

### **Bruno Clifton O.P.: a Biblical studies angle**

Recent archaeological and anthropological research into the Ancient Near East has seemingly put the history of the land—what we can call ‘terrestrial reality’—at odds with the history according to the bible. In place of confrontation however, these realities may be conceptually converged by drawing upon three assumptions about reality. In this way, assumptions are not a subjective distraction but rather lead to clarification. The first assumption broadly stated is that if the bible is ‘true’ and ‘inspired’ by God it is embedded in and refers to a ‘transcendental reality.’ A second assumption is that all reality (terrestrial/transcendental) flows from God. A third assumption is that since human reason as part of reality has its origins in God, so all knowledge, so far as it searches for truth in reality, searches for God and does not undermine God. Taking these assumptions together both ‘binds’ and ‘frees’ the biblical text. Such a procedure binds, because these assumptions give parameters to the nature of the biblical text upon which to build. It frees, because it allows perspectives on what is in fact one divinely-sourced reality to be brought into conversation, producing new and rich interpretations of the bible. Thus the biblical text shows a convergence in which terrestrial reality is not confronted but permeated by a perspective on reality that sees God as its source.