

King David's Tomb

Commentary for October 1, 2006 — Evidence and Location

The discovery of the Tomb of King David of Israel has always fascinated biblical scholars and archaeologists. Perhaps this is because no Old Testament character has such a well-developed personality through his own writings, with a true greatness of character and achievement in his life (2 Samuel 7:9).

King David had flaws that are also larger than life. They were flaws that spanned the full range of human emotion, good and evil conduct, good and evil experiences in life, great sin and yet a consciousness that strives for righteousness. At various times King David seemed to be the best of humanity, yet at other times the worst. He was larger than life, yet he is the most detailed, most human personality in the Bible.

Why the Interest in King David?

Perhaps the fascination with King David is because he was such a thoughtful and meditative person. We have his intimate thoughts about life and his love of God set forth in his own words preserved in the Psalms and in narratives. His writings display the full range of human emotion, while his life shows a person susceptible — just like you and me — to the prime motivators to evil in life: money, sex, and power. David was able to express emotions about life that few others have matched in history.

I remember someone (I do not recall the source) who termed King David the “first modern man” because he was, contrary to ancient times, very introspective and individualistic. He related to God as an individual, directly, and less through his participation in community. At the same time he formulated communal worship for the people of Israel in the Tabernacle he built for the Ark of the Covenant, and later for the Temple his son would build.

The article for the month of October 2006 is “The Location and Future Discovery of King David's Tomb.” However, as usual I want you to read the [“October 2006 Newsletter”](#) which contains context and background to the article.

One of the keys to the location of King David's Tomb is the concept that “house” can upon occasion mean “tomb” or “sepulcher” when context demands that meaning. The word “house” in the Bible denotes a place or a group of people where security within that place or group of people is a prime concept. When “house” refers to a place or a dwelling it denotes a separation from the “world outside” for privacy and safety. When “house” refers to a group of people, comprised usually of biological family and friends, it also denotes a separation from the “world outside,” in the sense of “us” in relation to “them.” House can also mean “tomb” in some contexts and King David came to understand that his tomb, provided by God, would be a place of security for his body until the resurrection from the dead. He looked to the future.

Much of what King David spoke in speeches and wrote in the Psalms was prophetic. But although many of the prophecies had their fulfillment in Christ, many of those prophecies referred to David first, and they describe what David was experiencing in his life. For example, when Christ cried out to God just before His death: **“My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?”** (Mark 15:34), King David felt that way and applied those words to himself first:

“My God, my God, why have you forsaken me? why are you so far from helping me, and from the words of my roaring? O my God, I cry in the daytime, but you hear not; and in the night season, and am not silent.”

• Psalm 22:1–2

When Jesus quoted that short phrase, He had the entire Psalm 22 in mind because it expressed His anguish and abandonment by God, just like David felt. To be sure King David was rescued. Jesus was not rescued. He died and was resurrected. David is still awaiting resurrection from the dead.

Discovery of the Tomb of King David will cause a revolution in the world. The discovery does not fit any prophetic scenario of any biblical scholar or student of prophecy, not even my scenario. There is no direct prophecy (that I can apply) that even hints that the discovery of David’s Tomb will have an impact at all, although I believe that to be the case. Read (and enjoy) the article, disagree if you will, but engage the material and learn for yourself whether interest in King David of Israel shall come alive again in the world, at God’s command.

David Sielaff
david@askelm.com