



**The Half Shekel Journals of 2023** by Pastor Ed Rice  
**#23027 Mon 27 Mar Solomon's Pillars**

I might well have spent another hour or two at the Timna Tabernacle.

I knew I did not have all the pictures I wanted, and I knew I was not the photographer to take more. A 10-Day Israel tour is madly pressed for time; this 14-Day tour was moderately so. The bus was headed out across the large Timna Valley with a projected stop at Solomon's Pillars before we took our ease at Eliot, Israel, on the Red Sea.

Solomon's Pillars are natural geological formations, now named after the Biblical King Solomon. No one is exactly sure why



that name stuck, except for the discovery that Solomon, and his recently discovered copper mining expeditions in the valley, caused his name to be affixed to the whole Timna Valley region.

The large quantities of sandstone around the valley, and the propensity for sandstone to erode by wind and rain into unique geological formations, is what Solomon's Pillars is all about. They seemed to have more of an Egyptian connection than a

Bible one. An inscription here depicts Pharaoh Ramsey III offering gifts to their goddess Hathor, and a Hathor Temple was built here by the Egyptians. Just the same, the sandstone formations were stupendous, and offered an hour of relaxation and photo poses with friends we had made on this journey.

See the picture to read the sign in Hebrew or Aramaic.

**Staying safe on the trails at Timna:** Rules for Visitors - General safety for visitors on wheels - Including cars, bicycles, and electric bikes.

Don't wander off! Stay on the paved roads and the designated dirt roads.

The roads have no shoulders! Go slowly, respect the road conditions, and be careful.

You'll be sharing all roads with people on foot and on bicycles. Please be extra careful, obey all traffic rules, and follow the directions on the posted signs.

Yield right of way to pedestrians and cyclists at all times.





## Safety on the hiking trails

Attention hikers! For your own safety, please follow instructions below and on the posted signs, including:

**Walk on the trails map for walking!**

Do not leave the trails for any reason. Before you start consider the terrain and the

weather. Be sure you have a hat, comfortable walking shoes, and enough water (at least three liters per person). No water is available along the trails, except at the Lake Complex.



Campfires of any kind are strictly forbidden - except in the picnic areas at the lake.

Flying drones anywhere in the park is strictly forbidden unless granted prior permission from the park manager.

Help preserve Timna's natural beauty - wildlife, vegetation and inanimate objects.

Help keep the park clean. Put waste in the containers provided, or pack it out with you.

Note that you are responsible for your own safety while visiting the park and using its facilities. No one else will be liable for any damage or injury to anyone walking or riding in the park or to any vehicle, whether on designated roads, and trails or otherwise. Do not endanger yourself or others.

**Trails are shared trails by motor vehicles, pedestrian and cyclists. Remember that, and be careful!**

Hiking on trails after dark is strictly forbidden.

Watch out for slippery and muddy sections of trails on roads. Stay away from the edge of cliffs. No gliding is allowed. Do not climb the cliffs.

Do not climb on any of the scenic Rock formations. Help preserve them as they are. (Hands off! No graffiti! No emojis!)





Timna Park and Solomon's Pillars were replete with hiking trails. Although we read the “Stay Safe on the Trails of Timna” sign, we were not really here for the hiking. In a large expanse that comfortably seated us on rocks around a “surround-sound” cathedral, Pastor Lee Pickett opened our Bibles to Psalms 148 and read all 14 verses before leading us in a prayer praising the Lord for the beauty of Creation and the beauty of the landscape where we were now seated.

*Psalm 148 1 ¶ Praise ye the LORD. Praise ye the LORD from the heavens: praise him in the heights.*

*2 Praise ye him, all his angels: praise ye him, all his hosts.*

*3 Praise ye him, sun and moon: praise him, all ye stars of light.*

*4 Praise him, ye heavens of heavens, and ye waters that be above the heavens.*

*5 Let them praise the name of the LORD: for he commanded, and they were created .*



*10 Beasts, and all cattle; creeping things, and flying fowl:*

*11 Kings of the earth, and all people; princes, and all judges of the earth:*

*12 Both young men, and maidens; old men, and children:*

*13 Let them praise the name of the LORD: for his name alone is excellent; his glory is above the earth and heaven.*

*14 He also exalteth the horn of his people, the praise of all his saints; even of the children of Israel, a people near unto him. Praise ye the LORD.*



*6 He hath also stablished them for ever and ever: he hath made a decree which shall not pass.*

*7 ¶ Praise the LORD from the earth, ye dragons, and all deeps:*

*8 Fire, and hail; snow, and vapour; stormy wind fulfilling his word:*

*9 Mountains, and all hills; fruitful trees, and all cedars:*





We were surrounded with such a profound beauty of majestic sandstone sculptures, that the verses resonated off the stone walls on three sides of our chapel.

*Ps 89:11-12 The heavens are thine, the earth also is thine: as for the world and the fulness thereof, thou hast founded them. The north and the south thou hast **created** them: Tabor and Hermon shall rejoice in thy name.*

Tabor means “an abrupt mound”, particularly Mount Tabor which rises out of the valley near the foot hills of Nazereth. Hermon means “a sanctuary” particularly Mount Hermon that overlooks Israel's northern most city of Dan. We now sit in the south of end Israel, ... and, “*The north and the south thou hast **created** them.*”

All this makes one ponder our Creator, Jehovah God who said:

*Isa 40:25-28 To whom then will ye liken me, or shall I be equal? saith the Holy One.*

*26 Lift up your eyes on high, and behold who hath created these things, that bringeth out their host by number: he calleth them all by names by the greatness of his might, for that he is strong in power; not one faileth.*

*27 ¶ Why sayest thou, O Jacob, and*



*speakest, O Israel, My way is hid from the LORD, and my judgment is passed over from my God?*

*28 Hast thou not known? hast thou not heard, that the everlasting God, the LORD, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary? there is no searching of his understanding.*

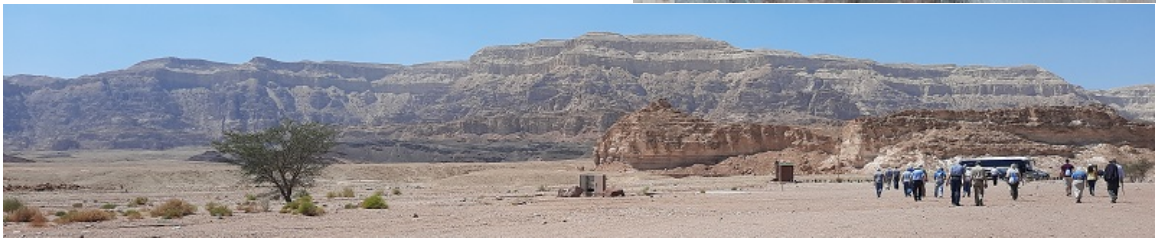
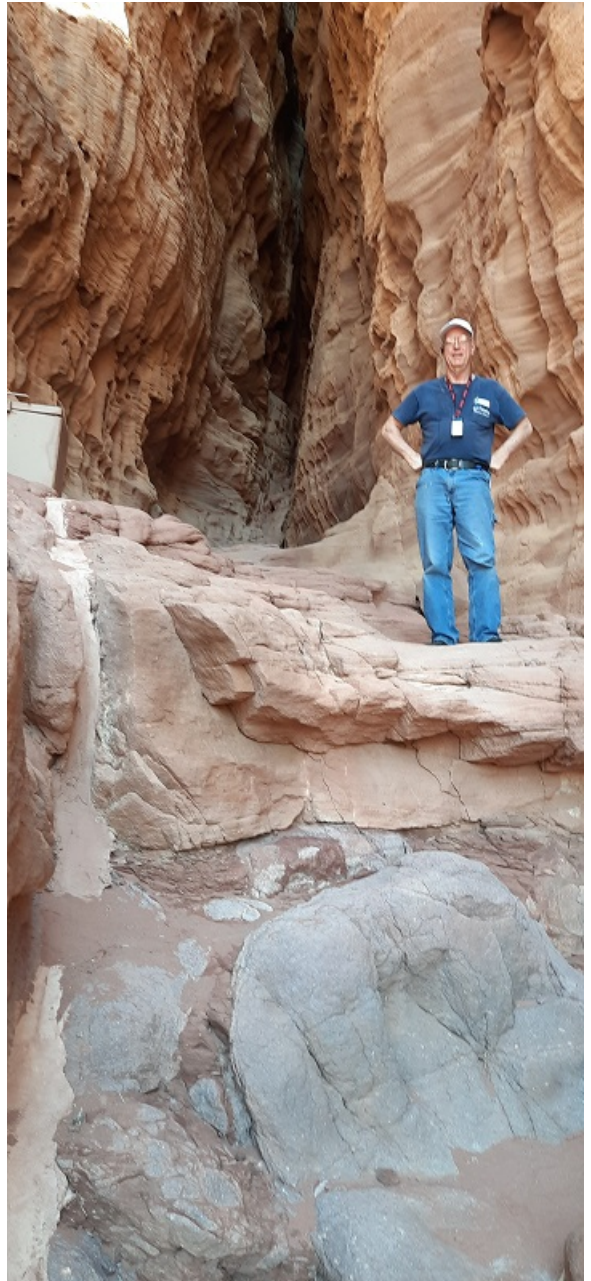


“Our Jehovah God, who created all this,” Lee paused and slowly turned around taking in the massive pillars that surrounded our little chapel of stone, ... “He looks down now and sees you, and sees me, ... and He loves us, He sooo loves us.” The world does not know him as their Creator, but we do, and he says:

*Isa 42:5-8 Thus saith God the LORD, he that created the heavens, and stretched them out; he that spread forth the earth, and that which cometh out of it; he that giveth breath unto the people upon it, and spirit to them that walk therein: I the LORD have called thee in righteousness, and will hold thine hand, and will keep thee, and give thee for a covenant of the people, for a light of the Gentiles; To open the blind eyes, to bring out the prisoners from the prison, and them that sit in darkness out of the prison house. I am the LORD: that is my name: and my glory will I not give to another, neither my praise to graven images.*

These pillars make me feel small, so does this Timna Valley, so does this expanse of Israel's Negev, but my God does not. He is God, ... and there is none else.

*Isa 45:18 For thus saith the LORD that created the heavens; God himself that formed the earth and made it; he hath established it, he created it not in vain, he formed it to be inhabited: I am the LORD; and there is none else.*



Pastor Lee captured the moment, captured it in Scripture that is sharper than a two edged sword, and able to discern the thoughts and intents of the heart.

Eli our guide, gave us a wealth of background about the sandstone's natural monuments, the Egyptian presence here and their temples, and then dismissed us to relax for pictures, exploration, and a casual hike back to the bus. We did all of that, with majestic awe.





God blessed us in a visit to the Timna Valley. I especially enjoyed the Tabernacle, but all of it held an overpowering, never-been-here-before, flavor that I could taste. I'll not soon forget what Negev is. We pressed on through Israel's ongoing Negev, and arrived in Eilat, where we checked in to the Isrotel Yam Suf Hotel on the Red Sea. Pastor Lee highlighted the incredible view of the ancient land of Edom directly across the Gulf of Aqaba. But I

*The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them; and the desert shall rejoice, and blossom as the rose. It shall blossom abundantly, and rejoice even with joy and singing: the glory of Lebanon shall be given unto it, the excellency of Carmel and Sharon, they shall see the glory of the LORD, and the excellency of our God (Isa.35:1-2).*



Eliat, Israel, Isrotel Yam Suf Hotel on the Red Sea  
27 March 2023 15:40



remembered better his emphasis of the good meal and a wonderful nights sleep.