

***Bittē-Yâ, daughter of Pharaoh (1 Chr 4,18),
and Bint(i)-ʿAnat, daughter of Ramesses II(*)***

וְאֵלֶּה בְּנֵי בִּתְיָה בַת־פַּרְעֹה אֲשֶׁר לָקַח מֶרֶד

“These were the sons of Bithiah, daughter of Pharaoh, whom Mered married”. - 1 Chr 4,18

“In the collective memory of the Israelites of these their formative years in the land, no recollection of Egypt was retained”. - D.B. Redford, *Egypt, Canaan, and Israel in Ancient Times*, 294.

Bithiah, daughter of Pharaoh and wife of Mered, reached great heights in Rabbinic tradition⁽¹⁾ and, according to some, in early Egyptian Christian folklore, as well⁽²⁾, but she has not fared nearly as well in modern biblical scholarship. Overshadowed by the other two “daughters of Pharaoh” in the Bible (Moses’ foster mother and Solomon’s wife), she has been treated like a stepdaughter, suffering serious neglect. Most commentaries on Chronicles pass over her in embarrassed silence. Her name does not appear in any of the standard histories of Israel, and no attempt has been made to find her in Egyptian sources. The vigorous debate concerning the historicity of Solomon’s “daughter of Pharaoh”⁽³⁾ has attracted no

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⁽¹⁾ She was identified with the daughter of Pharaoh who rescued Moses from the Nile and included among those who entered the Garden of Eden alive.

⁽²⁾ See D.T.M. FRANKFURTER, “Tabitha in the Apocalypse of Elijah”, *JTS* NS 41 (1990) 13-25. I am indebted to R.K. Ritner for this reference.

⁽³⁾ See A. MALAMAT, “The Kingdom of David and Solomon in its Contact with Egypt and Aram Naharaim”, *BAR* II (Garden City, NY 1964) 91-93; ID., “Aspects of the Foreign Policies of David and Solomon”, *JNES* 22 (1963) 11; ID., “A Political Look at the Kingdom of David and Solomon and Its Relations with Egypt”, *Studies in the Period of David and Solomon and Other Essays* (ed. T. ISHIDA) (Winona Lake 1982) 198-200; A.R. SCHULMAN, “Diplomatic Marriage in the Egyptian New Kingdom”, *JNES* 38 (1979) 187-188; K.A. KITCHEN, *The Third Intermediate Period in Egypt* (1100-650 B.C.) (Warminster

attention to Bithiah's plight. And now that that debate has given way to a debate concerning Solomon's own historicity⁽⁴⁾ her prospects seem dimmer than ever. In this article, I shall attempt to play the role of Prince Charming to this Cinderella among the biblical "daughters of Pharaoh".

Skeptics may object that Bithiah does not merit attention, that she is a fabrication of the Chronicler. This objection carries little weight, for the Chronicler is one of the last people that one should suspect of inventing a foreign wife for one of the ancestors of the Jewish community. Even if we adopt the view that the Chronicler was not the author of Ezra–Nehemiah⁽⁵⁾, he as undoubtedly a pious Jew who shared the abhorrence of foreign wives, including those of Solomon, expressed in Ezra 9–10 and Neh 13,23–27. This attitude is probably the reason for his decision to skip the discussion of Solomon's foreign wives (including the "daughter of Pharaoh") found in 1 Kings (11,1–10) and to omit three of the four other references to the "daughter of Pharaoh"⁽⁶⁾. It is hardly reasonable to suppose that the Chronicler would omit four references to Solomon's "daughter of Pharaoh" and then turn around and invent a new "daughter of Pharaoh" for the obscure Mered.

Naturally, it is impossible to prove that Bithiah, or any other figure in Chronicles, for that matter, is not a fabrication of one of the Chronicler's sources. Accordingly, I have no illusions that the onomastic, phonological, and historical evidence presented below will suffice to convince those for whom biblical accounts are

⁴1986) 280–283; D.B. REDFORD, *Egypt, Canaan, and Israel in Ancient Times* (Princeton 1992) 310–311; G. GARBINI, *History and Ideology in Ancient Israel* (New York 1988) 30; J.M. MILLER, *A History of Ancient Israel and Judah* (ed. J.M. MILLER – J.H. HAYES) (London – Philadelphia 1986) 195; G.W. AHLSTRÖM, *The History of Ancient Palestine from the Palaeolithic Period to Alexander's Conquest* (JSOTSS 146; Sheffield 1993) 519–520; A.R. MILLARD, "Story, History, and Theology", *Faith, Tradition, and History: Old Testament Historiography in Its Near Eastern Context* (ed. A.R. MILLARD – J.K. HOFFMEIER – D.W. BAKER) (Winona Lake 1994) 46–47.

⁽⁴⁾ G.N. KNOPPERS, "The Vanishing Solomon: The Disappearance of the United Monarchy from Recent Histories of Ancient Israel", *JBL* 116 (1997) 26; L.K. HANDY, *The Age of Solomon: Scholarship at the Turn of the Millennium* (Leiden 1997).

⁽⁵⁾ Cf. I. YEIVIN, *The Hebrew Language Tradition as Reflected in the Babylonian Vocalization* (Jerusalem 1985).

⁽⁶⁾ 1 Kgs 3,1; 7,8; and 9,16 have no parallel in Chronicles, but 9,24 = 2 Chr 8,11.

presumed to be unhistorical until proven otherwise. The best one can hope to prove about a detail reported in an ancient source is that it is plausible, and that is my goal in this article.

Onomastic Analysis

Bithiah is the only “daughter of Pharaoh” whose name is given in the Bible. Ordinarily, such specificity would be viewed by scholars as a point in her favor, but not in this case, for her name — *Bittē-Yâ* “daughter of Yâ” — contains an Israelite theophoric element(?).

It is true that *HALAT* derives the name from Egyptian *bj.tj.t* “queen”⁽⁸⁾, but this derivation is phonetically problematic. The masculine counterpart of the proposed Egyptian source, *bj.tj* “king of Lower Egypt”, is written *ibj.t* in demotic, and the closely related word *bj.tj* “beekeeper” yields *ebēit* “honey dealer” (alongside *ebit*) in Coptic⁽⁹⁾. The Hebrew rendering of *bj.tj.t* would thus be אַבִּיהָ, not בִּתְיָהָ. That this was already the case in the Ramessid era may be deduced from the cuneiform transcription *in-si-ib-ia = nj-sw.t-bj.t* “King of Upper and Lower Egypt” in an Akkadian letter from Ramesses II to Puduḥepat found at Boghazköi⁽¹⁰⁾. According to Sethe, this transcription contains the word *ib-ja = bj.t* “bee”, reflecting the form **ebjât*⁽¹¹⁾. Edelman gives the literal meaning of the whole phrase as “zur Binse und Biene gehörig”⁽¹²⁾.

The name, then, is clearly Semitic and appears at first glance to be Israelite in every way. Closer examination, however, reveals that the name exhibits two features that are unknown in other Israelite names.

Names of the form “daughter/son of DN” were not in use among

(?) So according to Jewish tradition (Lev. Rab. §1,3) and most modern scholars.

(8) I preserve the transliteration of Egyptian found in the German sources I have consulted.

(9) See A. ERMAN – H. GRAPOW, *Wörterbuch der ägyptischen Sprache* I (Leipzig 1926) 434-435; W. ERICHSEN, *Demotisches Glossar* (Copenhagen 1954) 27; W.E. CRUM, *A Coptic Dictionary* (Oxford 1939) 52b.

(10) See K. SETHE, “Das Wort für König von Oberägypten”, *Zeitschrift für ägyptische Sprache und Altertumskunde* 49 (1911) 17-21; E. EDELMAN, *Die ägyptisch-hethitische Korrespondenz aus Boghazköi in babylonischer und hethitischer Sprache* (Opladen 1994) I, 170; II, 257, 372.

(11) SETHE, “Das Wort für König”, 19.

(12) EDELMAN, *Die ägyptisch-hethitische Korrespondenz*, II, 257, 372.

native Israelites⁽¹³⁾, but they were fairly common among Israel's neighbors⁽¹⁴⁾, making their first appearance at the end of the third millennium BCE. For "daughter of DN" we find: *Ma-ra-at-î-lî* at Drehem (= Puzurish-Dagan) in Sumer (Ur III)⁽¹⁵⁾, *Mārat-Ištar*, *Mārat-Šamaš* and *Mārat-Iršitim* in Babylonia (Babylon I)⁽¹⁶⁾, *Bi-it-ti-ḏa-gan* at Terqa in Ḫani⁽¹⁷⁾, *Bi-it-ta-ad-di* at Alalakh⁽¹⁸⁾, *Bnt'nt* and *Bntšmš* in Egypt (New Kingdom)⁽¹⁹⁾, *Bṛšm* in Phoenicia⁽²⁰⁾,

⁽¹³⁾ There are three biblical names which have been analyzed as being similar to Bithia by some scholars: *Anat*, *Barkos*, and *Bathsheba*. It has been suggested that *Anat* (in *Šamgar ben Anat*) is a shortened form of *Bin-Anat*; F.M. CROSS, "Newly Found Inscriptions in Old Canaanite and Early Phoenician Scripts", *BASOR* 238 (1980) 7. But this hypocoristic name (found also at Ugarit) is not necessarily Israelite, any more than the name *Šamgar* = Hurrian *Šimig-ari* is Israelite; see *HALAT* and *Encyclopedia Miqrā'it*, s.v. The name *Barkos*, borne by the ancestor of a clan of temple servants, is not Israelite but Edomite. As for the name *Bathsheba*, its second component is taken by most scholars today as being the word for "abundance, satiety" rather than the name of a goddess; see *BDB*, *HALAT*, *IDB*, and *ABD*, s.v. The pointing of the sibilant as *š* rather than *ś* is not an obstacle, if the name is North-Israelite; see R.C. STEINER, *The Case for Fricative-Laterals in Proto-Semitic*, (AOS 59; New Haven, Connecticut 1977) 43.

⁽¹⁴⁾ Cf. B. PORTEN, *Encyclopedia Miqrā'it*, VIII, 39: "Names similar to Bithia with the component *bn* are lacking in Israel but are found with its neighbors...". Names of this type and the "son of DN" type have often been discussed; see especially A. CAQUOT, "Sur l'onomastique religieuse de Palmyre", *Syria* 39 (1962) 239-240; J. K. STARK, *Personal Names in the Palmyrene Inscriptions* (Oxford 1971) 78 s.v. *Brṣṣ*, 81 s.v. *Bṛty*; N. AVIGAD, "An Unpublished Phoenician Seal" *In Hommages à André Dupont-Sommer* (Paris 1971) 4.

⁽¹⁵⁾ R.A. DI VITO, *Studies in Third Millennium Sumerian and Akkadian Personal Names* (Rome 1993) 176, 224.

⁽¹⁶⁾ H. RANKE, *Early Babylonian Personal Names from the Published Tablets of the So-Called Hammurabi Dynasty (B. C. 2000)* (Philadelphia 1905) 191; J.J. STAMM, *Die Akkadische Namengebung* (Leipzig 1939) 260.

⁽¹⁷⁾ T. BAUER, *Die Ostkanaanäer, Eine philologisch-historische Untersuchung über die Wanderschicht der sogenannten "Amoriter" in Babylonien* (Leipzig 1926) 16; I.J. GELB, *Computer-Aided Analysis of Amorite* (Chicago 1980) 119.

⁽¹⁸⁾ H.B. HUFFMON, *Amorite Personal Names in the Mari Texts* (Baltimore 1965) 120, n. 10. The name is read *Bi-it-ta-at-ti* by D. J. WISEMAN, *The Alalakh Tablets* (London 1953) 131 and interpreted as containing the pronoun *'atti* by GELB, *Amorite*, 119.

⁽¹⁹⁾ T. SCHNEIDER, *Asiatische Personennamen in ägyptischen Quellen des Neuen Reiches* (Freiburg – Göttingen 1992) 94.

⁽²⁰⁾ AVIGAD, "Phoenician Seal", 3-4.

Btn^cm at Byblos and Kition⁽²¹⁾; *Btb^cl*, *Bṛšmn* and *Btn^cmt* at Carthage⁽²²⁾, *Bṛty* and βαθσαεδης (= *Btš^cd*) at Palmyra⁽²³⁾, *Brilh^c* at Edessa⁽²⁴⁾, Βιθναναια, Βαθναναια (= *Btnny*)⁽²⁵⁾, Βαθεισθαρα (= *Bṛystr*)⁽²⁶⁾ and Βαθιλας (= *Bṛlh*)⁽²⁷⁾ at Dura-Europos and Βαθελος (= *Bṛl*) at Nela⁽²⁸⁾.

On the pattern “son of DN” we find: *Mār-ī-lī* at Sumer (Ur III)⁽²⁹⁾, *Mār-ilil/Ma-ri-li*, *Mār-Ištar*, *Mār-^aŠamaš*, *Mār-^aAdad*, *Mār-ir-ši-tim*, *Mār-^aAmurru*, *Mār-^aNintu*, *Mār-^aNinḫursag*, *Bi-in-na-rum*, *Bu-ni-ilī/Bu-ni-i-la* and *Bu-nu-a-na-ti* in Babylonia (Babylon I)⁽³⁰⁾, *Bi-in-^aŠamaš*, *Bi-na-Ištar/Bu-nu-Ištar*, and *Bu-nu-e-ra-aḫ* (= *Bunu-Yaraḫ*) at Mari⁽³¹⁾, *Bi-in-i-la* at Alalakh⁽³²⁾, *Bn^cnt*, *Bin-^aēna-at*, *Bnšpš*, *Bin-šap-ši*, *Bnršp*, *Bnnkl*, *Bnilt*, *Bn-dgn*, etc. at Ugarit⁽³³⁾, *Bin-a-na* (of Byblos) and *Bi-in-₄-e-lī-ma* at Amarna⁽³⁴⁾ and *Bn^cnt* elsewhere in

(21) F.L. BENZ, *Personal Names in the Phoenician and Punic Inscriptions* (Rome 1972) 102; J.C.L. GIBSON, *Textbook of Syrian Semitic Inscriptions III*, (Oxford 1982) 99-100; M.G.G. AMADASI – V. KARAGEORGHIS, *Fouilles de Kition, III. Inscriptions Phenicennes* (Cyprus 1977) 65-66.

(22) BENZ, *Personal Names*, 102.

(23) CAQUOT, “Sur l’onomastique”, 240; STARK, *Personal Names*, 13. 81.

(24) H.J.W. DRIVERS, *Old-Syriac (Edesean) Inscriptions* (Leiden 1972) 32-34 (no. 45^{vii}/14).

(25) F. CUMONT, *Fouilles de Doura-Europos* (Paris 1926) 359-361, 437. See also Βιθνα[ναα] in M.I. ROSTOVITZEFF, *The Excavations at Dura-Europos: Preliminary Report of Fifth Season of Work* (New Haven 1934) 179 and [Βι]θναναα (sic) in M.I. ROSTOVITZEFF et al., *The Excavations at Dura-Europos: Preliminary Report of Sixth Season of Work* (New Haven 1936) 258.

(26) P.V.C. BAUR – M.I. ROSTOVITZEFF – A.R. BELLINGER, *The Excavations at Dura-Europos: Preliminary Report of Fourth Season of Work* (New Haven 1933) 162. For the form *ystr*, see J. NAVEH – S. SHAKED, *Amulets and Magic Bowls; Aramaic Incantations of Late Antiquity* (Jerusalem 1985) 266, s.v.

(27) *Dura-Europos: Preliminary Report Fifth Season*, 178.

(28) *Dura-Europos: Preliminary Report Fifth Season*, 179.

(29) DI VITO, *Studies*, 176, 224.

(30) RANKE, *Early Babylonian*, 75, 76, 122-123; BAUER, *Die Ostkanaanäer*, 16; STAMM, *Namengebung*, 260-261.

(31) GELB, *Amorite*, 118-119, 120-121. HUFFMON, *Amorite*, 176, distinguishes *bun-* “creation” from *bin-* “son”.

(32) GELB, *Amorite*, 118.

(33) J.T. MILIK, “An Unpublished Arrow-head with Phoenician Inscription of the 11th-10th Century B.C.”, *BASOR* 143 (1956) 5-6; J. AISLEITNER, “Studien zur Frage der Sprachverwandtschaft des Ugaritischen II”, *Acta Orientalia Hungarica* 8 (Budapest 1958) 60.

(34) R.S. HESS, *Amarna Personal Names* (Winona Lake 1993) 58-60.

Egypt (New Kingdom)⁽³⁵⁾, *Bn^cn* in Phoenicia (*Biqā^c*)⁽³⁶⁾, *Brrkb* at Zinjirli, *Brhdd* (the biblical Ben-Hadad) at Damascus, *Bur-a-na-te* at Iasbuqa⁽³⁷⁾, *Bi-ir-a-tar*, *Bir-^dŠa-maš*, *Bir-^d[Ra-m]a-na = Bur-^dRaman*⁽³⁸⁾ and *Ba-ar-a-ta-ra*⁽³⁹⁾ in Assyria; *Bnḥr* and *Bnhp* at Elephantine⁽⁴⁰⁾, *Bn-ršp* and *Bnb^cl* at Memphis⁽⁴¹⁾, *Br^cth*, *Bršmš*, *Brš^cd*, and *Brnbw* at Palmyra⁽⁴²⁾, *Brb^clšmyn*, *Brnbw* and *Brnny* at Hatra⁽⁴³⁾; *Bršmš* and *Br^cp* at Edessa⁽⁴⁴⁾; Βαρναβου⁽⁴⁵⁾, Βαρσαμισος (= *Bršmš*)⁽⁴⁶⁾, *Barhadadus*⁽⁴⁷⁾, Βαραδαδος⁽⁴⁸⁾, *Brblšmn* (of Haran)⁽⁴⁹⁾, *Barbaessamen* (= *Brb^cšmn*)⁽⁵⁰⁾, *Barathes* (= *Br^cth*)⁽⁵¹⁾ at Dura-Europos.

Phonological Analysis

Another unique feature of this name is preserved in the biblical reading traditions of the ancient Jewish communities of Babylonia

⁽³⁵⁾ SCHNEIDER, *Asiatische Personennamen*, 91-92.

⁽³⁶⁾ MILIK, "An Unpublished Arrow-head", 3. CROSS, "Newly Found Inscriptions", 7 reads *Bn^cn[t]*.

⁽³⁷⁾ R. ZADOK, *On West Semites in Babylonia During the Chaldean and Achaemenian Periods* (Jerusalem 1977) 107.

⁽³⁸⁾ K.L. TALLQVIST, *Assyrian Personal Names* (Helsingfors 1914) 64. 66.

⁽³⁹⁾ ZADOK, *On West Semites*, 106-107.

⁽⁴⁰⁾ P. MAGNANINI, *Le iscrizioni fenicie dell'oriente* (Rome 1973) 73 (no. 14a), 76 (no. 34b).

⁽⁴¹⁾ MAGNANINI, *Le iscrizioni fenicie*, 65 (no. 6), 63-64 (no. 2/3).

⁽⁴²⁾ CAQUOT, "Sur l'onomastique", 240; STARK, *Personal Names*, 12. 79. 80.

⁽⁴³⁾ S. ABBADI, *Die Personennamen der Inschriften aus Hatra* (Hildesheim 1983) 87-88, 90-91.

⁽⁴⁴⁾ DRUIVERS, *Old-Syriac*, 23 (no. 30/2), 25 (no. 34/1), 39-40 (no. 49/4).

⁽⁴⁵⁾ CUMONT, *Fouilles*, 123. 127.

⁽⁴⁶⁾ *The Excavations at Dura-Europos: Final Report* (New Haven 1959), V/1, 122 (no. 23/15).

⁽⁴⁷⁾ *Dura-Europos: Final Report*, V/1, 327 (no. 100 xxxi/5), 335 (no. 100 xxxix/23), 360 (101 xxxix/26).

⁽⁴⁸⁾ *Dura-Europos, Preliminary Report Sixth Season*, (New Haven 1936) 616/2.

⁽⁴⁹⁾ *Dura-Europos: Final Report*, V/1, 146 (no. 28/8).

⁽⁵⁰⁾ *Dura-Europos: Final Report*, V/1, 311 (no. 100 vi/33). *B^cšmn* for *B^clšmn* is found also in Hatran and Nabatean and already in the Aramaic text in demotic script (cf. also Punic *B^cšmm*); see R.C. STEINER – C.F. NIMS, "You Can't Offer Your Sacrifice and Eat It Too: A Polemical Poem from the Aramaic Text in Demotic Script", *JNES* 43 (1984) 108. The *ss* in *Barbaessamen* renders šš < lš. The *ae* is apparently the reflex of *a^c*; cf. Βαθσαεδης above.

⁽⁵¹⁾ *Dura-Europos: Final Report*, V/1, 332 (no. 100 xxxvi/18), 333 (no. 100 xxxvii/13), and *passim*.

and Alexandria. In contrast to the Tiberian tradition, which gives the name as *Bityâ*, the Babylonian tradition (as represented by Codex Berlin Or. Qu. 680) has *Bittÿyâ* with a geminated *t*, and the Alexandrian tradition (as represented by Codex Alexandrinus) has Βεθθια⁽⁵²⁾. The expected Greek transcription, with a single θ, can be seen only a few verses earlier in Codex Alexandrinus, assuming that Βαθρεφα in 1 Chr 4,12 represents אַפְרַח בֶּן־נַפְתָּלִי rather than MT אֶפְרַח בֶּן־נַפְתָּלִי. It can also be seen in the form Βεθσαβη “Bathsheba”⁽⁵³⁾ and in Aramaic names like Βιθναναια, Βαθναναια, Βαθσαεδης, Βαθεισθαρα, Βαθιλας, Βαθελος, Βαθγαλβα⁽⁵⁴⁾ and Βαθσαια⁽⁵⁵⁾. Unlike these forms, Βεθθια preserves the gemination attested in the second-millennium Amorite names *Bi-it-ti-^dDa-gan*, *Bi-it-ta-ad-di* and *Bi-it-ta-ma-al-ki*⁽⁵⁶⁾.

The first component of Βεθθια, viz. Βεθθ-, exhibits gemination at the end of an unsuffixed noun in the construct state. This is remarkable, since word-final gemination was normally lost in Hebrew⁽⁵⁷⁾, e.g., בַּיְתָּ < *bittu < *bintu⁽⁵⁸⁾, גִּיטָּ < *gittu < *gintu, חֲמִיּוֹ

⁽⁵²⁾ P. KAHLE, *Der masoretische Text des Alten Testaments* (Leipzig 1902) 77; YEIVIN, *The Hebrew Language Tradition*, 782.

⁽⁵³⁾ This form is found in one manuscript of Josephus' *Antiquities* VII, 158; cf. also Latin *bethsabee* in *Ant.* VII, 130, 146; see B. NIESE (ed.), *Flavii Iosephi Opera* II (Berlin 1885) 119. 122. 125. Most manuscripts have one of the forms from the LXX, where the names *Bathsheba* and *Beersheba* have apparently been confused.

⁽⁵⁴⁾ *Dura-Europos, Preliminary Report Sixth Season*, 412.

⁽⁵⁵⁾ The last name is from L. JALABERT – R. MOUTERDE, *Inscriptions grecques et latines de la Syrie* (Paris 1929-) 149 (no. 2321 from Homs). It and most of the others listed here are cited by K. BEYER, *Die aramäischen Texte vom Toten Meer* (Göttingen 1984) 537. The Aramaic name Βαθθαββα from Dura (CUMONT, *Fouilles*, 376) is not comparable to Βεθθια. It exhibits assimilation of *t* to following *ʔ*, as in Syriac **eʔaqtal* > *ettaqtal* and **eʔḥed* > *ettḥed*; T. NÖLDEKE, *Compendious Syriac Grammar* (London 1904) 25 (§36).

⁽⁵⁶⁾ WISEMAN, *The Alalakh Tablets*, 131.

⁽⁵⁷⁾ The Hebrew geminates always spanned a syllable boundary, ending one syllable and beginning the next, e.g., *Sablath*. Thus, the loss of a syllable through vowel deletion often led to degemination, especially in word-final position. Thus, the noun *gal* “heap” is derived from **gall* < **gallu* (root *g-l-l* “roll”), and the verb *gal* “uncover!” is the apocopated form of the imperative **galle^h* (root *g-l-y*). Kahle's theory that the Babylonian reading tradition of Hebrew preserves final gemination is an extrapolation from a handful of ambiguous forms; see G. BERGSTRÄSSER, *Hebräische Grammatik* I (Leipzig 1918) 141 (§24e); YEIVIN, *The Hebrew Language Tradition*, 350-351 [in

< **mattattu* < **mantantu*, צל < **sillu* < **tillu*. The original gemination was preserved in suffixed forms (e.g., בָּרוּ, גָּרוּ, and צָלָם), but not in unsuffixed construct forms. Thus, even in the Babylonian tradition, the *t* of בַּת פֶּרַעִה “daughter of Pharaoh” does not have a *dagesh*, unlike the *t* of בְּתִיקָה.

Here again, transcriptions of biblical names in the Greek version of I Chronicles preserve no trace of original final gemination in construct nouns outside of the name Βεθθια. Consider the personal names Ματταθιας (מַתְתִּיקָה; literally: “gift of the Lord”) and Βεσεληλ (בְּצִלְאֵל; literally: “in the shadow of God”) and the place name Γεθρεμμων (גֵּת רִמּוֹן; literally: “pomegranate press”)⁽⁵⁹⁾. Each contains a noun in the construct case that originally ended in a geminated consonant: מַתְתִּיקָה, בְּצִלְאֵל, and גֵּת (see above). That original final gemination is not represented in the Greek transliterations, despite the fact that the *medial* gemination found in two of the three names (מַתְתִּיקָה and גֵּת רִמּוֹן) is represented. The element Γεθ in Γεθρεμμων may be contrasted with Γεθθ- in Γεθθαμ and Γεθθαιου, the two suffixed forms of *gat* found in the Greek version of I Chronicles.

Thus, the geminated *t* preserved in the name Bithiah by the Alexandrian and Babylonian reading traditions of BH is quite exceptional⁽⁶⁰⁾. The fact that these two traditions are so far apart

Hebrew] and the literature cited there. It must be stressed that the *dagesh* in Babylonian forms like תָּא and תָּב, even in the unlikely event that it is forte, has no relevance to the second *dagesh* of בְּתִיקָה, since the final letter of תָּב has the *rafeh* sign in the Babylonian tradition; YEIVIN, *The Hebrew Language Tradition*, 782.

(⁵⁸) For the assimilation of the *n* in this word in Egypt, cf. *b-t-r-bi-y* (deity) “daughter of my lord” in the London Medical Papyrus; see R. C. STEINER, “Northwest Semitic Incantations in an Egyptian Medical Papyrus of the Fourteenth Century B.C.E.,” *JNES* 51 (1992) 196-197.

(⁵⁹) Cf. ^{alt}*Gi-ti-ri-mu-ni-ma* reflecting *Gitti-* (alongside ^{alt}*Gin-ti-ki-ir-mi-il^{ki}* and ^{alt}*Gi-im-ti^{ki}* reflecting *Ginti-*) in the Amarna letters; J.A. KNUDTZON, *Die El-Amarna-Tafeln* (Leipzig 1915) 1574.

(⁶⁰) The gemination in Βεθθια cannot be dismissed as a late development. In the Greek version of Chronicles, secondary gemination in names comparable to Βεθθια is extremely rare. I found the following names in which Greek -ια corresponds to Masoretic הַי- rather than הַי- or הַי-: Αζαρια, Αμαρια, Αμασιας/Αμεσσια, Ανανια, Ασαβια, Ασαδια, Βααλια, Βαραχια, Γοδολια, Ζαχαρια, Ιαρασια, Ιεκεμια, Ιεχονιας, Ισαβια, Μανθανιας, Ναθανιας, Νωαδια, Ογοθολια, Οχοζια, Φαλλετια/Φαλετια, Ρααβια, Ρασια, Σαλαμια, Σαμαρια, Σαφανα, Σαφατια, Σαρια, Σεβια, Σεχενια, Χωνενια. The form Αμεσσια seems to be due to confusion with Αμεσσα = אֲמֶסָּה. The form Φαλετια appears to have resulted from a copyist doubling the wrong letter.

geographically makes their agreement all the more impressive, leading us to conclude that the name Bithiah had a geminated *t* in the biblical period⁽⁶¹⁾.

Historical Analysis

The Chronicler's dating of Bithiah seems reasonably clear, despite the difficulty of the relevant verses. Bithiah's husband, Mered, had an ancestor named Ezra (1 Chr 4,17), who was related in some way to Joshua's contemporary, Caleb son of Jephunneh (1 Chr 4,15). The precise relationship between Ezra and Caleb is uncertain, but it is unlikely that Ezra is from the generation prior to Caleb, since he is listed later. This supplies an approximate *terminus a quo*. A *terminus ad quem* is provided by the fact that Mered's children from his other wife were founding fathers of Gedor, Socoh, and Zanoah. It is reasonable to assume that the Chronicler, like the author of Joshua⁽⁶²⁾, believed these towns to have been founded before the rise of the Monarchy⁽⁶³⁾.

We may conclude that the Chronicler (or his source) viewed Mered as living after the Exodus and before the Monarchy, a period that coincides roughly with the Ramessid era. According to this dating, if Bithiah was a historical figure she was in all probability a Ramessid. Bithia's Semitic name points in the same direction. If there is any hope at all of finding an Egyptian princess with a Semitic name, it is in the Ramessid period, for the use of Semitic was more common in that period than in any other period of ancient Egyptian history⁽⁶⁴⁾.

When we turn to Egyptian sources, we find that the only princess known to have borne a Semitic name was indeed a Ramessid: *Bint(i)-^cAnat*, the eldest daughter of Ramesses II, who eventually

⁽⁶¹⁾ Note that, by the principles of areal linguistics, "lateral areas preserve the older forms"; R. ANTTILA, *An Introduction to Historical and Comparative Linguistics* (New York 1972) 297. Alexandria and Babylonia are, of course, lateral with respect to Tiberias.

⁽⁶²⁾ Cf. Josh 15,34 (Zanoah), 35 (Socoh), 58 (Gedor). Or is Gedor here to be identified with Gederah in 15,36?

⁽⁶³⁾ In fact, it seems that all of the figures called the/a father of a town by the Chronicler were viewed by him as premonarchic.

⁽⁶⁴⁾ J.E. HOCH, *Semitic Words in Egyptian Texts of the New Kingdom and Third Intermediate Period* (Princeton 1994) 4-5.

became his wife, as well⁽⁶⁵⁾. The name appears more than a dozen times, accompanied by epithets like “Chief of the Harim of Amun” and “Great Royal Wife”, in the lists of princesses at Abu Simbel and Luxor, in her tomb in the Valley of Queens, on her sarcophagus, etc.⁽⁶⁶⁾. Ramesses’ reason for choosing that name is reasonably clear: he was a worshipper of the Canaanite goddess ‘Anat, and he refers to her as his mother in several inscriptions⁽⁶⁷⁾.

It is obvious that the name *Bint(i)-‘Anat* “daughter of ‘Anat” is very similar to the name *Bittě-Yâ* “daughter of *Yâ*”⁽⁶⁸⁾. Does this similarity have any significance? Let us summarize our findings thus far. The Chronicler’s tradition knows of an Egyptian princess who lived during a period of Israelite history synchronous with the Ramessid period in Egypt. The name of the princess — *Bittě-Yâ* — is Semitic rather than Egyptian, but it exhibits non-Israelite features and is unique in the Bible. It is very similar to the name of a Ramessid princess and is a non-Egyptian name attested for only a single person in the history of Egypt. Is all of this to be dismissed as a mere coincidence on the grounds that the Chronicler’s tradition could not possibly have preserved information from such an early period? Or should assumptions about what is possible be based on empirical data rather than vice versa?

To my mind, there is a simple way of accounting for the facts presented above, despite the fact that the eldest daughter of Ramesses II lived in the 13th century BCE while *Bittě-Yâ* must be dated to the 12th or 11th century BCE. It is to assume that there was a second Ramessid lady called *Bint(i)-‘Anat*, whose name was changed, either in her lifetime or subsequently (by a scribe or editor),

⁽⁶⁵⁾ SCHNEIDER, *Asiatische Personennamen*, 94 (cf. also 92). For the attestations, see HOCH, *Semitic Words*, 97-98. The most common spelling is *Bi-n-ti-‘-nt*.

⁽⁶⁶⁾ K.A. KITCHEN, *Ramesside Inscriptions; Translated and Annotated; Translations* (Oxford 1996), II, 598-600, 603-604.

⁽⁶⁷⁾ A. DUPONT-SOMMER, “Une stèle araméenne d’un prêtre de Ba‘al trouvée en Égypte”, *Syria* 33 (1956) 86-87; R. STADELMANN, *Syrisch-Palästinensische Gottheiten in Agypten* (Leiden 1967) 91-95; J. LECLANT, “Anat”, *Lexikon der Ägyptologie* I (Wiesbaden 1975) 254.

⁽⁶⁸⁾ So already M. GREENBERG, *Understanding Exodus* (New York 1969) 27, who refers to Bityah as “a hebraized analogue of the Canaanite name *Bint-Anat*, one of Ramses II’s daughters”. He is the only scholar I have found who noted the similarity between the two names.

to **Bittě-Yāhū* > *Bittě-Yâ*⁽⁶⁹⁾. Three cases of such a name change, involving only the theophoric element, are known from the Bible.

The most important one for our purposes involves the son of Tou/Toi, king of Hamath, as described by Malamat:

The original name [of the prince] is undoubtedly preserved in the Book of Chronicles as *Hadoram* (1 Chr 18,10), a shortened form of the typically West-Semitic name Hadadram. In contrast to his father's Anatolian or Hurrian name, To'i, or To'u, which is appropriate for the ruler of a neo-Hittite kingdom like Hamath, that of the son testifies to the spread of Aramaic influence in Hamath, perhaps as a result of the rise of Aram Zobah. The parallel verse in 2 Sam 8,10, on the other hand gives the son's name as Joram, an abbreviated form of *Jehoram*, replacing Hadad by a distinctly Israelite theophoric element. This should not be regarded as a textual corruption but simply as a second name which the prince adopted, a practice which is well attested in royal circles throughout the Near East. We do not know when Hadoram received his second name: during the embassy's stay in Jerusalem or on his accession to the throne in Hamath-or was it in some way connected with Solomon's activities in Hamath...? At any rate the change of his name should be regarded in the light of the case where the two Judean kings Eliakim-Jehoiakim and Mattaniah-Zedekiah had their names changed at the instigation of their respective Egyptian and Babylonian overlords (II Kings 23,34; 24,17)

... It seems that the last king of Hamath also bore a double name since he is called in Assyrian documents (from ca. 720 B.C.) either *Ilubidi*, or *Jaubidi*, i.e., Jeho-bidi⁽⁷⁰⁾.

This view has been endorsed by McCarter:

...we should probably assume that this prince, whose Aramean name was in fact Hadoram, took a second name indicative of his fealty to David⁽⁷¹⁾.

Malamat and McCarter believe that the substitution of *Yô* for *Haddu* was made in the prince's lifetime by or for an Israelite king. This seems plausible, but even if the substitution was made later,

⁽⁶⁹⁾ The substitution of *Yahu* for 'Anat as the theophoric element of the name of an Egyptian residing in Judah calls to mind the oath which a Jew residing in Egypt 6-7 centuries later swore by 'Anatyahu; see A. COWLEY, *Aramaic Papyri of the Fifth Century B.C.* (Oxford 1923) 147 No. 44:3; B. PORTEN – A. YARDENI, *Textbook of Aramaic Documents from Ancient Egypt* (Jerusalem 1989), II, 146-147.

⁽⁷⁰⁾ MALAMAT, "Aspects of the Foreign Policies", 6-7.

⁽⁷¹⁾ P.K. MCCARTER, Jr., *II Samuel* (New York 1984) 250. McCarter derives *Hādôrām* from *Haddu-rām* instead of *Hadad-rām*.

by an Israelite scribe or editor, it is a close parallel to our case, because it involves the child of a foreign potentate and because ʿAnat is the consort of Haddu.

Two other examples of name change via the substitution of theophoric elements are worthy of mention, even if they do not involve the names of different deities. As noted by Malamet, Pharaoh Necho changed the name of Eliakim son of Josiah to Jehoiakim (2 Kgs 26,34)⁽⁷²⁾. And one of the sons of David's concubines is called Beeliada in 1 Chr 14,7 but Eliada in 2 Sam 5,16 and 1 Chr 3,8⁽⁷³⁾. Finally, the changing of toponyms containing the names of foreign gods is noted in Num 32,38, "and Nebo and Baal-meon, their names being changed".

The explanation offered above enables us to account for both the onomastic and phonological peculiarities discussed above. Since the name is pagan and Canaanite in origin, its non-Israelite pattern need no longer surprise us. Its anomalous phonology can also be attributed to its foreign origin⁽⁷⁴⁾.

The existence of two Ramessid princesses named *Bint(i)-ʿAnat* would not be strange. We know of three Istnofrets (wife, daughter, and granddaughter of Ramesses II) and two Nefertaris (wife and daughter of Ramesses II) among the Ramessids⁽⁷⁵⁾. Indeed, at least one Egyptologist has assumed the existence of a second *Bint(i)-ʿAnat*⁽⁷⁶⁾.

⁽⁷²⁾ See the reference to "l'usage de rebaptiser le serviteur qu'on vient d'acquérir" in P. VERNUS, "Namengebung", *Lexikon der Ägyptologie* IV (Wiesbaden 1982) 327.

⁽⁷³⁾ I am indebted to S. Japhet for this example.

⁽⁷⁴⁾ We know that the word for "daughter" was *bitt(ě)* (with total assimilation of the nasal) rather than *bint(ě)* in some Northwest Semitic dialects well before the time we are discussing; see ns. 55 and 57 above. Let us make the plausible assumption that Hebrew was one of those dialects. If the *n* in the name *Bint(i)-ʿAnat* was retained for some time by the Israelites and it was assimilated only at a relatively late stage, the normal development *bitt(ě)* > *bit* > *bat* would have bypassed the name. In this way, the foreign phonology of the name would have been retained, albeit in an altered form.

⁽⁷⁵⁾ KITCHEN, *Ramesside Inscriptions*, II, 531, 598-600, 606.

⁽⁷⁶⁾ See SCHNEIDER, *Asiatische Personennamen*, 94. However, K.A. Kitchen writes in a letter dated Nov. 12, 1997: "I do not think we have a separate *Binti-ʿAnat II* – the statue of Merenptah at Luxor (KRI IV 64:3, as cited by Schneider) bears the figure of a *Bint-ʿAnat* who is King's Daughter, King's Sister, King's Wife. If she is the sister of Merenptah, as well as his wife, then she can only have been daughter of Ramesses II = *Bint-ʿAnat I*. Merenptah probably inherited her for dynastic reasons at his father's death".

If the pharaoh of 1 Chr 4,18 was Ramesses III, the re-use of the name *Bint(i)-ʿAnat* is even less surprising. It is well known that Ramesses III was an ardent admirer and imitator of Ramesses II. Kitchen, for example writes:

Ramesses III in particular consciously modelled himself, his titles, his family names, his wars and buildings, and thus his reign, on the example of Ramesses II. His sons, for example, were called Amenhir-khopshef, Pre-hir-wonmef, Ramesses, Khaemwaset, and so on.... Thereafter, the Twentieth Dynasty consisted entirely of kings who chose to bear the name ‘Ramesses’ (IV to XI)...⁽⁷⁷⁾.

So too Drenkhahn:

[Ramses III] suchte bewusst die Anlehnung an Ramses II.: er bildete seinen Namen nach dem Ramses’ II; seine Söhne und die hohen Beamten tragen Namen entsprechend denen von Ramses’ II; er kopiert und übernimmt Architektur und Dekoration des Ramesseums⁽⁷⁸⁾.

Given that his sons and even his officials had the same names as those of Ramesses II, it is hard to imagine Ramesses III *not* having a daughter named *Bint(i)-ʿAnat*⁽⁷⁹⁾. However, it is likely that we are dealing with a granddaughter or great-granddaughter of Ramesses III rather than a daughter, since “a marriage of an Egyptian princess to a foreign potentate was unthinkable in the New Kingdom or Empire period”⁽⁸⁰⁾. In the words of Amenhotep III to Kadashmanlil I: “From time immemorial, no daughter of the king of Egy[pt] is given to anyone”⁽⁸¹⁾. The term used to identify Bithiah in Chronicles is *bat par’ōh*, and it is well known that the terms *bēn/bat* can be used of any descendant, just as *ʾāb/ʾēm* can be used of any ancestor and *ʾāḥ/ʾāḥōt* can be used of any collateral rela-

⁽⁷⁷⁾ K.A. KITCHEN, *Pharaoh Triumphant; The Life and Times and Ramesses II, King of Egypt* (Warminster 1982) 227.

⁽⁷⁸⁾ R. DRENKHAHN, “Ramses III”, *Lexikon der Agyptologie* V (Wiesbaden 1984) 117.

⁽⁷⁹⁾ According to P. GRANDET, *Ramsès III: histoire d’un regne* (Paris 1993) 60, Ramesses III had “un certain nombre de filles, dont l’existence, quoique probable, n’est pratiquement pas attestée par les sources”. He had at least two principal wives and other, secondary wives.

⁽⁸⁰⁾ KITCHEN, *Third Intermediate Period*, 282.

⁽⁸¹⁾ EA 4:6-7 in W.L. MORAN, *The Amarna Letters* (Baltimore 1992) 8; MALAMAT, “Kingdom”, 92; SCHULMAN, “Diplomatic Marriage”, 179, but see also p. 180, n. 13 for exceptions to this rule.

tive. If Bithiah was not a daughter, she was free to marry a foreigner⁽⁸²⁾.

If Mered was a Judahite prince or elder, a marriage between him and a descendant of Ramesses III might possibly have had diplomatic overtones⁽⁸³⁾. One of the major threats to both the Egyptians and the Israelites beginning in the reign of Ramesses III was the Sea Peoples, including *Plst*, the biblical Philistines. It would have been natural for the Egyptians to attempt to use the tribe of Judah as a buffer against their common enemy and neighbor⁽⁸⁴⁾. Ramesses III succeeded in repulsing the Sea Peoples, “perhaps retaining a tenuous hold on coastal Canaan and its routes”⁽⁸⁵⁾, but after his death (c. 1154 B.C.E.), Egyptian power declined rapidly:

Thereafter, a long line of kings reigned — but hardly ruled — in swift succession, all inevitably called ‘Ramesses’, from IV to XI... The reigns of Ramesses V, VI, VII, VIII progressively saw low Niles, scarcity of food, rocketing inflation, and, under Ramesses IX, famine. The administration now creaked so badly that, when a pharaoh wanted something particular done, he ‘short-circuited’ regular channels frequently (instead of occasionally) by dispatching a royal cup-bearer. Corruption was now rife... Tomb robbery on a blatant scale did not spare the Valleys of the Kings and Queens... and even the great memorial — temples suffered — gold was stripped from the Ramesseum. So events moved on, under Ramesses IX, X and XI.

By now the Syrian dominions were long since totally lost...⁽⁸⁶⁾.

⁽⁸²⁾ Ramesses II, whom Ramesses III worked so hard to imitate, was not too proud to allow his son to marry the daughter of a Syrian sea captain named *Bin-anat*.

⁽⁸³⁾ Although diplomatic marriages normally involved a king’s daughter, Kadashmanenlil I was willing to accept a substitute from Amenhotep III: “Send me a beautiful woman as if she were [you]r daughter. Who is going to say, ‘She is no daughter of the king!’?”; EA 4:12-13 in MORAN, *Amarna Letters*, 9. The term *bat* (*par-ôh*), used of granddaughters, etc. as well as daughters, could have lent itself to a similar deception.

⁽⁸⁴⁾ The marriage of Solomon to a later Egyptian princess has been viewed in the same way. KITCHEN, *Third Intermediate Period*, 281-282, believes that Solomon and Siamun “found it in their mutual interest to become allies rather than to fight; by such an alliance, both militarily and commercially, Philistia was now caught as in a vice between Egypt and Israel”. Even REDFORD, *Egypt, Canaan, and Israel*, 310, finds it “conceivable that Egypt was delighted at the genesis of the kingdom of Israel, opposed as it was from the outset to the Philistine occupation of the coastal plain”.

⁽⁸⁵⁾ KITCHEN, *Pharaoh Triumphant*, 218.

⁽⁸⁶⁾ KITCHEN, *Pharaoh Triumphant*, 218.

In a literary text from this period of decline, the hero is not above seeking help from “those of Se^cir”, the Edomites⁽⁸⁷⁾. The marriage between Bithiah and Mered may also reflect the humbled state of the Egyptians. The Ramessids could no longer afford to be choosy; with the Empire crumbling, Egypt needed all the help it could get.

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SUMMARY

According to 1 Chr 4,18, a Judahite named Mered, who lived in the 12th or 11th century BCE, was married to a “daughter/granddaughter of Pharaoh”. The name of the woman, vocalized *Bittē-Yâ* in the Babylonian and Alexandrian traditions, is Semitic rather than Egyptian, but it exhibits non-Israelite features and is unique in the Bible. It is very similar to *Bint(i)-Anat*, the Canaanite name borne by the daughter/wife of Ramesses II in the 13th century BCE. For chronological and other reasons, the biblical *Bittē-Yâ* cannot be identified with this Egyptian princess/queen of the nineteenth dynasty; however, since many names of Ramesses II’s children were re-used in the twentieth dynasty, there may well have been a 12th/11th-century Ramessid lady named *Bint(i)-Anat*, perhaps a granddaughter of Ramesses III, who married a Judahite.

⁽⁸⁷⁾ KITCHEN, *Third Intermediate Period*, 275, n. 187.



PEETERS

Corrigenda: Bittě-Yâ, daughter of Pharaoh (1 Chr 4,18), and Bint(i)-‘Anat, daughter of Ramesses II

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Corrigenda

Due to editorial error a number of mistakes were made during the preparation of the manuscript of the article by R.C. Steiner, “*Bittě-Yâ*, daughter of Pharaoh” (*Biblica* 79 [1998] 394-408) for the printers. The editorial board apologises for these errors, which should be corrected as follows.

Footnote 5 has been inserted by mistake. Yeivin does not discuss the identity of the Chronicler.

Footnote 60. The Greek name *Zαβαδία* is missing. Also, the Hebrew form following “*Ἀμεσσα* =” should be *ממסא*.

Footnote 74 refers back to footnotes 55 and 57 instead of 56 and 58. The insertion of footnote 5 is the cause of this.

P. 395, l. 11. “he as undoubtedly” must be “he was undoubtedly”.

P. 403, l. 16: “and is a non-Egyptian name” must be read: “— a non-Egyptian name”, a phrase in apposition to “the name of a Ramessid princess”. The published text makes the apposition modify *Bittě-Yâ* instead of *Bint(i)-ʿAnat*. In other words “a non-Egyptian name” was supposed to refer to *Bint(i) ʿAnat*.

P. 407. As printed, in the citation from Kitchen the phrase “temples suffered” is surrounded by dashes and appears to be parenthetical. It should be read: “memorial-temples suffered—gold was stripped...”.

P. 408 summary. A hyphen instead of a slash should be read in “daughter-wife” and “princess-queen”, as customary in English Egyptological studies.

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