

Amnon (Son of Shimon)

Amnon (MT *Ammôn*) was one of the members of the tribe of Judah listed in the genealogy in 1 Chr 4:20. Nothing more is known about this person.

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Amok

According to the book of Nehemiah, Amok was a priest who returned from exile in the days of the high priest Joshua and Zerubbabel. The Hebrew name *ʿĀmôq* may derive from the adjective *ʿāmôq*, “deep,” “unsearchable,” or alternatively from a word denoting strength. The root *ʿmq*, “to be deep,” is widely attested in Hebrew, whereas strength is a conjecture based on some Ugaritic texts as well as Akkadian, where the word *emûqu* refers to physical and military strength and to power and capability. Since the name Amok is not used outside of Neh 12 in the Hebrew Bible, it is probable that it was not a very common name. However, there is no reason to assume that Amok was a nickname, as suggested by Blenkinsopp (340).

Amok is mentioned twice in Neh 12. This chapter contains two lists of leading priests (*rāʾšê hakkōhānīm*): Neh 12:1–7 lists priests who were in office under Joshua, whereas Neh 12:12–21 lists those under Joiakim, the high priest after Joshua. Amok is presented as one of the leading priests during the time of Joshua (Neh 12:7), while Neh 12:20 refers to Amok, the father of Eber, one of the leading priests during the time of Joiakim. It is evident that both Neh 12:7 and 12:20 refer to the same Amok.

There are considerable historical uncertainties concerning both lists. It is generally accepted that Neh 12:1–26 contains mainly priestly and Levitical material that belongs to the latest phases in the editorial development of Ezra-Nehemiah. This material probably derives from the 3rd century BCE (Pakkala: 266–74). Some of the material may be even later (Mowinckel: 50, 59–61). Earlier scholarship already assumed that Neh 12 is a late chapter (Batten: 275).

It is also evident that the chapter was written by several authors and editors. For example, it is generally recognized that one of the lists of priests was created later, after the other. Most scholars assume that Neh 12:12–21 is older than the list in Neh 12:1–7 (thus, e.g., Williamson: 355–66 and Gunneweg: 152). According to this view, the patronyms of vv. 12–21 were used to create a list that refers to an earlier time.

It is also probable that the list of signatories in Neh 10:1–9 functioned as a source for the lists of Neh 12. Most of the signatories appear in the lists of Neh 12 with the notable exception of the last six priests, which also include Amok. This implies that the last six were added to Neh 12 after Neh 10 had

been used as a source (thus many scholars, e.g., Blenkinsopp: 339–40). This assumption is supported by the fact that Joiarib, beginning the list of last six priests in both Neh 12:6 and 19, is preceded by the conjunction *wə*, although the lists otherwise do not use the conjunction between its members. In addition, most Septuagint manuscripts of Neh 12:1–7, probably representing an older version of the list than the Masoretic one, contain only a short list of priests, omitting, in addition to the last six, many others. It is therefore probable that the lists were edited several times. Amok is part of one of the latest additions. It is therefore unlikely that Amok is a historical person from the time of Joshua.

A probable reason for the successive additions was the necessity to update the list of priestly ancestors to correspond with contemporary priestly families and hierarchy. The lists continued to be updated for a considerable period. Since the source list in Neh 10 can already be dated to the 3rd century BCE (see Pakkala: 210–11, 247), it is likely that the lists and their additions in Neh 12 mainly reflect developments in the priestly families' hierarchies in the 3rd and 2nd centuries BCE. Amok, being in one of very latest additions, may thus be an ancestor or patriarch of a priestly family that had become significant in the 2nd century BCE. It is not by accident that Joiarib is the first priestly ancestor that begins the addition (in v.6 and 19; see above). According to 1 Macc 2:1 and 14:29, Joiarib (or Joarib) was the priestly ancestor of the Maccabees. This may indicate that the addition derives from Hasmonean times (Gunneweg: 152–53).

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Juha Pakkala

Amon (Deity)

→ Amun

Amon (Person)

The name *ʾAmôn* is a personal name, which in the Hebrew Bible applies to three persons. But two of them may originally have had different names. The only certain bearer of the name is a king of Judah. The name could be the short form of a theophoric name ([the deity] is faithful) or could be of Egyptian origin (the local deity of Thebes; Rudman).

1. King of Judah

According to 2 Kgs 21:18–25 (2 Chr 20:20–25), Amon succeeded his father Manasseh at the age of 22. His reign was very short (two years, ca. 642–40 BCE), since he was murdered by some of his court officials. But the ‘*am ha-arets*, probably some of the free landowners, opposed the rebellion and put Amon’s son Josiah on the throne. The reasons for Amon’s assassination are not clear, since the biblical report on this king is quite laconic. It could be that his murderers opposed his pro-Assyrian policy (Malamat), or that they belonged to a pro-Egyptian party (Cazelles); it could also be that he was murdered for internal reasons by one of his brothers (Cogan/Tadmor). The biblical writers are not very interested in the historical circumstances of Amon’s death and reign. The only information available concerns his cultic activities: he seems to have continued to worship Assyrian deities in the temple of Jerusalem. The Deuteronomists and the authors of Chronicles refer to his reign in order to highlight different theological options. According to the Deuteronomistic account in the book of Kings, Amon is described as evil as his father Manasseh. The statement that “he abandoned YHWH, the god of his fathers” has a parallel in Judg 2:21 (there are no other texts between Judg 2 and 2 Kgs 21 in which YHWH is designated in that way). The whole period from the time of Judges until the time of Josiah appears as a time of permanent disobedience to YHWH (see also 2 Kgs 32:22). The writer of the passage in Chronicles contrasts Amon to his father Manasseh (2 Chr 33:23), because Manasseh according to Chronicles did convert to YHWH after he was struck with sickness. Amon is therefore even worse than his father Manasseh, and belongs among the worst kings of Judah, the ones held responsible for the destruction of Jerusalem and the exile.

2. Governor of Samaria

According to the Masoretic text of 1 Kgs 22:26 (2 Chr 18:25), Amon is the name of a governor of Samaria during the reign of Ahab. According to Septuagint, the original name was probably ‘*Amer*’ (Stade).

3. Ancestor of Returnees from Exile

The name Amon also occurs in Neh 7:59, a text which mentions the “children of Amon” who returned to Judah in the first years of the Persian period. In the parallel list of Ezr 2:57 the same group is called “children of Ami,” which may indicate that this could be the original name in Neh 7.

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29. ■ D. Rudman, “A Note on the Personal Name Amon (2 Kings 21,19–26 // 2 Chr 33,21–25),” *Bib.* 81 (2000) 403–5. ■ B. Stade, “Der Name der Stadt Samarien und seine Herkunft,” *ZAW* 5 (1885) 173–75.

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Amora, Amoraim

Amora, Amoraim (from Heb./Aram. *amar*, lit. “speaker”) is the designation of the rabbinic teachers of the period after the Mishnah who interpret the traditions of the Mishnah and its period. They were active between 200 and 500 CE; traditionally one counts five generations of Palestinian Amoraim (up to the redaction of the Yerushalmi in the early 5th century CE) and seven generations of Babylonian Amoraim up to 500 CE when according to Sherira Gaon this group of talmudic teachers ended. This count gives an approximate chronology since precise dates of their lives are mostly unknown; only of a few do we have traditional years of their death. It also indicates the master-disciple relationships between the generations. Their name implies their derivative authority which depends on earlier texts and traditions of the Tannaim, the nearly undisputed founding masters. The Amoraim saw themselves first of all as commentators, but in the form of commentary they creatively developed and adapted traditions to new circumstances and filled them with life. They endeavored to provide the biblical basis for the Mishnaic laws and other traditions, thus shaping the unity of the dual Torah. They were the main authors of the Yerushalmi and also of the first strata of the Bavli, but also of the classical biblical commentaries, the Midrashim.

In some texts Amora has a more restricted meaning and designates the speaker of a great rabbi. Such a speaker repeats to the audience aloud what the master teaches or preaches in a low voice.

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Günter Stemmer

Amorites

1. In the Bible
2. Archaeology
3. Language and Texts
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1. In the Bible

The Amorites (MT *ʾĒmōrî*) are one of the several peoples in the biblical tradition that populated the land of Canaan before Israel’s entry into the land