

Triennial Torah Study – 4th Year 24/08/2013

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

<https://sightedmoon.com/files/TriennialCycleBeginningAviv.pdf>

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| Deut 32 | | 2 Chron 33-34 | Rev 18-19 |
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Moses' Prophetic Blessings on Israel (Deuteronomy 32:48-33:29)

Just before his death, Moses proclaims prophetic blessings for the tribes of Israel. Similar prophecies for all the tribes were given by Jacob, which Moses recorded earlier in Genesis 49. In one of Moses' blessings here, he actually quotes Jacob, in using the words, "on the head of Joseph, and on the crown of the head of him who was separate from his brothers" (Deuteronomy 33:16; Genesis 49:26).

In attempting to locate the various tribes today, such prophecies are invaluable. The easiest tribe for most people to identify is, of course, Judah—almost universally believed to be the ancestor of the modern Jews. Considering the history of the Jewish people, including the modern state of Israel, the prophecy that the Jews would have many enemies has certainly proven to be valid (Deuteronomy 33:7). But what about the other tribes?

Though still not commonly recognized or believed, many have come to the realization that most of the tribes of Israel later migrated to Northwest Europe following their Assyrian captivity (compare 2 Kings 17; The United States and Britain in Bible Prophecy).

The primary peoples of all the tribes of Israel would be those of Joseph. The father of Ephraim and Manasseh (Deuteronomy 33:17), Joseph was given the birthright, after Reuben, Jacob's firstborn, disqualified himself (Genesis 49:3-4; 1 Chronicles 5:1). Among those who accept the truth of the Israelite migrations to Northwest Europe, Joseph is commonly understood to be the forefather of the English-speaking peoples of the United States and the former British Commonwealth. Identifying the other tribes is more difficult, as there are not nearly as many biblical and historical clues to go on. Nevertheless, they apparently may be found among such nations as France, Switzerland, Belgium, the Netherlands, Ireland, Denmark, Sweden, Finland, Norway and Iceland. Simeon (not mentioned in Deuteronomy 33) and Levi were to be scattered throughout the other tribes (Genesis 49:5-7)—though Levi was given the job of teaching God's truth to His people (Deuteronomy 33:8-10).

Verse 27 contains a wonderful promise to Israel that certainly applies to the spiritual people of God today and always: “The eternal God is your refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms.” This reminds us that God will be there to “catch” us when we fall, if we devote our lives to serving Him.

Purging the Land (2 Chronicles 34:29-33; 2 Kings 23:1-20)

“Josiah’s humble, obedient response to the book was and remains a model of how all people should respond to God’s revealed Word. Josiah listened to Scripture, allowed its words of truth to judge him, and humbly confessed that he had neglected God’s commands (34:18, 19). After learning more about its truths (34:21), he shared the Scripture with others and led them in following it. He had the book read before the entire nation and led the Israelites in recommitting their lives to the Lord (34:29-31)” (“INDepth: The Book of the Law of the Lord,” Nelson Study Bible, sidebar on 2 Chronicles 34).

In 2 Kings 23:3 Josiah makes his covenant standing by a pillar—or on a pillar, as it could also be translated. This is referred to as his place in 2 Chronicles 34:31. It appears to be the coronation pillar stone mentioned in the crowning of Joash (see 2 Kings 11:14).

Josiah then essentially imposed God’s law on the people. Imposition may seem harsh, but we read in these passages that 18 years after Josiah came to the throne, there were still plenty of pagan traditions and idolatrous practices throughout Judah (2 Kings 23:4-20). This chapter highlights again how far the nation had sunk.

According to The Expositor’s Bible Commentary, although the Hebrew word translated “perverted persons” in verse 7 “denotes the ‘male shrine prostitutes,’ probably the term is used generically for prostitutes of both sexes who were employed in the heinous Canaanite fertility rites” (footnote on verse 7). Even though God forbade the practice (Deuteronomy 23:17) and reforming kings abolished it, it always came back.

The references in 2 Kings 23:8 to Geba (northern Judah) and Beersheba (southern Judah) show that high places (a generic term for worship places, not necessarily elevated) had to be rooted out everywhere. Josiah then takes steps to root out the most heinous remains of pagan worship, defiling Tophet, the place of child sacrifice in the Valley of Hinnom, and removing the idolatrous objects from God’s temple: “Apparently, the references in [2 Kings 23:11-12] are to various ceremonies involved in the worship of the sun, moon, and stars. Chariots and horses played a big part in the worship of the sun, probably because of the idea that the sun god drives across the sky in his chariot. In the literature of other nations, the sun god is pictured riding a winged chariot. Here, the horses and chariots mentioned were probably large statues, though they may have been miniature figurines used in astral worship. Rooftop shrines like those described in verse 12 were also related to this same pagan cult, which was introduced by King Ahaz” (Russell Dilday, *Mastering the Old Testament*, 1987, Vol. 9, p. 484). Indeed, in excavations “small horses with solar disks on their foreheads have been found both at Jerusalem and Hazor” (Nelson Study Bible note on verse 11).

Josiah started his reforms by defiling the cult places of worship and filling them with human bones (verses 14-15). Then he carried out what he had been prophesied to do by name long before in burning human bones on the pagan altar at Bethel, defiling it forever (verses 16-18; see 1 Kings 13:1-3). And he did likewise with the pagan altars throughout the land. It should be noted that this was done throughout even Samaria (2 Kings 23:19), the territory of the northern kingdom, which was recently occupied—starting about two years before the current major purge—by a major contingent of Scythians, that is, Israelites.

Revelation 18

John sees another messenger coming down from heaven having great authority and lighted with much esteem crying with a mighty voice, “Babel the great is fallen, is fallen...!” It is filled with all manner of uncleanness due to her whoring and riotous living.

John hears another voice from heaven then saying, “come out of her My people, lest you share in her sins, and lest you receive of her plagues.”

Elohim is remembering her unrighteousness and they have piled up so that they reach to heaven. She is destined to receive double in recompense for her iniquities. All of her payment for her sins shall visit her in one day. Death, morning , and starvation all at once and she is to be burned with fire.

The sovereigns of the earth shall weep and mourn over her and be amazed because all the judgments are come upon her in one hour.

All the sovereigns mourn because they can no longer benefit from all her merchandizing and her riches. They stand at a distance and are amazed at her judgment: the swiftness and totality of it all. Elohim completely avenges all the set apart ones who felt her wrath in this life. Then great rejoicing in heaven will take place at her destruction and demise.

Revelation 19

John hears the voice of a large crowd rejoicing in heaven and praising Elohim for His great Deliverance! He has judged the great whore and avenged their blood upon her. HalleluYah, HalleluYah! The twenty-four elders and the four creatures fell down and worshipped Elohim. Much, much rejoicing in heaven and praises to the mighty El Shaddai is heard.

The marriage of the Lamb has now come and the Bride has now prepared herself. She receives her dress of fine linen, clean and bright. John is instructed to write, “Blessed are those who have been called to the marriage supper of the Lamb!”

John saw heaven opened and a white horse was revealed. He who sat on him was called Trustworthy and True, and in righteousness He judges and fights. His robe has been dipped in blood and His Name is called: The Word of YHWH. The armies dressed in fine linen from heaven followed Him and they too rode white horses.

Out of His mouth goes a double edged sword and He is King of kings and Lord of lords. The birds of prey are called to a great feast, to feast on the flesh of the ones who followed the beast and the whore and took the mark of them. The beast, the sovereigns, their armies and all gathered to fight against the King of kings. The beast was seized, and with him the false prophet. They were thrown into the lake of fire burning with Sulphur. The rest were killed with the sword which came out of the mouth of Him who sat on the white horse and all the birds of prey were filled with their flesh.