

SOLOMON THE MYTH

Rohl, David (1995). *A Test of Time: The Bible—from Myth to History*. London: Century tries to defend the Bible as historical in the face of sensible researchers who have said it is largely against true history.

Chapter 8 of Rohl's book claims to verify what is said about Solomon in the Bible.

Solomon has been placed by most experts at a point in the Iron Age in which archaeology contradicts the Bible which speaks of Solomon's staggering wealth and more sophisticated life-style. Rohl shoves him into another period, the closing century of the Late Bronze Age. Archaeology has shown that there was tremendous political wealth then.

And Solomon married Pharaoh's daughter which is said to explain the Egyptian influence on architecture design in his country.

The Millo of Solomon, a stone terracing system in the City of David was said in the Bible to have been dug by Solomon. Pottery was found in it that dated it to the Bronze Age. The terraces were filled with rubble and rubble is likely to contain such pieces anyway so there is no proof that Solomon could have built the terrace no matter what Rohl says. There would have been scavengers and builders at the rubble explaining how the pieces of pottery got there. Old Potter was often used to make houses look nicer.

The Bible says that Solomon built a palace for the daughter of Pharaoh at the City of David.

Egyptian artefacts were found in the ruins which Rohl says were once this great palace.

But Rohl admits that it might not be a palace at all (page 183). The Bible says that the palace overlooked the City of David.

The Bible says that the reason it was built was because Solomon did not want a woman living in his own palace where the Ark of God had been.

The Bible claims that Solomon was incredibly wise. He would not have given his wife a palace reflecting Egyptian culture. A statue of a woman with a snake, the sign of wisdom, was found in the ruins so she was certainly an idol. We can take it that when the Bible says that Solomon was wise that the Egyptian style palace of the Egyptian princess did not exist. The bigoted Israelites hated anything pagan so Solomon had to be discreet. He might have went over to paganism later in life but he had to be discreet.

Rohl wonders if an ivory panel that could have once been part of a chair depicts Solomon and his Egyptian spouse. This is impossible for Solomon would not have dressed like a Pharaoh. The Bible says that there were lions on each side of Solomon's throne. On the panel there are not lions but winged lions with human heads, the sphinxes. They were idols. Is it likely that the Bible would call such creatures lions? Monsters would have been the preferred description. And the sun shines over the horses implying that the sun is a god. The panel does not picture Solomon.

The evidence that the Bible is wrong or unprovable if it is not seems strongest. When Solomon cannot fit into the rich Bronze-Age period he can fit into none.

The 2001 TV series on ITV, *Gospel Truth* presented by John Mc Carthy has disproved most of the major claims of the Old Testament. The title sequence of the programme quoted the prophet Jeremiah saying that the priests had corrupted the text of the Law of Moses, the supposed word of God, and put lies in it. One of the claims refuted was that Solomon was so wealthy. Modern archaeology tends to believe that Israel did not come out of Egypt and take over the Holy Land by invasion but just grew out of the people of Canaan. No evidence for the Exodus from Egypt as described in the Bible has ever been uncovered. Anyway the fact that Israel's pottery and script is so similar to the Canaanite design proves that Israel was born in Canaan especially when the Law of Moses was so determined to see any influence from the people of Canaan who were pagan destroyed.

Israel Finkelstein who directs the Institute of Archaeology at the University of Tel Aviv says that the fancy city of Jerusalem that the Bible says King David had was nothing more than a village in David's day and not the great city of an Empire that the Bible would have us think. He claims that many structures that are attributed to Solomon were built after Solomon's time so he denies that the Bible story of Solomon's fabulous wealth and the glory he brought to his kingdom is true. Finkelstein says there is no evidence for the united monarchy that the Bible says existed under David and Solomon. Do a search for and read the website *The Bible, as History, Flunks New Archaeological Tests*.

