

# GLOSSARY OF TERMS

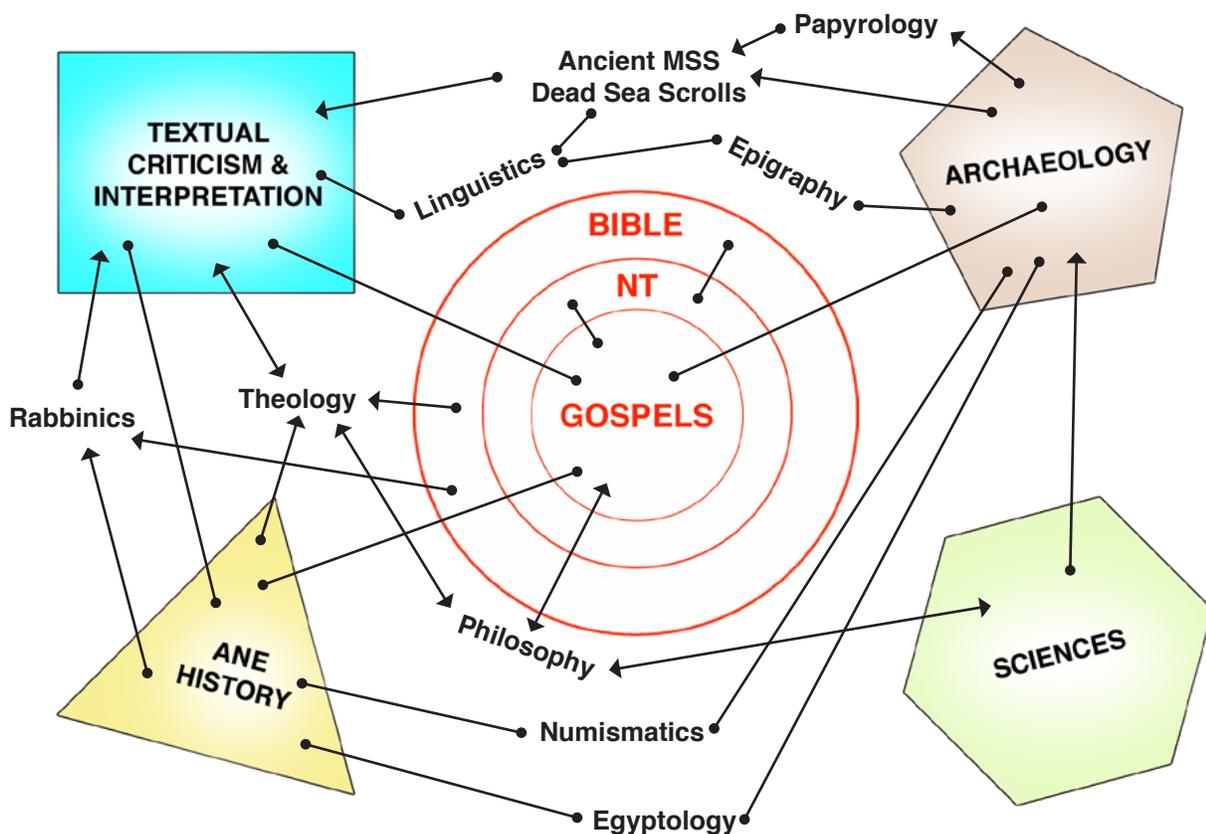
## RELATING TO THE HISTORICAL AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND OF THE BIBLE

There's nothing like the study of biblical archaeology to build your vocabulary. Biblical archaeology interrelates with so many different scholarly disciplines that it is impossible to keep any given inquiry into it from wandering into other fields. Therefore, the more one studies biblical archaeology, the more he or she is apt to learn about many other areas of biblical scholarship. That learning both requires and provides a growing vocabulary of technical terms.

The following glossary is an ongoing record of the terms that studying for *Shouting Stones* has brought to my attention. Some are familiar, others are obscure but all will pop up sooner or later in volumes relating to history and archaeology, and particularly in books on biblical archaeology. I hope the reader will find this growing list of terms both helpful and interesting!

Roderick Graciano  
August 2008

### SOME OF THE INTERRELATED DISCIPLINES CONNECTED TO BIBLICAL ARCHAEOLOGY



## SHOUTING STONES: GLOSSARY

### AERIAL PHOTOGRAPHY

The technique of taking photographs from an aircraft high above ground. Aerial photography is used in archaeology to find subtle patterns in the growth of vegetation that may indicate the existence of ruins below ground.

### AES GRAVE

Circular and heavy early bronze coinage of Rome and Italy.

### AES RUDE

Shapeless lump of bronze used as currency in Italy before the appearance of coins.

### AES SIGNATUM

Often applied to the metal “bricks” issued by the Roman mint in antiquity, but properly applying to any aes marked with a design (see [Type](#)).

### AGRAPHA

A saying of Jesus Christ not recorded in the four canonical Gospels, e.g., Acts 20.35.

### AIRLIFT

A method of removing sediments under water.

### ALABASTRON

Small jar for perfume or ointment, usually with narrow mouth and no handles.

### AMANUENSIS

A person employed to take dictation or copy manuscripts.

### AMORITES

A Semitic people who rose to power in areas of Mesopotamia and Syria around 2000 BC.

### AMPHITHEATRE

A structure in which tiers of seating for spectators rise from around a central space. A variety of entertainments were performed in the central area that was usually oval in shape. The Colosseum in Rome is the most famous example.

### AMURRU

(Egyptian term.) Region of the Amorites.

### ANTITHESIS

The second idea in a Hegelian dialectic that opposes the [Thesis](#) and is “resolved” in a [Synthesis](#).

### APOCALYPSE

Lit.: unveiling, revelation. Usually referring to the unveiling of Christ in the Second Coming; often used to refer to any cataclysmic event or to a literary work about such an event.

### APOCALYPTIC

Adj.: Cataclysmic, pertaining to the Second Coming of Christ or some other world shaking event brought about in divine judgment.

### APOCALYPTICISM

A theological perspective that includes belief in a cataclysmic resolution of what is wrong with the world.



A section of the ancient [aqueduct](#) to Caesarea Maratima.

Photo by Rachel Graciano, 2007.

## SHOUTING STONES: GLOSSARY

### **APOCRYPHA**

(1) Books written in biblical times and included in the Roman Catholic Bible, but not considered inspired. (2) Books written in biblical times or shortly thereafter, and on biblical themes, but not deemed worthy of inclusion in the Bible.

### **APODYTERIUM**

The dressing room of a Roman bathhouse.

### **AQUEDUCT**

An elevated conduit trough, built to carry water from springs in the countryside to the city.

### **ARABIA DESERTA**

Classical antiquity's designation for the desert region of northern Arabia.

### **ARABIA FELIX**

Classical antiquity's designation for the better watered southern region of Arabia.

### **ARABIA PETRAEA**

Classical antiquity's designation for the rocky region of northwestern Arabia that included the Sinai and present-day Jordan.

### **ARAMAISM**

A characteristically Aramaic turn of phrase or usage in the Greek Scriptures.

### **ARCHAEOLOGY**

(Alt. spelling Archeology) Archaeology can be described as the "past tense of cultural anthropology" (Renfrew). It is the study of mankind by the careful recovery of artifacts and other material remains of antiquity.

### **ARCHELAUS, ETHNARCH OF JUDEA**

Son of Herod the Great by Malthace, the Samaritan. Fear of Archelaus kept Joseph and Mary from resettling in Judea upon their return from Egypt.

### **ARCHITRAVE**

Main beam resting directly upon multiple columns.

### **ARCOSOLIUM, pl. Arcosolia**

Inside a tomb or catacomb, the arched or vaulted sepulchral chamber, cut like a shelf or bench, lengthwise into the wall of the tomb. Compare [Kokh](#).

### **AS**

A bronze Roman coin originally corresponding in weight to the pound.

### **AUREUS**

Roman gold coin and monetary unit from Caesar to Constantine.

### **AUTOGRAPH**

The manuscript actually penned by the author or his [amanuensis](#).

### **BACTRIAN CAMEL**

*Camelus bactrianus*, is the two-humped camel of Central Asia, believed to be the type domesticated before the dromedary.

### **BAR-TWISTED**

A type of jewelry element made by twisting a thin gold bar.

### **BASTINADO**

A wooden torture instrument used to beat the soles of the feet.

### **BEDDING TRENCH**

A trench used as the base for vertical posts.

### **BIFACE**

Stone tool, such as an axe head, made by flaking material from both sides or faces of the raw stone. See: Celt.

### **BIGATUS**

A coin upon which appears the design of a two-horse chariot.

### **BISQUEWARE**

Fired but unglazed clay vessel.

### **CADUCEUS**

Also CADUCEUM. A wand entwined by two serpents and belonging Mercury. An emblem of peace.

### **CALDARIUM**

The hot room in a Roman bathhouse.

### **CANONICAL**

Part of an officially accepted or endorsed collection—as are any of the 66 books of the Bible.

### **CANOPIC VESSELS**

Large jars in which are placed the viscera of a mummy.

### **CANTING TYPE or SYMBOL**

A design or symbol incorporating a pun in order to designate the person or state to which it refers.

### **CARBON 14**

See [radiocarbon dating](#).

### **CARNIX SERARUM**

Roman official in charge of execution.

### **CARTONNAGE**

Used papyri shaped and glued into mummy cases.

### **CARTOUCHE**

The oval surrounding hieroglyphic royal names.

### **CELADON**

A type of earthenware characterized by a translucent blue-green glaze.

## SHOUTING STONES: GLOSSARY

### CELLA

The interior room of a temple. Also, a storeroom or cellar.

### CELT

A biface used as an axe.

### CENACLE (from *cenaculum* = top story)

The historic church building maintained on the site of the upper room referred to in Acts 1.

### CLASSICAL CIVILIZATION

Ancient Greek and Roman civilizations between roughly 600 B.C. and A.D. 300, in which many of the political, philosophical, and artistic traditions of Western civilization began.

### CODEX (pl. *Codices*, from *caudex*, the trunk of a tree)

Originally a “book” consisting of thin tablets or leaves of wood. Since laws were inscribed in such books, the term became appropriate to any *code* of law. In NT studies, *codex* refers to a manuscript in the form of a book as contrasted to one written on a scroll. Codices became popular in the first century, just as world evangelism began, and so most early Christian Bibles are in the form of codices rather than scrolls.

### COFFERDAM

A wall constructed to isolate a submerged site.

### COPTIC

Hybrid Egyptian-Greek language used in Egypt in the early Christian era. Also, the native Christian culture of Egypt and Ethiopia.

### CORBELING

Successive courses of masonry in which each course extends farther out from the vertical of the wall than the course below. Corbeling can span a narrow space with a false arch.

### COUNTERMARK

A mark added to a coin after minting.

### CRITICISM, CANONICAL

An approach to the Bible that emphasizes theological reflection, and the primacy of the Pentateuch and the Gospels as foundational even if the Prophets and/or Paul’s epistles may be understood (by some) as predating the former in their composition.

### CRITICISM, FORM

An approach to textual analysis pioneered by the great “demythologizer” Rudolph Bultmann (1884-1976). It seeks to uncover oral sayings and traditions that underlie the NT and to understand how those traditions evolved in the early church. Form Criticism can help identify the different genres of literature (i.e., *forms* such as parables,

miracle stories, pronouncement stories) and the typical elements of those genres but becomes very speculative when it tries to establish the cultural context of those elements or forms.

### CRITICISM, LOWER

See **Criticism, Textual**.

### CRITICISM, TEXTUAL

The study of manuscripts and ancient translations in order to establish as nearly as possible the original biblical text (also known as **Lower Criticism**).

### CRITICISM, HIGHER

Thought no longer widely used, this term refers to the critical examination of biblical texts to evaluate things such as authorship, date and sources. This approach to the study of biblical text implied a skepticism, at least toward traditional understandings to the texts’ origins. See **Criticism, Historical**.

### CRITICISM, HISTORICAL

An approach to biblical texts that attempts to reconstruct their historical context and meaning. The historical-critical method of analysis assumes that a text cannot mean something contrary to what it meant to its first audience, as contrasted with interpretations by subsequent or modern readers. This method can help us avoid abuses of interpretation, but we must recognize that while a text cannot mean something *contrary* to its message to its original audience, it can mean something *in addition*, particularly in respect to typology and application.

### CRITICISM, LITERARY

An approach to biblical texts that seeks to analyze whole literary units, whether lengthy stories (as that of Joseph in Gen), a complete Psalm, or a whole book (such as Job). The strength of this approach is in helping the Bible student see the parts of specific Biblical narratives in terms of their whole (which helps avoid **proof texting**). The weakness has been the tendency of Literary Criticism to detach biblical narratives from their historical contexts (see **Criticism, Historical**).

### CRITICISM, NARRATIVE

Also clumsily called **Narratological Criticism**. A now popular method of **Literary Criticism** that concentrates on the story of a text and is more concerned with plot, characterization, and other literary techniques than with the historical reliability or theology of a passage.

### CRITICISM, REDACTION

An approach to analyzing biblical texts that sees them more as a composite of earlier sources and the authors more as compilers. The goal is to understand the author’s religio-political motives, emphases and intentions for a book or series of books.

## SHOUTING STONES: GLOSSARY

### CRITICISM, SOURCE

An analysis of the disparity of the writing styles (and sometimes accounts) within a single biblical document. Source criticism can be helpful in demonstrating that a biblical author used multiple sources for his document, but can also be abused by skeptics to belittle the idea of ultimately divine authorship. See [Documentary Hypothesis](#).

### CRUSADERS

Christian nobles, soldiers, and adventurers from Western Europe who invaded the Holy Land during the Middle Ages to rescue the Tomb of Christ from Moslem rule.

### CUNEIFORM

An ancient system of writing, using reeds to make patterns of triangular-shaped marks in soft clay tablets.

### CYCLOPEAN

Built of gigantic stones.

### DAMPING OUT

Humidifying ancient papyri in the restoration process.

### DEMIURGE

An emanation from God; a lesser, created god.

### DENARIUS

Silver coin originally equal to ten asses.

### DEUS EX MACHINA

Lat.: *god out of the machine*. A phrase describing a solution as conveniently appearing out of nowhere as the gods did from the theater machines in ancient dramas.

### DIALECTIC

A way of thinking or arguing that involves opposing ideas and their resolution.

### DOCUMENTARY HYPOTHESIS

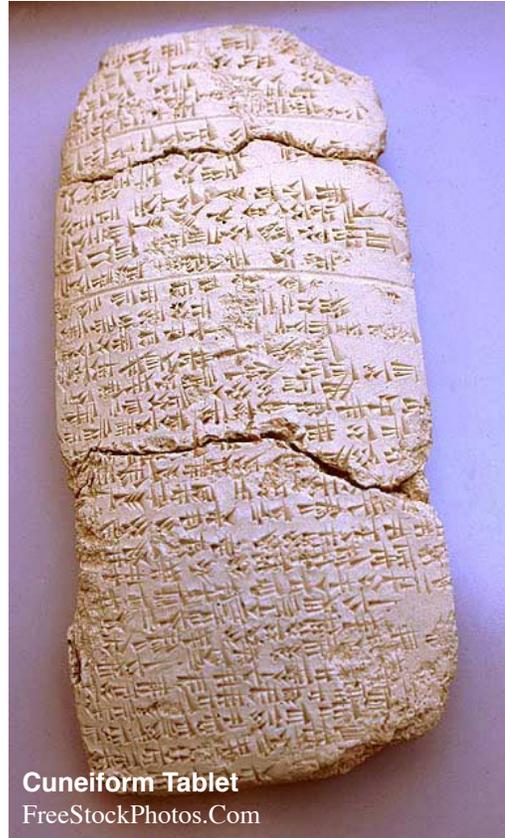
A now largely ignored theory about the origins and composition of the Pentateuch that questioned Mosaic authorship and ultimately proposed a centuries-long process of composition fueled by religio-political motives. More recent analysis of Genesis in the light of **Cuneiform** tablets and ancient colophons implies that the narratives of Genesis were composed by eye-witnesses among the patriarchs, and preserved to be ultimately compiled by Moses together with his own documents which we know as Exodus through (most of) Deuteronomy.

### DRACHM

A division of the stater, usually one half, sometimes one third.

### DROMEDARY

Camelus dromedarius, is the one-humped camel, the long-legged "ship of the desert" employed in the Sahara and Near East.



Cuneiform Tablet  
FreeStockPhotos.Com

### DROMOS

A long corridor cut into a hillside to form the approach to an underground tomb.

### DUPONDIUS

Coin equivalent to two asses.

### ELECTRUM

Alloy of gold or silver with a silver content of more than 20%.

### ENTABLATURE

Horizontal structure resting upon columns and comprised of the architrave, frieze and cornice.

### EPIGRAPHY

The study of inscriptions, particularly those inscribed in stone and marble.

### ESPLANADE

A flat, open pavement as in a courtyard.

### ESTRANGELO

A Syriac alphabet used from approximately the first to fourth centuries AD.

### EXCAVATION

The process of digging up an archaeological site to discover what it contains.

## SHOUTING STONES: GLOSSARY

### EXECRETION TEXT

Names of enemies or their cities written on pottery for the voodoo-like ritual of smashing the vessel in the mystical pursuit of the enemies' destruction.

### EXERGUE

Space on the reverse of a coin, below the design, where the date a mint mark appears.

### FABLE

A fictitious tale, often intended to instill some wise principle.

### FABRIC

In numismatics, the external shape and appearance of a coin determined by the minting mechanism as opposed to the design artist.

### FAIENCE

Colorfully glazed pottery.

### FELLAH, pl. Fellaheen

Peasant farmer in Egypt.

### FIBULA

Highly ornamented, safety pin-like, metal clasps.

### FIELD

In numismatics, the surface of a coin within the border, but not occupied by the design.

### FLAGELLUM

Short-handled whip of thongs.

### FLAN or BLANK

Piece of metal intended to be made into a coin by having a design impressed upon it.

### FORTIFICATIONS

Walls, towers, fortresses, or other structures designed to protect a community and make it easier to defend if attacked.

### FOUNDATION

A structure of stones, built below ground level, to support the weight of a wall or a building which is built on top of it.

### FRIEZE

The often ornamented horizontal structure resting upon the architrave and beneath the cornice of an entablature.

### FRIGIDARIUM

The cool room in a Roman bathhouse.

### GENIZA (Genizah)

Synagogue lumber room or closet, sometimes serving as the temporary repository of worn out scrolls or other unusable sacred materials.

### GNOSTIC

A belief system in which special knowledge is the key to salvation.

### GORGON

The snake-wreathed head of Medusa purported to have the power of turning humans to stone.

### GOSPEL

(1) Proclamation of good news; (2) a literary document setting forth the primary acts of Jesus Christ and/or his primary teachings; (3) one of the four canonical gospels: *Matthew, Mark, Luke and John*.

### GOSPEL OF JUDAS

A 4th-century Coptic document unearthed in Egypt in the early 1970s, but not translated into English and published until 2006. Irenaeus condemned this "gospel" in AD 180 as a heretical work of the Cainite sect of **Gnostics**. In the text, which is riddled with missing lines, Jesus teaches about cosmology, including such ideas as that a created angel named Saklas fashioned Adam and Eve. Jesus also promises that Judas will exceed all the other disciples because Judas will dispose of Christ's humanity: "you will exceed all of them. For you will sacrifice the man that clothes me."

### GOSPEL OF THOMAS

A **Gnostic** "gospel" consisting of sayings attributed to Jesus, some of which parallel canonical sayings, and some of which may be authentic **agrapha**.

### GOSPELS, The Synoptic

The first three canonical gospels (Matthew, Mark and Luke) as contrasted to the fourth (John). The Synoptics (from Grk, *seeing together*) were written from a similar point of view, covering much material in common, with the same or related wording, and with emphases upon Christ's Galilean ministry and the final week leading up to and including the Lord's death and resurrection.

### GOSPELS, The Synoptic Problem

The question of the literary relationship between the Synoptic Gospels. As a professor would question the means by which the term papers of three different students came to relate the same material in the same words, so NT scholars question how the Synoptics came to have so much material in common. See **Q**.

### GRAMMATICAL-HISTORICAL METHOD

A method of biblical study that seeks the meaning of a passage by application of standard rules of grammar and syntax. The goal is to understand what the text says grammatically and what it meant historically.

### GREENWARE

Clay vessel before firing.

## SHOUTING STONES: GLOSSARY

**GREYWACKE** (see [Schist](#))

### HASMONEAN

Name of the priestly-political dynasty of Jewish rulers in Palestine which lasted from 134 BC until the Roman conquest in 63 BC. Named for Asamonaeus, the great grandfather of Mattathias, they were all successors of John Hyrcanus. Herod claimed right to the kingship by virtue of descent from the Hasmoneans.

### HATTUSAS

The Hittite capital, now Boghazköy in central Turkey.

### HEBRAISM

A characteristically Hebrew usage or turn of phrase in the Greek Scriptures.

### HEGEL, GEORG WILHELM FRIEDRICH

(1770-1831) German philosopher who developed a dialectical logic that combines [Thesis](#) and [Antithesis](#) to produce a [Synthesis](#).

### HELIACAL RISING

Immediately pre-sunrise appearance of a heavenly body above the horizon.

### HIERATIC

Cursive Egyptian script used for writing on papyrus.

### HIEROGLYPHIC WRITING

A system of writing first used in ancient Egypt, in which simple pictures represent ideas, words, or sounds.

### HISTORICAL-CRITICAL METHOD

An approach to biblical analysis that attempts to treat the Bible like any other book, setting aside ideas such as inspiration, authority and divine causation. The goal is objectivity, but the approach is self-defeating. Cf. [Grammatical-Historical Method](#).

### HISTORICAL JESUS

Commonly, the supposed Jesus of history as contrasted with the “Christ of faith,” i.e., the Jesus presumed to have been distorted by church dogma. However, while every people will see Jesus through its own cultural lens, and while the Gospels are admittedly a hybrid of historical biography and theological treatise, Christianity has always affirmed the essential historicity of the NT records about Jesus. See [Quest For The Historical Jesus](#).

### HOLY VERNICLE

St. Veronica’s “napkin” with which she supposedly wiped Christ’s brow as he struggled up the Via Dolorosa, and upon which an imprint of Christ’s face magically appeared.

### HYPOCAUST SYSTEM

System of under floor heating used in hot rooms of Roman baths.

### HYPOGEUM

An underground chamber, such as a burial chamber.

### INSCRIPTION

A piece of written information, usually carved into some solid material, such as wood, metal, or stone.

### INSHUSHINAK

Patron deity of Elamite Susa.

### INSULA

- (1) A walled enclosure.
- (2) A distinct group of private houses.
- (3) An edifice surrounded by a free space.

### IPSISSIMA VERBA JESU

Jesus’ very own words.

### JESUS SEMINAR, THE

About 6 dozen scholars who met twice a year during the decade of the 1990s to debate questions about the historical Jesus (see [Quest For The Historical Jesus](#)). They are most known for voting on whether or not Jesus really originated the sayings attributed to Him in the gospels (including the apocryphal [Gospel of Thomas](#)). Their conclusions have been published in *The Five Gospels: The Search for the Authentic Words of Jesus* (Macmillan, New York, 1993). The group concluded that Christ’s divinity, virgin birth and resurrection are myths and that only 18% of the sayings and 16% of the deeds attributed to Him correspond even reasonably closely to the words and actions of the historical Jesus. The Jesus Seminar convinced the media that the Seminar spoke for the majority of scholars, when they in fact tend to represent what Blomberg calls “the radical fringe of New Testament scholarship.” The Jesus Seminar was primarily made up of liberal scholars but also included non-specialists like Dutch film maker Paul Verhoeven, director of *Showgirls!*

### JUDAS, Gospel Of

See [Gospel of Judas](#).

### KEEL

The primary beam that runs lengthwise along the bottom of a boat’s hull, “the spine” to which the hull’s ribs attach.

### KERYGMA

Proclamation; pertaining more to the proclamation than to the content of the Gospel.

### KHIRBET

(Arabic) Ruin.

### KOKH, pl. Kokhim

Long, narrow recesses in which a body, coffin or ossuary could be placed. Typical of first-century tombs, *kokhim* were cut into the wall of the tomb like pigeon holes, their length receding into the wall. Compare [Arcosolia](#).

## SHOUTING STONES: GLOSSARY

### **KOUSTODIA**

A Roman guard consisting of 4 to 16 men.

### **LEECHCRAFT**

Antiquated term for medical science.

### **LEECHDOM**

A medicine or remedy.

### **LEGEND**

A wonderful story passed down by generations, but not verifiable by historical record. Compare **Myth** and **Fable**.

### **LEVANT**

The geographical area lying between Egypt and Mesopotamia, that consists today primarily of Syria, Lebanon, Jordan, Israel.

### **LMLK JARS**

Four-handed pottery storage jars used for the collection of taxes-in-kind, and probably made by the royal potter.

### **LOCULUS (-i)**

Niche for holding a body, coffin or **Ossuary** in a tomb.

### **LOCUS (-i)**

A particular three-dimensional feature in an archaeological dig.

### **LOGOGRAM**

Sumerian sign/character used to denote a single word or idea.

### **MAGNETOMETER SURVEY**

A method of scanning below ground surface for magnetic anomalies indicating pottery concentrations.

### **MAHAYUGA**

Hindu eon or cycle of time lasting hundreds of thousands of years.

### **MANDYLION**

A sacred cloth of Edessa that disappeared from Constantinople in AD 1204.

### **MANUSCRIPT**

A handwritten document.

### **MASORETIC TEXT**

The traditional version of the Hebrew Old Testament, predated only by Qumran texts.

### **MASTABA**

(Arabic for “bench.”) Type of large Egyptian tomb made of mud bricks. It is flat-topped with sloping sides.

### **MESHWESH**

A tribal people from the coast of Libya.

### **METATHESIS**

Accidental transposition of letters, sounds or syllables

within a word, or of words within a line.

### **METOPE**

A decorated rectangular panel between the beam ends of a frieze on a Greek temple. The term is also used to indicate sectors of decoration found on certain pottery vases.

### **MIDDEN**

A garbage heap or accumulation.

### **MIDRASH**

Medieval Rabbinic commentaries, or something written in that style or for that purpose.

### **MIHRAB**

A niche or small room in a mosque indicating the direction of Mecca.

### **MOSAIC**

A design or decoration, usually quite large, covering the ceiling, walls, or floors of a building and made with large numbers of small colored stone, glass, brick or frit cubes, set in a cementing material.

### **MUMMIFY**

To prepare a corpse for burial so that it will not decompose. In ancient Egypt this was concluded by wrapping the body in strips of linen.

### **MUTATIO**

According to John C. H. Laughlin (see BAR 9309, p. 57), this word is used for the swimming pool in a Roman bathhouse.

### **MYRRHOPHORES**

Ointment bearers, as in the women who went to Christ's tomb to anoint his body.

### **MYTH (Grk. μῦθος)**

(1) A legendary **fable** or story with little or no connection to real history, often involving magical events.

(2) A non-historical story intended to convey true ideas, usually of a religious nature.

### **MYTHOLOGY**

(1) The collective body of myths belonging to a culture.

(2) The study of myths.

### **NAG HAMMADI LIBRARY**

A collection of mostly **Gnostic codices** inscribed in **Coptic** and dating from the 4th century AD. These documents were discovered in 1945 by two brothers digging for nitrate soil (used in fertilizer) in Upper Egypt, about 10 kilometers from the modern city of Nag Hammadi. Highly important in helping us understand **Gnosticism**, this “library” has sparked a revival of neo-Gnosticism along with revisionist understandings of Jesus.

## SHOUTING STONES: GLOSSARY

### NEGEV

The hilly desert south of Judea.

### NOMARCH

Ruler of an Egyptian nome.

### NOME

A province of ancient Egypt.

### OBVERSE

Side of the coin that received its design from the lower die.

### ODEON

Small theater or assembly hall.

### ONOMASTICA

(Grk. ὀνομαστικός) The set of proper names in a given language or subject.

### ORTHOGRAPHY

Study of the correct spelling of words.

### OSTRACA

Inscribed potsherds once used as ballots in the Athenian vote on banishment or ostracism.

### OSSUARY

A stone box used in antiquity by Middle-Easterners for the “second burial” of a loved-one’s bones after the soft tissues of the body had disintegrated in the tomb.

### OSTRICHICON

Inscribed ostrich shell, usually with Arabic.

### PALAESTRA

Open area for training or exercise.

### PALEOGRAPHY

Study of ancient writing, particularly of the form and slant of the letters, for the purpose of deciphering, dating and placing ancient documents, ostraca, graffiti and other inscriptions. Compare *Epigraphy*.

### PALIMPSEST

(From Grk. παλιψεστος, “rubbed smooth again.”) A papyrus or parchment manuscript upon which an incompletely erased earlier writing can be detected.

### PAPYROLOGY

The study of papyrus manuscripts; also the study of all ancient texts written on soft materials (and ostraca) as opposed to inscriptions in stone. See: *Epigraphy*.

### PARCHMENT

Writing surface made from animal skin.

### PAROUSIA

(par-ü-SEE-uh) The active presence of one having come. The coming and glorious presence of Jesus (e.g. 2Th 2.8).

### PATERAE

A metal drinking cup with a handle, and shaped not unlike a modern dry-measure measuring cup.

### PATIBULUM

Horizontal beam of a cross.

### PATINA

The thin layer of corrosion (chemical alteration by natural elements) on the surface of ancient objects.

### PILASTER

A square pillar partly embedded in a wall.

### PIRIFORM

Having the shape of a pear.

### PIRKA

Uncoursed and unworked fieldstones laid with mud mortar.

### PITHOS

Large, wide-mouthed earthenware jar for storing liquids or grain. Sometimes used to bury dead.

### POTSHERDS

The broken fragments of pottery, normally found in large numbers on archaeological sites.

### PREHISTORIC

From a period of human history before the appearance of written records.

### PRENOMEN (pl. Prenomina)

Name given a pharaoh upon coronation.

### PROOF TEXTING

The citing of biblical passages (often single verses) to support a doctrine or theological interpretation, without reference to the passages literary context. A proof-texting approach would interpret, for example, the “fire” of Mat 3.11 in the light of Act 2.3, rather than in the light of Mat 3.10,12.

### PROPYLAEUM

Vestibule or entryway at the front of a building.

### PSEUDEPIGRAPHA

A collection of Jewish/Christian religious literature dating from c. 200 BC to AD 200.

### PYLON

(Grk. for gate) The twin towers flanking the entrance to an Egyptian temple.

### PYRAMIDION

Capstone placed at the apex of a pyramid.

### PYXIS

A cosmetic container, often lidded.

## SHOUTING STONES: GLOSSARY

### Q

From the German *Quelle*, meaning “source.” A hypothetical document from which the Gospels of Matthew and Luke derived material which they have in common but do not share with Mark. See [Gospels, The Synoptic Problem](#).

### QUADRANS

Coin equivalent to one fourth of an as.

### QUADRIGATUS

Coin bearing the symbol of a four-horse chariot.

### QUEST FOR THE HISTORICAL JESUS, THE

The title of a book by Albert Schweitzer that became the catchphrase for the scholarly quest to write a historically reliable account of Jesus, i.e., to reconstruct the life and teaching of Jesus by critical historical methods. The first and second periods of this quest (Old Quest 1778-1900; New Quest 1940-1980) assumed a certain lack of historical reliability for the canonical gospels, since many of the “questers” rejected any place for the miraculous in a truly historical account. This resulted in a portrait of Jesus as an ordinary, non-supernatural person around whose memory legends had developed. The newest Third Quest (1980-present), informed by publication of the Dead Sea Scrolls and other advances in scholarship, focuses more upon seeing Jesus as a credible figure within first-century Palestinian Judaism. This Third Quest tends to contribute rather than to detract from the historical reliability of the Gospels.

### QUINARIUS

Silver coin originally equal to 5 asses or half a denarius.

### QUIRE

In bookmaking, a section of sequential pages usually formed by folding and trimming.

### RADIOCARBON DATING

A method of dating ancient objects by measuring the amount of radioactive carbon, or carbon 14, that remains in a once-living material, such as wood or leather.

### RE

Egyptian sun-god.

### RECTO

Front or main side of a document, or right-hand page of a book. (Cf. verso.)

### RELIEF

A picture in which the design (figures, objects, etc.) is carved into a flat surface, such as a wall.

### REREDOS

- (1) A wall or screen behind a church altar or,
- (2) an open hearth.

### REVERSE

In numismatics, the side of a coin impressed by the upper die. In paleography, the side of a tablet or document upon which the writing follows after that on the obverse.

### REVETMENT

Stone facing shoring up an embankment.

### ROOF Comb

A facade added to the front or middle of a roof.

### SCHIST (also Greywacke)

Gray-black, fine-grained stone used in Egyptian sculpture.

### SEALS

Small carved objects, usually of stone, used in ancient times to stamp a personal mark or design of the materials used to fasten ancient writings.

### SEDILE

Small seat attached to the front of a cross.

### SEMI-ENGAGED COLUMN

Column in a wall face serving as decoration, not support, as in Petra facades.

### SEMIS

Coin equivalent to one half of an as.

### SEPULCRUM

A sepulchre, the general term for a tomb in which the dead or their remains were deposited.

### SEPTUAGINT (abbr. LXX)

Greek translation of the Old Testament, produced in the 3rd century BC and in common use in the time of Christ. (From Latin for seventy, referring to the traditional number of translators.)

### SEQUENCE DATING

Method of determining the order in which different versions of a certain object were made or used over as long span of time.

### SERRATUS

Coin with serrated or notched edges.

### SESTERTIUS

Silver coin equivalent to one fourth a denarius, or a brass coin of Augustus equivalent to 4 asses.

### SEXTANS

Coin equivalent to one sixth of an as.

### SHEPHELAH

The region of ancient Israel that divided the coastal plain of Philistia from the central hill region of Judah.

### SHEPHELAH

The low-foothill country of southern Israel lying between the coast and the Judean mountains.

## SHOUTING STONES: GLOSSARY

### SILLYBOS (or *sittybos*, pl. *sillyboi*)

The tag glued to a literary scroll and upon which the title and author of the scroll was recorded.

### SINDONOLOGIST

Someone who studies the Shroud (Grk. *sindon*) of Turin.

### SITE

A particular place of interest to archaeologists, usually because it was used or inhabited by people in the distant past.

### SONAR

A device for locating objects under water, similar to radar but using sound waves instead of an electronic beam.

### SONDA

(Yugoslav) An excavation unit.

### SPHINX

A mythical beast of the ancient world, usually having the body of a lion and the head of a man. In ancient Egypt, many large statues of sphinxes were erected, the most famous of which is several stories high.

### SPILL

A splinter, or roll of paper used to light a lamp or pipe.

### STATER

The unit coin in any monetary system.

### STELE (pl. *Stela*)

An "upright stone," usually with an inscription or sculpture in relief.

### STICHOMETRY

The division of a text into lines of fixed length or the calculating of the average number of letters per such line.

### STRATA

Layers of material deposited in a place where people have lived a long time.

### STRIP-TWISTED

Method of twisting golden strips.

### STYLOBATE

The pavement or foundation upon which columns stand.

### SUPPEDANEUM

Foot support attached to a cross.

### SURVEY

In archaeology, the process of thoroughly examining a site and its surrounding countryside before beginning to excavate.

### SYMBOL

An additional and subsidiary type on a coin. (See: type.)

### SYNOPTIC GOSPELS (See [Gospels](#), [The Synoptic](#)).

### SYNOPTIC PROBLEM, The (See [Gospels](#), [The Synoptic Problem](#)).

### SYNTHESIS

The resolution of the [Thesis](#) and [Antithesis](#) in a Hegelian [Dialectic](#).

### TEL (Arabic: "Tell")

A gently sloping, flat-topped mound composed of the ruins and rubbish of successive ancient settlements.

### TEMENOS

(From Grk. *temnein*.) Sacred precinct.

### TEPIDARIUM

The tepid room in a Roman Bathhouse.

### TERMINUS POST QUEM

The date after which an event must have occurred.

### TETRASTYLE

Having four columns or pillars as in a tetrastyle facade.

### THEATRE

Grk. *theatron* from *the-asthai*: "view." A structure at which to view performances, the design of which consisted of tiers of seating rising from the perimeter of a central floor that was D-shaped. Compare [Amphitheatre](#).

### THESIS

The beginning idea in a Hegelian dialectic, that is opposed by an [Antithesis](#).

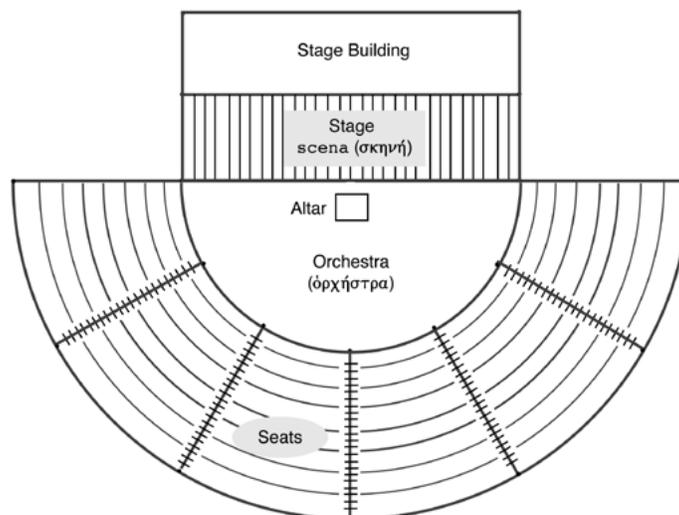
### TITULUS

Wooden placard upon which was written the

name of the crucifixion victim and the charge against him.

### TOMB

An elaborate grave, often a permanent structure built in advance and intended for a whole family.



Theatre Plan

## SHOUTING STONES: GLOSSARY

### TRENCH

A long, narrow and deep ditch used to prepare foundations for walls and buildings or to partially excavate an archaeology site.

### TRESSIS

Coin equivalent to three asses.

### TUMULUS (pl. Tumuli)

Burial mound.

### TYPE

In numismatics, the primary design on a coin.

### UDRU

Akkadian term for the Bactrian camel. Possibly related to the suffix “ustra,” as in Zarathustra.

### UNCIA

One twelfth of an [As](#).

### URSCHRIFT

Original writing or version.

### VARNISH

A natural accretion of minerals, together with organic matter metabolized by bacterial action, on the surface of ancient objects.

### VEIL OF THE TEMPLE

The veil of the Jerusalem Temple separated the Holy of Holies from the Holy Place. The Mishnah, *Shekalim* 7.5, describes the veil as 40 cubits long, 20 cubits wide and a handbreadth thick.

### VERSO

Reverse or secondary side of a document, or left-hand page of a book. (Cf. recto.)

### VICTORIATUS

Silver coin equivalent to 3/4 of a denarius.

### VOLUTE

Spiral ornament often employed in column capitals.

### WALL-ROOT

A foundation or section of wall below ground level.

### WEST SEMITIC

The language group that includes Hebrew, Canaanite and Ugaritic.

### WITCH BOTTLE

A narrow-necked glass or earthenware bottle used to hold items expected to work as a talisman.

### WORLDVIEW

A person's basic set of ideas that dictates his or her approach to life and understanding of the universe.

### ZAMBEELS

Baskets made from old tires and used for clearing excavation debris.

### ZIGGURAT

(“pinnacle”) A pyramid-like stepped tower, used in ancient Mesopotamia for religious worship.

### ZOOMORPHIC

Having the shape of an animal.