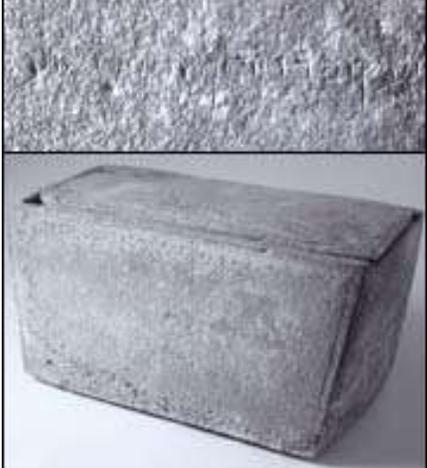
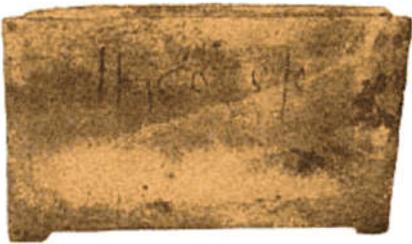
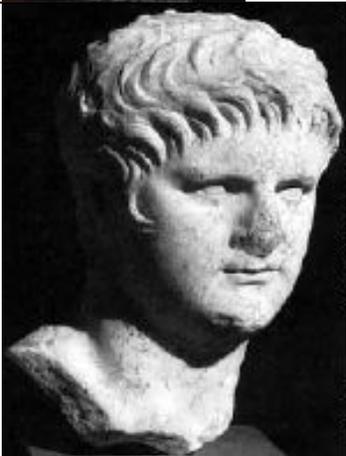


**Reason 15: Archeological and Non-Christian Witness of New Testament**

Graphic	Importance	Quote
	<p><b>The Pilate Inscription</b> In 1961 an Italian archaeologist, discovered an inscription at Casesrea Maritima. The inscription in Latin contained 4 lines translated as follows: "Tiberium Pontius Pilate Prefect of Judea" The stone was probably used in a foundation of a Tiberium (temple for the worship of Tiberius)</p>	<p>The inscription clarifies the title of Pontius Pilate as "prefect" at least during a time in his rulership. Tacitus and Josephus later referred to him as "procurator". The NT calls him "governor", a term incorporating both titles. This inscription is the only archaeological evidence of both Pilate's name and this title.</p>
	<p><b>The James Ossuary</b> Researchers may have uncovered the first archaeological evidence that refers to Jesus as an actual person and identifies James, the first leader of the Christian church, as his brother. The 2,000-year-old ossuary—a box that held bones—bears the inscription "James, son of Joseph, brother of Jesus." Until now, all references to the three men have been found only in manuscripts. Andre Lemaire, a paleographer at the Sorbonne University in Paris dates the box, which was empty, to 63 A.D.." Scientists at the Geological Institute of Israel examined the box, which is made of Jerusalem limestone, and judged it to be about 2,000 years old. The inscription is written in Aramaic, in a form that further narrows the possible time frame. "The script is very important for the date because the Aramaic script changed over time in ways we could measure," said P. Kyle McCarter, a paleographer at Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore, Maryland. "It's the most important criterion for dating this object, and the script is consistent with a date in the middle of the first century A.D.</p>	<p>This gives us one more piece of evidence outside of the Bible that these are real people, and that they're important people, and provides a small confirmation for the claims made about James as the brother of Jesus" What is highly unusual is the mention of a brother." So far, with all the inscriptions we have, only one other has mentioned a brother," said Lemaire. "This is a very important point for the problem of identification. There would need to be a special reason to mention the brother. It suggests the brother was also prominent, an important person." Jesus and Joseph were fairly common names of that era; James, slightly less so. Statistical analysis suggests that the possibility of these three names occurring in the given relationships (son of Joseph, brother of Jesus) is very small.</p>

	<p><b>Caiaphas Ossuary</b></p> <p>From the Caiaphas family tomb in Jerusalem, this ossuary bears the inscription "Yehosef bar Qafa: (Joseph, son of Caiaphas), and it is dated to the Second Temple Period. Caiaphas is the name of the High Priest who presided over the trial of Jesus (Matthew 26:3,57)</p>	<p>The Ossuaries system ceased after 70 AD. The box contained the bones of 4 children and an adult women and the bones of a man aged about 60. The ornate decorations mean that he was a significant person. Archeologists feel this may be the High priest during the time of Christ. Josephus refers to him as "Joseph who was called Caiaphas of the high priest"</p>
	<p><b>Yohanan —Crucified Victim</b></p> <p>In 1968 an ancient burial site was uncovered containing about 35 bodies. One named Yohanan Ben Ha'galgol had a 7 inch nail driven thru both feet. Evidence also exists that similar spikes were used in his arms. Yohanan's legs were crushed by a blow consistent with the common use of Roman crucifragium (John 19:31-32)</p>	<p>Each of these details confirms the New Testament description of Crucifixion.</p>
	<p><b>Matthias Tomb</b></p> <p>A first century stone coffin is marked with the sign of the cross on its lid and a single name on its front: "Matthias". Scholars believe this may be the final resting place of one of Jesus' twelve Apostles. (Acts 1:23)</p> <p>Prof. Sukenik, the father of Prof. Yigael Yadin who was the legendary scholar famed for his extensive work on the Dead Sea Scrolls, believed that he had unearthed one of the earliest records of Christian faith found.</p>	<p>Confirms the early establishment of Christianity in Palestine. And verification of new testament figures.</p>
	<p><b>Simon Barsabas Tomb</b></p> <p>An ossuary, found near the tomb of "Simon Barsabas" (Acts 1:21 &amp; 15:22) is inscribed with the dedication: "[To] Jesus, the Lord." Scholars believe this is the earliest record of Christian faith ever found. The burial cave, where the stone coffin was discovered, was sealed not later than the year 42 A.D., more than a decade before any part of the New Testament was written. What Sukenik discovered were the remains of a family burial cave (catacomb) dating to the early part of the first century. It included several stone ossuaries (coffins) marked with the sign of the cross and with numerous inscriptions, included several dedications to "Jesus."</p>	<p>Confirms the early establishment of Christianity in Palestine. And verification of new testament figures.</p>

	<p><b>The Nazareth Decree</b> A slab of stone found in Nazareth in 1878, inscribed with a decree from Emperor Claudius (AD 41-54) that no graves should be disturbed or bodies extracted or moved. With the offender being sentenced to Capital punishment on the charge of violation of a sepulcher.</p>	<p>A likely explanation is that Claudius having heard of the Christian doctrine of resurrection and Jesus' empty tomb while investigating the riots of AD 49, decided not to let any such report surface again. This would make sense in light of the Jewish argument that the body had been stolen (Mat. 28:11-15) This is early testimony to the strong and persistent belief that Jesus rose from the dead.</p>
	<p><b>The Erastus Inscription</b> On a slab of limestone which was a part of the pavement near the theater in Corinth, a Latin inscription was found which translates, "Erastus, in return for the aedileship, laid the pavement at his own expense"</p>	<p>In Romans 16:23 Paul writing from Corinth mentioned an Erastus and identified him as a city official.</p>
	<p><b>Leper remains of the First century</b> In Jerusalem at Hinnom Valley, the 2000 year old remains of a person with Hansen's disease (Leprosy) has been found. According to Shimon Gibson, an Israeli Archaeologist, This is the first example of Hansen's disease in the Middle East. Prior to this the earliest examples of Hansen was dated to the 5<sup>th</sup> century.</p>	<p>This finding confirms the records of the Gospels about the existence of Hansen's disease (Lebrosy) and the attitude toward those who had it.</p>
	<p><b>Non-Christian Witness</b></p>	<p><b>Quote</b></p>
	<p><b>Thallus</b> Wrote about 52 AD. None of his writings exist but fragmented citations are preserved. Julius Africanus, who wrote in AD 221 quotes Thallus in a discussion about the darkness that followed the crucifixion of Christ:</p>	<p>"On the whole world there pressed a most fearful darkness, and the places in Judea and other districts were thrown down. This darkness Thallus, in the third book of his History, calls, as appears to me without reason, an eclipse of the sun."</p>

		<p><b>Suetonius 117-138 AD</b>  Was chief secretary to Emperor Hadrian (117-138 AD) He confirms the report in Acts 18:2 that Claudius commanded all Jews (among them Priscilla and Aquila) to leave Rome in 49 AD.</p>	<p>He writes,  “As the Jews were making constant disturbances at the instigation of Chrestus, he expelled them from Rome.” (Suetonius, Life of Claudius, 25.4)  On the great fire of Rome he writes,  “Punishment was inflicted on the Christians, a body of people addicted to a novel and mischievous superstition.” (Suetonius, Life of Nero, 16)  <b>Who</b></p>
		<p><b>Tacitus 109 AD</b>  The 1st century Roman historian is considered one of the most accurate of the ancient world. He give an account of the great fire of Rome for which some blamed the Emperor Nero:</p>	<p>He writes  ‘To dispel the rumor, Nero substituted as culprits, and treated with the most extreme punishments, some people, popularly known as Christians, whose disgraceful activities were notorious. The originator of that name, Christus, had been executed when Tiberius was emperor, by order of the procurator Pontius Pilatus. But the deadly cult, though checked for a time, was now breaking out again not only in Judea, the birthplace of this evil, but even throughout Rome, where all the nasty and disgusting ideas from all over the world pour in and find a ready following.’ (Tacitus, A, 15.44)</p>
		<p><b>Josephus</b>  Josephus (37 A.D.-100 A.D.) Was a Pharisee of the priestly line and a Jewish Historian. He was an eyewitness to the Roman capture of Jerusalem.  He wrote two major works The Jewish Wars (77-78 AD) and Antiquities of the Jews (94 AD).  Josephus writes about New Testament Individuals. James, Brother of Jesus  John the Baptist  Jesus (Questioned)</p>	<p><b>James brother of Jesus</b>  He Writes, “He assembled the Sanhedrin of the judges and brought before them the brother of Jesus who was called Christ, whose name was James” Josephus, AJ, 20.9.1)  <b>John the Baptist</b>  He writes, “Now, some of the Jews thought that the destruction of Herod’s army came from God, and very justly, as a punishment of the what he did against John, who was called the Baptist; fro Herod slew him who was a good man and commanded the Jews to exercise virtue...and so come to baptism (AJ 18.5.2)</p>

	<p><b>Pliny the Younger</b>  Pliny the Younger was a Roman author and administrator. In a letter to the Emperor Trajan in about 112 AD, Pliny describes the early Christian worship practices:  This reference provides hard evidence that Jesus Christ was worshipped as God from an early date by Christians who continued to follow the practice of breaking bread together, as reported in Acts 2:42,46</p>	<p>"They were in the habit of meeting on a certain fixed day before it was light, when they sang in alternate verses a hymn to Christ, as a to a god, and bound themselves by solemn oath, not to do any wicked deeds, but never to commit any fraud, theft or adultery, never to falsify their word, nor deny a trust when they should be called upon to deliver it up; after which it was their custom to separate, and then then reassemble to partake of food—but food of an ordinary and innocent kind"  (Pliny the Younger, L 10:96).</p>
	<p><b>Emperor Trajan 98-117 AD</b>  In reply to Pliny's letter, Emperor Trajan gave the following guidelines for punishing Christians:</p>	<p>"No search should be made for these people, when they are denounced and found guilty they must be punished, with the restriction, however, that when the party denies himself to be a Christian, and shall give proof that he is not (that is by adoring our gods) he shall be pardoned on the ground of repentance even though he may have formerly incurred suspicion."  (Pliny the Younger, L, 10:97)</p>
	<p><b>Talmud</b>  Talmudic writings of most value concerning the historical Jesus are those compiled between 70 — 200 AD.  The Tannaitic Period. The most significant text is Sanhedrin 43a. New Testament details confirmed by this passage include the fact and the time of the crucifixion, as well as the intent of the Jewish religious leaders to kill Jesus.</p>	<p>"On the eve of Passover Yeshu was hanged. For forty days before the execution took place, a herald went forth and cried, "He is going forth to be stoned because he has practiced sorcery and enticed Israel to apostasy. Any one who can say anything in his favor let him come forward and plead on his behalf." But since nothing was brought forward in his favor he was hanged on the eve of the Passover!"  (Babylonian Talmud)</p>



**Lucian 165 AD**  
 Lucian of Samosata was a second century Greek writer whose works contain sarcastic critiques of Christianity He writes,

"The Christians, you know, worship a man to this day—the distinguished personage who introduced their novel rites, and was crucified on that account...You see, these misguided creatures start with the general conviction that they are immortal for all time, which explains the contempt of death and voluntary self-devotion which are so common among them; and then it was impressed on them by their original lawgiver that they are all brothers from the moment that they are converted, and deny the gods of Greece, and worship the crucified sage, and live after his laws. All this they take quite on faith, with the result that they despise all worldly goods alike, regarding them merely as common property (Lucian of Samosata, DP,11-13)



**Mara Bar-Serapion**  
 A Syrian, Mara Bar-Serapion wrote to his son Serapion sometime between the late first and early third centuries the letter contains an apparent reference to Jesus:

What advantage did the Athenians gain from putting Socrates to death? Famine and plague came upon them as a judgment for their crime. What advantage did the men of Samos gain from burning Pythagoras? In a moment their land was covered with sand. What advantage did the Jews gain from executing their wise King? It was just after that their Kingdom was abolished. God justly avenged these three wise men: the Athenians died of hunger; the Samians were overwhelmed by the sea; the Jews, ruined and driven from their land, live in complete dispersion. But Socrates did not die for good; he lived on in the teaching of Plato. Pythagoras did not die for good; he lived on in the statue of Hera. Nor did the wise King die for good; He lived on in the teaching which He had given (British Museum)