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Rare Tablets Unearthed
At Baptist-sponsored 'Dig'

NEW ORLEANS (BP)-- Tablets unearthed in the summer of 1974 by Southern Baptist-sponsored archaeologists may shed light on the history of Israel over 3,000 years ago.

Excavating for the third season at Tel Aphek-Antipatris near Tel Aviv, a 150-member international work force uncovered two rare fragmentary clay tablets.

They also uncovered a stone-built tomb of the Late Bronze Age (circa 13th century B. C.), whole vessels of pottery dating to the Israelite Monarchy (11th-10th century B. C.), and a Canaanite public building that was destroyed by fire around 1200 B. C.

And the diggers completed the excavation of a patrician house of the Late Roman Period (third century A. D.) and increased to 350 the number of ancient coins found at the site.

The cuneiform (wedge-shaped) tablets, the most significant find of this year's "dig," were discovered beneath burnt-brick debris of a Canaanite public building that was consumed by fire in the Late Bronze Age--around the time of Joshua and the Israelite conquest of Canaan.

"They are the only cuneiform tablets found in Israel during the last ten years," said George Kelm, associate professor of archaeology at New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary. Kelm has been co-director of the excavation since its initiation in 1972.

The as-yet undated tablets are "chance finds," Kelm said. He noted that some 20 tablets have been discovered at four other Palestinian sites. To date, however, no library or archives of cuneiform tablets has been unearthed in Israel.

"We have Palestinian documents in Egypt, written in cuneiform script," he said, "but no real collection in Israel."

The tablets found at Tel Aphek-Antipatris fall into two different categories. One, a literary text, contains ten lines of a Sumerian-Accadian lexicon (dictionary) including references to agriculture ("plough," "wheat," "hoe") and to religion ("Shamash," the sun god). The other, a commercial document, lists numbers, such as "one thousand" and "six hundred."

The fact that two documents of such diverse contents were discovered at the beginning of the public building excavation is "very encouraging," according to Kelm. It is possible, he added, that later excavations may reveal a collection of tablets at the site--perhaps even a library. "We always hope to find written materials at any site," he said.

One of the largest tells in Israel, Aphek-Antipatris stretches across 30 acres and spans nearly 5,000 years of history, from the Early Bronze Age (circa 3,000 B. C.) to the 19th century A. D.

In antiquity the biblical town of Aphek (Old Testament)-Antipatris (New Testament) was located on the international highway of the Near East, the Via Maris.

Because of its strategic position as a buffer between the northern and southern parts of the country, Aphek-Antipatris was inhabited throughout most of the historical ages. It was a natural financial center as well as a military target. Taxes and customs were collected in Aphek. Caravans threaded their way across its borders; military garrisons camped in its vicinity, and pharaohs plotted its fall.

Currently, archaeologists, headed by Moshe Kochavi of Tel Aviv University Institute of Archaeology, are gradually piecing together the jigsaw events of over 4,000 years of history at the site where the apostle Paul rested on his way from Jerusalem to Caesarea (Acts 23:31).

Representing Baptist institutions at the 1974 dig were Bruce Cresson, associate professor of religion at Baylor University (Waco, Tex.) and area supervisor at the excavation; Robert O. Fitts, Clear Creek Baptist Institute (Pineville, Ky.); W. Clyde Tilley, Union University (Jackson, Tenn.); Russell Lester and Jack Flanders, Baylor University; and Chin Hwang Chung, Korean Baptist Theological Seminary.

Also participating in the nine-week excavation were James Burnham of the Israel Baptist Convention; student and volunteer groups from New Orleans Seminary, Baylor University and the University of South Florida; and Christian groups from Indiana, Pennsylvania, and Germany.

Sponsors of the yearly dig are Tel Aviv University Institute of Archaeology, New Orleans Seminary, Baylor University, and the Municipality of Petah Tiqva, Israel.

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(BP) Photo mailed to Baptist state papers.

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Jimmy Carter to Seek
Demo Bid for Presidency

12/13/74

WASHINGTON (BP)--Declaring that "Americans are concerned about the basic integrity of government," Georgia Governor Jimmy Carter announced in Atlanta his decision to run for the Democratic presidential nomination in 1976.

Carter, a Baptist layman who currently serves on the Brotherhood Commission of the Southern Baptist Convention, made his announcement over live television and to an audience of more than 2,000 supporters.

He becomes the second publicly announced candidate for the Democratic nomination, the other being Congressman Morris K. Udall of Arizona. Several other candidates are expected to enter the running soon, including U. S. Senators Henry M. Jackson (D., Wash.) and Lloyd M. Bentsen Jr. (D., Tex.), and former U. S. Senator Fred R. Harris of Oklahoma.

In his announcement, Carter made reference to recent developments which have sapped the people's confidence in government and expressed his determination to avoid abuses "that have caused our people to question the basic integrity of our political system.

"One of the most serious defects in public life in recent years has been a slow deterioration in our standards and a subtle acceptance of mediocrity or failure in government which would be contrary to the best hopes and ideals of individual human beings as they shape and reshape and re-examine their own lives in their homes among people that they love, in their places of worship where they re-establish their relationship with God.

"I want to see the government of this nation exemplify in the purest and highest way, the hopes and ideals of the American people," Carter said.

He promised that within the next several weeks, he will announce "a complete code of ethics: to characterize his bid for the presidency. "Like most Americans," he said, "I was taught that just staying within the law is not enough. Just staying within the law is certainly not enough for one who seeks to be President of the United States."

His announcement also indicated that the Georgia governor, whose term of office expires in January 1975, will stress his experience at all levels of government and particularly his record as governor.

Carter's tenure as chief executive of the southern state has been characterized by an overall streamlining of the state's government and by efforts at reforming the budgeting and judicial systems.

Carter said his campaign, "will not be predicated on massive expenditures of money, nor reliant on a diverse, large, paid staff. We can't afford it, and that's not the way we want it. This campaign will have to depend on people like you who have confidence in me, who have confidence in our country." Carter said he had "no interest whatsoever" in the vice presidency but he said he would not rule it out if it were offered to him. He said, "I have a total commitment" to running for the presidency.

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A few hours before his announcement as a candidate, Carter addressed the National Press Club in Washington, where he sounded the same themes. "Our people are hungry," he declared, "for integrity and competence in government."

He identified himself as a farmer (he raises peanuts), an engineer, a businessman, a planner, a scientist (he is a physicist), a governor, and a Christian.

"With the shame of watergate still with us," he said, "and our 200th birthday just ahead, it is time for us to reaffirm and to strengthen our ethical and spiritual and political beliefs."

He continued, "In our homes or at worship we are ever reminded of what we ought to do and what we ought to be. Our government can and must represent the best and the highest ideals of those of us who voluntarily submit to its authority."

Carter tackled a whole series of national and international problems in his National Press Club speech. He said that "the biggest waste and danger of all" is the proliferation of atomic weapons in the world and called for accepting an ultimate goal to eliminate nuclear weapon capability "among all nations."

He also called for a stricter accounting by the U. S. military establishment. While noting the need for a commitment to "adequate military preparedness," he nevertheless insisted that "there is no reason why our national defense establishment cannot also be efficient."

Carter also called for the elimination of unnecessary secrecy within government agencies, full financial disclosure by all public officials, and public financing of all federal campaigns as measures which would help restore public confidence in government.

In addition, he called for continued efforts to end racial discrimination, an extensive program to protect the environment, commitment to tax reform, and a new determination to equal justice under law.

He also advocated major overhauls in public policies affecting poverty and welfare, transportation, education, health care, and farming.

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Missionaries Overwhelmed By Needs in Bangladesh

12/13/74

By James F. McKinley Jr.
Southern Baptist Missionary

DACCA, BANGLADESH (BP)--I was visiting with the Thomas E. Thurman family in Faridpur when Tom's son, Philip, called for me to come quickly. I had heard the cry of a child a few minutes earlier but had thought little of it since it was one of many.

When I reached the scene outside the Thurman's yard, Tom's wife, Gloria, was bent over the body of a starving woman. Her small daughter was screaming, thinking her mother was dead.

This was not a time for me to offer advice. I only prayed that Gloria and Philip knew what to do. The flies were brushed away. The daughter was comforted. Gloria fed her some milk and bread. Philip called a cycle rickshaw and instructed the driver to take the woman to a feeding camp.

Not much was done? Maybe not, but at least thirty people die daily in Dacca where there is no one to give milk and bread to them and no one to call a rickshaw to take the people to a place where they can be fed.

We help in many ways open to us. Recently, while driving along one of Dacca's main streets, I noticed a man who needed help. When I got down from the car, it was evident his little brother needed more help. Just talking with the two of them seemed to help

I asked what I could do and they replied they needed money for food. By that time dozens of people had gathered. They had not come to help, but to see what I was going to do.

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I slipped a sufficient amount of money into his hand and said, "I'll see you later," And I have seen him since.

The feeding camps are filled now, because more people are begging. Many of these have lost all mental capacity as a result of malnourishment.

We (missionaries) have decided we will try to help those whom we can, who have a little, so they can help themselves.

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Death: Daily Occurrence
For the Bengali People

12/13/74

By James F. McKinley Jr.
Southern Baptist Missionary

DACCA, BANGLADESH (BP)--A small truck pulled up to the curb. Two men got out and picked up a limp body, another victim of the present Bangladesh tragedy.

The flood waters of the summer swept over the country-side of Bangladesh as if they possessed the land. Those waters washed away many small shacks, the homes of thousands of Bengalis.

As the water began receding, the sandy banks of the rivers of Bangladesh began to break away. Homesteads became part of the rivers. With their meager belongings, millions of Bengalis began their search for a place to live.

With about 1,500 people per square mile in the country, there was little space left. The flood deepened the economic crisis of Bangladesh. Many people, who in the past had employed some of the poor, found themselves in difficulty. Their crops had been destroyed, they needed no laborers, and even if they did need them, the essentials of life came first.

So the poorer people who had small plots of land began selling what little they owned. They had to eat. This was the only way to survive. There was always someone who had enough money to buy land at a low rate.

This created more beggars--begging for that money from the sale of the lands. The price of living rose still more.

The vicious circle completed its round by forcing those who could not afford the prices into feeding camps.

Still, the task seems too great. No one knows how many people are involved, maybe a million, maybe three million.

The future for these people is dark indeed.

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CORRECTION

On the BP Feature of 12/12/74, the headline should read, "Inflation Abroad Skyrockets; Mission Funds Feel the Pinch," (vice "Fell").

Thanks--Baptist Press