Archaeological Confirmation Of Genesis

Intro: “Archaeology” comes from the combination of two Greek words: archaios which means ancient or old, and logos meaning word and applied as a study of. Thus, archaeology is the study of the ancient and applied as being through excavations. Merrill Unger wrote, “General archeology as a science based on the excavation, deciphering and critical evaluation of records of the past is a perennial fascinating subject. Of even greater interest is the more restrictive field of Biblical archeology. Dealing with the excavation, decipherment and critical evaluation of ancient records of the past that touch directly or indirectly upon the Bible and its message, Biblical archeology is attracting the attention of larger and larger numbers of enthusiastic investigators, students and Bible readers in general.” (Archaeology and the Old Testament (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1954), p. 9.)

The Bible is a book of history. Daniel Denham wrote, “It is a document that records events, the lives of people, and places in time and space, it is subject to this field of research, at least as concerns such matters.” (Archaeological Discoveries and Research Prove the Bible is Inspired,” In The Beginning” Christian Evidences and Apologetics, ed. Tommy J. Hicks (Lubbock TX: Hicks Publications, 2000), p. 355.) Archaeology can and does confirm the accuracy of the Biblical record. Job once said, “Or speak to the earth, and it shall teach thee: and the fishes of the sea shall declare unto thee” (Job 12:8). While Job meant that the earth would teach his friends that the wicked do prosper in this world, the earth will also teach us the accuracy of the biblical record.

The spade (archaeology) has done several things relative to the Bible. Wayne Jackson gives us a list of five points. “The science of archaeology has been a multiple benefactor to the Bible student. Archaeology has: (1) Aided in the identification of biblical places and in the establishment of biblical dates; (2) Assisted in our understanding of ancient customs and obscure language idioms; (3) Shed new light on numerous biblical words; (4) Enhanced our understanding of certain points of New Testament doctrine; (5) Progressively silenced the infidel critics of the inspired Word of God.....In view of this ongoing research, our appreciation of the Sacred Volume deepens and our confidence in its divine origin abounds.” (Biblical Studies in the Light of Archaeology (Montgomery, AL: Apologetics Press, 1982), p. 4-5.)

When we approach the book of Genesis, there is again a great deal of material available to us. The archaeologist Joseph Free wrote, “This writer once thumbed through the book of Genesis and mentally noted that each of the fifty chapters are either illuminated or confirmed by some archaeological discovery—the same would be true for most of the remaining chapters of the Bible, both Old and New Testament.” (Archaeology and Bible History (Wheaton, IL: Scripture Press, 1969), p. 340.) Therefore, we will of necessity limit our study to just a few areas.

I. Moses And Writing

A. The Bible affirms that Moses wrote the Pentateuch.

B. Liberal critics claimed it was impossible for Moses to write them.

1. They claimed there was no alphabet, thus no writing.
2. This added to the rise of the Documentary Hypothesis (known as JEDP Theory).
3. Wayne Jackson notes: “T. K. Cheyne, writing in the Encyclopedia Biblica, contended that the Torah [law] was not written until almost a thousand years after Moses! In fact, the modernist said that the art of writing was virtually unknown in Israel prior to the establishment of David’s kingdom!” (p. 31.)
4. Gleason L. Archer, Jr., wrote, “Even as late as 1893 the faithful followers of Wellhausen were still propounding his dictum that, since writing was only utilized about the time of David, Moses could not possibly have written the Pentateuch even if he had wanted to.” (Bibliotheca Sacra, (Dallas, TX: Dallas Theological Seminary (Electronic edition by Galaxie Software, 1999), Available: Logos Library System.)
C. **Archaeology confirmed that writing did exist prior to Moses.**


2. While these are pictographic tablets, it shows that writing existed long before Moses.

3. Gen. 10:10 “And the beginning of his kingdom was Babel, and Erech, and Accad, and Calneh, in the land of Shinar.”
   a. Accad is also known as Sippar (among other names) which means “Book Town” indicating it was famous for its libraries.
   b. Vast Abrahamic and pre-Abrahamic libraries have been found not only in Accad (Sippar), but also in Kish, Erech, Lagash, Ur, Babylon, Eridu, Nippur, Larsa, and Fara.

4. Others:
   a. “Weld Dynastic Prism” which is the first known outline of world history written 2170 B.C by Nur-Ninsubur.
   b. “Code of Hammurabi”
      1. This is Amraphel of Genesis 14:1 “And it came to pass in the days of Amraphel king of Shinar, Arioch king of Ellasar, Chedorlaomer king of Elam, and Tidal king of nations;”
      2. It contains 4,000 lines of inscription in the cuneiform writing of the Semetic Babylonian language (the language spoken by Abraham).
   c. There are thousands of inscriptions found in Egypt antedating Moses by a thousand years, along with the many other finds.

5. Wayne Jackson quotes Dr. W. F. Albright as saying, “Only a very ignorant person can now suggest that writing (in many forms) was not known in Palestine and the immediate surrounding regions during the entire second millennium B. C.” (p. 32)

II. **Creation**

A. **God created the world in 6 literal 24 hour periods.**

1. Gen. 1:1 “In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.”

2. Genesis 1 gives us an account of the creation.

3. Genesis 2 gives supplemental information to chapter 1 with specific information about the creation of man.

4. Free wrote, “Together they form an overall view of the broad sweep of creation, along with the essential details.” (p. 15.)

B. **Three major discoveries in Assyria and Babylon underscoring the universal belief in creation and later the universal flood.**

1. The Babylonian epic *Enuma Elish* tells of Creation

2. The *Epic of Gilgamesh* includes the story of the Flood

3. The more recently recovered *Epic of Atrahasis* brings both Creation and the Flood together in a continuing story

C. **Enuma Elish**

1. This is transliterated from the first few words and means “when above.”

2. Garry Brantley wrote, “This Akkadian document has created much general interest in comparative religious studies, primarily because of the number of similarities it presents to the Genesis cosmogony. In characteristic fashion, liberal theologians, pointing to the linguistic and conceptual similarities between the Genesis Record and *Enuma Elish* (and other ancient Near Eastern creation epics), assert that
Genesis is a revision of Sumerian and Akkadian creation myths, purged of their polytheism and adapted to the Hebrews’ own flavor of religious bias.” (Digging For Answers (Montgomery, AL: Apologetics Press, Inc., 1995). p. 77.)

3. Similarities
   a. The number seven:
      (1) Genesis has seven days in the creation week while Enuma Elish is written on seven tablets or cantos.
      (2) Both accounts know of a time when the earth was waste and void.
      (3) Genesis order follows formlessness while in Enuma Elish Marduk defeats chaos and establishes order.
      (4) Both accounts have a similar order of events in creation.
      (5) Garry Brantley wrote, “For instance, in both works, the order is as follows: (1) a watery mixture is present in the initial stages of creation; (2) light is then present (in Enuma Elish light emanates from the gods, while in Genesis Yahwah creates light); (3) the Firmament is created; (4) dry land appears; (5) the luminaries are established; (6) man is created [NOTE: It is interesting that in Genesis, man is created on the sixth day, and in Enuma Elish his creation is recorded in the sixth tablet]; (7) deity rests (in Enuma Elish, the gods rest and celebrate; in Genesis, Yahweh ceases His creative work and sanctifies the Sabbath).” (p. 81)
   b. Both accounts speak of the creation of the moon, stars, plant life, animals, and man.

4. Because of the similarities liberal theologians (especially the Higher Critics) claimed Moses (Creation) copied from and refined the more ancient Babylonians account (since the Babylonian is older by about four centuries, it is impossible that Enuma Elish copied from Moses).
   a. The differences (which are far more than the similarities) show that one did not copy from the other but point to a common historical event.
   b. K. A. Kitchen noted: “The common assumption that the Hebrew account is simply a purged and simplified version of the Babylonian legend (applied also to the Flood stories) is fallacious on methodological grounds. In the Ancient Near East, the rule is that simply accounts or traditions may give rise (by accretion and embellishment) to elaborate legends, but not vice versa. In the ancient Orient, legends were not simplified or turned into pseudo-history (historicized) as has been assumed for early Genesis.” (Ancient Orient and Old Testament (Downers Grove, IL: Inter Varsity Press, 1966), p. 89.)
      (1) Since the Genesis is the simplest of the two, it is the one that is pure and contains the true account of the creation.
      (2) Enuma Elish gives added confirmation to the accuracy of the Scriptures.
   c. Unger writes, “These are not traditions peculiar to Semitic peoples and religions, which have developed out of their common characteristics. They are traditions common to all civilized nations of antiquity. Their common elements point to a time when the human race occupied a common home and held a common faith. Their likenesses are due to a common inheritance, each race of men handing on from age to age records, oral and written, of the primeval history of the race....The Genesis account is not only the
purest, but everywhere bears the unmistakable impress of divine inspiration when compared with the extravagances and corruptions of other accounts. The Biblical narrative, we may conclude, represents the original form these traditions must have assumed.” (p. 37.)

III. MAN’S FALL

A. God created Adam and Eve and then placed them in a Garden (Eden) which contained the “tree of life.”

B. Location

1. The Garden of Eden is in the Euphrates-Tigris (Hiddekel is an ancient name for the Tigris River and the Septuagint so translates it) Valley.
   a. The area is known geographically as Mesopotamia.
   b. Gen. 2:10-15 “And a river went out of Eden to water the garden; and from thence it was parted, and became into four heads. 11The name of the first is Pison: that is it which compasseth the whole land of Havilah, where there is gold; 12And the gold of that land is good: there is bdellium and the onyx stone. 13And the name of the second river is Gihon: the same is it that compasseth the whole land of Ethiopia. 14And the name of the third river is Hiddekel: that is it which goeth toward the east of Assyria. And the fourth river is Euphrates. 15And the LORD God took the man, and put him into the garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it.”

2. Unger notes that “Genesis locates the beginning of human life in the very region which archaeological research has demonstrated to be the cradle of civilization.” (p. 40.)

3. William F. Albright writes, “Archaeological research has thus established beyond doubt that there is no focus of civilization in the earth that can begin to compete in antiquity and activity with the basin of the Eastern Mediterranean and the region immediately to the east of it—Breasted’s Fertile Crescent.” (From The Stone Age to Christianity (Baltimore, Md: Johns Hopkins Press, 1940), p.6.)

4. Wayne Jackson writes, “In the archaeological literature from ancient Sumer (near the head of the Persian Gulf) there is the account of the land of Dilmun. It is a paradise that is good, clean and bright; it knows no sickness or death. It was alleged to be located at the place where ‘the sun rises.’” (p. 8.)
   a. This corresponds to the Biblical location of Eden.
   b. Gen. 2:8 “And the LORD God planted a garden eastward in Eden; and there he put the man whom he had formed.”

C. The Myth of Adapa

1. A story of man’s failure to obtain eternal life.
2. It was found on four cuneiform tablets (three from King Ashurbanipal’s library in Nineveh and one from the archives of the Egyptian kings Amenhotep III and IV at Armana).
3. It corresponds to Genesis in 2 areas.
   a. Food of life is involved.
   b. The loss of immortality.
4. The Temptation Seals give a picture of the Genesis account.
   a. One seal discovered at Nineveh pictures a tree with a man on one side and a woman on the other side, both seated.
      (1) The woman is plucking fruit
      (2) Behind her to the left is a serpent standing erect and appears as if whispering to her.
b. Another seal was found at Tepe Gawra (a few miles north of Nineveh) by E. A. Speiser in 1932 and is called the “Adam and Eve” seal. It depicts a naked man and woman walking in a sad condition followed by a serpent.

IV. EARLY USE OF METALS
A. Skeptics said that iron was unknown previous to the twelfth century B.C.
B. Gen. 4:22 “And Zillah, she also bare Tubalcain, an instructor of every artificer in brass and iron: and the sister of Tubalcain was Naamah.”
C. Archaeology:
   1. In 1933 Dr. H. E. Frankfort was excavating in the ruins of Asmar, 100 miles Northeast of Babylon.
      a. He found an iron blade dated around 2700 B.C.
      b. This pushed the iron age back 1500 years.
   2. The Weld Dynastic Prism gave the names of ten kings who reigned before the flood.
      a. The third, fifth, and sixth kings reigned in Babgurguru.
      b. Babgurguru means “city of works in bronze.”
      c. Halley says, “It may be a tradition of Cain’s city, 4:17.” (p. 70.)
   3. In some pre-flood cities: Eridu, Obeid, Erech, Shushan, Ur, Kish, Fara, Sippar, and Larsa many copper implements have been found.
   4. Merrill Unger writes, “The potters wheel, the sailing boat, wheeled vehicles, production and use of copper and bronze, bricks and cylinder seals are among man’s discoveries as revealed by the excavations of the earliest sites.” (p. 44.)

V. THE FLOOD
A. The global flood is one of the most important events in the history of man (Gen. 6-9).
B. Archaeological confirmation:
   1. The record of a flood is found in every branch of the human race.
      a. Accounts of a flood that destroyed all people with the exception of one family have been found in Egyptian, Greek, Hindu, Chinese, Indian, English, Polynesian, Mexican, Peruvian, Greenland, American Indian, Babylonian, Assyrian, Persian, Fiji Islands, Brazilian, and Phrygian cultures.
      b. The only way to account for such is that they all point back to a common historical event.
      c. There are 2 that deserve special attention.
   2. The Sumerian account discovered at Nippur dating prior to 2000 B.C.
      a. It is inscribed on both sides with three columns to a side.
      b. The first column tells of a previous destruction of men and then how men and animals were created.
      c. The second column tells how a deity founded five cities and assigned a tutelary god over each.
      d. The third column introduces the flood, which made the goddess Ishtar (Ninhursag) groan for her people. Ziusudra (Ziusuddu) was king-priest. At the news of the flood, he made an idol of wood and worshiped it.
e. In the fourth column Ziusudra is told to stand by a wall and receive communication concerning the coming disaster. The purpose of the gods is to make known to him to destroy man.

f. In the fifth column the flood begins and Ziusudra is riding it out in a huge boat.

g. The sixth column tells about Ziusudra receiving immortality and taken to a paradise called “the mount of Dilum” to live forever.

3. The Babylonian account is found in the eleventh book of the *Epic of Gilgamesh*.

a. It bears striking resemblance to the biblical account of the flood.

b. Gilgamesh appears as the partly divine king of Uruk (the king Erech in Genesis 10:10 “And the beginning of his kingdom was Babel, and Erech, and Accad, and Calneh, in the land of Shinar.”).

c. His friend is Enkidu who dies and this sends Gilgamesh on his journey to find Utnapishtim the immortal to learn the nature of life beyond death and the possibility of obtaining immortality.

d. Utnapishtim explains his immortality by giving him an account of the Deluge.

e. The god Ea (god of wisdom) warned him about it.

f. Utnapishtim builds a huge boat in the form of a cube measuring 120 cubits and having six stories.

g. He divided the exterior into seven parts and the interior into nine parts and pitched it within and without with bitumen.

h. The god Adad (god of tempest and rain) brought the tempest and Annunaki brought the lightning. All the deities morn at the great destruction.

i. At last the ship strikes ground on Mount Nisir.

j. Utnapishtim sends out a dove on the seventh day followed by a swallow and a raven. The raven does not return.

k. Utnapishtim offers a sacrifice and the gods all crowd around and they quarrel over who is responsible for the flood.

l. Enlil is blamed and when he arrives he is upset that Utnapishtim has survived.

m. Enlil changes his mind and bestows immortality upon him.

n. While there are many differences the only way to account for the similarities is that they both go back to a common source originating in an actual historical event.

VI. **TABLE OF NATIONS**

A. **Genesis**

1. It is a book of beginnings.

2. It records the origins of the world, man, sin, redemption, etc.

3. It also records the beginning of nations: Gen. 10.

B. **Archaeology**

1. Joseph Free wrote, “This list of the peoples living during the early history of man gives indication of the general direction of their migrations and the location of their settlement.” (p. 44.)

2. William Albright said, “The Table of Nations remains an astonishingly accurate document.” (p. 30.)
3. William Albright adds, “The tenth chapter of Genesis has long attracted students of ancient Oriental geography and ethnography. It stands absolutely alone in ancient literature, without a remote parallel, even among the Greeks, where we find the closest approach to a distribution of peoples in genealogical framework.” (p. 30.)

4. Unger indicates the importance archaeology has played when he states, “Although numerous names of places and peoples included in the Table were known from ancient literary sources, notably Greek and Roman, many have been discovered for the first time by modern archeology.” (p. 77)

VII. UR OF THE CALDEES

A. Abram’s home.
   1. Abram’s original home was in lower Mesopotamia in Ur.
      a. Later he moved to Haran in upper Mesopotamia on his way to Canaan (Gen. 11-12).
      b. Abram’s home was not just called Ur, but more specifically Ur of the Chaldees or Chaldeans.
      c. Gen. 11:31 “And Terah took Abram his son, and Lot the son of Haran his son’s son, and Sarai his daughter in law, his son Abram’s wife; and they went forth with them from Ur of the Chaldees, to go into the land of Canaan; and they came unto Haran, and dwelt there.”
   2. At one time some held that the qualifying phrase “of the Chaldees” was an anachronism since they contended the Chaldeans did not get the district of Ur till the seventh century B.C.
   3. Wayne Jackson notes that “Donald Wiseman, Professor of Assyriology, University of London, has replied: ‘This ancient city of Ur certainly lay in territory called Kaldu (Chaldaea) from the early first millennium B.C. Since this area was normally named after the tribes living there, and no earlier general name for the area is known, it would be unscientific to call the reference to Ur ‘of the Chaldees’ in the second millennium an anachronism.’” (p. 11)

B. Abraham was called by God to leave his homeland.
   1. Gen. 12:1 “Now the LORD had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father’s house, unto a land that I will shew thee:”
   2. He was being called out of idolatry.
   3. Terah (Abraham’s father) served other gods; Jos. 24:2 “And Joshua said unto all the people, Thus saith the LORD God of Israel, Your fathers dwelt on the other side of the flood in old time, even Terah, the father of Abraham, and the father of Nachor: and they served other gods.”
   4. Joseph Free writes, “The archaeological excavation of Ur by Woolley has shed much light on the pagan religion which flourished at Ur in the days of Abraham. The chief deity of Ur was the moon-god named Nanna, whose temple and ziggurat were in a large area measuring twelve hundred by six hundred feet. Other evidence has been brought forth concerning private worship, which included the worship of idols placed in niches in the private house shrines.” (p. 50-51.)

VIII. CAMELS IN EGYPT

A. Abraham was given camels while he sojourned in Egypt
   1. He was also given sheep, oxen, he asses, menservants, maidservants, and she asses by Pharaoh.
   2. Gen. 12:16 “And he entreated Abram well for her sake: and he had sheep, and oxen, and he asses, and menservants, and maidservants, and she asses, and camels.”
B. Archaeology
1. Critics of the Bible have stated that the reference to camels in Egypt is an obvious error.
2. Wayne Jackson says that T. K. Cheyne states, “The assertion that the ancient Egyptians knew the camel is unfounded.” (p. 26.)
3. Joseph Free writes, “The writer’s study of archaeological material has, however, revealed a knowledge of the camel in Egypt even before the time of Abraham. Archaeological evidence showing early knowledge of the camel in Egypt includes statuettes and figurines of camels, plaques bearing representation of camels, rock carvings and drawings, camel bones, a camel skull, and a camel hair rope. These objects, some twenty in number, range from the seventh century B.C. to the period before 3000 B.C. Thus the evidence again shows the authenticity of the record concerning Abraham.” (p. 55-56.)

IX. Battle of the Kings
A. Genesis 14 records this incident.
B. Critics said.
1. Joseph Free writes, “1. The names of the Mesopotamian kings are fictional or unhistorical; 2. In the days of Abraham there was no such extensive travel as indicated by this military expedition; 3. There was no line of march east of Palestine, as indicated by Genesis 14:5ff.” (p. 57.)
2. Archaeology has given confirmation to each of these objections.
C. The Kings
1. The kings have been confirmed.
2. Joseph Free writes, “Inscriptions found in recent years have shown that the names of the Mesopotamian kings may in some cases be identified with names of persons already known from the discoveries, and that, in any case, they fit into the pattern of Babylonian names.” (p. 57.)
D. Travel
1. Travel was extensive in those days.
2. Joseph Free writes that in Abraham’s day “travel from Mesopotamia to the Mediterranean was so common that when a person rented a wagon he ran the risk of having it worn out by being driven several hundred miles to the sea-coast in the vicinity of Syria and Palestine.” (p. 57-58.)
E. The line of march.
1. Cities have been discovered confirming the line of march in Genesis 14.
2. Daniel Denham writes that “W. F. Albright and Nelson Glueck uncovered the ruins of a line of pre-Exodus cities along ‘the King’s Highway’ in what would have been the line of march the invading forces would have followed, and they date them from the time of Abraham (cf. vs. 4–7). Albright states that he ‘formerly considered this extraordinary line of march as being the best proof of the essentially legendary character of the narrative,’ but the evidence changed his personal assessment of the text.” (p. 362.)
X. MELCHIZEDEK

A. Abraham defeats the confederacy of kings

1. Gen. 14:13-17 “And there came one that had escaped, and told Abram the Hebrew; for he dwelt in the plain of Mamre the Amorite, brother of Eshcol, and brother of Aner: and these were confederate with Abram. 14And when Abram heard that his brother was taken captive, he armed his trained servants, born in his own house, three hundred and eighteen, and pursued them unto Dan. 15And he divided himself against them, he and his servants, by night, and smote them, and pursued them unto Hobah, which is on the left hand of Damascus. 16And he brought back all the goods, and also brought again his brother Lot, and his goods, and the women also, and the people. 17And the king of Sodom went out to meet him after his return from the slaughter of Chedorlaomer, and of the kings that were with him, at the valley of Shaveh, which is the king’s dale.”

2. Melchizedek come out to meet Abraham; Gen. 14:18-20 “And Melchizedek king of Salem brought forth bread and wine: and he was the priest of the most high God. And he blessed him, and said, Blessed be Abram of the most high God, possessor of heaven and earth: And blessed be the most high God, which hath delivered thine enemies into thy hand. And he gave him tithes of all”

B. Melchizedek described.

1. Heb. 7:2-3 “King of righteousness, and after that also King of Salem, which is, King of peace; Without father, without mother, without descent, having neither beginning of days, nor end of life; but made like unto the Son of God; abideth a priest continually.”

2. James Orr writes “Urusalim is to be identified with Jerusalem...The name of this king is given as Abd-Khiba (or Abd-chiba), though Hommel, quoted by G.A. Smith, Jerusalem, II, 14, note 7, reads Chiba. Zimmer, in ZA, 1891, 246, says that it can be read Abditaba, and so Sayce (HDB, III, 335b) calls him [εφηνεδη τοβη]. The king tells his Egyptian overlord, ‘Neither my father nor my mother set me in this place: the mighty arm of the king (or, according to Sayce, ‘the arm of the mighty king’) established me in my father’s house.’” (International Standard Bible Encyclopedia (Albany, OR: Ages Software, Inc., 1999), Available: Logos Library System.)

3. Melchizedek’s kingship was not conferred by his parents, it was not something he inherited, but it was given to him by God.

XI. SARAH GIVING HAGAR TO ABRAHAM

A. God’s promise

1. Abraham would have a son.
2. Sarah was barren
3. In Genesis 15 Sarah gives her handmaiden Hagar to Abraham to bear a son through her.

B. Archaeology

1. Sarah was not following God’s instructions but man’s traditions.
   a. The Nuzi tablets show the custom that when a wife was childless, “the wife could present her own slave-girl to her husband.” (The New Bible Dictionary (Wheaton, Illinois: Tyndale House Publishers, Inc., 1962) Available: Logos Library System)
   b. According to Joseph Free the Code of Hammurabi indicates the same practice. (pp. 59-60.)
2. According to Merrill Unger, the responsibility for the girl and the child then went to the father (in this case Abraham) which would explain why he was reluctant to send Hagar and Ishmael away without divine intervention. (pp. 121-122.)
3. God also records much the same actions by Rachel giving Bilhah and later Leah (but for different reasons) giving Zilpah to Jacob (Gen. 30).
XII. SODOM AND GOMORRAH

A. The Destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah has been an area of controversy.

1. Gen. 14:2 “That these made war with Bera king of Sodom, and with Birsha king of Gomorrah, Shinab king of Admah, and Shemeber king of Zeboiim, and the king of Bela, which is Zoar.”
   a. There were five principle cities of the plain.
   b. Sodom, Gomorrah, Adman, Zeboiim, and Bela (or Zoar).

2. God caused fire and brimstone to come down upon them destroying them; Gen. 19.

3. Most believe that these cities are buried in water just Southeast of the Dead Sea.
   a. According to Joseph Free, one indication is that “there are five streams at the south end of the Dead Sea, each one of which may have been the source of water for each of the cities in the group of five. Archaeological explorations...have shown evidence of a break in civilization about 2000 B.C. Recent researches by Nelson Glueck also have shown a break in culture about 2000 B. C. in Transjordan, which he connects with the period of Abraham.” (p. 63.)
   b. Daniel Denham writes, “There is a mount, called Jebel Usdum (Arabic for Mt. Sodom), stretching north and south about five miles in this region. A layer of salt at its base is 150 feet deep and extends for some seven miles. There is evidence of a violent up-heaval in the area. Sulphur, salt, and bitumen (i.e. brimstone, Gen. 14:10) lie on the top: having been thrown up by a great force. Geologists claim that there is extensive evidence of the fusion of rock formations with ‘great heat’ (cf. Gen. 19:27-28). There is also evidence of the burning on the site of Jebel Usdum.” (p. 363.)

XIII. THE HITTITES

A. They are mentioned a few times in Genesis and many times throughout the Old Testament.

1. Regarding God’s promise to give Abraham the land; Gen. 15:20 “And the Hittites, and the Perizzites, and the Rephaims,”

2. Abraham buying a burial place; Gen. 23:10 “And Ephron dwelt among the children of Heth: and Ephron the Hittite answered Abraham in the audience of the children of Heth, even of all that went in at the gate of his city, saying,”

3. Gen. 26:34 “And Esau was forty years old when he took to wife Judith the daughter of Beeri the Hittite, and Bashemath the daughter of Elon the Hittite:"

B. The skeptics denied their existence.

1. Joseph Free stated, “Even though they are referred to these many times, some scholars in the nineteenth century expressed doubts as to the existence or at least the importance of such an ancient people.” (p. 125.)

2. Joseph Free adds, “‘E. A. W. Budge of the British Museum, writing as late as 1902, still expressed doubt concerning this identification, and said that it had been made ‘on insufficient ground.’” (p. 126.)

C. Archaeology.

1. Merrill Unger writes, “William Wright, a missionary at Damascus, and A. H. Sayce were among the first to reconstruct the outlines of the history of the ancient Hittite empire.” (p. 92.)
2. Joseph Free writes, “In 1906, Hugo Winckler of Berlin went to the site known as Boghaz-koi, in central Turkey, and there examined the remains of what proved to be the capital of the Hittite Empire.” (p. 126.)
   a. He found 10,000 clay tablets revealing much about Hittite culture.
   b. It also reveals they were an important people of that time and had an extended empire.
3. Wayne Jackson adds that “some of these discoveries are tied in with the patriarchs of Genesis, thus establishing the accuracy of that inspired document.” (p. 28.)

XIV. CAVE OF MACHPELAH
A. When Sarah died Abraham sought to purchase the cave of Machpelah at Hebron from Ephron; Gen. 23.
   1. Ephron was willing to give Abraham the cave.
   2. Abraham insisted on buying it from him.
   3. The practice of giving away the field accords well with Hittite custom.
   4. Daniel Denham states, “It freed the sons of Heth from the burden of taxation for a field that they now considered unusable.” (p. 364.)
B. The payment.
   1. Gen. 23:16 “Abraham weighed to Ephron the silver, which he had named in the audience of the sons of Heth, four hundred shekels of silver, current money with the merchant.”
   2. Joseph Free writes “This shows that money was measured by weight in those days and was not yet coined. The archaeological discoveries indicate that coinage began about 700 B.C., probably being first developed by the Lydians of Asia Minor. Thus the implication that the shekel was a weight rather than a coin in the days of Abraham is another indication of the early date of the record concerning Abraham’s purchase of Machpelah. A similar indication of the shekel as a weight rather than a coin is seen in the time of Joseph as well.” (p. 67.)

XV. SELLING OF THE BIRTHRIGHT
A. Esau sells his birthright; Gen. 25.
   1. Esau had been in the field and when he came in he was faint.
   2. He wanted some of the pottage which Jacob had made.
   3. Thus he sells his birthright for the pottage.
B. Archaeology.
   1. This occurrence is supported by the Nuzi tablet, found in Mesopotamia and dating from the patriarchal period.
   2. Joseph Free writes, “In one Nuzi tablet, there is a record of a man named Tupkitilla, who transferred his inheritance rights concerning a grove to his brother, Kurpazah, in exchange for three sheep.” (pp. 68-69.)

XVI. LABAN’S TERAPHIM
A. Jacob and Laban.
   1. Jacob served Laban for 20 years.
      a. 7 years for Leah.
      b. 7 years for Rachel.
      c. 6 years for the flocks he would receive.
2. Jacob leaves to return to Canaan.
   a. Rachel steals the family images or teraphim.
   b. Laban pursues Jacob for 7 days.
   c. When Laban overtook Jacob, he searched diligently for the teraphim.
   d. Why would Laban (a man of great wealth) be so concerned over the idols?

B. The teraphim were closely associated with the inheritance.
1. Merrill Unger states that according to the Nuzi tablets “Evidently the possession of these household gods implied leadership of the family and in the case of a married daughter assured her husband the right to the property of her father. Since Laban evidently had sons of his own when Jacob left for Canaan, they alone had the right to their father's gods, and the theft of these household idols by Rachel was a serious offense (Gen. 31:19, 30, 25), aimed at preserving for her husband the chief title to Laban's estate.” (p. 123.)

2. Jacob (with possession of the teraphim) could appear in court and make claim to the estate of Laban.

3. It is no wonder Laban pursued Jacob with such intensity.

Conclusion: Since according to Joseph Free, every chapter of Genesis has either been illuminated or confirmed by archaeology, it is obvious that much more could be written. Just about every aspect of Israel in Egypt has been confirmed by archaeological discoveries. While the study of archaeology does not appeal to some, we should all recognize the importance of this line of evidence confirming the Bible as God’s Word. There is literally an amazing amount of discoveries all pointing to the fact that the Bible is inspired of God.