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**The Prophecies and Promises of 1 Nephi 13:30–31 That Invalidate  
the Heartland Theory for New World Book of Mormon Geography**

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# **The Prophecies and Promises of 1 Nephi 13:30–31 That Invalidate the Heartland Theory for New World Book of Mormon Geography**

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Our forthright declaration to all readers is that the Book of Mormon is a *real* account about *real* people who lived *somewhere* in the New World. That declaration supports our additional contention that the Book of Mormon is historical rather than ahistorical. And we further declare that the *somewhere* of the Book of Mormon is the geographic territory known as Mesoamerica, which, in general, involves territory from Mexico City on the north to the western parts of El Salvador and Honduras on the south. We maintain that all the actual New World events of the Book of Mormon took place within that territory.

To Book of Mormon readers of 1830 when the Book of Mormon was first published, the New World consisted of one continent that comprised territory spoken of today as North America, Central America, and South America. Here's how Noah Webster defined *continent* in 1828 just two years before the Book of Mormon was published: "In geography, a great extent of land, not disjoined or interrupted by a sea; a connected tract of land of great extent; as the Eastern and Western continent. It differs from an isle only in extent."<sup>1</sup>

In other words, from the perspective of 1830, all the New World events spoken of in the Book of Mormon took place on the Western continent in the geographic territory now known as Mesoamerica. As a group, those who believe in that line of reasoning have come to be known as "Mesoamericanists," and their model for Book of Mormon geography is widely spoken of as the "Mesoamerica Model."

To some readers of the Book of Mormon in the twenty-first century, all New World events of the Book of Mormon took place in North America within the "heartland" of the continental United States from the Great Lakes on the north to the Gulf of Mexico on the south. As a group, these readers have come to be known as "Heartlanders," and their model for Book of Mormon geography is spoken of as the "Heartland Model."

Obviously, proponents of the two models have much in common in relation to their beliefs and understandings within the Book of Mormon. Just as obviously, they differ in their beliefs about the New World geography of the Book of Mormon.

## The Heartland Model Basics for New World Book of Mormon Geography

In their Heartland Model book, *Prophecies and Promises: The Book of Mormon and the United States of America*, Bruce H. Porter and Rod L. Meldrum identify thirty-six prophecies and promises in the Book of Mormon that relate to the “land” of the Book of Mormon and to the “Gentiles” who are associated with the land.<sup>2</sup> According to Porter and Meldrum, “The collective view of the prophecies and promises clearly and unmistakably identifies and defines the extent of the location of the Promised Land. Whatever land is proposed to be the Promised Land must of necessity fulfill every single one of the 36 prophecies and promises revealed in the text.”<sup>3</sup>

As identified by Porter and Meldrum in *Prophecies and Promises*, the fundamental bases of the Heartland Model are the following:

1. “North America and in particular the United States is the only nation in the Western Hemisphere that qualifies in all 36 of [the] prophecies and promises.”<sup>4</sup>
2. “The Book of Mormon specifies that only one latter-day nation constitutes the Promised Land—and that nation must fulfill every one of the prophecies and promises”<sup>5</sup>

Porter and Meldrum correctly make four fundamental statements that are directly associated with all prophecies and promises contained in the Book of Mormon:

- “The scriptures are the standard of truth that even prophets of God must reverence.”<sup>6</sup>
- “One cannot reject or neglect the . . . prophecies and promises in the Book of Mormon.”<sup>7</sup>
- “The Book of Mormon was specifically written and compiled by the ancient prophets to be brought forth in the latter-days, and was ‘*Written by way of commandment, and also by the spirit of prophecy and of revelation.*’”<sup>8</sup>
- “A textual study of the Book of Mormon geography should include an unbiased review of *all passages that might pertain to the subject*. Scriptural research must be done without redefining the words and statements in the scriptures for the purpose of any personal agenda.”<sup>9</sup>

Via that last statement, Porter and Meldrum stipulate the highest standard that must apply when all prophecies and promises of the Book of Mormon are analyzed.

In the thirty-six prophecies and promises listed in their book,<sup>10</sup> Porter and Meldrum cite 1 Nephi 13:30 six times in six different prophecies and promises and 1 Nephi 13:31 one time.<sup>11</sup> However, as will be shown hereafter, they either do not understand these two scriptures or intentionally misapply them. The angel told Nephi the following:

*Nevertheless, thou beholdest that the Gentiles who have gone forth out of captivity, and have been lifted up by the power of God above all other nations, upon the face of the land which is choice above all other lands, which is the land that the Lord God hath covenanted with thy father that his seed should have for the land of their inheritance; wherefore, thou seest that the Lord God will not suffer that the Gentiles will utterly destroy the mixture of thy seed, which are among thy brethren.*

*Neither will he suffer that the Gentiles shall destroy the seed of thy brethren.* (1 Nephi 13:30–31)

### **The “Sense-Lines” of 1 Nephi 13:30–31**

For assistance in helping readers understand all aspects of the two verses of 1 Nephi 13:30–31 and for improved access to their content, we have broken the verses into “sense-lines” as Royal Skousen does in *The Book of Mormon: The Earliest Text*.<sup>12</sup> Readers may not appreciate the value of sense-lines if they have not read and studied Book of Mormon verses from Skousen’s *Earliest Text*. Skousen makes several important statements about sense-lines that should be applied to the sense-lines of 1 Nephi 13:30–31:

- Sense-lines can do a lot of the semantic work without adding a profusion of commas, semicolons, dashes, and parentheses.
- Often sentences in the Book of Mormon are rather convoluted, with parenthetical interruptions and multiple subordinate clauses. Sense-lines can assist readers in differentiating phrases and clauses, identifying constituent grammatical units, and keeping track of subjects, main verbs, and modifiers.
- [Sense-lines] facilitate the smooth reading of the text.
- Even though the Book of Mormon is not poetry, it *is* scripture, and as such it should be read as closely as poetry is read. Separating the phrases [via sense-lines] invites readers to identify parallel constructions, contrasts, and elaborations of

meaning, as well as challenging readers to consider the possible ways in which the discrete grammatical units might fit together.

- Given the nonstandard syntax in many passages [of the Book of Mormon], the relationship between clauses is not always immediately obvious. The effect of sense-lines can be both to speed up and to slow down the reading, depending on one's inclinations.<sup>13</sup>

The analysis that follows via the use of sense-lines will help readers understand how 1 Nephi 13:30–31—in just two Book of Mormon verses—negates the validity of the Heartland Model for the New World geography of the Book of Mormon.

Following two or more associated sense-lines from 1 Nephi 13:30–31, those sense-lines are analyzed with the facts of history—past, present, and future—in mind.

*Nevertheless, thou beholdest that the Gentiles  
who have gone forth out of captivity*

The facts of history dictate that the referent here for “Gentiles” is the English Gentiles—including any northern European people who escaped religious, economic, or political bondage—who came to the territory later known as the United States of America as a nation. Clearly, according to the historical record, they are the Gentiles that came “forth out of captivity.”

*and have been lifted up by the power of God  
**above all other nations upon the face of the land**  
**which is choice above all other lands,***

The two bolded sense-lines are perhaps the most important sense-lines of 1 Nephi 13:30–31. They probably must be read time and again by analysts who are attempting to understand all the nuances of the two bolded sense-lines.

The English Gentiles, with the help of “the power of God,” established a nation—singular—called the United States of America. Historically, according to the historical record and the words of the angel, that singular nation is only one nation among “*all other nations*” that are found “*upon the land which is choice above all other lands.*”

In other words, via careful historical reading, readers/analysts will discern that one nation, obviously known as the United States of America, has been enabled and required

by God to be the choicest and most responsible nation among “**all other nations**” that have been established “**upon the face of the land which is choice above all other lands.**”

The wording “*all other nations*” in this verse obviously cannot refer to the European Gentile nations because they do not exist upon “*the land which is choice above all other lands.*” Every nation on this continent received its freedom from its respective European Gentile nation.<sup>14</sup> And although the United States historically cannot be a part of “all other nations,” it is the major component of the nations that make up “*the land that is choice above all other lands*” because it is to be the choicest and most responsible of them all.

Therefore, from a historical perspective, the only conclusion to draw here is that the United States, as a nation among **all** the nations of the “Western continent,” “*the land which is choice above all other lands,*” has been elevated by God to a status that is somehow “above” that of the other nations—meaning under greater covenant responsibility than all the “other nations” in what today is referred to as North, Central, and South America, the territory that was viewed—and described by Moroni—as a continent in 1830 when the Book of Mormon was first published.

*which is the land that the Lord God hath covenanted with thy father  
that his seed should have for the land of their inheritance,*

Here, the angel tells Nephi that the land that is “*choice above all other lands,*” by covenant between God and Lehi,<sup>15</sup> is the land that Lehi’s seed will have as “*the land of their inheritance.*” Again, via the facts of history and the words of the angel, the United States as a singular nation is **only one nation among “all other nations”** that are found in “*the land which is choice above all other lands.*” Thus, Book of Mormon readers can discern that Lehi’s seed has been promised an inheritance encompassing all the territory of what today is North, Central, and South America, the “continent” of America in 1830 when the Book of Mormon was first published.

*wherefore thou seest that the Lord God will not suffer  
that the [English] Gentiles will utterly destroy the mixture of thy seed  
which are among thy brethren.*

Again, the facts of history help us understand the meaning of these lines of verse 30. Here, the angel passes along a promise to Nephi that the English Gentiles will not “*utterly destroy the mixture*” of Nephi’s seed who are “*among thy brethren.*” Readers should notice that somehow the Lord will preserve Nephi’s seed—which includes Joseph’s seed as Lehi prophesied (see 2 Nephi 3:2–3, 16, 23)—by “mixing” it with Lamanites to form a different group than those identified in verse 31, the “*seed of thy brethren.*” And it is this different

group of Lamanites whom Mormon identifies who will inhabit the “most favored nation.”<sup>16</sup>

The term “seed of thy brethren” always refers to the Lamanites—or to those *against* Christ. The term “thy seed” always refers to the Nephites—or those *for* Christ. In verse 30, Mormon is identifying a future special group of people—a “*mixture*” of Nephi’s seed who are among his brethren—as distinguished from the “seed of thy brethren.” This special group of people will inhabit that single nation to be blessed above all other nations that **will be found historically** “*upon the land choice above all other lands.*”

A significant additional prophecy and promise that extends those of verse 30 is found in verse 31, which reads as follows:

*Neither will he suffer that the [Spanish] Gentiles shall destroy the seed of thy brethren.*

The word “neither” has two important meanings. (1) As used here, it is an adverb that means “similarly not; also not.”<sup>17</sup> (2) As a conjunction, it means it “primarily refers to two; not either of two.”<sup>18</sup> When the two parts are connected, the paraphrased results are the following:

Verse 30: God will not let the [English] Gentiles destroy “*the mixture of thy seed, which are among thy brethren.*”

Also not:

Verse 31: God will also not let the [Spanish] Gentiles destroy “*the seed of thy brethren.*”

Obviously, two different groups of people are involved in verses 30 and 31: (1) “*the mixture of thy seed among thy brethren*” and (2) “*the seed of thy brethren.*” And the two groups of Gentiles are also involved here because “neither” also refers to two different entities. Therefore, the English Gentiles cannot be those who were prophesied to nearly destroy the group of Lamanites known as the “seed of thy brethren.” And the Spanish Gentiles cannot be those who were to nearly destroy the other group of Lamanites called by Mormon “*the mixture of thy seed, which are among thy brethren.*”

The “*seed of thy brethren*” are the Lamanites who will be located in “***all other nations upon the face of the land which is choice above all other lands.***” The facts of history help us understand that the Gentiles here are the Spanish, Portuguese, and Italian Gentiles whom we collectively refer to in our analysis of 1 Nephi 13:30–31, where appropriate, as the

“Spanish Gentiles.” Therefore, these other nations upon the face of “this land” must include Mexico and all nations in Central America and South America because the scripture says “*all other nations upon the land which is choice above all other lands.*”

For study purposes, here is 1 Nephi 13:30–31 with sense-lines and punctuation according to Skousen and with our abbreviated clarification suggestions in brackets:

*Nevertheless thou beholdest that the [English] Gentiles  
who have gone forth out of captivity [and settled primarily in the northern part of  
North America]  
and have been lifted up by the power of God  
above all other nations upon the face of the land [the crux or most important content of  
the scripture is here because “other nations” has to refer to the “Western  
continent” consisting of North, Central and South America and therefore  
referring to “other nations” besides the United States]  
which [the Western continent] is choice above all other lands [lands other than those  
found on the Western continent],  
which is the land [the “Western continent”] that the Lord God hath covenanted with thy  
father [Lehi]  
that his seed [referred to in the Book of Mormon as the Nephites and the Lamanites]  
should have for the land [the Western continent] of their inheritance,  
wherefore thou seest that the Lord God will not suffer  
that the [English] Gentiles will utterly destroy the mixture of thy seed [the  
“intermingling” of Nephi’s seed with the rest of Lehi’s posterity and with  
others not of his posterity, including the indigenous peoples of North, Central,  
and South America]  
which are among thy brethren [those who live among Lehi’s posterity—or vice versa].  
Neither [also not] will he suffer that the [Spanish] Gentiles shall destroy the seed of thy  
brethren [the Lamanites in “all other nations upon the face of the land which is choice  
above all other lands.]”*

**Bottom line:** A careful analysis of 1 Nephi 13:30–31 results in the conclusion that the Heartland Theory is invalid for four fundamental reasons:

1. It does not allow the prophecy and promise of the Book of Mormon to be realized that two separate groups of Gentiles were to come to the New World: (a) those who came out of captivity and (b) those who did not come out of captivity.



2. It does not allow the prophecy and promise of the Book of Mormon that two separate groups of “Lamanites” were to be located in the New World: (a) the mixture of Nephi’s seed among his brethren and (b) the “seed of thy brethren.”

3. It does not allow the prophecy and promise of the Book of Mormon that “other nations” would exist upon the promised land.

4. It does not allow for the verse 31 prophecy and promise to be fulfilled by the Gentiles who did not come out of captivity—the Spanish, Portuguese, and Italian Gentiles—upon the second group of Lamanites living in the “*other nations upon the land which is choice above all other lands.*”

The Heartland Model promotes exclusivity claims that only one nation in the New World, the United States of America, is *the* promised land and therefore is the *only* nation in the western hemisphere involved in fulfilling the thirty-six Book of Mormon prophecies and promises identified by Bruce Porter and Rod Meldrum. The following historical paraphrase of the most important part of verse 30 denies the possibility of such exclusivity claims: “The English Gentiles and the United States of America have been blessed by God above the blessings bestowed upon *all other* promised-land nations of the western hemisphere.”

### **The Prophecies and Promises of 1 Nephi 13:30–31**

Following are the actual prophecies and promises contained in 1 Nephi 13:30–31, including the four numbered and bolded ones that invalidate the Heartland Theory:

1. **“Other nations” will be established upon the “face of the land which is choice above all other lands.”** The 1 Nephi 13:30 wording, “*lifted up by the power of God above all other nations, upon the face of the land which is choice above all other lands,*” clearly means that “upon this land,” which is “*choice above all other lands,*” many nations will be located. Historically, the many or “other” nations that the angel prophesied would be established *have been established* upon this land, the 1830 “Western continent” or “American continent” of North, Central, and South America. This is one of many prophecies and promises in this scripture that are omitted by Porter and Meldrum. How can the United States alone fulfill this prophecy? It cannot. Therefore, the Heartland Model is invalid because it does not allow for **other nations** on “this continent” to be part of the fulfillment of this prophecy and promise.

Among these “other nations,” a “single” nation will be established by the Gentiles “*who have gone forth out of captivity.*” The Heartland Model correctly sets forth all the blessings, obligations, and responsibilities that this most blessed single nation of the United States must perform. Among the “other nations” located upon “*the land which is choice above all other lands*” will be one very special and blessed nation developed by the northern European Gentiles who will be charged with special responsibilities, such as establishing a land of liberty, restoring the gospel, correcting the Bible, etc. Such events are discussed extensively and correctly in *Prophecies and Promises*. The United States is the only nation to which the fulfillment of this prophecy and promise can be attributed.

2. This single nation will be lifted up by the power of God above all the “other nations” **that will exist “upon the face of the land which is choice above all other lands [this continent].”** The Heartland Theory is invalid because it does not allow for other nations on “this continent” to be part of the fulfillment of this prophecy and promise.
3. **This land where all the “other nations” will exist (“this continent” as stated by Moroni; see Joseph Smith—History 1:34) will be the place for the inheritance of Lehi’s seed.** Via the prophecy and promise in this scripture, which is omitted by Porter and Meldrum, the same angel declared unto Nephi that his father would have, as the land for the inheritance of his seed, all of the “land” where all these “other nations [would exist] upon the face of the land which is choice above all other lands.” Again, the United States cannot fulfill this prophecy and promise by itself. Therefore, the Heartland Model is invalid because it disallows any other nation than the United States to be a part of the inheritance of the seed of Lehi.
4. **With respect to this favored “singular” nation, the founding English Gentiles “who have gone forth out of captivity” will not utterly destroy the group of “Nephites and Lamanites” called by Mormon a “mixture” of Nephi’s seed among his brethren—as distinguished from “the seed of thy brethren,” the Lamanites, cited in verse 31.** That is, in verse 31, the angel declared that an additional group of Lamanites would be almost destroyed by those Gentiles coming to the Western continent—but not out of captivity, meaning the Spanish, Portuguese, Italian and other Gentiles. Therefore, the Heartland Model is invalid because it disallows the destruction of the other group of Lamanites, “the seed of thy brethren,” by the other group of Spanish, Portuguese, and Italian Gentiles.
5. Nephi’s seed, or at least a “mixture” of it, will be found “among thy brethren” — those Lamanites and a mixture of Nephi’s seed to be located within that “single

nation.” This wording could be referencing such events as that when many Nephites left with Hagoth and pursued their course northward—perhaps as proposed by Mark Alan Wright.<sup>19</sup>

## **Conclusion**

The two scriptures of 1 Nephi 13:30–31—and specifically four prophecies and promises contained in these scriptures—invalidate the premise and validity of the Heartland Model for New World Book of Mormon geography. Fundamentally, how can the “single nation” of the United States by itself fulfill all of these additional prophecies and promises? Bottom line: It cannot.

Thus, “this continent” of 1830—North, Central, and South America, including all nations upon it—is Zion and is the land referenced in the Book of Mormon as “choice above all other lands.” Therefore, the 1830 “Western continent,” as identified by Noah Webster in his 1828 dictionary, is designated as the land of inheritance for the seed of Lehi.<sup>20</sup>

Finally, any one or all four of the designated prophecies and promises from 1 Nephi 13:30–31 negate the validity of the Heartland Model for the New World geography of the Book of Mormon. Therefore, Book of Mormon analysts should look to the Mesoamerica Model as the “somewhere” of New World Book of Mormon geography.

## **The Expanded Text of 1 Nephi 13**

Readers should read and study the entire chapter 13 of 1 Nephi because it speaks about two groups of Gentiles coming from Europe to the Americas—based on the facts of history. In the version of 1 Nephi 13 that follows, the southern European Gentiles (Spain, Portugal, and Italy), represented by Columbus, will be designated as the “Spanish Gentiles,” and the northern European Gentiles, who “came out of captivity,” will be referred to as the “English Gentiles.”

Readers are encouraged to internalize all the pertinent facts of 1 Nephi 13 as they reach the inevitable conclusion that by themselves, four prophecies and promises of that chapter invalidate the model for New World Book of Mormon geography known as the Heartland Model—as advocated by those who believe that all New World events of the Book of Mormon took place exclusively within the territory between the Great Lakes on the north and the Gulf of Mexico on the south.

*1 And it came to pass that the angel spake unto me, saying: Look! And I looked and beheld many nations and kingdoms. . . .*

3 *And he said unto me: These are the nations and kingdoms of the Gentiles [in Europe].*

4 *And it came to pass that I saw among the nations of the [English and Spanish] Gentiles the formation of a great church. . . .*

9 *And also for the praise of the world do they [the people of Satan's abominable church] destroy the saints of God, and bring them down into captivity.*

10 *And it came to pass that I looked and beheld many waters; and they [the seas] divided the Gentiles [of Europe] from the seed of my brethren. [On the Western continent, the term "seed of my brethren" always refers to the Lamanites.]*

11 *And it came to pass that the angel said unto me: Behold the wrath of God is upon the seed of thy brethren [the Lamanites].*

12 *And I looked and beheld a man among the [Spanish] Gentiles [Columbus], who was separated from the seed of my brethren [Lamanites] by the many waters; and I beheld the Spirit of God, that it came down and wrought upon the man; and he went forth upon the many waters, even unto the seed of my brethren [the Lamanites who were residing in the initial portion of the land of promise called "the promised land"], who were in the promised land [the territory to which the Lord brought Lehi, the Jaredites, and Columbus, and other Spanish Gentiles].*

13 *And it came to pass that I beheld the Spirit of God, that it wrought upon **other** Gentiles [English]; and they went forth out of captivity, upon the many waters.*

14 *And it came to pass that I beheld many multitudes of the [English and Spanish] Gentiles upon the land of promise [the "Western continent," in 1830, consisting at that point as North and South America]; and I beheld the wrath of God, that it was upon the seed of my brethren; and they [the Lamanites] were scattered before the [English and Spanish] Gentiles and were smitten.*

15 *And I beheld the Spirit of the Lord, that it was upon the [English and Spanish] Gentiles, and they did prosper and obtain the land [this continent] for their inheritance; and I beheld that they were white, and exceedingly fair and beautiful, like unto my people before they were slain.*

16 *And it came to pass that I, Nephi, beheld that the [English] Gentiles who had gone forth out of captivity did humble themselves before the Lord; and the power of the Lord was with them.*

17 *And I beheld that their [English] mother Gentiles were gathered together upon the waters, and upon the land [that part of the land of promise in the northeastern United States], also to battle against them.*

18 *And I beheld that the power of God was with them [the English Gentiles who had gone forth out of captivity], and also that the wrath of God was upon all those that were gathered together against them to battle.*

19 *And I, Nephi, beheld that the [English] Gentiles that had gone out of captivity were delivered by the power of God out of the hands of all other nations [all European nations].*

20 *And it came to pass that I, Nephi, beheld that they [English Gentiles] did prosper in the land; and I beheld a book, and it was carried forth among them.*

21 *And the angel said unto me: Knowest thou the meaning of the book?*

22 *And I said unto him: I know not.*

23 *And he said: Behold it proceedeth out of the mouth of a Jew. And I, Nephi, beheld it; and he said unto me: The book that thou beholdest is a record of the Jews, which contains the covenants of the Lord, which he hath made unto the house of Israel; and it also containeth many of the prophecies of the holy prophets; and it is a record like unto the engravings which are upon the plates of brass, save there are not so many; nevertheless, they contain the covenants of the Lord, which he hath made unto the house of Israel; wherefore, they are of great worth unto the [English and Spanish] Gentiles.*

24 *And the angel of the Lord said unto me: Thou hast beheld that the book proceeded forth from the mouth of a Jew; and when it proceeded forth from the mouth of a Jew it contained the fulness of the gospel of the Lord, of whom the twelve apostles bear record; and they bear record according to the truth which is in the Lamb of God.*

25 *Wherefore, these things go forth from the Jews in purity unto the [English and Spanish] Gentiles, according to the truth which is in God.*

26 *And after they [these things] go forth by the hand of the twelve apostles of the Lamb, from the Jews unto the [English and Spanish] Gentiles, thou seest the formation of that*

*great and abominable church, which is most abominable above all other churches; for behold, they have taken away from the gospel of the Lamb many parts which are plain and most precious; and also many covenants of the Lord have they taken away.*

*27 And all this have they done that they might pervert the right ways of the Lord, that they might blind the eyes and harden the hearts of the children of men.*

*28 Wherefore, thou seest that after the book hath gone forth through the hands of the great and abominable church, that there are many plain and precious things taken away from the book, which is the book of the Lamb of God.*

*29 And after these plain and precious things were taken away it goeth forth unto all the nations of the [Spanish and English] Gentiles; and after it goeth forth unto all the nations of the Gentiles, yea, even across the many waters which thou hast seen with the [English] Gentiles which have gone forth out of captivity, thou seest—because of the many plain and precious things which have been taken out of the book, which were plain unto the understanding of the children of men, according to the plainness which is in the Lamb of God—because of these things which are taken away out of the gospel of the Lamb, an exceedingly great many do stumble, yea, insomuch that Satan hath great power over them.*

*30 Nevertheless, thou beholdest that the [English] Gentiles who have gone forth out of captivity, and have been lifted up by the power of God above [the United States is choice above] **all other nations**, upon the face of the land which is choice above all other lands [the prophecy is that many nations will be established upon the land which is choice above all other lands; however, the single nation of the United States will also be choice above the other nations of this continent], which [continent, including the other nations upon this land] is the land that the Lord God hath covenanted with thy father that his seed should have for the land of their inheritance; wherefore, thou seest that the Lord God will not suffer that the [English] Gentiles will utterly destroy the mixture of thy [Nephi's] seed, which are among thy brethren [the Lamanites].*

(Readers should notice here that the Book of Mormon does not say “*all the nations of the Gentiles*” as it does in other verses. Apparently in this verse, it is less broad to include only the other nations that will be established on this continent.)

That conclusion makes sense when the 1928 definition of the word *face* is applied: “The surface of a thing that is visible to the viewer or a part of the surface of a thing that is visible”<sup>21</sup> (the part of the land that is used by the English Gentiles). But what is visible and to whom? What is the difference in visibility to someone standing in Vermont to

include San Diego? or Mexico? or Central America? Maybe the meaning of the word *face* helps answer that question—especially when we consider that Nephi was a “spectator” as he reported what he saw in a vision:

31 *Neither will he suffer that the [Spanish] Gentiles shall destroy the seed of thy brethren [the Lamanites in all the other nations of this continent].*

32 *Neither will the Lord God suffer that the [English and Spanish] Gentiles shall forever remain in that awful state of blindness, which thou beholdest they are in, because of the plain and most precious parts of the gospel of the Lamb which have been kept back by that abominable church, whose formation thou hast seen.*

33 *Wherefore saith the Lamb of God: I will be merciful unto the [English and Spanish] Gentiles, unto the visiting of the remnant of the house of Israel in great judgment.*

34 *And it came to pass that the angel of the Lord spake unto me, saying: Behold, saith the Lamb of God, after I have visited the remnant of the house of Israel—and **this remnant of whom I speak is the seed of thy father [Lehi]**—wherefore, after I have visited them in judgment, and smitten them by the hand of the [English and Spanish] Gentiles, and after the Gentiles do stumble exceedingly, because of the most plain and precious parts of the gospel of the Lamb which have been kept back by that abominable church, which is the mother of harlots, saith the Lamb—I will be merciful unto the [English and Spanish] Gentiles in that day, insomuch that I will bring forth [not originate—the gospel restoration was a specific responsibility of the Gentiles who had gone forth out of captivity located in the United States] unto them [English and Spanish Gentiles], in mine own power, much of my gospel, which shall be plain and precious, saith the Lamb.*

Nephi 's vision clearly now goes back briefly to the time when Christ would appear to the Nephites, including the righteous Lamanites, and then the vision moves forward to our day.

35 *For, behold, saith the Lamb: I will manifest myself unto thy [Nephi's] seed [Nephites], that they shall write many things which I shall minister unto them [Nephi's seed], which shall be plain and precious; and after thy seed [the Nephites] shall be destroyed, and dwindle in unbelief, and also the seed of thy brethren [the Lamanites who will dwindle in unbelief], behold, these things shall be hid up [ca. AD 421 (Moroni 10:1)], to come forth unto the Gentiles, by the gift and power of the Lamb.*

36 *And in them [these things, the Book of Mormon] shall be written my gospel, saith the Lamb, and my rock and my salvation.*

37 *And blessed are they who shall seek to bring forth my Zion at that day, for they shall have the gift and the power of the Holy Ghost; and if they endure unto the end they shall be lifted up at the last day, and shall be saved in the everlasting kingdom of the Lamb; and whoso shall publish peace, yea, tidings of great joy, how beautiful upon the mountains shall they be.*

38 *And it came to pass that **I beheld** the remnant of the seed of my brethren [Lamanites], and also **[I beheld]** the book of the Lamb of God, which had proceeded forth from the mouth of the Jew, that it came forth from the [English] Gentiles unto the remnant of the seed of my brethren [Lamanites].*

39 *And after it had come forth unto them [the remnant of the seed of my brethren] I beheld other books, which came forth by the power of the Lamb [current revelation], from the Gentiles [who had gone forth out of captivity] unto them [Lamanites], unto the convincing of the Gentiles [English and Spanish] and the remnant of the seed of my brethren [Lamanites], and also the Jews who were scattered upon all the face of the earth, that the records of the prophets and of the twelve apostles of the Lamb are true.*

40 *And the angel spake unto me, saying: These last records [Book of Moron and current revelation], which thou hast seen among the [English] Gentiles, shall establish the truth of the first, which are of the twelve apostles of the Lamb, and shall make known the plain and precious things which have been taken away from them; and shall make known to all kindreds, tongues, and people, that the Lamb of God is the Son of the Eternal Father, and the Savior of the world; and that all men must come unto him, or they cannot be saved.*

41 *And they must come according to the words which shall be established by the mouth of the Lamb; and the words of the Lamb shall be made known in the records [Book of Mormon and current revelation] of thy seed, as well as in the records of the twelve apostles of the Lamb [Bible]; wherefore they both shall be established in one; for there is one God and one Shepherd over all the earth.*

42 *And the time cometh that he shall manifest himself unto all nations, both unto the Jews and also unto the Gentiles; and after he has manifested himself unto the Jews and also unto the Gentiles, then he shall manifest himself unto the Gentiles and also unto the Jews, and the last shall be first, and the first shall be last.*



## Notes

1. Noah Webster, *American Dictionary of the English Language* (New York: S. Converse, 1828), s.v. “continent.”
2. The thirty-six prophecies and promises are found in Bruce H. Porter and Rod L. Meldrum, *Prophecies and Promises: The Book of Mormon and the United States of America* (Mendon, NY: Digital Legend Press and Publishing, 2009), 84–86. In this article, all paraphrases and quotations associated with *Prophecies and Promises* come from the fourth printing. Readers are cautioned to be wary of pagination citations throughout their copy of *Prophecies and Promises* because Porter and Meldrum make frequent editorial changes of content among the printings without informing readers that such changes have been made.
3. Porter and Meldrum, *Prophecies and Promises*, 83.
4. Porter and Meldrum, *Prophecies and Promises*, 94.
5. Porter and Meldrum, *Prophecies and Promises*, 87.
6. Porter and Meldrum, *Prophecies and Promises*, 202.
7. Porter and Meldrum, *Prophecies and Promises*, 203.
8. Porter and Meldrum, *Prophecies and Promises*, 13; emphasis in original.
9. Porter and Meldrum, *Prophecies and Promises*, 27; emphasis in original.
10. Porter and Meldrum, *Prophecies and Promises*, 84–86.
11. The six prophecies and promises of 1 Nephi 13:30 by number, as listed on pages 84–86 of Porter and Meldrum’s *Prophecies and Promises*, are the following: (2) Land obtained and consecrated for an inheritance; (3) Land choice and precious above all other lands; (19) Gentiles to scatter and afflict remnant; (25) Gentiles to become a mighty nation upon the land; (27) Gentiles to come out of captivity to this land; and (28) Gentiles upon this land are protected by God. The one prophecy and promise found in 1 Nephi 13:31, as listed on page 86 of *Prophecies and Promises*, is the following: (31) Gentiles not to destroy the remnant.
12. See Royal Skousen, *The Book of Mormon: The Earliest Text* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2009).
13. Skousen, *The Book of Mormon: The Earliest Text*, xliii–xliv; emphasis in original.
14. See “The ‘Heartland Model’: The Rest of the Story,” [http://www.bmaf.org/articles/heartland\\_model\\_rest\\_story\\_\\_andersen-stoddard](http://www.bmaf.org/articles/heartland_model_rest_story__andersen-stoddard).
15. Here is another Book of Mormon statement that very authoritatively alludes to the “land-of-promise covenant” between God and Lehi: “*But, said he, notwithstanding our afflictions, we have obtained a land of promise, a land which is choice above all other lands; a land which the Lord God hath covenanted with me should be*”

*a land for the inheritance of my seed. Yea, the Lord hath covenanted this land unto me, and to my children forever, and also all those who should be led out of other countries by the hand of the Lord.” (2 Nephi 1:5)*

16. The term “seed of thy brethren” always refers to the Lamanites—or to those *against* Christ. The term “thy seed” always refers to the Nephites—or those *for* Christ. In verse 30, Mormon is identifying a special group of people—a mixture of Nephi’s seed who are among his brethren—not “seed of thy brethren.” This special group of people will be located within that single nation to be blessed above all other nations that **will be “upon the land choice above all other lands.”**

Further, the term “seed of thy brethren” also refers to those Lamanites who remained in the area of their “promised land,” the initial land of their inheritance. How was Mormon going to describe those descendants of Nephi—which must include those of Joseph (see 2 Nephi 3:2–3, 16, 23)—who were to be located in and participate in the development of the “most favored nation”? Nephi’s seed were to be a part of it. Some righteous members of his family would be involved. Mormon identified this special group of Lamanites as a “mixture of thy seed among the Lamanites” to distinguish them from the “seed of thy brethren.” Therefore, the term “Gentiles” in this verse refers to the English Gentiles and their purging of the territory of the United States. That is why Mormon followed up with verse 31, which says that the Spanish, Portuguese, and Italian Gentiles will purge the second or other group of Lamanites in the rest of “this continent” or “the Western continent.”

17. *Merriam-Webster Dictionary*, <http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/neither>, s.v. “neither” (accessed August 30, 2015).

18. Some style experts maintain that *neither* refers primarily to two—not either of two. However, by usage, it is applicable to any number, referring to individuals separately considered. For example, in the case of five or ten persons being charged with a misdemeanor or riot, each may say, “*Neither* of us was present.”

19. Mark Alan Wright, “Heartland as Hinterland: The Mesoamerican Core and North American Periphery of Book of Mormon Geography,” *Interpreter: A Journal of Mormon Scripture* 13 (2015): 111–129.

20. For more information, see our article on the Book of Mormon Archaeological Forum website entitled “The ‘Heartland Model’: The Rest of the Story,” ([http://www.bmaf.org/articles/heartland\\_model\\_rest\\_story\\_\\_andersen-stoddard](http://www.bmaf.org/articles/heartland_model_rest_story__andersen-stoddard)).

21. Webster, *American Dictionary of the English Language*, s.v. “face.”