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Tsiyon News

Tsiyon Messianic Radio Newsletter - Vol 7.27 - 04/16/6012 TAM - 07/06/12 AD

Yochanan The Forerunner



*Make ready the way of the Lord.
Make his paths straight.*

Luke 3:4, Isaiah 40:3

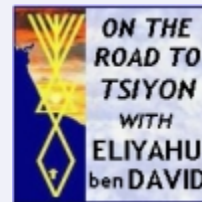
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*"Out of Tsiyon,
the perfection of beauty,
God shines forth" Psalm 50:2*

Tsiyon News



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July EBD Crossword Contest

Why not enter the new crossword puzzle contest for July, posted on my Eliyahu ben David website blog at elijahubendavid.com. Give it a try. You might win like Jim did last month. Congratulations to mail-in contestant, Jim. You won a "Judgment Day" book!

We Need Audio Recording Volunteers!

Would you like your voice to be heard on *Tsiyon Radio*? We are working on an audio project right now and would like to include voices of our listeners. Worried that your accent might not be accepted? No worries! We would like to include the real voices of our listeners from everywhere! You don't need a studio either. We can record you over Skype! If you are interested, let me know.

Messianic Music Artists

We like to include music from various independent Messianic artists. Let us know if you would like your music included here at *Tsiyon Radio*.

Cave linked to John the Baptist

Karin Laub/AP - 8/16/2004

KIBBUTZ TZUBA, Israel — Archaeologists think they've found a cave where John the Baptist baptized many of his followers — basing their theory on thousands of shards from ritual jugs, a stone used for foot cleansing and wall carvings that tell the story of the biblical preacher.

Only a few artifacts linked to New Testament figures have ever been found in the Holy Land,

and the cave is potentially a major discovery in biblical archaeology.

“John the Baptist, who was just a figure from the Gospels, now comes to life,” British archaeologist Shimon Gibson said during an exclusive tour of the cave given to The Associated Press.

But some scholars said Gibson’s finds aren’t enough to support his theory, and one colleague said that short of an inscription with John’s name in the cave, there could never be conclusive proof of his presence there.

Matching tradition with the evidence

John, a distant relative of Jesus — their mothers were kin, according to the Bible — was a fiery preacher with a message of repentance and a considerable following.

Tradition says he was born in the village of Ein Kerem, which today is part of modern Jerusalem. Just 2.5 miles (4 kilometers) away, on the land of Kibbutz Tzuba, a communal farm, the cave lies hidden in a limestone hill — 24 yards (meters) long, 4 yards deep and 4 yards wide.

It was carved by the Israelites in the Iron Age, sometime between 800 B.C. and 500 B.C, the scientists said. It apparently was used from the start as a ritual immersion pool, preceding the Jewish tradition of the ritual bath.

Over the centuries, the cave filled with mud and sediment, leaving only a tiny opening that was hidden by trees and bushes. Yet in recent years, it had occasional visitors — Reuven Kalifon, an immigrant from Cleveland who teaches Hebrew at the kibbutz, took his students spelunking.

They would crawl through the narrow slit at the mouth of the cave, all the way to the back wall, though they saw nothing but dirt and walls. In December 1999, Kalifon asked Gibson, a friend, to take a closer look.

Five years of excavation

Gibson, who has excavated in the Holy Land for more than 30 years, moved a few boulders near the walls and laid bare a crude carving of a head. Excited, he organized a full-fledged excavation.

Over the next five years, Gibson and his team, including volunteers from the University of North Carolina at Charlotte, cleared out layers of soil, picking up about 250,000 shards from small jugs apparently used in purification rituals.

Israeli archaeological site manager Rafi Lewis places his foot on a stone that the excavation team believes was used for ceremonial foot washing, during a tour of the Kibbutz Tzuba site on Monday.

The explorers uncovered 28 steps leading to the bottom of the cave. On the right, a niche is carved into the wall — typical of those used in Jewish ritual baths for discarding the clothes before immersion. Near the end of the stairs, the team found an oval stone with a foot-shaped indentation — about a shoe size 11. Just above, a soapdish-like niche apparently held ritual oil that would flow through a small channel onto the believer’s right foot.

On the water-covered floor of the cave, stones and boulders were moved aside by the worshippers, and a middle path was filled with gravel, said Egon Lass, an archaeological consultant at Wheaton College, near Chicago, who also worked on the dig.

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- [Go! #308](#)
- [Compass from the Ashes #307](#)
- [Compass in the Ashes #306](#)

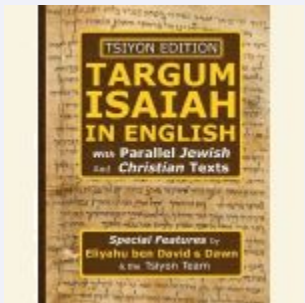
Contest!



Our Theme CD



NEW!



Be Prepared



Pass It On

British archaeologist Shimon Gibson, left, gestures with a wave of his hand, and site manager Rafi Lewis places his foot in a ceremonial stone as they stand in a large cistern, in the cave where the excavation team believes John the Baptist anointed many of his disciples.

Images tell Baptist's story

Crude images were carved on the walls, near the ceiling, and Gibson said they tell the story of John's life.

One is the figure of the man Gibson spotted on his first visit to the cave. The man appears to have an unruly head of hair and wears a tunic with dots, apparently meant to suggest an animal



hide. He grasps a staff and holds up his other hand in a gesture of proclamation.

James Tabor, a Bible scholar from the University of North Carolina, said there is little doubt this is John himself. The Gospels say that John was a member of the Nazirites, a sect whose followers didn't cut their hair, and that he adopted the dress of the ancient prophets, including a garment woven of camel's hair.

On the opposite wall is a carving of a face that could be meant to symbolize John's severed head. The preacher had his head cut off by Herod Antipas after he dared take the ruler to task over an illicit affair.

But the images are from the Byzantine era, apparently carved by monks who associated the site with John, following local folklore, Gibson and Tabor said.

"Unfortunately, we didn't find any inscriptions" that would conclusively link the cave to John, Tabor said.

Filling in the gaps

Still, Gibson, who heads the Jerusalem Archaeological Field Unit, a private research group, argues that the finds and the proximity of John's hometown are strong evidence the cave was used by the preacher.

"All these elements are coming together and fill in the picture of the life and times of John the Baptist," said Gibson, who has written a book about the dig, "The Cave of John the Baptist," to be published this week.

Stephen Pfann, a Bible scholar and president of the University of the Holy Land in Jerusalem, said Gibson has provided a plausible explanation for the unusual finds, but further study is needed. "It is inviting more scholars to come in and give alternative explanations, if they can," he said.

Gibson said he has left about a third of the cave untouched for other archaeologists to explore.

Tabor said no one could ever say for certain that John the Baptist used the cave. However, he said, the cave could help bring to life an important part of the New Testament.

"We actually have a geographical location near Ein Kerem now, at which water purification rites were conducted that go back to the first century and connects them to the traditions of John the Baptist," he said.

From Eliyahu

Look at the cave in the picture above. It has all the characteristics of an ancient Jewish mikvah bath - but in a cave. It is located where a site used by Yochanan/John would be expected - and it even has pictures of him on the walls! My question would be: If not the Immerser's mikvah cave, than what is the second best explanation for a mikvah *in a cave in the Judean wilderness?*! What a

great reminder this discovery is of the amazing work Yochanan/John did, in leading many to repentance in preparation for the Messiah. He did a great work as Forerunner of Messiah, and we have a lot more about that in our latest program.

Shalom,

Eliyahu ben David
www.tsiyon.org

Good News Nugget - GREETINGS TRIBESMEN!!! This is "Wild Man" Dave from the Tsiyon Promo and Media Dept with exciting news for ALL of our partners and friends of *Tsiyon*. Eliyahu has given me this column in the weekly *Tsiyon News* to help equip you to share the *Tsiyon* message. Here you will find a **Good News Nugget** posted each week for you to put to work in Messiah's service.

The latest **Good News Nugget** follows:

GREETINGS TRIBESMEN!! I want to ask you warriors of Yahweh some questions. Do you love the Tsiyon message? Do you get anxiety attacks waiting for the next Tsiyon program to come out? Do you have a yearning and burning to serve Yahweh in a real practical way that can change the lives of people? Are you a soldier of Yahweh? Are you hungry for the souls of the Remnant of Israel? Then contact me ASAP and get in the trenches where the real action is. This is where the rubber meets the road. Put on your gear and GET INVOLVED TODAY!! CALL ME OR EMAIL ME!! "WILD MAN CRIGGER"!!! (888)230-5945

WE HAVE A JOB FOR YOU!! PRAISE YAHWEH AND GET INVOLVED!!

Email me at help@tsiyon.org, so that we can work together in reaching the scattered remnant of Israel and/or for FREE Tsiyon cards. Shalom, "Wild Man" Dave

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