

ISRAEL  
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**SERIES: Israel**

**TITLE: Program 2 – Dr. Bahat Interview, Part 2**

**TUESDAY**

**OPEN**

I know that you say that this is the Word of God. But can you really, really prove that it is the Word of God? You know, basically when you look at the Bible, it really is a matter of faith. But, do you know what? One of the ways that we know that it's the Word of God is we begin to dig in the land of this Book. And when we dig we begin to uncover proof that shows us again extra biblical truth, hey this is the Word of God we're going to talk to Dan Bahat, that's done a lot of digging in Israel, an eminent archaeologist.

**PART ONE**

**Kay:** Dan Bahat, when I look at your curriculum vitae, I see just a list of incredible accomplishments I see numerous awards that you've been given and all sorts of recognition. Tell me, as you have overseen so many excavations You have been the field director for so many You've done so many excavations When you do those excavations, what does that do to you in respect to the Bible?

**Dan:** That's a very good question, because for years people believed that archaeologists function is to prove the Bible is true. There is one thing in which I must say and especially now in the bygone what is going on today in the world. There are many attempts today to shatter the Bible, all to say that actually the Bible is not described being the reality of life as it was then. So there are two things I want to say. One of them is: The Bible is not a book of history. It is not meant to be a book of history. On the contrary, the Bible mentions few books of history. For example: many of the kings who died and described in the book of Kings. The Bible say, ["And the rest of the things they have done are written in the books of the Kings of Judah and Israel..."] (PARAPHRASE repeated throughout 2 Kings 13 & 14) which means the sense of history was there. The books were simply lost. Why was the Bible saved? And what is the purpose of the Bible? The Bible wants to do one thing. The Bible wants to show that all the events of the world, whatever happens from the creation, the wars, the invasions and so on. All are in the hand of the Lord. In order to prove it, they bring all kind of events. So we should not refer to the Bible as history book. All the events which are meant to show the greatness of the Lord. And hence, this is why the Bible was saved and others were not. And I'll give you an example. For example, today, when you read in the Bible about King David. The whole history of King David is still very obscure. But we got here something, the conquest of Jerusalem, his ruling over Hebron, bringing the Ark of the Covenant to Jerusalem, all kind of episodes. (2 Samuel) But we don't have a full history of that king. Many scholars trying today to shatter the personality of King David and to say, well it was not important. In Jerusalem, we have not found things which are there and things of the like. Fortunately, quite recently, about four or five years ago, what discovered a monument which was built by Armean king and there he describes how defeated the Israelites, the Israelites, not Judah, because he speaks about the period when the kingdom was already divided between Judah and Israel. And he calls it the house of David. In other words, in the mind of the Armean king, King David was such an important personality that it cast its name over the two kingdoms, Judah and Israel all together, alike. So it shows that indeed he was a great king. Since Jerusalem was conquered and occupied so many times, there are

so many distractions. And every distraction cause a disappearance of statues. Therefore, when we find something that dates from the time of David then we should be grateful for what we find and not ask why didn't we find or diminish the figure of David, because we don't find. It is simply the bedrock of Jerusalem that it suffered so many conquests cause so many people desired it. So as you see archeology does not prove David is a great personality, when it speaks about Jerusalem, but it proves that he was great when you speak about the other site where this monument was discovered. So you see we must understand we don't have to prove the Bible true.

**Kay:** That's right. I love it. I remember when I went to Israel years ago and Prime Minister Sharon stood up and was speaking to us. We were a very small group. And he took this Bible and he said, "This is our mandate for the possession of this land and it's not a matter of having to prove it. It's a matter of believing it, isn't it?"

**Dan:** Precisely. It's a matter of believing.

**Kay:** Esther Slessor, our mutual friend. She's an orthodox Jewish woman and she's a character and we're the same age. And Esther says to me, she says, "Nobody can believe that I love a Gentile the way I love you." She says, "You're like my sister." But she says, "When you look at Jerusalem, you have to think of a birthday cake. You have to think of all the different layers on the cake." And so when we look at all these layers, all these time periods, it's obvious that Jerusalem has always been Jerusalem. So everything's been built on top. So something comes along and destroys it. But tell us about how we discovered the Herodian quarter.

**Dan:** That's the Jewish quarter.

**Kay:** Yes.

**Dan:** That's a very exciting thing. In 1848 the old city was conquered by the Jordanians and it was held by them. They deliberately destroyed the Jewish quarter which was before 48 which was the area

which we lost in 48. In 67 we came back to Jerusalem and the idea was to resettle it to rehabilitate it and to make the Jewish quarter again a living part

of the city. So we understood that in order to build the new Jewish quarter, we have to dig first. And this gave us a great opportunity to dig I would say almost one sixth of the old city to learn its history. Amongst other things which was discovered was the fact that the last kings of Judah, still in the first Temple period, expanded the city so far that the Jewish quarter of today was included in the walls of, let's say, of the old city of Jerusalem. From the days of King Hezekiah, around 700 B.C., after the destruction of the Temple in 586 B.C. So all together this was a new fact. Over it was the Maccabean period which shows, for us it's still a problem. Because the book of Maccabees which is one of the Apocrypha, but a very important book. Suddenly it broadens our knowledge about second Temple period Jerusalem in an immense way. The important thing was though that over the Maccabean period we found an enormous residential quarter which we believe was held by the priests. Why by the priests? Because the only thing, only object which shows us the identity of the people to whom the houses belong was a big seal or stopper of a jar or something of the like which says, "This belongs to Balchatros." Now who were the Balchatros? Catros, by the way, is the playing harp. And the family of Catros was very well known. Actually there was a street song, you know, a kind of a popular song in Jerusalem which besmirched the priestly families. And amongst them was mentioned the name of Catros, the family of Catros because they say, "Be careful of their pen, because when they write things, they always write bad things about people." That was the song. So we know that the priests live there. Amongst many of the things which we have discovered, on one of the walls on the plaster we discovered an incision of the candelabra, of the Jewish candelabra which stood in the Temple. And it was made in a very peculiar way because, because according to the book of Exodus it was made flower and buds and therefore the men who scratched it or incised it on the wall made a special form of this candelabra. Now why is it so important? Because we must remember that the only source which we allowed to cut in the Temple was the one which you see in Titus Arch, which describes all the spoils he took from Jerusalem. We know today, it was always suspicion in the past, but we know it today, that actually the menorah, the candelabra looked different than what it looks in Titus' Arch. To this very day, the

emblem of the state of Israel for example is a copy of Titus Arch. But we know that it was slightly different. And this is of great importance because it gives us idea really that the people knew about things. They have seen those kinds of things and what do we need more. In the priestly family, they were quite rich. That's for sure. And therefore, their houses were lavishly decorated as mosaic floors which plaster walls gives you the impression of how did people, rich people live during the second Temple period. And that's what we want to know.

**Kay:** You know when I wrote my novel, *Israel, My Beloved*, which is the history of Israel from 586 B.C. all the way through the coming of Messiah, but I did all my research in Jewish books. But I used that to describe the homes and in the upper quarter. You know what I would love to do? I would love to grab you by the hand and say, as I've said to so many. "Come with me. Come with me." And I would take you into this building and we would go past a little gal that made sure that we had our ticket and we would walk down these stairs. And we would go into this very quarter. You would see the tiled floors. You would see the things that they discovered in the excavation. You would see the micvahs, the bathes where they purified themselves. And you would realize that this is the land of the Book. These are real people. And as Dan was saying, it's not a history book. It's a book about life. It gives you the history that you need to know about the lives of the people. But it's a book about life. It's a book that tells you how you can have life, how you can know the giver of life. You know, right from the very, very beginning when man sinned, when man listened to a lie, when man turned his back on God, God has been reaching out and reaching out and reaching out and He's reaching out with His Word. And He's saying, "...I [have come] that [you might] have life and that [you might] have it...abundantly." (John 10:10, NKJV) And you find that life in the Book of life. And you find out that these were real people that knew their God. And the Bible says, "...The people that...know their God [will] be strong, and do exploits." (Daniel 11:32b, KJV)

## **PART TWO**

**Kay:** What is the most sacred thing to the Jews, the most important piece of furniture that was in the Tabernacle and then in the Temple? It's the Ark of the Covenant. Dan, the Temple. How important is the Temple and how important is a new Temple to the Jews? And what about the Ark of the Covenant?

**Dan:** Well, the whole story is a very interesting story. We know almost nothing of the Ark of the Covenant. What do we know about it? First of all, the importance of the Ark of the Covenant was that when the children of Israel were in the desert, it was carried in front of them and it is kind of a chest which was surmounted by two figures which are cherubims in between of which, was the divine presence of the Lord. What happens next, when someone brings the Ark of the Covenant into the Temple, the Bible says explicitly, that the divine presence of the Holy Providence is moving to the entire volume of the Temple and then it is not mentioned anymore. I can say one thing. People knew about the Ark of the Covenant because in the book of Jeremiah there is a very interesting story. In Jeremiah 3, verse 33, Jeremiah says to people, ["You should do the good in the eyes of the Lord and don't think that if you do evil things and you say the Ark of the Covenant, it will save you."] (PARAPHRASE Jeremiah 3) By believing that the Ark of the Covenant will cover your sins. So what does Jeremiah say? ["There will be days when you will multiply that you shall not say anymore the Ark of the Covenant, nor will you visit it anymore."] (PARAPHRASE Jeremiah 3:16, KJV) In other words, it means that people used to visit the place where the Ark of the Covenant was and people don't think about it. But the book of Maccabees, it tells us the prophet Jeremiah took the Ark of the Covenant, along with the Tabernacle and he brought it to Mt. Nebo. Mt. Nebo, in Judaism means the mount of oblivions. Why oblivions? Because you remember that Moses was buried, the Bible ends by saying, ["...And no one knew to this very day where the burial of Moses was."] (PARAPHRASE Deuteronomy 34:6b) So Jeremiah took the Ark of the Covenant and buried it in the cave on Mt. Nebo. The interesting thing is that Jeremiah was followed by few people who came along with him. After he

left the cave, after he sealed the door and everything, then they came for it, looked for it and never found it again. This is not the end of the story. According to our Mishnah which is a later scripture, one of the priest serving in the Temple saw that amongst the paving slabs of the Temple Mount, there was one slab which was different. So he immediately knew this is where the Ark of the Covenant should be. So he went to call his friends to show them the place and maybe to do something with it. After he told them that he saw the different slab and he believed that this was the ark of the covenant, he immediately died. He dropped dead. So the others knew that actually this was the site. And the last thing which we know is saying, that there was a stone in Jerusalem from the days of the first prophets and the reference is to David and Solomon. And they say the name of the place was “A Stone of Foundation” where the Ark of the Covenant was. In other words the stone of foundation is a holy rock which is found today under the Dome of the Rock. So maybe it is somewhere there if the stories are true, because we get it already as a tradition.

**Kay:** So then somebody would have gotten it from Mt. Nebo and brought it back?

**Dan:** And brought it back, probably, that’s how you can explain it. Now I’m not so sure if the story is true. But at least, about Mt. Nebo, I think we can rely on book of Kings.

**Kay:** The book of Kings or Maccabees?

**Dan:** Book of Maccabees.

**Kay:** Let me just explain to you that the book of Maccabees falls between Malachi and Matthew, okay. It falls right in that time period. And the Maccabean period, you learn about it and what happens in the uprising and the prophesies in the book of Daniel. So I just wanted you to know that. Okay.

**Dan:** Yes, now, so therefore, it is very difficult to say where the Ark of the Covenant will be. But I want to say one thing. People look for it in various places. Some say it is in Ethiopia. It’s all nonsense. There is no hint whatsoever about it. Now about the Temple itself, that’s really interesting

thing. First of all one must understand that the Temple as it was in its utmost glory; let's say in the days of Jesus, there was no ark of the covenant in the Temple. So the Ark of the Covenant is not indispensable for the Temple. On the other hand, the Jewish people are quite, I would say very perplexed about the Temple. Because on one side, everyone wants to see the Temple in its glory. On the other hand when you speak to people they say that Judaism had its greatest expressions after the destruction of the Temple when many of the Jews went to exile. Many Jews remained in the country. The greatest creation of the Talmud, of the writings and all kind of things that occurred in the country because the Temple was not there. For the Christians, the Temple is indispensable. Because when you read the second epistle of Paul to the people of Thessaloniki.

**Kay:** Yes, Thessalonians.

**Dan:** Thessalonians. There it says explicitly how Christ will have His second coming. And there it describes that there will be one day in the Temple, that a false messiah will show up, then he will preach to people. People will be reluctant to understand what he is talking about. And suddenly Jesus Christ will show.

**Kay:** Now it says, in 2 Thessalonians, chapter 2, "...[then He will take His seat in the holy place], displaying himself as being God." (2Thessalonians 2:4b) Now when it says holy place, it's talking about the most holy place, the holy of holies, which is where the Ark of the Covenant was, okay, which is talking about the day of the Lord and the day of Lord is a day of gloom. It's a day of distress. It's a day of trembling. It's a day of fear. It's a day that is yet to come. But it's a day that is the precursor; it's the day that heralds the coming of Messiah.

**Dan:** That's exactly what I wanted to say. That in order to have the Messiah, we have to have the Temple built. Now the Jewish don't think that it will be a human hand. They believe that one day we'll get up and in the morning and we'll see the Temple there. The last thing which I want to say in conjunction is that you have pointed rightly. That actually Jesus should show up in the holy of holies, which is exactly where the holy rock is. I think that



the construction of the Dome of the Rock by the Moslems, which was not only to shelter the holy rock, but also to humiliate Christianity and to show the worthlessness of Christianity. Because what is idea behind it? First of all, it was built by Christian builders who weren't forced to do it. That's what I understand. Because it was built precisely in the shape of the Church of the Holy Sepulcher, which they were tombed out in the middle of which was a tomb of Christ. And actually there is a holy room. But it was built bigger and higher to show, we are better. But this is known throughout the world. The Moslems, because there was a fight. You see that the fact is, that the fight for whose Jerusalem which today you can see between us and the Moslems started much before. Now how can I speak about the Dome of the Rock as built against Christianity? Because when you read the building inscription, this is a very significant thing, the entire building inscription, which describes the building, is repeating itself six times the same thing, although with different words. And it goes around the dome and therefore there was a lot of play so they could write it six times. And what does it say? There is no God but God and God is one complete and in tact. No human being can say that they're part of God. God never gave any part of His to a human being. Don't say the word, eternity, because Jesus is just another prophet. In other words, the whole concept of the Trinity which is so basic in Christianity, it should be emulated by that inscription and it repeats itself six times.

**Kay:** That is true. And what I want you to know is years ago, George Otis wrote a book, and it said the greatest threat to Christianity is Muslim faith. It's the greatest threat to Christianity. It's the greatest threat to Judaism. And you really need to understand it. The other day I was reading the Bible and I said, "What a difference between this and the Koran." Beloved, there is going to be a Temple there. And that Temple will herald the coming of Christ.