

Recent Archaeological Dig Confirms Scripture

by Ken Ham

A recent discovery in the city of Lachish, Israel, has brought attention to the specific details recorded in Scripture about the desecration of shrines to Baal. One king of Israel (Jehu) and one king of Judah (Hezekiah) are spoken of in 2 Kings in reference to destroying pagan shrines: *And they brought the sacred pillars out of the temple of Baal and burned them. Then they broke down the sacred pillar of Baal, and tore down the temple of Baal and made it a refuse dump to this day. Thus Jehu destroyed Baal from Israel* (2 Kings 10:26–28).

He [Hezekiah] removed the high places and broke the sacred pillars, cut down the wooden image and broke in pieces the bronze serpent that Moses had made; for until those days the children of Israel burned incense to it, and called it Nehushtan (2 Kings 18:4).

Just reported on September 28, 2016, a team of archaeologists found evidence in Lachish of both types of desecration of Baal temples. Although parts of the city gate of Lachish had been exposed in previous digs, this new excavation has completely exposed the gate, which at 13 feet tall and 80' x 80' long is the largest gate known from this period (8th Century BC). According to the Fox News article: *“The size of the gate is consistent with the historical and archaeological knowledge we possess, whereby Lachish was a major city and the most important one after Jerusalem,”* said excavation director Sa'ar Ganor. *According to the Book of Kings, he said, “the cities’ gates were the place where ‘everything took place’: the city elders, judges, governors, kings and officials - everyone would sit on benches in the city gate. These benches were found in our excavation.”*

The city gate also had chambers on each side and a set of stairs ascending to another chamber where offerings to Baal were placed. There also were two four-horned altars, which had been deliberately desecrated. Commenting on this shrine, Sa'ar Ganor elaborates: *It is most interesting that the horns on the altar were intentionally truncated..... That is probably evidence of the religious reform attributed to King Hezekiah, whereby religious worship was centralised in Jerusalem and the cultic high places that were built outside the capital were destroyed.*

But that wasn't all they found. As mentioned in the 2 Kings 10:27 account of Jehu, where he made the temple of Baal a refuse dump (many translations here say “latrine”), the archaeological team discovered what can best be described as “stone fashioned in the shape of a chair, with a hole in its centre - a toilet that was installed to desecrate the place.” This is the first time that archaeologists have confirmed the biblical accounts that toilets were installed in cultic locations to render them unfit for cultic rituals.

So this one archaeological dig, corroborating aspects of two historical accounts in Scripture, is just another example of how the history in the Bible is true and reliable. Over the years, many archaeologists have claimed there was no archaeological evidence for many of the events recorded in the Bible. But time and again, archaeology provides testimony to the absolute truthfulness of Scripture.

I'm often amazed that we continue to hear sceptics claim that the Bible is full of fairy tales, yet real observational science shows again and again the Bible's history to be true in even the smallest detail. You see, it's not a matter of evidence; it's a matter of the heart. Thus, no matter how much evidence they see for the veracity of Scripture, some will reject it outright. But the Christian can look at this discovery and proclaim with the prophet, *“The grass withers, the flower fades, but the Word of our God stands forever,”* (Isaiah 40:8).

