

1 CH 5:26 AND THE GOD OF ISRAEL STIRRED UP THE SPIRIT OF PUL KING OF ASSYRIA, AND THE SPIRIT OF TILGATHPILNESER KING OF ASSYRIA, AND HE CARRIED THEM AWAY, EVEN THE REUBENITES, AND THE GADITES, AND THE HALF TRIBE OF MANASSEH, AND BROUGHT THEM UNTO HALAH, AND HAVOR, AND HARA, AND TO THE RIVER GOZAN, UNTO THIS DAY. (KJB)

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1 CH 5:26 NKJV SO THE GOD OF ISRAEL STIRRED UP THE SPIRIT OF PUL KING OF ASSYRIA, THAT IS, TIGLATHPILESER KING OF ASSYRIA. HE CARRIED THE REUBENITES, THE GADITES, AND THE HALF-TRIBE OF MANASSEH INTO CAPTIVITY. HE TOOK THEM TO HALAH, HAVOR, HARA, AND THE RIVER OF GOZAN TO THIS DAY.

This was done in the days of Menahem's reign over Israel (772-761 B.C., See II Kg. 15:19-20). It is stated by most writers that in the Assyrian annals, Tiglath-pileser claimed to have received tribute from Menahem. This has led nearly all scholars to identify the Biblical "Pul" as being the same as Tiglath-pileser. The New King James translation alters this Scripture to read: "So the God of Israel stirred up the spirit of Pul king of Assyria, that is,¹ Tiglath-pileser king of Assyria" rather than the more correct word "and" as the King James Bible faithfully records.

However, this assertion is false as the name "Menahem" appears in **brackets** meaning that the annals is unreadable and the word has been supplied by the translator (namely, David Daniel Luckenbill, *Ancient Records of Assyria and Babylonia*, Vol I, sec. 772, Chicago, 1926.).² Thus, this identification is pure conjecture. Moreover, only five lines down in these same Assyrian annals appears the name of Pekah (Pa-qa-ha), the King of Israel who began his reign only two years after Menahem's death. The context indicates – the Biblical chronology demands – that the missing name in the damaged Assyrian records should be **Pekah**, not Menahem. Thus, there is no Assyrian historical text which says or even infers that Tiglath-pileser collected tribute from Menahem of Israel, although almost all sources proclaim that he so did.

Therefore, when the NKJV and nearly all others make Pul and Tiglath-pileser one and the same person, such is NOT a translation – rather it is an *interpretation* based on a faulty archaeological judgment. The word "Pul" is a *title* meaning Lord. It is NOT a name and could therefore refer to ANY Assyrian ruler.

This mis-identification is directly opposed to the actual translation and is absolutely shown to be false by the Biblical chronology of the Hebrew kings. Such an erroneous identification renders Biblical chronology impossible, unless one ignores many other Scriptures, as did Edwin Thiele (the chronologist nearly all modern scholarship and theology blindly follow).

Because Thiele unquestioningly accepted the Assyrian documents as absolutely factual and he erroneously identified Pul as being Tiglath-pileser III, he forced the Biblical text to conform with secular

¹ The NIV is similar; the NAS etc. renders "even". These rendering's are possible, but usually the grammar would call for "and".

² Italics designate a doubtful translation of a known text or for transliterations. Square brackets indicate restorations in the text; parentheses are placed around interpolations made for better understanding of the translation; obvious scribal omissions are placed between triangular brackets. A lacuna (a blank space or missing part i.e., a gap) is indicated by three dots, four if the lacuna comes before a final sentence dot (period). *Ancient Near East Texts (ANET)*, J.B. Pritchard, Princeton Uni. Press, p. vi, 1973.

history. The result of the chronological problem produced by this wrong association was the creation of a **third** Hebrew kingdom which Thiele entitled "Ephraim". Thus, he pretends that there was the kingdom of Judah to the south, with Israel and Ephraim as two distinct northern kingdoms. He portrays Pekah as the King of Ephraim ruling from Gilead, beginning his reign at the same time Menahem ascended to the throne of Israel, yet Isaiah 7:1 calls Pekah the "king of Israel". Second Kings 15:27 confirms this, adding that he reigned in Samaria.

Thiele also has Pekah reigning during the dominion of Menahem's son, Pekahiah, but 2 Kings 15:23-27 clearly states that Pekah was a *captain* in Pekahiah's army, not a King of "Ephraim". It further states that Pekah assassinated Pekahiah, becoming the King of Israel at that time.

This anti-Biblical scheme which Thiele calls "dual dating" also has the net result of Hoshea, King of Israel, being deposed at least 7 years *before* Hezekiah came to the throne of Judah. Such a scenario violates the plain teachings of II Kings 17:1; 18:1, 9-10 which place Hoshea and Hezekiah as having overlapping reigns – thus laying bare for all to see the absolutely destitute and perverted nature of Thiele's system.

Actually, the name of the principal Assyrian god from their older works is Val (or Vul in its Hebrew form). The letter "V" is identical to the letter "P" in their language such that Pul is also the name of their god. He is identical to the Canaanite god Baal, as our letters "v" and "b" are the same letter in Semitic languages. Hence, some man or men took the name or title of their god unto themselves or their position.

Moreover, even a casual glance at I Chr. 5:26 in the NKJV (and many others) reveals the obvious truth that Pul and Tiglath-pileser are *not* the same man but two different Assyrian monarchs. If they were one and the same ruler, why does the title "king of Assyria" follow after **both** – "So the god of Israel stirred up the spirit of Pul, **king of assyria**, that is, **iglath-pileser king of Assyria**." Were they the same, the verse would only have the title "king of Assyria" **once** and read more like: "So the God of Israel stirred up the spirit of Pul, that is, Tiglath-pileser, king of Assyria." The redundancy, although not mentioned heretofore in the literature to our knowledge, is an unmistakable indication that we are dealing with two distinct monarchs – not one!

Finally, the context of this passage and the reference in the Assyrian Eponym List require that the Biblical "Pul", though not mentioned in any extant Assyrian document by that appellation, is a king *prior* to Tiglath-pileser. If the Assyrian records are accurate in this time period, Pul is Ashur-dan III. As Assyrian names usually consisted of compounds of two, three or more elements, his complete name may well have originally been Ashur-danin-pal.

Pul is the Hebrew form of the Akkadian name Pal. It is known that this name was given to the eldest son of Shalmaneser III.³ Shalmaneser III's son, Shamasi-adad V, was also known as Shamas-Pul (Vul = Pul as V and P are interchangeable). Moreover, Shamas-Pul was Ashur-dan III's "grandfather" and Ashur-dan III's "father", Adad-nirari III, was known as "Pullush". Thus the word "Pul" is firmly attached to his immediate lineage and is seen to fit with the Biblical narrative.

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³ E.W. Faulstich, *History, Harmony & The Hebrew Kings*, (Spencer, Iowa, 1986), pp. 130-134.