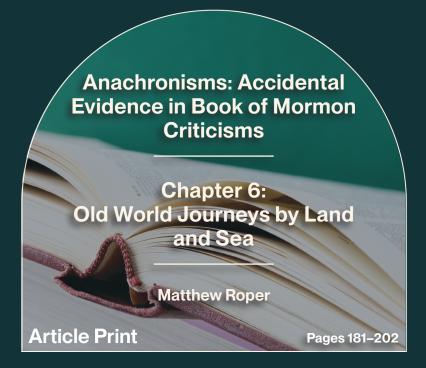


# Interpreter

A Journal of Latter-day Saint Faith and Scholarship



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# Anachronisms: Accidental Evidence in Book of Mormon Criticisms

## **Matthew Roper**

[Editor's Note: We are pleased to present chapter 6 from a book entitled Anachronisms: Accidental Evidence in Book of Mormon Criticisms. It is presented in serialized form in this volume of Interpreter: A Journal of Latter-day Saint Faith and Scholarship.]

## Chapter 6: Old World Journeys by Land and Sea

The accounts of the wilderness journeys of Lehi's family and the Jaredites have been the focus of criticism and even mockery since the publication of the Book of Mormon. Some have claimed that "the locale of the early chapters of the book is given as the Near East, specifically Jerusalem, the Red Sea area and the Arabian Peninsula," and other information about the geography and desert culture recounted in Nephi's narrative are inconsistent with what is known about that region anciently.¹ Beginning with the pioneering work of Hugh Nibley in the mid-Twentieth century and continuing until today, researchers have done much to shed light on this portion of the Book of Mormon showing that the narrative in many ways fits remarkably well in that ancient cultural context.²

#### 172. Land of Jerusalem

Status: Confirmed (1845–1965)

Critics' Claim: Some early critics of the Book of Mormon claim that

the phrasing "land of Jerusalem" (1 Nephi 2:11) used by Nephi and other Nephite prophets is inappropriate. As one early reader remarked, "'The land of Jerusalem.' ... There is no such land. No part of Palestine bears the name Jerusalem, except the city itself."<sup>3</sup>

**Response:** The phrase *land of Jerusalem* is used in the El Amarna Letters (figure 46) that were not discovered until 1887.<sup>4</sup> The phrase is also found in a text attributed to the prophet Jeremiah (4Q385b) discovered in the 1940s among the Dead Sea Scrolls. The text refers to the "exiles who were brought into exile from the land of Jerusalem." <sup>5</sup>

#### 173. Bethlehem Part of the Land of Jerusalem

**Status: Confirmed** (1845–1965)

Critics' Claim: One of the earliest and most common criticisms of



**Figure 46.** Amarna letter, Louvre Museum. Louvre Museum, Wikimedia Commons, s.v. "Amarna letter mp3h8882," commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Amarna \_letter\_mp3h8882.jpg.

the Book of Mormon was Alma's statement that Jesus was "born at Jerusalem which is the land of our forefathers" (Alma 7:10), rather than Bethlehem.<sup>6</sup>

**Response:** The El Amarna Letters, not discovered until 1887, show that the terms Jerusalem and "land of Jerusalem" could be used interchangeably, since Jerusalem was considered the administrative center that controlled the surrounding land. Letter 289 says, "And now as for Jerusalem — behold this land belongs to the king." In the days of Jesus, Jerusalem was also the capital of Judea. Significantly, El Amarna Letter 290 mentions "a town in the land of Jerusalem" with the Canaanite name *Bit-Lahmi*, which is "an almost certain reference to the town of Bethlehem." So, Bethlehem, known to us as the place of Jesus's birth, was considered by the ancient writer to have been a town belonging to Jerusalem, a town of the "land of Jerusalem," just as Alma's prophecy suggests.

#### 174. No Verifiable Details for Lehi's Wilderness Journey

Status: Confirmed (1966–2024)

**Critics' Claim:** Some critics have claimed that Nephi's description of his family's wilderness journey is too vague and that it is impossible to verify any of the details mentioned in his account. "After you leave Jerusalem, ransack its pages and you can't find anything that interlocks with any other history. It takes you out into the wilderness and you remain in the wilderness, and nobody knows anything about it or heard anything about it."

**Response:** Nephi's account of his family's journey through the wilderness to the sea has been shown to fit remarkably well with geographical, cultural, and historical information about the Arabian region, including northern Yemen and Oman.<sup>10</sup> In particular, Nephi mentions a place called *Nahom*, where they buried his father-in-law Ishmael (1 Nephi 16:34). The existence of a place known as *NHM* is now verified by ancient inscriptions and other historical records.<sup>11</sup>

## 175. Direction of Departure

Status: Confirmed (1845–1965)

**Critics' Claim:** Some critics have claimed that it would have made no sense for Lehi and his family to have traveled southward into the

Arabian wilderness (1 Nephi 2:5–6; 16:3) and that they should rather have gone westward across the Mediterranean.<sup>12</sup>

**Response:** Hugh Nibley has shown that under the circumstances the route southward would have been the wisest way to go. Given the precarious political situation involving the Kingdom of Judah, caught between Babylon and Egypt, and Judah's friendly relationship with Egypt, a westward journey could have led to disaster, as the apprehension of Urijah suggests (Jeremiah 26:20–23). On the other hand, a southern route would have been safer and would more or less shadow the Frankincense Trail. This route was fairly well established and would have taken Lehi and his family away from the danger of Lehi's Jerusalem enemies and their allies.<sup>13</sup>

#### 176. Three-Day Journey

**Status: Confirmed** (1966–2024)

**Critics' Claim:** Nephi says they reached a valley by the Red Sea after a three-day journey (1 Nephi 2:5–6). Some critics have claimed that it would have taken more than three days for Lehi and his family to travel to the Red Sea.<sup>14</sup>

**Response:** This is actually based upon a misreading of the text, which speaks of a three-day journey to the valley of Lemuel *after* they reach the borders of the Red Sea (1 Nephi 2:5–6). Wadi Tayyib al-Ism, considered to be the most likely candidate for Lehi's encampment, is approximately 75 miles (120 km) south of Aqaba, which is consistent with a three-day journey.<sup>15</sup>

## 177. River in a Valley

Status: Confirmed (1966-2024)

**Critics' Claim:** Some critics have claimed that there were no rivers in the part of ancient Arabia where Lehi is said to have camped "in a valley by the side of a river of water" (1 Nephi 2:6). According to one writer, Lehi and his family set up "their tents 160 miles from the place of starting, in a valley at the mouth of a river on the border of the Red Sea, where there never was a river for more than 300 miles either way along the shore of the sea." <sup>16</sup>

**Response:** There is a perennial flowing river or stream in Wadi Tayyib al-lsm—the only one known along this entire stretch of the Red Sea

coastline—which matches the description of the valley of Lemuel nicely.<sup>17</sup>

#### 178. River Flows into Red Sea

Status: Confirmed (1966-2024)

**Critics' Claim:** Other critics have claimed that there were never any rivers that flowed into the Red Sea, contrary to what the Book of Mormon claims (1 Nephi 2:8–9). As one critic wrote,

In almost every page there are statements which must be rejected on a moment's reflection. . . . In the wilderness, three days' journey, we are told of a river, where there never was a river. Then this river is said, first to empty itself into the Red Sea, and then into "the fountain of the Red Sea." Evidently the ignorant man who wrote all this nonsense, or spoke it, knew nothing of the geography of the wilderness, and knew little about seas, and rivers, and fountains. Young Smith might say these things in his ignorance, but a man really in the situation which he describes must have known better.<sup>18</sup>

According to another, "a river is spoken of in the wilderness, where no such river exists." Indeed, one critic insisted, "There are not even any traceable ancient river systems in this part of Arabia." As recently as 1979, a critic claimed, "there are no rivers in all of Arabia now or in recorded history, and no river empties into the Red Seal."

**Response:** The stream or river running through Wadi Tayyib al-Ism is the only stream in all of northwest Arabia that flows toward the sea throughout the year. It has been documented as reaching the Red Sea during certain parts of year and may have done so more consistently in antiquity.<sup>22</sup> During drier months, the river currently goes underground before reaching the sea, but does continue to flow under a gravel bed. Since "fountains" were usually underground water sources in antiquity, this may be what is meant by Nephi saying that river flowed "into the fountain of the Red Sea" (1 Nephi 2:9).<sup>23</sup>

#### 179. Eastward Turn

**Status: Confirmed** (1966–2024)

Critics' Claim: Some critics have claimed that Nephi's description is

too vague, making it impossible to determine where his family turned eastward after Ishmael's death (see 1 Nephi 17:1).

It was at this geographical point that they had their first death in the person of Ishmael. There is but little light that we can throw upon the exact route taken by these travelers, for the simple reason that the Mormon has no more light on these geographical questions than have we.<sup>24</sup>

**Response:** Nephi says that after they camped at Nahom they "did travel nearly eastward from that time forth" until they arrived at Bountiful (1 Nephi 17:1). NHM is an attested location (figure 47) at a significant eastward turning point in Yemen along the Incense Trail. Plausible locations for Bountiful lie nearly eastward from Nahom, a significant correlation of geographical evidence. This eastward turn aligns precisely with where Nephi's account would suggest.<sup>25</sup>

#### 180. New Names

**Status: Confirmed** (1845–1965)

**Critics' Claim:** At most stops along his journey, Lehi gives his own names to the locations where his group stays (see 1 Nephi 2:8; 16:6, 13; 17:5), a practice some critics have claimed is strange and inappropriate. <sup>26</sup>



Figure 47. Wadi Jauf, the NHM area. Photo courtesy of Warren Aston.

**Response:** As shown by Hugh Nibley, this is a common practice among Bedouins who travel through the Arabian desert.<sup>27</sup>

#### 181. Not Much Fire

**Status: Confirmed** (1845–1965)

**Critics' Claim:** Some critics considered it absurd that Lehi's family would not make much fire during their wilderness journey (1 Nephi 17:12).<sup>28</sup>

**Response:** Hugh Nibley has shown this was often a necessity in order to keep from attracting enemies and marauders in the desert.<sup>29</sup>

#### 182. Raw Meat

**Status: Confirmed** (1845–1965)

**Critics' Claim:** Some critics have objected to the practice of eating raw meat, which Nephi indicates they were required at times to do during their wilderness journey (1 Nephi 17:2).<sup>30</sup>

**Response:** Nibley shows that this was a known Bedouin practice when necessity requires.<sup>31</sup> The law of Moses prohibited the drinking of blood, not the eating of raw meat, as long as sacrificial rules were obeyed.

## 183. Bountiful (OW)

**Status: Confirmed** (1966–2024)

**Critics' Claim:** Some critics have claimed that Nephi's reference to a site that was "bountiful" during their wilderness journey in the Old World (1 Nephi 17:5) is incorrect, as there would have been no sites that were bountiful in ancient Arabia.

To believe the book of Mormon, we must suppose that these emigrants traversed almost the whole length of the Arabian Gulf... and that they discovered a country almost equal to paradise, where nobody else can find anything but a sandy, barren desert.<sup>32</sup>

"Here, again, is a blunder of ignorance of known factors. The coast-line of the Persian Gulf was utterly inhospitable and barren." One critic sarcastically quipped, "Arabia is bountiful in sunshine, petroleum, sand, heat, and fresh air, but certainly not in 'much fruit and wild honey', nor has it been since creation times."

**Response:** Research has verified the existence of a fertile region—the Dhofar region—that matches Nephi's description.<sup>35</sup>

#### 184. Much Fruit

**Status: Confirmed** (1966–2024)

**Critics' Claim:** Some critics have claimed that Nephi's statement that they found much fruit at Bountiful is wrong since ancient Arabia was not known for its "much fruit" (1 Nephi 17:5).<sup>36</sup>

**Response:** Recent research has confirmed that various kinds of fruit (figure 48) can be abundantly found at candidates for the Old World Bountiful.<sup>37</sup>

## 185. Wild Honey

**Status: Confirmed** (1966–2024)

**Critics' Claim:** Some critics have claimed that references to wild honey at Bountiful (1 Nephi 17:5) is unlikely for a text describing a location in ancient Arabia.<sup>38</sup>

**Response:** Research yields examples of wild honey at sites such as Wadi Sayq in southern Oman.<sup>39</sup>



Figure 48. Date palms near beach at Wadi Sayg. Photo courtesy of Warren Aston.

#### 186. Timber

**Status: Confirmed** (1966–2024)

**Critics' Claim:** Some critics have claimed that timber that could have been used to build a ship (1 Nephi 18:1) would have been unknown in ancient Arabia. "At this point Nephi is instructed to build a ship for passage to the New World, at a location probably more remote from ship-building timber than any place on the globe." Another wrote, "Nephi neglects to tell us the smaller details — how he found wood for the fire, saw timber for the ship." 41

**Response:** We still have much to learn about the history of trees along the coast of present-day Oman during the time of Lehi. Investigations thus far, however, suggest that there was sufficient timber in this region for the construction of a ship.<sup>42</sup>

#### 187. Ore

Status: Confirmed (1966-2024)

**Critics' Claim:** Nephi makes tools from ore while in Bountiful (1 Nephi 17:10, 16). Some critics have claimed that no ore has ever been found in this region of Arabia and would have been unavailable to Nephi.

Although the territory is one that in expanse is comparable to that portion of the United States lying between the Mississippi River and the Atlantic Ocean, yet in all that range of territory there has been no metal discovered that would be suitable for ship construction, except in the central part of the Sinaitic peninsula, either of which is hundreds of miles distant from the reputed spot where the vessel was built. And this fact goes far to strengthen the oft repeated assertion that the "author and proprietor" of the Book of Mormon was illiterate.<sup>43</sup>

**Response:** Oman was a well known source for copper ore in antiquity. <sup>44</sup> More recent discoveries have identified iron ore deposits in southern Oman close to a potential candidate for Old World Bountiful. <sup>45</sup>

#### 188. Bellows

Status: Confirmed (1966–2024)

Critics' Claim: Some critics have claimed that the process of making

a bellows would have been unknown to Nephi at the time of their wilderness journey.<sup>46</sup>

**Response:** Metallurgists in the ancient Near East were constructing relatively simple bellows for smelting metal before Nephi's day.<sup>47</sup>

#### 189. Mountain at Bountiful

**Status: Confirmed** (1966–2024)

**Critics' Claim:** Nephi states that he often went to a mountain near their camp at Bountiful (1 Nephi 17:7; 18:3). Some critics have claimed, however, that there were no mountains along the coast in this region of the world. "There are no mountains within several hundred miles of 'Bountiful' on the Persian Gulf." 48

**Response:** There are mountains near the coast in southern Oman. One site, Wadi Sayq, even has a prominent mountain near the inlet from which Nephi's ship could have been launched (figure 49).<sup>49</sup>

## 190. Pre-Columbian Sea Crossings

**Status: Confirmed** (1966–2024)

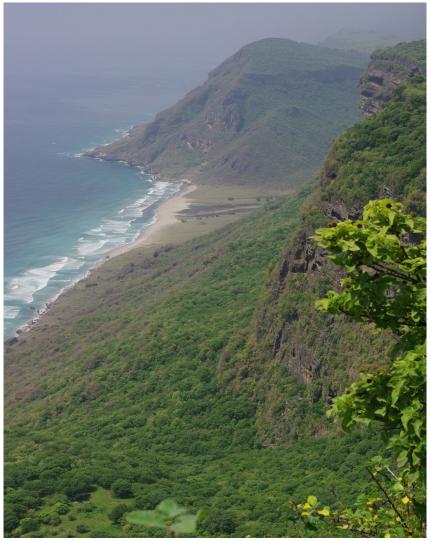
**Critics' Claim:** Some have claimed that transoceanic crossings from the Old World to the Americas did not occur prior to the advent of Columbus in 1492. "By this account Columbus is all becalmed; his voyage was too late in the age; his adventure is not a circumstance to the Mormons." "Prior to the discovery of America by Columbus, it was to the eastern hemisphere an *unknown land*; and that communication with the *moon* would, prior to that period, have been a more conceivable idea." <sup>51</sup>

**Response:** Growing evidence supports the view that transoceanic crossings of both the Pacific and the Atlantic before Columbus were not only possible but have occurred over thousands of years. <sup>52</sup> Some of the strongest evidence is that of transoceanic exchanges of plants as well as microorganisms which could only have spread through human agents. <sup>53</sup>

## 191. Pacific Ocean Crossing

Status: Confirmed (1966-2024)

Critics' Claim: Some critics have claimed that an ocean crossing to



**Figure 49.** View of Khor Kharfot, with Wadi Sayq to the right. Photo courtesy of Warren Aston.

the Americas makes no geographical sense in light of Nephi's description (1 Nephi 18:23) and would have been anciently implausible.<sup>54</sup>

**Response:** Recent research points to the plausibility of an ancient Pacific crossing with the help of El Niño-driven currents, which could have taken Lehi's party across the Pacific, landing them somewhere along the Central American coast.<sup>55</sup>

## 192. Jaredite Voyage Too Long

**Status: Confirmed** (1966–2024)

**Critics' Claim:** Some critics have claimed that the Jaredite voyage of 344 days is much too long for a crossing from the Old World to the New.

They were driven continually toward the promised land by "furious winds" and "terrible tempests," [Ether 6:5–6] yet it required 344 days to cross the ocean to this country.— You can judge for yourself with what speed they must have traveled.<sup>56</sup>

"It was a lazy wind that took 344 days to blow the Jaredites across the sea. A lost fishing crew is blown across the sea in less than a month these days."<sup>57</sup>

**Response:** The Jaredite vessels were barges that were driven by ocean currents and could be briefly submerged (Ether 2:6, 16–17, 23–25; 6:5–10). They were not sailing vessels. This is very different from the ocean-going vessels that would have been known to Joseph Smith were he the one who created this account.

Assuming the Jaredites crossed the Pacific from somewhere in eastern Asia, the time of 344 days seems reasonable. Following a tsunami on 11 March 2011 that killed 16,000 people in northern Japan, massive amounts of debris were carried across the northern Pacific reaching the coast of Vancouver Island, British Columbia, on 13 December 2011, a transit time of 280 days.<sup>58</sup>

According to Clifford Evans and Betty J. Meggers, a boat from off the shore of Kyushu, Japan, could catch the northwestern Pacific current, which would carry them at a speed of 24–43 miles per day. This would allow them to reach the shores of North America in approximately 330 days. Japanese junk vessels have sometimes been carried as far as the western coast of Mexico. In 1617 one such vessel made it to Acapulco. In 1815, a U.S. ship carried three Japanese men from Mexico to China. The three were "survivors of the crew of a junk which had drifted from the coast of Japan, entirely across the Pacific Ocean, and finally stranded on the coast of Mexico, where they remained two years."

Wythe Braden states,

Losing its rudder and being dismasted in the process, such a junk would drift at the mercy of the Kuroshio until eventually

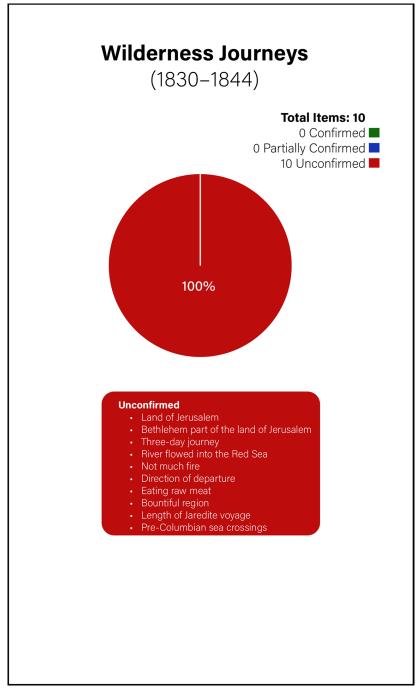
washed ashore somewhere along the route of the current's circulation — Canada, Alaska or the Aleutians by way of the Alaskan Current to the north, California or Mexico to the south, or to the Hawaiian Islands via the North Equatorial Current.<sup>61</sup>

## **Summary of Results**

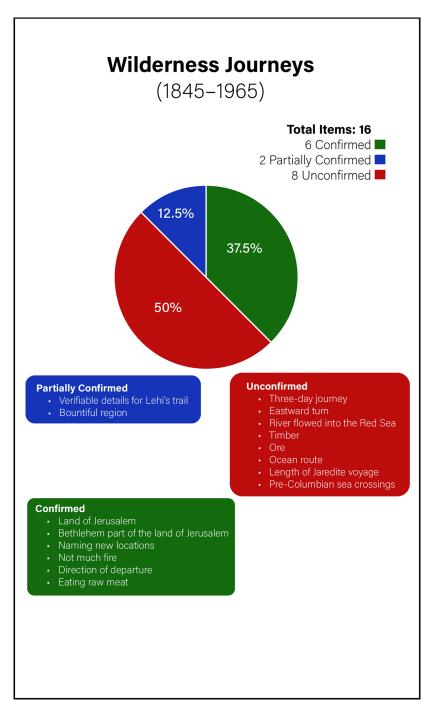
Writers from 1830 to 1844 had mentioned ten items that were considered anachronistic (figure 50) relating to Lehi's wilderness journey and the voyage of the Jaredites. None were confirmed. During the second period (1845–2024) there were sixteen items (figure 51), six of which found confirmation, two partial confirmation, and eight lacked verification. By 2024 the number of items had risen to twenty-one, all of which have found confirmation (figure 52).



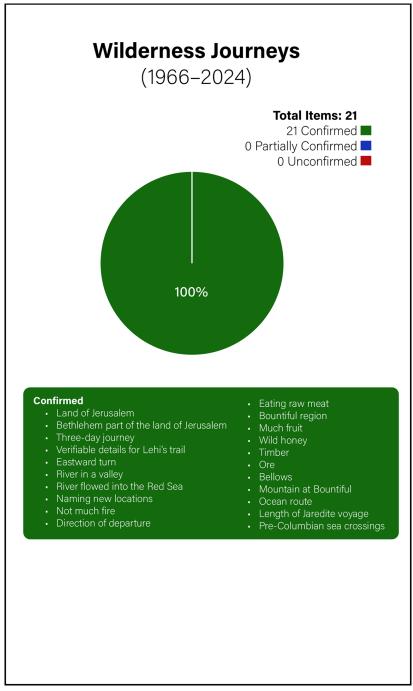
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**Figure 50.** Anachronisms for wilderness journeys in the Book of Mormon (1830–1844).



**Figure 51.** Anachronisms for wilderness journeys in the Book of Mormon (1845–1965).



**Figure 52.** Anachronisms for wilderness journeys in the Book of Mormon (1966–2024).

#### **Notes**

- 1. Gordon H. Fraser, What Does the Book of Mormon Teach? (Chicago: Moody Press, 1964), 12.
- 2. Hugh Nibley, Lehi in the Desert / The World of the Jaredites / There Were Jaredites (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book; Provo, UT: Foundation for Ancient Research and Mormon Studies [FARMS], 1988); Eugene England, "Through the Arabian Desert to a Bountiful Land: Could Joseph Smith Have Known the Way?" in Book of Mormon Authorship: New Light on Ancient Origins, ed. Noel B. Reynolds (Provo, UT: Religious Studies Center, Brigham Young University, 1982), 143-56; Noel B. Reynolds, "Lehi's Arabian Journey Updated," in Book of Mormon Authorship Revisited, ed. Noel B. Reynolds (Provo, UT: FARMS, 1997), 379-89; S. Kent Brown, "New Light from Arabia on Lehi's Trail," in Echoes and Evidences of the Book of Mormon, ed. Donald W. Parry, Daniel C. Peterson, and John W. Welch (Provo, UT: FARMS, 2002), 55-125; George Potter and Richard Wellington, Lehi in the Wilderness (Springville, UT: Cedar Fort, 2003); Warren P. Aston, Lehi and Sariah in Arabia: The Old World Setting of the Book of Mormon (self-pub., Xlibris, 2015); S. Kent Brown and Peter Johnson. Journey of Faith: From Jerusalem to the Promised Land (Provo. UT: Neal A. Maxwell Institute for Religious Scholarship, 2006); Warren P. Aston, "The Origins of the Nihm Tribe of Yemen: A Window into Arabia's Past," Journal of Arabian Studies 4, no. 1 (2014): 134-48; Warren P. Aston, "Into Arabia: Lehi and Sariah's Escape from Jerusalem," BYU Studies Quarterly 58, no. 4 (2019): 117-25, scholarsarchive.byu.edu/byusq/vol58/iss4/4/; Neal Rappleye, "An Ishmael Buried near Nahom," Interpreter: A Journal of Latter-day Saint Faith and Scholarship 48 (2021): 33-48, journal.interpreterfoundation.org/an -ishmael-buried-near-nahom/; Warren P. Aston, "A Research Note: Continuing Exploration and Research in Oman," Interpreter: A Journal of Latter-day Saint Faith and Scholarship 53 (2022): 255-64, journal interpreter foundation .org/a-research-note-continuing-exploration-and-research-in-oman/; Neal Rappleye, "The Place—or the Tribe—Called Nahom? NHM as Both a Tribal and Geographic Name in Modern and Ancient Yemen," BYU Studies 62, no. 2 (2023):49-72, scholarsarchive.byu.edu/byusq/vol62/iss2/4/; Rappleye, "The Nahom Convergence Reexamined: The Eastward Trail, Burial of the Dead, and the Ancient Borders of Nihm," Interpreter: A Journal of Latter-day Saint Faith and Scholarship 60 (2024): 1–86, journal.interpreterfoundation.org/the -nahom-convergence-reexamined-the-eastward-trail-burial-of-the-dead -and-the-ancient-borders-of-nihm/; Warren P. Aston, Godfrey J. Ellis, and Neal Rappleve. Into Arabia: Anchoring Nephi's Account in the Real World (Orem. UT: Interpreter Foundation; Salt Lake City: Eborn Books, 2024).
- 3. Origen Bacheler, *Mormonism Exposed, Internally and Externally* (New York: printed by the author, 1838), 14.
- 4. James B. Pritchard, The Ancient Near East: An Anthology of Texts and Pictures (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1958), 271–72, 274; Scripture Central Staff, "Land of Jerusalem," Evidence 79, 19 September 2020, scripturecentral.org/evidence/book-of-mormon-evidence-land-of -jerusalem; Scripture Central Staff, "Why Does the Book of Mormon Talk about a 'Land of Jerusalem'?," KnoWhy 495, 20 December 2018,

- 5. Florentino García Martínez and Eibert J. C. Tigchelaar, eds., *The Dead Sea Scrolls Study Edition* (Grand Rapids, MI: 1998), 2:773.
- "This prophet Smith... is better skilled in the controversies of New York than in the geography of history of Judea. He makes John baptize in the village of Bethabara, and says Jesus was born in Jerusalem." Alexander Campbell, "Delusions," in *Millennial Harbinger*, ed. Alexander Campbell (Bethany, VA: printed the editor, 1831), 2:93.
- 7. Pritchard, Ancient Near East, 273.
- 8. Pritchard, Ancient Near East, 274n1.
- 9. ClarkBraden,in "Braden-KelleyDebate," *IndependentPatriot* (Lamoni,IA),9 July 1891. Another critic has written, "Joseph had little knowledge of the vast desert area, the Arabian Peninsula. . . . Therefore, he was purposefully vague as to details of his route. For this reason Mormon 'historians' have been put to no end of trouble in piecing together an authentic map of Lehi's route to the sea." Wesley M. Jones, *A Critical Study of Book of Mormon Sources* (Detroit: Harlo Press, 1964), 15.
- 10. Scripture Central Staff, "Overview of Lehi's Journey," Evidence 233, 31 August 2021, scripturecentral.org/evidence/overview-of-lehis-journey.
- 11. Rappleye, "The Place—or the Tribe—Called Nahom?," 49–72; Warren P. Aston, "A History of NaHoM," *BYU Studies Quarterly* 51, no. 2 (2012): 78–98, scholarsarchive.byu.edu/byusq/vol51/iss2/6/; Aston, "Origins of the Nihm Tribe of Yemen." 134–48.
- 12. "Why were they not directed to the Mediterranean Sea, which was so near Jerusalem, instead of being made to perform the long and perilous journey to the borders of the Red Sea? More especially since the voyage through the former would have been shorter by six or seven thousand miles, (no trifling distance,) than the one performed according to the data given. An easterly course would have taken them across the desert of Arabia to the Persian Gulf." Daniel P. Kidder, *Mormonism and the Mormons* (New York: G. Lane and P. P. Sandford, 1842), 265; *The Doctrines of Mormonism* (London: Religious Tract Society, 1850), 12; William Kirby, *Mormonism Exposed and Refuted* (Nashville: Gospel Advocate Publishing, 1893), 442–43.
- 13. Nibley, Lehi in the Desert, 49-51.
- 14. "This, it must be confessed, was a most extraordinary journey; to go from Jerusalem to the Red Sea, with his wife, children, tents and baggage, in three days, was to travel with unparalleled celerity." Gimel, "Book of Mormon," Christian Watchman (Boston), 7 October 1831; Samuel W. Traum, Mormonism

- against Itself (Cincinnati: Standard Publishing, 1910), 90; Fraser, What Does the Book of Mormon Teach?, 35; Gordon H. Fraser, Is Mormonism Christian? (Chicago: Moody Press, 1977), 137–38.
- 15. Scripture Central Staff, "Valley of Lemuel," Evidence 121, 28 November 2020, scripturecentral.org/evidence/book-of-mormon-evidence-valley-of-lemuel.
- 16. S. Burnet, *The Evangelist*, September 30, 1880, as cited by Joseph Smith III in *The Spaulding Story Reexamined* (Lamoni, IA: Herald Office, 1883), 14.
- 17. Scripture Central Staff, "Valley of Lemuel"; Aston, "Into Arabia," 117–25; Scripture Central Staff, "Have the Valley of Lemuel and the River Laman Been Found?," KnoWhy 286, 13 March 2017, scripturecentral.org/knowhy /have-the-valley-of-lemuel-and-the-river-laman-been-found.
- 18. Doctrines of Mormonism, 12.
- 19. W.SparrowSimpson, *Mormonism:ItsHistory, Doctrines, and Practices* (London: A. M. Pigott, 1853), 32.
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- 26. "All the rivers and valleys he makes Lehi name with new names." Hyde, Mormonism, 223. T. B. H. Stenhouse complained that Nephi "calls all the rivers, mountains, and other prominent landmarks, which they passed, by other names than those generally known either in ancient or modern geography." T.

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- 28. "It seems, with all their knowledge of the arts of the compass, they did not know enough to rub two pieces of wood or stone against each other to get fire." Tyler Parsons, *Mormon Fanaticism Exposed* (Boston: printed for the author, 1841), 11. "There was no lack of wood for fire in the wilderness, no lack of stones to smite together, but simply to prove to them that they are the Lord's special pets, he saves them the trouble of making fire by performing the prodigious miracle of making raw meat sweet and palatable." M. T. Lamb, *The Golden Bible, or, The Book of Mormon: Is It from God?* (New York: Ward & Drummond, 1887), 61.
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