

Jennifer Guetta



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A SECRET TREASURE IN JERUSALEM

Notes from my first visit to the City of David in Jerusalem after I found Messiah.

Hidden away a few meters above the Gihon Spring in Jerusalem is perhaps the greatest discovery ever found in Israel. Strangely, not many people know about it. It is older and more spectacular than anything I have seen in Jerusalem. And very crucial for both the Old and New Testament.



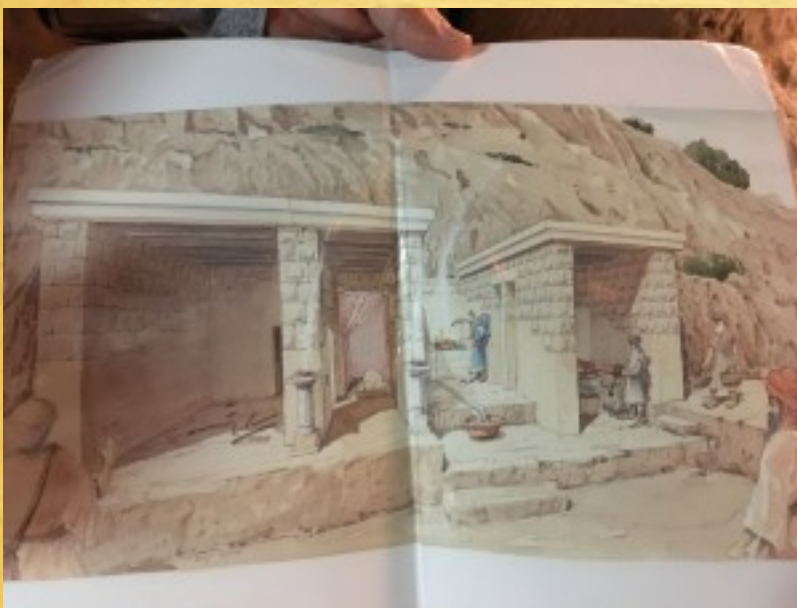
“Whatever is covered up will be uncovered, and every secret will be made known.” (Luke 12:2 GNT)

A few years ago archaeologist Eli Shukron uncovered the remains of an ancient sacred site just above the spring in the City of David dating from the time of Melchizedek up to the time of the kingdom of Judah (MB-Iron Age). The area includes four small rooms aligned next to each other. To the far right is a small room with an olive press in front of it, for making oil. Immediately to its right is another room with at the back a small square altar or “table” with along the side a long drainage channel, possible used to drain off blood. On the other end of the building is another room with strange V- shaped markings in the floor which the excavator interprets as used for placing a wooden installation to hold animals that were being prepared for sacrifice. In the walls are even cut holes to tie the cords to hold the animals. But the most incredible find is in the back of the middle room where one upright stone stands straight amidst a foundation of smaller stones: A Biblical “Stele”.





According to the excavator the site was definitely used for religious purposes, probably for sacrifice and anointing with oil. Its location above the only spring of Jerusalem and the massive spring tower also seem to be of central importance. Strangely it dates from the Middle Bronze Age into the Iron age and was still in use during Solomon's Temple. Nothing was found in the area to indicate it was used to serve foreign gods (no figurines, drawings, etc).



Reconstruction drawing of the sacred place by the spring in Jerusalem

This was a real sacred place above the spring used during the Bible. The question one immediately asks is: What was such a sacrificial place doing in Jerusalem south of the Temple Mount? Wasn't all sacrifice only done in the Temple? And what was it doing there so early with continued use into the Israelite period? It makes one wonder. And we don't have all the answers. What we do know, is that this place was used in Biblical times to sacrifice and probably anoint people and that it was used for ONE God.



Visiting this place was the highlight of my trip to Israel. A dream fulfilled. Long ago I heard that Eli Shukron had made a major discovery. I had been to the City of David many times before but did not have the chance in the last few years to see what he found. I did however, travel there in my imagination when I was writing three of my children's books

(all in Dutch). In my first book The Treasure of Zion, the children discover a flat stone in a room above the spring (I did not know about the discovery then!). In my second book, The Secret of the Golden star, the children witness the anointing of King Solomon by the spring. In the third book, The Mystery of the Lion Throne, the children go in search of the Ark of the Covenant and the climax takes place in an underground temple near the spring. I had never been there when I wrote these books but imagined it and used it as the basis for a great adventure. It is perhaps strange but shortly after I wrote the Lion Throne many of the spiritual things which happened to me took place. As if I had uncovered a secret which someone didn't want exposed. In my books the children are looking for the secret hiding place of the Ark of the Covenant that Solomon had built under the Temple. The Ark represented the very throne of God and His presence dwelled above it. But instead of finding the physical Ark my search for the truth ultimately led me to the greatest treasure of all: The real lions throne, the throne of the Messiah Yeshua (Jesus) and He showed me that His presence now lives in people (and no longer above an ark). After I experienced the spiritual world and was confronted with witchcraft, I had to admit that the invisible realm was very real and in it there are two kingdoms, light and dark. I also learned that Jesus is truly alive and had all authority over the darkness and there was a reason that darkness listened to His name. He rescued me from kabbala and witchcraft and brought me into His kingdom of light. It is a long story, but in the end God cornered the archaeologist.



After I gave my life to Jesus I also gave up the dream of ever going to the place that had inspired me for so long. But the Lord knows our dreams and hearts desires. He remembered, and blessed me by letting me go there with my mom and two sisters on Good Friday, the day we remember the greatest sacrifice ever made. The day that all other animal sacrifices were no longer necessary. The day His blood flowed for us and paid the price to set us completely free.



The Lord had blessed me even more by letting Eli Shukron guide us through his discovery. It was early Friday morning 2016. The sun was shining and we were filled with anticipation as we followed Eli through the streets of the Old City. Along the way we talked about the real location of the Via Dolorosa, the road Jesus walked with the cross. Archaeologically it is a contested route and he showed us some of the places where archaeologists think it took place. Then we turned south towards the City of David. Tears filled my eyes when we descended along the steep hill. I felt like I was visiting there for the first time, but I wasn't. I was not the same person I was before. It felt like everything was different. But it wasn't. It was me that had changed, and these old stones had stayed the same. We followed Eli into a well secured area, behind a fence and he took out a

key. Then we entered into a dark cave, with wooden beams holding up the ceiling.



Built into the bedrock, along the side of the hill, we saw four small rooms. I was amazed how well the walls were preserved. It's funny how things often look different than we imagined. But this was more beautiful than I could have dreamed of. Then Eli took out another set of keys and opened a steel box at the back of one of the rooms. The doors swung open. Behind it was an upright stone set in smaller stones. I gasped in awe.

A stone of covenant

You might think... It's just a stone! What is so special about a stone? In the Bible there are many stories about stones marking a covenant between God and the people.



For example the story of Jacob at Bethel:

“Early the next morning Jacob took the stone he had placed under his head and set it up as a pillar and poured oil on top of it.” (Genesis 28:18).

Another example is found in Genesis 35:44-46.

“So now come, let us make a covenant, you and I, and let it be a witness between you and me.” Then Jacob took a stone and set it up as a pillar. Jacob said to his kinsmen, “Gather stones.” So they took stones and made a heap, and they ate there by the heap. ...”

And here is another:

“So Joshua made a covenant with the people that day, and made for them a statute and an ordinance in Shechem. And Joshua wrote these words in the book of the law of God; and he took a large stone and set it up there under the oak that was by the sanctuary of the LORD. Joshua said to all the people, “Behold, this stone shall be for a witness against us, for it has heard all the words of the LORD which He spoke to us; thus it shall be for a witness against you, so that you do not deny your God” (Josh. 24:26)

Upright stones were symbols of a covenant between God and man. They are also called “stele” and are well known in Israel. Archaeologists have found them throughout the country, usually in combination with other stones. But never in Jerusalem. And never only ONE. This stone represented a relationship between ONE God and the people. The stone was also set up to make a vow, a reminder of a covenant. In the Bible when such a covenant was made there was often a meal right after with wine and bread, partaking of the feast upon the sacrifice.

Even King Josiah when he called the people to renew their vow to the Lord made them stand by a pillar in Jerusalem and renewed there their covenant with the Lord.

“And the king stood by a pillar, and made a covenant before the LORD, to walk after the LORD, and to keep his commandments and his testimonies and his statutes with all their heart and all their soul, to perform the words of this covenant that were written in this book. And all the people stood to the covenant” 2 kings 23:3

Now, I was staring at a real upright stone in Jerusalem placed purposely above the spring, next to a sacrifice area, and an olive press for anointing oil. I was in awe of being in such a place and was reminded that this was also Good Friday and it was almost 12:00 , the hour that the Romans erected the cross that Jesus hung on.

I gazed at the small altar of sacrifice with the channel for blood next to it. In today's society it sounds awful and one wonders why sacrifices were necessary. It is strange concept. That blood has to flow. However, in the Bible God is very clear about it. “For the life of a creature is in the blood, and I have given it to you to make atonement for yourselves on the altar; it is the blood that makes atonement for one's life.” (Leviticus 17:11). Blood had to flow to pay for the atonement of sin. In Genesis God said very clearly: “but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.” (Genesis 2:17). When man sinned, they were excommunicated from God and the punishment for sin was death. In the Old Testament animals died in our place. A lamb was slaughtered to atone for our sins. One died for the other.



I looked at the small square altar and wondered how many poor animals were sacrificed here for us. They did nothing wrong. They were perfect without blemish. Some archaeologists and rabbi's think the idea of atonement is purely pagan, because it is also found in many other religions, including ancient Assyria. But it is not pagan! It is very biblical, Jewish, and it is just how the spiritual world works. Therefore it can be seen in religions all over the world. Because in the spirit world there is a price to be paid. When Jesus died on the cross He paid the price once and for all and thankfully places like this were no longer necessary to sacrifice animals. It is through this concept that we can understand what John said when he said to Jesus: *“Behold the lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world” (John 1:29).*

IN THE ORDER OF MELCHIZEDEK

Already several weeks ago the Lord had put it in my heart to bring bread and wine to the underground sacred area above the spring and to renew my covenant here with him and remember what He had done for us on this day. We were four women coming back to a place that probably had a very important meaning for the people in the Bible. It was the first time in 2500 years that this place was used again. We came and dedicated this sacrificial place of Jerusalem to the Messiah, the lamb of God, who gave himself as the greatest sacrifice of all. What I didn't know was that Melchizedek, the high priest of Jerusalem had also brought forth bread and wine when he met Abraham. And the Messiah Yeshua/Jesus was priest in the order of Melchizedek.

“YOU ARE A PRIEST FOREVER ACCORDING TO THE ORDER OF MELCHIZEDEK.”
Hebrews 5:6

“Then Melchizedek king of Salem brought out bread and wine. He was priest of God Most High, and he blessed Abram”, Genesis 14:18-19

The Bible says Melchizedek was the priest of Salem (Jerusalem) long before the Temple existed. And he was priest of the Most High. The story of Melchizedek shows that long before David conquered Jerusalem this was a place dedicated to the MOST HIGH. Here we were, standing by a stone that had been purposely placed here to remember a covenant made between God and people, most likely dating from the time of

Melchizedek (The Middle Bronze age). It was still in use during the time of David and Solomon and probably all the kings of Judah. The Bible describes that Melchizedek, the original high priest of Jerusalem brought forth bread and wine to Abraham, probably making a covenant with him and transferring his power to Abraham.



V-shaped groves probably used for a wooden installation to hold the animals for sacrifice

On this day 2000 years ago, the Messiah, the priest in the order of Melchizedek, gave an ultimate sacrifice: His life. By doing so he paid with his own blood the sins of the world, so that man could be restored and have a relationship with God again. He also destroyed the powers of the darkness completely, bringing light and hope back into the world. A few hours after His death, the Jews celebrated Passover, a great meal of covenant with four cups of wine. The night before, during the last supper, Jesus had shown his disciples how to celebrate Passover from now in commemoration of him. He did not drink the fourth cup and said He would drink it when his kingdom would come. Three days after his death Jesus rose from the dead and His kingdom is now in us. Therefore he longs to drink this cup with us.

As I opened the bottle of wine and filled a cup, I remembered how Jesus had literally set me free from the bondage of witchcraft. How he liberated us and defeated the darkness. I remembered how exactly one year earlier we had celebrated His victory with 400 people during the biggest Passover Holland had ever seen. In that year (2015) Good Friday and Passover were on the same day, as they were many years ago, before time had distorted our conceptions. It was a great meal of covenant and also a call back to God.



Now we were here on this location breaking bread and drinking wine in the place where an original covenant had been made between God and the people, repeating our own vow. We said the blessing over the wine and repeated the Lords words: "Do this in remembrance of me." And we passed the cup around as if he himself invited us to His table in his kingdom. The wine is the symbol of the blood which flowed at Calvary. The blood of the lamb of Passover that was placed on the doors of the houses of the Israelites, as the darkness passed them by. The blood on the door of our hearts which forever makes sure that darkness passes us by. Then we broke the bread and said again: "Do this in remembrance of Him." And shared it one with another. Just as Melchizedek had done to Abraham, Jesus hands us His cup and was also transferring His power to us, and gave us all authority over the darkness.

The stone of remembrance is still locked away in Jerusalem in the secret hiding place. It has been rededicated to the high priest in the order of Melchizedek, Yeshua, the Messiah of Israel. Hopefully, it's message of covenant and redemption will now go back into the world and to Jerusalem. If you are visiting Israel and would like to see it you can contact Eli Shukron: www.elishukron.com
For more information about our trip, archaeology and the Bible, and its relationship to



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