

Doctrine of Baal

1. Baal was the supreme male divinity of the Phoenician and Canaanitish nations, as Ashtoreth was their supreme female divinity.
 - *Judges 2:13 And they forsook the Lord, and served Baal and Ashtaroth.*
2. Some suppose Baal to correspond to the sun and Ashtoreth to the moon; others that Baal was Jupiter and Ashtoreth Venus.
3. There can be no doubt of the very high antiquity of the worship of Baal.
4. Baal worship prevailed in the time of Moses among the Moabites and Midianites, and through them spread to the Israelites.
 - *Moabites. Numbers 22:41 And it came to pass on the morrow, that Balak took Balaam, and brought him up into the high places of Baal, that thence he might see the utmost part of the people.*
 - *Midianites. Numbers 25:3 And Israel joined himself unto Baal-peor: and the anger of the Lord was kindled against Israel.*

24,000 Heads Hung Against the Sun

4 And the Lord said unto Moses, Take all the heads of the people, and hang them up before the Lord against the sun, that the fierce anger of the Lord may be turned away from Israel. 5 And Moses said unto the judges of Israel, Slay ye everyone his men that were joined unto Baal-peor. 6 And, behold, one of the children of Israel came and brought unto his brethren a Midianitish woman in the sight of Moses, and in the sight of all the congregation of the children of Israel, who were weeping before the door of the tabernacle of the congregation. 7 And when Phinehas, the son of Eleazar, the son of Aaron the priest, saw it, he rose up from among the congregation, and took a javelin in his hand; 8 And he went after the man of Israel into the tent, and thrust both of them through, the man of Israel, and the woman through her belly. So the plague was stayed from the children of Israel. 9 And those that died in the plague were twenty and four thousand.

The Honoring of Phinehas A Covenant of Peace * An Everlasting Priesthood

10 And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, 11 Phinehas, the son of Eleazar, the son of Aaron the priest, hath turned my wrath away from the children of Israel, while he was zealous for my sake among them, that I consumed not the children of Israel in my jealousy. 12 Wherefore say, Behold, I give unto him my covenant of peace: 13 And he shall have it, and his seed after him, even the covenant of an everlasting priesthood; because he was zealous for his God, and made an atonement for the children of Israel. 14

The Shame of Zimri of the Tribe of Simeon and Cozbi, the Midianitish Woman

Now the name of the Israelite that was slain, even that was slain with the Midianitish woman, was Zimri, the son of Salu, a prince of a chief house among the Simeonites. 15 And the name of the Midianitish woman that was slain was Cozbi, the daughter of Zur; he was head over a people, and of a chief house in Midian.

The Slaughter of the Midianites

16 And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, 17 Vex the Midianites, and smite them: 18 For they vex you with their wives, wherewith they have beguiled you in the matter of Peor, and in the matter of Cozbi, the daughter of a prince of Midian, their sister, which was slain in the day of the plague for Peor's sake.

5. The worship of Baal was a problem during the time of the Judges. God commanded the altar to Baal be destroyed.
 - *Judges 6:25 And it came to pass the same night, that the Lord said unto him [Gideon], Take thy father's young bullock, even the second bullock of seven years old, and throw down the altar of Baal that thy father hath, and cut down the grove that is by it:*
6. The destruction of an image of Baal by the son of Joash provoked anger and invited retaliation.
 - *Judges 6:28 And when the men of the city arose early in the morning, behold, the altar of Baal was cast down, and the grove was cut down that was by it, and the second bullock was offered upon the altar that was built.*
7. The stupidity of worshipping a god that cannot defend himself was pointed out by Joash.
 - *Judges 6:31 And Joash said unto all that stood against him, Will ye plead for Baal? Will ye save him? He that will plead for him, let him be put to death whilst it is yet morning: if he be a god, let him plead for himself, because one hath cast down his altar. 32 Therefore on that day he called him Jerub-baal, saying, Let Baal plead against him, because he hath thrown down his altar.*
8. In the times of the kings of Israel, Baal worship became the religion of the court and people of the ten tribes.

King Ahab of Israel Worshipped Baal

- *1 Kings 16:31 And it came to pass, as if it had been a light thing for him to walk in the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, that he took to wife Jezebel the daughter of Eth-baal king of the Zidonians, and went and served Baal, and worshipped him.*

32 And he reared up an altar for Baal in the house of Baal, which he had built in Samaria. 33 And Ahab made a grove [an altar]; and Ahab did more to provoke the Lord God of Israel to anger than all the kings of Israel that were before him.

Four Hundred and Fifty Prophets of Baal

- *1 Kings 18:19 Now therefore send, and gather to me all Israel unto Mount Carmel, and the prophets of Baal four hundred and fifty, and the prophets of the groves four hundred, which eat at Jezebel's table.*
- *1 Kings 18:22 Then said Elijah unto the people, I, even I only, remain a prophet of the Lord; but Baal's prophets are four hundred and fifty men.*

9. Baal worship was prominent in Israel.

- *2 Kings 17:16 And they left all the commandments of the Lord their God, and made them molten images, even two calves, and made a grove, and worshipped all the host of heaven, and served Baal.*

10. Temples were erected to Baal in Judah.

- *1 Kings 16:32 And he reared up an altar for Baal in the house of Baal, which he had built in Samaria.*

11. Baal worship was attended by formal ceremonies with special garments and elaborate rituals accompanied by prayers.

- *1 Kings 18:19 Now therefore send, and gather to me all Israel unto mount Carmel, and the prophets of Baal four hundred and fifty, and the prophets of the groves four hundred, which eat at Jezebel's table.*
- *1 Kings 18:26 And they took the bullock which was given them, and they dressed it, and called on the name of Baal from morning even until noon, saying, O Baal, hear us. But there was no voice, nor any that answered. And they leaped upon the altar which was made.*

A Dead God Mocked

27 And it came to pass at noon, that Elijah mocked them, and said, Cry aloud: for he is a god; either he is talking, or he is pursuing, or he is in a journey, or peradventure he sleepeth, and must be awaked. 28 And they cried aloud, and cut themselves after their manner with knives and lancets, till the blood gushed out upon them.

- *2 Kings 10:22 And he [Elijah] said unto him that was over the vestry, Bring forth vestments for all the worshippers of Baal. And he brought them forth vestments.*

12. In the time of Elijah, not only was the altar of Baal to be destroyed, the prophets of Baal were to be executed.

The Supervised Execution by Elijah of 450 False Prophets of Baal

- *1 Kings 18:40 And Elijah said unto them, Take the prophets of Baal; let not one of them escape. And they took them: and Elijah brought them down to the brook Kishon, and slew them there.*

13. Providentially, not everyone in Israel worshipped Baal. God preserved a remnant of seven thousand who would not bow their knee to Baal or kiss his image.

- *1 Kings 19:18 Yet I have left me seven thousand in Israel, all the knees which have not bowed unto Baal, and every mouth which hath not kissed him.*

14. Licentious sensuality was the main attractiveness of Baal worship to the Jews according to the narrative of Numbers 25.

15. The plural, BAALIM, is found frequently, showing that he was probably worshipped under different names.

- BAAL-BERITH (the covenant Baal), the god who comes into covenant with the worshippers.

Judges 8:33 And it came to pass, as soon as Gideon was dead, that the children of Israel turned again, and went a whoring after Baalim, and made Baal-berith their god.

Judges 9:4 And they gave him threescore and ten pieces of silver out of the house of Baal-berith, wherewith Abimelech hired vain and light persons, which followed him.

- BAAL-ZEBUB (lord of the fly), and worshipped at Ekron.

False Hope in a False God

2 Kings 1:2 And Ahaziah fell down through a lattice in his upper chamber that was in Samaria, and was sick: and he sent messengers, and said unto them, Go, inquire of Baal-zebub the god of Ekron whether I shall recover of this disease. 3 But the angel of the Lord said to Elijah the Tishbite, Arise, go up to meet the messengers of the king of Samaria, and say unto them, Is it not because there is not a God in Israel, that ye go to inquire of Baal-zebub the god of Ekron?

2 Kings 1:6 And they said unto him, There came a man up to meet us, and said unto us, Go, turn again unto the king that sent you, and say unto him, Thus saith the Lord, Is it not because there is not a God in Israel, that thou sendest to inquire of Baal-zebub the god of Ekron? Therefore thou shalt not come down from that bed on which thou art gone up, but shalt surely die.

- BAAL-HANAN was the name of one of the early kings of Edom.

Genesis 36:38 And Saul died, and Baal-hanan the son of Achbor reigned in his stead. 39 And Baal-hanan the son of Achbor died, and Hadar reigned in his stead: and the name of his city was Pau; and his wife's name was Mehetabel, the daughter of Matred, the daughter of Mezahab.

1 Chronicles 1:49 And when Shaul was dead, Baal-hanan the son of Achbor reigned in his stead. 50 And when Baal-hanan was dead, Hadad reigned in his stead: and the name of his city was Pai; and his wife's name was Mehetabel, the daughter of Matred, the daughter of Mezahab.

Baal-Hanan was also the name of one of David's officers, who had the superintendence of his olive and sycamore plantations, which means that Jews named their children after a false god.

1 Chronicles 27:28 And over the olive trees and the sycamore trees that were in the low plains was Baal-hanan the Gederite: and over the cellars of oil was Joash

16. As children were named after Baal, so were geographical locations.

- BAAL was a town of Simeon, named only in 1 Chronicles 4:33, which from the parallel list in Joshua 19:8, seems to have been identical with BAALATH-BEER.

1 Chronicles 4:33 And all their villages that were round about the same cities, unto Baal. These were their habitations, and their genealogy.

Joshua 19:8 And all the villages that were round about these cities to Baalath-beer, Ramath of the south. This is the inheritance of the tribe of the children of Simeon according to their families.

- BAALAH (mistress) was another name for KIRJATH-JEARIM, or KIRJATH BAAL.

Joshua 15:9 And the border was drawn from the top of the hill unto the fountain of the water of Nephtoah, and went out to the cities of mount Ephron; and the border was drawn to Baalah, which is Kirjath-jearim: 10 And the border compassed from Baalah westward unto mount Seir, and passed along unto the side of mount Jearim, which is Chesalon, on the north side, and went down to Beth-shemesh, and passed on to Timnah:

1 Chronicles 13:6 And David went up, and all Israel, to Baalah, that is, to Kirjath-jearim, which belonged to Judah, to bring up thence the ark of God the Lord, that dwelleth between the cherubims, whose name is called on it.

BAALAH was another town of the same name in the south of Judah. *Joshua 15:29 Baalah, and Iim, and Azem,*

In Joshua 19:3 it is called BALAH, and in the parallel list, 1 Chronicles 4:29, it is known as BILHAH.

- BAALATH (mistress) was a town of Dan named with Gibbethon, Gath-rim-mon and other Philistine places. *Joshua 19:44 And Eltekeh, and Gibbethon, and Baalath.*
 - BAALATH-BEER (lord of the well). BAAL 1, a town among those in the south part of Judah, given to Simeon, which also bore the name of RAMATH-NEGEB, or "the height of the south." *Joshua 19:8 And all the villages that were round about these cities to Baalath-beer, Ramath of the south. This is the inheritance of the tribe of the children of Simeon according to their families.*
 - BAAL-GAD (lord of fortune), used to denote the most northern, Joshua 11:17; 12:7, or perhaps northwestern, Joshua 13:5, point to which Joshua's victories extended. It was in all probability a Phoenician or Canaanite sanctuary of Baal under the aspect of Gad or Fortune.
 - BAAL-HAMON (lord of a multitude), a place at which Solomon had a vineyard, evidently of great extent. *Song of Solomon 8:11 Solomon had a vineyard at Baal-hamon; he let out the vineyard unto keepers; every one for the fruit thereof was to bring a thousand pieces of silver.*
 - BAAL-HAZOR (village of Baal), a place where Absalom appears to have had a sheep-farm, and where Amnon was murdered. *2 Samuel 13:23 And it came to pass after two full years, that Absalom had sheepshearers in Baal-hazor, which is beside Ephraim: and Absalom invited all the king's sons.*
17. The influence of false gods and mythology upon children and cities is prevalent in American. In all fifty states, there is a town or city named after someone or something in Greek mythology. Consider: Athens, Alabama; Homer, Alaska; Hector, Arkansas etc.