

# David and Goliath: truth or legend?

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A tiny artifact found at a Bar-Ilan University archaeology dig in Israel reportedly holds a clue as to the history of the biblical figure Goliath.

The small ceramic shard unearthed at Tell es-Safi -- the site of the biblical city "Gath of the Philistines" -- contains the earliest Philistine inscription ever discovered, The Jerusalem Post reported Thursday. The inscription mentions two names that are remarkably similar to the name "Goliath."

The discovery is of particular interest since the Bible identifies Gath as Goliath's hometown.

Professor Aren Maeir, chairman of the university's Department of Land of Israel Studies and Archaeology, told the Post the odds of the inscription referring to the Goliath of the Bible are "small if non-existent."

Maeir said the find has been dated to some 50 years after the story of David and Goliath was to have taken place. Additionally, Maeir says Goliath was a very popular type of name of that era.

But the Post noted the archaeological find may be seen by some as the first clear extra-biblical evidence that the story of the battle between David and Goliath may be more than just legend.

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