

WHY WE BELIEVE: The Bible Text: John 4:5-26

Evidences from Bible Archeology pt. 4

“Every record has been destroyed or falsified, every book rewritten, every picture has been repainted, every statue and street building has been renamed, every date has been altered. And the process is continuing day by day and minute by minute. History has stopped. Nothing exists except an endless present in which the Party is always right.” (George Orwell)

- 1. When Communists take over they destroy any historical records...**
 - a. They call it Year Zero—so no one will question their power or their atrocities...
 - 2. Many people would rather believe FAKE History than REAL History...**
 - a. So They Replace REAL History with REVISIONIST History to fit a Political Narrative.
 - 3. They're not interested in Truth—they're interested in power—Truth is in the way**
 - a. Why do you think the Bible has been attacked for centuries?
 - b. Why do you think the Bible is Banned in Totalitarian countries?
 - c. Why do you think Critical scholars have tried to discredit the Bible to re-write history...
 - d. Because the Bible's is a Threat to godless people, governments, ideologies and worldviews
 - e. They would rather believe FAKE History (like DaVinci-code fantasy)
—Rather than REAL History like the Life of Christ from the Bible.
 - 4. But year after year Bible Archeology keeps exposing the fake history narratives!**
 - a. “It is remarkable that where confirmation is possible and has come to light, the Bible stands investigation in ways that are unique in all literature. It's superiority to attack, it's capacity to withstand criticism, it's amazing faculty to be proved right after all, are all staggering by any standards of scholarship. Seemingly assured results “disproving” the Bible have a habit of backfiring. Over and over again the Bible has been vindicated.”
—Dr. Clifford Wilson, Former Director of the Australian Institute of Archeology
-

I. EVIDENCES FROM BIBLE ARCHEOLOGY

(1) JACOBS WELL

- 1. Jacobs Well was on land purchased by Jacob during the time of Patriarchs**
 - a) not far from where Joseph was buried. (John 4:5–10)
- 2. EVERYONE has a SOUL THIRST...**
 - a) We all have a God-shaped vacuum... a God-shaped void in the soul
 - b) It is infinitely deep because it can only be filled by an infinite God.
 - c) **The Bible talks about this Soul Thirst (Jeremiah 2:13; Psalm 63:1; 42:2)**
- 3. Jesus tells this woman about the Living Water (4:11-26)**
 - a) This woman had 5 husbands and the man she was with was not her husband.
 - b) She thought the love of men would fill that void in her heart...
 - c) But nothing can replace a True and Right Relationship with God
- 4. True Worship (Jn 4:20)**
 - a) Just outside the location of the well is the Twin Mountains: Mt Ebal and Mt Gerizim, which was the mountain the woman was referring to.
 - b) But Jesus said something astonishing (John 4:20–24)
True worship would not be on either mountain—it will be in Spirit and in Truth.
 - c) **How ironic that a church has been built on the location of this well!**

- d) So many of the locations where Jesus taught or performed miracles have been turned into shrines of worship—which is NOT True Worship!
 - e) True worship is in spirit and truth according to the NT pattern given to us by God!
- But a Change would have to be made in the Covenant between God and Man

(2) TEMPLE WARNING INSCRIPTION

- 1. In 1871 a rectangular stone was found at the ruins of the temple mount**
 - a) It was a 1st century inscription that was a warning written in Greek
 - b) “No foreigner is to go beyond the balustrade around the plaza of the temple area. Whoever is caught doing so will have himself to blame for his subsequent death.”
 - c) In 1936 a stone fragment of a second warning was found with the same text, discovered near the Lion’s gate in Jerusalem.
- 2. This was the warning in the Temple complex that forbid any non-Jewish person from entering into the inner sanctuary by penalty of death.**
 - a) The Jewish rulers arrested Paul the Apostle for the accusation that he violated this by bringing Greeks beyond this partition, which he didn’t. (Acts 21:27-31)
- 3. This was the Middle wall of separation that separated Jews from Gentiles, Samaritans, and the rest of the world...**

But it was taken away by the blood of Jesus (Ephesians 2:13–16)

 - a) When Jesus was Crucified at Passover, He died for the Sins of the Whole World!
 - b) The Veil of the Temple was torn in two!
 - c) Jesus opened a New and Living Way to God for all nations, languages and people!
 - d) Jesus fulfilled the Old Testament covenant and made a new covenant...
 - e) A New Covenant in Christ replaced the old covenant.

(3) THE ARCH OF TITUS

- 1. Jesus prophesied that Jerusalem would be destroyed (Luke 19:28, 41–44)**
 - a) And that even the Temple would be destroyed (21:5–7)
 - b) Naturally they ask when—and Jesus tells them (20-24)
- 2. All of this was fulfilled 37 yrs later just as Jesus said—**
 - a) In a.d. 70 the Roman army destroyed the city and tore the temple to the ground
 - b) The Roman Emperor Vespasian sent His son Titus to destroy the city and gave him a triumphal procession when he returned to Rome.
- 3. The Arch of Titus (82 a.d.) still stands today with the evidence of his victory**
 - a) Romans soldiers carrying looted temple items like the gold menorah lamp stand...
The Table of Showbread, Trumpets and Titus and his army entering Rome.
- 4. Josephus witnessed the destruction of Jerusalem in a.d. 70 and recorded the historical details...**
 - a) The temple was destroyed and caught on fire, and the flames were so hot it melted the gold adorning the temple.
 - b) The gold melted and ran between the cracks of the stones of the temple.
 - c) The Romans pulled down every massive stone of the temple and collected the gold,
 - d) so that not one stone was left upon another until it was all tore down, as Jesus said

5. Over a million Jews died in the destruction of the city.

- a) But Josephus records that no Christians were killed because they had heeded the warning by Jesus to escape when they saw the signs approaching.
- b) Vespasian had surrounded the city but was called back to Rome to become emperor
- c) This gave a grace period for Christians to escape—before his son Titus returned

6. When we trust and obey the words of Jesus we will be saved!

(4) EMPEROR WORSHIP

1. The Roman Senate voted to deify Julius Caesar in 42 b.c. after he died

- a) Emperor worship then gained momentum in the reign of Augustus Caesar.
- b) And that sowed the seeds for emperor worship to become a State Religion.

2. The idea of being worshipped as a god appealed to depraved Emperors like: Caligula, Nero and Domitian.

- a) Caligula was the first Roman emperor to demand that he be worshipped as a god during his lifetime. He insisted that citizens bow to his statue and he set up a temple to himself in his palace, to claim divine status.
- b) Nero had a 120 ft statue of himself in Rome identifying him as a sun-god... and He had coins made giving him titles of deity.
- c) Domitian took the title "lord and god" and demanded universal worship across the Empire ordering people to confess he was "lord and god" as a test of loyalty.

3. Christians were considered traitors and heretics for refusing to worship the Emperor or the State and were persecuted and arrested...

- a) We have the letters from the Roman governor Pliny to the Emperor Trajan...
- b) asking how to handle the trials of Christians refusing to worship the statue of Caesar.

4. Tertullian records that this is why John the Apostle was banished to the remote Island of Patmos by the Emperor Domitian.

- a) It was on Patmos that John received the vision of Revelation (**Revelation 1:9**)
- b) Daniel 7 & Revelation 13 both describe pagan Rome as a Beast in symbolic apocalyptic language...
- c) Revelation 13 describes this false pagan worship (**Rev. 13:1–8; 14–17**)
- d) Those who burned incense and declared Caesar is lord received a seal/certificate
- e) Those who refused were banished or arrested and even killed.

5. Notice what Jesus said to the Church in Smyrna (Revelation 2:10–11**)**

- a) Polycarp was an Elder at Smyrna and had learned the gospel from Apostle John
- b) Polycarp was 86 yrs old when burned at the stake for refusing worship of emperor

(5) THE NAZARETH INSCRIPTION

1. Totalitarian governments criminalize Christianity because

—they want government to be god...

—So they refuse to recognize any God higher than Government.

- a) The Pharaohs, the Herods, the Cesar's... the Mullah's and Ayatollah's...
- b) the Marxists and Leftists and the Techno-Billionaire elites...
- c) Woke Universities Teaching Godless Ideologies...

2. They Don't Want the Truth—they Want Power

- a) They Love Themselves More than they love the Truth
- b) They betray themselves by what they fear
- c) None of them want to compete with Jehovah God.

3. Rumors of the Resurrection were unsettling to the Ceasars...

- a) In 1878, a stone slab with a 22-line Greek Inscription was found in Nazareth.
- b) It declares it is “an Edict of Caesar” from around a.d. 42 in the reign of Claudius.
- c) The same Claudius named by Luke (Acts 11:27–28).

4. The Stone inscription specifically prohibits the moving or stealing of bodies from stone sealed tombs as a capital crime punishable by death.

- a) It states that if anyone has “**extracted those who have been buried, or has moved with wicked intent those who have been buried to other places... or has moved sepulcher-sealing stones... You are absolutely not to allow anyone to move those who has been entombed...**”
- b) You can see this official edict of Caesar describes the very same type of tomb, that Jesus was buried in: a stone carved tomb sealed with a large stone.
- c) This was a Jewish burial custom, not a Roman one—
—Romans were known for cremation of the dead.

5. After Jesus Resurrection, the religious leaders bribed the soldiers to say the body of Jesus was stolen by his disciples (Matthew 28:12–15)

- a) The Rumor of Jesus tomb being empty reached as far as Rome...
and this official warning was no doubt a result of the turmoil it caused!
- b) But the Empty Tomb was not a missing persons case!
Because the body was seen—Jesus was alive from the dead!
- c) This News of Jesus resurrection spread across the Roman Empire because Jesus spent 40 days showing Himself alive from the dead! **(1 Cor 15:3–8)**

6. The Rumors of Jesus Resurrection were beginning to cause problems in the Empire—and it certainly wasn't helping Emperor Worship!

- a) The idea that the Disciples Stole the Body to Present a Lie to the World is Absurd.
- b) First, if the soldiers were asleep then how do they know what happened?
- c) Second: “**what good would it do the disciples to steal Jesus' remains, then lie about a resurrection? The basic rule with lying is this: Invent a story that benefits you, not one that gets you beaten, whipped, stoned, crucified upside down, or beheaded. My personal view is that any skeptic who is attracted to that explanation is simply not skeptical enough.**” (Gregory Kokul, Story of Reality)

(6) EARLY CHURCH MOSAIC

1. We have archeological evidence of King Herod the great, Caiaphas the HP, Pontius Pilate, and the Ceasars... but What about Jesus?

2. We have tons of literary evidence for the life of Christ.

- a) More than 30 extra biblical sources name Jesus within 150 years of His life.
- b) Roman historian Suetonius, Tacitus; Jewish historian Josephus, the Jewish Talmud.

3. But what about archeology? ...Coins? ...Or Stones?

- a) Millar Burrows: “If Jesus had chosen the way of revolution and seized the throne, if even for a short time he had withstood the Roman legions and set up an earthly kingdom, coins and inscriptions might be found... A wandering preacher who writes no books, erects no buildings, sets up no organized institutions, but leaves to Caesar what is Caesar’s, seeking only his Father’s kingdom, and who commits his cause to a few poor fisherman to carry on by word of mouth, leaves no coins bearing his image and superscription... Jesus has no monument but his church.”

4. You are His people, you are His church (1 Cor. 3:9; 16; Ephesians 2:19–22)

- a) When Pilate asked if Jesus was a King—Jesus said: **You say rightly that I am a King ...but My Kingdom is not of this world.** (John 18:36–37)

- **THE HEROD’S** left cold stones and coins...
- **THE CAESAR’S** left dead stone statues...
- **BUT JESUS** creates people born again as new creations in Christ!

Who spread His spiritual kingdom to all nations, languages and people!

5. So what a shock it was to the world on Nov. 5th, 2005 when archeologists announced an amazing discovery...

- a) In the town of Meggedo, in Northern Israel, a prison inmate at a maximum security prison unearthed the earliest evidence of a Christian ever found...
- b) While digging in the prison yard, Ramil Rail discovered a 16x32 foot mosaic floor of a church building...that bore a greek inscription
- c) saying the building was: **in the memory of “the God Jesus Christ.”**
- d) Pottery fragments and coins found at the site confirmed this was an early Christian church building where christians from the local area and from the nearby Roman camp where two Legions were stationed, gathered for worship around 230 a.d.

6. Not only is this significant for the fact that it mentions Jesus by name....

But also it says: “the God Jesus Christ.”

- a) There are skeptics (like Dan Brown DaVinci Code Types) and Jehovah Witnesses who claim that the Church INVENTED the deity of Jesus in the 4th century.
- b) Christians already knew Jesus was one of the trinity godhead from the Bible.
- c) When Jesus gave the great commission He commanded Baptism—in the name of the Father, the Son and Holy Spirit. **(Matthew 28:18-20)**
- d) All three were present and identified at Jesus baptism!

CONCLUSION:¹

1. **(Matthew 28:18-20) ALL Authority means ALL—that leaves none left over for anyone to contradict what Jesus commands!**
2. **But a lot of preachers will tell you — you don’t have to be baptized, because baptism is a work and you can’t be saved by works All you have to do is believe...**
3. **Wait, Who Has All Authority? Jesus commands it again (Mk 16:15-16)**

¹ For more Bible Archeology see: ‘Unearthing the Bible’ by Titus Kennedy, Harvest House Publishers 2020