

ARCHAEOLOGY VERIFIES THE BIBLICAL RECORD

“I have considered the days of old, the years of ancient times.” — Psalm 77:5

We are living in the *time of the end* prophesied in Daniel 12:4 — the age when *“many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased.”* We see ample evidence of this in the great advances of knowledge found in every field of endeavor. The past one hundred and fifty years have witnessed the escalation of scientific and technological progress unprecedented in man’s history.

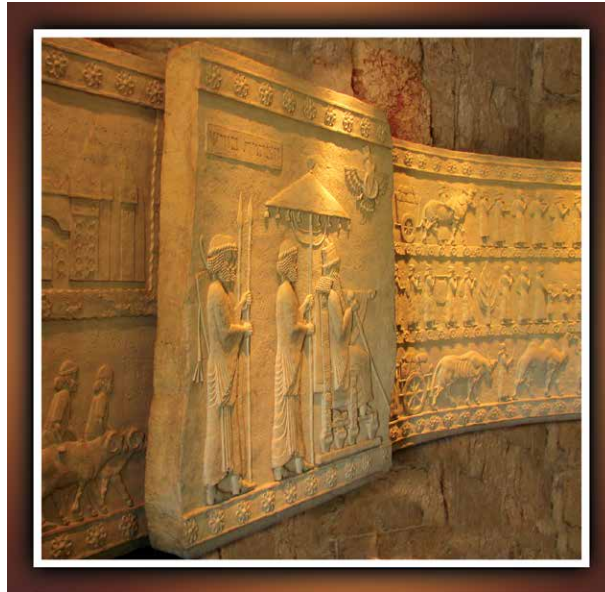
But with this increase of knowledge has come an age of skepticism in matters of faith in God and His Word. Evolution and other secular theories discredit the Bible, claiming Noah and the Flood never happened, King David was a mythological legend, and Solomon’s empire was a fanciful fable — all casting doubt that the Bible is the inspired

Word of God. This skepticism is reflected in a quote found in *Biblical Archaeology Review* by Philip Davis, July/August 1994, p. 55: *“I am not the only scholar who suspects that the figure of David is about historical as [the fictional] King Arthur.”*

The devastating effect of denying the literal existence of King David is that the New Testament would then be built upon folklore, since it claims that Jesus was the Messiah promised to come from the lineage of King David. But, by God’s grace, another very important science has also made incredible advances in the past two hundred years — the study of *archaeology*. Amazingly, it was Napoleon who can be accredited with inspiring modern archaeology. During his Egyptian campaign in A.D. 1801, the Pyramids so impressed him that he ordered a team of 150 scientists to dig and investigate the area. Since then, hundreds of excavations have given proof of historical events recorded in Scripture, thereby demonstrating the reliability of the Bible narrative.

UNEARTHING EVIDENCE OF THE BIBLICAL FLOOD

Dating back even earlier than King David and Israel’s antiquity is the amazing archaeological evidence of the Biblical Flood. To the religious community, discovery of Noah’s Ark would be an indisputable proof that the Flood was a reality and not a mere allegory. But, even without



The Citadel of David Museum in Jerusalem
“Cyrus & the Return to Zion” Exhibit

discovery of the ark, there has been convincing evidence that the Biblical Flood was a fact of history.

The late Prof. Langdon of the Institute of Metals, London, upon his return from extensive work in Mesopotamia in 1929, described his findings of a great *flood deposit* at a considerable depth, and of the layers below it, which contain relics of the civilization which thrived there before that event. We quote from his article which then appeared in *The London Times*: *“Below this flood layer was another, thirteen feet in thickness. In the lower part of this stratum were found the remains of brick buildings, which had been abandoned and silted up for many feet... This layer thus represented two periods—the earlier,*

when buildings were erected near its base; the later, when, after these buildings had been silted up, these shafts were sunk into it for the great tombs. In this layer [below the flood layer] were found a number of objects of copper, silver and gold, stone bowls, and a quantity of unpainted pottery.”

Evidences of a high degree of civilization in ancient times are further confirmed by the findings of famed archaeologist Leonard Woolley while excavating the ruins of the ancient city of Ur in 1923. Sumerian temples, workshops, law courts, and beautiful dwellings were discovered. He also unearthed the graves of the kings of Ur, with golden drinking cups, exquisitely shaped jugs and vases, bronze tableware, and musical instruments. In his diary Woolley wrote: *“Directly under the floor of one of the tombs of the kings we found in a layer of charred wood ash numerous clay tablets, which were covered with characters of a much older type than the inscriptions on the graves. Judging by the nature of the writing the tablets could be assigned to about 3,000 B.C. They were therefore two or three centuries earlier than the tombs.”*

As Woolley’s men continued to dig deeper, they discovered a *thick layer of virgin soil that could only have been deposited by a deluge of water*. This layer continued deeper for another ten feet, and then suddenly stopped, revealing below the soil evidence of another thriving human civilization — potsherds

and rubble from buildings. This pottery was not like the pottery found above the mud deposit which gave evidence of having been turned on a potter's wheel, but it was hand formed pottery. Woolley, without doubt in his mind, then reached the conclusion confirmed by Prof. Langdon, that the virgin soil deposit had been laid by the Biblical Flood.

ISRAEL: A LAND RICH IN HISTORY AND CONFLICT

There have been amazing archaeological discoveries in the land of Israel. Unfortunately, enemies of that tiny nation are seeking to destroy evidence that ancient Israel ever existed. By eradicating precious artifacts throughout the land of Israel, they are attempting to prove there is no historical evidence of an ancient Hebrew State. Despite the outcry from archaeologists and lovers of Israel, nothing seems to stop the wanton destruction of Biblical artifacts on the ancient Temple mount where Solomon's Temple once stood. In an attempt to erase evidence of Jewish presence in Jerusalem, the Islamic Trust has hauled away thousands of tons of dirt, rich with ancient treasures. But still a huge body of archaeological evidence exists.

The Associated Press, 2/10/08, comments on this evidence of an ancient Jewish presence in Jerusalem: "Underneath the homes and ragged streets of the Palestinian neighborhood of Silwan [City of David] lie the remnants of a glorious Jewish past: coins, seals, a road that led to the Biblical Temple and a water tunnel hewn by a Judean king 2,700 years ago. The Old Testament books of Kings and Chronicles recount the tunnel's origins: Hezekiah, king of Judea, dug it to channel water inside the city walls ahead of a siege by Assyrian armies. Measuring 1,750 feet long—about a third of a mile—the tunnel was dug around 700 B.C. by two [Jewish] teams that started from each end and met in the middle, an engineering feat brought to life by their chisel marks, still visible on the walls, and recounted in an inscription they mounted on the wall. But archaeology is hard-wired into the politics of modern-day Arab-Israeli strife, and new digs to unearth more of this past are cutting to the heart of the charged argument over who owns the Holy City today.... The City of David shows us the history and archaeology of Jerusalem... 'Jerusalem's [Jewish] foundations are here,' said archaeologist Eli Shukrun... The dig regularly yields important and colorful finds such as 2,500-year-old pins used to hold robes [of priests] closed, and seals stamped with the names of Yehochal ben Shlemiyahu and Gemaryahu ben Shafan, two figures mentioned in the biblical book of Jeremiah."

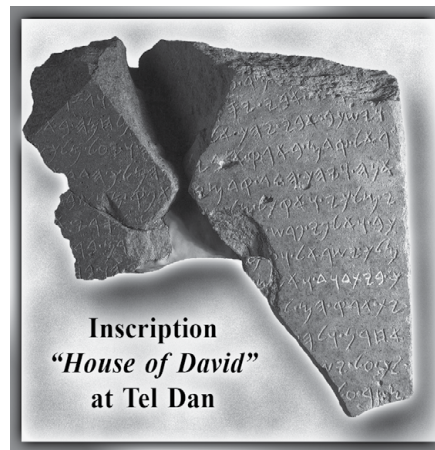
IN SEARCH OF THE CITY OF KING DAVID

Recent discoveries by the eminent archaeologist, Dr. Eilat Mazar have unveiled convincing evidence that pinpoint the exact location of King David's palace. She was noted as saying, "I excavate with the Bible in one hand and the shovel in the other." In 2005 she found King David's palace exactly where the Bible directed. In 2 Samuel 5:11 and 1 Chronicles 14:1 reference is made to King Hiram of the Phoenicians who offered to build King David a palace fit for an emperor. Just as Biblically described, Mazar found the trademark of Phoenician builders—cedars of Lebanon and their distinct style of stone masonry.

Mazar said, "One of the main clues in finding King David's palace was surprisingly from the Bible itself. [2 Samuel 5:17 states that] *When the Philistines heard that David had been anointed king over Israel, they went up in full force to search for him, but David heard about it and went down [from his palace] to the citadel.*" The Bible is careful to indicate that the palace was located *above* the citadel — the ancient walled city of David. Mazar observed, "The Bible would not have said 'went down' unless David indeed did go from his palace, down the slopes of the Ophel mountain, to the citadel. Consequently, his palace must have been located north of the city, not in the center of it." King David, who was already living in his new palace residence — not yet strong enough to withstand a major assault — regrouped south of his palace in the old Jebusite fortress city. This archaeological discovery is further proof of the historical King David.

DYNASTY OF DAVID AND SOLOMON

In 1993 archaeologists discovered the names of David and Israel in an inscription carved in stone only 100 years after David's death. *Biblical Archaeology Review*, March/April 1994, p. 26, reports: "It's not often that an archaeological find makes the front page of the *New York Times* (to say nothing of *Time* magazine). But that is what happened last summer at Tel Dan, ... in northern Galilee. There Avraham Biran and his team... found a



remarkable inscription from the ninth century BCE that referred both to the 'house of David' and to the 'king of Israel.'" *U.S. News & World Report* (10/25/99) stated that this "reference to David was a historical bombshell: never before had the familiar name of Judah's king been found in the records of antiquity outside the Bible."

Another scholar later found the name "House of David" in the inscriptions of the famous *Moabite Stone*, dated about 100 years after David's reign. It has been observed that "it is hard to understand how David's name could appear in (ancient) historical records if he were nothing but a mythological legend."

To confirm further evidence of *David's House* — the Davidic dynasty — Dr. Mazar, who, as we recall, excavates "with the Bible in one hand and a shovel in the other," began searching for King Solomon's palace. Dr. Mazar analyzed 1 Kings 3:1, "and the house of the Lord, and the wall of Jerusalem round about." Following this clue she and her team excavated and found Solomon's wall. Moreover, this wall not only confirms the presence of Solomon in Jerusalem, it confirms the Biblical narrative of Israel as a large and advanced kingdom. The wall contains the largest hewn stones from the First Temple period ever found in Israel.

Within the surrounds of the Solomon wall, Dr. Mazar and her team discovered other artifacts dating to the First Temple period (10th to 6th centuries BC). Seal impressions on jar handles with

the words “to the king,” testify to their usage within the monarchy. Also found were seal impressions (bullae) with Hebrew names, indicating the royal nature of the structure. Confirming the Biblical narrative of the presence of a major Israelite kingdom, Dr. Mazar states: *“A comparison of this latest finding with city walls and gates from the period of the First Temple, as well as pottery found at the site, enable us to postulate with a great degree of assurance that the wall is that which was built by King Solomon in Jerusalem in the latter part of the 10th century BC.”* Discoveries such as these are strong verification that King David and King Solomon did exist, and that, therefore, Jesus of Nazareth, the long expected Messiah, could, indeed, come from David’s lineage.

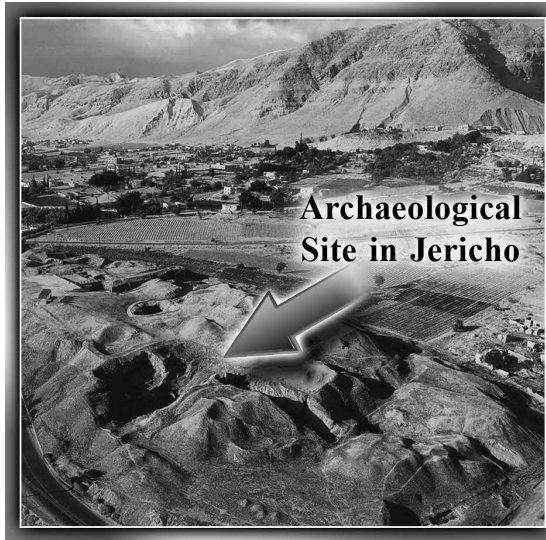
JERICO — A KEY CITY IN ISRAELI ANTIQUITY

The story of the fall of Jericho has long been considered by skeptics as mere folklore. But archaeological discoveries verify the Jericho account.

It was at Jericho, under the leadership of Joshua that the Israelites were told by God to enter and possess their promised homeland. Joshua was instructed to have the Israelites, led by the priests, march around Jericho once a day for six days. On the seventh day *“...they compassed the city seven times. And it came to pass at the seventh time, when the priests blew with the trumpets, Joshua said unto the people, Shout; for the Lord hath given you the city... So the people shouted when the priests blew with the trumpets: and it came to pass, when the people heard the sound of the trumpet, and the people shouted with a great shout, that the wall fell down... And they burnt the city with fire, and all that was therein.”* Joshua 6:15, 16, 20, 24

The first excavation of Jericho was in 1868, but it was not until 1930 that Dr. Garstang of Liverpool University discovered that *“From the standpoint of military architecture the defensive works of Jericho at this time were unparalleled... The whole system was destroyed 1600 B.C. by a general conflagration... accompanied also by local fires which completely charred and cracked the bricks.... The indications are those of earthquake... there remains no doubt: the walls fell outwards so completely that the attackers would be able to clamber up and over the ruins into the city.”* Archaeologists noted that the effect of the quake was unusual. A portion of the city wall on the north side remained standing after the devastation. This coincides with the account in Joshua 6 which tells of a woman named Rahab who lived in the wall of Jericho. She and her family were spared because of her faith in God and her courage in protecting the spies which Joshua sent to survey Jericho. Hebrews 11:31

Archaeology has once again provided evidence that what has been recorded in Scripture is reliable. As can be found with other miraculous events, God overruled the timing of the trumpet blasts on the seventh day to coincide with the earthquake that destroyed this key city in the settlement of the Holy Land.



THE DEAD SEA SCROLLS

One of the most important archaeological discoveries has been that of the Dead Sea Scrolls found in 1947 near Jericho. Several large clay jars in the caves of Qumran held tattered scrolls — some of the earliest copies of the books of the Bible. Previously, scholars had only clay tablets of Babylon and Egyptian papyrus to help them understand background information on the Bible, since no Old Testament manuscripts were known to have survived. However, all this changed with the discovery of over 800 papyrus and parchment texts found in these caves along the northwest corner of the Dead Sea. These Old Testament scrolls are 1,000 years older than any previously in existence.

The Isaiah Scroll is the oldest complete manuscript and is free of any real differences from the current Hebrew text. In fact, it has been confirmed that between the 1st and 9th centuries AD, the Jewish scribal copying of the Old Testament had been accomplished with remarkably few errors. This gives us confidence that the words in the Old Testament we read today are the same as those originally written thousands of years ago.

Fragments of every book of the Hebrew canon (Old Testament) have been discovered except for the Book of Esther. The Book of Nehemiah was just recently found so there are high expectations for the Book of Esther. There are now identified among the scrolls, 19 copies of the Book of Isaiah, 25 copies of Deuteronomy and 30 copies of the Psalms, and they accurately compare to each other. Since the Dead Sea Scrolls prove our Old Testament is accurate, it also proves that copyists during each generation since, for approximately 2,000 years, did not accidentally or deliberately change the text of the Old Testament.

ANCIENT ISRAEL — CAUSE TO REJOICE!

As thrilling as these discoveries are, some have asked, why should Christians be interested in the buried relics of the ancient past? Archaeology not only verifies the Bible as God’s Word, but proves that the Jewish people, by divine decree received the Land of Israel over 3,000 years ago and will never be taken out of their Land again. *“If ye will still abide in this land, then will I build you, and not pull you down, and I will plant you, and not pluck you up...”* (Jeremiah 42:10) Psalms 102:13-16 confirms that, when God’s favor returns to Zion (natural Israel) watchful Christians will *“take pleasure in her stones and favor the dust thereof. So the heathen shall fear [reverence] the name of the LORD... When the LORD shall build up Zion, he shall appear in his glory.”* The fact that the Jewish people are back in their homeland reveals that God has turned His favor toward Israel again. (Isaiah 40:1, 2) The Apostle Paul reveals why Christians should rejoice in the stones and dust of Israel: *“For if the casting away of them be the reconciling of the world, what shall the receiving of them be, but life from the dead?”* Romans 11:15

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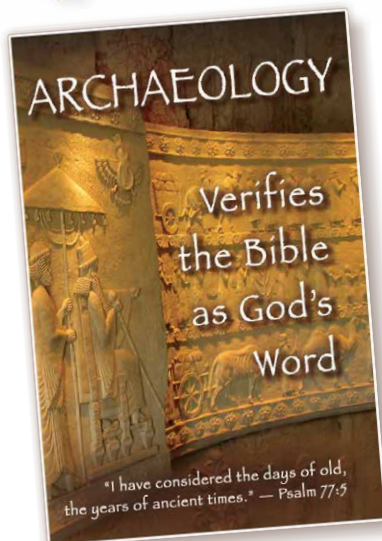
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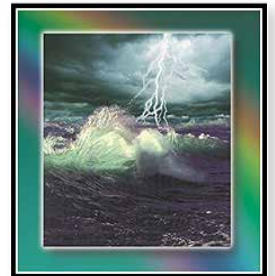
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