

Tell Amarna in Egypt and the Book of Mormon

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INTRODUCTION

"Tell el-Amarna, [is the] artificial name for the ruins of Akhenaton, the new capital [established in Middle Egypt, in the sixth year of the reign of Akhetaton about 1344 BC], of Egypt founded by the religious revolutionary, Akhetaton, [about] 190 miles south of Cairo. Pharaoh Amenophis IV (1372-1354), changed his name to Akhetaton, and introduced a great heresy in a different guise and a re-statement of an earlier belief in one sole god." (Clayton p. 122) "As a mystic he was remarkable, but as a ruler a disaster." (Posener p. 5) "The Amarna Letters reveal much about conditions in Palestine in the era just prior to the arrival of the Hebrews, and contain names of cities, rulers, and peoples useful in the reconstruction of the political geography of Palestine at this time." (Miller p. 15) See the Egyptian Maps for the location of Amarna on the Nile River.

"In 1886, according to 'Eduard Meyer not a single document existed to attest the authenticity of the Old Testament as history,' a year later the Amarna Tablets, a whole library of correspondence between the kings of Egypt and the princes of Palestine and Syria in the days of the Patriarchs, came forth. But the [great] revolutionary discoveries came with the finding of two other libraries, those of Ugarit and Qumran." (Nibley p. 52) Ugarit will be the subject of a future study, Qumran, or the Dead Sea Scrolls, has been the subject of numerous studies and tapes in this series. What was available to attest to the Book of Mormon in 1886? Not Much. But for both the Bible and the Book of Mormon, discoveries by the hundreds were to come in a great cascade.

In 1967, Nibley identified "twenty major manuscript deposits in the old world," and had this to say about No. ten in that list: "Tell el-Amarna, where in 1887 two hundred cuniform tablets were dug up by peasants, followed by hundreds of others, many of which were smashed and lost on the way to the dealers." (Nibley p. 52-55) Now, with recent publications of Amarna tablets and the discoveries made at this ancient city, it can now be discussed, and the contents explored for Book of Mormon parallels.

THE DISCOVERY

In 1887, an unnamed peasant woman, a native of Tell el-Amarna, a sleepy little village on the Nile about 250 miles north, or down river, from Thebes, was once again as she was prone to do, out in the desert hunting for sebak, (Payne p. 129) a kind of nitrous soil used as fertilizer by the natives. At random she had chosen a place to work with her spade, and beginning turning over the earth, she noticed several rectangular pieces of old clay which impeded her digging. She tossed them aside impatiently, and went on digging. She kept turning up spadeful after spadeful of the same crumbling pieces of clay. Grumbling, she decided to move on, bent down to pick up her gunny sack and noticed that the pieces of clay were covered with even lines of edge-shaped markings. (Payne p. 130) This little peasant woman of Tell el-Amarna had no way of knowing that these little clay tablets with the wedge-shaped markings on them were Babylonian cunifom. Or that Babylonian cunifom was a writing used by the rulers of the ancient world in their letters to one another. Rather than use papyrus, they used clay tablets, while they were still soft, and then baked them to preserve the markings.

Thinking that the markings on the tablets might make them valuable, the little lady from Amarna filled her gunny sack with 350 tablets and headed back to the village, where she had a stroke of good luck. A neighbor bought the whole sack full of tablets from her for the princely sum of fifty cents, about a month's wages. She hurried off with her riches, and history never again heard about her or who she was. Other neighbors hearing of her good fortune went to the dig site and themselves recovered some tablets. (Sasson p. 2411) The neighbor was familiar with dealers in artifacts and sold the tablets to a buyer who recognized the wedge-shaped markings for what they were. But cunifom tablets had never before been found in Egypt. This was the first discovery in Egypt of cunifom tablets. Because of this experts disagreed on whether or not they were genuine or forgeries. The tablets passed from hand to hand, until Sir Wallis Budge, the great Egyptologist, archaeologist, and cunifom expert, finally settled the matter. (Payne p. 131) When several of the tablets were brought to him for judgement, he studied them with growing excitement. The tablets were not forgeries. On the contrary, most of them were ancient, and contained anguished cries for help from cities in Palestine and Syria to a Pharaoh about whom archaeologists knew almost nothing. The Tell el-Amarna tablets, Budge announced, were "of very great historical importance." (Payne p. 131)

In 1892, Sir F. Petrie finally discovered the source of the documents, the royal archives of Ikhenaten (Akhenaten) at Amarna. The available collection [then] consists of 358 cuneiform tablets, being the correspondence, in the Akkadian language (some of the letters are in Hittite), between the Egyptian court and the princes of Palestine and Syria, [about] 1370-1348 BC, during the time of Israel's wanderings in the area. (Nibley p. 53)

Having identified where the tablets had come from, archaeologists began excavating in the empty desert behind Tell el-Amarna, little by little, uncovering the half-ruined palaces, temples, royal roadways, of a great buried city, built by Pharaoh Amenhotep the Fourth, [who for religious reasons was] also known as Akhenaten, [one of the Pharaohs of the 19th Dynasty 1570-1293] one of the most complex and extraordinary men in the history of the ancient world. (Payne p. 132)

THE ARCHIVE

"Archive material, [tablets] then, more commonly survives by chance, as incoherent groups of fragments-in fact, as rubbish. The prime Egyptian example of an archive simply abandoned in situ was the royal archive at Akhenaten's short-lived capital of Akhetaten (Amarna), from which came the Amarna Letters." (Sasson p. 2203) "The cuniform scribal tradition is an unbroken one, lasting at least thirty-four centuries. In particular the tradition of the so-called lexical texts, designed for scribal training, can be followed for the whole of that period. ...The Instructions of Shuruppak, (Erickson Aug 2005) can be traced from Old Sumerian version, (about 2400 BC, from the literary archive found at Abu Salabikh), to a Middle Assyrian translation about (1100 BC), while Sumerian cultic lyric poems of about 1800 BC were still being copied--almost unchanged--but accompanied by interlinear Akkadian translation--at Babylon in the first century BCE." (Sasson p. 2205) "Chancellery practices reached Ebla in Syria from Sumer through Kish... and Mari in the third millennium and ... Babylonian scribal procedures...reached the Hittite Empire and also Syria again, this time through the Hurrian state Mitanni, in the second Millennium. From Syria they were transmitted to Egypt and are known from the tablets found at Akhenaten (Amarna)". (Sasson p. 2205) The linkage throughout the ancient cities and over many centuries, is clear from this summary. In the Jaredite and Nephite histories, and names, this linguistic history is well preserved. Each of the great Empires, and each of the great cities, is being examined for the tablets they have yielded to see what, if any, parallels there may be to Book of Mormon names. The search is exciting, and it is most rewarding and productive. Some twenty-three cities have been identified with tablet discoveries that could be important for the study of Book of Mormon names. These are in addition to the ones already studied and presented in this web series.

THE AMARNA LETTERS

The Amarna "letters record the first expressions of Assyria's independence from Babylonia and represent the dialects of each of these powers. Those from Mitanni represent the final decades of that Kingdom's sovereignty and reveal something of the Hurrian influence there.

There are also letters from the Hittite empire and copies of replies from Egyptian rulers. ...a significant aspect of these letters has been the discovery of Canaanite [Phoenician] influence in the lexicon, phonology, morphology, and syntax of the Akkadian language in which they are written." (Hess p. 1) An early work The Tell El-Amarna Tablets, provided transliterated text, and an English translation. (Mercer) A history of the publication of the texts on Amarna was summarized by A.F. Rainey in 1978. ... "to which should be added the work of Moran." (Moran, preface and Murnane p. xi) A large portion of the letters were written in Byblos

[Phoenician] ... "Moran discovered the key to the grammar of the Amarna letters ...the ...system [was] almost wholly Northwest Semitic and thus closely related to ...contemporary Ugaritic language and of enormous significance for understanding the prehistory and early history of Hebrew." (Moran, viii) see also (Erickson, Reformed Egyptian 29 Jan 2005) At least Ten "languages were identified in the Amarna Letters, including Amorite, Hebrew, Phoenician, Ugaritic, Akkadian, Egyptian, Indo-Aryan [related to Sanskrit] , Hurrian, Anatolian, and Kassite." (Moran p. 6) Communications in ancient times had been extensive.

There is a great deal of worth in the study in the Amarna Letters, but only a few items will be selected for this study where the emphasis is on the contribution made to names in the Book of Mormon. Among the Amarna Letters were eight that were significant for continuing the debate among scholars as to the identification in the ancient texts of the Island of Cyprus. Scholars found in the Amarna Letters references to letters of Ugarit from the king and governor of Alashiya, which has been the name given to Cyprus by the more astute scholars. (Cline p. 41) A certain tablet, has this to say: "Say to the king of Egypt, my brother: Message of the king of Alashiya, your brother." (Merrillees p. 38, where the full tablet is shown with translation) There were also tablets discovered at Ugarit from the king and governor of Alashiya. (Cline p. 41) To help resolve this question of the origin of the clay of the Amarna tablets, the clay was subjected to petrographic and XES analysis and was found to match the clay beds found only on Cyprus. (Cline p. 41) Now many studies have been made in the Near and Middle East tracing the clays that pottery and ceramics have been made from and sourcing the clay back to original clay beds. (Goren) Die-hards, not understanding the specificity of petrographic and XES analysis just won't believe. Even with the Book of Mormon evidence so abundantly confirmed from these ancient discoveries there will be die-hards who won't believe. But their disbelief does not change the veracity of the truth. This technology is one I have used very often including a recent work to establish links and work out the sources of clay for pottery and ceramics of Anasazi Cultures north of the Colorado River and into Nevada areas.

DISCOVERY OF THE HITTITES:

It was two letters in the Amarna collection, written in an unknown language, sent by the King of Arzawa to Akhetaten. They had come from a place later identified as Bogazkoy in Turkey.

The ruins had been discovered by Charles Texier in 1834, but remained unidentified. In 1906 Hugo Winckler tracking down all he could find began excavations at Bogazkoy, finding hundreds of tablets, and identifying the ruins as Khatti, the Kingdom of the Hittites, and recovered a lost civilization.

(Guterbock, Hans G., in Sasson p. 2766)

The letters reflect the rise, at that time, of a dominant power to the north, the Hittites, who were beginning to challenge the long dominance of the region by Egypt, and another group was mentioned which was complicating the political situation in the entire Levant, or Palestinian area. "A class of outsiders known by their West Semitic label 'apiru (or habiru) [thought to refer to the Hebrews then settling in the Promised Land, who] further complicated the political situation by encouraging diverse populations to rebel against their own leaders." (Sasson p. 2411) The Book of Joshua tells the story.

It is clear from the Letters there was a market-driven economy in Egypt at this time, and class distinctions. (Sasson p. 1383)

There was a large gold hoard found in 1920, of gold bars, roughly made rings, silver figurines, scraps of previous metals, probably a jeweler's stock, or perhaps even a thief's loot. (Sasson p. 1384) It is apparent that trade and gift giving, particularly of gold, was a diplomatic given. (Sasson p. 1380)

Although Egypt had a written and an epistolary tradition as ancient as that of Mesopotamia, [it was very cumbersome and took a specialist to read it] the correspondence of the Egyptian court, both for its international affairs and with its vassals in southwest Asia, was conducted not in the language of the Egyptian Empire, but in the Akkadian language, and in the Akkadian cuneiform script [which was also used by Hittites, Hurrians, and others]. Egyptian writing was just too esoteric. In fact "peripheral Akkadian, served during the second millennium as the lingua franca, the diplomatic and trading language of the ancient Near East." (Sasson p. 2412) The Book of Mormon names reflects this in detail. Therefore, there is a great deal of general information found in the Amarna Letters for languages of the region, and Akkadian Language specifically. This all sheds light on the Book of Mormon names.

"By the time of the Amarna period, people of the eastern Mediterranean regions had been bilingual—in some regions multilingual—for centuries; they wrote Mesopotamian languages, but conversed in their local languages." (Sasson p. 2412) This spread cultures, styles, idioms, words, wisdom, and technical terms throughout all the languages, which continue even to today. "In the Amarna Period (late fifteenth and fourteenth centuries BCE) cuneiform Babylonian was the written lingua franca of the Near East, including ; pharaonic Egypt." (Gordon, in Sasson p. 2786) By then the twenty-nine or thirty-letter alphabet of Ugarit had spread to the ends of the earth. (Gordon in Sasson p. 2786)

THE REIGN OF THE JUDGES

In the Book of Mormon between 91 BC and AD 30, the Nephites were ruled by a series of judges. This period and the judges are discussed by Largey. (Largey pp. 474-475) The subject could be the basis for an extended study.

"The Syro-Palestinian states under Egypt's rule were all governed by princes called in the Amarna Letters hazannu, 'chief magistrate', mayor, regent'. A parallel West Semitic term is 'spt', which means ruler or judge." (Sasson p. 589) A knowledge of such practices may have been transmitted down through the Brass Plates. The Brass Plates were the vehicle for a lot more than has been understood in the past. The Late Bronze Age (the second half of the second millennium until about 1200) is probably the phase of the pre-Hellenistic history of Syria and Palestine

that is best known to us because of the amount and diversity of written sources that have survived. Among these sources is the archive from Tell al-Amarna (the site of Akhenaten) in Egypt.

This archive, which includes the correspondence between two pharaohs of the Eighteenth Dynasty and rulers of Asian cities and nations, may be the most important source of knowledge of Palestine under Egyptian rule. For this reason the Book of Mormon could be examined more thoroughly through this eye glass of the Amarna Letters than it has been.

THE PHOENICAN-MAYAN CONNECTION

The alphabet of Ugarit (Phoenicia) was polished into a twenty-two-letter alphabet of the Northwest Semites, and at Ugarit there developed a shorter alphabet as in the Phoenician-Hebrew-Aramaic alphabet, which is what was used in the Book of Mormon. (Erickson 18 May 2005) Americanists specializing in Mayan inscriptions, noted that the indigenous peoples of Central America had lunar zodiacs in which the signs had alphabetic phonetic values, found also in China and the Old

World.

A Mayan zodiac includes the direct sequence of a hand sign followed by a sign called 'lamat' or 'lambat', after which came the water sign. 'Hand' (specifically "palm of the hand") in northwest Semitic is 'kapp', which in Hebrew becomes 'kaf'. Kaf is also the name of the Hebrew letter 'k' (Erickson 18 May 2005) and corresponds to the Greek 'kappa'. Then comes the letter 'L', 'lamed' in Hebrew, Lamda in Greek, lamat/lambat in Mayan. Then comes 'water' which is 'mu' in Egyptian, Akkadian and Greek, and yields the letter 'm'. There is a striking direct sequence of 'k-l-m' in the Phoenician-Hebrew-Greek, Latin, and Mayan alphabets, connecting the New World and the Old, all embraced in the lunar zodiacs, showing global application. (Cyrus H. Gordon, in Sasson p. 2786) When comparing the twenty-two letters of the Phoenician alphabet to the "Chinese special graphs [twenty two in all] known as the 'ten heavenly stems' and 'twelve earthly branches', it was noted that some of the twenty-two Chinese graphs were in Ugaritic cuniform. The letter 'm' appears in the exact form that it appears in Ugaritic, and the letter 's' has the same shape as the cuniform letter for 'z' in Ugaritic." (Cyrus H. Gordon in Sasson p. 2786) Gordon also noted other cuniform signs in the Chinese graphs. The Chinese graphs are used for calendrics-as a numerical system, and for alphabetizing. (Cyrus H. Gordon in Sasson, pp. 2785-86)

"There are two major historical sources for the early history of the Philistine [the Sea Peoples, the Phoenicians] in the ancient Near East: Egyptian records and the biblical narratives." (Trude Dothan in Sasson p.1267) "References in the Amarna letters indicate that as early as the fourteenth century BCE, seafaring warriors were already serving as Egyptian mercenaries at Byblos," (Trude Dothan in Sasson pp. 1267-1268) and elsewhere, and had set up independent states of their own throughout the Mediterranean and into the Atlantic, (Bierling p. xii) and trading for and on behalf of Egypt, and other nations, as far away as west and south Africa, Britain and India. (Moscati pp. 78-81)

CONSONANT DOUBLING AND DOUBLING OF VOWELS:

On the highly technical side, an examination of the Book of Mormon names on pages 532-535, show a number of names with unusual consonantal doubling. Examples include Ammon, Ammonite, Ammonihahite, Ammoron, Gallim, Giddonah, Giddianhi, Gidgiddonah, Gidgiddoni, Irreantum, Middoni, Rabbanah, Sherrizah, Amnigaddah, and Uzziah. The last name is found in the Jewish Tanakh, (Mandel p. 528) with two variations, Uzza, and Uzzi, all three mean 'strength or forceful'. At this point we will not consider the Vowel Doubling, also found in the Book of Mormon. Counting the Biblical name there are fifteen names with Consonant Doubling. Could Joseph Smith have picked up on the Biblical name, Uzziah, to derive fourteen other names

with consonantal doubling? Doubtful! Is there some underlying principal involved that Joseph Smith may not have been aware of but which shows up in the names in a way that confirms the Book of Mormon text was an ancient texts obeying rules of Onomastic Science and grammar? One of the unique contributions to the Book of Mormon made by the Amarna Tablets and Letters, is an understanding of Consonant Doubling, to the benefit of Joseph Smith as a true translator working with a authentic ancient text.

"The scribes of Amurru, [the ancient Amorites, note the doubling in the name] both in earlier and later periods, were consistent in their denotation of consonant doubling ...They regularly marked consonant doubling in their writing and exceptions are quite few." (Isre'el p. 61) Here it is pointed out that it was a feature of earlier and later writing. The feature of consonant doubling is related to grammar. "Exceptions are usually connected with forms which are recognizable and nonhomographic, such as forms in the iparras ('present-future') verb, or other common words. [But] in earlier texts the use of the word ta-na-din-mi, meaning 'you will give' was used for tanaddinmi in the later texts. Anuma, which means, 'now, here', was common in later texts, but anuumma was used in most of the earlier texts. Hamutis meaning 'promptly' was used for hammuttis, (Isre'el p. 61) but it has two consonantal doublings. Note that our own English word 'common', follows this as well. It seems that there was also a tendency to avoid more than one denotation of doubling within a single word. Izzaazunim meaning 'they were standing' was used for izzazzuni. And innirir meaning 'to help' was substituted for innirir. (Isre'el p. 62) Most often, then, the consonant doubling found in the Book of Mormon reflect an earlier use of the names, such as the name Amnigaddah, which is a Jaredite name, he was the 35th descendant of Jared. Consonantal doubling in nouns, verbs, non-verbal forms and other forms, is also found in the Amarna Letters. (Isre'el pp. 62-66) Of course, Joseph Smith had plenty of time, 85 days or less, to figure this all out and keep it correct!

THE VOWELS

"The Akkadian language, which borrowed its script from the Sumerian, inherited signs for four categories of vowels: a, u, i, e. Akkadian speaking scribes used these signs for writing their own language, and in the dialects which had significant differences in pronunciation between the vowels e and i, their usage of the signs indeed reflected this difference." (Isre'el p. 71) "In the language of these [ancient] scribes the phoneme i had two different realizations, depending on its length: it was pronounced i when it was either short or

long and accented, e when it was long and unaccented....in the majority of cases the Amurru scribes did differentiate between signs signifying the vowel e and signs signifying the vowel i."

(Israel

p. 72) These signs were visible and readable in the cuniform styles on the Tablets. For this and other reasons it was imperative for Joseph Smith to get the Spelling of the names absolutely correct and too make sure Oliver got it exactly correct as well. We can then conclude that the names now, in the Book of Mormon, correctly reflect the various signs that were on the ancient texts indicating the various vowels, and consonants constructs that were to be maintained through time, with foreknowledge of just how the grammarians and philologists were going to reconstruct the languages and finalize the translations. So, "which is the best English translation? It is that which renders the Akkadian original [or any original text] as if its author would have written it himself in contemporary English." (Isre'el Vol II, p. 4) Ponder this as you contemplate the 'English' text of the Book of Mormon and its names.

MORPHOGRAPHEMIC SPELLING

"There are, however, various occurrences in which there is an apparently superfluous denotation of consonant doubling...Classified as (1) Purely Graphic, and (2) Phonological." (Isre'el p. 62) "Graphic doubling is a spelling tendency found elsewhere in Akkadian which is in effect, a type of morphographemic spelling...according to this spelling habit, stems are spelled as if they were separate units, and then a sort of 'phonetic complement' is added. This type of morphographemic writing is usually found in specific verbal forms, and as a rule the last sign of the stem is a CVS sign." (Isre'el I, p. 62) e.g., Ikalluunim meaning 'they eat', idinnunim, 'they give', isbattunim, 'you will put', liispurraam 'may he send here', [and with double doubling] tasapparra, 'may you write me'." (Isre'el p. 62) Note the double vowels in some of these words. This is also common in Book of Mormon names. In a non-verbal form you have: "assummikama, meaning 'for your sake'." (Isre'el p. 62)

"Phonological consonant doubling is attested in all period of Amurru Akkadian, in both letters and legal documents, and should be considered as a reflection of a feature of the spoken language, whether Akkadian or the substrate dialects. It is found in various formations replacing of an expected vocalic lengthening." (Isre'el Vol. I, p. 63) This appears also to be the case in the Book of Mormon, reflecting the modified Hebrew that was spoken by the Nephites. Specialists in such things can pursue this for rich rewards.

IRREANTUM--CHANGES THROUGH TIME OF CONSONANTAL DOUBLING:

In Semitic nouns: *Hiittam*, meaning 'sin', went from *hiittika*, to *hitaika*. (Isre'el Vol.11, p. 63). But of special interest to the Book of Mormon students is the peculiar name *Irreantum*. After eight years in the wilderness, Lehi and those traveling with him came to the sea (apparently the Arabian Sea) which they called *Irreantum*, 'which being interpreted is many waters' (1 Nephi 17:4-5, Largey p. 339) We are still looking for that name to substantiate its meaning and usage. In the Tanakh, 'Ir', means 'city' (I Chroncles 7:15), and in 'Iri' (I Chroncles 7:7) you have the meaning of 'Urbane'. (Mandel pp. 214-215). So the prefix varies little in meaning from language to language. In the Amarna texts from Egypt, we do have a name in which the consonant doubling of 'rr' does occur, following a vowel of 'i', and is used as in the Book of Mormon as a prefix, the name is: *irresutiya*. The suffix is different, so in the Amarna name the meaning is 'my aid', in this the prefix 'irr' means 'aid'. There is a hypocoristic ending in both names, in one it is the mimation, '-um', in the other it is the Yahweh, God, abbreviated to an ending of 'ya'. The name may then mean: 'God is my aid' for the Amarna name. The Book of Mormon interprets *Irreantum* as meaning 'many waters'. This suggest an astute awareness that this name could be interpreted differently, so its meaning in the way Lehi used it was provided, showing internal awareness of a peculiar name, and so in the Book of Mormon its meaning as applied to it's use for 'many waters' was specifically provided. That may have been the meaning given this ancient name in reformed Egyptian. In the Amarna text from letter No. 157, to the Egyptian King from Aziru, (Isre'el p. 17) it is more related to a word with similar spelling in *Boghazkoy Akkadian*, (Isre'el Vol. I, p. 63) with Hittite overtones. That may be the reason the 'interpretation' was also provided in the Book of Mormon texts so as not to confuse it with a similar name form northern Mesopotamia, used differently than in Egypt. All of this is a very subtle confirmation that Joseph was reading from an ancient text and getting the names correct under divine prompting. He could not have conjured up out of thin air this prefix of 'irr', then compound his situation by giving it an interpretation out of line with the rules. Later on in the Amarna text, the name *irresutiya* became *ireessutiia*, dropping the double consonant of 'rr', but picking up a double consonant of 'ss', but retaining the same meaning. Later forms of names occur where the double consonant of two 'r's is reduced to one 'r' in the name *irimaiaassa*, with the peculiar addition of two vowels and another consonant doubling of 'ss's, which may be Egyptian. (Hess p. 90). And *irsaappa* which is Hurrian, which may also be a shortened form of *irsappa* from Ugarit. (Hess pl. 90) Thus, some of the Book of Mormon names are very demanding, and definitely suggest name histories involving a number of languages and different historical periods of time. Thus the Book of Mormon is being technically highly consistent, allowing for specialized and particular knowledge only now being revealed from the study of the ancient tests in the last three decades.

DROPPING DOUBLE CONSONANTS

Sometimes the name would change greatly when the double consonants were dropped, especially in the Assyrian formation of

abstract nouns, where ahhuta became

Ses-utta, still retaining the

meaning of 'brotherhood', showing Assyrianisms. (Isre'el p. 63)

This also illustrates the difficulty in identifying a name because there

may exist another spelling with the same meaning. So in the search for name parallels, there must be a simultaneous search for meanings.

In verbs you have hadaakku

meaning 'I am glad' for the original hadaku,

or asbaaku, 'I sit', for asbaku, where the change in doubling is

a vowel. (Isre'el p. 63) In the Amarna letters the name Addaya,

became adaya, and from a Nuzi

letter we have the name Attaaa,

attesting to a double consonant and a triple

vowel, which later became Ataaa, then

ataaaia, and finally Ataa. In Mari the spelling is close to

the Amarna aaddaa, with two double

vowels and a double consonant, which became adaa, and then adda, but

all the same name. (Hess pp. 19-21) This illustrates the challenge when hunting

for names in the ancient texts that might be similar to those in the Book of Mormon.

In the Amarna texts there was what is called 'The

General's Letters', which attests many

other similar spellings, which should be listed separately since they are not

attested sporadically but rather systematically." (Isre'el p. 64) But we don't have space for all of

these kinds of listings. " ...The General's letters, hence, exhibits a phonological

reality. Since similar forms showing consonant

doubling in the rest of the Amurru

texts are not confined to any other small subcorpus, we should think of the

same underlying phonological reality also for the rest of the Amurru corpus." (Isre'el p. 64)

Isre'el comments on all these forms, more than shown above,

and says they should be regarded as a feature

of the dialects which had entered into the Akkadian

spoken by scribes of Amurru,

[Amorite, or Western Semitic]. Similar

spelling occurs in Assyrian, though restricted to specific words, but it seems to be a phonological trait specific to the area surrounding Amurru. [Western Semitic] "the interchangeability between long vowel and consonant doubling is a common feature sporadically attested in other Akkadian dialects too. ...[and] considered as examples of Assyrian influence, [but] accepted because of a similar, pre-existing phonological feature." (Isre'el p. 65) The trait was more general than realized. Which is saying that parallels in the Book of Mormon have a strange technical linkage to the Assyrian, Akkadian, and especially the Amurru names and naming processes. One has only to recall that all of the Northern Tribes were in boundary contract with the Amoritic (Amurru) peoples and no doubt picked up a lot of their personal names, and included them in their own name processing and genealogies, transmitting them down through time in the Brass Plates. Further study will confirm this, because it is a unique contribution to the analysis of Book of Mormon names and confirmation that the Book of Mormon is an authentic compilation of ancient records with many Onomastic levels demanding analysis.

MIMATION IN AMARNA NAMES

Mimation is the use of '-m' in some form at the ending of a name. Most frequently found in names before 700 BC, and most often between 2100 to 1800 BC. (Jirku quoted in Nibley Vol. 6 p. 288), not often after that. The Jaredite names attest to the use of mimation in a number of names, therefore it was utilized before the flood. The Ebla and Mari names (2400-2000 BC) also include some mimation, so mimation is ancient. The Brass Plates may therefore have included names with mimation because in the "Egyptian and Hittite records it is now clear that the dialects of Palestine and Syria dropped this mimation in the first half of the second millennium BC., and it is preserved in the Bible only in a few pre-Hebraic words." (Nibley Vol. 6, p. 288) There is a variety of mimation suffixes found at Amarna, they include: -mi, -ma, -me-e, --m, and -um. (Hess p. 202) One can check the names of the Book of Mormon and find out how many names end with these suffixes. There are quite a few. There are other suffixes in the Book of Mormon names not as yet found in the Amarna Letters, but are found in other discoveries. These are described elsewhere. (Erickson 23 Feb 2005)

NUNATION

Nunation is the use of '-n' in some form as the ending of a name. Most frequently found in names after 2000 BC. "Nunation itself, however, which is extremely common in the Book of Mormon proper names (PN) is an old-fashioned thing which in Lehi's day was a

sign of conservatism and most frequently found among the desert people. It turns up on old Hebrew genealogies in which 'the nomenclature is largely un-Hebraic, with peculiar antique formations in -an, -on, and in some cases of particular Arabian origin." (Nibley Vol. 6, p. 288). There are a variety of nunation suffixes found at Amarna, they include -na, -n, -un. (Hess p. 202) which are only a few of the many varieties in the ancient languages.

HYPOCORISTIC SUFFIXES AT AMARNA

The use of abbreviated elements representing God are found in many of the Semitic Languages, and also in Amarna, they include: -ia, -ya, -e, -a, -di, -di-ya. Like the forms of mimation and nunation, the Amarna Letters do not have all of the various types of hypocoristic suffixes, but enough to confirm that the Book of Mormon properly employed such elements in many names. (Hess p. 202)

In addition, Amarna names also have theophoric suffix elements in Personal Names, that include -abi-, ab-, adu-, -aia, -el, -l, ili, -elima, -an, -kil, -kili, -amr, -amur, -r, -arz, abni, -ni, -lu, -beel, -ahla, -ta, -la, and others. Some of these show up as suffixes on Book of Mormon names. Prevalent in the Book of Mormon are endings with the -i. ia, iah, the latter is very common in Book of Mormon names. "The vast Majority of Hebrew names found at Lackish [i.e., from records contemporary with Lehi] end the same way, indicating that -iah names were very fashionable in Lehi's time." (Nibley Vol. 6, p. 288) The ending -iahu is found on many Hebrew names which "become extremely common Book of Mormon name endings -ihah." (Nibley Vol. 6, p. 289) In a future study we will discuss the ancient discoveries at Lackish.

AMARNA PERSONAL NAMES:

The personal names in the Amarna Letters provide many parallels to Book of Mormon names. The names found with the same prefixes, suffixes, or other aspect of the personal names that may relate to Book of Mormon names is provided below. This is not exhaustive. It is preliminary to the extent that other sources of Amarna Names not now available, these when available will permit greater detail to be added to this aspect of Book of Mormons

studies. This present discussion it to stimulate interest and study. One must also recall the limitations of the Phoenician and Hebrew Alphabet when making selection of name parallels, "Since the Semitic 'L' must always be rendered as 'r' in Egyptian (which has no L), Helaman would in 'un-reformed Egyptian' necessarily appear as the typically Egyptian Heramon." (Nibley Vol. 6, p. 287) Also see Erickson 18 May 2005.

AHA

The prefix 'Ah', means brother. (Hess p. 22) The name Aha (Alma 16:5) and Ahah (Ether 1:9, Alma 16:4-8), found in the Book of Mormon also means brother. In the Tanakh, the spelling may include Aha, Ahb, Ahi, (its most frequent form), Aho, Ahu. (Mendel pp. 29, 45) If the vowel is followed by a 'z' or two 'zz's', the 'Ah' prefix will mean something different. (Mendel p. 45) Ahah was the 40th descendent of Jared. This suggests that forms or prefix elements of the name were obtained from the Jaredite records. However, 'Ah', is very common in ancient Semitic languages. "In certain common Semitic, predominantly logographically written name elements (ab- 'father', 'ah-' brother, 'il-' god'), an artificial distinction has been made between West Semitic and Akkadian items in rendering the former systematically as Abi, Ahi, and il and then later as abu, ahu, and ilu. This convention does not imply that the relevant elements were necessary so realized (readings ab, aba, abi, bi, ah, abh, ahi, ha, hi, il and ili are also possible in both West Semitic and Akkadian names) but simply serves to bring order to the chaos of variants and to make finding the appropriate entries easier. (Radner p. xxiii) The exact match to the Book of Mormon usage is found in Aha (the 'a' being a hypocoristica) based on West Semitic, 'ah' or Akkadian 'ahu'. (Radner p. 56) Thus, the 'Ahu' forming the Amarna Letters is ancient Akkadian, and the Aha in the Book of Mormon, Jaredite records, is West Semitic, but both mean the same: brother, and both are ancient. The form Aha, as used in the Book of Mormon, is also found in the Tablets of Mari. (Hess p. 22, Erickson 29 June 2005) Nibley has identified an Egyptian general who bestowed on his son the name Aha, meaning 'warrior', a name borne by the legendary first hero king of Egypt. (Nibley Vol. 6, p. 286)

AMARON

In the name Amaron, (Omni 1:3) the interest is in the prefix 'Ama'. It is also the prefix in the names: Amaleki, Amalekite, Amalickiah, Amalickiahite, these last four are all variations of Amaleki, just with

different suffixes, all used correctly in different parts of the Book of Mormon. No one ever said Joseph Smith had a chart to keep the names correct and to refer back as to how he used the names from time to time. Another prefix in Amaron, is the element Amar, meaning 'chosen', (Akkadian, Radner p. 98) found in the Amarna Letters, where it seems to mean with the hypocoristicon suffix 'a', 'chosen of God', which may have also been the name given for the tribe of Bedouin, known as the Beni Amran, who had set up an encampment on the east bank of the River, "two centuries [and a half] ago, on the edge of a great dry circle entirely occupied by a city which had been razed to the ground...Amarna is much more than an unparalleled site for excavation." (Posener p. 7) These two prefixes are discussed in more detail in Erickson August 2005. The Am, (Radner p. 97) Ama, and Amar, prefixes are common in Egyptian, (Hess p. 28) quite often in the use of the Egyptian God Amon. The prefix of Ama is also well known in Iranian. (Radner p. 97) there the meaning is 'attaching force'. There are many pages of names with the Am prefix. (Radner pp. 97-102) There are eighteen names with the 'Am' prefix in the Book of Mormon. How did Joseph keep them all correct and straight?

AMGID

"Amgid was a Jaredite King (Ether 10:32) who reigned at a time when the Jaredite kingdom was divided. After many years of fighting with his rival, King Com, Amgid was deposed, and Com gained 'power over the remainder of the Kingdom'." (Largey p. 46) There are three elements in this name, used at different times in processing names, they include Am, Amg, and the name itself Amgid. The last two can be compared with Amga of Anatolian origin. (Radner p. 101)

AMMON

Ammon (2 Nephi 21:14) is an important character, one of the sons of Mosiah. In his name there is the double consonant discussed above, in this case, 'mm'. In the Amarna Letters, the prefix Amm appears in two names, Ammiistamri, (Hess p. 189) and Ammunira. Both of these names are from the Ugarit area. The first is the name of a King of Ugarit, and the second is the name of a leader of Beirut. (Hess pp. 31-33) The prefix Amm means 'paternal uncle'. There are many names having this prefix in the Neo-Assyrian Empire. (Radner pp. 103-106) There are six names with this prefix in the Book of Mormon list, Ammon, Ammonite, Ammonihah, Ammonihahite, Ammoron, all derived from Ammon,

with modifying suffixes. As discussed in this series, the Amm prefix is also found in Egyptian names.

ANI-ANTI

Ani-anti was a Lamanite village (Alma

21:11). The prefix Ani in West Semitic seems to mean 'fastidious', (Radner p. 111) but may have been used differently in the Book of Mormon. In the Amarna letters the name anati, the prefix 'an' should be read as 'an', perhaps Akkadian for 'to, for'. In Akkadian the name anuia has "A hypocoristic suffix with a diminutive sense...although rare in Akkadian Personal Names, it appears frequently in Amorite (Western Semitic) Personal Names." (Hess p. 201) So the prefix 'ani' is found as West Semitic elements in West Semitic Personal Names. (Hess p. 200)

AMNOR-AMNIHU-AMNIGADDAH

Amnor is named

along with three others in Alma 2:22, it is also listed as an amount of Silver, the amnor, in Alma 11:6, and an amnor of silver was as great as two senums. (Alma

11:11) The prefix of interest is 'Amn'

. This prefix found in the three Book of Mormon names as shown. In the Amarna Letters there is found the name Ammunira.

Eleven variations of this name is given (Hess p. 32) only one has the 'Amn' prefix, Amnr, an Ugaritic name. (Hess p. 33) "Although there are different forms of ending for this Personal Name, the differences do not reflect case vowels. Rather, they suggest differences in style and origin." (Hess p. 32) Another name in the Amarna Letters is amurbaluk/haddu.

(Hess p. 33) In this instance the name is West Semitic. "Depending upon how the verbal element is understood...Amur reflect the verbal root '[a]mr',

which can carry the meaning 'to see' 'to speak'". (Hess p. 33)

"The language represented by this Personal Name, Ammunira, is a nominal sentence name, composed of a DN (God name)

followed by a predicate (nwr meaning

'light, fire') describing an attribute of the DN [God name, meaning]: 'ammu

is the light.'. In Ugarit the name becomes amnr [which would read the same as Amnor and Amnihu] with the GN [God name] appended as a suffix, meaning: 'amnr is the light'". (Hess p. 33) The 'r'

appended on a name generally means 'sees', such as has the discussion of the name Coriantimur, which means 'Corian

has seen or does see God'. (Erickson, 23 Feb) The Ugarit name is the closest comparison to the Book of Moron names, Ugarit was a huge commerce center just north of the northern boundaries of the Ten Tribes, which they may have very well utilized, picking up on the Ugaritic usage of this as well as many other names.

NIMRAH

Nimrah is a Jaredite name found in Ether 9:8-9. The prefix 'Nim' appears in the name nimuiutriia, with perhaps Egyptian connections. (Hess p. 118) The 'Nim' is a GN, [Gods name] and that Amarna name would read 'God is truth, rightness, justice.'" (Hess p. 118) The short two Book of Mormon names may mean simply 'Nim is God' or 'God is God'. In the Tanakh there are two names with this prefix, Nimrod, (the son of Cush, grandson of Ham), and of uncertain meaning, and Nimshi. Nimshi was the father of Jehu, the commander of King Joram's army who seized the throne of Israel. (Mendel p. 409)

PAHORAN

Pahoran was the chief judge of the Nephites about 68 BC. (Alma 50:40) He was the father of many sons and died about 52 BC. (Hel 1:2-4) In the Amarna Letters, the name Pahanate contains the essential consonant prefix 'ph', in the Book of Mormon, Pahoran has the prefix Paho, little different than the Paha in the name Pahanate. Some six name variations with this prefix occur in the Amarna Personal Name list (Hess p. 121) the general meaning may be rendered 'the servant of God' which Pahoran certainly was. (Hess p. 122) Another name in the Amarna Letters is Puhuru, a variant spelling of this name in ancient Emar is Pahura, and only requires the abbreviated suffix for god, a nunation or 'n' ending. to be nearly a match for the Book of Mormon name. The Pahanate variation given by Hess is interesting. "The language represented by this PN (personal name) is Egyptian." (Hess p 122) The prefix paha means 'the servant' the suffix is a hypocoristica for God. The suffix 'ran' in Pahoran, is found in the Nineveh tablets as [as a prefix] (ranqira) and in Babylonian names such as 'ranu', (Baker p. 1032) from tablets from Nineveh and in ancient Nuzi as Pahuur. (Hess p. 130) The name is not found in the Hebrew Tanakh. Most likely the name came from Lehi's Egyptian or Phoenician connections.

RABBANAH

This name is interpreted in Alma 18:13 to mean 'powerful or great king', referring to Ammon who was thought of as being the Great Spirit. The New Testament usage of a similar prefix found in the name is Rabboni. (John 20:16) "The title is related to ancient Near Eastern cognates designating 'greatness'." (Largey p. 672) In the Amarna Letters, two names have this prefix, rabiilu, meaning 'El' god is great/my healer (Hess p. 130), and rabusiidqi, with the West Semitic logogram representing 'rby' meaning 'great'. (Hess p. 131) Both of these names convey the significant meaning as given in the Book of Mormon, to be 'powerful or great king'. This name has been discussed in detail. (Erickson The Governor's Archive Aug 2005)

SAM

Sam was the third son of Lehi and older brother of Nephi. (1 Ne. 2:17) The name Sam is also a prefix in two other names in the Book of Mormon, both of them are Biblical: Samuel and Samaria. In the Tanakh there are four names with the prefix, Samlah, Samson, Samuel, and Samgar-Nebo. (Mendel pp. 450-453) The name has been found in ancient Tablets from various ancient discoveries, (Baker pp. 1081-1087) and the name has been discussed in this series. (Erickson Aug 2005) . In the Amarna Letters the prefix Sam occurs in the name samuhadda. (Hess p. 140) The prefix in West Semitic, Akkadian, means 'name, son, posterity' as the first element in the name samuhadda. Samuhadda means 'Posterity of Haddu'. (Hess p. 141) In the West Semitic language the name sama-eda, the prefix is derived from the roots 'sm' meaning 'name' and 'yd' meaning 'to know', or to 'hear', other names often use the meaning 'heard' for the prefix. (Baker p. 1081) In the West Semitic name Sama'-il, the name means 'God has heard', where the '-il' is the abbreviation for Elohim, or God. (Baker p. 1081) There are many names with this prefix. (Baker pp. 1081-1087) In the Amarna Letters, there is an Ugarit name, samulanuim, An Amorite name, samuu, (nearly a match for Sam) and a Hebrew name Samuel, (Hess p. 141) which is Samuel in the Bible. Given that the Book of Mormon is altered Hebrew written in reformed Egyptian, the name Sam without the hypocoristicon ending would have been used with or without the endings.

SHUM

Shum is first mentioned in the Book of Mormon in Alma 11:5 as a gold piece, but it was also used as a name for a Valley (Moses 7:5) and a people (Moses 7:7) during the days of Enoch, so it is an Adamic name. The Jaredites records and the Brass Plates could have transmitted this name into the Western Hemisphere. In the Amarna Letters Shum, like Sam, can mean "a name" or "son, posterity", which is also the meaning of Shem 'shm', in the Tanakh. (Mendel p. 492) Like Sam, it is ancient, Adamic in origin. This name has been discussed in more detail in this series. (Erickson, 15 Apr 2005) Joseph Smith's use of the various forms and elements of the Semitic names is internally consistent and correct. In letter No. 209, of the Amarna Letters, the prefix 'sum', sm, is identified specifically. (Hess p. 181)

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