

PRIMARY RECORDS kept and/or possessed by the NEPHITES

1. BRASS PLATES OF LABAN This was the family record kept by a relative of Lehi's named Laban, who lived in Jerusalem. After leaving that city, Lehi sent his sons back to obtain this record (1 Nephi 3-5). According to 1 Nephi 5:11-14, this record contained the five books of Moses as well as "a record of the Jews...from the beginning... down to the commencement of the reign of Zedekiah..." It also held "the prophecies of the holy prophets, from the beginning, even down to the commencement of the reign of Zedekiah; and also many prophecies which have been spoken by the mouth of Jeremiah." From this, we can guess that it contained what we have today as most of the Old Testament - minus the books of Lamentations, Ezekiel, Daniel, Malachi, Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther, and minus portions of Jeremiah, 2 Kings, and 2 Chronicles. Lehi also discovered on these plates was "a genealogy of his fathers", showing that he was a descendant of Joseph through Manasseh (1 Nephi 5:14; Alma 10:3).

2. SMALL PLATES OF NEPHI These were begun by Nephi to contain the religious history of the Nephite peoples. They were kept mostly by righteous men from Nephi to Amaleki, at which time they were full. The Small Plates of Nephi were included by Mormon into the Gold Plates and appear in the Book of Mormon as the books of 1 & 2 Nephi, Jacob, Enos, Jarom, and Omni.

3. PLATES OF MORMON The rest of the Book of Mormon is from plates Mormon made to write a history of his people. Mormon's son Moroni completed the plates after his father's death. They include history from:

a. PLATES OF LEHI This was Lehi's record of his ministry. It was the first portion of the Gold Plates that Joseph Smith translated, and it was lost and/or stolen when Martin Harris was given temporary custody of the manuscript. The Lord instructed Joseph not to retranslate as what it contained was also contained elsewhere in the volume.

b. LARGE PLATES OF NEPHI Nephi began the Large Plates to record the secular history of his people. And after the Small Plates were full, the record keepers wrote both the religious and the secular history on the Large Plates. These plates were Mormon's main source while compiling the history after the end of the Small Plates.

c. PLATES OF ETHER; THE TWENTY-FOUR PLATES This is a record of the Jaredites written by Ether and found by the people of Limhi. It was translated by the prophet Mosiah. Moroni included an abridgment of this record while completing his father's work. This is known in the Book of Mormon as the Book of Ether.