

King David Palace Discovered, Archaeologists Report

A seven-year-dig by a team of archaeologists has produced what it believes to be the remains of a palace belonging to biblical King David. Other Israeli experts, however, dispute the claim.

Most scholars who have reviewed the evidence suggest that there is no physical proof of King David among the ruins discovered by archaeologists from Hebrew University of Jerusalem and Israel's Antiquities Authority. Critics, like archaeologist Israel Finkelstein of Tel Aviv University, have said the 10th century B.C. site "could have belonged to other kingdoms of the area"—such as the Canaanites or Philistines—and not specifically King David.

Finkelstein told the AP that without a monument to King David himself, there would be no way to verify who built the palace.

The discovering archaeologists, however, claim that Khirbet Qeiyafa, in a fortified complex west of Jerusalem, is authentic.

"Khirbet Qeiyafa is the best example exposed to date of a fortified city from the time of King David," Yossi Garfinkel, a Hebrew University archaeologist who led the dig, told the Associated Press.

Among the items Garfinkel and his team discovered were "cultic objects typically used by Judeans," subjects of King David.

Garfinkel told the AP that critics like Finkelstein are relying on outdated theories.

"I think other people have a collapsed theory and we have fresh data," he said.

Garfinkel's group isn't the first to make claims of discovering a 10th century B.C. King David palace. Israeli archaeologist Eilat Mazar made such a claim in 2005, one that was disputed by Garkfinkel.