



The Half Shekel Journal by Ed Rice
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He carefully unfold the intriguing story of an archaeologist who read in her Bible one day that David came down from his palace into the City of David. Ergo David's Palace was in the highest part of the City of David, ergo she found it. Convinced of her discovery the Israeli Archaeological Society bought four houses from four Arab families and proceeded to dig out David's Palace. When the discoveries necessitated the excavation of the whole city block the Muslim's immediately opposed those who would sell their properties, even killing family members of those who had. Not to be outwitted or out maneuvered by the savage Muslim tactics the Israeli government offered each family 2 million for their homes with a complete new identity in the country of their choice. The Muslims who regard the Holy Bible as fabricated fiction and King David, in particular, to be absolutely non existent in history have unpardonably blundered when they find his inscriptions and signets.

The Archaeological adventures around the City of David make for much intrigue on their own account. In 2004, after 39 years of searching, studying and digging, the Fortress of Zion was discovered in the City of David. The next year, because of Eilat Mazar's 1997 publicized speculation that she knew where David's Palace could be found, they sunk their shovels into a huge building which proved to be David's Palace indeed. Earlier it was said that archeology is 90% imagination and 10% findings, but in the City of David the findings began to surpass all imaginations. In November of 2008 they uncovered layers of jars and bones and expect on their next dig to enter David's pantry and wine cellars as it were. Students come and dig here only 8 months per year and their focus has been on David's Palace as well as the wealth of 10th century finds that are an archaeologists treasure house. Also first century discoveries in the City of David have caused the remodeling of old traditions . The actual 50 yard by 50 yard Pool of Shalome was found last year by following the water ways from the traditional location, known now to be in the wrong spot. This will cause the perceived wall location to move. The discovery of many pools and springs in this area caused Ron, our guide, to be certain that "Aenon near to Salim" of John 3:23 will soon be certified to be the 'Springs (aenon) near to Jerusalem' in the City of David. To date no such Aenon has been discovered and it has always been speculated to be somewhere near the Jordan River where John the Baptist started baptizing. That speculation always confounded the Apostle John's clarity because John said, 1) it was in Judaea, and Jordan is not; 2) near where Jesus was, making it near Jerusalem; 3) because there was much water there, one would not likely say such about a river area; 4) it was shortly before John the Baptist was taken in Judaea and cast into prison, Herod did not go to Jordan to capture him; and 5) John's disciples and the Jews were arguing about purifying and these pools in the City of David were the very place of their purifying before their entry into the temple. When they finally uncover the placard which states this area to be "Aenon of Salim" there will be many a Bible student, who trusts the accounting and accuracy of God's Holy Word, who will say "I told you so."

They have discovered the one way path that leads from 'Micvah' (purifying bath) to the temple. Since you were not allowed to touch anything on your way to the temple it was a one way path, a separated path, which led to the temple. Excavating around the City of David and its abundance of water pools and good living conditions carries one through much Bible history. The Bible is His story, and tells you not just what happened but what happens. Archaeologists have even gone through the 2500 year old septic systems to carbon 14 date human feces and confirm the 586 BC siege of Jerusalem by analyzing

the layers of human diet through that period of time. There was so much archeology to explore and standing here in the newly excavated Palace of King David unleashed an avalanche of information and possibility.

David's Palace connected right to the wall of the city. Excavating turned out to be slowed and more tedious because of the wealth of discoveries. Artifacts from the Crusades back through the times of Christ, all the way through the kings of Judah back to David's time, thrilled and excited the Israeli Archaeological Society. What we could see was rocks and rooms of a palace, but Ronny's excitement would suffice. This was an archaeological gold mine and we wandered above room after room imagining the very presence of David, Solomon, Amnon, Tamar, Absalom, Jonathan's son Mephibasheth and the whole unfolding of Samuel's second book. We were here carried back to a thousand years before Christ and met anew "the man after God's own heart."

The Bible says of some kings of Judah that they were buried in the sepulchers of their fathers in the City of David, but not in the sepulchers of the kings. (examp. 2Chron 21:20) The Bible lists 21 kings that ruled in Judah after David, (one was actually an evil queen) and the difficulty of perusing through three thousand years of rocky history and locating the sepulcher of King David is daunting, but done to the satisfaction of many. Our visit to the tomb of David was exciting in the Bible memories it evoked and the reverence we observed. The Jews coming out of the 70 year Babylonian Captivity had learned very well God's first two commandments of Exodus 20. They did not venerate, bow to nor pray to stone, gold, objects or men. That was the practice of Rome, and became the practice of all Romanism. There was much praying going on at the sepulcher of King David, as well as a silent reverence but there was no idolatry. It was refreshing to visit the hallowed ground.



The upper room where Jesus observed the last supper with his disciples could not have survived the calamities that befell Jerusalem, but if it had it would likely be very near and very much like the room that was commemorated as such near the tomb of David. Our observation of the room was as it was a Bible memory of that last supper. The symbol of the pelican was pointed out. It adorned the 3rd century churches and the explanation given included the notion that a parent pelican will tear out its own flesh to ensure that its young get proper nourishment. I had never heard such an account of the pelican, but supposed the symbol quite lacking in that Jesus had not given just some of his flesh and some of his blood for our nourishment. He had to give all his life's blood to atone for our sin. He had to suffer death completely to die in our stead and "he, who knew no sin, was made sin for us that we might be made the righteousness of God through him." In the upper room he gave us the symbols that represent his sacrifice, atoning, and propitiation. We could better use Christ's method of remembering than carve images in stone.

I noticed here the much construction work and repairs being done in Jerusalem. The upper room was being remodeled from its previous use as a Mosque. When visiting in February there is much work being done in preparation for the Easter rush time. I had not noticed or minded it so much at the Church of the Resurrection, because we had little interest in venerating, bowing to, nor praying to the gold and stone that elicited so much of Romanism. But here in the tomb of David and in the upper room, it interfered with seeing things that really caught our interest.