

That Great City  
ZARAHEMLA

SENSE OF PLACE

THE SEARCH FOR  
THE LOST CITY OF

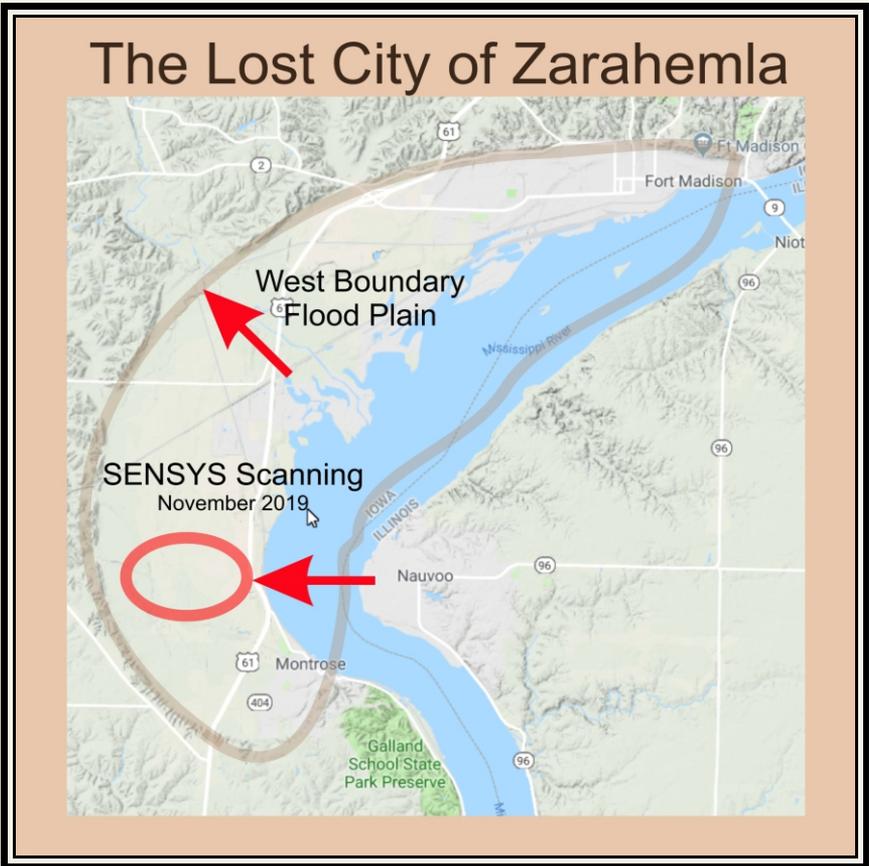
THE BOOK OF MORMON

May 14, 2019

**HEARTLAND**  
  
**RESEARCH GROUP**

The narrative of the Book of Mormon is set in time and place. The main part of the book tells the story of Lehi and his family who left from Jerusalem to America before the destruction of the First Temple. In their new world the descendants of these ancient immigrants grew and prospered for a 1,000 years.

The book has a total of 6,000 verses of which 500 refer to geography. The book has much to say about time and place for these people who lived from 600 BC to AD 421. In more than 500 pages there are more than 500 different place names. In these pages no other place is as frequently mentioned as Zarahemla. That place name is found in 72 verses. Just as Jerusalem is the great city of the Bible, so Zarahemla is the great city of the Book of Mormon. Zarahemla is an ancient city which has exact points in the timeline of the world. Until now, no one has known



**Figure 1.** The oval on the map is the starting point for the discovery of the Lost City of Zarahemla. In the 1<sup>st</sup> Century the flood plain from Montrose to Fort Madison was critical for supplying fresh produce for the people of Zarahemla. On that plain there are about 16,000 acres of fertile land bounded on the west by high bluffs.

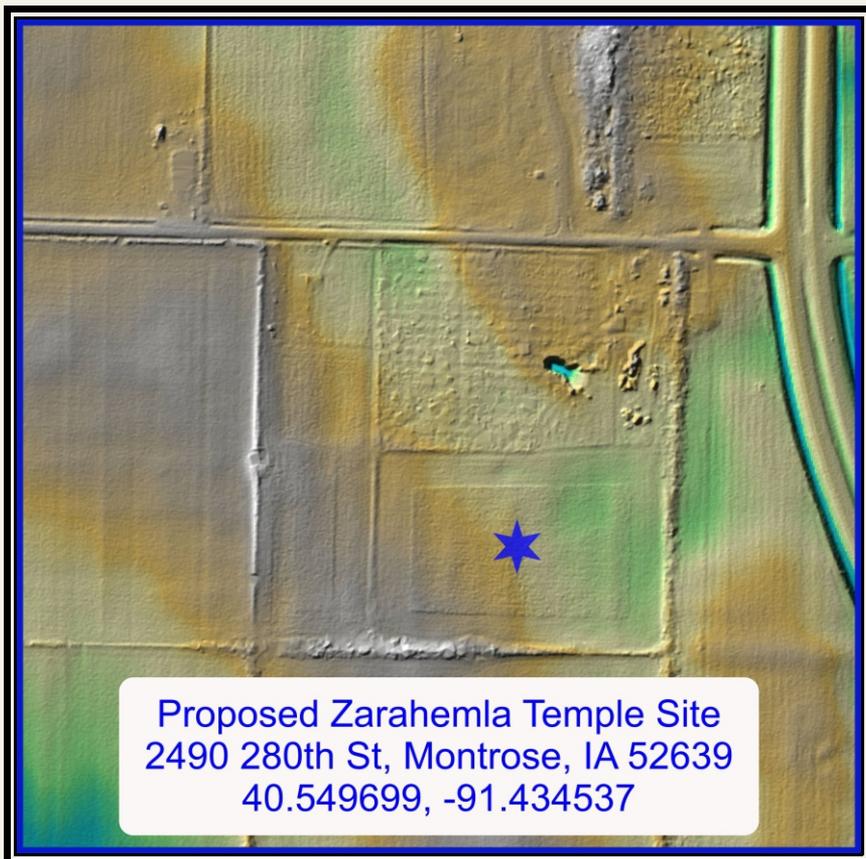


**Figure 2.** Google Map View of Proposed Site for Location of Zarahemla Temple. Fifteen Acres Available for SENSYS Scanning in 2019 after the harvest.

for sure the details of its geographical settings. Our goal is to correct this situation. There is no history for any city without time. There is no history for any city without place. Any history which lacks a position in time and a sense of place is inauthentic. We desire to give exact positions in time and place for Zarahemla. We intend to use the tools of modern science to discover the location of this city. Taking the Book of Mormon as our guide, we seek to define coordinates for that great city Zarahemla.

Figures 1 - 3 show the exact point for starting the research. After years of study, Wayne May has identified the probable site for the Zarahemla Temple. This site has 15 acres.

The first research goal is to identify features of interest that are under the ground on the temple site. We will use SENSYS equipment to create magnetometry imagery of the activities of people who lived on that land 2,000 years ago. From there we



**Figure 3.** Color-Coded Ranges for Elevations of LiDAR Image.

will look for ancient features in the ground from many as 200 acres of crop lands. All this data will be plotted on digital maps.

The second research goal is to locate the city wall for Zarahemla. After we have done that, we will look within the limits of that wall for evidence of human habitation.

The third research goal is to find a layer of ash which is broadly and uniformly distributed at a certain level under ground. By using the science of radiocarbon dating, we expect to establish that the ash is from the burning of Zarahemla on Passover Day in AD 33.

As additional goals, we will seek to confirm the re-building of Zarahemla in the 1st Century and the city's destruction by war in AD 325. Zarahemla was in a place where there were hundreds of millions of acres. When looking for the lost city one needs to make a hypothesis for the selection of a place where the search can begin. We will begin SENSYS scanning in November 2019 on the west side of the

Mississippi directly across from Nauvoo.

There are many reasons for selecting the area around Nauvoo as a place for searching for the Great City of Zarahemla. There are many people who favor this location for Zarahemla including Wayne May, Calvert Christensen, Jonathan Neville, Kevin Price and Joseph Smith. Here is a list of some reasons.

1. Many people have developed integrated presentations that place the events of the Book of Mormon within the rigor of GPS grids. These grids are essential for modern map making. The resulting geography is called the Heartland Model. This model gives supporting evidence that the events of the Book of Mormon took place in the Eastern half of the United States.
2. The Heartland Model puts the location of Zarahemla on the western side of the Upper Mississippi River across from Nauvoo.
3. The Mississippi River coincides well with the River Sidon in the Book of Mormon.
4. A significant outcropping of limestone rocks on the bottom of the Mississippi River at the Zarahemla site creates the Des Moines Rapids. The shallows of these Rapids created the perfect location to cross the River Sidon on foot to and from Zarahemla. These rapids were the only place over thousands of miles where



**Figure 4.** This photo shows men in the early 1900's busting down and destroying ancient earthworks in Chillicothe, Ohio. From this site a small piece of bark from a Black Locust Tree was found with certain artifacts. One hundred years later radiocarbon dating of that fragment of tree bark fixed its age at AD 40. In the chronology of the Book of Mormon, AD 33 has great significance. These men are digging a site which is associated with the time of Christ's visit to America.

someone could on foot cross the River. The Book of Mormon specifically mentions that an ancient army crossed the River Sidon on foot at Zarahemla.

5. Before his martyrdom, Joseph Smith revealed in the Doctrine and Covenants that the area on the western banks of the Mississippi River directly across from Nauvoo should be named Zarahemla.

6. Early church leaders including Wilford Woodruff and Parley P. Pratt referred to the area as Zarahemla.

7. The valley area on the west side of the Mississippi River opposite Nauvoo has a flood plain of rich soils, ideal for farming. It includes approximately 16,000 acres, all within walking distance of the proposed city of Zarahemla.

8. The area on the Nauvoo side of the river fits well the area described in the Book of Mormon where significant battles between the Nephites and Lamanites transpired.

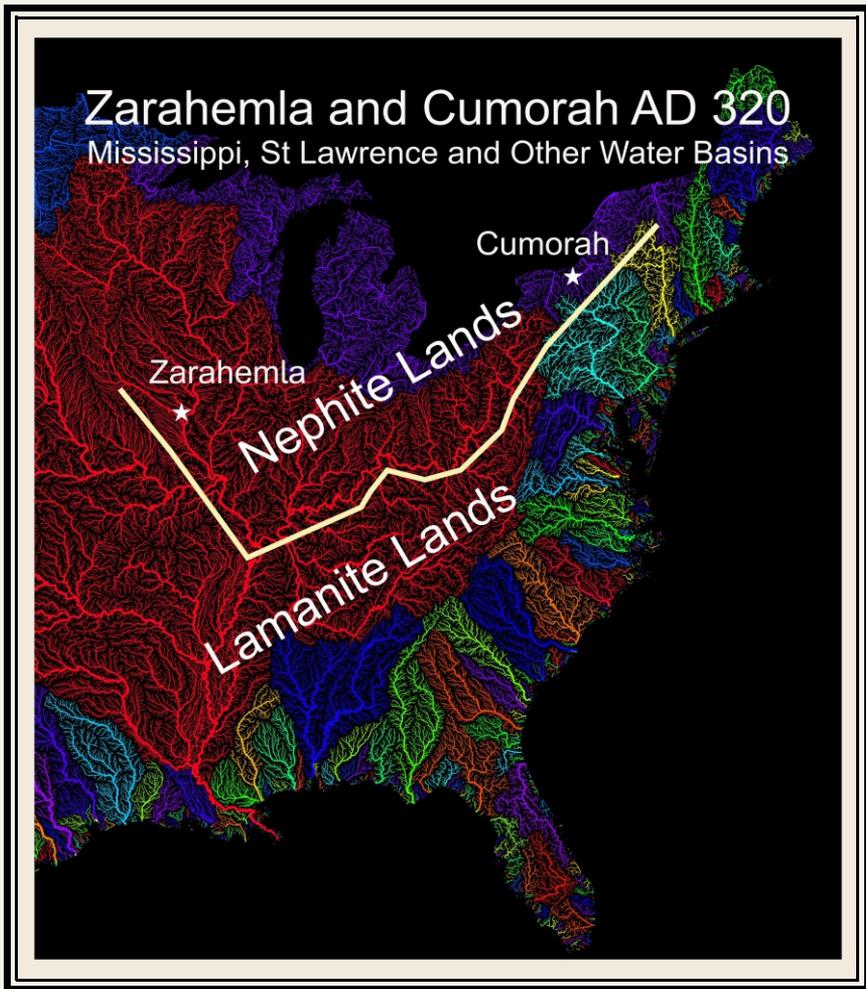
9. Many ancient burial mounds are found in the area that correspond well with Book of Mormon dates for battles.

10. Many artifacts have been found in the area including breast plates, headgear and arm shields.

There are advanced technologies which measure and identify ancient features that are buried in the ground. These technologies are based on solid scientific principles. The new procedures have had great success in unearthing ancient features in other parts of the world. The most notable example is from Stonehenge. There German engineers made magnetic scans of adjacent lands. The scanning revealed features in the ground which enlarged the world's understanding of that famous site. The same German technology will be used for discovering the lands of the Book of Mormon.

Cities are located on large landscapes. SENSYS technology locates buried features which were created from the activities of people who live 2,000 years ago. In 2018 German technology located buried houses which are from the 1st Century. On a hilltop in Ohio the results of SENSYS surveys identified exact positions for more than a half dozen round houses. Some round houses were large with diameters of 64 feet. SENSYS makes it possible to scan thousands of acres. Each data reading has GPS coordinates which are within an accuracy of 1/4". There are billions of data points. The plotting of digital images from these points are the basis for discovering features for the lost city of Zarahemla.

We will make magnetic images from data which come from the ground. These digital images will locate ancient features in the crop land of Iowa. The images will be plotted on digital maps and from these images we hope to locate and unearth the remains of Zarahemla. We are looking for the foundations of a city wall. Jerusalem in the 1st Century had a wall which was 12,000 feet in length. In that same century the Roman city of London had a wall with a length of 10,000 feet. Ancient walls



**Figure 5.** Water sheds in different colors for rivers in eastern half of the United States. Map also shows the continental locations for Zarahemla and Cumorah as well as the general border line between the Nephites and Lamanites in AD 320.

were expensive and gave important protection to the populations of cities.

- Zarahemla was the national city for the Nephite government that controlled a half million square miles. We expect to find traces of public buildings.
- Zarahemla was a city of commerce and trade. We expect to find roads and market places.
- Zarahemla was a city of ritual and religion. We expect to find traces of temples.

- Zarahemla was a city of entertainment. We expect to find places where ancient people gathered for public events.

- Zarahemla was a city which was destroyed by fire on Passover in AD 33 and by war in AD 325. We expect to find remnants of these destructions.

The scanning of the likely site of Zarahemla will begin this year after the harvest. We have selected 200 acres where we know magnetic technology will reveal underground features. The German equipment is already in America. We are making arrangements to lease the equipment. We expect that the first phase of our research will cost about \$50,000. We seek money to begin this investigation. The Book of Mormon identifies Zarahemla as the main city for a centralized government. The city had a hierarchy of social classes. The city had a standing army with a defensive wall. City life benefitted from the division of labor. People in the city enjoyed the fruits of intelligent effort. They knew writing, literature, art, mathematics, civil engineering, metallurgy, and complex strategies for protecting themselves against hostile neighbors.

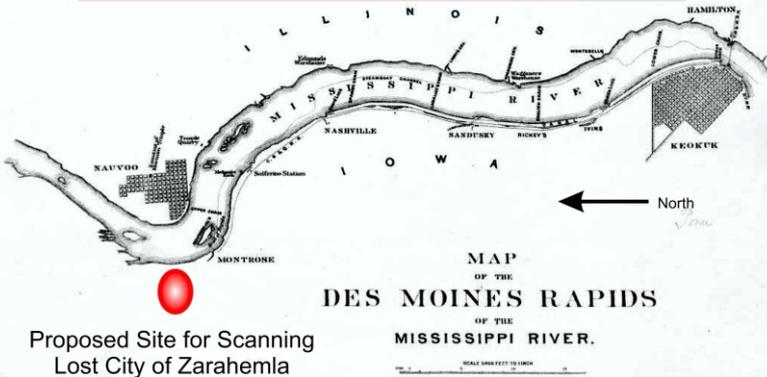
The Book of Mormon places many events relating to Zarahemla within a framework of time with which we are familiar. For example, at the time of Passover in AD 33 Zarahemla caught fire and burned to the ground. The burning of such a large city created tons of ash. That ash is an important stratigraphic layer which is below the surface of the ground. The radiocarbon dating of even one gram of the ash from the AD 33 Passover Fire would be sufficient to draw conclusions about the site and about the nature and date of its occupation. The discovery of such a layer of ash in the ground is a major research objective. We believe that best archaeological practices will confirm the truthfulness of the accounts which the Book of Mormon give concerning Zarahemla.

The proposed location for the scanning of Zarahemla is on a bend in the Upper Mississippi River just before the Des Moines Rapids. These rapids have had a profound impact on the transport of goods on the waters of the Upper Mississippi. Limestone formations at the bottom of the river created rapids which played an important role in the decision to build-up the city 2,000 years ago.

In its natural state, before the construction of the Keokuk Dam in 1913, the Mississippi at Nauvoo widened from 2,500 feet to 4,500 feet where it began its drop of 22 feet over 11 miles over shallow limestone rocks to the confluence with Des Moines River. The existence of these rapids over hard limestones stopped river traffic during the dry season. During low water, the transport of goods at the bend in the river required the unloading, the portaging and the reloading of raw materials and foodstuffs. Otherwise, the outcropping of limestone in the river's bottom would easily tear the bottoms of river vessels which would cause the vessels to sink. The rocks were an obstacle to the movement of millions of tons of goods and were the main reason for the building of the city of Zarahemla.

Zarahemla was an ancient city in America. Today no one knows the exact location

The Des Moines Rapids on the Upper Mississippi in its natural state widens from 2,500 feet to 4,500 feet in width at Nauvoo as it drops 22 feet over 11 miles over shallow limestone rocks to the confluence with Des Moines River.



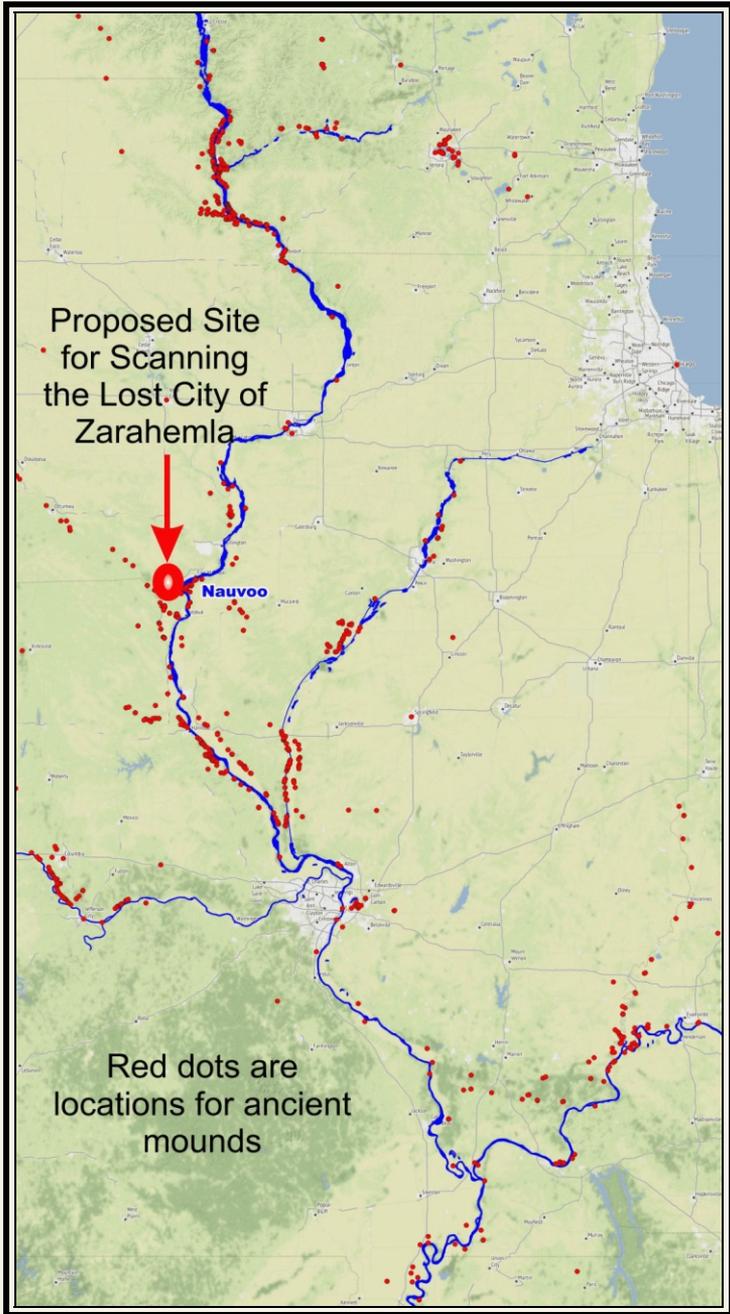
**Figure 6.** Proposed Scanning Site for Lost City of Zarahemla Placed on 1872 Map Drawn by U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

of Zarahemla. Many imagine that the well-known and ancient cities of stone found in many areas of the world are models for the likely construction of the city of Zarahemla. After all, so many ancient cities were constructed in a common fashion. The ancients placed cut stones on top of cut stones to construct their walls and their buildings. Some argue that if Zarahemla were a great city in history, it would have been constructed from cut stones and as such it would be impossible to hide such a city from being discovered by modern-day archaeologists.

Let us consider an alternative view for the construction of Zarahemla. There are interesting points of comparison with the history of Novgorod of 1,000 years ago to the history of Zarahemla of 2,000 years ago.

The establishment of the great nation of Russia finds its roots in Novgorod. In AD 1000 Novgorod was more important than Moscow. It was a city built mainly of earth and wood. Zarahemla in BC 100 was likely a city built mainly of earth and wood. Novgorod was the main city of a territory which had an area of about 500,000 square miles. Zarahemla was the main city of a territory which had an area of about 500,000 square miles. Novgorod was a city which via the Volga River connected to the heartland of Russia. Zarahemla was on the Upper Mississippi which connected it to the heartland of America. Novgorod resisted the Mongols, the Golden Horde of Asia. Zarahemla resisted the Lamanites, the scourge of the Nephites.

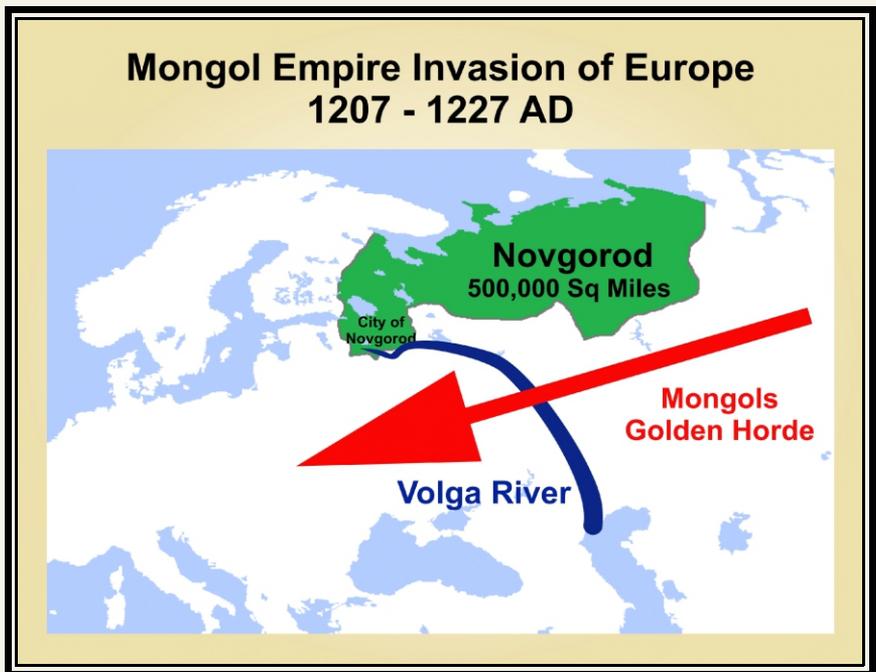
Here are some comments concerning the two cities.



**Figure 7.** Locations of Ancient Mounds in the Region of the Upper Mississippi.

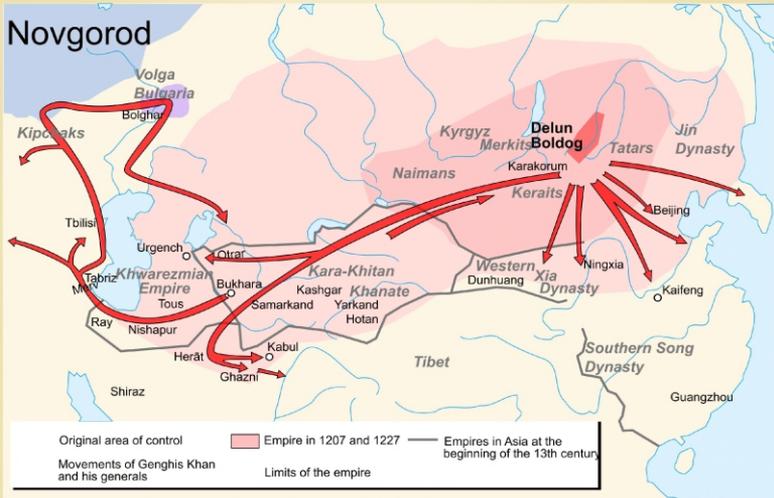
(1) Novgorod: The city is one of the most intensively and continuously studied urban sites in northern Europe. Systematic excavations began in 1932 and have continued almost every year since. The excellent preservation of organic and inorganic material in its anaerobic soils, including the structural remains of streets, properties, and buildings, has made it possible to study entire quarters of the town as well as the activities of its inhabitants. With deposits, up to 24-feet deep in places, and with well-dated sequences from the early to the mid-10th century, its importance to the study of both medieval Russia and the development of Europe cannot be overemphasized. In addition, excavations have recovered many examples of the organic remains normally lost to archaeologists, including a stunning collection of birch bark letters, unique written documents of the medieval period, which now number over a thousand separate inscriptions. Because of this, the site has received attention from a wide range of scholars from differing fields including medieval archaeology, history, architecture, botany, zoology, and linguistics.

(2) Zarahemla: The city is known in time but unknown in place. Until now the only references to the city are found in the Book of Mormon. It is time for modern technology to locate Zarahemla so that the dust may reveal the truth and the world may marvel at that city's rich history.



**Figure 8.** Defense of Novgorod Against Invasion of Mongolian Army, Golden Horde, in 1207 - 1227.

## Mongol Empire Expansion 1207 - 1227 AD

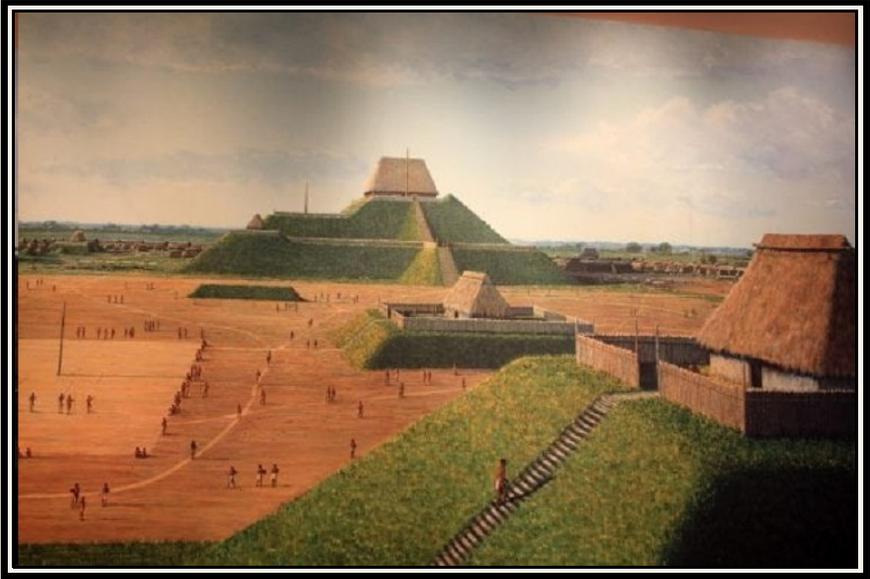


**Figure 9.** Mongols in the 13<sup>th</sup> Century Established the Largest Land Empire in World History.

The influence of the Mongol invasion on the territories of Kievan Rus' was uneven. The Novgorod Republic continued to prosper in the 13th Century, but new entities, the rival cities of Moscow and Tver, began to flourish under the Mongols. Moscow's eventual dominance of northern and eastern Rus' was in large part attributable to the Mongols.

It seems reasonable to draw parallels between Novgorod of the 13th Century to Zarahemla of the 1st Century. Both cities had relatively large populations and controlled large areas of land. Both cities had access to continental river systems which connected them to vast territories. Both cities were in conflict with large armies. Both cities used earth and wood for construction. Both cities were located on relatively flat terrain. Both cities over time became less important locations. Novgorod's place in history decreased as Moscow's place increased. Zarahemla's place in history became completely lost after its destruction in the 4th Century by the Lamanites. The histories of both cities are now greatly benefiting from new advances in archaeological technologies.

In the last few years there have been scores of reports about the discovery of the Lost City of Etzanoi on the bluffs near the confluence of the Walnut and Arkansas rivers in Kansas. Professor Donald Blakeslee, an archaeologist from Wichita State University, takes credit for finding this lost city. His success was based at least on two things. First, he had original documents and second he had new technologies. The Professor read and re-read 17th Century documents kept as journals and



**Figure 10.** In 1601 Conquistadors reported their finding of the City of Etzanoa where there were as many as 20,000 inhabitants. They wrote in their journals that walking through the city would take two or three days. Here is a depiction of the city as reportedly seen by 80 European adventurers who were looking for a fabled city of gold.

prepared as official government reports by Juan de Oñate. In 1601 he was the last of the Conquistadors who were commissioned by the Spanish Crown to seek glory and fortune by discovering at least one of the seven cities of gold which were reported to be in the new world.

Juan de Oñate took 80 men on a journey of discovery. He kept a journal. The Spanish Crown paid the men to look for one of the fabled cities of gold. In his journal Juan de Oñate wrote that they discovered a large city that had as many as 2,000 houses with a population of 20,000 people who lived on a landscape of 3,200 acres. Juan de Oñate drew sketches and wrote about the details of his discovery. The Spanish adventurer called the city Etzanoa. Soon after its discovery in the 17th Century the population of Etzanoa declined to zero and the city's location became lost to history. The disappearance of this large American city was much like the disappearance of Zarahemla. Both cities over time went out of view and their locations became unknown. The only evidence of these cities became ancient artifacts and features that were buried in the ground under the surface of the plow zone in fields which had row crops of corn and beans. No one could have imagined ten years ago that a few farmers were working soil where some of America's largest cities were once located. It would take old narratives and new technologies to bring these cities back to their proper historical settings.



**Figure 11.** Archaeologist Donald Blakeslee and his crew of field school students at work on a hillock just east of the Walnut River in Arkansas City to unearth more artifacts from the long-lost city of Etzanao as reported in *The Cowley Courier Traveler*, June 7, 2018.

For the last 400 years many historians and archaeologists read the original Spanish documents and felt that the Lost City of Etzanao had little or no connection to reality. Professor Blakeslee studied these same Spanish records which others had pushed to the side. He thought that they were accurate in their details and he wanted to find the city. He also became aware that there are new technologies that use magnetic sensors and GPS mapping. These new technologies had already discovered important features buried underground at several archaeological sites outside the United States. Professor Blakeslee gained access to the new remote sensing equipment through the U.S. National Park Services. He began his search for the Lost City of Etzanao in an open field where a young man had recently found a Spanish cannon ball. The Professor got magnetic images which showed below the surface of the ground clear features which were associated with the existence of an ancient city. The outlines of the city soon appeared out of the ground and it was measured to be as large as what Juan de Oñate had described in his journal of 1601.

Professor Blakeslee's research sets a pattern that we wish to follow. We read and re-read an ancient record which describes the existence and location of the Lost City of Zarahemla. We identify a location on a large river as a possible site for the

existence of that Lost City. We then apply the same technologies which Professor Blakeslee used to find the Lost City of Etzanao. We expect to be as successful in our search for Zarahemla as he was in his search for Etzanao.

What does a pre-industrial city of 20,000 people look like in America? Let us compare the details of the populations of the Lost City of Etzanao in 1601 to the 33 cities which were listed in the United States Census of 1800. From that Census we learn that if the Lost City of Etzanao had existed at the time of the independence of the United States it would have been ranked in the top tier of American cities right after New York, Philadelphia, Baltimore and Boston. By this measure, Etzanao was indeed a large American city. We expect that Zarahemla will be as large or larger than Etzanao. We are looking for a Lost City which has more than 2,000 houses and a wall which is as long as 10,000 feet.

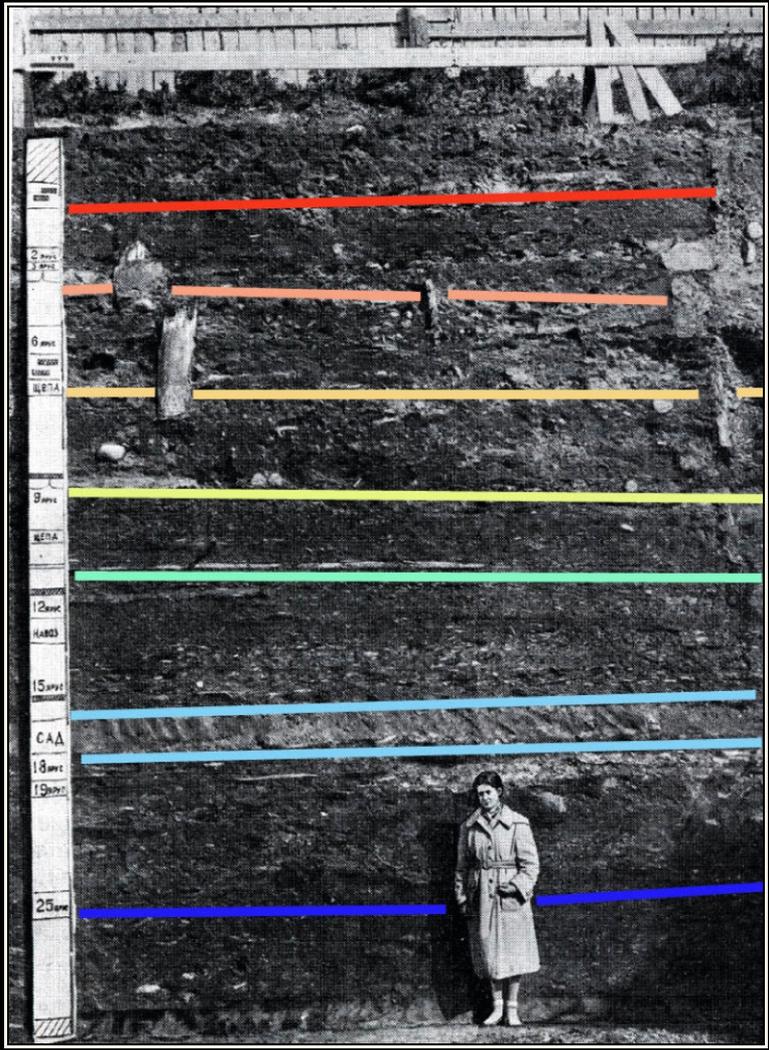
We need money to pay for the search of the Lost City of Zarahemla. The Heartland Research Group has already spent \$25,000 for its SENSYS scanning in Ohio during July and December of 2018. These scans involved the talent of 30 engineers in Bad Saarow, Germany.

There are dozens of talented people who have helped so far on a pro bono basis. We are still in the early stages of our research. We want to move forward in a more professional manner so we will be able to pay regular rates to those people who have the talent and the interest to do this research. The intent of this research is to give the Book of Mormon the same sense of space which already exists for the Bible. The success of the research will have a long lasting impact on the faith of millions of people. This is our goal. We welcome the chance to try.

We are using the best technologies which are available in the world. We are using the best software programs for managing billions of pieces of information. This is an on going project. The next phase of our research will be in November 2019. We expect that after the harvest we will be able to identify underground features that will be plotted on digital maps. We expect that the existence of these features in the ground will tie the real world to the Lost City of Zarahemla.

As in all original research there are great risks. We recognize the existence of these risks and are ready to go in the direction which the truth springing from the ground will take us.

We welcome your support and will be active in our reporting as we move forward.



**Figure 10.** Excavation of Ancient City of Novgorod during time of the Soviet Union.

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