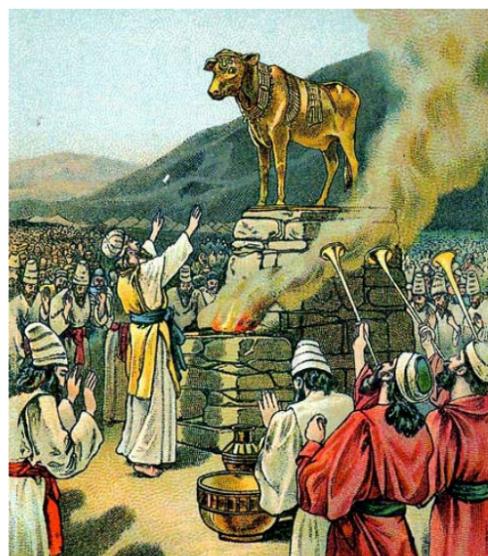


Pagan Israel

In Exodus 32 we read of Aaron's construction of an image in the form of a golden calf representing the pagan god Baal. Aaron disconcertingly spoke of the Golden Calf as Lord. At this same time Moses was receiving the Ten Commandments from the true Lord.

When the Golden Calf was completed Aaron presented it to the people who said, "These be thy gods, (plural) O Israel, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt. (There is only one God.)"

After the Israelites were settled in the "Promised Land" flowing with milk and honey they turned away from Almighty God and their unfaithfulness resulted in the Ten Tribes being expelled from the Promised Land. Their decline is told in the book of Judges and the sad account of their unfaithfulness is made all the worse by their refusal to return to God for any length of time despite all attempts by successive judges to prevent their descent into a horrid state of moral demise and ruin. They turned far away from the God of Abraham and their fathers and gave themselves up to the worship of idols and Canaanite gods. Judges 21:25 sums it up with the words, "In those days Israel had no king; everyone did as he saw fit"



We have to face the hard fact that the Israelites were worshipping multiple false gods as we can see here:-



Jdg 8:33 And it came to pass, as soon as Gideon was dead, that the children of Israel turned again, and went a whoring after the Baalim, and made Baal-berith their god.

Jdg 10:6 The people of Israel again did what was evil in the sight of the LORD and served the Baals and the Ashtaroth, the gods of Syria, the gods of Sidon, the gods of Moab, the gods of the Ammonites, and the gods of the Philistines. And they forsook the LORD and did not serve him.

2Ch 33:3 He rebuilt the high places his father Hezekiah had demolished; he also erected altars to the Baals and made Asherah poles. He bowed down to all the starry hosts and worshiped them.

Jer 9:14 Instead, they have followed the stubbornness of their hearts; they have followed the Baals, as their fathers taught them."

In 2 Kings 17 we read, "The people of Israel did secretly against the Lord their God things that were not right. They built for themselves high places in all their towns, from watchtower to fortified city. They set up for themselves pillars and Asherim on every high hill and under every green tree, and there they made offerings on all the high places, as the nations did whom the Lord carried away before them. And they did wicked things, provoking the Lord to anger, and they served idols, of which the Lord had said to them, "You shall not do this." Yet the Lord warned Israel and Judah by every prophet and every seer, saying, "Turn from your evil ways and keep my commandments and my statutes, in accordance with all the Law that I commanded your fathers, and that I sent to you by my servants the prophets."



The Israelites would not listen, but were as stubborn as their fathers had been who also did not believe in the Lord their God. They despised his statutes and his covenant that he made with their fathers and the warnings that he gave them. They went after false idols and followed the nations that were around them concerning whom the Lord had commanded them that they should not do like them. They abandoned all the commandments of the Lord their God, and made for themselves metal images of two calves; and they made an Asherah and worshipped all the host of heaven and served Baal. They burned their sons and their daughters as offerings and used divination and omens and sold themselves to do evil in the sight of the Lord, provoking him to anger. Therefore the Lord was very angry with Israel and removed them out of his sight. None was left but the tribe of Judah only. (This was the breakup of the Ten Tribes.) Judah was no better.

Notes



Astaroth (also Ashtaroth, Astarot, and Asteroth), in demonology, is a Crowned Prince of Hell. He is a male figure named after the Canaanite goddess Ashtoreth.

Athirat is almost always given her full title 'Lady Athirat of the Sea' or as more fully translated 'She who treads on the sea.' Her other main divine epithet was "the creatrix (female creator) of the gods.

Elohim is used for such deities as the Moabite god Chemosh, the Sidonian goddess Astarte, and also for other majestic beings such as angels, kings and judges.

Molech. Solomon built an altar to Molech at Tophet in the Valley of Hinnon near Jerusalem known as Hell which Jesus spoke about in the Sermon on the Mount. Manasseh in his idolatrous orgy also honored this deity. Josiah desecrated the Hinnom Valley altar, but Jehoiakim revived the cult." (Unger's Bible Dictionary) The whole point of the offering was that it was a human sacrifice. ..."When a child was sacrificed to Moloch, a fire was lit inside the statue. The priests would then beat loudly on drums & other objects so that the cries would not be heard."

America Today



Top figure Golden Calf. 2nd figure Baal 3rd from top Asherah Bottom figure Molech
Bohemian Grove America

Sources: Encyclopaedia Britannica, Jewish Encyclopaedia and the Biblical books of Kings and Judges.