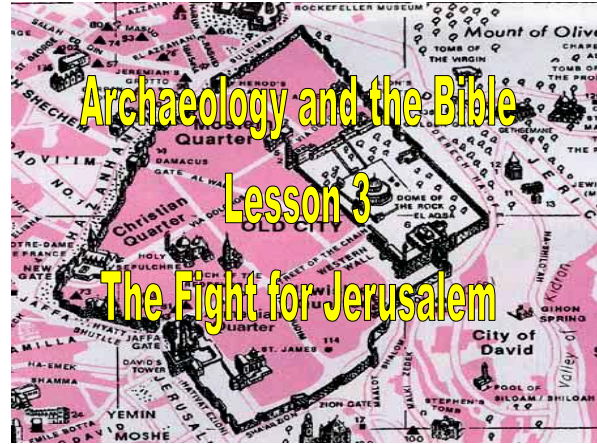


Archaeology and the Bible

Course 3 – The Fight for Jerusalem

Slide 1 – Intro Slide

When Solomon died, the ten northern tribes broke away from the federation, setting up their own kingdom in the north. Solomon's son Rehoboam was left with sovereignty over only two tribes. But he still had Jerusalem.



In 922BC the Egyptian pharaoh Sheshonk the First led a raid into Judah, and sacked the city, stealing the treasure of the Temple. Sheshonk was followed in the next century by the Philistines and Arabs, and then in 786 B.C. Joash of Israel invaded Judah and tore down part of the wall surrounding Jerusalem.

Question – What does that tell you about God's protection of His people?

Israel and Judah both had good kings and really bad kings. When the kings and the people ignored their God, He would allow them to have exactly what they wanted, Him to stay out of their business. That really wasn't a great idea.

One of the most important resources throughout history was water. Cut off a city's water supply and the time starts ticking down. Without water, we are dead.

Read 1 Kings 1:33-34 – The Gihon was prominent in the days of King David, 1000 BC.

Slide 2 – This is a modern day picture of what you would see if you went to the Gihon. You can go there as a tourist today.





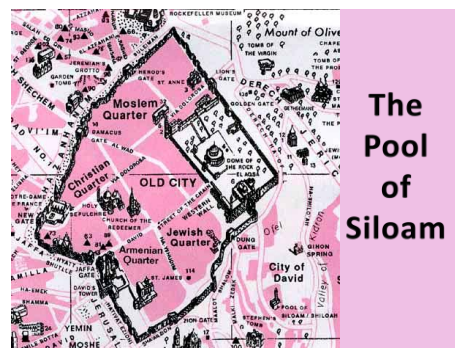
Slide 3 – Here you can see the steps leading down to the water and another picture of someone nearing the bottom near the spring.

Slide 4 - Now we arrive at the bottom of the steep stairway and approach the spring. Notice the spring flowing under the final steps. It's amazing to think that this water has been flowing here for thousands of years. The spring gushes intermittently from a natural cave once or twice a day at the end of the dry season and 4 to 5 times a day after the rainy season.



Slide 5

After Hezekiah became king of Judah, he built new fortifications and an underground tunnel (see illustration at left), which brought water from the Gihon Spring to the Pool of Siloam inside the city. This was extraordinary engineering achievement was done with what are primitive tools by modern standards.

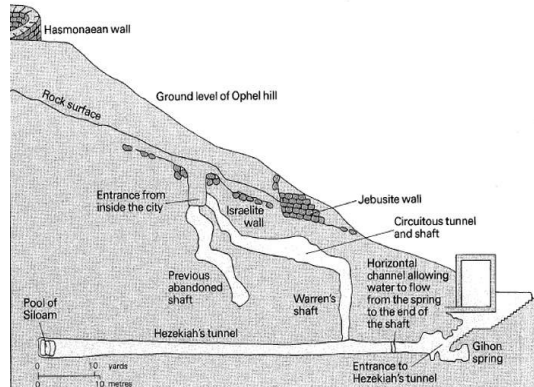


Read 2 Chronicles 32:1-5, 30-33

So to protect God's city and God's people, Hezekiah had to keep water away from Sennacherib, King of Assyria. That meant he also had to bring water permanently into the city.

Read 2 Kings 20:20 – Here is a Biblical reference to the actual tunnel being built by King Hezekiah and given as one of his great achievements. You could argue about the reality of that except for the fact that it is still there today as we will later see.

Slide 6



When the tunnel was complete you can see that it flowed from the Gihon Spring all the way through solid rock to the Pool of Siloam.

The tunnel running from the Gihon Spring to the Pool of Siloam was dug by 2 sets of workers. One set began at the Gihon Spring and the other at the Pool of Siloam. The completed tunnel was 1750' long winding through rock, veins of limestone and fissures within the rock.

In December of 1867 Captain Charles Warren explored the entire tunnel, crawling through sections. In 1909 Captain Montague Parker began to completely excavate the tunnel. He cleaned it out and restored it to its original height and width. The average height was just under 6' and total fall of elevation from the spring to the Pool of Siloam was 7'2". The width varies from 23" to 26".

Slide 7



In 1880 an inscription was discovered. It had been cut into the tunnel wall, and describes the meeting of the two groups of stone-cutters who were digging from opposite ends of the tunnel: 'And this was the way in which it was cut through: While [...] (were) still [...] axe(s), each man toward his fellow, and while there were still three cubits to be cut through, [there was heard] the voice of a man calling to his fellows, for there was an overlap in the rock on the right [and on the left]. And when the tunnel was driven through, the quarrymen hewed (the rock), each man toward his fellow, axe against axe; and the water flowed from the spring toward the reservoir for 1200 cubits.'

When the 2 work crews were 98' apart they suddenly heard each other's axes pounding the rock. They began to work toward the sound of each other. 944' from the Siloam Pool end they broke through. The floor of the southern part was only 1' higher than the northern part of the tunnel. The workers on the Siloam end needed air. They cut an air shaft 460' from the Pool to bring in air.



Slide 8

The photo shows where the inscription was cut from the side of the tunnel near the exit.

Slide 9

In this photo we see the actual inscription in its case in the Istanbul Archaeological Museum. A cast was made of the writing. Looters stole the original off the wall of the tunnel. Fortunately, it was found in 6 or 7 pieces in the possession of a Greek citizen in Jerusalem who claimed he purchased it from an unknown Arab. The Turkish Government acquired them and put them in their museum.



Where did we get this information? In June of 1880 a student of Conrad Schick was playing in the tunnel with some friends. About 20' inside the Siloam end of the tunnel his foot slipped and he fell into the water. As he stood up he noticed an inscription carved on a smooth portion of the tunnel wall about 3' above the floor. It was written in classical Hebrew. It was dated to around 700 B.C., the time of King Hezekiah.



Slide 10

2 photos inside the tunnel. A man is walking in the photo on the left. Notice the height.

Slide 11 & 12 – More photos inside the tunnel



Slide 13 – Exiting the Tunnel of Hezekiah into the Pool of Siloam



Slide 14 - The Taylor Prism dated to 691 BC. Recorded on it are the first 8 campaigns of King Sennacherib (704-681 BC). This six-sided baked clay document (or prism) was discovered at the Assyrian capital Nineveh, in an area known today as Nebi Yunus. It was acquired by Colonel R. Taylor, British Consul General at Baghdad, in 1830, after whom it is named. The British Museum purchased it from Taylor's widow in 1855. As one of the first major Assyrian documents found, this document played an important part in the decipherment of the cuneiform script.

The prism is intended to preserve King Sennacherib's achievements for posterity and the gods. The record of his account of his third campaign (701 BC) is particularly interesting to scholars. It involved the destruction of forty-six cities of the state of Judah and the deportation of 200,150 people. It says the 46 cities of Hezekiah fell “by the assaults of battering-rams and the blows of engines, the attack of foot-soldiers, sappers, breaches, axes. Of King Hezekiah, it says, “Himself, like a bird in a cage in the midst of Jerusalem, his royal city I shut up.” Although King Hezekiah did send tribute to Sennacherib, the Assyrian King was never able to take Jerusalem.

Read Isaiah 36:1-3; 37:36-38



Slide 15 - This sculptured wall excavated at ancient Nineveh is in the British Museum. It illustrates the fall of Lachish by the army of King Sennacherib and the inhabitants being driven into captivity. Before Sennacherib was routed at Jerusalem by the Angel of the Lord, he had captured 36 cities.



Slide 16

"Now it came to pass in the fourteenth year of King Hezekiah that Sennacherib king of Assyria came up against all the fortified cities of Judah and took them." - Isaiah 36:1-2

This alabaster wall panel was part of a series of panels that decorated the walls of the mighty king Sennacherib of Assyria, who's capital was Nineveh. It shows the Assyrian soldiers brutally abusing the captives of the conquered city of Lachish in 701 BC. The prisoners are being skinned alive. Lachish was a strongly fortified city located about 25 miles SE of Jerusalem. The amazing discovery of this panel is important in the study of Biblical Archaeology because it reveals the horrifying cruelty of the Assyrians and the brutal treatment of their prisoners. The Assyrians were raised up by God to punish Israel for their rebellion against Him. Never in history were a people so brutal. Their awesome warfare tactics are still studied today.

Material - Alabaster Panel - Neo Assyrian - Date: 700 BC - Nineveh, northern Iraq
Excavated by: Henry Layard 1845-1849 - Location: British Museum, London
www.bible-history.com



Slide 17

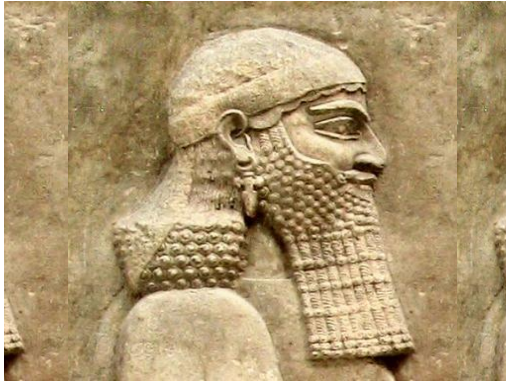
A siege machine used by Sennacherib against the walls of Lachish.

The Assyrians developed specialized storm troops who were able to take advantage of any breaches in the wall. Trained sappers built zigzag trenches allowing their own soldiers to get closer to the walls of the besieged city, without being hit by missiles coming from the city. Their engineers developed new siege weapons such as covered battering rams and mining tools.

The attackers would seal off the city under attack by encircling it with their army. The soldiers would settle down to work, but it was a busy time for the engineers, who would begin building siege works. An earthen wall might be built to encircle the city; it would have guard towers at regular intervals, to keep watch for breakouts. Siege ramps made of earth and wood would be built (see above right) as soon as the battering rams were ready for use. Unless relief came from outside, the inhabitants of the city were trapped. All they could look forward to was starvation, surrender, slavery or death - and probably a horrible death at that.

Read Jeremiah 19:7-9; Isaiah 5:25

Jeremiah describes some of the terrible things that happened during a siege: 'I will make them eat the flesh of their sons and their daughters, and everyone shall eat the flesh of his neighbor in the siege (19:9). And Isaiah comments that 'their corpses were as refuse in the midst of the streets' (5:25). God's people had intermarried with pagan nations and began to worship false gods, the Baals who worshiped with sacrifice, prostitution in the name of worshiping god, and even infant sacrifice. God will withdraw his protection and allow the evil nations to wake them up. It will be horrible. Still, they did not listen to messenger after messenger that God had sent. Now it was time to allow Assyria to do what Assyria did best.



Slide 18

The Later Campaigns of Sennacherib

In the last century scholars became aware that there were two invasions of Palestine by Sennacherib and that it is possible to discern in the scriptural record an early and a late campaign against Hezekiah. The first campaign to Palestine took place about 701 BC. The second campaign is dated by modern historians to 687BC or 686.

The annals of Sennacherib record only eight campaigns. The second march into Palestine, which ended disastrously and which probably was his last military undertaking, was not recorded by the Assyrian king, who had no intention of preserving for posterity the story of his reverses.

The last two campaigns memorialized by Sennacherib on the eight-faced Taylor Prism were against Elam. Elam, occupying roughly the territory of modern Iran, was already the goal of earlier Assyrian kings, Sargon II, father of Sennacherib among them. During the seventh campaign Sennacherib succeeded to invade only a marginal part of the country; he recorded reducing to ashes thirty-four strong cities together with their "countless" surrounding towns. "I besieged, I conquered, I despoiled, I destroyed, I devastated, I burned with fire; with the smoke of their conflagration I covered the wide heavens like a hurricane."

But "extreme cold" and heavy storms with "rain upon rain and snow" set in. "I was afraid of the swollen mountain streams; the front of my yoke I turned and took the road to Nineveh."

But before long Sennacherib returned to Elam to continue the orgy of destruction. To the king and people of Elam went an alarm from the people of Babylon, who still warred for

independence, asking for aid. Without delay Sennacherib set out on his eighth campaign: “My great battle chariot . . . I hurriedly mounted.” Defeating the Elamites in battle,

I cut their throats like lambs . . . My prancing steeds, harnessed for my riding, plunged into the streams of their blood. . . . The wheels of my war chariot . . . were bespattered with blood and filth. . . . Their testicles I cut off and tore out their privates . . . their hands I cut off . . .

Next Sennacherib turned towards Elam’s allies, the Babylonians, and brought them to a panicky flight: “They held back their urine, but let their dung go into their chariots” and in hot pursuit “150,000 of their warriors I cut down with the sword.”

After this feast of carnage Sennacherib again, as before the campaign against Elam, seized “the mighty bow which Assur had given me . . . in my hands; the javelin I grasped” and faced to road to Jerusalem.”

Resources for further Study:

www.bib-arch.org/ - The Biblical Archaeology Review Magazine Site

www.biblearchaeology.org

<http://ancienthistory.about.com>

<http://www.bible-archaeology.info/>

www.bible-history.com