

Dr. Jeffrey Hudon, Biblical Archaeology, Session 1, Introduction, History of the Discipline, Part 1 Resources from NotebookLM

1) Abstract, 2) Audio podcast, 3) Briefing Document, 4) Study Guide, and 5) FAQs

1. Abstract of Hudon, Biblical Archaeology, Session 1, Introduction, History of the Discipline, Part 1, Biblicalelearning.org, BeL

This lecture, by Dr. Jeffrey Hudon, introduces the field of Biblical Archaeology. **He defines the discipline**, contrasting differing viewpoints on its scope and methodology, and emphasizes its importance for understanding the Bible's historical and cultural context. **The lecture then explores the history of Biblical Archaeology**, highlighting key figures and discoveries, from early pilgrims to 19th and 20th-century pioneers like William Flinders Petrie and the institutions they established. **Specific examples of archaeological finds** are used to illustrate how archaeology complements and enriches biblical studies. Finally, **the lecture provides a geographical overview** focusing on the significant sites in Jerusalem and the surrounding regions.

2. 21 - minute Audio Podcast Created on the basis of Dr. Hudon, Biblical Archaeology, Session 1 – Double click icon to play in Windows media player or go to the Biblicalelearning.org [BeL] Site and click the audio podcast link there (Introduction & Languages → Archaeology).



**Hudon_BibArch_Ses
sion01.mp3**

3. Briefing Document

Okay, here is a detailed briefing document summarizing the key themes and ideas from the provided source, "Hudon_BibArch_EN_Ses01.pdf," which is a transcript of a lecture by Dr. Jeffrey Hudon on Biblical Archaeology:

Briefing Document: Biblical Archaeology - Introduction and History of the Discipline, Part 1

Introduction:

This document summarizes the first part of a lecture series on Biblical Archaeology by Dr. Jeffrey Hudon. It covers an introduction to the discipline, its definition, its value, and its historical development, drawing upon examples and key figures.

Key Themes and Ideas:

1. What Biblical Archaeology Is and Is Not:

- **Not Indiana Jones:** Dr. Hudon emphasizes that real archaeology is far removed from the Hollywood depiction of adventure. "Probably 95% of it's not very realistic."
- **Meticulous Excavation:** He describes the methodical nature of archaeological digs, mentioning the use of five-by-five meter squares ("That's how most archaeological digs are performed.") at sites such as Tel es-Safi (Biblical Gath).
- **Tangible Connection:** Archaeology allows for a tangible connection to the biblical past. As he describes, standing on the floor of an ancient kitchen at Kirbitz Safar in Jordan, "puts you in touch in a very tangible way with our Biblical forefathers and mothers."
- **Scientific Discipline:** Archaeology involves a blend of biblical studies, ancient languages, paleography, historical geography, and Near Eastern history with field excavation. "Biblical archaeology is a scientific discipline that blends the subjects of biblical studies, ancient languages, paleography... historical geography...and Near Eastern history with field archaeology and its sub-disciplines."
- **Purpose:** The goal is to understand the historical, cultural, religious, and political setting of the Bible.

1. Defining Biblical Archaeology:

- **W.F. Albright's Broad Definition:** Albright's view encompasses all lands mentioned in the Bible, from India to Spain and from southern Russia to South Arabia, from prehistory to the present. "Biblical archaeology covers all the lands mentioned in the Bible from India to Spain...and the whole history of those lands from about 10,000 BC or even earlier to the present time."
- **Anson Rainey's Skeptical View:** Rainey views archaeology as "the science of digging a square hole and the art of spinning a yarn from it," highlighting the potential for over-interpretation. This is a contrasting view that acts as a cautionary note.
- **Comprehensive Definition:** Dr. Hudon provides a detailed definition: a scientific discipline that combines field archaeology with biblical studies, ancient languages, paleography, historical geography, and Near Eastern history, to understand the context of the Bible.

1. The Value of Biblical Archaeology:

- **Apologetics:** Archaeology can corroborate the biblical account through artifactual evidence.
- **Cultural Context:** It provides vital information on the material and cultural context of the Bible, allowing us to better understand the customs and daily lives of its original audience.
- **Reinterpretation:** Archaeological discoveries can lead to a reevaluation and deeper understanding of scripture. For example, the tablets found at Ugarit have provided significant insight into the Canaanite cult and its relationship to the Old Testament.
- **Textual Understanding:** Archaeology can force scholars to re-read texts, re-interpret and understand scripture in a more powerful way.

1. Examples of Archaeological Discoveries:

- **Arnon Gorge (Wadi Mujib):** This site is presented as a concrete illustration of the biblical text from Deuteronomy, literally allowing one to "be there." "From Aroer, which is on the edge of the valley of the Arnon."
- **Tombstone of King Uzziah:** A tombstone inscription found near Jerusalem, in Aramaic, supports the biblical account of Uzziah's burial outside the royal tombs.

"To here were brought the bones of Uzziah, king of Judah, and not to be opened." This also highlights that at the time of Christ, the location of Uzziah's tomb was known.

- **Seal of Hezekiah:** A *bullā* bearing the seal impression of King Hezekiah of Judah is a tangible link to the biblical monarch. "Hezekiah, son of Ahaz, king of Judah"
- **Gerasa (Jerash) Cardo Maximus:** The remains of the Roman road in Jerash (Biblical Gerasa) provide context for the New Testament story of the man healed by Jesus. "Proclaiming throughout Gerasa how much Jesus had done for him."

1. Ancient Roots of Archaeology:

- **Flavius Josephus:** The ancient historian's work *The Antiquities of the Jews* highlights the early concept of archaeology as a study of antiquities.
- **Ashurbanipal:** The Assyrian king was an "amateur archaeologist" who collected ancient Mesopotamian tablets, preserving important works like the *Enuma Elish* and *Gilgamesh Epic*.
- **Nabonidus:** The Neo-Babylonian king excavated and restored ancient temples, collecting artifacts of earlier cultures, demonstrating that the practice goes back at least that far.

1. Early Post-Biblical Archaeology & Pilgrims:

- **Christian Pilgrims:** Pilgrims such as Helena (mother of Constantine), the Pilgrim of Bordeaux, and Egeria documented sites and monuments in the Holy Land, providing crucial information for modern research.
- **Empress Helena:** She went around to locate the major sites related to biblical history, most notably the life of Christ.

1. The 19th Century and the Rise of Modern Archaeology:

- **Napoleon in Egypt:** Napoleon's expedition led to the discovery of the Rosetta Stone, a crucial find that enabled the decipherment of Egyptian hieroglyphs, leading to "unlocked a language that scholars could not decipher up until that time."
- **David Roberts:** His paintings of the Holy Land and Egypt were very popular, bringing visual representations to the public. While artistically impressive, these paintings were not always accurate depictions.

- **Explorers and the Difficulties of Travel:** Dr. Hudon describes the dangerous nature of exploring the Holy Land, comparing it to going to the moon. Travel was expensive and dangerous.
- **Johann Ludwig Burckhardt:** This explorer, disguised as an Arab, was the first Westerner to see Petra in centuries.
- **Edward Robinson & Eli Smith:** Their work focused on identifying biblical sites by recognizing the preservation of Arabic place names (toponymy). The great German Old Testament historian Albert Alt said, "in Robinson's footnotes are buried the errors of generations."
- **US Navy Expedition:** Captain William Lynch led an expedition to map the Jordan River and the Dead Sea, highlighting the intersection of exploration and research.
- **The Mesha Stele (Moabite Stone):** Discovered by Frederick Klein, this monument provides an important parallel account of conflict between Moab and Israel and represents an important example of a first-hand account of what is described in the Old Testament, specifically 2 Kings.
- **The Behistun Inscription:** Sir Henry Rawlinson's work on this trilingual inscription unlocked the cuneiform script, aiding in the reading of Assyrian and Babylonian tablets.
- **Sir Austen Henry Layard:** His excavations in Nineveh and Nimrud unearthed the library of Ashurbanipal and provided further evidence for names in the bible that some questioned the historicity of, leading some to call this a "very, very important time in biblical archaeology."
- **George Smith** A floor sweeper at the British Museum, he taught himself cuneiform, found missing tablets of the Gilgamesh Epic, and was a "brilliant scholar, self-taught for the most part."

1. Early Archaeological Work in Jerusalem:

- **Louise de Saulcy:** He misidentified the tombs of Queen Helena of Adiabene as the tombs of the kings of Judah. Still, this was one of the first systematic excavations in Jerusalem.
- **The Palestine Exploration Fund:** Founded in 1865, this organization spurred detailed surveys of Jerusalem and the water system, with the help of Charles Wilson and Charles Warren.

- **Survey of Western Palestine:** Claude Reynier Condor and H.H. Kitchener led a large-scale mapping project of Western Palestine, gathering place names from locals.
- **William Flinders Petrie:** He established the concept of stratigraphy in archaeology, demonstrating that "cities were built upon cities" in a tell.

1. **Later 19th Century & Early 20th Century Figures & Institutions**

- **George Adam Smith:** Another scottish biblical scholar and pastor, he wrote an important book titled *The Historical Geography of the Holy Land* that was used by General Allenby to guide his troops.
- **National Archaeological Institutions** In the late 19th and early 20th centuries, the American Archaeological School (now ASOR), The British School, The École Biblique, the German Institute for Archaeology, and the Jewish Palestine Exploration Fund (now the Israel Exploration Society) were all established, and acted as "headquarters for the study of biblical archaeology."
- **The Jewish Palestine Exploration Fund:** Despite a pronounced lack of resources, it was a "very, very important" organization and has become a foundation for Jewish/Israeli archeology.

Conclusion:

Dr. Hudon's lecture provides a foundational understanding of Biblical Archaeology, emphasizing its scientific nature, its value in biblical study, and its rich history, with an overview of the figures, events, and institutions that shaped it. He stresses the importance of not simply seeing the Bible as a text, but understanding its physical, cultural, and historical context as well.

4. Hudon, Biblical Archaeology, Session 1, Introduction, History of the Discipline, Part 1

Biblical Archaeology Study Guide

Quiz

1. What is the significance of Tel es-Safi in the context of biblical archaeology, and what did excavations reveal about its destruction? *Tel es-Safi is believed to be the biblical Gath of the Philistines, the hometown of Goliath. Excavations there uncovered significant evidence of a wide-scale destruction of the city in the ninth century BC, correlating with the biblical account of the Arameans' attack.*
2. How did W.F. Albright define the scope of biblical archaeology, and how does this compare to Anson Rainey's view? *Albright defined biblical archaeology as covering all lands mentioned in the Bible from India to Spain and from southern Russia to South Arabia, spanning from 10,000 BC to the present. Rainey, in contrast, took a more negative view of the science, cautioning that archaeologists sometimes get overenthusiastic in their interpretations.*
3. What are three reasons why Christian universities and seminaries conduct archaeological excavations, even though they have the Bible? *Christian institutions excavate for apologetic purposes, to find evidence that corroborates biblical accounts. They also aim to understand the material and cultural context of biblical texts, including customs and how people lived. Finally, archaeology can force re-evaluation of scripture and lead to more powerful understandings.*
4. Describe the significance of the tombstone of King Uzziah, and how it relates to the biblical text. *The tombstone, written in Aramaic, states that the bones of Uzziah were brought there, indicating his burial was not with the kings due to a skin disease mentioned in the Bible. This tombstone corroborates the biblical account about Uzziah's separation from the royal tombs.*
5. What is a bulla, and what information does the bulla of Hezekiah provide? *A bulla is a lump of clay stamped with a seal, creating an impression. The bulla of Hezekiah shows his seal, verifying his kingship with the inscription "Hezekiah, son of Ahaz, king of Judah," alongside a winged creature motif, providing a tangible link to a biblical figure.*

6. Who was Ashurbanipal, and why is he considered an early archaeologist?
Ashurbanipal was a 7th century BC Assyrian king who collected, purchased, and transcribed old Babylonian tablets, legends and historical documents into Assyrian cuneiform. His actions preserved ancient literature, including the Enuma Elish and Gilgamesh epic, and he is thus seen as an early archaeologist.
7. How did Helena, the mother of Emperor Constantine, contribute to early Christian archaeology? *Helena went to Jerusalem and established churches at major sites in the life of Christ. Based on early Christian testimony she removed a Roman temple to uncover Golgotha, and identified the tomb of Joseph of Arimathea.*
8. Why was the Rosetta Stone crucial for Egyptology, and who was Jean Champollion? *The Rosetta Stone was crucial because it was inscribed in hieroglyphs, Demotic, and Koine Greek, allowing scholars to decipher hieroglyphs, which had been unreadable up until that time. Jean Champollion, a linguist, deciphered the text and unlocked hieroglyphs.*
9. What was the impact of the work of Edward Robinson and Eli Smith on biblical archaeology? *Robinson and Smith, through the study of toponymy, identified scores of biblical sites by connecting ancient names preserved by local Arabs to biblical locations. This is considered a foundational contribution to biblical archaeology as it located many sites through detailed linguistic analysis.*
10. What is the significance of the Mesha Stele, and what does it reveal about the conflict between Moab and Israel? *The Mesha Stele is a Moabite royal inscription from the 9th century BC that records the Moabite king Mesha's revolt against Israel, corroborating some aspects of biblical accounts and providing valuable insight into the geopolitical context of the time. The Stele offers a Moabite perspective on the same war described in the Bible.*

Essay Questions

1. Analyze the evolving definitions of Biblical Archaeology presented in the source, focusing on the perspectives of W.F. Albright, Anson Rainey, and the formal definition given in the lecture. How do these perspectives reflect the changing priorities within the discipline?
2. Discuss the roles of both Christian and secular actors in the early development of biblical archaeology, including pilgrims like Helena, explorers like Burckhardt, and

scholars like Robinson and Smith. How did their motivations and approaches shape the field?

3. Evaluate the significance of key discoveries discussed in the lecture, such as the tombstone of Uzziah, the bulla of Hezekiah, the Rosetta Stone, and the Mesha Stele. How do these discoveries impact our understanding of the Bible and the ancient world?
4. Examine the challenges faced by early explorers and archaeologists in the Holy Land during the 19th century, including difficulties of travel, Ottoman rule, and the conflicts over antiquities. How did these challenges shape the methods and progress of early archaeology?
5. Trace the historical development of archaeological institutions in the Holy Land, including the Palestine Exploration Fund, the American Schools of Oriental Research, and other national research centers. How did these institutions advance archaeological understanding and shape the modern practice of the discipline?

Glossary of Key Terms

Antiquity: Ancient times; the historical period before the Middle Ages.

Apologetics: The defense of a belief or system of beliefs, especially religious doctrines, through logical reasoning.

Aramaic: A Semitic language closely related to Hebrew, used in the ancient Near East, including during the time of Christ.

Bulla: A lump of clay that has been stamped with a seal, often used to secure or authenticate documents.

Cardo Maximus: The main north-south street in a Roman city.

Cuneiform: A system of writing used in the ancient Near East, characterized by wedge-shaped marks.

Decapolis: A group of ten cities on the eastern frontier of the Roman Empire with unique Greek and Roman influences.

Demotic: An ancient Egyptian script derived from hieratic, used in everyday writing.

Enuma Elish: A Babylonian creation myth.

Exegesis: Critical interpretation of a text, especially of the Bible.

Gath: An ancient Philistine city believed to be the hometown of Goliath, often identified with Tel es-Safi.

Gerasa: The biblical name for the city in Jordan, known today as Jerash, a city of the Decapolis.

Hieroglyphs: A writing system used in ancient Egypt, characterized by pictorial characters.

Jezreel Valley: A large fertile plain in northern Israel, historically the location of many battles.

Koine Greek: The common form of Greek used in the Hellenistic period, including the New Testament.

Lamassu: An Assyrian protective deity, often depicted with a bull or lion body, eagle wings, and a human head.

Levant: The geographical region of the eastern Mediterranean, encompassing modern-day Israel, Palestine, Lebanon, Syria, and Jordan.

Locus: A specific, defined area within an archaeological excavation.

Moabite: An ancient Semitic people who lived east of the Dead Sea.

Nabonidus: The last king of the Neo-Babylonian Empire, known for his archaeological interests.

Paleography: The study of ancient writing systems and scripts.

Petra: An ancient Nabataean city in present-day Jordan, famous for its rock-cut architecture.

Rosetta Stone: An ancient Egyptian stone inscribed with hieroglyphic, demotic, and Greek text, key to deciphering hieroglyphs.

Shephelah: The foothills of Israel-Palestine, located between the hill country and the coastal plain.

Stratigraphy: The study of the layers of earth and remains at an archaeological site.

Tel/Tell: An artificial mound formed by the accumulation of successive layers of human occupation.

Toponymy: The study of place names and their origins.

5. FAQs on Hudon, Biblical Archaeology, Session 1, Introduction, History of the Discipline, Part 1, Biblicalelearning.org (BeL)

Biblical Archaeology: An FAQ

1. **What is Biblical Archaeology, and how is it defined?**
2. Biblical archaeology is a scientific discipline that integrates biblical studies, ancient languages, paleography (the study of ancient scripts), historical geography, and Near Eastern history with field archaeology and its sub-disciplines. Its primary aim is to discover correlations that help us understand the historical, cultural, religious, and political/social setting of the Bible. It's broader scope encompasses all the lands mentioned in the Bible, from India to Spain and from southern Russia to South Arabia, and the history of those lands from 10,000 BC to the present.
3. **How does Biblical Archaeology differ from what we see in popular media, like Indiana Jones movies?**
4. While the Indiana Jones films portray archaeology as a high-adventure, treasure-hunting endeavor, real-life archaeology is much different. It is a painstaking process of excavating carefully in structured grids (typically five by five meters squares), documenting findings, and analyzing artifacts and contextual data. Although there can be a sense of adventure, it is not a treasure hunt in the Hollywood sense. The focus is more on understanding the past than acquiring artifacts for their monetary or individual value.

5. **Why is Biblical Archaeology important for understanding the Bible, and why do some universities still engage in it?**
6. Biblical archaeology is crucial because it provides the material and cultural context needed to understand the Bible more fully. The biblical texts were written for a specific audience, in a specific time, with specific customs and ways of life. By digging up physical evidence of these things, we can better understand the original intent of the texts. It also gives us a more tangible connection to biblical figures and stories. Additionally, archaeology can force us to reconsider previous interpretations and theories. While many Christian universities no longer engage in archaeological fieldwork due to financial or other resource issues, those that do, do so for both apologetic purposes and for gaining further cultural understanding of the biblical world.
7. **What are some specific examples of archaeological finds that support biblical accounts?**
8. There are many examples of archaeological finds that offer real-world context to biblical stories and accounts. For instance, the excavations at Tel es-Safi (biblical Gath), have uncovered evidence of the destruction of the city mentioned in 2 Kings when Hazael king of Aram attacked it. The tombstone of King Uzziah, discovered near Jerusalem, corroborated the biblical account of his burial. Another example would be a seal impression of Hezekiah, king of Judah, which was found, confirming the historical nature of this king. The Cardo Maximus in Jerash (biblical Gerasa) offers a place where the man healed by Jesus likely walked.
9. **What were some of the major turning points in the history of Biblical Archaeology as a discipline?**
10. Key turning points include:
 - **The rediscovery of the Rosetta Stone** by Napoleon's forces in Egypt which enabled the decipherment of hieroglyphs and opened up a vast wealth of information from ancient Egypt.
 - **The work of early explorers like Johann Ludwig Burckhardt**, who rediscovered the lost city of Petra and documented it.
 - **The work of Edward Robinson and Eli Smith**, who used Arabic place names to identify ancient biblical sites.

- **The excavation methods of William Flinders Petrie**, who identified the concept of "tells" as layers of ancient cities and established stratigraphy in the field.
 - **The discovery of the Mesha Stele**, which provided a Moabite perspective on events described in the Bible.
 - **The decipherment of cuneiform** after discovering the Behistun inscription, allowing scholars to read countless texts from ancient Mesopotamia and unlocking much more biblical context.
1. **Who were some of the pioneers in Biblical Archaeology, and what were their contributions?**
 2. Several individuals played pivotal roles in the development of biblical archaeology:
 - **William Foxwell Albright:** A prominent 20th-century American archaeologist who defined biblical archaeology and whose definition has largely withstood the test of time.
 - **Ashurbanipal** The Assyrian king who was an amateur archaeologist, collecting and preserving ancient texts that give much context to biblical and cultural studies.
 - **Nabonidus** The Neo-Babylonian king, like Ashurbanipal, is a critical early archaeologist, collecting and restoring many old temples and artifacts.
 - **Helena, mother of Constantine:** An early Christian pilgrim who identified key biblical sites in the Holy Land, leading to the construction of significant churches.
 - **David Roberts:** An artist who created paintings of the Holy Land, popularizing it in Europe.
 - **Charles Wilson and Charles Warren:** British royal engineers who made detailed surveys and maps of Jerusalem and its water supply.
 - **Sir William Flinders Petrie:** A brilliant Egyptologist who introduced the concept of stratigraphy and the study of "tells", laying the foundation for modern field techniques.
 - **Sir Henry Rawlinson:** The British scholar who deciphered cuneiform, unlocking many ancient texts from the middle east.

- **Austen Henry Laird** An English lawyer/diplomat who excavated Nineveh and Nimrud discovering much about ancient Assyria including the massive royal library of Ashurbanipal.
 - **George Smith** an English scholar who self taught himself Cuneiform and published works on the Gilgamesh Epic and other important tablets from the Assyrian royal library.
1. **What were some of the early challenges faced by archaeologists in the 19th century, and how did they overcome them?**
 2. Early archaeologists faced many challenges. Travel to the Holy Land was dangerous due to the Ottoman Empire's instability. Armed brigands, Bedouin tribes, and diseases such as dysentery were prevalent. The lack of photography meant that sites had to be described in detail or sketched. Despite these challenges, dedicated explorers, linguists, and scholars were able to piece together significant information about the history and geography of the biblical world.
 3. **What are some of the major archaeological institutions in the Holy Land, and what roles have they played?**
 4. Key archaeological institutions in the Holy Land include:
 - **The American Schools of Overseas Research (ASOR)**, initially known as the American Archaeological School, is a major research center for American archaeologists in the Middle East.
 - **The British School of Archaeology, now the Kenyon Institute**, is a key center for British archaeological work in Jerusalem.
 - **The École biblique et archéologique française de Jérusalem**, the French school, is famous for its library and renowned scholars.
 - **The German Institute of Archaeology**, located on the Mount of Olives, has been a significant center for German scholars in the region.
 - **The Jewish Palestine Exploration Fund (now the Israel Exploration Society)**, which was pivotal in developing Israeli archaeology and cultivating some important scholars in the field. These institutions have played crucial roles in fostering research, training archaeologists, and preserving cultural heritage.