

Your Word is Truth (John 17:17)

Session 2

Inerrancy and Historical Reliability of the Bible¹

In this second session we'll focus on two topics.

1. The Inerrancy of the Bible.
2. The Historical Reliability of the Bible.

Let's begin by looking at our first topic.

1. The Inerrancy of the Bible.

Dr. Norman Geisler says,

"Inerrancy means "wholly true and without error." And what God breathes out (inspires) must be wholly true (inerrant). However, it is helpful to specify more clearly what is meant by "truth and what would constitute an "error." Error is what does not correspond to reality. Nothing mistaken can be true, even if the author intended the true. Otherwise, every sincere utterance ever made is true, even the grossly mistaken."

When we say that the Bible is inerrant we are saying that everything that the Bible says in its original manuscripts corresponds to the facts or reality as we know it.

The doctrine of inerrancy like the Trinity is based on a correlation of scriptures. Here is a simple argument for inerrancy.

- The Bible claims to be the word of God (2 Tim.3:16, 2 Peter 1:20-21).
- God can't lie or make a mistake (Tit. 1:2 and Heb. 6:18)
- Conclusion: therefore the Bible is inerrant and true in all it says.

Other scriptures which imply inerrancy are the following:

John 17:17, "Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth."

¹ Notes are based on lectures by Joseph Holden of Calvary Chapel Bible College.

Psalm 12:6-7 says,

6. The words of the LORD *are* pure words, *Like* silver tried in a furnace of earth, Purified seven times.

7 You shall keep them, O LORD, You shall preserve them from this generation forever.

Psalm 119:60 says, “The entirety of Your word *is* truth, And every one of Your righteous judgments *endures* forever.”

Regarding so called errors in the Bible St. Augustine says,² “When we run into a so called error in the Bible, we must assume one of two things-either the manuscript was not copied correctly or we have not understood it rightly. What we may not assume is that God made an error in inspiring the original text.”

Usually the so called errors in the Bible are a result of mistranslation or misunderstanding of a passage of scripture.

In order to say that the Bible in its original manuscripts is not the inspired inerrant word of God, you must prove that God does not exist or that He is fallible. Both of these arguments are easily refuted by scripture and logic.

2. The Historical Reliability of the Bible.

Since the original manuscripts are the inspired and inerrant word of God and we don't have the original manuscripts the following questions arises. Are the manuscripts we have historically reliable and trustworthy?

- Church Father's quotes

Scholars say that there are 36,000 quotes from the pre-Nicene (325AD) church fathers. Scholars also say if you put all their scripture references together you can construct the entire New Testament beside eleven verses.

- Manuscript evidence

A. Old Testament (for a full list of Old Testament manuscripts see end notes).

² Augustine quoted by Norman Geisler and Randy Douglass, *Brining your faith to work*. P. 160.

- The Old Testament was written primarily in Hebrew from 1400BC-400BC. We do not have the original Hebrew Manuscripts.
- The two oldest complete Hebrew Old Testament manuscripts we have are *Aleppo Codex* (900AD.) and the *Codex Leningradensis* (1008AD.)
- The Dead Sea scrolls: In March of 1947 a number of caves were found in Quram near the Dead the sea. In these caves all the books of the Old Testament were discovered with the exception of Esther. These manuscripts are important because they date from the 2nd century B.C to the 1st century AD. One specific scroll that was discovered was the Isaiah scroll which dated to 100BC. This scroll of Isaiah was compared to the latest Hebrew manuscripts and was almost identical.

Concerning the Isaiah scroll Dr. Gleason Archer said,

³“The two copies of Isaiah discovered in Quram cave 1, proved to be word for word identical with our standard Hebrew Bible in more than 95 percent of the text. The 5 percent of variation consisted chiefly of obvious slips of the pen and variations.”

B. New Testament (for a full list of New Testament manuscripts see end notes).

- The New Testament was written in Greek from 50-100AD. We do not have any of the original Greek manuscripts. Though we don't have the original Greek manuscripts we have over 5,600 Greek manuscripts which date close to the original manuscripts.
- John Ryland fragment (125AD), John18:31-33 &37-38.
- Chester Beatty Papyri (200-300AD) Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, the Pauline epistles and Revelation.
- Bodmer Papyri (175-250) Portions of the John, 1&2 Peter, Jude.
- Codex Vaticanus (325AD) contains some of the Greek Old Testament and majority of the New Testament.

³ Norman Geisler quotes Gleason Archer, Baker Encyclopedia of Christian Apologetics. P. 187.

- Codex Sinaiticus (350AD) contains half the Greek Old Testament and the entire New Testament minus John 7-8, Mark 16.
- Codex Alexandrinus (5th century) contains the entire Old Testament and most of the New Testament.

Other New Testament manuscripts we have are:

⁴Latin Vulgate 10,000 +
 Ethiopic 2,000 +
 Slavic 4,101
 Armenian 2,587
 Syriac Pashetta 350 +
 Bohairic 100
 Arabic 75
 Old Latin 50
 Anglo Saxon 7
 Gothic 6
 Sogdian 3
 Old Syriac 2
 Persian 2
 Frankish 1
SUBTOTAL 19, 284
GRAND TOTAL 24,970

In comparing the manuscripts of the New Testament with other ancient writings Dr. Norman Geisler says, “There are 643 copies of Homers Iliad, and that is the most famous book of ancient Greece! No one doubts the text of Julius Caesar’s Gallic Wars, but we only have ten copies and the earliest of those was made 1,000 years after it was written. To have such an abundance of copies for the New Testament from dates within 70 years of their writings is amazing!”

Before we move on it’s important to note that some of the copies have minor variants or mistakes. By mistakes I mean things as a result of human frailty such as, misspelled words, not separating words, skipping a couple verses, reversing the order of words. Regarding this let me say two things.

⁴ Josh McDowell, New Evidence that demands a Verdict.

1. Because we have an abundance of manuscripts scholars can compare copy with copy and determine what was to be in the original text. Let me give you an example:

- Yu won a million dollars.
- You w#n a million dollars.
- You a million dollars
- Won you a million dollars.

The message is you won a million dollars; the original message is coming through accurately.

2. Remember that Inerrancy refers to the original manuscripts. When we are talking about inspiration and inerrancy we are looking for the voice or meaning. The copies that we have of the Bible are inerrant in that they 100% communicate the message original text.

Dr. A.T Robertson said, "Our concern is only with a thousandth part of the text."

Not only do we have an abundance of manuscripts, but the manuscripts we have are internally and externally historically reliable.

- Manuscripts were written by eyewitness.

A. Luke 1:1-3

1 Inasmuch as many have taken in hand to set in order a narrative of those things which have been fulfilled among us,

2 just as those who from the beginning were eyewitnesses and ministers of the word delivered them to us,

3 it seemed good to me also, having had perfect understanding of all things from the very first, to write to you an orderly account, most excellent Theophilus,

B. 2 Peter 1:16 For we did not follow cunningly devised fables when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of His majesty.

C. John 19:35 And he who has seen has testified, and his testimony is true; and he knows that he is telling the truth, so that you may believe.

D. John 21:24 This is the disciple who testifies of these things, and wrote these things; and we know that his testimony is true.

E. Hebrews 2:3-4

3 how shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation, which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed to us by those who heard *Him*,

4 God also bearing witness both with signs and wonders, with various miracles, and gifts of the Holy Spirit, according to His own will?

F. 1 John 1:1-3

1 That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, concerning the Word of life—

2 the life was manifested, and we have seen, and bear witness, and declare to you that eternal life which was with the Father and was manifested to us—

3 that which we have seen and heard we declare to you, that you also may have fellowship with us; and truly our fellowship *is* with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ.

- Counterproductive testimony.

A. The personal flaws of Bible characters and the authors are not omitted.

B. The triumph of the religious and civil authorities over Jesus are not omitted.

C. The testimony of women concerning Jesus' Resurrection was not omitted.

D. The Bible is silent concerning controversial issues and sayings that the early church and the church today struggles with.

- Archeology (for a full list of archeological discoveries see end notes)

Nelson Glueck says, "It may be stated categorically that no archaeological discovery has ever controverted a biblical reference. Scores of archaeological findings have been made which confirm in clear outline or exact detail historical

statements in the Bible.(Nelson Glueck, *Rivers in the Desert: A History of the Negev* (New York: Farrar, Strauss, & Cudahy, 1959, p. 31)”

- Joseph P. Free says, “In addition to illuminating the Bible, archaeology has confirmed countless pages which have been rejected by critics as unhistorical or contradictory to known facts.” (Joseph P. Free, *Archaeology and Bible History*. Wheaton: Scripture Press, 1969, p. 1)

The end result of a fully inspired and inerrant Bible is it is authoritative in all it says. One example that the Bible is authoritative is the teachings of Jesus (Matt.4, John 10:35).

In closing the Bible is the inspired inerrant authoritative word of God.

Biblical manuscripts and Archeological Discoveries by Joseph Holden of Calvary Chapel Bible College

Old Testament Manuscripts

Name/	Original Date	Earliest Copy	Gap	Books	Present Location
Title	Composition	Date			
Dead Sea Scrolls	13 th -4 th cent B.C.	250 B.C. – A.D. 68		223+ biblical mss. from every book of the Hebrew Bible except Esther	Jerusalem
Dead Sea Isaiah Scroll (1QIs-a)	8 th cent B.C.	150-100 B.C.		Only complete Hebrew copy of the entire book of Isaiah	Hebrew University
Dead Sea Scroll 1 Samuel (4Q Sanuel-B)	10 th -9 th cent B.C.	4 th -3 rd cent B.C.		Contains 1 Samuel 16, 19, 21,23. Perhaps the oldest Dead Sea Manuscript to date	

Rylands Papyrus 458	13 th cent B.C.	150 B.C.	Contains Greek portions of Deut. 23-28.	John Rylands Library Manchester, England
Nash Papyrus	13 th cent. B.C.)	150 B.C.-AD.68	Damaged portion of the Decalogue Exodus 20; Deut. 5:6-21; Shema 6:4-9	Cambridge Univ. Lib
Peshitta Syriac	13 th cent.-4 th cent. B.C.	A.D. 100-200	Entire Old Testament in Syriac	
Chester Beatty Papyri	13 th – 8 th cent B.C.	A.D. 150	Contains large portions of Genesis, Numbers, Deuteronomy, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Daniel, Esther, and Ecclesiastes	Dublin
Targum of Onkelos	13 th cent. B.C.	A.D. 200	Torah	
Codex Vaticanus (B)	13 th cent.-4 th cent. B.C.	A.D. 325	The Old Testament and Apocrypha in Greek uncials except portions of Genesis, 2 Kings, Psalms, 1 and 2 Maccabees, and the Prayer of Manesses.	Vatican Library
Codex Ephraemi Rescriptus	13 th -10 th cent B.C.	A.D. 345	Contains Job, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Solomon	
Codex Siniaticus (ξ)	13 th -4 th cent. B.C.	A.D. 350	Half the Old Testament in Greek uncials	British Museum
Latin Vulgate	A.D. 390-405		Entire Old Testament in Latin	

Codex Alexandrinus (A)	13 th -4 th cent. B.C.	A.D. 450	Entire Old Testament in uncial Greek	London, British Library
British Museum Oriental 4445	13 th cent. B.C.	A.D. 850	Pentateuch	British Museum
Codex Cairensis (C)	13 th -4 th cent. B.C.	A.D. 895	Former and Latter prophets	Aleppo, Syria
Aleppo Codex	13 th – 4 th cent. B.C.	A.D. 900	Oldest complete Hebrew text of the Old Testament	Jerusalem
Leningrad Codex	8 th -4 th cent B.C.	A.D. 916	Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel The twelve minor prophets	
Codex Leningradensis B-19A (L)	13 th -4 th cent. B.C.	A.D. 1008	Complete Hebrew text of the Old Testament	Leningrad Public Library
Samaritan Pentateuch (SP)	13 th cent B.C.	A.D. 10-11 th cent.	Pentateuch written in Samaritan Characters	Nablus;

Reliability of the New Testament

Bibliographical Test

Ancient New Testament Manuscripts and Dating

Name/ Title	Original Date of Autograph	Earliest Copy Date	Gap from Original	Books	Present Location
John Rylands Fragment (P52)	A.D. 85-100	A.D. 125	25-40 yrs	Selection of the Gospel of John, includes chapter 18:31-33, 37-38 and is considered the oldest New Testament fragment known	John Rylands Library Manchester, England
Chester Beatty Papyri (P45,46,47)	A.D. 50-100	A.D. 200-300	100—250 yrs	Contains portions of Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, Pauline epistles, and the book of Revelation.	Beatty Museum Dublin
Bodmer Papyri (P66, 72, 75)	A.D. 50-70	A.D. 175-250	105-200 yrs	Substantial portions of the Gospel of John and the earliest copy of 1 and 2 Peter and Jude.	Library of World Literature Culgany
Codex Vaticanus (B)	A.D. 50-100	A.D. 325	225-275 yrs	Codex contains most of the Greek Old Testament and the majority of the New Testament	Vatican Library Rome
Codex Sinaiticus (ⲁ)	A.D. 50-100	A.D. 350	250-300 yrs	Earliest copy of a complete New Testament except for several verses Mark 16 and John 7 and 8. Also includes Over half the Greek Old Testament (LXX)	British Museum London
Codex Alexandrinus (A)	A.D. 50-100	5 th century A.D.	350-400 yrs	Written in uncial Greek script, Alexandrinus possesses the entire	British Museum London

Old Testament and most of the New.

Codex Ephraemi (C)	A.D. 50-100	A.D. 45	350-400 yrs	Ephraemi was erased in the 12th century and then restored by Constantine Tischendorf in the 19 th century. It contains and portions of every book in the New Testament except 2 Thessalonians and 2 John	Bibliotheque Nationale Paris
Codex Bezae (D)	A.D. 50-65	5 th to 6 th century A.D.	400-500 yrs	The manuscript is a rare Greek and Latin bilingual text of portions of the Gospels, Acts, and 3 John 11-15. 3 John is in Latin only.	Cambridge Univ. Cambridge
Magdalen Papyrus	A.D. 40-65	A.D. 75 - 200	10-160 yrs	Small fragment of Matthew 26:7-8, 10, 14-15. German scholar Carsten Thiede has argued for middle to late 1 st century, if correct, the fragment would be the oldest manuscript of the New Testament.	Magdalen College Oxford
Codex Claramontanus (D2)	A.D. 50-64	A.D. 6 th century	500 yrs	Bilingual Greek/Latin manuscript of the Pauline Epistles, including	Bibliotheque Nationale Paris
Codex Washingtonianus	A.D. 50-100	A.D. 4 th -5 th century	250-400 yrs	Contains the four Gospels	Freer Gallery of Art Washington DC

Old Testament Archaeology

Name	Date	Evidence
Temptation Seal	3 rd Millennium B.C.	<p>This seal, which was discovered in Sumer, shows the same sequence of events that occurred in the Garden of Eden during the temptation of Eve. The artifact depicts a man and a woman viewing a tree as they are seated, with a serpent whispering in the ear of the woman as both are reaching for the fruit of the tree. In the past, the temptation incident was dismissed as Jewish myth, however, this seal demonstrates that the essentials of the temptation account in Genesis were well known thousands of years prior to the writing of the book of Genesis. (Genesis 3) The Genesis account in the Bible is more historical than other accounts because it is the least embellished.</p>
Adam and Eve Seal	3500 B.C.	<p>The Sumerian seal found by E.A. Speiser depicts a naked man and woman bowed in humiliation being driven out followed by the serpent (Genesis 3:23).</p>
Ebla Tablets	2350 B.C.	<p>This remarkable discovery by Paolo Matthiae while excavating Tell Mardikh, south of Aleppo, Syria, yielded approximately 16,000 clay tablets that describe various cities such as Sodom, Zeboim, Hazor, Megiddo, Jerusalem, and Gaza which were previously thought to be legendary. The tablets also record the concept of Ex Nihilo Creation similar to the Genesis account. In addition, the tablets reveal names that bore resemblance to the Hebrew names used two hundred years later such as Nahor, Israel, Michael, Ishmael, and Eber. Further, several deities named Dagon and Baal are identified which correlate to the biblical narrative.</p>

Belshazzar Inscription (Nabonidus Chronicle)	6 th century B.C.	For years historians denied the historical existence of “Belshazzar,” however, in 1854 Henry Rawlinson discovered an inscription in Ur which named “Bel-shar-usur” (Belshazzar) as the eldest son and coregent with King Nabonidus, who was often away from Babylon and left Belshazzar as king. This clarifies Daniel 5:29 which says that Daniel was “ <i>third</i> ruler in the kingdom.”
Hittites	1300 B.C.	Once thought to be mythological rather than historical due to their lack of extra-biblical mention, the Hittites proved to be the latter when, A.H. Sayce (1876) and Hugo Winckler (1906) discovered the Hittite library in central Turkey which consisted of law codes, legends, covenants, and myths. These discoveries not only establish the historicity of the previously unknown kingdom, they give one understanding of Abraham’s rationale for buying a <i>portion</i> of the land associated with the purchase of the cave of Machpelah from Ephron the Hittite (Genesis 15:20; 1 kings 10:29; 23).
Amarna Tablets	1400 B.C.	In 1887 a peasant woman stumbled across clay tablets with cuneiform inscriptions. Subsequent deciphering revealed the early conquests of Canaan by the Hebrews know by the name “Habiru.” The tablets, in conjunction with other discoveries at Mari and Nuzi

confirm that the Habiru were well known in Mesopotamia by the early second millennium B.C.

Nuzi Tablets	1500-1400 B.C.	<p>Excavations at Nuzi, in modern Iraq, lead to the discovery of thousands of clay tablets written in a Babylonian dialect which describe important parallels in law, customs, and society, with the biblical patriarchs and as late as the first millennium B.C. One such set of documents reveal that if a man did not have a son, he may adopt a slave, relative, or freeborn man to care for the elder man and carry on his name. This is reminiscent of Abraham's relationship with Eliezer in Genesis 15:2-4. Other documents illuminate a custom for women, who unable to conceive, gave their husbands another wife to bear children and to become the family heir (Genesis 16:2). If in the future the first wife bears children, the second wife and her son would be given a share of the family wealth and could not be cast out. Perhaps this explains why Abraham was reluctant to expel Hagar and Ishmael (Genesis 21:10-11)</p>
Babylonian Chronicles	600 B.C.	<p>The chronicles report of King Nebuchadnezzar's first decade as king. Information pertaining to his political and military exploits have been published since 1954, but of special interest are the details of Nebuchadnezzar's invasion of Palestine in the late 7th and early 6th century B.C. which corresponds to the prophecies of Jeremiah , 2 Chronicles 36:9 and 2 Kings 24.</p>

Tel Dan Inscription	9 th century B.C.	In 1993, Tell Dan excavators in the area of northern Galilee near Mount Herman unearthed a stone slab which contained several lines of incomplete Aramaic inscriptions. Among the identifiable inscriptions were the first extra-biblical citations of King David which read "The House of David" and "The King of Israel." Later discoveries also mention Jehoram and Ahaziah, names that correspond to 2 Kings 8-9.
Siloam Inscription	700 B.C.	In 1880, archaeologists discovered a cursive Hebrew inscription at the southern end of Hezekiah's 1700 ft. limestone water tunnel. It tells of how two groups of workers tunneled from the Pool of Siloam to a retention pool inside the Jerusalem city walls. (2 Kings 20:20; Isa 22:9f.; 2 Chron 32:30-31)
Taylor Prism	701 B.C.	The six-sided clay prism found in 1830 at Nineveh record the campaigns of Sennacherib (705-681 B.C.) against Judah and Hezekiah at Jerusalem as described in Isaiah 36-37 and 2 Kings 18-19.
Gilgamesh Epic	2000 B.C.	Babylonian clay tablets that describes a flood that possesses remarkable similarities to the flood recorded in the book of Genesis. The god Ea warns Utnapishtim to build a square ship in which to endure the week long deluge. After the storm, the waters

subside in one day and the boat rests upon Mt. Nisir. The deities are saddened over the destruction and make a covenant with Utnapishtim and grant him divine immortality. Though there are notable differences, it is consistent of a record that would be established

after such a great event. Worldwide there are over thirty separate accounts of the flood from various people groups living today.

Karnak Inscription	9 th century B.C.	Also known as the "Shishak Relief" depicts Egyptian Pharaoh Shishak's military victories over Rehoboam in the late 10 th century B.C.. This relief corresponds to the events mentioned in 1 Kings 14 and 2 Chronicles 12.
Moabite Stone	840-820 B.C.	This Moabite slab was found in 1868, east of the Dead Sea, by F.A.Klein. It documents the military conflict between King Mesha and the Israelites. It records the name "Yaweh" and how Omri, king of Israel, allowed Moab only to allow his son Ahab to rule the land. Eventually, after one generation, the god Chemosh enabled Mesha to reoccupy the land. This stone establishes the historicity of Omri, the usage of "Yaweh," and 2 Kings 1:1; 3:4-5.
Behistun Inscription	500 B.C.	Extra-biblical monumental reference to the Persian victory over Babylon and the rise of Darius I (522-486 B.C.) to power (Daniel 5:31; 6:1; Nehemiah 12:22; Ezra 4-6; Hag 1:1, 15; 2:10).
Cyrus Cylinder	500 B.C.	Persian clay cylinder discovered by Hormuzd Rassam that chronicles Cyrus's victory and the issuing of his decree permitting

freedom of worship and the return of captive gods to their own land
(cf. Ezra 1:1-3; 6:3-5; Isa 45:1)

Weld-Blundell Prism	2100 B.C.	This collection of tablets offers extensive lists of Sumerian kings that reigned before and after the “great flood.” Moreover, the kings listed before the flood are identified with extremely long lives, whereas, the kings who reigned after the flood have significantly shorter life spans, a feature consistent with the biblical account mentioned in the book of Genesis.
Merneptah Stele	1230 B.C.	Egyptian hieroglyphic slab containing Pharaoh Merneptah’s extra-biblical military exploits and the earliest mention of “Israel” outside the Old Testament. Therefore demonstrating that the ancient Israelites were in Canaan in the middle of the 13 th century B.C.
Black Obelisk of Shalmanaser III	841 B.C.	Discovered in 1846 by A.H. Layard in the palace of Nimrud, the Black Obelisk confirms the historical personage and military victories of the Assyrian King, and biblical figure, Shalmaneser III. In addition, the obelisk portrays Israel’s King “Jehu, son of Omri” bowing to pay tribute before Shalmaneser (2 Kings 9-10).
House of Yahweh Ostrakon	800 B.C.	The ostrakon is a clay pottery shard used as a receipt for the donation of silver to Solomon’s Temple. It is the earliest piece of evidence referencing the Temple outside the Biblical text.

Code of Hammurabi	1765-1700 B.C.	Historians have long asserted that the Israelites were too primitive to have such an advanced Mosaic Law Code by the 15 th century B.C., instead they place Israel's law formulation in the 5 th or 6 th century B.C.. However, with the discovery of Hammurabi's sophisticated code (282 laws dealing with morality, commerce, and religion), which predates Mosaic Law, there is little question as to the possibility of a 15 th century B.C. chronology of the Mosaic Law. Moreover, the Hammurabi Code which predates Moses by over 200 years, answers the objection that writing was a much later development in Canaan.
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Archaeology from the New Testament

Name	Date	Evidence
James Ossuary	A.D. 63	The 20 inch long limestone box is believed to be the past repository for the bones of James, brother of Jesus. The side panel of the box contains Aramaic script which reads "James, son of Joseph, brother of Jesus." If authentic, the ossuary would be the earliest archaeological evidence directly relating to James and Jesus.
Pilate Inscription	1 st century	Antonio Frova discovered a stone slab at Caesarea Maritima with a Latin inscription stating "Tiberium Pontius Pilate Prefect of Judea." This is the only archaeological evidence giving Pilate's name and

title.

Gabbatha	1 st century	According to William F. Albright the court location of Jesus's trial that is identified in John 19:13 and Matthew 27:27 as "the Pavement" or "Gabbatha" is believed to be at the Roman military headquarters (Tower of Antonia) in Jerusalem located at the northwest corner of the temple area.
Gallio Inscription	1 st century	In 1908, an inscription was found in northern Greece (Delphi) that identifies "Gallio" as the "Proconsul" being in office from A.D. 51-53 which corresponds to Luke's record in Acts 18:12-14.
Zues and Hermes	1 st century	In 1909, archaeologists unearthed several inscriptions and a temple near Lystra that identified Zeus and Hermes as the two most important gods since they were believed to have visited the earth. These gods were expected to return one day in the future, which helps scholars understand the reaction of the people when trying to identify Barnabas and Paul as Zeus and Hermes (Acts 14:7-13).
Yohanan Crucifixion	1 st century	Crucifixion victim, Yohanan Ben Ha'galgol, was discovered in 1968 in northeastern Jerusalem. Researchers gained vital information about crucifixion practices in the middle 1 st century that corroborate Christ's crucifixion experience as described in the gospels. They discovered that Ben Ha'galgaol was crucified with seven inch spikes driven through the feet and lower arm. In addition, both legs were broken. (Mark 15; Luke 23; John 19)

Pool of Bethesda	1 st century	During excavation in 1888 near the Church of St. Anne, the remains of the Pool of Bethesda mentioned in John 5:2 were discovered. Previously, this pool had no extra-biblical mention.
Coins	1 st century	Various coinage spoken of in the New Testament such as silver shekels (Mt 26:14-15), tribute penny Mark 12:13-17), and the widow's mite (Luke 21:1-4), have been identified as historical.
Ossuaries	A.D. 40-50	Several burial ossuaries near Jerusalem were found with the mark of the cross and various prayers directed to Jesus. It indicates early recognition that the followers of Jesus viewed his death on the cross as significant and that Jesus was God.