



Introduction to Biblical Archaeology

Rev. Neil C. Damgaard, Th.M.

Fall 2004

SYLLABUS

Texts:

All students will be required to obtain their own textbooks.

1. **Understanding the Land of the Bible (A Biblical – Theological Guide)** by O. Palmer Robertson, 1996, P& R Publishing, 158 pages. Available from Amazon.com or Barnes & Noble.com (about \$10 in softcover).
2. **Ancient Israel, From Abraham to the Roman Destruction of the Temple** (Revised version), 1999. Prentice Hall/Biblical Archaeology Society, 355 pages. From Amazon.com or from http://www.easycart.net/ecarts/bib-arch/Ancient_Israel.html (about \$20 in softcover).
3. Two Pamphlets: **Archaeology of the Bible (Old Testament) and Archaeology of the Bible (New Testament)**, 2003, Rose Publishing. About \$4 each. From <http://www.rose-publishing.com/showproducts.cfm?FullCat=36>

Course Paper: Each student will be required to write a five page research paper (double spaced) on a topic of relevance to biblical archaeology and of personal interest. A list of ideas and possible topics will be distributed. This will count 30% of the final grade.

Exams: A Mid-term *take home* exam on the material covered in class will be distributed on October 25th and is due on November 1st. This will count 30% of the final grade. A Final *take home* exam will be distributed on December 6th and is due on December 13th. It can be mailed back. This will count 30% of the final grade.

Attendance: Students may not miss more than one class, and they are responsible to get the notes for that class as the material will be covered on the final. Perfect attendance or 1 absence will be worth 10% of the final grade. More than one absence will forfeit 10% of the final grade.

Schedule

Week 1	Monday September 13 th	What IS Archaeology & What IS “Biblical” Archaeology?
Week 2	Monday September 20 th	The Materials of Biblical Archaeology Reading: Chapter 10, Robertson
Week 3	Monday September 27 th	Early Old Testament Archaeology Reading: Chapter 1, Shanks; Chapters 6 & 7, Robertson
Week 4	Monday October 4 th	Archaeological Exercise (Hands-On Learning) Reading: Chapter 8, Robertson
	Monday October 11 th	NO CLASS Columbus Day
Week 5	Monday October 18 th	Archaeology of the United and Divided Monarchies Reading: Chapters 4 & 5, Shanks



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LESSON 1

What Is Archaeology? What Is Biblical Archaeology?

Introduction There is something almost magical about digging for the past. We can learn much about how people lived, how events transpired and how the Bible accurately reflects the past in a study of biblical archaeology. It also can make our Bibles “glow” with even more certain light as we see through archaeology how an objective study of archaeological evidences illuminates the biblical record. I have been fascinated with this area of study since my early 20’s and have enjoyed one trip (so far) to Israel itself. I hope this small course will trigger interest in you to launch you on a lifetime of study into an endless pursuit of a deeper understanding of the people, events and great acts of God in the past.

Definitions

Archaeology

- ⌘ Scientific study of material remains of human cultures, deriving knowledge about prehistoric times. Began in the 1400s with the study in Italy of ancient Greek sculpture. (*The Concise Columbia Encyclopedia*, c. 1983 Columbia University Press.)
- ⌘ The science of the study of history from the remains of early human cultures as researched primarily by systematic excavations.
- ⌘ A systematic and descriptive study of antiquities via the exploration of the remains of past humans.
- ⌘ That branch of historical research which investigates past civilizations from surviving art, architecture, monuments, inscriptions literature, language, customs, and other material traces.

Biblical Archaeology

- ⌘ Archaeology of the biblical lands, especially the ancient Middle East, using artifacts, excavated remains and ancient texts to recreate the cultural setting of biblical times. Developed first by the British biblical scholar Edward Robinson, early 19th century.
- ⌘ Biblical archaeology is that area of archaeology which throws light upon our understanding of the Bible. As such, Biblical archaeology will be primarily restricted to the study of the culture and history of the Middle East and the Mediterranean world - that area which served as the historical context for the Bible.

1. To Aid us in Understanding the Bible.

Each book of the Bible was written to a particular audience.

- Genesis is written to Israelites who have come out of Egypt.
- Judges is written to Israelites living under the monarchy of Israel.
- Chronicles is written to post-exilic Jews returning to the land.
- The epistles are written to various churches throughout the Roman Empire.

In each case, the human author of the book assumes a certain amount of a prior knowledge. He assumes that he can speak of various geographic or cultural areas and that they will be known and understood and applied by his readers.

Our problem is that we are reading ancient Scriptures from a 21st century vantage point. A study of Biblical archaeology helps us to step into the sandals of the original readers and to interpret the Scriptures properly. It is only then that we will be able to apply the truths of the Scriptures rightly in our day.

2. To Affirm the Scriptural Narrative.

The Bible's historical accuracy has long been the source of attack. These attacks have not abated in recent years; they have escalated in intensity. One of the necessary fields of Biblical apologetics will be the defense of the historical veracity of the Bible. The battlefield for this conflict will be the arena of Biblical archaeology.

Make no mistake, this is no easy conflict. There are many archaeologists who reject the Bible out of hand, going so far as to deny the historicity of the patriarchs, the Exodus event and the existence of David or Solomon and their kingdoms.

At the same time, we must realize that there are many things in the Bible which are not substantiated in current Biblical archaeology. That is because we have only found a small fraction of the remains of antiquity.

Principle: The absence of evidence is not evidence of absence. This has been proven time and time again as new finds have substantiated areas which were previously thought to be in error.

¹ John Stevenson, assistant pastor at St Andrews Presbyterian Church and guest lecturer at Southwest Biblical Institute, South Florida Institute of Biblical Studies, Moldova Bible and Seminary in Eastern Europe, and most recently at the Miami International Seminary

3. To Aid us in the Work of Bible Translation.

Language is not a constant. It is always changing. One has only to pick up a King James Bible to see how much the English language has changed over the past 400 years. What is true of the English language is also true of the languages in which the Bible was written.

- The Old Testament was written primarily in Hebrew with a few chapters in Daniel being penned in Aramaic. Modern Hebrew has gone through some changes and there are a number of words in the Old Testament which are "hapax legomenon" - words which appear only once and which appear nowhere else.

How are we to determine the meanings of such words? It is the field of archaeology which provides assistance. Archaeological writings give us other examples of the usage of certain words and are a great help in interpreting the Bible.

- The New Testament is written in Koine Greek. The Greek of the New Testament is very different from the modern Greek which is spoken today. Fortunately, we have a great deal of examples of Koine Greek to compare with our New Testament vocabulary.

Archaeological Periods

Archaeological Periods in Palestine	Approx. Dates B.C.	Egyptian Dynasties	Biblical Correlations
Paleolithic (Old Stone Age)	Prior to 15,000 B.C.	Pre-dynastic	Genesis 1-11
Mesolithic (Middle Stone Age)	15,000-8,000		
Neolithic Pre-pottery	8,000-5,000		
Neolithic Pottery	5,000-4,300		
Chalcolithic	4,300-3,300		
Early Bronze I	3,300-2,900	1 2	
Early Bronze II	2,900-2,600	3 4 5 (Pyramid Age)	
Early Bronze III	2,600-2,300	1st Intermediate Per.	
Early Bronze IV	2,300-2,100	6 7 8 9 10	
Middle Bronze I	2,100-1,900	11 12	Patricarchs
Middle Bronze IIA	1,900-1,700	2nd Intermediate Period (Hyksos)	Sojourn in Egypt
Middle Bronze IIB	1,700-1,600		
Middle Bronze IIC	1,600-1,550		
Late Bronze I	1,550-1,400	18 New Kingdom	Exodus
Late Bronze IIA	1,400-1,300	19 Empire Age	Conquest
Late Bronze IIB	1,300-1,200		Judges
Iron IA	1,200-1,150	21	United Monarchy
Iron IB	1,150-1,000		
Iron IC	1,000-918		
Iron IIA	918-800	22 23 24 25 26	Divided Kingdom
Iron IIB	800-586		
Iron III	586-332	27 28 29 30	Captivity & Return to land
Hellenistic Period	332-63		Intertestamental Period
Roman	63 B.C.-c.450 A.D.		



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LESSON 2

The Materials of Biblical Archaeology

Introduction

Biblical archaeology is assisted by a number of important “materials.” The student needs to be familiar with each to appreciate the junction of various fields that biblical archaeology represents. Each area of investigation actually justifies great study but a general overview is in order here. We note also, that some of these areas of study include no controversy (geography for instance) but others have experienced much varied opinion and debate.

Biographies

Modern biblical archaeology began in the nineteenth century. Initially British, then American and finally Israeli archaeologists have given large portions of their professional careers to the unearthing and exegesis of biblical sites. They include Edward Robinson (1794-1863), William Foxwell Albright (1891-1971), Constantin von Tischendorf (1815-1874), Kathleen Mary Kenyon (1906-1978), Kenneth Kitchen, etc.

Scope and Cartography

The lands of the Bible go far beyond the tiny borders of the land of Israel. The story of the Bible begins in Mesopotamia, the land between the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers. By the end of the New Testament, the horizon has stretched westward all the way to Spain. Therefore we generally divide Biblical Archaeology into Old Testament Archaeology and New Testament Archaeology, which enters into the era of the Roman empire

Cartography is the study of maps and map-making. A general knowledge of map reading is essential to appreciating biblical archaeology. Maps are a central tool in placing sites in context to the ancient world, to the modern world and to biblical references to events, people, nations and cities.

Geography

Geography is the greater study of places, distances, land features, climate conditions, trade routes, boundaries, people movements, military campaigns and barriers. It is essential to have a basic understanding of what is where. Many places sound similar or look similar in writing and thus care should be taken for accuracy in referencing geographical details. Along with history, geography is a most important sub-study in biblical archaeology. Although the land of Israel itself is small, it is a fascinating and unique place!

Stratigraphy

This is the important study of the interpretation of the character of excavations. It rests on the fact that a lower deposit is earlier than the one above it. Artifacts in a given layer can, therefore, be earlier than the material in that deposit, but they cannot be later. Apart from minor disturbances of the soil, the layer, when isolated, is identified primarily by color, soil, and contents.

Methods of Excavations

1. **Complete excavation of a site** – the whole area is systematically laid bare. Most expensive means of excavation; used at Megiddo Levels 1-4.
2. **Pit Method** – Large pits sunk into important areas; cheaper.
3. **Trench Method** – Trenches cut in long rows through successive layers of strata; used at Jericho from 1953-1957.
4. **Grid Method** – the area to be excavated is divided into small squares with 3 feet between each square. Only 2 or 3 people enter each pit to excavate; less damage to objects; all finds are mapped and labeled according to the area.

Historical Sources

The Bible is our first source of information about what, where, when, who and often why. But there are many other historical sources that inform the study of biblical archaeology. Some are written, some are inscriptions, some are artistic, some are architectural and so forth. We use any area of study which might help us better understand a site.

Artifacts and Structures

An “artifact” is an object produced by human action and for a designed purpose. Artifacts include tools, weapons, utensils, etc. Grouped together, artifacts form “assemblages.” There have been thousands of fascinating artifacts excavated in Palestine since the early 1800s.

Structures offer a fascinating glimpse into the history of the past, biblical and non-biblical. The oldest archaeological site in the Middle East (indeed, in the world) is the tower at Jericho, dated to the 7th century before Christ! In this introductory course we will view a number of important remains of ancient structures.



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LESSON 3

Early Old Testament Archaeology

Reading: Chapter 1, Shanks; Chapters 6 & 7, Robertson

Introduction

To find evidence in the ground of the occupation of Palestine by the Hebrews should not surprise us. They were there. The Bible states that they existed because God created them as a new nation, beginning with Abram and his family, originally of Ur. From him, the Bible says that God said, a major and incredibly significant people would grow. They began in Palestine, moved to Egypt, came back from Egypt and then occupied a network of settlements, villages, cities and finally regions which would integrate into the nation of Israel down to their dispersal by the Romans at the end of the first century, A.D. A familiarization with the basic structure of the Old Testament is necessary to begin appreciating Old Testament archaeology. A basic outline would be

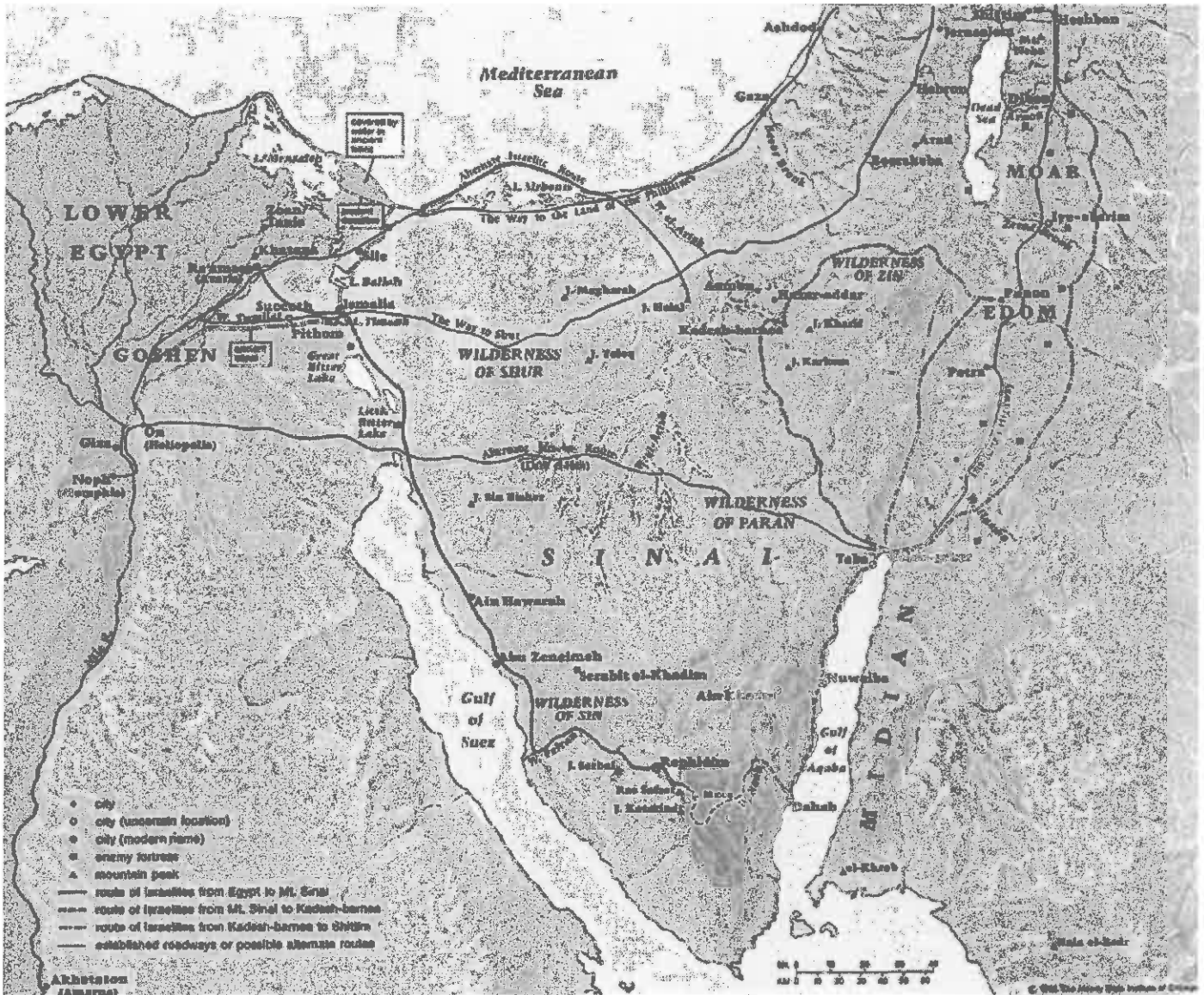
PERIOD	Years	Bible	People	Places	Events	Other Societies
➤ Pre-Abrahamic		Gen.				
➤ Abram & Sarai		Gen.				
➤ Isaac		Gen.				
➤ Jacob & sons		Gen.				
➤ Moses & the exodus		Ex.-Deut.		Sinai		Egypt
➤ Joshua		Josh.			Jericho	
➤ The Judges		Judg.				
➤ The First Monarchy		I Sam.		Canaan		Philistines
➤ The Second Monarchy			Solomon			
➤ The Third Monarchy						
➤ The Divided Monarchy						
○ Northern Kingdom						
○ Southern Kingdom						Medo-Persia
➤ Babylonian captivity	586B.C.	Daniel, etc.				Babylon
➤ The Return		Ezra, Neh.				
➤ Intertestamental period	>435 B.C.				Revolt	Greece
➤ Roman era	100 B.C.-100 A.D.	N.T.	Paul	The Med.		Rome

The earliest eras of study have yielded only a small amount of data beyond what the Bible states. For instance, even though Jericho has been significantly excavated, it is still controversial as to whether there is actual evidence there of Israelite destruction.

But that does not mean there is minimal data on Old Testament events. To the contrary, there is much. Your copy of *Archaeology and the Bible – Old Testament* is an

excellent guide as to what has been found so far, including: 1) the Sumerian King List; 2) evidence of an ancient flood story; 3) findings in Ur, hometown of Abraham; etc.

Places



The early history of the Hebrews has them moving between many locations before finally settling in Palestine. What remains of those times are some structures, artifacts, and of course, the biblical record, written by Moses and other early leaders. We find that many of the places referred to in the writings, have been at least partially uncovered and excavated.



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LESSON 4

An Exercise in Archaeology

1. Divide into two teams, according to choice.
2. Appoint a recording secretary to document your exploration.
3. Discover an artifact, hidden in the dirt in the bin for your team.
4. Clean the item.
5. Recreate the item.
6. Repair the item.
7. Speculate the use of the item and its date.
8. Write up your report and submit it to the instructor.



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LESSON 6

Archaeology of the Exilic Period

Reading: Chapters 6 & 7, Shanks

Introduction

Israel went into exile in the first years of the sixth century before Christ. This meant their land was despoiled, their families broken up, their possessions scattered if not destroyed and their very persons deported (those who survived the violence) into **Babylon** (see Genesis 10:10) to serve as responsible members of Babylonian society. God decreed the captivity because His people had stubbornly drifted into disbelief, wickedness and cynicism. Once there, we have glimpses of life there for the seventy period prescribed by God. Compare Psalm 137 and Jeremiah 29:5-7.

Psalm 137 (NASB)

¹ BY the rivers of Babylon, There we sat down and wept, When we remembered Zion. ² Upon the willows in the midst of it We hung our harps. ³ For there our captors demanded of us songs, And our tormentors mirth, *saying*, "Sing us one of the songs of Zion." ⁴ How can we sing the LORD'S song In a foreign land? ⁵ If I forget you, O Jerusalem, May my right hand forget *her* skill. ⁶ May my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth, If I do not remember you, If I do not exalt Jerusalem Above my chief joy. ⁷ Remember, O LORD, against the sons of Edom The day of Jerusalem, Who said, "Raze it, raze it, To its very foundation." ⁸ O daughter of Babylon, you devastated one, How blessed will be the one who repays you With the recompense with which you have repaid us. ⁹ How blessed will be the one who seizes and dashes your little ones Against the rock.

Jeremiah 29:5-7 (NASB)

⁵ 'Build houses and live *in them*; and plant gardens, and eat their produce. ⁶ 'Take wives and become the fathers of sons and daughters, and take wives for your sons and give your daughters to husbands, that they may bear sons and daughters; and multiply there and do not decrease. ⁷ 'And seek the welfare of the city where I have sent you into exile, and pray to the LORD on its behalf; for in its welfare you will have welfare.'

Treatment of the Jews in Babylon

Because of the Babylonian Captivity, Babylonia became the most important center of Jewish life during the Exile. We know a bit about Jewish thought and life because of some Jewish

communities in Egypt, but virtually nothing from the Assyrian Captivity in 722 B.C. and of the 10 lost tribes.

The Jewish people survived in Babylon because the Babylonian policy allowed the Jews to settle in towns and villages along the Chebar River, which was an irrigation channel. The Jews were allowed to live together in communities, they were allowed to farm and perform other sorts of labor to earn income. Many Jews eventually became wealthy. This was probably because of the influence of certain Jews who ministered in the palace of Babylon, like Daniel and his friends. It is also likely that the Lord purposed that the Jews would settle down there and get comfortable. Then after the 70 years were complete it would be a test of faith to pick up and return to Jerusalem.

In any case the Jews were treated well, and tablets were found near the Ishtar Gate which indicate that even in captivity Jehoiachin was referred to as the "king of Judah" and he received abundant food supplies from the royal storehouse.

During captivity the Jews were encouraged by the prophet Jeremiah from Jerusalem to take wives, build houses, plant gardens and take wives and take advantage of their situation because they were going to be there for seventy years.

The Exile was truly God's punishment to a rebellious people but they were to learn the lesson from His chastisement, and maintain hope for the coming redemption. They were to keep their hope alive and not be assimilated into the Babylonian way of life. To prevent this and to preserve their identity the religious leaders had Scribes copy the Scriptures. They also wrote much literature and taught the people to observe the Sabbath and to circumcise their male children.

Among the many archaeological discoveries that confirm the account written in the Bible, here are a few that stand out.

Lachish Letters



Important light has been revealed regarding the last days of Judah by the discovery in 1935 of eighteen ostraca (clay tablet with writing in ink) written in an ancient cursive script belonging to the seventh century B.C.

They were discovered at Lachish (Tell ed-Duweir) among the ruins of a small guard room just outside the city gate. Then a few years later three inscribed potsherds were also found at the site, and like the others, they contained names and lists from the period just before the fall of Jerusalem in 586 B.C.

Most of the letters were dispatches from a Jewish commander named Hoshai who was stationed at an outpost north of Lachish, who apparently was responsible for interpreting the signals from Azekah and Lachish during the time when the:

Jer 34:7 "when the king of Babylon's army fought against Jerusalem and all the cities of Judah that were left, against Lachish and Azekah; for only these fortified cities remained of the cities of Judah."

These final communications which mentioned the political and religious turmoil of the last days of Judah reveal the intensity of this time period and confirm that which was written in the Bible by the prophet Jeremiah.

The Babylonian Chronicles



The Babylonian Chronicles make it possible to assign the fall of Jerusalem to the Second of Adar (March 16) in 597 B.C. with complete accuracy, confirming the Biblical accounts of Babylonian attacks on Jerusalem in 597 and 586 B.C.

The Babylonian Chronicle records:

"In the seventh month (of Nebuchadnezzar-599 BC.) in the month Chislev (Nov/Dec) the king of Babylon assembled his army, and after he had invaded the land of Hatti (Syria/Palestine) he laid seige to the city of Judah. On the second day of the month of Adara (16th of March) he conquered the city and took the king (Jehoiachin) prisoner. He installed in his place a king (Zedekiah) of his own choice, and after he had received rich tribute, he sent (them) forth to Babylon."

When comparing this text from ancient Babylon with the record of the Babylonian invasion in the Book of II Kings 24:7-17 they demonstrate very clearly the accuracy of the Biblical text.

The Striding Lion



The Striding Lion
 Iraq: Babylon, Processional Avenue north of the Ishtar Gate
 Neo-Babylonian Period
 Reign of Nebuchadnezzar II, ca. 604-562 B.C.
 Molded brick with polychrome glaze
 90.3 cm H, 230.5 cm W
 Purchased in Berlin, 1931
 Oriental Institute, Chicago
 OIM A7481

This colorful striding lion of glazed brick with its mouth opened in a threatening roar, once decorated a side of the 'Processional Way' in ancient Babylon. The 'Processional Way' led out of the city through a massive gate named for the Mesopotamian goddess of love and war, Ishtar, whose symbol was the lion.

No doubt that any of the Jewish captives that entered Babylon would have seen these lions.

The Ishtar Gate



The Ishtar Gate at Babylon
 Reconstruction Glazed Brick
 Total Height—47 Feet, Width-32 Feet
 Neo-Babylonian
 7th–6th Centuries BC
 Dedicator: Nebuchadnezzar II
 Language: Akkadian
 Date of Excavation: 1899-1914
 Staatliche Museen , Berlin
 Dept. of the Near East

"Is this not Babylon that I have built..." –Daniel 4:30

The Ishtar Gate, one of the eight gates of the inner city of Babylon, was built during the reign of Nebuchadnezzar II (604- 562 BC). Only the foundations of the gate were found, going down some 45 feet, with molded, unglazed figures. The gateway has been reconstructed in the Pergamon Museum, Berlin, from the glazed bricks found, so its original height is different in size. Reconstructed height is 47 feet.

It was one of the eight gates of the inner city of Babylon. It was built in about 575 BC, the eighth fortified gate in the city. It is one of the most impressive monuments rediscovered in the ancient Near East. The Ishtar gate was decorated with glazed brick reliefs, in tiers, of dragons and young bulls. The gate itself was a double one, and on its south side was a vast antechamber. Through the gatehouse ran a stone-and brick-paved avenue, the so-called Processional Way, which has been traced over a length of more than half a mile.

King Nebuchadnezzar II of Babylon dedicated the great Ishtar Gate to the goddess Ishtar. It was the main entrance into Babylon. King Nebuchadnezzar II performed elaborate building projects in Babylon around 604-562 BC.

The Dedicatory Inscription on the Ishtar Gate reads:

"Nebuchadnezzar, King of Babylon, the faithful prince appointed by the will of Marduk, the highest of princely princes, beloved of Nabu, of prudent counsel, who has learned to embrace wisdom, who fathomed their divine being and reveres their majesty, the untiring governor, who always takes to heart the care of the cult of Esagila and Ezida and is constantly concerned with the well-being of Babylon and Borsippa, the wise, the humble, the caretaker of Esagila and Ezida, the firstborn son of Nabopolassar, the King of Babylon..."

Jehoiakin Inscription



This is one of the clay tablets that reveal the presence of the Judean royal house as prisoners in Babylon. They were excavated from an arched building near the Ishtar Gate of ancient Babylon. The cuneiform texts, which are dated between 595 and 570 B.C., contain lists of rations of barley and oil issued to the captive princes and artisans, including "Yaukin, king of the land of Yahud." This is a direct reference to Jehoiachin, and some of the other tablets also mentioned his 5 sons who accompanied him to Babylon. (Staatliche Museum, Berlin).

Eliakim Seal



This seal bears the inscription "The property of Eliakim, steward of Jehoiakin." It is from Debir (Tell Beit Mirsim) located 13 miles southwest of Hebron. It was excavated by William F. Albright in 1926.

Gedaliah Seal

This seal was found at Lachish and bears the inscription "Gedaliah, who is over the house." Gedaliah was the name of the man who the Babylonians had appointed as governor of Judah after the destruction of Jerusalem.

Nabonidus Stele

Nabonidus was known to be the king on the throne at the time of the Medo-Persian conquest of Babylon. However, in 1854 archaeologist Sir Henry Rawlinson found an inscription, while excavating at ancient Ur, which stated that Nabonidus associated with him on his throne his eldest son, "Bel-shar-usur", and allowed him the royal title.

Cyrus Cylinder



"...I am Cyrus. King of the world. When I entered Babylon...I did not allow anyone to terrorize the land...I kept in view the needs of the people and all its sanctuaries to promote their well-being...I put an end to their misfortune. The Great God has delivered all the lands into my hand; the lands that I have made to dwell in a peaceful habitation..."

On the site of Babylon, archaeologists discovered the Cyrus Cylinder, a clay cylinder with inscriptions which record details about the capture of Babylon by the Persian king Cyrus (539 B.C.).

According to the cuneiform on the Cyrus Cylinder, he was favored by Marduk and the other gods who purposed for Nabonidus and Belshazzar to be dethroned and divine help would be given to Cyrus. Cyrus reestablished their religious practices and was a very benevolent and gracious ruler. He was responsible for the return of the Jews to Jerusalem and the rebuilding of their temple.

The Benefits of the Babylonian Captivity

1. Cured of Idolatry

The Jews were almost completely cured of idolatry, no matter what their faults and downfalls were in later periods of history, they never returned to the idolatry of the nations around them as they had. The Babylonian Captivity had taught them to abhor the worship of idols.

2. The Scribes and Rabbinic Literature

The situation caused them to be separated from Jerusalem and the Temple and thus there came a new order called the "Scribes." In their earliest stages they served the Jewish colonists in a very valuable way, especially in teaching, guarding and preserving the Scriptures. The Scribes produced the rabbinical literature known as the **Mishna** (God's laws allegedly passed down orally and not recorded in Scripture), the **Gemara** (a commentary on the Mishna and a compilation of accepted traditions). These two volumes were later added to and combined to form the **Talmud** (Babylonian Talmud). There was also other important literature and secular writings.

3. The Synagogues

Places for assembly or "synagogues" were instituted in order to conduct formal Jewish worship, and to provide schools for education while they were far from their homeland. It was the difficult circumstances of the Babylonian Captivity that allowed for the synagogues, without these unusual circumstances there might not have been synagogues which kept the national spirit of the Jewish people even after the fall of the Second Temple.

4. The Teaching of the Scriptures

The Jewish people pursued the Scriptures. They compiled the Scriptures and studied them intensely, realizing the reason for the Captivity and teaching this to their children. Later Ezra, the Scribe, taught the Scriptures and gave light to its meaning.

5. Unification of the Jewish People

Similar to the captivity in Egypt, the Babylonian Captivity brought a common hardship and isolation which brought a common sympathy and a closer relationship with each of individual of the nation. They returned united and purified, anyone who would not learn this lesson remained in Babylon only to become lost in history.



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LESSON 7

Transition to the New Covenant Period

Introduction

The period of time between Malachi, the last writing Old Covenant prophet (c. 440 B.C.), and the arrival on the scene of John the Baptist is a time of theological transition. Typically we call it the “inter-testamental period,” or, the period between the Old and New Testaments. It is the time of Alexander the Great, Hannakuh, the Rosetta Stone and the writing of the scrolls which would come to be known as the Dead Sea Scrolls. Judaism was evolving and changing and in this time the parties known as the Pharisees, the Sadducees and the Essenes came to be. Herod the Great ruled Israel, with Roman permission, in the days when Jesus was born in Bethlehem. From the time of the Patriarchs, to Moses, through the years of the Judges, and through the monarchies, to a time of decline and then into the time of the Messiah, the land and its evidences echo the tale of God’s covenants. His management of the various dispensations was now entering its second to last era for the earth! (The final era will be Christ’s millennial reign). From an archaeological perspective, the remains of the transitional time between the Testaments, are many and rich!

The Rosetta Stone

In 196 B.C.E. a college of Egyptian priests issued a decree celebrating the coronation of their pharaoh, Ptolemy V Epiphanes (204–180 B.C.E.; formal coronation commemorations occurred periodically throughout the reign of a pharaoh). The Rosetta Stone records the text of the priests’ decree in two languages, **Greek** and **Egyptian**, and in three scripts. In addition to the Greek (at the bottom of the stone), the Egyptian version appears in informal (demotic) cursive writing (the middle inscription) and in formal hieroglyphics (at the top). This bilingual inscription provided the key to deciphering Egyptian hieroglyphics, and this opened the way to modern Biblical scholarship, which is predicated on the premise that the Bible can best be understood in the context of the ancient Near Eastern culture to which Israel belonged.

Although the Rosetta Stone is one of the most famous treasures in the British Museum, it was actually discovered in 1799 by a French lieutenant in Napoleon’s army of invasion of Egypt. It had been reused in the construction of an ancient wall. The broken piece of black basalt measures 3 feet 10 inches by 2 feet 6 inches and is just under 1 foot thick. It takes its name from the suburb of Alexandria in the western Egyptian Delta where it was found. After Napoleon’s defeat by Britain in 1801, the Rosetta Stone was claimed as a spoil of war and deposited in the British Museum’s collection in 1802.

The Greek portion of the inscription, of course, posed no difficulty to 19th-century scholars, and they theorized that the other two portions of the stone said the same thing in Egyptian. The first step in the decipherment undertaken by a number of scholars was to figure out that in the hieroglyphic portion the king’s name was enclosed in a cartouche (oval outline). From this discovery, which isolated seven characters, scholars were able to begin working out the sound values of various hieroglyphs. By 1824 the

French scholar Jean François Champollion (1790–1832) had worked out a full description of the Egyptian writing system.

Literacy in ancient Egypt was limited for the most part to scribes, but high-ranking noble officials are occasionally represented in their tombs as scribes. The thought of Moses learning to read hieroglyphics in the palace of his princess foster-mother is an appealing one, though historically unlikely.¹

Sebaste, Hellenistic Tower

A natural route from Herod's new seaport of Caesarea Maritima to Jerusalem led up into the central hill region past Samaria. Here in the ninth century B.C.E. Omri and Ahab had built the royal city of the northern kingdom of Israel on a broad mountain 1,300 feet above sea-level with this commanding view over the hills in all directions (1 Kings 16:24). The Israelite palace citadel was destroyed by the Assyrians in 721 B.C.E., (II Kings 17:5f). The hill was controlled and occupied by foreigners for most of the years afterward. The Assyrians, who settled colonists here from various countries, were replaced by the Babylonians, who were followed by the Persians. Then, in 332 B.C.E., Samaria was conquered by Alexander and was resettled by thousands of Macedonian soldiers. They built impressive new fortifications, including sturdy round towers such as the one in the foreground, and established a Greek city on the site. A theater was cut into the side of the hill just beyond this tower.

That Greek city was thoroughly destroyed by John Hyrcanus in 108 B.C.E., its foreign inhabitants sold into slavery, and the ancient Israelite capital restored to Jewish rule. One can imagine, therefore, how offended Jews must have been when Herod renamed the city Sebaste (the Greek equivalent for "Augustus") and built on this hill a lavish showplace dedicated to his Roman imperial friend and patron.²

Herodium

In the Judean wilderness about eight miles south of Jerusalem, Herod built this dramatic artificial mountain as a combination fortress-retreat and mausoleum. This aerial view looks east over Herodium to the distant mountains of Moab barely visible in the mist beyond the Dead Sea.

Herod chose this site perhaps because its isolated grandeur was conveniently near to Jerusalem, but perhaps also because it marked the scene of an important victory (in 40 B.C.E.) over the Hasmoneans in his rise to power. Sometime between 24 and 15 B.C.E. Herod had his engineers (and a goodly number of slaves) construct this circular enclosure on high vaulted foundations atop a natural hill. They surrounded the whole construction with a conical earthen rampart that enlarged the hill and raised it almost 200 feet above the surrounding terrain. Excavations since 1962 have clarified the architectural features on the summit as well as a complex of structures at the northern base of the hill (at the left edge of this photo). Included among the structures at the lower level are a small palace, a long artificial terrace and a large swimming pool. Josephus accurately described this complex, noting that water for its pool and gardens had to be brought to the site "from a distance and at great expense."

Josephus also described in detail the funeral procession that carried Herod's body here for burial in 4 B.C.E., but the burial chamber was so well concealed that it has yet to be discovered.³

¹ *The Biblical World in Pictures; BAS Biblical World in Pictures*. Biblical Archaeology Society, 2003.

² *Ibid*

³ *Ibid*

Cave of John the Baptist

A Response by Todd Bolen

Associate Professor of Biblical Studies at the Israel Bible Extension of The Master's College. He lives and teaches in Israel and has been photographing biblical sites and scenes throughout the Middle East since 1990.

August 16, 2004

The AP published a report yesterday, run by everyone, that an archaeologist had found "the cave of John the Baptist." You can find it online everywhere, including this [CNN page](#) which has 3 photos (also [Haaretz](#) and [Jerusalem Post](#)). People have asked me what I think, so what follows is my response. I would note that I know Dr. Shimon Gibson, respect him and his work, and even participated in the excavation of this cave with our students on a handful of days in the past couple of years.

The question is: how do we know that this cave is associated with John the Baptist? In the last decades, scholars have been criticizing "biblical archaeology," particularly for its haste in associating sites and levels with biblical events. Archaeological "proof" for such biblical stories is hailed until a later discovery shows the evidence to be flimsy and the conclusion incorrect.

Gibson is not a "biblical archaeologist" and has no intention to prove the Bible correct. But I believe he makes the same mistakes as previous archaeologists in jumping to a conclusion for which the evidence is slim - particularly a conclusion which associates it with the Bible and therefore makes it headline-worthy. If this was just another Iron Age cistern used by hermits in a later period, no one would care about it. But if it's identified with an important, and little-known, biblical figure as John the Baptist, the potential attention is profound and book sales multiplied (the book was released today - here it is at [Amazon](#)). And yesterday's headlines bore this out - every website I visited had a link to the story, and the book's sales rank at Amazon skyrocketed to #335.

Gibson is positive of the identification. He said, "I am now certain that this cave was connected with the ancient cult of John the Baptist. Indeed, this may very well be 'the' cave of the early years of John's life, the place where he sought his first solitude in the 'wilderness' and the place where he practised his baptisms" (source). This is the claim that must be evaluated.

First, it must be noted that the main claim is that this cave was used by *followers* of John the Baptist, hundreds of years after his death (in the Byzantine period, 330-630 A.D.). Pilgrims allegedly came to this cave to commemorate this man. The next issue is whether or not this pilgrim tradition is correct - if so, the cave could have been used by John the Baptist himself. These are two separate issues and answering one affirmatively doesn't necessarily mean that the second is also true. If the first is true, but not the second, what is being hailed is yet another cave that pilgrims visited (erroneously). There are hundreds of such caves in Israel! Among the many examples, Byzantine pilgrims visited the cave where Mary allegedly breastfed Jesus (and milk dropped on the ground) - this is the Chapel of the Milk Grotto in Bethlehem (and pilgrims still visit and worship here).

So I am not impressed if this is another cave that the Byzantines believed to be a holy place. But I'm not

convinced that this was such a cave in the first place. It's a cistern. It has steps leading into it. There is a drawing of a man on the wall and another drawing of a head without a body. There is a foot carved into a rock. The cave is about 2.5 air miles (4 km) from Ein Kerem, the *traditional* place where John the Baptist was *born* (not grew up, not ministered). It is about 1 mile from the "St. John in the Wilderness" monastery, built over *another cave* which was the site of a chapel in the Crusader period (12th century). From the reports and from my own knowledge of the excavation, that's the evidence.

The strongest support, in my opinion, is the location. The closest thing to this cave as far as important biblical events or people is John the Baptist. But what is to say that this cave is connected with biblical people at all? A figure sketched on the wall - what does this mean? There is nothing that identifies this as an important person, let alone John. There are no inscriptions or direct evidence to tie this to the biblical figure. The evidence is all circumstantial, and appears to me to be weak. I know of no other person (scholar, archaeologist) who follows Gibson in this identification, though perhaps some will come to light with this dramatic announcement. The book's subtitle also suggests this discovery is being oversold: "The Stunning Archaeological Discovery That Has Redefined Christian History."

It bears repeating that I have great respect for Dr. Gibson and his archaeological expertise. He is one of the most popular lecturers in our school's weekly series. I also note that he has written numerous books that are highly recommended, including last year's *Jerusalem in Original Photographs*. But I always felt during our time at the site and now with this announcement that this claim was very bold and the evidence meager. Perhaps the book contains the compelling evidence, but it seems strange that such would not be mentioned at the press conference.

NEWSWEEK August 30 issue - The 550 residents of Kibbutz Tzuba, a few miles down the road from Jerusalem toward Tel Aviv, mostly just want to be "left alone in their own little patch," Yael Kerem says apologetically. She ought to know, as marketing director for the guesthouse with which the kibbutz supplements its main businesses, a fruit and dairy farm and a small factory that makes bulletproof windshields. Yet even as she spoke last week, her cell phone was burbling as requests poured in for tours and interviews: a group of monks from Jerusalem, five busloads of visitors from Turkey, reporters from the United States and Europe. She gestures expansively toward a stand of olive trees. "We might have to pave over this area," she says, "so we can park the buses."

Israel, it has been said, is a place of too much history and too little geography. The very earth beneath Kibbutz Tzuba's nectarine trees hides the walls of settlements going back to the dawn of civilization, cisterns and caves used by wanderers in the time of Jesus. Wanderers very much like the Biblical John the Baptist, who, according to written tradition dating to the fourth century, was born just two miles from here. That distinction meant little, though, until last week, as word spread of a new book by one of Israel's most ambitious archeologists, Shimon Gibson, who spent three years excavating a cave on the grounds of Kibbutz Tzuba. Gibson's electrifying claim is that the cave contained a man-made pool in which John—and possibly even Jesus himself—may have performed the ritual cleansing known as baptism. If those claims are accepted—already a chorus of skeptics is rising to dispute them, and it is hard to see how they could ever be proved—the Tzuba cave would be, for Christians, one of the holiest places on earth.

Which is, perhaps, a mixed blessing, and not just for the kibbutzniks who would prefer an olive grove to a parking lot. The buried history of the Holy Land is a subject of no less contention than its endlessly fought-over land and water. In this part of the world, shards of pottery and scraps of parchment are weapons.

Weblog: Bring Me the Stead of John the Baptist?

Compiled by Ted Olsen | posted 08/17/2004 2:00 p.m.

World's press caves in to speculation

Did you hear that they discovered the cave of John the Baptist? It's in all the papers (691 Google News links so far). The Associated Press, which claims an exclusive on the story, calls it "potentially a major discovery in biblical archaeology."

No one is more excited than British/Israeli archaeologist Shimon Gibson, who uncovered the site.

"I am now certain that this cave was connected with the ancient cult of John the Baptist. Indeed, this may very well be 'the' cave of the early years of John's life, the place where he sought his first solitude in the 'wilderness' and the place where he practiced his baptisms," he said. "For the first time, we can point to a spot and say it is highly likely that this is where John the Baptist was baptising and undertaking his rituals. That is amazing."

Elsewhere, he's quoted as saying "The site we've uncovered is seemingly the connecting link between Jewish and Christian baptism." And "John the Baptist, who was just a figure from the Gospels, now comes to life." And ""In addition to John the Baptist, there's a possibility that Jesus used this cave as well."

A press release explains it all. "Tradition holds that John was born and raised in the area and that his mother Elizabeth hid with her infant son in a cave to escape the child slaughter commanded by King Herod. There are several churches in the area dedicated to John or claiming to be sites from which he conducted his ministry ... "

Oh wait. This is a press release from April 2000. Huh. But surely the finding that it's John the Baptist's cave is new, right? Uh, not really. *The Charlotte Observer* suggested as much on its front page back in Easter 2000. And the latest details aren't too new for Gibson to have a book on the shelves this week detailing the find, calling it "the first archaeological evidence of the historical reality of the Gospel story." The subtitle says the archaeological discovery "has redefined Christian history."

Wow! What, pray tell, was in the cave?

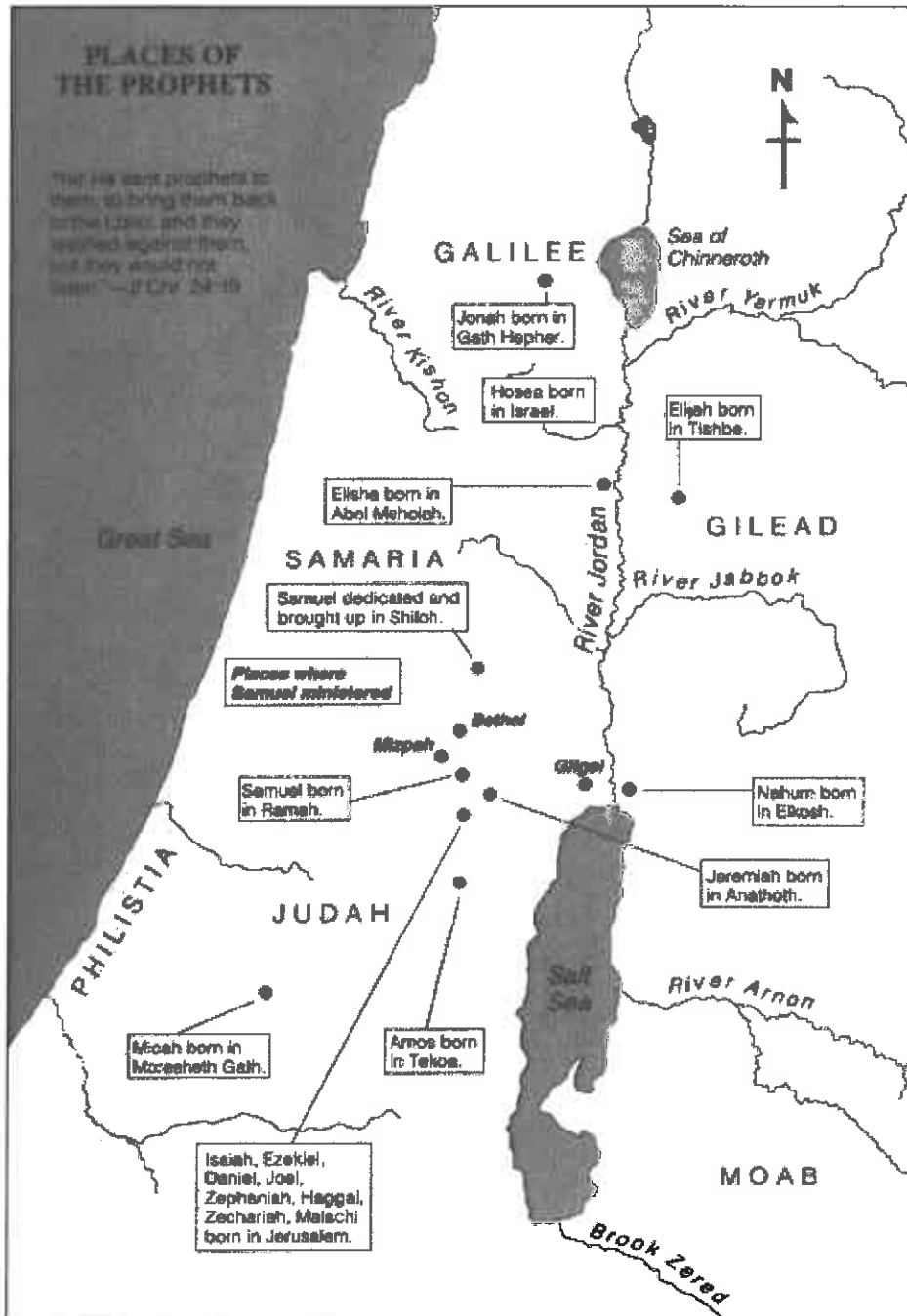
Carvings of images of John the Baptist, for one—including a figure that appears to depict his beheading. Oh, but they're from the Byzantine era, apparently carved by fourth and fifth century monks. And none of them have inscriptions describing the site as the cave of John. But Gibson's team also found first century pottery shards! Oh, but they also found 250,000 other shards, some as early as the second century B.C. Um, but it's a really cool find, right? You bet, Gibson told Reuters. "Nothing like this has been found elsewhere," Gibson said. "It is the first time we have finds from the early baptismal period ... It is an amazing discovery that happens to an archeologist once in a lifetime."

Well, if you're Shimon Gibson, you get enough amazing discoveries for multiple lifetimes. He discovered a first-century leper—a huge find, given that many scholars had argued that leprosy didn't really exist in Jesus' day and that his healings were of other skin ailments. And then there was his discovery of a shrouded corpse, which Gibson said "could be that of a witness to Christ's crucifixion" and proof that the Shroud of Turin is a fake. And then there was his highly publicized warning that the Temple Mount was in danger of imminent collapse. And his findings on the "real" Via Dolorosa. And all that is just in the last few years.

Weblog isn't suggesting that Gibson is making stuff up. He's a noted archaeologist, not some hack. But given the controversy about the last time someone claimed to have "the first archaeological evidence of the historical reality of the Gospel story," a bit more skepticism is in order these days. Skepticism is especially in order when James Tabor, Gibson's partner in the dig, says there's "no proof that John himself

actually used the cave," according to the CBC. Tabor is a bit more hopeful in an interview with *The Charlotte Observer*, saying the cave is "associated with the early followers of John, and possibly (with) John."

Still, Jordanian archaeologists have Gibson beat—they say they've got John's head itself. Oh, and there's University of Hartford (Conn.) archaeologist Richard Freund, who was reported to have found John's entire skeleton. Wait. I thought that was at the Umayyad Mosque ... Well, at least we know where his father is buried, right?





Introduction to Biblical Archaeology

Rev. Neil C. Damgaard, Th.M.

Fall 2004

LESSON 8

The Archaeology of Jesus

Introduction

No one has intrigued archaeologists more than Jesus of Nazareth. But evidence of Him is relatively rare. Fortunately, evidence of the places and events around Him is not rare. The towns and other places, some of the people, and events, are evidenced by finds made by archaeologists. Here are a few examples...

Bethlehen and the Church of the Nativity

This aerial photograph shows the main road to Bethlehem from the north (Jerusalem). The modern city stretches out from the historic center in all directions. Today Bethlehem is controlled by the Palestinian Authority and has a population of about 22,000 not including the suburbs of Beit Jala and Beit Sahour. The entrance to the famous church in Bethlehem is remarkably unimpressive. The large courtyard is perfect for priests, pilgrims or tourists, but most noticeable are the vendors. Palestinian police now patrol the area. Buses no longer are allowed to enter the square, but instead are directed to a large parking structure. This building is the oldest standing church in the Holy Land. Originally built by Constantine's mother in the 4th century, Emperor Justinian rebuilt the current structure in the 530s. It was apparently spared destruction from the Persians in 614 A.D. because the invaders saw the depictions of the Magi on the walls. Local Muslim-Christian friendship is believed to be why the church was not destroyed during al-Hakim's rule in 1009. Underneath the present floor are beautiful mosaics of the earlier church. The church built at the direction of Constantine's mother was octagonal in shape, typical of Byzantine memorial churches. Before the Roman empire converted to Christianity, the area was a sacred grove of Thammuz. Early tradition places the birth of Jesus in a cave. Scripture doesn't mention the existence of a cave, and skeptics note that many biblical events were commemorated in caves (more convenient for pilgrims to be sheltered from sun and rain?). But it is also true that many houses in the area are built in front of caves. A cave could serve a household well by providing shelter for the animals or a place of storage. According to tradition, Mary gave birth to Jesus at the place of where the star is located on the floor. The tradition that the birth was in a cave is one of the oldest Christian traditions. Justin Martyr mentions it in the mid-2nd century, as does the Protoevangelium of James (also 2nd c.). Origen notes that the cave of Jesus' birth was pointed out in his day and no doubt this was the same place where the Byzantine church was erected.

Nazareth

Situated inside a bowl atop the Nazareth ridge north of the Jezreel valley, Nazareth was a relatively isolated village in the time of Jesus with a population less than two hundred. Today Nazareth is home to more than 60,000 Israeli Arabs, and Upper Nazareth is home to thousands more Jewish residents. Very little is known about Nazareth from the ancient sources. Outside of the New Testament, Nazareth is never mentioned until the Byzantine period (4th c. A.D.). Archaeological excavations have confirmed that the city was only a small agricultural village during the Hellenistic and Roman periods. Jesus spent his boyhood years in Nazareth before beginning his ministry when he was about 30. After moving his home to Capernaum, Jesus returned to teach in the synagogue of Nazareth twice more, but was rejected both times. On one occasion the townspeople were so outraged at Jesus that they tried to throw him off a cliff to his death.

Tabgha

Tabgha is the traditional location for the calling of the disciples. It is believed that here Jesus walked along the shore and called out to Simon Peter and Andrew who were casting their nets into the lake. Walking along, Jesus saw two other brothers, James and John who were preparing their nets with their father Zebedee. Jesus called all of these men to follow him. This Byzantine mosaic is preserved under a modern church today, but it was once part of a church which commemorated Jesus' feeding of the 5000. The Byzantine pilgrims were mistaken in locating this miracle here because Scripture says that it took place in a remote place by Bethsaida. The artist was apparently unacquainted with the fish in the lake as none have two dorsal fins.

Sepphoris

Josephus called Sepphoris "the ornament of all Galilee." Herod Antipas chose this site in 4 B.C. as the capital of his government. He most likely built the theater as well. Josephus said Sepphoris was the largest city in Galilee and an exceptionally strong fortress at the time of the First Revolt in 66 A.D. The people of Sepphoris supported Vespasian in the Jewish Revolt, surrendering to the Romans and thus preventing the destruction of the city (War III.2.4). They even minted coins in honor of Vespasian as the "peace maker." This aerial view gives an interesting perspective of the archaeological work. Modern archaeologists typically excavate in squares (approximately 5 meters on each side), leaving the sides (balks) as a vertical record of the excavations. Some archaeologists remove the balks after they have served their purpose; others choose to leave them indefinitely. Sepphoris was first excavated by L. Waterman of Michigan University in 1931. In 1983, J. F. Strange of the University of South Florida began a survey of buildings, cisterns, and burial systems. A joint team from Duke University, North Carolina, and The Hebrew University began work in 1985. At the summit near the theater is a large dining room floor from the beginning of the 3rd century A.D. The house was built around a colonnaded yard and had two floors. The building included a central triclinium and

was most likely the home of an important Gentile person. It might have been the city or district governor. The triclinium mosaic includes 1.5 million stones in 28 colors. The beautiful woman in the mosaic is known today as the "Mona Lisa of the Galilee." She is depicted wearing a laurel garland and earrings. A similar figure was on the southern side of the frame and can still be partly seen today.

Capernaum

In existence from the 2nd c. B.C. to the 7th c. A.D., Capernaum was built along the edge of the Sea of Galilee and had up to 1500 residents. Today the ruins are owned by two churches: the Franciscans control the western portion with the synagogue and the Greek Orthodox's property is marked by the white church with red domes. The dating of this synagogue is debated, but it is clearly later than the first century. Excavations have revealed a synagogue from the time of Jesus with walls made of worked stone and 4 feet thick. These earlier walls were preserved up to 3 feet high and the entire western wall still exists and was used as the foundation for the later synagogue. Jesus was confronted by a demoniac while teaching here (Mark 1:21-27). In Capernaum, Jesus healed the servant of the centurion. This Roman official was credited with building the synagogue (Luke 7:3). In this synagogue, Jesus gave sermon on the bread of life (John 6:35-59). Excavations revealed one residence that stood out from the others. This house was the object of early Christian attention with 2nd century graffiti and a 4th century house church built above it. In the 5th century a large octagonal Byzantine church was erected above this, complete with a baptistery. Pilgrims referred to this as the house of the apostle Peter.

Pool of Siloam

South of the present walled city is the Pool of Siloam, where John's Gospel reports that Jesus sent a blind man to wash and receive his sight (John 9:1-7). Since the "pool" actually is the point of exit for fresh spring waters, it remained in use and its location was never lost. The "Bordeaux Pilgrim," who described Jerusalem in 333 C.E., mentions it as surrounded by a fourfold portico (probably the shrine to the Nymphs that other authors record Hadrian had erected in this area in the 2nd century C.E.). In the 6th century, the "Anonymous Pilgrim of Piacenza" reported finding a domed basilica over the pool, where Christian pilgrims claimed many cures. Excavations here in 1897 by the Palestine Exploration Fund did, in fact, uncover traces both of the late Byzantine basilica and of the earlier porticoed court. Archaeological investigation also has shown that the Siloam Pool figured in a critical episode of Jerusalem's history long before Jesus. In 1838, Edward Robinson explored the tunnel visible at the far end of the pool and demonstrated that it had been cut through the bedrock for a distance of 1750 feet—one third of a mile—to carry water to the pool from the Spring of Gihon on the city's eastern slope. A Hebrew inscription commemorating the tunnel cutting was later found just inside the tunnel at the southern end. The inscription can be dated by the shape of its script to the 8th century B.C.E., leading to the identification of this tunnel and pool construction as the defensive water "conduit" cut by King Hezekiah's engineers (II Kings 20:20). The waters that first flowed into this pool seven centuries before Christ helped the people of Jerusalem to withstand the siege of the Assyrian king Sennacherib in 701 B.C.E. (II Kings 18:13-19:37).



Introduction to Biblical Archaeology

Rev. Neil C. Damgaard, Th.M.

Fall 2004

LESSON 9

The Archaeology of Jesus part 2

Introduction

How much can we find left over from the life and ministry of Jesus? That question has compelled many biblical archaeologists to study the places that we know Jesus entered, visited, lived in or ministered around. They depend on the four Gospel accounts of course, for their list of places. But Jesus did not write (as Moses and Paul did). He did not build, as Herod did. He did not command cohorts of soldiers as Pilate did. He did not erect churches as His followers of two centuries later, and after did. What can be found of Him relates to the written record of His short three year incarnate ministry. Following are some interesting archaeological “signposts” from the life of Christ.

Caesarea Philippi

These rock-carved niches mark shrines to pagan gods at one of the sources of the Jordan River near the Biblical town of Dan. When Jesus and his disciples were here the area was named Caesarea Philippi, having been dedicated to Caesar Augustus by Herod’s son Philip. The popular name of this site was “Paneas” (reflected in the modern time of the site, Baniyas) in honor of Pan, the Greek god of forests and herds. Herod the Great had raised a temple here to Pan. In this place at the edge of the traditional Jewish land of promise, filled with its conflicting religious associations, the Gospel writers record that Jesus and his disciples expressed conflicting understandings of his identity and role in God’s plan (**Mark 8:27–33**). Here Peter declared to Jesus, “You are the Christ (Messiah),” Apparently Peter would have been using the traditional term for a “son of David” royal deliverer. But Jesus used this occasion to announce for the first time the very different role he felt called to fulfill. Giving himself a different title, Jesus foretold that “the Son of Man must suffer many things, and be rejected by the elders and the chief priests and the scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again.”¹

Tomb of Lazarus

Several episodes associate Jesus, while in Jerusalem, with the little village of Bethany on the eastern slope of the Mount of Olives. As a Galilean pilgrim, he appears to have taken up temporary residence in Bethany, rather than inside the city walls (**Matthew 21:17; Mark 11:11**), perhaps in the home of Mary and Martha (**Luke 10:38–42**), whose brother Lazarus he is reported to have raised from the dead (**John 11:1–44**). The steps in the middle of this floor in an ancient building in Bethany lead down to a vaulted chamber with three burial niches below. At least since the 4th century C.E. and probably earlier, this room has been revered in Christian tradition as the place of the miracle of Lazarus’ raising. Eusebius in 330 C.E. noted that “the place of Lazarus is still pointed out even until now,” and 60 years later Jerome wrote that a church had been erected at the tomb. Excavations by the Franciscans in 1949–1953, before the

¹*The Biblical World in Pictures; BAS Biblical World in Pictures*, 2003. Biblical Archaeology Society.

building of a modern church on the site, confirmed that a Byzantine church had been founded next to this tomb. The church was dated by its mosaics to the late 4th century C.E. **John 11:38** says of Lazarus' tomb that "a stone lay upon it." The stone to seal this tomb would have been a slab laid horizontally on the floor over the entrance steps.

Coinage

This silver *denarius*, showing the head of the Roman emperor Tiberius, is the type of coin used by Jesus to illustrate one of his teachings in Jerusalem:

And they sent to him some of the Pharisees and some of the Herodians to entrap him in his talk. And they came and said to him, "Teacher, we know that you are true, and care for no man; for you do not regard the position of men, but truly teach the way of God. Is it lawful to pay taxes to Caesar, or not? Should we pay them, or not?" But knowing their hypocrisy, he said to them, "Why put me to the test? Bring me a coin [Greek: *denarius*], and let me look at it." And they brought one. And he said to them, "Whose likeness and inscription is this?" They said to him, "Caesar's." Jesus said to them, "Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's" (**Mark 12:13–17**).

The letters of the inscription stand for "Tiberius Caesar Augustus, son of divine Augustus." This *lepton* coin, minted by Pontius Pilate, is the type referred to in another episode, recorded as having taken place near the Temple treasury in Jerusalem:

And he sat down opposite the treasury, and watched the multitude putting money into the treasury. Many rich people put in large sums. And a poor widow came, and put in two copper coins, which make a penny. And he called his disciples to him, and said to them. "Truly, I say to you, this poor widow has put in more than all those who are contributing to the treasury. For they all contributed out of their abundance; but she out of her poverty has put in everything she had, her whole living" (**Mark 12:41–44**).

The rounded "p" shape on the coin represents an augur's wand, and the inscription reads "Tiberius Caesar's [money]."

Pool of Bethesda

Christian pilgrims to Jerusalem in the centuries to follow would establish shrines at the presumed locations of almost every episode of Jesus' activity in the holy city. In only a very few instances, however, can these pious traditions be verified by archaeological evidence. One such case is shown here. According to the Gospel of John, Jesus healed a lame man at a pool called Bethesda (or Beth-zatha) new the "Sheep Gate" (or "sheep market") (**John 5:2–9**). Excavations by the White Fathers (a Roman Catholic order) at this spot where tradition had placed the pool, north of the Temple Mount, have confirmed that a Crusader church lay above remains of an earlier chapel. This chapel, in turn, had replaced a 5th-century C.E. church that had been erected directly above the deep and wide expanses of a major reservoir of the Roman period. This trench has exposed only part of the original pool under the successive layers of Christian shrine buildings to the right. Tunnels and soundings have indicated that the original installation was actually two pools forming parallel irregular rectangles with a separating dike between them. The double pools extend under present-day buildings to cover an area approximately 200 feet east-west and

about 280 feet north-south, an area in excess of 5,000 square yards. The pools had been cut deeply down into the bedrock and were surrounded by porticoes with columns almost 25 feet high to create a magnificent enclosure. (The Copper Scroll from the Dead Sea Scroll caves at Qumran probably refers to these features now known from excavation by calling the place Beth Eshdathayin, “House of the Twin Pools.”) The excavated portions of the pool can be seen today directly north of the Church of St. Anne, a beautiful Crusader period church, but one that marks a holy place that is completely traditional and does not lend itself to archaeological proof, a grotto in which the Virgin Mary was supposedly born to St. Anne.

Jericho-Jerusalem Road

After his ministry in Galilee, Jesus “set his face to go to Jerusalem,” as Luke phrases it (**Luke 9:50**), to fulfill the mission he had announced to his disciples. His Jerusalem ministry lasted not more than three weeks—some think even less. According to Mark, his last journey with his disciples brought him by way of Jericho (**Mark 10:46**), near the place of his baptism. The final day’s walk would have led him up this lonely stretch of road from Jericho to Jerusalem through the desolate landscape where his ministry had begun in his 40-day struggle with Satan in the wilderness of Judea. This is one of the sections of the Roman road that is still preserved as it winds up through the hills just south of the Wadi Qelt, bypassed now by the modern highway farther to the south. In Jesus’ day, travelers knew this well as a dangerous road; the many caves in the surrounding hills offered easy cover for robbers. It was a natural setting for Jesus’ parable of the man fallen among thieves who was rescued by the Good Samaritan (**Luke 10:25–37**). As Jesus passed this way for the last time, however, his mind was focused more on the dangers that lay ahead in Jerusalem.

The Rock of Agony

This patch of bedrock is reverently preserved in the chancel floor of the Church of All Nations next to the Franciscan Garden of Gethsemane. It marks the traditional “Rock of Agony” where Jesus is reported to have prayed on the night before his crucifixion, “Father, if it be possible let this cup pass from me; nevertheless, not as I will but as Thou wilt” (**Matthew 26:39**). The present church was built in this century, but it stands on the foundations of a church dating from the 4th century C.E., when Christian public shrines were first established.

Robinson’s ARCH

In 1838, the American explorer Edward Robinson noted a section of stonework protruding from the west wall of the Temple Mount near the southwest corner. He rightly surmised that the stones had originally formed the support for a broad archway (almost 50 feet wide) leading away from the Temple enclosure wall. Since the arch faces west, Robinson and almost all scholars following him assumed that this was the first of a set of arches that formed a bridge over the Tyropoeon Valley to allow people from the western Upper City to walk across to the sacred precinct without descending to the valley below. (Ancient doorways must have penetrated the wall approximately where the large window is now positioned.) Mazar’s excavators discovered the supporting pier for the western end of this arch where they calculated it should be about 40 feet from the wall, marked by the four square spaces enclosed by rectangular stones in the left foreground of this photo. In this, Mazar confirmed Charles Warren, who in the 1860s forecast this pier. Mazar did not find additional piers farther to the west, however. Here again he confirmed Warren who had been unable to locate additional piers further to the west. But Mazar did find foundations, running at a right angle to the south, for a series of smaller arches. Evidently Robinson’s Arch marks the end not of a bridge but of a broad stairway that rose from the lower city in the Tyropoeon Valley and then turned right to reach the Temple Mount over one broad arch spanning the width of the street below. Josephus had, in fact, described such a stairway (*Antiquities* XV, 11, 5).

The Golden Gate

Among the many shrines erected in Jerusalem during the Byzantine or early Arab periods, the best preserved is this beautiful gateway built into the eastern wall of the Temple Mount. The structure perpetuated the tradition of the “Beautiful Gate” located here during the Second Temple period to give access to the Temple courts from the Kidron Valley. In addition to its association with Jesus’ triumphal entry into Jerusalem (**Mark 11:1–10**), early Christian tradition also attributed a healing miracle to Peter at this spot (**Acts 3:1–10**). The name “Golden Gate” may have come from a mistranslation of the Greek *oraia* (beautiful) into the Latin *aurea* (golden). The latter name begins to appear in Christian literature by the 7th century C.E. The gateway structure has frequently been attributed to the Empress Eudocia, who renovated Jerusalem’s walls in the 5th century C.E. (Meir Ben-Dov, however, is now arguing on stylistic grounds for a date after the Arab conquest in the 7th century C.E.) The second photo, taken under poor conditions, shows an arch below present ground level directly beneath the double arches of the “Golden Gate” in the city’s east wall at the Temple Mount. When heavy rains in 1969 washed out the covering over a tomb chamber built against the ancient city wall, James Fleming literally fell into an archaeological discovery. He saw this arch and realized that it had to be a predecessor to the “Golden Gate” visible above it. He managed to take this photograph before the tomb was resealed and the wall segment hidden from view again. Just how early this lower gate is to be dated is difficult to say. The smooth facing on the arch stones suggests an earlier date than Hadrian’s rebuilding of the city as Aelia Capitolina in 132 C.E. The character of the wall blocks around the arch suggests a date even earlier than Herod. Some scholars have proposed that this gateway actually could go back to the original wall construction of Solomon, although that seems unlikely to most. In any event, the gate probably was already in place at the time of Jesus and marks the point at which he entered the city following his arrest in the Garden of Gethsemane.

The Garden Tomb

In 1984 some Protestant missionaries purchased a tomb earlier revealed in building excavations on the west side of Gordon’s Golgotha and enshrined it in a modern garden landscape to evoke the setting of the “garden tomb” described in John’s Gospel (**John 19:41, 20:15**). They were convinced that this was the specific tomb in which Jesus was laid. Several unusual features of this tomb combined to persuade a number of people down to the present day of its holy association. Five of those features can be seen here. Instead of the normal arrangement for access to a Roman-age tomb by steps cut down into bedrock to its entrance, here bedrock had been hewn away to create a level surface and a flat wall-face before the tomb. To the right of the doorway, a window had been cut to allow light to stream into the tomb chamber, onto the place of interment along its back wall. Two curved cuttings in the rock face on either side of the tomb entrance suggested footings for a barrel-vaulted roof over the area in front of the tomb. The groove in the center of the entrance threshold suggested the wearing effect of thousands of pilgrims’ feet. The channel in front of the entrance has been pointed to as confirmation that there was a rolling stone to seal the tomb as indicated in the Gospel accounts (**Matthew 27:59–28:2**), and a quarter of a stone cylinder—now resting to the right of the entrance—was found in the vicinity and declared to be a remnant of that stone, now shattered. Some scholars now recognize the chamber as being an Iron Age tomb from the 8th to 6th century B.C.E. and adapted for later use. The site has nonetheless become an important shrine for many Christian pilgrims in this century.



Introduction to Biblical Archaeology

Rev. Neil C. Damgaard, Th.M.

Fall 2004

LESSON 10

Jerusalem

Thus says the Lord: "This is Jerusalem, which I have placed in the middle of the nations ..." Ezekiel 5:5

Introduction

Of all the places in the world where modern man has tried to get back to the past, none surpasses the City of Jerusalem for intrigue, richness of history and passion for the events. Here, Judaism, Islam and Christianity meet in a nervous co-existence. Here, the Temple of God dwelt. Here, the Son of God was crucified and rose again. It becomes significant from a biblical perspective in the time of David, who annexed it from the Jebusites. This is around 1,000 B.C. Solomon built the First Temple here on what came to be known as the Temple Mount. It was destroyed by the Babylonians in 586 B.C. and then re-built under Ezra and Nehemiah.

City of David

Stepped Stone Structure: The structure probably supported a royal building, such as the king's palace. Revealed in the excavations of Duncan and Macalister, Kenyon and Shiloh, this is one of the largest Iron Age structures in Israel. 18 m in height have been revealed and it apparently dates to the end of the Jebusite city.

House of Ahiel: This is a typical Israelite four-room house. The outside stairway presumably led to the flat roof. The outside of Ahiel's house (east) was badly preserved, but the western side on the hill was well preserved. Inside the house were found cosmetics and housewares all from the ruins of 586.

Church of the Holy Sepulcher: Originally built by the mother of Emperor Constantine in 330 A.D., the Church of the Holy Sepulcher commemorates the hill of crucifixion and the tomb of Christ's burial. On grounds of tradition alone, this church is the best candidate for the location of these events. (The Garden Tomb was not identified as such until the 19th century.)

Church of Mary Magdalene: This Russian Orthodox church was built in honor of the czar's mother in 1888 and the mosaic inside depicts the legend of Mary Magdalene presenting an egg to the Emperor Tiberius. The egg allegedly turned red when she handed it to him, symbolic of Jesus' blood. 28 nuns from all over the world live in the convent here today.

Aerial View of the Temple Mount

At the Temple Mount in Jerusalem, seen from the south in this aerial view, Herod undertook one of his most ambitious building programs in a vain attempt to win the approval of his Jewish subjects. In 20 B.C.E. Herod began a lavish embellishment of the holy Temple itself and a project to increase greatly the size and the grandeur of the courts surrounding it. So ambitious were Herod's plans that they were not completed by the time of his death in 4 B.C.E.; in fact, they were still in progress three decades later at the time of Jesus' ministry (John 2:20). The Second Temple of the Jews stood at or near the spot now occupied by the golden-hued Dome of the Rock, seen here dominating the center of the Temple Mount precinct. The temple built in the 6th century B.C.E., to replace Solomon's Temple destroyed by the Babylonians, had been constructed along modest lines, a reflection of the limited means of the refugees who returned to Jerusalem after the Babylonian Exile. The first part of Herod's grand plan called for providing the Temple with an elegant and lavish new facade—in effect providing the Jews with a brand new Temple. Nothing at all is preserved of that structure except Josephus's description, since the Temple was thoroughly destroyed by Titus's Roman troops in 70 C.E. What might have been left of the building in the rubble of that destruction disappeared in the following centuries. Hadrian built a temple to Jupiter on the site in the 2nd century C.E.; it was dismantled by Christians in the 4th century. Eventually, the present mosque was constructed in the late 7th century to mark the spot from which Mohammed was believed to have ascended to the seventh heaven on his night journey. The second part of Herod's project on the Temple Mount has left impressive remains. South of the temple, Herod provided for an extensive enlargement of the sacred precinct. Since the hill drops off sharply at this point, Herod's engineers had to build as high as 130 feet from bedrock to create a terrace at the height of the Temple courts. The area of the silver-domed El Aqsa Mosque and the pavement stretching on either side along the southern (near) end of the Temple Mount in this view mark the completely new space Herod thus provided, an area some 80 feet wide north-south and over 800 feet east-west. This view shows almost the entire southern face of that construction as it was exposed in excavations directed by Benjamin Mazar after 1967. Huge rectangular dressed blocks of limestone, some weighing over 100 tons, were lifted in place to anchor the wall at its corners, later called the "pinnacles" of the Temple. At the top of this retaining wall, the southern edge of the extended Temple precincts was accented by an elaborate columned portico. The portico was lost in the destruction of 70 C.E., but its description was preserved by Josephus, and fragments of it have been retrieved from the rubble at the base of the wall in recent excavations.

The excavations also exposed remains of the broad stairs leading up to a southern entrance to the Temple Mount (visible directly below El Aqsa Mosque). Alongside those stairs, which have been partially restored, can be seen the walls of buildings in the southern part of the Roman-period city. To the left of the stairs and at a higher level, beneath the southwest corner of the Temple Mount, the walls of a large building complex of the Omayyad period (651-750 AD) can be seen.

Jerusalem Defense Tower

2 Kings 25:1-4. Praising Jerusalem sometime before 586 B.C.E., the psalmist exhorts the listener to "walk about Zion, go all around it, count its towers, consider well its ramparts; go through its citadels" (Psalm 48:12-13). For the psalmist the city's fortifications also serve as a metaphor for the impregnability of Jerusalem, "the city of our God, which God establishes forever" (Psalm

48:8). Despite this brave declaration, however, Jerusalem was conquered by the Babylonians (597 B.C.E.) and then destroyed by them (586 B.C.E.), along with the Temple King Solomon had built for Yahweh (2 Kings 25:8–10, 13–15). The stone structure in the center of this slide is the corner of one of the defense towers (preserved to a height of approximately 26 feet) that was built into the city walls of Jerusalem. The shape and location of the tower suggest that it may have been the front of the east wing of a gatehouse. The long stretch of “Broad Wall”, discovered 82 feet to the south of the tower, likely belonged to the same fortification system. At the base of the tower, archaeologists found evidence of the city’s siege and fall in a destruction layer full of ashy burned remains and four bronze arrowheads. In 2000, Israeli archaeologists Ronny Reich and Eli Shukron discovered what may be another defense tower from the period of Hezekiah near the Gihon Spring.¹

Mount of Olives

Separated from the Eastern Hill (the Temple Mount and the City of David) by the Kidron Valley, the Mt. of Olives has always been an important feature in Jerusalem’s landscape. From the 3rd millennium until the present, this 2900-foot hill has served as one of the main burial grounds for the city. The two-mile long ridge has three summits each of which has a tower built on it. This is the hill from which Jesus ascended back to heaven, and upon which He will return.

Upper Room

There is some support for the idea that the location called “the upper room” was located in the place shown. The column shown which includes relief of a type of pelican, whose young actually feeds upon the flesh of the mother’s chest, has been suggested to be a “code” type signal from early days that this was the room of the Last Supper.

Crucifixion Evidence from Jerusalem

Pilate had little concern for the religious arguments that had turned the Jerusalem priesthood against Jesus. As a Roman administrator, however, he was determined to keep the peace, and was persuaded by the charges that Jesus had pronounced himself “king” of the Jews. Pilate condemned him to the routine execution prescribed by the Romans for political troublemakers: crucifixion. Grim testimony to the manner of Jesus’ death recently came to light in a Jewish cemetery in the northern Jerusalem suburb of Giv’at ha-Mivtar. This foot bone of a man who died within decades of Jesus’ execution, and probably at Jerusalem, still holds the iron nail that pierced his foot when he was pinned to a cross. Remnants of a wooden board could be detected at the head end of the nail. The nail had been driven first through the board in order to keep the prisoner’s foot from putting free from the nail, since he was likely to writhe in agony on the cross for hours before he expired. Accounts of crucifixions indicate that the victim sometimes survived for two or three days, perhaps dying finally from asphyxiation as the chest muscles weakened. The point of this spike can be seen to have curled over, probably when it was hammered accidentally into a knot on the vertical support post for the cross. This man’s family probably left the nail in the foot when they were allowed to remove him from the cross because withdrawing it would have further torn his foot.

¹*The Biblical World in Pictures; BAS Biblical World in Pictures.* Biblical Archaeology Society, 2003.



LESSON 11

Archaeology & the First Christians

Introduction As the Gospel spread out from Jerusalem, to Antioch, into Asia Minor and into Europe, the first Christians left trace evidence of their presence. Of course, they did not have church buildings in the beginning. That did not happen until about the third century. However we can see the places and sites where they *were* with some assurance of proximity.

Basic Places

Jerusalem The Temple area was frequented by Christians as we read in the Book of Acts. What remains of the Temple is the Western Wall foundation, known as the Wailing Wall. Some steps and a number of mikvahs have also been uncovered. Directly inside the entrance to the Church of the Holy Sepulchre and to the right, steps ascend to the Chapel of Calvary on top of a pedestal of bedrock remaining from the small hill designated as the “hill of the skull.” For centuries pious pilgrims have been shown a seam in the rock where it was split as Jesus cried out on the cross and gave up his spirit (Matthew 27:50–54). The red stain on the rock was attributed to the spilt blood of Christ. According to a popular tradition reflected in Byzantine art, the blood of Christ flowed down from the cross through this seam to fall on the skull of Adam, buried directly beneath this spot.

A traditional site for the “upper room” is also suggested with some evidence. This is an interior view of the room commemorating Jesus’ Last Supper with his disciples. The Gospels are not agreed as to whether it was a Passover meal (so Mark 14:12–16, followed by Matthew and Luke) or a meal on the Day of Preparation for the Passover (so John 13:1f, 19:31). In either event, it soon became the model for the Christians’ central sacrament of the Eucharist (communion). Even before the Gospel writers, Paul notes the tradition in his letter to the Corinthians:

For I received from the Lord what I also delivered to you, that the Lord Jesus on the night when he was betrayed took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it, and said, “This is my body which is for you. Do this in remembrance of me.” In the same way also the cup, after supper, saying, “This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.” For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord’s death until he comes (I Corinthians 11:23–26).

This interior view of the room of the Last Supper incorporates reflections of three different eras of the later history of Jerusalem. The columns and capitals in the center of the room may go back to the Byzantine church that once stood on this spot. The ribbed roof-vaulting was introduced by Crusaders and represents their rebuilding of the shrine. The installations



LESSON 12

Issues of Biblical Archaeology Today

Introduction Biblical archaeology continues to excite students, seekers, and scholars. Relatively little of the wealth of what lies underground has been actually unearthed so far. How much more can and might be found is limited only by one's imagination and funding because there will never be any shortage of workers and volunteers. Political realities are a "hot" aspect today of biblical archaeology. Changing borders, the potential for a Palestinian state, terrorist incursions into Israel, Islamic diggings and construction under and around the Temple Mount all come to bear on scholarly prospects for further explorations.

1. **Mt. Ararat**, in easternmost Turkey at its boundary with Iran and Armenia, is, at 16,690 feet, the highest mountain in the Taurus chain and second highest (after Mt. Demavand, at 18,250 feet, in northern Iran) in the Near East. This picture shows Ararat, its volcanic cone covered with snow, to the left of a second high peak called Little Ararat. The photograph gives the illusion that the two are nearby and comparable. In reality Ararat dominates, in isolation, the plateau that surrounds it. The biblical account of the Flood describes Ararat as the first land to arise out of the receding waters and as the place where Noah's ark came to rest (Genesis 8:4). The Mesopotamian flood story, best known from the Epic of Gilgamesh, makes no mention of Ararat. It is therefore likely that the tradition reached the Jewish world from a closer source familiar with the topography of the eastern Taurus, which was remote territory for the Mesopotamians of southern Iraq in the third millennium B.C.E.* Mountains formed an essential element of the Mesopotamian landscape, with its eastern and northern limits marked by the Zagros and Taurus chains. The sun god Shamash was depicted with a saw to cut through the mountains as he climbed up from the east at daybreak, and numerous mountain deities are attested in the pantheons of the ancient Near East.¹

2. **7Q5** Jose O'Callaghan claimed in 1972 that some of the Greek fragments from Cave 7 were from the New Testament. This one he identified as a portion of Mark 6:52-53. O'Callaghan believed that eight other Cave 7 fragments also could be linked to passages in the following New Testament writings: three more from Mark, one from Acts, one from Romans, one from 1 Timothy, one from James and one from 2 Peter. A few others agree with O'Callaghan, but the vast majority of scholars have found the

* B.C.E. (Before the Common Era) and C.E. (Common Era), are the alternate designations corresponding to B.C. and A.D. often used in scholarly literature.

¹*The Biblical World in Pictures; BAS Biblical World in Pictures*. Biblical Archaeology Society, 2003.

evidence tenuous and unconvincing. The 19 fragments found in Cave 7 are probably from Greek translations of Hebrew sacred writings. In this example, O'Callaghan's strongest argument, there are only 19 or 20 letters, only half of which are fully preserved, and they form only one complete word—*kai*, which means "and."

3. **Ossuaries** are stone boxes used to hold the bones of the dead. During the last century B.C.E. and first century C.E., a popular burial practice of Jews, particularly in the region of Jerusalem, was to lay out their dead initially in bed-sized cubicles cut into the walls of family rock-cut tomb chambers. The technical name for the cubicles is *loculi* (singular, *loculus*). In Hebrew they were called *kokhim* (singular, *kokh*). Two rows of *kokhim* can be seen on the wall mural behind these ossuaries. A year or so after the family member had died, time enough for the flesh to have disintegrated, the burial vault was reentered and the bones gathered and placed in an ossuary. The ossuary was then either placed in the *kokh* or laid on the floor of the tomb chamber. Ossuaries often have been found to hold the bones of more than one person, perhaps being used for several members of the same family. It was typical to decorate the front and lid of an ossuary with incised patterns. Rosettes were one of the several motifs most commonly used; note the two rosettes on the ossuary in the foreground and on a few others in this photo. "Caiaphas," the name of the high priest who turned Jesus over to Pilate for judgment, was discovered for the first time in any archaeological context in 1990. In fact, the name appeared on three inscriptions on two ossuaries like the ones shown here in the Israel Museum, and bones were found in one of the Ossuaries that may be those of Caiaphas himself. This beautiful limestone ossuary was the most elaborately carved of the dozen found within the tomb. Where a typical ossuary might have two rosettes carved on the front face, this one has two clusters of six rosettes, each containing different patterns of swirls or petals. It obviously was prepared for a particularly honored person. There are two separate inscriptions naming "Joseph son of Caiaphas" on this ossuary, one on the back and the other on one side (shown on the following slides). These are the first references found in an archaeological context to the high priest and the first time the name Caiaphas has been found in its Semitic form. Three of the four New Testament Gospels (Matthew, Luke and John) identify the high priest who presided over the interrogation of Jesus in 29 or 30 C.E. as "Caiaphas" (Matthew 26:57; Luke 3:2; John 18:13–14). Josephus identifies the person who was high priest from 18 to 36 C.E. as "Joseph Caiaphas" (*Jewish Antiquities* 18.35) and also as "Joseph who was called Caiaphas of the high priesthood" (*Jewish Antiquities* 18.95). Evidently, the high priest at the time of Jesus' trial was named Joseph but was known also by his family name, Caiaphas. This was not an unusual practice, especially when someone's given name was very common. We know from records that Joseph was one of the two most popular names in use by males during that period. Inside the ossuary were found the bones of six persons: two infants, a child aged 2 to 5 years, a teenage boy, an adult woman and a man

about 60 years old. That would be a feasible age at death for the Caiaphas of the Gospel accounts. The other persons whose bones were placed in the ossuary may well have been members of his family. On one of the narrow sides of the ossuary an inscription had been carved into the plain surface. The inscription reads, "Joseph son of Caiaphas." The letters were crudely carved in a cursive Hebrew script, perhaps by a member of the family at the time that Caiaphas' bones were placed in the ossuary. As for the "**James**" ossuary, The James ossuary may be the earliest tangible evidence of Jesus of Nazareth, who until this point we knew only through literary texts. On October 21, 2002, the existence of the ossuary or burial box was announced in Washington, D.C. by the Biblical Archaeological Review. Since then, the limestone box has generated a great deal of discussion among scholars and a great deal of news coverage. To date, no object from the first century has been conclusively tied with Jesus. The historical figure of Jesus of Nazareth has long been established and is not seriously contested by scholars. References to Jesus can be found in ancient writings, both Christian and Roman, dating to the late first century and the early second century CE.

see: http://www.bibleinterp.com/articles/Official_Report.htm

Archaeological excavations in 2005: <http://www.mfa.gov.il/MFA/History/Early+History+-+Archaeology/Archaeological+Excavations+in+Israel+2005.htm>

<u>Ein Gedi</u>	Jan 3 - Jan 27
<u>Tel Rehov</u>	June 19 - July 29
<u>Tel Hazor</u>	June 21 - August 2
<u>Tel Dor</u>	June 28 - August 8
<u>Yavneh Yam</u>	July - August (TBA)

Note: There will be no excavations at Megiddo in 2005. The next field excavation is scheduled for 2006.

EIN GEDI	Ein Gedi is an oasis on the western shore of the Dead Sea, the lowest point on earth, more than 400 m. below sea level. Fresh water springs flow there and have made permanent settlement that lived on irrigation agriculture. Ein Gedi is mentioned in the Bible and in many historical sources. Archeological excavations revealed Chalcolithic Temple (4th millennium BCE) , Iron Age settlement (Biblical period), and a Roman - Byzantine Period village. The mosaic floor of the village synagogue has unique inscriptions. The aim the 3rd season of excavations is to continue uncovering the village's houses in order to reconstruct the rural life at the site of the Early Roman Period. The village houses were ruined around 68 CE, at the end of the Second Temple Period, a period that until now was not fully excavated in Ein Gedi.
Director:	Dr. Gideon Hadas, Kibbutz Ein Gedi. The expedition operates under the auspices of the

Introduction to Biblical Archaeology LESSON 12

4

	Institute of Archaeology, Hebrew University of Jerusalem.
Dates:	January 3-27, 2005
Accommodation :	Ein Gedi youth hostel, 5 people per room.
Work hours:	Fieldwork is conducted from Mondays through Thursdays, from 7:00 a.m. to 2:30 p.m..
Cost:	\$250 per week for room and board, 4 days work, depending on type of accommodation.
Registration fee:	\$30 (non-refundable). Returning volunteers exempt.
Minimum participation:	One week
Work hours:	Mon.-Thurs. 06:00-13:30.
Recreation:	Touring in Ein Gedi nature reserve, swimming in the Dead Sea, Ein Gedi hot spa.
Insurance:	Volunteers must arrange their own medical and accident insurance in advance and offer proof of doing so.
Contact:	Dr. Gideon Hadas, Fax 972-8-6584384; E-mail: gideonhadas@yahoo.com
Website:	For more information and application form see: http://planet.nana.co.il/ghadas
TEL REHOV	<p>Tel Rehov is the location of the largest ancient Canaanite and Israelite site in the Beth-Shean valley. The first six seasons of excavations, from 1997-2003, revealed successive occupational layers from the Late Bronze Age and Iron Age I (12th - 11th centuries BCE). Large and well-preserved buildings from three occupation layers were dated to the 10th-9th centuries BCE (the time of the United Monarchy of David and Solomon and the Divided Monarchy under Omri and Ahab).</p> <p>Major goals of this season will be the continued study of structures with their rich finds in Areas B and C, dating to the 10th-9th centuries BCE, the continued study of the Iron Age I and Late Bronze levels in Area D, and opening a new area on the upper mound where Early Bronze Age fortifications were discovered in the 2001 season and where later Bronze Age strata are expected to be found.</p>
Directors:	Professor Amihai Mazar, Institute of Archaeology, Hebrew University in Jerusalem
Dates:	June 19 - July 29, 2005
Accommodation :	Volunteers will live at Kibbutz Nir David, located about eight kilometers from the site, or alternatively, at another nearby kibbutz. At Nir David, accommodation is in air-conditioned wooden cabins that accommodate up to five people.
Cost:	<p>First three weeks of participation (regardless of which week you begin to dig): \$270 per week</p> <p>Each additional week: \$240 per week</p> <p>Sixth week (July 24-29): \$210 per week</p> <p>Weekly fee covers housing, food, transportation to and from the tel and laundry for seven full days.</p>
Application deadline:	April 30, 2005

Work hours:	Workdays Monday-Friday: Excavation - 5:15-12:30; pottery washing - 16:30. Lectures twice a week - 20:00.
Minimum stay:	Three weeks.
Academic credit:	An academic program will be offered to students who wish to obtain academic credit, both undergraduate and graduate. This credit will be granted from the Rothberg International School of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. For more information and cost see http://www.rehov.org/volunteer/Credit.htm
Recreation:	Swimming in the walking distance Sahne springs or in the kibbutz swimming pool, parties and barbecues. Weekends free.
Insurance:	Volunteers must arrange their own medical and accident insurance in advance, and offer proof of doing so.
Contact:	- For general information and questions: rehov@h2.hum.huji.ac.il - For those registering in North and South American: Lauren Wilson, 8432 Bashan Lake Ave., San Diego, CA 92119 Tel: 1-619-337 3892 rehov2005@hotmail.com - For those registering in Europe and Asia: Tel Rehov Expedition, The Institute of Archaeology, Hebrew University of Jerusalem Israel 91905 Tel. 972-2-588-2437 Fax: 972-2-5825548 e-mail: rehov@h2.hum.huji.ac.il
Website:	For more information and application form see: http://www.rehov.org/
TEL HAZOR	Hazor is a major site in the Galilee, located approximately 5 km. north of Rosh Pina. The population of Hazor in the second millennium BCE is estimated to have been about 20,000, making it the largest and most important city in the entire region, located strategically on the route connecting Egypt and Babylon. Hazor's conquest by the Israelites opened the way to the conquest and settlement of the Israelites in Canaan. The city was rebuilt and fortified by King Solomon and prospered in the days of Ahab and Jeroboam II, until its final destruction by the Assyrians in 732 BCE. In this season the levels of the Israelite and Canaanite period will be explored.
Director:	Prof. Amnon Ben-Tor, Institute of Archaeology, The Hebrew University
Dates:	June 21 - August 2. The season is divided into two 3-week sessions: June 21-July 12; July 12- Aug 2. Preference will be given to those who apply for the entire 6-week season.
Accommodation:	ETAP Hotel Galilee
Cost:	\$840 per session (\$280 per week x 3) or \$1550 for those who register for the entire period.
Registration fee:	\$25.
Credit courses:	Participants who wish to receive academic credit must make the appropriate arrangements with their own educational institutions. At the end of the season each

	participant will receive a certificate attesting to his/her participation in the excavations, lectures and field trips.
Work hours:	Excavation: 5:00 a.m. to 13:00 p.m. Monday through Friday, with additional work assignments in the afternoon and the evenings.
Lectures:	A series of lectures during the week will provide training in field archaeology and the interpretation of finds.
Recreation:	The expedition will organize tours (conducted or otherwise) to sites of your choice, provided enough participants are interested, at extra cost.
Minimum age:	18
Minimum participation:	3 weeks.
Insurance:	Volunteers must arrange their own medical and accident insurance in advance and offer proof of doing so.
Contact:	Prof. Amnon Ben-Tor, Institute of Archaeology, Hebrew University, Mount Scopus, Jerusalem 91905, Israel Tel. 972-2-5882403/4; Fax. 972-2-5825548. E-mail: bentor@mscc.huji.ac.il
Website:	For registration details and <u>application form</u> see: http://unixware.mscc.huji.ac.il/~hatsor/index.htm
TEL DOR	Tel Dor is a major Canaanite-Phoenician-Hellenistic-Roman port on the Mediterranean coast, located in present day Israel between Tel Aviv and Haifa. The site was excavated between 1980 and 2000 by a team directed by Ephraim Stern of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem with several other institutions worldwide. Starting on the summer of 2004, a new consortium, consisting of three Israeli and four American universities, as well as a large multi-disciplinary and multi-national team of scholars and experts, reopened the excavation, focusing on the Roman, Hellenistic, and Persian remains on the south side of the site, paying specific attention to its urban development, monumental buildings, and dwelling houses; will undertake limited excavation and scientific sampling of the Iron Age remains at the center of the site; and will continue preparing previously-excavated areas for publication.
Dates:	June 28 - August 6
Director:	Dr. Ilan Sharon, Institute of Archaeology, Hebrew University
Accommodation:	Nahsholim Seaside Resort Hotel; air-conditioned rooms, up to four per unit.
Cost:	The cost for a full season is \$2995; the cost for a half season is \$1895. Includes full (7-days/week) room & board and access to/participation in all Dor excavation activities.
Registration deposit:	\$200.
Work hours:	Excavation: 5:00 a.m. to 13:00 p.m. Monday through Friday, sorting finds, office work in the afternoon, lectures. Saturday and Sunday free. Weekend field trips at additional cost.

Academic credit:	Academic credit will be available through the participating academic institutions. Fees vary by institution.
Recreation:	Sports facilities, diving, boating & sailing, trips are available at the resort and/or adjacent beach.
Minimum age:	18
Minimum participation:	Two weeks.
Insurance:	Volunteers must arrange their own medical and accident insurance in advance and offer proof of doing so.
Contact:	Talia Goldman, Tel Dor project, Institute of Archaeology, Hebrew University, Jerusalem 91905 Israel E-mail: dor-proj@h2.hum.huji.ac.il In the USA, please contact Prof. Andrew Stewart: astewart@socrates.berkeley.edu
Website:	For information on site & project see: http://www.hum.huji.ac.il/dor/ For registration details and application forms: In North America: http://yana.sscl.berkeley.edu/%7Eteldor/volunteer/index.htm Elsewhere: http://www.hum.huji.ac.il/dor/
YAVNEH-YAM	The coastal site of Yavneh-Yam (Jamneia-on-the-Sea) is located approximately equidistant between Jaffa and Ashdod. It was occupied from the Late Bronze Period till the Middle Ages. Current excavations deal with the Late Iron Age, Persian, Hellenistic, Byzantine and Early Islamic periods.
Director:	Prof. Moshe Fischer, Department of Classical Studies, Tel Aviv University
Dates:	The sixth season will take place between July and August, 2005 and will be divided into two periods of two weeks each as follows: Period I: July 2005 (tentative!) Period II: August 2005 (tentative!)
Accommodation:	Ayanot Youth Village, 15 minutes drive from the site; air-conditioned rooms, four persons to a room.
Cost for volunteers:	TBA
Registration fee:	US\$50 (non-refundable).
Application deadline:	May 31, 2005
Academic program:	An official certificate is delivered for participation at the training and lecturing program of the project.
Work hours:	Excavation Monday-Friday 5:00-12:00. Treatment of finds (mainly pottery washing) 16:30-18:30. Evening lectures & other activities 20:00-21:30. Saturday-Sunday free.
Minimum stay:	Two weeks (Session I and/or Session II)

Minimum age:	16
Recreation:	Swimming in the Mediterranean and youth village pool, one Sunday trip per session.
Insurance:	Volunteers must arrange their own medical and accident insurance in advance, and offer proof of doing so.
Contact:	Prof. Moshe Fisher, Archaeological Project Yavneh-Yam, (Israel), 69978 Ramat Aviv, Israel. Tel. 972-3-6409938; fax: 972-3-6409457. E-mail: fischer@post.tau.ac.il
Website:	For more details and application form see http://www.tau.ac.il/~yavneyam

Israel Antiquities Authority - Programs for Organized Groups

The Israel Antiquities Authority's Department of Education and Information is responsible for educational programs in archaeology and heritage preservation. The department runs three centers for archaeology, offering tours, workshops, activities, enrichment courses and opportunities to participate in excavations - *for organized groups only*.

For further information, please contact:

The Center for Archaeology in the Galilee
Israel Antiquities Authority
PO Box 35
Nahalal 10600
Tel./Fax.: 972-6-6415607,8

The Center For Archaeology in Jerusalem
POB 586
91004 Jerusalem
Tel.: 972-2-5602621, 972-050-512113
Fax: 972-2-5602628, 972-2-6285054

The Center for Archaeology in the Negev
Israel Antiquities Authority
HaTzav St. 1
PO Box 271
Omer 84965
Tel./Fax: 972-7-6469940

ARCHAEOLOGY IN ISRAEL AND JORDAN SINCE 1948



From *The New International Dictionary of Biblical Archaeology*

Problem Texts in the Old Testament

It is amazing how relatively few discrepancies exist in the record of Scripture. However, skeptics and even honest-minded inquirers sometimes point to places in the text where an *apparent* contradiction appears.

People will often quip, "The Bible is full of errors." Therefore we must ask, where?

It is important to note a person's attitude with which they approach Scripture—a presupposed suspicion or a presupposed trust? Even so, there are really only a few places where these can be identified. Let's survey the major ones.

Genesis 1:11,12 and Genesis 2:5

2 creation accounts? In the first, there was vegetation, in the second there was not. Why can chapter two not be an elaborative re-statement of chapter 1, *not* a separate account?

Genesis 4:17

Cain's wife? Why not a sister, niece or grand-niece? This was not incest, as we understand it because sin, though it had entered the world, had not yet had its full effect on the world, thus the long life spans. Also, incest had not yet been forbidden.

Numbers 25:9 and I Cor. 10:8 (in one day!)

24,000 or 22,000? The number was perhaps *between* 24 and 22k, 24k when fully counted. Moses and Paul both rounded their numbers off?

2nd Samuel 24 and 1st Chronicles 21

Both God *and* Satan worked on David, i.e. 2nd Cor. 12.

2nd Samuel 24:9 and 1st Chronicles 21:5

Differing numbers? Soldiers vs. draftees? "Valiant" men vs. men?

Verse 13 and Verse 12

Vs. 13= 7 yrs. Vs. 12=3 years. Interesting to note that the NIV (because of the LXX reading) on Vs. 13 = 3 years. Could there have been a copyist error on this detail in the manuscripts?

Verse 24 and Verse 25

Fifty shekels of silver versus 600 shekels of gold? The first verse focuses on a portion? And also, perhaps by the time of First Chronicles, inflation had been factored into the account?

2nd Chronicles 4:2

Inside and outside diameters?

Dating of Daniel

The Dead Sea Scrolls prove that Daniel was at least earlier than them (2nd c. B.C.) and thus, earlier than critics of the authenticity of Daniel posited.



Introduction to Biblical Archaeology

Rev. Neil C. Damgaard, Th.M.

Fall 2004

Possible Topics for the Research Paper

Jericho
Caesarea Philippi
Kathleen Kenyon
William Albright
Edward Robinson and "Robinson's Arch"
Where Was Calvary?
The Church of the Holy Sepulchre
The Dead Sea Scrolls
What's in Nazareth Today?
The Mamartine Prison
Hazor
Meggido
Dan
Bethsaida and Chorazin
Capernaum
Mikvahs
Weaponry of the Roman Period
What Can We Learn from the Books of Maccabees?
The Ebla Tablets
The Rosetta Stone
The Moabite Stone
Inscriptions
Masada
Yigael Yadin
Caesarea (Maritime)
Herod's Buildings
Tombs in Israel
Sepphoris
St. Catherine's Monastery and Mt. Sinai
Ur
Babylon
Nineveh
Cultic Prostitution
Jerusalem (various aspects)
The Roman Occupation of Judea
The Seven Churches of the Revelation
Philippi
The Jesus Boat