
MENAHM

Located within the Israel Museum is an artifact known as the Iran Stele named after the place where it was discovered. The artifact records the military campaigns of the Assyrian ruler Tiglath-Pileser during his first nine years as king.



Iran Stele mentions
Menahem of Samaria

The text on this artifact also mentions that King Menahem of Israel, who reigned in Samaria, sent him a gift of silver, and that because of this gift he allowed Menahem to continue to rule.

The text states: "I received tribute from . . . Rezon of Damascus, Menahem of Samaria, Hiram of Tyre, . . . gold, silver, . . ." ANET 283

“In my former campaigns I considered all the cities . . . that I carried away as booty and . . . the place of Samaria only did I leave their king.”

ANET 283

This matches the Biblical account in 2Kings 15:19-20:

“Pul (Tiglath-Pileser) king of Assyria came against the land; and Menahem gave Pul a thousand talents of silver, that his hand might be with him to strengthen the kingdom under his control. And Menahem exacted the money from Israel, from all the very wealthy, from each man fifty shekels of silver, to give to the king of Assyria. So the king of Assyria turned back, and did not stay there in the land.”



Tiglath-Pileser Profile from the walls of his palace. British Museum

Menahem was a brutal man who showed little compassion for his fellow man. So brutal was he that during one of his attacks upon a city of his own country he had all the women who were with child ripped open so that he would guarantee all the infants of the city would be slain.

The first century Jewish historian Josephus wrote in his work Antiquities of the Jews concerning Menahem: "Now when Zachariah, the son of Jero-boam, had reigned six months over Israel, he was slain by the treachery of a certain friend of his, whose name was Shallum, the son of Jabesh, who took the kingdom afterward, but kept it no longer than thirty days; for Menahem, the general of his army, who was at that time in the city Tirzah, and heard of what had befallen Zachariah, removed thereupon with all his forces to Samaria, and joining battle with Shallum, slew him; and when he had made himself king, he went thence, and came to the city Tiphseh; but the citizens that were in it shut their gates, and barred them against the king, and would not admit him: but in order to be avenged on them, he burnt the country round about it, and took the city by force, upon a siege; and being very much displeased at what the inhabitants of Tiphseh had done, he slew them all, and spared not so much as the infants, without omitting the utmost instances of cruelty and barbarity; for he used such severity upon his own countrymen, as would not be pardonable with regard to strangers who had been conquered by him. And after this manner it was that this Menahem continued to reign with cruelty and barbarity for ten years. But when Pul, king of Assyria, had made an expedition against him, he did not wish to fight or engage in battle with the Assyrians, but he persuaded him to accept a thousand talents of silver, and to go away, and so put an end to the war. This sum the multitude collected for Menahem, by exacting fifty drachme as poll-money from every head, after which he died, and was buried in Samaria, and left his son Pekahiah his successor in the kingdom, who followed the barbarity of his father.'

Antiquities of the Jews, Book 9 section 228

MENAHEM WAS A CRUEL SHEPHERD

JESUS IS THE GOOD SHEPHERD

"Son of man, prophesy against the shepherds of Israel, prophesy and say to them, 'Thus says the Lord GOD to the shepherds: "Woe to the shepherds of Israel who feed themselves! Should not the shepherds feed the flocks? "You eat the fat and clothe yourselves with the wool; you slaughter the fatlings, but you do not feed the flock. "The weak you have not strengthened, nor have you healed those who were sick, nor bound up the broken, nor brought back what was driven away, nor sought what was lost; but with force and cruelty you have ruled them. "So they were scattered because there was no shepherd; and they became food for all the beasts of the field when they were scattered. "My sheep wandered through all the mountains, and on every high hill; yes, My flock was scattered over the whole face of the earth, and no one was seeking or searching for them."

'Therefore, you shepherds, hear the word of the LORD: "as I live," says the Lord GOD, "surely because My flock became a prey, and My flock became food for every beast of the field, because there was no shepherd, nor did My shepherds search for My flock, but the shepherds fed themselves and did not feed My flock"; 'therefore, O shepherds, hear the word of the LORD! 'Thus says the Lord GOD: "Behold, I am against the shepherds, and I will require My flock at their hand; I will cause them to cease feeding the sheep, and the shepherds shall feed themselves no more; for I will deliver My flock from their mouths, that they may no longer be food for them."

'For thus says the Lord GOD: "Indeed I Myself will search for My sheep and seek them out. "As a shepherd seeks out his flock on the day he is among

his scattered sheep, so will I seek out My sheep and deliver them from all the places where they were scattered on a cloudy and dark day. "And I will bring them out from the peoples and gather them from the countries, and will bring them to their own land; I will feed them on the mountains of Israel, in the valleys and in all the inhabited places of the country. "I will feed them in good pasture, and their fold shall be on the high mountains of Israel. There they shall lie down in a good fold and feed in rich pasture on the mountains of Israel. "I will feed My flock, and I will make them lie down," says the Lord GOD. "I will seek what was lost and bring back what was driven away, bind up the broken and strengthen what was sick; but I will destroy the fat and the strong, and feed them in judgment."

'And as for you, O My flock, thus says the Lord GOD: "Behold, I shall judge between sheep and sheep, between rams and goats. "Is it too little for you to have eaten up the good pasture, that you must tread down with your feet the residue of your pasture; and to have drunk of the clear waters, that you must foul the residue with your feet? "And as for My flock, they eat what you have trampled with your feet, and they drink what you have fouled with your feet."

'Therefore thus says the Lord GOD to them: "Behold, I Myself will judge between the fat and the lean sheep. "Because you have pushed with side and shoulder, butted all the weak ones with your horns, and scattered them abroad, "therefore I will save My flock, and they shall no longer be a prey; and I will judge between sheep and sheep. "I will establish one shepherd over them, and he shall feed them; My servant David. He shall feed them and be their shepherd. "And I, the LORD, will be their God, and My servant David a prince among them; I, the LORD, have spoken. Ezekiel 34:2-24 (NKJV)

THE OFFSPRING OF DAVID IS THE GOOD SHEPHERD

"I, Jesus, have sent My angel to testify to you these things in the churches. I am the Root and the Offspring of David, the Bright and Morning Star."

Revelation 22:16 (NKJV)

THE GREATEST WORDS FROM THE MOUTH OF THE GOOD SHEPHERD

"I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd gives His life for the sheep. "But a hireling, he who is not the shepherd, one who does not own the sheep, sees the wolf coming and leaves the sheep and flees; and the wolf catches the sheep and scatters them. "The hireling flees because he is a hireling and does not care about the sheep.

"I am the good shepherd; and I know My sheep, and am known by My own. "As the Father knows Me, even so I know the Father; and I lay down My life for the sheep. "Therefore My Father loves Me, because I lay down My life that I may take it again. "No one takes it from Me, but I lay it down of Myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This command I have received from My Father." John 10:11-18 (NKJV)

Resources:

The Holy Bible, Author: The Lord God
Scripture taken from the New King James Version unless noted.

Ancient Near Eastern Texts - Relating to the Old Testament.
James Pritchard, 3rd Edition, Princeton University Press 1969 ,
Pg 283 Account of Menahem's tribute to Tiglath-Pileser III and
the Assyrian king's statement that he left Samaria alone.

Halley's Bible Handbook ISBN 0-310-25720-4
pg.195 Menahem's reign (748-738 B.C.)

Iran Stele Inscription - from Tiglath-Pileser III
Text and Photograph
http://ochre.lib.uchicago.edu/zincirli/index_files/Page928.htm

Iran Stele Inscription photograph and text.
[http://www.english.imjnet.org.il/htmls/popup.aspx?c0=13152
&bsp=13055](http://www.english.imjnet.org.il/htmls/popup.aspx?c0=13152&bsp=13055)

Tiglath Pileser COS 2.117A. COS 2.117B
<http://fontes.lstc.edu/~rklein/Documents/Assins.htm#Tiglath>

ANET/COS Cross reference charts
<http://fontes.lstc.edu/~rklein/Doc5/COS-ANET%20Index.htm>
<http://www.bombaxo.com/cosanet.pdf>

Iran Stele - Israel Museum Info
http://cojs.org/cojswiki/Iran_Stele,_737_BCE

Josephus Antiquities of the Jews 9:228-236
William Whiston, A.M., Ed

Avigad's comprehensive Corpus of West Semitic Stamp Seals
(WSSS 35) Hami'ohel seal - Seal: "Belonging to Hami'ohel
daughter of Menahem". The seal was found in Jerusalem and is
dated to the seventh century. Its center is decorated with fish
and fins and a long tail.

Women in Ugarit and Israel: their social and religious position in
the By Hennie J. Marsman pg. 646

Seal: "Belonging to Hami'ohel daughter of Menahem".

<http://www.bib-arch.org/debates/seal-controversy-06.asp>
Hami'ohel daughter of Menahem - Proven proved wsss35

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