

# **Khirbet Beit Lehi And The Book of Mormon: A Non-Archaeologist's Rebuttal**

---

*This article is a rebuttal to the article published by Jeffrey R. Chadwick, the author of "Lehi's House at Jerusalem and the Land of His Inheritance,"<sup>1</sup> but specifically to "Khirbet Beit Lei and the Book of Mormon: An Archaeologist's Evaluation."<sup>2</sup> Both articles have been published by Brigham Young University. At the time of the publication, Dr. Chadwick served as Associate Professor of Church History and Doctrine at BYU and taught at the BYU Jerusalem Center in the area of archaeology.*

*The intent was not to publish a rebuttal on the Internet to avoid contention. However, Dr. Chadwick refusal to delete his article from the web has resulted in the continued perpetuation of his questionable assumptions, unsupported conclusions, and the perception that his conclusions are irrefutable. This rebuttal was first published in 2010 but has been updated (See Epilogue). Chadwick's article is available on the Internet.*

*The Beit Lehi Foundation is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. The Foundation was formed in 2008 by Alan and Gary Rudd for the purpose of supporting the excavation of the Beit Lehi archaeological site, located about 20 miles south of Jerusalem. Additional objectives include protection and preservation of the archaeological site, education for visitors and to facilitate the opportunity for families and young people to work at the excavation site under the guidance of a qualified archaeologist. 100% of all contributions go to the excavation efforts at Beit Lehi, Israel.*

*Jeffrey Chadwick refers to <http://www.beitlehifoundation.org> as "another of [Glenn] Kimber's Web sites."<sup>3</sup> By way of correction, at the time Chadwick's article was published, the web site had no connection with Glenn Kimber whatsoever and Glenn held no position with the Foundation. Nevertheless, the Foundation considered Dr. Kimber a good friend and he was later invited join our Board of Directors because of his vast knowledge of the Beit Lehi site and Israel. Nonetheless, the statement made by Chadwick is untrue and it is unclear how he came to such a false conclusion.*

*In English, the Hebrew word "Khirbet" means "ruins" and the Hebrew word "Beit" means "house." Therefore, in English "Khirbet Beit Lehi" means "the ruins of the house of Lehi." Hereafter this article will merely refer to the archaeological site as "Beit Lehi." Dr. Chadwick refuses to use the term "Beit Lehi" in referring to the archaeological site. Nonetheless, for purposes of this article, Beit Lehi, Beit Lei and Beit Loya will be treated as being one and the same place.*

*Alan Rudd is the President of the Beit Lehi Foundation and is the author of this article. He is also a practicing attorney and retired business executive. Alan Rudd received his undergraduate and Juris Doctorate Degrees from Brigham Young University.*

## Overview

There can be little doubt that this writer's credentials do not approximate those of Jeffrey Chadwick in the field of archaeology, languages, education, or authorship. In addition to his educational accomplishments, Chadwick has taught at BYU and has authored numerous articles. Nonetheless, in my more than 35 years of practicing law and serving in management positions of high-growth companies, I have concluded that everything and everybody has its limitations. This applies equally to academics and the intelligent off-spring of the academic environment. Intellectual brilliance without rational thought (common sense) and the ability to recognize and distinguish between the two is critical to success and true enlightenment.

Academia is good for theorizing, analyzing, or critiquing the past but often has difficulty bridging the chasm between theory and successful real-world implementation. I could give countless examples of brilliant men and women who had great ideas but failed in their attempt to productize their idea, sell their message, and encompass it within a rational business plan. Academic's, in particular, have a tendency to work alone and only use selective research of prior scholars as needed to justify their opinions and conclusions. The result is that they become blind to the myriad of alternatives and perspectives expressed by others, many of which are more plausible than their own.

This rebuttal to Jeffrey Chadwick's article does not propose definitive conclusions about where Lehi lived, where his land of inheritance was, where his ancestors may have lived, the identity of the prophet who lived at or near Beit Lehi according to Bedouin tradition, or where Samson slew the one thousand Philistines. These are matters to be determined only after much more archaeological excavation and research; or may never be discovered. This writer's sole purpose is to debunk much of the rhetoric about the Beit Lehi archeology site and why most of the conclusions advocated by Jeffrey Chadwick lack adequate foundation, exhibit unscholarly bias, and fail to give any credibility to differing views of others, even when based on far better scholarly interpretation and sound principles of common sense. The reader needs to understand that there is an element of "spirit" felt by those who visit Beit Lehi. These feelings are not easily explained or even clearly understood, but they are relied upon with the hope that truth will be revealed, and those promptings justified. This element is clearly lacking in a purely archaeological, academic interpretation.

To understand the underlying feelings surrounding the work at Beit Lehi, it is helpful for the reader to understand the zeal in which Jeffrey Chadwick addresses the

issues raised by those who have shared their feelings and opinions about the Beit Lehi project. The following is taken from Chadwick's article, *Khirbet Beit Lei and the Book of Mormon: An Archaeologist's Evaluation*:

“There is no such thing as a Lehi Cave or Beit Lehi. These terms are the unfortunate product of *linguistic misinformation, faulty scriptural interpretation, and too-fertile imagination*. They are not supported by finds or any archaeological excavation. It is stunning to me that the original linguistic blunder identifying Khirbet Beit Lei as Samson's Lehi in 1971 has gone too long unchallenged in Latter-day Saint circles. On the other hand, the *flawed use of both the Bible and Book of Mormon passages* to connect the prophet Lehi and his sons to both Khirbet Beit Lei and the Jerusalem Cave has not gone unchallenged. But the warnings of the challengers were not widely spread among the Latter-day Saint community *and were ignored by those of too-fertile imagination (emphasis added)*.”<sup>8</sup>

The tenor of Chadwick's statement can leave the reader with little doubt as to his feelings and opinions about Beit Lehi. The name of the cave mentioned by Chadwick is identified by the Beit Lehi Foundation and the Israeli Antiquity Authority as the “*The Jerusalem Cave*.” However, the area of Israel in which the cave is located has been referred to by Bedouins living in the area as *Beit Lehi*, from which the cave may have also become known to some as the Cave at Lehi or the Lehi Cave.

I can only interpret those that Chadwick takes aim at as having “too fertile imagination” to include Dr. Cleon Skousen, Dr. Glenn Kimber, Dr. Joseph Ginat, numerous General Authorities of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, and hundreds of visitors who have felt the spirit of that sacred spot, including myself. The reader might be surprised to know that the Chadwick statement is often read to those who visit the Beit Lehi site. The visitors are then asked for their opinions after they walk the site and listen to the archaeologists explain the findings. It is both rewarding and enlightening when every comment is positive, as though determining that Chadwick's article was irreverent and irrelevant.

In addition to the scholarly error this writer finds in the unsubstantiated assumptions and definitive conclusions reached by Chadwick to connect the Book of Mormon with certain locations in Israel, this writer takes exception to the disparaging tone and the lack of civility that underpin Chadwick's articles pertaining to the Beit Lehi and the lack of intellectual integrity he holds for its supporters and their opinions. Such

unsavory tones by one employed by BYU and writing to a LDS audience should be equally disturbing to the publisher and all who read his articles.

Included by permission is the following letter I received from a person who spent several days at Beit Lehi and who has read the articles written by Chadwick:

“I am not a gospel scholar or archeologist, but I have been blessed through a patriarchal promise, with faith and insight into the knowledge of Man and God. There is a Godly spirit that permeates the land of Beit Lehi; and the Holy Ghost testified of truth. No scholarly words or excavations are of greater importance to me than that spiritual witness.”

Obviously, this testimonial comes from one to whom Chadwick would identify as having “ignored the warnings” of scholars (like him) and one having “too-fertile imagination.”

I recently received a note from the family of a young man who worked excavating at the Beit Lehi site and who is now serving a mission in Peru. In a letter written to his parents he wrote:

“Beit Lehi, I don’t know why but for some reason I can’t stop thinking about it lately. It’s really weird. I would love to go back after my mission. There is really a spirit about that site that takes over and captivates the mind and soul.”

Upon reading the letter, an uncle of the missionary called me to say that his nephew’s experience at Beit Lehi was instrumental in his decision to serve a mission. At the time he went to Beit Lehi, the young man was contemplating marriage instead of a mission.

Chadwick’s article, *Khirbet Beit Lei and the Book of Mormon: An Archaeologist’s Evaluation*, is the result of being asked by both the Religious Studies Center and The Maxwell Institute at Brigham Young University to research and evaluate Khirbet Beit Lei (Beit Lehi), and to address the claims made by parties who attempt to connect the sites to the Book of Mormon.<sup>9</sup> I infer from this that BYU has a review process for articles to be published under its moniker. If true, it is unfortunate that a university, commissioned as an ensign to the world, appears to find no fault with Chadwick’s work in tenor and substance.

### **Background to the Beit Lehi Site**

In 1961 Israeli soldiers unearthed a cave that had inscriptions and drawings including the oldest known Hebrew writing of the word “Jerusalem” later dated to the period between 600 and 700 B.C. Originally, Dr. Joseph Naveh on behalf of the Israel

Department of Antiquities (“IAA”) was assigned to excavate the cave. Human bones were found along with several pieces of jewelry. However, the most important discovery was writing on the walls of the cave consisting of inscriptions and drawings. The inscriptions were later viewed by other renowned archeologists and Semitic linguists including Frank Moore Cross Jr., of Harvard University; French Professor Andre Lemaire at the Sorbonne in Paris and Ziony Zevit, professor of biblical literature in Los Angeles. It is interesting that each scholar interpreted the inscriptions differently. About the only consistent finding is that the writings were dated between 600 BC and 724 B.C.

Dr. Frank Moore Cross, Jr., a noted expert in epigraphy (the study of ancient inscriptions) and professor of Hebrew and oriental languages and literature at Harvard offered the following interpretation of the inscriptions:

“I am Yahweh thy God  
I will accept the cities of Judah  
And will redeem Jerusalem  
  
Absolve (us) O merciful God  
Absolve (us) O Yahweh  
Deliver (us) O Lord” <sup>10</sup>

The drawings depict men who appear to be fleeing, two ships, a human figure wearing a headdress, a human figure holding what many have interpreted as a lyre (a stringed musical instrument), a human figure in a state of prayer, and a depiction of what appears to be a four-sided enclosure. In nearly every instance, however, each of the inscriptions and the drawings has been given diverse interpretations. The cave became known as the “Jerusalem Cave” because of the word “Jerusalem” inscribed on the wall. To preserve the inscriptions and drawings, the IAA had the inscribed wall cut from the cave and is now prominently displayed in new Israel Museum in Jerusalem.

Remembering that the Jerusalem Cave was discovered in 1961, we must now move forward to the early 1970’s and introduce Dr. Joseph Ginat. Dr. Ginat was a Jew who held numerous positions in the Israeli government and academia and authored numerous books and articles. He was a frequent lecturer at world conferences and at various universities throughout the United States, Europe, Canada, and the Middle East. A search of public information regarding Dr. Joseph Ginat will provide many pages of his biography. The following summarizes some of his background and accomplishments:

- Director, Department of Arab Affairs, under Prime Minister Levi Eshkol
- Deputy Advisor on Arab Affairs to Prime Minister Golda Meir

- Sr. Researcher, Department of Arab Affairs, under Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin
- Senior Assistant to Prime Minister Ezer Weizman
- Personal Advisor on Arab Affairs to Prime Minister Ezer Weizman
- Advisor on Arab Affairs to Vice Premier and the Minister of Agriculture
- Director, the Israeli Academic Center, Cairo, Egypt
- National Advisory Committee for Women Status under Yitzhak Shamir
- Chairman, Committee for Relations with Arab and Muslim Countries
- Director, Jewish-Arab Center, University of Haifa

Dr. Ginat's teaching assignments around the world, along with his published articles, high profile committee positions, awards, and his other governmental and academic appointments, are too numerous to cover in this article. What is of particular importance was his expertise in Arab and Israeli affairs, his connection with the highest governmental authorities in Israel, and his love for and involvement with the LDS Church and Beit Lehi.

Upon graduating from Hebrew University with a degree in Archaeology and History of Middle Eastern Countries, Joseph applied to and was accepted at New York University as a Ph.D. candidate in the field of Cultural Anthropology. Joseph flew to New York to meet with university officials. What followed is a rare twist of fate or, as others might describe, divine intervention. While meeting with NYU officials it was suggested that if Joseph wanted to have a cultural experience in addition to a degree in Cultural Anthropology, that there was a university in the western United States that would be an ideal fit, the University of Utah. Located in the most Mormon influenced state in the Union, and in many respects, a culture more akin to Judaism than any other Christian religion, it was suggested that he contact the University of Utah and investigate the possibilities. Another Jew in New York City at NYU was nothing new, but a Jew in Salt Lake City, now that would be a cultured experience.

Joseph traveled to Salt Lake City where he met with university officials and was accepted into the university's Ph.D. program. He was also asked to teach and was designated a Visiting Professor during 1970 and 1972.

While in Utah Joseph gained many new friends including LDS scholar Dr. Cleon Skousen. Dr. Ginat was a frequent lecturer and was a guest on numerous radio programs in Salt Lake City addressing Middle Eastern issues and sharing his cultural experience in Utah. Joseph joked that he had been given more than thirty copies of The Book of Mormon during his first year, none of which he read. Dr. Ginat often met with LDS

Church Authorities and became good friends with then President, Harold B. Lee. In early 1971, President Lee asked if Dr. Ginat would consider teaching at BYU when his schedule at the University of Utah would permit. This he did in the summers of 1971 and 1975. It was following a reception with LDS Church leaders that Irene Staples, the reception coordinator at Church headquarters, presented Dr. Ginat with yet another copy of The Book of Mormon. However, this time Sister Staples would not allow Dr. Ginat to leave until he had committed to read it. This he consented to do and did.

He wasn't long into the Book of Mormon before Joseph became impressed with several things. One impression that weighed upon him was that The Book of Mormon had its beginnings in the Land of Jerusalem. It also caused him to remember the Jerusalem Cave that had been discovered in 1961. Dr. Ginat felt impressed that Lehi and the cave were somehow connected. He asked his good friend, Cleon Skousen, many questions about the Book of Mormon and explained his impressions that the cave and the surrounding area may have some connection with Lehi and his family. Prompted by these feelings, Ginat returned to Israel and visited the cave site. While investigating the cave and assessing the surrounding area, Dr. Ginat met Sheik Muhammad al-Asam who told him about the remains of an ancient oak tree about 600 yards from the cave where, according to Bedouin legend and tradition, a prophet named *Lehi* "blessed and judged the people of both Ishmael and Judah long before Mohammad."

In 1983 Dr. Skousen and his son-in-law, Dr. Glenn Kimber, worked with Dr. Ginat and Dr. Yoram Tsafir of Hebrew University to secure permission to begin to excavate the site. The first excavations began in December 1983. By noon of the first day, archaeologists had found an ancient village and the well-preserved mosaic floor of a Byzantine era chapel. The initial discovery, the chapel floor, was covered with sand to protect it until funds could be raised and conditions were right to continue future excavations. However, because of political unrest and not wanting to negatively impact the approval and construction of the BYU Jerusalem Center, excavation of the site stopped. It wasn't until 2005 that the military and the IAA granted a permit to begin excavation of the site. Dr. Tsafir had since retired and recommended Dr. Oren Gutfeld of Hebrew University as the new Director of Excavation at the Beit Lehi site, acting under the auspices of The Hebrew University at Jerusalem. Dr. Gutfeld holds a Ph.D. in Archaeology from Hebrew University and has been associated with numerous well-known archaeological finds throughout Israel. He continues as the Director of Excavation to this day.

Following his years of government service, Joseph Ginat was asked to join the faculty of the newly founded Netanya College. The charter of the college was to promote cultural understanding through education and dialogue among students with diverse religious and ethnic backgrounds from throughout the Middle East including Christian, Jew, and Muslim. Dr. Ginat's government service and expertise in Arab & Jewish relations made him a highly recruited faculty member. Netanya College became known for bringing diverse peoples together with emphasis in business, law and international relations.

It was during this time that Cleon Skousen and Glenn Kimber founded an organization to promote the archaeological excavation of the Beit Lehi site. Dr. Ginat graciously agreed to serve on the board of directors of the organization, as did Hartman Rector, Jr. of the First Quorum of the Seventy with permission from the First Presidency. It is true that these men believed that the site *may* be the home of Lehi or the land of his inheritance. This was based solely on impressions, and not on scientific or archaeological evidence, as there had not yet been any meaningful excavation efforts other than the Jerusalem Cave. The group also deeply felt that the inscriptions found in the Jerusalem Cave had religious significance. Not only is it the oldest known Hebrew writing of "Jerusalem," but the name of God, Jehovah, was written in first person. Tradition in the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> centuries B.C. held that writing the name of God to be blasphemous with the possibility that the perpetrator would be punished by law or by God. One could suggest that the inscriptions were the work of a monk or an infidel, but it is more probable that the inscriptions were made by a *High Priest* or *Prophet*, the only persons in ancient Israel who could speak for and on behalf of God. Even today most Jews will not use name of God or even the title "God" in any common communication such as greeting or a blessing (e.g., "God Bless," or "God be with you," etc.)

The newly formed Beit Lehi organization sought people and funds to excavate the site. The goals of the organization would be achieved if excavation efforts uncovered evidence having a connection with The Book of Mormon, or absent any connection, the discovery of other religious or historical truth. Part of the goal has already been achieved. According to IAA officials, the Beit Lehi site has caused Jewish historians and archaeologists to re-draw maps of ancient Israel to include Jewish settlements much further south of the city of Jerusalem than originally indicated on older documents.

During the early days of the excavation, Dr. Ginat began opening doors to government and education leaders in Israel to enable the work at Beit Lehi to proceed. His efforts were complicated by a growing distrust of Utah-based groups because of



BYU's development of a Jerusalem Center for Middle Eastern Studies. Quietly, but effectively, Dr. Ginat worked tirelessly to open doors for both the BYU Jerusalem Center and the Beit Lehi excavation project, which had no LDS Church or BYU affiliation or support. In the late 1990's Dr. Ginat was finally able to convince IAA officials that the support coming from the Utah-based group was to be applauded, not criticized. Dr. Ginat went to work arranging meetings between those interested in excavating Beit Lehi, the IAA and various Knesset members. These meetings also included General Authorities of the LDS Church to assist in building a stronger relationship and trust between the Church and Israeli authorities.

Dr. Ginat had a great affection for the LDS Church, its people, and the Beit Lehi project. While studying and teaching in Utah Dr. Ginat was both surprised and impressed with the "Zionist" feeling he felt within the Church. He was particularly inspired by the work of Orson Hyde who came to Jerusalem in 1842 under the direction of then-Church President, Joseph Smith, to dedicate the land of Israel for the return of the Jews. Brother Hyde, Dr. Ginat maintains, was the first leader of any religious denomination to understand and support the ultimate Zionist movement. He also gained an equal respect and friendship with each LDS President beginning with Harold B. Lee. Working with Jerusalem Mayor, Teddy Kollek, Dr. Ginat was instrumental in securing property on the Mount of Olives to honor Orson Hyde by establishing a five acre garden in his honor. In 1979, President Spencer W. Kimball traveled to Jerusalem to dedicate the newly created national park in memory of Orson Hyde.

Later, Dr. Ginat would convince the Trustees of Netanya College to establish an Orson Hyde Square at the entrance of the College. A large oak tree was planted (symbolizing strength and leadership) in honor of Orson Hyde. Around the square, Dr. Ginat had an olive tree planted for each President of the LDS Church, from Joseph Smith down to President, Thomas S. Monson. In front of each tree was erected a plaque stating the name of the LDS President, the year of their ordination as President, and the year of their death. Dr. Ginat insisted that each olive tree come from the ancient area assigned to Manasseh (Lehi's lineage) and then had the trees transplanted at Netanya College. Finally, a palm tree with a plaque was added around the Orson Hyde Square commemorating each LDS general authority that had visited Israel and dedicated the Holy Land for the return of the Jews.

On one occasion I candidly asked Dr. Ginat to tell me what motivated him to put so much of himself, his reputation and professional credibility at risk for the Orson Hyde Square at Netanya College. Students who walked through that beautiful memorial each

day to get to the main doors of the College certainly had no appreciation for or interest in that man, nor the men represented by the olive trees who were sustained by the faithful of a foreign, non-Jewish sect as prophets, seers, and revelators. It just made no sense to me. Joseph said that just because the Church was not able to proselyte in Israel, there was nothing that prevented him from opening the doors of the gospel to others. I quickly countered, but even if the memorial prompted feelings of wanting to know more, Israeli's were barred from being taught and baptized by Church mandate. His response was both gratifying and enlightening. It is not for Israeli's, he said, but for the thousands of foreign visitors that come to this College each year who have never heard of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints or the Prophet Joseph Smith. Hopefully, he continued, one day when those people return to their homes and two missionaries knock on their door, their experience at Netanya College will spark a remembrance of having heard the name of the Church or the name of Joseph Smith which will result in the two missionaries being invited into their home.

What a remarkable experience to visit both beautiful sites in Israel that have been constructed, at great political cost to Joseph Ginat. What could be of such immense importance to Joseph Ginat that he would put his personal and political reputation at such significant risk and open to public and professional ridicule? Some LDS Church leaders and BYU faculty believe that Dr. Ginat was solely motivated by money. Although I'm certain that Dr. Ginat earned commissions on his travel and tour connections, a common practice in Israel, and even though the LDS Church did graciously pay for one-third of the cost of developing the Orson Hyde Square, to suggest any impure motive by Dr. Ginat is baseless and demeans the character of a great man.

Joseph Ginat was a man who loved goodness, honesty and helping others. He was always quick to admit that he had been blessed by God and had felt spiritual promptings many times in his life. He treasured his relationships with Cleon Skousen, Hugh Nibley, Glenn Kimber, and each President of the Church. In fact, each LDS Church President from Harold B. Lee to Gordon B. Hinckley had accepted Dr. Ginat's invitation to come to Israel to meet with religious and government leaders. He would also take them to visit Arab Sheiks who would recount the ancient oral tradition of a prophet who lived around Beit Lehi and judged the people in righteousness.

The impressions he received while reading the Book of Mormon, he claimed, were real and wonderful. At one of my dinner meetings with Joseph Ginat in Israel, he proudly admitted that he had been living the Word of Wisdom for years, even though not a member of the Church, because he believed in it and it gave him strength. Then there was

the kinship he felt with Orson Hyde. Whenever Joseph came to Utah he loved to travel to Spring City in Sanpete County to place flowers on the grave of Orson Hyde.

A defining experience in the life of Joseph Ginat occurred one night while visiting friends and Church Authorities in Utah. The night before he was to make an address to a group in Logan, Utah, Joseph had a dream centered at Beit Lehi; a dream that seemed as real as life itself, a dream that made sleep impossible as he contemplated its meaning. That night would define Joseph's life for his few remaining years on earth. When his ride met him in the morning to take him from Salt Lake City to Logan, he recounted the details of his dream to the two men in the car, one a General Authority of the LDS Church. Joseph shared the particulars of the dream only with family and a few close LDS friends. What Joseph saw that night will not be covered in this article for it is personal, sacred, and beyond the understanding of pure archaeologists.

In 2005, the IAA granted Beit Lehi Excavation a permit to excavate at the site. The areas excavated were not selected by mere chance and each location produced significant archaeological discoveries. However, the real finds remain buried deeper and are yet to be uncovered. Beit Lehi is located on a natural hill with multiple stratum or layers evidencing diverse groups of people over different time periods. Older artifacts evidencing earlier periods are be found as excavation goes deeper through these layers and moving higher up the biblical hill or "tel." Archaeology work is slow and painstaking. Unless bedrock is found, you continue to go deeper, usually destroying later period ruins to find those of an earlier period.

In 2006, two things happened that would rip the spirit, even the very soul from Joseph Ginat. The man, once inseparably connected with the LDS faithful, now had a new vision thrust upon him. First, it was the darkness found in the hearts of jealous men and, second, the inevitable fate that waits us all, a diagnosis of death.

The first was a letter received by the president of Netanya College regarding Joseph Ginat's affiliation with Beit Lehi. The writer of the letter felt an obligation to advise the College that Dr. Ginat's association with the Beit Lehi archaeological project was a black mark upon the credibility of the College and that the College should distance itself from any notion that Beit Lehi was in any way connected with Mormon scriptural history, particularly of the foolish tradition that an ancient prophet by the name of Lehi once lived in the area. Dr. Ginat was devastated. Why would any person be concerned with his personal involvement in a cause that he honestly believed in and had spent so many years contemplating about? If Joseph knew the name of the letter writer, he would

not disclose it even to his closest friends, nor would the leaders of the College. What Dr. Ginat did disclose is that the letter had come from a scholar or leader within the LDS community. Was it possible for a member of the LDS faith to be so unchristian; so hard-hearted; so jealous and vindictive? The hopeful answer was “No,” but the ugly reality pointed to “Yes.”

The result was that Dr. Ginat was asked to resign from any association with the Beit Lehi project. Fortunately, Dr. Ginat remained committed to the Beit Lehi project and marshaled as much support as possible from the IAA and Israeli government officials. Then the proverbial other shoe dropped. Joseph was diagnosed with pancreatic cancer.

From the time of his diagnosis Joseph knew that his life was no longer his, it was now in God’s hands. Despite the chemotherapy, radiation and experimental drugs Joseph remained active. He went to work every day and continued with his behind-the-scenes efforts to validate his feelings, impressions and dreams associated with the Beit Lehi project. He was later able to get concessions from college officials who felt they had gone overboard in prohibiting Joseph from having any association with Beit Lehi. FunForLess Tours of Draper, Utah had been an avid supporter of the Beit Lehi project and knew Dr. Ginat well. Practically every tour to the Holy Land conducted by FunForLess, four to six tours each year, included a stop at Beit Lehi and then on to Netanya College to meet with Joseph Ginat. The only notable exception was tours organized or sponsored by BYU which would intentionally exclude Beit Lehi and Netanya College from its tour schedule. Refreshments and a mini reception were always provided for the tour groups visiting the College. Here Dr. Ginat would greet each guest and then address the group personally on issues ranging from the need for peace among Jews and Arabs, to his affection for the LDS Church, to the necessity to continue the excavation efforts at Beit Lehi. Joseph had nothing to gain. His cancer was terminal, and he knew it.

Joseph Ginat was dying. He had no reason to lie about his dreams, his impressions, or of his belief that the site of Beit Lehi may be the ancient home of a prophet named “Lehi.” He had read all the works of detractors from FARMS, including articles by Chadwick, and believed them to be wrong in their assumptions and conclusions. He also knew that many LDS, both within and outside the academic field, had inaccurately characterized his personal motives. His claim was that he wanted to discover truth, and nothing more. He failed to comprehend the bias and was hurt by any assertion that he was intentionally misleading LDS faithful.

In May 2008, doctors gave Joseph less than 6 weeks to live. As I met with Joseph in Jerusalem one evening, he asked if a meeting could be arranged between him and the newly sustained president of the LDS Church, President Thomas Monson. In part, I think Joseph wanted to set the record straight and he was confident that President Monson could judge the character of his heart and understand the promptings of the spirit that had changed his life. “But wait a minute,” came the remark from one at the table. “You are in so much pain you can barely sit here tonight, how do you expect to make a 20-hour trip to Salt Lake City?” His discomfort was so great that I witnessed him inject himself with morphine to minimize the excruciating pain. “God will provide,” came his response.

Within 48 hours Joseph, accompanied by the Senior Vice President of Netanya College, David Altman, was on a flight to Salt Lake City for a pre-arranged meeting with President Monson. The two men met in President Monson’s office. What transpired would, for the most part, be taken in confidence to Joseph’s grave. Four days later Joseph was back with us in Israel. At a gathering in a hotel restaurant in Tel Aviv, Joseph shared some of his thoughts on his meeting with President Monson. Surprisingly, all of us at the table noted that his disposition had changed, as had his level of pain. Joseph would not say much about what the two talked about and he made it clear that what was discussed would stay between him and President Monson. However, he did share with us that President Monson offered to give Joseph a blessing and invited Elder Jeffrey R. Holland of the Quorum of the Twelve to join him in the blessing.

Joseph remarked that the blessing brought great peace and comfort to him and that he was deeply grateful to President Monson and Elder Holland. He said that the blessing lasted a little less than 20 minutes and that it gave him many answers. He was clearly at peace and whenever he was called home to his maker, he was ready. Following the blessing Joseph stated that Elder Holland was instructed by President Monson to open dialogue between BYU and Netanya College and to strengthen ties between the two institutions. This also brought a sense of immense joy to Joseph.

Two months later, Joseph’s doctors could not understand why he was still alive, but Joseph had other plans. He had made plans to return to the United States in January 2009 to visit friends in Oklahoma where he had been a Fulbright Professor at Oklahoma University, and then go on to Salt Lake City to give a lecture and meet with President Monson again. It was more than seven months since his blessing as he boarded a flight to Dallas with colleagues from Netanya College. He was to be at my home in Salt Lake City later in the month. But such was not to happen. I would not see my friend Joseph Ginat again.

While in Dallas Joseph began to hemorrhage and was rushed to the hospital. Friends from Texas and Oklahoma rushed to his side. The doctors, unable to find the cause of the bleeding, believed that Joseph's death was imminent. His family was called, and they flew from Israel to Dallas, hoping to be with their husband and father before his passing. I was called by one of his friends notifying me of the situation and asked if I would coordinate a blood drive on his behalf. After five days, the doctors still had no answers for the hemorrhaging. Joseph wanted to go home to Israel to die but a commercial flight in his condition was out of the question. If Joseph began to bleed while in transit he would die, something he did not want to happen, nor did the airlines. A medical staff was flown from Israel to Dallas to assist Joseph in the event his condition improved, and he could make the flight home.

I made a call to the Mission President in Dallas to inform him of the circumstances and asked if he would send two of his missionaries to the hospital to give Joseph a blessing. The next day the Mission President called to confirm that the Elders had been warmly received by Joseph and the blessing had been given. Joseph then informed the doctors and the medical staff that he was going home.

The rear of a jetliner from Dallas to Toronto had been converted into a medical station and Joseph was transported by ambulance to the rear of the aircraft for boarding. His wife and daughter called me from Toronto to say that Joseph had made the flight without incident, a major medical miracle of its own. I assured them that all would be well from Toronto to Tel Aviv and not to worry, something I'm not totally sure I believed myself. Two days later I received a call from Joseph's wife telling me that Joseph was in a Tel Aviv hospital and that not a single bleeding incident occurred on the more than 25-hour trip home. I spoke briefly with Joseph as he wanted to thank me for sending the Elders and asked if I would call the Mission President and express his gratitude, which I did. When he boarded the plane in Dallas, he said he knew that all would be well even though he had hemorrhaged for seven days while in the Dallas hospital.

Joseph Ginat passed away on May 13, 2009, one year after receiving the blessing at the hands of President Monson and Elder Holland. Unfortunately, it was just two weeks before we were to meet in Israel. In a letter dated May 13, 2009, to Dr. David Altman, President Monson wrote:

“Dear Dr. Altman:

Thank you for the courtesy you extended to us in notifying us of the passing of your colleague and our dear friend, Joseph Ginat. I remember with great warmth

the time the two of you spent in my office here in Salt Lake City just one year ago. We knew Joseph was not well then but feel the blessing God granted him while we were gathered together undoubtedly had a beneficial effect in relieving his pain and in lengthening his Life. We will cherish the memories we have of Joseph's friendship and the kind service he rendered to us over the many years we have known him.

We pray that Heaven's peace and blessing will be upon him his family and friends during the funeral proceedings and beyond. Please express our condolences to Mrs. Ginat and the family.

Most sincerely,

Thomas S. Monson"

Joseph Ginat was a great friend to the Church. He should be honored, not abased. Those who suggest that Joseph Ginat was associated with the Church or the Beit Lehi project primarily for personal or financial gain are grossly mistaken and owe the Ginat family and his associates a sincere apology. It is true that Joseph stated his opinion on matters related to Beit Lehi. These opinions may be wrong or may yet be proven to be right. What is certain is that Joseph's opinion was based on sincere feelings, impressions and conclusions drawn from his Jewish and Arab backgrounds and his reading of the Book of Mormon. According to Chadwick, "the questions surrounding the Khirbet Beit Lehi site and discoveries are *essentially issues of archaeology* (emphasis added)." <sup>9</sup> Such could not be any further from the truth. Since approximately 80% of the site is yet unexcavated, the beliefs of those like Joseph Ginat have some basis in archaeology but far exceed the artificial barriers of human-based science, including archaeology.

For and on behalf of Dr. Oren Gutfeld, Director of Archaeology at Beit Lehi, this writer issues a disclaimer and an acknowledgement that Dr. Gutfeld distances himself from any issue relative to Mormonism and Beit Lehi. Being an archaeologist, an Israeli and a Jew, Dr. Gutfeld conducts the excavation of Beit Lehi in accordance with highest standards of archaeology science and protocol. He is associated with the excavation of Beit Lehi because he believes it is one of the most significant active archaeological sites in all of Israel.

I now turn to the substantive issues raised and the conclusions reached by Chadwick regarding Beit Lehi.

## What Purpose did the Jerusalem Cave Serve?

Since the Jerusalem cave discovered in 1961 contained skeletons, Chadwick correctly refers to the cave as a “tomb.” The cave contained two burial chambers. Human remains were found on benches cut into the rock, with a total of eight skeletons discovered. The triple-benches on which the human remains rested are reflective of benches found in tombs dating generally from 722 B.C. to 586 B.C. Because the remains were very brittle and seriously affected by alternating moisture and dryness, only the approximate age and sex of the skeletons could be determined. It appeared to be a family tomb as the remains ranged from 5 years to 60 years in age at the time of death. On or near the skeletons were found a bronze earring, a bronze ring, and a bronze clasp. No pottery was found in the burial chamber.<sup>65</sup> The only pottery found was *outside* the cave and was dated, as Chadwick correctly states, to the early Persian Period (537-332 B.C.), much later than the writing in the burial cave. The remains had not been disturbed since being placed in their original position, further evidence that even later peoples would not cross the threshold of a tomb, even though it appears that were just outside the closed entrance.<sup>66</sup>

This particular burial cave differs from other Iron Age caves in the variety of engravings found on the wall, including a number of short Hebrew inscriptions on the walls of the entry chamber that Chadwick correctly identifies interprets as curses.<sup>67</sup> The implication of these curses is that robbers or intruders entering the tomb would be cursed. In addition, we find three human figures, two ships, various circles, and a number of inscriptions in ancient Hebrew script. Some lines were incised having definite forms such as the ancient Hebrew *taw* (x), while other lines could not be interpreted because of incompleteness or erosion. The archaeologists did not follow the customary procedure of filing in what appeared to be missing. This burial cave was definitely unique.<sup>68</sup>

Chadwick leaves little doubt with the reader that the Jerusalem Cave was used solely as a burial tomb and uses that conclusion to debase Dr. Ginat. The basis of Chadwick’s ire is with an essay prepared by Dr. Ginat for a BYU symposium in 1971. According to Chadwick, Ginat glossed over the issue that the Jerusalem Cave served as a tomb. Here Chadwick’s states his irritation:

“Ginat did not discuss the primary function [of the cave] as a burial site, glossing over the issue by saying only that the site’s original excavator, Naveh, concludes that this cave is a tomb (emphasis added)”.<sup>11</sup>



Can I be the only person that finds Chadwick's attack on Ginat as both irrational and ill-founded merely because he did not spend enough time addressing Naveh's position on the cave "as a tomb" at a BYU symposium some 40 years ago. Can such a position be categorized as anything short of a petty accusation and further evidence of an unhealthy bias Chadwick has surrounding the work at Beit Lehi and Ginat personally.

There is no doubt that the Jerusalem Cave was used as a burial cave at some point. Joseph Ginat had stated this in his BYU essay, and it has been confirmed subsequently in two video presentations on the Beit Lehi site. The first is the video Chadwick refers to in *Khirbet Beit Lei* entitled *The Lehi Cave*, produced by The Living Scriptures (1986) and featuring Dr. Joseph Ginat, Dr. Yoram Tsafrir and Dr. Cleon Skousen. The second is a presentation by Glenn Kimber and Jewish archaeologist Dr. Oren Gutfeld available on DVD entitled, *Beit Lehi Excavation*, published by Beit Lehi Excavation (2006). What is difficult to understand is that Chadwick refuses to acknowledge the possibility that the cave was used for any other purpose prior to its use as a tomb.

There is ample evidence to place in question whether the Jerusalem Cave was originally designed as a tomb. Although skeletons were found, none were dated. C-14 dating was not common in 1961. Further, under Jewish law, unearthed skeletons are not subject to any extensive scientific analysis such as carbon dating. What happened to the skeletons is unknown but in accordance with Jewish Law and custom, they were most likely taken to a new spot and reburied. As has been cited above, the age of the Jerusalem Cave varies by archaeologists from 724 - 600 BC. It is more likely, however, that the cave was *not* used originally as a burial site but was used for that purpose years later, although there is no conclusive evidence either way. Only common sense suggests that it would not be uncommon to retrofit caves as tombs in advance of death anciently.

This writer is not certain for what purpose the cave was originally used but it appears, more likely than not, that its first use was that of a storage area, a hiding place, or a sacred place. Under Jewish law, Jews were considered "impure" should they enter a burial area with corpses. Therefore, the human figures, drawings, and other writing on the walls, most of which are clearly of a spiritual nature, would most likely have been inscribed before the caves were used as a burial chamber. Because of its sacred nature, it is very possible that persons made arrangements to have their remains buried in the cave. This had been the tradition of people for many generations. In Jerusalem, deceased persons were buried just outside the city wall in the Kidron Valley as it was the closest place to the temple (the most sacred site in Israel) and still comply with ancient Jewish law to be buried outside the wall of the city. Visitors to Jerusalem today are awed by the

graves that cover nearly every foot of land in the Kidron Valley. The sole purpose was to be buried near a sacred edifice. It is highly probable that the Jerusalem Cave would serve the same purpose for the spiritually believing deceased. This conclusion appears to be consistent with the finding that the artifacts found at the mouth of the tomb were dated between 537-332 B.C., well after the date of the inscriptions. As stated earlier, the triple bench style tomb is indicative of a later Iron Age II design used from 724-586 B.C. If so, that's a hole in history of 138 years, large enough to drive a 21<sup>st</sup> century semi-truck through.

Despite any rhetoric to the contrary, an educated man of spiritual enlightenment undoubtedly made the inscriptions in the cave as one speaking as God, on behalf of God, and to God. The ability to read and write was not common among the people around 600 B.C., neither was it permissible, except for a Prophet or High Priest, to write for and on behalf of God himself. Famed Israeli archaeologist, Joseph Naveh, supports the notion that the writings were the work of a holy man “with a fairly good handwriting.”<sup>68</sup>

If written by a common person, such blasphemy could be subject to punishment, and why would any person go to such great pains to carve such profound writings on a wall for the mere sake of graffiti? The other writings, equally clear, are a plea and/or a prophecy that Jerusalem will yet be redeemed even though that redemption had been delayed due to the wickedness of the people. The more logical conclusion is that the drawings on the cave wall also reflect men of a spiritual stature; one dressed in priestly robes, another appearing to be in a praying mode, and another appearing to be playing a stringed music instrument, not unlike king David when he lamented his fall with music and Psalms on his lyre. As to the four-sided structure carved in the wall of the cave, some archaeologists interpret the carving as a fortress, others including Dr. Gutfeld, believe the structure is a tent. Whereas the human form is common in a pictorial theme, the representations of ships in a tomb “provided an unexpected discovery.”<sup>69</sup> The reason for the ships baffles archaeologists even today. The only conclusion they reach is that the ships are connected with religious beliefs.

Frank Moore Cross, a renowned authority in Semitic languages, interpreted the inscriptions in the cave as a divine address, a prophecy or oracle of salvation and a plea for absolution and deliverance. Chadwick is correct that there was a difference of opinion as to the interpretation of the inscriptions. Professors and scholars Joseph Naveh and Andre Lemaire interpret the inscription as a hymnic or confessional declaration. Dr. Yoram Tsafrir of Hebrew University agreed with Cross. Chadwick states that, Ziony Zevit at the University of Judaism in Los Angeles offered a fourth translation. After

reading all these various published interpretations, Dr. Patrick D. Miller, Jr., currently the Charles T. Haley Professor of Old Testament Theology at Union Theological Seminary and a Harvard Professor reviewed the inscriptions in detail in 1980 and concluded:

“The writer [Miller] had assumed on the basis of photographs as well as the character of the other inscriptions that the reading of Lemaire was correct. The opportunity of spending a prolonged period of time examining the inscription in the summer of 1980 has called that assumption into question and convinced us that Cross is probably on the right track.”

Miller continued:

“The language is reminiscent of Jeremiah and Isaiah. In form the inscription is more like Second Isaiah than Psalms, as one would expect from a *prophetic oracle of salvation (emphasis added)*.”<sup>12</sup>

When answering his own question: “Were the inscriptions written by a prophet or the associates of a prophet?” Chadwick’s answers, “Again, probably not.”<sup>13</sup> How can he reject the idea that a prophet could have written the inscription but give no reason? The best he can do is cite Frank Moore Cross who claims that one must “suppress the temptation to suggest that the oracle and the petitions may have been the work of a prophet or his amanuensis (associate) fleeing Jerusalem.”<sup>15</sup> Why are we required to *suppress* the idea? Where is the stretch in logic? The “why” is because Cross and Chadwick are first and foremost archaeologists and even the very nature of persons who write inscriptions on cave walls are “*essentially issues of archaeology*.”<sup>14</sup> Absent incontrovertible scientific evidence it would be unprofessional for either man to draw any religious inferences. It’s the age-old dilemma that science has no room in the inn for religion. Unfortunately, Chadwick should have a broader horizon and need not repudiate spiritual enlightenment and common sense in the name of science and archaeology. Archaeology gives few definitive answers but like a good hunting dog, points the way for reasonable conclusions to be drawn.

It is unfortunate that archaeology formulates conclusions based only on what is tangible—what can be touched—and has no place for spiritual impressions. There is no better example of that than the garden tomb. Many scholars suggest that the burial site of Christ is in the Church of the Holy Sepulcher, as first canonized by Helena, the mother of the Emperor Constantine of Constantinople. Yet, several LDS prophets who have stood at the entrance of the garden tomb have been heard to whisper their impressions that the Garden Tomb is the actual site where Christ’s body was laid to rest; where the angels

rolled the stone away on that glorious resurrection morning to claims “He has risen.”<sup>15a</sup> What archaeologists get wrong, the spirit can correct.

As to the opinion expressed by Ginat, Skousen and others that the Jerusalem Cave could be the “cavity of rock” in which Nephi and his brothers hid when fleeing from the army of Laban, this author agrees that the opinion is far too speculative. If based on some spiritual enlightenment, and absent some level of archaeological or historical evidence, such opinions are best kept in the heart. Even if it later proves to have some credibility, it offers too much of an opportunity for scholars to discredit not only the opinion, but an entire project. It also may lead those that are easily swayed by spiritual matters to reach an inaccurate, unsupportable conclusion. The Beit Lehi Foundation distances its organization from such statements. The only comment this writer would assert is cannot a cavity in a rock also be defined or described as a cave?

### **How Far Back Do Civilizations Date at Beit Lehi?**

Chadwick contacted Dr. Oren Gutfeld to arrange for a visit to Beit Lehi in the summer of 2008. Dr. Gutfeld, the Director of Excavation at Beit Lehi, then called the Beit Lehi Foundation which funds the excavation to inquire about Dr. Chadwick and what he should do. Chadwick’s reputation for his bias against Beit Lehi was well known and documented by his earlier writings. It was clear that any visit to the site would probably result in the publishing of more negative text. To assume he would do otherwise would mean that he would have to admit that his previous assumptions and conclusions were incorrect. Nevertheless, the Foundation agreed to have Chadwick meet with one of the assistant archaeologists to review the site. Dr. Gutfeld asked Yakov Kalman, Assistant Director of Excavation at the Beit Lehi site, to accompany Dr. Chadwick on his visit. Chadwick writes that in August of 2008, excavation Yakov Kalman accompanied him on an “*extensive*” personal tour of the Khirbet Beit Lei (Beit Lehi) excavation site highlighting and explaining all the project’s finds. Chadwick concluded that the oldest artifacts found at the site date no “earlier than the Hellenistic Period” and that “there is no evidence whatsoever that the site was a settlement prior to 332 B.C.”<sup>16</sup> Chadwick claims that Kalman answered questions posed by Chadwick including an answer “that not even a single sherd of Iron Age II Pottery (1200 BC – 600 BC) had been recovered anywhere on the site.”<sup>17</sup> Suffice it to say that Kalman’s recollection of his statements is quite the opposite of that expressed by Chadwick. The conclusion Kalman reached about the visit is that little was divulged and though pleasant, Chadwick did not seem genuinely interested in learning anything about the site.

In some respects, Chadwick is correct about what had been published at the time and what had not been disclosed publicly. One of the problems facing the site is that it sits on an Israeli military installation and the archaeologists have been unable to secure the site from treasure hunters, artifact thieves and vandals. On the weekends, the military base does not prevent residents from entering onto the archaeology site. For this reason, many of the findings are not published to prevent people from coming to the site until a permit and funding can be secured to build a security fence. Therefore, public awareness is not in Beit Lehi's best interest. There have been reports in the past year that on some weekends as many as 2000 people have visited the site as a result of un-wanted publicity from media outlets in Israel, including articles published about the site.

To correct Chadwick, artifacts have been found at Beit Lehi that date prior to 2000 B.C. In fact, according to Dr. Gutfeld and experts at The Hebrew University at Jerusalem, the Beit Lehi site has produced artifacts dating back to 4000 B.C. Dr. Garold Mills of the University of Oklahoma can attest to artifacts dating back to 2000 B.C. which he discovered personally with Dr. Gutfeld at Beit Lehi. According to Kalman and Dr. Gutfeld, what Chadwick was told is that no Iron Aged II "*architectural remains*" had yet been found, not that Iron Age II artifacts have not been found. In fact, a treasure trove of Iron Age II pottery sherds has been found and documented at the Beit Lehi site. Since the date of Chadwick's visit to the site, Iron Age II *architectural remains* have been discovered and verified by the Israeli Antiquity Authority (600 – 1200 B.C).

One needs to remember that Beit Lehi sits on a military testing range. For more than 50 years the military has used the area as a target area for the detonating of large explosives and for military maneuvers. Heavy equipment has been used to dig trenches, create plateaus, and carve out large chunks of the site, particularly from the mid-point of the tel to the top. The fact that the tel has been "reconfigured" by man is obvious. The result is mostly negative but is not without some benefit. The older areas of the tel (. i.e., those dating to the Iron Age), the archaeologists believe, are higher on the tel that overlooks the area of Hebron. These archaeologists fear that the military may have inadvertently destroyed Iron Age structures. However, digging on the tel by the military has unearthed massive amounts of Iron Age pottery sheds. In a recent survey of the upper portion of Beit Lehi that I participated in with Dr. Oren Gutfeld, nearly every square foot produced handfuls of Iron Age pottery sherds.

Chadwick contends that often Iron Age pottery is found in areas where no Iron Age settlement existed. He claims that wind, rain, flash floods and earthquakes move the pottery around in ways that even he is at a loss to explain. In discussing that possibility

with archaeologists at Beit Lehi, their response is that if that were the case at Beit Lehi then more Iron Age pottery would have been found at the bottom of the tel than was actually discovered. The fact that such an abundance of Iron Age pottery has been found higher on mound leads the archaeologists, and particularly Dr. Oren Gutfeld, to believe that Iron Age settlements existed on the site. Quoting Dr. Gutfeld:

*“Look around, we’re at the highest levels of the site. How could rain, wind and flash floods have carried the pottery sheds and deposited them here? No, there is no doubt that these Iron Age sherds have been unearthed by the military.”*

Had Chadwick walked in the same area of Beit Lehi that Dr. Gutfeld and I did during his reported “*extensive search of the area,*” he could not have missed the abundance of Iron Age pottery that lay scattered all along the mid and upper portion of the tel of Beit Lehi.

Chadwick also refers to a survey done of a village near the site of Beit Lehi by Yehuda Dagan as part of a general survey of the Judean hill country during the late 1970’s. According to Chadwick, Dagan’s survey determined that the “village of Lei” was first settled during the Hellenistic period (beginning 332 B.C.) and continued through the Roman and Byzantine periods and into the seventh and eighth centuries A.D. He then concludes as follows:

“Dagan found no pottery samples which would suggest that the site had been a settlement during Iron Age II (the period to which the nearby cave is dated).”<sup>18</sup>

According to Dr. Oren Gutfeld, this statement is simply untrue. In *Israel, Map of Amatzya*, Volume 1 (109) *The Northern Section*, Jerusalem (2006), unlike other sites that Dagan published in his survey, Dagan dedicates 6 pages to the Beit Lehi area; pages 100-105 in Hebrew and pages 116-119 in English. Here Dagan is very clear of Iron Age finds at the site. The finds were pottery (Iron Age II) spread over c. 10 dunams (about 3 acres), remains similar to those from Lachish, strata IV-II, just a few miles away.

In November 2009, Dr. Gutfeld was asked to give a lecture on Beit Lehi at the annual ASOR convention in New Orleans. ASOR is an organization that focuses on Near Eastern Archaeology and dates to 1900, of which Chadwick is a member. The ASOR annual meeting brings scholars together from around the world to present their latest findings and discuss their research. Dr. Chadwick was in the audience in New Orleans when his erroneous statement regarding the finds at Beit Lehi was noted, disputed, and corrected by Dr. Gutfeld at the lectern. Following the presentation, Dr. Gutfeld states that he and Chadwick talked, and that Chadwick acknowledged that he was unaware of the Iron Age II pottery that had been found at the site, a statement which Chadwick now

denies. Offended by the reversal, Dr. Gutfeld made a formal report to the Israel Antiquities Authority regarding the Iron Age II artifact discoveries at Beit Lehi to prevent Chadwick and others from discrediting him or the project further, even at the risk of bringing more unwanted attention to the site.

### **Where is Jerusalem?**

It sounds like a rhetorical question doesn't it, but the answer is not simple. The difficulty lies in defining what is meant by "Jerusalem." Concerning the birth of the Savior, Alma writes that "[H]e shall be born of Mary, *at Jerusalem which is the land of our forefathers (emphasis added).*"<sup>19</sup> Bible and modern prophets confirm that Jesus was born at Bethlehem and not in the city of Jerusalem (see Matthew 2:1). There can be no doubt among LDS writers and scholars that the terms "land of Jerusalem" and "Jerusalem" are used interchangeably in the scriptures and historical records. However, when referring anciently to the city of Jerusalem, it is usually identified as the City or Great City of Jerusalem. The problem remains, however, whether the term "Jerusalem" used in scripture has reference to the land around Jerusalem or the great city of Jerusalem. And then there is the question of just how far the "land of Jerusalem" extends from the great city.

In an article entitled *Jesus' Birthplace and the Phrase 'Land of Jerusalem'* by Robert R. Bennett and published by The Maxwell Institute at Brigham Young University (2000), Dr. Bennett, correctly summarizes the issue when he concludes:

"Reflecting a well-established biblical pattern, the Book of Mormon uses the name *Jerusalem* to refer to the city *and* the land surrounding (which would include Bethlehem) and to the regions that were governed and protected by those in control of the city."<sup>20</sup>

This topic of where Lehi lived will be covered in more specificity later in this article, but what is clear is that "at Jerusalem" and the "city of Jerusalem" is most often not one and the same.

When appearing to the Nephites the Savior makes several references to "Jerusalem." In speaking of the day when the house of Israel will again be gathered to Jerusalem the Savior states:

"Then will the Father gather them [his people] together again, and give unto them *Jerusalem* for the *land* of their inheritance (*emphasis added*)" (3 Ne. 20:33).

Is the Savior's reference to "Jerusalem" intended to apply only to a gathering to the City of Jerusalem? For sure not. Today, this prophecy is being fulfilled with millions of Jews gathering to the *land of Jerusalem*, with only a very small percentage living within the borders of the ancient city. When speaking of "Jerusalem" certainly the Savior is speaking of the much broader *Land of Jerusalem*, which includes the City of Jerusalem.

In recounting Lehi's vision of the pending destruction of Jerusalem, Nephi records:

"And he read 'Wo, wo, unto Jerusalem, for I have seen thine abominations! Yea, and many things did my father read concerning Jerusalem – that it should be destroyed, and the inhabitants thereof . . . perish by the sword, and many should be carried away captive in Babylon.'" (1 Ne. 1:13).

Was Lehi seeing only the destruction of the city and only those within the city walls suffering death or being carried away captive? It doesn't take a scholar to know that Lehi was looking upon the entire *Land of Jerusalem*, and not just the capital city.

And then there was the occasion where Nephi was commanded to construct a ship to cross the great seas to the promised land. In promising Nephi that this experience would strength his testimony the Savior stated:

". . . After ye have arrived in the promised land, ye shall know that I, the Lord, am God; and that I, the Lord, did deliver you from destruction; yea, that I did bring you out of the *land of Jerusalem*." (1 Nephi 17:14)

This writer lives in Cottonwood Heights, Utah, a suburb of Salt Lake City. When I travel and people ask me where I am from, I don't respond with Cottonwood Heights since, inevitably, the next question is, "Where is Cottonwood Heights?" Thus, I respond that I am from Salt Lake City. However, should the Lord ever direct prophets to warn the people that Salt Lake is going to be destroyed unless its residents repent, there should be no doubt that the Lord's warning is equally targeted to the residents of Cottonwood Heights, and every other town and city in the Salt Lake Valley. I suspect that even the good residents of Utah County would be wise to heed such a warning.

The writer of the Gospel of Luke adds an interesting comment that may have application to the definition of Jerusalem and Judah.

"And it came to pass on a certain day, as he [Christ] was teaching, that there were Pharisees and doctors of the law sitting by, which were come out of *every town of Galilee, and Judaea, and Jerusalem*: and the power of the Lord was present to heal them (*emphasis added*)." (Luke 5:17)



*Judaea* or *Judea* is a Greek and Roman adaptation of the name “Judah,” which originally encompassed the territory of the Israelite tribe of that name and later of the ancient Kingdom of Judah.” Luke’s statement clearly suggests that there are *towns of Jerusalem* and *towns of Judaea* or Judah which are separate and distinct, and yet, are collectively referred to as “Jerusalem” and “Judaea.” The fact is, that “Jerusalem” can be used to refer to either or both of the *city of Jerusalem* or the *Land of Jerusalem*, depending on the context in which it is used. Included at the end of this Rebuttal is an article written by scholars at Book of Mormon Central, a nonprofit organization. The writer had undoubtedly read Chadwick’s article and this Rebuttal.

### **Where Was the Home of Lehi?**

For most, the distinction of what is meant by “Jerusalem” does not matter. But to the archaeologists like Dr. Chadwick, the distinction is critical. You see, Chadwick uses the term “Jerusalem” to prove that the Book of Mormon prophet Lehi lived in the “City of Jerusalem” and not outside the city in the “land of Jerusalem.” To hold otherwise, would open the possibility that Beit Lehi could be within the radius of Jerusalem or one of the “towns of Jerusalem,” encompassing the home of Lehi or the land of his inheritance. Chadwick openly finds folly with anyone who would believe that Lehi lived anywhere but inside the walls of the city of Jerusalem. Chadwick states:

“The oft-repeated notion that Lehi’s house was not inside the city of Jerusalem but somewhere well outside the city on his land of Inheritance is *simply incorrect*. Also incorrect is the idea that Lehi’s Land of inheritance was a plot of real estate close enough to the city of Jerusalem to be within the boundaries of the greater land of Jerusalem.”<sup>21</sup>

Relative to Lehi’s life prior to his departure into the wilderness, there has been no topic written more about or more debated than where Lehi and his family lived, the whereabouts of their land of inheritance, and the place of their embarkation into the wilderness for their ultimate trip to the Promised Land. The major issue is a lack of information, which opens floodgates for supposition and assumptions based on what little information is available. This writer is not sure where Lehi’s house was or where his land of inheritance was, but Chadwick’s conclusion is an example that “Jerusalem” can be manipulated to mean whatever one wants it to mean. Although I take no comfort in so stating, Chadwick’s conclusions are based upon unscholarly supposition, illogical assumptions and are a profound expression of academic arrogance.

In his article cited above, Dr. Bennett ascribed to the position taken by Dr. Hugh Nibley that Lehi did not live in the city of Jerusalem. We read, for instance, writes Dr. Bennett, that “Lehi dwelt ‘at Jerusalem in all his days’ (1 Nephi 1:4), yet we *know* that he *did not live in the city* of Jerusalem (emphasis added).”<sup>22</sup> Scholars S. Kent Brown and Terrence L. Szink, both colleagues of Chadwick, also disagree with Chadwick having stated that Lehi lived “*near*” Jerusalem.<sup>22a</sup> However, there is no greater authority on the subject than Dr. Hugh Nibley. In his book *Lehi in the Desert* (1952) Nibley concludes:

“Though he dwelt at Jerusalem, Lehi did not live in the city, for it was after they had failed to get the plates in Jerusalem that the sons decided ‘to go down’ to the land of our father’s inheritance (1 Nephi 3:16) and there gather enough wealth to buy the plates of Laban.”<sup>23</sup>

Arguably, the Book of Mormon confirms the position of most LDS scholars that Lehi lived in the land of Jerusalem and not the city. In Alma 10:3 we read:

“And Aminadi was a descendant of Nephi, who was the son of Lehi, who came out of the *land of Jerusalem* . . . (emphasis added)”

Alma makes no reference to Lehi coming from the great city of Jerusalem, only the “land of Jerusalem.” I wonder how scholars like Bennett, Brown, Szink and Nibley would feel when reading Chadwick tell the world that their conclusions are “*simply incorrect*.”<sup>21</sup>

The few things we know about Lehi prior to his family life with his wife Sariah and their children Laman, Lemuel, Nephi, Sam and an unspecified number of daughters, is that he “dwelt at Jerusalem in all his days” (1 Nephi 1:4) and that Nephi’s record “is in the language of my father, which consists of the learning of the Jews and the language of the Egyptians (1 Nephi 1:2).” That’s it! Whether or not the lost 116 pages of original manuscript of the Book of Mormon, taken from the Plates of Lehi, would have shed any more light on the matter of Lehi’s up-bringing and homeland is mere speculation. It is only through the eyes of Nephi that we learn anything about the character and cultural status of Lehi, but nothing about Lehi prior to his family life with Sariah, including:

- He was a man of wealth (1 Nephi 2:4)
- He was called to preach repentance to “his people.” (1 Nephi 1:5; 18)
- He had his “own home” at Jerusalem (1 Nephi 1:7).
- He had a land of inheritance (1 Nephi 2:4).
- His lineage was of Joseph, through Manasseh (1 Nephi 5:14; Alma 10:3).
- He was called to cry repentance to the Jews following a vision (1 Ne. 1:18-19).

From these few facts and from the known history of the land of Jerusalem, can one conclude where Lehi and his family lived? Chadwick is one who claims to know with certainty. He cites 1 Nephi 1:4 as the pillar of his foundational support for the conclusion that Lehi lived in the City of Jerusalem.

“For it came to pass in the commencement of the first year of the reign of Zedekiah, king of Judah, (my father, Lehi, having dwelt at Jerusalem in all his days); and in that same year there came many prophets, prophesying unto the people that they must repent, or the great city Jerusalem must be destroyed (1 Nephi 1:4).”

“*It seems clear* that Nephi meant for the readers of his record to understand that his father Lehi lived *in* the city of Jerusalem itself, not somewhere outside the city walls (emphasis added).”<sup>24</sup>

Perhaps it should be clear to intellectual pigmies like me, but there are more than just a few renowned scholars who take exception to Chadwick’s conclusion, including those noted above. It is only clear that Lehi lived in the city of Jerusalem to those who interpret “at Jerusalem” to mean “the city of Jerusalem” and not the “land of Jerusalem.” The fact is that there is nothing clear on the face of any passage as to where Lehi lived, at least no more clear than Alma’s assertion that Christ would be born at Jerusalem.

Why the parenthetical in 1 Nephi 1:4 and what does it mean? The use of parenthetical text is to summarize, paraphrase or directly quote an idea from a source. In other words, a parenthetical is used any time when one refers to something that has been learned from another source. (See *The Bedford Handbook*). The purpose of the parenthetical in verse 4 is simply to acknowledge that Lehi is the source of the information and a credible source as one who lived “at Jerusalem” when the prophesying of destruction was being preached. If the two mentions of Jerusalem in verse 4 mean the same, then why does Nephi state that his father lived “at Jerusalem” but that the destruction has reference to the “city of Jerusalem?” Again, there is not a single scripture that states that Lehi lived in the “city” of Jerusalem. Chadwick concludes that Lehi lived in the city because he concludes that his ancestors did. He states:

“It is far more probable that Lehi was the grandson or great-grandson of people who left western Manasseh as refuges around 724 B.C. and fled south to settle in Jerusalem.”<sup>25</sup>

“After assessing all the data, I will suggest that Lehi’s house was located in the city quarter of ancient Jerusalem called the Mishneh.”<sup>26</sup>

Since it is clear to Chadwick that Nephi meant for the readers of his record to understand that his father Lehi lived inside the walls of the city of Jerusalem, not somewhere outside the city walls, the reader is correct to assume that Chadwick has shut the proverbial door on any other alternative. Using 1 Nephi 4:1 as his foundation, he takes scholarly license to reach the conclusion that Lehi's ancestors fled the land of Manasseh, generations before Lehi, and settled in the area of the city of Jerusalem known as Mishnah. So little is known about Lehi that it seems absurd to make speculative assumptions regarding Lehi's ancestors up to three generations prior, about whom nothing is known. There is always the possibility that Chadwick's assessment is correct since it can neither be proven or disproven. However, the probability that his assumptions and suppositions are accurate is, at best, unlikely.

There are alternatives, however, that are more scripturally sound and based on a significant measure of common sense. Of course, all conclusions and opinions are merely conjecture until credible archaeological evidence is uncovered. What we do know for certain is that there is no evidence that Lehi or any of his ancestors ever lived in the land of Manasseh, or that any ancestor ever moved to the city of Jerusalem. Since Lehi is of the tribe of Manasseh, he *may* have had some accessorial tribal tie to the land of Manasseh in northern Israel, but if he did, he did not know it. Likewise, one can speculate that Lehi's ancestors *may* have fled to escape the conquering Assyrians between 732 B.C. and 722 B.C., but such reasoning is not based on any evidentiary foundation. Nowhere in the Book of Mormon is there any mention of a migration of Lehi's ancestors to Jerusalem. In fact, the writings of Nephi suggest that Lehi, himself, was uncertain of his lineage until discovering such in the Brass Plates. This we will substantiate later, but for now, let's assume that Lehi may have had some ancestral tie to the land of Manasseh.

As recorded in 1 Nephi 5:14, Lehi learns that he is of the lineage of Joseph as he reads the genealogies on the Brass Plates. However, it's not until Alma 10:3 that we learn that Lehi was of the tribe of Manasseh, the one tribe of Israel that dwelt more out in the desert than any other. As such, they were not city dwellers but more nomadic in their culture. Hugh Nibley describes the tribe of Manasseh as "the one [tribe] which lived farthest out in the desert, came into most frequent contact with the Arabs, intermarried with them most frequently, and at the same time had the closest traditional bonds with Egypt."<sup>27</sup> Nibley goes on to explain that the term "Arab" is not meant to designate any particular race, tribe or nation but as a way of life.<sup>28</sup> Lehi, Nibley claims, was a Sheik and as such possessed and demonstrated the characteristics of a Sheik including traits of generosity, nobility, fervor, devoutness, visionary and a wonderful capacity for eloquence

and dreams.<sup>29</sup> Nibley's claim that Lehi was a leader or "sheik" of a group of people is supported by the words of Nephi when he states:

"Wherefore it came to pass that my father, Lehi, as he went forth prayed unto the Lord, yea, even with all his heart, *in behalf of his people (emphasis added)*. (See 1 Nephi 1:5).

Chadwick contradicts Nibley and states, "Lehi was a Jew, not an Arab, and would not likely have been given an Arabic or South Arabian name by his Jewish parents."<sup>30</sup> Clearly, Chadwick's issue on this matter seems to be a disagreement with Dr. Nibley, and though history may prove Chadwick correct, we have yet to see relevant evidence that his conclusions are better supported than those of Hugh Nibley. Chadwick should feel on very shaky ground taking on the most renowned LDS scholar with nothing more than unsubstantiated conjecture.

The tribes of the north and those of the south were generally not allies and formed alliances with different countries to protect their lands, even from the tribes of the other kingdom. In speaking with the archaeologists, historians, and students at Hebrew University Jerusalem, I was told that the citizens of the northern and southern kingdoms of Israel were not friendly with each other. Except for Levites who were needed for temple ceremonies in Jerusalem, outside tribal members would not be welcomed as permanent residents in the city of Jerusalem. King Hezekiah invited people from the north to come to Jerusalem to participate in religious celebrations, but citizens would not have welcomed them to stay permanently inside the city. Had refugees from the north come to Jerusalem to escape the Assyrians, they would have been granted protection but would not have been welcomed to stay after the threat had ended. Further, since Lehi's ancestors would have been accustomed to dwelling outside the city, after the threat of the Assyrians had passed, Lehi's ancestors would have likely moved south since the north was still in a state of chaos.

It is this writer's contention, that there are several other alternatives to the single conclusion espoused by Chadwick. Another alternative and a more logical assumption is that Lehi's ancestors, if they did come from the north, never stopped at Jerusalem but journeyed further south, perhaps as far south as Egypt prior to the Assyrian invasion. Why Egypt?

**First**, Egypt had been an ally of the southern kingdom for many years. Even when not an ally, Egyptians were better taskmasters than the Assyrians. At the time of the Assyrian invasion in the north, there were large populations of Israelites that had fled to

Egypt. Hugh Nibley describes the Manassehites as having had the closest traditional bonds with Egypt.

**Second**, God had a well-established precedent of protecting his chosen by opening the doors of Egypt for their protection, as well as for their training. An angel told Joseph and Mary to take the Christ-child to Egypt to escape Herod's decree. Joseph was sold into Egypt by the hands of his brothers and by the hand of God to be a savior to his family during the seven years of famine. Despite the risk to his life and the life of his wife, Abraham was commanded to go into the land of Egypt to teach, preach and form an alliance in addition to escaping the famine that continued in Palestine. (See Abraham 2:21). Moses too was raised and prepared for his great prophetic calling in Egypt. Elijah bypassed Jerusalem and fled into Egypt (Mount Sinai) when Jezebel sought his life following the execution of her priests and prophets of Baal.

**Third**, Lehi had a keen understanding of the Egyptian language. To what do we owe this proficiency in Egyptian? Did it come from being a powerful merchant, or was the powerful merchant partially a result of his skill in the Egyptian language that had been spoken in his household for generations? Lehi may have dwelt at Jerusalem all his days, but it is doubtful his ancestors did. Like Moses and Joseph, Lehi may have been educated "in the learning of the Jews and the language of the Egyptians" from ancestors that had a prolonged stay in Egypt.

**Fourth**, following the destruction of Jerusalem, the contemporaries of Lehi fled to Egypt where their primary settlements were at Elephantine or Yeb.<sup>31</sup> Most scholars believe that the prophet Jeremiah (a contemporary of Lehi) was one of those who went to Egypt with the blessing of the Babylonian king.

**Fifth**, in an article published in the Improvement Era in April 1948, Brother Nibley drew particular attention to the tendency for Book of Mormon names to concentrate in Upper Egypt, south of Thebes. In fact, two of Lehi's sons, Nephi and Sam, have their roots in Egyptian.<sup>32</sup> Even the name "Lemuel" is not a conventional Hebrew name but Arabic as it appears only once in biblical text (Proverbs 31:1, 4). However, Nibley contends that "Lemuel" is completely at home in the south desert among the Edomites, a people whose deity was "Yahweh, the God of the Hebrews."<sup>33</sup> All this could suggest strong ancestral ties with Egypt.

There is another compelling reason why the city of Jerusalem may not have been the home of Lehi and his family. Jerusalem had become a wicked city. How wicked? So wicked that Jeremiah was told by God not to marry, not to have children (Jer. 16:1), for

even his wife, sons and daughters would die and be as “*dung upon face of the earth; and they shall be consumed by the sword, and by famine; and their carcasses shall be meat for the fowls of heaven, and for the beasts of the earth (Jer. 16:4).*” Upon reading the words of Jeremiah it is difficult to see how Sodom and Gomorrah could have been more wicked than Jerusalem in the days of Lehi. The citizens of the city of Jerusalem were committing every type of whoredom, adultery, worshipping of false gods and even sacrificing their children to graven images of Baal. The Prophet Urijah was captured and beheaded, and Jeremiah was cast into prison. Sodom was granted a stay of execution if only ten righteous people could be found. For Jerusalem, however, no such reprieve would be given, reflecting its degree of wickedness.

Consider the charge given to Jeremiah, a contemporary of Lehi, to run through the *streets of Jerusalem* in an attempt to find even *one* worthy follower of the God of Israel.

“Run ye to and fro through the streets of Jerusalem, and see now, and know, and seek in the broad places thereof, if ye can find *a* man, if there be any that executeth judgment, that seeketh the truth; and I will pardon it.

And though they say, The Lord liveth; *surely they swear falsely.*” (Jer. 5:1-2)

There was not a single man in all of the *city of Jerusalem* that could be rightfully called a disciple of the living God. Now, how could that be true if Lehi and his family were residents of the city? And how about Ishmael, whose family would later join Lehi in the wilderness? Was he a man referred to by the Lord as one who sought not the truth and could not execute righteous judgment? The only logical, scholarly, and reasonable conclusion is that Lehi and Ishmael and their families *did not live in the city of Jerusalem*, but in the land of Jerusalem.

Like Abraham who shunned the wickedness of Sodom, it is unlikely that Lehi would subject his family to the evils of the city life in Jerusalem. Knowing of the wickedness of the city and given the many threats against his own life, certainly Lehi would have left the city of Jerusalem and moved his family to spiritual safety. However, since there is no mention of Lehi’s departure from Jerusalem until fleeing into the wilderness and given that Lehi “dwelt at Jerusalem all his days,” it is likely that Lehi’s home was never within the city walls of Jerusalem.

Lehi was a prosperous merchant whose wealth consisted of “all manner of riches” (1 Nephi 3:16). Lehi received his great wealth, including gold and other precious metals, in exchange for his wine, oil, figs, and honey. Merchants would travel the great trade routes from Syria to the Mediterranean and Egypt. Since Egypt controlled the western

trade, it is easy to see how Lehi could profit from his possible Egyptian background and learning. His knowledge of desert travel would serve him well in the dangerous routes between Egypt and Jerusalem.<sup>34</sup>

The area around Beit Lehi would have made an excellent homestead for Lehi, the merchant. In 2008 while building a highway near Beit Lehi, workers uncovered an ancient trade route leading south to Egypt and north to Syria. Further excavation produced an ancient Roman road, with well-preserved mile markers, bridging the Beit Lehi area and the Mediterranean. The Israel Antiquity Authority is currently discussing plans to establish an archaeology park in the area where the ancient trade routes intersect, with Beit Lehi as a key anchor to the park. Archaeologists believe that the Roman road was built over a more ancient road. None of this appears to have been known by Chadwick when he conducted his so-called extensive research of the Beit Lehi area.

Chadwick totally rejects the possibility that Lehi's could have settled south of the city of Jerusalem as they would have disappeared in the Assyrian attack on Judah by Sennacherib in 701 B.C. Chadwick does an admirable job of citing from the Prism of Sennacherib when it supports his position but ignores additional writings that might cast aspersions upon his conclusions.

Approximately twenty years following the fall of the kingdom of Israel, the Assyrians under Sennacherib attacked the Kingdom of Judah. Victory inscriptions contained on the Prism of Sennacherib state that the citizens of Judah "*who did not bow to my feet quickly; I conquered (them) and carried their spoils away* (emphasis added)."<sup>35</sup> Sennacherib would also write that when he conquered Ekron that he killed the officials and those accused of crimes, but as for the rest of the people—the common people—that were not guilty of crimes or misbehavior, they were released and allowed to remain on their homesteads.<sup>36</sup> From Sennacherib's own writing we learn that it wasn't always his practice to kill or scatter those he conquered. Where people acknowledged the authority of Assyria, the common people could be spared. Had the kings of Israel and Judah listened to Isaiah and Jeremiah by not breaking away from those to whom they paid tribute; their kingdoms may have been spared. Who is to say that Lehi's ancestors were not spared destruction by adhering to the counsel of the Lord to continue to pay tribute to Assyria? Jerusalem was spared by a godly miracle, so why not Lehi's ancestors?

For the next several decades Assyria and Egypt would wage war until around 668-665 B.C. when Assyrian ruler Ashurbanipal conquered Tirhakah and installed an Egyptian, Neco, as his successor. This began an alliance between the Egyptian and



Assyrian kingdoms brought peace to the kingdom of Judah until the downfall of the Assyrian empire in 627 B.C. It is possible, perhaps probable, that Lehi's ancestors, wherever they were at this time, either remained or re-settled in the land south of Jerusalem and did so in peace. Lehi would have been born sometime between the formation of the alliance and the reign of Josiah that began in 639 B.C.

If, solely for the sake of discussion, we assume that Lehi lived in the city of Jerusalem, that assumption raises a myriad of questions that are difficult to reconcile. Hugh Nibley points out that Lehi's mode of travel among the desert cultures would be by camel. The walled city of Jerusalem would have little room for substantial numbers of camels and certainly a wealthy caravan merchant like Lehi would have a large number of camels.<sup>37</sup> Further, when Lehi loaded his tents and belongings to depart Jerusalem to venture into the wilderness, necessity would dictate camels, not horses. Is it baffling only to this writer that the loading of a caravan of camels and departing the city with all his family members would go un-noticed? Would not such raise the suspicion of his enemies? And if at night, how did he get his camels out of the city? Was it customary to have the gates of the city opened at night to allow a caravan to leave or strangers to enter unnoticed? A former professor at BYU, LaMar Berrett, concludes that Lehi's departure was intended to be secret. According to Berrett:

“Evidently, he (Lehi) did not want his departure to be publicly known lest his enemies pursue him . . . .”<sup>38</sup>

This is confirmed by Nephi when he tells Zoram that he must not return to the city of Jerusalem but must go with Nephi and his brothers into the wilderness. Nephi explains:

“Now we were desirous that he [Zoram] should tarry with us for this cause, that the Jews might not know concerning our flight into the wilderness, lest they should pursue us and destroy us.” (1 Nephi 4:36).

So great was Lehi's fear that his departure would be discovered that Nephi records that the family traveled three days (presumably day and night) before stopping and pitching their tents in the valley of Laman. Then there is the question of how far the family could travel in a day by camel caravan? If starting from the city, it would be virtually impossible for Lehi's caravan to cover the distance required to place them in the valley of Laman near the mouth of the Red Sea in just three days. On the other hand, if Lehi had begun his journey from an area south of the city, say around Beit Lehi, or about 20 miles closer to the Red Sea, then such a trek would still require a Herculean effort but is definitely possible. Also note the language of 1 Nephi 2:11 where Laman and Lemuel

are complaining to Nephi that their father has led them “out of the land of Jerusalem, to leave the land of their inheritance.” They did not say that they had been led out of the great city of Jerusalem. (See also 1 Nephi 3:18).

Having fled initial danger, Lehi then calls his sons together and instructs them that the Lord has directed them to go to the City of Jerusalem to secure the brass plates from Laban. Lehi is told the records contain a history of the God’s dealings with the children of Israel and (of particular importance to Lehi) a genealogy of Lehi’s forefathers. (See 1 Ne. 3:3). Nephi then devotes about 55 verses (1 Nephi 3:5-31; 4:1-29) to the “brass plates” experience including the contention between the brothers, the severe risk involved, the drawing of lots to see who would approach Laban, running away from the guards sent by Laban to kill them, Nephi’s return to the city under the threat of imminent death to secure possession of the brass plates, the killing of Laban, and then fleeing back into the wilderness with Zoram. Consider once more the “brass plates” saga to the experience when Lehi directed his sons to *again return* to Jerusalem to bring Ishmael and his family into the wilderness. Oddly, there is no record of contention or fear in returning to Jerusalem, despite the fact that they had been pursued by Laban’s guards on orders to kill the brothers after Laban stole their immense wealth, and even though they would be the prime suspects in the killing of Laban and the taking of the brass plates. From the time Lehi tells his sons that they are to “*again return unto the land of Jerusalem*, and bring down Ishmael and his family into the wilderness until they leave the house of Ishmael and head-back to the tent of Lehi, Nephi covers the same in just 4 verses (1 Nephi 7:2-5); why so little coverage?

Heading back into the city of Jerusalem, or anywhere near to it, would be more dangerous to the brothers than their first expedition, so why no contention? The reason is obvious, because the brothers did not have to enter the city or even approach near to it. Lehi did not live in the city and neither did Ishmael. Ishmael probably lived south of the city, far enough south that the brothers would not have to maneuver in or by the city of Jerusalem to the house of Ishmael. Most likely Ishmael lived in or near the same village as Lehi. Hugh Nibley reaches the same conclusion:

“The fact that this was a simple and uncomplicated mission at a time when things would have been very hot for the brethren in the city itself (where they had been chased by Laban’s police on their former expedition and would be instantly recognized) implies that *Ishmael, like Lehi, lived well out in the country* (1 Nephi 7:2-5) (emphasis added).”<sup>39</sup>

## Lehi's Prophetic Mission and Who Were His People

Lehi was a community leader, as Hugh Nibley states, a Sheik, which was concerned for the welfare of “his people.” Who “*his people*” were is not known, but Nibley is of the opinion that “*his people*” are not the Jews in the city of Jerusalem:

“Nephi always speaks of the ‘the Jews who were at Jerusalem’ with a curious detachment, and no one in First Nephi ever refers to them as ‘the people’ or ‘our people’ but always quite impersonally as ‘the Jews’.” (See 1 Nephi 2:13).<sup>40</sup>

Were they people of the House of Israel that had escaped death or captivity by fleeing to Egypt, who now had migrated back to the land of Israel? Or, were *his people* not of the house of Israel but of the lineage of Abraham who lived near the ancestral homeland of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Abraham had a large posterity living near Beersheba at the time, south of Jerusalem, resulting from the six children born to him and Keturah. Through the lineage of one of their sons, Midian, would come Jethro, Moses’ father-in-law, a rightful and worthy heir of the Melchizedek Priesthood. There is also the chosen people descending from Abraham’s son, Ishmael. So, who were the people of Lehi? That question has yet to be answered. What is relatively certain is that “*his people*” were not the Jews, whether in the Land of Jerusalem or the city of Jerusalem.

When Lehi become a “prophet” to the Jews at Jerusalem is an interesting one. Nephi records that during the first year of the reign of Zedekiah that *many* prophets came forth prophesying that the great city of Jerusalem would be destroyed if the people did not repent. (See 1 Nephi 1:4). This promise of destruction absent repentance caused Lehi to have a heightened concern for his own people. As Lehi goes to minister to *his people* his heaviness of heart brings him to his knees. Nephi states:

“Wherefore it came to pass that my father, Lehi, as he went forth prayed unto the Lord, yea, even with all his heart, *in behalf of his people* (emphasis added).”<sup>39a</sup>

What happened next is one of the most glorified visions in all scripture. A pillar of fire dwelt upon a rock and Lehi saw and heard much. So overcome he returns home where the vision continues. Here he is carried away with the Spirit in a vision. The heavens are opened, he sees who he believes is God sitting on his throne. He beholds the Savior, his ministry and the twelve that will carry the work of the salvation to the gentiles. Then he witnesses the destruction of Jerusalem if the inhabitants did not repent.

Was Lehi a prophet to the Jews at the time he stopped to pray “*in behalf of his people*” or, did the prophetic mantle fall upon Lehi as a result of his prayer when the

heavens where opened. Regardless of the answer, the glorious vision experienced by Lehi appeared to change both his message and his target audience. The new message was repent or be destroyed! The new target audience was “the Jews.”<sup>39c</sup> Nephi writes:

“And when the Jews heard these things there were angry with him . . . and they also sought his life.” (1 Nephi 1:20)

It was not “*his people*” that sought his life, but “*the Jews.*” Whether Lehi’s calling was to warn the Jews within or outside the walls of the city of Jerusalem is not known. If outside the city, then perhaps Zenos and Zenock also fall into this same category which is why their ministries are also not recorded in the stick of Judah.

Remember, Nephi simply records that Lehi stops to pray for “*his people*” when a vision is opened to him. And yet, from this little amount of information Chadwick concludes as follows:

“When Lehi went forth to prayer (1 Nephi 1:5), he probably *exited the walls of the city* just as Nephi himself did when he said, ‘I went forth unto my brethren, who were without the wall (emphasis added).’<sup>41</sup>

First, Nephi did not say that his father went forth for the sole purpose to pray. Instead, he states that his father “*as he went forth prayed unto the Lord . . .*” The difference is subtle, but meaningful, as we will address later. Second, there is no mention of Lehi “*exiting the walls of the city.*” To even assert the possibility that Lehi exited the city walls is a trivial attempt to bolster Chadwick’s claim that Lehi lived in the city.

Chadwick tugs at the heartstrings of the reader by suggesting that the area where Lehi retired to pray was the same site to which the Savior would later bleed from every pore to atone for the sins of mankind in the Garden of Gethsemane.<sup>42</sup> I concur that would be a wonderful possibility if Lehi had lived in the city and there were a reference that he went to the Mount of Olives, of which there is not. Dr. Hugh Nibley also disputes Chadwick’s contention that Lehi went forth for the specific purpose to pray, in the Garden of Gethsemane, or anywhere else. Nibley writes:

“Very significant is the casual notice that Lehi once had a vision in a *desert place* ‘as he went forth’ (1 Ne 1:5), as he went he prayed, we are told, and as he prayed a vision came to him. The effect of the vision was to make him hasten back ‘to his own house at Jerusalem’ (1 Ne. 1:7), where he had yet greater visions, showing that it was not necessary for him to ‘go forth’ either to pray or to have visions; he did not go forth expecting a vision—for when a vision came he immediately

returned home—but one came to him in the course of his *regular journey as he went about his business and forced him to change plans* (emphasis added).”<sup>43</sup>

Further, a “*desert place*” can hardly be defined as the area just across the Kidron valley to the beautiful non-desert place of Gethsemane.

### **Nibley’s Alleged Contradiction**

On the issue of where Lehi lived, Chadwick poses a contradiction that, on its face, is difficult to reconcile; difficult because the author of the apparent contradiction is now deceased and unable to clarify, acknowledge or denounce the contradiction. That contradiction is said to have come from the pen of Hugh Nibley. Chadwick in his work, *Lehi’s House at Jerusalem and the Land of His Inheritance* (pages 82-83), commends Nibley for “correcting” his earlier error that, “though he dwelt at Jerusalem, Lehi did not live in the city.” The correction, Chadwick claims, came in the 1958 work of Nibley, *An Approach to the Book of Mormon*, pages 46-47, where Nibley wrote:

“He [Lehi] had ‘his own house at Jerusalem’ (1 Nephi 1:7); yet he was accustomed to ‘go forth’ from the city from time to time (1 Nephi 1:5-7), and his paternal estate, the land of his inheritance, where the bulk of his fortune reposed, was some distance from the town (1 Nephi 3:16, 22; 2-4).”

Chadwick continues:

“Here Nibley correctly alluded to the facts that Lehi’s house at Jerusalem was inside the city itself and that his land of inheritance was a distinct different location from both his house and Jerusalem.”<sup>44</sup>

This alleged correction made by Hugh Nibley puzzles this writer and raises several questions:

1. The scripture in Nephi that Lehi had “his own home at Jerusalem” has never been amended in the Book of Mormon since first published. Certainly, a scholar of the caliber of Hugh Nibley would have read this scripture numerous times. In 1952 there was no doubt that Nibley interpreted this scripture ***not*** to mean that Lehi lived in the city of Jerusalem. In fact, it is the only time this writer can find that Hugh Nibley (as alleged by Chadwick) ever mentions that Lehi lived in the city.

2. Why would it take six years for Brother Nibley to “correct” his inaccurate interpretation as alleged by Chadwick?

3. Why does Nibley not expressly state in his 1958 article that the contradiction was, in fact, a correction? Any elementary grade student could see that the opinions offered by Chadwick and the statements attributed to Nibley are 100% contrary to earlier conclusions, and yet, Nibley says nothing about his reason for the “alleged” change in opinion.

4. Albeit perhaps a minor issue, why does Nibley refer to Jerusalem as a “town” instead of a “city” in his “alleged” correction? I can find no scriptural text where Jerusalem is ever referred to as a “town.” It just seems odd that a scholar of the caliber of Hugh Nibley would refer to the city of Jerusalem as a “town” in this single instance.

5. Is Nibley really the author of this statement?

6. How does the supposed change affect conclusions reached by Hugh Nibley on the myriad of other perspectives he gives on Lehi, his past and his culture? If he was so clearly wrong on this conclusion, what other conclusions should the reader discount as being inaccurate?

If the statement is indeed a change in opinion by Brother Nibley, as alleged by Chadwick, then this writer accepts Brother Nibley’s revised conclusion and would accept his opinion as adding substantial credibility to the position that Lehi lived in the city. The land of Lehi’s inheritance, however, is still another issue and I know of no such alleged contradiction. That matter will be addressed later.

What is equally disconcerting is that Chadwick fails to inform the reader that later in the same work Nibley again states that Lehi *did not* live in the city of Jerusalem. In addressing the fact that the brothers had no apparent fear in returning to Jerusalem to bring Ishmael and his family into the wilderness, Nibley again states on page 109 (remembering that the alleged contradiction was recorded on pages 46-47):

“The fact that this was a simple and uncomplicated assignment at a time when things would have been very hot for the brothers in the city itself (where they had been chased by Laban’s servants on the former expedition, and would be instantly recognized) implies *that Ishmael, like Lehi, may have lived well out in the country* (1 Nephi 7:2-5) (emphasis added).”

Is this not a contradiction to the alleged contradiction? Moreover, the position that Lehi never lived in the city of Jerusalem is consistent with all the other conclusions that Nibley reaches about Lehi. But there is an even more disturbing point about the alleged contradiction. Again, quoting the alleged Nibley contradiction cited by Chadwick:

“He [Lehi] had ‘his own house at Jerusalem’ (1 Nephi 1:7); yet he was accustomed to ‘go forth’ from the city from time to time (1 Nephi 1:5-7), and his paternal estate, the land of his inheritance, where the bulk of his fortune reposed, was some distance from the town (1 Nephi 3:16, 22; 2-4).” (*Emphasis added*)

Look at the ‘go forth’ language of the above quotation. Lehi’s “own house at Jerusalem” is taken from 1 Nephi 1:7, yet the ‘go forth’, also surrounded by quotation marks, infers that exact language is found somewhere in 1 Nephi 1: 5-7. However, “go forth” is nowhere to be found in any of those verses from which to quote! Verse 5 states “as he went forth, prayed . . .” but that’s as close as it comes. Obviously the “go forth” is not Nibley’s own phrase or it would not be in quotations. Therefore, as to the statement cited by Chadwick as a contradiction, only one of the following must be true:

1. The statement was written by Nibley and was intended to be a correction but with important text missing and, therefore, has no credibility until corrected (least likely possibility); or
2. The alleged contradictory statement was not penned by Hugh Nibley and Chadwick is merely guilty of doing a sloppy job of research by failing to see the obvious grammatical inconsistencies, and then compounded his negligence by failing to notice that Nibley had contradicted the alleged contradiction later in the same work; or
3. Most probably, Nibley did not write the “alleged” contradiction, Chadwick knew it, and he included the statement (along with his personal but unsupportive interpretation) to bolster his position by deceiving the reader.

In any event, those interested in learning more about Lehi’s world would do well to read Brother Nibley’s article, *Lehi in the Desert*.

### **The Land of Lehi’s Inheritance**

As noted previously, Chadwick takes no greater literary and archaeological license than when concluding that Lehi’s land of inheritance was in the western area of Manasseh. In support of his contention Chadwick sites the following:

1. Lehi’s great-grandparents lived in Manasseh but fled to Jerusalem to escape Assyrian deportation. <sup>45</sup>
2. The land of inheritance was a tract of land in western Manasseh for which Lehi’s ancestors, perhaps his great-grandparents, had retained a ‘written deed’

- when they fled the Assyrians. Lehi could then lay claim to the land of his great-grandparents whose century old deed remained valid, and all the treasure remained untouched. <sup>46</sup>
3. Upon capturing the lands of Manasseh, Sennacherib (Assyrian King) had granted control of the land to the Philistines. Around 627 B.C. the Assyrian empire fell, and the citizens of Judah expanded into the countryside and drove the Philistine farmers off the original land of Manasseh, including Lehi's land of inheritance. Lehi probably allowed the gentile Samaritans to continue to farm the land of Lehi's inheritance and to pay rent to Lehi.<sup>47</sup>
  4. Lehi left gold and silver and all manner of riches on the property in Manasseh for safe keeping, "because he [Lehi] knew those riches would not be safe in Jerusalem." <sup>48</sup>

Chadwick contends these assumptions are plausible. However, their likelihood of being incorrect has a far greater probability. The best that any scholar should offer is an "I don't know" and stop with the unsubstantiated theories and fault finding with those having contrary views. Unfortunately, scholars get no credit or recognition for "I don't know."

Upon securing the brass plates from Laban, Nephi records:

"And it came to pass that my father, Lehi, found upon the plates of brass a genealogy of his fathers; *wherefore he knew that he was a descendant of Joseph; yea even that Joseph who was the son of Jacob, who was sold into Egypt, and who was preserved by the hand of the Lord, that he might preserve his father Jacob, and all his household from perishing from famine.*

And they were also led out of captivity and out of the land of Egypt, by that same God who had preserved them.

And thus my father, Lehi, *did discover the genealogy of his fathers.* And Laban also was a descendent of Joseph, wherefore he and his fathers had kept the records.

And now when my father saw all these things, *he was filled with the Spirit,* and he began to prophesy concerning his seed (emphasis added)." (1 Nephi 5:14-17)

Is there any doubt in the reader's mind, based on the tenor in which Nephi writes and the number of verses devoted to the subject of lineage that Lehi was without knowledge of his lineage before reading the brass plates? What Lehi read was tantamount to a revelation for Nephi tells us that Lehi "discovered the genealogy of his fathers." In



particular was his great joy to learn that he was of the lineage of Joseph, the same Joseph that was sold into Egypt (there's that emphasis on Egypt again). Nephi later devotes a chapter to Lehi's lineage without giving it, but merely states that it is included in the record kept by his father (See 1 Nephi 6). Since every writer in the Book of Mormon refers to his ancestry, in some manner, it is safe to conclude that the writings of Lehi translated by Joseph Smith and then lost by Martin Harris would have given us some history of Lehi's life and happenings.

Since lineage was such a critical part of one's heritage, and if Chadwick is correct when he concludes that Lehi's ancestral home was in the land of Manasseh, doesn't it seem strange that Lehi would be so gladdened to "*discover*" that he was of the lineage of Joseph? Isn't it also strange that Lehi never once refers to Manasseh, only Joseph? Is it not strange that Lehi was unaware of his lineage, or at best, wasn't sure of his lineage? In any case, it is a reasonable and logical assumption that Lehi had not been taught regarding his lineage. Hugh Nibley asked the same question when substantiating his contention that Lehi did not live in the city of Jerusalem. Dr. Nibley stated:

"The seminomadic nature of Manasseh might explain why Lehi seems out of touch with things in Jerusalem. For the first time he 'did discover' (1 Nephi 5:16), from records kept in Laban's house, that he was a descendent of Joseph. Why hadn't he known that all along?<sup>48</sup>

And then consider the naming of Lehi's first four sons: Laman, Lemuel, Sam and Nephi. As mentioned earlier, Nephi and Sam have their roots in Egyptian and Lemuel is not a conventional Hebrew name but Arabic.<sup>39</sup> Now consider the names given to the next two sons of Lehi and Sariah after *discovering* that Lehi was of the lineage of Joseph. The names of his two sons born in the wilderness are *Jacob* and *Joseph*, both directly tied to Lehi's ancestral lineage. So why wait until your 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> sons to give them names from your royal ancestral lineage? Why, because Lehi did not know his lineage until it was revealed to him on the brass plates. The Lord himself told Lehi that this was one of the reasons for securing the records held by Laban. When explaining the reasons to Nephi why the brass plates were so important, Lehi said:

"For behold, Laban hath the record of the Jews and also a ***genealogy of my forefathers***, and they are engraven upon the plates of brass (emphasis added).  
(1 Nephi 3:3)

This should create enough uncertainty to debunk Chadwick's untenable suppositions, faulty assumptions, and definitive conclusion that Lehi's land of inheritance was in

western Manasseh. It took a revelation from the plates of brass to provide Lehi with a “record of my [Lehi’s] forefathers.” Otherwise, let Chadwick produce the *written deed* he alludes to.

Before leaving this issue of whether or not Lehi’s land of inheritance was in Manasseh, there is another scholarly conclusion espoused by Chadwick that, in particular, baffles me. Chadwick claims that Lehi left gold and silver and all manner of riches on the property in Manasseh for safe-keeping, “because he [Lehi] knew those riches would not be safe in Jerusalem.”<sup>48</sup> Why would Lehi consider the city of Jerusalem unsafe for his riches, yet a suitable place to raise his children? Is Chadwick suggesting that the prophet did not consider his children to be of equal value to his gold and silver?

### **Who was the Prophet of the Bedouin Tradition at Beit Lehi?**

This is the most difficult area to address since this writer struggles enough with the English language. To understand the Hebrew or Arabic languages, particularly ancient ones, is well beyond my ability to understand or fake an understanding. On the other hand, Chadwick claims to speak and understand Hebrew (modern & ancient), Arabic, Greek, and Egyptian (ancient); intimidating to say the least. This is where a Urim and Thummim would come in handy. However, since one is not at my disposal I am required to look to scholars, local Arab sources, and other credible resources that do have an understanding of ancient Middle Eastern languages and cultures for assistance.

While investigating the cave and assessing the surrounding area, Dr. Ginat met Sheik Muhammad al-Asam who took him to the remains of a two-tiered low-walled structure about 200 yards from the cave where, according to Bedouin legend and tradition, a prophet named Lehi blessed and judged the people of both Ishmael and Isaac. On the top tier was an ancient oak tree that the Sheik explained was where this ancient prophet would sit in judgment and teach the people. To the Bedouin community it was a sacred place where grazing animals were not allowed to enter.

Chadwick refers to a film produced by Cleon Skousen and Glenn Kimber entitled “*The Lehi Cave*” where Joseph Ginat interviews Sheik Muhammad al-Asam regarding the name of the place. Speaking in Arabic and summarized by Joseph Ginat in English, Chadwick states that the Sheik referred to the ancient prophet as “Nebi Lei.” I have heard the name of the prophet spoken a little differently by several people and I have yet to determine the correct pronunciation of prophet. The foreign accents and the fact that oral traditions are exactly that—oral, nothing in writing, make it difficult to reach a

conclusion. I have heard names battered about including Layy, Lei, Lekhi, Lechi, Loya, Lahai, Lahi, and a few others. Some names come from supporters, others from detractors of the Bedouin tradition.

Oral traditions always bear the risk of losing purity over time. This is one reason Lehi was commanded to take the plates of brass with them to the Promised Land, to preserve the language and knowledge of their ancestors. The Mulekites, on the other hand, took no records and it resulted in the loss of their language, knowledge, and traditions of their fathers. (See Omni 1:17). There should be no surprise in the possibility that error in the pronunciation or spelling of the name of an ancient prophet, whether Lekhi, Lahi, Lehi, Lechi, etc., may have crept into the oral descriptions of the various Bedouin tribes over more than 2,000 years.

The issue raised by Chadwick to be a good one, one that requires thoughtful research and consideration. However, what I find disturbing and reflective of his bias is Chadwick's failure to acknowledge even the possibility that a prophet *may* have lived, preached, judged, or ministered to people at or near the site of Beit Lehi, regardless of the prophet's name. Equally disturbing is that Chadwick appears to be discrediting Dr. Ginat by stating:

“. . . but in the *dubbed* English translation Ginat renders it as “nabi lah-ee”, quite *deliberately altering the vowels and pronouncing the name with two syllables* (emphasis added).”<sup>50</sup>

Chadwick would later write that Dr. Ginat insisted that “Lei” and “Lehi” are equivalent. As far as I can determine, that assertion is untrue. Joseph Ginat never stated that the two names were equivalent, only that the correct English pronunciation of the ancient prophet was Lehi. Joseph did not seek to deceive but to state what the consensus of Bedouin belief was, namely, that the prophet's name in English was “Lehi.”

What Chadwick does not know is that Joseph Ginat was a Jew by birth but an Arab by adoption. Dr. Ginat was as much Arab as Jew and spoke fluent Arabic. This is but one reason Dr. Ginat achieved such stature within the Israeli government and later at Netanya College. Following his initial meeting with Sheik Muhammad al-Asam, Dr. Ginat spent a great deal of time researching the Bedouin tradition of a prophet that ministered at Beit Lehi. He talked to many Bedouins including his own adoptive Arab family to learn more about the tradition and to either dismiss it as folklore or validate it. It was only then that Dr. Ginat concluded that the name of the prophet in English was Lehi and referenced the English translation in the DVD, *The Lehi Cave*.

On numerous occasions this writer has met with Sheik *Agel al-Atrash*, a prominent Sheik residing between Beit Lehi and the biblical village of Be'er Sheva, and inquired specifically as to the name of the ancient prophet. On no occasion was Joseph Ginat present so I used an interpreter, Yosef Goldman, or Oren Gutfeld, who both spoke English, Hebrew, and Arabic. In every instance the Sheik's Arabic pronunciation was interpreted into Hebrew by Goldman and Gutfeld as "*Nebi Lechi*" and in English prophet Lehi. When asked what happened to Nebi Lechi the Sheik confirmed the tradition that he simply vanished with his family.

When Sheik Agel al-Atrash first learned that the group I was with was in Israel to excavate the Beit Lehi area he placed his hand over his heart and thanked us for coming to his land to uncover the truth about their prophet. The Sheik certainly had no personal gain associated with the site, only a desire to uncover the truth of the tradition. When writing this article, I again contacted both Yosef Goldman, Oren Gutfeld and Sheik *Agel al-Atrash* and asked them to please confirm the name of the ancient prophet. The email response was always "Nebi Lechi."

A similar discussion and the same conclusion was expressed years earlier when Sheik Agel al-Atrash's father met with Howard W. Hunter in the Sheik's hospitality tent with young Sheik Agel, then a young Sheik in waiting, at the side of his father. According to Sheik Agel al-Atrash, the story has remained the same in his family from generation to generation. One might ask why Dr. Ginat was unaware of this tradition since he was adopted by an Arab Sheik. Although he was adopted by an Arab, he never lived day-to-day with the adoptive family, all being another story for another time.

Chadwick may be correct when he concludes that the current site is known as "Beit Lei," named for an Arab settlement not far from the area that existed in the medieval ages. The Medieval ages occurred between the 5<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> centuries A.D. However, the question is not what the area was called in the 5<sup>th</sup> - 15<sup>th</sup> centuries A.D., but the name of the village or settlement between 1200 B.C. and 500 A.D. Today, the area is known as Horvat Beit Loya, a modern name given by the Israeli Naming Convention, an organization established after the War of Independence of the State of Israel (1948). Therefore, the modern name "Loya" is irrelevant in any discussion regarding relationships with the biblical or Book of Mormon place or person named "Lehi."

Could the Bedouin tradition have reference to the Prophet Lehi found in the Book of Mormon? Yes. Is it possible that the prophet who resided in the area is *not* the Lehi mentioned in the Book of Mormon? Yes. However, what has remained consistent over

the centuries is that a honored prophet lived at the Beit Lehi area and ministered to the people; that he lived long before Mohammad (long before 600 A.D.); and that the prophet vanished to the disappointment of the people. Oddly, but predictable, Chadwick concludes that the so-called prophet was not a prophet but, at most, a “Muslim Saint.”<sup>51</sup>

The following information is taken from the work of four renowned scholars and archaeologists, three of which are Jewish. The first is Hugh Nibley, a prolific author and professor of Ancient Scripture. Dr. Nibley was fluent in Latin, Greek, Hebrew, Egyptian, Coptic, Arabic, German, French, English, Italian, and Spanish. He also studied Russian, Dutch and Old Norse, which sufficiently enabled him to read an entire encyclopedia in Norwegian. Nibley’s research focus was Hebrew, Greek, and Egyptian. He insisted on reading the relevant primary and secondary sources in their original languages.

Second is Nelson Glueck, an American rabbi, educator, and archaeologist. He founded and served as President of Hebrew Union College-Jerusalem Institute of Religion and Institute of Archaeology from 1947 until his death in 1971. Today the college has four campuses, with one in Jerusalem. The first person Dr. Glueck asked to serve on the board of trustees of the College was Dr. Frank Moore Cross, Jr. Glueck is credited with uncovering more than 1,000 ancient sites in Israel. He has been on the cover of Time Magazine and offered the benediction on the inauguration of President John F. Kennedy.

The third expert is Paul Haupt, a Semitic scholar and one of the pioneers of Assyriology in America. He later became a professor of Semitic languages at Johns Hopkins University.

The fourth is Julius Wellhausen, a German biblical scholar and orientalist, noted for his understanding of the origin of the Pentateuch/Torah (first five books of the Bible).

In his work *Lehi in the Desert*, Nibley cites Glueck, Haupt and Wellhausen as they weave a fabric of scholarly insight into the meaning of the name “Lehi.”<sup>52</sup> It begins with the legendary place named by Hagar, second wife of Abraham, as Beer-Lahai-roi (Genesis 16:14), also referred to as “well Lahai-roi” (Genesis 24:62; 25:11). However, the correct English translation from Hebrew is “Be'er LeHai Ro'i.”<sup>53</sup> It was here where an angel appeared to Hagar and found for her a fountain of water in the wilderness after Sarai cast her out.

The meaning of Be'er LeHai Ro'i has several interpretations but the two most common are “the well of him that liveth and seeth me,” and “the well of the vision of life.”<sup>54</sup> The location is also historically important because it was where Isaac dwelt

(Genesis 25:11). Be'er LeHai Ro'i was located in the south country, believed to be near Beersheba or Tel Be'er Sheva where Abraham lived and bore six children with his third wife, Keturah. Tel Be'er Sheva is an ancient archaeological site northeast of modern day Beersheba and about 20 miles south of Beit Lehi. The findings unearthed there suggest the region has been populated since the 4th millennium B.C.<sup>55</sup>

Wellhausen rendered Be'er Lehai-ro'i as meaning "spring of the wild-ox jawbone," but Paul Haupt contends that "Lehai-ro'i" should be rendered as "Lehi" which does not mean "jaw" but "cheek." According to Glueck, Lahai is the root of Lehai-ro'i which occurs quite frequently either as a part of a compound, or as a separate name of a deity or a person, particularly in Minaean, Thamudic, and Arabic texts." There is a Beit Lahi among the ancient names around Gaza, but the meaning of the name has been lost in the area. Nibley is unsure of the interpretation of the compound word "Be'er Lehai-ro'i" but is certain that the name Lahai or Lehi "is thoroughly at home among the people of the desert and, so far as he knows nowhere else."<sup>56</sup>

The *Midrash Rabbah* is a Jewish commentary of the Torah which contains a treasury of homiletic, ethical, and moral interpretations of the scriptures as expounded by the Rabbis during Talmudic times. Midrash Rabbah SS 1:53-55 explains that the "cheeks" of Israel that are comely are the conscientious teachers of the Torah whose "cheeks" were made for speech, like Moses and Aaron. Here, the term "cheeks" means one who is called to teach or expound the gospel. The Hebrew name for "cheeks" is "Lechi" or in English "Lehi."<sup>57</sup> Hence, it is consistent with ancient history that Lehi would be known as a Rabbi, a teacher, even a Prophet.

Chadwick goes to significant effort to distance the site of Beit Lehi as having any relationship or connection to the Book of Mormon prophet Lehi or that the site was inhabited prior to 300 B.C. In his article *The Names Lehi and Sariah-Language and Meaning*,<sup>58</sup> he goes to some length in an attempt to explain why Lehi was given such an odd name, which in Hebrew means either "jaw" or "cheek."<sup>59</sup> Chadwick goes about as far-a-field as one can go by speculating as follows:

*"Lehi is a nickname of sorts that originated with family, friends, or associates when Lehi was a youth or full-grown man, which stuck with him and wound up being used instead of his given name unknown to us (emphasis added)."*<sup>60</sup>

I suspect that Chadwick was looking to protect Lehi's parents from ridicule for giving Lehi a name of a body part (jaw or cheekbone), or worse, a name that could be interpreted as the *jawbone of an ass*, referring to Lehi of Samson fame.

Frankly, I believe Lehi's parents had a perfectly good reason for naming their son Lehi. As cited by Midrash Rabbah SS 1:53-55, "Lehi" means one who has the "cheeks" of Israel; cheeks made for speech, like Moses and Aaron. Perhaps Lehi's parents knew that Lehi was destined to be the mouthpiece of God, even a voice speaking from the dust.

If there was a name change to "Lehi" at a later time, such would not be an uncommon practice. Giving prophets dual names or changing a name in ancient Israel was not uncommon. Jacob became Israel, Abram became Abraham, and Jethro was also known as Reuel. Nonetheless, with absolutely no proof otherwise, it is unreasonable to assume that "Lehi" was little more than a slang or nonsensical nickname. I concur that scholarly minds could differ on the exact pronunciation of a name. However, what cannot be disputed is the Bedouin tradition that speaks of a prophet who lived near the area known as Beit Lehi.

Lastly, on this issue of the name of the site, the following comment made by Chadwick is unworthy of an LDS scholar. In addressing the issue of whether "Beit Lehi" is an accurate interpretation of the Arabic name "Beit Lei," (which may or may not have any connection with Beit Lehi) Chadwick cites Frank Moore Cross, Jr. who calls the interpretation a "linguistic blunder." Chadwick then adds his own venomous conclusion:

"Its perpetration by so many others for nearly four decades now has been an even bigger blunder."<sup>61</sup>

Frank Moore Cross I can understand, but a professor at BYU must be held accountable to a higher standard of civility.

Regardless of what Chadwick classifies as linguistic blunder, the name "Beit Lehi," meaning the house of Lehi, and Khirbet Beit Lehi meaning the ruins of the house of Lehi, may yet prove to be accurate. While some choose demeaning rhetoric and engage in speculation, others are attempting to determine the name of the area used anciently. A grant given to a Jewish scholar at a renowned U.S. institution to research and hopefully determine any ancient name(s) of the site has already produced results. There is little doubt that Flavius Josephus and early Christian fathers referred to the Beit Lehi site as *Beit Zedek* at or around the time of Christ. "Zedek" means *Righteousness* or *Justice* or both. Therefore, Beit Lehi was once known as the *City of Righteousness*, the *City of Justice*, or the *City of Righteousness & Justice*.

## The Miracle of Samson's Spring

Whether or not Beit Lehi is near the site of Samson's Spring where Samson slew 1000 philistines with the jawbone of an ass is not necessarily important. (See Judges 13-16). In fact, I visited the Beit Lehi site for two years before the chief archaeologist on the excavation showed me the spring, only about 300 yards from the Jerusalem Cave, and stated that it was the "traditional" site of Samson's Spring. Traditional means that it has not been proven, but that it has been designated by tradition. The possible authenticity of this traditional site is confirmed by Dr. Oren Gutfeld who also refers to the hills surrounding Beit Lehi as the "Hills of Lechi" or the hills surrounding the area referred in the Book of Judges as Lehi.<sup>62</sup>

I do not know where Samson killed the Philistines and where the spring came forth to preserve Samson's life—no one does. I agree that there is an absence of archaeological evidence about where Samson slew the Philistines. However, that does not disprove that the well near Beit Lehi, obviously supplied from an underground spring, is not "Samson's Well." Chadwick contends that the well structure dates to the Roman period, which I have been assured by a number of Israeli archaeologists is not determinable without a scientific analysis of the stone and mortar used in construction of the structure. But assuming that the statement by Chadwick is correct, the fact that the current well "structure" was constructed during the Roman age to harness the water, has no bearing on when the spring was discovered or when the water first appeared on the surface.

Josephus wrote that the spring continued to produce water in his day, around 100 AD. Nevertheless, the spring of Samson fame is real and is somewhere. If not at Beit Lehi, where is the spring that gave Samson life? Some believe it may be the Spring of Ayun Kara near Zoreah (also "Zorah"), but this is also an unsubstantiated tradition. Since the spring, according to Josephus, functioned for more than 1200 years, it is reasonable to believe that the sacred spot touched by the hand of God is still producing water today.

Chadwick further contends that Beit Lehi is too far south of the events that transpired with Samson. I don't know. However, I draw the reader's attention to Judges 16:4-17. Here Samson is ambushed by the Philistines while visiting a harlot in the city of Gaza. In escaping, Samson tore the gates and doorframe off as one unit and carried it forty miles. Did Samson go to Etam? Did he go to Bet Shemesh? Did he go to Zoreah? Did he go anywhere near the Sorek Valley? The answer to all is no, he traveled nearly forty miles to "a hill near Hebron (Judges 16:3)." What hill? Why all the way to Hebron?



Why so far south and east? Why closer to Beit Lehi? Did Samson return to the hills that once hid him from the Philistines and where the spring came forth to preserve his life? Where did Samson sit in Judgment for 20 years?

### **Other Matters Requiring Comment**

Much has been made about the ships found as part of the mosaic floor of the Byzantine era church and those found on the walls of caves at Beit Lehi. Why the ships were engraved in the Jerusalem cave is unknown. Perhaps the fact that Beit Lehi is on a merchant highway leading to the Mediterranean Sea may have some bearing. As for the ships on the mosaic floor, the question has been answered with the discovery of Salome's tomb at the site. The IAA has stated its opinion that the fisherman in the ships is that of James and John, apostles and the sons of Salome.

As stated earlier, with reference to whether the "cavity of rock" in which some people believe Nephi and his brothers may have hidden is the same as the Jerusalem Cave, to assert that the ships represent or commemorate the journey of Lehi's family to the Promised Land, is far too speculative and almost to a certainty, not true.

### **Closing**

Throughout this body of work this writer has taken issue with the virtual certainty of Chadwick's assumptions, suppositions, scriptural interpretations; the virtual certainty of his conclusions, his lack of civility, and the scholarly disdain he shows towards others espousing a genuine difference of opinion. In some instances, he appears to have the unmatched ability to both interpret and re-write history. Chadwick's conclusions and his choice of topics appear contrary to the mission statements of both the Maxwell Institute and the Research Studies Center at Brigham Young University. If more evidence is needed then consider the following conclusions taken from Chadwick's work entitled, "*An Archaeologist's View*, Journal of Book of Mormon Studies: Volume – 15, Issue – 2, Maxwell Institute, Provo, Utah (pages 68-77); online at [www.farmsnewwebsite.farmsresearch.com](http://www.farmsnewwebsite.farmsresearch.com) (pages 1-12):

*"Jerusalem, where Nephi's story began, is one Book of Mormon site that we can confidently identify. Additionally, we can say with **virtual certainty** that certain areas in Israel, often presented to Latter-day Saint tourists as having been associated with Lehi and his family, were not connected with them at all."*

*"I have published elsewhere my views on a number of factors related to the background of 1 Nephi 1-2, including . . . the general type and location of Lehi's*

‘house at Jerusalem’ (1 Nephi 1:7), the ‘land of his inheritance’ (2:4), the dates of Lehi’s ministry in Jerusalem and his departure into the wilderness . . .”

And then the finale:

“Students of the Book of Mormon should be wary of claims about a so-called Lehi Cave or an alleged City of Lehi or Beit Lehi in the hills of Judah. *These claims are entirely spurious* (emphasis added). (Internet Site, pages 1-2).

For Dr. Chadwick’s edification, I quote the definition of “spurious” from Dictionary.com:

“**spu·ri·ous** - not genuine, authentic, or true; not from the claimed, pretended, or proper source; counterfeit. . . illegitimate.”

The synonyms for spurious include “*false, sham, bogus, mock, feigned, phony; meretricious, and deceitful* (emphasis added).”

I recently received an email from a scholar who claimed that Jeffrey Chadwick has his disciples and advocates who have “*feasted on the words of Chadwick and done much to discredit the interest and support of the Beit Lehi project.*” If that is indeed true, then Chadwick is accomplishing his mission. Nevertheless, Chadwick and his colleagues must understand that the more educational designations behind one’s name, the greater amount of prudence that must be exercised when offering conclusions that cannot be substantiated with any degree of certainty; or when making suppositions and assumptions based on mere guesswork. Truth is never the enemy, but reckless disregard for truth is.

Whether blatant or subliminal, intentional, or accidental, scholarly disagreement should never raise to the level of personal attacks or demeaning the opinions of others, particularly absent conclusive knowledge based on sound archaeological or scriptural evidence.

It is clear to this author that there is no archaeological evidence, to date, that Beit Lehi is either the home of the Book of Mormon prophet Lehi or his land of inheritance, or of any other prophet such as Zenos or Zenock. Likewise, neither is there any dependable or incontrovertible evidence that Lehi lived in the City of Jerusalem and that his land of inheritance was north of Jerusalem. Hopefully, this work has debunked that myth. It is this author’s view, however, that Beit Lehi is a more logical site for the home of Lehi and, especially, for his land of inheritance than the land north suggested by Chadwick.

Much of this writer’s information has come from the scholarly writings of Dr. Hugh Nibley. Dr. Nibley was viewed by many as one of the most influential apologists within Mormonism and the most renowned LDS scholar in Biblical and Mormon

scripture, as well as Egyptian, Hebrew and early Christian histories. He has even been praised by Evangelical scholars for his ability to draw upon historical sources to provide evidence for Latter-day Saint beliefs based on archaeological, linguistic, and historical evidence.<sup>63</sup> His works, while not official positions of the Church, are highly regarded within the LDS community. He published many articles in LDS Church magazines and his, *An Approach to the Book of Mormon*, was adopted in 1957 as a religious lesson manual by the Church.

One of Dr. Nibley's crowning works was his scholarly contribution to the work of translating and interpreting the Dead Sea Scrolls. His expertise in grasping the meaning of the ancient writings, particularly as it applied to sacred ordinances marveled his colleagues on the project. He was fluent in 16 languages. Brother Nibley was not without his critics. His harshest criticism came from his peers at BYU who charge that he misused many of his sources, failed in proper footnoting, and that the methodology he used was outdated as being too early 20<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>64</sup> To those critics we can now add Jeffrey Chadwick.

Despite these criticisms, Dr. Nibley's work has laid the groundwork for greater understanding of our ancient past and will continue to withstand the test of time. I am confident that a majority of LDS scholars, theologians, Church Authorities and BYU administrators would side with Dr. Nibley over Chadwick, especially when Chadwick's conclusions and suppositions are critically reviewed. Unlike 65 years of Hugh Nibley's works, there appears to be no interest in providing a peer review assessment of Chadwick's untenable methodologies and absurd conclusions.

When considering whether or not to write an article challenging the conclusions of Chadwick, I sought the occasion to visit with a General Authority for his opinion and for counsel on the matter. After our visit he called me to express his feelings that there is something significant about the site and counseled me to continue with the project; to seek for truth, but not to manufacture it. I take that counsel to also mean that I am not to make assumptions and suppositions that have no basis in fact, but to wait for truth to be unearthed. I commend that prudent counsel to all.

## **Epilogue**

Following the initial publication of my rebuttal, I received numerous letters, emails, and telephone calls. It was gratifying that so many had taken the time to read the article and to provide comments, which included faculty and administrators at the Brigham Young University, Church leaders and just every-day ordinary people who

welcome honest scholarly opinion and effort. One letter came from the Director of the BYU Studies Center disavowing the conclusions reached by Chadwick on behalf of the BYU Studies Center, The Maxwell Institute and Brigham Young University.

More than a few colleagues, acquaintances and students were quick to admit that Chadwick has an unhealthy zeal for his own opinions. The only disappointing response came directly from Jeffrey Chadwick. Written on non-BYU stationery (which he noted), Chadwick thanked me for sending him a copy of the article and then stated, “I found your remarks *most revealing*” (emphasis added). Frankly, I wasn’t sure if that was intended as a compliment, or not. In any event, Chadwick’s letter can be summarized from just a couple of the sentences lifted from his letter. He writes:

“I stand behind the article, *one-hundred percent.*”

Chadwick concludes:

“I will *respectfully* and *unapologetically* continue to present my article, the report contained therein, and the conclusions reached, *as correct and accurate in every respect*” (emphasis added).”

My initial thought was, “Did he really just use *respectfully* and *unapologetically* in referring to his article?” Although no apology was expected by this writer, I found Chadwick’s lack of circumspection and contriteness more baffling than all his assumptions, suppositions and conclusions which run perpendicular to common sense and scholarly reasoning. A colleague of Chadwick would write:

“I had always sensed a kind of intellectual deference, in some of Chadwick’s observations, to the cold clinical archeological methods of tangible substantiation, which seems to ignore compelling circumstantial evidence. Strange indeed that a ‘Mormon’ scholar wouldn’t leave the door a little more open.”

Strange indeed!

Several years later a member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter0day Saints would visit Beit Lehi. Following an extensive tour of site with his family and after a period for private reflection, the apostle offered the following assessment: “. . . *I have been deceived.*” Words of encouragement were given to all present to continue the work at the site and to continue to seek for truth. The apostle felt that the site had something meaningful to offer, whether related to the time of the Old Testament, the New Testament, the Book of Mormon, or all three, he was not certain. These words were followed by words of apology and a commitment that things at

Brigham Young University would change, and they did. Not long after that visit the FARMS organization was surgically replaced with a less contentious organization. Apologists were replaced and articles became more generic under the *Come Follow Me* Moniker. I believe the types of “scholarly” articles published by Dr. Chadwick, and others, played a significant role in refocusing the mission of the Maxwell Institute and the contents of its publications. Unfortunately, Chadwick’s articles remain on the Internet in an attempt to hinder the work of the Beit Lehi project.

Since first publishing this paper, we have continued to uncover history changing discoveries, including hewn subterranean installations and surface structures, ten or more columbaria (one being the largest ever found in Israel), nine olive presses, numerous water cisterns, quarries, three stables, several public buildings, towers, houses, hideaways, a cave with pictures drawn on the walls depicting boats, along with an inscription “Jesus is/was Here”, tombs, subterranean structures with pillars 60 feet tall, additional ancient engravings, ancient Christian churches, two additional Byzantine churches, a temple, inscriptions dealing with the house of “Zebedee” and, most significantly, the tomb of Salome (wife of Zebedee) with 57 inscriptions. Salome was the mother of apostles James and John, the sons of Zebedee. She was with Mary at the foot of the cross and was one of the women at the empty tomb and who heard the angels proclaim, “He is not here, He has risen.” She was a devote disciple of Christ and believed to be the mid-wife to Mary. It is generally believed that she is closely related to Mary and the Savior. Israel archaeologists have concluded that the fisherman found on the mosaic floor of the Byzantine Church are indeed those of James and John, placed there in tribute to their mother buried just a few hundred yards to the south. An Iron Age dwelling, tower and fortress have also been discovered but have yet to be excavated.

All these finds are miraculous when one considers that they have all been unearthed and excavated in about 150 days of actual excavation, largely by students and volunteers. Equally significant is the fact that the Beit Lehi site has been a scared area to Jews, Christians and Muslims. Many of the discoveries at Beit Lehi have not been made public in order to protect the sites, but the Israel Antiquity Authority and multiple Israeli archaeologists have confirmed all discoveries. There is so much more history and truth to discover, with less than 20% of the known site having been excavated.

What some believed to be nothing more than a rural, insignificant site, is now the largest lost city ever discovered in Israel. We have done test excavations covering almost a square mile of the site and have finally located the parameters of the settlement(s).

What is certain is that dozens of known structures are in need excavation. As one BYU scholar told me, “What you have discovered is a game changer.” Indeed it is!

### **Acknowledgement**

*The author expresses his deepest appreciation to editors and contributors Gary Rudd, Doug Witt, Elaine Watts, Debra Lynn, Dr. Oren Gutfeld and former General Authorities of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Without their selfless commitment and devotion to uncover the truth at the Beit Lehi, the pursuit of truth as a non-profit venture could not exist. More importantly, their insight that extends well beyond the realm of science and archaeology give me the courage, faith, and motivation to carry on.*

*The Beit Lehi project will not succeed without financial donations from good people willing to lend support, not for personal gain but for the pure gratification of contributing to causes which are of good report and praiseworthy. With you, I too seek after these things. For more information on what you can do to help and to receive regular updates on excavation activities, go to the official web site at [www.beitlehifoundation.org](http://www.beitlehifoundation.org).*

### **FOOTNOTES**

1. Jeffrey R. Chadwick, *Lehi's House at Jerusalem and the Land of His Inheritance*, Glimpses of Lehi's Jerusalem, The Maxwell Institute, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah (2004). Hereafter “Chadwick, *Lehi's House*.”; online at <http://www.preview.farmsresearch.com/publications/books.php?bookid=2>.
2. Jeffrey R. Chadwick, *Khirbet Beit Lei and the Book of Mormon: An Archaeologist's Evaluation*, the Religious Educator published by Religious Studies Center, Brigham Young University, Volume 10, No. 3, Provo, Utah (2009). Hereafter “Chadwick, *Khirbet Beit Lei*.”
3. Chadwick, *Khirbet Beit Lei*, page 31.
4. History of the Maxwell Institute-Introduction, [www://maxwellinsitute.byu.edu/about/introduction.php](http://www://maxwellinsitute.byu.edu/about/introduction.php) (2008).
5. History of the Maxwell Institute-Introduction, [www://maxwellinsitute.byu.edu/about/byustudies.php](http://www://maxwellinsitute.byu.edu/about/byustudies.php) (2008).
6. *Mission Statement*, Religious Studies Center, <http://.rsc.byu.edu/missionStatement.php>
7. *Message from Director*, Religious Studies Center, <http://rsc.byu.edu/directorMessage.php>.
8. Chadwick, *Khirbet Beit Lei*, page 43.
9. *Ibid*, pages 18-19.
10. *Ibid*, page 26.
11. *Ibid*, page 32.
12. Congress Volume, Vienna 1980 by John Adney Emerton.

13. Chadwick, *Khirbet Beit Lei*, page 41
14. Ibid, page 41; Cross, “Cave Inscriptions,” page 304.
15. Chadwick, *Khirbet Beit Lei*, page 18.
- 15a. Harold B. Lee, “Cherished Experiences” (1958), “Qualities of Leadership” page 7 (1970), Fireside address, Page 10 (1971); Gordon B. Hinckley, “*Deseret News*, Church Section, page 12 (Nov 3, 1979); Spencer W. Kimball, *Deseret News*, Church Section 5 (Nov 3, 1979). See also Galbraith, Ogden & Skinner, *Jerusalem The Eternal City*, Deseret Book, (1996) pages 505-507.
16. Ibid, pages 31-32.
17. Ibid, Page 32.
18. Ibid, page 29.
19. Book of Mormon, Alma 7:10.
20. Robert R. Bennett, *Jesus’ Birthplace and the Phrase ‘Land of Jerusalem*, Maxwell Institute, Brigham Young University (2000).
21. Chadwick, *Lehi’s House*, page 82.
22. Bennett, *Jesus’ Birthplace and the Phrase ‘Land of Jerusalem*, page 1
- 22a. S. Kent Brown, and Terrance L. Szink, *Lehi*, The Encyclopedia of Mormonism, Maxwell Institute, Brigham Young University, republished March 26, 2008, original 1992.
23. Hugh Nibley, *Lehi in the Desert, The world of the Jaredites, There were Jaredites* (1952, 1<sup>st</sup> ed., Salt Lake City: Deseret Book and FARMS, 1988), 7.
24. Chadwick, *Lehi’s House*, page 83.
25. Ibid, page 87.
26. Ibid, page 81.
27. Hugh Nibley, *Lehi in the Desert*, 1952, Part I, page 8.
28. Ibid; “I do not think that there is much doubt that the Hebrews were what we should call Arabs, using the term in its widest sense.” Alfred Guillaume, *The Habiru, the Hebrews, and Arabs*, PEFQ (1946), 65-67.
29. Hugh Nibley, *Lehi in the Desert*, 1952, Part II, page 1.
30. Jeffrey R. Chadwick, *The Names Lehi and Sariah—Language and Meaning*, Neal A. Maxwell Institute (2000).
31. Hugh Nibley, *Lehi in the Desert*, 1952, Part I, page 4.
32. Ibid, pages 1-3.
33. Ibid, page 9.
34. Ibid, pages 6-7
35. Ben McGuire, *Did Lehi Use Egyptian? Examining Jewish-Egyptian Relations in The Seventh Century B.C.*, Foundation for Apologetic Information & Research, (2002).
36. Ibid.
37. Hugh Nibley, *Lehi in the Desert*, Part II, Page 7.
38. LaMar Berrett, New Light: *The So-Called Lehi Cave*, Journal Book of Mormon Studies, Maxwell Institute, Volume 8, Issue 1 (1999), pgs 64-66.
39. Hugh Nibley, *Lehi in the Desert*, 1952, Part IV, page 5.

40. Hugh Nibley, *Lehi in the Desert*, 1952, Part I, page 8.
41. Chadwick, *Lehi's House*, page 83.
42. Ibid.
43. Hugh Nibley, *Lehi in the Desert*, 1952, Part I, page 6.
44. Chadwick, *Lehi's House*, Pages 82-83.
45. Chadwick, *Lehi's House*, page 105.
46. Ibid, page 106.
47. Ibid, pages 108-110.
48. Ibid, pages 111-112.
49. Hugh Nibley, *Lehi in the Desert*, 1952, Part I, page 8.
50. Chadwick, *Khirbet Beit Lei*, page 21.
51. Ibid, page 39.
52. Hugh Nibley, *Lehi in the Desert*, 1952, Part I, page 9.
53. Ibid; Rabbi Shlomo Riskin, *Shabbat Vayera 20 Cheshvan 5764*, 15 November 2003; <http://www.ohrtorahstone.org.il/parsha/5764/vayera64.htm>
54. Easton, Matthew George. M.A., D.D., "Definition for 'Beer-lahai-roi' *Eastons Bible Dictionary*; [www.bible-history.com - Eastons](http://www.bible-history.com - Eastons) (1897).
55. Z. Herzog, *Beer-sheba II: The Early Iron Age Settlements*, Institute of Archaeology, Tel Aviv University, Ramot Publishing Company, Tel Aviv (1984).
56. Hugh Nibley, *Lehi in the Desert*, 1952, Part I, page 9.
57. Lehi Hebraic Definition, Zion's Heritage Int'l; [www.latterdayisraelite.com/lehi.html](http://www.latterdayisraelite.com/lehi.html)
58. Jeffrey R. Chadwick, *The Names Lehi and Sariah—Language and Meaning*, Maxwell Institute, Provo, Utah (2000).
59. Ibid.
60. Ibid.
61. Chadwick, *Khirbet Beit Lei*, page 36.
62. Oren Gutfeld and Michal Haber, *A Guide to Beit Loya (Lehi)*, Beit Lehi Foundation (2009), page 10.
63. Hamblin, William J. (1990) "Time Vindicates Hugh Nibley". *FARMS Review of Books*. Provo, Utah: Maxwell Institute. Volume 2, Issue 1, pp. 119-127.
64. Kent P. Jackson, "Review of Hugh Nibley, *Old Testament and Related Studies*," *BYU Studies* 28 no. 4 (1988): 115-17; Ronald V. Huggins, "Hugh Nibley's Footnotes," *Utah Lighthouse Messenger* no. 110 (May 2008): 9-21.
65. Human Skeleton Remains in Two Burial Caves, N. Hass, *Israel Exploration Journal*, Volume 13, No. 2, Jerusalem (1963), pages 93-96.
65. Human Skeleton Remains in Two Burial Caves, N. Hass, *Israel Exploration Journal*, Volume 13, No. 2, Jerusalem (1963), pages 93-96.
66. Old Hebrew Inscriptions in a Burial Cave, J. Naveh, *Israel Exploration Journal*, Volume 13, No. 2, Jerusalem (1963), page 75.



67. Ibid, page 79
68. Ibid, pages 76-77.
69. Ibid, pages 81-82

Notes:

1. Lehi in the Desert, Parts I-V taken from [http://www.boap.org/LDS/Hugh-Nibley/Lehi\\_in\\_the\\_Desert\\_Part\\_I \(II; III; IV; V\).html](http://www.boap.org/LDS/Hugh-Nibley/Lehi_in_the_Desert_Part_I_(II;_III;_IV;_V).html) (page numbers different from original publication).
2. Some DVD's cited are available online at <http://beitlehifoundation.org> @ contact us.
3. See also [http://www.hadashot-esi.org.il/report\\_detail\\_eng.asp?Id?=1065 &magid=115](http://www.hadashot-esi.org.il/report_detail_eng.asp?Id?=1065 &magid=115).
4. Guide to Beit Loya (Beit Lehi-2009) is available at <http://beitlehifoundation.org>.
5. Many secondary sources have been cited, as original sources are not readily available to the author.

## BOOK OF MORMON RESOURCES

JUNE 5, 2015

### AT JERUSALEM [THE MEANING OF]

Dirt archaeology is expensive. Even a modest dig can cost hundreds of thousands of dollars per field season with more required for lab work to analyze samples and artifacts. Institutions sponsor most projects. Occasionally a generous soul comes along who is willing to privately fund excavation out of an altruistic motivation to advance scientific knowledge. I have met three such noble individuals.

Tim Tucker sponsors research at various sites in the state of Puebla, Mexico.

Joe V. Andersen funds excavation in the department of Baja Verapaz, Guatemala.

Alan Rudd supports field work at the Beit Lehi site about 35 kilometers SW of Jerusalem.

All three men have an admirable sense of mission arising from a deep personal and spiritual connection to the lands they study. All bristle at cavalier scholarly criticism which they view as cheap shots enabled by the relatively facile act of putting pen to paper. In contrast, these hardy explorers are fully invested, having expended considerable time and private treasure probing the significance of their chosen sites.

Beit Lehi has gained some notoriety among students of the Nephite text as a candidate for the Judean home of Lehi, Sariah and their children. Many LDS scholars, led by Jeffrey R. Chadwick of the BYU religion faculty, debunk that idea as a myth. The crux of the issue lies in the interpretation of [1 Nephi 1:4](#) and [1 Nephi 1:7](#). The text says Lehi dwelt and owned a house "at Jerusalem." Does that mean the walled city proper or its environs round about? As we have found dozens of times before in dealing with geographic questions, the text on this point is clear and unequivocal. "At Jerusalem" in Nephite parlance meant in the land of Jerusalem and was not limited to the urban area in the capital city.

The phrase "at Jerusalem" occurs 19 times in the text:

[1 Nephi 1:4](#) Lehi "dwelt at Jerusalem in all his days."

[1 Nephi 1:7](#) After witnessing a pillar of fire upon a rock, Lehi "returned to his own house at Jerusalem." [1 Nephi 2:13](#) "The Jews who were at Jerusalem" sought to take away Lehi's life.

[1 Nephi 5:4](#) Had Lehi not seen visions he would have "tarried at Jerusalem" and perished with his brethren. The Kingdom of Judah was destroyed by the Babylonians under Nebuchadnezzar in a series of military actions ca. 597 - 582 B.C.

The context for these passages is explained in Nephi's colophon: "The Lord warns Lehi to depart out of the land of Jerusalem" and "Nephi taketh his brethren and returneth to the land of Jerusalem after the record of the Jews."

[1 Nephi 19:13-14](#) In Nephi's gloss on Zenos, he explains that because they will crucify the Christ, the Jews "who are at Jerusalem" will be scourged by all people, wander in the flesh, perish, become a hiss and a byword, and be hated among all nations. This is an accurate description of the Jewish diaspora and holocaust.

[1 Nephi 19:20](#) explains that Nephi, like earlier prophets, saw in vision the destruction decreed "for those who are at Jerusalem." The Lord was merciful to Nephi, warning him to flee and avoid death. [1 Nephi 19:22](#), [2 Nephi 1:3](#) and [Ether 13:7](#) all provide context. The land of Jerusalem was destroyed.

[1 Nephi 22:3-4](#) Many in scattered Israel "are already lost from the knowledge of those who are at Jerusalem." The more part of the tribes will be scattered upon all the face of the earth, and also among all nations, and upon the isles of the sea.

[2 Nephi 6:8](#) In Jacob's gloss on Isaiah, he explains that "those who were at Jerusalem, from whence we came, have been slain and carried away captive." After describing the Savior's mortal ministry and crucifixion, Jacob prophesies the Jewish diaspora, holocaust, and eventual return to "the lands of their inheritance." [2 Nephi 6:9-11](#).

[2 Nephi 9:5](#) Jacob refers to prophecies that the Savior in his mortal ministry will "show himself unto those at Jerusalem, from whence we came."

[2 Nephi 10:3-6](#) Jacob again speaks of the mortal ministry of the Savior among the Jews who are in the more wicked part of the world. He calls them "they at Jerusalem" and prophecies the Jewish diaspora at the hands of the Romans.

[2 Nephi 25](#) is Nephi's plain explanation of Isaiah 2-14 which he has just quoted verbatim in [2 Nephi 12-24](#). Isaiah explicitly describes the parallel couplet "Judah and Jerusalem"

[2 Nephi 12:1](#), [2 Nephi 13:1](#), [2 Nephi 13:8](#), [2 Nephi 15:3](#) as does Malachi [3 Nephi 24:4](#). Isaiah refers to "their land" [2 Nephi 12:7-8](#) and "whole Palestina." [2 Nephi 24:29-31](#). Isaiah also rhythmically couples Zion and Jerusalem [2 Nephi 14:3-4](#). [2 Nephi 20:12](#), [2 Nephi 20:32](#), [2 Nephi 20:36-37](#). Nephi's plain descriptions of Isaiah's referents include:

"among the Jews" [2 Nephi 25:1](#), [2 Nephi 25:6](#), [2 Nephi 25:9](#)

"of the Jews" [2 Nephi 25:2](#), [2 Nephi 25:5-6](#), [2 Nephi 25:18](#)

"from Jerusalem" [2 Nephi 25:4-5](#)

"the Jews" [2 Nephi 25:5](#), [2 Nephi 25:15](#)

"Jerusalem" [2 Nephi 25:14](#), [2 Nephi 25:19](#)

"land of Jerusalem" and "land of their inheritance" [2 Nephi 25:11](#)

"at Jerusalem" and "the regions round about" [2 Nephi 25:6](#)

[Alma 7:10](#) could hardly be more explicit. Bethlehem was "at Jerusalem which is the land of our forefathers."

[Alma 11:4](#) Mormon says the Nephites used a different measure of stored value than "the Jews who were at Jerusalem." Helaman 16:18 refers to the mortal ministry of the Savior "unto them who shall be at Jerusalem." Helaman 16:19 clarifies that the geographic referent is "the land of Jerusalem."

[3 Nephi 10:5](#) The risen Lord compares "ye people of the house of Israel, ye that dwell at Jerusalem" with the fallen Nephites and Lamanites.

[3 Nephi 15:14](#) The risen Lord tells the Nephites that knowledge of them was withheld from "your brethren at Jerusalem." In the following verse the Lord again refers to "them" who are in "the land."

[3 Nephi 16:4](#) The risen Lord says "my people at Jerusalem" are "they who have seen me and been with me in my ministry." Earlier in the passage He describes the geographic referent as "the land of Jerusalem." [3 Nephi 16:1](#).

[3 Nephi 17:8](#) The risen Lord perceives that the Nephites wanted to see the same healing miracles He had "done unto your brethren at Jerusalem."

[4 Nephi 1:31](#) "The Jews at Jerusalem sought to kill Jesus." Conspiracy against the Savior is attested as early as [Matthew 12:14](#), [Mark 3:6](#), and [Luke 6:11](#).

Close reading of all 19 occurrences of the phrase "at Jerusalem" in the text shows a consistent pattern. "At Jerusalem" among the Nephites meant in the land of Jerusalem and environs. It was not limited to the capital city itself. This does not mean Beit Lehi was the ancestral home of Lehi and his family, but it means Beit Lehi could have been Lehi's home, contra Chadwick.