

\$2



A 'take home'
guide to the
Bibleworld
Galleries

This guide book contains summaries of the Bibleworld Exhibits. Due to constraints of space, we cannot include all the information on all of our text panels. In this booklet, we have provided short descriptions about some of the artefacts, models and replicas. We encourage you to read the suggested Bible passages.

(Booklet produced August 2016)

Bibleworld aims to provide an enjoyable and educational environment which inspires people to continue learning about the world in which the Biblical events took place. The Bibleworld Charitable trust is a non-denominational not-for-profit organisation and is run by volunteers.

www.bibleworld.org.nz

1) The Era of the Patriarchs

(approx. 2200 – 1900 BC)

The Patriarchs lived about 4000 years ago, at a time when some people dwelt in walled cities, others lived in villages and some travelled and traded internationally. Abraham left his home city of Ur in Mesopotamia, and in time made his home in Canaan, where he and his family lived as Bedouin in tents. The book of Genesis describes God's covenant promises to Abraham: that he would have many descendants, who would possess the Promised land, and these descendants were to be a blessing to the nations. The land promised to Abraham was at the crossroads of three continents: Asia, Africa and Europe.

Family rivalry was rife during the time of the Patriarchs. It is family jealousy that eventually leads to Joseph being sold into slavery in Egypt, with the remainder of his family moving to Egypt later during a great famine. The time of the Patriarchs concludes with Joseph, his father Jacob and their extended family living in Egypt, far from the Promised Land.

Key People and events

Abraham and Sarah

God's covenant promises to Abraham and his descendants

The destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah

Hagar and the birth of Ishmael

The birth of Isaac

Jacob and Esau

Jacob marries Leah and Rachel and has 12 sons and 1 daughter

Joseph sold into slavery in Egypt

Jacob and his family move to Egypt during a severe famine

Bible references: Genesis 12 – 50, possibly the book of Job



Replica panel from the Gilgamesh Epic

This is a replica of one of a series of tablets which make up the Gilgamesh Epic, an ancient story telling the adventures of a Mesopotamian hero called Gilgamesh. This particular section of the Epic tells of a man called Utanapushtim who survives a flood. The account of Utanapushtim contains some interesting parallels with the account of Noah in the Bible. See Genesis 6—8.



Puabi cylinder seal

This cylinder seal is a copy of one owned by a lady called Pu-abi, who was queen of Ur in around 2600 BC. Her name and title are written in cuneiform script on the seal which was made from

lapis lazuli, sourced from the region of Afghanistan. In Genesis 38 we read of Tamar using a cylinder seal on a cord as a means of identifying the father of her twins.



Bedouin Model

This model shows some features of a Bedouin lifestyle and reflects how Abraham and Sarah might have lived. The model shows people living in goat's hair tents. The site is located near a well which was of vital importance for supplying people and livestock with water. See Genesis 12—25 to read of Abraham's travels, including his conflicts over the use of wells.

2) Egypt and the Exodus

(approx. 1900 – 1400 BC)

About 400 years after the time of Joseph, circumstances had become quite difficult for Abraham's descendants in Egypt who were now living as slaves. God raises up a deliverer, Moses, to free his people from slavery in Egypt. Moses as a representative of God confronts Pharaoh, a representative of the Egyptian gods, and through a series of plagues God displays his power over the whole world.

After a final deadly plague, Abraham's descendants, the Israelites leave Egypt in the Exodus. At Mount Sinai, God makes a covenant with his chosen people and provides them with a Law Code outlining how they are to live. Despite God's miraculous provisions for his people, they continually disobey and distrust God, which results in that generation spending 40 years wandering in the wilderness. This period of time concludes with the death of Moses, and his successor Joshua ready to take the Israelites into the Promised Land.

Key people and events

Moses' mother places him in a basket on the Nile River

The ten plagues

The crossing of the Red Sea

The provision of manna and quail

Mount Sinai and the Ten Commandments

Aaron and the golden calf

The construction of the Tabernacle

Aaron consecrated as High Priest

Joshua serves as Moses' assistant

The twelve spies check out the Promised Land

Bible references: Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy



Replica panel showing Ramses the Great

Some scholars believe that Ramses (c1279—1213 BC) was the Pharaoh who oppressed the Israelites in Egypt. Another, and possibly more likely, candidate for the Pharaoh of the Oppression was Thutmosis III who reigned from c 1479—1425 BC. Read of the Oppression of the Israelites in Egypt in Exodus chapters 1—2.



Canaanite Amphora

This large amphora dates to c 1850—1200 BC. It was excavated in Israel and then repaired. As the people of Israel travelled by land between Egypt, Canaan and other regions, this amphora was most likely being used to transport dry goods, fruit or grain on a ship.



The Tabernacle Model

After Moses had led the Israelites on the Exodus from Egypt, he was instructed by God to create a mobile place of worship called the Tabernacle. Here the priests offered sacrifices to and worshipped God. The tabernacle was moved regularly as the people of God moved through the wilderness. Exodus chapters 25—30 describe the tabernacle and its furnishings.



The High Priest's Garments

Moses was given very specific instructions on how to make the garments for the High Priest. The High Priest was the only person who was able to enter the Holy of Holies, and he was only able to do this once a year. See Exodus 28 for a description of his garments. Read Hebrews 4:14—5:9 which outlines the way in which Jesus has become a superior High Priest, representing all people forever.

3) Conquest and Judges

(approx. 1400 – 1050 BC)

Following the death of Moses, the people of Israel face the challenge of entering and conquering a well fortified land, populated with skilled warriors. God's people see some amazing miracles when they obey God, including the miraculous destruction of the walled city of Jericho. They also learn of the consequences that accompany disobedience, with an unexpected defeat at Ai. Joshua reminds the people that if they obey God and his law code, things will go well for them but if they reject God's ways they will face the negative consequences.

Unfortunately after the death of Joshua and the following generation, the Israelites again reject God's ways. The book of Judges describes how 'everyone did what was right in their own eyes.' During this time the Israelites frequently worshipped other gods, imitating the practices of the Canaanites who were in the land before them. God raises up a series of judges to help rescue the people from their oppressors, but society continues to deteriorate. There however remains a glimmer of hope for the Israelites. The book of Ruth tells of some people who remain faithful to God.

Key people and events

Joshua and the rescue of Rahab
The collapse of the walls of Jericho
Allotment of the land to the 12 tribes
Deborah
Gideon
Samson and Delilah
Samson versus the Philistines
Naomi, Ruth and Boaz

Bible references: Joshua, Judges, Ruth



Gezer Calendar

This small limestone tablet, discovered in 1908 at ancient Gezer in Israel sheds light on how the Israelite horticultural year unfolded. It is thought to be a school boy's tablet and dates to around 925 BC. It summarizes the farming year as follows:

'Two months of harvest [September/October]

Two months of planting [November/December]

Two months are late planting [January/February]

One month of hoeing [March]

One month of barley-harvest [April]

One month of harvest and festival [May]

Two months of grape harvesting [June/July]

One month of summer fruit' [August]



Genuine Artefacts

Bibleworld has a range of real artefact used in ancient times. This image shows a lamp, and an oil filler used to replenish the oil in a lamp. Throughout the Biblical era, people used small clay lamps, filled with olive oil to illuminate their homes. King David would draw on the lamp as an image in a song of praise. "You are my lamp oh Lord. You turn my darkness into light" (2 Samuel 22:29).

4) The United Kingdom

(approx. 1050 – 930 BC)

After the chaos of the Judges era, some of the Israelites concluded that the best solution was to have a king, like the other nations. Initially this seemed like an effective plan, as Israel entered what has been described as its 'golden age'. During this time, there was a single king over the whole country, firstly Saul, then David, then Solomon. The land of the Israelites increased in size, as these kings conquered close enemies and established treaties with other nations. During his reign, David established Jerusalem as his capital and Solomon later built a temple for God in Jerusalem. Many psalms and proverbs were written during this time.

However throughout this time there were serious and deadly conflicts between members of the Royal family and within the leadership of the army. After the death of Solomon, the people rebelled against the harsh demands of the king and the kingdom ultimately split in two.

Key people and events

Samuel anoints Saul as the first King of Israel

David defeats Goliath

Rivalry between Saul and David

David becomes King

God makes a covenant with David

David's sin with Bathsheba

Conflict between David's sons including Amnon and Absalom, Adonijah and Solomon

Solomon becomes King

Solomon builds the Temple

The Queen of Sheba visits Solomon

Bible references: 1 & 2 Samuel, 1 Kings, Psalms (most), Proverbs, Song of Songs, Ecclesiastes?



House of David Inscription replica

These three pieces of inscribed basalt were discovered at Tel Dan in 1993 and contain some familiar names. They describe an unknown king boasting of conquering both the king of Israel and the king of the house of David. Scholars have been able to deduce that this unknown king was most likely Hazael of Damascus recording his campaign against Jehoram of Israel and Ahaziah of Judah, and is likely to be dated to around 841 BC. Read about this battle in 2 Kings 8:28—29.



Model of Jerusalem at the time of Solomon

King David captured the small and well fortified city of Jebus, despite the overwhelming confidence of the local inhabitants. He made this his capital city and built himself a palace there. Read 2 Samuel 5:6-12 to find out about David's capturing of the city.



Model of the Temple built by Solomon

King David purchased land and acquired supplies which his son Solomon would later use to build the first 'permanent' temple for God in Jerusalem. 1 Kings chapters 5—8 describe the construction of the Temple, its furnishings and its dedication at the time of King Solomon.

5) The Divided Kingdom

(approx. 930 – 587/6 BC)

Solomon was succeeded by his son Rehoboam who immediately got offside with the ten northern tribes. This resulted in a split forming between the ten tribes who would become known as the Northern Kingdom of Israel (Ephraim) and the Southern Kingdom of Judah (led by kings from the line of David). These two kingdoms existed side by side, often in conflict with each other, for about 200 years. Jeroboam became the first king of the Northern Kingdom and set up idolatrous worship sites at Dan and Bethel. Unfortunately most of the kings that followed also encouraged these pagan practices. In 722 BC, the Assyrians brought an end to the Northern Kingdom with the siege of its capital city, Samaria.

The Southern Kingdom of Judah continued for a further 135 years. Although the Assyrians threatened Judah and Jerusalem during the time of Hezekiah, God miraculously saved the city of Jerusalem. It was Nebuchadnezzar and the Babylonians who eventually captured Jerusalem in 587/6 BC and took many citizens into exile. Throughout this turbulent time, God sent many prophets to warn the people and to encourage them to return to his covenant and law.

Key people and events

Lots of bad kings (esp. Jeroboam & Ahab)
and a few good kings (esp. Hezekiah & Josiah)

Elijah and Elisha

Elijah versus the prophets of Baal

Jonah's reluctant mission to Nineveh

The Assyrian siege and fall of Samaria

Hezekiah is threatened by Sennacherib and the Assyrians

The Babylonians capture Jerusalem and destroy the Temple

**Bible references: 1 & 2 Kings, Psalms, Hosea, Joel?, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah,
Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Isaiah, Jeremiah**



Replica Jehu Relief

A large obelisk was commissioned by Shalmaneser III of Assyria to boast about conquered nations who paid him tribute (tax). One panel on this obelisk depicts King Jehu of Israel (c842-815 BC) bringing tribute to Shalmaneser III including a gold bowl and gold vase. See 2 Kings 9 & 10 to find out about Jehu.



Real bronze Weapons

The Bibleworld collection includes several bronze weapons used during the time of the kings of Israel and Judah including arrowheads, a dagger, two spearheads, a battle axe and a mace head. You can read of many battles in the books of 1 & 2 Kings.



Model of a City Under Siege

Many ancient cities were placed under siege by foreign armies, including the city of Jerusalem. Read in 2 Kings 18-19 how God miraculously saved the city of Jerusalem during a siege. And then read in 2 Kings 25 how Jerusalem eventually fell to the Babylonians after a long siege.



Sennacherib's Prism Replica

King Sennacherib of Assyria commissioned four clay prisms on which he recorded his many conquests. In the text he describes his siege of Jerusalem and how he had king Hezekiah trapped in Jerusalem like a bird in a cage. However he does not describe the unfortunate casualties suffered by his army as recounted in 2 Kings 18-19.

6) The Exile in Babylon

(approx. 587/6 - 539 BC)

During the first year of his reign, Nebuchadnezzar conquered the Egyptian/Assyrian alliance and then turned his attention toward Jerusalem. For almost 20 years, Nebuchadnezzar would attempt to control the affairs of the city. He would appoint and depose kings, demand tribute and take many people as captives into exile in Babylon (including Daniel and Ezekiel). The city of Jerusalem finally fell to Nebuchadnezzar and the Babylonians in the summer of 587/6 BC. Many of the poorer and unskilled people were left behind in Judah and continued to survive as best they could.

The prophet Jeremiah remained in Jerusalem throughout this turbulent time. He sent messages to the captured exiles in Babylon before being taken to Egypt against his will. Ezekiel and Daniel both lived and prophesied in Babylon. This era produced the well known Psalm 137:

By the rivers of Babylon we sat and wept when we remembered Zion.
There on the poplars we hung our harps, for there our captors asked us for songs,
our tormentors demanded songs of joy; they said, "Sing us one of the songs of Zion!"
How can we sing the songs of the Lord while in a foreign land?

Key people and events

Nebuchadnezzar and the Babylonians capture Jerusalem
Daniel serves the king
Nebuchadnezzar's dream is interpreted by Daniel
Shadrach, Meshach, Abednego and the fiery furnace
Belshazzar's feast and the writing on the wall
Ezekiel's visions

Bible references: Psalms, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Lamentations, Daniel



Replica Babylonian Chronicle

The small clay tablet known as the Babylonian Chronicle describes some of the achievements of the Babylonian King Nebuchadnezzar. The text includes an account of Nebuchadnezzar's invasion of Jerusalem in 598/97 BC, and tells how he took King Jehoiachin prisoner to Babylon and replaced him with a new king, Zedekiah. You can also read about these events in 2 Kings 24:8-20



Real Brick from Babylon

During the time that the Jews were in exile in Babylon, Nebuchadnezzar undertook several huge building and restoration projects. Much of the city was constructed from mud bricks, which were stamped with Nebuchadnezzar's name and titles. This is a part of one of those bricks.



Ishtar Gate

One of Nebuchadnezzar's projects was the construction of the impressive Ishtar gate in Babylon. The gate was made of blue glazed mud bricks coloured with lapis lazuli. These would have been fired in a hot furnace like the one described in Daniel 3:13-27.



Replica Jehoiachin Ration Tablet

2 Kings 25:27-30 describes King Jehoiachin taken prisoner to Babylon and tells how he was later freed from prison and was given a regular food supply by the Babylonian king. The Jehoiachin ration tablet found in Babylon in the early 1900s describes Jehoiachin's family receiving rations from the king.

7) Return and Rebuilding

(approx. 539 – 400 BC)

The Jewish exiles faced a radical change when the Persian King Cyrus defeated the Babylonians in 539 BC. Cyrus issued an edict which allowed the Jews (and many other conquered people) to return to their homeland and rebuild their temple. Some Jews chose to return to Jerusalem and Judea, while many others who were well integrated into society chose to stay on living in Babylon and Persia (some of their descendants have lived there, in Iraq and Iran, until the present day).

The Jews who did return to Jerusalem discovered a somewhat ruined and neglected city. They set about rebuilding homes and businesses. The Temple however remained neglected until c520 BC when the prophets Haggai and Zechariah urged the people to rebuild it. The Temple was completed and dedicated in c516 BC. Some years later, both Nehemiah and Ezra returned to Jerusalem to bring about social reform, urging the people to commit themselves to God, his covenant and law.

Key people and events

The rise of Cyrus the Great and the Persian Empire

Daniel and the lion's den

Zerubbabel and the return from Exile

Haggai and Zechariah exhort the people to rebuild the Temple in Jerusalem

Nehemiah and the rebuilding of Jerusalem's walls

Ezra teaches the people the Law of God

Esther becomes Queen in Persia

Haman's plot against the Jews

Malachi is believed to be the last of the Old Testament prophets

**Bible references: Ezra, Nehemiah, 1 & 2 Chronicles, Esther, Haggai, Zechariah,
Malachi**



Replica Cyrus Cylinder

The Cyrus Cylinder is regarded today as the first ever 'Bill of Human Rights'. It outlines the edict of King Cyrus of Persia that allowed people taken into captivity by the Babylonians to return to their homelands and rebuild their places of worship. The Biblical account of this edict can be found in Ezra 1:1-4.



Replica Darius Relief

Darius the Great was king of Persia from 522 to 486 BC. During his reign he received a letter from those opposing the rebuilding of the temple in Jerusalem. A search of the royal archives revealed that Cyrus had approved the project. Darius then wrote a decree also supporting the project. Read in Ezra 5 & 6 about Darius's decree for the rebuilding of the temple in Jerusalem. Darius' son, Xerxes, would later take Esther as his queen.



Replica Gold Daric

Darius the Great was the first king to mint the distinctive gold daric and silver siglos coins which each depict the 'great king'. Each daric weighed approximately 8.33 grams, and contained about 98 percent gold. Read in Ezra 2 about the Jews receiving 61,000 darics to rebuild the temple in Jerusalem (i.e. about 500 kg of gold!).

8) The Intertestamental Era

(approx. 400 - 6 BC)

'The 400 Silent Years' is used to describe this era from the last of the Old Testament prophets until the arrival of John the Baptist. Some of the books of the Apocrypha and other non-biblical writings describe this tumultuous period of time. Alexander the Great rose to power and set about conquering the whole of the known world. As his army spread, they taught people all over the Empire the Greek language and customs. With Alexander's death the large Greek Empire split into four, and the Jews remained caught between the Seleucid Empire to the north, and the Ptolemaic Empire to the South.

The Seleucid king, Antiochus Epiphanes IV, made life particularly difficult for devout Jews. He outlawed Jewish worship practices and defiled the altar of the Temple by setting up an altar to Zeus and sacrificing pigs. As a result the Maccabeans, a group of devout Jews, fought for independence from the Seleucids. After many long struggles they finally achieved independence in c164 BC, but this independence would come to an end with the Roman conquest of Jerusalem by Pompey in 63 BC.

Key people and events

Alexander the Great

Introduction of Greek language and customs

Antiochus Epiphanes IV defiles the Jerusalem Temple

Simon and the Maccabean revolt

The writing of the Dead Sea scrolls

Julius Caesar and the rise of the Romans

Antony and Cleopatra

Augustus becomes Emperor

Herod the Great begins rebuilding the Temple and its courts in Jerusalem

Bible references: This period of time is often called 'The 400 silent years' with no biblical books written during this time. Several books of the Apocrypha describe events during this period.



Lamps

The lamp on the left shows the Greek innovation of creating a small enclosed lamp which decreased the amount of oil that evaporated. The lamp on the right was used by the Hasmonean Jews who rejected all things Greek and made lamps that reflected those used during the era of King David, but retained the enclosed style.



Sling bullets

While previous armies had used sling stones, the Greek army invented the lead sling bullet, a fast and accurate projectile to target the enemy. Some users enhanced them with clever or sarcastic messages for the unfortunate recipients. Sling bullets have been found reading: 'Take that', 'Catch', 'Ouch' or 'For Pompey's backside'.



Rosetta stone

The Rosetta Stone is a fragment of a large Egyptian monument known as a stele. The stele was created in 196 BC during the reign of the pharaoh Ptolemy V to commemorate Ptolemy's 'good deeds' toward the temples of Egypt. The text is written in three languages: Greek, Demotic and Hieroglyphs. This stone became the key to allow modern scholars to learn to translate the hieroglyphs, although it took enormous effort over many years to decipher this difficult script.

9) The New Testament Era

(approx. 6 BC—100 AD)

The '400 Silent Years' end with the announcement of the birth of John the Baptist and Jesus. These two boys are born into a world dominated by the mighty Roman Empire which had conquered Judea some 60 years earlier. The local region of Judea was ruled by a disturbed and paranoid man called Herod, who would later become known as Herod the Great because of his impressive building projects.

Jesus was born in the small village of Bethlehem and grew up in the modest village of Nazareth among people living a simple rural life. The city of Jerusalem was the hub of Jewish life, centred around the majestic temple built by Herod the Great. Jesus and his disciples would frequently travel from the rural region of the Galilee to the bustling city of Jerusalem. In Jerusalem they would encounter a range of Jewish groups with sometimes conflicting views about correct practices and beliefs. After the death and resurrection of Jesus, his disciples would begin the missionary task of taking the Good News to the whole of the known world.

Key People and Events

- The birth of John the Baptist and Jesus
- The baptism of Jesus and the calling of his disciples
- Jesus' miracles and teaching
- Jesus' conflict with the Jewish leaders
- The death, resurrection and ascension of Jesus
- Jesus' commissioning of the early Church
- Paul, Peter and other apostles begin the missionary task
- Paul, James, Peter and others write the New Testament letters
- The writing of the four gospels
- The apostle John receives visions on the island of Patmos.

Biblical references: The 27 books of the New Testament



House model

The model is based on archaeological discoveries and research conducted at Nazareth Village in Israel. The flat roof of a house was used for drying food and for sleeping in warm weather. Read Mark 2 for an account of four men who lowered their paralysed friend through a roof.



Boat model

The Sea of Galilee is a similar size to Lake Rotorua. Many of Jesus' disciples were fishermen who worked on the Sea of Galilee. Jesus performed many miracles while out in a boat, showing himself to be the Son of God. Read Matthew 14:22-33.



Roman Military Exhibit

During Jesus' lifetime, his homeland was under the control of the Roman Empire and Roman soldiers would have been a common sight, mostly working as peace-keepers. After his trial, Roman soldiers were given the gruesome responsibility of crucifying Jesus Christ. Read Mark 15:16 ff.



Cooking Pot

This cooking pot was excavated in Samaria. The base still shows the darkening from being used over an open fire. A typical main meal in New Testament times would have been a lentil and vegetable stew, accompanied by bread, and possibly fish. Meat would have been eaten on special occasions.



Model of Jerusalem at the Time of Jesus

This large model shows many of the significant sites in Jerusalem visited by Jesus. The population of the city at the time is estimated to be around 50,000 people. Jesus visited the city regularly from the time of his youth. See Luke 2:41ff to read about Jesus' visit to Jerusalem when he was aged 12.



Temple Model

In 20/19 BC, Herod the Great began building the massive Temple Mount platform and Temple, which took about 80 years to complete. When Jesus' disciples commented about this amazing structure (Mark 13:1-2), Jesus prophesied that the Temple would be destroyed. This prophecy was fulfilled in 70 AD when the Romans seized Jerusalem.



Tomb Model

This model has been based on the tomb of Caiaphas, the High Priest at the time of Jesus' death. It shows a typical first century tomb carved into limestone. After his death, Jesus' followers began preparing his body for burial, but the women found there was no need to use their spices. See Luke 23:50—24:12.



Ossuary Replica

This is a replica of the bone box of Jehohanan discovered in Jerusalem in 1968. Jehohanan had been born with a cleft palate deformity and was later crucified. One of the remains in the ossuary was a heel bone with an iron nail still through it.

Recommended Resources

We encourage all our visitors to read through their Bibles regularly. We suggest you aim to read through the New Testament every year, and read at least one section of the Old Testament each year.

As you read through the Bible, we recommend using the 'Bible Project'. This online resources provides short 7—9 minute 'YouTube' videos summarising each book of the Bible. www.jointhebibleproject.com.

We also encourage our visitors to memorise Bible verses to help allow God's word to shape our lives and thinking. We suggest beginning with the following: Philippians 4:6-7, John 3:16-17, John 14:1-2, Colossians 3:1-2, Romans 1:16, Romans 8:28, Romans 8:38-39, Hebrews 13:5, Luke 6:27-28, 2 Timothy 3:16-17.

If you would like to know more about recent discoveries relating to the Bible and archaeology, we recommend following blog produced by Bible places: <http://blog.bibleplaces.com>.

