

Tribute to James H. Charlesworth

Director and Editor, Princeton Dead Sea Scrolls Project
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on the occasion of his retirement
from the faculty of Princeton Theological Seminary
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As background for these comments, my passion for Biblical Archaeology was set by Professor Nelson Glueck's public seminars in Cincinnati in the 1950s on his returns from Transjordan. He shared his finds, discoveries and analyses in a way that hooked his audiences, including this (then) teenager. I have been a serious fan of the field ever since.

Decades later, I became a member/subscriber to the various publications and events of the Biblical Archaeology Society to whom my primary gratitude is for its introduction of me to Professor James Charlesworth's papers, articles, books, lectures, network television appearances, archaeology association presentations, Israel tours, and other major contributions to my "Nelson Glueck passion."

My professional work includes thirty-plus years of invited speaking engagements about research and developments in packaging manufacturing technology, environmental management, and pollution-prevention. Audiences include industry, academic, and government representatives in North America, Europe and Asia. The key reward to me from participating in these international forums is the continuing education I gained by observing each event's other speakers, not just their subject content, but also their presentation style, skill and preparation.

An occasional presenter would exhibit a peerless, uniquely entertaining delivery. But none – not one – of those many hundreds of speakers I experienced at my own industry or archaeology events stimulated in the attendees a subsequent captivation – academic or popular – to become immersed in the respective field, as I saw with audiences of Dr. Charlesworth's in the U.S. and in Israel. I can merely imagine what it must have been like to have sat in his academic lecture-rooms at PTS and other academies.

Professor Charlesworth's contributions to Biblical Archaeology far surpass his numerous publications and lectures. The respect, deference, and cooperation I've seen offered him by international professionals in archaeology, let alone by his general-interest audiences, evidences the compelling contributions he has leveraged into advancing the field of archaeology, biblical and beyond. Every institution Professor Charlesworth touched is appreciably better off by its relationship with him.

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