



Biblical Archaeology

# THE SCOOP on **CHRISTMAS**





# EVIDENCE

“Almost no serious academic—of any ideological, religious or nonreligious stripe—doubts that Jesus of Nazareth actually lived some time in the first century and was crucified by order of Pontius Pilate, governor of Judea. The evidence for the existence of Jesus—literary, archaeological, and circumstantial—is overwhelming.”

Dr. Craig Evens, *Fabricating Jesus*





**MODERN DEPICTIONS**





# EXCAVATING

“Archaeology over the last 150 years has not only contributed to our understanding of the historical context of Jesus, the Gospels, and the 1st-century world, but many discoveries have directly confirmed the accuracy of the Gospel accounts about his life and historical existence—and new discoveries continue to be uncovered and mysteries untangled.”

Dr. Titus Kennedy, *Excavating the Evidence for Jesus*







# PRIMARY GOAL

“Illumination of the Bible serves as the primary goal of ancient Near Eastern Archaeology. By drawing out the cultural clues that are embedded in the remains of material culture, the text is set in its proper context.”

Dr. Scott Stripling, *The Trowel and the Truth*

Setting

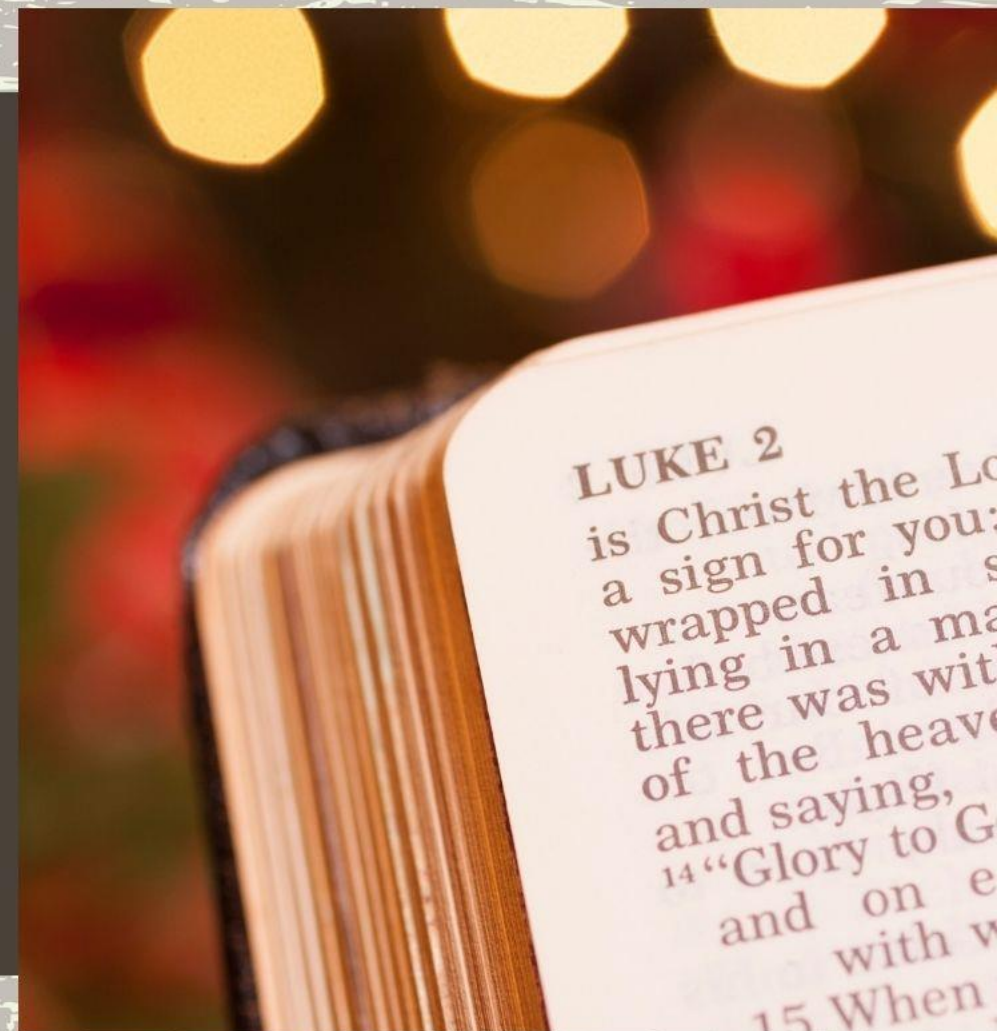
01

# THE PROVENANCE.



“...having investigated everything carefully from the beginning, to write it out for you in consecutive order... so that you may know the exact truth about the things you have been taught.”

**LUKE 1:1-4**





Setting

**02**

# THE SITUATION.



“And everyone was on his way to register for the census, each to his own city.”

**LUKE 2:1-2**







# CENSUS

“Gaius Vibius Maximus, Prefect of Egypt: Seeing that the time has come for the house to house census, it is necessary to compel all those who for any cause whatsoever are residing out of their provinces to return to their own homes, that they may both carry out the regular order of the census and may also attend diligently to the cultivation of their allotments.”

Egypt Province, ca. 104. *British Museum Papyrus 904*





Setting

03

# THE SITES.

“Joseph also went up from Galilee, from the city of Nazareth, to Judea, to the city of David which is called Bethlehem”

LUKE 1:1-4





# NAZARETH



First century courtyard house excavated in 2015;  
venerated as the boyhood home of Jesus



Late Hellenistic-Early Roman  
courtyard house (100BC-100AD)  
Discovered in 2009



# BETHLEHEM



The 2015-2016 excavations near the Church of the Nativity discovered evidence of a first century village.







# PROPHECY

“But as for you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, too little to be among the clans of Judah, from you One will go forth for Me to be ruler in Israel. His goings forth are from long ago, from the days of eternity.”

The Prophet Micah, 700 BC



Setting

04

# THE INN.



“She wrapped Him in cloths, and laid Him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn.”



**STONE MANGER: Todd Bolen/BiblePlaces.com**



“INN” = kataluma (Greek)

kataluma could be translated “guest room”

“Where is the guest room [*kataluma*], where I may eat the Passover with My disciples?’ And he will show you a large upper room furnished; prepare it there.”

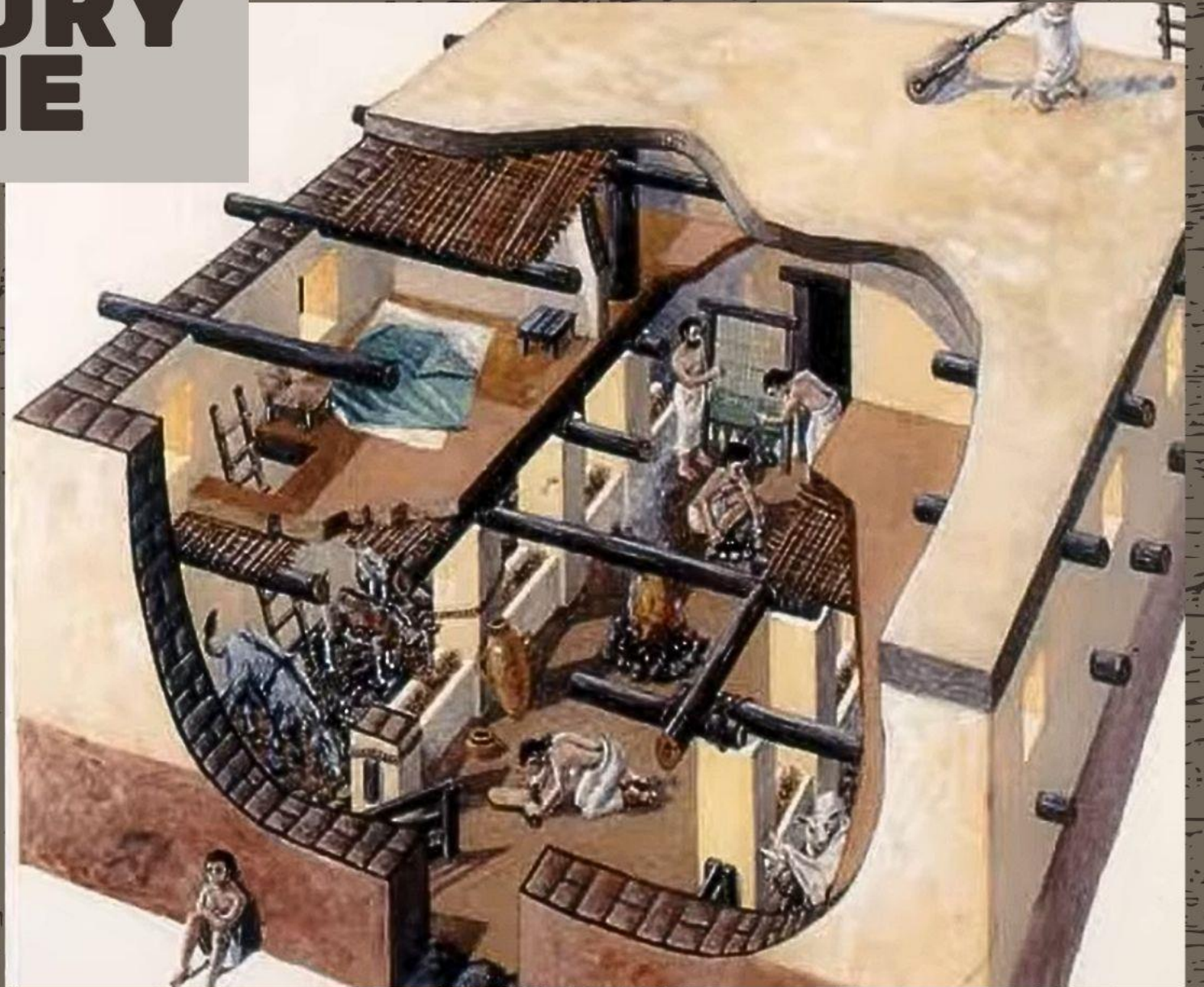
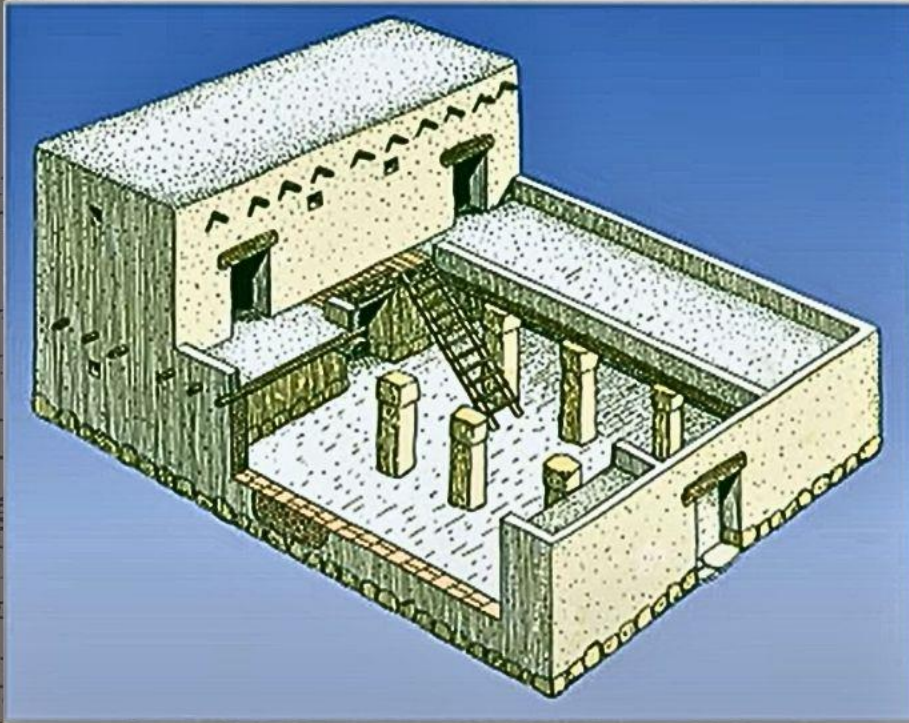
**LUKE 22:11-12**

“brought him to an inn [*pandoxeion*] and took care of him. On the next day he took out two denarii and gave them to the innkeeper [*pandoxeus*]”


**LUKE 10:34-35**



# FIRST CENTURY JEWISH HOME







“caves were often next to, under, or integrated into the house,” and “were often used as storage areas for homes in the 1st century. Animals could have been kept in a cave or in a stone pen near the house.”

Dr. Titus Kennedy, *Excavating the Evidence for Jesus*

“Caves made ideal stables and therefore were common places to find mangers. Shepherd caves, as they are often called, provide sheep a place of refuge from heat and threat of predators. Since they remain cool in the summer, warm in winter, and dry during the rainy season, sheep caves are often found beneath or besides ancient houses.”

Joel Kramer, *Where God Came Down*





**STONE MANGER in Meggido**



**STONE MANGER in Tekoa,  
near Bethlehem**



Setting

05

# THE GIFT.



The story of Christmas is real. God really took on human form to save us from the very real problem of sin, offering us salvation as a free gift through faith in Christ.



**“The Word became flesh and dwelt among us.” (John 1:14)**



Merry  
Christmas



Biblical Archaeology

# THE SCOOP

on **CHRISTMAS**

