

The Ancient City of Nagar and Book of Mormon Names (Part 1)

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THE ANCIENT CITY OF NAGAR

In the Near East, in the upper part of Mesopotamia near the Syrian and Turkish border, is Tell Brak; now known as the Ancient City of Nagar an ancient capital of a State Kingdom. It is a huge mound made up of the remains of centuries of cities overbuilt one atop each other and more than 250 acres in extent. The ancient city is located on the Zweligua River overlooking an important River Crossing. The mound is so strewn with ceramic shards one cannot walk without stepping on broken pottery. There is a photo of the mound showing the vast areas of broken pottery on page xxxi of Oates. Artifacts and material from the Halaf and Ubaid prehistoric (5000-4200 BC) periods, (Arnold p. 18) indicate a long history reaching back into the Neolithic times near 9,000 BC. But the city rose abruptly in size and importance soon after the beginning of the Adamic Period 4000 BC, or Terminal Ubaid, about 4000 BC, then was replaced by Early Northern Uruk, about 4000-3500 BC. (Oates p. xxx) These people would have been descendents of Adam.

The city of Nagar was in place and flourishing some 3600 BC. (Yoffe p. 43) "The site is best known for its sequence of rich temples of the late Uruk and Jamdet Nasr periods, when it was clearly an important centre. Most famous of all is the so called Eye Temple, richly decorated with clay cones, copper panels, and gold work, in a style very similar to that found in the contemporary temples of Sumer [way to the south] in southern Mesopotamia." (Whitehouse p. 71) In fact it is directly related in style to Uruk the First Great City of Mesopotamia, (Liverani; Akkermans p. 181) whose influence had a tremendous spread in ancient Mesopotamia. Uruk was located on the north end of the Persian Gulf. It was the First City of Mesopotamia. (Liverani p. 1) It will be the subject of a future study. After the flood, some 2600 BC, the ancient sites and new cities would have been occupied by descendents of Noah.

MEANING OF THE NAME NAGAR

The name Nagar means 'a cultivated place' or, possibly, a 'spring'. In Biblical Hebrew the West Semitic root, 'ngr', has the meaning 'to gush forth'. (Oates p. 380) Modern Archaeologists' suggest that the period of written documents did not begin until about 3500 BC. However the LDS believe Adam kept records. (Moses 6:5) Enoch kept a record and also recorded it on stone. (D&C

107:57) Abraham refers to multiple records going back to the beginning that he had access to. (Abraham1:28) Recent discoveries confirm this tradition of records from the beginning. From the Revelation of Adam found in Egypt nearly half a century ago we get: "Adam imparted his revelations to his son Seth, and showed him his original greatness before the Transgression and his going out of Paradise...Seth welcomed the teaching of his father...it was given to him to inscribe this wisdom in a book and to teach it...for the first time in this world there were seen a book written in the name of the Most High. Seth bequeathed to his descendants the book thus written, and that book was handed down even to Noah...In the time of the Flood, Noah took with him into the ark the Books [now plural] of these teachings, and when he came out of the ark, he ordained in his turn that the generations that came after him were to repeat the many things and the holy mysteries written in the books of Seth upon the Majesty of the Father and upon all the mysteries [ordinances]. Hence these books, these mysteries and this narrative were handed down even to our fathers, who welcomed them with joy and passed them on to us." (Doresse p.185) The restoration documents and the Book of Mormon are correct histories finding abundant confirmation in recent discoveries.

At the time of early Nagar more regional centers were also developing.

One thousand years later, about 2400 BC, the earlier history of Nagar is "illuminated by much information found in the pre-Sargonic archives from Tell Mardikh (Ebla), Tell Hariri, (Mari) and Tell Beydar (ancient Nabada/Nabatium, Erickson 22 Feb 2006) ...In these sources Nagar appears as a capital of one of the most powerful kingdoms in northern Syria...located in the Khabur Region." (Eidem p. 99 in Oates 2001) But a major archive of documents has not yet been found at Nagar, but it is only a matter of time until such happens. Cities of this size have always yielded major documents. This study therefore, is limited to the sparse site materials and tablets so far found and especially bulla such as the: "Two dedicatory inscriptions of the Old Akkadian king Rimush (c. 2278-2270) found by an earlier excavator, Mallowan, one of which came from the debris of the Naram-Sin Palace." (Eidem p. 99 in Oates 2001) The most ancient reference to Nagar probably comes from [the ancient Kingdom of] Mari. (Eidem p. 99 in Oates 2001) "The many inscriptions, scattered in various trenches, surely indicate that major archives from the late third millennium are likely to appear in on-going excavations at the site." (Eidem pp. 103-105) The present and recent wars in the Near East prohibit on-going excavations.

NAGAR, EBLA AND KISH

The abundant Ebla texts involving Nagar "document the earliest diplomatic marriages attested anywhere in the cuniform record...two royal marriages of wider political significance, first with Nagar, the second with

the even more powerful king of Kish in southern Sumeria near modern Baghdad. The marriage alliance with Nagar was under...Is ar-Adum, the last king of Ebla...the crown prince of Nagar, Ultum-huhu, marrying Tagris-Damu, a princess of Ebla...whereas the superior status of the son of the King of Kish is reflected in his marriage to the princess Hirdut, daughter of the then queen." (Oates p. 381) The nearly 40,000 tablets of Ebla yielding name lists provide a great deal of names of Kingdoms and cities in contact with Ebla and those with which Ebla had a more intimate relationship, or marriage ties, including Nabada and Nagar. (Pettinato pp. 188-190) Ebla documents list large numbers of special garments and textiles, jewelry and sumptuous garments, which the bride took to Nagar for the ceremonies where she was to become Queen. (Oates p. 381) Various hoards of gold, silver, and copper/bronze objects were also recovered during excavations of Nagar. (McDonald pp. 227, 233-256, in Oates 2001) The reference to the King of Kish is extremely important because that name is found in the Book of Mormon in the direct genealogical listing descendants for Jared. Kish is the 30th descendant of Jared. This is a direct link of the Book of Ether in the Book of Mormon and the records of ancient Nagar. Because of the prominence of the name Kish, it appears in nearly all tablets recovered from most of the ancient cities of the Near East, and since the Jaredites records are authentic, it is expected to be found there.

There was a major battle fought at Nagar with destruction over the whole of the site, marking the initial Akkadian appearance in the Khabur. Nagar was rebuilt and was the seat of the Kingdom of the Akkadians for four generations. It had a long history, down to Roman times ending with the construction of a Roman Castellium about 350 AD. (Oates p. xxx)

LOCATION OF NAGAR

Several major trails and trade routes led from the Tigris Valley northwesterly to southeastern Anatolia and to western Syria. One of these roads left the Tigris at the great city of Assur (Ashur), the capitol of Assyria in it's hey day. It continued northwesterly through the gap or pass at the western end of Jebel (Mount) Sinjar, between it and Jebel Jeribe, then it continued on the northern flanks of Jebel Jeribe northward to Lake Khatuniye, then more directly north-northwest to the confluence of the Wadis Radd and Jaghjagh. Many large cities line the banks of the Jaghjagh. There a major river crossing was once controlled by a large city on the north bank, now the immense mound of Tell Brak, the ancient city of Nagar. (Oates pp. xxv-xxvii) Near the end of the Third Millennium BC it was the largest of the cities of the Subartu Region, and politically the most important. The city functioned as a Gateway City to the rich agricultural lands of the Khabur plains, a major station on the roads to the north through the Mardin Gap, visible from the city, and onwards to Diyarbakr and the rich copper mines of Ergani. (Oates p. xxv) It had its beginnings in the early Fourth Millennium BC, with a Neolithic history before

that, and then rose to its heights during the last third of the Third Millennium, but as even larger cities were established elsewhere in the region Nagar declined through the subsequent centuries.

EXCAVATIONS AT NAGAR

Archaeologists were busy in the Khabur Plains before 1930 when Mallowan began his pioneering excavations at Nagar. Max von Oppenheim had been excavating before that at Tell Halaf to the northwest of Nagar and no doubt had walked over the mound of Nagar and saw its potential. David Oates and Sid Kasem Tuweir had been working at Tell al Rimah in northern Iraq, and other sites in the region, focusing on second millennium sites, they turned their interest to third millennium sites, and owing to Mallowan's excavations of the Naram-sin 'Palace' at Tell Brak they included that mound in their survey for a likely place to dig in 1975. "Brak stood out as ideal for the investigation of this period...the southern area of the mound appeared to have been abandoned at the end of the third millennium, a situation which promised relatively simple access to levels of this date." (Oates p. xxv) "Brak [Nagar] lay approximately at the modern limits of rain fed farming, allowing at least the possibility of investigating the impact of marginal climatic variation on the history of the area at this time." (Oates p. xxv) They wanted to understand the "urban growth in this region in the third millennium and, very specifically, to investigate the credibility of Akkadian imperial claims. [of that time period]." (Oates p. xxv) They began their work in 1975 and continued through to 1999, and when the region is stable again, they may resume work there. A summary of their findings is on the Chart included herewith. (Oates p. xxx) Little work has been done on that portion of the Mound with Fourth Millennium occupation, a substantial settlement with monumental walls. Large portions of the site are still intact. Thus, this is a preliminary study of Nagar, it is only PART 1.

NAGAR AS A PROVINCIAL CAPITAL AND MAJOR POWER

With the 1976 discovery of tablets at Ebla, extensive information on the entire region was obtained. "Changing power-relations between the major Khabur kingdoms had made Nagar preeminent in the period covered by the Ebla Texts." (Oates p. 101) "Later, in the 3rd millennium BC, Tell Brak became a provincial capital of the Akkadian empire; the palace of Naram Sin, grandson of Sargon, during this period was more of a depot for storage of tribute and loot than residential seat. The city was plundered after the fall of the Akkadian empire, but the palace was rebuilt in the Ur III period by Ur Nammu." (Whitehouse p. 71) Sargon I (2334-2279

BC) was the King of Akkad, Naram-sin (2254-2218 BC) was his grandson, who made some great conquests including Ebla, built a great palace at Nagar. His son Shar-Kali-Sharri (2217-2194), was the last of the dynasty. Enmenana, a daughter of Naram Sin, was High Priestess at Ur [near the city of Uruk on the Persian Gulf]. (Roaf p. 96) The family of Abraham, whose records were in the Brass Plates, may have also transmitted names down in the records, later used by the Nephites. Nagar was only about 100 miles slightly south east of Harran where Abraham lived for a while before departing for Canaan under the Lord's direction. Naram-Sin was so "state-conscious [that he] chose Tell Brak [Nagar] as the focus of his administration in the Khabur region, (Oates p. 379) attested to by the presence of the palace bearing his name.

"Linguistically, mid-third-millennium Nagar is part of a wider landscape of Semitic-speaking kingdoms." (Oates p. 3780) Most of the cities employed Sumerian cuniform to write their documents. "The Sumerian King List gives Semitic names for most of the rulers of the first dynasty of Kish [one of the earliest empires]. By 2600-2500 BC, tablets from Abu Salibikh [The subject of a future entry], near Nippur in central Sumer, bear a large number of Semitic names, including the names of half the scribes who wrote on the tablets found in Sumerian. There is no evidence from the century before Sargon (2371-2316 BC) for anything in the nature of a Semitic 'invasion'. And such Semites as did arrive during that [early time] probably came in as individual families, [from the north] settling in the northern Sumerian settlements and cities and rapidly adopting Sumerian Culture and loyalty to their adoptive city-state." (Saggs pp. 41-42)

Nagar became the head city of a major state before 2400 BC and traded effectively and independently with the great centers of about that time as far away as India; Ebla to the southwest and Mari to the southeast. The second city of this State, was Nabada, 50 miles west on the banks of the Wadi Aweidj. (Sallaberger & Ur p. 610, Erickson 22 Feb 2006)

PERSONAL NAMES

The following names include geographic and personal names available as of 2001. Of particular interest are names related to those found in the Book of Ether in the Book of Mormon, directly related to the

Jaredites. The prefixes or suffixes being studied are identified and then Book of Mormon names with those same elements, prefixes or suffixes are then listed so one can make immediate comparison. Then the prefixes or suffixes are discussed and their meanings given when they are available. Earlier studies in this series are referred to if findings in other archives in other cities have also been found to shed light on Book of Mormon names. The main objective is to shed additional light on the prefixes and suffixes and other names in the Book of Mormon, comparing them with the names appearing in the ancient documents. This study is intended to be preliminary in character, not exhaustive, because other documents in process if being translated will shed additional light on much of what follows in the future.

PREFIXES OR NAMES

'Aha', 'Ahu' or 'Ahah': AHA, AHAH, AHAZ

The Book of Mormon name Aha is found in Alma 16:5, one of two sons of Zoram, the name could have been derived from the Jaredite records because the name Ahah is found in Ether 1:9 where it is noted that Ethem is the son of Ahah the 40th descendent of Jared. (Largey p. 431) The Jaredites passing through this region of northern Mesopotamia on their Journey to the Americas would have been familiar with names in use at that time. This is one of the reasons some of this name search is directed at the oldest sites in the Subartu region to see if names found there appear in the Book of Mormon, particularly the Jaredite records. And the names do occur, as expected. This is positive confirmation of the Jaredite record as a genuine genealogy of correct names from that time period. How could Joseph Smith make the time distinctions so accurately and with so many names? Certainly the information and translation data was not available to him, in some instances the information on names was not available until 2006.

The name Ahaz, the eleventh King of Judah, is a common name and a well known king's name in the Tanakh. (2 Kings 15:38) There it has the Hebrew meaning of 'possessor'. In I Kings 22:40, the name Ahaziah, meaning 'God holds firm' is the son of Ahab and Jezebel. (Mandel p. 37) It is a Biblical name and no doubt would have been in the Brass Plates.

At Nagar these prefixes show up in a sealed bulla with the names a-hu-ahu, or Ahu-ahi, meaning 'brother's brother', the name of a Nagar scribe, having these prefix elements very much like three of the listed Book of Mormon names. (Eidem p. 106, in Oates 2001) Nagar documents have

the name ahudu. The vowels 'a' and 'u' are interchangeable. (Ibed p. 119) Thus, Aha and Ahu are the same. The name Aha is common in the Neo-Assyrian name lists. It is West Semitic and means 'brother'. (Radner p. 56) The gender form for a female is 'Ahata', adding to the prefix Aha the suffix of 'ta'. Ahata means 'sister'. (Radner p. 58) By adding to the prefix 'Aha' the suffix of 'ti' (Ahati) the meaning is 'my sister', and if the suffix is 'tu' (Ahatu) it means 'his sister'. (Radner p. 59) In the Neo-Assyrian name lists there are more than 320 names with these prefixes. (Radner pp. 56-89) It would have been a serious omission if the Book of Mormon did not have at least one name with these prefixes. It is nice to find that there are several such names, and that they are linked with the Jaredite genealogy. These prefixes have been discussed in a number of previous web site entries, including (Erickson 17 Aug 2005; 22 Feb 2006) Refer to those entries for additional detailed discussions.

THE PREFIXES 'Ab' and 'Abi': ABEL, ABINADI, ABINADOM, ABISH, ABLOM, ABRAHAM

The prefixes 'ab' and 'abi' are found in many of the available name lists of the Near East. These prefixes have been discussed in a number of other web site entries as mentioned above. At Nagar in a list of animals probably belonging to individuals is the name Abikum with the Abi prefix. (Eidem p. 10, in Oates 2001) There is also the name 'Abu'. (Ibed p. 110) The ending of 'i' or 'u' doesn't change the name. They all mean the same 'father'. (Radner p. 1) In the Tanakh, the name 'Abi' (daughter of Zechariah, 2 Kings 18:2) means 'my father', Abel (son of Adam) means 'the father is Elohim' or 'emptiness', Abinadab (keeper of the ark (I Samuel 7:1) meaning 'father of generosity', Abish, Abishi or Abishai (a leading commander in David's army, I Samuel 26:6) means 'father of gift'. (Mandel pp. 3-13) The prefix Abdi means 'my servant'. (Mandel pp. 3-13). Abish is also the name of Lamanitish women. (Alma 19:16) Additional information on this prefix can be found in earlier entries to this site. (Erickson 17 Aug 2005; 22 Feb 2006) Again, there are many names in most of the ancient archives recovered with this prefix. Its inclusion in the Book of Mormon would be expected.

THE PREFIX 'Amu': AMULEK, AMULON, AMULONITES

This prefix is found at Nagar in the name amur-dinger, the suffix -dinger, identifies the named person as a leader, so the actual

name is just Amur. (Eidem p. 119, in Oates 2001) There are no names in the Tanakh with this prefix. In the Neo-Assyrian name lists, there are a variety of names with the prefix, Amudani, amukanu, amukkaani, all West Semitic, where it seems the prefix Amu- means 'pillar'. (Baker p. 107) There are more than fifteen names with the prefix Amu- in the Neo-Assyrian name lists. (Radner pp. 109-111) Most of them are of Akkadian origin, the time period of Nagar covered by the inscriptions found, others are West Semitic. In some instances the prefix 'Amu' refers to the Egyptian God Amon. (Radner p. 109) And in the name Amu-rtese, meaning 'It is Amon who has given him', Amu-rteesi, [or Amu-rtese] sells his daughter in marriage to an Egyptian woman. (Radner p. 109)

THE PREFIX 'ha': HAGOTH, HAMATH

The names ha-ab-a-za, and ha-bi-ra-am- are found on bullas at Nagar. (Eidem p. 119, in Oates 2001) The element 'H' is the abbreviation of an unknown deity, or abbreviation of a divine name such as HDD, as in the storm God 'Haddad', and is attested to in Egyptian graffito from Abydos, and an inscription from Carthage, which is Phoenician in origin. (Benz p. 302) The deity names Haddu, Hadu, Hadda, Hada, Hedda, Handa, Handu, are all found in the Neo-Syrian lists. The name Hamum, meaning 'father in law' is also in those lists. (Gelb p. 19) With the possibilities of a Phoenician connection to the reformed Egyptian of the Book of Mormon, the Abydos and Carthage parallel might be expected. (Erickson 29 Jan 2005) The elements 'HM' or the prefix hama or ham, in the Biblical name Hamath (2 Nephi20:9) are found in Neo-Assyrian names such as Hamasum, Hamrum, and Hamsatum. (Gelb p. 20) The 'tum' ending, or suffix, when used generally is feminine.

THE PREFIX 'ir': IRREANTUM

'Ir' is found in the names ir-dan-i and ir-ra-GAR, and ir-zu-ni, at Nagar. (Eidem p. 19, in Oates p. 119) This prefix has been discussed in various earlier studies including: Erickson 22 Feb 2006; 15 April 2005, and so won't be repeated here. The fact that many diverse cities have documents that confirm Book of Mormon usages and names, and by virtue of the very repetition of names, and prefixes, suffixes, cores, and abbreviations prove most conclusively the unique character and authenticity of the Book of Mormon names. There are more than 100 names in the Ebla Lists with the 'Ir'

prefix, and one name Irrara having the double 'rr' such as found in Irreantum. These are the kind of things that could have tripped Joseph Smith up, because in the Book of Mormon the meaning of the name was also given, meaning 'many waters'. (1 Ne. 17:5) The 'tum' ending, or suffix, is a gender designation; waters would have been feminine. (Sallaberger pp. 43-49)

THE KINGDOM OF KISH

As noted above, the prince of Nagar is married for diplomatic purposes with the daughter of the King of Kish.

Kish

is an old city near Babylon, it lies near the area where the tower

of Babel was built. (See various maps for this web site) From this general area, most likely, the Jaredites were led away to the Americas.

(Erickson 4 Aug 2005) Documents from Nagar refer to Kish,

and documents recovered from Ebla and Mari refers to Kish.

As noted above and elsewhere, Kish is the 30th descendant of Jared. So the link of the ancient cities with the Jaredites occurs again and again throughout the various archives and documents, providing a very distinctive and positive link to the Jaredites.

THE PREFIX 'ku': KUMEN, KUMENONHI, KISHKUMEN

Bulla, pillow shaped tablets, flat on one side, from Nagar contain the names of ku-un-sa-lim

and ku-ru-ub-en-zu. (Ibed p. 119) In the Book of Mormon, the consonant elements of 'KM' in 'kum' are prefixes to names such as kumrum and kumsum, with the meaning of 'priest'.

(Gelb p. 23) Kumen and Kumenonhi are both among the apostolic twelve established by Christ in the western Hemisphere. (3 Ne. 19:4) But Kishkumen, was just the opposite, being a murderer (Hel. 1:11) However, the prefix

Kish

would appear to have been derived from the gold plates Mosiah had translated of the Jaredites. Kish,

a descendant of Jared, has been discussed elsewhere, as has the prefix 'ku'. There are fifteen names in the Amorite name lists with the prefix 'Ku'. (Gelb p. 23)

At the time of Nagar, the Ebla name lists have an abundance of names with the prefix 'ku', where the meaning is 'true'. There are more than thirty names in the Ebla lists with this prefix. (Pagan pp.

343-344) One name has the 'kum' prefix in the name Kumi. These names have been discussed elsewhere. (Erickson 22 Feb 2006; April 2006)

THE PREFIX 'is':

ISAAC, ISABEL, ISAIAH, ISHMAEL, ISHMAELITE, ISRAEL, ISRAELITE

This prefix is

found in the above six names that occur in the Book of Mormon, but they are all Biblical names, some of them reflect the time of Abraham and his family. No Nephite or Jaredite names have this prefix, though it and all of the names above no doubt are to be found in the Brass Plates. The prefix

'is' or 'isa', found in three of the names given above, means 'city' and is

found in such names as Isi, Isanitu, Isanaiu, Isau, which are

old Akkadian names, though they are also found in Neo-Assyrian lists as well,

(Baker p. 565) which again, places these kinds of names and prefixes in the time of early Nagar.

Thus, we find in the contemporary Ebla

name lists, that there are nearly four pages of names with the 'Is' prefix. (Pagan pp. 339-342) and several with the 'Isa' such as isabu, isane, isaldaum, isalli, and isalmalik

(Malik sought), (Pagan p. 339), with varied meanings of 'man', 'sought', and 'asked'.

THE PREFIX 'lam' : LAMAN, LAMANITES, LAMONI

The name lamu...is

found on a Bulla at Nagar. (Ibed p. 119) This prefix,

'lam' has been discussed in several

of these studies (Erickson 17 Aug 2005) The consonants 'LM' are found in many Semitic documents from a number of cities.

The name Lama is found in the

ancient archives of Ebla

with the meaning 'why'. (Pagan p. 24) With

the hypocoristic endings, or abbreviations for God endings, 'n', 'on', 'an', 'oah', 'ahah', or 'ah' the

meaning is 'why God?', appropriate for Laman and Lemuel. Lamoni was a descendant of Ishmael (Alma 17:21), and for a time as king of the Lamanites, he had the same attitude, but Ammon finally converted him.

THE PREFIX
'lib': LIB

This name is an exact match to a name found at Nagar. The name Lib, found in the Book of Mormon, (Ether 1:17) is a Jaredite name. He was the 31st descendent of Jared. Therefore it is an ancient name, and to find it in the old Nagar name lists sheds light on the Jaredite contacts as they left the vicinity of the tower of Babel near Babylon and Kish.

The name on a bulla (No. 33, l 6) from Nagar is li-bur-be-li. (Eidem p. 119, in Oates 2001) This name has also been discussed in other studies.

THE PREFIX 'mu':
MULEK, MULOKI

Found in the name mu-ri-is, or Muris, on a Bulla (No. 12) at Nagar, the prefix may have been utilized by the Mulekites and have been in circulation in Jewish records about the time Mulek departed Jerusalem as it was being destroyed. The names would have come into the records of the Nephites after the discovery of the Mulekites and the records of Zarahemla who was a descendant of Mulek. (Mosiah 25:2) Muloki worked with Ammah, (Alma 20:2) he also preached with Aaron, and even preached alone. (Alma 21:11) There are more than 60 names in the Ebla lists with the prefix 'mu', two of them have the prefix 'mul', often the meaning is 'knowing, ecstatic, or foal'. (Pagan pp. 351-353) The prefix may have been in the brass plates where there is listed a Muppim, which means 'wavings', one of the ten sons of Benjamin. (Gen. 46:21) But the bible also had that name as well as that of Mushi, meaning 'sensitive', grandson of Levi. (Exodus 6:19) Since the Mulekites had no contact with the Brass Plates, mostly likely the use of the name and the prefix has Biblical Hebrew as its origin. (Mandel p. 390)

THE PREFIX
'rab': RABBONAH

The name Rabbonah, with the prefix 'rab' was singled out for explanation in Alma 18:13 as meaning "great", mighty', and has been discussed elsewhere. It is found in the name Ra-bi-il on a Bulla from Nagar. (Eidem p. 119, in Oates 2001) In the name Rabbum, the meaning is 'numerous', (Gelb p. 29) a take off on 'great'. In names found in the Tanakh, the meaning of Rab or Rabb includes 'chief'. (Mandel p. 431) In the Ebla name list the name Rabbatum means 'great', (Pagan p. 345) confirming the special explanation given for that name in the Book of Mormon. (Alma 18:13) Other studies in this series have discussed this prefix.

THE PREFIX 'LU': LURAM

Luram was one of those who died by the sword in the great final battle at Cumorah, or the Hill Shim. (Moroni 9:2) The name may have been taken from the Plates of Ether, or from the Brass Plates. It goes back into some antiquity as the documents from Nagar indicate. From Nagar we get the name Lu-ri-im, (Eidem page 129 in Oates 2001) which is very close to the Book of Mormon name, both names have the consonants 'LRM'. Both names end with 'm', attesting to the ancient practice of mimation. (Nibley p. 288) The longer prefix 'Lura' is found in one name, and the prefix Lur, is found in two other names in the Amorite name lists, Lurabi, Lurieu and Lurihu, again testifying to their antiquity. (Gelb p. 619) In the Ebla name lists for towns and villages the town of Luraan is included, (Pettinato p. 207), which is the same as Luram in the Book of Mormon but with a slightly different suffix which can be variable. It is a close match.

PREFIX 'Zar': ZARAHÉMLA

The prefix 'Zar' or 'Zara' found in the Book of Mormon name Zarahemla, (Omni 1:12) is found in third millennium inscriptions at Nagar in the name 'zar-a-ni-um', in this name the suffix 'um', is a mimation found in Jaredite names, it stands for a 'God's Name', GN. It is one of the toponyms or names attested to in the Ebla texts of places in the region of Nagar which had rulers with such names to whom "shipments of silver to the king of Nagar and eight of his vassal cities," were recorded. (Eidem p. 101, in Oates 2001) The list included the name na-bat-ti-um,

for Nabada. (Erickson 22 Feb 2006) A nearby city, Zar-a-ni-um, was likely located east of Nagar. At that time "Nagar may have been one of several large Khabur kingdoms in late pre-Sargonic times [about 2300 BC] ...one which controlled the western portion...Nagar was preeminent in the period covered by the Ebla texts." (Eidem p. 101 in Oates 2001) The Ebla name lists include two names with the prefix element 'zara', Zaraan, meaning 'liar', and Zaranu, also meaning 'liar'. The suffix 'hemla' has similarity with Hemti-ili in the Neo-Assyrian name lists, meaning 'My ardour is my god'. (Baker p. 471)

In the Ebla name lists the names Zaran, Zarri, Zarrum and Zaranu, all meaning 'Liar' all have the prefix 'Zara' or 'Zar'. Also in the Ebla lists are the names Zarmatu and zarbat both refer to an Euphrates Poplar. (Pagan pp. 383-384) "Both informal and formal languages contain variables as well as constants. By definition, a constant is a symbol that keeps the same meaning across contexts. A variable, by definition keeps the same meaning throughout any one context." (Altman p. 110) This is also true of prefixes and suffixes, vowels.

The full prefix of Zarahemla is Zarah which in Hebrew means 'Rising light'. (Genesis 38:30) Zarah in the Tanakh was one of the twin sons of Judah and Tamar. Zarah had the scarlet thread tied about his arm as his hand came out first. (Numbers 26:20) A later descendant, Jeuel, was the leader of a clan settling in Jerusalem after the Babylonian Exile. (I Chron. 9:6; Mandel p. 536)

THIRD MILLENNIUM INSCRIPTIONS

Some of the Mallowan tablets of 1930 were published in 1940 by Gadd, then Loretz published others in 1969, Oates and others published some of their findings, most of what was available or had become available was included in the work of Finkel and Illingworth, most of which, updated, appears in the Oates' work of 2001. (Oates p. 102). That is the main source for Part I of these studies. Most of the tablets available come from the period of Akkadian control in the Third Millennium with a high incidence of Akkadian personal names. (Oates P. 102) Most of these names are from bullae or sealings. (Eidem p. 103)

At the time of Nagar, the northern Mesopotamians had adapted the southern Sumerian writing system of cuniform, but that "system needed a very large number of symbols. The Akkadian move to a phonetic-based system reduced the number needed to express the spoken word. The Phoenician system, [of which Ugaritic is part] brought the number down to twenty-two symbols plus five final forms. Our modern English alphabetic system is a finite collection [or reduction] of fifty-two graphic symbols." Altman p. 110) It was the Sumerians who "divided the day into 24 hours, the hour into 60 minutes, the minutes into 60 seconds, and the circle into 360 degrees." (Altman p. 17) This set the stage for everybody else. Writing was widespread and effective. "These ancient Sumerian, Lagashian, Akkadian, Ugaritic, Phoenician, Moabite, Edomites, pre-Exilic Hebrew and Babylonian societies were literate in the modern meaning of the word. They left an enormous number of records for us to read-more than five million tablets." (Altman p.18) The problem has been in getting them translated and published.

The Jaredite records go back to these early periods and the Brass Plates, reflecting everything back to the beginning, and the personal writings and abridgements of Mormon and Moroni places the Book of Mormon among the world's greatest literature. The names so unique in the Book of Mormon are among the most positive authentication of this. "The Sumerian writing system is called a syllabary. Each symbol in a syllabary stands for a consonant and a vowel...The earliest tablets show that the Sumerian already used syllabograms, (symbols representing the spoken consonant-plus-vowel)." (Altman p. 21) The oldest cities and their tablets in the Near East have names that are found in the Book of Mormon. The names confirm the veracity and historical claims of the Book of Mormon. The final version of the Book of Mormon was written in 'Reformed Egyptian', (Morm 9:32) which may very well have been Phoenicianized-Egyptian. (Erickson 18 May 2005) "The Phoenician writing system was compact, comprehensive, economical, and practical." (Altman p. 37) Just like the Book of Mormon. The Sumerians as the first to utilize writing systems may have this 'First' challenged by the civilization of the Indus Valley...[Mohenjo-daro, Harappa]which remains to be interpreted. (Wheeler p. 10, 40) The tablets of Nabada and Nagar show that they were trading with the Indus Valley civilizations. This is remarkable. This has been mentioned in early entries to this series. So far, no Book of Mormon names are found in the Indus sources, but then, most of the writings of that region have not been translated yet. But time will tell. There are no claims in the Book of Mormon for a geographical relationship to the Indus Valley, but there are many for the Near East and Egypt.

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