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Exciting News: We're Creating an Archaeological Exhibit

And it will host the world premiere of the Hezekiah and Isaiah bullae recently discovered in the Ophel in Jerusalem!

- Brad Macdonald
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I want to tell you a little about an exciting and special new project we are currently working on. Starting Sunday, June 10, the Armstrong International Cultural Foundation (our humanitarian arm) will host a three-month archaeological exhibit in the lobby of Armstrong Auditorium.

What makes this exhibit special is that it will be the world premiere of the Hezekiah and Isaiah bullae recently discovered in the Ophel in Jerusalem. We've titled the exhibit "Seals of Isaiah and King Hezekiah Discovered." In addition to showcasing more than 40 physical objects, we plan to explore the incredible story told by these artifacts. All of the artifacts come from the same period and tell the story of Judah's eighth-century-b.c. renaissance, its miraculous deliverance from the Assyrian Empire, and the extraordinary relationship between King Hezekiah and Isaiah the prophet. (We are also creating an online version of the exhibit.)

While the stars of the show are the seals of Hezekiah and Isaiah, I'm also pretty pumped about the supporting cast. In addition to the bullae, we have 37 other artifacts on loan from the Israel Antiquity Authority, including iron arrowheads used in the siege of Lachish as well as royal Judean clay vessels. The exhibit will also highlight plenty of Assyrian history and include replicas of the famous Sennacherib Prism (aka Taylor/Jerusalem/Oriental Prism), various other Assyrian inscriptions, and the famous Lachish wall reliefs (currently displayed in the British Museum).

We aim to tell the story of all these physical objects using maps, illustrations, mini-documentaries, interactive aids and storyboards. Visitors will be able to walk through a 12-foot-long exact replica of Hezekiah's underground water tunnel in Jerusalem.

That's not all. We are planning something special for the grand opening on Sunday, June 10. The exhibit will open with a special symposium hosted from the stage of Armstrong Auditorium *and* from the King David Hotel in Jerusalem. The symposium will feature three or four special speakers, including Dr. Eilat Mazar, as well as a short video. Dr. Mazar (and perhaps one or two others) will be speaking from a special Jerusalem reception we will host at the King David Hotel in Jerusalem. Her address will be broadcast live back to the audience in Armstrong Auditorium. Meanwhile, the events in Armstrong Auditorium, including one or two speeches, will be streamed live to the reception in Jerusalem. Isn't technology incredible?

We are still finalizing details, but opening day events will celebrate the exhibit opening and the Hezekiah and Isaiah bullae, as well as the 50-year anniversary of our "iron-bridge" partnership with Benjamin and Eilat Mazar and the State of Israel. In a way, the Hezekiah and Isaiah bullae, and a host of other discoveries made on the Ophel and City of David, are the fruits of this wonderful five-decade partnership.

If you would like to attend opening day in Edmond, Oklahoma, you can learn more and secure your ticket by visiting ArmstrongAuditorium.org.

If you would like to attend the reception in Jerusalem, please state your interest by e-mailing Brent Nagtegaal

at bnagtegaal@pcog.org.

If you can't make opening day, "Seals of Isaiah and King Hezekiah Discovered" runs from Sunday, June 10, through Sunday, August 19. Entrance is free after opening day.■

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