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**Ancient Temple Seal Found**

Israeli archaeologists have uncovered the first archeological find to confirm written testimony of the ritual practices at the Jewish Temple in Jerusalem. An Israeli Antiquities Authority archaeological survey at the northwestern corner of the Temple Mount yielded a tiny tin artifact, the size of a button, inscribed with the Aramaic words: "Daka Le'Ya," which the excavation directors on behalf of the IAA, archaeologists Eli Shukron and Professor Ronny Reich, decipher as "pure for God."

Researcher-Excavators Professor Reich of the University of Haifa and Dr. Shukron of the Israel Antiquities Authority believe the artifact, dated to the first century, near the end of the Second Temple period, is similar to seals described in the Mishnah. If right, this is the first time physical evidence of the temple ritual corroborates the

written record. The team believes the tiny seal was placed on objects designated for use in the temple, which needed to be certified as ceremonially pure.



A new interpretation is now being put forward. Professor Shlomo Naeh of the Hebrew University believes the inscription should be read differently. Naeh also believes the object is related to Temple worship and purity, but reads the inscription, as "Daka[r] a Ley[ehoyariv]." Dakar in Aramaic is ram and a stands for aleph, the first day of the week, when the priestly order of Yehoyariv is known to have been on duty in the Temple.

To ensure the purity of animal sacrifices offered in the Temple - and to maintain an economic monopoly - pilgrims were required to buy their offerings in the Temple courts. They gave money to a treasurer who would exchange it for a token inscribed with the type of sacrifice they had purchased and the date. Such a seal may well have been redundant. On the other hand, it could well have served to certify that the sacrifices bought met temple standards, as well as allayed concerns that some animals brought for sacrifice had not been purchased on the temple precincts.

Naeh supports his theory by explaining, "Purity was very fluid; the mere touch of an impure person was enough to make the object impure, so it is unlikely such a seal existed." What is more, the object lacked a hole for a thread or a handle to affix it to another object.

### **In Jesus' Footsteps**

The Israeli Ministry of Tourism has launched a new trail that follows Jesus' the presumed course of Jesus' wanderings in Lower Galilee, from Mount Precipice near Nazareth to Capernaum on the northern bank of Lake Galilee. The 62-kilometer route (about is 38 miles) is designed for hikers, cyclists and horseback riders.

At the dedication ceremony for the Gospel Trail, Tourism Minister Stas Misezhnikov described the trail as designed for Christian tourists, who represent over two-thirds of incoming tourists, and to offer Israelis a new and unique attraction. The Gospel Trail is expected lead to an increase in the number of Israelis and tourists in the area, attracting businessmen and tourism entrepreneurs, and leading to new business ventures.

" Christian tourism constitutes the main anchor of incoming tourism to Israel," explained Misezhnikov. "The Gospel Trail, reinforces the spiritual experience for every and represents a major, positive means for exploiting the tourist potential of the region. It will encourage economic momentum thanks to creation of new jobs and an increase in income."

A brief perusal of the map of Israel reveals that similar route was dedicated three years ago, known as the "Jesus Trail." This trail follows a slightly different route, 65 kilometers in length, from Nazareth to the Lake, and caters - until recently, with the enthusiastic encouragement of the Tourism Ministry - to exactly the same clientele.

The older route was an initiative of Maoz Yinon, a 35-year-old entrepreneur who owns the Fauzi Azar hostel in Nazareth, and another hostel in Jerusalem. At the time, Yinon won the support of many groups for his plan, among them the Tourism Ministry, the Israel Trails Committee (part of the Society for the Protection of Nature in Israel) and several local authorities. Together with an American Christian named David Landis, he developed a route based on three principles: connecting to Christian tradition, hiking in beautiful landscapes and it encouraging the involvement of local communities.

Tourists now have a choice: The Gospel Trail, or the Jesus Trail.

### **The Islamic World**

Islamic parties have won over two thirds of parliamentary seats, with the Islamic brotherhood gaining 40% and the more radical Salafists, 21%. The Egyptian army is seeking a continuing role in Egyptian politics. It presently forms the *ad hoc* government, and controls about a third of the economy through state-owned companies. The tourist industry, which provided 15% of the country's income, is in crisis, with a presently expected annual income that is no more than 5% and, quite likely, will be less. Meanwhile, a new Egyptian phenomenon has arisen: an unofficial vigilante grassroots, the "Committee for the Prevention of Vice and Promotion of Virtue" (adopting the name of an official government body in Saudi Arabia) has begun prowling the streets. In Saudia, members of the Committee, armed with wooden canes, enforce the strict

separation of men and women, conservative dress codes, public prayer and other behavior patterns it believes are dictated by Islam. Viewing the Saudi model, some Egyptians now worry about what the Egyptian counterpart Committee might do, especially following the Islamist parties' sweep in the recent elections.



A month ago, Around 1,000 Egyptians rallied near the ancient pyramids on Friday to protest what they said were threats by Islamic radicals to undermine tourism. The Virtue Committee has openly avowed to “preserve the morals of Egyptians in accordance with Sharia law.” Representatives have begun visiting shops, cafes and similar Egyptian locations to lecture owners on the un-Islamic nature of their businesses, often referring to places that sell body-clinging women’s clothes and alcohol as “haram” (forbidden by Islam). In an official communiqué, the Committee claimed, “millions of Egyptians consented [to the activity of the Committee] to because of their desire to see the diligent work of their members, as they establish the law of God.”

Islamists now lead the Tunisian government in ways that give rise to concern among the educated. A former terrorist, the local leader of al-Qaida, is leading Libya. Iran is exploiting the vacuum created by the lack of US determination everywhere from Afghanistan, through Pakistan to Egypt and further west on the African continent, threatening the Arab Emirates, forging ever increasing links with the Shiite government in Iraq (Iran is Shiite). US President Barack Obama claimed on December 14 that, while the situation left behind in Iraq was not perfect, "we are leaving behind a sovereign, stable, and self-reliant Iraq." One wonders how exact an estimate that is proving to be, with continued internal violence and the breakdown of relations between the Iraqi Shiite majority and Kurdish and Sunni minorities.

In Turkey, the Islamist government has also been busy. Prime Minister Erdogan’s domestic policy has involved growing repression; arrests without trial; trumped-up charges of terrorism and treason; intimidation of the media, and constitutional changes that accord him control over all state institutions including the courts. Having broken the Turkish army, which formerly served as a barrier to Islamist control of the country, Erdogan needs only to consolidate his stranglehold on the courts. Once that is achieved, he will be free to do in Turkey

whatever he pleases. It remains to be seen if, should a non-Islamic party win in future elections, Erdogan's Islamist party would vacate the seat of power.

### **Israeli Advances in Cancer Research**

Israeli medical researchers say they have developed a new technique for blasting cancer tumors from the inside, reducing the risk of reoccurrence following treatment.

Tel Aviv University Professors Keisari and Kelson are about to commence clinical trials of a pin-sized radioactive implant that beams short-range alpha radiation from within the tumor. Unlike conventional radiation therapy, the alpha particles "diffuse inside the tumor, and disintegrate," a university statement quoted Keisari as saying. "It's like a cluster bomb – instead of detonating at one point, the atoms continuously disperse while emitting alpha particles at increasing distances."

The process takes about 10 days leaving non-radioactive and non-toxic amounts of lead. "Not only are cancerous cells more reliably destroyed but, in the majority of cases, the body develops immunity against the return of the tumor," the statement said. The implant, inserted into the tumor by hypodermic needle, "decays harmlessly in the body." In pre-clinical trials on mice, one group had tumors removed surgically while another was treated with the radioactive wire. "When cells from the tumor were re-injected into the subject, 100% of those treated surgically redeveloped the tumor, compared to only 50% of those treated with the radioactive wire," it said. "Researchers have had excellent results with many types of cancer models, including pancreatic, lung, colon, breast, and brain tumors. The procedure would begin clinical trials soon.

### **A Life-Saving Spray**

Hospitals around the world are plagued by virulent, antibiotic-resistant germs that have proven impossible to eradicate. In Israel alone (population under 8 million),

some 1,500 people died of antibiotic-resistant infections. This marks a 7% rise since 2009, according to an Israeli Health Ministry report released earlier this year. The data do not show whether the infections were actually acquired in the hospital, but previous research indicates that more than two-thirds of infections are transmitted in medical centers, Yehuda Carmeli of the epidemiology unit at Tel Aviv's Ichilov Hospital said after the report came out.

Israeli researchers are laying the groundwork for a spray that will make it easier to eliminate these germs. If used on a large scale, this spray could change the nature of hospital-acquired infections "toward being more susceptible to antibiotics," e researchers say in an article in this month's issue of Applied and Environment Microbiology, a journal published by the American Society for Microbiology.

Lead researcher Dr. Udi Qimron, a microbiologist at Tel Aviv University's Sackler School of Medicine, explained that the spray works by altering the genetic makeup of antibiotic-resistant bacteria. "You can kill the bacteria by cleaning with bleach, but you can't kill them 100%, and you can't control the secretion of resistant bacteria, when a patient sneezes," said Qimron, who worked on the project with the researchers Rotem Edgar, Nir Friedman and Shahar Molshanski-Mor. "Using a substance that moves the bacteria toward susceptibility to antibiotics will prevent resistant bacteria from multiplying."

Qimron and the other researchers say their spray that contains the bacteriophages, or bacteria-infecting viruses, successfully used to render the bacteria sensitive to antibiotics.

The spray could be used wherever there are concentrations of resistant germs,

like beds, handrails, door handles. Initial research tested a harmless version of the E. coli bacteria, which became sensitive to two kinds of antibiotics, streptomycin and nalidixic acid. Researchers are now planning to experiment with disease-causing (pathogenic) strains of bacteria. This is the next step toward developing a commercially viable spray. The spray will be tested on lab mice and later in local hospitals.

### **Israeli Medical Research and Development**

Israel is highly respected medical innovator. Addressing the ICI (Innovations in Cardiovascular Interventions) conference, held recently in Tel Aviv, Professor Beyar described Israel as a “world power” in the development of medical devices, with particular reference to the cardiovascular field.

Beyar, himself a leading interventional cardiologist, claimed Israel is known around the world for its breakthroughs and imaginative medical

applications, particularly in the cardiovascular field. According to statistics, 56% of the Israeli life sciences industry is devoted to the development of medical equipment, 20% to biotechnology and 12% to drug development. Equipment innovation deals primarily with implants and single-use equipment such as stents, artificial heart valves and devices to open clogged arteries. Two hundred and twelve Israeli companies are involved in medical technology; 82 of which work solely in the development and manufacture of cardiovascular devices.

“Compared to Silicon Valley in California, Israel has about the same number of residents and companies in the life sciences,” said Beyar, “with one small difference: Silicon Valley companies have a budget 20 times larger than that of all the Israeli companies combined.”

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### **Israeli Social Crises Continues**

In Beit Shemesh, an Orthodox passer-by spat at a nine year old girl on her way to school because she unknowingly walked on a sidewalk reserved for men. Public protest was but a whimper. In Jerusalem, an Orthodox man verbally abused a young soldier because she refused to sit at the back of the bus in which the two were travelling. Jerusalem’s billboards show only males. Israel’s (Orthodox) acting Minister of Health demonstratively walked out of a public event because a woman performer took the stage to sing.

The Orthodox educational system teaches that democracy is to be replaced with Jewish Law and rabbinic rule, and a prominent leader of the settlers has called for the demise of the Israeli democratic process and its replacement with a rabbinocracy. Orthodox schools refuse to teach math, science, English and history. The young are educated to despise the values of the secular state and to view the continual study of Jewish lore a higher calling than providing for their families or defending the country. Beit Shemesh is planning a new neighborhood with 25,000 apartments. These are to be marketed to Orthodox residents at cost price. At the same time, Minister Yishai proposed changing the scale for payment of city taxes, so that large families with low incomes, living in small apartments, receive a larger discount.

At the same time, (Orthodox) Interior minister and Shas Party Chairman, Eli Yishai, objected to the establishment of wholly Orthodox cities because, he said, such cities could not survive. They would be “without revenues, without anyone to pay city taxes and without an industry. Only secular Jews are expected to find gainful employment, pay taxes, support the State and served in the Armed Forces. Meanwhile, the State supports Orthodox education, health care, welfare, ritual baths, synagogues, and other religious institutes of higher learning

while Orthodox men send their women to work, live off state stipends and have a large number of children, most of whom decline to serve in the military.

Rabbis have called upon some of their disciples to join the Israeli Police Force, “infiltrate” the Force and become dominant in its policing of the country. Whole neighborhoods are being targeted, Orthodox families moved in and consistent efforts made to impact local life and patterns of life. A prominent religious politician has said, “Within ten years, the number of Orthodox will increase to the point that we will be the majority. The we’ll teach you how to be Jews.” As of 2010, more than half of Israeli children are enrolled in the religious school system.

### **2012 US Visit**

We are now planning the **2012 annual visit to the US**. Some windows are still open, primarily in the Carolinas, Ohio, Michigan, Illinois, and Seattle. **Interested churches and conferences should contact us as soon as possible.**

This year Bracha and I expect to be driving through the East, and the mid-West, commencing at Cleveland Ohio, driving via churches in Pennsylvania to the Philadelphia PA area, Delaware, Dayton OH and Waukesha Wisconsin. They then plan to fly to Seattle and San Jose, back to Waukesha, pick up their vehicle and drive to Louisville KY, Atlanta Georgia, Charlotte SC, Lexington NC, and back to Cleveland, where I am scheduled to fly to New York and attend a symposium on Messianic Judaism. **Bracha** intends to remain in the US for a few more weeks, while Baruch returns to Israel in late October.

### **Ministry and Family News**

The coming year promises to be busy. I continue to teach the **Young Adults** and to preach at **church**. I’ve also accepted responsibility for a bi-weekly Thursday **Bible study** at church, where we shall be studying the book of Judges. Many hours are devoted almost daily to research and the writing of **my thesis** and the **commentary on Romans**. One day a week is devoted to **the Modern Hebrew Bible**. Notice of my new book in English follows below.

**Eran, Avital and children** plan to visit Israel for six weeks this summer on occasion of Noam’s twelfth birthday (coming of age in Jewish tradition). **Keith** and **Shlomit** are gearing up for the birth of their second child in April. **Marcus and Tamar** are happy in Seattle.

This month, **Bracha and I** will celebrate 43 years of marriage, for which we give God thanks. These have been good years, full of the kindness of the Lord and of surprises in the course of our efforts to serve the Lord. We were granted far more than we would have ever expected, certainly more than we dared request.

**Rose** completes her military service on February 7<sup>th</sup> and is looking at job opportunities as well as continued schooling. She hopes to be able to travel before undertaking schooling.

We are very pleased to be able to report that, for the first time, our **target income**, barring office help, has been achieved. Any increase in income will now be put toward hiring part-time office help in research, accounting and administrative work, thus relieving my burden somewhat and increasing my output. A sincere thanks is due to the Lord, and to all of you who stand with us so generously. I pray for grace to be a good steward of your trust.

### **Baruch’s New Book on Malachi**

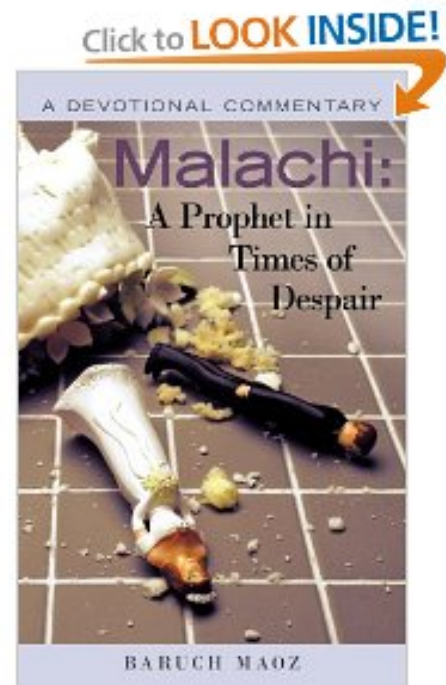
Crossbooks has just published my new devotional commentary: **Malachi: A Prophet in Times of Despair**. The image below is taken from Amazon’s site (so “click to look inside” will not work...). The book shows connections between the plight of the people returning from Babylon and challenges facing Christians today, indicating the biblical hope and call to selfless obedience. The circumstances of the time and the book’s characteristics are described in non-technical

language, and the text is studied, passage-by-passage, with detailed practical application. There is also an extended discussion of marriage and divorce, seeking to lay down biblical standards.

This book was written for Christians facing frustration, disappointment, marital stress, or spiritual malaise, for those interested in Jewish-Christian insights in an often overlooked prophetic book, as well as individuals seeking aid in their devotional life, group Bible studies and Pastors seeking inspiration for preaching.

Crossbooks has determined a price of \$13.99 for the book and \$3.99 for the electronic version. Amazon is selling it for \$11.89, and the electronic version for \$3.99. Orders may also be placed with Barnes & Noble.

Please help us by ordering the book from your local Christian bookshop or church bookstall and by recommending the book to others (Ingram is the primary distributor). Above all, please pray that God will use this book for his glory and the edification of believers.



**Jonah: A Prophet on the Run**, the first of the Devotional Commentary series, is being prepared for republication by Shepherd Press, and P&R is preparing my **Judaism is Not Jewish** for publication in July. The new title will be **Come Let Us Reason Together**. I will inform you once these books are available. You can assist distribution by asking for these books at your Christian bookstore and church bookstall, and by giving or recommending them to friends.

**Some have inquired when MaozNews will resume the biographical series. If events in Israel or the Middle East will leave us enough space, the next issue of MaozNews will carry another installment. I confess I am gratified, surprised and thankful to learn that some have found my story not only interesting, but helpful.**

TAX-deductible **support for our ministry** should be written to the order of **Berean Baptist church, P.O. Box 1233, Grand Blanc, Michigan 48480-3233**. Direct bank transfers may be made to **Franklin Bank, 24725 West Twelve Mile Road, Southfield, MI 48034 USA, Routing Number 241271957 Berean Baptist Special Account No. 567495976**.

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