

Triennial Torah Study – 2nd Year 09/04/2011

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We now return to our 3 1/2 year Torah studies which you can follow at

https://sightedmoon.com/sightedmoon_2015/files/TriennialCycleBeginningAviv.pdf

Ex 8	1 Kings 15-16	Ps 115-117	Luke 22:39-71
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Ex 8

You will notice in this chapter that the Magicians could produce the frogs but could not get rid of them. We then see how Yehovah separates the Israelites from the Egyptian with the plagues. It is my belief that this is how the two witnesses will show the world who are Israelites in the last days.

Verse 26 is one we should look at. The reason it was an abomination to the Egyptians if Israel were to sacrifice a lamb was because this lamb was one of the gods of Egypt. One animal associated with perhaps some of Egypt's best known and most important gods was the Ram, who like the bull, seems to have also been specifically worshipped as a temple animal.

See article at <http://www.touregypt.net/featurestories/ram.htm>

1 Kings 15-16

1-Kings 15

[1-Kings 15:1] NOW IN THE EIGHTEENTH YEAR OF KING JEROBOAM THE SON OF NEBAT REIGNED ABIJAM OVER JUDAH.

Abiyam in Hebrew, i.e. Father of (Abi) the People. He is also referred to as Abiyah (Abijah see 2-Chronicles 12:16) and in Hebrew as Abiyahu (2-Chronicles 13:20 the KJ renders this name as simply ABIJAH). Abiyah means "My Father is God".

See our note to
1-Kings 14:31

<http://britam.org/Kings/1Kings14.html>

where we note that the form "Yam" could have been used interchangeably with Yah.

[1-Kings 15:2] THREE YEARS REIGNED HE IN JERUSALEM. AND HIS MOTHER'S NAME WAS MAACHAH, THE DAUGHTER OF ABISHALOM.

There is a chronological discussion as to whether the three years of Abiyah's reign were full years or merely regnal ones i.e. not complete years but counted as such for dynastic purposes.

ABISHALOM is considered another form of Abshalom.

The father of Maachah according to some accounts (e.g. Josephus) was Abshalom son of David who rebelled against him, defiled his concubines, and was killed.

See:

2-Samuel-15

<http://britam.org/2samuel-15.html>

In [2-Chronicles 13:2] it says: HIS MOTHER'S NAME ALSO WAS MICHAIAH THE DAUGHTER OF URIEL OF GIBEAH.

There seems to be contradiction here.

Was his mother MAACHAH, THE DAUGHTER OF ABISHALOM [1-Kings 15:2]

or

MICHAIAH THE DAUGHTER OF URIEL OF GIBEAH?

To find an answer, we went through some of the Commentaries.

MICHAIAH was another name for MAACHAH. She may not have been actually the daughter of ABISHALOM but rather the grand-daughter through her mother.

We see later that she was a bad person. Her grandson Asa who reigned after Abiyah was a good king and demoted her from her position of importance due to her wickedness.

AND ALSO MAACHAH HIS MOTHER, EVEN HER HE REMOVED FROM BEING QUEEN, BECAUSE SHE HAD MADE AN IDOL IN A GROVE; AND ASA DESTROYED HER IDOL, AND BURNT IT BY THE BROOK KIDRON [1-Kings 15:13].

In Scripture ancestors are sometimes referred to as "father" or "mother" and in genealogical accounts it happens that some generations may be skipped over.

It has been suggested (Daat Mikra) that MAACHAH is referred to as THE DAUGHTER OF ABISHALOM (even though she was actually merely a descendant) to emphasize the retrograde qualities she may have inherited from him.

[1-Kings 15:3] AND HE WALKED IN ALL THE SINS OF HIS FATHER, WHICH HE HAD DONE BEFORE HIM: AND HIS HEART WAS NOT PERFECT WITH THE LORD HIS GOD, AS THE HEART OF DAVID HIS FATHER.

The Sages said that both Rehoboam and his son Abijah did not actually sin themselves. They rather did not prevent the people from sinning. They failed to exert their authority and the influence they did have to keep their subjects on the right track.

[1-Kings 15:4] NEVERTHELESS FOR DAVID'S SAKE DID THE LORD HIS GOD GIVE HIM A LAMP IN JERUSALEM, TO SET UP HIS SON AFTER HIM, AND TO ESTABLISH JERUSALEM:

There are Jewish families that believe they are descended from King David. There are also claims concerning the British Royal Houses and so on. We have discussed this elsewhere. It does stand to reason however that descendants of David now occupy ruling positions over different sections of the House of Israel and Judah. Abiyah did not deserve to rule by virtue of his own deeds but rather due to him being descended from David. We may never know how things are figured out. We all should try to do as well as we can in religious matters not only for our own sake but also for the sake of our family and our people.

[1-Kings 15:5] BECAUSE DAVID DID THAT WHICH WAS RIGHT IN THE EYES OF THE LORD, AND TURNED NOT ASIDE FROM ANY THING THAT HE COMMANDED HIM ALL THE DAYS OF HIS LIFE, SAVE ONLY IN THE MATTER OF URIAH THE HITTITE.

David only sinned in the matter of Uriah.

[1-Kings 15:6] AND THERE WAS WAR BETWEEN REHOBOAM AND JEROBOAM ALL THE DAYS OF HIS LIFE.

[1-Kings 15:7] NOW THE REST OF THE ACTS OF ABIJAM, AND ALL THAT HE DID, ARE THEY NOT WRITTEN IN THE BOOK OF THE CHRONICLES OF THE KINGS OF JUDAH? AND THERE WAS WAR BETWEEN ABIJAM AND JEROBOAM.

[1-Kings 15:8] AND ABIJAM SLEPT WITH HIS FATHERS; AND THEY BURIED HIM IN THE CITY OF DAVID: AND ASA HIS SON REIGNED IN HIS STEAD.

The Book of Chronicles gives us more details concerning the reign of Abiyah.

We hope eventually to write a separate Brit-Am Commentary to Chronicles so we may not always refer to what Chronicles says in our commentary to the Book of Kings. Nevertheless concerning Abiyah it is worth noting.

Chronicles tells us how Abiyah with 400,000 warriors went to war against Jeroboam with 800,000. it is implied that Jeroboam had initiated hostilities in an attempt to subdue Judah. Abiyah reproved Jeroboam and the Ten tribes for rebelling against the House of David and for taking advantage of the inexperience of Rehoboam his father to break away from Judah. He also condemned them for worshipping golden statues of bull calves and appointing ordinary volunteers as priests in place of the Levites.

Jeroboam the King of Israel made an ambush against the Host of Judah and attacked them from both sides. The men of Judah cried to the Almighty and the Priests sounded the trumpets. God saved them. They slaughtered 500, 000 Israelites and pursued after them capturing settlements in the region of Bethel, Yehsanah, and Ephraim in general. After that Jeroboam never recovered. He was struck by God and died.

Abiyah had 14 wives, 22 sons, and 16 daughters.

He died 10 years after the war against Jeroboam and was succeeded by his son Asa.

Below is the relevant passage from Chronicles:

[2-Chronicles 12:16] AND REHOBOAM SLEPT WITH HIS FATHERS, AND WAS BURIED IN THE CITY OF DAVID: AND ABIJAH HIS SON REIGNED IN HIS STEAD.

[2-Chronicles 13:1] NOW IN THE EIGHTEENTH YEAR OF KING JEROBOAM BEGAN ABIJAH TO REIGN OVER JUDAH.

[2-Chronicles 13:2] HE REIGNED THREE YEARS IN JERUSALEM. HIS MOTHER'S NAME ALSO WAS MICHAIAH THE DAUGHTER OF URIEL OF GIBEAH. AND THERE WAS WAR BETWEEN ABIJAH AND JEROBOAM.

[2-Chronicles 13:3] AND ABIJAH SET THE BATTLE IN ARRAY WITH AN ARMY OF VALIANT MEN OF WAR, EVEN FOUR HUNDRED THOUSAND CHOSEN MEN: JEROBOAM ALSO SET THE BATTLE IN ARRAY AGAINST HIM WITH EIGHT HUNDRED THOUSAND CHOSEN MEN, BEING MIGHTY MEN OF VALOUR.

[2-Chronicles 13:4] AND ABIJAH STOOD UP UPON MOUNT ZEMARAIM, WHICH IS IN MOUNT EPHRAIM, AND SAID, HEAR ME, THOU JEROBOAM, AND ALL ISRAEL;

[2-Chronicles 13:5] OUGHT YE NOT TO KNOW THAT THE LORD GOD OF ISRAEL GAVE THE KINGDOM OVER ISRAEL TO DAVID FOR EVER, EVEN TO HIM AND TO HIS SONS BY A COVENANT OF SALT?

[2-Chronicles 13:6] YET JEROBOAM THE SON OF NEBAT, THE SERVANT OF SOLOMON THE SON OF DAVID, IS RISEN UP, AND HATH REBELLED AGAINST HIS LORD.

[2-Chronicles 13:7] AND THERE ARE GATHERED UNTO HIM VAIN MEN, THE CHILDREN OF BELIAL, AND HAVE STRENGTHENED THEMSELVES AGAINST REHOBOAM THE SON OF SOLOMON, WHEN REHOBOAM WAS YOUNG AND TENDERHEARTED, AND COULD NOT WITHSTAND THEM.

[2-Chronicles 13:8] AND NOW YE THINK TO WITHSTAND THE KINGDOM OF THE LORD IN THE HAND OF THE SONS OF DAVID; AND YE BE A GREAT MULTITUDE, AND THERE ARE WITH YOUR GOLDEN CALVES, WHICH JEROBOAM MADE YOU FOR GODS.

[2-Chronicles 13:9] HAVE YE NOT CAST OUT THE PRIESTS OF THE LORD, THE SONS OF AARON, AND THE LEVITES, AND HAVE MADE YOU PRIESTS AFTER THE MANNER OF THE NATIONS OF OTHER LANDS? SO THAT WHOSOEVER COMETH TO CONSECRATE HIMSELF WITH A YOUNG BULLOCK AND SEVEN RAMS, THE SAME MAY BE A PRIEST OF THEM THAT ARE NO GODS.

[2-Chronicles 13:10] BUT AS FOR US, THE LORD IS OUR GOD, AND WE HAVE NOT FORSAKEN HIM; AND THE PRIESTS, WHICH MINISTER UNTO THE LORD, ARE THE SONS OF AARON, AND THE LEVITES WAIT UPON THEIR BUSINESS:

[2-Chronicles 13:11] AND THEY BURN UNTO THE LORD EVERY MORNING AND EVERY EVENING BURNT SACRIFICES AND SWEET INCENSE: THE SHEWBREAD ALSO SET THEY IN ORDER UPON THE PURE TABLE; AND THE CANDLESTICK OF GOLD WITH THE LAMPS THEREOF, TO BURN EVERY EVENING: FOR WE KEEP THE CHARGE OF THE LORD OUR GOD; BUT YE HAVE FORSAKEN HIM.

[2-Chronicles 13:1] AND, BEHOLD, GOD HIMSELF IS WITH US FOR OUR CAPTAIN, AND HIS PRIESTS WITH SOUNDING TRUMPETS TO CRY ALARM AGAINST YOU. O CHILDREN OF ISRAEL, FIGHT YE NOT AGAINST THE LORD GOD OF YOUR FATHERS; FOR YE SHALL NOT PROSPER.

[2-Chronicles 13:13] BUT JEROBOAM CAUSED AN AMBUSHMENT TO COME ABOUT BEHIND THEM: SO THEY WERE BEFORE JUDAH, AND THE AMBUSHMENT WAS BEHIND THEM.

[2-Chronicles 13:14] AND WHEN JUDAH LOOKED BACK, BEHOLD, THE BATTLE WAS BEFORE AND BEHIND: AND THEY CRIED UNTO THE LORD, AND THE PRIESTS SOUNDED WITH THE TRUMPETS.

[2-Chronicles 13:15] THEN THE MEN OF JUDAH GAVE A SHOUT: AND AS THE MEN OF JUDAH SHOUTED, IT CAME TO PASS, THAT GOD SMOTE JEROBOAM AND ALL ISRAEL BEFORE ABIJAH AND JUDAH.

[2-Chronicles 13:16] AND THE CHILDREN OF ISRAEL FLED BEFORE JUDAH: AND GOD DELIVERED THEM INTO THEIR HAND.

[2-Chronicles 13:17] AND ABIJAH AND HIS PEOPLE SLEW THEM WITH A GREAT SLAUGHTER: SO THERE FELL DOWN SLAIN OF ISRAEL FIVE HUNDRED THOUSAND CHOSEN MEN.

[2-Chronicles 13:18] THUS THE CHILDREN OF ISRAEL WERE BROUGHT UNDER AT THAT TIME, AND THE CHILDREN OF JUDAH PREVAILED, BECAUSE THEY RELIED UPON THE LORD GOD OF THEIR FATHERS.

[2-Chronicles 13:19] AND ABIJAH PURSUED AFTER JEROBOAM, AND TOOK CITIES FROM HIM, BETHEL WITH THE TOWNS THEREOF, AND JESHANAH WITH THE TOWNS THEREOF, AND EPHRAIM WITH THE TOWNS THEREOF.

[2-Chronicles 13:20] NEITHER DID JEROBOAM RECOVER STRENGTH AGAIN IN THE DAYS OF ABIJAH: AND THE LORD STRUCK HIM, AND HE DIED.

[2-Chronicles 13:21] BUT ABIJAH WAXED MIGHTY, AND MARRIED FOURTEEN WIVES, AND BEGAT TWENTY AND TWO SONS, AND SIXTEEN DAUGHTERS.

[2-Chronicles 13:2] AND THE REST OF THE ACTS OF ABIJAH, AND HIS WAYS, AND HIS SAYINGS, ARE WRITTEN IN THE STORY OF THE PROPHET IDDO.

[2-Chronicles 14:1] SO ABIJAH SLEPT WITH HIS FATHERS, AND THEY BURIED HIM IN THE CITY OF DAVID: AND ASA HIS SON REIGNED IN HIS STEAD. IN HIS DAYS THE LAND WAS QUIET TEN YEARS.

[1-Kings 15:9] AND IN THE TWENTIETH YEAR OF JEROBOAM KING OF ISRAEL REIGNED ASA OVER JUDAH.

Asa in Hebrew (and Aramaic) connotes "healing".

[1-Kings 15:10] AND FORTY AND ONE YEARS REIGNED HE IN JERUSALEM. AND HIS MOTHER'S NAME WAS MAACHAH, THE DAUGHTER OF ABISHALOM.

[1-Kings 15:11] AND ASA DID THAT WHICH WAS RIGHT IN THE EYES OF THE LORD, AS DID DAVID HIS FATHER.

[1-Kings 15:12] AND HE TOOK AWAY THE SODOMITES OUT OF THE LAND, AND REMOVED ALL THE IDOLS THAT HIS FATHERS HAD MADE.

SODOMITES. Hebrew "kedoshim" literally "Holy Ones". These were males who dedicated themselves to homosexual prostitution with the proceeds going to the pagan Temple they worked out of.

[1-Kings 15:13] AND ALSO MAACHAH HIS MOTHER, EVEN HER HE REMOVED FROM BEING QUEEN, BECAUSE SHE HAD MADE AN IDOL IN A GROVE; AND ASA DESTROYED HER IDOL, AND BURNT IT BY THE BROOK KIDRON.

We saw above (1-Kings 15:3) that MAACHAH is referred to as THE DAUGHTER OF ABISHALOM (even though she was actually merely a descendant) to emphasize the retrograde qualities she may have inherited from him.

[1-Kings 15:14] BUT THE HIGH PLACES WERE NOT REMOVED: NEVERTHELESS ASA'S HEART WAS PERFECT WITH THE LORD ALL HIS DAYS.

THE HIGH PLACES. Hebrew "Bamot". These were places of worship and the offering of sacrifice to the God of Israel but outside of the Temple Area. This was forbidden but a continued common practice even when righteous monarchs were in power.

[1-Kings 15:15] AND HE BROUGHT IN THE THINGS WHICH HIS FATHER HAD DEDICATED, AND THE THINGS WHICH HIMSELF HAD DEDICATED, INTO THE HOUSE OF THE LORD, SILVER, AND GOLD, AND VESSELS.

[1-Kings 15:16] AND THERE WAS WAR BETWEEN ASA AND BAASHA KING OF ISRAEL ALL THEIR DAYS. Baasha was the king of the Ten Tribes in the Kingdom of Israel to the north of Judah and Jerusalem. The narrative has here jumped forward in regards to the Northern Kingdom but it backtracks later. We shall see 1-Kings 15:27) how Jeroboam the son of Nebat died and was followed by his son Nadav who reigned for two years. He was then killed by Baasha from the Tribe of Issachar who ruled in his stead.

[1-Kings 15:17] AND BAASHA KING OF ISRAEL WENT UP AGAINST JUDAH, AND BUILT RAMAH, THAT HE MIGHT NOT SUFFER ANY TO GO OUT OR COME IN TO ASA KING OF JUDAH.

RAMAH. Supposedly near the present-day Arab occupied city of Ramallah.

[1-Kings 15:18] THEN ASA TOOK ALL THE SILVER AND THE GOLD THAT WERE LEFT IN THE TREASURES OF THE HOUSE OF THE LORD, AND THE TREASURES OF THE KING'S HOUSE, AND DELIVERED THEM INTO THE HAND OF HIS SERVANTS: AND KING ASA SENT THEM TO BENHADAD, THE SON OF TABRIMON, THE SON OF HEZION, KING OF SYRIA, THAT DWELT AT DAMASCUS, SAYING, SYRIA. In Hebrew "Aram" a term that applied also to areas in northern Syria and present-day Iraq. DAMASCUS. In Biblical terms Damascus often refers to a city or area by the Upper Euphrates in the region of Gozan.

See:

"Brit-Am Now" - 402

<http://britam.org/now/now402.html>

#3. The NORTHERN BORDERS of Biblical Israel

[1-Kings 15:19] THERE IS A LEAGUE BETWEEN ME AND THEE, AND BETWEEN MY FATHER AND THY FATHER: BEHOLD, I HAVE SENT UNTO THEE A PRESENT OF SILVER AND GOLD; COME AND BREAK THY LEAGUE WITH BAASHA KING OF ISRAEL, THAT HE MAY DEPART FROM ME.

[1-Kings 15:20] SO BENHADAD HEARKENED UNTO KING ASA, AND SENT THE CAPTAINS OF THE HOSTS WHICH HE HAD AGAINST THE CITIES OF ISRAEL, AND SMOTE IJON, AND DAN, AND ABEL-BETH-MAACHAH, AND ALL CINNEROTH, WITH ALL THE LAND OF NAPHTALI.

MAACHAH became the name of the goddess of war in Ancient Ireland.

ABEL-BETH-MAACHAH means The Plain of the House of Maacah. In Hebrew it could also be rendered as Emain Maacah, as explained elsewhere. ABEL-BETH-MAACHAH had been an important Israelite center in the north.

Later the name Emain Macah re-appeared in Ancient Ireland.

Emain Macha is also known as Navan Fort in County Armagh, Northern Ireland. It was the site of the traditional capital of the Ulaid.

Quotation:

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Navan_Fort#Emain_Macha_in_Irish_mythology

##According to Irish mythology and historical tradition it [Emain Macha] was the capital of the Ulaid, the people who gave their name to the province of Ulster. It was supposedly founded by the goddess Macha in the 5th or 7th century BC, and was the seat of Conchobar mac Nessa in the tales of the Ulster Cycle. ...##The name Emain Macha is variously explained as "Macha's neck-brooch", after Macha marked out the boundaries of the site with her brooch, and "Macha's twins", after Macha gave birth to twins after being forced to compete in a chariot-race. The Annals of the Four Masters record that it was abandoned after it was burned by the Three Collas in 331 AD, after they had defeated Fergus Foga, king of Ulster.

<http://www.encyclopedia.com/doc/1O70-EmainMacha.html>

Excavation (1963–71) has established that the round house was begun c.700 BC and rebuilt nine times before 100 BC; the surrounding stockade was rebuilt six times. Emain Macha is probably identical with the Isamnon mentioned in Ptolemy's geography (2nd cent. AD). The survival of the skull of a Barbary ape at Emain Macha implies that the site was known far beyond Ireland.

[1-Kings 15:21] AND IT CAME TO PASS, WHEN BAASHA HEARD THEREOF, THAT HE LEFT OFF BUILDING OF RAMAH, AND DWELT IN TIRZAH.

TIRZAH. A town in the Highlands of Samarian northeast of Shechem.

It had been named after one of the five daughters of Zelophehad (Numbers 26:33).

It was known for its beauty,

THOU ART BEAUTIFUL, O MY LOVE, AS TIRZAH, COMELY AS JERUSALEM, TERRIBLE AS AN ARMY WITH BANNERS (Song of Songs 6:4).

[1-Kings 15:22] THEN KING ASA MADE A PROCLAMATION THROUGHOUT ALL JUDAH; NONE WAS EXEMPTED: AND THEY TOOK AWAY THE STONES OF RAMAH, AND THE TIMBER THEREOF, WHEREWITH BAASHA HAD BUILDED; AND KING ASA BUILT WITH THEM GEBA OF BENJAMIN, AND MIZPAH.

[1-Kings 15:23] THE REST OF ALL THE ACTS OF ASA, AND ALL HIS MIGHT, AND ALL THAT HE DID, AND THE CITIES WHICH HE BUILT, ARE THEY NOT WRITTEN IN THE BOOK OF THE CHRONICLES OF THE KINGS OF JUDAH? NEVERTHELESS IN THE TIME OF HIS OLD AGE HE WAS DISEASED IN HIS FEET. Asa supposedly had gout which is known as the disease of kings. Henry-viii of England also suffered from gout. I had several attacks of gout a few years ago but (apart from occasional twitches) have since benefited from a relief. I hope it continues. Gout may be occasioned by a combination of diet, general health factors, and hereditary. It is said to occur when uric acid accumulates in the body as a result of not being sufficiently flushed out by urination. The acid accumulates over time in the joints (especially those of the feet) until being activated. My own attacks, though very painful to me, were relatively mild and I may have gotten rid of it, at least in part. Previously my diet had been composed largely of elements said to cause gout such as fish, honey (I used it instead of sugar), and occasional beer. I drastically modified my diet and apparently alleviated the cause. Gout can be very painful and disabling. When attacks occur there seems to be little that can be done about them except take medicine to reduce the swelling and wait till it passes.

I had received advice to eat cherries and drink cherry juice and this seemed to help.

When one feels an attack is about to occur moderate exercise seems to put it off though athletic activity in the past may increase susceptibility?

[1-Kings 15:24] AND ASA SLEPT WITH HIS FATHERS, AND WAS BURIED WITH HIS FATHERS IN THE CITY OF DAVID HIS FATHER: AND JEHOSHAPHAT HIS SON REIGNED IN HIS STEAD.

JEHOSHAPHAT. In Hebrew Yeho-shaphat i.e. God is the Judge.

[1-Kings 15:25] AND NADAB THE SON OF JEROBOAM BEGAN TO REIGN OVER ISRAEL IN THE SECOND YEAR OF ASA KING OF JUDAH, AND REIGNED OVER ISRAEL TWO YEARS.

NADAB from the root NDB (also pronounceable as NDV) connotes generosity, voluntariness.

[1-Kings 15:26] AND HE DID EVIL IN THE SIGHT OF THE LORD, AND WALKED IN THE WAY OF HIS FATHER, AND IN HIS SIN WHEREWITH HE MADE ISRAEL TO SIN.

[1-Kings 15:27] AND BAASHA THE SON OF AHIJAH, OF THE HOUSE OF ISSACHAR, CONSPIRED AGAINST HIM; AND BAASHA SMOTE HIM AT GIBBETHON, WHICH BELONGED TO THE PHILISTINES; FOR NADAB AND ALL ISRAEL LAID SIEGE TO GIBBETHON.

Daat Mikra based on an analysis of names in the Book of Chronicles suggests that the Tribe of Issachar as well as its dwelling in its own territory which may have stretched in a narrow strip from the Sea of Galilee to the Mediterranean also settled in part in the territory of Ephraim.

GIBBETHON is of unknown location. There was a place of the same name in the southern territory of Dan (Joshua 19:44). It could be that the Philistines had occupied GIBBETHON and the Israelites were trying to take it back. Gibbethon would have been close to the border with Judah.

[1-Kings 15:28] EVEN IN THE THIRD YEAR OF ASA KING OF JUDAH DID BAASHA SLAY HIM, AND REIGNED IN HIS STEAD.

[1-Kings 15:29] AND IT CAME TO PASS, WHEN HE REIGNED, THAT HE SMOTE ALL THE HOUSE OF JEROBOAM; HE LEFT NOT TO JEROBOAM ANY THAT BREATHED, UNTIL HE HAD DESTROYED HIM, ACCORDING UNTO THE SAYING OF THE LORD, WHICH HE SPAKE BY HIS SERVANT AHIJAH THE SHILONITE:

Ahiyah had prophesied that all the House of Jeroboam would be wiped out.

[1-Kings 15:30] BECAUSE OF THE SINS OF JEROBOAM WHICH HE SINNED, AND WHICH HE MADE ISRAEL SIN, BY HIS PROVOCATION WHEREWITH HE PROVOKED THE LORD GOD OF ISRAEL TO ANGER.

Jeroboam is nearly always recalled as someone who sinned and who caused Israel to sin. We should be very careful in what we do or say and not cause others to transgress because of us.

[1-Kings 15:31] NOW THE REST OF THE ACTS OF NADAB, AND ALL THAT HE DID, ARE THEY NOT WRITTEN IN THE BOOK OF THE CHRONICLES OF THE KINGS OF ISRAEL?

[1-Kings 15:32] AND THERE WAS WAR BETWEEN ASA AND BAASHA KING OF ISRAEL ALL THEIR DAYS.

[1-Kings 15:33] IN THE THIRD YEAR OF ASA KING OF JUDAH BEGAN BAASHA THE SON OF AHIJAH TO REIGN OVER ALL ISRAEL IN TIRZAH, TWENTY AND FOUR YEARS.

[1-Kings 15:34] AND HE DID EVIL IN THE SIGHT OF THE LORD, AND WALKED IN THE WAY OF JEROBOAM, AND IN HIS SIN WHEREWITH HE MADE ISRAEL TO SIN.

1-Kings chapter 16

[1-Kings 16:1] THEN THE WORD OF THE LORD CAME TO JEHU THE SON OF HANANI AGAINST BAASHA, SAYING,

[1-Kings 16:2] FORASMUCH AS I EXALTED THEE OUT OF THE DUST, AND MADE THEE PRINCE OVER MY PEOPLE ISRAEL; AND THOU HAST WALKED IN THE WAY OF JEROBOAM, AND HAST MADE MY PEOPLE ISRAEL TO SIN, TO PROVOKE ME TO ANGER WITH THEIR SINS;

JEHU (Yehu) THE SON OF HANANI was a Prophet and so was his father (2-Chronicles 15:7).

Baasha had been made king in place of Nadab, the inheritor of Jeroboam, because Jeroboam and his successor had sinned. The Commentators point out that Jeroboam had had great merits of his own. He had been considered one of the greatest Torah scholars in all Israel but he had sinned by changing the mode of worship and setting up two gold bull calves in Beth-el and Dan and appointing non-Levites to priestly positions. These innovations had led to open idol worship though such may not necessarily have been the original intention.

Baasha lacked the redeeming qualities of Jeroboam and had not turned out better than him. On the contrary he had continued in his reprobate path. For this he was to be punished.

[1-Kings 16:3] BEHOLD, I WILL TAKE AWAY THE POSTERITY OF BAASHA, AND THE POSTERITY OF HIS HOUSE; AND WILL MAKE THY HOUSE LIKE THE HOUSE OF JEROBOAM THE SON OF NEBAT.

[1-Kings 16:4] HIM THAT DIETH OF BAASHA IN THE CITY SHALL THE DOGS EAT; AND HIM THAT DIETH OF HIS IN THE FIELDS SHALL THE FOWLS OF THE AIR EAT.

[1-Kings 16:5] NOW THE REST OF THE ACTS OF BAASHA, AND WHAT HE DID, AND HIS MIGHT, ARE THEY NOT WRITTEN IN THE BOOK OF THE CHRONICLES OF THE KINGS OF ISRAEL?

[1-Kings 16:6] SO BAASHA SLEPT WITH HIS FATHERS, AND WAS BURIED IN TIRZAH: AND ELAH HIS SON REIGNED IN HIS STEAD.

[1-Kings 16:7] AND ALSO BY THE HAND OF THE PROPHET JEHU THE SON OF HANANI CAME THE WORD OF THE LORD AGAINST BAASHA, AND AGAINST HIS HOUSE, EVEN FOR ALL THE EVIL THAT HE DID IN THE SIGHT OF THE LORD, IN PROVOKING HIM TO ANGER WITH THE WORK OF HIS HANDS, IN BEING LIKE THE HOUSE OF JEROBOAM; AND BECAUSE HE KILLED HIM.

ALSO. The Commentary Mishbatsot Zahav (Shabtai Weiss) points out that the Prophecy of Jehu (Yehu) the Prophet was in addition to the previous prophecy he had given beforehand. Even though the decree in heaven had been made against Baasha there was still a chance that through repentance it could be annulled. Elah the

son of Baasha however did not take the warning to heart but kept going in the perverse manner of his father. The previous Prophecy against the House of his father (i.e. in effect against him) was therefore repeated and strengthened.

BECAUSE HE KILLED HIM. He had the right to kill Nadab the son of Jeroboam only so long as he did better than him. When instead of correcting the evil that had been done he did the opposite then he too was to be found culpable.

[1-Kings 16:8] IN THE TWENTY AND SIXTH YEAR OF ASA KING OF JUDAH BEGAN ELAH THE SON OF BAASHA TO REIGN OVER ISRAEL IN TIRZAH, TWO YEARS.

[1-Kings 16:9] AND HIS SERVANT ZIMRI, CAPTAIN OF HALF HIS CHARIOTS, CONSPIRED AGAINST HIM, AS HE WAS IN TIRZAH, DRINKING HIMSELF DRUNK IN THE HOUSE OF ARZA STEWARD OF HIS HOUSE IN TIRZAH.

Zimri according to a Midrash (Pesikta de Rav Kahana, MZ) was from the Tribe of Simeon.

[1-Kings 16:10] AND ZIMRI WENT IN AND SMOTE HIM, AND KILLED HIM, IN THE TWENTY AND SEVENTH YEAR OF ASA KING OF JUDAH, AND REIGNED IN HIS STEAD.

[1-Kings 16:11] AND IT CAME TO PASS, WHEN HE BEGAN TO REIGN, AS SOON AS HE SAT ON HIS THRONE, THAT HE SLEW ALL THE HOUSE OF BAASHA: HE LEFT HIM NOT ONE THAT PISSETH AGAINST A WALL, NEITHER OF HIS KINSFOLKS, NOR OF HIS FRIENDS.

He wiped out all the males in the extended family of Baasha.

[1-Kings 16:12] THUS DID ZIMRI DESTROY ALL THE HOUSE OF BAASHA, ACCORDING TO THE WORD OF THE LORD, WHICH HE SPAKE AGAINST BAASHA BY JEHU THE PROPHET.

[1-Kings 16:13] FOR ALL THE SINS OF BAASHA, AND THE SINS OF ELAH HIS SON, BY WHICH THEY SINNED, AND BY WHICH THEY MADE ISRAEL TO SIN, IN PROVOKING THE LORD GOD OF ISRAEL TO ANGER WITH THEIR VANITIES.

[1-Kings 16:14] NOW THE REST OF THE ACTS OF ELAH, AND ALL THAT HE DID, ARE THEY NOT WRITTEN IN THE BOOK OF THE CHRONICLES OF THE KINGS OF ISRAEL?

These Chronicles are not the same as the Biblical Books of Chronicles but separate records that have been lost. Our own Books of Chronicles in the Bible were traditionally written up by Ezra the Scribe but Ezra could well have extracted them in part from the official records mentioned here.

[1-Kings 16:15] IN THE TWENTY AND SEVENTH YEAR OF ASA KING OF JUDAH DID ZIMRI REIGN SEVEN DAYS IN TIRZAH. AND THE PEOPLE WERE ENCAMPED AGAINST GIBBETHON, WHICH BELONGED TO THE PHILISTINES.

Baasha had slain Nadab son of Jeroboam when the Israelites were besieging Gibbethon. Now the sons of Baasha in his turn were murdered by Zimri, again when they were besieging Gibbethon (1-Kings 15:27).

[1-Kings 16:16] AND THE PEOPLE THAT WERE ENCAMPED HEARD SAY, ZIMRI HATH CONSPIRED, AND HATH ALSO SLAIN THE KING: WHEREFORE ALL ISRAEL MADE OMRI, THE CAPTAIN OF THE HOST, KING OVER ISRAEL THAT DAY IN THE CAMP.

Omri was to become king of Israel. His son was King Ahab. Both Omri and Ahab were important monarchs. They made an impression on foreigners. In their honor the Kingdom of Israel was referred to by the Assyrians as Bit Khumria or House of Omri. In Hebrew the name Omri begins with the letter "ayin" which can take a guttural sound and be pronounced as a K or a G. It has been suggested in the past that an Assyrian pronunciation of Khumri (Gumria) gave rise to Gimmirri which was the name given to the Cimmerians amongst whom part of the Lost Ten Tribes were to be found.

Brit-Am acknowledges this possibility but leaves the case open.

Below are two extracts on this matter: One from a British-Israel source, the other from our book, "Lost Israelite Identity. The Hebrew Ancestry of Celtic Races", Jerusalem, Israel, 1996.

(1) Extract One

THE REAL DIASPORA

(THE MYSTERY OF THE MISSING BIBLE TRIBES!)

<http://www.ensignmessage.com/archives/diaspora.html>

In the second row of carvings, Kinsmen of Jehu, son of a man named KHUMRI, are shown bringing tribute consisting of metal and vessels of silver and gold.. KHUMRI was the Assyrian designation of the Jews... This monument of the Assyrian king has pictures of conquered princes paying tribute, including "Jehu, the son of Khumri," a term designating him as an Israelite. This Assyrian name for Israel, Khumri, translates as "House of Omri," after an Israelite king who gained fame for a new law-code he developed (Micah 6:16). Famed early 20th century historian archaeologist, Archibald Henry Sayce, in his book, Higher Critics and the Monuments, p. 396, adds: 'It was, however, in the lime of Ahab the son of Omri that the Assyrians first became acquainted with the northern kingdom of Israel, and consequently Samaria continued ever afterwards to be known to them as Beth-Omri, the 'house of Omri'. "

KHUMRI

Scholars confirm that the people known to the Persians as SAKA, to the Babylonians as GIMIRRI, and to the Assyrians as KHUMRI, were but different names for the Lost Ten Tribes in captivity. "Saka" or "Sacaе" meant "House of Isaac," while the terms "Khumri" and "Gimirri" translate as "House of Omri." (The Assyrians later also adopted the Babylonian variant of Khumri, Gimirr.) From this word Khumri or Gimirri developed the tribal name, "Cimmerian," as well. The famed ancient writer, Herodotus, visited these tribes about 450 B.C. Sir Henry Rawlinson, decipherer of the Behistun Rock, informs us that, "We have reasonable grounds for regarding the GIMIRRI, or CIMMERIANS, who first appeared on the confines of Assyria and Media in the seventh century B.C., and the SACAE of the Behistun Rock, nearly two centuries later, as identical with the BETH-KHUMREE of Samaria, or the Ten Tribes of the House of Israel..." George Rawlinson, translator of the History Of Herodotus, stated, "The SACAE or Scythians, who were termed GIMIRRI by their Semitic neighbours, first appear in the cuneiform inscriptions as a substantive people under Esar-Haddon in about B.C. 684." By this date the Ten Tribes, Israel-Gimirri, were entirely resident in Assyria, for a great deportation of the whole seed of Ephraim (Jer. 7:15) had removed them from Palestine. We read "there was none left but the tribe of Judah only ... so was Israel carried away out of their own land to Assyria unto this day." (2 Ki. 17:18,23).

(2) Adaptation of Extract 2.

From

"Lost Israelite Identity. The Hebrew Ancestry of Celtic Races".

The exile of all Israel from the northern Galilee is recorded in an inscription of Tiglathpileser who boasts of exiling all of "Bit Khumria" except for a small remnant which he left around the city of Samaria⁶ which city was then the capital and had been built by King Omri. "Bit Khumria" was the name which the Assyrians gave to northern Israel presumably in remembrance of King Omri ("Khumri" in Assyrian) whose son Achab had once fought and defeated the Assyrian forces⁷.

The Gimirae were also to become known as Gamira, Kimmeroi, and Cimmerians; the appellations Cymry and Cimbri are also derived from the same root. In the east Caucasus area the Humri River is also called the River Gumri and may have been named after the Cimmerians.

The Cimmerians proper were to be driven out of the Middle East and to make their way to western Europe. Forms of their name or root words derived from it are: Cymree, Cimbri, Camber, Humber, Hammer, Himmer, and so on. It has been suggested (quite frequently) that the name Gimirae together with its derivatives are a form of the Hebrew "OMRI" which was pronounced by the Assyrians something like KHUMRI. The Assyrians used "Omri" (i.e. "Khumri") as a name encompassing all of the kingdom of ten tribed northern Israel. Omri had been only one of the kings of northern Israel but his name was used by the Assyrians for all of his kingdom for several generations after his demise. The suggested permutation of "Khumri" (Omri) into Gimirae is actually linguistically quite feasible. Parallel cases of permutations of other words beginning (like "OMRI") with the Hebrew letter AYIN and eventually being pronounced in the Assyrian sphere as "G" are known. Even so, that "Khumri" (Omri) eventually really did become "Gimirae" has yet to be proven and does not really need to be since stronger more confirmable proofs are readily at hand.

Micah (6:15) condemns the northern Israelites for keeping the "Statutes of Omri". "OMRI" begins with an AYIN which as enunciated has no exact equivalent in European tongues and is variously transliterated as "H" ("Hebrew"), "O" ("Omri"), "A" ("Anamim"), "G" ("Gaza"), etc. The Arabs today have a form of AYIN which transliterated into English would be rendered as "G" and does have a "g"-like sound. The northern Israelites like the Phoenicians (whose dialect of Hebrew was similar to theirs probably did not pronounce "Ayin" clearly. The

Assyrians used a special symbol called "KHETH" for all gutturals including Ayin so that Omri became pronounced as Khumri. The Akkadian languages which the Assyrians used had a tendency to exchange a simple "K" for the "KHETH" ("KH") and also "G" for "K" so therefore Omri (Khumri) could have become Gimirae. Some authorities, such as Pinches, seem certain that the actual pronunciation (by both the Northern Hebrews and by the Assyrians) of "Omri" (the name applied to Israel) was at least quite close to Gimiri, e.g. T.G. Pinches "Omri was likewise pronounced in accordance with the older system, before the ghain became ayin. Humri shows that they said at that time `Ghomri" : "Ghomri" in Assyrian speech would easily have been renderable as "Gimirae" the name given to the Cimmerians.

Kristensen, in her work (Anne Katrine Gade KRISTENSEN, "Who were the Cimmerians, and where did they come from?", translated from the Danish by Jorgen Laessoe. Copenhagen, 1988)

(also milled over this subject, as for example in the following quotation:

~The Cimmerians are referred to as "Gimiraja", "Gamiraja", "Gamir", and "Gamirra".

~ When 'Omri could be rendered as "~Humri", then according to Pinches it shows that at the time the name was pronounced `Ghomri, in accordance with the older system before ghain became ayin'.

~In as much as the Assyrians...had to represent it by a character which may be transliterated Kh, Gh, or H, according to choice.

~It may be taken for granted that there is a linguistic relationship between 'Omri and the term used for the Cimmerians...

"Cf. also the Armenian name for northern Gamir in the vicinity of Leninakan: Kumayri (Later Gumri) (Kristensen p.121 n.419; [suggests the transition from "Khumri" to "Gumri"..]:

~The arguments adduced by the students of the Ten Tribes amounts to the possibility that there may have been two different ways in which the Assyrians attempted to render the Hebrew 'Omri. Incidentally, the Hebrew word for Cimmerians, Gomer, appears to be rather close to the older form, Omri.

In the past a whole string of writers identified the Lost Ten Tribes with the Cimmerians and the Cimmerians with West European groups especially with the Celts or at least with part of them. Kristensen openly accepts the British Israelite equation of Omri with Gimiri and she is probably one of the few recognised academic scholars to do so.

"The philological connection between 'Omri and "Gimiri" has been so conclusive to the students of the Ten Tribes...everywhere in the works of these scholars, in spite of an apparent lack of petty criticism of sources, we find results and conclusions which will turn out to be of invaluable importance for professional historians..particularly if we would go to the trouble of checking the premises on which the conclusions rest. The perspectives which are laid open, and the insight and intuition displayed by these scholars, are truly remarkable".

We would add to the above:

We have indicated additional reasons for accepting the possibility of a transmutation of Omri (Khumri) to Gimiri. It now seems undoubted that such a possibility exists and in one way or another is mentioned and exemplified in quite a few sources. NEVERTHELESS, even if the two names were identically the same (without the need to explain how one turned into the other), it would not be sufficient in itself. Despite everything the whole equation still contains an element of uncertainty. The alternate explanation that the exiled Israelites combined with elements from another entity called GOMER is more compatible with all of the facts rather than the idea of a one to one complete identity of Gomer (Gimira) with Israel. The suggested combination may have been accompanied by a similarity of name and historical parallels for such a "coincidence" are known.

In our opinion the Brit-Am explanation and summarization of the subject is still the best available.

[1-Kings 16:17] AND OMRI WENT UP FROM GIBBETHON, AND ALL ISRAEL WITH HIM, AND THEY BESIEGED TIRZAH.

[1-Kings 16:18] AND IT CAME TO PASS, WHEN ZIMRI SAW THAT THE CITY WAS TAKEN, THAT HE WENT INTO THE PALACE OF THE KING'S HOUSE, AND BURNT THE KING'S HOUSE OVER HIM WITH FIRE, AND DIED.

[1-Kings 16:19] FOR HIS SINS WHICH HE SINNED IN DOING EVIL IN THE SIGHT OF THE LORD, IN WALKING IN THE WAY OF JEROBOAM, AND IN HIS SIN WHICH HE DID, TO MAKE ISRAEL TO SIN.

Zimri only reigned for seven days (1-Kings 16:15).

What kind of sins could he caused Israel to commit in such a short time. The Radak says that he committed the

offences while still the Chief of the Army under Baasha and Elah son of Baasha whom Zimri killed.

The Commentary "Mishbatsot Zehav" brings commentaries to the effect that Zimri when being made king had all his sins forgiven in the same way as (according to tradition) a Groom on the day of his marriage is forgiven his sins. A King and others who are appointed to high positions like a bridegroom are given a new chance on the day of their appointment.

Zimri however intended to cause the people to continue to worship idolatry and the power of his personality was enough even in the few days that he was in power to have an effect.

[1-Kings 16:20] NOW THE REST OF THE ACTS OF ZIMRI, AND HIS TREASON THAT HE WROUGHT, ARE THEY NOT WRITTEN IN THE BOOK OF THE CHRONICLES OF THE KINGS OF ISRAEL?

[1-Kings 16:21] THEN WERE THE PEOPLE OF ISRAEL DIVIDED INTO TWO PARTS: HALF OF THE PEOPLE FOLLOWED TIBNI THE SON OF GINATH, TO MAKE HIM KING; AND HALF FOLLOWED OMRI.

[1-Kings 16:22] BUT THE PEOPLE THAT FOLLOWED OMRI PREVAILED AGAINST THE PEOPLE THAT FOLLOWED TIBNI THE SON OF GINATH: SO TIBNI DIED, AND OMRI REIGNED.

The Commentaries (Rashi, Radak) say that Asa king of Judah married his daughter to Omri. This strengthened popular support for him against Tibni who committed suicide.

[1-Kings 16:23] IN THE THIRTY AND FIRST YEAR OF ASA KING OF JUDAH BEGAN OMRI TO REIGN OVER ISRAEL, TWELVE YEARS: SIX YEARS REIGNED HE IN TIRZAH.

[1-Kings 16:24] AND HE BOUGHT THE HILL SAMARIA OF SHEMER FOR TWO TALENTS OF SILVER, AND BUILT ON THE HILL, AND CALLED THE NAME OF THE CITY WHICH HE BUILT, AFTER THE NAME OF SHEMER, OWNER OF THE HILL, SAMARIA.

Samaria in Hebrew is written as "Shomron".

Judah and Samaria in Modern Hebrew are referred to as "Yehudah ve-Shomron".

Samaria is a Green pronunciation that appears to have been derived from the Phoenicians. There are indications that the Northern Israelites themselves may actually have referred to the Shomron as Samaria or something like it. The Assyrians called it Samarina. The Khazars who comprised part of the Lost Tribes left a trail of place-names after them named in honor of Samaria.

See:

"The Khazars. Tribe 13"

<http://www.britam.org/Khazarbook.html>

Samaria was also the name given to a Province around the city of that name.

The city of Samaria became the capital of the Northern Kingdom.

In the Bible the term Sarmaria is often used as synonymous with the Northern Kingdom of Israel in the same way as the term Washington is sometimes used to stand for the USA Administration.

The sages said that Omri merited that he and his son and grandson would rule over Israel by virtue of his building the city of Samaria. He added an additional settlement of importance to Israel and enabled those who were in need to settle there.

[1-Kings 16:25] BUT OMRI WROUGHT EVIL IN THE EYES OF THE LORD, AND DID WORSE THAN ALL THAT WERE BEFORE HIM.

[1-Kings 16:26] FOR HE WALKED IN ALL THE WAY OF JEROBOAM THE SON OF NEBAT, AND IN HIS SIN WHEREWITH HE MADE ISRAEL TO SIN, TO PROVOKE THE LORD GOD OF ISRAEL TO ANGER WITH THEIR VANITIES.

[1-Kings 16:27] NOW THE REST OF THE ACTS OF OMRI WHICH HE DID, AND HIS MIGHT THAT HE SHEWED, ARE THEY NOT WRITTEN IN THE BOOK OF THE CHRONICLES OF THE KINGS OF ISRAEL?

[1-Kings 16:28] SO OMRI SLEPT WITH HIS FATHERS, AND WAS BURIED IN SAMARIA: AND AHAB HIS SON REIGNED IN HIS STEAD.

Ahab was apparently the son of Omri and the daughter of Asa king of Judah.

[1-Kings 16:29] AND IN THE THIRTY AND EIGHTH YEAR OF ASA KING OF JUDAH BEGAN AHAB THE SON OF OMRI TO REIGN OVER ISRAEL: AND AHAB THE SON OF OMRI REIGNED OVER ISRAEL IN SAMARIA TWENTY AND TWO YEARS.

[1-Kings 16:30] AND AHAB THE SON OF OMRI DID EVIL IN THE SIGHT OF THE LORD ABOVE ALL THAT WERE BEFORE HIM.

[1-Kings 16:31] AND IT CAME TO PASS, AS IF IT HAD BEEN A LIGHT THING FOR HIM TO WALK IN THE SINS OF JEROBOAM THE SON OF NEBAT, THAT HE TOOK TO WIFE JEZEBEL THE DAUGHTER OF ETHBAAL KING OF THE ZIDONIANS, AND WENT AND SERVED BAAL, AND WORSHIPPED HIM.

Ahab took Jezebel (Yezebel) to wife even though she was a worshipper of idols. She could not have converted since a convert has to renounce idolatry and accept the commandments (Mishbatsot Zehav).

It may that, even at that stage, the Northern Israelites already had the status of non-Israelites from the point of view of religion or where in some kind of in-between-zone. An Israelite who worships idolatry has a problematic status.

Alternately, it may that on a superficial level there was not that much of a difference between the worship of the Northern Israelites and the Canaanites. The two parties may have used the same terminology and symbolism only given it a different emphasis.

ETHBAAL KING OF THE ZIDONIANS reigned over Phoenicia.

[1-Kings 16:32] AND HE REARED UP AN ALTAR FOR BAAL IN THE HOUSE OF BAAL, WHICH HE HAD BUILT IN SAMARIA.

This could be interpreted as saying that he set up an altar for Baal in the House of Baal that he had already built.

The Northern Israelites (and Israelites in general) may have used the term "Baal" as an alternative name for the Almighty. Baal mean "master, lord".

Under the influence of his wife and her entourage however he redirected his intentions i.e. whereas before in some way by "Baal" the Almighty may have been intended the same term was now used for explicitly for idolatrous worship such as the Canaanite Phoenicians employed.

Cf.

[2-Kings 17:9] Also the children of Israel secretly did [Hebrew: VaYechapu] against the LORD their God things that were not right, and they built for themselves high places in all their cities, from watchtower to fortified city. 10 They set up for themselves sacred pillars and wooden images[a] on every high hill and under every green tree.

The words translated as "secretly did" in Hebrew (VaYechapu) connote cover over and hide. The Targum Yehonatan renders this as:

The Children of Israel said things that were not correct about the Almighty their God.

This translation in our opinion suits the Hebrew meaning here. They invented a new theology making their worship of the Almighty consistent with concepts of the surrounding nations.

We see from Hosea that the Northern Israelites referred to the God of Israel as Baal.

[Hosea 2:16] AND IT SHALL BE AT THAT DAY, SAITH THE LORD, THAT THOU SHALT CALL ME ISHI [My husband]; AND SHALT CALL ME NO MORE BAALI.

[Hosea 2:17] FOR I WILL TAKE AWAY THE NAMES OF BAALIM OUT OF HER MOUTH, AND THEY SHALL NO MORE BE REMEMBERED BY THEIR NAME.

[1-Kings 16:33] AND AHAB MADE A GROVE; AND AHAB DID MORE TO PROVOKE THE LORD GOD OF ISRAEL TO ANGER THAN ALL THE KINGS OF ISRAEL THAT WERE BEFORE HIM.

A GROVE. Hebrew Asheyra.

[1-Kings 16:34] IN HIS DAYS DID HIEL THE BETHELITE BUILD JERICHO: HE LAID THE FOUNDATION THEREOF IN ABIRAM HIS FIRSTBORN, AND SET UP THE GATES THEREOF IN HIS YOUNGEST SON SEGUB, ACCORDING TO THE WORD OF THE LORD, WHICH HE SPAKE BY JOSHUA THE SON OF NUN. Hiel from Beth-el rebuilt Jericho.

Jericho was in the territory of Benjamin (Joshua 18:21).

Beth-el comprised twin townships, one in Benjamin and the other in Ephraim.

Joshua had cursed whosoever would rebuild Jericho (Joshua 6:26).

Hiel had several sons. When he began the rebuilding his firstborn died and by the time he finished all of his sons had been taken away.

Ps 115-117

“He Has Sent Redemption to His People”

Psalm 115 is another psalm of praise, portions of which appear in Psalm 135. As stated earlier, Psalm 115 was, and still is among the Jews, the first of those traditionally read or sung following the Passover meal. It is a song expressing communal confidence in God to help and bless His people, apparently originally intended to have groups singing responsively. “Structurally, the song advances in five movements involving a liturgical exchange between the people and temple personnel: (1) vv. 1-8: the people; (2) vv. 9-11: Levitical choir leader (the refrain [“He is their help and shield”] perhaps spoken by the Levitical choir); (3) vv. 12-13: the people; (4) vv. 14-15: the priests; (5) vv. 16-18: the people” (Zondervan NIV Study Bible, note on Psalm 115).

The psalmist has the people begin by directing praise away from themselves to where it rightly belongs—to God (verse 1a). As the song later shows, God’s people are not the source of their own blessings. Rather, God Himself is. God’s glory is revealed in His “mercy” (hesed, steadfast loyal love) and His “truth” (His revelation of what is true and His commitment to maintain His word)—His “love and faithfulness” toward His people (verse 1b, NIV)—as evidenced through their many blessings.

What, then, the people continue, is the basis for the gentile nations to question the whereabouts—the existence or power—of Israel’s God? (verse 2). God is not bound to the earth. He dwells in heaven, from where He rules over the universe with all power and authority to do throughout it as He pleases (see verse 3; compare verses 15-16). Their gods, in contrast, are merely lifeless metals formed into shape by the hands of men (verse 4). These idols are pointless “do-nothings.” They can’t speak, see, hear, smell, feel, walk or talk (verses 5-7)—all things the true God can do.

Then notice Psalm 115:8: “Those who make them [i.e., idols] are like them; so is everyone who trusts in them.” Yet idolaters themselves speak, see, hear, smell, feel, walk and talk. In what way, then, are they like their idols? Perhaps with the people the words are meant in a figurative sense of lacking spiritual discernment and ability—i.e., being spiritually deaf, dumb and blind. Note, for example, Jeremiah 5:21: “Hear this now, O foolish people, without understanding, who have eyes and see not, and who have ears and hear not.” Further, they lack spiritual power, being unable to “walk” in the way of God. The idolaters could also be said to be like the idols in the general sense of being foolish things. Both are also ultimately powerless and ineffectual. It could even be that the end of idolaters is in mind—that those who persist in idolatry will become like idols in that they will end up as lifeless human forms. They will have noses but will do no smelling, hands but will do no handling and mouths but will do no talking—because they will be dead (compare Psalm 115:17).

In contrast to vainly worshipping false idols is serving and trusting in the true God—who has all power and glory—for help, for protection and for perpetual blessing. The Levitical choir appeals to three groups of people to trust Him: the Israelite nation (verse 9), the house of Aaron, i.e. the priesthood (verse 10) and those who fear God (verse 11). The last group apparently means all God-fearers everywhere, in every nation, as the complementary statement in verse 13 adds “both small and great.” Verses 12-13 contain the response of the people, who refer to themselves as “us,” as in verse 1. “The threefold call to trust the Lord, the three groups of people, and the threefold assurance of God’s protection find their symmetric complement in vv. 12-15a with a threefold formula of blessing (‘will bless us’) and a restatement of the three groups (‘house of Israel,’ ‘house of Aaron,’ and ‘those who fear the LORD’)” (Expositor’s Bible Commentary, note on verses 12-15). These groups are also found in Psalm 118:2-4 (compare 135:19-21, where the house of Levi is also mentioned).

Verses 14-15 of Psalm 115 follow with the priests’ blessing on the people, ending with the declaration that God is the maker of heaven and earth. In the next and last section, the people give the final response in the song, acknowledging God’s sovereignty over heaven and earth, including His appointment of man’s subordinate dominion over the earth (verse 16, compare Genesis 1:28-30). This is part of God’s great blessing. Furthermore, He desires that people acknowledge and enjoy His blessings—not that their lives and participation in His creation be snuffed out in death (verse 17). Those who sing this song in faith and hope conclude that they will bless God forevermore (verse 18)—implying a joyous eternal life of praising Him.

“I Will Praise You, for You Have Answered Me, and Have Become My Salvation”

Psalms 116 is a song of thanksgiving to God for deliverance from “the pains of death...the pains of Sheol [the grave]” (verse 3). The circumstances of its original composition are unknown. In similar language to that of some of David’s psalms, the author here speaks of personal rescue by God from some severe life-threatening situation. However, the “I” in the song eventually came to represent all of Israel, being sung on the occasion of Passover-the second of those psalms sung after the traditional Jewish meal, as explained in previous comments. In that sense, the song came to be seen as celebrating deliverance from Egyptian bondage (compare verse 16).

Interestingly, in Jewish interpretation every follower of God is to view himself as having been personally delivered from Egypt, making the “I” in the song all the more fitting for that occasion. We could say the same in a spiritual sense for those who make up God’s Church-as Egypt represents the evil world we live in and its sin leading to death. In any case, the song certainly has application to all of God’s saints (verse 15)-His holy ones-even today. And it particularly applies to the quintessential saint-the One who offered Himself up in sacrifice on Passover as the true Passover sacrifice-Jesus the Messiah. Jesus Himself was miraculously saved more than once from attempts against His life-until it was time for Him to make the supreme sacrifice and die. Yet even after He died, God the Father nevertheless rescued Him from death by resurrecting Him to eternal life. Just the same, God will often intervene throughout the physical lives of His people to keep them from untimely death. But should He choose to allow them to die before they have reached old age-or even if they do reach old age and die naturally-He will ultimately rescue them later through the future resurrection.

Looking at some of the specifics of the psalm, verse 6 says that God preserves the “simple.” Whereas this word often means naïve, here it could probably better be translated “innocent, clean, or untarnished” (The Nelson Study Bible, note on verse 6). Perhaps the person intended is uncomplicated in manner of thought because he is not trying to spin and maintain a web of deceit. The NIV translates the word in this instance as “simplehearted,” which could imply “those who are childlike in their sense of dependence on and trust in the Lord” (Zondervan NIV Study Bible, note on verse 6).

Having been rescued from death’s clutches (verses 3-6, 8), the psalmist is able to find rest and peace of mind (verse 7). He knows that he “will walk before the LORD in the land of the living” (verse 9)-similar to words used elsewhere by David (Psalm 27:13; Psalm 56:13). Indeed, it appears that the psalmist believed in this outcome even during his ordeal, as his next words, “I believed, therefore I spoke” (verse 10a), are probably to be linked with the statement in verse 9 (contrary to the NKJV punctuation). “The belief in v. 10 is the hope, articulated in v. 9, that the psalmist would walk in the land of the living” (Nelson, note on verses 9-10). This interpretation we may surmise from the apostle Paul’s quotation of the first part of verse 10 in 2 Corinthians 4 as a profession of faith, explaining why he risked his life preaching the gospel (see verses 7-14). Note Paul’s words in verses 13-14: “And since we have the same spirit of faith, according to what is written, ‘I believed and therefore I spoke,’ we also believe and therefore speak, knowing that He who raised up the Lord Jesus will also raise us up with Jesus, and will present us with you.” Paul in this statement may imply that the psalmist himself had faith not only in being presently rescued, but ultimately even in the future resurrection of the dead.

The latter part of Psalm 116:10 should probably not be within the quotation of what the psalmist had earlier spoken. Rather, it is likely just a statement of fact, as Green’s Literal Translation presents it: “I was greatly afflicted.” In verse 11, the word rendered “haste” could be interpreted “dismay” (NIV) or “alarm” (Green’s). And the despairing statement that “all men are liars” could mean that all are “vain” or “unreliable” (see Expositor’s Bible Commentary, note on verses 10-11)-in contrast to God, who is always true and trustworthy, the only one who can be absolutely counted on to come through on His promises.

In verse 12, the psalmist considers what he will give to God for the good that God has done for Him. Of course, none of us could ever repay God for the blessings He has given us. That is not the point. Rather, our obligation to our Maker and Savior is to do all that He requires of us-to give to Him what He expects of us-to submit our lives wholly to His will. This is the context to bear in mind for the rest of the psalm.

The first thing the psalmist answers with is that He will “take up the cup of salvation” (verse 13a). Some see here a drink offering (compare Numbers 28:7). However, it appears that the psalmist is taking up this particular cup to drink from it himself rather than pouring it out as a drink offering. The figure of the “cup” occurs elsewhere in the Psalms as signifying one’s lot in life-what has been apportioned to him (see 16:5). In 23:5, as part of

dining at the Lord's banquet, the cup is shown to be running over with blessings. Here in Psalm 116 it offers salvation. The meaning, then, would seem to be that the psalmist will embrace this salvation that God has apportioned to him. As his duty to God, he will accept God's offer of eternal life and blessing along with all the terms that accompany it.

There may be more to the imagery here as well. Some view the "sacrifice of thanksgiving" in verse 17 to mean a thank offering—a special peace offering—and see the cup as "the cup of wine drunk at the festal meal that climaxed a thank offering (cf. 22:26, 29; Lev 7:11-21)—called [it is presumed in this case] the 'cup of salvation' because the thank offering and its meal celebrated deliverance by the Lord" (Zondervan, note on Psalm 116:13).

Furthermore, recall that this psalm became associated with the Passover—and consider that this verse may have given the psalm its special place in the Jewish liturgy of the evening. As The Nelson Study Bible comments: "At Passover this psalm is read after the meal, immediately following the third cup of wine, called the cup of salvation. How appropriate that this Passover psalm would call to mind God's cup of salvation the very night that the Savior was betrayed (Matt. 26:27; Luke 22:14-22)" (note on Psalm 116:12-13). We do not eat a meal as part of the Passover service today, recognizing that Jesus implemented new symbolism. But the truths expressed in these psalms readily correspond to the spiritual meaning of this sacred memorial of Christ's death. The psalmist's sufferings certainly prefigured those of Jesus. And there may well be a relation between the cup of salvation here and the cup of the New Covenant that Jesus instituted at the Passover. Indeed, all of God's people must accept the redemption and salvation that comes through it.

Harkening back to his question of verse 12, concerning what he will render to God, the psalmist next answers that he will call on the name of the Lord (verse 13b). That is, he will look to God as his source of help—as his God. Next he says he will pay his vows to God (verse 14)—honor the promises and commitments he has made—in the presence of all God's people, as a witness and example.

The psalm then makes what may seem a strange, non-sequitur statement in verse 15: "Precious in the sight of the LORD is the death of His saints." Some think the word for "precious" here should be translated "costly"—meaning that God takes it as a heavy loss—so that He does not readily allow it. Yet God does not lose His faithful saints. Those who die are preserved for His Kingdom, and for Him the time passes quickly. So how are we to understand the verse? The Zondervan Student Bible comments: "This verse, often read at funerals, in no way implies that God enjoys the death of his people. Instead, it means that he carefully watches over their death, and that it matters deeply to him" (note on verse 15). While true, this does not explain how the verse fits here. Indeed, if the psalmist were glad of God rescuing him from death, why is he saying this at all?

Recall the context of verse 12: "What shall I render to the LORD for all His benefits toward me?" Immediately after saying he will render the paying of his vows in verse 14, we find this statement in verse 15 that God considers the death of His saints to be precious or valuable. In context, it too is something rendered to God. The point would seem to be that the giving of ourselves wholly to God—unto death if necessary—is highly valued in His sight. After all, in such death God does not lose His servant. Just the opposite, it is a moment of immense gain. For when saints die their salvation is assured—surely a very precious thing in God's sight, as in their next conscious moment they will be immortal spirit members of His family, faithful through all eternity to come. Even though God has rescued him, the psalmist knows that God could still require the sacrifice of his life—which he is willing to give, knowing that God will resurrect him in the future. Here, of course, is a very strong parallel with Jesus Christ, who willingly submitted to the sacrificial death God required of Him in anticipation of life with the Father yet to come.

Following on in the listing of what he will give to God, the psalmist next commits himself to being God's humble servant. Interestingly he points out in this context that God has loosed his bonds. God has released him from death's grip not to wild abandon, but to freely and fully serving the true God. Israel shared this responsibility in the Exodus and throughout its national history. And Christians have likewise been freed from their sinful past to obey God from now on (compare Romans 6:15-22).

The psalmist next declares that he will offer the "sacrifice of thanksgiving" (Psalm 116:17). As mentioned above, this could refer to the giving of a special thank offering (Leviticus 7:12). Yet it could more generally apply to

simply thanking and praising God, at least in a figurative sense. We should be extremely grateful for all that God has done for us and express our gratitude to Him regularly and often when we call on Him in prayer. Throughout this section, we see a loving relationship in action. God loves the writer, providing him with many blessings, including instruction on his obligations to his Creator. The author loves God, responding with a willing heart eager to fulfill his responsibilities in living according to God's Word. In the briefest of terms, God commands and man obeys. But there is more—a loving relationship exists, as illustrated throughout the psalms. The New Testament further develops this relational aspect of mutual love between the Father and the believing son or daughter.

Verse 18 may be only a reiteration of verse 14. Yet it could well be more than that, signifying that the psalm itself, in its composition and later actual performance in the temple (compare verse 19), is a fulfillment of paying vows made to God. On a prophetic level, the wording may also foreshadow Jesus' offering of Himself in Jerusalem as the true Passover sacrifice—and the witness and example given to His followers.

“I Will Praise You, for You Have Answered Me, and Have Become My Salvation” January 20

Psalm 117 is the shortest psalm and the shortest chapter in the Bible. It has a simple yet important directive: everyone is to praise the Lord (verse 1). The psalmists typically call for the faithful of Israel to offer praise. But in this psalm, the writer calls for “all you Gentiles”—that is, “all you nations” (NIV)—and “all you peoples” to praise God.

In Romans 15:11 the apostle Paul quoted Ps. 117:1 in conjunction with other Old Testament passages to explain that God intended the gentiles to have a relationship with Him as well (see Romans 15:8-12; compare Psalm 18:49; Deuteronomy 32:43; Isaiah 11:10).

Along with the other songs of this section, the psalmist here uses Hallelujah—“Praise the LORD” (Psalm 117:1-2). He also uses the word shavah for “laud” or “extol” (verse 1, NIV). “Laud, which means ‘to speak well of,’ nicely parallels the term praise, which means ‘to be excitedly boastful about’” (Nelson Study Bible, note on verse 1).

God is to be praised for His hesed (His loyal, steadfast lovingkindness and mercy) and His enduring emet or truth, implying “faithfulness” (NIV) to maintain His word, to keep His promises (verse 2). Through these, those of all mankind who respond in sincerity and faith may share in the wonderful, eternal blessings of the people of God—for they, too, will be His people.

Luke 22:39-71

You will notice we are reading about the Exodus and at the same time at this time of year we are also reading about the arrest and the crucifixion of Yehshua.

Rather than say anything I would urge you all to rent and watch the Ten Commandments and then the Passion of Christ this coming week as we all de-leaven our homes.