

Esau Have I Hated!

The Apostate Tribe of Dan

ESAU AND THE PHOENICIANS
DAN WAS ALWAYS DIFFERENT!
DAN & JOSEPH
DAN'S INEVITABLE DOWNFALL
THE PROPHECIES ABOUT DAN
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This third installment of our study should prove quite intriguing and informative, since, in addition to more information on Esau and the Edomites, we will also be delving into a subject that, at first glance, might not seem appropriate for this subject. As we move, however, into Part 3 of the series on *Esau Have I Hated*, there will be a concentration on the enigmatic tribe of Dan, the descendants of one of the twelve sons of Jacob, and its possible connections to the overall topic of our study. As the story unfolds, I believe that you will come to appreciate that there is indeed an historical and even current relationship between the Danites and the Edomites, one that simply cannot be overlooked or denied. First, however, we need to pursue yet another of the many migrations of Esau and his descendants.

ESAU AND THE PHOENICIANS

As we have observed in the previous two installments, the descendants of Esau, son of Isaac, brother of Jacob, and perpetual enemy of Israel, were hardly content to remain within the confines of their ancient homeland to the southeast of Palestine. Many of the various Edomite tribes migrated into other areas of the world, often with powerful impact upon the societies of their day. One of those particular regions where we find a strong Edomite presence is among the famous seafaring peoples of Phoenicia.

This area was originally settled and populated by certain of the Canaanite tribes who occupied and gave their family name to the entire Promised Land that the Almighty originally gave to Jacob and his children, through His covenant with the patriarch Abraham. The Phoenicians were, of course, the great maritime people of the ancient world, renowned as *the* major commercial and colonizing power for hundreds and hundreds of years. But who were the Phoenicians? What were their origins, from what locale did they migrate, and what connection, if any, do they and their exploits have with the Biblical narrative, and to the subject of our particular discussion? The answers to these questions are truly astounding, as we shall see.

Ancient Phoenicia occupied a narrow strip of land, about one hundred and fifty miles long and thirty miles wide, shut in between the Mediterranean on the west and the high range of Lebanon on the east, and consisting mostly of a succession of narrow valleys, ravines, and hills, the latter descending gradually towards the sea. On the north it was bounded by the River Orontes and Mount Casius, and by Mount Carmel on the south. On this narrow strip of land, the Phoenicians had twenty-five cities of which the most important were Tyre, Sidon, Aradus, Byblos, Marathus, and Tripolis. Less important were Laodicea, Simyra, Arca, Aphaca, Berytus, Ecdippa, Akko, Dor, Joppa, Gabala, Betrys, and Sarepta.

The name *Phoenicia* is of later Greek derivation. The original inhabitants of this area were Canaanites (Heb. *Kenaaniy*), or descendants of Canaan, son of Ham. The Hebrew word *Kenaaniy* actually means *a merchant or trafficker*, a particularly appropriate appellation for those who dwelled in Phoenicia, since they became the greatest of the sea traders, their fleets literally traversing the globe.

The significance of the Phoenician peoples in ancient history cannot possibly be overstated, both in terms of their maritime achievements, their colonization efforts, and the part they played in the affairs of other great nations long after it is assumed that they vanished from the world scene.

The most ancient authoritative information on Phoenicia comes to us from the Canaanite historian Sanchaniathon. Predating even the era of the great Greek poet Homer, he provides us with some very pertinent and most enlightening facts concerning the origins of the Phoenicians. According to Sanchaniathon, a people from the area of the Erythraean Sea migrated into the Galilee and from there to the seacoast. The imminent Greek historian Herodotus confirms this as well.

The word *Erythraean* means **red**, a fact that must not be lost on us as we investigate the Phoenicians. According to most of the ancient historians, including Diodorus Siculus, Aristophanes, and Plutarch, the *Erythraean Sea* was, in fact, the *Red Sea*, receiving its name not due to its color actually being red, but from Esau or *Edom*, the son of Jacob, some of whose descendants occupied the eastern Sinai peninsula, ranging over into certain areas of Arabia. Note a passage to this effect in I Kings 9:

“And king Solomon made a navy of ships in Eziongeber, which is beside Eloth, on the shore of the Red Sea, in the land of EDOM” (I Kgs. 9:26).

Tyre, the greatest of the ancient Phoenician city-states, to which there are numerous Scriptural references, was, according to Sanchaniathon, colonized by one King *Erythras*, literally meaning *King Red*! The Jewish rabbinic scholar Rashi states in his commentary on Genesis 25:23 that Esau himself was the actual founder of Tyre, and this contention would appear to be absolutely correct! Even the name *Tyre* can be traced back to the Hebrew word *tsur*, which means *rock*. There is an interesting play on words in the prophecy against Tyre in Ezekiel 26:4, which says:

“And they shall destroy the walls of Tyrus, and break down her towers: I will also scrape her dust from her, and make her like the top of a ROCK.”

It is almost surely no mere coincidence that for centuries, prior to the rise of the Nabatean kingdom, the ancient rose-rock city of *Petra* was a major stronghold of the Edomites. Not only is this area world-famous for its great rock outcroppings and magnificent carved stone edifices, but the name itself, just like *Tyre*, means *rock*!

In the extended prophecy against Tyre found in Ezekiel 26-28, it seems most appropriate that the descendants of Esau should be so directly connected with this ancient city-state, because in the description of its great fall, we read language almost identical to that written in the book of Revelation with regard to the demise of the end-time world-ruling system of evil, which, as we will come to see, also is strongly connected to latter-day Edomites. Note the interesting and amazing comparisons below:

“Behold, I am against you, O Tyrus, and will cause many nations to come up against you...And they shall make a spoil of your riches, and make a prey of your merchandise...And I will cause the noise of your songs to cease; and the sound of your harps shall be no more heard” (Ezek. 26:3, 12-13).

“And the voice of harpers, and musicians, and of pipers, and trumpeters, shall be heard no more at all in you; and no craftsman of whatever craft he may be shall be found any more in you...for your merchants were the great men of the earth; for by your sorceries were all nations deceived” (Rev. 18:22-23).

“Say to Tyrus, O you that are situate at the entry of the sea, which are a merchant of the people for many isles...O Tyrus, you have said, I am of perfect beauty...They have made all your ship boards of fir trees of Sinir...your benches of ivory...fine linen with embroidered work...blue and purple from the isles of Elishah was that which covered you...Tarshish was your merchant by reason of the multitude of all kind of riches; with silver, iron, tin, and lead, they traded in your fairs. Javan, Tubal, and Meshech, they were your merchants...the men of Dedan...Syria...Judah, and the land of Israel...Damascus were your merchants...they occupied in your fairs with the chief of all spices, and with all precious stones, and gold.” (Ezek. 27:2-25).

“The merchandise of gold, and silver, and precious stones, and of pearls, and fine linen, and purple, and silk, and scarlet, and thyine wood, and all manner vessels of ivory, and manner vessels of most precious wood, and of brass, and iron, and marble, and cinnamon, and odors, and ointments, and frankincense, and wine, and oil...all the fruits that your soul lusted after are departed from you” (Rev. 18:12-14).

“Thus says the Lord God to Tyrus; Shall not the isles shake at the sound of your fall...Then all the princes of the sea shall come down from their thrones, and lay away their robes, and put off their embroidered garments: they shall clothe themselves with trembling; they shall sit upon the ground...and be astonished at you. And they shall take up a lamentation for you, and say to you, How are you destroyed, that was inhabited of seafaring men, the renowned city, which was strong in the sea...Now the isles...shall be troubled at your departure...They shall make themselves utterly bald for you, and gird them with sackcloth, and they shall weep for you with bitterness...saying, What city is like Tyrus...When your wares went forth out of the seas, you filled many people; you did enrich the kings of the earth with the multitude of your riches and of your merchandise” (Ezek. 26:15-18; 27:31-33).

“And the kings of the earth, who have committed fornication and lived deliciously with her, shall bewail her, and lament for her, when they see the smoke of her burning...And the merchants of the earth shall weep and mourn over her; for no one buys their merchandise any more...the merchants of these things, which were made rich by her, shall stand afar off for the fear of her torment, weeping and wailing, and saying, Alas, that great city...for in one hour so great riches is come to naught. And every ship master, and all the company in ships, and sailors, and as many as trade by sea, stood afar off, and cried when they saw the smoke of her burning, saying, What city is like unto this great city” (Rev. 18:9, 11, 15-18).

That Esau and the Edomites were directly connected to the Phoenicians is a virtual given. One of the chief gods in the Phoenician pantheon bore the name of *Ousoos*, unequivocally identified with Esau. *The Dictionary of Religion & Ethics* states:

“There is no question but that this *Usous (Ousoos)* within the Phoenician pantheon was the Biblical *Esau*” (vol. XI, p. 179).

Even Tyre itself was at one time known as *Ushu*, without doubt etymologically connected to the name of Esau. As stated earlier, it was the Greeks who called the inhabitants of the Levant *Phoenicians*. But why such a name? Perhaps it should not come as any great surprise to learn that the definition of the word *Phoenicia* is the color **red!** Thus both Edom and Phoenicia have the same meaning!

Once again, Sanchaniathon informs us that it was the god *Usous (Esau)* who taught the Phoenicians the art of ship-building and navigation, two skills for which they eventually became world famous. Historians generally hold that the Phoenicians were the first civilization to create a full alphabet, and not surprisingly, this same *Usous* is also credited with inventing and imparting to the Phoenicians the first standard collection of writing characters, upon which most of the western alphabets are based.

Eusebius, the famous early church historian, relates a Phoenician legend regarding the origin of the great city-state of Tyre. It involves twin brothers, *Samemroumos*, a tent-maker whose name means *exalted by heaven*, and *Ousoos*, who became renowned as a **hunter**. The two brothers quarreled, and *Ousoos* was forced to seek his fortune at sea, thus accounting for the Phoenicians maritime achievements. This ancient story is obviously an account of the rivalry between Jacob and Esau, and yet it forms a significant part of Phoenician mythology.

Furthermore, the name *Samemroumos* seems to be a play on the Hebrew word for *Samaria*, the area where the Northern Kingdom of Israel dwelled. If this is correct, it not only indicates a direct connection between Esau and the Phoenicians, but also perhaps a northern Israelite factor as well. As we move further into our study, this possibility will become more and more of a believable reality, as we see develop the unusual relationship between the descendants of Esau and certain of their Israelite cousins, an association that has been enshrouded in mystery and purposely obscured down through the centuries.

And lest we forget, please be reminded that Isaac's firstborn son, Esau, against the will of God and to the everlasting displeasure and sorrow of his parents, married into the evil Canaanites by taking two of the daughters of Heth, progenitor of the powerful Hittite empire. Under no circumstances can Esau's cursed Canaanite relations be relegated to a

mere error in human judgment. These marriages were carefully and specifically contrived by Esau who, having lost both his birthright and firstborn blessings, sought advantageous ties with the Hittites in order to secure for himself and his progeny a strong financial and military base from which to operate. Certain branches of the Edomites established seaports at Aqaba and other locations on the Red Sea and the Persian Gulf. They gained all the necessary sailing skills required of a seafaring people, thus the Edomite clan that migrated into Phoenicia arrived already well educated in the ways of ocean travel and commerce.

In Greek, as well as Roman, mythology, *Uranus* was considered the first of the gods. His offspring were known as the *Titans*, and among them was *Kronus (Cronus)*, known also as *Saturn*, and earlier as *Typhon*. Kronus was also identified as the Canaanite deity *Baal-Zephon* (the name given the area near the Red Sea where God parted the waters for the famous Israelite crossing - Ex. 14:2). The Egyptians associated Baal-Zephon with their own god *Seth* (not *Seth*, the son of Adam) who, as we discovered in an earlier installment of this study, was introduced into the Egyptian pantheon by the *Hyksos*, who were, in reality, the Amalekite tribe of Edomites that fought with Israel on their route out of Egypt (as an aside, it is very instructive that the ancient Egyptian historian Manetho refers to the *Hyksos* as *Arabians* and *Phoenicians* - the very two geographic areas we see associated with the Edomites!). Seth, it would seem, might correlate with the patriarch Abraham, whom the descendants of Esau deified and transferred to the Egyptians during their reign over that empire immediately after the Exodus.

In addition, Cronus (Saturn) subsequently deposed Uranus and became the chief deity. According to Sanchoniathan, Cronus traveled throughout the world establishing colonies. In an incredible statement, the historian records that:

“Cronus offered up his only son as a sacrifice and CIRCUMCISED himself, and forced his allies to do the same.”

This story is instantly recognizable as being based on the life of Abraham and his son Isaac. Cronus was, in fact, Abraham himself, who, like many of the ancient Biblical characters, had their lives interwoven into myth and legend by numerous later societies throughout the world. And indeed, just as Cronus was a great colonizer, so Abraham sent out the twelve sons of Ishmael, his first-born, into areas south and east of Palestine, and later his six sons by Keturah into the east country to settle there (Gen. 25:1-18). Interestingly, once deified, Cronus became associated with the planet Saturn whose sacred day was Saturday the seventh day of the weekly cycle, most appropriate for the patriarch Abraham who was obedient to all the laws of Yahweh (Gen. 26:5). In addition, the word *Saturn* means *hidden*, which is identical to the term *Zephon* (as in *Baal-Zephon*, mentioned earlier in connection with Cronus, Typhon, and the Amalekite/Egyptian god Seth, all of which were identical entities). An ancient source (*Isolde and Osira*, 31, no. 259) utilized by the historian Plutarch says that Typhon (Cronus) fathered *Hierosolymus (Jerusalem)* and *Iudaeus (Judah)*. The famous Phoenician god *Baal* was often depicted as a two-horned deity, and the Greek name *Cronus (Kronus)* is derived from the Hebrew *Keren*, meaning *horn*! Very interesting indeed how all these seemingly minute bits and pieces of ancient history fit together to form a picture that can still be appreciated thousands of years later by inquiring minds such as our own!

One of the grandsons of Cronus was the famous *Zeus* of Greek mythology (The Roman *Jupiter* or *Jove*). According to legend, Zeus was sent to Crete, and from there, he and some of his offspring went to Troy, and subsequently throughout Greece itself. The famous Spartans and Trojans of ancient Greek history are said to have been his descendants. Indeed, in the time of the Messiah, it was strongly believed, and even recorded in I Maccabees 12 and Josephus' *Antiquities of the Jews*, that the Spartans, on the mainland of Greece, were directly related to Abraham. That this story should be of keen interest to we believers is not all that surprising when we consider the fact that Crete and the Aegean isles are said to have been invaded anciently by Semitic peoples from, of all places, Phoenicia, the very region where Esau and a major branch of his descendants migrated and settled!

Such information should not shock us or cause us to doubt its veracity, for it was divinely prophesied that great kings of the earth would issue forth from the loins of Abraham. We read in Genesis 17 the following:

“As for me (God), behold, My covenant is with you, and you (Abraham) shall be a father of many nations...And I will make you exceeding fruitful, and I will make nations of you, and KINGS shall come out of you” (Gen. 17: 4, 6).

There is even a particular line of thinking that connects the historical character Esau with the mythological character *Hercules*. Although this connection is somewhat tenuous, it has possibilities. Over time, we have learned that many, if not most, of the gods and goddesses, heroes and heroines of ancient Babylonian, Egyptian, Assyrian, Greek, Roman, and Norse mythology, were originally based on men, women, and events recorded in the Hebrew Scriptures.

The Greek name for *Hercules* is *Heracles*, which actually means, *glorious gift of Hera*, or *son of a glorified ancestress (Hera)*. The fact is that Esau viewed himself as a world Messiah, and acted accordingly. He believed that it was his destiny to fulfil the great promises given to his grand-father Abraham, and, though denied the birthright and first-born blessings from Isaac, he dedicated his life to seeking them on his own.

Esau knew, of course, that Jacob was the favored child of his mother, Rebekah, and that she was directly involved in the treachery to deceive Isaac into giving the blessing to his younger brother. Although he loved his father, for these other reasons, he hated his mother. The Semitic name for the Great Earth goddess was *Awa* or *Avah*. In Greek, it was *Hera*. The true original Mother of all living was, of course, *Eve* or *Evah*. Her name in Hebrew is actually *Chavvah*. The name *Heracles*, therefore, is really a word that means *the son of Eve*, or *the great gift of Eve*. The Redeemer of all mankind was prophesied to come from the seed of Eve (Gen. 3:15). Instead of honoring his own mother, Esau rather identified himself with the mother of all living, namely, Eve.

The chief deity of Tyre was *Melkart*, also known as *Baal-Melkart*. This was, by the way, the god of choice for the likes of the Phoenician harlot queen Jezebel, wife of Ahab, king of Israel. In fact, she introduced this form of *Baal*-worship into the Northern Kingdom, polluting it to the core.

Melkart, like Esau, was also a hunter of great renown. According to virtually all the authorities on ancient mythologies, the Greeks associated their great

hunter/hero *Heracles* (Roman - *Hercules*) with the Phoenician *Melkart*. We have already, in fact, commented briefly on possible connections between the Hebrews, Phoenicians, and Greeks, but, as we will discover later in this study, there is actually an abundance of evidence to sustain the contention that certain Hebrew peoples, namely Edomites, along with some northern Israelites, migrated into the coastal area of Phoenicia, intermarried with the Canaanite residents of the area, founded the great city-state of Tyre, and ultimately became the greatest of the ancient Sea-People, some of whom eventually sailed to Crete, the Aegean Islands, and the Peloponnesus, laying the groundwork for what we know as the *Greek* civilization. Indeed, as astounding as it may sound, the eventual *Hellenization* of the entire Middle Eastern/Mediterranean region (including the later *Roman* influence throughout Europe, which was simply derived from the Greeks) can essentially be traced back to the descendants of Esau! And when one considers the unspeakable horrors and damage inflicted by the Hellenistic world upon Israel, and upon the Jews in particular, there can be no doubt whatsoever that the ancient struggle of Esau to take revenge against Jacob and regain what was lost has indeed been on-going through every historical era from that time until this very day!

The fact is that there were several *Hercules* in the myths of the ancient world, and this is admitted by most scholars on the subject. It is quite likely that the notion of the celebrated *hunter/hero* indeed tracks back to Cain himself in the pre-Flood era, as well as to Nimrod in post-Flood times. And perhaps it finds its most complete fulfillment in a very well-known Biblical figure whose life we will investigate a little later in this study, namely, the mighty Samson the Danite, Judge of Israel during a critical period in her history, and one whose story is quite phenomenal indeed.

Although I do not claim to be an expert in the etymology of words, I do find it very interesting and intriguing that the words *Esau*, *Ousoos*, *Usous*, *Esus* (the *lord* or *master* of the Druid trinity, which we will show later has a distinctive connection with Esau and Edom), and *Zeus* all share a very striking similarity, and, based upon the information at our disposal, each of these terms is indeed a name for the Biblical character *Esau* himself! Frankly, one is even compelled to consider the Greek *Iesous*, from which is rendered the familiar name *Jesus*. Just comparing these various words, *Esau*, *Ousoos*, *Usous*, *Esus*, *Zeus*, *Iesous*, and *Jesus*, cannot help but cause one to wonder about the relationship that they potentially share. If indeed the original of these terms goes back to *Esau*, we have a situation that truly shatters previously held conceptions, for such information would indicate that Esau, the great perpetual enemy of the true Messianic line of Jacob, and Judah in particular, may well have through the centuries been palmed off as the true Savior, and may even to this day still be worshiped in his very own name! Although I have great respect for the Hebrew name of the Messiah, I have never been a supporter of the idea espoused by some that the word *Jesus* may be of pagan origin, but, quite frankly, I had never really associated it with *Esau*, whom I now clearly see as the ultimate rejecter of the true Messiah, and very likely the one historical individual who saw himself as the world messiah, and sought to perpetuate this concept through his descendants. This possibility certainly gives one reason to pause and consider carefully the implications raised by such a notion.

In this light, we might also wonder about such words as *Ursa*, *Ursus*, *Arth*, *Artemis*, and even *Arthur*, all of which are related to and carry the meaning of a particular animal, namely, the *bear*. You will recall that Esau is described in the Scriptures in a very unique manner. In the Genesis account, we read:

“And when her (Rebekah) days to be delivered were fulfilled, behold, there were twins in her womb. And the first came out red, all over like a HAIRY GARMENT; and they called his name Esau” (Gen. 25:24-25).

One of the more obvious characteristics of a bear is that it is exceedingly *hairy*, indeed perhaps the *most hairy* of all mammals. We also read in the same chapter regarding Esau yet another *bear-like* trait:

“And the boys (Esau and Jacob) grew: and ESAU was a CUNNING HUNTER, a man of the field; and Jacob was a plain man, dwelling in tents” (Gen. 25:27).

Like a bear, Esau was a strong, savvy hunter, and like a bear, he was on the move, unlike his more placid, sedate brother who was satisfied to be a tent-dweller. Esau, therefore, was much more like Cain, a man of the field, and like Nimrod, the mighty hunter in place of the Lord! It is written in the *Targums of Onkelos and Jonathan ben Uzziel* that **“Esau was a man of idleness to catch birds and beasts, a man going forth into the field to kill lives, as Nimrod had killed, and Hanok his son” (p. 241).**

Note also that Esau is described as being *cunning*. The *Book of Jasher*, chapter 28:19-20 declares that Esau was a **“designing and deceitful man, one who hunted after the hearts of men and inveigled them.”** A footnote indicates that the Hebrew literally states that Esau stole the minds of people, a most apropos statement regarding the deceptive qualities employed by the Edomites, both anciently and currently!

The reference to Esau having been hairy all over also can be related to the hair on his head as well, for he and many of his descendants became well-known for wearing *long hair*, long *red* hair (remember that Esau’s nickname was *Edom*, meaning *red*), both facts that we will want to keep in mind as we proceed through our study. Additionally, the Edomites were given by Yahweh the area known as *Mt. Seir* as their possession. In fact, *Seir* became synonymous with *Edom*, and the two words are used interchangeably in the Hebrew Scriptures. The word *Seir* is defined as *rough*, and is related to the term *sa’ir*, which means *hairy*. So, the name itself is most appropriate for the Edomite homeland. There is even a possibility that *Seir* may be etymologically connected to the idea of a hairy animal, namely, *the bear*. If indeed these associations between Esau and the bear are correct, and the evidence is certainly convincing that such is the case, this then becomes valuable information, since the theme of the *bear* is intricately interwoven into the story that we are right now beginning to see unfold before us.

With regard to the Edomite/Phoenician connection that we have been examining, it is most intriguing that the Hebrew Scriptures single out two peoples as being famous for their wisdom—the Phoenicians of ancient Tyre (Ezek. 28:3, 12; Isa. 23:8) and the Temanites of Edom (Jer. 49:7; Job 2:11, 22:1; Obadiah 9). Indeed, there is even Biblical evidence for close ties between Tyre and Edom. Note the following passage from Amos 1:

“Thus says the Lord (YHWH), For three transgression of GAZA, and for four, I will not turn away the punishment thereof; because they carried away captive the whole captivity, to deliver them up to EDOM...For three transgressions of TYRE, and for four, I will not turn away the punishment thereof; because they delivered up the whole captivity to EDOM, and remembered not the brotherly covenant: but I will send a fire on the wall of Tyre, which shall devour the palaces thereof. Thus says the Lord, For

three transgressions of Edom, and for four, I will not turn away the punishment thereof...I will send a fire upon Teman, which shall devour the palaces of Bozrah” (Amos 1:6-12).

The evidence derived from secular history, ancient mythology, and, of course, the Holy Bible, all testify convincingly to the affinity between the Edomites and the Phoenicians. We are compelled to acknowledge that at least one of the tribes of Esau gained great sea-faring experience sailing the waters of the Red Sea, the Persian Gulf, and the Indian Ocean, who then migrated under tumultuous circumstances north into the Galilee and from there to the Mediterranean coast, colonizing the area known as Phoenicia, establishing the great city-states of Tyre and Sidon, instituting the cult of *Baal*-worship which would become one of the most damning influences on the Israelites and indeed eventually the entire world, even to this very day, deifying both Esau and Abraham, under the names of *Ushu* and *Cronus/Baal-Zephon* respectively, and ultimately becoming the greatest maritime power of the ancient world—a remarkable turn of historical events!

The religion of the Phoenicians was highly pantheistic, and their close proximity to Israel allowed them to greatly influence the customs of the people, particularly with regard to worship. The Phoenicians were, in fact, a more sophisticated people than the Israelites. When the various tribes, especially those situated in the Northern Kingdom came into contact with the Phoenicians, they were made to feel ashamed for their supposed ignorance in worshiping only one God. After all, if one was good, many would surely be better! Thus, the Israelites were time and time again greatly tempted by the Phoenicians to pervert their form of worship, a temptation to which they not only succumbed, but indeed often carried to major extremes. This situation was exacerbated by the intermarriage between many of the northern Israelites with the idolatrous Canaanites. We are told in Judges 3:

“And the children of Israel dwelled among the Canaanites, Hittites, Amorites, Perizzites, Hivites, and Jebusites: and they took their daughters to be their wives, and gave their daughters to their sons, and served their gods. And the children of Israel did evil in the sight of the Lord, and forgot the Lord their God, and served Baalim and the groves. Therefore the anger of the Lord was hot against Israel” (Judg. 3:5-8).

We know that the idolatrous Phoenician/Canaanite worship began to corrupt Israel after the days of Joshua, and continued until the day both the Northern and Southern Kingdoms went into their respective captivities some 700-900 years later. Even Solomon with all his God-given wisdom, and to whom the Almighty appeared on two separate occasions, allowed himself to be seduced by his many Phoenician concubines into worshipping the Sidonian goddess Ashtaroth (I Kgs. 3:1-5; 9:2; 11:1-5).

Later, after the division of the United Monarchy, king Ahab of Israel violated the commandment of God and married Jezebel, the daughter of Ethbaal, king of Sidon, and high priestess for the Phoenician cult of Baal. Under her influence, the Northern Kingdom became infiltrated with corruption and degradation. Baal-worship was rampant, and it eventually led to the Assyrian takeover and captivity which God inflicted upon the Israelites for these heinous sins.

The Phoenician religion promoted that most dreadful of rites, the sacrificing of children to the pagan gods. Yahweh condemned the people through the prophet Jeremiah, saying:

“They have also built in the name of the high places of Baal, to burn their sons with fire for burnt offerings to Baal, which I commanded not, nor spoke it, neither came it into My mind” (Jer. 19:5).

Jezebel introduced another facet of Phoenician worship, that of male and female temple prostitutes. The monies generated by these sexual perverts helped finance the service to the goddess Astarte. Demon-worship was also prevalent among the Canaanites, as was the practice of cannibalism. In fact, the very term itself is derived from the two words *Canaan* and *Baal*. We must continually remember that it was these peoples descended from Ham and his son Canaan, and into whose line Esau married and with whom his descendants intermingled, that were instrumental in re-establishing the pre-Flood religion and moral decay that originally brought about the destruction of the human race. They were commanded by God to be utterly destroyed by Israel, but the people failed to fully obey this most significant divine instruction. The result, of course, was the utter perversion of the Israelites, a wretched condition that is still alive and well in our very day and time! Indeed, the introduction anciently of the Phoenician/Edomite system of *Baal*-worship into Israel laid the groundwork for much of what palms itself off today as *Christianity*! Hopefully this connection will be made very clear in later installments of this study, but rest assured that it is by no means insignificant.

It is written in the *Babylonian Talmud*:

“Five things did Canaan charge his sons: love one another, love robbery, love lewdness, hate your masters, and do not speak the truth.”

The Jezebel/Phoenician connection to ancient Israel was not merely a one-time event, but actually spawned an entire network of evil throughout the land for many years afterward. Indeed, it even invaded the Southern Kingdom when Jezebel's daughter, the evil Athaliah married Jehoram, king of Judah. He followed in the footsteps of his wicked mother-in-law, as did his son Ahaziah after him. Then, in an incredible turn of events, Athaliah herself literally seized the throne, murdering all the possible claimants except Joash, who was protected by Jehosheba, Athaliah's own sister, along with the high priest Jehoiada. For six years, the young Joash was hidden in a chamber in the Temple, and in his seventh year, Athaliah was slain, and he was coronated king of Judah.

This is such an amazing story, not only on its own merits as an historical event, but also because of the significant typology involved. Joash is a type of the Messiah, and Athaliah a symbol of the evil end-time ruler of evil. That she was of Phoenician/Edomite descent is most important in this regard. During the years of her wicked reign of terror, Joash remained hidden in the Temple, a type of Christ being in heaven, but in the seventh year, he comes down in victory, even as will Yahshua (Jesus). Interestingly, Joash was not only crowned king in the seventh year, but also on the seventh or Sabbath day of the week, thus fulfilling the type completely! Athaliah, like Jezebel before her, is representative of the wicked Edomite system that long was planned to overtake the entire world. Nothing less

than total domination of the human race will be satisfactory for those involved in this endeavor.

But this is by no means the end of the story, for it also involves one of the key tribes of Israel, an apostate people who became strongly connected to their Edomite cousins in Phoenicia—the enigmatic tribe of Dan!

DAN WAS ALWAYS DIFFERENT!

Dan? Of all the tribes of Israel, why Dan? What possible significance could this relatively obscure people have with respect to great historical events relating to Esau and his descendants, events that have had incredible repercussions through the centuries, and even powerful end-time relevance?

After Jacob (Israel) departed from an incredible 20 years' labor for his uncle Laban, he left with not one, but two wives, Rachel, his beloved, and her sister Leah, who was foisted off on him by the greedy and rather treacherous Laban himself. Some might perceive that this protracted period of service during which Jacob is deceived more than once by his uncle was just remuneration for Jacob's taking advantage of Esau and obtaining both the birthright and the blessing of the firstborn. Jacob's name, after all, meant *supplanter*, until, of course, it was changed by Yahweh to Israel (interpreted variously as *He shall rule with God [El]; He shall rule [as] God; Let God Persevere, etc.*).

There was, however, a problem, in that the preferred bride, Rachel, was barren, and, unlike as in later times, including even today, the bearing of children was of the utmost, critical importance to the people of that ancient era. Indeed, there was a certain stigma attached to women who could not produce offspring, and the husband was expected to make the necessary exceptions in his marital arrangement to have children, one way or another. Of course, in Jacob's case, he actually had another legal wife, and Leah was well able to bear children to her husband, which she did, birthing four fine sons, Reuben, Simeon, Levi, and Judah, all names with which we are quite familiar.

After the birth of Judah, however, Rachel could stand the pressure no more. The polygamous situation into which Jacob had gotten himself was becoming intolerable to Rachel, and, in spite of Leah being her own sister, there was much contention, especially with regard to the issue of child-bearing. Rachel, therefore, took action on her own behalf, and gave her handmaiden, Bilhah, to her husband, with the demand that he have a child by her, one that Rachel would, in a manner of speaking, be able to claim as her own. The result was the birth of Jacob's fifth son, whom Rachel named *Dan*, the Scriptures commenting on this occasion:

“And Bilhah conceived, and bare Jacob a son. And Rachel said, God has judged me, and has also heard my voice, and has given me a son: therefore she called his name Dan” (Gen. 30:5-6).

The most obvious significance in this passage is the fact that Dan was the first son of Jacob to be born outside his wedlock to Leah and Rachel. While this may not appear at first to be of any real importance, it actually is, for it set Dan, in particular, apart from the first

four of Jacob's children, and is an indication of the lower birth status of a number of the sons, and subsequent tribes, of Israel, beginning with Dan himself.

Jacob continued his arrangement with Bilhah, resulting in the birth of yet another son, Naphtali (Gen. 30:7-8). At this point in the saga, Leah discovers that she too has become barren, so, following the example of her sister Rachel, she employs her own handmaiden, Zilpah to engage in the same kind of relationship with Jacob on her behalf, a convention to which he willingly submitted. Thus followed the births of Jacob's seventh and eighth sons, Gad and Asher. Take note that Dan, Naphtali, Gad, and Asher form something of a sub-group among the children of Israel, due to their mothers being handmaidens of Jacob's two wives, and, to a certain extent, because they all were born consecutively, in close proximity to one another, and, as a result, grew up as a unit, and tended to associate together even after they were grown, as we shall soon see.

After the birth of Asher, tensions ran high between Leah and Rachel, neither one of whom were at this time able to bear children. After an especially confrontational situation transpired (Gen. 30:14-16), Rachel relented and acquiesced to Leah's desire to have more children by Jacob, and indeed she was blessed by God with two more sons, Issachar and Zebulun, as well as a daughter, Dinah.

Finally, it came Rachel's turn, and miraculously she was able to bear Jacob his last two sons, Joseph and Benjamin, of which Joseph became his father's most favored child. In the process of Benjamin's birth, however, Rachel died, and was buried in Ephrath, the specific area of Bethlehem from which Micah later prophesied the future Messiah would originate (Micah 5:2). *Ephrath* or *Ephratah* in Hebrew means *fruitfulness*. Once Israel was settled in the Promised Land, this sector of Bethlehem became the locale where the annual Passover lambs were raised, a most appropriate development considering that Yahshua/Jesus Himself was born there as well.

DAN & JOSEPH

The next reference to Dan in the Scriptures is a rather veiled one, but the likelihood is that, though not directly mentioned by name, he was clearly involved in a signal incident that eventually had far-ranging and quite significant implications for the entirety of ancient Israel. The account is found in the opening verses of Genesis 37 as follows:

“And Jacob dwelt in the land wherein his father was a stranger, in the land of Canaan. These are the generations of Jacob. Joseph, being seventeen years old, was feeding the flock with his brethren; and the lad was with the SONS OF BILHAH, and the SONS OF ZILPAH, his father's wives (concubines); and Joseph brought unto his father THEIR EVIL REPORT” (Gen. 37:1-3).

As you can easily determine, only Joseph, of all Jacob's children, is specified by name in this passage of Scripture. The reference, however, in verse 2 is inescapably clear that certain specific other sons of Israel were with Joseph on this occasion, namely, the sons of the two handmaidens, Dan, Naphtali, Gad, and Asher. It is imperative that we take note of this particular grouping of Jacob's children with respect to this incident. Even though these sons are not listed by name, we know for a fact precisely who they were. Notice that

they were together, virtually as a separate group, a proclivity that would continue with their tribal descendants as well.

The real significance, however, is the fact that Dan is not only one of the four sons involved, but is the oldest of the group, and thus the most likely ringleader of the *evil report* which Joseph brings back to his father. In other words, this passage is telling us more about Dan than apparently meets the eye. Dan and his three brothers, Naphtali, Gad, and Asher, clearly did not have a good relationship with Joseph, the most favored of all the children of Israel. We are not told of what this particular *evil report* consisted, but it prefaces the very key event that resulted in the plot against Joseph's life and his subsequently being sold into slavery, an occurrence that literally changed the course of history! And, although we usually associate Reuben and Judah with being the most prominent individuals in the story of the brothers' betrayal of Joseph, a close inspection of Genesis 37 actually reveals that these two men worked to spare the life of their younger brother. The real trouble began among the discontented group headed by Dan, and the plot to murder Joseph has its roots in this situation reported on in Genesis 37. We, therefore, have strong and compelling early evidence of the dark side of Dan himself, the first of the children of Israel to be born of the handmaidens. The likelihood, as we shall see develop, is that Dan was looked upon as something of a *black sheep* within the family, and acquired a sort of second-class citizenship among the tribes of Israel. He undoubtedly felt the sting of such judgment against himself, and it seems that he did everything in his power to prove his critics to be absolutely correct in their assessment of him. It was as though Dan, in the vernacular, was saying, *You think I'm bad now? Well, you ain't seen nothing yet!*

In addition, such a betrayal of Joseph by Dan cannot help but be seen as an ancient type of another far greater betrayal, that instigated by Judas Iscariot toward the Messiah Himself. Indeed, the parallels are fascinating and compelling, for as there were twelve apostles, so there were twelve tribes of Israel, one of which would betray Yahshua/Jesus. And it can be stated without hesitation that of all the sons of Jacob, none even come remotely close to typifying the coming Messiah, other than Joseph who, in fact, is arguably the most complete type of Christ in all the Scriptures! In fact, it is impossible not to associate the betrayal of Joseph with the later infamous betrayal of the Savior.

Furthermore, if one looks at the family of Jacob from another perspective, there were originally 12 sons and thus 12 tribes, and yet once we observe the nation of Israel in the wilderness and later in the Promised Land, we see 13 tribes, the two sons of Joseph, Ephraim and Manasseh, having separate identities within the camp. In like manner, there were also twelve original apostles, but the addition of Matthias would make a total of thirteen. These are interesting points to consider, and we will do so further at a later juncture in our study.

DAN'S INEVITABLE DOWNFALL

Given the circumstances in the family of Jacob, it is not all that shocking that some of the children turned out to be less than their father would have hoped. Dan was one such son. From his birth on, he was reckoned by his older brothers, Reuben, Simeon, Levi, and Judah, as being in that lower echelon of the family, of having a less prestigious pedigree, and of being rather reckless, all of which were, in fact, quite true.

Dan's reaction to such perceptions and undoubtedly to the typical treatment he would have received as a result, led him and his descendants to choose a more independent course for themselves. Not wishing to remain in the shadow of the more favored children, Dan's pathway often led to major departures from the tribal unity of Israel and from the Law and purposes of God as well.

As the Danites continued to pursue their own way, we cannot help but begin to notice a de-emphasizing, indeed even a certain demotion, of the tribe of Dan in the Mosaic record. Although born the 5th out of 12 sons, Dan is often listed at or near the end in various places in the Torah and the Chronicles. For instance, in Genesis 46, at the time when Jacob was moving his family to Egypt, Dan is listed next to last (v. 23). Additionally, only a single line is devoted to this tribe in the account. Indeed, rather than enumerate the actual children of Dan by their individual names, as is done with each of the other sons, he is given short shrift with only the general tribal name of Hushim given. All of these facts are indicators that Dan and his descendants were held in less esteem than most, if not all, of the other children of Israel.

In fact, in the Genesis 46 passage, you will note that the very last two sons listed are Dan and his brother Naphtali, even though they were much higher in the literal birth order. To put an even finer point on things, we read in verse 25 the following editorial notation:

“These are the SONS OF BILHAH, which Laban gave unto Rachel his daughter, and she bare unto Jacob.”

Notice carefully that the two sons of Bilhah, the 5th and 6th born of Jacob's children, are listed dead last, even after the sons of Zilpah, Leah's handmaiden. Whether this was a comment originally made by Moses himself or a later insertion by Ezra, there absolutely has to be a strong reason for this kind of arrangement. It is not haphazard, accidental, or even coincidental whatsoever. Virtually the same thing can be seen in the second census recorded in Numbers 26. So it is abundantly clear that the children of Bilhah were the least favored in the family of Israel, and of those two tribes, Dan was at the bottom of the pile!

With respect not only to Dan's demotion from his birth order position in the tribal listings, there are a couple of additional peculiarities which, at first glance, might not appear all that important, but taken together with the accumulating evidence, they almost surely are. In the second chapter of Numbers, the tribal arrangement of the camp is given. This camping structure is not to be summarily dismissed as inconsequential. Yahweh orchestrated the specific placement of the various tribes based upon a divine pattern.

As most of us are well aware, numbers are exceedingly important within God's scheme of things. We see numerical patterns running throughout the Scriptures. In fact, the entire created universe is basically mathematical in structure. With regard to our subject, the number four comes into play. Dr. E. W. Bullinger, in his seminal work, *Number in Scripture*, makes the following astute observation on the significance of the number *four*:

“Now the number *four* is made up of three and one (3 + 1 = 4), and it denotes, therefore, and marks that which follows the revelation of God...namely, *His creative works*...The *fourth day* saw the *material creation* finished (for on

the *fifth* and *sixth* days it was only the *furnishing* and *peopling* of the earth with living creatures)...*Four* is the number of the great elements—earth, air, fire, and water. *Four* are the regions of the earth—north, south, east, and west. *Four* are the divisions of the day...*Four* are the seasons of the year—spring, summer, autumn, and winter. *Four* are the great variations of the lunar phases...In the next chapter (Gen. 3:22-24), the cherubim are first mentioned. These are *four*, and they have to do with *creation* always. They are first seen here, keeping, i.e., guarding (Gen. 2:15) the Tree of Life, and thus preserving the blessed hope of immortality for creation...They are seen on the veil and on the mercy-seat, binding up the hope of creation with Him who is called ‘the Hope of Israel’...In the Apocalypse the same four cherubim are called ‘the living creatures’ (Rev. 4). These announce the coming One; these sing of *creation* and of Him who created all things, and for whose pleasure they were created (Rev. 4:11). Whenever they speak, it is in connection with the earth. These call forth and announced the judgments or plagues (Rev. 6) which issue in the ejection of the Usurper from the earth, and the destruction of them which destroy the earth...Hence it was that these four cherubic forms were placed in the Signs of the Zodiac, and so placed that they divide it into *four* equal parts, thus uniting in one the twelve signs which set forth the blessed hope of a groaning creation, which waits for the Promised Seed of the woman to come and crush the serpent’s head and bring in universal blessing. They are the *four* heads of animal creation: the lion, of wild beasts; the ox, of tame beasts; the eagle, of birds; and man the head of all...They mark the purpose of God from the moment the curse was pronounced, and are the pledge that it will one day be removed” (pp. 123-125).

Although further elaboration on the number *four* is given, the above-cited information should serve well for our purposes. The camp of Israel was set out *foursquare*, according to the cardinal points of the compass. Although there were twelve tribes, there were only four standard-bearers. Each of the four had two additional tribes attached to them in the formation. To the east was the lead tribe of Judah, and with them were Issachar and Zebulun. On the south was the head tribe of Reuben, and associated with them were Simeon and Gad. The west was headed by the tribe of Ephraim, along with Manasseh and Benjamin; and finally, listed *last* in the account of Number 2 is the tribe of Dan in the north, with his companions Naphtali and Asher. Take special note of the wording involved with regard to Dan in this passage:

“All they that were numbered in the camp of Dan were a hundred thousand and fifty and seven thousand and six hundred. They shall go HINDMOST with their standards” (Num. 2:31).

Once again, the tribe of Dan is not only listed last, he is specified to *bring up the rear*, as it were—a clear distinction denoting the lesser status of the Danites within the camp of Israel.

In addition, Dan was situated in the *north* (Num. 2:25). Again, this is not some arbitrary, random placement. It is no mere coincidence that Dan, of all the tribes, was positioned in the north. It was unquestionably intentional and by divine decree, for the Scriptures clearly indicate that either *evil* or *judgment* are associated with or come out of the *north*.

For instance, virtually all of Israel's classic ancient enemies were from the north or considered to be from the north, even including Babylon. Furthermore, you will undoubtedly recall that on a number of occasions the prophets of Israel and Judah, in predicting latter-day events, speak of trouble coming from the north. For instance, note the following passages:

“And the word of the Lord come unto me the second time, saying, What do you see? And I said, A seething pot; and the face thereof is toward the north. Then the Lord said unto me, Out of the NORTH shall EVIL break forth upon all the inhabitants of the land” (Jer. 1:13-14).

**“Behold, the noise of the bruit is come, and a great commotion out of the NORTH COUNTRY, to make the cities of Judah desolate, and a den of dragons’ (Jer. 10:22).
“Son of man, set your face against Gog, the land of Magog...and prophesy against him...In that day when My people of Israel dwell safely, shall you not know it? And you shall come from your place out of the NORTH PARTS, you, and many people with you, all of them riding upon horses, a great company, and a mighty army” (Ezek. 38:2, 14-15).**

“The king of the NORTH shall come against him like a whirlwind, with chariots, and with horsemen, and with many ships; and he shall enter into the countries, and shall overflow and pass over. He shall enter also into the glorious land, and many countries shall be overthrown” (Dan. 11:40-41).

These are but a smattering of the Biblical references to evil and destruction emanating from the north. It would appear from the prophecies that the end-time anti-Christ indeed comes out of the north, a fact that we will want to keep squarely in mind as we continue through this study.

The north is also the direction associated with judgment in the Scriptures. In fact, the passages quoted above are actually a part of God's judgment against the sins of His own people. We read in Psalms 75:

“When I (Yahweh) shall receive the congregation (Heb. *mo'ed* - a set time, a festival, an appointment), I will JUDGE uprightly. The earth and all the inhabitants are dissolved...Lift not up your horn on high: speak not with a stiff neck. For promotion (Heb. *ruwm* - exaltation, extolling) comes neither from the east, nor from the west, nor from the south. But GOD IS THE JUDGE...All the horns of the wicked also will I cut off; but the horns of the righteous shall be exalted” (Psa. 75:2-3, 5-7, 10).

Since the Almighty, in this passage, rules out every direction but the north, it is clear that this position is reserved for Him as the true and righteous Judge of the earth. In this respect, it is quite interesting that the word and name *Dan* means *to judge*. Was Dan (*Judge*) purposely located by God in the northern quarter of the camp as a kind of prophetic indication that this tribe would produce the *unrighteous judge*, attempting to usurp the position of the truly righteous Judge Himself? Remember that the character named *Lucifer* (Heb. *Heylel*, from *halal* - to shine, hence to make a show, to boast; to be clamorously foolish; to rave) boasted that he would ascend into the heavens, above the throne of God, and sit in the *sides of the north* (Isa. 14:13). When we begin to discuss the

prophecies connected with the tribe of Dan, these factors will come into play much more substantially.

To elaborate further on Dr. Bullinger's reference to the cherubim and its relationship to the camp formation of ancient Israel, the four-square arrangement was designed according to a pattern based on these great *living creatures*. The cherubim had four faces, that of a lion, an ox, a man, and an eagle. These four characters became the signs of the four standard-bearing tribes of Israel: the lion for Judah, the ox for Ephraim, the man for Reuben, and the eagle for Dan.

Bullinger's mention of the Zodiac with respect to the number *four* is both interesting and instructive, because there is a direct and very divine connection, for just as Israel had twelve divisions, so there are twelve signs in the Zodiacal belt, that swath through the heavens which marks the apparent path of the sun as viewed from earth. Also, just as Israel's twelve tribes were arranged around four standard-bearers, three tribes to each standard, so the twelve constellations of the Zodiac are further divided into four groups of three signs each—Leo the lion (Judah), Taurus the bull (Ephraim), Scorpio the scorpion (Dan—a significant clarification on this sign is needed and will be discussed later), and Aquarius the water-bearer (Reuben). And furthermore, just as each of the four Israeli standard-bearing tribes had a designated leader, so each of the four major constellations of the Zodiac has a star of the first magnitude associated with that sector of the heavens—Regulus/Leo, Aldebaran/Taurus, Antares/Scorpio, and Fomalhaut/Aquarius.

This sort of heavenly pattern is seen in a number of other arrangements as well, a well-known example of which would be the four gospel accounts in the New Testament. The inclusion and omission of certain facts, along with any apparent contradictions among these sacred writings, can almost always be accounted for by understanding that each of the four writers was guided by the Spirit to reveal and emphasize a different aspect of the Messiah. Matthew presents Him as King, and is thus associated with the lion; Mark as the Servant, even as the ox was the classic beast of burden in ancient times; Luke shows Yahshua/Jesus as a Man, therefore his account is directly linked with the cherub's face of a man; and John reveals Christ as God, symbolized by the eagle.

Although some of this information may not bear directly on our discussion, it is most interesting and impressive to observe the intricate way that God has woven the tapestry of His creation and His divine purposes together. Truly, His thoughts are higher than ours!

Before leaving this section of our discussion, let us note that the consistent diminution of the tribe of Dan continues on throughout the Scriptures, both Old and New Testaments. When the Israelites had crossed over Jordan and successfully defeated a number of the Canaanite armies, the land was divided with each tribe receiving their prescribed allotment. Once again, rather than list Dan in his proper birth order, which was fifth in the progression, his portion is given last of all (Josh. 19:40-48).

And to further drive home the point, note the following:
“And the coast of the children of Dan went out TOO LITTLE FOR THEM.”

In other words, Dan's share of the Promised Land was actually too small or narrow for them. They were, in fact, one of the larger tribes in terms of population, and yet their

allotted territory was among the smallest in the land, certainly another indication of their considerably lower esteem among the children of Israel. We will come back to this area of Scripture in the next part of this study and discuss the significance of precisely what the Danites did to secure additional turf for themselves, as the methodology they employed provides a key to their true nature, both anciently and currently as well.

Not only do we find the Danites often listed last or near last among the children of Israel, there are striking occasions when they are omitted from the record altogether. A classic case in point is found in the book of I Chronicles. The first nine chapters of this book are devoted almost exclusively to family records, going briefly from Adam to Abraham, then the descendants of Ishmael, Keturah, Abraham's second wife, and Esau. Beginning in chapter 2 and going all the way through chapter 9, we find the lineages of the various sons of Jacob. The record lists name after name of the Israelite descendants, first from Judah, followed by Simeon and Reuben, then Gad and Levi and Issachar, finally concluding in chapter 9 with the family of Benjamin—but not a single word concerning the tribe of Dan! They are completely missing from the record—a striking omission. Adding to this is the fact that, in chapter 6, where all of the Levitical cities throughout the land are named, Dan, of all the tribes, is left out! Where, oh where, is Dan? It is almost as though there was a conscious effort to erase this very name from memory!

And, of course, undoubtedly the most glaring exclusion of the tribe of Dan is to be found in the New Testament, in the seventh chapter of the book of Revelation. It is here that John is told about the famous and enigmatic 144,000. Note the following introductory statement in verse 4:

“And I heard the number of them which were sealed: and there were sealed a hundred and forty and four thousand of ALL THE TRIBES of the children of Israel.”

The subsequent verses tell us that they were evenly divided, 12,000 from each tribe—and indeed, precisely twelve tribes are named in this passage, but you may search high and low, and you will find no trace whatsoever of the tribe of Dan! They, once again, are completely deleted from this prestigious list in Revelation 7. And remember verse 4 states that the 144,000 come from *all* the tribes of Israel. What inference are we to draw from this evidence? That Dan is no longer even considered one of the twelve tribes? It may not be quite that final, but the fact that this particular tribe is missing cannot be attributed to anything but a divine disallowance.

This omission is far more critical than the ones in the Old Testament, due to the prophetic nature of Revelation. It is speaking specifically of the end-time, the time when the anti-Christ arises to power in the world, the time when the people of God are greatly persecuted by the ruling beast system. And this will be especially applicable with regard to the nation of Israel and the true Jewish people at that time. From this point on, we will be forced to seriously consider the reason for Dan not being listed in the 144,000. Most people generally tend to think of the tribes of Israel in terms of ancient history, but Revelation 7 is talking about the future. Would Dan's past problems alone bar his descendants from being included in this listing, or is it possible that the Danites are disqualified for much later sins as well, perhaps egregious transgressions relating to the time of the end? The answer to this question is absolutely crucial.

THE PROPHECIES

Although there is not a plethora of prophetic information regarding each separate tribe of Israel in the Bible, we do find some, and what we have with respect to Dan is both interesting and intriguing indeed. The first prophecy with respect to any of the various tribes is found in the book of Genesis on the occasion when Jacob, nearing the end of his life, gathered his twelve sons around him for a final family conclave. While most Bibles designate Genesis 49 as the blessing of Jacob upon his sons, even a perfunctory reading of this chapter immediately signals that the words that the old patriarch spoke were hardly in the form of a blessing. In fact, the opening verse indicates quite the opposite:

“And Jacob called unto his sons, and said, Gather yourselves together, that I may tell you that which shall BEFALL YOU IN THE LAST DAYS” (Gen. 49:1).

Note carefully that what Jacob was about to speak had little to do with actually blessing his sons, but rather was to be a prophetic utterance regarding each of them with regard to the *latter days*, and what their father said was hardly smooth and pleasant in their ears. Beginning with Reuben, the firstborn, Jacob minces no words by saying:

“Reuben...unstable as water, you shall not excel; because you went up to your father’s bed; then defiled you it; he went up to my couch” (Gen. 49:3-4).

One has to wonder as Jacob looked at each of his children for the last time, just how painful it must have been for him to have such understanding of their future states. Simeon and Levi are predicted to be divided and scattered, because of their anger which led to murder. Judah appears to receive something of a blessing, but it is not without great distress. Issachar was to become a servant paying tribute, and Gad was to be overcome by his enemies. Of all the tribes, only Joseph comes in for genuine outright blessings, and they are many.

But what about Dan? The words of Jacob are very telling. Even though a number of his sons receive a negative prediction, none quite match the nature of what was spoken concerning the tribe of Dan. Beginning in verse 16, we read:

“Dan shall judge his people, as one of the tribes of Israel. Dan shall be a SERPENT by the way, an ADDER in the path, that bites the horse heels, so that his rider shall fall backward” (Gen. 49:16-17).

No other tribe of Israel received a word of prophecy like the one uttered by Jacob to his son Dan. A number of the other children had their weaknesses pointed out, or were given predictions regarding dire consequences that would eventually befall them, but only Dan is singled out for his inherent evil.

Note carefully that Jacob prophesies Dan is to be a SERPENT. This can hardly be viewed as inconsequential, particularly in light of the Biblical symbolism associated with these and other related reptilian creatures. The serpent is representative of Satan, the great Adversary and the personification of wickedness, and is so portrayed throughout the Scriptures, from his conspicuous appearance in the Garden of Eden in Genesis to the concluding chapters of the book of Revelation. Furthermore, note carefully that this prophecy regarding Dan pertains to his attitude and action toward his own family—his fellow

brother tribes. Is Jacob stating or implying here that Dan will be as the Adversary in the affairs of Israel in the end-time? Was Dan's father given a revelation of future betrayal within his own clan? If so, this is disturbing news for latter-day Israel, and could well provide enquiring minds today with an invaluable *key* as to what part the tribe of Dan is destined to play in world affairs. Rest assured that we will be seeking specific answers to these very questions throughout the remainder of this discussion.

Dan is called a *serpent* by his father in Genesis 49:17. Jacob, however, is more specific in the next sentence, for he states:

“Dan shall be...an ADDER in the path.”

The Hebrew word for *adder* is *shphiyphon*, and is derived from the root term *shuwph*, which means *to gape, to snap at, to overwhelm*, and is rendered *to break, bruise, and cover*. Thus it is quite apparent that Jacob's perception of his son in this instance is far from positive. He tells us that Dan the serpent will be in the path—the path of the rider and his horse; and that he will bite at the horse's heels, causing him to fall backward. Thus Dan is prophesied to be an impediment, an opponent, and negative force in the latter days.

It is well known, of course, that the serpent is representative of evil, of conniving, of worldly wisdom. It is first associated with the great deceiver, Satan the devil, who appeared in the Garden of Eden in the form of a serpent, and with subtlety beguiled Eve. Whether this creature was originally the precise description of what we know as a snake today is perhaps debatable, for the derivation of the Hebrew word *nachash* means *to hiss, i.e. whisper a (magic) spell; to prognosticate; an enchantment or enchanter*, and, as such, may be subject to more than one interpretation. This fact, however, is beside the point with respect to our discussion. The serpent encountered in Genesis 3 was cursed by the Almighty to crawl upon its belly in the dust of the ground, and thus the word *nachash* became the general term for a *snake* in the Hebrew language.

With respect to the latter days, of which Jacob's prophetic words speak, the serpent, of course, plays *the* signal role, for it is the sign of the Adversary, Satan the devil, and thus the spirit of the anti-Christ that will arise in the end-time. This is so stated in many Biblical prophecies, but surely none more emphatically than the book of Revelation, where we read:

“And there appeared another wonder in heaven; and behold a GREAT RED DRAGON, having seven heads and ten horns, and seven crowns upon his head. And his tail drew the third part of the stars of heaven, and did cast them to the earth...And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon, and the dragon fought and his angels...And the great dragon was cast out, that old SERPENT, called the Devil, and Satan, who deceives the whole world...And when the dragon saw that he was cast unto the earth, he persecuted the woman which brought forth the man child...And the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ” (Rev. 12:3-4, 7-9, 13, 17).

The Greek word for *dragon* in verse 3 actually is defined as a *fabulous kind of **SERPENT***, so called because of its keen power of sight (from the root 'derke,' signifying 'to see'). It is used precisely 13 times in the Apocalypse to designate Satan the devil.

Satan, of course, is the real power behind the throne, as it were, of these horrific end-time events predicted in the book of Revelation. His chief servants, however, are also identified with the image of a *serpent*. Indeed we read in Revelation 9:15-19, that the power of the dreaded latter-day army that devastates one-third of the earth's population is likened unto that of a serpent.

How interesting then that the first human being ever to be Scripturally identified with the serpent is none other than the fifth son of Israel and the subject of our discussion—Dan himself, and this serpent connection to the tribe of Dan cannot be summarily dismissed as a casual use of this symbol. It is the sign of the Adversary, Satan the devil, and its image crops up in prophecy after prophecy in the Scriptures. In fact, the snake became the identifying sign of the Danites, both with respect to the figure that appeared on their standard as a part of the camp of Israel, as well as to numerous heraldic and other uses throughout the later history of this tribe during its many migrations to key areas of the world. In fact, ***no other individual human beings are compared to the serpent in all the Scriptures save Dan and his descendants!!*** I would submit to you that this is quite remarkable and most significant!

It is also noteworthy that the *biting* of the horse's heels is language eerily similar to what we read in the first great Messianic prophecy in Genesis 3:15, where Yahweh says to, of all creatures, the ***serpent***:

“And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her seed; it (Messiah - the ultimate seed of the woman) shall bruise your head, and you (the serpent) shall bruise his HEEL.”

With respect to the image of a serpent, much, of course, has also been made of the fact that the tribe of Dan appears to have left a trail in their numerous migrations throughout the world, a trail that can be traced and followed, indeed such as a serpent would make as it slithers along the ground. There is undoubtedly a great deal of truth to this assertion, for Dan surpassed by far all of the tribes of Israel in its ability and desire to travel, explore, and colonize, a reality that already connects this particular tribe with the sea-faring branch of Edomites who settled in on the Tyrian coast in Phoenicia.

In addition to the prophecy of the dying Jacob, Moses also spoke specific words with regard to each of the twelve tribes of Israel just prior to his own death. They are recorded in Deuteronomy 33. Moses' sayings in this chapter are usually regarded as blessings pronounced upon the various clans, and indeed, for most part, they are. You will note, for instance, in verse 6, that it is said: **“Let Reuben live, and not die; and let not his men be few,”** and in verse 7: **“Hear, Lord, the voice of Judah, and bring him unto his people: let his hands be sufficient for him; and be You a help to him from his enemies.”** In verse 8, there is a blessing given to Levi, and then to Benjamin, **“the beloved of the Lord” (v. 12)**. These are followed by a long passage regarding the good things of Joseph. Zebulon and Issachar are both told to **“rejoice”** in verse 18, and Gad is commended in verses 20-21. **“Of Naphtali he said, O Naphtali, satisfied with favor, and**

full with the blessing of the Lord” (v. 23), and “of Asher...Let Asher be blessed with children; let him be acceptable to his brethren, and let him dip his foot in oil” (v. 24).

Every single one of these 11 tribes received positive comments and blessings from God through His servant Moses, even though most of the people were never really all that faithful. Still, Yahweh had a special place in His heart for Israel, and He foresaw good things that would eventually befall the people

Of course, the obvious omission at this point is the tribe of Dan. He receives just a single short sentence from the mouth of Moses, and what a contrast it is from all the rest of the tribes. In verse 22, we read:

“And of Dan he said, Dan is a LION’S WHELP: he shall leap from BASHAN.”

Not another word is spoken with respect to the Danites. No blessing is given, nothing positive is stated. Dan is the only tribe in all of Israel that failed to be accommodated under the Mosaic blessing. Instead, we are told that Dan is compared to a *young lion*, and that he will *leap from Bashan*, neither statement of which seems to make all that much sense to most readers of the Bible. There is, however, meaning to the words of Moses that we need to consider in our study.

The reference to Dan being a *lion’s whelp* should have a familiar ring to it, for in the previously referenced passage in Genesis 49, Jacob used the identical expression to describe the tribe of Judah (Gen. 49:9). The root word for *whelp* in the Hebrew means *to turn aside, to gather for hostile purposes*. If the promised Messiah was predicted to come through the line of Judah, and He is the true *Lion* (Rev. 5:5), then what are we to make of Dan in this regard? If the true *lion* does not descend through Dan, then what *lion* does? The answer may be found in the simple, well-known passage that reads:

“Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the DEVIL, as a roaring LION, walks about, seeking whom he may devour” (I Pet. 5:8).

It appears that the tribe of Dan was particularly despised and highly criticized by the tribe of Judah, and that enmity between these two people began early on in their history. As we have previously noted, Dan came to be considered the lowliest of the clans of Israel, and none thought of the Danites in this light more than those of Judah. Indeed, Moses’ words concerning Dan may contain in them a veiled hint that something dreadful would be associated with this tribe in the future.

THE SPECTER OF THE ANTICHRIST!

The notion that, as the true Messiah would be the Lion of Judah, so the false Messiah would be connected with the lion of Dan. It is, in fact, quite ancient and was taken most seriously by a number of the elder Jewish scholars, as well as many of the early New Testament Church leaders. For instance, Hippolytus, the most prolific ecclesiastical writer of the pre-Constantine era, and an avowed opponent of the Roman Popes Zephyrinus and Callistus, makes the following deduction concerning the prophecies against Dan:

“Mark these words of Jacob which were spoken to Judah, and are fulfilled in the Lord. To the same effect, moreover, does the patriarch express himself regarding Antichrist. Wherefore, as he prophesied with respect to Judah, so did he also with respect to his son Dan. For Judah was his fourth son; and Dan, again, was his seventh son. And what, then, did he say of him? ‘Let Dan be a serpent sitting by the way, that bites the horse’s heel?’ And what serpent was there but the deceiver from the beginning, he who is named in Genesis, he who deceived Eve, and bruised Adam in the heel?...And again, Moses says: ‘Dan is a lion’s whelp, and he shall leap from Bashan.’ And that no one may fall into the mistake of thinking that this is spoken of our Savior, let him attend to this. ‘Dan,’ says he, ‘is a lion’s whelp;’ and by thus naming the tribe of Dan as the one whence the accuser is destined to spring, he made the matter in hand quite clear. For as Christ is born of the tribe of Judah, so Antichrist shall be born of the tribe of Dan. And as our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, the Son of God, was spoken of in prophecy as a lion on account of His royalty and glory, in the same manner also has the Scripture prophetically described the accuser as a lion, on account of his tyranny and violence. For in every respect that deceiver seeks to make himself appear like the Son of God. Christ is a lion, and Antichrist is a lion...The Savior was manifested as a lamb; and he too will appear as a lamb, while he is a wolf within. The Savior was circumcised, and he in like manner will appear in circumcision. The Savior sent apostles unto all the nations, and he in like manner will send false apostles. Christ gathered together the dispersed sheep, and he in like manner will gather together the dispersed people of the Hebrews. Christ gave to those who believed on Him the honorable and life-giving cross, and he in like manner will give his own sign. Christ appeared in the form of a man, and he in like manner will come forth in the form of a man. Christ arose from among the Hebrews, and he will spring from among the Jews (Hebrews). Christ displayed His flesh like a temple, and raised it up on the third day; and he too will raise up again the temple of stone in Jerusalem. And these deceits fabricated by him will become quite intelligible to those who listen to us attentively, from what shall be set forth next in order” (Hippolytus, *A Discourse on the End of the World, and on the Antichrist, and on the Second Coming of our Lord Jesus Christ*, XVIII, XIX, XX).

This perhaps may seem like quite an extraordinary conclusion for Hippolytus to draw concerning the tribe of Dan, but he was certainly not alone in making such a contention. His mentor, Irenaeus, Bishop of Lyon, also held the same view. Writing in his famous *Against Heresies*, he says:

"Moreover, another danger, by no means trifling, shall overtake those who falsely presume that they know the name of Antichrist. For if these men assume one [number], when this [Antichrist] shall come having another, they will be easily led away by him, as supposing him not to be the expected one, who must be guarded against...This, too, the apostle affirms: 'When they shall say, Peace and safety, then sudden destruction shall come upon them.' And Jeremiah does not merely point out his sudden coming, but he even indicates the tribe from which he shall come, where he says, 'We shall hear the voice of his swift horses from Dan; the whole earth shall be moved by the voice of the neighing of his galloping horses: he shall also come and devour the earth, and the fulness thereof, the city also, and they that dwell therein.' This, too, is the reason that this tribe is not reckoned in the Apocalypse along with those which are saved" (*Against Heresies*, V, 30, 1-2).

Note in this passage that Irenaeus makes reference to yet another prophecy concerning the tribe of Dan, one that we have yet to investigate. Let's take a look at it in Jeremiah 8. In a stinging denunciation of Judah's sinfulness, God promises to bring great destruction upon the land. That the dire words of the prophet had an initial fulfillment anciently is undeniable, but, like many Biblical predictions, this one appears to have a latter-day application as well. Jeremiah writes:

“At that time...death shall be chosen rather than life...Yea, the stork in the heaven knows her appointed times...but my people know not the judgment of the Lord...Therefore will I give their wives unto others, and their fields...from the prophet even unto the priest every one deals falsely. For they have healed the hurt of the daughter of my people slightly, saying, Peace, peace; when there is no peace...I will surely consume them, says the Lord...Why do we sit still? Assemble yourselves, and let us enter into the defended cities, and let us be silent there: for the Lord our God has put us to silence, and given us water of gall to drink, because we have sinned against the Lord. We looked for peace, but no good came; and for a time of health, and behold trouble! The snorting of his horses was heard from DAN: the whole land trembled at the sound of the neighing of his strong ones; for they are come, and have devoured the land, all that is in it; the city, and those that dwell therein. For, behold, I will send SERPENTS, cockatrices, among you, which will not be charmed, and they shall bite you, says the Lord...When I would comfort myself against sorrow, my heart is faint in me...Is there no BALM IN GILEAD; is there no physician there? Why then is not the health of the daughter of my people recovered” (Jer. 8).

Within the context of a possible end-time prophetic scenario, these words could well be an indication that the great destroyer whom God will bring against His people will come forth from the tribe of Dan. The immediately following reference to serpents in verse 17 also would have a direct and strong connection to Dan, since, as we have already read, Jacob was led to use the symbol of the snake with respect to what would befall Dan in the latter days (Gen. 49:16-18).

In addition, Jeremiah's plaintive cry, **“Is there no balm in Gilead?” (V. 22)**, would seem to be a reference to the Messiah, indeed the returning Messiah, giving us something of an indication that this prophecy may well have end-time implications. In this regard, Jeremiah's question lines up well with Jacob's statement at the end of his prediction concerning Dan. After uttering the prophecy that Dan would **“judge Israel,”** and be **“a serpent in the way” (Gen. 49:16-17)**, the aged patriarch makes the following statement:

“I have waited for Your salvation, O Lord” (Gen. 49:18).

Given the fact that Jacob expressly states in the beginning of the chapter that the words he is speaking are for the *latter-days* (Gen. 49:1), his saying in verse 18 with respect to the **“salvation of the Lord,”** seems a virtual parallel to Jeremiah's question regarding the **“balm in Gilead,”** since they both come at the mention of the tribe of Dan, and both appear to be references to the return of the Messiah as the only hope for Israel.

In a somewhat similar and very likely related prophecy, Jeremiah again mentions Dan. In chapter 4, beginning in verse 4, we read:

“Circumcise yourselves to the Lord, and take away the foreskins of your heart...lest My fury come forth like fire...Blow the trumpet in the land; cry, gather together...Set up the standard toward Zion...for I will bring evil from the NORTH, and a great destruction. The LION is come up from his thicket, and the destroyer of the Gentiles is on his way; he is gone forth from his place to make your land desolate...Behold, he shall come up as clouds, and his chariots shall be as a whirlwind: his horses are swifter than EAGLES. Woe unto us, for we are spoiled!...For a voice declares from DAN, and publishes affliction from Mount Ephraim. Make you mention of the nations; behold, publish against Jerusalem, that watchers come from a far country, and give out their voice against the cities of Judah...How long shall I see the standard, and hear the sound of the trumpet?” (Jer. 4:4-7, 13, 15-16, 21).

Note the mention on two occasions of the *standard*. Note also that the prophesied destruction comes from the *north*. The standard of Dan, according to Numbers 2:25 was situated on the *north side*. Combined with the direct reference to Dan in verse 15 this prophecy becomes quite compelling, and appears to dovetail with Jeremiah’s aforementioned prediction concerning Dan in chapter 8. In addition, the adversary in this instance is described as a *lion*. This cannot, of course, be a reference to Judah, and within the context of the 12 tribes of Israel at least, would be applicable to Dan. Even the use of the term *eagles* in verse 13 is somewhat evocative of Dan, whose sign anciently was the eagle, the last of the four cherubic faces (man, lion, ox, and eagle - Ezek. 1:10; Rev. 4:7).

Ephraem the Syrian, writing around 373 A.D., states the following concerning the Antichrist:

"At the end of the world at the final consummation . . . suddenly the gates of the north shall be opened... They will destroy the earth, and there will be none able to stand before them. After one week of that sore affliction (tribulation), they will all be destroyed in the plain of Joppa . . .Then will the son of perdition appear, of the seed and of the tribe of Dan . . .He will go into Jerusalem and will sit upon a throne in the Temple saying, 'I am the Christ,' and he will be borne aloft by legions of devils like a king and a lawgiver, naming himself God" (*On the Last Times, the Antichrist, and the End of the World*).

This same sense was also shared by St. Methodius of Olympus, who lived and wrote from about 250-311 A.D. Here is a short excerpt on the subject:

“When the son of perdition appears, he will be of the tribe of Dan, according to the prophecy of Jacob. This enemy of religion will use a diabolic art to produce many false miracles, such as causing the blind to see, the lame to walk, and the deaf to hear. Those possessed with demons will be exorcised. He will deceive many and, if he could, as our Lord has said, even the faithful elect. Even the Antichrist will enter Jerusalem, where he will enthrone himself in the temple as a god (even though he will be an ordinary man of the tribe of Dan to which Judas Iscariot also belonged)” (*Dan: A Type of the Antichrist*).

As a final comment on this aspect of the tribe of Dan, we read a passage from *The Jewish Encyclopedia*’s online edition:

"Dan became the very type of evil-doing. He was placed to the north (Num. ii. 25), this being the region of darkness and evil (Jer. i. 14), because of his idolatry which

wrapped the world in darkness (Num. R. ii.). Still further goes a tradition which identifies the serpent and the lion (Gen. xlix. 17 and Deut. xxxiii. 22) with Belial (see the literature in Bousset's "Antichrist," 1895, pp. 87, 113). Irenæus ("Adversus Hæreses," v. 302), Hippolytus ("De Christo et Antichristo," pp. 14, 15), and other Church fathers have a tradition, which can not but be of Jewish origin, that the Antichrist comes from the tribe of Dan" (*The Jewish Encyclopedia.com*).

Suffice it to say that there was unquestionably a widely held belief early-on among both Jews and Christians that the prophecies concerning Dan appeared to suggest that the Antichrist would arise from this apostate tribe of Israel. And, frankly, I do not disagree that this is a strong possibility, and I say this with the full knowledge that I have also contended that the False Messiah would come from Esau's descendants. Actually, I believe that both are correct, and that there is a definitive connection between certain aspects of the tribe of Dan and at least one line of the Edomites.

DAN'S FIRST GREAT LEAP!

Although generally understood as being somewhat speculative, it does appear from the ancient records that at least a segment of the tribe of Dan may have been the first of the Israelites to migrate beyond the confines of the early boundaries. So early, in fact, that their initial departure can be traced all the way back to the time of the Exodus itself, and perhaps even before that.

Looking back into the annals of ancient history, we come upon the testimony of the Egyptian chronicler Hecataeus of Abdera. Writing during the reign of Ptolemy I, Hecataeus records a remarkable story that is nothing less than that of the Israelite Exodus from Egypt. The following is a most significant excerpt from his account:

"Once, when a PESTILENCE had broken out in Egypt, the cause of the visitation was generally ascribed to the ANGER OF THE GODS. As MANY STRANGERS dwelled in Egypt, and observed DIFFERENT CUSTOMS in religion and sacrifice, it came to pass that the hereditary worship of the gods was being given up in Egypt. The Egyptians, therefore, were of opinion that they would obtain no alleviation of the evil unless they REMOVED THE PEOPLE OF FOREIGN EXTRACTION. When they were driven out, the noblest and bravest part of them, as some say, under noble and renowned leaders, DANAUS and Cadmus, came to HELLES (GREECE); but the great bulk of them migrated into the land, not far removed from Egypt, which is now called JUDEA. These emigrants were led by Moses, who was most distinguished among them for wisdom and bravery" (Dr. Max Duncker, *The History of Antiquity*, I:456-466).

This is a striking bit of history with regard to certain Israelites under the leadership of one DANAUS splitting from the other tribes at or about the time of the Exodus, and striking out across the Mediterranean Sea to the area of Greece! The followers of Danaus were known as the DANAAN. You will recall from the first section of this article that pertinent historical data also confirms that elements of the Edomites also traveled early on to the Aegean islands and to Greece proper. Indeed, as we will come more and more to

see, the activities of these two related peoples, cousins in fact, become more and more intertwined as the centuries unfold.

Another well-respected early historian is Diodorus of Sicily. He composed a 40-volume history of world, and includes the following very similar information regarding the tribe of Dan:

“They say also that those who set forth with DANAUS, likewise from Egypt, settled what is practically the oldest city of Greece, Argos, and that the nations of the Colchi in Pontus and that of the Jews, which lies between Arabia and Syria, were founded as colonies by certain emigrants from their country (Egypt); and this is the reason why it is a long-established institution among these peoples to circumcise their male children...the custom having been brought over from Egypt. Even the Athenians, they say, are colonists from Sais in Egypt” (*History of the World*, Bk. I, sec. 28, pp. 1-5).

The first-century Jewish historian Flavius Josephus, writing in *Against Apion*, records the history of Lysimachus of Alexandria, wherein two exoduses from Egypt are said to have occurred at or about the same time, the main one led by Moses over land, and the other by sea!

Josephus also records two separate letters that were exchanged between the Spartans in Greece and two of the Jewish high priests. First the letter from the Spartans (also called Lacedemonians):

“AREUS, KING OF THE LACEDEMONIANS, TO ONIAS, SENDS GREETINGS. We have met with a certain writing, whereby we have discovered that both the Jews and the Lacedemonians are of ONE STOCK, and are derived from the kindred of ABRAHAM. It is but just, therefore, that you, who are our brethren, should send to us about any of your concern as you please. We will also do the same thing, and esteem your concerns as our own...Demotoles, who brings you this letter, will bring your answer back to us. This letter is foursquare; and the seal is an EAGLE, with a DRAGON IN HIS CLAWS” (*Antiquities of the Jews*, Bk. 12, chapter 4, sec. 10).

Note the emphasized words in this passage. Not only did the Spartans recognize that they were descended from Abraham, they also were aware of their close relationship with the Jews in particular, indicating a direct tie-in to the tribes of Israel.

Furthermore, the last line of the letter is most telling, for it is stated as being first *foursquare*. Why say such a thing? What could it possibly mean? Although this could conceivably be a casual reference with no substantive significance, the statement is unusual and compelling enough to at least consider another credible explanation. Since king Areus admits that a family relationship existed between the Jews and the Spartans (Lacedemonians), it is intriguing that the ancient layout of the camp of Israel was also precisely *foursquare*. The lead tribes were located at the four points of the compass, as we have already covered, with Judah in the east, Reuben in the south, Ephraim in the west, and Dan in the north.

It is, however, the rest of Areus's statement that appears to seal the issue, for he says:

“This letter is foursquare; and the seal is an EAGLE WITH A DRAGON IN HIS CLAWS.”

This is an amazing declaration, since the eagle (the fourth face of the cherubim) was the sign associated with Dan, and the standard or ensign for this tribe was indeed the eagle with a serpent in its claws—precisely the description given by Areus with regard to the Greek Spartans! It would, therefore, seem a virtual certainty that the king was signifying to the Jewish high priest exactly the relationship of his people to Israel. They were Danites!

The second letter quoted by Josephus is a later reply by the Jewish high priest Jonathan to the initial Spartan correspondence, a portion of which reads as follows:

“Accordingly, as they returned, they came to Sparta, and delivered the epistle which they had received from Jonathan to them; a copy of which follows here: ‘Jonathan the high priest of the Jewish nation...to the...body of the people of Lacedemonians, send greeting...When in former times an epistle was brought to Onias, who was then our high priest, from Areus, who at that time was your king...concerning the kindred that was between us and you, we...were well pleased with Demoteles and Areus, although we did not need such a demonstration, because we were well satisfied about it from the sacred writings’” (*Ibid.*, Bk. 13, chapter 5, section 8).

The implication, if not the direct statement, of Jonathan, the high priest, is that the Jewish leaders already were aware of the family relationship among the Spartans, Jews, and other tribes of Israel, and that they knew this fact based upon the *sacred writings*. Whether or not this was intended to mean the Hebrew Scriptures themselves, or one of the other highly regarded intertestamental writings, such as I Maccabees, is uncertain. It is, however, quite possible that the Jewish scholars of that period did understand from the Old Testament that such a relationship existed. It is unfortunate that we modern students of the Bible and secular history tend to not give the ancients nearly the credit they deserve for their knowledge and understanding, which, in many instances, far exceeds our own.

It can, therefore, be positively established that at least an element of the tribe of Dan migrated by sea to Greece, during the general time-frame of the Israelite exodus from Egypt, perhaps even somewhat earlier, as certain ancient testimony, especially that of Petavius in his *History of the World*, actually puts their departure as occurring within only a few years after the death of Joseph. This presumably would have been at a juncture when the Israelites were not yet slaves in Egypt, and might well have had the freedom to leave on their own volition.

Both Greek and Irish history confirm that a contingent of the Danaans, called the *Twuatha de Danaan*, literally the *Tribe of Dan*, left Greece at a certain point, under possible duress, and migrated north via various navigable rivers to the Baltic Sea, and from there to Denmark and parts of southern Sweden, across the North Sea to Scotland, and finally Ireland. These famous journeys of the Danites are very interesting to investigate, but any full examination of them will necessarily have to remain outside the scope of this present study. For anyone interested in pursuing this subject further, there are numerous references and indeed complete written works readily available on the various migrations of the tribe of Dan.

By the time of the great Greek epic poet and historian Homer, the Greeks were commonly referred to as **DANAANS**. Homer himself uses this term almost exclusively in his writings. This should not be taken as meaning that all Greeks were descendants of Dan. The indigenous population of Greece is descended from Javan, one of the sons of Japheth, and this name is utilized throughout Jewish history as a reference to the Greeks. The invasion of Edomites, Danites, and certain other Israelite peoples did not replace the original inhabitants of the land, but merged with and co-existed with them. The arrival of these various immigrants did, however, unquestionably set the stage for the rise of the high Greek civilization with which everyone is quite familiar, and certain of them did indeed become the dominating forces in Greek history from around 1400 B.C. onward.

ON TO BAHSAN!

Going back to the prophecy of Moses in Deuteronomy 33, the remainder of his short prediction regarding the tribe of Dan states:

“He shall leap from BASHAN” (Deut. 33:22).

Bashan is a fairly well-known word to most Bible students. It is a place name that is somewhat indirectly referred to in the 14th chapter of Genesis. This is where the famous account of Abram’s sensational rescue of Lot is recorded, but the key point with regard to our study is found in the earlier portion of the passage. As you will recall, there was war waged between the armies of the Siddim Vale, led by Bera king of Sodom, and a huge invading force of Babylonians under the leadership of Amraphel king of Shinar, a character that appears to have been the Biblical personage known as Nimrod, the son of Cush and grandson of Noah. The eastern hordes proved too strong for the southern Canaanites, and they were subjugated for some 12 years. In the 13th year they rebelled, and in the 14th year, a second, even more massive invasion from the east occurred, precipitating a great slaughter. We read in Genesis 14:5-7:

“And in the fourteenth year came Chedorlaomer, and the kings that were with him, and smote the Rephaims in ASHTEROTH KARNAIM, and the Zuzims in Ham, and the Emims in Shaveh Kiriathaim, and the Horites in their Mount Seir, unto El-paran, which is by the wilderness. And they returned, and came to Enmishpat, which is Kadesh, and smote all the country of the Amalekites, and also the Amorites, that dwelled in Hazon-tamar.”

While these ancient geographical names may have little relevance for most people today, they do provide us with some pertinent information concerning the area known as *Bashan*. The reference to *Ashteroth Kernaim* in verse 5 pinpoints the residence of the feared Rephaim class of giants. Even though they were defeated by the massive eastern forces (reportedly almost 1,000,000 strong) in this particular battle, they were by no means destroyed, and indeed they continued to populate this same locale for hundreds of years to come, for we read in the book of Joshua with respect to the Israelite victories:

“Now these are the kings of the land, which the children of Israel smote...Sihon, king of the Amorites...and the coast of Og king of Bashan, which was of the remnant of the giants, that dwelled at Ashtaroth and at Edrei, and reigned in Mount Hermon, and in Salcah, and in all Bashan” (Josh. 12:1-2, 4-5).

Bashan comprised the territory from Gilead in the south to Mount Hermon in the north, with the Jordan River as its western boundary and Salcah on its eastern extremity. This was not a part of the inheritance originally granted to the tribe of Dan. In order for the prophecy of Moses to be fulfilled, it was necessary that the Danites at some point extend their influence north into Bashan, and that event is recorded for us in a most intriguing passage in Judges 17-18.

As the story begins, the tribe of Dan is not mentioned, rather it deals with a certain unknown man of Mount Ephraim named Micah. He has stolen money from his mother, and when he returns it, she takes a portion of the silver and has two idols made for her son. One need not read very far into chapter 17 before recognizing clearly that there is something gravely wrong about this situation. Already, we see deception, theft, and idolatry in place. The mother, in fact, had already dedicated the silver to Yahweh on her son's behalf, with which to make graven images (v. 3), so both mother and son are in gross violation of the Torah.

Micah, however, becomes much more deeply entrenched in idolatry, for we read in verse 5:

“And the man Micah had a HOUSE OF GODS, and made an EPHOD, and a TERAPHIM, and consecrated one of his sons, who became HIS PRIEST. In those days, there was no king in Israel, but every man did that which was right in his own eyes” (Judg. 17:5-6).

Not only do we encounter the issue of idolatry in this chapter, we also should take note that it is connected in this case with Mount Ephraim and the area in the northern part of the land of Canaan. Of course, this early period was long before the division of the United Monarchy, but Mount Ephraim would eventually be the ruling center of the northern kingdom of Samaria, and even at such an ancient date it is already associated with the sin of idolatry, something for which it would become notorious, leading ultimately to its destruction.

Next, we are told in verse 7 of a certain young man, a Levite from Bethlehem-Judah, who is on a journey searching apparently for a place where he can settle down and serve in his Levitical capacity. Immediately we sense something is rotten, because it was not the customary procedure in Israel for Levites to just wander around the countryside looking for work. In addition, Bethlehem-Judah was not one of the designated Levitical cities according to the Torah commands. There were 48 of them throughout the land, giving the entire population relatively easy access to their services. It is even questionable as to whether or not this man, whose name was Jonathan, was a legitimate Levite at all, since his lineage, given in Judges 18:30, appears to come through the tribe of Manasseh, rather than Levi:

“And the children of Dan set up the graven image: and Jonathan, the son of Gershom, the son of *Manasseh*, he and his sons were priests to the tribe of Dan.”

Since Manasseh was not of the priestly line, this could be a mistranslation, as some have suggested, and perhaps was originally intended to state that Jonathan was descended from Moses, a Levite, since only a slight addition to the Hebrew is required to alter the name to Manasseh.

This wandering *Levite*, so obviously out of God's will, happens to come upon Micah's house in Mount Ephraim. When Micah discovers who he really is, or at least claims to be, he is jubilant, and immediately offers the man money, clothing, and food as payment for him becoming his own personal priest. In fact, the exact expression uttered by Micah to the young man is:

“Dwell with me, and be unto me a FATHER and a PRIEST...So the Levite went in” (Judg. 17:10).

We must realize that Micah is not asking this man to be as a physical parent unto him, for the next verse plainly tells us:

“And the Levite was content to dwell with the man; and the young man was unto him (Micah) as one of his SONS” (v. 11).

Clearly, therefore, Micah is much older than Jonathan. Indeed, it would appear that the exact opposite situation developed, whereby the young man actually became as one of Micah's own sons. That being the case, what does he mean by requesting that the Levite become a *father* to him? I would suggest that this is to be understood in a religious sense of the term. We all are quite familiar with the title *father* as it is applied by ecclesiastical institutions. That typically Roman Catholic word, however, long pre-dates the founding of that church organization. It was only borrowed from much earlier pagan sources, one of which we can read about in the 17th chapter of Judges!

And so this corrupt would-be Levite lands a paying job as Micah's personal hired priest, and you just have to know by Micah's reaction what his real motives actually are in the entire matter, when you read the following verse:

“Then said Micah, Now know I that the Lord will do me good, seeing I have a Levite to my priest” (Judg. 17:13).

Now enter the tribe of Dan into this unusual, almost bizarre story. The Danites needed land, because their inheritance bordered one of Israel's perpetual enemies, the Philistines, and they were unable to fully conquer the territory and route the Canaanites. So five spies are dispatched to search for a place where the residue of the people can settle, and in their journeying the Danite contingent happens by Micah's house in Mount Ephraim. Recognizing the young Levite's voice, the men stop and inquire as to why he is there. When Jonathan reveals unto them what has transpired, they are glad, because, you see, these men of Dan had the same corrupt motives as did the Levite. They wanted to get something from God without obeying Him. Note their response to him:

“And they said unto him, Ask counsel, we pray you, of God, that we may know whether our way which we go shall be prosperous” (Judg. 18:5).

They too were far more interested in getting what was their's, and perhaps even what wasn't their's, than they were in worshiping and serving the true God as He had

commanded them to do. They were willing to sell themselves into idolatry in order to secure the blessings of the gods. And so, they appropriated the services of the young Levite, enticing him to leave Micah, and become their priest, indeed the priest for all the land-dwelling Danites, an offer the money-grubbing cleric simply couldn't refuse!

When Micah protested their action, the Danites explained the *facts of life* to the hapless Ephraimite, who suddenly decided it was a whole lot better to be without a personal religious shrine, complete with his own priest, and remain alive, than it was to push the issue any farther and end up dead! Jonathan the Levite quickly accepted the offer and blessed the Danite warriors, who grabbed up the graven image, the ephod, the teraphim, and the molten image, and with the priest in tow, absconded with them northward in search of a people whom they could easily victimize, and whose land they could confiscate for themselves.

Their objective was not long in being achieved, for they happened upon the peaceful little village of Laish. It was an unarmed, undefended city, and ripe for the taking. The Danite soldiers ambushed the helpless citizens of Laish, slew them with the sword, and proceeded to burn the town to the ground, demonstrating two of the inherent traits of Dan and his descendants—trickery and violence.

A third negative characteristic of this tribe also became immediately evident, indeed if it wasn't already well accounted for among the Danites, for we read in Judges 18:29-31 the following insightful information regarding this incident:

“And they took the things which Micah had made, and the priest which he had, and came unto Laish, unto a people that were at quiet and secure: and they smote them with the edge of the sword, and burnt the city with fire. And there was no deliverer, because it was far from Sidon, and they had no business with any man...And they built a city, and dwelled therein. And they called the name of the city Dan, after the name of Dan their father (a proclivity of this particular tribe)...And the children of Dan set up the graven image: and Jonathan, the son of Gershom, the son of Manasseh (pos. Moses), he and his sons were priests to the tribe of Dan UNTIL THE DAY OF THE CAPTIVITY OF THE LAND. And they set them up Micah's graven image, which he made, ALL THE TIME THAT THE HOUSE OF GOD WAS IN SHILOH.”

The city of Laish, destroyed by the invading Danites, was located in the extreme upper Jordan Valley, north of the Sea of Galilee. The residue of the tribe of Dan settled along the various tributaries that fed into the Jordan River at the base of Mt. Hermon. This area marked the northernmost point in all of Israel, and the expression **“from Dan to Beersheba”** (Judg. 20:1; I Sam. 3:20; II Sam. 3:10, 24:2; I Kgs. 4:24, et. al.) became a common saying among the Israelites, descriptive language indicating the boundaries of the land from north to south.

The problems associated with Dan are quite evident just in this single incident involving the destruction of Laish. Perhaps the most significant of them all was the fact that the tribe of Dan embraced idolatry and false worship more readily than any of the other children of Israel (though all were eventually guilty of doing so to one degree or another). In many respects, the willingness of the Danites to adopt strange gods and other religions in place of the worship of Yahweh, and to quickly establish a base of operations for the development of their idolatrous practices, proved very enticing to many of their fellow

Israelites. Dan, in essence, became the facilitator of paganism for the children of Israel, and as such, the main polluter of God's way among the people.

The choice of territory in which the Danites ultimately settled is, in itself, quite strategic. First of all, it put them as far away as possible from the rest of the nation, and especially from Shiloh, where the center of Yahweh-worship in Israel was situated at this time in their history. In positioning themselves in this fashion, they were subjected to great temptation by the heathen societies to the north and west. Inevitably, given their location, they came under the influence of the people about whom we have already learned so much—the Edomite Phoenicians.

In aligning themselves with the descendants of Esau, the Danites in effect became the avowed enemies of Yahweh and the true Messiah that was to come through Jacob and Judah. Esau vowed to kill his brother to whom he had sold the birthright, and to regain what he had lost through the treachery of Jacob. From this early conflict stems the great struggle between the descendants of these two individuals. Not only did the false worship center established in northern Israel by the Danites for hundreds of years vie directly with Shiloh for the spiritual allegiance of the people, there is evidence that this evil system may have had a direct connection with the crucifixion of Yahshua, for we read in that famous Messianic passage of Psalms 22:

“My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?...Be not far from me; for trouble is near; for there is none to help. Many bulls have compassed me: strong BULLS OF BASHAN have beset me round. They gaped upon me with their mouths, as a ravening and a roaring lion” (Psa. 22:1, 11-13).

We know for a fact that at least the opening words of this Psalm were indeed specifically spoken by the Messiah while hanging on the cross. It is very plausible that some of the other verses were also quoted by the Savior on this horrible occasion. Whether this is so or not, the 22nd Psalm is unquestionably about the dying Messiah. Note it is said that **“strong bulls of Bashan”** were present at the crucifixion, and that they uttered slurs at Christ as He hung suffering and dying on the cross. Bashan, the area to which Dan migrated, was famous for its strong bulls, and in this instance, they are used as a symbol for the enemies of Messiah, indeed, the very ones perhaps most responsible for His death. This statement may have far greater implications and repercussions than are normally attached to it.

Who were these *bulls of Bashan*? Don't forget who called this part of the country their home. By the first century A.D., that region was populated with Danites and Edomites. Is it possible that this combination in some way was responsible for the murder of Yahshua? Wasn't it a segment of the Jewish religious leadership that fomented the plot to kill the Savior? Well, that is certainly what the Bible indicates, although there were certainly other conspirators involved. Was this signal event orchestrated by higher powers than the chief priests, scribes, and elders, who served only as puppets in the matter? Or had the religious power elite of first-century Judea become infiltrated by men of questionable ethnic and moral background, indeed men who descended from the avowed enemies of the true Jewish people? These are serious questions for anyone seeking the full truth and a deeper understanding of how this world has been shaped by the hands of evil powers willing to literally strike a deal with the devil.

When the Messiah looked at those assembled around the crucifixion site, He knew within Himself the identification and true nature of the ones who had plotted against Him. Remember that it was originally Esau's sworn pledge to kill his brother Jacob. Doing so would have cut off the righteous line of Abraham and Isaac that was destined to bring forth the Christ into the world, the very essence of the birthright blessing that Esau despised, trading it to Jacob for a bowl of mere red pottage.

Were there descendants of Esau present in first-century Judea? Of course, we already know this to be a well-documented historical fact. Were there descendants of Esau in first-century Judea who had converted to the religion of the Jews? Certainly, because the Jewish high priest John Hyrcanus had waged war against the Idumeans some 140+ years earlier, compelling them to adopt Judaism, including submission to circumcision. In many, if not most, respects, these Edomite converts were essentially indistinguishable from their Jewish cousins, and had become totally absorbed into the fabric of first-century Judean society. Were there descendants of Esau who were in positions of power within first-century Judea, and who would have been enemies of Yahshua? Absolutely, the Herodian dynasty of kings was Idumean and thus Edomite in its ancestry. We all remember that, upon consultation with the rabbinic authorities regarding the anticipated birth of the Messiah, Herod the Great, shortly prior to his death, issued the most infamous royal decree ever, commanding all Jewish males two years of age and under to be slaughtered. Indeed, it was Herod Antipas who later had John the Baptist beheaded, and who, along with his men, mocked and ridiculed the Savior just prior to his death on the cross. And it was Herod Agrippa I who, according to Acts 12:1-3, persecuted the early believers in Jerusalem, including incarcerating the apostle Peter, and murdering James, the brother of John.

In addition to the Herods and their Edomite cohorts, there is another factor that we should consider with respect to the possible involvement of the tribe of Dan in the death of the Messiah, and this concerns Judas Iscariot, the one who betrayed and sold out Yahshua to the conspiring religious authorities. You may not have viewed Judas quite from the following perspective, but I believe you will find it quite intriguing.

First of all, as noted in an earlier installment of this study, there appears to be a very closely related pattern between the tribes of Israel and the original apostles. The most obvious similarity is that there were precisely 12 of each. In addition, we have covered more than ample evidence that one of the 12 tribes became apostate, and that this tribe was clearly Dan. In like manner, there was one of the 12 apostles that was an apostate, and that was Judas Iscariot. Moreover, the apostate tribe of Dan was prophesied to be as a serpent that bites the heel of the horse, causing the rider to fall backward, and he is presented as one who will betray his own people Israel. Identically, Judas became the betrayer of Christ.

With regard to Dan and the evil action of the serpent, we are compelled to recall the ancient prediction of Genesis 3:15, a direct reference to the death of the Messiah at the hand of the serpent's seed, which reads:

“And I will put enmity between you (serpent) and the woman, and between your (serpent's) seed and her seed (Messiah); it shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise His heel (typical of Christ's death).”

Although clearly understandable on more than one level, this prophecy could quite feasibly apply to the betrayal of Yahshua by Judas. That he should be described as a *seed of the serpent* is easily acceptable, since we are told that Satan himself entered Judas Iscariot (Jn. 13:27), not to mention the plain fact that he was guilty of the single most dastardly deed in all of history! It is also telling that the Savior was literally wounded in the heel, due to the spikes being driven through his feet.

Aside from this very interesting pattern of similarity between Dan within the 12 tribes of Israel and Judas among 12 apostles, there is also another consideration. The most likely etymology for Judas' surname, *Iscariot*, is *man of Karioth*. We read in Joshua 15:60 of a place in Judah named *Kirjath-Jearim*, also rendered *Kiriath-Jearim*. Due to the false worship associated with this area, it became known as *Kiriath-Baal*. Notice, however, the passage in Judges 18, where we read about the migration of Dan into the northern part of Israel:

“And there went from thence of the family of the Danites, out of Zorah and out of Eshtaol, six hundred men appointed with weapons of war” (Judg. 18:11).

The cities of Zorah and Eshtaol were a part of Dan's original portion of the Promised Land (Josh. 19:41). The 600 Danite warriors were gathered out of these two population centers and commissioned to march northward to Laish, the defenseless Sidonian city, and take it captive. As the Danite contingent moved toward the north, we read:

“And they went up, and pitched in Kiriath-Jearim, in Judah” (Judg. 18:12).

As you can easily determine, this is the same city of Judah that was mentioned just a few paragraphs earlier. Now note what is said next:

“Wherefore they called that place Mananeh-Dan unto this day: behold, it is behind Kiriath-Jearim” (Judg. 18:12b).

Now what does all of this information mean with regard to our study? The city of Kiriath-Jearim was apparently a border town, in close proximity to, if not on the very boundary itself, between the territory allotted to Judah and Dan. The Danites pitched their camp just to the west of Kiriath-Jearim, and, as they were wont to do, named the place after their father, calling it *Mahaneh-Dan*. So what we have here is the city of Kiriath-Jearim in Judah situated directly across the border from Mahaneh-Dan. Although named after the patriarch Dan by the Danites themselves, the area of Mahaneh-Dan actually came to be considered as the Dan sector of Kiriath-Jearim. In other words, by the time of the first century A.D., there were really two *Kiriaths*, one in Dan, and the other just across the line in Judah. Interestingly, the plural for *Kiriath* is *Kirioths*. In effect, therefore, the name *Judas Iscariot* actually can be translated *Judas of the two Kirioths*. The usage of the plural in the case of Judas indicates that he was most likely from the Danite *Kiriath*, otherwise the singular would have been employed, as was normally done, since the Jewish *Kiriath* was the more prominent of the two settlements.

Aside from the foregoing information with regard to the connection between Dan and Judas, please recall that the tribe of Dan is glaringly omitted in the allocation of the 144,000 in Revelation 7. This, of course, is an end-time reference, and most likely is related to Dan's part in the betrayal of Israel. In other words, just as Judas Iscariot (*Judas the Danite*)

double-crossed the Messiah and was eliminated from the apostolic ranks, so the latter-day betrayer of Israel, the tribe of Dan, is also left out of those who are sealed.

In many respects, just as the end-time descendants of Dan, or a portion thereof, can be seen with reference to the predicted Anti-Christ, so can Judas Iscariot. Remember that there are only two individuals in all of Scripture that are called the *son of perdition*, an especially denigrating term, and they are Judas himself and the Anti-Christ (Cf. Jn. 17:12 & II Thess. 2:3). And, as mentioned earlier, the only two Scriptural instances of Satan personally possessing a human being are Judas Iscariot (Jn. 13:27) and the Anti-Christ (II Thess. 2:8-9; Rev. 16:13).

And finally, Judas, Dan, and the end-time figure known as the Anti-Christ can all be seen as related in the 55th Psalm. Although I realize that this may not be the commonly accepted application of this passage, I think you will agree that it is indeed appropriate. This psalm is a complaint by king David on the occasion of his having been betrayed:

“Give ear to my prayer, O God; and hide not Yourself from my supplication...because of the oppression of the wicked...My heart is sore pained within me: and the terrors of death are fallen upon me. Fearfulness and trembling are come upon me, and horror has overwhelmed me” (Psa. 55:1, 3-5).

Compare these poignant words with the plaintive cries of the Messiah at the time surrounding His arrest and crucifixion:

“So also Christ glorified not Himself...who in the days of His flesh, when He had offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto Him that was able to save Him from death, and was heard in that He feared” (Heb. 5:5).

“And He took with Him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, and began to be sorrowful and very heavy. Then says He unto them, My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death” (Matt. 26:37-38).

“And being in an agony He prayed more earnestly” (Lk. 22:44).

Next, David pours out his inner wish that he could escape the terror he was facing, saying:

“Oh that I had wings like a dove! For then would I fly away, and be at rest. Lo, then would I wander far off...I would hasten my escape from the windy storm and tempest” (Psa. 55:6-8).

These words parallel quite well the pleas of Yahshua in the Garden of Gethsemane when the Scriptures state:

“And He went forward a little, and fell on the ground, and prayed that, if it were possible, the hour might pass from Him. And He said, Abba, Father, all things are possible unto You; take away this cup from Me” (Mk. 14:35-36).

Then David reveals the source of his horror—he has been betrayed, but notice how he characterizes his betrayer:

“For it was not an enemy that reproached me; then I could have borne it...But it was you, a man like me, my guide (Heb. *chief friend, familiar*) and my acquaintance” (Psa. 55:12-13).

Of course, with respect to our Savior, we know that the very next event to transpire on that fateful night was, upon arising from prayer, his confrontation with Judas Iscariot and the band of conspirators, which, like David, constitutes His own betrayal, not by aliens, but rather by apostates from within. David then says of his own *Judas*:

“We took sweet counsel together, and walked unto the house of God in company” (Psa. 55:14).

And we read in the case of Christ these similar words:

“And while He yet spoke, lo, Judas, one of the twelve, came, and with him...the chief priests and elders of the people. Now he that betrayed Him gave them a sign, Whomsoever I shall kiss, the same is he; hold him fast...And Jesus said unto him, Friend, why are you come?...In that same hour said Jesus unto the multitudes, Are you come out as against a thief...for to take Me? I sat daily with you teaching in the Temple, and you laid no hold on Me” (Matt. 26:47-48, 50, 55).

David then concludes his petition by uttering words that are directly applicable both to Judas Iscariot, as well as to the end-time Anti-Christ:

“He has put forth his hands against such as be at peace with him; he has BROKEN HIS COVENANT. The words of his mouth were smoother than butter, but war was in his heart” (Psa. 55:20-21).

Note here that David’s betrayer, he says, has “**broken his covenant**,” and that his words were “**soft...but war was in his heart**.” Are these statements not reminiscent of Daniel’s prophecies regarding the Anti-Christ, when he says:

“And he (the evil prince to come) shall confirm a COVENANT with many for one week: and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and oblation to cease, on the wing of the Temple he will set the abomination of desolation” (Dan. 9:27).

“Near the end of their kingdoms...an insolent king, skilled in intrigue, will come to the throne...He will cause deceit to prosper through his cunning and by his influence, and in his own mind he will make himself great. In a time of peace, he will destroy many; he will even stand against the Prince of princes” (Dan. 8:23, 25).

“At the appointed time he (*Anti-Christ*) will come again to the South...On his return, he will favor those who abandon the HOLY COVENANT. His forces will rise and desecrate the Temple fortress. They will abolish the daily sacrifice and set up the abomination of desolation. With flattery he will corrupt those who act wickedly toward the covenant” (Dan. 11:29-32).

That the Anti-Christ should arise from among the tribes of Israel ought not be all that shocking, not only in view of the material that we have already covered, but also with respect to other specific prophecies such as the following from the book of Daniel. Concerning this evil end-time ruler, we read:

“Neither shall he regard the GOD OF HIS FATHERS...But in His stead shall he honor the God of forces: and a god whom HIS FATHERS KNEW NOT shall he honor with gold and silver...Thus shall he do in the most strongholds with a STRANGE GOD” (Dan. 11:37-39).

Note carefully the phrase **“God of his fathers.”** This is an Hebraic idiom, indicating that the Anti-Christ will almost surely be someone whose ancestors knew Yahweh, the true God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, known collectively as *the fathers*. Under virtually any circumstance, this would be considered a reference to his being, in some fashion, of Israel. As our study becomes more focused on the latter days, we will be looking in greater detail at the predicted Anti-Christ deriving from and ultimately betraying Israel. For the present, however, let us return to our discussion of the historical aspects of Edom and Dan.

The predictable merging of the descendants of two patriarchs shouldn't really be all that surprising, especially if we consider some of the numerous similarities between the two houses. The most obvious is that they shared a close family relationship, since Esau was Dan's uncle. From the beginning, they both were considered lower in God's eyes, as well as those of the rest of the peoples. They were, in effect, both rejects! They were also very much alike in character, as both exhibited the traits of craftiness, secrecy, deception, and violence, not to mention, of course, a strong penchant for the most despicable sort of religious practices imaginable!

In addition, factions both of the Danites and the Edomites took to plying the high seas. Not only did the earliest migration of any Israelite people occur within the tribe of Dan--they migrated by ship, rather than by land--but we also observe rather early in the period of the Judges that the remainder of the Danites, who carved out their own place in the north, also took to shipbuilding and sailing, for we read in Judges 5 an excerpt from the magnificent Song of Deborah, composed upon the occasion of Israel's great victory over Sisera and the Canaanites, that states:

“Gilead abode beyond Jordan: and why did Dan remain in SHIPS?” (Judg. 5:17).

Even at this early date, the Danites were known as mariners. Note also that the Song of Deborah seems to be chiding Dan for his lack of participation in the war against Jabin and Sisera, yet another indicator that this particular tribe had much higher priorities on its agenda than the purposes of God and the welfare of their fellow Israelites.

Dan's seafaring tendencies and abilities were a perfect fit with their Edomite/Canaanite cousins in Tyre and Sidon, who had mastered the art of maritime activities from their years of sailing and commerce in the south, on the Red Sea, the Persian Gulf, and the Indian Ocean. The merging of Edomite and Danite sailors, along with certain of the native Canaanites, provided the basis for the great Phoenician civilization that became renowned as the world's greatest seafaring peoples. This would prove to be a boon to many nations, as the Phoenician ships plied the open seas conducting trade, exploration, and colonization throughout the whole earth. It is by no means an exaggeration to say that these Danite-led mariners sailed to the remotest parts of the globe, far beyond what conventional later historians would give them credit for doing. In more modern times, research and discovery has proven the prowess of these ancient sailors. They were the

first to explore fully the Mediterranean Sea, and sail through the Pillars of Hercules (Strait of Gibraltar, between northernmost Africa and Spain, interestingly named after the Phoenician mythological hero/god *Heracles* [Hercules], the original model for whom was most likely *Esau* himself, the founder of Tyre, and the chief deity of ancient Phoenicia.) into the Atlantic Ocean. They were the first to sail round the southern tip of Africa and into the Indian Ocean and the Orient. And they were the first to sail across the Atlantic to the Americas, hundreds and hundreds of years before the days of Christopher Columbus or the Vikings! Dr. Barry Fell, among a number of other experts, has uncovered remarkable evidence of a Danite/Edomite/Phoenician presence in the west, especially in Central and South America among the Incas and Aztec Indians, and in Mexico.

Another interesting point regarding Dan's relocation to the extreme north of Israel is that this migration placed it in close proximity to snow-capped Mount Hermon, the highest point in the land. This area has a long and mysterious history. Ancient records, stories, legends, and myths abound with regard to the unusual and even *sacred* nature of this region. With reference to the pre-Flood era, we read the following from the *Book of Enoch* regarding the signal event of Genesis 6:4:

“And it came to pass when the children of men had multiplied, that in those days were born unto them beautiful and comely daughters. And the angels, the children of heaven, saw and lusted after them, and said to one another: ‘Come, let us choose us wives from among the children of men and beget us children’...And they were in all two hundred who descended in the days of Jared on the summit of MOUNT HERMON, and they called it Mount Hermon, because they had sworn and bound themselves by mutual imprecations upon it” (Ch. 6, vv. 1-8).

This notorious incident that transpired at Mount Hermon, is recorded in even greater detail in certain of the *Dead Sea Scrolls*, in particular, *The Book of Giants*, as well as *The Book of Jubilees* and *The Book of Jasher*. In fact, this area, which became the extreme northern boundary of Israel, attained almost mythical proportions in ancient times. It is considered by most scholars to be the site of Christ's Transfiguration.

Hittite, as well as Biblical, records confirm that Mount Hermon was considered anciently as a dwelling place of the gods. Names such as *Baal-hermon*, *Baal-gad*, and even *Hermes* (*Mercury* of Roman mythology. *Hermes* is derived from the name *Hermon*), emanate from this area. The mountain became a major center of pagan religious activity, including the worship of *Pan*. The region was even known as *Paneas*. Indeed, the *Cave of Pan*, which still today dominates the foot of Mount Hermon, was known as the *passageway to Hades*.

Given just these few facts, it is hardly any wonder that, upon their entrance into the Promised Land, Yahweh gave the Israelites the following strict command:

“But of the cities of these people, which the Lord your God does give you for an inheritance, you shall SAVE ALIVE NOTHING THAT BREATHES: but you shall utterly destroy them...That they teach you not to do after all their abominations, which they have done unto their gods; so should you sin against the Lord your God” (Deut. 20:16-18).

After the time of Joshua, the people of Israel became lax and disobeyed the Almighty. In so doing, they failed to utterly destroy the Canaanites from the land, but rather began to intermarry with them, eventually succumbing to the worship of their gods. This was especially true in the northern portion of the land, and most especially true at Mount Hermon, where the tribe of Dan settled. The Danites became, in effect, the leaders of Israel's departure from the Torah and their plunge into idolatry and ultimately destruction.

Later, in the days of Jeroboam, the northern ten tribes rebelled against the House of David and separated themselves from the southern tribes of Judah and Benjamin. The almost immediate result of this division is succinctly recorded for us in I Kings 12, where we read:

“So Israel rebelled against the house of David unto this day...And Jeroboam said in his heart, Now shall the kingdom return to the house of David: If this people go up to do sacrifice in the house of the Lord at Jerusalem ...Whereupon the king took counsel, and made two calves of gold, and said unto them, It is too much for you to go up to Jerusalem: behold your gods, O Israel, which brought you up out of the land of Egypt. And he set one in Bethel, and the other he put in DAN. And this thing became a sin, for the people went to worship before the one, even unto DAN. And he made an house of high places, and made priests of the lowest of the people, which were not of the sons of Levi. And Jeroboam ordained a feast in the eighth month, on the fifteenth day of the eighth month, like unto the feast that is in Judah (*Sukkot - Feast of Tabernacles*), and he offered upon the altar” (I Kgs. 12:19-20, 26-32).

Note carefully the strategic part the area of Dan plays in this rebellion against God. The golden calf placed in Dan was situated at Mount Hermon, the historic site of pagan Canaanite worship, and the even more ancient locale of unspeakably evil pre-Flood activity that resulted in the destruction of the human race! Dan, in fact, became the center of Phoenician/Edomite Baal-worship among the nations of the Northern Kingdom of Israel.

I strongly suspect that Mount Hermon, given its very early history, whether in the form of legend, myth, or factual reportage, actually forms the basis and is the original model of the fabled *mountain of the gods*. Virtually all ancient pagan civilizations had a *sacred mountain*, almost always located in the *north*, that was deemed to be the home of the gods. By far the most famous of these is Mount Olympus in Greece, but there are numerous others in different locales and historical eras. Mount Hermon is undoubtedly the oldest of these very hallowed places, and perhaps the most significant as well. The concept of the *sacred mountain* is that it constitutes the *center of the world*, the *gateway to revelation*, and the *stairway to heaven*. Where there was no mountain, the people constructed one. The Babylonian ziggurat, such as the infamous Tower of Babel, or the Egyptian pyramids on the Giza Plateau are prime examples of such human efforts. In fact, after the Tower of Babel debacle, the area of Mount Hermon once again assumed its sacred pre-Flood significance. Indeed, the Amorite word for this mountain was *Senir* (Deut. 3:8-9), a variant of the name *Shinar*, thus evoking the location of Nimrod and the notorious incident at Babel.

Based upon the Paris Zero Meridian, which was universally used prior to the Greenwich International Zero Meridian established in 1884, Mount Hermon, interestingly enough, is located at precisely 33 degrees latitude and 33 degrees longitude! It is no accident or coincidence that Scottish Rite Freemasonry has precisely 33 degrees, the

33rd being a conferred status, rather than earned. Could some of the original foundational ideas and tenets of Freemasonry actually go back to the pre-Flood world associated with Mount Hermon, the initial *mountain of the gods* at the 33rd parallel? I believe the answer is an unqualified YES, and that is also precisely why Canaan and his descendants were drawn to this area of the world, and made it a great post-Flood center of false worship and strong demonic activity.

The Promised Land that God had reserved for His people Israel was, of course, the very part of the world chosen by the descendants of the evil Ham through his most perverted son Canaan. These peoples were divided up into numerous tribes, and their names fill the pages of the books of Joshua and Judges. How appropriate that the Canaanites established a council of **33 KINGS** who ruled over Palestine. How did they arrive at such a number? It appears to have been the avowed intent of Canaan to re-institute the pre-Flood pagan religious rites. Could the number 33 have a connection with the world prior to the Great Deluge? Certainly such a possibility exists, particularly when the fact that the area of Babylon is also situated on the 33rd degree north parallel. If this same general area had pre-Flood significance, as it did immediately after the Flood with the enterprising efforts of Nimrod, then the pagan significance of the number 33 could well have very ancient origins indeed. The most ancient texts, in fact, reveal that the spiritual hierarchy of Satan is comprised of 33 gods or demons, and is itself the ultimate basis for the esoteric significance of this specific number.

In addition, Masonic lore claims that since Jesus, who is considered as one of the Master Initiates, apparently died at the age of 33, this exact number represents the highest spiritual level which one can attain.

It is likely that Mount Hermon was originally associated with the name of *Ham*, who was also venerated and worshiped as *Thoth-Hermes*. The son of Hermes was Pan, and as mentioned earlier, Mount Hermon became the center of Pan-worship. The tribe of Dan also became devotees of the god Pan, and some of them transferred his cult to Greece, at which point he entered the pantheon of deities where he is best known to readers of Greek mythology.

Remember also the name *Paneas*, which is the ancient term for the area around the base of Mount Hermon. You won't see *Paneas* on any modern map. This area has gone through a few name changes over time. Today it is called by the Arab word *Baniyas*. In the days of the Messiah, it was known as *Caesarea Philippi*, and as such is mentioned on several occasions in the New Testament. At that time, it was part of an area called the *Decapolis*. This was not primarily a Jewish settlement, and even first-century Jews considered it far too pagan to even visit very often.

This was then and had for centuries been a center for the worship of the god Pan. There was an impressive temple built in his honor at the base of Mount Hermon. Pan was the god of nature, noted for his voracious sexual appetite. He was the lusty god, known also as *Pallas*. He was characterized as half-goat, and thus was a *satyr*, indeed the chief *satyr*, of which there were many in the ancient mythologies. The constellation Capricorn the goat-man was associated with him, even as it had been long before with Ham (Hermes) and his son Canaan (Pan), the post-Flood progenitors of the pre-Flood system of false worship, which they successfully re-established. The *unicorn* also became connected

with Pan and his cult at Mount Hermon. In fact, there is even a brief reference to this fact recorded in the 29th Psalm, which reads:

“The voice of the Lord is powerful...The voice of the Lord breaks the cedars; yea, the Lord breaks the cedars of Lebanon. He makes them also to skip like a calf; Lebanon and SIRION like a young UNICORN” (Psa. 29:4-6).

Sirion, we are told in Deuteronomy 3:9, was the Sidonian name for Mount Hermon. With respect to the alternative name *Pallas*, you might be interested to know that the root words comprising the term *Palestine* are *Pallas* and *Heth*. *Pallas* we already know was another name for the god *Pan*, whereas *Heth* was the son of Canaan, and the father of the *Hittites*. The original word was *Palesheth*. According to the *Encyclopedia of Religion*, the worship of Hermes and his son Pan at Mt. Cyllene in Arcadia was done under the name of *Phales*, which is derived from the word *phallos*, which gives us the term *phallus* or *phallic*.

The name *Hermon* itself has a reference to a *heap of stones, a landmark, a pyramid*. Interestingly, stones were often utilized in the worship of the gods. We not only see this throughout the Middle East, but indeed around the world. Stone pyramids were erected anciently in numerous civilizations, from Egypt, which is also known for its obelisks as well, to Central and South America to India. The Babylonians and Sumerians were famous for their brick and stone towers or *ziggurats*. Then there are other structures, the mysterious *stone circles* that we find in various locales from Israel itself to the most well known of all, those found in England, the most famous of all being *Stonehenge*. The European stone circles were part of the Druid religion, which sprang from the Danites who earlier had migrated to Arcadia and other parts of Greece. Many, if not most, of the stone monuments, served not only as centers of pagan worship, but were particularly aligned with the stars and planets, allowing the ancients to accurately calculate the movement of the astral bodies, virtually all the major ones of which figured prominently in their religious beliefs and practices.

Mount Hermon became popularly known as *The Forbidden Place*. It marked the northern limit of Israelite conquest in the days of Moses and Joshua. In other words, it was the sign designating the place where Moses was to stop and go no farther. Hermon and beyond were considered outside the influence and protection of the true God.

The stone heaps so often utilized in the worship system of the mystery religions were actually phallic symbols. In reality, the renaming of the Promised Land by the term *Palestine* constitutes a brash, outright statement that this was the land of *phallic-worship*, part of the very ancient pre-Flood system instigated by the *Nephilim*, and reinstated through the descendants of Ham and Canaan after the Flood. You might want to think about these historical facts when you hear this area of the world termed as *Palestine*.

Pan is also closely associated with music, and the pipe and flute most especially. Although a rather obscure reference, we find in II Samuel 24:6 a possible reference to Pan-worship being connected to the tribe of Dan. Note the following:

“Then they came to Gilead, and to the land of Tahtim-hodshi; and they came to DAN-JAAN, and about to Sidon, and come to the stronghold of Tyre” (II Sam. 24:6-7).

The place-name *Dan-jaan* is obviously named after Dan, and is clearly shown by the text to be in the extreme northern area of Israel to which the tribe of Dan migrated. The meaning of this term, however, is intriguing. Most sources render it in one of two ways, either *Dan of the woodland or forest*, or *Dan played a pipe* (Merrill C. Tenney, *Zondervan Pictorial Dictionary of the Bible*, p. 199). Both of these definitions can be viewed as having a relationship to Pan, since he was the god of nature, and thus of the forest and woodlands, and he has always been very closely associated with the musical instrument called a *pipe* or *flute*. In fact, the *pan-flute* is quite well known.

Pan-worship was transported from Mount Hermon by a segment of Danites to Arcadia in Greece. Arcadia is a very important area which will form a part of our study later in this series. Although we are getting ahead of our story, suffice it to say that not only was this the region to which the Danite/Edomite sailors eventually migrated, but Arcadia also became the home of the Sicambrian Franks, the ethnic group from which the Merovingians emerged. In fact, the likelihood is great that the descendants of Merovee, who became the first kings of the Holy Roman Empire, and were granted such title in perpetuity by the Papacy, were at least partly of Danite/Edomite extraction.

The mythological origin of the Merovingian race is traced back to a water-beast known as the Quinotaur, which took the form of a sea-goat. This ancient story is derived from lore associated with the god Pan, who was, in fact, a sea-goat. The source of this mystical beginning to the Merovingians can be traced directly to the influence of the Danites who took Pan-worship to Arcadia and throughout Greece. Capricorn, the astrological sign connected to Pan, eventually became *Baphomet* and the *Goat of Mendes*, both of which are symbols of Satan, and were worshiped by the Knights Templar, the military wing of the Priory of Sion, established at the time of the First Crusade for the express purpose of aiding the re-establishment of the deposed Merovingian royal line over Europe.

With respect to the subject of Freemasonry, the term *Sion* is strongly associated with the symbolism attached to this ancient evil craft. Note that this word is *Sion*, not *Zion*. There is a difference, for in Deuteronomy 4, we read:

“And this is the law which Moses set before the children of Israel...in the land of Sihon (one of the *giants*) king of the Amorites, who dwelled at Heshbon...and the land of Og (another *giant*) king of Bashan...From Aroer, which is by the banks of the river Arnon, even unto MOUNT ZION, which is HERMON” (Deut. 4:44-48).

Notice that the King James Version of the Scriptures renders the name of Mount Hermon as Mount *Zion*. A check of the Hebrew used in this instance, however, reveals a mistranslation. *Zion* in Hebrew is *Tsiyown*, and is the name of the famous mountain of Jerusalem. It is used often throughout the Old Testament, both in a heavenly, as well as an earthly, sense. The key word in Deuteronomy 4:48, however, is not *Tsiyown* at all, but an entirely different term, *Siyon*, and indeed is the correct alternate name of Mount Hermon. The term *Sion* is connected directly to the pagan idolatry centered around Mount Hermon, and its inclusion in Freemasonry is not coincidental, since this assumed *fraternal* organization has been for centuries the promulgator of the ancient mystery religion, and at its upper echelons is integrally involved in the age-old, on-going attempt to control the world. In this regard, Mount Hermon, Sion, Esau, Dan, Baal, Freemasonry, etc. in the north, stand in total opposition to Jerusalem, Zion, Judah, Yahweh, Messiah, and Torah in the south.

As an aside to this aspect of our study, it is instructive to know that in Celtic the word *Sion* means *Mount of Stones* or a *Fortress*. The Druids would build huge fires in the midst of their great stone circles or *Sions*, and the high priest would conduct worship services standing in the midst of the fiery stones. The central stone was called the *Stone of the Covenant*, and in Ireland, where there was much Danite migration and influence, it was known as *Bethel - The House of God!*

Just as an interjection, the *Priory of Sion*, a highly secret society connected with the Knights Templar which we will discuss in another installment of this study, has been, since at least the time of the first Crusade (1099 A.D.), totally dedicated to the restoration of a particular royal house, the *Merovingians*, installing on the throne of a United Europe the very man who may well be revealed as the end-time Biblical Antichrist! How interesting it is that the Old Testament contains precisely 33 separate terms denoting the latter-day Antichrist! And it is by no mean a mere coincidence that in the Hindu sacred book, the *Vishnu-Purana*, we read:

“These thirty-three (33) divinities exist age after age, and their appearance and disappearance is in the same number as the sun sets and rises again” (p. 160).

Or that the Buddhist *Tibetan Book of the Dead* speaks of the 33 heavens ruled over by Indra and the 33 ruled over by Mara? The obvious answer to these questions is **HARDLY!!**

Even in our own day, the current European Council of Princes, ostensibly the advisory body to the European Union, consists of exactly 33 participating members, divided into the Council of Nine, and the Council of Twenty-Four. Every distinguished member of this assembly is of *Merovingian* lineage. The Merovingian dynasty is the royal bloodline that preceded Charlemagne and the Carolingian usurpers to the throne of the Holy Roman Empire, a bloodline that claims divine descent, but as we shall soon come to see derives instead from the apostate Israelite tribe of Dan! This conclave is destined to become the occult hierarchy of Europe. The present head of the European Council of Princes is HRM Prince Michael James Alexander Stewart, 7th Count of Albany (Scotland), succeeding the Hapsburgs of Austria who had held the seat since 1946. Rest assured, therefore, that this organization, the *Priory of Sion*, and the evil ruler to come, all have or will have direct ties to Freemasonry, the 33rd parallel, Mount Hermon, Esau, Dan, and Baal-worship! More about this subject will be forthcoming.

It should also be of interest that the headwaters of the Jordan River emanate from Mount Hermon. The name *Jordan*, as you can easily see, contains the word *dan*. It is derived from the Hebrew root word meaning *to descend*, and can be defined as *the descent or the going down of Dan*, and has always been associated with *death*. The *Jordan* River marks the eastern boundary of Israel, and winds its way like the serpent of Dan down from the *Cave of Pan* on Mount Hermon. As it moves along, silt and debris, the earthy wastes, are picked up by the flowing waters. Down, down, down, the river of Dan descends until it reaches the lowest land region on the face of the earth, the appropriately named *Dead Sea*, where forward motion finally ceases as it spills its filthy contents into that lifeless body of water. Remember that Naaman the Syrian at first refused to bathe seven times in the Jordan, exclaiming that there were far better rivers in his own land. Perhaps this is why the Messiah agreed for John to baptize Him in the Jordan River, since it has such a connotation as the *place of death!*

Of course, we could not leave off a discussion of this particular area of the world without mentioning the fact that this region is today known as the *Golan Heights*, over which so much controversy and bloodshed has arisen in the land of Israel. One of the chief purposes of the Six-Day War in 1967 was to gain control of the Golan from Syria. It has remained ever since perhaps the most hotly disputed territory on earth, and will almost certainly figure prominently in the end-time prophetic scenario that will unfold! So, when you hear news about the Golan Heights in Israel, think about Dan and Mount Hermon, and remember the prophecy that we read earlier in Jeremiah 8:15-17:

“We looked for peace, but no good came; and for a time of health, but behold trouble! The snorting of his horses was heard from DAN: the whole land trembles at the sound of the neighing of his strong ones; for they are come, and have devoured the land...For, behold, I will send serpents...among you...and they shall surely BITE YOU.”

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