

Early Bronze Age to the Islamic period, read text, view maps, select individual objects with detailed information, rotate some objects and search for comparative objects in the collection. The Museum will be closed for the summer in order for Efrain Velazquez and Eduardo Brugman to photograph the murals and the objects. Most of the new features on the Webpage will not be available until later this year. (Robert D. Bates)



Rainey and Geography

Anson F. Rainey, professor Emeritus of Ancient Near Eastern Cultures and Semitic Linguistics at Tel Aviv University and professor of Historical Geography at Bat Ilan and Ben Gurion Universities spoke for the Horn Archaeological Lectureship on Feb. 4, 2002. Dr. Rainey's visit to Andrews is part of a world-wide lecture tour that includes Wheaton College, UCLA, La Sierra University, Walla Walla College, Konkuk University, Korea, the University of Melbourne, Australia and other Universities. His lecture was entitled *Bringing the Bible Down to Earth - The Disciplines of Historical Geography: An Approach to the Everyday Life of Ancient Israel*.

In his lecture, Dr. Rainey emphasized the importance of Historical Geography as a tool for understanding the Bible. He believes that Historical Geography increases our realization that the Bible had to do with real people, that these people struggled for their existence, fought their enemies, and struggled with issues of morality. Though some deny the people of ancient Palestine were Israelites, Rainey suggests that historical geography links the archaeological evidence to the Bible and ancient documents. The places identified in the Bible are real places that are often found in ancient inscriptions and frequently confirmed through archaeological excavations.

There are many dimensions of Historical Geography that make it an



Anson F. Rainey

important tool for understanding the Bible. The physical and historical dimensions of geography deal with sequences of events and their relationship to the places of those events. Some claim that historical reflections are shaped by modern bias and can not accurately describe historical events. Rainey agrees that people inevitably bring their own "personal load of emotion and experience," however, approaching historical events subjectively doesn't mean that the history which emerges has no value. For Rainey, history is a modern reflection on past events. "Documents from the ancient world and archaeological finds were left by somebody," it is the role of the scholar to communicate with those people. Even if that communication is somewhat subjective, it is still in real time and about real people from real places.

The Bible describes a people with a unique culture which interacted with a number of different cultures. Ancient Israel was frequently influence by the surrounding cultures. Historical geography tries to understand this cultural dimension. What were the people like who lived during that time, what kind of houses did they live in, what did they eat and how did they prepare their food, and what was life like in their villages? The answer to these and other questions and explain why certain places became casual settlements and why others developed into villages, towns, and cities.

The spiritual dimension of historical geography is the most frequently criticized and most often ignored. Some scholars dismiss this dimension as clouding the objectivity of biblical scholarship. However, Rainey points out that those who wrote the biblical, Assyrian, or Egyptian texts wrote them from religious points of view. Scholars and Bible students also have their religious points of view. Indeed, most of the interest in the land of the Bible is because of a spiritual dimension. The people in and the places of the Bible have had a major impact upon the spiritual outlook of millions of people. Rainey believes that this spiritual dimension of the Bible can not be ignored when dealing with "the experience of these people over a number of centuries in a particular place and at particular time." (Robert D. Bates)



Younger Lecture

On March 4, K. Lawson Younger presented a lecture entitled *The 'Lost Tribes' of Israel in Light of Recent Discoveries*. Dr. Younger is Professor of OT, Semitic Languages and Ancient Near Eastern History at Trinity International University and is widely published in the area of Biblical and Assyriological Studies, including the recent 3 volume *The Context of Scripture*, edited together with W. W. Hallo. Younger's lecture focused on recent discoveries that shed light on the deportation of the kingdom of Israel by the Assyrians in the late eighth century B.C., where the deportees ended up and how they fared.

While his main interest was the control of Gaza, the hub the spice trade, Tiglath-pileser III conquered northern Israel in his campaigns of 734-732 B.C. This is reflected in 2 Kgs 15:29, 1 Chron 5:26, the Eponym Chronicle, reliefs from Ashtaroth and Gezer, Summary Inscriptions 4, 9 and 13 as well as Annals 18 and 24. These texts agree that Tiglath-pileser III conquered the Galilee and Gilead regions, deported its population,