

# DIG

# SIGHT NEWSLETTER



## YOU'VE GOT MAIL

I must admit—these days it is not very often that I get a personal handwritten letter in my mailbox. It is mostly via my virtual inbox(es) through which the rest of the world communicates with me. And then there is the never-ending flood of messages on Facebook, SMS, Twitter, and whatever other instant communication gadgets are out there that I'm blissfully unaware of. At the recent Society of Biblical Literature annual meetings in Baltimore, I had been invited to give a response to two papers in the session on Ancient Near Eastern Iconography and the Bible. I had planned to work on my response in my hotel room during the evenings of the meetings and type it up on my laptop. And then I realized that I had forgotten the computer power cable! Suddenly, amidst all of the electronic devices surrounding me, my only remaining option was to use the pen and paper on the desk in front of me. This resulted in five pages of densely handwritten notes with crossed-out words and corrections, mind-mapping arrows, circles, different colored annotations in the margins, and the daunting task of actually deciphering all that in front of an academic audience. It turned out to be a delightful exercise, and I will definitely keep the manuscript for some time. There is something about a handwritten text that communicates more than just mere content.

In any archaeological project, all activity comes immediately to an excited standstill when an inscription is discovered, be it in the field while excavating or in the camp during pottery washing. Suddenly a carelessly collected sherd turns out to be an ostrakon—a broken piece of pottery that has been used or reused as a writing medium—containing an inscription, sometimes consisting of a few roughly incised letters. At other times it could be an extensive text written in a beautifully flowing script by a trained scribe. The “Qeiyafa Ostrakon,” found in 2008 by the joint excavation of The Hebrew University of Jerusalem and Southern Adventist University at Khirbet Qeiyafa, bears testimony to the importance of inscriptions in biblical archaeology. It turned out to be the oldest Hebrew inscription found to date, containing a text replete with biblical terminology, even though it has not been deciphered in its entirety.



The “Qeiyafa Ostrakon.” Photo credit: Clara Amit, Israel Antiquities Authority.

The new excavation project of Southern Adventist University, again in partnership with The Hebrew University of Jerusalem, has been designated as *The Fourth Expedition to Lachish*, building upon the findings of the three previous excavations under Starkey and Tufnell (1932–38), Aharoni (1966 and 1968), and Ussishkin (1974–87). A prominent place among these findings is held by the famous “Lachish Letters,” which were discovered by the Starkey and Tufnell expedition in 1935 (Letters 1–15) and 1938 (Letters 16–18), respectively. According to the excavators, the archaeological context in which the ostraca were found corresponds to Level II, which is the Babylonian destruction layer, dated to 589/88 B.C. The fragments were discovered in the burnt debris layer of a room in the eastern tower of the main gate that led into Tell ed-Duweir, which has been identified as ancient Lachish. Room F18C was possibly a guardroom, in which were received important documents by senior officers (H. Torczyner et al., *Lachish I, The Lachish Letters* [London: Oxford University Press, 1938], 11-14). Most of the letters are now housed in the British Museum in London, except for Letter 6, which is on display in the Rockefeller Museum in Jerusalem.

While a number of the letters are difficult to read (esp. Ostraca 7, 10, 11, 13, 15, 17), the documents tell the dramatic tale of the last days of the Kingdom of Judah before the Babylonian conquest, as Nebuchadnezzar's army was advancing

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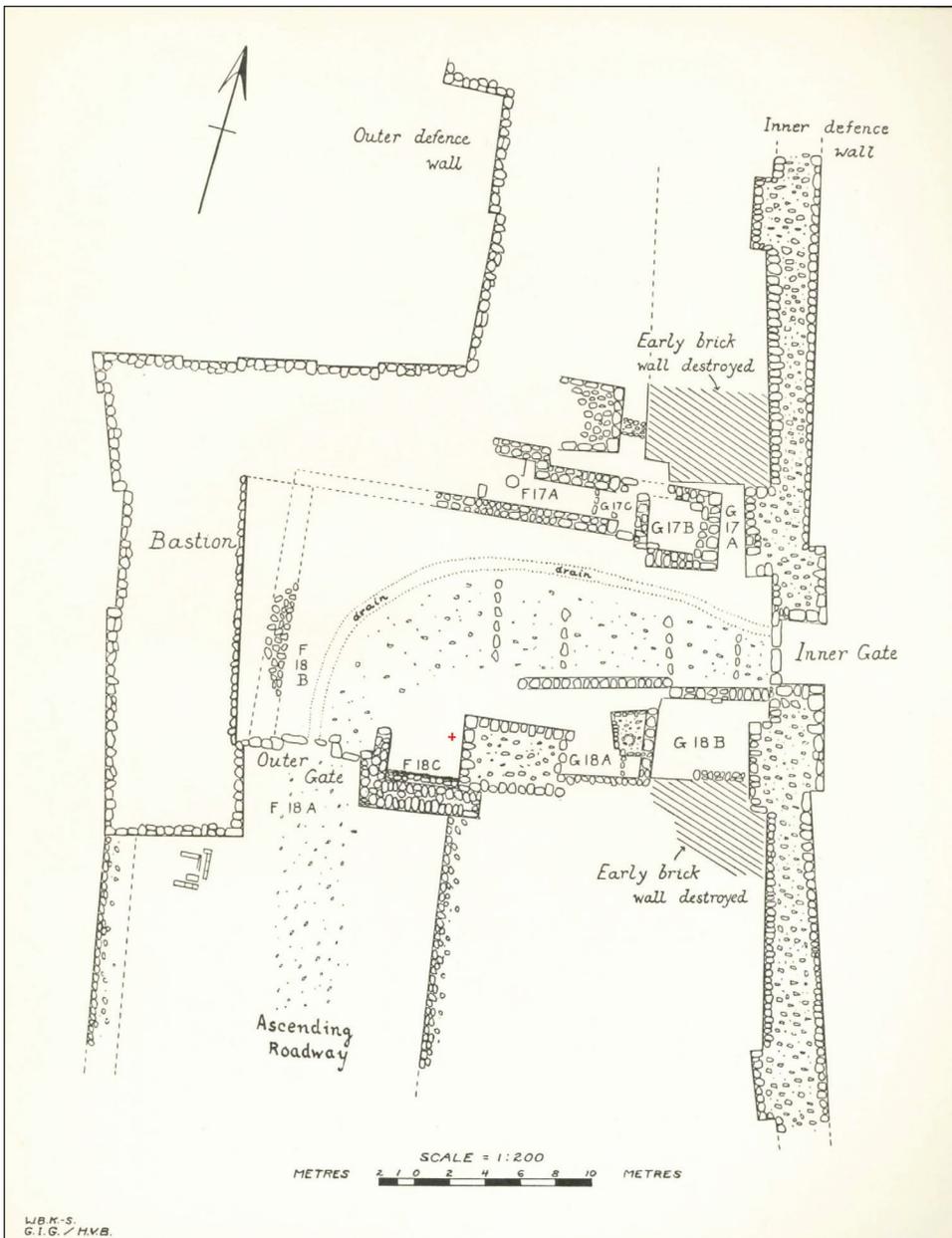
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Plan of Bastion and Gateways, from *Lachish I: The Lachish Letters* (1938), 223. The red "+" indicates the location of Room F18C.

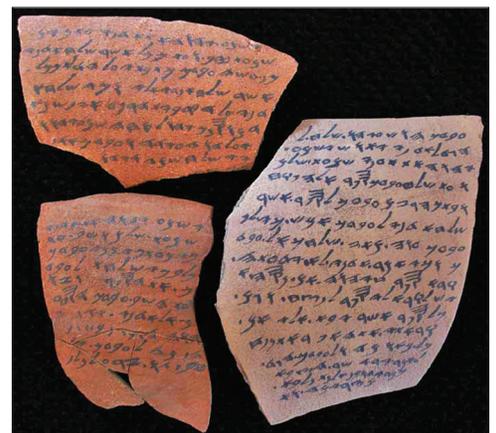
on Jerusalem. The sherds are inscribed in a beautifully flowing script, known as the Phoenician-Hebrew alphabet, by a variety of scribes, indicating that literacy was fairly common during the 6th century B.C. Ostraca 1 and 11 are lists of names which provide insights into the onomastics of this period: e.g., line 1 of Letter 1 reads "Gemaryahu son of Hissilyahu," whereas the name "Gemaryahu" ("Yahweh has fulfilled") also occurs in a contemporary prophetic biblical text, in Jeremiah 36:10. Other letters give us insights into the importance of the prophetic office in ancient Israel: "And as for the letter of Tobiyahu, the servant of the king, which came to Sallum, the son of Yaddua, from the prophet, saying, 'Be on guard!' your ser[va]nt is sending it to my lord" (Letter 3,

lines 18–20).

Three of the letters are directed to Yaush (Letters 2, 3, and 6), obviously a man of military authority who must have lived in the border fortress of Lachish, and the question has been raised as to the origin of these letters. Yigael Yadin's theory that the letters originated in Lachish has been largely abandoned (Anson F. Rainey, "Watching for the Signal Fires of Lachish," *Palestine Exploration Quarterly* 119 [1987]:149–151). This brings us to the famous passage from Letter 4, which has also become a catchphrase in our new expedition. The full text of lines 10–13, according to Rainey's reconstruction, reads: "And may [my lord] know that we keep on the lookout for the fire signals of Lachish according to all the signs that

my lord established, because we do not see Azekah" (Anson F. Rainey, "Watching for the Signal Fires of Lachish," *Palestine Exploration Quarterly* 119 [1987]:150; cf. also J. A. Emerton, "Were the Lachish Letters Sent To or From Lachish?" *Palestine Exploration Quarterly* 133 [2001]:2–15). It stands to reason that Hawsha'yahu, who underwrites Letter 3, was an outpost commander that had a clear line of sight on both Azekah and Lachish. He wrote to his superior at Lachish, expressing his concern for the disappearance of the Azekah signal, which might have reflected the destruction caused by the advancing Babylonian army (cf. also Jer. 34:7). Possible locations for that outpost could have been Kiryat Yearim or Beit Mahsir, close to Jerusalem, that monitored the Judean countryside for fire signals. The existence of a system of signal towers in Judah has been previously demonstrated (cf. A. Mazar, "Iron Age I and II towers at Giloh and the Israelite settlement," *Israel Exploration Journal* 40 [1990]:77–101; cf. also O. Borowski, et al., "Communication by Fire (and Smoke) Signals in the Kingdom of Judah," *NASA Technical Reports Server* [1998], [http://ntrs.nasa.gov/archive/nasa/casi.ntrs.nasa.gov/19980237255\\_1998375885.pdf](http://ntrs.nasa.gov/archive/nasa/casi.ntrs.nasa.gov/19980237255_1998375885.pdf); accessed December 3, 2013). The somewhat concerned, if not desperate, tone of the letter attests to the historical drama in Judah that preceded the total destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple in the year 587/6 B.C.

I wonder if Yaush ever had a chance to respond or if the fires of Lachish were ever seen again by Hawsha'yahu following his writing of that letter. Maybe the next thing he saw were the helmets



Reconstruction of the Lachish Letters. Clockwise, from upper left: Letter 4, Letter 3, and Letter 5. Reconstruction by Kris Udd; photo credit: [www.bibleinterp.com](http://www.bibleinterp.com).

of the Babylonian soldiers advancing on Jerusalem. This is where history meets current archaeology. On the last day of our short excavation season at Lachish this past summer, we unexpectedly came across the same destruction layer that had yielded the Lachish Letters 75 years ago: Level II, the Babylonian destruction. Though at a different location on the site, the telltale signs were the same: complete vessels lying flat on a floor, a loom weight with a burnt side up, and a Babylonian arrowhead in the vicinity. There is always the possibility that more letters will be uncovered over the next field seasons, and, in that sense, we are still keeping a lookout for the signal fires of Lachish that tell us about its dramatic history during biblical times. What remains certain is that every object sends a message to us echoing through the millennia, communicating to us the historicity of the Bible. In biblical archaeology, "You've got mail" every day! 🍷

*Martin G. Klingbeil, DLitt*



## PROFESSIONAL MEETINGS 2013

The annual meetings of the American Schools of Oriental Research (ASOR) took place this year in Baltimore, Maryland, close to its picturesque inner harbor. Drs. Michael Hasel and Martin Klingbeil, director and associate director of the Institute of Archaeology at Southern Adventist University, as well as Daniel Perez, Lynn H. Wood Archaeological Museum coordinator, attended the meetings and were able to interact with colleagues from all over the world on the issues of archaeology and biblical studies. Through the generous support of one of our board members who also attended the ASOR meetings, a significant number of new books were acquired which will be added to the holdings of the William G. Dever Research Library at Southern.

Hasel was nominated to serve as a trustee for the American Schools of Oriental Research, the leading international professional organization for Near Eastern studies, archaeology, language, and literature. He was elected with one other person to serve in that capacity over the next two years.

Klingbeil also participated in the Society of Biblical Literature (SBL) meetings and served as a respondent to two papers in the session on Ancient Near Eastern Iconography and the Bible. One paper was presented by Evelyne Martin, a PhD candidate from the University of Berne, Switzerland, on "The Concept of Theriomorphism," and the other by Ryan Bonfiglio, a PhD candidate from Emory University, who discussed the topic "Metaphorically Speaking (and Seeing): The Image-Text

Relationship in Theory and Practice". Klingbeil also accepted an invitation to co-chair this session, together with Prof. Brent Strawn from Emory University, for the next three years. 🍷



View of downtown Baltimore last month during the professional meetings. Photo credit: Daniel Perez.

# FALL SEMESTER MUSEUM LECTURES

The Lynn H. Wood Archaeological Museum held two presentations this fall as part of the Museum's annual Lecture Series. Dr. P. Kyle McCarter, William Foxwell Albright Chair of Biblical and Ancient Near Eastern Studies at Johns Hopkins University, spoke this past September. Dr. Michael G. Hasel, director of the Institute of Archaeology at Southern and co-director of *The Fourth Expedition to Lachish*, spoke in October. Below is an overview of the first two presentations for the 2013-2014 academic year.

## NEWLY DISCOVERED INSCRIPTIONS FROM THE EARLIEST DAYS OF THE KINGDOM OF ISRAEL

Archaeological excavations in the Near East have yielded many inscriptions over the last century. Inscriptions as they relate to the time period of the tenth century B.C. in Israel, however, are not common in the archaeological record. In fact, P. Kyle McCarter's lecture this past September at Southern Adventist University, "Newly Discovered Inscriptions from the Earliest Days of the Kingdom of Israel," covered the most recent epigraphic findings relating to the highly elusive United Monarchy period in ancient Israel. More specifically, McCarter, a foremost epigrapher and expert on tenth-century Judah from Johns Hopkins University, highlighted the fact that prior to the discovery of the "Qeiyafa Ostrakon" in 2008 and the more recent 2012 discovery of an inscription from the City of David excavations in Jerusalem, only two other inscriptions were known to be found relating to the time of the tenth century B.C.

The "Tel Zayit Abecedary," found on the final day of the 2005 excavation season at Tel Zayit, comprises what its name implies: an alphabet. McCarter pointed out that it testifies that literacy is found in a region far from the Kingdom's capital in Jerusalem, which challenges the minimalist notion that literacy did not exist in the tenth century B.C. in Judah.

Beyond the "Tel Zayit Abecedary" discovery in 2005, McCarter stated that the next (or second) inscription relating to the Kingdom of Israel was found at the site of Khirbet Qeiyafa. In the 2008 excavation season at Khirbet Qeiyafa, a five-line ostrakon was found just north of the site's western gate. Written in proto-Canaanite script, the "Qeiyafa Ostrakon" serves as the oldest known Hebrew script to date. From an epigraphic standpoint, the inconsistent execution of various characters signifies a then still-developing alphabet. The significance behind the "Qeiyafa Ostrakon," though many of the inked characters are significantly faded or obliterated, comes from the subject matter found on the pottery sherd. Words such as "king," "judge," "establish," "widow," and "slave," among others, appear to signify the presence of a centralized authority or kingdom existing in the Judean Shephelah region. Based on the archaeological context and the paleoepigraphy of this inscription, the "Qeiyafa Ostrakon," according to McCarter, serves as the second known epigraphic find relating to this period since the discovery of the "Tel Zayit Abecedary" in 2005.

Just a few months prior to McCarter's lecture, the announcement of an inscription was discovered in the City of David excavations in Jerusalem. These excavations, under the direction of Israeli archaeologist Eilat Mazar, yielded a partial inscription next to the rim of a jar. Although the beginning and ending of the inscription are not completely



Dr. P. Kyle McCarter. Photo credit: Johns Hopkins University.

intact, McCarter translated the inscription as a label reading "[wine] belonging to Hanah" or "[wine] belonging to Hanah-el." Whether or not this inscription predates the "Qeiyafa Ostrakon" has yet to be determined. However, certainty can be found in the discovery and significance of these three recently discovered inscriptions as they relate to literacy and recordkeeping in the early Kingdom of Israel. ✍

## EXCAVATING NEBUCHADNEZZAR'S DESTRUCTION AT LACHISH

The biblical city of Lachish is mentioned 24 times in the Old Testament. Some of the most notable references are the Israelite conquest of Lachish (Joshua 10:3-35; 12:11; 15:39), the Assyrian siege and destruction of the city by the Assyrian king Sennacherib in 701 B.C. (2 Kings 19:8; 2 Chronicles 32:9), and the destruction of both Lachish and Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar II, king of Babylon, in 586 B.C. (Jeremiah 34:7). Lachish, during the Iron Age, stood as the most important city in Judah after Jerusalem. The biblical site of Lachish, known locally as Tell ed-Duweir, has been excavated in three prior expeditions. A fourth expedition to this site, along with reasons for this new

# FALL SEMESTER MUSEUM LECTURES



Dr. Michael Hasel lecturing on the 2013 excavation season at Tel Lachish in Lynn Wood Hall at Southern Adventist University. Photo credit: Daniel Perez.

project, served as the focus of Dr. Michael Hasel's lecture this past October.

The first expedition, led by British archaeologist James Leslie Starkey and his assistant, Olga Tufnell, from 1932 to 1938, established the high excavation and publishing standard for succeeding archaeological studies at the site. Undoubtedly, the most significant findings from this first expedition were the Lachish Letters, ostraca contextualized from the destruction of the city by Nebuchadnezzar II in 586 B.C. Israeli archaeologist Yohanan Aharoni, Institute of Archaeology director at Tel Aviv University, led the second expedition at Lachish in 1966 and 1968. The third expedition, led by distinguished Israeli archaeologist David Ussishkin of Tel Aviv University, took place from 1974 to 1987. The most current expedition at Lachish, *The Fourth Expedition to Lachish*, is co-sponsored by Southern Adventist University and The Hebrew University of Jerusalem.

*The Fourth Expedition to Lachish* serves as a logical transition from the excavations at Khirbet Qeiyafa in the study of the archaeology of southern Judah. The seven seasons at Khirbet Qeiyafa produced much data on the early history of Judah—the time period of Saul's and David's respective reigns as king of Israel. With about 25% of the site excavated in

only seven seasons of fieldwork, and an additional 30% consisting of exposed bedrock, approximately 55% of the occupation activity at Khirbet Qeiyafa is now known. This shift to investigating the archaeological activity at Lachish is prompted by two primary factors: First, since archaeology is a destructive discipline, a portion of an archaeological site is always left unexcavated for future archaeologists to test (and possibly correct) past studies and results. Second, the archaeological record of southern Judah, specifically the intermittent time period of approximately 200 years between the early history of Judah and the collapse of the kingdom in the sixth century B.C., is largely unknown, or incomplete at best.

The stratigraphy at Lachish, based on the previous three expeditions to the site, revealed the following chronological sequence: Roman-Byzantine occupation (Level I), a Babylonian destruction layer marked by Nebuchadnezzar's destruction in 586 B.C. (Level II), the Assyrian campaign by Sennacherib in 701 B.C. (Level III), largely unknown Judean occupation of the site (Levels IV and V), and the Late Bronze Age occupation during the time of Joshua (Level VI). *The Fourth Expedition to Lachish* seeks to clarify this unknown period of history found in Levels IV and V.

This past summer, a small contingency from Southern and The Hebrew University embarked on a short two-week season to establish a site grid, as well as conduct some initial excavation probes in the northeast quadrant of the tel. During the second week of the season, the only week where excavations took place, the area in which Southern excavated revealed part of Nebuchadnezzar's campaign at the site in Level II—indicated by a destruction layer containing complete, horizontally-lying vessels comprising an oil lamp, jug, and a dipper juglet. The Hebrew University worked in further exposing one of the outer city walls initially uncovered (but not recorded) during the first expedition to the site. Southern plans to bring 30 to 40 volunteers and launch full-scale excavations at Lachish with The Hebrew University. The 2014 season at the site will work in expanding excavations within this northeast quadrant, further exposing and documenting the Babylonian destruction layer, as well as into preceding occupation levels. ✍

## The Fourth Expedition to Lachish Online!

Want to know more about this new exciting project? *The Fourth Expedition to Lachish* continues the excavation tradition at one of the most famous biblical sites in Israel and is also on the cutting edge of archaeological discovery and technology.

Be on the lookout for new information on the official website for *The Fourth Expedition to Lachish*, where you will be able to find all of the latest news and developments relating to the project, how to participate, and more!

<http://www.southern.edu/Lachish>

# RECENT PUBLICATIONS: 2012-2013

## MICHAEL G. HASEL

- Garfinkel, Yosef, Saar Ganor, and Michael Hasel. "The Iron Age City of Khirbet Qeiyafa after Four Seasons of Excavation." In *The Ancient Near East in the 12th-10th Centuries BCE: Culture and History, Proceedings of the International Conference held at the University of Haifa, 2-5 May, 2010*, edited by Gershon Galil, Ayelet Gilboa, Aren Maeir, and Dan'el Kahn, 149-74. Alter Orient und Altes Testament, 392. Münster: Ugarit Verlag, 2012.
- Garfinkel, Yosef, Katherina Streit, Saar Ganor, and Michael Hasel. "State Formation in Judah: Biblical Tradition, Modern Historical Theories, and Radiometric Dates at Khirbet Qeiyafa." *Radiocarbon (Proceedings of the 6th International Radiocarbon and Archaeology Symposium)* 54/3-4 (2012): 1-11.
- Hasel, Michael G. "New Excavations at Khirbet Qeiyafa and the Early History of Judah." In *Do Historical Matters Matter to Faith?: A Critical Analysis to Modern and Postmodern Approaches to Scripture*, edited by James K. Hoffmeier and Dennis Magary, 477-96. Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2012.
- Hasel, Michael G. "Review of C. L. Crouch. *War and Ethics in the Ancient Near East: Military Violence in Light of Cosmology and History*. BZAW 407. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2009." *Bulletin of Biblical Research* 22/1 (2012):115-116.
- Garfinkel, Yosef, Saar Ganor, and Michael Hasel. "Khirbet Qeiyafa." In *Oxford Encyclopedia of the Bible and Archaeology, Vol. 2*, edited by Daniel M. Master, 55-62. New York: Oxford University Press, 2013.
- Hasel, Michael G. "The Archaeology of Khirbet Qeiyafa: Another Battle over David and Goliath." *Archaeological Diggings* 20/3 (2013): 10-15.
- Garfinkel, Yosef, Michael G. Hasel, and Martin G. Klingbeil. "An Ending and a Beginning: Why We're Leaving Qeiyafa and Going to Lachish." *Biblical Archaeology Review* 39/6 (2013): 44-51.

## MARTIN G. KLINGBEIL

- Klingbeil, Martin G. "Floral Imagery." In *Dictionary of the Old Testament: Prophets*, edited by J. Gordon McConville and Mark J. Boda, 248-53. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2012.
- Klingbeil, Martin G., and Gerald A. Klingbeil. "'Mirrors of the Dance': Finding the Interplay Between the Static and the Dynamic in Biblical Ritual and ANE Iconography." *Journal of Northwest Semitic Languages* 38.2 (2012): 1-22.
- Klingbeil, Martin G. "Review of de Hulster, Izaak J. and Rüdiger Schmitt, eds. *Iconography and Biblical Studies: Proceedings of the Iconography Sessions at the Joint EABS/SBL Conference, 22-26 July 2007, Vienna, Austria*. Münster: Ugarit-Verlag, 2009." *Orientalische Literaturzeitung* 107.3 (2012):171-4.
- Klingbeil, Martin G. "Review of Zenger, Erich, ed. *The Composition of the Book of Psalms*. Bibliotheca Ephemeridum Theologicarum Lovaniensium 238. Leuven: Peeters, 2010." *Bulletin for Biblical Research* 22.4 (2012): 582-4.
- Klingbeil, Martin G. "A picture is worth a thousand words . . . and the outstretched arm of Yahweh." *Adventist Review* (April 26, 2012), 18-21.
- Klingbeil, Martin G. "Israeli Artifacts Now on Display at Southern Adventist University." *Adventist Review* (December 20, 2012), 9-11.
- Klingbeil, Martin G. "Divine Warrior II: Hebrew Bible/Old Testament." In *Encyclopedia of the Bible and its Reception*, edited by H.J. Klauck et al., 6:982-984. Berlin and New York: de Gruyter, 2013.
- Garfinkel, Yosef, Michael G. Hasel, and Martin G. Klingbeil. "An Ending and a Beginning: Why We're Leaving Qeiyafa and Going to Lachish." *Biblical Archaeology Review* 39/6 (2013): 44-51.

# DIRECTOR'S LETTER: PARTNER WITH US



Would it not be exciting to find more letters from Lachish dating to the Babylonian destruction by Nebuchadnezzar (see cover story)?

The goal this coming season is to expose a large area of this destruction in Area

A. Only time will tell what artifacts will be uncovered, but there are sure to be surprises. The allure of archaeology is the thrill of new discoveries. In anticipation, airfares have been reserved. Application forms have been filled out. Students are submitting deposits. Equipment is being purchased. Plans are being laid out. We are indeed gearing up for the first major excavation effort of Lachish in twenty years.

An excavation project of this magnitude requires major funding. The most expensive part is simply the airfare needed to get there. Next year we are planning to take between 60 and 70 people from Southern. At \$1,830 for each ticket, that is over \$120,000. While many of the students will cover much of their own airfare, we would like to provide assistantships to help defray the costs. On the other hand, the staff (who are not taking it for academic credit) also need their travel expenses covered. This is only one aspect of the costs involved.

I am pleased to inform you that a member of our Institute of Archaeology Advisory Board has committed to match dollar for dollar, up to \$250,000, towards our excavation fund in support of *The Fourth Expedition to Lachish*. To accomplish this project over the next 10-12 years (five years of excavation followed by at least that many years for publication), we will need to raise \$150,000 a year, that is, at least 1.5 million dollars over the span of the project. The matching fund would give us an immediate boost towards that goal, totaling \$500,000. As we come to the close of this year, would you help us accomplish this goal? Just think—your donation will be worth twice the amount you are giving. Every donation will provide funding toward assistantships for university students to have this experience, excavation equipment, computers, artifact processing, and funding staff—including world-renowned experts who will analyze various finds that are discovered over the course of the excavation for final publication.

The doors have been opened for us to excavate the second most important city after Jerusalem in the Kingdom of Judah. God has placed us in one of the most important ancient cities as critics have questioned almost every aspect of biblical history. We have an opportunity to provide new data and resources to reaffirm our understanding of the Bible and provide great support for its history. We can provide training for students and professors from around the world as consortium institutions are joining the project. We believe that this opportunity is nothing short of Providential for this time in earth's history, and we invite you to be involved. ✍

## I WOULD LIKE TO SUPPORT THE INSTITUTE OF ARCHAEOLOGY, SOUTHERN ADVENTIST UNIVERSITY, IN THE FOLLOWING WAYS:

- Institute of Archaeology (donations will be applied to areas of greatest need)
- Archaeological Excavations Fund
- Lynn H. Wood Archaeological Museum
- William G. Dever Research Library

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Signature	

- Check (made payable to "Southern Adventist University")
- I'm not prepared to give at this time. However, I would like to commit to a financial gift in the area marked above. Please contact me for payment arrangements.

# RECENT SIGHTINGS

## BEHOLD! JERUSALEM DIG TURNS UP PRIESTLY BATHTUB FROM JESUS' TIME (NBC News)

Archaeologists say they have uncovered a first-century mansion on Jerusalem's Mount Zion, complete with an ancient bathtub that just might have belonged to one of the priests who condemned Jesus to death.

"Byzantine tradition places in our general area the mansion of the high priest Caiaphas or perhaps Annas, who was his father-in-law," Shimon Gibson, the . . . [Click here to read more](#)



Photo credit: Shimon Gibson / UNC Charlotte



Photo credit: Phillip Sapirstein / Tel Aviv University

## ANCIENT WALL IN ISRAEL MATCHES UP WITH BIBLE'S TALE OF ASSYRIAN ATTACK (NBC News)

Archaeologists say they have unearthed the remains of massive fortifications built about 2,700 years ago around an Iron Age Assyrian harbor in present-day Israel. The ruins appear to have a connection to Assyria's takeover of the region, as mentioned in the Book of Isaiah. "The fortifications appear to protect an artificial harbor," Tel Aviv University's Alexander Fantalkin, leader of the excavations at the Ashdod-Yam . . . [Click here to read more](#)

## EGYPT: ISRAEL HAS RETURNED 90 STOLEN ANTIQUITIES (HAARETZ)

Israel has returned a collection of 90 antiquities after discovering that the artifacts—presented for sale at auction—had been stolen, Egyptian authorities said on Monday.

The collection reportedly included clay vessels and vases, stelae, and cultic figurines.

Antiquities theft is a huge problem . . . [Click here to read more](#)



Photo credit: Reuters



Photo credit: Sam Wolff, Tel Gezer Excavation Project

## BIBLICAL CITY RUINS DISCOVERED UNDER RUINS OF ANOTHER ANCIENT CITY IN ISRAEL (The Huffington Post)

An ongoing excavation in Israel has uncovered new evidence of an ancient city buried beneath the King Solomon-era metropolis of Gezer.

An international group of archaeologists has been working together for several years on the dig, located between modern-day Tel Aviv and Jerusalem, according to a statement released by the Israel Antiquities Authority (IAA). An important historical city in its own right, Gezer is . . . [Click here to read more](#)



## UPCOMING EVENTS

### LYNN H. WOOD ARCHAEOLOGICAL MUSEUM LECTURE SERIES

February 11, 2014, 7 p.m.

"Tell Jalul: A Levitical City of Refuge in Jordan?"

Randall W. Younker, PhD (Andrews University)

March 11, 2014, 7 p.m.

"Ossuaries and the Burials of Jesus and James"

Jodi Magness, PhD (University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill)

The museum lecture series is free and open to the public. For more information, visit our website at <https://www.southern.edu/archaeology/lectureseries/Pages/lectureseriesprogram.aspx>

### SPEAKING SCHEDULE: MICHAEL G. HASEL

December 11–15, 2013

Biblical Foundation Conference: Lectures on Archaeology, Ghana

December 15–19, 2013

Biblical Foundation Conference: Lectures on Archaeology, Rwanda

April 17, 2014

Northwest Georgia Trade and Convention Center, Dalton, Georgia

### ARCHAEOLOGICAL FIELDWORK AND MIDDLE EAST STUDY TOUR

June 18–July 29, 2014

*The Fourth Expedition to Lachish, Israel*

**THE BATTLE OVER KING DAVID**  
EXCAVATING THE FORTRESS OF ELAH

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**November 7, 2012 - April 30, 2014**

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## DIG SIGHT

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