

~PILLAR (664)

.. Structural Pillars

.. Figurative Use

.. The Miraculous Pillars Of Cloud And Of Fire Remain Over Israel

- An upright structural support or column, or something resembling or comparable to such a supporting column.
- Some ancient peoples of the Middle East set up sacred pillars in connection with their false religion, quite likely these involved phallic symbolism. The Israelites, upon entering the Promised Land, were to **destroy such sacred** pillars, and they were forbidden to set up pillars of that sort.
- On the other hand, this is what you should do to them. Their altars you should pull down, and their **sacred pillars** you should break down, and their sacred poles you should cut down, and their graven images you should burn with fire. (**Deuteronomy 7:5**)
- Neither should you set up for yourself a sacred **pillar**, a thing Yehowah your God hates indeed. (**Deuteronomy 16:22**)
- However, at times they took up heathen religion and used sacred **pillars**.
- And they too kept building for themselves high places and sacred **pillars** and sacred poles upon every high hill and under every luxuriant tree. (**1 Kings 14:23**)
- And he kept on doing what was bad in Yehowah's eyes, only not like his father or like his mother, but he removed the sacred **pillar** of Baal that his father had made. (**2 Kings 3:2**)

See Also SACRED PILLAR

- Quite apart from the improper use of **pillars** hated by God, the Hebrew Scriptures mention the setting up of **pillars** or stones of a commemorative nature. Such **pillars** were neither objects of idolatrous worship nor symbolic of sex organs. They served to recall historic acts or events.

- On two occasions **Jacob set up stone pillars** at Bethel. Both instances involved taking note of Yehowah's dealing with Jacob in a special way at that place.
- So Jacob got up early in the morning and took the stone that was there as his head supporter and he set it up as a **pillar** and poured oil on the top of it. (**Genesis 28:18**)
- Further, he called the name of that place Bethel, but the fact is, Luz was the city's name formerly. (**Genesis 28:19**)
- And this stone that I have set up as a **pillar** will become a house of God, and as for everything that you will give me I shall without fail give the tenth of it to you. (**Genesis 28:22**)
- I am the true God of Bethel, where you anointed a **pillar** and where you vowed a vow to me. Now get up, go out of this land and return to the land of your birth. (**Genesis 31:13**)
- Consequently Jacob stationed a **pillar** in the place where he had spoken with him, a **pillar** of stone, and he poured a drink offering upon it and poured oil upon it. (**Genesis 35:14**)
- And Jacob continued to call the name of the place where God had spoken with him Bethel. (**Genesis 35:15**)
- The **pillar** Jacob stationed over Rachel's grave was no doubt stone and still existed in Moses day.
- Thus Rachel died and was buried on the way to Ephrath, that is to say; Bethlehem. (**Genesis 35:19**)
- Hence Jacob stationed a **pillar** over her grave. This is the pillar of Rachel's grave down to this day. (**Genesis 35:20**)
- When the Israelites accepted the Laws Moses had received from God, Moses built an altar and twelve **pillars** corresponding with the twelve tribes of Israel.
- Accordingly Moses wrote down all the words of Yehowah. Then he got up early in the morning and built at the foot of the mountain an altar and twelve **pillars** corresponding with the twelve tribes of Israel. (**Exodus 24:4**)

- Joshua gave similar instruction involving stones to represent the tribes, though the account does not call them **pillars**. These were to serve as a memorial to Israel and would give occasion for fathers to explain to their sons what the twelve stones meant.
- And it came about that as soon as the whole nation had completed passing over the Jordan, Yehowah proceeded to say to Joshua: (**Joshua 4:1**)
- Take for yourselves twelve men from the people, one man from each tribe. (**Joshua 4:2**)
- And command them, saying; Take up for yourselves from the very middle of the Jordan, from the place where the priests feet stood motionless, twelve stones, and you must carry them over with you and deposit them in the lodging place in which you will lodge tonight. (**Joshua 4:3**)
- So Joshua called twelve men whom he had appointed from the sons of Israel, one man from each tribe. (**Joshua 4:4**)
- And Joshua went on to say to them; Pass ahead of the ark of Yehowah your God to the middle of the Jordan, and lift up for yourselves each one a stone upon his shoulder, according to the number of the tribes of the sons of Israel. (**Joshua 4:5**)
- In order, that this may serve as a sign in your midst. In case your sons should ask in time to come, saying; Why do you have these stones? (**Joshua 4:6**)
- You must also say to them, Because the waters of the Jordan were cut off from before the ark of Yehowah's covenant. When it passed through the Jordan the waters of the Jordan were cut off, and these **stones** must serve as a memorial to the sons of Israel to time indefinite. (**Joshua 4:7**)
- Accordingly the sons of Israel did so, just as Joshua had commanded, and they took up **twelve stones** from the middle of the Jordan, just as Yehowah had stated to Joshua, to correspond with the number of the tribes of the sons of Israel, and they went taking them over with them to the lodging place and depositing them there. (**Joshua 4:8**)
- There were also twelve stones that Joshua set up in the middle of

the Jordan on the standing place of the feet of the priests carrying the ark of the covenant, and they continue there until this day. (**Joshua 4:9**)

- As for the twelve stones that they had taken out of the Jordan, Joshua set these up at Gilgal. (**Joshua 4:20**)
- And he went on to say to the sons of Israel; When your sons ask their fathers in time to come, saying; What do these stones mean? (**Joshua 4:21**)
- You must then let your sons know, saying; On the dry land it was that Israel passed over this Jordan. (**Joshua 4:22**)
- When Yehowah your God dried up the waters of the Jordan from before them until they had passed over, just as Yehowah your God had done to the Red Sea when he dried it up from before us until we had passed over. (**Joshua 4:23**)
- In order, that all the peoples of the earth may know Yehowah's hand, that it is strong, in order, that you may indeed fear Yehowah your God always. (**Joshua 4:24**)
- A covenant or a victory could be marked by setting up a stone, often a **pillar**.
- And now, come, let us conclude a covenant, I and you, and it must serve as a witness between me and you. (**Genesis 31:44**)
- Accordingly Jacob took a stone and set it up as a **pillar**. (**Genesis 31:45**)
- Then Jacob said to his brothers; Pick up stones! And they went taking stones and making a heap. After that they ate there on the heap. (**Genesis 31:46**)
- And Laban began calling it Jegarsahadutha, but Jacob called it Galeed. (**Genesis 31:47**)
- And Laban proceeded to say; This heap is a witness between me and you today. That is why he called its name Galeed. (**Genesis 31:48**)
- And The Watchtower, because he said; Let Yehowah keep watch

between me and you when we are situated unseen the one from the other. (**Genesis 31:49**)

- If you go to afflicting my daughters and if you go to taking wives in addition to my daughters, there is no man with us. See! God is a witness between me and you. (**Genesis 31:50**)
- And Laban went on to say to Jacob; Here is this heap and here is the **pillar** that I have erected between me and you. (**Genesis 31:51**)
- This heap is a witness, and the **pillar** is something that bears witness, that I will not pass this heap against you and that you will not pass this heap and this pillar against me for harm. (**Genesis 31:52**)
- Let the god of Abraham and the god of Nahor judge between us, the god of their father. But Jacob swore by the Dread of his father Isaac. (**Genesis 31:53**)
- Then Joshua wrote these words in the book of God's Law and took a great stone and set it up there under the massive tree that is by the sanctuary of Yehowah. (**Joshua 24:26**)
- And it came about that while Samuel was offering up the burnt offering, the Philistines themselves drew near for battle against Israel. And Yehowah now caused it to thunder with a loud noise on that day against the Philistines, that he might throw them into confusion, and they got defeated before Israel. (**1 Samuel 7:10**)
- At that the men of Israel sallied forth from Mizpah and went in pursuit of the Philistines and kept striking them down as far as south of Beth-car. (**1 Samuel 7:11**)
- Then Samuel took a stone and set it between Mizpah and Jeshanah and began to call its name Ebenezer. Accordingly he said; Till now Yehowah has helped us. (**1 Samuel 7:12**)
- After his victory over the Amalekites, King Saul erected a **monument** for himself at Carmel.
- Then Samuel got up early to meet Saul in the morning. But report was made to Samuel, saying; Saul came to Carmel, and,

look! He was erecting a **monument** for himself, and he then turned around and went across and descended to Gilgal. (1 Samuel 15:12)

- The **Hebrew** word here translated, **monument**, is usually rendered, **hand**, but it is also used at;
- Now Absalom himself, while he was alive, had taken and proceeded to raise up for himself a **pillar**, which is in the Low Plain of the King, for he said; I have no son in order to keep my name in remembrance. So he called the **pillar** by his own name, and it continues to be called **Absalom's Monument** down to this day. (2 Samuel 18:18)
- In connection with the **pillar** Absalom raised up called, **Absalom's Monument** [NW, AT, RS], so evidently Saul erected a victory monument or pillar.
- I will even give to them in my house and within my walls a **monument** and a name, something better than sons and daughters. A name to time indefinite I shall give them, one that will not be cut off. (Isaiah 56:5)

See Also ABSALOM

- The idea of a **pillar** as a commemorative **monument** may be involved in the prophecy at;
- In that day there will prove to be an altar to Yehowah in the midst of the land of Egypt, and a **pillar** to Yehowah beside its boundary. (Isaiah 19:19)
- Written in the **Eighth Century B.C.E.**, it dealt with circumstances after the destruction of Jerusalem in **607 B.C.E.** Some of the Jews who were left in their land by the Babylonians fled to Egypt and dwelt in Egyptian cities, as foretold in,
- In that day there will prove to be five cities in the land of Egypt speaking the language of Canaan and swearing to Yehowah of armies. The **City of Tearing Down** will one city be called. (Isaiah 19:18)
- And Johanan the son of Kareah and all the chiefs of the military forces and all the people did not obey the voice of Yehowah, to

keep on dwelling in the land of Judah. (**Jeremiah 43:4**)

- So Johanan the son of Kareah and all the chiefs of the military forces took all the remnant of Judah that had returned from all the nations to which they had been dispersed, in order to reside for a while in the land of Judah. (**Jeremiah 43:5**)
- Even the able-bodied men and the wives and the little children and the daughters of the king and every soul that Nebuzaradan the chief of the bodyguard had let stay with Gedaliah the son of Ahikam the son of Shaphan, and Jeremiah the prophet and Baruch the son of Neriah. (**Jeremiah 43:6**)
- And they finally came into the land of Egypt, for they did not obey the voice of Yehowah, and they came gradually as far as Tahpanhes. (**Jeremiah 43:7**)
- The word that occurred to Jeremiah for all the Jews that were dwelling in the land of Egypt, the ones dwelling in Migdol and in Tahpanhes and in Noph and in the land of Pathros, saying;
- The word that occurred to Jeremiah for all the Jews that were dwelling in the land of Egypt, the ones dwelling in Migdol and in Tahpanhes and in Noph and in the land of Pathros, saying; (**Jeremiah 44:1**)
- Thus the promise that there would be a **pillar** to Yehowah beside Egypt's boundary has been understood by many commentators to mean that Yehowah would be taken note of or commemorated in Egypt, whether there was a literal **pillar** or not.
- And it must prove to be for a sign and for a witness to Yehowah of armies in the land of Egypt, for they will cry out to Yehowah because of the oppressors, and he will send them a savior, even a grand one, who will actually deliver them. (**Isaiah 19:20**)
- And Yehowah will certainly become known to the Egyptians, and the Egyptians must know Yehowah in that day, and they must render sacrifice and gift and must make a vow to Yehowah and pay it. (**Isaiah 19:21**)
- And Yehowah will certainly deal Egypt a blow. There will be a dealing of a blow and a healing, and they must return to Yehowah, and he must let himself be entreated by them and

must heal them. (Isaiah 19:22)

· Structural Pillars

- Biblical references and archaeological discoveries show **pillars** of wood, stone, and brick being used in the Middle East as structural supports. Often the roof beams or upper stories of a building were held up by **vertical columns**.
- True wisdom has built its house, it has hewn out its seven **pillars**. (Proverbs 9:1)
- And it came about that because their heart was merry, they began to say; Call Samson that he may offer us some amusement. So they called Samson out of the prison house that he might make sport before them, and they proceeded to stand him between the **pillars**. (Judges 16:25)
- With that Samson braced himself against the two middle **pillars** upon which the house was firmly established, and got a grasp on them, one with his right and the other with his left hand. (Judges 16:29)
- And he proceeded to build the House of the Forest of Lebanon a hundred cubits in its length, and fifty cubits in its width, and thirty cubits in its height, upon four rows of **pillars** of cedarwood, and there were beams of cedarwood upon the **pillars**. (1 Kings 7:2)
- The wood or brick **pillars** might rest on stone bases. Solomon's **House of the Forest of Lebanon** contained rows of **cedarwood pillars** supporting the beams and upper chambers.
- Apparently the fact that the cedar was from Lebanon or the resemblance of the **pillars** to a forest resulted in the buildings name. The nearby **Porch of Pillars** was obviously also noted for its abundant **pillars**, though the record does not give their number or material.
- And his own house Solomon built in thirteen years, so that he finished all his own house. (1 Kings 7:1)
- And he proceeded to build the House of the Forest of Lebanon a hundred cubits in its length, and fifty cubits in its width, and thirty cubits in its height, upon four rows of **pillars** of cedarwood,

- and there were beams of cedarwood upon the **pillars**. (1 Kings 7:2)
- And it was paneled in with cedarwood above upon the girders that were upon the forty-five **pillars**. There were fifteen to a row. (1 Kings 7:3)
 - As for framed windows, there were three rows, and there was an illumination opening opposite an illumination opening in three tiers. (1 Kings 7:4)
 - And all the entrances and the doorposts were squared with the frame, and also the forefront of the illumination opening opposite an illumination opening in three tiers. (1 Kings 7:5)
 - And the **Porch of Pillars** he made fifty cubits in its length, and thirty cubits in its width, and another porch was in front of them with pillars and a canopy in front of them. (1 Kings 7:6)
 - And there were windows of narrowing frames for the guard chambers and for their side **pillars** toward the inside of the gate all around, and that is the way it was for the porches. And the windows were all around toward the inside, and on the side pillars there were palm-tree figures. (Ezekiel 40:16)
 - And he proceeded to bring me into the porch of the house, and he went measuring the side **pillar** of the porch, five cubits on this side and five cubits on that side. And the width of the gate was three cubits on this side and three cubits on that side. (Ezekiel 40:48)
 - The length of the porch was twenty cubits, and the width eleven cubits. And by steps was how they would go up to it. And there were **pillars** by the side posts, one over here and one over there. (Ezekiel 40:49)
 - Marble **pillars** were used in the courtyard of Ahasuerus palace.
 - There were linen, fine cotton and blue held fast in ropes of fine fabric, and wool dyed reddish purple in silver rings and **pillars** of marble, couches of gold and silver upon a pavement of porphyry and marble and pearl and black marble. (Esther 1:6)

- The most noteworthy **pillars** in Solomon's temple were two huge copper pillars named **Jachin and Boaz** in front of the porch.
- Then he cast the two **pillars** of copper, eighteen cubits being the height of each **pillar**, and a string of twelve cubits would measure around each of the two **pillars**. (**1 Kings 7:15**)
- Eighteen cubits was the height of each **pillar**, and the capital upon it was of copper, and the height of the capital was three cubits, and the network and the pomegranates all around upon the capital, the whole of it, was copper, and the second pillar had the same as these upon the network. (**2 Kings 25:17**)
- And as regards the **pillars**, eighteen cubits in height was each pillar, and a thread of twelve cubits itself would go around it, and its thickness was four fingerbreadths, it being hollow. (**Jeremiah 52:21**)
- The **New Bible Dictionary** [edited by J. Douglas 1985, p. 941] suggests that the king stood by one of these **pillars** on ceremonial occasions, but that cannot be confirmed, for the Bible merely says the king was **standing by his pillar at the entry**.
- Then she saw, and there was the king standing by his **pillar** at the entry, and the princes and the trumpets by the king, and all the people of the land were rejoicing and blowing the trumpets, and the singers with the instruments of song and those giving the signal for offering praise. Immediately Athaliah ripped her garments apart and said; Conspiracy! Conspiracy! (**2 Chronicles 23:13**)
- Then she saw, and there the king was standing by the **pillar** according to the custom, and the chiefs and the trumpets by the king, and all the people of the land rejoicing and blowing the trumpets. Immediately Athaliah ripped her garments apart and began crying; Conspiracy! Conspiracy! (**2 Kings 11:14**)
- And the king kept standing by the **pillar** and now concluded the covenant before Yehowah, to walk after Yehowah and to keep his commandments and his testimonies and his statutes with all the heart and with all the soul by carrying out the words of this covenant that were written in this book. Accordingly all the people took their stand in the covenant. (**2 Kings 23:3**)

- He could have been standing at a gate of the inner court or some other elevated place for addressing the people.

See Also CAPITAL

- Smaller **pillars** were used in the tabernacle, four of acacia wood to support the curtain between the Holy and Most Holy and five to hold up the screen at the entrance.
- And you must put it upon four **pillars** of acacia overlaid with gold. Their pegs are of gold. They are upon four socket pedestals of silver. (**Exodus 26:32**)
- And you must put the curtain under the hooks and bring the ark of the testimony there within the curtain, and the curtain must make a division for you between the Holy and the Most Holy. (**Exodus 26:33**)
- And you must put the cover upon the ark of the testimony in the Most Holy. (**Exodus 26:34**)
- And you must set the table outside the curtain, and the lampstand opposite the table on the side of the tabernacle toward the south, and the table you will put on the north side. (**Exodus 26:35**)
- And you must make a screen for the entrance of the tent of blue thread and wool dyed reddish purple and coccus scarlet material and fine twisted linen, the work of a weaver. (**Exodus 26:36**)
- And you must make for the screen five **pillars** of acacia and overlay them with gold. Their pegs are of gold. And you must cast for them five socket pedestals of copper. (**Exodus 26:37**)
- Sixty other **pillars** supported the linen hangings around the courtyard and the screen at the gate of the courtyard.
- And you must make the courtyard of the tabernacle. For the side toward the Negeb, to the south, the courtyard has hangings of fine twisted linen, a hundred cubits being the length for the one side. (**Exodus 27:9**)
- And its twenty **pillars** and their twenty socket pedestals are of copper. The pegs of the **pillars** and their joints are of silver.

(Exodus 27:10)

- So, too, it is for the north side in length, the hangings being for a hundred cubits of length, and its twenty **pillars** and their twenty socket pedestals being of copper, the pegs of the **pillars** and their joints being of silver. (**Exodus 27:11**)
- As for the width of the courtyard, on the west side the hangings are of fifty cubits, their **pillars** being ten and their socket pedestals ten. (**Exodus 27:12**)
- And the width of the courtyard on the east side toward the sunrising is fifty cubits. (**Exodus 27:13**)
- And there are fifteen cubits of hangings to one side, their **pillars** being three and their socket pedestals three. (**Exodus 27:14**)
- And for the other side there are fifteen cubits of hangings, their **pillars** being three and their socket pedestals three. (**Exodus 27:15**)
- And for the gate of the courtyard there is a screen twenty cubits long, of blue thread and wool dyed reddish purple and coccus scarlet material and fine twisted linen, the work of a weaver, their **pillars** being four and their socket pedestals four. (**Exodus 27:16**)
- Small, ornamental **pillars** of silver apparently supported the canopy of Solomon's litter.
- It is the litter that King Solomon has made for himself from the trees of Lebanon. (**Song of Solomon 3:9**)
- Its **pillars** he has made of silver, its supports of gold. Its seat is of wool dyed reddish purple, its interior being fitted out lovingly by the daughters of Jerusalem. (**Song of Solomon 3:10**)

.. Figurative Use

- The material and function of structural **pillars** made them fitting symbols of sturdy support. They would illustrate that which securely upholds. The Christian congregation could be called, a **pillar** and support of the truth, for it upholds the truth in contrast to religious error.

- But in case I am delayed, that you may know how you ought to conduct yourself in God's household, which is the congregation of the living God, a **pillar and support of the truth**. (1 Timothy 3:15)
- James, Cephas, and John were spoken of as seeming to be **pillars** in the early congregation, they were solidly fixed and strong supporters of it.
- Yes, when they came to know the undeserved kindness that was given me, James and Cephas and John, the ones who seemed to be **pillars**, gave me and Barnabas the right hand of sharing together, that we should go to the nations, but they to those who are circumcised. (Galatians 2:9)
- Christians who conquer will be made **pillars** in the temple of God, gaining a permanent position in the spiritual structure.
- The one that conquers, I will make him a **pillar** in the temple of my God, and he will by no means go out from it anymore, and I will write upon him the name of my God and the name of the city of my God, the new Jerusalem which descends out of heaven from my God, and that new name of mine. (Revelation 3:12)
- The idea of the sturdiness of a **pillar** is found in the allusions to **pillars** in describing the feet of a strong angel.
- And I saw another strong angel descending from heaven, arrayed with a cloud, and a rainbow was upon his head, and his face was as the sun, and his feet were as fiery **pillars**. (Revelation 10:1)
- The legs of the shepherd lover of the Shulammite girl were like **pillars** of marble, being beautiful as well as strong.
- His legs are **pillars** of marble based on socket pedestals of refined gold. His appearance is like Lebanon, choice like the cedars. (Song of Solomon 5:15)

.. The Miraculous Pillars Of Cloud And Of Fire Remain Over Israel

- Yehowah miraculously guided the Israelites out of Egypt and through the wilderness, going ahead of them in the daytime in a **pillar** of **cloud** and in the nighttime in a **pillar** of **fire** to give them light to go.

- And Yehowah was going ahead of them in the daytime in a **pillar** of cloud to lead them by the way, and in the nighttime in a **pillar** of fire to give them light to go in the daytime and nighttime. (**Exodus 13:21**)
- This was, not two **pillars**, but one **pillar** of fire and cloud that would normally appear as a cloud in the daytime and as fire at night.
- And it came about during the morning watch that Yehowah began to look out upon the camp of the Egyptians from within the **pillar** of fire and cloud, and he went throwing the camp of the Egyptians into confusion. (**Exodus 14:24**)
- When the Egyptians pursued the Israelites, the **pillar** moved to the rear, perhaps spreading out like a wall.
- Egypt rejoiced when they went out, for the dread of them had fallen upon them. (**Psalms 105:38**)
- He spread out a cloud for a screen, and fire to give light by night. (**Psalms 105:39**)
- It caused darkness on the Egyptian side but shed light on the Israelite side.
- Then the angel of the true God who was going ahead of the camp of Israel departed and went to their rear, and the **pillar** of cloud departed from their van and stood in the rear of them. (**Exodus 14:19**)
- So it came in between the camp of the Egyptians and the camp of Israel. On the one hand it proved to be a cloud together with darkness. On the other hand it kept lighting up the night. And this group did not come near that group all night long. (**Exodus 14:20**)
- When the tabernacle was set up, the **pillar** above it served as a sign that Yehowah was in his holy place.
- And Moses was not able to go into the tent of meeting, because the cloud resided over it and Yehowah's glory filled the tabernacle. (**Exodus 40:35**)

- The **pillar** represented Yehowah, and he spoke out of it.
- And they will be bound to tell it to the inhabitants of this land. They have heard that you are Yehowah in among this people, who has appeared face to face. You are Yehowah, and your cloud is standing over them, and you are going before them in the **pillar** of cloud by day and in the **pillar** of fire by night. (**Numbers 14:14**)
- After that Yehowah came down in the **pillar** of cloud and stood at the entrance of the tent and called Aaron and Miriam. At this both of them went out. (**Numbers 12:5**)
- In the **pillar** of cloud he continued speaking to them. They kept his reminders and the regulation that he gave to them. (**Psalms 99:7**)
- The last historical notice of the **pillar** was just before Israel entered the Promised Land.
- Then Yehowah appeared at the tent in the **pillar** of cloud, and the **pillar** of cloud began to stand by the entrance of the tent. (**Deuteronomy 31:15**)
- When they were settled in their land the guiding **pillar** was not needed as it had been during their wandering.
- For Yehowah's cloud was over the tabernacle by day, and a fire continued upon it by night in the sight of all the house of Israel during all their stages of journey. (**Exodus 40:38**)
- Yehowah will also certainly create over every established place of Mount Zion and over her convention place a cloud by day and a smoke, and the brightness of a flaming fire by night, because over all the glory there will be a shelter. (**Isaiah 4:5**)