

## ~BAAL-BERITH (75)

(Ba'al-be'rith) [Owner of the Covenant, *El-berith*, God of a Covenant]

- When all the landowners of the tower of Shechem heard of it, they immediately went to the vault of the house of **El-berith**. (Judges 9:46)
- The Baal of Shechem, whom the Israelites began worshipping after the death of Judge Gideon.
- And it came about that as soon as Gideon had died the sons of Israel again took up having immoral intercourse with the Baals, so that they appointed **Baal-berith** as their god. (Judges 8:33)
- The designation **Baal-berith** may denote that this particular Baal was believed to watch the keeping of covenants.
- A kind of treasury was evidently attached to the house or temple of **Baal-berith** at Shechem.
- Then they gave him seventy pieces of silver from the house of **Baal-berith**, and with them Abimelech proceeded to hire idle and insolent men, that they might accompany him. (Judges 9:4)
- In connection with the grape harvest, the Shechemites apparently held a festival in honor of **Baal-berith**, climaxed by a kind of sacrificial meal in the temple of their god. It was in the temple of **Baal-berith** on the occasion of their eating and drinking and cursing Abimelech, likely under the influence of wine, that Gaal incited the Shechemites to revolt against King Abimelech.
- And they went out as usual into the field and engaged in gathering the grapes of their vineyards and in treading them and in carrying on a festal exultation, after which they went into the house of their god and ate and drank and called down evil upon Abimelech. (Judges 9:27)
- And Gaal the son of Ebed went on to say; Who is Abimelech, and who is Shechem that we should serve him? Is he not the son of Jerubbaal, and is not Zebul a commissioner of his? Serve the men of Hamor, Shechem's father, you others, but why should we ourselves serve him? (Judges 9:28)

- **And if only this people were in my hand! Then I would remove Abimelech. And he went on to say to Abimelech; Make your army numerous and come on out. (Judges 9:29)**
- **Later, when threatened by Abimelech, the landowners of the tower of Shechem [Migdal-Shechem, AT] sought refuge in the vault of the house of El-berith, or Baal-berith, only to perish in the conflagration when Abimelech and his men set the vault on fire.**
- **When all the landowners of the tower of Shechem heard of it, they immediately went to the vault of the house of El-berith. (Judges 9:46)**
- **Then it was reported to Abimelech that all the landowners of the tower of Shechem had collected together. (Judges 9:47)**
- **At that Abimelech went up Mount Zalmon, he and all the people that were with him. Abimelech now took an ax in his hand and cut down a branch of the trees and lifted it up and put it on his shoulder and said to the people that were with him; What you have seen me do, hurry up, do like me! (Judges 9:48)**
- **So all the people cut down also each one a branch for himself and went following Abimelech. Then they put them against the vault, and over them they set the vault on fire, so that all the men of the tower of Shechem died too, about a thousand men and women. (Judges 9:49)**