of a rectangle

One of the reasons for the differences is the way in which ancient peoples viewed the world around them. They looked at things from a personal viewpoint of how they were related to the immediate world around them rather than their location on a global map of the world. Although, they may have had maps, these maps were usually pictorial and very localized as shown in this slide.



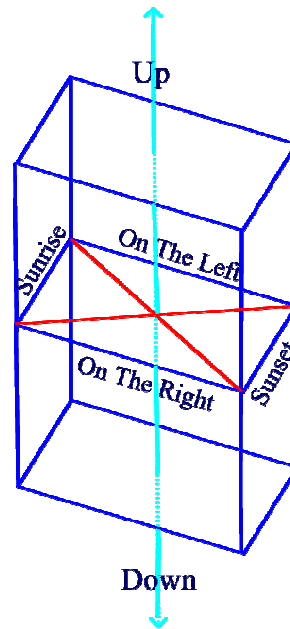
Their concept of a map was mostly pictorial with lines drawn to show interconnections. Little or no effort was given to keep things in scale. However, relative locations were usually preserved.

Our modern concepts are based on a global view of the world as taught in school from the first grade on. This concept is based on two-dimensional maps with rectangular coordinates aligned with the north, south, east and west compass points. Even when using a globe we use a two dimensional grid imposed on the globe. Although three-dimensional globes are available, the vertical resolution is too low for a practical impression of the differences in elevation. With the advent of computers and satellite images, it is now possible to get a better impression of the significant differences in elevation of the world's terrain but this is only making slow inroads into our traditional view of geography.

Comparison between modern and Mesoamerican concepts of direction

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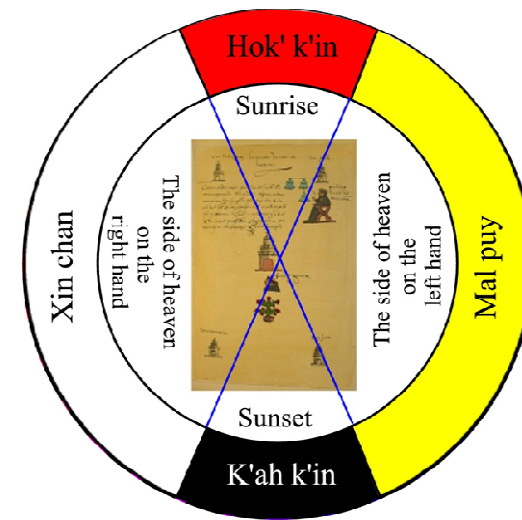
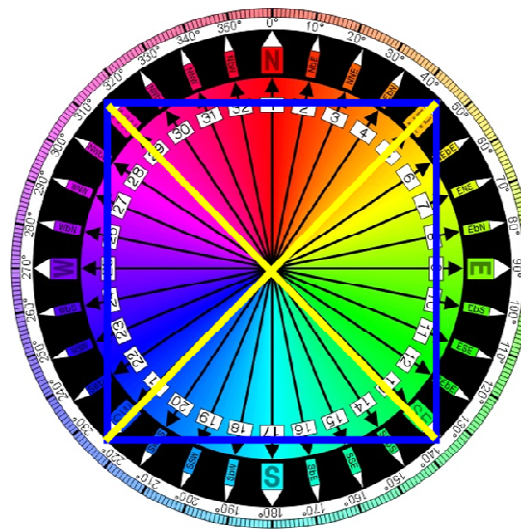
As shown in the right hand column, the ancient view was a local view with a much greater influence of the three dimensional nature of the geography. To them up and down were used with reference to the real world and not to the top and bottom of a map. The sun was their principal reference for directions and their way of dividing the land into quarters was based on the summer and winter solstices.



This drawing is an attempt to show graphically this concept. The Mesoamerican saw them selves at the center of a rectangular three-dimensional cube at the crossing point of the three axes. To them up and down were practical concepts of direction rather than abstract concepts based on a map of the world. In addition their concept was based on what they could see or had experienced rather than a global view based on academic knowledge learned in educational institutions.

In order to clarify this concept, I have created a Mesoamerican compass rose in order to compare it to a modern compass based rose. As you can see, in the modern rose the quarters are based on a square with an equal number of directions (compass points) in each quarter

Modern and Mesoamerican Cultural Directions

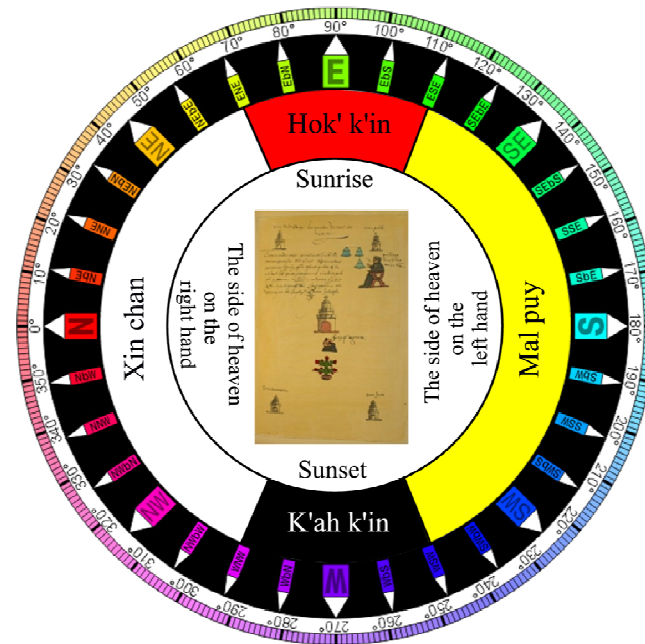


modern
compass based
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quarter

In the
Mesoamerican
rose the

quarters are based on a rectangle and this results in fewer directions in the eastern and western quarters compared to the northern and southern quarters.

This difference is made clearer by superimposing the Mesoamerican solar rose on top of the modern compass rose.



Note that the Mesoamericans oriented their maps with east at the top rather than north.

This is confirmed by this map of the quarters of Mexico City. It is part of the Osuna codex written to the Spaniards by the Aztecs in 1565 in order to document the construction of five cathedrals in Mexico City.

Four of these cathedrals are still present in modern Mexico's capital and their location confirms the orientation of the map to the east.

This overlay clearly shows that the number of directions in the eastern and western quarters are much fewer than those in the northern and southern quarters.

Results Based on the 378 References to Direction in The Book of Mormon

Percent of Total			
	Found in The Book of Mormon	From Quincunx	From Square
North plus Northward	39	37	25
South plus Southward	27	37	25
East plus Eastward	19	13	25
West plus Westward	16	13	25

The Book of Mormon contains 378 references to directions. One of the anomalies, long recognized by others, is the disparity between the number of east and west references and the number of north and south references.

Sorenson comments about this disparity in his appendix to "The Geography of Book of Mormon Events". He concludes that although

it is not obvious what one is to make of this disparity, future study may resolve the problem. If we apply the concept depicted by this comparison of the Mesoamerican view of the quarters of the land to the distribution of the references to direction in the Book of Mormon, we get this table.

The concept of a rectangular representation of quarters is called a quincunx. When we express the percentage of directions in each quarter as a percentage of the total, we find that only the combination of south and southward approaches that expected by the modern compass rose. The rest are better fit to the distribution predicted by the Mesoamerican solar rose. The lower value for the distribution for south and southward may be accounted for by the fact that the major portion of Lamanite lands were to the south and therefore fewer references to specific locations in these lands.

Here we see this concept imposed on a satellite map of Mesoamerica. As can



be seen this results in seas present in all four quarters in conformance with the Book of Mormon's cultural concept that they were an island nearly surrounded by water.

With these concepts of direction and their application to Mesoamerica, I would like to discuss three of the many convergences between Mesoamerican geography and the text of the Book of Mormon. These three are what Brant calls productive convergences because they not only fit to the geography but give us further insight into and clarify questions we might have about what the text is talking about.

Limhi's search Party and the Record of Jaredites

This story begins in Moroni's commentary on the Record of Ether found in the 24 Gold plates and originally translated by King Mosiah.

Ether 15:

33 And the Lord spake unto Ether, and said unto him: Go forth. And he went forth, and **beheld that the words of the Lord had all been fulfilled**; and he finished his record; (and the hundredth part I have not written) and he hid them in a manner that the people of Limhi did find them.

Ether 13

20 And in the second year the word of the Lord came to Ether, that he should go and prophesy unto Coriantumr that, if he would repent, and all his household, the Lord would give unto him his kingdom and spare the people— 21 Otherwise they should be destroyed, and all his household save it were himself. And he should only live to see the fulfilling of the prophecies which had been spoken concerning **another people receiving the land for their inheritance; and Coriantumr should receive a burial by them;** and every soul should be destroyed save it were Coriantumr.

Omni

20 And it came to pass in the days of Mosiah, there was a large stone brought unto him with engravings on it; and he did interpret the engravings by the gift and power of God. 21 And they gave an account of one Coriantumr, and the slain of his people. And Coriantumr was discovered by the people of Zarahemla; and he dwelt with them for the space of nine moons. 22 It also spake a few words concerning his fathers. And his first parents came out from the tower, at the time the Lord confounded

the language of the people; and the severity of the Lord fell upon them according to his judgments, which are just; and their bones lay scattered in the land northward.

What did King Limhi probably know about Zarahemla?

- 1.It was to the north.
- 2.It was located west of the river Sidon.
- 3.That the journey up from Zarahemla probably followed the course of the River Sidon.
- 4.That Zarahemla was not in a land of many waters.

King Limhi's description of the event:

Mosiah 8:

7 And the **king said** unto him: Being grieved for the afflictions of my people, I caused that forty and three of my people should take a journey into the wilderness, that thereby they might find the land of Zarahemla, that we might appeal unto our brethren to deliver us out of bondage. 8 And they were lost in the wilderness for the space of many days, yet they were diligent, and found not the land of Zarahemla but returned to this land, having traveled in a **land among many waters**, having discovered a land which was covered with bones of men, and of beasts, and was also covered with **ruins of buildings of every kind**, having discovered a land which had been peopled with a people who were as **numerous as the hosts of Israel**.

12 And I say unto thee again: Knowest thou of any one that can translate? For I am desirous that these records should be translated into our language; for, **perhaps**, they will give us a knowledge of a remnant of the people who have been destroyed, from whence these records came; or, **perhaps**, they will give us a knowledge of this very people who have been destroyed; and I am desirous to know the cause of their destruction.

1. King Limhi assumes that the records contain the history of the people that built the ruins.

Mosiah 21:

25 Now king Limhi had sent, previous to the coming of Ammon, a small number of men to search for the land of Zarahemla; but they could not find it, and they were lost in the wilderness. 26 Nevertheless, they did find a land which had been peopled; yea, a land which was covered with dry bones; yea, a land which had been peopled and which had been destroyed; **and they, having supposed it to be the land of Zarahemla**, returned to the land of Nephi, having arrived in the borders of the land not many days before the coming of Ammon.

1. King Limhi assumes that the records contain the history of the people that built the ruins.
2. The search party assumed that the ruins were from the destruction of the city of Zarahemla.

Mosiah 21:

27 And they brought a record with them, **even a record of the people whose bones they had found**; and it was engraven on plates of ore.

1. The search party assumed that the ruins were from the destruction of the city of Zarahemla.

2. King Limhi assumes that the records contain the history of the people that built the ruins.
3. Mormon now assumes that the record is that of the people whose bones had been found.

The Archeological Record

Mulekites arrive in America about 600 BC

La Venta 900 BC to 400 BC - possible interaction with Mulekites

Tres Zapotes 900 BC to 900 AD – possible interaction with Mulekites

San Lorenzo 1200 BC to 900 BC – too early

Limhi's search party 121 BC - too late to interact with either La Venta or San Lorenzo but one or the other may have been the builders of the ruins mentioned. The Tres Zapotes group could not be the builders of the ruins because they were still occupying their location.

Mosiah encounters people of Zarahemla 200 BC – may have included some of the La Venta or Tres Zapotes groups

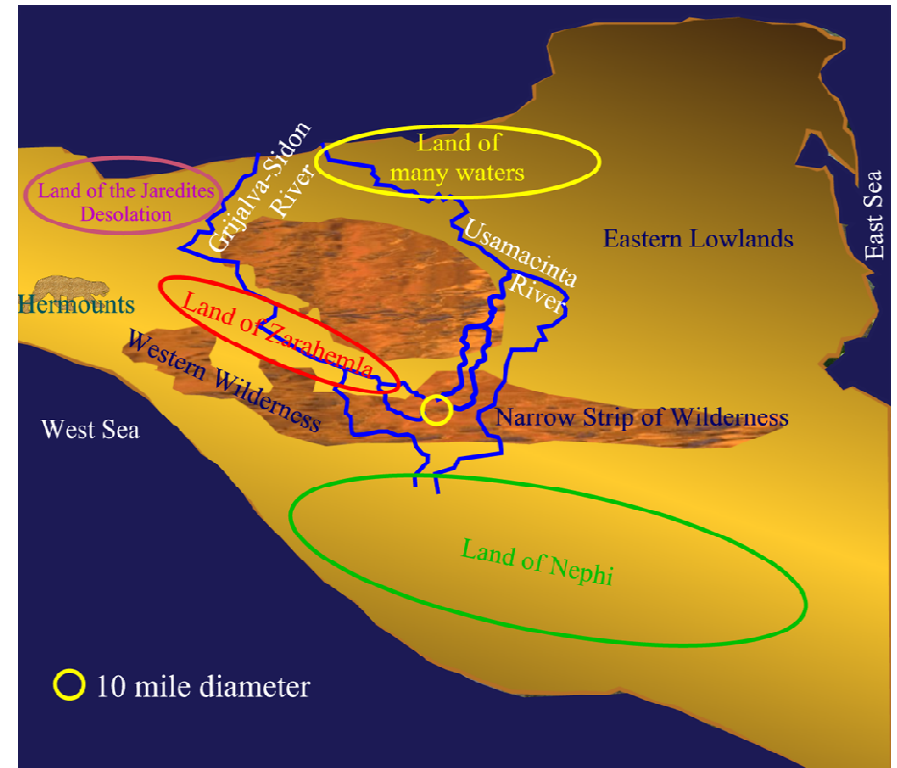
Why did they get lost?

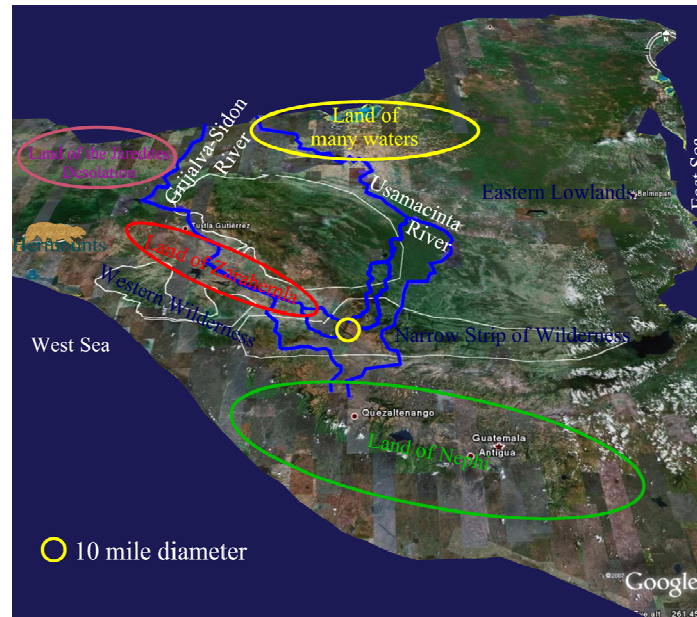
Based on a Mesoamerican location of the culture, they must have chosen the wrong river.

1. There are two rivers in Mesoamerica that appear to meet the description of the river Sidon.
2. Their headwaters are both in the narrow strip of wilderness area and they flow to the north emptying into the Gulf of Mexico.
3. Depending on one reading of Alma 22, the head of the river Sidon flows from east to west. If, however, one assumes that this phrase refers to the narrow strip of wilderness then either river could qualify as the Sidon. Regardless of which river was the Sodon, they must have chosen the wrong river or they would have found the land of Zarahemla.

26 Nevertheless, they did find a land which had been peopled; yea, a land which was covered with dry bones; yea, a land which had been peopled and which had been destroyed; **and they, having supposed it to be the land of Zarahemla, returned to the land of Nephi,** having arrived in the borders of the land not many days before the coming of Ammon.

Once they were satisfied that they had found the Land of Zarahemla and thus accomplished their mission, they turned around and returned to the land of Nephi-Lehi. Presumably by the same right they had traveled to get





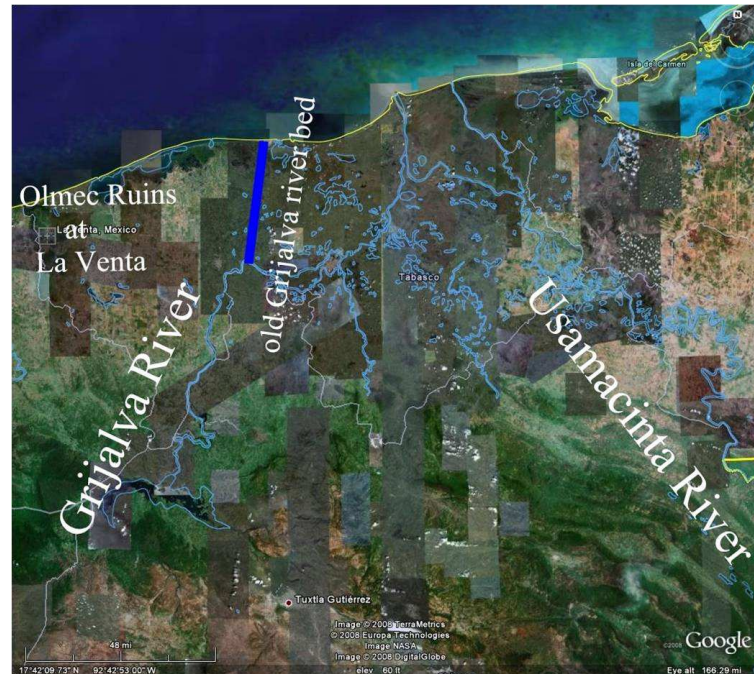
there. At this time they did not realize that they had traveled to the wrong place. It was Only after they returned and met Ammon and his companions who came from the land of Zarahemla did they realize their mistake. It was King Limhi who concluded that they had somehow become lost in the wilderness. The search party were always aware of where they were in relation to the land of Nephi-Lehi, otherwise how would they have been able to find their way back. They were never lost.

In this satellite view of Mesoamerica we can see the paths of the two rivers as they flow to the gulf.

The Grijalva flows through the river valley, turns north and passes through the Angostura Canyon. It then enters another canyon called the Sumidero. After leaving the mountains it flows north to the Gulf. The present day path turns east and flows into the mouth of the Usamacinta, however this is a fairly

recent change occurring since the time of the Nephite culture. You can still see the old channel now called the Rio Seco.

After leaving the narrow strip of wilderness flows into the Maya lowlands and then into the gulf.



waters.

Which river did they follow?

A closer satellite view of the area where the two rivers empty into the gulf shows the Usamacinta passing through an area filled with lakes and swampland

The path followed by the search party was probably to the west of the river because they were probably aware that the city of Zarahemla was west of the Sidon.

The Grijalva, however, flows directly to the sea after leaving the mountains and if they were keeping to the west bank they would have never encountered the land of many

The archeological record locates the La Venta ruins just to the west of the Grijalva River. If they followed the Grijalva, keeping to the west bank, they would have encountered these ruins, concluded that it was Zarahemla and returned to the land of Nephi-Lehi without ever passing through the land of many waters.

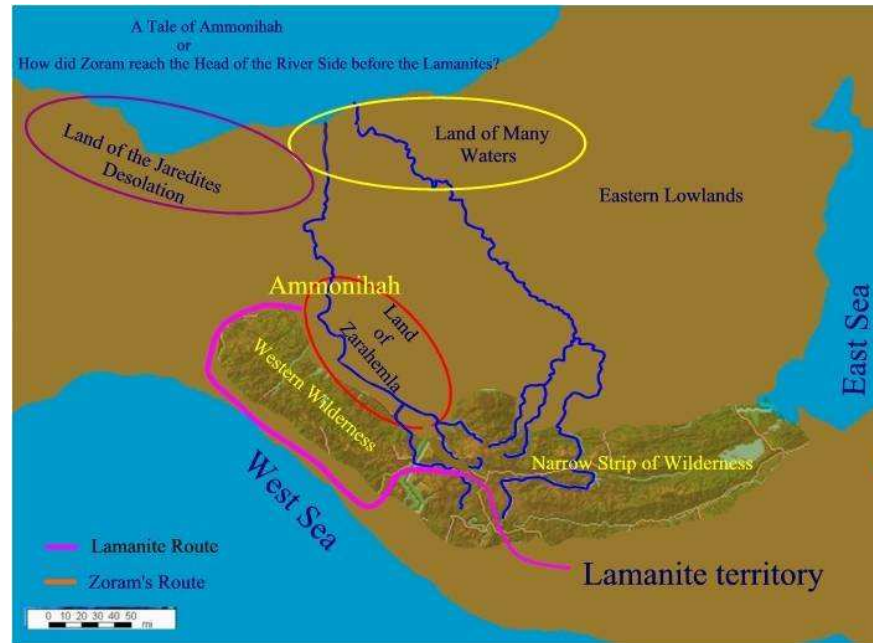
Therefore based on the geography of the area, they most likely followed the Usamacinta and missed the Land of Zarahemla located in the Grijalva river valley. This is in agreement with Sorenson's conclusions for the location of the river Sidon and the Book of Mormon culture.

A second brief convergence is found in the story of the destruction of Ammonihah

Alma 16:

2 For behold, the armies of the Lamanites had come in upon the wilderness side, into the borders of the land, even into the city of Ammonihah, and began to slay the people and destroy the city.

3 And now it came to pass, before the Nephites could raise a sufficient army to drive them out of the land, they had destroyed the people who were in the city of Ammonihah, and also some around the borders of Noah, and taken others captive into the wilderness



1. The wilderness side
2. Took captives
3. Returned by the same route
4. The Book of Mormon does not record any attempt by the Nephites to control this coastal path to the north possibly because they were separated from it by a mountain range that was almost impossible to cross.

Alma 16:

6 And it came to pass that Alma inquired of the Lord concerning

the matter. And Alma returned and said unto them: Behold, the Lamanites will cross the river Sidon in the south wilderness, away up beyond the borders of the land of Manti. And behold there shall ye meet

them, on the east of the river Sidon, and there the Lord will deliver unto thee thy brethren who have been taken captive by the Lamanites.

7 And it came to pass that Zoram and his sons crossed over the river Sidon, with their armies, and marched away beyond the borders of Manti into the south wilderness, which was on the east side of the river Sidon.

8 And they came upon the armies of the Lamanites, and the Lamanites were scattered and driven into the wilderness; and they took their brethren who had been taken captive by the Lamanites, and there was not one soul of them had been lost that were taken captive. And they were brought by their brethren to possess their own lands.

The Lamanite took a longer route and were hampered by the need to guard their prisoners and to watch for Nephite pursuit.

The Nephite route was not only shorter but they had no need to guard prisoners or to be on the lookout for Lamanite pursuit.

My third and final convergence is a geographic description of the Amlicite – Nephite battle described in Alma 2:11-38

In this description Mormon uses an unusual way of describing directions. Instead of saying northwest, he uses the terms “on the west and on the north” rather than northwest or northward.

Alma 2:

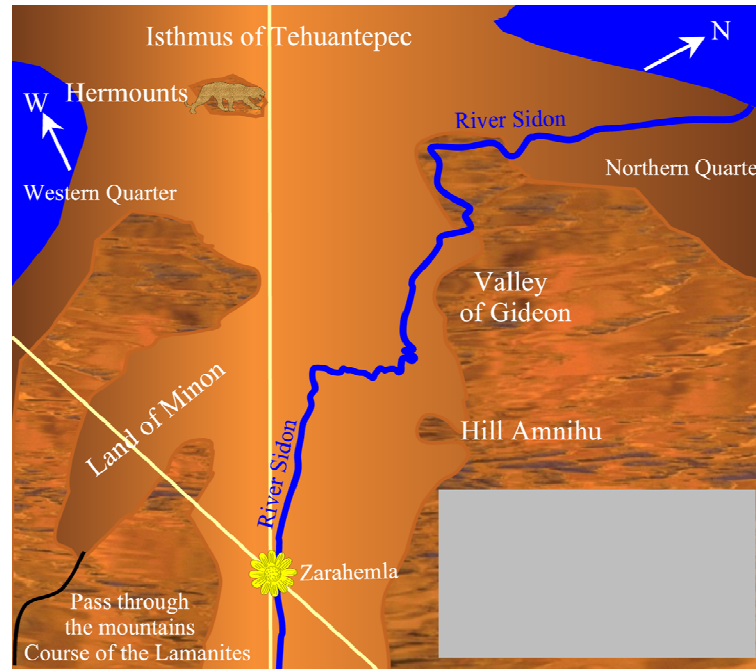
11 Now the people of Amlici were distinguished by the name of Amlici, being called Amlicites; and the remainder were called Nephites, or the people of God.

12 Therefore the people of the Nephites were aware of the intent of the Amlicites, and therefore they did prepare to meet them; yea, they did arm themselves with swords, and with cimeters, and with bows, and with arrows, and with stones, and with slings, and with all manner of weapons of war, of every kind.

13 And thus they were prepared to meet the Amlicites at the time of their coming. And there were appointed captains, and higher captains, and chief captains, according to their numbers.

Modern map locations. View looking northwest along the Grijalva river valley.

1. Santa Rosa – Sorenson's choice for the location of the city of Zarahemla
2. Cerro Mitzpilla – 4300 ft high outlier rising about 1500 feet above the surrounding terrain.
3. Barrancas of Tehuantepec - 4000-5000 ft high eastern border of the passage through the Isthmus of Tehuantepec.
4. Only pass from the Lamanite dominated Pacific coast into the Grijalva river valley. Gives access to the valley by way of a side valley that is separated from Santa Rosa by a mountain spur that must be gone around in order to reach Santa Rosa.



Book of Mormon map locations

1. Lines showing borders of the Nephite quarters of the land.
2. City of Zarahemla
3. Hill Amnihu – high consistent with an advantageous battleground.
4. Barrancas – Consistent with Hermounts or a wilderness of wild animals.
5. Land of Minon in a side valley separated from the main land of Zarahemla.
6. Pass through giving access to the land of Zarahemla from the Pacific coast.

Barrancas of Tehuantepec looking towards the east.

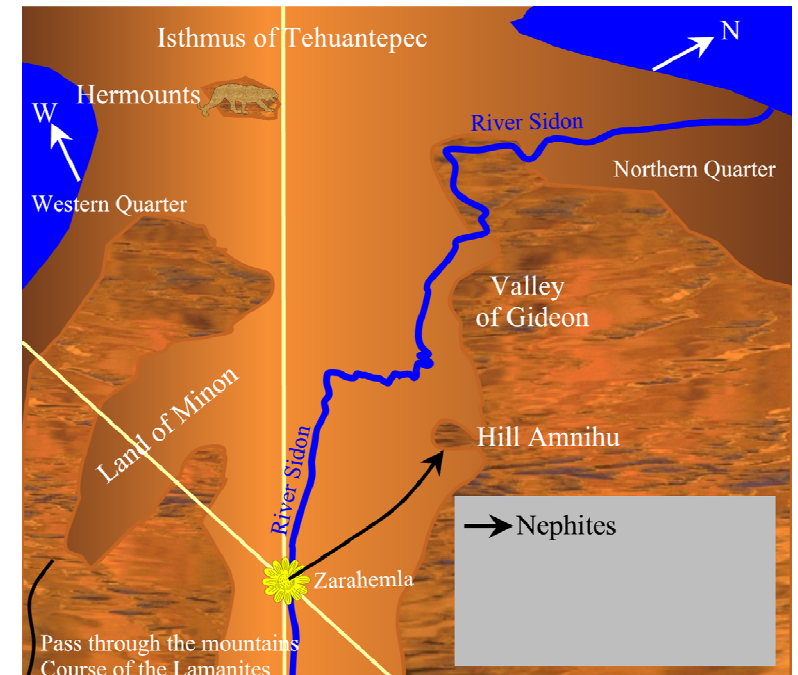
Border between the northern and western quarters that by crossing back and forth between the two quarters would explain the peculiar use of the directional terms in the description of this particular battle.

Alma 2:

15 And it came to pass that the Amlicites came upon the hill Amnihu, which was east of the river Sidon, which ran by the land of Zarahemla, and there they began to make war with the Nephites.

Zarahemla to Amnihu

Step 1 of the battle. Nephites leave the city undefended and go out to do battle with the Amlicites at the Hill Amnihu.



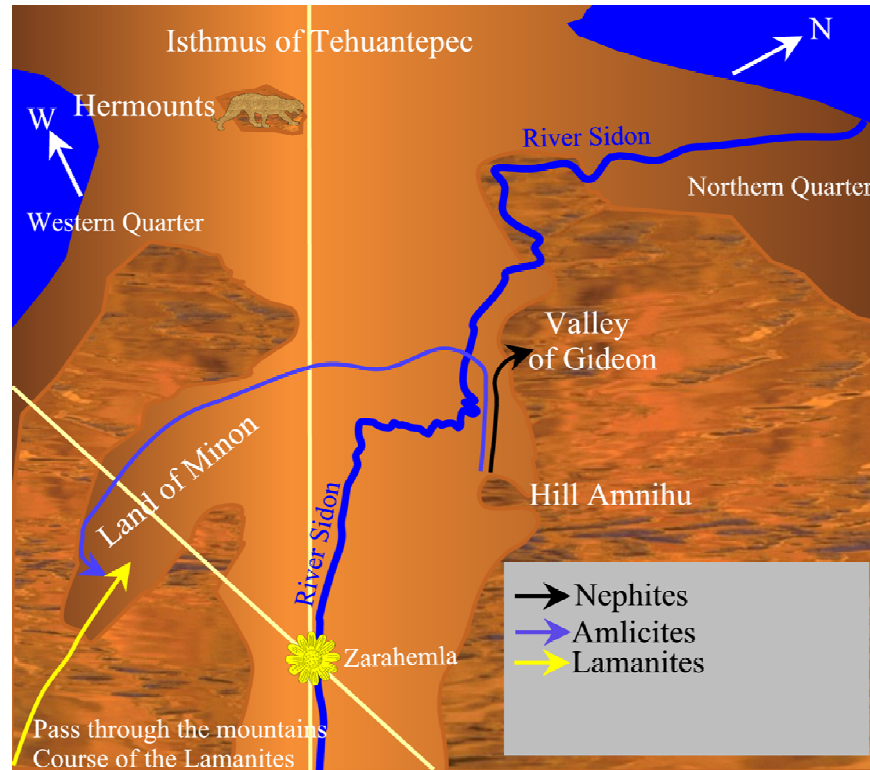
Alma 2:

18 Nevertheless the Lord did strengthen the hand of the Nephites, that they slew the Amlicites with great slaughter, that they began to flee before them.

20 And it came to pass that when Alma could pursue the Amlicites no longer he caused that his people should pitch their tents in the valley of Gideon, the valley being called after that Gideon who was slain by the hand of Nehor with the sword; and in this valley the Nephites did pitch their tents for the night.

21 And Alma sent spies to follow the remnant of the Amlicites, that he might know of their plans and their plots, whereby he might guard himself against them, that he might preserve his people from being destroyed.

24 Behold, we followed the camp of the Amlicites, and to our great astonishment, in the land of Minon, above the land of Zarahemla, in the course of the land of Nephi, we saw a numerous host of the Lamanites; and behold, the Amlicites have joined them;



Amnihu to Gideon - Nephites prevail and drive the Amlicites towards the valley of Gideon

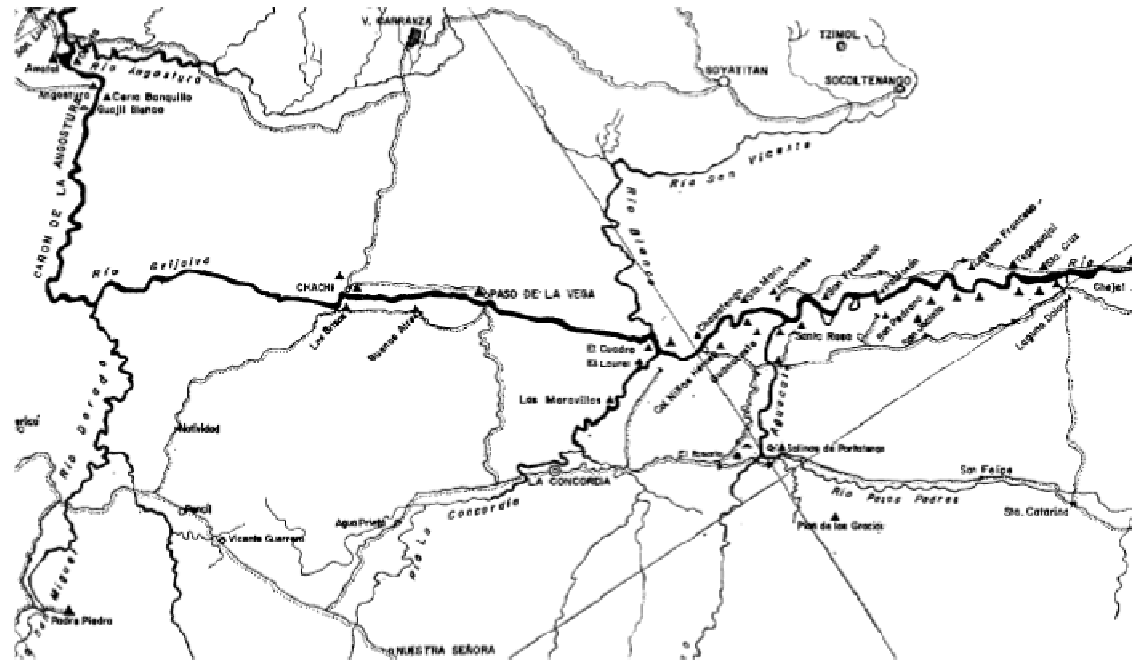
Amnihu to Minon – Amlicites flee toward the valley of Minon for a prearranged meeting with the a Lamanite army

Lamanites to Minon - Amlicites join forces with the Lamanites who have entered unnoticed into the valley of Minon and head down the valley to attack the undefended city of Zarahemla driving the Nephites in the valley before them.

Alma 2:

26 And it came to pass that the people of Nephi took their tents, and departed out of the valley of Gideon towards their city, which was the city of Zarahemla.

This map of the Grijalva river valley, drawn by the NWAFF before the flooding of the valley by the construction of the Angostura dam, shows that there was only one area where they could have crossed the



Sidon on the quickest route back to the undefended city of Zarahemla. This was here at Chachi. This crossing is to the west of Santa Rosa and may indicate that the city may not have been at Santa Rosa but was located somewhat further to the west.

Alma 2:

27 And behold, as they were crossing the river Sidon, the Lamanites and the Amlicites, being as numerous almost, as it were, as the sands of the sea, came upon them to destroy them.

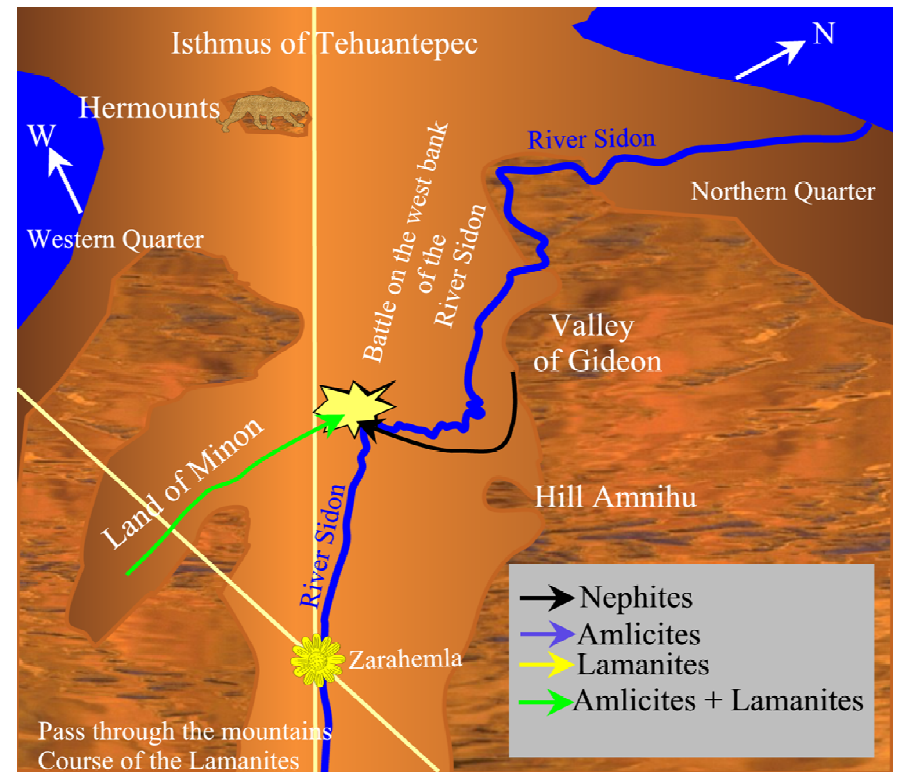
34 And thus he cleared the ground, or rather the bank, which was on the west of the river Sidon, throwing the bodies of the Lamanites who had been slain into the waters of Sidon, that thereby his people might have room to cross and contend with the Lamanites and the Amlicites on the west side of the river Sidon.

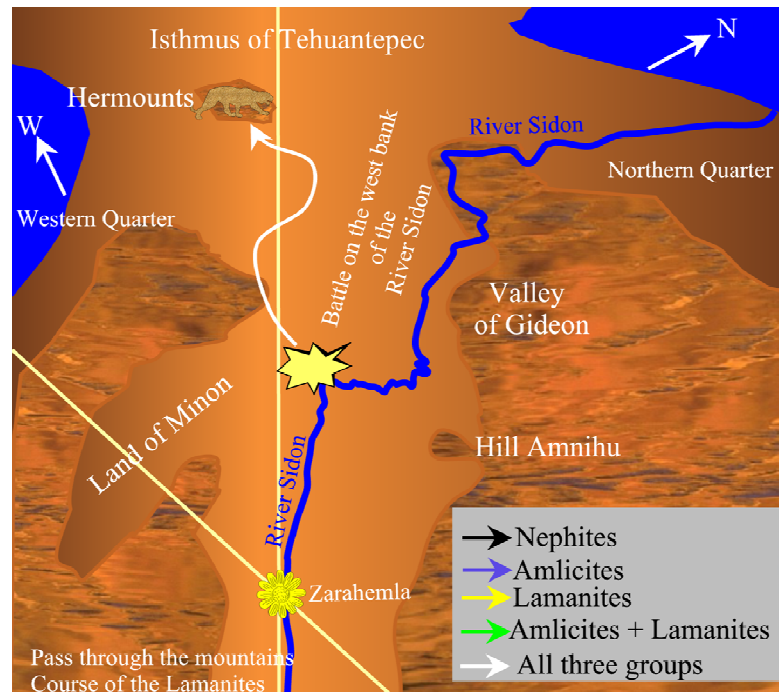
35 And it came to pass that when they had all crossed the river Sidon that the Lamanites and the Amlicites began to flee before them, notwithstanding they were so numerous that they could not be numbered

The battle is joined and the Nephites cross over and clear the west bank of the river. The Lamanites and Amlicites are demoralized, although excess in numbers begin to flee.

Alma 2:
36 And they fled before the Nephites towards the **wilderness which was west and north**, away beyond the borders of the land; and the Nephites did pursue them with their might, and did slay them.

37 Yea, they were met on every hand, and slain and driven, until they were scattered **on the west, and on the north**, until they had





reached the wilderness, which was called Hermounts; and it was that part of the wilderness which was infested by wild and ravenous beasts.

38 And it came to pass that many died in the wilderness of their wounds, and were devoured by those beasts and also the vultures of the air; and their bones have been found, and have been heaped up on the earth.

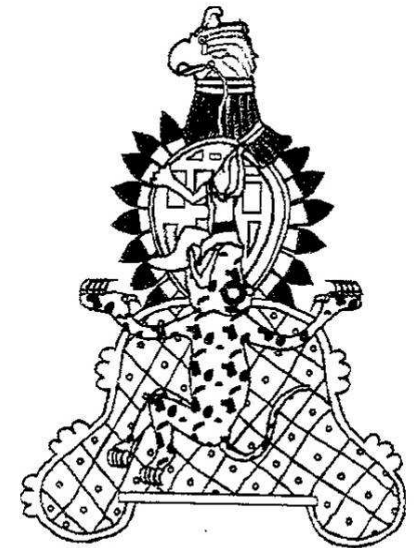
The Nephites drive them, apparently crossing back and forth across the line between the quarters. This would be significant to the Nephites because they would have had the sun in their face as the battle extended into the afternoon.

The battle ends as the Amlicites and Nephites enter the wilderness of Hermounts. A number of years ago, I had chosen these Barrancas as the location for Hermounts because of their fit to the description of this wilderness found in the text of the Book of Mormon.

About a year ago, on the Aztlan discussion list, someone raised the topic of whether or not there were man-eating beasts in Mesoamerica. One of the list members, an expert of the Nahuatl language, responded by explaining that Tehuantepec is a Nahuatl word meaning “hills” or “mountains of the man-eating beast.”

This is demonstrated by the Tehuantepec coat of arms.

1. We see here the glyph for hill or mountain
2. And here the glyph for jaguar or better-said tecuani. Although Tecuani is usually translated as jaguar, in Remi Simeon’s *Diccionario de la Lengua Nahuatl* first published in 1885, its meaning is given as

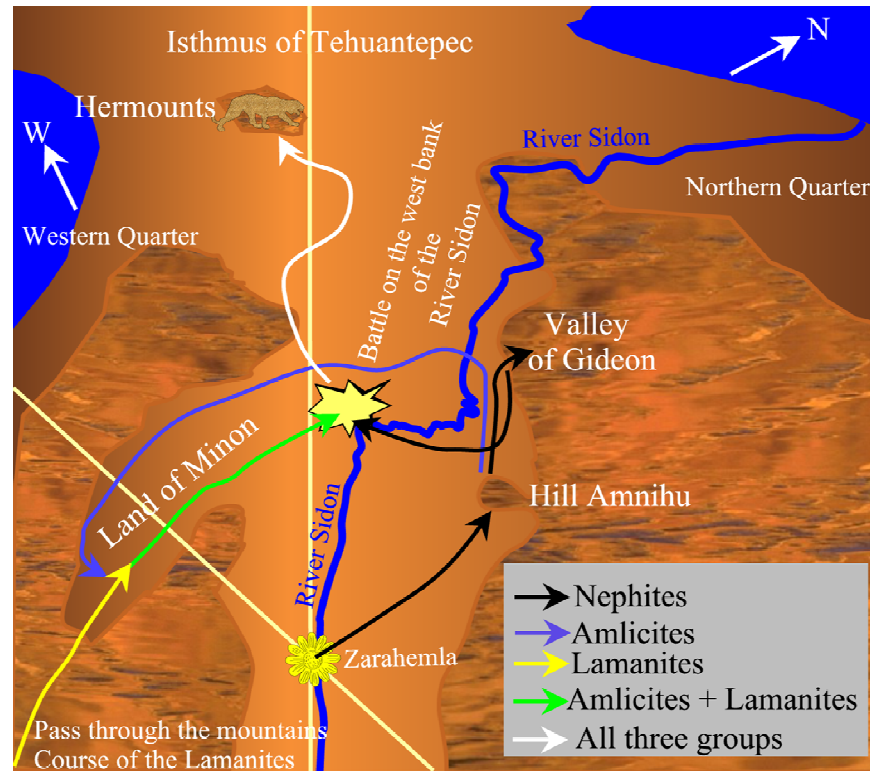


GUISI'LULA'A
TEHUANTEPEC, OAX.

devoradora de hombres or in English, man eating beast.

3. Although the Nahuatl language may have come late to this area in Mesoamerica, subsequent

culture often gloss local geographic features with a translation into their language of the previous cultures names for these features.



To recap this account of the Amlicite-Lamanite and Nephite battle.

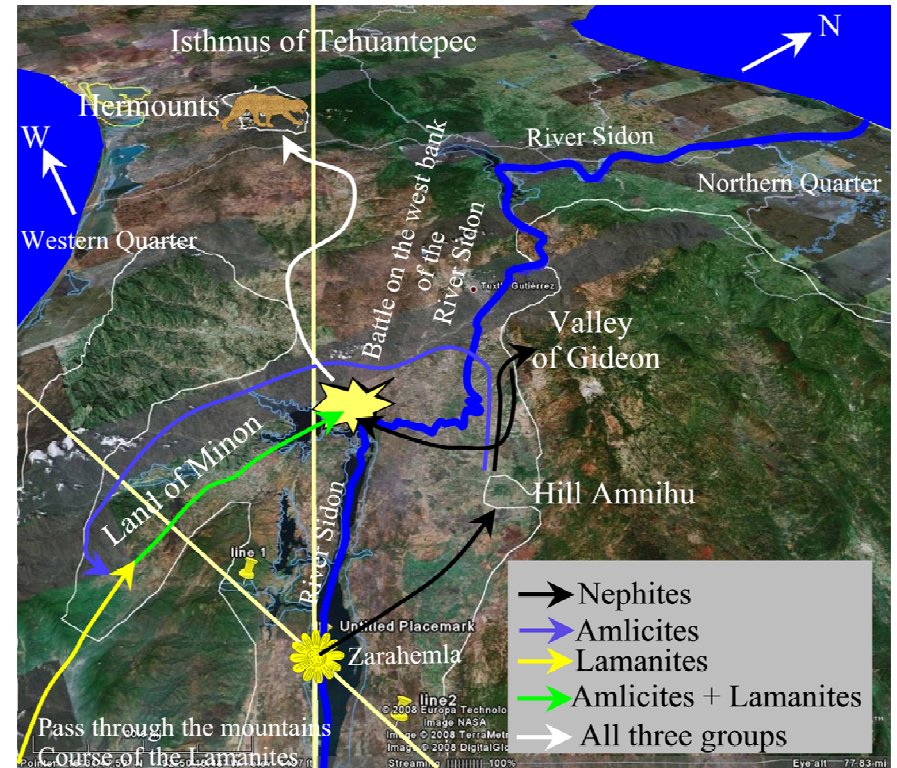
1. Starts at the hill Amnihu.
2. Moves to the area of the valley of Gideon
3. Resumes the next day on the banks of the river Sidon
4. The enemy is driven on the west and on the north to the wilderness of Hermounts where

the bodies are left to be devoured by wild beasts.

Here is a satellite view of the same information. The areas marked by white lines are mountainous areas not amenable to travel or fighting.

Summary

Using Mesoamerican cultural concepts of direction and geography, I have been able to show convergence between multiple geographic features of the Grijalva river valley and the



text of the Book of Mormon. Although, individual correlations may be meaningless when examined by themselves, the fact that together they correlate at multiple points with the text and do so in the correct geographical relationships depicted in the text, leads to the conclusion that they are real and describe real events, people and locations.

As Brant has said,

Have you seen the dog?

I have seen the dog and can not now unsee it.

Thank you.

You can also watch this presentation on our Youtube site:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=knw0pl8Ifsc>

ⁱ Lucy Mack Smith, *History of Joseph Smith by His Mother* [Salt Lake City: Stevens & Wallis, Inc., 1945], 82

ⁱⁱ **LS. In the handwriting of John Taylor, Joseph Smith Papers, LDS Church Archives.** . Barrett, "John M. Bernhisel, Mormon Elder in Congress." John Bernhisel to Joseph Smith, September 8, 1841

ⁱⁱⁱ "What Did the Biblical Writers Know and When Did They Know It? " by William G. Dever page 107