

Biblical Archaeology



So what is Archaeology?

- The word archaeology is derived from the Greek *archaio* (ancient, old) and *logos* (word, study): thus signifying the orderly arrangement of ancient things.
- “Archaeology is the study of the ancient and recent human past through material remains. It is a subfield of anthropology, the study of all human culture. From million-year-old fossilized remains of our earliest human ancestors in Africa, to 20th century buildings in present-day New York City, archaeology analyzes the physical remains of the past in pursuit of a broad and comprehensive understanding of human culture.”
 - Society for American Archaeology

Classic examples: 1) the Rosetta Stone



Classic example: 2) the Terracotta Army





So what is Biblical Archaeology?

- Biblical archaeology is a specialized branch of archaeology that is devoted to the gathering and classification of archaeological data that come from or relate to the areas included in the biblical world and the times pertinent to the biblical story.
- It seeks to gain more information from what remains of past civilizations, whether it be pottery, tools, household utensils, furnishings, ornaments, buildings, fortifications, coins, sculpture, paintings, mosaics, weapons, inscriptions, stonework and artwork, and other buried material that was once made or fashioned by man.

About the Biblical Archaeology Society:

- “The excitement of archaeology and the latest in Bible scholarship...”
 - The Biblical Archaeology Society (BAS) was founded in 1974 as a nonprofit, nondenominational, educational organization dedicated to the dissemination of information about archaeology in the Bible lands. BAS educates the public about archaeology and the Bible through its bi-monthly magazine, Biblical Archaeology Review, an award-winning web site, books and DVDs, and tours and seminars.
 - <https://www.biblicalarchaeology.org/>

5 Key takeaways from today's lesson:

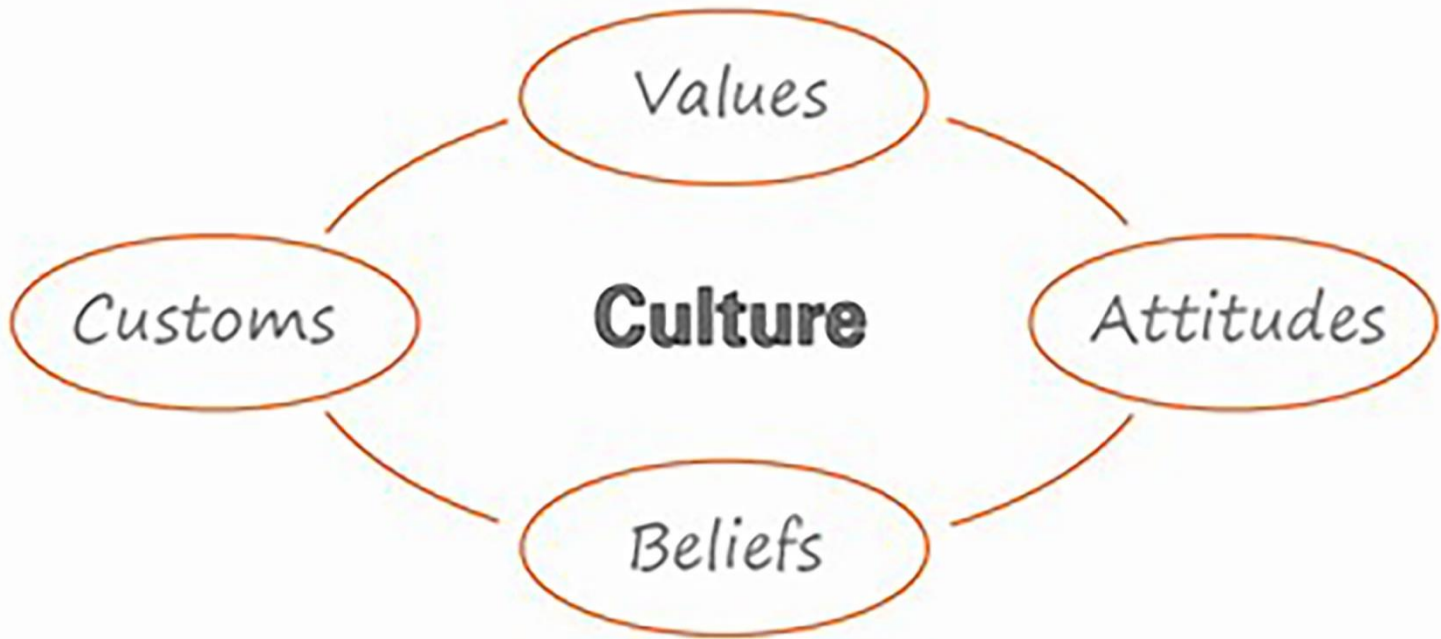
1. Real archaeology is not like Indiana Jones.



2. Biblical archaeology provides a better understanding of the cultures of the Bible.



3. Knowledge of biblical cultures helps us to better interpret the Bible.



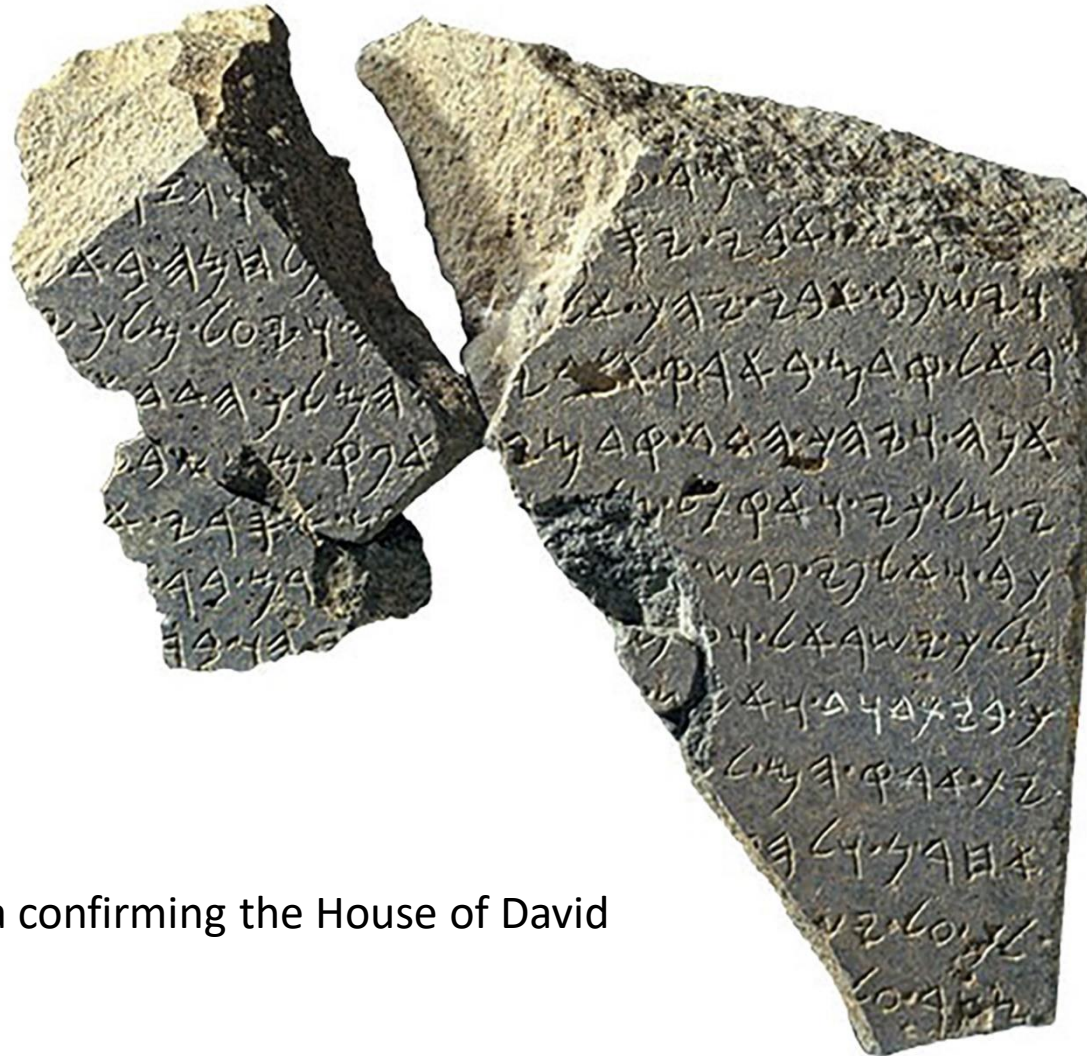
Example: Jewish dietary laws (kashrut)



4. Archaeology conveys a third dimension to the text.



5. Archaeology helps corroborate historical events and people.



The Tel Dan Stela confirming the House of David

NY Times – Front Page

From Israeli Site, News of House of David

By JOHN NOBLE WILFORD

Published: August 6, 1993

- An Israeli archeologist has discovered a fragment of a stone monument with inscriptions bearing the first known reference outside the Bible to King David and the ruling dynasty he founded, the House of David.
- Scholars of biblical history said this was strong corroborating evidence for the existence and influence of the House of David in early Jewish history and in the traditions of both Judaism and Christianity. In their excitement, they used words like "phenomenal," "stunning" and "sensational" to emphasize the importance of the discovery in biblical archeology.
- The broken monument, or stele, was found in the ruins of a wall at Tel Dan, the site of an ancient city in northern Israel near the Syrian border and at one of the sources of the Jordan River. The discovery was made this summer by Dr. Avraham Biran, an archeologist at Hebrew Union College and the Jewish Institute of Religion in Jerusalem and director of excavations at Tel Dan since 1966.

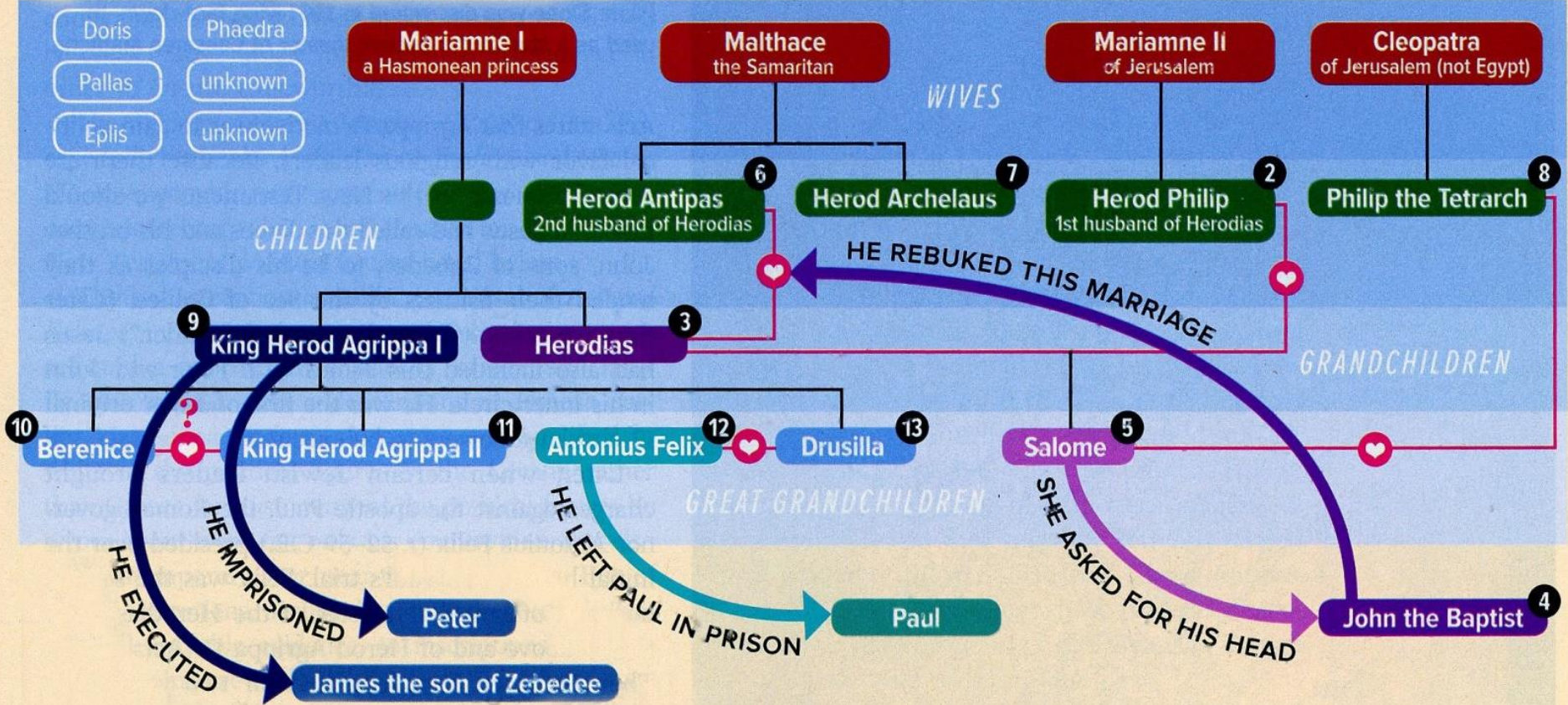
Herod the Great
Governor of Galilee (r. 47–37 B.C.E.)
King of the Jews (r. 37–4 B.C.E.)

Jesus
HE TRIED TO KILL

OTHER WIVES

- Doris
- Phaedra
- Pallas
- unknown
- Eplis
- unknown

Herod the Great's Family Tree



New Testament Political Figures Confirmed by Historical Texts and Archaeology

Name	Who was he or she?	When did he rule?	Where in the New Testament?	Sample of evidence in historical writings	Evidence in inscriptions	
Roman Emperors						
1	Augustus	Roman Emperor	31 B.C.E. –14 C.E.	Luke 2:1	Numerous	Numerous
2	Tiberius	Roman Emperor	14–37 C.E.	Luke 3:1	Numerous	Numerous
3	Claudius	Roman Emperor	41–54 C.E.	Acts 11:28; Acts 18:2	Numerous	Numerous
4	Nero	Roman Emperor	54–68 C.E.	Acts 25-26; 28:19	Numerous	Numerous

Herodian Family

5	Herod I, the Great	Rome's King of the Jews over all of Palestine.	37–4 B.C.E.	Matthew 2:1; Luke 1:5	Josephus, <i>Antiquities and Wars</i>	Coins
6	Herod Archelaus	Oldest son of Herod the Great. Ethnarch of Judea, Samaria and Idumea.	4 B.C.E.–6 C.E.	Matthew 2:22	Josephus, <i>Antiquities and Wars</i>	Coins
7	Herod Antipas	Son of Herod the Great; second husband of Herodias. Tetrarch of Galilee and Perea (Transjordan). He ordered the execution of John the Baptist.	4 B.C.E.–39 C.E.	Luke 3:1; Luke 13:31–32; Luke 23:7–12; Mark 6:14; Mark 6:16–28; Mark 8:15	Josephus, <i>Antiquities and Wars</i>	Coins
8	Herod Philip	Son of Herod the Great but not a ruler; Herodias's uncle and first husband; father of their daughter Salome.		Matthew 14:3–4; Mark 6:17–18; Luke 3:19	Josephus, <i>Antiquities and Wars</i>	(No coins because he was not a ruler)
9	Herodias	Granddaughter of Herod the Great; niece and wife of Herod Philip, mother of his daughter Salome; then Herod Antipas's wife. She brought about the order to execute John the Baptist.		Matthew 14:2–11; Mark 6:17–28; Luke 3:19–20	Josephus, <i>Antiquities and Wars</i>	(No coins because she was not a ruler)

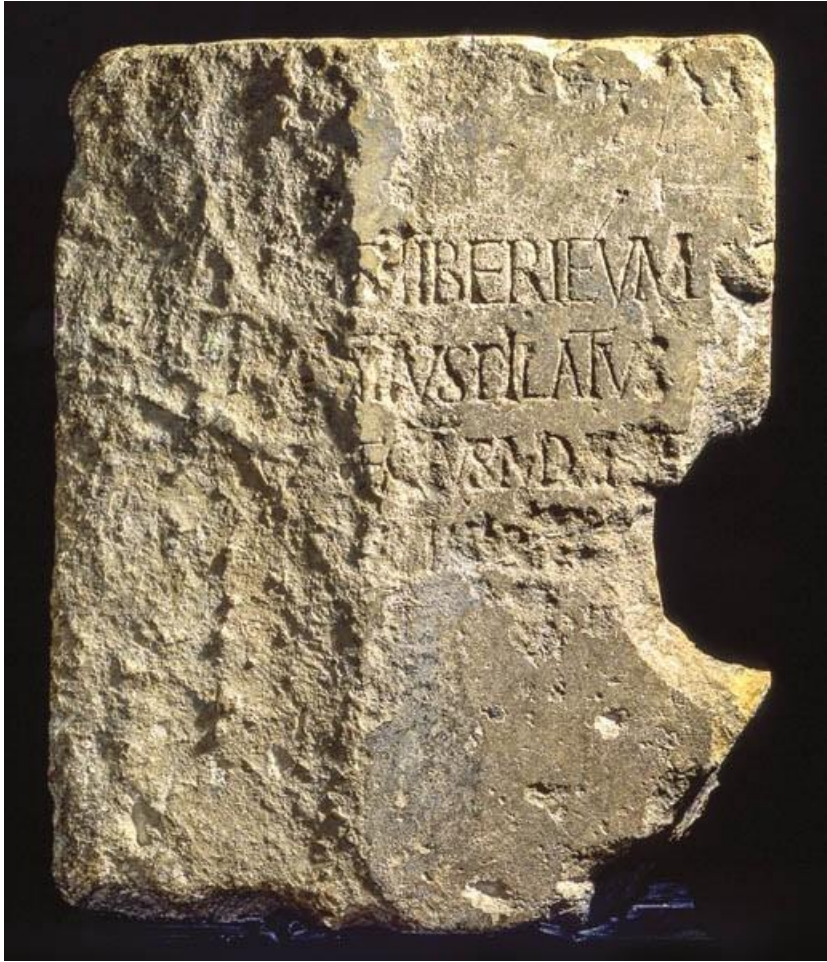
10	Salome	Herodias's daughter. Her dance led to the execution of John the Baptist. Grandniece and later wife of Philip the Tetrarch.		Matthew 14:3-12; Mark 6:17-29	Josephus, <i>Antiquities</i>	Coins of her second husband, Aristobulus, king of Chalcis
11	Philip the Tetrarch	Son of Herod the Great. Tetrarch of Trachonitis, Iturea and other northern portions of Palestine. Eventually husband of his grandniece Salome.	4 B.C.E. -34 C.E.	Luke 3:1	Josephus, <i>Antiquities and Wars</i>	Coins
12	Herod Agrippa I	Grandson of Herod the Great; brother of Herodias. King of Trachonitis, Batanea, gradually all of Palestine. Executed James the son of Zebedee and imprisoned Peter.	37-44 C.E.	Acts 12:1-6, Acts 18-23	Josephus, <i>Antiquities and Wars</i>	Coins

13	Herod Agrippa II	Son of Herod Agrippa I. Initially Tetrarch of Iturea and Trachonitis, then also over parts of Galilee and Perea, Chalcis and northern territories. Festus appointed him to hear Paul's defense.	50–c. 93 C.E.	Acts 25:13–26:32	Josephus, <i>Antiquities and Wars</i>	Coins
14	Berenice/Bernice	Sister and companion of Herod Agrippa II, rumored lovers. Attended Paul's trial before Festus.		Acts 25:13, Acts 23; Acts 26:30	Josephus, <i>Antiquities and Wars</i>	Inscription of King Herod Agrippa II in Beirut
15	Drusilla	Sister of Herodias and Herod Agrippa I; Jewish wife of Roman governor Felix.		Acts 24:24	Josephus, <i>Antiquities</i>	(No coins; not a ruler)

Roman Legate and Governors

16	Publius Sulpicius Quirinius (= Cyrenius)	Roman imperial legate brought in to govern Syria-Cilicia after Herod Archelaus's rule led to rebellion.	6–9 C.E. and possibly earlier	Luke 2:2	Josephus, <i>Antiquities and Wars</i>	The Lapis Venetus inscription discovered in Beirut
17	Pontius Pilate	Roman prefect of Judea who conducted Jesus' trial and ordered his crucifixion.	26–36 C.E.	Matthew 27:11–26; Mark 15:1–15; Luke 3:1; Luke 23:1–24; John 18:28–19:22	Josephus, <i>Antiquities and Wars</i> ; Tacitus, <i>Annals</i> ; Philo, <i>De Legatione ad Gaium</i>	Pilate Stone discovered at Caesarea Maritima; coins
18	Lucius Junius Gallio	Roman proconsul of Achaia who convened and dismissed the trial of Paul in Corinth.	c. 51–55 C.E.	Acts 18:12–17	Seneca, <i>Letters</i> ; Tacitus, <i>Annals</i>	Stone inscription discovered in Delphi, Greece
19	Marcus Antonius Felix	Roman procurator of Judea who held initial hearings in the trial of the apostle Paul.	52–c. 59 C.E.	Acts 23; Acts 24	Josephus, <i>Antiquities and Wars</i>	Coins
20	Porcius Festus	Roman procurator of Judea who conducted a hearing in the trial of Paul, during which Paul appealed to Caesar and was sent to Rome.	59–62 C.E.	Acts 24:27–25:27; Acts 26:24–32	Josephus, <i>Antiquities</i>	Coins

Archaeological Evidence: Pontius Pilate

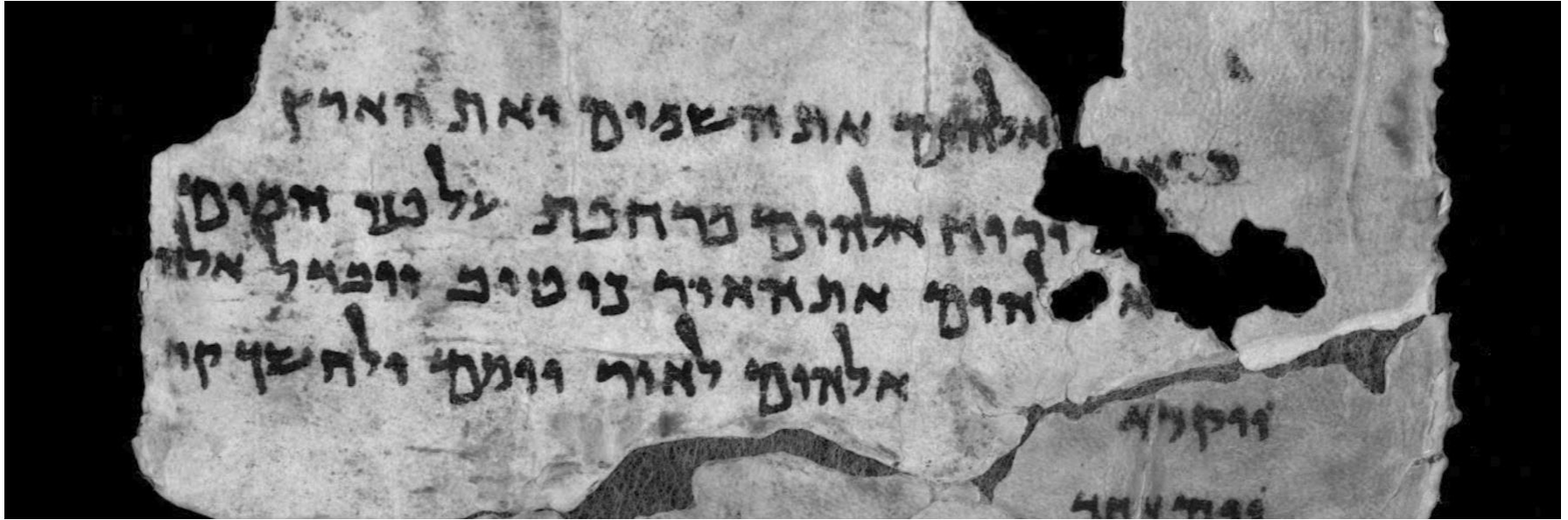


The Pilate Stone



Pilate Coins

The Dead Sea Scrolls



GENESIS

4Q Genesis⁸

Date: 100–1 BCE, Late Hasmonean Period

Language: Hebrew

Among the oldest known copies of Genesis, the fragment of the Scroll shown here contains the description of the first three days of the creation of the world.

“In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. And the earth was formless and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep; And the spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters.”

— GENESIS 1:1–2



Finally at Your Fingertips

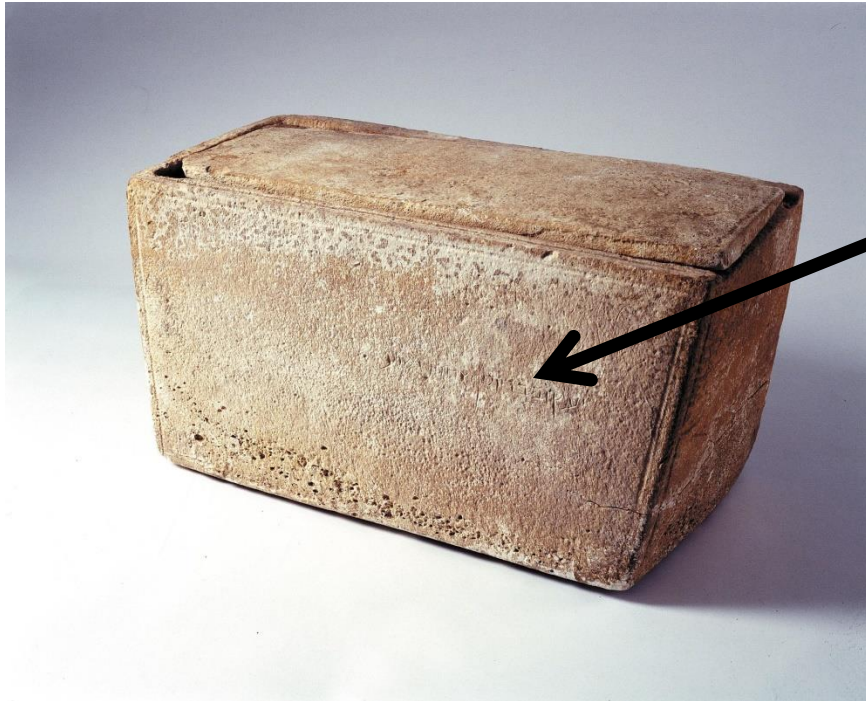
The Leon Levy Dead Sea Scrolls Digital Library offers an exceptional encounter with antiquity. Using the world's most advanced imaging technology, the Digital Library preserves thousands of scroll fragments, including the oldest known copies of biblical texts, now accessible to the public for the first time.

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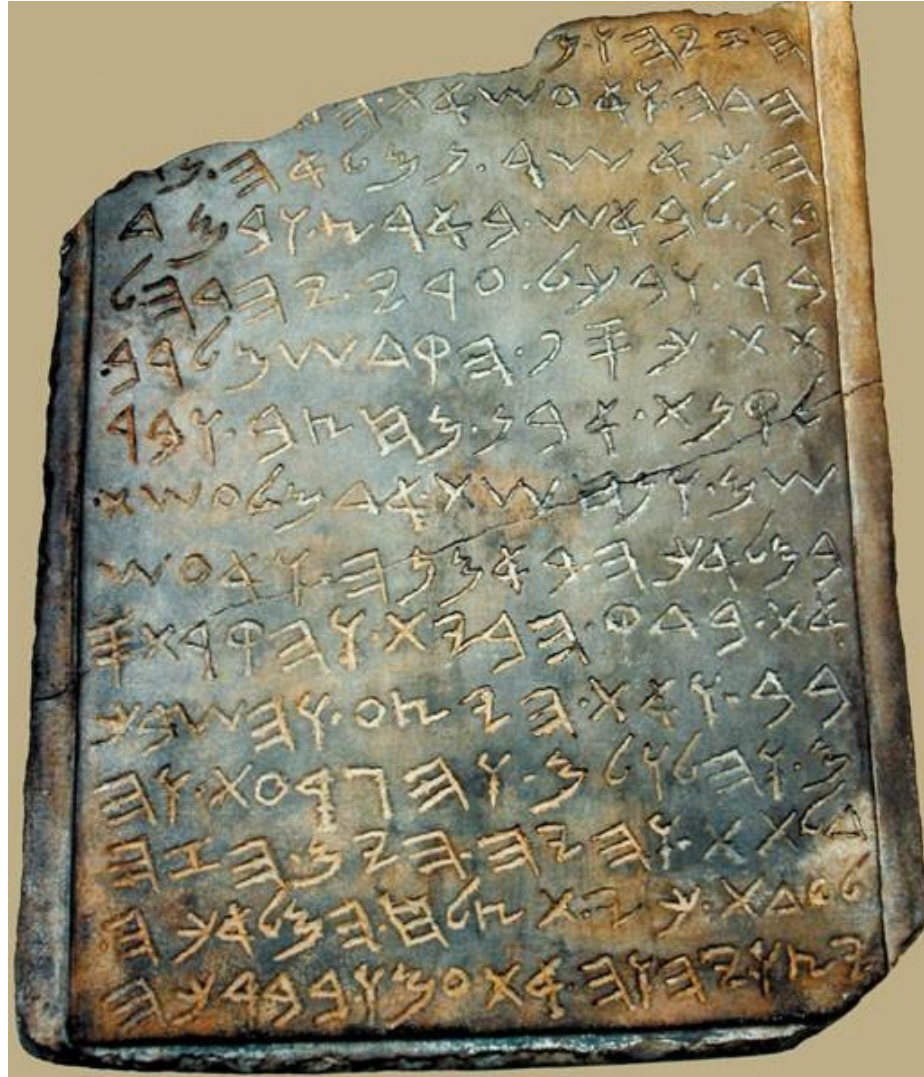
<https://www.deadseascrolls.org.il/home>

The James Ossuary – Real? Or fake?



The Aramaic inscription on the James Ossuary (burial box) reads "James, son of Joseph, brother of Jesus."

The Jehoash Tablet – Real? Or Fake?



The Ivory Pomegranate



If authentic, the famous inscribed ivory pomegranate may have been the head of a scepter from Solomon's Temple.



Provenance and Provenience

- Provenance is the chronology of the ownership, custody or location of a historical object.
- Provenience is used with a related but very particular meaning, to refer to the precise location where an artifact or other ancient item was found.
- An artifact may thus have *both* a provenience and a provenance.

Museum of the Bible – Washington D.C.

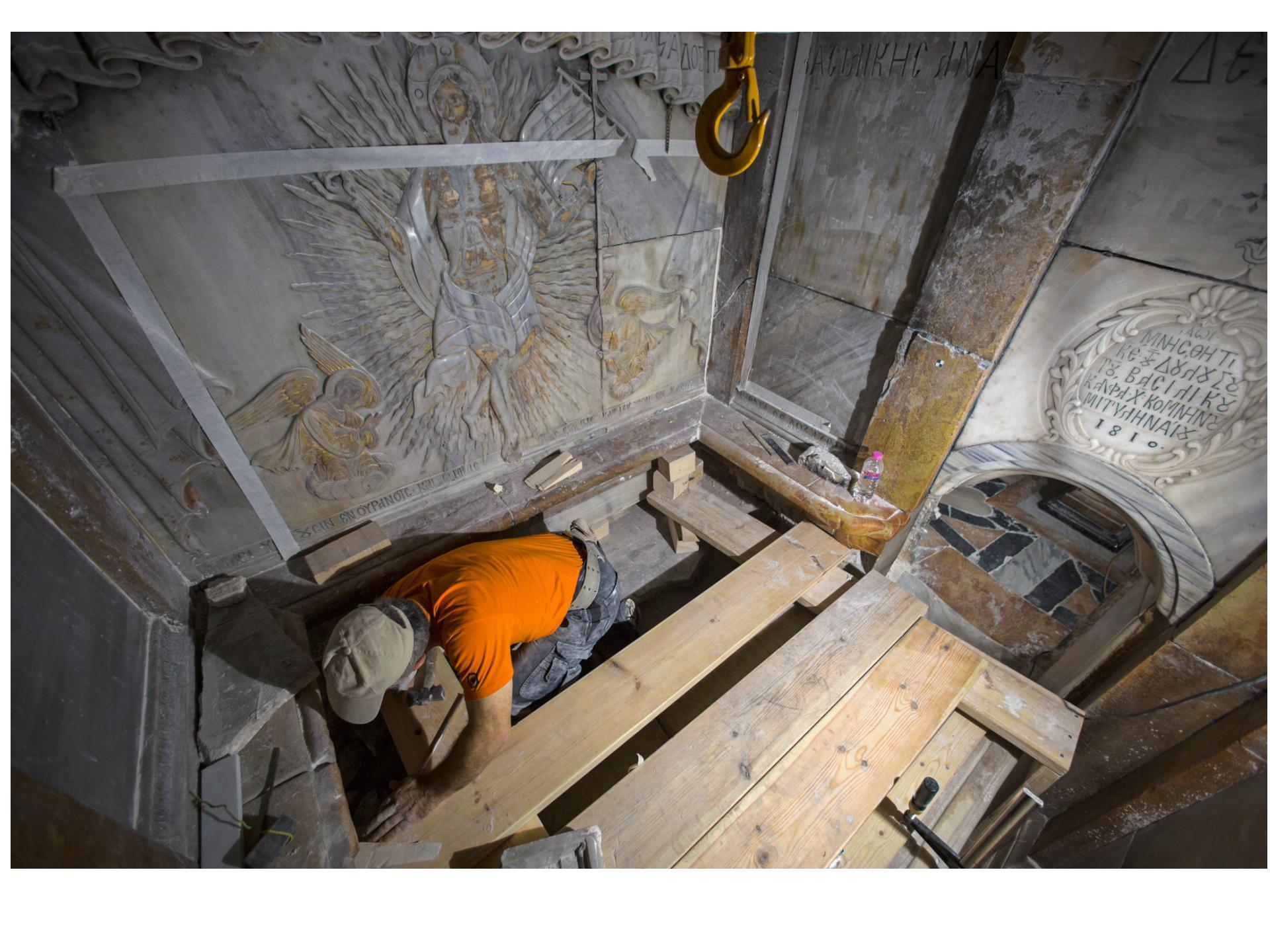


<https://www.museumofthebible.org/>

Church of the Holy Sepulchre









A restorer removes debris beneath a broken marble slab to expose the original rock surface of what is considered the burial place of Jesus.

PHOTOGRAPH BY ODED BALILTY, AP FOR NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC





Thank you! – Questions??

