

Book Reviews

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Prophecy and History, by: Alfred Edersheim. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1955. xxi plus 391 pages. \$3.75.

This volume is another in a series of reprints sponsored by Baker Book House under the general title: The Baker Co-operative Reprint Library. The book comprises the Warburton Lectures delivered by the author of the better known work, *Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah*. It was published in 1901. A reprint of any of the products of this man is welcome to conservative scholars, because his insights are seasoned with good judgment and a deep appreciation of the biblical testimony on the subject discussed.

The volume is of average size, good format, and very readable type. The lectures retain the flavor of personal conversation, and is not "heavy" in style. There are a number of explanations in footnotes, plus scripture references and only a few references to the works of other scholars. In the back there are two appendices dealing with source criticism of the Pentateuch, but there is no index of topics dealt with in the book.

In the preface, the author outlines the materials with which he deals. In brief it is the validity of the messianic concepts found in the Old Testament and fulfilled in Christ. Edersheim early lays down the dictum "that the kingdom of God was the connecting, pervading, and impelling idea of the Old Testament" (p. 39). Next the fulfillment of messianic prophecies in Christ is demonstrated, then the principles governing prophecy and fulfillment are outlined. The essential differences between Old Testament prophecy and heathen divination are discussed, as well as the marks of the true in contrast to the false prophet. In connection with the development of messianic ideas in the Old Testament, the problems of liberal criticism of the canonical books are grappled with and solved from a conservative point of view. The messianism of apocalyptic literature in the Apocryphal and Pseudepigraphic writings is contrasted to that of Old Testament prophecy. The lectures conclude with an evaluation of the last stage, the mission and messages of John the Baptist and of Jesus the Messiah.

This book is typical of the traditional approaches to Old Testament prophecy. The fulfillment of prophecy in Christ was central for the New Testament writers, for the early church Fathers, and

for the Evangelical Reformers. There is much in this approach which is good, for it regards Christ as the climactic point of God's redemptive acts. This view also regards Old Testament prophecy as containing more meaning than the contemporary history of the prophet could exhaust. Important as these emphases are, it also overlooks other important aspects of prophecy. Edersheim recognizes the moral teachings of the prophets to their day but does not develop them adequately.

To understand fully Old Testament prophecy, one must know the historical situation in which each prophet lived and preached. Political, cultural, economic, domestic and religious factors enter into this picture, and to them the prophet's message had relevance. The prophet also was a person in close communion with the divine Person who had given him a task and a message for other human persons. The characteristics of the prophet's religious life within this structure has not been given sufficient attention by conservative students of prophecy. To give attention to these factors need not detract from the messianic. Indeed, it ought to enrich and enlarge the significance of the messianic for Christ's ministry and for ours as well.

Despite its limitations, Prophecy and History is worthy of a place in every minister's library and ought to be read carefully.

George H. Livingston

The Seven Deadly Sins, by Billy Graham. Grand Rapids, Zondervan Publishing Company, 1955. 114 pages. \$2.00.

Dr. Graham's Hour of Decision has become a household institution to millions of persons the world over. The clarity and obvious sincerity of the presentation of the essentials of the Christian gospel commend the Hour to a wide range of listeners who are concerned with the meaning of that Gospel to men and women of our day.

Against the bland view of sin which has found acceptance for the few decades past, Billy Graham here asserts the classic understanding of sin as both treason against God and destructive of the sinner. The outline of the work is, as the title indicates, the conventional one; since the time of Gregory the Great, his reduction of the wide range of transgressions to the terms of seven root sins has been accepted as valid. This work begins with this assumption.

The seven chapters deal, respectively, with Pride, Anger, Envy, Impurity, Gluttony, Slothfulness and Avarice. The analysis of these is basically biblical; their wide implications, in terms of today's life, appear in the hard-hitting paragraphs which are here published, with little editing from their broadcast form. Two themes are interwoven throughout the work: the revealed attitude of God toward sin, and the manner in which sin distorts and destroys human life. Both of these are handled in such a manner as to commend the sermons as "Tracts unto Life" for today's men and women. Those who are made uncomfortable by Dr. Graham's demolition of their refuges can find here also a basis for hope and deliverance. This is a good book.

Harold B. Kuhn

The Grammar of Prophecy, by R. B. Girdlestone. Grand Rapids: Kregel Publications, 1955. xiii plus 179 pages. \$2.50.

Girdlestone defines prophecy as prediction, though he recognizes other features of prophecy. "Grammar" is defined as method and the author seeks to lay bare the method of prophecy as found in the Scripture. The theology of prophecy is first discussed, followed by a brief analysis of true prophecy. Next the prophetic forms of thought, formulae, and grammatical syntax of prediction are enumerated. The remainder of the book is given to the typology of Old Testament worship practices, the exegesis of apocalyptic, and the fulfillment of prophecy in the New Testament. Unfulfilled elements in Scriptural prophecy are given some notice at the close of the book.

This book is a typically conservative treatment of prophecy. It is right in assuming that the supernatural factor is basic in Old Testament prophecy. It is also right in asserting that the message of Hebrew prophecy could not be exhausted by any limited segment of history. It pointed toward Christ and it revealed a comprehensive purpose which God was focusing upon a great redemptive act. Yet this book, as is the case with many conservative treatments of prophecy, has several weaknesses. It shows lack of concern for the historical situation in which the prophet lived and toward which much of his message was oriented. Hence, the prophet, as a man, is a vague figure. He lacks aliveness. There is almost a total disregard for the psychological factors in prophecy. For many, psychology has no relevance for a study of the prophets and pro-

phesy. This is in part due to an unwarranted assumption that any hint that psychology can contribute to an understanding of prophecy detracts from the concepts of revelation and divine inspiration. If prophecy is only a "fluteplayer playing on a flute" technique, then psychology has no place. But there is nothing in the Old Testament which will support such a view.

Another reason psychology is thought to be incompatible with prophecy is an extreme application of abnormal psychology to prophecy has been made by some scholars. Actually, a psychology stressing growth and maturity has much more relevance. The prophets were human and had their spiritual struggles, but in God they found personal salvation. Their own experience with God therefore, is just as important as the message they proclaim. We need more emphasis on this point, which the book under review lacks. The aspects which it does treat are sanely discussed, but the book needs more of a sense for the dynamic and vitality which are apparent in almost every verse the prophet uttered.

George H. Livingston

Pattern of Things to Come, compiled by Dorothy McConnell. New York: Friendship Press, 1955. 80 pages. \$1.50.

Dorothy McConnell, editor of the *World Outlook*, has compressed into this small volume the utterances of various spokesmen of the world church respecting the future strategy of Christian missions. The ideas expressed by the contributing authors were first presented in papers and panels at the Fiftieth Annual Assembly of the Division of Foreign Missions of the National Council of Churches of Boston in 1954. To these statements the editor has added some interpretative remarks and has appended to each chapter questions designed to provoke thought and further discussion. The book has a rather fragmentary and jumpy sequence which does not lend itself to easy reading but still there is enough of sincerity of purpose to keep the thought moving ahead.

The book helps bring to focus some of the more pressing issues confronting the church today in Southeast Asia, Africa, and Latin America. Problems relating to race relations, missionary personnel, church cooperation, institutional policy, and techniques of evangelism are freely discussed. One is made to see that there is a wide and dangerous discrepancy between the ideal Christian community and the actual situation. New and radical procedures are called for if the church is to answer the challenge of this revo-

lutionary hour.

In response to these urgent needs, the book makes a contribution to the study of missions. The experts quoted do more than simply raise problems; they anticipate some solutions. Issuing from a compelling sense of Christian unity and vocation, a pattern of things to come is envisioned. Indeed, much is left unsaid, particularly in regard to the spiritual power and force needed to motivate these schemes in the future. Perhaps more explicit attention to the missionary motivation of the church described in the Book of Acts would help to illumine the proposed pattern. But in this bewildered age we should be grateful for whatever guidance is given us even if it fall short of the ideal.

Robert E. Coleman

Hebrew Vocabularies, by: J. Barton Payne. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1956. \$1.00.

A serious gap developed in Hebrew language study when Harper's *Vocabularies* by William R. Harper, 1890, went out of print. A year ago Dr. Payne successfully revived interest in this work by publishing in mimeograph form a portion of Harper's work. To meet the demand, a more attractive booklet was produced by Baker Book House.

This new product does not provide all of the materials presented in the earlier work of 1890. It is limited to verbs and nouns occurring more than ten times in the Old Testament and to the particles made up of prepositions, adverbs, and conjunctions. In the last section Harper's list has been considerably revised. A helpful feature is that the Hebrew words and their English equivalents has been brought together, whereas they were separated in the older edition. This is a decided improvement.

One cannot but regret that Harper's lists of nouns arranged according to their meanings, and nouns arranged according to their derivation were not also included. This would of course involve duplication of words appearing in the frequency lists but would be valuable to the teacher and student.

Before this edition appeared, the writer had independently been working on the same Harper's vocabulary with the aim of making them available to his Hebrew classes. Romanized characters were used in these language classes for the first half-year instead of the Hebrew characters and points and so he had added a

transliteration of these lists to the Hebrew words and English equivalents. The reviewer can only regret that transliteration does appear in the new edition by Payne. The use of transliteration is a growing trend and has proved highly successful in the reviewer's classes as a means of conveying the simplicity of Hebrew. Of course, since Hebrew characters are employed after the middle of the first year in his classes, the reviewer greatly appreciates this new production, for it is definitely helpful equipment for both the teacher and student of Hebrew.

George H. Livingston

The Gospel in Leviticus, by J. A. Seiss. Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House. Reprint of the Philadelphia edition. 403 pages. \$3.95.

This book is one of the studies in typology produced by Mr. Seiss. Its aim is to "supply a popular exposition of the Levitical rites and ceremonies, to trace their typical import and relations, and to set forth the great features of the Gospel as therein enumerated by types of God's own choosing."

The author begins with a short defense of typological exposition and then proceeds to apply the method to successive chapters of Leviticus. As a whole, Mr. Seiss does not carry his method to extremes. Often he presents good insights concerning the religious significance of Hebrew ritual practices. Hence, the book has homiletical value. The historical setting of these practices are almost completely ignored. Very little effort is made to compare or to contrast with similar usages in contemporary pagan cultures. The book seems to say more about a Christian understanding of sacrifice and priesthood than about the ancient Hebrew view. Consequently this study is not the last word on the subject. But one cannot fail to appreciate the emphasis which typology places on the religious meaning of Hebrew ritual. The book lacks an indexing apparatus.

George H. Livingston

The Challenge of Existentialism, by John Wild. Bloomington: University of Indiana Press, 1955. 297 pages. \$6.00.

Existentialism may well seem to some a word with which to conjure; no person making claim to intellectual respectability dare ignore it, and yet many are hard put to define precisely what they mean when they intone the word. It is therefore not surprising that some have attempted to expound and to evaluate it prematurely. This is distinctly not the case with the author of *The Challenge of Existentialism*.

Professor John Wild of the department of philosophy in Harvard University has given the reading public a volume which embodies long and painstaking study of the literature of the existentialist movement. He is aware, of course, of the more popular and literary form of existentialism, beginning with that of Pascal, developing with the works of Kierkegaard, and ripening with the jottings of Sartre. He brings to his task also a penetrating knowledge of the more systematic works of Karl Jaspers and Martin Heidegger, having studied with the latter at Freiburg before the War.

Professor Wild's volume deals fundamentally with three questions: What is Existentialism? What forces have caused its appearance in our time? What are its prospects for the future? The first section of the work deals in detail with the second of these questions. Existentialism appears as a reaction against the subjectivist tendencies in philosophy since Descartes, with the consequent essentialism (as opposed to the study of concrete existents) and its submergence of the individual into the social "apparatus". It rebels against the neglect of the world as "concretely and immediately given to us" and against the reduction of all entities to the level of physical existence, so that "There is no basic differences between a person and a thing" (pp. 17).

Existentialism thus represents a protest against the submergence of the individual into the mass, the subsumption of personality under the human group as objective Geist, and the oversimplified phenomenologies of either pan-subjectivism or pan-objectivism. It emerged from a definite set of historical and philosophical conditions, and has of course taken deeper root on the Continent and in the British Isles than in the Western Hemisphere.

In a certain sense, Existentialism stands at the end-point of the breakdown of modern philosophy; in another sense, it represents a restoration of certain phases of classical philosophy. It goes without saying that it is an outgrowth of the thinking of vigorous personalities, outstanding among which is the Danish thinker Soren Kierkegaard. Professor Wild sees the major contribution of Kierkegaard to be methodological -- that is, in his "radical empiricism" which is a blend of subjectivism, passionate personal committal in ethics, and phenomenological interest (pp. 53ff). The

raw material of the existential method is the mass of manifold data given in experience. This raises the philosophical question, How are these data related to 'Being as the basic theme of philosophy'? Wild follows Heidegger at this point, in his position that the science of being has bogged down by virtue of its confusion of being with one kind of being. Existentialism avoids the dogmatism of both materialism and idealism at this point, by their interest in "Being and its structure (as) distinct from every entity." (p. 64).

The bearing of the existential way of thinking upon the disciplines of logic, ethics, and anthropology is traced with much care and detail in the chapter entitled "Human Awareness and Action", and the one following it under title, "Existentialist Ethics: Integrity and Decision." It is the discussion of the ethical bearings of Existentialism which is of the greatest immediate interest to the Christian theologian. It must reject the naturalistic ethic of the one who would emphasize the continuity between man and the rest of nature, and protests this in the name of man's sense of isolation and homelessness in the world of nature. On the other hand, it rejects "values" as fixed qualities or properties (pp. 69, 125), and substitutes for the dualism of good-and-evil the distinction between authentic and unauthentic modes of existence.

The sickness of contemporary culture, suggests the existentialist, stems basically from man's unauthentic 'flight from being', this being stimulated by the development of modern technology. Modern man finds himself constrained to serve "the titanic apparatus of the mass order" (p. 135). Clearly, this philosophy represents a protest against mass uniformity, and in the name of a reassertion of a responsible individuality. No doubt this way of thinking is intended as an alternative to the more radical forms of mass tyranny, such as Marxism.

The latter part of our volume (pp. 185-272) contains Dr. Wild's personal evaluation of Existentialism. He sees clearly the manner in which it challenges the basics of modern life; it contests the claims of scientific idolatry, the optimism with respect to the ultimate outcome of things, and the comforting opiate of modern materialism. So far, so good.

The major concern of our author, however, is the effect which Existentialism may have upon the basics of philosophical thought. He asks:

Are moral freedom and authentic human existence to be purchased only at the price of an ultimate irrationalism? Must disciplined description be restricted to human existence alone? Is existence itself absurd? Must we abandon the principle of sufficient reason and the hope for explanation? If we recognize practical reason, and its primordial

levels of mood and feeling, must we then discard all theoretical insight as moral disease? Must we abandon all hope for the recognition of universal moral principles, and for the rational guidance of action (p. 185)?

The final three chapters, "Realistic Phenomenology", "Philosophical Anthropology" and "Realistic Ethics" contain Dr. Wild's criticism and correction of this type of philosophy. His method is that of seeking the valid insights of the existentialist, and setting them within the general framework of a realistic philosophy. He deals with such questions as the stability and structure of man's mental life, human freedom, human communication, the moral law in man, man's boundary situation, and the nature of human consciousness. This reviewer recalls vividly the manner in which his esteemed tutor dealt with these subjects in the course, Philosophy 9. In this section, as in the course just mentioned, Dr. Wild strikes telling blows for man's moral responsibility, for his transcendence of the subhuman world, and against Heidegger's and Sartre's denial of life after death.

The final chapter deals with that element in Existentialism which is most disturbing to the Christian mind, namely its rejection of moral norms -- of fixed standards of good and evil. Professor Wild maintains (correctly we think) that it is at this point that the philosophy of the future must correct and go beyond Existentialism. Against the amorphous quality of existential ethics (with the abnormal preoccupation with authentic and non-authentic types of existence), he makes a strong case for a moral structure in the universe, a deeply embedded moral awareness in man, and a structured conscience. For the future, he sees an intense development of the discipline of ethics to be the alternative to the non-survival of civilization.

He proposes as the center of such an intensification of moral interest an "integral synthesis" of natural law with existential freedom (p. 267). Basic to this will be the retention of the "classical analysis of man" and the classical understanding of the cardinal virtues. There must be, moreover, a better balancing of the competing claims of the individual and of the social group than Existentialism has to date proposed. Dr. Wild's final plea is for a social ethic which recognizes the validity of the needs of the whole man, that is, the validity of his material rights, his rational rights, and the rights which have been guaranteed by the liberal Constitutions of Western states.

The Challenge of Existentialism is a work for the reader who desires earnestly to understand the Existentialist philosophy as a serious movement in today's thought. Dr. Wild lifts this philosophy from its sometime status as an effete cafe exercise. The one who

reads his volume carefully may well find the existentialist literature to be more than a mere something to be read daily, like one's Wordsworth, to keep him from being a theological boor. Professor Wild sees, more clearly than most, that a generation which has lost its bearings has mirrored itself in a philosophy. To find its way out of the wilderness, that generation must correct its way of thinking, and do so in a manner which maintains rapport with its basic mood, but which goes far beyond its existential irrationalism and despair. This volume points the direction in which such a philosophy of reclamation may be found.

Harold B. Kuhn

The Task of Christian Education, by: D. Campbell Wyckoff. Philadelphia: Westminster, 1955. 172 pages. \$2.75.

The author of this book, Dr. D. Campbell Wyckoff, recently became Thomas Sinnot Professor of Christian Education in Princeton Theological Seminary.

The book derives from numerous addresses given by the author and falls into five major sections: the first dealing with contemporary religious education in theory, aims, and practice; the second with the need for a way of life that is definitely Christian and treating of Christian doctrine, the Bible, the Church, growth in ability to believe, and the reality of Jesus Christ; the third with the subject of personality becoming Christian and the author's formulation of his fundamental theory of Christian education; the fourth with implementation of the theory and the responsibility of the individual, the home, the church, the school and the community in that connection. In it certain contemporary developments are considered. The last part is the final summary and conclusion.

The key to this volume appears to be couched in the statement: "The curriculum of Christian education has been defined as all those planned experiences by which the pupil becomes Christian."

In introducing his subject the author says that pragmatic naturalism was guided by sound psychological principles, although he attributes to the leaders of naturalism in religious education inadequate comprehension of what they were thinking and doing. He says:

Many leaders in the field began to wonder if perhaps some of the failure to achieve the high purposes that they had set for themselves might not be due to a sacrificing of

the essential method of the Christian faith to the new methods and procedures they had been using.

It would seem to this reviewer that some sort of wedding is sought of these high naturalistic purposes with a newly discovered supernaturalism.

"Now that the theory of Christian education shows promise of becoming to some extent stabilized, we see the possibility in the years that are immediately ahead of a new period of creative thought, action and achievement akin in promise to the period of the 1920's.

We cannot know what the future holds, but we hope that in the coming years we may, with something of a merging of the achievements of the 1920's and the theological discoveries and rediscoveries of the later period, come to the place where we can establish a process of Christian education that has real validity and integrity for our day."

The offspring of this wedding of naturalism and neo-supernaturalism is to be "a new period of creative thought, action and achievement."

Our author says that it is now necessary that we rethink our purposes and return to a theistic theology. But the return urged is not as a repentent prodigal religious leader from his devotion to the compromising of the faith, but as a pilgrim making progress from naturalism to supernaturalism in an unbroken pilgrimage to the Heavenly City. He fails to make it very clear that persons who have been in the role of religious leaders but who must now "rethink" from an atheistic "Christian" position to a theistic one stand in need of much more than "rethinking."

The author holds that Christian education is to help persons to develop Christianity, just as by flexing their muscles they develop muscularity.

His definition of the New Birth is bound up with his discussion of "creative activity" methodology. He fails to project the basic implication of "creative activity" as that of a unique physical being responding to a unique physical environment resulting in the de novo in the physical processes of emergent evolution. Consequently the definition given of Christian rebirth by the author is that it is "primarily a matter of the recreation of human experience into experience that is divinely redeemed." He maintains that the Christian life has continuity with the whole of human experience, whereas when St. Paul became a Christian, "old things passed away and all

things became new." There is something reminiscent of Dewey's reconstruction of experience in the author's definition of the Christian life.

Born-again Christians do not define their Christian experiences as a continuation of what they had all along experienced as sinners. Spiritual life begins anew for the Christian with the experience of regeneration. He has a spiritual birthday. There is a distinct break between Christian experience and the experience of lostness. There is growth in the Christian life but it is conditioned upon an initial Christian experience.

The author posits the necessity of knowing the pupil as well as the demands upon Christian personality, religious and social. This and many other statements in the book are educationally and religiously constructive.

The faith, fellowship, social action and worship are curriculum considerations in Christian education as are organization, administration, supervision and evaluation its basic functions.

The author falls into the error of making the Christian life man's search for God. To eagerly seek God's guidance and wisdom, His forgiveness and strength is a privilege and duty throughout the Christian life but to be continually searching for God is not the Christian life. God reveals Himself supernaturally to His children. Becoming a Christian is finding God, and being found of Him. This revelation is neither a matter of human intuition nor of continuous questing.

Christian education per se is not merely the transformation and reconstruction of personality. Saving transformation and reconstruction in the ultimate Christian sense means recreation -- a miracle of spiritual creation.

The book gives the impression that commitment brought about as a religious education process rather than a supernatural work of regeneration is the end of evangelism; that the only depravity with which man is born is his freedom and power of choice enabling him to be either a sinner or a saint.

The book is to be commended in that it attempts some sort of movement in the direction of orthodoxy but its lingering, not to say longing, look back to the 1920's leaves in the silence of it a charred and lifeless form instead of what might have been the glad cry of escape from a hopeless naturalism.

The author's competence and ability assure us that he must know and understand what the period of the 1920's hoped for, what it promised in its utter naturalism. Instead then of moving forward to a "living" faith as he suggests, the move can only be back to the faith deserted in the 1920's.

Harold C. Mason

The Dead Sea Scrolls, by: Millar Burrows. New York: The Viking Press, 1955. 435 pages. \$2.50.

The appearance of this volume is timely indeed. It comes amid a flood of popular reports on the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls and their significance and does much to set the subject in a proper perspective. It comes in the wake of numerous technical articles by specialists, most of them proffering some novel explanation, often rather dogmatic and usually encumbered by the impendementa of scholarly documentation. This volume deserves to be hailed as the most complete and judicious treatment of the subject in the English and probably in any language. Its author is qualified to tackle this tough assignment by virtue of being "in on the ground floor," in connection with the discovery of the scrolls, by his linguistic competence, and by his previous work on editing, and publishing on this subject. The volume includes twelve well-chosen pictures and diagrams, and sixteen pages of bibliography, but no index. Unfortunately in a work of this kind there are no footnotes, but, as the author explains "this book is not intended for the scholar." There are numerous published technical treatments on this subject, including other works of this author, and this non-technical report to the public meets a real need.

In the first of the six parts of the volume Professor Burrows reviews the exciting and complicated series of events connected with the discovery of the scrolls. It does much to bring correlation to the often conflicting accounts of the discovery and recognition of these various documents. This narrative is continued to mid-year 1954. The battle of the savants is discussed in the second division. On the basis of text, language, historical allusions, carbon dating, and other evidence, it may be affirmed that the Qumran documents were written after the third century B. C. and before 70 A. D. After reviewing the origin, history, organization and beliefs of the community at Qumran the author cautiously concludes (in accordance with subsequent studies) that the Qumran covenanters were identical with the Essenes described by the classical authors -- Josephus, Philo and Pliny. In part five the author appraises the significance of the scrolls in the areas of textual criticism, grammar, paleograph and New Testament interpretation. In this important, and now controversial area, the author concludes that while the scrolls illuminate many facets of Biblical study, especially of the Fourth Gospel, they do not compel any basic revision of Biblical interpretation. In general they may be said to substantiate the tradition views of the Bible with especial reference to the trustworthiness of the Massoretic text, the antiquity of the canon, the importance of the Septuagint, the his-

toricity of the Fourth Gospel, and even of the sound judgment of many of the "apostolic fathers."

One of the most valuable features of the book, to the average reader, is the translation of the important portions of the manuscripts from Cave One. Because of its relevance to these the Damascus Document, discovered earlier in Cairo, is also Translated. While Isaiah is omitted, the other manuscripts are here translated -- The Habakkuk Commentary, the Manual of Discipline, selections from the book of Wars of the Sons of Light with the Sons of Darkness, and selections from the Thanksgiving Hymns.

Thus the book makes a valuable contribution to the subject by making available to the non-specialist the results of keen scholarship, seen through the eyes of an informed and judicious participant in the most important discoveries in Biblical Archaeology of this century.

George A. Turner