



The Spiro Ark and HGSS are proud to present:

New Light on the Temple Mount, Jerusalem

A lecture by Prof. Gabriel Barkay

The Temple Mount, which has never been excavated by archaeologists, has been like a black hole in the archaeological map of Jerusalem. But when in 1999 the Islamic authorities of the Mount (the Waqf) dug a large pit in the south-east sector, extracting more than four hundred truckloads of earth saturated with the Temple Mount's history and dumping it in the Kidron valley, they gave an opportunity for the first time to look into the archaeological record of the Mount. Work has taken place for the last six years to sift this soil, and tens of thousands of finds have been recovered, producing an original and important corpus of data which contributes much new evidence to the history of the Temple Mount throughout all of its periods of occupation.

The lecture will deal with the methodology of this project, and the problems which have arisen in its implementation, as well as with its results. The finds cover a span of fifteen thousand years, from prehistoric flint implements to modern artefacts. Included among the finds are a few seals and bullae with ancient Hebrew inscriptions of the First Temple period, probably connected to figures involved in the administration and cult of the Temple of Solomon, and approximately six thousand coins, from the earliest, minted in Jerusalem in the post-exilic period, through the Hellenistic, Hasmonean, late-Roman and Byzantine periods, to Arabic, Crusader and Islamic coins, up to modern times.

Gabriel Barkay is Professor of Biblical Archaeology at Bar-Ilan University and Jerusalem University College. He is a renowned Israeli archaeologist involved in many major excavations and is a recipient of the prestigious Jerusalem Prize for Archaeology. Prof Barkay is also responsible for the discovery of the earliest biblical verses ever found, the two silver plaques with the priestly benediction from the 7th century BCE. He is a member of the Supreme Archaeological Council of Israel. Dr Barkay currently heads (with Z. Devira) the actual project to sift the soil from the Temple Mount.

Wednesday 15TH February 2012, 8:00pm

VENUE: Hampstead Garden Suburb Synagogue, Norrice Lea, N2 0RE

Entrance fee: £5

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