

The Muse

The Newsletter of the Museum of Biblical & Sacred Writings

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HELP THE MBSW!

The Museum of Biblical & Sacred Writings is excited about the relationships that we develop with colleagues such as Scott Moffatt, a friend of the Museum who has agreed to build five exhibit showcases to display Torah Scrolls and other items of antiquity. These cases will be built during the latter part of this summer for use in the Museum's Fall Semester exhibits. The estimated cost per case is approximately \$1,000, so we are in the process of raising \$5,000. You can help the Museum reach this goal with a contribution. Thank you for considering this request.

CHRISTMAS IN JULY: STAR OF WONDER

By THURBER D. PROFFITT, PH.D.

Did you know that the Christmas Story is told four times in the New Testament? Matthew writes about the Magi ("wise men"), Luke writes about the shepherds, Paul mentions Jesus' birth in Galatians(4:4), and John mentions it in the Apocalypse or Revelation. Over the years, many have speculated concerning what the wise men saw in the heavens. In the New International Version New Testament we read the Magi report,

"We saw his star in the east at its rising...the star was ahead of them until it came and stopped..." (Matt. 2: 1-2, 9). An Irish pastor wrote a book about these verses, *The Great Christ Comet* (2015). According to Reverend Nicoll, the star was a comet in the year 6 BC. But where was the comet? According to Rev. 12, the comet was in the constellation Virgo (virgin) at the time of the Hydra (dragon) meteor shower. On September 23, 2017, weather permitting, you too may be able to see what the Magi saw in September or October of 6 BC!

KING DAVID'S PALACE

Over the years archaeologists have discussed the historicity of King David of Ancient Israel. However, in the early 1990's at Tel Dan in Israel, Israeli archaeologist Avraham Biran discovered an ancient inscription that referred to the "House of David" about a century after King David's time. Since then the

Biblical "naysayers" have had to admit that there really was a King David.

Now the primary issue that Jerusalem archaeologists raise is the location of King David's Palace. Was David's Palace on the "City of David's hill, south of the Temple Mount area? Or was it on or next to the Temple Mount? Some have argued that the 12 acre spur south of the Temple Mount known as the City of David was really the site of the Ancient Temple of Jerusalem. Archaeologists and historians are writing books arguing for the various possible sites.

You just have to take a trip to Jerusalem to see for yourself! How about joining the next HistoryOnTheMove Study Tour in January? Visit www.historyonthemove.com for details.

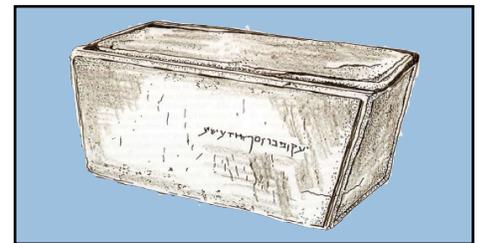
JAMES OSSUARY INSCRIPTION — AUTHENTIC OR FORGERY?

In 2002, Israeli Oded Golan, a collector of items of antiquity, introduced an ancient bone box, or ossuary, that he had acquired in an article of *Biblical Archaeologist Review*. The bone box has an inscription on it that reads in Aramaic "James, son of Joseph, brother of Jesus." Is this one of the brothers of Jesus? Almost immediately after the introduction of the bone box, scholars

began to debate about whether the inscription was authentic or a forgery.

In the July/August 2016 issue of *Biblical Archaeologist Review*, Editor Hershel Shanks raises the fact that scholars have differed in their opinions over the authenticity of the bone box inscription for over a decade. Oded Golan had to undergo a seven year trial in Israel concerning his claim of authenticity. The trial was

finally dismissed for lack of evidence. Biblical Archaeology often presents us with issues of authenticity!



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