**EGYPT**

VIDEO TWO

Joseph

Oldest pyramind in Egypt dated 2750 BC.

1)inscription concerning famine

2)painting in tomb left starving cow, on right fat cow

EGYPTIANS were notorious for only recording their victorious.

i.e., Ramses who fought against the hykso and got leaked and then gos and details his victories of the past.

Time magazine article of the APIS bull discovery. Israel’s idolatry.

ISIS ad OSIRIS (female/male)Isis conceives as a virgin a Son 🡪Horus (The savior of the world)

Religion of works.

FINDS

[1958 SECRET MARK GOSPEL](#Mark)

[Instruments in Daniel’s account](#music)

[Jesus’ Tomb](#Jesustomb)

[The Search for the Historical Jesus](#HistoricalJesus)

Luke’s Reference to Syrian Governor

**An Amazing Discovery**

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An Amazing Discovery

By [Charles W. Hedrick](javascript:OpenAuthInfo(%22http://dev.bib-arch.org/author.asp?PubID=BSBA&Volume=35&Issue=06&AuthInfoID=au03&SourcePage=article.asp%22))

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*Southwest Missouri State University professor Charles Hedrick opens the discussion by setting the stage for us, as we asked him to do, without revealing his own belief in the authenticity of Secret Mark.*

In 1958 Morton Smith, a 43-year-old Columbia University history professor, spent the summer looking for ancient manuscripts and handwritten entries in old printed books at monasteries in Turkey, Greece and the Holy Land. One of his destinations was the storied Greek Orthodox monastery of Mar Saba in the Judean wilderness, roughly a dozen miles southeast of Jerusalem.

Smith was no stranger to the place. Seventeen years earlier he had spent two months of seclusion there, fully participating in its meditative way of life. Day began in the isolated Byzantine structure with morning worship from midnight until 6:00 a.m., only to be resumed again in the afternoon from 1:30 to 3:00. Around 5:00 p.m. the monks observed evening prayers and then slept till midnight. “Between the services was silence—the silence of the desert, no voices, no sounds of animals, not even wind in the trees,” as Smith described it.[1](javascript:OpenNote(%22http://dev.bib-arch.org/note.asp?PubID=BSBA&Volume=35&Issue=06&ArticleID=21&NoteType=1&NoteID=001&SourcePage=article.asp%22)) It was a life of worship, meditation and spiritual reflection.

After his first trip to Mar Saba in 1941, Morton Smith was ordained an Episcopal deacon (in 1944). Although not officially, in effect he later left the clergy, however, to pursue the scholarly life. He once quipped to the eminent Yale scholar E.R. Goodenough that “he was passing out cigars because he was no longer a Father.”[2](javascript:OpenNote(%22http://dev.bib-arch.org/note.asp?PubID=BSBA&Volume=35&Issue=06&ArticleID=21&NoteType=1&NoteID=002&SourcePage=article.asp%22)) He remained a lifelong bachelor.

On his second visit to the monastery (in 1958), Smith excused himself from the daily liturgy in order to give complete focus to his manuscript search. He later published a catalogue of the manuscripts he discovered at Mar Saba.[3](javascript:OpenNote(%22http://dev.bib-arch.org/note.asp?PubID=BSBA&Volume=35&Issue=06&ArticleID=21&NoteType=1&NoteID=003&SourcePage=article.asp%22))

Each morning he would climb the stairs to the cluttered tower library together with a monk assigned to sit with him while he worked. There he found manuscripts and nearly 500 books scattered hither and yon and jammed into the bookcase. Each day he was permitted to take a few books to his monk’s cell for study. One of the books he examined was written in Latin and Greek, lacking a cover and a title page. It later turned out to be a 1646 edition of the letters of Ignatius of Antioch edited by Isaac Voss.[4](javascript:OpenNote(%22http://dev.bib-arch.org/note.asp?PubID=BSBA&Volume=35&Issue=06&ArticleID=21&NoteType=1&NoteID=004&SourcePage=article.asp%22)) The final pages of the printed book had originally been blank, but now they contained a handwritten Greek manuscript of the 18th century (judging by the handwriting), which purported to be a copy of a letter by the second-century church leader Clement of Alexandria.

The Clement letter is addressed to one Theodore, otherwise unknown. Theodore apparently had asked Clement questions about a Secret Gospel of Mark, and Clement answers by quoting two excerpts from the Secret Gospel.

[](javascript:OpenImage(%22http://dev.bib-arch.org/image.asp?PubID=bsba&Volume=35&Issue=06&ImageID=04600&SourcePage=article.asp%22))

Smith photographed the letter and at the end of the summer returned to his teaching duties at Columbia. He spent the next 15 years studying the handwritten manuscript, conferring with colleagues and preparing it for publication. In 1973 Smith simultaneously published two books on the Clement letter: one a scholarly book titled *Clement of Alexandria and a Secret Gospel of Mark* and the other a popular book titled *The Secret Gospel: The Discovery and Interpretation of The Secret Gospel According to Mark*. Both books exploded like bombshells on the reading public, but in the academic guild it was a “nuclear event.”[5](javascript:OpenNote(%22http://dev.bib-arch.org/note.asp?PubID=BSBA&Volume=35&Issue=06&ArticleID=21&NoteType=1&NoteID=005&SourcePage=article.asp%22))

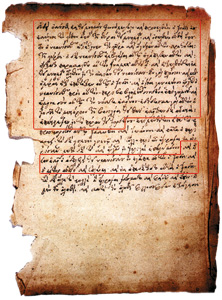
Clement’s letter to Theodore appears to be something of a diatribe against the Carpocratians, a Gnostic-Christian group whose members (Clement says in the letter) “wander ... into a boundless abyss of the carnal and bodily sins” and embrace “blasphemous and carnal doctrine” (Smith’s translation). Clement elsewhere accuses them of engaging in orgies: They “overturn the lamps and so remove the light that would uncover the shame of their dissolute ‘righteousness’ and unite with whom they will” (*Stromata* III.2). Another second-century writer, Irenaeus, accused them of “practicing magic arts and incantations, love potions and love feasts” and of living dissolute lives (*Against Heresies* I.25.3). The Carpocratians further claimed, according to Irenaeus, that one must experience “everything ungodly and impious” in order to free one’s soul from the world (*Against Heresies* I.25.4). In his letter, Clement commends Theodore for “silencing the unspeakable teachings of the Carpocratians,” and then proceeds to his own denunciations of them.

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More particularly, Clement quotes from a Secret Gospel of Mark. According to Clement, Mark had written his original gospel in Rome containing material appropriate for beginners in faith. This version did not even “hint” at the “secret” (or “mystic”) things. When Mark came to Alexandria, however, he added to his original gospel other material suitable for those aspiring to reach a higher level of knowledge in the faith. This version Clement described as “a more spiritual gospel,” which was intended for use by those “being perfected” in the faith.

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According to the Clement letter, Carpocrates, for whom the Carpocratian sect was named, secured a copy of “the Secret Gospel” by duping a certain presbyter of the church in Alexandria, where Mark had left the Secret Gospel when he died. Carpocrates then “doctored” Mark’s Secret Gospel by adding material to it—in effect mixing “holy words with utterly shameless lies.” Thus, although there was a certain amount of truth in what the Carpocratians said about the Secret Gospel of Mark, nevertheless in the form used by the Carpocratians, it was, according to Clement, false and misleading.

[](javascript:OpenImage(%22http://dev.bib-arch.org/image.asp?PubID=bsba&Volume=35&Issue=06&ImageID=04720&SourcePage=article.asp%22))

Theodore had apparently asked Clement certain specific questions, which are not reiterated by Clement. Clement refutes the false statements of the Carpocratians simply by quoting two excerpts from the “undoctored” version of Secret Mark, one long and the other but a single sentence.

The first quotation from Secret Mark describes the resuscitation of a young man who had died. The youth’s sister pleads for help from Jesus, and both go to a garden tomb from which a great cry is heard. Jesus rolls away the stone from the door of the tomb, enters and resuscitates the youth. The youth “looking upon [Jesus], loved him.” They go to the youth’s house, “for he was rich.” Jesus remains there for six days, and then advises the young man what he must do. The unnamed youth then comes to Jesus in the evening “wearing a linen cloth over his naked body. And he remained with him that night, for Jesus taught him the mystery of the kingdom of God.”

[](javascript:OpenImage(%22http://dev.bib-arch.org/image.asp?PubID=bsba&Volume=35&Issue=06&ImageID=04734&SourcePage=article.asp%22))

Clement implies that the Carpocratian version of the Secret Gospel contained an offensive statement not found in Mark’s longer gospel, and refutes it; “Naked man with [or on] naked man” is not found in Secret Mark, Clement insists. Clement counsels Theodore to deny under oath that the Carpocratian version of Secret Mark was written by Mark. And even if the Carpocratians were to say something true, Theodore should not agree with them.

Smith briefly describes his own feelings at his startling discovery. He felt as if he were “walking on air.”[6](javascript:OpenNote(%22http://dev.bib-arch.org/note.asp?PubID=BSBA&Volume=35&Issue=06&ArticleID=21&NoteType=1&NoteID=006&SourcePage=article.asp%22)) He photographed the letter of Clement three times and continued on with his search for other manuscripts.

When Smith published the results of his study of the Clement letter 15 years after its discovery, scholarly responses were harshly negative, even caustic. Many of the published reactions were inflammatory personal assaults on Smith himself,[7](javascript:OpenNote(%22http://dev.bib-arch.org/note.asp?PubID=BSBA&Volume=35&Issue=06&ArticleID=21&NoteType=1&NoteID=007&SourcePage=article.asp%22)) and in particular at his interpretation of the text, rather than concerned with the question of whether or not the letter was forged. (The forgery issue was first raised by Quentin Quesnell in 1975.[8](javascript:OpenNote(%22http://dev.bib-arch.org/note.asp?PubID=BSBA&Volume=35&Issue=06&ArticleID=21&NoteType=1&NoteID=008&SourcePage=article.asp%22))) Smith’s conclusion was that Clement’s letter was a genuine second-century text and that Secret Mark was also genuine—from the late first century. The Secret Gospel of Mark demonstrated that the Jesus movement had begun with a mystery-religion baptismal initiation: Jesus baptized each of his closest disciples into the mystery of the kingdom of God, “singly and at night.” In his larger study Smith wrote: “In this baptism the disciple was united with Jesus. The union may have been physical ... (there is no telling how far symbolism went in Jesus’ rite), but the essential thing was that the disciple was possessed by Jesus’ spirit.”[9](javascript:OpenNote(%22http://dev.bib-arch.org/note.asp?PubID=BSBA&Volume=35&Issue=06&ArticleID=21&NoteType=1&NoteID=009&SourcePage=article.asp%22)) This is how Smith put it in his more popular book: The disciple ecstatically “entered the kingdom of God, and was thereby set free from the laws ordained for and in the lower world. Freedom from the law may have resulted in completion of the spiritual union by physical union.”[10](javascript:OpenNote(%22http://dev.bib-arch.org/note.asp?PubID=BSBA&Volume=35&Issue=06&ArticleID=21&NoteType=1&NoteID=010&SourcePage=article.asp%22))

Moreover, according to Smith, the account in Secret Mark had traits relating it to the incident in [Mark 14:51–52](javascript:OpenBibleRef('http://dev.bib-arch.org/bible.asp?VerseIDMin=24806&VerseIDMax=24807&')) in which a young man followed Jesus in the evening “wearing nothing but a linen cloth” over his naked body.[11](javascript:OpenNote(%22http://dev.bib-arch.org/note.asp?PubID=BSBA&Volume=35&Issue=06&ArticleID=21&NoteType=1&NoteID=011&SourcePage=article.asp%22)) Smith argues further that the church in the second and third centuries covered up the historical datum that Jesus began his movement with a “baptism into the mystery of the kingdom of God,” as reflected in Secret Mark.[12](javascript:OpenNote(%22http://dev.bib-arch.org/note.asp?PubID=BSBA&Volume=35&Issue=06&ArticleID=21&NoteType=1&NoteID=012&SourcePage=article.asp%22))

It is not difficult to imagine how Smith’s interpretation of Secret Mark antagonized scholars having close personal religious ties to a community of faith. Although Smith never really developed his suggestion that the uniting of the disciple with Jesus *may* have been physical, this was the one line in the book that most stirred the ire of the academic guild. Further, it is the one line that raises the issue of homosexuality, which some think is actually affirmatively stated in the first excerpt of Secret Mark only by how they interpret it.

Smith had the reputation of being a difficult man—austere, intense, even haughty, a man who did not suffer fools gladly. These personal reactions to Smith no doubt added to the hostility against him.

In light of the issues raised by Smith’s two books, efforts were made to see and examine the Voss book containing the letter of Clement, which Smith claimed to have found in the Mar Saba library. In 1976, three years after the publication of Smith’s books on Secret Mark, three Hebrew University scholars (David Flusser, Shlomo Pines and Guy G. Stroumsa, then a graduate student at the Hebrew University), in the company of an official of the Greek Orthodox Church (Archimandrite Meliton), went to Mar Saba and managed to “relocate” the book, after some searching around in the tower library where Smith left it. Because of its significance, all concurred that it should be taken to Jerusalem and secured in the Patriarchate library. They hoped that a scientific test of the ink would demonstrate the date of the inscription of Clement’s letter, but such a test was not permitted. Subsequent scholars who visited the library later were not permitted to see the book.

In 1980 Thomas Talley, a professor at General Theological Seminary in New York, reported in an article that he was not allowed to see the letter because it had been removed from the book and was being “repaired.”[13](javascript:OpenNote(%22http://dev.bib-arch.org/note.asp?PubID=BSBA&Volume=35&Issue=06&ArticleID=21&NoteType=1&NoteID=013&SourcePage=article.asp%22)) Shortly after the book was deposited in the Patriarchate library in Jerusalem, the librarian (Kallistos Dourvas) removed the two folios containing the Clement letter in order to photograph it. He then replaced the two loose folios at the back of the book.[14](javascript:OpenNote(%22http://dev.bib-arch.org/note.asp?PubID=BSBA&Volume=35&Issue=06&ArticleID=21&NoteType=1&NoteID=014&SourcePage=article.asp%22)) And then the Voss book itself was “misplaced” in the library and could not be located. In June 2000, however, the Voss volume was relocated in the Patriarchate library, but the two folios containing the letter of Clement were missing. They are still missing.

Morton Smith continued to publish on the Clement letter until his death in 1991.

In 2005 Scott Brown published his revised doctoral dissertation (*Mark’s Other Gospel: Rethinking Morton Smith’s Controversial Discovery*). It was the first thorough review of Smith’s publications. Brown disagreed with Smith’s interpretation and argued that the excerpts from Secret Mark should be read in the context of the canonical Gospel of Mark with reference to the distinctly Marcan literary techniques they employ. This interpretation had the effect of neutralizing Smith’s theory that the longer excerpt of Secret Mark reflected a mystery-religion’s baptismal initiation. More importantly, Brown concluded that the Clement letter was a genuine second–third-century text, and that Secret Mark was a longer gospel likely written by the very same author who had written the original Gospel of Mark.

Brown’s volume was immediately followed by Stephen Carlson’s *The Gospel Hoax: Morton Smith’s Invention of Secret Mark*.[15](javascript:OpenNote(%22http://dev.bib-arch.org/note.asp?PubID=BSBA&Volume=35&Issue=06&ArticleID=21&NoteType=1&NoteID=015&SourcePage=article.asp%22)) The title says it all. Smith perpetrated the forgery to get back at his colleagues for not recognizing his genius.[16](javascript:OpenNote(%22http://dev.bib-arch.org/note.asp?PubID=BSBA&Volume=35&Issue=06&ArticleID=21&NoteType=1&NoteID=016&SourcePage=article.asp%22)) Carlson, a lawyer and currently a Ph.D. student in the Graduate Program in Religion (New Testament) at Duke University, claims to have found clues “in places scholars do not normally look.” Carlson relies on anomalies in the text that in his view confirm the forgery. For example, the handwriting reflects a forger’s tremor, and certain letterforms closely resemble the forms of these same letters found in marginal notations written by Smith.

In 2007 a monograph by Peter Jeffery, professor of music history at Princeton, also charged that the Clement letter was a forgery.[17](javascript:OpenNote(%22http://dev.bib-arch.org/note.asp?PubID=BSBA&Volume=35&Issue=06&ArticleID=21&NoteType=1&NoteID=017&SourcePage=article.asp%22)) Smith’s interpretation, Jeffery argues, reflects a “tale of ‘sexual preference’ that could only have been told by a 20th-century Western author.”[18](javascript:OpenNote(%22http://dev.bib-arch.org/note.asp?PubID=BSBA&Volume=35&Issue=06&ArticleID=21&NoteType=1&NoteID=018&SourcePage=article.asp%22)) Jeffery bases his conclusions on an analysis of Morton Smith’s character, largely based on Smith’s reading of Secret Mark as homoerotic and on what he claims are modern homosexual anachronisms in the text. He also relies on alleged anachronisms regarding the development of Christian liturgy.

The stalemate with regard to Secret Mark continues. Although some scholars have made use of the text in their analysis of Christian origins, the focus of the discussion has remained on the man who discovered—or forged—the text.

And the Band Played On...But What Did They Play On?

by [Terence C. Mitchell](http://www.bib-arch.org/e-features/band-played-on.asp#author)

[http://www.bib-arch.org/images/articletools-comment.png](http://www.bib-arch.org/e-features/band-played-on.asp#comments) [Talkback](http://www.bib-arch.org/e-features/band-played-on.asp#comments)  [Add Your Comment](http://www.bib-arch.org/e-features/band-played-on.asp)

[](http://www.bib-arch.org/images/e-features/band-played-on-01.jpg)  
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The text itself is music. Like a refrain, the litany of instruments is repeated four times in chapter 3 of the Book of Daniel: “the cornet, flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery, and dulcimer, and all kinds of musick.” Like an insistent ostinato, the names Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-Nego—the three young Hebrew exiles who will be fed to the “fiery furnace”—are repeated 13 times in the same chapter. The introduction and coda—twice at the beginning and once at the end—are “the satraps, the administrators, the governors, the counselors, the treasurers, the judges, the magistrates, and all the officials of the provinces,” who are called together to hear the decree of King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon. Anyone who fails to bow down to the king’s golden statue at the sound of the orchestra will be thrown to the flames, the king’s herald declares. Of course, you know the rest: The three Hebrews—Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-Nego—refuse to bow down, so they are tossed into the fire with their clothes on. But they remain unscathed: Not “a hair of their heads” is singed! Thus Nebuchadnezzar learns a little respect for the God of Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-Nego.

For sheer poetic beauty, it is difficult to surpass the 17th-century King James Version (also known as the Authorized Version), quoted above. Yet just what does this musical passage tell us about the orchestra that Nebuchadnezzar assembled?

Any study of these instruments must address two issues: First, the King James translators had a difficult time determining what instruments were meant by the original Aramaic text (Daniel, unlike most of the Hebrew Bible, is partly written in Aramaic). Second, a modern reader will have difficulty understanding what instruments the King James translators were referring to because some of the same terms are used for very different instruments today.

[](http://www.bib-arch.org/images/e-features/band-played-on-02.jpg)  
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Take, for example, the cornet of the King James Version, which is a translation of the Aramaic term *qeren*. Today a cornet is a small brass trumpet, popular among military bands. But that’s not what the King James translators had in mind: In the 16th to 17th century, the cornet was usually a curved, horn-shaped instrument. Some were carved from wood and covered with leather; others were made of ivory.[1](http://www.bib-arch.org/e-features/band-played-on.asp#note01)

The translators’ use of the word “cornet” suggests that they were aware of the base meaning of the word: The English “cornet” is derived (via French) from the Latin *cornu*, which means “horn.” (In modern translations, *qeren* is usually translated as “horn”; see the sidebar to this article.) The word *qeren* occurs frequently in the Hebrew Bible, usually in reference to the horn of an animal, such as a goat, rather than a musical instrument. *Shofar* (ram’s horn) most commonly fills that function, but that both *shofar* and *qeren* had the same meaning in early Hebrew is clear from the passage in Joshua that describes the fall of Jericho. There the priests are commanded to blow ram’s-horn trumpets: “So the people shouted when the priests blew with the trumpets and it came to pass&that the wall fell down flat” (Joshua 6:20). Shofar is used in Joshua 6, verses 4, 6, 8, 13 and 20, but *qeren* is used in verse 5. This shows that the *qeren* was known as a musical instrument at an early date.

Which brings us to the question of the date of the Daniel story. Many modern commentators argue that the book is a product of the second century B.C., but this is not a universally held view. While the text has probably suffered from scribal errors in transmission and we do not have it precisely as originally written, I believe there are reasonable grounds for dating the original composition as early as the fifth or even the late sixth century B.C., not long after the reign of Nebuchadnezzar (605–562 B.C.). In looking for the instruments that are indicated in the biblical text, we may therefore consider instruments known in the sixth and fifth centuries B.C.

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| [http://www.bib-arch.org/images/e-features/band-played-on-03-s.jpg](http://www.bib-arch.org/images/e-features/band-played-on-03.jpg) Click to view a slide show of larger images and captions. | [http://www.bib-arch.org/images/e-features/band-played-on-04-s.jpg](http://www.bib-arch.org/images/e-features/band-played-on-04.jpg) Click to view a slide show of larger images and captions. |

Let’s move on to the flute—as the translators rendered the Aramaic term *mashroqi*. The flute used at the time of the King James translation was not unlike that of today; the instrument was made of wood or ivory, rather than metal, but it still consisted of a long narrow tube that was closed at one end and had finger holes. The sound was produced by blowing across a hole near the closed end of the tube.

The word *mashroqi* occurs only this once in the Bible. Scholars call this singular usage a *hapax legomenon* (from Greek, meaning “once said”). Moreover, the word does not occur at all in any ancient extrabiblical text. The only clue to its meaning is its possible derivation from the Hebrew verb *sharaq*, “to hiss,” which suggests that the *mashroqi* was some kind of wind instrument, such as a pipe or a flute. This is only a guess, but it is a reasonable one, and it lies behind all the modern versions, which translate *mashroqi* as either flute or pipe.

We can hardly blame the King James translators. They did the best they could with the information they had. Not until the early 19th century did excavations reveal actual musical instruments or representations of them (such as those on monuments in Mesopotamia, north Syria and Egypt) dating from the third to first millennia B.C. Explorers and archaeologists in Egypt and Mesopotamia have supplied us with a wealth of material unavailable to earlier Bible translators.

Two of the instruments mentioned in the King James Version of Daniel–the sackbut and psaltery–are especially intriguing because they are quite unfamiliar to us today. The Aramaic for the first of the two is *sabk*. I suspect that when the King James translators rendered this as sackbut, they were simply making a guess on the basis of aural similarity. In the medieval period, a sackbut was a kind of trombone or slide trumpet.

The authors of the biblical text themselves may not have recognized these instruments, as is indicated by the fact that they spelled this word in more than one way (*sabk* and sŒabk, with a different s) in the same episode. This uncertainty about the spelling indicates that it is not an Aramaic term but a foreign loanword, very probably related to the Greek *sambukē*. Since this in its turn is regarded as a loanword in Greek (that is, it is not native Greek), it is possible that both *sabk* and *sambukē* derive from a common, third source. In the Septuagint, the third-century B.C. Greek translation of the Hebrew Bible, *sabk* is indeed translated into Greek as *sambukē*, showing that in the Hellenistic period the translators were aware of the similarity. The use of *sambukē* in Greek, however, does not shed much light on the meaning of *sabk*. The word is used in military contexts to refer to some kind of siege engine, perhaps as a sort of barrack-room joke. These jests suggest that the *sambukē* had a triangular shape. At the same time, references in musical contexts mention strings, sometimes “many strings,” and indicate that the instrument had a high pitch. So some kind of small harp is a reasonable guess.

[](http://www.bib-arch.org/images/e-features/band-played-on-05.jpg)  
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The harp that we know today is the large instrument played by Harpo Marx in the movies and seen on the concert platform during performances of the dramatic music of composers such as Berlioz. It has a substantial base resting on the ground, foot pedals and a heavy frame, as well as a substantial strut “outside” the longest string. The 16th- to 17th-century harp had the same general shape but was much smaller and could be carried by a standing musician. The harp was held against the chest by a strap over the shoulder. Similarly, the ancient harp was a hand-carried instrument, as we know from reliefs and other representations.

Like *sabk*, the Aramaic word translated “psaltery” is also spelled two different ways in the Aramaic text of Daniel: *pĕsantērîn* and *pĕsantērîn* (with a different *t*). It too appears to derive from a foreign loanword, the Greek *psalterion*. The *psalterion* was literally something plucked, from the Greek verb *psallein*, “to pluck.”

At this point, let me clarify the difference between a harp and a lyre. In very general terms, a harp can be seen as descended from the archer’s bow, with a sound box attached to the bow part and additional strings, shorter and shorter in length, filling the space inside the original, single string (see Mareshah burial cave fresco).

The lyre is quite different. It consists of a sound box with an aperture in the side and two upright arms spanned by a crosspiece (see eighth-century relief from Karatepe, Turkey and wall painting from the Tomb of the Leopards). The strings were stretched between the sound box and the crosspiece, the latter normally being at an angle so that differences in pitch could be obtained by strings of varying length.

Classical scholars usually understand the word *psalterion* to mean “harp,” but this view is largely based on the assumption that only harps were plucked. It is clear from textual references, however, that lyres were also sometimes plucked. Since there is evidence for many lyres in the ancient Greek world but very few harps, it is a reasonable guess that in this context the *psalterion/pesanterin* could have been a lyre.[2](http://www.bib-arch.org/e-features/band-played-on.asp#note02)

[](http://www.bib-arch.org/images/e-features/band-played-on-06.jpg)  
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We have now renamed the King James sackbut as a probable harp and the psaltery as a probable lyre. So what about the instrument that the King James Version does call a harp? This is a translation of the Aramaic word *qayteros*, very likely another loanword from Greek: *Kitharis*, meaning “lyre,” is found in the Homeric books dating to about the eighth to seventh century B.C. This term acts as a sort of chronological marker because in about the sixth century B.C. the form kitharis went out of use. So the related *qayteros* is unlikely to be later than the sixth century.

Since Greek helps us to identify *qayteros* as a lyre, and since we have already identified *psalterion* as a lyre—what are we to make of the fact that we now seem to have two lyres? Well, the truth is that in ancient times there were many kinds of lyre. Greek sources, particularly vase paintings, show a great variety of lyres (but a limited number of harps). Although the use of the word *psalterion* in reference to a musical instrument is not attested in Greek texts until the fourth century B.C., we have numerous representations of lyres from the second half of the eighth century B.C. onwards.[3](http://www.bib-arch.org/e-features/band-played-on.asp#note03)

Artistic representations show that the Greeks had at least four types of lyre: the *lyra* (with a small tortoise shell as the sound box), the *barbitos* (with longer arms and a larger tortoise shell as the sound box), the *kithara* (an elaborate wooden instrument, sometimes richly decorated) and a smaller wooden instrument, often used by women, for which the ancient name is not known.

These images also offer clear evidence that two different kinds of lyre were sometimes used in the same musical group: An eighth-century B.C. stone relief from Karatepe, in south central Turkey, shows four musicians, two of whom are playing different kinds of lyre (see eighth-century relief from Karatepe, Turkey). Similar evidence comes from the Greek world. Two types of lyre are depicted on some Attic red-figure vases [a](http://www.bib-arch.org/e-features/band-played-on.asp#end01) from about the fifth century B.C. Although the lyres are not actually being played, they are clearly depicted in the same scene.[4](http://www.bib-arch.org/e-features/band-played-on.asp#note04) These images suggest that Nebuchadnezzar’s orchestra may well have had two different kinds of lyre—a *kithara* and some other kind.

This leaves us with what is perhaps the most intriguing of the six instruments referred to, what the King James translators call a dulcimer, *sumponeya* in Aramaic. The designation “dulcimer” is questionable, as reflected in the variety of modern translations for *sumponeya* in addition to “dulcimer”: “bagpipes” (Revised Standard Version), “pipes” (New International Version) and even “an entire musical ensemble” (New Revised Standard Version).

A dulcimer, both in King James’s time and ours, is a stringed instrument backed by a soundboard and played with hammers. There is, however, no evidence for the dulcimer in antiquity.[5](http://www.bib-arch.org/e-features/band-played-on.asp#note05)

For a long time it was thought that the dulcimer appeared in the series of sculptures showing the war of Ashurbanipal in Elam, which was found in 1850 by Austen Henry Layard at Kuyunjik, ancient Nineveh, in the Palace of Sennacherib. (The sculptures are now in the British Museum.) One of the reliefs depicts a group of musicians, including one playing a strange instrument that some have identified as a possible dulcimer (see the second sidebar to this article). Layard illustrated these musicians in his great folio publication *Monuments of Nineveh* as well as in his popular book *Discoveries in the Ruins of Nineveh and Babylon*, where he implicitly linked the instrument in the relief with the dulcimer by citing the Daniel passage in a footnote and by comparing this strange instrument with the “modern santour of the East”[6](http://www.bib-arch.org/e-features/band-played-on.asp#note06) (the santuµr being a Persian instrument very like the dulcimer).[7](http://www.bib-arch.org/e-features/band-played-on.asp#note07)

A “tidied-up” illustration of this supposed dulcimer appeared in two important publications in the 1860s.[8](http://www.bib-arch.org/e-features/band-played-on.asp#note08) In one of them, the instrument is explicitly referred to as a dulcimer, although the author does note that the sculpture depicts it in a strange way.[9](http://www.bib-arch.org/e-features/band-played-on.asp#note09) Nevertheless, for years this relief was thought to give credence to the idea that there was a dulcimer in ancient times.

The series of sculptures in which the supposed dulcimer appears is one of the few Nineveh reliefs made of limestone, which is prone to shattering, rather than gypsum. It was brought to London in many fragments and put together in the British Museum. A substantial break ran right across the representation of the supposed dulcimer. The basis of later, more refined drawings of the “dulcimer” was the rougher sketch made on-site by Layard, who fudged over the damaged area. Because of this, in 1979, as Deputy Keeper of Western Asiatic Antiquities at the British Museum, I arranged for William Langford, the specialist stonemason in my department, to remove the modern “makeup” that filled this damaged area. This made it clear that the instrument in question was nothing other than a horizontal harp of a type well known in Assyrian reliefs. And that was the end of our only ancient “dulcimer.”

So if the *sumponeya* was not a dulcimer, what was it? *Sumponeya*, too, is a loanword from Greek, but there are two possible source words: *sumphonia* or *tumpanon*, the latter being a tambour, a kind of drum. The first possibility, *sumphonia*, is attested in Greek literature from the fourth century B.C. on with the general sense “concord,” “unison of sound”; hence the renderings in the New Revised Standard Version, “an entire musical ensemble,” and the Revised English Bible, “full consort”–perhaps what we would call a symphony orchestra.

The latter possibility, that *sumponeya* might have been derived from the Greek *tumpanon*, was first suggested by Ray Joyce.[10](http://www.bib-arch.org/e-features/band-played-on.asp#note10) This sort of alternation between s and t is known in ancient Greek, so I find this suggestion quite persuasive. The Greek historian Herodotus mentions a *tumpanon* as part of the cultic equipment used in a festival of the Mother Goddess in the early sixth century B.C.[11](http://www.bib-arch.org/e-features/band-played-on.asp#note11) In the fifth century the word is mentioned by the poet Pindar and the playwright Euripides.[12](http://www.bib-arch.org/e-features/band-played-on.asp#note12) Tambours (like tambourines without the jingles) (see eighth-century relief from Karatepe, Turkey) are well attested in Attic red-figure vase paintings of the fifth century B.C., so this is a possibility.[13](http://www.bib-arch.org/e-features/band-played-on.asp#note13)

If the interpretation as *tumpanon* is correct, this would be a kind of handheld drum.

So perhaps the famous refrain from the Book of Daniel ought now to read, “If ye be ready that at what time ye hear the sound of the horn, flute, harp, lyres and tambour, and all kinds of musick, ye fall down and worship the image which I have made.”

Notes

[1.](http://www.bib-arch.org/e-features/band-played-on.asp#note01r) Mary Remnant, *Musical Instruments of the West* (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1978), p. 138 and figs. 119.5–9.

[2.](http://www.bib-arch.org/e-features/band-played-on.asp#note02r) See Terence C. Mitchell, “The Music of the Old Testament Reconsidered,” *Palestine Exploration Quarterly* 124 (1992), p. 137.

[3.](http://www.bib-arch.org/e-features/band-played-on.asp#note03r) See, e.g., John Boardman, *Early Greek Vase Painting: 11th-6th Centuries B.C.—A Handbook* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1998), figs. 99, 105, 131, 145.

[4.](http://www.bib-arch.org/e-features/band-played-on.asp#note04r) See Martha Maas and Jane M. Snyder, *Stringed Instruments of Ancient Greece* (New Haven: Yale Univ. Press, 1989), p. 74, fig. 7; pp. 102–111, figs. 5, 6, 11, 17, 26; p. 134, fig. 11.

[5.](http://www.bib-arch.org/e-features/band-played-on.asp#note05r) See Mitchell, “Music of the Old Testament,” p. 135.

[6.](http://www.bib-arch.org/e-features/band-played-on.asp#note06r) See Austen Henry Layard, *Monuments of Nineveh*, 2nd ser. (London: John Murray, 1853), pl. 49; and *Discoveries in the Ruins of Nineveh and Babylon* (London: John Murray, 1853), pp. 454–455, p. 454 n.

[7.](http://www.bib-arch.org/e-features/band-played-on.asp#note07r) See, e.g., Remnant, *Musical Instruments of the West* (London: Batsford, 1978), p. 177; see also, conveniently, *The Century Dictionary*, rev. ed., 10 vols. (London and New York: The Century Co., 1899), vol. 7, p. 5337, with an illustration from a Persian painting (this dictionary was edited by the great Yale Sanskrit scholar William Dwight Whitney).

[8.](http://www.bib-arch.org/e-features/band-played-on.asp#note08r) The illustration appeared in George Rawlinson, *The Five Great Monarchies of the Ancient Eastern World*, 2nd ed., 3 vols. (New York: Dodd, Mead, & Co., 1881), vol. 1, p. 538; and Carl Engel, *The Music of the Most Ancient Nations, Particularly the Assyrians, Egyptians and Hebrews* (London: J. Murray, 1864).

[9.](http://www.bib-arch.org/e-features/band-played-on.asp#note09r) Engel, *Music*.

[10.](http://www.bib-arch.org/e-features/band-played-on.asp#note10r) In Mitchell and Ray Joyce, “The Musical Instruments in Nebuchadnezzar’s Orchestra,” in D.J. Wiseman, ed., *Notes on Some Problems in the Book of Daniel* (London: Tyndale Press, 1965), pp. 19–27, at pp. 25–26.

[11.](http://www.bib-arch.org/e-features/band-played-on.asp#note11r) Herodotus, *Histories* 4.76.

[12.](http://www.bib-arch.org/e-features/band-played-on.asp#note12r) Conveniently quoted in Andrew Barker, Greek Musical Writings, vol. 1, The Musician and His Art (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1984), pp. 59–60, 74–76, 88.

[13.](http://www.bib-arch.org/e-features/band-played-on.asp#note13r) E.g., in Boardman, *Athenian Red Figure Vases: The Classical Period—A Handbook* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1989), pls. 177, 229, 285, 294, 324; see also, in general, Martin Litchfield West, Ancient Greek Music (Oxford and New York: Clarendon, 1992), p. 124; Mitchell, “Music of the Old Testament,” p. 137.

[a.](http://www.bib-arch.org/e-features/band-played-on.asp#end01r) During the seventh to fifth centuries B.C., Greek vases were generally decorated with black figures on a lighter background. During the Attic period (fifth to fourth century B.C.), however, the natural red terra-cotta of the vase was left exposed for the figures, and the background was painted black.

[Back to top](http://www.bib-arch.org/e-features/band-played-on.asp#top).

http://www.bib-arch.org/images/graypix.gif

Terence C. Mitchell

Terence C. Mitchell was the Keeper of the Department of Western Asiatic Antiquities at the British Museum in London from 1983 until his retirement in 1989. He is the author of The Bible in the British Museum (British Museum Press, 1996) and several chapters in the revised Cambridge Ancient History (Cambridge Univ. Press, 1982).

Letter from the Field: An Ancient Synagogue Comes to Light

by [Mark Wilson](http://www.bib-arch.org/e-features/priene-excavation.asp#author)

[http://www.bib-arch.org/images/articletools-comment.png](http://www.bib-arch.org/e-features/priene-excavation.asp#comments) [Talkback](http://www.bib-arch.org/e-features/priene-excavation.asp#comments)  [Add Your Comment](http://www.bib-arch.org/e-features/priene-excavation.asp)

[](http://www.bib-arch.org/images/e-features/priene-excavation-01.jpg)  
Click to view a slide show of larger images and captions.

Priene is one of Turkey’s best preserved ancient cities. It has a dramatic location on the south side of Mount Mycale, which separates it from Ephesus to the north. The city is draped over a saddle beneath a massive acropolis and arranged in the regular streets characteristic of the Hippodamian grid plan. The city formerly lay beside the ancient Gulf of Latmus (now silted in) across from Miletus. Priene is noted for a number of outstanding Hellenistic structures that still remain: the theater, prytaneion, bouleterion, gymnasion, and extensive city walls. But now Priene is also famous for the synagogue that was discovered in the western residential area in 1895–98 by Theodor Wiegand and Hans Schrader. In their excavation report published in 1904 the structure was tentatively identified as a house church, and so it was labeled on the site plan. In 1928 the Israeli archaeologist E. L. Sukenik first identified this as a synagogue because of the presence of a niche in the building plan and the discovery of a menorah plaque near the niche. Numerous scholars have commented on the synagogue’s significance to Diaspora Judaism but have lamented the lack of further information. Literary evidence tells us that hundreds of thousands of Jews lived in Asia Minor in the first century C.E. However, only two confirmed synagogues have been found: the large one in Sardis and this second one in Priene.

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| [http://www.bib-arch.org/images/e-features/priene-excavation-02-s.jpg](http://www.bib-arch.org/images/e-features/priene-excavation-02.jpg) Click to view a slide show of larger images and captions. | [http://www.bib-arch.org/images/e-features/priene-excavation-03-s.jpg](http://www.bib-arch.org/images/e-features/priene-excavation-03.jpg) Click to view a slide show of larger images and captions. |

In 2008 Hershel Shanks, editor of the *Biblical Archaeology Review*, visited Priene with contributing editor Suzanne Singer and Mark Wilson. Shanks proposed to excavation director Professor Dr. Wulf Raeck that the Biblical Archaeology Society would sponsor a fresh look at the synagogue, with its unusual square apse or niche. Professor Raeck indicated his interest in such a project, and the first excavation at the site in over a century was scheduled for August 2009.

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| [http://www.bib-arch.org/images/e-features/priene-excavation-04-s.jpg](http://www.bib-arch.org/images/e-features/priene-excavation-04.jpg) Click to view a slide show of larger images and captions. | [http://www.bib-arch.org/images/e-features/priene-excavation-05-s.jpg](http://www.bib-arch.org/images/e-features/priene-excavation-05.jpg) Click to view a slide show of larger images and captions. |

Archeologist Dr. Nadin Burkhardt from the University of Frankfurt am Main and Dr. Mark Wilson of the Asia Minor Research Center in Izmir began the work at the synagogue during this year’s campaign. The project had been scheduled for two weeks because of the great amount of work that was required. A team of three Turkish workmen first cleaned the whole area. One of the first objects recovered was a missing menorah plaque with two peacocks. This plaque had been published both as a drawing and as a photograph since the initial excavation, but the drawings lacked accuracy and detail. So the plaque was redrawn and then taken to the excavation depot for safekeeping.

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| [http://www.bib-arch.org/images/e-features/priene-excavation-06-s.jpg](http://www.bib-arch.org/images/e-features/priene-excavation-06.jpg) Click to view a slide show of larger images and captions. | [http://www.bib-arch.org/images/e-features/priene-excavation-07-s.jpg](http://www.bib-arch.org/images/e-features/priene-excavation-07.jpg) Click to view a slide show of larger images and captions. |

An important dimension of the current work was the critical re-measuring of the building and its adjacent structure. Several sondages were taken at key points in an attempt to find ceramic or numismatic evidence of the synagogue’s date as well as to gain an understanding of the different phases of the building. An altar, cut in two and laid down as flooring, was lifted from the floor. A previously unknown Hellenistic inscription to Athena Polias, the patron goddess of Priene, was discovered on it. The niche was cleaned out, and the plaster exposed in an attempt to learn how the niche functioned architecturally in the building. There are several questions still to answer regarding its particular placement in the eastern wall. A team of architects descended on the area during the second week, and made drawings of the building spolia that lay in the synagogue. Their work has allowed a more informed reconstruction of the interior space to be made. The remains of a bench on the north wall are clearly discerned; however, the function of a complementary structure on the south side remains undetermined. The area, sometimes called the main entrance of the synagogue, still leaves unanswered questions. It appears the excavations a century ago greatly disturbed the area, making a full reconstruction difficult. An entrance from the main street through the nearby prostas house seems certain. Also certain are two main periods of the building construction, different in size and form.

[](http://www.bib-arch.org/images/e-features/priene-excavation-08.jpg)  
Click to view a slide show of larger images and captions.

The small finds, the relief plaque, two graffiti with menorah, and the building structure suggest an interpretation of the building as a late antique synagogue. The new excavation was a great success, and a full report is being prepared for publication in academic journals as well as, perhaps, a general summary to come in *Biblical Archaeology Review*. We hope to be in the field again next year.

http://www.bib-arch.org/images/graypix.gif

Mark Wilson

Mark Wilson is the director of the Asia Minor Research Center in Izmir, Turkey. Mark received his doctorate in Biblical Studies from the University of South Africa (Pretoria), where he serves as a Research Fellow in the Department of Old Testament and Biblical Archaeology. He is currently Visiting Professor of Early Christianity at Regent University and leads field studies in Turkey for several universities and seminaries. He is the author of *Charts on the Book of Revelation*, the revising editor of *The Cities of St. Paul*, editor of *Constantinople and the Scenery of the Seven Churches of Asia Minor* and the author of “The Book of Revelation” in the Zondervan Illustrated Bible Backgrounds Commentary. Professor Wilson also served as a consultant for “The First Christians” in the History Channel’s “Lost Worlds” series.

**“Jesus Tomb” Controversy Erupts—Again**

Introduction

[http://www.bib-arch.org/images/articletools-comment.png](http://www.bib-arch.org/debates/jesus-tomb-01.asp#comments) [Talkback](http://www.bib-arch.org/debates/jesus-tomb-01.asp#comments)  [Add Your Comment](http://www.bib-arch.org/debates/jesus-tomb-01.asp)

Claims that the family tomb of Jesus has been found in the East Talpiot section of Jerusalem have sparked bitter debate for a second time by a scholarly conference organized in Jerusalem by the Princeton Theological Seminary to assess the likelihood that the Talpiot tomb is indeed the tomb of Jesus. You can follow the heated discussion using the links below.

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| Initial Statements   * [15 Scholars Protest “Vindication” Claim](http://www.bib-arch.org/debates/jesus-tomb-03.asp) * [The Vindication Claim](http://www.bib-arch.org/debates/jesus-tomb-04.asp) * [DeConick: Dubious Mary Magdalene Identification](http://www.bib-arch.org/debates/jesus-tomb-05.asp) * [Lemaire: It’s Very Improbable](http://www.bib-arch.org/debates/jesus-tomb-06.asp) * [Vermes: No Support Whatever](http://www.bib-arch.org/debates/jesus-tomb-07.asp) * [Gibson: Not Vindicated in Any Way](http://www.bib-arch.org/debates/jesus-tomb-08.asp) * [Tabor: It Could Be the Tomb](http://www.bib-arch.org/debates/jesus-tomb-09.asp) * [Zias: Deliberate Misrepresentation](http://www.bib-arch.org/debates/jesus-tomb-10.asp) | Statments in Response   * [Simcha Jacobovici Responds to His Critics](http://www.bib-arch.org/debates/jesus-tomb-11.asp) * [Princeton Theological Seminary Statement](http://www.bib-arch.org/debates/jesus-tomb-12.asp) * [DeConick: Response to the Conference Participants’ Letter](http://www.bib-arch.org/debates/jesus-tomb-13.asp) * [Tabor: Response to the Conference Participants Statement](http://www.bib-arch.org/debates/jesus-tomb-14.asp) * [Vermes: No Deep Divisions](http://www.bib-arch.org/debates/jesus-tomb-15.asp) * [Shimron Responds to Jacobovici](http://www.bib-arch.org/debates/jesus-tomb-16.asp) * [Kenyan: Some Very Uncommon Names](http://www.bib-arch.org/debates/jesus-tomb-17.asp) * [Fuchs: The Statistics Are Not “Nil”](http://www.bib-arch.org/debates/jesus-tomb-18.asp) | Statments in Response, cont'd.   * [Charlesworth Comments Reported by The Jerusalem Post](http://www.bib-arch.org/debates/jesus-tomb-19.asp) * [Zias: Further Comments](http://www.bib-arch.org/debates/jesus-tomb-20.asp) * [Comments of Dr. Claude Cohen-Matlofsky](http://www.bib-arch.org/debates/jesus-tomb-21.asp) * [Further Comments by Cohen-Matlofsky](http://www.bib-arch.org/debates/jesus-tomb-22.asp) * [Further Comments by Charlesworth](http://www.bib-arch.org/debates/jesus-tomb-23.asp) * [Further Comments by Kenyan](http://www.bib-arch.org/debates/jesus-tomb-24.asp) * [Additional Comments by Cohen-Matlofsky](http://www.bib-arch.org/debates/jesus-tomb-25.asp) * [The Tomb and Statistics](http://www.bib-arch.org/debates/jesus-tomb-26.asp) |
| Background   * [Magness: Has the Tomb of Jesus Been Discovered?](http://www.bib-arch.org/debates/jesus-tomb-02.asp) * [Tabor: Two Burials of Jesus of Nazareth and the Talpiot Yeshua Tomb](http://www.bib-arch.org/debates/jesus-tomb-02-a.asp) * [Evans and Feldman: The Tomb of Jesus? Wrong on Every Count](http://www.bib-arch.org/debates/jesus-tomb-02-b.asp) | | |

More on the Talpiot Tomb Controversy

The first furor occurred in March 2007 when the Discovery Channel aired “The Lost Tomb of Jesus,” which claimed that the Talpiot tomb not only contained the ossuary (bone box) of Jesus but also that of Mary Magdalene, who the program claimed had been Jesus’ wife, and also that of a Judah son of Jesus, who the program suggested had been the son of Jesus and Mary Magdalene. Now a second wave of controversy has been sparked in the wake of a scholarly conference organized in Jerusalem by the Princeton Theological Seminary to assess the likelihood that the Talpiot tomb is indeed the tomb of Jesus.

Even though most of the conference attendees felt that the Talpiot tomb was unlikely to have been the tomb of Jesus, Simcha Jacobovici, director of “The Lost Tomb of Jesus,” issued a press release claiming that the conference had “vindicated” his program. Several conference participants then issued a statement to the contrary. Here you can read the scholars’ statement, Jacobovici’s press release and initial comments by several scholars. Not surprisingly, those comments have led to more comments and reactions.

In addition to claiming that the Talpiot tomb contained the ossuaries of Jesus, Mary Magdalene and Judah son of Jesus, “The Lost Tomb of Jesus,” program further suggested that one ossuary, originally discovered along with nine others in the Talpiot tomb but which has since been lost, was in fact the “James brother of Jesus” ossuary that first made headlines of its own in late 2002. “The Lost Tomb of Jesus” was directed by filmmaker Simcha Jacobovici and produced by James Cameron, the director of the blockbuster movie “Titanic.”

Many scholars immediately criticized the program, saying it contradicted much of what we know historically and that it made numerous dubious assumptions.

At the end of the scholarly conference organized by the Princeton Theological Seminary, Ruth Gath, the widow of Yosef Gat, the original excavator of the Talpiot tomb in 1980, told the audience that her husband had believed that the tomb was indeed that of Jesus but had kept his views private for fear of stoking a worldwide anti-Semitic backlash. Despite Ruth Gath’s revelation, most of the conference attendees felt that the Talpiot tomb was unlikely to have been the tomb of Jesus.

The Search for the Historical Jesus

Jesus Seminar: who are they??

**Early writers who attested Jesus as the Son of God:**

* Clement - Bishop of Rome (30-100 AD)
* Writer of The Epistle of Barnabas (c.70-100 AD)
* Polycarp Bishop of Smyrna (70-100 AD) Student of the Apostle John
* Ignatius – Bishop of Antioch (35-110 AD)
* Ireaeus – Bishop of Lyons (France) (130-200 AD)
* Tertullian – Second Century Apologist (160-220 AD)
* Clement Bishop of Alexandria (150-215 AD)

**Luke’s Reference to Syrian Governor:**

Facts of the NT can be tested and confirmed by archaeology.

Luke describes the census that brought mary and Joseph to Bethlehem as taking place while Corinnus is governor of Syria and during Herod the great rule.

Historians looked at that and said see you can’t believe luke. We know that Herod died 4 BC and Corinnus did not rule until 10 years later.

Later a discovery was made of a coin that proved Corinnureigned from 11 BC during the reing of Herod. Either 2 Corinus’ or Corinnus ruled twice. In either case, Luke was right.

**WRITING OUTSIDE THE BIBLE**

IN his book “The Historical Jesus” Dr. Gary Habermas boasts to have found 39 Ancient Sources that Document the Life of Jesus from outside the Bible includeing 17 nonChristian sources which together record over a hundred facts concerning Jesus.