



Tel-Dan Inscription and Possible Location of the Golden Calf of Dan

in the ancient Aramaic script which dates to that same period, probably during the reign of Hazael, king of Syria. It mentions the "House of David" and the "King of Israel." These are, so far, the earliest known references to David and Israel outside the Bible. There are others of somewhat later date, but this is the oldest to date.

The photo on the right is of the gate to tel-Dan with the "podium" (the stone base to the right of the gate) just to the side of it. It is believed that Jeroboam stood near this po-

dium as he marshaled his forces from there (2 Samuel 18.4) and that this is possibly where the golden calf was also located. ~



This inscription appears on a piece of basalt stone that was discovered in 1993 during the excavation of tel-Dan, the site of the ancient city of Dan in the extreme north of the nation of Israel which thrived during the later period of the Judges, the reigns of Saul, David and Solomon and on into the time of the divided kingdom. The inscription appears

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Adultery: It Destroys The Soul

by David Padfield

In giving the Ten Commandments, Jehovah declared, "You shall not commit adultery" (Exodus 20:14). The wise King Solomon said the adulterer "destroys his own soul" (Proverbs 6:32). The apostle Paul tells us "fornicators and adulterers God will judge" (Hebrews 13:4).

The Greek word for "adulterer" (moichos) is found in such passages as Luke 18:11 and 1 Cor. 6:9. An adulterer is one "who has unlawful intercourse with the spouse of another" (Vine's Expository Dictionary Of Biblical Words, p. 14).

People often ask, "Why is adultery so bad? What harm does it cause?" While modern society sometimes winks at adultery, God will hold adulterers accountable (Revelation 21:8).

When the great patriarch Job gave a speech affirming his moral character, he said, "If my heart has been enticed by a woman, or if I have lurked at my neighbor's door, then let my wife grind for another, and let others bow down over her. For that would be wickedness; yes, it would be iniquity worthy of judgment. For that would be a fire that consumes to destruction, and would root out all

my increase." (Job 31:9-12). In verse 11, some translations use the words "heinous crime" instead of "iniquity" to describe adultery.

In commenting on Job 31, brother Homer Hailey wrote: "Adultery is described as fulfilling an extremely wicked plan, committing an outrageous crime. It was an offense worthy of condemnation by the judges God and man. Under the Mosaic law it was punishable by death (Lev. 20:10); and under the new covenant, the furnace of fire (Rev. 21:8, 'fornicators' include all sexual perversions and violations). Figuratively, it is a fire that consumes

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the whole person, body, soul, and spirit (cf. Prov. 6:20-35; ch. 7). Also, when such immorality becomes the accepted conduct of a nation, it brings that nation to destruction (cf. Israel and Judah). Time does not change principles; what was morally true in Job's day is equally true now." (Now Mine Eye Seeth Thee, A Commentary On Job, p. 267).

Adulterers are covenant breakers. When a young couple gets married they enter into a covenant (Malachi 2:14). The seductress is one who "forsakes the companion of her youth, and forgets the covenant of her God" (Proverbs 2:17). Wedding vows are a covenant between the man, the woman and God. The man and woman vow their faithfulness to each other and promise to "forsake all others" as long as they both shall live. Adulterers break this promise and are therefore liars. They have lied to their spouse and to their God. They lied to their friends who stood up with them at their wedding and served as legal witnesses. They usually end up lying to their children as well.

What makes adultery different from other sins? In 1 Corinthians 6:18 Paul wrote, "Flee sexual immorality. Every sin that a man does is outside the body, but he who commits sexual immorality sins against his own body." "Every sin that man doeth, is without the body: the apostle means all sin except fornication. It might be objected that sins like suicide, drunkenness and so on are surely not without the body. Yet it is fornication alone which has no other purpose but the satisfaction of the lusts of the body. An unchaste person does not care what be-

comes of the harlot. In a case of suicide the pleasure of the body is not sought. As to intemperance, it arises mostly in sociable company. In the case of insobriety it is not the act of eating and drinking but the excess of eating and drinking which is sinful. In the case of fornication, however, the action in itself, the carnal communion, is sinful. Food comes from without to the body, the sexual appetite arises in the body and has it as its only domain. Thus Paul is able to write that fornication is a sin against the body. The words: without the body must mean therefore: having their purpose without the body. A fornicator aims solely at the satisfaction of his own body and he disregards the essential purpose of the human body." (Grosheide, Commentary On The First Epistle To The Corinthians, p. 151).

In the early 1900's A. T. Robertson commented on the phrase "sins against his own body." He wrote, "The fornicator takes his body which belongs to Christ and unites it with a harlot. In fornication the body is the instrument of sin and becomes the subject of the damage wrought. In another sense fornication brings on one's own body the two most terrible bodily diseases that are still incurable (gonorrhea and syphilis) that curse one's own body and transmit the curse to the third and fourth generation. Apart from the high view given here by Paul of the relation of the body to the Lord no possible father or mother has the right to lay the hand of such terrible diseases and disaster on their children and children's children. The moral and physical rotteness wrought by immorality defy one's imagination." (Word Pictures In the New Testament,

Vol. IV, p. 123). The sexually transmitted diseases of our day make gonorrhea and syphilis look mild by comparison.

I did not vote for Ross Perot in the last election. However, I did like a few of things he said. When asked by the news media about his company's policy of firing executives who cheated on their wives, he said, "If a man's own wife can't trust him, why should I?" An adulterer can not be trusted by anyone, especially his spouse.

An adulterer can be forgiven of his sin like the adulterers and homosexuals at Corinth (1 Cor. 6:9-11). However, there are lingering consequences of sin, and especially the "heinous crime" of adultery.

It would take many years for one guilty of adultery to ever be qualified to serve as an elder or deacon, since both are to be "blameless." How long would it take for an adulterer to restore his good name and "have a good testimony among those who are outside" (1 Timothy 3:7)?

It is a sad fact that many gospel preachers have been guilty of adultery. I can not understand why some brethren want them to keep preaching. Should preachers who have been guilty of adultery go back to "making tents" for a living? They can not be trusted by their spouse. Do you trust them? They have proven themselves to be liars and covenant breakers, and now they want elders and other brethren to have confidence in them? It is amazing that some who are the most discerning in detecting "heresy" among us are men who have had trouble finding their own bedroom.

Maybe they think that by focusing on some current doctrinal issue brethren might forget how they broke their wedding vows, ruined their reputation, lied to both God and their spouse and caused another man's wife to commit this "heinous crime" with them.

When a preacher commits adultery it affects every member of the congregation where he labors. A preacher where I grew up committed adultery. He left the Lord and his spouse and the brethren withdrew their fellowship from him. After he left, the brethren looked differently at all preachers. It took more than a decade before those brethren were able to look at any preacher without suspicion.

Sometimes men caught in adultery claim they are just like King David of Israel and therefore we should just overlook their transgressions. I have read of King David. David was a friend of God. These men are not King David! When Nathan confronted David with his sin, David humbly and meekly repented. David did not deny his adultery nor seek to censure Nathan. I have never known an adulterer like David. Everyone I have ever heard of who was accused of adultery first tried to deny the crime. Then, after proof was brought forth, they tried to minimize the seriousness of their crime or blame someone else. Many speak ill of the ones who try to bring them to repentance.

We would not have to spend time discussing the consequences of adultery if people would heed the words of Paul to "flee fornication" (1 Cor. 6:18). I have never read a better exposition of these

words than from the pen of Albert Barnes: "There is force and emphasis in the word flee. Man should escape from it; he should not stay to reason about it -- to debate the matter -- or even to contend with his propensities, and to try the strength of his virtue. There are some sins which a man can resist; some about which he can reason without danger of pollution. But this is a sin where a man is safe only when he flies; from pollution only when he refuses to entertain a thought of it; secure when he seeks a victory by flight, and a conquest by retreat. Let a man turn away from it without reflection on it and he is safe. Let him think, and reason, and he may be ruined. 'The very passage of an impure thought through the mind leaves pollution behind it.' An argument on the subject often leaves pollution; a description ruins; and even the presentation of motives against it may often fix the mind with dangerous inclination on the crime. There is no way of avoiding the pollution but in the manner prescribed by Paul; there is no man safe who will not follow his direction. How many a young man would be saved from poverty, want, disease, curses, tears, and hell, could these two words be made to blaze before them like the writing before the astonished eyes of Belshazzar (Dan. v.), and could terrify him from even the momentary contemplation of the crime." (Notes On The New Testament, I Corinthians, pp. 106, 107).

I wish that every mother and father would sit down with their teenage children and read together the words of Solomon as he admonished his own son to "flee fornication." "For by means

of a harlot a man is reduced to a crust of bread; and an adulteress will prey upon his precious life. Can a man take fire to his bosom, and his clothes not be burned? Can one walk on hot coals, and his feet not be seared? So is he who goes in to his neighbor's wife; whoever touches her shall not be innocent." (Proverbs 6:26-29). ~

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