

RELIGION

Concerning the "Phoenician" religion most scholars are united in their belief that there exists nearly complete identity between "Phoenician" religious values, as reflected in different archaeological findings and the idolatrous worship that the Bible ascribes to the Israelites before they were taken into captivity.¹ Slouschz says that "The Hebrews held the same religion as the Phoenicians, and therefore it is impossible to differentiate between them".² The "Phoenician" hierarchy both in structure and in terminology resembles that of the Israelites. The servants in the Temples called Kohanim, and the higher in position among them is called Rav – Kohen.³ The names of the sacrifices are the same (Zebah, Asham, Minha, Kalil, Shalem). The tariffs of sacrifices in the "Phoenician" Temples are identical barring a few slight differences, to those used by the Israelites as described in the Bible.⁴

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- 1 Cook, Phoenicia, EB. edit. 1929.
Contenau, La Civilisation Phénicienne, p. 82 ff.
Berger, Phénicie, La grande Encyclopédie, Tome 26.
Della Vida Giorgio Levi, Fenici, EI. 1932, p. 1000.
Ribichini, Beliefs and Religious Life. p. 104 in The Phoenicians, Bompiani, 1988.
 - 2 Slouschz, La Civilisation Hebraïque Et Phénicienne a' Carthage, pp. 27 – 28.
 - 3 Della Vida, *ibid.* p. 1000
Contenau, *ibid.* pp. 105, 108.
Hours–Miedan, Carthage, 1949, pp. 48– 49, 53.
Lods, Les Prophètes d'israël etc. 1935, p. 294.
Barrois, Manuel d'Archéologie Biblique, 1953, (II), pp. 340, 334
Hooke, The Origins of Early Semitic Ritual, pp. 66–67.
Gray, *ibid.* p. 143.
Gaster, The Ras Shamra Texts And The Old Testament, PEQ. 1934, p. 141
Slouschz, Hebraeo – Phéniciens Et Judeo – Berbères, p. 126.
Wright, How Did Early Israel Differ From Her Neighbours, BA, 1943, pp. 4–5.
Warmington, Histoire Et Civilisation De Carthage, p. 193.
Harden, The Phoenicians, 1962, p. 105.
Moscati, The World Of The Phoenicians, p. 143.
Kaperlud, The Ras Shamra Discoveries, 1965, pp. 17, 73.
 - 4 Della Vida, *ibid.* p. 1000
Contenau, *ibid.* pp. 105, 108.
Hours–Miedan, Carthage, 1949, pp. 48– 49, 53.
Lods, Les Prophètes d'israël etc. 1935, p. 294.
Barrois, Manuel d'Archéologie Biblique, 1953, (II), pp. 340, 334
Hooke, The Origins of Early Semitic Ritual, pp. 66–67.
Gray, *ibid.* p. 143.

Robertson Smith remarks⁵: "It is clear from the Old Testament that the ritual observances at a Hebrew and at a Canaanite sanctuary were so similar that to the mass of the people Jehovah worship and Baal worship were not separated by any well-marked line".⁶

A similar remark is made by Miedan⁷: "A striking analogy is immediately apparent between Phoenician religious ritual and that of the Hebrews". Slouschz writes: "It can be seen that the official literature of the ancient Carthaginians is largely permeated with religious concepts and are evident in those same literary aspects. in expression and culture, as those of the Jews in ancient time. it reveals the same traditions and the same frame of mind mainly noticeable from a purely structural perspective. What we know of the social formation of Carthage leads us to that of Jerusalem and the scribes".⁸

In 1845 while excavating the foundations for a cathedral in Marseille, France, a stone was found on which a list of sacrificial tariffs was carved and its content closely resembles certain portions in the Book of Leviticus. This resemblance has already been referred to by Slouschz, Conder, Harden, Contenau and Others.⁹ Such resemblance to portions of the Book of Leviticus can also be found in similar lists of tariffs discovered at Carthage¹⁰ Just as in all other spheres, here too, because of the similarity between the Israelite religion and that of those called Phoenicians, most scholars came to the conclusion that the Israelite nation borrowed its culture and religious

Gaster, *The Ras Shamra Texts And The Old Testament*, PEQ. 1934, p. 141

Slouschz, *Hebraeo – Phéniciens Et Judeo – Berbères*, p. 126.

Wright, *How Did Early Israel Differ From Her Neighbours*, BA, 1943, pp. 4–5.

Warmington, *Histoire Et Civilisation De Carthage*, p. 193.

Harden, *The Phoenicians*, 1962, p. 105.

Moscato, *The World Of The Phoenicians*, p. 143.

Kaperlud, *The Ras Shamra Discoveries*, 1965, pp. 17, 73.

5 Smith Robertson, *The Religion of The Semites*, p. 254

6 For Robertson Smith "Canaanite" equals to "Phoenician"

7 Hours – Miedan, *Carthage*, p. 55

8 Slouschz, *La Civilisation Hébraïque Et Phénicienne A' Carthage*, p. 22.

9 CIS., I. 165.

Slouschz, *ibid*, pp. 17, 23, 27, 28.

–Otzar Haketovot Hafenikiot, 1942, Tab. 129 p. 141 (Hebrew)

– *Hebreo-Phéniciens Et Judeo-Berbeères*, p. 126.

Contenau, *ibid*, pp. 108 – 109.

Harden, *ibid*, p. 105.

Conder, *Phoenician Notes*, PEF. 1889, p. 144.

Della Vida, *ibid*, p. 1000.

Sayce, *Early History of The Hebrews*, pp. 204–207.

10 Perrot–Chipiez, *History of Art In Phoenicia And Its Dependancies*, 1885, p. 271.

Smith Robertson, *ibid*, pp. 217 – 220, 237.

Hours – Miedan, *ibid*, pp. 48 – 49.

Dussaud, *Les Origines Canaanéen de Sacrifice Israelite*, p. 134

customs from the "Canaanites – Phoenicians".¹¹

Conder who refers to the burial customs among the Phoenicians", remarks: "The Phoenicians and the Hebrews buried their dead in an identical fashion in niches"¹², and elsewhere:

"Similarities can be found in tomb construction between Jerusalem and Carthage".¹³ Such similarity in burial customs is also pointed out by Slouschz, Barnette, and Perrot.¹⁴ While Sukenik remarks that "In the excavations of the unified expedition to Samaria remnants from the Israelite period were found Showing a similar formation to that in Ugaritic tombs".¹⁵ It must be noted that in texts related to burials found at Carthage, we find identical terms to those used in Jewish burial rituals e. g. *Lezekher Olam* – (for eternal memory), *Beth Olam* – (eternal House = tomb), *Aron* (=coffin) and the like.¹⁶

According to Dussaud¹⁷ the tablets of Ras Shamra point to a complete identity between the Phoenicians and the Israelites in those concepts concerning spirit and soul from which, he believes the same burial rituals, the same lamentation ritual, and identity in sacrificial rituals derive.

11 Wright, *ibid*, pp. 4–5.

Hooke, *ibid*, p. 67.

Gray, *ibid*, pp. 4, 208.

12 Conder, *Syrian Stone Lore*, pp. 93 (notes), 94, 132.

13 Conder, *ibid*, p. 104.

See Also Slouschz, *Hebreo – Phéniciens et Judeo–Berbères*, p. 345

14 Perrot – Chipiez, *History of Art In Phoenicia etc.* p. 149.

Barnette, *Phoenicia*, EB. (1968), p. 892.

Phoenician – Punic Art, EWA., p. 306.

Slouschz, *La Civilisation Hebraique Et Phénicienne A Carthage*, pp. 18, 22.

15 Sukenik, *Instalations For The Dead Ritual In Canaanite Ugarit And Israelite Samaria*, *Kedem* 2, pp. 43, 45 (Hebrew)

16 Slouschz, *La Civilisation Hebraique Et Phénicienne A Carthage*, pp. 18, 22

17 Dussaud, *La Notion D'ame Chez Les Israelites et les Phéniciens*, SY. 1935, pp. 272–275.