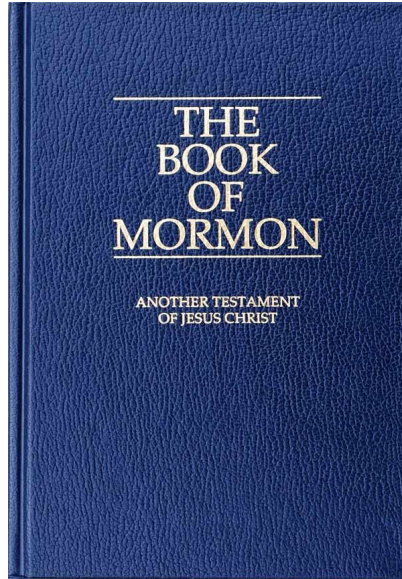


# Insights into the Book of Mormon from Scholarly Research – The Jaredites



From the work of Thor Heyerdahl, Hugh Nibley,  
and others, as well as my own research.

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# Careful to put study into perspective

Writing in 1890, President George Q. Cannon explained that “the First Presidency have often been asked to prepare some suggestive map illustrative of Nephite geography, but have never consented to do so. Nor are we acquainted with any of the Twelve Apostles who would undertake such a task. The reason is, that without further information they are not prepared even to suggest. The word of the Lord or the translation of other ancient records is required to clear up many points now so obscure.” (George Q. Cannon, editorial, Juvenile Instructor, 1 January 1890)

# Careful to put study into perspective

Church leaders, acknowledging the lack of authoritative answers regarding Book of Mormon geography, have encouraged earnest, diligent, and careful study of the matter while counseling the Saints not to allow such interests to cloud their focus on gospel principles.

(Matthew Roper - LDS scholar (2010). Joseph Smith and the Question of Book of Mormon Geography. Mormon Studies Review, 22(2).)

# Careful to put study into perspective

In 1903, President Joseph F. Smith taught that regarding Book of Mormon geography, the question, for instance, of the location of the city Zarahemla “was one of interest certainly, but if it could not be located, the matter was not of vital importance, and if there were differences of opinion on the question, it would not affect the salvation of the people: and he advised against students considering it of such vital importance as the principles of the Gospel” and cautioned them against making questions of Book of Mormon geography “of equal importance with the doctrines contained in the Book.”

(Quoted in “Book of Mormon Students Meet,” Deseret Evening News, 25 May 1903; and “Where was Zarahemla?” Provo Daily Inquirer, 25 May 1903)

# Questions and Considerations

1. Why were scholars so critical of the Book of Ether in the beginning?
2. What types of strange cultural things do we see in the Book of Ether?
3. Are there any similar cultures we know of today?
4. Where did the Jaredites start from (i.e.. where is the Tower of Babel)?
5. Where did they go when they left?
6. How did they travel?
7. Is there any way we might have an idea what the Jaredites looked like?
8. What did Ether mean when he said they were destroyed?
9. Things to remember when researching religious things scientifically.

When the Book Of Mormon was first published, the scholars of the day tried to pick it apart. The main book that they liked to scoff at was the Book of Ether.

On my mission to New York, there were still those who scoffed at it. Let's look at the questions they raised.

- 1) What happens when two sides come to battle, i.e., when is the war over? (not just on the last war?)
- 2) Do they prefer to kill or capture the opposing king?
- 3) What do they do with a captured king?
- 4) What do the people do once their king is captured?
- 5) Why is the Brother of Jared never named?

# Why did they do this?

To understand them we need to understand where they came from.

Were there any other cultures like the Jaredites from which we can draw parallels?



1) Where did they live, i.e.. where was the Tower of Babel?

Two brothers, is there a significance to the fact one tells the other what to do and that one is never named. Some suggest that it is because Ether is a descendent of Jared, but could there be more?





2) When they left, which way did they go? Ether 2:1

1 And it came to pass that Jared and his brother, and their families, and also the friends of Jared and his brother and their families, went down into the valley which was northward, (and the name of the valley was Nimrod, being called after the mighty hunter) with their flocks which they had gathered together, male and female, of every kind.

Where did they go from there?

## Similarities to Oriental Culture

Hugh Nibley said that the Jaredites came across Asia and left for America somewhere around the China Sea. One of the main reasons was the match to the Oriental culture.

Let's look at our questions again with how the Oriental Culture would handle them.

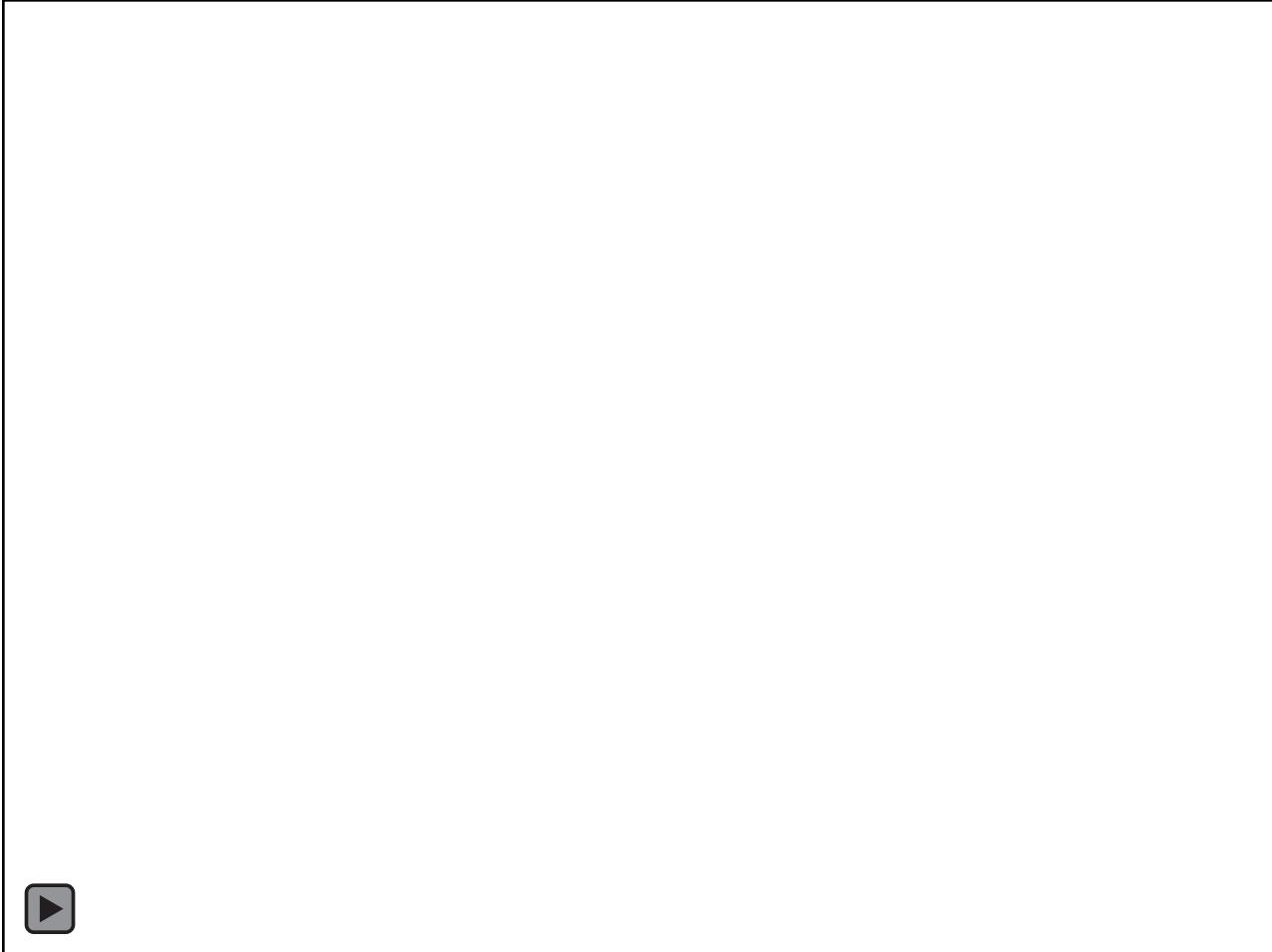
1) What happens when two sides come to battle, i.e., when is the war over? (not just on the last war?)

What happens in the movie Mulan?

# Mulan, Scene 1 and 2



# Mulan, "Bow To Me"



# Similarities to Oriental Culture

2) Do they prefer to kill or capture the opposing king?

3) What do they do with a captured king?

4) What do the people do once their king is captured?

What about chess?

What about not having the Brother of Jared named?

# But some LDS scholars shared doubts

Some LDS scientist say it would have been too inhospitable to have crossed Siberia, so could they have really done it?

Science and the book of Ether together give us two keys that work together to answer the question.

# Time Line

First we need to understand the time period

Noah and the flood - About 2300 BC

The tower of Babel - About 2150 BC

**A difference of about 150 years.**

How many times did the Jaredites build ships and why is that question key to answering the question?

Sometimes we get so caught up in the story about the boats like a dish that we miss the first time they build barges.

The scripture part of the key.

Ether 2:5-6

5 And it came to pass that the Lord commanded them that they should go forth into the wilderness, yea, into that quarter where there never had man been. And it came to pass that the Lord did go before them, and did talk with them as he stood in a cloud, and gave directions whither they should travel.

6 And it came to pass that they did travel in the wilderness, and did build barges, in which they did cross many waters, being directed continually by the hand of the Lord.

7 And the Lord would not suffer that they should stop beyond the sea in the wilderness, but he would that they should come forth even unto the land of promise, which was choice above all other lands, which the Lord God had preserved for a righteous people.



Some academic people suggest that the Jaredites did not build ships twice, but it was just multiple reference in the scriptures to the same ocean crossing. They claim there was no reason to build a ship when they could walk around any of the inland seas.



According to science, there was a great sea across Siberia that has gradually disappeared, a sign, according to science, of global warming since a few millennia BC. This would mean from about the time of Noah the sea faded away until its last traces disappeared in about the 1980's.



Coloring the lowest levels blue in a map based on altitude, it can be created to a degree. Going north they would have met this sea and building barges they could travel fairly easily to the Orient.

This takes care of two problems, the crossing of the inhospitable desert, and the fact that they probably did need to build water crafts twice.

This brings up another concern some have. They claim that it was unlikely this group had ship building skills.

According to Thor Heyerdahl, the ancient people didn't build what we think of as conventional boats. They usually built barges (rafts) from either lashing logs together, or from reeds.



He built what he considered a typical reed ship.



# “Barges” – I traveled on in Peru



# In the land beyond the sea

Ether 2:7 And the Lord would not suffer that they should stop beyond the sea in the wilderness, but he would that they should come forth even unto the land of promise, which was choice above all other lands, which the Lord God had preserved for a righteous people.





This would be the China area.



Hugh Nibley believes they left around the China Sea up to the sea of Japan.  
If they left from there, where would they travel?

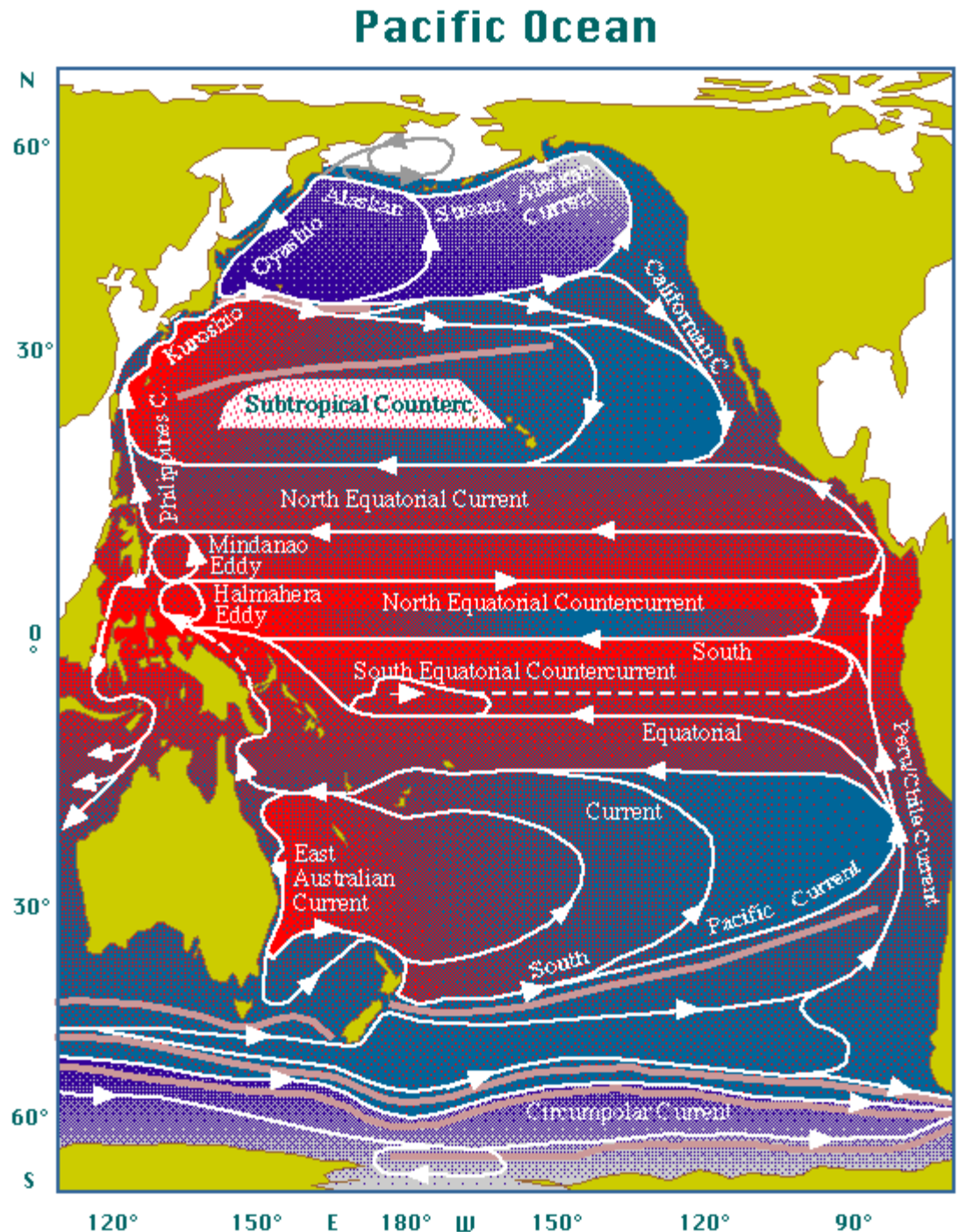
So what does this all tell us about the travel of the Jaredites?

Pacific Ocean Currents  
(Note the path of Jaredites)

**Ether 6:11** And thus they were driven forth, three hundred and forty and four days upon the water.

In comparing this to ocean currents I approximated about 1 year on the ocean current would be around Seattle.

(Consider what washed up in America from the tsunami in Japan and the time.



# Why is the Brother of Jared never named?

Note: He is not the only one (From Ether 11)

**15** And it came to pass that there arose a rebellion among the people, because of that secret combination which was built up to get power and gain; and there arose a mighty man among them in iniquity, and gave battle unto Moron, in which he did overthrow the half of the kingdom; and he did maintain the half of the kingdom for many years.

**16** And it came to pass that Moron did overthrow him, and did obtain the kingdom again.

**17** And it came to pass that there arose another mighty man; and he was a descendant of the brother of Jared.

**18** And it came to pass that he did overthrow Moron and obtain the kingdom; wherefore, Moron dwelt in captivity all the remainder of his days; and he begat Coriantor.

There are some Oriental name traditions with respect to the king (Jared) that might be the reason.

# Name Traditions

- No one is allowed to have same name as king and one of the two had to change his name.
- Those connected to king are often not named in literature except as brother of king, cousin of king, sister of king, etc.
- King may purchase rights to things and it is in literature as he being the inventor (chess is an example)

# Name Traditions

The brother of Jared is not the only one in the book of Ether not named.

(Examples)

- Ether 10:14 Brother of Kim not named - takes Kim captive
- Ether 10:30 Man takes Hearthom captive not named
- Ether 11:15 Mighty man not named takes half of kingdom from Moron
- Ether 11:17 Moron beats that man and another “mighty man” arises, descendant of Brother of Jared, and beats Moron.

# Naming

Brother of Jared. Deference to king.

Chinese translation is older brother, but that doesn't match.

Older brother patriarch, younger brother prophet.

# A couple of extra questions

- What about their total destruction?
- What did the Jaredites look like?



# Let's consider their destruction?

## First need location.

Ether 9

31 And there came forth poisonous serpents also upon the face of the land, and did poison many people. And it came to pass that their flocks began to flee before the poisonous serpents, towards the land southward, which was called by the Nephites Zarehemla.

Ether 10:

**19** And it came to pass that Lib also did that which was good in the sight of the Lord. And in the days of Lib the poisonous serpents were destroyed. Wherefore they did go into the land southward, to hunt food for the people of the land, for the land was covered with animals of the forest. And Lib also himself became a great hunter.

**20** And they built a great city by the narrow neck of land, by the place where the sea divides the land.

**21** And they did preserve the land southward for a wilderness, to get game. And the whole face of the land northward was covered with inhabitants.

# From Book of Mormon Central



# Destruction?

Hugh Nibley shares concepts that the Jaredites were not totally destroyed, only the nation of the Jaredites. As the battles raged, many refugees likely fled to where the Mulekites were. The first place the Jaredites settled was a place called Moron. Adding the i ending to a word in ancient Egyptian gave it ownership, so Moroni would mean belonging to Moron. There are many places that have names probably given by the Jaredites and continued among the Mulekites, indicating that they intermingled. (Note all Nephites with Jaredite names have Mulekite connections.) Here are some of the terms.

1. The Hill Shim where ten-year-old Mormon was taken
2. Nehor was the place where Jaredites withdrew to after a battle. (Nehor great apostate)
3. Alma named sons Shiblun and Corianton
4. Nephite weights and measures come from Jaredite

# Notes to think about

5. Morianton was a name of an early Jaredite king and was the name of the coast settled by the Nephites.
6. The Hill Shim in Ether 9:3, and Mormon is told to take the records from the Hill Shim (Mormon 1:3) by Ammaron. It could be possible that the Nephites used names given by the Jaredites.
7. Nehor was the name of the Jaredite wilderness where the rebels withdrew, as well as a Jaredite city in that region. It was also the name of a Nephite apostate.
8. Note that Noah is both a Jaredite and Nephite name and appears nowhere else except for Noah in the bible. Alma the elder was Noah's priest, and his grandsons had Jaredite names, Shiblun and Coranton (Alma 31:7)
9. Corihor was grandson of a Jaredite king, and Korihor was a Nephite.

# Jaredite Connection

“There is nothing in the Book of Mormon that shows *direct* contact between the Nephites and the Jaredites. There is always a go-between—the Mulekites, who, as the story of the elder Coriantumr shows, were the nearest neighbors to the Jaredites and separated, as we learn from Mosiah's account[sic], by a considerable distance from the Nephites. Everything points to the absorption of a good deal of Jaredite culture by the people of Zarahemla shortly after their arrival: The tradition of a very Jaredite pattern of behavior and dissent against Nephite rule by men of Mulekite background bearing Jaredite names makes the case pretty clear.

The dropping of the name Jaredites by their mixed descendants has many historical parallels. The Hurrians lost their name so quickly and completely when they mixed with the Hittites that until recent years it was doubted that there ever were such people; yet we now know that it was the Hurrians, ranging over the vast back country to the north, that supplied the Hittites with their ruling class and their tradition of empire. Such a role may be the same for the scattered and nomadic Jaredites of the last days have played in contact with the more civilized but less aggressive people of Zarahemla, completely losing their Jaredite identity but still given away, as are the Hurrians, by the strange names of their leaders. Incidentally, the fact that Nephite weights and measures bear *Jaredite* names indicates long cultural overlap.” (Nibley P. 246)

# Notes to think about

1. The Mulekites arrived in America approximately 2-3 years after the Nephites. (Note the destruction of Jerusalem was 11 years after Lehi left and Lehi was in the wilderness for 8 years.)
2. The only recorded overlap between the Nephites and the Jaredites was with Coriantumr and the Mulekites.
3. The Mulekites likely overlapped the Jaredites from 50-250 years.
4. The Mulekites “discovered” Coriantumr, not the other way around (Omni 1:21)
5. Centuries after the destruction of the Jaredites, we find a Nephite named Coriantumr. He was a descendant of Zarahemla, the leader of the Mulekites.
6. The first land settled by the Jaredites was Moron. The land of the Nephites bordering the wilderness was called Moroni, and in the Near East the i ending is a possessive, so Moroni would mean belonging to Moron. (Note that this I ending is the oldest endings and has remained unchanged from Egypt to Babylon.)

# But Ether Said They Were Destroyed

In war, people tend to flee. And there was no people more adept at fleeing and hiding than the Jaredites. So as the Shiz and Coriantumr swept the people before them, surely many fled. For four years Shiz and Coriantumr gathered to their armies. (Indicating a lack of patriotism and passion.) Note Ether 15:14

"They were for the space of four years gathering together the people, that they might get all who were upon the face of the land, and that they might receive all the strength which it was possible that they could receive."

As Hugh Nibley notes, it doesn't say they succeeded in getting everyone. And note that the people had a tendency to group together as outcasts and robbers if they didn't want to join. The Jaredite tendency is seen in the Gadianton band. And this gathering obviously couldn't take in everyone as it didn't take in the Mulekites, Nephites, and Lamanites.

Note that the Lord said he would destroy Israel and Judah, but many of those people lived, so what does that destruction mean? Nibley says the main use of the word destroy is to break down or take apart.

**He destroyed them as a nation.**

# Jaredites Among The Nephites

So why doesn't the record say something about them among the Nephites?

Note it only spends three verses in Omni (Omni 15-17) on the Mulekites. This also indicates there could have been others led here that Mormon doesn't mention because that's not his purpose in writing.



# What Did The Jaredites Look Like?

Some interesting clues

If they were not all destroyed, they would have been among the Mulekites and thus among the Nephites

[Mosiah 25:13](#) And now all the people of Zarahemla were numbered with the Nephites, and this because the kingdom had been conferred upon none but those who were descendants of Nephi.

So what does Jaredites among the Nephites have to do with what they might have looked like?

[Moroni said they were fair: Ether 13:17](#)

But he repented not, neither his fair sons nor daughters; neither the fair sons and daughters of Cohor; neither the fair sons and daughters of Corihor; and in fine, there were none of the fair sons and daughters upon the face of the whole earth who repented of their sins.

And what does it have to do with the Orient?

There were probably, as God usually does, some of the Jaredite party left in the orient to populate it, so they would have been the first people there after the flood. In addition, it appears the Jaredite party was large, too large to all travel across the sea in the barges with animals, too. So the question would be, do we have any idea what the first inhabitants of the orient were like?

# Do We Have Any Idea What The Jaredites Looked Like?

1. Obviously we can't know for sure, but, as in the presentation we can pretty much guarantee they migrated through Asia.
2. We know they were the first people in that land (Ether 2:5) "... into that quarter where there never had man been"
3. The oldest mummies found in China are in the Tarim Basin which has the conditions to preserve hair and skin, and some of these are blond, red haired and fair skinned. As far back as 2000 BC. One was probably 6 feet tall. (Coonan, 2006).



Also Reference: Reader's Digest – August 1994 “the Mummies of Xinjiang”

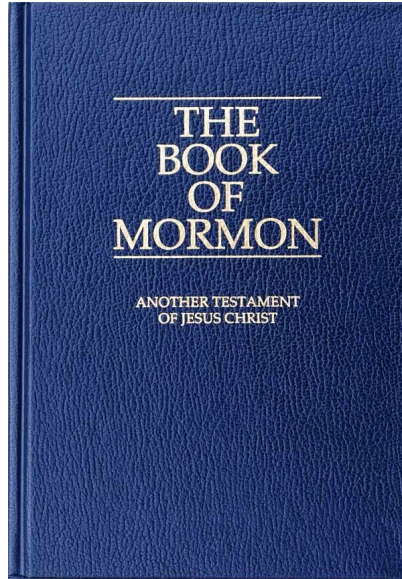


4. Thor Heyerdahl, searching for the legend of Odin, the story of the first man to come to Norway, (though considered a God in legend) says they came from Eastern land in boats. He supposes they came out of Azerbaijan because of a similar legend there
5. There are similar legends of Odin in Germany.
6. There were probably, as God usually does, some of the Jaredite party left in the orient to populate it, so they would have been the first people there after the flood.

Things to remember when  
researching religious things  
scientifically.

End of Main Presentation

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