

Chapter 1 : New Testament Archaeology

Archaeology gives us independent evidence for cultural practices, beliefs, places and people mentioned in the New Testament. This evidence confirms the historical character and reliability of the Gospel texts.

Any time a book alleges to report historical events accurately, that book potentially opens itself up to an immense amount of criticism. If such a book claims to be free from all errors in its historical documentation, the criticism frequently becomes even more intense. But such should be the case, for it is the responsibility of present and future generations to know and understand the past, and to insist that history, including certain monumental moments, is recorded and related as accurately as possible. The New Testament does not necessarily claim to be a systematic representation of first-century history. It is not, per se, merely a history book. It does claim, however, that the historical facts related in the text are accurate, with no margin of error 2 Timothy 3: It is safe to say that, due to this extraordinary claim, the New Testament has been scrutinized more intensely than any other text in existence with the possible exception of its companion volume, the Old Testament. What has been the end result of such scrutiny? The overwhelming result of this close examination is an enormous cache of amazing archaeological evidence that testifies to the exactitude of the various historical references in the New Testament. As can be said of virtually every article on archaeology and the Bible, the following few pages that document this archaeological evidence only scratch the surface of the available evidence. Nevertheless, an examination of this particular subject makes for a fascinating study in biblical accuracy. All four gospel accounts make reference to Pilate. His inquisition of Jesus, at the insistence of the Jewish mob, stands as one of the most memorable scenes in the life of Jesus. No less than three times, this Roman official explained to the howling mob that he found no fault with Jesus John Wanting to placate the Jews, however, Pilate washed his hands in a ceremonial attestation to his own innocence of the blood of Christ, and then delivered the Son of God to be scourged and crucified. What can be gleaned from secular history concerning Pilate? For approximately two thousand years, the only references to Pilate were found in such writings as Josephus and Tacitus. The written record of his life placed him as the Roman ruler over Judea from A. The records indicate that Pilate was a very rash, often violent man. The biblical record even mentioned that Pilate had killed certain Galileans while they were presenting sacrifices Luke Besides an occasional reference to Pilate in certain written records, however, there were no inscriptions or stone monuments that documented his life. Such remained the case until In that year, Pilate moved from a figure who was known solely from ancient literature, to a figure who was attested to by archaeology. Located in Caesarea was a large Roman theater that a group of Italian-sponsored archaeologists began to excavate in The Latin inscription on the stone, however, proved that originally, it was not meant to be used as a building block in the theater. On the stone, the researchers found what was left of an inscription bearing the name of Pontius Pilate. The entire inscription is not legible, but concerning the name of Pilate, Finegan remarked: What the complete inscription once said is not definitely known, but there is general agreement that originally the stone may have come from a temple or shrine dedicated to the Roman emperor Tiberius Blaiklock, , p. To support their accusations, they pointed out that the term politarch is found nowhere else in Greek literature as an official title. Thus, they reasoned that Luke made a mistake. How could someone refer to such an office if it did not exist? Whoever heard or read of politarchas in the Greek language? No one in modern times. That is, no one in modern times had heard of it until it was found recorded in the various cities of Macedoniaâ€”the province in which Thessalonica was located. In , Carl Schuler published a list of 32 inscriptions bearing the term politarchas. Approximately 19 out of the 32 came from Thessalonica, and at least three of them dated back to the first century see McRay, , p. In , the arch was torn down and used to repair the city walls p. An inscription on this arch, which is now housed in the British Museum, ranks as one of the most important when dealing with the term politarchas. This particular inscription, dated somewhere between 30 B. Thus, the arch most likely was standing when Luke wrote his historical narrative known as Acts of the Apostles. And the fact that politarchs ruled Thessalonica during the travels of Paul, now stands as indisputable. If Luke had been fabricating these travels, he could have made vague references to Roman rulers without giving specific names

and titles. But that is not what one finds in the book of Acts. On the contrary, it seems that Luke went out of his way to document specific cities, places, names, and titles. Because of this copious documentation, we have ample instances in which to check his reliability as a historian. One such instance is found in Acts 13. Was there ever a Sergius Paulus? Bruce expanded on this information when he explained that Cyprus was made an imperial province in 27 B.C. Once given to the Senate, proconsuls would have ruled Cyprus, just as in the other senatorial provinces Bruce, 1987, p. 100. As Thomas Eaves remarked: Therefore, the historians support Luke in his statement that Cyprus was ruled by a proconsul, for it was between A.D. 27 and 68. If we accept secular history as being true we must also accept Biblical history, for they are in agreement, p. 100. In addition to the known fact that Cyprus became a senatorial province, archaeologists have found copper coins from the region that refer to other proconsuls who were not much removed from the time of Paul.

Chapter 2 : Biblical archaeology - Wikipedia

The Archeology of the New Testament is the authoritative illustrated account of what is presently known about the chief sites and monuments connected with the life of Jesus and the history of the early church.

Christian Worldview May 15, Sir William Mitchell Ramsay , a 19th-century English historian and prolific writer, held a pervasive anti-biblical bias. He believed the historical accounts in the Book of Acts were written in the mid-second century. He began a detailed study of the archaeological evidence, and eventually came to an illuminating conclusion: There are reasons for placing the author of Acts among the historians of the first rank. Cyprus, for example, which was an imperial province until 22 BC, became a senatorial province in that year, and was therefore governed no longer by an imperial legate but by a proconsul. Archaeological discoveries in the 19th century revealed that Quirinius or someone with the same name was also a proconsul of Syria and Cilicia from 11 B. Related to Erastus In Romans Related to Lysanias Luke described a tetrarch named Lysanias and wrote that this man reigned over Abilene when John the Baptist began his ministry Luke 3: Two inscriptions have been discovered that mention Lysanias by name. One of these, dated from A. Related to Iconium In Acts Some ancient writers like Cicero wrote that Iconium was located in Lycaonia, rather than Phrygia, but a monument was discovered in that confirmed Iconium as a city in Phrygia. In , archaeologists began excavating the area near St. Five of these were in reference to Thessalonica, the very city in which Luke was claiming to have heard the term. Related to Pontius Pilate For many years, the only corroboration we had for the existence of Pontius Pilate, the governor of Judea who authorized the crucifixion of Jesus, was a very brief citation by Tacitus. Related to the Custom of Crucifixion While thousands of condemned criminals and war prisoners were reportedly executed in this manner, not a single one of them had ever been discovered in any archaeological site. But an inscription was discovered at Soli in Cyprus that acknowledged Paulus and identified him as a proconsul. Luke describes features of the Roman world corroborated by other non-Christian historians: Luke includes a correct description of two ways to gain Roman citizenship Acts He includes an accurate explanation of provincial penal procedure Acts But in spite of the inherent difficulties and limitations of the discipline, the archaeological evidence supporting the claims of the New Testament is incredibly robust refer to the Biblical Archaeology Society for additional evidence. Image courtesy of arturbo at iStock by Getty Images. Articles on the BreakPoint website are the responsibility of the authors and do not necessarily represent the opinions of BreakPoint. Outside links are for informational purposes and do not necessarily imply endorsement of their content. Commenters are welcome to argue all points of view, but they are asked to do it civilly and respectfully. Comments that call names, insult other people or groups, use profanity or obscenity, repeat the same points over and over, or make personal remarks about other commenters will be deleted. After multiple infractions, commenters may be banned.

Chapter 3 : Archaeological and External Evidence for the Bible: An Outline - Faith Facts

Biblical Archaeology Society Staff 02/16/ Most Jewish readers approach the New Testament, if they approach it at all, with at best a certain unfamiliarity. This is unfortunate, according to Jewish New Testament scholar Amy-Jill Levine, [Read more.](#)

There is an ongoing debate among scholars regarding the historical accuracy of the Bible. Some feel that the Bible is a fictitious work and should be read as a work of literary fiction. Others feel it is an accurate historical work divinely inspired by God. Archaeology has played a major role in determining the trustworthiness of the Bible. In a previous article , we discussed archaeological confirmations of the Old Testament. In this one, we will look at the archaeological discoveries that have confirmed the historical accuracy of the New Testament. There is a great deal of evidence outside of the Bible that confirms the account of Jesus as written in the Gospels. It is important to realize, however, that it is unrealistic to expect archaeology to back up every event and place in the New Testament. Our perspective is to look for what evidence exists and see whether or not it corresponds with the New Testament.

Historical Confirmation of Jesus The first evidence comes from the four Gospels which, themselves, are proven to be accurate. Jewish historian Josephus 37 A. In his work *Antiquities*, he states: 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 both 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 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 him, are not extinct to this day. They were in the habit of meeting on a certain fixed day before it was light, when they sang an anthem to Christ as God, and bound themselves by a solemn oath not to commit any wicked deed, but to abstain from all fraud, theft and adultery, never to break their word, or deny a trust when called upon to honor it; after which it was their custom to separate, and then meet again to partake of food, but ordinary and innocent kind. One of the most important Romans historians is Tacitus. Christus, from whom the name had its origin, suffered the extreme penalty during the reign of Tiberius at the hands of one of our procurators, Pontius Pilatus, and a most mischievous superstition, thus checked for the moment, again broke out not only in Judea,. **Accuracy of the Gospels** The accuracy of the Gospels has been supported by archaeology. The names of many of the Israelite cities, events, and people described in them have now been located. Here are a few examples. The Gospels mention four neighboring and well-populated coastal cities along the Sea of Galilee: Capernaum, Bethsaida, Chorazin, and Tiberias. Jesus performed many miracles in the first three cities. Despite this testimony, these cities rejected Jesus and therefore were cursed by Him Matt. These cities eventually disappeared from history and their locations remained missing for centuries. Their demise fulfills the prophetic condemnation of Jesus. Only recently has archaeology recovered their possible locations. Tell Hum is believed to be Capernaum. Layers of civilizations can be found at different strata. The locations of Bethsaida and Chorazin still remain unconfirmed, but the present site at a tell 1. Matthew 2 states that Jesus was born during the reign of Herod. Upon hearing that a king had been born, the frightened Herod ordered all children under the age of two to be killed. His slaughter of innocents is consistent with the historical facts that describe his character. Herod was suspicious of anyone whom he thought may take his throne. Thus, his brutality portrayed in Matthew is consistent with his description in ancient history. John describes the pool as having five porticoes. This site had long been in dispute until recently. However, this pool was also discovered in , upholding the accuracy of John. Evidence for Pontius Pilate, the governor who presided over the trial of Jesus, was discovered in Caesarea Maritima. In , an Italian archaeologist named Antonio Frova uncovered a fragment of a plaque that was used as a section of steps leading to the Caesarea Theater. This fits well chronologically with the New Testament which records that Pilot ruled as procurator from A. Tacitus, a Roman historian of the first century, also confirms the New Testament designation of Pilate. Their accurate portrayal of this Roman practice has been confirmed by archaeology. In , a gravesite in the city of Jerusalem was uncovered containing thirty-five

bodies. Each of the men had died a brutal death which historians believe was the result of their involvement in the Jewish revolt against Rome in 70 A. Studies of the bones performed by osteologists and doctors from the Hadassah Medical School determined the man was twenty-eight years old, stood five feet six inches, and had some slight facial defects due to a cleft right palate. What intrigued archaeologists were the evidences that this man had been crucified in a manner resembling the crucifixion of Christ. A seven-inch nail had been driven through both feet, which were turned outward so the nail could be hammered inside the Achilles tendon. Archaeologists also discovered that nails had been driven through his lower forearms. A victim of a crucifixion would have to raise and lower his body in order to breathe. To do this, he needed to push up on his pierced feet and pull up with his arms. John records that in order to expedite the death of a prisoner, executioners broke the legs of the victim so that he could not lift himself up by pushing with his feet. The Dead Sea Scrolls tell that both Jews and Romans abhorred crucifixion due to its cruelty and humiliation. The scrolls also state it was a punishment reserved for slaves and any who challenged the ruling powers of Rome. This explains why Pilate chose crucifixion as the penalty for Jesus. Relating to the crucifixion, in a stone slab was found in Nazareth with a decree from Emperor Claudius who reigned from A. It stated that graves must not be disturbed nor bodies to be removed. The punishment on other decrees is a fine but this one threatens death and comes very close to the time of the resurrection. This was probably due to Claudius investigating the riots of 49 A. He had certainly heard of the resurrection and did not want any similar incidents. Historian Thallus wrote in 52 A. There appeared to be no evidence for several cities, persons, and locations that he named in his works. However, archaeological advances have revealed that Luke was a very accurate historian and the two books he has authored remain accurate documents of history. One of the greatest archaeologists is the late Sir William Ramsay. He studied under the famous liberal German historical schools in the mid-nineteenth century. Known for its scholarship, this school taught that the New Testament was not a historical document. With this premise, Ramsay investigated biblical claims as he searched through Asia Minor. What he discovered caused him to reverse his initial view. I began with a mind unfavorable to it [Acts], for the ingenuity and apparent completeness of the Tübingen theory had at one time quite convinced me. It did not then in my line of life to investigate the subject minutely; but more recently I found myself often brought into contact with the Book of Acts as an authority for the topography, antiquities, and society of Asia Minor. It was gradually borne in upon me that in various details the narrative showed marvelous truth. Thessalonica, politarchs; Ephesus, temple wardens; Cyprus, proconsul; and Malta, the first man of the island. However an inscription dating to be in the time of Tiberius, who ruled from A. Once again archaeology confirms this account. At Delphi an inscription of a letter from Emperor Claudius was discovered. Archaeologists excavating a Corinthian theatre in discovered an inscription. The designation of treasurer describes the work of a Corinthian aedile. Any attempt to reject its basic historicity must now appear absurd. Roman historians have long taken it for granted. John records that when Peter investigated the empty tomb, he found the burial cloth folded neatly next to where Christ once laid. A linen shroud called the Shroud of Turin, on display at the Vatican, has been claimed to be that burial cloth. On it is an image with pierced wrists and ankles believed to be that of Christ. The shroud first appeared for public display sometime after in Lirey, France. A knight named Geoffrey de Charny brought the shroud to France. In , it was willed to the Vatican. In , Secondo Pia photographed the shroud and believed the image was a negative image like that of a photograph. This added to the mystery of the shroud since photography had not been invented during medieval times. In a group of experts confirmed the fact that no pigment of paint was found even under magnification. The most extensive study was undertaken in . They used six tons of equipment and 2. It has been one of the most intensely studied artifacts of all time. The study could not determine the authenticity of the fabric. Swiss criminologist Max Frei found forty-eight samples of pollen, of which seven could have come from plants in Palestine. The weave of the cloth was herringbone twill, a style that existed in ancient times. Although these findings supported the authenticity of the shroud, other findings testified otherwise. In , the shroud was carbon 14 tested to verify its date. Laboratories in Oxford, Zurich, and the University of Arizona tested the cloth.

Chapter 4 : Mobile Ed: NT Archaeology and the New Testament (5 hour course) - Logos Bible Software

Digging into New Testament archaeology. Archaeology is in fact both an art and a science, and as applied to the study of the New Testament it is a recent phenomenon. Furthermore, the truth is that.

An Outline Archeology consistently confirms the Bible! Documents written on clay tablets from around B. In use in Ebla was the name "Canaan," a name critics once said was not used at that time and was used incorrectly in the early chapters of the Bible. The tablets refer to all five "cities of the plain" mentioned in Genesis 14, previously assumed to have been mere legends. Greater proportion of Egyptian words in the Pentateuch first five books than in rest of the Old Testament. Finds in Egypt are consistent with the time, place, and other details of biblical accounts of the Israelites in Egypt. Confounding earlier skeptics, but confirming the Bible, an important discovery was made in Egypt in A tabletâ€”the Merneptah Stelaâ€”was found that mentions Israel. Merneptah was the pharaoh that ruled Egypt in B. The context of the stela indicates that Israel was a significant entity in the late 13th century B. The Hittites were once thought to be a biblical legend, until their capital and records were discovered in Turkey. Crucial find in Nuzi northeastern Iraq , an entire cache of Hittite legal documents from B. Confirms many details of Genesis, Deuteronomy, such as: Walls of Jerichoâ€”discovery in s by John Garstang. The walls fell suddenly, and outwardly unique , so the Israelites could clamber over the ruins into the city Joshua 6: In , scholars identified an ancient seal belonging to Baruch, son of Neriah, a scribe who recorded the prophecies of Jeremiah Jer. In , Harvard researchers unearthed a silver-plated bronze calf figurine reminiscent of the huge golden calf mentioned in the book of Exodus. In , archaeologists uncovered a 9th century B. The words carved into a chunk of basalt refer to the "House of David" and the "King of Israel. It was once claimed there was no Assyrian king named Sargon as recorded in Isaiah The very event mentioned in Isaiah 20, his capture of Ashdod, was recorded on the palace walls! Even more, fragments of a stela a poetic eulogy memorializing the victory were found at Ashdod itself. Another king who was in doubt was Belshazzar, king of Babylon, named in Daniel 5. The last king of Babylon was Nabonidus according to recorded history. The ruins of Sodom and Gomorrah have been discovered southeast of the Dead Sea. Evidence at the site seems consistent with the biblical account: Geologist Frederick Clapp theorizes that that pressure from an earthquake could have spewed out sulfur-laden bitumen similar to asphalt known to be in the area through the fault line upon which the cities rest. The dense smoke reported by Abraham is consistent with a fire from such material, which could have ignited by a spark or ground fire.

Archaeology and the New Testament The New Testament mentions specific individuals, places, and various official titles of local authorities, confirmed by recent archeology. Luke sites exact titles of officials. Titles varied from city to city so they are easily checked for accuracy. Lysanias the Tetrarch in Abilene Luke 3: Erastus, city treasurer of Corinth Romans Gallioâ€”proconsul of Achaia Greece in A. Politarchs "city ruler" in Thessalonica Acts Chief Man of the Island on Malta Acts Pool at Bethesdaâ€” discovered in Many examples of silver shrines to Artemis found Acts Inscription confirms the title of the city as "Temple Warden of Artemis". Census began under Augustus approximately every 14 years: There is evidence of enrollment in B. Historian Josephus puts Quirinius as governor in Syria at 6 A. Recent inscription confirms that Quirinius served as governor in 7 B. Augustus treated Herod as subject Josephus. Parallelâ€”a census took place in the client kingdom of Antiochus in eastern Asia Minor under Tiberius. Enrollment in home town? He seizes the important and critical events and shows their true nature at greater length In short, this author should be placed among the very greatest of historians.

External References to Jesus and the Christian Church. Born to priestly family in A. Commanded Jewish troops in Galilee during the rebellion. Surrendered, and earned the favor of Emperor Vespasian. Wrote 20 books of Antiquities of the Jews. Refers to John the Baptist killed by Herod and to James, the brother of Jesus condemned to death by stoning by the Sanhedrin. He referred to Jesus in his Antiquities The standard text of Josephus reads as follows: For he was the achiever of extraordinary deeds and was a teacher of those who accept the truth gladly. He won over many Jews and many of the Greeks. He was the Messiah. When he was indicted by the principal men among us and Pilate condemned him to be crucified, those who had come to love him originally did not cease to do so; for he appeared to them on the

third day restored to life, as the prophets of the Deity had foretold these and countless other marvelous things about him, and the tribe of the Christians, so named after him, has not disappeared to this day. Although this passage is so worded in the Josephus manuscripts as early as the third-century church historian Eusebius, scholars have long suspected a Christian interpolation, since Josephus could hardly have believed Jesus to be the Messiah or in his resurrection and have remained, as he did, a non-Christian Jew. Many people among the Jews and the other nations became his disciples. Pilate condemned him to be crucified and to die. But those who had become his disciples did not abandon his discipleship. They reported that he had appeared to them three days after his crucifixion and that he was alive. Accordingly, he was perhaps the Messiah, concerning whom the prophets have reported wonders. And the tribe of the Christians, so named after him, has not disappeared to this day. Israel Academy of Sciences and Humanities, Paul Maier, professor of ancient history, "Scholars fall into three basic camps regarding Antiquities Josephus must have mentioned Jesus in authentic core material at Finally, the fact that the second reference to Jesus at Antiquities Thallus" wrote a history of Greece and Asia Minor in A. Julius Africanus AD , commenting on Thallus, said: Tertullian, writing to Roman officials, writes with confidence that records of the Luke 1 census can still be found. Roman historians Tacitus" Greatest Roman historian, born c. Christus, from whom they got their name, had been executed by sentence of the procurator Pontius Pilate when Tiberias was emperor; and the pernicious superstition was checked for a short time only to break out afresh, not only in Judea, the home of the plague, but in Rome itself,.. In his Life of Claudius:

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What have you been thinking about? Williams examines the historical reliability of the New Testament in the light of the findings of archaeology. 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. For the great German exegetes of the era a voyage to Palestine was beside the point, as the life of the historical Jesus was for them solely a matter of interpreting texts. The excessive scepticism shown toward the Bible by important historical schools of the eighteenth-and-nineteenth centuries, certain phases of which still appear periodically, has been progressively discredited. Discovery after discovery has established the accuracy of innumerable details, and has brought increased recognition to the value of the Bible as a source of history. It can show that the names of certain characters in the Gospels are accurate, when we find inscriptional references to them elsewhere. Events and teachings ascribed to Jesus become intelligible and therefore plausible when read against everything we know about life in Palestine in the first third of the first century. In trying to determine if a witness is being truthful, journalists and lawyers will test all the elements of his or her testimony that can be tested. If this investigation reveals that the person was wrong in those details, this casts considerable doubt on the veracity of his or her entire story. However, if the minutiae check out, this is some indication not conclusive proof but some evidence that maybe the witness is being reliable in his or her overall account.

Crucifixion Victim In an ancient burial site was uncovered containing about 35 bodies. This find proves that a victim of crucifixion like Jesus could receive a proper Jewish burial. AD 41 by Emperor Claudius AD to the effect that no graves should be disturbed or bodies extracted, with offenders sentenced to death. This only makes it yet more unlikely that the already fearful disciples would have risked such an act. However, thanks to archaeology there is now dramatic evidence of its existence in the early first century. DNA testing confirmed that the man wrapped in the shroud was related to other members whose skeletal remains were recovered in the tomb. This DNA testing also revealed that the man has suffered from leprosy Under the direction of the Israeli Antiquities Authority, archaeologists began a race against time to carefully extract the boat from the mud before the waters returned. Eventually it was placed in a climate-controlled environment to protect it from aging. Pots and lamps found inside the boat dated it to the first century. Carbon testing further confirmed the dating. The design of the boat was typical of fishing boats used during that period on the Sea of Galilee. In the back of the boat was a raised section like the one where Jesus could have been sleeping, as indicated in the Gospel accounts. The boat could accommodate 15 people including crew. This archaeological discovery confirms the description given in the Bible. When Paul and his companions had passed through Amphipolis and Apollonia, they came to Thessalonica. Paul went into the synagogue, and on three Sabbath days he reasoned with them from the Scriptures, explaining and proving that the Messiah had to suffer and rise from the dead. Some of the Jews were persuaded and joined Paul and Silas, as did a large number of God-fearing Greeks and not a few prominent women. But other Jews were jealous; so they rounded up some bad characters from the marketplace, formed a mob and started a riot in the city. But when they did not find them, they dragged Jason and some other believers before the city officials, shouting: Then they made Jason and the others post bond and let them go. The inscription lists the officials of the town in the second century AD, beginning with six Politarchs and naming the city Treasurer and the Gymnasiarch Director of Higher Education. Equally, the names Secundus and Gaius were borne by a man from Thessalonica Acts These were not, of course, the same men, but simply demonstrate the currency of the personal names in the area in the century following the time of Paul. This palindrome appears at sites across the Roman Empire in later centuries. All sorts of ingenious explanations have been offered for this remarkable square. On the principle that the simplest explanation is the best, unravelling it as a Christian text gains first place. It shows a man standing by a crucifixion victim with the head of a donkey. The Greek

caption reads: Christian Church at Megiddo, c. This strategic trade city contains the remains of a Christian prayer hall dating to the third century. It contains three mosaic inscriptions pointing to its Christian use. The fish that adorn the centre of one of four mosaics in the hall are a Christian symbol – the word *ichthys* Greek for fish: Places Here is a selection of finds relating to places mentioned in the New Testament. Bethlehem In May the Israel Antiquities Authority announced the discovery of a bulla a small clay seal that mentions Bethlehem, the birthplace of Jesus cf. The first ancient artifact constituting tangible evidence of the existence of the city of Bethlehem, which is mentioned in the Bible, was recently discovered in Jerusalem. A bulla measuring c. The bulla was impressed with the seal of the person who sent the document or object, and its integrity was evidence the document or object was not opened by anyone unauthorized to do so. Three lines of ancient Hebrew script appear on the bulla: The tax could have been paid in the form of silver or agricultural produce such as wine or wheat. This is the Bethlehem next to Jerusalem referred to in the Bible. France describes Nazareth as: It was a small village, largely devoted to agriculture, bypassed by the main roads which ran to the near-by Hellenistic city of Sepphoris, the capital of Galilee. Its population has been estimated at between 200 and 400, and the remains of its buildings show no sign of wealth in the relevant period. No ancient historians or geographers mention Nazareth before the beginning of the fourth century. Questions as to its genuineness were resolved by this discovery. Two tombs contained objects such as pottery lamps, glass vessels, and vases from the first, third, or fourth centuries. Situated below the Annunciation Church and the Church of Saint Joseph to the north, some of these structures are connected by ancient tradition with the habitations of Joseph and Mary. According to excavation director Yardenna Alexandre: The discovery is of the utmost importance since it reveals for the very first time a house from the Jewish village of Nazareth and thereby sheds light on the way of life at the time of Jesus. The building that we found is small and modest and it is most likely typical of the dwellings in Nazareth in that period. The houses excavated at Capernaum were one-story buildings, with an outside staircase giving access to the flat roof. The roof was not of stone, but of wooden beams or branches thatched with rush and daubed with mud. The people encouraged Jesus to heal the slave because the Roman officer had built their synagogue. The black basalt foundations of this 1st century synagogue a dating confirmed by pottery finds beneath the floor can be seen today under the remains of the 4th century lime-stone synagogue in Capernaum. In 1968, archaeologists discovered the remains of an earlier church underneath it. This had been built around what was originally a private house, which was apparently used by Christians as a meeting-place during the second half of the first century. It was pointed out to early pilgrims such as Egeria, the mother of emperor Constantine, who recorded c. 385. It is where the Lord cured the paralytic. Until recently, this was considered to be the Pool of Siloam from the time of Christ. There is little question that this is in fact the pool of Siloam, to which Jesus sent the blind man in John 9. The town is on the south side of the Sea of Galilee in an area known as the Decapolis. This is the region to the south and east of the Jordan in which there were ten independent cities founded originally by Alexander the Great. At the time of Jesus these remained cosmopolitan communities where temples and synagogues would be found alongside each other. Jew and pagan would trade and mix – under the wider cultural umbrella of whatever colonial power was in the ascendancy. Recent excavations have uncovered the remains of a fourth-century church, which is so large that it must have been connected to a site of major importance. The church has no less than five aisles, which suggests that it was visited by large numbers of pilgrims. Digging down beneath the foundations, archaeologists have discovered a Roman tomb that has been dated to the year AD 25. The strange thing is that the church has a hole in the floor that looks right down on to the tomb. The tomb itself is in an easily identified spot; it is just under an archway that marks the western city boundary. They have neither destroyed it, replaced it, nor attempted to mark it with crosses or symbols of resurrection. For some reason, they wanted to preserve it as it was. It is a serious possibility that this was one of the tombs that provided a home for the Gadarene demoniac. It has been preserved under the church to mark the place of his exorcism. Certainly the traditional tomb that is now known as his tomb was in a cemetery in the first century other first-century tombs have been found just to the north. Herod the Great We have a bronze coin minted by Herod the Great. On the obverse side it is the profile of Herod. In Israeli Professor of Archaeology Ehud Netzer discovered in Masada a piece of broken pottery with an inscription, called an ostrakon. Herodium is a man-made mountain in the

Judean wilderness rising over 2, feet above sea level. In 23 BC Herod the Great built a palace fortress here on top of a natural hill. Seven stories of living rooms, storage areas, cisterns, a bathhouse, and a courtyard filled with bushes and flowering plants were constructed. The whole complex was surrounded and partly buried by a sloping fill of earth and gravel. Before AD 50, an area 62 feet square was paved with stone at the northeast corner of the theatre in Corinth, Greece. But an inscription at Delphi notes this exact title for the man, and it dates him to the time Paul was in Corinth AD In the fifteenth year of the reign of [1] Tiberius Caesar “ when [2] Pontius Pilate was governor of Judea, [3] Herod tetrarch [a governor of a quarter of a province] of Galilee, his brother [4] Philip tetrarch of Iturea and Traconitis [cf. Josephus, Jewish Antiquities The coin shows a portrait of Tiberius Caesar.

Chapter 6 : 9 archaeology finds that confirm the New Testament

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List of biblical figures identified in extra-biblical sources
Objects with unknown or disproved biblical origins[edit]
Biblical archaeology has also been the target of several celebrated forgeries, which have been perpetrated for a variety of reasons. One of the most celebrated is that of the James Ossuary , when information came to light in regarding the discovery of an ossuary , with an inscription that said " Jacob , son of Joseph and brother of Jesus ". In reality the artifact had been discovered twenty years before, after which it had exchanged hands a number of times and the inscription had been added. This was discovered because it did not correspond to the pattern of the epoch from which it dated. Their authenticity is highly controversial and in some cases they have been proved to be fakes. The Ark of the Covenant: Local tradition claims that it was brought to Ethiopia by Menelik I with divine assistance, while a forgery was left in the Temple in Jerusalem. Objects originating from the "antiques" dealer Oded Golan. As described above, the Israeli police accused Golan and his accomplices of falsifying the James Ossuary in , they were also accused of falsifying a number of other objects: The Jehoash Inscription , which describes repairs to the temple in Jerusalem. It is suspected that the inscription has been falsified onto authentic ancient stones. Various ostracas mentioning the temple or biblical names. A stone candelabra with seven arms, decorated with a menorah from the temple. A stone seal with gold borders that was attributed to King Manasseh of Judah. A quartz plate with an inscription in the ancient Egyptian language stating that King Shishak had captured the ancient city of Megiddo. An ivory pomegranate with the inscription "property of the priests of the Temple" carved on an authentic piece of antique ivory. Numerous bullas, including some that mention biblical figures such as the scribe Baruch ben Neriah and the prophets Isaiah and Ezekiel. Many scholars consider that these findings belong to pseudoarcheology. Photos of the site can be seen at the Narkas website. However, geologists at the government institute concluded that the samples were volcanic rock and not petrified wood. Critics insist that the linen cloth contains a painting of Jesus made in the Middle Ages. Others maintain that the image was formed by an energetic process that darkened the fibres of the shroud at the moment of resurrection. A cloth with the face of a man, said to be Jesus by believers, imprinted on it. There are at least six images in existence that bear a marked resemblance to each other and which all claim to be the original Veil. Biblical archaeology and the Catholic Church[edit] The majority of excavations and investigations carried out in the area where the biblical narratives are set mainly have the objective of casting light on the historical, cultural, economic and religious background to the texts, therefore their main objective is not usually proving the veracity of these stories. However, there are some groups that take a more fundamentalist approach and which organize archaeological campaigns with the intention of finding proof that the Bible is factual and that its narratives should be understood as historical events. This is not the position of the official Catholic Church. In certain cases these investigations can find the place where these narratives took place. In other cases they can confirm the veracity of the stories. However, in other matters they can question events that have been taken as historical fact, providing arguments that show that certain stories are not historical narratives but belong to a different narrative genre. In , Pope Pius XII recommended that interpretations of the Scripture take archaeological findings into account in order to discern the literary genres that the Scriptures used. Expert commentaries[edit] [Eakins in a essay published in Benchmarks in Time and Culture and quoted in his essay "Archaeology and the Bible, An Introduction". In this article he reiterates his perceptions of the negative effects of the close relationship that has existed between Syro-Palestinian archaeology and biblical archaeology, which has caused the archaeologists working in this field, particularly the American archaeologists, to resist adoption of the new methods of " processual archaeology ". In addition he considers that: Most people really think that archaeology is out there to prove the Bible. No archaeologist thinks so. And for a long time it was thought to work. William Albright , the great father of our discipline, often spoke of the "archaeological revolution. Archaeology as it is practiced today must be able to challenge, as well as confirm,

the Bible stories. Some things described there really did happen, but others did not. I am in fact not even a theist. This is what archaeologists have learned from their excavations in the Land of Israel: Perhaps even harder to swallow is that the united monarchy of David and Solomon, which is described by the Bible as a regional power, was at most a small tribal kingdom. And it will come as an unpleasant shock to many that the God of Israel, YHWH, had a female consort and that the early Israelite religion adopted monotheism only in the waning period of the monarchy and not at Mount Sinai. On the alleged Temple of Solomon, Finkelstein said that there is no archaeological evidence to prove it really existed. This is my career as an archaeologist. I should tell them the truth. If the people are upset, that is not my problem. In his book *The Old Testament Documents: Are They Reliable and Relevant?* Evangelical Old Testament scholar Walter C. With increasing clarity, the setting of the Bible appears more vividly within the framework of general history. On the other hand, archaeology has also given rise to some real problems with regard to its findings. Thus, its work is an ongoing one that cannot be foreclosed too quickly or used merely as a confirming device. This is not to say that archaeology is a cure-all for all the challenges brought to the text--it is not! There are some monstrous problems that remain--some created by the archaeological data itself. But since we have seen so many specific challenges over the years yield to such specific data in favor of the text, a presumption tends to build that we should go with the text until definite contrary information is available. This methodology that says that the text is innocent until proven guilty is not only recommended as a good procedure for American jurisprudence, but it is recommended in the area of examining the claims of the Scripture as well.

Chapter 7 : Archaeology of the New Testament | Rothberg International School

In this one, we will look at the archaeological discoveries that have confirmed the historical accuracy of the New Testament. There is a great deal of evidence outside of the Bible that confirms the account of Jesus as written in the Gospels.

To download the full article with all images and notes, click here: [Jesus and the apostles did not erect buildings or put up inscriptions or make special clay pots. Nevertheless, New Testament archaeology has yielded some excellent and surprising finds. My criteria here are: Consult an expert for rankings of findings in order of scholarly importance. The Pool of Bethesda. The Pool of Siloam John 9 was discovered in , and it fit very neatly with the biblical description of the place where the blind man washed and was healed. The Pool of Bethesda, by contrast, was discovered long ago but positively identified only recently. In John 5, Jesus visits Bethesda and sees the lame man who had been waiting for years. But sure enough, the ruin of Bethesda shows that it definitely did have five colonnades and porticos, just as John describes it – and its architectural oddness is probably the reason why he mentioned it in the first place! It appears that the pool was a mikveh, that is, a place where people would bathe to purify themselves before entering the temple. The Pool of Bethesda 4. The town of Magdala is on the western shore of Galilee. It has been excavated for several years, and the most amazing find has been the synagogue from the 1st century. Nor do they prove the gospel, or the Bible. What does John 5 teach? That Jesus healed a lame man at such-and-such a place, and by the way, the place looked like this. The archaeological evidence states that the place existed, in the location John 5 says and that it looked as John describes it. One might be drawn to say that, if John got it right about the building, then he must have gotten it right about what Jesus did in it. But the archaeologists by the nature of their evidence cannot prove that Jesus was ever there or that he did that miracle; it is not their job! A better headline would summarize the article this way: Here is a better, more precise, formulation that has to do with the other pool we mentioned above, Siloam: Charlesworth of the Princeton Theological Seminary. This is normal and part of any scholarly discipline. The late Ron Wyatt merits special mention, given that he announced that he had discovered all sorts of things: Wyatt deluded others – and quite likely, himself – with his finds. His modus operandi was: I found that, but terrorists stole my photos. Here is a rough pencil sketch of what I saw. The just-possible Childhood Home of Jesus in Nazareth. In it was announced that a house in Nazareth had been excavated. Some headlines announced that it was the house where Jesus grew up, but that is not possible to know. What we do know is that the whole town only had a few hundred inhabitants, and that the house dates from the first century, that is, Jesus must have been familiar with the building. And we know that local Christians have regarded this as his home for at least years. Nazareth home Here it helps to know how old Christian churches evolved. For example, the Church built over the house of Peter in Capernaum, is probably the house mentioned in the gospels. Beyond that date we cannot peer, but we do know that there are early Christian tombs under the church. So, starting from the top and working downward, they sometimes find: This is what we have in Nazareth, a home that for many centuries was venerated as the home of Jesus, although that is unverifiable today. It is interesting in that it reveals a typical home of his day, arranged around a central courtyard, and with an exit that led on to the street. It is simple, but would have been comfortable. The tomb of Philip is very likely to be a genuine identification. From earliest days of the church there was a Christian presence in three neighboring towns in Asia Minor: Standing in Laodicea, with Hieropolis in the distance In the second century, it was the home of the church father Papias, who had been a disciple of the apostle John. And according to very early tradition, Philip had also worked in Hieropolis. There were two prominent Philips in the apostolic church, Philip of Bethesda, the apostle who is usually paired with Thomas; and Philip the Deacon, who also evangelized Samaria and the Ethiopian eunuch. It is this second Philip who hosted Paul in Acts He had four unmarried daughters who prophesied. Their tomb is there and the tomb of their father. In fact, he found a first-century tomb that is exactly as tradition described it. The tomb church and the Martyrium were build in the 4th or 5th centuries. The tomb is empty, which was more or less expected, because history said that the bones had been removed to Constantinople. This is I think certainly the tomb of one of the](#)

biblical Philips, but which of the two is hard to say; I think it is Philip the Deacon. Either way, here is extraordinary physical evidence from the first century of one of the most prominent early Christians. The first-century tomb of Philip. Now we go to Rome. For almost years, the continuous tradition has been that Paul was beheaded in Rome by the Emperor Nero, that his head is buried in St John Lateran there, and that his body was buried in a tomb under the Basilica of St Paul Without the Walls an odd-sounding name, but it means that it lay outside the walls of the ancient city; today it is part of Italy, not the Vatican State. Constantine built the first church on top of the site of his traditional tomb, and then others were built on top of the same site. In experts opened the tomb for the first time and found human bones. Carbon 14 tests confirm that they are from the second or first century AD. The pope has announced that it is the body of Paul, although that is not possible to prove conclusively. The Talpoit Tomb had ossuaries that had names such as Jesus son of Joseph maybe, the inscription is very unclear , Jose, Mary, Matthew, Judas, and so must have been where Jesus was really buried; in that case his body lay in a family tomb, and he was not raised from the dead. It is broadly believed, by believers and non-believers, that the theory is worthless, given that the family did not live in Jerusalem and did not have the wealth needed to buy such a tomb, and given that all these names were among the most popular of the day. Floor Tiles from the Temple of Herod. I award the blue ribbon to a find that has extraordinary significance to Jews as well as to Christians. For the first time ever, experts have found remnants of the Temple of Herod, usually known as the Second Temple. By the way, the Wailing Wall is a retaining wall, designed by Herod to shore up the enlarged temple platform, and is not considered part of the temple itself. For that reason, there is a political element in this story. The grossest example in our day is set forth by those who deny the Holocaust. But because of the high tensions surrounding the holy site in Jerusalem, there are Arab leaders who deny that the Jews ever had a temple there; that if they had one it was in some other location. For that reason, they have tried to block investigations of the site. This was a breathtaking and illegal move, since in historical areas it is vital to locate the remains in situ, that is, where they have remained since antiquity. The scholars had to resort to a bold measure: These are stone tiles, multicolored pieces that were imported from all over the empire, and arranged in geometrical designs in the open temple courtyards. Pieces of flooring A portion of the reconstructed floor The floor must have cost Herod a fortune to install. The materials that were found matched what the rabbis and Josephus had said about its floor. The discipline of archaeology: It cannot prove the NT true, but through ancient manuscripts it can show that the NT was written mere decades after Pentecost, and that its text has been extraordinarily well preserved. It cannot prove the message of the apostles, but it can prove that they were real men who lived, and traveled to far places, and died for their message. The final chapters have not been written on the authenticity of the James Ossuary or the Cave of the Seventy; I lean toward believing that they are genuine, but the evidence is mixed.

Chapter 8 : Archaeology and the New Testament by John McRay

Archaeology and the Historical Reliability of the New Testament Peter S. Williams examines the historical reliability of the New Testament in the light of the findings of archaeology. "On the whole archaeological work has unquestionably strengthened confidence in the reliability of the Scriptural record."

Share 9 archaeology finds that confirm the New Testament Hundreds of archaeological findings are confirming the biblical record. Peter S Williams looks at some of the most interesting discoveries Imagine the excitement of brushing away the soil from some ancient stone or pottery shard and finding an inscription mentioning someone previously only known from scripture, and whose existence was questioned by Bible critics. Imagine what it would be like to unearth a building mentioned in the Gospels that Jesus and the disciples actually visited. Can you imagine discovering something which has been hidden for 2, years? These things really happen! Many critics of Christianity continue to argue against the trustworthiness of the New Testament record but, in fact, every new archaeological find has been on the side of scripture, not the sceptics. What the late biblical archeologist Nelson Glueck wrote in remains true: As with any witness, the more their testimony checks out where we can independently test it, the greater our general confidence in that source becomes. Crucifixion victim It has been speculated " especially by the sceptical scholar and author John Dominic Crossan " that the crucified corpse of Jesus would have been eaten by dogs, either as it hung on the cross or after it was buried in a shallow grave reserved for executed criminals. The story begins in when building contractors unexpectedly uncovered an ancient burial site containing about 35 bodies. One tomb contained the bones of two generations of a family who lived in the century before the time of Jesus. One member of that family was Yehohanan, who was between 24 and 28 years old when he died. He had been crucified. His bones were discovered in an inch long limestone ossuary or bone-box , and a seven-inch nail had been driven through the heel bone of his left foot. Fragments of olive wood were found at the point of the nail, revealing the wood of the cross on which he died. To date, this is the only archaeological discovery from Roman times of a crucifixion victim. And it demonstrates that crucifixion victims were buried, just as the Gospel accounts suggest. The Nazareth decree An early story about the empty tomb of Jesus, circulated by the Jerusalem authorities, was that his body had been stolen. But if anyone legally charges that another person has destroyed, or has in any manner extracted those who have been buried, or has moved with wicked intent those who have been buried to other places, committing a crime against them, or has moved sepulchre-sealing stones, against such a person I wish that [violator] to suffer capital punishment under the title of tomb-breaker. This only makes it yet more unlikely that the already fearful disciples would have risked such an act. But how can we know that these important details about the local environment Jesus conducted his ministry in are a true reflection of the time? In , Israel suffered a drought, which caused the waters of the Sea of Galilee to recede, exposing large areas of the shallow seabed. Two local fishermen, who were also amateur archaeologists, discovered a boat buried in the mud, which turned out to be a well-preserved fishing boat from the time of Jesus. The design of the vessel " which measured over 27 feet in length " was typical of fishing boats used during the time of Jesus in the eastern Mediterranean. The boat was next to the village of Migdal, which in the first century was called Magdala, the home of Mary Magdalene. Professor Shelley Wachsmann and other archaeologists raced against time to recover the boat from the mud before the waters returned. It was placed in a climate-controlled environment to protect it. Pots and lamps found beside the boat helped to date it to the first century, which was confirmed by radiocarbon dating of the wooden planks. In the back of the boat is a raised section, like that where Jesus was sleeping in the story of calming the storm. The boat could accommodate 15 people, so there would certainly have been room for Jesus and his twelve disciples in such a boat. Confirming the places in the New Testament 4. He then instructs the blind man to wash in the Pool of Siloam. The blind man does so, and is healed. But the existence of the pool of Siloam and the accuracy of the biblical account contradicts the view that such stories were later inventions. Until recently, this was thought to be the Pool of Siloam. By the summer of , archaeologists said it was without doubt the missing pool of Siloam. There is little question that this is in fact the pool of Siloam, to which Jesus sent the

blind man in John 9. That said, indirect mention of Nazareth is contained in Jewish sources from the end of the first century AD. Archaeology has also added to this literary evidence. The evidence on the ground in Nazareth gives a good indication of the ancient date of the village. For example, archaeological digs in the vicinity of Nazareth have discovered tombs dating from the first century AD confirming the village was a strongly Jewish settlement. Then, in December , archaeologists from the Israeli Antiquities Authority, excavating in the grounds of a former convent, unearthed a house from first century Nazareth. According to excavation director Yardenna Alexandre: The building that we found is small and modest and it is most likely typical of the dwellings in Nazareth in that period. In , archaeologists discovered the remains of an earlier church underneath it. This had been built around what was originally a private house, which was apparently used by Christians as a meeting-place during the second half of the first century. Today a modern church exists, suspended above the site, with the excavation site visible through a glass floor. Given that the early tradition goes back to the first century, this is almost certainly the very place where Jesus stayed – the home of his chief apostle, Peter. In Latin, the inscription dated to c AD reads:

Chapter 9 : Apologetics Press - Archaeology and the New Testament

Veteran archaeologist John McRay sheds light on the biblical text by examining archaeological discoveries in Archeology and the New www.nxgvision.com he tours sites associated with the ministry of Jesus, the journey of Paul, and the seven churches of Revelation, he shows the pervasive influence of society, architecture, and religion on the peoples of the first century and on the New Testament.

The Old Testament was maintained as the historical archives for an entire nation by a well-organized system of recorders and scribes. At this point, I was on fire for exploring this stuff. Nobody ever told me this material was available. I thought the Bible was a collection of moral mythology stories used to support "blind faith" in a couple of major world religions. I had no idea that the Bible was grounded in historical, geographical and archaeological evidence. As I turned to the evidence for the New Testament writings, I was reading and digesting up to four books per week Like the Old Testament, I found that the historical record of the New Testament was upheld again and again The "Southern Steps" where Jesus and his followers entered the Temple are preserved in an active excavation site. The Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem is generally considered a credible site for the birth place of Jesus. The huge Church of the Holy Sepulcher in Jerusalem is also considered a reliable historical site covering the locations of the crucifixion and burial of Christ. These sites were covered over and thus, preserved by the Romans in the second century AD. On the Sea of Galilee , towns such as Nazareth are still active. Capernaum and Chorazin, two sites Jesus visited often, have been excavated and preserved. I was spending hours at my desk with the latest New Testament archaeology books and periodicals, cross-referencing the latest finds with the New Testament passages The synagogue at Capernaum where Jesus cured a man with an unclean spirit and delivered the sermon on the bread of life. The Pool of Bethesda in Jerusalem, where Jesus healed a crippled man. The Pool of Siloam in Jerusalem, where Jesus healed a blind man. The tribunal at Corinth where Paul was tried. The theater at Ephesus where the riot of silversmiths occurred. Of course, none of this New Testament archaeology proved the underlying theology to me, but it was still powerful. The places existed and the historical events happened. I was ready to go one layer deeper and see who these history writers were. In my mind, I needed to further establish their credibility in order to start understanding where they were coming from with their record of such profound events Scripture citations, in order, Mark 1: