



Endnotes:

The Ultimate Sign: Isaiah 7

1. Two possibilities have been suggested as to this meeting location. The first is north of Damascus Gate at what was known as the Serpents Pools. These pools are now covered over by the Damascus Gate parking lot (Barkay 1985: 63-65, 3*). The second possibility is by the Pools of Bethesda (Bahat 1989: 28, 33). In the year 701 BC this would be the meeting place of three of Hezekiah's court officials with the Rabshakeh, the commander of the Assyrian army, who was besieging Jerusalem (Isa. 36:2; II Kings 18:17).

2. The first suggestion was made by William Foxwell Albright based on a cuneiform tablet that was excavated at Nimrud in 1952 by Professor Max Mallowan, the husband of Agatha Christie. Albright gave his translation of line 4-7 of Tablet XIV as: "The messenger of Ayanir, the Tab'elite, Ezazu by name, is bringing a sealed document with him to the palace" (1955:34). He suggested that the land of Tab'el is in northeastern Palestine or southeastern Syria and that the son of Tab'el "was presumably the son of Uzziah or Jothan by a princess of Tab'el" (1955:35). Albright's reading of Tab'elite is contrary to the original reading of the epigrapher who translated the text, H. W. F. Saggs. He translates it as "Dabilite" and identified it as "a place in or near Moab" (1955:132). One should be cautious about accepting Albright's identification and interpretation.

The second suggestion was made based on a vassal list on a stele of Tiglath-Pileser III that was found in western Iran and is now in the Royal Ontario Museum (Levine 1972a). In the year 737 BC, Tiglath-Pileser III campaigned in the west and made various kings vassals, including Resin of Damascus, Menahem of Samaria and a certain Tubail of Tyre (1972b:41). It has been suggested that the "son of Tabeel" was a prince of the king of Tyre whose father was named Tabal, or Tabail. According to this suggestion, Pekah and Rezin promised the king of Tyre the throne of Judah if he would join the coalition (Hayes and Irvine 1987: 127).

The final suggestion was set forth by Professor Benjamin Mazar (1957: 137-145; 229-238). He contends that: "It is likely that this Ben-Tab'el was the descendant of a noble Judean family, perhaps even a relation of the house of David, who had many supporters among Ahaz' enemies in Jerusalem and was closely connected with the kings of Israel and Aram" (1957: 236). He places their land holdings in Transjordan in general and Gilead in specific (1957: 237-238). Most likely Professor Mazar is correct.

It was the practice in Israel (the Northern Kingdom) to exterminate entire dynasties. This is seen by the elimination of the House of Jeroboam I (I Kings 14:7-11; 15:27-29), the House of Baasha (I Kings 16:1-4, 11, 12), the Omride Dynasty (II Kings 10:8-11) and the House of Jeroboam II (Amos 7:9; Hosea 1:3; II Kings 15:16). One would assume that they would be planning to exterminate the entire House of David.