

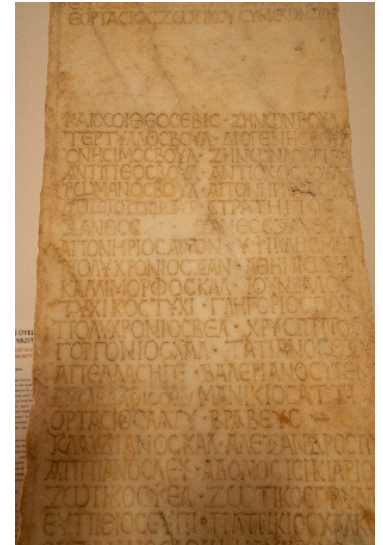
Saturday, Nov 7 part 2: Aphrodisias (con't)

## Jewish History in Aphrodisias

Little is known about the Jewish presence here. One carving of a menorah has been found (which we did not see). In the museum there was a pillar inscribed on two adjacent faces with the names of men who either belonged to the local synagogue or had donated to it. The placard with the description said that there “were about 110 names on the front and 25 on the left side. The main list on the front was divided into two parts. First were those who had distinctly biblical names or names favored by Jews such as Benjamin, Judas, Joseph Jacob, Samuel. Beneath those were a list of those Gentiles who had a strong chosen affiliation with Judaism but who were not themselves Jews. Some of the people also listed their professions. They were all tradesmen ranging from food providers to painters to leather workers to sculptors and builders. It is likely the pillar stood outside the local synagogue and was a striking testimony to the



prominent place of the Jewish community in the city, to continuing fluid religious interaction in the fourth century, and especially to the high valuation of professions among this group of like-minded monotheists.” And yet no synagogue has been found. Our archeologist guide said he is sure they will still uncover a synagogue and will let me know when they do.



Almost all of the heads of the statues both on the grounds and in the museum had broken noses. When Christianity became more prominent, they broke the noses of the statues as a way to break the pride of the people.



There were reliefs of everyday life. Farming, markets. I asked our museum guide if there were any statues or reliefs of someone sleeping. She said no, but on the way out, I did notice one on the wall. Everyone sleeps – I knew there had to be something.

