

2008 Proclaimer

"The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, .. to proclaim the favorable year of the Lord!" -Isa.61:1-2

A teaching and exhortation medium by members of the
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Archeologist Unearths Biblical Controversy

by Michael Valpy

"Artifacts from Iron Age fortress confirm Old Testament dates of Edomite kingdom"

Canadian archeologist Russell Adams's interest is in Bronze Age and Iron Age copper production. He never intended to walk into archeology's vicious debate over the historical accuracy of the Old Testament -- a conflict likened by one historian to a pack of feral canines at each other's throats.

Yet by coincidence, Prof. Adams of Hamilton's McMaster University says, he and an international team of colleagues fit into place a significant piece of the puzzle of human history in the Middle East -- unearthing information that points to the existence of the Bible's vilified Kingdom of Edom at precisely the time the Bible says it existed, and contradicting widespread academic belief that it did not come into being until 200 years later.

Their findings mean that those scholars convinced that the Hebrew Old Testament is at best a compendium of revisionist, fragmented history, mixed with folklore and theology, and at worst a piece of outright propoganda, likely will have to apply the brakes to their thinking.

Because, if the little bit of the Old Testament's narrative that Prof. Adams and his colleagues have looked at is true, other bits could be true as well.

References to the Kingdom of Edom -- almost none of them complimentary -- are woven through the Old Testament. It existed in what is today southern Jordan, next door to Israel, and the

relationship between the biblical Edomites and Israelites was one of unrelenting hostility and warfare.

The team led by Prof. Adams, Thomas Levy of the University of California at San Diego and Mohammad Najjar of the Jordanian Department of Antiquities was investigating copper mining and smelting at a site called Khirbat en-Nahas, by far the largest copper-production site in the region.

They applied high-precision radiocarbon-dating methods to some of their finds, and as they say in the British journal *Antiquities*, "The results were spectacular."

They firmly established that occupation of the site began in the 11th century BC and a monumental fortress was built in the 10th century BC, supporting the argument for existence of an Edomite state at least 200 years earlier than had been assumed.

What is particularly exciting about their find is that it implies the existence of an Edomite state at the time the Bible says King David and his son Solomon ruled over a powerful united kingdom of Israel and Judah.

It is the historical accuracy - the very existence of this United kingdom and the might and splendour of David and Solomon, as well as the existence of surrounding kingdoms - that lies at the heart of the archeological dispute.

Those scholars known as minimalists argue that what is known as "state formation" -- the emergence of regional governments and kings -- did not take place in the area until the imperialistic expansion of the Assyrian empire in the 8th century BC, so David and Solomon, rather than being mighty monarchs, were mere petty chieftains.

And because everything that takes place in the Middle East inevitably is political, the minimalist argument is seen as weakening modern Israel's claim to Palestine.

In the biblical narrative, the Edomites are the descendents of Esau, whose blessing from his father, Isaac, was stolen by his younger brother, Jacob, ancestor of the Israelites. (Fans of the British satirical-comedy group *Beyond the Fringe* will recall how Jacob pulled off

the theft by presenting himself as the hirsute Esau to their blind father, saying in an aside: "My brother Esau is an hairy man, but I am a smooth man.")

The Edomites are lambasted in the Bible for refusing to let the Israelites rest on their land as they flee Egypt. God declares obscurely: "Over Edom will I cast out my shoe." The Israelites grumble enviously that there were kings of Edom before there were kings of Israel -- a highly significant passage because it implies that state formation occurred in Edom before it happened in Israel.

Finally, there is the biblical account of David's war against the Edomites, in which David and his general, Joab, kill 18,000 Edomites and establish military control over them by "putting garrisons throughout all Edom."

Irish scholar John Bartlett, one of the world's great experts on the Edomites, dates the battle at 990 to 980 BC, precisely when Prof. Adams and his colleagues date the fortress.

Says Prof. Adams: "This battle between the Israelites and the Edomites, although not possible to document, is typical of the sort of border conflicts between Iron Age states. And the evidence of our new dates at least proves that it may, in fact, be possible to place the Edomites in the 10th century [BC] or earlier, which now supports the chronology of the biblical accounts.

"It is intriguing that at Khirbat en-Nahas, our large Iron Age fort is dated to just this period, suggesting conflict as a central concern even at a remote copper-production site."

He concludes: "We're not out to prove the Bible right or wrong. We're not trying to be controversial. We're just trying to be good anthropologists and scientists, and tell the story of our archeological site accurately."

NEXT SERVICE HERE IS

5:00 PM this evening

The Lord will be here ~ will WE?

Friendly Fire

It happened in the basement of the military training barracks. I and a few other soldiers were sorting brass after the company had been on the firing range. Unnoticed by the group, one soldier took some live rounds found among the spent ones and loaded them into a weapon and pulled the trigger. Needless to say we were scared and shocked, but luckily no one was hit by the bullets. This episode brought to mind how tragic it is when someone is injured or killed by a comrade's carelessness (friendly fire).

We, in this congregation, are in engaged in spiritual warfare against evil and the evil one. We need to wield the sword of the spirit which is the Word, but we must be careful how we wield the sword. It must not be used in such a way as to injure our comrades in the faith.

*[Jesus said,] "Whoever causes one of these little ones who believe to stumble, it would be better for him if, with a heavy millstone hung around his neck, he had been cast into the sea." **Mark 9:42***

Avoiding Friendly-Fire Casualties

"For you were called to freedom, brethren; only do not turn your freedom into an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another. For the whole Law is fulfilled in one word, in the statement, 'you shall love your neighbor as yourself.' But if you bite and devour one another, take care that you are not consumed by one another."

Galatians 5:13-15

Love One Another!

This is a sure way to avoid friendly-fire casualties in the church.

THOSE NEEDING PRAYERS

Jason & Marie & Cayna Anderson
Edith Ayers
Frank & Tina Ayers
Jamie Ayers
Jack & Dorothy Bailey
Margie Buchanan
Ed Brouillette
Bill Cain
Karen Daly
Robert Erickson
Min Fox
Helen Gray
Chris Heffelfinger
Margaret Holcomb
Chuck House
Donna Lee & Amber
Jean McCarty
Martha McCurdy
Kiley Pace
R.B. & June Rankin
Wendell & Irma Rapier
Berniece Raven & Sharon Collamore
Rosie Reagan
LaurieAnn Reagan
Eli & the Roadman family
Caleb & Jacob Robertson
Taylor Romine
Ray Rude
Bill & Rena Schultz
Troy Shadman
The Brad Shuck Family
Ron & Terry Stewart & Caleb
Ola Thornburg
Nancy Valine
Shirley Watkins
Clair & Ellie Williams
Kathy Wilson (**Folsom**)
Gordon Wilson

TRAVELING IN THEIR WORK

Karen Daly
Aaron Robertson
Glenn and Sara Reagan
Gordon Wilson

IN THE MILITARY

Jason Anderson
David Lovett
Aaron Robertson
Trent Walsh

WHAT IMPRESSES GOD

Luke 18:9-14

INTRODUCTION:

- A. Jesus tells of one who tried to impress God, and didn't; but showed that humility would!
- B. At one time or another all of us are guilty of trying to impress God.

I. WHAT IMPRESSES GOD IS WHEN YOU DON'T TRY TO IMPRESS HIM. Vss 10-12

- A. I know immediately you are ready to jump all over the Pharisee because he was, to say the least, a bit arrogant – don't you think?
 - 1. Quite frankly, he really was an Eagle Scout. He dotted every religious "i" and he crossed every theological "t."
 - 2. He was standing in the center of the inner court right in the heart of the temple.
- C. Then we read that he tithed everything that he possessed.
 - 1. Now the Old Testament only required that you tithe your income.
 - 2. HEAR this: there's nothing wrong w/fasting more than once a week, and there certainly is nothing wrong with giving more than a tithe.
 - 3. But the problem was, this man thought then what a lot of people think today--he thought his goodness gained him brownie points with God. He thought God accepts a person based on what they do for Him. He was religious and he was really proud of it.
- E. Let me just stop right here and make an application.
 - 1. We cannot trust anything other than Christ to make us right with God!
 - 2. The Pharisee thought that God would be impressed with all that he was doing.
- F. This Pharisee had an "I" problem.
 - 1. He suffered from two big problems: INFLATION AND DEFLATION.
 - 2. He had an inflated view of himself, and a deflated value of God's will.
- G. This Pharisee had fooled himself with, "God, I thank You that I am not like other men."
 - 1. This man was even fooled about his prayer.
 - 2. Proudful prayer is nothing more than an echo in your own ears.

II. SECOND, HUMILITY DOES IMPRESS GOD.

- A. Jesus' contrast would have been easily recognized to those hearing this parable.
 - 1. A tax collector was about as different from a Pharisee as a Saint is from a sinner.
 - 2. They were so despised they couldn't hold public office or even give testimony in court.
- B. The Pharisee tried to impress God, but didn't; the tax collector did impress God.
- C. A highway to heaven is paved with humility.
 - 1. Now on the outside the Pharisee "looked" religious; have thought the Pharisee was much closer to God, but on the inside it was the tax collector who was close to God.
 - 2. Because the Bible says in Psa 34:18.
- D. This man was willing to humble himself without waiting on God to do it for him.
 - 1. God has ways of humbling us if we don't initiate it ourselves.
 - 2. God will exalt the humble, and will humble the self-exalted.
- E. Honesty impresses God. This man literally said, "Be merciful to me the sinner."
 - 1. The word "merciful" is from a Greek word that literally mean "atonement."
 - 2. Yom Kippur literally meant "the Day of Atonement." The word atonement means, "to cover."
 - 3. What this man really said was this: "I am a sinner. Lord will you "cover" for me?"

IN SUMMARY:

- A. In verse 14, please note what Jesus said about the man who impressed God.
 - 1. The Lord Jesus draws a conclusion from this story that shocked His listeners.
 - 2. Now let me bring this parable down to where we live right now.
 - 4. The way to serve and be impressive to God is simply to face the truth.
 - 5. We need to realize we need to depend on God to help us be stronger!