Name Him To Claim Him –Part 9

Archaeological Evidence for Names In The Tanakh

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Proverbs 30:4

Who hath ascended up into heaven, or descended? who hath gathered the wind in his fists? who hath bound the waters in a garment? who hath established all the ends of the earth? what *is* his name, and what *is* his son's name, if thou canst tell?

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

This is the lead page of the 1611 KJ's Bible.

Notice at top of page Our Creator's Name in Modern Hebrew.
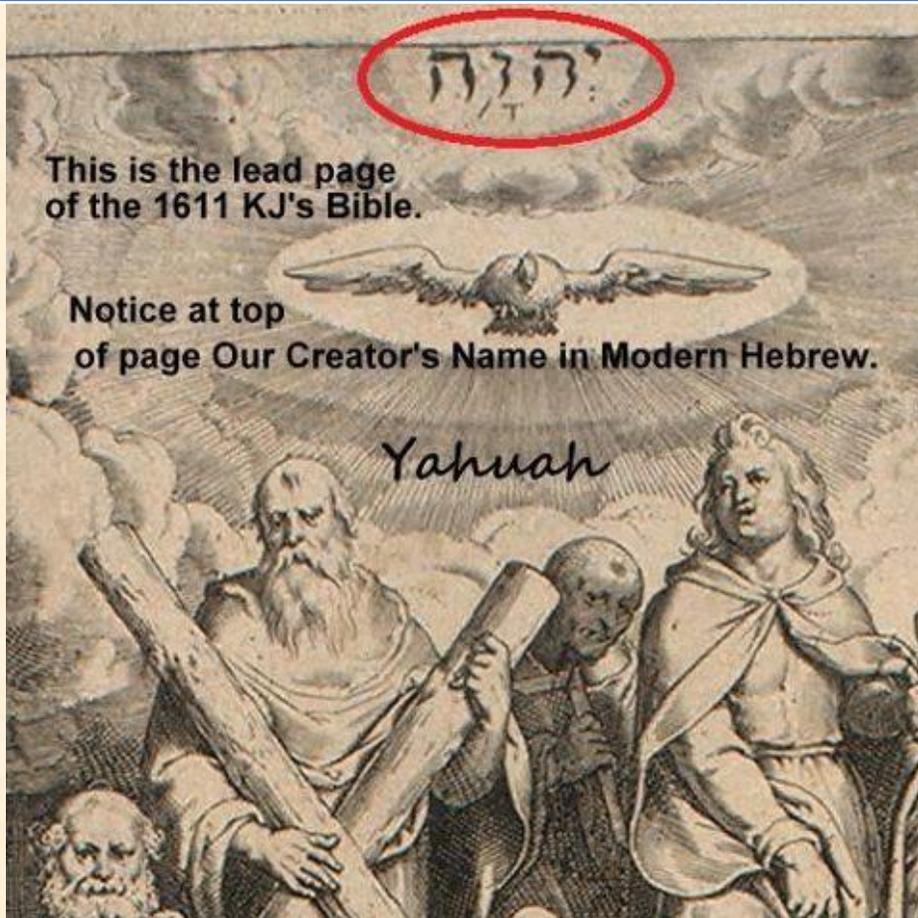
Yahuah

Our personal study on why we have come to trust the importance of calling on The Creator's Name and His Son's Name using as close to the original pronunciation as possible.

Items of Discussion

Archelogy Evidence

In this part we will be looking at ancient proof of the validity of the four letters, יהוה to show that it was held to be the Name of the Most High Almighty and not a manifestation of kabbalah.

The earliest inscription of His Name is on the Moabite Stone in ancient Hebrew script, dated 890 BC.

You can see the Creator's Name on this Ancient Stone at bottom.
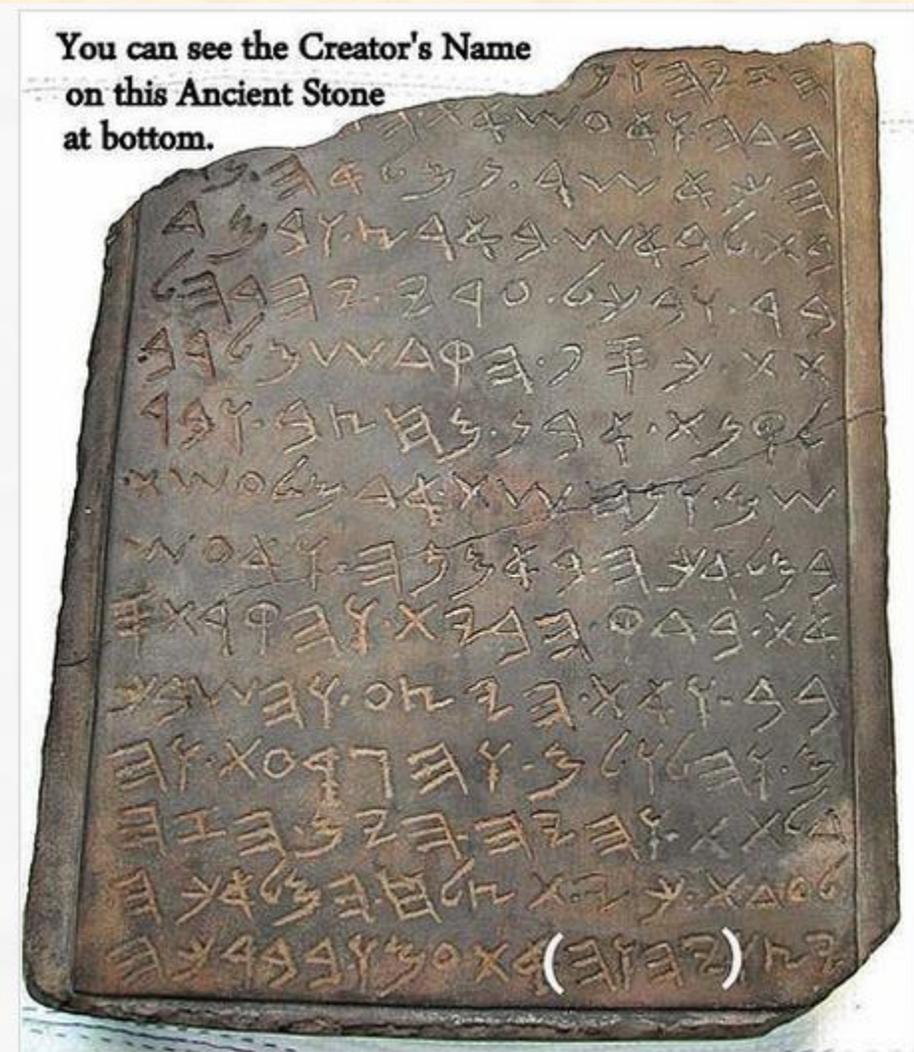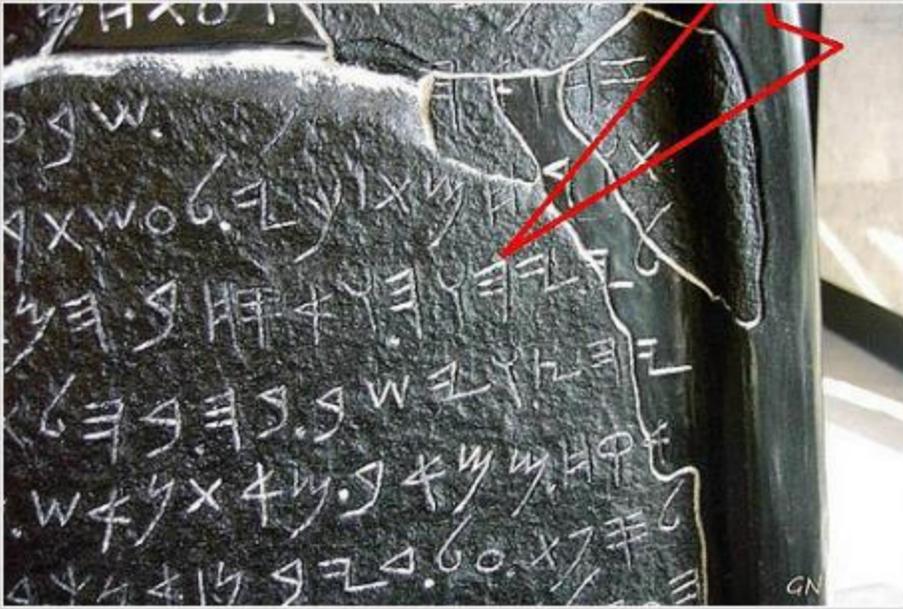
However the oldest Scripture text found is called the Silver Scroll from the 7th Century that we have already looked at. Here is an article from the Biblical Archaeological Review Dated April 1983.

OLDEST SCRIPTURAL
TEXT FOUND
SEVENTH CENTURY
B.C.E.

YAHWEH
(Ancient Hebrew Text)
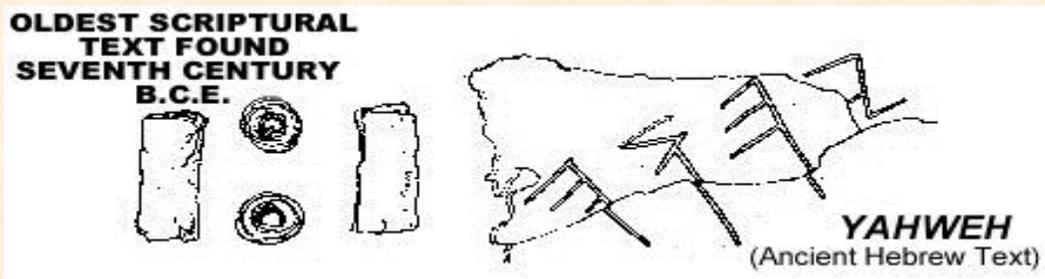
Click to
Enlarge

The <u>very oldest Scriptural text ever found</u>, dating back almost 2,600 years, was found in a tiny silver amulet which contains a Seventh Century b.c.e. extract from the Book of Numbers (6:24-26), the priestly blessing. The rolled up amulet was part of a treasure hard found by a Tel Aviv University archeologist in a First Temple Period family tomb in Yerusalem, Israyl. When this amulet was written, the Temple of Solomon still stood, the heirs of King David still ruled on the throne, and <mark>the Dead Sea Scrolls would not be written for another 400 years</mark>.

It was three years after its discovery before this fragile amulet could be unrolled by technical experts at the Israyli Museum. On this amulet the <mark>Name of Yahauh could be clearly read</mark>. Complete details of this magnificent find can be read in the 6-28-86 and 8-9-86 issues of *The Jerusalem Post* and the 6-87 issue of *The Readers Digest*.

<mark>**Bar Mar/Apr 1983**</mark>

News from the Field: The Divine Name Found in Jerusalem

By Gabriel Barkay

The Divine Name—the tetragrammaton—*yod*, *he*, *waw*, *he*—YHVH—Yahweh—~~LORD~~—sometimes rendered in English Jehovah—has been found in the Holy City, Jerusalem, for the first time in an archaeological excavation.

Dating to the end of the seventh or sixth century B.C., the prayer-like inscription containing the Divine Name was scratched on a tiny amulet—a rolled-up strip of silver.

Jerusalem is the most excavated site in the Holy Land. Indeed, some excavations are still in progress. Nevertheless, the number of inscribed objects from the First Temple Period (which ended with the Babylonian destruction of Jerusalem in 587 B.C.) is very limited. The few inscriptions that have been found were carved in stone or written on potsherds.

The reasons for this paucity are not difficult to understand. Inscriptions on less durable materials like papyrus have long since disintegrated. Moreover, Jerusalem has been destroyed many times. Each time, a new city was built on the remains. There are no occupational gaps in its 5,000-year history. And today's Jerusalem is built on the remains of the ancient city. It is therefore not surprising that the ancient treasures described in the books of the Old Testament have long since vanished. Even in excavations, precious metals as well as inscriptions are rare. This makes our find doubly rare.

One burial cave with unusual architectural features held a special surprise. Under one of the burial benches in this cave we found a large, undisturbed repository—a hollow area hewn under the burial bench. Burial in a repository like this was customary in Judah during the Davidic dynasty. Initially the body of the deceased was laid on the hewn stone burial bench inside the cave. Later, to make room for subsequent burials, the bones of the deceased were collected and placed in the repository, along with the deceased's burial gifts. In this way, generations that followed were buried in the same burial cave as their ancestors. This is the meaning of the Biblical expression, "He was gathered unto his fathers" (e.g. Judges 2:10; 2 Chronicles 34:28). The bones of the deceased were literally placed with those of the fathers in the repository under the burial bench.

The Divine Name that clearly appears in the inscription is composed of the four Hebrew characters written in ancient Hebrew script, *yod-he-waw-he,* commonly written Yahweh and sometimes pronounced Jehovah. The Divine Name appears in the Old Testament over 6,800 times, yet this is its first appearance on an archaeological find **from the city of Jerusalem**—the city where the Lord's Temple was built—though the Divine Name does appear on archaeological finds outside Jerusalem (some examples are the Lachish Letters[a], the Arad Letters, finds at Kuntillet Ajrud (Khorvat Teiman) in the Sinai[b], and cave walls in the Judean hills). The length of the Divine Name in our inscription is 10.9 mm (0.43 inch). The dimensions of the whole strip when unrolled are 97 mm (3.82 inches) in length, by 27 mm (1.06 inches) in width. The second strip, which is much smaller, was opened later and measures 39 mm (1.54 inches) in length, and 11 mm (0.43 inch) in width. It is also covered with densely scratched characters in the ancient Hebrew script.

The dating of the two inscribed, rolled silver strips to the end of the seventh or to the sixth century B.C. is fixed mainly by the archaeological context within which they were discovered. This dating is established primarily by the association of the amulets with a rich assemblage of datable pottery totaling more than 300 pieces, found in the repository with the amulets. Additional evidence for the date of the strips is paleographic; the script seems to be typical of the seventh or sixth century B.C. if we compare it to other dated inscriptions.

The pottery indicates that the burial cave continued to be used after the destruction of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar the Babylonian in 587 B.C. It seems very possible, since most of the objects are dated after 587 B.C., that these two silver strips date to the days following the city's destruction. This may have important historical implications.

The prophet Jeremiah was an eyewitness to the Babylonian destruction of Jerusalem. Yet neither the book of Jeremiah nor other books of the Bible provide much information about this period in Jerusalem's history—probably because of the trauma and shock caused by the destruction of the city. In the minds of the Jews the holy city of Jerusalem was indestructible. Now they knew differently. One reference in the book of Jeremiah (Jeremiah 41:5) relates that the Jews cherished the physical remains of Jerusalem by visiting the ruins of the Temple. Our silver amulet with the name of the Lord and the other finds from the repository possibly indicate that Jews continued their contacts with Jerusalem after the destruction of the city and the First Temple.

CLICK IMAGE FOR LARGER VIEW
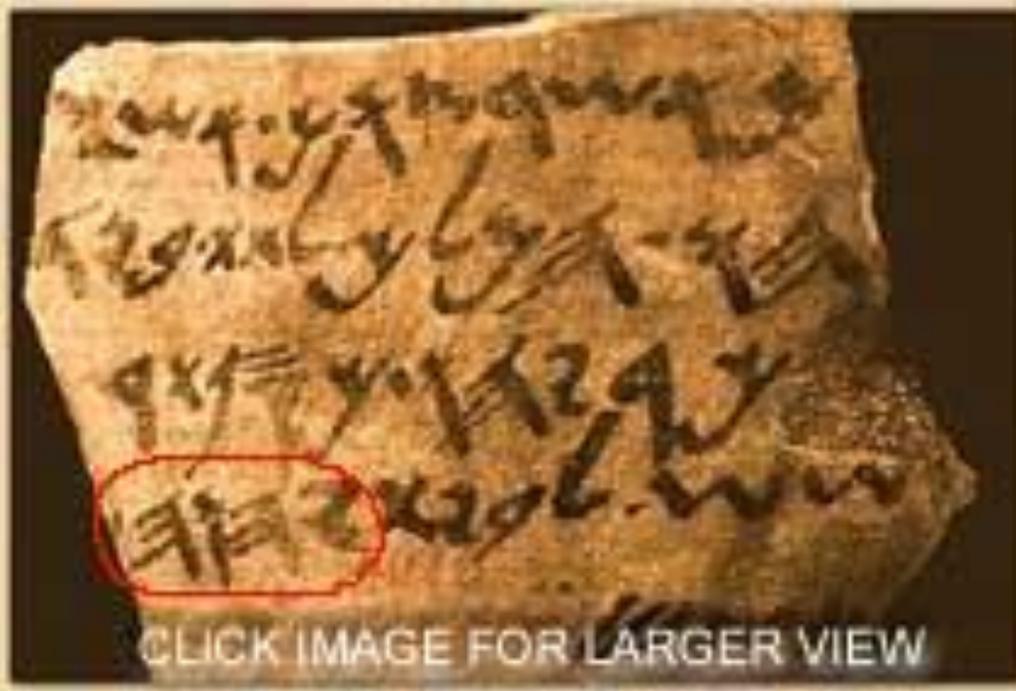
Ancient Inscription Records Gift To Solomon's Temple

November/December 1997 issue of *Biblical Archaeology Review*, **pages 28-32.**

We see here that the Creator's work during the time of Solomon was known by the same Name as it is today—The House of Yahuah. It was Solomon who built the Temple where this tithe was given. You can read of this in I Kings 6.

Two extremely important Hebrew inscriptions have recently surfaced on the antiquities market. One appears to be a receipt for a donation of three silver shekels to the House of Yahweh, pursuant to an order of the Israelite king. This is the oldest extra-Biblical mention of King Solomon's Temple ever discovered. The other inscription records the petition of a widow for some portion of her late husband's property. Both inscriptions, apparently by the same scribe, are written in Old Hebrew, or paleo-Hebrew, the script used before the Babylonian Exile. Both are on pieces of pottery, called ostraca because they bear an inscription.

   Only one other extra-Biblical source mentions Solomon's Temple, destroyed by the Babylonians in 586 B.C.E...

The text on the first ostracon, which measures about 4 inches wide by 3.5 inches tall (10.9 by 8.6 cm), is only 5 lines and 13 words long. All the words are complete and readable. See the box for the text and translation.

A TEMPLE RECEIPT
Text:
1. K'SR SWK. 'SY
2. HW.HMLK.LTT.BYD
3. [Z]KRYHW.KSP TR
4. SS.LBYT YHWH [.]
5. S3

Translation:
1. Pursuant to the order to you of Ashya-
2. hu the king to give by the hand
3. of [Z]echaryahu silver of Tar-
4. shish to the House of Yahweh
5. Three shekels.
*Brackets indicate that the letter or word has been reconstructed. Half-brackets indicate that part of the letter or word has been reconstructed.

Most of the words are separated from one another by dots acting as word dividers. However, sometimes the word dividers are omitted, such as between <u>LBYT and YHWH, which together are pronounced Beit Yahweh and mean "House of Yahweh</u>."

The Temple is designated by the Hebrew term <u>BYT YHWH, many times in the Bible</u>. (Temple only refers to the building, Beit—House refers also the people of Yahweh). But BYT YHWH had been found complete in only one extra-Biblical inscription, a faded ostracon from Arad with an obscure context, until this newly published ostracon was revealed.

<u>BYT YHWH</u> has been reconstructed on the inscribed ivory pomegranate that served as the head of a priestly scepter <u>in Solomon's Temple</u>... divine name would mean "<u>he causes to be, or exist,</u>" i.e., "<u>he creates</u>." Amorite personal names after 2,000 B.C. lend support to the Haupt-Albright view, demonstrating that the employment of the causative stem *yahwe* "he creates" was in vogue in the linguistic background of early Hebrew.

Three-shekel receipt provides evidence of King Solomon's Temple

NEW YORK (AP)- Talk about holding on to a receipt.
   A recently discovered piece of pottery recording a donation to the "House of Yahweh" may contain the oldest mention outside the Bible of King Solomon's Temple.
   The 3-1/2 by 4-inch artifact is nearly 3,000 years old, dating to a time when kings sent messenges

inscribed on pottery.   - 11/3/97
(AP Photo)

Three Shekels for the Lord

Ancient inscription records gift to Solomon's Temple

By Hershel Shanks

Two extremely important Hebrew inscriptions have recently surfaced on the antiquities market. One appears to be a receipt for a donation of three silver shekels to the Temple of Yahweh, pursuant to an order of the Israelite king. This is the oldest extra-Biblical mention of King Solomon's Temple ever discovered. The other inscription records the petition of a widow for some portion of her late husband's property. Both inscriptions, apparently by the same scribe, are written in Old Hebrew, or paleo-Hebrew, the script used before the Babylonian Exile. Both are on pieces of pottery, called ostraca because they bear an inscription.

The text on the first ostracon, which measures about 4 inches wide by 3.5 inches tall (10.9 by 8.6 cm), is only 5 lines and 13 words long. All the words are complete and easily readable. See "A Temple Receipt" below for the text and translation. Most of the words are separated from one another by dots acting as word dividers. However, sometimes the word dividers are omitted, such as between LBYT and YHWH, which together are pronounced Beit Yahweh and mean "house (or temple) of Yahweh." This omitted word divider may have important implications for the well-known "Beit David" inscription from Tel Dan ("Reading of 'Beit David' Inscription Strengthened").

The Temple is designated by the Hebrew term BYT YHWH, "the house of the Lord," many times in the Bible. But BYT YHWH had been found complete in only one extra-Biblical inscription, a faded ostracon from Arad with an obscure context, until this newly published ostracon was revealed.

"Yahweh" is clearly present and easily readable on the newly published Temple ostracon.

The ostracon describes the silver being donated to the Temple as "silver of Tarshish." The Bible mentions Tarshish on several occasions, but whether it refers to a place, a kind of ship or a set of trade routes remains a mystery.

The *New Jerusalem Bible*, for example, explains in a footnote at 1 Kings 10:22 that the "meaning [is] uncertain, perhaps a place-name. Or 'refinery ships'for carrying metal." The Temple ostracon supports the theory that it was a place, as most scholars now conclude. But what place? According to 1 Kings 10:22, gold, silver, ivory, apes and peacocks came from Tarshish. Spain has been suggested as a possible location. However, Harvard paleographer Frank Moore Cross suggests another possibility, based on a reference to Tarshish in a Phoenician inscription found on Sardinia and known as the Nora Stone.[b] According to Cross, "Tarshish" there may refer to a Sardinian site where metal was smelted, suggesting that the name comes from a root meaning "to smelt."

Several other Biblical texts connect Tarshish with silver. Jeremiah 10:9 mentions that "beaten silver is brought from Tarshish." In support of the Spanish hypothesis, the authors of the *Semitica* article note that several classical sources refer to silver production in Spain. "Tarshish silver" may also simply refer to silver of very high quality.

The ostracon states that the money is to be given, as commanded by King Ashyahu, to one Zecharyahu for transmittal to the Temple. Ashyahu appears in a number of inscriptions,[c] but nowhere with the title of king, and the Hebrew Bible lists no king of Judah or Israel by that name. However, the scholars who published the ostracon speculate that since royal names often appear in more than one form, this name might be another form of Yoash or Yehoash (often written in English translations as Joash and Jehoash). These names merely reverse the two elements in Ashyahu—*ash*, meaning "has given," and the theophoric element *yahu* or *yah*, signifying Yahweh—yet each of these names means "Yahweh has given." Two kings Yoash or Yehoash are known to have existed: a king of Judah who reigned from about 835 to 796 B.C., and a king of Israel who reigned from about 803 to 787 B.C.

A third possibility exists, that Ashyahu was King Josiah, who reigned over Judah from about 640 to 609 B.C. and instituted an important religious reform making the Jerusalem Temple the center for all worship of Yahweh. His

name in Hebrew is composed of the same two elements *Y'ash-yah*, pronounced Yoshiah. (*Y'ash* is the imperfect form of *ash*.)

Which, if any, of these kings is referred to in the ostracon as Ashyahu depends on the date of the ostracon. The article's authors date the handwriting on the ostracon to the latter part of the seventh century B.C., shortly before the Babylonian destruction of the Temple. Israeli paleographer Ada Yardeni agrees with a seventh-century B.C. date for the inscription. On this basis, the two kings named Yoash or Yehoash can be ruled out, as the article's authors do, leaving only Josiah (or Yoshiah) as a likely possibility.

Cross, on the other hand, would date the handwriting more than a century earlier. P. Kyle McCarter, Jr., of Johns Hopkins University agrees with him. If their dating is correct, the two kings named Yoash or Yehoash are better candidates. Because the suffix *-yahu* is associated with Judah—the suffix *-yah* was used in the northern kingdom of Israel—the King Yoash or Yehoash who ruled Judah from 835 to 796 B.C. is McCarter's pick.

The name Zecharyahu, the intermediary mentioned in the ostracon, is well known from other inscriptions and from the Bible. **BAR** readers will recognize the name's English form: Zechariah or Zachariah.[d]

The ostracon's final line contains the single letter *shin*, the standard abbreviation for *shekelim*. The number of shekels is indicated by three strokes. At this early date, before the introduction of coinage, a shekel corresponded to a weight of a little more than 11 grams.

Since the amount is the last item recorded, even though "silver of Tarshish" appears earlier, the article's authors speculate that this may have been a standard receipt for a Temple donation. The amount may have been filled in only at the time of donation. The ostracon was then given to the donor as an official receipt.

If one still wants to persist and say that YHWH is a pagan deity, then you now must rip out all information dealing with Solomon including the Psalms and David as The Name YHWH is the same Name that David used, knew and wrote songs to. The above clearly proves that the Temple of King Solomon was called "The House of YHWH" and is consistent with the spelling and writing of YHWH's name in scrolls before this period.

The next one is a fragment of the Dead Sea Scrolls -10 Commandments Deut 5.

From the website (6) it states:

Dan Rahimi, the ROM's VP for gallery development said that the leather scroll was thought to date from between 30 and 1 B.C. The scroll was discovered in one of 11 caves in 1952. It is not the oldest surviving copy but is the second-or-third-oldest.

"The parchment is part of the Dead Sea Scrolls found in the ancient remnants of a monastic community in 1947. The scrolls, including the **10 Commandments** parchment, are dated at close to 30 years before the birth of Christ.

The next oldest written document that contains a complete **10 Commandments** is 1,010 years old and is part of a complete Hebrew Bible that was probably written in Cairo and is now in St. Petersburg."

The displayed Scroll contains the text of the Ten **Commandments** from Deuteronomy 5 and is the best preserved of all the Deuteronomy manuscripts discovered. A biblical scroll, it is written in Hebrew and dated to ca. 30 – 1 BCE.

The oldest known text of the Ten Commandments is the **Nash Papyrus,** discovered in Egypt. A Hebrew text, it dates to 150-100 BCE; the Ten Commandments scroll in this exhibition dates to 30-1 BCE. In the Nash Papyrus the Ten Commandments are followed by the start of the *Shema Yisrael* prayer ("Hear, O Israel...").

The Nash Papyrus

Prior to the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls, the Nash Papyrus was the oldest Hebrew text in existence. It contains the Decalogue or Ten Commandments as well as the Shema Yisrael Prayer. It is dated now to the second century BC. It was found in Egypt in 1902. The Shema reads, "Listen O Israel: Yahweh our God is one Yahweh." It was an instructional collection reminding Israel of their duty to God.

The Tetragrammaton YHWH "Yahweh" is visible twice on the last line of this piece as well as other places in this text. (This is a replica)

HEBREW TEXT.

[... אנכי י]הוה אלהיך אשר [הוצא]תיך מארץ מ[צרים]   1

[לוא יהיה ל]ך אלהים אחרים [על פ]ני לוא תעשה[לך פסל]   2

[וכל תמונה] אשר בשמים ממעל ואשר בארץ [מתחת]   3

[ואשר במי]ם מתחת לארץ לוא תשתחוה להם [ולוא]   4

[תעבדם כי] אנכי יהוה אלהיך אל קנוא פק[ד עון]   5

BIBLICAL ARCHAEOLOGY REVIEW

The **Oldest Hebrew Inscription?**
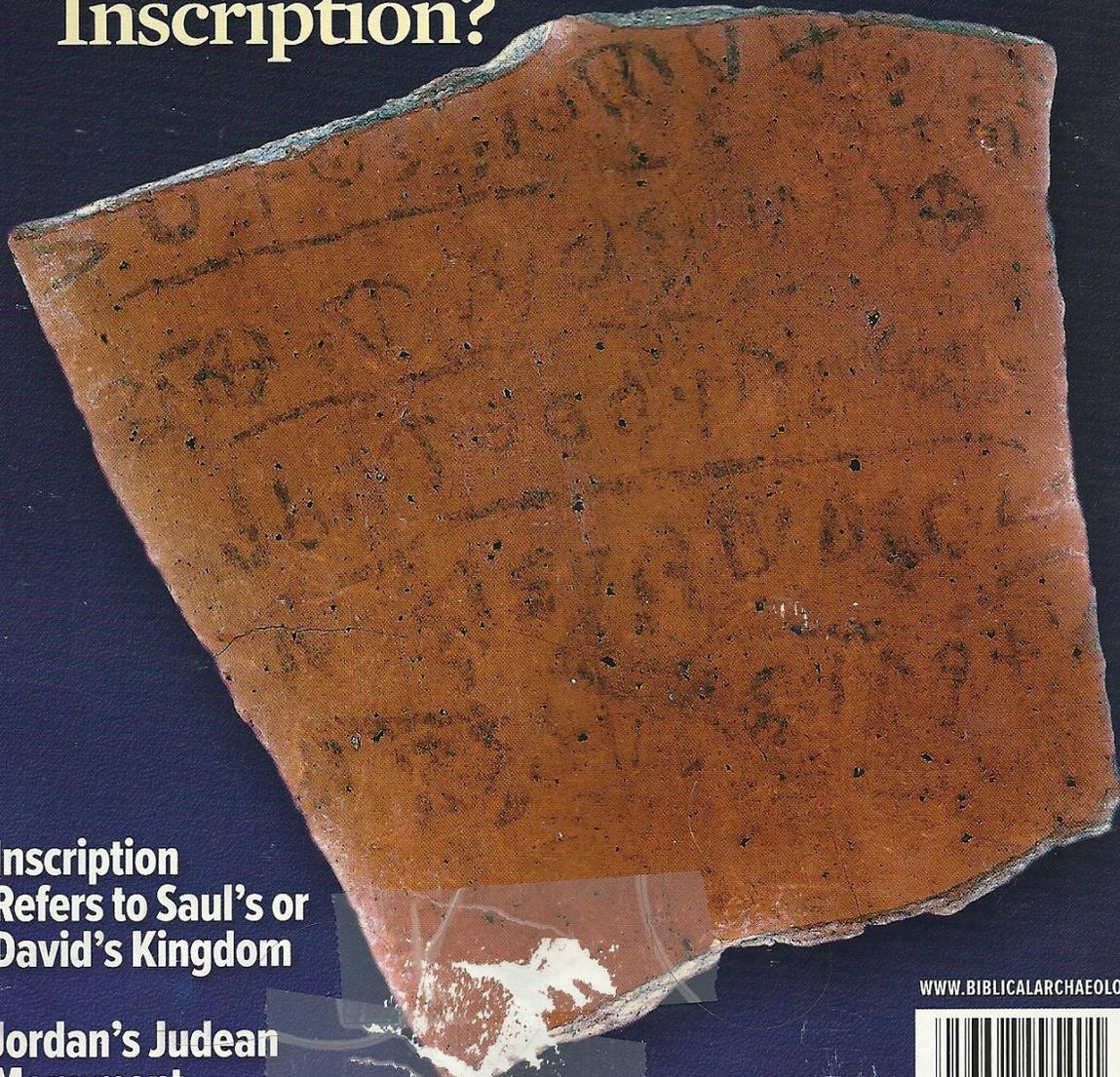
**Inscription Refers to Saul's or David's Kingdom**

Jordan's Judean Monument

When Job Sued God

FORMER PRIDE OF THE ISRAEL MUSEUM, this small ivory pomegranate is inscribed in ancient Hebrew around the neck with the words "Belonging to the Tem[ple of Yahwe]h, holy to the priests." Its authenticity was originally confirmed by expert epigraphers André Lemaire of the Sorbonne and the late Nahman Avigad but was later called into question by none other than Yuval Goren. If authentic, this may be a scepter head from Solomon's Temple.
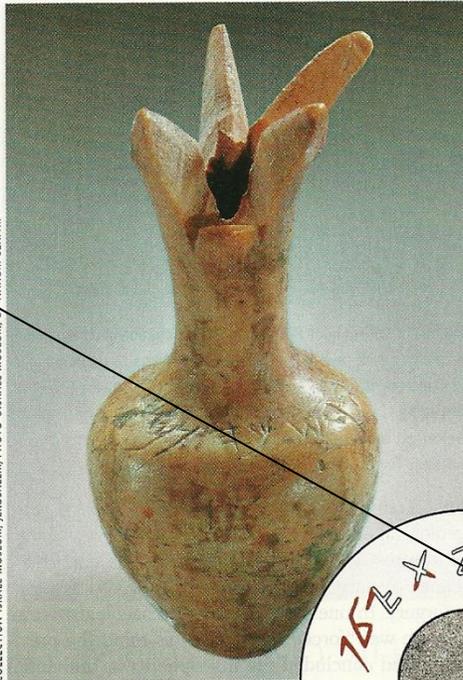
COLLECTION ISRAEL MUSEUM, JERUSALEM/PHOTO ©ISRAEL MUSEUM, BY NAHUM SLAPAK
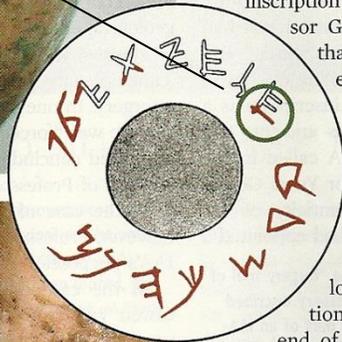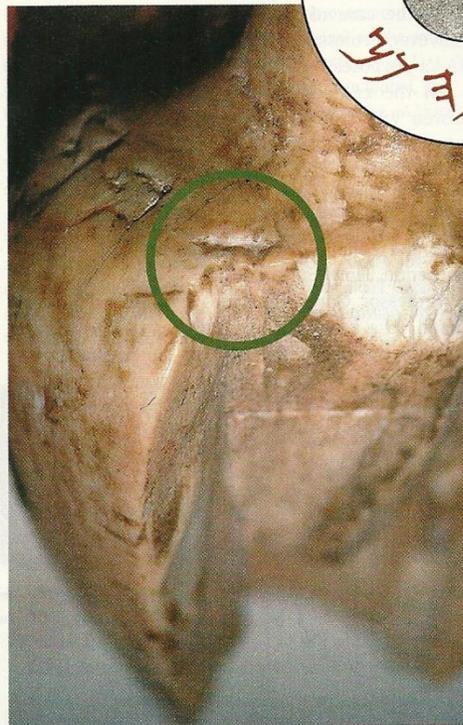
the ossuary's stone surface. After examining it under an ordinary microscope, he studied "thin sections" of the inscription under a vastly more powerful microscope that revealed the various layers in the patina. Next, samples were examined with an Environmental Scanning Electron Microscope (ESEM), which uses electron beams to reveal characteristics and elements of the patina, which are then chemically determined by an Energy Dispersive Spectrometer (EDS).

The result of this examination of the Miriam ossuary inscription was the identification of various layers in the patina—for example, a yellow-orange film of biopatina under some calcite stone patina—that could only occur "over a prolonged sequence of time."[5] This would be "extremely difficult—if not impossible—to replicate in laboratory conditions." Hence the inscription was ancient and genuine.

The startling relevance of the Miriam ossuary inscription to the other artifacts that Professor Goren had found to be forgeries is that, in Goren's own view, there is an examination—an ESEM/EDS examination—that *can* establish whether the inscription is authentic. Why, then, did he not perform an ESEM/EDS examination on the James ossuary? This is especially strange because another scientist on the committee assigned to look at the James ossuary inscription (Orna Cohen) found that "the end of the inscription, 'brother of Jesus,' appears authentic. In some places there seems to be remains of old [original] patina." Moreover, Professor Goren says that in a 2007 article, he outlined the procedures he used in his study of the Miriam ossuary. Presumably he was familiar with them even earlier. So why did he not use these methods

HEY, WHAT ABOUT THE *HEH*? Goren's suspicion of the pomegranate hinged on his belief that the inscription stopped short of an ancient break in the ball portion. All agree that about a third of the ball broke off in antiquity (there were also two small, new breaks much whiter in color). If the letters go into the ancient break, they were almost certainly there before the pomegranate broke in antiquity and are therefore authentic. If the inscribed letter strokes stop short of the break, however, as Goren argued, then the inscription is most likely a forgery. During a 2007 microscopic re-examination of the pomegranate, it seemed clear that the *heh* at the end of the reconstructed "Yahweh" did indeed go into the ancient break (circled at left and in drawing above), but Goren was unwilling to acknowledge or discuss the *heh* in the published report.

(ESEM/EDS) on the James ossuary inscription that he found to be a forgery?

Worse still, Goren himself could conclude only that "the inscription [on the James ossuary] was inscribed *or* cleaned in a modern period" (emphasis supplied). Shouldn't his finding that the suspicious covering he identified could be the result of a "modern cleaning" (ever the smart aleck, Goren dubbed this covering the "James Bond") have suggested to Goren that he should perform an ESEM/EDS examination to determine authenticity? It would seem that Goren was determined to come up with a finding of forgery.

Goren's conclusion formed the basis of a criminal indictment that could send defendant Oded Golan to jail. This apparently didn't bother Goren. And his conclusion was accepted—until he testified in court and was subject to cross-examination. Then it fell apart.

Other equally eminent scientists found—as Orna Cohen did—original patina in the letters of the inscription under the surface coating. When presented with pictures showing this, Goren asked the court for a recess until the next day so he could re-examine the inscription. When he returned to court, he admitted that the inscription contained some original ancient patina. (Actually, he had discovered this more than a year before the indictment, but he failed to disclose it in his report to the IAA. This was the same original patina in the first letter of "Jesus" identified by Orna Cohen.) One of his explanations of this original patina he now admitted to seeing was that it might be in an ancient scratch that the modern forger used as a stroke in the forged letter. A little far-fetched, to say the least. But even then, Goren did not suggest performing an ESEM/EDS exam on the James ossuary, as he had done to determine the authenticity of the Miriam ossuary inscription.

When pressed on cross-examination as to whether the inscription on the James ossuary was a forgery, all Goren would say is that he was "undecided."

Turning to the ivory pomegranate inscribed "Belonging to the Tem[ple of Yahwe]h, holy to the priests," the inscription had been authenticated by Israel's greatest script expert, Nahman Avigad. Careful examination by world-authority Sorbonne scholar André Lemaire confirmed Professor Avigad's judgment. The Israel Museum paid $550,000 for the object.

Again, Goren led the troops in concluding that the inscription was a modern forgery. This time the issue turned on a physical examination of the letters of the inscription as they related to an

GEOLOGICAL SURVEY OF ISRAEL

A STRING OF ERRORS. This 15-line inscription attributed to King Jehoash describes repairs made to the Jerusalem Temple in the late ninth century B.C.E. (also related in the Hebrew Bible). If authentic, it is the only known royal Israelite inscription, but once again Goren has declared it a forgery. After misidentifying the type of stone, Goren then claimed that the Jehoash tablet had a fake patina applied to it but could not accurately explain how. He also failed to address the ancient crack that runs across several lines of the inscription—a risky gamble for a would-be forger if the chiseling should cause the tablet to break (it later broke while being handled by police). And again, Goren has not used the ESEM/EDS technique to examine the inscription and potentially clear up all doubt.

edge of a part of the pomegranate that had broken off. That is, a third of the ball (or grenade) of the pomegranate had broken off in ancient times; all agree that this break is ancient. The question is whether any of the letters of the inscription goes into the break. If so, that would show that the letter had been inscribed in ancient times before the part of the pomegranate forming the ancient break had broken off.

Goren claimed the letters involved stopped short of the ancient break. By this time, Professor Avigad had passed away. André Lemaire's physical examination of the pomegranate differed from Goren's. So a group of us, including both Goren and Lemaire, got together at the Israel Museum to look at the object under a microscope.*

Three letters were involved. One goes into one of the new breaks. Goren admitted he had been wrong to conclude otherwise. But this did not decide the issue because it involved a new break. A second

Let's look at even earlier evidence - The Lachish Letters.

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

The **Lachish Letters** (Hoshaiah Letters) are a group of letters written in carbon ink in Ancient Hebrew on clay ostraca. The letters were discovered at the excavations at Lachish (Tel ed-Duweir).

The individual ostraca probably come from the same broken clay pot and were most likely written in a short period of time. They were written to Joash, possibly the commanding officer at Lachish, from Hoshaiah, a military officer stationed in a city close to Lachish (possibly Mareshah). In the letters, Hoshaiah defends himself to Joash regarding a letter he either was or was not supposed to have read. The letters also contain informational reports and requests from Hoshaiah to his superior. The letters were probably written shortly before Lachish fell to the Babylonian army in 588/6 BC during the reign Zedekiah, king of Judah (ref. Jeremiah 34:7). The ostraca were discovered by J.L. Starkey in January–February, 1935 during the third campaign of the Wellcome excavations. They were published in 1938 by Harry Torczyner (name later changed to Naftali Herz Tur-Sinai) and have been much studied since then. They are currently located in the British Museum in London, apart from Letter 6, which is on permanent display at the Rockefeller Museum in Jerusalem, Israel.[1]

Text of the Letters

Letter Number 2

To my lord, Yaush, may YHWH cause my lord to hear tiding(s) of peace today, this very day! Who is your servant, a dog, that my lord remembered his [se]rvant? May YHWH make known(?) to my [lor]d a matter of which you do not know.[2]

Lachish Letter 3 Transliterated

Letter Number 3

Your servant, Hosayahu, sent to inform my lord, Yaush: May YHWH cause my lord to hear tidings of peace and tidings of good. And now, open the ear of your servant concerning the letter which you sent to your servant last evening because the heart of your servant is ill since your sending it to your servant. And inasmuch as my lord said "Don't you know how to read a letter?" As YHWH lives if anyone has ever tried to read me a letter! And as for every letter that comes to me, if I read it. And furthermore, I will grant it as nothing. And to your servant it has been reported saying: The commander of the army Konyahu son of Elnatan, has gone down to go to Egypt and he sent to commandeer Hodawyahu son of Ahiyahu and his men from here. 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.[3]

Notes: This ostracon is approximately fifteen centimeters tall by eleven centimeters wide and contains twenty-one lines of writing. The front side has lines one through sixteen; the back side has lines seventeen through twenty-one. This ostracon is particularly interesting because of its mentions of Konyahu, who has gone down to Egypt, and the prophet. For possible biblical connections according to Torczyner, reference Jeremiah 26:20-23.

Letter Number 4

May YHW[H] cause my [lord] to hear, this very day, tidings of good. And now, according to everything which my lord has sent, this has your servant done. I wrote on the sheet according to everything which [you] sent [t]o me. And inasmuch as my lord sent to me concerning the matter of Bet Harapid, there is no one there. And as for Semakyahu, Semayahu took him and brought him up to the city. And your servant is not sending him there any[more ---], but when morning comes round [---]. And may (my lord) be apprised that we are watching for the fire signals of Lachish according to all the signs which my lord has given, because we cannot see Azeqah.[4]

Letter Number 5

May YHWH cause my [lo]rd to hear tidings of pea[ce] and of good, [now today, now this very da]y! Who is your servant, a dog, that you [s]ent your servant the [letters? Like]wise has your servant returned the letters to my lord. May YHWH cause you to see the harvest successfully, this very day! Will Tobiyahu of the royal family c<o>me to your servant?[5]

Letter Number 6

To my lord, Yaush, may YHWH cause my lord to see peace at this time! Who is your servant, a dog, that my lord sent him the king's [lette]r [and] the letters of the officer[s, sayin]g, "Please read!" And behold, the words of the [officers] are not good; to weaken your hands [and to in]hibit the hands of the m[en]. [I(?)] know [them(?)]. My lord, will you not write to [them] sa[ying, "Wh]y are you behaving this way? [. . .] well-being [. . .]. Does the king [. . .] And [. . .] As YHWH lives, since your servant read the letters, your servant has not had [peace(?)].[6]

Letter Number 9

May YHWH cause my lord to hear ti[dings] of peace and of [good. And n]ow, give 10 (loaves) of bread and 2 (jars) [of wi]ne. Send back word [to] your servant by means of Selemyahu as to what we must do tomorrow.[7]

Lachish Letters

Bible History Online

Did the Lachish letters reveal the turmoil in Judah just before the Babylonian captivity?

The discovery of the Lachish Letters in 1935 of eighteen ostraca (clay tablets with writing in ink) written in an ancient Hebrew script, from the 7th century BC reveal important information concerning the last days of the southern kingdom of Judah.

They were discovered at Lachish (Tell ed-Duweir) among the ruins of an ancient guard room just outside the Lachish city gate.

Then a few years later three inscribed potsherds were also found at the site, and like the others, they contained names and lists from the period just before the fall of Jerusalem in 586 BC.

Most of the letters were dispatches from a Jewish commander named Hoshaiah who was stationed at an outpost north of Lachish, who apparently was responsible for interpreting the signals from Azekah and Lachish during the time when the Babylonians came against Jerusalem:

Jer 34:7 "when the king of Babylon's army fought against Jerusalem and all the cities of Judah that were left, against Lachish and Azekah; for only these fortified cities remained of the cities of Judah."

The ostraca read: "To my lord Ya'osh. May Yahweh cause my lord to hear the news of peace, even now, even now. Who is your servant but a dog that my lord should remember his servant?"'

These final communications which mentioned the political and religious turmoil of the last days of Judah reveal the intensity of this time period and confirm that which was written in the Bible by the prophet Jeremiah.

The Lachish Letters are an important discovery in the study of Biblical Archaeology and shed much light on the last days of Judah.

British Museum Excerpt

Lachish Letter II

Israelite, 586 BC
From Lachish (modern Tell ed-Duweir), Israel

A letter written on a piece of pottery

This is one of a group of letters written on ostraka (potsherds) found near the main gate of ancient Lachish in a burnt layer which archaeologists have associated with the destruction of the city by the Babylonians in 586 BC. It is written in ink in alphabetic Hebrew. The letters are a poignant record of the city's last days.

In 598 BC Nebuchadnezzar, King of Babylon, invaded Judah after it had rebelled against him. He captured Jerusalem and took the royal family captive. He installed Zedekiah, the former king's uncle, as his choice of ruler. However, rebellion broke out again. Nebuchadnezzar showed no mercy this time and in 587 BC he beseiged and then destroyed Jerusalem.

This was the period at which this letter was written. It came from an officer named Hosha'yahu who was in charge of a military outpost. He was writing to Ya'osh, military commander at Lachish, as the situation worsened.

'To my lord Ya'osh. May Yahweh cause my lord to hear the news of peace, even now, even now. Who is your servant but a dog that my lord should remember his servant?'

Peace was not to be. Nebuchadnezzar moved on to Lachish and nearby Azekah, the last two major cities of Judah to be subdued by the Babylonians. There followed a large-scale deportation of a part of Judah's population. Thus began the exile, a period of great significance for the Jews spiritually, and one which would profoundly influence later religious ideology and teaching.

Height: 9 cm
Width: 10 cm

Excavated by J. L. Starkey, Wellcome-Marston Research Expedition.

ANE 125702

Room 57, The Ancient Levant

The British Museum

The Kings of Israel (all wicked)
Jeroboam I (933-911 BC) twenty-two years
Nadab (911-910) two years
Baasha (910-887) twenty-four years
Elah (887-886) two years
Zimri (886) seven days
Omri (886-875) twelve years
Ahab (875-854) twenty-two years
Ahaziah (855-854) two years
Jehoram (Joram) (854-843) twelve years
Jehu (843-816) twenty-eight years
Jehoahaz (820-804) seventeen years
Jehoash (Joash) (806-790) sixteen years
Jeroboam II (790-749) forty-one years
Zechariah' (748) six months
Shallum (748) one month
Menahem (748-738) ten years
Pekahiah (738-736) two years
Pekah (748-730) twenty years
Hoshea (730-721) nine years

The Kings of Judah (8 were good)
Rehoboam (933-916 BC) seventeen years
Abijam (915-913) three years
Asa (Good) (912-872) forty-one years
Jehoshaphat (Good) (874-850) twenty-five years
Jehoram (850-843) eight years
Ahaziah (843) one year

Athaliah (843-837) six years

Joash (Good) (843-803) forty years

Amaziah (Good) (803-775) 29 years

Azariah (Uzziah) (Good) (787-735) fifty-two years

Jotham (Good) (749-734) sixteen years

Ahaz (741-726) sixteen years

Hezekiah (Good) (726-697) 29 years

Manasseh (697-642) fifty-five years

Amon (641-640) two years

Josiah (Good) (639-608) thirty-one years

Jehoahaz (608) three months

Jehoiachim (608-597) eleven years

Jehoiachin (597) three months

Zedekiah (597-586) eleven years

http://www.bible-history.com/archaeology/israel/lachish-letters.html

Lachish

Joshua 10:31 And Joshua passed from Libnah, and all Israel with him, unto Lachish, and encamped against it, and fought against it.

Assyrian warriors shown impaling Jewish prisoners. Part of a relief from the palace of Sennacherib. British Museum, London. Credit: Erich Lessing/Art

History of Lachish
Today, Lachish is known as Tell ed-Duweir. Lachish was once a highly fortified city that was situated in the lowlands of Judea, located 30 miles southwest of Jerusalem. This once powerful and strategic city disappeared from the world's memory only to reappear in the 20th century.

Once one of Israel's largest cities, Lachish covers an impressive eighteen acres. Though they have crumbled to a fraction of their original height, the city walls still look imposing today.

At Lachish, archaeologists have discovered the largest gate complex in Israel. The massive double gate included both an outer gate structure and an inner gate. Its large size testifies to the strength and importance of ancient Lachish.

The Lachish Letters

Assyrians attack the Jewish fortified town of Lachish. Part of a relief from the palace of Sennacherib at Nineveh. British Museum, London. Credit: Erich Lessing/Art Resource, NY.
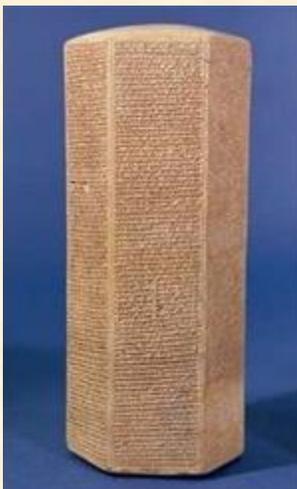
Sennacherib's Prism - Also known as Taylors Prism The cuneiform text on this clay prism documents the

Mr. J. L. Starkey and his worthy associates directed the excavations at Lachish from 1932 to January 10, 1938, and made many significant discoveries, the most important being twenty-one letters (**now known as The Lachish Letters**) which they found among the ashes and charcoal in the guard room adjoining the outer gate of the city. These letters were written with carbon ink by a certain Hoshaiah (Nehemiah 12:32, Jeremiah 42:1, 43:2), a subordinate military officer stationed at an outpost near Jerusalem, to Joash the commanding officer at Lachish. These short messages were written during the last years of Jeremiah (c.588 B.C.) and reflect the troubled period through which the kingdom was passing during Zedekiah's reign just before the fall of Lachish and some two years before the fall of Jerusalem. They were evidently written within a period of a few days or weeks, as is indicated from the similarity of the fragments, five of which fit together as pieces of one vessel.

Letter I contains a list of nine proper names, **five of which are found in the Old Testament.** Three appear only during the time of Jeremiah. In Letter IV

Hoshaiah writes:
And let my lord know that we are watching for the signals of Lachish according to all the indications which my lord hath given, for we cannot see Azekah.

Jeremiah mentions "fire" signals (Jeremiah 6:1), and tells how the king of Babylon "fought against Jerusalem, and against all the cities of Judah that were left, against Lachish, and Azekah: for these defenced cities remained of the cities of Judah" (Jeremiah 34:7). - More information on the Letters

Lachish Under Siege
Of further interest is the fact that archaeological digs at the city of Lachish bear out the details of Sennacherib's wall relief. Extensive archaeological digs at Lachish from 1935 to 1938 by the British, and again from 1973 to 1987 under Israeli archaeologist David Ussishkin and others, have revealed a treasure trove of artifacts, each of which fits the events depicted by Sennacherib. Concerning the Assyrian siege of Lachish, William Dever noted:

"The evidence of it is all there: the enormous sloping siege ramp thrown up against the city walls south of the gate; the double line of defense walls, upslope and downslope; the iron-shod Assyrian battering rams that breached the city wall at its highest point; the massive destruction within the

spread of the Assyrian Empire, including King Sennacherib's wars against the Neo-Hittite states in Turkey and Sidon.

fallen city.... Virtually all the details of the Assyrian reliefs have been confirmed by archaeology.... Also brought to light by the excavators were the double city walls; the complex siege ramp, embedded with hundreds of iron arrowheads and stone ballistae; the counter-ramp inside the city; the destroyed gate, covered by up to 6 ft. of destruction debris; huge boulders from the city wall, burned almost to lime and fallen far down the slope."
(2001, pp. 168-169).

The Assyrian monarch's siege of Lachish is documented by the biblical text, and the destruction of the city is corroborated by the massive carving dedicated to the event in Sennacherib's palace at Nineveh, as well as the actual artifacts found in stratum III at Lachish

The Amarna Letters
The town of Lachish is also mentioned in the Amarna letters.
Letter from Pabi, Prince of Lachish, to Akhenaton

Scriptures
Joshua 10:31 And Joshua passed from Libnah, and all Israel with him, unto **Lachish**, and encamped against it, and fought against it:

2 Kings 18:14 And Hezekiah king of Judah sent to the king of Assyria to **Lachish**.

Isaiah 37:8 So Rabshakeh returned, and found the king of Assyria warring against Libnah: for he had heard that he was departed from **Lachish**.

http://www.formerthings.com/lachish.htm
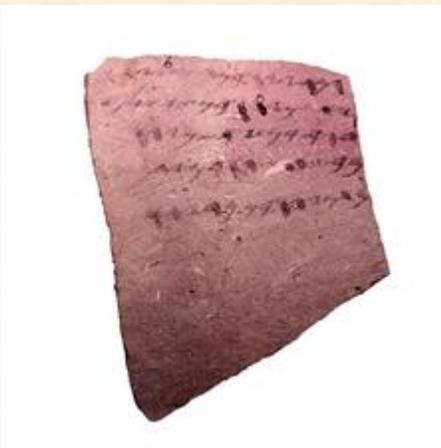
Lachish Letter I

Israelite, 586 BC
From Lachish (modern Tell ed-Duweir), Israel

A letter written on a piece of pottery

This is one of a group of letters written on *ostraka* (potsherds) found near the main gate of ancient Lachish (modern Tell ed-Duweir) in a burnt layer associated with the destruction of the city by the Babylonians in 586 BC. It is written in ink in alphabetic Hebrew, and reads:

Gemaryahu, son of Hissilyahu
Yaazanyahu, son of Tobshillem
Hageb, son of Yaazanyahu
Mibtahyahu, son of Yirmeyahu
Mattanyahu, son of Neryahu

Presumably this list had some administrative function. Though several of the names occur in the Old Testament, it cannot be proved that the same individuals are intended.

The letters were received by Ya'osh, the military governor of Lachish, from Hosha'yahu, a subordinate officer in charge of a military outpost during the invasion by the Babylonian forces under Nebuchadnezzar which ended in the siege and destruction of Jerusalem in 587 BC.

Subsequently only Azekah, about 18 miles south west of Jerusalem, and Lachish itself, about 12 miles further on, remained in Judean hands, until they too fell. There followed a large-scale deportation of a part of Judah's population. Thus began the exile, a period of great significance for the Jews spiritually, and one which would profoundly influence later religious ideology and teaching.

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http://www.britishmuseum.org/explore/highlights/highlight_objects/me/l/lachish_letter_i.aspx

Tel Lachish

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

Lachish main gate

Tel Lachish ([Hebrew](): תל לכיש; [Greek](): Λαχις; [Latin](): *Tel Lachis*) is a National Park in Israel. Lachish was an [ancient Near East]() town located at the site of modern Tel Lachish or Tell ed-Duweir in the [Shephelah](), a region between [Mount Hebron]() and the maritime Mediterranean coast. The town was first mentioned in the [Amarna letters]() as *Lakisha-Lakiša* (EA 287, 288, 328, 329, 335). According to the Bible, the Israelites captured and destroyed Lachish for joining the league against the [Gibeonites]() ([Joshua]() 10:31-33), but its territory was later assigned to the [tribe of Judah]() (15:39) and became a part of the [Kingdom of Israel]().

History

Commander's palace.

Assyrian siege ramp.

Judean captives being led away into slavery by the Assyrians after the siege of Lachish in 701 B.C. This relief is important for the knowledge of Judean dress.

Occupation at the site of Lachish began in the Neolithic period, reaching appreciable size during the Early Bronze Age. The next significant development of the city came during the Middle Bronze II period when the area began to come under strong Egyptian influence. The next peak was the late Late Bronze Age, when Lachish is mentioned in the Amarna Letters. This phase of the city was destroyed during the general devastation of the region ca. 1150 BC sometimes ascribed to the Sea Peoples. Rebuilding began in the Early Iron Age ca. 900 BC.

Under Rehoboam, Lachish became the second most important city of the kingdom of Judah. In 701 BC, during the revolt of king Hezekiah against Assyria, it was captured by Sennacherib despite determined resistance (see Siege of Lachish). [1] Some scholars believe that the fall of Lachish actually occurred during a second campaign in the area by Sennacherib ca. 688 BC. Nonetheless the site now contains the only remains of an Assyrian siege ramp in the Near East. Sennacherib later devoted a whole room in his palace for artistic representations of the siege on stone orthostats now in the British Muesum. The orthostats depict battering ramps, sappers, and other fighters along with Lachish's architecture and its surrender, these along with the archaeology give a good understanding of siege warfare of the period. [2] The town later reverted to Judaean control, only to fall to Nebuchadnezzar in his campaign against Judah in 586 BC.

During Old Testament times Lachish served an important protective function in defending Jerusalem and the interior of Judea. The easiest way to get a large attacking army (such as an Assyrian army, see Isaiah 36:2, Isaiah 37:8 and Jeremiah 34:7) up to Jerusalem was to approach from the coast. Lachish was one of several city/forts guarding the canyons that lead up to Jerusalem and greater Judea. In order to lay siege to Jerusalem an invading army would first have to take Lachish, which guarded the mountain pass. During the reign of Hezekiah, King of Judah, the Assyrians, under King Sennacherib, attempted to take Jerusalem, and, in that campaign, succeeded in taking Lachish (see 2 Chronicles 32:9 and Isaiah 36:2). Modern excavation of the site has revealed that the Assyrians built a stone and dirt ramp up to the level of the Lachish city wall, thereby allowing the soldiers to charge up the ramp and storm the city. Excavations revealed approximately 1,500 skulls in one of the caves near the site, and hundreds of arrowheads on the ramp and at the top of the city wall, indicating the ferocity of the battle.

Biblical references to Lachish include Joshua 10:3, 5, 23, 31-35; Joshua 12:11; Joshua 15:39; 2 Kings 14:19; 2 Kings 18:14, 17; 2 Kings 19:8; 2 Chronicles 11:9; 2 Chronicles 25:27; 2 Chronicles 32:9; Nehemiah 11:30; Isaiah 36:2; Isaiah 37:8; Jeremiah 34:7; and Micah 1:13.

Identification of Tell ed-Duweir as Lachish

During the 19th and early 20th centuries, Lachish was identified with Tell el-Hesi from a cuneiform tablet found there (EA 333). The tablet is a letter from an Egyptian official named Paapu, reporting cases of treachery involving a local kinglet, Zimredda. However this hypothesis is no longer accepted. [3] More recent excavations have identified Tell ed-Duweir as Lachish beyond reasonable doubt.

Archaeology

The site of Tell ed-Duweir was first excavated in 4 seasons between 1932 and 1938 by the Wellcome-Marston Archaeological Research Expedition. The work was led initially by James Leslie Starkey until he was murdered by Arab bandits. The effort was completed by Olga Tufnell.[4][5][6][7] In 1966 and 1968, in a dig which focused mainly on the "Solar Shrine", Yohanan Aharoni worked the site on behalf of Hebrew University and Tel Aviv University.[8]

More recently, excavation, and later restoration, work was conducted between 1973 and 1994 by a Tel Aviv University Institute of Arachaeology and Israel Exploration Society team led by David Ussishkin.[9][10][11]

Paleo-Hebrew ostraca

Excavation campaigns by James Leslie Starkey recovered a number of ostraca (18 in 1935, three more in 1938) from the latest occupational level immediately before the Chaldean siege. They then formed the only known corpus of documents in classical Hebrew.[12][13]

LMLK seals

Another major contribution to Biblical archaeology from excavations at Lachish are the LMLK seals, which were stamped on the handles of a particular form of ancient storage jar. More of these artifacts were found at this site (over 400; Ussishkin, 2004, pp. 2151–9) than any other place in Israel (Jerusalem remains in second place with more than 300). Most of them were collected from the surface during Starkey's excavations, but others were found in Level 1 (Persian and Greek era), Level 2 (period preceding Babylonian conquest by Nebuchadnezzar), and Level 3 (period preceding Assyrian conquest by Sennacherib). It is thanks to the work of David Ussishkin's team that eight of these stamped jars were restored, thereby demonstrating lack of relevance between the jar volumes (which deviated as much as 5 gallons or 12 litres), and also proving their relation to the reign of Biblical king Hezekiah.[14][15]

The 1898 Reference by Bliss, contains numerous drawings, including examples of Phoenician, etc. pottery, and items from pharaonic Egypt, and other Mediterranean, and inland regions.

Notes

1. ^ David Ussishkin, The conquest of Lachish by Sennacherib, Tel Aviv University Institute of Archaeology, 1982, ISBN 965-266-001-9
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3. ^ Sir William Matthew Flinders Petrie, Tell el Hesy (Lachish), Published for the Committee of the Palestine exploration fund by A. P. Watt, 1891
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9. **^** D. Ussishkin, Excavations at Tel Lachish - 1973-1977, Preliminary Report, Tel Aviv, vol. 5, pp. 1-97, 1978
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15. **^** D. Ussishkin, The Destruction of Lachish by Sennacherib and the Dating of the Royal Judean Storage Jars, Tel Aviv, vol. 4, pp. 28-60, 1977

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Lachish – The Amarna Letters
Lachish, located at the site of Tel el-Hesi between the coastal plain and the highlands of Judah, was a Canaanite and then an Israelite city spanning over 1,000 years. A tablet, one of the Amarna Letters from the Egyptian administration to their Canaanite vassals, discovered in early excavations at the site identified it as Lachish.

Lachish – The Conquest of Joshua
The first evidence for habitation at Lachish comes from 1700 BC, where a Middle Bronze Age Canaanite city fortified by a large wall was discovered. The next city dates to around 1500 BC according to finds of Egyptian scarabs, where remains of an iron blast furnace were found, making it one of the earliest examples of this type of metallurgy. This city was also likely the city that Joshua and the Israelites conquered in Joshua 10.

> *And Joshua and all Israel with him passed on from Libnah to Lachish, and they camped by it and fought against it. The Lord gave Lachish into the hands of Israel; and he captured it on the second day, and struck it and every person who was in it with the edge of the sword, according to all that he had done to Libnah. Then Horam king of Gezer came up to help Lachish, and Joshua defeated him and his people until he had left him no survivor. And Joshua and all Israel with him passed on from Lachish to Eglon, and they camped by it and fought against it.* (Joshua 10:31-34)

It is clear that the 15th century city conquered by Joshua was replaced by a later city, but it was not destroyed by fire, as the account in the book of Joshua also indicates. Further excavations revealed a city destroyed in the 12th century B.C., although the identity of the conquering army is unknown.

Lachish – The Empire of Solomon

The next mention of Lachish comes in 2 Chronicles 11:9, when Rehoboam, son of Solomon, did some building at Lachish, and then 2 Kings 14, when King Amaziah fled to Lachish to escape a conspiracy, but was captured and killed.

> *Now the rest of the acts of Amaziah, are they not written in the Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Judah? They conspired against him in Jerusalem, and he fled to Lachish; but they sent after him to Lachish and killed him there.* (2 Kings 14:18-19)

By the beginning of the reign of Rehoboam and the divided Kingdom in the late 10th century BC it is clear that Lachish had become an Israelite city, and there are artifacts and architecture at the site which indicate Israelite settlement in this period. One of the architectural features in the 10th century BC Lachish is known as a Solomonic gate—a main city gate with the distinguishing features of 6 chambers, also found at a few other 10th century BC Israelite cities and identified with Solomon.

Lachish – The Assyrians and Babylonians

The most interesting and compelling evidence from Lachish, however, comes from the 8th and 7th centuries BC when first the Assyrians attack, and then the Babylonians. Lachish seemed to be a popular attack point because of its strategic position as a protective city on the route to Jerusalem. The easiest route to Jerusalem, located in the Judean highlands, is a path east, starting from the Mediterranean coast. Lachish guards this path through the mountain passes, and so it was heavily involved in the Assyrian and Babylonian conquests. In about 701 BC, the Assyrians under Sennacherib attacked the kingdom of Judah, laying siege to Lachish, among other cities.

> *Sennacherib king of Assyria sent his servants to Jerusalem while he was besieging Lachish with all his forces with him, against Hezekiah king of Judah and against all Judah who were at Jerusalem.* (2 Chronicles 32:9)

Lachish – The Taylor Prism and Lachish Reliefs

The Taylor Prism records part of this conquest of Judean cities, but even more illustrative of the siege and conquest of Lachish are the Lachish reliefs found at Nineveh and on display at the British Museum. The reliefs show in detail the siege and battle between the Assyrians and the Judeans, and the eventual victory of the Assyrians and capture of Judeans at Lachish. The site also contains much archaeological evidence from the battle. Besides a destruction layer at the site from ca. 700 BC, hundreds of Assyrian arrowheads were found in excavations of the destruction layer, and approximately 1,500 skulls were also discovered in caves near the site. Excavations also reveal that the Assyrians built a stone and dirt siege ramp up the city wall, allowing soldiers to charge up the ramp and into the city. The ramp can be seen today at the site and in the reliefs. Many LMLK ("belonging to the king") stamp seals were also discovered on jars at Lachish, dating to and associated with king Hezekiah's reign in the late 8th and early 7th century BC. These LMLK jars have also been found at numerous Iron Age Israelite sites.

In the 7th century BC, the Babylonians had become the dominant power in the ancient Near East and conducted a campaign against the rebelling Judeans.

> *The army of the king of Babylon was fighting against Jerusalem and against all the remaining cities of Judah, that is, Lachish and Azekah, for they alone remained as fortified cities among the cities of Judah.* (Jeremiah 34:7)

Lachish – The Lashish Ostraca and Its Final Defeat

To reach the capital of Jerusalem, Lachish had to be defeated once again, as it guarded the path. In the Babylonian destruction layer, the Lachish ostraca were found. They are a series of 21 letters written in black ink on broken pieces of pottery, depicting conditions at the end of the 7th century BC, shortly before the Babylonian conquest of Jerusalem. Most of the letters are written from Hosha'yahu, a military officer who was in charge of an outpost near Lachish, to Ya'osh, the military commander at Lachish. They describe the situation in Judah just before the fall of Jerusalem to Nebuchadnezzar and also attest to the account of Jeremiah concerning Lachish as one of the last cities to fall to the Babylonians before the siege of Jerusalem. They also mention a warning from "the prophet," a diplomatic mission to Egypt, and a conspiracy (cf. Jeremiah 37:5 and 38:19). The letters, besides being extremely important historically, are invaluable for the further study of ancient Hebrew, as the corpus of Hebrew documents from this era is extremely limited, so each new find may add significantly to the understanding of ancient Hebrew.

Lachish

Also known as Tel Lachish/Lakhish, Tell ed-Duweir, Lachisch, Lakhish

Tell Lachish

Identified first as Lachish by Albright in 1929, the tell was excavated by James Leslie Starkey 1932-38 and by Tel Aviv University 1973-87.

Lachish is generally regarded as the second most important city in the southern kingdom of Judah. It enters the biblical narrative in the battle accounts of Joshua, Sennacherib and Nebuchadnezzar.

Approach Ramp

The city was surrounded by two walls including a lower retaining wall. The approach ramp led to the outer gatehouse which in turn led to the inner triple-chambered gatehouse.

Lachish is the only tell in the country that is owned by the Israel Antiquities Authority. They inherited it from the British who purchased the site for excavation.

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Fosse Temples

Starkey's excavations of the moat on the west side of the tell revealed a rich collection of finds in the Late Bronze Age Fosse Temples. Three successive temples built here by the Canaanite inhabitants were finally destroyed about 1200 BC.

After Starkey was murdered in 1938, local Arabs looted all that was left of this temple, especially the remains of the lowest level.

Siege Ramp

The only siege ramp excavated in the ancient Near East is this one constructed by the forces of Sennacherib in his 701 BC invasion of Judah. More than 1000 iron arrowheads were found in the ramp as well as a chain for catching the battering rams.

This ramp is depicted in Sennacherib's siege reliefs with five battering rams ascending it.

Israelite Palace

At the end of the Judean monarchy, this governor's residence was half an acre in size. It is the largest Iron Age structure known in Israel. Built on the summit of the tell, this palace was constructed in three discernible phases which help archaeologists to understand the length of the cubit in the earlier and later periods. Evidence for the stabling of horses in the courtyard has been found.

View of Hill Country

The famous Lachish Letter #4 describes how the writer was looking for the signal-fires of Lachish for the signal-fires of Azekah could no longer be seen. Possibly the writer of this ostracon was viewing the destruction of the cities of the Shephelah from the nearby hill country to the west. Jeremiah 34:7 corroborates the fact that the last two cities remaining were Azekah and Lachish.

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http://www.bibleplaces.com/lachish.htm

Lachish: Royal City of the Kingdom of Judah
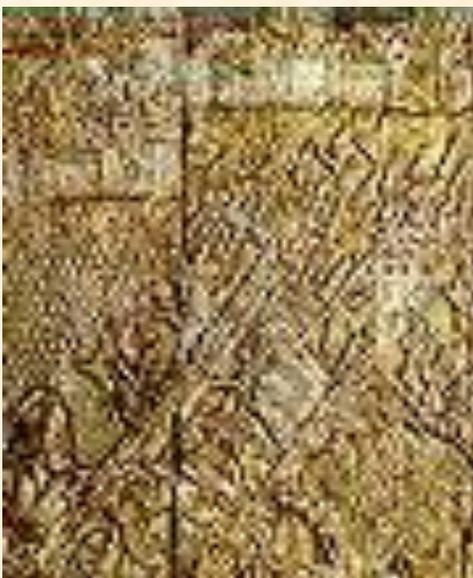
Tel Lachish, the mound of the ancient city of Lachish, is located in the lowlands of the Judean Hills, some 40 km. southeast of Jerusalem. The abundance of water sources and the fertile valleys of the area favored the existence of a prosperous city over a considerable period of time.

The mound of the city was first excavated during the 1930s. Systematic and in-depth excavations of large areas of the mound were again conducted between 1973 and 1987.

The Canaanite city

A large, fortified Canaanite city was

established at the beginning of the 2nd millennium BCE on a hillock dominating the surrounding area. It was fortified by a wall and a *glacis*, a ramp-like structure of compressed earth with a hard, smooth surface of lime plaster. The fortification was completed by a *fosse* (moat) at the foot of the *glacis*.

A large palace of numerous rooms and a courtyard, probably the residence of the Canaanite King of Lachish, stood on the acropolis - the highest part of the city. It could not be completely exposed, as a later Israelite palace was built above it.

From letters sent by the kings of Lachish to their overlords, the pharaohs of Egypt (the 14th century BCE el-Amarna correspondence) it may be deducted that Lachish was an important urban center and the seat of the Egyptian governor of southern Canaan.

Two temples are known from this period at Lachish. Finds from the Fosse Temple, at the western foot of the mound, include cult vessels, offering bowls and imported items of pottery, faience and ivory, all evidence of wealth. The temple on the acropolis, with Egyptian architectural elements, included an entrance chamber, a main hall (16 x 13 m.)

and a raised holy of holies. Two octagonal stone columns supported the wooden ceiling, while the walls were decorated with painted plaster.

Canaanite Lachish was totally destroyed by fire at the end of the 12th century BCE. According to one theory, the destruction was wrought by the Philistines of the nearby Coastal Plain; according to another, more widely accepted theory, it was wrought by the Israelites, whose capture and destruction of the city is recorded in the Bible. (Joshua 10:31,32)

The Israelite city

Rebuilt as a fortress-city of the Kingdom of Judah, Lachish gained in importance after the split of the kingdom into Judah and Israel. As the largest city on the western border of the Kingdom of Judah facing the Philistines of the Coastal Plain, Lachish was fortified with a double line of massive mud-brick walls on stone foundations. The main city wall on top of the mound was 6 m. wide, with a sloping *glacis* supported by a revetment wall along the middle of the slope. The city gate, in the southwestern wall, is one of the largest and most strongly fortified gates known of this period. It consists of an outer gate in a huge tower built of large

Zanoah
Jarmuth
Gath
VALLEY OF ELAH
Azekah
Gederah
Socoh
Adullam
Moresheth-gath?
Libnah?
Ether?
Aczib
Ged
Keilah
reshah
Nezib
Beth-z
H
Lachish
Beth-tappuah
Makkedah
Eglon?

0   5   10 mi
0   5   10   15 km

stones which protrudes from the line of defenses. The gatehouse, on top of the mound, consists of three pairs of chambers with wooden doors on hinges.

A palace-fortress was built on the acropolis and probably served as the residence of the governor appointed by the King of Judah. During the 8th century BCE a new wing was added to the palace, enlarging it to 76 x 36 m. Next to the palace was a courtyard with stables and storerooms; the whole complex was surrounded by a wall with a gatehouse.

The city of Lachish was destroyed by the Assyrian army during Sennacherib's campaign against the Kingdom of Judah in 701 BCE. The destruction was total; the buildings were burned to the ground and the inhabitants exiled. The Assyrian campaign, during the reign of King Hezekiah, and the encampment of the Assyrian army at Lachish are described in detail in the Bible. (2 Kings 18:14-17; 2 Chronicles 32:9) The conquest of Lachish is depicted in monumental stone reliefs found at Sennacherib's palace at Ninveh, providing a rare contemporary "photograph" of the battle and conquest. These relief-images of the Assyrian attack have been confirmed

by archeological evidence at the site: the attack on Lachish was launched from the southwest; the attackers built a siege ramp against the slope of the mound, which according to calculation contained some 15,000 tons of stones and earth! The ramp was covered with plaster to allow the Assyrian battering ram to be moved up to the city wall and breach it. The city's defenders constructed a counter-ramp inside the city, thus raising the city wall, which forced the Assyrians to raise the height of their ramp in order to overcome the city's new defenses. The fierceness of the battle is attested to by the remains of weapons, scales of armor, hundreds of slingstones and arrowheads.

During the reign of King Josiah (639-609 BCE), the city of Lachish was rebuilt and fortified. This much poorer city was captured and destroyed by the Babylonian army in 587/6 BCE. (Jeremiah 34:7) In one of the rooms, which opened onto a courtyard outside the city gatehouse, a group of *ostraca* were found during the excavations in the 1930s. Now known as the Lachish Letters, they constitute an important corpus of Hebrew documents from the First Temple period. Written in paleo-Hebrew script on pottery sherds, they

are messages sent by the garrison commander of a small fortress to his commanding officer in Lachish.

The excavations were conducted by D. Ussishkin of Tel Aviv University.

http://www.mfa.gov.il/MFA/History/Early%20History%20-%20Archaeology/Archaeological%20Sites%20in%20Israel%20-%20Lachish-%20Royal%20Ci

Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs

The ghosts of Tel Lachish
By ALLAN RABINOWITZ

(May 6) - There's something ghost-like about Tel Lachish. From the gravel access road it resembles the movie-set shell of a haunted mansion.

A wall looms high and vivid in the northwest corner, bare of the dirt that covers the rest of the tel. It is probably part of the buttressed wall that stood as Lachish resisted the invasion of the Assyrian Empire, 2,700 years ago, during the reign of King Hezekiah over the kingdom of Judah.

Along that buttressed wall, which exploited an earlier Canaanite trench below, one can easily imagine the Judeans perched on its ramparts shooting arrows and hurling stones, torches and perhaps clay jars filled with hot oil down on the invaders.

A view of the siege ramp up which the Assyrians rolled battering rams that pounded the wall of the Judean hilltop kingdom.
(Michal Roche)

For it is war - its shadows and all-pervasive biblical (not to mention human) reality - that we see, more than anything else, while picking our way through the undeveloped but potentially riveting site of Lachish.

We can best understand Lachish by staring at the Assyrian wall sculptures which were discovered in Assyria's ancient capital, Nineveh (now Iraq), and other sites, and are now exhibited in the British Museum. The Assyrian rulers lined their palaces with battle scenes advertising the awesome power of their empire.

In its time, Assyria was the strongest regime to have rolled across the ancient Near East. It stretched from east of the Tigris and Euphrates rivers to the Mediterranean Sea, and from just below the Black Sea south to Gaza, Sinai and finally the Nile Delta and points south.

In 701 BCE, the Emperor Sennacherib invaded and subdued the coastal territory of the Philistines, stopping an Egyptian army that rushed north to challenge him. Then he turned east to conquer the recalcitrant little hilltop

kingdom of Judah. Hezekiah paid heavy tribute, but his kingdom was the only pocket left uncontrolled by the empire.

One wall relief, taken from Sennacherib's palace in Nineveh, depicts the battle for Lachish. That town, which guarded the road from the southernmost coast up to Hebron and the southern Judean hill country, faced the full force of Assyrian power and wrath.

If you can't get to London, stare at a photograph (available in many history and archeology books) of that multipanel frieze, and envision it as a three-dimensional computer model you can enter. You'll be swept into the chaos of siege and battle.

Four-wheeled battering rams rolled up a carefully constructed siege ramp and pounded the wall, probing for weaknesses. Ranks of archers and sling-throwers took aim at the defenders on the parapets. The Judeans shot arrows and hurled stones and firebrands.

Bold Assyrian infantrymen raised their shields while trying to heave the scaling ladders up. Some, repulsed, hurtled to earth. Bodies piled up. Screams and smoke filled the air. Still the battering rams pounded.

ASSYRIAN rulers glorified war. They developed specialized corps - cavalry, sappers, combat engineers, snipers, aquatic units - and "modernized" their weapons and strategies. Perhaps that was why Isaiah, who witnessed the growing Assyrian threat, prophesied a time when nations would no longer "study war."

You will see the "modern" military machine Assyria unleashed against Lachish as you follow the path from the parking lot to the tel's gate structure. On your right, the cutaway slope of tightly compacted earth and stones is the Assyrian siege ramp, built against Lachish's southern wall. (Inside the wall, the Judeans built a counter-ramp.)

Near the siege ramp, a path slopes up toward Lachish's ancient gate on what was originally a chariot ramp. As you climb it to the elaborate gate structure, the largest in ancient Israel (Lachish was evidently second in importance only to Jerusalem), note the city wall on your right. An advancing Assyrian, typically carrying his shield on his left arm, would expose his right flank to archers on the walls.

At the top, the invaders had to break through an outer gate, pivot to the right while they were packed in a small courtyard and exposed to fire from bordering towers, and break through an inner gate, the remains of which you can now walk through.

But the Assyrians surmounted the town's defenses, as they did, according to Sennacherib's own account, at 45 other Judean towns. Inside Lachish's walls, though the site is undeveloped and only partially excavated, there is evidence of fierce burning at the level of the Assyrian invasion. Arrowheads, sling-stones and the crest of an Assyrian helmet offer only hints of the tumult and destruction highlighted in the Assyrian frieze.

The people inside these walls must have been terrified, perhaps huddling in the palace complex that still sits just to the left inside the gate complex. Perhaps, in what might have been a spin-off sanctuary of the Temple in Jerusalem, priests performed desperate rituals in hope of divine intervention.

The residents were right to be afraid, for gruesome fates awaited captives of Assyria. They were uprooted, tortured, led away with bags over their heads, with limbs lopped off, with rings in their noses or lips. The stone relief of Lachish's conquest shows the exile of prisoners as vividly as the battle itself.

The horror recorded at Lachish could be reconstructed at virtually any biblical city or fortress. But toppled stone walls cannot reveal the hatred, the fear, the blood and the destroyed families. In recalling the drama of the Lachish conquest, footage of Kosovan refugees takes on a perspective of timeless, tragic, human experience.

USING Lachish as a base, the Assyrian army moved into the hills against Jerusalem but, according to II Kings (20:35), was smitten by an angel of God and retreated. Lachish was rebuilt, again became the southwest guardian of Judah and later faced a new enemy, the Babylonians.

Evidence linked to the Babylonian attack, though sparse, is chilling and poignant. Among the 18 Hebrew ostraca (fragments of inscribed pottery) found in a guardroom, one reads, "Let my lord know that we are watching over the beacon of Lachish, according to the signals which my lord gave, for Azeka is not to be seen."

This is like a movie scene in which the blip of an aircraft disappears from a radar screen. That one simple message encapsulates Lachish's isolation and doom before the Babylonian onslaught.

The book of Jeremiah (34:7) confirms that Azeka and Lachish were the last cities to fall, leaving Jerusalem alone.

Tel Lachish is located about three kilometers south of Route 35 (the road between Kiryat Gat and Beit Guvrin), on the road leading to Moshav Amatzya. It is open to the public, with no specific hours, entrance fee, supervision or facilities. Identification signs are minimal. To enjoy the site more fully, bring a guidebook.

Allan Rabinowitz is a licensed tour guide. He can be reached at allan@jpost.co.il

http://web.archive.org/web/20020805171840/http://www.jpost.com/com/Archive/27.Sep.1999/Tourism/Article-16.html

Lakhish Ostraca, c. 587 BCE

The Lachish Letters
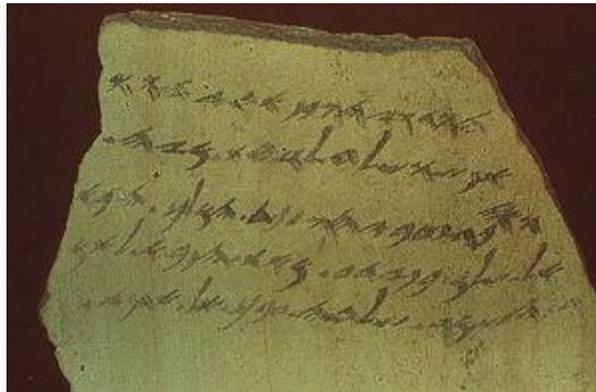
Lakhish Ostraca

Lakhish Ostraca. Photo courtesy of Bible History Online.

In 701 BCE, the Assyrian king Sennacherib led his armies to Phoenicia (the coast of Lebanon) and the Land of Israel with the aim of crushing a rebellion against him that had erupted under the leadership of Hezekiah, king of Judah, and Zedaka, king of Ashkelon. (The story of this rebellion is alluded to in I Kings 18:13-14). After defeating an Egyptian auxiliary force that had come to the aid of the rebels in Philistia, Sennacherib advanced to the Judean Foothills (Shephelah) and pitched camp at the foot of Lachish, the second most important city in Judah after Jerusalem. The people of Lachish, aware that the Assyrian army would have the upper hand in any direct confrontation, barricaded themselves in the city in the hope of outlasting the enemy. The Assyrians, however, managed to break through the city's fortifications by raising a stone siege ramp against its walls. Upon Sennacherib's orders, they destroyed the walls, looted the city's treasures, and sent its survivors into exile.

Lachish stood desolate for decades, and the region was ultimately severed from Judah and delivered into Philistine hands. However, during the period in which Babylonia and Media waged war against Assyria, finally conquering it in 612 BCE, Lachish was reinhabited, and the city was once again annexed to Judah. Its walls were rebuilt, but the palace was not. The settlement probably served as a military fortress.

Between 605 and 601 BCE, during the reign of Jehoiakim, the kingdom of Judah was subjugated by Babylonia, though there were periodic attempts by the Judean kings to shake off the yoke of foreign rule (as in II Kings 24:1). When the vassal king Zedekiah rebelled against Babylonia in 589 BCE, Nebuchadnezzar's armies descended upon Judah, laid waste to its cities and fortresses (including Lachish), and in 586 BCE, conquered Jerusalem and destroyed the Temple. In the shadow of these events, the Lachish Letters were written.

The Letters

The twenty-one letters discovered at Lachish were written in ink on potsherds (ostraca) in ancient Hebrew script. They were composed by Hosha'yahu, who sent them to his master, Ya'ush. Most scholars believe that Hosha'yahu was the commander of a small garrison along the road from Lachish to Jerusalem (perhaps Maresha), and that Ya'ush was his superior

officer, stationed at Lachish. Archaeologist Yigal Yadin, however, posited a different theory: He believed that Hosha'yahu was the commander of Lachish and that his letters, written on papyrus, were addressed to Ya'ush, a person of high rank who lived in Jerusalem. According to this hypothesis, the Lachish Letters were copies of the papyri sent to Jerusalem.

The letters reflect an atmosphere of tension and imminent danger and a general sense of intrigue and suspicion. We learn from them that the commander of the Judean army traveled to Egypt, Babylonia's enemy, presumably to solicit military aid; that among the members of the royal court and within the prophetic circles, there was much talk of the Babylonian threat being close at hand, and that this seemed to be having a dispiriting effect on the people; that Hosha'yahu was insulted because Ya'ush accused him of not having read carefully enough a letter he sent him, or of having misunderstood its content (some scholars interpret this as meaning that Hosha'yahu read a letter that had not been intended for him).
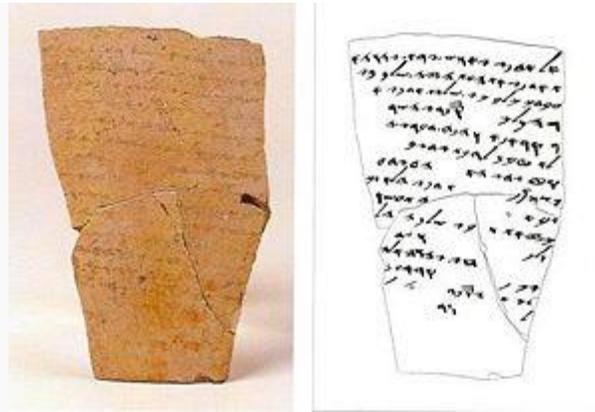
Lachish Letter no. 6

Apparently, the Lachish Letters were written prior to the outbreak of the war with the Babylonians in 589/8 BCE, for they contain no reference to actual fighting, to the enemy's presence, or to the blocking of the route to Jerusalem. Nevertheless, some interpret a certain line in Letter 4 as a sign that Azekah, situated sixteen kilometers north of Lachish, had already fallen to the Babylonians, for its fires were no longer visible: "Let him also know that we are watching for the beacons of Lachish, in accordance with all the fire-signals that my lord has given, but we do not see Azekah." If this interpretation is correct (many scholars have rejected this view), then at the time the letter was written, the Babylonian armies had already conquered large portions of Judah and must have already been quite close to Lachish.

Letter 6, the only one on permanent exhibition at the Rockefeller Museum (no. 42), deals with letters from Jerusalem that had reached Ya'ush, which contained quotes from a prophet (or prophets) or officials expressing defeatist attitudes about the approaching war. Ya'ush forwarded the letters to Hosha'yahu for his perusal. Hosha'yahu responded quickly, stating that in his opinion, such statements were damaging to the morale of the people and its king and to their ability to withstand attack. He pleaded with his commander to encourage the officials to cease writing letters containing such demoralizing messages: "I tell you that since your servant read the letters, there has not been for your servant [peace] . . ."

English Translation of Letter no. 6, written in ancient Hebrew script in black ink on a potsherd (from Torczyner 1938) L 16 W 10, No. 38.129:

1. To my lord Ya'ush. Yahweh give my

2. lord to see the present season in good health. What

3. is your servant but a dog that my lord has sent the letter of the

4. king and the letters of the officials saying,

5. Read this and see how the words of the [prophet] are not

6. good, liable to loosen your hands [and to make]

7. limp the hands of the [men] . . .

8. . . . ? [And now, my] lord, will you not

9. write to them [and say, Why] do you behave

10. like this - [in] Jerusalem too? Look, it is to

11. the king [and to his house] that you are doing this

12. thing. By the life of Yahweh,

13. I tell you that since your servant read

14. the letters, there has not been

15. for your servant [peace] . . .

Ornit Ilan. *Image and Artifact: Treasures of the Rockefeller Museum* with Aerial Photographs by Duby Tal and Moni Haramati. The Jerusalem Museum, 2000. pp. 62-63.

http://cojs.org/cojswiki/Lakhish_Ostraca%2C_c._587_BCE

Lachish

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

Jump to: navigation, search

This article is about the ancient town. For other uses, see Lakhish (disambiguation).

Lachish (Hebrew: לכיש; Greek: Λαχις; Latin: *Lachis*) was a town located in the Shephelah, a region between Mount Hebron and the maritime plain of Philistia (Joshua 10:3, 5; 12:11). The town was first mentioned in the Amarna letters as *Lakisha-Lakiša* (EA 287, 288, 328, 329, 335). According to the Bible, the Israelites captured and destroyed Lachish for

joining the league against the Gibeonites (Joshua 10:31-33), but its territory was later assigned to the tribe of Judah (15:39) and became a part of the Kingdom of Israel.

Lachish

History

Judean captives being led away into slavery by the Assyrians after the siege of Lachish in 701 B.C. This relief is important for the knowledge of Judean dress.

v • d • e

Campaigns of theNeo-Assyrian Empire

Rise of Neo-Assyria – Campaigns of Ashurnasirpal II – Campaigns of Shalmaneser III – Qarqar – Campaigns of Tiglath Pileser III – Campaigns of Sargon II – Campaigns of Sennacherib – Lachish – Jerusalem – Diyala River – 1st Babylon – Campaigns of Esarhaddon – Campaigns of Ashurbanipal – Ashdod – Susa – Elam – 2nd Babylon – Arrapha – Assur – Nineveh – Harran – Carchemish

Under Rehoboam, Lachish became the second most important city of the kingdom of Judah. In 701 BC, during the revolt of king Hezekiah against Assyria, it was captured by Sennacherib despite determined resistance (see Siege of Lachish). The town later reverted to Judaean control, only to fall to Nebuchadnezzar in his campaign against Judah (586 BC).

During Old Testament times Lachish served an important protective function in defending Jerusalem and the interior of Judea. The easiest way to get a large attacking army (such as an Assyrian army, see Isaiah 36:2, Isaiah 37:8 and Jeremiah 34:7) up to Jerusalem was to approach from the coast. Lachish was one of several city/forts guarding the canyons that lead up to Jerusalem and greater Judea. In order to lay siege to Jerusalem an invading army would first have to take Lachish, which guarded the mountain pass. During the reign of Hezekiah, King of Judah, the Assyrians, under King Sennacherib, attempted to take Jerusalem, and, in that campaign, succeeded in taking Lachish (see 2 Chronicles 32:9 and Isaiah 36:2). Modern excavation of the site has revealed that the Assyrians built a stone and dirt ramp up to the level of the Lachish city wall, thereby allowing the soldiers to charge up the ramp and storm the city. Excavations revealed approximately 1,500 skulls in one of the caves near the site, and hundreds of arrowheads on the ramp and at the top of the city wall, indicating the ferocity of the battle.

Biblical references to Lachish include Joshua 10:3, 5, 23, 31-35; Joshua 12:11; Joshua 15:39; 2 Kings 14:19; 2 Kings 18:14, 17; 2 Kings 19:8; 2 Chronicles 11:9; 2 Chronicles 25:27; 2 Chronicles 32:9; Nehemiah 11:30; Isaiah 36:2; Isaiah 37:8; Jeremiah 34:7; and Micah 1:13.

Archaeology

Identification

During the 19th and early 20th centuries, Lachish was identified with Tell el-Hesi from a cuneiform tablet found there (EA 333). The tablet is a letter from an Egyptian official named Paapu, reporting cases of treachery involving a local kinglet, Zimredda.

Blast furnace

Excavations at Tell el-Hesy were conducted by Petrie and Bliss for the Palestine Exploration Fund during the years 1890 – 1892, and among other discoveries was the remains of what was identified as an iron blast furnace, with slag and ashes, which was dated to 1500 BC. If the theories of experts are correct, the use of the hot-air blast instead of cold air was known at an extremely early age.

Classical Hebrew ostraca

See also: Paleo-Hebrew alphabet

More recent excavations have identified Tell ed-Duweir as Lachish beyond reasonable doubt. Excavation campaigns by James Leslie Starkey recovered a number of ostraca (18 in 1935, three more in 1938) from the latest occupational level immediately before the Chaldean siege. They then formed the only known corpus of documents in classical Hebrew.

LMLK seals

Another major contribution to Biblical archaeology from excavations at Lachish are the LMLK seals, which were stamped on the handles of a particular form of ancient storage jar. More of these artifacts were found at this site (over 400; Ussishkin, 2004, pp. 2151-9) than any other place in Israel (Jerusalem remains in second place with more than 300). Most of them were collected from the surface during Starkey's excavations, but others were found in Level 1 (Persian and Greek era), Level 2 (period preceding Babylonian conquest by Nebuchadnezzar), and Level 3 (period preceding Assyrian conquest by Sennacherib). It is thanks to the work of David Ussishkin's team working at the site from 1973 – 1994 that eight of these stamped jars were restored (Ussishkin, 1983), thereby demonstrating lack of relevance between the jar volumes (which deviated as much as 5 gallons or 12 litres), and also proving their relation to the reign of Biblical king Hezekiah.

The 1898 Reference by Bliss, contains numerous drawings, including examples of Phoenician, etc. pottery, and items from pharaonic Egypt, and other Mediterranean, and inland regions.

Lachish (22 Occurrences)

Joshua 10:3 Therefore Adoni-Zedek king of Jerusalem sent to Hoham king of Hebron, to Piram king of Jarmuth, to Japhia king of **Lachish**, and to Debir king of Eglon, saying, (WEB KJV JPS ASV BBE DBY WBS YLT NAS RSV NIV)

Joshua 10:5 Therefore the five kings of the Amorites, the king of Jerusalem, the king of Hebron, the king of Jarmuth, the king of **Lachish**, the king of Eglon, gathered themselves together, and went up, they and all their armies, and encamped against Gibeon, and made war against it. (WEB KJV JPS ASV BBE DBY WBS YLT NAS RSV NIV)

Joshua 10:23 They did so, and brought those five kings out of the cave to him: the king of Jerusalem, the king of Hebron, the king of Jarmuth, the king of **Lachish**, and the king of Eglon. (WEB KJV JPS ASV BBE DBY WBS YLT NAS RSV NIV)

Joshua 10:31 Joshua passed from Libnah, and all Israel with him, to **Lachish**, and encamped against it, and fought against it. (WEB KJV JPS ASV BBE DBY WBS YLT NAS RSV NIV)

[Joshua 10:32](#) Yahweh delivered **Lachish** into the hand of Israel. He took it on the second day, and struck it with the edge of the sword, with all the souls who were in it, according to all that he had done to Libnah. (WEB KJV JPS ASV BBE DBY WBS YLT NAS RSV NIV)

[Joshua 10:33](#) Then Horam king of Gezer came up to help **Lachish**; and Joshua struck him and his people, until he had left him none remaining. (WEB KJV JPS ASV BBE DBY WBS YLT NAS RSV NIV)

[Joshua 10:34](#) Joshua passed from **Lachish**, and all Israel with him, to Eglon; and they encamped against it fought against it. (WEB KJV JPS ASV BBE DBY WBS YLT NAS RSV NIV)

[Joshua 10:35](#) They took it on that day, and struck it with the edge of the sword. He utterly destroyed all the souls who were in it that day, according to all that he had done to **Lachish**. (WEB KJV JPS ASV BBE DBY WBS YLT NAS RSV NIV)

[Joshua 12:11](#) the king of Jarmuth, one; the king of **Lachish**, one; (WEB KJV JPS ASV BBE DBY WBS YLT NAS RSV NIV)

[Joshua 15:39](#) **Lachish**, Bozkath, Eglon, (WEB KJV JPS ASV BBE DBY WBS YLT NAS RSV NIV)

[2 Kings 14:19](#) They made a conspiracy against him in Jerusalem; and he fled to **Lachish**: but they sent after him to Lachish, and killed him there. (WEB KJV JPS ASV BBE DBY WBS YLT NAS RSV NIV)

[2 Kings 18:14](#) Hezekiah king of Judah sent to the king of Assyria to **Lachish**, saying, "I have offended; return from me. That which you put on me, I will bear." The king of Assyria appointed to Hezekiah king of Judah three hundred talents of silver and thirty talents of gold. (WEB KJV JPS ASV BBE DBY WBS YLT NAS RSV NIV)

[2 Kings 18:17](#) The king of Assyria sent Tartan and Rabsaris and Rabshakeh from **Lachish** to king Hezekiah with a great army to Jerusalem. They went up and came to Jerusalem. When they were come up, they came and stood by the conduit of the upper pool, which is in the highway of the fuller's field. (WEB KJV JPS ASV BBE DBY WBS YLT NAS RSV NIV)

[2 Kings 19:8](#) So Rabshakeh returned, and found the king of Assyria warring against Libnah; for he had heard that he had departed from **Lachish**. (WEB KJV JPS ASV BBE DBY WBS YLT NAS RSV NIV)

[2 Chronicles 11:9](#) and Adoraim, and **Lachish**, and Azekah, (WEB KJV JPS ASV BBE DBY WBS YLT NAS RSV NIV)

[2 Chronicles 25:27](#) Now from the time that Amaziah did turn away from following Yahweh they made a conspiracy against him in Jerusalem; and he fled to **Lachish**: but they sent after him to Lachish, and killed him there. (WEB KJV JPS ASV BBE DBY WBS YLT NAS RSV NIV)

[2 Chronicles 32:9](#) After this did Sennacherib king of Assyria send his servants to Jerusalem, (now he was before **Lachish**, and all his power with him), to Hezekiah king of Judah, and to all Judah who were at Jerusalem, saying, (WEB KJV JPS ASV BBE DBY WBS YLT NAS RSV NIV)

[Nehemiah 11:30](#) Zanoah, Adullam, and their villages, **Lachish** and its fields, Azekah and its towns. So they encamped from Beersheba to the valley of Hinnom. (WEB KJV JPS ASV BBE DBY WBS YLT NAS RSV NIV)

[Isaiah 36:2](#) The king of Assyria sent Rabshakeh from **Lachish** to Jerusalem to king Hezekiah with a large army. He stood by the aqueduct from the upper pool in the fuller's field highway. (WEB KJV JPS ASV BBE DBY WBS YLT NAS RSV NIV)

[Isaiah 37:8](#) So Rabshakeh returned, and found the king of Assyria warring against Libnah, for he had heard that he was departed from **Lachish**. (WEB KJV JPS ASV BBE DBY WBS YLT NAS RSV NIV)

[Jeremiah 34:7](#) when the king of Babylon's army was fighting against Jerusalem, and against all the cities of Judah that were left, against **Lachish** and against Azekah; for these alone remained of the cities of Judah as fortified cities. (WEB KJV JPS ASV BBE DBY WBS YLT NAS RSV NIV)

[Micah 1:13](#) Harness the chariot to the swift steed, inhabitant of **Lachish**. She was the beginning of sin to the daughter of Zion; For the transgressions of Israel were found in you. (WEB KJV JPS ASV BBE DBY WBS YLT NAS RSV NIV)

http://bibleatlas.org/lachish.htm

Lachish

Ancient Jewish City is Southern Judah

Aerial View of Tel Lachish

(From: www.odysseyadventures.ca/articles/lachish_slides/lachish_text.htm)

Next to Jerusalem, Lachish was perhaps the most important city of Judah. It guarded the south western portion of the Judah. In that later part of Judah's history, Lachish was sieged and destroyed on two occasions: in 701 B.C., by the Assyrians during the reign of Sennacherib, and in 588-87 B.C., by the Babylonians during the reign of Nebuchadnezzar.

Map of Judah
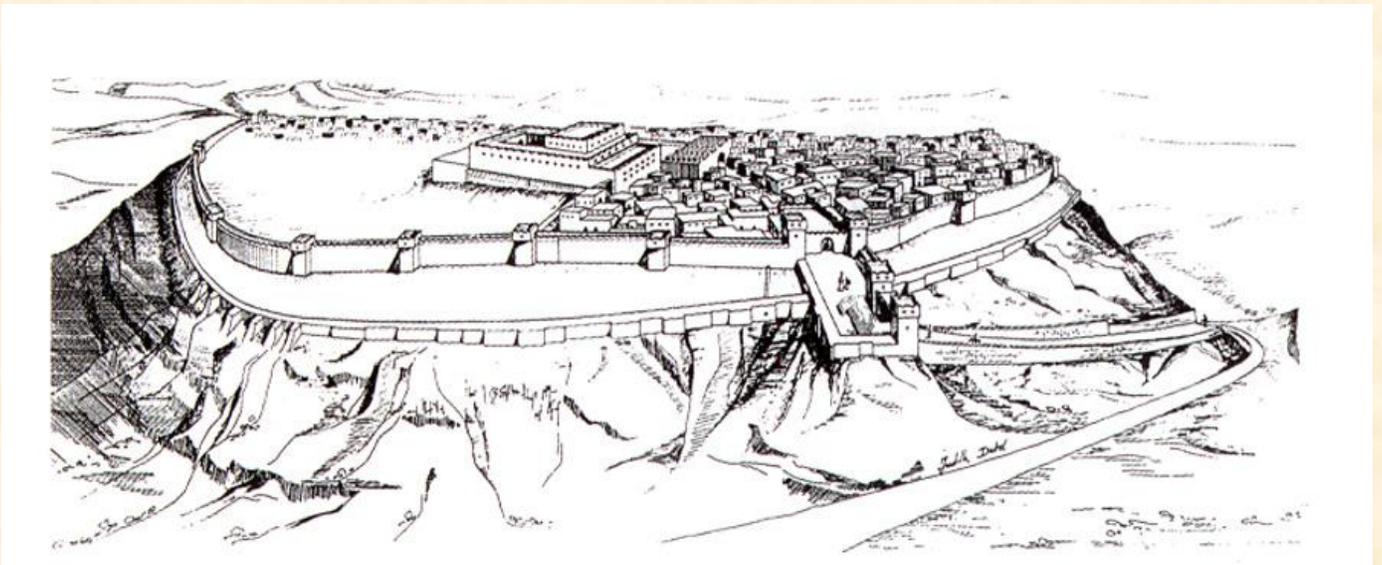
Artists rendition of ancient Lachish.

The city was surrounded by deep valleys except on the south-western side.   Though it was heavily fortified, it was the main area of attack in both sieges.

Artists rendition of ancient Lachish.

(From: http://fontes.lstc.edu/~rklein/images2/lachmode.jpg)
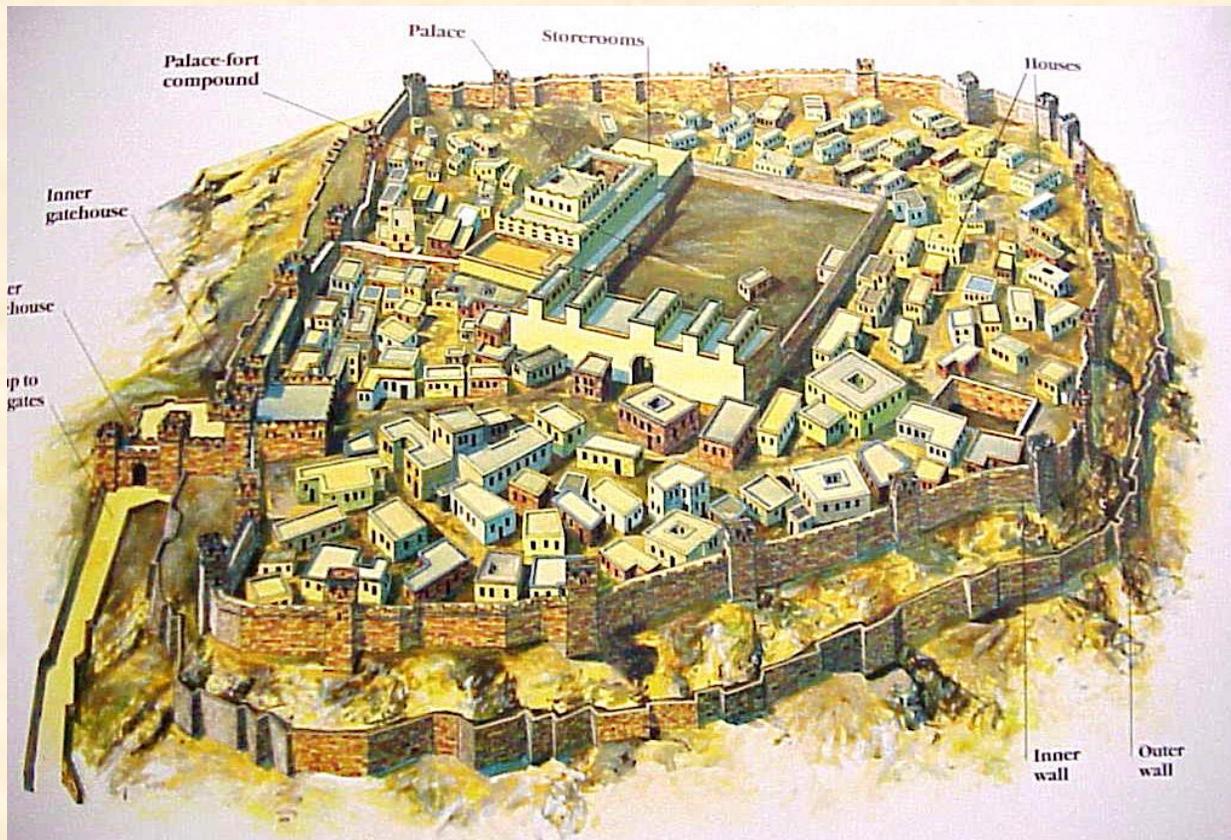
The Assyrian Siege of Lachish
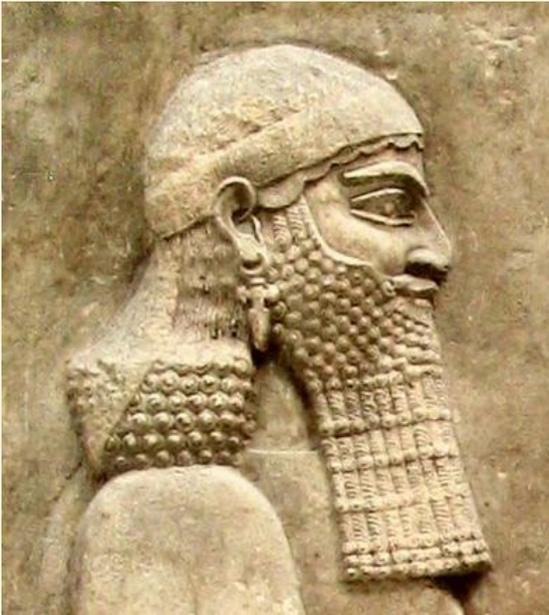
In 704 B. C., Sennacherib ascended the Assyrian throne. Shortly thereafter he lead a military campaign against Babylonia, where a revolt was taking place. In 701 B.C., he lead his troops into Syria and then into Judah. In that year he laid siege against Lachish, one of several cities of Judah that were in revolt during the reign of King Hezekiah.

The siege of Lachish by the Assyrians is archaeologically well documented. Excavations at Tel Lachish have produced abundant evidence of the siege. More importantly, in his palace at Nineveh, Sennacherib commissioned a set of stone reliefs be made commemorating the siege to decorate the walls of a room dedicated to the battle. The reliefs depict the siege of Lachish.
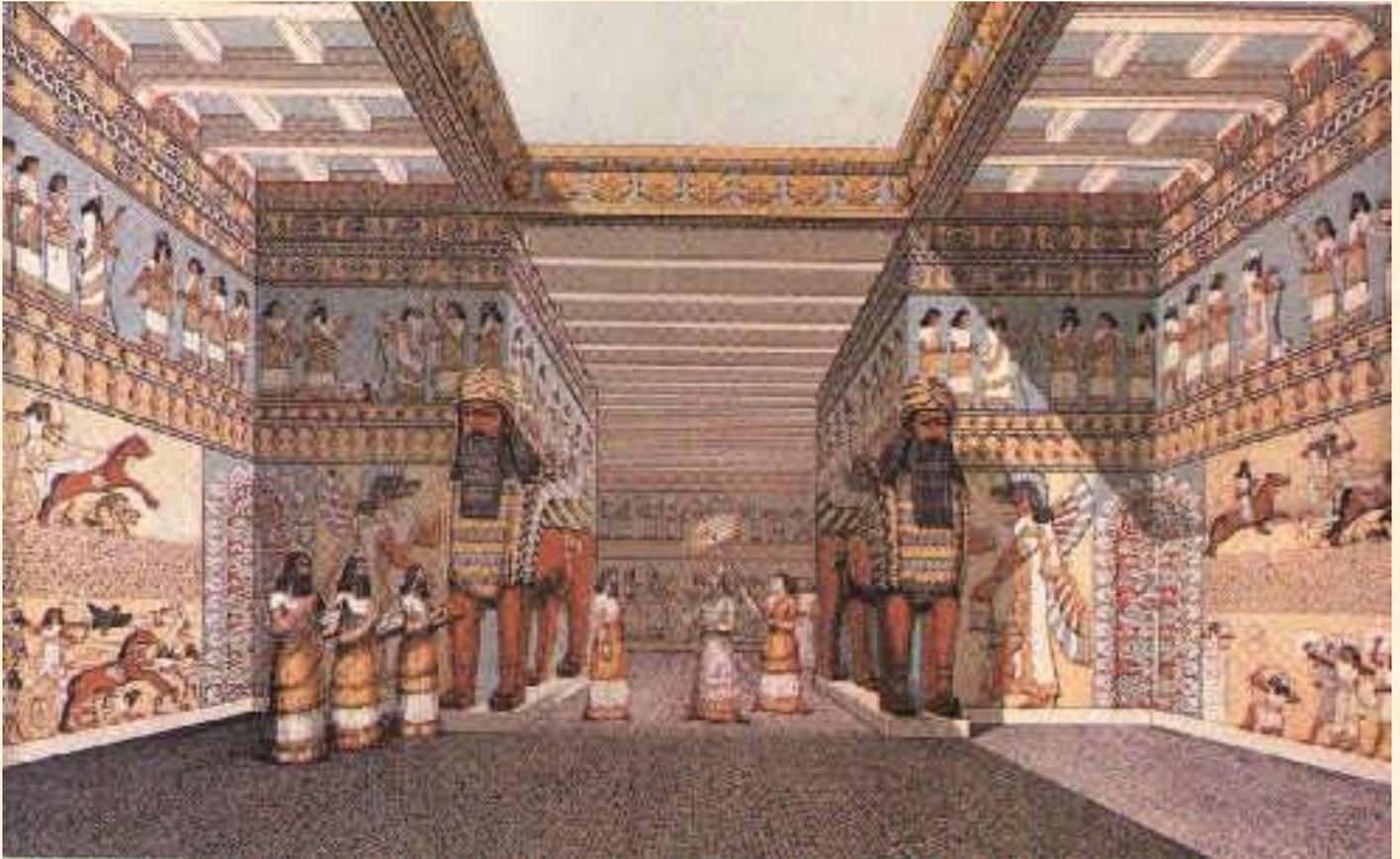
Depiction of Sennacherib's throne room at Nineveh.
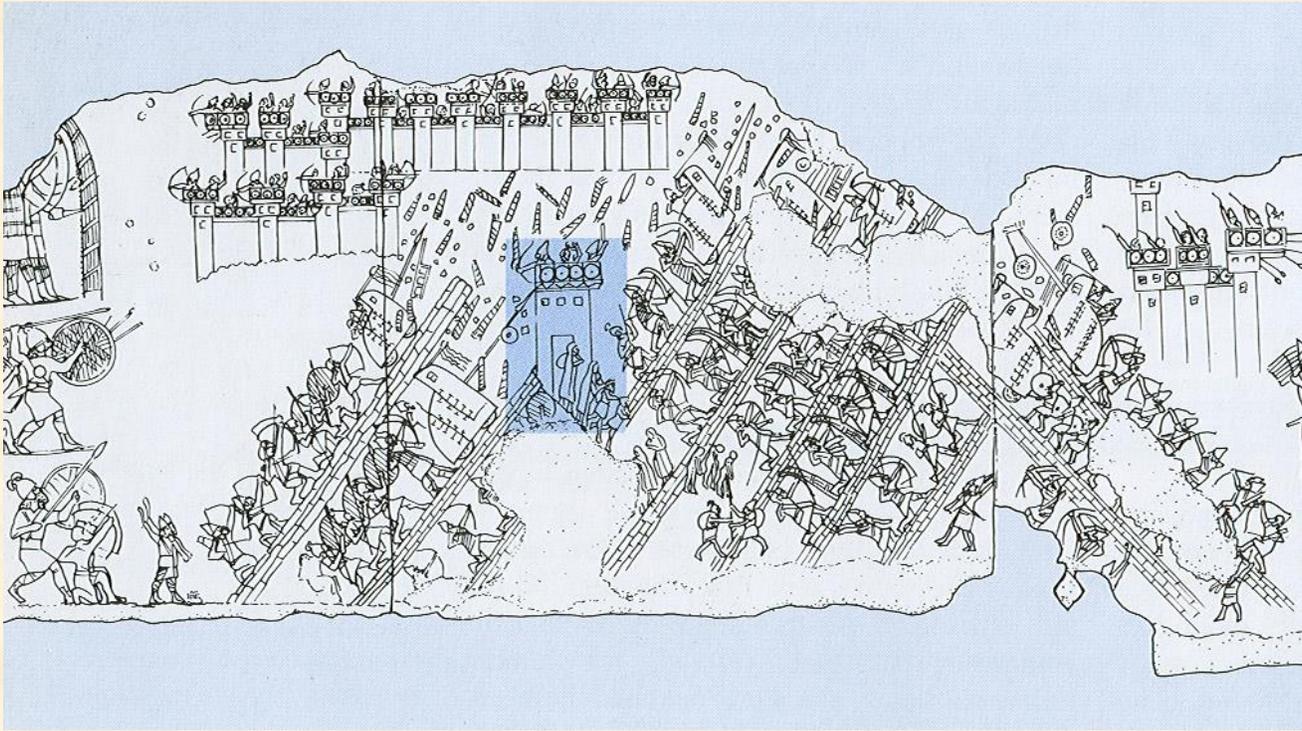
The Assyrian siege of Lachish

In this section of the relief, the siege of Lachish is portrayed. The city is seen in the background. The Assyrian siege ramps and battling rams can be seen attacking the most vulnerable part of the city wall, the gate (seen in the highlighted blue area)! . The Jews on the wall above are throwing torches onto the siege ramps hoping to catch them on fire.

The reliefs also depict the taking into captivity the defeated Jews. Though this is portrayed at the same time the battle is going on, reality is that this would have happened after the gate and walls would have been breached and the Jews defeated. Out of the gate Jewish captives are being taken

10/14/2017
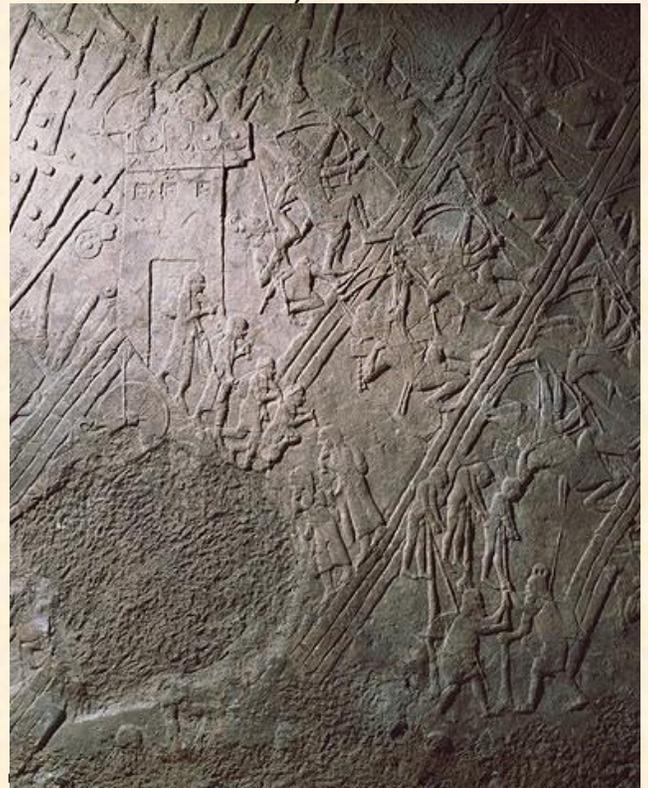
to Assyria. They are being lead by other captives who are being empaled on poles.
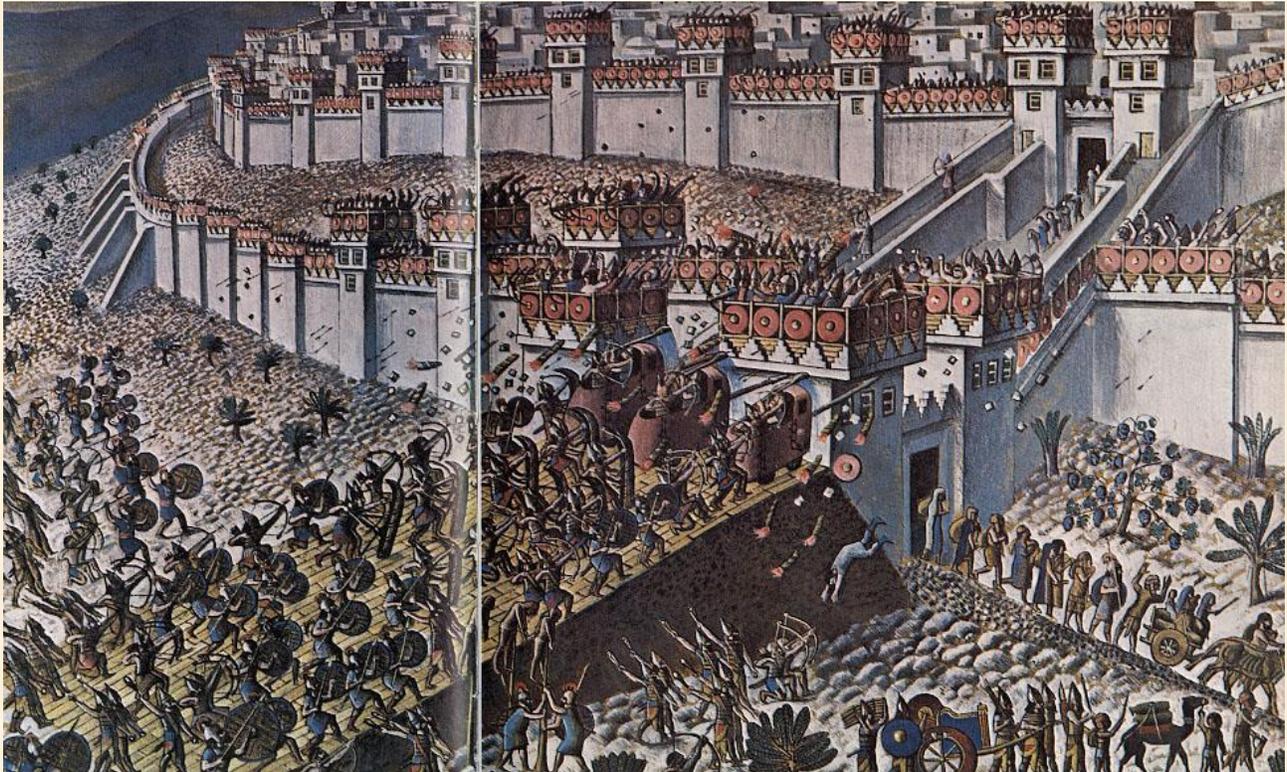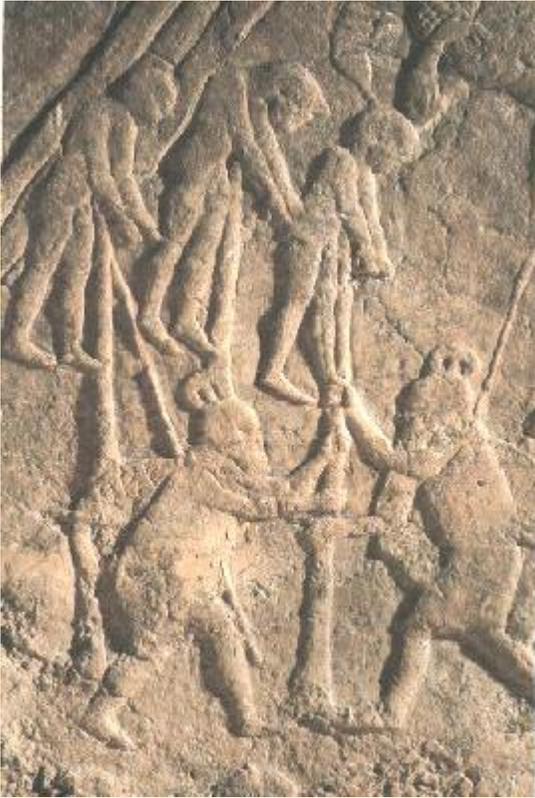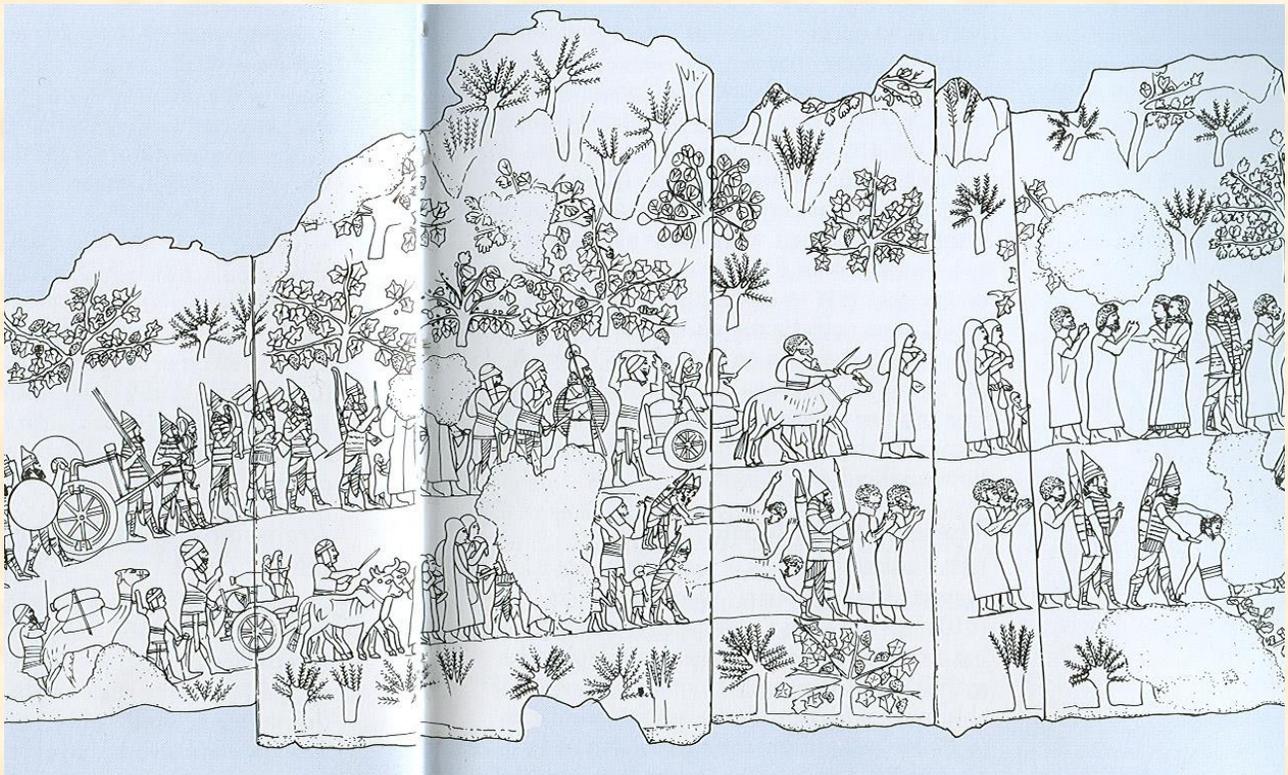
Jewish Captives

The upper portion of the panel reveals the horticulture of the area surrounding Lachish, (perhaps date palms, olive trees, or fig trees). The left part of the middle portion of this panel shows the Assyrians hauling off the booty of their victory. On the right as well as on the lower portion of the panel, captives are being taken. Some are being killed while others will become slaves.
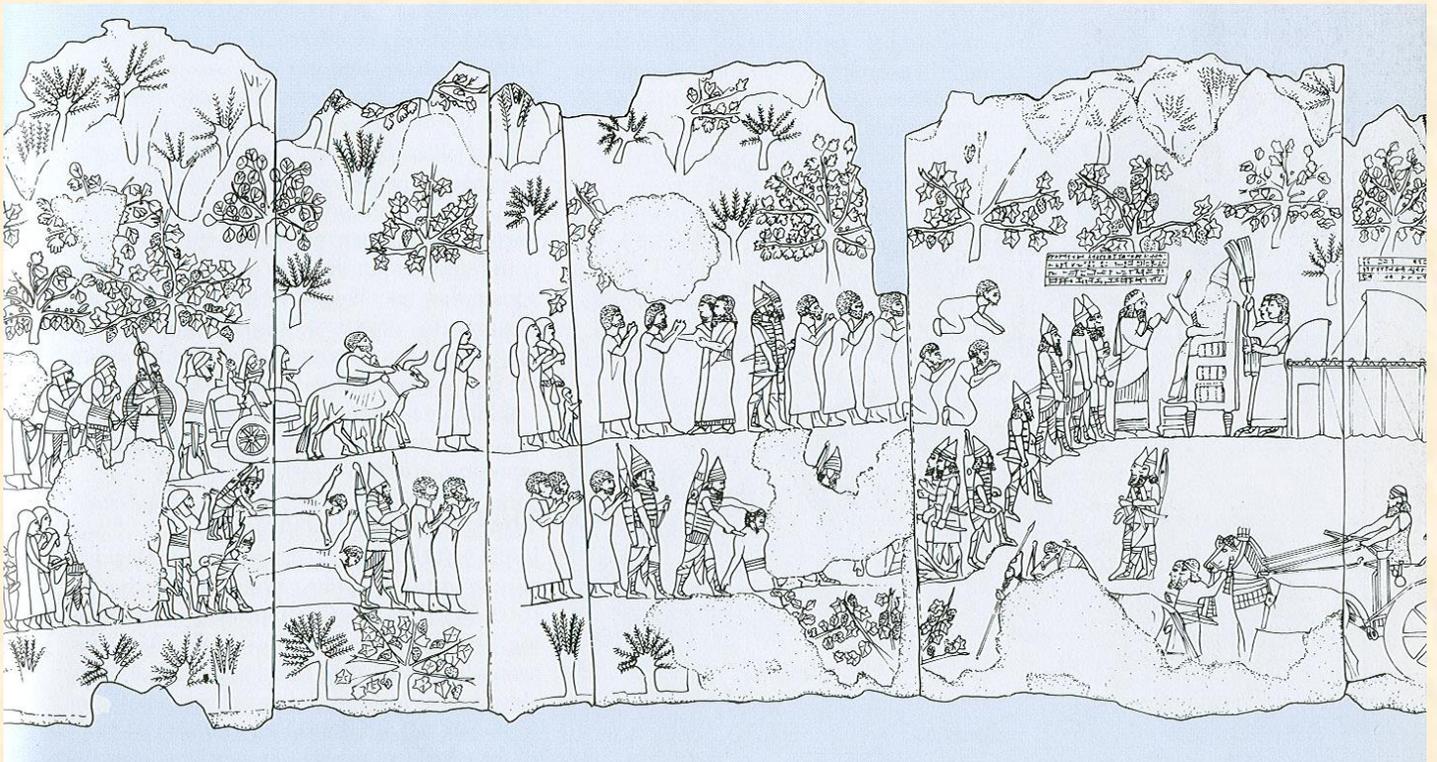
Throne of Sennacherib

On the left end of this panel, Sennacherib is seen sitting on his throne directing the siege of Lachish.

Lachish Letters

Discovered at Lachish (Tell ed-Duweir) in 1935, 18 hastily written letters dating to 587 BC describes the terrifying final days of Judah under King Zedekiah before its final overthrow by the Babylonians in 586 BC. These confirm the fulfillment of prophecies describing Judah's Babylonian captivity and con... ...:8-9; 34:7; Daniel 9:2; 2 Chron 36:15-

This note was written by a Jewish military officer to his superior: 'To my lord Ya'osh. May Yahweh cause my lord to hear the news of peace, even now, even now. Who is your servant but a dog that my lord should remember his servant?'

Lachish Letters (ostracon)

YHUH Tetragrammaton in ancient Hebrew characters

The Murashû Archive, late 5th century BCE

Judeans in Babylonia

**Relevant Textual Information:** The following is a list of apparently Israelite names from this tablet:

Name	Biblical Equivalent	Meaning	Biblical Citation
Yadi'-yaw	Jedaiah	"Yahweh knows"	Ezra 2:36
Yahu-natan	Jehonathan	"Yahweh has given"	2 Chron. 17:8
Shama'on	Simeon		Gen. 29:33
Ahi-yaw	Ahijah	"Yahweh is my brother"	1 Sam. 14:3
Shabbatai	Shabbethai		Ezra 10:15
Baniya	Benaiah	"Yahweh has built"	2 Sam. 23:30
Yigdal-yaw	Igdaliah	"Yahweh is great"	Jer. 35:4

Date: latter half of the 5th century BCE, mostly 440-416 BCE

Current Location: University of Pennsylvania Museum, Philadelphia

Language and Script: Neo-Babylonian?; cuneiform
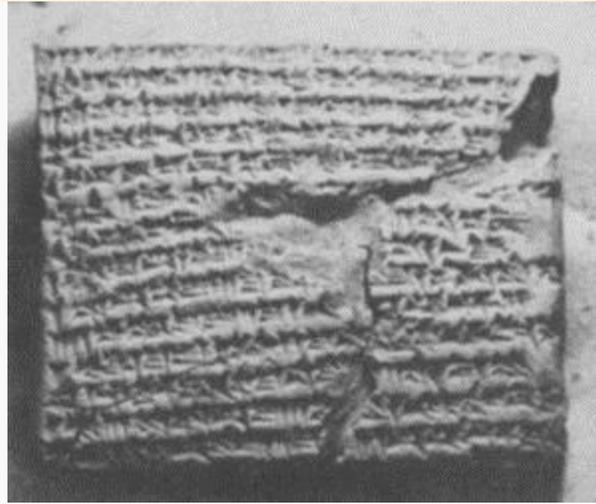
The Marashu Archive 1

The Marashu Archive 2

General Information:

• The Murashû firm was run by a family of financiers in Babylonia during the Persian Period. Archaeologists excavating at Nippur discovered an archive of almost 900 cuneiform tablets documenting the Murashûs' business activities. Particular attention has been given to those names in the documents that have theophoric versions of the name Yahweh in them. Presumably, these people were descendants of the exiles from Judah who were displaced to Babylon over 150 years earlier by Nebuchadnezzar. From the Murashû documents it seems these Jews living in Nippur were fully integrated into Babylonian society. Although the connection seems to make sense, we should be cautious because names do not necessarily prove ethnicity. Even the Bible (see Daniel 1:7; Esther 2:7) mentions examples of exiles in Babylonia and elsewhere adopting local names. A leading example is Zerubbabel, the leader (Ezra 2:2) of the community of exiles who returned to Judah and whose name means "seed of Babylon."

• The document shown here is a lease contract for a canal by a group of partners from Ellil-shun-iddin, a member of the Murashû family. ==Some of the partners have "Yahwistic" names, meaning their name includes part of the name Yahweh, **the personal name of the Israel God**, often translated in English Bibles as The Lord.== Quite commonly we find that names in the Ancient Near East, including names in the Bible, are constructed as phrases that relate an action of a god to the bearer of the name. Some examples are Ishmael – "Yishma'el" in Hebrew, meaning 'God hears,' and Elijah – "Eliyah(u)" in Hebrew, meaning 'The Lord Yahweh is my God.'

Translation: Yadi'-yaw, the son of Bana-'el; Yahu-natan, Shama'on and Ahi-yaw, the sons of Yadi'-yaw; Satur, the son of Shabbatai; Baniya, the son of Amel-nana; Yigdal-yaw, the son of Nana-iddin; Abda, the son of Apla; Nattun, the son of Shillim; and all their partners in Bit-gira; spoke freely to Ellil-shun-iddin, the son of Murashu, as follows: "Rent to us for three years the Mares' Canal, from its inlet up to its outlet, and the tithed field which is on this canal, and the field which is to the left of the Milidu Canal, and the three marshes which are to the right of the Milidu Canal, except the field which drinks (its) waters from the Ellil Canal; and we will give you annually 700 kur of barley according to the standard measure of Ellil-shum-iddin, and, as an annual gift, 2 grazing bulls and 20 grazing rams."

Circumstances of Discovery and Acquisition: The Murashû tablets were discovered in 1893 during excavations at Nippur undertaken by the University of Pennsylvania.

http://www.cojs.org/cojswiki/The_Murash%C3%BB_Archive%2C_late_5th_century_BCE

Saturday, January 9, 2010

The Name Yahweh in Egyptian Hieroglyphic Texts

ANS NEWS STORY

By Charles Aling, Clyde Billington and Gordon Govier
Special to ASSIST News Service

ST. PAUL, MN (ANS) -- The oldest historical mention of ancient Israel occurs in the Merneptah stele, an Egyptian monument dated to 1208 B.C. But mention of Israel's God, Yahweh, occurs even earlier in Egyptian inscriptions in conjunction with a group of people called the Shasu.

Among ancient Egyptian designations for types of foreign peoples in the New Kingdom Period (1550–1070 BC), the term Shasu occurs fairly frequently. It is generally accepted that the term Shasu means nomads or Bedouin people, referring primarily to the nomadic peoples of Syria-Palestine. There are two hieroglyphic references in New Kingdom Period texts to an area called "the land of the Shasu of Yahweh." Except for the Old Testament, these are the oldest references found in any ancient texts to the God Yahweh.

THE TERM SHASU

The term Shasu is found in a variety of New Kingdom hieroglyphic texts including the military, administrative, and diplomatic documents of pharaohs Thutmosis III, Amenhotep II, Thutmosis IV, Amenhotep III, Akhenaton, Seti I, Ramses II, Merneptah, and Ramses III.

The vast majority of scholars who have written on the Shasu stress that they were a people who were not totally nomadic. There were specific geographic areas associated in Egyptian topographical texts with the Shasu, thus indicating that at least some Shasu lived a somewhat settled existence in defined areas. "Semi-nomadic" is probably a more accurate translation.

The term Shasu is almost exclusively used in New Kingdom texts for semi-nomadic peoples living in parts of Lebanon, Syria, Sinai, Canaan, and Transjordan, and for people groups clearly identified as Semitic herders. The Shasu were rarely if ever under the control of the Egyptian government and were almost always looked upon as enemies of the Egyptians. For example, at the famous Battle of Kadesh in ca. 1275 BC, there were Shasu soldiers who were allies of the Hittites against Ramses II.

It is very likely that the Egyptians of the New Kingdom Period classified all of the ancient Edomites, Ammonites, Moabites, Amalekites, Midianites, Kenites, Hapiru, and Israelites as Shasu. There is even a reference dating to ca. 1250 BC in Papyrus Anastasi I to a group of giant Shasu living in Canaan who may be identified with the giants encountered by the Israelites at the time of the Exodus.

THE LAND OF THE SHASU OF YAHWEH

The New Kingdom inscriptions which refer to "the Land of the Shasu of Yahweh" are found in two topographical lists. The lists are found inscribed on the walls of temples, one at Soleb and the second at Amarah-West.

Soleb, a temple dedicated to the god Amon-Re, was built by the Egyptian Pharaoh Amenhotep III around 1400 BC. Today it is located in the nation of Sudan, on the left bank of the Nile about 135 miles south of Wadi-Halfa. Amarah-West, which is also located in Sudan, is a construction of Ramses II in the 13th century. The section of the Amarah-West topographical list which contains the reference to "the land of the Shasu of Yahweh," is not original with Ramses II, and was almost certainly copied from the earlier list at Soleb.

Egyptologists in general do not question the appearance of the name Yahweh in these two ancient lists. For example, Donald Redford writes of the reference to Yahweh at Soleb:

For half a century it has been generally admitted that we have here the tetragrammaton, the name of the Israelite god "Yahweh;" and if this be the case, as it undoubtedly is, the passage constitutes the most precious indication of the whereabouts during the late 15th century BC of an enclave revering this god.*

Even though Egyptologists accept the appearance of the name Yahweh in these topographical lists at Soleb and Amarah-West, **the implications of its appearance do not seem to have been fully appreciated by Old Testament scholars.** Of course the question remains, who or what is being referred to by the word Yahweh? Is it a reference to the God of Israel? Or is it just a reference to a town or city like most of the other Shasu descriptions?

The answer to this is not known with absolute certainty, but even if Yahweh is a place in these hieroglyphic texts, it was clearly a place named after the god Yahweh of the Old Testament. Anything less seems too coincidental.

There is no topographical site in the entire region today that bears the name Yahweh or anything remotely similar. There is also no biblical reference or ancient historical source that mentions a topographical site named Yahweh.

"The land of the Shasu of Yahweh"

"Rameses II"

From the temple at Amarah-West
Rameses II: 1304-1237 BC

www.bible.ca

Excavating in Egypt, T. James, 1982, p 129
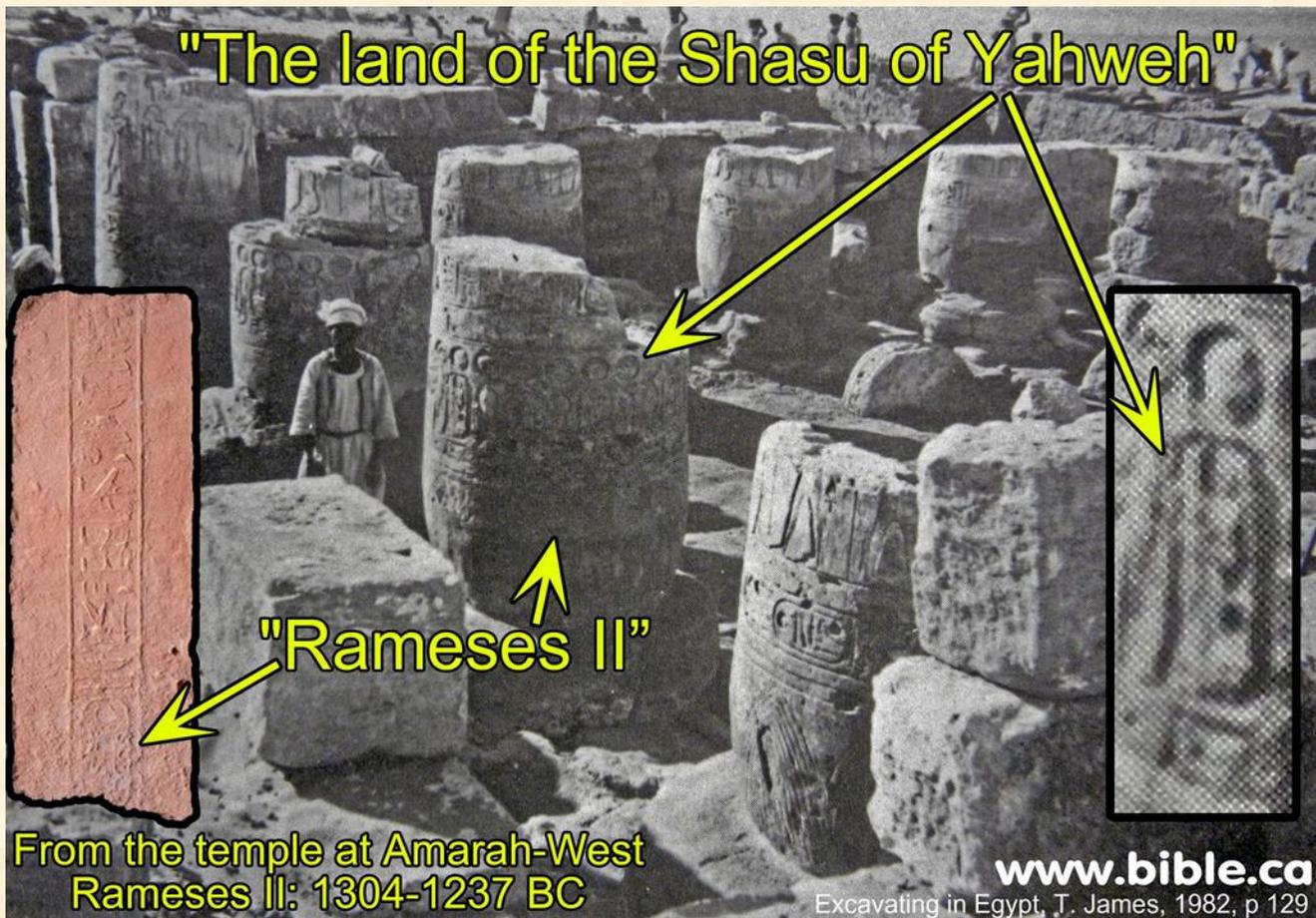
EGYPTIAN SYNCRETISM AND THE GOD YAHWEH

The Egyptians were known to have worshipped foreign gods and goddesses. The West Semitic goddess Astarte, who probably evolved out of Semitic Ishtar and/or Sumerian Inanna, was a goddess of love and fertility. She does not appear in Egyptian texts until the reign of Amenhotep II in the 15th century BC, when she is mentioned in that king's famous sphinx stele. In the New Kingdom Period Astarte was made a consort of Set and a daughter of Re. In Egyptian art, Astarte is depicted standing on a horse, with a crown on her head, and holding various weapons. A temple to her was built at Tell el Daba, biblical Rameses, a city site associated both with the Israelites and the Hyksos.

Another West Semitic female warrior deity revered in Egypt was Anath, who appears as early as the late Middle Kingdom, perhaps as a part of the influx of Semites into Egypt that eventually produced the so-called Hyksos period. After a brief hiatus in Dynasty 18, Anath enjoyed a resurgence of popularity in Dynasty 19, being credited with military victories of Seti I and his son Ramses II. The center of her worship was the Delta. Because of the sexual nature of her worship, Anath was viewed as an associate of a number of sexually-oriented Egyptian deities: Min, Hathor, and Set. She was depicted either wearing a traditional Egyptian sheath dress or as wearing nothing at all. She also tended to be shown holding weapons, such as a spear or battle-axe.

Reshef, a Canaanite god of war and thunder, seems to have been introduced into Egypt by the Hyksos. As king of the netherworld, Reshef was thought to bring plague and war upon humanity. The Egyptians depicted him in a distinctly Syrian style, with kilt, beard, and horned helmet, but he could also be shown wearing the White Crown of Upper Egypt and holding the Egyptian ankh and scepter,

or sometimes holding Canaanite weapons. This, along with Reshef's insertion as a member of a trinity of deities with the god Min and the goddess Qadesh, shows the marked degree of syncretistic integration of foreign deities into the Egyptian pantheon.

==However Yahweh was for some reason treated very differently. Clearly the Egyptians knew about Yahweh as can be seen in the Soleb and Amarah-West topographical lists, but they did not worship him, and they apparently did not want to worship him.==

==Nor was Yahweh equated to or identified with any Egyptian deity. There were no temples to Yahweh built by the Egyptians, nor were there any artistic representations made of him, or in fact even any discussions of him in Egyptian texts. It appears that the ancient Egyptians placed Yahweh into a category all by himself. To say the least, this is very strange for the syncretistic Egyptians. A possible explanation is that Yahweh was seen by the Egyptians as an enemy God, of an enemy tribal group which was a part of the hated Shasu peoples who lived north of Egypt.==

THE SHASU OF YAHWEH AND THE DATE OF THE EXODUS

There are two indisputable facts that Old Testament scholars must face when dealing with these hieroglyphic references to the Shasu of Yahweh. ==First, there is no doubt that the name of the Israelite God Yahweh appears in these hieroglyphic texts at Soleb and Amarah-West. **And second, at Soleb the reference to Yahweh dates to 1400 BC, during the reign of Pharaoh Amenhotep III.**== In other words **==Pharaoh Amenhotep III, or his scribes, knew about the Hebrew God Yahweh in 1400 BC.==** This fact is highly significant when trying to date the exodus of the Israelites from Egypt under Moses.

In Exodus 5:2 Pharaoh answers the first request of Moses to allow the Israelites to go into the desert to worship Yahweh by saying: "Who is Yahweh that I should obey His voice to let Israel go? I do not know Yahweh, and besides I will not let the Israelites go." Pharaoh appears here to be saying that he had never heard of the God Yahweh. This interpretation of Pharaoh's statement is reinforced by Exodus 7:17 where God responds to Pharaoh: "Thus says Yahweh, 'by this you will know that I am Yahweh, behold I will strike the water that is in the Nile with the staff that is in my hand, and it will become blood.'" (NASV)

In his third meeting with Moses and Aaron after the second plague, Pharaoh clearly recognized Yahweh as some sort of deity and asked Moses and Aaron to pray to Yahweh to remove the plague of frogs (see Exodus 8:8). If the Pharaoh of the Exodus had never before heard of the God Yahweh, this strongly suggests that the Exodus should be dated no later than 1400 BC because Pharaoh Amenhotep III had clearly heard about Yahweh by that time.

CONCLUSION

It is clear that there once was a group of Shasu Bedouin/nomads living in Syria-Palestine who were associated with either a deity or a place named Yahweh. It is also clear that the name Yahweh was known to the Egyptians in the 18th Dynasty during the reign of Pharaoh Amenhotep III.

But it must be admitted at this point that ==we also know from the Old Testament that there were other==

worshippers of Yahweh in Canaan who did not go into Egypt and therefore did not leave Egypt at the time of the Exodus. The question thus arises, were they perhaps the Shasu of Yahweh mentioned at Soleb and Amarah?

Although we do not have all the information that we wish we did, it is significant that there are no mentions of the Shasu of Yahweh in Egyptian texts earlier than the reign of Amenhotep III. If the group in question were Yahweh followers who never went to Egypt, why are they absent in topographical lists from the early period of the 18th Dynasty, for example, from the extensive topographical lists of Thutmosis III? The reason may very well be because the Shasu of Yahweh were indeed the Israelites and that they were still living in Egypt in the early 18th Dynasty.

The fact that the Shasu of Yahweh first appear in topographical lists under Amenhotep III in ca. 1400 BC fits perfectly with the Early Date of the Exodus, but this fact presents major problems for those scholars who prefer a Late Date for the Exodus during the reign of Pharaoh Ramses II in the 13th century BC. In any case, these references to Yahweh have been ignored for far too long by both conservative and liberal Bible scholars.

It thus appears very likely that the Shasu of Yahweh, who are mentioned in the topographical texts at Soleb and Amarah-West, were the Israelites who by about 1400 BC had settled into their own land in the mountains of Canaan. It also appears that for the ancient Egyptians the one feature that distinguished the Israelites from all the other Shasu (Semitic herders) in this area was their worship of the God Yahweh.

* Donald B. Redford, *Egypt, Canaan, and Israel in Ancient Times* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1993), p. 272

Charles Aling, an Egyptologist and chairman of the History Department at Northwestern College (St. Paul, MN), is the primary author of this article, with additional research and editing assistance from Clyde Billington, also a professor of history at Northwestern College, and Gordon Govier, the editor of ARTIFAX magazine. This is a condensed version of an article that appeared in the Autumn 2009 issue of ARTIFAX.

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http://bibleandarchaeology.blogspot.com/2011/09/earliest-yhwh-inscription-c-1400-bc.html

1. Yahweh inscription, c. 1400 BC

This photo displays a reproduction of the oldest known inscription of the name "YHWH," the personal name of God (cf. Exodus 3). The writing is in hieroglyphs and is dated to c. 1400 BC.

"The knowledge of Him [Yahweh] did not come from Egypt. A God who conquered the gods of Egypt cannot have been of Egyptian origin Himself, and Hebrew religion, which began with the service of one God only and culminated in definite monotheism, has no real affinity with the pantheistic tendencies of Egyptian idolatry. We cannot gain much light upon the subject from the cuneiform inscriptions of Babylonia. Lately much discussion has arisen in the discovery of three clay tablets said to contain one, if not three, proper names, meaning "Yah is God." The tablet belongs to the age of Hammarabi, about 2250 B.C., and are not Babylonian, but Canaanite or Hebrew. The translation is questionable, and "Yahwe," not "Ya," is the primary form of the divine name as the use of the Hebrew language and the occurrence of the name "Yahwe" on Mesha's stone show, so that a derivation for the Babylonian god Ea is impossible, and we shall do well to acquiesce in Dr. Driver's judgment that the names are yet too isolated to admit of any confident inference. Besides, even if we know that the names on the tablets meant "Ya is God," we should still be quite in the dark as to the connection between this use of the name in remote antiquity and its subsequent history." - SOURCE: *Hebrew Religion To The Establishment Of Judaism Under Ezra* By W. E. Addis, M. A., Crown Theological Library Vol. XVI, pp. 67-68, New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, London: Williams And Norgate.
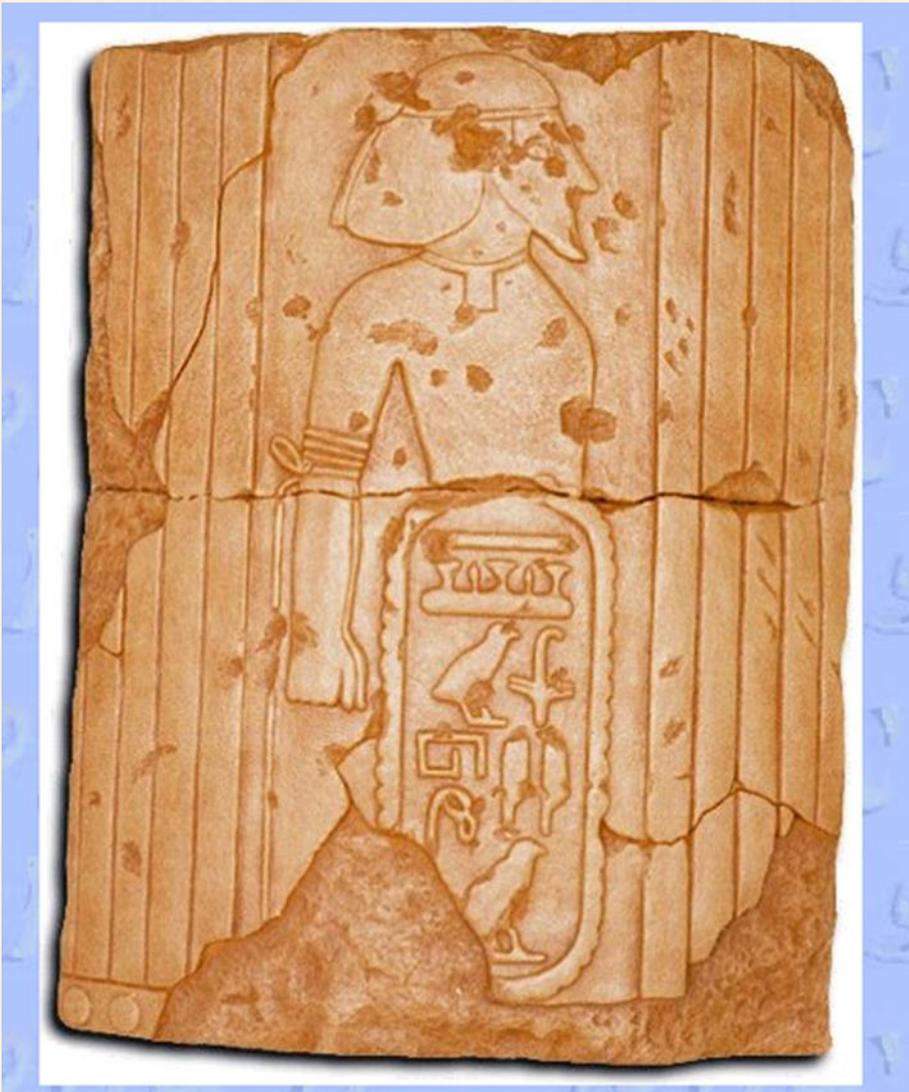
TRANSCIPTION

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http://theosophical.wordpress.com/2011/08/04/biblical-archaeology-10-house-of-yahweh-ostracon/

Biblical Archaeology 10: House of Yahweh Ostracon

Posted by jasondulle under Archaeology

An ostracon dated to the early 6th century BC was discovered in Arad (an ancient city of Judah). It reads, "To my lord Eliashib: May YHWH inquire after your well-being. And now, give to Shemaryahu a measure (of flour), and to the Kerosite you will give a measure (of flour). And concerning the matter about which you commanded me, it is well. He is staying in the house of YHWH."

The author of this ostracon is unknown—as is the precise circumstances surrounding the writing—but the recipient is Eliashib. Nothing is known about this individual. The ostracon makes it clear, however, that the author is responding to a prior correspondence from Eliashib. The author speaks of a mutual acquaintance as staying in the house of YHWH, which is likely a reference to Solomon's temple in Jerusalem.

Significance:

1. This is the 2nd oldest mention of Solomon's temple discovered (the "3 shekel" ostracon is the oldest).
2. This was written within a few years/decades before Solomon's Temple was destroyed by the Babylonians in 586 BC.

The ostracon is currently housed in The Israel Museum.

http://www.lebtahor.com/Archaeology/papyriscrolls/Thehilliym%20Scroll.htm

QUMRAN GREEK
SCROLL FRAGMENT

Beginning in the 40's, with the first discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls, by a shepherd boy, archaeologists have uncovered many more caves and a whole community area. Within the Cave number 4, scrolls and fragments were numbered by the order in which they were discovered, amongst the scrolls and fragments of Hebrew and Aramaic documents, there were fragments of scrolls in Greek. The Greek fragments were of the Minor Prophets. You can see very clearly the Greek script, with Hebrew Script inserted in certain places. The Hebrew script is Paleo-Hebrew. The insertions of the Paleo-Hebrew, are of the name YHWH. The Paleo-Hebrew is varied, from the hands of different scribes. The Paleo-Hebrew is the same as that of the 6th century BCE. Similar to that of the Arad Ostraca. The Greek Septuagint translation, which was done sometime around 250 BCE, was believed to have been done in similar fashion. The text was Koine Greek, with Paleo-Hebrew script for the name YHWH. Since it is not known, whether Greek texts of Scripture were done prior to the Septuagint, scholars can only estimate the time of these Minor Prophets fragments to be some time around 250 BCE to 70 CE.
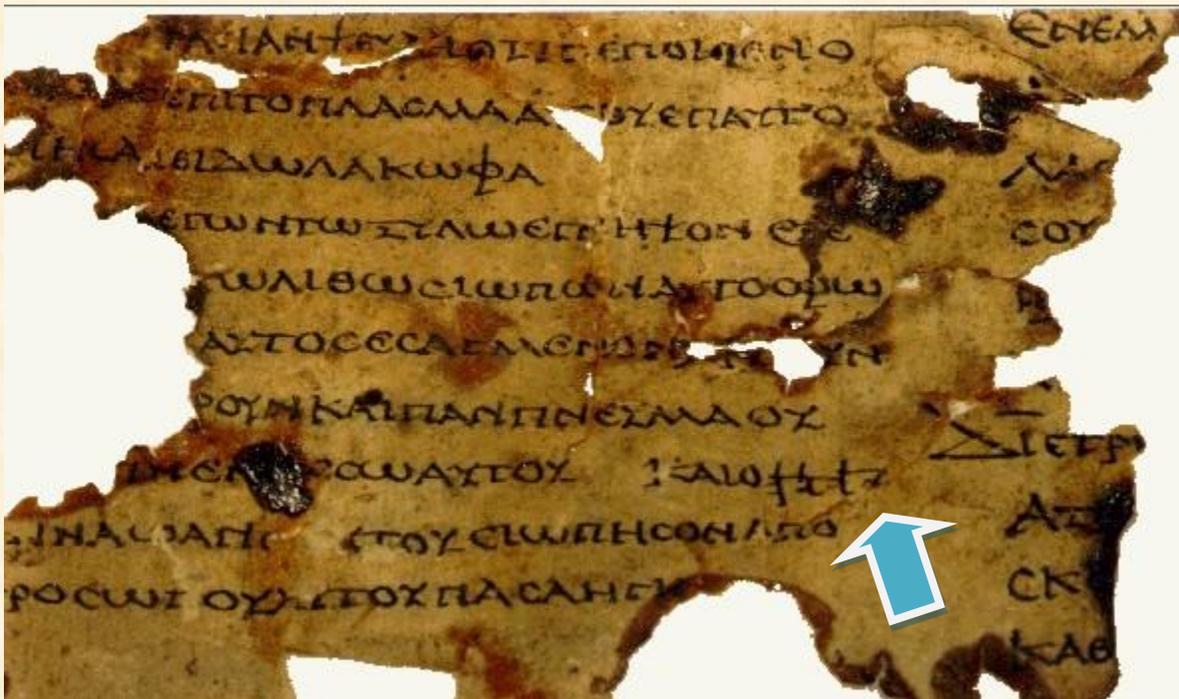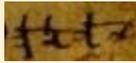
YHWH written in Paleo-Hebrew of the 6th century BCE, similar to the Arad and Lachish ostraca examples.

THEHILLIYM SCROLL

This is a scroll that contains the Thehilliym (Tehillin / Psalms), found at the caves in Qumran, in 1956. It dates between 30-50 CE. Below is an enlargement of another scroll so that you may better see the paleo-Hebrew writing for the name יהוה , while the remaining text is in the more modern Squared Aramaic. While the text may change from language to language, even over time, the scribes held the name YHWH in honor and continued to write it in the Paleo-Hebrew. For an example, see the Greek Minor Prophets fragment found at Qumran, which was written in Greek, yet the name YHWH written in the Paleo-Hebrew. Even at this late date, the practice of writing YHWH in Paleo-Hebrew was still practiced.
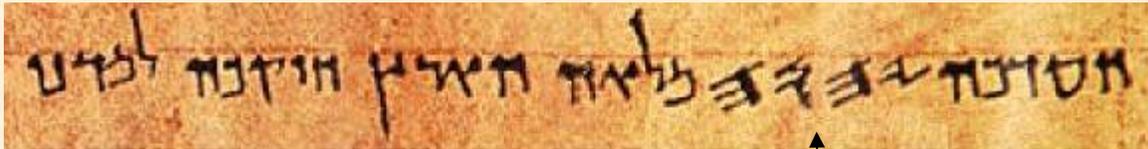
The Paleo-Hebrew writing of YHWH in both of these scrolls is of a varied writing style, both in territory and time, compared to known archaeological inscriptions. Please see the [Ancient Alefbeth chart](#). The "yod" is closer the known style of the Moabite 9th century BCE; the "he" is similar to the known Phoenician of 1000 BCE; and the "waw" is closer to that of the Lachish style, dating around the 6th century BCE. Scribal schools in differing territories, adopted their own styles of writing.

In America

NEW MEXICO LEGENDS

Puerco Valley to the Laguna Pueblo

Just a few miles west of [Los Lunas](#) you will enter the beautiful Rio Puerco Valley, home to more than 10,000 archeological sites. In the midst of this haunting landscape, most of these sites date back to the Puebloan cultures of the ancient [Anasazi](#) [Indians](#). Also in this area are 50 volcanoes, one of largest being Cabezon peak, rising in elevation some 8,000 feet.

Some eighteen miles beyond Los Lunas on the western side of the Rio Grande River is [New Mexico's](#) Mystery Stone, also referred to as the Inscription Rock. Believe it or not, this ancient petroglyph has cast doubt on whether Christopher Columbus or the Norsemen were truly America's first explorers.

Though people were aware of the rock when [New Mexico](#) became a territory in 1850, no one could read it. Local [Indians](#) told the owner of the land in 1871 that the rock predated their tribes coming to the area.
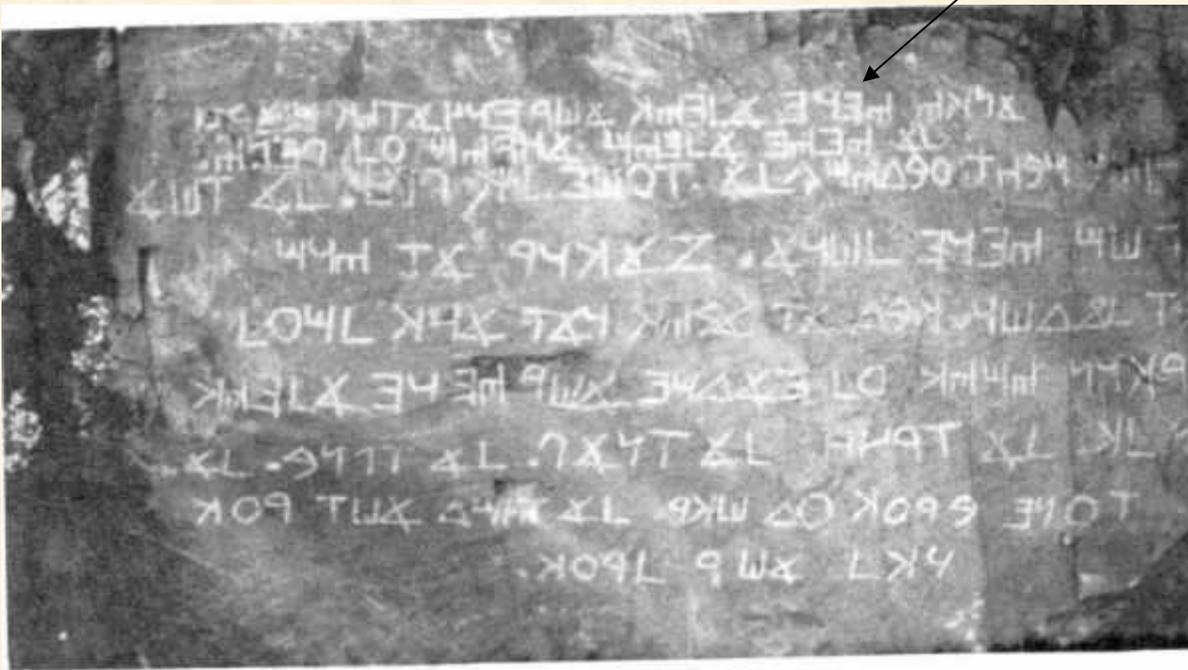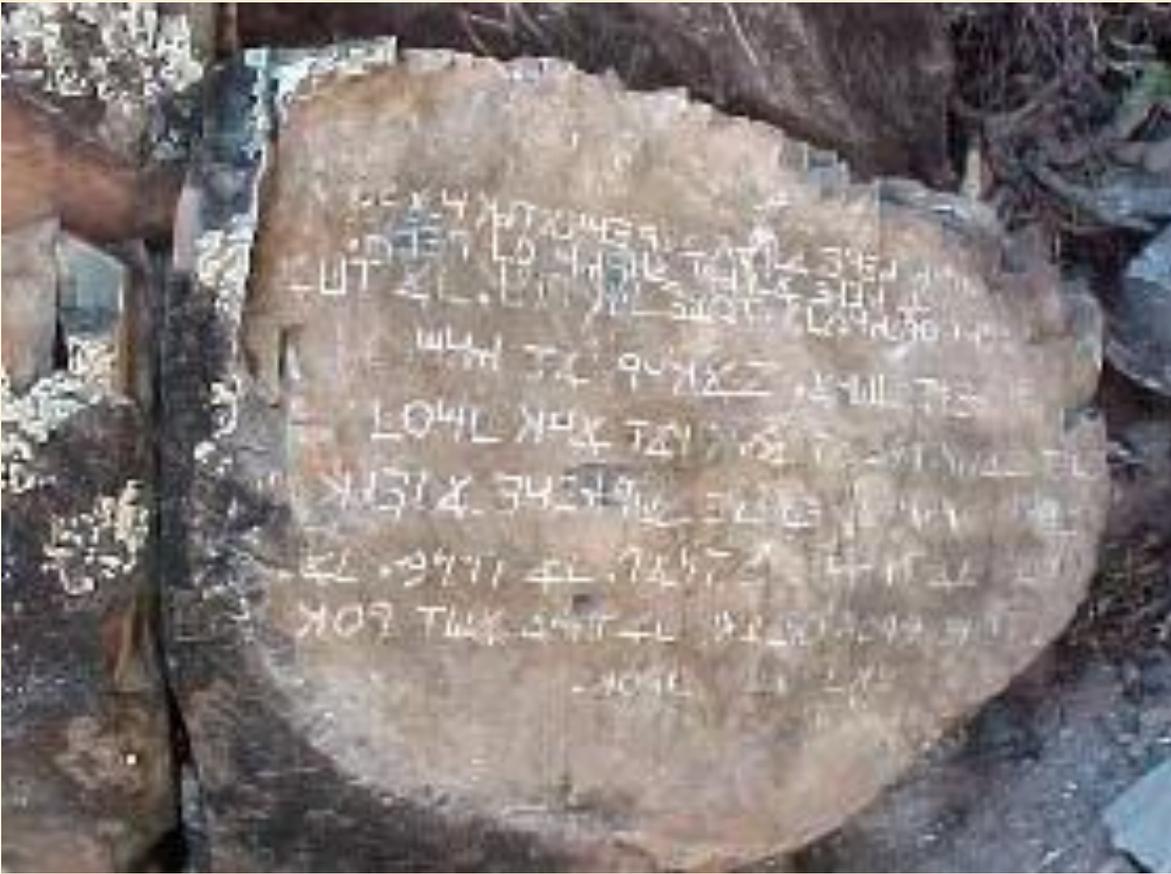
The site has been known as "Mystery Mountain" by the locals, but is more commonly known as "Hidden Mountain." At the foot of this hill on the lower right side of a large mound of lava, there is a large boulder weighing an estimated 80 to 100

tons. The lava mound lies in a little canyon. Nine rows of characters are chiseled into the north face of the boulder, resembling ancient Phoenician script. ** Paleo Hebrew**

Over the years, numerous interpretations and translations have been made over the years, but most agree that it is an ancient version of the Ten Commandments which has also led to it being called the "Ten Commandments Rock." Whatever the case may be, the circumstances surrounding this inscription are mysterious, giving the Mystery Stone its well-deserved name.

In 1999 Stan Fox, a linguist and Bible expert from Colchester, England, made a fresh translation of the Los Lunas Inscription, based upon photos and a careful drawing of the text.

I am Yahuah your God who has taken you out of the land of Egypt, from the house of slaves. There must be no other gods before my face. You must not make any idol. You must not take the name of Jehovah in vain. Remember the sabbath day and keep it holy. Honour your father and your mother so that your days may be long in the land that Jehovah your God has given to you. You must not murder. You must not commit adultery. You must not steal. You must not give a false witness against your neighbour. You must not desire the wife of your neighbour nor anything that is his.

You must purchase a Recreational Access Permit from the New Mexico State Land Office to be allowed access to the land where Mystery Stone is located.

Heading west, Route 66 paralleled the railroad as it climbed the steep slope of the Rio Grande Valley and curved northwest toward Correo. Though this old town still appears on maps, there is nothing left of Correo. Deriving its name from the Spanish word meaning "mail" or "post office," as the town began with a simple store with a post office in the 1920s. There was also a one room school house held in an old box car for the children of the rail road crews. Later a café, gas station and tourist cabins were added. However, today all that remains of Correo is rubble and old Route 66 fading into the desert.

Another nine miles brings you to the tiny Mesita Village along a bouncing road where grass is pushing its way through the pavement. Once you have reached this cluster of adobe houses populated by Pueblo Indians you are officially on the Laguna Reservation. As you continue the five mile journey to Laguna look for Owl's Rock to the right. A bit further on you'll come to the notorious Deadman's Curve, a 180 degree bend in the road to the left. You can bet this old turn scared more than one old Route 66 traveler in days past.
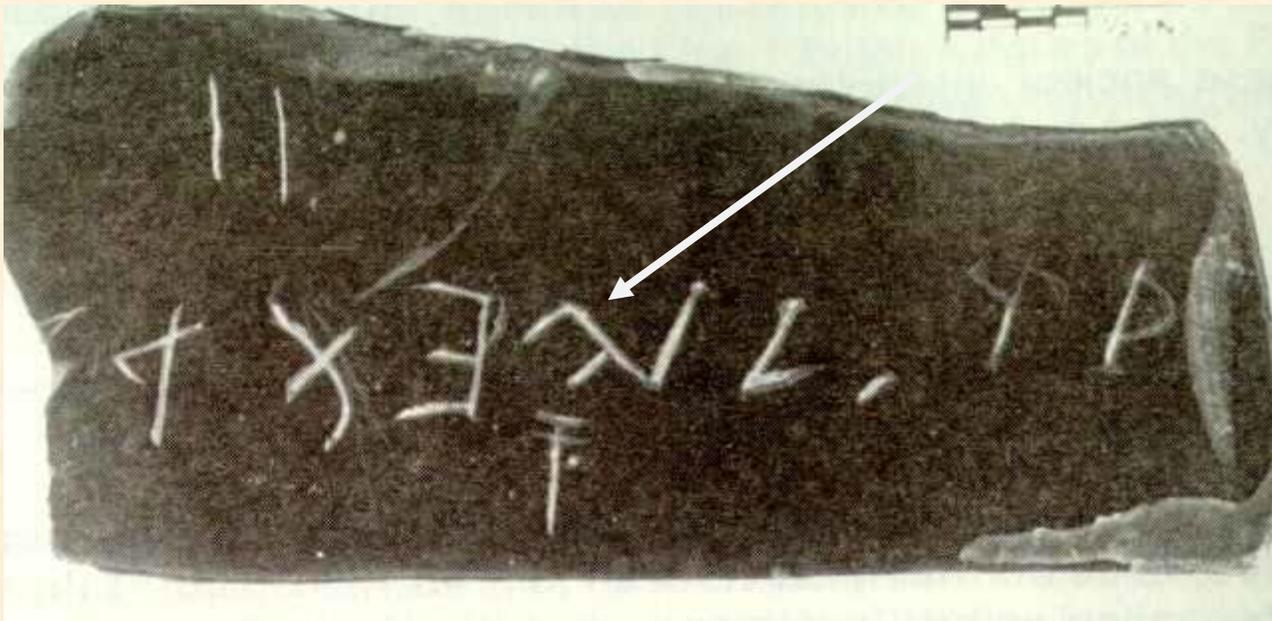
Batcreek Stone Hebrew Inscription found in an ancient grave near Batcreek Tennessee by Smithsonian Inst. 1885; Written in Paleo Hebrew. Traslation:

" Sure;y, I pray you Yah, Have Pity" Ref. Discovery of Ancient America, by, David Allen Deal, 1984.

MOABITE INSCRIPTION FROM EL-KERAK (FIRST OR SECOND HALF OF THE 9TH CENTURY BC)

Moabite is a language very much like ancient Hebrew and it was spoken by the people who lived in the country of Moab. Moab was a kingdom situated across the Dead Sea from Israel and Judah. Another inscription in Moabite, known as the Moabite Stone, tells about the victory of Mesha, king of Moab, over one of the descendants of Omri, king of Israel. The alphabet used is like the one the Israelites used until the 6th to the 4th centuries B.C.E.

http://lila.sns.it/mnamon/index.php?page=Esempi&id=44&lang=en

Literally, in the hills of this area the Name of God is carved out

http://littleguyintheeye.com/daily-tidbits-320-earth-day/
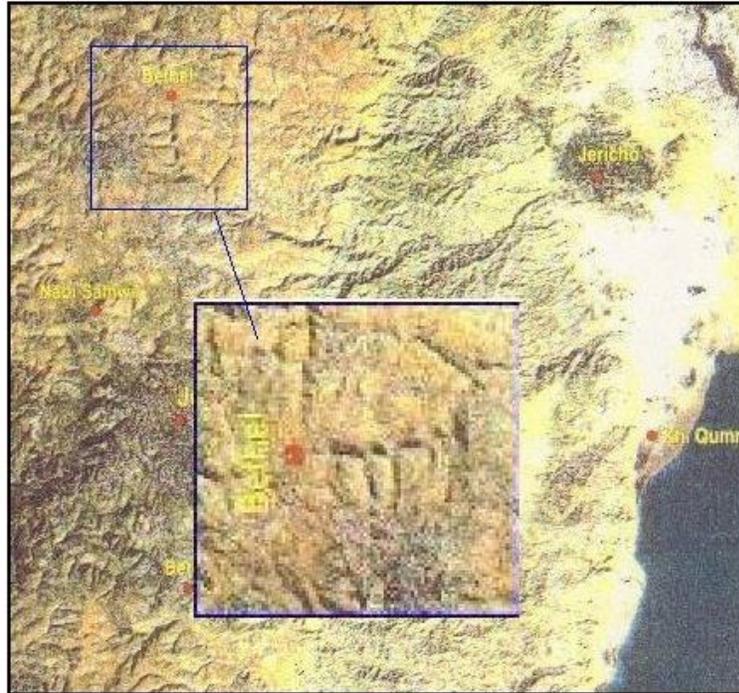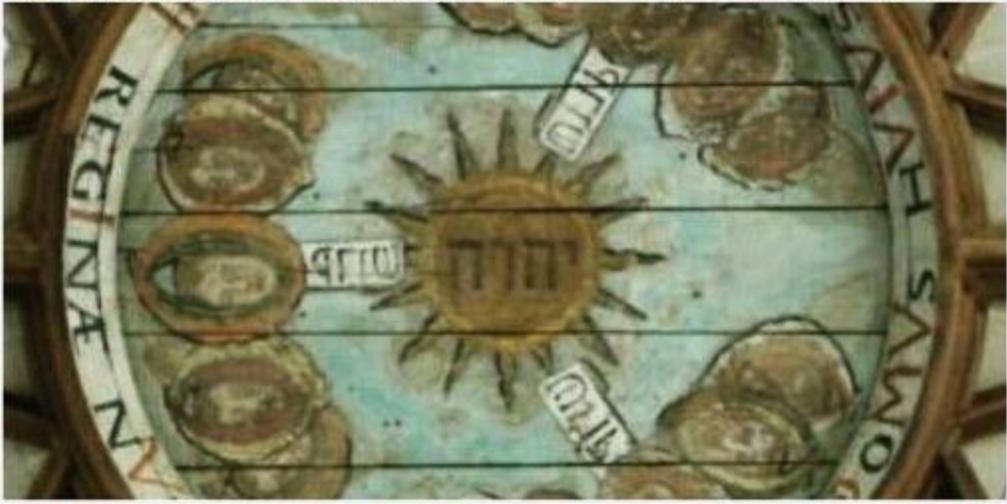
YHWH Hebrew on the ceiling in the Winchester Cathedral Hampshire England

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divine-name.info

Visit

Shona Meredew saved to **divine name**
http://www.divine-name.info/remarkable/helsinki/helsinki2.jpg
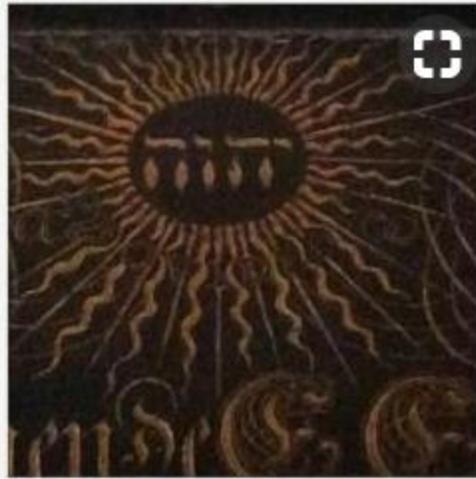
Saved by
Jw.org Joanna Jabłońska

Open

Shona Meredew saved to divine name
Look what we found in the Royal Palace of Amsterdam!f

Saved by
Jessee Grunstra

Open

Shona Meredew saved to **divine name**
⋯ ⋯ ⋯ : King Christian IV of Denmark and Norway. Silver coin in the year 1644

יהוה
Hieß nichts anders den
Gottes Haus
und hie ist die
Pforte des Himmels
GEN:XXVIII   V: 17.

Many coins were minted bearing God's name. This one, dated 1661, is from Nuremberg, Germany. The Latin text reads: "Under the shadow of your wings"
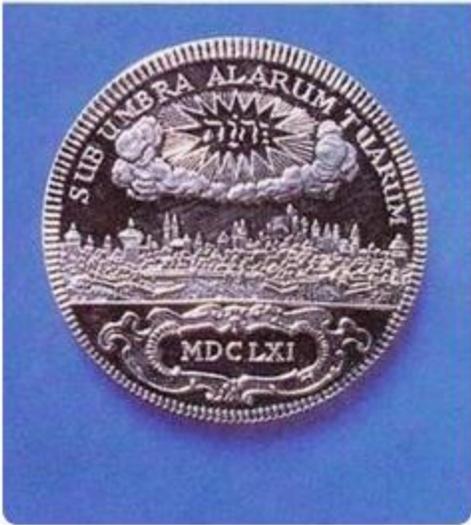
https://www.slideshare.net/godknt777/does-archaeology-disprove-the-bible

House of God Inscription

This clay shard (7th century BC) was used as a **receipt for silver** donated to Solomon's temple. It is the earliest evidence outside the biblical text referencing the first temple as "Beth Yahw'h" or "House of God."
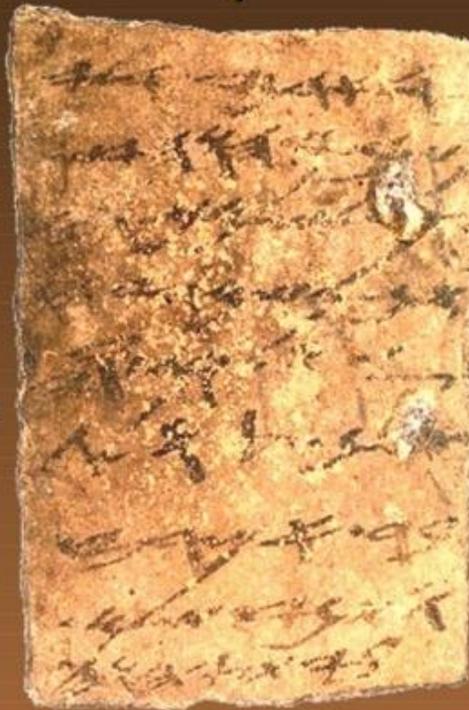
Pedayahu Seal

Dating from the 6th century BC, the Pedayahu Seal (drawing) depicts an ionic capital typical of the first temple architecture, bares the Hebrew inscription "Belonging to Pedaiah son of the king." Pedaiah is named in the Bible as one of the sons of Jehoiachin (Coniah), king of Judah (1 Chronicles 3:18-19)

"And the sons of Jeconiah were Assir, Shealtiel his son, and Malchiram, Pedaiah, Shenazzar, Jecamiah, Hoshama, and Nedebiah."

Gemaryahu Bulla

Found in the city of David, Jerusalem, this 6th century BC bulla
impression is inscribed with two rows of Hebrew letters reading:
"Gemaryahu son of Shaphan," referring to Jehoiakim's scribe named "Gemariah, son of Shaphan" mentioned in Jeremiah 36:10-12, 25 wh... ...to Jeremiah's letter that Baruch had p... ...the temple

Also discovered during the temple mount dump excavations was the 7th-6th century BC bulla belonging to "Galyahu son of Immer." Immer was a priest associated with the prophet Jeremiah (Jeremiah 20:1)

Brekhyahu Bulla

This clay bulla was impressed by a Hebrew inscribed seal that read "Belonging to Barekyahu, son of Neriyahu, the scribe." The late bulla specialist, Nahman Avigad of Hebrew University, identified this late 7th century BC inscription as baring the name of Jeremiah's scribe, Baruch, the son of Neriah, mentioned in Jeremiah 36:1-32.

Also discovered was the bulla of "Jerahmeel, son of the king," who was sent by King Jehoiakim to arrest Jeremiah and Baruch (Jeremiah 36:26), and the bulla "Belonging to Yehuchai (Jehucal) ben Shelemiyahu ben Shovi" who was sent by King Zedekiah to ask Jeremiah for prayer (Jeremiah 37:3; 38:1).

http://www.angelfire.com/wy/Franklin4YAHWEH/YHWH-BiblePics.html

1602

Above is a copy of a 1602 Old Testament Cover Page containing the name of YaHWeH in Hebrew. Look at the enlargement with the blue arrow below pointing at the name of YaHWeH

http://www.angelfire.com/wy/Franklin4YAHWEH/YHWH.html

There is another short stone inscription on the south pinacle of the mesa. It may have served as an altar. The picture was taken by David Moore on a field trip to Hidden Mountain in 1993. The first line contains the Tetragrammaton in paleo-Hebrew letters. The letters are similar in style to those on the Decalogue inscription stone but appear to be more eroded.

God's name on
a church in
Minorca, Spain;

The so called "tetragammaton" on Central Synagogue in Buenos Aires adorning the upper level.

Bourges Cathedral, France

Fourviere Catholic Basilica, Lyons, France

Currch in Digne, Southern France

Stasbourg Cathedral, France

Church in La Celle Dunoise, France

Church in Sao Paulo, Brazil

The Name Yahweh from The Bible in Sefardi Hand, 1385 (copy) Original in the British Library, London

Blois, France, St. Louis Cathedral

Vienna

Cathedral of St. Germain-des-Pres

At the top of the ceiling of the cathedral of Toledo

St. Michaels Church - Vienna, Italy: Statue of Michael casting down Satan from heaven

St. Ann's Church - Manchester, England

Santa Fe

The most interesting architectural feature of the Saint Francis de Assisi Cathedral in Santa Fe is the presence of the tetragrammaton in Hebrew over the main entrance to the cathedral. It's made more puzzling by it's presence inside of a triangle, which simultaneously reminded me of the trinity and the every conspirirific eye in the pyramid motif. No one really knows why it is there, but it is speculated that the Archbishhop had it worked into the design out of respect for a member of Santa Fe's Jewish community, who donated much of the funds to build the cathedral, and who was a close friend of the Archbishop.

Wittenberg

Hebrew for Yahweh at the altar of Trinity Church
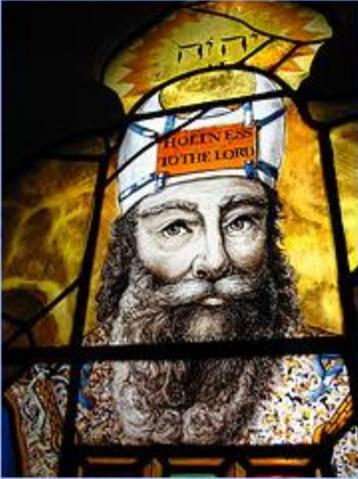
Arborfield, Berkshire

YHWH At Top Of Columbia University Seals

0000   0000

Magen Avot synagogue, above the ark in the main sanctuary.

# Even the CORRUPT Roman Church ACKNOWLEDGE the 4 Hebrew Letters יהוה (ЭYЭZ)- see BELOW

RCM S. LUDOVICI

DEO UNI ET TRINO

The Tetragrammaton on the Tympanum of the Roman Catholic Basilica of St. Louis, King of France in Missouri

Royal Steward Inscription

In 1870, Charles Clermont-Ganneau discovered a 7th century BC lintel tomb inscription near the Kidron Valley at Silwan (ancient Siloam), east of the old city of Jerusalem. Nahman Avigad recently deciphered the inscription which gives a partial name which reads "[Shebna]yahu" who was the royal steward over the house of King Hezekiah. Isaiah prophesies against Shebna for hewing out a tomb and living above his means (Isaiah 22:15-25; 1 Kings 4:6; 16:9).
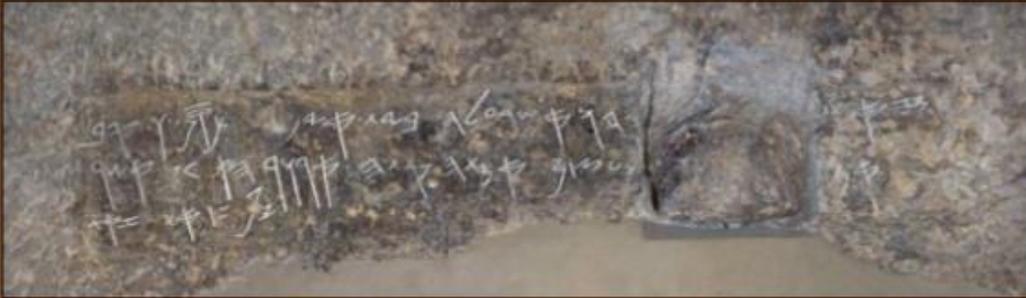
Inscription reads: "This is [the sepulcher of . . .] yahu who is over the house. There is no silver and no gold here but [his bones] and the bones of his *amah* with him. Cursed be the man who will open this!"

Gemaryahu Bulla

Found in the city of David, Jerusalem, this 6th century BC bulla impression is inscribed with two rows of Hebrew letters reading:

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I hope this sampling has given you more witnesses to confirm the proof that the name for the Almighty Most High Eternal in the Tanakh is 𐤉𐤄𐤅𐤄 and it was the name that Yahusha preached in the authority of and had as part of His name. It is still relevant today. 𐤉𐤄𐤅𐤄 does not change nor does His name. And as we have seen- It's set in stone.