

*The Dead Sea Scrolls and the Bible* give an excellent overview of the topics addressed and will be of value to scholars and students alike who wish to grasp the nature of the primary texts in relation to scripture as well as current scholarly thinking about them. The lucidity of VanderKam's prose is to be commended. As seen, this reviewer has suggested instances where what is stated may require to be nuanced or concerns an area where further research is required. However, that does not detract from the overall worth of the book which is likely to be a classic for some time to come.

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**Ronny Reich (trans. Miriam Feinberg Varnosh), *Excavating the City of David: Where Jerusalem's History Began*, Jerusalem: Israel Exploration Society and Biblical Archaeology Society, 2011, 368pp. ISBN: 9789652210821, USD 50.**

Reviewed by Anne E. Gardner

*Excavating the City of David: Where Jerusalem's History Began* presents, as the title suggests, an account of archaeological excavations on Jerusalem's south-eastern hill, where the earliest signs of human occupation are apparent. It also attempts to provide a short history of Jerusalem based on the archaeological finds. In addition, *Excavating the City of David*, produced with lavish colour photographs, maps and diagrams and aimed at the interested layperson, refers to a number of complex issues. These include the relationship between archaeological finds and the Bible; the nuances of interpretation of archaeological finds by different archaeologists at various times and relations between governing and administrative bodies and excavations. Political aspects also creep into the tale - including relations between the ultra-orthodox and secular archaeologists and attitudes to Palestinian workers. The unifying feature of *Excavating the City of David* is the voice of Ronny Reich. His dedication to understanding the work of those archaeologists who preceded him, his persistence in difficult excavations as well as his reflections on all the above named issues bring to life the finds from ancient Jerusalem within the context of the modern day. Reich's involvement in writing the present work though was not part of the original plan.

Mendel Kaplan, a South African Jew with an interest in the ancient world, visited the City of David in 1977. He was appalled by its condition and, having secured the support of the mayor of Jerusalem, proposed that the Hebrew University undertake a dig of the whole area of the City of David using the financial resources of an autonomous foundation set up by Kaplan himself. Although it was not practical to attempt to excavate the whole area, the proposal was accepted in essence and Yigal Shiloh appointed as archaeologist. It had been Kaplan and Shiloh's intention to publish a popular book but the premature

death of the latter left a vacuum which Ronny Reich was called upon to fill, both as excavator and author.

The history of the excavations of the City of David takes up the majority of *Excavating the City of David* (from pages 13-276). Reich divides the history of excavations into four periods: the Ottoman, the Mandate, the Divided city and the Reunified city. By far the greatest amount of archaeological activity has taken place in the last period and most of that was by Shiloh and then Reich and his partner, Eli Shukron, who, at the outset, merely undertook a rescue dig at the behest of the IAA. Prior, though, to providing an account of their own work, Reich recounts the main features of all earlier digs, giving the reader the benefit of his assessment of their importance and aspects that would be followed up or viewed in a different light at a subsequent time. Every dig, as far as possible, is situated within its historical context and in order to do so there were occasions when Reich had to unearth archival material. In contrast to Final or even Preliminary Reports from the individual archaeologists concerned, Reich provides an easy to read account into which his own personal story is interwoven. His comments on political/religious matters which have affected the course of archaeological exploration run like a thread through his work. He first alludes to such matters on p.9 when he says, "Working in Jerusalem reveals not only ancient remains, but constantly lays bare and touches the delicate nerves of Israeli society." Reich and Shukron's digs are the most recent major explorations of the City of David and one hundred and twenty pages are devoted to them. There is a sense in which all previous archaeological digs in the area are viewed as merely a prelude to theirs which perhaps is inevitable, given the chronological scheme. At least it is made clear that at all times they were building on the work of others but also carefully reassessing it when new finds or even set-backs required it. Their contribution to uncovering the ancient waterways and defensive aspects of the spring and the city is outstanding. While luck played a certain part, perseverance and mental acumen were necessary to their success.

The section on the history of Jerusalem is much shorter (pp. 277-343). There are two particular highlights: 1) Reich's brilliant argument for the successive names of the water systems and the original designation of the Gihon Spring 2) his explanation for the lack of sherds around the Spring from LBA-Iron I, Persian period, Byzantine-Crusader periods in terms of access having been cut off (known for the latter two periods but theorised for LBA-Iron I). Overall, though, this section on the history of Jerusalem is less successful than the one on the history of the excavations for it is much less open. A minimalist approach is adopted. This is argued for by Reich who says that only archaeological data, as opposed to textual, can be accepted as scientific. While few would refute that archaeological finds are of the utmost importance, the lay person is not always aware that archaeologists do not interpret or date their finds with one accord. In

other words, just how “scientific” is archaeological evidence when viewed through the prism of the opinions of archaeologists? And how “scientific” is it to utilise one’s own opinions about particular artefacts and translate those into “historical” evidence concerning a particular period when other archaeologists have quite different opinions and would use the same evidence to amplify our knowledge of quite a different period? This Reich does in the case of Kenyon’s proto-Aeolian capital found in Jerusalem, assigning it to the late eighth century BCE at the earliest without mentioning that Kenyon thought it was from the tenth/ninth century BCE. Indeed, in the case of that particular artefact, the date can never be secure because it was found not *in situ* but rather in debris from the Babylonian destruction and thus dating it earlier will always be conjectural to some extent.

In keeping with the accepted practice of archaeologists, there is an explicit separation of archaeological evidence and Biblical story. This separation is extended to the Amarna Letters which are decried as mere “text”. Although this is done by other archaeologists also (Magrit Steiner for instance) one wonders why this should be so. The Amarna Letters had not been copied and recopied like the Bible and are as much of an archaeological artefact as the bullae found by the Spring and which Reich sets much store by. The answer probably lies in a limited understanding of the nature of ancient texts whose context is not immediately apparent and which need to be assessed in terms of 1) the semantic field of the vocabulary that appears in them 2) the literary genre to which they belong 3) their context within the literary, social, economic and political world of the time. Yet there are times when Reich does make use of texts and in ways that help to advance our knowledge of Jerusalem. His convincing theory about the names for the waterways - Siloam prior to the Exile and Gihon after the Exile - is linked with Isa 8:16 and 2 Chron 32:30. He purports that the earlier name for the Gihon Spring was En Shemesh. He derives support for this theory from Josh 18:17 and his personal observation of the effect of the sun (shemesh) upon the spring.

Generally speaking, there is an unacknowledged aspect amongst some scholars of the relationship between the archaeology of Israel and the Bible. In the case of the present work which claims to base itself on archaeology, its appeal to the popular imagination is encapsulated in the name “City of David” which alludes to 2 Sam 5:6-9 where it is claimed that David captured the city and called it after his own name. Indeed it is because of the stories in the “Book of Books”, as Reich calls the Bible on one occasion, that the early history of Jerusalem is of interest to so many people throughout the world who are potential buyers of his volume! Time and further research, both archaeological and textual, will tell whether in the future the “history” of Jerusalem conforms more closely to the Biblical story, particularly in the period of the early monarchy, than Reich and others see it as doing at present.

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**James K. Hoffmeier and Dennis R. Magary, *Do Historical Matters Matter to Faith: A Critical Appraisal of Modern and Postmodern Approaches to Scripture*, Wheaton IL: Crossway, 2012, 542pp, ISBN 9781433525711, USD 35.**

Reviewed by Christopher J. Davey

This substantial volume is the outcome of a colloquium at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School in February 2009. It was prompted by Kenton L. Sparks’ *God’s Word in Human Words: An Evangelical Appropriation of Critical Biblical Scholarship* (Baker Academic, 2008) and we are told that ‘the authors of the present book, a number of whom are world-class archaeologists, calmly extend invitation by implication to Professor Sparks, and others, to consider the validity of his errancy proposal’ (14). One may assume from this that the book is an argument for the inerrancy of Scripture as advocated by Augustine, the Roman Catholic Church until the nineteenth century, and some modern-day American evangelical Christians; but for those who read on, the situation may not be so clear-cut.

The book is arranged in five parts, the titles of which demonstrate its theological character; Biblical, Systematic, and Historical Theology; The Old Testament and Issues of History, Authenticity, and Authority; The New Testament and Issues of History, Authenticity, and Authority; The Old Testament and Archaeology. It has received many favourable theological reviews by evangelical scholars, but it has largely passed the archaeological community by. The archaeological contributors are active field workers, but as seminary based scholars, they work within a theological environment.

After reading Dr Arbino’s paper in this edition of *Buried History*, archaeologists who wish to engage with evangelical theology may also dip into this volume. However the repeated refutation of Sparks’ book does often lessen the general relevance of the material. For example, the first paper by Thomas H. McCall on ‘Religious Epistemology’ draws attention to a couple of relevant recent developments in the philosophy of knowledge and discusses how epistemology may relate to critical biblical scholarship. This is a reminder that people approach information and reach decisions in different ways and, as such, does have some relevance to archaeological research. However a significant portion of the paper deals with Sparks’ chapter on epistemology and hermeneutics and is the first of a number of such discussions in the book resulting in a zero-sum game.

Mark Thompson’s ‘Toward a Theological Account of Biblical Inerrancy’ begins by suggesting that the idea of inerrancy was not expounded until the veracity of Scripture was questioned in the nineteenth century. Both Warfield and the Chicago Statement maintain that the inerrant autographs are effectively the same as the current Bible. Thompson appears to look favourably on the definition of inerrancy by Paul Feinberg who proposed