

## ARTIFACTS REVEAL AN ANCIENT CALENDAR SYSTEM

by Bill and Karen Bishop

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In the quest for Truth, people often seek some type of evidence that the calendar found in the Dead Sea Scrolls was one and the same calendar used by the Hebrew people from antiquity. There is no need to search further. This proof has been uncovered and reported.

In an article titled: [Calendars in Late Antiquity and the Middle Ages: Standardization and Fixation](https://blogs.ucl.ac.uk/calendars-ancient-medieval-project/), we find the discovery of an ancient plaque called the Tel Fara Plaque which was used for keeping the calendar. The complete article can be found at <https://blogs.ucl.ac.uk/calendars-ancient-medieval-project/>.

The picture below is courtesy of UCL Institute of Archaeology – from Sacha Stern - 'Counting time with peg holes'. Sacha was studying the evolution of Jewish calendars (among others) in late antiquity and medieval societies. The project was funded by the European Research Council, based in the Department of Hebrew and Jewish Studies at the UCL (University College of London).



Tel Fara Plaque, Courtesy of UCL Institute of Archaeology  
from Sacha Stern – *Counting Time with Peg Holes*

This concept of counting time with holes is profoundly related to the calendar of the Dead Sea Scrolls. In our book [The Biblical Calendar Then and Now](#), we show that from the day the new year begins, the rest of the year unfolds by counting! The calendar of the scrolls has 30 days in each month, and a single day called the Tekufah day at the end of each quarter which separates one season from the next. The 3 columns of 10 holes each would be for the 30-day count, and the hole at the top of the plaque would designate this special Tekufah day each season.

We first happened upon this artifact when researching an article that can be read at <https://thetorah.com/what-is-the-bibles-calendar/>.

Though the author had not yet realized that the ancient calendar system they had reported was related to the calendar of the Dead Sea Scrolls, when we take a

close look at the artifact, there is absolutely no way to refute this conclusion. The three rows of 10 holes each plus the extra at the top of the plaque provides an unmistakable caricature of the calendar of the scrolls.

In the article, they state that this was “discovered in the area of ancient Judah and dating from Iron Age II (early first millennium)”. This “age” was known to be the time when David and Solomon were living – the same time when the Zadokite priesthood was established. Actually, the plaque itself verifies this time frame.

The top of the plaque where the single hole is found has a distinctive character as well. It is called a proto-Aeolic capital. We find the description for this proto-Aeolic capital in an article by the Armstrong Institute:

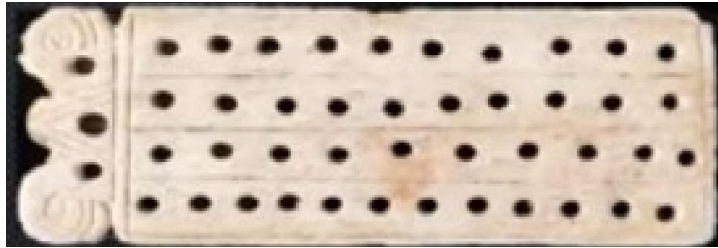
A proto-Aeolic capital is the stylized uppermost part of a column. It is highly decorative and makes the pillar more stable. The more ornate the pillar capital, the more prestigious the building it belonged to ... . The picture from their article shows the nature of such a capital.



You may recognize these features from top of the Tel Fara Plaque, pictured above. The name of the article speaks volumes. It is: [Proto-Aeolic Capital Points to King David's Palace](#). This then likewise corroborates that the timing of the Tel Fara Plaque is relative to the life of King David.

Later, when viewing Sean Griffin's Kingdom in Context youtube broadcast #52, we found that another similar (but more detailed) version of this plaque had been featured on page 37 of the March – April, 1983 edition of the [Biblical Archaeology Review](#) periodical. Sean's youtube broadcast from September 28, 2020 can be found at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zqFUplhMQp0>. It was titled: [Which Calendar Did Ancient Israel Follow](#), and a picture of this plaque was featured at 00:45:37 of the broadcast.

In this picture of the plaque, you will see an extra detail.



Biblical Archaeology Review (March-April 1983, p.37)

This plaque has the same 3 rows of 10 holes, but it also has a 4<sup>th</sup> row of 12 holes. So - this more sophisticated version allowed for the tracking of the months as they passed. We would note that there was never any need for a 13<sup>th</sup> hole, as there will never be a 13<sup>th</sup> month within the schematic framework of the 364-day calendar of the scrolls. This plaque also had 3 holes instead of just 1 in the same style of proto-Aeolic capital at the top of the plaque. This allowed for the counting of the first 3 quarters of the year as it passed. When the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter was complete, it was about time for the beginning of a new year, so no 4<sup>th</sup> hole was needed. This particular plaque was dated to the 7<sup>th</sup> century BCE.

Other plaques have been found as well, but these two will serve our purposes for now. So - did the calendar of the scrolls precede the luni-solar version of the Jewish calendar that is in use today? Without a doubt it did! So why are we resistant to a return to the ancient paths once known to Yah's children?

Jeremiah 18:15

(15) Because my people hath forgotten me, they have burned incense to vanity, and they have caused them to stumble in their ways **from the ancient paths**, to walk in paths, in a way not cast up;

Jeremiah 6:16

(16) Thus saith the LORD, Stand ye in the ways, and see, and **ask for the old paths**, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls. But they said, We will not walk therein.

Maybe with the resurgence of this calendar, we are being given a second chance to reject the newer paths with their Babylonian influence that Yah's people have stumbled into, and return to the ancient paths that He ordained for His people to follow. Now that they are making themselves known to us, let us be sure to NOT answer in the manner of Yah's people of old. Let us be sure NOT to reject these ancient paths as they did in the end of Jeremiah 6:16. Let us be sure NOT to say, we will not walk therein! Instead, may we research these ancient paths, and embrace them!