

WHY WE BELIEVE: The Bible Text: Daniel 5; Jeremiah 36

Evidences from Bible Archeology pt. 2

1. The Bible is unlike any other book in the history of the human race
 2. Over 2,700 times the Bible writers declare their writing it is by inspiration of God
 3. But not only does it claim it—it proves it over and over...
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I. EVIDENCE FROM BIBLE ARCHEOLOGY

(1) RUINS OF NINEVEH

1. **The Bible mentions the Assyrian city of Nineveh several times in the OT**
 - a) God even sent a Prophet named Jonah to warn the city to repent or God's Judgment would be upon them for their wickedness. (Jonah 1:1–2)
 - b) Jonah tried to run from God—rather than preach to the sworn enemies of Israel.
 - c) He didn't want the city to repent—he wanted the judgement of God to fall on them
 - d) But God has His ways of getting our attention and Jonah went (Jonah 3:3–6)
2. **Was Nineveh just a Mythological city?**
 - a) Was the story of Jonah just a big fish story?
 - b) And why would they repent at the preaching of a single Hebrew Prophet?
3. **Many critics of the Bible thought this was just a myth—until 1847 when a British archeologist named Austen Layard discovered the ruins of Nineveh!**
 - a) The ancient city of Nineveh was once the capital city of the Assyrian Empire.
 - b) Nineveh has been explored and excavated and we have found the city walls, the defensive moats, the temples, palaces and the library of Nineveh!
 - c) On the eastern bank of the Tigris River across from the city of Mosul, Northern Iraq.
 - d) The British Museum has an entire exhibit dedicated to the discoveries of Nineveh
4. **The Bible was right—the ancient ruins of Nineveh have been found...**
 - a) But one of the criticisms that skeptics raise has to do with the cities' sudden repentance to the preaching of Jonah.
 - b) It seems unrealistic to critics that the people of Nineveh would suddenly repent from the preaching of just one prophet of God.
 - c) But a Bible historian shares some background information on why the city would've responded sincerely to the preaching of a prophet of God.

“If Jonah had gone to the city during the reign of the Assyrian king Ashur-dan III (772–754 b.c.), the prophet may have found the city psychologically prepared for his message by two foreboding famines (in 765 and 759 b.c.) and a total solar eclipse on June 15, 763 b.c. People in those days often took such events as indicators of divine wrath.” (Dr. John Hannah, Prof. of Historical Theology, Dallas Theological Seminary¹)
 - d) Well that just happened to be about the time Jonah did go to Nineveh! Which helps us understand why the people were so ready to repent.

¹ Bible Knowledge Commentary, Walvoord and Zuck, p.1463-1464.

(2) THE HITTITE NATION

- 1. Almost 50x in the Old Testament we read of a people known as the Hittites**
 - a) The Hittites were identified as one of the nations that the children of Israel were to conquer when entering the Promised Land (Joshua 11:3-4).
 - b) They bought chariots and horses from King Solomon (1 Kings 10:29)
 - c) Bathsheba's husband was Uriah the Hittite, a soldier in David's Army, who was later killed in a web of deceit by King David to cover up his sin of adultery.
 - d) The Old Testament clearly names the Hittites as a very real nation.
- 2. But Bible critics have claimed for years that the Hittites were just a mythological culture that had never existed, because there was no evidence outside the Bible of the Hittite nation.**
 - a) But that all changed in 1876 when an archaeologist named Hugo Winckler visited a site in Turkey and found the ancient ruins of a long lost city.
 - b) He found an amazing amount of human artifacts—including five temples, city walls, store houses, many sculptures, coins and inscriptions...
 - c) But more importantly, he found a huge storeroom filled with over 10,000 clay tablets filled with Hittite laws, military information and Hittite religious practices.
 - d) The University of Chicago has even published a Hittite Dictionary!
- 3. Once again the Bible was right all along, regardless of what people think.**

(3) CYLINDER OF NABONIDUS

- 1. In the Babylonian lists of Kings, the name BELSHAZZAR had never been seen before outside of the Bible, in the book of Daniel.**
 - a) So critics of the Bible mocked this as an alleged error of the Bible...
 - b) As if Belshazzar was just a mythical name made up by men...
 - c) The critics also cited two ancient historians, Berossus and Polyhistor who both said the last king of the Babylonian empire was Nabonidus.
- 2. We know King Nebuchadnezzar captured Jerusalem and brought the captives of Judah back to Babylon, including Daniel and his friends.**
 - a) In time King Nebuchadnezzar became so arrogant that God humbled him for 7 yrs,
 - b) and when he finally came to his senses he issued a decree praising God (Dan. 4)
- 3. But after many years after Nebuchadnezzar died, we read of another king who was not humble at all and decided to mock God.**
 - a) He held a royal banquet and they all got drunk and he called for the golden bowls that had been taken from the Temple in Jerusalem,
 - b) and they partied and dedicating the temple vessels to the pagan gods of Babylon.
 - **(DANIEL 5:1–9) So who is Belshazzar?**
- 4. The Cylinder of Nabonidus was found in the ancient ruins of Ur...**
 - a) in a temple dedicated to the moon god, Confirming the Bible account was correct!.
 - b) "For me, Nabonidus, King of Babylon, save me from sinning... and grant me as a present a life of long days, and as for Belshazzar my firstborn son, my own child, let the fear of your great divinity be in his heart, and may he commit no sin; may he enjoy happiness in life."

5. This Babylonian Tablet records that when King Nabonidus left Babylon...

- a) for an extended stay at the Arabian Oasis town of Tema, 450 miles from Babylon,
- b) he entrusted the rule of Babylon into the hands of BELSHAZZAR His Oldest Son!
- c) This explains why Belshazzar could only offer a third place in the kingdom (5:7),
because he himself was only a 2nd ruler under his father!

6. Daniel knew the writing on the wall—this was the night that Babylon fell

- a) Cyrus and his commanding General Darius took the capital city of Babylon that night
- b) The Greek Historian Xenophon recorded that Cyrus's army diverted the Euphrates river enough for the army to slip under the walls of Babylon.
- c) The Babylonians were OVER CONFIDENT and UNPREPARED ...
- d) They thought no one could breach the massive walls of Babylon...
- e) So they were feasting drinking until it was too late! **(Daniel 5:29-30 > Daniel 6:28)**

(4) CYRUS CYLINDER

1. God raises up nations and also brings them down according to His will...

- a) and God also raises up leaders and can take them down as well...
- b) God named Cyrus by name 300 years before Cyrus was even born...
- c) In order to accomplish His will... **(Isaiah 45:1; 44:28).**

2. The Cyrus Cylinder was found in an ancient temple in the ruins of Babylon.

- a) It is a baked clay cylinder written in cuneiform script, that give an account of the conquest of the Babylonian Empire by the Persian king Cyrus the Great.
- b) It also gives a decree that authorized all the conquered people to return home...
- c) and rebuild their places of worship that had been destroyed by the Babylonians
- d) The Babylonian form of the decree found on the Cyrus Cylinder states:
"Sanctuaries had been abandoned for a long time. I returned the images of the gods, who had resided there [in Babylon] to their places and I let them dwell in eternal abodes. I gathered all their inhabitants and returned them their dwellings."

3. The empire-wide decree found on the Cyrus Cylinder and the decree recorded in the book of Ezra are legally the same...

- a) but they were written to two different nationalities,
- b) showing that Cyrus had given freedom of religion to the people under his empire.

4. Cyrus fulfilled exactly what God had decreed: (Ezra 1:1–4).

- (1) That Israel could return after 70 years of captivity
- (2) and they could rebuild the Temple in Jerusalem.

The book of Ezra and Nehemiah give the account of the Temple being rebuilt, just as God said it would be.

(5) SEAL OF BARUCH

1. Two clay seal impressions have been found in Jerusalem that read:

"belonging to Baruchyahu son of Neriah the scribe."

- a) They were found in an area of Jerusalem that had been destroyed during the Babylonian conquest of Jerusalem in 587 B.C.
- b) The name Baruch means "the blessed."
Berekhyahu means "the blessed of Yahweh."
- c) A Scribe would use a seal to authenticate a scroll just as a "notary public" does today.

2. These seals date to the time of Jeremiah the Prophet in Jerusalem...

and Baruch is named as Jeremiah's scribe! (Jeremiah 36:1-8)

- a) God gave a prophetic message to Jeremiah to deliver to the people and Jeremiah dictates it to Baruch the scribe to write in a scroll.
- b) Jeremiah is confined by a corrupt King and he is not allowed to go to the House of the Lord, so he sends Baruch to read the word of the Lord to all the people.
- c) The scroll is then taken to king Jehoiakim who gets so angry that he takes the scroll and cuts it in two and burns it in fire (36:22-23)
- d) The king destroyed and burned the scroll of the word of God... So God told Jeremiah to write it again and deliver it to the king! (36:27-32)

3. God's word is eternal—it cannot be destroyed!

- a) The Word of God is Eternal and it cannot be altered or corrupted.
- b) God gives a warning to anyone who dares tamper with His word...
- c) a warning given at the beginning, the middle and the end of the Bible
- d) First a Blessing (Revelation 22:14-17) Then a Warning (22:18-19)

(6) THE DEAD SEA SCROLLS

1. Many Critics have made a reputation for themselves claiming the Bible was altered over time and they've undermined the faith of many people.

- a) But in 1946 a Beduin goat herder was searching for a lost goat in the cliffs above the Dead Sea. And while he was throwing rocks into a cave to scare the goat out when he heard the sound of breaking pottery.
- b) He found what is now know as Cave 1 containing clay jars filled with ancient scrolls.

2. Discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls is the greatest manuscript find in history

- a) Every OT Book in the Bible stored in clay jars in the caves of Qumran...
(except the book of Esther: Someone forgot to return it to the Qumran library :)
- b) But just single manuscripts... but multiple scrolls of each book...
19 copies of Isaiah, 25 copies of Deuteronomy; 30 copies of the Psalms.
- c) These OT Manuscripts were 1,000 years older than any others we had at the time, and stored away 2 1/2 centuries before the birth of Christ!

3. Discovery of the DDS is Physical Forensic Evidence that:

- a) ALL the 350+ messianic prophecies concerning Jesus were written centuries before Jesus was even born!
- b) Proving that NOT ONE WORD was ever altered to "fit" the birth, life, death and resurrection of Jesus
- c) That the OT scriptures you have in your Bible is word for word accurate to the ancient Hebrew manuscripts of God's word given to Israel.

→ (Luke 21:33-36)

CONCLUSION:

Luke 21:33 "Heaven and earth will pass away but my words will never pass away"

Sources: George DeHoff, Why We Believe the Bible; Titus Kennedy, Unearthing the Bible. Wycliffe Dictionary of Biblical Archaeology; Joseph P. Free, Archaeology and Bible History

—Bill Turner 8/2026