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Author(s) Kevin L. Barney

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Abstract Many easily recognizable Hebrew words and names can be found in the Book of Abraham. One name that hasn't had a concrete meaning attached to it, however, is *Elkenah*. In this article, Barney addresses whether Elkenah is a person, place, or name; what its possible linguistic structures are; and what it might mean. Most importantly, Barney links Elkenah with the Canaanite god El and the attending cult—a cult that practiced human sacrifice. This has significant ramifications for the Book of Abraham, which has been criticized for its inclusion of human sacrifice. Assuming a northern location for the city Ur and taking Elkenah as the Canaanite El resolve the issue of child sacrifice in the Book of Abraham.

On Elkenah as Canaanite El

Kevin L. Barney

Much like the Book of Mormon, the Book of Abraham is extant only in its English translation (and in other translations based on the English text). In such a situation, the transliterated words in the text's onomasticon take on added significance as representing possible fossilized remnants of the original text.[1] Although the Book of Abraham contains a number of easily recognizable Hebrew words and names, many of the names in the book are obscure and have a less obvious derivation. The first of these words to appear in the text is *Elkenah*. In this article, I will explore the possible derivations of this word and then articulate some of the ramifications the most likely derivations would have for understanding the Book of Abraham generally.

Elkenah in the Book of Abraham

The name *Elkenah* appears twelve times in the Book of Abraham. The first three occurrences appear in the explanations of the figures in Facsimile 1. Figure 3 therein is identified as "the idolatrous priest of Elkenah attempting to offer up Abraham as a sacrifice," referring to the person standing at the left of the altar. Figure 4 shows "the altar of sacrifice by the

Facsimile 1 from the Book of Abraham. Courtesy of the Church History Library, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

idolatrous priests, standing before the gods of Elkenah, Libnah, Mahmack-rah, Korash and Pharaoh," referring to the lion couch, the four canopic jars, and the crocodile of the facsimile. Figure 5 is labeled "the idolatrous god of Elkenah," referring to the falcon-headed jar, generally understood in its Egyptian context as Qebehsenuf, one of the four sons of Horus.

Turning to the text itself, we note that Elkenah is mentioned an additional seven times in Abraham 1, at verses 6, 7(bis), 13, 17, 20, and 29, and again in Abraham 2:13 and 3:20. The first three of these occurrences appear in the following quotation from Abraham 1:5–7:

> My fathers, having turned from their righteousness, and from the holy commandments which the Lord their God had given unto them, unto the worshiping of the gods of the heathen, utterly refused to hearken to my voice; for their hearts were set to do evil, and were wholly turned to the god of Elkenah, and the god of Libnah, and the god of Mahmackrah, and the god of Korash, and the god of Pharaoh, king of Egypt; therefore they turned their hearts to the sacrifice of the heathen in offering up their children unto these dumb idols, and hearkened not unto my voice, but

endeavored to take away my life by the hand of the priest of Elkenah. The priest of Elkenah was also the priest of Pharaoh.

This text mentions both "the god of Elkenah" and "the priest of Elkenah," who also does double duty as "the priest of Pharaoh." The principal evils involved in the worship of this and the other "heathen" gods are idolatry and child sacrifice. Abraham speaks against the practice of child sacrifice but is rebuffed. Verse 10 of Abraham 1 tells of the "thank-offering of a child," and verse 11 tells us of three virgin girls who were sacrificed by the priest of Elkenah. According to verse 12, the priests also attempted to sacrifice Abraham, apparently in part as a response to his speaking out against the practice, his father having been an instigator of the attempted sacrifice (v. 30). Abraham lifted up his voice unto the Lord, who filled him with the vision of the Almighty and sent the angel of his presence to unloose Abraham's bands (v. 15). In verse 16 the angel speaks as if he were the Lord (or possibly this was the Lord himself), announcing to Abraham that he has heard him and has come down to deliver him into a strange land. The angel/Lord announces that the fathers have turned their hearts away from him to worship the god of Elkenah and the other idolatrous gods, and that for this reason he has come to destroy the priest who sought to take Abraham's life (v. 17). Verse 20 tells us that this took place in the land of Ur, of Chaldea. And so the Lord breaks down the altar of Elkenah and of the gods of the land and utterly destroys them and smites the priest so that he dies. Finally, verse 29 reports that following the death of the priest of Elkenah, there was a famine in the land, in response to which Abraham follows God's direction and starts for the land of Canaan (Abraham 2:4).

Was Elkenah the name of a god, a place, or a person? Each appearance of the name *Elkenah* in the text is preceded by "the god of," "the gods of" (usually part of a sequence),[2] "the priest of," or "the altar of."[3] There is an inherent ambiguity in the English genitive particle *of*, and Hugh Nibley has suggested that, instead of the name of a god, Elkenah could be the name of a person or place.[4] While I would acknowledge this as a possibility, in my view, the most natural way to read the text is to take "the god of Elkenah" as an epexegetic genitive (i.e., Elkenah *is* the god), in which case "the priest

of Elkenah" would be the priest dedicated to the god of that particular cult. While either "the god [worshipped by the person] Elkenah" or "the god [worshipped at the place] Elkenah" is conceivably possible, and while I do believe that this is the correct way to read the text in the case of "the god of Pharaoh,"[5] these alternatives in the case of "the god of Elkenah" strike me as unduly strained. In particular, I believe the language of verse 20, "and the Lord broke down the altar of Elkenah, and of the gods of the land," equates Elkenah with the other gods of the land (in this instance not separately named as was the case previously).[6] Indeed, since Elkenah is specifically named here and the other gods are not, and since Elkenah is always listed first (even to the point of requiring right-to-left numbering of the four gods before the altar in Facsimile 1), Elkenah would appear to be not only a god, but the preeminent god in the cultus described in the story.[7]

At this point, let us stop and summarize the main points we can derive from the text concerning Elkenah:

- Although the name conceivably could refer to a person or place, it most likely refers to a god.
- Elkenah represents the chief god in the cult of the fathers against which Abraham argued.
- Child sacrifice was offered to this god, which was evil in the sight of the Lord. Apart from idolatrous representation, this seems to have been the principal fault of this deity from Abraham's perspective.
- A priest of this god attempted to sacrifice Abraham in Ur of the Chaldees.
- The priest of Elkenah was also the priest of Pharaoh.
- Elkenah was represented on Facsimile 1 by the falcon-headed canopic jar of Qebehsenuf, one of the sons of Horus.
- The Lord broke the bands that bound Abraham, broke down the altar of Elkenah, destroyed the gods, and killed the priest of Elkenah.
- Following the death of the priest of Elkenah, there was a famine in the land that necessitated Abraham's removal to the land of Canaan.

The name is spelled different ways in the extant Book of Abraham manuscripts. The distribution of these variant spellings is set forth in the accompanying table:

Verse Location in Printed Book of Abraham	Ab2 (Williams)	Ab3 (Parrish)	Ab4 (Phelps/Parrish)	Ab5 (Richards)
1:6	Elk=kener	Elkkener	Elkkener	Elkenah
1:7	Elk=kener	Elkkener	Elkkener	Elkenah
1:7	Elk=Keenah	Elkkener	Elkkener	Elkenah
1:13	Elk-keen__	Elkkener	Elkkener	Elkenah
1:17	Elk-kee-nah	Elkkener	Elkkener	Elkenah
1:20	Elk-keenah	Elkkener	Elkkener	Elkenah
1:29	Elk+keenah	Elkkener	Elkkener	Elkenah
2:13				Elkenah
3:20				Elkenah[8]

Frederick G. Williams seems to have started spelling the name with an *-er* ending, but then correcting to an *-ah* ending for most of his occurrences. Warren Parrish and W. W. Phelps, perhaps following the beginning of the Williams document, retained the *-er* ending. Willard Richards gives the form of the name as it was published in the *Times and Seasons*, and given that Joseph would have approved that text prior to publication, this is presumably the form of the name as Joseph intended it to be presented in the Book of Abraham.

The Name *Elkenah*

With that background, we can begin to approach the name itself. We are fortunate to have a partial Rosetta Stone to aid us in our investigation. The *El-* element of Elkenah almost certainly represents the Semitic word for deity, *ʾel* (or *ilu* in Akkadian). Further, in the Bible as elsewhere, Semitic El is very commonly modified in some fashion, which appears to be the case here as well. Based on known uses of the word *El*, I will suggest six (not necessarily exhaustive) possibilities for how we might take the *-kenah* element. As a general matter, El could be either the proper name of the god or the generic Semitic term for *god*. In either case, the following *-kenah* element could be in apposition with the *El-* element or in a genitival relationship, or acting as an attributive adjective or participle, a verb construed with El, or a pronominal suffix of some sort.

It would appear that the six most likely possible linguistic structures for this name are as follows:

A. El could be used as the generic appellative *god* with a divine name following in apposition—that is, "the god Kenah." This usage is, however, relatively rare (one parallel being *ʾil Haddu* "the god Haddu").[9]

B. Elkenah could be a theophoric name predicating some quality of the *El-* compound—that is, "El is *kenah*" or "El *kenah* [as a verb]," whatever *kenah* might mean. For instance, Abraham's chief servant was named Eliezer, "God of help" or "my God is help" (Genesis 15:2).[10] This type of structure would only work if Elkenah were the name of a human being (or an angel) and not the name of the god himself.

C. The *-kenah* element could refer to a place or people. In this event, the name would mean "El of Kenah," where Kenah is a land, country, or ethnic designation. An analogous form in the Old Testament would be *ʾEl Yisrael* "the God of Israel" from Psalm 68.

D. The *-kenah* element could refer to a person. In this event, the name would mean "El of Kenah," where Kenah is a human being. An analogous form in the Old Testament would be *ʾelohim Abraham* "the God of Abraham," as in Genesis 31:53.

E. The *-kenah* element could be an epithet modifying the *El-* element. Such epithets are common in the Old Testament. Examples of El epithets include the following:[11]

El Combination	Meaning
El Shaddai	El Almighty
El Elyon	El the Highest One
El Olam	El the Everlasting One
El Bethel	El of Bethel (i.e., the El revealed at the shrine Bethel)
El Roi	El of Vision (or Divining)
El Berith	El of the Covenant

F. Kenah could be the name of a deceased king. There is evidence of a Canaanite belief in postmortem divinization.[12] The Ugaritic king list precedes each name with the word *ʾl*, "god."[13]

With this brief survey of some of the possibilities inherent in an El combination, let us now turn our attention to six concrete proposals for how the name *Elkenah* should be understood in the Book of Abraham (see appendix 1 for a summary):

1. *ʾEl qanah* "God has created." This name occurs a number of times in the Old Testament as a personal name, mostly with reference to Korahite Levites (see appendix 2), transliterated in the King James Version as Elkanah. The name also occurs in Akkadian, both as *Ilu-qana* and (with the elements reversed) as *Qana-ilu*.[14] The precise meaning of the name is disputed because there is a significant scholarly debate over whether the Hebrew verb *qānah* principally means "to create" or "to acquire."[15] In any event, as a theophoric name (pattern B), this name would work only if one were willing to take Elkenah in the Book of Abraham as the name of a person, as in "the god [worshipped by the person] Elkenah." *Pace* Nibley, I do not believe that this is a correct reading of the Book of Abraham; I therefore would discount this name as a possible solution.[16] It would also be difficult to account for the /a/ to /e/ vowel shift in the second syllable suggested by Book of Abraham "Elkenah."

2. *ʾEl qeni* "El is mighty." This was the first of three suggestions offered by Hugh Nibley in his *Improvement Era* series[17] and involves a combination of the Semitic El with an Egyptian element *qen-* or *qeni*, which means "mighty, powerful, brave." The form would be analogous to *Amon-qen(i)*, "Amon is mighty." Although Nibley devotes

two columns of text to explaining this suggestion, which appears to have been his favorite, I would discount it for the same reason I would discount *ʾEl qanah* above; I do not believe Elkenah in the Book of Abraham is meant to refer to a human being.

3. *Il Kinaḫḫi* "El of Canaan." This was the second of Nibley's three suggestions, and one that I came to myself independently. Although Nibley devoted only a few sentences to it, I believe it is actually by far the strongest of his proposals.

On the surface, however, this might appear to be one of the weaker proposals, since in Hebrew Canaan is spelled with a second *n*: *Knʿn*, or *Kenaʿan* with Masoretic vocalization (accented on the second syllable). Egyptian also prefers the second *n* with the spellings *Kynʿnw*, *Kȝnʿnʿ*, and *Knnʿnȝ*. The name is also found syllabically written in Akkadian as *Ki-na-aḫ-num* (gentilic), with the pharyngeal consonant represented by *ḫ*, and as *Ki-in-a-nim*,[18] with the pharyngeal unrepresented. In cuneiform texts from Tell El Amarna and Bogazkoy, however, the following spellings are attested: *Ki-na-aḫ-ni*, *Ki-na-aḫ-na. Ki-na-aḫ-ḫi*, *Ki-na-a-aḫ-ḫi* and *Ki-na-ḫi* (see image on p. 27).[19] Ugaritic also reflects both spellings with the final -*n* and spellings without it, as in *mârî^{M MAT}ki-na-ḫi*, "men of the land of Canaan."[20] The appearance of the (normalized) reduced base *Kinaḫḫ-* indicates that the final -*n* in the other examples is an affixational morpheme (i.e., a grammatical element).[21] The geminate (doubled) final consonant in *Kinaḫḫu*[22] *(ḫḫ-)* is a common feature of the Akkadian transcription of non-Akkadian words and geographic names, as in *Amurru*, *Simurru*, *Mitanni* (nominative *Mitannu*), and *Hilakku*.[23] Of the dozen occurrences of "Canaan" in the Tell El Amarna letters, those originating in Canaan itself (i.e., Tyre and Byblos) use the -*n* affix, but those originating in Syria and Mesopotamia do not.[24]

In the Greek of the Septuagint as well as in the New Testament, *Canaan* is transliterated Χανααν *Chanaan*, based on the Hebrew spelling. There are other Greek sources, however, that spell the name *Chna* [Χνα *chi-nu-alpha*]. For instance, Hecataeus of Miletus affirmed that Phoenicia was called *Chna*.[25] Philo of Byblos in his *Phoenician History* identifies a certain *Chna* as the first to carry the name "Phoenician,"[26] and Herodianus Grammaticus (second century AD) and Stephanus of Byzantium (s.v. *Chnâ*) report that the Phoenicians were formerly called
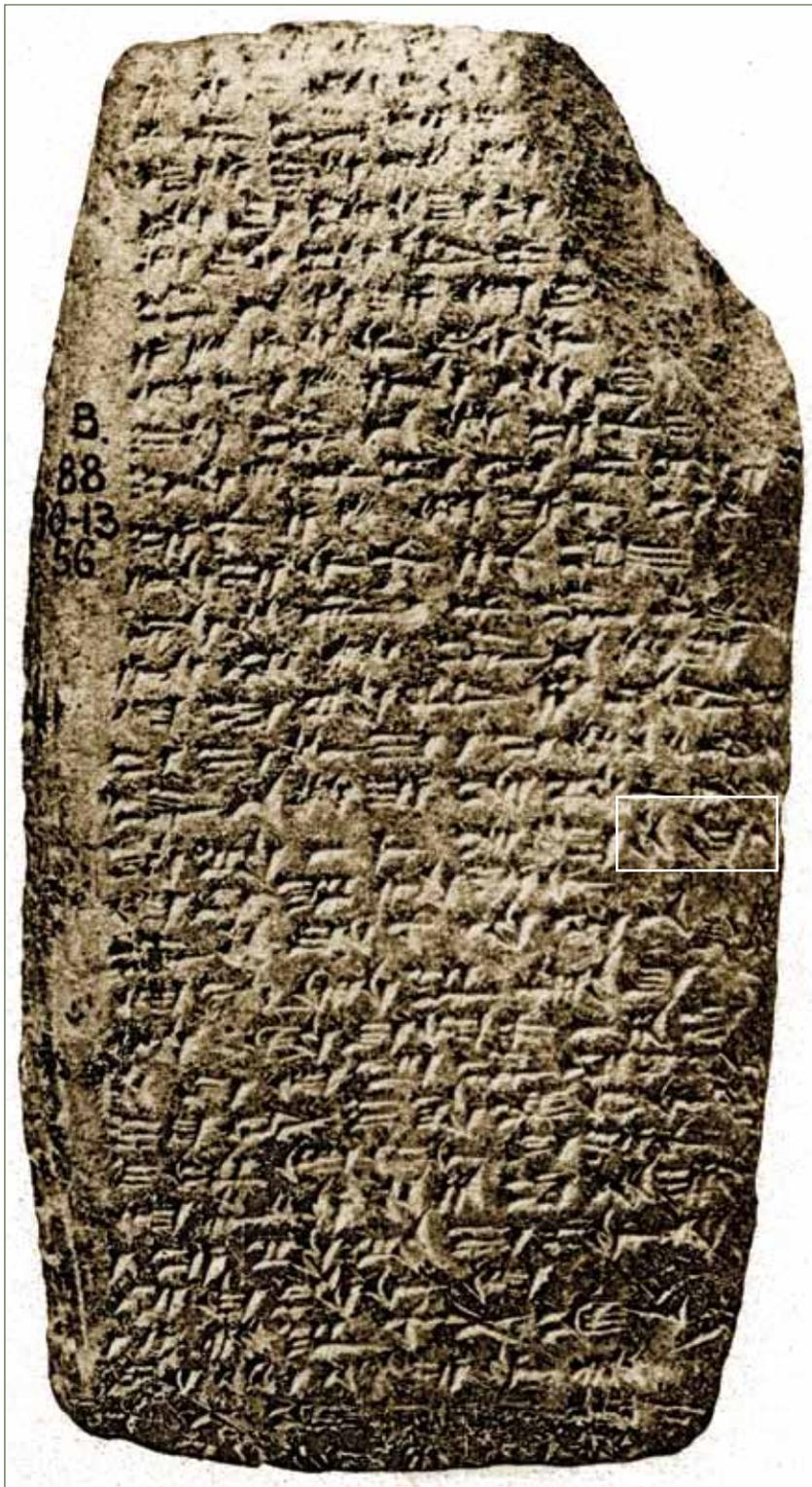
Tell El Amarna tablet from Egypt (E29813, obverse, object 1; 1888,1013.56). © The Trustees of the British Museum. Inset: The Middle Babylonian word for Canaan, *Kinaḫḫi*, appears about halfway down on the far right and wraps around the edge.

Chnâ. These Greek sources appear to represent a continuity with the Akkadian reduced form *Kinaḫḫ-.*[27]

The etymology of Canaan has been somewhat elusive. Scholars have moved from Semitic, to non-Semitic, and back to Semitic assumptions concerning the origin of the name. Ephraim A. Speiser argued that *Kinaḫḫu* had a Hurrian origin, consisting of *kina* and the Hurrian suffix *-(ḫ)ḫi* "belonging to."[28] The meaning of the *kina* element was somewhat uncertain. One possibility was that it meant "reed," with the word itself meaning "land of reeds" (compare Byblos, so named for being an exporter of papyrus, which was made from reeds, whence the Greek word for "book" [*bublos*] and English "bible"). A second possibility was that *kina* meant red purple dye (derived from a certain type of shell common on the seacoast), which seemed to be supported by cuneiform texts from Nuzi. On this theory the occasional *-n* affix would be the Hurrian definite article or a determinative suffix, and *Kinaḫḫu* would mean "Belonging to (the land of) Purple." This etymology was appealing because it suggested a continuity with the Greek word for the Phoenicians, *Phoinikē* (from *phoinix*, "red purple"), and it also explained the use of Hebrew *knˤny* for "merchant." But it has since been shown that the Hurrian word had a different history than that posited by Speiser,[29] and improved attestation of third-millennium-BC geographic names from Syria-Palestine has lessened the likelihood of a Hurrian etymology for Canaan. For instance, the ethnicon Canaanite is now attested in a text from Mari as ˡᵘ*ki-na-aḫ-num*ᵐᵉˢ.[30] It now appears that the words for "purple" and "merchant"

took their names *from* the region, rather than giving their names *to* the region. The meaning of the word now most likely must be sought in the Semitic lexicon, in which event the *-n* affix is not a Hurrian grammatical element at all, but an attested, though rare, Semitic noun-forming suffix.[31]

If, as most scholars now believe, the word is Semitic in origin, it almost certainly derives from the root *KNᶜ ("to bend the knee, to bow"), with an afformative *-n* sometimes added. One possible Semitic etymology for the word, suggested long ago by Wilhelm Gesenius, is "lowland" (as opposed to the higher country of Aram to the east),[32] but this is problematic because the root does not have the intransitive meaning "to be low." The most recent and widely accepted Semitic etymology for Canaan was put forward by Michael Astour.[33] He noted that *KNᶜ in Biblical Hebrew [*kanaᶜ*] is found only in the *niphal* verb stem ("to be subdued," "to lower oneself") and in the *hiphil* ("to subdue"). In Aramaic, the verb [*kenaᶜ*] also occurs in the *qal*, "to bow down, bend." Arabic *kanaᶜa* has several usages, including (1) "to fold wings and descend to earth" (said of a large bird) and (2) "to bow, to incline toward the horizon" (said of a star). As applied to the sun, the word would be exactly equivalent to Latin *occidere*.[34] Therefore, Astour takes the derived form *Kinaᶜu* as signifying the "Occident," the "Land of Sunset," or "Westland."[35] This is the West Semitic equivalent of Akkadian *Amurru* "West." In Amarna-era texts and in the Bible, the terms *Canaan* and *Amurru* are largely synonymous.[36] It is interesting in this connection that the sons of Horus stood for the four cardinal directions[37] and that Qebehsenuf, which represents "the idolatrous god of Elkenah" on Facsimile 1,[38] was indeed the god of the West.[39]

I am not aware of an actual attestation of *Il Kinaḫḫi*. The Ebla tablets come close, however, describing an offering to ᵈBAD *ka-na-na* "Lord of Canaan," where the appellative ᵈBAD (the Sumerogram for "divine Lord") most likely refers to Dagan.[40] The Ras Shamra tablets equate Dagan with El, each of which is described as the father of Baal. Note also the usage in Psalm 106:38, *ᶜatsabbe Kenaᶜan*, "the idols of Canaan" (used in a child sacrifice context). Note further that some form of the word *Canaan* appears six times in the Book of Abraham text.

4. *ᵓEl Qini* "El of the Kenites." This was the third of Nibley's three suggestions. The Kenites are first mentioned at Genesis 15:19 (as part of a list of peoples God would dispossess to give their land to Abraham's descendants) and were understood to be descendants of Cain [*Qayin*], although in fact their name probably refers to their metalworking craft. These were desert nomads who lived to the east of Egypt and were generally viewed favorably by the Israelites. Moses's father-in-law, Jethro, was a Kenite. Part of the rationale for this proposal, apart from a mild linguistic resemblance, is based on something of a misunderstanding. Apparently following Klaus Baer,[41] Nibley took the hawk-headed jar of Facsimile 1, figure 5 (i.e., "the idolatrous god of Elkenah"), as Duamutef,[42] who represented the East. Since the Kenites lay to the east of Heliopolis, this seemed to him like a natural fit. The hawk-headed figure is usually not, however, Duamutef, but Qebehsenuf, and this is the god representing the *West*, not the *East*, as described above. Therefore, a significant portion of the rationale for this proposal was based on a mistake.

5. ᵈ*Il-gi-na* (meaning uncertain). John Lundquist has suggested this as a possibility.[43] It is number 407 on a list of 3,800 Mesopotamian deities. Lundquist suggests that the *gi* syllable can also be read as *ki*,[44] and the name is accompanied by the Sumerian DINGIR determinative, indicating that this is the name of a god. This is certainly a possibility; since, however, we know nothing else about this deity, it is rather difficult to evaluate how strong a possibility it might be (apart from linguistic similarity).

6. *ᵓEl qoneh* "El the Creator." This would be a hypocoristic form of the well-attested Canaanite epithet *ᵓl qn arṣ*, "El, Creator of the Earth," which is itself a shorter version of the later and longer form of the epithet found at Genesis 14:19, 22: *ᵓel ᵓelyon qoneh shamayim weᵓareṣ* "El Most High, Creator of the Heaven and the Earth."[45] In a Hittite myth borrowed from Canaan prior to 1200 BC, El is called "Elkunirša" (the Hittite spelling of West Semitic *ᵓl qn ᵓarṣ).* This El was the husband of the goddess Asherah (= Ashertu) and lived in a tent at the headwaters of the Euphrates (= Mala) River.[46] This name appears in the Phoenician-Hittite bilingual inscription of Azitawadda.[47] This same epithet (*ᵓl qn ᵓarṣ*, partially restored) was found in a three-line inscription dating to the eighth or seventh century BC by

Nahman Avigad in the Jewish quarter of Jerusalem in 1971.[48] There is a substantial body of literature on this name.[49]

The similarity in form of this name to proposal 1 is due to the fact that the same verb is used in both names, but here the verb is an attributive participle. While the consonants work well, the vowels are a weakness of this theory. The participial form in Phoenician and Ugaritic would be *qaniy(u)* (where the final *–u* is the case ending). Due to the Canaanite and other sound shifts, that participial form comes into Hebrew as *qoneh*. In neither case do the vowels mesh well with *kenah*, with its short initial vowel followed by an /a/ quality second vowel. Of course, the Book of Abraham was translated by an inspired rather than an academic translation process, and it is possible that the representation of the name in English is but an approximation of the original, ancient form.

In assessing these six proposals, for the reasons I have indicated, I would consider numbers 1, 2, and 4 as the least likely possibilities. Number 5 is possible, but in the absence of further information it cannot be effectively assessed. In my view, the strongest proposals are numbers 3 and 6. Based on present information, however, it may be difficult to select between these options. This is because number 3 is based on the Semitic root *KNˤ, and number 6 on *QNH, and the English element -*kenah* in the Book of Abraham is not sufficiently precise to distinguish between these two roots.[50] Number 6 gets points for being based on a strongly attested El epithet. Also, some Book of Abraham manuscripts spell Elkenah as "Elkkener," with an "r" ending, which is at least suggestive of the *plene* form of the epithet. On the other hand, while *Kinaḫḫi* is not to my knowledge attested with an El combination, the patterns "El of [place-name]" and "[god] of Canaan" are both attested. *Kinaḫḫi* itself is attested earlier than number 6, and this proposal does not require that we posit a hypocoristic form. Also, in my view, the vowels work better for proposal 3 than for any other (including proposal 1). All things considered, it seems to me that we have a draw between proposals 3 and 6, at least pending further research. For many purposes, however, our inability to decide conclusively between these two proposals will not matter, because both have reference to the same deity: Canaanite El.

Elkenah as Canaanite El

Does an equation of Canaanite El with Elkenah fit what we know of Elkenah from the Book of Abraham text? I believe that it does. First of all, we suggested that Elkenah must be a reference to a god and not a man. We know that Elkenah could be a human's name from biblical attestations, but we have now also demonstrated that Elkenah works very well as the name of a god.

Second, we deduced that this god was likely the chief god of its pantheon. El in fact was the supreme deity of the Canaanite pantheon. El was the father and creator of gods and men. He was perceived as an aged patriarch, wise in judgment, the king of heaven, and chief of the council of the gods. He was a tent dweller and lived in the far north. His patriarchal authority was won in the ancient wars of the gods as a great warrior. His principal wife was Asherah, mother and creatress of the gods, although his other sisters Anat and Astarte also served as consorts. His vigorous procreative powers populated heaven and earth.[51]

Third, we saw that Abraham's experience with this god took place at Ur of the Chaldees. If we can assume the northern location for Ur in Syria,[52] the presence of a Canaanite cult (together with some Egyptian syncretism, seen in the priest of Elkenah also acting as the priest of Pharaoh) in that area is not surprising. El was not only the supreme deity in Canaan, but in Syria-Palestine generally.[53] Lundquist reports that the chief deities at Ebla were Dagan, Baal, Sipish (or Shemesh), Kemash, Ashtar (the male version of Ishtar), and Hadda.[54] Syncretistic Canaanite versions of these deities also existed (with Dagan being the Syrian equivalent of El).

If proposal 3 is correct, this may explain why it was necessary to qualify the name *El* with "of Canaan" or "of the West," in order clearly to distinguish this from another El cult. If proposal 6 is correct, note that the myths relating to this deity place him at the headwaters of the Euphrates, which is in the general area of the northern location for Ur.

Fourth, and perhaps most importantly, an identification of Elkenah as Canaanite El would help to explain the presence of child sacrifice in the Book of Abraham account. In 1969, William J. Adams Jr. published an article in *BYU Studies* entitled "Human Sacrifice and the Book of Abraham."[55] At the time Adams was a graduate student

in Akkadian, Ugaritic, and Old Testament languages at Hebrew Union College. Adams showed Facsimile 1 to some of his fellow students in Assyriology, who immediately claimed that there was no evidence the Babylonians ever practiced human sacrifice. This led Adams to look into the matter; his interest in the topic was further spurred with the recovery of the original of Facsimile 1 from the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York.

Adams found that, while there was a widespread scholarly assumption against Babylonian human sacrifice, certain scholars remained uncommitted either way. Looking into the evidence himself, he did find some suggestive items from four sources: (l) circumstantial evidence from archaeological digs, (2) comments in ancient written texts, (3) human sacrifices as pictured on cylinder seals, and (4) the behavior of other Semitic peoples regarding the practice of human sacrifice. Adams assumed that Ur of the Chaldees was in southern Mesopotamia and therefore assumed that evidence for human sacrifice in the Book of Abraham should come from Babylonian sources. Most of the evidence Adams found was either subject to alternative explanations or apparently based on influence from western Semitic religions.[56]

If we assume a northern location for Ur[57] and take Elkenah as Canaanite El, then human sacrifice in the Book of Abraham is no longer a difficulty. While Babylonian (and Egyptian) evidence of human sacrifice of the type portrayed in Abraham 1 may be somewhat limited, scholars generally agree that human sacrifice was a long-accepted practice in Canaanite religion.[58] The Old Testament preserves a number of allusions to Canaanite practices of human and child sacrifice, such as Deuteronomy 12:31; Psalm 106:37–39; Isaiah 66:3; Micah 6:7, and the numerous references to the Molech cult (including Leviticus 18:21; 20:2; 2 Kings 3:27; 16:3; 17:17, 31; and 23:10; Jeremiah 7:31–32; 32:35; and Ezekiel 16:20–21). The Akedah ("binding" of Isaac) in Genesis 22 likely had a Canaanite background.[59] It was El among the gods who sacrificed his own children, Yadid and Mot.[60] Classical sources[61] and archaeological discoveries[62] attest to human sacrifice in the continuum from Canaanite to Phoenician to Punic religion,[63] with the popularity of child sacrifice at Carthage being dependent on an El cult.[64] If Elkenah was Canaanite El, then the feature of child

sacrifice in the Book of Abraham fits that cult very well indeed.

Although the Molech cult spoken of in the Bible, which is a particular manifestation of the long-standing Canaanite penchant for child sacrifice, postdates the time of Abraham,[65] it does have some indirect relevance to the Book of Abraham. Some scholars, notably Moshe Weinfeld,[66] have questioned whether the cult really involved child sacrifice, preferring to see the key expression "to pass through the fire" as a simple dedication to the god. Most scholars, however, acknowledge that the cult did indeed involve the actual killing of children. A second issue is whether Molech should be taken as the name of a god or simply as the name of an offering, as Otto Eissfeldt argued in 1935.[67] Although there is in fact a Punic term *mulk* that means "offering," most scholars believe that the Old Testament references to Molech are to an actual deity. A third issue is the identification of this deity. There have been many proposals, but the most widely held view today equates the god with the *Mlk* resident at ʿttrt mentioned in the Ras Shamra tablets (Malik in Akkadian texts),[68] a god of the netherworld.[69]

It has sometimes been supposed that human sacrifice to Molech should be identified with the offering of the firstborn male to Yahweh mentioned in the Pentateuch. In distinguishing these practices, scholars have pointed out that the Canaanite sacrifices were not limited to the firstborn, nor were they limited to one child only per family, nor were they limited to sons, as the sources speak repeatedly of offering daughters as well as sons. It is interesting in this light that the Book of Abraham mentions the sacrifice of three daughters, which thus accords with known Canaanite practices.

Conclusion

We began by examining the Book of Abraham text to see what it tells us about the figure Elkenah. Based on an assumption that the *El-* element in the name is Semitic ʾel, we identified a number of possible linguistic structures for an ancient El combination. We then reviewed six concrete proposals for Elkenah, concluding that the strongest possibilities, "El of Canaan" and "El the Creator," both point in the direction of the same deity: Canaanite El.

This deity compares favorably with the information set forth in the Book of Abraham text regarding Elkenah.[70] In particular, the type of sacrifice described in Abraham 1 fits a cultic setting in Syro-Palestinian or Canaanite territory much more readily than it fits a Mesopotamian or Assyro-Babylonian scenario. More to the point, the scene on Facsimile 1, with its representation of a human sacrifice on an Egyptian lion couch, fits extremely well with Egyptian Middle Kingdom evidence for the cultic ritual of human sacrifice.[71] Although there is much more work to be done (including similar studies of the other names in the Book of Abraham onomasticon), both the name *Elkenah* and the cult described in the text seem to point to a Syro-Palestinian context for Abraham 1. Consistent with Lundquist's study, I believe that future research should focus on this region as a prime location for the possible setting of the text. ■

APPENDIX 1
Summary of Proposed Derivations of Elkenah

Transliteration(s)	Meaning	Language(s)	Structure
1. *Ilu-qana*; *ʾEl qanah*	God has created [a son]	Akkadian; Hebrew	(B) Theophoric
2. *ʾEl qeni*	El is mighty	[Semitic]/Egyptian	(B) Theophoric
3. *Il Kinaḫḫi*; *El Chna*	El of Canaan	Akkadian; Greek transliteration	(C) God of [place/people]
4. *ʾEl Qini*	El of the Kenites	[Semitic]	(C) God of [place/people]
5. ᵈ*Il-gi-na*	[uncertain; possibly "God of Regular Offering"]	Sumerian	[uncertain; possibly (E) God + epithet]
6. *ʾl qn a[rṣ]; Elkuni[rša]; ʾEl qoneh*	El the Creator [hypocoristic for El, Creator of the Earth]	Canaanite; Hittite; Hebrew	(E) God + epithet

APPENDIX 2
The Name *Elkanah* in the Old Testament

1. Son of Korah (and great-grandson of Levi)	Exodus 6:24
2. A Korahite Levite (possibly the same as 1)	1 Chronicles 6:23, 25, 36
3. A Korahite Levite, descended from 2	1 Chronicles 6:26, 35
4. A Korahite Levite, descended from 3 and father of Samuel	1 Chronicles 6:27, 34; 1 Samuel 1–2 (8 occurrences)
5. A Korahite Levite who was one of David's warriors at Ziklag	1 Chronicles 12:6
6. A Levite who was one of two doorkeepers for the ark of the covenant	1 Chronicles 15:23
7. A high official in the court of Ahaz, assassinated by Zichri, an Ephraimite warrior	2 Chronicles 28:7
8. A Levite who was the ancestor of Berechiah son of Asa, who settled in Jerusalem after returning from the Babylonian exile	1 Chronicles 9:16

Adapted from Ronald Youngblood, "Elkanah," in *ABD*, 2:475–76.

Notes

A draft of this article was posted on the Internet at BCC Papers *2/2 (2007) at bycommonconsent.com.*

1. Paul Y. Hoskisson, "An Introduction to the Relevance of and a Methodology for a Study of the Proper Names of the Book of Mormon," in *By Study and Also by Faith*, ed. John M. Lundquist and Stephen D. Ricks (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book and FARMS, 1990), 2:126–35, although focused on the Book of Mormon, provides useful methodological comments that can be applied to the study of the Book of Abraham ono-masticon as well.

2. In Abraham 2:13, "gods of Elkenah" is not used as part of a sequence. I would read that as a further evidence that Elke-nah was the chief deity of the pantheon, preeminent among the gods.

3. Note that in the usage of the Hebrew Bible, the expression "altar of" can be followed by the material of which the altar is composed ("altar of stones," "altar of gold"), the purpose of the altar ("altar of incense"), or the deity to whom the altar is dedicated ("altar of the Lord," "altar of Baal"). This last type of occurrence is attested at Leviticus 17:6; Deuteronomy 12:27; 16:21; 26:4; 27:6; Joshua 9:27; 22:19, 28–29; Judges 6:25, 28, 30; 1 Kings 8:22, 54; 18:30; 2 Kings 23:9; 2 Chronicles 6:12; 8:12; 15:8; 29:19, 21; 33:15–16; 35:16; Nehemiah 10:34; Malachi 2:13. The expression "altar of X" is never used to refer to a human being who owns or has constructed the altar.

4. Hugh Nibley, *An Approach to the Book of Abraham* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book and FARMS, 2009), 313–19.

5. Stephen E. Thompson, "Egyptology and the Book of Abra-ham," *Dialogue* 28/1 (1995): 156 n. 66, correctly reads "the god of Elkenah" as "the god Elkenah," but then assumes "the god of Pharaoh" must mean "the god Pharaoh" based on consistency of usage. Nibley made the opposite argument; he (correctly, in my view) observed that, since Pharaoh is a human king and is consistently represented as such in the text, "the god of Pharaoh" most likely means "the god worshiped by Pharaoh," and then argued based on consis-tency of usage that "the god of Elkenah" means "the god worshiped by Elkenah," as discussed above. I believe both of these scholars are wrong to assume consistency of usage. I believe Thompson is correct vis-à-vis Elkenah (Thompson points out that the reference in Abraham 1:7 to a "priest of Elkenah" and not a "priest of the god of Elkenah" supports this reading), but Nibley is correct vis-à-vis Pharaoh (there are a number of references to Pharaoh in the text, in which he is consistently portrayed as a human king and not in his divinized aspect). This reading is confirmed by Abraham 1:13: "and it stood before the gods of Elkenah, Libnah, Mah-mackrah, Korash, and also a god like unto that of Pharaoh, king of Egypt." The genitive with the first four names is epexegetic, meaning that they were themselves gods, but the construction is modified when it comes to describing the god worshipped by Pharaoh, a human king. Further support for this reading occurs at Abraham 1:17, which mentions "the god of Pharaoh, king of Egypt."

6. In Mesopotamian thought, an *ilu* had greater fluidity of manifestation and a larger potential for identification with other *ilus* who shared similar qualities or powers than did the biblical God. See Barbara Nevling Porter, "The Anxiety of Multiplicity: Concepts of Divinity as One and Many in Ancient Assyria," in *One God or Many? Concepts of Divinity in the Ancient World*, ed. Barbara N. Porter (Casco Bay, ME: Casco Bay Assyriological Institute, 2000), 211–72.

7. Nibley's emphasis in his *Improvement Era* series (now reprinted in *An Approach to the Book of Abraham*, 313–19) was to lay out as many different possibilities as he could, without necessarily choosing the strongest among them. It remains for those who follow him to sift through the many tantalizing leads he provided and make these kinds of judgments.

8. In manuscript Ab5a, Willard Richards spells the three occurrences of the name in the explanations to Facsimile 1 as *Elkenah*. The manuscript designations are those used by Brian M. Hauglid in his forthcoming textual history of the Book of Abraham. These sigla relate to the traditional designations as follows: Ab2 = KEPA 2; Ab3 = KEPA 3; Ab4 = KEPA 1; and Ab5 = KEPA 4.

9. Frank Moore Cross, *Canaanite Myth and Hebrew Epic: Essays in the History of the Religion of Israel* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1973), 50.

10. There is often an ambiguity in ancient Hebrew theophoric names reflecting a medial *yod*, which could be either a first person pronominal suffix or an archaic genitive. So, for example, the name *Melchizedek* could mean either "My king is righteousness" or "King of righteousness."

11. Numerous other El epithets exist, such as the following examples from the Old Testament: *ʾel deʾoth* "God of Knowledge" (1 Samuel 2:3), *ʾel neqamoth* "God of Vengeance" (see Psalm 94:1), and *ʾel gemuloth* "God of Recompenses" (Jeremiah 51:56), as well as these examples from the Ras Shamra Tablets: *il ṣpn* (ʾIlū Ṣapuni "The gods of Mount Sapunu"), *ỉlỉb* (ʾIluʾibi "The God-of-the-Father"), *ỉl ddmm* (ʾIlū Dadmima "Gods-of-the-Land-of-Aleppo"), *ỉl lb[-]n* (ʾIlū LB[-]N "Gods of *Labana*"), and *ỉl bt* (ʾIlū-Bêti "God-of-the-House"). See the Ugaritic deity lists in Dennis Pardee, *Ritual and Cult at Ugarit* (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2002), 11–24.

12. John Day, "Canaan, Religion of," in *The Anchor Bible Dictionary* (hereafter *ABD*), ed. David Noel Freedman (New York: Doubleday, 1992), 1:834.

13. Manfried Dietrich, Oswald Loretz, and Joaquin Sanmartín, eds., *Die keilalphabetischen Texte aus Ugarit: Einschliesslich der keilalphabetischen Texte ausserhalb Ugarits* (Kevelaer, Germany: Verlag Butzon & Bercker, 1976), 1:113.

14. Johannes C. de Moor, "El, the Creator," in *The Bible World: Essays in Honor of Cyrus H. Gordon*, ed. G. Rendsburg et al. (New York: KTAV, 1980), 176.

15. The debate often centers around christological arguments over Proverbs 8:22. The meaning "acquire" predominates in Biblical Hebrew. In fact, Bruce Vawter, "Proverbs 8:22: Wisdom and Creation," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 99/2 (1980): 205–16, argues that it *always* means "acquire," although most, such as the dated but still useful C. F. Burney, "Christ as the *APXH* of Creation," *Journal of Theological Studies* 27 (1926): 160–77, acknowledge that in some biblical passages the verb does seem to mean "create." But in the Ras Shamra tablets the verb definitely means "to create." It now appears that there were two roots in West Semitic underlying Hebrew *qānah*, one meaning "to acquire" (*QNW) and the other meaning "to create" (*QNY). See R. N. Whybray, "Proverbs VIII:22–31 and Its Supposed Prototypes," *Vetus Testamentum* 15/4 (1965): 504–14; William A. Irwin, "Where Shall Wisdom Be Found?" *Journal of Biblical Literature* 80/2 (1961): 133–42; and Marvin H. Pope, *El in the Ugaritic Texts* (Leiden: Brill, 1955), 51.

16. Critics typically assume that the Book of Abraham is a nineteenth-century production and therefore claim that Joseph Smith simply adapted the name *Elkenah* from the biblical precedents. See, for example, newsgroups.derkeiler.com/Archive/Soc/soc.religion.mormon/2005-08/msg00763.html (accessed 17 March 2010). While this is of course possible, it is my intention in this article to explore openly the possibility of an ancient origin for that book without making any such a priori assumption.

17. Nibley, *An Approach to the Book of Abraham*, 313–15.

18. The *m* at the end of these words is called mimation and falls into disuse after the Old Babylonian period.

19. Michael Astour, "The Origin of the Terms 'Canaan,' 'Phoenician,' and 'Purple,'" *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 24/4 (1965): 346.

20. G. Johannes Botterweck, Helmer Ringgren, and Heinz-Josef Fabry, eds., *Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament*, trans. David E. Green (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1974–2006), 7:212.

21. Philip C. Schmitz, "Canaan (Place)," in *ABD*, 1:828.

22. As a geographic name, *Kinaḫḫi* usually appears with an *-i* genitive ending.

23. On the linguistic tendency toward the reduction of final double consonants to single consonants, see Zellig S. Harris, *Development of the Canaanite Dialects* (New Haven, CT: American Oriental Society, 1939), 76.

24. Astour, "Origin of the Terms," 346; Jack M. Sasson, "The Earliest Mention of the Name Canaan," *Biblical Archaeologist* 47/2 (1984): 90.

25. Francis Brown, S. R. Driver, and Charles A. Briggs, eds., *Hebrew and English Lexicon* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1979), 488.

26. Harold W. Attridge and Robert A. Oden Jr., *Philo of Byblos: The Phoenician History: Introduction, Critical Text, Translation, Notes* (Washington, DC: Catholic Biblical Association of America, 1981), 60–61 and n. 144; Albert I. Baumgarten, *The Phoenician History of Philo of Byblos: A Commentary* (Leiden: Brill, 1981), 232.

27. Schmitz, "Canaan (Place)," 1:829.

28. Ephraim A. Speiser, "The Name *Phoinikes*," *Language* 12 (1936): 121–26.

29. Benno Landsberger, "Über Farben im Sumerisch-akkadischen," *Journal of Cuneiform Studies* 21 (1967): 166–67.

30. Georges Dossin, "Une mention de Canaanéens dans une lettre de Mari," *Syria: Revue d'art oriental et d'archéologie* 50 (1973): 277–82; Sasson, "Earliest Mention," 90.

31. See Astour, "Origin of the Terms," 346–50, and Schmitz, "Canaan (Place)," 1:829.

32. *Gesenius' Hebrew-Chaldee Lexicon to the Old Testament*, trans. Samuel P. Tregelles (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1978), 405.

33. Astour, "Origin of the Terms," 348.

34. Jeremiah 10:17 reads as follows: "Gather up thy *wares* out of the land, O inhabitant of the fortress." The King James Version rendering "wares" of the hapax legomenon *kinʿa* or *kenaʿa* is supported by the Targums [*sʾchorta*] and by Symmachus [*emporia*]. The Septuagint, however, has simply *hypostasis*, here evidently designating any "bundle, load, or burden set down from the shoulder or an animal back to the ground," thus showing how the word derives from *KNʿ. See Astour, "Origin of the Terms," 347 n. 17.

35. That the name was originally a generic term such as "the West" is suggested by the fact that it often appears with the definite article *the* (especially Egyptian *pꜣ*), i.e., "the Canaan."

36. If one accepts the Documentary Hypothesis, note that the pre-Israelite inhabitants of Palestine are called "Canaanites" in J and P but "Amorites" in E and D. See Kevin L. Barney, "Reflections on the Documentary Hypothesis," *Dialogue* 33/1 (2000): 57–99. Note that E. Jan Wilson, "'A Bird in the Hand . . .': Some Thoughts on the Search for Abraham" (unpublished paper), independently suggests that the setting for Abraham may have involved Amorites.

37. Thompson, "Egyptology and the Book of Abraham," 152, in a misguided attempt to deny Joseph Smith even so much as a lucky guess, tries too hard to rebut this point. See the discussion of Thompson's article in Kevin L. Barney, "The Facsimiles and Semitic Adaptation of Existing Sources,"

in *Astronomy, Papyrus, and Covenant*, ed. John Gee and Brian M. Hauglid (Provo, UT: FARMS, 2005), 122–24.

38. Note that this arrangement was not standardized until the Saite Period (Twenty-Sixth Dynasty, 685–525 BC). See Maarten J. Raven, "Egyptian Concepts on the Orientation of the Human Body," in *Proceedings of the Ninth International Congress of Egyptologists*, ed. Jean-Claude Goyon and Christine Cardin (Leuven: Peeters, 2007), 2:1570–71.

39. To summarize, the attested Akkadian forms reflect two variations: (1) the pharyngeal consonant can be represented or not, and (2) the *-n* affix can be appended or not (this usage apparently being dependent on geographic location). The forms also reflect two linguistic developments: (1) the dropping of mimation and (2) the reduction of the final double consonant to a single consonant. The form *Elkenah* in the Book of Abraham reflects two additional linguistic developments, which are both easily predictable and actually attested in the later Hebrew and Greek forms: (1) the shift from Akkadian *i* to *e* or *schwa* and (2) the dropping of the case endings. If proposal 3 is correct, then the only remaining ambiguity in Elkenah is whether the final *-h* represents the pharyngeal consonant or is simply to be taken with the preceding *a* vowel.

40. Giovanni Pettinato, "Culto ufficiale ad Ebla durante it regno di Ibbi-Sipiš," *Oriens Antiquus* 18 (1979): 103; Fritz Stolz, "Kanaan," in *Theologische Realenzyklopädie*, ed. Gerhard Krause and Gerhard Müller (Berlin: de Gruyter, 1976–), 17:540. Also note that in bilingual passages, the Sumerian determinative DINGIR (represented by the superscript ᵈ) equals *ilu*. See "ilu" in the *Chicago Assyrian Dictionary* (Chicago: Oriental Institute, 1921–), 7:91.

41. See H. Michael Marquardt, "The Book of Abraham Revisited," *Journal of Pastoral Practice* 5/4 (1983): 107.

42. There has been unfortunate confusion on this point since the summer of 1968. Polemically oriented treatments are found in Robert L. and Rosemary Brown, *They Lie in Wait to Deceive* (Mesa: Brownsworth, 1981), 1:160, and Jerald and Sandra Tanner, *Can the Browns Save Joseph Smith?* (Salt Lake City: Utah Lighthouse Ministry, 1981), 23–27. Benjamin Urrutia, "The Joseph Smith Papyri," *Dialogue* 4/2 (1969): 133, and Nibley, *An Approach to the Book of Abraham*, 319, both equate Facsimile 1, figure 5 (the hawk-headed canopic jar), with Duamutef (although Nibley gives the names in their standard order on pp. 296–301). As noted above, these scholars appear to have been following Klaus Baer, "The Breathing Permit of Hôr," *Dialogue* 3/3 (1968): 118. John Gee reports in his "Notes on the Sons of Horus" (Provo, UT: FARMS, 1991), 43–44, that there was a certain ancient variation in the identification of the different heads of the canopic jars, and Baer's equating of the hawk head with Duamutef is indeed attested in antiquity. Nevertheless, in its standard form the hawk-headed jar is a representation of Qebehsenuf. In addition to Gee, see the following: Richard A. Parker, "The Joseph Smith Papyri: A Preliminary Report," *Dialogue* 3/2 (1968): 86; Leonard H. Lesko, in his response to Thomas Stuart Ferguson, as reported in Stan Larson, *Quest for the Gold Plates* (Salt Lake City: Freethinker Press in association with Smith Research Associates, 1996), 97; Michael D. Rhodes, "A Translation and Commentary of the Joseph Smith Hypocephalus," *BYU Studies* 17/3 (1977): 272; and Thompson, "Egyptology and the Book of Abraham," 152.

43. John M. Lundquist, "Was Abraham at Ebla? A Cultural Background of the Book of Abraham (Abraham 1 and 2)," in *Studies in Scripture, Volume Two: The Pearl of Great Price*, ed. Robert L. Millet and Kent P. Jackson (Salt Lake City: Randall, 1985), 232, citing Anton Deimel, *Pantheon Babylonicum oder Keilschriftkatalog der Babylo. Gn.* (Rome: Pontifical Biblical Institute, 1950), 48.

44. Lundquist overstates this possibility. The GI5 sign is the KI sign and the GI sign is also the KI2 sign, but they are not

as interchangeable as they might appear. Sumerian gi-na = Akkadian *ginû* "regular offering"; see Rykle Borger, *Mesopotamisches Zeichenlexikon* (Münster: Ugarit-Verlag, 2004), 280; *Chicago Assyrian Dictionary* G 80–82.

45. I am uncertain as to which LDS scholar deserves credit for first suggesting this connection. Stephen D. Ricks makes the suggestion in John Gee and Stephen D. Ricks, "Historical Plausibility: The Historicity of the Book of Abraham as a Case Study," in *Historicity and the Latter-day Saint Scriptures*, ed. Paul Y. Hoskisson (Provo, UT: BYU Religious Studies Center, 2001), 75. The suggestion was also made in W. V. Smith, *A Joseph Smith Commentary on the Book of Abraham*, at www.boap.org/LDS/BOAP/SecondEd/index.html, p. 22 of commentary (accessed 25 March 2010). I also found a significant amount of information on this subject in the archives of the ANE Listserv at the University of Chicago for 23 June 1998 (volume 1998, number 171); John Tvedtnes of the Neal A. Maxwell Institute for Religious Scholarship at BYU was one of the posters in that thread and had significant information on this epithet at his fingertips, which suggests that he may also have known about this proposal at that time. The archive is available at oi.uchicago.edu/research/library/ane/digest/1998/v1998.n171 (accessed 17 March 2010). Of course, another scholar may have noted this possibility even earlier, or perhaps several scholars noted the connection independently.

46. Harry A. Hoffner Jr., trans., *Hittite Myths*, ed. Gary M. Beckman (Atlanta: Scholars, 1990), 69–70, 83. See Heinrich Otten, "Ein kanaanäischer Mythus aus Boğazköy," *Mitteilungen des Instituts für Orientforschung* (1953): 125–50; Harry A. Hoffner Jr., "The Elkunirša Myth Reconsidered," *Revue hittite et asianique* 23/76 (1965): 5–16; Maciej Popko, *Religions of Asia Minor*, trans. Iwona Zych (Warsaw: Academic Publications, 1995), 128; Gary Beckman, "Elkurniša and Ašertu," in *The Context of Scripture*, ed. William W. Hallo and K. Lawson Younger Jr. (Leiden: Brill, 2003), 1:149. See also Ben H. L. van Gessel, *Onomasticon of the Hittite Pantheon* (Leiden: Brill, 1998), 1:63, but note the review by Harry A. Hoffner Jr. in *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 59/4 (2000): 295.

47. For the Phoenician version, see Herbert Donner and Wolfgang Röllig, *Kanaanäische und Aramäische Inschriften* (Weisbaden: Harrassowitz, 1966), #26 A, III, line 18 (p. 37). Tvedtnes points out that there are Luvian correspondences for this title, on which see Emmanuel Laroche, "Etudes sur les hiéroglyphes hittites," *Syria* 31 (1954): 102–3.

48. Patrick D. Miller Jr., "El, the Creator of the Earth," *Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research*, no. 239 (1980): 43–46. This article also lists other Aramaic and Neo-Punic sources for this epithet.

49. Including Pope, *El in the Ugaritic Texts*; Frank Moore Cross Jr., "Yahweh and the God of the Patriarchs," *Harvard Theological Review* 55 (1962): 236; de Moor, "El, the Creator," 171–87; Day, "Canaan, Religion of," 1:831; Lowell K. Handy, *Among the Host of Heaven: The Syro-Palestinian Pantheon as Bureaucracy* (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1994), 34–37; and Jacob Hoftijzer and K. Jongeling, *Dictionary of the North-West Semitic Inscriptions*, part 2 (Leiden: Brill, 1995), 1015–16, which provides substantial additional bibliography.

50. For instance, the Sephardic transliteration method Joseph Smith learned from Joshua Seixas in the Kirtland Hebrew School does not distinguish *kaph* and *qoph*, using *k* for both; see Joshua Seixas, *A Manual Hebrew Grammar for the Use of Beginners* (Andover: Gould and Newman, 1834), 5. As we have seen, Akkadian represented the guttural at the end of *KNᶜ* (ᶜ*ayin* in Hebrew) either with a hard *ḥ* (like Hebrew *ḥeth*) or not at all.

51. In general, see Frank Moore Cross Jr., "ʾel," in *Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament*, 1:242–53.

52. Numerous LDS scholars have argued for a northern location of Ur in Syria rather than the location in southern Mesopo-

tamia. See Nibley, *An Approach to the Book of Abraham*, 427–28, and *Abraham in Egypt*, 2nd ed. (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book and FARMS, 2000), 85–86; Lundquist, "Was Abraham at Ebla?" 225–27; Paul Y. Hoskisson, "Where Was Ur of the Chaldees?" in *The Pearl of Great Price: Revelations from God*, ed. H. Donl Peterson and Charles D. Tate (Provo, UT: BYU Religious Studies Center, 1989), 119–36; John A. Tvedtnes, "'Ur of the Chaldees' and the Book of Abraham" (unpublished paper); and Gee and Ricks, "Historical Plausibility." I concur with the position of these scholars. Wilson, "A Bird in the Hand," strikes a cautionary note and argues for the southern location in Mesopotamia. If this position is correct, more research would be required to determine to what extent there may have been Canaanite influences there. The Amorite migrations mentioned by Wilson would certainly suggest a possible source of such influence.

53. Handy, *Syro-Palestinian Pantheon*, 69–95.

54. Lundquist, "Was Abraham at Ebla?" 232.

55. William J. Adams Jr., "Human Sacrifice and the Book of Abraham," *BYU Studies* 9/4 (1969): 473–80. Adams's conclusions also find support in a later study; see Alberto R. W. Green, *The Role of Human Sacrifice in the Ancient Near East* (Missoula, MT: Scholars Press, 1975).

56. Thom Wayment, "Traditions of Child Sacrifice in the Ancient Near East" (unpublished paper), also addresses evidence for both Assyro-Babylonian and Egyptian practices of human sacrifice.

57. Intriguingly, near the end of his lengthy study, Green concludes that "almost all evidence of human sacrifice in the Palestinian region can be traced back to a northern origin around north Syria and south Anatolia. This northern strand may be traced chronologically from the Abraham-Isaac narrative based on seals and subsequently through each consecutive period." See Green, *Role of Human Sacrifice*, 200.

58. Day, "Canaan, Religion of," 1:834.

59. John Day, *Molech: A God of Human Sacrifice in the Old Testament* (Cambridge: University of Cambridge Oriental Publishers, 1989), 70. See also Jon Levenson, *The Death and Resurrection of the Beloved Son: The Transformation of Child Sacrifice in Judaism and Christianity* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1993).

60. See Sakkunyaton's "Phoenician Theology" preserved in fragments in Eusebius, *Praeparatio Evangelica* i.10.21, 34, 44, cited in Cross, "ʾel," 1:248.

61. Day, *God of Human Sacrifice*, 86–91, in an appendix gives 19 quotations from classical and patristic sources attesting to Phoenician and Carthaginian practices of human and child sacrifice.

62. See the discussion in Wayment, "Traditions of Child Sacrifice."

63. The Canaanites and the Phoenicians represent approximately the same culture. Scholars generally use the word *Canaanite* to refer to the period antedating roughly 1200 BC, and the word *Phoenician* to refer to the period thereafter. *Punic* derives from the Latin form of *Phoenician* and has special reference to Carthage, a Phoenician colony founded on the north coast of Africa in the ninth century BC.

64. Cross, "ʾel," 1:248.

65. In addition to Day, *God of Human Sacrifice*, see George C. Heider, *The Cult of Molek: A Reassessment* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1985); and Heider, "Molech," in *ABD*, 4:895–98.

66. Moshe Weinfeld, "The Worship of Molech and of the Queen of Heaven and Its Background," *Ugarit-Forschungen* 4 (1972): 133–54.

67. Otto Eissfeldt, *Molk als Opferbegriff im Punischen und Hebräischen und das Ende des Gottes Moloch* (Halle: Niemeyer, 1935).

68. This proposal can be found in Day, *God of Human Sacrifice*, where he argues that the existence of a god named Molech is suggested by a god *mlk* from two Ugaritic serpent charms, and an obscure god Malik/Malku from Akkadian god lists who in two texts was equated with Nergal, the Mesopotamian god of the underworld. A god of the underworld is just the kind of god one might worship in the valley of Hinnom rather than on a hilltop.

69. Actually, if one were so inclined, one could make an argument that this deity is to be equated with El. It has been suggested that Molech is a dysphemism, the vowels having been tampered with by replacing them with the vowels of *boshet* "shame" (a process that has been demonstrated in the case of the corruption of Ashtart to Ashtoreth; compare also the use of Ishbosheth "man of shame" for Saul's son Eshbaal "man of the lord," as described in Hoskisson, "Proper Names," 128–29). If that is true, the name in reality could be the generic *melek* "king" (especially since it is usually preceded by the definite article), in which event the reference would most likely be to El or Baal, the Canaanite deities most commonly designated as "king" in epithets (as in *ʾl mlk*, "El the King").

70. On why a Canaanite deity would be represented by Egyptian symbols on the facsimiles, see Barney, "Facsimiles and Semitic Adaptation."

71. See the extensive bibliography in the unpublished article, "An Egyptian Context for the Sacrifice of Abraham," by John Gee and Kerry Muhlestein on human sacrifice in the Egyptian Middle Kingdom.