



# Biblical Archaeology

What does it have to do with you?

**My Jesus, my Savior,  
Lord there is none like You;  
All of my days I want to praise  
the wonders of Your mighty love.**



**My comfort, my shelter,  
Tower of refuge and strength;  
Let every breath, all that I am,  
never cease to worship You.**



**Shout to the Lord,  
all the earth, let us sing  
power and majesty,  
praise to the King.**



**Mountains bow down  
and the seas will roar  
at the sound of Your name.**



**I sing for joy  
At the work of Your hands,  
Forever I'll love You  
Forever I'll stand,**



**Nothing compares  
to the promise I have in You.**



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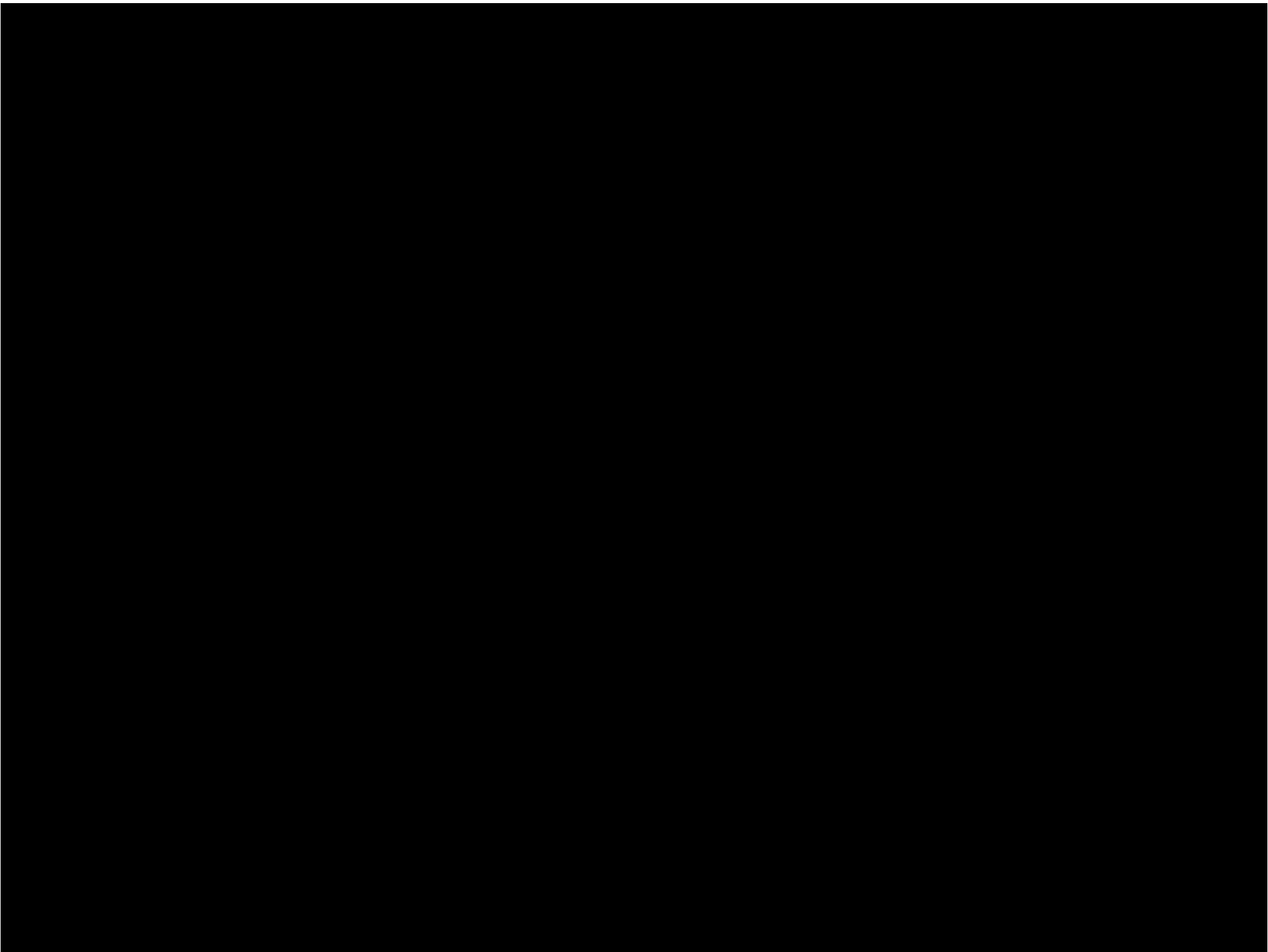


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A Key Recent Discovery (*BAR* Nov/Dec 02)...

**DEEMED A  
FORGERY BY THE  
ISRAELI  
ANTIQUITIES  
AUTHORITY  
(JUNE 2003)**

Earliest  
Archaeological  
Evidence of Jesus  
Found in Jerusalem

**Reads:  
"James,  
son of  
Joseph,  
brother  
of  
Jesus."**

This is the earliest  
evidence of Jesus  
found outside the Bible!

# Caiaphas Ossuary

(*BAR* Sept/Oct 1992)

● Before this discovery there was no evidence for his existence outside the Bible

**FIT FOR A HIGH PRIEST.** The most intricately carved ossuary in the burial chamber (below and on front cover) lay undisturbed in niche IV (at left in the black-and-white photo at right). Decorated with two circles each containing five whorl rosettes surrounding a center rosette, the ossuary twice bears, with a slight variation in spelling, the name "Yehosef bar Qafa" (Joseph, son of Caiaphas; see photo and transcription in accompanying article). Inside the ossuary were the remains of six people: two infants, a child between the ages of two and five, a youth aged 13 to 18, an adult female and a man about 60 years old. Given the name inscribed on the ossuary, together with the extravagance of its decoration, the excavators wondered whether the remains of the 60-year-old man might well be those of the high priest described in the New Testament as interrogating Jesus and then delivering him to the Roman authorities.

The companion ossuary in niche IV bears the name Shalom, Salome in Greek and a variant of Shlomzion (see p. 44 in accompanying article).





# What is Archaeology?

- The word itself
  - Greek Meaning: arche (old) + logos (word)
  - Archaeology = “old words”
- Some definitions
  - “The science or study of history from the **remains** of early human cultures as discovered chiefly by systematic excavations” (*Funk & Wagnall's*)
  - “The scientific study of material remains (as **fossil relics, artifacts, monuments**) of past human life and activities” (*Webster's*)

# What is Biblical Archaeology?

“Biblical Archaeology’ selects those material remains of Palestine and its neighboring countries which relate to the biblical period and narrative. These include the remains of buildings, art, inscriptions and every artifact which helps the understanding of the history, life and customs of the Hebrews and those peoples who, like the Egyptians, Phoenicians, Syrians, Assyrians and Babylonians, came into contact and influenced them.”

--D. J. Wiseman, “Archaeology,” *New Bible Dictionary*, 2d ed. (Wheaton: Tyndale, 1982), 70

# Archaeological Terms

## ● Classification of Objects

- Artifacts (e.g., Herodian lamp)
- Epigraphs



**Black Obelisk of  
Shalmaneser**

# Archaeological Terms

## Excavation Terminology

Tell

Stratum



*Schematic drawing of an ancient Palestinian tell showing methods of excavation and levels (strata) of occupation*

# History of Biblical Archaeology



● **Accident:** Rosetta Stone discovery (1799)

87c-d

# The Rosetta Stone

🌀 The key to understanding Egyptian hieroglyphics

Top:



Hieroglyphics

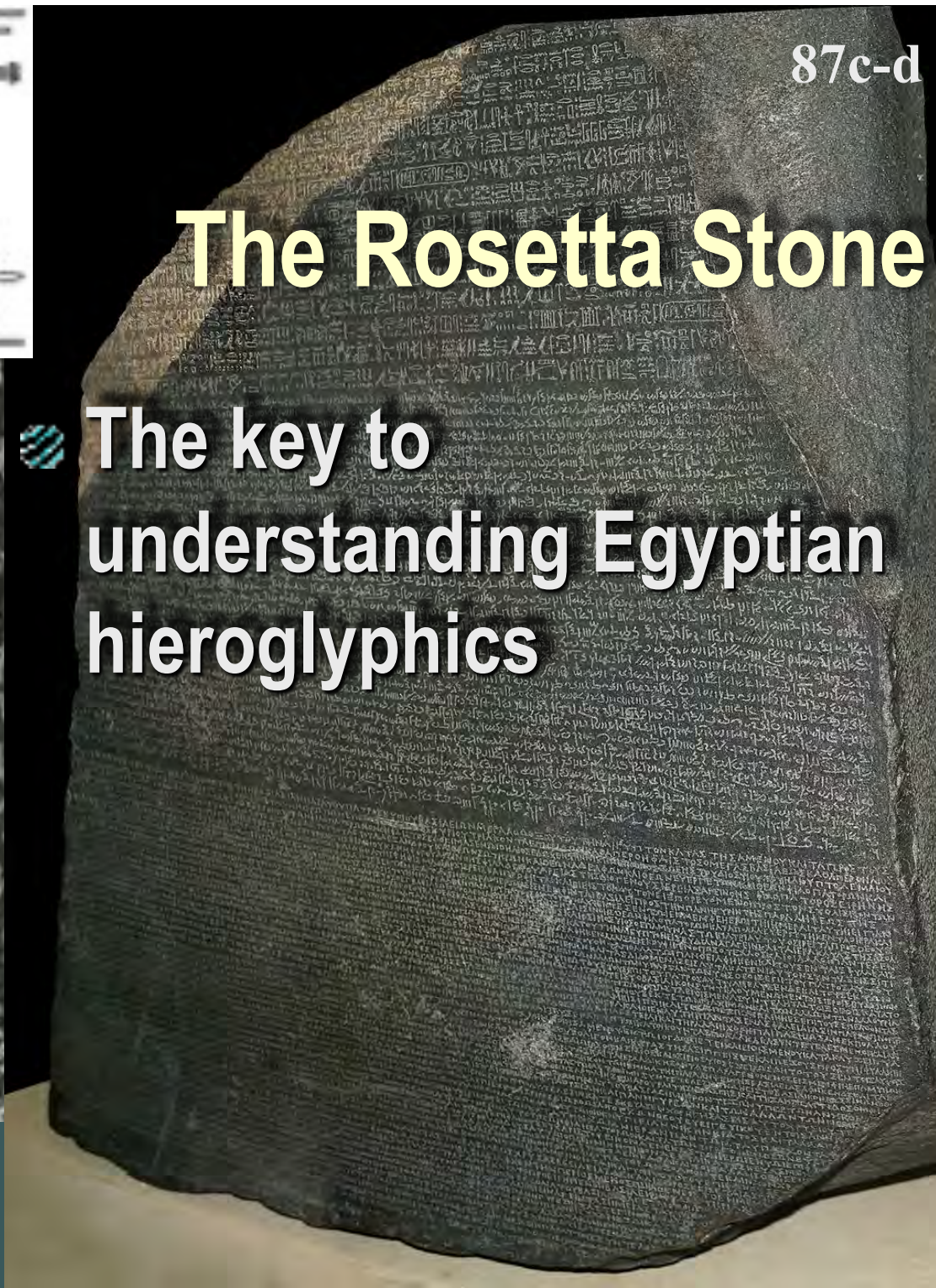
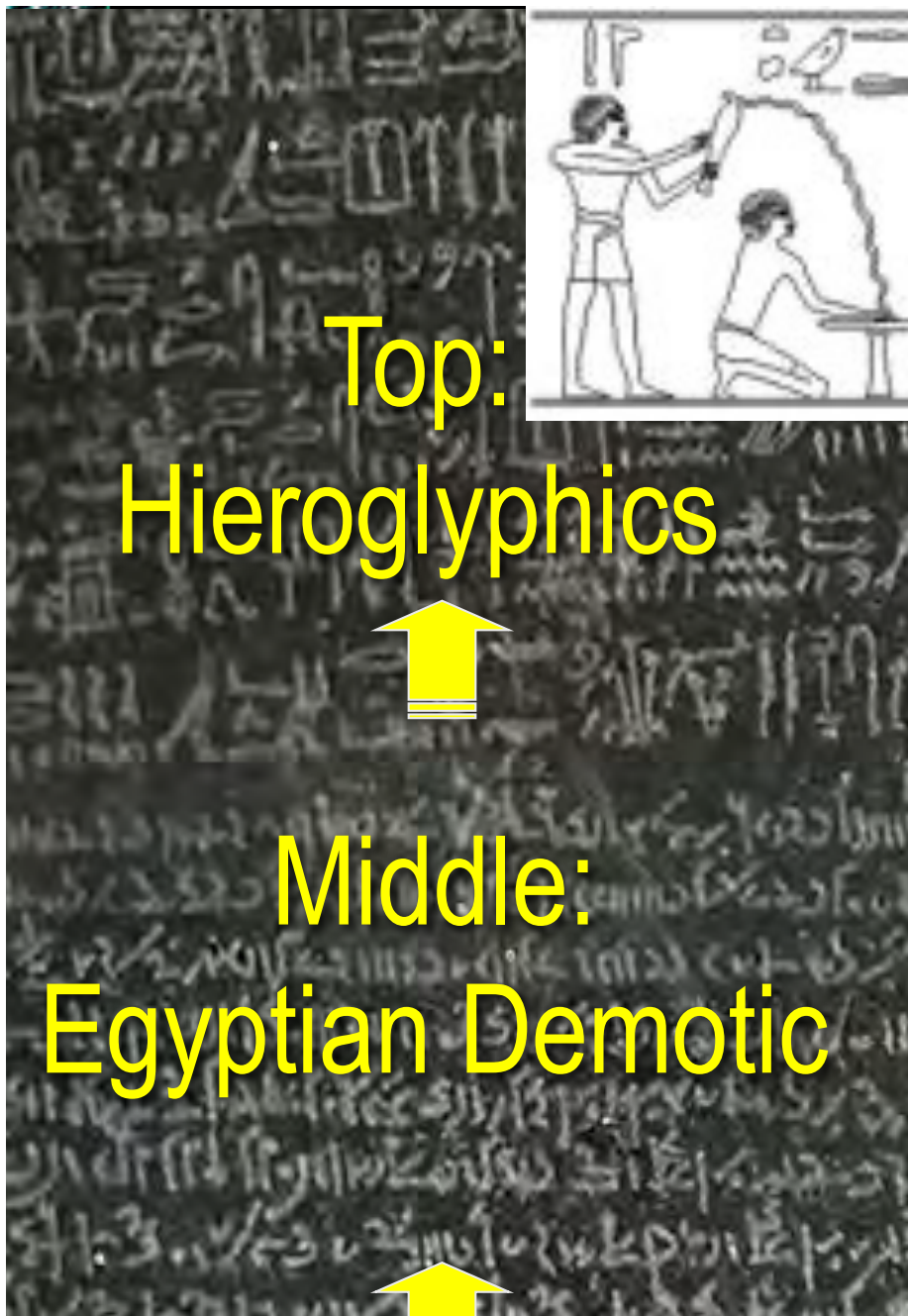


Middle:

Egyptian Demotic



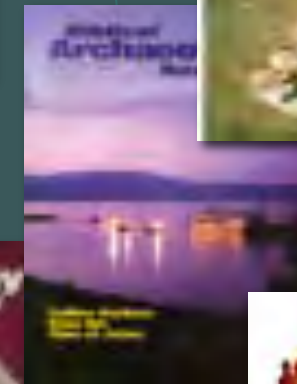
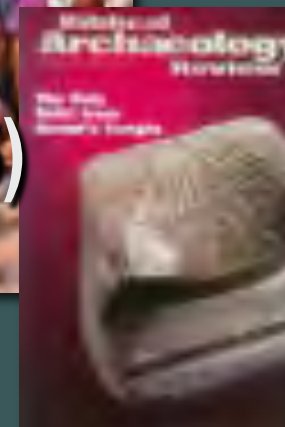
Bottom: Greek



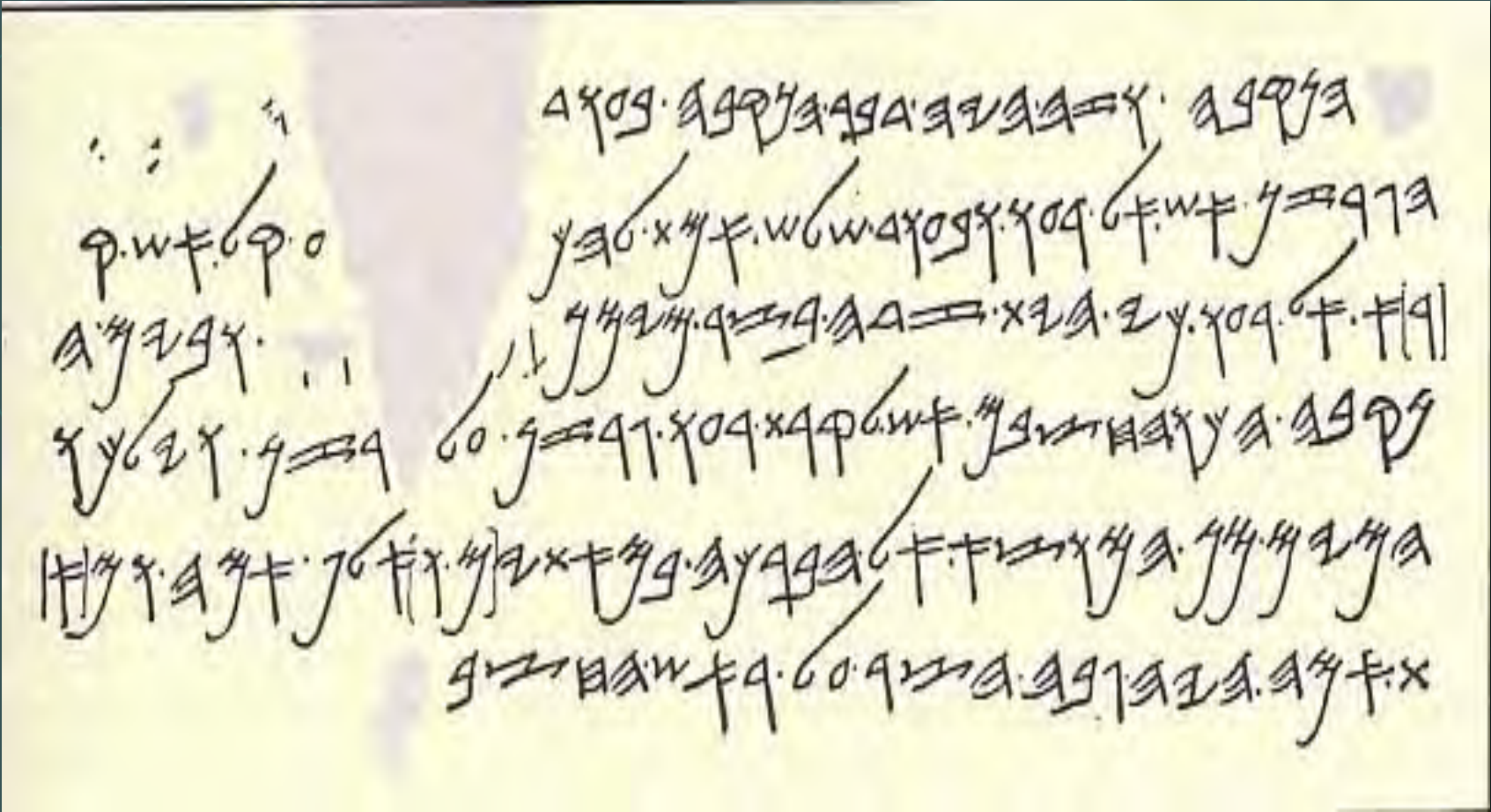
# History of Biblical Archaeology



- **Accident:** Rosetta Stone discovery (1799)
- **Surface:** Edward Robinson & Eli Smith (1838)
- **Digs:** DeSaulcy in Jerusalem (1863)
- **Popularizing:** *Biblical Archaeology Review* (1975)



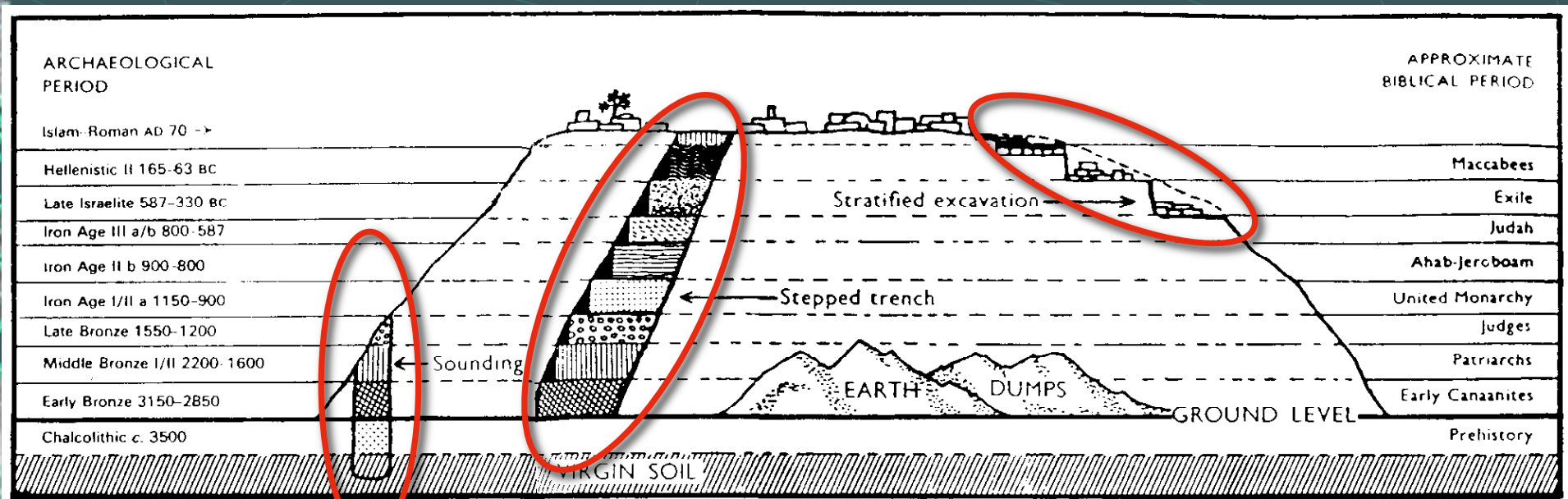
# Excavation Sites



Siloam Inscription

# Methods

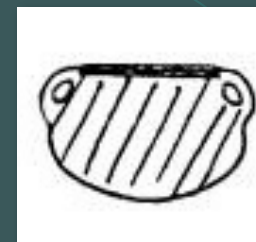
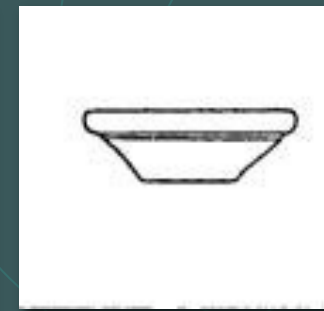
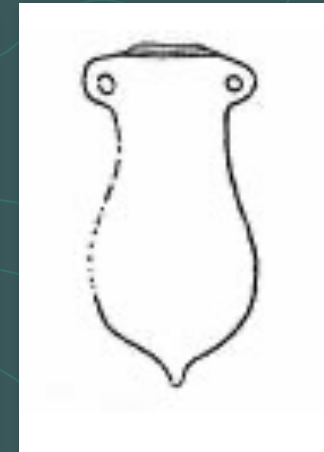
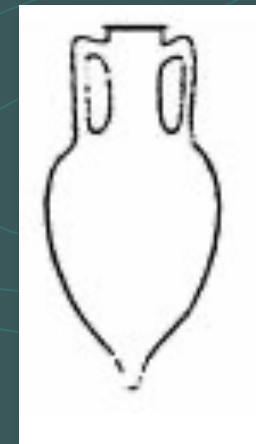
- Sounding (vertical)
- Stepped trench (tell portion)
- Stratification (entire side)
- Carbon-14 testing



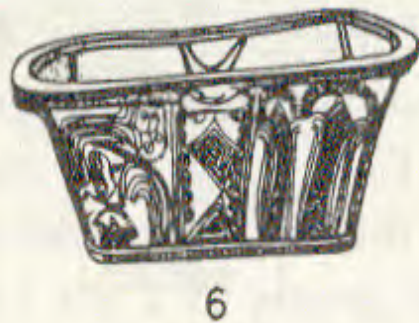
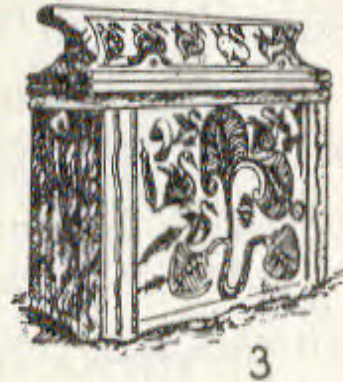
*Schematic drawing of an ancient Palestinian tell showing methods of excavation and levels (strata) of occupation*

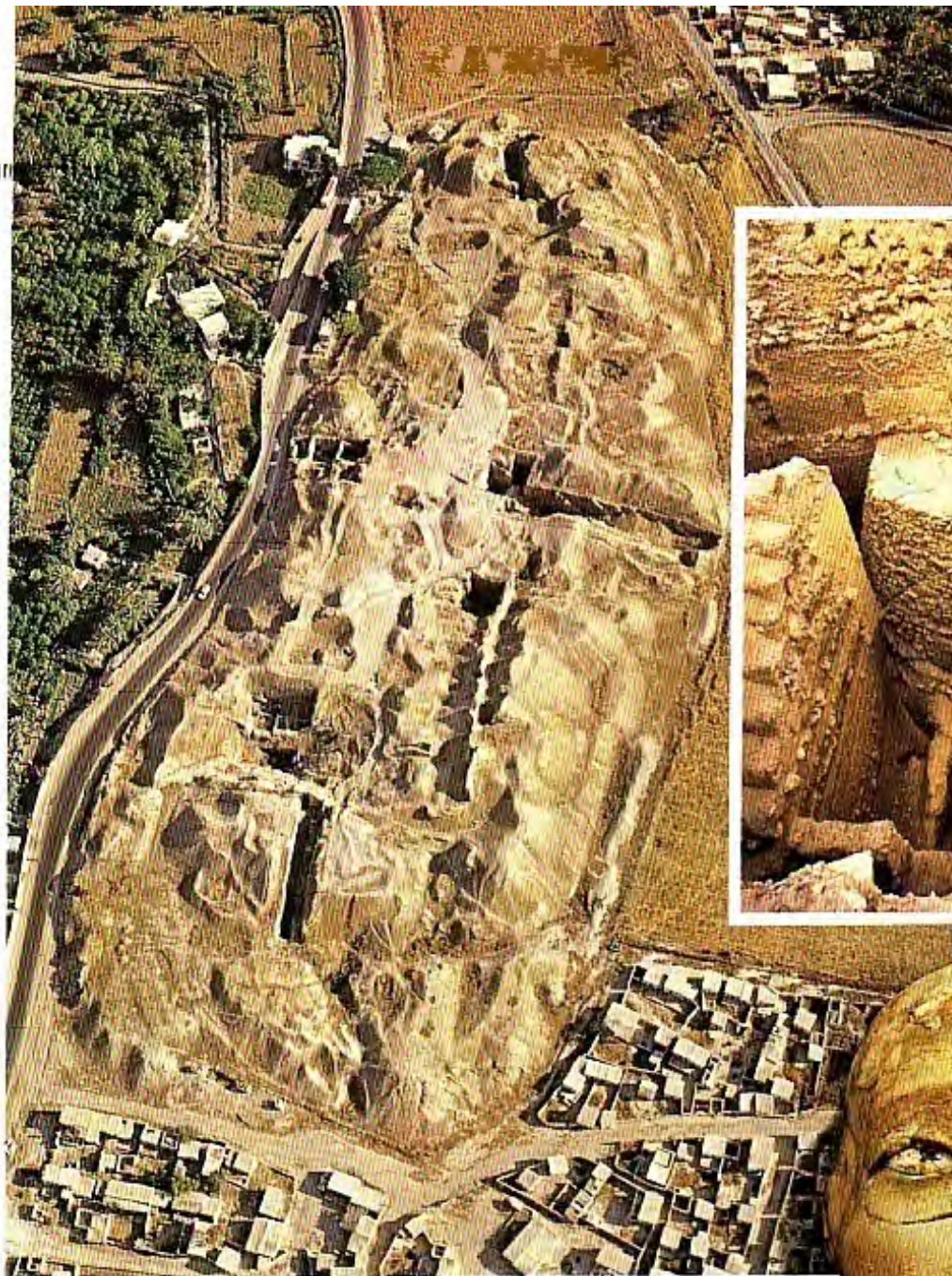
# Pottery Analysis

	Large vessels	Jugs and pitchers	Jars and pots	Flasks	Juglets	Cups	Bowls and plates	Lamps
Neolithic and Chalcolithic						 		
Early Bronze Age			 				 	
Middle Bronze Age		 			 		 	 
Late Bronze Age		 			 	 	 	
Iron Age		 		 	 		  	
Persian period	 			 			 	
Hellenistic period		 		 		 	 	
Roman period	 		 				 	



# Philistine Pottery





## Discovering Ancient Jericho

Situated on a broad, humid plain in the Jordan valley rift, 840 feet below sea

# Value of Biblical Archaeology

200, 206

## Confirmation of Biblical History (cf. OTB, 201-4)

Archaeological Periods	Sometimes known as	Approx. Period
Islamic		AD 636 –
Byzantine		AD 324 – 636
Roman III		AD 180 – 324
Roman II		AD 70 – 180
Roman I	Herodian	37 BC – AD 70
Hellenistic II	Hasmonaean/Maccabean	152 – 37 BC
Hellenistic I		330 – 152 BC
Babylonian/Persian	Late Iron (= LI)/Persian	587 – 330 BC
Iron Age III b		720 – 587 BC
Iron Age III a		800 – 720 BC
Iron Age II b	Middle Iron (= MI)	900 – 800 BC
Iron Age II a		1000 – 900 BC
Iron Age I b		1150 – 1000 BC
Iron Age (= IA) I a	Early Iron/Israelite (= EI)	1200 – 1150 BC
Late Bronze II b		1300 – 1200 BC
Late Bronze II a		1400 – 1300 BC
Late Bronze (= LBA) I	(Late Canaanite (= LC))	1550 – 1400 BC
Middle Bronze II c		1600 – 1550 BC
Middle Bronze II b		1750 – 1600 BC
Middle Bronze II a	(Middle Canaanite (= MC))	1950 – 1750 BC
Middle Bronze (= MBA) I	Early – Middle Bronze Age	2200 – 1950 BC
Early Bronze IV	Early Bronze Age III b	2350 – 2200 BC
Early Bronze III	(Early Canaanite III)	2650 – 2350 BC
Early Bronze II	(Early Canaanite II)	2850 – 2650 BC
Early Bronze (= EBA) I	(Early Canaanite (= EC) I)	3150 – 2850 BC
Chalcolithic	Ghassulian	4000 – 3150 BC
Neolithic (Pottery)		5000 – 4000 BC
Neolithic (Pre-Pottery)	New Stone Age	7500 – 5000 BC
Mesolithic	Middle Stone Age/Natufian	10,000 – 7500 BC
Palaeolithic	Old Stone Age	– 10,000 BC

Islamic AD 636 →

Byzantine AD 324 → 636

Roman AD 180 → 324

Hellenistic 330 – 37 BC

Iron Age 1200 – 330 BC

Sometimes known as Israelite Period

Bronze Age 3150 – 1200 BC

Sometimes known as Canaanite Period

Chalcolithic 4000 – 3150 BC

Stone Age → 4000 BC

# Confirmation of Biblical History

## The Flood

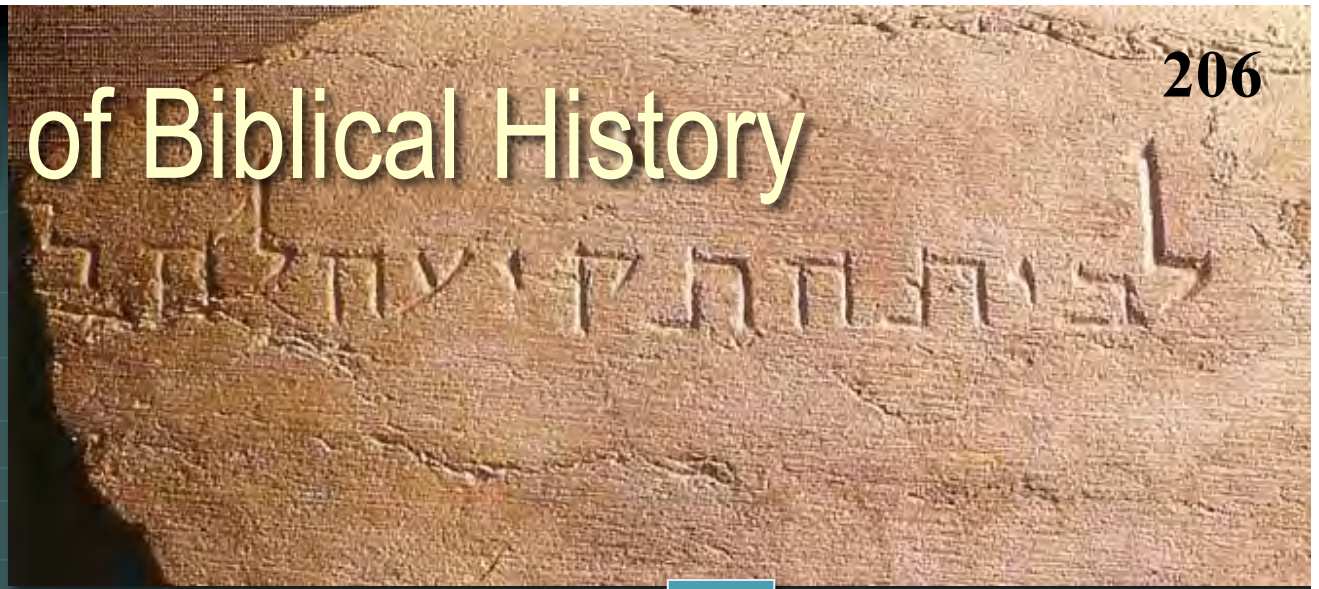
### ● Black Sea habitation (OTB, 211a)



# Confirmation of Biblical History

## Jerusalem

- Place of trumpeting (OTB, 211)
- Gihon Spring wall and gate (AD 1999; OTB, 33-34)



# Confirmation of Biblical History

## Jerusalem

- Black Sea habitation (OTB, 211a)
- Place of trumpeting (OTB, 211)
- Gihon Spring wall and gate (1999, OTB, 33-34)
- Hezekiah's tunnel and Warren's Shaft (OTB, 31)

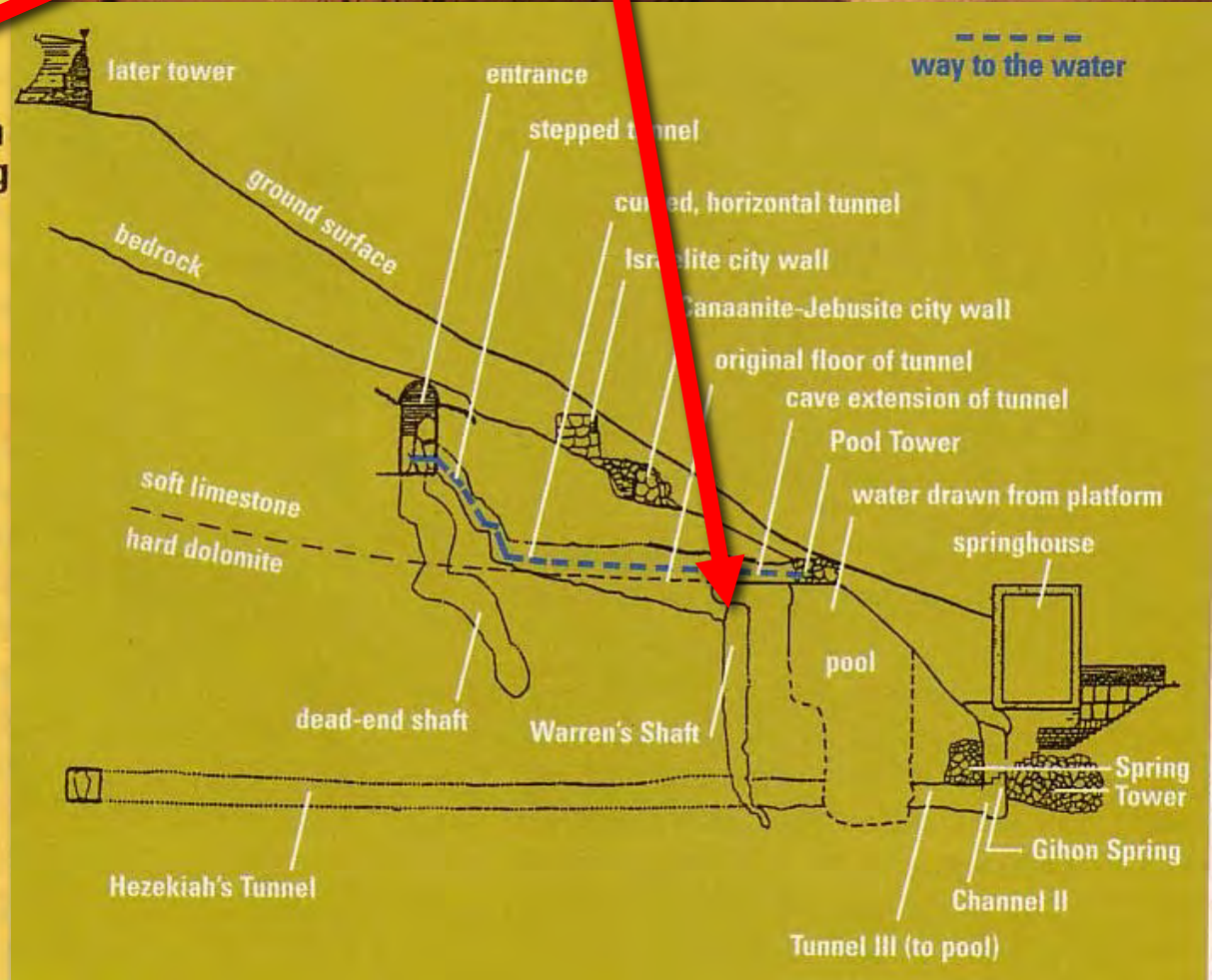
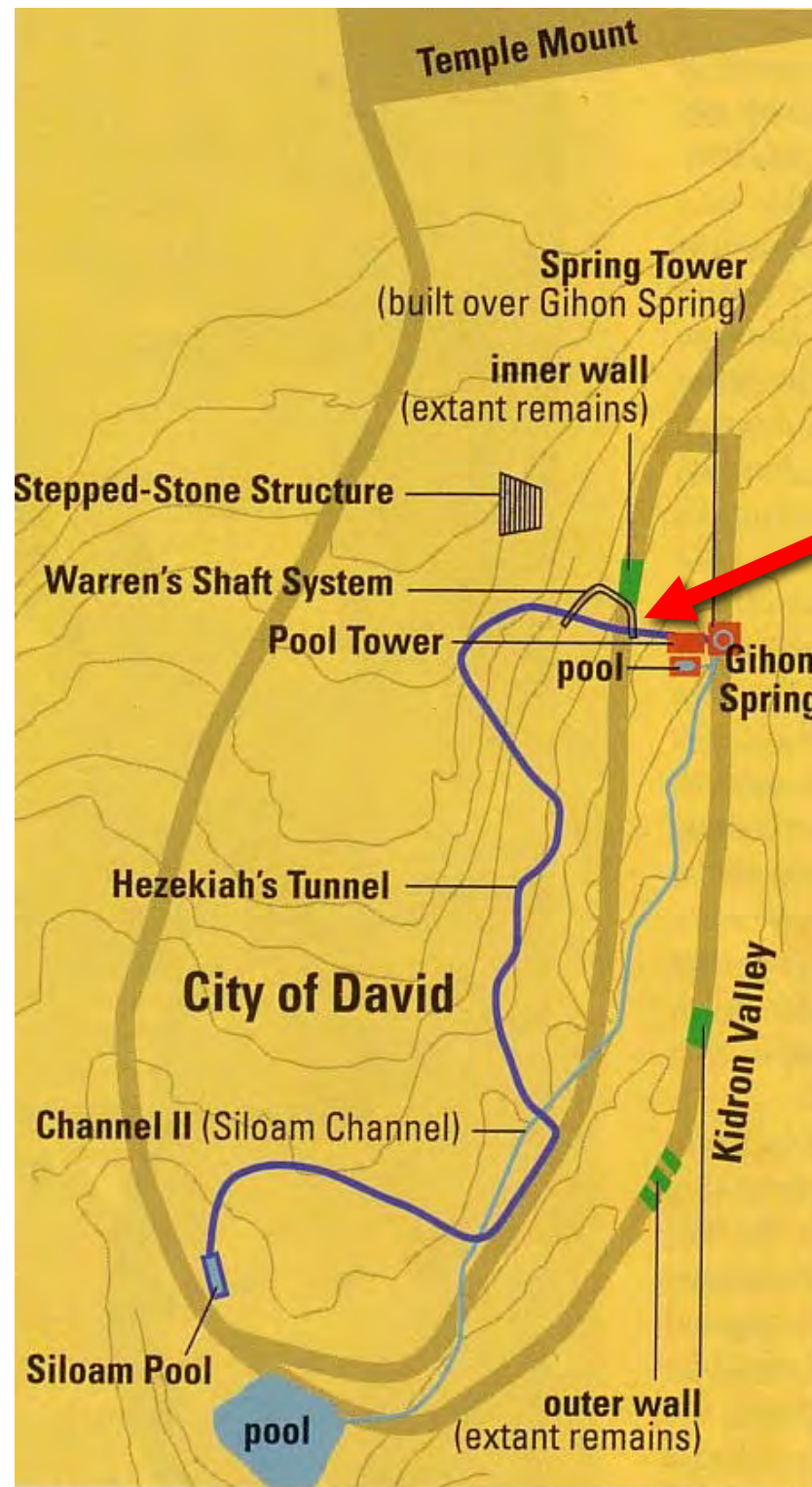
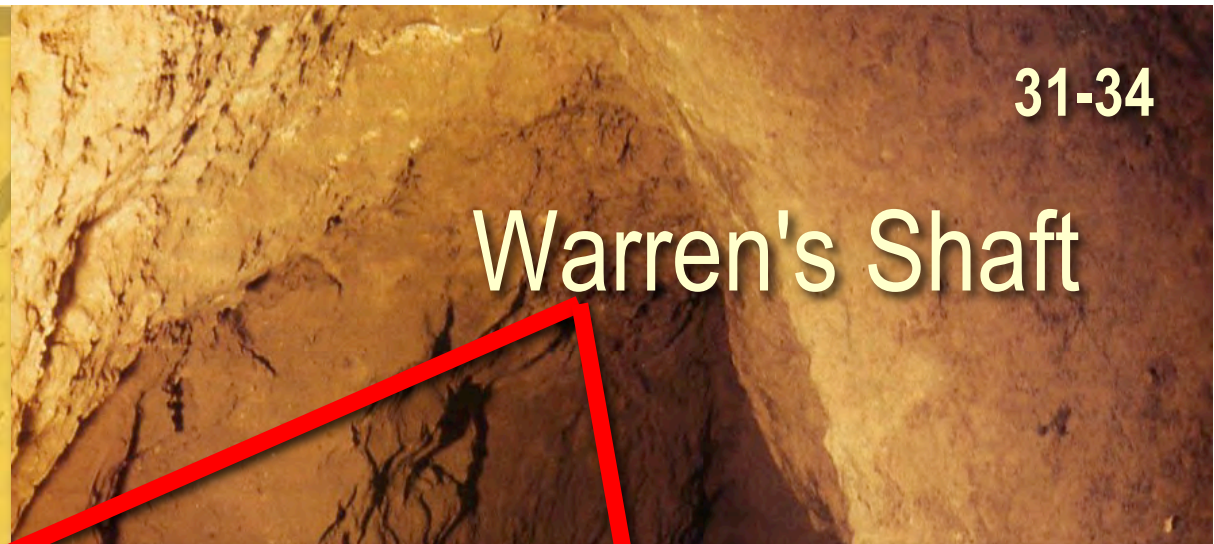


Beni Hasan Tomb Painting

# Hezekiah's Tunnel



# Warren's Shaft



# Transmission of Scripture

## Masoretic Isaiah Scroll



Isaiah AD 1000

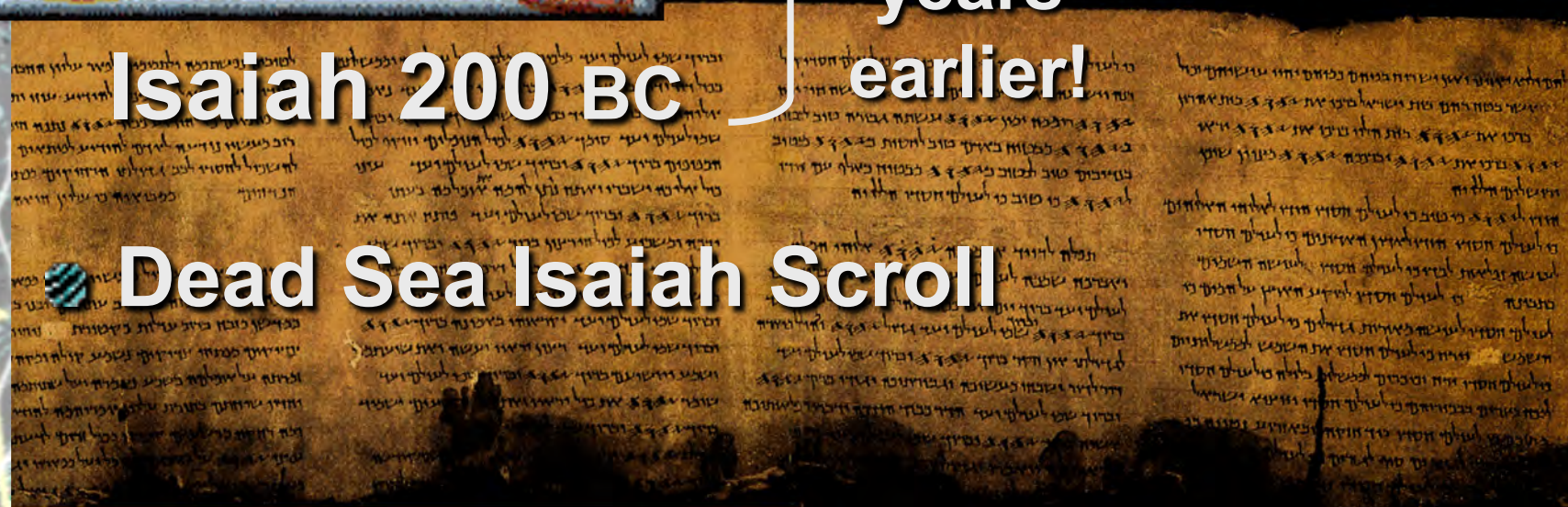
1200 years



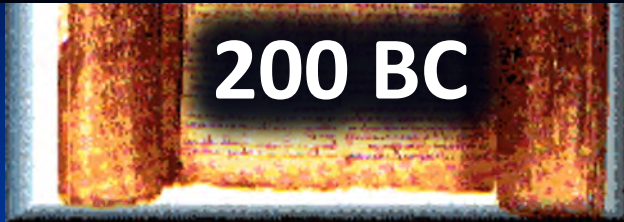
Isaiah 200 BC

earlier!

## Dead Sea Isaiah Scroll



# ISAIAH: QUMRAN v. THE MASORETES



Of the 166 Hebrew words in Isaiah 53, only seventeen letters in Dead Sea Scroll 1QIsb differ from the Masoretic Text:

10 letters = **spelling** differences

4 letters = **stylistic** changes

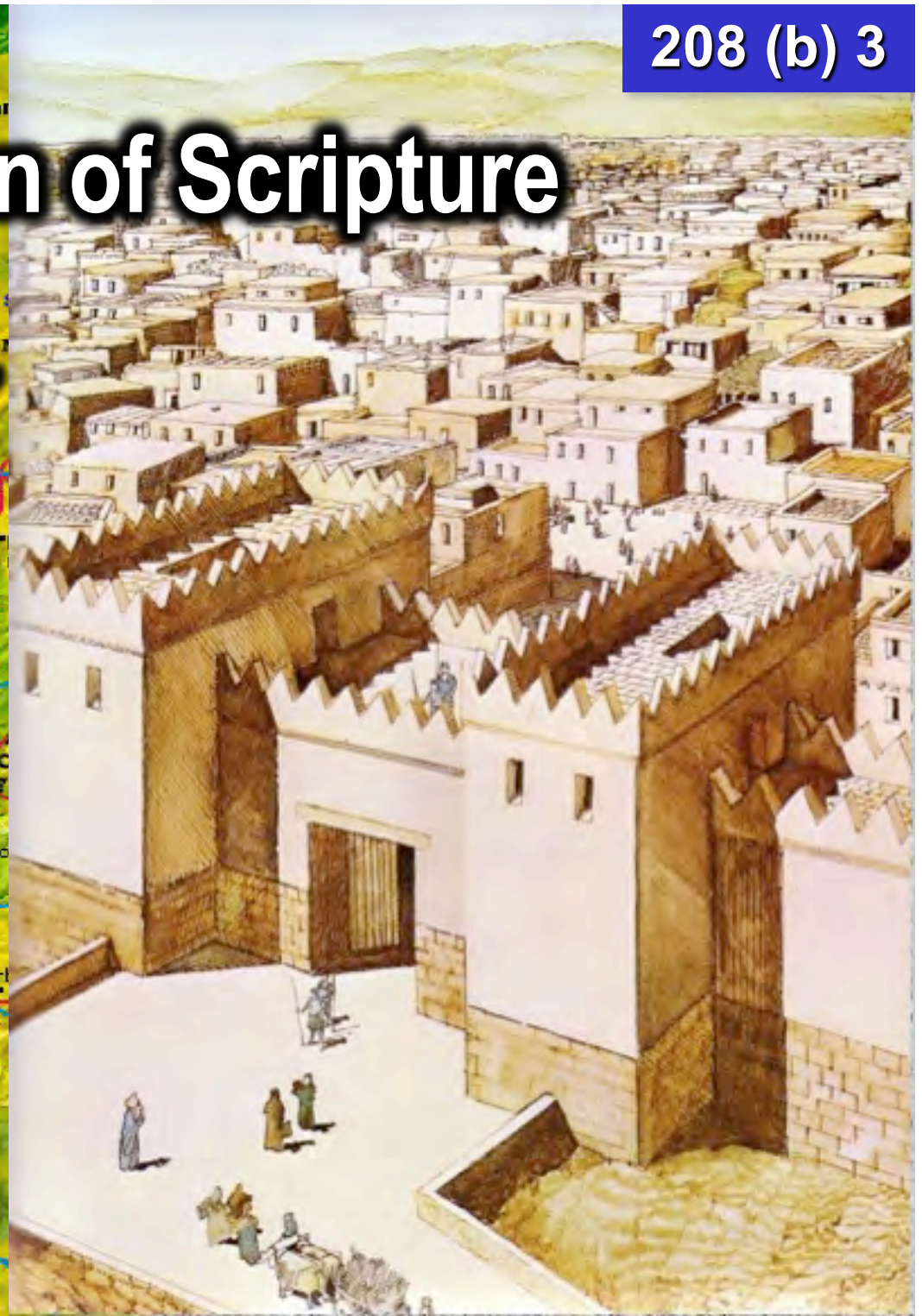
3 letters = **added word** for "light" (vs. 11)

17 letters = no affect on biblical teachings

# Better Interpretation of Scripture



**Hazor**



# Value of Biblical Archaeology

1. Confirmation of Biblical History (cf. OTB, 201-4)
2. Confirmation of Transmission of Scripture
3. Insight into Interpreting Scripture
4. Source of Revenue for Israel & Her Neighbors



# Dangers of Biblical Archaeology

- **Priority:** Will one first accept the Bible or archaeology?
- **Subjectivity:** Bias is a problem for liberal and conservative alike
- **Incomplete Record:** Most of the Bible cannot be proven by archaeology



(See Exodus 14)

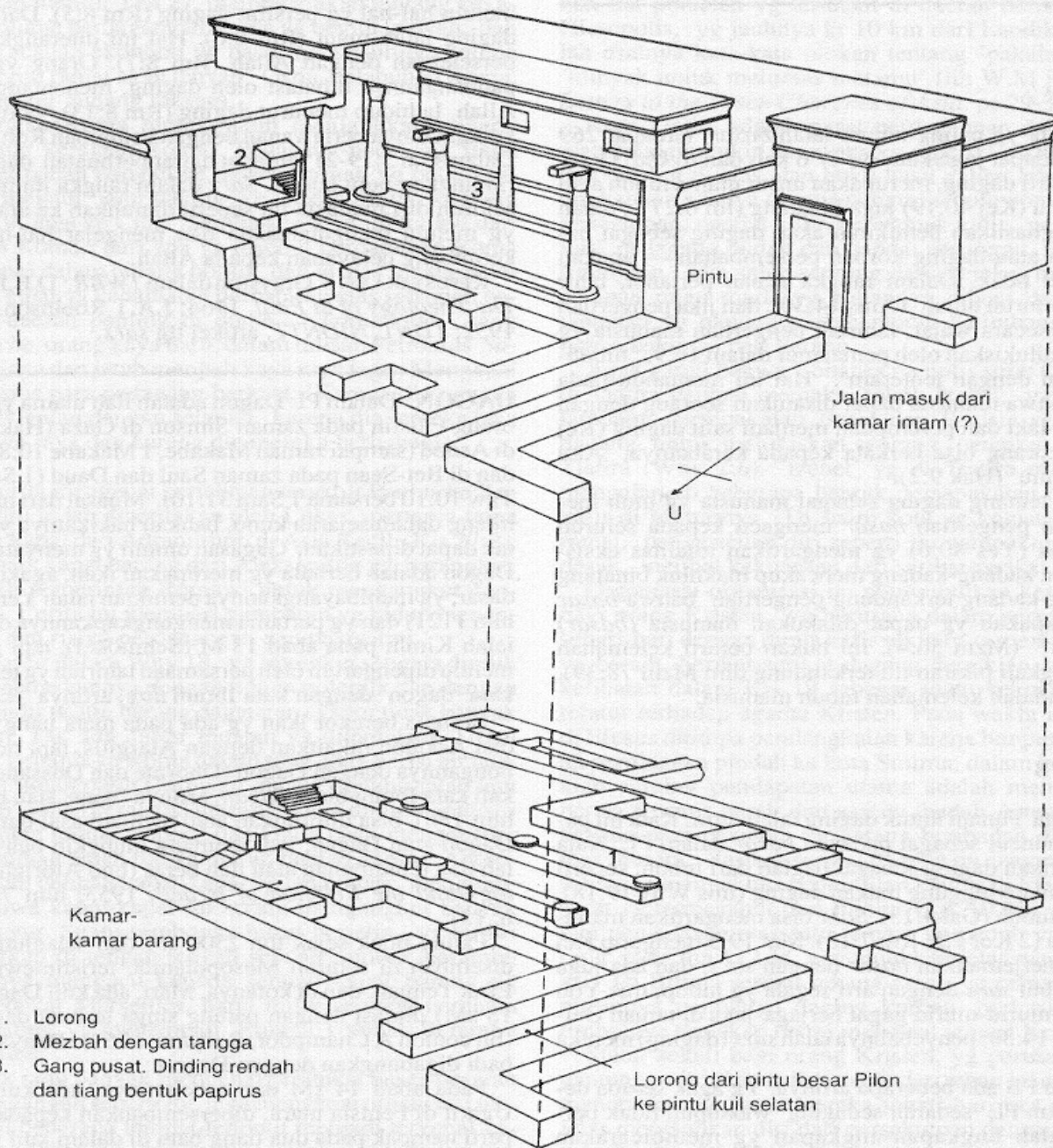
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I THINK THAT YOU HAVE SOME SERIOUS FAITH ISSUES

# Dangers of Biblical Archaeology

- **Priority:** Will one first accept the Bible or archaeology?
- **Subjectivity:** Bias is a problem for liberal and conservative alike
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- **Complexity:** Biblical archaeology is the oldest, most complicated, most stratified, least substantiated type

# The Temple of Dagan



# Dangers of Biblical Archaeology

- **Priority:** Will one first accept the Bible or archaeology?
- **Subjectivity:** Bias is a problem for liberal and conservative alike
- **Incomplete Record:** Most of the Bible cannot be proven by archaeology
- **Complexity:** Biblical archaeology is the oldest, most complicated, most stratified, least substantiated type
- **Limited Apologetic Value:** It cannot prove God's existence or create faith in Christ

# Can archaeology prove Moses received the Ten Commandments?

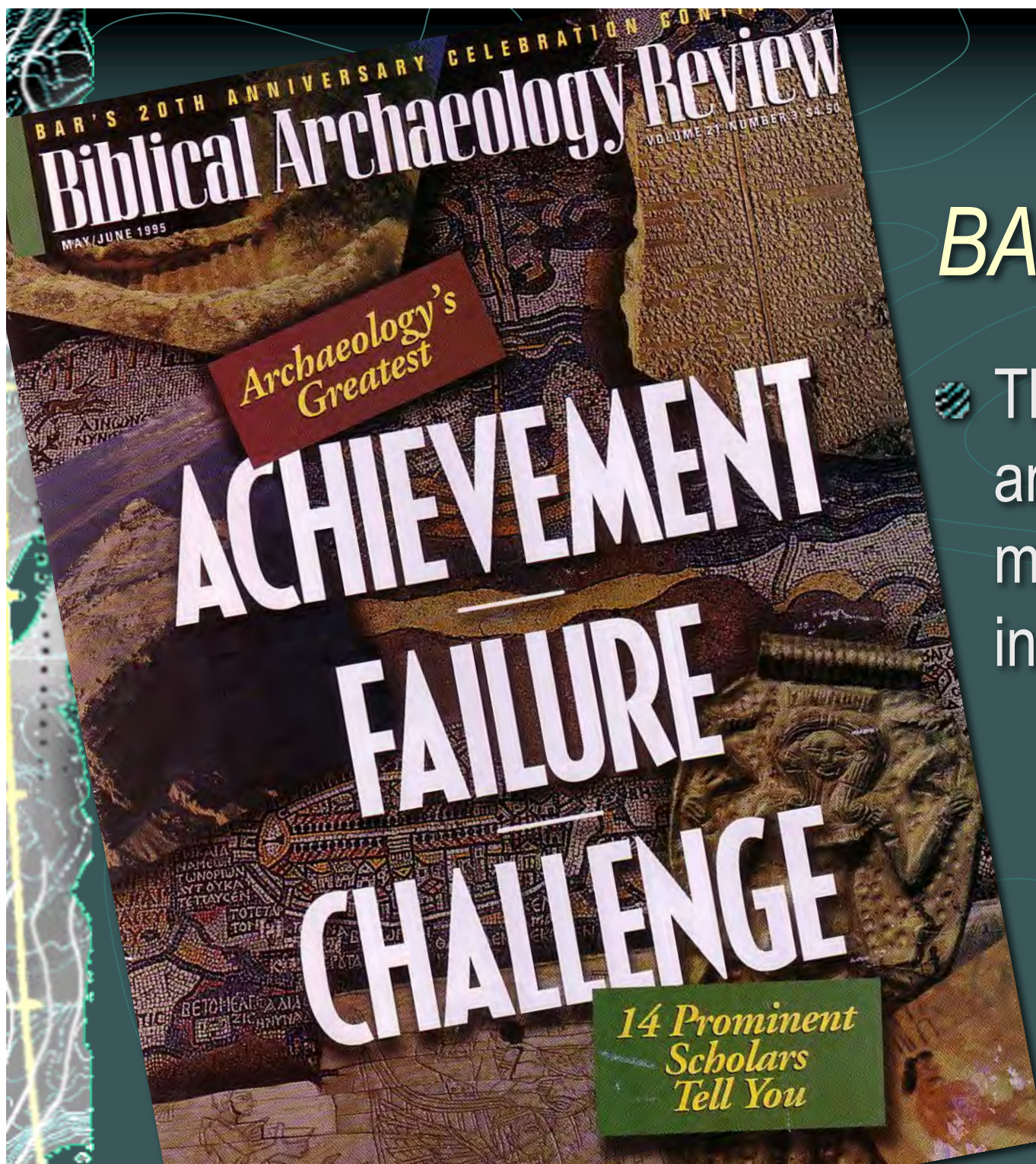


# The Future of Biblical Archaeology

- Excavating  
Jerusalem's  
Western Wall
- Archaeology will  
never end



Workers excavating an archeological site near the western wall in Jerusalem under the supervision of an archeologist. © Frank Raymond

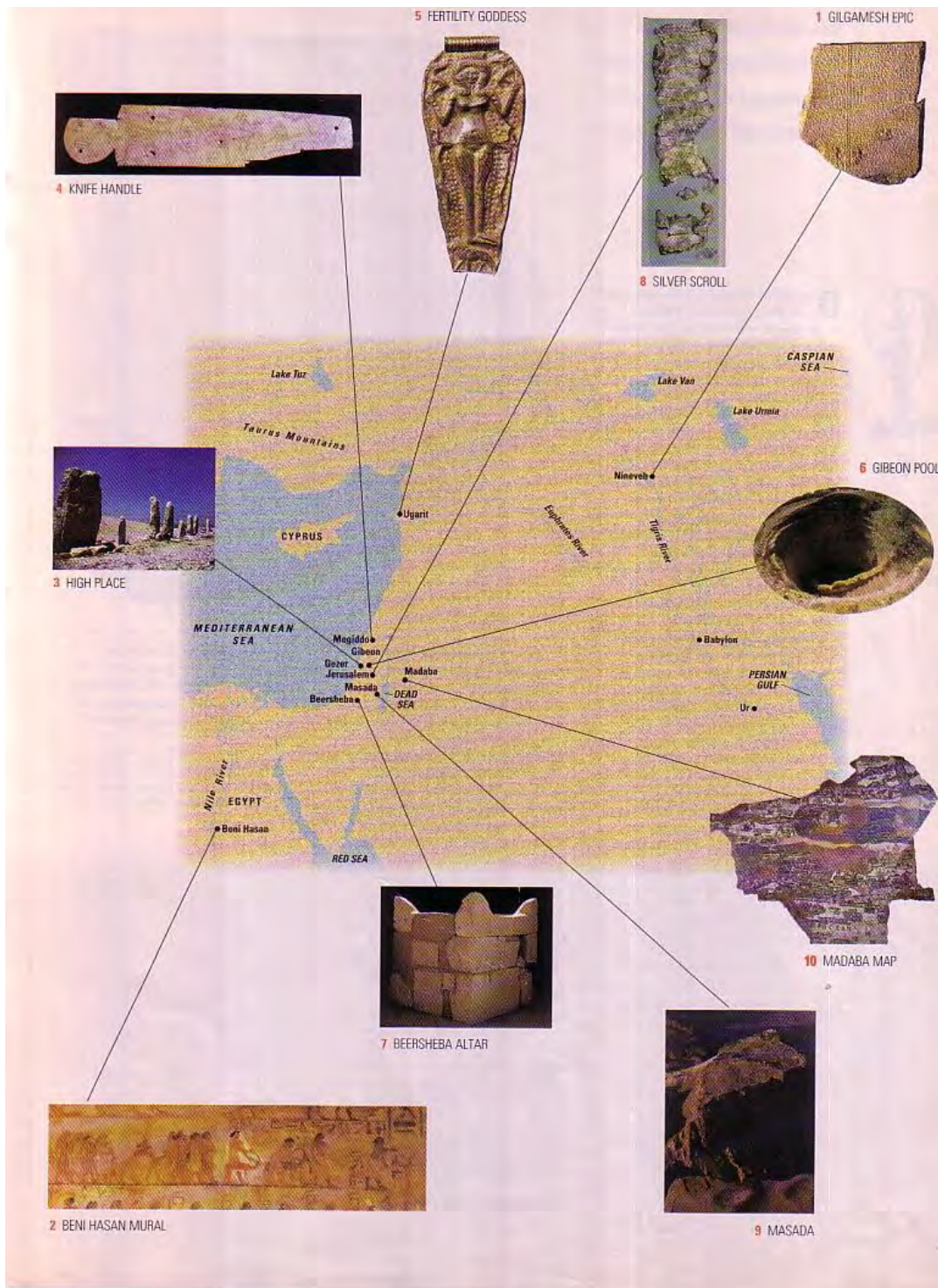


## BAR

- The most popular archaeology magazine began in 1975

# 10 Great Finds

-  This *BAR* article by Michael D. Coogan highlights the ten most significant artifacts throughout the Middle East (May/June 1995)



# #1 Gilgamesh Epic Tablet XI

- Nineveh,  
Iraq
- 650 BC
- Flood story  
similar to  
Gen. 6–9



# #2 Beni Hasan Mural

Two Egyptians lead 219  
the procession  
(no beards)

● Egypt

● 1850 BC

● Attests to Israelites trading in Egypt

● Joseph story (Gen. 37–50)

● Solomon's wife (1 Kings 9:16), etc.

8 wealthy Asiatic men  
& 4 women follow  
(note beards)



## #3 Gezer High Place

- Near Tel Aviv, Israel
- 1600 BC
- Covenant made with stones
  - Jacob & Laban (Gen. 31:43-54)
  - Joshua at covenant renewal (Josh. 24:25-27)

## #4 Knife handle

- Megiddo, Israel
- 1250 BC
- Shows Egyptian control over Megiddo as well as the luxury of Canaanite royal courts akin to Solomon's (1 Kings 6:23-28; Exod. 25:17-22)



# #5 Fertility Goddess Pendant

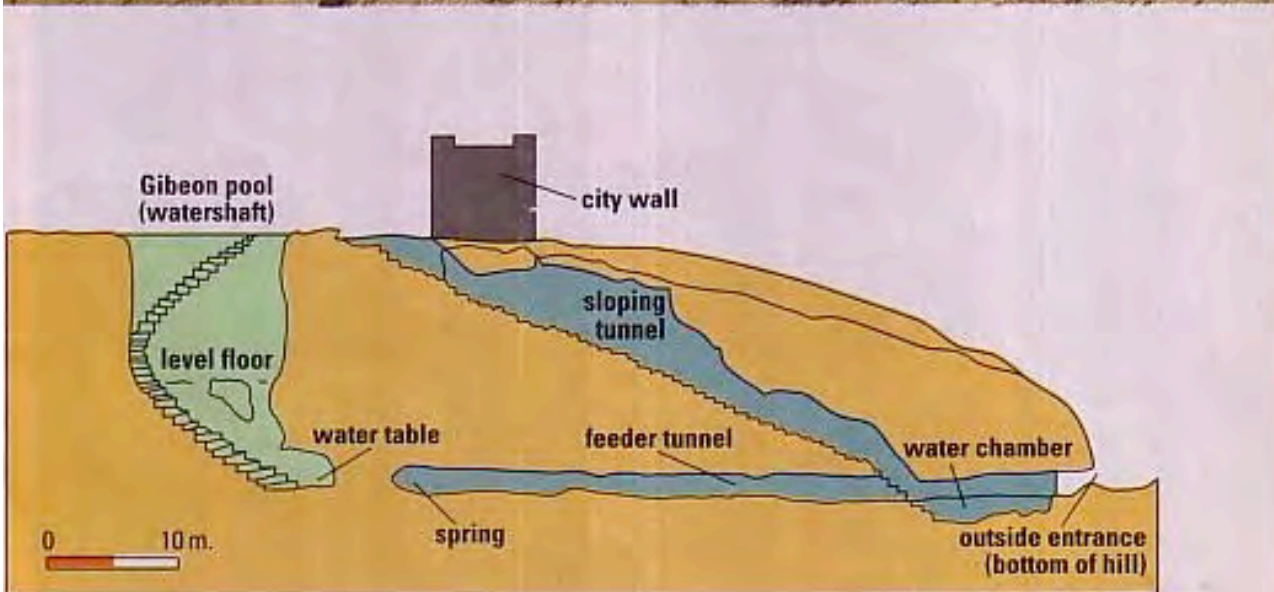
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- Ras Shamra, Syria (ancient Ugarit)
- 1300 BC
- Ugaritic discovery in 1928 shows close linkage of Northwest Semitic cultures
- Ashtart (holiness goddess) called “queen of heaven” worshipped in Israel (Jer. 7:18; 44:17-19)



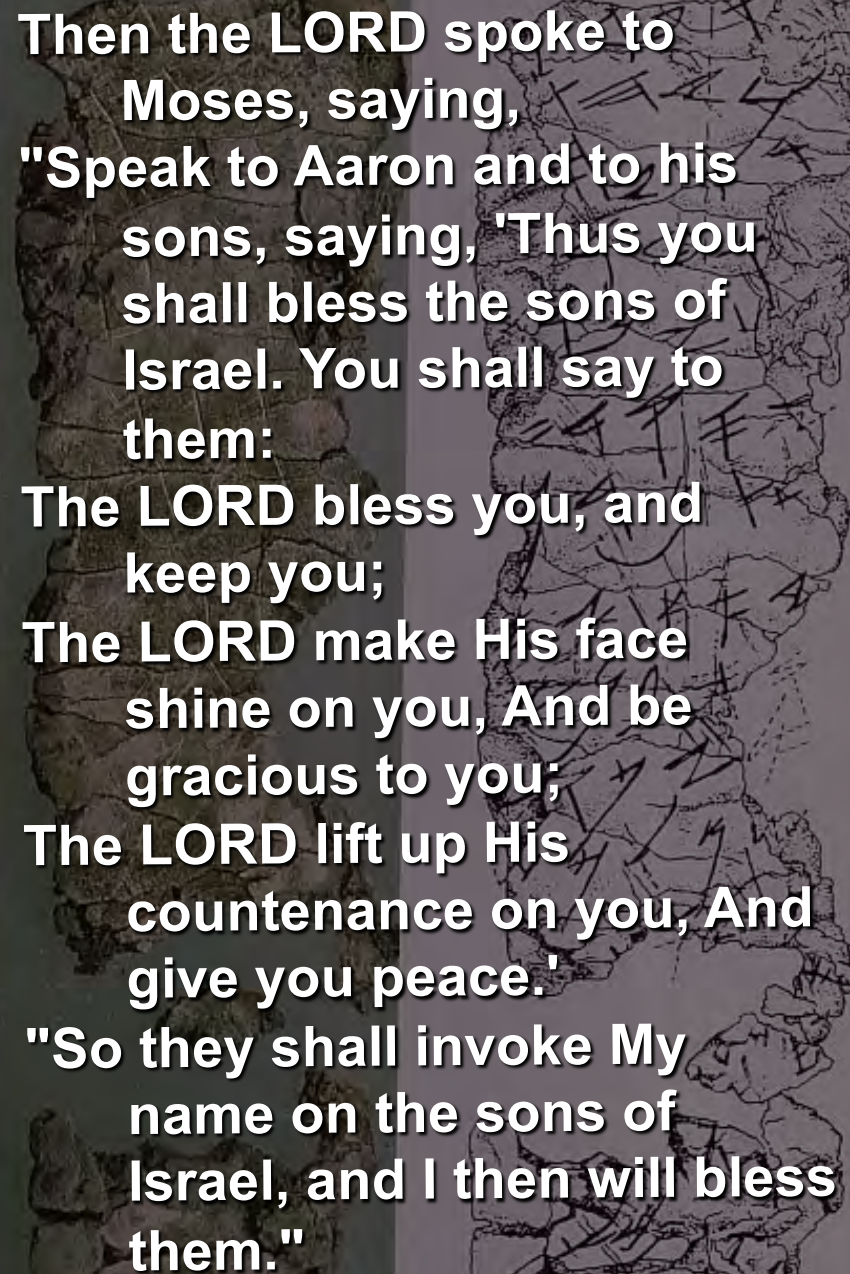
## #6 Gibeon Pool

- 10 km north of Jerusalem
- 1050 BC
- Pool noted in 2 Sam. 2:13; Jer. 41:12
- Shows advanced Gibeonite engineering



## #7 Beersheba Altar

- Near Beer-Sheba in ancient Israel's far south
- 750 BC
- Huge (63" x 63") altar with horns (cf. Exod. 29:12; 1 Kings 1:51; 2:28)
- Pagan altar of hewn stones prohibited by Exodus 20:25



Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying,  
"Speak to Aaron and to his sons, saying, 'Thus you shall bless the sons of Israel. You shall say to them:  
The LORD bless you, and keep you;  
The LORD make His face shine on you, And be gracious to you;  
The LORD lift up His countenance on you, And give you peace.'  
"So they shall invoke My name on the sons of Israel, and I then will bless them."

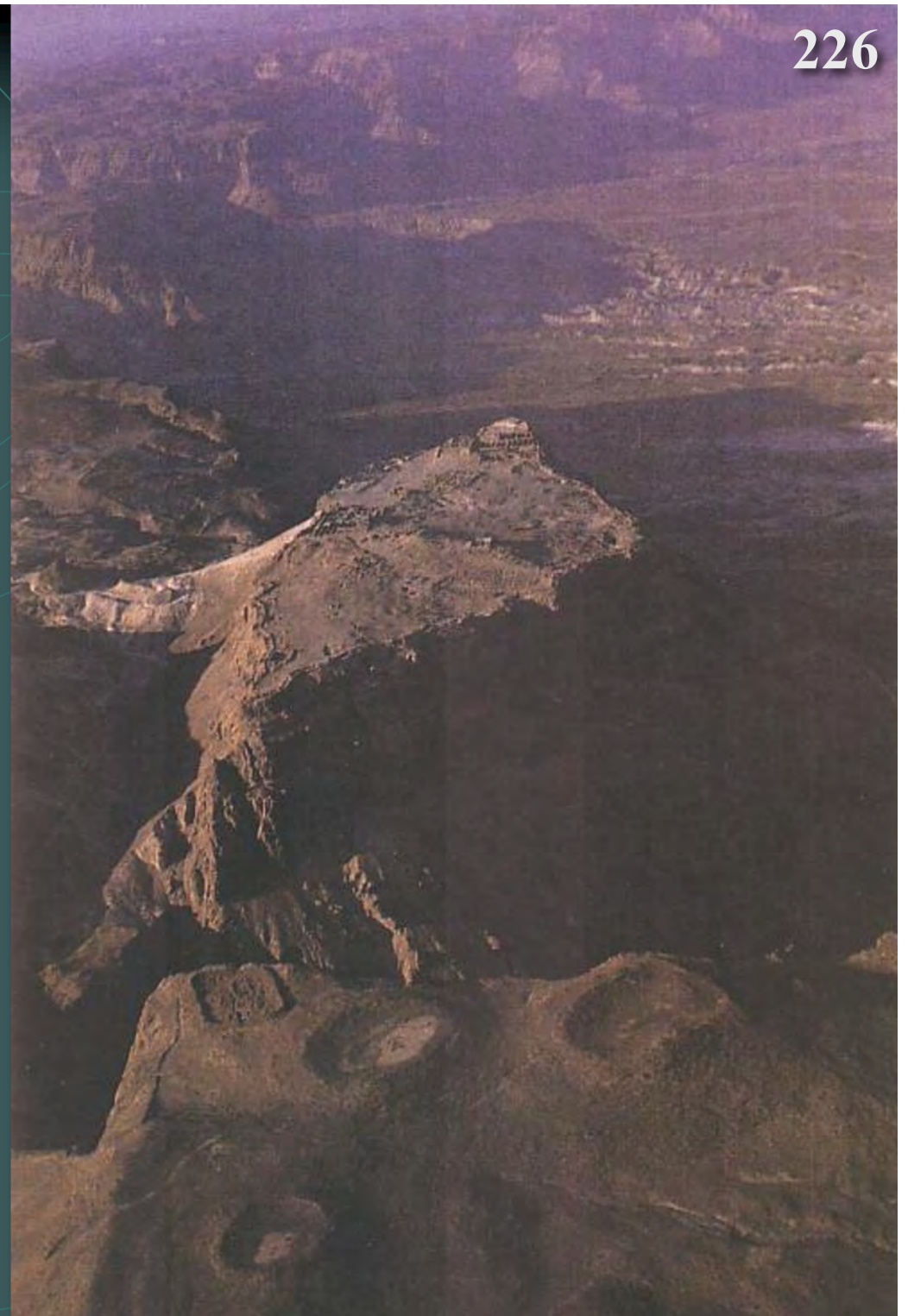
(Numbers 6:22-27)

## #8 Silver Scroll Amulet

- Ketef Hinnom, near Jerusalem
- 650-400 BC
- Earliest inscription of a biblical text

## #9 Masada

- Southwest shore of Dead Sea
- 150 BC
- Probably David's stronghold (1 Sam. 22:4-5)





## #10 Mosaic Map


**Madaba,  
Jordan**


**AD 550**


**Largest &  
oldest map of  
Jerusalem,  
with Cardo**

# 10

### MOSAIC MAP

Madaba, Jordan

6th century C.E.

stone and glass tiles, 297 square feet

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