

Mesoamerican King Lists and the Book of Mormon

By Neil Steede © 2009

Kings lists are important to following historical events in any culture for such lists give continuity to the historical fabric of the society being studied. In this four part series the king lists given in the Book of Mormon will be discussed as there are essentially four lists to examine;¹ Jaredite, Mulekite, Lamanite, and Nephite. I will report on them in this order.

Many of these king lists serve as benchmarks of the civilizations over which they rule. Cultural developments and geographical movements are often reported in association with the kings and therefore evidences of such things may be sought. If evidences can be found then advances in our under-

standing of these historical events may be increased. The focus here is to search for those evidences.² My first examination is the Jaredite King List.

The Jaredite King List

The Jaredite King List is given complete in Chapters 3 & 4 of the Book of Ether. The list is wrought with rebellions and counter rebellions with the accompanying migrations. First, I will provide the entire king list covering some 30 generations. The generational lines will be shown in the chart presented on the inside of this cover.

From this chart we can see five major migrations and six major rebellions for power. If these incidents occurred as reported then I should be able to find archaeological evidences to

support them. I believe those evidences should be the scars of wars, definite migration movements and possibly evidences that don't quite fit meaning the skirmishes or divisions of society not reported in Ether's accounts. My search will begin where the Jaredites landed upon their arrival to the Americas.

The Jaredite Arrival

It has been fairly well demonstrated that the Jaredites arrived on the Pacific Coast of Mesoamerica³ near the mouth of the Rio Balsas Valley (present-day Ixtapa and Zihuatenejo). This is the area of the Land of Moron.⁴ This valley extends eastward from the Pacific Coast about halfway across Mesoamerica. The greatest

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DNA and the Book of Mormon

By Chris Scott Second Article in a Series

Almost everyone likes a good mystery. Some like easy conclusions and skip right to the end of the book. Others like to enjoy every twist and turn in the story, to dig in depth the mysteries within the mystery and read from cover to cover. Still others enjoy open ended mysteries where one or more conclusions are possible. The mystery in this article is concerning Lehi, his family, friends and what genes they might have carried to the new world.

In order to begin a discussion about Lehi and any traceable genes in the new world I need to estab-

lish some information about genetics and the markers that the scientists are using to study the migration of peoples around the world.

When reading articles about DNA and its relationship to the Book of Mormon I found myself asking the question "What is mitochondrial DNA?" I will hereafter refer to this as mtDNA. It was apparent from articles that mtDNA is genetic material passed down through the maternal line and that the paternal line had very little to do with it. What I found is that there are two types of DNA within the cell. One type is

nuclear DNA that is found within the nucleus of the cell and the other is mtDNA which is found in the mitochondria of the cell. (see figure 1) The nuclear DNA is what we inherit from each parent.

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Mesoamerican King Lists *continued*

ancient city of the area is Teopantecuanitlan. I believe this to be the site of the capital City of Moron. This site is now dated as early as 2200 BC⁵ making it the earliest known metropolis in the Americas. At this point in time there is already evidence of a split and migration and it is my suspicion is that this occurred before the first Book of Mormon recorded rebellion.

Remains of a culture known as the Patano Culture can be found running northward up the coast from the mouth of the Rio Balsas Valley to Southern California.⁶ My guess is that the existence of this culture is due to remnant Jaredites moving up the coast to "inherit" new lands. At the moment there is no direct evidence of much relationship between the Patano Culture and the larger main group that remained congregated in the Land of Moron and its capital at Teopantecuanitlan. By the third generation the first rebellion begins during the reign of Kib.

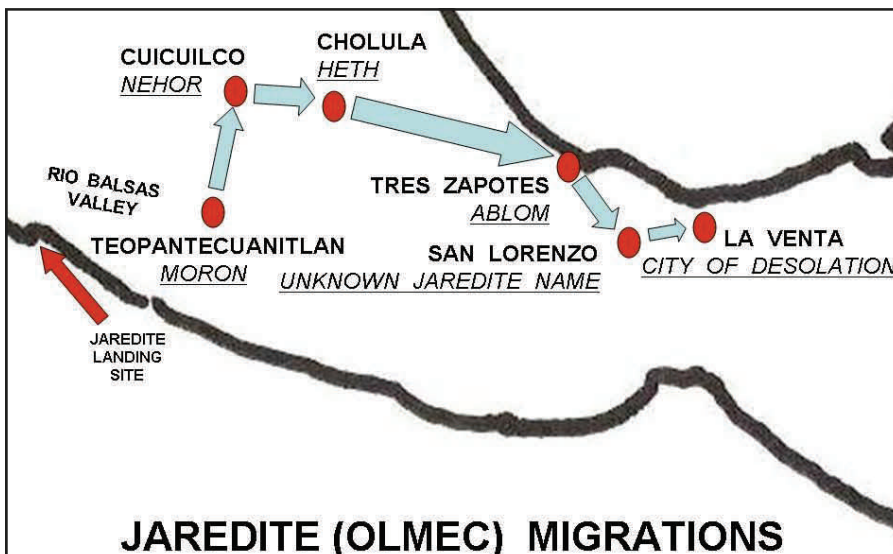
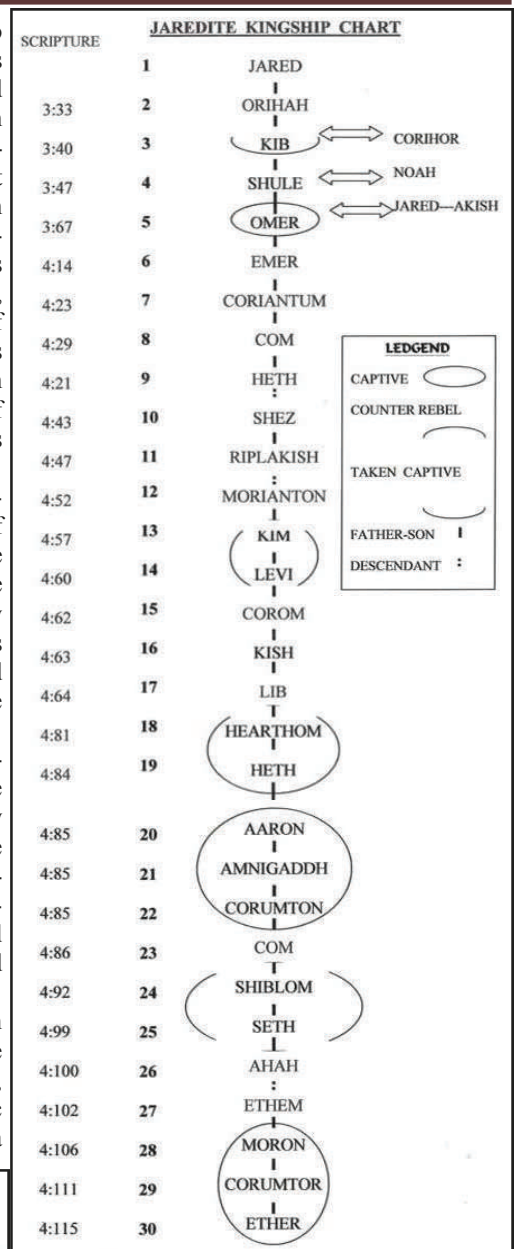
Kib's son Corihor drew away a large group from the people of Moron and settled in the Land of Nehor.⁷ In the verses that follow we are told that Corihor moved outside of the Land of Moron which was part of the area close to what the Nephites called the Land of Desolation. We are later told that Corihor had to come up to the Land of Moron to attack his father in the Land of Moron, therefore wherever Nehor is geographically located it is lower than Moron. Moreover, it must be north or south of Moron since the Nephite Land of Desolation is east and

the Land of Moron extends westward to the sea. Because the Jaredite Culture is northward of the narrow neck of land and the only direction left for expansion is northward, I believe the City of Nehor must be located in that direction. It seems as though the optimum location for the City of Nehor is the site presently known as Cuicuilco. Not only is the geographical location appropriate, but the dates fit. The foundations of Cuicuilco date to about 2000 BC.⁸ As far as geography it is lower than Teopantecuanitlan, so the comment of traveling up to Mormon from Nehor is also a match.

Following this same line of reasoning I can now discover many pieces of the puzzle. Knowing that there were five major migrations I can follow the Jaredite trail of expansion into the New World. Those five major migrations have been fairly well documented.⁹ And the six major revolutions can also be traced¹⁰ (see migration map).

The point of this exercise is to illustrate that one can follow the Jaredite Culture from inception to demise. By doing this one can find that the Jaredite civilization is what is known in archaeological circles as the Olmec civilization. And along that trail I should find evidences for the very kings mentioned in Ether.

It has been suggested more than once that one of the hallmarks of the Olmec civilization, the Colossal Heads, are representations of the Olmec kings.¹¹ If this is so then this creates a



problem because there are a lot more Jaredite kings than Colossal Heads. The Jaredite King List is composed of thirty names while there are only seventeen Colossal Heads. There is the question of the Colossal Head count when considering the possibility of yet undiscovered Colossal Heads. Some have suggested theories that additional heads may yet be found in the La Venta area.¹² While that theory may be true, such on-site archaeologists as Dr. Rebecca Laluk have confidently stated that they do not believe that theory to be true;¹³ and I have a tendency to agree with the archaeologists in this regard.



If the Olmec portrayals are in fact of kings then these heads might be representing the twenty-two who lived as kings who ruled as opposed to kings in captivity.

The greatest support for confirmation of the Jaredite King List in Mesoamerican archaeology is the inscription found on the crown of Colossal Head # 1 from LaVenta.¹⁷ If this claim is accurate¹⁸ then it is a portrayal of the Jaredite King Lib, and the inscription on its crown lists the genealogy of King Lib.¹⁹

There does appear to be archaeological evidence for the Jaredite King List. It fits geographically, chronologically, culturally, and epigraphically.

Endnotes:

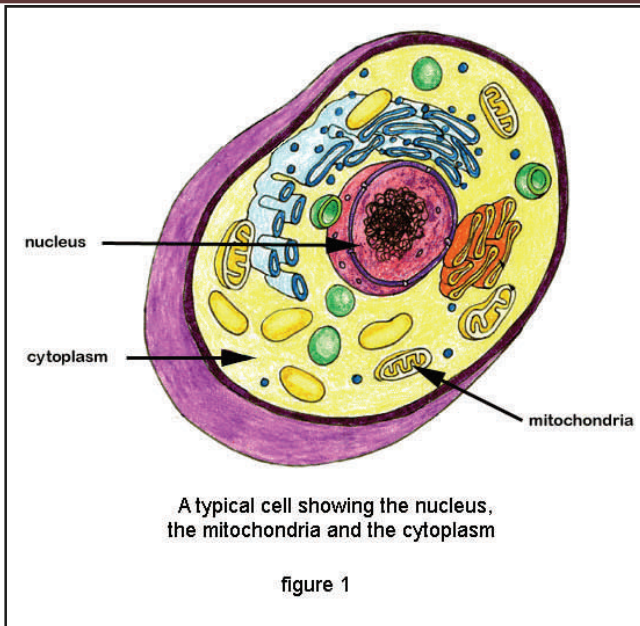
1. The argument can be made that there are up to ten king lists depending on how one looks at it. Kingdoms such as Jacobugath's and Zoram's only lasted for a single reign, while the existence of those kingdoms is important to follow the archaeological trail they will not be dealt with here.
2. A far more in-depth study than what will be found in Steede, Neil; *Book of Mormon Archaeology: Artifact by Artifact*. 8 volumes, MLK Publishing, 2009, ESRS, PO Box 4175, Independence, MO 64051.
3. Steede, opinion cited.
4. Ibid.
5. The "Graveyard" Culture.
6. Community of Christ 1908 Book of Mormon Ether 3:41.
7. Steede, opinion cited.
8. Mario Perez Campa, INAH.
9. Steede, Neil; *Book of Mormon Archaeology: Artifact by Artifact*. 8 volumes, MLK Publishing, 2009, ESRS, PO Box 4175, Independence, MO 64051.
10. Ibid
11. Ibid
12. In a private conversation with the author of *Cabecitas Olmecas* Luis Calderon, who is possibly the largest private collector of coastal Olmec artifacts, he stated his opinion that possibly up to twenty more Colossal Heads could be found in LaVenta. Dr. Calderon now resides in Coatzacoalcos, Veracruz. His book states why he believes so many Colossal Heads are yet to be found.
13. Dr. Rebecca Laluk, private conversation.
14. There are several sources that identify LaVenta as the City of Desolation. The two best are Garth Norman who presented a paper on such at a Salt Lake City conference and Neil Steede (opinion cited).
15. Steede, opinion cited.
16. It is highly questionable if the head found at Cholula (City of Heth) should be considered. It seems more probable that the Cholulan head is possibly a duplicate or not even a king portrayal.
17. Steede, opinion cited.
18. Steede, opinion cited.
19. Steede, opinion cited.

Where I deviate from both viewpoints is in the definition of a Colossal Head. In the sense used by archaeologists in reference to artistry and grandeur I agree with their classification of seventeen, but in the sense of heads actually representing Olmec (Jaredite) Kings, I differ. When not taking into consideration the normally accepted aspects and only considering migration geography as outlined and possible sculpture representing kings, I find a count of twenty-two or possibly twenty-three, and several are quite a distance from the Gulf Coast. Four identified heads are located at

LaVenta (City of Desolation¹⁴), but in the storehouse at the LaVenta site is what has been referred to as the "rolled out" Colossal Head.¹⁵ This head has all the hallmarks of the four recognized Colossal Heads of the site except that it is flat. Meanwhile there are four more such "heads" that were found during excavations at Teopantecuanitlan by Dr. Guadalupe Don Juan. These five heads are in the correct geographical sites to fit Ether's descriptions, but why twenty-two, or twenty-three?¹⁶ Re-examining Ether's king list might give one a clue. Of the thirty kings listed, eight lived in captivity.

DNA and the Book of Mormon *Continued*

A chromosome is a strand of DNA and one chromosome is passed to the offspring from each parent. They mix in a process called recombination creating a generation of offspring with a unique mix of the chromosomes inherited from the parents. I naturally thought that this is what the scientists studied when they were researching genealogy or population genetics, but oddly enough what is being studied is mtDNA. mtDNA is passed down to daughters and sons from the mother. It is carried in the cytoplasm of our cells and helps in the process of oxidation. It has its own unique function in the body and is often studied by scientists for medical reasons or to find cures for inheritable diseases. mtDNA does not change as it is passed down from



A typical cell showing the nucleus, the mitochondria and the cytoplasm

figure 1

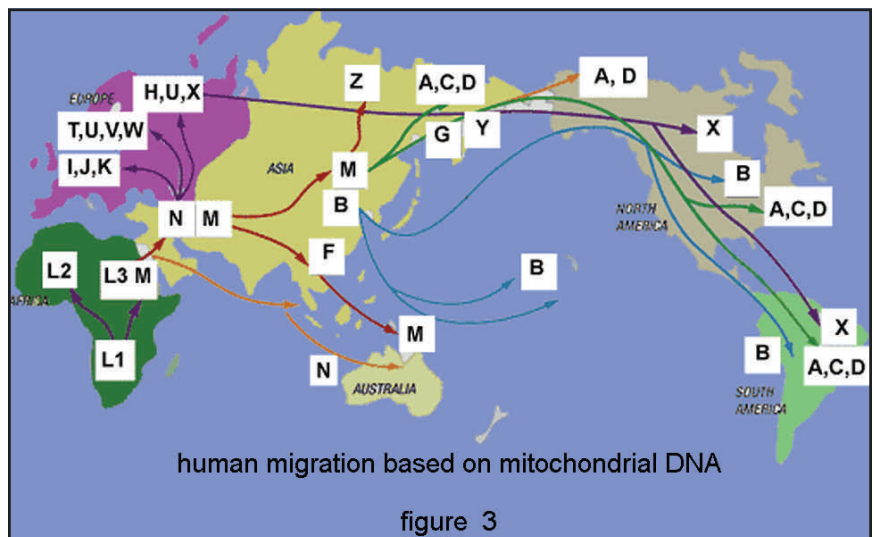
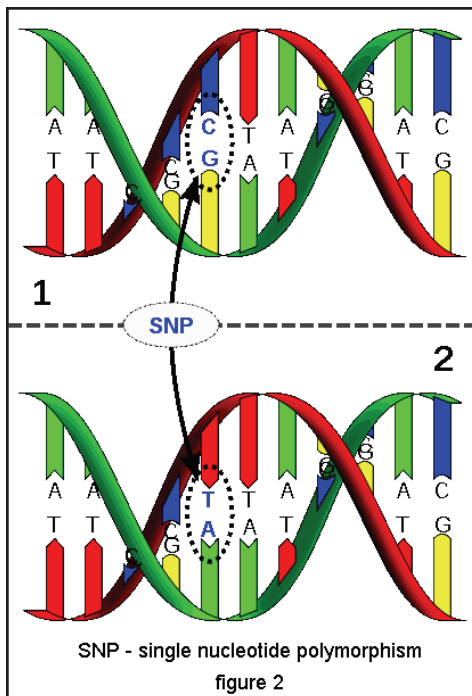
the unique signature of each group. In this manner migrations of people are studied and conclusions can be drawn as to the origins of people from various cultures. (see figure 3) Another haplogroup that is studied is on the Y-chromosome and is carried on the paternal line; from father to son. There is a portion of the Y-chromosome DNA that does not recombine with the female X-chromosome. This portion of Y-chromosome does not change just as the mtDNA does not change unless there is a mutation. Y-chromosome DNA mutations are also given number and letter designations in order to trace molecular lineage. mtDNA and Y-chromosome DNA are the markers that are being studied and are

what is needed in order to help solve our mystery. The *most recent common ancestor* (MRCA) referred to in my first article is considered a branch point where a mutation has occurred and is designated as a haplogroup in the study of population genetics. This now brings me to the discussion of how this relates to the Book of Mormon.

There are two genetic origin references that I know of in the Book of Mormon. One is from I Nephi 1:164 "And it came to pass that my father Lehi also found upon the plates of brass a genealogy of his fathers. Wherefore he knew that he was a descendant of Joseph; even that Joseph who was the son of Jacob,

variable region that undergoes changes when under a great deal of stress. These changes or mutations occur on a single nucleotide, which is the tiniest part of the gene. (see figure 2) These changes occur infrequently over thousands of years. Nucleotides are grouped on part of the gene and that grouping is referred to as a *haplotype*. The haplotypes are consistent from generation to generation unless a change occurs in the nucleotide sequence. These changes are called a *single nucleotide polymorphism* (SNP) mutation. When a mutation occurs a new haplotype is formed and becomes a *haplogroup*. These haplogroups are assigned letters and number designations to distinguish

what is needed in order to help solve our mystery. The *most recent common ancestor* (MRCA) referred to in my first article is considered a branch point where a mutation has occurred and is designated as a haplogroup in the study of population genetics. This now brings me to the discussion of how this relates to the Book of Mormon.



Adventures In Scriptures

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Nephi's Farewell Message to His People



Nephi loved God and his people. And because he loved his people he wanted to teach them the ways of God. He spoke to them in plainness of what he had learned about the coming of Christ.



There would be a prophet that would come before Christ. He would **baptize** people who wanted to **repent** of their sins. Christ was baptized by this prophet and set the example for us. He showed the people the straitness of the path and the narrowness of the gate by which they should enter. Nephi told us that if we become followers of Christ and enter into the path that we would have the Holy Spirit with us.

The Holy Spirit gives Christ's followers the ability to speak with the tongues of angels and the desire to **sing** praises to God. It teaches us to keep his commandments, to **love** and have **charity** towards each other, and to **study** and **pray** always. The **promise** is given that those who enter in by gate and **endure** to the end shall inherit eternal life.

Nephi then entrusted the spiritual records to his brother Jacob. He instructed him on how to keep the records and set him apart to be the spiritual leader of the people. II Nephi 13-14

Go to the mountains and find the hidden message

He t h
a t e n d u
r e t h t o
s h a e l l b
e s a v e d

II Nephi 13:20

Unscramble the following word taken from the story above.

nsgi _ _ _ _

osepimr _ _ _ _

syutd _ _ _ _

rypa _ _ _ _

pezbati _ _ _ _

ternep _ _ _ _

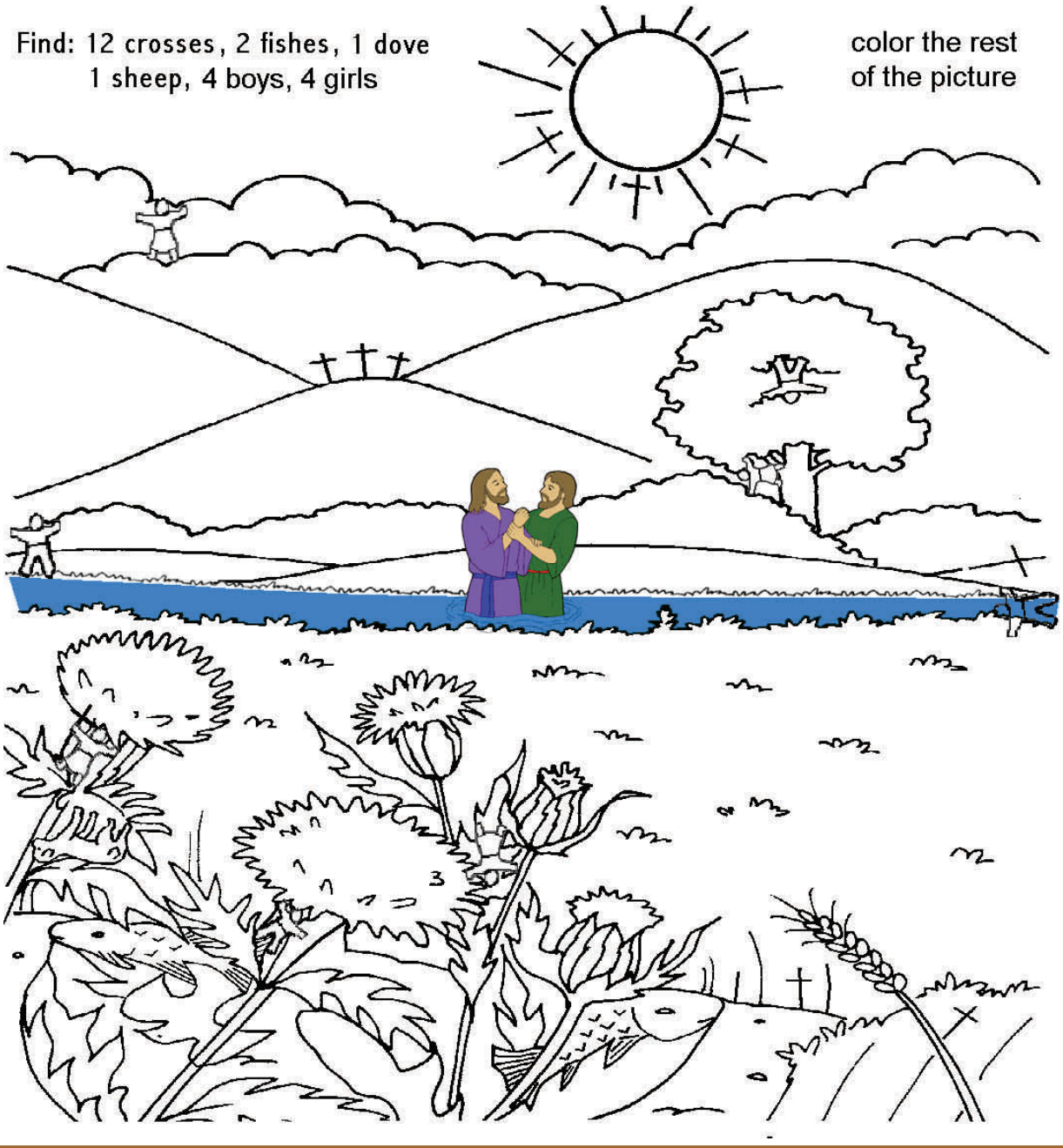
veol _ _ _ _

athciyr _ _ _ _

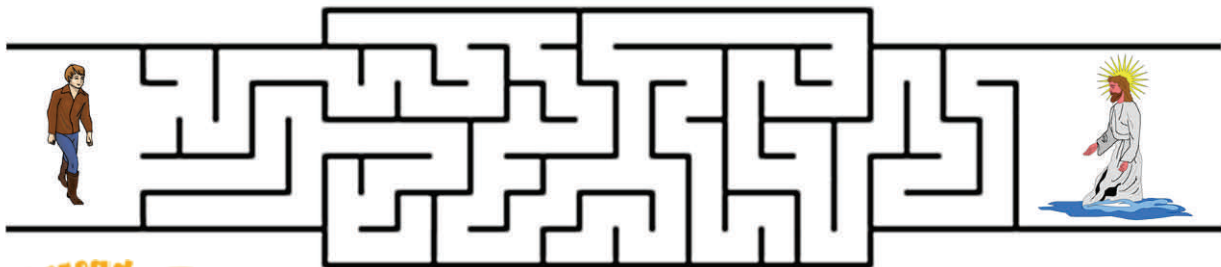
nedreu _ _ _ _

Find: 12 crosses, 2 fishes, 1 dove
1 sheep, 4 boys, 4 girls

color the rest
of the picture



Become followers of Jesus



Spread the **WORD**

JESUS

For the Love of John By Elrey Goheen

This is my testimony of an experience I had with a man named John. It started one day as I had gone to Lunch Partners, sponsored by the Restoration Church located in the old William Christian High School building on Lexington in Independence. I had been delivering lunches for several years, then one day as I was getting my lunches ready to deliver I saw a man at the kitchen window and he rapped on the window pane several times. I asked one of the ladies preparing the food who that was at the window. She said "Oh, that's John. He comes here every day and stands at the window and we take a lunch to him." I inquired why he didn't come to the kitchen dining room like the rest of the homeless people did every day that they were open.

John, as it was explained to me, was very timid and shy and I suppose felt out of place in a crowd. John was probably in his 50's or early 60's. His hair was straggly and matted and he looked like he had just gotten up out of bed.

For some reason I had a very strong feeling to get to know John. I was told he very seldom talked with anyone. I made it a point whenever I saw John outside to say "Hi" or "How's the weather" or anything just to get him to talk. For some reason I felt a deep love for John, and this made me want to get to know him better. After several weeks John was talking with me and I felt we were getting to be

friends. Then on Wednesday I came to deliver lunches and John was not there, I presumed he had already been there and gone. The next week John was not there again, so I asked one of the ladies "Where is John?" "Oh," she explained "John passed away last week."

I made it a point whenever I saw John outside to say "Hi" or "How's the weather" or anything just to get him to talk. For some reason I felt a deep love for John, and this made me want to get to know him better

I understand when someone loses a loved one. I wondered if John had a family, where he lived and if anyone came to his funeral, or if he even had one. Then and only then did I realize God had wanted me to meet John and love him as Jesus had loved those "unlovable" people he had encountered. What a wonderful experience I had just witnessed. I felt so fortunate, so blessed to have known John and even more blessed to know that I had experienced a portion of the love of Jesus. I will never forget my time with John and I will forever treasure what God has given me.

This experience made me think of a

book I read titled The Jesus I Never Knew by Phillip Yancey. In his book he tells of his experiences in his life and how he wanted to discover the real Jesus. He attended Bible College, searched through seminary libraries; one catholic, one protestant liberal, and one conservative. Each one seemed to offer different versions of Christ.

No one seemed to really know this man we call Jesus. Not even his disciples really understood him. Who was this man whom people call the Savior, King, and Messiah. A man who associated with people who were considered "low class" and people who were to be avoided: This was the Jesus Phillip Yancey came to know this Jesus of love.

This also reminds me of the times of our yearly treks to Mexico to discover the hidden records of our ancestors. We had many wonderful experiences, but were unable to find what we thought to be God's will.

During some of our recent trips, we discovered that what God really desired of us was to get to know the people of a little town of Jalapa near the mountain we visited. We have since made friends of the majority of the people, especially the kids. We realize that we need to love the people and maybe some day God will reveal His will to us. Jesus is love, if we can love even a fraction as much as Jesus, then we will know Him.

Two Trips Planned for 2010 By David B. Brown

2010 is already promising to be an eventful year with two projects already on the calendar. Many of the members of the Hill Cumorah Expedition Team are participating in a research trip sponsored by the Early Sites Research Society and scheduled to take place the last two weeks of January. The group will be flying into Mexico City on January 21st to immediately hit the road and travel to archaeological sites along the Gulf of Mexico. This itinerary is geared to visit as many of the Olmec sites as they can in nine days in an effort to further research and provide additional evidences to correlate the Olmec with the Jaredites.

Building upon the Jaredite King List already printed on these pages, Neil Steede and others will be continuing to

gather information to flesh out the history of the Jaredites with Olmec cultural evidences. They are hoping to find important added connections as research trips such as this have always produced unexpected and often amazing results.

The Hill Cumorah Expedition Team will then be sponsoring their annual Spring Expedition to the Jalapa de Diaz region on March 20th thru April 2nd of this spring. The early dates for this trip are a result of Holy Week being the first full week of April followed immediately by the Community of Christ World Conference. We have long ago decided to take Neil's advice to avoid Holy Week in Mexico and we feel it is important to be present for the 2010 World Conference this spring.

This year's trip to the region we believe to be Hill Cumorah is to include a renewal of relationships we have established throughout the valley and a vertical hike up to the Mixtec outlook on the west end of the mountain known as Cerro Rabon.

The successes of our previous expeditions and research trips have been in large part due to the prayerful preparation and support of people such as yourself. Our traveling for these adventures have always been self-funded by those participating on the trip, but it is the sincere prayers for our safety and the desire to receive greater light that has yielded such remarkable harvests of information that becomes knowledge. We sincerely ask for your prayerful support.

**We're on the web at
www.hceti.org**

The Hill Cumorah Expedition Team, Inc is a Missouri not-for-profit corporation dedicated to the study, research and dissemination of information as it pertains to the Book of Mormon. Our primary focus is to research and assemble archaeological and other related information to help establish the historical feasibility of the Book of Mormon.

HILL CUMORAH EXPEDITION TEAM, INC

Searching for Truth

c/o David B. Brown
311 N Lee Street
Buckner, Mo 64016

Phone: 816-650-3904
E-mail: davidbrown@hillcumorahexpeditionteam.com

Contributors and Editors

David Brown
Elrey Goheen
Chris Scott
Neil Steede

Children's Page by Terry and Chris Scott

Photographs provided by:
Terry Scott and Neil Steede.

DNA and the Book of Mormon *Continued*

who was sold into Egypt, and who was preserved by the hand of the Lord,Thus my father Lehi discovered the genealogy of his fathers." The other reference in is Alma 8:3 *"And Aminadi was a descendant of Nephi, who was the son of Lehi, who came out of the land of Jerusalem, who was a descendant of Manasseh, who was the son of Joseph, who was sold into Egypt by the hands of his brethren."* The oral tradition handed down from generation to generation is a powerful tool of discovery for those wanting to trace their lineage and heritage. It gives a starting point for what my study should include, and what questions in this mystery need to be answered.

One of the difficulties in this study is establishing markers that are unique to just the tribe of Manasseh, or to Joseph his father. Ideally you would have to identify a Y-chromosome marker that started with Joseph and carried down from father to son for many generations down to Lehi and on to the present generation of Native Americans. Also, you would have to show

that the marker was in a population in the Middle East at the same time knowing that they were of the tribe of Manasseh and then show the same marker in the Americas. This would be a very narrow study and extremely difficult. The studies currently being conducted are much broader in scope and involve mathematics, genetic drift, statistics, etc.; all of these concepts will be dealt with in greater detail in future articles.

Using mtDNA in relationship to the Book of Mormon has its own set of questions. What was the lineage of the females in the story of the Book of Mormon? What markers would they have carried from a large genetic pool in the Middle East? How diluted would the mtDNA become after many generations of mixing with a population already in the Americas? (To be addressed in a future article.)

When Lehi immigrated to the new world he took with him only a small group of followers. His own family consisted of six individuals. Ishmael's family

was larger and consisted of at least nine individuals, perhaps more. And Zoram the servant of Laban was among the group. We are not given Ishmael's lineage and this is crucial as his daughters would be carrying the majority of mtDNA markers. Also, we don't know what lineage Sariah, Lehi's wife was or the lineage of Lehi's mother. When we consider the DNA that was represented among them it was a small amount compared to the larger gene pool of the Middle East. We don't know what unique characteristics their genes carried that would show up in today's population of Native Americans. Thus the mystery seems somewhat unsolvable. The best we can do is to look for Middle Eastern genes in general and see if there are correlations. The mystery at this point is open-ended with many possible conclusions. For those who like to skip to the last page and see the mystery solved there will be frustration. For those who like to study mysteries within mysteries there is a great deal of knowledge to be gained.