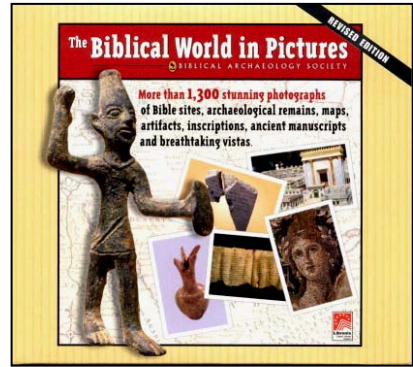


Biblical Archaeology Society, *The Biblical World in Pictures*, CD, revised edition. \$179.95.

Review by Kris J. Udd.

The Biblical Archaeology Society has published a number of high-quality slide sets over the past few decades.



The pictures from 10 of those slide sets have been digitized for this CD. Each image is accompanied by a caption. The CD runs on the Libronix software platform, and thus can be incorporated into a larger library of Libronix resources. The CD can also operate as a stand-alone product. If the CD is used along with other Libronix products, the various resources are linked, allowing easy access to related Scripture references, encyclopedia articles, or other items.

When this product was first marketed I attempted to get additional information directly from BAS. Specifically, I wanted to know how large the picture files were, which directly affects their usability in other applications like PowerPoint. I received no response to my email query. When the updated version was published, I decided it just looked too good to pass up, so I ordered a copy. The CD arrived in a reasonable amount of time, but my expectations about the quality of the pictures were promptly exploded. In a word, the pictures are abysmal. There are two reasons for this. First, the images are all low resolution. None of the pictures I viewed were full-screen size, and very few would be helpful for educational purposes such as printing or projection. Second, most of the images are really lackluster when it comes to color. Many of them look dark, dingy, or have a bluish tinge. They hardly qualify as the “stunning photographs” touted on the CD jacket. I know from their magazines that BAS has some incredible photographic

resources, but they don't showcase any of that on this CD. In addition, the images are not easily accessible for other software programs. To use them in PowerPoint, for example, the Libronix software must first be opened, the picture located within Libronix, and then copied and pasted into the other program. It is not possible to locate the images and copy them directly from the CD. This may be an intentional feature aimed at limiting the use of the images elsewhere. If that was the goal, it has been successfully reached. Finally, I was miffed that one of the photographs used to sell the CD is not even included on the CD. The dust-jacket prominently displays a picture of the "house of David" inscription from Tel Dan. However, a search through the complete index of pictures on "Dan" and "inscription" failed to locate any photo of that landmark item, probably because it had not yet been discovered when the original slide set was produced.

The slide sets from which this product is taken were clearly intended for educational use, and they were high quality images. It is not clear what use this format of the pictures is intended to fill, but it is certainly not appropriate for classroom instruction. Unless and until the quality of the images can be improved, this product is not a recommended buy.