The Reliability of the Scriptures:

A Historical and Archeological Survey

Unit 1

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

1. The need for this study

2. The purpose of this course

3. The study will be based on the following assumptions:

a. History is reliable

b. Archaeological findings and historical facts DO NOT prove the veracity of a biblical text or events. However, these are considered "CIRCUMSTANTIAL PIECES OF EVIDENCE" that affirm the integrity of the text or event.

c. Selected scope

d. Diverse audience

e. Biblical archaeology is limited to the research in biblical lands, commonly described as the "Near Middle East."

4. Definition of Biblical Archeology

a. Old Testament archaeology

b. New Testament archaeology

5. Short history of biblical archaeology

a. Early archeologists

1. Roque Joaquin de Alcubierre (Spanish) 1738 in Herculaneum
2. Mercello di Venuti (Italian) 1748 in Pompeii
3. Lucas Holstenius and Karl Jakob Weber (Germans) supervised the excavations using scientific methods from 1750 to 1765
4. The British established the Society for Antiquities in 175, followed by the British Museum in 1753-1759
5. In 1793 the Louvre Museum was founded in Paris
6. The following years were a competition to see which institution could gather as many artifacts as possible under the auspices of their governments

c. Pivotal moments in biblical archaeology

1. The Rosetta Stone
2. The Deciphering of cuneiform
3. The Discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls
4. New archaeological methods
5. Founding of the State of Israel

6. Limitation of archaeology (David Graves)

a. Old does not make true

b. Archaeologists may reach the wrong conclusions

c. Biblical archaeology is a new science, and much remains to be done

f. Fragmentary nature of the evidence (Edwin Yamauchi)

* + 1. Existence
    2. Surveyed
    3. Excavated
    4. Examined
    5. Published

g. We see only incomplete data

h. We all have presuppositions

i. Subjective and objective interpretations

7. Minimalist and Maximalist approaches

8. Common misconceptions about biblical archaeology

a. There is no neutrality

b. Seen more than what the evidence shows

c. Archaeology is an exact science

d. Old science is bad science

e. The simple answer is the best answer

f. The fallacy of "negative proof"

9. Conclusion and Q and A.