

History of Biblical Archaeology

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I. What is archaeology?

- A. Archaeology is the reconstruction of past human cultures through the study of their material remains as excavated in their stratigraphic contexts.
- B. Archaeology contains 3 phases
 - 1. Data collection
 - 2. Analysis
 - 3. Modeling

II. Role of Archaeology

- A. Value of Archaeology to the Bible
 - 1. Confirms the Historical Authenticity of the Bible
 - 2. Corrects false Interpretations of the Bible
 - 3. Clarifies our understanding of the Bible
 - 4. Complements the Bible's message
- B. Limits of Archaeology¹
 - 1. Only a fraction has survived
 - 2. Only a fraction of available sites have been surveyed
 - 3. Only a fraction of surveyed sites have been excavated
 - 4. Only a fraction of an excavated site is actually examined
 - 5. Only a fraction of what is excavated is eventually reported and published

¹ Edwin Yamauchi, *The Stones and the Scriptures*, (Grand Rapids, MI.: Baker Books, 1972), 146-157.

III. The Schools of Archaeology

- A. Minimalist
 - 1. Minimalists generally do not view the Bible as historical and is not necessary in archaeological study of the Palestinian area.
 - 2. Minimalists seek to keep the Bible and archaeology separate.
- B. Maximalists view the Bible as historical.
 - 1. The Maximalist regards the Bible as a useful and sometimes necessary guide to archaeology of Palestine.
 - 2. Maximalists also believe the Bible can fill in the gaps to the questions archaeology is not able to answer.

IV. History of Biblical Archaeology

- A. Rise of Biblical Archaeology (1885-1985)
 - 1. Napoleon arrived in Egypt.
 - 2. Early Diggers Into the Biblical World
 - 3. Matthew Flinders Petrie (1853-1942)
 - 4. Bible scholars gained interest in discovering evidence for the Old Testament.
- B. Biblical Archaeology Golden Age (1870-1970)
 - 1. John Garstang (1876-1956)
 - 2. Nelson Glueck (1900-1971)
 - 3. William Foxwell Albright (1891-1971)
 - 4. George Ernest Wright (1909-1974)
 - 5. Kathleen Kenyon (1906-1978)
 - a) Key figure in the negative turn in Biblical archaeology regarding the historical authenticity of the Bible.
 - b) She dated Jericho's fall approximately 1550 BC and the Exodus to 13th century AD.

6. Most archaeologist concluded Genesis to Joshua even to Solomon was fiction.
- C. Attacks against biblical archaeology (Post 1985) and the rise of Minimalism
1. By 1985, belief in the historical nature of the Hexateuch was a minority view.
 2. It was concluded the archaeology of Albright and Wright had been discredited.
 3. William Dever
 4. Amihai Mazar
 5. Israel Finkelstein
- D. The Death of Biblical Archaeology
1. By 2000 there was a consensus that biblical archaeology was dead and the Torah was mythical in nature.
 2. The pendulum began to swing back towards the center in the late 1990s.
- E. Resurgent and future of biblical archaeology
1. New studies are beginning to support the Pentateuch.
 2. Discovery of Historical synchronisms and cultural specificity are presenting a strong case for authenticity of the biblical accounts.

V. How to Approach Archaeology

- A. Two incorrect Approaches
1. Extreme Minimalists
 2. Extreme Maximalists
- B. Correspondence with the Bible and Archaeology
1. The Bible and Archaeology should be complimentary.
 2. When they are in conflict, we should study both carefully.
 3. There are two basic categories: Cultural specificity and historical synchronisms.

- a) Cultural specificity
- b) Historical synchronisms

VI. Alleged Archaeology Discoveries that Proliferate Today