

BEYOND  
REASONABLE  
DOUBT

A Video Tour through the  
Archaeology of the Bible  
by  
John Cooper

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## **Beyond Reasonable Doubt – Session 1**

### **Introduction and Preliminary Considerations**

Thank you for your interest in examining the concept of biblical faith. It is our belief that overwhelming evidence is available which proves “Beyond Reasonable Doubt” that God exists, that the Bible is God’s written word, and that Jesus is the Son of God and the Savior of the world. We believe that every able human being has certain needs, certain awarenesses, and certain worth. Through contact with knowable facts we can reach our potential for love, purpose, and hope. Our lives can be meaningful and joyful when we find truth and certainty. So this study is important to all of us.

In this first session we will be discussing things that are necessary for fulfillment and happiness. We will be looking at true biblical faith and its benefits. We will compare the Bible definition of faith with the common misunderstanding of “faith” by the general populace and by the misunderstandings of “faith” by many in the religious world.

In the pursuit of this faith we will examine the trustworthiness of the Bible. We will try and ascertain through looking at archaeology if the Bible is historically accurate when it mentions places and people. We will look at the textual reliability of the books of the Bible. As we do these things we need to be aware of some of the fallacies and limitations of these endeavors. Critics have sometimes not been fair in their assessment of the evidence, being unwilling to accept overwhelming evidence. On the other hand proponents of faith have sometimes gone to far in accepting questionable evidence only to be embarrassed later by a more complete and accurate rendering of the evidence.

Included in the study guide for each lesson will be copies of various charts and slides that can help facilitate discussing that lesson. Please understand that ours is not an exhaustive examination of all the information available. It is an attempt to marshal enough evidence to convince an honest and open person that “beyond reasonable doubt” our propositions and positions are reasonable, warranted, and true.

## **Questions about “Introduction and Preliminary Considerations”**

1. Discuss the four things mentioned that all humans need for happiness and fulfillment.
2. Can you think of other things that should be added to these four?
3. What were the three essentials for a beneficial religion or faith?
4. Can you add other items to these three?
5. Did you see any significant differences in the popular definition of “faith” when compared to the biblical definition cited in this presentation?
6. What was noteworthy about Paul’s words to King Agrippa in Acts 26:25, 26?
7. What are some references that show that the authors of scripture knew they were writing the word of God?
8. How might people’s backgrounds and beliefs affect their acceptance and interpretations of archaeological finds?
9. What are some of the limitations we face in the field of archaeology and the Bible?
10. How can a little knowledge of biblical chronology help in understanding archaeology and the Bible?

# Four Things We ALL Need-

**Love**

**For God so loved the world**

**Value**

**that he gave his one and only Son**

**Forgiveness**

**that whoever believes  
in him shall not perish**

**Hope**

**but have eternal life**

**John 3:16**

# 3 Essentials for Beneficial Religion/Faith

## Real

**1 Cor. 15:6**—“he appeared to more than 500 of the brothers at the same time, most of whom are still living”

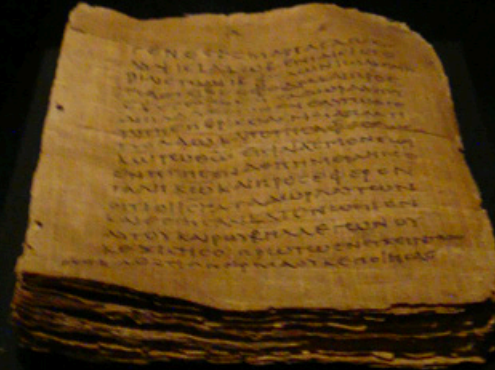
## Relevant

**Mt. 11:28**—“Come to me , all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest.”

## Rewarding

**1 Pet. 1:3**—“he has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead

## Paul's Call to Faith- Acts 26:25, 26



**“I am not insane...What I am saying is true and reasonable...The King is familiar with these things...I am convinced that none of this has escaped his notice, because it was not done in a corner.”**

# What is “faith”?

## Dictionary/Popular definition

1. Unquestioning belief that does not require proof or evidence.
2. Unquestioning belief in God, religious tenets, etc.

**Webster's New World Dictionary**



**“If anybody thinks  
he is a prophet or  
spiritually gifted let  
him acknowledge  
that what I am  
writing you is the  
Lord’s command.**

**I Corinthians 14:37**





***“Beyond Reasonable Doubt” - Outline***

**The Textual Reliability of the Bible**

**Archaeology and the Old Testament—  
Parts 1 and 2**

**Archaeology and the New Testament—  
Parts 1 and 2**

**The Inspiration of the Bible**

**The Historicity of Jesus**

**The Divinity of Jesus**

## **Beyond Reasonable Doubt – Session 2**

### **The Textual Reliability of the Bible**

Critics of the Bible often maintain that it is a book full of errors and we cannot know what the original writings were really like. What about it? Can we trust that the writings in the Bible have been faithfully copied and recopied and that what we now have is what was originally written? This presentation will help us answer these important questions. What do the facts show?

The Dead Sea Scrolls discovered in 1947 help us answer these questions for the Old Testament. Up until that time the textus receptus (received text) was the foundation for our English Old Testament. This was the text received from Jewish scribes called the Masorets. These were the texts found in the oldest Hebrew manuscripts, dating to around 900 A.D. When we compare the Dead Sea Scrolls, which date from approximately 200 B.C. to 100 A.D. there is very little difference between them and the Masoretic texts. So, for over this 1,000 year period, there were very minimal changes in the biblical texts. The Old Testament has been very well preserved.

The very early manuscripts for the New Testament and the great number of them and the widespread distribution of them helped guard against fatal errors creeping into the texts. Comparing these manuscripts with each other enables any errors to be corrected since the errors in the different manuscripts occurred in different places. So the New Testament likewise is very true to the original composition and not full of mistakes and errors. We can trust our New Testament.

In addition to affirming the textual reliability of the New Testament, the early widespread dissemination of the New Testament documents provided a very real way of falsifying or verifying the stories and people recorded in its pages. If the stories were false thousands of people who read the New Testament could have debunked these stories. If the stories were true, thousands could have, and did, testify to the truthfulness of these stories. Many gave witness to the truthfulness of these stories by giving up their lives, literally, rather than giving up their faith. People usually do not die defending something they know to be a lie.

## **Questions about “The Textual Reliability of the Bible”**

1. Why is having a reliable Bible important?
2. Why might it be important to have some knowledge about how we got the Bible and how we can know it is reliable?
3. Discuss the current arrangement and the approximate dates for the writing of the original Bible books.
4. Discuss the importance of the “Dead Sea Scrolls.”
5. Are you aware of any of the theories about the Qumran community that is located in close proximity to where the “Dead Sea Scrolls” were found.
6. Why is it important to have early manuscripts for the New Testament?
7. Describe the two types of Greek manuscripts and some interesting facts concerning them.
8. What are the three important sources for recreating a reliable New Testament?
9. How is it possible to correct errors in the various New Testament manuscripts?
10. What are the “Big Three” Greek manuscripts for the New Testament?
11. What is interesting about the history of the Codex Sinaiticus?

# Dead Sea Scrolls -1947

Portions of 931 manuscripts—300 B.C. - 40 A.D.



220 scrolls of Biblical Texts 21 from Isaiah

The Great Isaiah Scroll—only complete O.T. book

Differ from Masoretic Hebrew (*textus receptus*) text less than 1%

1,000 years earlier than then extant Hebrew scrolls

Masoretes add vowels “*niqqud*” and cantillation marks “*Masora.*”

Palestinian families

Moses ben Asher—895 A.D. and Moses ben Naphtali—890-940 A.D. at Tiberias



Acrostic Psalm 145—Missing letter “*nun*” found making 22

# Important Greek Manuscripts

**Uncials - 300**

All capital letters  
Generally older

**Minuscules - 4,000**

Lower case letters  
Widespread representation

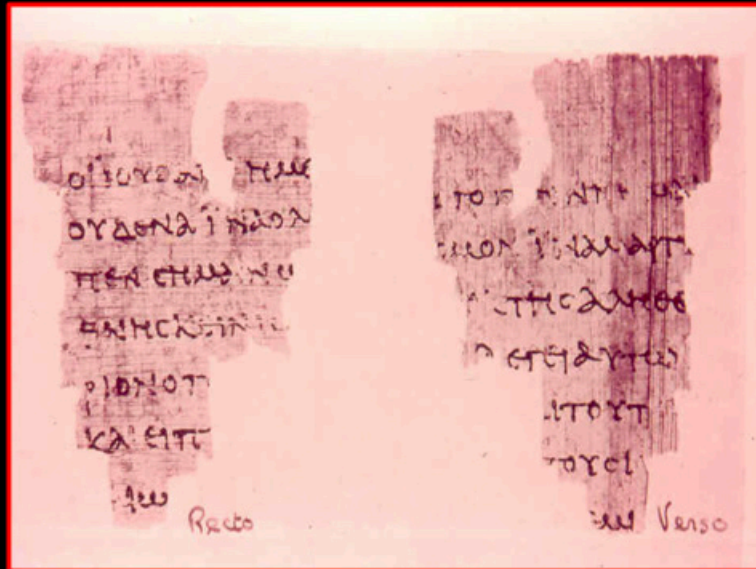
# Oldest fragment of any N.T. book

p52

125 A.D.

“Everyone on  
the side of  
truth listens  
to me”

“What is  
truth?”



John 18:31, 32

John 18:37, 38



# Historical Attestation to the Genuineness and Reliability of the New Testament

## Manuscripts

p52—Rylands

p66—Bodmer

p46—Beatty

Vaticanus

Siniaticus

Alexandrinus

## Versions

Syriac

Latin

Coptic

Gothic

Armenian

Georgian

## Quotations

Clement-Rome

Justin Martyr

Clement-Alex.

Origen

Tertullian

Eusebius

| <b>Author and Work</b>            | <b>Date Written</b> | <b>Years between original and copy</b> | <b>Oldest copy</b> | <b>Number of copies</b> |
|-----------------------------------|---------------------|--|--------------------|-------------------------|
| Pliny— <i>Natural History</i>     | 61-113 A.D.         | 750                                    | 850 A.D.           | 7                       |
| Herodotus— <i>Histories</i>       | 427-347 B.C.        | 1,300                                  | 900 A.D.           | 8                       |
| Thucydides— <i>History</i>        | 460-400 B.C.        | 1,300                                  | 900 A.D.           | 8                       |
| Suetonius— <i>Twelve Caesars</i>  | 75-160 A.D.         | 800                                    | 950 A.D.           | 8                       |
| Tacitus— <i>Histories, Annals</i> | ca. 100 A.D.        | 1,000                                  | 1,100 A.D.         | 20                      |
| Plato— <i>Dialogues</i>           | 427-347 B.C.        | 1,200                                  | 900 A.D.           | 7                       |
| Aristotle— <i>Works</i>           | 384-322 B.C.        | 1,400                                  | 1,100 A.D.         | 49                      |
| Homer— <i>Iliad</i>               | 900 B.C.            | 500                                    | 400 B.C.           | 643                     |
| <b><i>New Testament</i></b>       | <b>45-100 A.D.</b>  | <b>50</b>                              | <b>125 A.D.</b>    | <b>5,600</b>            |

## Early Quotations of New Testament Verses

|              | Gospels       | Acts         | G. Letters | P. Letters    | Rev.       | Total         |
|--------------|---------------|--------------|------------|---------------|------------|---------------|
| J. Martyr    | 268           | 10           | 6          | 43            | 3          | 330           |
| Irenaeus     | 1,038         | 194          | 23         | 499           | 65         | 1,819         |
| Clement-A    | 1,017         | 44           | 207        | 1,127         | 11         | 2,406         |
| Origen       | 9,231         | 349          | 399        | 7,778         | 165        | 17,922        |
| Tertullian   | 3,822         | 502          | 120        | 2,609         | 205        | 7,258         |
| Hippolytus   | 734           | 42           | 27         | 387           | 188        | 1,378         |
| Eusebius     | 3,258         | 211          | 88         | 1,592         | 27         | 5,176         |
| <b>Total</b> | <b>19,368</b> | <b>1,352</b> | <b>870</b> | <b>14,035</b> | <b>664</b> | <b>36,289</b> |

**“The Christian can take the whole Bible in his hand and say without fear or hesitation that he holds in it the true word of God, handed down without essential loss from generation to generation throughout the centuries.”**

**Sir Frederic Kenyon, *Our Bible and the Ancient Manuscripts*, page 58**

**Sir Frederic Kenyon, *The Bible and Archaeology*,  
page 288**

**“The interval then between the dates of original composition and the earliest extant evidence becomes so small as to be in fact negligible, and the last foundation for any doubt that the Scriptures have come down to us substantially as they were written has now been removed. Both the *authenticity* and the *general integrity* of the books of the New Testament may be regarded as finally established.”**

## **Beyond Reasonable Doubt – Session 3**

### **Archaeology and the Old Testament – Part 1**

We begin our look at Archaeology and the Old Testament in this session. Unbeknownst to many Bible believers there has been quite a battle raging amongst archaeologists concerning the validity and legitimacy of “Bible archaeology” over the past several decades. Many “minimalists” have called in to question long held beliefs about some of the greatest archaeological discoveries. As the title implies “minimalists” tend to minimize and even discount the findings of archaeological remains that might have something to do with or support the truthfulness or accuracy of the Bible. Sometimes it seems that some archaeologists let their interpretation of sites and artifacts be guided more by their backgrounds and beliefs than the evidence itself. No doubt some of this is in reaction to the unwarranted pronouncements by the “maximalists” who might tend to “maximize” claims about how certain finds prove the Bible to be true without adequate study or evidence.

It is important for both sides to be honest and realistic. There are thousands of ancient sites that have not been excavated. Of the many sites that have been excavated, only a small part of these sites are often excavated. There is a wealth of stuff just waiting to be uncovered. New discoveries are being made every year. It might behoove individuals involved in this pursuit to not be quite so dogmatic about their finds. More evidence and information can and will change our interpretations on a regular basis. It is my belief, and admittedly bias, that the more truth we find from these finds, the more the Bible will be supported. My bias is not without merit. The controversy over competing theories about Jericho seems to illustrate that more study and excavations helps the position that the Bible is a reliable guide to the historical facts it records. The discovery of the Hittite empire likewise shows the Bible to be reliable and the critics to be in error. The Dead Sea Scrolls have affirmed the wonderful preservation of the Hebrew text in contradiction of many of the critics who maintain the Old Testament text cannot be trusted.

And so the representative evidence in this session does show that the Bible places mentioned and recorded parallel events are real. We can trust our Bible as a reliable source of historical record.

## **Questions about “Archaeology and the Old Testament – Part 1”**

1. How do you think a study on archaeology and the Bible can help students of the Bible?
2. What are some of the limitations we face in the field of archeology and the Bible?
3. How might peoples backgrounds and beliefs affect their acceptance and interpretations of archaeological finds?
4. What is the importance of the Merneptah Stele?
5. What do you recall about the Shishak Relief?
6. Describe the difference between the “minimalists” and the “maximalists” in Biblical archaeology.
7. What does the discovery at Khirbet Qeiyafa seem to support?
8. What is the significance of the “House of David” inscription at Dan?
9. Discuss the significance of the Moabite Stone.
10. What does Eliat Mazar think she has discovered in Jerusalem?

# **Archaeology and the Bible**

**Controversial topic**

**Minimalists vs. Maximalist**

**Backgrounds and Beliefs matter**

**Conservative vs. Liberals**

**Ever changing field**

**Recent vs. Dated**



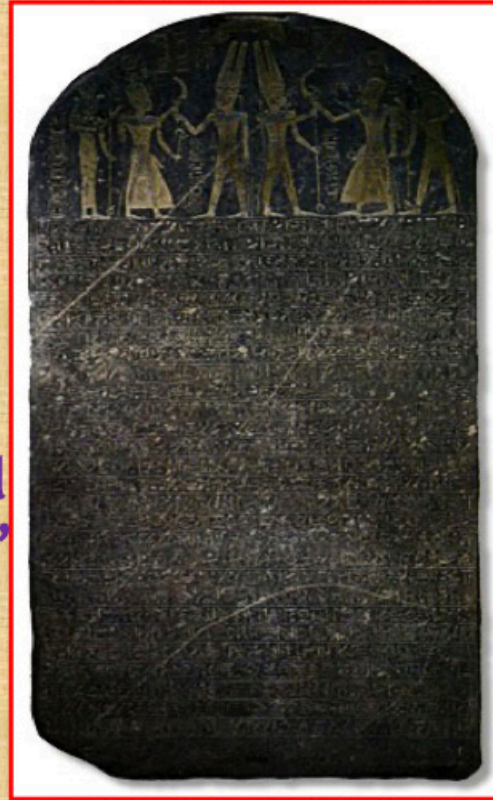
# Archaeology and the Bible

## Preliminary Observations

1. 100s /1,000s of Sites
2. Small Percentage of sites excavated
3. Small Percentage of area of sites excavated
4. Many sites impossible to excavate-money, manpower, location
5. Pottery trends tend to change
6. Remains many not tell whole story
7. Awareness of limitations needed

# Merneptah Stele

- Pharaoh Merneptah's military victories
- From c. 1230 B.C.
- Earliest extra-biblical reference to "Israel."
- "Israel is laid waste, its seed is not."



## Shishak I Relief

Shishak  
(945-924 B.C.)

Invades Israel,  
Judah (925 B.C.)

Temple at Karnak

2 Chronicles 12:1-12

“Arad, Beth-Horon, Beth-Shean, Gibeon  
Mahanaim, Megiddo, Rehob, Taanach”

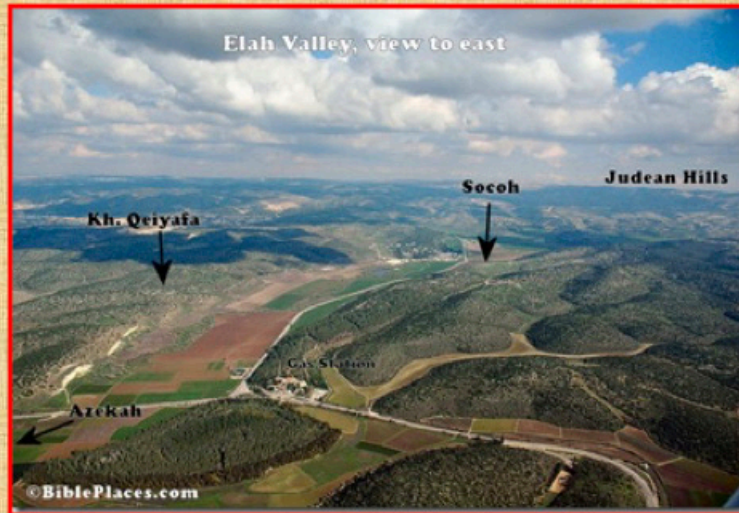
Disc. by Jean-Francois  
Champollion in 1828

**Khirbet Qeiyafa**

27 Miles SW  
of Jerusalem

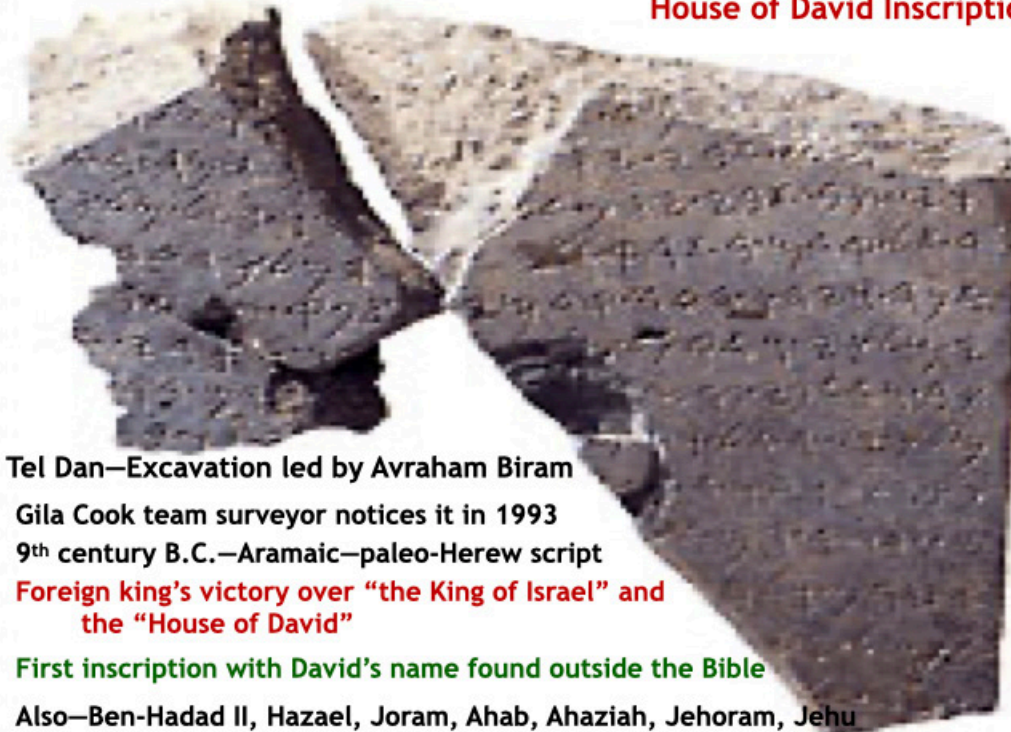
**Valley of Elah—looking East**

Excavated from 2007 by Yosef Garfinkel and Saar Ganor  
for Hebrew University of Jerusalem



**Fortifications and pottery from late 11<sup>th</sup> or early 10<sup>th</sup> century B.C.  
Only known fortified city in Judah dating to time of David**

## House of David Inscription



Tel Dan—Excavation led by Avraham Biram

Gila Cook team surveyor notices it in 1993

9<sup>th</sup> century B.C.—Aramaic—paleo-Hebrew script

Foreign king's victory over "the King of Israel" and  
the "House of David"

First inscription with David's name found outside the Bible

Also—Ben-Hadad II, Hazael, Joram, Ahab, Ahaziah, Jehoram, Jehu

# The Moabite Stone

From Mesha—850 B.C.

Mentions Omri and  
cities in Israel

See 2 Kings 3:4-27

Discovered—1868

In Louvre, Paris

“House of David” disc.  
on line 31



**Eliat Mazar**  
**Excavating**  
**David's Palace?**

**Jerusalem**

2005—Monumental palatial  
structure—  
“Large Stone Structure”

10<sup>th</sup> century B.C.



## **Beyond Reasonable Doubt – Session 4**

### **Archaeology and the Old Testament – Part 2**

We continue our look at Archaeology and the Old Testament in this session. Our study will primarily be covering the time of the Divided Monarchy of Israel to the return of the exiles from Babylon under the Persians (approximately 931-400 B.C.). In this time frame we find Israel and Judah in conflict with the Assyrians. Samaria, the capital of Israel and the northern 10 tribes falls to Assyria in 722 B.C. Many of the Israelites are deported and sent to various parts of the Assyrian Empire. Likewise foreigners are imported from other Assyrian conquered lands to be assimilated with the Israelites left in Israel. Thus the Samaritan race begins.

Nineveh, one of the capitals of the Assyrian Empire, falls to the Babylonians in 611 B.C. Later the Babylonians ultimately conquer Jerusalem, capital of Judah, in 586 B.C. Many captives are taken to the city of Babylon. Babylon falls to the Persians in 539 B.C. Cyrus, King of Persia, allows the Jewish captives who wanted to return to Judah. Jeremiah had predicted this 70 captivity.

In this presentation we will see pictures of much confirming evidence of these events in inscriptions, monuments and on reliefs. Archaeology has brought forth abundant evidence of the interaction of these great world powers and the nations of Israel and Judah. Here again we see great confirmation of the historical accuracy of the Bible



## **Questions about “Archaeology and the Old Testament – Part 2”**

1. What Israelite king is mentioned on the Monolith Inscription of Shalmanesser III and what is said about him?
2. What is unique about the “Black Obelisk” of the Assyrian King Shalmanesser III?
3. Which Bible king is mentioned on the “Taylor Prism” of the Assyrian King Sennacherib?
4. Share some of the details that make to “Siloam Inscription” so interesting.
5. What was found in Babylonian records about King Jehoiachin of Judah?
6. What is significant about the “Cyrus Cylinder” and how does it relate to the Bible?
7. What is the importance of the “Darius Inscription” at Behistin?
8. Share some thoughts on the significance of the Rosetta Stone.
9. Which of the archaeological discoveries shown in this presentation did you find most interesting? Why?
10. Are you aware of other discoveries from this time frame that you would like to discuss?

## Assyrian Kings of Biblical Significance

|                        |                |  |                                       |
|------------------------|----------------|--|---------------------------------------|
| <b>Shalmaneser III</b> | <b>858-824</b> | <b>Monolith Ins.<br/>Black Obelisk</b> | <b>1 Kings 20:22<br/>2. Kings 6:8</b> |
|------------------------|----------------|--|---------------------------------------|

|                            |                |                     |  |
|----------------------------|----------------|---------------------|--|
| <b>Tiglath-Pileser III</b> | <b>744-727</b> | <b>Menahem Ins.</b> | <b>2 Kings 15:19<br/>1 Chronicles 5:26</b> |
|----------------------------|----------------|---------------------|--|

|                      |                |                      |                     |
|----------------------|----------------|----------------------|---------------------|
| <b>Shalmaneser V</b> | <b>726-722</b> | <b>Conquers Sam.</b> | <b>Kings 17:1-6</b> |
|----------------------|----------------|----------------------|---------------------|

|                  |                |                     |                    |
|------------------|----------------|---------------------|--------------------|
| <b>Sargon II</b> | <b>721-705</b> | <b>Display Ins.</b> | <b>Isaiah 20:1</b> |
|------------------|----------------|---------------------|--------------------|

|                    |                |                     |                        |
|--------------------|----------------|---------------------|------------------------|
| <b>Sennacherib</b> | <b>704-681</b> | <b>Taylor Prism</b> | <b>2 Kings 18:13ff</b> |
|--------------------|----------------|---------------------|------------------------|

|                   |                |                       |                      |
|-------------------|----------------|-----------------------|----------------------|
| <b>Esarhaddon</b> | <b>680-669</b> | <b>Zinjirli Stela</b> | <b>2 Kings 19:37</b> |
|-------------------|----------------|-----------------------|----------------------|

|                     |                |                      |                 |
|---------------------|----------------|----------------------|-----------------|
| <b>Ashurbanipal</b> | <b>668-633</b> | <b>Large Library</b> | <b>Ezra 4:2</b> |
|---------------------|----------------|----------------------|-----------------|

**Fall of Ninevah—611 B.C.**

## The Kurkh Monolith Inscription

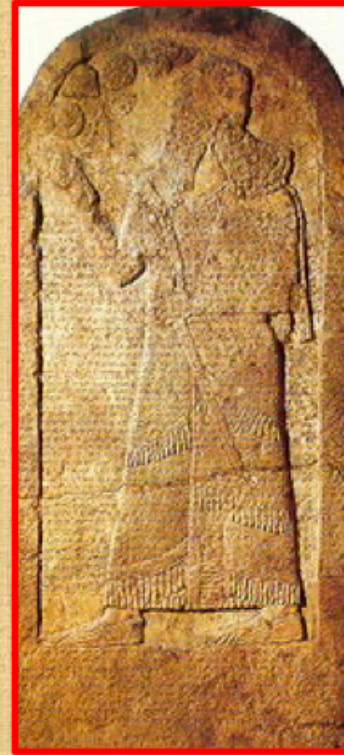
**Shalmaneser III (858-824 BC)**

**Discovered in 1861 by  
John George Taylor  
in Kurkh, Turkey**

**Now in British Museum**

**Ahab, King of Israel contributes  
2,000 Chariots and 10,000 soldiers  
to help fight Shalmaneser III**

**Battle of Qarqar—853 BC**



# The Black Obelisk

**Shalmanesser III**

**King of Assyria**

**858-824 B.C.**

**Found in 1846**

**At Nimrod**

**By A. H. Layard**



# Taylor Prism

Discovered by John Taylor in 1830

Now in British Museum

Sennacherib—705-681 B.C.

701 B.C. invasion of  
Israel

46 cities conquered

Hezekiah shut up in  
Jerusalem—

“like a bird in a cage”

2 Kings 18:13; 19:16, 20, 36

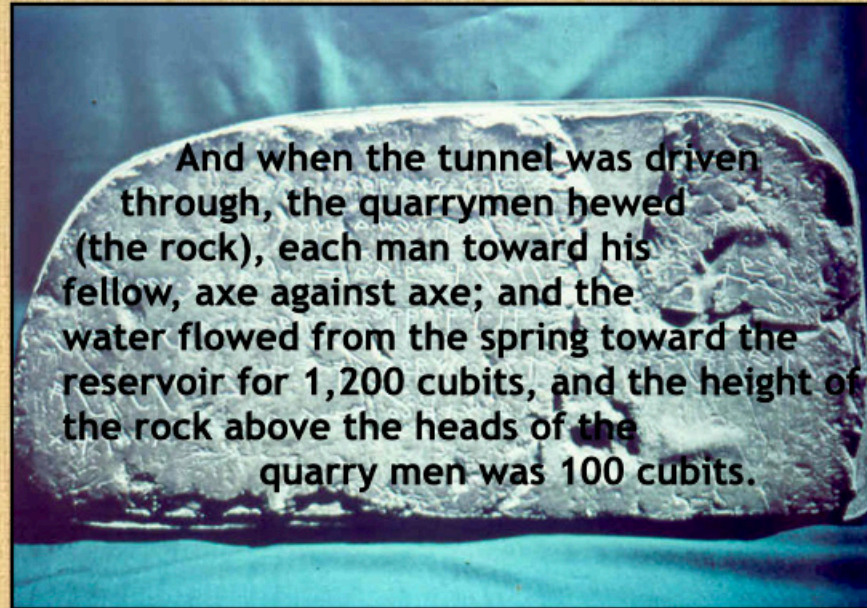
2 Chron. 32:1, 2, 9, 10, 22

Isa. 36:1; 37:17, 21, 37



## Siloam Inscription—701 B.C.—Hezekiah's tunnel

Now in Istanbul Museum    Discovered by peasant boy in 1880



Hezekiah's tunnel—2 Kings 18:17; 20:20; Isaiah 7:3; 36:2

# Kings of Babylon

**Nabopolassar—624-605**

**Nebuchadnezzar—605-562**

Daniel, 2 Kings 24, 25

**Amel-Marduk—561-560**

2 Kings 25, Jeremiah

**Nergal-sharusur—559-556**

Jeremiah 39:3, 13

**Labashi-Marduk—556**

**Nabonidus—555-539**

(Belshazzar-son, co-regent)

**Babylon falls to Cyrus of Persia in  
539 B.C.**

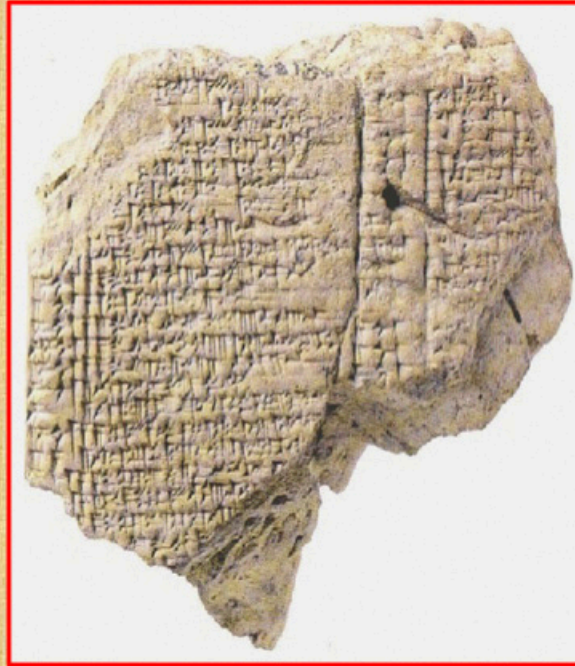


# Jehoiachin's Ration Inscription

Records rations for  
Jehoiachin (609-598 B.C.)  
and his sons while in  
captivity in Babylon

Discovered in 1900 in  
Babylon by  
Robert Koldewey

2 Kings 25:27-30





# Cyrus Cylinder—539-530 B.C.

Disc. by Hormuzd Rassam in 1879

Decree relating to return of captives to their homeland

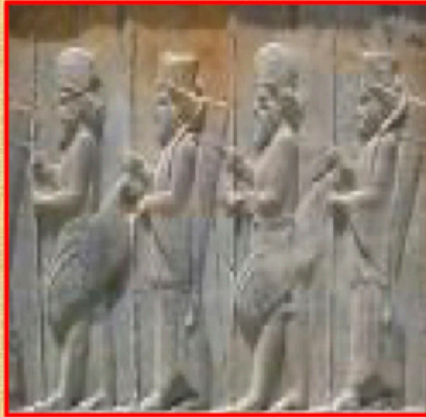


2 Chron. 36:23; Ezra 1:2-4

# Persepolis Relief—515 B.C.

Disc. by Ernst Herzfeld, Erich Schmidt in 1930

Mentions King Darius I—522-486 B.C.



Ezra 4:5, 24; Nehemiah 12:22

## Captivity predicted—Jer. 25:1, 12; 29:10-14

605—Jerusalem destroyed, deportation

539—Babylon captured by Persians

538—Cyrus allows exiles to return

537—Return under Sheshbazzar

536—Work on temple begins

516—Temple is completed

458—Ezra to Jerusalem



# The Persian Period



559—Cyrus inherits Anshan

549—Cyrus conquers Astyages, the Mede

539—Cyrus conquers Babylon

530-522—Cambyses rules, conquers Egypt

522-486—Darius I rules

486-465—Xerxes I rules, attacks Greece

480—Xerxes defeated at Salamis by Greeks

464-424—Artaxerxes I rules. Nehemiah

## Relief and inscription of Darius at Behistun

-Between Bagdad  
and Teheran

-500 feet high!

-58½ feet long

-Elamite, Old Persian,  
Babylonian

-Key for reading  
Akkadian cuneiform

-H. C. Rawlinson copied  
it in 1835 and deciphers  
the Persian part.



# The Rosetta Stone

- Discovered in Egypt. July 15, 1799, by soldiers in Napoleon's army
- Napoleon campaigned in Egypt 1798-1801
- He is defeated, spoils go to the victorious British
- Trilingual edict deciphered by Jean Francois Champollion
- Now in British Museum in London



## **Beyond Reasonable Doubt – Session 5**

### **Archaeology and the New Testament – Part 1**

In this presentation we look at archaeological sites from the first century in Israel. We can get a good idea of what the land and cities were like during the time of Jesus. We will find that many of the places that are mentioned in the Gospels can be identified. Contrary to the idea proposed by skeptics that the story of Jesus is just a fabrication of later liars or unscrupulous disciples, the stories are rooted in real and identifiable times and places.

Of special interest in this session are several cities which Herod the Great had built. Among these we will look at remain of his structures in Jerusalem, Caesarea Maritima, Herodium and Masada. We will also view remains at Caesarea Philippi and Capernaum. In Jerusalem we will see some traditional sites like Golgotha, Bethesda and the Garden Tomb.

Again, it is important to note that the New Testament was written at the time it purports to be, in the places it claims to be and about real people who really lived. Adequate opportunities were available from the start for falsifying everything about Jesus and the Gospel records. But rather than stifle the movement the truthfulness of eyewitness evidence caused the movement to spread rapidly across the land of Israel and then across the Roman Empire within the first century. Only the truthfulness of the facts of the movement can account for the explosive growth of Christianity even in the face of persecution.

## **Questions about “Archaeology and the New Testament – Part 1”**

1. Review and discuss some of the major changes that took place in the 400 years between the Old Testament and N.T.
2. What were some of the sites in Jerusalem that you found interesting?
3. What did you think about Masada and the events that occurred there?
4. What are some of the things you recall about Caesarea Maritima?
5. What is the significance of the “Pilate Inscription” at Caesarea Maritima?
6. What do you recall about Herodium?
7. What was mentioned about Caiaphas in this presentation?
8. What do you find interesting about the “Nazareth Inscription”?
9. Which of the items mentioned did you find most interesting?
10. Why is a study of these sites important?



## Between the Old Testament and the New Testament

# The 400 Not so “Silent Years”

### World empires change

539- Persia under Cyrus conquers Babylon

490- Persian defeated at Marathon

480- Persians under Xerxes sacks Athens then defeated at Salamis

359- Phillip of Macedon comes to power

356- Alexander the Great is born

331- Alexander conquers Persia. He dies in 323. Greek empire divides

200- Rome defeats Antiochus III

63- Pompey intervenes in Judean Civil War

### Biblical world changes

538- Cyrus allows captives to return to homelands

458- Ezra goes to Judah. Nehemiah goes in 444

301- Ptolemy I defeats Antigonus and captures Judea

285- Septuagint is written in Alexandria

200- Antiochus defeats Ptolemy V—Judea under Seleucid control

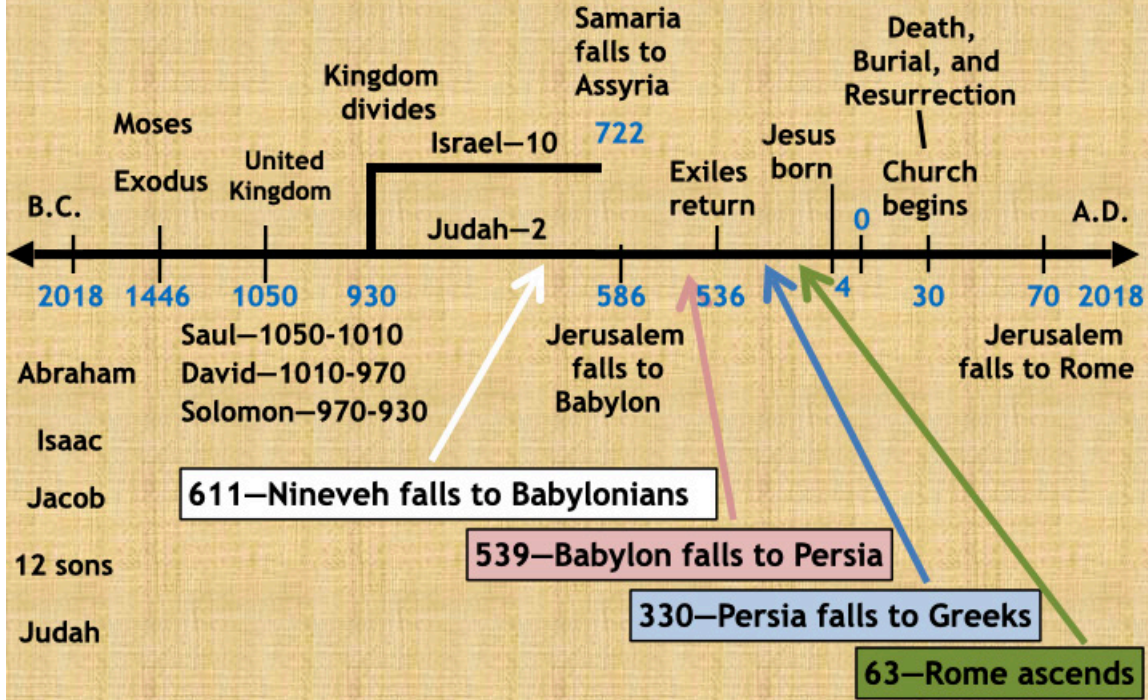
167- Maccabean Revolt begins

142- Simon Maccabeus establishes independent Jewish state

63- Pompey intervenes in Judean Civil War

47- Herod appointed governor of Galilee

# Between the Testaments



## **Caiaphas' Ossuary—42-43 A.D.**

**Disc.—Zvi Greenhunt in 1990**



**Mt. 26:57-67; John 11:18—High priest at Jesus' trial**

# Pilate Inscription

**Caesarea  
Maritima**

Discovered in  
1961  
By Antonio Frova

**John 18:33-40**



# Pool of Siloam

Disc. by Eli Shakrum and Ronny Reich in 2004



Steps down into garden/pool area

John 9

# Capernaum—“Peter’s house”

1<sup>st</sup> cent. 4<sup>th</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> cent. A.D. Disc. by Franciscans in 1921



Mark 1:29-34



**The Garden Tomb**

## **Beyond Reasonable Doubt – Session 6**

### **Archaeology and the New Testament – Part 2**

Paul and his traveling companions visited many important cities on his three missionary journeys. Many of these places have been excavated and great discoveries have been made which confirm and illuminate many of the people and places mentioned in the New Testament. In this session we will view Philippi, Corinth, Delphi and Athens as well as several others locations.

What we find in visiting these ruins is that these are real places rooted in history and that the record of them found in the New Testament is reliable and trustworthy. We have no reason to doubt the truthfulness of these stories as they recount the steady growth of the Christian movement in the first century Roman empire. This rapid growth of faith gives strong proof of the reality of the claims of Christianity. If the teachings of Christianity were based on imaginary stories or unreal people there were thousands of people who could have disproved the claims of those promoting these teachings.



## **Questions about “Archaeology and the New Testament – Part 2”**

1. This presentation chronicles some of the travel and activities of Paul during his “missionary journeys.” Talk about the significance of his conversion and subsequent missionary journeys.
2. How can we explain Paul’s life and practices if all he built his life on was based on lies and/or fabrications?
3. How could it be believed that though all the places and preaching results are real, the message Paul shared was all false?
4. What is the significance of the “Sergius Paulus Inscription” and story from Cyprus (see Acts 13:7)?
5. What are some of the interesting details of Paul’s visit to Philippi in Acts 16?
6. What do you find exciting about the “Erastus Inscription” found in Corinth?
7. What is the significance of the “Gallio Inscription” found at Delphi?
8. Discuss the content of Paul’s sermon on Mars Hill in Athens?
9. Why did Paul bring up the resurrection (Acts 17) and what was the reaction?
10. Why is the resurrection of Jesus important to talk about today in our preaching and teaching?

# Sergius Paulus Inscription—d. 1877- Soli

Acts 13:7—Proconsul on Cyprus



1887—Inscription in Rome with his name



**Egnatian Way—Road traveled by Paul**



## Erastus Inscription

## “The Synagogue of the Hebrews”—Disc. 1898



**Corinth**

## Delphi or Gallio Inscription



**9 fragments found in 1908—Date to Claudius (41-54 A.D.)**

**Mention Gallio, the proconsul of Corinth—51 or 52 A.D.**

**Acts 18:1-4, 18-23**

While Paul was waiting for them in Athens, he was greatly distressed to see that the city was full of idols ... Paul then stood up in the meeting of the Areopagus and said;

**“Men of Athens! I see that in every way you are very religious. For as I walked around and looked carefully at your objects of worship, I even found an altar with this inscription;**

**TO AN UNKNOWN GOD**

**Now what you worship as something unknown I am going to proclaim to you.**



**The God who make the world and everything in it is the Lord of heaven and earth and does not live in temples built by hands...**

**In the past God overlooked such ignorance, but now he commands people everywhere to repent. For he has set a day when he will judge the world with justice by the man he has appointed.**

**He has given proof of this to all men by raising him from the dead.”**

**Acts 17:16, 22-24, 30-31**

**Library of Celsus—115-125 A.D.—15,000 scrolls**



**A number who had practiced sorcery brought their scrolls together and burned them publicly. When they calculated the value of the scrolls, the total came to fifty thousand drachmas. In this way the word of the Lord spread widely and grew in power.**

**Acts 19:18-20**



## Theater at Ephesus



**“When they heard this, they were furious and began shouting:**

**‘Great is Artemis of the Ephesians!’**

**Soon the whole city was in an uproar...and all of them rushed into the theater together.**

**The assembly was in confusion: Some were shouting one thing, some another.**

**Most of the people did not even know why they were there...**

**When they realized he [Paul] was a Jew, they all shouted in unison for about two hours:**

**‘Great is Artemis of the Ephesians!’”**

**Acts 19:28, 29, 32, 34**

## **Beyond Reasonable Doubt – Session 7**

### **The Inspiration of the Bible**

In this presentation reasons are given for believing in the inspiration of the Bible. By inspiration we are maintaining that God had a hand in revealing himself through written communication. We believe that the Bible contains his will for mankind. Though written by men we believe these men were guided by God. The questions below help us explore this wonderful book and the wonderful message it contains for all mankind: God cares for us and has worked throughout history and nature to show us his love.

## **Questions about “The Inspiration of the Bible”**

1. List the five reasons give affirming the inspiration of the Bible.
2. Can you think of other reasons for affirming its inspiration?
3. How does the problem of evil and suffering affirm God’s reality?
4. How might the reality of our needs demand the reality of real solutions?
5. Why has the world been created the way it is in regard to human choice?
6. How does freedom of choice effect us and others in the world we live in?
7. What do the prophecies of Jesus show about God?
8. What does the origin of, and order, in the universe show us about faith in God?
9. What is “Plank Time” and what does it show us about faith in God?
10. What does DNA show us about intelligent design and God?

## **Evidences of the Inspiration of the Bible**

**1. Amazing Unity Beyond Man's Power.**

**2. Historical Accuracy Beyond Man's Power.**

**3. Tremendous Influence Beyond Man's Power.**

**4. Foreknowledge of Future World Events.**

**5. Superhuman Scientific Foreknowledge.**



To admit the reality of **evil**  
is to admit the reality of **God**.

One cannot know real **evil**  
unless one knows real **good**.

One cannot know real **good**  
unless one knows an absolute  
**Standard of Good**.



An absolute standard of **Good**  
demands an all knowing and perfect entity.

**An all knowing and perfect entity is **God**.**

To admit the reality of **evil**  
is to admit the reality of **God**.

## **The Bible Deals Realistically With Reality!**

If we concede that because evil exists God does not—  
how does that solve anything?

Now we have no one to blame and no explanation!

**But ... sin and evil do exist!**

An explanation is possible when the greater picture is seen.

**God has created a world in which true freedom of choice exists!**

### **1. Our bad choices can bring us bad results.**

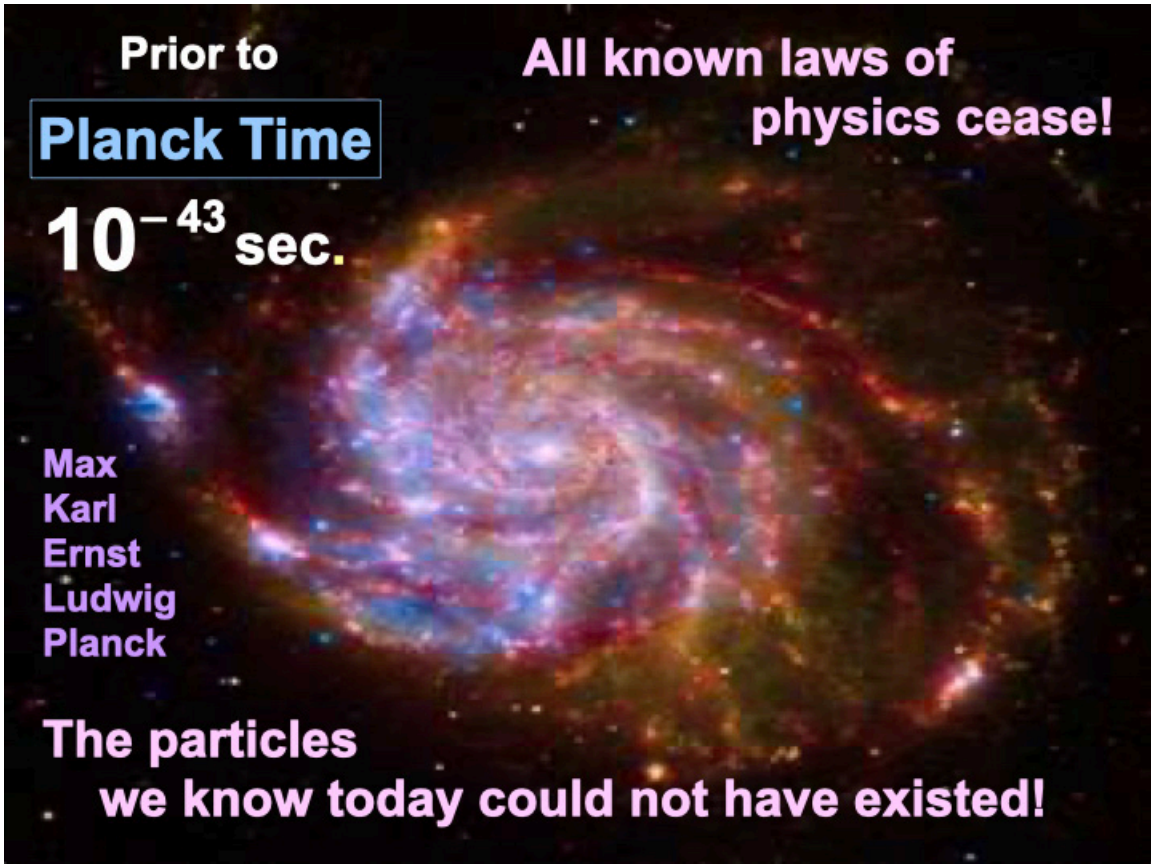
“A man reaps what he sows. Whoever sows to please their flesh, from the flesh will reap destruction. Whoever sows to please the Spirit, from the Spirit will reap eternal life.”

**Galatians 6:7, 8**

### **2. Bad choices by others can bring bad results to us.**

“And they spread among the Israelites a bad report about the land they had explored... Your children will be shepherds here for forty years, suffering for your unfaithfulness...”

**Numbers 13:32; 14:33**



**Prior to**

**Planck Time**

**$10^{-43}$  sec.**

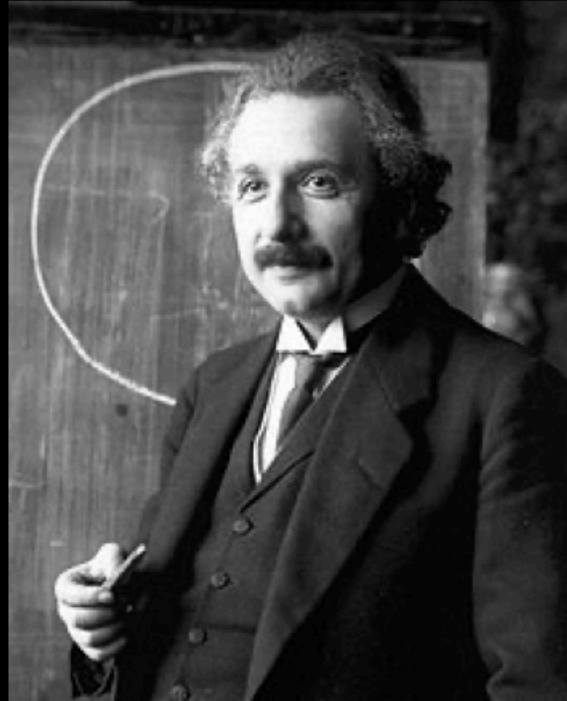
**All known laws of physics cease!**

**Max  
Karl  
Ernst  
Ludwig  
Planck**

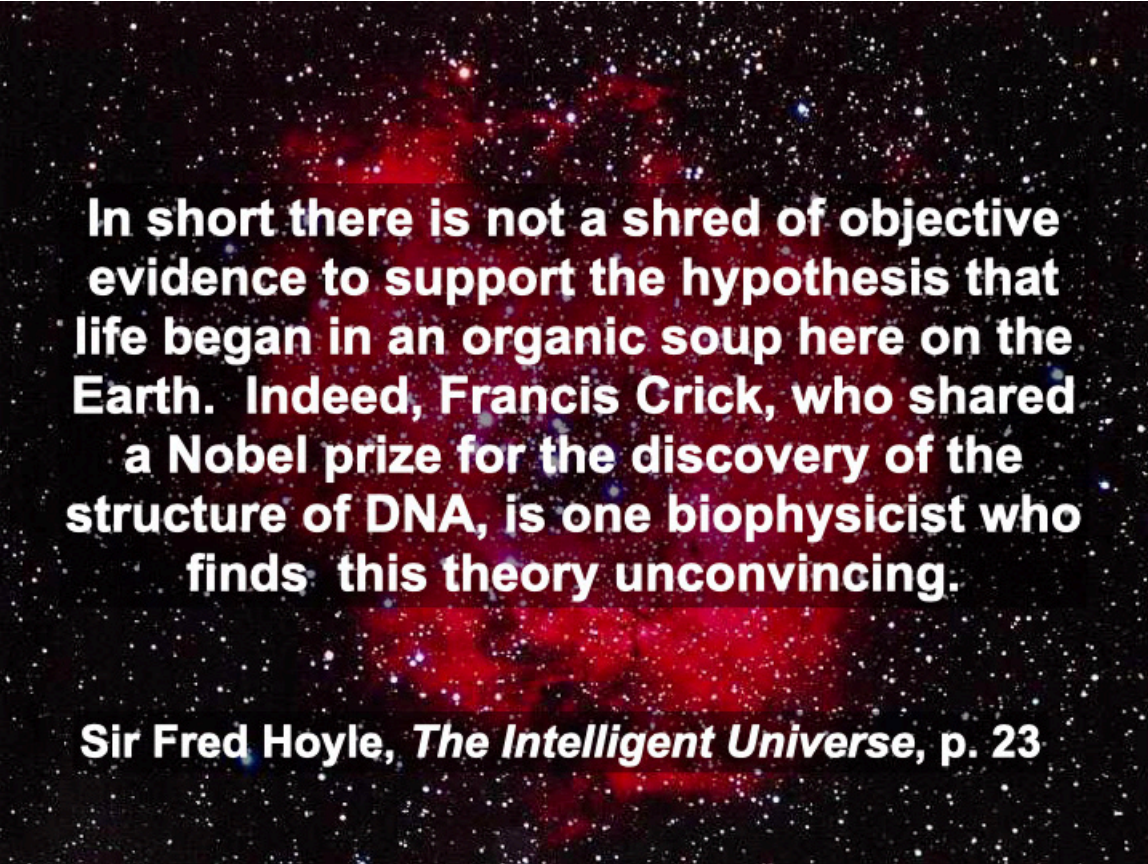
**The particles  
we know today could not have existed!**

**Einstein's**  
**“fudge factor”**  
**“Cosmological**  
**constant”**

**“the greatest**  
**blunder of**  
**my life”**







**In short there is not a shred of objective evidence to support the hypothesis that life began in an organic soup here on the Earth. Indeed, Francis Crick, who shared a Nobel prize for the discovery of the structure of DNA, is one biophysicist who finds this theory unconvincing.**

**Sir Fred Hoyle, *The Intelligent Universe*, p. 23**

**DNA has an amazing ability to store massive amounts of information in an infinitesimally small space with the arrangement of its four letter alphabet. The information needed to build the proteins for all the species of organisms that have ever lived (approx. 1,000 million)**

**“could be held in a teaspoon and there would still be room left for all the information in every book ever written.”**

**Michael Denton, *Evolution: A Theory in Crisis*, p. 334**

A photograph of Antony Flew, an older man with glasses, wearing a dark jacket over a blue shirt. He is standing in a library or study, with bookshelves filled with books behind him. A black text box is overlaid on the top left of the image, and a larger black text box is overlaid on the bottom center.

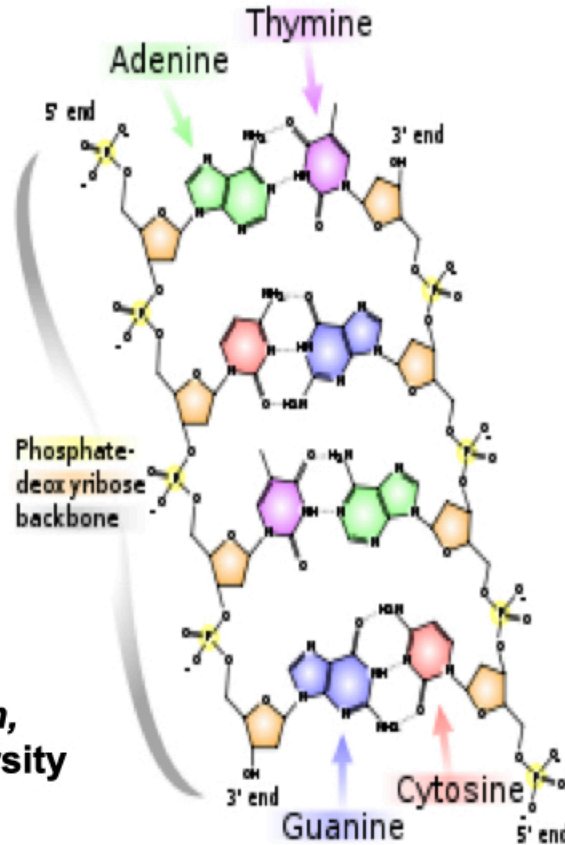
**Antony Flew**

**DNA research “has shown, by the almost unbelievable complexity of the arrangements which are needed to produce life, that intelligence must have been involved.”**

# DNA Diagram

“This new realm of molecular genetics [is] where we see the most compelling evidence of design on earth.”

Dean Kenyon—  
*Biochemical Predestination*,  
San Francisco State University



**Nature hates a vacuum.**

**There are real *needs*  
that every human has.**

**Does not a real *need*  
imply a real source of  
*fulfillment* for that *need*?**

**One implies the other.**





**A minor detail.**

What is the difference in these two pictures?

**One is not plugged in.**

**One is plugged in.**

**Beneficial FAITH** is when we **recognize and plug in** to a **power source** that can meet our needs in life.



**A major difference!**

## **Beyond Reasonable Doubt – Session 8**

### **Evidence for the Historical Reality of Jesus**

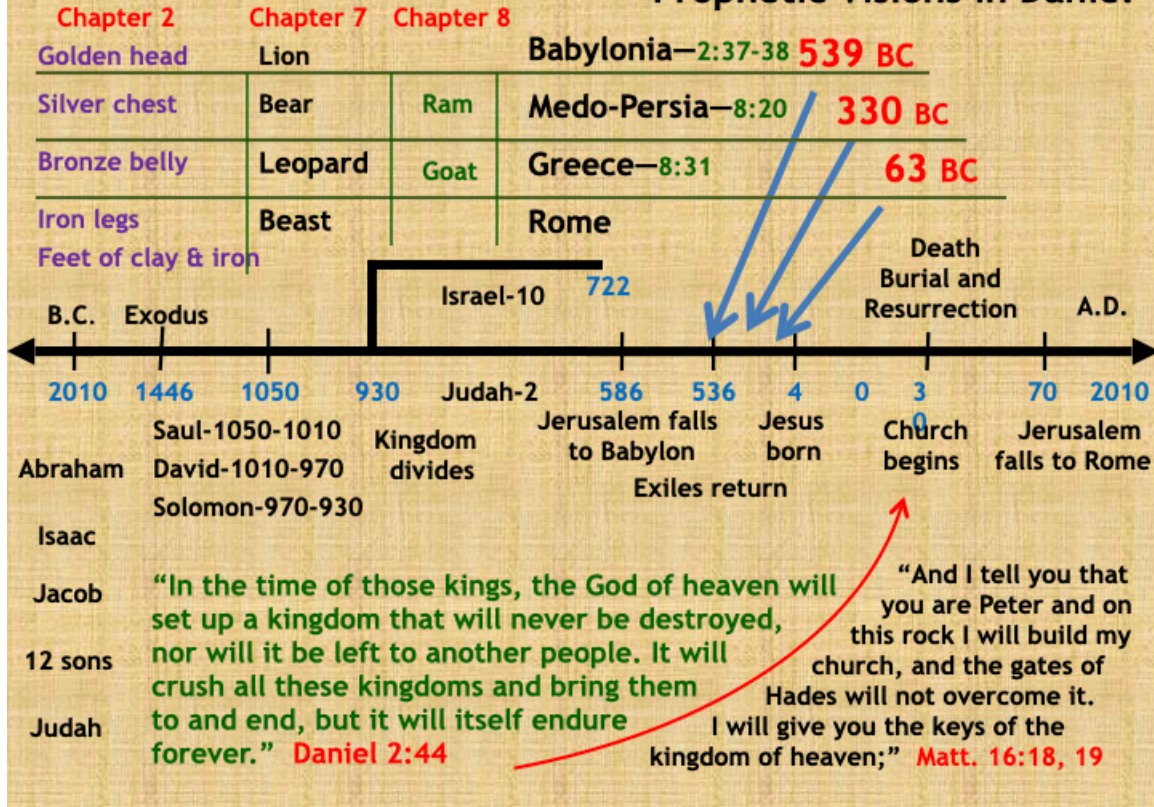
Did a man names “Jesus” really live? Was he made up by a group of misguided Galileans? This session examines historical references to a man names Jesus of Nazareth. We believe there is compelling evidence that Jesus was a real man of history. It would do us all well to be acquainted with the evidence and to know this man. Consider the questions below as we consider the evidence for his historical reality.

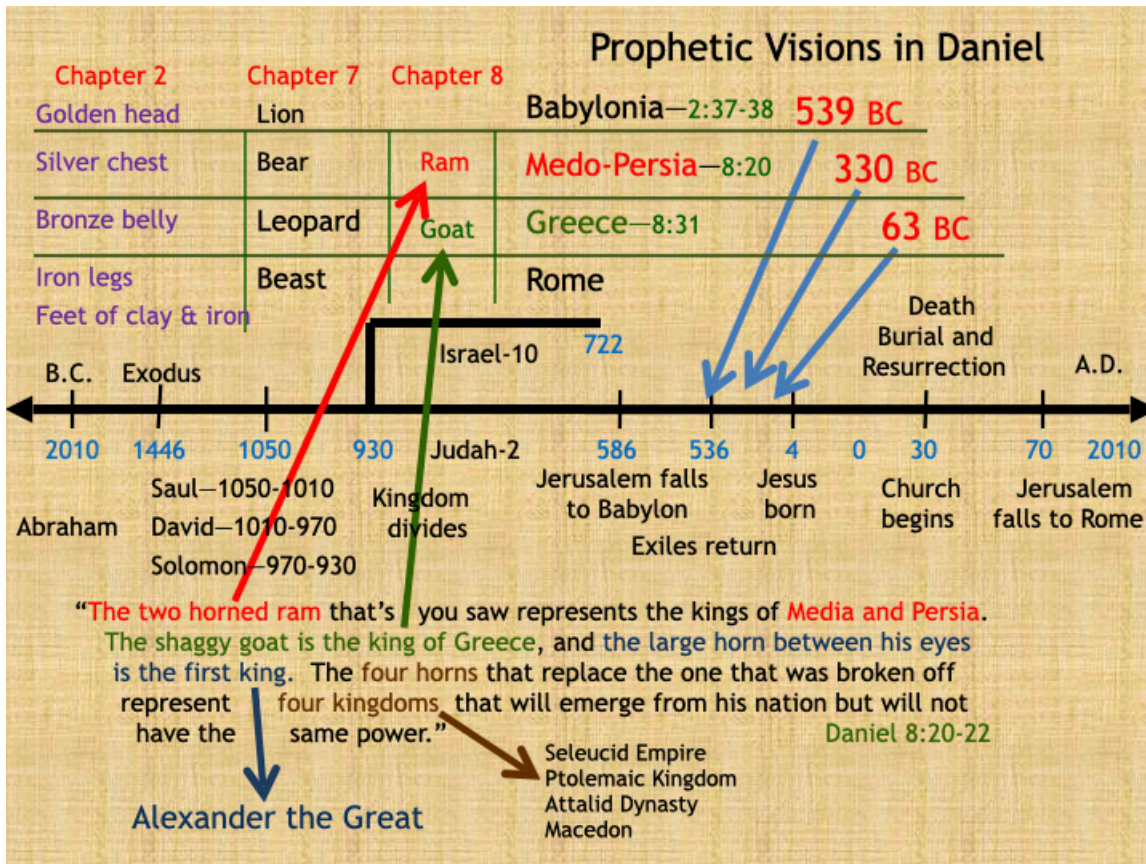
## **Questions about “Evidence for the Historical Reality of Jesus”**

1. Discuss the three “converging and convincing evidential sources” mentioned in this presentation.
2. Which of the three is most helpful to you?
3. Discuss the reasons given that seem to preclude the idea that this whole story of Jesus is a myth or a concoction of a group of either deluded or deceitful men or the invention of one man.
4. What do you find especially interesting or helpful in the excerpt of Tacitus about the early Christian movement?
5. Discuss the expulsion of the Jews by Claudius and the reference to this in Acts 18:2.
6. Review and discuss what you find interesting or inspiring about Pliny’s letter to the Emperor Trajan.
7. What is interesting about Josephus’ reference to Jesus?
8. Why is the Nazareth Inscription significant?
9. Discuss the importance of the prophecies in Daniel mentioned in this presentation.
10. Why do you think we need to establish the historical reality of Jesus?



# Prophetic Visions in Daniel





## **Converging and Convincing Evidential Sources**

- 1. Early date and wide spread circulation of the New Testament documents.**
- 2. Accurate biblical and extra-biblical references to real people and places.**
- 3. Persecution forced adherents to make serious, rational decisions and indicated that even adversaries understood the claims to some degree.**

# **Fabrication, Falsehood, and the Gospel**

## **1. None would have**

**Messianic expectations different**

**Persecution soon challenged**

**Morality of the movement**

## **2. None could have**

**Resurrection core teaching—  
refutation?—produce body!**

**Miracles claimed as confirmation**

**Fulfillment of scripture claimed**

## **Beyond Reasonable Doubt – Session 9**

### **Considering the Claims for the Divinity of Jesus**

Jesus made great claims about his divinity and his purpose. This presentation looks at both the claims and the offered proof of his claims. If his claims are true then every human being can be blessed by who he is and what he offers. It is our belief that when all the evidence is honestly evaluated we can come to the definite conclusion that Jesus is the Son of God and Savior of mankind. Discuss the questions below as you consider this great truth.

## **Questions about “Considering the Claims for the Divinity of Jesus”**

1. List the five claims Jesus made about himself.
2. Can you recall other claims he made about himself?
3. What might be people’s reactions to his claims?
4. Can you recall in Scripture any examples of people’s reactions?
5. Is there a way to accept a “middle ground” regarding his claims
6. What are the five ways listed inn this presentation that Jesus proved his claims?
7. Discuss the weight and validity of each of these claims.
8. How might the things “Jesus was for” and the things “Jesus was against” worked for him and against him?
9. Who would have been drawn to Jesus and would have been repulsed by him and why?
10. Why should each of us seriously consider the claims of Jesus?

# Jesus Claimed to be:

**1. The Son of God—John 3:16**

**2. The Messiah—John 4:26**

**3. The Judge—John 5:22**

**4. The “I AM”—John 8:58**

**5. The way, the truth,  
the life—John 14:6**

# The Claims of Jesus

**TRUE**

**All people must  
love and obey  
him to be saved  
eternally.**

**FALSE**

**Jesus was a liar  
or a lunatic. He  
was not a good  
man.**



# Jesus Proved His Claims:

**1. Fulfilled prophecies**

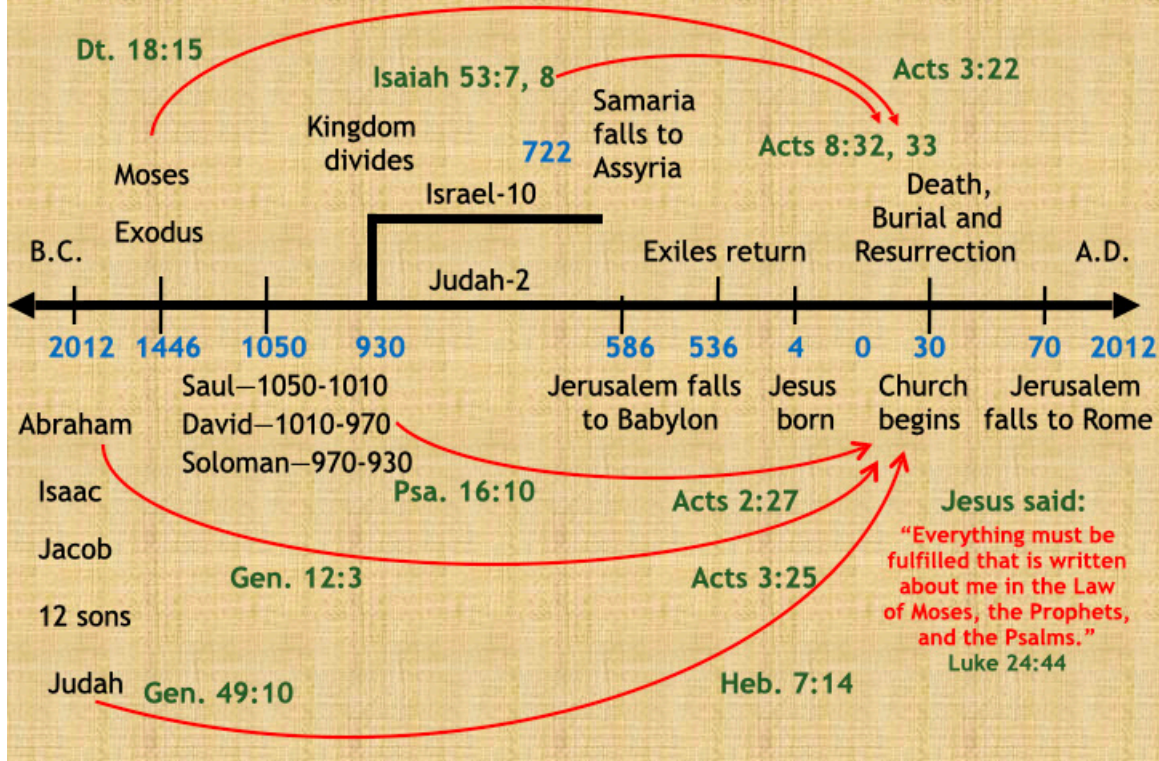
**2. Miraculous signs**

**3. Resurrection**

**4. Teachings**

**5. Impact**

# In The Fullness of Time—Galatians 4:4



## **The teachings of Jesus— Jesus is...**

### **Against abusive religious leaders—Matthew 23:4**

“They tie up heavy loads and put them on men’s shoulders...”

### **Against abusive religious rules—Matthew 23:13, 23**

“You shut the kingdom of heaven in men’s faces...you have neglected the more important matters...justice, mercy and faithfulness”

### **Against violent rebellion—John 18:36**

“My kingdom is not of this world. If it were, my servants would fight...”

### **Against materialism and greed—Matthew 6:19**

“Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth,”

### **Against judgmentalism—Matthew 7:2**

“Do not judge...for in the same way you judge others, you will be judged,”

### **Against racism—John 4:9**

“(For Jews do not associate with Samaritans.)”

### **Against male chauvinism—John 8:7**

“If any one of you is without sin, let him be the first to throw a stone at her.”

## **The teachings of Jesus—Jesus is...**

**For love of all mankind—Matthew 5:44**

“Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you,...”

**For value of every person—Matthew 5:22**

“Anyone who says, ‘You fool!’ will be in danger of the fire of hell.”

**For forgiveness and reconciliation—Matthew 6:14**

“For if you forgive men when they sin against you, your heavenly Father will also forgive you.”

**For fairness and good relationships—Matthew 7:12**

“So in everything, do to others what you would have them do to you...”

**For our peace and well being—Matthew 6:34**

“Do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself...”

**For our healing and happiness—Matthew 5:4**

Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted”

**For a hope and a future for us—John 14:2, 3**

“In my Father’s house are many rooms...I am going there to prepare a place for you...I will come back and take you...”

## Session 1 Questions/Answers about “Introduction and Preliminary Considerations”

1. Discuss the four things mentioned that all humans need for happiness and fulfillment.  
*Love, value, forgiveness, hope — John 3:16*
2. Can you think of other things that should be added to these four?
3. What were the three essentials for a beneficial religion or faith?  
*Real, relevant, rewarding*
4. Can you add other items to these three?
5. Did you see any significant differences in the popular definition of “faith” when compared to the biblical definition cited in this presentation?  
*Biblical faith is built on evidence, dictionary faith is “unquestionable belief,” almost opposites*
6. What was noteworthy about Paul’s words to King Agrippa in Acts 26:25, 26?  
*Paul appealed to the King to look at the facts, these things were “not done in a corner.”*
7. What are some references that show that the authors of scripture knew they were writing the word of God?  
*1 Cor. 14:37; 1 Thess. 2:13; 2 Tim. 3:16, 17*
8. How might people’s backgrounds and beliefs affect their acceptance and interpretations of archaeological finds?  
*Unbelievers may not accept facts that support the Bible. Overly and unfairly skeptical.*
9. What are some of the limitations we face in the field of archaeology and the Bible?  
*Many sites unexcavated, many sites are under modern cities, not enough money to excavate.*

10. How can a little knowledge of biblical chronology help in understanding archaeology and the Bible?

*Keep the Bible and various finds in their proper place chronologically.*

## **Session 2 Questions/Answers about “The Textual Reliability of the Bible”**

1. Why is having a reliable Bible important?

*So that we can know what its message is for us and that it is true.*

2. Why might it be important to have some knowledge about how we got the Bible and how we can know it is reliable?

*Helps us understand when it was written, language and customs of the times, and knowledge of the early manuscripts*

3. Discuss the current arrangement and the approximate dates for the writing of the original Bible books.

*O.T. — 39 books 1,400–400 B.C. mostly Hebrew; N.T. — 27 books, 50–100 A.D. Greek*

4. Discuss the importance of the “Dead Sea Scrolls.”

*Copies of O.T. books are 1,000 years earlier. Show how well preserved and accurate our O.T. is.*

5. Are you aware of any of the theories about the Qumran community that is located in close proximity to where the “Dead Sea Scrolls” were found.

*Some say they could have been the Jewish sect of Essenes.*

6. Why is it important to have early manuscripts for the New Testament?  
*The earlier the more testable for truthfulness, more accurate rendering of originals, better understanding of doctrines*
7. Describe the two types of Greek manuscripts and some interesting facts concerning them.  
*Uncials - earlier, all capitals, around 300; miniscules - more numerous, like handwriting, over 4,000*
8. What are the three important sources for recreating a reliable New Testament?  
*Early manuscripts, versions from other languages, quotations from early Christian writers*
9. How is it possible to correct errors in the various New Testament manuscripts?  
*Compare numerous different manuscripts from different locations. Errors are in different places, corrections obvious*
10. What are the “Big Three” Greek manuscripts for the New Testament?  
*Codex Vaticanus, Sinaiticus, and Alexandrinus*
11. What is interesting about the history of the Codex Sinaiticus?  
*Sold to the British Museum in 1933 by the Communist government of Russia*

### **Session 3 Questions/Answers about “Archaeology and the Old Testament – Part 1”**

1. How do you think a study on archaeology and the Bible can help students of the Bible?  
*Can better understand the culture, places and language, and how it relates to Bible people and events*

2. What are some of the limitations we face in the field of archeology and the Bible?  
*Many sites not excavated, modern cities built over many ruins, not enough money to excavate many places*
3. How might peoples backgrounds and beliefs affect their acceptance and interpretations of archaeological finds?  
*They may be biased against belief in the Bible. Could be trying to make a name for themselves.*
4. What is the importance of the Merneptah Stele?  
*Earliest non-biblical to "Israel" from around 1230 B.C.*
5. What do you recall about the Shishak Relief?  
*From Karnak and mentions Shishak invading Israel. Shishak is mention in 2 Chron. 12:1-12*
6. Describe the difference between the "minimalists" and the "maximalists" in Biblical archaeology.  
*Minimalists minimize any Bible connections with finds, maximalists maximise everything*
7. What does the discovery at Khirbet Qeiyafa seem to support?  
*There is compelling evidence for organized substantial villages around Jerusalem during the time of David.*
8. What is the significance of the "House of David" inscription at Dan?  
*Earliest inscription with David's name on it outside of Bible from 9th century B.C.*
9. Discuss the significance of the Moabite Stone.  
*Mentions "Omri" king of Israel and the conflict with "Mesha" king of Moab from around 850 B.C.*
10. What does Eliat Mazar think she has discovered in Jerusalem?  
*Possibly the palace of King David or at least a royal building from David's Jersalem.*



## Session 4 Questions/Answers about “Archaeology and the Old Testament – Part 2”

1. What Israelite king is mentioned on the Monolith Inscription of Shalmanesser III and what is said about him?  
*King Jehu offered tribute to him.*
2. What is unique about the “Black Obelisk” of the Assyrian King Shalmanesser III?  
*Only relief picture depicting of an Israel king found to date.*
3. Which Bible king is mentioned on the “Taylor Prism” of the Assyrian King Sennacherib?  
*King Hezekiah of Judah*
4. Share some of the details that make to “Siloam Inscription” so interesting.  
*Tells how they dug from each end and met in the middle.*
5. What was found in Babylonian records about King Jehoiachin of Judah?  
*Amount of food rations for him and his sons while they were in captivity.*
6. What is significant about the “Cyrus Cylinder” and how does it relate to the Bible?  
*Show the policy of the Persians to return captive people to their homes, Jews in Babylon allowed this.*
7. What is the importance of the “Darius Inscription” at Behistin?  
*Allowed scholars to compare the different languages there and then decipher them.*
8. Share some thoughts on the significance of the Rosetta Stone.  
*Key to deciphering Egyptian hieroglyphics*
9. Which of the archaeological discoveries shown in this presentation did you find most interesting? Why?
10. Are you aware of other discoveries from this time frame that you would like to discuss?

## Session 5 Questions/Answers about “Archaeology and the New Testament – Part 1”

1. Review and discuss some of the major changes that took place in the 400 years between the Old Testament and N.T.  
*Fall of Babylon to Persia, Persia to the Greeks, Greeks to the Romans. The exile and return of Jews.*
2. What were some of the sites in Jerusalem that you found interesting?  
*Bethesda, Garden Tomb, Golgotha, steps to Herod’s temple, Wailing Wall*
3. What did you think about Masada and the events that occurred there?  
*Romans conquer after a long siege, over 900 Jews commit suicide rather than surrender*
4. What are some of the things you recall about Caesarea Maritima?  
*Herod’s palace, huge man-made harbor, theater, aqueduct*
5. What is the significance of the “Pilate Inscription” at Caesarea Maritima?  
*Shows he is a real historical figure at proper time and place regarding the New Testament period*
6. What do you recall about Herodium?  
*Cone shaped hill built by Herod and where his tomb has been found*
7. What was mentioned about Caiaphas in this presentation?  
*High priest during time of Jesus whose ossuary was found*
8. What do you find interesting about the “Nazareth Inscription”?  
*Apparently a reaction of Emperor Tiberius to the rumor mentioned in scripture that someone stole the body of Jesus. Death penalty on any other grave robbers*
9. Which of the items mentioned did you find most interesting?
10. Why is a study of these sites important?  
*Helps validate the reality of people and events mention in the New Testament*

## Session 6 Questions/Answers about “Archaeology and the New Testament – Part 2”

1. This presentation chronicles some of the travel and activities of Paul during his “missionary journeys.” Talk about the significance of his conversion and subsequent missionary journeys.  
*How can we explain his conversion and missionary zeal if it is not based on fact?*
2. How can we explain Paul’s life and practices if all he built his life on was based on lies and/or fabrications?  
*He was an educated man with everything to loose by following Jesus.*
3. How could it be believed that though all the places and preaching results are real, the message Paul shared was all false?  
*Why would anyone make up all these things? How could anyone fool all the people with lies and deception?*
4. What is the significance of the “Sergius Paulus Inscription” and story from Cyprus (see Acts 13:7)?  
*Shows the reality of this governmental official.*
5. What are some of the interesting details of Paul’s visit to Philippi in Acts 16?  
*Conversions of Lydia and the jailor and the earthquake which freed Paul and Silas. God saves.*
6. What do you find exciting about the “Erastus Inscription” found in Corinth?  
*Most likely a reference to the same man Paul mentions in Romans 16:22.*
7. What is the significance of the “Gallio Inscription” found at Delphi?  
*Helps us date events in Acts as Gallio ruled for only a year.*
8. Discuss the contest of Paul’s sermon on Mars Hill in Athens?  
*Amazing that he preached about the resurrection to idolatrous people and sophisticated philosophers.*

9. Why did Paul bring up the resurrection (Acts 17) and what was the reaction?  
*It is the core teaching of Christianity and proof of its truthfulness and hope it gives.*
10. Why is the resurrection of Jesus important to talk about today in our preaching and teaching?  
*It is a fact that gives credence to all of his claim and gives us the promise of life after death.*

### **Session 7 Questions/Answers about “The Inspiration of the Bible”**

1. List the five reasons give affirming the inspiration of the Bible.  
*Unity, historical accuracy, foreknowledge, influence, scientific insights*
2. Can you think of other reasons for affirming its inspiration?
3. How does the problem of evil and suffering affirm God’s reality?  
*Cannot know real evil unless you know real good. Real good requires God.*
4. How might the reality of our needs demand the reality of real situations?  
*Reality of real needs strongly infers the reality of real fulfillment of needs.*
5. Why has the world been created the way it is in regard to human choice?  
*True freedom requires real consequences of actions. We are not robots.*
6. How does freedom of choice effect us and others in the world we live in?  
*Our bad choices can bring bad results to us and others. Others’ bad choices can affect us as well as them.*
7. What do the prophecies of Jesus show about God?  
*He had the coming of Jesus planned from the beginning. He knew that with freedom of choice we would make some wrong ones and thereby need forgiveness which he provided in Jesus taking on himself our punishment.*

8. What does the origin of, and order, in the universe show us about faith in God?  
*The creation shows God's limitless power and unfathomable intelligence.*
9. What is "Plank Time" and what does it show us about faith in God?  
*The short period of time after the creation event before which no one knows what matter was like or where it came from. Faith in an eternal God is the only reasonable answer to explain the origin of matter and order in the universe.*
10. What does DNA show us about intelligent design and God?  
*Supernatural intelligence is necessary to create such complexity. It could not have happened by chance.*

### **Session 8 Questions/Answers about "Evidence for the Historical Reality of Jesus"**

1. Discuss the three "converging and convincing evidential sources" mentioned in this presentation.  
*Early and widespread circulation of the N.T. documents. Archaeological evidence of reality of people and places mentioned in N.T. Persecution of early adherents strong evidence they would not die for a lie.*
2. Which of the three is most helpful to you?
3. Discuss the reasons given that seem to preclude the idea that this whole story of Jesus is a myth or a concoction of a group of either deluded or deceitful men or the invention of one man.  
*None would have concocted a story that brought its adherents pain, loss, and death. None could have deceived so many in the very country and so soon after these events supposedly happened.*

4. What do you find especially interesting or helpful in the excerpt of Tacitus about the early Christian movement?  
*Christianity had spread to Rome within 30 years. There were so many Christians in Rome and they were willing to die than recant.*
5. Discuss the expulsion of the Jews by Claudius and the reference to this in Acts 18:2.  
*Most likely the Jews were expelled from Rome because of confusion and controversy over Christus, likely Christ.*
6. Review and discuss what you find interesting or inspiring about Pliny's letter to the Emperor Trajan.  
*There were so many Christians so early and so willing to die for their faith.*
7. What is interesting about Josephus' reference to Jesus?  
*He speaks of Jesus' miracles and resurrection.*
8. Why is the Nazareth Inscription significant?  
*Implies the Emperor knew of the rumor that the body of Jesus was stolen.*
9. Discuss the importance of the prophecies in Daniel mentioned in this presentation.  
*Shows God's foreknowledge and plan.*
10. Why do you think we need to establish the historical reality of Jesus?  
*So our faith is founded on facts and so we can share this with others.*

### **Session 9 Questions/Answers about "Considering the Claims for the Divinity of Jesus"**

1. List the five claims Jesus made about himself.  
*The Son of God; the Messiah; the Judge; the "I am;" The Way, the truth, the life.*
2. Can you recall other claims he made about himself?

3. What might be people's reactions to his claims?
4. Can you recall in Scripture any examples of people's reactions?
5. Is there a way to accept a "middle ground" regarding his claims?
6. What are the five ways listed in this presentation that Jesus proved his claims?  
*Fulfilled prophecy; miraculous claims; resurrection; teachings; impact*
7. Discuss the weight and validity of each of these claims.  
*All were able to check out the prophecies; many had seen his miracles; hundreds had seen him after his resurrection; his teachings were unique and challenging; thousands followed him and had their lives forever changed.*
8. How might the things "Jesus was for" and the things "Jesus was against" worked for him and against him?  
*Some would be drawn to him, others would be jealous of him and oppose him. Perhaps it depended on their needs and their position in life.*
9. Who would have been drawn to Jesus and would have been repulsed by him and why?  
*Those who had power and wealth may be repulsed by him, they could lose their position and be challenged to use their wealth for the good of others. Perhaps the poor and neglected people were drawn to his love and acceptance.*
10. Why should each of us seriously consider the claims of Jesus?  
*The evidence seems overwhelming and the offerings of Jesus are what everyone needs. We all need love, value, forgiveness, and hope.*