

belief. This must come from another source. The same is true of the Book of Mormon. Initial and continuing faith and testimony come from prayerful study of its spiritual message.

In this light, the existence of the Book of Mormon is the most convincing proof of its own authenticity. For open-minded inquirers, the materiality of the book and the remarkable consistency of its narrative are sufficient grounds for taking the book seriously and considering its truthfulness. But the ultimate question of truthfulness is a spiritual one requiring faith in the possibility of a spiritual answer from a divine source. Sincere inquirers, Latter-day Saints or otherwise, need to test the promise of the prophet Moroni² and read the book, ponder, and pray. There is no adequate, secular shortcut to the difficult process of personal revelation. Believers who put stock in physical evidences confuse the real basis of their belief. Testimony from the earth follows that from the heavens. This principle was well summarized by President Gordon B. Hinckley: "The evidence for [the Book of Mormon's] truth, for its validity in a world that is prone to demand evidence, lies not in archaeology or anthropology, though these may be helpful to some. It lies not in word research or historical analysis, though these may be confirmatory. The evidence for its truth and validity lies within the covers of the book itself. The test of its truth lies in reading it" (52).

See also *Transoceanic crossings, pre-Columbian.*

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Archeantus A Nephite who along with other "choice men" lost his life in an intense battle with the Lamanites in the latter part of the fourth century A.D. (Moro. 9:2). Mormon's singling out Archeantus in his epistle to Moroni², along with Luram and Emron by name, may have indicated his military importance to the Nephites, personal friendship, or both.

Aright See Appendix C.

Armor A specialized type of military equipment designed to protect the body from wounds. Armor has been widely used throughout history in most regions of the world. The Book of Mormon uses eight terms for armor: breast-plates, shields, armor, head-plates, arm-shields, animal skins, thick clothing, and bucklers (a type of a shield). A comparison of the descriptions of armor in the Book of Mormon with pre-Columbian archaeological evidence indicates that most armor was made of animal skins, cloth, wood, or stone. The only reference to metal armor in the Book of Mormon is to a Jaredite breastplate (Mosiah 8:10), which may roughly correspond to iron mirror-like breast-plates known to have been used by the Olmecs. The Book of Mormon states that non-Nephite peoples had inferior types of armor until the first century B.C. (Alma 3:5; 43:19–37), when they seem to have begun to adopt Nephite-style armor (Alma 49:6). The standard system of armor described in the Book of Mormon consisted of a basic cloak or vest of thick fabric or animal skin, a breastplate, a headplate, and a shield, which broadly corresponds with artistic and archaeological evidence of pre-Columbian armor from Mesoamerica. Book of Mormon armor also differs from the biblical descriptions of armor. Although coats of mail or scale (small overlapping pieces of metal sewn onto a leather jacket), greaves (leg armor), and helmets are conspicuous in biblical accounts of warfare (1 Sam. 17:5–6), they are absent from the Book of Mormon. Likewise, scale or mail armor and greaves are not found in early classic artistic and archaeological records in the New World.