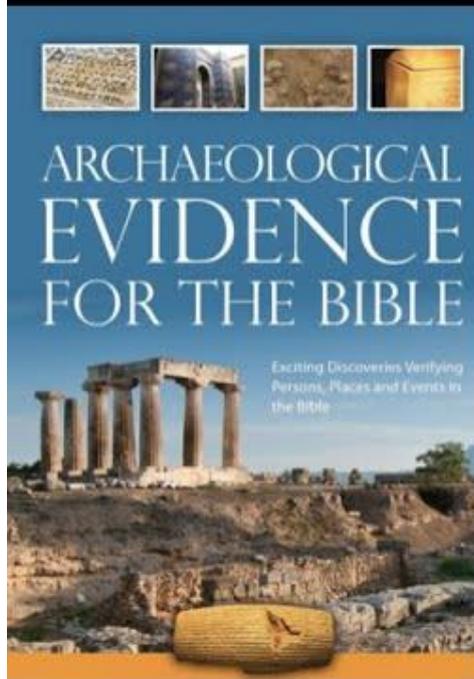


# EBI-01 - Biblical Archaeology - The Window Into The Past



## **UNDERSTANDING BIBLICAL ARCHAEOLOGY— God's Window Into The Past**

### BIBLICAL ARCHAEOLOGY

Elements of Biblical Interpretation-1

I would like to take you on a very exciting journey tonight. In fact, I remember the very first time that I had to sit through a seminary level, biblical archeology class. It was a sleeper, I'll tell you. I learned some good lessons there about how not to bore everybody to death. For one thing, it was all text and we never saw what we were talking about. Tonight, we're going to see what we talk about. Biblical archeology is just one of the elements that are a part, working together, helping us to interpret the Bible.

What I mean by that, there are two views of biblical archeology that are in Christendom. In fact, I won't be so bold tonight as to name the name of the Christian schools, but the Christian schools, colleges, universities, seminaries across the country in America lineup under one of two views of Biblical archeology. The first one is called the maximalist, and I would be a maximalist, which means that we believe that the Bible is flawlessly, inspired history. It's not an exhaustive history. It really only mentions China once. The word China is in the Bible, in Isaiah. It isn't talking about all the dynasties, the Ming and the Tang and the Qing and all these things. But anything it says about history is an eyewitness account from the only person you can trust your soul with. It's absolutely reliable. A maximalist is someone that believes that the Bible interprets the debris.

The minimalists are obviously the opposite. There are vast number of Christian schools in America that believe that if the Bible says one thing, and if an unsaved archeologist who has a predisposition, in every way, to think, there's no way the Bible could be true, and if he disagreed then the Bible is wrong. That's the minimalist view. I would be a maximal list view but let me show you how that involves biblical interpretation.

## BIBLICAL ARCHAEOLOGY

- The Bible's History is inspired, so it is the key to piecing together archaeological findings (maximalist view vs. Minimalist view).
- We piece together findings from archaeology, and then interpret them according to the eyewitness account God has given us.
- Only the Bible has an unchanging account of history past, present, and future.

First of all, the Bible's history is inspired, the key to piecing together the archeological findings. Do you remember that archeology digs down through layers of dirt? They pieced

together, did you know they get all these little pieces, and they have to fit them together. There's something that guides them in that. For the maximalist, it would be if the Bible says that an event in the Bible took place there, they're looking for evidence of that. They're looking for that to show up. If you don't think that the Bible is probably absolutely authoritative then you would, for example... recently archeologists has been digging in the city of David. I'll show you a picture of it in a few moments. That archeologist is a Jew and an unbelieving Jew, doesn't believe in Jesus Christ, but they were scorned by the entire archeological community. This archeologist, it's a woman, as she excavated in the city of David she said, I read in the book of 1 Samuel that King David built a palace just south of where his son Solomon built the temple. She said there is going to be a monumental palatial structure because it says it in I Samuel. Now, she's not a Christian, doesn't believe anything like we do. The archeological community just scoffed, and mocked, and carried on. Guess what? She found, 10 years ago, she found a palatial structure that exactly matches what the scriptures described. It was right where the Bible said it would be. Only the Bible has the unchanging account of history past, present, and future. All other histories, and I collect books and I have many books of historical content, they're constantly revising them. Constantly bringing the new findings. The Bible doesn't need any new findings because God just wrote it down correctly the first time.

- Everything happened some-where (that is Geography), and some-time (that is History); and when you combine those two ideas into the Land of the Book you get Biblical Archaeology (finding remains of where things happened and when).
- To God the single most important geographic location on Earth is where Christ was Dedicated by His parents, where He taught many of His key teachings, where He was Tried, Condemned, Crucified & Buried, where He Rose, where He Ascended, where His Church was born, and where He will Return at His Second Coming.
- That location for those seven key events to God, is Jerusalem.

Everything happens somewhere, that's geography. Have you ever thought about that? Everything happened somewhere. You localize where it happened and you have begun, I'm talking about human events on Earth, you have geo= Earth, graphy= writing. About what? The location of things on Earth. Everything happened somewhere and sometime. Everything happening sometime is history. It happened at a point. And it happened at a place. Bible geography is the place these things happen. Bible history is the, when it happened, that event that's talked about. When you combine those two ideas into the Land of the Book,

that's the lands where the Bible occurred, you get biblical archeology. Biblical archeology is just combining the geography of the Bible with the history of the Bible, and you find remains of where things happened and when. You know what's amazing? They all match up with the Bible and that affects our interpretation, because what we see in the archeology gives a visual to what our minds read. As we read these words you have, as you're reading, you have a picture in your mind, but then when you go there, that picture is enhanced or it's refined. It's just amazing.

To God, the single most important geographic location on Earth on Earth is where Christ was dedicated by His parents, where He taught many of His key teachings like John 10. A couple of weeks ago I told you exactly where Jesus taught because the Bible tells you exactly where Jesus taught, John 10, some of His good shepherd teachings. We know just where, not only historically that took place, but geographically where that took place. Biblical archeology is involved where He was tried, where He was condemned, where He was crucified, where He was buried, where He rose, where He ascended, where His church was born. We know right where the church was born, on a Sunday morning. We know exactly the day of the week the church was born on. It's the same day that Jesus rose from the dead only 50 days later. It's exactly beautifully laid out in the scriptures and where He will return in the second coming. That place where those seven key events are recorded in the Bible is the city of Jerusalem. To God Jerusalem is the center of redemptive history. Geographically, like the medieval maps, they used to put Jerusalem at the center of the world. Did you know that people talk about how archaic that is when they look at those maps, but did you know that shows a Theo-centricity, God centers His attention on Jerusalem.

In fact, the Psalm say that His throne is over that, that He is over for Jerusalem. In fact, I've told you this many times, we'll go into it when we go into biblical geography, but even the Hebrew words for directions are fascinating. The Hebrew word for, in front of, is the word that you'd see translated in the Bible as east. The Hebrew word speaks as if God is sitting on a throne in the temple or tabernacle looking out the door and in front of is the word east, behind His back is the word west, to His right hand is the word south, and to His left hand is the word north. God even gives directions based on this. It's just a fascinating understanding of the Hebrew language.

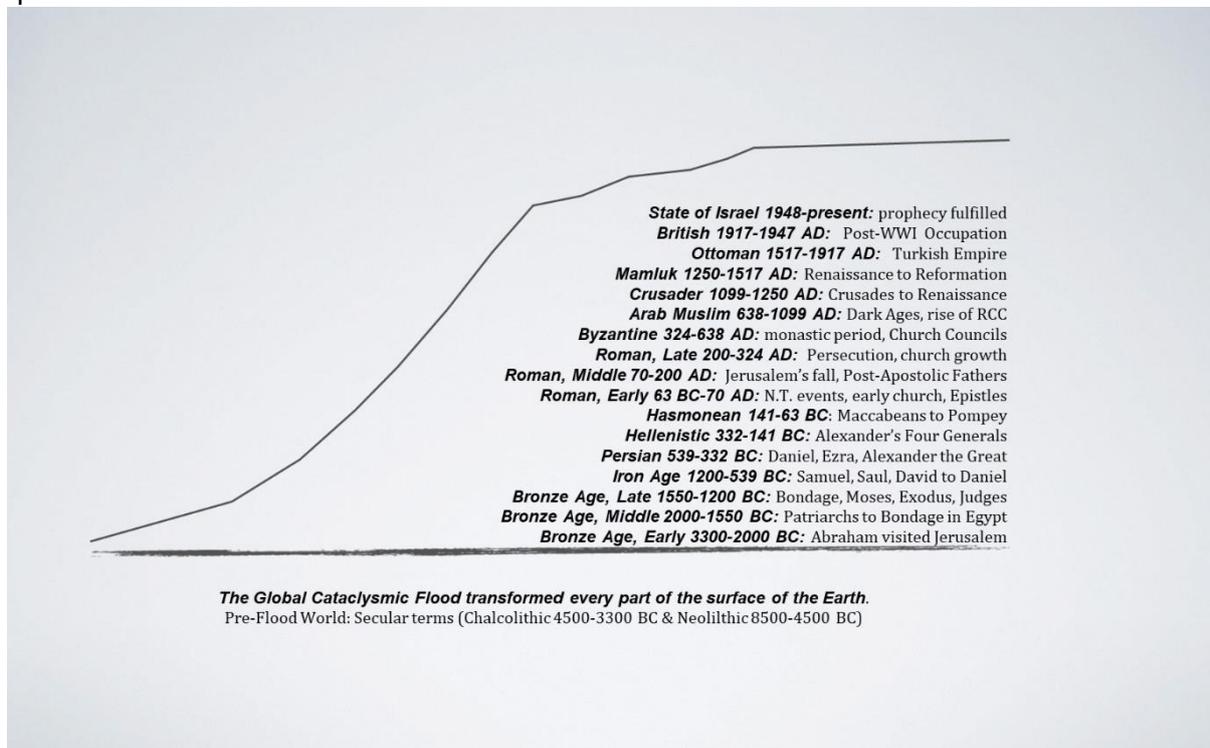
- So, to understand Biblical Archaeology: all of the Land of the Book, and especially Jerusalem, are very important.
- To explain simple Biblical Archaeology, we would take the Scriptures and apply the historical framework God's Word presents, and sort all of the various archaeological remains into their Biblical Context.
- To use Jerusalem as an example, the surface of the ground would be the present and then the deeper you go, the more levels of past Biblical History you would pass through.
- If we were to show Jerusalem's layers by recognized secular time periods it would look like this:

To understand biblical archeology, and all the Land of the Book, and especially Jerusalem are very important. To explain simple biblical archeology, we would take the scriptures, we would apply the historic framework God's word presents, we'd sort out all the various archeological remains into their biblical context because only the Bible is an eyewitness by someone that has no human bias. You understand that? All of us see things from our angle. That's why, if there's an accident, the police go around and they find a couple of friends of yours that showed up to try and help your insurance and then they talked to a few other people, because they're trying to not get a biased account. The only unbiased account are the scriptures.

To use Jerusalem, as an example, the surface of the ground would be the present and then the deeper you go, the more levels of past biblical history you'd pass through. If we were to show Jerusalem's layers by recognized secular scientist. Now, I'm just going to use and what I'm going to do is I'm going to explain the biblical events in the secular. For example, just this past July, I stood with a whole group from Calvary and from many other churches. We stood at the Scala Sancta, that's the steps Martin Luther climbed up on his knees. Remember when he came to faith in Christ? It's in Rome and that building is still there. As we stood there I said, would you all just look across the road. Do you see anything funny over there? They all looked across the road and they said yeah, it looks like the Washington monument. I said yeah, what is that? They said, we don't know, we came on the tour, you tell us. I said, that's the largest Egyptian obelisk ever taken out of Egypt. It weighs 483 tons, solid granite, and it's sitting over there. Why is it there? What's there? Pope Sixtus V. was showing off his power and he put it there. But did you know, the hieroglyphics are still on that thing. Egyptologists have looked over there and do you know who made that, the largest obelisk in the whole city of Rome, the largest one ever to escape from Egypt? The Pharaoh whose oldest son died. His second born son became the Pharaoh.

In Wikipedia, if you can trust anything out of Wikipedia, it says the Pharaoh that made that obelisk across the roads, the Laterano. If you ever heard of St. John and Laterano the church, that's the mother church of Rome, Saint Peter's is not. The Basilica of Rome is not the Vatican. It is Saint John and Laterano. That's the original place of the Roman Catholic church since the fourth century and it still is where the ex-cathedra seat is. That obelisk has nothing to do with the church or with Rome. It was built by the one who lost his firstborn son. Wikipedia tells you, and Britannica, and anybody else that the obelisk was built by a pharaoh that was alive in 1446, BC. The Bible tells you that's when the final 10th plague went through Egypt on a Friday night. They went out, it was on a Sabbath Eve and that's where Friday the 13th comes from. If you ever want to know, the whole idea. That was a very unlucky Friday for anybody that had a firstborn son. But secular, you can take the secular dates, like the Wikipedia date and you look at that date, and you look at that obelisk. As we stood there, we said the man that built that 483 ton thing, the one who looked God in the face, and mocked Him, and wouldn't let His people go.

q



me just get to this, this would be, let's put a house here. This is the surface of the Earth. This is a Samaritan's Purse house, right here. We just saw them build it. Here it is sitting on the ground. The one you saw was on a slab. If you were in Jerusalem, that dirt would be part of the 1948 onward, prophecy fulfilled, state of Israel. Did you know that under it would be layer after layer, after layer, after layer of continuous habitation. Jerusalem has been built and rebuilt, and destroyed and rebuilt, and destroyed and rebuilt, destroyed and rebuilt, 30 plus times.

Now, this is secular dating, they're real small, and I'll just tell you the British were there from 1917 to 47. The Ottomans were there from the time of Martin Luther through World War II.

The Ottomans, that's another word for the Ottoman Empire, which is Turkey. Turkey was the big player in the Middle East. They're coming back by the way; they're hoping to revive their empire. The Mamluk's were Egyptian Moslems and they swept through Jerusalem. They controlled it from after the Crusades through the time of Martin Luther. The Crusaders, the misguided Christians in name only, the crusaders really weren't a good thing. If you've ever read all the Crusades, it was a real strange period of time. What the Crusades did is, the Crusade conquered the church of the Holy Sepulchre and other parts of Jerusalem back in 1099. But what really happened, most of us should be very thankful for the Crusades, they went back to medieval dark Europe with spices, with medicines, with literature, with manuscripts, with scientific insights that the European had lost in the Dark Ages. The Romans had known all this stuff, but the dark ages and the decline of Europe and the rot that Europe had gotten into just got very, very dark. They came back from the Holy Land with all this stuff which spurred, if you know anything about history, the Renaissance, which went into the Reformation.

The Arab Muslims are the level below that. The Persians came in 638 and they stayed until they were driven out by the crusaders. The Byzantine's, most people don't even realize Byzantine is Rome in the east. The Roman Empire was a western empire. If you're looking at a map, the western side was Rome. The eastern side was Constantinople. This side remained the Byzantine side, stayed there was a Roman emperor sitting on a throne in Constantinople, when Christopher Columbus was alive. That's how long the Roman Empire lasted. The Roman Empire declined or ended in 1453, AD, and it started in 1776, BC. 2200 years, Roman. It's just an amazing long period of time, but the eastern empire is this Byzantine empire. This is a very important thing to us. This is not only the monastic period, this is when all the church councils formed. Did you grow up in a church that quotes the Chalcedonia creed, or quotes any of the great creeds of the church? Those are from councils. Those councils were all sponsored during the Byzantine period and much of the events circulated around the Holy Land.

If you dug down through the dirt under your house in Jerusalem, you would be going through these layers, you'd hit the Byzantine. Then there's the Roman period time of persecution and when the church really grew. Then you would get down to the time of the fall of Jerusalem and AD 70, that's when the post apostolic fathers lived, the people that are so critical to understanding the early church. Then, Rome. This is the occupation during Christ's time. That's a whole period of time you dig through, but it keeps going. That's the problem with digging anything in Jerusalem, under it is something older, something amazing. The Hasmoneans or the Maccabees. The Hellenists, that's Alexander the Great. The Persians as in Iran, which is the whole Persian period, that's the time when Darius the Mede and all that; that's the time of Daniel, Ezra, and Alexander the Great.

Before that is what's called in secular history, by the way these are all secular, these are not in the Bible. These are secular titles. The Iron Age is from the time of the Judges through the time of Daniel. Samuel, Saul, David to Daniel, what is called the Iron Age in archeological terms. The Bronze Age has three parts: late, middle, and early.

This one is when this obelisk, I told you about, is from. That's from the time of, it's just after actually... the obelisk would be from right here, but this is the time of the bondage. Moses, the Exodus, and the Judges are all in this period of time. The patriarchs to the bondage in Egypt. Then finally, Abraham visiting Jerusalem.

All of that but look at this. We know, do you see this black line? That's when God flooded the whole Earth. So, nothing survived that was prior to the flood. Did you know the pyramids have to be this side of the flood, they couldn't have survived a global flood. They're hardly surviving the sandstorms; they're falling apart as it is. They were not in a global flood that totally changed the whole topography of the surface of the planet. Maximalists, believe this line. They believed that God erased, and buried, and squashed, and crushed all other civilizations, and there's nothing standing on this world that they are finding, in any archeological digs of the surface layers, that is from before the flood. There is no pre flood civilizations that are find-able. There are bones and dinosaur bones and everything else from the flood time, but this period of time is buried under, sometimes, a mile of flood debris. Remember, the Grand Canyon was laid down and then formed with the great basin of water that was in North America, and all the volcanism, but I'm not doing the flood tonight.

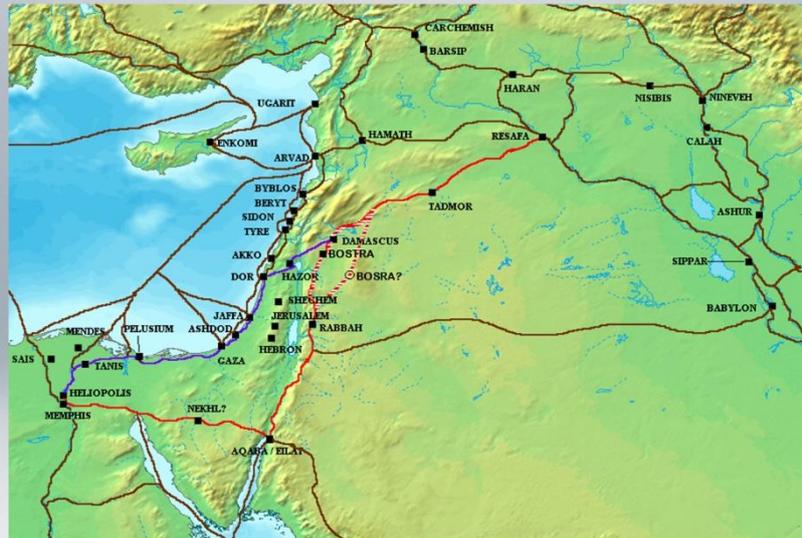
If you were in Jerusalem, this is a dig. Archeologists, what they do is they start digging away the dirt, trying to get down to see all of the ages. That's what they've done in Jerusalem. Let's see, what have they found?

## BIBLICAL ARCHAEOLOGY HELPS US SEE THE PAST

- God's Word describes 2,938 **people**;
- God's Word describes hundreds of **places**; and
- God's Word describes countless **events**.
- All are **SEEN more clearly**, and the implications of what happened are clearer when seen through the lens of Biblical Archaeology.

Biblical archeology helps us see the past. God's word tells us about, almost, 3000 different people. God's word describes several hundred places by name, geographic points, countless events, and then it links the people, the places, and the events together, and all are seen

more clearly and the implications of what happened when you look at them through the Bible. That's what I'd like to do with you tonight.



## ANCIENT TRADE ROUTES

Just for a second take your Bible and let me really quickly, before we go tonight, I'm going to show you a few examples. Look at Genesis 11, we'll start in Genesis and I'm going to show you how you can interpret the Bible because of truths that correspond with archeology. Chapter 11 of Genesis, and it says, verse 31 at the end of the 11th chapter, *"And Terah took his son Abram and his grandson Lot, the son of Haran, and his daughter-in-law Sarai, [...] and they went out with them Ur of the Chaldeans to go to the land of Canaan."* Here is Ur of the Chaldeans and here's the land of Canaan. There's two ways it could've gone because this is a vast desert. Todd Aaron would never have crossed it because remember he said he can only be seven miles from a Starbucks. There are no Starbucks between there, at all. There is one trade route, that's very treacherous, that's known. If you know where the oasis are you can make it from place to place, but the majority of people followed what is called the Fertile Crescent. They went up like this following the more watered, more civilized area. Most likely what Abraham did is, he followed this trade route. You see, these red lines are the trade caravan routes. Everything in the Bible follows these caravan routes. This one most likely is the one that Abraham would have come down on. He temporarily stayed up here in Haran and then he would have gone up like this, came back down, and he came into the land, coming down. In fact, Shechem right there, is one the places that's mentioned in the Bible. Look what it says, Terah died up here in Haran, they came from Ur, they followed the trade route, went up there. Verse 1, the Lord told Abraham to go. Abraham does take off and he goes to verse 6 of chapter 12. He goes right here, Shechem. He followed that trade route down and went right down there to Shechem.

Now you say, what does that have to do with interpreting the Bible? Let me show you a few things. It's so interesting. What else are on these trade routes? The trade route here in Damascus, this is the city of Damascus that's having all the fighting right now, the trade routes split off and goes by the water. This is called, if you've ever heard, Via Maris. Mare is the sea. That is the Via Maris. It's one of the most important roads of the ancient world. This one is called the King's Highway and it went down, they could take shipping and all this. This one is the King's Highway, and this is the Via Maris. Do you know what's so interesting? When this comes down right here, this Via Maris, when it goes from Damascus right there where that circle is, it has to go into a narrow pass that skirts along the shore of the Sea of Galilee. There was always a tax booth right there in the middle of that circle, where the Via Maris came across there. It was at a city called Capernaum and Matthew sat there at that tax booth. Why did Jesus make Capernaum His town in the New Testament? Because anything that anybody heard in Capernaum would go to the ends of the Earth. It would go down all these trade routes because this was a crossroads, where those trade routes met. Actually, there's one that swung under the lake too. The ancient trade routes are where the gospel message and where the biblical characters followed those routes.



We're going to get this more in biblical geography, but during the period from the Judges in 1200 BC through Samuel, about 1,050 BC, this is what Israel looked like, the tribal areas. You notice this is the Jordan river right there. Do you notice how much of Israel is in modern day Jordan? How much of the promised land is in the West Bank? Did you know when people say West Bank, this is called the West Bank. Do you know what Christian should say? The West Bank of the Euphrates, because God gave them all the way up into what would be the region that would be on the Euphrates. He didn't give them just this little strip from the Jordan river to the Mediterranean, they had over here. David extended it out that way.

# ISRAEL: SAUL TO DAVID



Real quickly, let's do Saul to David, the United Kingdom. It was the same. David extended it in his conquest much beyond that.

# ISRAEL: 830BC



By the time of Jeroboam, 830 BC is Jeroboam II, when Israel was under its divided state. This is the Northern Kingdom and the Southern kingdom. This is Judah, the good guys that didn't become calf worshipers. This is Israel, the Northern Kingdom, and the dividing line.

Jerusalem is right there on the northern part of Judah. This is what it looked like during all that you read about in I and II Kings, and that whole period of decline.



## HIGH PLACES: GESHUR GALILEE

Now, this is fascinating and I won't go into it too much, you can't see this slide very well, but if you could see it, there's something here. It looks like a tombstone. If you can see, there's another one right there; it looks like a tombstone. You can't see it very well, but there are steps going up. This is a gate to a city, Geshur. This is where Absalom's mother was from. It's also in the New Testament, this city is called Bethsaida. That should bring bell, that's where Peter and Andrew were from. Peter and Andrew were from the same city that Absalom's mother was from. But you say, who cares? This is fascinating, this corrects so many of our misconceptions.

These things that look like tombstones, that thing right there, those are high places. Did you know, when you read the Bible, it's always talking about... and the high places were not removed... and the high places were not removed. Did you know? I read the Bible for years before I ever took the time to figure out what a high place was. I thought it was like Mount Everest, they were building something up on mountains. A high place was a little elevated, to step up, little shrine. You can't see it, but there's this little god right here. It looks like that who is a representation of the fertility, and rain, and crop god. You would live in the city on your way out to work your fields. If you wanted your sheep to have little ewes and if you wanted your cattle to calve, you would tip your hat, throw a tip, put a little fruit on that thing for good luck, because this was the god that made animals have young and made your crops grow. These little shrines were set up everywhere in Israel because the people wanted the best of both worlds. They had this invisible God that was so rough on them with all His rules and then they had the local gods that all the natives and the inhabitants of the land said, this god will make your crops grow. The people want to hedge both sides. This is an

example of how every Israelite city during the kingdom time had these little shrines. Once in a while you hear about people like Josiah, Hezekiah, breaking all these things down. In fact, what you also can't see is both of them are broken. Both of them were purposely, intentionally broken, probably during Josiah and Hezekiah's reigns. That's just a fascinating little site.

# PAUL'S CONVERSION

ACTS 9:11

Let's go to Acts 9:11 and really quickly, we have about 15 minutes, I want to start showing you some of the interpretational helps that biblical archeology gives us. Acts chapter 9, verse 11. *"The Lord said to him, 'Arise and go to the street called Straight.' "* Oh, so he just typed into his smartphone, Straight. You know, that's the name of a street, right? Like Elm, Pine, Washington Avenue. Go to Straight Street. And you know what, there's really no doctrinal implications of knowing what Straight means, but there are a lot of practical applications of knowing what it means.

# STREET CALLED STRAIGHT?

- What would that mean, if anything? Without digging down to that time we'd not really know.
- It was the Main Street of the Roman World.
- Every city had one.
- They were the main north-south axis.
- They were called the *Cardo* (Greek for "heart")

The street called Straight. What would that mean, if anything? Without digging down to that time, we don't really know. But what you find when you dig is it was the main street of the Roman world. They were all the Straight Street. Every city had one of these streets. They were the main north and south access of the street. In fact, Alexander started this. Alexander started laying out cities with a *Decumanus*, a street that went this way, east and west. And a *Cardo* that went north and south. The big Straight Street was called the *Cardo* and it was on a north-south, crossing an east-west. Usually, where they met was the *Agora*, the marketplace of the city. When they were going to this they were going to the heart of the city. The word straight is actually the word *cardo* (*kardia*), it's the Greek word for heart. You ever heard of; we're going into the heart of the city. Alexander, when he Hellenized, when he made civilization spread out from Greece all the way to India, he started telling the cities they need to have this structure. By the time following Alexander's time, the Roman empire had this structure. Going to the Straight Street means Paul went to the main street, the largest, the Boulevard of Damascus.

# Gerasa

Mt. 8:28

Now, let's go to Matthew 8:28, because I want to show you how this affects our understanding. I think a lot of times when we think of Jesus, we think of the Jesus video. That most of His ministry was about and around those people, they're almost bare footed, they're bumpkins, they're like West Virginia hillbilly Jed Clampett kind of things. But look at Matthew 8 and verse 28. It says, "*When He'd come to the other side, to the country of the Gergesenes, there met Him two demon possessed men.*" Gergesenes was a region that was dominated by a main city, Gerasa or Jerash.



There's Jerash today. Now this is how much dirt. You can see this hill; all of this stuff was in those layers of all the civilization. The archeologists have dug up this place where you're looking at, this city that dominated this region and Matthew 28. Look at the forest of columns.



Gerasa oval plaza panorama

Now, that maybe doesn't mean much to you, but now look at it from a different angle. This is where the two streets met. This is where the Decumanus crosses the Cardo. Look in the

center, this is the marketplace of the city. This is the Agora. You might know it by the Roman name, they called it the forum. The forum = the marketplace, = the Greek word which you might see sometimes, the Agora. These three interchangeable terms were for the heart of the city. That would be, very much, the place you'd want to go if you wanted to get a message out. Right here, this little strip right there, is what we were looking at from the other slide.



Now, we'll look at it from another angle. Look, this is that forest of columns. Now, you can see all these modern Arab homes, this is in the city of Jordan, which used to be the tribe of Manasseh in the biblical times. This city is what the cities looked like in the time of Christ. That's not in those Jesus movies. We're talking about millions of people, hundreds of thousands. That's how you could get one group He fed, when He had 5,000, it was 5,000 men who probably had their wife with them, probably had their two or three kids. We're talking about 20,000 people at a pop. You have to have quite a metropolitan, quite a wide group of population to get 20,000 people off work to come to an event during the day. We're talking about large cities. This is the Cardo, this main road, and then it would keep going.



Gerasa oval plaza columns

Now, we're in this marketplace and this is just very similar layout to all these cities.



Gerasa Cardo

You say, that's in Jordan and how do we know Jesus ever went there? We don't. He didn't. He got back on the boat. He didn't go there. Most of them had these triumphal arches at the end. Incredible architecture.



Most of them, this is right off if you went back here to this big Plaza, if you walk up the steps, you're looking down. We're actually on top of the hill looking down, this is what you're looking at. This is the stairway; all those are stairs. This is just the base of a massive temple that went way up, about a hundred feet higher. That was to the love goddess, Artemis. The goddess that they worship with all of their different worship. This is unbelievable, the structural size of these things. I don't know if you can see it, but there's a person standing right there. Look, they're not even up to the bottom of this column, which is about 60 to 80 feet tall. Those columns are only on the deck before you get up to the real thing. They had some pretty amazing buildings back then.



Gerasa western baths

Now right off this, where we're standing, is this Plaza. This is the bath house. In the ancient world, there were a lot of public baths with running water. You would take your bath; the toilets were there. It's just civilization amazing. Now, it's all fallen down, but it's amazing.

# Beth Shean

Mt. 4:25

Now, turn to Matthew 4:25 because this has all been a nice travel log, but has nothing to do with the Bible because Jesus was never there. Look at Matthew 4:25, it says, "*Great*

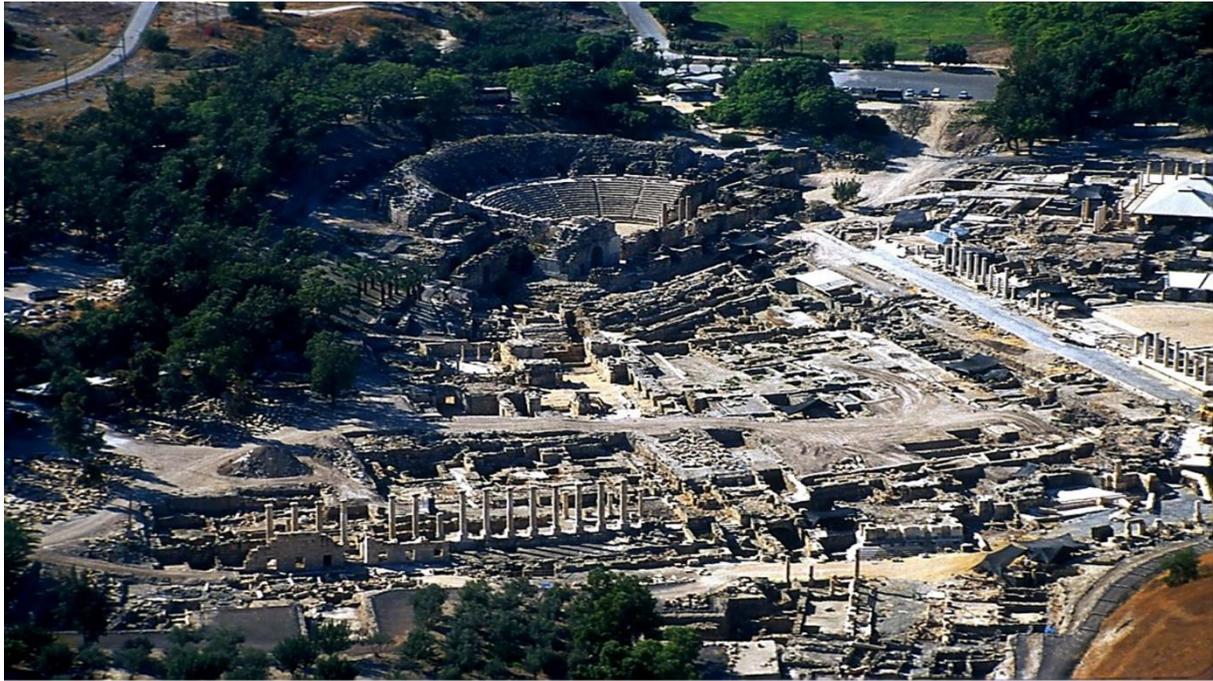
*multitudes followed Him from Galilee, and from Decapolis."* All of a sudden, one of the Decapolis cities. That city you just saw, Jerash, the name of it, that's in Jordan. This Decapolis city is in Israel. What I'm going to show you right now, Jesus would have seen. Now, this ruins the Jesus video.



Beth Shean aerial from southwest

When you see the civilization here, here's the city down here of the time of Christ, this is where King Saul's body was nailed to the wall. This is the Old Testament city; this is the New Testament city. Unbelievable.

This is the Cardo. This is the Forum area or the Agora. This is the Decumanus. Going this way, all of these are the bath houses. This is a gigantic, you can't see it, but a theater that seats several thousand people. You can see there's the columns, the Decumanus, the east-west one going this way. This city, it's called the Disney World of the Holy Land. It's always a stop, whenever you go over to Israel. Beth Shean, but this city shows us how civilized the Holy Land was in the first century.



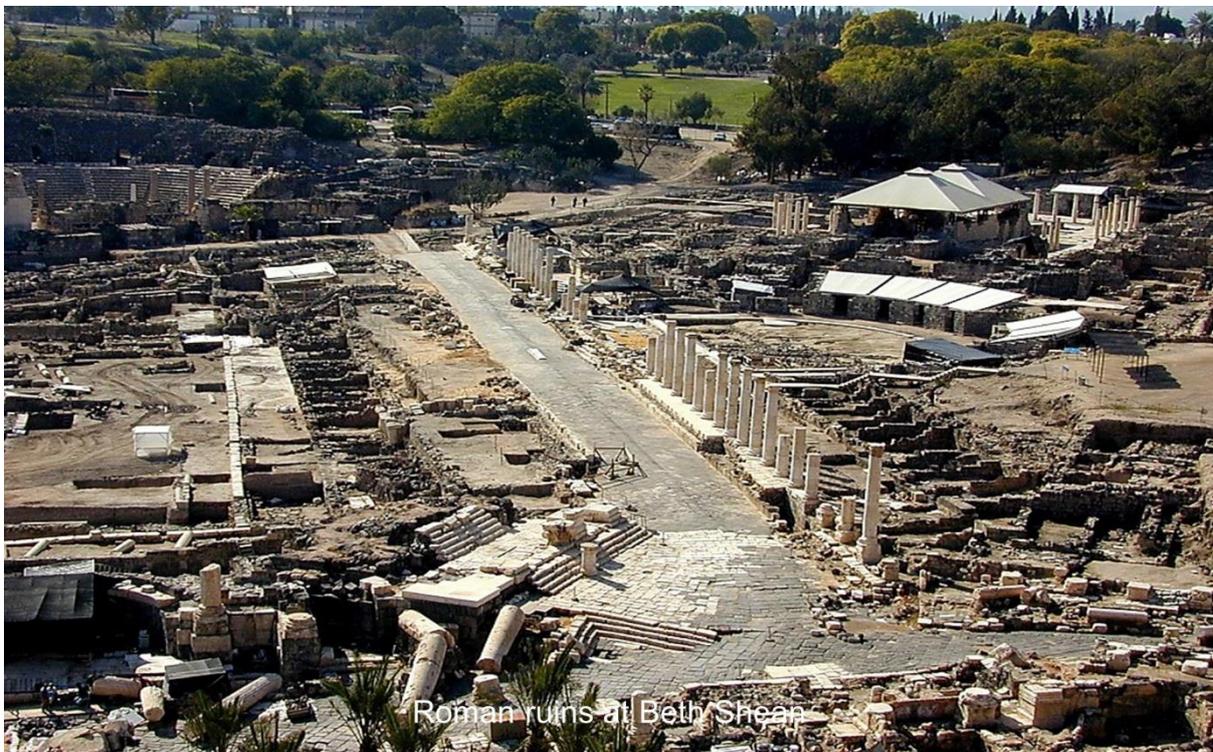
Beth Shean aerial from northeast

Another view, here's the theater I told you about right there. Here's the Cardo there. The baths over here. Here's the Forum. Do you remember when we were studying redemption? The word for redemption is the word *exagorazō*. This is the Agora; this is the marketplace where slaves were sold. Redemption is to be bought out of the Agora. When Jesus talked about redemption, they all knew about slaves, every town had an Agora and in that Agora sold slaves, every town. Slavery was everywhere. There were more slaves than citizens in the Roman Empire. When Jesus talked about redemption, He was talking about something that everyone knew. The picture just was vivid in their mind.



Palladius Street at Beth Shean

Now, this is called Palladius street right here. This is still in this Decapolis town of Beth Shean. Do you see this? This is raised, like a little rise in the road. That's the sewer. They had storm sewers, they had hot and cold running water. This is just the colonnade, so you'd have shade.



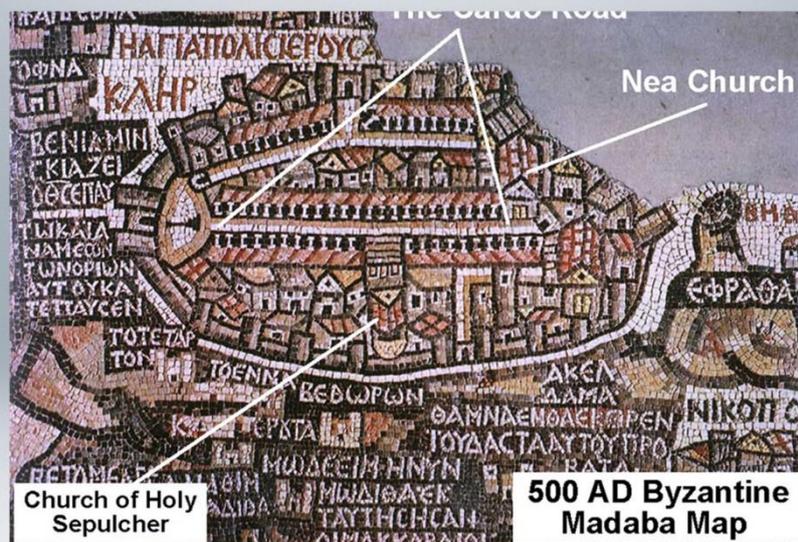
Roman ruins at Beth Shean

This is another angle, the big bath houses over there, the big theater here. There's that storm drain going right down the middle. You say where's the rest of it? They don't want to knock everybody's house down. It's there, it's just huge. The city is huge. It fell down by the way, in the great earthquake of the eighth century AD.



You know what this is? It's an amphitheater. Now, most people would call this a theater and wouldn't understand the difference between an amphitheater and a theater. A theater only is a half of a circle. An amphi-theater is round, it's both sides. Just half of it is a theater. This is an amphitheater it's round, people sit all the way around. This is an arena where they martyred Christians. At least a thousand, we know of from Church history, died in those sands in Beth Shean in the first century, in the early Church. It was a big city.

# Medeba Map



## MADABA, JORDAN

Medeba is a town in Jordan where on the floor of a church they found this mosaic. In 500 AD, during the Byzantine time, the Roman Empire in the east side, and all of a sudden people, archeologists, looked at this. Found it in the 1800's AD and they could read, this is ierousalēm, that's the city of Jerusalem. They said, Jerusalem has a Cardo? This is the Cardo, the main north and south drag. Nobody knew Jerusalem had a Cardo in 1800. Somebody

looked at this and they said, wow. So, they started digging in Jerusalem. Here are more pictures.



It is the Madaba map.



Medeba map, north of Jerusalem

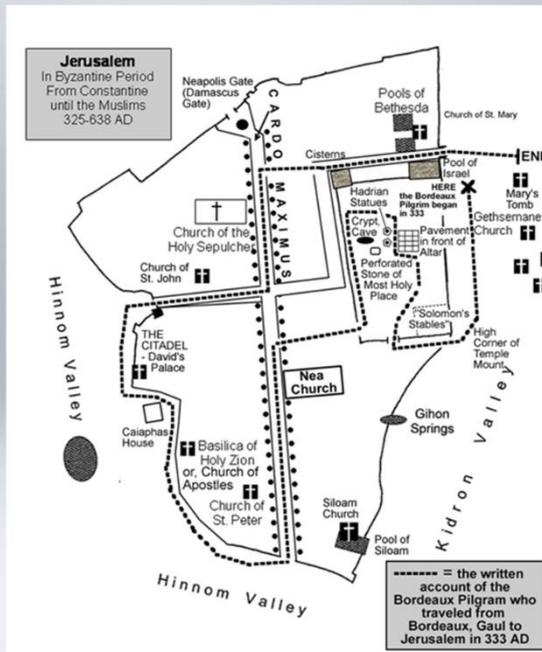
It wasn't just a Jerusalem, they have found all of these, the sites from the early church on this mosaic.



Medeba Map, southwest of Jerusalem

This was like a AAA office; the maps were a little heavier. They weren't made of paper; they were made of tile. It's unbelievable, everything there.

# JERUSALEM: BYZANTINE PERIOD



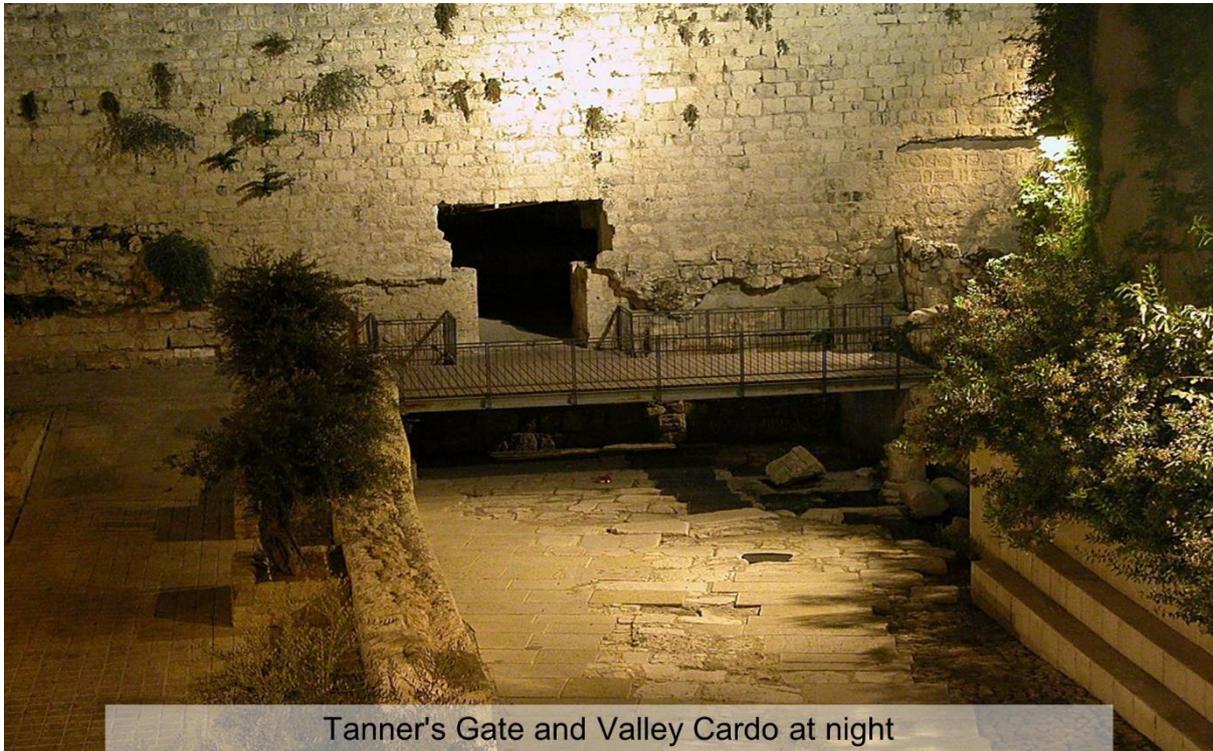
This is what Jerusalem looked like in the Byzantine times, the post early Church era. There's the north-south drag, there's the east-west drag, and all these churches. Now, that was on this map they have found.

# JEWISH QUARTER

MT. 8:20

Let's go to Matthew 8:20, because none of that I said has anything to do with the Bible, it's just interesting. Look at Matthew 8. "And Jesus said to him," remember, verse 19, this scribe

says, hey, I'll go with you everywhere you go. In verse 20, Jesus said, "...foxes have holes and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay His head." You know what Jesus said? He says, I don't have a home, I don't even own a home.



Tanner's Gate and Valley Cardo at night

Those people that were hassling Jesus all the way through His ministry, as they started excavating Jerusalem they found all of these first century roads that are underneath. Some of them 20 feet or more, 40 feet under the surface of modern day Jerusalem. They have found the first century roads, King Herod built. In fact, in July, they just opened a section. There's a road that goes from the city of David, the pool of Siloam, underneath all of the Moslem homes and it comes up at the Western wailing wall. You can walk underground on a road that Herod built underneath all of this modern city. You're 40, 50, 60 feet underground, which is how much the debris has piled up over the years. It comes out right here at what's called the wailing wall. It's just a continuation of a road that goes all the way up to the Damascus gate. This is a little piece of it.



Cardo looking southwest

This is the column structure.



Cardo from south

It had covering, they've put it together to show you.



Cardo from north

By the way, above us are all the Jewish houses. This is underneath the Jewish quarter because the Muslims won't let them dig underneath their parts or they'll riot if they do. The Jews are allowing under their homes to be dug out and they're finding all the first century level artifacts.



Cardo shopping area from south

In fact, you can even shop. This is called the Cardo. This is the Cardo. This is the actual first road and it's all full of Jewish shops. You can eat down there and everything. The whole city is above you and it's you're down in the time of Christ. It's a fascinating thing to be there.



## JERUSALEM HOUSE

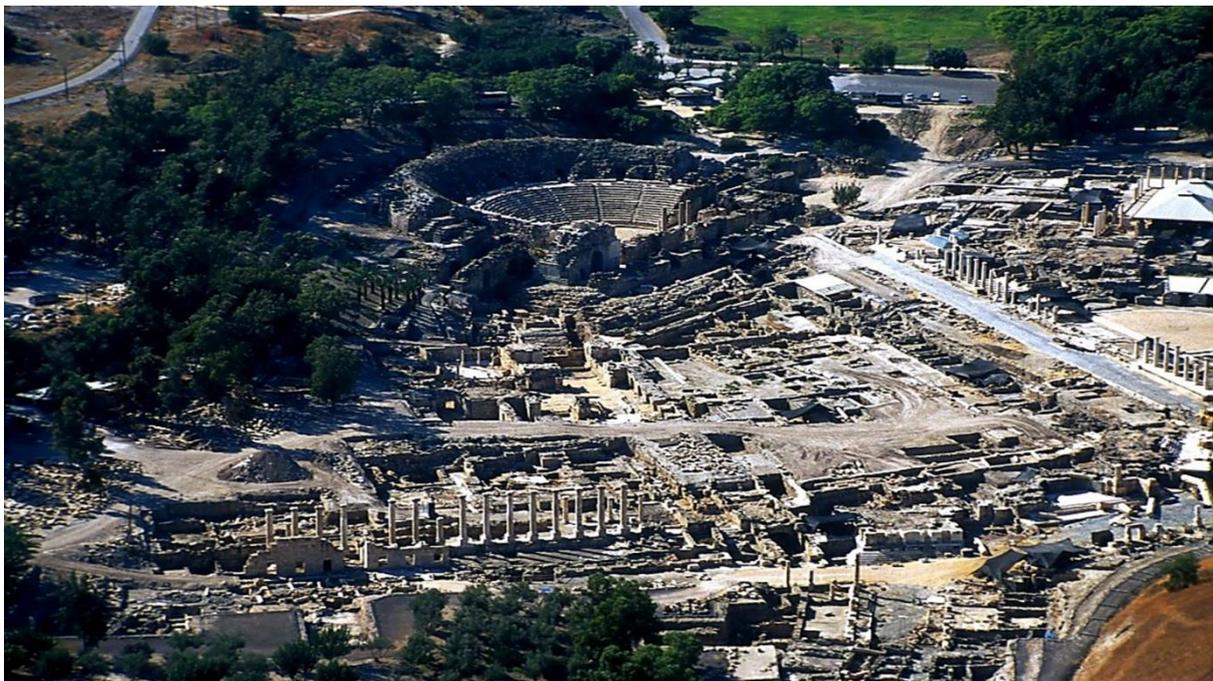
What I'm bringing you to is this. This is a house they found under there. This house has 6,000 square feet. It has an indoor swimming pool. How many have you have one of those? I bet not very many. An indoor swimming pool, a 6,000 square foot house with, they even found the table and all of the different plates and serving things and everything. These things are imported from all over the world.

China, not the country of China, but they had China that was brought in from far reaches of the Roman Empire. You say, what's the big about that? Look back at chapter 8 verse 20. Jesus was alluding to the fact that He lived a very simple, poor life. They were going home to their indoor pool. This is inside the old city of Jerusalem. This house, people were living in there that heard Jesus teach in the temple. When the destruction of the Romans came, the Romans started the city on fire, and everything fell. In fact, the house next door it's grizzly. The people are still, their bones are still there, and they're trying to get their jewels and treasures. The house burned and fell on them. You can even find the women had, one woman had her makeup in her hand, lipstick, or something. It's still inside the container and she's holding it. Can you imagine? If the house was burning, would you run in and get your makeup? Probably really needed it, for some reason.

# PAUL AT THESSALONICA

- Acts 16:22-24 Paul beaten with rods
- Acts 16:40 Paul starts walking
- Acts 17:1 Paul walks 97 miles to Thessalonica
- 1 Th. 2:1-4 Paul defends his reliability

Real quickly, one last thing, and we're going to go after this, we have a minute. If you go to Acts 16, Paul is beaten in Philippi with rods. In chapter 16, verse 40. The next day after being beaten till you could see the bones, in Acts 16:40, he starts walking. Acts 17:1, Paul walks 97 miles. That's how far it is from Philippi to Thessalonica. When he writes back in 1 Thessalonians 2:1-4, Paul defends his reliability. He says, I'm not unclean, I'm not dishonest, I'm not a crook. Why would he say that?



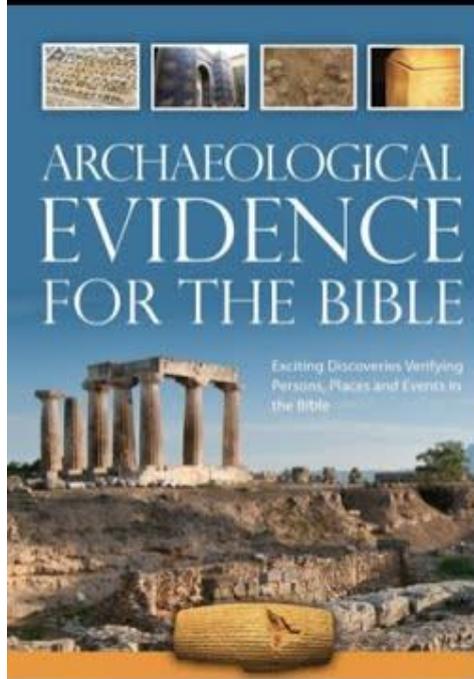
Beth Shean aerial from northeast

I want you to see something. Every town had a bath house like this over here. If Paul walked into Thessalonica, he would have gone to a public bath. When Paul went to that public bath, he would have taken his cloak off, and he would have hung it up on a hook, and he would take his tunic off. As he hung up his tunic, there would have been a collective gasp. His back looked like the lines on a steak after being on the grill. You know how it sears in those marks? That's what Paul looked like after being beaten in Philippi. Every time he took a bath, which is where normal people that weren't kings had to go, to a bath house; this is where you use the toilet, and you took a bath. If you're a good Jew, you did both quite frequently. Every time he went in there and hooked his clothes, there are only two kinds of people that got beaten like he was; runaway slaves and convicts. Paul entered his ministry, walking down streets like this, going into bath houses like that. Paul would experience people not understanding why he'd been beaten like that. I could go through lots of other stuff they found, but we don't have time at 7:16pm.

Biblical archeology is the merging of the geography of the Bible, with the history of the Bible. Using the Bible as the guide, as the eyewitness account. It makes all of the pieces line up and all of a sudden it makes the picture of the New Testament and Old Testament world come alive.

Let's all stand for a word of prayer and then I hope as you're reading the Bible in days ahead, that you'll pay attention to those little geographic and historical notes because they are eyewitness accounts of real history, real geography, and the archeologist are verifying it everywhere they go.

Father in Heaven, I thank you for giving us a book that is so valuable. I pray that it would draw our attention more than so much that is really useless, that we can spend an hour without even knowing it, watching something, the latest little video of someone when we aren't listening to the voice of the very God of the universe. I pray that we would want your word to feed our souls because it's real. Plus, it's so fascinating, the more we study it. I pray that you'd strengthen us to that end, that we may be holding forth the word of life, that we may rejoice in the day of Christ, that we have not run or labored in vain because we've walked in step with your word. We ask that in the precious name of Jesus and for your glory. And all God's people said, Amen. God bless you as you go.



# **UNDERSTANDING BIBLICAL ARCHAEOLOGY— God's Window Into The Past**