

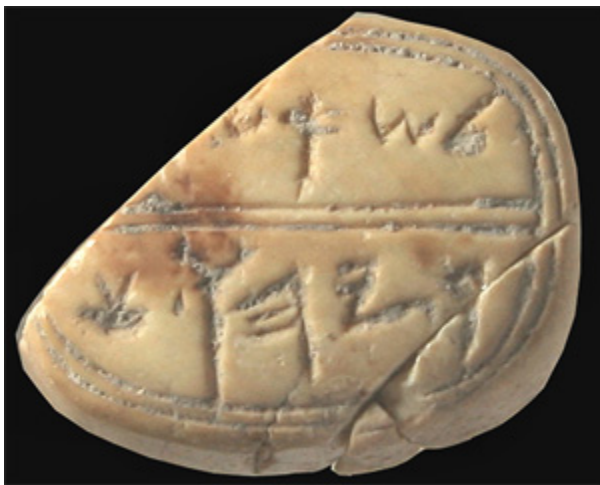
First Temple Period Seal With The Name Shaul Found

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<http://www.forzion.com/full-article.php?news=7289>

A Bone Seal Engraved with the Name Shaul, from the Time of the First Temple, was Found in the IAA Excavations in the Walls Around Jerusalem National Park, in the City of David

The seal was displayed during a visit there by the Knesset presidium prior to Jerusalem Day



Today (Tuesday) the Knesset presidium, headed by Speaker Reuben Rivlin, visited the City of David in Jerusalem. A Hebrew seal that dates to the time of the First Temple was displayed for the first time during the visit. The seal was found in an excavation that is being conducted in the Walls Around Jerusalem National Park, on behalf of the Israel Antiquities Authority and in cooperation with the Nature and Parks Authority, under the direction of Professor Ronny Reich of the University of Haifa and Eli Shukron of the IAA, and underwritten by the 'Ir

David Foundation'.

The seal, which is made of bone, was found broken and is missing a piece from its upper right side. Two parallel lines divide the surface of the seal into two registers in which Hebrew letters are engraved:

A period followed by a floral image or a tiny fruit appear at the end of the bottom name.

The name of the seal's owner was completely preserved and it is written in the shortened form of the name שָׁאֵל (Shaul). The name is known from both the Bible (Genesis 36:37; 1 Samuel 9:2; 1 Chronicles 4:24 and 6:9) and from other Hebrew seals.

According to Professor Reich, "This seal joins another Hebrew seal that was previously found and three Hebrew bullae (pieces of clay stamped with seal impressions) that were discovered nearby. These five items have great chronological importance regarding the study of the development of the use of seals. While the numerous bullae that were discovered in the adjacent rock-hewn pool were found together with pottery sherds from

the end of the ninth and beginning of the eighth centuries BC, they do not bear any Semitic letters. On the other hand, the five Hebrew epigraphic artifacts were recovered from the soil that was excavated outside the pool, which contained pottery sherds that date to the last part of the eighth century.

It seems that the development in the design of the seals occurred in Judah during the course of the eighth century BC. At the same time as they engraved figures on the seal, at some point they also started to engrave them with the names of the seals' owners. This was apparently when they started to identify the owner of the seal by his name rather than by some sort of graphic representation.”

It appears that the “office” which administered the correspondence and received the goods that were all sealed with bullae continued to exist and operate within a regular format even after a residential dwelling was constructed inside the same “rock-hewn pool” and the soil and the refuse that contained the many aforementioned bullae were trapped beneath its floor. This “office” continued to generate refuse that included bullae, which were opened and broken, as well as seals that were no longer used and were discarded into the heap of rubbish that continued to accumulate in the vicinity.

[Israel Antiquities authority](#)