

# Introduction to Christian Apologetics:

## ∞ 05 Historicity of the Bible ∞

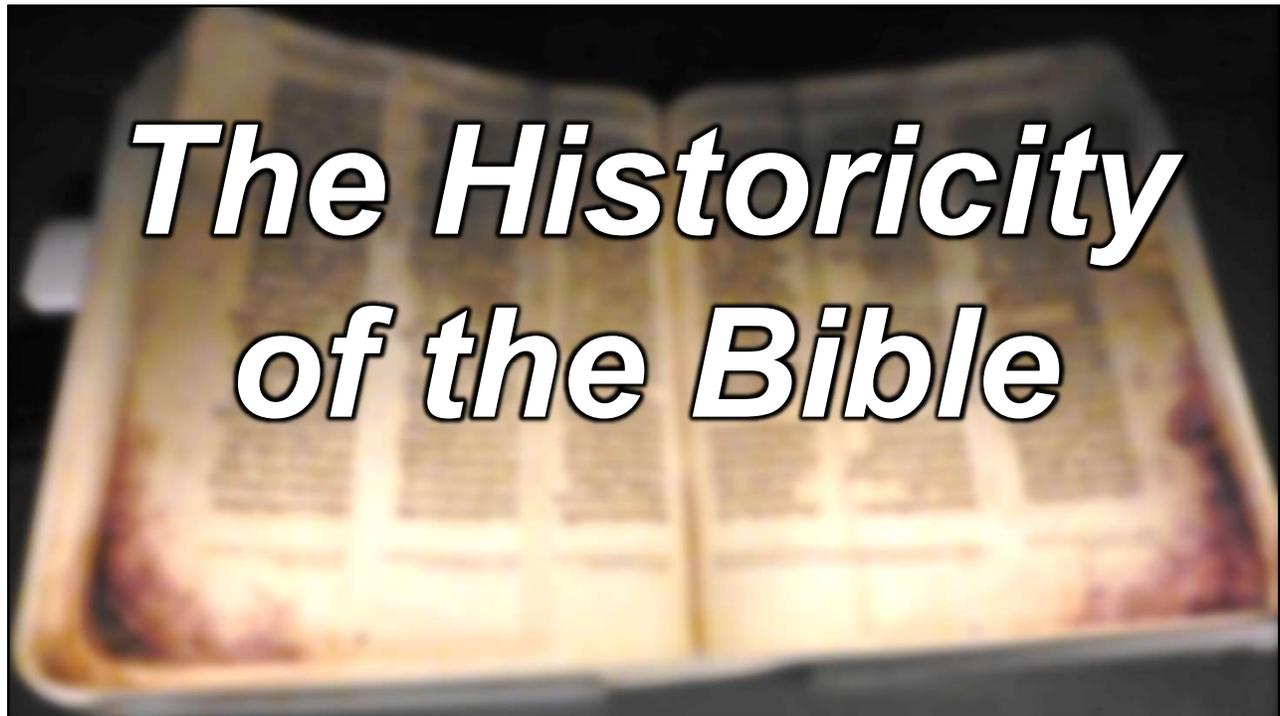
Richard G. Howe, Ph.D.

Provost

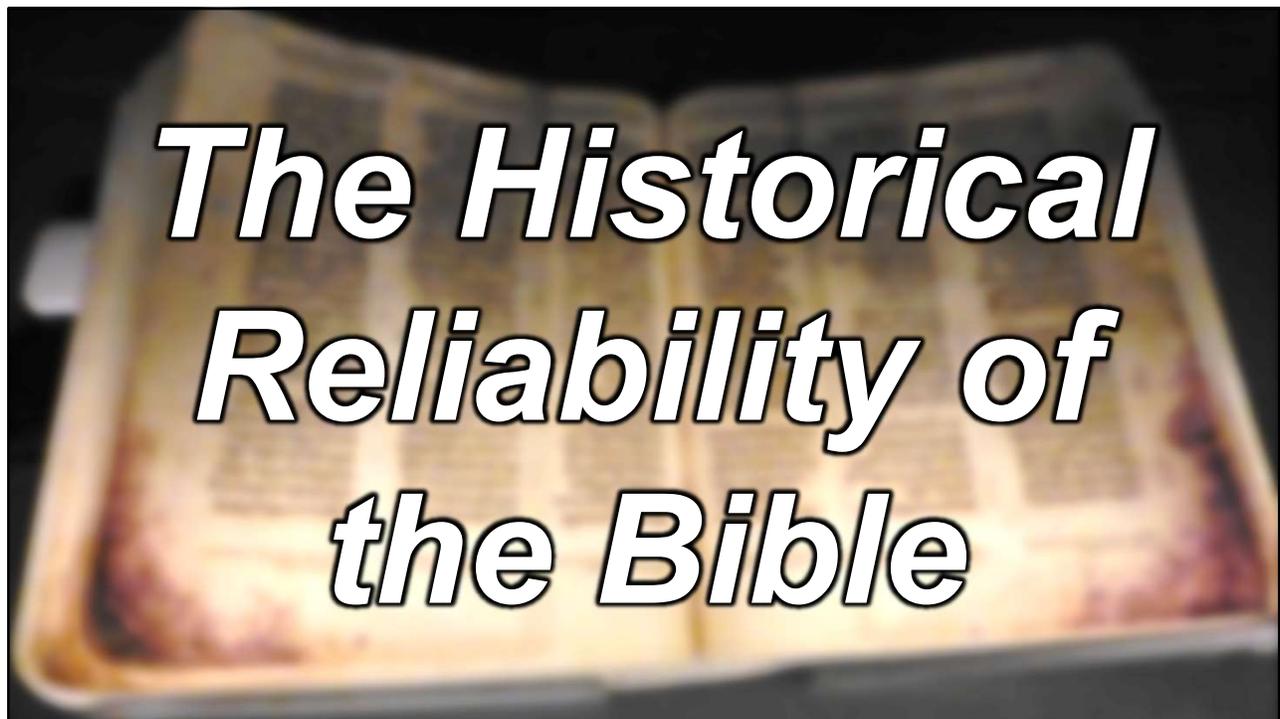
Professor of Philosophy and Apologetics

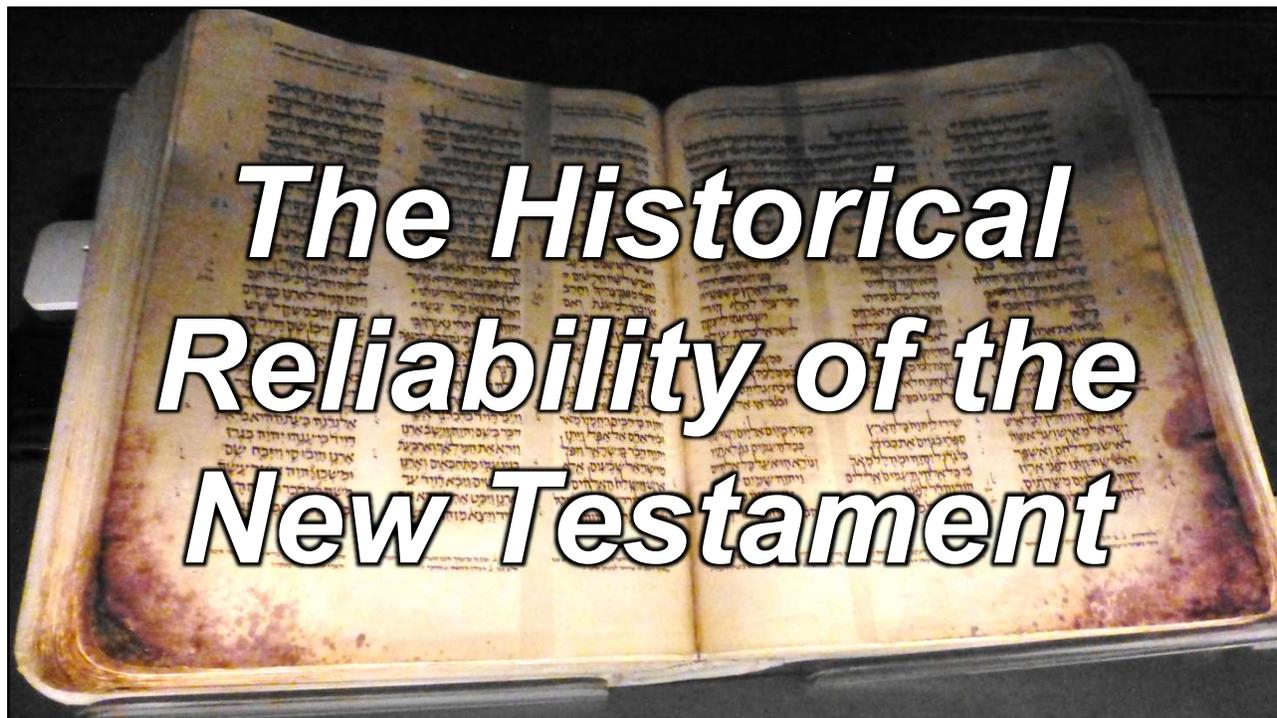
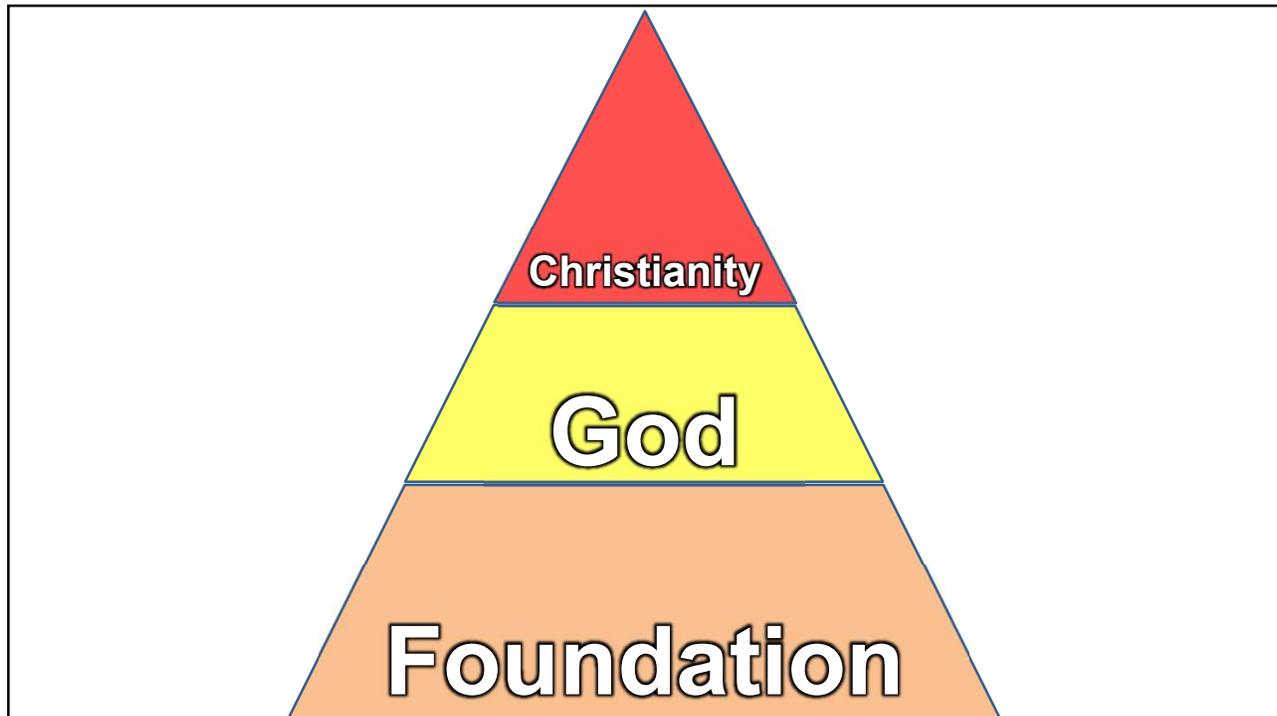
Norman L. Geisler Chair of Christian Apologetics

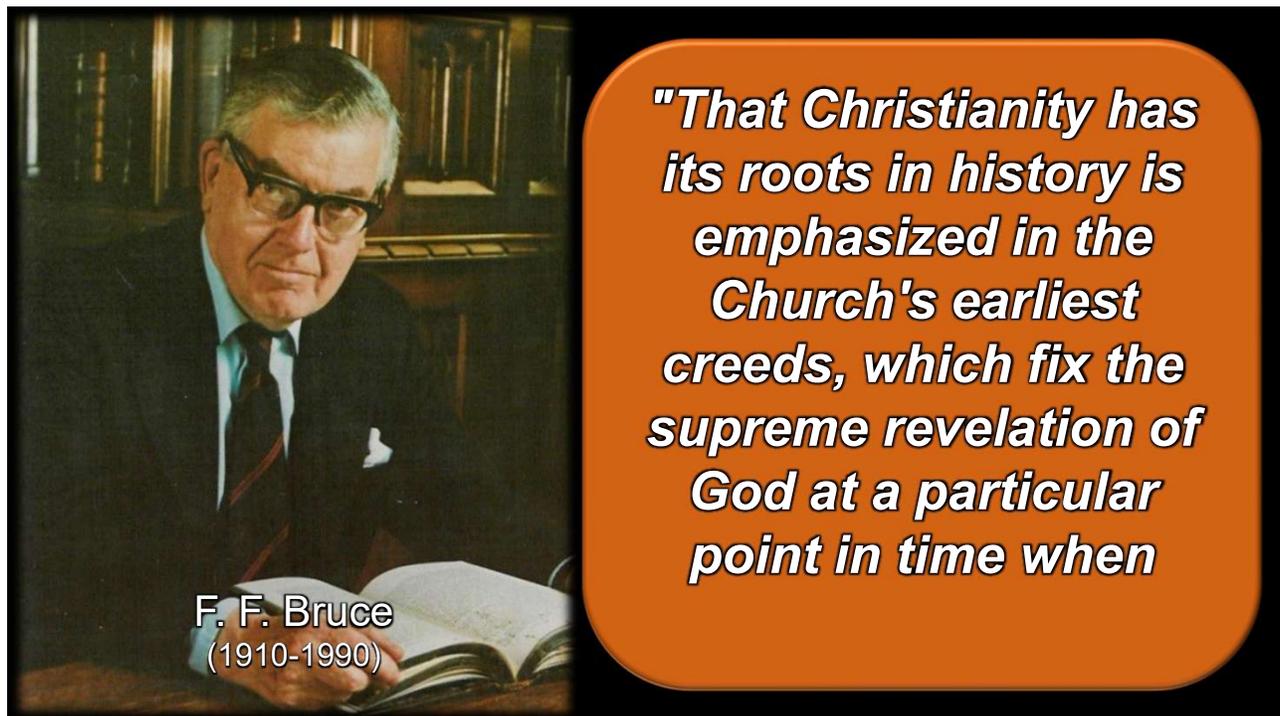
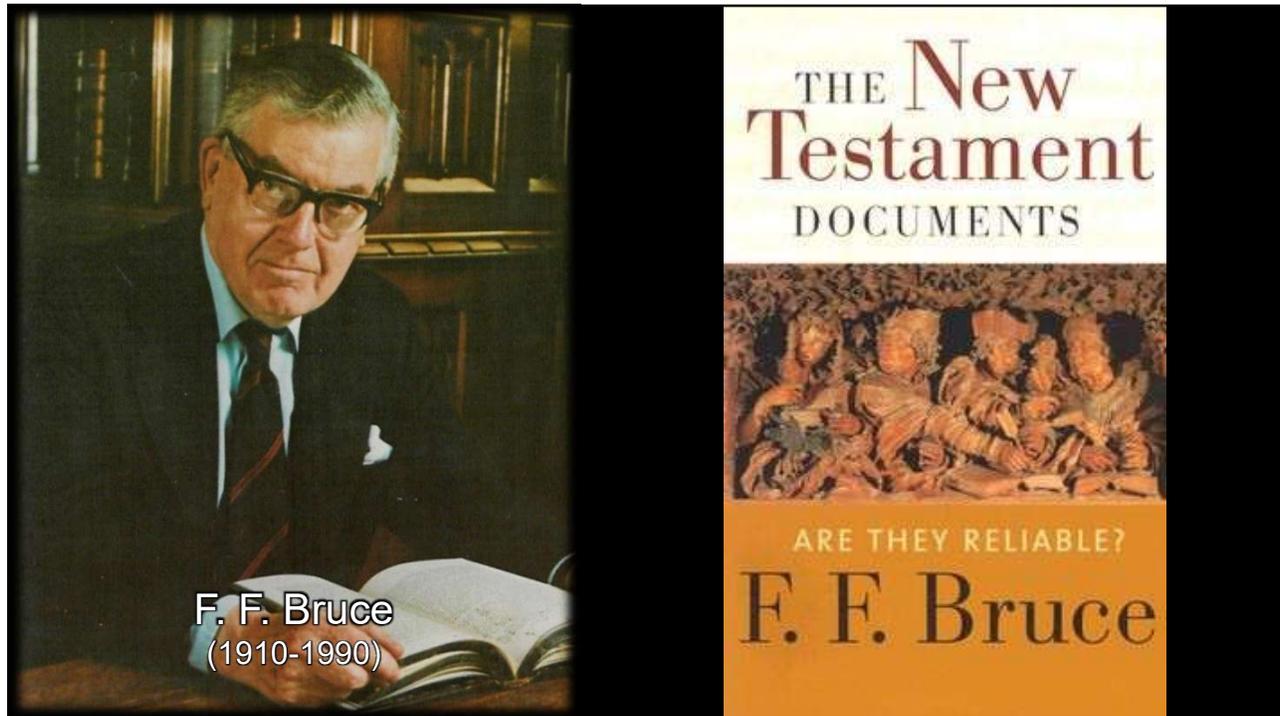
Southern Evangelical Seminary, Rock Hill, South Carolina, USA

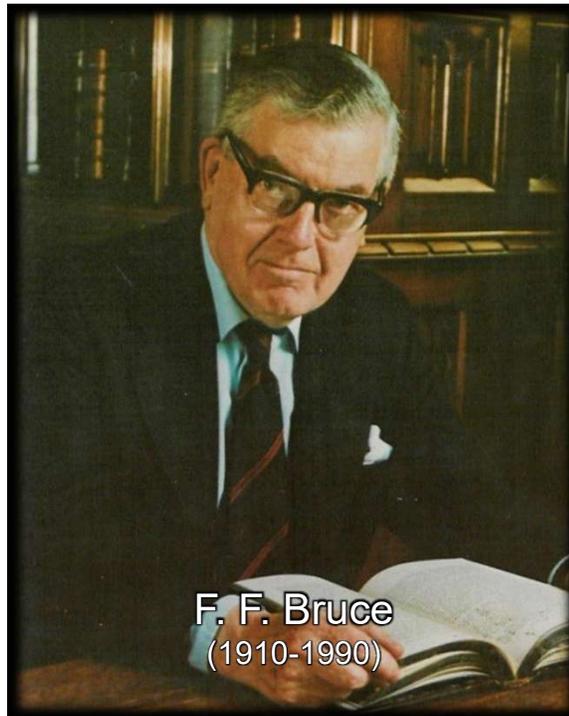


# *The Historicity of the Bible*



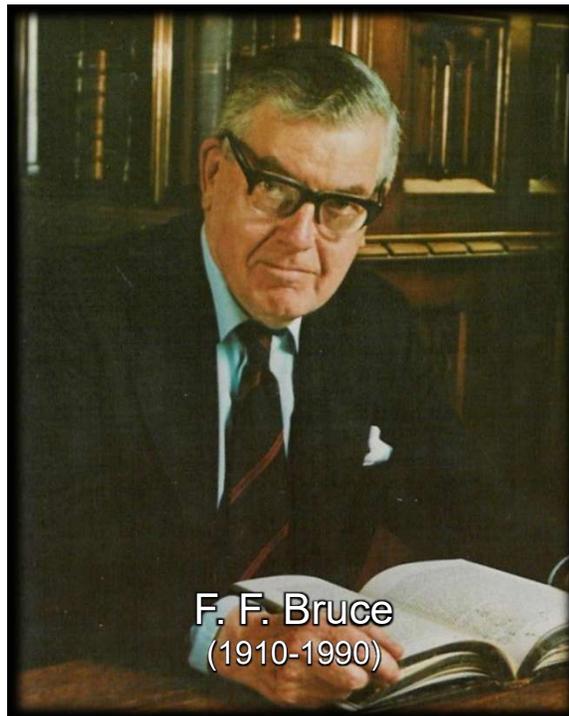






F. F. Bruce  
(1910-1990)

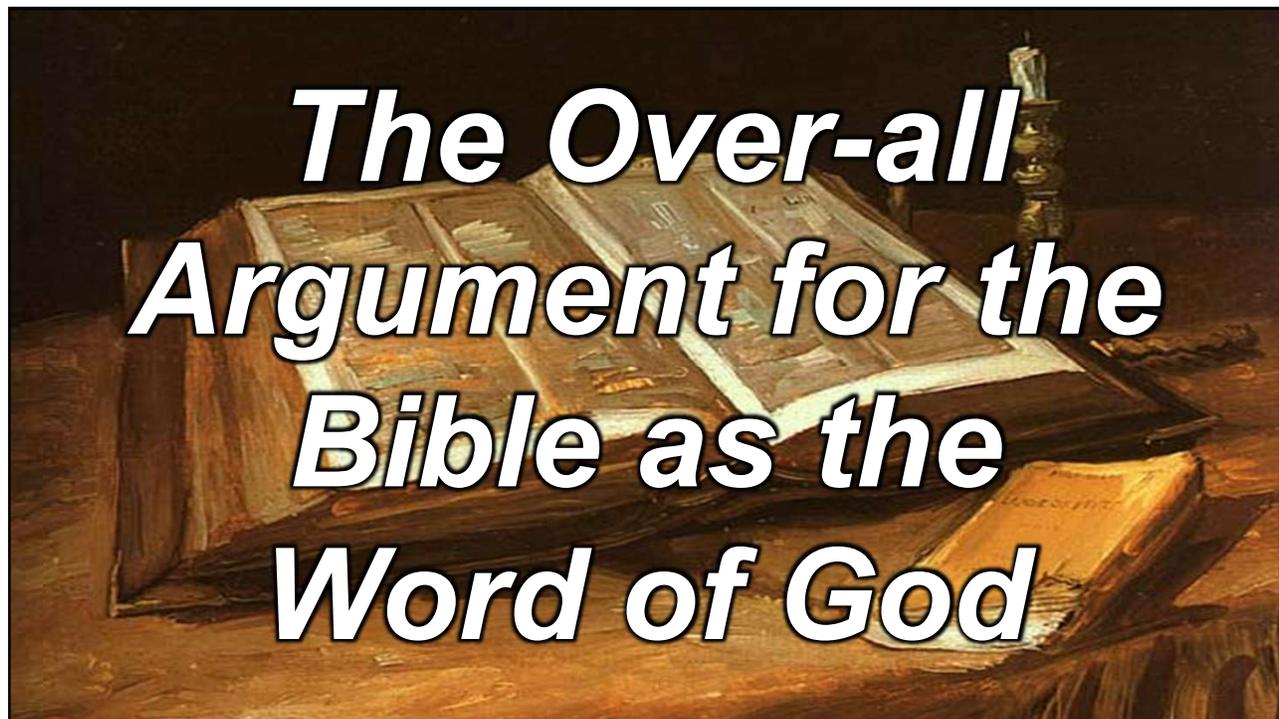
***"Jesus Christ, His only Son our Lord ... suffered under Pontius Pilate.' This historical 'once-for-all-ness' of Christianity, which distinguishes it from those religious and philosophical systems***



F. F. Bruce  
(1910-1990)

***"which are not specially related to any particular time, makes the reliability of the writings which purport to record this revelation a question of first-rate importance."***

[F. F. Bruce, *The New Testament Documents: Are They Reliable?* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing, 1988), 8]



**1. *The Bible is a basically reliable and trustworthy document of history.***

***Historicity of the Bible***

**2. *On the basis of this, we have sufficient evidence to believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.***

***Who Is Jesus?***

**3. *Jesus Christ teaches that the Bible is the Word of God.***

***The Inspiration and Inerrancy of the Bible***

**4. *Therefore, the Bible is the Word of God and Christianity is true.***

***The Truth of Christianity***

- 1. The Bible is a basically reliable and trustworthy document of history.** **Historicity of the Bible**
- 2. On the basis of this, we have sufficient evidence to believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.** **Who Is Jesus?**
- 3. Jesus Christ teaches that the Bible is the Word of God.** **The Inspiration and Inerrancy of the Bible**
- 4. Therefore, the Bible is the Word of God and Christianity is true.** **The Truth of Christianity**



***Is the New Testament that we have today an accurate copy of the original New Testament?***

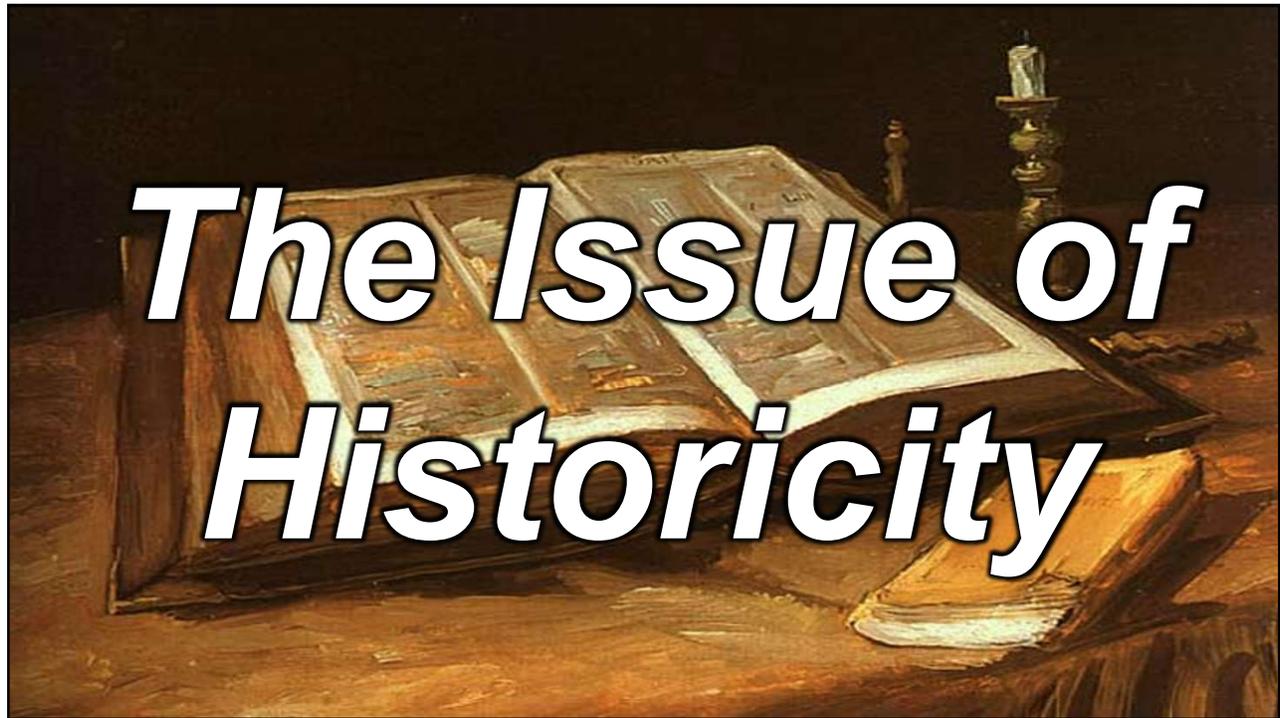
***☞ Do we have what they wrote? ☞***

***This is an historical question involving the task of examining the reliability of the New Testament documents with regard to their transmission down to us through history.***

***Did the events attested to in the New Testament really happen?***

***☞ Is what they wrote true? ☞***

***This is an historical question involving the task of examining corroborating evidence and judging the plausibility of eyewitness testimony.***

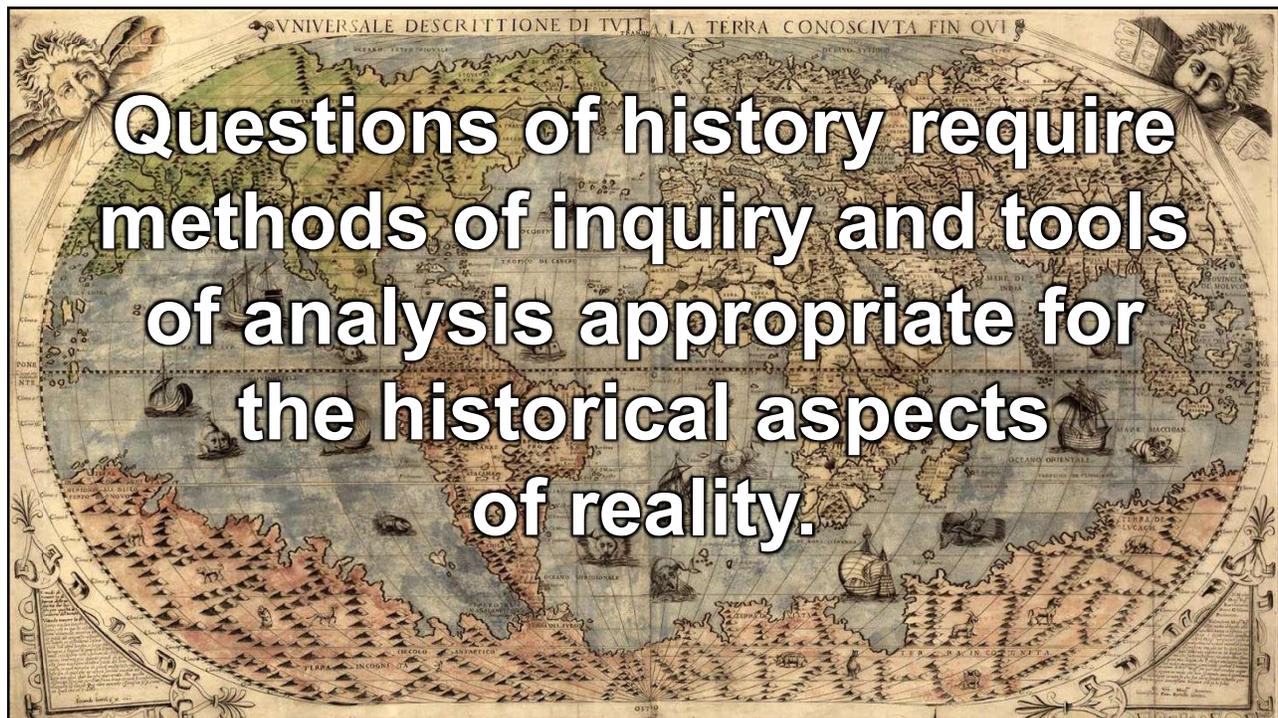
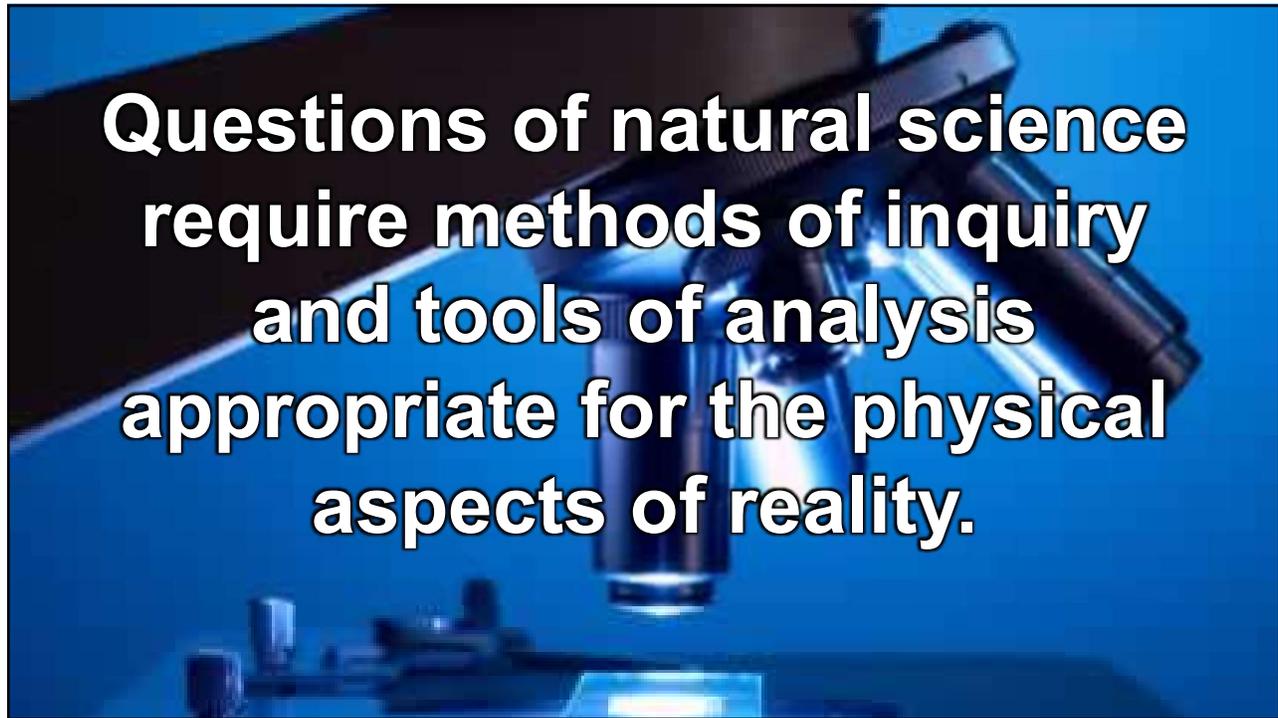


# ***The Issue of Historicity***

***In many instances, the test  
for the truth of a claim will  
differ according to the kind of  
thing about which the  
claim is made.***

***Different aspects of reality  
require different methods of  
inquiry and tools of analysis.***

**Questions of mathematics  
require methods of inquiry  
and tools of analysis  
appropriate for the  
mathematical aspects  
of reality.**



***Confusion and error can arise when assumptions from one aspect masquerade as a question in different aspect.***

**What if someone argued that the account could not be historically accurate because it is impossible for a human to walk on water.**

***What assumption is being made?***

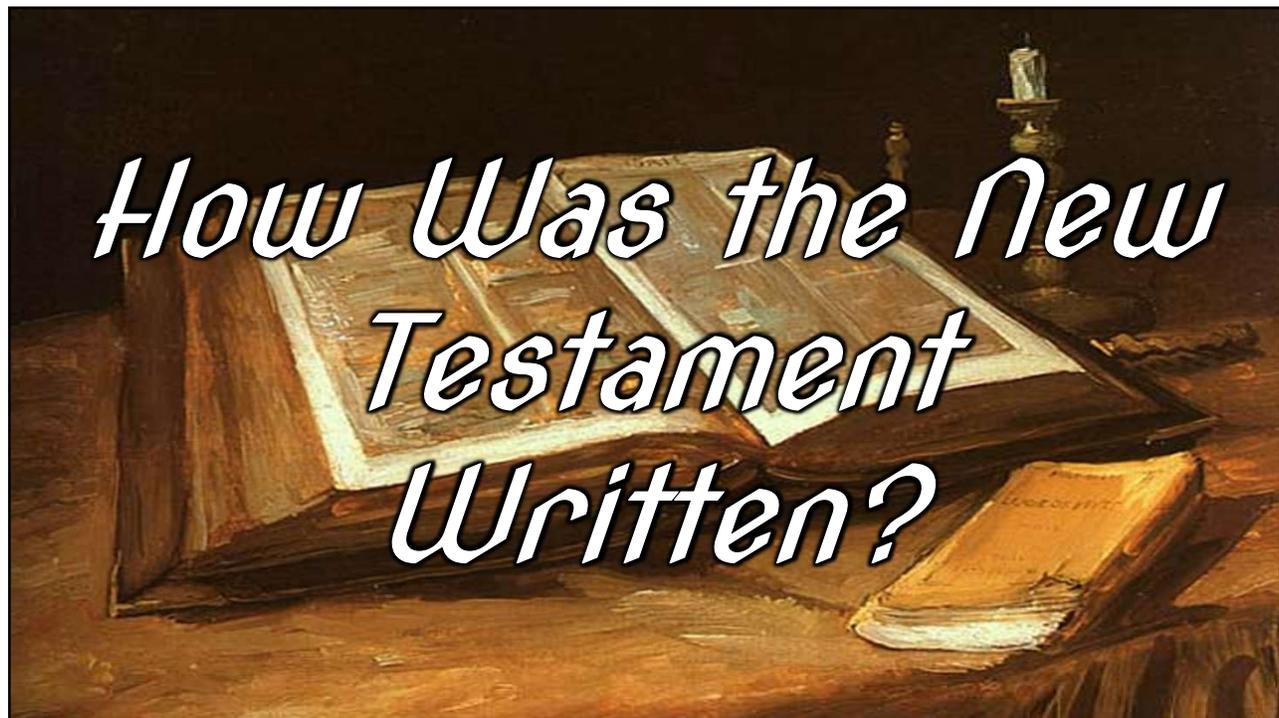
***miracles are not possible***

***The question of whether miracles are possible is what kind of question?***

What if someone argued that the account could not be historically accurate because it is impossible for a human to walk on water.

# philosophical

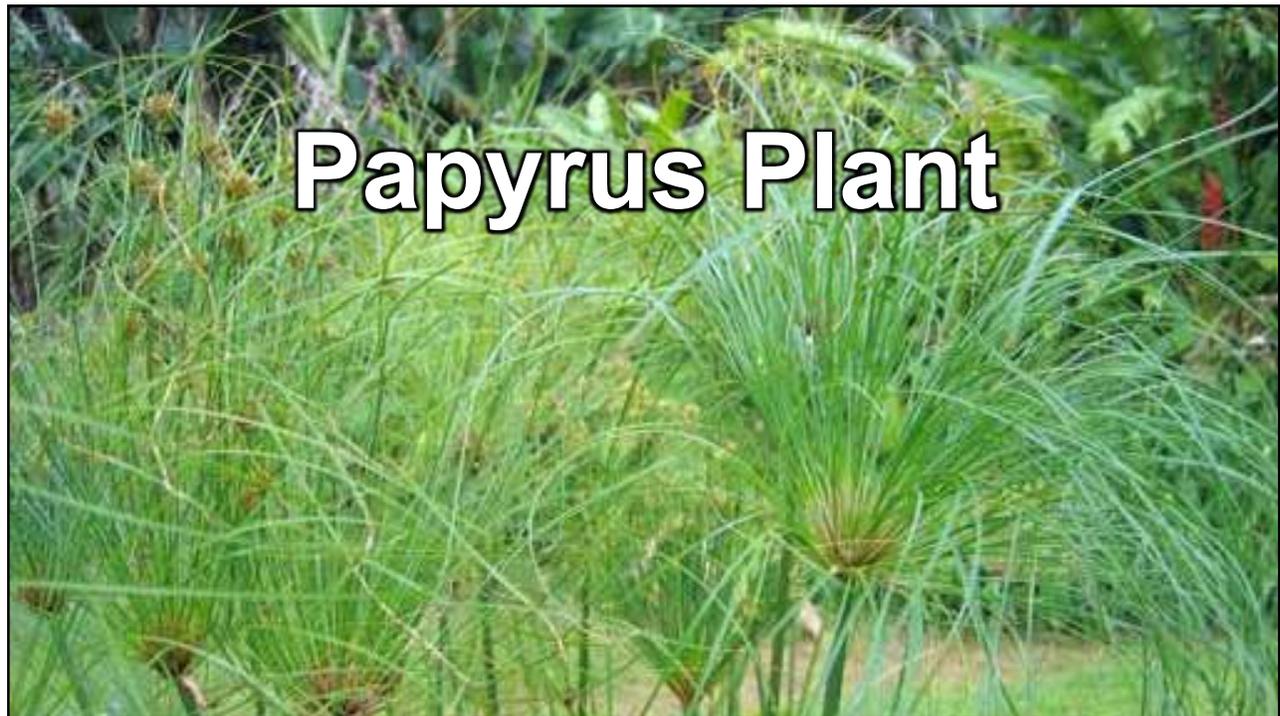
The question of whether miracles are possible is what kind of question?



*How Was the New Testament Written?*

## 🌀 Papyrus 🌀

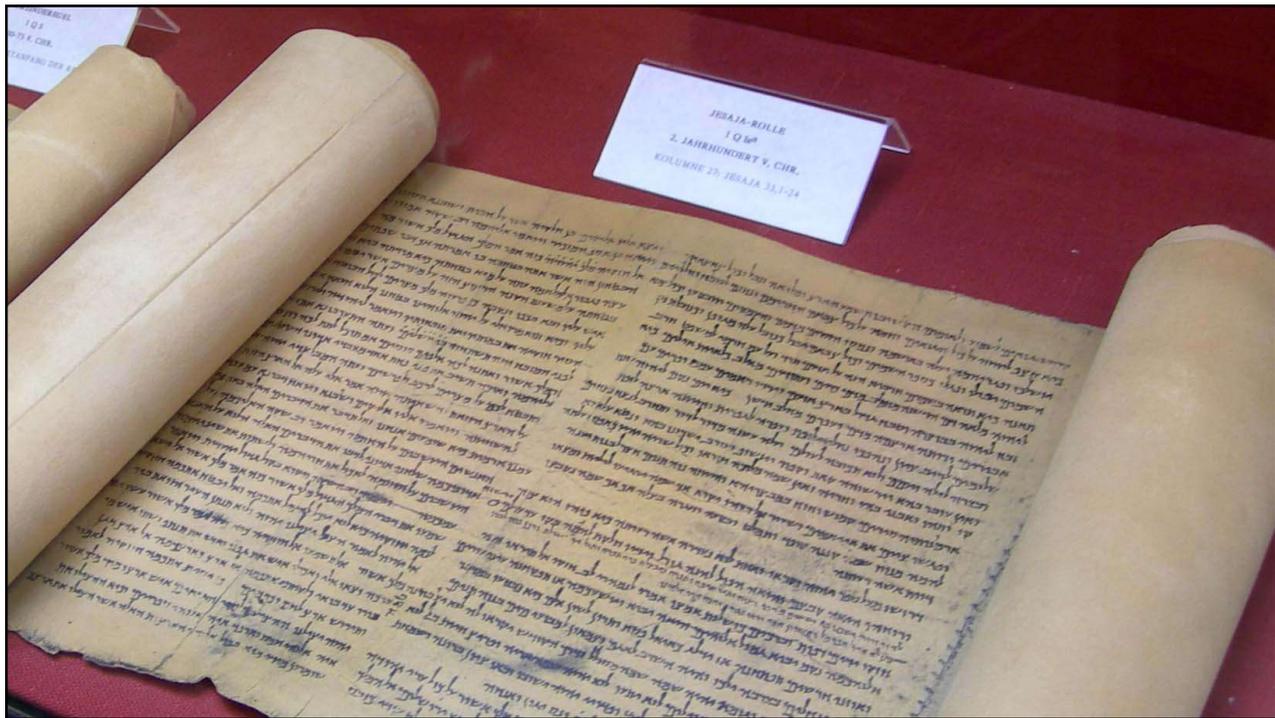
*pl., papyri; paper manuscript made from the papyrus plant; either in the form as scrolls (long sheets rolled onto stick) or as codices (books)*



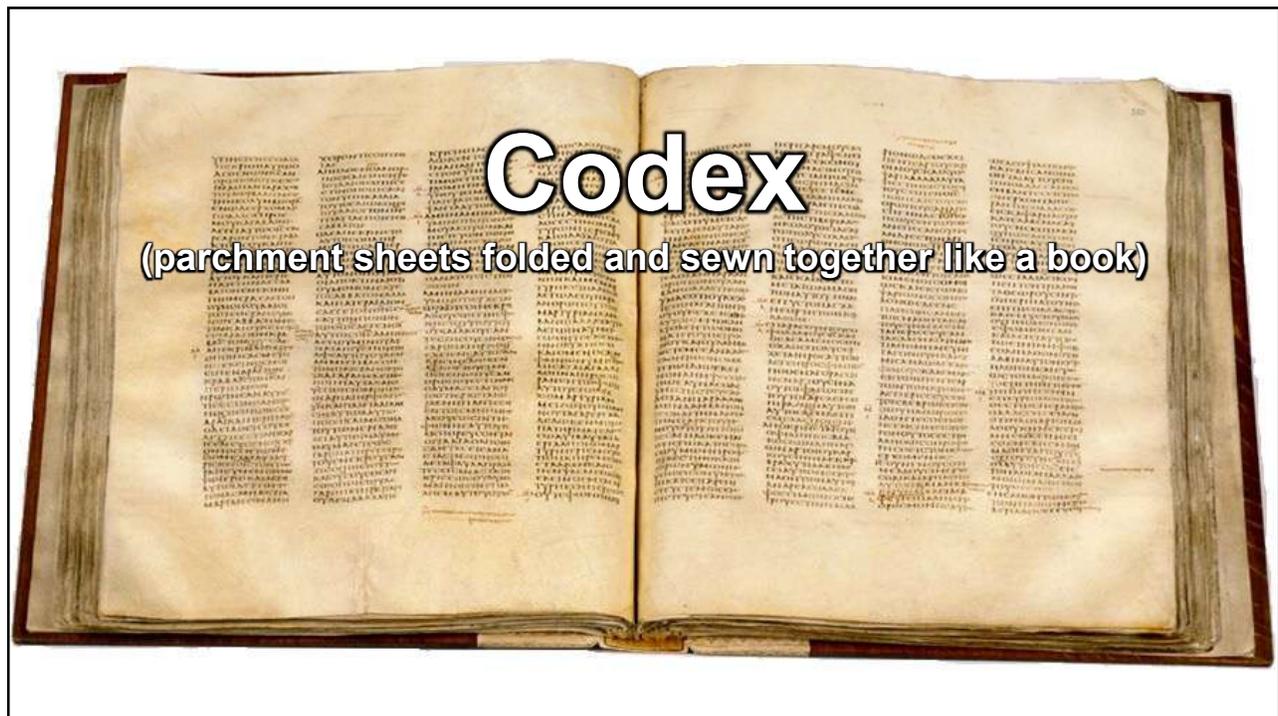


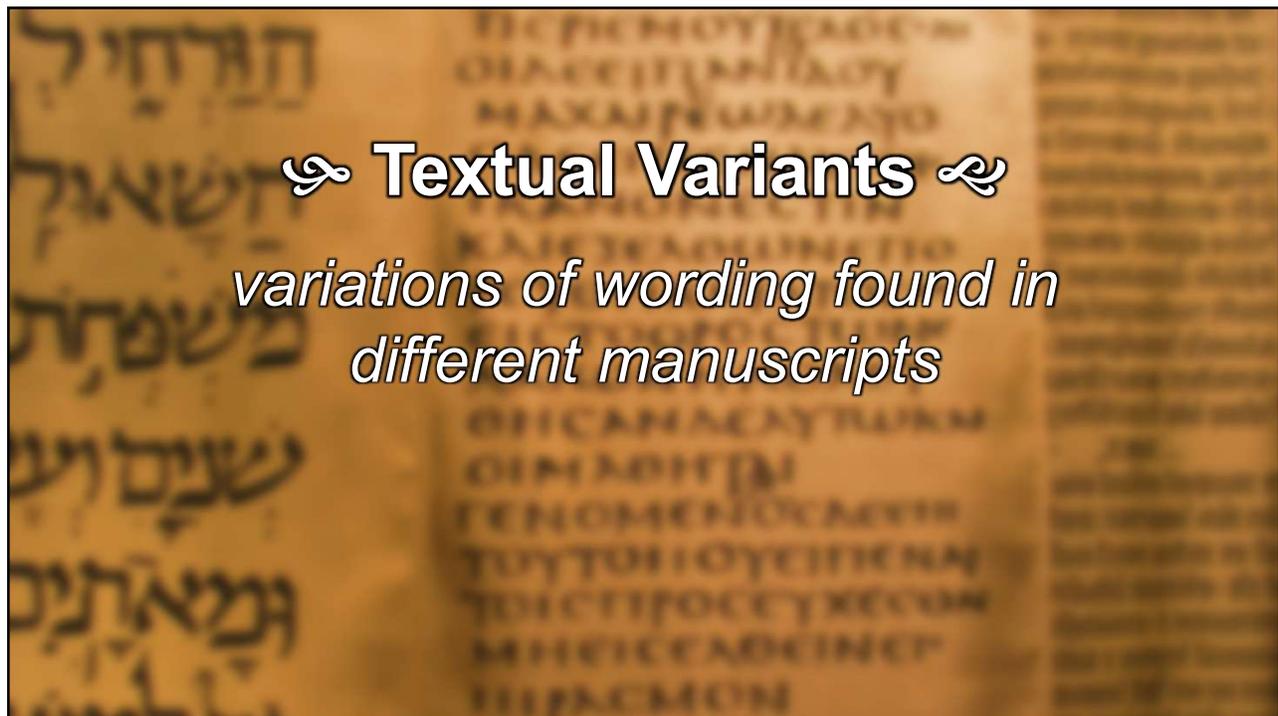
# Scroll

(sheets of papyrus glued together)



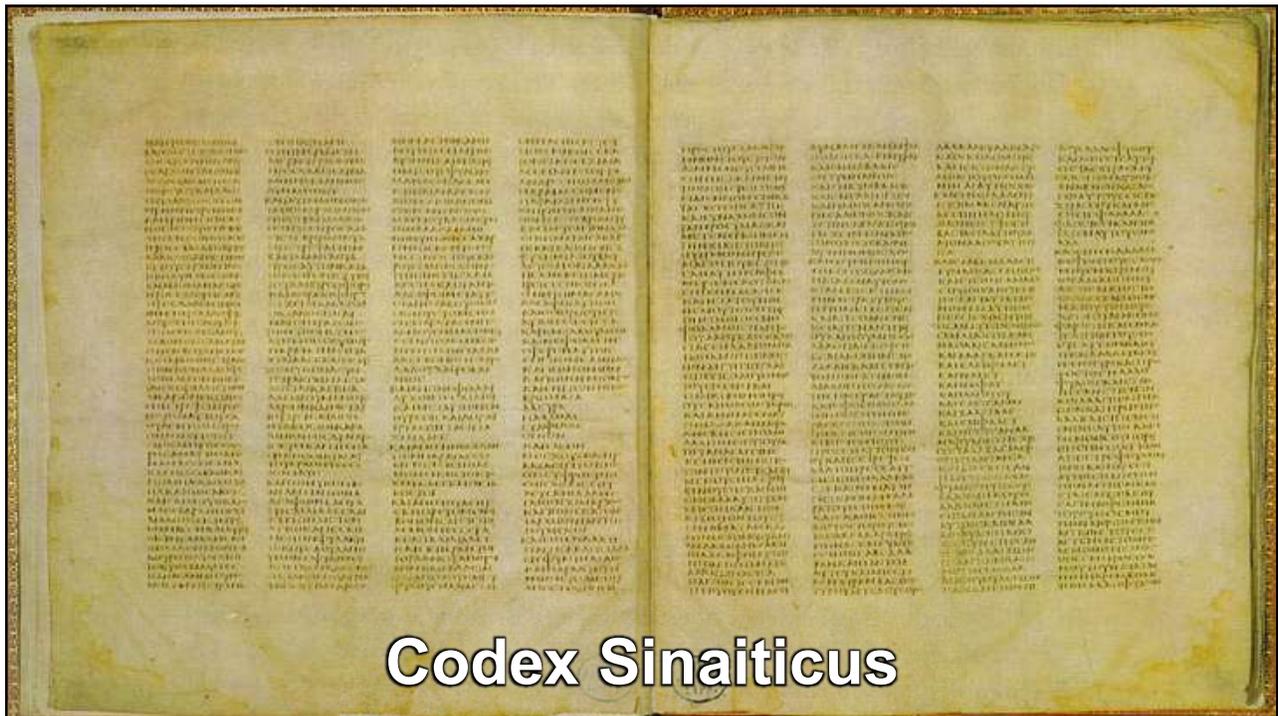
JERUSA-ROLLE  
I Q 30  
2. JAHRHUNDERT V. CHR.  
KOLUMNE 25, JERUSA 31,1-34





## ∞ Uncials ∞

*from the Latin for 'a twelfth part,' a "book-hand" style of writing used in Literary works (as opposed to a cursive style used in everyday documents); more formal, deliberate, carefully executed letters, sometimes referred to as 'majuscules' (all capitals)*



**Codex Sinaiticus**





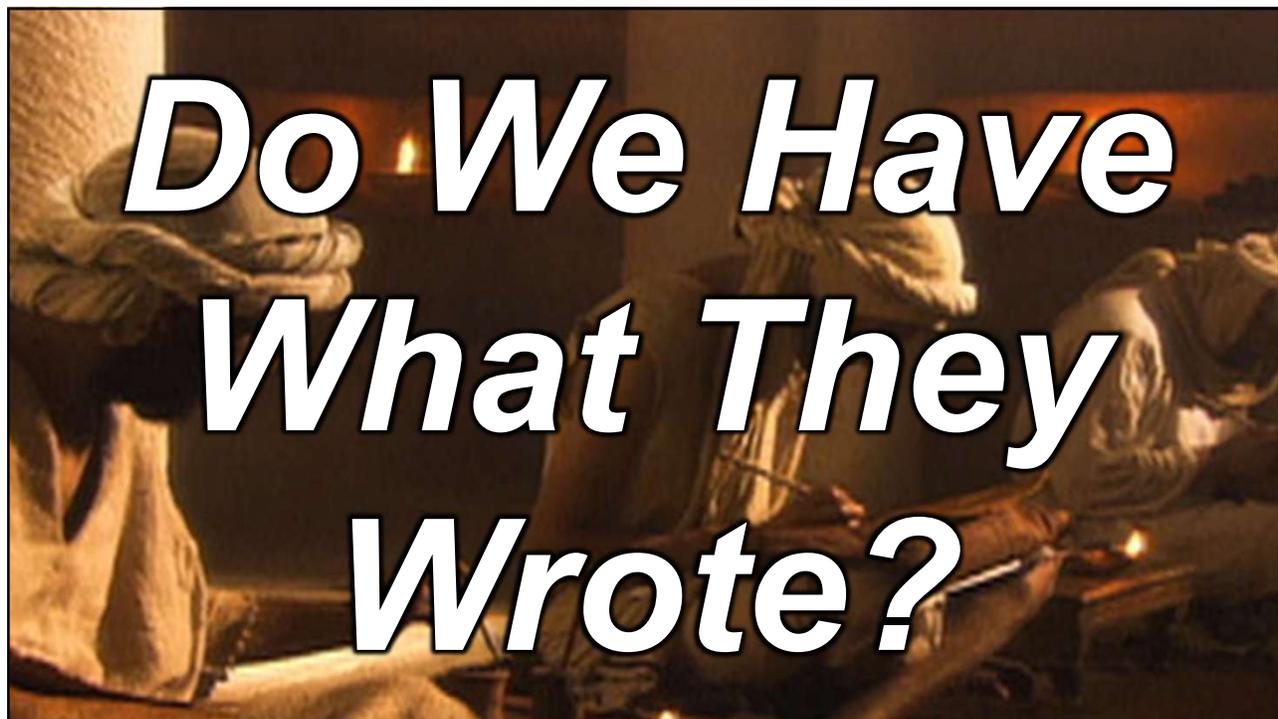
## 🌀 Lectionaries 🌀

*manuscripts containing selections of passages of Scripture in proper sequence appointed to be read on Sundays and other holy days in the Christian year*

## Epistolary

**Ephesians 19, 20, 21**  
**Italy, ca.1450**  
**University of Colorado**

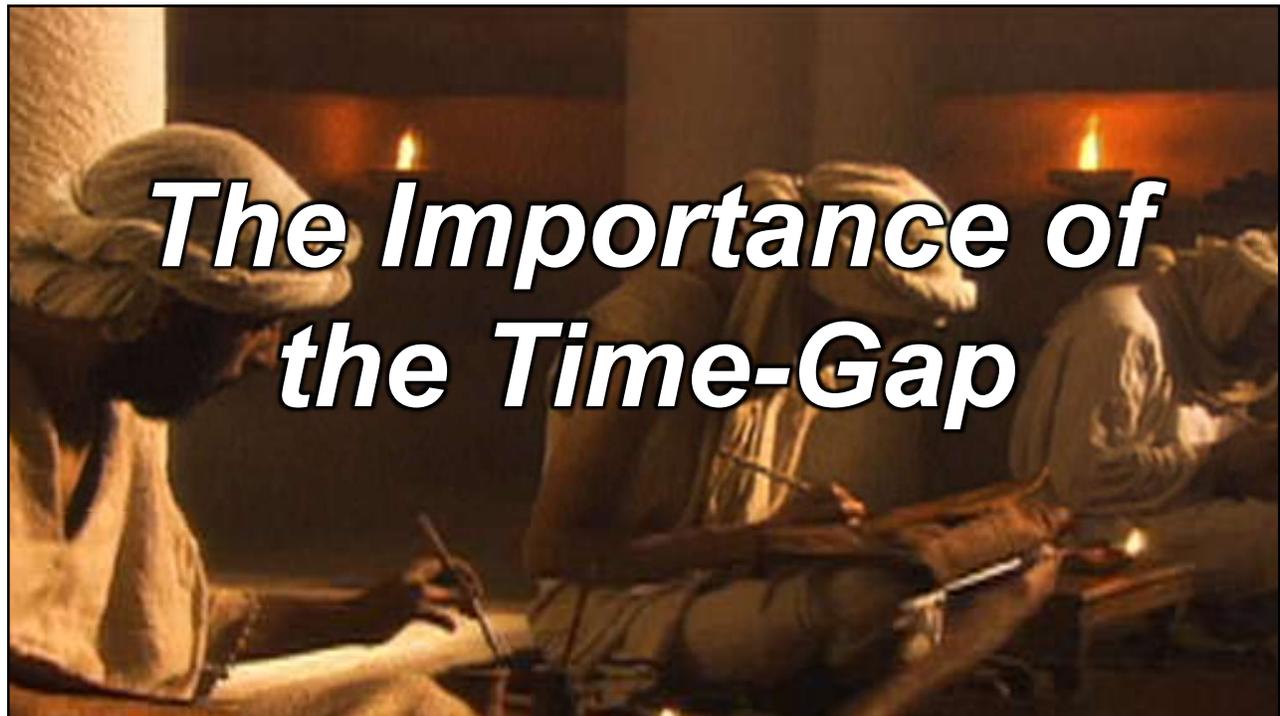
data est uob in xpo ihu: qz in oib di  
 uices factis in illo: in oī ubo et in omī  
 scāca: sicut testimoīū xpi confirmati ē  
 in uob: ita ut nich uob dicit in ulla grā.  
 expectāto reuelatōem dñi nri ihu  
 xpi. Qui et confirmabit uos usqz in fi  
 nem sine omne: in die: roūctus dñi  
 in ihu xpi. **De ca. xix. ad ephesios .m.c.**  
**F**res. Renouamī spū m̄tas ure: et tou  
 ritate nouū hoīem: qui scdm deū cre  
 atus est: in iustia: et scāctate lucatis.  
 p̄opt qd̄ deponētes in rocaū loqm̄i u  
 eritate: unū sc̄sqz cū p̄amo suo: qm̄ su  
 mus in uice m̄bra. Ita sc̄m̄ret nolite pe  
 ccare. Sol nō occidit: sup̄ uacū dīam.  
 urim. Nolite locū dñe dr̄abolo. Qui  
 simabat: n̄ n̄ furet. **Augis aut labo**  
**ret opanteo maib suis: qd̄ bonū ē: ut**  
**beat unū t̄buat nec̄itate p̄ca. Dom̄. v. b.**  
**F**res. **Directe quo cau. xx. ad ephesios:**  
 et ambulat: n̄ q̄ in s̄p̄c̄tes. **Rēdant**  
 ē ut sapiētē



***We begin to understand the integrity of the New Testament text when we compare it with other works of antiquity whose integrity is seldom called into question.***

***We want to see how the New Testament compares with other ancient works in two areas:***

- 1. The **time-gap** between the oldest extant manuscript and the date of the original writing*
- 2. The **number** of extant manuscripts*



***No original manuscripts of the New Testament exist since they were made of material that easily disintegrated. Copies of the originals were made and disseminated.***

***Copies of the copies were made and disseminated. As older copies disintegrated, a time-gap began to appear between the date of the original composition and the oldest extant copy.***

**Generally, the narrower the time-gap between a copy and the date of original composition, the less one would suspect that variations had crept in.**

Author	Book	Written	Earliest Copy	Time Gap	No. of copies
Homer	<i>Iliad</i>	800 BC	c. 400 BC	c. 400 yrs.	2,200
Herodotus	<i>History</i>	480-425 BC	c. AD 900	c. 1,350 yrs.	8
Thucydides	<i>History</i>	460-400 BC	c. AD 900	c. 1,300 yrs.	8
Caesar	<i>Gallic Wars</i>	100-44 BC	c. 900 AD	c. 1,000 yrs.	10
Livy	<i>History of Rome</i>	59 BC-AD 17	4th cent. (partial) mostly 10th cent.	c. 400 yrs. c. 1,000 yrs.	20
Tacitus	<i>Annals</i>	AD 100	c. AD 1,100	c. 1,000 yrs.	20
Pliny	<i>Natural History</i>	AD 61 – 113	c. AD 850	c. 750 yrs.	7
Suetonius	<i>De Vita Caesarum</i>	AD 75 - 160	c. AD 950	c. 800 yrs.	8

# St. John Fragment

(formerly known as the John Rylands Fragment)



recto  
part of John 18:31-33

verso  
part of John 18:37-38

- *first dated to c. 100-150 AD*
- *most recently dated to AD 200*
- *located in the John Ryland Library of Manchester, England*
- *oldest known fragment of the New Testament*
- *contains fragments of the gospel of John*
- *within 110 to 130 years of the original*

# St. John Fragment

(formerly known as the John Rylands Fragment)



recto  
part of John 18:31-33

verso  
part of John 18:37-38

***"The Fragment is widely regarded as the earliest portion of any New Testament writing ever found. It provides us with invaluable evidence on the spread of Christianity in the provinces of the Roman Empire in the first centuries of our era."***

[<https://www.library.manchester.ac.uk/rylands/special-collections/exploring/guide-to-special-collections/st-john-fragment/what-is-the-significance/>, accessed 01/11/24]

# John Rylands Fragment (P<sup>52</sup>)

John 18:31-33  
recto

oi loudai hāmi[n]  
"... the Jews, "For us ..." (v. 31)

oudena hina ὁ l[ogos]  
"...no one in order  
that the saying..." (vv.  
31-32)

οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι ἡμῖν  
ΟΥΔΕΝΑ ΙΝΑ Ο ΛΟΓΟΣ  
ΕΙΠΕΝ ΣΗΜΑΙΝΩΝ  
ΑΠΟΘΗΣΚΕΙΝ  
πραιτωριονοπαλιν  
καὶ εἶπεν  
Ἰουδαίων

eipen sāmāinō[n]  
"...He said, signifying..."  
(v. 32)

[apo]thnāskein "...die..."  
(v. 32)

praitōrionpalin  
"Praetorium" (v. 33)

ka[i] eip[en] "...and said..."  
(v. 33)

[louda]iō[n] "...Jews..." (v. 33)

omeron not visible  
theta partially obscured  
iota partially obscured  
or elided (left out)

# John Rylands Fragment (P<sup>52</sup>)

John 18:37-38  
verso

[to]uto yeyennāmai  
... this I was born... (v. 37)

[kos]mon hina mart[urāsō]  
"...world in order  
that I should  
testify..." (v. 37)

τοῦτο γεγεννημαι  
ΚΟΣΜΟΝ ΙΝΑ ΜΑΡΤΥΡΗΣΩ  
ΕΚ ΤΑΣ ΑΛΗΘΕΙΑ  
ΛΕΓΕΙ ΑΥΤΩ  
ΚΑΙ ΤΟΥΤΟ  
ΤΟΥΣ ΙΟΥΔΑΙΟΥΣ  
ουδεμιαν

ek tās alāthe[ia]  
"...of the truth..."  
(v. 37)

[i]legei autō  
"...said to him..." (v. 38)

kai toutō  
"... and [when he had said]  
this ... " (v. 38)

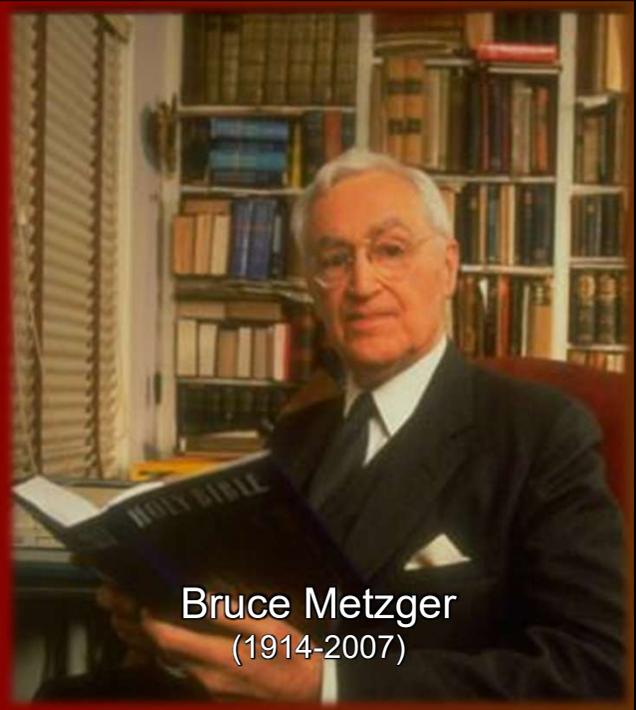
tous loudaious "... the Jews ... "  
(v. 38)

[oud]emi[an] "... no ... (v. 38)"

epsilon and kappa  
are obscured  
omeron is obscured

*"Had this little fragment been known during the middle of the past [19<sup>th</sup>] century, that school of New Testament criticism that was inspired by the brilliant Tübingen professor, Ferdinand Christian Baur, could not have argued that the Fourth Gospel was not composed until about the year 160."*

[Bruce Metzger, *The Text of the New Testament: Its Transmission, Corruption, and Restoration*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1968), 39]



Bruce Metzger  
(1914-2007)

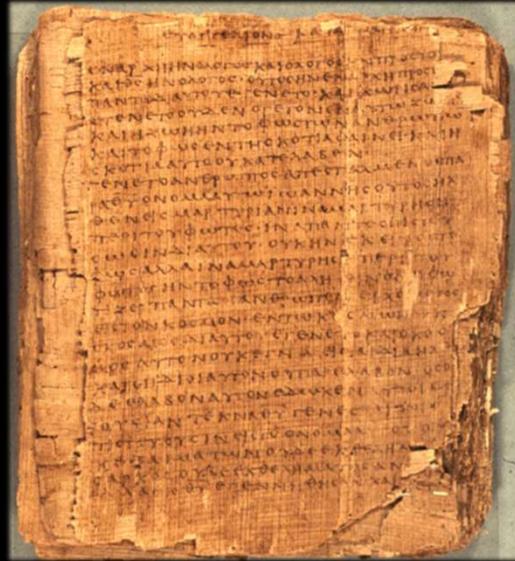
## Chester Beatty Papyri



- dated early 3rd century AD
- in the Chester Beatty collection in Dublin, Ireland
- part of P<sup>46</sup> is owned by the University of Michigan
- major portions of the New Testament
- original codex contained 220 leaves
- P<sup>45</sup> contains much of the Gospels and Acts (oldest known)
- P<sup>46</sup> contains the Pauline Epistles (oldest known)
- P<sup>47</sup> contains Revelation

# Bodmer Papyrus

- earliest copies of Luke, Jude, First & Second Peter
- at the Bodmer Library in Geneva, Switzerland
- contains 88 papyri manuscripts
- part of an extensive collection that contains both Greek and Coptic and both secular and sacred texts
- contains
  - ✓ P<sup>66</sup> (shown here) - most of the Gospel of John (AD 200)
  - ✓ P<sup>72</sup> - Jude, the Epistles of Peter, Psalms 33 and 34 in Greek (3rd cent.)
  - ✓ P<sup>74</sup> - Acts virtually complete and the General Epistles (James, 1 & 2 Peter, 1, 2 & 3 John, Jude) in fragmentary form (6th or 7th cent.)
  - ✓ P<sup>75</sup> - most of Luke and John (2nd or 3rd cent.)



# Codex Vaticanus (B)

AD 325-350

- in the Vatican Library, Rome, Italy
- 759 extant folios (first twenty original folios are missing; a part of folio 178, and ten folios after fol. 348)
- contains most of the Bible (except most of Gen., Heb. 9:14 to the end, the Pastoral Epistles, Revelation)



[<http://www.bible-researcher.com/codex-b.html>, accessed 01/11/24]

# Codex Sinaiticus (Ⲩ)

AD 340

- oldest complete New Testament in existence
- named after the Monastery of Saint Catherine, Mount Sinai, where it had been preserved until the middle of the nineteenth century
- 400 leaves
- leaves measure 380 mm x 345 mm (15 inches x13.5 inches)



[<http://codexsinaiticus.org/en/>, accessed 01/11/24]

# Codex Sinaiticus (Ⲩ)

AD 340

- in four institutions
  - ✓the British Library (principle portion of 347 leaves)
  - ✓the Library of the University of Leipzig (43 leaves)
  - ✓the National Library of Russia in Saint Petersburg (parts of six leaves )
  - ✓the Holy Monastery of the God-Trodden Mount Sinai (Saint Catherine's) (further portions)



[<http://codexsinaiticus.org/en/>, accessed 01/11/24]

# Codex Sinaiticus (Ⲩ)

AD 340

• contains

- ✓ The entire New Testament
- ✓ The number of the books in the New Testament in *Codex Sinaiticus* is the same as that in modern Bibles in the West, but the order is different.
- ✓ The Letter to the Hebrews is placed after Paul's Second Letter to the Thessalonians, and the Acts of the Apostles between the Pastoral and General Epistles.

<https://codexsinaiticus.org/en/codex/content.aspx>, accessed 01/11/24]



# Codex Sinaiticus (Ⲩ)

AD 340

• contains

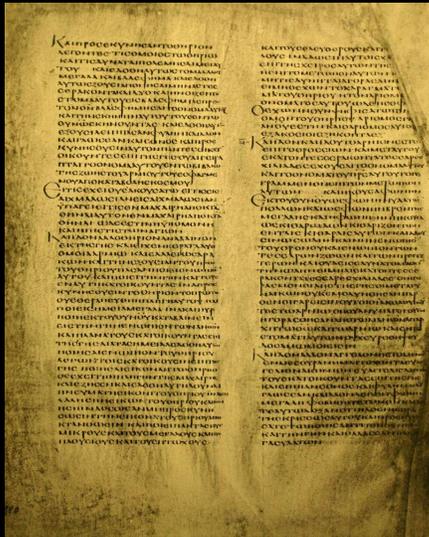
- ✓ half of the Old Testament, i.e., the Septuagint (missing Genesis – 1 Chronicles)
- ✓ OT Apocrypha (2 Esdras, Tobit, Judith, 1 & 4 Maccabees, Wisdom and Sirach)
- ✓ two early Christian texts (an epistle by an unknown writer claiming to be the Apostle Barnabas; *The Shepherd of Hermas*)

[<http://codexsinaiticus.org/en/>, accessed 01/11/24]



# Codex Alexandrinus (A)

AD 450



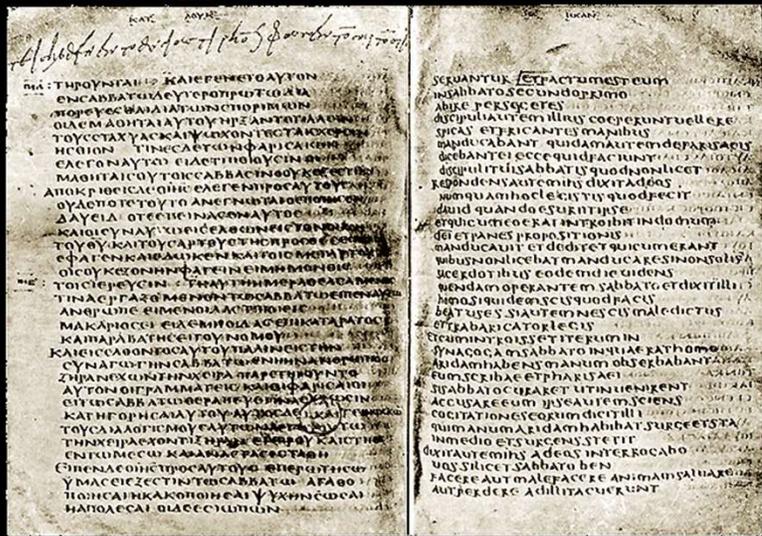
- in the British Library
- earliest known location was Alexandria, Egypt
- It contains the entire Greek Bible, except Matthew 1:1 through 25:6, John 6:50 through 8:52, and 2 Corinthians 4:13 through 12:6.
- some early Christian writings including the first Epistle of Clement, and the second Epistle of Clement up to 12:4.
- 773 leaves (originally 822) are thin vellum, 12 3/4 inches high by 10 inches broad
- Each page has two columns of 49 to 51 lines.

[<http://www.bible-researcher.com/codex-a.html>, accessed 01/15/22]

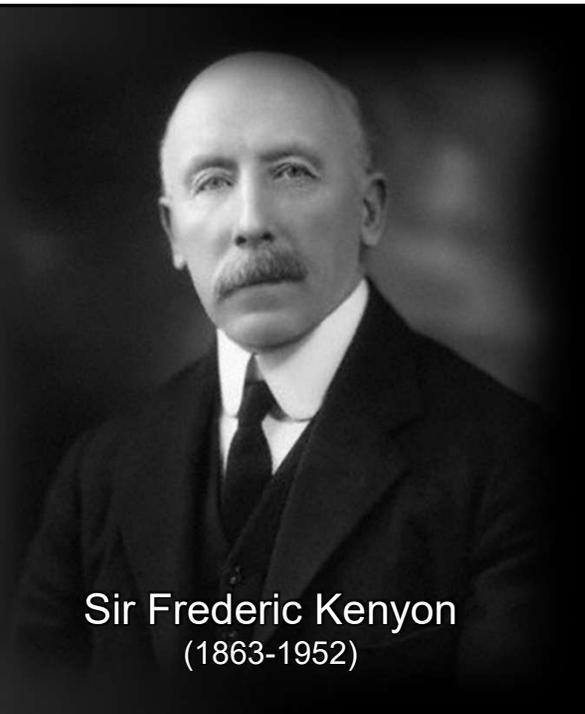
# Codex Bezae (D)

AD 450

- receives its name from Theodore Beza, the friend and successor of John Calvin
- the University of Cambridge, obtained it as a gift from Beza in 1581
- text is Greek and Latin
- 10 x 8 inches
- contains:
  - ✓ the Gospels with select verses missing in the order of Matthew, John, Luke, Mark (only Luke is complete)
  - ✓ Acts
  - ✓ a few Latin verses of 3 John

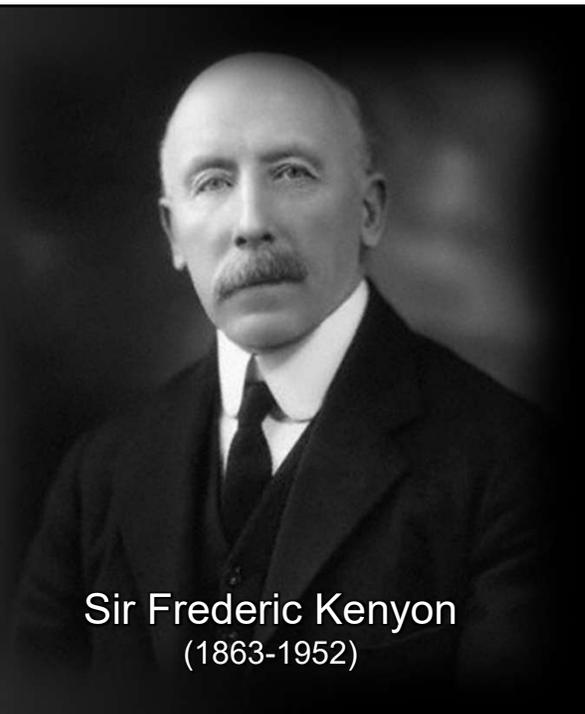


***"The interval then  
between the dates of  
original composition  
and the earliest  
extant evidence  
becomes so small as  
to be in fact  
negligible,***

A black and white portrait of Sir Frederic Kenyon, a man with a mustache, wearing a dark suit and tie.

**Sir Frederic Kenyon  
(1863-1952)**

***"and the last  
foundation for any  
doubt that the  
Scriptures have  
come down to us  
substantially as they  
were written has now  
been removed.***

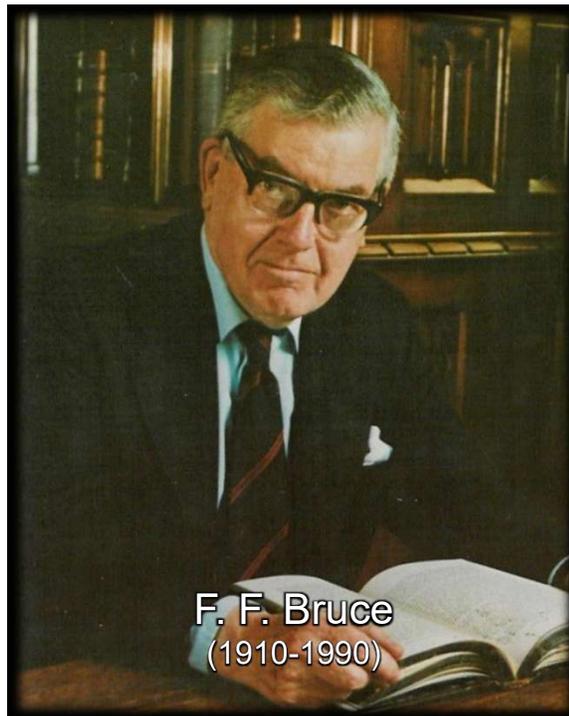
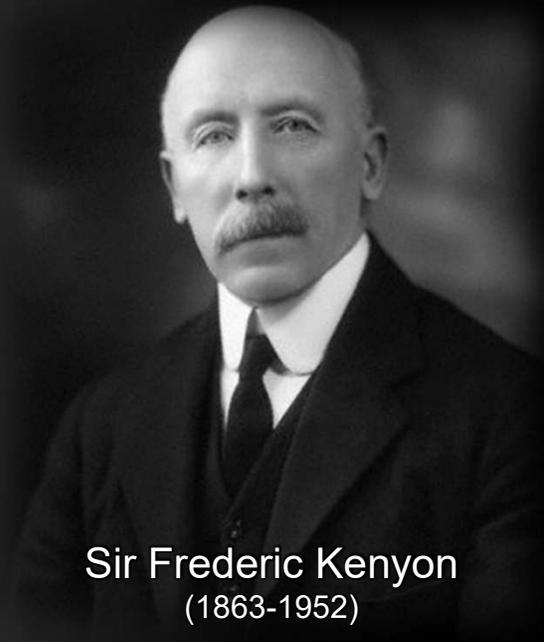
A black and white portrait of Sir Frederic Kenyon, a man with a mustache, wearing a dark suit and tie.

**Sir Frederic Kenyon  
(1863-1952)**

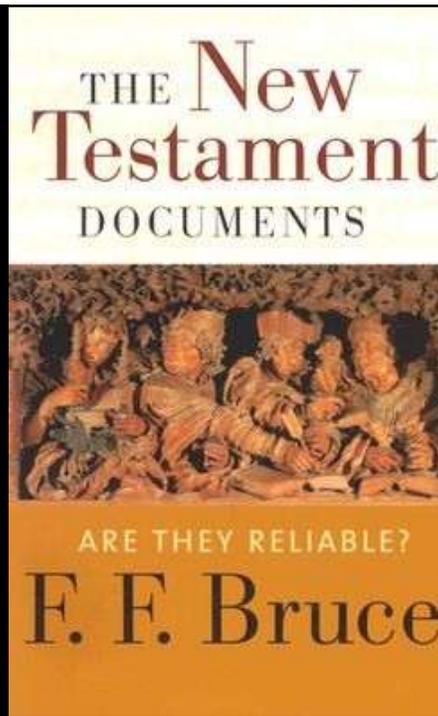
***"Both the authenticity and the general integrity of the books of the New Testament may be regarded as finally established."***

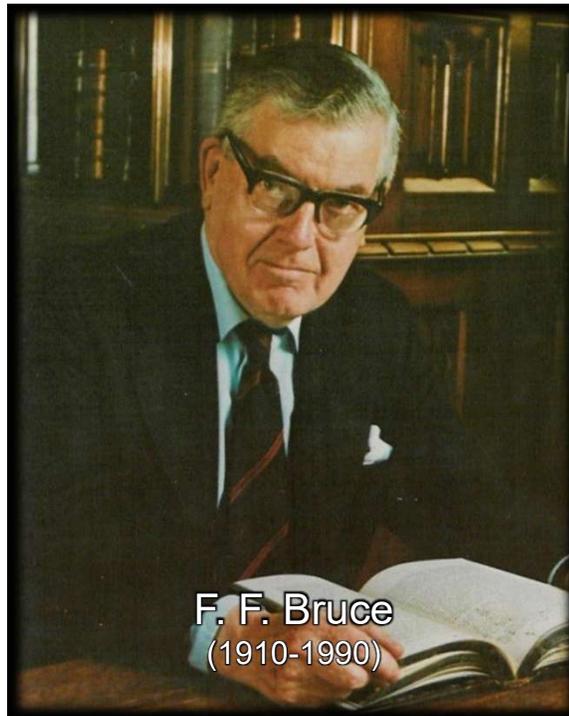
[*The Bible and Archeology* (New York: Harper & Row, 1940), 288ff.]

**Sir Frederic Kenyon**  
(1863-1952)



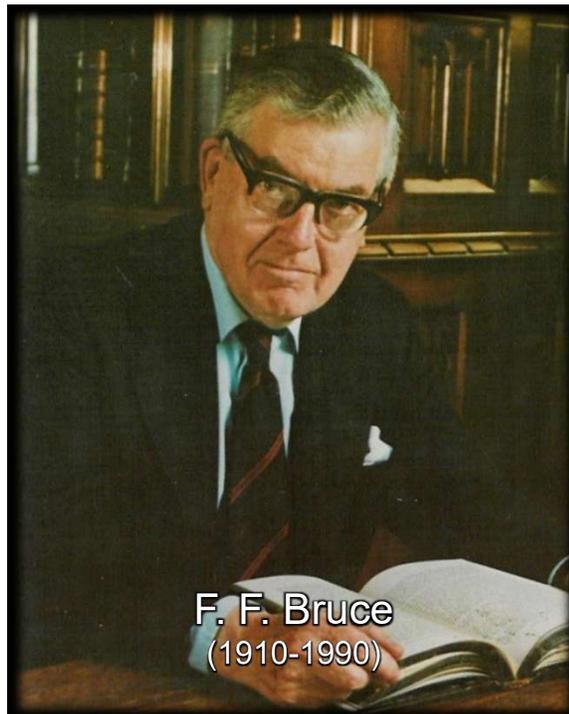
**F. F. Bruce**  
(1910-1990)





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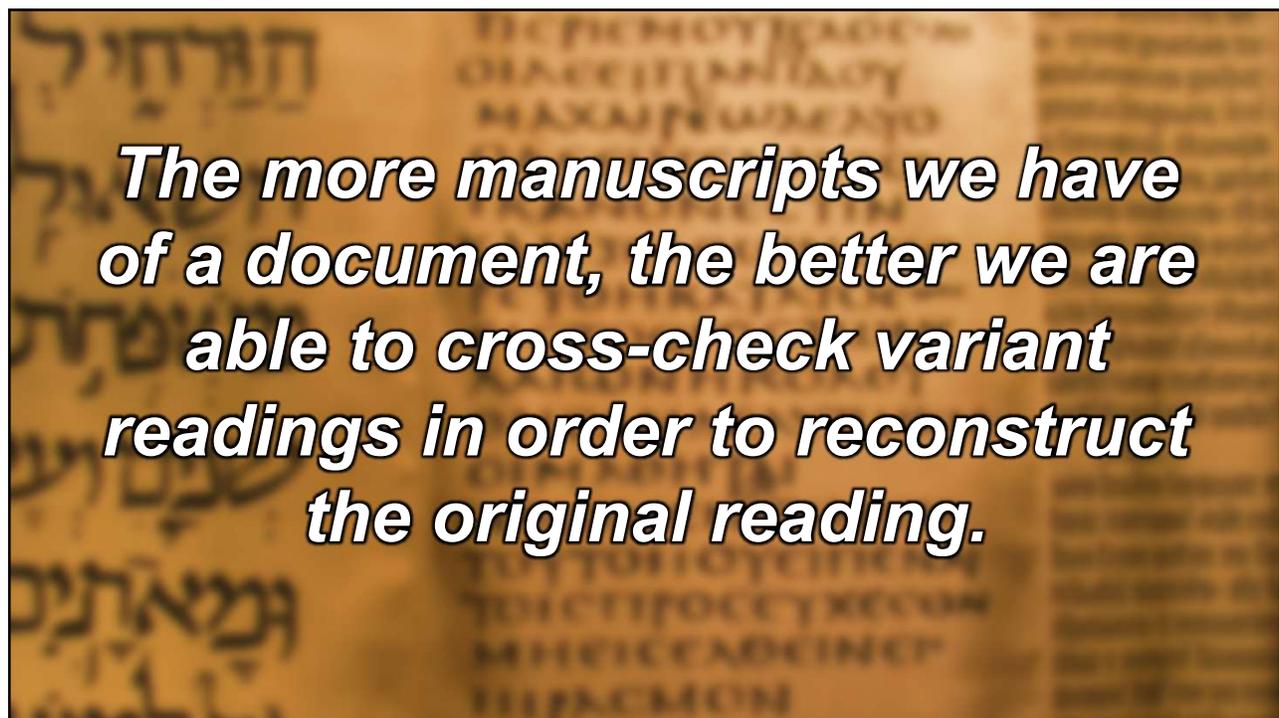
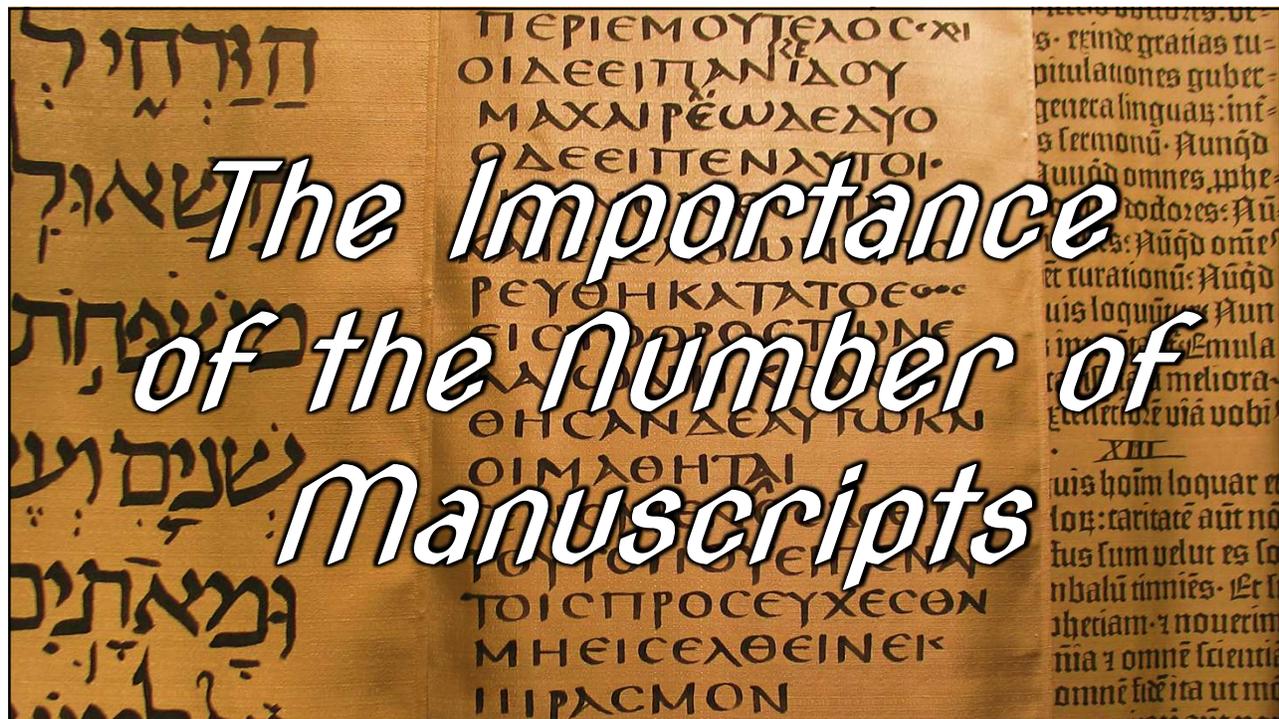
***"The evidence for our New Testament writings is ever so much greater than the evidence for many writings of classical authors, the authenticity of which no one dreams of questioning."***



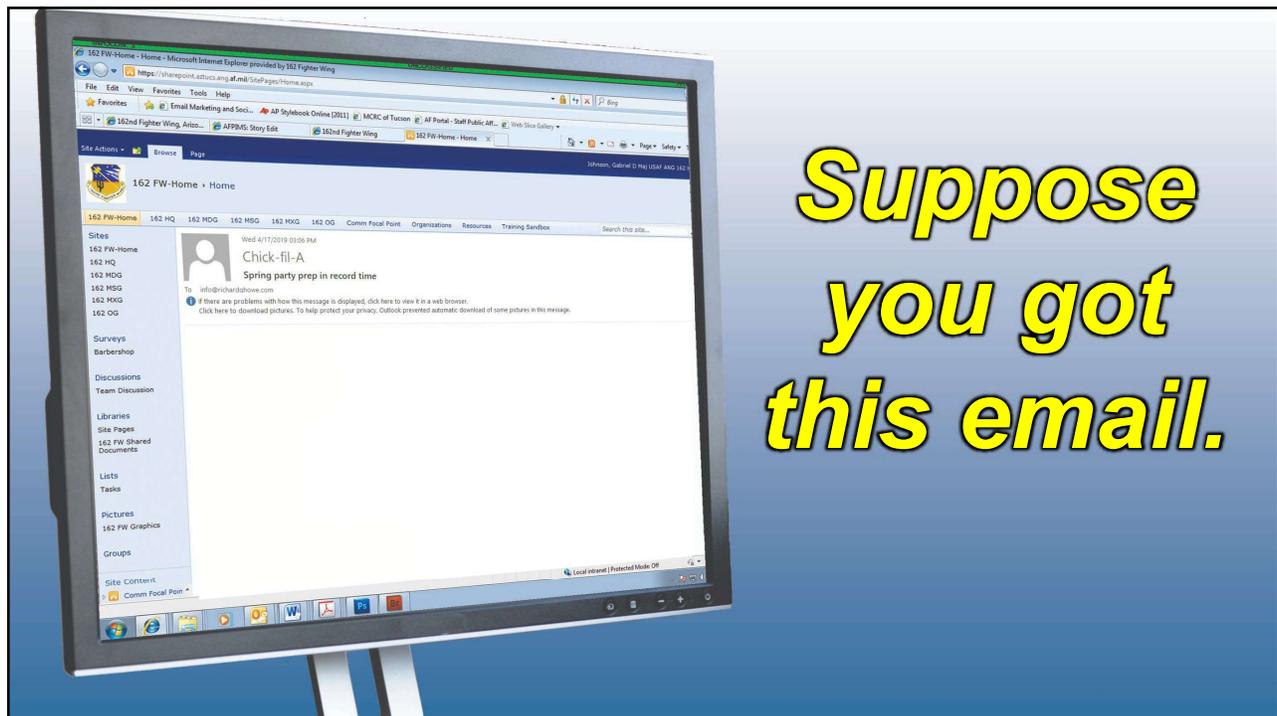
F. F. Bruce  
(1910-1990)

***"And if the New Testament were collection of secular writings, their authenticity would generally be regarded as beyond all doubt."***

*The New Testament Documents: Are They Reliable?* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing, 1988), 15.



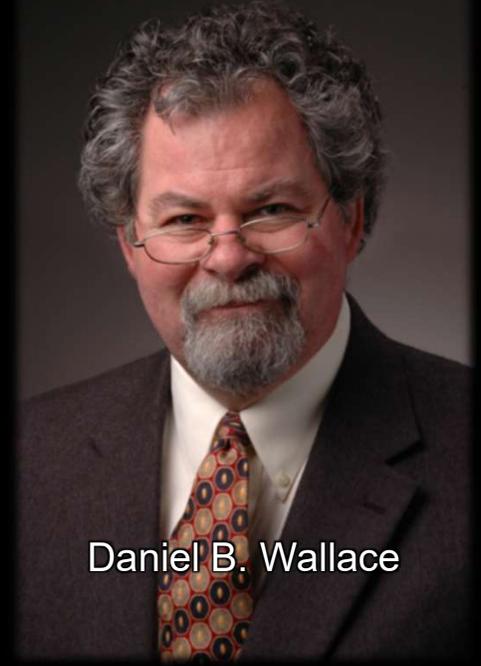
***The science of comparing variant readings in copies of an ancient document in order to ascertain the original reading is called textual criticism.***





*"A variant is simply the difference in wording found in a single manuscript or group of manuscripts (either way, it's still only one variant) that disagrees with a base text. ... The estimates today are closer to 400,000."*

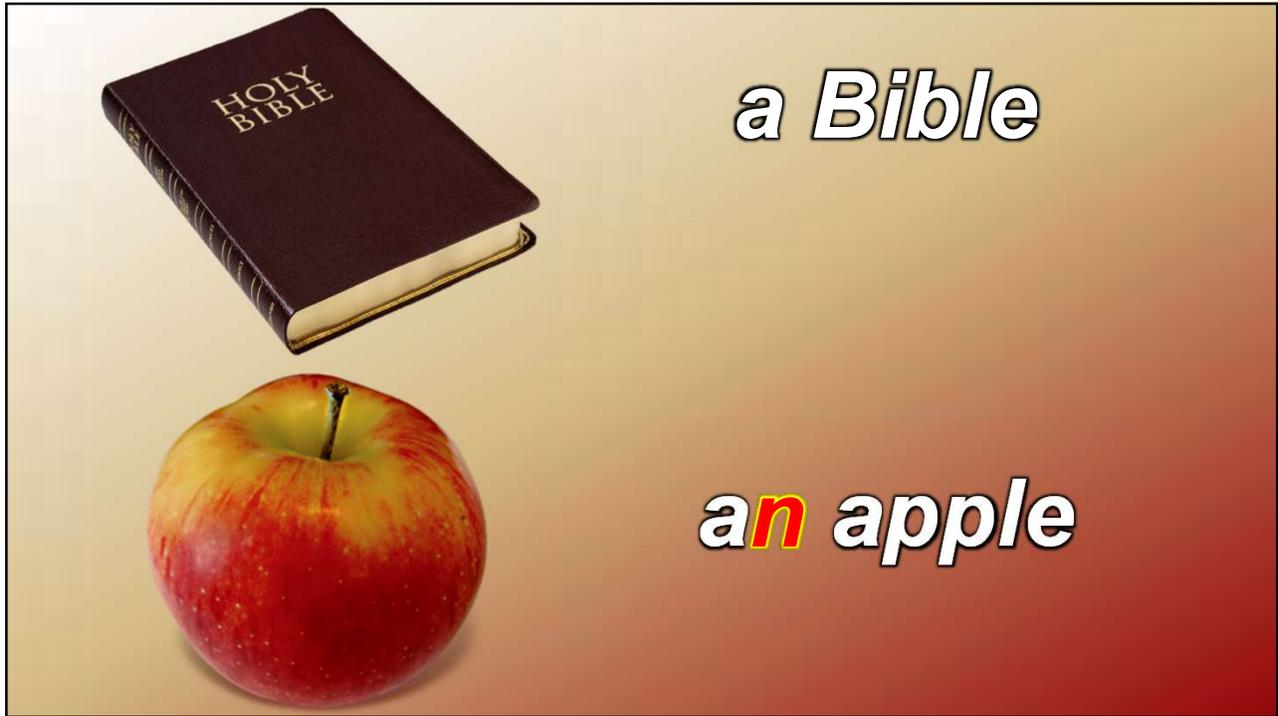
[Daniel B. Wallace, "The Number of Textual Variants: An Evangelical Miscalculation," <https://danielbwallace.com/2013/09/09/the-number-of-textual-variants-an-evangelical-miscalculation/>, accessed 01/14/22]



Daniel B. Wallace

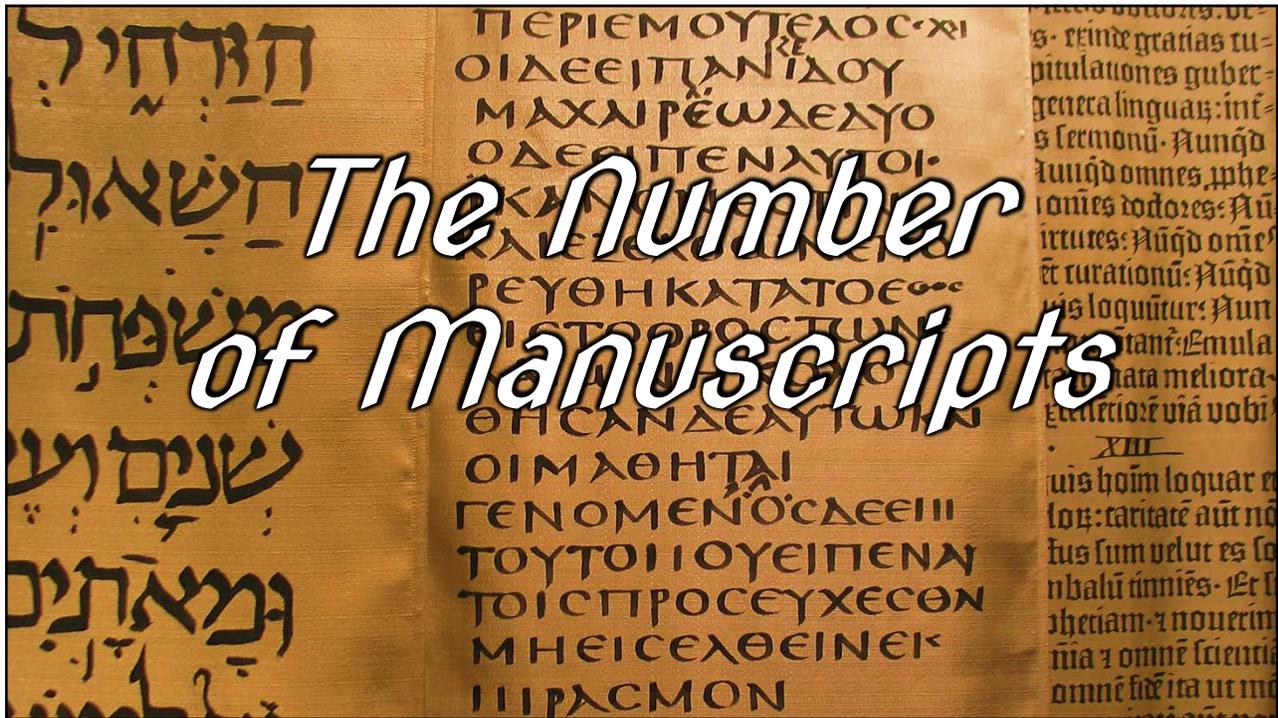
***Most of the variants are spelling variations.***

***Most of the spelling variations are the movable  $\nu$  (nu).***



*a Bible*

*an apple*



*The Number of Manuscripts*

Author	Book	Written	Earliest Copy	Time Gap	No. of copies
Homer	<i>Iliad</i>	800 BC	c. 400 BC	c. 400 yrs.	1,757
Herodotus	<i>History</i>	480-425 BC	c. AD 900	c. 1,350 yrs.	109
Thucydides	<i>History</i>	460-400 BC	c. AD 900	c. 1,300 yrs.	50
Caesar	<i>Gallic Wars</i>	100-44 BC	c. 900 AD	c. 1,000 yrs.	251
Livy	<i>History of Rome</i>	59 BC-AD 17	4th cent. (partial) mostly 10th cent.	c. 400 yrs. c. 1,000 yrs.	150
Tacitus	<i>Annals</i>	AD 100	c. AD 1,100	c. 1,000 yrs.	33
Pliny	<i>Natural History</i>	AD 61 – 113	c. AD 850	c. 750 yrs.	200
Suetonius	<i>De Vita Caesarum</i>	AD 75 - 160	AD 950	800 yrs.	8

<b>Papyri</b>	<b>&gt;140</b>
<b>Uncials</b>	<b>322</b>
<b>Minuscules</b>	<b>2,936</b>
<b>Lectonaries</b>	<b>2,453</b>
<b>Total:</b>	<b>&gt;5851</b>

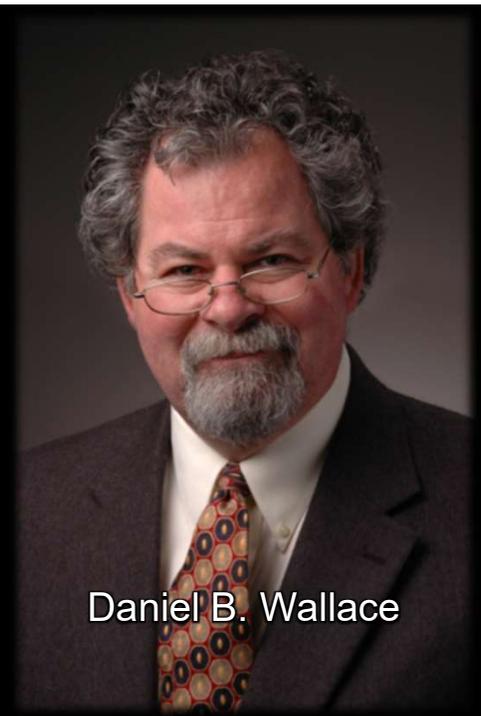


Latin Vulgate	10,000+	Old Latin	50
Ethiopic	2,000+	Anglo Saxon	7
Slavic	4,101	Gothic	6
Armenian	2,587	Sogdian	3
Syriac Pashetta	350+	Old Syriac	2
Bohairic	100	Persian	2
Arabic	75	Frankish	1
		<b>Total</b>	<b>19,284+</b>



***"To date, more than one million quotations of the NT by the church fathers have been tabulated. These fathers come from as early as the late first century all the way to the middle ages."***

["An Interview with Daniel B. Wallace on the New Testament Manuscripts," <http://thegospelcoalition.org/blogs/justintaylor/2012/03/21/an-interview-with-daniel-b-wallace-on-the-new-testament-manuscripts/>, accessed 01/11/24]



Daniel B. Wallace



 *The Center* FOR THE STUDY OF  
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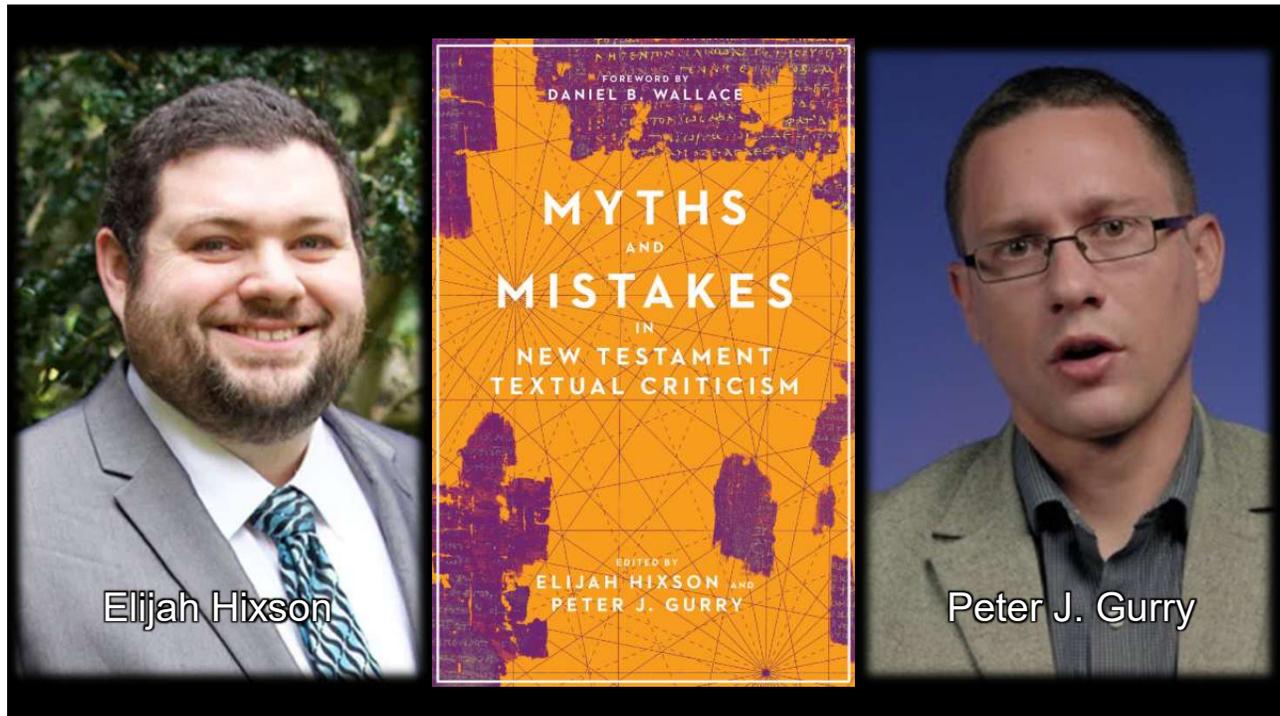
"Their professionalism, the quality of their work, and their state-of-the-art equipment were excellent."

*"Essential Christian beliefs are not affected by textual variants in the manuscript tradition of the New Testament."*

[Bart Ehrman, *Misquoting Jesus: The Story Behind Who Changed the Bible and Why* (New York: HarperCollins, 2005), appendix, as cited in Daniel Wallace, "Has the New Testament Been Hopelessly Corrupted?" in Stephen B. Cowan and Terry L. Wilder, eds., *In Defense of the Bible: A Comprehensive Apologetic for the Authority of Scripture* (Nashville: B&H Academic, 2013), 161]



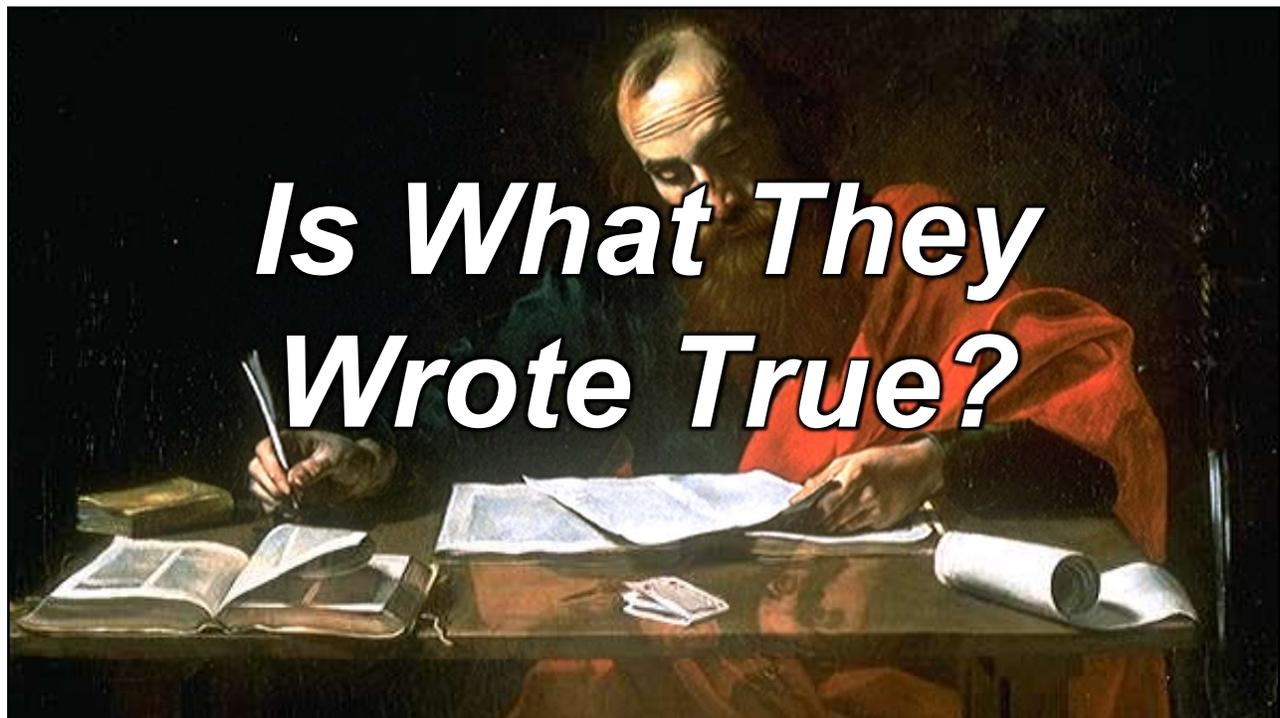
Bart Ehrman



Elijah Hixson



Peter J. Gurry





*Answering the critics  
by **responding to the  
reasons against**  
believing the  
testimony of the New  
Testament writers*

*Making the case by  
**giving the reasons for**  
believing the  
testimony of the New  
Testament writers*



## Responding to the Reasons Against

1. *Their claims are too fantastic (for example, that Jesus rose from the dead).*
2. *People from the ancient world were not interested in accurate history.*
3. *The deity of Christ was the result of a close vote among church leaders convening at the Council of Nicaea in 325 AD.*
4. *The Gospels were written much later and cannot be trusted to give an accurate account of the life of Jesus.*
5. *The story of Jesus is more accurately contained within the Gnostic documents than in the New Testament. These Gnostic documents show a mere human Jesus.*
6. *The writers were reading back into the life and teachings of Jesus their own concerns and desires.*
7. *There are no extra-biblical (i.e., outside the Bible) references to New Testament people or events.*



***Their claims are too fantastic (for example, that Jesus rose from the dead)***



**Response**

*Whether or not these types of events (such as a resurrection) can occur is not an historical question but a philosophical one.*



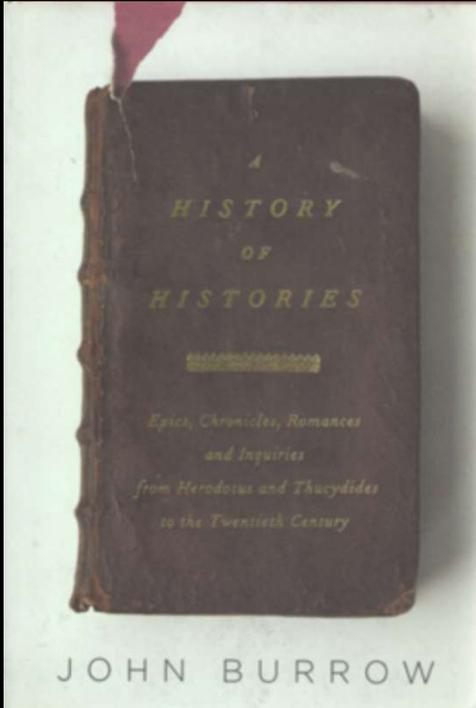
*People from the ancient world were not interested in accurate history.*



**Response**

*The writings from other historians show that ancient people understood the differences between history and myth.*

*This is especially true with the Hebrew mindset (within which the New Testament was birthed) which understood the sacredness of history.*



A  
HISTORY  
OF  
HISTORIES

Epics, Chronicles, Romances  
and Inquiries  
from Herodotus and Thucydides  
to the Twentieth Century

JOHN BURROW



John Burrow  
(1935-2009)

*"The central concerns—above all with history as truth-telling and, at least as an ideal, as free from bias—were already very old ones and, though shaken, are still in some sense with us, for those of us for whom a distinction between say, history and imaginative fiction is still an important one.*

John Burrow  
(1935-2009)

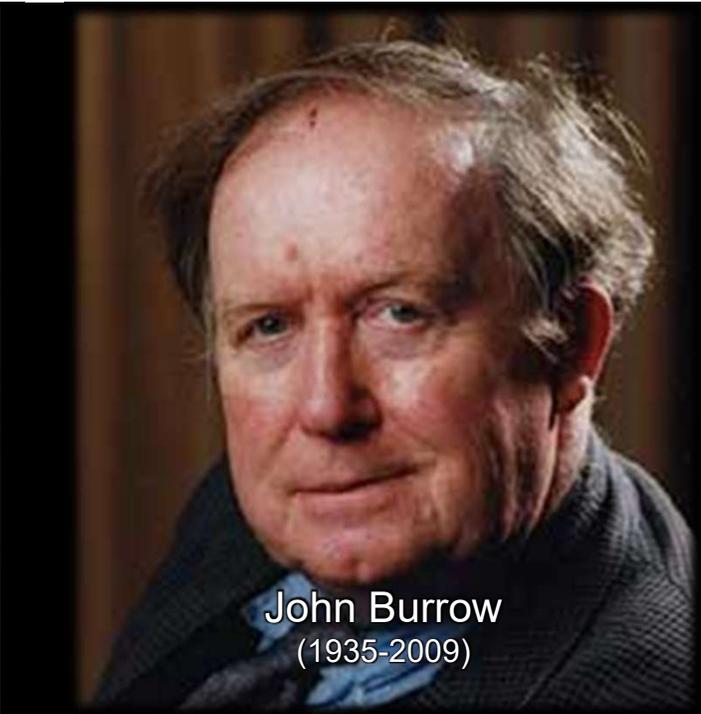
*"In this view Herodotus was taking an important step in distinguishing his own Histories from the work of the poets, and Thucydides, though he may have judged unfairly, was invoking relevant criteria when he sneered by implication at Herodotus as belonging with authors less concerned to tell the truth than to entertain the public. ...*

John Burrow  
(1935-2009)

*"Of course, in the history of historiography zeal for truth had been a spectrum rather than an absolute—truth mattered, fairly obviously, more to Polybius than to Livy—but someone who wholly and perhaps willfully falls of the negative end of the scale ... counts rather as a parodist or imitator of history."*

[A History of Histories: Epics, Chronicles, Romances and Inquiries from Herodotus and Thucydides to the Twentieth Century (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2007), xiv-xv]

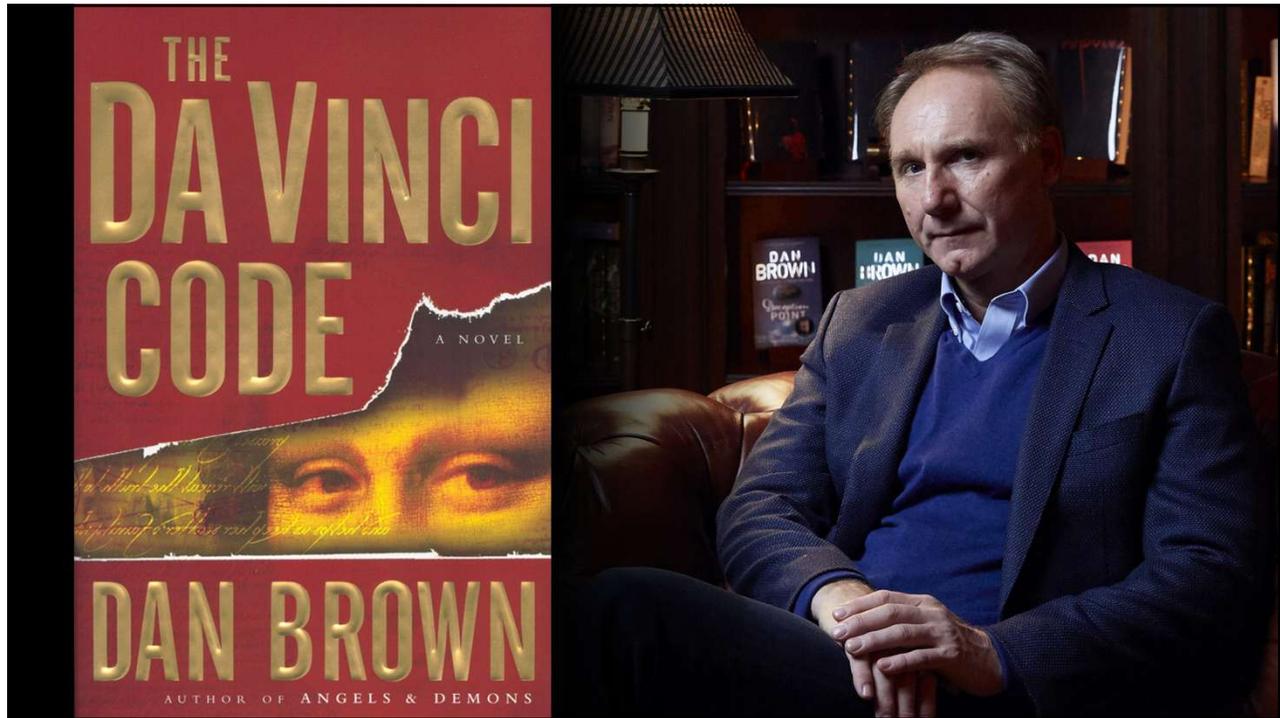
JOHN BURROW



**John Burrow**  
(1935-2009)



***The deity of Christ was the result of a close vote among church leaders convening at the Council of Nicaea in 325 AD.***



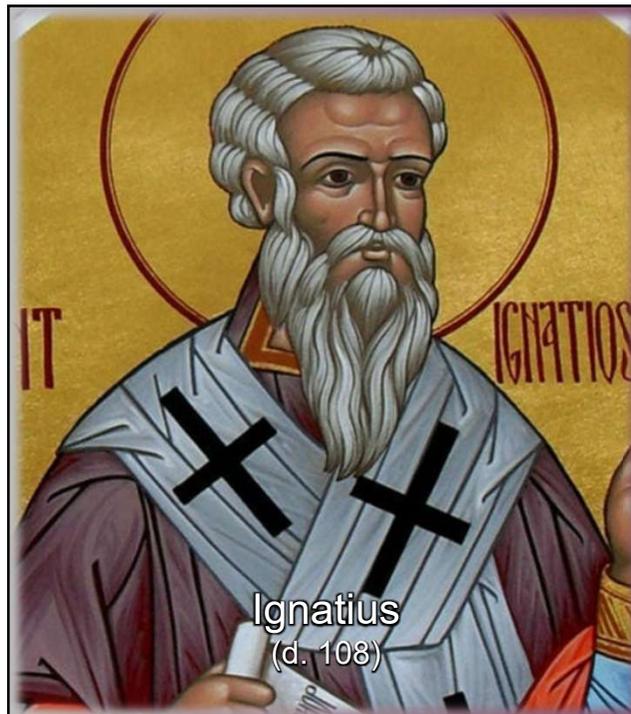
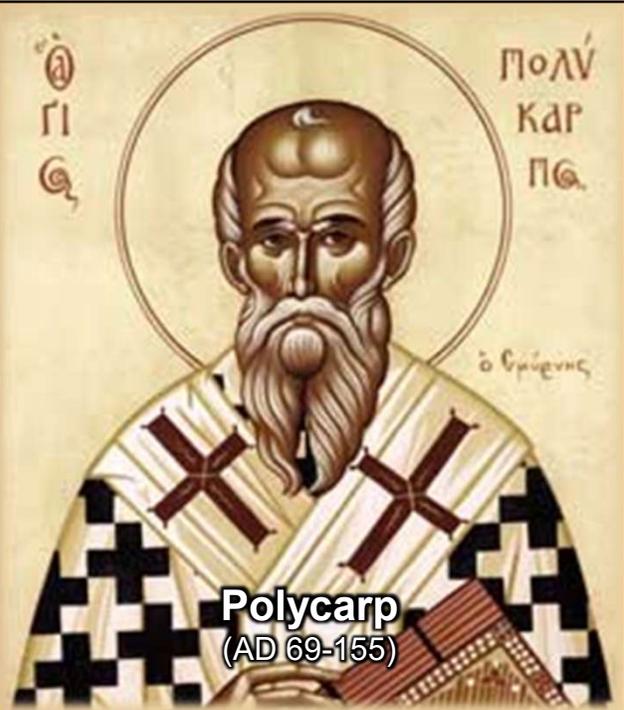
*The divinity of Jesus was affirmed long before Constantine and the Council of Nicaea.*

**Response**

The image shows a black and white photograph of a man in a suit and tie, shouting into a telephone receiver. The word 'Response' is written in large, bold, yellow letters with a red outline at the bottom of the photo. To the right of the photo, a quote is displayed in a yellow, serif font with a red outline: 'The divinity of Jesus was affirmed long before Constantine and the Council of Nicaea.'

*"May the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the eternal High Priest himself, the [Son of] God Jesus Christ, build you up in faith and truth."*

(Epistle to the Philippians, 12)

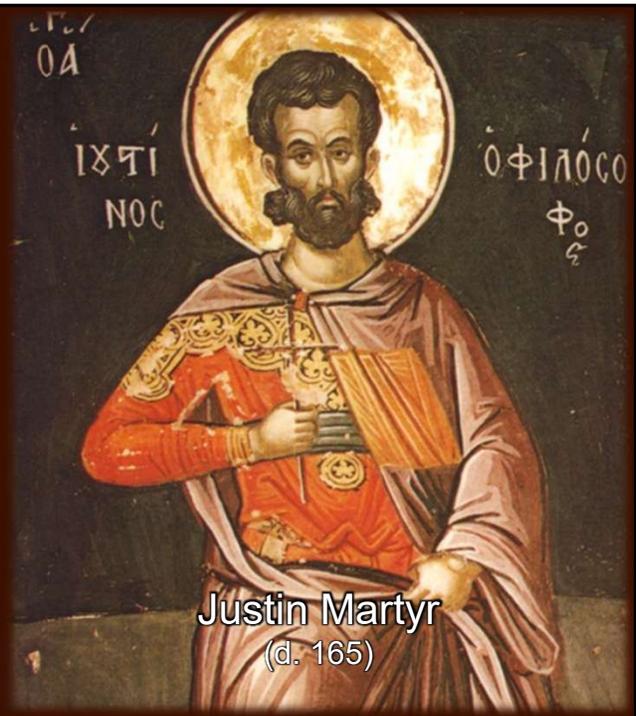


*"God Himself being manifested in human form for the renewal of eternal life."*

(Epistle to the Ephesians, 19)

*"... the Logos  
Himself, who took  
shape, and  
became man, and  
was called Jesus  
Christ ..."*

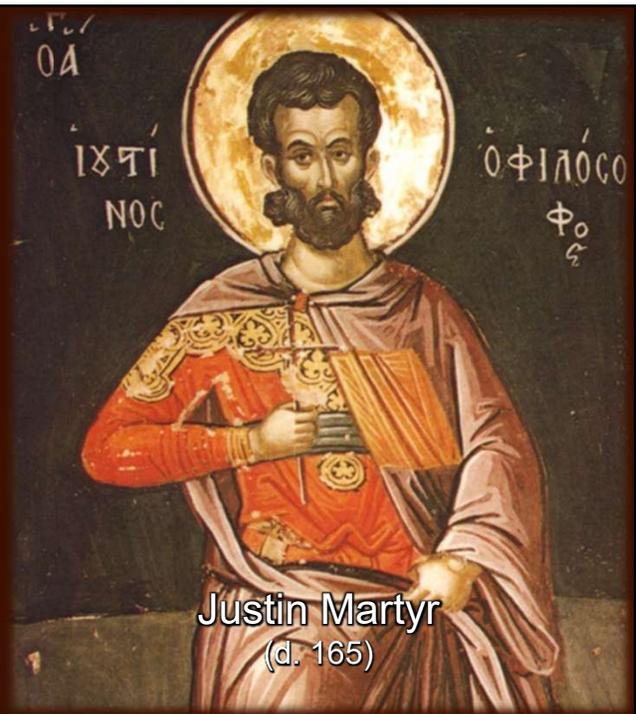
*(First Apology 5)*



Justin Martyr  
(d. 165)

*"...the Father of  
the universe has a  
Son; who being  
the logos and  
First-begotten is  
also God"*

*(First Apology 63:15)*



Justin Martyr  
(d. 165)



**Tatian**  
(120-180)

*"We do not act as fools,  
O Greeks, nor utter idle  
tales, when we  
announce that God was  
born in the form of a  
man."*

([https://en.wikisource.org/wiki/Ante-Nicene\\_Fathers/Volume\\_II/Address\\_to\\_the\\_Greeks](https://en.wikisource.org/wiki/Ante-Nicene_Fathers/Volume_II/Address_to_the_Greeks), accessed 07/30/22)



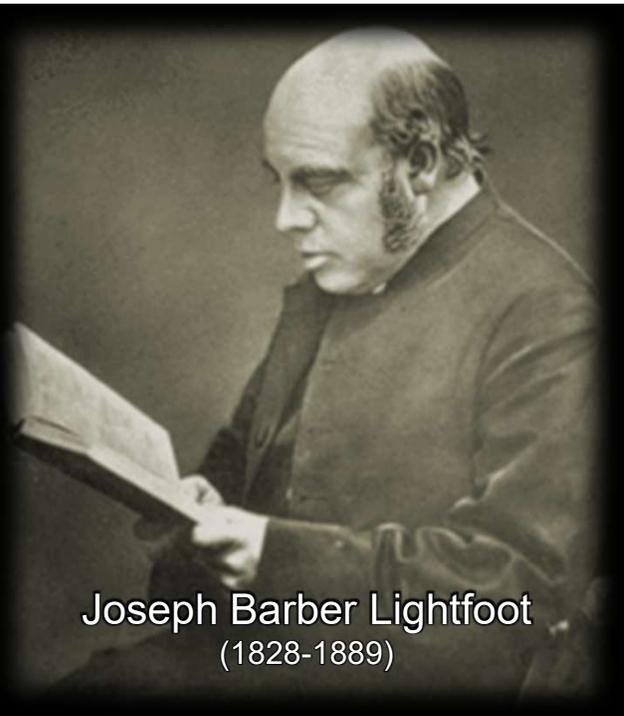
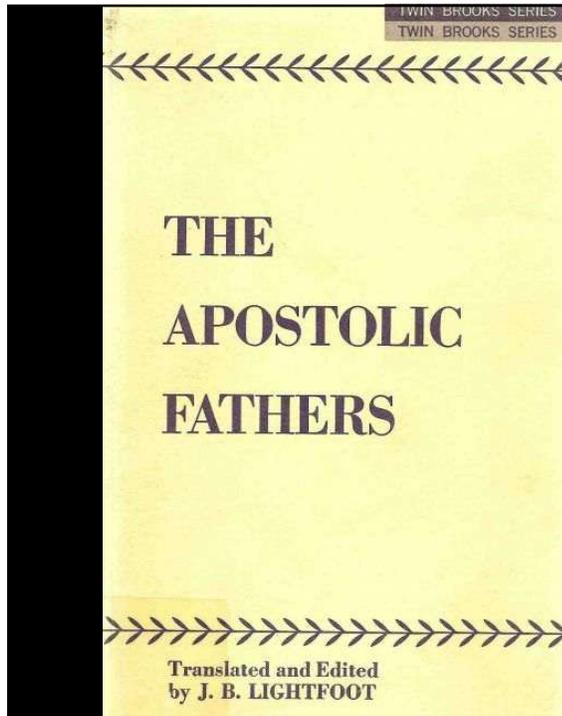
**Origen**  
(c. 185-254)

**Novatian of  
Rome**  
(c. 200-258)

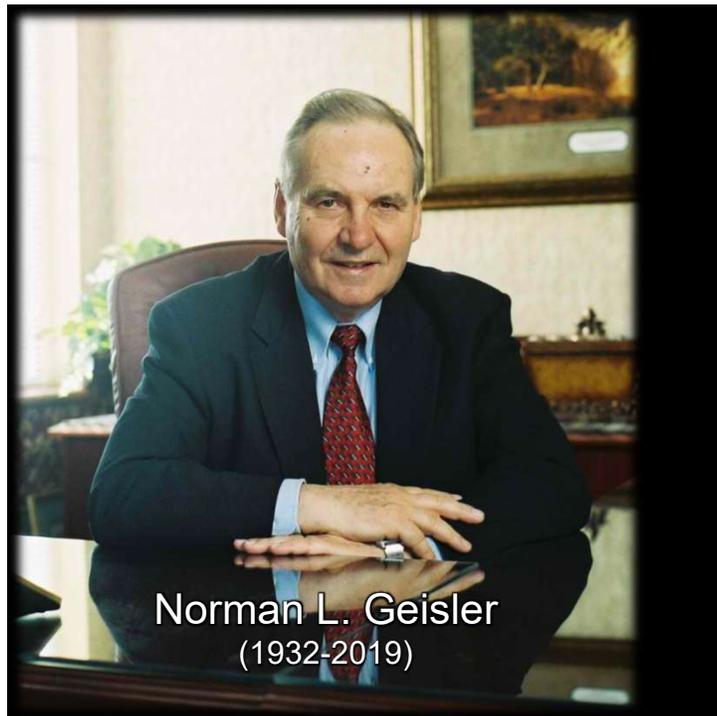
**Lactantius**  
(c. 250 - c. 325)

**Cyprian**  
(d. 258)

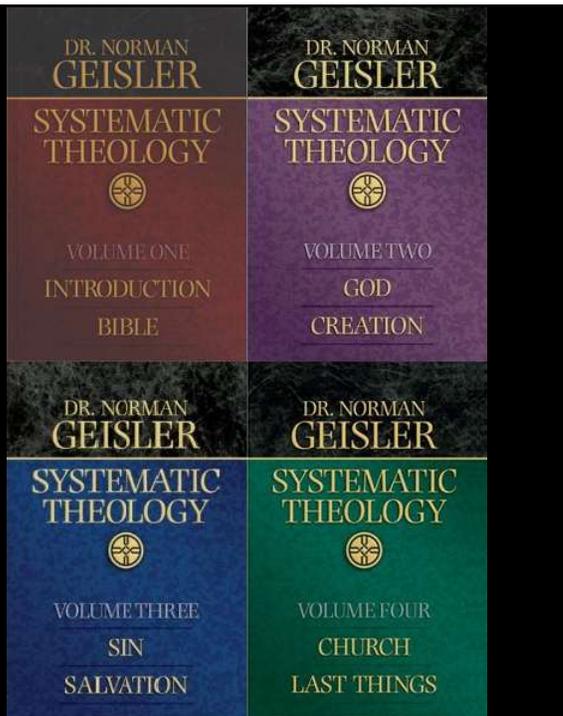
**Methodius**  
(d. 311)

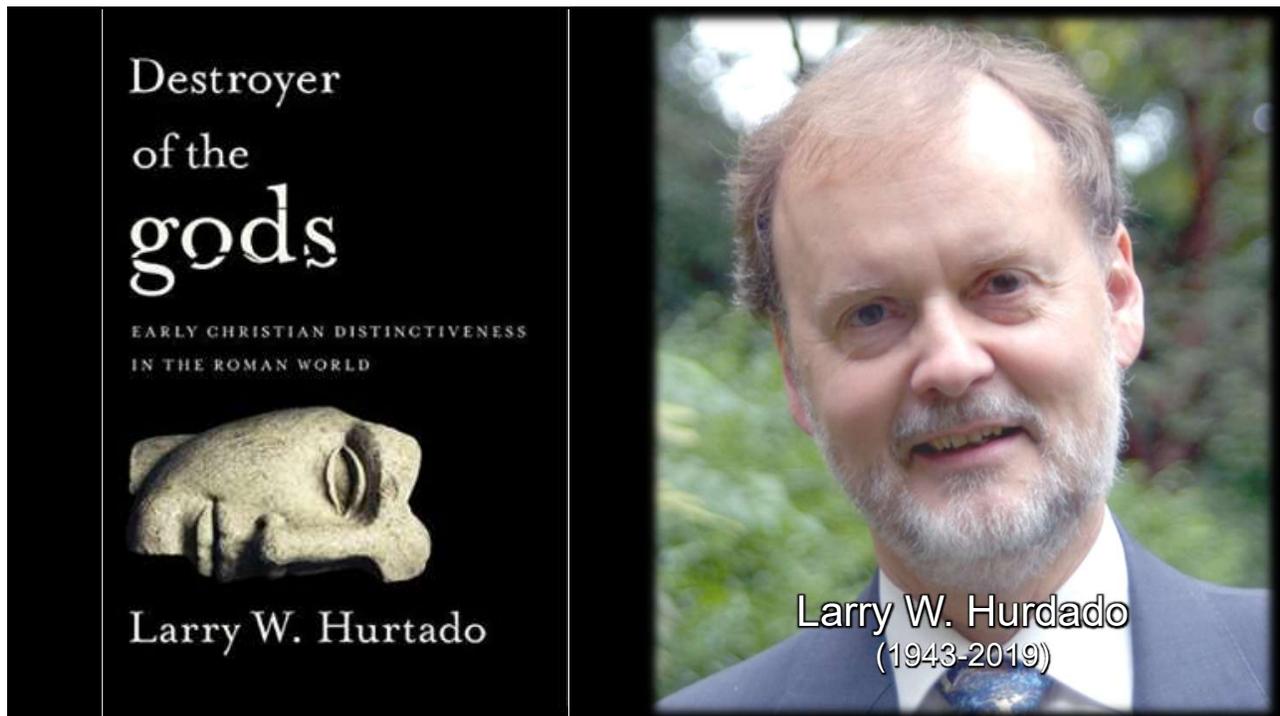
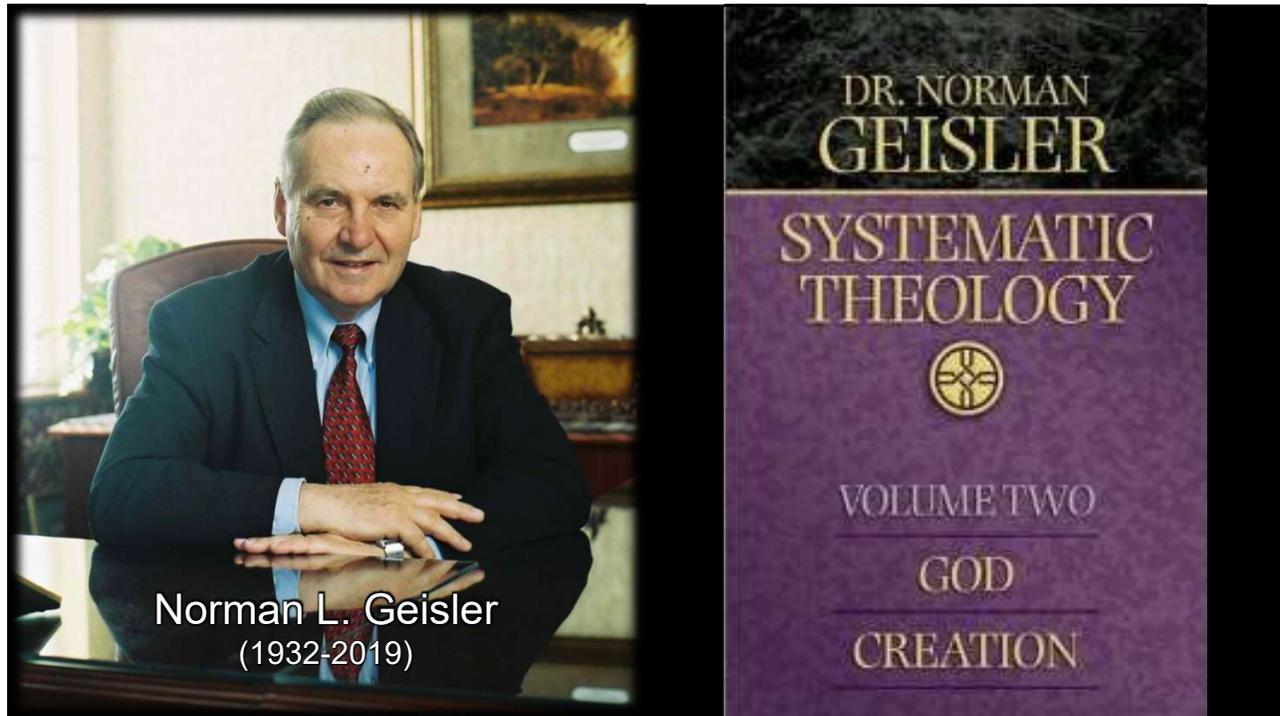


Joseph Barber Lightfoot  
(1828-1889)



Norman L. Geisler  
(1932-2019)





***"Christianity did not become successful through Constantine giving it imperial approval. Instead, Constantine adopted Christianity because it had already become so successful despite earlier efforts to destroy the movement."***

[Destroyer of the Gods: Early Christian Distinctives in the Roman World (Waco: Baylor University Press, 2017), 5]



Larry W. Hurdado  
(1943-2019)

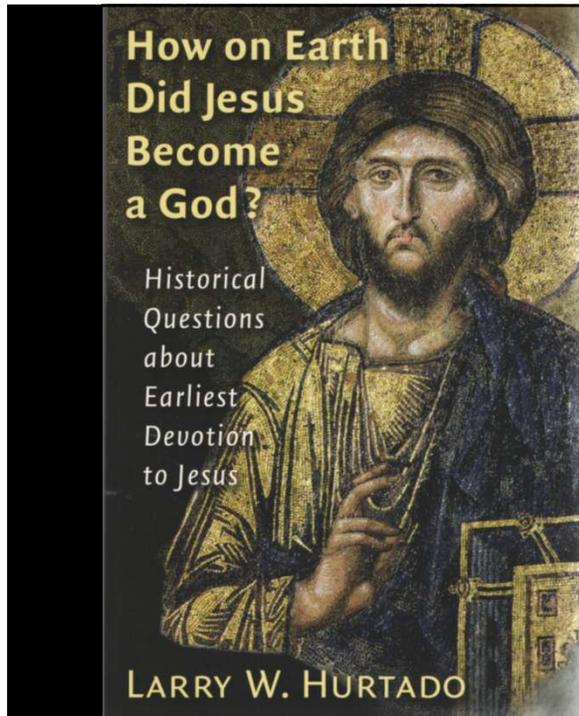


LORD JESUS CHRIST | *Devotion to Jesus in Earliest Christianity*

LARRY W. HURTADO



Larry W. Hurdado  
(1943-2019)



- ❖ convened June 19, 325
- ❖ considered the First Ecumenical Council
- ❖ convened by the Roman Emperor Constantine in Nicaea in Bithynia (now Iznik, Turkey)
- ❖ around 300 church leaders present



Arius (who regarded Jesus as a subordinate god and of a similar substance (ὁμοιούσιος / homoiouσιος) to the Father)



Athanasius (who regarded Jesus as co-equal and of the same substance (ὁμοούσιος / homouσιος) as the Father)

There was no "vote" on the deity of Christ. The Bishops were asked to sign the final conclusion of the council—which affirmed the full deity of Christ—and only 2 out of the 300 or so refused.

This is far from the "close vote" that *The Da Vinci Code* claims.

## Conclusions

- ✓ All the church fathers before Nicaea acknowledged the deity of Christ.
- ✓ The church fathers often defended the deity of Christ against the heresies that denied it.
- ✓ Nicaea formalized what the Church already believed and was defending.



*The Gospels were written much later and cannot be trusted to give an accurate account of the life of Jesus.*



*The four Gospels of the New Testament were attested to long before Constantine and Nicaea.*

**Response**



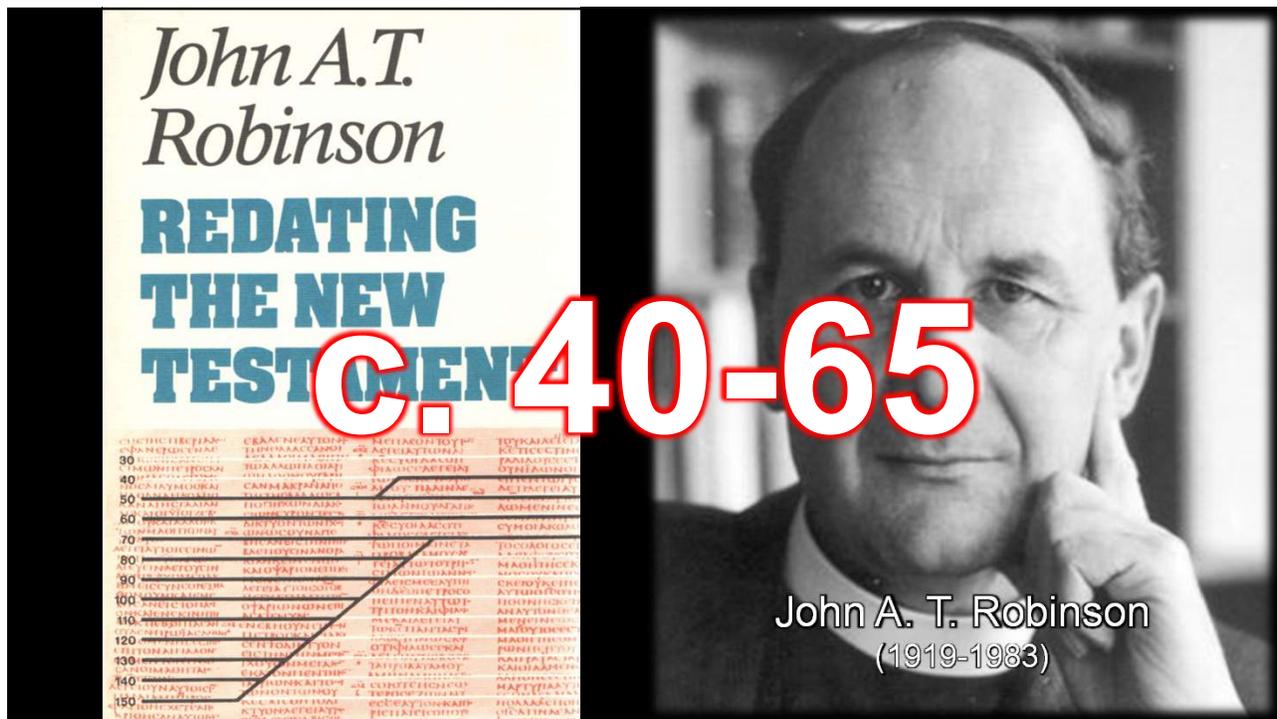
**Response**

- ❖ *Epistle of Barnabas* (c. 70-79)
- ❖ *Didache* (c. 70-130)
- ❖ *Papias* (c. 70-163) *Interpretation of the Oracles of the Lord*
- ❖ *Josephus' Antiquities* (93-94)
- ❖ *Clement of Rome* (c. 95-97) *Epistle to the Corinthians*
- ❖ *Epistles of Ignatius* (c. 110-117)
- ❖ *Irenaeus* (c. 130-202) *Against Heresies*
- ❖ *Marcion* (c. 140)
- ❖ *Origen* (AD 185-254) *Homily on Luke*
- ❖ *Muratorian Canon* (late 2nd Century)

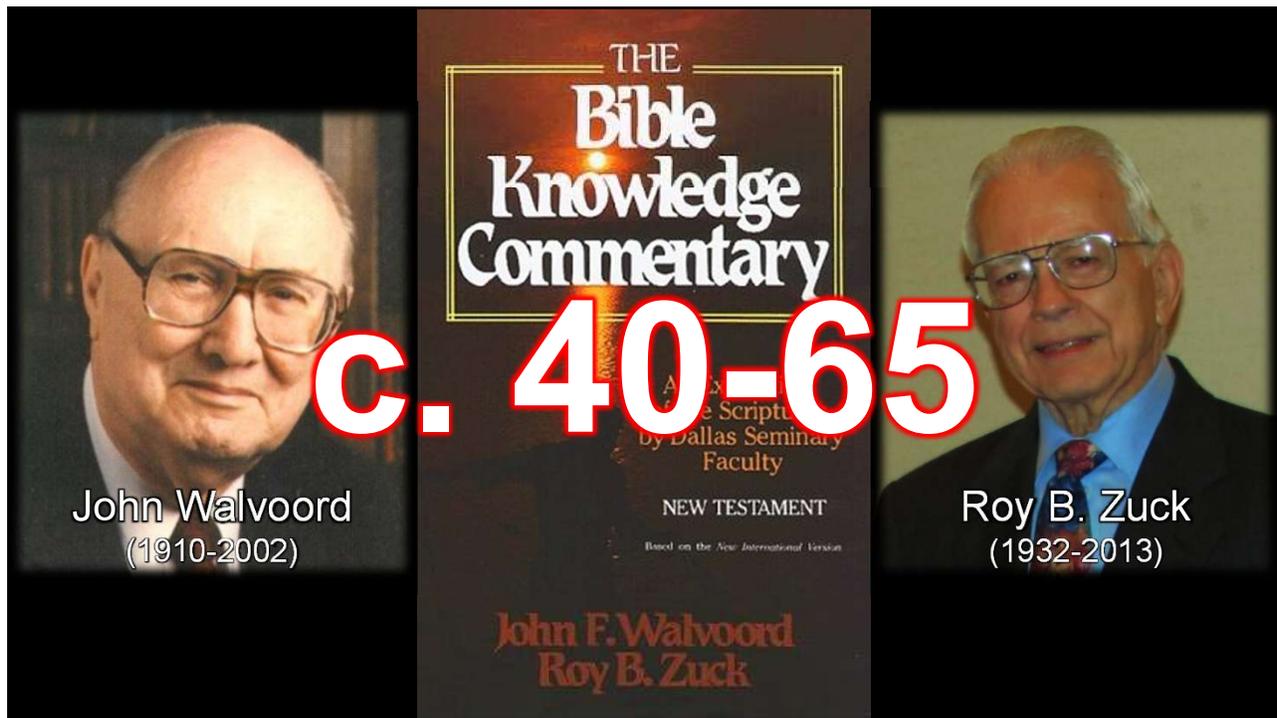


**Response**

*Some scholars give the four Gospels relatively early dates, even within the first century.*

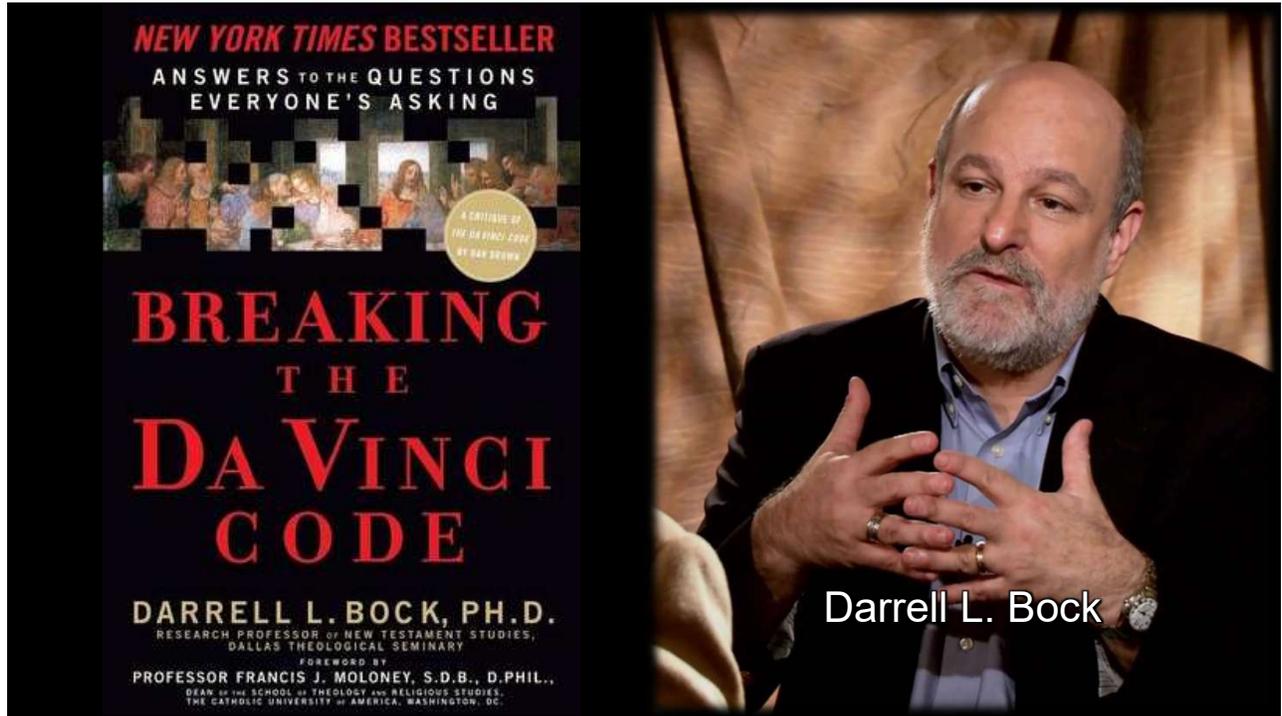
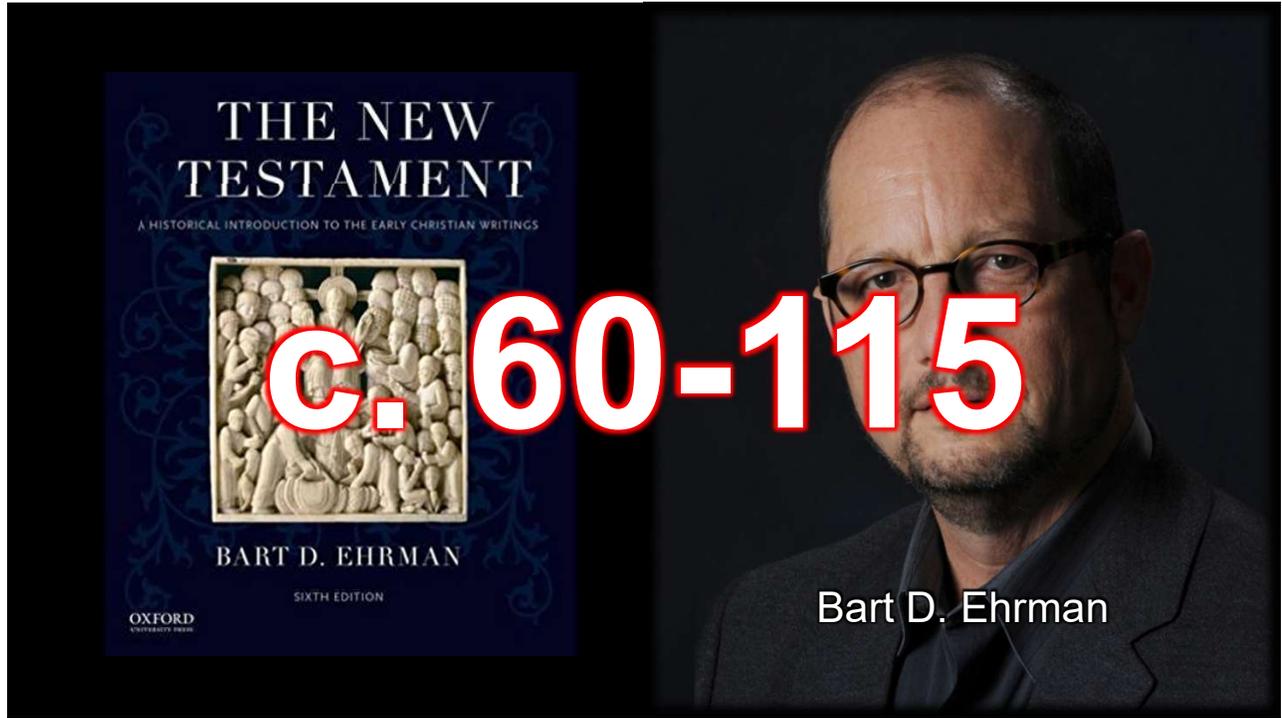


John A. T. Robinson  
(1919-1983)

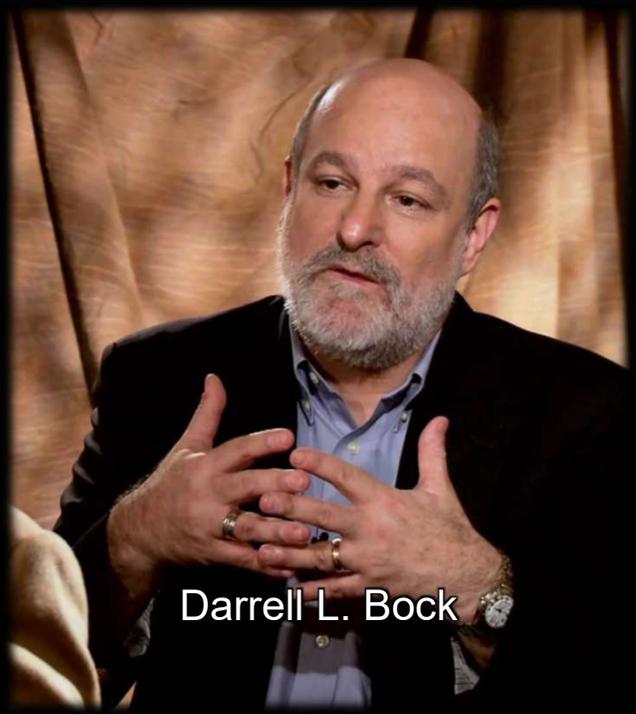


John Walvoord  
(1910-2002)

Roy B. Zuck  
(1932-2013)

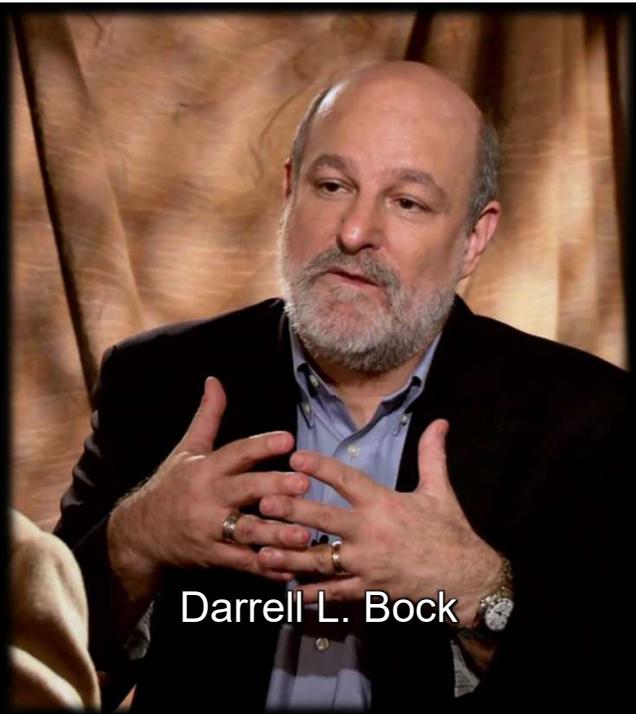


***"The Nicene Creed puts in precise philosophical and theological language what had been expressed in more general terms for years. It also affirmed which texts taught such views.***



Darrell L. Bock

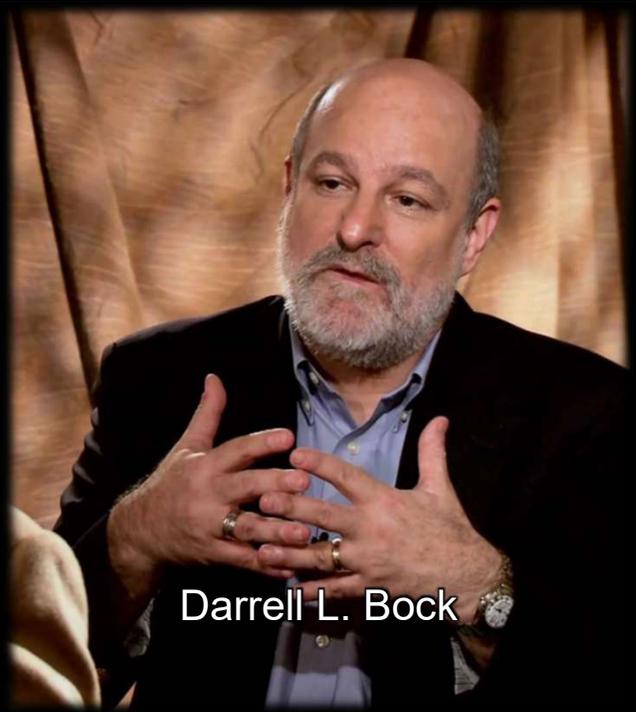
***"What is more, the four Gospels highlighted at this council had been solidly established and recognized in these communities for more than a century before Nicaea.***



Darrell L. Bock

***"The vote at Nicaea,  
rather than  
establishing the  
church's beliefs,  
affirmed and  
officially recognized  
what was already  
the church's  
dominant view."***

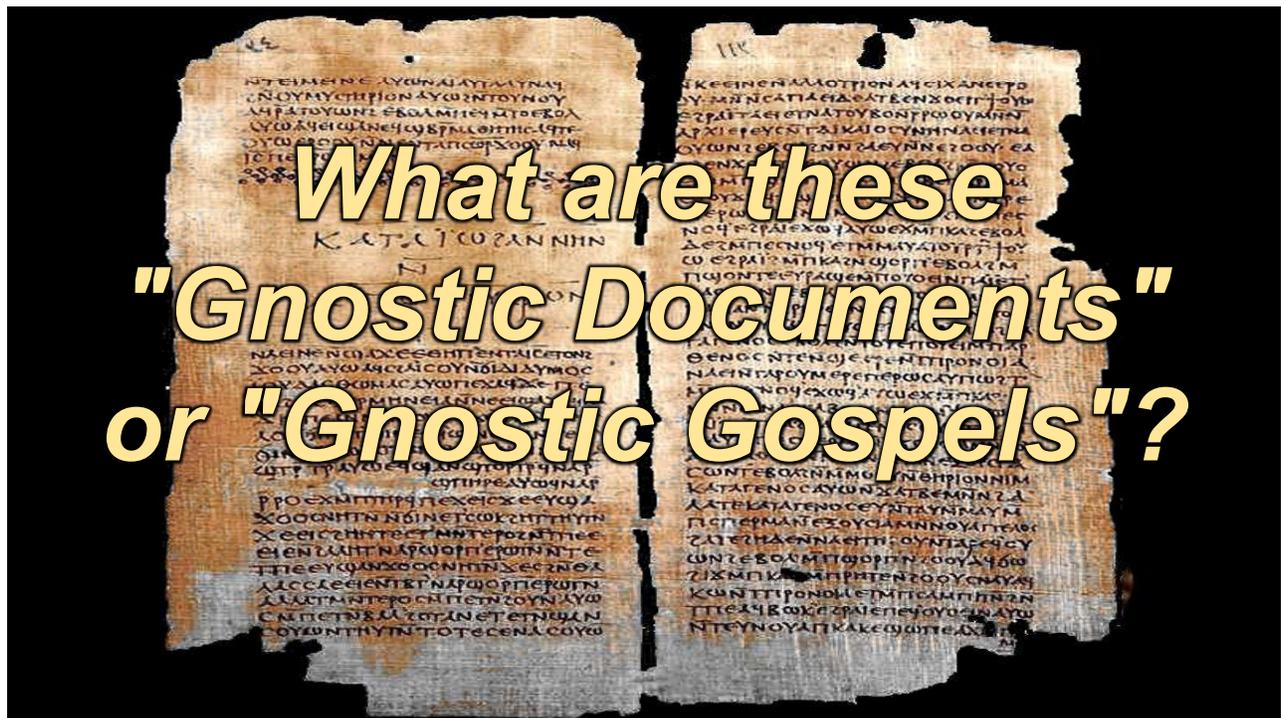
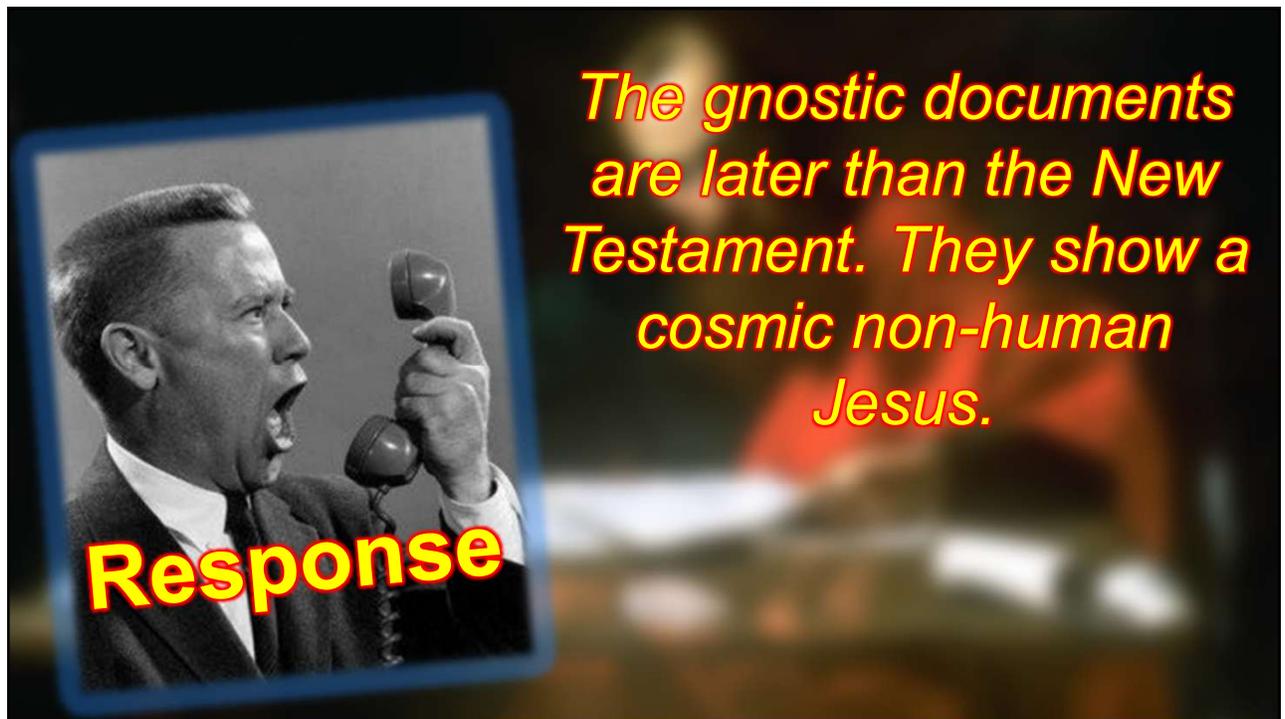
[Breaking the Da Vinci Code: Answers to the  
Questions Everyone's Asking (Nashville: Thomas  
Nelson Publishers, 2004), 102]

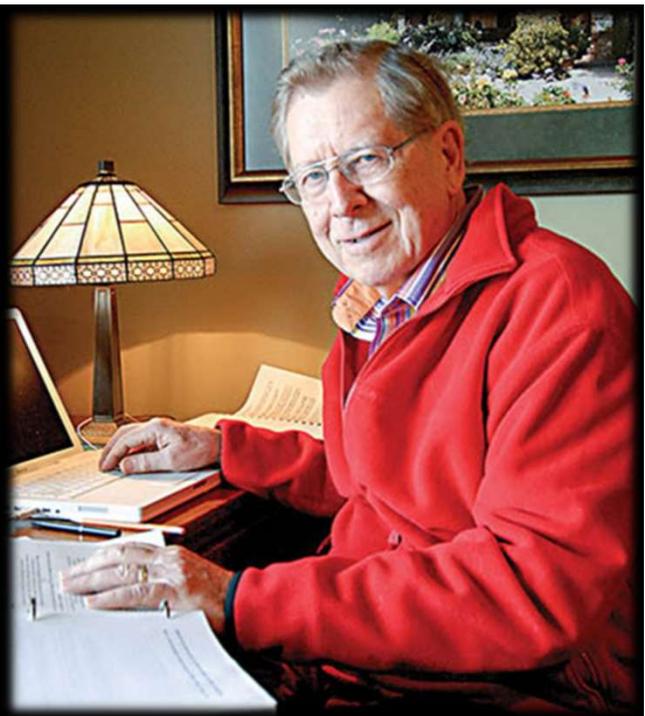
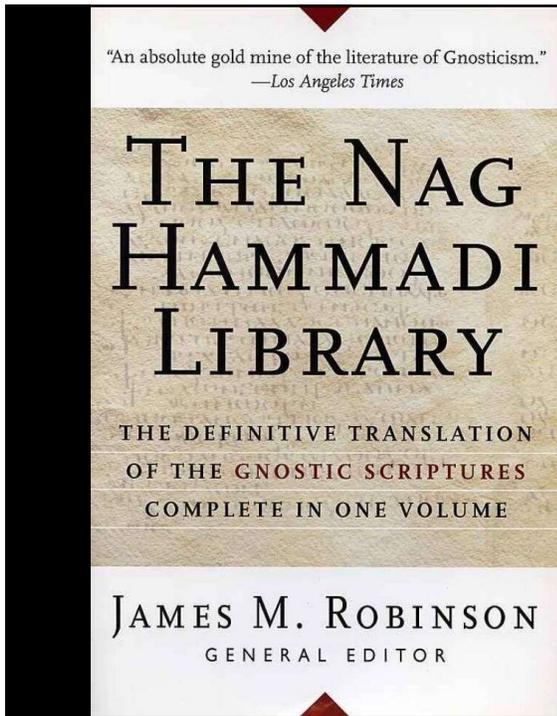
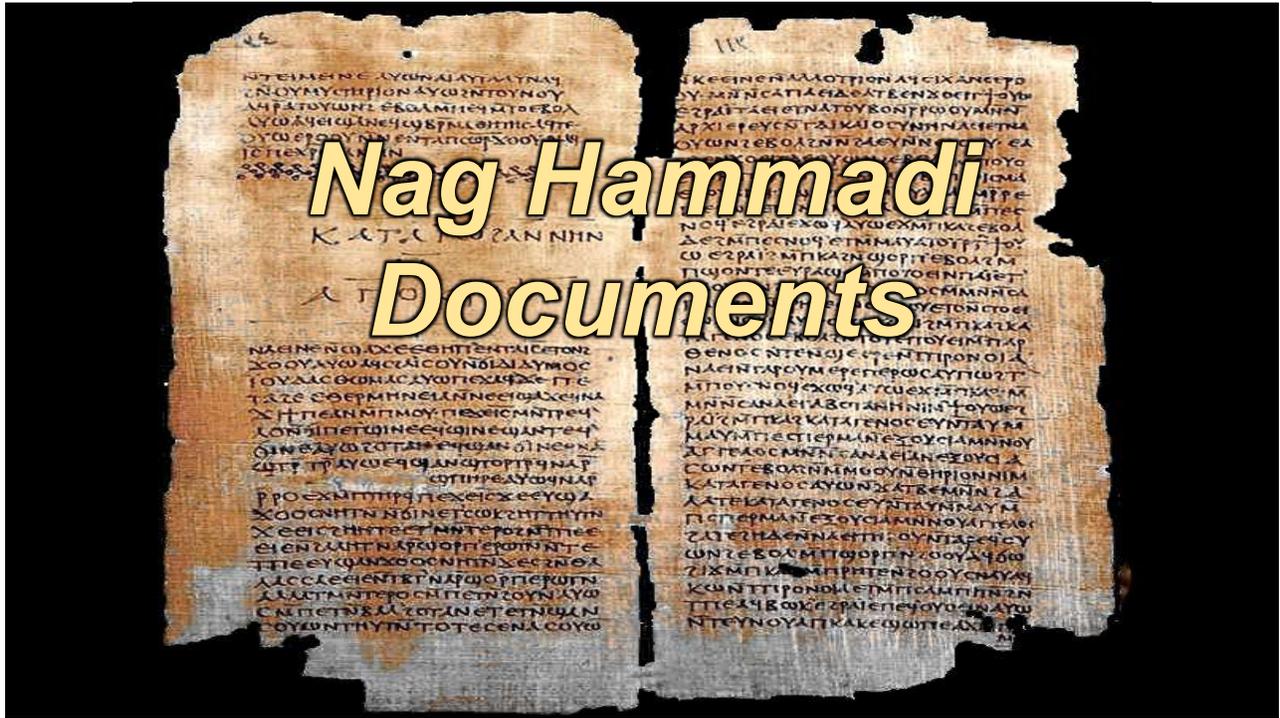


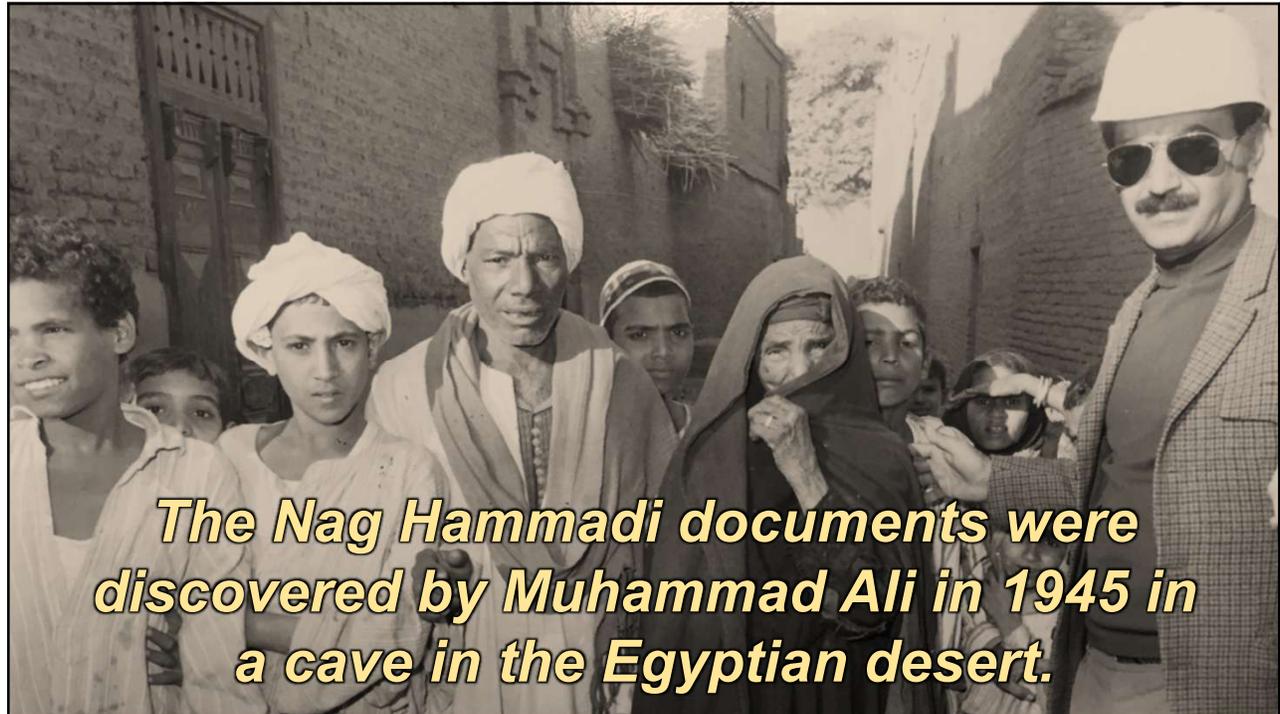
Darrell L. Bock



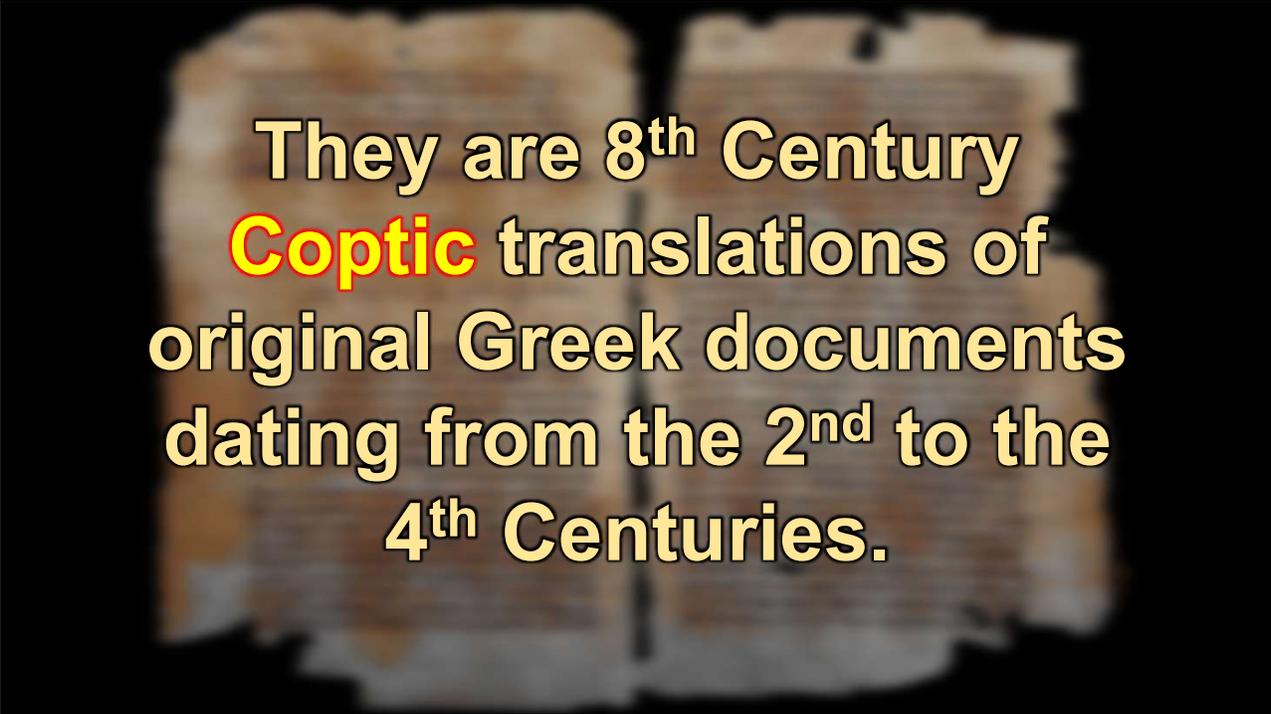
***The story of Jesus is  
more accurately  
contained within the  
Gnostic documents than  
in the New Testament.  
These Gnostic  
documents show a mere  
human Jesus.***



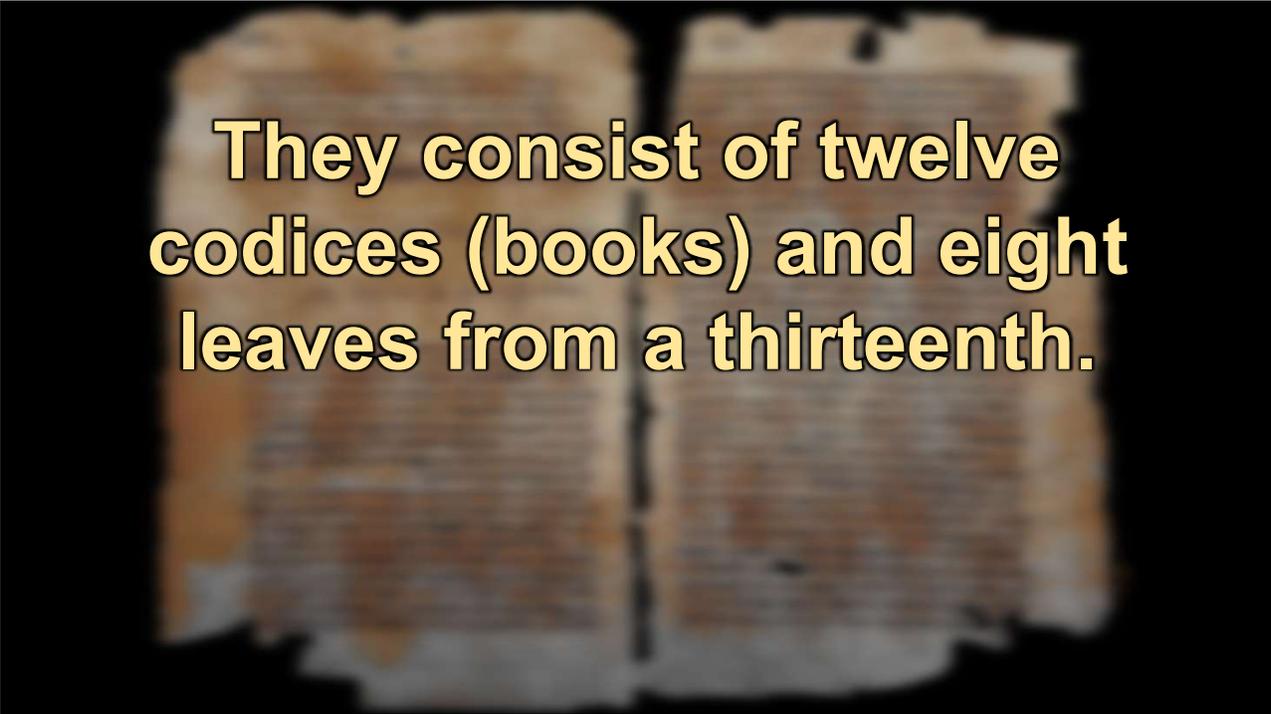




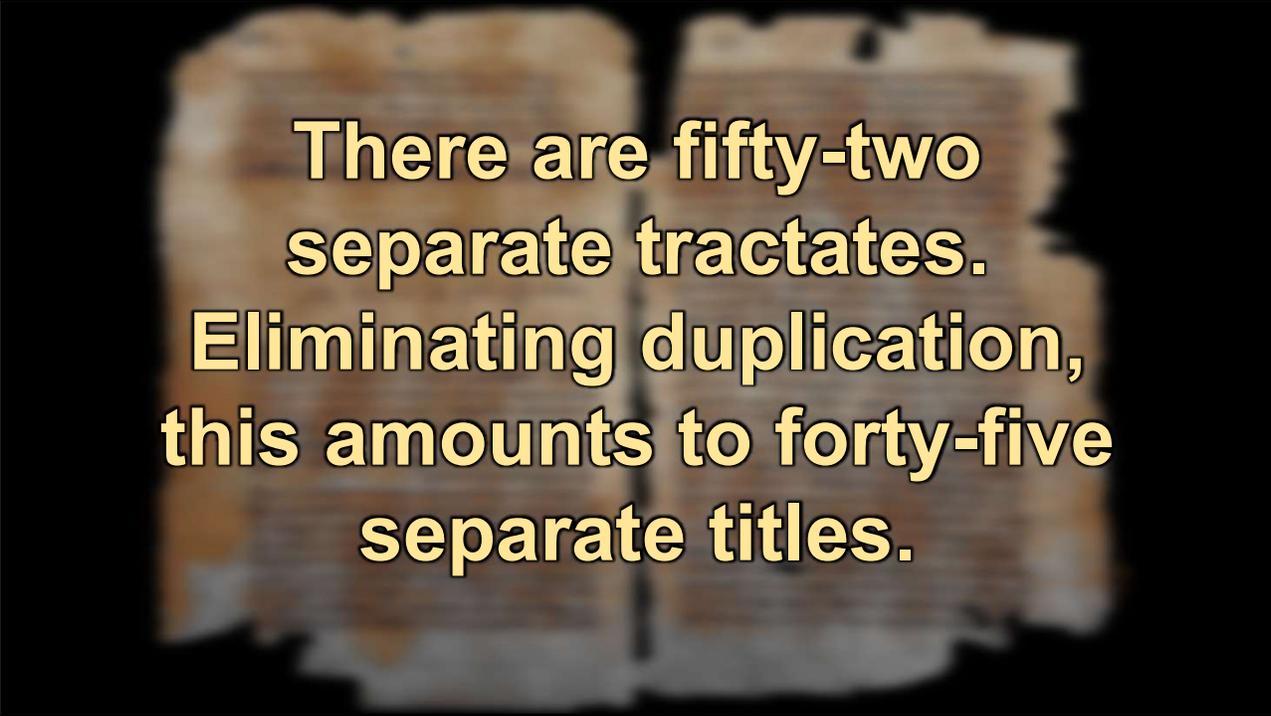
**They are 8<sup>th</sup> Century Coptic translations of original Greek documents dating from the 2<sup>nd</sup> to the 4<sup>th</sup> Centuries.**



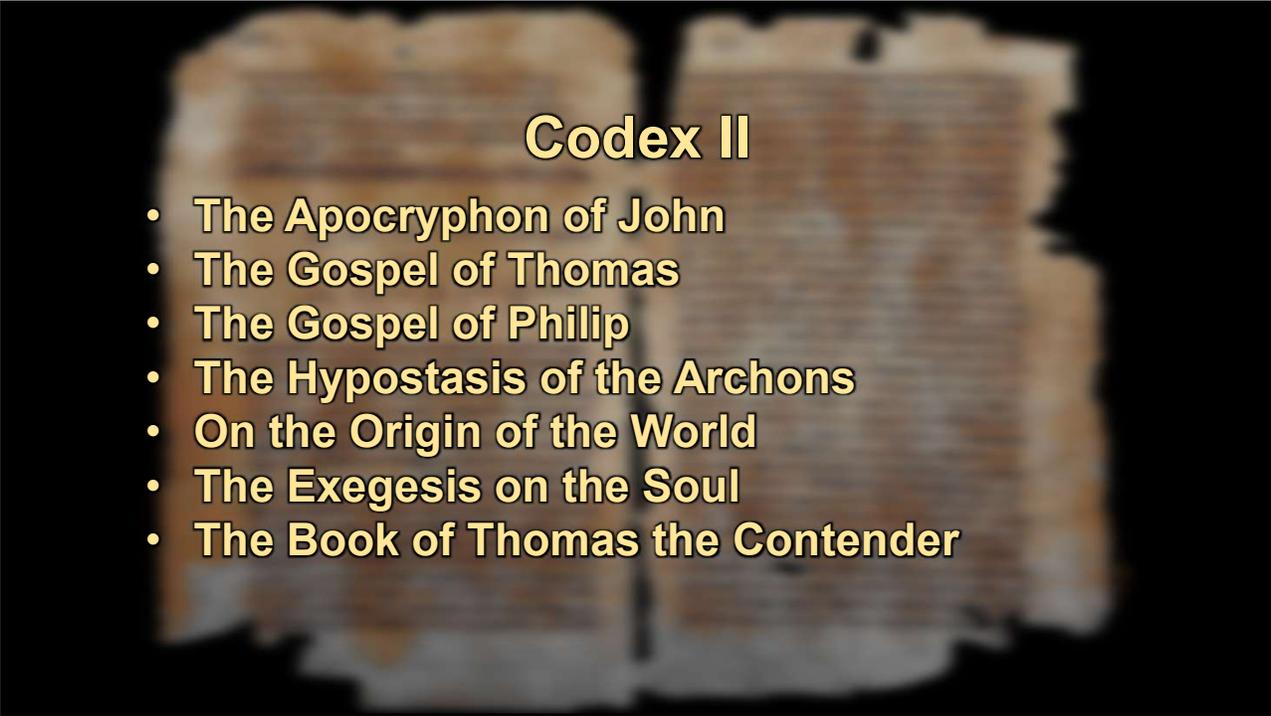
They are 8<sup>th</sup> Century  
**Coptic** translations of  
original Greek documents  
dating from the 2<sup>nd</sup> to the  
4<sup>th</sup> Centuries.



They consist of twelve  
codices (books) and eight  
leaves from a thirteenth.

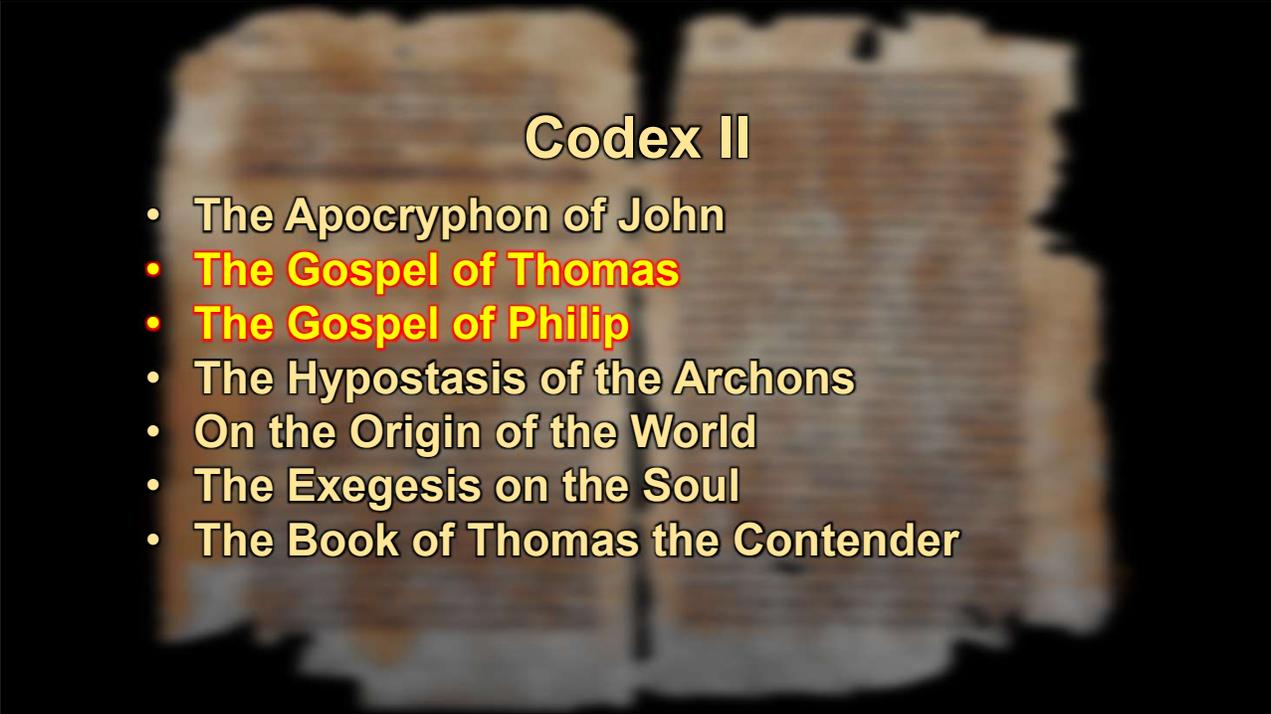


**There are fifty-two  
separate tractates.  
Eliminating duplication,  
this amounts to forty-five  
separate titles.**



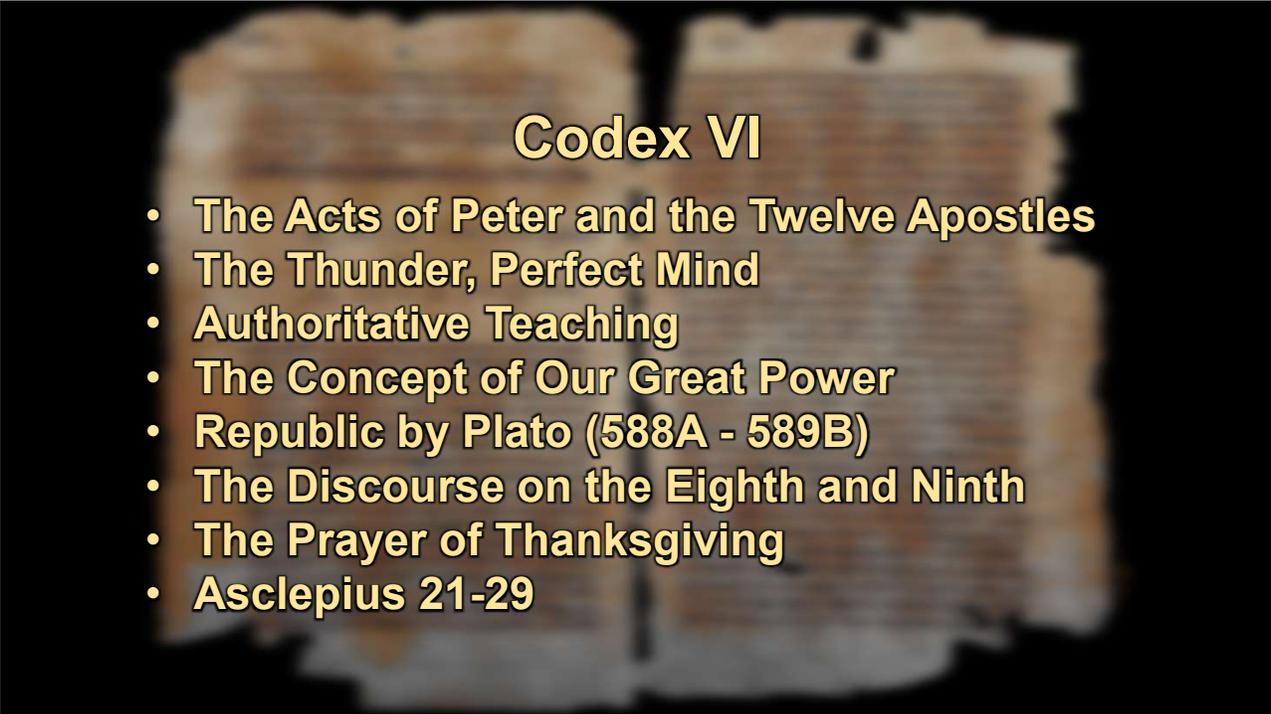
## **Codex II**

- **The Apocryphon of John**
- **The Gospel of Thomas**
- **The Gospel of Philip**
- **The Hypostasis of the Archons**
- **On the Origin of the World**
- **The Exegesis on the Soul**
- **The Book of Thomas the Contender**



## Codex II

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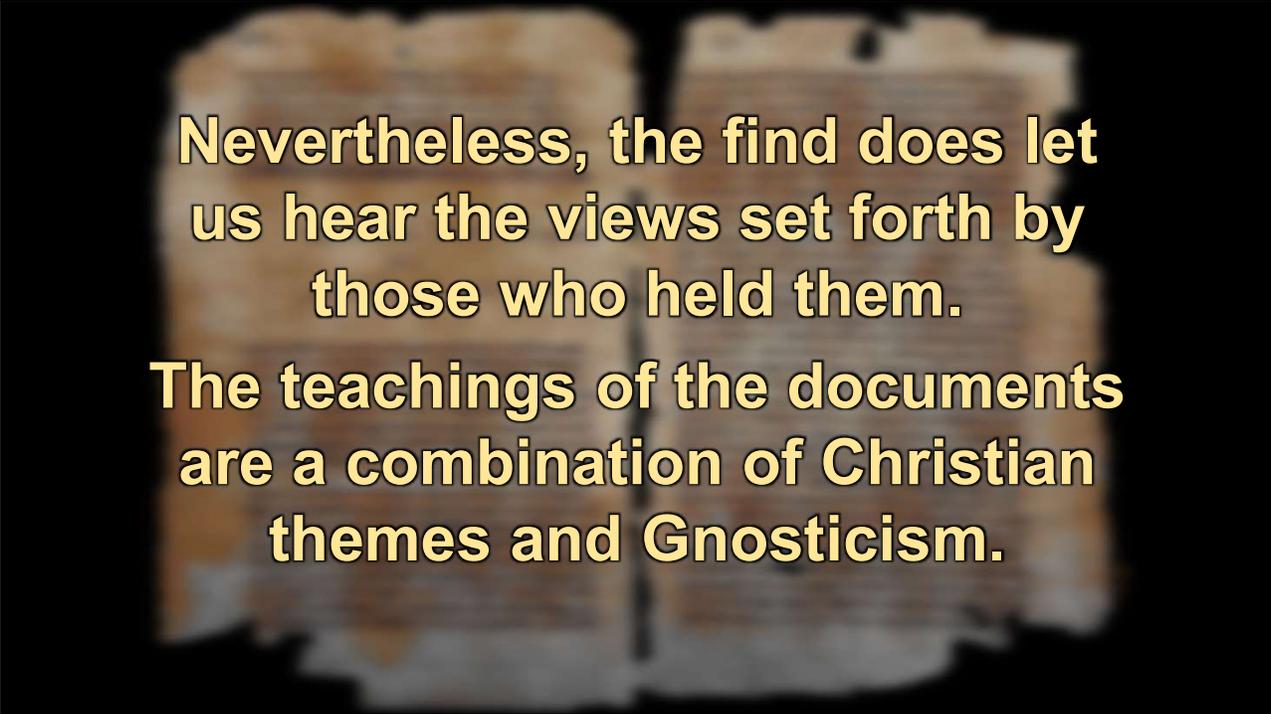
## Codex VI

- The Acts of Peter and the Twelve Apostles
- The Thunder, Perfect Mind
- Authoritative Teaching
- The Concept of Our Great Power
- Republic by Plato (588A - 589B)
- The Discourse on the Eighth and Ninth
- The Prayer of Thanksgiving
- Asclepius 21-29

## Codex VI

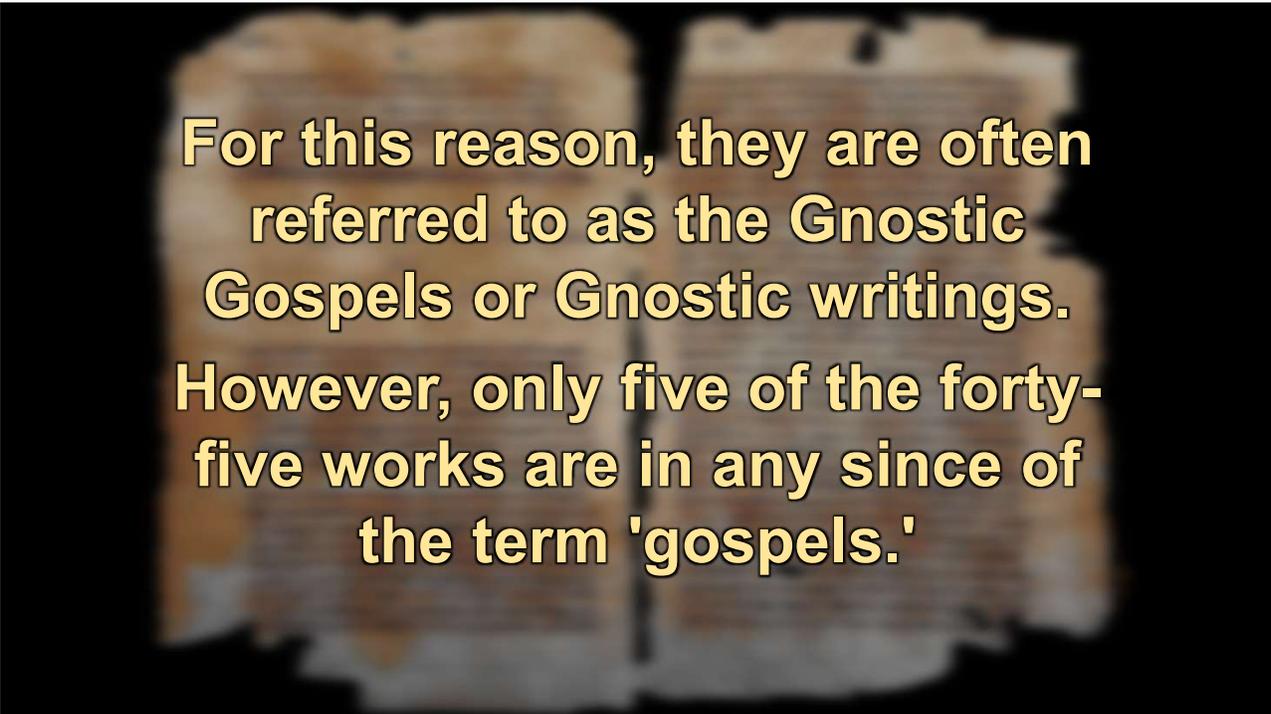
- The Acts of Peter and the Twelve Apostles
- The Thunder, Perfect Mind
- Authoritative Teaching
- The Concept of Our Great Power
- **Republic by Plato (588A - 589B)**
- The Discourse on the Eighth and Ninth
- The Prayer of Thanksgiving
- Asclepius 21-29

Though they are sometimes called "secret" documents, the texts were no "secret." Their content has been known from the critical writings of the Church Fathers of the 2nd to 4th Centuries.



Nevertheless, the find does let us hear the views set forth by those who held them.

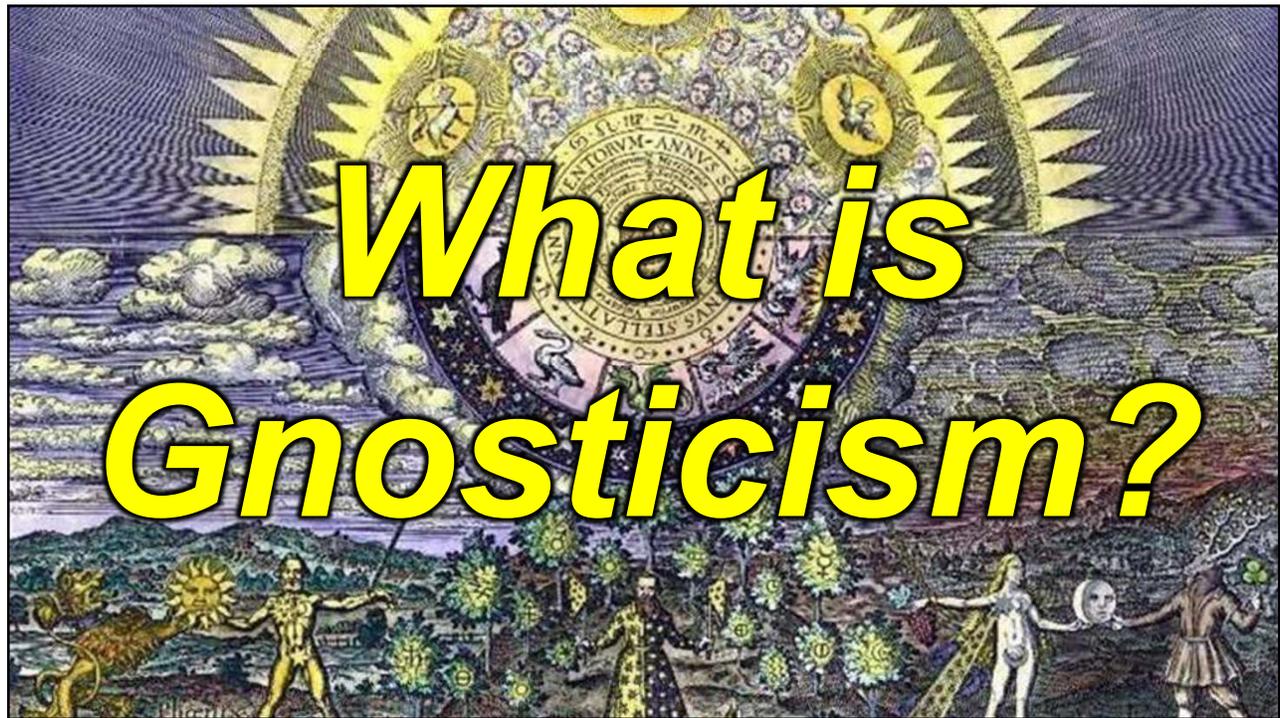
The teachings of the documents are a combination of Christian themes and Gnosticism.



For this reason, they are often referred to as the Gnostic Gospels or Gnostic writings.

However, only five of the forty-five works are in any sense of the term 'gospels.'

Other Coptic Gnostic documents have also been found apart from the Nag Hammadi documents that are sometimes grouped together with them in translations (e.g., The Gospel of Mary; discovered in 1896.)



**The term 'gnosticism'  
comes from the Greek  
word γνῶσις" (gnōsis)  
meaning 'knowledge.'**

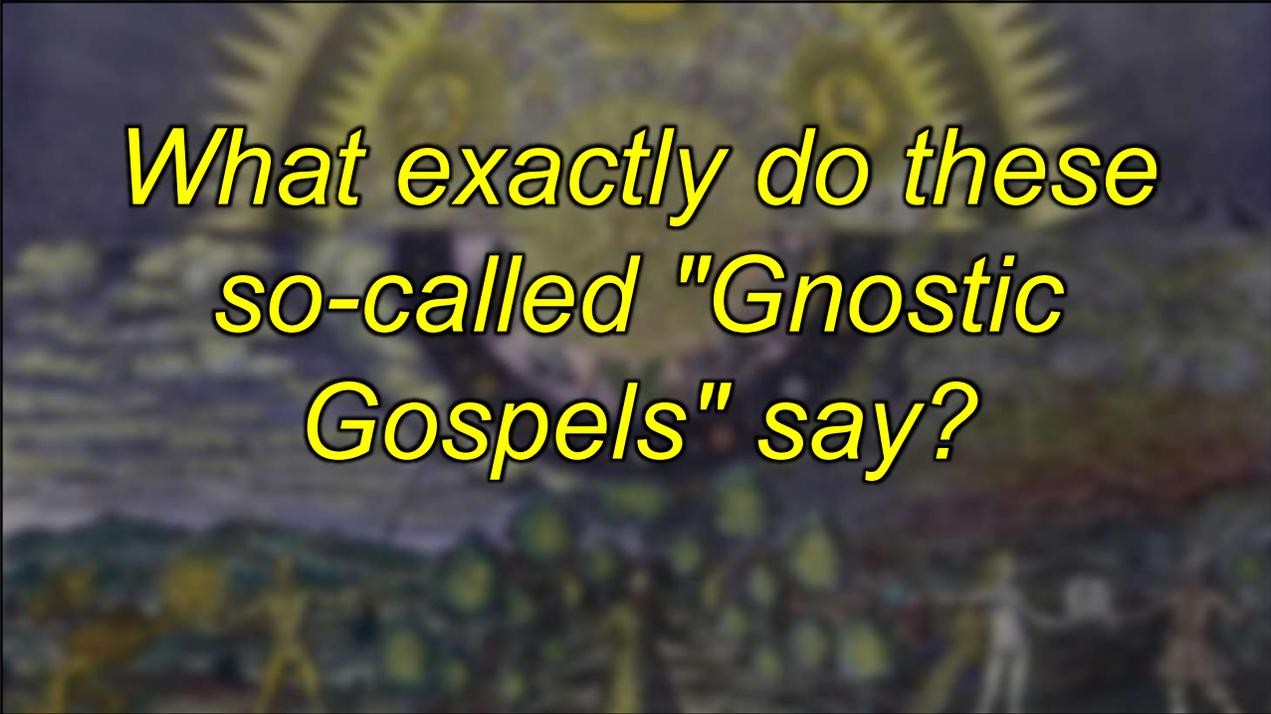
**It refers to a religious  
movement which began to  
flourish toward the end of  
or soon after the  
apostolic era.**

**The movement taught that one is saved, not because of any atoning work of a Savior, but through a secret knowledge.**

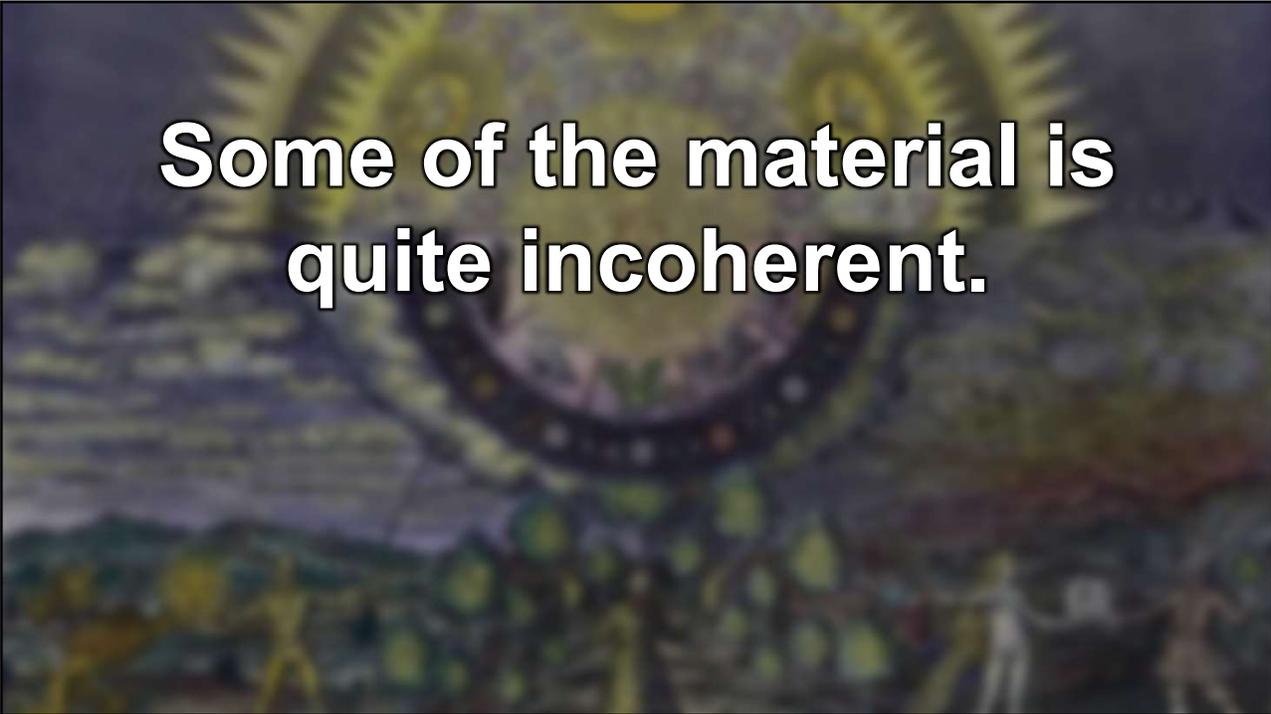
## **Some Tenets of Gnosticism**

- ❖ The True God is a pure, immaterial fullness of light, removed from the creation.
- ❖ The material world is evil and is not a subject of ultimate redemption in the end.

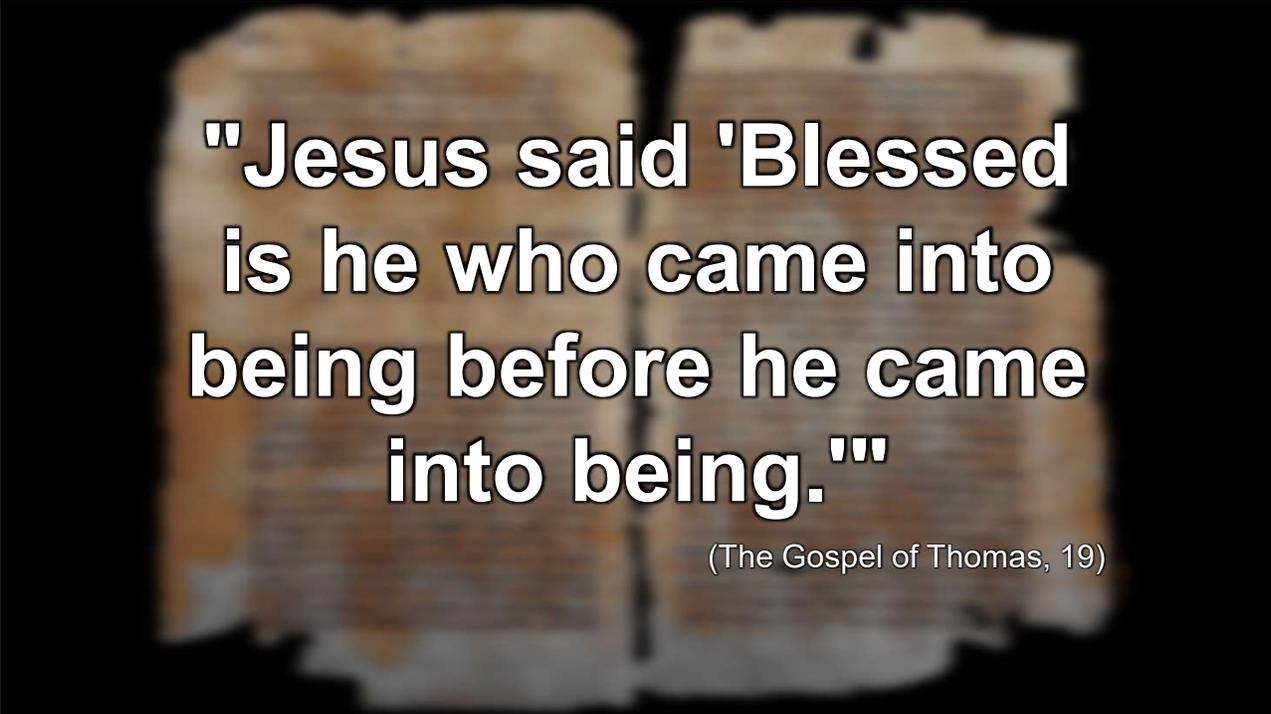
- ❖ A substitute, not Jesus, was the one who suffered on the cross.
- ❖ All of this is "secret"—a mystery.
- ❖ Knowledge is self-knowledge, not knowledge centering in Jesus.



*What exactly do these  
so-called "Gnostic  
Gospels" say?*

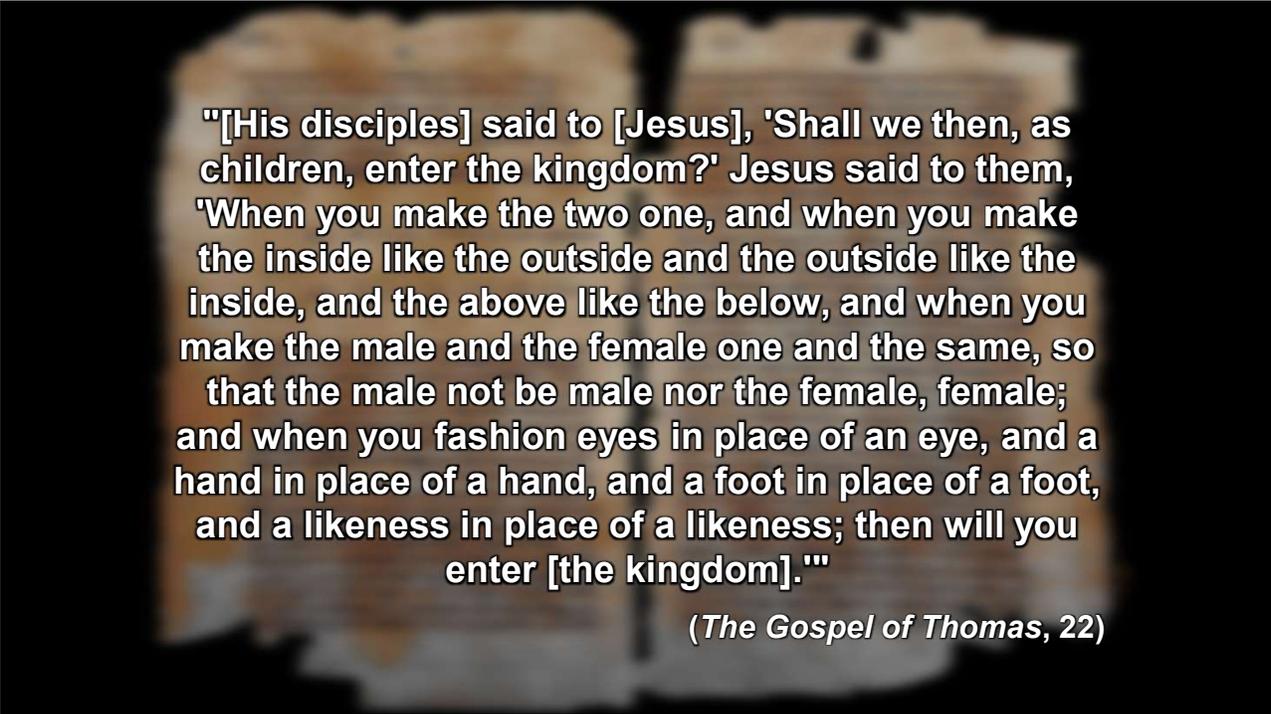


**Some of the material is  
quite incoherent.**



**"Jesus said 'Blessed  
is he who came into  
being before he came  
into being.'"**

*(The Gospel of Thomas, 19)*

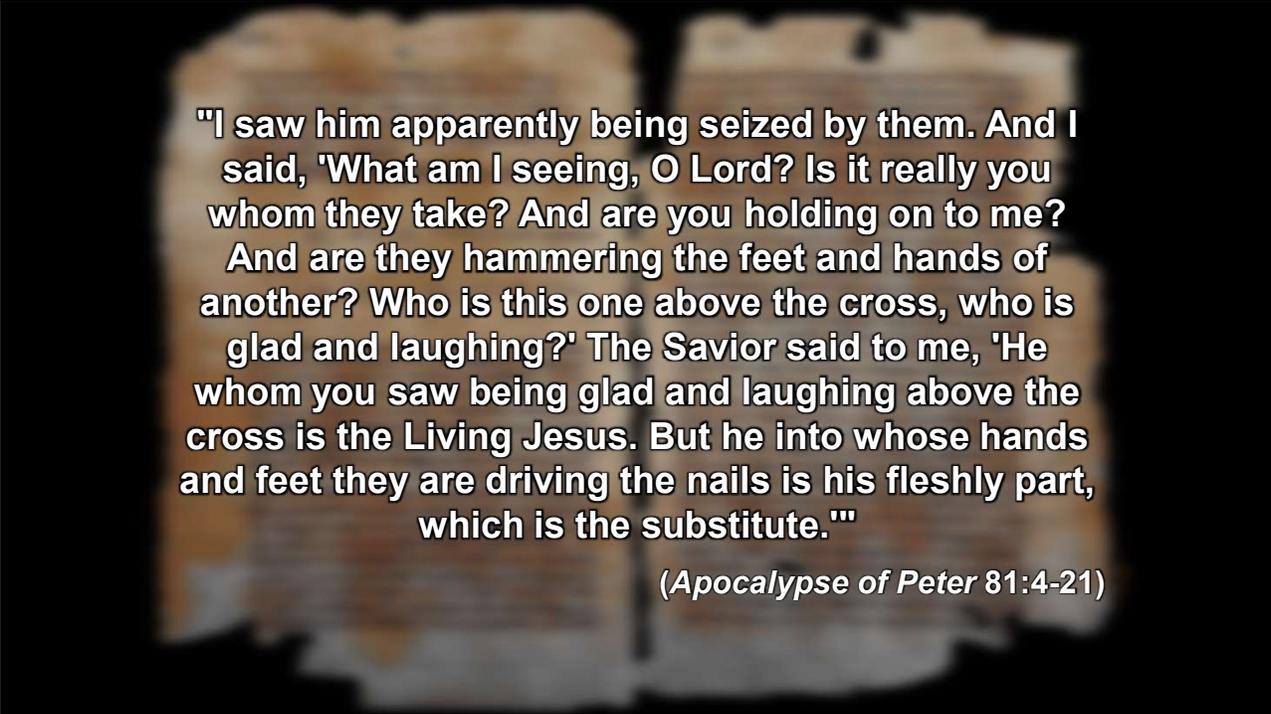


**"[His disciples] said to [Jesus], 'Shall we then, as  
children, enter the kingdom?' Jesus said to them,  
'When you make the two one, and when you make  
the inside like the outside and the outside like the  
inside, and the above like the below, and when you  
make the male and the female one and the same, so  
that the male not be male nor the female, female;  
and when you fashion eyes in place of an eye, and a  
hand in place of a hand, and a foot in place of a foot,  
and a likeness in place of a likeness; then will you  
enter [the kingdom].'"**

*(The Gospel of Thomas, 22)*

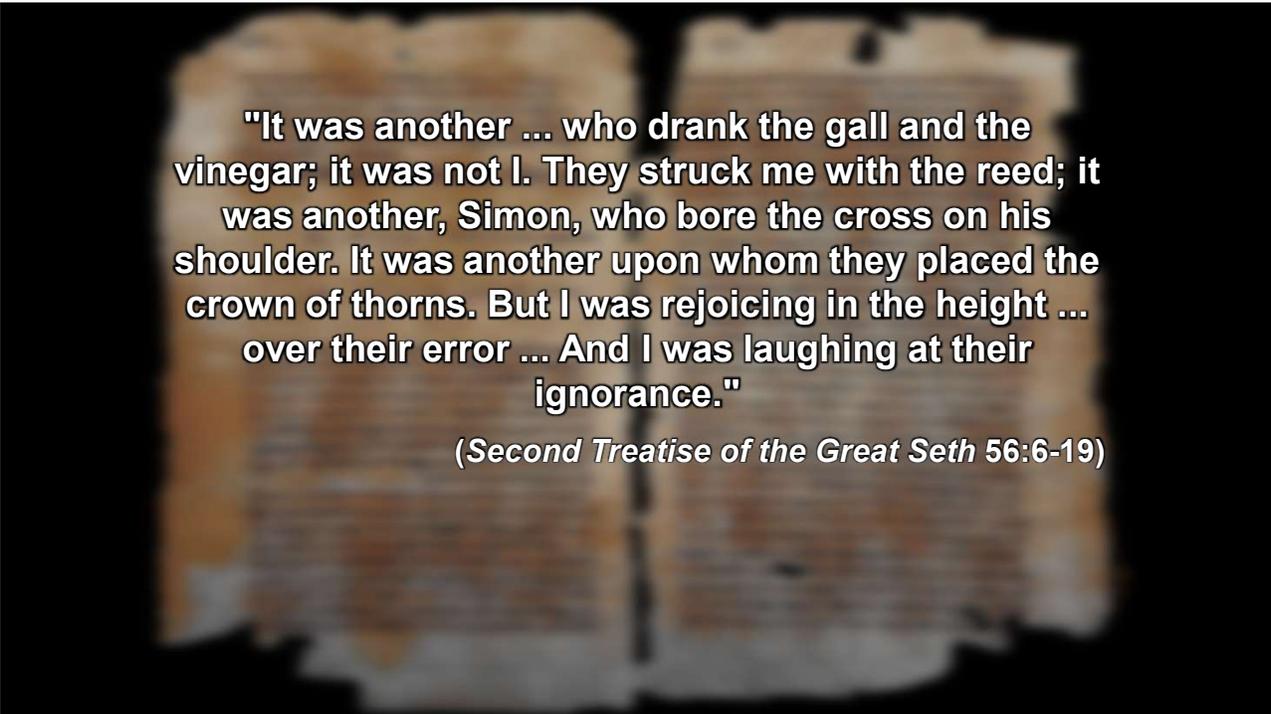
**Thus, it is difficult to glean a consistent picture of anything in the documents, though many of the teachings fall within a Gnostic world view.**

**There is a distinction between the Living Jesus and the fleshly Jesus, the latter alone being the one who was crucified.**



"I saw him apparently being seized by them. And I said, 'What am I seeing, O Lord? Is it really you whom they take? And are you holding on to me? And are they hammering the feet and hands of another? Who is this one above the cross, who is glad and laughing?' The Savior said to me, 'He whom you saw being glad and laughing above the cross is the Living Jesus. But he into whose hands and feet they are driving the nails is his fleshly part, which is the substitute.'"

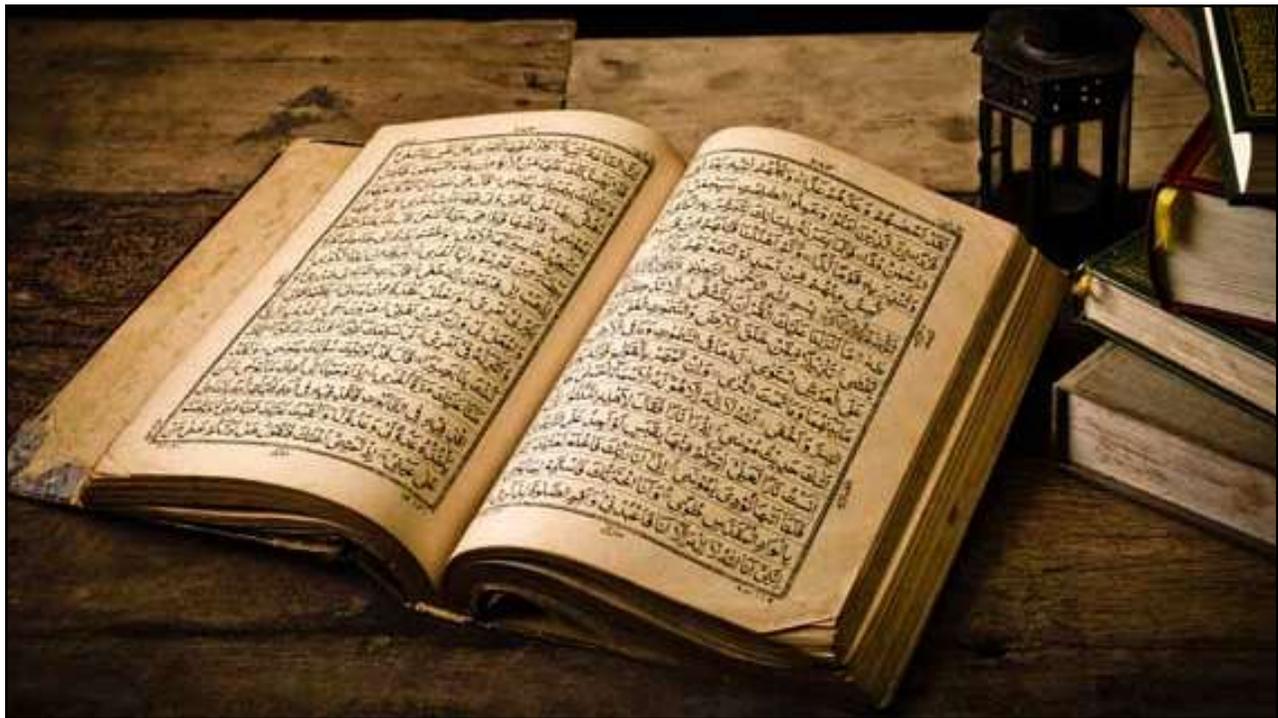
*(Apocalypse of Peter 81:4-21)*



"It was another ... who drank the gall and the vinegar; it was not I. They struck me with the reed; it was another, Simon, who bore the cross on his shoulder. It was another upon whom they placed the crown of thorns. But I was rejoicing in the height ... over their error ... And I was laughing at their ignorance."

*(Second Treatise of the Great Seth 56:6-19)*

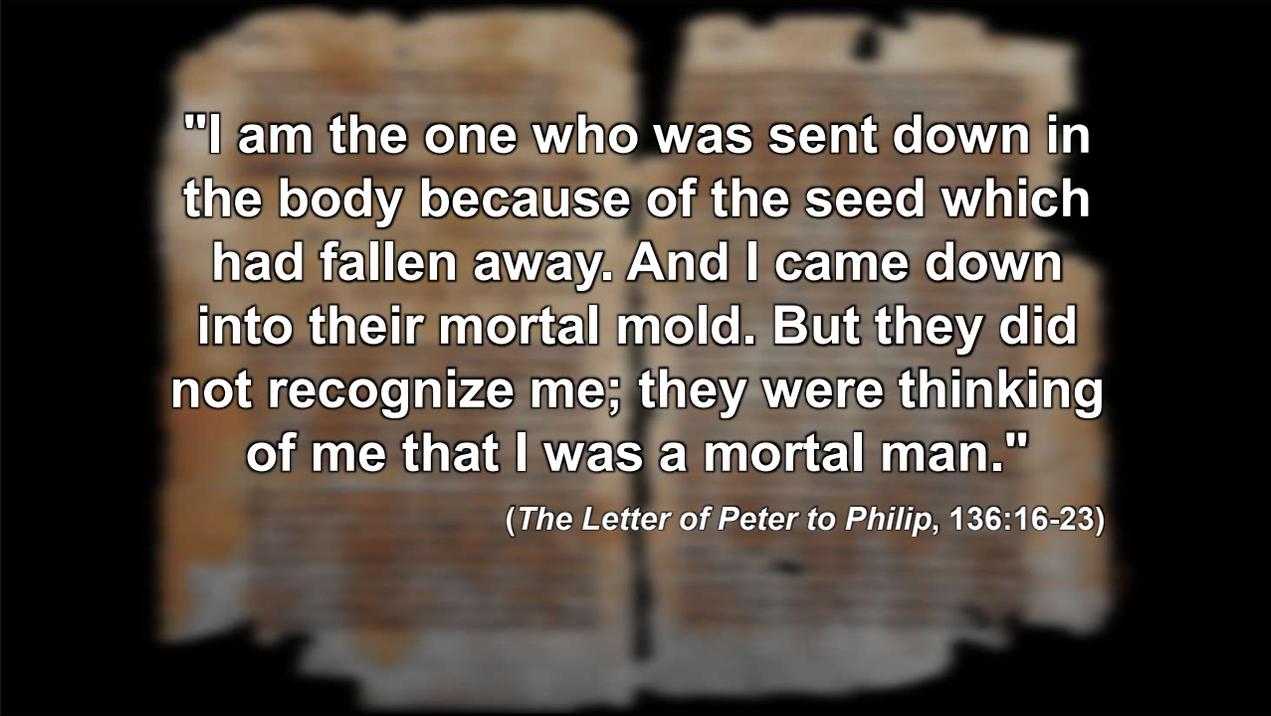
**Interestingly, compare  
this to the Quran.**



## ﴿ Sura 4:158 ﴾

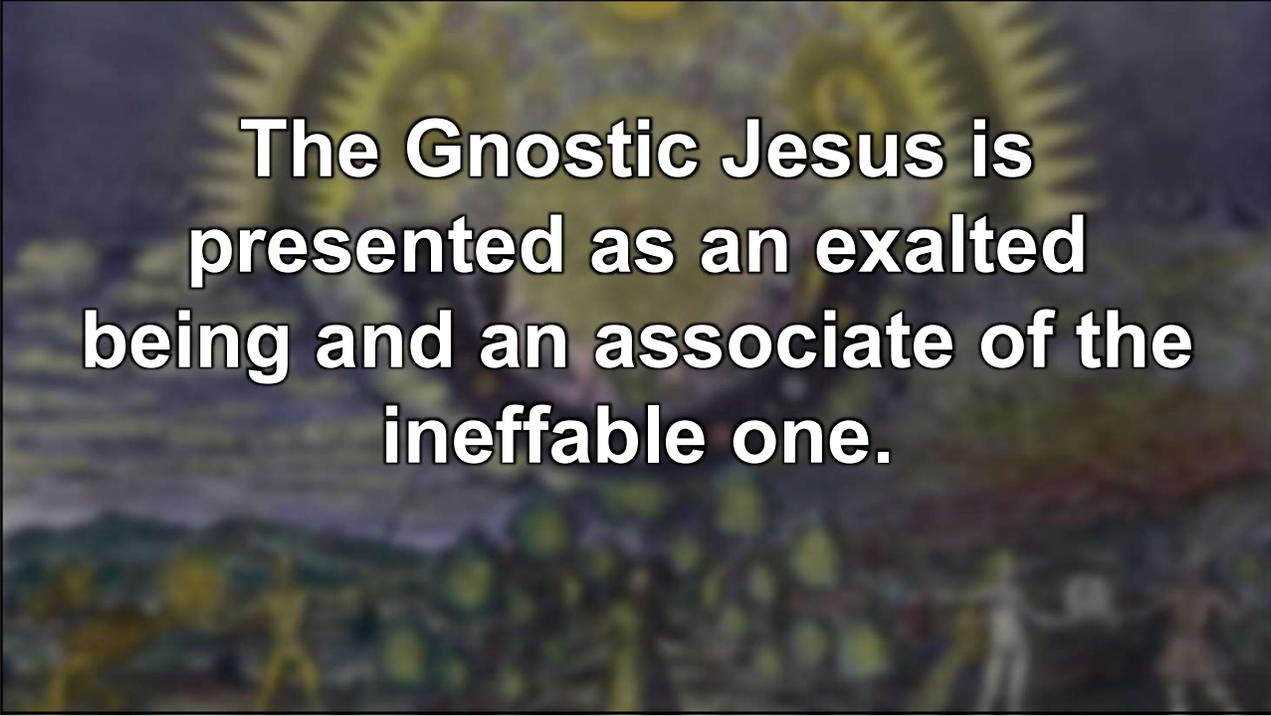
*"... but they did not kill him, and they did not crucify him, but a similitude was made for them. And verily, those who differ about him are in doubt concerning him; they have no knowledge concerning him, but only follow an opinion. They did not kill him, for sure! nay, God raised him up unto Himself; for God is mighty and wise!"*

**The true identity of the Gnostic Jesus seems to reside in his transcendence apart from his incarnation.**

A photograph of an open book with text overlaid. The text is in white with a black outline, set against a dark background. The book's pages are visible in the background.

**"I am the one who was sent down in the body because of the seed which had fallen away. And I came down into their mortal mold. But they did not recognize me; they were thinking of me that I was a mortal man."**

*(The Letter of Peter to Philip, 136:16-23)*

A photograph of a sunflower field with text overlaid. The sunflowers are in the foreground, and the background is a blurred field of more sunflowers under a bright sky.

**The Gnostic Jesus is presented as an exalted being and an associate of the ineffable one.**

"I am Jesus Christ, the Son of Man, who is exalted above the heavens, O perfect and incorruptible ones, because of the incorruptible and perfect mystery and the ineffable one. But they think that we decreed them before the foundation of the world in order that, when we emerge from the places of the world, we may present there the symbols of incorruption from the spiritual union unto knowledge. You (pl.) do not know it because the fleshly cloud overshadows you. But I alone am the friend of Sophia. I have been in the bosom of the father from the beginning, in the place of the sons of the truth, and the Greatness. Rest then with me, my fellow spirits and my brothers, for ever.

*(The Second Treatise of the Great Seth, 69:22-70:11)*

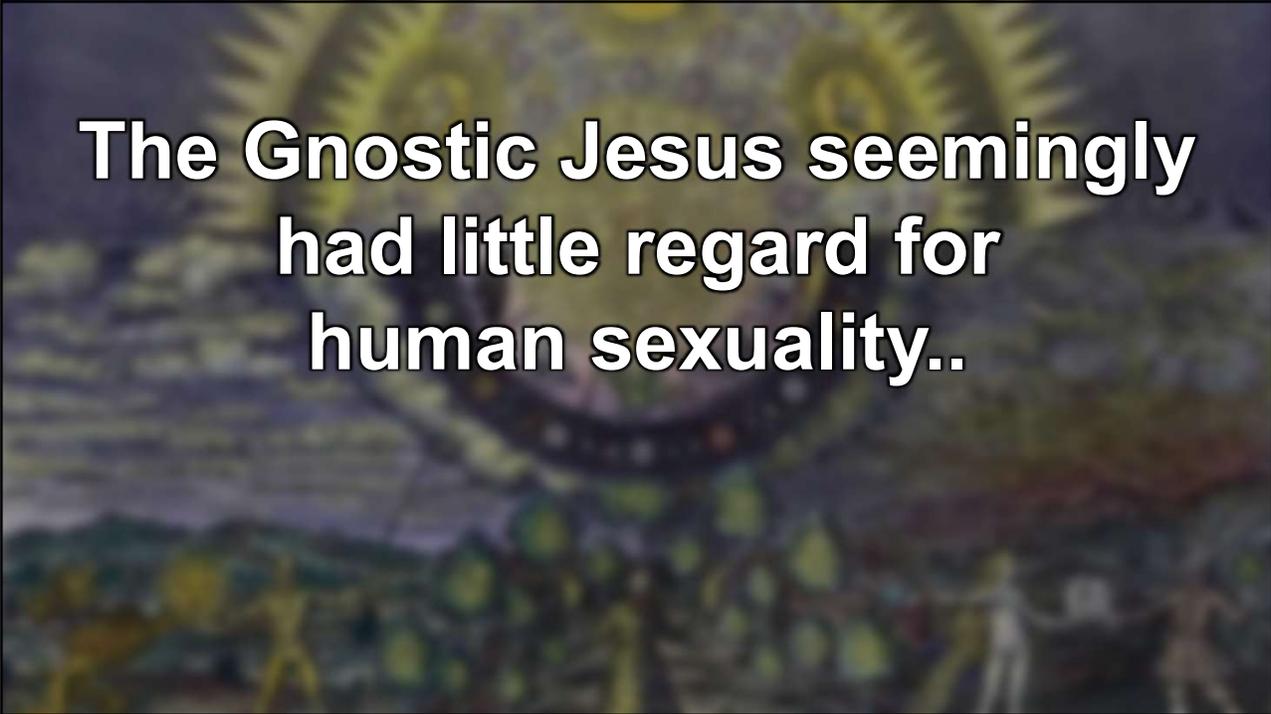
**The Gnostic Jesus seemingly  
had little regard for women.**

**"Simon Peter said to them, 'Let Mary leave us, for women are not worthy of life.' Jesus said 'I myself shall lead her in order to make her male, so that she too may become a living spirit resembling you males. For every woman who will make herself male will enter the kingdom of heaven.'"**

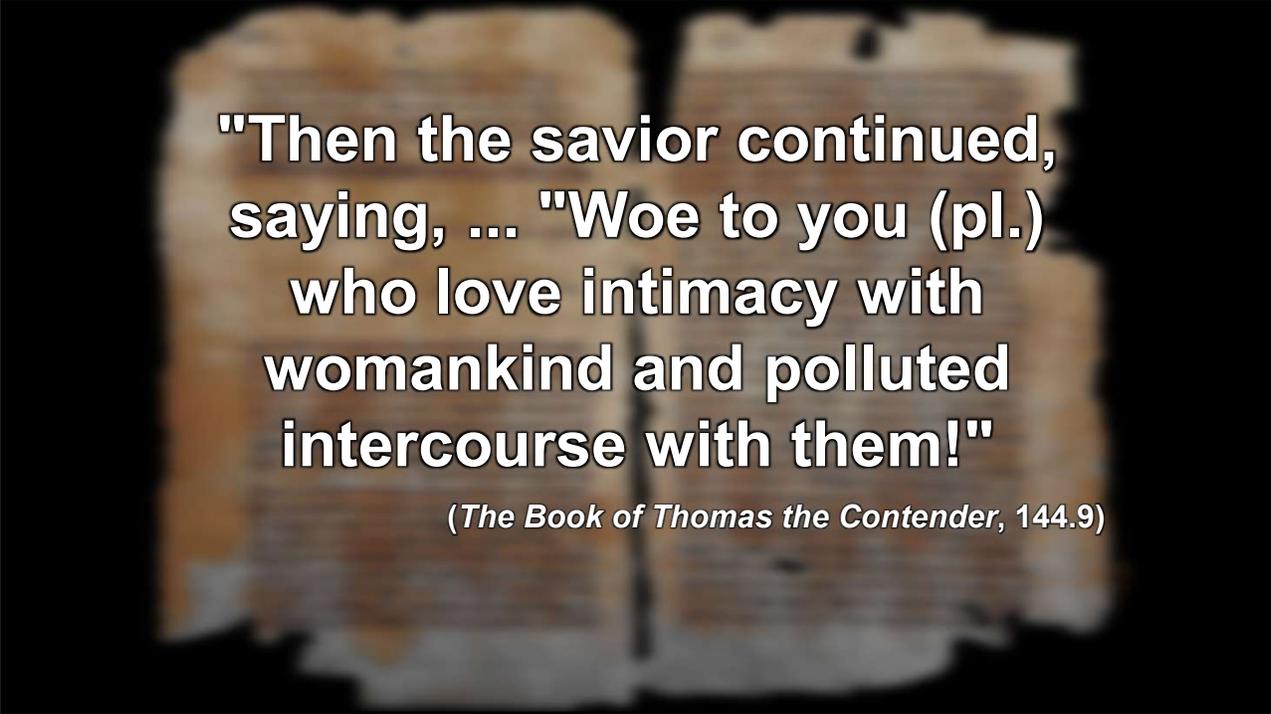
*(The Gospel of Thomas, 114)*

**"I am Christ, the Son of Man, the one from you (pl.) who is among you. I am despised for your sake, in order that you yourselves may forget the difference. And do not become female, lest you give birth to evil and (its) brother: jealousy and division, anger and wrath, fear and a divided heart, and empty, non-existent desire. But I am an ineffable mystery to you."**

*(The Second Treatise of the Great Seth, 65:19-33)*



**The Gnostic Jesus seemingly  
had little regard for  
human sexuality..**



**"Then the savior continued,  
saying, ... "Woe to you (pl.)  
who love intimacy with  
womankind and polluted  
intercourse with them!"**

*(The Book of Thomas the Contender, 144.9)*

**"But the Son of Man [came] forth from Imperishability [being] alien to defilement. He came [to the] world by the Jordan river, and immediately the Jordan [turned] back. And John bore witness to the [descent] of Jesus. For it is he who saw the [power] which came down upon the Jordan river; for he knew that the dominion of carnal procreation had come to an end. The Jordan river is the power of the body, that is, the senses of pleasures. The water of the Jordan is the desire for sexual intercourse. John is the archon of the womb."**

*(The Testimony of Truth, 30:19-31:6)*

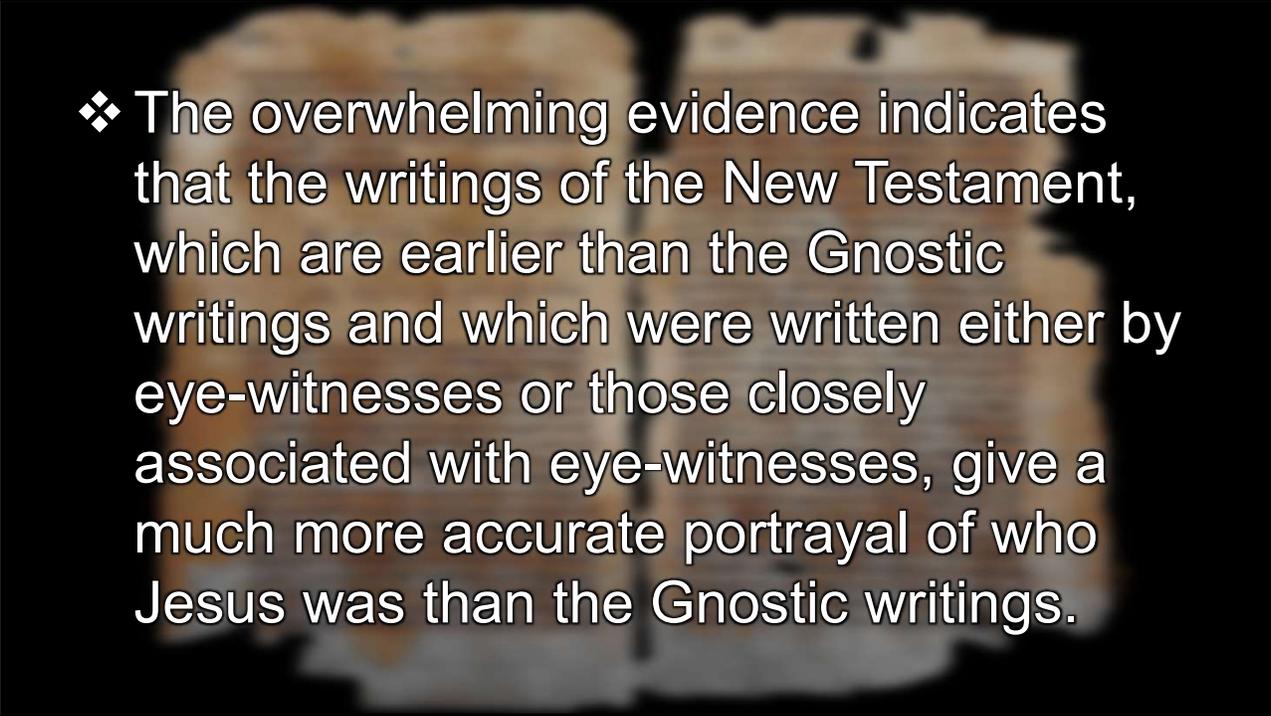
**The Gnostic Jesus seemingly had little regard for decency although the language could be metaphorical for the physical body.**

"His disciples said, 'When will you become revealed to us and when shall we see you?' Jesus said, 'When you disrobe without being ashamed and take up your garments and place them under your feet like little children and tread on them, then [will you see] the son of the living one, and you will not be afraid.'"

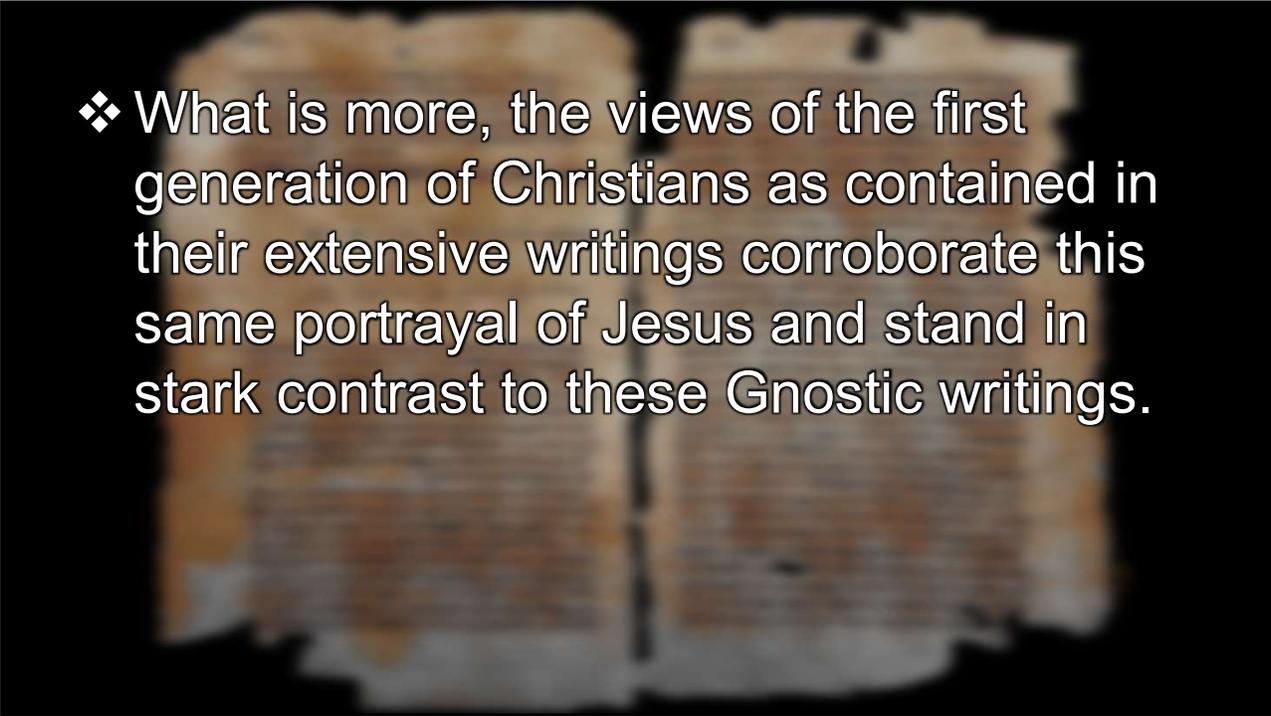
*(The Gospel of Thomas, 37)*

## ∞ Conclusion ∞

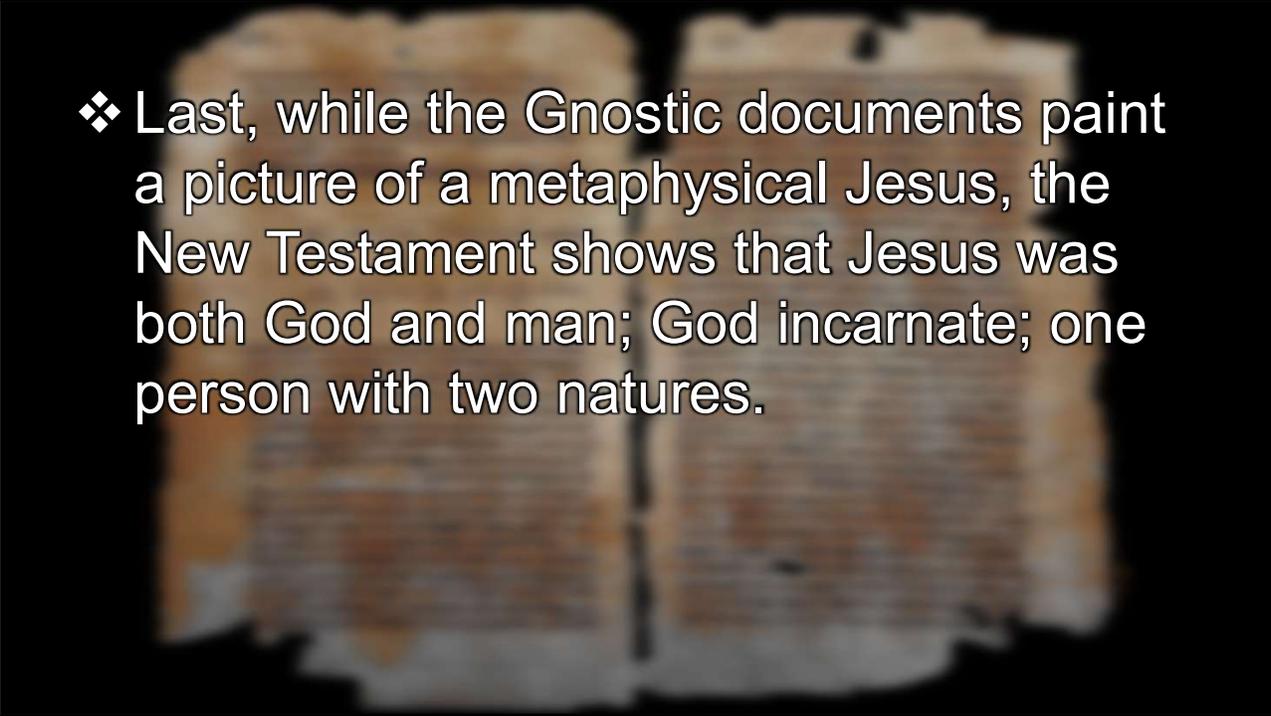
The evidence shows that traditional view of the deity of Jesus (Jesus is both human and divine) predates the later gnostic view of Jesus (Jesus was not human).



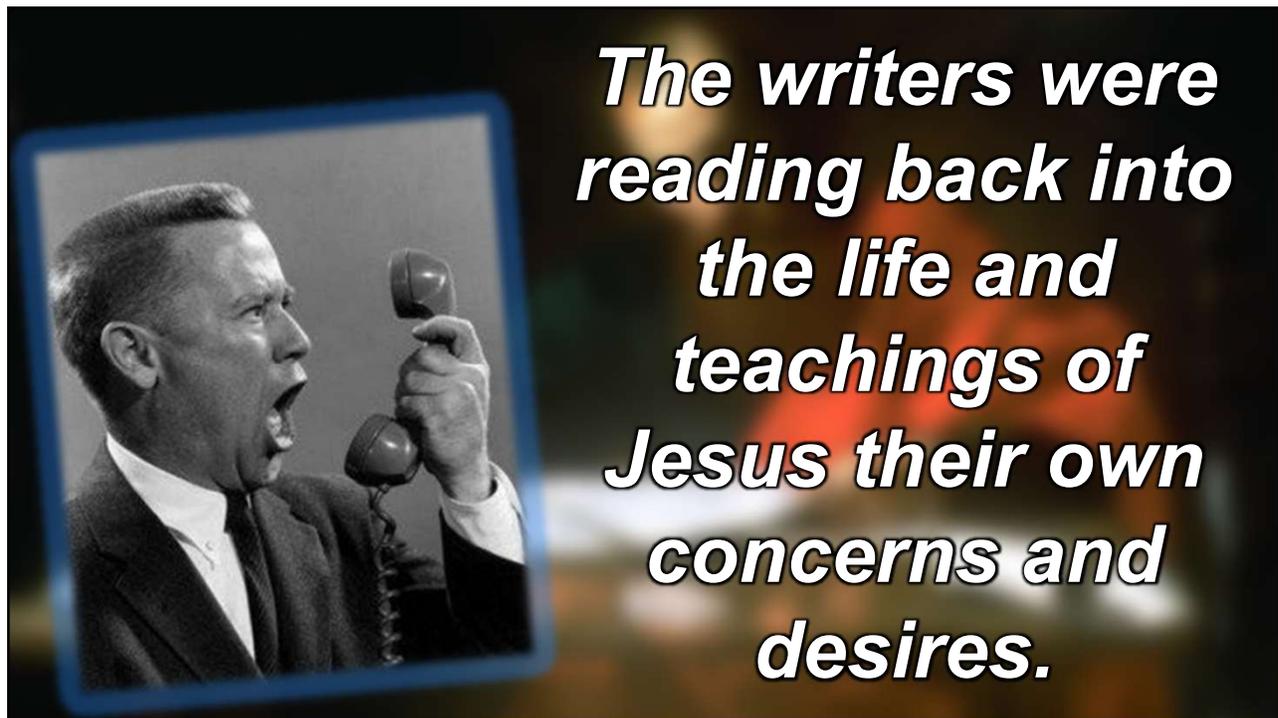
❖ The overwhelming evidence indicates that the writings of the New Testament, which are earlier than the Gnostic writings and which were written either by eye-witnesses or those closely associated with eye-witnesses, give a much more accurate portrayal of who Jesus was than the Gnostic writings.



❖ What is more, the views of the first generation of Christians as contained in their extensive writings corroborate this same portrayal of Jesus and stand in stark contrast to these Gnostic writings.



❖ Last, while the Gnostic documents paint a picture of a metaphysical Jesus, the New Testament shows that Jesus was both God and man; God incarnate; one person with two natures.





**Response**

*The presence of irrelevant material, the lack of relevant material, and the presence of counterproductive material indicate that the writers were not merely reading back into the life of Jesus.*



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*The presence of irrelevant material, the lack of relevant material, and the presence of counterproductive material indicate that the writers were not merely reading back into the life of Jesus.*

***If the disciples or the early church invented the story of Jesus Christ, why would the story include elements that were unimportant to them?***

***Jesus' Sabbath controversies with the Pharisees***

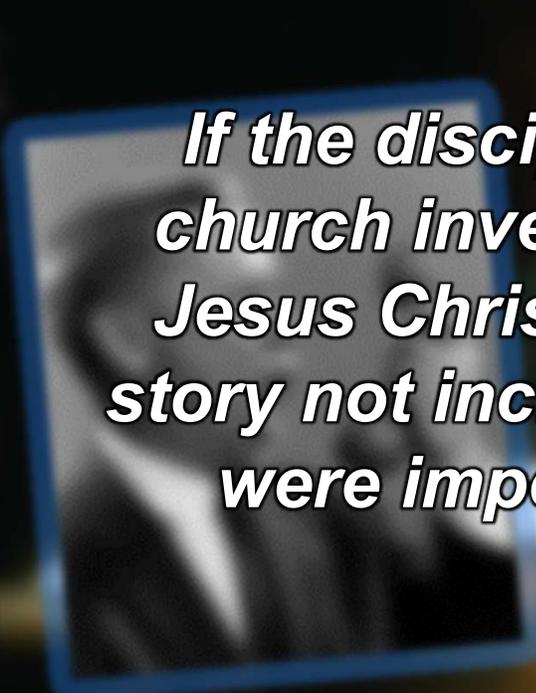




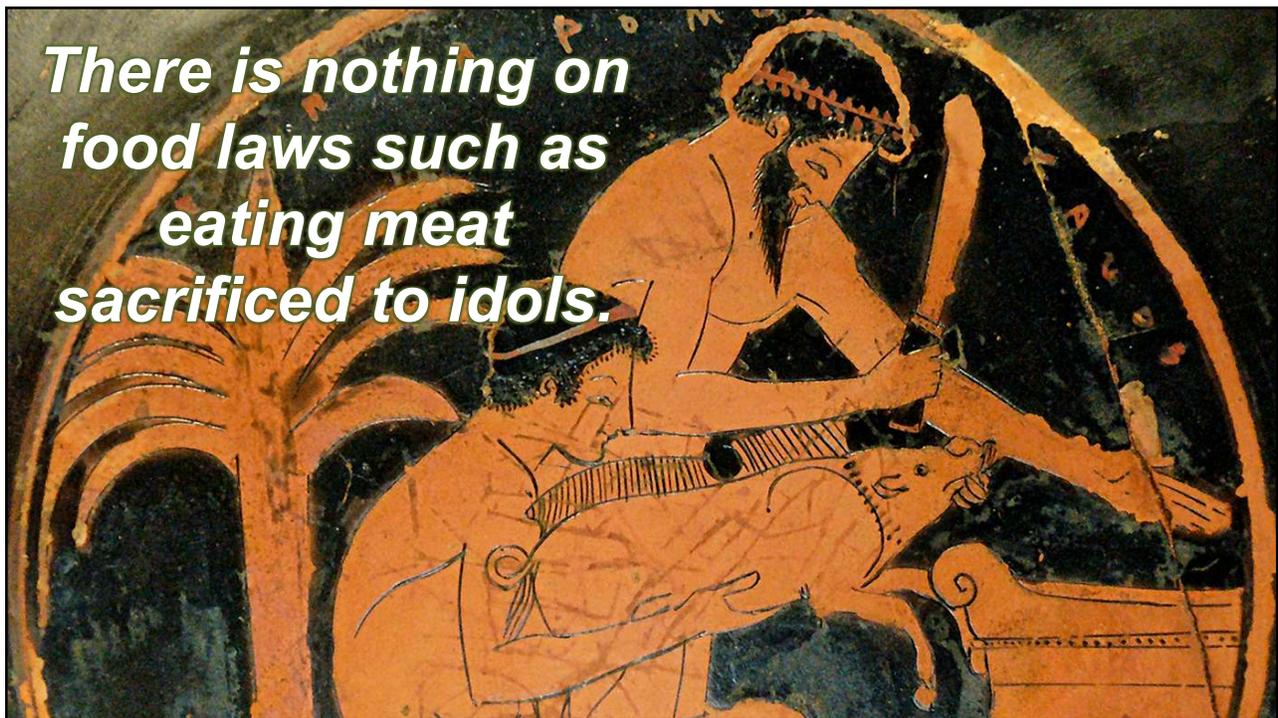
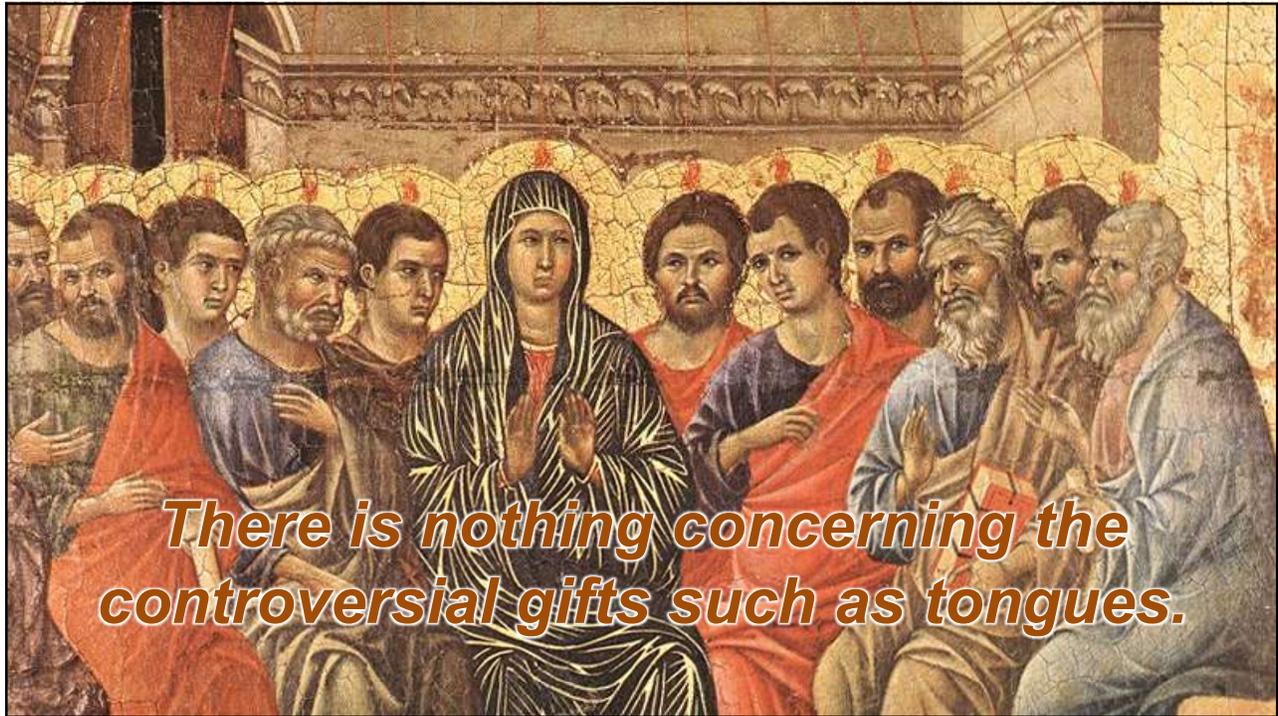


**Response**

*The presence of irrelevant material, the lack of relevant material, and the presence of counterproductive material indicate that the writers were not merely reading back into the life of Jesus.*



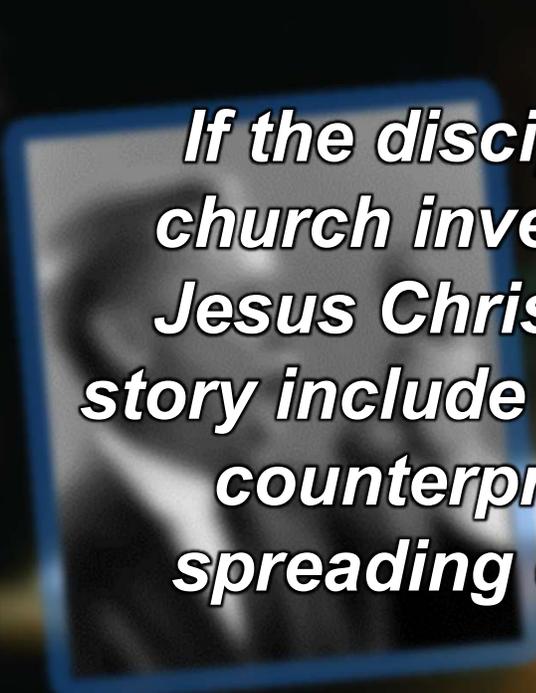
***If the disciples or the early church invented the story of Jesus Christ, why would the story not include elements that were important to them?***



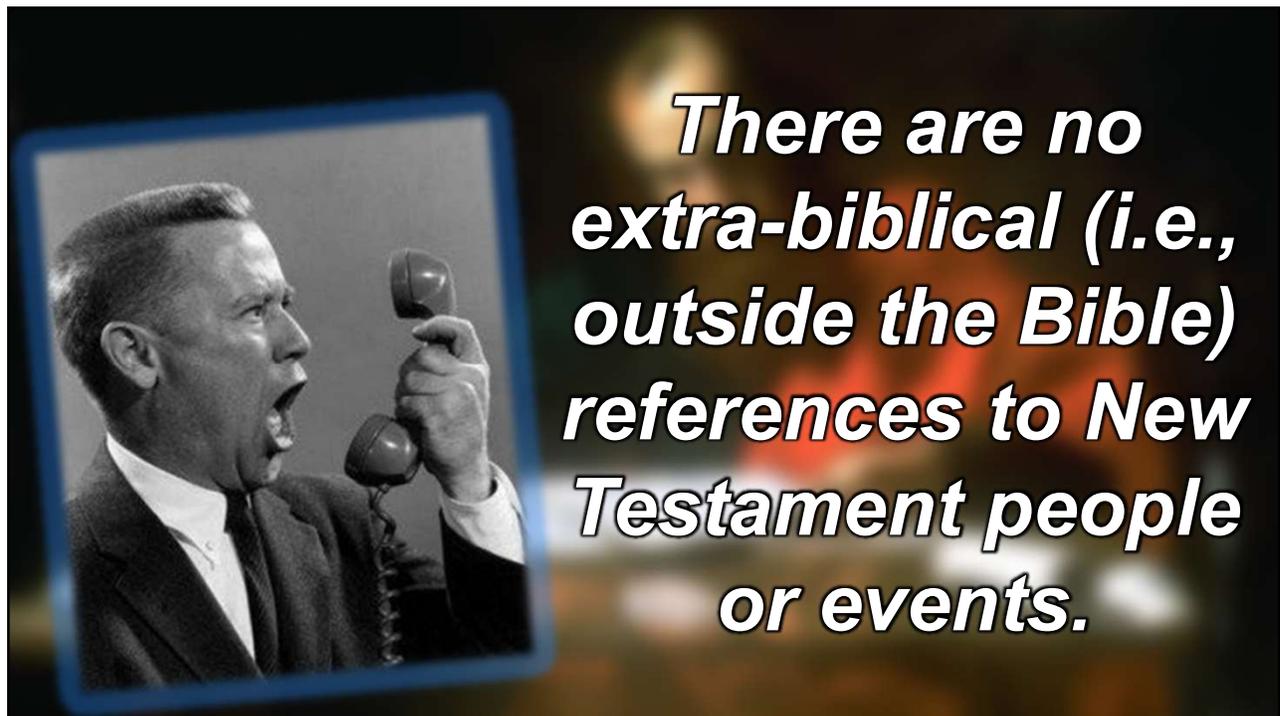
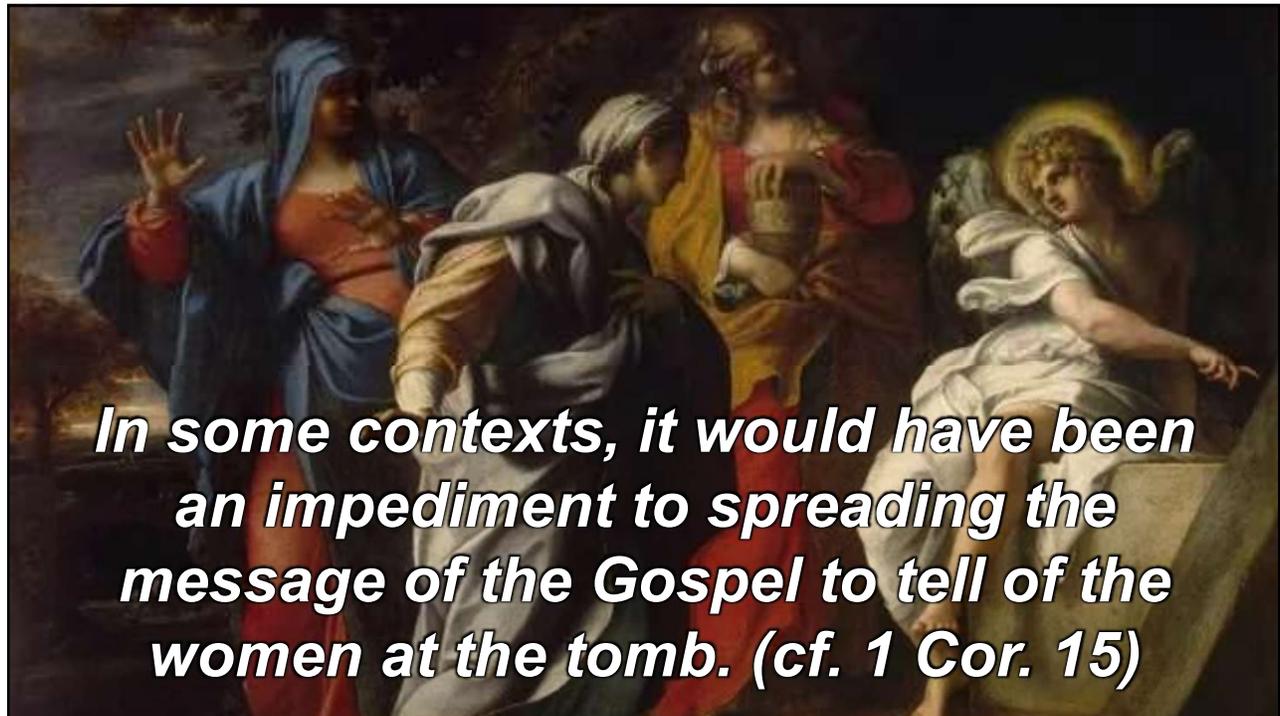


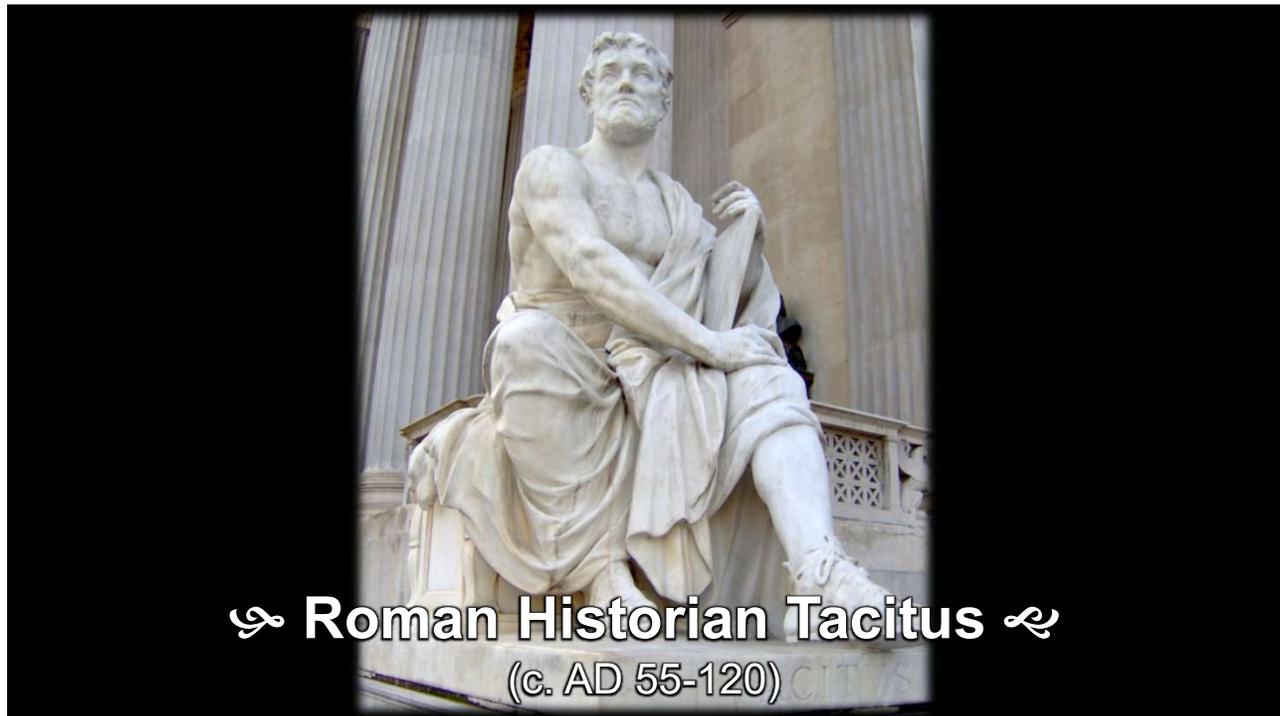
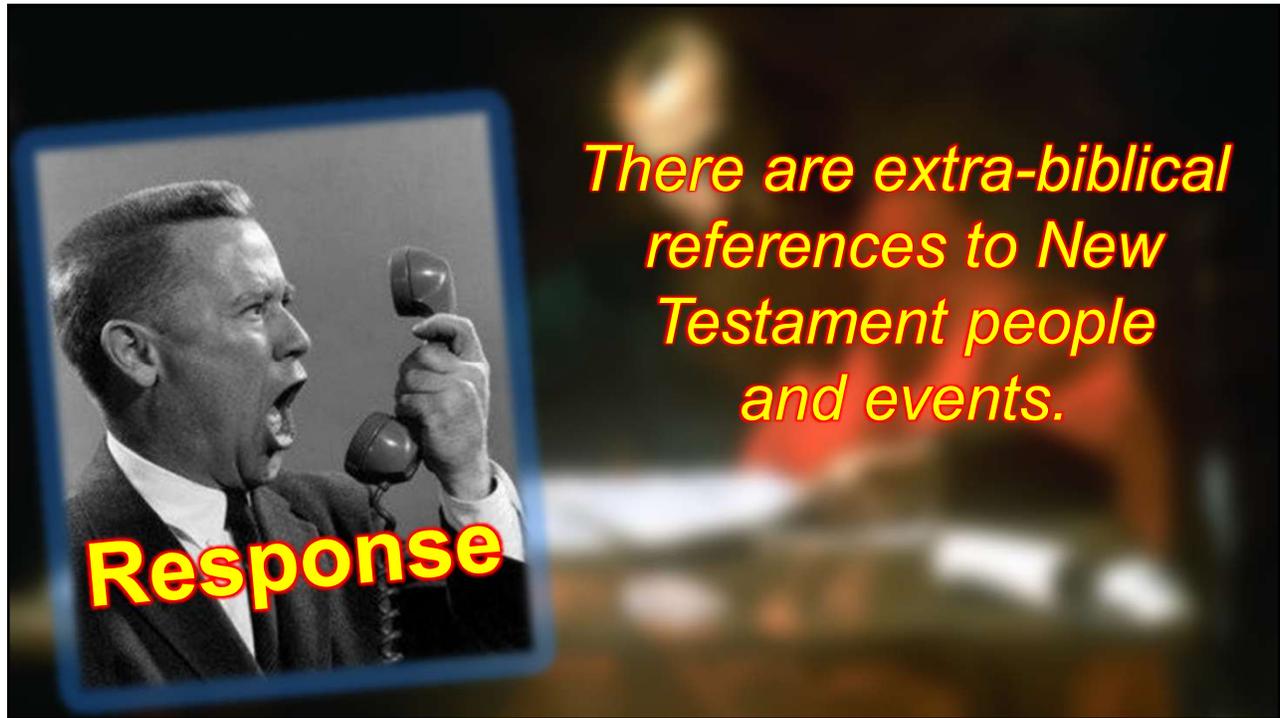
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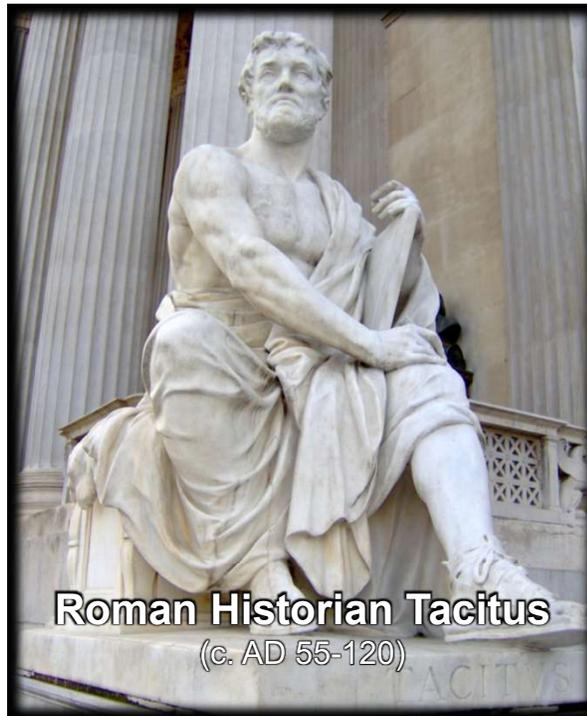
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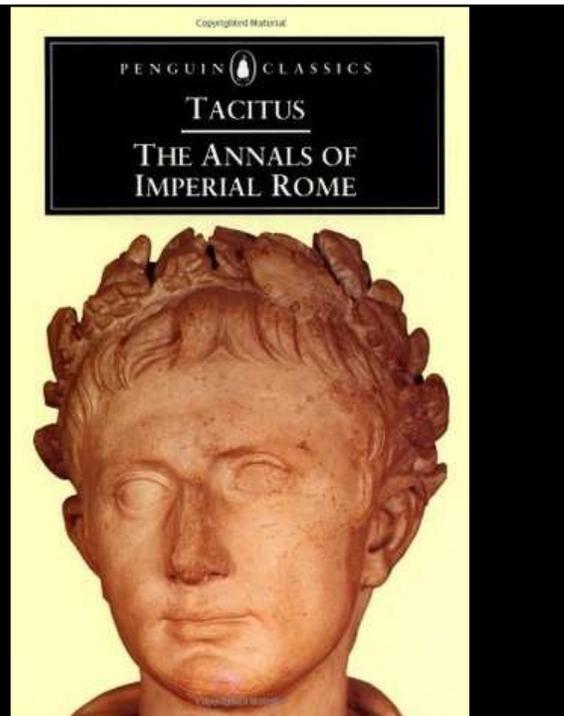
***If the disciples or the early church invented the story of Jesus Christ, why would the story include elements that were counterproductive to the spreading of the message?***



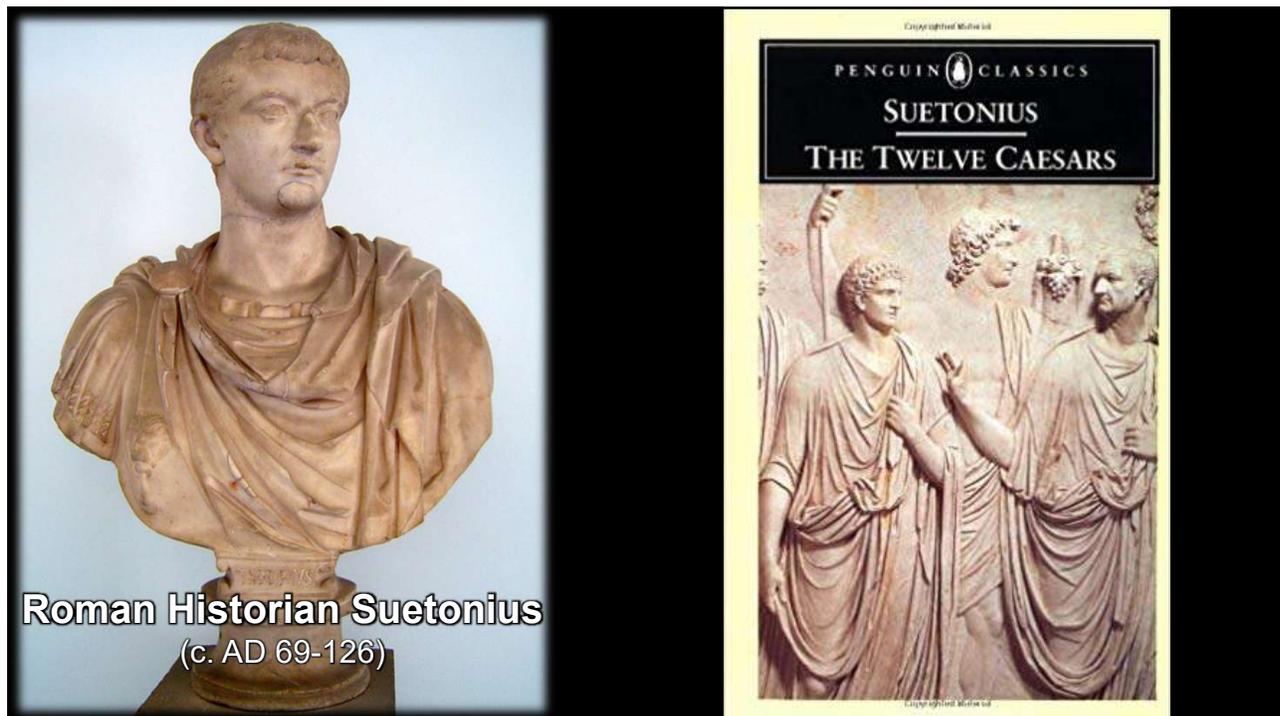




**Roman Historian Tacitus**  
(c. AD 55-120)



But neither human resources, nor imperial munificence, nor appeasement of the gods, eliminated sinister suspicions that the fire had been instigated. To suppress this rumour, Nero fabricated scapegoats – and punished with every refinement the notoriously depraved Christians (as they were popularly called). Their originator, Christ, had been executed in Tiberius' reign by the governor of Judaea, Pontius Pilatus.<sup>1</sup> But in spite of this temporary setback the deadly superstition had broken out afresh, not only in Judaea (where the mischief had started) but even in Rome. All degraded and shameful practices collect and flourish in the capital.



tion of their faults. In granting the Trojans, as founders of the Roman race, perpetual exemption from tribute, he supported his act by reading aloud an ancient letter written in Greek to King Seleucus, from the Senate and People of Rome, with a promise of loyal friendship on condition that Seleucus should 'keep their Trojan kinsfolk free from all imposts'. Because the Jews at Rome caused continuous disturbances at the instigation of Chrestus,<sup>1</sup> he expelled them from the city. When the German envoys first visited the Theatre, they took their seats among the common people, but, noticing the Parthian and Armenian

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**Crestus = Christ**

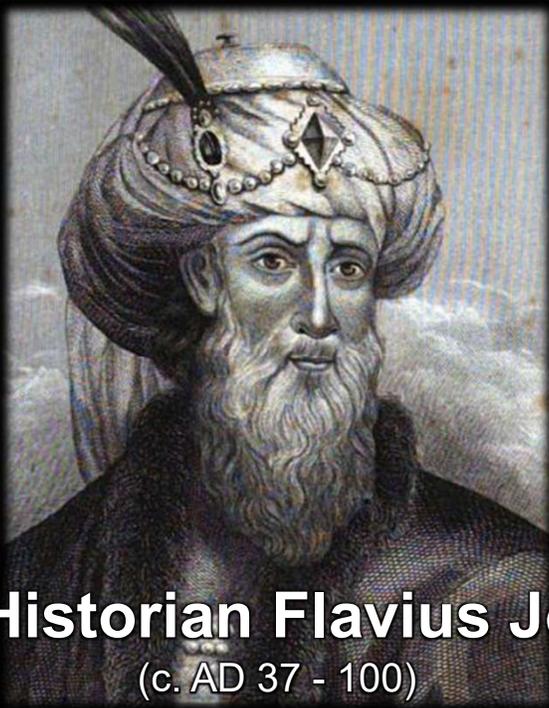
**he = Claudius**

**them = the Jews**

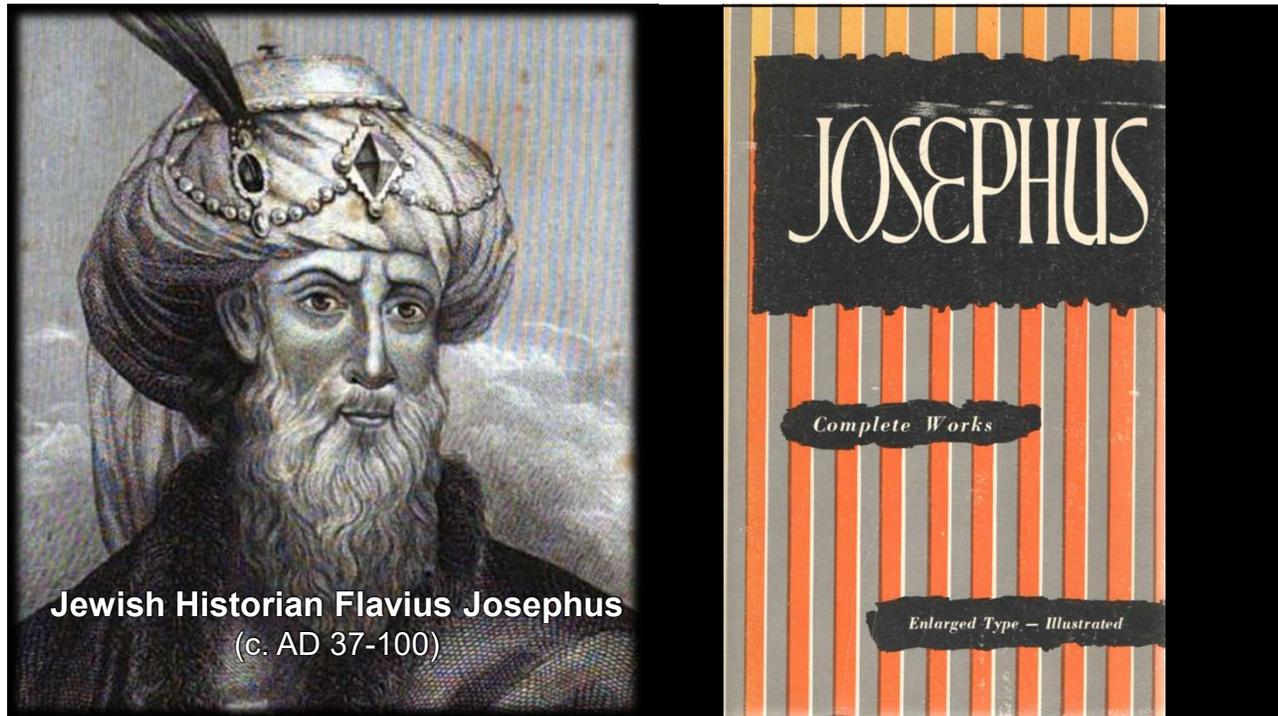
... he expelled them from the city."

cf. Acts 18:1-2 "After these things Paul departed from Athens and went to Corinth. And he found a certain Jew named Aquila, born in Pontus, who had recently come from Italy with his wife Priscilla (because Claudius had commanded all the Jews to depart from Rome); and he came to them."

Because the Jews at Rome caused continuous disturbances at the instigation of Chrestus,<sup>1</sup> he expelled them from the city.



🌀 Jewish Historian Flavius Josephus 🌀  
(c. AD 37 - 100)



***Antiquities of the Jews***  
**Book XVIII, Chapter V, Section 2**  
**On the martyrdom of James**

*"Festus was now dead, and Albinus was but upon the road; so he assembled the sanhedrim of the judges, and brought before them **the brother of Jesus, who was called Christ, whose name was James**, and some others and when he had formed an accusation against them as breakers of the law he delivered them to be stoned."*

*Antiquities of the Jews*  
Book XX, Chapter IX, Section 1  
**On John the Baptist**

*"Now, some of the Jews thought that the destruction of Herod's army came from God, and that very justly, as a punishment of what he did against **John, that was called the Baptist**; for Herod slew him, who was a good man, and commanded the Jews to exercise virtue, both as to righteousness towards one another, and piety towards God,*

*Antiquities of the Jews*  
Book XX, Chapter IX, Section 1  
**On John the Baptist**

*"and so to come to baptism; for that the washing [with water] would be acceptable to him, if they made use of it, not in order to the putting away, [or the remission] of some sins [only], but for the purification of the body: supposing still that the soul was thoroughly purified beforehand by righteousness."*

*Antiquities of the Jews*  
Book XVIII, Chapter V, Section 2  
On Jesus

*"Festus was now dead, and Albinus was but upon the road; so he assembled the sanhedrin of the judges, and brought before them **the brother of Jesus, who was called Christ,** whose name was James, and some others and when he had formed an accusation against them as breakers of the law he delivered them to be stoned."*

*Antiquities of the Jews*  
Book XX, Chapter IX, Section 1

On Jesus (with alleged Christian interpolations)

*"Now, there was about this time, Jesus, a wise man, if it be lawful to call him a man, for he was a doer of wonderful works—a teacher of such men as receive the truth with pleasure. He drew over to him both many of the Jews, and many of the Gentiles. He was [the] Christ; and when Pilate,*

***Antiquities of the Jews***  
**Book XX, Chapter IX, Section 1**

**On Jesus (with alleged Christian interpolations)**

*"at the suggestion of the principal men amongst us, had condemned him to the cross, those that loved him at the first did not forsake him, for he appeared to them alive again the third day, as the divine prophets had foretold these and ten thousand other wonderful things concerning him; and the tribe of Christians, so named from him, are not extinct at this day."*

***Antiquities of the Jews***  
**Book XX, Chapter IX, Section 1**

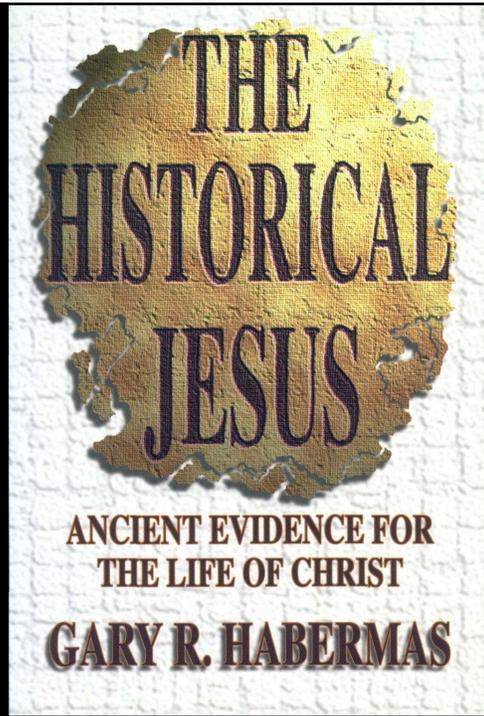
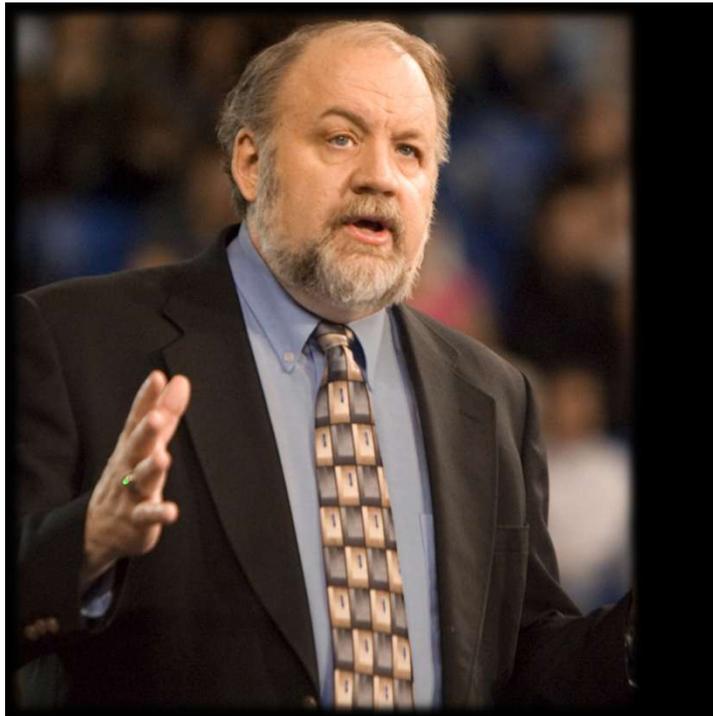
**On Jesus (without alleged Christian interpolations)**

*"At this time there was a wise man who was called Jesus. His conduct was good and (he) was known to be virtuous. And many people from among the Jews and the other nations became his disciples. Pilate condemned him to be crucified and to die."*

***Antiquities of the Jews***  
**Book XX, Chapter IX, Section 1**

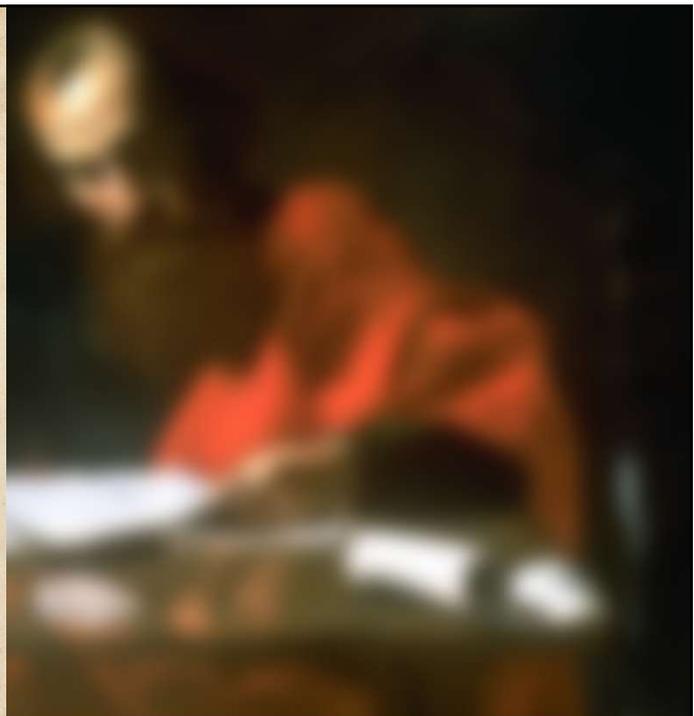
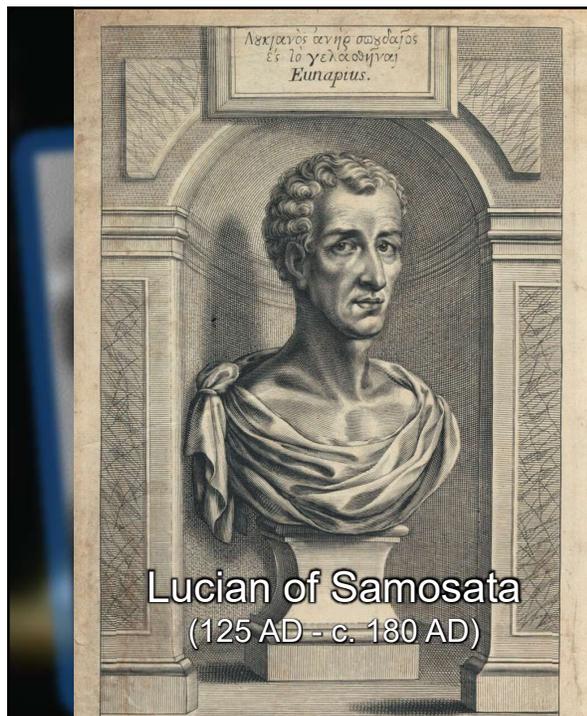
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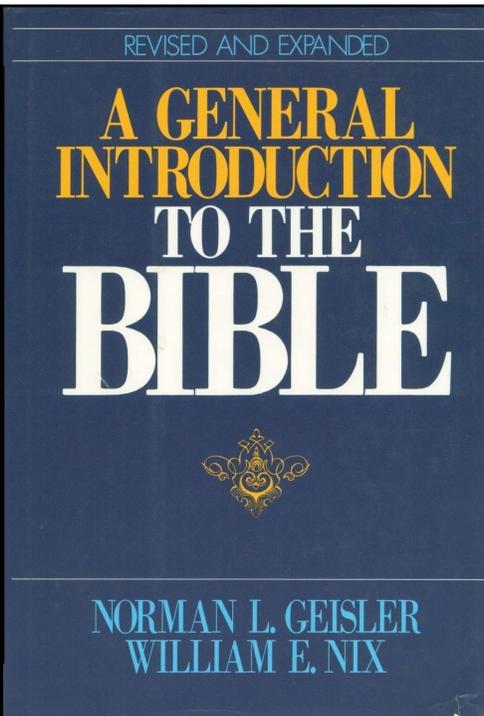
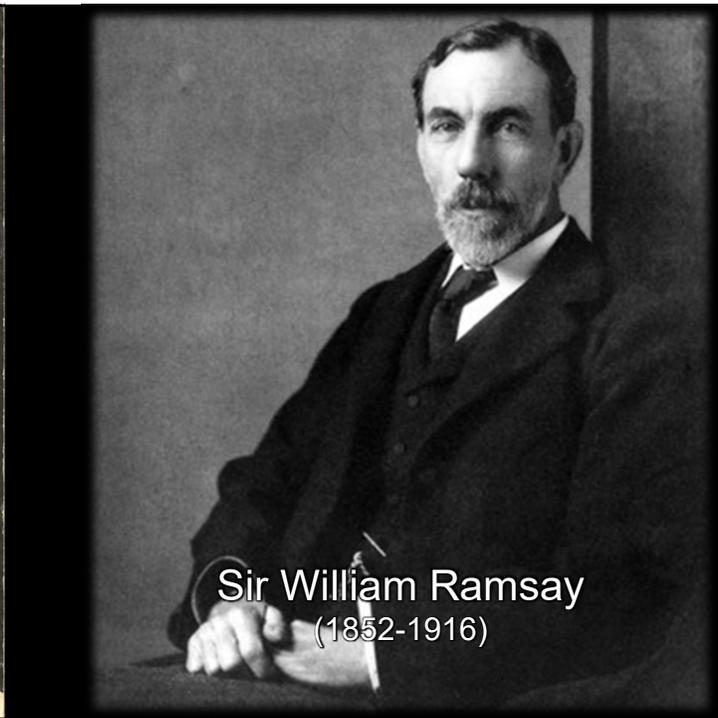
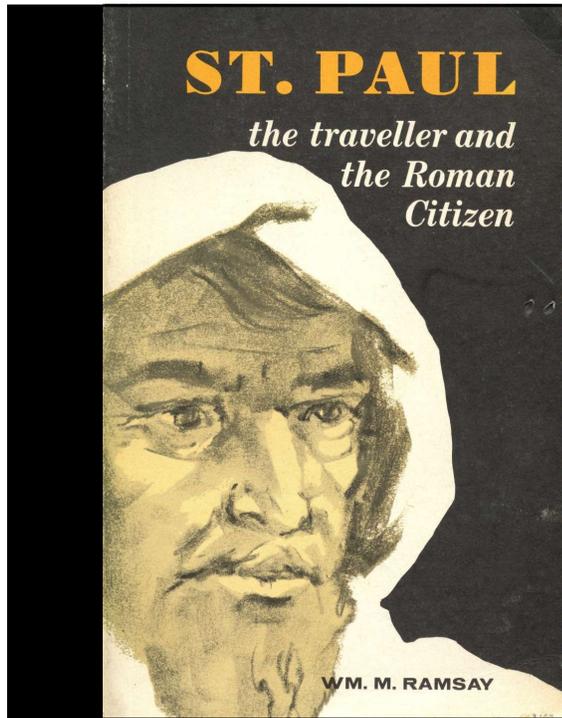
*"But those who had become his disciples did not abandon his discipleship. They reported that he had appeared to them three days after his crucifixion, and that he was alive; accordingly he was perhaps the Messiah, concerning whom the prophets have recounted wonders."*



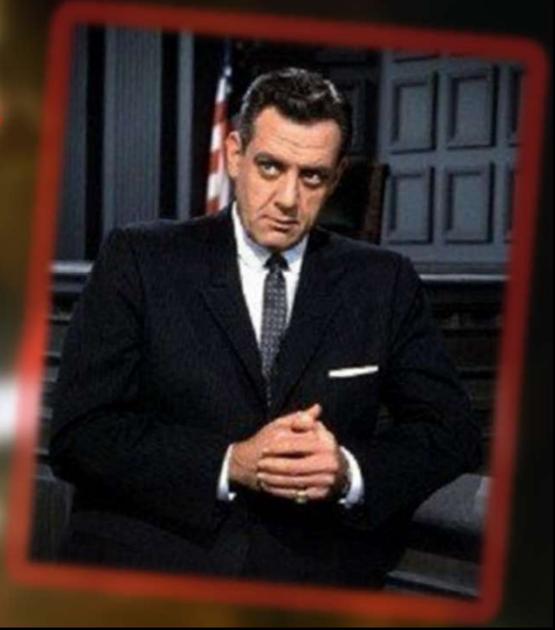
## References to New Testament People and Events Outside the Bible

- |                            |   |
|----------------------------|---|
| • <i>Thallus</i>           | • <i>Lucian</i>   |
| • <i>Pliny the Younger</i> | • <i>Mara Bar-Serapion</i>  |
| • <i>Emperor Trajan</i>    | • <i>the lost work "Acts of Pontius Pilate" quoted by Justin Martyr in AD 150</i> |
| • <i>Emperor Hadrian</i>   |   |
| • <i>The Talmud</i>        |   |

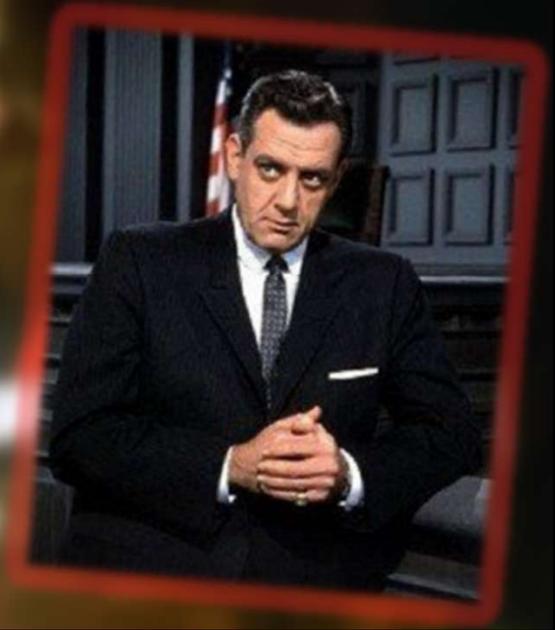




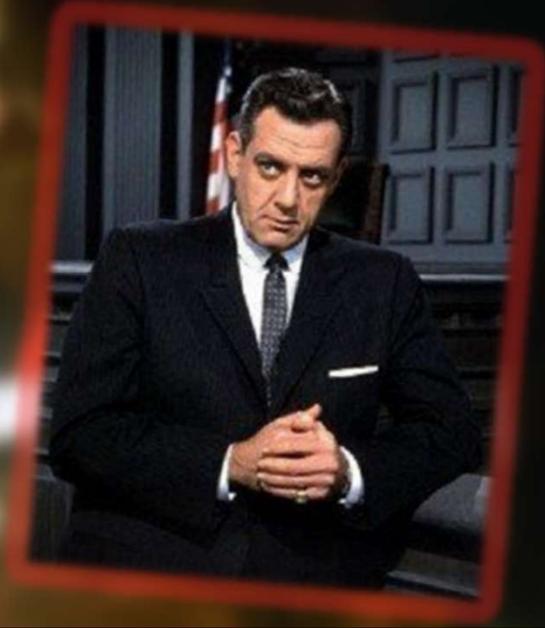
*Making the case by  
**giving the reasons for**  
believing the  
testimony of the New  
Testament writers*



*The testimony  
is from  
contemporary  
eyewitnesses to  
the events.*

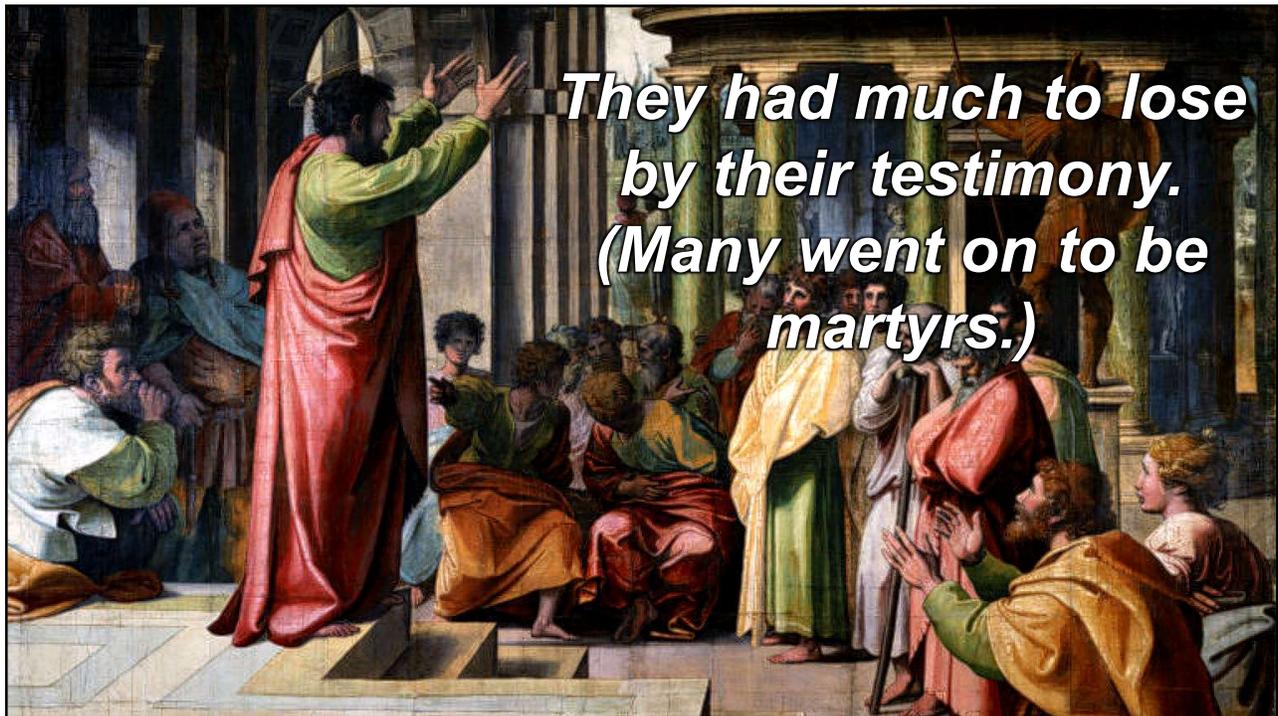
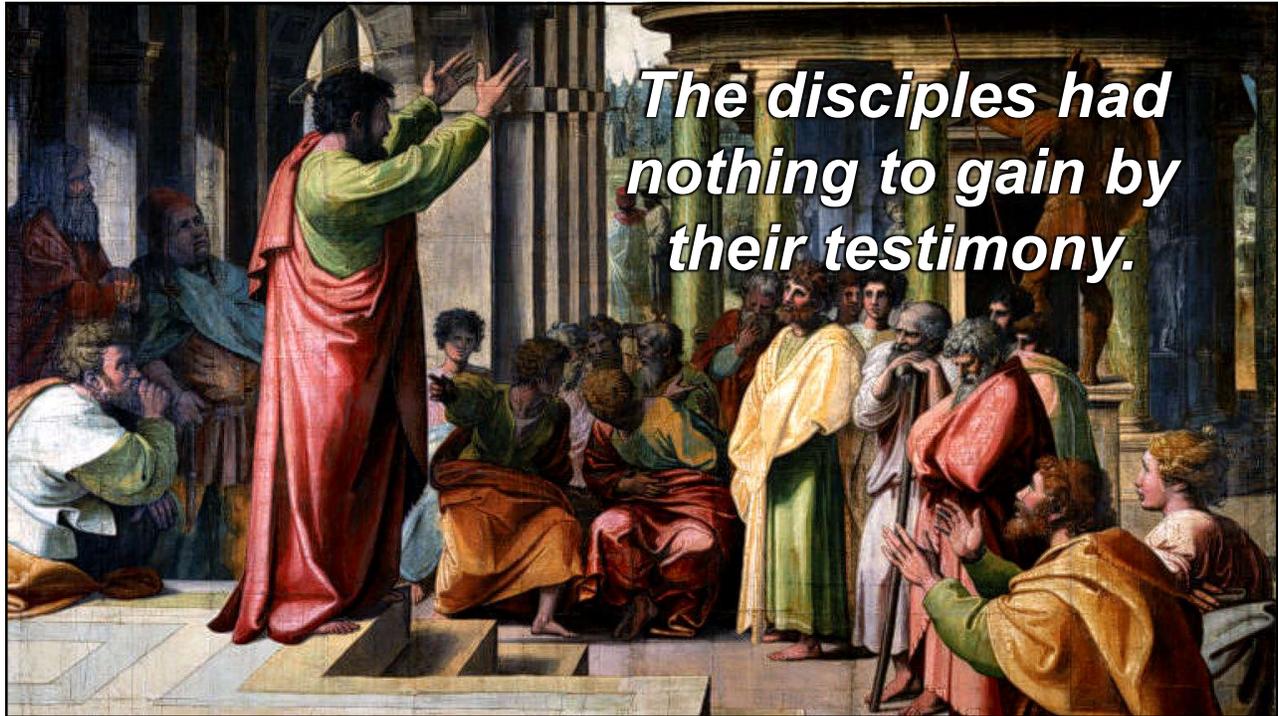


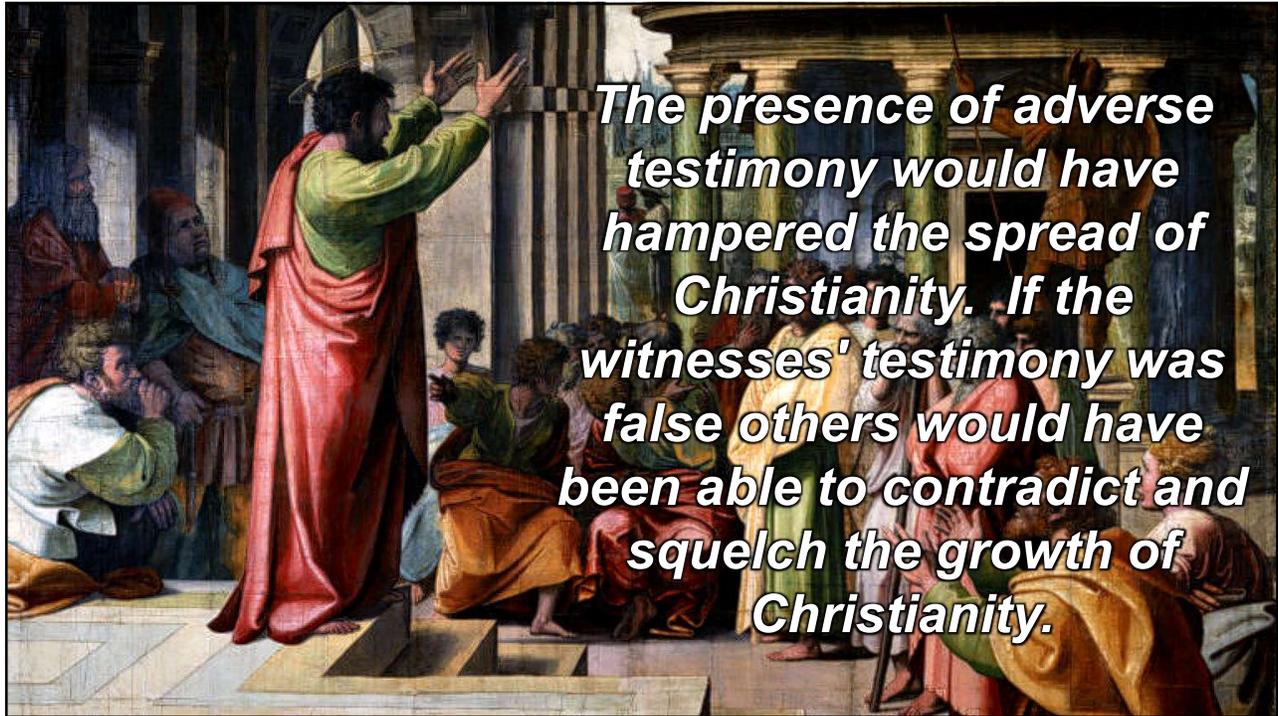
***The testimony  
is accurately  
reported in the  
manuscript  
tradition.***



***It is reasonable to  
believe that the  
witnesses were  
willing and able to  
tell the truth.***

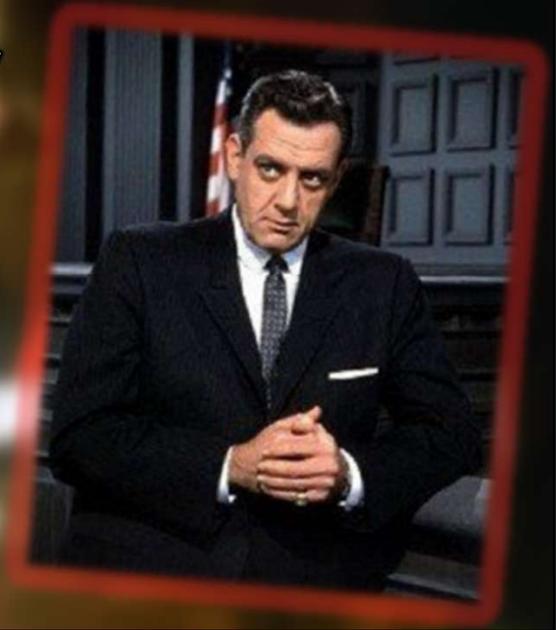


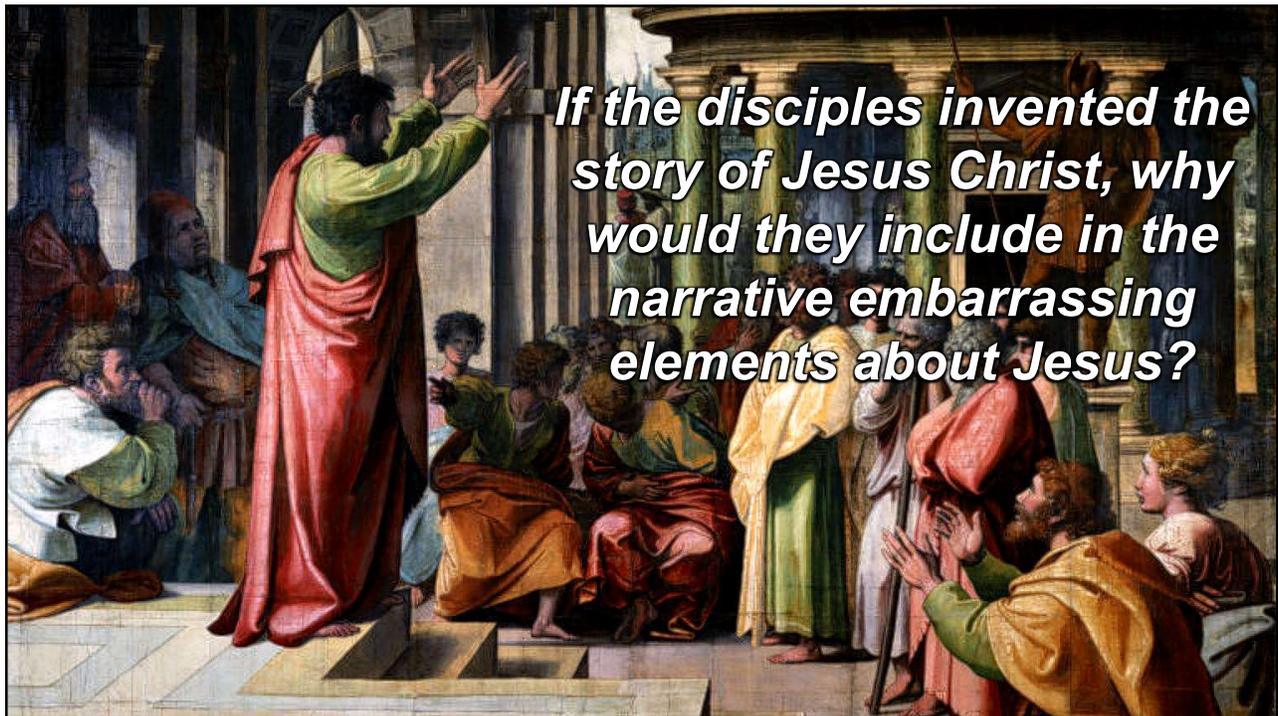
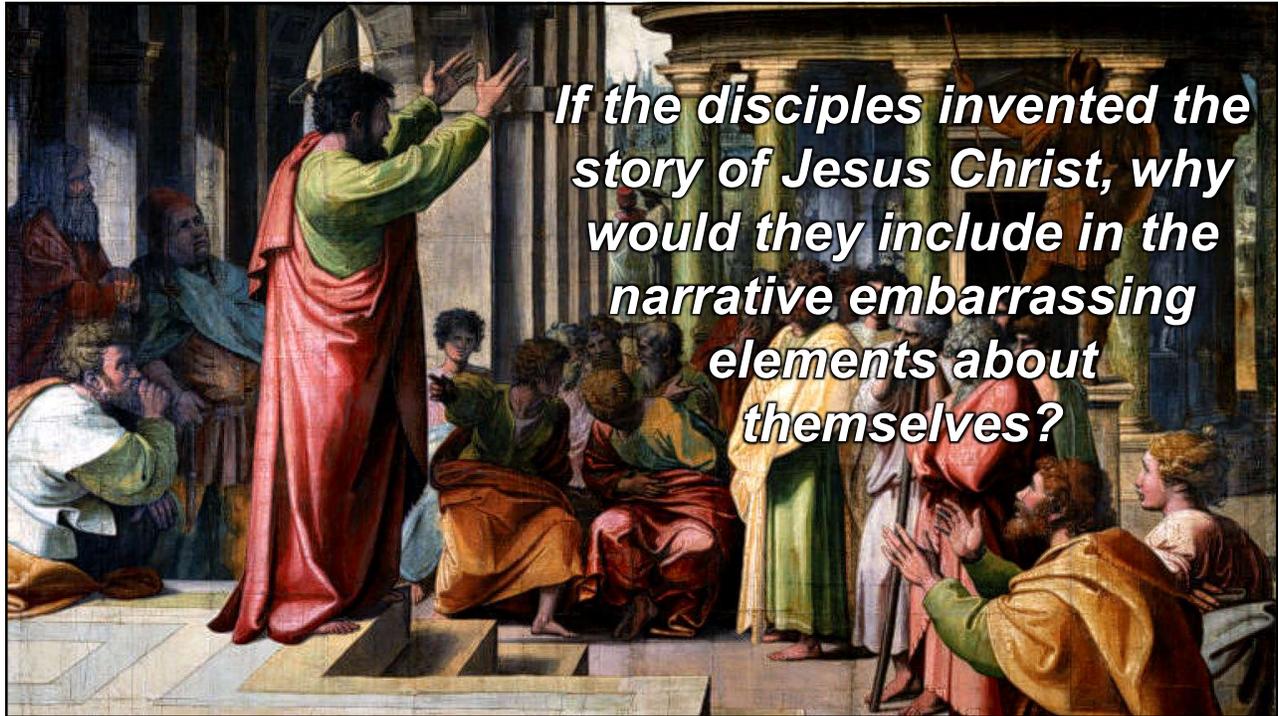


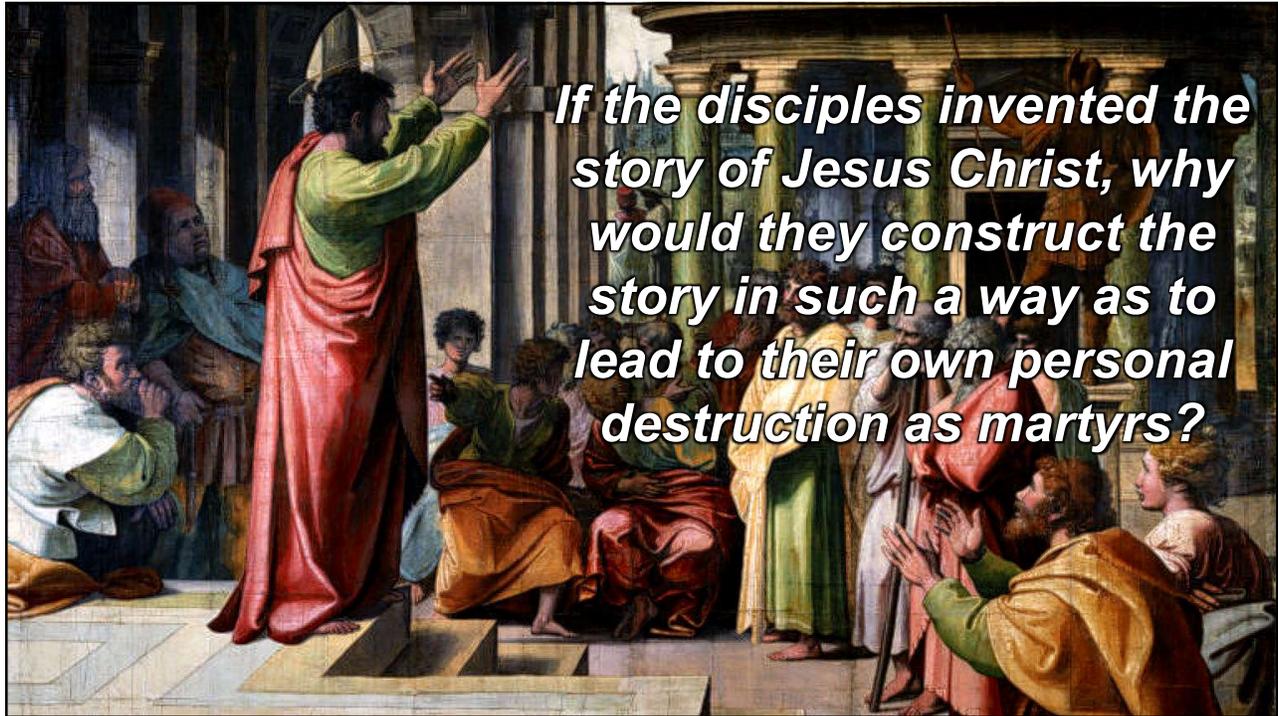


***The presence of adverse testimony would have hampered the spread of Christianity. If the witnesses' testimony was false others would have been able to contradict and squelch the growth of Christianity.***

***The Gospels bear the earmarks of historicity.***







***If the disciples invented the story of Jesus Christ, why would they construct the story in such a way as to lead to their own personal destruction as martyrs?***

***Archaeology testifies of the historicity of the Bible.***



## The Testimony of Archeology

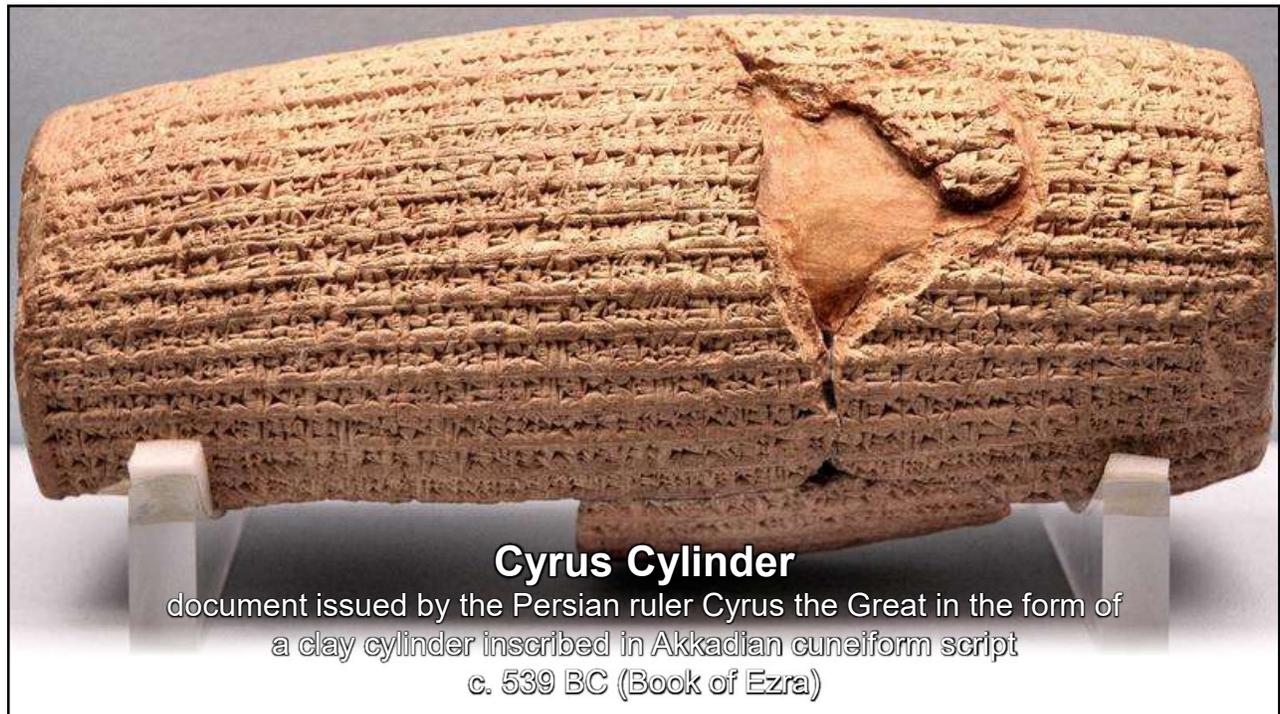
- *Old Testament Period*
- *Nazareth Decree*
- *The Ebla Tablets*
- *Theater in Ephesus*
- *Ossuaries*
- *Temple of Diana*
- *Pool of Siloam*
- *Erastus Inscription*
- *Pontius Pilate Inscription*
- *Galilee Boat*
- *Heel Bone of Crucifixion Victim*
- *Jesus Inscription*
- *Cities of Revelation*

## The Testimony of Archeology

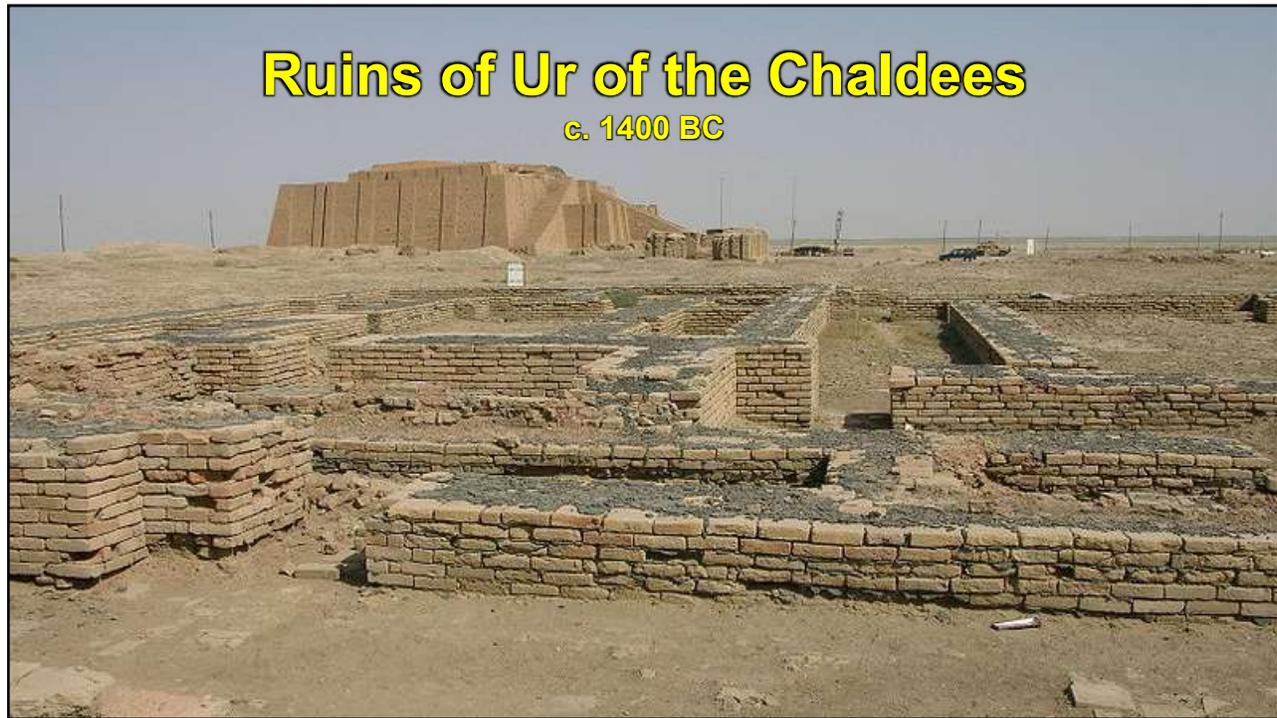
- *Old Testament Period*



Kadesh Treaty (in Akkadian) Between  
Hittite King Hattusilis and Egyptian Pharaoh Ramses II  
1269 BC Gen. 23:10, Ex. 23:28



**Cyrus Cylinder**  
document issued by the Persian ruler Cyrus the Great in the form of  
a clay cylinder inscribed in Akkadian cuneiform script  
c. 539 BC (Book of Ezra)





## Mesha Stele

(Ninth Century BC)

- ❖ discovered 1868
- ❖ now at the Louvre in Paris
- ❖ 3 feet tall; 2 feet wide
- ❖ ancient inscription by Mesha, King of Moab
- ❖ references Omri, King of Israel (1 Kings 16)



## Kurkh Stele

(Ninth Century BC)

- ❖ discovered 1861
- ❖ now at the British Museum, London
- ❖ slightly over 7 feet tall; just under 3 feet wide
- ❖ references Ahab, King of Israel (1 Kings 16:28)

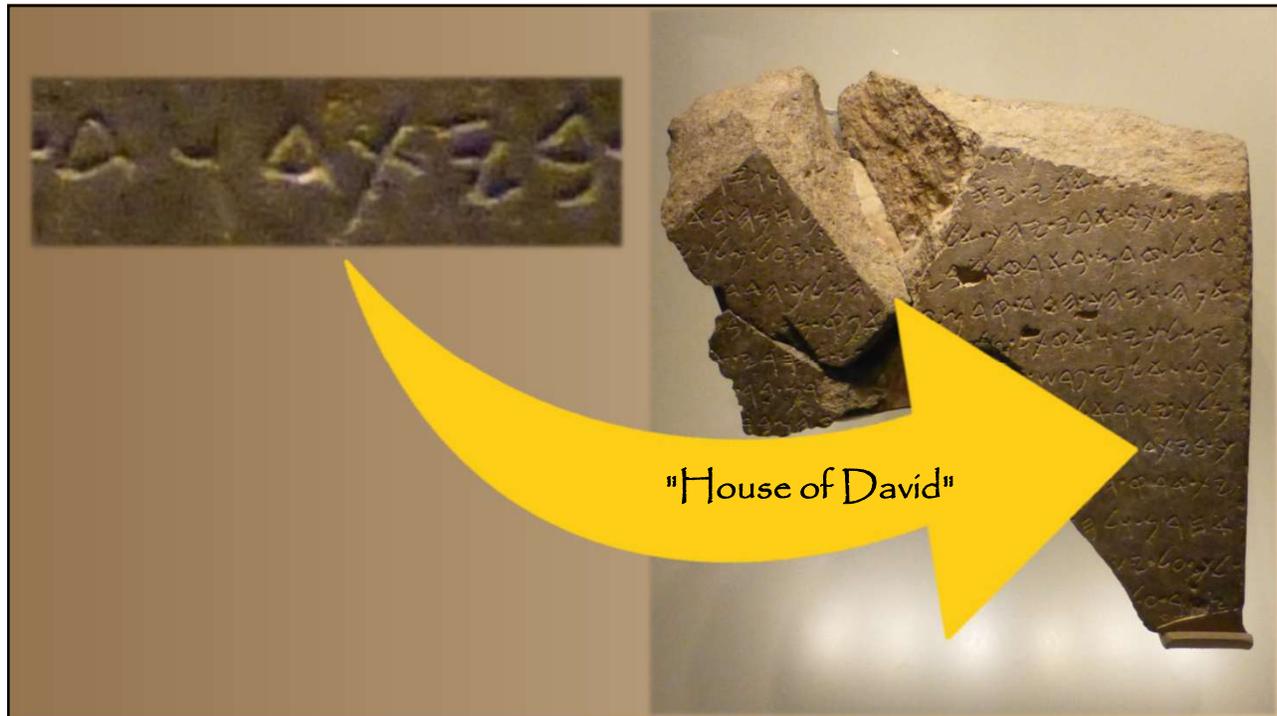


## Tel Dan Stele\*

(Ninth Century BC)

- ❖ discovered 1993
- ❖ now at the Israel Museum, Jerusalem
- ❖ reference the "House of David"



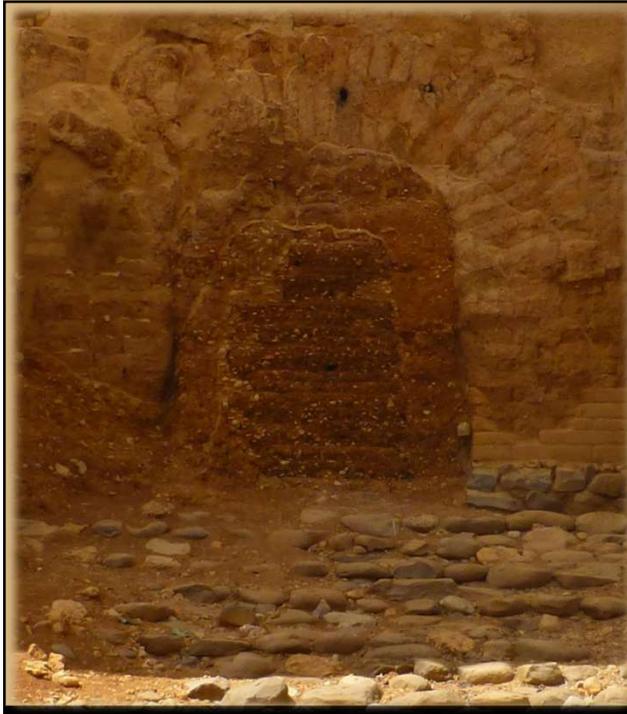


**Tel Dan Stele\***  
(Ninth Century BC)

- ❖ discovered 1993
- ❖ now at the Israel Museum, Jerusalem
- ❖ reference the "House of David"
- ❖ reference to Ahaziah (2 Kings 22:40)







## Abraham Gate at Tel Dan

(1,750 BC)

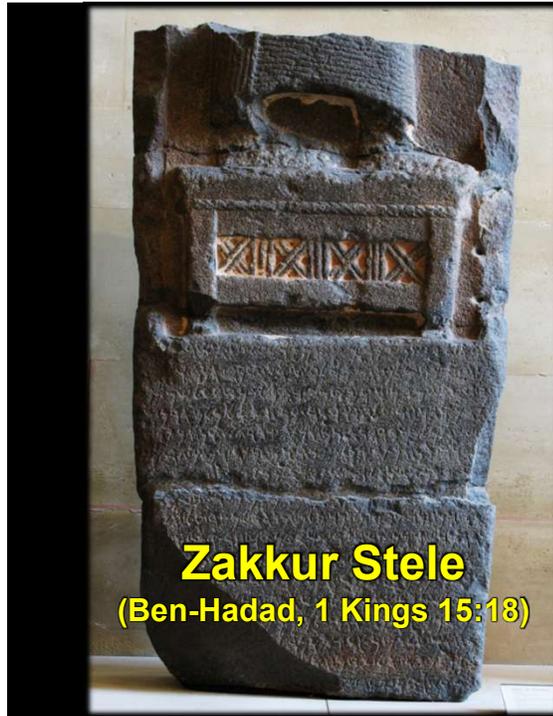
- ❖ discovered 1966
- ❖ Possibly the gate through which Abraham passed in his travel to Dan to recuse Lot (Gen. 14:14).

## Black Obelisk of Shalmaneser III

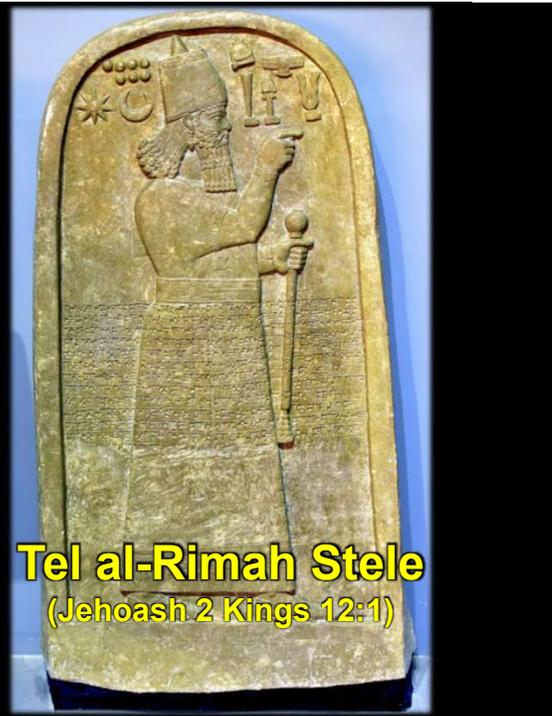
(Ninth Century BC)

- ❖ discovered 1846 by Sir Austen Henry Layard
- ❖ one of two complete Assyrian obelisks yet discovered
- ❖ now at the British Museum, London
- ❖ 6 ½ feet tall; 1 ½ feet wide
- ❖ references Jehu, King of Israel (1 Kings 19:16)





**Zakkur Stele**  
(Ben-Hadad, 1 Kings 15:18)



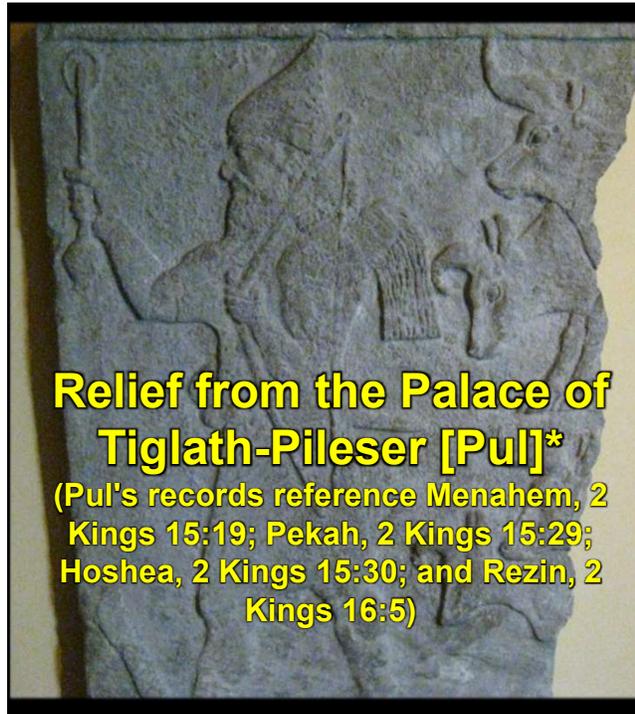
**Tel al-Rimah Stele**  
(Jehoash 2 Kings 12:1)



**Seal of "Shema, Servant of Jeroboam" [Jeroboam II]**  
(2 Kings 14:16)



**Relief of Sennacherib, King of Assyria\***  
(2 Kings 18:13)



### Relief from the Palace of Tiglath-Pileser [Pul]\*

(Pul's records reference Menahem, 2 Kings 15:19; Pekah, 2 Kings 15:29; Hoshea, 2 Kings 15:30; and Rezin, 2 Kings 16:5)



### Altar of Sargon II to the god Sibitti\*

(Isa. 20:1)

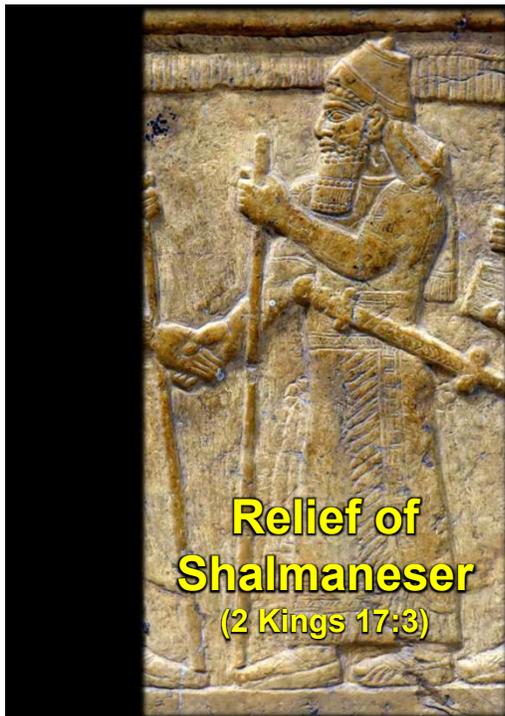
שבִּירי מצבת ניצחון אשורית של המלך סרגון השני  
אשדוד, 712 לפני הספירה, בזלת

המצבה כתובה בכתב־היתדות בשפה האכדית. היא הוצבה באשדוד לאחר שסרגון, מלך אשור, כבש את העיר, כמסופר בישעיהו כ': א' "בשנת בא תרתן אשדודה בשלח אתו סרגון מלך אשור וילחם באשדוד וילכדה".

#### Fragments of an Assyrian victory stele of King Sargon II

Ashdod, 712 BCE, basalt

The stele is written in cuneiform script in Akkadian. It was erected in Ashdod after the city had been conquered by Sargon, king of Assyria. The book of Isaiah (20:1) refers to the incident: "In the year that the commander in chief, who was sent by Sargon the king of Assyria, came to Ashdod and fought against it and took it. . . ."



**Relief of  
Shalmaneser**  
(2 Kings 17:3)



**Seal which reads  
"belonging to Ahaz, son of  
Yehotam, King of Judah"**  
(2 Kings 16:1)



**Taylor Prism**  
(2 Kings 17:3)

## Taylor Prism

(Ninth Century BC)

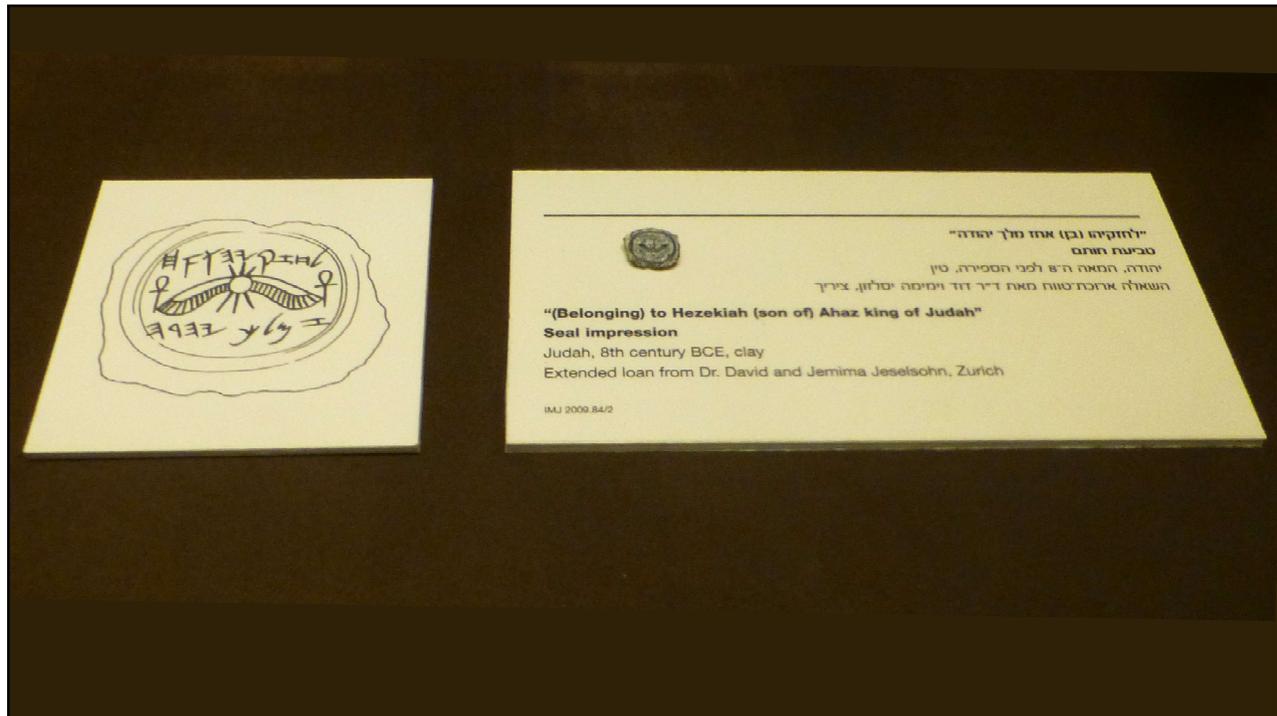
- ❖ discovered 1830
- ❖ at the British Museum, London
- ❖ contains the annals of the Assyrian King Sennacherib (together with the Oriental Institute Prism and the Jerusalem Prism)
- ❖ contains narratives about Hezekiah (2 Kings 18:29-32)



## Hezekiah Royal Seal Impression (Bulla)

(Eight Century BC)

- ❖ discovered 2009
- ❖ at the Israel Museum, Jerusalem
- ❖ "(belonging) to Hezekiah (son of) Ahas King of Judah"
- ❖ 2 Kings 18:1




## Bulla with Possible Reference to the Prophet Isaiah

(Eight/Seventh Century BC)

- ❖ discovered 2015 near the bulla of the Hezekiah Royal Seal
- ❖ Though it bears the name 'Isaiah', scholars disagree whether the word following (nvy) is the word for 'Prophet'.
- ❖ Since the bulla is broken off, there is no way to tell whether it is the common name or whether there was the letter aleph following 'nvy', which would make it the word for 'Prophet.'



# The Ipuwer Papyrus

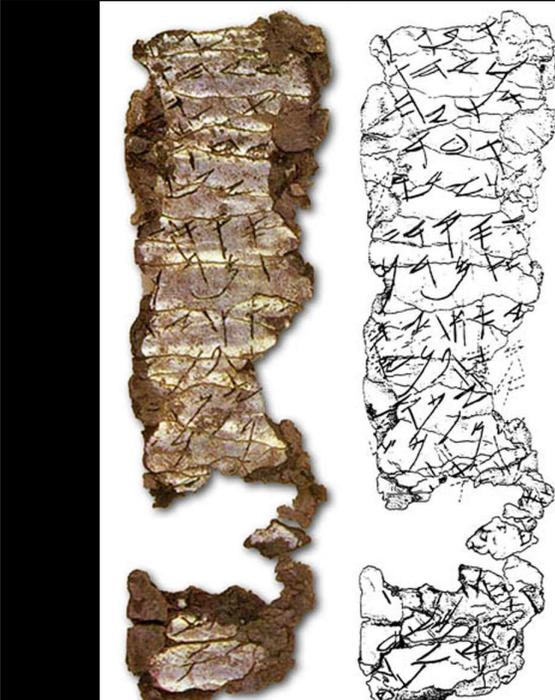
- ❖ an ancient Egyptian papyrus manuscript
- ❖ contains the "Admonitions of Ipuwer" an Egyptian sage
- ❖ discovered in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century
- ❖ housed in the national archeological museum in Leiden, Netherlands
- ❖ dated 1,400 to 1,200 BC
- ❖ Though disputed, some believe it is a first-hand account of the plagues of Exodus.





## The Ketef Hinnom Scrolls

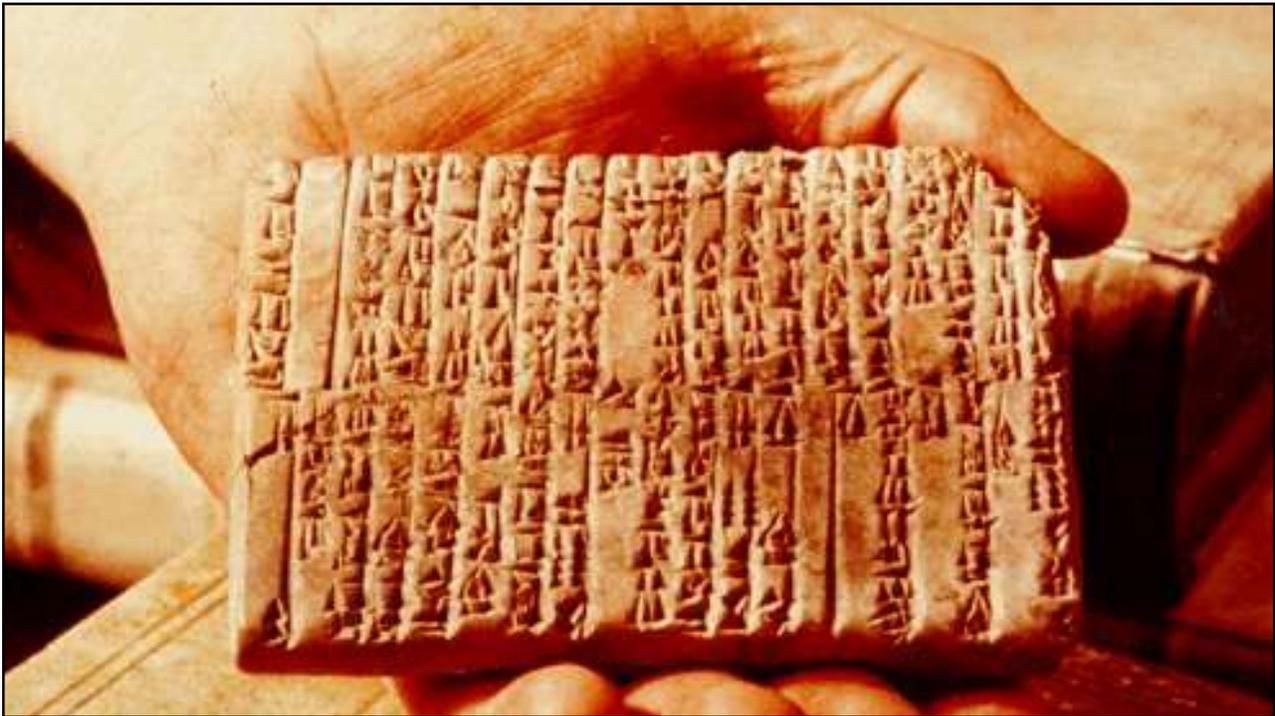
- ❖ discovered in 1979 during an excavation of a 7<sup>th</sup> Century BC tomb at the funerary site of Ketef Hinnom outside of Jerusalem
- ❖ silver amulets containing the oldest text of the Old Testament



-- הברו (כ)  
 - יְיָ נִיְהוּ - May the LORD bless you and guard you -  
 - יְיָ יְהוָה וְיִשְׁמְרֶךָ (ו)  
 - יְיָ עֲשֵׂה - יְיָ יְהוָה וְיִשְׁמְרֶךָ  
 - שִׁבְרַכְּךָ (י) - (Yevhārekh-khā Adhōnāy veyishmerēkhā ...)  
 יְהוָה וְיִשְׁמְרֶךָ (י) May the LORD make His face shed light upon you  
 יְיָ אֵל יְיָ and be gracious unto you -  
 פְּנֵי יְיָ (יה) יְיָ יְהוָה פְּנֵי אֱלֹהֶיךָ וְיִחַן  
 וְיִשְׁמְרֶךָ (אל) ("Yā'ēr Adhōnāy pānāw ēlekhā viḥunnēkkā ...)  
 שִׁמְלֶךָ ש  
 - לֹ (מ) - May the LORD lift up His face unto you and give you  
 ----- peace -  
 ----- יְיָ יְהוָה פְּנֵי אֱלֹהֶיךָ וְיִשְׁמְרֶךָ לְךָ שְׁלוֹמִים  
 - כמ - ("Yissā Adhōnāy pānāw ēlekhā viyāsēm lekhā shālōm.")  
 - ו - נ -  
 -----

## The Testimony of Archeology

- *Old Testament Period*
- *The Ebla Tablets*



*Ebla was a city-state with a population of 260,000.  
Ebla site, known as Tel Mardikh, is in northern Syria.  
It has been excavated by Professor Paolo Matthiae of  
the Rome University since 1964.*

*It is mentioned in texts of the ancient Sumerians,  
Akkadian, and Egyptians  
It was destroyed by the Akkadians around 2250 BC.*

*In 1975, around 15,000 tables were recovered.  
(The count is around to 17,000.)*

*Most of the tablets deal with economic matters,  
receipts, and other commercial activities.*

*Other tables deal with case law and the law code of  
Ebla (which is now recognized as  
the oldest ever found.)*

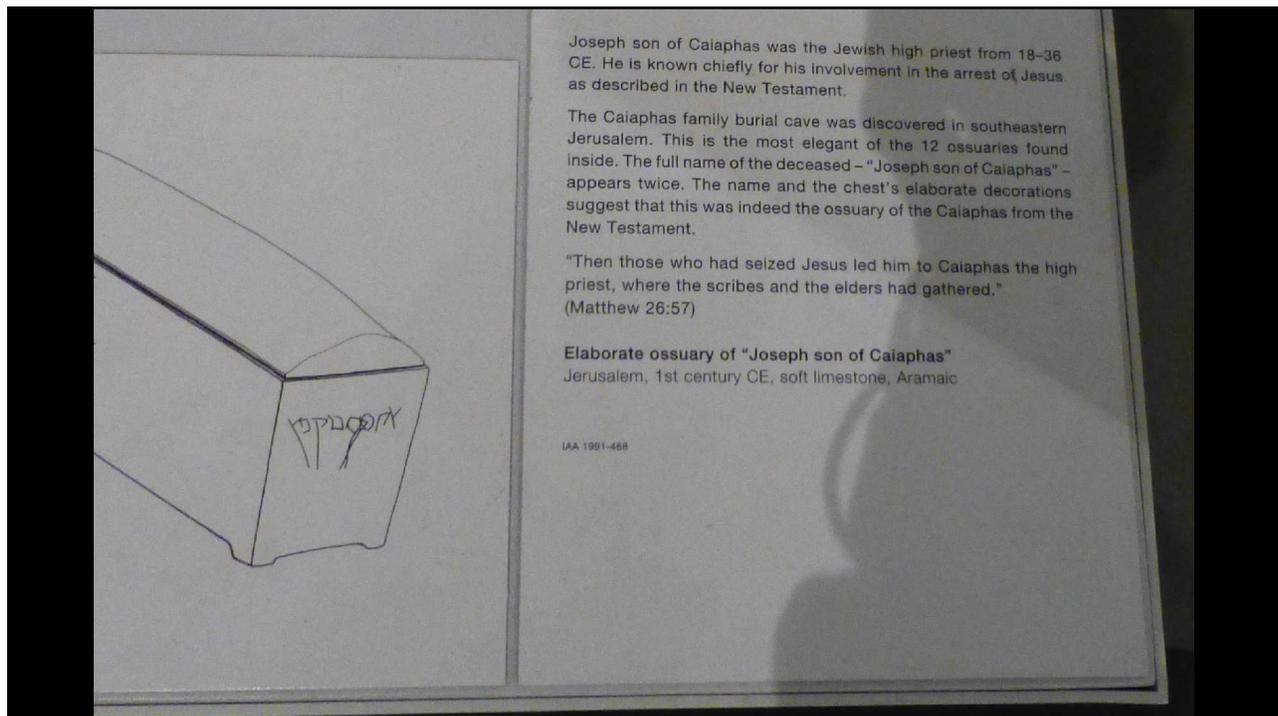
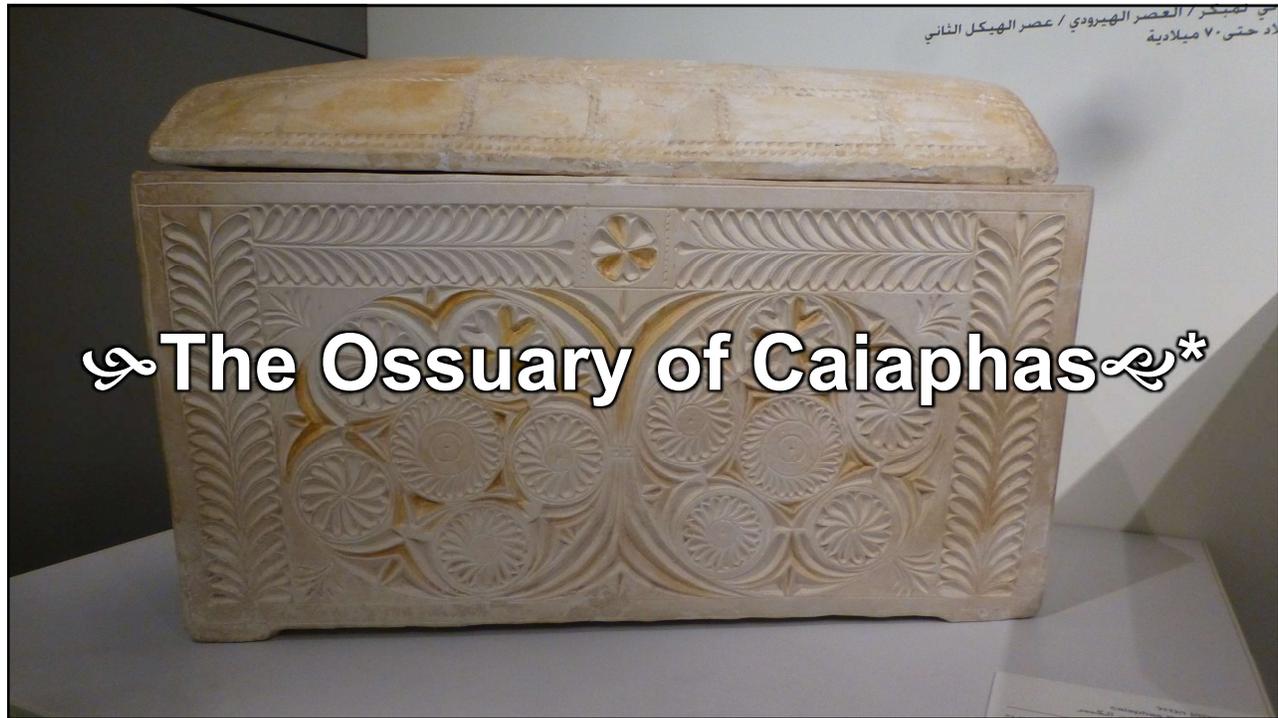
***A number of cities are referred to in the tablets, including Damascus, Urusalima (Jerusalem; being the earliest reference to this city), Sodom, Gomorrah, Carchemish (cf. Is. 10:9).***

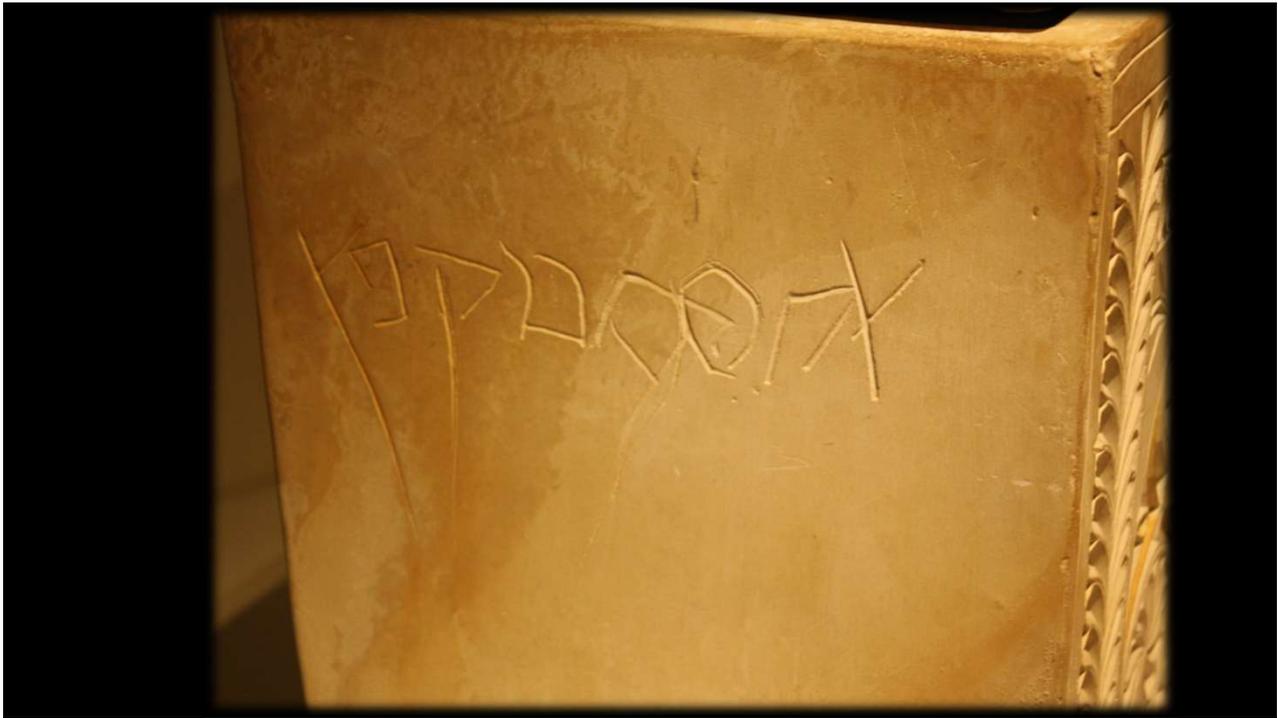
***Names of deities include El and Ya.***

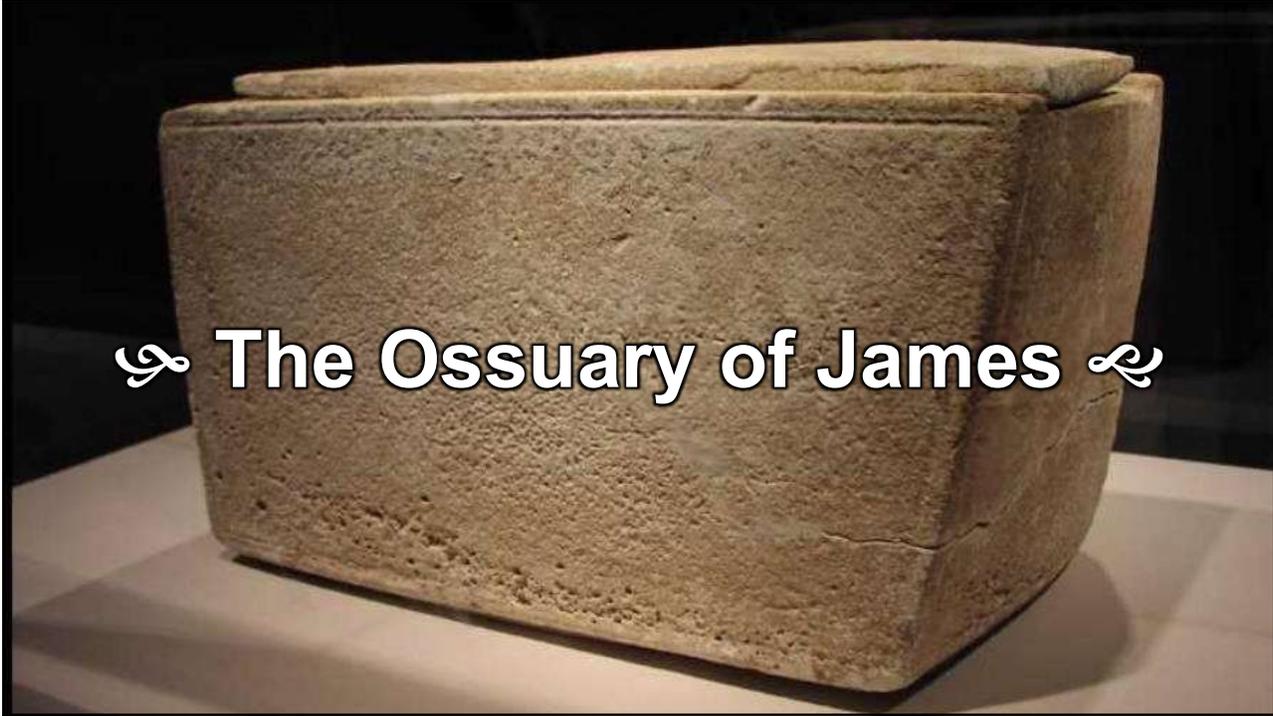
***The tablets also mention the Hittites. Liberal critics of the Bible had not too long ago maintained that Abraham (c. 2000 BC) could not have had any dealings with any Hittite (Genesis 23) because there were no Hittites this long ago.***

## **The Testimony of Archeology**

- Old Testament Period***
- The Ebla Tablets***
- Ossuaries***







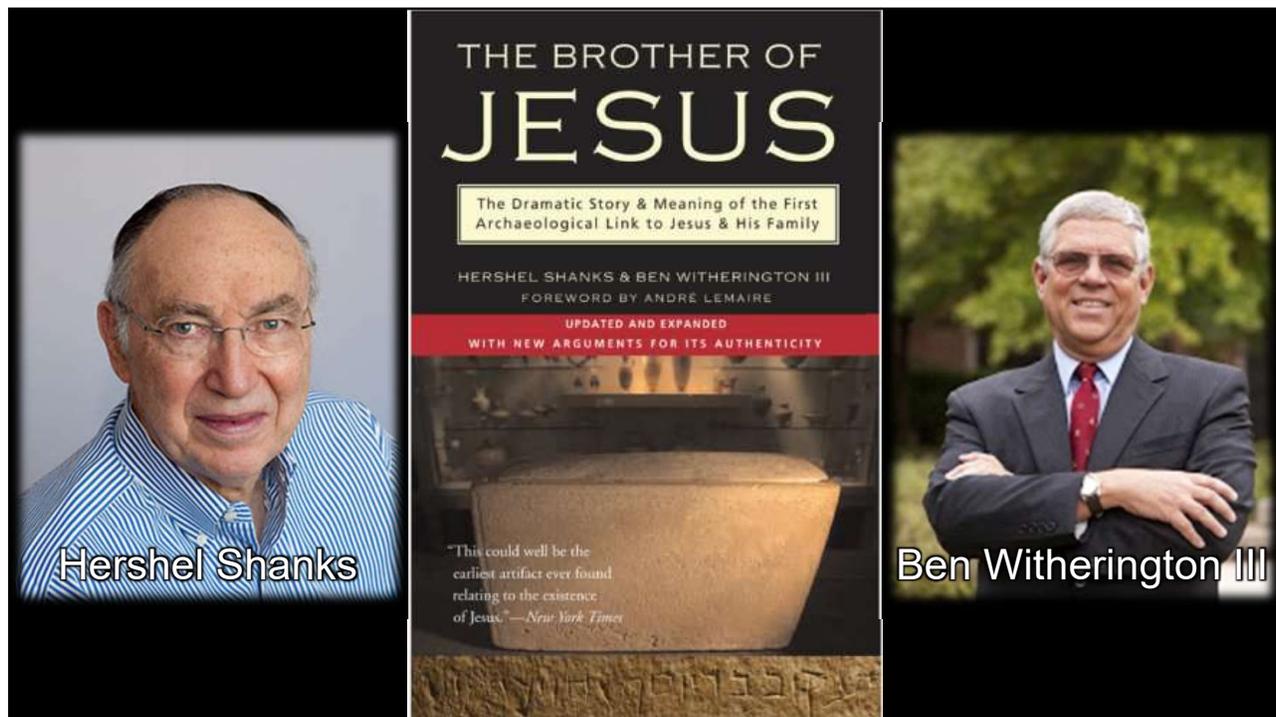
# ∞ The Ossuary of James ∞

Jesus	of	brother	Joseph	son of	Jacob (James)
Yeshua	d	achui	Yosef	bar	Ya'akov
ישוע	ד	אחוי	יוסף	בר	יעקוב

← read right to left

יעקוב בר יוסף אחוי ד ישוע

*א. גולן*



## The Testimony of Archeology

- *Old Testament Period*
- *The Ebla Tablets*
- *Ossuaries*
- *Pool of Siloam*

## John 9:1-7

*Now as Jesus passed by, He saw a man who was blind from birth. {2} And His disciples asked Him, saying, "Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?" {3} Jesus answered, "Neither this man nor his parents sinned, but that the works of God should be revealed in him. {4} I must work the works of Him who sent Me while it is day; the night is coming when no one can work. {5} As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world." {6} When He had said these things, He spat on the ground and made clay with the saliva; and He anointed the eyes of the blind man with the clay. {7} And He said to him, "Go, wash in the pool of Siloam" (which is translated, Sent). So he went and washed, and came back seeing.*

## Pool, site of cure by Jesus, identified

BY RAMIT  
PLUSHNICK-MASTI  
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

JERUSALEM — Archaeologists in Jerusalem have identified the remains of the Siloam Pool, where the Bible says Jesus miraculously cured a man's blindness, researchers said Thursday.

The archaeologists are slowly digging out the pool, where water still runs, tucked away in what is now the Arab neighborhood of Silwan. It was used by Jews for ritual immersions for about 120 years until the year 70, when the Romans destroyed the Jewish Temple.

Many of Jesus' acts are directly linked to Jewish rituals, and the miracle of the blind man is an example. According to the Bible, the man was undergoing ritual immersion in the Siloam Pool for entry into the temple compound, and Jesus used the occasion to cure his blindness.

In the past four months, archaeologists have revealed the pool's 50-yard length and a channel that brought in water from the Silwan spring. In the past week, a section of stone road that led from the pool to the Jewish

Temple was uncovered.

"The moment that we revealed and discovered this four months ago, we were 100 percent sure it was the Siloam Pool," said archaeologist Eli Shukron.

Stephen Pean, a Bible scholar, said the pool's waters were considered so pristine they could purify even a leper.

Pean said Jesus likely chose to cure the blind man using the purest water available because people with any disabilities were barred from the temple.

"The whole point is that people will not only be healed physically but also healed spiritually," he said. "This discovery helps bring the Gospel alive in the context of Jewish practice."

The archaeologists excavating the site are with the Israeli government's Antiquities Authority. They found biblical-era coins marked with ancient Jewish writing, along with pottery shards and a stone bottle cork, helping them confirm the area was the Siloam Pool.

The Israeli Antiquities Authority is negotiating with the Greek Orthodox Church, which owns the land, to continue the dig.

## Pool, site of cure by Jesus, identified

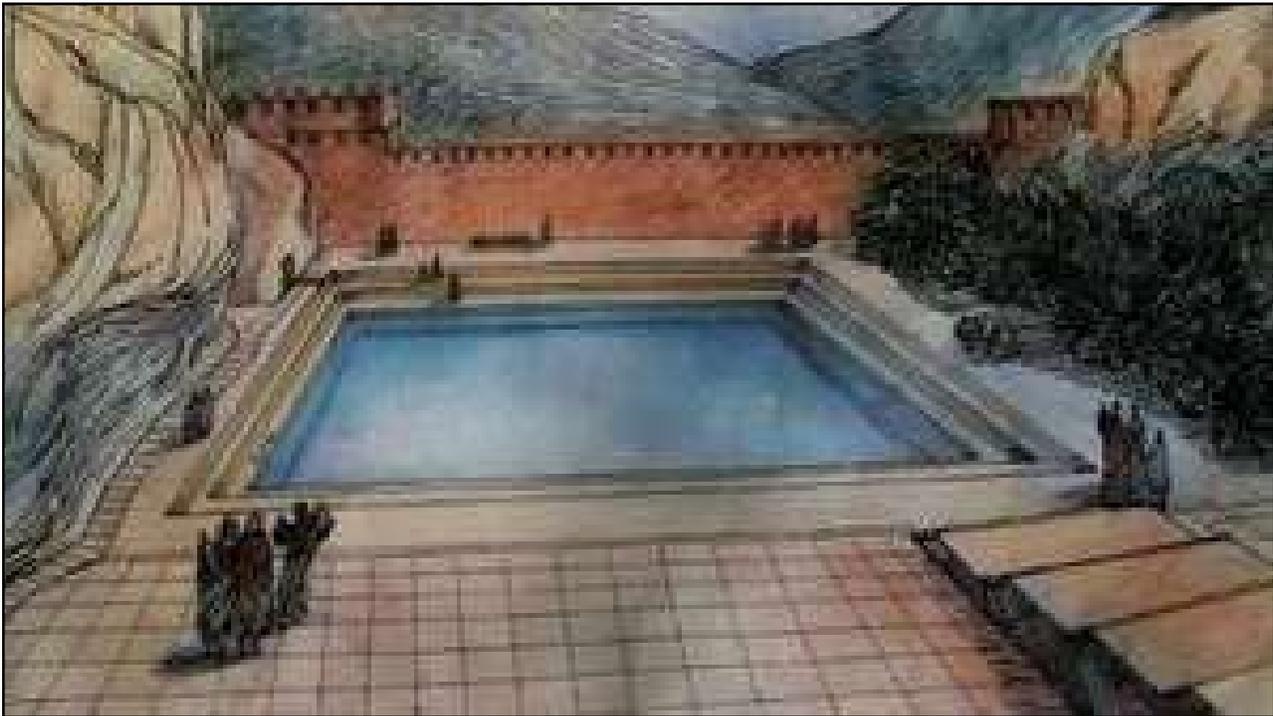
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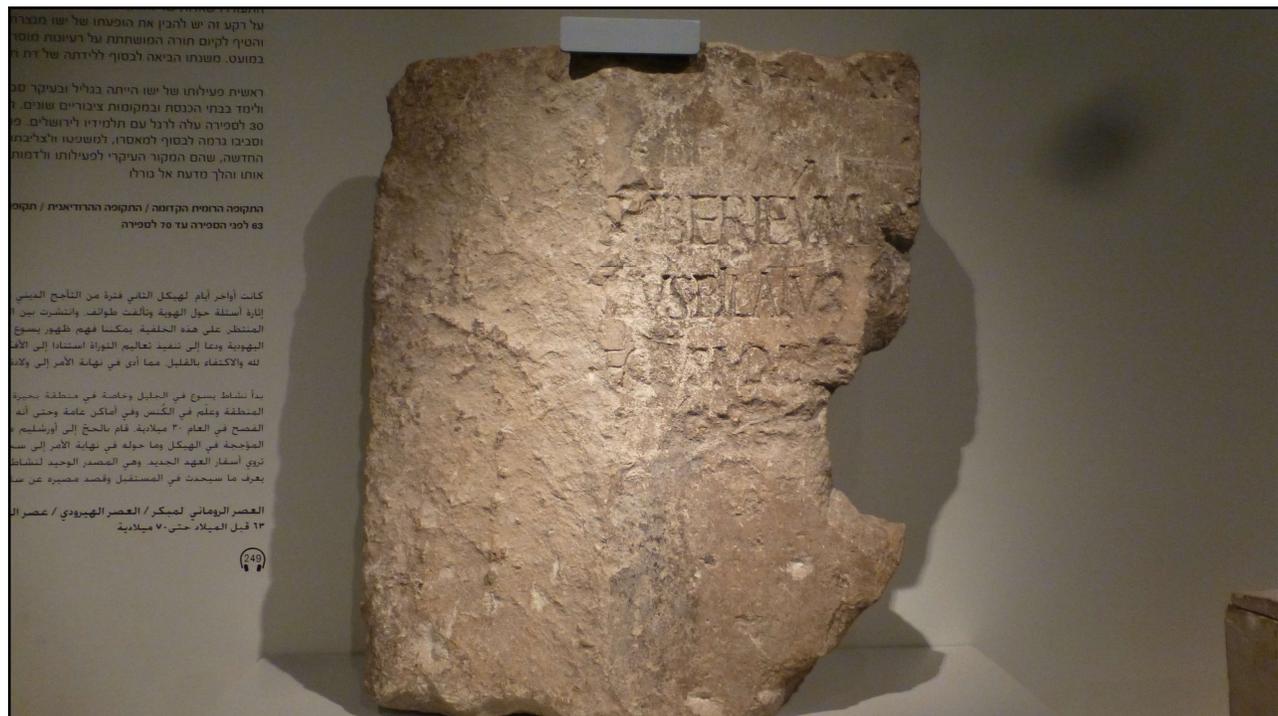


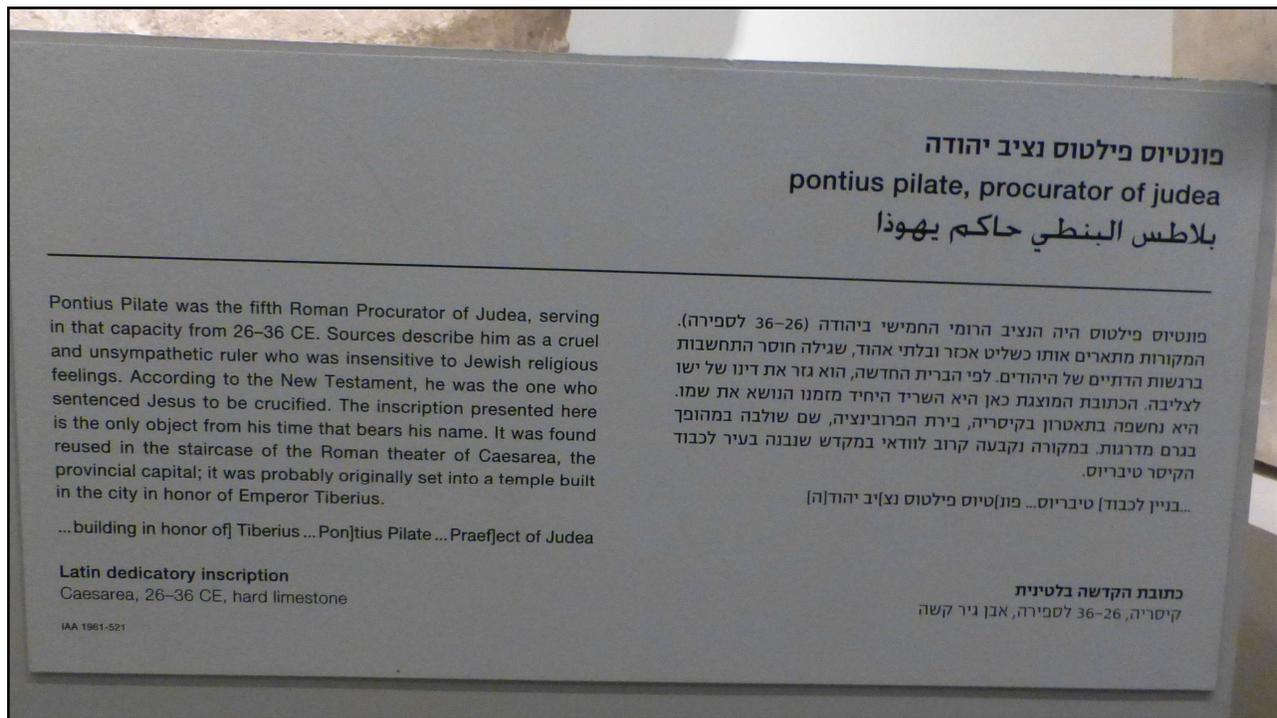
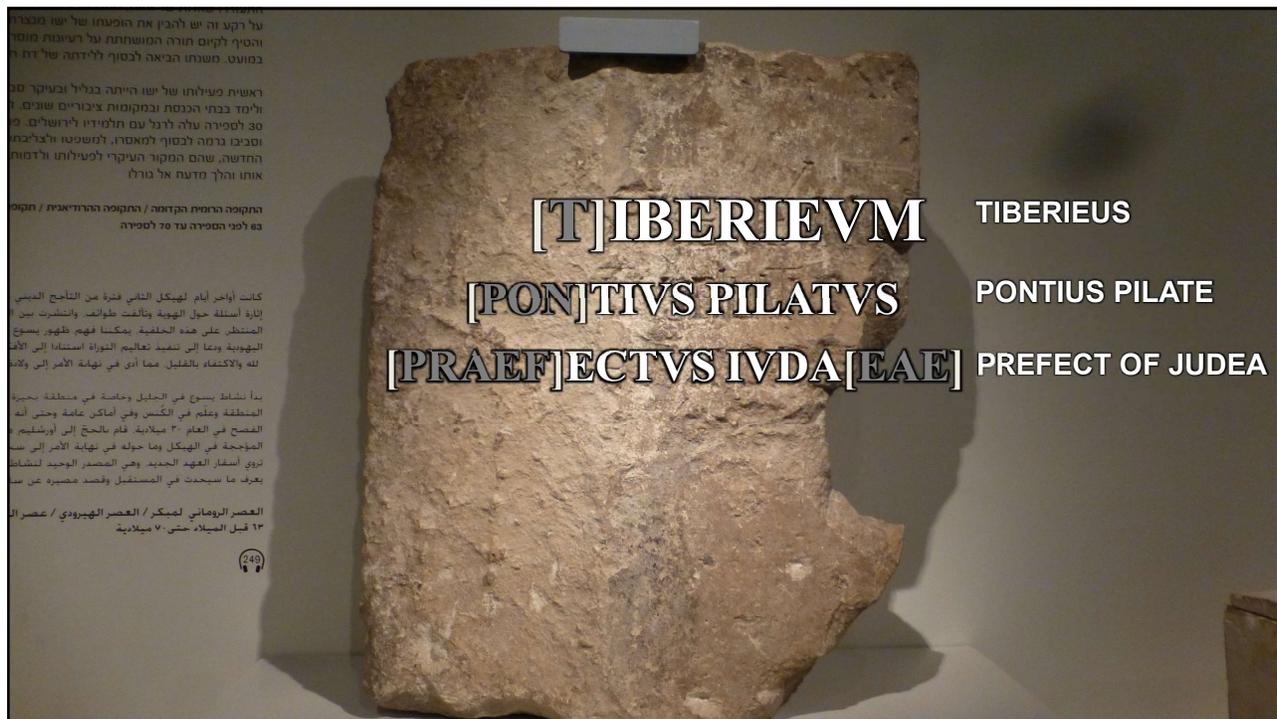




# The Testimony of Archeology

- *Old Testament Period*
- *The Ebla Tablets*
- *Ossuaries*
- *Pool of Siloam*
- *Pontius Pilate Inscription*





## The Testimony of Archeology

- *Old Testament Period*
- *The Ebla Tablets*
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- *Heel Bone of Crucifixion Victim*



## The Testimony of Archeology

- Old Testament Period
- The Ebla Tablets
- Ossuaries
- Pool of Siloam
- Pontius Pilate Inscription
- Heel Bone of Crucifixion Victim
- Nazareth Decree



- ✓ *discovered at Nazareth in 1878*
- ✓ *measuring 15" x 24"*
- ✓ *decree issued by an unknown Caesar; possibly by Claudius between AD 41-54*
- ✓ *text reads ...*

### **Ordinance of Caesar**

*It is my pleasure that graves and tombs remain perpetually undisturbed for those who have made them for the cult of their ancestors or children or members of their house. ... Let it be absolutely forbidden for anyone to disturb them. In case of violation I desire that the offender be sentenced to capital punishment on charge of violation of sepulcher.*

- ✓ *Remember that Claudius expelled the Jews in Rome because of the trouble instigated by Christ.*
- ✓ *Some suggest that it was the testimony of the resurrection (disciples claiming that Jesus had risen; Jews claiming that the body was stolen) that prompted the decree*

## The Testimony of Archeology

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- *Pontius Pilate Inscription*
- *Heel Bone of Crucifixion Victim*
- *Nazareth Decree*
- *Theater in Ephesus*

## Act 19:23-29

*And about that time there arose a great commotion about the Way. For a certain man named Demetrius, a silversmith, who made silver shrines of Diana, brought no small profit to the craftsmen. He called them together with the workers of similar occupation, and said: "Men, you know that we have our prosperity by this trade. Moreover you see and hear that not only at Ephesus, but throughout almost all Asia, this Paul has persuaded and turned away many people, saying that they are not gods which are made with hands. So not only is this trade of ours in danger of falling into disrepute, but also the temple of the great goddess Diana may be despised and her magnificence destroyed, whom all Asia and the world worship." Now when they heard this, they were full of wrath and cried out, saying, "Great is Diana of the Ephesians!" So the whole city was filled with confusion, and rushed into the theater with one accord, having seized Gaius and Aristarchus, Macedonians, Paul's travel companions.*



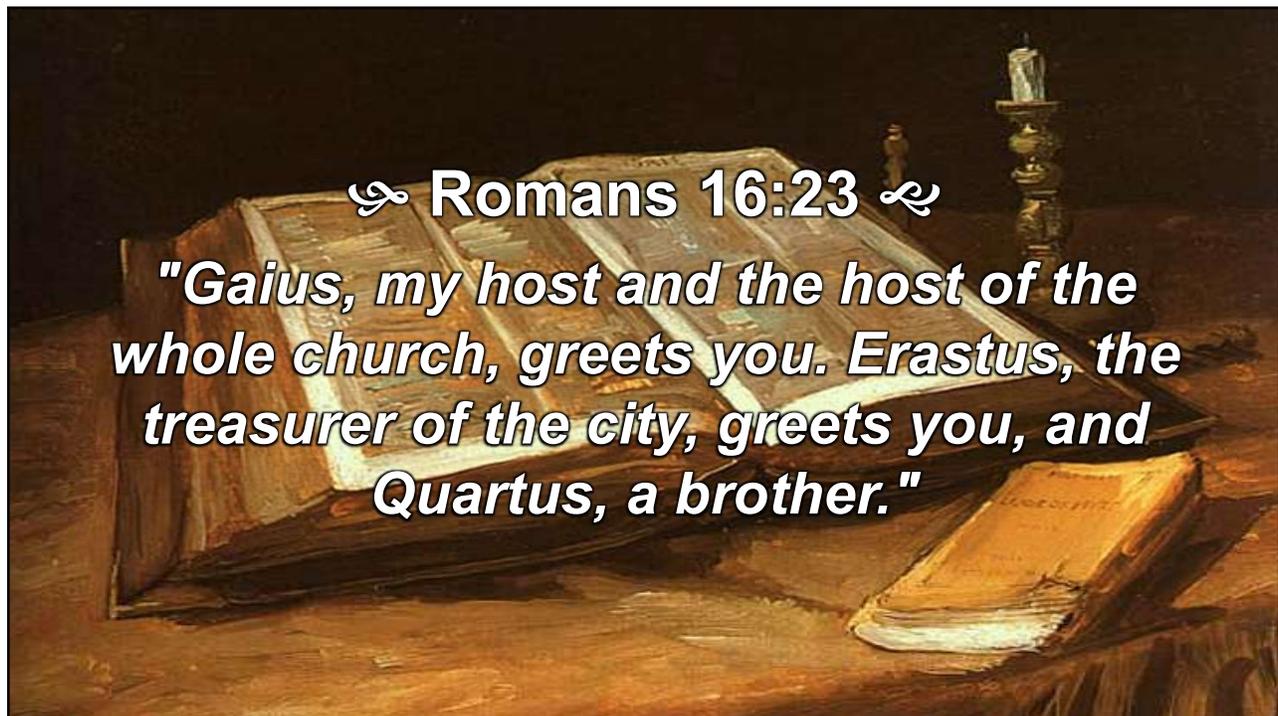
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- *Temple of Diana*



## The Testimony of Archeology

- *Old Testament Period*
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- *Nazareth Decree*
- *Theater in Ephesus*
- *Temple of Diana*
- *Erastus Inscription*





- ❖ *marble paving stone*
- ❖ *discovered in Corinth in 1929 among excavated ruins*
- ❖ *Latin inscription reads: ERASTUS. PRO. AED. S. P. STRAVIT*
- ❖ *Latin (without abbreviations): ERASTUS PRO AEDILITATE SUA PECUNIA STRAVIT*
- ❖ *Translated: "Erastus, in return for his aedileship, laid this pavement at his own expense."*
- ❖ *The office of aedilis was the commissioner of public works*

(<http://holylandphotos.org/browse.asp?s=1,4,11,28,74,95&img=GSPLCO01>)

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- *Temple of Diana*
- *Erastus Inscription*
- *Galilee Boat*





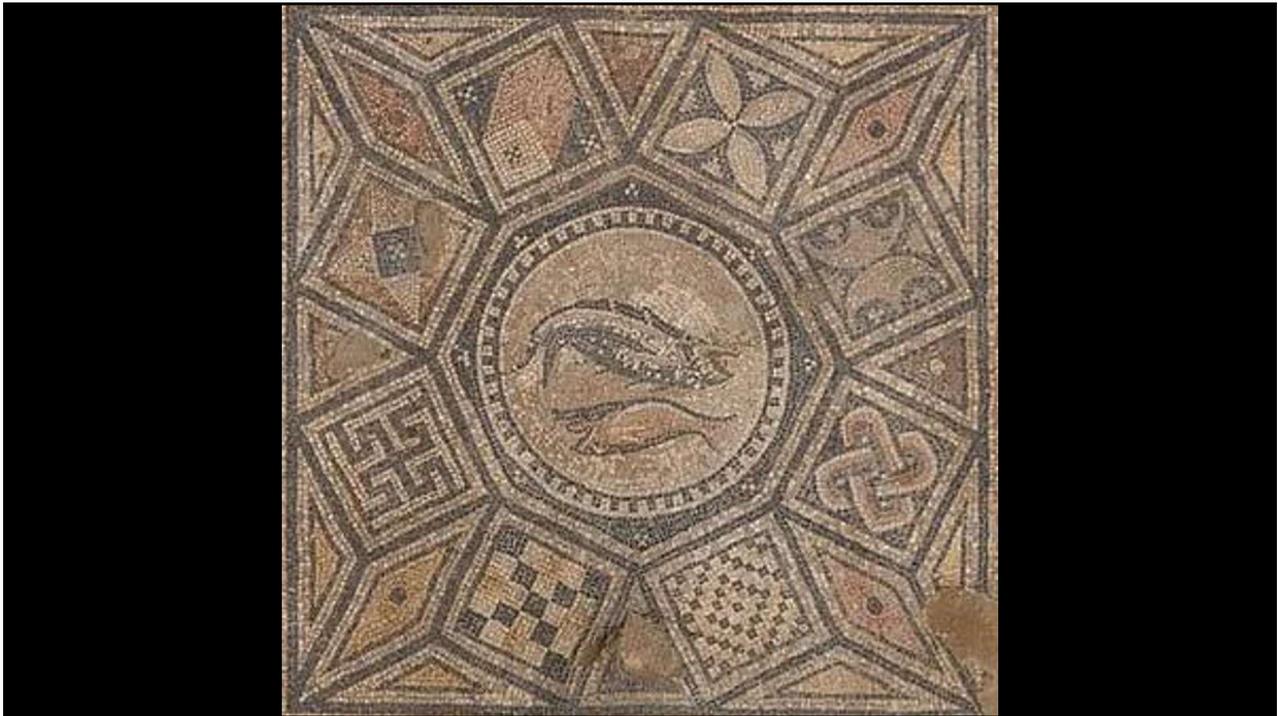
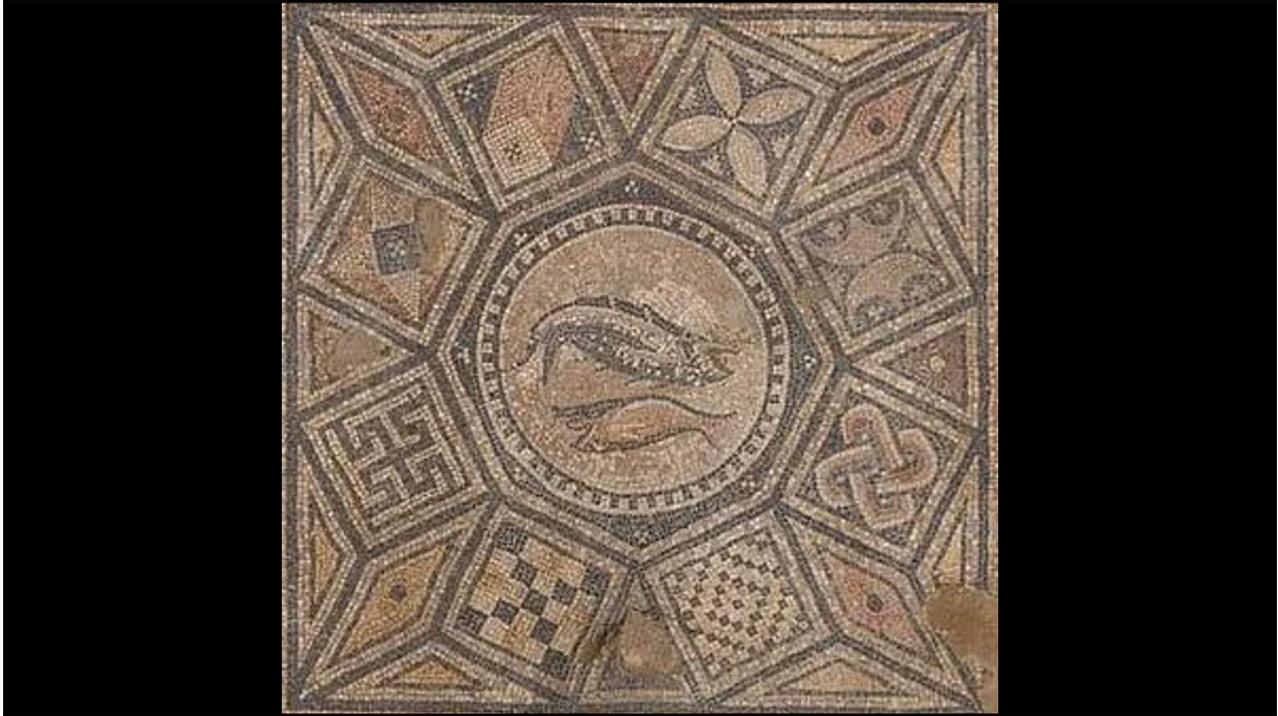
## The Testimony of Archeology

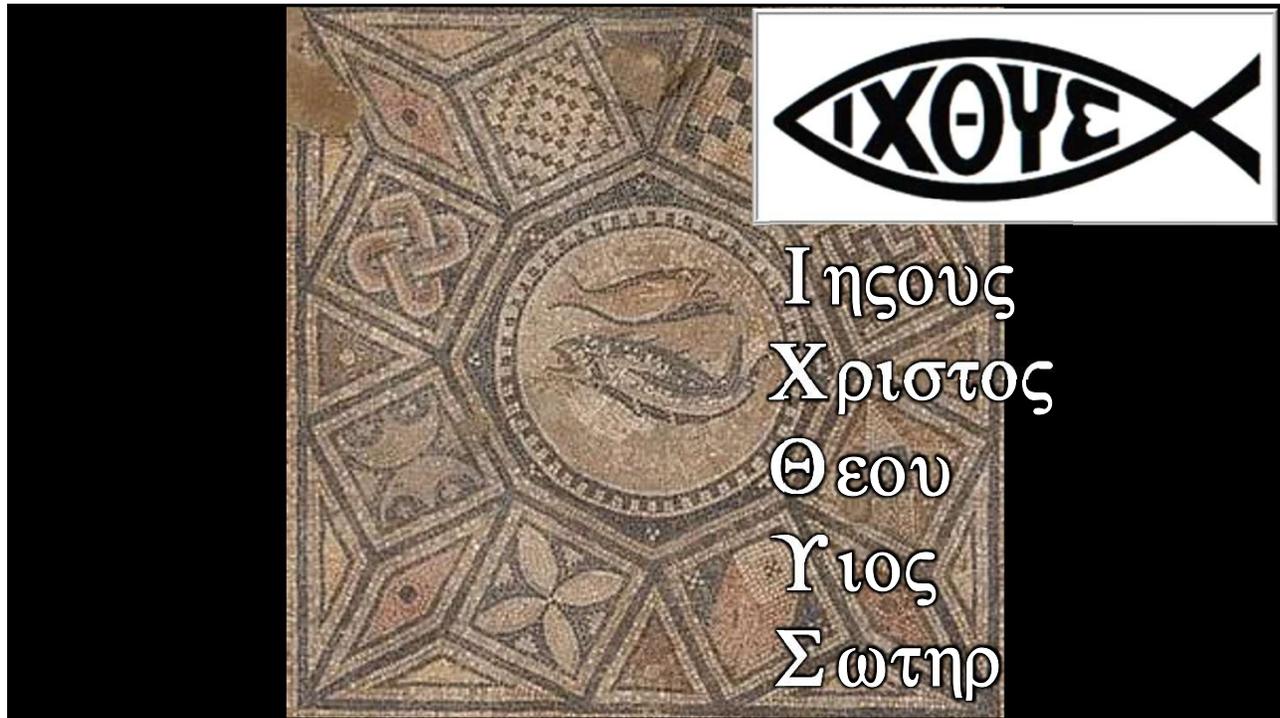
- |  |                              |
|--|------------------------------|
| • <i>Old Testament Period</i>            | • <i>Nazareth Decree</i>     |
| • <i>The Ebla Tablets</i>                | • <i>Theater in Ephesus</i>  |
| • <i>Ossuaries</i>                       | • <i>Temple of Diana</i>     |
| • <i>Pool of Siloam</i>                  | • <i>Erastus Inscription</i> |
| • <i>Pontius Pilate Inscription</i>      | • <i>Galilee Boat</i>        |
| • <i>Heel Bone of Crucifixion Victim</i> | • <i>Jesus Inscription</i>   |

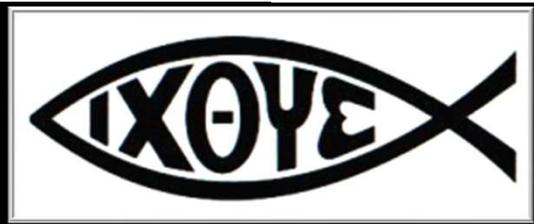
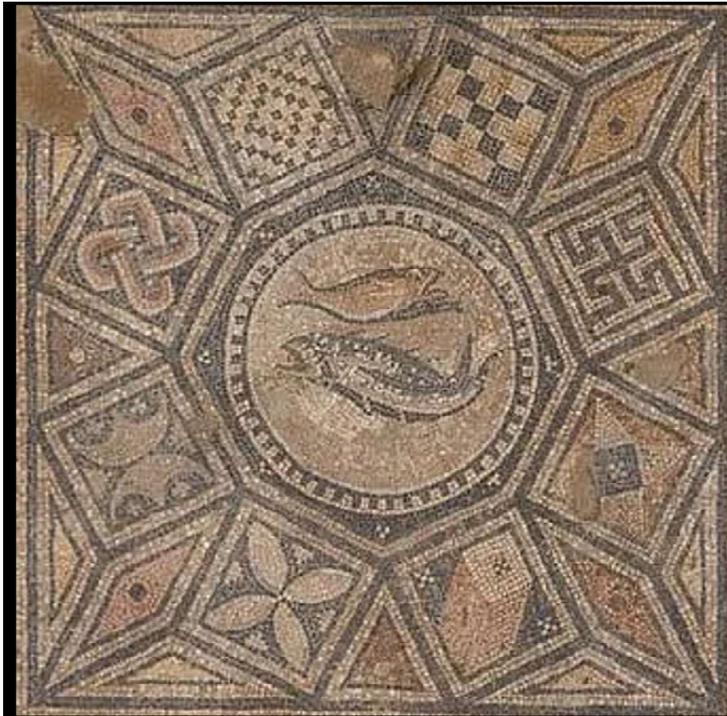


- *referred to as the Megiddo Mosaic*
- *on display at the Museum of the Bible in Washington, DC*
- *16 feet by 32 feet*
- *discovered between 2003 and 2005 by the Israel Antiquities Authority beneath the floor of an Israeli prison in Megiddo*
- *dated to around AD 230*
- *evidence of early Christian worship*
- *earliest known inscription identifying Jesus as God*

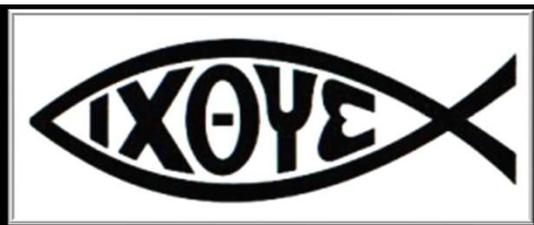
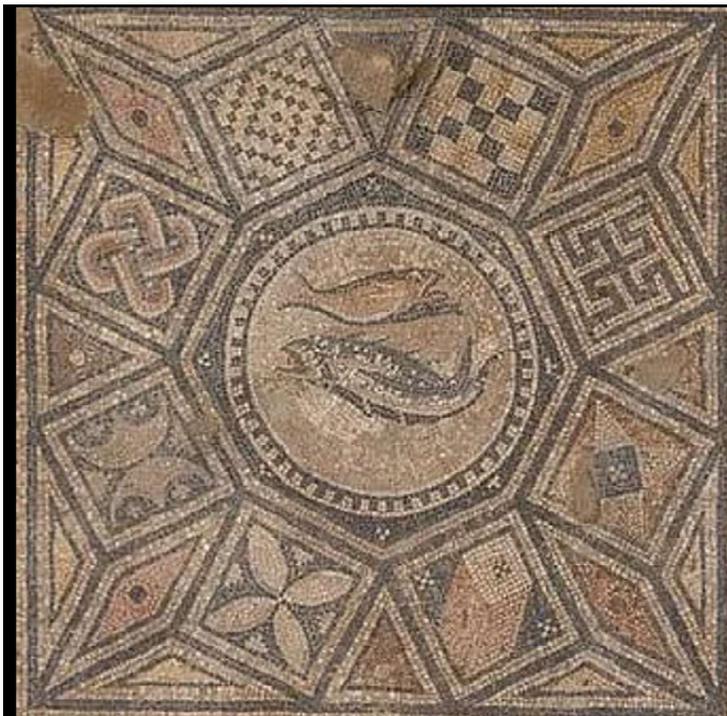




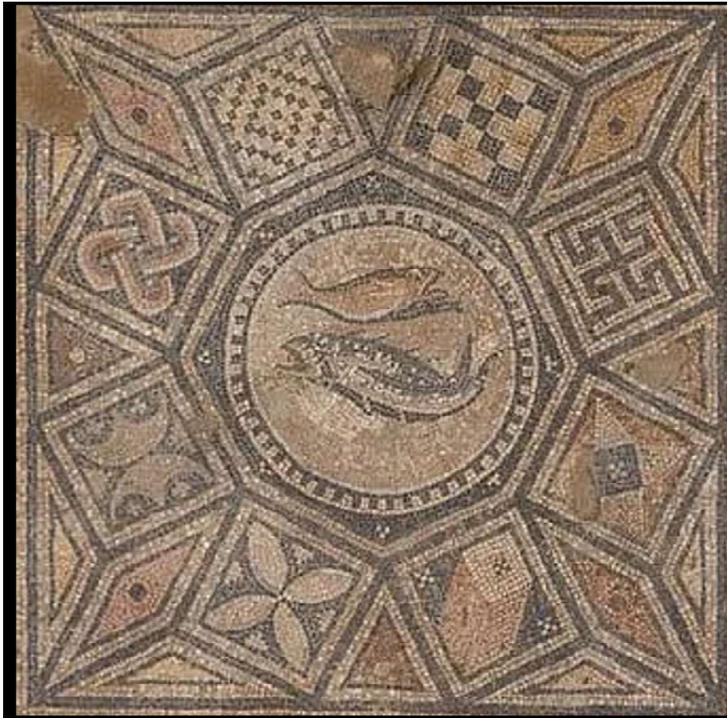




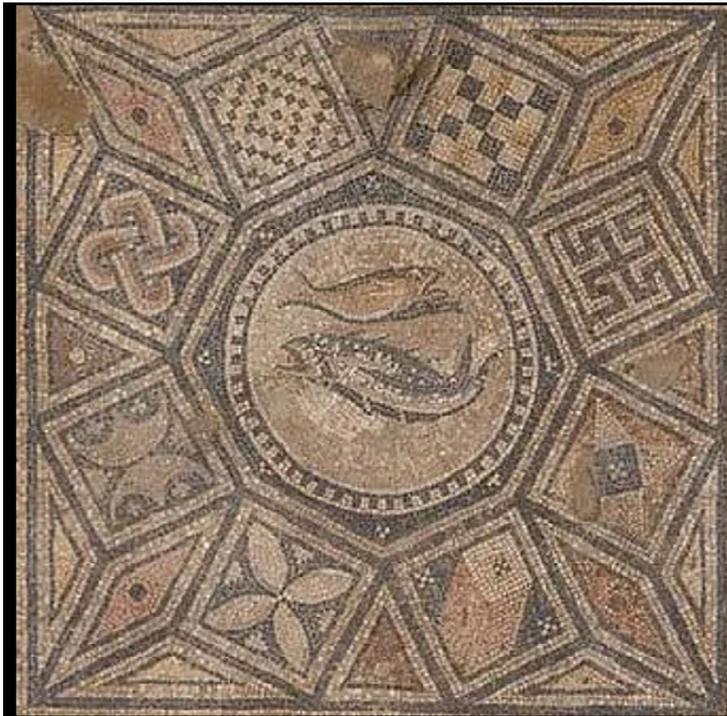
**Jesus  
Christ  
of God  
Son  
Savior**



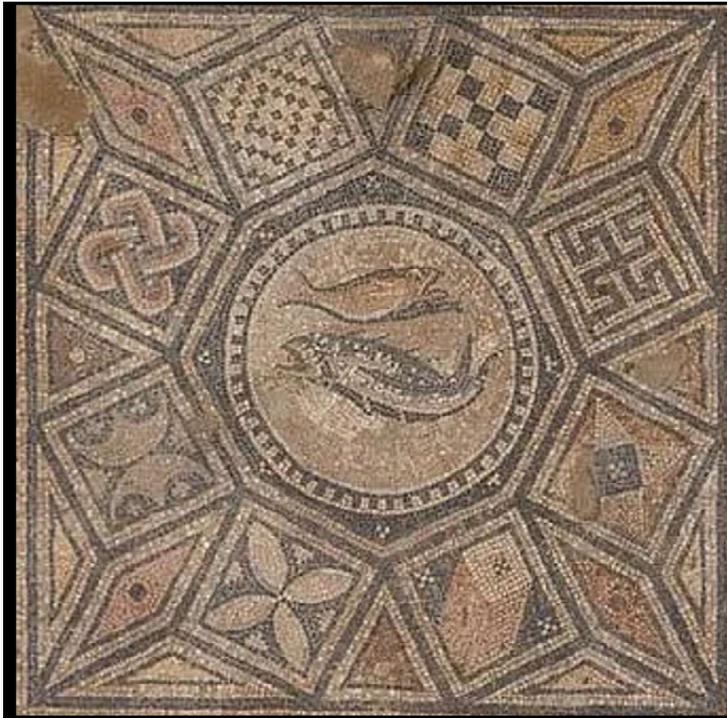
**Jesus  
Christ  
Son  
of God  
Savior**



Ι iota (I)  
 Χ chi (CH)  
 Θ theta (TH)  
 Υ upsilon (U)  
 Σ sigma (S)



**ICHTHUS**  
**Ichthus is the**  
**Greek word**  
**for 'fish'.**



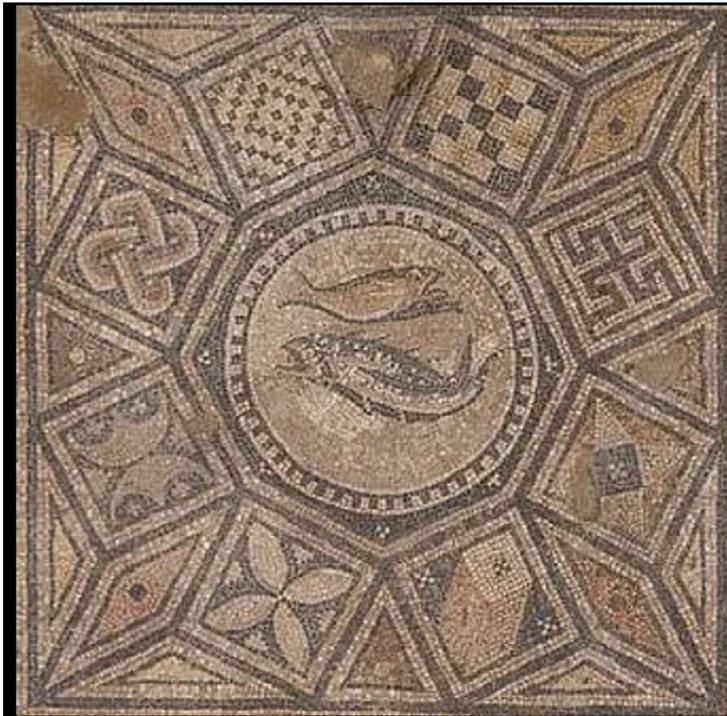
I = I

X = CH

Θ = TH

Υ = U

Σ = S

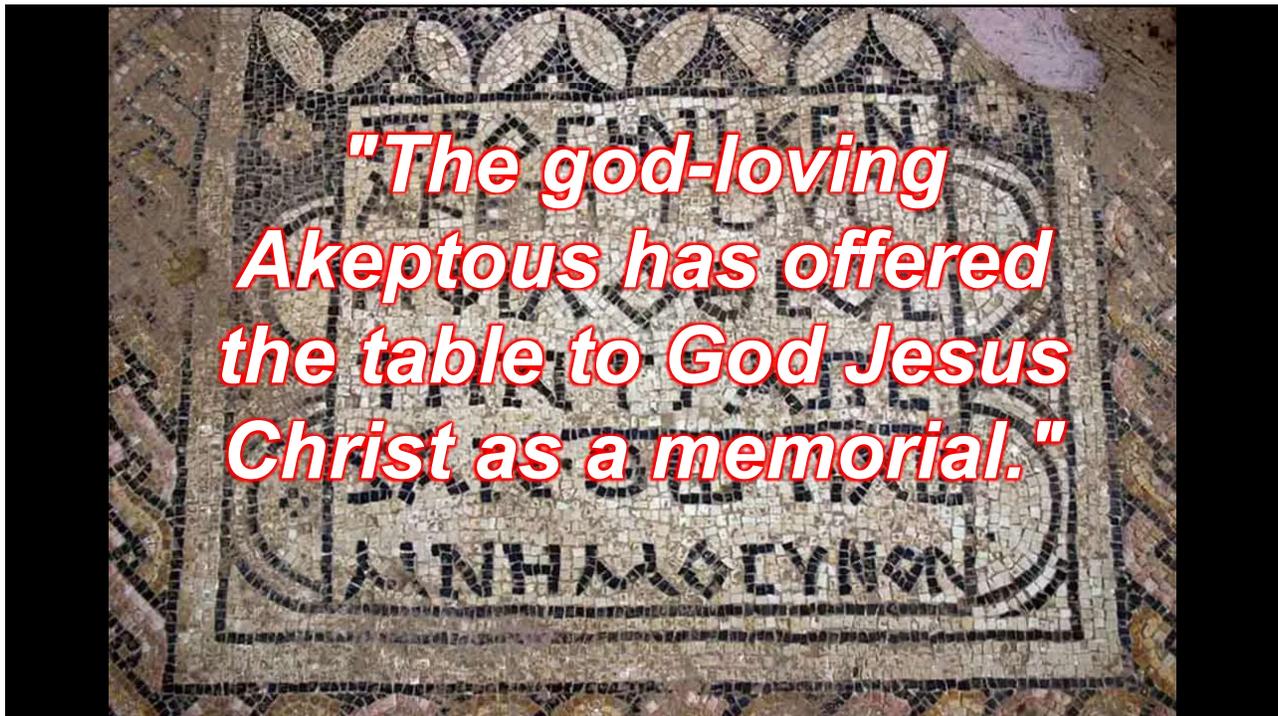


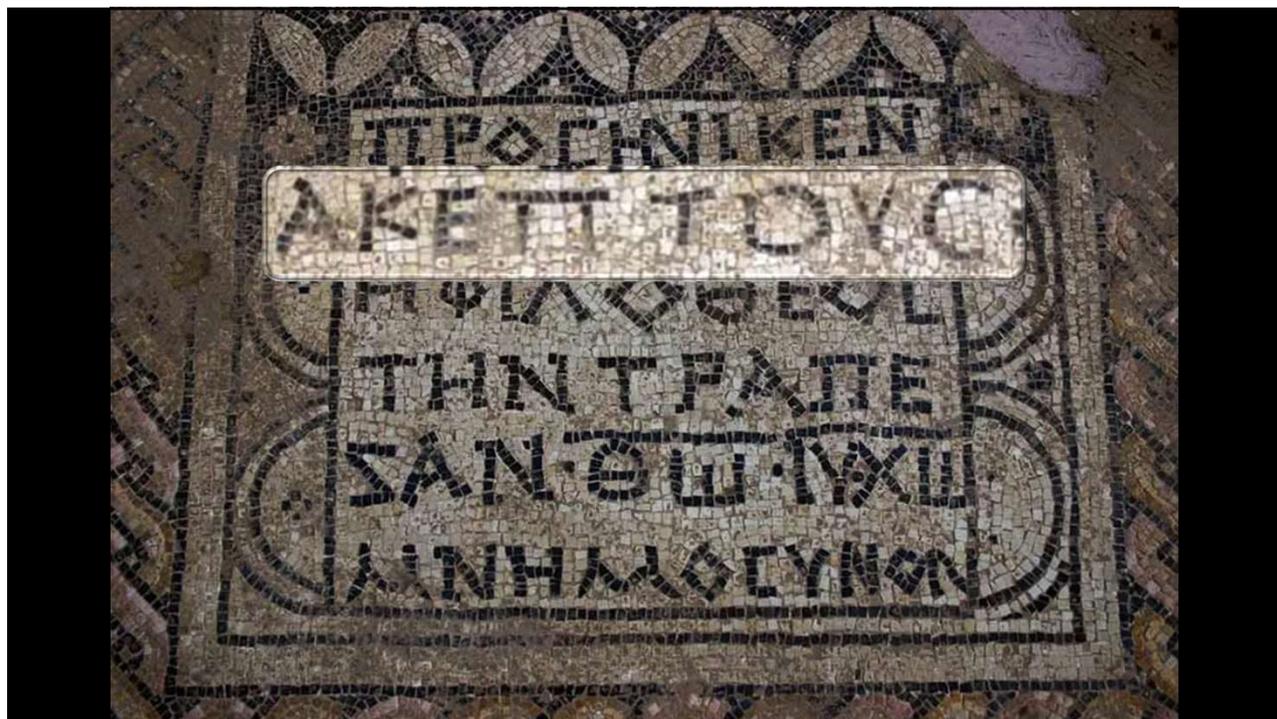
**ICHTHUS**

**Ichthus is the  
Greek word  
for 'fish'.**



***"The god-loving  
Akeptous has offered  
the table to God Jesus  
Christ as a memorial."***



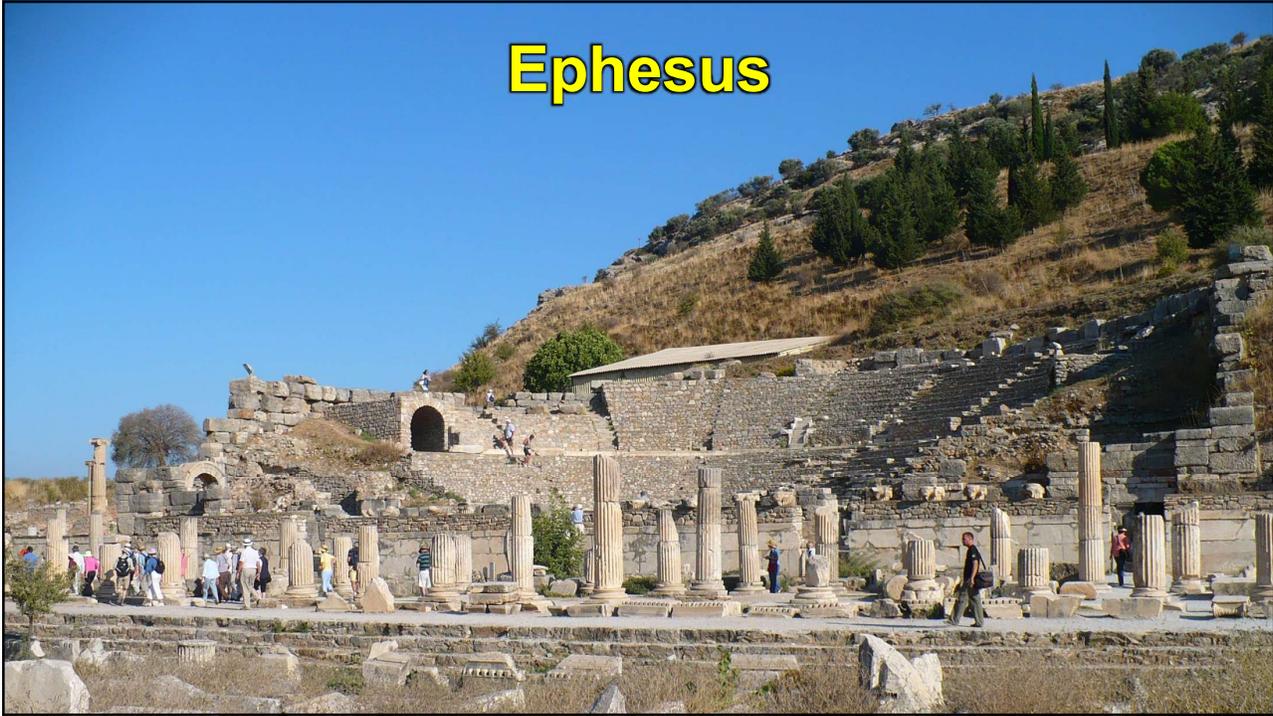






## The Testimony of Archeology

- *Old Testament Period*
- *The Ebla Tablets*
- *Ossuaries*
- *Pool of Siloam*
- *Pontius Pilate Inscription*
- *Heel Bone of Crucifixion Victim*
- *Nazareth Decree*
- *Theater in Ephesus*
- *Temple of Diana*
- *Erastus Inscription*
- *Galilee Boat*
- *Jesus Inscription*
- *Cities of Revelation*





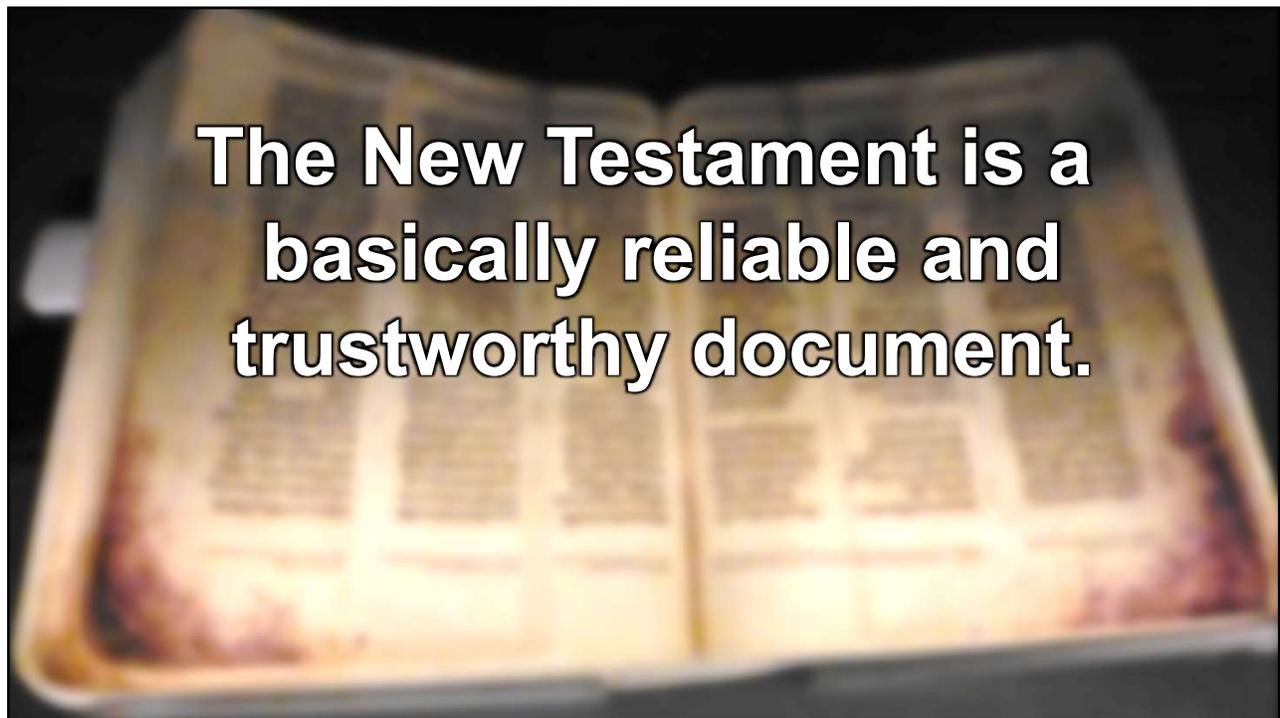
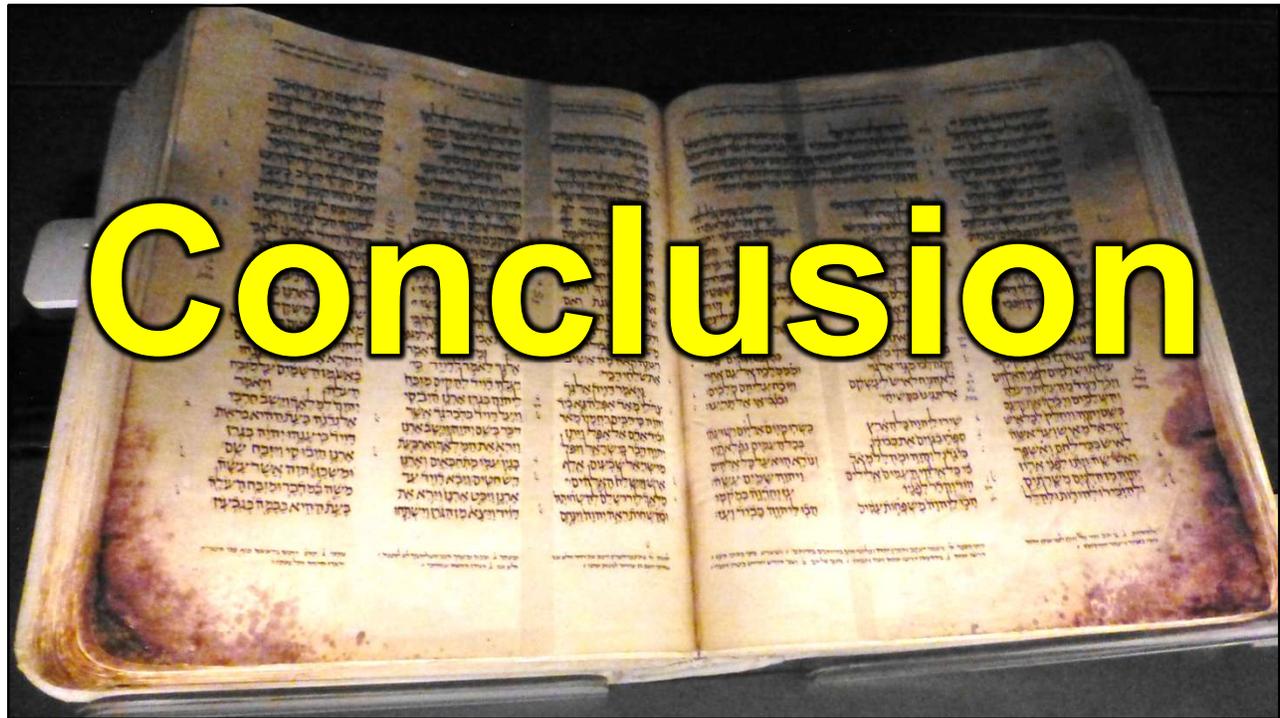




**Philadelphia**



**Laodicea**



***The New Testament that we have today an accurate copy of the original NT.***

- ✓ *time gap between original and oldest extant manuscripts*
- ✓ *number of manuscripts*
- ✓ *early versions of the Bible*
- ✓ *quotes from early Christians*

***It is reasonable to believe that events attested to in the New Testament really happened.***

- ✓ *contemporary eyewitnesses*
- ✓ *accurately preserved in the manuscript tradition*
- ✓ *objections can be answered*
- ✓ *extra-biblical references*
- ✓ *no adverse (counter) testimony*
- ✓ *earmarks of historicity*
- ✓ *testimony of archeology*



