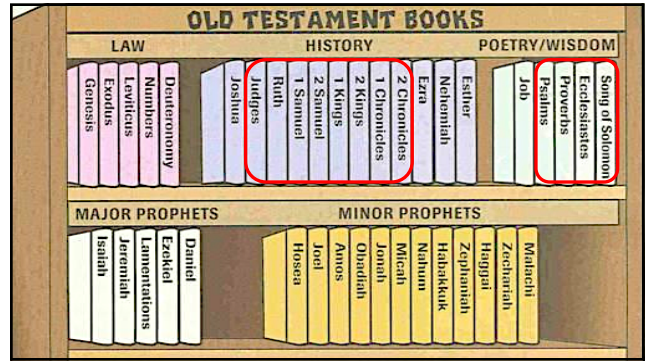
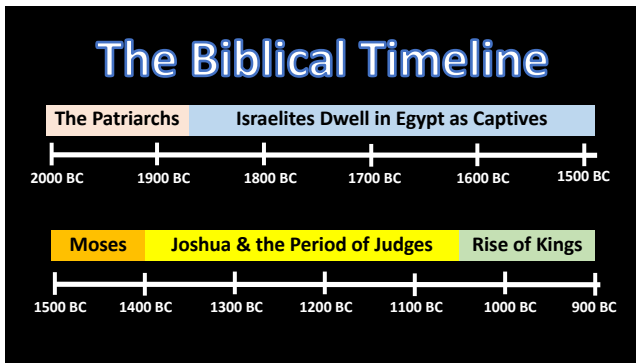




1



2



3

Survey: The Period of Judges

- Theocratic Reign (Law of God)
- Judges Dispense & Deliver
- No King Ruling in Israel
- Cyclical Pattern of Sin & Rescue
- Abundance of Female Heroes
- Steadily Increasing Wickedness
- "Right in Their Own Eyes"
- Horrific Abuses of Priesthood

Key Figures: Othniel, Ehud, Deborah, Gideon, Abimelech, and Samson

4

The Tribe of Dan

The Danites was a sea-faring tribe (Judges 5:27), but they abandoned the coastal territory due to the military threat of the Philistines. They explored the north and conquered Laish (Judges 18). The ancient Mycenaean-style artifacts discovered at Dan (i.e. Laish) date to the 13th century BC and affirm the presence of sea-faring people.


5

The Gates of Dan

Among World's Oldest Cities
The City Predates Abraham
Formerly Known as "Laish"
Renamed after the Tribe of Dan


"When Abram heard that his relative had been taken captive, he... went in pursuit as far as Dan" (Genesis 14:14).

6



Gideon Defeats Succoth
 The Bible tells us that Gideon defeated the men of Succoth (Judges 8:16). The Jerusalem Talmud claimed that Succoth was later called "Tar Ellah," which many believe is modern Deir Alla. Upon excavating the city, they found that it was built atop an ancient city. Those ruins contained the blackened remains of an ancient jar to the late 13th century BC — the time period of Gideon.


7



ABIMELECH

Looking west into the pass at Shechem
 Mt. Gerizim (left) and Mt. Ebal (right)


8



11th Century BC Seal
 Archaeologists unearthed a seal in the ancient city of Beth Shemesh — a town separating the Israelites and the hated Philistines. The seal dates to the period of the Judges and Samson. It celebrates a fight between a man and a lion.

"The Spirit of the Lord came upon Samson in power so that he tore the lion apart with his bare hands as he might have torn a young goat." (Judges 14:6)

9



Temple of Dagon

"Samson reached toward the *two central pillars* on which the temple stood. Bracing himself against them... He pushed with all his might, and down came the temple on the rulers and all the people in it." (Jdgs. 16:29-30)

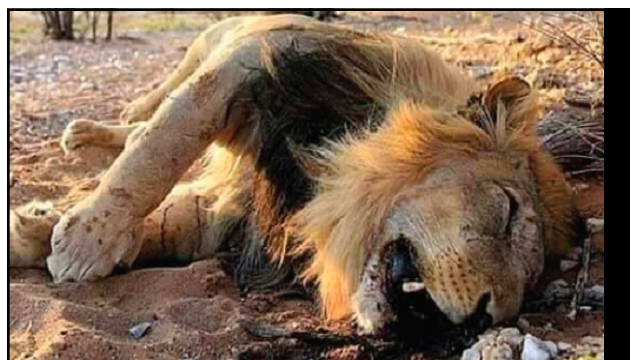
Archaeologists excavated the Temple of Dagon at Tell Qasile in 1972. The architectural plan is identical to the one described in the book of Judges. Dr. Bryant Wood noted, "Both temples share a unique design — the roof was supported by two central pillars." Wooden pillars likely rested on two stone support bases seen above.

10

Judges 14:12-14

Samson said to them, "Let me now put a riddle to you. If you can tell me what it is... then I will give you thirty linen garments and thirty changes of clothes...." And they said to him, "Put your riddle, that we may hear it." And he said to them, **"Out of the eater came something to eat. Out of the strong came something sweet."**

11



12



The Hair of Samson

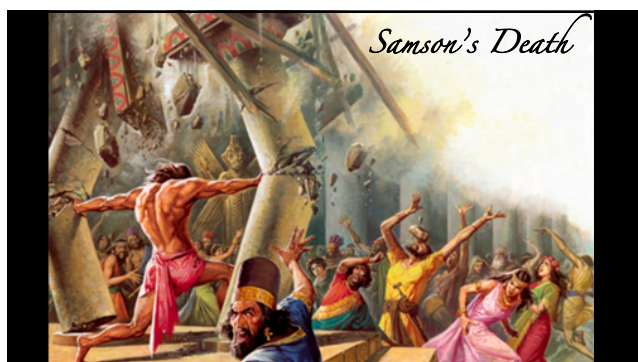
“A razor has never come upon my head, for I have been a Nazirite to God from my mother’s womb. If my head is shaved, then my strength will leave me, and I shall become weak and be like any other man.”

13

Judges 14:12-14

The Philistines seized him and gouged out his eyes and brought him down to Gaza and bound him with bronze shackles. And he ground at the mill in the prison. But the hair of his head began to grow again after it had been shaved. Now the lords of the Philistines *gathered to offer a great sacrifice to Dagon their god* and to rejoice, and they said, “Our god has given Samson our enemy into our hand.”

14



15



16

A Letter to King Zimri Lim of Mari

“This ecstatic of Dagon came and addressed me as follows, ‘That God sent me to hurry right to the king that they are to offer *mortuary sacrifices* for the shade of Yadu Lim.’ This is what the ecstatic said to me. I have, therefore, written to my lord that my lord do what pleases him.”

*** Dagon: god of fertility, agriculture, and afterlife ***

17

A Letter to King Zimri Lim of Mari

“My lord should deal with this.... The man who told me this dream was to offer a sacrifice to Dagon. And so I did not send him on. Moreover, *since this man was trustworthy, I did not take any of his hair or the fringe across his garment.*”

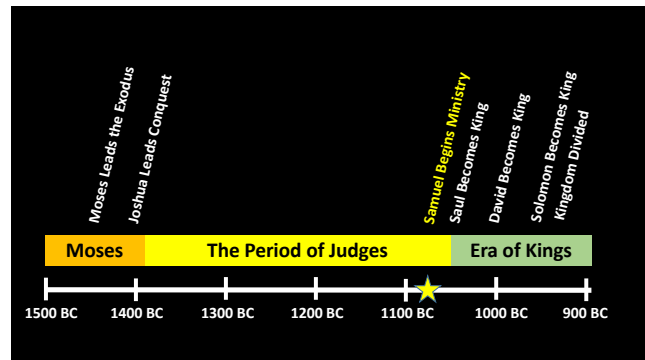
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Eerdmans Dictionary of the Bible

The notion of regularity in divine communication led to a number of practices in which one could determine the will of the gods. Rituals were regularly performed in regard to major events, such as lot casting prior to military engagements. Mesopotamians considered omens to be more reliable than more direct forms of divine communication, as evidenced in the library of Zimri-lim, king of Mari (ca. 1775). A number of ecstatic prophetic messages were delivered, generally credited to the god Dagan, which were addressed to the king during his military campaigns. These messages were accompanied by hair and garment samples from the would-be messenger of the god, to be tested by omens to confirm the validity of the message.

Eerdmans Dictionary of the Bible

19



20



Destruction of Shiloh

Dr. Israel Finkelstein led the excavation of Shiloh in 1981. After affirming the Israelites' history in this key city, he found evidence that Shiloh was destroyed in 1050 BC. Carbon dating affirmed this dating. Finkelstein believes that this occurred in the wake of the Philistine's triumph over the Israelites at Ebenezer when the Israelites were routed and Eli's sons lost the Ark of the Covenant. The prophet Jeremiah later tells us that Shiloh was destroyed in battle (Jeremiah 7:12).

21



22

1 Samuel 4:15-18

The man said to Eli, "I am he who has come from the battle... Israel has fled before the Philistines, and there has also been a great defeat among the people. Your two sons also, Hophni and Phinehas, are dead, and the ark of God has been captured." As soon as he mentioned the ark of God, Eli fell over backward from his seat by the side of the gate, and his neck was broken and he died, for the man was old and heavy.

23

1 Samuel 5:1-3

When the Philistines captured the ark of God, they brought it from Ebenezer to Ashdod. Then the Philistines took the ark of God and brought it into the house of Dagon and set it up beside Dagon. And when the people of Ashdod rose early the next day, behold, Dagon had fallen face downward on the ground before the ark of the Lord.

24

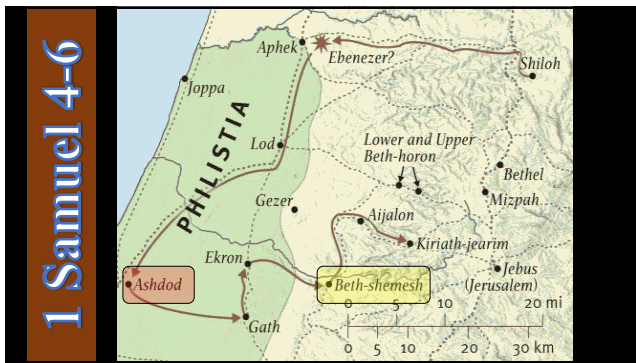
1 Samuel 5:3-4

So they took Dagon and put him back in his place. But when they rose early on the next morning, behold, Dagon had fallen face downward on the ground before the ark of the Lord, and the head of Dagon and both his hands were lying cut off on the threshold. Only the trunk of Dagon was left to him.

25




26



27

The Ancient Ruins of Beth-Shemesh



Archaeologists uncovered a stone table inside a temple-like structure in the ancient city of Beth-Shemesh. The artifact dated to 1100 BC.

“The cart came into the field of Joshua of Beth-Shemesh and stopped there. A great stone was there.... The great stone beside which they set down the ark of the Lord is a witness to this day in the field of Joshua of Beth-Shemesh.” (1 Samuel 6:14-18)


28



29


ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVIDENCE
The United Kingdom

30



“The Old Testament historical tradition is a fiction written around the middle of the first millennium.... The David of the Bible... is not a historical figure.”
 — Niels Peter Lemche, University of Copenhagen —

“David and Solomon were, in political terms, little more than hill country chieftains, whose administrative reach remained on a fairly local level, restricted to the hill country.”
 — Dr. Israel Finkelstein, *The Bible Unearthed* —



31



Solomon's Empire

- The territory of Israel before David became King
- Area conquered by David and inherited by Solomon
- Area under strong economic influence of Solomon

32

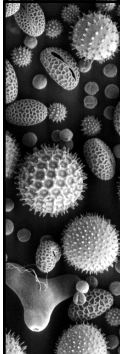
Israel & “The Bronze Age Collapse”



David and Solomon reigned over the pinnacle of Israel’s power. However, in what historians call “the Bronze Age Collapse,” the three major kingdoms (Egypt, Assyria, and Babylonia) each fell into a “dark age” during this period. Dr. Robert Drews of Vanderbilt University claimed this was “the worst disaster in ancient history, even more calamitous than the collapse of the Western Roman Empire.” In this power vacuum, Israel expanded.

33

The Mysterious Collapse




Scholars have proposed many theories to explain the collapse of civilization — plagues, natural disasters, foreign invasion, or a drastic change in climate. Pollen samples of this era reveal a sudden shift in agricultural practices. Between 1250 BC and 1100 BC, the region abandoned its former crops and began harvesting crops that flourish in dry climate (e.g. olive trees). Such a famine likely destabilized the region. The Bible declares, “In the days when the judges ruled, there was a famine in the land” (Ruth 1:1).

34


The Egyptians & the Anakim

Egyptian magicians often created “execration texts” on pottery to place curses on their enemies. They believed that when the pharaoh smashed these vessels that the curse would go into effect. One potsherd (c. 1900 BC) now in the Berlin Museum features an inscription referring to the “ly-Aneq.” Dr. Alan Johnson, professor at Wheaton College and Cambridge University, believes this “could well be the Anakim of biblical materials.”




35

The “Goliath” Potsherd

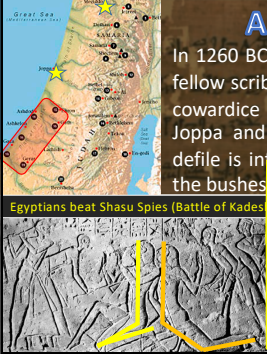


Dr. Aren Maeir of Bar-Ilan University led an excavation in the city of Gath and discovered the oldest Philistine inscription ever found. The inscription, etched on a small potsherd fragment, was dated to the 9th or 10th century BC. Dr. Maeir claims that a name on the potsherd seems to be equivalent to the name “Goliath.” Even Dr. Maeir’s detractors admit that the name is “remarkably similar.”



36

Anastasi Papyrus I



In 1260 BC, the Egyptian scribe Hori mocked his fellow scribe Amenemope for acting in shameful cowardice when making his way to the cities of Joppa and Megiddo. Hori wrote, "The narrow defile is infested with Shasu concealed beneath the bushes. Some of them are of four cubits or five cubits, from nose to foot, fierce of face, their heart is not mild, and they hearken not to coaxing." An Egyptian cubit is 21 inches. This is more than 8.5 feet.

37

A Harpist in the King's Court



"Whenever the spirit from God came upon Saul, David would take his harp and play. Then relief would come to Saul; he would feel better, and the evil spirit would leave him" (1 Samuel 16:23).


38

The Discovery of Ziklag



Archaeologists from the Israel Antiquities Authority recently discovered the ancient city of Ziklag. Shortly after the Amalekites had "overcome Ziklag and burned it with fire" (1 Samuel 30), David took refuge in this city, because Saul was seeking to kill him. Teams have confirmed that the city's ruins date to the 11th century BC — the precise period of David and Saul.

39



On that day, David said, "Anyone who conquers the Jebusites will have to use the water shaft" (2 Samuel 5:8).


40

King David's Palace



Dr. Eilat Mazar led the excavations in the City of David. She wrote, "This is a huge structure, the largest ever found in Israel from the ancient Israelite period.... It can only be a royal structure.... Jerusalem at the time of King David and King Solomon was very much like the Bible describes. It was monumental; the constructions were massive." She also found a "prestigious collection" of "elegant pottery."

41



Excavated Ruins of David's Palace
Dated to 1000 BC

42

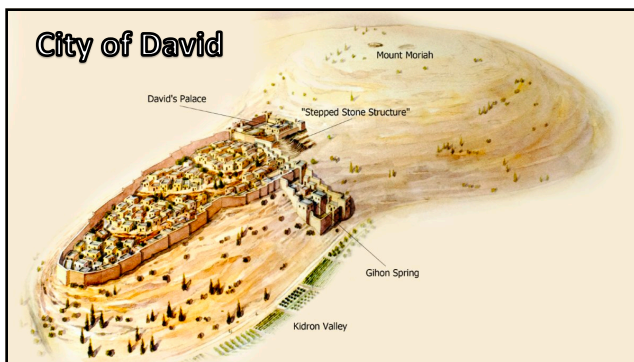


43



“David then took up residence in the fortress and called it the City of David. He built up the area around it, from the supporting terraces inward” (2 Samuel 5:9).

44



45

David's Phoenician Styled Architecture

Atop the “City of David,” excavators found an *enormous* capital that once rested atop a column — with an obvious Phoenician design. According to the Bible, Phoenician stonemasons helped to build David's palace.

“Now Hiram king of Tyre sent messengers to David, along with cedar logs and carpenters and stonemasons, and they built a palace for David” (2 Samuel 5:11).

The columns of the Pantheon (built in 120 AD) are nearly five feet wide.

46



47

The Philistines: Sea Peoples?

Archaeologists are currently excavating the five ancient cities of the Philistines (Ashdod, Ekron, Gath, Ashkelon, and Gaza), searching for clues concerning their mysterious origins. The Prophet Jeremiah claimed that the Philistines were “a remnant from the coasts of Capthor” (i.e. the island of Crete). Recent findings — including Greek-styled pottery, Aegean script, and evidence of both pork and dog consumption — affirm that the Philistines were likely Mediterranean in origin. Likewise, an inscription at the temple of Ramses III describes a battle against “Sea Peoples” (1180 BC), which he named the “Peleset.”

48

Ekron Inscription: King Achish



The Bible claims that “David fled from Saul and went to Achish king of Gath” (1 Samuel 21:10). Excavations at Ekron uncovered an inscription at a Philistine temple. It reads: “The temple that Achish, son of Padi... ruler of Ekron built for PTGYH.”

The name “Achish” stems from the word “Achaioi,” a name associated with ancient Greece (*Achaia*, Acts 19:21). This affirms that the Philistines were “sea peoples” from the Aegean.

49

Iron Age: Philistine City of Ekron



The Ekron excavations also provided proof that the Philistines had more advanced weaponry than their neighbors. They were first in the region to produce iron weapons. The book of Judges admits that the Israelites “were unable to drive the people from the plains, because they had iron chariots” (Judges 1:19). This intensified Israel’s desire to be “like all the other nations, with a king to lead us” (1 Samuel 8:20).

50

Ancient Fortified City



The Israeli Antiquities Authority has confirmed that the fortified city and palace discovered at *Khirbet Qeiyafa* was likely constructed during the reign of David or Solomon. Situated on the road to Philistia near the Valley of Elah (where David fought Goliath), it was an ideal defensive location. This city hosts the second largest palace discovered in the territory of Judah in the period.

51

Shaaraim: City of Two Gates



Shaaraim (*Khirbet Qeiyafa*) is listed in three books of the Bible. The Hebrew name *Shaaraim* literally means “two gates.” Excavations reveal that the city had two gates (on the western and southern sides of the city). Following David’s defeat of Goliath, the Bible tells us that “the wounded Philistines fell on the way from *Shaaraim* as far as Gath and Ekron” (1 Samuel 17:52).

52

The Qeiyafa Ostracoon



An ancient ostracoon, discovered at Shaaraim has been dated to the early 10th century BC. Featuring the oldest sample of ancient Hebrew writing, experts agree that the ostracoon contains references to the poor, the oppressed, widows, orphans, and a new king. Contemporary cultures of that time-period rarely mentioned such marginalized groups, yet both David’s Psalms and Solomon’s Proverbs, which were written during this same period, are filled with such references.


53

The Pool at Gibeon



King David’s men battled against the rebellious loyalists of King Saul at the “pool at Gibeon” (2 Samuel 2:13). Archaeologists claim that this massive pool is at least 3,000 years old, confirming that it was dug prior to the reign of David, just as the Bible claims.

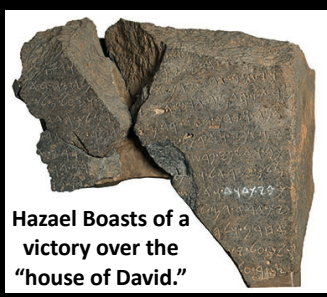
54



"Dan to Beersheba"

The Lord repeatedly promises that He would "establish David's throne over Israel and Judah from Dan to Beersheba" (2 Samuel 3:10). For decades, skeptics claimed that this was a wild exaggeration regarding the size of David's kingdom. They argued that the territory controlled by David likely amounted to little more than a small tribal kingdom.

55




Aramean Victory Pillar at Tel Dan

Archaeologists have dated this victory pillar between 870 BC to 750 BC

Hazel Boasts of a victory over the "house of David."

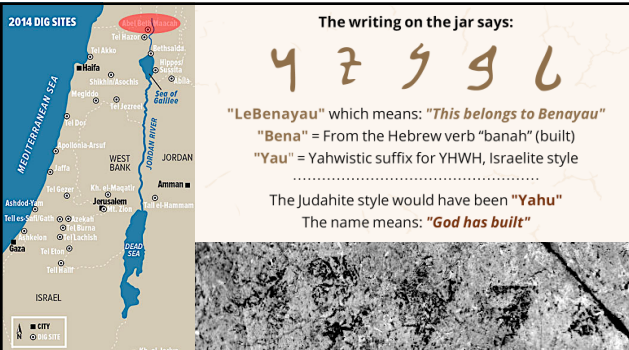
56

Israel's Boundary in the North



Abel Beth Maacah is an ancient Israelite city listed under the reign of King David. Skeptics have argued that the city was Phoenician or Aramean, not Israelite, because it was too far north (four miles west of Dan) to be an Israelite city. In 2020, two archaeologists from Hebrew University announced that they had found a 10th century jar featuring Hebrew writing in the ruins of the city.

57



The writing on the jar says:


י ז ש ש ל

"LeBenayau" which means: "This belongs to Benayau"
 "Bena" = From the Hebrew verb "banah" (built)
 "Yau" = Yahwistic suffix for YHWH, Israelite style

The Judahite style would have been "Yahu"
 The name means: "God has built"


58

The Ruins of Ancient Beersheba



During the excavations of Beersheba, ancient fortification walls were dated to the 10th century BC. The city featured a multi-chambered gate of Solomonic style. The city also hosted a destroyed pagan altar — likely torn down during the reforms of King Hezekiah (Isaiah 36:7). Some believe that the ancient well at Beersheba was dug by Isaac's servants after the death of Abraham (Gen. 26:25).

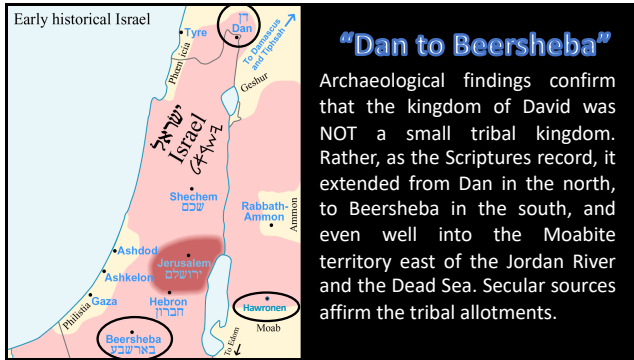
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The "Moabite Stone"

On the Moabite Stone (c. 830 BC), King Mesha recorded a triumph over the "house of David" at Hawronen — verifying that David's kingdom extended east of the Dead Sea. Mesha also bragged of conquering "the men of Gad [who] had dwelt in the land of Ataroth from of old." Indeed, the Torah informs us that the "Gadites (one of Israel's 12 tribes) built up Ataroth" during Joshua's conquest (Num. 32:34).

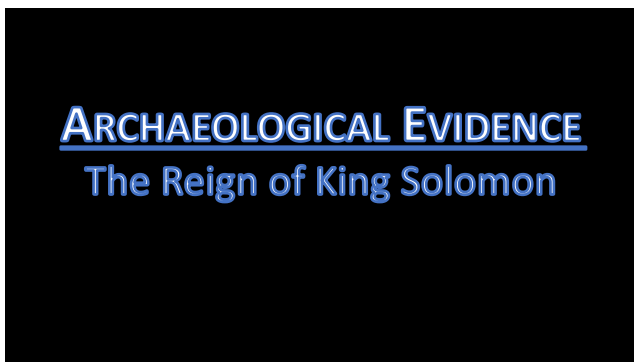
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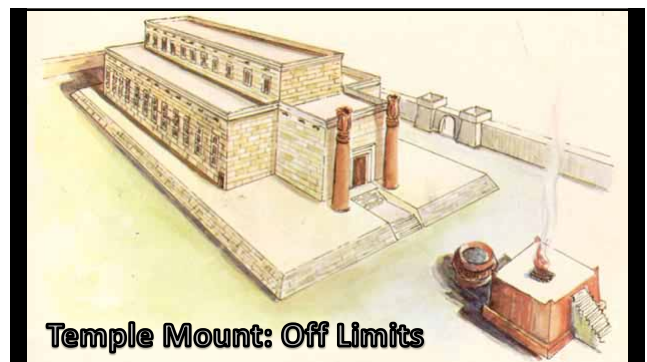
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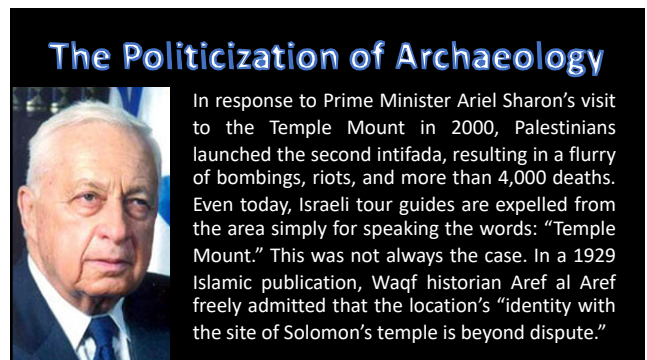
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64



65



66

THE TIMES OF ISRAEL

Islamic guards try to boot guide for saying 'Temple Mount' on Temple Mount

Waqf officials haul Israeli archaeologist in front of Israeli police for not using term 'Haram al-Sharif' during historical tour of site; police advise him to refrain from saying 'Temple Mount' for rest of visit

BY ILAN BEN ZION | January 3, 2017, 3:39 pm | © 209 Haram al-Sharif: "The Noble Sanctuary"

67

Tragic Disregard for Biblical History

The Waqf is an Islamic council that oversees the Temple Mount. In 1999, while developing part of a new mosque, they bulldozed a massive trench — 131 feet long and nearly 40 feet deep — into the strata adjacent to the Temple Mount, recklessly removing 13,000 tons of debris. The material, forever without provenance, was dumped in the Kidron Valley. Yasuf Natsheh, the Waqf's chief archaeologist, mocked the Israelite outcry: "Every stone is a Muslim development. If anything was destroyed, it was Muslim heritage.... It is worth nothing." When asked if the Temple Mount was buried there, he responded, "I would not like to answer."

68


Tragic Disregard for Biblical History



As part of the "Temple Mount Sifting Project," volunteers began sifting through the 13,000 tons of debris unloaded at various dumpsites. Dr. Eyal Meiron, an Israelite historian, lamented: "That earth was saturated with the history of Jerusalem. A toothbrush would be too large for brushing that soil, and they did it with bulldozers." Despite a 2004 Israeli court injunction, the Waqf continued to hastily remove material from the Temple Mount site.


69

Temple Mount Sifting Project




Bulla: Temple Official Named in Jeremiah

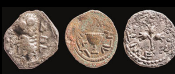
Despite working on this huge sifting project since 2004, the "Temple Mount Sifting Project" leaders claim that they are still years away from completion.




"More than half a million artifacts have been saved and stored."



Bulla: "Gibeon for the King"
*** Reign of Manasseh ***



800 Second Temple Coins



Floor Tiles of Herod's Temple

70

Cedar Beams from Solomon's Temple

In the 1930s, renovations of the Al-Aqsa Mosque involved the removal of dozens of "cedar of Lebanon" beams that supported its ceiling. These ancient beams were encased inside newer planks.





Photo during Renovation

Experts have used carbon dating to prove that the beams did NOT originate with the mosque's construction in 705 AD. Many beams dated to the time of Herod's temple. The oldest beam dated to 884 BC (+/- 180 years). This span of time would include the construction of Solomon's temple in 966 BC.

71

Solomon & the Cedars of Lebanon



*In a letter to the King of Tyre, Solomon wrote, "I intend, therefore, to build a temple for the Name of the Lord my God.... So give orders that **cedars of Lebanon** be cut for me" (1 Kings 5:5-6).*

One of the Herodian beams featured distinct impressions produced after centuries of pressing down on the columns. One longer beam featured the impressions at intervals of 10.8 feet — the same interval between columns at other Herodian structures.

72

Fortification Wall in Jerusalem



Dr. Eilat Mazar uncovered an ancient fortification wall in Jerusalem, **dating to the 10th century BC** — the period of King Solomon. The wall is roughly 230 feet long and 20 feet tall. She also found inscriptions on the artifacts uncovered at the site mentioning a “king.”

“Solomon made an alliance with Pharaoh... and married his daughter. He brought her to the City of David until he finished building his palace, the temple of the Lord, and the wall around Jerusalem.” (1 Kings 3:1)

73



Bones of Sacrifices

The Waqf conducted a limited excavation (coinciding with the laying of a new power cable at the mosque). Their workers unearthed bones of sheep and goats — two animals slain in the Levitical system. The artifacts dated to the period of Solomon’s Temple. During the dedication of the new temple, Israelites were “sacrificing so many sheep and cattle that they could not be recorded or counted” (1 Kings 8:5).

74

Jars of Wine for the King of Judah

The Israel Antiquities Authority announced the discovery of an ancient papyrus shipping receipt, dating to roughly 700 BC. Measuring only 4.3 inches long, this document reads: “From the king’s maidservant from Na’arat, jars of wine, to Jerusalem.”



75

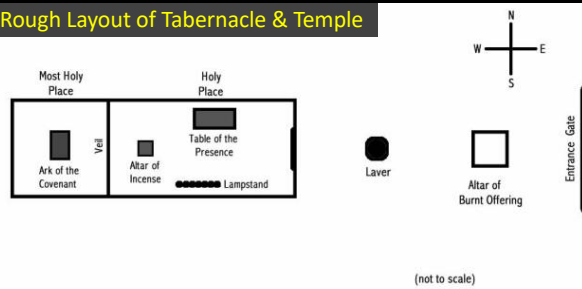


The Temple at Arad

In 1962, Dr. Yohanan Aharoni discovered the Temple of Arad, located west of the Dead Sea. In the excavations, he discovered an inscription referring to the “House of Yahweh,” and he noted that the temple’s layout bore striking similarities to Solomon’s Temple in Jerusalem — an altar of sacrifice, a courtyard, incense altar, and two internal rooms. Historians believe that this temple was abandoned or destroyed during the reforms of Hezekiah.

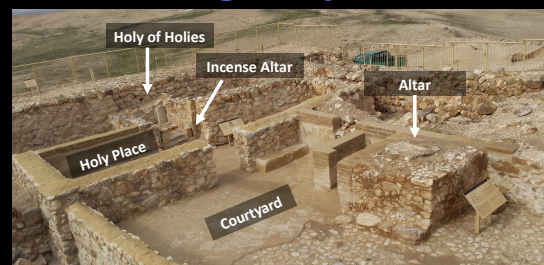
76

Rough Layout of Tabernacle & Temple



77

East-Facing Temple at Arad



78



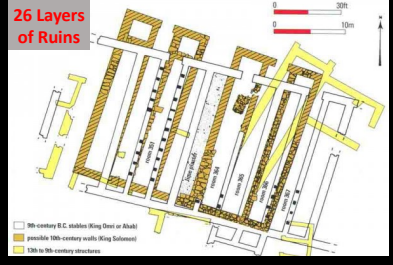
Temple Shrine?



As Solomon constructed the temple, the Bible tells us that “he made for the entrance of the nave four-sided doorposts of olive wood” (1 Kgs. 6:31-33). For centuries, scholars failed to understand what was meant by “four-sided doorposts.” Recently, the discovery of a 35cm shrine at Khirbet Qeiyafa dating to the 10th century BC has shed new light on this passage.

79

The Ruins of Megiddo






26 Layers of Ruins

- 9th century B.C. (Shiloh King Dadi or Abdi)
- possible 10th-century walls (King Solomon)
- 12th-century structures

80


Solomonic Gates at Megiddo



At the palace in Megiddo, the gates feature a Solomonic style — three rows of cut stones laid atop cedar beams (for earthquakes). When Solomon built the inner courtyard of the temple, *“he built the inner courtyard of three courses of dressed stone and one course of trimmed cedar beams”* (1 Kings 6:36).

81

Solomon’s Throne at Megiddo



An artifact discovered at Megiddo displays an elevated royal throne. The king is surrounded by doves and is being presented with an Egyptian lotus — two emblems of peace. The throne is rounded and flanked by winged lions. The Bible describes Solomon’s throne in great detail: “The throne had... a rounded top. On both sides of the seat were armrests, with a lion standing beside each of them” (1 Kings 10:19).

82