

Biblical archaeology is a comparatively new science. Except for a very few places in which classical literature has contact with the New Testament and still less where it has contact with the Old Testament, nothing was known of the background of these books outside of the Bible itself until the last century. It is entirely within that time that excavations in Mesopotamia, Egypt, and Palestine have opened up to us an entirely new world. Great ancient civilizations have been raised from the dead and stand out now with a great deal of their detail visible to us. We know much more about the life and history of these lands at certain periods in ancient times than we do of almost any period of the middle ages.

Since a century ago, practically nothing was known of the background of the Bible aside from ~~the~~ things definitely stated in the Bible itself, it was easy at that for scholars to build up theories based entirely on the study of the literature contained in the Scripture. Thus, the rise of the so-called Higher Criticism occurred when there was nothing of an external nature to check its results. Hegelian philosophy and evolutionary theories were applied more and more to the different books of the Bible and the portions of them were subdivided and subdivided down to the most minute details, and rearranged with aeric philosophical concepts. While this was occurring, archaeology was revealing many new phases of the culture and life of the lands mentioned in the Bible, and now so much has been learned that it is possible to check the results of the Higher Criticism at many points with the material which has been gained by examination of the places mentioned in Scripture.