

NEW TESTAMENT

50

Proofs for the BIBLE

Archaeological finds that help confirm the Bible's accuracy

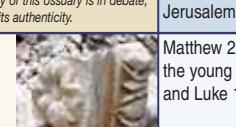
50 finds that help us understand the Bible better

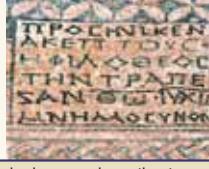
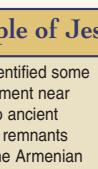
Finds that help explain Bible backgrounds and cultures

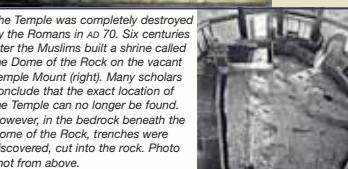
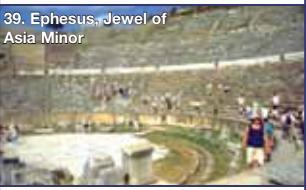


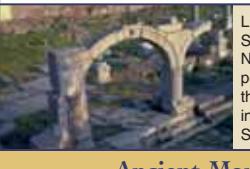
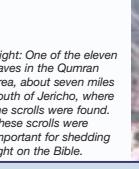
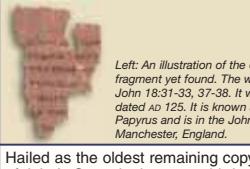
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Archaeological Find	Description of the Find	Importance of the Find
The Life and Ministry of Jesus		
1. The Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem Archaeology has shown that the use of caves as animal stables in the Holy Land has been a common practice from very ancient times. Ancient records show that for at least two centuries before a church was built, Christians had marked this particular cave as the place of Jesus' birth.	 <small>Since AD 326 a building known as the Church of the Nativity has stood over a cave at what was the ancient outskirts of Bethlehem.</small>	Matthew 2:1-8, Luke 2:4-15, and John 7:42 all identify Bethlehem as the place of Jesus' birth. Because Joseph and Mary could find no room at the village inn and the newborn Jesus was laid in a manger (animal feedbox), it has been assumed that the birth took place in a stable. The niche at left marks the place that Christians throughout history identified as Jesus' birthplace. Archaeology and tradition combine in this instance to lend both accuracy and insight to the Gospel accounts.
2. Nazareth, Hometown of Jesus Today Nazareth is a bustling Arab-Jewish city built atop and around the ancient village, located in the southern hills of lower Galilee.	 <small>Left: Church of the Annunciation</small>	Little would be known about the town where Mary received the angelic news that she would give birth to Christ, and where Jesus grew up, if it were not for the Christian holy places and archaeology. Matthew 2:23, 4:13, Mark 1:9, and Luke 1:26-28 give the New Testament accounts of the events connected with Nazareth. John 1:46 also mentions Nazareth.
3. Bethsaida, City of Woe Much of the ancient harbor city of Bethsaida has been recovered since 1987 after several seasons of archaeological work. It has finally been placed accurately on biblical maps as a result.		Bethsaida was the birthplace of Peter, Andrew, and Philip, and is mentioned in the Gospels more than any other city except Capernaum and Jerusalem. Jesus pronounced a "woe" (condemnation) upon the city in Matthew 11:21 and Luke 10:13. It was destroyed around AD 66-68, and was never rebuilt. Mark 8:22 and John 1:44 also mention Bethsaida.
4. Cana, Site of a Wedding Feast Archaeological investigations show that the ruins at Khirbet Qana were a village during the time of Christ. Its ruins are located about nine miles north of Nazareth.	The Gospel of John (John 2:1-11) records the miracle of Jesus turning water into wine during a wedding celebration in the village of Cana.	 <small>Right: Cana ruins at Khirbet Qana date to the time of Christ</small>
5. The House Church at Capernaum While excavating an early church building at Capernaum in 1968, archaeologists found that the building had been placed over a house from the time of Jesus.	 <small>Right: Words were found scratched on the walls of the house indicating that the early Christians believed the house had been that of the apostle Simon Peter.</small>	Matthew 8:14, Mark 1:29, and Luke 4:38 all speak of Peter's house and Jesus' visits there. This may be the reason Christians began to worship at this site.
6. The Synagogue at Capernaum Archaeologists have restored a synagogue that stood there some 350 years after Jesus' time. However, recently it was discovered that this synagogue was built over the foundation of the synagogue from Jesus' time, confirming that this is the place where important Bible events took place.		Capernaum served as Jesus' headquarters during his ministry in Galilee. According to Mark 1:21-28, 3:1-6, Luke 4:31-37, and John 6:59, Jesus both taught and healed people in the synagogue there.
7. Gergesa, Where Christ Cast Out Demons The location of Gergesa has remained a mystery until recently. In 1970 Israeli archaeologist Vasilios Tzaferis investigated ruins of a Byzantine church from AD 585 uncovered during road construction along the east side of the Sea of Galilee.	The excavations turned up an ancient church building, monastery, and chapels. A mosaic-paved chapel had been built at the foot of a steep slope, leading Dr. Tzaferis to conclude that the ancient Christians had built the entire complex here to preserve an early tradition that this was where the miracle occurred in which swine ran off a cliff into the sea.	In Matthew 8:28-34 Christ casts demons out of two men into a herd of swine that ran down a steep place into the Sea of Galilee. Two other possible locations were thought to be Gadara or Gerasa (Mark 5:1-13; Luke 8:26-39) but both are located far from the Sea of Galilee or any steep place. The ruins of the El-Kursi monastery probably mark the location of Gergesa.
8. Jacob's Well Near Sychar The well can be found today beside what archaeologists have identified as the ancient north-south road near Mount Gerizim, in the eastern part of Nablus.	Today the well is still fed by an underground stream, and an unfinished church building covers it.	John 4:1-42 tells the story of Jesus' encounter with a Samaritan woman at Jacob's well. Since ancient times Christian pilgrims have come to the well and have written about it.
9. Jericho, Where Jesus Met Zacchaeus Most of the ruins of Herod the Great's winter palace at Jericho reveal that it was built in the finest Roman style. Jericho is where Herod the Great built many grand buildings at great public expense.	The Jericho of Jesus' day lay a few miles south of the Old Testament city. Jericho was connected to Jerusalem by means of a 17-mile-long road that ran through a steep valley. Among the structures discovered there were Herod the Great's winter palace and a hippodrome (stadium for horse races and other spectacles).	Herod the Great was king when Jesus was born (Matthew 2:1-12). Jericho was the city where Jesus encountered Zacchaeus, a tax collector (Luke 19:2-10). Jericho is also the setting of Jesus' story of "The Good Samaritan" (Luke 10:30-37).
10. The Pool of Bethesda in Jerusalem Site of Jesus' healing of a paralyzed man (John 5:2-11), much of the remains of this pool have been unearthed since 1956.	At right are the ruins of what was the Pool of Bethesda. Portions of the five porticos (roofs supported by columns) mentioned in the Gospel story have been found and can be seen by visitors today.	 <small>John 5:2 (NIV) says, "Now there is in Jerusalem near the Sheep Gate a pool, which in Aramaic is called Bethesda and which is surrounded by five covered colonnades."</small>

	Archaeological Find	Description of the Find	Importance of the Find
Matt. Mark Luke John	11. Bethany, Where Jesus Raised Lazarus A village grew around the first-century AD tombs that once comprised Bethany's cemetery. Since early Christian times, one tomb has been said to be that of Lazarus.	By the AD 300s a church had been built over the tomb of Lazarus, with steps leading down into the tomb. Today visitors can still visit that ancient tomb and reflect on the great miracle Jesus performed there.	The village of Bethany is mentioned 13 times in the New Testament. Located on the east side of the Mount of Olives, only a short distance from Jerusalem, it was a favorite stopover for Jesus and the disciples when they came to Jerusalem. It was from Bethany's cemetery that Jesus raised Lazarus (John 11).
Matt. Mark Luke	12. The Pontius Pilate Inscription In 1961 archaeologists working at the ruins of Caesarea Maritima, in Israel, found a stone slab bearing the name of Pontius Pilate, who was involved in the trial of Jesus.	<i>Right: Portion of the stone, bearing Pilate's name, which commemorated his dedication of a temple to Emperor Tiberius.</i> 	This is the oldest appearance of Pilate's name to be found, and it dates to the time of Jesus. Luke 3:1 says: "Now in the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberias Caesar, Pontius Pilate being governor of Judea, and Herod being tetrarch of Galilee..."
Matt. Mark Luke	13. Caiaphas's Family Tomb In 1990 builders accidentally uncovered a first- century AD burial cave south of Jerusalem. Later, archaeologists investigated and found several stone boxes (called ossuaries) that contained human bones.	 <i>Left: The ossuary of Caiaphas, the priest who brought Jesus to trial. Ossuaries were used to store the bones of several generations of family members.</i>	Inside the stone boxes were the bones of two infants, a child, a teenager, a woman, and a man. One box had the name "Caiaphas" on it. The man's bones may be those of Caiaphas, the priest who brought Jesus to trial, mentioned in Matthew 26:57 and John 18:13-14.
Matt. Mark Luke	14. Crucifixion Evidence In 1968, the bones of a young man who had been crucified during New Testament times were found in the Jerusalem area. The bones were found in a stone box bearing the name "Yehohanan."	A 7-inch-long nail was still embedded in the heel bone. 	This find shows gruesome evidence of how the Romans crucified persons such as Jesus. Luke 23:33 NIV says, "When they came to the place called the Skull, there they crucified him [Jesus], along with the criminals—one on his right, the other on his left."
Matt. Mark Luke	15. Rolling Stone Tombs At several places in modern Israel there are examples of the type of tomb in which Jesus' body was placed after the Crucifixion. Mostly cut into the sides of hills, each used a large circular stone to cover the entrance.	Inside the tomb is a central room, called an antechamber, and as many as six to eight burial shafts. After the bodies decayed, the bones would be removed from each shaft and placed in a covered stone box (called an ossuary) in the central room. The photograph at right was taken from inside the tomb, looking out past the rolling stone and up the steps.	At right is a tomb with a rolling stone entrance. The curved edge of the stone is on the right. Tombs were mostly cut into the sides of hills and used a large circular stone to roll in front of the entrance. Matt. 27:60; 28:2; Mk. 15:46; 16:3, 4; Luke 24:2. 
Matt. Mark Luke John	16. Jesus' Burial Place, the Tomb of Joseph of Arimathea Two different places in Jerusalem have been suggested as the site of the tomb from which Jesus arose. Most archaeologists believe that the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, built around AD 340, stands over the site of the tomb.	 Archaeology in and around the Church of the Holy Sepulchre has revealed a rock quarry from the end of the Old Testament era. Tombs had been cut into the quarry wall during the first century AD. The other proposed site for the tomb is the Garden Tomb, or "Gordon's Calvary."	Archaeology in the Garden Tomb area has turned up tombs of the type used during Old Testament times, with some having been reused between AD 400-600. Evidence from both locations may shed new light on the search for this all-important Christian site. Matthew 27:57-60, Mark 15:45-46, Luke 23:50-53, and John 19:38-42 refer to the tomb of Joseph of Arimathea.
Palestine and Trans-Jordan			
Matt. Mark	17. Limestone Ossuary of James In 2002 a limestone box from the first century AD with the words "James, son of Joseph, brother of Jesus" inscribed on it in Aramaic was found in a private collection in Israel. Matthew 13:55 and Mark 6:3 refer to James, brother of Jesus.	 <i>The James ossuary was on display at the Royal Ontario Museum from November 15, 2002 to January 5, 2003. Scholars disagree about whether the patina (a film that develops over centuries on stone) in the incisions of the inscriptions chemically matches the patina elsewhere on the ossuary. The history of this ossuary is in debate, as is its authenticity.</i>	The inscription on the box may be the oldest tangible link to Jesus. Of hundreds of these ossuaries, only one other mentions a brother. Scholars suggest that either the brother was responsible for the burial or was prominent. By the AD 60s when James was stoned for his devotion to Jesus as the Messiah, Jesus was prominent, and James was head of the church at Jerusalem.
Matt. Luke	18. Herodium, King Herod's Palace Josephus wrote that Herod was buried at his 45-acre palace, called Herodium, about two miles southeast of Bethlehem.	<i>In 2007, archaeologists unearthed several fragments of an ornately carved sarcophagus. The sarcophagus is likely the tomb of King Herod.</i> 	Matthew 2:19-20 tells of the death of King Herod while the young child Jesus was in Egypt. Matthew 2:1-16 and Luke 1:5 also refer to Herod.
Matt. Mark Luke John	19. The Madaba Mosaic Map This mosaic map of the Holy Land was made about AD 560 to serve as the decorative floor of an early church located near the Dead Sea in modern Jordan.	 <i>Portion of Madaba mosaic map</i>	This oldest map of the Holy Land yet found shows the locations of dozens of places where important Biblical events occurred.
Matt. Mark Luke John	20. The Galilee Boat When drought caused the waters of the Sea of Galilee to recede in 1986, residents of a village on the northwest shore found a boat buried in the mud. Later it was removed and restored.	Coins and pottery found with the boat date to New Testament times. The only such boat ever found, it shows what the boats used by Jesus and the disciples were like. 	<i>Right: The prow of a boat similar to those used by Jesus and his disciples. (Matthew 8:23; Mark 1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 8; Luke 5, 8; John 6:22)</i>

Archaeological Find				Description of the Find		Importance of the Find	
John	21. Tiberias, Capital City on the Sea of Galilee	Herod Antipas (one of Herod the Great's sons) founded Tiberias in AD 18 as the capital of Galilee. He was involved in Jesus' trial.		Left: Synagogue floor preserved in Tiberias.	Although Tiberias is mentioned only once in Scripture (John 6:23), it was an important city of the area where Jesus probably carried out much of his ministry.	John the Evangelist	
Matt. Mark Acts	22. Caesarea Philippi	The modern city of Tiberias stands today over much of the ancient one. However, excavations in 1973-74 revealed two large round stone towers on either side of the main gate dating to the city of Jesus' time.	A large palace was found which matches Josephus's descriptions of that of Herod Agrippa II, a descendant of Herod the Great. Herod Agrippa II was the governor of Galilee before whom Paul gave a defense of his faith (see Acts 26: 2-29).		According to Matthew 16:13-20 and Mark 8:27-30 Jesus and the disciples were near this city when Jesus asked them who people were saying he was. Peter said, "You are the Christ."	Gospels	Zur Rückseite
Acts	23. Caesarea on the Sea	Since the 1950s excavations have turned up most of Herod's harbor, as well as city streets, a theater, the marketplace, shops, aqueducts, temples, and private dwellings.		Excavations of Caesarea illustrate how important this city was in Jesus' and Paul's day.	Caesarea is where the Apostle Paul first won Gentile converts (Acts 10), and was the site of his imprisonment (Acts 23-26). It was also the home of the Roman governors, such as Pontius Pilate. The city began as Herod's dream and grew into Roman Palestine's major port and governmental center. King Herod Agrippa I was smitten of God in this theater (Acts 12:23).	Gospels	Zur Rückseite
Rev.	24. Megiddo (Church Inscription)	In 2005, a prayer hall was discovered outside of the Megiddo Prison. The floor of the prayer hall features a detailed mosaic floor with inscriptions that consecrate the church to "God Jesus Christ."		Right: This inscription on the mosaic floors consecrates the church to God Jesus Christ. The name of Jesus is identified as being sacred by a line placed above it.	The Bible teaches and the Christian Church has always upheld that Jesus is God (John 1:1-5, 20:28; Hebrews 1:6-8). This find verifies that the Christian Church recognized the divinity of Jesus as early as the third century.	Gospels	Zur Rückseite
Matt. Mark	25. Sepphoris, Metropolis of Galilee	Extensive excavations at Sepphoris have revealed that it was a sizable city built on a Roman plan.	Among the excavated ruins are a large theater, temples, public buildings, and a lavish palace with beautiful mosaics. Although Sepphoris was located only about three miles from Nazareth, it is mentioned nowhere in the New Testament.		Because Sepphoris was very near Nazareth, it is possible that Joseph and the young Jesus could have worked on building projects there. It was also the chief residence of Herod Antipas, who played a role in Jesus' trial in Jerusalem.	Gospels	Zur Rückseite
Matt. Mark John	26. The Ten Cities of the Decapolis	Archaeologists have located almost all ten cities (only the identification of Tell el-Ashari, in Jordan, with Dion remains indefinite). Enough archaeological work has been done to confirm that these were important and wealthy cities in Jesus' day.		Left: Beth Shean, also known as Sythopolis, one of the Decapolis. (Deca = 10; polis = city)	Two of the Gospels (Matthew 4:25, Mark 5:20, and 7:31) speak of the spread of Jesus' message among the people of the Decapolis, a league of ten cities where Greek language and culture flourished. One ancient writer lists them as Damascus, Abila, Scythopolis, Hippos, Raphana, Gadara, Pella, Dion, Philadelphia, and Gerasa. For many years the locations of only about half of the cities were known.	Gospels	Zur Rückseite
Jerusalem and the Temple of Jesus' Day							
Matt. Mark Luke	27. Herod's Palace and Pilate's Praetorium in Jerusalem	Since about AD 1100, some pavement north of the Temple Mount has been pointed out as the Praetorium, but archaeologists have found that it dates to about a century after Jesus' and Paul's time.	More recently, archaeologists have identified some Herodian walls, foundations and pavement near the present Jaffa Gate that conform to ancient descriptions of the Praetorium. These remnants can be found today in the vicinity of the Armenian Orthodox Seminary and what is called "the Citadel," or "David's Tower."		Eight passages in the New Testament refer to a place in Jerusalem called in Greek "the Praetorium." In those passages "Praetorium" has been translated as, "the palace courtyard," "the headquarters," "the governor's headquarters," "Pilate's headquarters," "Herod's headquarters," and "the place of the imperial guard." It is where Jesus was brought before Pontius Pilate (Matthew 27:27; Mark 15:16; John 18:28-33).	Gospels	Zur Rückseite
	28. The Jerusalem Temple of Jesus' Day (Herod's Temple)	Beginning in 1968 excavations commenced in the area of the south retaining wall of the Temple Mount in Jerusalem.	The work has uncovered much of this part of the Temple as it was in Jesus' day, including the southern gates and steps leading up to them. At right is the only step on the Temple Mount believed to be from Jesus' day.		It is unknown which entrance to the Temple Mount Jesus and the disciples used in Matthew 21, Mark 11, Luke 19-21, and John 2, 5, and 7. Luke 1:9 mentions the priest's custom of burning incense when he went into the Temple of the Lord.	Gospels	Zur Rückseite
	29. "Place of Trumpeting," Temple Inscription from Jesus' Day	In 1969 excavators removing debris from the southwest corner of the retaining wall of the ancient Temple in Jerusalem found a rectangular capstone from one of the Temple towers.		The "place of trumpeting" on the stone refers to the place where the priests blew trumpets announcing the beginnings of holy festivals (See Psalm 81:3 and Joel 2:15). This rare find brings to life the Temple rituals of Jesus' day.	Left: The Hebrew words carved into this Temple tower capstone say, "...to the place of the trumpeting."	Gospels	Zur Rückseite
	30. A Temple Sundial Relic from Jesus' Day	During excavations around Jerusalem's Temple Mount in 1972, excavators found a limestone sundial in a pile of debris left by the Roman army when they destroyed the Temple in AD 70.	Archaeologists discovered that the notches cut into the face of the sundial were carefully calibrated to tell the time and seasons based on the sun's movement in Jerusalem. Carved on its back is a seven-branched menorah (candelabra), like the large one in the Temple. The pile of debris bears testimony to the Roman destruction of the Temple.		Jesus said in Mark 13:2, regarding the Temple, "Not one stone will be left upon another that will not be thrown down" (Matt. 24:2; Luke 21:6). The calibrations on the sundial speak to the importance of correctly measuring both time and the seasons in the priests' performance of the Temple rituals.	Gospels	Zur Rückseite

Archaeological Find		Description of the Find	Importance of the Find
Acts Eph.	31. Fragments of a Warning to Gentiles from the Temple of Jesus' Day In 1871 a stone slab containing Greek writing surfaced in Jerusalem. In 1938 another slab similar to it was found just north of the Temple Mount. Both translate, "No gentile may enter within this Temple barrier! Anyone caught will be responsible for his own death."	 <small>Left: Stone slab with Greek writing gives warning that Gentiles should not enter the Temple. (In Acts 21:27-29 the Jews accused Paul of bringing Greeks into the Temple.)</small>	According to Josephus, a Jewish writer of the first century, these warnings were hung on a low wall that divided the public square of the Temple from the sacred inner courtyard that was accessible only to Jews. These rare finds from the Temple of Jesus' day shed light on the Temple regulations, and enrich our understanding of the importance of Ephesians 2:14, "For he [Jesus] is our peace, who has made us both one, and has broken down the dividing wall of hostility."
Mark Luke Hebrews	32. The Holy of Holies in the Temple of Jesus' Day Archaeologist and leading authority on the Temple, Leen Ritmeyer, has now found what appear to be the foundations of the walls of the Holy of Holies (the most sacred portion) of the ancient Temple.	 <small>The Temple was completely destroyed by the Romans in AD 70. Six centuries later the Muslims built a shrine called the Dome of the Rock on the vacant Temple Mount (right). Many scholars conclude that the exact location of the Temple can no longer be found. However, in the bedrock beneath the Dome of the Rock, trenches were discovered, cut into the rock. Photo shot from above.</small>	The trenches conform precisely to the dimensions of the walls of the Holy of Holies, as described in ancient Jewish writings. Finding the trenches that match the dimensions of the walls of the Holy of Holies could well provide the location of the events recorded in Mark 15:38 and Luke 23:45 (the veil of the Temple was torn in two from top to bottom when Jesus died). The Holy of Holies is mentioned in Hebrews 6:19, 9:3-11, 10:20.
Mark Luke	33. The Arch of Titus Carved in relief on the triumphal Arch of Titus, in the ancient Forum (public square) of Rome, is a scene of Roman soldiers on parade carrying the sacred items looted from the Temple in Jerusalem in AD 70. These items included the Table of the Showbread, the Menorah (Golden Lampstand), and a scroll of God's Law.		Between Christ's resurrection and the time when Christianity was spreading throughout the Mediterranean world, a cataclysmic event occurred—the Roman army, under General Titus, invaded Jerusalem. On the ninth of Av (a Jewish calendar month corresponding to June) in AD 70, the army destroyed both the city and the Temple, carrying away the sacred Temple items. In the ancient Forum in the city of Rome there still stands a triumphal archway commemorating the victory of Titus and his army. See Mark 13:2; Luke 2:16.
The Ministry of Paul			
Acts	34. Damascus, City of Saul's Conversion Located in Syria, modern Damascus covers most of the ancient city today. Limited excavations have revealed some of the city's Roman gates, arches, and even the remains of "the street called Straight," where Saul stayed during his sojourn in the city (Acts 9:11).	 <small>Left: Straight Street in modern Damascus.</small>	Though first mentioned in the Bible in Genesis 14:15, Damascus is important also in the New Testament as the site of the conversion and early witness of Saul (Paul), as recorded in Acts 9:1-25. This reference reveals that Saul stayed at a home located on the main east-west road, near the heart of the city.
	35. The Politarch Inscriptions Thirty-two inscriptions have been found that have the term "politarchs" ("city authorities"), and 19 of them come from Thessalonica. At least three inscriptions date from Paul's time.		Because the Greek term "politarchs" could not be found in existing ancient literature outside of the New Testament, some critics argued that Luke must have been mistaken in his use of the term in Acts 17:6. That passage speaks of some believers at Thessalonica being dragged by a mob before the "politarchs." At least three inscriptions date from Paul's time, showing that Luke was quite correct in this detail.
	36. The Areopagus at Athens 	 <small>Left: Areopagus (Mars Hill) in Athens, Greece</small>	Acts 17:19-34 gives the account of Paul's presentation of the Gospel before the Athenian administrative council, known as the Areopagus. The term "Areopagus" is Greek for "Hill of Ares (or Mars)." The council seems to have taken its name from the place where they met.
	37. The Gallio Inscription Archaeologists found a stone inscription at Delphi, in Greece, that mentions a Roman governor (proconsul) named Gallio of the province of Achaea.	 <small>This inscription contains a Roman date, corresponding to 52 AD. The name "Gallio" is highlighted.</small>	Gallio is the same governor referred to in Acts 18:12. The date on this inscription allows Bible scholars to know almost exactly when the Apostle Paul was ministering to early Christians in Corinth.
	38. The Bema at Corinth One of the most important New Testament archaeological finds from Corinth is the city's "Bema," a platform where officials addressed the public.	 <small>Left: Wall at right is the platform on which the Bema was built. Spectators stood about 7.5 feet below on stone pavement.</small>	In AD 51 the Apostle Paul was brought before the Roman governor Gallio at this platform in Corinth (Acts 18:12-17). The Bema was discovered in 1935. The identity of the Bema is certain because of seven pieces of an inscription found nearby.
	39. Ephesus, Jewel of Asia Minor 	 <small>Archaeology has recovered much of the city of Ephesus from Paul's day. The temple of Artemis, one of the seven wonders of the ancient world, has been located. Also found was the theater where Paul's companions were dragged during a riot of silversmiths resulting from Paul's preaching (Acts 19:23-41).</small>	This large city was the place the Apostle Paul stayed the longest during his missionary journeys (Acts 18:19-21 and 19:1-41). The letter to the Ephesians was written to the believers at Ephesus by Paul.
Romans	40. The Erastus Inscription In 1929 archaeologists found a paving stone near the theater of Corinth in Greece that contains Erastus's name, and notes that he was indeed a Roman public official there.	 <small>Writing from Corinth, the Apostle Paul passed along greetings from several Corinthian believers, including Erastus, the city treasurer or chamberlain (Romans 16:23). This find, with seven inch high letters, verifies Erastus's existence as a public official in Corinth just as the Bible says.</small>	 <small>Right: Erastus's name on paving stone. Foot at top shows size.</small>

	Archaeological Find	Description of the Find	Importance of the Find
Early Christianity in the Mediterranean World			
Acts	41. Antioch, Important Center of Early Christianity Artifacts found in Antioch (in Turkey today) reveal that the city had a population that was diverse racially and ethnically. It was an important crossroad in the immense Roman highway system. In New Testament times Antioch grew to be second only to Jerusalem as a large center of Christianity.	Excavations have shown that Antioch was a large Roman city in Paul's day covered today by the Turkish city of Antakya. 	Acts 11 and 14 recount the work of Paul and Barnabas in Antioch helping to build a Christian community made up of people from a wide variety of backgrounds. These finds help to explain why the establishment of the strong body of believers at Antioch played such a vital role in the future spread of Christianity throughout the entire Mediterranean region. <i>Left: Modern Antakya, Turkey</i>
Acts Phil.	42. Philippi, Where Paul First Preached in Europe Among the ruins at Philippi are numerous carved shrines to various Greco-Roman and eastern gods and goddesses. On top of the city's acropolis (highest hill) are the remains of ramparts (defensive walls) and a theater.		Located in northeast Greece, Philippi is where Paul preached his first sermon on European soil, and won a convert in Lydia, "a seller of purple" (see Acts 16:12-14). Paul wrote a letter to the Philippians. <i>Right: The Via Egnatia, an important east-west Roman highway that passed through this significant early seat of Christianity.</i> 
Acts 1 Thes. 2 Thes.	43. Thessalonica, Capital of Macedonia Located about 115 miles southwest of Philippi, along the ancient Roman highway known as the Via Egnatia, lies the city of Thessalonica. The Via Egnatia was an important east-west Roman highway that passed through this area.	Archaeological remains include the remnants of several early church buildings, a Roman triumphal arch, and some of the city's ancient walls. Little is seen here from the time of Paul because modern Salonika, the second largest city in Greece, covers the buried remains of Roman Thessalonica.	According to Acts 17:1-10 Paul visited here, preaching three times in the synagogue. He was subsequently expelled from the city. Still, he persisted in planting a church, and eventually wrote two epistles to the Christians there. Thessalonica went on to become an important center of early Christianity, with several churches.
Acts Rev.	44. "God Fearers" Inscriptions At the ancient sites of Aphrodisias and Miletus in modern Turkey, scholars have discovered two interesting inscriptions carved in marble and placed at ancient public buildings.	Each inscription contains the term "God Fearers" with reference to a group identified by outsiders as being a part of the Jews.	This term is much the same as what is found in Acts 13:16, 26, 43, and Acts 17:4, 17 where the meaning has puzzled scholars for a long time. The inscriptions show that the God Fearers likely were non-Jews who believed in the God of Israel.
Rev.	45. Seven Churches of Revelation Archaeological excavations have now been carried out at all seven ancient cities, and the work at Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamum, and Sardis in particular has been very extensive.		In Revelation 1:11 John is instructed by the Lord to send messages to seven churches in the Roman province of Asia, located in western Turkey today. Revelation 2 and 3 contain the messages addressed to the churches at Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamum, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia, and Laodicea.
Ancient Manuscripts			
	46. The Dead Sea Scrolls These finds, including both entire ancient scrolls and scraps of them, were found mostly in caves along the northwest shore of the Dead Sea. In 1947 shepherds found the first seven scrolls stuffed in ancient pottery jars in a cave.	Practically all of the Dead Sea scrolls are written in Hebrew and Aramaic. Among them are the oldest copies yet found of almost all of the books of the Old Testament. They date from between about 300 BC to AD 70. Also of special significance are the non-biblical documents, which reveal much about the varied nature of Judaism during the time between the Old and New Testament periods.	 <i>Right: One of the eleven caves in the Qumran area, about seven miles south of Jericho, where the scrolls were found. These scrolls were important for shedding light on the Bible.</i>
	47. Earliest New Testament Copy In 1920 a British traveler in Egypt acquired a small fragment of papyrus (a paperlike substance made from woven reed stalks). Later, scholars discovered that the writing on it was from the Gospel of John.	 <i>Left: An illustration of the oldest New Testament fragment yet found. The words on it are from John 18:31-33, 37-38. It was part of a codex dated AD 125. It is known as the John Rylands Papyrus and is in the John Rylands Library in Manchester, England.</i>	Because no originals of the biblical books have survived, scholars have relied on the finds of ancient copies to piece together the text of the Bible. The papyrus codex was likely copied within a generation of the original book of John itself.
	48. Oldest Copy of John's Gospel In 1956 the world learned of the existence of a copy of the Gospel of John that had been penned in Greek on papyrus sometime between AD 150-200.	Hailed as the oldest remaining copy of the majority of John's Gospel, about two-thirds of the text has survived the ravages of time. Swiss industrialist M. Martin Bodmer purchased it in Egypt, and later gave it to a museum.	This early copy has proved invaluable to Bible scholars and translators for helping to reconstruct the most accurate Greek text possible of the Gospel of John.
	49. The Oldest Complete Copy of the New Testament In 1844 New Testament scholar Konstantin von Tischendorf discovered the oldest surviving copy of the New Testament. He found it among the books belonging to a monastery that has stood at the foot of Mount Sinai since ancient times.	Known today as Codex Sinaiticus, this Bible was written on parchment around AD 350. This text is also known by the name "Aleph," the Hebrew letter "A." The other early key Greek text is Codex Vaticanus, also known as "B."	 Codex Sinaiticus has proved vital to scholars and translators in verifying the accuracy with which the New Testament has been reproduced across the ages. When new Bible versions refer to "most reliable texts," they are referring to "A" and "B."
	50. Greco-Roman References to Jesus Flavius Josephus, Jewish historian, wrote <i>Antiquities</i> (AD 93), which mentions both Jesus and his brothers. Tacitus wrote <i>Annals</i> between AD 115-117, which mentions Jesus' execution by Pilate.	<i>Antiquities</i> states "About this time arose Jesus, a wise man. For he was a doer of marvelous deeds, and a teacher of men who gladly receive the truth. He drew to himself many persons, both of the Jews and also of the Gentiles. And when Pilate, upon the indictment of the leading men among us, had condemned him to the cross, those who had loved him at first did not cease to do so. And even to this day the race of Christians, who are named from him, has not died out."	Tacitus's <i>Annals</i> state "Christus, from whom the name [Christians] had its origin, suffered the extreme penalty during the reign of Tiberias at the hand of one of our procurators, Pontius Pilate, and a deadly superstition, thus checked for the moment, again broke out not only in Judaea, the first source of the evil, but also in the City..."

50 Proofs for the Bible: New Testament

Arrangement of Events

The contents of this chart are generally arranged from the earliest events mentioned in the Bible to the most recent events.

Dates of Events (examples)

1st century AD = AD 1-100
2nd century AD = AD 101-200
10th century AD = AD 901-1000
13th century AD = AD 1201-1300
1st millennium AD = AD 1-1000
2nd millennium AD = AD 1001-2000

Reference Materials

Archaeology and the New Testament, Dr. John McRay.
Rose Publishing resources that will help in the study of this topic:

420 *Bible Time Line* pamphlet
306 *"Then and Now" Bible Map* book
302 *Holy Land: Then & Now* wall chart
304 *Paul's Journeys: Then & Now* wall map
305 *Where Jesus Walked: Then & Now* wall map
418 *Archaeology and the Bible: O.T.* wall chart
434 *Archaeology and the Bible: N.T.* wall chart
544 *Jerusalem at the Time of Jesus* wall chart
622X *50 Proofs for the Bible: Old Testament* pamphlet
621X *100 Proofs for the Bible* PowerPoint®

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Acknowledgments: Text by Professor Larry McKinney, Central Baptist Theological Seminary, Kansas.

Photos/art: British Museum, Zev Radovan, Gretchen Goldsmith, Dr. John McRay, Arvel Witte, Rick Humphrey, Paul Fisher.

Special thanks to Dr. John McRay, Wheaton College, and Michael Cochrane.

Cover: Erastus inscription, Politarch inscription, "Place of Trumpeting" inscription, Madaba Mosaic, Caiaphas's Ossuary, First century oil lamp.

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Formerly published as *Archaeology and the Bible: New Testament*.
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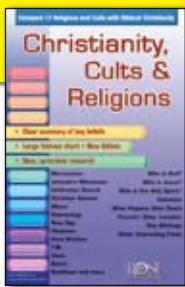
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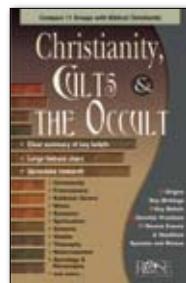
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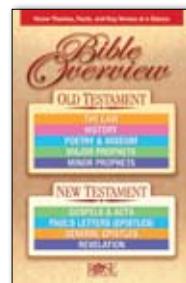
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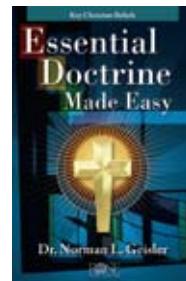
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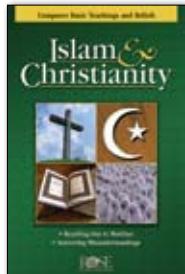
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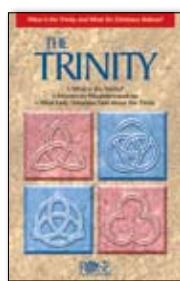
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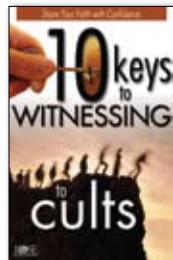
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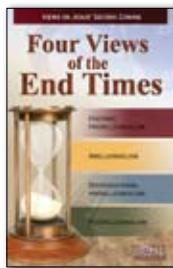
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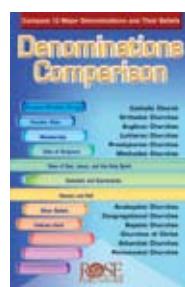
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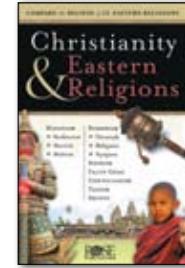
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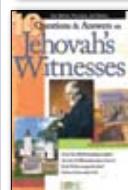
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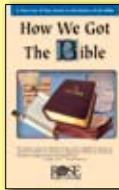


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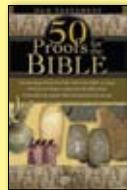
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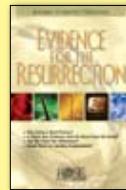
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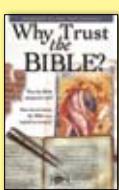
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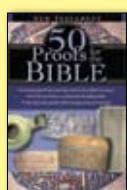
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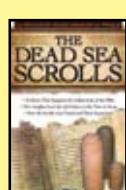
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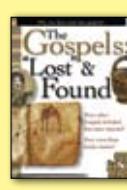
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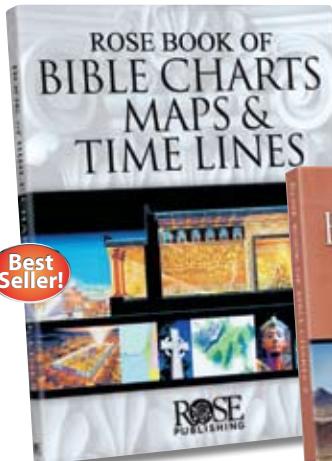
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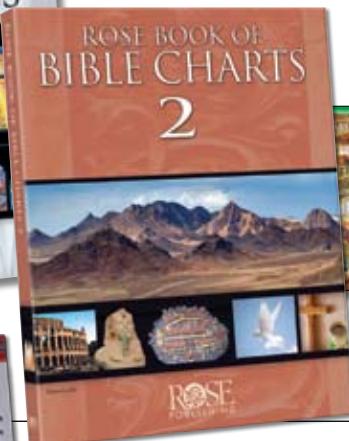
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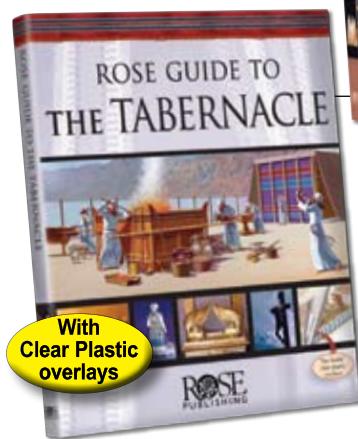
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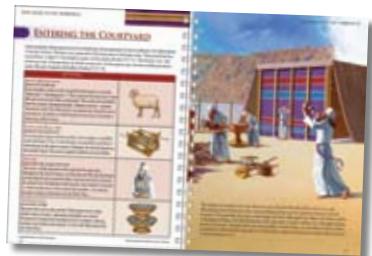
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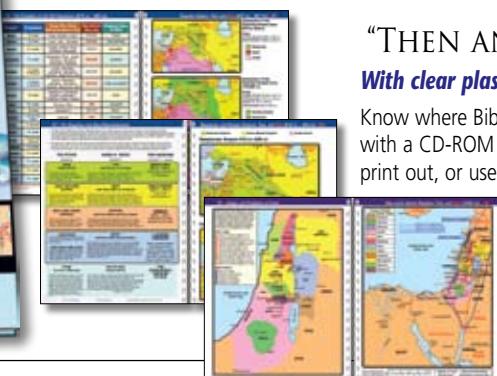
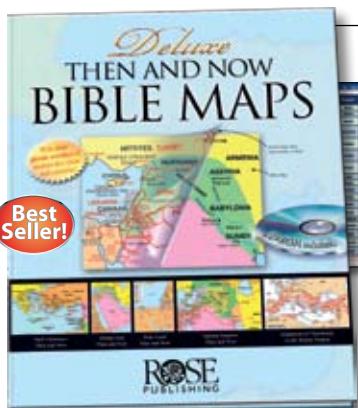
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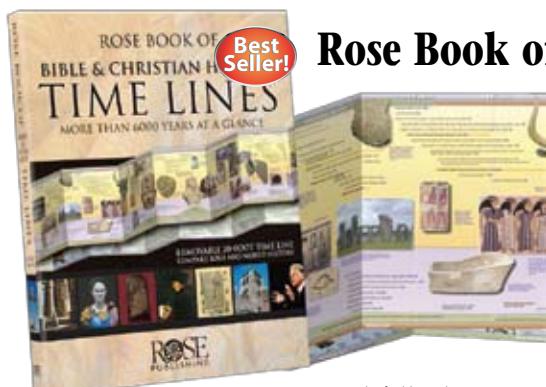
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