

Legal Traditions Related to Biblical Law

Key Scripture 2 Nephi 25:25

Explanation This chart can be seen as a genealogy of law. As part of the brass plates brought to the Americas by Lehi and his family, the Torah (the five books of Moses containing the Mosaic law) governed Lehi's seed until Jesus Christ fulfilled the law and established his higher law. The Jewish Mishnah and Talmud, as well as the Dead Sea Scrolls of the Essenes, were also based on the law of Moses. Originally, some critics faulted the Book of Mormon because it did not depict the Nephites as following the law of Moses in a way that perfectly cohered with the law of Moses as interpreted under rabbinical Judaism. The Dead Sea Scrolls, however, indicate that the Essenes also interpreted the law of Moses differently than the Pharisees did, showing that the law of Moses was interpreted in more than one way in antiquity and that the independent Nephite tradition could have adhered to the law of Moses while not following all of the laws in the same manner as did the Jews.

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