

The Secret Of Baalbek

IMMANUEL VELIKOVSKY

THE TEMPLE AT DAN

Copyright (c) 1981 by The Estate of Immanuel Velikovsky

The story of Jeroboam, son of a widow of Zereda, an Ephraimite and Solomon's servant, begins with this passage:

Solomon built Millo, and repaired the breaches of the city of David, his father.

And the man, Jeroboam, was a mighty man of valor; and Solomon, seeing the young man that he was industrious, made him ruler over all the charge of the house of Joseph.(1)

The ambitious servant was not satisfied with this honor of administering the land of Menashe (Manasse) and Ephraim, or even the entire northern half of the kingdom; he wished to be a king himself. When Jeroboam's plans became known to Solomon, the king intended to kill him, but Jeroboam ran away to the Pharaoh of Egypt. When Solomon died, he returned; he tore the ten tribes' land from Rehoboam, son of Solomon. Solomon's realm was split in two: Jeroboam became king of Israel in the north, and Rehoboam retained the kingdom of Judah in the south. To make the rift permanent Jeroboam had to keep the people from going to Jerusalem and its new temple.

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, then shall the heart of this people turn again unto their lord, even unto Rehoboam, king of Judah, and they shall kill me, and go again to Rehoboam, king of Judah.(2)

From the viewpoint of serving his own ends, it was a sound idea to build on some ancient sites places for folk gathering which would compete with Jerusalem.

Whereupon the king [Jeroboam] took counsel, and made two calves of gold, and said unto [his people], It is too much for you to go up to Jerusalem....

And he set the one in Beth-el, and the other put he in Dan.(3)

Beth-el was in the south of his kingdom, close to Jerusalem, Dan in the north of his kingdom. In order to attract pilgrims from the land of Judah, Jeroboam also made Beth-el the site of a new feast, "like unto the feast that is in Judah".(4) Setting up the image of the cult in Dan, Jeroboam proclaimed: "Behold thy gods, O Israel, that brought thee up out of the land of Egypt."(5) Thus, Dan in the north competed with

Jerusalem in the days of Passover and Tabernacles. The temple of Dan was a much larger edifice than the temple in Bethel, and it became a great place for pilgrimage, attracting people even from the southern kingdom.

And this thing became a sin; for the people went to worship before the one [of the two calves], even unto Dan.(6)

The temple of Dan was called a "House of High Places": "And he made an house of high places . . ."(7) The Temple of Jerusalem was also called a "House" in Hebrew.

For centuries the temple of Dan in the north successfully contested with the Temple of Jerusalem and attracted throngs of pilgrims.

Jeroboam, the man who supervised under Solomon the building of Millo, the fortress of Zion with its strong wall, and who, in recognition of his ability demonstrated in this work, was appointed governor of the northern provinces, now, when king, must have desired to erect in Dan a temple surpassing the magnificent Temple of Solomon in Jerusalem. Only in offering a more imposing building could he hope not only to turn the people from going to Jerusalem, but make the people of Judah elect a pilgrimage to Dan over one to Jerusalem. Meanwhile, Jeroboam had seen the temples and palaces of Egypt, and his ambition was, of course, to imitate all the splendor he had seen in Jerusalem, in Karnak, and in Deir el-Bahari. Or would this "mighty man of valor", industrious constructor of Zion's citadel, and a shrewd politician, try to contest the Temple of Jerusalem by means of an ignoble chapel? That he succeeded in his challenge is a testimony to the size and importance of the temple at Dan.

It was not enough that Dan and Beth-el were ancient places of reverence: magnificence was displayed in the capital of Solomon, and magnificence had to prevail in the temple cities of the Northern Kingdom.

[** Image] Source: Ages in Chaos.

The temple of Beth-el, the smaller of the two Israelite temples, was demolished three centuries later by King Josiah, a few decades before the Temple of Jerusalem was destroyed by Nebuchadnezzar. It was trampled into smithereens by the king, jealous for his God.(8) There is no mention of a destruction of the temple in Dan.

Where was Dan and its "House of High Places"?

1. I Kings 11:27 28.

2. I Kings 12:26 27.

3. I Kings 12:28, 29.

4. I Kings 12:32, 33.

5. I Kings 12:28.

6. I Kings 12:30.

7. X Kings 12:31.

8 II Kings 23:15.

THE SEARCH FOR DAN

Dan was the northernmost point of the Israelite settlement where one of the twelve tribes chose its domicile. A familiar expression was: "From Dan even to Beer-Sheba."(1)

Students of biblical geography have agreed to place Dan in the Arab village of el-Kadi, on the upper flow of the Jordan, which is there but a rivulet. In recent years very insignificant ancient ruins have been found on this place.(2) This is in accord with what the biblical archaeologists expect, for they think the temple of Dan to have been a very modest structure of which, most probably, hardly any ruins would have remained.

The biblical Dan is placed on the upper flow of the Jordan because of a passage in Josephus Flavius. In his *Jewish Antiquities*, Josephus says that Dan was on "a spot not far from Mount Libanus and the sources of the lesser Jordan".(3) Commentators of Josephus deduced that by the "lesser Jordan" the upper flow of the Jordan, above the Lake of Huleh, or above the Lake of Tiberias, is meant; however, this interpretation is not supported by the words "not far from Mount Libanus" since, from the surroundings of el-Kadi and the sources of the Jordan, the snow-capped Hermon or Anti-Lebanon can be seen in the distance, but not Lebanon, far behind the Anti-Lebanon.

After having chosen the source of the Jordan as the area where to look for Dan, this ancient city was located at el-Kadi for the following reason: the name Dan is built of the Hebrew root that signifies "to counsel" or "to judge". El-Kadi means in Arabic "the judge". There was no other reason, beside this philological equation of Hebrew and Arabic terms, to locate the site of the ancient temple city in the small village of el-Kadi, since until quite recently no ruins, large or small, were found on the site.

The aforementioned reference in Josephus makes one wonder whether by "the lesser Jordan" the river Litani was meant. This river begins in the valley between Mount Lebanon and Mount Anti Lebanon, flows to the south in the same rift in which farther to the south the Jordan flows, and towards the source of that river, but changes its course and flows then westwards and empties itself into the Mediterranean. Its source being near Mount Lebanon, it appears that the Litani was meant by "the lesser Jordan".

However, Josephus, who wrote in the first century of the Christian era, was not necessarily well-informed concerning the location of Dan the temple city of the Northern Kingdom a state whose history ended with the capture of Samaria by Sargon II in -722.(4)

Therefore, it is only proper to go back to the Scriptures in trying to locate Dan.

1. Judges 20: I; Samuel 3:20.

2. See Israel Exploration Journal, Vol. 16(1966),pp 144-145;ibid Vol.19(1969),pp. 121-123. [In 1980, an arched city gate was reportedly uncovered at this site. -LER]

3. Antiquities v.3.i.

4. Similarly, the passage in the Book of Enoch (13:7),which refers to Dan to the "south of the western side of Hermon" must not be treated as an historical location.

THE PORTION OF THE CHILDREN OF DAN

When the Israelites, after the Exodus from Egypt, roamed in the wilderness, they sent scouts to Canaan to investigate the land and to report. The scouts passed the land through its length "from the wilderness of Zin unto Rehob, as men come to Hamath".(1) These were also destined to be the southern and northern borders of the land: "Your south quarter shall be from the wilderness of Zin" and in the north "your border [shall be] unto the entrance of Hamath".(2)

The expressions "as men come to Hamath", or "unto the entrance of Hamath" signify that Rehob, the northern point of the land visited by the scouts, was at a place where the road began that led to the city of Hamath in Syria.

In the days of conquest under Joshua son of Nun, when the land was partitioned by lot, the tribe of Dan received its portion in the hilly country on the road from Jerusalem to Jaffa. The tribe was opposed by the Philistines, also invading the same country. When the population of Philistia increased through the arrival of new immigrants from the Mediterranean islands, the tribe of Dan, being the advance guard of the Israelites, had to suffer not mere resistance, but strong counter-pressure. The Samson saga reflects this struggle. Tired of continuously opposing the increasing influx of the Philistines, the Danites migrated to the north.

They . . . came unto Laish, unto a people who were quiet and secure; and they smote them with the edge of the sword, and burned the city with fire.

And there was no deliverer, because it was far from Zidon, and they had no business with any man; and it was in the valley that lieth by Beth-Rehob. And they built a city, and dwelt therein.

And they called the name of the city Dan . . . howbeit, the name of the city was Laish at the first.(3)

Here we meet again the northern point Rehob or Beth-Rehob. We are also told that it was situated in a valley. Next to it was the city of Laish, and the Danites burned the city and then erected there a new city, Dan.

Beth-Rehob, or House of Rehob, is the place we met in the story of the scouts sent by Moses - as the most remote point they visited going to the north.

The place was "far from Zidon"; if it were where it is looked for today -- at the source of the Jordan - it would not have been proper to say "far from Zidon", but rather "from Tyre". But if Zidon (Sidon) is named as the nearest large city, Tyre must have been still farther from Laish-Dan, and the latter city must have been more to the north, in the valley between Lebanon and Anti-Lebanon.

The Danites were in contact with the Zidonians already at the time when they fought with the Philistines for the possession of territory. Because of want of land, they sent many of their sons as sailors on Phoenician ships.(4) In their new place of abode the Danites became kindred with the Phoenicians.

In Dan-Laish, "the children of Dan set up the graven image" of Micah.(5) The story of this holy image is connected with the migration of the Danites to the north. Before migrating they sent a few men to find for them "an inheritance to dwell in".(6) These men traversed, on their errand, the mountainous land of Ephraim. Micah was an Ephraimite who built a private chapel in Mount Ephraim, where he placed "a graven image and a molten image", and hired a Levite to serve there as a priest.(7) The men of Dan, dispatched on the errand to find a new domicile for the tribe, heard an oracle from the priest. After having spied the place of Laish, they returned to their tribe that dwelt in the hilly borderland of Zarah, and with six hundred warriors went to the north. Passing again Mount Ephraim, they took with them the image and the priest, despite the bitter protests of Micah. When they conquered Laish "the children of Dan set up the graven image".(8) Since then, there was an oracle in Dan.

The name Danjaan, found in the Scriptures,(9) is apparently a synonym for Dan: it means "Dan of answer", or "of oracle".

Dan became the site of the temple built by Jeroboam. It was a holy place long before he built his temple there, since the story of the oracle of Micah is conspicuously narrated in the Book of Judges; it is rather probable that Rehob was a sacred place even before the Danites built their city on the ruins of Laish close by.

It cannot be said of the present village of el-Kadi that it lies on the road "as men come to Hamath"; to satisfy this description, Rehob must be looked for farther to the north.

-
1. Numbers 13:21.
 2. Numbers 34:3, 7-8.
 3. Judges 18:27-29.
 4. Judges 5 17.
 5. Judges 18:30.
 6. Judges 18:1.
 7. Judges 17 4, 7-13.
 8. Judges 18:30.
 9. Samuel 24:6.

THE SUCCESSORS OF JEROBOAM

Being located in an outstretched part of the Israelite kingdom, Dan was often the subject of wars between the kings of Damascus and of Israel. Shortly after the death of Jeroboam, the temple city was conquered by the king of Damascus.(1) It appears that, at the time of the revolution of Jehu, three generations later, in the ninth century, Dan was still in the hands of the kings of Damascus; but it is said that Jehu, who destroyed the temple of Baal in Samaria, did not destroy the temple of Dan, nor did he abolish its cult, "the sin of Jeroboam". This implies that Dan came back into the hands of the Israelites in the days of Jehu. In any case, the population of the northern kingdom that of Israel but also of the southern kingdom that of Judah continued to go to Dan on the feasts of Passover and Tabernacles, preferring it to Jerusalem.

Jehu, jealous of the God Yahweh, did nothing to keep the people from going to Dan, and obviously even

encouraged them to do so; the cult of Dan was one of Yahweh, though in the guise of a calf, or Apis.

In the eighth century the prophet Amos, one of the earliest prophets whose speeches are preserved in writing, spoke of the worship at Dan:

They that swear by the sin of Samaria, and say, Thy god, O Dan liveth; and, The manner of Beer-Sheba liveth; even they shall fall, and never rise up again.(2)

For a time Amos prophesied at Beth-el, the other sacred site of the Northern Kingdom. In his time the place had a royal chapel; and in view of the statement that, of the two places where Jeroboam placed the calves, the people went to worship in Dan,(3) apparently the chapel of Beth-el remained a minor sacrarium and did not attract many worshippers.

Hosea, another prophet who lived in the eighth century, admonished: "Let not Judah offend . . . neither go ye up to Beth-Aven."(4) He prophesied also that the "inhabitants of Samaria shall fear because of the calves of Beth-Aven", and that the glory of that place will depart from it.(5)

It is generally agreed that Hosea, speaking of Beth-Aven ("the House of Sin"), referred to Beth-el. This is supported by the verse in the Book of Joshua which tells: "And Joshua sent men from Jericho to Ai, which is beside Beth-Aven, on the east side of Bethel."(6)

It appears that the name Beth-Aven, or "The House of Sin" was applied to both places where Jeroboam built temples for the worship of the calf. It is possible that, in another verse of his, Hosea had in mind the temple of Dan; he said: "The high places also of Aven, the sin of Israel, shall be destroyed . . ."(7)

"The sin of Israel" is the usual term for the cult of Dan; and the "high places", according to the quoted story of Jeroboam placing calves in Dan and Beth-el,(8) were built in Dan.

At the beginning of the Book of Amos, the following sentence appears: "I will break also the bar of Damascus, and cut off the inhabitant from the plain of Aven (*me'bik'at Aven*) . . . and the people of Syria shall go into captivity unto Kir. . ."(9)

I shall return later to this passage and to the accepted interpretation of "the plain of Aven".

During the wars of the eighth century, the temple city of Dan may have taken part in the struggle of the Northern Kingdom for its existence, being oppressed first by Syria, and then by Assyria. Dan may have been besieged, and may have changed hands during these wars, but nothing is known of its destruction.

In the latter part of the eighth century the population of the Northern Kingdom was deported by Sargon II to remote countries, from where it did not return. More than a century later Jeremiah referred to the oracle of Dan: "For a voice declareth from Dan", (10) which shows that the oracle of Dan was still in existence after the end of the Northern Kingdom.

An oracle venerated since ancient times, a magnificent temple where the image of a calf was worshipped, a place where the tribes of Israel gathered in the days of the feasts, and the people of Judea used to come,

too this was the cult.

On the way to Hamath, on the northern frontier of the Northern Kingdom, closer to Zidon (Sidon) than to Tyre, and strategically exposed to Damascus this was the place.

Would no ruins help to identify the site?

. . . to be continued.

-
1. Kings 15:20.
 2. Amos 8:14.
 3. I Kings 12:30.
 4. Hosea 4 15.
 5. Hosea 10:5.
 6. Joshua 7:2; cf. Joshua 18:1 1-12:"and the lot . . . of Benjamin . . . and their border . . .at the wilderness of Beth-Aven." Cf. also I Samuel 13:5 and 14:23.
 7. Hosea 10:18.
 8. I Kings 12:28-30.
 9. Amos 1:5
 10. Jeremiah 4:15. 32
-

THE SECRET OF BAALBEK (CONCLUDED)

IMMANUEL VELIKOVSKY

Copyright (C) 1981 by the Estate of Immanuel Velikovsky

BAALBEK

In the valley that gives birth to two rivers of Syria -- the Orontes flowing to the north, and the Litani flowing to the south and west, between the mountains of Lebanon and Anti-Lebanon, where roads from Palestine in the south, Damascus in the east, and the sea-coast on the west meet and run from there to Hamath in Upper Syria -- lie the ruins of Baalbek.

"When we compare the ruins of Baalbek with those of many ancient cities which we visited in Italy, Greece, Egypt, and in other parts of Asia (and Africa), we cannot help thinking them to be the remains of the boldest plan we ever saw attempted in architecture. Is it not strange then, that the age and the undertaker of the works, in which solidity and duration have been so remarkably consulted, should be a matter of such obscurity. . .?"(1)

From the time when this was first written, in the fifties of the eighteenth century, and till today, nothing was added to dispel the obscurity which envelops the origin of this temple city.(2) The excavations undertaken there brought no solution to the problem of its origin or the nature of its cult.(3) No early inscriptions were found.

Thronges of travelers who spend their day wandering among the ruins of a magnificent acropolis go away without having heard what the role of the place was in ancient times, when it was built, or who was the builder. The pyramids, the temples of Karnak and Luxor, the Forum and Circus Maximus in Rome were erected by builders whose identity is generally known. The marvellous site in the valley on the junction of roads running to Hamath is a work of anonymous authors in unknown ages. It is as if some mysterious people brought the mighty blocks and placed them at the feet and in front of the snow-capped Lebanon, and went away unnoticed. The inhabitants of the place actually believe that the great stones were brought and put together by Djenoun, mysterious creatures, intermediate between angels and demons.(4)

1. Robert Wood, *The Ruins of Palmyra and Baalbek* (Royal Geographical Society, London, 1827), Vol. III, p. 58; first published as *The Ruines of Baalbec* (1757).

2. "Wir wissen aussert wenig von dem Schicksal Baalbeks in Altertum", O. Puchstein, *Führer durch die Ruinen von Baalbek* (Berlin 1905), pp. 3-4.

3. "Es war leider bei den an glänzenden Erfolgen so reichen Ausgrabungen eine Enttäuschung, dass sie über das Wesen des Gottes und die Geschichte seiner Verehrung nichts gelehrt hat." H. Winnefeld, *Baalbek, Ergebnisse der Ausgrabungen und Untersuchungen von 1895-1905*, ed. by Th. Wiegand, Vol. II (Berlin, 1923), p. 110.

SOLOMON'S BAALBEK

Local tradition, which may be traced to the early Middle Ages, points to a definite period in the past when Baalbek was built: the time of Solomon.

Idrisi, the Arab traveler and geographer (1099-1154), wrote: "The great (temple-city) of astonishing appearance was built in the time of Solomon."(1) Gazwini (d. 1823 or 4) explained the origin of the edifices and the name of the place by connecting it with Balkis, the legendary Queen of the South, and with Solomon.(2)

The traveler Benjamin of Tudela wrote in the year 1160 of his visit to Baalbek: "This is the city which is mentioned in Scripture as Baalath in the vicinity of the Lebanon, which Solomon built for the daughter of Pharaoh. The place is constructed with stones of enormous size."(3)

Robert Wood, who stayed at Baalbek in the 1750's, and who published an unsurpassed monograph on its ruins, wrote: "The inhabitants of this country, Mohomedans, Jews and Christians, all confidently believe that Solomon built both, Palmyra and Baalbek."(4)

Another traveler who visited Syria in the eighties of the eighteenth century recorded: "The inhabitants of Baalbek assert that this edifice was constructed by Djenoun, or genies in the service of King Solomon."(5)

-
1. Idrisi in P. Jaubert, *Géographie d'Edrisi* (Paris, 1836-1840), I, p. 353 quoted by C. Ritter, *Die Erdkunde*, Vol. XVII (Berlin, 1854), p. 224.
 2. *Al-Qazwini Zakariya ibn Muhammad Kosmographie*, H. F. Wüstenfeld ed. (Berlin, 1848-49), II, p. 104.
 3. A. Asher tr. and ed., *The Itinerary of Benjamin of Tudela* (N. Y., 1840-41).
 4. R. Wood, *The Ruins of Palmyra and Baalbek* (London, 1827), p. 58.
 5. C. F. Volney, op. cit., p. 224.

ON -- AVEN

The identification of Bikat Aven, referred to in Amos 1:5 with the plain of Coele-Syria is generally accepted.(1) The text, already quoted, reads: "I will break also the bar of Damascus, and cut off the inhabitant from the plain of Aven . . ." The Septuagint, the Greek translation of the Bible by the Seventy, renders the above text as "the valley of On," written the same as On (or Heliopolis) in Egypt. The Hebrew spellings of Aven and On do not differ in consonants; and vocals were inserted in the texts by the Masoretes in a late period. On is the Hebrew name of Heliopolis in Egypt, pronounced also as Aven, as in Ezekiel 30:17; Bikat Aven is the name of the plain of Baalbek in Amos. Tradition has it also that the cult of Baalbek was brought there from Heliopolis in Egypt.(2)

Hosea, however, called by the name of Aven (Beth-Aven) the cities of Bethel and Dan;(3) and he spoke of "high places" there, and in the instance where he referred to "the sin of Israel" he obviously meant Dan.(4)

Amos, who in the eighth chapter speaks against the worshippers at Dan, in chapter one speaks against the plain of Aven -- and thus, comparing Hosea and Amos, one wonders whether Amos 1:5 speaks of Baalbek or of Dan.

The expression Bikat* Aven, or the Valley (Plain) of Aven in Amos impelled the exegetes and commentators to refer the place to Coele-Syria, and this because Bi'qa is the specific name of the Coele-Syrian plain -- still in use today. The very name Baalbek is generally explained as the Baal of Bi'qa or Bekaa -- of the valley.

* *Editor's Note:* The Hebrew word *bikat* can be translated as either plain or valley. -- LMG

Baalbek is situated in the valley between Lebanon and Hermon. Of Dan it is also said that it was situated in a valley:

". . . And it was in the valley that lieth by Beth-Rehob. And they built a city, and dwelt therein."(5)

1. E. Robinson, *Biblical Researches in Palestine and the Adjacent Regions* (London 1874), Vol. III, pp. 519-520.

2. Lucian, *De Dea Syria*, par. 5; Macrobius, *Saturnalia* I. 23: Assyrii quoque Solem sub nomine Jovis, quen Dia Heliopoliten cognominant, maximis ceremoniis in civitate que Heliopolis nuncupatur. Ejus dei simulacrum sumtum est de oppido Aegypti, quod et ipsum Heliopolis appellatur, regnante apud Aegyptios Senemure; perlatum est primum in eam per Opiam, legatum Deleboris, regis Assyriorum, sacerdotesque Aegyptios, quorum princeps fuit Partemetis, diuque habitum apud Assyrios, postea Heliopolim commigravit.

3. Hosea 10:5.

4. Hosea 10:8.

5. Judges 18:28.

BAALATH, BAALGAD, BAAL ZAPHON, BAALMELECH

Is Baalbek the Scriptural Baalath, as Benjamin of Tudela thought? About Baalath it is said: "And Solomon built . . . Baalath, and Tadmor in the wilderness."(1) Tadmor is Palmyra, far to the northeast of Baalbek. (1a) Baalath is said to have belonged to the tribe of Dan.(2)

Or, is Baalbek the Scriptural Baal Gad? deliberated a few scholars.(3) It is said: "Baal Gad in the valley of Lebanon under mount Hermon."(4) In the valley of Lebanon under mount Hermon lies Baalbek. If this identification is correct then Baalbek was inside the Israelite kingdom. However, against this supposition of Baal Gad in the valley of Lebanon it was argued that the Israelite kingdom never embraced the area of Coele-Syria, or the valley between Lebanon and Hermon (Anti-Lebanon).(5)

Some writers would regard Baalath and Baal Gad as two names of one place and would locate it at Baalbek.(6)

If Solomon built in Palmyra in the desert between Syria and Mesopotamia, the region of Coele-Syria between Lebanon and Hermon could certainly be in the area of his building activity, argued these scholars. But placing Baal Gad in Coele-Syria, where would they place Dan, the northernmost point of the Kingdom of Israel? To keep Dan in Galilee and to place Baal Gad, an Israelite city, one hundred fifty kilometers farther to the north will not stand up against the indisputable fact that Dan was the northernmost city in Israel.

Some scholars, looking for Baalbek in the Scriptures, identified it with Baal-Hamon, referred to in the *Song of Songs*.(7) And again, Baal Hamon is supposed to be another name for Baalath and Baal Gad (8)

Also Baal Zaphon, or Zeus Cassius, was proposed as Baalbek.(9) In this connection it can be said that, according to the Talmud, Gad was the name of the planet Jupiter;(10) and Zeus Cassius signifies Jupiter of Lebanon; and Hamon was supposed to be a Syrian form of the name Amon(11) who, according to the Greek authors, was Zeus-Jupiter.(12)

All this together, if correct, points toward the cult of Jupiter in Baalbek, a matter to which we shall return in one of the next sections.

Besides Baal Gad, Baal Zaphon or Zeus Cassius, Baal Hamon, and Baalath, one more name is identified as Baalbek: Baalmelech, or "the royal Baal".(13)

1. I. Kings 9:17-18.

1a. [Cf. K. Michalowski, *Palmyra* (N.Y., 1968); *Dictionary of the Bible*, edited by J. Hastings (Rev. ed., N. Y., 1963), "Tadmor"; *The New Westminster Dictionary of the Bible*, edited by H. S. Gehman (Phila., 1974), "Tadmor". -- LMG]

2. Joshua 19:44.

3. Michaelis, *Supplementa ad lexica hebraica* (Göttingen, 1784-1792), pp. 197-201; Ritter, *Die Erdkunde*, Vol. XVII, pp. 229-230; E. F. C. Rosenmüller, *The Biblical Geography of Asia Minor, Phoenicia and Arabia*, tr. by N. Morren (Edinburgh, 1841), I. ii., pp. 280-281; W. H. Thomson, "Baalbek" on *Encyclopaedia Britannica* (14th ed.), vol. II, p. 835.

4. Joshua 11:17; cf. St. Jerome, *Onomastica*, article ; "Baalgad"

5. E Meyer, *Geschichte des Alterthums*, Vol. I (first ed., Berlin, 1884), p. 364, note; Robinson, *Biblical Researches*, III, p. 410, n. 2.

6. Cf. Robinson, *Biblical Researches*, III, p. 519; Ritter, *Die Erdkunde* Vol. XVII, pp. 229-230.

7. *Song of Songs* 8:11.

8. G. H. von Schubert, *Reise in das Morgenland in den Jahren 1836 und 1837* (Erlangen, 1838, 1839); Wilson, *Lands of the Bible*, Vol. II, p. 384.

9. O. Eissfeldt, *Tempel und Kulte syrischer Städte in heenistischer Zeit* (Leipzig, 1941), p. 58.

10. F. H. W. Gesenius, *Thesaurus philologicus linguae hebraeae et chaldaee Veteris Testamenti* (Leipzig, 1829), p. 264.

11. Michaelis, *Supplementa ad lexica hebraica*, p. 201; Rosenmüller, *Biblical Geography*, I. ii, p. 281; Wilson, *Lands of the Bible*, II, p. 384.
12. Herodotus, *Histories* II. 42; Diodorus Siculus I.13.2.
13. G. Hoffman, "Aramäische Inschriften," *Zeitschrift für Assyriologie*, XI (1896), p. 46. [Cf. *Worlds in Collision*, p. 175; D. Cardona, "Saturn as King," *KRONOS* IV:3, pp. 91-92. -- LMG]

THE TRILITHON

Already in the last century it was observed that the Acropolis of Baalbek and the temples built on it date from different epochs. The massive substratum -- the great base of the acropolis -- appears to be of an earlier date; the three temples on the substratum, of a later date.

It is even probable that the wall of the acropolis did not originate in one epoch. Among the stones of which it is built there are three* of an unusual size -- almost twenty meters long. Each of them weighs about one thousand tons. These huge monoliths are incased in the wall. The question arises whether they are not the survivals of the original cyclopean structure -- that which carried the name Rehob, or Beth-Rehob, and which served as a landmark for the scouts dispatched by Moses in their survey of Canaan, and for the emissaries of the tribe of Dan in their search for the territory in the north. Like Stonehenge in Great Britain, or Tiahuanaco in the Andes, it may have originated in an early time -- not necessarily neolithic, since it appears that these stones are subjected to hewing by metal tools.

* *Editors Note*: The three massive slabs imbedded in the Baalbek wall received their combined name of *trilithon* from historians of Byzantine times, but they do not constitute a trilithon in the modern sense of the word. -- DC

[*!* Image]

In the quarry a mile away is found another stone of comparable size, cut out of the rock from all but one side; it appears that this stone of more perfect cut was quarried in a later time, possibly in the days of Jeroboam, or even later; but, for probably mechanical considerations, the work was not finished and the stone not removed, and the emulation of the early builders not completed.(1)

In another place I intend to return to the problem of the Trilithon of Baalbek, when treating cyclopean buildings and the mechanical means of quarrying and transporting these monoliths.

1. See the recent discussion by Jean-Pierre Adam, "À propos du trilithon de Baalbek, Le transport et la mise à l'oeuvre des mégalithes," *Syria* LIV (1977), pp. 31-63.

THE EMBOSSED QUADERS

Aside from the incased trilithon, the attention of the visitor to Baalbek who inspects the wall of the acropolis is drawn to stones of a bossed shape with an indented rim on all four sides of the face of the stone.

[*!* Image]

O. von Richter in 1822(1) and S. Wolcott in 1843(2) drew attention to the fact that the quaders of the wall of the temple area of the acropolis of Baalbek have the same form as the quaders of the Temple of Solomon, namely, of the surviving western (outer) wall, or Wailing Wall. The Roman architects, wrote Wolcott, never built foundations or walls of such stones; and of the Israelite period it is especially the age of Solomon that shows this type of stone shaping (chiseling). The photograph of the outer wall of Baalbek's temple area illustrates that the same art of chiseling was employed in the preparation of stones for its construction. Whatever the time of construction of other parts of Baalbek's compound -- neolithic, Israelite, Syrian, Greek, or Roman -- this fundamental part of the compound must have originated in the same century as the surviving (western) wall of the area of Solomon's temple. [Cf. G.M. Lamsa, "Solomon's Lost Temple," *New Magazine*, Feb. 1967 -- *LMG*]

[*!* Image] _____

1. O. von Richter, *Wallfahrt*, p. 88; quoted by Ritter, *Die Erdkunde*, XVII, p. 231.
2. S. Wolcott, "Notices of Jerusalem; and Excursion to Hebron and Sebeh or Masada; and Journey from Jerusalem northwards to Beirut, etc." in *Bibliotheca Sacra* (1843), p. 82; quoted by Ritter, *Die Erdkunde*, XVII, p. 232.

THE TEMPLES OF THE ACROPOLIS

The buildings on the flat plateau of the Acropolis have columns with capitals of Corinthian style. The time of the origin of these temples is disputed. An author of the last century(1) brought forth his arguments against a late date for the temples atop the acropolis; he would not agree to ascribe them to the Roman period, or Greek period; he dated them as originating in an early Syrian period: the Romans only renovated these buildings in the second century of the present era.

The opinions of scholars are divided over whether these buildings can be ascribed to Roman times, though the source of the designs on the doorways and the ceiling and in the capitals of the columns speak for a Roman origin. When the Roman authorship of the buildings is denied, the Romans are credited only with renovating the structures.

The Emperor who is sometimes said to have built the largest of the temples in the temple area -- that of Jupiter -- is Aelius Antoninus Pius (138-161). The source of this information is the history of John of Antioch, surnamed Malalas, who lived not earlier than in the seventh century of this era, and wrote that Antoninus Pius built a temple for Jupiter at Heliopolis, near the Lebanon in Phoenicia, which was one of the wonders of the world.(2)

Julius Capitolinus, who wrote the annals of Antoninus Pius and enumerated the buildings he erected, offers no material support for the assertion made by the Syrian writer of the early Middle Ages. Though Antoninus Pius did build in Baalbek, as is evidenced by his inscriptions found there,(3) his activity was restricted to reparation of the temples or the construction of one of the edifices in the temple area.(4) The work in its entirety could not have been his because Lucian, his contemporary, calls the sanctuary of Baalbek already ancient, and because Pompey had already found it in existence and Trajan consulted its oracle.

The style of the temples caused the same divergence of opinion as the style of the surviving ruins of Palmyra. Some regard them as Roman,(5) others as Hellenistic and Oriental.(6) They are sometimes

[*!* Image]

INSERT KVI3_12.JPG HERE

called East-Roman.(7) In the case that only the ornamentation is of the Roman period the question may arise whether the walls and the columns of these buildings could be of as early a period as the seventh century before the present era, or the time of Manasseh, of whom Pseudo-Hippolytus says that he reconstructed Baalbek, built originally in the time of Solomon.(8)

-
1. See von Schubert, *Reise in das Morgenland*, op. cit., Vol. III, p. 325.
 2. *Chronographia in Corpus Scriptorum Historiae Byzantinae* 11, p. 280.
 3. Robinson, *Biblical Researches*, III, p. 509.
 4. Robinson suggested that "Antonine rebuilt the great temple of the Sun; and erected the lesser temple to Jupiter Baal" (*Biblical Researches*, III, p. 520, n.6).
 5. O. Puchstein in Th. Wiegand ed., *Palmyra* (Berlin, 1932).
 6. B. Schulz in Wiegand ed., *Palmyra*.
 7. H. Winnefeld, B. Schulz, *Baalbek* (Berlin, Leipzig, 1921, 1923).
 8. L. Ginzberg, *Legends of the Jews* (Philadelphia, 1928), VI, p. 375. [Cf. "Jerusalem City of Venus," *KRONOS* III:3, pp. 70-72. -- *LMG*]

THE CALF

It was almost a common feature in all places where pilgrims gathered to worship at a local cult that diminutive images of the deity were offered for sale to them. Also small figures of the god or of his emblem in precious or semi-precious metals were brought by worshippers as a donation to the temple where the large scale figure had its domicile.

In Baalbek archaeological work produced very few sacred objects or figures that could shed light on the worship of the local god. "It was a disappointment, next to the brilliant success of so rich an excavation, that nothing was learned of the nature of the deity and the history of its worship."(1)

Figures of Jupiter Heliopolitanus standing between two bullocks or calves have been found at Baalbek, dating from Roman times.(2) In addition, an image of a calf was also found.

The only figure of an earlier time found in Baalbek is an image of a calf. Since it is to be expected that images found in an ancient temple are reproductions of the main deity worshipped in the holy enclosure, it is significant that the holy image in the temple of Baalbek was that of a calf, and of no other animal.*

* *Editor's Note*: The image of the calf that was found could also have been a votive offering having nothing to do with the nature or character of the deity being worshipped. -- *DC*

[*!* Image]

The name Baal-Bek (Baal-Bi'qa) is sometimes transmitted by Arab authors as *Baal bikra*, or Baal of the Steer or Calf, which is the way of folk etymology to adapt the name to the form of the worship practiced in the temple. This, together with the finding of the images of the calf in the area of the temple, strengthens the impression that the god of Baalbek was a calf.

1. Winnefeld in Wiegand, *Baalbek*, op. cit., Vol. II(1923), p. 110.
2. René Dussaud, "Jupiter héliopolitain," *Syria* I (1920), pp. 3-15; Nina Jidejian, *Baalbek Heliopolis "City of the Sun"* (Beirut, 1975), ill. no. 135-140.

THE ORACLE OF BAALBEK

Baalbek or, as the Romans called it, Heliopolis, was venerated in the Roman world as the place of an old cult of an ancient oracle, and it rivalled successfully other venerated temples of the Roman Empire.

It is known that the Emperor Trajan, before going to war against the Parthians in the year 115, wrote to the priests of Baalbek and questioned its oracle. The oracle remained in high esteem at least as late as the fourth century of the present era, when Macrobius in his *Saturnalia* wrote of Baalbek: "This temple is also famous for its oracles."(1)

Was it the ancient oracle of Micah? In the words of Jeremiah, shortly before the Babylonian exile of -- 586 in which he spoke of "a voice . . . from Dan", (2) we had the last biblical reference to the oracle of Micah. In the days of Jeremiah the oracle must have been seven or eight hundred years old. Did it survive until the days of Trajan and even later, until the days of Macrobius?

In the Tractate Pesahim of the Babylonian Talmud is written the following sentence: "The image of Micah stands in Bechi." (3) Bechi is known as the Hebrew name for Baalbek in the time of the Talmud. As we have seen, in the Book of Exodus it is recounted that the Danites, migrating to the North, took with them Micah and his idol, and that it was placed in Dan of the North. The Talmud was composed between the second and the fifth centuries of the present era.

This passage in the Tractate Pesahim is a strong argument for the thesis of this essay, namely that Baalbek is the ancient Dan. (4)

1. *Sat.* I. 23. 12.
2. Jeremiah 4:15.
3. Pesahim 117a; see Ginzberg, *Legends of the Jews*, VI, p. 375.
4. The readers of this passage probably understood it in the sense that Micah's oracular image, after being removed from the temple of Dan, was placed in Baalbek. Baalbek being Dan, such an interpretation is

superfluous.

TWO PROBLEMS: A SUMMARY

The problems will be put side by side. Dan was the abode of the old oracle of Micah. Jeroboam built there a "house of high places", or a temple. Previously, he was the builder of Jerusalem's wall under Solomon; before becoming king of the Northern Kingdom he lived as an exile in Egypt. He introduced the cult of the calf in Dan.

The new temple was built to contest and to surpass the temple of Jerusalem. It became the gathering place of the Ten Tribes, or "the sin of Israel", and pilgrims from Judah also went there.

The prophets, who opposed the cult of Dan, called the place Aven, like Aven, or On (Heliopolis) in Egypt.

Its oracle was still active in the days of Jeremiah, in the beginning of the sixth century.

Dan was the northernmost city of the Kingdom of the Ten Tribes, and the capital of the tribe of Dan. It was situated in a valley. If Baal Gad, between the Lebanon and the Anti-Lebanon was not the same place, Dan must have been more to the north.

The place was at the point where the roads meet that run toward Hamath.

No ruins of this temple-city are found. Where was Dan and its temple?

* * *

Remains of a great temple-city are preserved in Baalbek. At the beginning of the present era it was described as already ancient. It bore the name of Heliopolis, like the Egyptian On, or Aven (Ezekiel); and Amos, who spoke against the worshippers at Dan, prophesied the desolation of Bikat-Aven, or the Valley of Baalbek.

Its cult was introduced from Egypt. During excavations, the figure of a calf was unearthed.

The temple possessed an old oracle. The Talmud contains the information that the oracle of Micah (which according to the Book of Judges was in Dan) stands in Baalbek.

Local tradition assigns the building of the temple of Baalbek to the time of Solomon. The wall of the temple area is built of great stone blocks of the same peculiar shape as those of the Wailing Wall in Jerusalem, the remains of the outer wall of the temple area erected by Solomon.

Baalbek lies in a valley (Bi'qa) between the Lebanon and the Anti-Lebanon, and on the junction of the roads that connect Beirut from the west and Damascus from the east with Hamath in the north.

The history of the temple-city of Baalbek in pre-Roman times is not known, neither is its builder known,

nor the time when it was built.

* * *

Two problems -- when was Baalbek built and who was its builder, and where was Dan and what was the fate of its temple -- have a common answer.

The tradition as to the age of the acropolis and temple area of Baalbek is not wrong. Only a few years after Solomon's death the house of the high places of Dan-Baalbek was built by Jeroboam.* Possibly, Solomon had already built a chapel for the oracle, besides the palace for his Egyptian wife.

* [See I. Velikovsky, "Theses for the Reconstruction of Ancient History," *Scripta Academica Hierosolymitana* (N. Y., 1945), Thesis No. 62 and Thesis No. 63. -- LMG]

The *Djenoun* who, according to Arab tradition, built Baalbek for Solomon were apparently the tribesmen of Dan. In the Hebrew tradition, too, the tribesmen of Dan, because of the type of worship in their capital, were regarded as evil spirits. In the corrupted name of Delebore, who, according to Macrobius, was the king who built Baalbek and introduced there the cult of Heliopolis from Egypt, it is possible to recognize the name of Jeroboam who actually returned from Egypt before he built "the house of the high places".

* * * * *

EDITORIAL POSTSCRIPT:

Velikovsky's essay on Baalbek was planned to include a discussion of the names by which this place was known in Egyptian texts. This part was not written, but a few notes of his, scattered among his papers, may help us to follow his reasoning. One note reads: "Dunip (Tunip) of the el-Amarna letters and other ancient sources was Dan. It was also Kadesh of Seti's conquest. Finally, the place is known as Yenoam ('Yahwe speaks') which refers to the oracle."

Tunip: *As Velikovsky noted in "From the End of the Eighteenth Dynasty to the Time of Ramses II" (KRONOS III:3, p. 32) certain scholars (e.g., Gauthier) have identified Tunip with Baalbek, though others (e.g., Astour) have disputed the link. Thutmose III recorded the capture of Tunip in the 29th year of his reign; an inscription recounts the Egyptian king's entering the chamber of offerings and making sacrifices of oxen, calves, etc. to Amon and Harmachis. The el-Amarna letters indicate that the same gods were worshipped at Tunip as in Egypt*

On the walls of a Theban tomb of the time of Thutmose III (that of Menkheperre-Seneb), among paintings of foreigners of various nations, there is one of a personage from Tunip, carrying a child in his arms. Velikovsky thought that, possibly, it was a depiction of Jeroboam, and that the painting illustrated the passage in the First Book of Kings (11:40): "And Jeroboam arose, and fled into Egypt, unto Shishak, king of Egypt. . ."

Among the considerations which led Velikovsky to identify Tunip with Dan-Baalbek were (1) Tunip was located in the general area of Baalbek, with some scholars asserting that the two were one and the same.

(2) *There was a temple of Amon at Tunip; the Roman equivalent of Amon -- Jupiter -- was worshipped at Baalbek.*

Kadesh of Seti's Conquest: *This identification was given in brief in Velikovsky's article in KRONOS III:3, mentioned above. The relevant passage reads: "There is a mural that shows Seti capturing a city called Kadesh. Modern scholars recognized that this Kadesh or Temple City was not the Kadesh mentioned in the annals of Thutmose. Whereas the Kadesh of Thutmose was in southern Palestine, the Kadesh of Seti was in Coele-Syria. The position of the northern city suggested that it was Dunip, the site of an Amon temple built in the days of Thutmose III. Dunip, in its turn, was identified with Baalbek." Pseudo-Hippolytus (Sermo in Sancta Theophania in J. -P. Migne, Patrologiae Cursus Completus [Graecal Vol. 10, col. 705) gives the information that Manasseh, son of Hezekiah, restored Baalbek. In his forthcoming Assyrian Conquest, Velikovsky suggests that this could have been a reward for Manasseh for his "loyalty to the Assyrian-Egyptian axis".*

Yenoam: *Regarding Yenoam, I find only the following among Velikovsky's notes: "Yenoam-Dan (Yehu probably introduced the cult of Yahwe at Dan)." Yenoam, read in Hebrew, could be interpreted as "Ye [Yahwe] speaks"; Velikovsky evidently saw in the name a reference to the oracle at Dan. Yenoam is mentioned among the towns taken by Thutmose III (he captured it soon after taking Megiddo). In the el-Amarna letter no. 197 there is a reference to a town named Yanuammu. Later, Seti recorded the despatching of an army against Yenoam, in the first year of his reign. Yenoam is once again mentioned on Merneptah's so-called Israel Stele; the claim is that it was "made non-existent" In Ramses II and His Time this deed is ascribed to Nebuchadnezzar.*

-- Jan N. Sammer
