

I will go into this in more depth at some time, but until just recently (2006), the introduction page in the Book of Mormon said all of the people chronicled in the book “were destroyed, except the Lamanites, and they are the **principal** ancestors of the American Indians.” The new introduction reads much the same, but says the Lamanites “are **among** the ancestors of the American Indians.”

This change does not agree with the Book of Mormon or what has been taught by most Church leaders since Joseph Smith, Jr. The Church leaders have affirmed until very recently that the American Indians are the direct descendants of Lehi and Mulek and their families — who were all of the House of Israel (Jews). No other groups of people are discussed as being encountered in the Book of Mormon other than the Jaredites, who all died in a massive battle. I think the wording change in the Book of Mormon title page is in direct response to the developing body of DNA and other evidence that show the American Indians are not Israelites.

“The Book of Mormon is a record of the forefathers of our western tribes of Indians; having been found through the ministration of an holy angel, and translated into our own language by the gift and power of God, after having been hid up in the earth for the last fourteen hundred years, containing the word of God which was delivered unto them. By it we learn that our western tribes of Indians are descendants from that Joseph who was sold into Egypt.” — Joseph Smith, Jr, Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith, p 17

“It has been said by many of the learned and wise men, or historians, that the Indians or aborigines of this continent, are of the scattered tribes of Israel. It has been conjectured by many others, that the aborigines of this continent are not of the tribes of Israel, but the ten tribes have been led away into some unknown regions of the north. Let this be as it may, the prophecy I have just quoted ‘will fetch them,’ in the last days, and place them in the land which their fathers possessed.” — Joseph Smith, Jr, Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith, p 85

“The Nephites suffered extinction about 400 A.D., but the Lamanites lived on in their degraded course, and are today extant upon the land as the American Indians.” — Apostle James Talmage, Jesus the Christ, 23rd ed., p. 49

“Not only in the Book of Mormon are the descendants of Lehi called Jews, but also in the Doctrine and Covenants. In section 19, this is found: ‘Which is my word to the Gentile, that soon it may go to the Jew, of whom the Lamanites [Native Americans] are a remnant, that they may believe the gospel, and, look not for a Messiah to come who has already come.’ ” — Prophet Joseph Fielding Smith, Doctrines of Salvation, v. 3, p. 264

“Lamanites share a royal heritage. I should like to address my remarks to you, our kinsmen of the isles of the sea and the Americas. Millions of you have blood relatively unmixed with gentile nations.” — Prophet Spencer W. Kimball, The Teachings of Spencer W. Kimball, p. 596

So, what does the DNA evidence say? DNA evidence indicates American Americans descended from Asia, not Israel as the church teaches. Asian migrants have populated this continent for over 50,000 years. The thousands of DNA samples from every known tribe of Native Americans indicate an **Asiatic** rather than **Semitic** origin and give greater support to the theory of a prehistoric Asiatic migration across the Bearing Strait. Here are a few quotes about the DNA evidence.

“So far, DNA research has lent no support to the traditional Mormon beliefs about the origins of Native Americans. Instead, genetic data have confirmed that migrations from Asia are the primary source of American Indian origins... While DNA shows that ultimately all human populations are closely related, to date no intimate genetic link has been found between ancient Israelites and indigenous Americans, much less within the time frame suggested in the Book of Mormon.” — Thomas Murphy, Mormon anthropologist, American Apocrypha, 2002, p. 47-48

“I don’t think there is one iota of evidence that suggests a lost tribe from Israel made it all the way to the New World. It is a great story, slain by ugly fact.” — Michael Crawford, anthropologist at University of Kansas.