

Ba'al Theory of Christianity

A Rough Timeline

Covering the most of the time frame of the two books

The Phoenicians were clearly a people grounded in the belief systems of the Ancients. They expanded this world view into the land areas that would eventually be dominated by the Classical view. Simply for this fact alone, the Phoenicians are a people of major historical importance.

However, if some historians are correct, the true greatness of the Phoenicians will only be understood when we have a fuller understanding of the history of Africa, and perhaps even the New World, in ancient times. In other words, we need to know most of the history of the ancient world, and all the history of religions in this area dating back 10,000 years or so to fully appreciate the Phoenicians.

One of the main premises of these books is that the religion of the Phoenicians, through an older form of Judaism, and over a very long period, became a major influence on the development of Christianity. Specifically, the Phoenicians influenced the Christians' view of the way to appease God, and also the way to create a new covenant with God. This new covenant with God is the basis of Christianity and therefore the foundation of the religion. In my view, this new covenant may be nothing more than an old Phoenician one.

We will explore how the rituals of the religion of the Phoenicians were the inspiration for the "structure" of the death of Jesus, and therefore, central to the whole development of the Christian religion.

- This evolution of ritual from the Phoenicians to the Christians covers more than two thousand years, and is greatly intertwined with the history of the Jews, and their mostly failed history as a people in the world of Ancient and Classical politics. The people who became the Jews had multiple responses to the repeated historical failures. The remnants of the Jews at each point of failure created responses, at times clinging to the old beliefs. This resulted in multiple forms of Judaism, (some "modernized," some deeply traditional") which helped to create this bridge to the development of Christianity. In short, this is how Ba'alism influenced the new religion.

To begin to understand this concept of religious transition, we need to look at this timeline which will be greatly expanded upon later. (All these dates are "rough estimates")

- 15,000 – 1500 BC ... Organized religion is based in worship of the great Earth Mother. There is very little evidence, in many locations, of the concept of a Sky God, or in fact, any many male deity. (The timeline for

the Earth Mother religion denotes its dominance in some areas for this whole period. However, the dominance of the Mother Goddess began to erode starting as early as 6,000 in some places, and lasted until 1500 in some limited areas.

- 6000 BC to 2500 BC ... Phoenician religion evolves out of the Mother Goddess religion to incorporate the general religious views of Mesopotamia and Egypt, and becomes greatly influenced by the Sky God concepts of the Semites and later Indo Europeans. The male dominated pantheon of gods is developed, with the great mother still worshiped but in a secondary role. The key deities in the newer religion are the sun and the weather (or storm) gods. Many of the religious stories are based in agricultural events and on astrological observations.
- 3000 BC -250 BC ... the religion of Phoenicia is a major influence in the Southern Mediterranean Basin, dominating North Africa, the major islands of the Western Mediterranean, and half of what is now Spain. The influence spreads to mainland Europe, including Greece, and to what is now England, It is even possible that it spread to the Americas.
- 3,000 -1200 BC Phoenicia periodically under control or major influence of Egypt, but is more often a relatively free trading partner.
- 1750-1500 BC – Clear links between the development of Greek culture to Phoenician influence (Founder of Thebes, Cadmus, is a Phoenician prince.) The Greek develop/adopt Phoenician pantheon with new names)
- 1600 -1200 BC The invasion of the “Hyksos,” “Sea People” and other nomadic peoples greatly destabilizes the Eastern Mediterranean areas, It is possible that the eruption of the San Torini volcano impacts the strength of rivals such as Crete and Egypt. Phoenicia survives and becomes more independent and more dominant in the Eastern Mediterranean area. They become almost completely dominant in all Mediterranean trade.
- 1100 -1000 BC, in the highlands of what is now the “Holy Lands”, a small and unimportant area of Phoenician influence, the cult of Yahweh, modeled greatly on Phoenician religion, develops.
- Between 1000 BC and 650 BC, internal struggles between the Yahweh cultists leads to disunity and great internal struggles in what was the southern area dominated by the Phoenicians (or Canaanites). Religious struggles concern mainly the role of Yahweh. The debate was over whether he was a sole god, chief god, or just a god. There were also questions over the proper ways to offer prayers and sacrifice to him and other gods. Mostly the proponents of Yahweh are in an inferior political position throughout this period

- 900 – 650 BC – Assyrian and Neo- Babylonian domination of Eastern Mediterranean. Phoenicia is attacked often, with major defeats, but manages to stave off complete domination by the new powers. Phoenicia creates more support for it's Western Mediterranean colonies as a means for escaping, if needed, from the new powers.
- Minor and relatively unimportant semi-Yahwehist kingdoms (Israel and Judah) are both destroyed with minimal effort by the super powers, and the peoples there are mostly exiled.
- 600-550 BC Yahwehists in exile in Babylon create a new religion with Yahweh as sole god, and declare that all defeats were Yahweh's punishment for the failure to comply with Yahweh's laws and mandates. (People now called Jews). Holy books rewritten and codified.
- 550 – 325 BC Persia dominates Eastern Mediterranean, with Phoenicia as a major ally in the Persian wars with the Greeks.
 - Yahwehist cult allowed to return to "Judea" to rebuild their temple and to establish a colony of believers. Less than 10% of the Jews" return to Judea. (There are Four major division of "Jews" at this time ... Returnees, those in Babylon, those who had fled to Egypt at the time of conquest, and those who had remained in Judea at the time of conquest.)
 - Persian religions influence the whole area (with new concepts of dualism, of heaven and hell (existence of the Devil), the resurrection of the dead, and many other new ideas which influence all the religions of the area, including the Jews. These are mostly resisted by the Phoenicians, in an effort to maintain cultural (if not limited political) independence.
- 325 – 150 BC Hellenistic (Greek) conquests of Eastern Mediterranean and cultural domination of the area. Phoenicia suffers great defeats and loses trading control to the Greeks; Phoenician remnants (including Carthage) put far greater efforts in the Western Mediterranean, including Spain.
 - "Classical world view" (Hellenism) mostly replaces "Ancient world" at least as the dominant culture of the rulers.
 - Phoenicia loses in wars with Alexander and also in the Punic Wars with Rome, Carthage is destroyed, Phoenicia is

- “Hellenized,” Spain and other areas of Phoenician influence are occupied by Rome.
- 140 BC – 140 AD Jewish war of resistance against Classical domination
 - 135 – 65 BC Judea rebels against the Greeks' successor (to Alexander) kings, unifies around religious issues, creates brief independent state (the Second Jewish Commonwealth) under strong “orthodox religious” efforts ... force converts peoples of the area (including Galilee and southern Phoenicia to “orthodox Judaism” Jews offer alternative world view to both Ancients and Hellenization
 - (65 BC – 65 AD Jewish state under Roman control, with a relative hands off policy concerning religion, Jews often prosper under Roman rule, but resent direct rule.
 - 66 AD – 135 AD Rome crushes a series of three major (and a number of minor) Jewish revolts and destroys Judea, the Second Temple. Rome nearly exterminates the Jews in much of the Eastern Mediterranean world. The large Jewish presence in Egypt is repressed. The only other large Jewish community in Babylonia survives almost untouched by Roman efforts. Loss in revolts eliminates the Jewish alternative as a “player” in the struggle between Ancients and Classical world views.
- 65 BC – 650 AD Roman (Byzantine) Domination of the Eastern Mediterranean
- 70 AD – 650 AD Christianity develops.

Christianity is a merging and morphing of the Ancient, Classical, Persian, and Jewish world views. Elements of all four are combined into a new “unified religion” for the Roman world.

- Extensive competition within the Christian communities, as well as strong competition from other (mainly Ba’alist and Persian based religions) leads to new, combined religions supported by the Emperors under the “One Emperor, One God,” paradigm.
- New religion puts far more emphasis on an afterlife, and the fate of souls than any other previous religion. It develops a major role for the Devil.
- Once power is obtained, Christians strongly represses “Classicalist” view with extensive killings, “burning of books” and other overt acts to eliminate the concepts of the Classical world.

- Extensive fighting internally among Christians continues concerning the rites and rituals of the new religion, leading to great division and regional conflicts over point of the religion.
- 650 AD and on ... Muslim invasions attempt to eliminate the Classical and Ancient world views and mainly support the world view of the Yahwehists.
 - Iconoclasts and Luther and other Protestantism can be seen as the response to the Islamic efforts around a return to Yahwehism.
- 650 – 1492 Reduced Christian world is mostly devoid of importance and knowledge for hundreds of years, attempting to fend off Muslims, Vikings, Mongols and a host of other peoples. The Church often invokes “God’s wrath,” through use of forced conformity and disallowing any thought not represented as good in the Bible.

As we can see from this time line, the Phoenicians were a major and important people, for much longer of a time frame than is n generally recognized. Their religion was mainly constant, dominating the area of their homeland, and was spread over wide areas by the Phoenician traders and colonies.

The “Jews” during most of this time, were a minor people, facing defeat after defeat and for most their existence they offered little to the world. (And there is little place in “history” to support the stories of the Exodus and the Davidic Empire as “fact”) Their religion was a minor player in the events of most of the time.