

We may assume that God reveals similar concepts to different people at different times and that such similarities in theme are to be expected. The lingering question is whether such concepts could be expected to be found in identical sequences of ideas, phrases, and sentences. Consider the story of Judith in the Apocrypha compared to the decapitation of Laban in the Book of Mormon:

1. In this story Judith/Nephi are servants of God. They encounter Holofernes/Laban who wants to destroy God's people (Judith 7:1; 8:7; 1 Ne. 3:25). Interestingly, "Laban" is a name that appears in Judith's narrative (8:26).
2. Judith/Nephi leave/enter the city secretly by night. They find Holofernes/Laban upon the bed/ground, asleep and drunk with wine (Judith 13:2; 1 Ne. 4:4-5, 7).
3. Both take Holofernes/Laban by the hair and with his own sword cut off his head (Judith 13:6-8; 1 Ne. 4:9, 18).
4. Judith/Nephi then take some of Holofernes/Laban's possessions. When they rejoin their people, there is great rejoicing in their success (Judith 13:12; 14:9; 15:11; 1 Ne. 4:19, 38; 5:9).
5. Both groups celebrate by offering burnt offerings to the Lord (Judith 16:18; 1 Ne. 5:9).

Elsewhere in the Book of Mormon, one wonders if the twelve apostles of Jesus could be the model for the Nephite twelve disciples. For instance, the New Testament apostles include men with three duplicate sets of names: Simon Peter, Simon the Canaanite, James the son of Alphaeus, James the son of Zebedee, Judas the brother of James, and Judas Iscariot (Luke 6:13-16; Matt. 10:2-4; Mark 3:16-19; 1:13). The American twelve similarly include three sets of duplicate names: two men named Jonas, two named Mathoni (Mathoni and Mathonihah), and two named Kumen (Kumen and Kumenonhi) (see 3 Ne. 19:4). The Old World twelve include three sets of brothers: Andrew and Simon, James and John, and Judas and James. Among the American twelve are two sets of brothers and a father and son: Mathoni and Mathonihah, Nephi and Timothy, and Timothy's

son Jonas. These parallels suggest a close relationship with the New Testament text. In chapter three, I will further examine themes in 3 Nephi.

For now, let us turn our attention to the American antiquities that formed such an immediate and compelling topic of study and discussion in young Joseph's environment. Dan Vogel's *Indian Origins and the Book of Mormon* demonstrates how extensively ideas concerning American antiquities were discussed in Joseph's era and how relevant these nineteenth-century views are to the Book of Mormon. For example, the most popular notion at the time was that Native Americans descended from Israelites. Genetically, it is now accepted that Indians are of Siberian and Mongolian extraction and that they migrated from Asia across the Bering Strait. Besides sharing distinctive genes, the corresponding morphological similarities are striking: "the characteristic eyefold, the pigmented spot which appears at the base of the spine of infants, and the shovel shape of the incisor. These traits have been found in varying proportions among every Indian group studied."³⁵

During the last ten years, scientists from various research organizations, including biologists from Brigham Young University, have tested the DNA of over 7,000 American Indians. These tests cover about 130 tribes scattered throughout North, Central, and South America. This research has revealed that in excess of 99 percent of the ancestors of living Native American women arrived on the American continent from Asia over 12,000 years ago. About 90 percent of the men have Y-chromosome DNA from the same place of origin. Lesser DNA lineages originate in Africa or Europe, most likely Spain, but not from the Middle East.³⁶

35. Dan Vogel, *Indian Origins and the Book of Mormon: Religious Solutions from Columbus to Joseph Smith* (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1986), 51-52, 69-72.

36. Theodore G. Schurr, "Mitochondrial DNA and the Peopling of the New World," *American Scientist* 88 (May-June 2000): 246-53; Simon Southerton to Grant Palmer, 16 Oct. 2000. Southerton, a Mormon geneticist with