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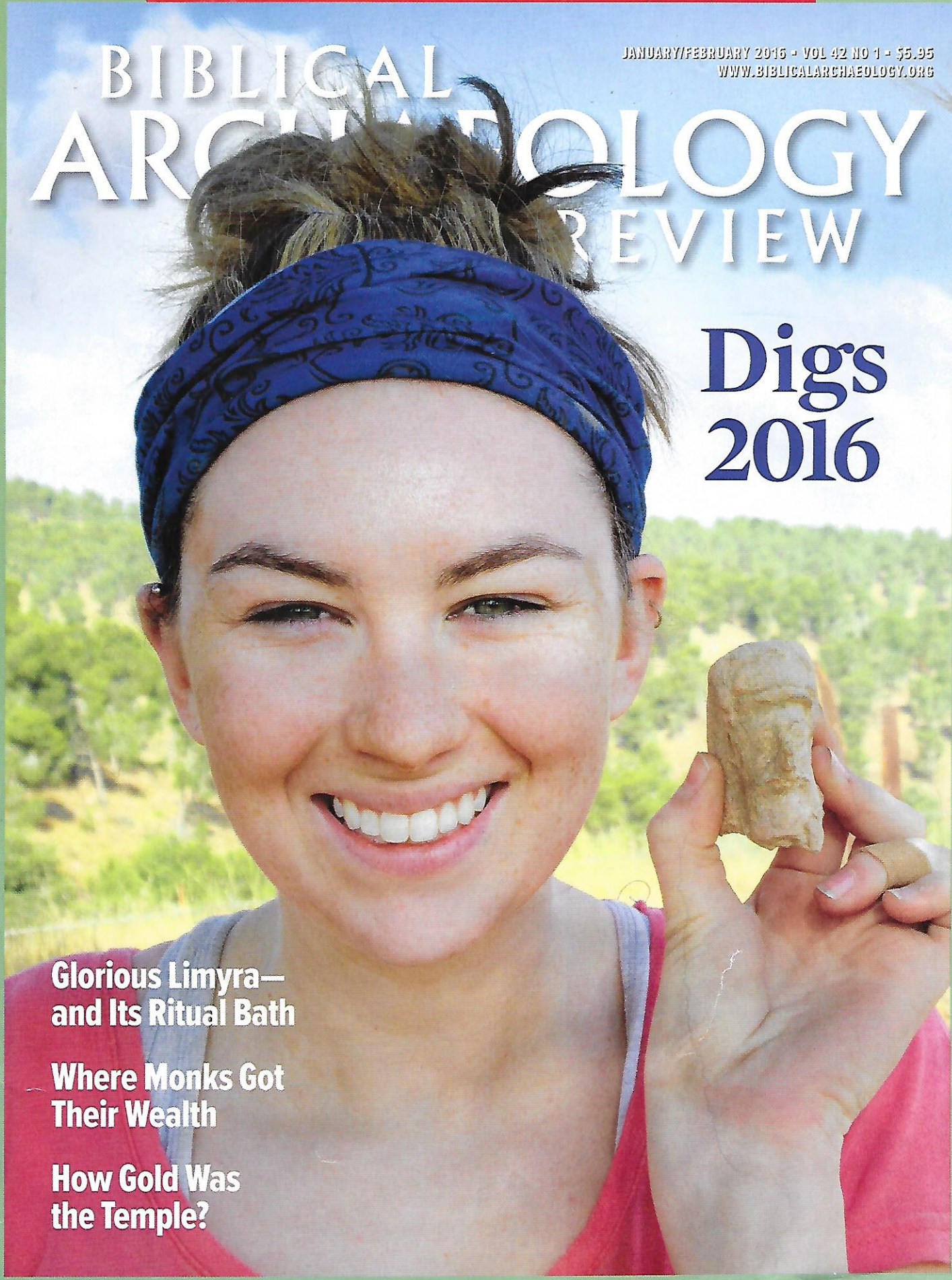
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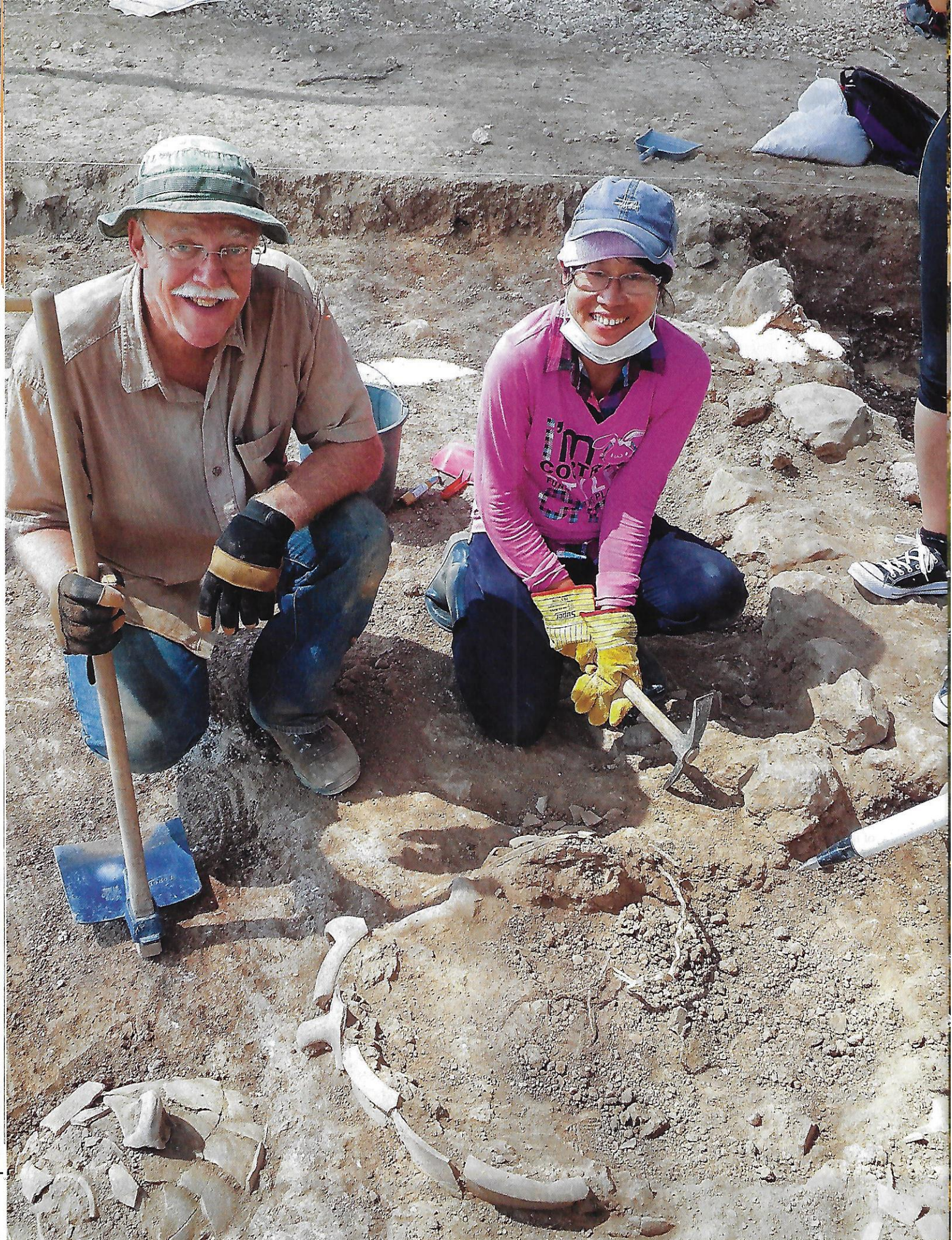
Digs 2016

**Glorious Limyra—
and Its Ritual Bath**

**Where Monks Got
Their Wealth**

**How Gold Was
the Temple?**





Passport to the Biblical World

Robin Ngo

WHY DO HUNDREDS OF VOLUNTEERS FROM around the world travel to Israel and Jordan to take part in archaeological expeditions each summer? For many, it's because these digs offer a portal to the Biblical world. Excavations across the Biblical lands transport volunteers back to a time when kings and queens reigned, a tribal social organization defined daily life, and trade networks stretched from the Arabian peninsula to the islands of the Aegean.

DIG DIVERSITY. "It was fantastic being in a multi-disciplinary and multi-cultural environment and working with a variety of ages, from three-year-old children to eighty-year-old experienced archaeologists," said Tell es-Safi volunteer Seng Tawng of Lutheran Theological Seminary in Hong Kong, pictured here with Carl Shwanke, a retired chemical engineer, excavating Iron Age vessels from the ninth-century B.C.E. destruction layer at Biblical Gath.

Stepping out of the portal and plopped into a trench, dig volunteers may unearth the common objects signaling everyday life: jugs, lamps, loom weights and perhaps—if they're lucky—coins. Stepping back and gazing at the excavation site as a whole, the volunteers may imagine from humble archaeological remains what once stood here proudly: a palace, a temple, a marketplace—perhaps all encircled by a massive fortification wall.

So grab your passport and come along with **BAR** as we visit four representative sites that will open a portal to the storied world of the Bible and our ancient past.

Gateway to Philistine Gath

The Ackerman Family Bar-Ilan University Expedition to Gath is excavating at Tell es-Safi, located on the border between the southern coastal plain





CENTRAL TIMNA VALLEY PROJECT

ON SLAVES' HILL. Tel Aviv University's Lyndelle Webster and the Austrian Archaeological Institute's Lisa Peloschek unearth the outer wall of a metallurgical installation on "Slaves' Hill," an extensive, Solomonite-era copper production site in the center of the Timna Valley in southern Israel.

(Philistia) and the Judean foothills (the Shephelah) in central Israel. Most scholars associate Tell es-Safi with Biblical Gath, home of the giant Goliath who fought David (1 Samuel 17). Gath was part of the Philistine Pentapolis, a group of five cities settled in Canaan at the end of the Late Bronze Age (c. 1200 B.C.E.). Archaeology has unearthed evidence of a Philistine presence here throughout the Iron Age (c. 13th–late 8th centuries B.C.E.).*

"The excavations at Tell es-Safi have contributed substantially to our understanding of the Philistines, who were a major player in relation to the Israelites/Judahites during the Iron Age," explained excavation director Aren Maeir, Professor of Archaeology in the Martin (Szusz) Department of Land of Israel Studies and Archaeology at Bar-Ilan University. "We have shown evidence of strong bi-directional influence between these cultures in various aspects of daily

life, such as in cult, diet, architecture, language and writing. This influence is seen already at an early stage, in Iron I. Interestingly, this seems to mirror the Biblical understanding of the intense and complex relations that existed between the Israelites/Judahites and the Philistines, as reflected in the Bible's Samson narratives."

Last summer, the excavation team uncovered the Iron Age city gate and fortifications of Philistine Gath. That field season marked the third time retired chemical engineer Carl Schwanke had returned with his wife, Leslie, to Tell es-Safi. Excavating in the lower city of Gath, the Schwanke and their team members uncovered clear evidence of iron production in layers dating to about 800 B.C.E.

"Our tools included large picks, handpicks, hoes, the ubiquitous black buckets, wheel barrows, our faithful Marshalltown trowels and sometimes even dental tools," Schwanke explained. "It just depended on whether we were clearing top soil and digging down to the destruction layer or excavating a pot."

Peeling back layers of history, Schwanke and his team members found remnants of an Iron Age metallurgical production area: slag (stony waste produced after smelting), hammer scale (flaky remains from the iron forging process) and tuyere fragments (a nozzle through which air is blasted into a furnace).

"We are still searching for remnants of an actual

*See Aren M. Maeir and Carl S. Ehrlich, "Excavating Philistine Gath: Have We Found Goliath's Hometown?" *BAR*, November/December 2001; Aren M. Maeir, "Prize Find: Horned Altar from Tell es-Safi Hints at Philistine Origins," *BAR*, January/February 2012.

furnace—or furnaces—used in the production to quantify its importance to the city,” Schwanke explained.

At the summit of Tell es-Safi, the Gath volunteers were excavating a collapsed floor dating to the Early Bronze Age—a time before the arrival of the Philistines.

“This area sits just outside and under the Early Bronze Age fortifications, which surround nearly the entire tell,” explained Darra Stuart, a junior at the University of Kansas. “These finds may provide a greater understanding of how the tell looked and was used during the Early Bronze Age.”

A unique aspect of working on a dig like Tell es-Safi is that you may find yourself in the shadow of legendary Holy Land archaeologists from the early days of the discipline:

“We excavated the continuation of the Early Bronze fortification wall and even seem to have

found an area that archaeologists F.J. Bliss and R.A.S. Macalister previously excavated [at the end of the 19th century],” marveled Bar-Ilan University freshman Shoshana Guterman.

Journey to Biblical Jezreel

Moving from the southern coastal plain north to the lush Jezreel Valley, we arrive at Jezreel, where Naboth the Jezreelite and King Ahab of Samaria argued over Naboth’s vineyard (1 Kings 21:1–4) and where Queen Jezebel was trampled to death by usurper Jehu’s horses (2 Kings 9:30–33). The Jezreel Expedition has been excavating at the site since 2013, uncovering remains spanning the Neolithic, Chalcolithic, Early Bronze, Middle Bronze, Iron Age, Roman, Medieval and Islamic periods.** The project is led by Jennie Ebeling, Associate Professor of Archaeology at the University of Evansville, and Norma Franklin, Research Associate at the Zinman Institute of Archaeology at the University of Haifa.

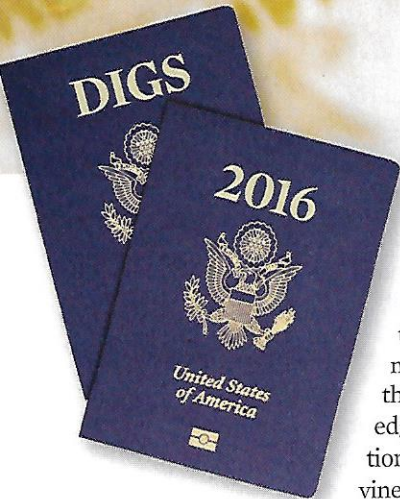
“One of the most exciting finds at Jezreel is a sophisticated winery complex that may date to the

MEASURING UP. Total stations, like this one used by University of Evansville students Elizabeth Kunz and Emily Corrigan, record elevations and were just one of the technical tools used during the 2015 season of the Jezreel Expedition.

**See Norma Franklin and Jennie Ebeling, “Archaeological Views: Returning to Jezreel,” *BAR*, May/June 2013.



COURTESY OF THE JEZREEL EXPEDITION



Iron Age and the period when Ahab and Jezebel lived at Jezreel,” said Ebeling. “Consisting of a large treading floor, two fermenting vats and many bedrock mortars, the winery is located at the foot of the northeastern slope of Tel Jezreel at the edge of the fertile fields below. This installation provides context for the story of Naboth’s vineyard and suggests large-scale wine production at the site in the Iron Age and subsequent periods.”

Working near a spring below the Iron Age upper city, Kentucky Christian University junior Justin Butler detected evidence of industry:

“We discovered what we thought may be a lime kiln,” said Butler. “We also found many pieces of burned basalt chips as well as cuts in the basalt bedrock. This led us to believe that either a lime kiln—because of all the limestone which surrounded it—or some other type of oven may be within our [excavation] square.”

According to Elizabeth Kunz, a senior at the University of Evansville, volunteers must be able to endure physical labor in the blistering Mediterranean heat.

DIGGING DESTRUCTION. Wesleyan University’s Sarah McCully uses a trowel while Stanford University’s Simeon Ehrlich uses a patiche to carefully excavate Philistine storage jars caught in Ashkelon’s destruction by Babylonian King Nebuchadnezzar in 604 B.C.E.



ERIC H. CLINE

TRAVELS WITH TROWEL. University of California, Berkeley student Melissa Cradic shows a bichrome jug that had been discovered in a burial at Tel Megiddo. Cradic also excavates at Legio, a Roman camp just south of Tel Megiddo.

“While all digs are different, on the Jezreel Expedition we worked under tarps early in the day to avoid the worst of the heat and sun, which is intense on a tell,” Kunz explained. “I wouldn’t say the work was back-breaking, but it was physical.”

Kunz recommends staying well-nourished and hydrated throughout the dig day.

“Digging involves a lot of manual labor, so I would eat Clif Bars upon waking up, though we



MELISSA AJA, COURTESY OF THE LEON LEVY EXPEDITION TO ASHKELON



LARA BRUCKER/TEL DOR

PASS THE DIRT. Turning a laborious task into fun in the sun, volunteers and staff at the ancient harbor town of Tel Dor form a bucket chain to transport dig fill away from the excavation squares.

also ate breakfast after a few hours work. Electrolyte supplements were also my friend during this time. Putting those in my water restored my energy and prevented light-headedness.”

Excavating the Ironclads

The Jezreel Valley is also where the Legio VI Ferrata, or the Sixth Ironclad Legion, was camped. The Legio VI Ferrata was one of two Roman legions, along with the Legio X Fretensis, stationed in Judea during the reign of Roman emperor Hadrian (117–138 C.E.). The camp of the Legio VI Ferrata was known previously only from historical sources. In recent years, remains of the legion’s base have come to light through archaeological work led by Matthew J. Adams, the Dorot Director of the W.F. Albright Institute for Archaeological Research in Jerusalem,* Yotam Tepper, a Ph.D. candidate at Tel Aviv University, and Jonathan David, Professor of Classics at Gettysburg College.

The Legio VI Ferrata was in Judea during “a time of significant development in early Christianity and in Rabbinic Judaism (second and third centuries C.E.),” explained Adams. “Both religions

had significant presence in the Galilee centers that the VIth Legion was positioned to monitor. The village adjacent to the base shows evidence of Jewish, pagan and Christian inhabitants, the latter dramatically represented by one of the earliest prayer halls (or House Churches) known, with mosaic inscriptions mentioning ‘God Jesus Christ,’ a Roman centurion and a group of important local women. In the context of repeated tensions between the local population in Judea and their Roman overlords, it appears that the concept of Armageddon as a penultimate battle had its historical roots in the idea that a successful rebellion against the empire would require a major battle to expel the VIth Legion at Legio (i.e., at the nearby ‘Hill of Megiddo,’ Har Megiddon).”

Survey and excavation work at Legio revealed archaeological evidence confirming the location of the camp, which had theretofore been only a hypothesis.**

“Among these finds were roof tiles stamped with the name of the Legion: ‘LEGVIFERR,’ the Latin abbreviation for Legio VI Ferrata, ‘The Iron Legion,’” said Adams. “We also found scales from Roman armor, lead ingots and more than 100 coins, some of which had a counter-mark of the VIth Legion (an extra stamp with the VIth’s name). The most surprising and spectacular was the chance discovery of a stone table-leg carved with the snarling visage

*See Matthew J. Adams, “Archaeological Views: On the Shoulders of Giants: Directing Jerusalem’s Albright Institute,” *BAR*, November/December 2014.

**See Matthew J. Adams, Jonathan David and Yotam Tepper, “Legio: Excavations at the Camp of the Roman Sixth Ferrata Legion in Israel,” *Bible History Daily* (blog), October 20, 2013 (www.biblicalarchaeology.org/legio).

of a large feline, perhaps a panther.”

“This summer, we uncovered a massive road, pipes, monumental architecture and plenty of walls,” said first-time Legio volunteer McKenna Mattingly, a student at Riverside Community College in California. “The size of the road we excavated speaks to the size of the camp itself, which had been under debate at the beginning of our season.”

For Mattingly, excavating under the scorching sun pushed her and her team members to their physical limits, but also unified them as a group and as part of a greater educational objective.

“Excavating is a grueling process. It means 4:00 a.m. wake-up calls and pick-axing at 5:00. It means sore muscles and tired backs and falling—a lot. It means carrying heavy buckets full of dirt up and down a hill. It means being slightly sunburned at all times and being soaked in sweat for hours.”

Mattingly added that having a sense of humor is a must.

“It’s hard work, and you’ll trip and fall—I

guarantee it,” she said. “It was, however, one of the best experiences I’ve ever had in my life.”

Beam Up to Bethsaida

Next we head to Galilee, where the site of Bethsaida sits atop a basalt hill overlooking the Sea of Galilee. The site may be associated with the kingdom of Geshur, which was destroyed by Assyrian King Tiglath-pileser III in 732 B.C.E. In the New Testament, Jesus healed the blind man (Mark 8:22–25) and fed the multitude (Luke 9:10–17) at Bethsaida. The Bethsaida Biblical Archaeology project, directed by Rami Arav, Professor of Religion and Philosophy at the University of Nebraska Omaha, has unearthed an Iron Age gate complex, the Hellenistic-Roman town dating to Jesus’ time, a wine cellar and two bronze bowls used in Roman cultic rituals.*

“Bethsaida is the only place associated with Jesus’ ministry in Galilee that is available to archaeological

*See Rami Arav, Richard A. Freund and John F. Shroder, Jr., “Bethsaida Rediscovered,” *BAR*, January/February 2000.

Scholarship Opportunities

The Biblical Archaeology Society, publisher of *BAR*, offers scholarships of \$1,500 every year to people who would otherwise not be able to volunteer. To apply, simply send a letter to BAS Dig Scholarships, 4710 41st St., NW, Washington, DC 20016, or send it by email to bas@bib-arch.org, stating who you are, where and why you want to excavate, and why you should be selected for a scholarship. List your mailing address, phone number and email, as well as the names, addresses, email address and phone numbers of two references. Applications must be received by March 14, 2016.

Thank You

The BAS Dig Scholarship program is made possible by the generous contributions of donors. Our sincere thanks to the following people, who supported the 2015 volunteers:

Kenneth and Ann Bialkin

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Edward and Raynette Boshell

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Daniel Mintz and

Meredith Berkman

Jonathan Rosen

Michael and Judy Steinhardt

Samuel D. Turner

Harry and Gertrude Schwartz
Foundation, Jeffery Yablon,
trustee



THE TEL BURNA ARCHAEOLOGICAL PROJECT

WINNER WINNER. BAS scholarship recipient Benjamin Yang from the Evangelical Seminary in Taiwan shows off a Late Bronze Age plaque figurine of a female at Tel Burna.



HANAN SHAFIR

SIFT AND SEARCH. At Bethsaida, the search for small finds continued with sifting by Kate Phillips, a participant with Consortium Member, University of San Diego.

research. All other places—Capernaum, Chorazin and Nazareth—were severely destroyed in later periods,” said Arav.

Part of the excitement of archaeology, according to Creighton University senior Tom Ferlic, is being able to see what may not have been seen for millennia.

“I would spend my day finding mostly pottery, but as soon as I hit the floor, I found animal bones, a piece of what looked like a rusted nail and more floor. That was my favorite thing about digging: Every single day, uncovering more of the floor, uncovering something that had never been uncovered before.”

For excavation volunteer Caitlin Doherty, a recent graduate of the University of San Diego, working in a fill at Bethsaida offered her a chance to dig up a vast expanse of the site’s history all at once.

“We dug through material that had been removed, disturbed and subsequently replaced after its original deposition,” said Doherty. “Material from the Roman period had been removed by the Syrian army in the mid-20th century during a military campaign in the Golan Heights. Later, the Syrian bunkers were refilled, throwing the ancient material (now mixed) back into the pit. As a result, in the same bucket of

dirt I could find Hellenistic/Roman-period glass along with Ottoman pottery and Syrian toothbrushes!”

Touching History

While immersed in the Biblical past, our dig volunteers found themselves forming wonderful friendships that unified the group and helped make the demanding work even fun. And for volunteers both seasoned and brand-new, having history be so tangible was an unforgettable experience.

“It was fantastic being in a multi-disciplinary and multi-cultural environment and working with a variety of ages, from three-year-old children to eighty-year-old experienced archaeologists,” recalled Tell es-Safi volunteer Seng Tawng, a doctoral student at Lutheran Theological Seminary in Hong Kong.

“I made amazing connections with people all over the world,” said McKenna Mattingly of the Legio excavation. “I touched history with my own two hands and contributed to a project at the forefront of its field. I had the time of my life.”

“Your own specific effort is just one small part of the whole team effort and the prior year’s efforts, as well,” reflected Tell es-Safi volunteer Carl Shwanke. “It’s almost like reading a page-turning mystery book where the story continues to evolve, and you can’t wait to find out what happens next. And the fact that there are connections to the Bible makes it even more relevant and interesting.”

Dig Sites 2016

These are the 2016 dig opportunities. Visit www.biblicalarchaeology.org/digs for additional information, including a full description of each site, the excavation's goals for the coming season, important finds from past seasons, Biblical connections and profiles of dig directors. The right archaeological expedition for you is just a click away!

Abel Beth Maacah

June 19–July 15

DIRECTORS: Robert Mullins,
Nava Panitz-Cohen

Abila of the Decapolis

June 27–Aug. 10

DIRECTOR: David Vila

Ashdod-Yam

July 25–Aug. 21

DIRECTORS: Alexander Fantalkin,
Angelika Berlejung

Ashkelon

June 4–July 16

DIRECTORS: Lawrence Stager,
Daniel Master

Azekah

July 16–Aug. 11

DIRECTORS: Oded Lipschits,
Manfred Oeming,
Yuval Gadot

Bethsaida

May 22–July 9

DIRECTOR: Rami Arav

Hippos-Sussita

July 3–July 28

DIRECTOR: Michael Eisenberg

Jaffa

June 26–July 28

DIRECTORS: Aaron Burke,
Martin Peilstöcker

Khirbet el-Eika

June 26–July 22

DIRECTOR: Uzi Leibner

Mt. Zion

June 11–July 7

DIRECTORS: Shimon Gibson,
James D. Tabor

Shikhin/Asochis

May 20–June 17

DIRECTOR: James R. Strange

Tel Akko

July 3–July 30

DIRECTORS: Ann Killebrew,
Michal Artzy, Michael
Sugerman

Tel Burna

June 19–July 15

DIRECTOR: Itzick Shai

Tel Dor

July 2–July 29

DIRECTORS: Ilan Sharon,
Ayelet Gilboa

Tel Gezer

June 20–July 15

DIRECTORS: Steve Ortiz, Sam
Wolff

Tel Hazor

June 19–July 29

DIRECTOR: Amnon Ben-Tor

Tel Jezreel

May 27–June 24

DIRECTORS: Jennie Ebeling,
Norma Franklin

Tel Lachish

June 19–July 27

DIRECTORS: Yosef Garfinkel,
Michael Hasel, Martin
Klingbeil

Tel Megiddo

June 18–August 3

DIRECTORS: Israel Finkelstein,
Matthew Adams,
Mario Martin

Tell es-Safi/Gath

June 26–July 22

DIRECTOR: Aren Maeir

Tell Halif

May 29–July 1

DIRECTOR: Oded Borowski

Tell Keisan

July 3–July 31

DIRECTORS: David Schloen,
Gunnar Lehmann

Tiberias

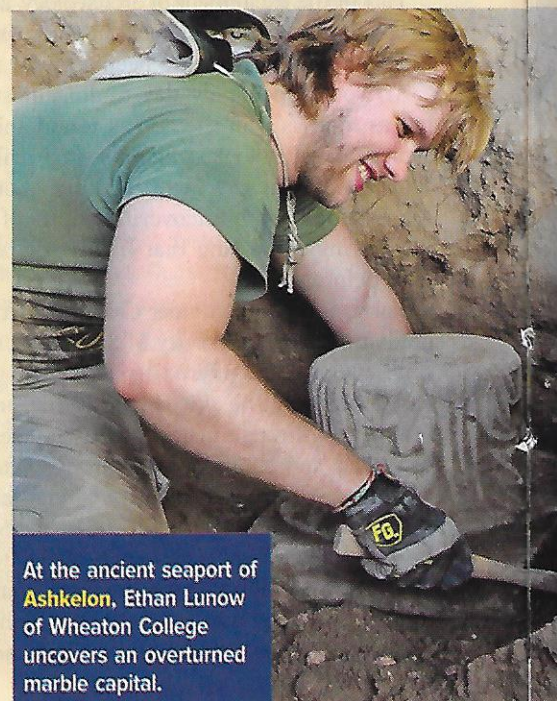
January 24–February 19

DIRECTOR: Katia Cytryn-
Silverman

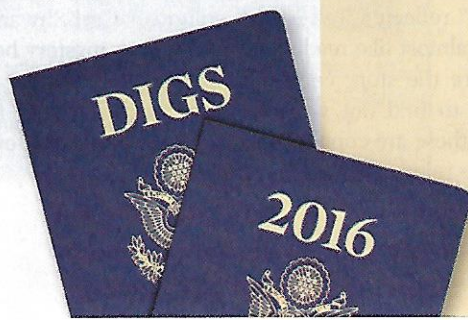
Timna

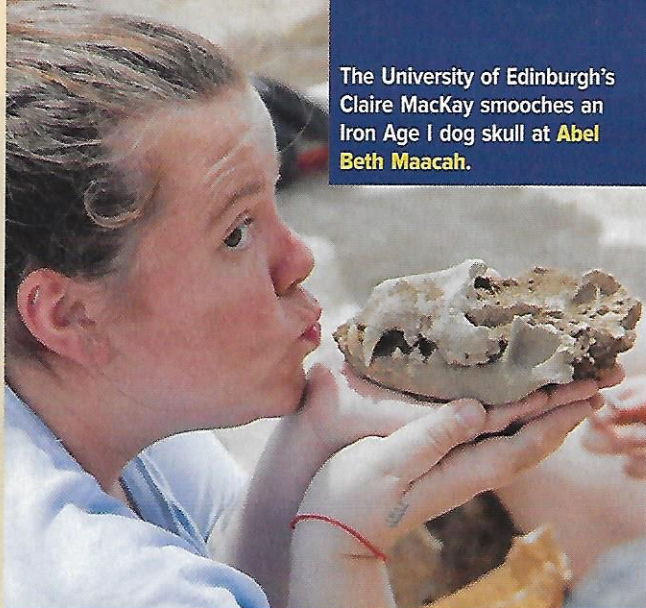
January 24–February 2

DIRECTOR: Erez Ben-Yosef

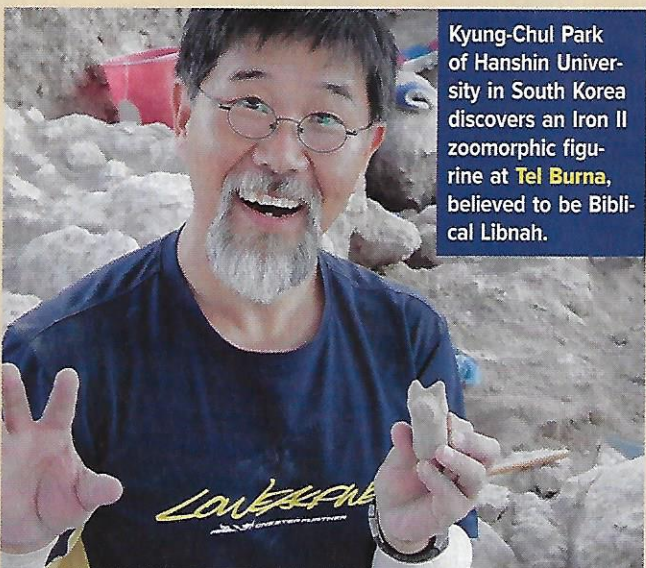


At the ancient seaport of **Ashkelon**, Ethan Lunow of Wheaton College uncovers an overturned marble capital.





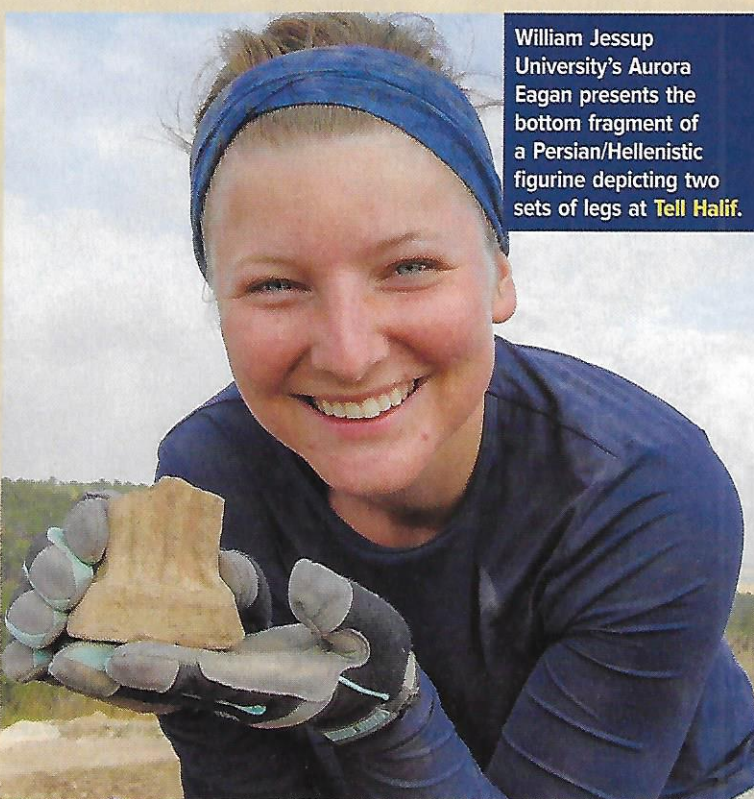
The University of Edinburgh's Claire MacKay smooches an Iron Age I dog skull at **Abel Beth Maacah**.



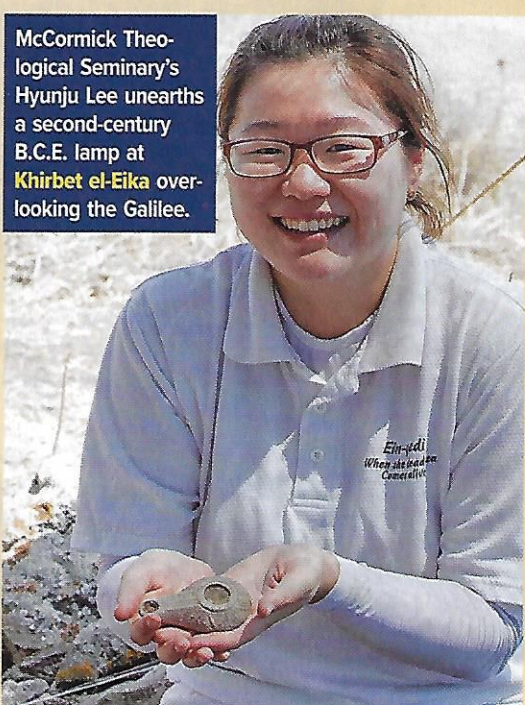
Kyung-Chul Park of Hanshin University in South Korea discovers an Iron II zoomorphic figurine at **Tel Birna**, believed to be Biblical Libnah.



Tel Dor staff members Yiftah Shalev, Hagar Ben-Basat and Amit Rosenblum hold up a partially reconstructed Iron Age Phoenician pithos.



William Jessup University's Aurora Eagan presents the bottom fragment of a Persian/Hellenistic figurine depicting two sets of legs at **Tell Halif**.



McCormick Theological Seminary's Hyunju Lee unearths a second-century B.C.E. lamp at **Khirbet el-Eika** overlooking the Galilee.