

The study of Biblical archaeology in relation to the Bible must of necessity differ greatly from other subjects discussed in this Handbook. Most of them deal with sciences which involve the attempt to ascertain general laws which are just as valid today as they have even been in the past. It is possible to experiment upon these laws and to learn and apply the principles contained in them. Archaeology, on the other hand, is not a science of this type at all. It is rather a means for gaining knowledge of the history and culture of ancient times. It is a study of those things which have been preserved, whether above ground or within the earth, which throw light upon life as it existed in antiquity. It is thus altogether different in nature than the other sciences. One may compare the laws of biology with statements about biology contained in the Scripture. One does not similarly compare archaeology with statements in the Scripture, but compares history, or ancient culture, with the Bible, and sees how the statements found in the Bible compare with those facts which have been learned about history by means of archaeology.

Another difference between the present subject and the others discussed in this Handbook is that it has a far greater number of points of contact with the Bible. In treatments of such sciences as chemistry, it is possible to take up and discuss practically all the points at which the Bible deals with principles considered in chemistry. It would be absurd to think of writing a complete chemistry from the statements dealing with it which are found in the Bible. Only occasionally does the Bible touch upon a fact of chemistry. In certain other sciences, such as geology or biology, the contacts are much more numerous. Yet, even here it is not difficult in a short paper to discuss most of the key points at which there is contact between a Biblical statement and a statement in these fields, and everyone can see how absurd it would be of writing a complete biology or a complete geology on the basis of the comparatively few references to these sciences in the Bible. When we enter the field of history, we have a field in which the Bible has far more to say. A great portion of the Bible deals with events and circumstances of ancient life. The contacts with ancient history are extremely numerous. Even to enumerate them would require far more than the space of this entire volume. All that the present article can attempt to do is to discuss some of the principles involved in the relationship of archaeology to the Bible, and to discuss a few of the more important points of contact between the facts gained