

What should someone do when a long-held hypothesis fails? In seeking a setting for Book of Mormon events that matches the text's descriptions, one Latter-day Saint found himself looking in a very surprising part of the world.

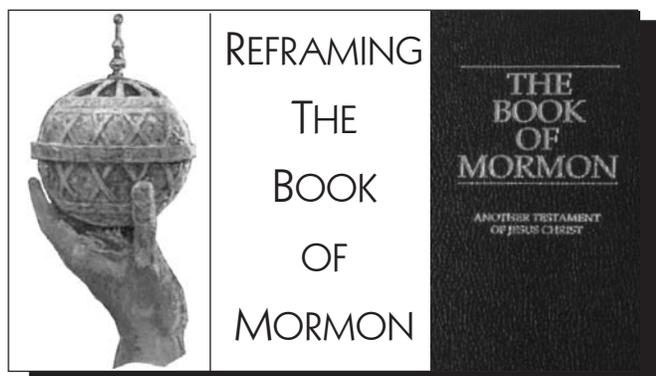
A MALAY SITE FOR BOOK OF MORMON EVENTS

By Ralph A. Olsen

We owe almost all our knowledge not to those who have agreed but to those who have differed.

—C. C. COLTON¹

THE BOOK OF MORMON IS A SCRIPTURAL ACCOUNT of three small groups of Middle Easterners who migrated to a “land of promise.” To date, the site of Book



of Mormon events has not been found. Without strong physical evidence indicating the actual existence of the peoples and happenings described in the Book of Mormon record, many have found it difficult to accept the book as genuine scripture or Joseph Smith as a prophet of God. The quest for a suitable site matching Book of Mormon descriptions—of the geography, climate, cultural traits, and so forth—is therefore of great importance to those, like me, who believe scripture should be taken at face value as much as possible.

No revelation regarding the site has been received. As LDS Book of Mormon scholar John Sorenson states: “Church authorities from the time of Joseph Smith to the present have come to no consensus, made no authoritative statement, and reported no definitive solution to the question of Book of Mormon geography.”²



RALPH A. OLSEN, Ph.D., is a retired chemistry professor at Montana State University, with research interests in plants, soils, and microbes. He and his wife Vanona currently live in Bozeman, Montana. He may be contacted by mail at: 1605 W. Kagy Blvd., Bozeman, MT 59715.

Initially, Book of Mormon lands were thought to occupy all of South America—“the land southward”—and North America—“the land northward”—with the Isthmus of Panama understood to be the “narrow neck of land” connecting the two. Those who have followed Book of Mormon scholarship for the past few decades have become aware of problems with this view. Indeed, a whole range of problems and difficulties, already well documented in many books, articles, and essays, make both the hemispheric and limited geography models seem untenable.³ Recent DNA studies of Amerindians have also convincingly shown that most of them are descended from peoples from Northeast Asia, not from the Middle East.⁴

Taken together, these problems have caused me to wonder for some time why very few researchers seem to have considered the possibility that Book of Mormon events occurred somewhere other than in America. In the physical sciences, when evidence indicates flaws in an accepted hypothesis, even if the inconsistencies might at first seem slight, researchers actively seek a better hypothesis. Mormonism’s Ninth Article of Faith reminds us that many truths are yet unknown, and Apostle John A. Widstoe has encouraged honest inquiry: “There can be no objection to the careful and critical study of the scriptures, ancient or modern, provided only that it be an honest study. . . a search for truth.”⁵ In the sciences, as in life, there is no shame in trying and sometimes failing; the shame comes in not trying at all.

Strengthened by sentiments like Elder Widstoe’s and aware of the difficult problems with the settings currently being proposed as the site of Book of Mormon events, I have for some time now been actively searching for a more suitable location.⁶ And my search has led me to a surprising candidate: the Malay Peninsula in Southeast Asia.

In presenting what I label the “Malay Hypothesis,” I realize I am suggesting that studies aimed at locating Book of Mormon lands and accurately identifying the descendants of Book of Mormon peoples would need to undergo a radical paradigm shift—one that many would consider quite far-fetched. I am fully aware that no Church leader, Joseph Smith included, has pointed toward a Southeast Asian setting, but neither have they made statements which rule it out.

I began developing this hypothesis many years before DNA studies began pointing toward Asian origins for Amerindian peoples, and the Malay Hypothesis does not rely upon those findings. Still, I hope the results of that research might embolden some advocates of the various Western Hemisphere sites to seriously consider the Malay Peninsula (hereafter, Mala).

I have developed the Malay Hypothesis in great detail,⁷ but in this short essay, I will present only a very brief introduction and overview of some its interesting matches with the Book of Mormon text. I present Mala for consideration, but I do not undertake any detailed discussion of deficiencies in the predominant models.⁸ My hope for this presentation is to “prime the pump,” asking for a fair hearing and for interested readers to look at my longer study and, perhaps, read for themselves the Book of Mormon with Mala in mind.⁹ Because I believe the Book of Mormon is a genuine record of actual peoples and events, not merely a metaphorical or spiritual record, I believe the quest for discovering the lands and peoples described is a very valuable one.

THE JOURNEY

ACCORDING TO MY reading of the Book of Mormon, sometime between 3000 and 2500 B.C., the Jaredites walked to Nimrod (Ether 2:1) near the upper Tigris River. (See current day maps of Iraq.) They built barges on which they floated down the “many waters” of the river (Ether 2:6) to the Persian Gulf, “the sea which divideth the lands” (Ether 2:13). There they built new barges to cross an ocean (Ether 2:16). The Lehites’ voyage began about 600 B.C., from the nearby southern coast of Arabia (1 Nephi 17:5–8). They also made their way to the land of promise by means of an ocean voyage.

The following is a partial list of interesting factors to consider in hypothesizing about Book of Mormon journeying.

- In their travels to the ocean, the Jaredites were getting farther away from America but closer to the Mala. If we grant that the Lord was directing the Jaredites, having them travel west from Nimrod via the Mediterranean Sea would have been a far shorter and more sensible route if the land of promise was to be somewhere in the Americas. It would have been even more sensible for Nephites originating near the sea in Jerusalem.

- Under precarious conditions—with families and livestock aboard, and with no experience, no maps, no navigational skills, and no technical equipment—a 4,000 mile voyage to Mala would have been far more likely to succeed than a 16,000 mile voyage to the Americas (which actually takes them past Mala).

- To avoid becoming separated (in the case of the Jaredites) and to replenish requisite supplies of food, feed, and water, coast-hugging voyages seem to make the most sense. A journey toward Southern Asia meets this ideal, but one that continues across the Pacific, with only occasional islands as potential stopping places, does not.

- The Book of Mormon makes no reference to sickness, fatalities, drownings, shipwrecks, food, feed and water shortages, nor to serious mutinies or despair. Perhaps relatively short voy-

ages on one of the earth’s calmer oceans are indicated?¹⁰

- Joseph Smith is quoted as saying: “Lehi went down by the Red Sea to the great Southern Ocean, and crossed over to this land.”¹¹ From Arabia, the “great Southern Ocean” extends eastward to the Malay Peninsula but not to the Americas. There are coordinated currents (gyres) going past Arabia and as far east as the Malay Peninsula. These would have been crucial to the sail-less, drifting Jaredite barges. Getting through the Indonesian isles alone (past Mala) would require skilled guidance and some means of propulsion.

GEOGRAPHY

AS A CANDIDATE for the land of promise, Mala has many significant geographical features matching Book of Mormon descriptions. As readers consider the points that follow, it will be helpful to refer to the map on page 32. The following list of advantages for the Malay Hypothesis is not exhaustive, and although I don’t argue in any detail against the various proposed American settings, each “positive” for Malay listed here solves a related problem in many of the other settings:

- *Peninsula and Orientation.* As a peninsula, Mala is “nearly surrounded by water” (Alma 22:32). The leading proposed Mesoamerican site, on the Isthmus of Tehuantepec, is nearly surrounded by land and has no terminus at all. Mala is also oriented northward-southward, as Book of Mormon descriptions state, whereas the Isthmus of Tehuantepec extends east-west.¹² I see no reason to believe that Book of Mormon directions are not the same as ours. The Liahona served as a compass, and the Lehites knew they were going south-southeast along the Red Sea (1 Nephi 16:13). For Mala, directions are not a problem. For the dominant Mesoamerican hypothesis, many places where Book of Mormon authors mention directions are seriously skewed counter-clockwise.

- *Seas.* Seas to the east and west predominate in Mala but not in many of the favored Mesoamerican proposals.¹³

- *Boundaries.* In Mala, the land southward would be present-day Malaysia, the land of Bountiful would be Thailand, and much of the land northward would be Myanmar (Burma). Could it be that ancient boundaries have been retained?

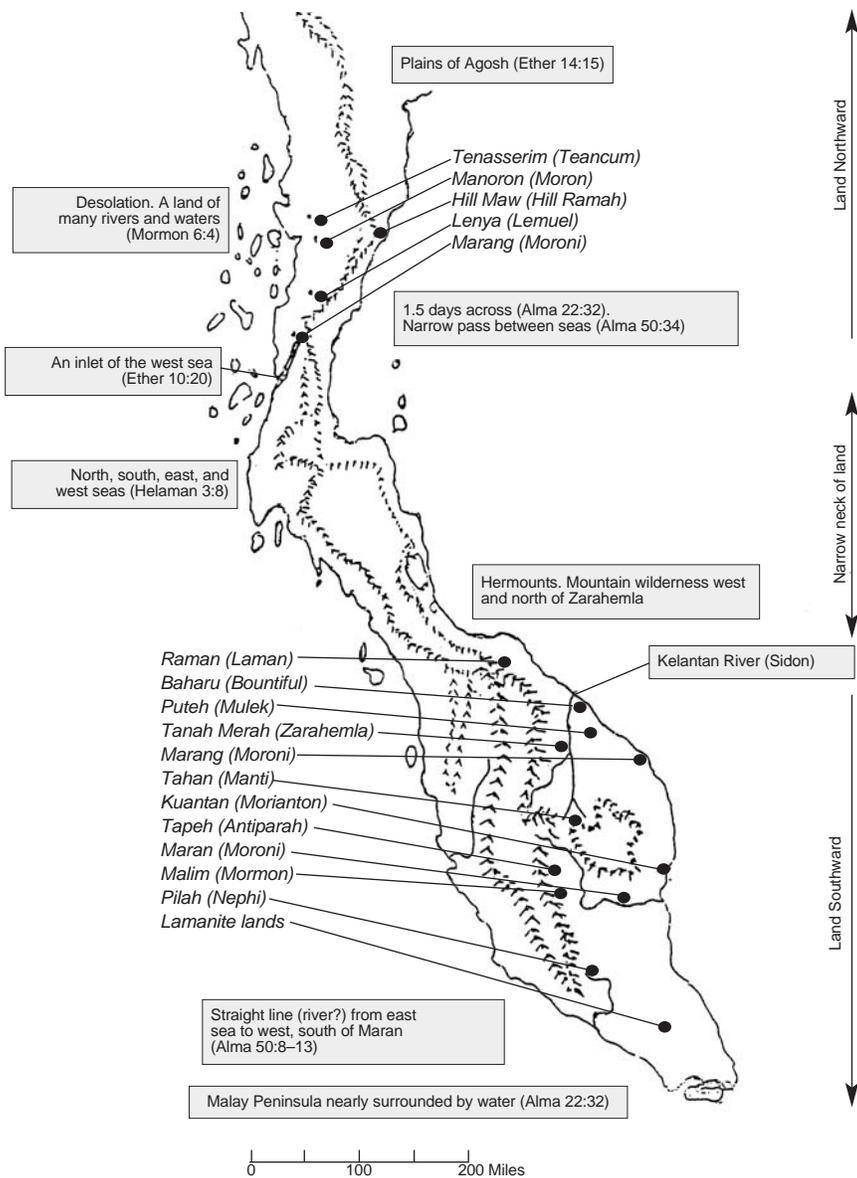
- *Land of Bountiful.* In the Mala setting, the land of Bountiful can correctly occupy the entire narrow neck of land and extend from sea to sea (Alma 22:29–33; 50:8–11, 32–34).¹⁴

- *Width and length.* A Nephite could cross the northern end of the narrow neck in 1.5 days (Alma 22:32). In going from Zarahemla on the land northward (through the narrow neck of land), Nephites traveled “an exceedingly great distance” (Helaman 3:3–4). As seen on the map (page 32), Mala provides the requisite geography.¹⁵

- *Inlet.* Mala has an inlet of the west sea by the narrow neck of land, which would account nicely for a reference to a place near the narrow neck “where the sea divides the land” (Ether 10:20).

- *The land southward.* The land southward was nearly surrounded by water with a small neck of land extending northward (Alma 22:32). This matches a Mala setting.

CULTURE, ANIMALS, PLANTS, AND PEOPLE



PROPOSED LANDS OF PROMISE ON THE MALAY PENINSULA.

Additional possible Book of Mormon names can be found north of the peninsula where Book of Mormon peoples could easily have migrated. These place names include: Leh (Lehi), Sai-rai (Sariah), Canaine (Canaan), and Lamaing (Laman). On nearby Sumatra, one finds a Lammeula (Lemuel). As mentioned in the body of the article, on the Comoros Islands (off the shore of Madagascar), which were settled by people from the Malay Peninsula, there is a city of Moroni.

- **Sidon River.** A major river, Sidon, runs north to the sea past Zarahemla to the west. The Kelantan River matches the accounts (Alma 2:15; 2:34; 16:6,7; 43:22).

- **A narrow strip of mountain wilderness.** A narrow strip of wilderness extends east-west across the midsection of the land southward (Alma 22:27). The Cameron Highlands of Mala match the account.¹⁶

- **Inhabitable terrain.** Well-inhabited hilly terrain was located along two hundred miles or more of the northeastern seashore in the land southward (Alma 50-62). Mala matches very well, whereas some proposed sites in America have no lands along a northeastern seashore portion of the land southward at all.

ARCHAEOLOGISTS HAVE FOUND many evidences in Palestine that support biblical accounts. As scholars have noted, the few evidences found in support of Book of Mormon events occurring in Mesoamerica are mostly circumstantial and unconvincing.¹⁷ By contrast, the Malay Peninsula has much in its cultural history that aligns with Book of Mormon peoples and events, including:

- **Jewish affinities.** Hugh Nibley has noted that the Karens of Burma “have displayed such astonishing cultural affinities with the Jews that some observers have even claimed them to be of Jewish origin.” There are also striking resemblances between Karen beliefs and those in the Book of Mormon.¹⁸

- **Script and languages.** Nibley also reports that writing in the India-Burma region (directly north of the Malay Peninsula) “was actually derived from Aramaic and Phoenician forms ultimately taken from the Egyptian.”¹⁹

- **Mining, metallurgy, tools, and weapons.** In a 1979 study of Thai metallurgy, D. T. Bayard reports that bronze may have been in use as early as 3,000 B.C. The introduction of iron tools has been dated at about 1340 B.C.²⁰ These dates match the chronology and activities of the Jaredites (Ether 10:23-27) and Nephites (Jarom 1:8)

- **Inscribed metal plates.** The Karen tribe (mentioned above) made metal plates not only of copper but of gold. In nearby India, copper plates, inscribed, perforated, and linked together by metal rings have been found.²¹

- **Animals for food.** Book of Mormon peoples are described as having domesticated cattle, oxen, cows, sheep, goats, swine and other animals (Ether 9:18). All of these animals are indigenous to the Old World (none in America). Evidence for pigs, dogs, fowl, goats, and cattle during Book of Mormon times has been found in Southeast Asia.²²

- **Animals for work.** Book of Mormon peoples are described as having horses and asses, and the more useful elephants and cureloms and cumoms (Ether 9:18). Horses and asses and elephants are indigenous to the Orient. Mala also has water buffalo and other bovines (could these be cureloms and cumoms?) which are more useful than horses and asses in the Southeast Asian climate and for indigenous forms of agriculture.

- **Grains.** Middle Eastern grains included wheat, oats, barley, rye, millet and possibly rice. Successful production requires tillage operations using farm implements and work animals. Wheat, barley, and other cereal grains have long been cultivated in Southeast Asia.²³ There is no evidence of their cultivation in Mesoamerica.

• *Fruits.* Valued Middle Eastern fruits included apple, pear, plum, cherry, apricot, peach, fig, persimmon, melon, quince, pomegranate, banana, orange, lemon, lime and date.²⁴ An early naturalist in the southern Burma area found pineapple, grape, banana, coconut, breadfruit, plum, apple, orange, lime, citron and many other fruits under cultivation.²⁵

• *Silk.* The Book of Mormon describes an abundance of silk (Alma 1:29; Ether 10:24). The silk arts were developed in neighboring China about 2,600 B.C.²⁶ As a way to reconcile Book of Mormon terms with other settings, some have suggested that the terms may not have been translated correctly: maybe “silk” doesn’t really mean silk. However, I prefer that terms be interpreted literally, if possible. The Introduction to the Book of Mormon quotes Joseph Smith as saying that the Book of Mormon is the “most correct of any book on earth and the keystone of our religion.” I believe we should not simply reinterpret or assign vague meanings to those parts of the book that do not fit our preconceived notions.

• *Volcanic explosions.* The Book of Mormon reports that at the time of Christ’s crucifixion, devastating events took place in the land of promise (3 Nephi 8). The effects are so catastrophic, I believe they can best be explained by an explosive volcanic event (not simply an extrusion of lava). The Malay Peninsula provides a good setting. For example, the Krakatoa (1883) and Tambora (1815) explosions both in Indonesia, just south of the proposed Mala site, caused huge quantities of material to be blown into the atmosphere, leaving calderas. There were tempests and thunderous noise and frightful earthquakes and lightning, and fires and tsunamis, all of which killed tens of thousands of people. The accompanying darkness lasted for several days and affected the entire world with low temperatures, hurting crop yields.²⁷ The days of darkness were to be a sign of the crucifixion to those on the isles of the sea (1 Ne. 19:10). With many isles nearby, the Malay Peninsula provides a good setting for the events.

• *Place names.* Palestine still has many place names which existed in Biblical times. One might reasonably expect a comparable array of place names in the Book of Mormon to exist in the land of promise. The proposed Mala setting is intriguing for this reason. Owing to dissension and incessant warfare, groups of people from the peninsula are thought to have “hived off,” and it is natural that they would not travel farther than necessary.

On or within reasonable distances from the peninsula, the twenty-two place names listed on the map (page 32) can be found on modern-day maps. Not only are the names comparable to Book of Mormon names but the locations match Book of Mormon accounts. For example, in Ether 13–15, we read that in the final battles, the Jaredites fought near Moron (Manoron) and then went eastward to a seashore through a range of hills and fought near a Hill Ramah (Hill Maw). The priceless plates of Mormon—the “records which had been entrusted [to him] by the hand of the Lord” (Mormon 6:6)—may still be there.

Another possibility: Madagascar was settled by people from the Malay area between 300 and 500 A.D.²⁸ This was about the time Moroni, and possibly other survivors, were fleeing from

their lives from the victorious Lamanites. Could it be possible that this is the reason that a city of Moroni is found on an island off the shore of Madagascar?²⁹

• *Polynesian origins.* “A basic view held in the Church is that Polynesians have ancestral connections with the Book of Mormon people. . . .” Church leaders have indicated that among Polynesian ancestors were the people of Hagoth who set sail from Nephite lands about 54 B.C. (Alma 63:5–8).³⁰ Migrations westward into islands of the Pacific are obviously proposed in the various American-setting hypotheses.

In an overview of perspectives about Polynesian origins, Russell T. Clement, a special collections librarian at BYU-Hawaii writes: “In few cases is the Mormon Church at such odds with the learning of men as in its answers to the intriguing questions of Polynesian origins and migrations.”³¹ Clement then quotes from a statement representative of the widespread scholarly consensus on the subject: “What seems beyond question is that, wherever the Pacific peoples might have come from in the first place, they reached the Pacific by way of Asia.”³² I’ll share two items from the very long Polynesia section of my larger work that support the Malay Hypothesis:

(1) Hawaiians claim they came from a great and huge land (compared with their islands?) joined by an isthmus; the east and west sides were washed by oceans.³³ Coupled with the scholarly consensus that their ancestral home was Asia, the Malay Peninsula is a nice fit.

(2) Easter Island, off the coast of South America, is said to have been settled about 600 A.D. by Polynesians who migrated from the west.³⁴ The people were called “long ears” by some for their custom of piercing their ear lobes and using weights to induce them to grow to shoulder length. Malaysians practiced the same custom.³⁵ Also of interest is a legend that the first king on Easter Island brought seven tribes with him: the Nephites recognized seven subdivisions (Jacob 1:13). On Easter Island, seven huge stone structures were erected in honor of the seven tribes. These statues “stare out beyond the island *across the ocean to the west*, remembering where they came from.”³⁶

• *DNA.* A traditional LDS belief is that all Amerindians are descendants of Book of Mormon people. As mentioned earlier, DNA evidence suggests that most descended from Asian peoples. The Malay Hypothesis is compatible with this belief, for it postulates that small groups of Book of Mormon peoples fled Southeast Asia and arrived at many sites in the Americas.

CLOSING THOUGHTS

TO THE BEST of my knowledge, all Book of Mormon accounts can be reasonably accommodated to the Malay Hypothesis. This hypothesis seems to me to work much better with statements that the people of Babel, the House of Israel, and even the Lehtes themselves “should be scattered upon all the face of the earth” (1 Nephi 10:12–13; Ether 1:33). The Malay Hypothesis proposes that there are many cherished lands of promise (or Zions) throughout the world, not just one.

The Malay Hypothesis has not been sanctioned by the Church. As Brigham Young states, “We are to judge opinions of leaders about geography or other matters for ourselves.”³⁷ As an old chemist meddling in hallowed ground, I have undoubtedly made mistakes. But I’ve done my best. I hope and pray that others will help in determining its validity. If true, the potential spiritual benefits to brothers and sisters now and in the eternities to come are immense. ☺

NOTES

1. Kevin Goldstein-Jackson, ed., *The Dictionary of Essential Quotations* (Totowa, NJ: Rowman & Littlefield, 1983), 84.
2. John L. Sorenson, *An Ancient American Setting for the Book of Mormon* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1996), 4.
3. See, for instance, Brent Lee Metcalfe, ed., *New Approaches to the Book of Mormon* (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1993), especially chapters 7 and 8; Earl M. Wunderli, “Critique of Limited Geography for Book of Mormon Events,” *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 35, no. 3 (Fall 2002); Thomas W. Murphy, “Simply Implausible: DNA and a Mesoamerican Setting for the Book of Mormon,” *Dialogue* 36, no. 4 (Winter 2003); Stan Larson, *Quest for the Gold Plates: Thomas Stuart Ferguson’s Archaeological Search for the Book of Mormon* (Salt Lake City: Freethinker Press, 1996).
4. See Thomas W. Murphy, “Lamanite Genesis, Genealogy, and Genetics,” in *American Apocrypha: Essays on the Book of Mormon*, eds. Dan Vogel and Brent Lee Metcalfe (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 2002, 47–77; Simon G. Southerton, *Losing a Lost Tribe: Native Americans, DNA, and the Mormon Church* (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, forthcoming); references to more than a dozen DNA studies related to Amerindian ancestry are cited in Brent Lee Metcalfe, “Reinventing Lamanite Identity,” *SUNSTONE* (March 2004), pages 23–24, note 3.
5. John A. Widtsoe, *In Search of Truth: Comments on the Gospel and Modern Thought* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1930), 81–82.
6. In particular, I’ve focused on the problems associated with the Mesoamerican setting proposed by John L. Sorenson in *Ancient American Setting* (and many other books and articles), which is currently the hypothesis driving most geographical studies conducted by the Foundation for Ancient Research and Mormon Studies (FARMS). So entrenched is this Mesoamerican hypothesis that Sorenson was led to say that “the prospect that any other part of America than Mesoamerica was the scene of Book of Mormon events is so slight that only this obvious candidate will be considered here.” John L. Sorenson, *The Geography of Book of Mormon Events* (Provo: FARMS, 1990), 407.
7. Ralph A. Olsen, *The Malay Peninsula as the Setting for the Book of Mormon*, 1997, unpublished. Copies are available in libraries at Montana State, Utah State, and the University of Utah. My family and I are considering options for making this study available online or in some more easily accessible way. We will decide soon and notify the Sunstone offices. In the meantime, those interested may email Sunstone, info@sunstoneonline.com, to be put on a contact list.
8. I am not the “discoverer” of the many problems with the proposed Mesoamerican and other American settings, nor am I unaware of the many studies and articles which have attempted to defend against the various deficiencies. I respect these scholarly attempts, but many of the solutions proposed seem strained to me, requiring a great deal of effort to accept. My hope in presenting Mala is that, when someone looks hard at it as a potential site, it will be seen as the more parsimonious explanation. As William of Occam suggests, “One should not increase, beyond what is necessary, the number of entities required to explain anything.”
9. For copies of my study, see the information above in footnote 7.
10. Skeptics are encouraged to try to repeat the Jaredite voyage under comparable adverse conditions. Under far more favorable circumstances, only two of Magellan’s five ships managed a comparable voyage to the Philippines. The crews experienced many of the problems listed above. *Encyclopedia Britannica* (2003), s.v. “Ferdinand Magellan.”
11. Joseph Smith Jr., *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, comp. Joseph Fielding Smith (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1938), 267.
12. Because of space limitations for this article, and because this article is focusing on Mala and not particular critiques of the Mesoamerican hypotheses, we’ve not reproduced Mesoamerican maps here. One can view two different maps of Mesoamerican proposals that postulate an Isthmus of Tehuantepec setting in Metcalfe, ed., *New Approaches to the Book of Mormon*, 274–75.
13. BYU archeologist John E. Clark concludes that “Any geography that tries to accommodate a north and south sea is doomed to fail.” John E. Clark, review in

Review of Books on the Book of Mormon, vol. 1 (1989), 65. Unless one tries to understand certain Book of Mormon references as metaphorical, which ultimately is Clark’s strategy for dealing with this issue, the proposed Mesoamerican setting is not a good candidate for Book of Mormon events.

14. For a good discussion of Book of Mormon references to the land of Bountiful, see William Hamblin, review in *Review of Books on the Book of Mormon*, vol. 1 (1989):74–75.

15. Mala’s width is thirty miles, whereas the narrowest point on the Mesoamerican model is 130 miles.

16. John E. Clark writes: “Internal evidence in the Book of Mormon is convincing that ‘wilderness’ refers to mountainous regions. . . .” (Clark, 27).

17. Central America, for example, has many ruins scattered throughout a highly diverse terrain and no natural boundaries to delineate Book of Mormon lands. As indicated by several hypotheses, there are many possible ways of juggling proposed locations of Book of Mormon lands. Each hypothesis has some advantages, but none match very well. See Deanne G. Matheny, “Does the Shoe Fit? A Critique of the Limited Tehuantepec Geography,” chapter 7 in *New Approaches to the Book of Mormon*; and Glenna Nielsen-Grimm, “The Material Culture of the Book of Mormon,” delivered as the May 1992 Sunstone Book of Mormon Lecture (tape BM92–005).

18. Hugh Nibley, *Lehi in the Desert and the World of the Jaredites* (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1980), 121. Karen historical events match those of the Book of Mormon peoples to an amazing extent. The Karens (Lamanites?) lost their copy of Y’wa’s book. The white brothers (Nephites?) carefully preserved their copy. As a result, white people became righteous and are known as “guides to God.” They sailed away in ships with “white wings” but will return with Y’wa’s “white book.” Some traditions say the book would be of gold or silver. See Don Richardson, *Eternity in Their Hearts* (Ventura, CA: Regal Books, 1981), 74.

19. *Ibid.*, 20.

20. D. T. Bayard, “The Chronology of Prehistoric Metallurgy in Northeast Thailand” in R. Smith and W. Watson, eds., *Early Southeast Asia* (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1979), 151.

21. Hugh Nibley, *Lehi in the Desert* (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1980), 121. A picture of one of the inscription plates with Hebrew lettering can be viewed at A. Bunker, “On a Karen Inscription Plate,” *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, vol. 10 (1872): 712.

22. P. S. Bellwood, *Conquest of the Pacific* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1979), 136.

23. R.L. Pendleton, *Thailand, Aspects of Landscape and Life* (New York: Duell, Sloan, and Pearce, 1962), 177.

24. Milton R. Hunter and Thomas Stuart Ferguson, *Ancient America and the Book of Mormon* (Oakland, CA: Kolob Book, 1964), 159.

25. F. Mason, *Tenasserim* (Maulmain, Burma: American Mission Press, 1852).

26. *Encyclopedia Britannica* (2003), s.v. “silk (fibre).”

27. *Encyclopedia Britannica* (2003), s.v.v. “Kakatoa,” “Volcanism and Tectonic Activity,” “Tectonic Landforms.”

28. Mervyn Brown, *A History of Madagascar* (Princeton, NJ: Markus Wiener, 2000), 14.

29. *Oxford Atlas of the World*, 10th ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), Index: “Moroni, Comoros Islands.”

30. *Encyclopedia of Mormonism*, ed., Daniel H. Ludlow (New York: Macmillan, 1992), s.v. “Polynesians.”

31. Russell T. Clement, “Polynesian Origins,” *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, vol. 13, no. 4 (Winter 1980), 88.

32. *Ibid.*, 89. The quote is from Glen Barclay, *A History of the Pacific from Stone Age to Present Day* (London: Sigdwick & Jackson, 1978), 3.

33. Paul R. Cheesman, *Early America and the Polynesians* (Provo: Promised Land Publications, 1975), 16.

34. Paul Trachtman, “Mysterious Island,” *Smithsonian* (March 2002): 90.

35. Gavin Young and Paul Wachtel, *Malaysia: Heart of Southeast Asia* (Singapore: Archipelago Press, 1991), 169.

36. Trachtman, 94 (emphasis added). Of additional interest to readers might be the extensive list of similarities between Southeast Asia, the Pacific Islands, and the western shores of America published in John L. Sorenson and M. H. Raish, *Pre-Columbian Contact with the Americas across the Oceans* (Provo: FARMS, 1990), sections F-217 and F-034B. These include: shell trumpets and other similar musical instruments, pellet bows, barkcloth, blowpipes, games, the use of jade, arch calendaring, porcelain, makara, elephant motif, artistic depictions of the cosmic tree, crouching human figures, human sacrifice, animal deities, Quetzalcoatl, hand symbolism, serpent dragons, and tiger demons.

37. John A. Widtsoe, *Discourses of Brigham Young* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1941), 135.

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