







ISRAEL IS A BORDERLAND CONSTANTLY CAUGHT  
BETWEEN GREAT KINGDOMS AND EMPIRES,  
CREATING IMMENSE CULTURAL TENSION  
THAT GOD USED AS THE PERFECT CONDITION  
TO SEND FORTH THE GOSPEL.



**BORDERLANDS**  
ISRAEL IN THE TIME OF JESUS

**A CREATION MUSEUM EXHIBIT**

TIM CHAFFEY AND TRAVIS WILSON

FOREWORD BY KEN HAM

# ISRAEL IN THE TIME OF JESUS



## BRIDGING THE OLD AND NEW TESTAMENTS



The Old Testament closes with the Jewish people back in their land following a 70-year exile in Babylon. The Temple and walls of Jerusalem have been rebuilt, but the situation is bleak. God remains silent over the next 400 years while Israel languishes under Persian, Greek, and Roman authorities.

As the New Testament opens, the Jewish people have divided into philosophical, regional, and political factions. Greek language and ideas permeate society, but the Roman Empire rules the Mediterranean world. Yet an Idumean king raised as a Jew sits on the throne in Jerusalem.

Then, God breaks His silence and sends His Son into this homeland to be born of a virgin. Nothing will ever be the same.

### WORLD TURNS GREEK

Centuries before the birth of Jesus, the armies of Alexander the Great sweep eastward from Greece to India. His conquests bring a new era of government, education, and religious practice. Greek culture—called Hellenization—changes Jewish life. Some Jews readily embrace the changes, while others vehemently resist the changes.



Informational panel featuring a map of the Mediterranean region and a portrait of a man, likely a historical figure related to the exhibit's theme.

Interactive display area with a wooden countertop. It includes a tablet with a blue interface, a small glass display case containing a figurine, and other informational materials.



### ROMAN DOMINATION

Roman legions march eastward, turning the world into the expanding Roman Empire. Civil war and transforms the social stability to the Jewish and oppression. Disillusioned, they will overthrow their enemies.



### THE BULL OF BOMBE



rule is a study in contrasts. While the ruling class benefits greatly  
ces, hard labor marks the life of most people. With little  
rd mobility, the poor usually remain in poverty, and the rich  
y. Many of the poor envy the rich and despise the corruption  
while the affluent generally spurn the poor. This tension  
lasses amplifies the ever-increasing hostility in Israel.



### THE HOUSEHOLD STRUCTURE



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### VILLAGE AND CITY LIFE

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reinterpreted religio  
in the coun



**JEWISH FAMILY**  
▲ **MAN** The man is depicted in a white tunic and purple sash, carrying a wooden box and a red bag. This attire is typical of a man from a village or city in the first century CE.  
▲ **WOMAN** The woman is depicted in a yellow and blue robe, wearing a head covering. This attire is typical of a woman from a village or city in the first century CE.



## IDOLATROUS IMPACT

Centuries of Gentile rule force the Jewish people to live alongside the uncircumcised. Pagan temples and shrines dot the landscape, frustrating faithful Israelites who despise the influence these idolatrous practices exert on their neighbors and families.

## RELIGION AND PRACTICES

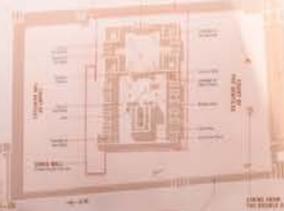
With foreign political lines and designs, beliefs typical among Jews in the first century. Decades of Roman oppression and disputes with the growing Christian movement war an increasingly visible region into a powder keg, waiting for a spark that would only lead to devastation for the Jews, people they hated and their temple.

## GRECO-ROMAN RELIGION

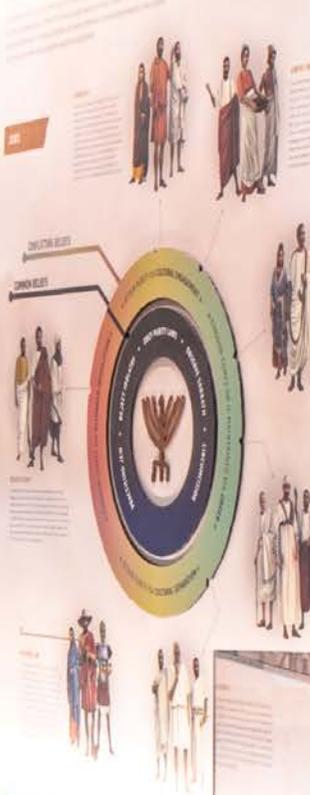
Gentiles adopted many religious beliefs from the Greeks, including the Olympic pantheon of gods and goddesses. These beliefs permeated every aspect of public life. The favor of a god or goddess was sought by the successful for a prize and prosperity. This, in turn, encouraged people to offer sacrifices to the gods. Sacrifices were made in shrines and public buildings. Public buildings featured large statues, and some displayed images of human figures. The most used in the public sphere were the Greek gods.



## HEROD'S TEMPLE



## SPECTRUM OF BELIEFS







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**ENHANCE YOUR EXPERIENCE** of Israel in the time of Jesus by listening to the score written and orchestrated by Ben locco exclusively for the *Borderland* exhibit. Scan this with your camera app or go to [GetAnswers.org/borderland](https://GetAnswers.org/borderland).



**Ben locco** | It was a great honor to create the ambient backdrop for this incredible exhibit. My challenge as a composer is to help transport the listener into another culture and time. My hope is that this soundtrack offers just a small glimpse into this fascinating part of history.





## FOREWORD BY KEN HAM



Two thousand years ago... what was the world like? Removed by two millennia and with a very different cultural background, many of us would struggle to describe what the world was like when Jesus walked the dusty streets of Nazareth or taught on the shore of

Galilee. But knowing the historical details brings the pages of the Bible into vivid color and gives us new insight into Scripture's timeless teaching. That's why I am so excited about *Borderland: Israel in the Time of Jesus*.

This exhibit at the Creation Museum is exquisite in detail. From the clothing worn by the people of Jesus' day to the layout of a typical home to various roles people filled in society, the exhibit's craftsmanship and level of detail and research will delight you. With such a buffet to feast on, many museum guests wish they had more time to digest the exhibit. And that's where this fantastic print resource comes in. Within this book, you have a full Creation Museum exhibit to mull over and share with others.

God's Word is living and active—it's not a dead historical relic written centuries ago. It's as relevant to us today as it was to the original audience. As you study the intricacies of society two millennia ago, notice how similar people "back then" are to people today. Truly there's nothing new under the sun! God knows our human nature intimately and has given us a living Word to change us.

As with all our resources, we trust this book will aid you in going deeper in your knowledge of God and his Word. More than just knowing facts for Bible trivia, let the details of Jesus' world equip you to better and more accurately interpret and apply God's Word to your life.

Enjoy your journey back in time as you read this book. As you read, don't forget that it was into that very broken, sinful world (much like our own) that God chose to send his Son. And he didn't come to overthrow the oppressive government or right every injustice. Rather, he came as the humble servant, lived a perfect life, died on the cross, and victoriously rose from the grave, freely offering forgiveness of sin and eternal life to all who will repent and believe. That message was the hope of the world two thousand years ago—and still is today.

In Christ,

**Ken Ham**

CEO - *Answers in Genesis, the Creation Museum, and the Ark Encounter*



## INTRODUCTION BY TIM CHAFFEY



I was very excited when I saw the initial design concepts for *Borderland*. I have always enjoyed history and geography, and this exhibit required plenty of research into both subjects. I have an even greater love for studying and teaching the Bible.

Although *Borderland* is not primarily an exhibit about Scripture, it provides guests with important historical details that set the stage for the New Testament.

Properly understanding the Bible is of utmost importance since it is God's Word. A key principle for interpreting and applying any message is "Context! Context! Context!" This means that we must pay close attention to the surrounding content rather than extracting a statement from its context. There is no shortage of biblical passages used inappropriately because someone has yanked a verse from its context. This often leads a person to misunderstand and misapply the verse. Focusing on the context of a given passage helps us avoid these errors.

Although it is often overlooked, studying the cultural and historical background of the people and events is a necessary step in discovering the context. Since approximately 400 years passed between the close of the Old Testament and the opening of the New Testament, readers are introduced to a host of new nations and groups interacting with Israel and the Jews. Why does the Roman Empire suddenly dominate the region? Who are the Pharisees, Sadducees, Zealots, Hellenists, and Samaritans? What is the

Diaspora? How did the Temple become the center of the religious life of the Jews in the first century? How does the geographical setting enhance our interpretation of a passage? Without a basic understanding of these subjects, readers of the New Testament may miss out on vital truths.

Our talented designers and artists worked on creating realistic depictions of people and places as well as replicas of clothing and armor. Meanwhile, Mike Belknap and I spent our time developing the content, with some assistance from Greg Iocco and Levi Sherman. The combination of large signs and interactive monitors gave us the space we needed to cover a broad spectrum of subjects and greater depth on crucial points.

I truly enjoyed writing the content for the *Borderland* exhibit and overseeing the writing of this book. I learned quite a few things along the way. It is especially satisfying to know that our work has helped others better comprehend the world Jesus Christ inhabited so that they will be more capable to rightly handle the word of truth (2 Timothy 2:15).



## THE ORIGIN OF THE EXHIBIT BY TRAVIS WILSON

"I want you to design a coin case." Those words came from the late Patrick Marsh, the creative visionary behind the Creation Museum and Ark Encounter. I believe it took about 15 seconds for the initial seeds of *Borderland* to take root in my imagination. This simmered for several months while I finished up some other projects, but immediately I knew there was an opportunity here. More than just showing a bunch of ancient coins, we could give guests a real taste of the culture and history of the Jewish people from 2,000 years ago.

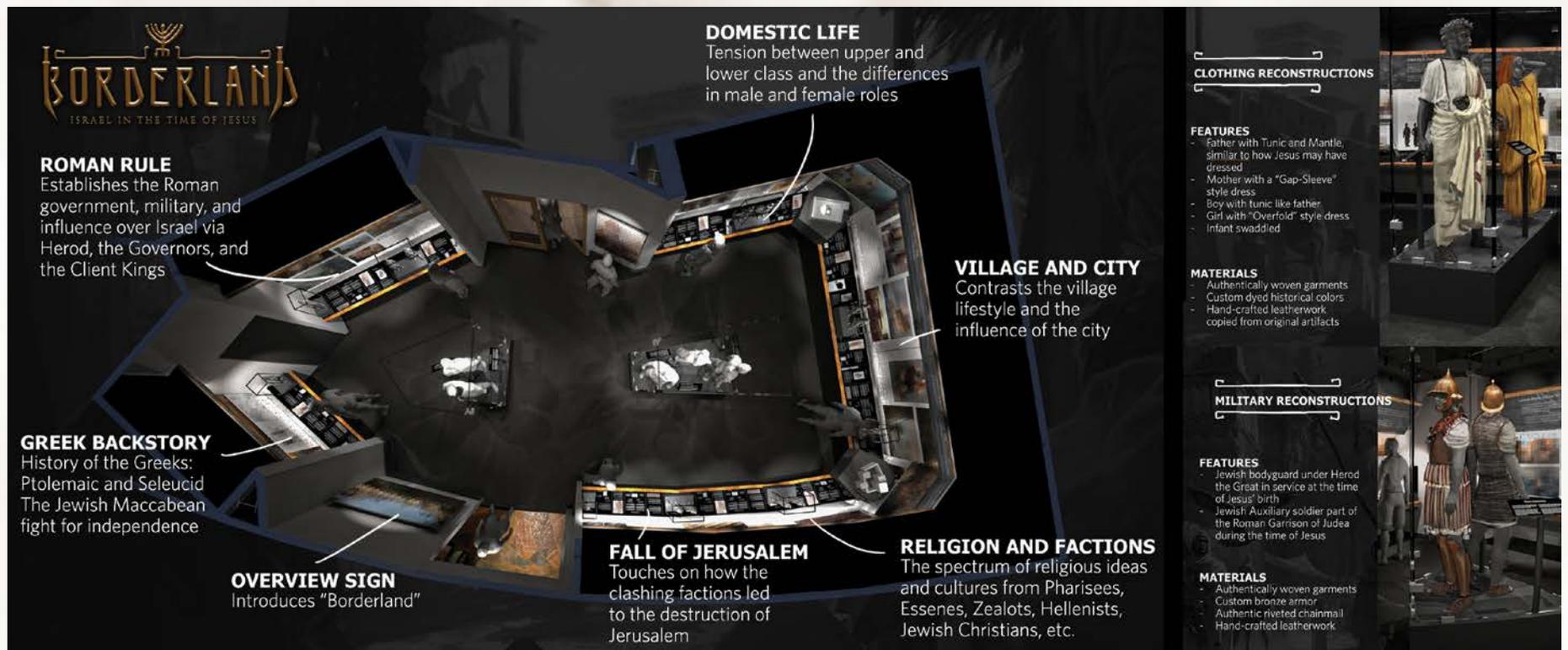
My love for the first century started in 2008 when we did a live nativity program for the Creation

Museum. As we developed looks for Mary and Joseph, soldiers, and other costumed characters, I learned about the history and culture in more depth. The clothing in particular always intrigued me. It moves differently than our modern Western clothing, creates elegant silhouettes, and the folds and draping create movement along the shape of the body. I then saw the chasm between what pop culture knows about ancient material (from movies to church plays) versus what the archaeological community has meticulously documented. The aspects of this foreign world came alive to me and became distinct, and I wanted to share this with people.

For years I had waited to show this first-century world and was nearly there with my ideas for

*Borderland*, but I needed a way to pull it all together. While flipping through some film/video game art books designed like this book, I noticed how well they established the culture and "built the world." You do not even have to read a single word to really get it. That is when it hit me—we were going to need lots of illustrations, small-scale figures, and reconstructed clothing. This way when you walk in, you absorb first-century Israel as if you were walking into the pages of a concept art book.

In the end, I am thrilled with what our team has brought to life. What started off as an idea for a coin display turned into a rich and robust look at the world that Jesus lived in.



INITIAL CONCEPT





## WHO'S WHO

*The team that brought the exhibit to life:*

### DESIGN

#### ALLEN GREENE

Director of Attractions Design

#### TRAVIS WILSON

Senior Project Director,  
Art Director

#### ERIC DEAN

Senior Graphic Designer

#### DOUG HENDERSON

Supervising Art Director

#### HANNAH AHERN

Exhibit Artist

#### NATE BARTON

Key Exhibit Artist

#### ZACK BROWN

Design Artist

#### JENELLE CERVENKA

Graphic Designer

#### HALEY CRAFT

Junior Design Artist

#### HANNAH CRAFT

Junior Graphic Designer



#### BEHIND-THE-SCENES INFO

Keep a lookout for this icon for behind-the-scenes insights from the incredible team that God has brought together here at Answers in Genesis.

**AVERY FETZER**

Exhibit Artist

**BROOKLYN FORD**Lead Exhibit  
Maintenance Artist**FELICIA GOEBEL**

Exhibit Artist

**SANDY HABOUSH**

Textile Artist

**AMBER HARBIN**

Exhibit Artist

**ETHAN HARBIN**

Graphic Designer

**BEN IOCCO**Concept Artist,  
Musical Composition**GREG IOCCO**Key Exhibit Artist,  
Illustrator, Researcher**JESSE PIÉ**

Key Exhibit Artist, Illustrator

**ERIC REMUS**Exhibit Artist,  
Digital Sculptor**LEVI SHERMAN**Key Exhibit Artist,  
Researcher, Living History  
Coordinator**LONDON TOWNSEND**

Exhibit Artist

**JOHNNY WHITE**

Key Exhibit Artist, Illustrator

**CONTENT****TIM CHAFFEY**

Content Manager

**MIKE BELKNAP**

Content Writer

**FABRICATION AND  
TECH DESIGN****HARRISON CRAIG**Director of Exhibit  
Project Management**KIM HOFFMAN**

Production Shop Manager

**MICHAEL CONNOR**

CAD Technical Designer

**AL GIBSON**CNC Operator,  
Production Fabricator**CARSON HAGER**

Production Fabricator

**ALEX HOLA**Lighting-CNC  
Technical Designer**BOBBY KNIGHT**

Production Fabricator

**ETHAN MCKEEVER**Production Fabricator,  
Technical Designer**BEN PETERSON**

Production Fabricator

**DANIEL STIBRAL**

Production Fabricator

**TONY WRAY**

Production Fabricator

**ADMINISTRATION****MIKE ZOVATH**Chief Action Officer  
& Cofounder**PATRICK MARSH**Vice President of  
Attractions Design**TIM SCHMITT**Vice President of  
Horticulture, Site  
Development & Facilities**LEROY LAMONTAGNE**Director of Strategic  
Construction Infrastructure**ANTONIO DA FIENO**

Architectural Designer

**AMY STAUFFER**Attractions Design  
Office Manager**AUSTIN MACNAMARA**Attractions Design  
Assistant Office Manager**CONTRACTORS****JOSEPH BALMOS**

Lent Greaves and Helmet

**EZEQUIEL NICOLÁS****BAÑOS CACCIATORE**  
Bags**NICK BURNS**

Illustrator

**TOM DAVIS**

Digital Sculptor

**AUSTIN DEGROOT**

Illustrator

**GABRIEL EVERSON**

Cuirass

**LARRY HASTINGS**

Artist

**KEITH LOWE**

Illustrator

**BERNARDO PETTOROSSO**

Helmets

**TIM PETTY**

Digital Sculptor

**PATRICK POINTER**

Sword Maker

**SERGEY SIMUNIN**

Mail

**FACILITIES****TOM VAN HUSS**Director of Facilities  
Maintenance**STEVE BRUNS**

Maintenance Supervisor

**MARK NAKOFF**

Master Electrician

**JEFF RUSNAK**General Maintenance  
Technician**CONNOR MCCOLLOUGH**Apprentice - General  
Maintenance Technician**AUDIO/VISUAL SERVICES****DOUG NELSON**Director of  
Audio/Visual Services**RICK MENDENHALL**Manager of  
Audio/Visual Services**MASON WYANT**

Lead A/V Technician

**ANTHONY COLLINS**

Digital Signage Manager

***Special thanks to those who  
volunteered their time:*****CASEY CHAFFEY****BRIGID EVERSON****JOY FOURIE****BECCA GRUBER****CATHY HENDERSON****MARY BETH SENA****DANAE SENA****FAITH SHERMAN****MARCIE WILSON****DONNA YOUNG**

## LOGO DEVELOPMENT

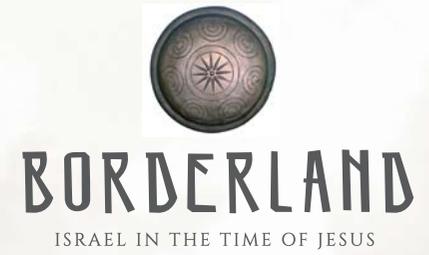
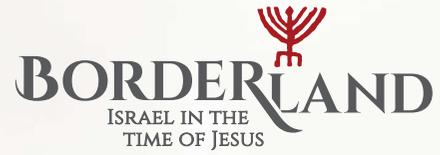
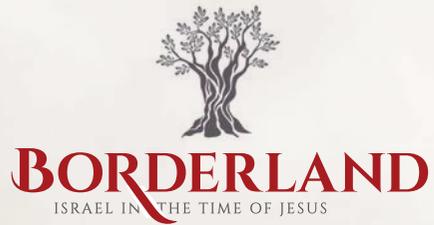
**Travis Wilson** | The title came from listening to various experts talk about Israel and its place in the ancient world. Over and over, it was called a borderland and a buffer zone between warring kingdoms and empires. Whether they be Egypt and Babylon/Assyria, the Ptolemies and the Seleucids, or Rome and Parthia, the region of Israel and Judea seems to constantly get caught in the middle, culturally pushed and pulled, making for an incredibly rich story and history. The tension and conflict are a great tool to grab and hold people's attention. Eric took this information and worked it together beautifully in the logo design.

**Eric Dean** | Typography and logo development are my favorite aspects of design. Fonts can communicate so much more than the words that they spell. At a glance, a logo font can start to tell the story behind what it represents. Searching for the right *Borderland* fonts was like an epic treasure hunt that took days, and I loved every minute.

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 ISRAEL IN THE TIME OF JESUS  
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**Eric Dean** | Tim, Travis, and I discussed different iconic symbols that would visually tie the *Borderland* logo to Israel. We looked at olive trees, fig trees, grapes, the star of David, and a couple others, but ultimately felt that the menorah was the strongest. The icon itself was inspired by an ancient tomb door carving discovered in Tiberias in Israel's Galilee region. Levi provided Sicarii blade references for the blades used in the B and D. They play into the cultural tension that Israel was under.



# BORDERLAND

ISRAEL IN THE TIME OF JESUS

Eric Dean | After the logo was designed, we used a CNC machine to cut it out of PVC. Bobby hammered the shapes and Larry painted the letters to look like bronze.



## MAP AND MONITOR ICONOGRAPHY

**Eric Dean** | Between the informative maps and large amount of content in the *Borderland* exhibit, we wanted a way to visually represent some quick takeaways. This is why we developed the following icon system used primarily in the maps and interactive touch screens throughout the exhibit.



MARBLE



GRAIN



OLIVES



FISH



HORSES



WINE



POTTERY



GLASS



CLOTH



SLAVES



WOOD



PAPYRUS



WOOL



COPPER



SILVER



SALT



GOVERNMENT



LEADERS



CHURCH



JUDAISM



ECONOMY



MILITARY



PHILOSOPHY/WRITING



ARCHITECTURE



HEROD'S TEMPLE



HOME & FAMILY



PAGAN TEMPLES



FORTRESS



CULTIC



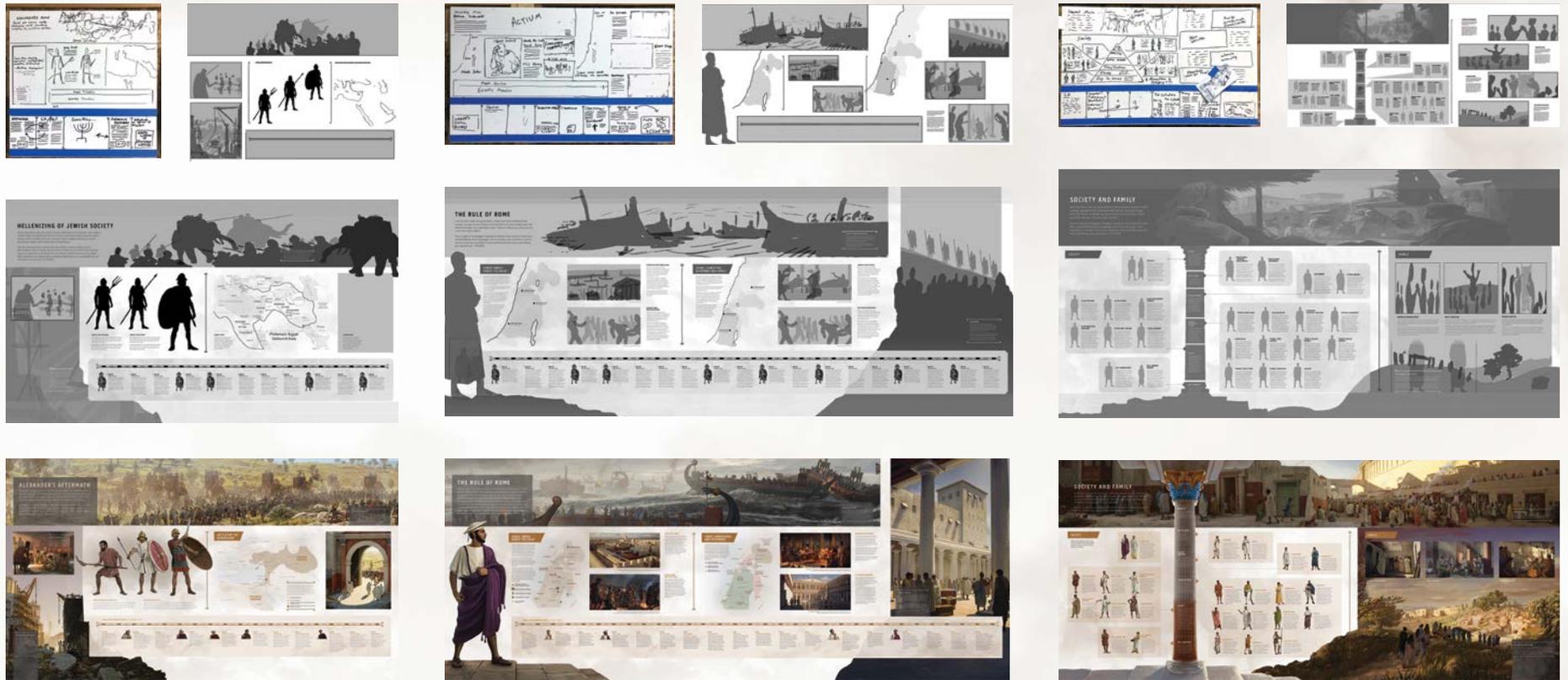
MOUNT GERIZIM



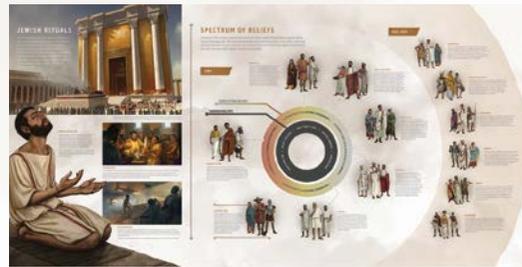
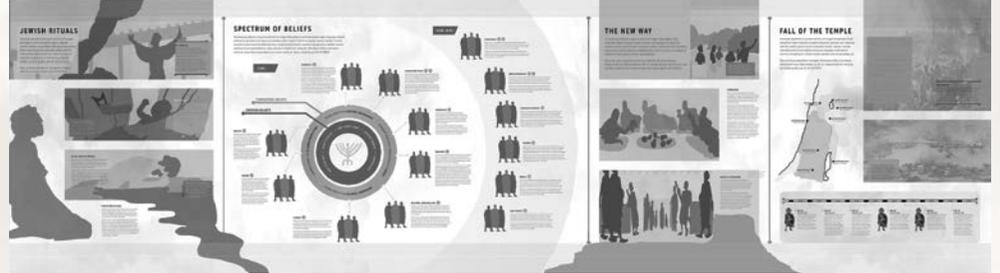
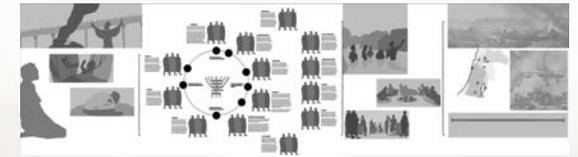
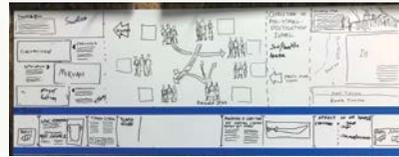
## WHITEBOARD SESSIONS & SIGN DEVELOPMENT

**Tim Chaffey** | *Borderland* is a content-heavy exhibit and is divided into large categories, such as the Greek and Roman backgrounds and Village Life vs. City Life. Each of these major sections contains several topics we needed to address. We held several brainstorming sessions where we organized our ideas on a large whiteboard. From there, we took a divide-and-conquer approach where Mike focused on writing a section and I wrote a different one. Eric mocked up large signs for us, and we printed out the content we had written and pinned it in place on these signs so that we would know what still needed to be written.

## RESEARCH + CONTENT DEVELOPMENT



## RESEARCH + CONTENT DEVELOPMENT

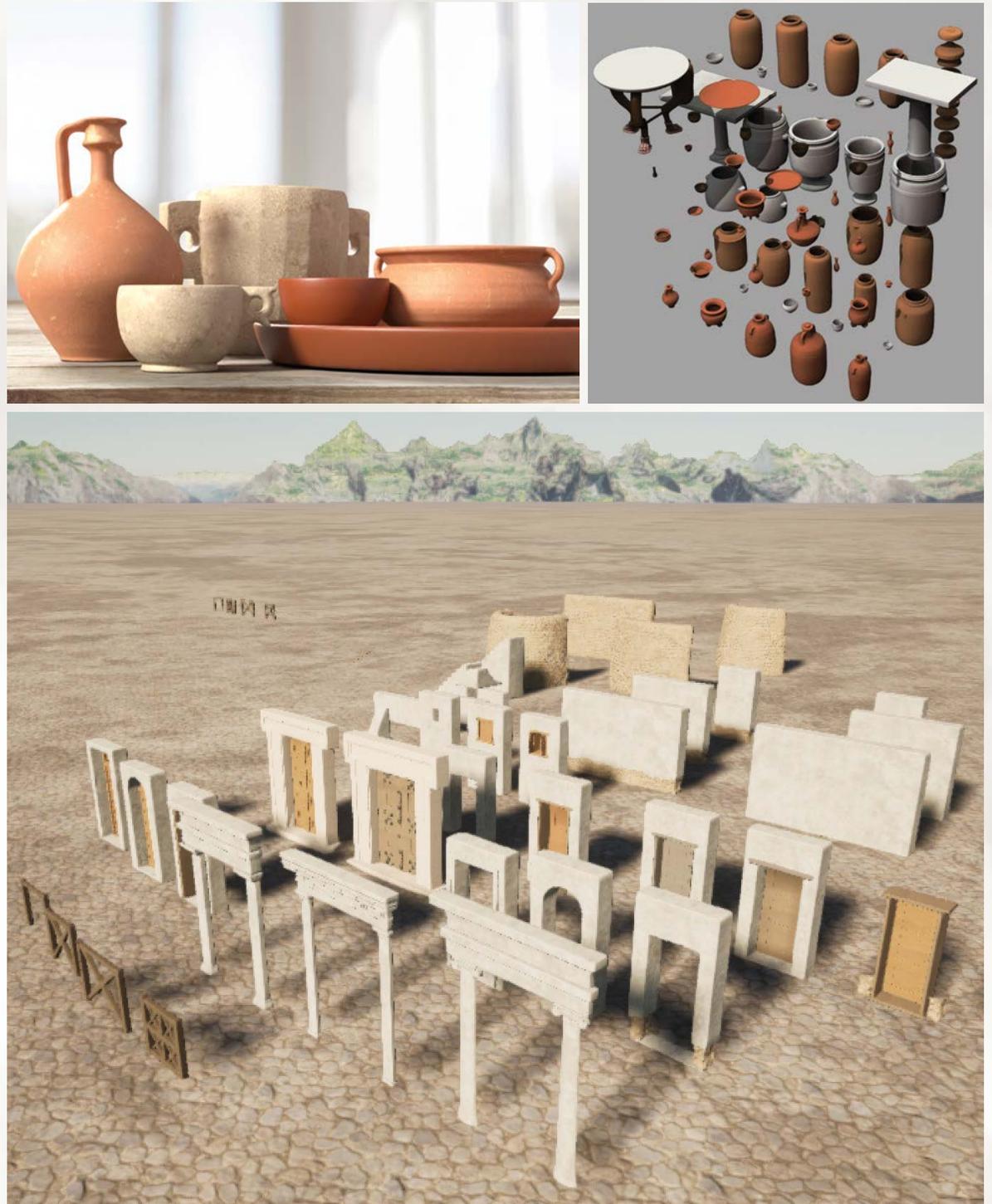


## 3D ASSETS

**Travis Wilson** | Once we got past the concept development of the exhibit, the real work needed to begin. We had a large number of illustrations and models to produce, so Greg and I spent months building digital assets to be used as underlays for landscape illustrations and character illustrations, as well as 3D-printed characters. This gave us the surety that they were based on real archaeological sites or objects and could take pressure off the illustrators and sculptors down the road.

We produced hundreds of posed characters that were then processed as needed for 3D printing or illustrations. I started with a basic human sculpt and brought this into a clothing simulation software to build and calculate the clothes draping in the various poses. This could then be used as an illustration for underpainting or passed off to digital sculptor for 3D printing.

For our illustrations, we prepped by creating tons of interchangeable building pieces, helmets, ships, pillars, pots, and more in ZBrush (a digital sculpting program). Then all these assets were brought into our rendering program, Twinmotion.



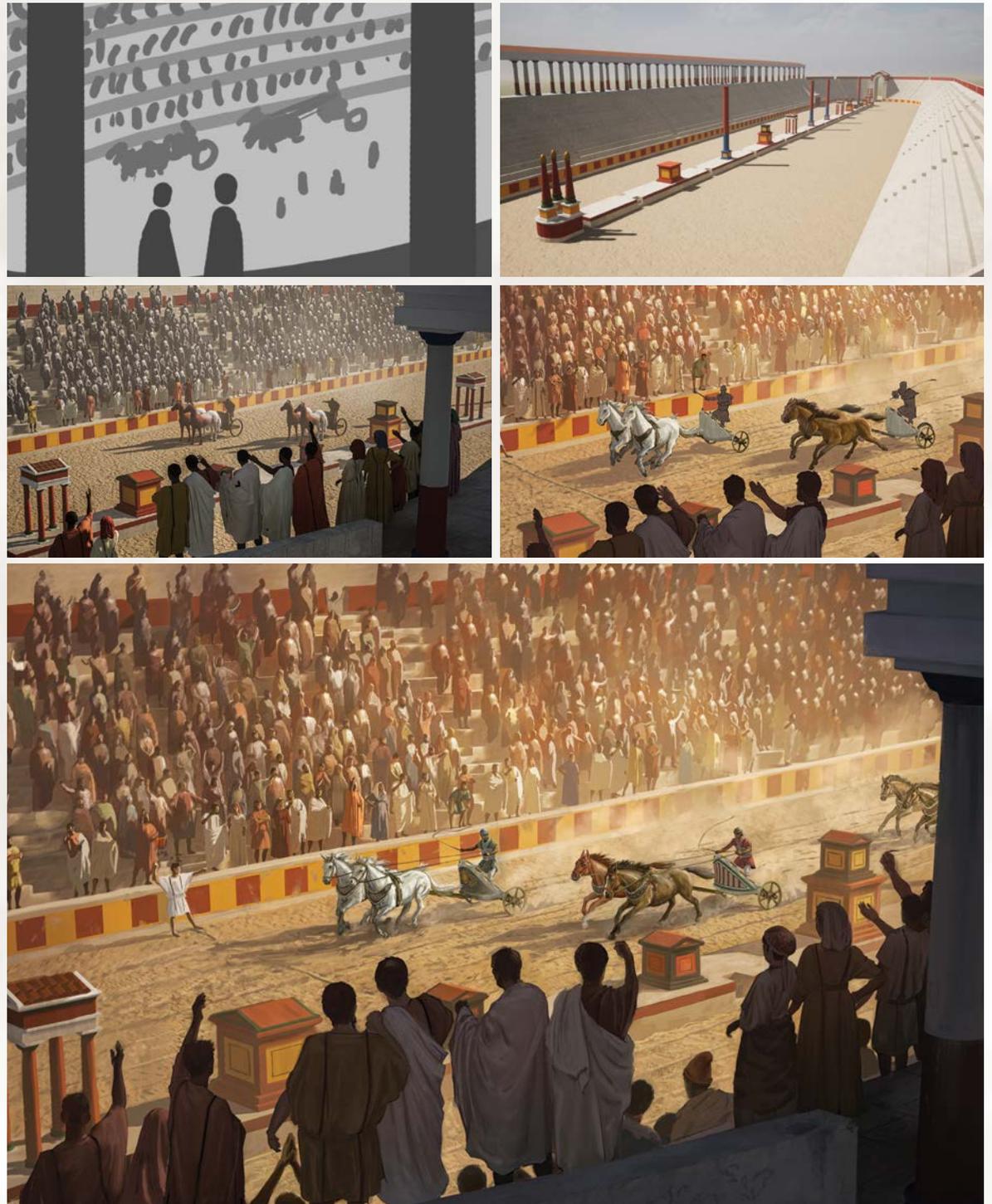


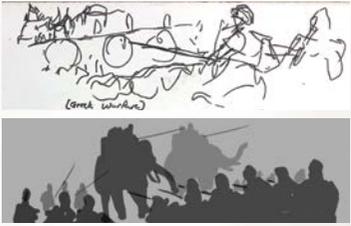
## ILLUSTRATION

**Travis Wilson** | To create the scenes for the illustrations, we used a program called Twinmotion, which is a great tool for visualizing architectural spaces. With its very easy interface, Greg and I were able to immediately start building scenes with the right lighting and camera angles needed for the illustrations. We were able to act like digital cinematographers in a digital diorama.

These computer-rendered scenes then went to a team of seven illustrators: Greg Iocco, Jesse Pié, Johnny White, Nick Burns, Austin DeGroot, Keith Lowe, and me (though I didn't do quite as much as I would've liked). The team graciously worked with our method we had developed on a previous project. With this technique, an artist worked on one piece, then swapped it the next day to work on a fellow illustrator's work. This results in a consistent style and gives each artist a fresh look at a piece. One of the things I emphasized was for each artist to touch every corner of the piece as much as possible so that we did not end up with disjointed pieces. Though it took some getting used to, it worked well for this context, and I think we ended up with stronger illustrations overall.

**Greg Iocco** | Working with multiple artists on the same illustration has its challenges. But combining talents and seeing things from different perspectives is the catalyst that takes a work of art to the next level—and the journey together as a team is deeply satisfying.

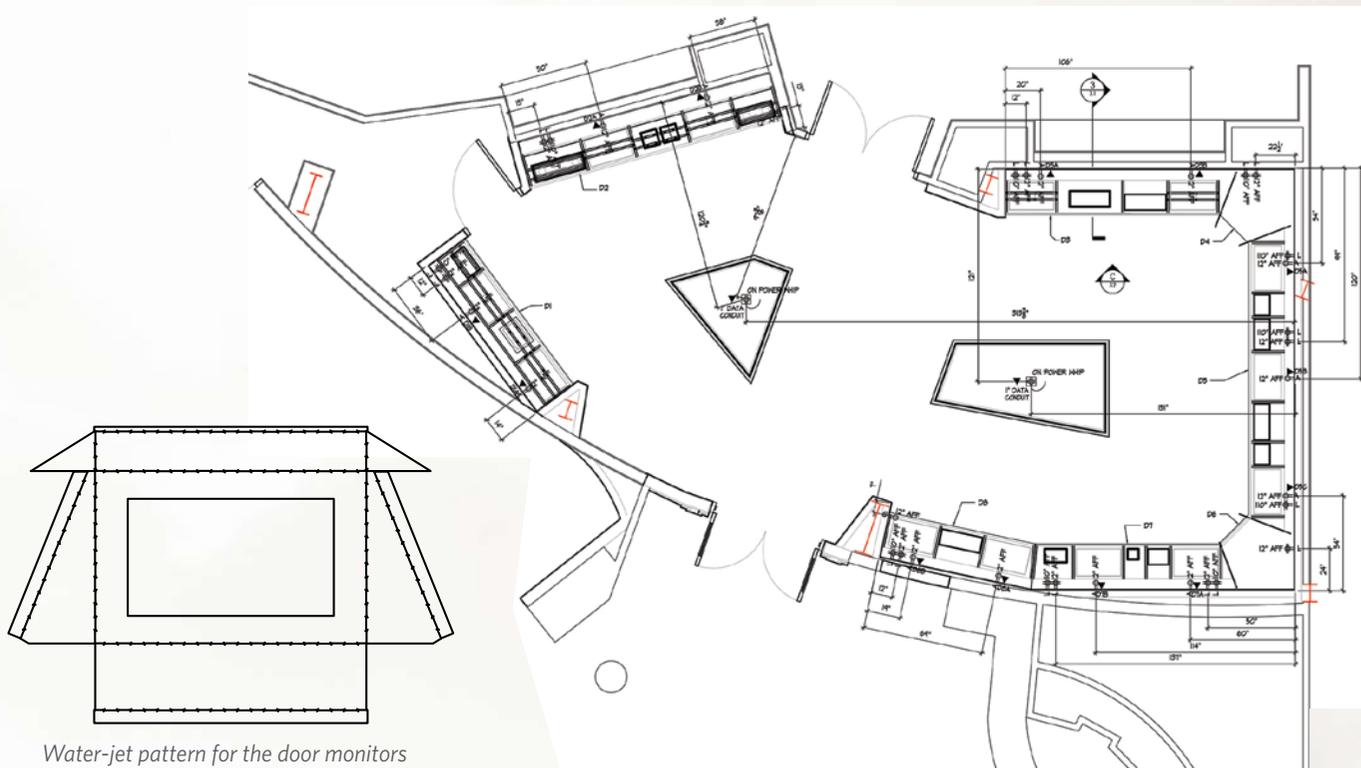
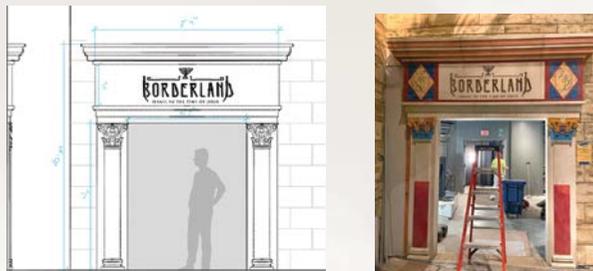
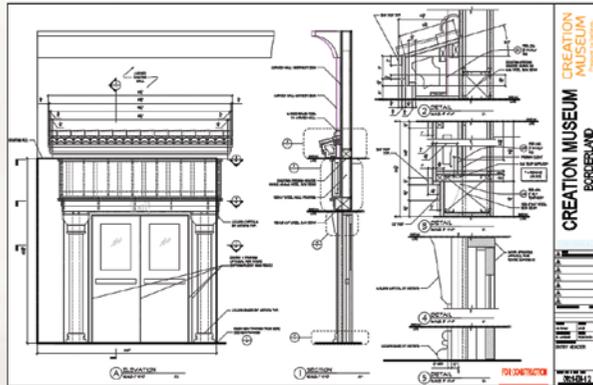




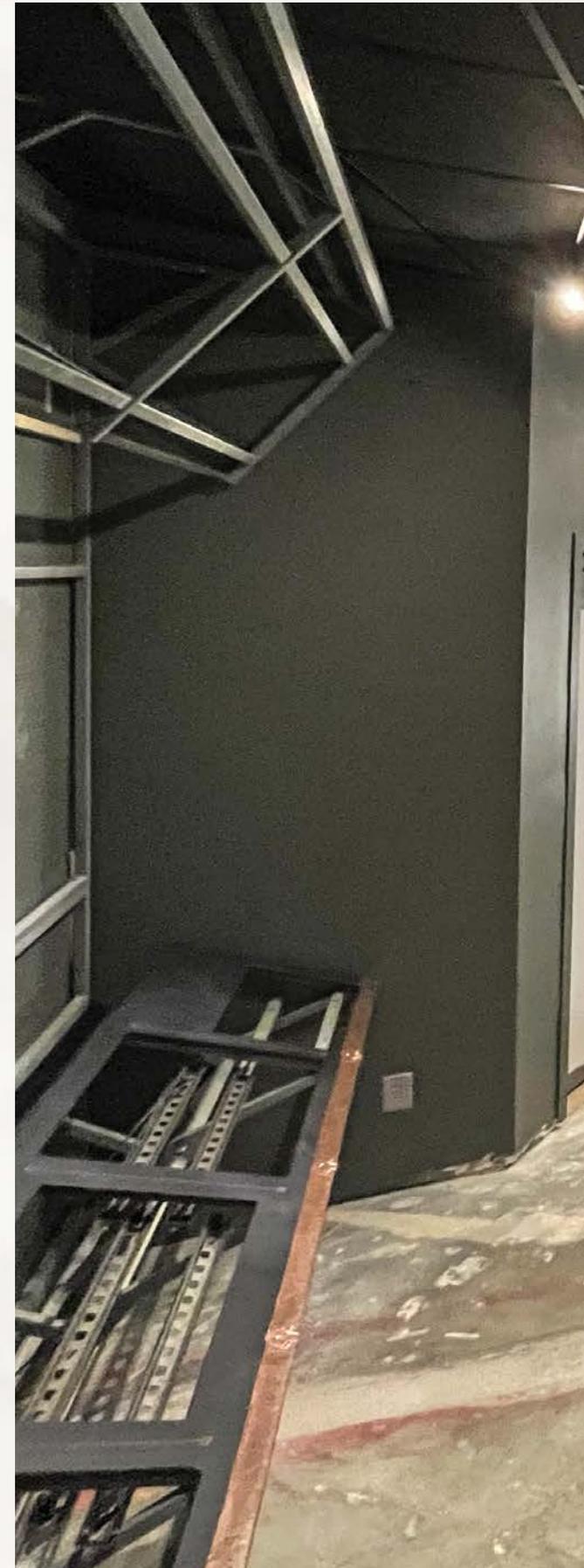
## FABRICATION AND TECH DESIGN

**Harrison Craig** | With every project comes difficulties to overcome. One of these challenges was creating graphic frames with angled facets that turned two corners and provided access to wall-mounted power supplies. Ethan McKeever built the room in 3D CAD to get the transitions correct. We decided to build the corner pieces out of CNC-cut plywood while using tube steel for the straight runs.

Since Travis wanted to mount interactive monitors into the mannequin cases, we also had to come up with a custom metal access door that held the monitors at an easy viewing angle. Michael Connor worked in 3D CAD to get the shapes just right. We used a water-jet machine to cut out the steel plate pattern, then folded the parts and welded them up.



Water-jet pattern for the door monitors



Construction phase of the Borderland exhibit





## BRIDGING THE OLD AND NEW TESTAMENTS

The Old Testament closes with the Jewish people back in their land following a 70-year exile in Babylon. The Temple and walls of Jerusalem have been rebuilt, but the situation is bleak. God remains silent over the next 400 years while Israel languishes under Persian, Greek, and Roman authorities.

As the New Testament opens, the Jewish people have divided into philosophical, religious, and political factions. Greek language and ideas permeate society, but the Roman Empire rules the Mediterranean world. Yet an Idumaeen king raised as a Jew sits on the throne in Jerusalem.

Then, God breaks His silence and sends His Son into this borderland to be born of a virgin. Nothing will ever be the same.

▶ After growing up as a carpenter's son in Nazareth, Jesus launches His ministry in Capernaum, which is on the Sea of Galilee. He gathers twelve disciples, many of whom were fishermen, and entrusts them with sharing God's message of redemption with the world.



■ **Greg Iocco** | A fishing village on the Sea of Galilee is the perfect place to start visualizing the delicate barrier separating the Jew and the Greek. Here, devout Jews eked out their unique identity on the edge of a pagan frontier infamous for cults and idolatry. It truly was a borderland within the larger borderland of the Jewish world.









## GREEK LEARNING

Hellenization strongly impacted many upper-class Jewish families around Jerusalem. They often chose Greek names for their children and adopted a Greek style of education at the gymnasium, a place of physical and mental training.



**Keith Lowe** | I had a very difficult time figuring out how to correctly render the children's tunics. After a few missteps, I decided to purchase some fabric and asked my neighbor to sew me a small tunic. I then asked my daughter to wear it and hold a book to represent the tablets. It was a good solution and a great way to connect my kids to the work in a tangible way.



## BETWEEN MALACHI AND MATTHEW: A BRIEF SURVEY OF INTERTESTAMENTAL JEWISH LITERATURE

The four centuries between the writing of the Old and New Testaments witnessed a wealth of literature related to sacred Scripture. Based on the content of extant fragments and manuscripts, Jewish readers highly regarded their Scriptures and longed to know more about biblical accounts. For example, *Joseph and Aseneth* provides an exciting fictional backstory for Joseph's wife, and the *Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs* greatly expands Jacob's final blessings and instructions for his sons (Genesis 49).

The Dead Sea Scrolls are perhaps the most famous intertestamental writings and one of the greatest archaeological finds in history. Portions of more than 225 manuscripts of biblical books and approximately 670 non-biblical scrolls have been discovered among these scrolls.<sup>1</sup>

Many of the non-biblical writings consist of imaginative expansions of biblical texts or commentaries on them. For example, the badly damaged manuscript known as the *Genesis Apocryphon* contains a fictional conversation between Lamech and his father, Methuselah, over concerns Lamech had about his wife, who was pregnant with Noah. Also embellishing accounts in early Genesis are two of the most popular books among the scrolls: *1 Enoch* (25 copies) and *Jubilees* (21 copies). Though not considered to be Scripture, these works were well known to first-century Jewish audiences, and Jude alludes to *1 Enoch* several times in his brief letter.

Portions of every book in the Old Testament and four books of the Apocrypha (the additional books in Roman Catholic and Eastern Orthodox Bibles) have been discovered.

<sup>1</sup> Martin Abegg Jr., Peter Flint, and Eugene Ulrich, *The Dead Sea Scrolls Bible: The Oldest Known Bible Translated for the First Time into English* (New York: HarperOne, 1999), xv.  
Photo: Book of Enoch fragment in Aramaic found among the Dead Sea Scrolls



**Tim Chaffey** | The Jewish people produced many writings during the roughly 400 years between the close of the Old Testament and the opening of the New Testament. While we do not consider these texts to be inspired Scripture, they are quite useful in helping us understand the historical setting of the New Testament and the ways in which many Jews understood the Old Testament.