
Letters

MORDECAI, DANIEL AND THE TABLE OF NATIONS

Dear Editor,

As one who has enjoyed Mr Cooper's series on the history of man, I would like to know if he knows of secular records mentioning the biblical Mordecai or Daniel, since each had positions of high authority in pagan nations?

Mordecai is stated in Scripture as being second only to King Ahasuerus (Esther 10:3), who ruled over 127 provinces from India to Ethiopia (Esther 1:1). He wrote to all the provinces (Esther 9:20,29) in their own languages (Esther 8:9), and was feared throughout all the provinces (Esther 9:3,4).

Daniel, named Belteshazzar by the prince of the eunuchs (Daniel 1:7), was the third ruler under Belshazzar (Daniel 5:29). He was over 120 princes under Darius (Daniel 6:1,2). A decree was published in all languages to fear the God of Daniel (Daniel 6:25,26).

It would seem likely that these men should appear in secular writings.

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The Author Replies ...

Thank you for the most interesting enquiry concerning Mordecai and Daniel. My researches into the Table of Nations, alas, did not bring me up to their time, so I personally have little to offer. However, much can be gleaned from modern books on these characters, for an example of which I quote from Merrill J. Riner's **Archaeology and the Old Testament**:-

'Although the names Vashti and Esther have not been found in contemporary sources, both have

satisfactory Persian etymologies and there can be no reasonable doubt that they are historical. The name Mordecai is Babylonian Mardukai, occurring quite frequently in late Babylonian inscriptions, and is derived from the name of the god Marduk. The names of the chamberlains and other Persians in the book cannot as yet be proved authentic, but since many of them are apparently Elamite, the recent discovery of numbers of Elamite administrative tablets from the reign of Artaxerxes I bids fair to illuminate the problem.

Especially illuminated by the discoveries at Susa is Haman's method for fixing the date for the destruction of the Jews by casting dice (Esther 3:7). M. Dieulafoy, the excavator of Susa, actually recovered one of these quadrangular prisms on which were engraved the numbers one, two, five and six."

This was written 42 years ago, and it would be interesting to discover exactly what the (then) newly-discovered Elamite tablets revealed. I would recommend Unger's book (still available) to anyone interested in the historicity of the Old Testament books and characters, and if anyone is able to look up the new Elamite records then I for one would be very interested indeed to hear about what they tell us.

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REFERENCES

1. Unger, M., 1954. **Archaeology and the Old Testament**, Zondervan, Grand Rapids, Michigan, pp. 308-309.

CONTEMPORARY SUPPRESSION OF THE THEISTIC WORLD VIEW

Dear Editor,

Dr Jerry Bergman's analysis of the 'Contemporary Suppression of the Theistic World View' [CEN Tech. J., 9(2):267-275] is to be welcomed and commended. May I comment, however, on some issues raised? (My concern here is with those creationists who subscribe to the bases of faith outlined in the front of your journal.)

The Question of Suffering

- (1) We are taught to expect and rejoice in suffering for the sake of Christ — we ought not to be surprised or dismayed (John 15:18-21; 1 Peter 4:12-14; Matthew 5:11-12).
- (2) We must learn from Scripture and from history that those who oppose us are also under the government of God; their power to control and influence is only granted so long as God sees fit, for purposes hidden in His infinite wisdom (Psalm 94:3-4; cp. vv. 22-23).
- (3) The Almighty will not allow His Truth to be derided for ever, but will shortly arise with fury and with vengeance against His enemies (2 Thessalonians 1:7-10).
- (4) God Himself is with those who trust Him and walk humbly before Him. He is well able to place us in positions of influence, or allow us to suffer 'affliction with the people of God' (Hebrews 11:25), as He sees fit (Psalm 146:8; Luke 1:49-53).
- (5) We need not therefore fight anxiously for our personal 'rights', but instead our conduct must be humble, honourable and holy; the Almighty will avenge His children in due time (Romans 12:19-21). Whilst protesting appropriately against unlawful practices that

question of atheist versus the theist, but the theist who realises that God takes an active role in the universe and is, as the historic Christian Church has taught, the Creator. This means that genetic copying mistakes, natural selection, chance, time and unforeseen occurrences is not the creator. More and more, a phrase used by evolutionists is 'we are a lucky accident'. I have found most Christians are highly receptive to the creation world view and immediately see the critical significance of it **if** it is explained to them. Awareness of the many scientists who are **not** evolutionary naturalists and of the fact that the scientific evidence for the evolutionary world view is poor, at best, is also critical.

The Scriptures clearly teach that we must be like salt, and let our light shine forth into a dark world. The record of the early Christians is clear: when the state tried to suppress and shut them up, they used the example of Paul and protested vigorously, even to the point of being willing to disobey the law if it conflicted with their Christian obligations. A strong interest of mine has been early Christianity from the apostles to about AD 325, when the council at Nice occurred. The stand they took then and why is quite clear, and I perceive that we today are often not carrying out our Christian obligation. We must emulate the example of Paul and the other Apostles and boldly relate our concerns to the church and others. The Christian doctrine of creation, as Ken Ham rightly stresses, is **foundational** and **ail else** rests upon it. I agree that our foremost concern should be the honour of Christ and His Truth, but to do this we today must do as Paul did and appeal to Caesar. We must boldly proclaim this truth and oppose those who endeavour to suppress it.

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THE NAME *JEHOVAH* IN GENESIS

Dear Editor,

F. G. Smith wrote in 'The Use of the Divine Names in Genesis'¹ '... *the incidence of the name YHWH in Genesis is due to the hand of Moses the translator*' and '... *Moses substituted the new name which had been revealed to him, namely YHWH or Jehovah*'. His unproved and incorrect assertion raises three issues:-

- (1) What are the names of God in Genesis?
- (2) How is Exodus 6:3 to be translated and understood?
- (3) How are apparent contradictions of the Bible to be harmonised?

The Name Jehovah in Genesis

In Genesis 1:1-2:3 God is called **God**, His personal name and the name of a class of beings of which there is only one member. After man's sin there are many so-called gods who are not gods, and the one true God is called by many names — for example, Jehovah God, Everlasting God, Almighty God, God of Abraham. In Genesis 2:4 His proper name, His covenant name, **Jehovah**, is introduced. This name lives in the name **Jesus** — *Jehoshua*, Jehovah saves. Jehovah is rendered *ho kyrios* (the Lord) in the New Testament and is variously rendered in English: YHWH, Yahweh, Jahveh, Jehovah, GOD, the LORD. Because the name Jehovah is familiar to us in our English hymns and Bibles, I shall use Jehovah rather than YHWH. I'm sure Moses did not pronounce it 'Jehovah'; but then neither did Matthew say 'Jesus'. Also, using Jehovah prevents confusing the LORD (for Jehovah) with the Lord (for *Adonai*).

Jehovah is named 164 times in Genesis, including 40 times by Himself or by other speakers. Jehovah God gave Adam one commandment; and **Jehovah God** first proclaimed the Gospel: the Seed of the Woman shall crush your head (Genesis 3:15).

In Genesis we read the name Jehovah on the lips of Eve, Lamech,

Noah, Abram, Sarai, Abraham's servant, Laban, Bethuel, Abimelech, Isaac, Jacob, Leah and Rachel. And in Genesis 15:7 **Jehovah Himself says to Abram, 'I am Jehovah, who brought you out of Ur of the Chaldees, to give you this land to inherit it.'** This follows immediately after 'he [Abram] believed in **Jehovah**, and He accounted it to him for righteousness.' Yet Mr Smith wrote, 'It [the phrase "I am the LORD"] is never used before Exodus 6:3'. In Genesis 28:13, **Jehovah says to Jacob, 'I am Jehovah, God of Abraham your father and the God of Isaac; the land on which you lie I will give to you and your descendants.'** Yet Mr Smith wrote, '*But YHWH is never used at all in any covenant dealings between God and the patriarchs.*'

Genesis 4:26 says, 'Then men began to call on the name of Jehovah.' Besides this, Abram called on the name of Jehovah (Genesis 12:8, 13:4), Abraham called on the name of Jehovah (Genesis 21:33), Rebekah enquired of Jehovah (Genesis 25:22), and Isaac called on the name of Jehovah (Genesis 26:25). Abel brought an offering to Jehovah (Genesis 4:4), Noah built an altar to Jehovah (Genesis 8:20), Abram built altars to Jehovah (Genesis 12:7, 'to Jehovah, who had appeared to him', Genesis 12:8, 13:18), and Noah called the God of Shem Jehovah (Genesis 9:26). When he was dying, Jacob said, 'I have waited for Your salvation, O **Jehovah!**' (Genesis 49:28). Yet Mr Smith dismissed Genesis 4:26 as '*one isolated verse*'.

Dr Alfred Edersheim² pointed out that Abram used Melchizedek's name for God but added the name **Jehovah** (Genesis 14:19,22):-

'And he [Melchizedek] blessed him and said: "Blessed be Abram of God Most High, Possessor of heaven and earth" . . . But Abram said to the King of Sodom, "I have lifted my hand to **Jehovah**, God Most High, the Possessor of heaven and earth".'

This was an **oath** of Abram, in Jehovah's name. Would Moses have