

Kingdom of King David Identified Using Ancient Fortress

Professor Yosef Garfinkel of the Institute of Archaeology at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem claims to have identified a portion of the ancient Kingdom of Judah, as described in the Bible during the time of David and Solomon.

His research, published in the Jerusalem Journal of Archaeology, has ignited a contentious discussion about the validity of the United Monarchy as depicted in the infallible Word of God.

According to biblical accounts, the United Monarchy, also known as the Kingdom of Israel, existed from 1047 to 930 BC. Encompassing the territories of the Kingdom of Judah and the Samarian Kingdom of Israel, it spanned across present-day Israel, Jordan, Lebanon and Syria.

Kings Saul, David and Solomon were the three rulers mentioned in the Bible as reigning over the United Monarchy. Following Solomon's reign, his son Rehoboam's ascent to power led to the division of the kingdom into two: Israel in the north and Judah in the south.

While some scholars, including Yosef Garfinkel, assert that archaeological evidence supports the existence of the United Monarchy, others hold a dissenting view.

Khirbet Qeiyafa, also known as Elah Fortress, an ancient city overlooking the Elah Valley, serves as a focal point in Garfinkel's study.

 Dating back to the first half of the tenth century BC, the site sprawls across six acres, enclosed by a 2,300-

foot-long wall. Situated near Beit Shemesh, about 20 miles southwest of Jerusalem, Khirbet Qeiyafa is considered one of the fortresses affiliated with King David's Kingdom. It represents one of several fortified sites located beyond Jerusalem, forming a network.

Garfinkel argues that these fortresses, united by roadways, formed part of a singular, integrated kingdom during David's reign. He notes, "If you take all these sites, they have the same urban concept, they are all sitting on the border of the kingdom and sitting where you have a main road leading to the kingdom. These cities aren't located in the middle of nowhere. It's a pattern of urbanism with the same urban concept."

However, other scholars contend that David and Solomon were likely local chieftains ruling over small, fortress-like cities rather than a collection of extensive fortifications.

Professor Israel Finkelstein of Tel Aviv University and the University of Haifa expresses uncertainty regarding the dating of the five sites examined by Garfinkel. Establishing their alignment with the tenth century BC is crucial in substantiating the existence of a unified kingdom. Divergent periods of origin could potentially undermine such claims, suggesting an alternative interpretation.

The ongoing debate between maximalist and minimalist archaeologists, as described by Yosef Garfinkel, underlies the differing perspectives. Maximalists emphasize the historical significance of biblical accounts, utilizing them as valuable sources. In contrast, minimalist scholars criticize the Bible's utility for historical purposes.

Each new archaeological discovery provides more evidence that the Bible is true and authentic. As the apostles Paul and Peter wrote in 2 Timothy 3:16 and 2 Peter 1:20, the Bible was breathed by God Himself, not written from the understanding of man.

These ancient fortresses are further evidence supporting the historical accuracy of the Bible.

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