

Biblical Archaeology

Edwin Yamauchi, *The Stones and the Scriptures: An Introduction to Biblical Archaeology*, J.B. Lippincott Company / A Holman Book, Philadelphia, 1972.

Edwin Yamauchi is a Japanese-American, born in Hawaii, and unfortunately he is a Protestant. He identifies himself as a Traditionalist Protestant - he doesn't like the Liberal Protestants, because he doesn't think they have any faith, and he doesn't like the Fundamentalist Protestants, because he thinks they don't have any reason - just emotion. Unfortunately all this biblical Archaeology is being done today by Jews and Protestants. There are hardly any Catholics in the field at all. For one thing these digs are terrifically expensive. They are usually financed by places like Harvard. Yamauchi attacks the so-called scientific biblical criticism which has dominated biblical exegesis now for so long.

Dr. Yamauchi begins with the theories of Wellhausen and Gunkel, and then goes through all the books of the Old Testament, and shows how these theories do not square with the archeological facts. But the traditional historicity of these books, their authorship, dates, all square with the archeological findings.

The widespread notion, found for example in college text books, that the Old Testament is a crazy quilt of unreliable legends owes its genesis to a discipline known as higher criticism. Higher or literary criticism is the study which attempts to determine the questions of authorship, of the date, and of the composition of any literary text on the basis of vocabulary, style, and consistency. Lower or textual criticism, on the other hand, seeks to ascertain the original text by comparing manuscripts and ancient versions.

A... In biblical studies higher criticism received its classic exposition in 1878 in the work of Julius Wellhausen. The latter's documentary hypothesis, in contrast to the tradition of Mosaic authorship, analyzed the Pentateuch (the first five books of the Old Testament) as a work which had been woven together from late sources by anonymous editors. He called the hypothetical documents which had been stitched together J for Jehovah, E for Elohim, D for Deuteronomy, and P for the Priestly Code. These strands were assigned dates ranging from the ninth century B.C. for J to the sixth century B.C. for P on the basis of Wellhausen's concept of the evolution of Israel's religion. According to this viewpoint, which was influenced by Darwin and Hegel, the religion of the Hebrews evolved at first into a national henotheism (the worship of one god from among many gods) and only much later in the time of the literary prophets and the Exile into an ethical monotheism. (pp.27,28)

So traditionally the Pentateuch was written by Moses around 1500 B.C. But Wellhausen's theory is that it dates from 900 to 600 B.C., just by an *a priori* theory of the evolution of religion, which he got from Darwin and Hegel. The Jews were originally polytheists, there were

many gods, but their own tribal god, was the best god. This is called henotheism. But in the post-Exilic period a higher ethical Monotheism evolved, especially in the time of the so-called **Second Isaias**. This purports to be scientific, but it is completely *a priori*. It starts with a theory and then tries to make the facts fit the theory. This is what is known as **scientism**; it is just hiding behind the prestige of science.

At the beginning of the twentieth century a further development in literary criticism was the shift from the investigation of written documents to **form criticism** pioneered by Gunkel, who concentrated on the smaller genres or literary units.... One of the striking characteristics of the scholars who have approached the Bible primarily through literary analysis is the non-use or at best the grudging use they have made of archaeological evidence. This is understandable for the nineteenth century and the early twentieth century when archaeology was in its infancy. Wellhausen who was a great Arabic and Hebrew scholar, reconstructed Israelite life on the basis of Arabic poetry. He refused to believe that either Egyptian or Akkadian had been deciphered. On the other hand, Assyriologists since the 1890's and field archaeologists since the 1920's have discovered that their evidence accorded better with the biblical traditions than they did with Wellhausen's reconstructions. (pp.29,30)

Now he is going to go through the whole Old Testament and show how the archaeological data just demolishes the literary criticism of the various books. But let me just do his treatment of one book, the Psalms. The Psalms are all supposed to be post-Exilic, according to the biblical critics, because of their high ethical monotheism. David was around 1000 B.C., which according to Wellhausen was the henotheistic period, one tribal god of the Jews who was superior to neighboring tribal gods. But the archaeological evidence contradicts this theory:

Although the Psalms are not all ascribed to David and although the very superscriptions may be of late date [these are the little headings from the Septuagint like **A Psalm for Asaph**, which St. Jerome added to the Vulgate] (as indicated by the variations in the Cave XI Psalms Scroll from Qumran), it may be convenient to comment here on the bearing of recent finds on the dating of the Psalms. Critical scholars following the lead of Wellhausen and Duhm [Duhm is the one who came up with the **second Isaias** theory] dated the Psalms to the post-Exilic period because their level of religion seemed too advanced for an earlier age. R.H. Pfeiffer [a Harvard liberal Protestant] dated the great majority of the Psalms between 400 and 100 B.C. in his introduction to the Old Testament published in 1941. (pp.65,66)

Now the archeologic discoveries he is going to go to are those found at Ugarit. Ugarit is a *tel*, one of these mounds, where they have been digging for over twenty years. Ugarit is on the Syrian shore of the Mediterranean between Turkey and Lebanon, now called Rash Shamra, and the date that this city was destroyed was 1200 B.C., in other words long before David.

...The discoveries at Ugarit on the one hand and at Qumran on the other have shown that the Psalms are to be dated early rather than late in Israel's history. Many scholars have shown that the Ugaritic texts yield exact parallels to the poetic patterns and verbal combinations of the Psalms, Proverbs, and other biblical texts. As Ugarit was destroyed c. 1200 B.C. these parallels

imply an early date. Albright comments: [Albright is probably the most famous of these Protestant biblical archaeologists] >Actually much early verse dates from the second millennium, and was composed in a poetic dialect closely related to the generalized epic dialect of Canaan in which Ugaritic verse was composed.@(p.66)

David then just took over the local literary form of Canaanite verse which will date the Psalms to around 1000 B.C. The critics want to date them to the post-Exilic period. Now they have found Psalms and hymns from the post-Exilic period at Qumran. Qumran is the most famous of these archaeological sites, an Essene community on the shore of the Dead Sea.

AThe new evidence from Qumran gives us many original Hebrew compositions of the Hellenistic age. With the exception of the non-canonical additions to the Cave XI Psalms Scroll, the Qumran compositions do not resemble the Psalter. The Thanksgiving Hymns of the Dead Sea community are largely made up of mosaics of biblical quotations.@(p.67)

These Psalms of the post-Exilic period are not like David's Psalms at all, they are little mosaics of biblical quotations. So can you see the archeological argument against biblical criticism. The critics wanted to date the Psalms to the post-Exilic period because of their high ethical monotheism. This does not fit the facts. The facts fit the traditional dating and authorship of the Book of Psalms.

Let me now go on to the New Testament. Yamauchi will briefly summarize the position of the critical school. Again it is completely *a priori*. They have a theory and try to force the biblical facts to fit the theory, and then call it science. This is not science. In science you don't begin with a theory and then go to the facts. You begin with the facts, and then try to invent a theory to fit the facts.

AINew Testament criticism the scholar who corresponds in stature and influence to Julius Wellhausen in Old Testament studies is F.C. Baur of Tübingen (1792-1860) [Tübingen is a famous German University where all these biblical exegetes have studied. Hans Küng taught there for a time.] Like Wellhausen, Baur seems to have been influenced by Hegel's philosophy. The philosophic dialectic of Hegel assumed that history went through a pattern of thesis - antithesis - synthesis. According to Baur, Paul representing Gentile Christianity (thesis) advocated freedom from the law. Peter's party representing Jewish Christianity (antithesis) and advocating adherence to the law was the group that reacted against Paul's teaching. From this conflict emerged a synthesis of the second century church (as seen in Acts).

ALike Wellhausen in the field of Old Testament criticism, Baur having established an evolutionary scheme of development believed that he could date the New Testament documents according to their place in this pattern. On this basis he accepted only four of the epistles as genuinely Pauline (Galatians, Romans, I and II Corinthians). John's Gospel was placed as late as the second half of the second century. The Acts of the Apostles was also assigned this late date. Its author was not writing history but was trying to produce a certain effect by his imaginative description of the early Church. Baur's views were quite dominant throughout the nineteenth

century and have left a lasting legacy for the twentieth century, though many of his assumptions have been disproved. (pp.92,93)

Again you can see the pattern. They start with the theory, thesis - antithesis, and then make the facts fit the theory. St. Luke did not write the Acts of the Apostles, but an unknown author of the late second century.

The Tübingen school was followed by the *Religionsgeschichtliche* or History of Religions School which in Pauline research emphasized parallels with pagan mystery religions. These scholars concluded that Christianity was the product of various syncretistic influences. Jesus was interpreted in terms of Jewish apocalypticism. W. Bousset held that the Church in Palestine, which was thoroughly Jewish, considered Jesus simply as an exalted man. [This is what all the Modernists claim that the Synoptics teach - that Jesus was simply an exalted man.] It was only with the spread of Christianity to the Gentile world that Jesus was worshiped as divine. Paul's Greek orientation was opposed to the Jewish Jesus, and Paul's own concepts of Christ were supposedly borrowed from the Hellenistic mysteries. (p.94)

So this is how we get the divinity of Jesus, from St. Paul's use of the pagan mystery religions.

Form criticism, which is the consideration of the various literary units, was applied to the New Testament as well as to the Old Testament with similar negative results. The dominant figure in recent studies has been Rudolf Bultman, who used the form critical method with the presuppositions of the History of Religions School. For Bultman the Gospel materials are the late creations of the church, aetiological legends as it were. (p.94)

An aetiological legend is a fictional explanation of a geographical or physical fact. For example a child would see a pile of stones, and ask his father what it meant. The father would answer that Abraham built an altar here, and then make up a story to go with the pile of stones. Bultman says that the empty tomb was a fact, but the Resurrection of Our Lord is an aetiological legend attempting to explain that fact.

He distinguishes between the *historiche Jesus* (the human Jesus who walked the roads of Palestine) and the *geschichtliche Christus* (the Christ of faith who gives meaning to history). The former is virtually unknowable; it is the latter that can be apprehended by faith. The Gospel, which is explained by Mandaean parallels [the mystery religions], is late and completely unhistorical. In the words of Vincent Taylor, extreme form critics like Bultman practically assume that all eyewitnesses were taken out of the world at the time of the ascension of the Lord.

According to form critics like Bultman and Dibelius, the various miracle stories, parables, passion accounts, etc. were passed on orally for many years. The so-called *Redaktionsgeschichte* or Redactional History scholars attempt to analyze how the various authors or editors have put these literary units together to support their theological views. It is

commonly assumed that the Evangelists and the writer of the Acts were interested in theology and not history. (pp.94,95)

Again that is the theory, and when these critics discovered that their theories did not fit the archeological evidence, they refused to accept the evidence. Yet they still claim to be scientists.

As in the case of Old Testament literary criticism, New Testament literary criticism was born in pre-archeological days. The Tübingen School flourished during a time when hardly anything was known about the chronology of Greek pottery or Hellenistic - Roman architecture. A disregard for archeological data characterizes even the later form critical school. As Albright [Again probably the most famous of these Protestant archaeologists] notes:

In the same way, the form-critical school founded by M. Dibelius and R. Bultman a generation before the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls has continued to flourish without the slightest regard for the Dead Sea Scrolls. In other words, all radical schools in New Testament criticism which have existed in the past or which exist today are pre-archaeological, and are therefore, since they were built *in der Luft* (>in the air=), are quite antiquated today. (p.95)

That is a perfect picture of the Catholic Modernists of today. They are way behind the times. They don't even know or understand the significance of the Dead Sea Scrolls or the other discoveries of biblical archaeology. They can drop the names like Ugarit or Qumran, but have no idea of their significance. Yamauchi now goes through the whole New Testament in terms of archeological discoveries, but again I thought I would just do one book, the Acts of the Apostles. Yamauchi uses the work of one of these prominent Protestant biblical archaeologists, William Ramsay. This man actually followed in the footsteps of St. Paul all through Asia Minor and Greece, examining the various temples, monuments, tombs, etc., and he was flabbergasted at the historical accuracy of the Acts. If you remember Baur of the Tübingen school said that the Acts represented the synthesis achieved in the second century church, and was completely unhistorical:

During his ministry at Ephesus Paul must have contacted the highest levels of society as well as the lowest, for we read that certain of the chief men of Asia, which were his friends (Acts 19:31) tried to dissuade Paul from going to the theater. These men were *Asiarchs*, [the word St. Luke uses in the Greek version] provincial dignitaries who were chosen from the wealthiest and most aristocratic men of the province. Acts 19:35 includes two terms which have specialized meanings. The town clerk or *grammateus* [again Luke's Greek term] who quieted the crowd was no mere flunky but the democratic city's executive officer. He reminded the Ephesians that their town was a *neokoros* or a temple-keeper (KJV worshipper) of the great goddess. The Greek word literally means temple sweeper but came to have the honorific meaning of warden. A Greek inscription describing Ephesus as a temple warden of Artemis confirms Luke's use of the term.

Elsewhere we find Luke consistently using the accurate titles for different situations. He correctly calls the governor of Cyprus a *proconsul* (Acts 13:7), Greek *anthupatos*, since after 22 B.C. Cyprus was a senatorial rather than an imperial province governed by a legate. He calls the chief official in Malta "the first man of the island" (Acts 28:7), a title confirmed in both Greek and Latin inscriptions for the Roman governor of that island. H.J. Cadbury has remarked:

Just as you can test a man's knowledge of modern Oxford and Cambridge by his ability to name correctly the presiding officer of each college whether as Master, Principal, Provost, Warden, Rector, President or Dean...so one can test Luke's knowledge of municipal institutions in the Aegean cities. His language fully meets the test. (p.119)

These titles the Romans gave to these provincial dignitaries were often just temporary, and were changed from time to time. But the titles Luke uses exactly fit the period from 30 to 50 A.D., the traditional dating of the Acts, and they do not fit the late second century of Bauer.

After Paul's arrest by soldiers from the Fortress Antonia, he was taken under guard to Caesarea where he was held first under Felix and then under Festus. In his description of Paul's appearance before Festus, Luke's use of the term *kyrios* or "lord" (Acts 25:26) was once questioned. But numerous inscriptions have turned up using this title for Nero, so that Deissman could say: "The insignificant detail, questioned by various commentators who seated at their writing tables in Tübingen or Berlin, vainly imagined that they knew the period better than St. Luke, now appears thoroughly credible." Luke's scrupulous accuracy in describing Paul's appearance before various Roman magistrates has prompted Sherwin-White to say: "The accounts of these trials in Acts is so technically correct that Roman historians since Mommsen have often used them as the best illustrations of Roman provincial jurisdiction in this particular period." (pp.120,121)

The point Yamauchi is making is that if Luke is such a scrupulously accurate historian in the Acts, how much more so would he be in his Gospel. St. Luke tells us in the preface to his Gospel: "According as they have delivered them to us, who from the beginning were eyewitnesses and ministers of the word: it seemed good to me also, having diligently attained to all things from the beginning," meaning he would most certainly go to Our Lady for his Infancy Narrative, and all the witnesses of Our Lord's Resurrection, the historicity of which the Catholic Modernists continue to deny. We would know this *a priori*, but it is nice to see it confirmed by biblical archaeology. We know that true science is always going to uphold the faith, it is only false science, scientism, that is against the faith.

The biggest bonanza in biblical archaeology to date has been the Dead Sea Scrolls. These are from that Essene community in Qumran, where they found in caves, manuscripts in jars that go back as far as 250 B.C. The oldest Hebrew text we had of the Bible before this, the Massoretic text, went back only to the tenth century A.D. This Massoretic Text differs in some places substantially from the Greek version, the Septuagint. The Septuagint was always in Christian hands, but the Hebrew text was not always in Christian hands. That little Hebrew Christian community was absorbed, and a tradition of Hebrew scholarship in the Church was lost

until St. Jerome revived it. St. Jerome probably had a better Hebrew text to work with than the Massoretic text we have today, and also, with St. Augustine's prodding, he was careful to compare it with the Septuagint. St. Augustine warned him that the Jews have had this Hebrew text for so long now on their own, that we don't know what they have done with it. Now at Qumran they have found Hebrew texts that go back as far as 250 B.C., and they agree completely with the Septuagint, which we also would have known *a priori*:

APrior to the discovery of the Qumran manuscripts our oldest extant Old Testament texts were those known as the Massoretic Text dating from the tenth century A.D. The greatest significance of the Dead Sea Scrolls lies in the recovery of Old Testament manuscripts about a thousand years earlier than our medieval copies. Of the 500 some MS (manuscripts) recovered, 175 or one-third are biblical...The oldest text is an archaic Exodus fragment dated to 250 B.C. or even earlier...

AThe Septuagint (LXX), the Greek translation of the Old Testament begun c. 250 B.C., ranks next to the MT in importance for the reconstruction of the Old Testament text. It was widely used in New Testament times, as may be seen from the fact that the majority of the 250 Old Testament citations in the New Testament are from this version. When the LXX diverged from the MT some scholars had assumed that the LXX translators had taken liberties with their texts. We now know from Qumran that many of these differences were due to the fact that the translators were following a somewhat different Hebrew text belonging to what we may call the Proto-Septuagint family. At Qumran we have Hebrew texts of Exodus, Numbers, Deuteronomy, Jeremiah, Samuel and Job of this type. (pp.130,131)

AFamily is the term they use to classify these various manuscripts. He is saying that this new family, the Proto-Septuagint, must have been the one the Septuagint translators used. We would go further and say that the Jews most probably deliberately corrupted the passages pointing to Our Lord as Messiah in the Massoretic text. St. Justin Martyr in his *Dialogue with Trypho the Jew* even accuses the Jews of changing the shape of the Hebrew letter *tau*. It looks like a T now, but St. Justin says it originally looked like a cross. In other words you have to be very careful of modern translations that are made from the Massoretic text. The Jews have also dropped seven books of the Old Testament, Tobias, Judith, Wisdom, Ecclesiasticus, Baruch and the two books of the Machabees, supposedly on the ground that they were written in Greek rather than Hebrew. But we know that this is not the real reason The Second Book of the Machabees has a beautiful profession of faith in the resurrection of the body, Samona and her seven sons, which the Jews cannot stand. The Protestants went along with them in this because Machabees also has the clearest passage in the Bible on Purgatory. Now they have found the original Hebrew texts of these books. The Jews and the Protestants call them Apocryphal, we call them Deutero-canonical:

AThe Apocryphal works accepted in the Roman Catholic Bible as deutero-canonical, and the Pseudoepigraphical works [e.g. the Book of Wisdom falsely attributed to Solomon, according to the Jews and the Modernists] were both rejected from the canon by the Jews. Until recently

these works were known to us only in Greek translations. Qumran has now given us the Hebrew and Aramaic originals of some of these works. (p.131)

Now we should move in right away on Professor Yamauchi - what are you doing still a Protestant? The Protestants follow the Massoretic text - Luther dropped these seven deuterocanonical books, and here is the archaeology upholding the Catholic canon! Let us pray that Edwin Yamauchi will enter that Church to which his studies have led him.

Please pardon me if I conclude with a personal reminiscence, I think it is a funny story, that is right on point, Archaeology proves the Bible. During World War II, I went to Australia as a replacement, which means you go all alone, which is the worst way to go. All you have is a number, they call a military specification number. So when an outfit needs your number, you are sent as a replacement. So there was an outfit in northern Australia that was just alerted to move up to New Guinea, and some poor GI cracked up when they got the word, and I was sent up to replace him. Of course I was petrified. This outfit which I was with for the rest of the war, turned out to be a former West Virginia National Guard outfit, and the kids were mostly farm boys, a few thought they had come up in the world by going down into the coal mines. But they were real Protestant Fundamentalists, they call no man father type. A few of them read their "Bible" every day. But I got along fairly well with most of them.

When we got up to New Guinea, and were being bombed by Jap planes, I could hear the fellow in the hole next to me praying: "Get them outa here Lord; **Lord, git them outa here!**" But whenever things quieted down, we had a fellow called a morale sergeant, whose contribution to morale consisted in hanging up a couple of loud speakers on coconut trees and playing what used to be called hillbilly music. The men would put in for requests, and about once a day, there would come: "And for Tom Sennott, 'The Great Speckled Bird.'" I never once requested that song, but they must have figured that after three years of Boston College, I needed conversion, because the theme of the song was Archaeology proves the Bible. I never could quite figure out from the words the story behind the song; I have never come across it in any biblical archaeology book. But in Jeremiah 12:9 there is a reference to a great speckled bird, and I guess one of the higher critics claimed that there was no such bird, and used it to debunk the Bible. But then they discovered a mosaic of a great speckled bird, so *archaeology proves the Bible!*

What a beautiful thought I am thinking
Concerning the great speckled bird.
Oh they say that his name is recorded
In the pages of God's Holy Word...

I had two years of that song! That's *my* song!
