

The Relation of Archaeology to the Bible.

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Archaeology is the study of places and objects which have been preserved from antiquity and which can be used to throw light on the history and culture of the human race in ancient times. In the narrower sense it includes only the study of material remains of ancient civilizations, such as parts of buildings, tombs, statuary, pottery and implements. A large part of the literature of ancient Greece, Rome, and Palestine has been passed down to us through a long period of copying and recopying. While most of it has never been lost, its original copies have completely disappeared, and its study is designated as Classics or as Biblical Study and not included under the heading of archaeology. However, records which have been preserved from ancient Egypt and Mesopotamia have been buried or lost until comparatively recently. Only within the last century has it been possible to read them, or in most cases, even to have them in our possession. Since these records consist of original materials which have been rediscovered in modern times, their study is properly included in the general field of archaeology.

It is thus apparent that archaeology is not, like Physics or Chemistry, a complete body of phenomena to be investigated. It consists rather of a partial means of recovering knowledge of past history and culture. Its results are rarely subject to experimentation, like those of these other sciences. It is not so much a body of knowledge, in its own right, as a means for the increase of our knowledge of ancient history.

Since the Bible has far more contact with human history than it has with