

Indiana Jones and the Temple of Yahweh: What Archaeology Reveals About the Bible

The historical accuracy of the Bible is the subject of the next *Religion at the Interface* lecture to be presented by Jennifer Groves at the Midland Seventh-day Adventist Church, Friday, March 18 at 7 p.m. In spite of the abundance of archaeological findings from the Middle East, significant disagreements remain among experts on how this data relates to the biblical record.

A graduate of Andrews University and the University of Arizona, Ms. Groves is a staff archaeologist with the Tall Jalul Excavation, sponsored by Andrews University. She has taught anthropology and archaeology classes at Andrews University and Bethel College. This fall Ms. Groves will be entering the doctoral program in archaeology at the Andrews University Seminary. Her thesis will focus on the distribution of certain ceramic types in Jordan in the Madaba region during the 8th-5th centuries BCE (Late Iron II-Persian Periods). An experienced Middle East archaeologist, Ms. Groves has excavated at Tall Jalul since 1992. Prior to that, she worked at two other sites in Jordan: Tall Jawa (an Iron Age site) and el-Dreijat, a Hellenistic period fortified farmstead site. She also excavated at Tel Gezer in Israel. Excavations in the U.S. include the Wupatki Archaeological Project in northern Arizona. Her primary responsibility in this latter project was the classification of ceramic types.

Her lecture in Midland on March 18 addresses some popular misconceptions about biblical archaeology and why these ideas persist. A brief overview of the history of archaeology in the Middle East will provide the background for the discussion. The wide variety of theological and archaeological interpretations regarding some recent archaeological discoveries will be evaluated. Why are there such dramatic differences of opinion? Are these differences justified? Can a Christian who is professional archaeologist accept the historical references contained in the Bible as bearing the same inspired authority as the non-historical statements?

Jennifer Groves will also be speaking at the 11 a.m. Saturday worship service of the Midland Seventh-day Adventist Church on March 19, where her topic will be "He Can Do Magic: Seeking God in Troubled Times." Ancient peoples relied on a wide variety of techniques to communicate with various deities in an effort to extract answers for confusing and difficult circumstances. The Israelites practiced similar methods as they sought to follow God. What can we learn from their example?

Religion at the Interface lectures are free and open to the public. Their purpose is to assist the individual, young or old, in the lifelong process of developing a cohesive worldview, a total integration of intellectual and spiritual values into one consistent basis for faith, conviction, and life's decisions.