

“AS FAR AS DAN”

Bryan Matthew Dockens

During our morning reading on Thursday, Cainan inquired as to why Dan is mentioned as a place name during Abram’s life (Genesis 14:14), despite the fact that Dan is a place so called for the tribe of the same name (Joshua 19:47) whose forefather was Abraham’s grandson (Genesis 30:4-6). He wanted clarification about this apparent anachronism.

I am quite pleased that my ten-year-old son would offer such an observation. We were reading three chapters with many names of persons and places included, most of which are difficult for even adult readers. To notice that single word meant he was really paying attention. It also means he retained the knowledge of Israel’s twelve tribes and kept in mind their chronological order. I am impressed.

My boy’s interest was a matter of sincere curiosity, but the same question may well arise from skeptics intending to cast doubt on the veracity of Scripture. Scoffers revel in these apparent contradictions, but their scholarship is superficial, failing to consider very simple and reasonable explanations. The question deserves some consideration.

The conquest, when Leshem was redesignated by the Danites (Joshua 19:47), got underway after 40 years of wilderness wanderings (5:6). Sojourning through the desert followed 430 years of Israel dwelling in Egypt (Exodus 12:41). Israel went to Egypt when Jacob was 130 years old (Genesis 47:9). Jacob was born when his father Isaac was 60 (25:26). Abraham was 100 when his son Isaac was born (21:5), and he was between 75 (12:4) and 85 (16:3) when he visited Dan (14:14). $40+430+130+60+15=675$. How, then, could Abram have visited Dan 675-685 years before the place was ever called by that name?

The city existed under a different name until the Danites took it. People like Abram visited there well before it gained its later name. It is very often the case that a current name will be applied to a place when past events are referred to. After all, “Istanbul was Constantinople” and “even old New York was once New Amsterdam.”

Genesis is not a contemporary account of events personally observed by the narrator, but a history told in retrospect. The phrase “to this day” occurs eight times within its pages, once (Genesis 48:15) in a quotation and seven times (19:37, 38; 22:14; 26:33; 32:32; 35:20;

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“WHOSO EATETH MY FLESH”

Patrick Donahue

One completely misses the point of John 6:54 (“Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day”) if he thinks that verse is talking about the Lord’s Supper. One does **not** have to partake of the Lord’s Supper to have eternal life. He possesses eternal life immediately upon his obedience to the gospel, completed in baptism (John 3:36). John 6:54 is saying one must **appropriate the sacrifice of Christ to himself** to have eternal life, exactly what John 4:14 (“But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life”) is saying. Surely, John 4:14 is not talking about the Lord’s Supper also? Now, just how does one appropriate Jesus’ sacrifice in order to receive eternal life? John 6:40 makes that clear – by believing in the Son. Compare verse 40 to 54 and you will see exactly what Jesus meant by eating His flesh and drinking His blood. It has nothing to do with the Lord’s Supper. We don’t need false arguments for the truth.

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47:26) indicating that the information documented took place long before the record was written.

It would be altogether unreasonable to expect such an expansive history as is chronicled in Genesis to treat its subject matter as a current event. Over 23 centuries are covered in this one book! Chapter five, alone, contains 1,556 years of genealogy. The family tree continues for 410 years in chapter eleven. That’s 1,966 years just to get to Abram. Add up his age when Isaac was born, 100 (21:5), and Isaac’s age when Jacob came along, 60 (25:26), plus Jacob’s age when he stood before Pharaoh, 130 (47:9); $1,966+100+60+130=2,286$ years. Joseph was 30 when he warned Pharaoh of the famine (41:46), 7 years of plenty transpired (41:30), and they were 2 years into the famine when he reunited with his brothers and father (45:6). Thus, Joseph was 39 when Jacob was 130, and he died at the age of 110 (50:26). $110-39=71$ and $2,286+71=2,357$. The book of Genesis closes with the death of Joseph 2,357 years after it began at Creation!

A history that spans well over two millennia, recorded long after the events documented, unsurprisingly refers to a place by the name known to contemporary readers rather than by its previous designation. That is appropriate.

**"WHAT MUST I DO
TO BE SAVED?"**

ACTS 16:30

LEARN THE GOSPEL

John 6:45; Romans 10:17

BELIEVE IN CHRIST

Hebrews 11:6; John 3:16

CONFESS CHRIST

Matthew 10:32-33; Romans 10:9-10

REPENT OF SIN

Acts 3:19; 17:30

BE BAPTIZED INTO CHRIST

Mark 16:16; Romans 6:3-6

REMAIN STEADFAST

1st Corinthians 15:58; Revelation 2:10

**"THE ASSEMBLING OF
OURSELVES TOGETHER"**

HEBREWS 10:24-25

SUNDAY

Worship @ 10:00 a.m.

Studies @ 11:45 a.m.

WEDNESDAY

Studies & Worship @ 7:00 p.m.

THURSDAY

Men's/Women's Studies
@ 6:00 p.m.

75 Sherrod Boulevard
Belen, New Mexico

**"IF A MAN IS OVERTAKEN IN
ANY TRESPASS..."**

RESTORE SUCH A ONE"

GALATIANS 6:1

CONFESS TRESPASSES

James 5:16; 1st John 1:9

REPENT OF SIN

Acts 8:22

PRAY FOR FORGIVENESS

Acts 8:22

REMAIN STEADFAST

1st Corinthians 15:58; Revelation 2:10

**"A WORD FITLY SPOKEN IS
LIKE APPLES OF GOLD IN
SETTINGS OF SILVER"**

PROVERBS 25:11

"You cannot repent too soon
because you do not know how
soon it may be too late."

– Thomas Fuller

"WHOLE COUNSEL"

ACTS 20:27

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"WHOLE COUNSEL"

Bryan Matthew Dockens

Welcome to the first edition of *"Whole Counsel,"* a weekly publication of the Rio Grande Valley church of Christ, edited by me, the evangelist Bryan Dockens. It is my goal to get this paper printed and distributed every Sunday, but, schedule depending, it may occasionally be released on Wednesday. It is my goal to include my own writing in at least two issues per month, but, occasionally, I will exceed that, and, less often, I won't quite reach my goal. Regardless, I am committed to setting forth wholesome material that is worthy of your reading, whether I penned it myself or obtained it from another preacher or teacher.

The title of this publication is derived from the apostle Paul's remarks to the Ephesian elders, reminding them of his ministry in that church over the course of some years: *"I have not shunned to declare to you the whole counsel of God"* (Acts 20:27). As was Paul's purpose, so is mine. He *"kept back nothing that was helpful, but proclaimed it"* (20), and so I intend to present both positives and negatives, exhortations and admonitions, encouragements and criticisms (cf. Jeremiah 1:10; 2nd Timothy 4:2).

Because this is meant to be *"the whole counsel of God,"* space herein will not be allotted to social announcements or other distractions, but will be strictly limited to spiritual instruction, explaining Scripture and making application of the same.

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