
The Muse

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THE OLDEST HEBREW BIBLE?

What is the oldest Hebrew Bible? This may be a difficult question to answer. Biblical scholar Paul Sanders discusses this in an article that appeared in the November/December issue of *Biblical Archaeology Review*. The Dead Sea Scrolls (ca. 250 BC and 68 AD) contain portions of the oldest Hebrew Bible text, while the Aleppo Codex and the Leningrad Codex are

the oldest complete versions, copied by the Masoretes in the 10th and 11th centuries AD.

The Ashkar-Gilson Bible Manuscript may bridge the gap between the Dead Sea Scrolls and the Codices of the Middle Ages. The Aleppo Codex, the oldest Hebrew Bible that has survived to modern times, was copied by Torah Scribes

called Masoretes in Tiberias, Israel around 930 AD. The Aleppo Codex is not complete, however, as almost 200 pages went missing between 1947 and 1957. Who knows - those missing pages may appear in someone's collection!

(ICEJ News, 11/4/2015)

JOSEPH'S TOMB IN ISRAEL

Last month, with the unrest occurring in Israel, the Jewish holy site of Joseph's Tomb in the city of Nablus was damaged by Palestinian rioters. The City of Nablus hired a team of masons, painters, welders, and electricians, under an escort of the Israeli Defense Forces, to go to the site for repairs. The work team completed their repairs in one night between the hours of 1:00 AM and 6:00 AM at a cost of approximately NIS 100,000 or \$25,000. Amazing what can be done in one night!

(ICEJ News, Nov. 4, 2015)

THE HASMONEANS & THE CITY OF DAVID

Archaeologists digging in the City of David area of Jerusalem, just south of the Old City, announced recently that they believe they have discovered remains of the Greek Acra citadel, used by the Seleucid King Antiochus IV in the 2nd century BC. Antiochus used this area to control Jewish activities in and around the Temple Mount, prompting the revolt which led to the Jewish Hasmonean Dynasty taking over. That war is recorded in the Apocryphal Book of Maccabees and by the Roman historian Josephus Flavius. The Jewish holiday of Chanukah commemorates this revolutionary war.

A joint statement put forth by archaeologists and the Israel Antiquities Authority states: "The new archaeological finds indicate the establishment of a well-fortified stronghold that was constructed high on the bedrock cliff overlooking the steep slopes of the City of David hill. This stronghold controlled all means of approach to the Temple atop the Temple Mount, and cut the Temple off from the southern parts of the city."

(ICEJ News, 11/4/2015)

HAS QUEEN NEFERTITI'S TOMB BEEN FOUND?

Since the late 1800's there has been speculation regarding where the mummy of Egyptian Queen Nefertiti might be buried. There is DNA evidence supporting the claim that her mummy was found in 1898. There have also been claims that a mummy found in 2003 is in fact the real Queen Nefertiti. Now a new hypothesis has been presented by Egyptologist Nicholas Reeves concerning the true location of Nefertiti.

While examining high definition scans of King Tutankhamen's tomb, Reeves noticed a possible outline of a door or entryway, now covered by plaster and paintings. Reeves proposed that King Tutankhamen's tomb was originally Queen Nefertiti's tomb and that her burial chamber was sealed off to create a new chamber when King Tutankhamen died at a young age. Despite renewed interest in Egypt's ancient history, Reeves is quick to note that his hypothesis is highly improbable, though if he is correct, the archeological findings contained within will be highly significant for historians and archeologists alike.

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