



## 63 A.D. Inscription Refers to "Jesus."

"First appearance in the archaeological record," say experts.

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Limestone ossuary dated to A.D. 63 inscribed in Aramaic with the word "Jesus." Photograph courtesy Biblical Archaeology Society.

**October 22, 2002 Washington, D. C.** - The first and only appearance, so far, of the word "Jesus" inscribed in the archaeological record has been discovered by Andre Lemaire, a French expert in ancient inscriptions. Dated to A.D. 63, the words in Aramaic - the language that Christ and his followers used - are carved into a limestone burial box known as an ossuary: "James, son of Joseph, brother of Jesus." Lemaire says that ossuary burials - digging up a grave after a year to put the bones into a limestone box - were generally practiced between 20 B. C. and A. D. 70, exactly the time of the earliest Christian efforts in Jerusalem. According to Biblical scholars, the presence of all three famous names is extraordinary. Historic research to date have confirmed that only twenty men with the name "James" in Jerusalem in A.D. 63 would have had a father named Joseph and a brother named Jesus.

*Biblical Archaeology Review* (see website below) also reported that two scientists with the Israeli government's Geological Survey examined the inscribed limestone ossuary with a microscope and could find "no evidence that might detract from the authenticity."

The owner of the ossuary does not want to be known publicly to avoid insurance costs and guards for the extraordinary historic artifact. The man said he "didn't realize the significance" of the ossuary and wonders, "How could the Son of God have a brother?"

About the question: Did Jesus have siblings? The Gospels call James the "brother of Jesus." Protestants and Catholics have different interpretations because of the "virgin birth" status of Christ from his human mother, Mary. Protestants infer that Christ was Mary's first pregnancy, an "immaculate conception," followed by later normal intercourse with Joseph, followed by the birth of four sons, including James, and at least two daughters. The Catholics have held that James was only a close relative to Jesus Christ.

The owner is now apparently willing to allow an exhibit of the ossuary at the Royal Ontario Museum in Toronto, Canada, during the annual meeting of Bible scholars in November.

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**Website:**

[http://www.bib-arch.org/bswb\\_BAR/indexBAR.html](http://www.bib-arch.org/bswb_BAR/indexBAR.html)

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