

The "Jehoash Inscription"

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Right on the heels of the discovery of a bone box that could have contained the bones of Jesus' brother, James, comes another archaeology discovery of astounding proportions. The "Jehoash Inscription" could be the most astounding discoveries in the history of biblical archaeology. The implications of this discovery are not just biblical. There are explosive political issues as well.

The topics covered here are:

- What is the "Jehoash Inscription?"
- Is it Authentic?
- What are the biblical and political implications of the inscription?
- What is The Jehoash Inscription?

Briefly, it is a 9 X 11 inch black sandstone plaque that memorializes contributions of silver for repairs to Solomon's Temple (the first temple). It was written between 835 and 801 B.C.E. during the time that Jehoash, also called Joash, was king of Judah. At that time the temple was already over 100 years old and, like any building, needed some repairs. Apparently Jehoash had a building fund campaign to collect money for the work. Then he had a memorial plaque inscribed and put in the wall of the refurbished temple. Sounds very modern, doesn't it?

Is it Authentic?

The inscription came to the attention of the archaeology world over a year ago. Since then there has been a raging debate about its authenticity. The debate centers on the patina. The patina is a film that develops on stone, and other material over hundreds or thousands of years. World-class linguists and paleographers (experts in ancient scripts) are absolutely certain that it is a clever fake. On the other hand, three leading geologists are just as certain that it is authentic.

What are the biblical and political implications of the inscription?

The biblical implications are pretty straight forward. For people of faith the inscription simply provides more evidence that what the bible tells us about Solomon's Temple is true. People of faith don't need scientific proof, but it is satisfying non-the-less.

However, the inscription creates severe headaches among certain "biblical scholars." There is a group of scholars, collectively known as "Biblical Minimalists" who deny that the bible contains any real history. They believe that the "Golden Age" of the Jews never existed and that there was never a great king named David or Solomon. They also deny that Solomon built a temple. If the inscription is authentic the minimalists will have to rethink their view of the historicity of the bible.

The political implications of the inscription could be explosive, particularly in Jerusalem. Much of the tension between the Jews and Palastinians is because both religions claim the mound as their holy place. Yasser Arafat claims there was never a Solomonic Temple on the Temple Mound as the Bible says. Strong evidence that the Jews did have a temple on the mound would undermine the Muslim claim to the mound and create even more tension. Currently the Jews are only allowed to worship at a small part of the Temple Mound known as the "Wailing Wall."

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Two stunning archaeological discoveries have been announced recently; David's palace and the Siloam Pool. They are important because they confirm what is written in the Bible and put to rest arguments that the Bible is not an accurate source of history. A brief description of these two discoveries is given below. There are links to more detailed information.

David's Palace

For years certain "Biblical scholars" have argued that most, if not all, of the history found in the Bible was invented by the Jews to give themselves a glorious heritage. In particular, they assert that there was no "Golden Age of Saul, David, and Solomon." Their argument was that Jerusalem was not a great city of political power during the time of David, but that it was only a small village. They base their argument on the fact that no archaeology digs have so far turned up any

evidence to support the Bible's claim that Jerusalem was a great city during David's time. In other words they claimed that "the absence of evidence is evidence of absence."

Now, that is all changed. Archaeologists have uncovered what they believe was David's palace in Jerusalem. Studies are underway to confirm the findings, but no one is disputing the claim that David's palace has been found at last.

Go to [Biblical Archaeology Review](#) to read all the details. On that same web page you will find more details about the Siloam Pool discussed below.

Siloam Pool

Yet another stunning archaeological discovery, which dramatically affects the Bible, was announced within the past two weeks!

John 9:1-7

9:1 As he walked along, he saw a man blind from birth.

9:2 His disciples asked him, "Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?"

9:3 Jesus answered, "Neither this man nor his parents sinned; he was born blind so that God's works might be revealed in him.

9:4 We must work the works of him who sent me while it is day; night is coming when no one can work.

9:5 As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world."

9:6 When he had said this, he spat on the ground and made mud with the saliva and spread the mud on the man's eyes,

9:7 saying to him, "Go, wash in the pool of Siloam" (which means Sent). Then he went and washed and came back able to see.

The exact location of the Siloam Pool in Jerusalem has been located and verified. This means that another important reference in the Bible is supported by archaeological study. There are three Siloam pools in Jerusalem's history and they are all three referenced in the Bible. Two are in the Old Testament and one is the pool referenced above in John 9:7. The exact locations of the two Siloam Pools from the Old Testament are not known.

The first Siloam Pool is documented in 2 Kings 20:20.

And the rest of the acts of Hezekiah, and all his might, and how he made a pool, and a conduit, and brought water into the city, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah?

The "conduit" above refers to Hezekiah's Tunnel, which he built to secure Jerusalem's water supply from attack. It ran for 1,750 feet under the ridge on which the City of David lay, from the Gihon Spring to the "pool" (Siloam Pool).

The second Siloam Pool is documented in Nehemiah 3:15.

But the gate of the fountain repaired Shallun the son of Colhozeh, the ruler of part of Mizpah; he built it, and covered it, and set up the doors thereof, the locks thereof, and the bars thereof, and the wall of the pool of Siloah by the king's garden, and unto the stairs that go down from the city of David.

The "pool of Siloah" is the Siloam Pool.

All three of the Siloam Pools were in slightly different locations, though they were all fed by Hezekiah's tunnel from the Gihon spring.

Go to [Biblical Archaeology Review](#) to read all the details. Scroll down the page and you will see the story about the Siloam Pool. At the bottom of the page is a link to the latest [Biblical Archaeology Review](#) article with the details of the discovery and a picture of the pool. It is a .PDF file so you will need the Acrobat Reader to open the article.