

ARCHAEOLOGY

ARCHAEOLOGISTS TRADITIONALLY PIECE together artifacts to reconstruct the story, lifestyles and culture of ancient people and civilizations. In the case of Biblical Archaeology, the historical record was already available long before the digging began. Biblical archaeology has always consistently affirmed Scriptural accounts of history.

Archaeological artifacts have affirmed hundreds of Bible events, people, leaders and nations, exactly as described thousands of years ago in Scripture. Yet, even such verifiably authenticated “road maps of history,” do not stop the skeptics. Television programs purporting to investigate Biblical events and miracles invariably morph into biased attempts to discredit Biblical accounts. But God’s timelessly inspired, unchanging Scripture allows all who are willing, to study and verify God’s truth for themselves. Prominent archaeologists have repeatedly affirmed that no known artifact has contradicted any part of the Bible’s historical account.

“I’ve been accused of teaching the absolute divine inspiration of the Scripture. I want it to be understood that I have never taught this. All I have ever said is that in all of my archeological investigation I have never found one artifact of antiquity that contradicts any statement of the Word of God.”

Nelson Glueck, President of the Jewish Theological Seminary in the Hebrew Union College; Considered one of greatest archaeologists ever:

“There can be no doubt that archaeology has confirmed the substantial historicity of Old Testament tradition.”

William F. Albright, Prominent Archeology expert

As should be expected, new archaeological discoveries always support the Scriptural record. Sir William Ramsey, a prior non-believer and renowned archaeologist, was convinced the book of Acts was fabricated during the second century. He diligently sought to discredit Luke’s historical account through archaeology. Ramsay’s beliefs drastically changed as his archaeological finds proved the book of Acts was accurate to the minutest detail. Sir William Ramsay, then a Christian, wrote:

“I may fairly claim to have entered on this investigation without prejudice in favor of the conclusion which I shall now seek to justify to the reader. On the contrary, I began with a mind unfavorable to it...but more recently I found myself brought into contact with the Book of Acts as an authority for the topography, antiquities, and society of Asia Minor. It was gradually borne upon me that in various details the narrative showed marvelous truth. In fact, beginning with a fixed idea that the work was essentially a second century composition, and never relying on its evidence as trustworthy for first century conditions, I gradually came to find it a useful ally in some obscure and difficult investigations ^[59]-- Luke is a historian of first rank; not merely are his statements of fact trustworthy... this author should be placed along with the very greatest of historians.”^[60]

Sir William Ramsey

Non-believers (including many archaeologists) often start with a biased presumption that Scripture/the Bible is only a fable or myth that bears no further investigation. Because of this, some Biblical artifacts have sometimes been ignored or shelved for decades. In spite of this, archaeological proof of the Biblical record eventually finds its way into the public forum.

Given the wealth of archeological and scientific support for Scripture, one would think scientists and archaeologists would save time and embarrassment by first validating their conclusions against “God’s history book,” before making them public.

“For the wisdom of this age is foolishness with God. As it is written, “He catches the wise in their craftiness.” (1 Corinthians 3:19)

“God chose what the world thinks foolish to shame the wise, and God chose what the world thinks weak to shame the strong. (1 Corinthians 1:27)

New Biblical artifacts continue to prove the Biblical record and disprove conclusions or assumptions to the contrary. Political leaders, geographical boundaries, nations, military movements, cultures, social institutions, languages, customs, and events are exactly as reported in Scripture/the Bible. For centuries, detractors insisted the first five books of the Old Testament (Pentateuch) could not have been written by Moses, since, in their opinion, “writing and legal systems did not yet exist.” However, archeological artifacts, such as the Hammurabi Code, have demonstrated that detailed pre-Mosaic writing and legal codes did exist.

After the Exodus from Egypt, the land of Canaan (modern Israel) was settled by the ancient Jewish tribes and later became the nation of Israel. Thus, by default, almost all archaeological excavation in Israel over the past century has been Bible archaeology. Since many ancient cities of Israel (i.e.; Jerusalem) were completely razed and leveled, with new cities built on top of the ancient ruins, successive excavation projects often uncover even earlier cities. ^[60, 78]

No archeological discovery has ever contradicted a Biblical reference. In addition to the archaeological record, the Bible’s accuracy is supported by prophecy, science, literature and many other compelling proofs.

“All human discoveries seem to be made only for the purpose of confirming more and more the Truths contained in the Sacred Scriptures.”

- Sir William Herschel (1738-1822), English astronomer, discoverer of the planet Uranus

20,000 significant Scripture/Bible-related artifacts, supporting parts of almost every book of the Bible, have been uncovered. Examples of many Bible-related archaeological artifacts are highlighted below:

Notes:

- **“Stele”, “Stela”** - an upright stone slab or column typically bearing a commemorative inscription or relief design, often serving as a gravestone.
- **BCE And CE** (Before) Common Christian Era; are sometimes substituted for BC (Before Christ) and AD (Anno Domini – In the year of Our Lord)
- **Dates** Dates are conservatively based on the estimated date the related Bible passages were written. Scripture is representative, but not all inclusive.

OLD TESTAMENT ARCHAEOLOGICAL ARTIFACTS ^[#51+]

The Dead Sea Scrolls are undoubtedly the greatest manuscript find of all time. Discovered between 1947 and 1956, *the Dead Sea Scrolls* comprise 800 complete documents and thousands of fragments, most of which were copied in Hebrew, Aramaic and Greek around **250 BC To 68 AD**. They contain Biblical and apocryphal works, prayers, legal texts and sectarian documents. This priceless collection of ancient manuscripts contains almost the entire Old Testament Book of Isaiah (**700 BC**), along with manuscript fragments of every Book in the Hebrew Canon (Old Testament) except Esther. Another fragment (4Q41) contains one of the earliest copies of the Ten Commandments. **Significance:** Although these manuscripts

preceded the previous earliest known manuscripts by 1,000 years, only minimal text variations were found. This conclusively proved Bible texts thousands of years old had been accurately reproduced and were completely reliable. While not original autographs, the amazing preservation and accuracy of the scrolls eliminates any basis for specious suggestions that the originals might have been changed. [#51]

The Temple of King Solomon (700 BC): The Ain Dara Temple in Northern Syria is similar in every respect to the first Temple of King Solomon as described in the Bible (Age, size, plan, and more than 30 architectural and decorative elements). The original temple is thought to have been built on the Temple Mount in Jerusalem, but excavation is impossible due to the location of the Muslim Dome of the Rock. Solomon's temple was destroyed in 587-589 BC by *Nebuchadnezzar* during the siege of Jerusalem. **BIBLE REF:** 1 Kings: 24 and 25; **Significance:** Further establishes the existence and location of Solomon's Temple. [#51]

The Quadrilingual Darius I Jar (500 BC) - Darius I of Persia, also known as "**Darius the Great**" (486 BC) is mentioned in several Old Testament books. This Persian calcite jar has four inscriptions that praise Darius in four different languages (one more than the Rosetta Stone). The Old Persian, Elamite and Akkadian inscriptions read "Darius, great king" and the Egyptian hieroglyphs read "King of Upper and Lower Egypt, lord of the two lands, Darius, living eternally, year 36." Coincidentally, the 36th year of Darius's reign (486 BCE) was also his last. **BIBLE REF:** Ezra 4, 5, Daniel 5, 6, Haggai 1, 2, Zechariah 1 – **Significance:** Affirmed the existence and rule of Darius as described in scripture (approx. 500 BC). [#51]

The Biblical name Eshbaal [Esh Baal] (900 BC) was found in an ancient inscription. Incised before firing on a 3,000-year-old pithos (large ceramic storage jar). The jar and inscription was discovered at the site of Khirbet Qeiyafa in Israel. **Significance:** Scripture reveals that Eshbaal was the second king of Israel, King Saul's son and a rival of King David. *Ner was the father of Kish, Kish*

the father of Saul, and Saul the father of Jonathan, Malki-Shua, Abinadab and Esh-Baal. **BIBLE REF:** 1 Chronicles 8:33, 9:39 – (900-800 BC). [#51]

Yahweh Šebaot Inscription (800 BC) This limestone inscription from a burial cave in Judah (800–750 BC) is written in Paleo-Hebrew script and reads "**Cursed be Hagaf son of Hagab by Yahweh Šebaot.**" **Significance:** The phrase Yahweh Šebaot, often translated as "Lord of Hosts," appears over two hundred times in the Hebrew Bible, especially in prophetic books such as Isaiah and Jeremiah. The museum's inscription is perhaps the earliest non-Biblical evidence for this name. **BIBLE REF:** Ezra 2:46 (530 BC) and others. [#51]

Tel Dan ("David") Stela – (1000 BC) – House of David Inscription - Few Biblical archaeology discoveries have attracted as much attention as the Tel Dan Stela. Tel Dan is located at the foot of Mount Herman in Northern Israel. **Significance:** The 900 BC Inscription affirmed King David's dynasty, "the House of David" (outside the Bible). **BIBLE:** 1 and 2 Samuel (King David) (1000 BC) **SOURCE:** Archaeology Today. [57, 51] ; **BIBLE REF:** 1-2 Samuel, 1-2 Kings.

The Larsa Tablet (1820 BC): - This Akkadian tablet, which contains over 630 lines, comes from the southern Mesopotamian city of Larsa during the second year of King Rim-Sîn's reign, (1821 BC). The tablet registers the rites performed in Larsa's many temples from the fifteenth until the twenty-fourth day **of the month of Shabaṭu**, the month identical to **the** Biblical month of Shebat (Zechariah 1:7). **Significance:** 4,000-year old cuneiform tablet written in Akkadian listed eight day schedule for a Larsa temple, near the birthplace of Abraham. (modern day southern Iraq – neighboring city of Ur Kasdim. **BIBLE REF:** Genesis 11:28-31, 15:7 (500 BC) [#51]

Relief of Ark-of-the Covenant like Image (800 BC) According to Exodus 25:10–16 (1300 BC), the Ark of the Covenant was a rectangular box carried on poles. The museum has a Basalt Relief from Arslan Tash (Northern Syria,

ancient Hadatu) from c. **800–750 BC** which depicts two men (likely priests) carrying a rectangular box on poles. **Significance:** Affirms Biblical references to the Ark of the Covenant. **BIBLE REF:** Exodus 25:10-16; Numbers, Deuteronomy, Joshua, Samuel, Kings. ^[#51]

The Ivory Cherub (850 BC)- According to the Bible, cherubs were placed in both the Tabernacle and the Temple. While the descriptions about these creatures are vague, the museum has an ivory Phoenician-style cherub from Arslan Tash (Northern Syria, ancient Hadatu) from c. 850–800 BC. This cherub was probably called a kuribu in Akkadian (similar to Hebrew). **Significance:** Was likely used to decorate the throne of Hazael, king of Damascus, mentioned in the books of Kings, Chronicles and Amos. Also affirms Biblical descriptions of cherubs in the Temple and on the Ark of the Covenant. **BIBLE REF:** Exodus 37:7–9; 1 Kings 6:23–30. ^[#51]

The Lion and Calf Bowl (3000 BC): - According to Isaiah’s prophecy of peace, “The wolf shall dwell with the lamb, the leopard shall lie down with the kid and the calf and the lion and the fatling [will dwell] together” (Isaiah 11:6). On the museum’s unique serpentine bowl from southern Mesopotamia c. 3300–2900 B.C.E., lions and calves are depicted lying down peacefully one after the other. **Significance:** Early non-Biblical reference to Biblical Illustrations. **BIBLE REF:** Isaiah 11:6 ^[#51]

The Ebla Tablets (2300 BC): were discovered in Northern Syria in the 1960s. The Ebla kingdom existed approximately 1,000 years before Moses (reaching its height around 2300 BC). The five Cities of the Plains: Sodom, Gomorrah, Admah, Zebolim and Zoar are also referenced in the Ebla Tablets. **Significance:** The Ebla Tablets showed that extensive written records and a system of laws existed 1,000 years prior to Moses (about 2300 BC). Also affirms more than 70 Bible references to these Cities. **BIBLE REF:** Sodom (53), Zoar (10), Admah (6); Genesis, Deuteronomy, Jeremiah, Isaiah, Kings, Lamentations, Amos, Ezekiel ^[#49]

The Nuzi Tablets (1500 BC): - Approximately 4,000 cuneiform tablets written in the Akkadian language were discovered in the ancient city of Nuzi (modern Iraq). These tablets are dated at 1500-1400 BC and probably originated during the patriarchal period of the Bible. The customs and lifestyles described in the Nuzi Tablets closely resemble customs and lifestyles reported in the Patriarchal period of the Bible. **Significance:** The Nuzi Tablets show that extensive written records and laws existed 500-years prior to Moses (about 1800 BC) – They also affirm Biblical customs from patriarchal accounts, such as maids producing children for barren wives. **BIBLE Ref:** (Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Deuteronomy, Numbers). ^[#49]

King Belshazzar (1400 BC) – The book of Daniel’s claims that Belshazzar was the King of Babylon and that King Nabonidus reigned on the Babylonian throne at the time of the Medo-Persian conquest of Babylon. While excavating ancient Ur, an inscription stated that Nabonidus passed the throne and royal title to his eldest son, “Bel-shar-usur.” **Significance:** Supports the Daniel 5:29 promise of the “third” place in the kingdom, implying that Belshazzar was only second in authority. Daniel’s accounts of Belshazzar, once dismissed by detractors, were later proved completely reliable. **BIBLE REF:** 8-10 references in Daniel ^[#49]

The Hittites (1400 BC): Archaeologists digging east of Ankara, Turkey, discovered the ruins of Hattusas, the ancient Hittite capitol at what is today called Boghazkoy, along with a vast collection of Hittite historical records showing a flourishing Hittite empire around 1500 BC. **Significance:** For years historians claimed that the Bible was in error because they could find no traces of the “Hittite” civilization referenced over sixty times in the Bible. Today, there is abundant archaeological evidence to support an advanced Hittite civilization that once vied with Assyria and Egypt for power in the ancient world. The discovery of the Hittite civilization is another example of claiming Bible error before all the facts are in! (Today, one can even get a doctorate in Hittite studies at the University of Chicago). **BIBLE REF:** Genesis;

Exodus, Deuteronomy, Joshua, Judges, Kings, Chronicles, Nehemiah, Ezra ^[#49, 56] Genesis 23, 25:9, 49:30, 50:13, reports that Abraham buried Sarah in the Cave of Machpelah, which he purchased from Ephron the Hittite. 2 Samuel 11 tells of David's adultery with Bathsheba, the wife of Uriah the Hittite.

King of Sargon (700 BC)- Discoveries made at Sargon's palace further verified the Biblical account of the fall of Samaria. 2 Kings 17:24 also lists the nations from which Sargon brought people to settle Samaria. **Significance:** Since Sargon's name was not mentioned in other ancient literature, critics concluded the Bible was in error. The discovery of Sargon's palace again proved the Bible correct. A quote written on the ancient walls of Sargon's palace further affirmed Scripture: "The town I rebuilt better than it was before and settled therein people from countries which I myself had conquered." **BIBLE REF:** Isaiah 20:1 and 2 Kings refers to Sargon II as "the king of Assyria" ^[#49]

Tell el-Amarna Tablets (1300 BC): were found in el-Amarna, an ancient capital of Egypt (Akhetaten). They date from the fourteenth Century BC and are from officials of Palestine and Syria who were upset because of the attacking Habiru (or 'Apiru). These tablets describe a disorganized turmoil among the states and contain requests for Egyptian assistance and troops. **Significance:** These letters substantiate the situation described when the Israelites invaded Canaan under Joshua. (The tablet dates also correspond with the estimated dates of the Exodus from Egypt and conquest of Canaan). Scholar William F. Albright, equates the term Habiru in the Amarna Tablets with the Biblical term in Hebrew first used by Abraham - **BIBLE REF:** Genesis 14:13, Exodus, Joshua, etc.). ^[#49]

Merneptah Stele (1230 BC). A seven-foot slab engraved with hieroglyphics, also called the Israel Stele, boasts of the Egyptian pharaoh's conquest of Libyans and peoples in Palestine, including the Israelites: "Israel — his seed is not." The Merneptah Stele was found in 1896 in Thebes and resides in the Cairo Museum in Egypt.- **Significance:** This is the earliest reference to Israel

in non-Biblical sources and demonstrates that as of c. 1230 BC, the Hebrews were already living in the Promised Land; (and had spent considerable time in Egypt). **BIBLE REF:** Exodus, Joshua ^[#50, 56]

Burial Plaque of King Uzziah (750 BC): King Uzziah ruled in Judah from 792 to 740 BC, a contemporary of Amos, Hosea, and Isaiah. In 2 Chronicles 26 his sin is recorded, which resulted in his being struck with leprosy later in life. When Uzziah died, he was interred in a "field of burial that belonged to the kings." His stone burial plaque has been discovered on the Mount of Olives, and it reads: "Here, the bones of Uzziah, King of Judah, were brought. Do not open." **Significance:** Affirms numerous Bible references to the reign of King Uzziah. **BIBLE REF:** King Uzziah (25): Amos, Isaiah, Hosea, Kings, 2 Chron. ^[#50]

Hezekiah's Siloam Tunnel Inscription (750 BC): King Hezekiah of Judah ruled from 721 to 686 BC. Fearing a siege by the Assyrian king, Sennacherib, Hezekiah preserved Jerusalem's water supply by cutting a tunnel through 1,750 feet of solid rock from the Gihon Spring to the Pool of Siloam inside the city walls (2 Kings 20; 2 Chron. 32). At the Siloam end of the tunnel, an inscription, presently in the archaeological museum at Istanbul, Turkey, celebrates this remarkable accomplishment. **Significance:** The tunnel is one of the few Biblical sites that has not changed in appearance in 2,700 years! **BIBLE REF:** Siloam: 2 Kings, 2 Chronicles, John, Luke; Hezekiah: (117) Kings, Proverbs, Chronicles, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Hosea, Micah. ^[#50, #56]

The Sennacherib Prism (700 BC): After having conquered the 10 northern tribes of Israel, the Assyrians moved southward toward Judah (2 Kings 18–19). The prophet Isaiah told Hezekiah, God would protect Judah and Jerusalem against Sennacherib (2 Chron. 32; Isa. 36–37). The Assyrian cuneiform record found at the Assyrian capitol of Nineveh describes Sennacherib's invasion of Judah in 701 BC. It claims the Assyrian king shut Hezekiah inside Jerusalem "like a caged bird," but does not state he conquered Jerusalem, which the record certainly would have included. The Assyrians, in fact,

bypassed Jerusalem on their way to Egypt and Jerusalem did not fall until 586 BC when it was conquered by Nebuchadnezzar and the Babylonians. Sennacherib returned to Nineveh where his own sons murdered him (also as predicted in Scripture).- **Significance:** Archaeology again affirmed the Biblical record and prophecy **BIBLE REF:** 2 Kings, 2 Chronicles, Isaiah. [#50]

Shishak, King of Egypt's plunder of Judah (1000 BC) - Shishak's campaign is documented in Egypt as well as in the Bible. Upon his return, he constructed a large festival court in front of the great Temple of Amun at Thebes in southern Egypt. On one of the walls, Shishak commissioned a commemorative relief of his Palestinian campaign. Remains show that Shishak attacked Judah and the northern kingdom of Israel. **Significance:** Affirms Biblical records of early kingdoms and kings of Israel. *"In the fifth year of King Rehoboam, Shishak, King of Egypt, attacked Jerusalem. He carried off the treasures of the Temple of the Lord and the treasures of the royal palace. He took everything, including all the gold shields Solomon had made"* **BIBLE REF:** 1 Kings 14:25-26; Also see: 1 Kings 14:25-27, 2 Chronicles 12:2-10 Shishak (6), Rehoboam (41). [#51]

The Egyptian Scarab of Khirbet el-Maqatir – (1500 BC) -This tiny amulet, carved in the familiar shape of a dung beetle, has been dated to the Bronze I period of **1550-1450 BC**. Its discovery in the destroyed remains of a fortress at Khirbet el-Maqatir, nine miles north of Jerusalem, affirms this site as the **real location of Ai, the city destroyed in Joshua 8**. (The site archaeologists had traditionally associated with Ai at nearby et-Tell lacked the destruction dated to the time of Joshua, raising questions about the accuracy of the conquest narrative. **Significance:** Affirms 1500 BC conquests in Canaan by Joshua. **BIBLE REF:** Joshua 8. [#52].

Royal Public Buildings at Khirbet Qeiyafa - The palace of King David (900 BC). The palatial ruins and nearby storehouse helped confirm Khirbet Qeiyafa's identification as a heavily fortified city in Judah at the time of King David. - **Significance:** City overlooks the Elah Valley, where David

famously confronted Goliath. Khirbet Qeiyafa was constructed to help protect Jerusalem and the Judean highlands from the lowland Philistines. **BIBLE REF:** 1-2 Kings, 1-2 Samuel. [#52];

Khirbet Summeily bullae (1000 BC)- The discovery of six clay seal impressions—or bullae—from the 10th century BC indicate significant administrative activity at a remote outpost at Khirbet Summeily near Gaza, on the ancient border between Judah and Philistia. **Significance:** The bullae are the latest in a series of discoveries that support the existence of a major Jerusalem-based kingdom in the **10th century BC**, at the Biblically reported time of David and Solomon's reign. - **BIBLE REF:** Samuel, Kings, Solomon [#56]

The Cylinder of Cyrus the Great. 2 Chronicles 36:23 and Ezra 1 report that Cyrus the Great of Persia, after conquering Babylon, permitted Jews in the Babylonian Captivity to return to their homeland as prophesied by Isaiah (Isa. 44:28). This tolerant policy by the ruler of the Persian Empire is borne out by the discovery of a nine-inch clay cylinder found at Babylon from the time of its conquest, **539 BC**. It reports Cyrus' victory and subsequent policy of permitting Babylonian captives to return to their homes and even rebuild their temples. -- The list of correlations between Old Testament texts and the hard evidence of Near Eastern archaeology is extensive. When it comes to the inter-Testament and New Testament eras, the number of positive correlations is unparalleled. **Significance:** Strongly supports the date and details of Biblical accounts of the conquest of Israel by Babylon and the subsequent rise of Cyrus and return of the Israelites to Israel. **BIBLE REF:** 2 Chronicles 36:23; Ezra 1. [#56]

Amulet Scroll (700 BC): Israeli archaeologists excavated several burial caves in Jerusalem, near the Hinnom Valley. In one cave almost 700 items were found, including: burial gifts of pottery vessels, over 100 pieces of silver jewelry, arrowheads, bone and ivory artifacts, alabaster vessels, 150 beads and a rare, early coin. Among the silver items was a rolled-up amulet bearing the

tetragrammaton, the name of God (the consonantal letters *yod, he, waw, he*), YHWH. The tomb dates to the end of the Davidic dynasty (700 BC). The prayer-like inscription on the amulet is from the Aaronic or priestly blessing found in Numbers 6:24-25. **Significance:** Among the oldest extra-biblical evidence for the name of God. The owner apparently wore the inscribed, rolled-up silver amulet during his/her lifetime, and accompanied the owner in death and burial. **BIBLE REF:** Num. 6:24-25 ^[#57]

Philistine city of Ekron: The city of Ekron is referenced in Joshua 13 and twenty-three other Old Testament references. A royal dedicatory inscription carved into a slab of limestone confirmed the place name, along with the names of five of its rulers, two of which are specifically mentioned in the Bible. **Significance:** The inscription was found in a destruction layer attributed to the Babylonian conquest dating to 603 BC. It was within the sanctuary of a 186 x 124-foot temple complex that followed the design of Assyrian palaces. **BIBLE REF:** 1 Samuel, 2 Kings, Jeremiah 25:20, Amos 1:8 and others. ^[#57]

The Walls of Jericho During excavations of Jericho, Professor Garstang found an incredible confirmation of the biblical record about the conquest of Jericho. As verified by archaeologists: “There remains no doubt: the walls fell outwards so completely that the attackers would be able to clamber up and over their ruins into the city.” All other archeological digs in that time and area reveal the walls of cities always fall inwards, as invading armies push their way into a city. **Significance:** Joshua 6:20, states, “the wall fell down flat, so that the people went up into the city every man straight ahead, and they took the city.” **BIBLE REF:** Joshua, Numbers, Deuteronomy, Kings, 2 Samuel, Chronicles. According to Grant Jeffries, ‘The Signature of God’ (2015), “Only the supernatural power of God could have caused the walls to fall outward as described in Joshua’s account of the conquest of Jericho” ^[#58, #49]

The Moabite Stone (900 BC) contained language very similar to Biblical Hebrew. The events on the stone report that during the reigns of Omri and

Ahab, Moab was a tributary to Israel, but that after the death of Ahab, Mesha, King of Moab rebelled. After this time, Mesha was unable to defeat Jehoram in several battles. The actual words are: “Now the men of God had always dwelt in the land of Ataroth, and the King of Israel had built Ataroth for them: but I fought against the town and took it and slew all the people of the town as satiation for Chemosh and Moab.” **Significance:** The events recorded on the stone correspond with the **Bible records** from 1 Kings 16 through 2 Kings 3 (circa 900 BC) with significant information about Omri, the 6th king of Israel. The stone also includes the name of Israel’s God, “Yahweh,” further affirming the historical accuracy of the Bible. ^[#60]

The Black Obelisk of Shalmaneser III (850 BC), discovered by Henry Layard in 1845, it describes the campaigns of Shalmaneser III of Assyria who reigned around **850 BC**. The scenes depicted on the obelisk show gold tribute being paid to the great Assyrian monarch by Jehu of Israel, who is bowing before the Assyrian king (2 Kings 10:31-33 -- **900 BC**). **King Sennacherib** of the Assyrians also came against Judah During the reign of King Hezekiah (Southern Israel) - **Significance:** There are over 100 Bible references to King Hezekiah in the Books of 2 Kings through 2 Chronicles (1000 to 950 BC). Hezekiah ensured that Jerusalem invaders would have difficulty getting good water, while Jerusalem had a good supply. ^[#60]

Biblical Cities in Israel (1000 BC): Many Biblical cities have been excavated, such as: Ekron, Jericho, Haran, Hazor, Dan, Megiddo, Shechem, Samaria, Shiloh, Gezer, Gibeah, Beth Shemesh, Beth Shean, Beersheba, Lachish, and many others (including major, obvious locations such as Jerusalem, Babylon, etc. **Significance:** These ancient Biblical sites are repeatedly referenced in Scripture and their excavations, without exception, affirm the Old Testament historical narrative. Prior to their twentieth century excavations, almost all were labeled as ‘fables’ by Bible detractors ^[#56, #60]

Israel’s enemies (circa 1000 BC) Among the most dangerous of these were the Philistines of which the earliest depiction is on the Temple of Rameses

III at Thebes (1150 BC), as “peoples of the sea” who invaded the Delta area and later the coastal plain of Canaan. The five cities they established (Ashkelon, Ashdod, Gaza, Gath, and Ekron) have all been excavated, at least in part, and some remain cities to this day. **Significance:** Precise evidence from urban archaeology excavations affirm the locations and existence of Israel’s enemies as described in scripture. **BIBLE REF:** numerous [#56]

NEW TESTAMENT ARCHAEOLOGICAL ARTIFACTS

Ancient Israeli coins (60-150 AD) mark historical events: During the First Jewish Revolt against Rome (66–70 CE), which ended with the destruction of the Temple, Jews minted their own coins dated to the first, second, third, fourth and more rarely, fifth year of the revolt. Dating began with the beginning of the revolt. Many of the coins also bore legends like “Jerusalem the Holy” or “Freedom of Zion.” **Significance:** The Romans crushed the Jewish revolt in 70 AD (except for the holdouts at Masada, among other places), but the Jews managed to revolt again a little more than 60 years later. This revolt, the so-called Bar-Kokhba Revolt (132–135 AD), lasted only two-and-a-half years. Coins from this revolt are much rarer. As in the first revolt, coins are dated beginning with the start of the revolt. An example is a coin inscribed, “Year 1 of the Redemption of Israel,” or another inscribed, “Year 2 of the Freedom of Israel.” Rarely, a coin will bear the legend “Year 3 of the Redemption of Israel.” [#54]

Roman historian, Cornelius Tacitus (50 AD) wrote concerning Nero: “Hence to suppress the rumor, he falsely charged with the guilt, and punished with the most exquisite tortures, the persons commonly called Christians, who were hated for their enormities. Christus, the founder of the name, was put to death by Pontius Pilate, procurator of Judea in the reign of Tiberius; but the pernicious superstition, repressed for a time broke out again, not only through Judea, where the mischief originated, but through the city of Rome also” (Josephus, Annals XV .44). **Significance:** Affirms the death of Christ and persecution of Christians outside of Scripture . [#49]

St. Peter’s House at Capernaum (30 AD)-- Archaeologists excavated a simple first-century AD home in Capernaum that may have been inhabited by Jesus during his Galilean ministry. According to the excavated material, the function of the house appears to have changed dramatically, becoming a place for communal gatherings, possibly Christian. **Significance:** Significant circumstantial evidence to support the house’s importance in earliest Christianity; associated with Jesus and Peter. **BIBLE REF:** Matthew 8:14, Luke 8:51. [#53]

The Galilee Boat (120 BC – 40 AD): The remains of a 2,000 year old boat buried in the mud of the Sea of Galilee, carbon-14 dated to between 120 BC and 40 AD.. Items found with the boat included pieces of pottery, a lamp and cooking pot. The boat measures 30-feet long and 8 feet wide. It could hold about fifteen individuals and accommodate four oarsmen and a helmsman, and could either sail or be rowed. **Significance:** Similar to the descriptions of boats used by Jesus and his disciples to cross the Sea of Galilee. The boat has been preserved in an exhibit hall at Kibbutz Ginnosar as a visual reminder of the many Bible references to Jesus and His disciples on the Sea of Galilee. **BIBLE REF:** (Matt 8:18, 23-27, 9:1, 14:13- 14, 22-32, 15:39, 16:5; Mark 4:35-41, 5:18, 21, 6:32-34, 45-51, 8:9-10, 13-14; Luke 8:22-25, 37, 40; John 6:16-21). [#57]

Herod’s Gate at Herodium (30 AD) What was believed to be the tomb of Herod the Great was excavated in 2007. In 2014, Hebrew University archaeologists also announced the discovery of a huge entrance—60 feet long, 20 feet wide, and 60 feet high, providing direct access to an inner courtyard. -- **Significance:** Affirms Biblical references to Herod the Great. Note: The entryway is adjacent to a royal theater and may never have been used. **BIBLE REF: Matthew, Mark, Luke, Acts, Romans.** [#56]

Siloam Pool (in Jesus’ Time) -- In 2004, near the Temple Mount in Jerusalem, archaeologists excavated part of a large pool. **Significance:** This is where Jesus is believed to have performed the miracle of restoring sight to a blind man in the Gospel of John. -**BIBLE REF: John 9.** [#53]

New Testament Cities: (30-70 AD) Major New Testament cities have been excavated over the past 100-years (Capernum, Galilee, Nazareth, etc.). Ongoing excavations are being conducted at: Beth Shan of the Decapolis (Matt. 4:25, Mark 5:20, 7:31 (70 AD) and at Caesarea Phillipi, the Galilean city visited by Jesus (Matthew 16:13, Mark 8:22, Acts 8 through Acts 25) near the ancient port on the Sea of Galilee; at Bethsaida (Matt. 11:21, Mark 6 and 8, Luke 9, 10, John 1, 12); and Caesarea Maritima, the site of King Herod's famous harbor and the trials of the Apostle Paul. At Masada, the desert mountaintop fortress of King Herod, archaeologists found pieces of a discarded storage jar with the Latin phrase "Herod king of the Jews." This is the first ancient inscription with both the name and title of the infamous Jewish king. At the northern Galilee site of Tel Hazor, four ancient clay tablets were found dated to the period of Joshua and mentioning the sites Biblical name –

Significance: As has been the case with Old Testament excavation sites, New Testament archaeology and artifacts have, without exception, supported and affirmed the Bible narrative.

Josephus' testimony of Christ's Existence: A prominent Jewish historian and contemporary of Christ (neither a known Christian, disciple or Bible writer). His works are full of references to New Testament characters such as Herod, the Roman emperors, the high priestly families of Annas and Caiaphas, the Pharisees, the Sadducees, etc. Especially interesting is the following passage: "...so he assembled the Sanhedrin judges, and brought before them the brother of Jesus, who was called Christ, whose name was James, and some others... (Antiquities XX 9:1)" ----

Josephus also stated: "Now there was about this time Jesus, a wise man, if it be lawful to call him a man, for he was a doer of wonderful works - a teacher of such men as receive the truth with pleasure. He drew over to him many of the Jews, and many of the Gentiles. He was [the] Christ; and when Pilate, at the suggestion of the principal men amongst us, had condemned him to the cross, those that loved him at the first did not forsake him, for he

appeared to them alive again the third day, as the divine prophets had foretold these and ten thousand other wonderful things concerning him; and the tribe of Christians, so named from, are not extinct at this day. (Antiquities XVIII 3:3)" **Significance: Secular historian affirms life and times of Jesus Christ.** [#49]

Burial Place of Stephen (34 AD): Near the Palestinian town of Ramallah archaeologists have discovered **the burial place of Holy Archdeacon Stephen, the First Martyr for Christ** (Reported by the *Linganews*). Research in the Kharaba at Taiar village. Also discovered were the ruins of an entire church complex that includes a temple and monastery of the Byzantine-Umayyad era. **Significance:** Inside one of the churches was an inscription which indicates the church had been built in honor of Holy Apostle and Archdeacon Stephen, who was buried here in **35 AD.** **BIBLE REF:** Acts 7:55-8:2. [#56]

The Ossuary of Caiaphas (50AD): In 1990, an ossuary believed to contain the bones of the High Priest Caiaphas was discovered near the "Jerusalem Peace Forest" on the southwest side of old Jerusalem, across the Hinnom Valley from Mt. Zion. -Two of a dozen ossuaries in the tomb contained a form of the name Qafa', or Caiaphas. An intricately carved ossuary also was inscribed, "Yehosef bar Qafa'" (Joseph son of Caiaphas). **Significance:** Believed to be the tomb and bones of Caiaphas, before whom Jesus was brought for questioning **BIBLE REF:** Matthew 26:3, 57; Luke 3:2; John 11:49, 18:13, 14, 24, 28; Acts 4:6) [14]. [#57]

Pontius Pilate Inscription (30 AD): Inscriptional evidence for Pilate was discovered in Italian excavations at Caesarea Maritima in 1961 on a dedicatory stone bearing a three-line inscription *Tiberieum/[Pon]tius Pilatus/[Praef]ectus Iuda[ea]*, "Tiberius [the Roman emperor of the period]/Pontius Pilate/Prefect of Judea." **Significance:** There are over sixty New Testament references to Pontius Pilate, the fifth governor of Roman Judea, under whose governance Jesus of Nazareth was crucified. Pilate was appointed by the emperor

Tiberius in AD 26. Pilate is also mentioned by Josephus, Philo and Tacitus and coins issued during his governance exist

The inscription affirms the historicity of Pilate (who died in 37 AD) and clarifies the title he bore as governor. **BIBLE REF:** Matthew 27:2, Mark 15, Luke 3, 13, 23, Acts, 1 Timothy. ^[#49]

The Census at the birth of Christ (1 AD). Archaeological evidence has shown that a census was conducted by Governor Quirinius about the time of Jesus' birth. A papyrus was found in Egypt which gives directions for a Roman census and orders all people away from home to return in preparation of the coming census. **Significance:** Affirms the often debated Census at the time of Jesus birth. Prior to this discovery, Bible detractors argued against the Census. **BIBLE REF:** Luke 2:1-3. ^[#49]

WHAT OTHERS SAY ABOUT BIBLICAL ARCHAEOLOGY?

The Historical Accuracy of Scripture

- “I may add that the result of my 45 years of study of the Bible has led me all the time to a firmer faith that in the Old Testament, we have a true historical account of the history of the Israelite people”

Robert Dick Wilson --Theologian, Educator, Linguist

The Historical Accuracy of Scripture

- “There is no ground at all for refusing to accept these oldest traditions as historically trustworthy in all essentials, and in their chronological ordering of history”

Professor Edward Meyer -- One of greatest authorities on ancient history

Old Testament Archaeology ‘fills historical gaps’

- “Old Testament archaeology has rediscovered whole nations, resurrected important peoples, and in a most astonishing manner filled in historical gaps, adding immeasurably to the knowledge of Biblical backgrounds.”

Merril Unger—Theologian, Author, Bible scholar and commentator

No Archaeological Artifact contradicts any Statement in God’s Word

- “I’ve been accused of teaching the absolute divine inspiration of the Scripture. I want it to be understood that I have never taught this. All I have ever said is that in all of my archeological investigation I

have never found one artifact of antiquity that contradicts any statement of the Word of God”

Nelson Glueck—Archaeologist; Past President of the Jewish Theological Seminary in the Hebrew Union College and one of greatest archaeologists

Archaeology affirms the accuracy of Biblical History

- “There can be no doubt that archaeology confirmed the substantial historicity of the Old Testament. Discovery after discovery has established the accuracy of innumerable details, and brought increased recognition to the value of the Bible as a source of history”

William F. Albright—American Archaeologist; known for Bible site excavations

Archaeology affirms the accuracy of Biblical History

- “It is to the credit of W.F. Albright that much of his scholarly endeavor has been directed toward rehabilitating the reputation of the Old Testament as a reliable record of the past. In numerous books and articles he has shown again and again that the Biblical record has been vindicated against its critics by recent archeological discovery”

Gleason Archer Jr.—Prominent Archaeologist; 1916-2004 – Biblical scholar, theologian, educator and author

No Archaeological finding contradicts Scripture

- “I know of no finding in archaeology that’s properly confirmed which is in opposition to the Scriptures. The Bible is the most accurate history textbook the world has ever seen.”

Dr. Clifford Wilson, former director of the Australian Institute of Archaeology

Archaeology proves the Bible is Accurate and Reliable

- “Through the wealth of data uncovered by historical and archaeological research, we are able to measure the Bible’s historical accuracy. In every case where its claims can thus be tested, the Bible proves to be accurate and reliable.” –

Dr. Jack Cottrell, *The Authority of the Bible* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1979), pp. 48-49.

Archaeological records confirm the Bible’s Historical Accuracy

- “In every instance where the findings of archaeology pertain to the Biblical record, the archaeological evidence confirms, sometimes in detailed fashion, the historical accuracy of Scripture. In those instances where the archaeological findings seem to be at variance with the Bible, the discrepancy lies with the archaeological evidence, i.e., improper interpretation, lack of evidence, etc. -- not with the Bible.” –

Dr. Bryant C. Wood - Archaeologist, Associates for Biblical Research [1]

Scores of Archaeological findings Confirm Biblical History

- “...Scores of archaeological findings have been made which confirm in clear outline or exact detail historical statements in the Bible. And, by the same token, proper evaluation of Biblical description has often led to amazing discoveries.” –

Dr. Nelson Glueck, *Rivers in the Desert*, (New York: Farrar, Strous and Cudahy, 1959), 136.

There is no known Instance of Archaeology proving the Bible wrong.

- “Archaeology has confirmed countless passages which have been rejected by critics as unhistorical or contradictory to known facts.....Yet archaeological discoveries have shown that these critical charges.....are wrong and that the Bible is trustworthy in the very statements which have been set aside as untrustworthy..... We do not know of any cases where the Bible has been proved wrong.” –

Dr. Joseph P. Free, Chairman Department of Archaeology, Wheaton College, ‘Archaeology and Bible History’, Scripture Press, Wheaton, IL, 1969, pg. 1

No artifact disproves a single theological doctrine in the Bible

- “The reader may rest assured that nothing has been found [by archaeologists] to disturb a reasonable faith, and nothing has been discovered which can disprove a single theological doctrine. We no longer trouble ourselves with attempts to ‘harmonize’ religion and science, or to ‘prove’ the Bible. The Bible can stand for itself.” –

Dr. William F. Albright, eminent archeologist who confirmed the authenticity of the Dead Sea Scrolls

Archaeology has only strengthened confidence in Scripture’s reliability

- “On the whole, however, archaeological work has unquestionably strengthened confidence in the reliability of the Scriptural record. More than one archaeologist has found his respect for the Bible increased by the experience of excavation in Palestine....Archaeology has in many cases refuted the views of modern critics. It has shown, in a number of instances, that these views rest on false assumptions

and unreal, artificial schemes of historical development. This is a real contribution and not to be minimized.” –

Millar Burrows, Professor of Archaeology at Yale University, Author: ‘What Mean These Stones?’, Meridian Books, New York, NY, 1956, p. 1

Archaeological discoveries increase the Bible’s indisputable credibility

- “It is therefore legitimate to say that, in respect of that part of the Old Testament against which the disintegrating criticism of the last half of the nineteenth century was chiefly directed, the evidence of archaeology has been to reestablish its authority and likewise to augment its value by rendering it more intelligible through a fuller knowledge of its background and setting. Archaeology has not yet said its last word, but the results already achieved confirm what faith would suggest – that the Bible can do nothing but gain from an increase in knowledge.” –

Sir Frederic Kenyon, a former director of the British Museum, *The Bible and Archaeology* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1940), page 279.

Bible records stand-up to the keenest scrutiny and the hardest inquiry

- “I set out to look for truth on the borderland where Greece and Asia meet, and found it there. You may press the words of Luke in a degree beyond any other historian’s and they stand the keenest scrutiny and the hardest treatment.” –

Sir William Ramsey – Archaeologist, Author: ‘The Bearing of Recent Discovery on the Trustworthiness of the New Testament’ (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1975 reprint), page 89.

The Scripture Accounts of Acts place Luke Among the greatest Historians

- “Luke is a historian of the first rank; not merely are his statements of facts trustworthy; he is possessed of the true historic sense...In short this author should be placed along with the very greatest of historians.” –
Sir William Ramsey (archaeologist), *The Bearing of Recent Discovery on the Trustworthiness of the New Testament*, 1915, pages 81, 222 - (Wikipedia – Creation Science Encyclopedia under Bible Archaeology Quotes (10))