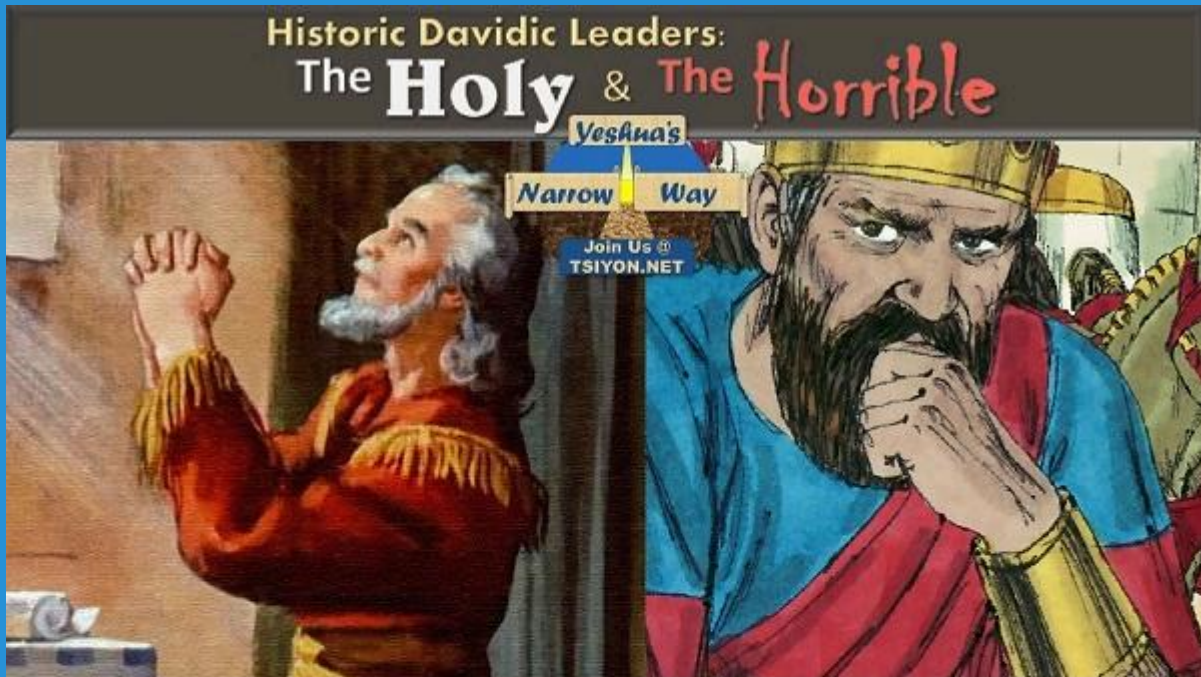


TSIYON NEWS

Tsiyon Messianic Radio Newsletter - Vol 19.19 - 03/07/6024 TAM - 05/15/2024 AD

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See this live stream panel discussion tonight at www.Tsiyon.Net

Also in this *Tsiyon News*: Eliyahu shares his latest message.

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~ See Shavuot notice near the end of this Tsiyon News ~

From Eliyahu

From the Bible's point of view what is the difference between good people and bad people? Assuming we are speaking of YHWH's covenant people, Israel, good people are those who conscientiously strive to keep His commandments and bad people are those who don't. Sounds simple enough, yet modern readers often err in making this distinction when assessing Bible characters. Why? The tendency is

to judge by modern standards of conduct, or personal standards of conduct, rather than on the basis of Yah's commandments.

For example, consider David. While everyone likes the 'David killed the giant' story, David often receives mixed reviews after that. Why? One very big reason has to do with the fact that David had a number of wives - not just one. A number of verses list David's wives, such as this one:

*"To David were sons born in Hebron: and his firstborn was Amnon, of **Ahinoam the Jezreelitess**; and his second, Chileab, of **Abigail the widow of Nabal the Carmelite**; and the third, Absalom the son of **Maacah the daughter of Talmai king of Geshur**; and the fourth, Adonijah the son of **Haggith**; and the fifth, Shephatiah the son of **Abital**; and the sixth, Ithream, of **Eglah**, David's wife. These were born to David in Hebron." 2 Samuel 3:2-5*

I count 6 wives there, and there were more later in David's career. That practice runs completely contrary to both Christian values and feminist values of our day. Not only that, but it seems to call forth a strong emotional repugnance against it, causing people to think of David as a bad person. Was he?

Certainly, if he was alive today and living like this he would definitely be stigmatized. However, the stigma attached to having multiple wives that exists today is not to be found among the commandments of the Torah that governed ancient Israel. In fact, the Torah allows and regulates such marriages, and even requires them in certain situations, such as in the case of levirate marriage, for example. Mind you, the Torah is not just a book of commandments. It is the handbook for a complete social system that governed Israel in David's time. The social system of the 21st century world is completely different, but does that mean that David was bad? David lived, not according to the modern system, but according to the commandments of the Torah as practiced in his time, which was the standard by which he is rightfully judged.

David was guilty in the sin against Uriah the Hittite, which David both admitted and repented of. Everybody knows about that, so there is no need to rehash it here. In dealing with that sin, YHWH said this:

"This is what YHWH, the Elohim of Israel, says: 'I anointed you king over Israel, and I delivered you out of the hand of Saul. I gave you your master's house, and your master's wives into your bosom,

*and gave you the house of Israel and of Judah; and if that would have been too little, **I would have added to you many more such things.**"*

2 Samuel 12:7-8

Clearly, the implication of Yah's statement above is, that while David overreached in the matter of Uriah, all else that David had, including his wives, had come from YHWH. Given no lesser witness than God Himself, it would surely be wrong to judge David as 'bad' because he accepted the gifts his Father gave him.

Here, some writers have realized they can not accuse David simply because he had wives, so they have found another way of slandering him. They say he had Canaanite pagan wives - which is forbidden by the Torah. Regarding the Canaanites He said:

*"..when YHWH your Elohim shall deliver them up before you, and you shall strike them; then you shall utterly destroy them: you shall make no covenant with them, nor show mercy to them; **neither shall you make marriages with them**; your daughter you shall not give to his son, nor shall you take his daughter for your son." Deut 7:2-3*

Had David taken wives from any of the Canaanite nations listed as such in the Torah, then he would be in violation of this command prohibiting marriage from among them. That would definitely be bad. Some claim that David did exactly that. They make the case from David's raids from Ziklag upon neighboring Canaanite tribes, using this verse:

*"David and his men went up, and made a raid on the **Geshurites**, and the Girzites, and the Amalekites; for those were the inhabitants of the land, who were of old, as you go to Shur, even to the land of Egypt."*

1 Samuel 27:8

They claim this proves the Geshurites were Canaanites. Then they point out that David took "Maacah the daughter of Talmai king of Geshur as wife" (2 Samuel 3:2-5). In their eyes that makes David a bad fellow, because they think this proves that David disobeyed the commandment against taking Canaanite wives. That looks like a solid case against David - until you review the rest of the facts. What facts?

The heart of it is that there were two different distinct people groups translated as *Geshurites* in some Bibles. *Easton's Bible Dictionary* lists these as follows:

* The **inhabitants of Geshur**. They maintained friendly relations with the Israelites on the **east of Jordan** (Joshua 12:5 ; Joshua 13:11 Joshua 13:13).

* **Another aboriginal people of Palestine who inhabited the southwest border of the land**. Geshuri in Joshua 13:2 should be "the Geshurite," not the Geshurites mentioned in ver. 11,13, but the tribe mentioned in 1 Samuel 27:8 .

The tribes that David raided from Ziklag included the nearby *Geshurites* located in the "southwest border of the land." Notice now that these Geshurites were Canaanites, located near the Philistines, in the direction of Egypt:

"YHWH said to [Joshua], "You are old and advanced in years, and there remains yet very much land to be possessed. "This is the land that still remains: all the regions of the Philistines, and all the Geshurites; from the Shihor, which is before Egypt, even to the border of Ekron northward, which is counted as Canaanite"" (see the map near the bottom of this page). Joshua 13:1-3

David didn't marry these people, he killed them as the Torah commanded.



"Geshur and Maacath dwell in the midst of Israel to this day."
Josh 13:13

"The influence of the Israelite religion [on Geshur] may be seen in dietary practices and the selection of sacrificial animals."

Arav, Rami, ed. (2004). Bethsaida: A City by the North Shore of the Sea of Galilee, Vol 3. Truman State University. pp. 17–39.

"Maacah the daughter of Talmai king of Geshur" was from an entirely different group of people that lived in Geshur, in the northeast, in the Israelite territory of Manasseh (see map above).

There is no record of anything but friendly relations between Israel and these Geshurites. Consider what Joshua tells us:

*"..With [Manasseh,] the Reubenites and the Gadites received their inheritance, which Moses gave them, beyond the Jordan eastward, even as Moses the servant of YHWH gave them: ...Moses attacked these [enemy nations in the area], and drove them out. Nevertheless **the children of Israel didn't drive out the Geshurites, nor the Maacathites: but Geshur and Maacath dwell in the midst of Israel to this day.**" Joshua 13:7-13*

This is very interesting. If these Geshurites had been Canaanites they would have been destroyed in Moses' military campaign throughout the area east of the Jordan, so clearly, they were not Canaanites, that YHWH condemned in the Torah. Moses very deliberately let them live, and they continued to *"dwell in the midst of Israel"* for centuries thereafter, until the Assyrians deported them, along with the Ten Tribe Kingdom of Israel.

Clearly, Israel could have destroyed them and taken their land at any time, but never did. This suggests that although they had once been pagans, they likely converted to the worship of YHWH upon seeing the awesome power and wisdom of Israel's God. I can think of no other reason why they would be allowed to dwell within Israel's territory for centuries, with no conflict whatsoever. Other commentators agree:

*"Scholars debate whether the Geshurites were affiliated with the Arameans or the Israelites. It is likely that they had connections to both groups. Before Joshua's conquest, they were probably predominantly Aramean. However, **during the time of Israel's dominance, many Geshurites likely assimilated with Israel.**"*
[<https://www.gotquestions.org/Geshurites.html>]

Thus, the evidence shows that David's Geshurite wife was not a Canaanite and should not be assumed a pagan, but was likely a believing foreigner. Therefore, King David was in no violation of Torah in taking "Maacah the daughter of Talmai king of Geshur" as wife.

Indeed, the Scriptures give us an unequivocal assessment of David, saying:

*"**David did that which was right in the eyes of YHWH, and didn't turn aside from anything that He commanded him all the days of his life, except only in the matter of Uriah the Hittite.**" 1 Kings 15:5*

David was left with only one sin on his record, from which he had repented. Other than that, he had a perfect record of obedience. May we all do as well.

Tonight I will be hosting a live panel discussion about other leaders in David's line - some bad and some good. All are invited to join us tonight, May 15, 2024, at Tsiyon.Net, at 8 PM, Central, for this informative live stream discussion.

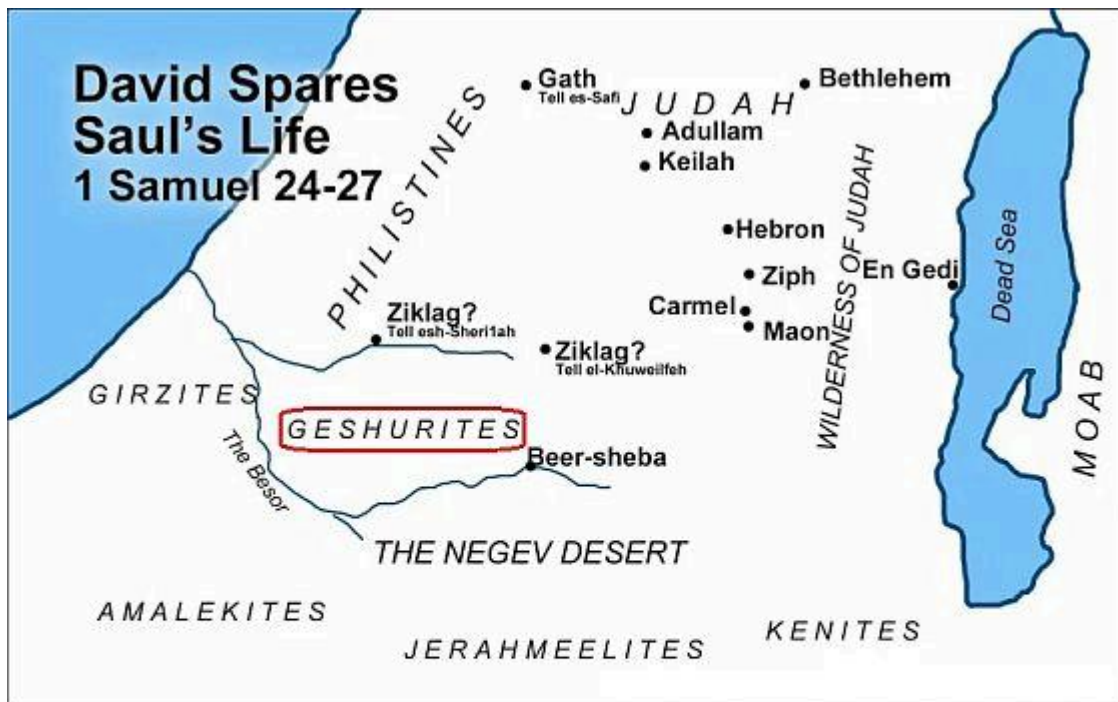
In His Name,

Eliyahu

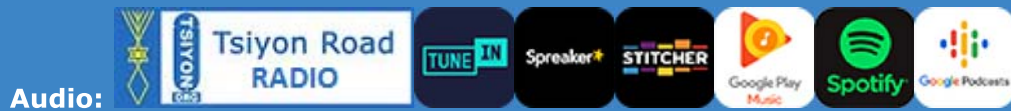
Tsiyon.Org

Shavuot tomorrow night: Shavuot starts tomorrow night at sundown, May 16, 2024, and ends at the next sundown of May 17, 2024 according to the Hebrew calendar of Scripture. Tsiyon will be observing Shavuot this year by airing special Shavuot programming on Tsiyon Radio at Tsiyon.Org throughout this timeframe.

The pagan Geshurites raided by David were located in the south.



ESV Archaeology Study Bible says, "These Geshurites are those living near the Philistines (Josh 13:2), not those near Bashan (Josh 13:11). The Girzites are not mentioned elsewhere in the Bible. The Amalekites of 1 Samuel 15 and 30 were located to the south, toward the Egyptian border."



*"In the world you shall have tribulation; but be of good courage!
I have overcome the world."* John 16:33

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