

Triennial Torah Study – Year 2 16/04/2011

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By Joseph F. Dumond

This week's Triennial Torah reading can be found at:

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

Ex 9 1 Kings 17-18 Ps 118 Luke 23:1-49

Ex 9

From Karaite Korner we learn about Exodus 9:31-32

Abib indicates a stage in the development of the barley crops. This is clear from Ex 9,31-32 which describes the devastation caused by the plague of hail:

“And the flax and the barley were smitten, because the barley was Abib and the flax was Giv’ol. And the wheat and the spelt were not smitten because they were dark (Afilot).”

The above passage relates that the barley crops were destroyed by the hail while the wheat and spelt were not damaged. To understand the reason for this we must look at how grain develops. When grains are early in their development they are flexible and have a dark green color. As they become ripe they take on a light yellowish hue and become more brittle. The reason that the barley was destroyed and the wheat was not is that the barley had reached the stage in its development called Abib and as a result had become brittle enough to be damaged by the hail. In contrast, the wheat and spelt were still early enough in their development, at a stage when they were flexible and not susceptible to being damaged by hail. The description of the wheat and spelt as “dark” (Afilot) indicates that they were still in the stage when they were deep green and had not yet begun to lighten into the light yellowish hue which characterizes ripe grains. In contrast, the barley had reached the stage of Abib at which time it was no longer “dark” and at this point it probably had begun to develop golden streaks.

I would also like to urge you all to read Exodus 12 at this time of year and to watch the movie the Ten Commandments. If you do not have it, go and rent it.

1 Kings 17-18 **<http://www.ucg.org/bible-commentary/1-Kings/Elijah-proclaims-drought;-Elijah-and-the-widow/default.aspx>**

Ahab and Elijah (1 Kings 17)

The great prophet Elijah is now introduced. Halley's Bible Handbook states: “Six chapters are given to Ahab's reign, while most of the kings have only a part of one chapter. The reason: it is largely the story of Elijah.... Elijah's 'rare, sudden and brief appearances, his undaunted courage and fiery zeal, the brilliance of his triumphs, the pathos of his despondency, the glory of his departure, and the calm beauty of his reappearance [in a vision] on the Mt. of

Transfiguration, make him one of the grandest characters Israel ever produced” (1965, note on 1 Kings 17). It is noteworthy that only two prophets appeared in the vision with Jesus in the transfiguration—Moses and Elijah (Matthew 17:1-9).

Elijah’s ministry would be the pattern for later important ministries. Elijah’s successor, Elisha, received Elijah’s mantle with a mandate to carry on the same type of ministry—even completing some of the tasks given to Elijah. John the Baptist went “before [Jesus Christ] in the spirit and power of Elijah” (Luke 1:17). The rest of Luke 1:17 adds further understanding of the overall perspective of the original ministry of Elijah. And in Malachi 4:5, God says: “Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the LORD.” Apparently, John the Baptist was the forerunner of an end-time Elijah figure, who would preach in the spirit and power of Elijah to prepare the way for Christ’s second coming (compare Matthew 17:10-12).

In marrying Jezebel and accommodating her religion, Ahab allowed Baal worship to be reintroduced in a big way into Israel (1 Kings 16:31-33). Prior to this time, the Kingdom of Israel’s apostasy had apparently been confined to the sin of Jereboam son of Nebat, who built the golden calves and established new worship centers in Dan and Bethel. Near the end of the wilderness wanderings under Moses, there had been a brief encounter with Baal of Peor in connection with the Balaam incident (Numbers 25:3-9; compare Revelation 2:14). And some Baal and Ashtoreth worship had taken place in the rather disorganized period of the judges (Judges 2:11-19; 3:7; 6:25-32; 8:33; 10:6-16; 1 Samuel 7:3-4; 12:9-11). Solomon had built altars to various pagan deities, some of which were equated at times with Baal (1 Kings 11:18). But since the days of Samuel, through the period of the kings up until Ahab (about 200 years), there is no specific mention of Israelite Baal worship taking place.

Now, however, Jezebel not only brings in Baal worship but attempts to destroy all of the prophets of God, 100 of whom are protected by the God-fearing governor of Ahab’s house, as we will see in our next reading (1 Kings 18:3-4). So God sends one of the most famous prophets of the Bible, Elijah, to pronounce judgment on Ahab, beginning with a three-and-a-half-year drought (Luke 4:25; James 5:17-18) and its resulting famine. The drought was apparently a forerunner and type of a future drought referred to in the book of Revelation (11:3, 6). However, the end-time drought will be much greater in scope—as the dire events preceding Christ’s return will be worse than any that have ever happened (Matthew 24:21).

Amazingly, in the growing sparseness of the land, God wonderfully provides for His servant via special delivery from the birds of the air!

Ironically, Zarephath—Elijah’s place of refuge during the latter years of the drought, where God miraculously provides for the widow and her son who take him in—was in the region of Sidon (see Luke 4:26), the same territory that Jezebel came from (1 Kings 16:31).

God’s provision through the multiple miracles we see here should encourage our faith. He can take care of our needs even when it looks like it’s impossible to meet them (see Matthew 6:25-34).

First, we should take inspiration from the godly and heroic example of Obadiah (not the same as the author of the biblical book by that name). Next, Elijah extends an invitation to a grand test to show who is the true God and who are His servants. Elijah told the people that it was time for them to stop sitting on the fence—faltering between two opinions by the syncretism of intermingling the worship of the true God with the worship of Baal. The same message applies today to the participants of modern Christendom, who, however unwittingly, mix elements of pagan worship—such as crosses, Christmas trees, Sunday observance, Easter eggs and Easter bunnies—with the worship of the God of the Bible.

The contest Elijah arranges was designed to apparently give every advantage to the Baal worshipers. Mount Carmel, near the modern city of Haifa on the Mediterranean coast, was considered sacred to Baal. The answering by fire apparently referred to lightning—and Baal was considered to be the god of storm, with lightning in his divine arsenal. Moreover, Elijah calls for his own sacrifice to the true God, and even the firewood it was to be burned upon, to be thoroughly and completely soaked with water—an ironic touch considering the kingdom had been plagued by a three-and-a-half-year drought that had started at Elijah's command.

Moreover Elijah is just one against 450 prophets of Baal (1 Kings 18:22). It does not appear that the 400 prophets of Asherah answered the challenge (compare verse 19). Incidentally, we should consider Elijah's statement that he alone is left a prophet of the Lord (verse 22). Why would he say this, since Obadiah had just reported his hiding of 100 of God's prophets? (Verses 4, 13.) Perhaps they had been killed after Obadiah hid them, though it seems unlikely that this would have gone unmentioned in context. More likely Elijah was referring in verse 22 to himself being the only true prophet still carrying on a public ministry. The others had all gone underground.

The prophets of Baal probably begin calling on their gods by the time of the morning sacrifice. To evoke some sort of response from their god, they leap about and chant. By noon, the supposed height of the power of their sun god, there was still no answer—and Elijah begins his taunting. "Busy" in verse 27 is a euphemism. Notice the verse in the Contemporary English Version: "At noon, Elijah began making fun of them. 'Pray louder!' he said. 'Baal must be a god. Maybe he's daydreaming or using the toilet or traveling somewhere. Or maybe he's asleep, and you have to wake him up.'"

And rather than give up, they do cry out louder, leaping more earnestly—and they even "cut themselves, as was their custom" (verse 28). So, as bizarre as it may seem, such uncontrolled frenzy and self-mutilation were actually normal elements in their worship. This illustrates how pagan religion is often quite harmful to its participants. By contrast, the true religion God gave through Moses forbade such cuttings in the flesh (Leviticus 21:5; 19:28).

All of this continues until the time of the evening sacrifice, when Elijah finally takes his turn, beginning with the construction of God's altar and the soaking of the sacrifice. In the end, God showed Himself to be the true God over storms, with real power to control the elements—indeed, the true God over all, while Baal was proven to be nothing.

18:1 And it came to pass after many days that the word of the LORD came to Elijah, in the third year, saying, "Go, present yourself to Ahab, and I will send rain on the earth." 2 So Elijah went to present himself to Ahab; and there was a severe famine in Samaria. 3 And Ahab had called Obadiah, who was in charge of his house. (Now Obadiah feared the LORD greatly.

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"Obadiah" in Modern Hebrew is pronounced as "Ovad-Yah" The name means Servant or slave (Aved) of the Almighty.

According to some of the Sages Obadiah was an Edomite Convert and author of the Biblical Book of Obadiah whose main theme is a prophecy against Edom.

<http://britam.org/obadiah.html>

The Book of Obadiah prophecies that in the End Times Joseph will fight against Edom and defeat him.

Obadiah according to the Classical Rabbinical Commentators refers to the Lost Israelites from the Ten Tribes being in the region OF THE CANAANITES EVEN UNTO ZAREPHATH (Obadiah 1:20). This meant the area of Western Europe especially France and the British Isles.

See the Brit-Am Commentary on Obadiah 1:20 for details and explanation.

<http://britam.org/obadiah.html>

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4 For so it was, while Jezebel massacred the prophets of the LORD, that Obadiah had taken one hundred prophets and hidden them, fifty to a cave, and had fed them with bread and water.)

5 And Ahab had said to Obadiah, "Go into the land to all the springs of water and to all the brooks; perhaps we may find grass to keep the horses and mules alive, so that we will not have to kill any livestock."

6 So they divided the land between them to explore it; Ahab went one way by himself, and Obadiah went another way by himself.

7 Now as Obadiah was on his way, suddenly Elijah met him; and he recognized him, and fell on his face, and said, "Is that you, my lord Elijah".

8 And he answered him, "It is I. Go, tell your master, "Elijah is here.".

9 So he said, "How have I sinned, that you are delivering your servant into the hand of Ahab, to kill me".

10 As the LORD your God lives, there is no nation or kingdom where my master has not sent someone to hunt for you; and when they said, "He is not here," he took an oath from the kingdom or nation that they could not find you.

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Ahab was a powerful monarch and had influence in the international arena.

There follow two brief extracts (one from Wikipedia, the other from the Jewish Virtual Library) concerning Ahab that give some idea of who he was.

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(1) Ahab

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ahab>

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

Extracts:

Ahab (or Ach'av or Achab in Douay-Rheims or Hebrew: , Modern A av Tiberian A , A ; “Brother of the father”) was king of Israel and the son and successor of Omri (1 Kings 16:29-34). William F. Albright dated his reign to 869 ” 850 BC, while E. R. Thiele offered the dates 874 ” 853 BC.[1]

Ahab married Jezebel, the daughter of King Ithobaal I of Tyre, and the alliance was doubtless the means of procuring political support.

Shalmaneser III's (859-824 BC) Kurkh Monolith names King Ahab.

During Ahab's reign, Moab, which had been conquered by his father, remained tributary; Judah, with whose king, Jehoshaphat, he was allied by marriage, was probably his vassal; only with Aram Damascus is he believed to have had strained relations.

Battle of Qarqar

The Battle of Qarqar is one event mentioned by external sources and was perhaps at Apamea where Shalmaneser III of Assyria fought a great confederation of princes from Cilicia, Northern Syria, Israel, Ammon and the tribes of the Syrian desert (853 BC). Here Ahab (A-ha-ab-bu mat) (Adad'idri).

Ahab's contribution was reckoned at 2,000 chariots and 10,000 men. The numbers are comparatively large and possibly include forces from Tyre, Judah, Edom and Moab. The Assyrian king claimed a victory, but his immediate return and subsequent expeditions in 849 BC and 846 BC against a similar but unspecified coalition seem to show that he met with no lasting success. According to the Tanakh, however, Ahab with 7,000 troops had previously overthrown Ben-hadad and his thirty-two kings, who had come to lay siege to Samaria, and in the following year obtained a decisive victory over him at Aphek, probably in the plain of Sharon at Antipatris (1 Kings 20). A treaty was made whereby Ben-hadad restored the cities which his father had taken from Ahab's father (that is, Omri, but see 15:20, 2 Kings 13:25), and trading facilities between Damascus and Samaria were granted.

Three years later, war broke out on the east of the Jordan River, and Ahab with Jehoshaphat of Judah went to recover Ramoth-Gilead. During this battle Ahab disguised himself but was shot by an arrow and mortally wounded (ch. 22). The Hebrew Bible says that dogs licked his blood, according to the prophecy of Elijah.

He was succeeded by his sons, Ahaziah and Jehoram.

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(2) Ahab

Jewish Virtual Library

<http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/biography/Ahab.html>

(born c. 853 – BCE Reigned c. 874" c. 853 BCE)

Extracts:

Ahab whose name means “the Father is my brother”, i.e. “God is my close relative” (Pfeiffer, 1988: 40), owed much of his success to his father Omri’s efforts to set the Northern Kingdom on a firm political foundation. Omri founded Samaria, the third capital of the Northern Kingdom in his 7th year (c. 880 BC). Jeroboam had chosen Shechem, a place of with ancient associations with the patriarchs Abraham (Gen. 12:6) and Jacob (Gen. 33:18). Later the capital had moved to Tirzah, about 7 miles to the north-east of Shechem.” (Bruce, 1983: 43). Omri bought the hill of Samaria from Shemer for 2 shekels of silver (1 Kings 16:24), and increased its natural advantages by fortification. Samaria was built on an isolated hill, 90m [300 ft] in height, connected with the surrounding hill country only by a saddle to the east and surrounded by a fertile valley (Isa. 28:1, 4) (Van Selms, 1988: 296). The strength of Samaria can be gauged by the number of sieges it withstood against well-equipped armies during its 150 year history. It took the Assyrians three years to capture it (725-722 BC). The city could control the trade routes to the North, East and West to the Valley of Esdraelon. Omri made Samaria the property of the Kings of Israel; technically not subject to the tribes and their popular gatherings, but only to the King and local authorities (Van Selms, 1988: 296) as David had done for Jerusalem.

The Moabite Stone records that Moab was subjugated by Israel during the reign of Omri (something that Scripture does not mention) (Prichard, 1955, 320-321). Some measure of his success can be gained when reading Shalmanesser III’s account of the tribute he received from Jehu (841-814 BC) (1 Kings 19:16-17). Shalmanesser refers to Jehu as “the son of Omri”. Although not physically descended from him by this time the Royal house of Israel was known internationally by the name of its most famous member. Omri was as far thinking politically as he was strategically. By the time his son Ahab acceded to the throne in 874 BC he had already cemented his father’s alliance with Phoenicia by marrying Jezebel daughter of Ethbaal, the priest-king of Tyre. ...He [i.e. Ahab] later arranged the marriage of his daughter Athaliah to Joram, crowned prince of Judah, sealing an alliance with their father Jehoshaphat. This marriage was to have serious religious consequences; for Athaliah had imbibed her mother’s Baalism, which later led to a crisis in Judah (see 2 Kings 11). Joint operations between Ahab and Jehoshaphat were equally ill-fated. Their trading venture, again reminiscent of Solomon’s (1 Kings 9:26-28), was brought to an abrupt halt when the entire fleet was wrecked before it had even set sail (2 Chron. 20:35-37; 1 Kings 22:48). Joint military operations also ended in disaster (1 Kings 22:29-38).

Jezebel’s patronage of the cults of Ba’al and Asherah led Ahab into direct confrontation with one of the greatest of the prophets, Elijah. He appeared suddenly before the king and defied Ba’al by declaring that by his word alone would there be either rain or dew in the land (1 Kings 17:1). Before Ahab could detain him Elijah was gone and despite an international search Elijah

remained hidden (18:9). After three years Elijah sought out the king, who was now searching for grass for his horses (18:5-6). Obadiah, who was in charge of Ahab's palace, brought him word of where Elijah was to be found and when they met Ahab accused him of being a "troubler of Israel."

Ben Hadad, King of Aram aided by 32 of his vassals attempted to capture Samaria. Initially it appears that Ahab was prepared to surrender to him and accept the lose of his wives and possessions (20:1-7). Ben Hadad, however, appears to have wanted a fight and so made his demands so unreasonable that Ahab had no choice but to refuse them and prepare for a siege (20:9-12)...Ben-Hadad was finally captured by Ahab's inferior forces after being defeated at Aphek in the plain of Jezreel the following year.

...the states of Israel, Aram, Hamath and nine other smaller powers were forced to unite against the growing power of Assyria, which had been impotent for almost two centuries due to the attacks of Aramean nomads. From 900 BC onwards the power of Assyria swept westwards and in 853 Shalmaneser III faced the coalition of Syrian and Cilician states at Qarqar on the Orontes river. According to Shalmaneser's own records Ben-Hadad fielded 20 000 soldiers, and Ahab 10 000 soldiers and 2 000 chariots.

Shalmaneser claims a sweeping victory; the corpses of his foes, he says, covered the plain of the Orontes and dammed the stream itself [Pritchard, 1955: 277-281]. But the fact that he did not pursue his alleged advantage and returned home and did not return for 12 years suggests that the confederates gave a good account of themselves." (Bruce, 1983: 47, brackets mine).

The size of the force that Ahab fielded is ample proof that he was the most powerful king in the history of the Northern kingdom (Hoerth, 1998: 313). After the Assyrian threat had been vanquished, for a time at least, the alliance soon broke up and war resumed between Israel and Aram.

Following the Battle of Qarqar Ahab called upon his ally Jehoshaphat [of Judah] to aid him in his struggle with Ben Hadad. ...Despite entering battle in disguise Ahab was finally slain by a stray arrow (22:1-34). At the last he appears to have shown real courage in remaining propped up in his chariot until he died from lose of blood, to delay the dispersal of his troops when they saw that he was dead (22:34-36). Ahab was succeeded by his son Ahaziah (1 Kings 22:40). He had ruled Israel for 22 years.##

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Let me share with you why there are 76 years difference between the Jewish year of 5771 and our current year 5847 You can read this in This year of 5843 or the Jewish year 5767 Why the difference? The missing Kings. [https://sightedmoon.com/sightedmoon_2015/?](https://sightedmoon.com/sightedmoon_2015/?page_id=150)

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11 And now you say, "Go, tell your master, "Elijah is here"!"

12 And it shall come to pass, as soon as I am gone from you, that the Spirit of the LORD will carry you to a place I do not know; so when I go and tell Ahab, and he cannot find you, he will kill me. But I your servant have feared the LORD from my youth.

13 Was it not reported to my lord what I did when Jezebel killed the prophets of the LORD, how I hid one hundred men of the LORD's prophets, fifty to a cave, and fed them with bread and water"

14 And now you say, "Go, tell your master, 'Elijah is here.' "He will kill me!"

15 Then Elijah said, "As the LORD of hosts lives, before whom I stand, I will surely present myself to him today."

16 So Obadiah went to meet Ahab, and told him; and Ahab went to meet Elijah.

17 Then it happened, when Ahab saw Elijah, that Ahab said to him, "Is that you, O troubler of Israel".

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Ahab acknowledged that it was due to Elijah that a drought had come upon the land.

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18 And he answered, "I have not troubled Israel, but you and your father's house have, in that you have forsaken the commandments of the LORD and have followed the Baals.

19 Now therefore, send and gather all Israel to me on Mount Carmel, the four hundred and fifty prophets of Baal, and the four hundred prophets of Asherah, who eat at Jezebel's table."

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The term translated as Asherah in Hebrew here is "Ha-Asherah".

Asherah was a Canaanite goddess parallel to the Babylonian Ishtar, the Egyptian Isis, and the Anglo-Saxon Eostre.

Asherah is also the term given to a form of pagan worship associated with a group of trees on top of hill.

A remnant of this practice is noticed today amongst the Palestinians who denude the fields of all trees and vegetation by over-grazing them with goats etc but sometimes leave a group of trees on top of a hill around a shrine dedicated to one of their dead holy men.

Asherah pole

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Asherah_pole

An Asherah pole is a sacred tree or pole that stood near Canaanite religious locations to honor the Ugaritic mother-goddess Asherah, consort of El.

Maypole

Maypole in Sweden

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Maypole>

Dancing around the maypole, in "meberg, Sweden

The maypole is a tall wooden pole ...erected to celebrate May Day or Midsummer...With roots in Germanic paganism, the maypole traditionally appears in most Germanic countries.

Maypole dance

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Maypole_dance

Maypole dancing is a form of folk dance from western Europe, especially England, Sweden, Galicia, Portugal and Germany,

According to the polemic anti-Catholic pamphlet, The Two Babylons [Alexander Hislop in 1853], the origin of the maypole dance began in ancient Babylon during sex worship and fertility rites. A carved upright representation of the human penis was danced around by young females and woven with ribbons to ensure offspring. There is a lack of evidence to support this view, however.

http://paganismwicca.suite101.com/article.cfm/pagan_may_day_festival_beltane

Beltane, also called May Eve, begins on April 30th, according to some Pagan traditions, while others celebrate only on May 1st. It is a day of celebration, dancing around the Maypole and feasting.

Beltane in Celtic means "Fire of Bel". Bel is another form of the name Baal.

Beltane

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Beltane>

Early Gaelic sources from around the 10th century state that the druids of the community would create a need-fire on top of a hill on this day and drive the village's cattle through the fires to purify them and bring luck (Eadar d'itheine Bhealltainn in Scottish Gaelic, 'Between two fires of Beltane').

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Elijah's Mount Carmel Victory

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20 So Ahab sent for all the children of Israel, and gathered the prophets together on Mount Carmel.

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Scene from Mount Carmel

Mount Carmel was in the territory of Manasseh (Joshua 19:26). There had been there an altar to the Almighty that the priests of Baal had broken down.

The word Carmel (says Daat Mikra) connotes "Pasture of Shepherds".

Another explanation of the name is "Vineyard (Cerem) of God (el)".

The present Israeli city of Haifa is built on Mount Carmel.

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21 And Elijah came to all the people, and said, “How long will you falter between two opinions”If the LORD is God, follow Him; but if Baal, follow him.” But the people answered him not a word.

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falter between two opinions##

The word translated as falter is “Poschim” from the same root as Pesach the Hebrew word for Passover.

Pesach received its name because the Angel of God skipped over the houses of the Israelites when he struck the Egyptian firstborn.

Here the word “Poschim” seems to connote an attitude by which they tried to keep one foot in each camp.

We see here that the Israelites had not entirely abandoned worship of the Almighty.

Ahab named his children Jehoram (“The ALMIGHTY is high”), Ahaziah (“The ALMIGHTY has taken hold”), and Athaliah (“The ALMIGHTY is exalted”).

Other sources indicate that in the popular eye a kind of synthesis had developed in which the separate identity of The ALMIGHTY and of the Baal merged and interchanged one with the other.

God was not pleased with this.

[1-Kings 18:22 Then Elijah said to the people, I alone am left a prophet of the LORD; but Baals prophets are four hundred and fifty men.

We saw above (1-Kings 18:13) that Obadiah the Minister of Ahab was hiding one hundred prophets in two different caves and supplying them with food and water.

One explanation (Meshek Chochmah) is that even though other prophets remained these were individuals who could receive Divine Inspiration but would not necessarily always do so whereas Elijah was at a higher and more permanent level.

Another explanation is by claiming to be the only prophet left Elijah was covering up for the others of whom Ahab was unaware.

The Sages pointed out that Obadiah could not be maintaining so many prophets in hiding without the involvement of others and the knowledge of many more.

They said that this was one of the positive points about the generation of Ahab. They were not informers. By virtue of their abstaining from evil speech and tattle-bearing they were victorious in warfare, said the Sages.

cf.

<http://britam.org/hosea4.html>

[Hosea 4:17] EPHRAIM IS JOINED TO IDOLS: LET HIM ALONE.

“Ephraim is joined to idols” in Hebrew, “Havur Etzavim Ephraim ” which has a double meaning also implying “Ephraim is a union of idols.” The Rabbis (Midrash Tanchuma) said that the verse hinted at Ephraim being unified even though they were idolaters and by virtue of this unity (says the Sages) he is still formidable, “LET HIM ALONE.”

There is a social-psychological explanation for this in so far as not informing on each other leads to unity of purpose and mutual forgiveness.

[1-Kings 18:23 Therefore let them give us two bulls; and let them choose one bull for themselves, cut it in pieces, and lay it on the wood, but put no fire under it; and I will prepare the other bull, and lay it on the wood, but put no fire under it.

[1-Kings 18:24 Then you call on the name of your gods, and I will call on the name of the LORD; and the God who answers by fire, He is God.
So all the people answered and said, It is well spoken.

The Zohar says that the god baal was a sun god whereas Asherah was associated with the moon.

Archaeology seems to confirm this.

The Celtic god "Bel" (derived from baal) was also a solar god.

Wikipedia. Belenus

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Belenus>

In Celtic mythology, Belenus (also Belinus, Belenos, Belinos, Belinu, Belanu, Bellinus, Belus, Bel) was a deity worshipped in Gaul, Britain and Celtic areas of Austria and Spain. He had shrines from Aquileia on the Adriatic to Kirkby Lonsdale in England.[1][2] His name means "shining one" [3] or "henbane god"[4] and he is associated with heat and healing.

The solar or healing implications of Belenus (?the brilliant one [5] or ?henbane god?[4]) would have encouraged syncretism with the god Apollo.

Bel was an alternative pronunciation of Baal.

Wikipedia. Bel (mythology)

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bel_\(mythology\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bel_(mythology))

Bel ...signifying "lord" or "master", is a title rather than a genuine name, applied to various gods in Babylonian religion...Linguistically Bel is an East Semitic form cognate with Northwest Semitic Ba'al with the same meaning.

Baal (Bel) was therefore associated with heat and fire. Elijah was challenging the priests of Baal to prove his ability in the field he was supposed to be most paramount in.

Elijah was acting as an agent of the Almighty and by Divine Direction.

Normally it would be forbidden to make such tests of God.

It is also normally forbidden to say that if a pagan deity can do such and such we will believe in it.

No matter what sign of wonder a pagan faith may produce we are forbidden to believe in anything but the Almighty.

Deuteronomy 13:1 If there arises among you a prophet or a dreamer of dreams, and he gives you a sign or a wonder, 13:2 and the sign or the wonder comes to pass, of which he spoke to you, saying, 'Let us go after other gods', which you have not known, 'and let us serve them',

13: 3 you shall not listen to the words of that prophet or that dreamer of dreams, for the LORD your God is testing you to know whether you love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul. 13:4 You shall walk after the LORD your God and fear Him, and keep His commandments and obey His voice; you shall serve Him and hold fast to Him.

[1-Kings 18:25 Now Elijah said to the prophets of Baal, Choose one bull for yourselves and prepare it first, for you are many; and call on the name of your god, but put no fire under it.

[1-Kings 18:26 So they took the bull which was given them, and they prepared it, and called on the name of Baal from morning even till noon, saying, O Baal, hear us! But there was no voice; no one answered. Then they leaped about the altar which they had made.

[1-Kings 18:27 And so it was, at noon, that Elijah mocked them and said, Cry aloud, for he is a god; either he is meditating, or he is busy, or he is on a journey, or perhaps he is sleeping and must be awakened.

[1-Kings 18:28 So they cried aloud, and cut themselves, as was their custom, with knives and lances, until the blood gushed out on them.

Even now the Shiite Muslims in Lebanon cut themselves with knives and swords when celebrating the death of their prophet Ali whom they believe succeeded Mohamed. The video clips of this available for free viewing on the web.

[1-Kings 18:29 And when midday was past, they prophesied until the time of the offering of the evening sacrifice. But there was no voice; no one answered, no one paid attention.

[1-Kings 18:30 Then Elijah said to all the people, Come near to me. So all the people came near to him. And he repaired the altar of the LORD that was broken down.

Previously an altar to the God of Israel had existed in that place but it had been wrecked or fallen into ruin.

[1-Kings 18:31 And Elijah took twelve stones, according to the number of the tribes of the sons of Jacob, to whom the word of the LORD had come, saying, Israel shall be your name.

The name Israel means overcome with or wrestling against God; being upright with God.

[Genesis 32:28] AND HE SAID, THY NAME SHALL BE CALLED NO MORE JACOB, BUT ISRAEL: FOR AS A PRINCE HAST THOU POWER WITH GOD AND WITH MEN, AND HAST PREVAILED.

Elijah took twelve stones representing the twelve sons of Israel, i.e. the Twelve Tribes.

Two important principles are involved here:

If you have a problem or a need turn to God and not to other powers.

A completely correct worship of the Almighty is only possible when it is recognized that Israel consists of ALL Twelve Tribes (Commentary "Ha-Akedah" by Rabbi Isaac Arama 1402-1494 quoted in "Mishbetsot Zahav").

The national pride of all Israelites requires Biblical Consciousness alongside awareness of Israelite Ancestry.

This is what our organization, Brit-Am, the Ten Tribes Movement, believes in.

[1-Kings 18:32 Then with the stones he built an altar in the name of the LORD; and he made a trench around the altar large enough to hold two seahs of seed.

How Elijah did this is not clear. This is quite a large area. It would have needed the help of others.

Perhaps the building of Elijah entailed the Prophet directing others what to do?

[1-Kings 18:33 And he put the wood in order, cut the bull in pieces, and laid it on the wood, and said, Fill four water pots with water, and pour it on the burnt sacrifice and on the wood.

[1-Kings 18:34 Then he said, Do it a second time, and they did it a second time; and he said, Do it a third time, and they did it a third time.

[1-Kings 18:35 So the water ran all around the altar; and he also filled the trench with water.

[1-Kings 18:36 And it came to pass, at the time of the offering of the evening sacrifice, that Elijah the prophet came near and said, LORD God of Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, let it be known this day that You are God in Israel and I am Your servant, and that I have done all these things at Your word.

#the time of the offering of the evening sacrifice# In Hebrew the word translated as “evening sacrifice” is “minchah” and the time was later afternoon close to evening tide.

#LORD God of Abraham, Isaac, and Israel#. Elsewhere the expression used is #Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob# (2-Kings 13:23). The names Israel and Jacob interchange but they have different connotations. The term “Israel” is often used as referring to the Israelites in the national sense. In the present scene with Elijah “Israel” is the term being emphasized.

[1-Kings 18:37 Hear me, O LORD, hear me, that this people may know that You are the LORD God, and that You have turned their hearts back to You again.

#turned their hearts back to You again#. In the Hebrew original it says simply “You turned their hearts back”.

We are quoting from Daat Mikra as to what the different sources say about this passage: The Commentators are divided in their explanation of this verse. Some (amongst the Sages) say that Elijah meant that God Himself had caused them to sin and depart from HIM. Rambam (Maimonides) explains this as an outcome of sin. If a person sins then often more occasions to sin are opened up before him and he is liable to fall in a spiralling descent. The same happened with the Israelites as a whole.

Others (Saadia Gaon, Targum Yehonatan) explain it in the same ways as the King James translates it. God in HIS mercy was leading the people back onto the right track.

Still another explanation (DM quotes from Fiorka) that the verse should be divided thusly:

The first part,

##Hear me, O LORD, hear me, that this people may know that You are the LORD God## is addressed to the Almighty, while the second part [as translated from the Hebrew and NOT according to the KJV]

##and you turned their hearts back.## is addressed to King Ahab who was present at the scene, i.e. ##and you [Ahab] turned their hearts away.##

Personally, we tend to agree with the Sages (Beracoth) that Elijah was imputing some of the blame to God Himself. This however brings up complicated theological questions and it could be that the other explanations are preferable.

[1-Kings 18:38 Then the fire of the LORD fell and consumed the burnt sacrifice, and the wood and the stones and the dust, and it licked up the water that was in the trench.

[1-Kings 18:39 Now when all the people saw it, they fell on their faces; and they said, The LORD, He is God! The LORD, He is God!

[1-Kings 18:40 And Elijah said to them, Seize the prophets of Baal! Do not let one of them escape! So they seized them; and Elijah brought them down to the Brook Kishon and executed them there.

“The Brook Kishon” (not to be confused with the Kidron in Jerusalem) receives confluents from the Gilboa Mountains and the Nazareth area, flows through the Jezreal Valley, passes by Mount Carmel and then enters the Mediterranean Sea where the present day cities of Haifa and Akko meet.

Nowadays this stream is extremely heavily polluted and it is considered dangerous to even wash one’s hands in its water!

“The Brook Kishon”. The word translated as “Brook” in Hebrew is “Nachal” which is usually understood to mean brook or stream as opposed to “Nahar” meaning river. Technically however it may be that nachal refers to a flowing body of water fed primarily by rainwater and underground springs whereas “nahar” is a secondary flowing body of water derived from nachalim (i.e. nachals) flowing into it.

Since the Jordan has had much of its water supply diverted the Kishon is now the largest river in Israel.

The Drought Ends

[1-Kings 18:41 Then Elijah said to Ahab, Go up, eat and drink; for there is the sound of abundance of rain.

[1-Kings 18:42 So Ahab went up to eat and drink. And Elijah went up to the top of Carmel; then he bowed down on the ground, and put his face between his knees,

Aryeh Kaplan (“Jewish Meditation” etc) claimed that Elijah used a recognized physical exercise that enhances meditation techniques to induce Prophecy.

Aryeh Kaplan

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Aryeh_Kaplan

The works of Kaplan are well worth reading but before taking them seriously one should perhaps consult other sources.

In Brit-Am we advocate straight learning of the Bible as preliminary to everything else.

[1-Kings 18:43 and said to his servant, Go up now, look toward the sea.

So he went up and looked, and said, There is nothing. And seven times he said, Go again.

[1-Kings 18:44 Then it came to pass the seventh time, that he said, There is a cloud, as small as a mans hand, rising out of the sea! So he said, Go up, say to Ahab, Prepare your chariot, and go down before the rain stops you.

[1-Kings 18:45 Now it happened in the meantime that the sky became black with clouds and wind, and there was a heavy rain. So Ahab rode away and went to Jezreel.

[1-Kings 18:46 Then the hand of the LORD came upon Elijah; and he girded up his loins and ran ahead of Ahab to the entrance of Jezreel.

The ability of Elijah to run before the chariot of Ahab was due to power given him from above. Nevertheless, Elijah like most of the ancient prophets was probably quite an athlete in his own right by our standards.

Ahab had been disgraced in a way by Elijah bringing down fire from heaven and then killing the priests of baal. In another sense the honor of Israel had been restored. The honor of God is the honor Israel. The Sages point out that Ahab was still king of Israel and by Elijah running before him he was being shown respect.

Ps 118

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

Psalms 118 is a psalm of thanksgiving and prayer for deliverance from enemies. Though the particular circumstances of its composition are unidentified, we do see that it concerns confidence in victory after apparent near loss in a battle against a group of enemy nations (see verses 10-13). The last of the Egyptian Hallel (“praise”) collection (113-118), Psalm 118 was traditionally sung or recited at the end of the Passover evening liturgy-though Psalm 136 was later added to the end, as it expands on the opening and closing words of Psalm 118, “Oh, give thanks to the LORD, for He is good! For His mercy [hesed, loyal lovingkindness] endures forever.” These words, taken from the psalm David composed for the occasion of bringing the Ark of the Covenant to Jerusalem (see 1 Chronicles 16:34), were also used to open Psalms 106 and 107. We should recall that the Egyptian Hallel psalms were also sung at all the annual festivals. Indeed, Psalm 118 was an important part of the temple liturgy at the Feast of Tabernacles, as we will see.

Building from the call to thanks and praise in the first verse, verses 2-4 direct the call to three groups-the nation of Israel, the Aaronic priesthood and, in general, all those who fear God-the same groupings found in Psalm 115:9-13 (compare 135:19-20, which also mentions the house of Levi). The call here is to proclaim the repeated refrain “His mercy endures forever.”

Many maintain that the “I” speaking throughout the remainder of Psalm 118 is the Davidic king leading the battle against the enemy, given his declaration about destroying the enemies (compare verses 10-12). Others contend that the psalmist wrote this song to be sung by all Israelites from a first person perspective-in both a collective and personal sense. Of course, a righteous king could have written it with that broader intention as well. In the time of Jesus Christ, the “I” who acts “in the name of the LORD” (verses 10-12, 26) was understood to refer to the king of Israel-indeed, the Messiah (see John 12:13). The psalm is certainly messianic, as we will later see from explicit New Testament references.

Verses 5-7 of Psalm 118 recall God’s past deliverance and express confidence in His ongoing faithfulness. As the all-powerful God is on the side of His people, there is no reason to fear anything from anyone (verse 6; compare Romans 8:31).

Psalm 118:8-9 acknowledges the crucial understanding that ultimate trust must be in God alone-not in oneself or other people, no matter what their position or power may be. Interestingly, it has been pointed out that these two verses form the central verses in the Bible as we have it-that is, according to the book arrangement and chapter and verse divisions found in most modern Bibles (James Montgomery Boice, *Psalms: An Expository Commentary*, Vol. 3: *Psalms 107-150*, 2005). Of course, the modern arrangement is actually not the original one-and chapter and verse divisions came centuries after the canonization of Scripture and are sometimes poorly determined. Nevertheless, the message of the particular verses here is indeed a central theme of Scripture. Man, at his best, is limited, mortal, unreliable. As God says in Jeremiah 17:5-7: “Cursed is the man who trusts in man and makes flesh his strength.... [But] blessed is the man who trusts in the LORD.”

We then come in Psalm 118:10-18 to the actual circumstances of the battle. The King James and New King James translators, and the translators of many other modern versions, consider that the battle here is to be understood in the past tense, as having already been won-thus explaining the psalm’s focus on thanksgiving and God having answered prayer (verse 21). Yet notice in the KJV and NKJV the problem in saying that the enemies “surrounded me” and “were quenched” (past tense) and that “I will destroy them” (future tense). Notice furthermore the confidence in a future outcome-“I shall not die, but live” (verse 17)-and, more striking, the prayer for God’s intervention: “Save now, I pray, O LORD” (verse 25). Thus the battle is ongoing-the thanks and praise being for past deliverance and blessings and for intervention that will surely yet come.

This being so, the word translated “surrounded” in verses 10-12 is probably better translated as “have surrounded” or, as in Green’s *Literal Translation*, “surround.” The psalm expresses the dire gravity of the situation by using this term four times. The psalmist compares the

enemies to a swarm of bees (verse 12). Yet they “are quenched” (GLT)-that is, they are to be quenched-as quickly as burning thorns. For Israel, with God’s help, will prevail (same verse).

Going back to the Greek Septuagint translators, many have seen a need to emend the text of verse 13 to say that “I was pushed” (NIV) rather than follow the Masoretic Text: “Pushing, you pushed me to fall” (GLT). In the Masoretic Text, the words seem addressed to God, yet the next words are “But the LORD [has] helped me” (same verse). This, however, is not as contradictory as might at first seem. For it would actually fit what is clearly stated a few verses later: “The LORD has chastened me severely, but He has not given me over to death” (verse 18). Evidently the enemy invasion and initial losses constitute punishment from God for some unnamed sin. But the psalmist is nonetheless confident that God will turn things around, so there must already have been repentance, particularly as he sees himself-or God’s people collectively-as righteous (compare verses 15, 19-20). The passage could also be applied to the Messiah, who, though innocent Himself, would initially suffer adversity and death for the sins of all nations but would later return victorious over all enemies.

Verse 14 is taken from the Song of Moses in Exodus 15:2, invoking the imagery of God’s deliverance of Israel from Egypt-perhaps helping to give the psalm its place within the Egyptian Hallel collection. Repetition concerning God’s right hand (verses 15-16) may also be taken from the Song of Moses (see Exodus 15:6-7). Just as God powerfully intervened for Israel in the Exodus, so would He intervene on this later occasion-and so will He intervene for His people today. The same words from Exodus 15:2 are also quoted in Isaiah 12:2, meaning that they are found in the Law, the Prophets and the Writings-the three major sections that make up the Old Testament.

Isaiah 12, it should be mentioned, is a prophecy of Israel’s future repentance when God delivers His people from national enemies-and Psalm 118, beyond its application to the circumstances in which it was written, should likewise be seen as prophetic of the future. Indeed, we elsewhere see God’s people at that time singing the Song of Moses (compare Revelation 15:2-3). Isaiah 12:3 speaks of drawing water with joy from the wells of salvation which became related to the Feast of Tabernacles, during which a special water-drawing and water-pouring ceremony was instituted. In Psalm 118:15, the mention of rejoicing and salvation in the tents of the righteous also helped to connect this psalm with the Feast of Tabernacles in the worship services of the temple.

Verses 19-20, calling for the opening of the “gates of righteousness” so as to pass through also called here “the gate of the LORD through which the righteous shall enter”-is often seen as picturing a festival procession coming through the gates of Jerusalem or the gates of the temple. The imagery seems related to what David wrote in Psalm 24, which many see as descriptive of the Ark of the Covenant being brought into the city or tabernacle gates after military victory. “There is only One who can enter the gates of the Lord of His own accord-the perfect King of glory” (Nelson Study Bible, note on 118:19-21). And this would seem to point to Jesus Christ as ultimately fulfilling these verses.

The idea of a procession is also found in an alternative translation of Psalm 118:27, as we will later see-all of this adding to the connection of Psalm 118 to the annual festivals.

Yet others suggest a more figurative meaning for the gates of righteousness-that the only way into the presence of the Lord, to salvation (verse 21), is through righteousness. Thus, verses 19-20 may be part of an expression of repentance-of determination to do what God says as He empowers. Probably both ideas are intended, as in Isaiah 26:2: "Open the gates, that the righteous nation which keeps the truth may enter in." While Jesus alone lived a perfectly righteous life, others can receive righteousness through Him. Jesus mentioned the narrow gate that leads to life (Matthew 7:13-14) and said that He Himself is the gate or door leading to salvation (John 10:9).

The next verse (Psalm 118:21) declares intention to praise God for having answered His people's prayer and having become their salvation. The latter phrase about God having become salvation is a refrain, repeated-in a slightly reworded form-from the verse taken from the Song of Moses (verse 14). It is worth noting that the word in both places translated salvation, occurring 78 times in the Old Testament, is yeshu'ah, which is very close to the name Yeshua-that is, Jesus. (The name Yeshua is probably a contraction of the longer form Yehoshua, meaning "Yahweh Is Salvation.")

Again, there is a powerful messianic aspect to this psalm. The ultimate deliverance sought would come through the Messiah. Note particularly verses 22-23 about the rejected stone becoming the "chief cornerstone." The NIV has "capstone." The literal meaning, as the Zondervan NIV Study Bible points out in its note on verse 22, is "'head of the corner'-either a capstone over a door (a large stone used as a lintel), or a large stone used to anchor and align the corner of a wall, or the keystone of an arch (see Zec 4:7; 10:4). By a wordplay (pun) the author hints at 'chief ruler' (the Hebrew word for 'corner' is sometimes used as a metaphor for leader/ruler; see Isa 19:13; see also Jdg 20:2; 1 Sa 14:38). This stone, disdained by the worldly powers, has become the most important stone in the structure of the new world order that God is bringing about through Israel. Jesus applied this verse (and v. 23) to himself (see Mt 21:42; Mk 12:10-11; Lk 20:17; see also Ac 4:11; Eph 2:20; 1 Pe 2:7)."

It is not clear what the psalmist himself had in mind when he wrote these words. Some suggest that Israel or its king was meant as the rejected stone-now saved and placed at the head of all others. Yet perhaps the psalmist directly foresaw the Messiah as bringing the salvation foretold in the psalm. In any case, the inspired words primarily refer to Jesus Christ, as the New Testament makes clear.

In verse 24, the day the psalm designates for rejoicing seems to refer to the time of victory-the day of salvation-though this of course also prefigures the ultimate time of God's future intervention in the Day of the Lord. This would also fit the time of the Messiah's crowning as King over all. However, the day of rejoicing and gladness became specifically associated with God's festivals, further encouraging the use of this psalm as a festival song. Of course, verse 24 could on some level be a more general call to rejoicing in all that God does for His people that is, every day is a day God has made, a fact to always find happiness in. But in context, the emphasis here is on the day of salvation-present and future.

With this focus, verse 25 appeals to God to “save now”-that is, to let today be the day of salvation by granting help and victory. The Hebrew phrase here, hoshi’ah na’, “is related to the noun yeshu’ah (‘salvation,’ ‘victory,’ vv. 14-15, 21)” (Expositor’s Bible Commentary, note on verses 24-25). This phrase hoshi’ah na’, later contracted to hoshana and transliterated into Greek in the New Testament as hosanna, became an appeal for the messianic age foreshadowed in the Feast of Tabernacles. Indeed, Psalm 118 became, as mentioned earlier, an important part of that feast’s temple liturgy. The binding of the sacrifice to the altar in verse 27 is thought by many to represent a thank offering, but some came to relate it to the sacrifices made during the annual festivals, particularly the Feast of Tabernacles. The Tabernacles link was made stronger by an alternate translation of this verse, as given in the NIV: “With boughs in hand, join in the festal procession up to the horns of the altar.” In Jesus’ day, the Jewish people during the Feast of Tabernacles would sing Psalm 118, proclaiming Hoshana, while waving palm and other branches during the priestly procession along a path decorated with branches that culminated at the temple altar with the water-pouring ritual. This provides a historical context for the crowd’s reception of Jesus when He made His triumphal ride into Jerusalem on a donkey in fulfillment of another messianic prophecy. While this took place just prior to the Passover, the people responded with Tabernacles ritual-as they believed Jesus had come to inaugurate the messianic age. Notice what happened: “And a very great multitude spread their clothes on the road; others cut down branches from the trees and spread them on the road. Then the multitudes who went before and those who followed cried out, saying: ‘Hosanna to the Son of David! “Blessed is He who comes in the name of the LORD!” Hosanna in the highest!” (Matthew 21:8-9). John 12:13 says they “took branches of palm trees and went out to meet Him and cried out: ‘Hosanna! “Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord!” The King of Israel!” Mark 11:10 adds that they cried out “Blessed is the kingdom of our father David that comes in the name of the Lord!”

Of course, they did not understand that Jesus had to first fulfill the Passover symbolism at that time by laying down His life as a sacrifice. Consider in this light that Psalm 118 was also part of the Passover liturgy in that day, highlighting a crossover in themes between the spring and fall festivals. It is interesting to note that Jesus at His final Passover spoke to His disciples not only of His imminent sacrifice, but also of salvation in His future Kingdom-which is predominantly a fall-festival theme. It is also the foremost theme in this psalm. As Psalm 118 closed the traditional Jewish Passover service, many have suggested that it was the hymn that Jesus and His disciples sang before leaving the upper room (see Matthew 26:30), though we cannot be sure.

Psalm 118 closes with a personal declaration of worshipping God with praise (verse 28) and the same opening call to thank God for His goodness and enduring lovingkindness (verse 29)the basis for His salvation.

Luke 23:1-49

“King Herod”, mentioned in the Bible’s Acts of the Apostles,[9] is often identified as the same person as King Agrippa I. The identification is based on the description of his death, which is sufficiently reminiscent to Agrippa’s death in Josephus’ work, although Josephus does not

verify the Bible's claims that "an angel of the Lord struck him down, and he was eaten by worms and died." The fact that the Bible knows the king by a different name led apologetic Bible historians to rename him as "Herod Agrippa". However, it must be noted that "Herod" was the name of Agrippa's brother, King of Chalcis and High Priest of Jerusalem, so the king described in the Bible may as well be an amalgam of several different royals.

Description of Herod Agrippa I as a cruel, heartless king who persecuted the Jerusalem church, having James son of Zebedee killed and imprisoning Peter, sounds at first to be in stark contrast with Josephus' account of a kindly man. It makes sense, however, if one recalls that Agrippa had been born and raised to revere his Jewishness. Agrippa would resent a movement begun during his absence from Judæa when explained to him by the religious leaders of Israel as a sacrilegious mission trying to equate a mere man, Jesus of Nazareth, with the One God of Judaism.

Blastus is mentioned in the New Testament as Herod's chamberlain.

Herod Antipas, uncle and predecessor of Agrippa I as ruler of Galilee and Peræa, is the Herod mentioned in the Gospels who authorized the execution of John the Baptist and played a role in the trial of Jesus (Matthew 14:3-12, Mark 6:17-29 and Luke 23:5-12).

I would like to share two more things with you. One is how Yeshua actually died and as many Christians say Jesus fulfilled the law I would like to show you exactly what laws Jesus fulfilled the penalty for them. You can read this at https://sightedmoon.com/sightedmoon_2015/?page_id=28

The second article is what was nailed to the tree which you can read at https://sightedmoon.com/sightedmoon_2015/?page_id=138 It is not the law or the Torah that is nailed to the Tree but the debt that has accrued from our sinfulness.

The Epitaph on the Cross of Yeshua

By Chuck Missler (From his Book "The Creator Beyond Time and Space")

Throughout the Tanach-our Old Testament-there are many fascinating acrostics and other textual peculiarities that will fascinate the diligent scholar. In the New Testament there also appears to be a Hebrew acrostic that generally goes unnoticed.

Meaning of the word Acrostic: A composition in verse , in which the first, and sometimes last, letters of the line read in order form a name, a sentence, or title.

When Jesus was crucified, Pilate wrote the sign that was nailed to the cross. The particular wording he chose displeased the Jewish leadership and they asked him to change it. He refused. There are some interesting aspects to this incident that are not apparent in our English translations.

" And Pilate wrote a title and put it on the cross. And the writing was, 'Jesus Of Nazareth The King Of The Jews.' This title then read many of the Jews: for the place where Jesus was crucified was nigh to the city: and it was written in Hebrew, and Greek, and Latin. Then said

the chief priests of the Jews to Pilate, 'Write not, The King of the Jews; but that he said, I am King of the Jews.' Pilate answered. 'What I have written I have written.'"

John 19:19-22 (KJV)

Pilate refused to revise the epitaph he had composed. This may have more significance than is apparent in our English translations. The Hebrew epitaph is shown below (remember Hebrew is read from right to left):

Ha Yehudi m vMelech HaNazarei Yeshua

H W H Y

Yeshua HaNazarei v Melech HaYehudim: Jesus the Nazarei and King of the Jews.

What we don't notice in the English translation is that the acrostic made up of the first letter of each word spells out Yahweh (YHWH)!

"The precise meaning," writes Herbert F. Stevenson, "of the name is obscure. In the Hebrew, It was originally composed of four consonants YHWH – known to theologians as 'the tetragrammaton' – to which the vowels of Adonai were afterwards added (except when the name is joined to Adonai: then the vowels of Elohim are used). The Jews came to regard this name as too sacred to pronounce, however, and in the public reading of Scriptures they substituted Adonai for it – Jehovah was indeed to them 'the incommunicable name.'"

If Pilate had rewritten it in the manner they had requested him to, it would not have spelled out the Name of God. Did Pilate realize this? Was it deliberate? Did he do it just to upset the Jewish leadership, which he realized delivered Him up for Envy? (Matthew 27:18). Or was he beginning to suspect that there was more going on here than he previously realized?

I have two more articles for some of you to read over this Holy Days season. One is the Red Sea crossing https://sightedmoon.com/sightedmoon_2015/?page_id=107 and the other is how to count to three as some of you come out of your Christian wrong think, it is also time to relearn how to count to three. https://sightedmoon.com/sightedmoon_2015/?page_id=19