

SHARING SCRIPTURE

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The Bible as History

For use: May 31 - June 6

Texts: 1 Samuel 17; Isaiah 36:1-3, Isaiah 37:14-38; Daniel 1, 5; Matthew 26:57-67; Hebrews 11:1-40

When Batya Ofan overturned a bucket of dirt into a sifting pallet, he discovered a piece of black-colored clay small in size but big in significance.

“I immediately understood it was a bulla and there was much, much excitement,” enthused the national service volunteer, who was working last year with the City of David’s Sifting Project in Jerusalem. “For me, holding an artifact from 2,600 years ago in my hand, from the time period of the Kings of Judah, is just amazing.” [1]

Leon Sverdlov describes the bulla in his *The Jerusalem Post* article in the following way:

“The seal is inscribed with the name of ‘Adoniyahu Asher Al HaBayit,’ meaning ‘Adoniyahu by Appointment of the House,’ the most prominent role in the king’s court in the Kingdom of Judea that appears for the first time on the list of ministries of Solomon. The one-centimeter-wide bulla, which dates to the seventh century BCE – the period of the Kingdom of Judea – and was used to sign documents, bears a term widely used throughout the Bible to describe the most senior minister serving under kings of Judea or Israel.” [2]

After comparing the 2,600-year-old Hebrew seal found near the Western Wall to biblical record, many scholars and Christians believe the finding-- compounded with numerous other similar discoveries--provides evidence to affirm faith in the historicity of the Scriptures.

In this week’s Sabbath school lesson, “The Bible as History,” we learn how the Scriptures are set within the context of a particular time and place, and that

God worked within the framework of history to communicate the plan of salvation with humanity. Archaeology helps to substantiate such history and to build our trust in the Bible.

~Curtis Rittenour

[1] <https://www.jpost.com/israel-news/2600-year-old-hebrew-seal-found-near-western-wall-601118>

[2] Ibid.

For Reflection

Connecting: Have you ever read about an archaeological discovery in Israel that helped confirm the historicity of the Bible? (Examples might include the Dead Sea Scrolls, the Nag Hammadi Library, or the Siloam Pool in Jesus' time.) If you are able, connect with your group online, and share what you learned with your group.

Sharing: Do archaeological discoveries in Israel prove the accuracy of the Bible?

1. Absolutely. Such finds are just another piece of evidence to confirm the Bible as the Word of God.
2. No. There is so much pseudo-archaeology that much of these so-called finds are hoaxes.
3. Maybe. Archaeology today is raising more questions about the historicity of the Bible than giving answers.
4. Archaeology can never be a substitute for faith in the Bible.
5. We must recognize the role archaeology can play in providing a deeper understanding of the Bible, but not elevate it to a level that replaces the Bible.
6. Other...

Applying: Dig online for a reputable article on an archaeological find in Israel. Summarize its key points and, using technology to connect if necessary, discuss with your group how the find can help build faith in the Bible.

Valuing: Have you ever questioned the historicity of the Bible? Pray with one other member in your group and ask God to strengthen your faith in the Bible.

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Executive Director

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