

DIG



KHIRBET QEYAF A 2011 SEASON

For the third consecutive year, Southern Adventist University's Institute of Archaeology, in partnership with The Hebrew University of Jerusalem, excavated the site of Khirbet Qeiyafa, a biblical city from the time of King David. The city, identified as biblical Sha'arayim (Josh 15, 36; 1 Sam 17:52; 1 Chr 4:31), overlooks the Elah Valley, a principal thoroughfare in biblical times that lead to Jerusalem. The setting for the battle between David and Goliath was precisely this valley, and Khirbet Qeiyafa rests atop one of the hills overlooking the road. This is likely the reason the city was built as a garrison town or fortress during the reign of Saul or David.

Since 2007, The Hebrew University of Jerusalem's team, led by Prof. Yosef Garfinkel, has been uncovering the massive fortifications of this city, including two contemporaneous gates that have been linked to its biblical identification (Sha'arayim means "two gates" in Hebrew). In 2009 Southern Adventist University joined the project and began working in the area south of the western gate (Area D). In addition to the excavation team, the Institute of Archaeology brings a group of survey and information technology specialists to coordinate the survey work and help maintain the electronic database. Using a state-of-the-art electronic theodolite and a GPS system, the team is able to record

measurements with clinical precision and produce accurate, digital architectural top plans daily.

Last summer, the Southern team, under the direction of Dr. Michael G. Hasel, uncovered the remains of a large Late Persian/Early Hellenistic period (late fourth-century B.C.) building measuring approximately 6,000 square feet. This summer 50 Southern students and staff completed the excavation of the Hellenistic building and uncovered a major olive press installation adjacent to the building in the south. The press was built on bedrock and was plastered on the floors and walls. This is not only the first olive press excavated at Qeiyafa, it is one of the earliest examples of this type of industry in the Hellenistic

period in Israel.

Further to the south, an Iron Age (early tenth-century B.C.) stone quarry was found. The bedrock was cut into very large rectangular blocks that were then chiseled into smaller boulders to be used in the fortification of the city. Excavators also discovered a Hellenistic or Roman period pickaxe (*dolabra*) in this area, indicating that the quarry continued to be used in later periods. Nearby, the remains of three Iron Age rooms emerged, and several partially restorable vessels were found on the surface above bedrock. A standing stone (*massebah*) stood in the center of one of these rooms, indicating that this might have been a cultic area in the Iron Age.

Hellenistic activity outside the olive



Director Michael Hasel inside Khirbet Qeiyafa's olive press installation uncovered this summer.

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press installation was limited to a large pit filled with Hellenistic material. As many as 24 buckets full of pottery shards were pulled out of the pit in one day! This pit was likely the olive press installation's refuse pile, where broken jars and other vessels were dumped. The Iron Age remains were no less rich. Just north of the Hellenistic pit, the Southern team discovered the best-preserved example of an Iron Age floor at Khirbet Qeiyafa. The remains of five storage jars, two bowls, one Ashdod Ware juglet, and one very large, eight-handled krater were found on this plaster and pebblestone surface. Other Iron Age layers east of the pit yielded similar finds.

Altogether, more than 25,000 pieces of pottery and nine semi-restorable vessels were dug up this season in Area D. Other significant finds include several iron blades, a flint blade, a faience scarab seal, a bone seal with lion and man, an iron ring, part of a rare libation vessel, part of an Aramaic ostrakon (pottery shard with writing), and dozens of silver and bronze coins. Dr. Martin Klingbeil, associate director of the Institute of Archaeology, is an expert on ancient seals and was particularly excited about the prospect of examining these objects: "Finding a seal in an excavation is always a highlight, since it represents a comparatively scarce object which can contribute important data towards the socio-political and religious understanding of the site."

None were as excited, however, as the students who found the artifacts. "I've always wanted to go on a dig, but I never imagined I would personally find two of the most important finds of the season," said Justin Alexander, a pastoral care major who found the scarab seal and the Aramaic ostrakon. "I didn't care for the early schedule at first," explained theology graduate Jennifer Fos, "but once we started finding things, I was hooked!" Jennifer was in charge of recording the pottery and objects in the field.

Weekend tours also provided students with an opportunity to see other biblical sites, an experience that was as educational as it was spiritually enriching. "Having communion at the Garden Tomb was probably my favorite part," recalled Stella Tsui, a pre-physical therapy major. "[Communion] never really clicked for me before, but seeing the place where Jesus died and was buried . . . that really put things into context. It was a spiritually uplifting experience that I will never forget."

With three seasons of excavation completed, the Institute of Archaeology's next goal is to finish the analysis and processing of the finds in order to publish the results in the next two years. "With the conclusion of our excavations at Qeiyafa, we now come to the more difficult task of publishing the final results of these three seasons of excavations," stated Michael G. Hasel, director of the Institute of Archaeology. The report will be published in two volumes. The first will focus on the architectural descriptions and plans of the site. The second volume will contain the report on pottery, stone artifacts, and other finds. ✍️



Left (top-to-bottom): Students Arielle Andrews, Justin Alexander, and Joliann Penn holding a (partial) chalice, a scarab seal, and a finger-impressed jar handle, respectively. *Right:* Part of a rare libation (cultic) vessel found in Area D this summer.

A CHALLENGE TO BIBLICAL MINIMALISM

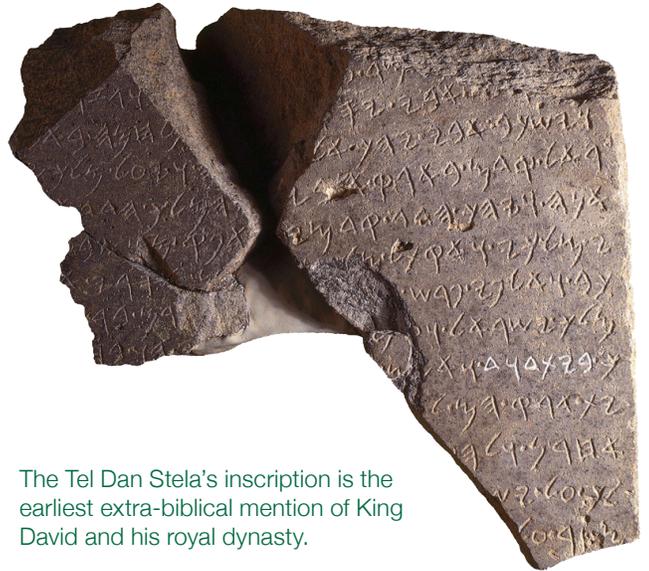
In the light of the discoveries made at Khirbet Qeiyafa, a city from the time of King David, biblical minimalism has undergone a paradigm shift. This intellectual movement gained prominence in the 1980s for challenging the historicity of the biblical account. In particular, minimalist scholars focused on the narratives concerning David and Solomon, the period known as the United Monarchy. In their estimation, these stories were written hundreds of years after the fact and contain very little historical truth. But their arguments against the reliability of the Bible have been undermined by archaeological discoveries, most recently those made at Khirbet Qeiyafa.

In a recent *Biblical Archaeology Review* article, Yosef Garfinkel, co-director of the Khirbet Qeiyafa Archeological Project, examines the evolution of the minimalist position and their response to the evidence uncovered at Qeiyafa. As early as 1993, the minimalist, argument was challenged by the discovery of an Aramaic stela at the site of Tel Dan in northern Israel. For the minimalists King David was a mythical figure, much like King Arthur, so it came as a surprise to them when it was discovered that the stela mentions the “House of David,” a direct reference to King David’s

dynasty in Judah. In addition, a reexamination of the famous Mesha stela (also known as the Moabite stone) identified another reference to the House of David.

With two contemporaneous archaeological artifacts attesting to the historicity of King David, the minimalists were forced to abandon their mythological paradigm. But now the argument shifted from denying the existence of David and Solomon to denying the archaeological evidence for their kingdom. The method was deceptively simple: lower the archaeological material associated with the United Monarchy by about a hundred years, from the tenth century to the ninth century B.C.

In the archaeology of ancient Israel, there are two periods in question. The first is the Iron Age I, which is characterized by small rural communities organized by tribes—biblically, the period of the Judges. The following period, Iron Age II, was characterized by urban centers organized by a centralized state—biblically, the period of the United Monarchy. On these points all scholars agree. Most also agree that David



The Tel Dan Stela's inscription is the earliest extra-biblical mention of King David and his royal dynasty.

and Solomon would have ruled from c. 1000 to 925 B.C. (following traditional biblical chronology). The question is whether those 75 years fall within the Iron Age I period (rural tribal society) or the Iron II (urban centralized state).

While the traditional chronology places the transition from Iron I to Iron II around 1000 B.C., the revised minimalist chronology lowers the date of transition to c. 925 B.C. in order to place David and Solomon’s kingdom in the Iron I period. “All the magnificent archaeological materials, including monumental architecture, that had been previously dated to the time of David and Solomon were now dated later.



Aerial photo of the Western Gate at Khirbet Qeiyafa. The city’s massive fortification system presents clear evidence of a centralized governing authority in Judah in the early tenth century B.C., the time when King David ruled.

And the poor materials that were previously assigned to the pre-state period . . . now became evidence of life in the time of David and Solomon,” explains Garfinkel.

The chief proponent of this Low Chronology is Tel Aviv University professor Israel Finkelstein. Finkelstein and other Low Chronology proponents rely heavily on radiocarbon dating of organic remains (e.g., wood and olive pits) to support their conclusions. But the accuracy of the results is dependent on the type and quality of the samples, as well as the certainty of the archaeological stratum from which the specimens were taken. Moreover, radiocarbon dates must be calibrated, which means there are no absolute dates, only averages of averages. All these uncertainties have resulted in both sides of the debate using samples from a variety of sites to support competing chronologies.

Nevertheless, some radiocarbon dates from sites in northern Israel do seem to indicate that the transition to Iron II took place in the latter part of the tenth century. But Garfinkel cautions that what holds true in the North (Kingdom of Israel) isn't necessarily the case in the South (Kingdom of Judah). In fact, the evidence from Khirbet Qeiyafa, a Judean site, strongly argues for an earlier transition into the Iron II period. The massive fortifications are a strong indication that an organized government was in charge of the city's construction. Radiocarbon analysis of olive pit samples also points to an early-tenth century B.C. date for the city's occupation. "The fortified city of Qeiyafa indicates that



The Qeiyafa Ostrakon is possibly the earliest example of Hebrew writing. This proof of literacy so early in Israel's history contradicts the assumption that historical recordkeeping was a product of later centuries.



Professors (left-to-right) Yosef Garfinkel, Israel Finkelstein, and Michael Hasel at Khirbet Qeiyafa. Finkelstein and a group from Tel Aviv University visited the site this summer.

Iron Age IIA began in Judah at the very end of the 11th century B.C.E.," concludes Garfinkel.

That the Iron I to Iron II transition from a rural tribal society to an urban centralized state might have occurred at different times

(i.e., Judahite) settlement. Even before the first excavation report was published in 2009, minimalist scholars were already arguing for a Philistine occupation of the site. Garfinkel summarizes the evidence against a Philistine identification: (1) No pig or dog bones were found at Qeiyafa; (2) the city's main entrance faced Jerusalem rather than Philistia; (3) Qeiyafa has a casemate (double) wall, a construction unknown in Philistia but common in Judah; (4) of the Philistine settlements, only the main five Philistine cities (Pentapolis) were fortified; and (5) the Qeiyafa Ostrakon was most likely written in Hebrew.

“WHILE THE DISCOVERIES FROM KHIRBET QEYAFYA WILL PROBABLY NOT SATISFY THE MINIMALIST CAMP, THE UNBIASED OBSERVER MUST CONCLUDE THAT A CHANGE IN INTERPRETATION IS IN ORDER.”

in the North than in the South is not a problem for the historical account of the Bible. In fact, the narrative partly supports this phenomenon. David and Solomon ruled from Judah, with Jerusalem as their capital. Not until late in Solomon's reign are we told that he rebuilt the walls of some northern cities (1 Kings 9:15). It makes sense that urbanization and building projects lagged behind in the North. The fact that the northern tribes were ready to secede at the end of his reign (1 Kings 12) hints not only to political but also societal and economic differences between Israel and Judah.

Given that David was a real historical figure and that Khirbet Qeiyafa is a fortified city in Judah dating to the early tenth century, what has the minimalist response been? Their answer has been to deny that Khirbet Qeiyafa was an Israelite

While the discoveries from Khirbet Qeiyafa will probably not satisfy the minimalist camp, the unbiased observer must conclude that a change in interpretation is in order. The competing dates for the Iron I to Iron II transition indicate that urbanization and state formation progressed at different rates in Israel than in Judah. The radiometric and archaeological evidence need not be in opposition to the historical data in the Bible. The biblical tradition, therefore, actually helps us understand the archaeological finds, and archaeology, in turn, illustrates the biblical narrative. 🏹

EVIDENT SILENCE OR SILENCED EVIDENCE?

The widely used adage that “absence of evidence is not evidence of absence,” attributed to the U.S. astronomer Carl Sagan (1934-1996), has certainly had a long track record in the history of archaeological research. While the *argumentum ex silentio* (argument from silence) has been classified as a heuristic fallacy, it has nevertheless permeated argumentation in higher criticism which has often cited the lack of archaeological evidence as argument for non-existence, basing far-reaching conclusions on it.

A good case in point is the historicity of the Old Testament book of Daniel, especially Chapter 5, which provides some historical details for which there has been for some time no extra-biblical evidence, leading to the conclusion that the author of the book of Daniel was unfamiliar with sixth-century Neo-Babylonian history. This, in turn, would support the so-called Maccabean Thesis, which reduces the prophetic book to a historical sketch of the life of a politically rather insignificant Syrian king by the name of Antiochus IV Epiphanes. He decided to profane the temple in Jerusalem, thereby causing the Jewish Maccabean revolt. It was written,

supposedly, by an unknown author in the second century B.C. as *vaticinia ex eventu*, i.e., as prophecy after the event, giving it a pseudo-prophetic literary appearance. The *Anchor Bible Dictionary*, a fairly up-to-date reference work, suggests: “Daniel refers to no events later than the time of Epiphanes, and evidently expected the end of history shortly thereafter. Such preoccupation with the Maccabean period is most easily explained if the author lived at that time. The references to the Babylonian period, in contrast, are notoriously confused” (J. J. Collins, “Daniel, Book of,” *ABD* 2:30).

According to a critical view of the historicity of Daniel 5, the mention of Belshazzar as the last king of Babylon (Daniel 5:1, 30) does not coincide with the Babylonian Chronicle, an ancient historiography in the form of clay tablets inscribed in cuneiform, excavated in Babylon and mainly housed in the British Museum in London, which meticulously records the succession of Babylonian kings. According to the Babylonian Chronicle, Nebuchadnezzar II died in 562 B.C. His death was the beginning of the demise of the empire. His son, Amel-Marduk, only ruled for two years (562-560 B.C.) and was murdered by Neriglissar (560-556 B.C.), a general and son-in-law of Nebuchadnezzar. He was succeeded by Labashi-Marduk (556 B.C.) who reigned for three months and was overthrown by Nabonidus (556-539 B.C.). So far the Neo-Babylonian kings’ list.

So what about Daniel’s Belshazzar? In 1854 four identical clay cylinders were found at each of the corners of the Moon temple at Ur by J. E. Taylor (British Museum, WA 91125; Rm 55). In 1861 these cylinders were published by W. H. F. Talbot; they contained a prayer of Nabonidus on behalf of his oldest son, Bel-shar-usur. The text from lines 24-26 reads: “Belshazzar – the son – first [born] – the offspring of – my heart [body]” (W. H. F. Talbot, “Translation of Some Assyrian Inscriptions,” *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* 18 [1861]: 195).

The temple at Ur was dedicated to the moon-god Sin, and Nabonidus was a devoted follower of that deity, being more interested in dedicating his life to religious pursuits and astronomy. During the last

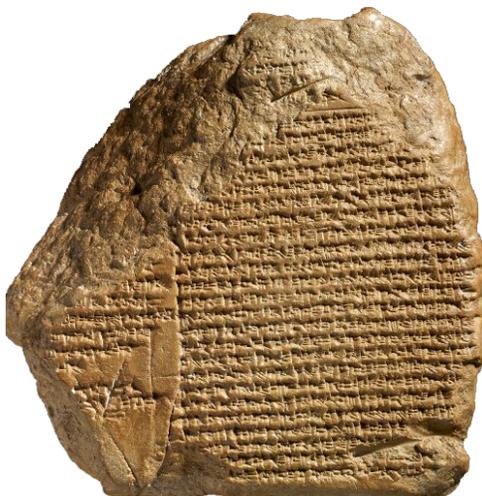


Stela of Babylonian king Nabonidus.

ten years of his reign, his son, Belshazzar, co-reigned with him. Nabonidus left all the details of the government in the hands of Belshazzar and moved to Tema, where he could follow his religious devotion to the god of the moon Sin.

The co-reign between Nabonidus and Belshazzar was brought to light when Sidney Smith in 1924 published a text known as the “Persian Verse Account of Nabonidus.” It mentions that when Nabonidus went off to spend a prolonged time at Teima in Arabia, he appointed Belshazzar as co-ruler. It reads: “He entrusted the ‘camp’ to his oldest (son), the first-born, the troops everywhere in the country he ordered under his (command). He let [everything] go, entrusted the kingship to him and, himself, he started out for a long journey” (S. Smith, *Babylonian Historical Texts Relating to the Capture and Downfall of Babylon* [London: Methuen & Co., Ltd, 1924], 98-123).

The absence of Nabonidus during the last ten years of his reign was confirmed when two fifth-century B.C. stelae with Aramaic inscriptions were found at Tema, Saudi Arabia. One was discovered in 1880 and the other, exactly 100 years later in 1980. Both shed light on the fact that Tema was the Neo-Babylonian royal residence for about ten years in the mid-sixth century BC. It is further corroborated by the “Harran inscriptions of Nabonidus” found on three stela in the Syrian city of Harran and published by C. J. Gadd in 1958. The



The Chronicle of Nabonidus describes events from the succession of Nabonidus in 556 B.C. until the 530s and stresses Nabonidus’ absence from Babylon for much of his reign.

stelae depict Nabonidus in a worshipping posture before astral symbols (crescent, winged sun-disk, and star) and mention that the senior king spent ten years living in Arabia.

Finally, in connecting Daniel 5 with Babylonian history, it was noted how close the correlation is between this chapter and the "Nabonidus Chronicle" that describes the fall of Babylon. The clay tablet forms part of a series and summarizes the principal events of each year from the accession of Nabonidus in 556 until the 530s B.C. The Chronicle stresses that Nabonidus was absent in Arabia for much of his reign, thereby interrupting performances of the annual spring festival in Babylon, where the king's presence was essential. The Chronicle reads: "In the month of Tashritu, when Cyrus attacked the army of Akkad in Opis [i.e., Baghdad] on the Tigris, the inhabitants of Akkad revolted, but he [Cyrus or Nabonidus?] massacred the confused inhabitants. The fifteenth day [October 12], Sippar was seized without battle. Nabonidus fled. The

sixteenth day, Gobryas [litt: Ugbaru], the governor of Gutium, and the army of Cyrus entered Babylon without battle. Afterwards, Nabonidus was arrested in Babylon when he returned there" (A. K. Grayson, *Assyrian and Babylonian Chronicles* [Text from Cuneiform Sources 5; Locust Valley, NY: J. J. Augustin, 1975], pp. 104-112).

If Nabonidus had been in the city that night, he should have put in an appearance at the banquet, but he is never mentioned there. The Chronicle reports where he was. He was out in the field fighting Cyrus's other division near the Tigris River. Thus, Daniel says that Belshazzar, one coregent with one division of the army, was in the city the night that it fell, while the Chronicle says that Nabonidus, the senior coregent, was out in the field with the other division of his army. Consequently, Daniel 5:7, 16, and 29 declare emphatically that Belshazzar could only offer the third place of authority in the kingdom, since he himself was only number two in the absence of his father, Nabonidus. It appears that the author of Daniel 5 knew his history

very well, as only a contemporary could have—somebody that lived right in the middle of the events described in Chapter 5.

Over 100 years of evidence coming forth in support of the historicity of Daniel 5, however, seems not to have done much for critical scholarship, as has been illustrated in the quote above from the *Anchor Bible Dictionary*, which was published in 1992. One could bring into this discussion other case studies, such as the madness of king Nebuchadnezzar in Daniel 4 in relationship to other texts from the Babylonian Chronicles, or, for that matter, the historicity of another ancient king, King David of Israel, which is currently hotly attacked from the so-called minimalist school of history. No Tel Dan inscription or Khirbet Qeiyafa discovery can probably change its line of argument. It, therefore, appears that it is not the absence of evidence but the "evidence one chooses to ignore" which is evidence of absence. ✍

Martin G. Klingbeil, DLitt

MUSEUM LECTURE: THE TEMPLE OF SOLOMON

The last guest lecturer for the Lynn H. Wood Archaeological Museum Lecture Series for the 2010-11 academic year was John M. Monson, Ph.D., associate professor of Old Testament and Semitic Languages at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School in Chicago.

Monson lived in Jerusalem until he came to America for college, so he has an intimate knowledge of the land of Israel. He speaks Hebrew and Arabic fluently and has participated in many archaeological digs in Israel. He has a master's degree from the Institute of Holy Land Studies in Jerusalem and both a master's and a doctoral degree from Harvard University.

Monson's lecture, entitled "The Temple of Solomon: The Center of the Universe Then and Now," examined the historical, biblical, and archaeological evidence concerning Solomon's Temple in order to

reconstruct what that structure might have looked like. Monson explained that while the archaeological remains of the Temple are inaccessible due to its location on the Dome of the Rock in Jerusalem, we can look at contemporary parallel structures in other parts of the ancient Near East to supplement and illustrate the biblical details. The problem with some of the earlier reconstructions is that they were not based on ancient Near Eastern parallels but, rather, were a reflection of the artist's world.

Most parallels can be found in northern Syria. The so-called "long-room" style temples are very similar in size and layout to the description of Solomon's Temple found in the Bible. In particular, the 'Ain Dara Temple shares many features in common with Solomon's Temple: a long, rectangular configuration of similar dimensions, a double-pillar portico (entrance), a main sanctuary room (holy place), and a shrine area (most holy place). Also, like Solomon's Temple, the 'Ain Dara sanctuary is built on a raised platform overlooking a city. In total, 33 of the architectural elements found in 'Ain Dara are tallied with 65 of the features



Professor John Monson at museum lecture.

mentioned in the biblical description Solomon's Temple.

This topic is the subject of a new book by Monson about to be released by Oxford University Press. To learn more about past or future lectures, visit <http://www.southern.edu/archaeology/lectureseries/Pages/lectureseriesprogram.aspx> ✍

ASTONISHING DISCOVERIES SERIES ON HOPE CHANNEL

It was in seeking adventure that the young man from Britain set out on his trek through Asia toward India, but it was in Persia and Iraq that Austen Henry Layard would find the treasure he was seeking. Introduced to archaeology, he became obsessed with finding the fabled biblical city of Nineveh. He had rummaged around other sites and then headed north to the large mound known as Nimrud, near Mosul, Iraq. In 1846, at the age of 29, he discovered the famous Black Obelisk of Shalmaneser III (858-824 BC). The 6.5-ft-tall monument shows five different subdued kings prostrating themselves before the Assyrian king. There kneels King Jehu of Israel with his face to the ground before Shalmaneser, king of Assyria. Behind him are retainers bearing tribute. Layard had found the earliest surviving image of an Israelite king—Jehu, the son of Omri (2 Kgs 10:31-34)!

Yet, despite his belief that he had in fact found the city of Nineveh, that discovery lay further to the north. One day a farmer came to him with word that, while plowing in the field, he had found some inscriptions. Layard headed to the site immediately and set his workmen to the task. In a few short hours, his men had revealed not one but two important palaces of the Assyrian empire. One of them was the palace of King Sennacherib, who invaded Judah in 701 BC. Layard had finally found Nineveh, the ancient capital of Assyria. It was from here that the most ruthless kings went forth to conquer the then-known world. The relief panels discovered in Sennacherib's palace depict the gruesome scenes of his attack against the city of Lachish (2 Kgs 18:1). They show siege walls against the city and eight battering rams, with foot soldiers, archers, and slingers moving against it. But none of the reliefs shows the destruction of Jerusalem. The Bible records that the Lord saved Jerusalem following Hezekiah's prayer.

ARCHAEOLOGY AND THE BIBLE

Layard's discoveries in the nineteenth century have been multiplied many times during the last 150 years of archaeology in the land of the Bible as artifacts, cities, and ancient records reveal the trustworthiness of Scripture. Excavations in Babylon reveal that Nebuchadnezzar was indeed the great builder of that city as described in the book of Daniel (4:30). The Cyrus cylinder found in that city describes in detail the fulfillment of the prediction in Isaiah 44 and 45 that God would send a deliverer for His captive people in Babylon. Today we have confirmed the existence of at least 70 biblical characters, including kings, servants, scribes, and courtiers. That thrilling quest for discovery continues into the twenty-first century.

In the last 20 years, archaeologists working in the Middle East have revolutionized the understanding of some of the key nations and people mentioned in the Bible. The famous Philistine cities of Ashkelon, Ashdod, Ekron, and Gath have been excavated extensively, revealing a sophisticated culture of architecture,

art, and technology. The Philistines were the elite of Palestine in the ancient world. Even in an age of skepticism toward some of the Bible's most famous kings, like David and Solomon, major new discoveries bring about caution to those who claim that the Bible is myth.

In 1993 an inscription was discovered by a student volunteer at excavations in the northernmost biblical city of Dan. It mentioned for the first time the "house of Israel" and the "house of David," clearly a reference to the southern kingdom of Judah. David not only existed, but he was remembered over a century later as the founder of a great dynasty. In 2007 Herod the Great's tomb was discovered at Herodium, and in 2008 the oldest known Hebrew inscription was uncovered at a site on the Elah Valley, where the Bible describes the fight between David and Goliath.



ARCHAEOLOGY AND EVANGELISM

All of these discoveries attest to the importance of archaeology as a tool for understanding the Bible, but what about archaeology as a tool for evangelism? Not everyone would make that outright connection, but archaeology has been used very successfully to bring others to Christ. Think about it: if you want to convince people about the truths presented in God's Word, would it not be important to first establish that the Bible is reliable in what it portrays as history? If you do not begin with those basics, especially in today's postmodern society, you will be speaking past people's most basic question, Can I rely on the Bible? That is why most of the NET evangelistic meetings during the past decade have begun with at least one or two presentations on this important subject.

In the last several years, an expanded approach was developed with Mark Finley and Ron Clouzet, together with the Institute of Archaeology at Southern Adventist University. Amazing results could be seen. "In conducting the Discoveries series," says Finley, "we were able to draw large numbers of people in cities like Chattanooga, Portland (Maine), Chicago, and Orlando. People who are interested in history flock to these meetings, and the retention into the main meetings is remarkable." In Chattanooga over 800 people came to the seminars. At the University of Southern Maine campus, over 450 people registered. For the NET 2011 series, archaeology meetings will lead into the main series in September. "Let's work together to make history for God's Kingdom and the life of the people in your community," urges Clouzet, speaker for NET 2011. The "Astonishing Discoveries" series will take place September 14-18, 2011 and be broadcast throughout North America on the Hope Channel, for more information, see <http://host.prophesiesdecoded.com/archaeology> 

RECENT SIGHTINGS

ANCIENT BELL FOUND IN JERUSALEM OLD CITY SEWER (USA Today)

A tiny golden bell pulled after 2,000 years from an ancient sewer beneath the Old City of Jerusalem was unveiled Sunday by Israeli archaeologists, who hailed it as a rare find. The orb half an inch in diameter has a small loop that appears to have been used to sew it as an ornament onto the clothes of a wealthy resident of the city two millennia ago, archaeologists said. When Eli Shukron of the Israel Antiquities Authority shook it Sunday, the faint metallic sound was . . .



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ARE THESE THE RUINS OF BIBLICAL CITY OF DAVID? (CNN)

Archaeologists in Israel have found remains which may be the biblical City of King David, the first evidence that the ancient Jewish empire actually existed. The bible refers to a powerful 10th century B.C. Kingdom of David . . . but little evidence of its existence has ever been found. Now, an archaeological discovery at Khirbet Qeiyafa . . . appears to show signs of a Jewish settlement. Professor Yosef Garfinkel . . . said that evidence found at the site included a single pottery fragment with an inscription believed to be an early form of Hebrew and olive pits dated as 3,000 years old.

[Click here to read more](#)

3,000-YEAR-OLD ALTAR UNCOVERED AT PHILISTINE SITE (Haaretz)

A stone altar from the 9th century BCE was found in an archeological dig on Tel Tzafit, a site identified with the biblical Philistine city of Gat. The altar is reminiscent of Jewish altars from the same period and sheds light on the cultural links between the two peoples, who fought each other for centuries. The altar is approximately one meter tall, half a meter wide and half a meter long. It was found by a team of diggers led by Prof. Aren Maeir of the Land of Israel and Archaeology studies at Bar-Ilan University.



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ARCHEOLOGISTS UNCOVER FINEST EXAMPLE OF ISRAELITE-ERA HOME (The Jerusalem Post)

An archeological dig near Haifa recently uncovered a 3,000-year-old house that is the best-preserved structure yet discovered from the Israelite period. The four-room structure also boasts mosaics and artifacts testifying to the considerable wealth of its owners. The site at Tel Shikmona – in Shikmona Nature Reserve at Haifa's southern edge – was partially excavated 40 years ago, but years of neglect left the area covered with garbage and earth.

[Click here to read more](#)



UPCOMING EVENTS

LYNN H. WOOD ARCHAEOLOGICAL MUSEUM LECTURE SERIES

September 21, 2011, 7 p.m.

“Gezer: The Search for the City of Solomon,” by Steven M. Ortiz, PhD (Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary)

October 12, 2011, 7 p.m.

“The 2011 Excavation Season at Khirbet Qeiyafa, Israel,” by Michael G. Hasel, PhD (Southern Adventist University)

February 15, 2012, 7 p.m.

“Ancient Near Eastern passports: Two Stamp Seals from Khirbet Qeiyafa,” by Martin G. Klingbeil, DLitt (Southern Adventist University)

March 21, 2012, 7 p.m.

“Transformations in the Twelfth Century B.C.: The Coming of the Philistines to Ashkelon,” by Daniel Master, PhD (Wheaton College)

The museum lecture series is free and open to the public. All lectures are held in Lynn Wood Hall on the campus of Southern Adventist University. For more information, visit our website at <http://www.southern.edu/archaeology>

NEAR EAST ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY ANNUAL MEETING

November 16-18, 2011, San Francisco, CA

“New Excavations at Khirbet Qeiyafa-Sha’arayim and the Early History of Judah,” by Michael G. Hasel, PhD



FREE ADMISSION

ASTONISHING DISCOVERIES

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Babylon, Sumer, and the Quest for Power
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Living Rocks from the Apocalypse
Sunday, Sept. 18, 7:30 p.m.

PRESENTERS



Ron E. M. Clouzet, D.Min. Director of NADEI and Professor of Christian Ministry and Pastoral Theology at Andrews University



Michael G. Hasel, Ph.D. Curator of Lynn Wood Museum and Professor of Archaeology and Near Eastern Studies at Southern Adventist University

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