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A Comprehensive Commentary of the Book of Omni

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A Comprehensive Commentary
of the
Book of Omni

*together with references for further study
from the General Conferences of
The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints
the Encyclopedia of Mormonism
and other doctrinal texts by General Authorities of the Church*

Written and compiled by
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Parrish Press
Orem, Utah

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Preface

This project began as an attempt to provide my children and grandchildren something of their ancestor's love and understanding of the scriptures. I began producing volumes many years ago which I was pleased to call Paraphrastic studies. I wrote one of these studies for each of the four Gospels and the letters of Paul. Eventually, however, I began to sense that there was much that I knew about the New Testament that my "translations" could not communicate. I therefore thought to write a comprehensive commentary on the entire New Testament, beginning with Matthew and concluding with the book of Revelation. As I published each of the nine volumes, I included the paraphrastic studies, where I had them, in conjunction with the commentary for each book in the New Testament. I began this project in 2005 and completed the final volume in 2010. The whole effort was a delight to my soul.

A year before I retired from the Church Educational System, in 2003, I thought to produce an 1830 formatting of the Book of Mormon using the present text of the 1981 edition. This was a relatively easy task, given the technology available to me. I distributed these to my colleagues at the Orem Institute of Religion, members of my family, and a few other interested parties for the cost of printing and binding them. Sometime in the early spring of 2007, I was impressed to begin a verse by verse commentary on the Book of Mormon, a task that I had not presumed to attempt, inasmuch as there are no translation difficulties that abound in the Old and New Testaments. Yet, there were instances of nineteenth-century word usage and syntactic issues that I thought a commentary might help to clarify. As I began, however, I discovered that there was much more that I could communicate to my children of my understanding of the ancient record of the Nephites, material that I had gleaned as I taught the scriptures during my thirty-five year career with CES. This labor eventually produced five volumes of moderate size. As I published each segment of the commentary, I enclosed the 1830 formatting of each book in the Book of Mormon that I had devise several years before. The last volume also appeared in late 2010.

By the time that I was fully engaged with writing commentaries on both the New Testament and the Book of Mormon, I had become infatuated with the idea that I might be able to expand the commentaries to include the other volumes of scripture as well. Thus, in the winter of 2010 I began writing commentaries on the Pearl of Great Price, and the Doctrine and Covenants. Once I finished with the Pearl of Great Price, I began to move ahead with the book of Genesis and the rest of the Old Testament. In the late fall of 2014 I finished the last of the commentaries on the Old Testament, for a total of thirty-three printed and bound volumes. With these volumes and the others produced over the past ten years, I have completed commentary on every verse of the Standard Works of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

My procedure for writing the Commentary was similar to that used in creating the original paraphrastic studies. The same reference texts were employed. For difficult words in Greek, Hebrew,

and English I resorted to the works of James Strong and other lexicographers for linguistic insight. I consider the contributions made by conservative Protestant scholarship (as recorded in the *New International Version*) and conservative Catholic scholarship (as related in the *New Jerusalem Bible*). I resorted to the considered thought of Adam Clarke, one of the most prominent and prolific commentators on the sacred manuscripts available at the beginning of the nineteenth century, and who, I believe, was a man of great faith. I consulted with the *Joseph Smith Translation* at appropriate times (including in another column an indication that a JST change had been made for any given verse), and frequently to the writings of the General Authorities of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, as I contemplated the possible meanings of each word and phrase. From time to time I resorted to *Smith's Bible Dictionary* and *Discovering the World of the Bible* by LaMar Berrett for some of the more arcane information that I thought would illuminate the text.

I have attempted to maintain a steady course throughout my commentaries, treating each verse as unique, and where appropriate, duplicate notes and the text rather than use cross-references within the volume. Some may find this a waste of paper and ink, but I frankly dislike having to rifle through pages or volumes trying to find the first instance of the note or commentary. The duplications are easily ignored; fumbling through pages cannot be. It is in the best interests of the reader, however, to contemplate the reasons why such duplications exist in the biblical text in the first place. They are purposeful and I have attempted to point out their purpose as I have progressed through each volume.

My numbering system for the notes used in the body of the commentary was adapted from historical linguistic texts with which I am familiar and which I had found quite useful. The pattern used is *chapter.verse.word*; thus note “3.4.5” would contain material referring to the fifth word in the book of Hosea 3:4, for example. I make no comprehensive promises regarding the precision of my word count in any particular verse, but it will be close enough to eliminate any distressing confusion. Inasmuch as I began this series with the Gospel of Matthew, there will be times when I will make reference to my own work in that first volume. Sometimes there will be no more than a reference, “*MT-C 23.4.5*”; other times I may quote directly from the original text. In either case my sole motivation will be to facilitate the flow of ideas rather than to multiply words. There are enough words already. References to the Commentaries on other books of the New Testament are abbreviated as follows:

Matthew— <i>MT-C</i>	Ephesians— <i>EP-C</i>	Hebrews— <i>HB-C</i>
Mark— <i>MK-C</i>	Philippians— <i>PP-C</i>	1 Peter— <i>1 PE-C</i>
Luke— <i>LK-C</i>	Colossians— <i>CL-C</i>	2 Peter— <i>2 PE-C</i>
John— <i>JN-C</i>	1 Thessalonians— <i>1 TH-C</i>	1 John— <i>1 JN-C</i>
Acts— <i>AC-C</i>	2 Thessalonians— <i>2 TH-C</i>	2 John— <i>2 JN-C</i>
Romans— <i>RM-C</i>	1 Timothy— <i>1 TM-C</i>	3 John— <i>3 JN-C</i>
1 Corinthians— <i>1 CO-C</i>	2 Timothy— <i>2 TM-C</i>	Revelation— <i>RV-C</i>
2 Corinthians— <i>2 CO-C</i>	Titus— <i>TT-C</i>	
Galatians— <i>GA-C</i>	Philemon— <i>PL-C</i>	

References to the Commentaries in the books of the Old Testament are as follows:

Genesis— <i>GE-C</i>	2 Chronicles— <i>2 CR-C</i>	Daniel— <i>DA-C</i>
Exodus— <i>EX-C</i>	Ezra— <i>ER-C</i>	Hosiah— <i>HS-C</i>
Leviticus— <i>LV-C</i>	Nehemiah— <i>NE-C</i>	Joel— <i>JL-C</i>
Numbers— <i>NM-C</i>	Esther— <i>ES-C</i>	Amos— <i>AM-C</i>
Deuteronomy— <i>DT-C</i>	Job— <i>JB-C</i>	Obadiah— <i>OB-C</i>
Joshua— <i>JO-C</i>	Psalms— <i>PS-C</i>	Jonah— <i>JH-C</i>
Judges— <i>JD-C</i>	Proverbs— <i>PV-C</i>	Micah— <i>MH-C</i>
Ruth— <i>RU-C</i>	Ecclesiastes— <i>ES-C</i>	Nahum— <i>NA-C</i>
1 Samuel— <i>1 SM-C</i>	Song of Solomon— <i>SS-C</i>	Habakkuk— <i>HB-C</i>
2 Samuel— <i>2 SM-C</i>	Isaiah— <i>IS-C</i>	Zephaniah— <i>ZP-C</i>
1 Kings— <i>1 KG-C</i>	Jeremiah— <i>JR-C</i>	Haggai— <i>HG-C</i>
2 Kings— <i>2 KG-C</i>	Lamentations— <i>LM-C</i>	Zechariah— <i>ZE-C</i>
1 Chronicles— <i>1 CR-C</i>	Ezekiel— <i>EZ-C</i>	Malachi— <i>ML-C</i>

I have also made reference to the other standard works of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. The references to the Book of Mormon are articulated in bold and italics lettering using the following abbreviations:

1 Nephi— <i>1 NE-C</i>	Omni— <i>OM-C</i>	3 Nephi— <i>3 NE-C</i>
2 Nephi— <i>2 NE-C</i>	Words of Mormon— <i>WM-C</i>	4 Nephi— <i>4 NE-C</i>
Jacob— <i>JA-C</i>	Mosiah— <i>MS-C</i>	Mormon— <i>MM-C</i>
Enos— <i>EN-C</i>	Alma— <i>AL-C</i>	Ether— <i>ET-C</i>
Jarom— <i>JM-C</i>	Helaman— <i>HE-C</i>	Moroni— <i>MR-C</i>

The abbreviation *TPW-C* refers to the material found on the Title Page of the Book of Mormon and in the Testimonies of the Three and Eight Witnesses. The references to Sections that are in the Doctrine and Covenants are indicated as *DC-C* followed by the section number and verse (*OD1-C* and *OD2-C* are self-explanatory); The Pearl of Great Price references contained herein use the following abbreviations: *MO-C*, *AB-C*, *SM-C*, *SH-C*, and *AF-C*.

In some cases I have taken on what some would consider controversial material. I make no apologies for so doing. I have found that my children are best served when an issue is approached head on, the differing points of view presented, and the rationale given as to why one school of thought ought to be preferred over another. Sometimes the decisions are logically founded; others the result of doctrinal points that are unique to theology of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. In most cases I have not argued authorities, even though I could have inserted multiple references to the writings of scholars with whom I am familiar. I have chosen to have my sources on any particular issue to remain anonymous in the text of the commentary for several reasons. First and foremost, this work is my commentary, what I believe and hold to be true. In the end, that is what my children wish to know. Secondly, I did not wish to have my children accept or dismiss a particular view merely because of who had been the author of it. Many wonderful insights have been made by scholars both inside and outside of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Wherein I have found one view to be preferable over another has not been a partisan matter, but rather a matter of the mind, heart, and spirit cooperating together in an attempt to understand what must be the truth. Thirdly, I have been quite clear who my “authorities” have been. It is my fondest

desire that my children would become as familiar with their writings as I have. Were I to cite all of my sources with extensive quotes from each, there would be no need for them to open any of the books that I have come to love. That, in part, is why I included the third column containing cross-references to the various doctrinal works in the Commentaries. Exceptions to this practice should be noted as being of extreme importance.

In addition to the text of the Standard Works, together with my own commentary, I inserted a column of references for further study. The citations are taken from three major sources: the *Conference Reports* of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints from April 1980 to November 2002 (abbreviated as CR followed by the year, month and page number); the *Encyclopedia of Mormonism* (four volumes, abbreviated EM followed by the volume and page number); and *A Scripture Index* (a compilation of scripture references cited in various texts published by General Authorities of the Church). For those not familiar with the abbreviations used in *A Scripture Index*. I include them below:

TPJS— <i>Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith</i>	PM— <i>Promised Messiah</i>
GD— <i>Gospel Doctrine</i>	MM— <i>Mortal Messiah</i> (4 vols.)
MA— <i>Mediation and Atonement</i>	MLM— <i>Millennial Messiah</i>
FWR— <i>Far West Record</i>	DNTC— <i>Doctrinal New Testament Commentary</i> (3 vols.)
DHC— <i>History of the Church</i> (7 vols.)	JC— <i>Jesus the Christ</i>
TSWK— <i>Teaching of Spencer W. Kimball</i>	AF— <i>Articles of Faith</i>
MF— <i>Miracle of Forgiveness</i>	DS— <i>Doctrines of Salvation</i> (3 vols.)
FPM— <i>Faith Precedes the Miracle</i>	AGQ— <i>Answers to Gospel Questions</i> (5 vols.)
MD— <i>Mormon Doctrine</i>	

As with each of the volumes previously published, I include two lists. The first, bound in front of the Commentary, is a listing of all of the words and phrases upon which I have made extensive remarks, a kind of sequential table of contents. I have also arranged this list alphabetically and have placed it at the end of the Commentary as a kind of index. A comprehensive alphabetical index for the entire volume appears as the last section of this book.

Needless to say that all of the errors in the material submitted herein to the reader are the product of my own limitations as a scholar; all of the brilliance which may appear here is the product of minds and hearts filled with the fire of the Spirit of God, from whom all truth and beauty ultimately derive.

A Note on the Electronic Edition

Not only did my children and other family members receive bound copies of commentaries, but there were a number of friends and neighbors who had expressed an interest in them. There were requests from others who desired copies of what I had done, but I was not in a position to provide them with hard copies. Inasmuch as I had all of the volumes in computer files, I thought to compile each of the commentaries in some format that could be read on a smart device. I opted to use the Adobe Acrobat, turning all of the work into PDF files. I have used these on my tablet for many years and have found them useful and far easier to cart about with me. In the early spring of 2015, my neighbor David Dollahite arranged for a meeting with Jack Welch and Marny Parkin regarding the possibility of BYU providing a dedicated web site so that there would be greater public access to my

work. Thus began the present enterprise of editing and standardizing all that had done during the last ten years. My commentary on the Gospel of Mark is the second of these electronic volumes. Within a year or so I hope to have all of the books available in the same format.

PNH
Orem, Utah
August 2015

Sequence of Specifically Noted Words and Phrases in the Omni Commentary

1.0.4— <i>Omni</i>	1.14.25— <i>Zarahemla</i>	1.21.33–34— <i>nine moons</i>
1.1.8— <i>Omni</i>	1.14.37— <i>Mosiah</i>	1.22.9— <i>fathers</i>
1.1.14— <i>Jarom</i>	1.14.40–42— <i>plates of brass</i>	1.22.12–13— <i>first parents</i>
1.1.27— <i>genealogy</i>	1.14.49— <i>Jews</i>	1.22.18— <i>tower</i>
1.2.23— <i>Nephites</i>	1.15.7— <i>Mosiah</i>	1.22.24— <i>confounded</i>
1.2.33— <i>Lamanites</i>	1.15.13— <i>Zarahemla</i>	1.22.53–54— <i>land northward</i>
1.3.36–37— <i>in fine</i>	1.15.17— <i>Jerusalem</i>	1.23.3— <i>Amaleki</i>
1.3.68— <i>Amaron</i>	1.15.22— <i>Zedekiah</i>	1.23.10— <i>Mosiah</i>
1.4.4— <i>Amaron</i>	1.15.25— <i>Judah</i>	1.23.18— <i>death</i>
1.4.18–19— <i>father</i>	1.15.31— <i>Babylon</i>	1.23.20— <i>Benjamin</i>
1.5.22— <i>Nephites</i>	1.16.6— <i>wilderness</i>	1.23.23— <i>reigneth</i>
1.6.17— <i>Jerusalem</i>	1.16.18–19— <i>great waters</i>	1.24.11— <i>Benjamin</i>
1.8.15— <i>Chemish</i>	1.16.22— <i>land</i>	1.24.20— <i>Nephites</i>
1.9.3— <i>Chemish</i>	1.16.24— <i>Mosiah</i>	1.24.23— <i>Lamanites</i>
1.10.3— <i>Abinadom</i>	1.17.6— <i>Mosiah</i>	1.24.47— <i>Zarahemla</i>
1.10.8— <i>Chemish</i>	1.17.19— <i>wars</i>	1.25.11— <i>old</i>
1.10.25— <i>Nephites</i>	1.18.7— <i>Mosiah</i>	1.25.15— <i>seed</i>
1.10.28— <i>Lamanites</i>	1.18.15–16— <i>his language</i>	1.25.19— <i>Benjamin</i>
1.11.11— <i>plates</i>	1.18.32— <i>Zarahemla</i>	1.25.23–24— <i>just man</i>
1.11.17— <i>kings</i>	1.18.46— <i>written</i>	1.25.33–34— <i>these plates</i>
1.12.4— <i>Amaleki</i>	1.19.10— <i>Zarahemla</i>	1.25.48— <i>Israel</i>
1.12.17— <i>Mosiah</i>	1.19.13— <i>Mosiah</i>	1.26.13— <i>Christ</i>
1.12.28— <i>Zarahemla</i>	1.20.10— <i>Mosiah</i>	1.26.20— <i>Israel</i>
1.12.31— <i>warned</i>	1.21.2— <i>they</i>	1.27.23— <i>Nephi</i>
1.12.46— <i>Nephi</i>	1.21.8— <i>Coriantumr</i>	1.28.46— <i>Zarahemla</i>
1.13.82— <i>Zarahemla</i>	1.21.18— <i>discovered</i>	1.30.3— <i>Amaleki</i>
1.14.12— <i>Zarahemla</i>	1.21.23— <i>Zarahemla</i>	1.30.34— <i>full</i>

A Commentary on the Scriptures
by
Paul Nolan Hyde, Ph.D.

The Book of Omni

0.0 Determining the chronology of this portion of the Book of Mormon is extraordinarily difficult inasmuch as the last temporal marker given in the book of Omni is provided in verse 5, that of Amaron, the son of Omni. The next point in the chronology of the Nephites that we can fix with any certainty at all is the birth of King Mosiah 2, the son of King Benjamin, which takes place in 154 BC. Scholars have strongly suggested that Zeniff's re-establishment of Nephite rule in the land of Nephi took place about 200 BC (see *MS 9.1*). We do not know for a certainty, however, whether it was King Mosiah 1 or King Benjamin who permitted the colony to depart from Zarahemla. Deciding on which of the two is correct hinges on the chronology of the final four verses of the present book (see 1.27–30). If these verses constitute an afterthought by Amaleki, rather than a sequential historical observation, then it is possible that the king was Mosiah 1. If we are to understand the text as given is strictly sequential, then no other conclusion may be drawn than that Benjamin was the king of Zarahemla.

1.0.4—*Omni*—The son of Jarom, the grandson of Enos, the son of Jacob the brother of Nephi. One of the nominal writers on the Small Plates of Nephi.

1.1 We have assumed that the death of Joram took place the year that he wrote his last upon the Small plates of Nephi, two hundred and thirty-eight years after the departure of Lehi and his family from Jerusalem or about the year 361 BC. Following the same line of thinking as to when these later writers were making their contributions, we may conclude that Omni had the Small Plates in his possession for forty-four years, from 361 BC until 317 BC when he entrusted the plates to his son, Amaron.

1.1.8—*Omni*—The son of Jarom, the grandson of Enos, the son of Jacob the brother of Nephi. One of the nominal writers on the Small Plates of Nephi.

1.1.14—*Jarom*—The son of Enos the son of Jacob. One of the writers who committed their names and testimonies to the Small Plates of Nephi.

1.1.27—*genealogy*—A worthy goal, but that was not the nature of the original commandment given by Nephi to his brother Jacob. It is clear from the text of his own book, however, that Jarom thought that the genealogy of the family was one of the major purposes for his own inscription (see *JM-C 1.1*). It is interesting, however, that while Omni and Chemish make no mention of prophecies and revelations as being part of their duty to the records, Amaron and Abinadom, the son of Chemish, do (see 1.4–8 and 1.11).

1.2 We are not privy to the specific nature of Omni's wickedness but it would seem to be at least a neglect of the ordinances of the Law of Moses. Given his status as a warrior, continually in the field with the Nephite armies, his obser-

*The Book of Omni

* p. 148
Omni
EM 1:148, 196,
198, 212, 213,
350
EM 2:714, 855
EM 4:1782,
1819

{*Chapter I*}
(Chapter 1)

{*I*—1830}

1 BEHOLD, it came to pass that I, Omni, being commanded by my father, Jarom, that I should write somewhat upon these plates, to preserve our genealogy—

Omni 1:1–17
PM 90

2 Wherefore, in my days, I would that ye should know that I fought much with the sword to preserve

Omni 1:2
EM 1:378

vance of the Law may have been seriously wanting in his opinion. Some scholars have suggested that the life of a warrior may not have been conducive to a spiritual life and that was the source of his guilt, that he may have felt himself as belonging to a disreputable class. This, however, is probably an overstatement of the facts. We have only to point to Captain Moroni, Lehi, Helaman, Teancum, and a host of others to demonstrate that a man in the defense of his people can still be a spiritual giant.

1.2.23—*Nephites*—In reference to the posterity and followers of Nephi, the son of Lehi, who provided leadership to the righteous six hundred years before the birth of Christ.

1.2.33—*Lamanites*—Specifically the posterity of the eldest son of Lehi and Sariah, and generally those who apostatized away from the teachings of the fullness of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. They were the primary opposition of the Nephites who in general adhered to the teaching of the prophets, seers, and revelators of the Lord God of Israel.

1.3 We may not know the significance of this particular six-year period of time between 323 BC and 317 BC. It may be nothing more than an indication that verses 1, 2 and the first part of 3 were written in 323 BC, with Omni generalizing about his life as a warrior up until that time, assuring his readers that there had been periods of time when there were seasons of peace notwithstanding the times of war. Omni may have lamented somewhat that he had nothing spiritual to contribute to the record, a product of his sense of unworthiness as a wicked man. Some scholars have pointed to Omni's confession as a commentary on the spiritual degeneracy of the entire Nephite culture. This extrapolation may be unwarranted.

1.3.36–37—*in fine*—That is to say, “lastly”. We may correctly conclude here that Omni had first written upon the Small Plates in 323 BC and then later returned to write his last upon the plates six years later, in 317 BC, before entrusting them into the hands of his son, Amaron.

1.3.68—*Amaron*—The son of Omni, the son of Jarom, the grandson of Enos, the son of Jacob the brother of Nephi. One of the nominal writers on the Small Plates of Nephi.

1.4 Amaron gives his temporal marker in verse 5 as being 320 years since the time Lehi and his family departed from Jerusalem, which corresponds to the year 279 BC. We may justifiably assume that Amaron was nearing death inasmuch as he entrusted the Small Plates of Nephi into the hands of his brother, Chemish, the same day that he wrote his last.

1.4.4—*Amaron*—One of the sons of Omni, the son of Jarom, the grandson of Enos, the son of Jacob the brother of Nephi. One of the nominal writers on the Small Plates of Nephi.

1.4.18–19—*father*—Amaron refers to the Small Plates as belonging to his father, Omni, rather than as a record begun by Nephi. One wonders as to how much of the book had been read by Amaron, even though they had been in his possession for thirty-eight years.

1.5 The wicked among the Nephites, the more part of them, had been destroyed. Amaron does not tell us precisely how that transpired, but we may assume that it took place as a result of the great wars that had intensified during the life of Omni, during which he was compelled to take the lives of his brethren in order to preserve his people. Whether Omni fell in battle, we know not, but apparently many of the Nephites had lost their lives in the conflict which appears to have continued for most of Amaron's life.

my people, the Nephites, from falling into the hands of their enemies, the Lamanites. But behold, I of myself am a wicked man, and I have not kept the statutes and the commandments of the Lord as I ought to have done.

{¶—1830}

3 And it came to pass that two hundred and seventy and six years had passed away, and we had many seasons of peace; and we had many seasons of serious war and bloodshed. Yea, and in fine, two hundred and eighty and two years had passed away, and I had kept these plates according to the commandments of my fathers; and I conferred them upon my son Amaron. And I make an end.

{¶—1830}

4 And now I, Amaron, write the things whatsoever I write, which are few, in the book of my father.

5 Behold, it came to pass that three hundred and twenty years had passed away, and the more wicked part of the Nephites were destroyed.

1.5.22— <i>Nephites</i> —In reference to the posterity and followers of Nephi, the son of Lehi, who provided leadership to the righteous six hundred years before the birth of Christ.	6 For the Lord would not suffer, after he had led them out of the land of Jerusalem and kept and preserved them from falling into the hands of their enemies, yea, he would not suffer that the words should not be verified, which he spake unto our fathers, saying that: Inasmuch as ye will not keep my commandments ye shall not prosper in the land.	Omni 1:6 CR85-A 16 CR86-A 34 CR00-O 21
1.6 This same warning appears in Jarom's record (see <i>JM 1.9</i>) in conjunction with Lehi dying testament to his family (see <i>2 NE-C 1.20</i>). The warning was the flip side of the promise, that the Nephites would be protected and preserved from their enemies if they would keep the commandments. They had done so for many years and therefore reaped the blessings. When the Nephites began to fall into apostasy, the reversal of fortunes had to take place as well and thus they were afflicted, sometimes with great loss of life, by the Lamanites.		
1.6.17— <i>Jerusalem</i> —A city located about 32 miles from the Mediterranean Sea and 18 miles from the Jordan River and the northern tip of the Dead Sea. Once the city was captured by the children of Israel from the Jebusites, it served as the capital of the kingdom of Israel and Judah for many centuries. Jerusalem sits aside of several prominences including mount Moriah, where Abraham was commanded to take Isaac as an offering unto the Most High God, and mount Zion. The Kidron Valley and the Mount of Olives lie immediately to the east. The traditional sites of Calvary and the Garden Tomb lie immediately to the north. The king at the time of the initial entry into the land of promise was Adonizedek.		
1.7 As the Nephites were afflicted, great numbers of the wicked among having been killed, there came a resurgence of repentance on the part of the survivors and a reciprocating forgiveness on the part of the Lord. The righteous were spare and were delivered from their enemies. The consummate deliverance of the Nephites from the hands of their brethren would be the escape from the land of Nephi into the wilderness and eventually to the land of Mulekite Zarahemla, being led by Mosiah 1, the father of King Benjamin and the grandfather of King Mosiah 2. We cannot at present discern precisely when that exodus took place. But we can be certain that it took place sometime between 279 BC and 200 BC, the latter date being the year that we suppose that Zeniff and his people returned to the land of Nephi from Zarahemla in order to re-inherit their first possession.	7 Wherefore, the Lord did visit them in great judgment; nevertheless, he did spare the righteous that they should not perish, but did deliver them out of the hands of their enemies.	
1.8 We may assume that Chemish is a younger brother of Amaron and younger son of Omni, but there is little to sustain that supposition save for the fact that Chemish appears to have outlived his brother.	8 And it came to pass that I did deliver the plates unto my brother Chemish.	
1.8.15— <i>Chemish</i> —One of the sons of Omni, the son of Jarom, the grandson of Enos, the son of Jacob the brother of Nephi. One of the nominal writers on the Small Plates of Nephi.	{J—1830}	
1.9 We have no way of knowing when Chemish made his entry upon the Small Plates of Nephi, inasmuch as neither he nor his immediate successors give any indication as to the passage of time. Any chronology during the period of time beginning with the death of Amaron in 317 BC and ending with the birth of King Mosiah 2 in 154 BC can be nothing but the most tentative of speculations based on insubstantial assumptions. Having said all this, may I suggest the following:	9 Now I, Chemish, write what few things I write, in the same book with my brother; for behold, I saw the last which he *wrote, that he wrote it with his own hand; and he wrote it in the day that he delivered them unto me. And after this manner we keep the records, for it is according to the commandments of our fathers. And I make	* p. 149

If we assume the average life expectancy to be approximately 80 years and approximately 40 years between generations, the chart below gives us a pos-

sible scheme for the time period. Dates with asterisks are fairly reliable.

<u>Writer</u>	<u>Born</u>	<u>Died</u>
Omni	397 BC	317 BC*
Amaron	359 BC	279 BC*
Chemish	350 BC	270 BC
Abinadom	310 BC	220 BC
Amaleki	270 BC	190 BC (170 BC ?)

Only one of the five writers in the book of Omni mentions the flight of Mosiah 1 from the land of Nephi to the land of Zarahemla, suggesting that that exodus did not take place until after the death of Abinadom, which we have speculated was about 220 BC. We do not know when Mosiah 1 was born nor when he died, but we do know precisely when Benjamin and Mosiah 2 died and can easily extrapolate the birth year of Mosiah 2. If we follow the same assumptions for the unknown factors as we did above for the book of Omni, we may chart the following:

<u>King</u>	<u>Born</u>	<u>Became King</u>	<u>Died</u>
Mosiah 1	241 BC	201 BC	161 BC (176 BC ?)
Benjamin	201 BC	161 BC (176 BC ?)	121 BC*
Mosiah 2	154 BC*	124 BC*	91 BC*

If our chronologies have any merit at all, we may conclude that Mosiah 1 left the land of Nephi in 220 BC at the tender age of 21. The family of Lehi had been led by such righteous youthfulness before. We may only guess at the length of time required for the Mulekites to recognize the character of this young man in order to be moved to make him their king. If the age of thirty is assumed, which the Mulekites might have favored traditionally, Mosiah 1 would have become King of the land of Zarahemla about the same time as the birth of his heir, Benjamin, or about 201 BC. The year following the ascension of Mosiah 1 to the throne, Zeniff and his followers would have made their attempt to reclaim the lands of their first inheritance, only 20 years after they had been forced to leave. It is clear from later accounts that some of the Mulekites went with Zeniff up to the land of Nephi.

Of what value is the foregoing? Hardly any, save for the fact that it is possible to plot a chronology which accounts for the characters and the events during an undocumented time period with a degree of reasonableness. The difficulty with the two charts as they stand, however, is that Amaleki states that he was born in the days of Mosiah (not necessarily while Mosiah was king of Zarahemla) and had lived to see the days of King Benjamin (see 1.23–24). We have speculated that Mosiah 1 lived until 161 BC, by following our standardized variables, and that Amaleki lived until 190 BC by using the same criteria. Clearly this cannot be the case unless Mosiah 1 abdicated relatively early in his reign, a highly unlikely eventuality. Therefore, there must be a flaw in our calculations. Yet even if our assumptions are flawed, it is possible to resolve the problems with one or two adjustments. Amaleki may have lived more than 80 years, a distinct possibility inasmuch there were at least two probable centenarians in his lineage; Mosiah 1 may have lived less than 80 years, also a distinct possibility if the death of his grandson is any indication. If Amaleki lived to be a hundred like Jacob and Enos, then he would have died in 170 BC; if Mosiah 1 only lived to be sixty-five, two years longer than Mosiah 2, then he would have died in 176 BC. This would provide a six-year overlap. There are other resolutions as well, all of them no better than what is

an end.

postulated here.

1.9.3—*Chemish*—One of the sons of Omni, the son of Jarom, the grandson of Enos, the son of Jacob the brother of Nephi. One of the nominal writers on the Small Plates of Nephi.

1.10 Like his grandfather, Omni, Abinadom was a warrior, hard-pressed to deliver his people out of the hands of the Lamanites. The military pressure undoubtedly continued because of the rising generation's failure to comprehend the causes that brought about the destruction of their grandparents.

1.10.3—*Abinadom*—The son of Chemish and the grandson of Omni. One of the nominal writers on the Small Plates of Nephi.

1.10.8—*Chemish*—One of the sons of Omni, the son of Jarom, the grandson of Enos, the son of Jacob the brother of Nephi. One of the nominal writers on the Small Plates of Nephi.

1.10.25—*Nephites*—In reference to the posterity and followers of Nephi, the son of Lehi, who provided leadership to the righteous six hundred years before the birth of Christ.

1.10.28—*Lamanites*—Specifically the posterity of the eldest son of Lehi and Sariah, and generally those who apostatized away from the teachings of the fullness of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. They were the primary opposition of the Nephites who in general adhered to the teaching of the prophets, seers, and revelators of the Lord God of Israel.

1.11 Note that Abinadom does not confess transgressions, but he does testify that to his knowledge, nothing more has been added to the scriptures. This does not necessarily impugn the character of Abinadom but it probably does suggest that the Nephites were having some difficulty living what they already had. Abinadom may have been among the few who were reading the scriptures at the time.

1.11.11—*plates*—This is in reference to the Large Plates of Nephi which had been maintained for over 350 years by the time of Abinadom's inscription upon the Small Plates

1.11.17—*kings*—It would appear that Abinadom is neither a king nor a priest to his people, but solely a defender against the deprecations of the Lamanites. This does not necessarily preclude his being a prophet, however.

1.12 If our proposed chronology be correct, then Amaleki would have been born in the year 270 BC and would have been about fifty years of age at the time of the exodus from the land of Nephi to the land of Zarahemla. He would have witnessed the entire reign of Mosiah 1 and perhaps as much as six years of the reign of King Benjamin.

1.12.4—*Amaleki*—The son of Abinadom, and last of the sequential writers on the Small Plates of Nephi.

1.12.17—*Mosiah*—The first Nephite king of the land of Zarahemla. He was the father of king Benjamin and the grandfather of Mosiah II, the third of the righteous kings in the land.

1.12.28—*Zarahemla*—The land originally settled by the Mulekites that lay between the narrow neck of land to the north and the narrow strip of wilderness to the south that separated it from the lands of Nephi and Lehi. It became the great bastion of Nephite civilization for more than five hundred years.

1.12.31—*warned*—That Mosiah's experience may have paralleled that of Isaiah, the prophet in the Temple, has been discussed before (see 2 NE-

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10 Behold, I, Abinadom, am the son of Chemish. Behold, it came to pass that I saw much war and contention between my people, the Nephites, and the Lamanites; and I, with my own sword, have taken the lives of many of the Lamanites in the defence of my brethren.

11 And behold, the record of this people is engraven upon plates which is had by the kings, according to the generations; and I know of no revelation save that which has been written, neither prophecy; wherefore, that which is sufficient is written. And I make an end.

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12 Behold, I am Amaleki, the son of Abinadom. Behold, I will speak unto you somewhat concerning Mosiah, who was made king over the land of Zarahemla; for behold, he being warned of the Lord that he should flee out of the land of Nephi, and as many as would hearken unto the voice of the Lord should also depart out of the land with him, into the wilderness—

Omni 1:12
EM 2:959
Omni 1:12–13
EM 1:173, 188
Omni 1:12–15
EM 1:141
Omni 1:12–18
DS 2:198
Omni 1:12–19
AF 262
Omni 1:12,19
EM 1:99

C 1.1). This constitutes the third time that the servants of God pertaining to Lehi' family have been commanded to depart from the lands of their inheritance. First, Lehi was commanded to leave Jerusalem, then Nephi was commanded to depart from the land of Lehi and flee into the mountains of Nephi with all those who would hearken to his voice, and here Mosiah 1 is commanded to depart from Nephi into a land hitherto unknown to the Nephites or to the Lamanites, but had been prepared for them by the hand of the Lord through Mulek and his entourage.

1.12.46—*Nephi*—A mountainous region east of the first settlement established by Lehi and his entourage. It was the area in which Nephi and his followers established the first Nephite colony. Zeniff and his people from the land of Zarahemla would later settle there. It was also the place where the fertile missionary labors of the sons of Mosiah and their companions bore fruit among the Lamanites.

1.13 We are not told how long this journey took, but if subsequent attempts are any indication, it was a long and arduous experience, fraught with danger and privation. One wonders if the faithful who followed Mosiah used the Liahona in their travels. It is certain that Mosiah and his companions would have carried away with them all of the artifacts of the Nephite people together with the vast collection of plates that had been produced during the more than 350 years since Nephi began the Large Plates called by his name. As has been demonstrated before, if the Liahona was employed during their escape from the land of Nephi, Mosiah 1 would have had to continually admonish his people in much the same fashion that Nephi had counseled with his family. Hopefully, they were more tractable than Laman and Lemuel and their party.

1.13.82—*Zarahemla*—There has been some speculation regarding the derivation of this Mulekite name. The most appealing interprets the word as a “man or place of abundant posterity” (see *MS-C 14.1.17*).

1.14 We do not know precisely when the land of Zarahemla was settled. We are certain, however, that the Mulekites had arrived in the Americas about the year 580 BC and perhaps somewhat earlier. We do not know if the land of Zarahemla was named such because of the man, Zarahemla, who greeted Mosiah or whether the man was named Zarahemla because of a similar tradition followed by the Nephites to have their kings take the name of “Nephi” upon themselves in honor of the son of Lehi who had preserved them from all of the enemies (see *JA-C 1.9–11*).

1.14.12—*Zarahemla*—The land originally settled by the Mulekites that lay between the narrow neck of land to the north and the narrow strip of wilderness to the south that separated it from the lands of Nephi and Lehi. It became the great bastion of Nephite civilization for more than five hundred years. The name is directly associated with that of the last of the great Mulekite leaders.

1.14.25—*Zarahemla*—The last of the great Mulekite leaders who ruled at the time of the entrance of Mosiah I and the Nephites from the land of Nephi.

1.14.37—*Mosiah*—The first Nephite king of the land of Zarahemla. He was the father of king Benjamin and the grandfather of Mosiah II, the third of the righteous kings in the land.

1.14.40–42—*plates of brass*—As it will be seen, the Mulekites had lost their religion and their language such that they could not even read their own inscriptions made generations earlier. They were in an unhappy

13 And it came to pass that he did according as the Lord had commanded him. And they departed out of the land into the wilderness, as many as would hearken unto the voice of the Lord; and they were led by many preachings and prophesying. And they were admonished continually by the word of God; and they were led by the power of his arm, through the wilderness until they came down into the land which is called the land of Zarahemla.

14 And they discovered a people, who were called the people of Zarahemla. Now, there was great rejoicing among the people of Zarahemla; and also Zarahemla did rejoice exceedingly, because the Lord had sent the people of Mosiah with the plates of brass which contained the record of the Jews.

Omni 1:13–14
EM 1:192
EM 2:959
Omni 1:13–19
MD 520

Omni 1:14
EM 1:148
Omni 1:14–16
EM 2:706
Omni 1:14–18
MD 103
Omni 1:14–19
AF 322
EM 1:201

state of affairs and the appearance of an enlightened and educated people who had it in their power to restore them to their former state was welcomed indeed.

1.14.49—*Jews*—That is, those who could trace their lineage back to Judah, one of the twelve sons of Jacob. The land of Palestine had been home to twelve tribes at one time, but this had been generally reduced to the remnants, the largest faction being that of the tribe of Judah.

1.15 Lehi departed from the land of Jerusalem six hundred years before the birth of the Lord Jesus Christ, a fact that is mentioned repeatedly in the text of the Book of Mormon. Nephi tells us that this occurred during the first year of the reign of Zedekiah (see *1 NE-C 1.4*). By all accounts, the destruction of the city of Jerusalem took place in the eleventh year that Zedekiah wore the crown of the Kingdom of Judah; that is to say, 589 BC. Scholars laboring without the benefit of the Book of Mormon have proposed a wide variety of dates for the destruction of Jerusalem by the Babylonians, none of which can muster the authority accompanying the testimony of those who were there.

1.15.7—*Mosiah*—The first Nephite king of the land of Zarahemla. He was the father of king Benjamin and the grandfather of Mosiah II, the third of the righteous kings in the land.

1.15.13—*Zarahemla*—The land originally settled by the Mulekites that lay between the narrow neck of land to the north and the narrow strip of wilderness to the south that separated it from the lands of Nephi and Lehi. It became the great bastion of Nephite civilization for more than five hundred years. The name is directly associated with that of the last of the great Mulekite leaders.

1.15.17—*Jerusalem*—A city located about 32 miles from the Mediterranean Sea and 18 miles from the Jordan River and the northern tip of the Dead Sea. Once the city was captured by the children of Israel from the Jebusites, it served as the capital of the kingdom of Israel and Judah for many centuries. Jerusalem sits aside of several prominences including mount Moriah, where Abraham was commanded to take Isaac as an offering unto the Most High God, and mount Zion. The Kidron Valley and the Mount of Olives lie immediately to the east. The traditional sites of Calvary and the Garden Tomb lie immediately to the north. The king at the time of the initial entry into the land of promise was Adonizedek.

1.15.22—*Zedekiah*—The last king of Judah before the Babylonian captivity. He was named Mattaniah by his parents, Josiah and Hamutal, but was renamed Zedekiah by Nebuchadnezzar at the age of twenty-one. When Zedekiah proved unsatisfactory during the eleventh year of his reign, most of the sons of the king were put to death as he stood with them, then the king of Babylon had Zedekiah's eyes thrust out (see Jeremiah 52:8–11). One of his sons had escaped the vengeance of Nebuchadnezzar, however, and with a group of supporters eventually crossed the ocean to settle in the land of Zarahemla. These Jewish colonists have been traditionally called the Mulekites.

1.15.25—*Judah*—In reference to the southern Kingdom of Judah which would be destroyed, conquered, or oppressed one generation after another until it was completely decimated in AD 130 by the Roman legions putting down the Second Jewish Rebellion.

1.15.31—*Babylon*—A great nation founded in the Mesopotamian valley closely associated with the Chaldean empire. It had risen to some economic importance by the time of the fall of Jericho to the Israelites

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15 Behold, it came to pass that Mosiah discovered that the people of Zarahemla came out from Jerusalem at the time that Zedekiah, king of Judah, was carried away captive into Babylon.

under Joshua. The Babylonians would eventually become a world power, overrunning the whole of the Middle East. The threat of the Babylonian captivity would bring about the departure of several groups from the land of Israel, the most prominent in scripture being Lehi and his family, together with the associates of Mulek who eventually settled the land of Zarahemla. Babylon has become the metaphorical representation of materialism in the world of men.

1.16 One wonders how the Mulekites were led from the land of Judea to the Americas by the “hand of the Lord” Were they aware of the guidance? Had they a prophet among them? We have no record of the journey and thus no specific detail as to what transpired.

1.16.6—*wilderness*—We are not told which wilderness is meant, and there are a plethora to choose from. Lehi and his family traveled in the wilderness to the south of Jerusalem, into the vast wastes of the Arabian peninsula. They set sail into the Indian Ocean, voyaging south and then eastward through the southern Pacific Ocean until they reached the northern shoreline of what is now called South America. It is unlikely that Mulek and his entourage followed that same path. As other scholars have long since concluded, it is probable that those who escaped the wrath of Nebuchadnezzar fled westward across the Sinai, through Egypt and northern Africa. How they acquired ships to sail the Atlantic we are not told, the details undoubtedly lost through the Mulekites’ failure to preserve much of their history. Although there have been many sites recommended, it is likely that the Mulekites landed somewhere on the northeastern shores of what is now South America.

1.16.18–19—*great waters*—When Lehi and his family arrived at the land which they called Bountiful on the shores of southern Arabia, they encountered the “many waters” of the Indian Ocean, which they called Irreantum” (see *1 NE-C 17.5*). Some scholars have attempted to equate those waters with the “great waters” mentioned here, suggesting that Mulek and his people followed essentially the same path as Lehi and his party. There is no warrant for this proposal. By the same token, however, an argument could be made that the Mulekites followed the same track as did the Jaredites many centuries before when they traveled to their promised land from the Tower of Babel. It seems reasonable to accept the latter proposal over the former inasmuch as the Mulekites came in contact with the Nephites first rather than the Lamanites. Had the Mulekites followed the same wind and ocean currents as Nephi’s ship, they probably would have arrived near the place that Lehi first established his family. Yet, there was no contact between the Mulekites and the posterity of Lehi for nearly four hundred years. It seems likely, then, that the Mulekites traveled westward, rather than eastward, across the “great waters”, settling in a land which was separated from both the Nephites and the Lamanites by a strip of almost impenetrable wilderness.

1.16.22—*land*—In reference to the land of Zarahemla, the location of which is probably in the northern portion of what is now South America near the narrow neck of land.

1.16.24—*Mosiah*—The first Nephite king of the land of Zarahemla. He was the father of king Benjamin and the grandfather of Mosiah II, the third of the righteous kings in the land.

16 And they journeyed in the wilderness, and were brought by the hand of the Lord across the great waters, into the land where Mosiah discovered them; and they had dwelt there from that time forth.

Omni 1:16–17
EM 1:192

1.17 And thus we see the wisdom of the Lord having commanded Lehi to send his sons back to Jerusalem to obtain the Brass Plates from Laban. Had Nephi failed to obtain the records, the posterity of Lehi would have suffered the same fate; they would have lost their language, their faith, and what natural affection they had for each other.	17 And at the time that Mosiah discovered them, they had become exceedingly numerous. Nevertheless, they had had many wars and serious contentions, and had fallen by the sword from time to time; and their language had become corrupted; and they had brought no records with them; *and they denied the being of their Creator; and Mosiah, nor the people of Mosiah, could understand them.	Omni 1:17 CR85-O 48 CR86-O 70 CR93-A 15 Omni 1:17-18 EM 1:174 Omni 1:17-19 EM 2:959 * p. 150
1.17.6— <i>Mosiah</i> —The first Nephite king of the land of Zarahemla. He was the father of king Benjamin and the grandfather of Mosiah II, the third of the righteous kings in the land.		
1.17.19— <i>wars</i> —We may speculate at length as to the motives that propagated the warfare among the Mulekites, but given that Mulek and his people were of the royalist elite of Jerusalem, much imagination is not required.		
1.18 The Mulekites had been bereft of a standard for language education for four centuries and the changes in the speech patterns would have been substantial. If modern linguists have really discovered the forces that bring about change in spoken language, we may conclude that while the vocabulary may have changed some, given the new environment in the Americas, most of the changes would have been phonetic, the manner in which they articulated their words. Once Mosiah perceived what the phonetic differences were, it would have been a relatively simple matter to restore the Mulekites to their mother tongue.	18 But it came to pass that Mosiah caused that they should be taught in his language. And it came to pass that after they were taught in the language of Mosiah, Zarahemla gave a genealogy of his fathers, according to his memory; and they are written, but not in these plates.	
1.18.7— <i>Mosiah</i> —The first Nephite king of the land of Zarahemla. He was the father of king Benjamin and the grandfather of Mosiah II, the third of the righteous kings in the land.		
1.18.15–16— <i>his language</i> —We would have to conclude that Mosiah's pronunciation was what became the standard for the entire society, a literal King's Tongue.		
1.18.32— <i>Zarahemla</i> —The last of the great Mulekite leaders who ruled at the time of the entrance of Mosiah I and the Nephites from the land of Nephi.		
1.18.46— <i>written</i> —Apparently upon the Large Plates. As will be clarified later in the book of Mosiah, Zarahemla was a direct descendant of Mulek. By the time Mosiah came in contact with Zarahemla about 220 BC, Zarahemla's direct lineage back to Mulek would have probably involved no more than fifteen or twenty names.		
1.19 There were far more Mulekites than there were Nephite (see <i>MS-C 25.2</i>). One wonders at the motivation at having Mosiah be their king. Mosiah certainly was not of any royal or priestly lineage. He was gifted, to be sure, and had been the means of restoring the Mulekites to a degree of their heritage. He also had made available the Brass Plates by which the Mulekites could reinstate proper temple worship among themselves. Had there been any among those who traveled with Mulek who were of the tribe of Levi, who were priests of Aaron? We do not know, we cannot say. Certainly, in the religious arena, the Nephites were far more advanced by having among them bearers of the Melchizedek Priesthood. Yet, one wonders at the great wars and contentions that the Mulekites as a people had endured. Were they war-weary? Did they recognize the deleterious effects of factionalism? Were they then willing to have a respite from all of the political wrangling that had plagued their society for generations by selecting a wise man to be their king who had no outward agenda involving the royalist feelings of the Mulekites? One wonders if these	19 And it came to pass that the people of Zarahemla, and of Mosiah, did unite together; and Mosiah was appointed to be their king.	Omni 1:19 EM 1:99 Omni 1:20–21 AGQ 1:160 MD 818 DS 3:224 Omni 1:20–22 EM 2:959

sentiments, which were put to rest for a time with the selection of Mosiah, would rise again to distress the people. We may have to conclude that much of the political turmoil between the kingmen and the freemen has its roots in the original contentions that prevailed among the Mulekites.

1.19.10—*Zarahemla*—The last of the great Mulekite leaders who ruled at the time of the entrance of Mosiah I and the Nephites from the land of Nephi.

1.19.13—*Mosiah*—The first Nephite king of the land of Zarahemla. He was the father of king Benjamin and the grandfather of Mosiah II, the third of the righteous kings in the land.

1.20 The translation of the Coriantumr stone may have been facilitated by the Urim and Thummim which was later in the possession of King Mosiah 2, by which Mosiah translated the 24 gold plates discovered by the people of Limhi which constituted the record of Ether, the last prophet of the Jaredites (see *MS-C 8.13*). How or when the “interpreters” came into the possession of the Nephite kings we at present do not know. The brother of Jared had a two-stone set of interpreters which he was told could be used to translate his writings (see *ET-C 3.21–24*), but in no place can we read how Mosiah 1, his son, or his grandson might have come into possession of them independent of the 24 gold plates of Ether. All that remains is that Mosiah 1 was enabled to translate the Coriantumr stone by the gift and power of God, and Mosiah 2 was enabled to translate the record of Ether by means of the interpreters in his possession.

1.20.10—*Mosiah*—The first Nephite king of the land of Zarahemla. He was the father of king Benjamin and the grandfather of Mosiah II, the third of the righteous kings in the land.

1.21 As may be discovered elsewhere, Coriantumr was the last surviving descendent of Mahonri Moriancumr, the brother of Jared. Ether was the last descendant of Jared himself. The destruction of the Jaredites took place at the Hill Ramah, the Jaredite name for the Hill Cumorah where the destruction of the Nephites took place. Contrary to the opinions of many of the misinformed, this hill is located in western New York, the same prominence in which was found Mormon’s collection of plates, from which the Book of Mormon was translated by the Prophet Joseph Smith.

1.21.2—*they*—That is to say, the engravings on the stone.

1.21.8—*Coriantumr*—The last of the Jaredite kings, as Ether had been the last of the Jaredite prophets.

1.21.18—*discovered*—We do not know whether this discovery took place as they traveled in the wilderness immediately after they arrived by ship, or whether he wandered in among them once they were ensconced in the city of Zarahemla.

1.21.23—*Zarahemla*—The land originally settled by the Mulekites that lay between the narrow neck of land to the north and the narrow strip of wilderness to the south that separated it from the lands of Nephi and Lehi. It became the great bastion of Nephite civilization for more than five hundred years. The name is directly associated with that of the last of the great Mulekite leaders.

1.21.33–34—*nine moons*—The Jews, Mulek’s people included, traditionally employed a lunar calendar in all of their temporal computations. The Law of Moses was also informed by a lunar calendar, and thus the Nephites probably followed the lunar calendar as well. There is, however, no other time frame used in the Book of Mormon that employs a

20 And it came to pass in the days of Mosiah, there was a large stone brought unto him with engravings on it; and he did interpret the engravings by the gift and power of God.

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21 And they gave an account of one Coriantumr, and the slain of his people. And Coriantumr was discovered by the people of Zarahemla; and he dwelt with them for the space of nine moons.

Omni 1:21
DS 3:323
PM 304
EM 1:178
EM 2:719

reference to the moon. We may speculate about how and when the ancient inhabitants of the Americas developed or switched to a solar calendar, our best guess being sometime after the Law of Moses was no longer required of the covenant people of the Americas, or about AD 33. It is clear, however, that many Native Americans still depend on the moon as a temporal marker.

1.22 If we assume that Mulek and his people arrived in the Americas about 580 BC, then we must assume that the destruction of the Jaredites must have been about the same time, relatively speaking. This being the case, the Jaredites would have possessed the land for nearly two thousand years before their destruction. That nation fell for the same reason that the Nephites fell: they failed to worship the God of this land who is Jesus Christ and were swept off the land in order that they might be replaced by another people.

1.22.9—*fathers*—Perhaps this is in reference to a portion of Coriantumr's genealogy, rather than to his "first parents". The Mulekites would have been predisposed to inquire after this sort of information.

1.22.12–13—*first parents*—No doubt in reference to Jared and his brother, their families and friends who were spared the confusion of tongues at the Tower of Babel.

1.22.18—*tower*—In reference to the Tower of Babel which biblical scholars have dated to the 23rd century before the birth of Jesus Christ.

1.22.24—*confounded*—The builders of the Tower of Babel were deprived of the ability to communicate with each other. Jared and his family and friends were spared that condemnation because of the petitions of the brother of Jared to the God of Heaven. Thus, of all of the people who inhabited the earth, only the Jaredites continued to speak and write in the language of Adam, the language of God.

1.22.53–54—*land northward*—That is to say, north of the narrow neck of land that separated the land northward from the land southward.

1.23 It would seem reasonable to assume that Amaleki participated in the exodus from the land of Nephi to the land of Zarahemla and was an eyewitness of all that he records in his narrative.

1.23.3—*Amaleki*—The son of Abinadom, and last of the sequential writers on the Small Plates of Nephi.

1.23.10—*Mosiah*—That is to say, Amaleki was born sometime after 241 BC (see 1.9).

1.23.18—*death*—Perhaps around the year 176 BC (see 1.9).

1.23.20—*Benjamin*—The son of Mosiah I and the father of Mosiah II. He was the second righteous Nephite king of the land of Zarahemla.

1.23.23—*reigneth*—If our calculations be correct, Amaleki lived during the first six years of Benjamin's reign; that is to say, from 176 to 170 BC (again, see 1.9).

1.24 Once the Lamanites perceived in 221 BC that a portion of the Nephites had left the land of Nephi, they would have been tenacious in their attempts to discover where they had gone. With the return of Zeniff and his colony sometime around 200 BC, the Lamanites would have been stirred up once again to find the land of Zarahemla. It would seem certain, then, by the year 176 BC that the Lamanites had figured out how to descend upon the land of Zarahemla, but not in sufficient numbers to destroy them.

1.24.11—*Benjamin*—The son of Mosiah I and the father of Mosiah II. He was the second righteous Nephite king of the land of Zarahemla.

22 It also spake a few words concerning his fathers. And his first parents came out from the tower, at the time the Lord confounded the language of the people; and the severity of the Lord fell upon them according to his judgments, which are just; and their bones lay scattered in the land northward.

Omni 1:22
EM 1:177

/J—1830/

23 Behold, I, Amaleki, was born in the days of Mosiah; and I have lived to see his death; and Benjamin, his son, reigneth in his stead.

24 And behold, I have seen, in the days of king Benjamin, a serious war and much bloodshed between the Nephites and the Lamanites. But behold, the Nephites did obtain much advantage over them; yea, insomuch that king Benjamin did drive them out of the land of Zarahemla.

1.24.20— <i>Nephites</i> —In reference to the posterity and followers of Nephi, the son of Lehi, who provided leadership to the righteous six hundred years before the birth of Christ.		
1.24.23— <i>Lamanites</i> —Specifically the posterity of the eldest son of Lehi and Sariah, and generally those who apostatized away from the teachings of the fullness of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. They were the primary opposition of the Nephites who in general adhered to the teaching of the prophets, seers, and revelators of the Lord God of Israel.		
1.24.47— <i>Zarahemla</i> —The land originally settled by the Mulekites that lay between the narrow neck of land to the north and the narrow strip of wilderness to the south that separated it from the lands of Nephi and Lehi. It became the great bastion of Nephite civilization for more than five hundred years. The name is directly associated with that of the last of the great Mulekite leaders.		
1.25 The greatest troubles that came upon the Nephites were a result of not believing in the omniscience of God, that there was safety in His covenants because He knew all things from the beginning to the end, from all eternity to all eternity. The Nephites eventually failed to believe that men could be endowed by their creator with power by which the children of men might be spared the horrors of both death and hell. Amaleki has witnessed for himself the gift of tongues in the person of Mosiah 1. He probably enjoyed that blessing himself as the Mulekites and the Nephites came together to become one people.	25 And it came to pass that I began to be old; and, having no seed, and knowing king Benjamin to be a just man before the Lord, wherefore, I shall deliver up these plates unto him, exhorting all men to come unto God, the Holy One of Israel, and believe in prophesying, and in revelations, and in the ministering of angels, and in the gift of speaking with tongues, and in the gift of interpreting languages, and in all things which are good; for there is nothing which is good save it comes from the Lord; and that which is evil cometh from the devil.	Omni 1:25 MD 647, 799 DNTC 2:383 EM 1:99 CR01-O 78 Omni 1:25–26 PM 168 Omni 1:25,30 EM 1:200
1.25.11— <i>old</i> —If our calculations be correct, Amaleki would have been about 100 years of age (see 1.9).		
1.25.15— <i>seed</i> —A sorrow to Amaleki that he chooses not to explain.		
1.25.19— <i>Benjamin</i> —The son of Mosiah I and the father of Mosiah II. He was the second righteous Nephite king of the land of Zarahemla.		
1.25.23–24— <i>just man</i> —A fact that we ourselves will witness in his final address to his people (see <i>MS-C 2–5</i>).		
1.25.33–34— <i>these plates</i> —As always, “these plates” in this context refers to the Small Plates of Nephi. King Benjamin will entrust the Small Plates to the custodian of the historical depository of the Nephites. These civil and sacred records will continue in the hands of the designated custodians until the time of the prophet Mormon. In fulfilling the commandment to produce a one-volume work regarding the spiritual history of the Nephites, Mormon will bring to light the Small Plates which had apparently lain in the depository for nearly five hundred years without much notice. Mormon would be so taken by them that he physically included them in his collection of plates. Mormon’s final testimony was incised upon the Small Plates, as we will see below.		
1.25.48— <i>Israel</i> —In reference to the covenant people, traditionally the posterity of the patriarch Jacob. There are those, however, who have been adopted into the House of Israel through obedience to the principles and ordinances of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ.		
1.26 What is there of the fullness of the Gospel of Jesus Christ that Amaleki does not understand? We must believe that Amaleki is a man who knows of prophesying and revelations from his personal experience. He is a man who has enjoyed the ministry of angels and the goodness of God. For him these are not just doctrinal points to be taught to the untutored; these are the principles that defined his life as a disciple of Jesus Christ. The gifts of the Spirit were as real to him as breathing and walking. What does Amaleki know of the plan of	26 And now, my beloved brethren, I would that ye should come unto Christ, who is the Holy One of Israel, and partake of his salvation, and the power of his redemption. Yea, come unto him, and offer your whole souls as an offer-	Omni 1:26 AF 94 MD 276, 360 PM 303 CR85-O 41 CR87-O 79, 103 CR87-O

salvation? It is clear that he understanding the premortal role of the Lord Jesus Christ in the Grand Council of Heaven. He understands the Savior's role as the executor of the Father's will. It is clear that he knows from personal experience those things which must be done by the children of men in order to receive the approbation of Heaven, salvation and exaltation in the Celestial Kingdom. As a prophet of God, as one who had received the promise of eternal life, he invites all who may read his worlds to follow in that path which leads to the Lord Jesus Christ and the blessings of the atoning sacrifice.

1.26.13—*Christ*—Simply put, the name “Christ” is the Greek translation of the Hebrew “Messiah”. In both Hebrew and Greek, the terms mean “anointed one”. Every prophet of God from the days of Adam has been anointed in preparation for their ministry to the world. Every king who has ruled by divine right has also been anointed as part of his ascendancy to the throne and the scepter. The same may be said of every priest who has administered the ordinances of the Priesthood, particularly those of the Melchizedek Priesthood, and most specifically in the House of the Lord. Some scholars have suggested that even though certain men have been anointed to be prophets and priests, or kings and priests, or prophets and kings, none but Jesus has been anointed prophet, priest, and king. Of course, these scholars have asserted such out of ignorance, not understanding that all those who are heirs of salvation and exaltation have been anointed prophets, priests, and kings in similitude of their Savior. Jesus is Lord of Lords, King of Kings, the Great High Priest who presides over all priesthood, the prophet who has inspired all prophets in whatever time or place in which they might have lived. He is our Master in all things, but his labors have been designed to bring us all back into the presence of God as he is.

1.26.20—*Israel*—In reference to the covenant people, traditionally the posterity of the patriarch Jacob. There are those, however, who have been adopted into the House of Israel through obedience to the principles and ordinances of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ.

1.27 Given the nature of the running narrative of Amaleki's account, this seems to be a bit of an afterthought, much like Moroni's additional materials once he had accomplished that which he father had asked him to do. When one considers the final verse of Ether, Moroni's translation, the readers can easily perceive that Moroni thought that his fate would immediately be similar to that of the prophet Ether (see *ET-C 15.34*). No one is more surprised than himself that he is given the opportunity to write the book of Moroni (see *MR-C 1.1–4*). If Amaleki is doing something similar here, then our notion of the chronology of Amaleki's narrative must be adjusted somewhat. If our own chronologies given above are somewhat realistic (see 1.9), then Zeniff's return to the land of Nephi with his Nephite and Mulekite associates took place about 200 BC. King Benjamin's reign did not begin until 176 BC. If this be correct, then Amaleki is undoubtedly reminiscing about an event that took place some 25 years before his final inscriptions upon the Small Plates.

1.27.23—*Nephi*—A mountainous region east of the first settlement established by Lehi and his entourage. It was the area in which Nephi and his followers established the first Nephite colony. Zeniff and his people from the land of Zarahemla would later settle there. It was also the place where the fertile missionary labors of the sons of Mosiah and their companions bore fruit among the Lamanites.

1.28 A detailed description of the rebellion in the wilderness that brought

ing unto him, and continue in fasting and praying, and endure to the end; and as the Lord liveth ye will be saved.

CR89-O 96
CR90-A 97
CR92-A 9, 103
CR93-A 110,
114
CR97-A 80, 100,
101, 103

{*J—1830*}

27 *And now I would speak somewhat concerning a certain number who went up into the wilderness to return to the land of Nephi; for there was a large number who were desirous to possess the land of their inheritance.

* p. 151
Omni 1:27–30
AGQ 3:39
EM 1:173

28 Wherefore, they went up into

about the demise of the Nephite army is found in the record of Zeniff that is rehearsed in the book of Mosiah (see *MS-C 9.1–2*). It was the contention between Zeniff and the leader of the army that led to the decimation of those who had gone up from Zarahemla to reclaim the land of Nephi from the Lamanites. The fifty who returned to Zarahemla from the battle were undoubtedly all supporters of Zeniff's view of the Lamanites. We cannot be certain at this point whether Amaleki is referring to the general of the first expedition of the Nephites or to Zeniff himself. Zeniff says that he "contended" with his brethren in the wilderness which may very well have indicated his agency as an alternative "leader". Zeniff refers to the general as an "austere and a blood-thirsty man" (see *MS-C 9.2*).

1.28.46—*Zarahemla*—The land originally settled by the Mulekites that lay between the narrow neck of land to the north and the narrow strip of wilderness to the south that separated it from the lands of Nephi and Lehi. It became the great bastion of Nephite civilization for more than five hundred years. The name is directly associated with that of the last of the great Mulekite leaders.

1.29 Zeniff testifies in his own record that he invited all who wished to return to the land of Nephi could do so, but with the condition that they would not slaughter the Lamanites, but negotiate with them (see *MS-C 9.3*). Their trek through the wilderness between the land of Zarahemla and the land of Nephi was fraught with great difficult which Zeniff attributes to their failure to consider the mind and will of God in their journeying. The oddity here is that Zeniff and his original companions knew the route to the land of Nephi and yet still had difficulty retracing their own steps. Perhaps we ought to be more astounded at the nature of the wilderness through which they were passing, undoubtedly a wild mountainous terrain.

1.30 Zeniff's people would be isolated from the land of Zarahemla from about 200 BC until about 121 BC when Ammon is allowed to go with sixteen of his companions into the wilderness to find out what had happened to the second company (see *MS-C 7.1–5*). Thus, Amaleki had no idea what had happened to his brother and could not have lived long enough to have found out. If our chronology is correct, Amaleki died in 170 BC, fifty years before Ammon's trek.

1.30.3—*Amaleki*—The son of Abinadom, and last of the sequential writers on the Small Plates of Nephi.

1.30.34—*full*—And yet Mormon will record his last words upon the Small Plates. We might, at this point, speculate about the nature of Reformed Egyptian and whether the conciseness of the language allowed for a few more characters in Mormon's hand. We might also ruminant about whether the exposed cover faces of the Small Plates had ever been written upon to avoid having any inscription damaged through handling. We might propose, if this latter were the case, that Mormon felt comfortable about writing on the cover plates since they would now be protected by his own plates to which he had appended the Small Plates. Mere speculation for the time being.

the wilderness. And their leader being a strong and mighty man, and a stiffnecked man, wherefore he caused a contention among them; and they were all slain, save fifty, in the wilderness, and they returned again to the land of Zarahemla.

{J—1830}

29 And it came to pass that they also took others to a considerable number, and took their journey again into the wilderness.

Omni 1:30
MD 326

30 And I, Amaleki, had a brother, who also went with them; and I have not since known concerning them. And I am about to lie down in my grave; and these plates are full. And I make an end of my speaking.

Alphabetized List of Specifically Noted Words and Phrases in Omni Commentary

<i>Abinadom</i> —1.10.3	<i>Israel</i> —1.25.48	<i>Nephites</i> —1.5.22
<i>Amaleki</i> —1.12.4	<i>Jarom</i> —1.1.14	<i>nine moons</i> —1.21.33–34
<i>Amaleki</i> —1.23.3	<i>Jerusalem</i> —1.15.17	<i>old</i> —1.25.11
<i>Amaleki</i> —1.30.3	<i>Jerusalem</i> —1.6.17	<i>Omni</i> —1.0.4
<i>Amaron</i> —1.4.4	<i>Jews</i> —1.14.49	<i>Omni</i> —1.1.8
<i>Amaron</i> —1.3.68	<i>Judah</i> —1.15.25	<i>plates</i> —1.11.11
<i>Babylon</i> —1.15.31	<i>just man</i> —1.25.23–24	<i>plates of brass</i> —1.14.40–42
<i>Benjamin</i> —1.24.11	<i>kings</i> —1.11.17	<i>reigneth</i> —1.23.23
<i>Benjamin</i> —1.23.20	<i>Lamanites</i> —1.10.28	<i>seed</i> —1.25.15
<i>Benjamin</i> —1.25.19	<i>Lamanites</i> —1.24.23	<i>these plates</i> —1.25.33–34
<i>Chemish</i> —1.10.8	<i>Lamanites</i> —1.2.33	<i>they</i> —1.21.2
<i>Chemish</i> —1.8.15	<i>land</i> —1.16.22	<i>tower</i> —1.22.18
<i>Chemish</i> —1.9.3	<i>land northward</i> —1.22.53–54	<i>warned</i> —1.12.31
<i>Christ</i> —1.26.13	<i>Mosiah</i> —1.12.17	<i>wars</i> —1.17.19
<i>confounded</i> —1.22.24	<i>Mosiah</i> —1.20.10	<i>wilderness</i> —1.16.6
<i>Coriantumr</i> —1.21.8	<i>Mosiah</i> —1.19.13	<i>written</i> —1.18.46
<i>death</i> —1.23.18	<i>Mosiah</i> —1.23.10	<i>Zarahemla</i> —1.14.12
<i>discovered</i> —1.21.18	<i>Mosiah</i> —1.16.24	<i>Zarahemla</i> —1.15.13
<i>father</i> —1.4.18–19	<i>Mosiah</i> —1.14.37	<i>Zarahemla</i> —1.19.10
<i>fathers</i> —1.22.9	<i>Mosiah</i> —1.17.6	<i>Zarahemla</i> —1.14.25
<i>first parents</i> —1.22.12–13	<i>Mosiah</i> —1.15.7	<i>Zarahemla</i> —1.12.28
<i>full</i> —1.30.34	<i>Mosiah</i> —1.18.7	<i>Zarahemla</i> —1.21.23
<i>genealogy</i> —1.1.27	<i>Nephi</i> —1.27.23	<i>Zarahemla</i> —1.18.32
<i>great waters</i> —1.16.18–19	<i>Nephi</i> —1.12.46	<i>Zarahemla</i> —1.24.47
<i>his language</i> —1.18.15–16	<i>Nephites</i> —1.10.25	<i>Zarahemla</i> —1.28.46
<i>in fine</i> —1.3.36–37	<i>Nephites</i> —1.2.23	<i>Zarahemla</i> —1.13.82
<i>Israel</i> —1.26.20	<i>Nephites</i> —1.24.20	<i>Zedekiah</i> —1.15.22