



INSTITUTE OF ARCHAEOLOGY HORN ARCHAEOLOGICAL MUSEUM

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Bible Conference Meets

Two hundred-fifty archaeologists, Bible teachers, church leaders, and laity gathered in Jerusalem from June 8-14 for the First International Jerusalem Bible Conference sponsored by the Seventh-day Adventist (SDA) Church. Meetings were held at the Ramat Rachel Hotel located on a hill between Jerusalem and Bethlehem.

The keynote speaker was Robert S. Folkenberg, President of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists. Other church leaders who attended the conference included Alfred C. McClure, President of the North American Division; William G. Johnsson, Editor of *Adventist Review*; and Gerry D. Karst, Administrative Assistant to the President of the General Conference.

Four days of morning and evening meetings focused on Theology, Archaeology, Church History, Missions, Ministries, New Testament, and Old Testament topics. The rest of the time was filled with touring biblically-related sites in Israel.

The Institute of Archaeology (IA) was one of the principal sponsors of the event in conjunction with the Adventist Theological Society (ATS) and the Biblical Research Institute (BRI) of the General Conference. Randall W. Younker, Director of the IA, served on the organizing committee, presided at one of the sessions, and led some of the daily tours. David Merling, Associate Director of the IA, arranged the tours. Richard M. Davidson, President of the ATS, served as principal coordinator for the conference, arranging accommodations and developing the program. George Reid, director of the BRI, processed all the applications of the participants and served as liaison with world SDA church leaders.

ATS has voted to organize another Jerusalem Bible Conference for the year 2003. See you in Jerusalem! (David Merling)

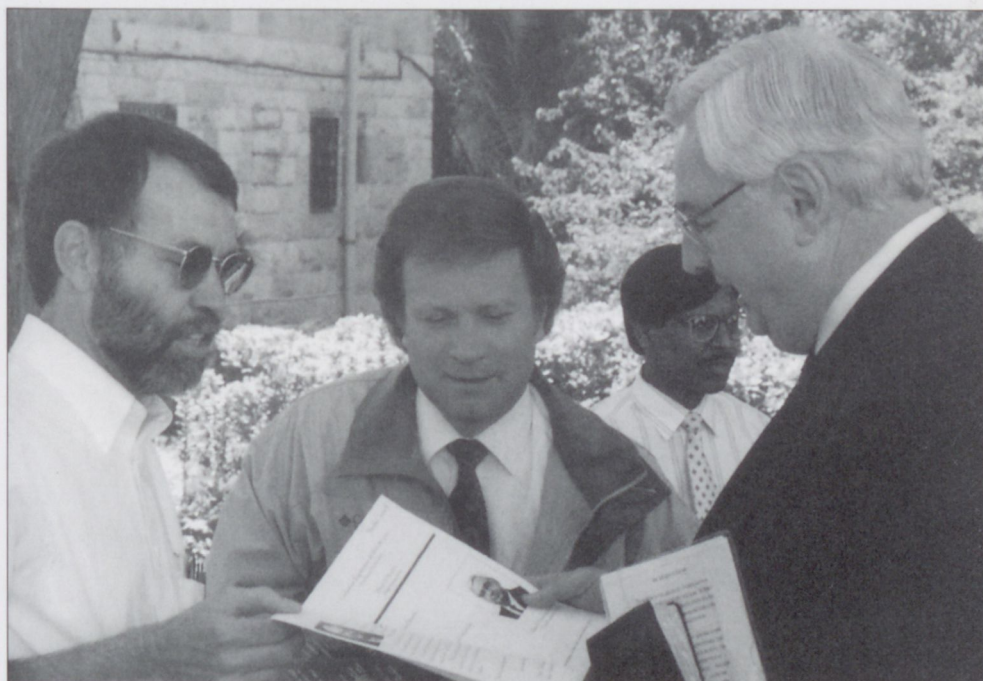


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NEWSLETTER

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Richard M. Davidson, Randall W. Younker, and Robert S. Folkenberg discuss plans at the Jerusalem conference. (photo courtesy of Ed Christian)



Jan Sigvartsen (l) and Rachel Holmes (r) excavating a Bedouin burial at Hisban. (photo courtesy of Paul J. Ray, Jr.)

Hisban 1998

Excavations at Tall Hisban were conducted from June 24-July 31, 1998, following up a three-and-a-half week season in 1997. Twenty students from Andrews University joined with 10 students from foreign countries and 20 Jordanians to participate in the excavations. Øystein S. LaBianca served as Project Director; Paul J. Ray, Jr. was Chief Archaeologist.

Excavation was carried out in three areas on the tell. The work that began in the Area G cave complex in 1997 was continued this season with Terje Oestigaard, University of Bergen, as Field Supervisor. Several new probes were excavated on the middle level of the complex. The central area on this level was cleaned out for tourism purposes.

A probe was also excavated in the lower level of the complex. This section now appears to have functioned as a cistern and was only connected with the cave complex due to earthquake or tunneling activities. This probe indicated that both the cave and the cistern were cleaned out during the Byzantine period.

However, sherds from as early as Iron Age II and lithics from the Palaeolithic and Epipalaeolithic periods indicated earlier uses of this cave complex. A more thorough exploration of peripheral areas of the complex located an additional one

hundred meters of tunnels.

Area L was opened on the southwest side of the acropolis with Bethany J. Walker, University of Toronto, as Field Supervisor. The team worked to expose the visible Middle Islamic (AD 1200-1400) architecture, testing the earlier hypothesis that this was part of a caravanserai, or inn used by caravans. The team also determined that the tower and fortification system in Area L were founded during the Hellenistic period (4th century BC).

The presence of floors in Area L during the Byzantine period (4th century AD) suggested that the area no longer served defensive purposes. The floors were contemporary with churches previously excavated at Tall Hisban.

At least four phases from the Middle Islamic period, including several small rooms with barrel vaults, were located in Area L. These rooms were connected to the courtyard and bath complex excavated in the 1970s. Due to the small size of the bath house and other evidence, the whole complex is now interpreted as a fortified postal station and governor's palace.

A Late Islamic period (AD 1400-1800) squatter settlement rests atop the Byzantine floor remains. A small bedouin cemetery was also exposed immediately below the ground surface in one of the squares.

Area M was opened on the northeastern summit of the tell and supervised by Lael O. Caesar, Andrews University. Bedrock was reached in one of the squares revealing more of the Hellenistic fortification system also uncovered in Area L.

An underground structure was located underneath the walls and tower of the fortification system. This structure consisted of two vertical shafts, one directly beneath the Hellenistic tower. The latter shaft functioned as a cistern and was later modified into a tomb with benches and a sloping entrance during the Iron Age. (Paul J. Ray, Jr.)



'Umayri 1998

This summer over 100 people took part in excavations at Tall al-'Umayri. Aside from the 30 workers from the nearby village of Bunayat, foreign excavators and specialists came from 20 countries and all six inhabited continents to work at this excavation.

Tall al-'Umayri is unique in Jordan because its most important and best preserved remains date to the Bronze and Iron Ages (3000-500 BC) instead of the more common Roman, Byzantine, and Islamic eras. Work is presently underway to make the site presentable to visitors.

The most impressive new discoveries include the remains of a building made with very large stones from the Middle Bronze Age (about 1600 BC). Also from that period are tower foundations atop a great earthen rampart, a well-plastered water pool (which may be unique from this time in Jordan), and a large building made of massive stones inside the fortification system. The Middle Bronze Age is a time when very few settlements existed south of Amman on the Jordanian plateau. To find such substantial remains from such a rare period was unexpected.

Excavations this summer also uncovered more earthen floors surrounding a dolmen (a large stone burial monument). This is the first dolmen in all the Mediterranean basin to produce quantities of burials (20), complete pottery vessels (20), and surfaces indicating patterns of use. The burial site dates to the Early Bronze Age (about 3000 BC). (cont'd. on p. 3)

'Umayri, cont'd.

Just to the north of these remains is a two-room building dating to the Late Bronze Age (1500-1300 BC). Each of the two floor levels was covered with a layer of burned bricks and wood. The walls are unique as they are composed of flat stones which look like mudbricks. The presence and preservation of this building is the only one of its kind in Jordan.

Besides the Late Bronze Age remains, excavators worked their way through the massive destruction of the early Iron Age town. The debris was made up of burned bricks and roofing materials such as wooden beams and reeds. Just who destroyed the town is not known, but it seems to have been a military invasion to judge by the many bronze weapons found in the debris. One of the stone-pillared rooms was filled with almost two meters of pure ashes.

Another significant find from this city was the thick town wall made of very large stones. The wall was plastered in antiquity and stood three to four meters above the ground.

This season, the team attempted to locate the southern limits of the administrative complex at the western part of the site. This was accomplished by uncovering a large wall which probably dates to the early Iron Age and was reused by the late Iron Age bureaucrats who ran the administrative complex. South of the wall

were other buildings dating to the Persian and Hellenistic periods.

Among the small finds were about 10 seals and seal impressions, bringing the total discovered at the site to over 80. Most of the seals were associated with the administrative complex from the late Iron Age and represent the bureaucratic activity there. Tall al-'Umayri has produced more seals and seal impressions than any other site in all of Palestine.

Another find, although fragmentary, is unique in Jordan. It consists of small pieces from a life-sized statue made out of ceramics. There is a dramatically painted eye, an ear, a chin with a thin mouth, parts of arms, two heels, and other parts of the chest and shoulders. However, very few of the pieces could be put together and the overall impression of the statue still eludes the excavators. Because the soil in which the fragments were found was part of debris dragged in from elsewhere, more remains will most likely not be found in this area.

Over the last ten years Tall al-'Umayri has produced the best preserved town from the early Iron Age in Jordan. The walls of several houses stand two meters high and pillar bases indicate that the roofs were supported by wooden posts. This town probably represents nomadic tribal groups settling into towns and villages much as the bedouin are doing today in modern Jordan. Perhaps

the ancient inhabitants became the people we know today as the Ammonites, the ancient group that gave their name to modern Amman, but other tribal groups of the area are equally good possibilities.

Thanks to the efforts of the Tall al-'Umayri team, archaeologists have begun to fill in the gaps of a large portion of Jordan's history. (edited from press release by Larry G. Herr)



APOT Reviewed

The Institute of Archaeology is proud to announce three reviews of *Ancient Pottery of Transjordan*. The reviews of *APOT*, co-authored by Ralph E. Hendrix, Philip R. Drey, and J. Bjørnar Storfjell, appeared in *Andrews University Seminary Studies (AUSS)*, *Biblical Archaeology Review (BAR)*, and *Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research (BASOR)*.

Piotr Bienkowski (Liverpool Museum, England) wrote the article appearing in *AUSS* (35.2: 276-278). Bienkowski thoughtfully critiqued the various chapters of *APOT*, concluding that "this book will become an essential primary reference."

The *BAR* article (24: 60) was written by Eric Meyers (Duke University). Meyers felt that *APOT* will do "for Transjordan what Amiran's book did for Cisjordanian pottery." Further, Meyers asserted that *APOT* "will be required reading (and study) not only for students of Jordanian archaeology, but also for Israeli archaeologists. It will be used in the field as well as in the classroom."

The last article appeared in *BASOR* (310: 79-81) and was written by Suzanne Richard (Drew University). This critique of *APOT* was a thorough summary and evaluation of the individual chapters of the book. Like Meyers, Richard concluded that *APOT* would be "a handbook utilized in the classroom." Richard added that "as a work aimed to edify beginners about the esoteric principles and terminology of typological analysis, it is a roaring success."

We thank Piotr Bienkowski, Eric Meyers, and Suzanne Richard for their positive, thoughtful, and insightful critiques of *APOT*. (Philip R. Drey)



The Late Bronze Age building at Tall al-'Umayri. (photo courtesy of Douglas R. Clark)