

## Proto-Aeolic Capital Kept Quiet—But Why?

Archaeologist Binyamin Tropper recently discovered a proto-aeolic capital still attached to its column in a cave south of Jerusalem. While the discovery and its surrounding structure could provide invaluable insights into the Israelite monarchy in the First Temple period—perhaps as early as the much-debated period of David and Solomon—it turns out that Tropper and Kfar Etzion field school director Yaron Rosenthal were not the first to come across the proto-aeolic capital. According to the Israeli newspaper *Makor Rishon* (first printed in English by [The Jewish Press](#)), when Rosenthal shared the discovery with the Israel Antiquities Authority (IAA), he received a surprising response: “Yaron, please, you found it, but we know about it. Now forget the whole thing and keep your mouth shut.” Apparently the IAA has known about the proto-aeolic capital and column for 18 months, but has intentionally kept it quiet. The question is: why?

This beautiful capital, carved in proto-Aeolic style, was discovered by Kathleen Kenyon near a building that may be David’s palace and was likely once a part of that building. Credit: Israel Antiquities Authority. Proto-Aeolic (also called proto-Ionic) capitals are characteristic elements of First Temple period (1000 B.C.–586 B.C) public architecture. The proto-aeolic capital type has been found at major First Temple period sites, including Dan, Hazor, Megiddo, Jerusalem and Ramat Rachel. The recent discovery, which consists of a proto-aeolic capital and column carved out of a single piece of stone, stands out amongst the broader collection, which is comprised of capitals detached from their original column perches. The capitals are rectangular stone slabs incised with spiraling volutes, resembling Tree of Life motifs and Classical Greek Ionic capitals. The quality of the newly-discovered capital suggests that it was used in a royal structure; one that Rosenthal claims was untouched by secondary building use. This stunning structure has the potential to shed light on many remaining questions on Israelite kingship—if archaeologists are allowed to investigate the site.

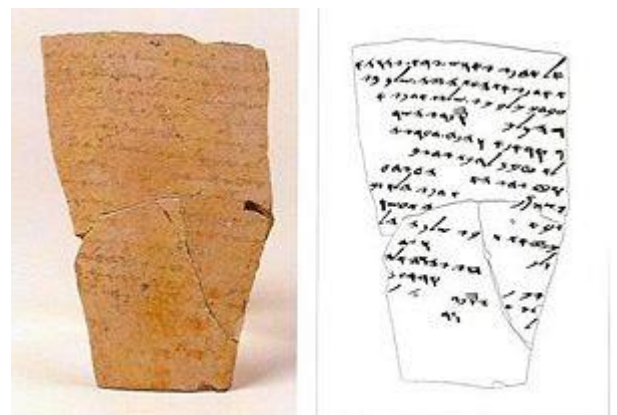
[Read more.](#)

For our Hebrew-speaking readers, please read the original article published in [Makor Rishon](#).

## Jeremiah 37

- 589 BC Pharaoh Psammetichus II dies and Pharaoh Apries (Hophra of Jeremiah 44:30) replaces him. Apries (Hophra) was ambitious, but incompetent.
- Ezekiel 17:15 – says Judah asked Apries to help fight off Babylon. One of the Lachish Letters mentions a commander from Judah going to Egypt. The longest of the ostraca is the third. It is a letter from Hoshai to Yaosh:

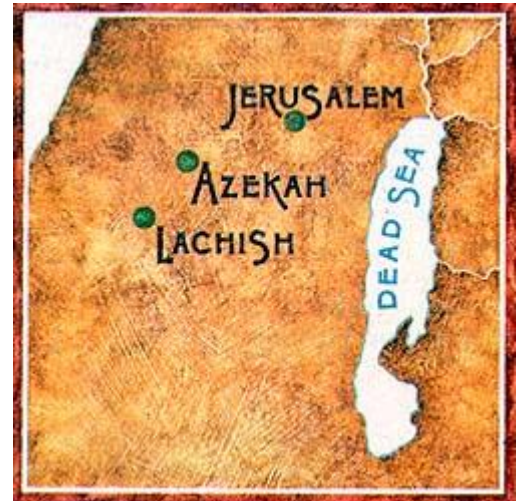
*Thy servant Hoshai hath sent to inform my lord Yaosh: May Yahweh cause my lord to hear tidings of peace! And now thou hast sent a letter, but my lord did not enlighten thy servant concerning the letter which thou didst send to thy servant yesterday evening, though the heart of thy servant hath been sick since thou didst write to thy servant. And as for what my lord said, "Dost thou not understand? - call a scribe!" as Yahweh lives no one hath ever undertaken to call a scribe for me;*



and as for any scribe who might have come to me, truly I did not call him nor would I give anything at all to him!

And it hath been reported to thy servant, saying, "The commander of the host, Coniah son of Elnathan, hath come down in order to go into Egypt; and unto Hodaviah son of Abijah and his men that he sent to obtain... from him."

And so for the letter of Tobiah, servant of the king, which came to Shallum son of Jaddua through the prophet, saying "Beware!" thy servant hath sent it to my lord.



Hoshaiah had been scolded for disregarding orders contained in an earlier letter. Some think that he disclosed the contents of a secret communication. He insisted that he had not wilfully disobeyed. The letter speaks of a trip to Egypt made by a man named Coniah, son of Elnathan.

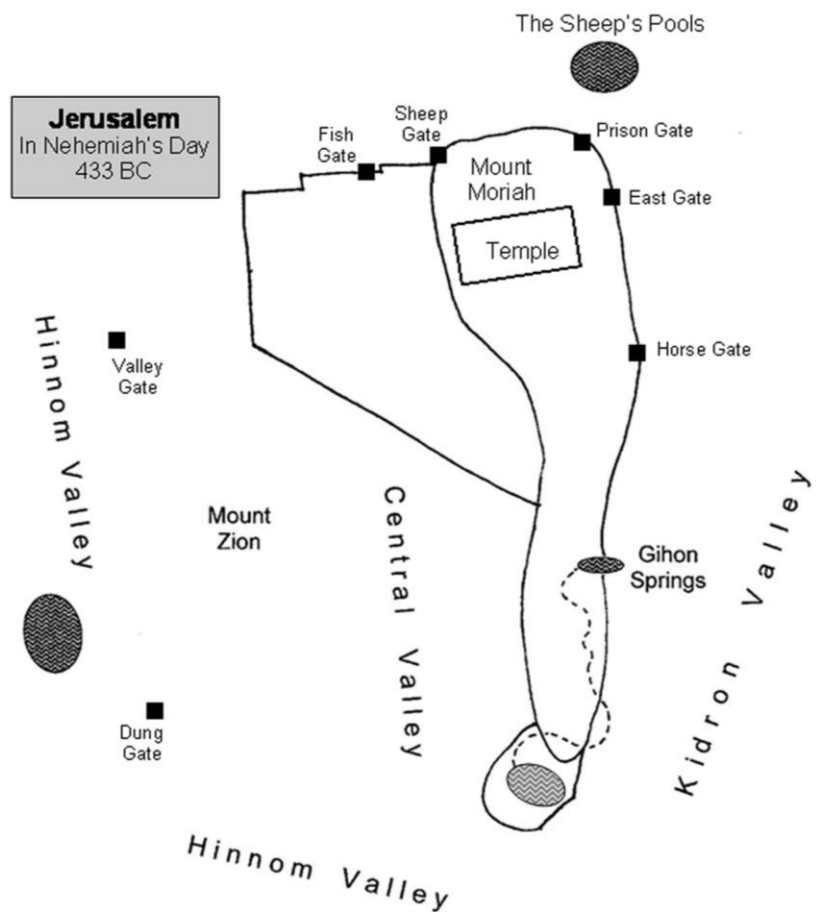
37:13

- Benjamin Gate would have led to the land of Benjamin.
- Jeremiah goes through the Benjamin Gate to get to Anathoth which is north/northeast of Jerusalem.
- Zedekiah used it as a place to do business in Jeremiah 38:7

37:15

The **house of Jonathan was a prison.**

- In the ancient world prisons were not used to punish prisoners, but to detain them until a decision could be reached, a debt paid, a situation resolved, etc. Not to punish them for a lengthy period of time.
- Prisons were chambers in temples, cisterns in royal palaces, or caves in private homes, granaries, silos or storerooms.



### 37:16 The Vaulted cell in a dungeon

- This appears to be dangerous and life threatening.
- In 38:6 Jeremiah will be placed in an **empty water cistern** and sink in the mud

### 37:21 Jeremiah is transferred to the courtyard of the guard.

