

Smoky Mountain Bible Institute

Archeology 103 Tells & Artifacts

Let's break out our brush again and knock some dust off more interesting archeological artifacts. This veritable mountain of ancient treasures all makes perfect sense in light of God's truth.

Horned altars. The Bible describes these in detail, many of which are found in the archeological record.

Pharaoh Merneptah claims on a 7-foot-tall stele (tablet) to have conquered the Israelites in 1230 BC. Hmmm – if he conquered them in battle, then maybe they existed. This same battle is depicted on a long wall in the great Karnak Temple dated at around 1209 BC.

Jericho is a gold mine of biblical evidence. The city walls have clearly fallen due to numerous “earthquakes” that seem to be unique to that little piece of property. There are some who claim the walls have clearly fallen outward. There were so many city layers on that little hill, today known as “Tell es-sultan”, that it is uncertain which one Joshua conquered. There is however a layer that is a prime candidate. Also, there are some interesting biblical facts about this location. In Joshua 6 verse 26 it says *“Joshua laid an oath on them at that time, saying, “Cursed before the Lord be the man who rises up and rebuilds this city, Jericho.” “At the cost of his firstborn shall he lay its foundation, and at the cost of his youngest son shall he set up its gates.”* Then a little over 500 years later some arrogant or ignorant guy by the name of Hiel put God to the test. We find this in I Kings 16:34 where it says *In his days Hiel of Bethel built Jericho. He laid its foundation at the cost of Abiram his firstborn and set up its gates at the cost of his youngest son Segub, according to the word of the Lord, which he spoke by Joshua the son of Nun.* Now today's scholars will say the scribes made these two accounts connect, while dismissing the textual and archeological evidence that separates these two texts. And there is the strange coincidence that the tell, or hill, is still uninhabited today. It is on the northwestern edge of the area that is today called Jericho surrounded by farms. But no one lives in or on the site and the evidence strangely suggests that no one has lived on that particular hill for oh, say about 3000 years. The town however claims a 9000 year old heritage attached to that hill. This is actually an abbreviated discussion on Jericho. There are two very good DVD's that cover in detail how the archeology affirms the biblical account: Jericho Unearthed @ Expidionbible.com, and The Fall of Jericho from Ensign Media.

Temple of Rameses III has a carving on one of its walls describing a pesky sea people called the Philistines. Another group of people that is well described in scripture and archeological evidence, mountains of it, validate biblical truth.

Canaanite gods & goddesses. In the 1930's, hundreds of stories were found on clay tablets in the city of Ugarit in Syria. These tablets speak of Asherah, Astarte and Ashtaroth. Amazingly, these are the same names recorded for the Canaanite gods in Numbers, 1 Kings, Jeremiah and Hosea.

Dan is another amazing little town in northern Israel, evidence of Laish, a Canaanite town that was destroyed in 1150 BC, and then built upon and inhabited by Israelites, just as recorded in Judges and 1 Kings. You will find the same archeological story throughout Israel: Canaanite town destroyed Jewish town built on the ruins; Megiddo, Hazor and many others.

Ashkelon. Let's finish up today's lesson with an ancient seaport. Ancient Israel never conquered this Philistine stronghold. However, four of God's prophets predicted its demise: Amos, Jeremiah, Zephaniah and Zechariah all predicted its destruction, and in 604 BC, Nebuchadnezzar destroyed it completely. Strangely enough, excavations that were begun in the 1980's provide much evidence for this fulfilled prophecy.

In Christ
Pastor Portier