

THE TRUTH GLEANER.

BIBLICAL, HISTORICAL AND CURRENT.

“Buy the truth and sell it not; also wisdom, and instruction, and understanding.” Prov. 23:23

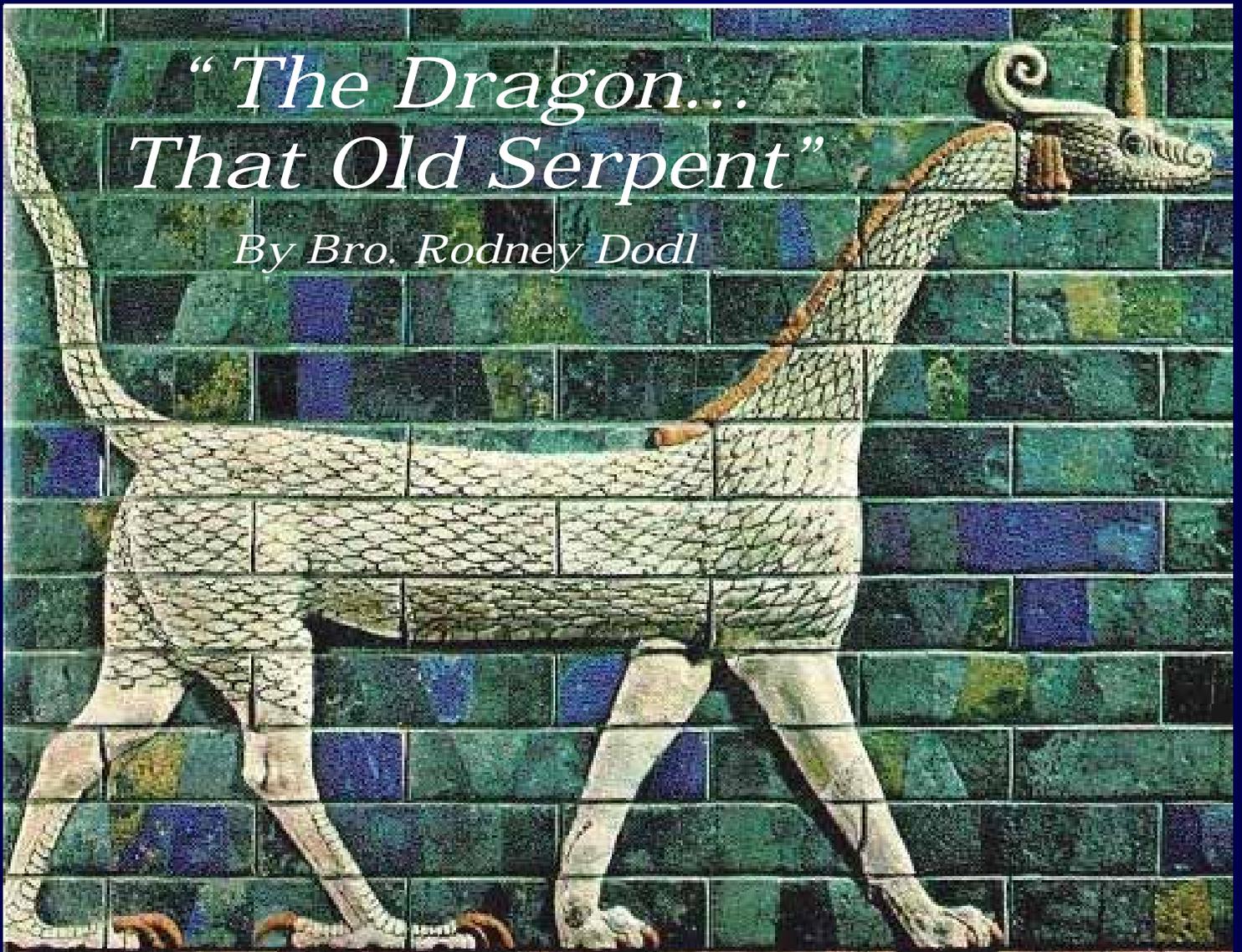
A Christadelphian publication devoted to gleaning and heralding the Truth concerning the problem of life, here and hereafter, the restoration of the Jews to the Holy Land, the return of Christ as King of all the earth, and the signs of the approaching end of Gentile times.

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“The Dragon... That Old Serpent”

By Bro. Rodney Dodl



Tile Mosaic from the Ishtar Gate, Babylon

The feature article for this issue is a subject that encompasses the Scripture from Genesis to Revelation and plays upon that seemingly endless theme of “Rome versus Zion”. We know, however, that this controversy will not go on without resolution forever, but awaits the arrival of the “Day Star” whose brightness will reveal that “wicked one”, “whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of His coming” (2 Thes. 2:8). We now invite your attention to a consideration of this controversy of the ages and the root cause of enmity in that system styled by John in the vision of the Apocalypse as...

“The Dragon... That Old Serpent”

“And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels, And prevailed not; neither was their place found any more in heaven. And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him” (Rev 12:7-9).

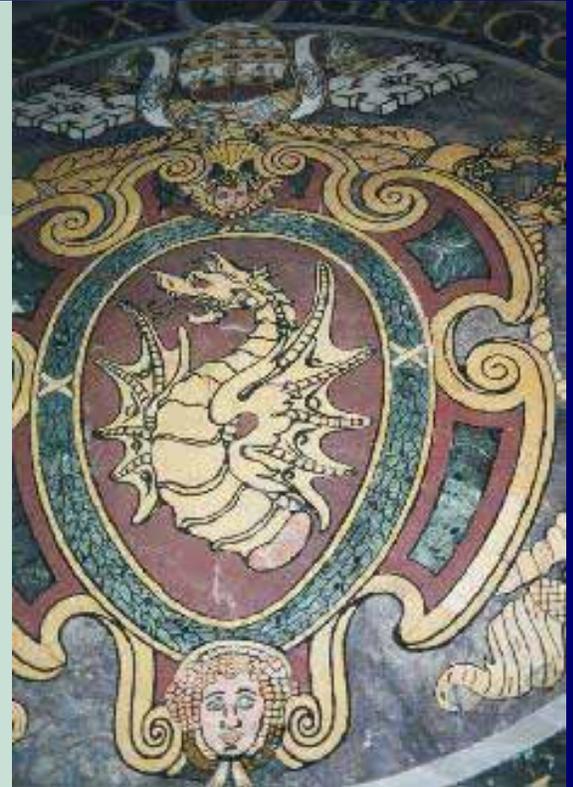
Within the twelfth chapter of Revelation is recorded a great struggle as seen in vision by the Apostle John. This struggle is described as a war in heaven between the man child Michael (Constantine) and the Great Dragon. This particular account has regrettably been misinterpreted and embellished in the teachings of the majority of those claiming the title of “Christians”. In their explanations of this passage, these verses are seen as a literal war in heaven between Michael (who is either described as an archangel or is equated to Christ) and the Great Dragon which is seen as the Devil, an immortal, fallen angel who acts as the instigator of all sin and evil in the world.

Those who possess the Truth, however, know that the existence of a Devil in the form of an immortal, supernatural Being is, in fact, a fallacy and a fraud, and the concept of a war inflicting chaos and dissention in heaven, the very throne of the Almighty, is contrary to the fundamental truths concerning heaven as a peaceable habitation which truly manifests the righteousness of the Deity. If heaven can contain wars and

strife, why should we pray, “Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven”?

If first principle truths deny the possibility of a literal war in heaven, what then can we make of the combatants as described in Revelation 12? The answer, of course, is that the writings of John in the Apocalypse are visions which must be interpreted symbolically in a manner consistent with the whole of Scripture. Our intention in this article is to focus on the great dragon and uncover his origin and his end. [These thoughts were derived from a study in a weekly Bible class examining the book of Revelation as expounded by Bro. John Thomas in *Eureka* (in particular volume IIIa, pages 35-62, 1981 Red Edition), which we commend to your own personal study for more details and depth.]

As we begin our examination of the dragon, it would be best to start with some basic definitions of how this word is translated and used in the scriptures. The word dragon comes from two words: *tannin* in the Hebrew and *drakon* in the Greek. *Tannin* is translated into dragon, serpent, whale, or sea monster in the Old Testament as translated in the Authorized Version. In the New Testament, *drakon* is exclusively translated as dragon and only occurs in the book of Revelation.



The Coat of Arms of Pope Gregory XIII (who was complicit in the Huguenot tragedy) is resplendent with the Dragon.

The Appendix of the *Emphatic Diaglott* provides the following definition: “DRAGON, signifies a large fish, as the whale, or crocodile, or a great serpent. In some places, it evidently means the deadly poisonous lizard called Gecho by the East Indians. By the Egyptians, Persians, and Indians the dragon is regarded as the established emblem of a monarch. Sometimes it is used for monarchical despotism in general. **The Roman government, both in its pagan and papal forms, as a persecuting power, is represented by this symbol.**”

This definition of *dragon* as a crocodile or great serpent is consistent with its usage in many scriptures as we shall

see.

As we examine the dragon name and those upon whom it is conferred, we must remember the complete phrase from Revelation 12:9, “*the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world.*” From this description the true nature of this dragon is apparent.

The original serpent was a liar and a deceiver who tried (and succeeded) to convince Eve that the reasoning of the flesh was superior to the laws and will of God. The results were that the serpent’s reasonings, which were “*sin in conception*”, were subsequently transferred and became a part of the character and physical constitution of man, bringing enmity between Creator and creation. This enmity included the pronouncement of sentences (or curses) upon the latter that would affect all classes of men, whether they developed from the woman’s or the serpent’s seed (Gen. 3:13-19). The specifications in these sentences form what Bro. Thomas describes as “**THE CONSTITUTION OF the Serpent-World, or the KINGDOM OF SIN;** and termed in Scripture ‘the kingdom of men’,” a dominion completely hostile to the Divine law.

The Devil, also Diabolos, is a false accuser and slanderer and Satan is an adversary, which in this context proves to be an adversary to the plan of the Almighty. We know that the diabolos is correctly applied to the sin in the flesh incurred by all the descendants of Adam causing them to deceive themselves to follow their own carnal tendencies, but the dragon in Revelation 12 is described as having a grander scope for his conquests. He seeks to deceive the whole world. This symbol is not then representative of a single person, but of a system which works in opposition to the Almighty seeking to turn the hearts of many unto sin. Warnings against this deception are scattered throughout Scripture. In Jeremiah’s day, for example, this principle manifested itself in false teachers against whom Yahweh spake, saying, “*...Let not your prophets*

and your diviners, that be in the midst of you, deceive you, neither hearken to your dreams which ye cause to be dreamed. For they prophesy falsely unto you in my name: I have not sent them, saith the LORD” (Jer. 29:8-9). And in Jesus’ day, he warned, “*...Take heed that ye be not deceived: for many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and the time draweth near: go ye not therefore after them*” (Luke 21:8).

After providing its definition for dragon, the *Diaglott* also makes reference to the relation of the symbol of the dragon with Rome. The Apostle Paul



The Egyptian god Sebek

picks up on this point in his identification of the Man of Sin, “*even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders*” (2 Thes. 2:3-12). This is certainly appropriate for the New Testament references to dragon, but we hope to demonstrate that Rome was not the first nation associated with the dragon symbol. Instead, it was the natural heir

in a succession of kingdoms which bear the dragon name.

The book of Ezekiel first attributes the dragon to Pharaoh, king of Egypt.

“*Son of man, set thy face against Pharaoh king of Egypt, and prophesy against him, and against all Egypt: Speak, and say, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, I am against thee, Pharaoh king of Egypt, the great dragon that lieth in the midst of his rivers, which hath said, My river is mine own, and I have made it for myself*” (Ezekiel 29:2-3).

Consider the attitude of Pharaoh as depicted in these verses as he refuses to acknowledge the Almighty as the Creator of all things. He claims possession of the Nile and boasts to have made it himself! This reminds us of those in Paul’s day (and ours as well), “*Who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator*” (Rom. 1:25).

The Egyptian Pharaohs were often raised to the level of gods within their culture, and with the Nile playing a central role in the life of Egypt, the crocodile became a key figure in this mythology. Shown in the picture to the left is the Egyptian god Sebek with the head of a crocodile on a man’s body. Sebek symbolized the might of the Pharaohs.

As a side note, when Aaron was commanded to “*Take thy rod and cast it before Pharaoh*”, he was told that it would become a serpent or *tannin*. This has led some to speculate that Aaron’s rod actually became a crocodile. If this were true, then the swallowing up of the magicians’ crocodiles, a symbol of the might of Pharaoh, would have been even more dramatic and indicative of the eventual overthrow of the Egyptian power.

Thus from Egypt we see the beginning of a system incorporated in an entire nation which seeks to deny the truth of the one true God and replace it with a system of false beliefs and false

worship. Spiritual Egypt seeks to deceive many through the proclamation of doctrines such as immortality of the soul and polytheism, therefore Spiritual Israel is commanded to depart from this serpent just as the natural Israelite departed Egypt in the time of Moses.

This role of deceiver was not to remain within the nation of Egypt, but as times and political powers changed, so moved this false system of worship from Egypt through Assyria and into Babylon. This transfer is recorded in Isaiah as follows:

“Rejoice not thou, whole Palestina, because the rod of him that smote thee is broken: for out of the serpent's root [Egyptian/Assyrian] shall come forth a cockatrice [Babylon], and his fruit shall be a fiery flying serpent” (Isa. 14:29).

The Scripture notes that the serpent's root would not be totally cut off with the fall of the Egyptian and Assyrian dynasties, but would be reborn in another nation even more poisonous than its predecessor. This cockatrice is the king of Babylon who, having swallowed up both the Egyptian and Assyrian dynasties, is then himself identified as the dragon power in Jeremiah.

“For thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel; The daughter of Babylon is like a threshingfloor, it is time to thresh her: yet a little while, and the time of her harvest shall come. Nebuchadrezzar the king of Babylon hath devoured me, he hath crushed me, he hath made me an empty vessel, he hath swallowed me up like a dragon, he hath filled his belly with my delicates, he hath cast me out” (Jer. 51:33-34).

This chapter in Jeremiah declares Yahweh's great judgment against Babylon at the hands of “the kings of the Medes” (verse 11). In recounting the iniquities of Babylon, Nebuchadrezzar is identified with the dragon. This symbol is not only revealed in the Spirit Word, but also through archaeology centered around the ruins of Babylon.

On the title page of this article, we see an emblem of the “Dragon of Marduk”, 604-562 BC, which was created as part of the Ishtar gate, one of the principle gates into the ancient city of Babylon. This gate was excavated from 1899-1914.

The inscription on the gate declared that it was built by Nebuchadrezzar, and it was decorated with images of dragons (Marduk, chief god) and bulls (Adad, god of weather) which were created out of molded, glazed bricks. Nebuchadrezzar's dedication of this gate to the goddess Ishtar (goddess of love

Report criticizes use of ancient Babylon as coalition base

CBS NEWS, Sat. 15 Jan 2005

LONDON - Coalition troops in Iraq are blamed for damaging and contaminating parts of the archaeological city of Babylon in a report released Saturday.

The report by John Curtis, keeper of the British Museum's Near East department, notes that dragons at the Ishtar Gate were marred by cracks and gaps where someone tried to remove their decorative bricks.

The troops are also blamed for crushing a 2,600-year-old brick pavement with military vehicles and for breaking bricks stamped by King Nebuchadrezzar II, the report notes.

The Ishtar Gate of Babylon



<http://www.cbc.ca/story/world/national/2005/01/15/babylon-coalition050115.html>

Photo credit: AFP/File/Roslan Rahman

and war) illustrated Babylon's polytheistic religion which stood in opposition to the one and only true God of Israel, Yahweh. Marduk was the principle god of many worshipped by the Babylonians. The stories of these gods and their interaction with each other are very similar to the Greek and Roman mythologies which would come centuries later. One might well imagine Daniel and other faithful children of Israel looking with disdain upon these emblems of false worship as they passed by to perform their duties for the king.

After the destruction of Babylon, the dragon symbol was adopted by other nations eager to be represented by this symbol, oblivious to its scriptural connection to sin. From *The Two Babylons* by Alexander Hislop, page 238 (Third Edition), we read, “The following extract from Salverte may cast some light upon it: *The dragon figured among the military*

ensigns of the Assyrians. Cyrus caused it to be adopted by the Persians and Medes. Under the Roman emperors, and under the emperors of Byzantium, each cohort or centuria bore for an ensign a dragon (Des Sciences Occultes, Appendix, Note A, p. 486)."

We would like to quote again from Isaiah 14:29:

"Rejoice not thou, whole Palestina, because the rod of him that smote thee is broken: for out of the serpent's root [Egyptian/Assyrian] shall come forth a cockatrice

A Samaritan Legionnaire with the Draco

Reconstruction drawing by Gerry Embleton



An original Roman Draco found in Niederbieber, Germany

[Babylon], **and his fruit shall be a fiery flying serpent."**

Having previously identified the cockatrice with Babylon, we would now like to consider its fruit or offspring – the serpent.

The fiery flying serpent, we believe, is a direct reference to Rome whose deception of the whole earth stems from the fact that she incorporated all of the pagan worship of Egypt and Babylon into a corrupted form of Christianity, out of whose mouth is spewed a doctrine so poisonous that it devours as a fire all those who partake of its message of pious delusion.

The dragon symbol was for centuries associated with the symbol of fire, hence the "*fiery flying serpent*". From the passage in Isaiah, "*fiery*" from the Hebrew *seraph* (H8313) means *burning*, that is, (figuratively) a *poisonous* or fiery serpent. Again, from *The Two Babylons*:

"Could the power of Pagan Imperial Rome — that power that first persecuted the Church of Christ, that stood by its soldiers around the tomb of the Son of God Himself, to devour him, if it had been possible, when He should be brought forth, as the first-begotten from the dead, to rule all nations—be represented by a 'fiery Serpent'? Nothing could more lucidly show it forth. Among the lords many and the gods many, worshipped in the imperial city (Rome), the two grand objects of worship were the 'Eternal Fire,' kept perpetually burning in the temple of Vesta, and the sacred Epidaurian Serpent" (pages 236-237, Second American Edition).

As noted in the above quotations from *The Two Babylons*, the ensign of a dragon in the form of a fiery serpent was used by the Romans both by their emperors and by their armies. Bro. Thomas draws particular attention to this symbol as it came to be used by the Roman legions in their conquest of the known world. From *Eureka*, Vol. IIIa, Chapter 12, section 10, we read,

"The dragon was one of the military

ensigns of imperial Rome. Ammianus Marcellinus, as quoted by Elliott, thus describes it: 'The dragon was covered with purple cloth, and fastened to the end of a pike gilt and adorned with precious stones: its wide throat being opened, so that the wind blew through it; and it hissed, as if in a rage, with its tail floating in various folds to the breeze.'" This emblem was popularly known as the Roman Draco (see illustrations, page 5).

Also noted in this same section:

"In another note Mr. Elliott remarks that 'in Trajan's time the dragon was a Dacian ensign, not a Roman; as appears from the base-reliefs on Trajan's column. A century afterwards it was, as a Roman ensign, sculptured on Severus' arch of triumph. Later in the third century it had become almost as notorious among Roman ensigns as the Eagle itself: and is in the fourth century noted by several authors. Among these John, surnamed Chrysostom, who flourished then, says that 'the emperors wore among other things to distinguish them, silken robes embroidered with gold, in which Dragons were represented.' Speaking of the procession of Constantine from Milan to Rome, Gibbon says, 'he was encompassed by the glittering arms of the numerous squadrons of his guards and cuirassiers. Their streaming banners of silk, embroidered with gold, and shaped in the form of Dragons, waved round the person of the emperor.'"

It should be noted from this quote that Trajan's use of the dragon was during the time when paganism was the religion of the empire. Trajan reigned from AD 98-117. This pagan phase of the empire continued until the events recorded in Revelation 12, when Constantine sought to convert the empire over to Christianity. Constantine and his adherents, however, did not abandon these relics of their pagan predecessors, but instead incorporated them into their own false worship and system of government.

Constantine himself introduced the symbol to the eastern division of the Empire, and when Constantinople fell in 1453, the eastern seat of the dragon power was transferred to the third Rome (Russia) through the Eastern Orthodox Church, whose spiritual guides still wrestle with the church in the west for the mastery of the symbol's power over the nations.

From history, then, we see that Rome has identified itself with this dragon symbol. This we believe is in accordance with the Almighty's plan to reveal to His servants the true deceiver and antichrist whose pernicious ways seek to destroy the inhabitants of the earth. This great deception will not last for ever, for the scriptures foretell of the fall of this great Babylonian system. From Isaiah we read:

"In that day the LORD with his sore and great and strong sword shall punish leviathan the piercing serpent, even leviathan that crooked serpent; and he shall slay the dragon that is in the sea" (Isa. 27:1).

There is no question concerning the final end of this great



The emblem of the Dacian dragon from Trajan's Column, a 100-foot tall monument to the Dacian Wars.

dragon system amidst the sea of nations. While its deception has lasted for centuries, from Egypt to Babylon to Rome, its head must be crushed so that it can no longer pierce the souls of men by leading them into deception. In this the Lord will triumph victoriously as this great incorporation of sin is finally destroyed. Just as Jesus conquered his own sinful nature and thereby crushed the seed of the serpent, so he will vanquish this system. A great destruction is due to those who have sought to supplant the simplicity of the Truth for their own profit and gain. Their destruction is assured when "he shall slay the dragon that is in the sea."

"Rejoice over her, thou heaven, and ye holy apostles and prophets; for God hath avenged you on her. And a mighty angel took up a stone like a great millstone, and cast it into the sea, saying, Thus with violence shall that great city Babylon be thrown down, and shall be found no more at all" (Rev. 18:20-21).

HISTORICAL

The following information (in quotes) was published by the International Christian Embassy Jerusalem website at www.icej.org, and appeared in *Milestones Snippets* for November, 2004.

THE STORY BEHIND THE MYTH

“In front of the European Council in Brussels, Belgium, is a statue of Europa riding a bull. Opposite the building is the European Commission, the powerhouse of Europe. According to Greek mythology, this Bull represents the pagan god Zeus who deceived Europa and carried her away to the island of Crete (where she was seduced). From this epic, the name “Europe” is derived. The mythology or symbolism may remind Christians of a woman riding the beast in the book of Revelation.

‘Whichever view you take, it is of great concern that Europe might be deceived and be taken away by a power which she herself cannot control and take advantage of her,’ said Jürgen Bühler, ICEJ German Branch Director.

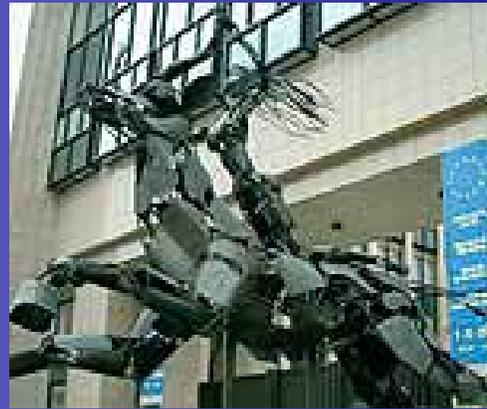
COMMENT: A similar more contemporary form has been erected in Moscow, and a painting of the traditional scene hangs in the EU headquarters in Brussels. This depiction, originally a symbol from ancient Greece, is also brandished on EU coinage — see below left.*** May we not discern the nearness of our Lord in view of these signs? Jesus rebuked the unbelieving Jews of his own day saying, ***“O ye hypocrites, ye can discern the face of the sky; but can ye not discern the signs of the times?”*** (Matt. 16:3). Every believer should take note of these developments as they relate to the fulfillment of the visions of the apocalypse given to the apostle John concerning the political heavens in the last days (specifically chapters 12 and 17). There are scoffers who will tell us that these things mean nothing, and that we need not concern ourselves with the European habitable. The vision, however, tarries no longer, and speaks loudly from the political aerial for those who have ears to hear and eyes to see — Yahshua is even at the doors!

We feel that it is prudent to reiterate the words of Jürgen Bühler, ***“Europe might be deceived and be taken away by a power which she herself cannot control...”*** This is the power which is now shaping up in central Europe, the cradle of the ancient Roman Empire. It is a power which wields the rhetoric of “democracy” to the masses, but will in the end become a dominating autocrat that rules from the Pyrenees to the Urals. This is the very ***“Gog of the land of Magog, the Chief Prince of Rosh, Meshech, and Tubal”*** as described in Ezekiel 38 materializing before our very eyes.

We watch as President Putin consolidates his power base in Russia, strengthens ties with the EU (now ready to launch its own independent military force), while the U.S. and Britain hunker down in Arabia, and the introduction of a new more powerful Pope looms on the horizon. These are signs that we are moving ever closer to the dawn of a bright new day, even when the day star of righteousness appears with healing in his wings - his divisions of immortalized saints to take the kingdoms of this world and make them the everlasting possession of a righteous seed! Then, every eye shall see him and every knee shall bow! It is near! The signs are all around us and should dispel the fog of superficial material pursuits and direct our energies to Yahweh and His saving Word. If we will only hear!



*** Coin image Courtesy, *The Bible Magazine* VOL. 16 ISSUE No. 4; Symbol of Europe, its Origin and Meaning.



EUROPE



The Glory of Yahweh Revealed Through the Heroes of Israel

Introduction to the Book of the Judges ~ Part 2 ~

By Bro. Al Bryan and Bro. Bryan Cram

In our last installment we considered the first five of seven primary principles enumerated throughout the Book of the Judges. They are:

1. **Israel an Example**
2. **The Place of the Judges in the Hebrew Scriptures**
3. **Failure Through Compromise**
4. **Faith by Hearing – the Weak Made Strong**
5. **Yahweh's Mode of Instruction**
6. **In the World But Not of the World (This Issue)**
7. **Four Principles in Operation.
(Sin, Suffering, Supplication, Salvation)**

We now proceed with the sixth principle that underscores the relationship of the times of the Judges to our own times and the necessity of the body of Christ to remain separate from the world and all its enticing, yet deadly entanglements. Thus, we are called to be:

6. In the World But Not of the World

In the latter verses of Judges chapter 2, and again in the opening verses of Judges chapter 3, we are told that because Israel transgressed Yahweh's covenant, He would *"not henceforth drive out any from before them of the nations which Joshua left when he died: That through them I may prove Israel."* This solidifies the principle place of the Book of Judges as being typical of the times of the Gentiles, *"to know whether they would hearken unto the commandments of the LORD."*

To accomplish His purpose, Yahweh carefully chose out four nations by whom Israel would be proved, each bearing characteristics that reveal a world in which the ecclesia even now dwells. These four were **1) the Philistines; 2) the Canaanites; 3) the Sidonians; and 4) the Hivites.** The common denominator of these peoples is that they are all descendants from Ham, and therefore, all in the loins of his curse: *"And Noah awoke from his wine, and knew what his younger son had done unto him. And he said, Cursed be Canaan; a servant of servants shall he be unto his brethren"* (Gen. 9:24-25).

Here we have a semblance with all those in the loins of Adam, a condemned race, and a foreshadowing of the destiny of Gentile nations in relation to Israel. It is noteworthy that Nimrod was also in this lineage (Gen. 10:6-9) and that it was he who led the first rebellion against Yahweh after the flood. Nimrod became a persecutor of the faithful (Gen. 10:9) and was the chief founder of Babylon and Assyria (Genesis 10:10-11). A brief review of the nations left to prove Israel will reveal that they also were of Nimrod's stock and are indeed a foreshadowing of the system of political and ecclesiastical usurpation that he established, styled by the Spirit through the Revelation of Jesus Christ as *"MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH"* (Rev. 17:5).

The Philistines (see Plate No. 3, page 10):

From the Hebrew *Pelishtiy* (pel-ish-tee' - Strong 6430); a Pelishtite or inhabitant of Pelesheth; from *Pelesheth*, (pel-eh'-sheth -Str. 6429); rolling; i.e. migratory; from *Palash* (paw-lash' Str. 6428); a prime root; to roll (in dust): -roll (wallow) self.

The origin of the Philistines, though often debated among worldly scholars, may be accurately deduced from the scriptures with a little detective work. In Amos 9:7 they are described as *"the Philistines from Caphtor,"* and in Jeremiah as a *"remnant"* thereof (Jer. 47:4). In Moses' genealogical table of nations, Caphtor is identified as descending from the line of Ham and Cush (Gen. 10:6-14). The Companion Bible notes that a translation of verse 14 of Genesis 10 should be rendered, *"And Pathrusim, and Casluhim, and Caphtorim (out of whom came Philistim)."*

Caphtor has been identified as possibly relating to Cyprus, but more often to Crete, the cradle of the Minoan civilization. At an unknown interval in the third millennium B.C., a people migrated from these islands to the southern shores of Canaan establishing themselves as village dwellers in Gerar with whom Abraham had relations, not the least of which was Abimelech, king of the Philistines (Gen. 21:22-32). Many a historian has disputed this account, supposing that, because of the so-called "lack of evidence", the Philistines did not migrate to Canaan until the twelfth century B.C. (800 years after Abraham's sojourning in the land). While there is general

agreement among scholars of ancient history that a massive immigration into Canaan by sea peoples from Crete took place around 1200 B.C., there is no reason to suppose Philistine settlements did not exist long before this time. Otherwise it becomes difficult to explain how the Philistines suddenly appear in history with a highly developed Pentapolis of strong-walled city-states consisting of Gaza, Ashkelon, Ashdod, Ekron, and Gath (from whence came the giant).

The flagrant disregard of Scripture by the so-called “scholars” of higher learning deserves no response, but the archaeological evidence upon which they base their careless declarations may yet be their undoing as it has many a time in the past. Even now it can be shown from archaeological findings that the more peaceable character of Philistines at the time of Abraham is in keeping with the history of the Minoan culture from which they descended. Nevertheless, if only based upon our faith in the Biblical account, we may simply deduce that the Philistines of Abraham’s day eventually migrated northward, by necessity or desire, driving out the Canaanites as they went.

Why the character of these peoples seems to have changed so much over the centuries may be an unsolvable mystery. However, it is not beyond reason to speculate that they were made into a war-like people due to the rising power of Egypt under the cruel Egyptian lords who knew not Joseph. Thus, even while Israel was cast into bondage in Egypt, neighboring countries were forced into open war, and history clearly records in stone that the Philistines, strong as they had become, were at last put to tribute by Pharaoh.

With this brief background of history, we will proceed with our principle interest in these peoples and the characteristics they attained which define their typical role among nations. A consideration of the Hebrew root word *palash*, from which “Philistine” is derived, is a starting point for our search. The use of this term is found in several passages that may enlighten us as to the true meaning:

“Declare ye it not at Gath, weep ye not at all: in the house of Aphrah roll thyself in the dust” (Micah 1:10).

In this passage the Hebrew word *palash* is translated “roll thyself”. A similar use is found in Ezekiel’s lamentation against Tyre thusly:

“And shall cause their voice to be heard against thee, and shall cry bitterly, and shall cast up dust upon their heads, they shall wallow themselves in the ashes” (Ezek. 27:30).

Here, *palash* is translated “wallow themselves”. In both passages the use of the term appears to relate to the base instincts of man’s fleeting interests, revealing the man of the flesh, the earthy man of Adam. In taking a broader view of



B. Norraba

An artist’s rendering from a stone carving of a Philistine warrior

Philistine history, we can then see how the Deity has chosen their name carefully as a witness to their true character. The following outline gives us a glimpse into these peoples, who changed over time from simple village dwellers in Gerar into a powerful and militaristic nation.

1. The Philistines from the times of Abraham to Solomon were antagonists against the chosen race (Gen. 21:25; Judges 3:31; Judges 13-16; I Sam. 4:17; I Sam. 31; I Chron. 14:8).
2. They took Jews for slaves, for which they are condemned by the prophets of Israel (Joel 3:6; Amos 1:6).
3. They stole away the wealth of Israel, including the Ark of the Covenant for a time (Joel 3:4-5; I Sam. 4:17).
4. They were idolaters who drew Israel away from Yahweh (Isa. 2:6) and who worshipped Ashteroth, the female consort of Baal (Judges 6:25;8:33). The Philistines also worshipped Dagon the fish god (their national god) and Baalzebub, in whose name the Lord was accused of casting out devils (Matt. 12:24).
5. The Philistines were expert in the arts of metal work and iron smelting, talents that they brought with them from Crete, which was known especially for very highly developed bronze work. But having fortified themselves against outside aggressors, the Philistines also became expert in the making of implements of war, secrets that they guarded closely (I Sam. 13:19-22). The Companion Bible suggests at this reference that this explains why Ehud had to make his own dagger (Judges 3:31), why Shamgar used an ox-goad (Judges 3:31),

JUDGES - PLATE NO. 3

~ *The Philistines from Caphtor* ~



B. Norraba

Figure 1 (Above):
Octopus vase from Palairastro
1500 B.C.
Height: 11 inches

Figure 2 (Below):
Beaked Jug from Phaistos;
1800 B.C.
Height: 10-5/8 inches



B. Norraba

ARCHAEOLOGY CONFIRMS BIBLE TRUTH: Animal representations throughout Minoan civilization are portrayed in playful, non-violent patterns (above), unlike much of Egyptian and Mesopotamian works, which are fierce and violent. This very stylistic form of artwork reflecting a manner of life as peaceful dwellers among nations curiously turns up in abundance in the land of the Philistines, believed by archaeologists and historians to be a remnant of the Minoan Civilization (the Caphtor of Jeremiah 47:4 and Amos 9:7). This harmonizes exactly with the village dwelling people (Philistines) with whom Abraham had relations (Gen. 20:15-18; 21:32-34), a people that would eventually change in character so dramatically, that by the time of King David, they come to represent sin in all its personal and corporate manifestations.



B. Norraba

LEFT: Here, a few examples of early Philistine slipware, illustrating stylistic animal patterns after a fashion of their Minoan heritage (above).



The Philistine “Pentapolis” consisted of five city-states in a loose alliance of “sea peoples”. The five-fold division is thought to have developed on account of the five distinct dialects of the Minoan civilization in Crete from where the Philistines are thought to have mass migrated around 1200 B.C.

Earlier colonization, beginning as early as 2200 B.C., was perhaps responsible for the establishment of Gerar, the headquarters of Abimelech, “King of the Philistines”, in the times of the patriarchs Abraham and Isaac (Gen. 26:1-8).

why Samson “had nothing in his hand” (Judges 14:5-6), and why there was not “*a shield or spear seen among 40,000 in Israel*” (Judges 5:8).

6. One final principle about the Philistines is noteworthy and rings true among all those who are not born in the lineage of Abraham. Despite their “earthy” heritage, a remnant among them chose to cast their lot with the house of David. Among these were several groups of Philistines loyal to the king, namely the Cherethites and Pelethites of Gath, David’s bodyguards (2 Sam. 15:18; 15:18; 20:7–23; I Kings 1:38). While this claim is disputed among various Bible scholars, it is certain that many heroes of the “greater son of David” will be of Gentile stock! An earnest of this arrangement is surely seen with Ittai the Gittite (an inhabitant of Gath, i.e., a Philistine) who declared unto David, “*As the LORD liveth, and as my lord the king liveth, surely in what place my lord the king shall be, whether in death or life, even there also will thy servant be*” (2 Sam. 15:21). May our faith be founded as sure as this, and we will be judged as true Israelites indeed.

To summarize our thoughts regarding the Philistines in their typical role among nations, we need look no further than the “iron empire” of Rome and her successor nations, as well as other antagonists still in the land that continue to gnaw, fight, and meddle in the affairs of Israel. Concerning the former allusion to Rome, we note that the Philistines were belligerent and uncouth in their treatment of Israel as were their Roman successors who began to lord over the Jews when Pergamum was willed to Caesar in 63 B.C. This antagonism climaxed under Roman Imperialism in A.D. 70 when Jerusalem, the temple, and the people were overthrown; when the booty of the temple was carted off to faraway temples no better than that of Dagon himself, and when the Jews were sold into slavery among the Gentiles – a Philistine hallmark.

Gentile belligerence among “Philistines” near and far continues to plague the tiny nation of Israel today. The Palestinians, for example (a derivative of Pelishtite), continue as a “pricking briar”, but represent a mere earnest of anti-Semitism that lies barely dormant among Gentile nations afar

off. This arrangement will at length reach a climax purposed by Yahweh: anti-Semitism will arise and give birth to a greater cause which aligns nations beneath the banner of Gog, and he will “think an evil thought” (Ezek. 38:10). The nations of Europe particularly are even now shaking off their shame for past misdeeds and again speaking boldly against the people of God. Thus, Yahweh will gather their horses and chariots to “the battle of that great day of God Almighty” (Rev. 16:14), and like their Philistine predecessor of old who boasted against Israel for 40 days with shield and spear (I Sam. 17:16), the Gentile nations will be cut down by the stone of Israel (Dan 2:31-35). David guided by the Spirit of Yahweh choreographed this future day of battle in the events of which he was a primary participant. While approaching his Philistine opponent, David was speaking telescopically of the future when he proclaimed:

“This day will the LORD deliver thee into mine hand; and I will smite thee, and take thine head from thee; and I will give the carcasses of the host of the Philistines this day unto the fowls of the air, and to the wild beasts of the earth; that all the earth may know that there is a God in Israel. And all this assembly shall know that the LORD saveth not with sword and spear: for the battle is the LORD’s, and he will give you into our hands” (I Sam. 17:46-47).

In the antitype of the battle that occurred between Israel and the Philistines in the valley of Elah, Yahweh’s salvation (the stone of Israel) has conquered sin. In a future manifestation, Christ and his associates will “eat the flesh of kings, and

the flesh of captains, and the flesh of mighty men, and the flesh of horses, and of them that sit on them, and the flesh of all men, both free and bond, both small and great” (Rev. 20:18).

This illustrates that the strength of the Gentiles will fail them, and Gog, their mighty champion, will fall by the sword that proceeds from the mouth of the greater than David, Jesus the Messiah (Rev. 19:15).

In the aftermath of the battles of Armageddon, when the armies of Gog will have been soundly defeated, the nations afar off that sent their armies to the field of battle must still be contested, and the religious system that is at the root cause of Gentile belligerence towards Israel and Messiah must be cut off and destroyed as a Dagon to the ground. While wrapped in the name of “Christianity”, the Roman Catholic system is really no less idolatrous than the worship of Ashteroth or Beelzebub, whose ministers of darkness have adopted a style of dress mixed up with Babylonian, Judean, and Canaanitish attributes, adorning “fish hats” after a fashion of the Dagon priests in Ashdod (see graphic on page 13). This system of blasphemy is incurable, wallowing itself in the muck and mire of Gentile superstition and worldly gain until the time of the end, when it must be cast as a millstone into the sea: “*Thus with violence shall that great city Babylon be thrown down, and shall be found no more at all*” (Rev. 18:21). Such will be the fate of all those who do not come out of her, men of the earth, rolling in the dust—to the dust shall they return for ever.



In the antitype of the battle that occurred between David and the Philistine Goliath in the valley of Elah, Yahweh’s salvation (the stone of Israel) has conquered sin. In a future manifestation, Christ and his associates (the four stones from the shepherd’s bag) will defeat the Gogian invader in the Valley of Judgment (Joel 3:12) and Sin will be cut off.

“...He shall wound the heads over many countries. He shall drink of the brook in the way: Therefore shall he lift up the head” (Psa. 110:6-7)

Left: A Partial Rendering of Gustave Dore’s “David and Goliath”

The Canaanites (see Plate No. 4, page 14):

From the Hebrew *Kenaaniy* (ken-ah-an-ee' - Strong 3669); a Kenaanite or inhabitant of Kenaan; by implication a peddler (the Canaanites standing for their neighbors the Ishmaelites, who conducted mercantile caravans): - merchant trafficker; patrial from *kenaan* (ken-ah'-an - Strong 3667); humiliated; Kenaan, a son of Ham; also the country inhabited by him; from *kana* (kaw-nah' - Strong 3665); a prime root; to bend the knee; hence to humiliate, vanquish: bring down (low), into subjection, under, humble (self), subdued.

Canaanite is a term used generally to describe all non-Hebrew peoples who inhabited the land west of the Jordan River between the Mediterranean and Dead Seas; however, Jabin, King of Canaan, is identified specifically with Hazor (Josh. 11:1; Judges 4:2), located about 10 miles due north from the Sea of Galilee. The Canaanites as a whole consisted of a loose confederation of seven distinct tribes or city-states (Deut. 7:1) that formed alliances for defensive purposes (Josh. 9:1-2; 11:1-5). Their name is derived from Canaan, son of Ham (Gen. 10:6). Being of the same origin, the history of the Canaanites is akin to the history of their Philistine brothers, yet they presented a more subtle and therefore far more deadly enemy to Israel than the five lords of the Philistines. While the Philistines were continually belligerent and warlike throughout Israel's history, the Canaanites, as their name suggests, were more concerned with the amassing of pleasure and wealth through the trafficking of merchandise, whether ill gotten or not. Thus, once Israel was established in the land, the Canaanites dwelt among the Hebrews and sought to establish favor with them through worldly enticements. For this reason Yahweh commanded that Israel should make no covenant with them:

"Take heed to thyself, lest thou make a covenant with the inhabitants of the land whither thou goest, lest it be for a snare in the midst of thee: But ye shall destroy their altars, break their images, and cut down their groves: For thou shalt worship no other god: for the LORD, whose name is Jealous, is a jealous God: Lest thou make a covenant with the inhabitants of the land, and they go a whoring after their gods, and do sacrifice unto their gods, and one call thee, and thou eat of his sacrifice; And thou take of their daughters unto thy sons, and their daughters go a whoring after their gods, and make thy sons go a whoring after their gods" (Exod. 34:12-16).

Implicit in this warning is the close proximity that Israel would share with the Canaanites if they did not altogether exterminate them: *"Thou shalt save alive nothing that breatheth"* (Deut. 7:2,24; 20:16) and destroy their images of idolatry (Deut. 7:5,25). Yahweh was well aware that these peoples were of the same stock as those whom He destroyed in Sodom and Gomorrah, a people who followed every vile affection imaginable; so vile, in fact, that Yahweh determined that in the future Age to come, no Canaanite would dwell in the land (Zech. 14:21).



B. Norraba

A Priest of Dagon (the patron "fish god" of the Philistines). Note the striking resemblance to modern Papal "garb".

The Bible describes the Canaanites as great and mighty (Num. 13:28), extremely numerous (Deut. 7:17), idolatrous (Deut. 29:17), superstitious (Deut. 18:9-11), and profane (Lev. 18:27). There could be no clearer resemblance of these peoples to our times; we are outnumbered and surrounded by sin. If we fail to see the resemblance, then we will fail to heed the warning!

Canaanite Influence Today

Just as Yahweh's chosen people Israel were tested by Canaanite influences during the period of the Judges, so too are the *called out ones* - the ecclesia - put to a similar trial today. *"For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth"* (Heb. 12:6). Trial is a blessing. Through trial a Believer is presented with an opportunity to further manifest a character pleasing unto The Almighty.

JUDGES - PLATE NO. 4

~ *The Seven Divisions of The Canaanites* ~
Deuteronomy 7:1

1. Hittites: The children of Heth, second son of Canaan. The Hittites were located primarily in Syria (becoming the dominant power in the north – II Kings 7), having descended into Canaan from Hattusas, their capital in Asia Minor. Abraham purchased the field and cave of Machpelah from Ephron the Hittite, near Kirjatharba; “the same is Hebron in the land of Canaan” (Gen. 23:1). Later, two Hittites are reckoned in connection with David (Ahimelech and Uriah) and others were tributaries to Solomon (I Kings 9:20-21). At the height of their empire, the Hittites kept both Assyria and Egypt from dominating the land between*.

H2850: chittiy - *Khít-tee'*

Patronymic from H2845; a *Chittite*, or descendant of Cheth:—Hittite, Hittites.

H2845: cheth - *khayth*

From H2865; *terror*; *Cheth*, an aboriginal Canaanite:—Heth.

H2865: chathath - *khaw-thath'*

A primitive root; properly to *prostrate*; hence to *break down*, either (literally) by violence, or (figuratively) by confusion and fear:—abolish, affright, be (make) afraid, amaze, beat down, discourage, (cause to) dismay, go down, scare, terrify.

* The Ancient World, An Historical perspective, Henry C. Boren, P. 74-79

2. Gergashites: It is suggested that these peoples were from Galilee, possibly related to the Gergasenes (Gadarenes) of Luke 8:26 and Luke 8:37 dwelling on the east side of the Jordan valley at Gadara in the land of Gilead, or Gergesa on the mid-point of the western shore of Galilee**.

H1622: girgashiy - *ghir-gaw-shee'*

Patrial from an unused name (of uncertain derivation); a *Girgashite*, one of the native tribes of Canaan:—Girgashite, Girgashite.

** Moody Bible Atlas – Nations of Genesis 10

3. Amorites: Amorite infers the “Hill Country” of Palestine in contrast to the lowlands or coastal plains (Deut. 1:44; Josh. 11:3). Judges 1:35 states that “*the Amorites would dwell in mount Heres in Aijalon, and in Shaalbim,*” about 15 miles north east from Jerusalem. But it is evident that they were spread throughout the land since Jerusalem’s nativity is “*of the land of Canaan; thy father was an Amorite, and thy mother an Hittite,*” and they are also found near Mamre, being confederate with Abraham in the battle of the kings (Gen. 14:13).

H567: emoriy - *em-o-ree'*

Probably a patronymic from an unused name derived from H559 in the sense of *publicity*, that is, prominence; thus a *mountaineer*; an *Emorite*, one of the Canaanitish tribes:—Amorite.

4. Canaanites – See Main Text

5. Perizzites: The Perizzites are most often named in concert with other Canaanitish peoples. The book of Judges places them in association with Adoni-Bezek, Bezek being on the west side of the Jordan Valley about half way between the Dead Sea and the Sea of Galilee (Judges 1:4).

H6522: prizziy - *per-iz-zee'*

From H6521; inhabitant of the open country; a *Perizzite*, one of the Canaanitish tribes:—Perizzite.

H6521: praziy - *proziy - per-aw-zee - per-o-zee'*

From H6519; a *rustic*:—village.

H6519: prazah - *per-aw-zaw'*

From the same as H6518; an open country:—(unwalled) town (without walls), unwalled village.

H6518: pararaz - *paw-rawz'*

From an unused root meaning to *separate*, that is, *decide*; a *chieftain*:—village.

6. Hivites: These peoples occupied central Palestine in proximity to Gibeon (Josh. 11:19), Shechem (Gen. 34:2) and “in Mount Lebanon, from Mount Baal Hermon to the entering in of Hamath” (Josh. 11:3; Judges 3:3).

H2340: chivviy - *khiv-vee'*

Perhaps from H2333; a *villager*; a *Chivvite*, one of the aboriginal tribes of Palestine:—Hivite.

H2333: chavvah - *khav-vaw'*

Properly the same as H2332 (*lifegiving*, that is, *living place*); by implication an encampment or *village*:—(small) town.

7. Jebusites: The occupants of Jebus, the ancient fortress of Jerusalem (Josh. 15:8; Judges 1:21; 2 Sam. 5:6-9). These peoples boasted against David and his men saying “*except thou take away the blind and the lame, thou shalt not come in hither.*”

The threshing floor of Araunah the Jebusite figures prominently in Israel’s history as the place purchased by David to stay the hand of a smiting angel (2 Sam. 24) and where Solomon’s temple would later be built.

H2983: ybusiy - *yeb-oo-see'*

Patrial from H2982; a *Jebusite* or inhabitant of Jebus:—Jebusite (-s).

H2982: ybus - *yeb-oos'*

From H947; *trodden*, that is, *threshing place*; *Jebus*, the aboriginal name of Jerusalem:—Jebus.

In truth, it is our good fortune to pass through the fire of refinement during our probation, for when we “*endure chastening, God dealeth with (us) as with sons*” (Heb. 12:7).

One of the recurrent trials placed on Believers today is the precept of separation. “*Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord*” (2 Cor. 6:17). Our consideration in this installment is the challenge to the faithful of existing in the world, yet refraining from all its temptations and distractions. Regrettably, for the community of *called out ones*, separation is proving easier said than done.

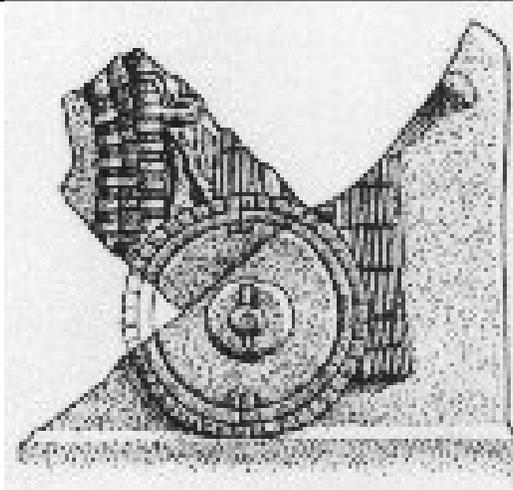
This fusion of worldly influences and the ecclesia reveals itself in subtle ways. Whether it is the adoption of modern church-like practices, a tolerance for false Christian doctrines, or a casual approach to Yahweh manifest in improper discussion and dress, the distinction between the brethren of Christ and the apostate world in which they exist is becoming more difficult to discern.

The Canaanites were known for their worldly persuasions. As stated earlier, they focused on pleasure and wealth, regardless of how these desires might be attained. How fitting that this describes the world in which we contend today. Like water that cannot be controlled, social forces, with their blatant and subtle messages of humanism and immorality, are tireless in their assault against the ecclesia.

Signs of succumbing to “*all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life*” (1 John 2:16) are now more evident than ever. These symptoms are physically apparent, for example, in the sloppy dress of our young men and the revealing attire of our young women. Sensual and seductive clothing should be wholly rejected as unacceptable for the saints of God. The musical chimes of a cell phone (another worldly intrusion) have no place interrupting ecclesial functions, particularly the memorial remembrance of the sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ. Are not these symptoms akin to Ezekiel’s generation who “*put no difference between the holy and profane*” (Ezek. 22:26)?

Moreover, as predicted through the letter to the Laodicean ecclesia, the Canaanite influence is visible spiritually as well. Many of the principles professed today in the community offer little distinction from the modern Christian movement (too much philosophy, too little scripture), and the once clear lines between truth and error have become blurred, and are now debated for so-called “fairness”.

Again, Yahweh declared through His servant, Zechariah, “*in that day there shall be no more the Canaanite in the*



Stone cut relief depicting an Iron Chariot

house of the LORD of hosts” (Zech. 14:21). May we heed this warning, and avoid the perils that besiege the ecclesia today – the modern parallel of the immoral religion originally practiced by the Canaanites.

Summary

Israel did not have sufficient faith and trust in Yahweh, and therefore did not

drive out the Canaanites for fear of their iron chariots (Josh. 17:16; Judges 1:19). This would later prove to their own hurt as Yahweh sold them into the hand of Jabin, king of the Canaanites, and they were oppressed by his nine hundred chariots of iron (Judges 4:1-3). What will be the fate of the present day ecclesia if we likewise fail to separate ourselves from the world?

In the antitype of the Canaanites, we are given characteristics that may be added to the same system of men identified with the Philistines: a system that traffics in merchandise of the earth and in the souls of men (Rev. 18:12-13). Hence, the system identified by John as *Babylon the Great* is also Canaanitish in its corrupt system of making merchandise of false religion, as well as its amassing of wealth and armaments held in store for Yahweh’s purpose with Israel and the nations, though they remain in ignorance of Him. At length these Gentiles will answer to the root meaning of *kana*: “to bend the knee; hence to humiliate, to vanquish” and so bring them into subjection beneath the scepter of Judah as declared by the prophet Isaiah:

“*I have sworn by myself, the word is gone out of my mouth in righteousness, and shall not return, That unto me every knee shall bow, every tongue shall swear. Surely, shall one say, in the LORD have I righteousness and strength: even to him shall men come; and all that are incensed against him shall be ashamed. In the LORD shall all the seed of Israel be justified, and shall glory*” (Isa. 45:23-25).

We will explore this relationship further when considering the parable of Deborah, Barak, and Jael in their heroic defeat of Sisera and Jabin, king of the Canaanites.

In our next installment we will complete our consideration of “In the World But Not of the World” and take a brief look at the **Sidonians** and the **Hivites**, the other two peoples chosen out by Yahweh to “prove” Israel.

To be continued in Vol. 4, Issue 3, LORD willing

BIBLICAL ALLEGORIES

The Second Call of Simon - Luke 5:1-11

By Bro. Alex M. Briley

In the fifth chapter of Luke, we have recorded the second call of Simon to follow Yahshua. Careful consideration of all the gospel accounts will reveal that this is not a parallel incident to Matthew chapter four or Mark chapter one, where the first call to follow Yahshua is recorded. The events recorded are important to us in their exhortational value, as well as their symbolic teaching. When we consider that Simon was on several occasions reminded of his calling, we are exhorted to continually examine how the Lord is reminding us of our duty to him throughout our lives.

The Setting

A great company of people had gathered themselves to hear the words of Yahshua at Gennesaret. In the calm setting of the early morning they desired to hear the things concerning the kingdom of God, while Simon and his partners were occupied with cleaning their nets after a night of unprofitable work. Gennesaret means *harp-shaped* (Strong's), or the *garden of the prince* (Hitchcock). This causes our thoughts to consider a time when great multitudes will gather to hear the Word of Yahweh in the garden of the Lord. *"Thus saith the Lord GOD; In the day that I shall have cleansed you from all your iniquities I will also cause you to dwell in the cities, and the wastes shall be builded. And the desolate land shall be tilled, whereas it lay desolate in the sight of all that passed by. And they shall say, This land that was desolate is become like the garden of Eden; and the waste and desolate and ruined cities are become fenced, and are inhabited. Then the heathen that are left round about you shall know that I the LORD build the ruined places, and plant that that was desolate: I the LORD have spoken it, and I will do it"* (Ezekiel 36:33-36). The Kingdom of God is likened to the Garden of the Prince. And in that garden will all nations come to hear and worship Yahweh.

Luke tells us that Yahshua taught the people out of one of Simon's ships. He sat down in one of them and thrust out a little from the land, and when seated upon the calm sea of that early morning, he taught the multitude. In like manner, Yahshua will sit down upon His throne in the Kingdom, and teach on the calm seas: *"And I saw*

as it were a sea of glass mingled with fire: and them that had gotten the victory over the beast, and over his image, and over his mark, and over the number of his name, stand on the sea of glass, having the harps of God [Gennesaret]. And they sing the song of Moses the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying, Great and marvellous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints. Who shall not fear thee, O Lord, and glorify thy name? for thou only art holy: for all nations shall come and worship before thee; for thy judgments are made manifest" (Revelation 15:2-4). At this time the word of Yahweh will be paramount in the minds of men, *"for the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea."*

Luke also records for us that the time of these events were in the early morning. We see that Simon and his fellows had spent the night fishing and were now cleaning their nets. It is noteworthy that David speaks of the Kingdom of God as the dawning of a new day in 2 Samuel 23:1-4. We also are reminded that Malachi saw Yahshua as *"the Sun of righteousness"*, who shall *"arise with healing in his wings"* (Malachi 4:2).

Thus it is that when Yahshua arises as the Sun of Righteousness, and reigns over a calm sea, making Israel as the garden

A garden by the sea at Gennesaret



of the Lord, a harp-shaped place, that all nations will come and hear the gospel of peace.

Simon's Disposition

One might ask, "Why was Simon not listening to the teaching of the Master? Why was he busy with the cares of this life, while the greatest man who ever spoke was a few feet away?" Indeed, the question is a valid one. We would never do that... **or would we?** Yahshua said, "*For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them*" (Matthew 18:20). **We might say then, that whenever we decide not to attend classes or lectures, we are mending our nets while the Master is gathered with our Brethren.** This is a condition that Yahshua was seeking to change in Simon and in us as well.

When anyone is focused on this life and not the Master's teaching, he has become a child of the night, not of the day. Simon was still a child of the night. He was still engaged in work that brought no results. Paul exhorts us to be of the day and not of the night. "*But of the times and the seasons, brethren, ye have no need that I write unto you. For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night. For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape. But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief. Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness. Therefore let us not sleep, as do others; but let us watch and be sober. For they that sleep sleep in the night; and they that be drunken are drunken in the night. But let us, who are of the day, be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love; and for an helmet, the hope of salvation*" (1 Thessalonians 5:1-8). Simon was of the night at this point, but Yahshua turns him into a child of the day. As long as he was of the night, he caught nothing, but in this new morning of the day, he caught more than he alone

could handle.

Let us all then be fishers of the day. The night is unprofitable; in it we will catch nothing for Yahweh's use. But the work of the Lord is profitable, and like Simon, after this event, we should always be engaged in it. "*Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord*" (1 Corinthians 15:58). "*And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not*" (Galatians 6:9).

It is noteworthy that at this point in the narrative Luke begins to refer to Simon as *Simon Peter*. Because it was not until Simon ceased to be a child of the night, and truly became a hearer, or "Simon", that he had the hope of that new name. It was a name (Peter, rock) that reflected the hope of the Kingdom, when all the children of the day will be given a new name. "*He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the ecclesias; To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna, and will give him a white stone, and in the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth it*" (Revelation 2:17).

Yahshua taught Simon Peter that the Kingdom will bring a great haul, a great reward unto Yahweh. He therefore left his boats and the great catch of natural fish behind, and he followed the Master, seeking a more important catch of MEN. "*And it shall come to pass, that every thing that liveth, which moveth, whithersoever the rivers shall come, shall live: and there shall be a very great multitude of fish, because these waters shall come thither: for they shall be healed; and every thing shall live whither the river cometh. And it shall come to pass, that the fishers shall stand upon it from Engedi even unto Eneglaim; they shall be a place to spread forth nets; their fish shall be according to their kinds, as the fish of the great sea, exceeding many*" (Ezekiel 47:9-10).

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