

Archaeologists Unearth Rare 1,700-Year-Old Inscription on Church in Israeli Desert

German and Israeli scientists discovered a 1700-year-old stone bearing the name of a city believed to be the possible location of an ancient biblical town.

The Greek inscription refers to the city of Elusa (*Halutza* in Hebrew) and was discovered during excavations in Halutza National Park in the Negev desert.

“The name of the city of Elusa appears in a number of historical documents and contexts, including the Madaba mosaic map, the Nessana papyri and other historical references. However, this is the first time that the name of the city has been discovered in the site itself. The inscription mentions several Caesars of the tetrarchy, which allow to date it around 300 C.E.,” the Israel Antiquities Authority said Wednesday in a press release.

The United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) declared Elusa a World Heritage site. The city is one of two main potential locations for the biblical city of Ziklag.

Ziklag is mentioned in Genesis, Joshua and Samuel. King David is believed to have been given the town by a Philistine king named Achish.

According to the Israel Antiquities Authority, Elusa was founded toward the end of the 4th century B.C. and was an important station along the ancient Incense Road between Petra and Gaza. The city continued to develop over the years and reached its peak in the Byzantine period in the fourth to mid-sixth centuries A.D.

Dr. Tali Erickson-Gini, an archaeologist who worked on the project, said wine was largely responsible for the flourishing of the entire region.

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How Donald Trump Is the Christian Hero We Never Expected

I was not surprised when Hillary Clinton declared that she believed people like me to be “deplorable.” I could not tell you exactly when it started, but it has been clear to me and I believe most evangelicals, that the hard left has been long engaged in a war with all that is Constitutional, conservative and Christian.

As the mayor of the city of El Cajon, California, just outside of San Diego, I live in a small outpost of conservatives, traditionalists and many Christians, who are surrounded by the left as Israel is surrounded by the Arab world. In my small city, there are three megachurches and over a dozen smaller ones. As a group, we are committed and passionate about Jesus, family, conservatism and the rights and liberties guaranteed by the U.S. Constitution. Many are equally passionate about President Donald Trump.

It has not always been so. I remember, before the primary presidential election of 2016, very few of us were excited about a Trump candidacy. The thought of Trump championing the evangelical cause was laughable. He had been divorced twice,

bragged about groping women and was likely just a New York liberal posing as a Republican. He was brash, wealthy and combative, and it seemed very likely that he would not be, could not be, the man we would vote for.

When he ascended to the top of the ticket, I remember many making wild "Never Trump" announcements about not voting, or even voting for Hillary. This of course was just posturing, as anyone could see that Hillary was so deeply intertwined with the Christian-hating, Constitution-torturing extreme left that to elect her would be akin to electing Nero. Slowly, we adjusted to the unthinkable concept of voting for Trump and as a nation, we evangelicals did just that—by over 81 percent.

After the election, we collectively held our breath and waited. What was God up to? Were we doomed, or was there a spiritual jujitsu happening that would make a sinner like Trump a man after God's own heart? I've heard it said that no man can judge the spirituality of another, but any of us can be fruit inspectors. So what has been the fruit of this presidential administration?

Trump began by signing executive orders to protect religious liberty. He instructed the Department of Justice to issue guidelines protecting the religious liberties of people engaging with the Federal government. He put the IRS on notice that they could no longer harass conservative or faith-based organizations. He boldly fought for the repealing of the Johnson amendment, which uses the power of the IRS to intimidate pastors against speaking on political matters. He provided protections for health-care workers who had objections to providing abortions, transgender surgeries or any other job duty their faith would preclude.

By moving the U.S. Embassy in Israel to Jerusalem, he broke with decades of U.S. policy. This striking decision acknowledged not only the 3,000-year history of the Jewish people, but also their right to proclaim Jerusalem as their

capital. This was another 2016 campaign promise fulfilled, like his vow to be tough on China and improve border security. With his relocation of the embassy, millions of Christians and Jews felt relieved and vindicated in light of Genesis 12:3, which, paraphrased, states that those who bless Israel will be blessed and those who curse her will be cursed.

American Christians watched with amazement as President Trump systematically rejected the bias of the established media and called into question their motives and tactics. Christians have intuitively known that it is this same group that has systematically and relentlessly worked to root out religious values and voices from the public square. Like your big brother showing up just as you're being worked over by school yard bullies, Trump showed up and sent the unruly media mob scattering. He took on the very premise of the media and called them out on their bias. Christians felt protected and understood.

Arguably, left-leaning courts and their propensity to establish law, not interpret it, have been the most noticeable harbinger of the impending loss of American religious liberty. I once heard Pastor Jim Garlow say, "I fully expect to die in government housing." Garlow meant that before Trump, the direction of the highest court seemed to lead toward the persecution of people of faith, for speaking aloud the tenets of that faith. He, at that time, expected that in his civil disobedience, he would end up spending his last years in prison. So it was a fundamental shift when the president was successful in the placement of two conservative judges on the Supreme Court and dozens of other appointments to lesser courts. Christians could argue that the significance of this act alone makes the president a hero of Christians and conservatives alike.

But what about his sinfulness? Well, that is puzzling. If we were to design the perfect candidate to "Make America Great Again" we would surely choose a politician who was pastor-

like, or a learned man of God. That's not who won the 2016 election. What if God, in His wisdom, had a different plan in mind? Could it not be that Trump is an imperfect man—like David, or Samson or Moses—and is still of profound use to God? Haven't we seen characters like Winston Churchill, whose accomplishments dwarfed the criticisms of their vices and manner? What limits does God have in choosing a leader or, for that matter, in anything? Does it condemn us in hypocrisy that we would ignore the faults of Donald Trump but revel in his policies and accomplishments?

I think the answer is that choosing a president is not a hypothetical exercise, but a meaningful choice in the direction of our nation. In 2016, we had a choice between a well-established woman who claimed to be a Christian but was demonstrably committed to eradicating Christian rights and values, and an unruly man who said he was a Christian and pledged to protect those same values. The proof will always be in the results. Looking at this administration's actions and achievements thus far, I believe it is clear that the result of a Trump presidency is that the positions of people of faith have improved.

It is not hypocritical to be pleased with the improvement of Christian rights and the protection of Christian values, even if the man responsible for it is imperfect. The truth is that the left doesn't really care about Trump's moral failings. We know this because the left's heroes are routinely caught in the same sins and behaviors and often, they are much more heinous and profound. The left, however, shamelessly defends their own with vigor. Trump's vices are just the convenient fodder his enemies use as a straw-man argument in their relentless mission to destroy him. In truth, they could not care less about his sins; what bothers them are his accomplishments. {eoa}

Dr. Bill Wells *Psy.D.*, is the mayor of the city of El Cajon, California. He is the CEO and owner of Broadwell Health Inc.

He describes himself as a Christian conservative who began his political career in 2008 as a city council member and has served as mayor since 2013.

How a Simple Prophetic Prayer Birthed ‘Godspeed’ Magazine

Everyone knows the media world is changing—most of it not for the better. Recently, though, I had the chance to speak with someone who is making a difference in media for God’s glory. Jeremy Lamont just started an online magazine called *GODSPEED*, something he never even considered until God burdened his heart to do it in 2012.

In my interview with Lamont, he shared how God led him to publish the digital magazine, the promises the Spirit gave him for the magazine’s future and how this growing publication is making a difference. (Click [here](#) or scroll down to the end of this article to listen to our entire conversation.)

“In 2012, God—in prayer—specifically said that this was what I was supposed to do,” Lamont tells me. “And so I started following the footsteps because He specifically said it had to be a digital magazine. And in the seven years since then, it has turned into exactly what He promised. Just as an example, He said it would look like *Time* magazine, and we now have David Aikman, who was the senior news correspondent for *Time* magazine for 23 years, as our editor-in-chief. So it’s really God who has the glory on this one.”

I’ve known Aikman since the late 1970s when he was senior correspondent for *Time* magazine, and our lives have intersected in so many different ways. There was a time when Aikman was one of the highest-ranking Christians in the

journalism realm. So I was impressed when I learned he was working with *GODSPEED* magazine. When I asked Lamont how he managed to get an editor-in-chief of Aikman's stature, he gave all credit to God.

"It's so impossible to describe the things God has done with *GODSPEED* magazine without going back to what God did," Lamont says. "I was specifically told in another prayer later that I would have a partner who was the granddaughter of the founder of the Pentecostal movement—or one of the founders—Charles Parham."

A week after that prayer, Parham's granddaughter, Roberta Parham Hromas—affectionally known as "Bobby"—invited Lamont to a meeting at her house with various representatives from the Christian Broadcast Network, Oral Roberts University, the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association and more. Lamont tells me he felt out of place at that meeting, but afterward, Hromas approached him, and the two decided to be partners in Lamont's digital magazine. That same night, Hromas put Lamont in touch with Aikman, and a year later, Aikman came on staff for *GODSPEED* as editor-in-chief.

In all this, Lamont sees the hand of God at work.

"In all of *GODSPEED* magazine, the common theme is that I literally cannot take credit for any of it," he says. "Rather, He's made it clear that it's His will that my primary role is to follow and go exactly where He takes me. And so our method is we take clipboards and fill them with information and planning, and then God somewhat swats them out of my hand and fills the clipboard with His information, and then we follow His planning."

GODSPEED is available for \$5 a month. You can download the app free of charge in the app store, on Google Play and on Amazon, and Lamont says you get two free issues when you do that. If you do subscribe, though, you'll get content every month

centered on “God in action,” as Lamont puts it.

In fact, Lamont says he won't publish stories simply for the sake of prominent Christian names. If a story doesn't show God moving in some way, he doesn't want it.

“That's what *GODSPEED* magazine is,” he explains. “We cover freedom from the point of view of, ‘How is God using people right now to protect the freedom to worship Him?’ If we cover ‘infant lives matter,’ we're really covering ‘How is God protecting the right only He could give, which is life?’”

I'm happy to report on people like Lamont, who are resisting culture's secular pull toward godlessness and instead taking a firm stand for Christ in media. And in a way, I can relate with Lamont, since I felt a similar call many years ago to publish a magazine and report on how God is moving. Granted, I started *Charisma* magazine before personal computers were on the market—and this was long before the internet. So much has changed since *Charisma*'s founding in 1975, but God's heart to reach the masses with truth has not.

I encourage you to listen to my entire conversation with Lamont below. I recently subscribed to *GODSPEED* magazine, and I encourage you to do the same at the App Store, Google Play, Amazon or . For more information, go to !

Am I Addicted? The 5 Stages of Porn Addiction

Pornography usage affects your life in many ways—your relationships, your job, your social interactions and so much more. Perhaps you've begun to wonder if you're addicted to

porn.

First, not everyone who views porn is an addict. But there are patterns and symptoms that can be very good indicators that you can use to see if you are in danger of porn addiction.

Many of these signs are almost identical to the indicators used to classify substance addiction like drugs and alcohol.

Focus on the Family notes that there are five stages of pornography addiction.

1. Early Exposure

Most men who become addicted started at an early age. This could have been looking at a magazine or a video clip. But that first exposure started their relationship with porn.

2. Addiction

At this stage, you keep seeking out more porn to view. You have started to make it a regular part of your life, and not just an occasional peek.

3. Escalation

Now you have become so accustomed to seeing porn that you need to find more graphic material. You may not have even considered this more explicit porn before, but now you have started to enjoy it.

4. Desensitization

You have reached the stage where you have become numb to porn. Even the most disgusting, graphic types of porn now seem boring or unexciting to you. You are desperate to find that same type of thrill you use to get but you can't seem to find anything to replace it.

5. Acting out sexually

You have finally reached the point where you are willing to risk making the dangerous jump from visual fantasy to acting out in the real world.

Of course, everyone is different, so you may find that this pattern varies for you. If you're uncertain about the extent of your struggle with sex addiction, you can take the Sexual Addiction Screening Test anonymously and online for free.

Symptoms of Addiction

As with any addiction, there are several signs and symptoms of porn addiction. Here's a partial list of some common ones:

- Unable to stop using porn despite trying to do so
- Becoming angry, defensive, or irritable when asked to stop viewing porn
- Increased sense of shame and guilt
- Decreased time spent with family and friends
- Denial that you have a porn problem
- Lying and being more secretive about activities
- Reduced interest in sexual, emotional or physical interaction with your spouse
- Intense feelings of shame and guilt
- Feeling like you're living a double life
- Blaming others for your porn use
- Loss of interest in work, socializing, hobbies and other activities

Whether your journey with pornography has led to a full blown addiction or is an intermittent struggle, there is help for you.

Trying to regain control over your life

Most men who use porn are trying to self-medicate. They have experiences in their past that have left painful memories and marks on their heart. Viewing porn makes them feel good momentarily and provides a fleeting relief to the pain they

try to heal. Any enjoyment quickly gives way to shame, which drives the user back to their virtual electronic drug all over again.

Porn also gives addicts a feeling of being able to control at least a part of their lives.

Dr. Peter Kleponis, a licensed clinical therapist, wrote for *Covenant Eyes*: