

WHY WE BELIEVE: The Bible Text: 2 Timothy 3:16-17

Evidences from Bible Archeology

1. The Bible has long been dismissed by critics as a book of myths, legends, fairy tales

- a. They claim that the people, places and events of the Bible are elaborate fabrications that were entirely made up by deceitful men.
- b. They consider the Bible guilty until proven innocent—but they give a complete pass to any other writings, especially ones that criticize the Bible—because of their own Worldview:

“The excessive skepticism of many liberal theologians stems not from a careful evaluation of the available data, but from an enormous predisposition against the supernatural.” (Millar Burrows, Yale).

2. But when we actually investigate the Bible and it's claims—we see overwhelming evidence of the inspiration of God! (2 Timothy 3:16-17)

Not only does the Bible claim to be the inspired word of God, it proves it w/ cascading lines of evidence

- Amazing scientific accuracy and foreknowledge
- Hundreds of Fulfilled Prophecies
- Thousands of Archeological Discoveries
- Amazing internal harmony of the Bible
- Historical confirmation from hostile witness testimony
- Thousands of ancient manuscript copies of the Bible
- The Discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls

3. Over the last 150 years, archeologists have been discovering artifacts, ruins, coins and inscriptions that continually verify the accuracy and details of the Bible!

[Some of it is HOSTILE WITNESS TESTIMONY—from sources who had nothing to gain and much to lose—for confirming the people, places and events of the Bible]

- a. Causing many people to rethink their views of the Bible:

“A wave of archeological discoveries is altering old ideas about the roots of Christianity and Judaism—and affirming that the Bible is more historically accurate than many scholars thought.” (James Mann, US News and World Report, 8/24/81)

I. EVIDENCES FROM BIBLE ARCHEOLOGY

(1) THE STELE OF HAMMURABI

1. In 1901 a French archeologist was exploring the ancient ruins of Susa... —The same Persian city that queen Esther was in.

- a) He discovered a large black Diorite 8 ft high & 6 ft circumference at the base.
- b) It is the longest Babylonian inscription ever found...
- c) 4,000 lines of inscriptions containing 248 laws from Babylon from about 2,000 BC.

2. Bible skeptics had always claimed that Moses could not have written the first 5 books of the Bible because writing had not yet been invented.

- a) But the Code of Hammurabi was written 600 years before the time of Moses
- b) Clear proof writing was already in use in the Mesopotamian valley Abraham was from
- c) The Code of Hammurabi had numerous laws about commerce, labor, wages, contracts, and inheritance, and even listed the price of a slave.
- d) When Joseph was sold by his brothers to Midianite traders, he was sold for 20 shekels — the exact price listed in the code of Hammurabi (Genesis 37:28)

3. There's a few similarities between the laws of Moses & code of Hammurabi

- a) But the Laws of Hammurabi are external laws—while the laws of Moses involve the motives and feelings of the heart and mind.
- b) The laws of Hammurabi only deal with human relationships—but the laws of Moses deal with man's relationship to God first, then man's relationship to others.

(2) THE GENESIS FLOOD

We know from the book of Genesis that humanity became so wicked that God brought Judgement on the world by a world-wide flood.

- The flood account is **recorded in Genesis**—and **affirmed** by **Jesus** and **Peter**
- If there was a world-wide flood then we would expect to see evidence of the flood:

1. THE FOSSIL RECORD: Everywhere we look all around the world

- archeologists, paleontologists and geologists on 7 continents find billions of dead creatures buried & fossilized in sedimentary rock of sand, mud & lime.
- And these creatures were buried by water rapidly, rather than by a natural death where they would be destroyed by scavengers or slow decomposition. but buried rapidly w/ bones, skin and feathers still intact and fossilized.
- Paleontologists now know that these fossilized creatures died in a flood, were buried rapidly in mud flow and compressed under pressure, and preserved.
- The fossils of Billions of dead creatures buried and preserved in sedimentary rock all across there world is a powerful evidence for the Flood.

2. THE CULTURAL RECORD: We also have written records of the flood from many ancient cultures across the world...

- The Sumerians, Assyrians, Babylonians, Greeks, Hindus, Chinese, Mexicans, Hawaiians and Native Americans all had flood accounts.
 - There are difference in the details—but the parallels are striking...
- a. **In 1850, British Archeologists Discovered the Ancient Library of Nineveh and they Brought Back 20,000 Clay Cuneiform Tablets.**
 - A Young 22 yr old Assistant George Smith began sorting the tablets and in 1872, when Smith came across a small fragment on which were the words,
"The mountain of Nisir stopped the ship. I sent forth a dove, and it left. The dove went and turned, and a resting place it did not find, and it returned."
 - b. **In Time He Found More Tablets of the flood—strikingly similar to Genesis**
Notice the similarities between the Genesis account & Gilgamesh Epic from Nineveh:
 - The Flood was Divinely Planned.
 - The Flood was a result of Judgement on the human race
 - Advance notice of the flood was given to one person
 - There was instructions to build a boat.
 - The Boat was to be covered in waterproofing pitch/tar inside and out.
 - A storm brought t on the flood
 - The man who built the boat, his family and animals aboard were saved.
 - Everyone not on the boat was destroyed.
 - Birds were sent out to find of the world was habitable.
 - The boat came to rest on a mountain.
 - Sacrifices were offered after the flood

A worldwide catastrophic, extinction level event people told for generations

(3) TOWER OF BABEL INSCRIPTION

- 1. After the Genesis flood, the Bible lists the building of the cities of...**
 - a) Babylon, Ur, and Nineveh along the Tigris and Euphrates river [in modern day Iraq].
 - b) In Genesis we read about a major building project ([Genesis 10:10; 11:1-4](#))
- 2. Archeologists have found 27 clay tablets & fragments in the Akkadian language from 3 locations in Mesopotamia, (the land of Shinar) dating around 2100 b.c. (not long after the Flood),**
 - a) describing a Tower Building Project: A Gigantic temple tower Ziggurat they called:
 - b) “a holy mountain” ... “a temple brought down from heaven” ... “a great shrine” ... “an abode of the gods” indicating it’s size and function.
- 3. Notice this similarity between the Sumerian tablet and the Biblical account:**
 - a) “The whole universe... may they all address Enlil together in one language. For at that time... Enki, the lord of abundance ... shall change the speech in their mouths, as many as he had placed there, and so the speech of mankind is truly one.”
- 4. Archeologists even found a TOWER OF BABEL Tablet [IMAGE]**
 - a) Dr. Andrew George, a professor of Babylonian and Assyrian history at the University of London said, “As an Assyriologist, I don’t deal in the Bible, and I am not a religious person, but in this case, I can say there is an actual building which does seem to be the inspiration for the Biblical narrative.”

(4) EGYPTIAN INSCRIPTION OF YHWH

- 1. Archeologists found 2 separate Egyptian hieroglyph inscriptions that read:**
“land of the nomads of YHWH”
 - a) One in the Egyptian temple of Amun, on the west bank of the Nile.
 - b) The other was found at an ancient Egyptian Temple in modern day Sudan.
- 2. These are the oldest known texts of the name (YHWH) Yaweh ever found...**
 - a) the personal name of God in Hebrew, as it is given in the OT. [from about 1400 b.c.]
 - b) The Egyptian hieroglyph is even a transliteration of the same Hebrew spelling as we see in Genesis Y-H-W-H
- 3. The fact that we find God’s personal name in Egypt from 1400 BC shows that the Egyptians and even the Pharaoh Himself knew about the Israelites and their worship of Yaweh.**
 - a) It even refers to the nomadic people of YHWH as tent dwellers, which is exactly what Abraham and his descendants did when called out of Ur into the land of Caanan.
 - b) And the reference to nomadic wanderers is accurate from what we also know about the Exodus and wilderness wanderings. ([Numbers 32:13](#))

(5) MERNEPTAH STELE

- 1. An Egyptian Stone Monument found in the ruins of a temple in Thebes**
 - a) It is over 10 ft tall and describes the military campaigns of Pharaoh Merneptah.
 - b) A portion of the text reads: “[Canaan has been plundered into every sort of woe.](#)
[Ashkelon has been overcome. Gezer has been captured... Israel is laid waist.](#)”

2. **This is considered the oldest inscription ever mentioning the name 'Israel' and shows that Israel was in Canaan in 1300 b.c. just as the Bible said.**
 - a) It mentions other cities in Canaan... But the fact that Israel is the only nationality mentioned by name shows they were the dominant group in Canaan at that time.
 - b) Exactly as we read about in the Bible in Joshua and Judges (**Judges 1:28-29**)
3. **I like these inscriptions of HOSTILE TESTIMONY...**
 - a) Hostile Testimony means they had Nothing to gain for confirming the people, places and events of the Bible...
 - b) but by bragging about their military conquests they actually confirm the people, places and events of the Bible.

(6) THE TEL DAN STELE

1. **It's not often that an archaeological find makes the front page of the New York Times as well as in Time magazine.**
 - a) But that is what happened in 1993 after a 3,000 year old discovery at Tel Dan,
 - b) a mound in northern Galilee, at the foot of Mt. Hermon, headwaters of Jordan River.
2. **The fragmentary Tel Dan Stela provided the first extra-biblical evidence for the existence of King David.**
 - a) The Aramean king who erected the stela in the mid-ninth century B.C.E. claims to have defeated the "king of Israel" and the "king of the House of David."
3. **This was an important find because up until 1993, there was not a single shred of evidence that King David existed except in the Bible.**
 - a) It had become fashionable for scholars to claim David was a Myth, like King Arthur
 - b) Claiming that David was just a religious and political mythology...
 - c) Their claims were exposed overnight in 1993 when the Tel Dan Stele was found!
 - d) Time Magazine: "The skeptics claim that King David never existed is now hard to defend." (Time Magazine, 12/18/95)
 - e) Since this find another reference to King David was found on the **MOABITE STONE** now on display at the Louvre in Paris.
 - f) Just as Bible said all along (**2 Samuel 5:3**)

(7) THE BLACK OBELISK OF SHALMANESER III

1. **The Assyrian ruler Shalmaneser put up a monument dedicated to himself, called the Black Obelisk of Shalmaneser.**
 - a) It listed 31 years of Military Campaigns and Foreign Kings he subdued.
 - b) The Cuneiform text not only lists the kings paying tribute, but illustrates the scenes
2. **On one Panel: Shalmaneser stands on one side with 2 Assyrian officials, while King Jehu of Israel bows down with his face to the ground.**
 - a) Text reads: "The tribute of Jehu, house of Omri. I received from him silver and gold..."
3. **This is the earliest known image of an Israelite King—**
 - a) an independent source confirming Jehu as the king of Israel in 9th century B.C.
 - b) Independent hostile testimony that had nothing to gain by confirming the people, places and events of the Bible—yet still does! (**2 Kings 9:2-3**)

(8) HEZEKIAH'S TUNNEL

- 1. The Bible tells us of a Tunnel that was ordered to be dug by King Hezekiah**
 - a) The purpose of this tunnel was to channel water from the Gihon Spring underground
 - b) to within the city walls so that Jerusalem would have a water source even during an enemy siege of the city. **(2 Kings 20:20; 2 Chronicles 32:3, 30)**
- 2. This hidden Tunnel was discovered—an engineering marvel of the time**
 - a) It winds through 1,750 feet of Limestone Bedrock (1/3 of mile) under the city.
 - b) It was dug by two teams from opposite ends and met in the middle—Where they made an inscription in the wall to commemorate the completion of the tunnel.
 - c) You can walk through this tunnel today and see the inscription yourself
- 3. This Tunnel was needed immediately because there was an Assyrian Siege of the city by the invading Army of Sennacherib...**

(9) THE SENNACHERIB PRISM (Taylor Prism)

- 1. In 701 B.C. the Assyrian King Sennacherib invaded Judah**
 - a) and took many of the fortified cities (2 Kings 18:13)
 - b) But Sennacherib made the mistake of boasting against God!
 - c) claiming that even the God of Israel could not save them! **(2 Kings 18:32–33, 35-36)**
- 2. King Hezekiah was extremely upset and Prayed to God (2 Kings 19:14–19)**
 - a) **AND GOD ANSWERED HIS PRAYER (2 Kings 19:20; 32–36)**
- 3. God defended Jerusalem Against the Assyrian Army**
 - a) by sending an Angel into their camp and 185,000 soldiers were killed.
 - b) Sennacherib returned to Nineveh without capturing the capital city of Israel!
- 4. Now Notice the Taylor Cylinder... Sennacherib's spin on this defeat:**
 - a) "As to Hezekiah, the Jew, he did not submit to my yoke, I laid siege to his strong cities. Himself I made a prisoner in Jerusalem, his royal residence, like a bird in a cage."
– Sennacherib Prism; British Museum
- 5. Remember the Bible also stated that Sennacherib returned home and was killed by his own sons (2 Kings 19:36–37)**
 - a) Esarhaddon, actually recorded this very event in his own words!
 - b) **INSCRIPTION by Sennacherib's Son Esarhaddon (681-668 B.C.)**
 - c) "In the month of Nisanu, on a favorable day... I made my joyful entrance into the royal palace, the awesome place wherein abides the fate of kings. A firm determination fell upon my brothers. They forsook the gods and turned to their deeds of violence, plotting evil. To gain the kingship they slew Sennacherib their father."

CONCLUSION:¹

- 1. Hezekiah is listed in the Lineage of Jesus the Messiah in Matthew 1**
- 2. The very tunnel that Hezekiah had dug to protect Jerusalem actually Flows into the Pool of Siloam where Jesus Healed the Blind Man.**
- 3. You can Trust the Bible—It is the Word of Truth, the Word of Life (Ps 119:105)**

¹ Sources: George DeHoff, Why We Believe the Bible; Titus Kennedy, Unearthing the Bible.