

ARCHEOLOGY

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In recent years the field of archeology has become more and more specialized. Individual scholars devote all their time to the study of Mesopotamia, or of Egypt, or of Palestine, or of some other section of the ancient world. Some in fact even specialize in early Mesopotamia, or in Mesopotamia of a slightly later period. The volume and complexity of the material available is very great, and a full knowledge of the whole field is no longer possible for any one individual.

With all the complexity of the field, it is amazing how unexpectedly contacts with the Bible come to light. One never knows just where something will appear that throws light on a certain Biblical statement, or that has direct interest in connection with some Biblical point.

A very interesting area of discussion is the consideration of the evidence on the long history of the reign of the Assyrian kings in comparison with the Biblical statements. Assyria is the northern section of Mesopotamia. Here many of the rulers were fiercer and more brutal than those of Babylonia. This was quite natural, since this northern area was more exposed to danger from animals and from the wild tribes of the mountains. In order to survive, constant maintenance of a strong military force was necessary. Once the Assyrians had attained sufficient power for survival, it was natural enough that this power should be turned toward extending control over neighboring regions. In the period from 900 to 630 B.C., with some intermissions, we find constant forward progress by the Assyrian empire, conquering areas in all directions, and extending its sway further and further. Echoes of this movement are found