

Archaeologists Unearth 'Suburb' From the Time of Jesus

New building construction in Israel often yields ancient treasures. That's the case in the Jerusalem neighborhood of Sharafat.

Israeli archaeologists uncovered a Jewish village from the around the time of Jesus in this Jerusalem Arab neighborhood as part of what's called a salvage excavation—an excavation conducted while preparing the site for a new elementary school.

"The most spectacular find here is a grand burial estate," said archaeologist Ya'akov Billig, who is leading the excavations at the site for the Israel Antiquities Authority.

Today, the area is inside Jerusalem. Two thousand years ago, it would have been like a suburb of Jerusalem.

"The burial estate starts from a stepped, long corridor going under a bridge like an overpass into a courtyard with a bench on one side and a bench on another side," Billig explained to CBN News. "Then, from there upwards there was a covered barrel entrance to the burial cave and from there on inwards is the underground burial cave."

Billig said the burial estate tells a lot about its owners.

"The whole plan here belongs to some very important and/or rich person with his family, possibly even for several generations," he said.

They've also identified a Jewish ritual bath and much more.

"One of the agricultural products that was grown here and

produced, there were probably grape vineyards. We have evidence of the winepress with a very large treading floor where they placed the grapes, said Billig.

“We also have an olive press. Between the wine and the olive oil they probably had quite a high living standard here,” he said. {eoa}

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