

Resource: Biblica Bible Dictionary

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Biblica Bible Dictionary

B

Baal

A false god worshipped by people groups in and around Canaan. In the Hebrew language the word Baal means lord or ruler. Baal was worshipped as the god of the sun and of storms. People thought he gave them children and healthy crops.

Baal Peor

Peor was a place in the land of Moab. The Israelites broke their covenant with God there when they started worshipping Baal. The result was a plague that killed thousands of Israelites.

Babel

The city that people worked together to build before they spoke different languages. They started building a high tower in the city of Babel. They wanted to stay there instead of spreading out over the earth. This went against what God wanted for people. God stopped them by changing the language they spoke. This confused them because they could no longer understand one another. In the Hebrew language, the word Babel sounds like the word for confusion. Babel was a sign for people working together against what God wants.

Babylon

The capital city of Babylonia. Babylonia was a kingdom in Mesopotamia that lasted for thousands of years. It became a powerful government that ruled over many other nations and people groups. Many Babylonians were from the people group called the Chaldeans. Babylonia took control of the southern kingdom of Judah. In 586 BC Babylonian armies destroyed Jerusalem and the temple built when Solomon was king. They forced many people from Judah to leave their land. They had to live in

exile in Babylon. Marduk-Baladan, Nebuchadnezzar, Awel-Marduk and Belshazzar were Chaldean kings of Babylonia. The Persian government took control of the Babylonian government in 539 BC. Some books of the Bible use the name Babylon to talk about powerful governments. The name Babylon described rich and proud kingdoms that didn't honour God. They tried to be more powerful than any other government or people group. They ruled over other nations without mercy and treated people very badly. In Revelation, John used Babylon as a sign for the government of Rome.

Balaam

A prophet from Mesopotamia who wasn't from Jacob's family line. He used magic to learn what would happen in the future. Balak hired him to put a curse on the people of Israel. Balaam's donkey spoke to him to try to stop him. God caused Balaam to bless his people instead of cursing them.

Balak

The king of Moab during the time that the Israelites were travelling to Canaan. He hired the prophet Balaam to put a curse on the Israelites. He thought that this would help him drive the Israelites away from his land.

Baptism

A practice among Jews. Baptism was an outward sign of something that had happened inside of people. They would go into the water and be covered by it. Then they would come back out of the water. People did this to be made clean according to Jewish laws. Gentiles were baptised to show that they had accepted the Jewish faith. Jews were baptised as a sign that they obeyed God. It showed that they had turned away from sin.

Christians are baptised to show they have turned away from sin and believe in Jesus. It shows they are committed to following Jesus and being part of God's people.

Barabbas

A Jew who was guilty of murder and of fighting against the Roman government. The Romans had put him in prison. Pilate set him free instead of setting Jesus free at the Passover Feast.

Barak

An Israelite from the tribe of Naphtali. He obeyed God's instructions to attack Sisera's army. But he was only willing to obey God if Deborah went with him. With Deborah, he sang an important song about their victory in Judges chapter 5.

Barnabas

A Jewish believer from the tribe of Levi who was from the island of Cyprus. His name sounds like the Hebrew words for son of help. Barnabas was also called Joseph. He freely gave what he owned to help others. He also helped bring peace between people. Barnabas was an apostle. He helped Saul after he became a believer. He and Saul travelled to many places sharing the good news about Jesus. John Mark was Barnabas' cousin.

Bathsheba

The wife of Uriah the Hittite. David committed adultery with her, murdered her husband and then made her his wife. Her first child with David died as a result of David's sins. Her second child with David was Solomon. Jesus came from Bathsheba's family line.

BC

A way to describe all the years before Jesus was born. BC means before Christ.

Beersheba

A city in southern Canaan. It became the most southern city in the land of Israel. Abraham dug a well there. God spoke to Hagar, Isaac, Jacob and Elijah in Beersheba or the desert near it.

Believe in

In the Old Testament, God showed that he wanted people to believe in him. This meant trusting that God is who he says he is. It meant trusting that he would do what he promised to do. It led to obeying God and worshipping only him. Believing in God is how people were made right with God. In the New Testament, God showed that he also wanted people to believe in Jesus. This meant trusting that Jesus is who he says he is. It meant trusting that Jesus would do what he promised to do. Everyone who believes in Jesus is saved from the power of sin, death and evil. Jesus gives them life that never ends. People who believe in him obey him and follow his way of life. (Salvation)

Believer

Someone who believes in Jesus Christ and follows him. In the New Testament they are also called Christians. They believe that Jesus of Nazareth is God's Son who rose from the dead. Believers worship Jesus as God. They serve him as Messiah and King. Believers were first called Christians at Antioch in Syria. They are called by Christ's name because they follow his way of life. Believers remain part of their community and their people group as they follow Jesus. They continue their people group's laws and practices. They do this unless the laws and practices go against what Jesus taught. This is true for Jewish believers and for Gentile believers.

Benjamin

The youngest son of Jacob and Rachel. Rachel first named him Ben-Oni. In the Hebrew language Ben-Oni means son of my trouble. Jacob changed his name to Benjamin. Benjamin means son of my right hand. Rachel died giving birth to Benjamin. His family line became a tribe of Israel.

Berea

A Greek city in the Roman territory of Macedonia. It was in the area that is now northern Greece. Paul travelled there on his second journey.

Bethany

The town where Mary, Martha and Lazarus lived. It was a short distance east of Jerusalem and near the Mount of Olives.

Bethel

The place where God appeared to Jacob when he ran away from Esau. It was also called Luz. In the Hebrew language Bethel means house of God. Abraham and Jacob built altars to worship God there. It became an important city in Israel. It was north of Jerusalem at the border between the southern and northern kingdoms. Jeroboam built a temple to worship false gods there.

Bethlehem

The town that David was from and where Jesus was born. It's a short distance south of Jerusalem.

Bible

The book of holy writings of Jews and Christians. For Jews, the Bible includes the books of the Old Testament. For Christians, the Bible includes the books of the Old Testament and the New Testament. (God's word)

Bilhah

A servant of Rachel. Rachel gave her as a concubine to Jacob (concubines). The family lines of her sons Dan and Naphtali became tribes of Israel.

Bless all nations

God promised that all nations on earth would be blessed through Abraham and his family line. God repeated this promise to Isaac and to Jacob. It was repeated in Psalm 72 and Zechariah chapter 8. This

promise was fulfilled in many ways. One way was through the laws of God's covenant with the Israelites. The Israelites were to worship God only and obey the Mount Sinai covenant. This would show other nations how wise and understanding God's people were. It would show other nations that God was near to his people and loved them. This would make other nations want to worship and obey the true God. Another way was through Jesus. Jesus was from Abraham's family line. All people on earth can be made right with God by believing in Jesus. That is how God's promise about all nations being blessed is completely fulfilled.

Blood

Throughout the Bible there are two meanings for the word blood. The first meaning is the red liquid inside the bodies of humans and animals. The second meaning is a sign of life. Life is a gift from God. Blood was considered important because it showed that an animal or a person was alive. Losing blood was understood to lead to death. So anything that had to do with a loss of blood was considered unclean. Because blood was important, it was used to make things holy and clean. Sprinkling blood from sacrifices on someone or something was a sign. It showed that the person or object had been made clean from death and sin.

Body of Christ

A way of describing the community of Jesus' followers. It's a picture that describes how everyone in the church loves and serves one another. Christ's body is made up of many different people who are brought together as one. Trusting in Jesus and obeying him is what makes them one. Using their different gifts, together they continue doing Jesus' work on earth.

Book of Enoch

A Jewish writing known before and after Jesus' time. It wasn't written by the Enoch talked about in Genesis.

Book of life

Throughout the Bible there are two meanings for the book of life. It's also called God's book. In the Old Testament, it was a way of talking about people who are alive. It was described as a list of names collected in a book that God writes. In the New Testament, it was a way of talking about people who follow Jesus. It was described as belonging to the Lamb of God. The book of life isn't an actual book with names written in it. It's a way of talking about who is alive or who believes in Jesus.

Born again

A way of describing what happens when people believe in Jesus as King and Saviour. They stop living as slaves to sin. Being a slave to sin is like being dead spiritually even though the body is alive. When people trust Jesus, he gives their spirit new life. This new birth is a spiritual birth. It's not the same as someone's body being born. New life for their bodies will come later when God raises people from the dead.

Brother-in-law's duty

A practice common among many people groups for hundreds of years. It takes care of the widow and the family line of a man who dies. The brother of the man who dies marries the widow and has a child with her. The child is considered the child of the man who died. This child receives the property and carries on the name of the man who died. The child also takes care of the mother when she is old.

Burnt offerings

Sacrifices or offerings of clean male animals or birds that people chose to make. The entire animal except for the skin was burnt. This was a sign that the person making the sacrifice was completely committed to God. There were certain times that burnt offerings had to be made. People could also make burnt offerings other times when they wanted to. Trumpets were blown during burnt offerings.

Buy back

To get back something or someone that has been given or sold. This is done by paying the price for the thing or the person. Another word for this is to redeem. The one who buys back the thing or person is called the redeemer. God bought back the Israelites when they were slaves in Egypt. This showed that he was their redeemer. When Jesus died on the cross, he paid the price to buy back all sinners. He redeems all who trust in him. He redeems them from the power of sin, death and evil.