

Archaeologist Amos Kloner And Scholars Dispute Lost Tomb Of Jesus Claim

Amos Kloner, First Archaeologist to Examine Site, Disputes James Cameron's Claims

For Immediate Release

FORT LAUDERDALE, Fla./EWORLDWIRE/Feb. 27, 2007 --- A top Israeli archaeologist on Monday squashed claims featured in a documentary by award-winning film directors that the burial site of Jesus has been located and which suggests he had a son. Similar to the DaVinci Code the documentary by Oscar winning James Cameron claims Jesus was married to Mary Magdalene and had a son named Judah.

Likewise in the Davinci Code controversy, the hoax came out in books and television shows like The History Channel's Josh Bernstein's, Digging for the Truth. In Bernstein's episode, he debunks the main artifacts that are referenced in the DaVinci Code. In both controversies, leading scholars claim there is more sensationalism than fact.

Amos Kloner, the first archaeologist to examine the site, said the idea fails to hold up by archaeological standards but makes for profitable television. Kloner said that of 900 burial caves found within four kilometers (two and a half miles) of Jerusalem's Old City and from the same era, the name Jesus or Yeshua was found 71 times, and that "Jesus son of Joseph" had also been found.

In a document that examines the artifacts, Professor Kloner writes, "It is easy to see how the writer wanted to attract the attention of modern day viewers by using forms that are as similar as possible to current script. Their placement and design are 'monumental' and stand out. The vast majority of such ossuary inscriptions were carelessly written and schematic."

Stephen Pfann, a biblical scholar at the University of the Holy Land in Jerusalem who was interviewed in the documentary, said the film's hypothesis holds little weight. "I don't think that Christians are going to buy into this," Pfann said. "But skeptics, in general, would like to see something that pokes holes into the story that so many people hold dear."

Professor L. Michael White, of the University of Texas, said he also doubted the claims were true. "This is trying to sell documentaries," he said, adding a series of strict tests needed to be conducted before a bone box or inscription could be confirmed as ancient. "This is not archeologically sound - this is fanfare."

This same sensationalism is the same hype that made the Davinci Code a bestseller. The new James Cameron movie is likely to try to cash in on the same group of people who thought the DaVinci Code was based on facts. Even Cameron admits, "This is the beginning of an ongoing investigation." Cameron said, "If things come to light that erode this investigation, then so be it." However, he will make a lot of money before the public knows the complete picture.

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Ossuary of Jesus?

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