

## Peter's Great Confession

Week 38 ~ Who Am I? - Pan and Caesarea Philippi

### Pan

In ancient Greek religion and mythology, **Pan** (/pæn/; Ancient Greek: Πάν, romanized: *Pán*) is the god of the wild, shepherds and flocks, nature of mountain wilds, rustic music and impromptus, and companion of the nymphs. He has the hindquarters, legs, and horns of a goat, in the same manner as a faun and a satyr. With his homeland in rustic Arcadia, he is also recognized as the god of fields, groves, wooded glens and often affiliated with sex; because of this, Pan is connected to fertility and the season of spring. The word *panic* ultimately derives from the god's name.

In Roman religion and myth, Pan's counterpart was Faunus, a nature god who was the father of Bona Dea, sometimes identified as Fauna; he was also closely associated with Sylvanus, due to their similar relationships with woodlands. In the 18th and 19th centuries, Pan became a significant figure in the Romantic movement of western Europe and also in the 20th-century Neopagan movement. Being a rustic god, Pan was not worshipped in temples or other built edifices, but in natural settings, usually caves or grottoes such as the one on the north slope of the Acropolis of Athens. These are often referred to as the Cave of Pan. The only exceptions are the Temple of Pan on the Neda River gorge in the south western Peloponnese – the ruins of which survive to this day – and the Temple of Pan at Apollonopolis Magna in ancient Egypt. In the 4th century BC Pan was depicted on the coinage of Pantikapaion. Pan is famous for his sexual prowess, and is often depicted with a phallus. Diogenes of Sinope, speaking in jest, related a myth of Pan learning masturbation from his father, Hermes, and teaching the habit to shepherds.

There was a legend that Pan seduced the moon goddess Selene, deceiving her with a sheep's fleece. Women who had had sexual relations with several men were referred to as "Pan girls."

Pan's goatish image recalls conventional faun-like depictions of Satan. The similarities between conventional representations of Pan and the Devil were observed by the occultists Aleister Crowley and Anton Szandor LaVey, the latter of whom said in *The Satanic Bible*: Many pleasures revered before the advent of Christianity were condemned by the new religion. It required little change-over to transform the horns and cloven hooves of Pan into a most convincing devil! Pan's attributes could neatly be changed into charged-with-punishment sins, and so the metamorphosis was complete.

### Caesarea Philippi

Literally "Philip's Caesarea" was an ancient Roman city located at the southwestern base of Mount Hermon. It was adjacent to a spring, grotto, and related shrines dedicated to the Greek god Pan. Now nearly uninhabited, Caesarea is an archaeological site in the Golan Heights. Caesarea was called Paneas, later Caesarea Paneas, from the Hellenistic period after its association with the god Pan, a name that mutated to *Banias* the name by which the site is known today. (This article deals with the history of Banias between the Hellenistic and early Islamic periods) For a short period, the city was also known as Neronias; the surrounding region was known as the Panion.

Caesarea Philippi is mentioned by name in the Gospels of Matthew and Mark. The city may appear in the Old Testament under the name Baal Gad (literally "Master Luck", the name of a god of fortune who may later have been identified with Pan); Baal Gad is described as being "in the Valley of Lebanon below Mount Hermon."

### Hellenistic Paneas – The Temple of Pan

Alexander the Great's conquests started a process of Hellenisation in Egypt and Syria that continued for 1,000 years. Paneas was first settled in the Hellenistic period. The Ptolemaic kings, in the 3rd century BC, built a cult centre.

Panias is a spring, today known as Banias, named for Pan, the Greek god of desolate places. It lies close to the "way of the sea" mentioned by Isaiah, along which many armies of Antiquity marched. In the distant past a giant spring gushed from a cave in the limestone bedrock, tumbling down the valley to flow into the Hula marshes. Currently it is the source of the stream Nahal Snir. The Jordan River previously rose from the malaria-infested Hula marshes, but it now rises from this spring and two others at the base of Mount Hermon. The flow of the spring has decreased greatly in modern times. The water no longer gushes from the cave, but only seeps from the bedrock below it.

Panias was an ancient place of great sanctity and, when Hellenised religious influences were overlaid on the region, the cult of its local numen gave place to the worship of Pan, to whom the cave was dedicated and from which the copious spring rose, feeding the Hula marshes and ultimately supplying the Jordan River. The pre-Hellenic deities that have been associated with the site are Ba'al-gad or Ba'al-hermon.

The Battle of Panium is mentioned in extant sections of Greek historian Polybius's history of "The Rise of the Roman Empire". The battle of Panium occurred in 198 BC between the Macedonian armies of Ptolemaic Egypt and the Seleucid Greeks of Coele-Syria, led by Antiochus III. Antiochus's victory cemented Seleucid control over Phoenicia, Galilee, Samaria, and Judea until the Maccabean Revolt. The Hellenised Seleucids built a pagan temple dedicated to Pan, creator of panic in the enemy, at Panias.

### **Roman period**

During the Roman period, the city was first part of local client kingdoms including the Herodian, then after the death of Philip the Tetrarch it was administered directly by Rome as part of Phoenicia Prima and Syria Palaestina, and finally, after AD 218, the Gaulanitis (Golan), whose capital it was, was included together with Peraea in Palaestina Secunda. The ancient kingdom of Bashan was incorporated into the province of Batanea.

### **Herod and Philip (20 BC – AD 34)**

On the death of Zenodorus in 20 BC, the Panion, which included Panias, was annexed to the Kingdom of Herod the Great.<sup>[15]</sup> He erected here a temple of "white marble" in honour of his patron. In the year 3 BC, Philip II (also known as Philip the Tetrarch) founded a city at Panias. It became the administrative capital of Philip's large tetrarchy of Batanaea which encompassed the Golan and the Hauran. Flavius Josephus refers to the city as Caesarea Panias in Antiquities of the Jews; the New Testament as Caesarea Philippi (to distinguish it from Caesarea Maritima on the Mediterranean coast). In 14 AD, Philip II named it Caesarea in honour of Roman Emperor Augustus, and "made improvements" to the city. His image was placed on a coin issued in 29/30 AD (to commemorate the founding of the city), this was considered idolatrous by Jews but was following in the Idumean tradition of Zenodorus.<sup>[18]</sup> According to Josephus (War 3: 512-13), Philip tried to determine the source of the Jordan by throwing chaff in the nearby volcanic Lake Ram, which then appeared in Banyas.

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Information from [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pan\\_\(god\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pan_(god))  
and  
[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Caesarea\\_Philippi](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Caesarea_Philippi)

See the websites for further information