

# Theology on the Web.org.uk

*Making Biblical Scholarship Accessible*

This document was supplied for free educational purposes. Unless it is in the public domain, it may not be sold for profit or hosted on a webserver without the permission of the copyright holder.

If you find it of help to you and would like to support the ministry of Theology on the Web, please consider using the links below:



Buy me a coffee

<https://www.buymeacoffee.com/theology>



PATREON

<https://patreon.com/theologyontheweb>

**PayPal**

<https://paypal.me/robbradshaw>

---

A table of contents for *Journal of the Transactions of the Victoria Institute* can be found here:

[https://biblicalstudies.org.uk/articles\\_jtvi-01.php](https://biblicalstudies.org.uk/articles_jtvi-01.php)

## THE PLACE AND PROGRESS OF BIBLICAL ARCHAEOLOGY

By D. J. WISEMAN, O.B.E., M.A., A.K.C.

RECENT years have witnessed the continued growth in the importance of archaeological research both in fact and in the public estimate. While many factors conduce to this interest in the scientific study of material remains from ancient life, the widespread knowledge of the Bible story remains the initial view-point of many to whom it is almost their only introduction to remoter antiquity. Yet few seem to realize the scope of this comparatively young branch of human inquiry which has been rewarded by finds which would appear far to outweigh the comparatively small effort expended. The influx of evidence has been such as to cause the majority of individual scholars to limit their work to a well defined field of study, to a period such as pre-history, to a group of objects according to type or material or to languages which can be grouped by affinity of structure or script. Moreover, each of these specializations is repeated in the varying geographical or cultural areas in which archaeological research is pursued. Thus to the student of the ancient Near East the results of excavations, quite apart from the earlier discoveries which may need publication or re-evaluation, come faster than can be easily absorbed. A single mind can no longer compass with authority a wide range of interests, and scholars are led to specialize in the interpretation of the finds from Palestine, Egypt, Syria, Assyria and Babylonia, Persia, or the Hittite or other territories.<sup>1</sup> This necessary narrowing of focus has resulted in a corresponding dearth of syntheses, yet it will be obvious that any progressive science needs a periodic review, or stock-taking, if its results are to be made readily available to those whose main interests lie elsewhere.

It is to the credit of this Institute that in these days of increasing specialization it continues to bring together a wide variety of interests to the common focal point of the Christian faith and thus of the Bible. Throughout its history the Institute has not lacked the support of those equipped to present to it the results of archaeological findings in their relation to the Bible. We need now name only such men as my predecessor in office, Professor T. G. Pinches, who almost annually from 1900 until his death in 1928 covered the expanding field of Babylonian studies, or our late President, Sir Frederic Kenyon, whose mastery of Biblical Manuscripts and wide learning in matters archaeological provided more than one Annual Address.<sup>2</sup> It is in this tradition that I address you this evening.

<sup>1</sup> There are, of course, a few exceptional scholars such as Professor W. F. Albright, who still contrives to write on, and contribute to, all these fields of study.

<sup>2</sup> E.g. "Greek Manuscripts and Archaeology" (1943); "The Fourth Gospel" (1945); "The Bible and Criticism" (1947); "New Testament Criticism To-day" (1948); "The Institute and Biblical Criticism To-day" (1950).

However, first we must discuss the place of Biblical archaeology in relation to other branches of science to-day. By Biblical archaeology is generally meant the selection of the results of archaeological research in the Near East relating to the Bible or, more precisely, the study of the material remains of antiquity in Palestine and in those countries which from earliest times to the first century of the Christian era were brought into relation with it. This includes the remains of buildings, sculpture and art, pottery, inscriptions on whatever substance they may have been written, indeed any artefact which leads to an understanding of the history and life not merely of the Hebrews or of Palestine, but of those countries, especially Syria, Egypt, Jordan, Asia Minor and "Mesopotamia", which bear more or less closely on the Biblical record.<sup>1</sup>

Now this very act of selection, though common to the archaeological and other scientific workers, has created a divergence of opinion concerning the place of Biblical archaeology to-day. There is suspicion of the purpose and manner which dominate the selection made by some. By many, Biblical archaeology is treated as an unco-ordinated body of knowledge summoned as an ally to defend or confirm the Scriptures as they understand them, and a vague idea thus abounds in some quarters that the Bible is confirmed, or proved increasingly, with each discovery.<sup>2</sup> Partly in reaction to this attitude others stress that the value of the Bible lies not in its historical or literary but in its religious teaching, the great themes of which lie outside the scope of archaeological inquiry. These would argue that religious truth is one thing and historical fact another. Both parties would agree that an increasing understanding of Bible history has come principally from the field of archaeology and that this has tended to bring a return to a more conservative attitude in some questions, notably the historical credibility of the Patriarchal Age, and the disposition to credit more of the Biblical poetry, now comparable with similar forms from early Canaan, than formerly.<sup>3</sup> It has led also to the general appreciation of the greater reliability of the Massoretic text of the Old Testament than was allowed earlier in this century. Moreover there is general agreement on the legitimacy and value of selecting evidence which *illustrates* the Biblical record, its life and times, its places, peoples, customs, literature and even words. It would not seem just to belittle any evidence which directly corroborates the historicity or accuracy of the Bible at any point any more than it would be right, as sometimes also happens, to interpret the evidence either of archaeology or of the Bible itself out of context in order to find proofs of Biblical accuracy. Happily the dichotomy resulting in these two extreme attitudes is less than formerly; and Old Testament theologians and archaeologists, at least,

<sup>1</sup> Sir F. G. Kenyon, *The Bible and Archaeology* (1940), p. 17.

<sup>2</sup> Millar Burrows, *What mean these Stones?* (1941), pp. 2-3.

<sup>3</sup> H. H. Rowley, *The Old Testament and Modern Study* (1951), pp. xx-xxi.

are to-day quicker to appreciate each other's disciplines, thanks largely to the influence of such men as Professors W. F. Albright, H. H. Rowley, A. Guillaume, Millar Burrows and G. E. Wright. Although *direct* confirmations of the Bible from external sources are rarer than the indirect illustrations gained they are being more carefully noted. As would be expected, such points are largely those where the divine revelation is made in, or concerns, a time or place otherwise now known to us from archaeology. The fact that Sennacherib did besiege Hezekiah in Jerusalem, and that Nebuchadrezzar did capture Jerusalem in 597 B.C. are such points at which archaeological facts can be unequivocally said to prove or confirm the Biblical reference (not the whole Bible!) as true. This is not, of course, to assert that the truth of the Bible cannot be demonstrated on other grounds.

Having thus said something of the general setting of Biblical archaeology, let us now review its progress as a science. Obviously it would be impossible in this address to cover the whole of the hundred or more years in which archaeological discoveries have been brought to bear on the Scriptures. Such reviews have been given in other places. In a paper on *Recent Trends in Biblical Archaeology* read to this Institute in 1950 I sought to point out the most important development of the preceding ten years. Since then much has been found which illustrates and not a little, in my opinion, which directly substantiates the Bible story. Despite this there have been few comprehensive surveys of Biblical archaeology and only one published here in England—*The Old Testament and Modern Study* (S.O.T.S., 1951). In this the American Professor W. F. Albright has outlined the archaeology of Palestine and surrounding lands in the thirty years from 1920 to 1950. More recently in his *The Bible after Twenty Years of Archaeology* (1932–1952) he has drawn attention to special points in that progress, a number of which I had myself covered in my earlier paper, viz. (1) The general agreement (for there remains but a narrow margin of disagreement) in the correlation of Babylonian, Egyptian and Syro-Palestinian chronologies before about 1500 B.C. This is an essential factor in the understanding of the events and history of these civilizations. (2) The results of excavations at Mari and Ugarit (Ras Shamra). The former are important for the light they shed upon the North-West Semitic life of Patriarchal times; the latter as illustrating the thought and life of the Canaanites, and not least in that Ugaritic poetry has led to Albright's dating such Hebrew poems as the Song of Deborah (Judges 5), the Song of Miriam (Exodus 15) to the time of Moses, the Oracles of Balaam (Num. 22–24) to the thirteenth century and the Blessings of Jacob (Gen. 49) and the Blessings of Moses (Deut. 33) as not later than the eleventh century B.C. Similarly, in opposition to the widely accepted results of literary criticism, he would assign many psalms to this early date, including Psalm 68, though "this psalm has often been attributed to the Maccabean Period (second century B.C.) in spite

of the fact that Jewish scholars who translated into Greek in the same century did not understand it any better than did the Massoretes a thousand years later. This is typical of the utter absurdity of much so-called 'critical' work in the biblical field".<sup>1</sup> The Ugaritic tablets have also done much to make apparent the gulf between the religions of Israel and of Canaan. Albright also stresses the importance of the new finds relating to the Exilic period and of the Dead Sea Scrolls, to both of which subjects I will return. He also wisely draws attention to the early Gnostic and Manichaean codices from Egypt which are important for the study of the background of the thought, and for the date, of the gospel of John. Further discoveries of papyri in Egypt may well be expected to give new light on the gospel narratives.

To illustrate the actual progress and the type of development which may be expected from Biblical archaeology it will be, perhaps, most helpful if I confine myself to discoveries and researches made since Professor Albright's review in 1952, i.e. to the last three years.

#### *Excavations*

With the cessation of actual hostilities conditions in Israel have allowed an increasing archaeological effort, partly by way of excavating sites before their modern development and partly in survey of the terrain itself. As a result of the latter in the Galilee area, excavations commenced last autumn on Tell-el-Qedah, the city of Hazor mentioned in both Mari and El-Amarna correspondence and cited as "the head of all kingdoms" in the days of Joshua (11: 10); the first season's work under Y. Yadin has resulted in evidence for the destruction of the city at the end of the eighth century (i.e., probably, by Tiglathpileser III in 732 B.C.), for the existence of a flourishing city (Level IV) of the Ahab period and for an earlier city of about 40,000 inhabitants which met its end in the thirteenth century, that is at the very period considered by most scholars as the date of Joshua's conquest of the country. The discovery of a Canaanite temple of the late Bronze Period with a number of statues and stele, including a simple but effective carving of two hands raised as if in prayer to a deity represented by the sun disc, will go far to showing us the hitherto little known art of Canaan and the influences upon it. The excavations also produced a pottery fragment bearing two letters in the Proto-Sinaitic alphabetic script similar to that previously found at Lachish.<sup>2</sup>

Excavations at Biblical Dothan and Dibhon have as yet produced little evidence which relates to the Biblical period. Work at Jericho has continued for three months each year from 1952 under Dr. Kathleen Kenyon, but since it has mainly concentrated on the early Neolithic period and the seventeenth-century city there, it is of less importance for direct Biblical

<sup>1</sup> W. F. Albright, op. cit., reprinted from *Religion in Life*, 21, No. 4 (1952), pp. 543–4.

<sup>2</sup> A preliminary report on the Hazor excavations by Y. Yadin in *The Illustrated London News*, April 14th, 1956.

than for general archaeological studies. The clearest picture is of the town in the Patriarchal period. This is partly due to the unusual conditions which have preserved objects of wood and textiles in the tombs of the period outside the town. This city with its streets and well-built drains and little shops appears to have been sacked by the Egyptians c. 1560 B.C. and then lain in ruins till c. 1400 B.C. and with its elaborate defences may have been the work of the Hyksos peoples. Of the succeeding city of Joshua's time little has been found in all areas so far examined by the present expedition—only one house wall and part of a kitchen.<sup>1</sup> It is thus probably too early to make a detailed comparison with the results of the previous work done at the same site by Professor J. Garstang.

Further afield work continues at Ras Shamra (Ugarit) and at Mari (Tell Hariri) in Syria. The publication of the fourteenth-century texts from the former site by Professor J. Nougayrol will help,<sup>2</sup> with the Alalakh texts to which I refer below, to a clearer understanding of Syria at the time of the conquest or just before. The British expedition to Nimrud (Iraq) has continued work from 1952–1956 with one year's respite (1954). The results as they affect Old Testament studies can be summarized as follows:—

- (i) The earliest levels were marked by Ninevite V type pottery—a fact which may support the tradition of Genesis 10: 11 that the city was founded, as were other Assyrian cities, by people moving north from Sumer.
- (ii) A stela of Ashur-nasir-pal II gives the population of the city in 879 B.C. as 69,574 persons, which may be a useful indication that Jonah (4: 11) did not exaggerate the population of the northern capital, the ruins of which cover an area more than twice that of Nimrud.<sup>3</sup>
- (iii) Texts found include slave-contracts which may show that the amount of fifty silver shekels per head demanded of the Israelites was a redemption from slavery.<sup>4</sup> Other documents of the reign of Tiglath-pileser III include letters which show the extent of his control of Phoenicia and Palestine.<sup>5</sup> A further historical text, unpublished, of the same king refers to Hazael and to Israel. In this connection it is well to note that Hazael is to be read rather than Naphtali in the documents previously made known of this king. A text of Sargon II

<sup>1</sup> For preliminary reports see *The Palestine Exploration Quarterly*, 1952, pp. 62–82; 1953, pp. 81–95; 1954, pp. 45–63; 1955, pp. 108–117, and *The Illustrated London News*, May 12 and 19, 1956 (esp. pp. 552–5).

<sup>2</sup> J. Nougayrol, *Textes accadiens et hourrites des Archives est, ouest et centrales (Le Palais royal d'Ugarit III)*, 1955.

<sup>3</sup> D. J. Wiseman, *Iraq*, 14 (1952), p. 28.

<sup>4</sup> D. J. Wiseman, *Iraq*, 15 (1953), p. 135.

<sup>5</sup> H. W. F. Saggs, *Iraq*, 17 (1955), pp. 128–54.

found at Nimrud describing operations in Babylonia in 710–709 B.C. contains passages which have a striking resemblance to Isaiah 13: 19–22.<sup>1</sup> A polyptych or group of eight ivory writing boards with inscriptions on wax (*is le'u*) of the same king dated about 707 B.C., the oldest known “book”, gives added point to the contemporary prophets' words in Isaiah 30: 8<sup>2</sup>. Last year massive clay tablets were found, each originally containing about 800 lines of inscription, outlining the treaty obligations of the Median vassals of Esarhaddon. When these are published we shall no doubt have more information by which to compare the treatment and reactions of Israel and Judah to their Assyrian overlords. These finds might be considered typical of the indirect evidence to be expected from excavations at places distant from Palestine.

#### *Published Texts*

##### (i) *Alalakh and the Old Testament*

The publication of more than 500 inscribed clay tablets found by Sir Leonard Woolley at Atshana (Alalakh) in 1938–1949 and published in 1953 has afforded additional light on the life of a typical Syrian community in the eighteenth and fifteenth centuries B.C.<sup>3</sup> This is to be welcomed as giving evidence more closely linked geographically with Palestine than that often quoted for the Patriarchal period (e.g. the Nuzi or Mari and other Old Babylonian texts). Again summarizing some of the results:

- (1) The classes of society included tenant-farmers or “free proletarians” (the Hebrew *hofshi*), a free-born people who as a social group stood between the small class of land-owning aristocracy and an equally small class of slaves.<sup>4</sup>
- (2) An extradition clause in a treaty between two sovereign states in North Syria and a practical example of its implementation helps in the understanding of the problem of fugitive slaves in the Old Testament. Thus in 1 Kings 2: 39–40 we are told that Shimei entered Philistine territory to search for his two slaves and by demanding their return of King Achish of Gath returned with them. This would imply a treaty with such extradition rights between Solomon and the king of Gath. The Alalakh texts would similarly throw light on the Deuteronomic provision prohibiting the extradition of fugitive (presumably Hebrew) slaves (23: 15–16).<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> D. J. Wiseman, *JT VI* 87 (1955), pp. 35f. C. J. Gadd, *Iraq*, 16 (1954), p. 193.

<sup>2</sup> D. J. Wiseman, *Iraq*, 17 (1955), pp. 3–13.

<sup>3</sup> D. J. Wiseman, *The Alalakh Tablets*, 1953.

<sup>4</sup> I. Mendelsohn, *Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research*, No. 139 (October, 1955).

<sup>5</sup> I. Mendelsohn, “On Slavery at Alalakh”, *Israel Exploration Journal*, 5 (1955), pp. 65–72.

(3) The Alalakh practice of the exchange of cities—whether to preserve inter-state boundaries along natural features of the terrain or not, we do not know—is possibly reflected in the transactions of 1 Kings 9: 11. One unpublished Alalakh tablet of this class is of particular interest as it involves seven cities on each side. The ceremony of exchange involves the declaration of the inviolability of the transaction to be confirmed over a slaughtered sheep and the participants declaring: “if ever I take back what I have given you . . .”—i.e. implying “may the gods similarly cut off my life”, or some such phrase, an idea paralleled in the Old Testament oaths (cf. 1 Sam. 3: 17). This same text gives further evidence for the presence of Hittites in Syria in the eighteenth century and there is no reason why they might not be found further south in the same period (Gen. 23).<sup>1</sup> Among other small details from this neighbour of early Israel we find the names of Abina‘mi (Hebrew: Abino‘am); Aiabi (Job) and Saps (cf. Heb. Samson).<sup>2</sup> While of course these are not references to the actual, and later, Biblical persons they give helpful early parallels for the existence and form of the names.

(ii) While on the subject of texts which illustrate the patriarchal period it should also be pointed out that the publication in 1953 of Old Babylonian texts found at Ur provides a source for closer parallels to the Abrahamic story than do the fifteenth-century Nuzi texts from which so many illustrations of the patriarchal customs have been drawn. While not providing new evidence these texts do show that customs, such as the adoption of a slave as heir, etc. were long established practices and in force in Abraham’s first home town.<sup>3</sup>

Although no new discovery, the official publication of the *The Early Period* uncovered by Sir Leonard Woolley in the Ur excavations will be of especial interest to Bible students for the clear account given of the Flood level first reported in 1929. In his description Woolley reaffirms his opinion that the eight-foot clean deposit of silt was of riverine origin and marked no normal inundation. He disassociates this from similar third millennium B.C. deposits found at Kish and thinks that this marks the historical flood, reflected in the Babylonian and Hebrew accounts and which, according to Sumerian king-lists, caused a violent break in the continuity of the land’s history. Woolley places the event after the Al ‘Ubaid and before the Uruk period, that is before the first written texts are found.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> To be published by D. J. Wiseman.

<sup>2</sup> W. F. Albright, *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, 74 (1954), pp. 226–27.

<sup>3</sup> H. H. Figulla and W. J. Martin, *Ur Excavations Texts*, Vol. V (British Museum, 1953).

<sup>4</sup> *Ur Excavations*, Vol. IV (British Museum, 1956), pp. 15–19.

(iii) An instance of the direct corroboration of the history of Judah from the Babylonian records is found in the recently published Chronicle tablet which relates the history of the Battle of Carchemish in 605 B.C. and the capture of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar in 597 B.C.<sup>1</sup> The entry reads: “In the seventh year, the month of Kislev, the Babylonian king mustered his army and marched to the Hatti-land (i.e. Syria-Palestine), and besieged the city of Judah and on the second day of the month of Adar he seized the city and captured the king. He appointed there a king of his own choice, received its heavy tribute and sent (them) back to Babylon.” Here is a direct reference to the attack on Jerusalem which played so prominent a part in Biblical history. It is the divine punishment foretold by the prophet Isaiah and more especially by Jeremiah who read the political and military portents in the days which followed the battle of Carchemish. This event was henceforth to mark the beginning of the Jewish exile with all the religious and cultural changes and influences that period was to bring. The capture of the Judaeon capital in this year was also to be a preliminary step in the war which led to the close siege and heavy destruction of the city in 586 B.C.

The participants, if not all the details, in this year’s happenings are well known from Biblical sources. The captured king was Jehoiachin, the successor of Jehoiakim, who with his queen, family, state officials and local craftsmen was taken off a prisoner to Babylon. The heavy tribute included the Temple vessels. The king of Nebuchadnezzar’s choice, appointed to succeed him, was Mattaniah whose royal name was designated or changed to Zedekiah. This change of name appears to testify to the position held by him on oath to Nebuchadnezzar “that he would certainly keep the kingdom for him and make no innovation nor any league of friendship with the Egyptians”. The date of this conquest of Jerusalem is now known precisely for the first time, namely the second of Adar, i.e. 15/16 March, 597 B.C., thus affording us an exact date within both Biblical and Neo-Babylonian history. It seems that the Babylonians took some time to collect the captives who numbered three thousand according to Josephus, or ten thousand according to the Hebrew records which add the numbers of soldiers to those of the royal party. Thus their exile began “at the turn of the year” (2 Chron. 36: 10), that is in the month following the capture of the city, in the month which marked the commencement of the eighth regnal year of Nebuchadnezzar (2 Kings 24: 12). It is perhaps relevant to say that we have a further glimpse of these exiles who are mentioned in ration tablets from Babylon published by E. F. Weidner in 1939. These

<sup>1</sup> D. J. Wiseman, *Chronicles of Chaldean Kings*. British Museum, 1956. The extract here is taken from my Lecture to the British Academy on February 22, 1956. A report on this appeared in *The Times* of February 23, 1956.

tablets are dated in the tenth to thirty-fifth years of Nebuchadrezzar (i.e. 595–569 B.C.) and name Jehoiachin, king of Judah, and his sons together with Judæan craftsmen and other prisoners who receive their sustenance from the royal storehouses.<sup>1</sup> The importance of these chronicle tablets is, however, not merely in their direct bearing on the Old Testament history. Since they cover the years 626 B.C.–594 B.C. with but one short break they enable Neo-Babylonian history to be accurately recovered for the first time and thus indirectly the bearing of that history on Judah. Moreover they should put an end to the speculations which have hitherto abounded, if we may judge from learned publications, concerning the date of the Battle of Carchemish and of Jehoiachin's capture. They also give a reasonable background to the defection of Jehoiakim from Nebuchadrezzar after three years of subservience (604–601 B.C.). Suffice it to say that as with most discoveries these tablets do not answer all the known difficulties and even raise several new problems.

#### *The Dead Sea Scrolls*

Probably the most widely known of recent discoveries are the Biblical scrolls and fragments found in Wadi Qumrân. Nine years have passed since seven scrolls were accidentally found by shepherds in the wilderness and although all there have not yet been published (only Isaiah of the Biblical scrolls), the work on the fragments continued as a whole and a whole literature on the field has developed, of which H. H. Rowley's *The Zadokite Fragments and the Dead Sea Scrolls* gives a summary up to 1952. Millar Burrows, *The Dead Sea Scrolls* (1955), is also an excellent up-to-date study of the scrolls with some translations. *The Journal of Biblical Literature*, 74, Part 3 (September, 1955), discusses various phases of the current work on the scrolls to which more than one hundred books or monographs have been so far devoted. Only last year, however, the initial cache of scrolls was re-united by the purchase by the Hebrew University of Jerusalem of those that had been for long on the market in America. In the same year discoveries, though few, were continuing by the excavation of a further four caves near the Khirbet Qumrân. This year has seen the unrolling of a scroll containing the text, with commentary or expansion, of part of Genesis, previously thought to have been the book of Lamech. In this survey it is possible to give only a brief summary of some of the finds and not to enter far into the discussions on their contents which will continue for many decades.

About 400 individual manuscripts have been identified among the fragmentary finds at Qumrân and of these the majority are from Cave

Four, of which Professor Cross has given an introductory report.<sup>1</sup> From this it is clear that after three years' work 330 manuscripts have been identified of which ninety are Biblical and represent all the books of the Hebrew Canon except Esther. Of these forty-seven columns of 1 and 2 Samuel are the best preserved. The text is unusual and reflects the Alexandrian Septuagint. Where passages in Samuel and Chronicles overlap this manuscript is closer to the text of Samuel used in the Chronicles than to the traditional text of Samuel. The most popular books from the Essene scriptorium and its neighbouring depositories, as preserved in Cave Four are Deuteronomy (13 MSS.), Isaiah (12) and the Psalms (10), which books are the most frequently quoted in the New Testament from the Old. "We cannot avoid the conclusion," writes Dr. Cross, "that in the historical books the Septuagint translators faithfully and literally reproduced the Hebrew text in their hands. This does not mean that the Septuagint presents a text which is superior to the Massoretic text, though this is not infrequently the case. It simply means that the LXX accurately reflects the Hebrew textual tradition at home in Egypt, and perhaps in Palestine, in the second century B.C. The new manuscripts of the historical books are thus not only valuable textual witnesses in themselves; they reconstitute the LXX in these books as a textual authority, and give us the means to control its evidence." The texts also show the three major textual traditions current at Qumrân for the Pentateuch, some showing a close affinity to the Massoretic text, others to the long neglected Old Samaritan recension and others to the Alexandrian Septuagint. The text of Isaiah appears to have been stabilized in the main earlier. It is certain that the Qumrân scrolls inaugurate a new and welcome period of Old Testament textual studies.

However, it is not so much the Biblical scrolls as the non-Biblical which have latterly caught the public imagination in their bearing on the rise of Christianity. The idea that Christianity is in a measure based on the teachings of the Essenes, a sect now better known from these manuscripts, is largely the result of the studies of Dupont-Sommer,<sup>2</sup> which have been popularized by a journalist, Edmund Wilson.<sup>3</sup> While it is beyond all doubt that the scrolls will be of great importance to New Testament studies, the conclusions now being advocated must be subject to careful study before acceptance. The recent assertions of Allegro and others that the "Teacher of Righteousness", a dominant figure in the Habbakuk commentary (probably dated before 41 B.C.), was Jesus Christ, whose death is recorded in the new texts and other sources, is denied by many scholars including Dupont-Sommer, Rowley and Young.<sup>4</sup> While the

<sup>1</sup> F. M. Cross, *Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research*, 141 (February, 1956), pp. 9–13.

<sup>2</sup> English translations:—(1) *The Dead Sea Scrolls, A Preliminary Survey* (1952). (2) *The Jewish Sect of Qumran and the Essenes, New Studies on the Dead Sea Scrolls* (1954).

<sup>3</sup> *The Scrolls from the Dead Sea* (1955).

<sup>4</sup> E.g., E. J. Young, "The Teacher of Righteousness and Jesus Christ," *Westminster Theological Journal*, 18 (May, 1956), pp. 121–45.

<sup>1</sup> E. F. Weidner, *Mélanges Syriens offerts à M. René Dussaud*, II, pp. 923–35.

scrolls may reveal certain ideas and practices which may have some formal resemblance to Christianity it is not a necessary conclusion that Christianity is merely a result or development of the teaching of the scrolls. There may have been claimants to Messiahship who sought to follow the Old Testament pattern, but the profound differences between the Master shown in the scrolls and Jesus Christ Himself must not be ignored. As with so many archaeological discoveries this seems to illustrate the danger of premature speculation before the complete results have been published. For the Dead Sea scrolls this is not likely to be for some years and there are indications that additional material may soon be expected.<sup>1</sup>

This brief summary will have been all too inadequate but may have helped to show the nature and scope of the new evidence brought forward by recent discoveries in the realm of Biblical archaeology, taking this (as I feel it should always be) in its broadest sense. When it is realized that this is the work of but a few men over a few years, the quick pace of progress in knowledge which illustrates and, in a smaller way, directly relates to the Bible will be appreciated.

In closing this Annual Address I can but express the hope that the Victoria Institute by its inquiries and papers may continue to ensure that Biblical archaeology shall be granted its rightful place among other branches of science related to the Bible and that its progressive results be made available to those interested in every branch of learning.

<sup>1</sup> E.g., *The Times*, May 26 and 28, 1.