

# JANET PARSHALL

## COMMENTARY

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### **Preserved for Eternity**

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I used to find the subject of archeology rather boring. That is, until my husband opened up the wonders of that particular science to me.

Through my husband's instruction and enthusiasm, I began to realize that "digging around" in archeology wasn't just about finding broken pieces of ancient pottery, or dusting off stones. It's more like being an historical Sherlock Holmes – finding bits of history that tell a bigger story.

A discovery made in the sands of Egypt is a perfect example of what I mean. Egyptian archaeologists have found the mummy of a woman. Nothing unusual there, you might think. Doesn't Egypt have lots of mummies? That's true enough. In fact, on a trip to Egypt, my husband and I saw many such discoveries at the museum in Cairo. But this mummy is truly different.

Found in the Bahariya Oasis, about 186 miles outside of Cairo, this mummy dates back to the Roman Era. The discovery was made when the archeologists uncovered 14 Greco-Roman tombs dating to the third century B.C.

The mummy is 38 inches tall; leading scientists to believe this was either a woman or a child. But, as is often the case, it is the burial box, or the sarcophagus that is most intriguing.

The box is decorated with the face of a woman – clothed in a long tunic, a headscarf, shoes and a bracelet. Colored stones where the eyes are carved into the box give the sense that the woman is awake.

Given the intricacies of the sarcophagus, it's believed that this was a woman who was probably wealthy and held a prominent place in society.

Archeologists have dated the mummy at about 31 B.C., the period of history when Rome ruled Egypt.

Think about it! Almost 2100 years ago people like Cleopatra, Marc Antony and Julius Caesar were making history. And now, the Roman Empire and Royal Egypt *are* history. All that's left are bits of pottery, dusty stones, and burial boxes.

But in a land northeast of Egypt, there walked a Man like no other. He healed the sick, made the blind to see and raised the dead. Archeologists will never find His body in some ornate burial box. In fact, quite the opposite. His tomb is empty.

What's more – His death provided for us a treasure that's imperishable. It's worth is greater than silver or gold. It will never perish, or spoil or fade. It won't be found in the desert sands, but it's being kept in Heaven for us.

1 Peter tells us that we are like the grass and the flowers – we wither and fall. That find in Egypt reminds us of our appointment with death. A woman lived and died as a Roman citizen in Egypt thousands of years ago and all that remains is a fascinating artifact of history. But that empty tomb outside of Jerusalem reminds us that, through Christ, *we* have been preserved through *all* eternity.

That's my opinion. I'm Janet Parshall.

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