

The
ACTS
of the Apostles



**THE GOSPEL CREATES
COMMUNITIES
MARKED BY UNITY,
GENEROSITY AND
HONESTY**

INTRODUCTION

- In these verses, Luke expounds on the content of Acts 2:42–47.
- He reiterates that the early church was marked by unity in Christ, the teachings and power of the apostles, and the grace of God, all of which overflow into a lifestyle of radical generosity.
- To help illustrate this principle, he records two examples of the early believers' approach to giving.

INTRODUCTION

- We read about Barnabas and a married couple named Ananias and Sapphira. By sharing the consequences of their decisions, Luke instructs us to follow the example of the former and not the latter.
- When it comes to living for Christ, everything is open to examination by the Holy Spirit: our motives, our behavior, our relationships, and even our resources. If the Gospel is truly at work in our lives, we will be found forthright and trustworthy in all areas.

**THE CHURCH SHOULD
BE KNOWN FOR UNITY
AND GENEROSITY THAT
FLOWS FROM THE
GOSPEL**

ACTS 4:32-35

UNITY

- This believing community is marked by their unity, which is the motivating principle of all the others.
- Luke begins by describing the powerful unity of the Jerusalem church as being “of one heart and soul.”
- This phrase is a common Hebraic idiom used especially in Deuteronomy to express a common and consuming allegiance to God (Deuteronomy 6:5; 10:12; 11:13; 26:16; 30:2, 6, 10).

UNITY

- Now, their common allegiance stretches beyond their ethnic ties and is grounded in and testifies to Christ and His work on their behalf.
- The unity we see expressed in the early church and in the Church today is one of the answered prayers of Jesus Himself (John 17:9–11, 21–23) and what Paul writes about later in his epistles to other new church plants (Ephesians 4, Philippians 2).

UNITY

- Notice that, for the second time in Acts, Luke reserves this description of unity for “those who believed” (v. 32; cf. 2:44).
- He is reiterating that this kind of unity and generosity is not possible for those who are not empowered by the gospel and the Holy Spirit.

GENEROSITY

- This unity among the believers produces radical generosity.
- Previously, Luke wrote that “no one said that any of the things that belonged to him was his own.”
- This is his way of saying that these believers operated on the principle that “what’s mine is yours.”
- They did not lay selfish claim to the things that had been provided to them by God (1 Corinthians 4:6–7).

GENEROSITY

- He states that “they had everything in common,” meaning that there was a sense of unqualified sharing of belongings and resources, no one claiming rights to what he or she possessed.
- The generosity assured that “there was not a needy person among them.”
- Imagine a church giving to the point where there are no needs left at all. Most incredible is that this giving was not forced, but voluntary.

GENEROSITY

- Luke extends a great challenge to us as we read these verses.
- May we also consider all our belongings and resources as ultimately owned by God and available to any who may have need.
- This is the example Jesus set before us when He gave up everything He had to sacrifice Himself for our freedom (Philippians 2:5–11).

**THE CHURCH SHOULD
BE KNOWN FOR
HONESTY AND TRUTH
THAT IS AFFIRMED BY
THE SPIRIT**

ACTS 4:36-5:11

BARNABAS

- Luke finishes his portrayal of the early church with two specific examples of truthfulness: one to imitate (Barnabas) and one to avoid (Ananias, Sapphira).
- Though his birth name was “Joseph” (v. 36), the apostles nicknamed him “Barnabas,” translated as “son of encouragement.”
- Nicknames were signs of respect in that time which summed up a person’s character or calling.

BARNABAS

- Barnabas owned a field, sold it voluntarily, and laid the proceeds before the apostles to be distributed for anyone who needed help (v. 37).
- This openly generous and sacrificial example is the one we should emulate in our giving.
- The power and truth of the Gospel is at work in his humble approach to living out Christ's example of generosity.

ANANIAS & SAPPHIRA

- Luke sharply contrasts with the story of Barnabas by telling the story of Ananias and Sapphira.
- Luke uses the word “but” to signify a strong transition, setting up the second example in dramatic opposition to the first.
- He begins the account with similarities. The husband and wife, like Barnabas, owned a piece of land and sold it, promising to give the proceeds to the needy.

ANANIAS & SAPPHIRA

- When the time comes to hand over what they pledged, they pretend to give the full amount while holding back some of the money for their own gain.
- One could guess they wanted the same applause that Barnabas received but without the full cost of sacrifice.

ANANIAS & SAPPHIRA

- Peter first confronts Ananias about his deception. Peter places the blame on two parties, the first being Satan.
- Given that Satan is the father of all lies (John 8:44), Peter knows that he is clearly behind this deception. Through Ananias, he has entered the church community for the first time.
- Peter also places blame on Ananias, accusing him of lying to the Holy Spirit.

ANANIAS & SAPPHIRA

- The Bible teaches that one's posture toward an authority figure reflects one's posture toward God himself (Romans 13:1–2).
- In this case, lying to the apostles meant lying directly to God (v. 4).
- This couple was under no obligation to sell their land or even give all the proceeds of it to the Church. The problem only arose when they lied.

ANANIAS & SAPPHIRA

- The wording in this section greatly parallels the account of Joshua 7:1–26, where Achan embezzled some of the plunder devoted to God for sacred use.
- Indeed, immediately after the confrontation, Ananias dies (v. 5).
- Watching God take seriously the pledges of His people, the other Christians experience a sense of fear (v. 5).

PETER & SAPPHIRA

- Peter confronts Sapphira, who is unaware of her husband's death.
- In verse 8, Peter gives her the chance to confess and asks her about the amount she pledged. Unfortunately, she continues with the same lie.
- Peter accuses her of the same sin as Ananias in verse 9, and in verse 10 we see her fate is the same as her husband's.

PETER & SAPPHIRA

- Just as she and her husband presented a united front in their deception, so they would be united in the consequences of their conspiracy.
- In restating that “great fear” came upon everyone in verse 11, Luke makes it clear that Ananias and Sapphira’s example is one to avoid.
- God’s people should be marked by honesty in all they do. We are to resist darkness and live in the light (1 Corinthians 10:13, James 4:7–8).

ASK KERBY:

BIBLICAL RELIABILITY

ARCHAEOLOGY

“Archeological work has unquestionably strengthened confidence in the reliability of the scriptural record. More than one archaeologist has found his respect for the Bible increased by the experience of excavation in Palestine.”

Millar Burrows



ARCHAEOLOGY

“It may be stated categorically that no archaeological discovery has ever controverted a biblical reference. Scores of archaeological findings have been made which confirm in clear outline or exact detail historical statements in the Bible.”

Nelson Glueck



OLD TESTAMENT

October 30, 2017



DISCOVERING NABOTH'S VINEYARD

Another Find of Biblical Proportions



BREAKPOINT

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OLD TESTAMENT

- Norma Franklin (University of Haifa) and Jennie Ebeling (University of Evansville) led excavation in the Jezreel Valley - Meggido.
- They found several wine presses and olive presses, including the largest ancient winepress ever found.
- According to *Biblical Archaeology Review*, they found Naboth's vineyard by using the details in 1 Kings 21 that provides an account of the plot by Jezebel to kill Naboth when King Ahab coveted his vineyard.

OLD TESTAMENT



OLD TESTAMENT

- Archaeologists from the Israel Antiquities Authority digging at the biblical city of Tel Lachich discovered an ancient toilet.
- King Hezekiah (2 Kings 10) is commended because he “removed the high places, smashed the sacred stones, and cut down the Asherah poles.”
- It goes on to explain that he “demolished the pillar of Baal, and destroyed the temple of Baal, and made it a latrine to this day.”

DEAD SEA SCROLLS



DEAD SEA SCROLLS

- Dead Sea scrolls discovered in 1949 (200 BC - AD 100).
- The oldest Old Testament manuscripts we had before the Dead Sea scrolls was dated to be AD 900.



DEAD SEA SCROLLS

“There can be no reasonable doubt that the Qumran manuscripts came from the century before Christ and the first century A.D. Thus, they are one thousand years older than the Masoretic manuscripts of the tenth century.”



NEW TESTAMENT

A Brief History of Time... In Advance

Archaeological Evidence and ... Scholarly Research Verify ... the book of Acts is accurate

Supporting Data and Analysis

A substantial amount of archaeological evidence has been unearthed, which makes the Christian faith credible. This evidence permits us to answer the question "How credible is a spiritual belief system if it only uses a book as its spiritual guide with no external evidence to support it?"

Credible Research by a Classic Scholar Uses Data to Challenge His Scholarly Peers (Naturalists (Atheists))

The classic scholar, Dr. Colln J. Hemer wrote [The Book of Acts in the Setting of Hellenistic History](#). Dr. Hemer's work compares the texts written into the book of Acts to archaeological discoveries of the past 200 years. A careful study taken from Dr. Hemer's work (**pages 109 to 158: "Specific Local Knowledge"**) verifies the Apostle Paul's mission travels did occur (**at the 99.9% confidence level**). Since the unique events written in the book Acts are matched by archaeological records, Dr. Hemer concludes that Paul and Luke had to be there to record such unique events.

Science

NEW TESTAMENT

- Classical scholar and historian Colin Hemer chronicles Luke's accuracy in the book of Acts verse by verse.
- With painstaking detail, Hemer identifies 84 facts in the last 16 chapters of the Book of Acts that have been confirmed by historical and archaeological research.
- This includes nautical details, names of gods, designation of magistrates, and proper names and titles.

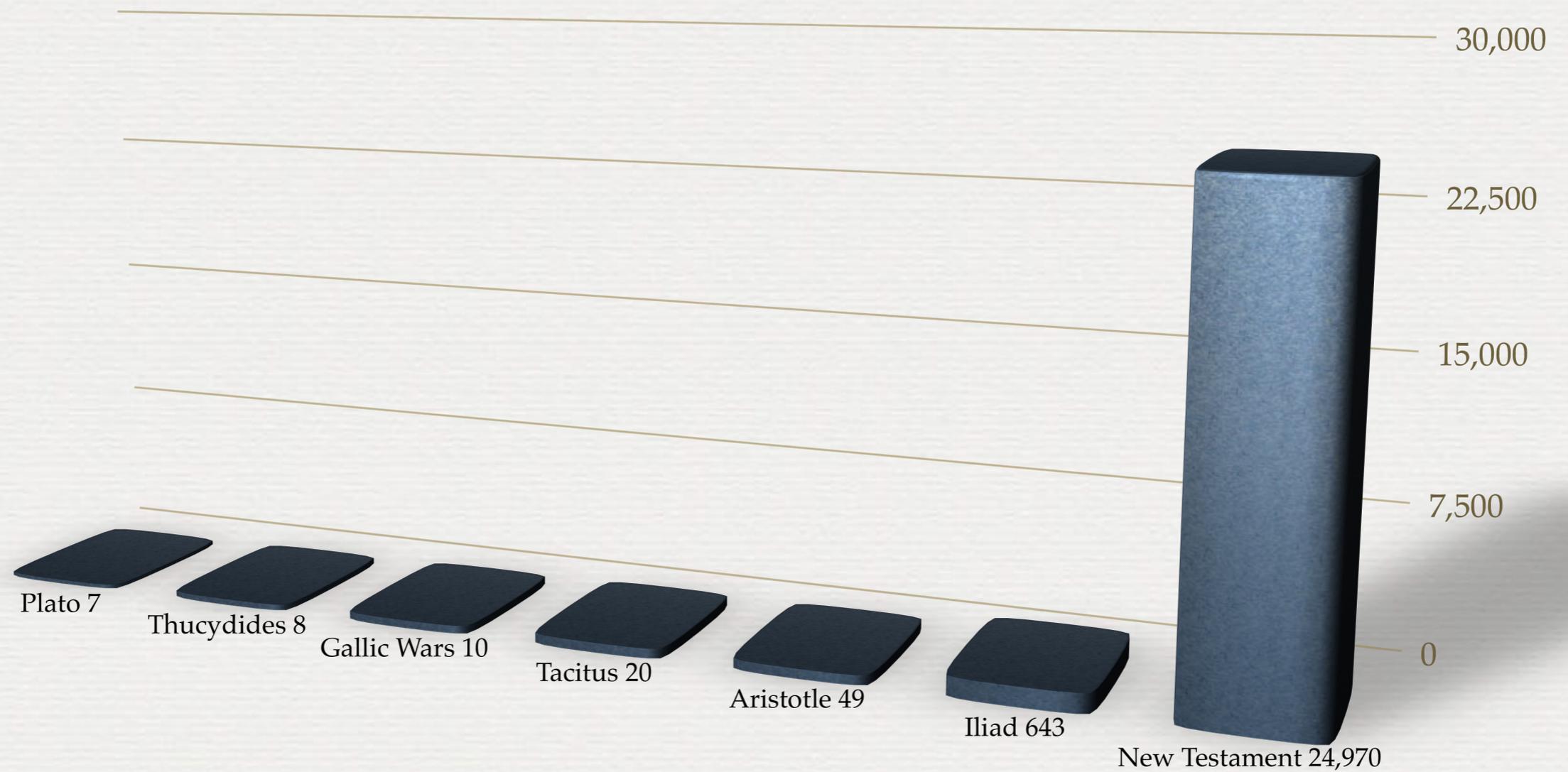
ANCIENT LITERATURE

<i>Work</i>	<i>Copies</i>
<i>Plato</i>	7
<i>Thucydides, History</i>	8
<i>Caesar, Gallic Wars</i>	10
<i>Tacitus, Annals</i>	20
<i>Homer, Iliad</i>	643

DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE

Greek manuscripts	5,700
Latin Vulgate	10,000
Other Translations (Coptic, Ethiopian)	9,200
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TOTAL	24,900

BIBLE & LITERATURE



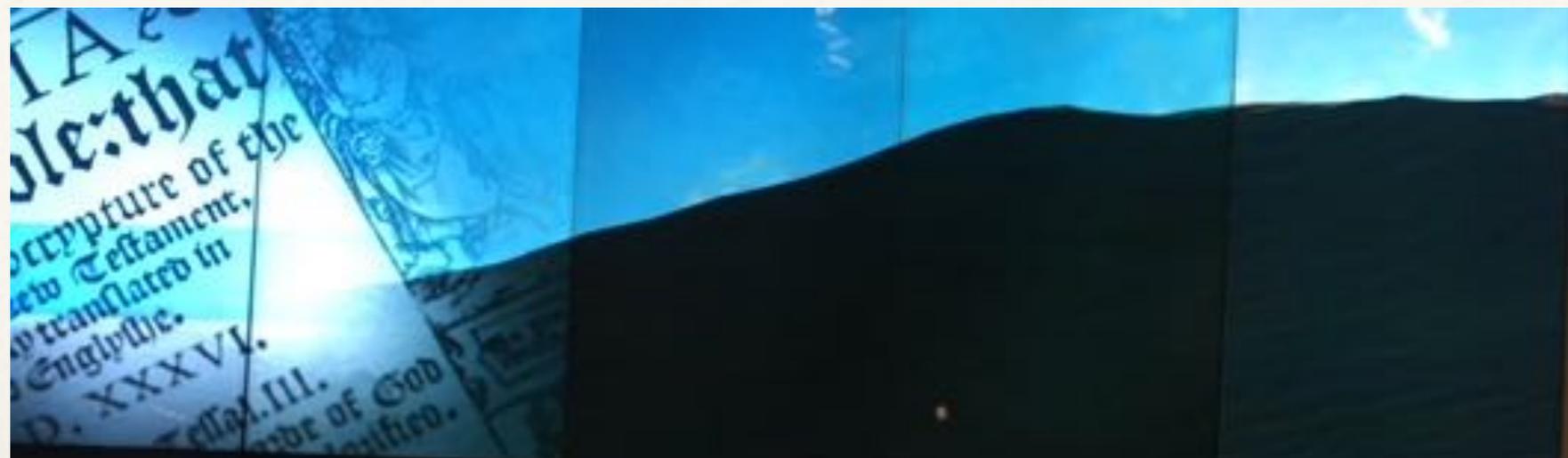
**MUSEUM OF
THE BIBLE**







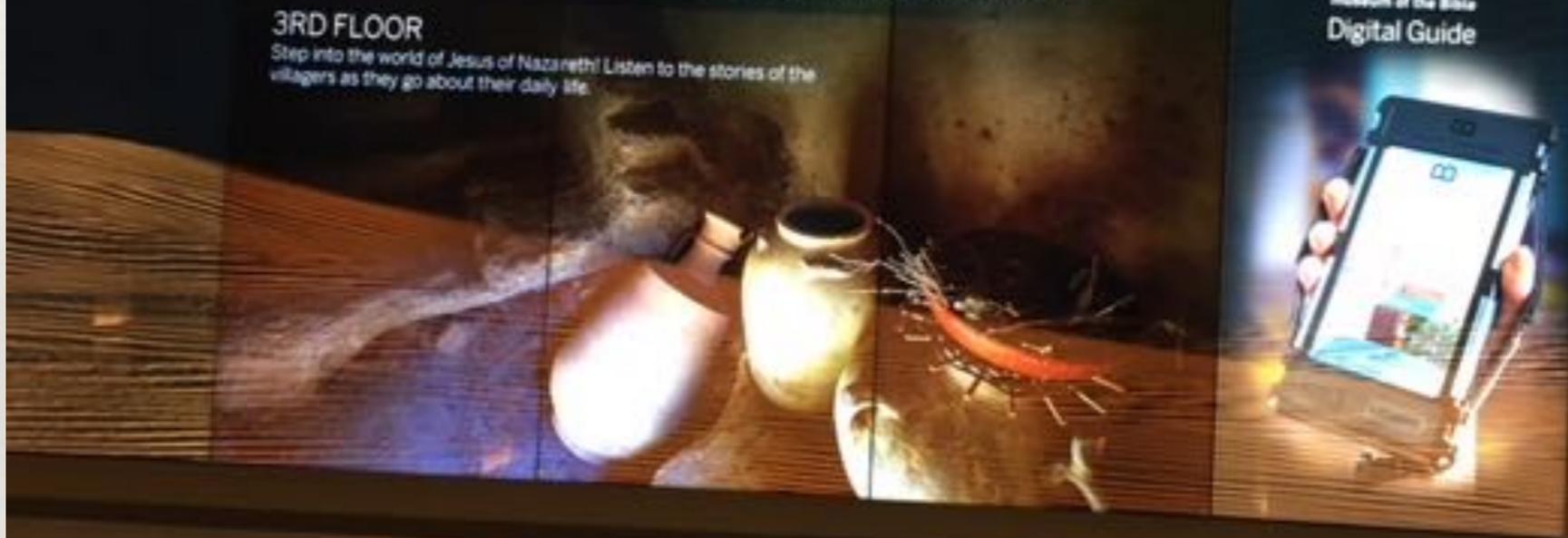




The World of Jesus of Nazareth

3RD FLOOR

Step into the world of Jesus of Nazareth! Listen to the stories of the villagers as they go about their daily life.



Museum of the Bible
Digital Guide

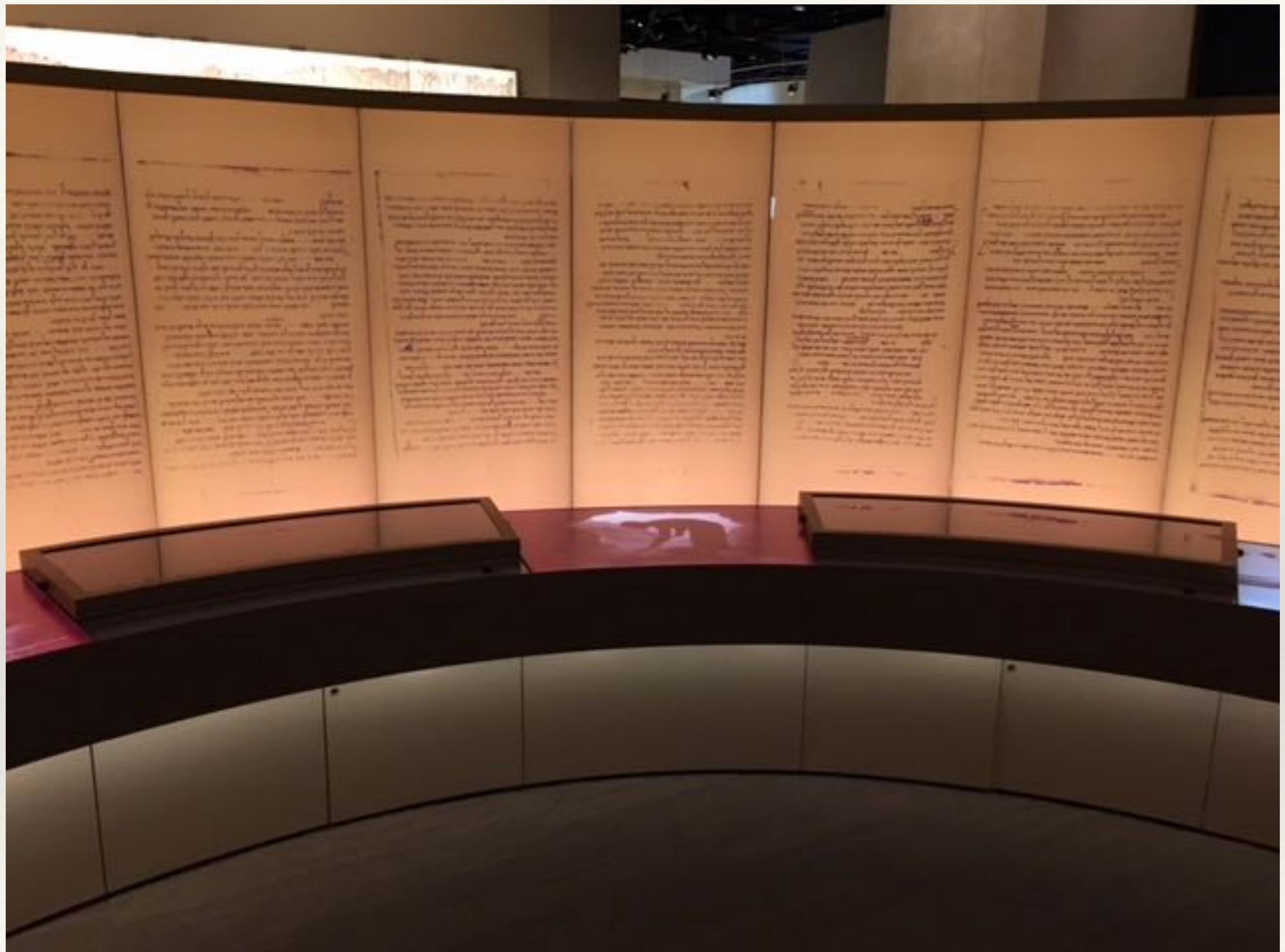


**DRIVE THRU
HISTORY**
WITH DAVE STUTTS

**THE
HISTORY OF THE BIBLE**



















museum of the Bible