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[TRIBUTE TO THE MEMORY OF WILLIAM FOXWELL ALBRIGHT AND PERE ROLAND DE VAUX]

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## WILLIAM FOXWELL ALBRIGHT

On the 19 September 1971 W. F. Albright died at the age of eighty in Baltimore, U.S.A. Our image of Albright is first and foremost of an extremely fertile scholar endowed with unusual gifts, who has done more during the last half century than anyone else to advance the study of the world of the Bible in its widest sense. It was he who laid the foundations of modern Biblical archaeology. No important branch of Bible studies, ancient Israelite history, civilization of the ancient east and Palestinian archaeology was absent from his interests and writings. Moreover, at the same time as being expert at finding his way in the literary and epigraphic sources, in most languages of the middle east and in the archaeological finds which are being continuously discovered in excavations in the Land of Israel and its neighbours, he was endowed with a critical sense and an unusual analytical ability employed in dealing with difficult and complicated problems and with the discovery of new horizons in scholarship.

However, Albright's main merit lay in his profound ability to summarize the results of research and its effects and to present a clear and organic picture of the development of the Palestinian civilization and the history and religion of the Israelite nation against the backgrounds of the civilizations of the ancient east. No wonder that his books: *From The Stone Age To Christianity*; *The Archaeology of Palestine*; *Archaeology and the Religion of Israel*, gained such a wide circulation and were translated into several languages.

What characterizes Albright's scholarship is, on the one hand, the exploitation of all possible data for the purpose of clarifying and analyzing any particular subject he was dealing with in a brilliant scientific method, and on the other hand, his "up-to-dateness" and his attention to recent research and discoveries. He never flinched from changing his views if new data necessitated such a change, or if he was convinced that he had been mistaken in his conclusions.

His scientific image is conspicuous for his activity in establishing a firm basis and new ways for research and for adumbrating numerous subjects to which his predecessors had paid no attention. He was far from restricting himself to limited spheres of research. With his command over so many spheres he was able to leave his imprint on several disciplines far removed from one another as regards both contents and scientific method. The most outstanding example in Palestinian archaeology are his excavations at Tell Beit Mirsim. The

comprehensive and detailed report of these excavations has become a classic text for the strategraphic investigation of Palestinian tells, and a source of inspiration for the archaeologists of our generation. His researches in geography and in historical topography which are based upon archaeological surveys undertaken by himself during his residence in this country in the twenties and thirties, and on a critical approach to the literary and epigraphical sources, serve as an example for all that is being done in this field. His contribution is obviously very considerable in the study of the external documents relating to the Land of Israel and its history in Bible times, and especially the Egyptian and Accadian sources, including the El-Amarna Letters. No less important is his contribution to the research of the West-Semitic epigraphy, beginning with the Proto-Sinaitic inscriptions and ending with the Dead Sea Scrolls, including the Ugaritic documents and the Phoenician inscriptions. All he did is pervaded by his powerful creative spirit. There is his research on Israelite culture and religion against the background of the middle-eastern civilization, in combination with a wide range of data and phenomena from the different material and spiritual spheres in the life of man, and the repeated attempts for getting to the roots of the nature and character of the original Israelite creativity as it found its expression in the Book of Books.

It was his monumental range of knowledge, supreme originality, open-mindedness and scientific honesty which placed Albright at the centre of scholarship which he advanced and developed. He succeeded in fostering the interest and enthusiasm of his numerous pupils in the United States, Israel and other countries, many of whom followed in his path while others were decisively influenced by him.

Albright was a faithful friend of the Jewish people and an enthusiastic supporter of the rebirth of the People of the Bible in the Land of the Bible.

May his memory be blessed.

**Benjamin Mazar**

## PERE ROLAND DE VAUX

At the beginning of September 1971 the Dominican Father Roland de Vaux, one of the outstanding scholars of Palestinian antiquities in our generation, passed away. Père de Vaux was born in Paris in 1903. He entered the Dominican Order in 1929 and in 1933 he joined the School of Biblical and Archaeological Studies of the Order in Jerusalem, in the Monastery of St. Etienne. Apart from several trips abroad (during one of these he served as visiting professor at Harvard) he remained a citizen of Jerusalem until the day of his death. During the years 1935—1970 he taught Biblical History at the Israeli Biblical Institutes; occasionally he also taught Biblical exegesis as well as Assyrian and Babylonian. Among the many distinctions he was awarded for his scientific work was his membership of the Académie Française, of the British Academy, of the Society of Antiquarians in London and of the Society for Bible Research; he also received nine honorary doctorates. He was principal of the School from 1945-1965, the editor of its periodical from 1938-1953 and Head of the Monastery from 1949-1952.

As an excavator De Vaux divided his activities between two widely separated periods — the Early Canaanite Period (Early Bronze) and the Second Temple Period. His excavations in northern Tell el-Far'ah (which he identified with Biblical Tirzah) continued intermittently for fourteen years and enriched our knowledge of the time preceding the period of the Patriarchs. They demonstrate the cultural continuity between these periods and the Israelite period, particularly in the building of fortresses and houses as well as of cult structures. Soon after the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls Père de Vaux together with L. Harding conducted excavations in the settlement of the Dead Sea Sect in Khirbet Qumran (perhaps the Fortress of the Assideans mentioned in the Scrolls). These excavations and those in the Murabba'at Cave, which were carried out at the same time, form the basis of our knowledge to this day of the pottery of the end of the Second Temple Period as well as of the material, architectural and institutional background of this sect. They also supplied the objective dating of the Scrolls.

Apart from these two great projects Père de Vaux participated in several other excavations. In the years 1961-1963 he took part in Dr. Kenyon's expedition in the Jerusalem excavations and during the last year of his life he began the excavations at Tell Keisan near Haifa.

In addition to his archeological activity, Père de Vaux was engaged in Bible Studies and Israelite history. He participated in the publication of the Jerusalem Bible — especially Genesis and the Books of Samuel — which was prepared by the Dominican School in Jerusalem; he wrote two volumes of *Les institutions de l'Ancien Testament* which gained wide recognition and were published also in Hebrew and in English. Of his last book *Israelite History I*, 1971, only the first volume is published.

*Père de Vaux was outstanding in his scientific work as an exact excavator who made precise surveys and reports of the results of his research.* His conclusions were based on a factual and considered analysis of the finds. As a member of an order in a Catholic Institute he was subject to Church discipline in everything relating to its teachings; he was free, however, in his approach to Israelite antiquities in all other spheres. His considerable organizational power, his enthusiasm for his work and his energy were clearly shown during the time he headed the project of the publication of the Dead Sea Scrolls and fragments, in cooperation with the Jordanian Department of Antiquities. The sudden change which befell Jerusalem upon the Six-Day War caused him some confusion which he managed to overcome during the last year of his life. In his personal relations he was always correct. He did not conceal his views, but he did not confuse the spheres of scholarship and politics. His death at the age of sixty-eight has left a gap in the ranks of Bible scholars and French archaeologists which cannot be easily filled.

**M. Avi-Yonah**