

Ancient Seals Unearthed in Jerusalem Dig

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Note from Pastor Kevin Lea: Another historical proof that the Jews lived in Jerusalem for hundreds of years, and thousands of years ago, and have a legal/historical claim to the city and land.

A routine archeological excavation ahead of private construction in an Arab neighborhood on the outskirts of Jerusalem has uncovered a series of seal impressions from the reign of the biblical King Hezekiah 2,700 years ago, the Israel Antiquities Authority announced Monday.



One of the artifacts found at the excavation site.

Photo: Courtesy

The archeological treasure trove was discovered in Umm Tuba, on the southeastern edge of the city, during a salvage excavation carried out in January ahead of planned construction at the site.

The seal impressions found include those of two high-ranking officials named Ahimelech ben Amadyahu and Yehohail ben Shazar, who served in the Judean kingdom's government.

Another Hebrew inscription, dating 600 years later than the seal impressions, was discovered on a jar fragment from the Hasmonean period in the second century BCE.

The site also housed a large building during the First and Second Temple periods unearthed during the dig.

The remains of the building included several rooms arranged around a courtyard. Pottery that was recovered from the ruins of the building were used to date it to First Temple period.

The building was destroyed, along with Jerusalem and all of Judah during the Babylonian conquest of Jerusalem.

Jews reoccupied the site 600 years later during the Hasmonean period, and the rebuilt structure stood for another 200 years until the destruction of the Second Temple by the Romans in 70 CE.

During the Byzantine period, the place was reinhabited as part of the extensive settlement of monasteries and farmsteads in the region between Jerusalem and Bethlehem.

Three years ago, the impressive remains of a monastery were also uncovered in the area.

"I had expected to uncover [much] later finds dating back to the Byzantine era based on a nearby excavation previously carried out at in the area, and we were surprised to uncover an array of finds all the way back to the Iron Age," said Zubair Adawi, who directed the excavation on behalf of the state-run archeological authority.

By law, all new construction must be preceded by an archeological excavation.

With the mandatory dig now completed and the finds removed, the private construction will be allowed to commence, Adawi said.