

# *Smoky Mountain Bible Institute*

## *Archeology 109 N.T. People*

Let's continue our discussion on archeology, shifting our attention to some of the people in the New Testament and the archeological evidence for their existence.

**Lazarus:** The town of Bethany still exists and was a regular stopping point for Jesus and His apostles as they traveled to and from Jerusalem. Bethany had a cemetery, and about 1700 years ago a church was built over what is believed to be the tomb from which Lazarus was raised from the dead. That tomb was preserved and is open to the public today. It is empty just like the one in the church of the Holy Sepulcher, but the resident of the tomb in Bethany returned to the grave while the resident of the tomb of the Holy Sepulcher conquered death and sits at the right hand of God, and is daily present in your life.

**Pontius Pilate:** He was not some fictitious character, but the real historically verified governor of Judea, a Roman vassal state in the time of Christ. Besides Jewish historical accounts of his leadership in the region and many traditions of his Italian origins and life, Eusebius cited some early apocryphal accounts that claim Pilate suffered misfortune in the reign of Caligula (AD 37–41), and was exiled to Gaul where he eventually committed suicide in Vienne. There are also ruins of a small Roman house known as "The House of Pilate" in the town of Abruzzo in central Italy. In 1961 however, real carved-in-stone evidence was found in the ruins of a temple dedicated to Emperor Tiberius (another name matching biblical accounts) by none other than the region's governor—Pontius Pilate.

**Caiaphas:** His ossuary (a traditional Jewish box for human bones) was found in 1990 just south of Jerusalem and is now on display in the Israel Museum. The name, date, and other bones and ossuaries found in the tomb, make it very likely that this contained the bones of the same man who brought Jesus to trial.

**Crucifixion:** There is much evidence for the practice of crucifixion for execution in many ancient historical accounts, but there is also one solid piece of physical evidence in the form of a heel bone that was discovered in 1968 with a nail through it, used to nail the person to something, presumably a cross.

**King Herod:** (74 BC-1 BC) He was the great builder of Herodium, his 45 acre palace about 2 miles south of Bethlehem, which is one of his many well-known architectural achievements. (This is the same Herod who ordered the slaughter of the innocents in Bethlehem.) Some of Herod's other well-known architectural accomplishments are Masada, the whole city of Caesarea Marittima, and also Jerusalem's second temple of which only the massive foundation area still stands, held up by what we know today as the Wailing Wall. This is not to mention the large quarry discovered by Yuval Baruch on September 25, 2007, which was used to supply the second temple project. Coins, pottery and iron stakes found there proved the date of the quarrying to be about 19 BC. Many clear examples exist of this real historical king who sought to murder the Son of God as recorded in scripture. No one doubts or debates the existence of Herod or his monuments.

In Christ  
Pastor Portier