

PERSONAL NAMES FROM THE TABLETS OF EBLA AND THE BOOK OF MORMON NAMES PART 2

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EBLA EBLA was an ancient city excavated at the site of Tell Mardikh on the River Orontes in Syria. Excavations since 1976 have yielded evidence of a previously unknown language, now called Eblaite, and a history of a powerful state of the 3rd millennium BC. The site was occupied from the 4th millennium BC. The period of its greatest wealth and power was in the mid-3rd millennium. A large royal palace of this period has yielded an archive of more than 15,000 tablets uncovered in 1975, five years after they had started digging at the large Ruin or Tell. Earlier, rooms with collapsed shelves of thousands of tablets had been recovered. As digging continued, the greater archives of tablets were found. Tablets from the ROYAL ARCHIVES OF EBLA were featured life size and in color on the cover of BIBLICAL ARCHAEOLOGY in May 1976, Vol. 39, No. 2. In the summary of a lengthy article in that issue prepared by Giovanni Pettinato who was associated with the original discovery along with the Director, Paulo Matthiae, (Pettinato p. 6) it stated: "It (Ebla) had a population of 260,000, spoke a language close to Hebrew. Its greatest king bore a name cognate with Eber, the ancestor of the Hebrews. (Genesis 10:21) [Among the 100 or more Gods] they worshipped a god named Ya [an abbreviation for Jehovah]. (See Erickson Web Site 4 Aug 2005) Canaanite Ebla-brought back to life in an extraordinary find of 15,000 tablets—seems destined to revolutionize the history of the ancient Near East." From the tablets up to 1991, more than 80 kingdoms some with different languages communicating and trading with Ebla were identified; some of these have been the subject of entries into this Web Site series. (Pettinato pp. 115-117) Ebla, allied with Hamazi, controlled much of the region, including most of Palestine except for the Phoenician coastal cities. They so oppressed the southern Sumerian Cities that the great city of Kish arose and militarily defeated Hamazi and helped in the subjugation of Ebla about 2250 BC. The Jaredites lived near Kish. The name of Kish appears in the Jaredite genealogical records. (Erickson Web Site 4 Aug 2005; Largey p.269) indicating the Jaredites were aware of what was going on and who the main players were. EBLA AND MARI At the time the tablets were being inscribed or prepared Ebla was contemporaneously involved with Mari. (Erickson Web Site, March 2008) Eight tablets referred to eight Kings of Mari, the last one was King Anubu, who waged war on Ebla. (Gordon Vol. I, p. 57) But it was Naram Sin, son of Sargon, of Akkad who brought the destruction to Ebla that resulted in the burning of the palace, burning and preserving the archive of tablets about 2250 BC. (Gordon Vol. 1, Astour, M., pp. 63-64) This suggests that the episode of the Tower of Babel mentioned in Genesis 11:1-9, and in Ether 1:3, 5, and 33, had already occurred. A tablet found in Ur, a southern Mesopotamian City, "gave the following account of an unusual tower or ziggurat: "The erection (building) of this tower (temple) highly offended all the gods. In a night they (threw down) what man had built, and impeded their progress. They were scattered abroad, and their speech was strange." (Wilson p. 84) This fits into the accepted chronology and the events recounted in Ether for the approximate time of departure of the Jaredites from the region of Kish, which was near Babylon and Babel in southern Mesopotamia. To test the reality of the Jaredite record in that approximate time period, we could expect that the many names on the tablets would be parallel to some of those in the limited Jaredite record found in the Book of Mormon. It is a great thrill to find such historical and name parallels. But this could only happen if the Book of Mormon is true and the names are real! Among the tablets, "there are the syllabaries,... for learning Sumerian grammatical texts with verbal paradigms in Eblaite and 32 bilingual (Sumerian and Eblaite) vocabularies—the first in history." (Pettinato 1976, p. 45) Tablet TM.75.G.2000, with 18 duplicates, contained nearly a thousand translated words. So some tablets were dictionaries, often eighteen inches long, enabling those working on translating them to effectively establish the ancient language. Many were three to six inches square, looking almost as if they had been inscribed a week or so ago, instead of nearly 4300 years ago, were in excellent condition. They were inscribed with Sumerian cunifrom script, very precise and sophisticated, adopted by many of the Mesopotamian cities and cultures, and they were in two languages, the Sumerian and the language of Ebla, a Semitic tongue, which is now called Eblaite. The discoveries at Ebla permit the recognition of a Western Semitic region from the Euphrates to the Mediterranean Sea and an Eastern Semitic region located between the two great Rivers, the Tigris and the Euphrates. (Gordon p. 97) Excavations are still on-going at the site and the work of translating the tablets continues. The work has revealed a wealth of information about the economy, political organization and religion of Ebla. The city was at an important junction of great trade lanes, it was a huge commercial center, exporting and importing woolen cloth from the extensive goats and sheep herds of the region and furniture to very distant areas, (Whitehouse p. 156) with a central area for processing gold, silver, brass, copper precious stones, alabaster, and other processed and artistic items. Around 2250 BC the city was captured and destroyed by the Akkadian Naram-Sin. The city was rebuilt with a great palace complex from which wealthy burials have been excavated from the early 2nd millennium BC. (Whitehouse p. 156) As will be noted below, the Ebla texts also include many Semitic names which recall those of the Old Testament, some names have the abbreviated or hypocoristic endings, or suffixes, of Yehweh, such as —yah, found in the Bible and the Book of Mormon. There are, as will be noted, more parallels to Book of Mormon names than to the Biblical names. The tablets from Ebla reopen the whole question of the historical authority of the Book of Genesis. (Hallo in Gordon p. 139) The tablets should more than do so for the historical authority of the Book of Mormon! PROSOPOGRAPHY AND ONOMASTICS The techniques needed to study the ancient names now includes Prosopography, or the study of individuals identified by their personal names. References to such studies are frequent in the entries made to this Web Site. Prosopography is to be distinguished from Onomastics, the study of names from the linguistic point of view. Much good work has been done on the Onomastics of Ebla. Both disciplines employ the resources of computer technology. A symposium was held in 1985 in Rome, dealing both with the

Onomastics and the Prosopography of Ebla. In 1988 a major stride was taken by the publication of the work edited by A. Archi, *Eblaite Personal Names and Semitic Name-giving: Papers of a Symposium Held in Rome July 15-17, 1985* (ARES I: ROME) referred to in these web site studies. Earlier than his work was the immense compilation by Ignace J. Gelb, *Computer-aided analysis of Amorite*, (University of Chicago, Illinois 1980) also referred to many times in these studies. Platt and Pagan listed some twenty thousand names by 1988. (Gordon Vol 3, p. 109) But the main guide and source through the maze of Eblaite studies is the work referred to many times below by Pagan, *Morphological and Lexical Study of Personal Names in the Ebla Texts*, 1998. Also important is the four volume set edited by Cyrus H. Gordon and Gary A Rendsburg from 1987 to 2002 on *Eblaica*. So by 2005 the present and on-going web site entries could be prepared. Until these essential books were available not a great deal could be done to compare the names of the Book of Mormon to those found at Ebla. And until the book *EBLA*, the work of one of those closely associated with the excavations and recovery of the tablets, Giovanni Pettinato, an understanding of the recovery of the history and archaeology of Ebla would have been difficult to make, if not impossible. THIS SERIES OF STUDIES PART 1 was the first of a planned series of studies in progress on the names found on tablets recovered from the excavations of Ebla. It was entered into the web site in 23 Feb 2005. PART 2 will continue the study of such names utilizing the compilation of names prepared by Pagan in 1998. (Pagan pp. 269-392) The procedure will be to present the names alphabetically, using other available texts to help explain the meaning of the names where useful. The Book of Mormon names are given first, on the left side, and the names derived from the tablets will be on the right. As any reader of the Book of Mormon knows, the meaning of most Book of Mormon names was not given. To help in the understanding of names constant references will be made to the Prosopographic and Onomastic sources. The names on most Mesopotamian tablets were written in cuniform as syllables; in transliteration most of the time the person working on the tablets will write the name out and hyphenate the syllables. It appears awkward, but it is a convention the academics use, and so most of the time when listing names from Ebla they are written in syllabic form, with the hyphens. They could just as well be written without the hyphens the way the Book of Mormon names have been transmitted down to us. Because the Ebla name list is extensive it will take a series of entries to go through all the names. It will be noted that the prefixes of most Book of Mormon names are also found in many of the Ebla names. Exact matches are exciting to find, one of the singular archaeological evidences confirming the Book of Mormon is in authenticating work of this type. It is very rewarding. It is stunning to realize the Book of Mormon is true and the names are real. NAMES FROM EBLA ABINADI: ABI-NA-DU, ABI, ABI-HA, ABI-DUM, ABI-LU, ABI-RUM, ABI-SA, ABI-ZA-MU, ABI-U, ABI-ZU, A-BA-LI-IM ABINADI is first mentioned in Mosiah 7:26-28. He was a very courageous prophet, and the first recorded to die as a martyr, at least in the abridged record of the Book of Mormon. Nothing is known of his background or family. He appeared as an aged and mature prophet who single handedly confronted the wicked royal establishment of King Noah. He left five major teachings that were recorded by Alma, whom he converted. (Largey p. 22-24) He was killed because he stated that Christ was God (The Son of God) and should come down among the children of men, and take upon him flesh and blood and be put to death. (Largey p. 22: Mosiah 17:7-8) It is strange but this is the same doctrine that many Christian Churches of today find so offensive about the Book of Mormon. King Noah ordered him put to death. He was bound and scourged with burning faggots, even unto death. (Alma 25:11) He left an enduring legacy and is one of the most remembered of Book of Mormon prophets. (Erickson 13 July 2005) While he answered all the questions asked of him during the interrogations, only the answer he gave to questions about Isaiah 52:7-10 was included in the abridgement. Mormon later tells of other teachings of Abinadi (Morm 1:19) about which we have little record. ABINADI'S name has been found in other tablets from other excavated cities of Mesopotamia and discussed in other treatments of this web site. In the name lists from Ebla there is almost an exact match in the name ABINADU, differing only with the vowel ending the names, in the Book of Mormon the ending is an 'i', and from Ebla the ending of the name is a 'u'. Vowels are interchangeable in many names, the names from Ebla date about 2250 BC, the Book of Mormon records could have easily enough used an 'i' in the ending rather than the more ancient 'u' 1600 years later. Nibley provides an interesting detailed comparison with the interrogations of righteous men based on the Abinadi account in Mosiah compared with various Dead Sea Scrolls and other ancient documents. (Nibley pp. 303-309; 285-286; 487-488) Often overlooked is that ABINADI answered questions and READ from his personal copy of SCRIPTURES. Exactly what this collection of scriptures included no one knows. (Nibley vol. 6, pp. 162-163, 184) With or without the hyphens the names mean the same. The hyphens do separate the prefixes and suffixes and meanings of each syllable, which helps to find the meaning of the name. The essential prefix is ABI- which means 'father' and the meaning of the name ABINADU from the Ebla texts means 'the exalted one is my father'. The suffix ending of 'NADI' means 'exalted one'. Therefore ABINADI could very well mean 'my father is exalted'. The possessive 'my' is indicated by the suffix ending of 'i' or 'u'. The Ebla names ABI-SA and ABI-U and ABI-HA all mean 'her father'. The Ebla name ABI means 'my father', the name ABI-DUM means 'he appeared' and the name ABI-RUM means 'mighty'. The name ABI-LU can mean 'god is my father' or 'mighty'. The name ABI-ZA-MU means 'the red one is my father' and ABI-ZU means 'his father'. (Pagan p. 274) Because the prefix ABI- is found in Sargonic times, (Di Vito p. 187) predating and contemporary with the Jaredites, one might ask if Abinadi is a Sargonic or Akkadian name, if so it would be a most ancient name? However, ABINADI does show up in Egypt in the form of ABINABU, which is Aramaic, (Porten p. 317) with apparently the same meaning. Lehi could have learned of that name during his contacts with Egypt, or it could have been in the Brass Plates. But it remains an ancient name. The last name from Ebla, A-BA-LI-IM is from a list of 'Types of Onomasticques a [of] Ebla' prepared by Fronzaroli. (Archi p. 15) The meaning is not given for the name, but from what we know of the prefix meaning it would be 'the uncle is Lim'. AHA: AHA, AHA-A-DU, AHA-DU-RA, AHA-DUM, AHA-AR-SE, AHA-LUM, AHA-RA AHA-RA-MALIK, AH-DAR, AH-HA-LUM AHA is an ancient Semitic name meaning

&brother& and is found in most languages derived from the older Semitic. The Book of Mormon name AHA is only mentioned in Alma 16:5) with his brother Lehi. There is an exact match in Ebla name lists to the name AHA. (Pagan p. 278) The essential prefix is AHA-. That prefix is found in many of the Ebla names. The name AHA-A-DU means &father is brother&, AHA-DUM has the feminine ending so the meaning is &sister&, AHA-AR-SE means &i got a brother&, AHA-LUM, means &brother is late&, AHA-RA means &the late one&, AHA-RA-MALIK means &Malik is late&, AHA-DU-RA, means &Dura is brother,& (Pagan p. 278) The abbreviated names with only AH- as a prefix, include AH-(AH) DA-AR which means &Dar is a brother& and AH (AH) HA-LUM, means &uncle is my brother. (Pagan p. 286) Changing the prefix elements from of ABI, to AHU still retains the meaning of the prefix as &brother&. There are 13 additional names in the Ebla name lists with that prefix, nearly all referring to brother. (Pagan 278) From Ebla there is also the parallel name A-HA-AR-SE. (Archi p. 61) The Egyptian form retained the ancient Aramaic of AHA, with the same meaning as &brother&. (Porten 320) It was such a common prefix that its absence from the Book of Mormon might have caused a cynic to be critical of its absence. But who reads the Book of Mormon that close? Most critics of the Book of Mormon expose the fact that they have been lazy and have not closely read the texts. ABLOM: AB-R-AM , AB-RA-HU, AB-RI-A-HU, AB-SI, ABU, ABLOM is a place name found in Ether 9:3, and is therefore a Jaredite name. The prefix AB- equal ABU- is found in Ancient Akkadian (Black p. 1, 3) earlier than Sargonic times, and in nearly all Semitic languages it means &father&, as well as at Ebla (Pagan p. 286) and has been discussed in other entries of the Web Site because it is found on many tablets from many ancient cities. The meaning of the suffix &LOM& is not known. In the Ebla name lists the prefix means &father& because Eblaite is a Semitic derivative, so at Ebla the prefix AB- means &father.& (Pagan p. 285) There are many names with the prefix AB-. At Ebla the early Semitic form for Abraham, Abra-am is listed and there it means &father is lofty,& later when the name change occurred for that great prophet the name of Abraham came to mean &Father of the Faithful&, or the &Father of the Great and Noble ones&. (Abra. 3:22-23) Recall that Christ in his personal prayers addressed his Father as &ABBA FATHER& which is such a tender endearment that in English it means &Daddy!& Does this say something about the relationship of the Father and the Son? The other names listed from Ebla are found in Pagan p. 286. At Ebla another form of names involving the inclusion of deity, whole or abbreviated, is noted in the name ABA-IL, which has a number of versions, but they all mean &the God&, (Il is father) or &Elohim is father&. ((Pagan p. 271) A future study will have more to say about the use of El and Elohim and His status among the Gods of Ebla. AGOSH: AGASA-DU, AGAR, AGARU AGOSH is also place name for extensive plains in the geography of the Jaredites, found in Ether 14:15-17. It is the site of the great Battle during the last wars of the Jaredites. Lib pursued Coriantumr and his people to the plains of AGOSH, where Coriantumr gave battle to Lib. Coriantumr slew Lib there, but Lib&s brother, Shiz, continued the battle until the severely wounded Coriantumr fled. (Largey p. 31) The consonantal elements AG- used as a prefix appear in names from Ebla such as AGASA-DU, meaning &burrower& (Pagan p. 269), AGARU, meaning &flight&, (Pagan p. 269), and AGAR, also means &flight&. (Pagan p. 270) However the prefix AG- does not seem to have been used in personal names at Ebla nor in the Book of Mormon, a technical detail that is important. ALATH: ALALU ALATH is another place name, mentioned in 2 Ne 20-28. The consonantal elements ALA- seem to be associated with place names in the lists from Ebla. ALA- means …is the city&; the suffix would explain something about the city. In Ebla the name ALA-SA-GU means &exalted is the city.& (Pagan p. 279) In Ebla there is also another name, ALA-AS-SE where the given meaning is &my trust is Harru.& Here ALA- means &my trust.& The meanings of &my trust& and &exalted& may both be associated with &revere&, where to &revere& someone is to &exalt& them, and to &trust& someone is to &revere& or &exalt& them. It would be nice to have a thesaurus for ancient names. ALMA: ALMA, AL-MA-LIK, AL-MI-NU, AL-RA-DA-MU, AL-RA-KAM, AL-RA-SUM, AL-RI, AL-SUM, AL-ZA-LI-IM ALMA is one of the most important and well known prophets in the Book of Mormon. His father was also called ALMA. The name first appears in Mosiah 17:2 and many references for those with that name are given. It is an example of papyponymy where father&s pass their names on to sons. (Erickson 9 March 2005; Largey p. 35-43) Great teachings were revealed to ALMA, and the Book by his name occupies much of the Book of Mormon. ALMA is also the name of a valley. (Mosiah 24:20) In the Ebla name lists the name ALMA, is an exact match to the Book of Mormon name, and at Ebla the name means, &mountain& or &the mountain&. (Pagan p. 286) It is not known what the people of the Book of Mormon knew the name to mean. The Ebla name of AL-MA-LIK means &Malik is a mountain&. The name AL-MI-NU from Ebla means &(divine) love (?) is a mountain.& Used as a prefix in names, ALMA may be abbreviated to just AL as in the Ebla name AL-DA-MU, which means &Damu is a mountain.& The AL elements in the prefix alone means &mountain& as in the names AL-RA-KAM, which means &Qawm (KAM) is a mountain&. AL-RA-SU, means &his mountain&, AL-RI, means &my mountain&, AL-SUM, which means &Sum is a mountain&, and AL-ZA-LI-IM, which, with a different core, means &Lim was satisfied&&. (Pagan p. 286) In one of the early studies of the Web Site the name ALMA was also found as the name of a Queen at Ebla. (Erickson 23 Feb 2005) The feminine usage is well known in the phrase &ALMA MATTER& or &fostering mother.& (Nibley p. 281) But in a find of the Bar-Kokhba period from the Cave of Letters, dating near 115 AD, near where the Dead Sea Scrolls were found a document translated from the find shows it to be in a conveyance, or a deed, of land to Bar-Kokhba, made by ALMA, SON OF YEHUDAH. (Yadin p. 176) Nibley first drew attention to this document and the confirmation of the name. (Nibley 1989, pp. 281-282) It appears that ALMA is most often used for a male name in the ancient documents. This one of the most interesting parallels of a name in the Book of Mormon. AMALEKI, AMALEKITE, AMALICHIAH, AMALICHIAHITES, AMARON:: AMA, AMABIDU, AMADA, AMADU, AMAGA, A-MA-IL,

