

Real or Fairy-Tale? 11 Bible Characters Found in the Dirt with Dr. Titus Kennedy

(March 27, 2026)

FRANK:

Ladies and gentlemen, is the Bible full of myths and fairy tales that don't really have any grounding in reality? My guest today will point out that if you think the Bible is full of myths and fairy tales, you haven't really been looking into archaeology lately.

Because archaeology continues to reveal that the people and some of the events in the Bible actually are corroborated by discoveries in the dirt. And my guest, Dr. Titus Kennedy, who's been on this program several times before because he's written such great books, has a brand new one out called *Archaeology and the People of the Bible: Exploring the Evidence for the Historical Existence of Bible Characters*.

At my count, there's 124 people in this book that are mentioned in the Bible that have been found in the dirt. And as Titus will point out, there's actually a few more than that. So here he is, ladies and gentlemen, all the way. All the way from the People's Republic of Seattle, the great Titus Kennedy. How are you, sir?

TITUS:

Hey. Doing well, Frank. Thank you for having me. And thank you for taking a look at my book.

FRANK:

Oh, it's always great, all your books. This is either the fourth or the fifth. Which book is this?

TITUS:

This is the fourth on biblical archaeology.

FRANK:

The fourth on biblical archaeology.

We've done shows in every one of them because they're so good, and they're written for the average person that might not have any sort of background in archaeology. Even you might not have a lot of background in the Bible, yet you can still understand what's going on. This book Titus, you've got 124 people.

37 of them are from the New Testament, 87 of them, if my math is right, are from the Old Testament. And I just want to go through some of these. Obviously, we can't go through them all, but why don't you just pick one from the Old Testament that you find intriguing and talk about a little bit?



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TITUS:

Sure. So one, that I think is pretty interesting, because part of it deals not only with was this person a real historical character? Did he do the things that we see talked about in the Bible?

But also, I think it answers a question that a lot of people have in terms of interpretation. And that is Tiglath-Pileser III, the Assyrian king, who we see in the Bible is also called by another name, Pul, or Pulu, or at least it appears that way.

And so there has been this discussion or debate between people and between scholars, whether or not those two names in the Bible are talking about the same person. And, you know, you can make an argument textually from the Bible about that, although it's not absolutely clear.

But when we get into the archaeology of it, not only do we see plenty of evidence for this actually very famous king, Tiglath-Pileser III, but there have been discoveries. One in particular that really solidifies that he is one and the same with this Pul, that it was just his other name, in fact.

So if we go into some of the details on that, we see usually in the Bible, he's called Tiglath-Pileser. And then, you know, we would tack on the third, because there were multiple kings in Assyria with this name. And so we don't want to mix them up.

He was a king in the 8th century BC, he was one of the most powerful, really, I would say, as far as the Neo-Assyrian Empire goes, he was the one who militarily really brought it to the top of the ancient world.

And so Assyria became the dominant military power during his reign and then following. But we read about this other name, Pulu, there in the Bible, and we've got some hints that it is him on what's called the Babylonian king List A, where it uses that name.

And it's at the time of his reign. So it seems like, okay, either it's him because the Assyrians had control over Babylon, or it's another guy who's a regional ruler in Babylon. Okay, you got either of those options. But then there is a stele that was more recently discovered and deciphered, and it's a stele of a king named Awariku.

And he talks about in one part of the inscription how something is. It's a gift of Tiglath-Pileser, Puwal, king of Assyria. And so he gives us both of his names, and we understand that his probably birth name was Pul or Pulu, and that's what he used in Babylon in reference to him being king of Babylon.

FRANK:

So this gentleman, not really a gentleman, he was a brutal dictator. But Pulu or Tiglath-Pileser, as you say, was in the 700s BC, he's the king of Assyria. He is probably the guy that Jonah does not want to go see.

Is he about Jonah's time, Titus?

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TITUS:

He's a little bit later than Jonah's time, but it's the same type of ruler. So the Assyrians during this period were, as you said, brutal, extremely brutal.

They were known for just going out and conquering everybody around them. And then they would do things like decapitate people and put their heads on stakes. They would peel their skin off them while they were alive. They were not nice people. And you can understand why Jonah thinks, why would I help out our enemies who are brutalizing us and other people constantly?

FRANK:

So this is the same group that took out the northern empire or the northern kingdom in 722 BC, but this gentleman or this ruler here was not the ruler at the time. That was Sargon II who took them out.

TITUS:

Correct. So, Tiglath-Pileser III. He was king until 727 BC. So he actually started a campaign against the Northern Kingdom of Israel, but he didn't finish conquering that kingdom.

And as you said, yeah, Sargon II, he finished it up.

FRANK:

So these people were absolutely brutal. And you can actually see what they did. Maybe you could talk a little bit about this, Titus. You do tours of the British Museum.

In fact, you're going to be out there this summer doing a tour of the British Museum. And in the British Museum, I believe they have the reliefs of Sennacherib for his siege of Lachish. What are those reliefs show that they did to the people of Lachish, which is a city, a fortified city in Judah that was taken out in 701 BC.

What do those reliefs show about how brutal these people were, these Assyrians were?

TITUS:

Well, they show some of what I had mentioned before. So we've got decapitation of prisoners, and then we have impalement also of their prisoners or their foreign enemies.

So they impale them on stakes and leave them there and then stretching them out and cutting their skin off while they're still alive. And then of course, deportation as well. Taken away from their home and taking them somewhere else into Assyria, and sort of spreading the people out. A little bit differently than what the Babylonians did.

FRANK:

Now, the inscription that identifies Pulu or Tiglath-Pileser, where was that found?

TITUS:

That's found in present-day Turkey.

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FRANK:

Okay, so not even in the region of Assyria at the time, it's in Turkey?

TITUS:

Oh, it was, yeah, it was one of their neighbors. So it's kind of on the frontier because the Assyrian Empire pushed into what is today Eastern Turkey during this time.

FRANK:

All right, so you have a ruler that the Bible talks about, in the 700s BC from Assyria, and we find him in the dirt.

Can you talk a little bit about Sargon II, what's been found there? Because he was the one along with, I don't know if I pronounced this name right. You'll get it right because you're a real archaeologist, Titus. But is it Salamaneser?

Wasn't that the guy right before Sargon II from Assyria who took out the Northern Kingdom?

TITUS:

Yeah, Shalmaneser V, that's right. So, Shalmaneser V, he probably was the one who started the siege of Samaria and then Sargon succeeded him while that was going on.

And it seems like Sargon finished it and conquered that city. So Sargon II, very interesting because he's mentioned by name once in the bible. Isaiah, 20, verse one. And if we go back into the earlier days of biblical archaeology, biblical history, and you read about what scholars think about this, mention of Sargon is many of them were saying this is a made-up king.

We don't know of any Sargon who was a king of Assyria around 700 BC. And then ironically, as more excavations are done, he actually becomes one of the most famous and powerful kings of the Neo-Assyrian period.

And just countless artifacts that have attested—

FRANK:

All right, hold the thought, Titus. We're going to come back right after the break with a lot more. Be back right after this.

One hundred and twenty-four names you find in the Bible have been undeniably found in archaeology. We're just talking about a few of them today from my guest, Dr. Titus Kennedy and his new book, *Archaeology and the People of the Bible*. It goes through all 124 people.

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It shows you pictures as to what's going on, where the archaeological artifact was found, what it says what it means, what time of in history, this happened, how it relates to the Bible. This is an excellent book if you really want to see how many different people in the Bible have been found in the dirt.

Before we were rudely interrupted by a hard break there, Titus, you were talking about Sargon II, who secular historians didn't think existed. The Bible talks about him, and then they found what from him that said, oh, this guy really did exist?

TITUS:

Well, they found stelae depicting him, they found his official annals, they found his palace. They found other cultures who mention him. So, yeah, he's one of the more famous now of the Neo-Assyrian period. And, we've had a lot of examples like this where at one point in time the Bible talked about a particular person, oftentimes a ruler, names them.

Scholars, archaeologists, historians say, hey, we have no archaeological evidence that this person existed. So we think this is just a fictional character. And then in the future, discoveries are made and we find out, nope, that person existed, and they were who the Bible says they were, and they did what the Bible says they did.

FRANK:

It's interesting because we just covered in our last edition of the Bible You Never Knew, we were talking about Hosea. And Hosea is in the 700s BC, and when the northern kingdom came down, or when the northern kingdom was defeated and taken away by Assyria, it describes what happens in 2 Kings 17.

However, it's not just 2 Kings 17 that tells us what happened. It's this archaeological discovery from Sargon II, from Assyria. When you read what he writes about it, Titus, he's essentially saying the same thing that 2 Kings 17 says, that he went in there, he found Hosea, the king of Israel was a traitor and stopped giving him tribute.

And then he took off. He took away a very specific number, 27,280 people. This is what the king of Assyria says. Sargon II, he took that many people out of Samaria, and he brought them to Assyria, and then he repopulated Samaria.

So here's an instance where you have, an instance, one of many, where you have a foreign king affirming what the Bible says. I mean, this happens over and over again. And you do a great job of pointing that out. In the new book, *Archaeology and the People of the Bible*. You also have in here someone by the name of Hilkiah the Priest.

Who is Hilkiah the Priest? He's obscure. Most people haven't heard of him. But he's in the Bible, and he's also found in archeology. Who is he, Titus?

TITUS:

Yeah. Hilkiah was a priest during the reign of King Josiah. So, in the late 7th century BC, this is getting to be near the end of the kingdom of Judah.

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So, what's important about this guy other than he's a person of medium prominence, named in the Bible? Well, he was a priest, so he's connected to the temple in Jerusalem. Right? And so something that was found there not only affirms his existence, but it connects to the existence of the temple there in Jerusalem.

And really, the most important artifact associated with this person is a seal. So a lot of times we find what are called bullae, and bullae are these pieces of clay that have been stamped by a seal. But much more rare is to find the actual seal.

But in this case, there was a seal of Hilkiah found, or actually of his son. And it reads on it in archaic Hebrew seal of Hanun, belonging to Hanun, son of Hilkiah the Priest. And so we've got Hilkiah the priest attested.

And of course, that connection to the temple there in Jerusalem was found near there in Jerusalem. And we have a son named Hanun, who we actually don't know about in the Bible, but apparently, you know, he had other children other than who's mentioned in the Bible.

And then we've got Abullah. So one of those impressions of a different stamp seal, and this one says, belonging to Azariah, son of Hilkiah, and Azariah, we do know from the Bible as one of Hilkiah's sons.

So, seems like two of these artifacts connect to and attest to Hilkiah the priest.

FRANK:

So, Hilkiah the Priest was a priest in the southern kingdom of Judah at the time?

TITUS:

Yes, yes. Time of Josiah. Right.

FRANK:

That's amazing.

For those of you, we'll try and put these on the screen, but this is what it looks like in the book. You can see the seal there. And then Titus describes what's going on. I mean, this is an obscure person. I mean, I know I've read about him, but I forgot about him. And yet we find a seal of his son in the dirt.

Now, right after this, in 586 BC, Nebuchadnezzar came down from Babylon and took out the southern kingdom into exile. And he had an officer of his that has been found in the dirt.

We know Nebuchadnezzar's been found, too. But who is this officer, this obscure person in the Bible that has also been found in the dirt?

TITUS:

Well, the guy that led the army of Nebuchadnezzar at that time and the siege and destruction of Jerusalem was Nebuzaradan.

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And we see him appear in the records of Nebuchadnezzar, because obviously, he served in the court of Nebuchadnezzar. So we're talking 6th century BC, early 6th century BC. This was the beginning of the Neo-Babylonian Empire.

And 587, about, was the destruction of Jerusalem. So this Nebuzaradan, the captain of guard, is there, and most likely, you know, he was in that position for a little while before he got to Jerusalem. Maybe had to work his way up the ladder a bit.

And indeed, if we look into the records of King Nebuchadnezzar, there is one from year seven of his reign, which is around 598 BC, and it was a prism found at Babylon. And part of it talks about a bunch of the high-ranking officials of Nebuchadnezzar.

And one of them is Nebuzaradan, and they give him this title, the chief cook. So they had a lot of—

FRANK:

Important guy. Important guy.

TITUS:

Yeah, but they had a lot of odd-sounding titles like that in the Babylonian empire.

It didn't mean that his only duty was to cook food for Nebuchadnezzar. However, as someone who would have handled his food, the king's food, he had to be extremely trustworthy, you know, among the most trustworthy people. So, he has that position connected to the king.

Later on, he is commanding the king's armies in Jerusalem.

FRANK:

That's amazing. That's been found. And there's a guy you have right after him. I don't know if you can memorize this guy or not, but in the book, I remember studying this particular archeological discovery.

It's Nebo Sar—

TITUS:

Nebo-Sarsekim. Oh yeah, yeah. I think he's kind of well-known now because this was a pretty recent find, like what, 10 years ago or so? It was a little tablet that was in the British Museum.

It had been there for a long, long time. But there are many of them that have never been translated—

FRANK:

Yeah, here it is right here in the book, by the way.

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TITUS:

There he is tiny little, tiny little receipt for a donation to a temple. So scholar was in there working on translating these texts and publishing them, and he's reading this one, and he looks at this name and title, Nebo-Sarsekim, the Chief Eunuch.

And he's thinking, you know what, I think I've seen that name before. It sounds like one that is in the book of Jeremiah. And so when he goes, he looks Jeremiah 39:3, and there is Nebo-Sarsekim, the Chief Eunuch with some other officials of Nebuchadnezzar in Babylon.

And here we go. It's just a little receipt with this guy's name and title, but it attests to his existence, position, time, period, all that right there.

FRANK:

That's amazing. I mean, he's an obscure guy, and we have a receipt.

And I've been told this, Titus, and since you're an archaeologist, you would know how true this is that some of the greatest archaeological discoveries will be made in the basement of the British Museum. Because there's so many artifacts down there that they haven't even looked at yet.

And they don't even have the expertise to look at. As I understand it, only a small fraction of what they have is on display, correct?

TITUS:

Oh, yeah. And a lot of museums are like that. You know, they probably have two to ten times as many artifacts in storage.

And as you said, a lot of them have not been studied and published, especially if we're talking about cuneiform tablets. So there is potential for great discovery still, even without going and excavating new things; there's still a lot that needs to be processed.

FRANK:

What is the earliest archaeological discovery in the book? How far back do we have archaeology? I know we have David, so that's about 1000 BC. There's someone in here by the name of Danel. Not Daniel, but Danel. Who's that?

TITUS:

Yeah. So that's the earliest one I put in there. So Danel is actually mentioned a lot later in the Bible. So he's mentioned in Ezekiel, but in that reference, it's talking about people from the patriarchal period.

He talks about Danel and Noah and Job. And he discusses things like weren't able to save their own sons and daughters. Probably in reference to Job and Danel, at least. And if we look for possibly this person in the archaeological record, what we see is in tablets from Ugarit from the end of the late Bronze Age.

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So we're talking 14th century to 13th century BC here. There is a story that was written down about this person named Danel, who was kind of a hero in a way, but the story is somewhat focused on his son.

And it's usually titled the Epic of Aqhat, and his son's name was Aqhat. But a lot of it is about Danel. And he seemed to have been this righteous person. His son is killed by order of the goddess Anat.

And so the story is about that, but, you know, he's placed in this early period. And so there are some scholars who think, not only was Danel a real person, but these two are the same. The one mentioned by Ezekiel and the one mentioned in those tablets from Ugarit.

FRANK:

And you also have Balaam in this book, you have Bithia, who is a daughter of a pharaoh. And then we have David. We'll talk about David when we come back. A little bit later in the program, we're going to talk about Jesus and Peter, too. What kind of archaeological evidence have we found related to those central figures in the Bible quite obviously. We're talking to my friend Dr.

Titus Kennedy. His new book *Archaeology and the People of the Bible*. You're listening to I Don't Have Enough Faith to Be an Atheist. Don't go anywhere. Back after the break.

AD:

Students across America are more open to the truth of Christianity than ever before. And Dr. Frank Turek is taking the powerful evidence for God to campuses like UC Berkeley, the University of Georgia, Ohio State, and Alabama, reaching thousands in person and millions more online.

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FRANK:

What is the evidence that people, places, and events in the Bible have been corroborated by archaeology? Well, it turns out, according to the new book by my friend Dr. Titus Kennedy, there's at least 124 people so far that have been found in archeology that are actually in the Bible, and they're all in the brand new book, *Archeology and the People of the Bible*.

Before we get back to Dr. Kennedy, I want to mention that this coming week we're going to be at Ole Miss University on Tuesday, and then on April 2, Thursday will be up in my old stomping grounds up there in Rochester, New York, will be at RIT, Rochester Institute of Technology.

Following week will be at Louisiana Christian University. And we've got some other universities coming up after that. So thank you for your prayers for this college tour. We're recording this before we went to Utah Valley University, but I'll give you a report on what happened there once I get back.

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Also want to point out that we have the Cross Examined Instructor Academy online, coming up later in April. If you want to be a part of that, go to crossexamined.org, click on online courses. You'll see it there. And then the in-person CIA is going to be, let's see, July 30th, 31st, and August 1st here in Charlotte, North Carolina.

Apply if you want to be a part of that. Hope to see you here this summer. Let me get back to my friend, Dr. Titus Kennedy. Titus, before the break, we were talking a little bit about Old Testament discoveries. How significant was it in 1993 to find that David, the name David, the house of David, was found in archaeology?

Where was it found? What's the significance of this find?

TITUS:

Yeah, it was almost a paradigm shift. And I think it also demonstrated that even scholars who are quite opposed to the historicity of the Bible or who have a worldview or a bias, that the Bible is going to be fictional unless proven otherwise, that they can, or at least a lot of them can be convinced by clear archaeological evidence.

So, up until that point, most archaeologists and historians through the 80s and early 90s thought David was a fictional or mythological king, because they said there's no archaeological evidence to establish him.

And then at Tel Dan, the site of ancient Dan in northern Israel, north of the Sea of Galilee, they're excavating in the plaza in front of the city gate, and they pull up this large stone, and on one side of it, there's an Aramean inscription.

And it was part of a stele, actually a victory stele. So they start to decipher this, and they find that it is a victory stele of an Aramean king from the 9th century BC, who claims that he has defeated the king of Judah and Israel, and then that they are of the house of David.

And so, suddenly, you had almost contemporary attestation of King David, and it was being acknowledged by one of the enemies of Israel, that he was the founder of the dynasty of kings of Israel and Judah.

And so this changed things almost overnight.

FRANK:

And when we say, a king from Aram, that would be modern-day Syria, correct?

TITUS:

Yeah, approximately. Yeah.

FRANK:

And who was that king? And have we found him as well? The king that actually inscribed this, that I beat this guy from the house of David?

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TITUS:

Yeah, it was almost certainly Hazael. And why we can say that is not only is it the right time period, but what happens or what is recounted on the stele fits with what we know Hazael did in the Bible.

So on the stele, he claims that he defeated Joram of Israel and Ahaziah of Judah. Well, if we go to the biblical text about Hazel, we see that he was involved in wars with both of those kings.

And on the stele, he actually attributes himself as, as killing them, even though he, you know, in reality probably wasn't directly involved with it. But he did fight both of them, so seems like that's who he is. And—

FRANK:

This is about what time?

Like eight—

TITUS:

840 BC about. Yeah. So this is about 130 years after David hands the scepter to Solomon. And then Hazael himself is, is attested by numerous artifacts.

Now, he would have been on this stele, but it was fragmentary. We only have small bits of it. So that's why we're kind of guessing, based on circumstantial evidence, who it was. But Hazael is mentioned on things like that famous black obelisk of Shalmaneser III.

He is mentioned on a statue, also of Shalmaneser III, an inscribed statue. And this is really interesting because it also corroborates the Bible's narrative about how Hazael usurped the throne when he assassinated the previous king, Bar-Hadad or Ben-Hadad III.

And then Hazael is also mentioned on the Stele of Zakur. He was a king of Hamath. Some other artifacts, like there's a piece of ivory that's inscribed with Lord Hazael and so forth. These aren't as clear as some of the other ones. They, you know, say Lord Hazael.

It's probably him. But yeah, these other three that I mentioned are very clear.

FRANK:

Now, is David mentioned anywhere else? I thought I heard there's a couple of other discoveries related to David. Archaeological discoveries.

TITUS:

Yes.

So after the Tel Dan stele came out, then some scholars re-evaluated the Mesha stele, which is from almost exactly the same time, Mesha of Moab. And it also has that phrase house of David on it, referring to the founder of the dynasty of kings.

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So that'd be a second one. There's possibly a third reference to David on Shoshenq the I list, at Karnak, but that's a maybe a little more iffy. And then, of course, we have other archaeological finds that relate to David, like I would say, his palace in Jerusalem, and then some of the cities around the region that show evidence of a centralized government during his reign.

FRANK:

Phenomenal stuff. Our mutual friend Joel Kramer was asked once if you had to pick just one archaeological discovery from the Old Testament, what would you pick? And he actually picked what you just said, the Mesha stele, or the Moabite stone. Can you give us like a minute on that?

What is that about?

TITUS:

So this is a victory stele, like the Tel Dan Stele, but it was erected by Mesha of Moab. And on it, he tells this story, going back to previous generations about how, in the time of Omri, the Moabites had been defeated and then put under the thumb of the Israelites, the Northern kingdom.

But then he tells the story of the rebellion during his reign and how, after 40 years, they'd finally thrown off this yoke. And we see that also in the Book of Kings, there's like an entire chapter dedicated to this story.

And this is essentially the Moabite version of what we read in Kings there. So it's pretty, pretty incredible. Lots of different people are mentioned. You know, David, House of David's mentioned, Omri's mentioned, Mesha of course is mentioned.

A lot of locations are. Yahweh is on there. It's the earliest reference in a Semitic language to Yahweh. You know, we've got that earlier one, from Soleb, the temple of Amenhotep III. But this is the earliest Semitic reference to Yahweh.

So, really an incredible find. And just the story of this discovery is pretty interesting too.

FRANK:

Yeah, that's where they, the locals, once they realized what they had, they broke it in pieces. So, the Brits had to go buy it from the different locals so they could put it back together.

TITUS:

Yeah, yeah, that's right.

FRANK:

And now it's in the Louvre, right? Is it in the Louvre?

TITUS:

Thankfully, it's mostly put back together. You know, there are some missing pieces, but they had actually done a squeeze of it before that. So we do have the whole inscription.

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FRANK:

Let's talk a little New Testament now. We just touched on just four or five people from the Old Testament in Titus's book. *Archeology and the People of the Bible*. There's 88, or sorry, 87 people in the Old Testament that have been discovered. And there's actually a few more than 87, but those are the ones that each have their own pages in the book.

Let's talk New Testament if we can. Herod Agrippa I. Help us with the Herod's. There's so many Herod's in the Bible, people get confused.

TITUS:

Yeah, well, because it's a Herodian dynasty there, right? So they are taking Herod the Great, his name, and that continues on with the dynasty.

So he had lots of sons, lots of grandsons, and so on and so forth. So when we get to Herod Agrippa I, we're actually in the time of the book of Acts. So you go to Acts chapter 12, for example, and it talks about Herod Agrippa I.

And we see that Herod Agrippa I was not the biggest fan of the early Christians. He persecuted them. In fact, we see that he executed one of the disciples, apostles now, and he imprisoned Peter.

And, you know, he probably would have continued on doing that. But as we continue reading in that chapter, we see that he died. He was struck down by God. And so if we're looking archaeologically for Herod Agrippa I, we've got coins of his, of course, that have his name on them.

So he's very clearly attested, in that way. But that story in Acts about his death is also extremely interesting because Josephus also recounts that episode, but with a little bit different perspective.

And so he adds in some other details that are not in Acts. When you put Acts and Josephus together, you get a fuller picture of what happened. And then over there at Caesarea Maritima, where that occurred, where his death occurred in 44 AD, you know, you've got some of the buildings that are associated with him, like possibly the theater where he may have given that speech, or maybe the stadium, which is right next to it.

So one of these guys, grandson of Herod the Great, mentioned in the Bible, episode about him mentioned in the Bible. And then all these details about his existence and his death are corroborated in archaeological inscriptions or ancient manuscripts like Josephus.

FRANK:

And there are other Herod's too, that have been found, certainly in coins and writings of Josephus. And it's amazing that the Bible has all these people, real-world people. And we'll talk about a couple of them after the break as well.

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And we'll also talk about Peter and Jesus who have been discovered in archaeology as well. My guest, Dr. Titus Kennedy. The brand new book, *Archaeology and the People of the Bible*, another great one from Titus. You need to check it out. And it's written for anybody, ladies and gentlemen.

It connects the Bible with these artifacts that have been found in the dirt, and shows you that the people the Bible are talking about actually did exist in the times and places the Bible says back right after the break.

FRANK:

Ladies and gentlemen, there are so many people in the Bible that have been found in the dirt that, Titus Kennedy has put them in a book, *Archaeology and the People of the Bible*. And you can read about them. Short, succinct, two to three pages each.

And the archaeological discovery that shows that these people actually existed. We've gone through several already. There's 124 in the book. Let's do one more from the New Testament before we talk about Jesus and Peter. And that is someone associated with the beheading of John the Baptist.

Who is that, Titus?

TITUS:

Well, that's Salome. So she was the one who requested his head at the urging of her mother. So, she's again one of these more obscure or minor characters, at least in the narrative of the Gospels.

But she is there. And while I maybe stretched my rules a little bit to put her in this book, because we don't see the name Salome in any of the Gospel accounts. In some manuscripts, we do see Herodias, and not talking about her mother, but they seem to use her name as Herodias.

And so that was sort of my segue into it. Like, okay, maybe she had two names, Herodias and Salome. And then she's more well-known by her name Salome, because that distinguishes her from her mother. So, anyhow, what we have, though, first of all, in Josephus, ancient manuscripts of Josephus, he talks about her a fair amount.

And he talks about the beheading of John the Baptist. I mean, that whole story is corroborated by Josephus as well, which is pretty incredible and significant in and of itself. But he mentions Salome, the daughter of Herodias.

So we know. We know exactly who that is and her role there. And he tells us on the one hand that later she married Philip the Tetrarch, who, of course, Luke 3:1 mentions him. He's attested by his coins and by the city of Caesarea Philippi.

But she marries him, then he dies, and then she marries another family member. So Philip the Tetrarch was her uncle. He dies. Then she marries Aristobulus V, who is her cousin. Here is where her archaeological attestation comes into play.

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So her cousin, who is a king, Aristobulus V, made his own coins, issued his own coins. And on one type of his coin, which is quite rare today, it shows one side her husband's face and his name.

On the other side. It has Salome's portrait, and it has inscribed in Greek, Queen Salome. So not only do we have her name inscribed, but we have her face there on this rare type of coin as well.

Pretty cool.

FRANK:

So this is the lady that danced, correct?

TITUS:

Yeah, that is, that is. And she was probably quite young at the time. I would say she was born roughly in 15 AD. So she's probably like, you know, 16 years old, maybe at that time.

FRANK:

Oh, wow. Here's the coin. That's the coin from Salome. Salome. That's probably the front side of the coin. Is that the back side of the coin?

TITUS:

That would be the reverse side. So her husband was on the main side.

FRANK:

Okay. Yeah.

And so it's all in this book, *Archeology and the People of the Bible*. So this lady, this young girl, is not named in the Bible other than Herodias's daughter. Is named by Josephus. And that name is also found on a coin with her image on it.

This is amazing material, Titus. So few people know about it as well. That's why this book is so important. Again, it's called *Archeology and the People of the Bible*. Let's talk a little bit about Peter and Jesus. What kind of evidence do we have that Peter existed from archeology?

TITUS:

Yeah, Peter's an interesting case. So I'm sure that there are people who love the stuff related to Peter, and there are people who are like, that's a bit of a stretch or something. But, yeah, I think it's very interesting.

So first of all, we have a couple of pieces of architecture. We've got a couple of buildings or architectural things that are related to Peter. And the first is his house or his mother in law's house in Capernaum, which was the base for Jesus's ministry during the time in Galilee.

And then we have his tomb in Rome underneath the Basilica of St. Peter. And you say, you know, how do we know that those are connected to Peter? All right, well, first of all, if we're talking about the house, so that

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house is right next to the synagogue, and it was a house that was then turned into a church in the late first century.

And then inscriptions start showing up on the walls, some of which mention Peter specifically and even connect him to Rome. So, he looks like he left his house, he left it to the Christians, they turned it into a church.

They commemorated it as the former house of Peter that had been turned into a church. But we also have inscriptions with Peter's name on them in there. So then we go to Rome, and this tomb of Peter that was found in the 20th century, or I should say rediscovered, because it was known much earlier.

It's the reason Constantine built the church there, because of Peter's martyrdom and burial on that spot. And they are excavating, and they're in this cemetery, this Roman period cemetery of the first and second century.

And they see on this wall next to the burial that they're working on is the name, Peter. It says in Greek, basically, Peter inside. Peter in here. And they look at those bones, they analyze those bones, and it seems like it's probably a reburial in the second century of an original first-century burial.

And the bones are of a man who's about, in his 60s. Okay, so right, right time or right age for Peter at his death, which he died in AD 64. And he, according to early Christian accounts, was not only martyred, but he was crucified upside down.

And so as they're examining these bones, they notice that there are pieces of the skeleton from every part of the body except for the feet. So it's like he was cut down from the cross when he was crucified upside down.

They just cut at his ankles. And so we may actually have the bones of Peter there in his tomb, but certainly we have some inscriptions mentioning him and seemingly his house as well.

FRANK:

My favorite place in Jerusalem is Capernaum, because that synagogue is there.

And then Peter's mother-in-law's house is right there. And I can picture so many things going on right there from the Bible in Capernaum. But that's fascinating about the Roman discovery. Is that in the book, too, Titus?

TITUS:

Yeah, it is.

FRANK:

Okay. How about Jesus? What kind of archaeological evidence do we have for Jesus?

TITUS:

Well, of course, we can talk about the different ancient accounts from the first and second century, these ancient manuscripts of various authors and historians.

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And even if we restrict it to people who lived in the first century, okay, they didn't necessarily write about Jesus until the second century, but some of them lived at least in the first century. We've got Josephus, we have Serapion, we have Tacitus, we have Pliny the Younger, and we have Suetonius.

So all these people write about Jesus, and all of them lived in the first century. That is incredibly significant, of course. But if we want to talk strictly about archaeological artifacts from the first century, then we would go to two in particular, and there's a couple of others I would mention that I think are very significant as well.

First of all, we're talking about the name Jesus. We've got his name on the James Ossuary. So that went through a lot of discussion. I won't get into it now. I think we've talked about it before, but we've got this inscription.

James, son of Joseph, brother of Jesus. Okay, so brother of Jesus is tacked on, which is extremely abnormal. And this, I would say, is an inscription mentioning Jesus Christ and, of course, James and Joseph as well, which is.

There's two more people for you there that are named in the New Testament. So we've got first-century, pre-70 AD archaeological inscription mentioning Jesus. If we go over to Egypt, there is a very interesting find that was discovered, oh, what was around 18 years ago now, probably in the harbor of Alexandria.

And it was a cup. And this was a cup that seems to have been used in some kind of magical rituals because on it is inscribed in Greek, through Christ the magician.

And so they were trying to harness the power of Christ because they thought that he was this powerful magician. Well, that's how a lot of people, especially in Egypt, would have looked at Jesus or did look at Jesus. We have the writings of Celsus in the second century, who says that when Jesus went to Egypt as a boy or a baby, he learned magic from the Egyptians, and then he went back to Judea and, you know, performed these miracles, and that's how he proclaimed that he was God.

So they're looking at him from that perspective of this magician. And we see that in things like the Egyptian magical papyri as well, where one of the formulas for casting out demons is to invoke the name of Jesus, God of the Hebrews. So I think this is.

FRANK:

We're about out of time, Titus. I just got to ask you one other thing about that. Jesus' name was also found in the house in Capernaum with Peter as well.

TITUS:

It was, yeah. Just not from the first century. Second, second, or third century. Yes.

Inscriptions about Jesus. Definitely.

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FRANK:

All right. This is a fabulous book, Titus. You always do a great job. By the way, the last program Titus and I did on archaeology got almost 400,000 views. We'll put that in the show notes as well. Titus, thanks for doing this and for your continued work. It's helping a lot of people.

TITUS:

My pleasure. Glad to hear that.

FRANK:

That's Titus Kennedy, the book *Archaeology and the People of the Bible*. Check it out, ladies and gentlemen, a great book. One hundred and twenty-four people found right here. All right, Lord willing, we'll see you here. Next time. God bless.

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