

BOOK REVIEWS

LADDER OF TIME: Suggested Answers to Some Notorious Problems of the Old Testament History, Statistics and Dating, by Ralph Ogden. 143 pages, Arthur H. Stockwell Ltd., Ilfracombe, Devon, 1970.

This small paperback by the Examining Chaplain to the Archbishop of Sydney, who has contributed a brief foreword, should be read by Old Testament historians because of the novelty of its approach to Old Testament problems of chronology. It has certain weaknesses as a book of scholarship, notably a complete lack of references to relevant modern literature, no subject or author indices, and an obvious bias to a conservative Christian viewpoint. Nevertheless it is interesting, refreshing and very suitable reading for first degree students of Biblical Studies.

Ogden faces the insuperable problem of reconciling biblical and secular chronology, and rejects the biblical numbers. He concludes that the correct approach is to take the established actuarial life-span of 25-30 years per generation as reliable, this being the period by which the lives of father and son generally overlap. He applies this to the genealogy preserved in the *Gospel according to St. Luke* which assigns to Jesus "fifty-five ancestors in a direct male line from Abraham to Joseph inclusive"; this he thinks was originally preserved in the genealogical records in the Temple. Luke's genealogy is identical with the fourteen generations recorded by Matthew and is supported by Josephus, 1 Ch. 2:3-15 and Ruth 4:18-22. To these generations Ogden applies the "modern actuarial" 25/30 year generation which is different to and more realistic than the estimate of the length of a *dor generation* as nearly a century (cf. Gen. 15:13-16) where four *dorim* cover 400 years (cf. Albright BASOR 163, 1961).

Ogden then looks for check-points in extra-Hebrew literature; he finds that Sheshonk I (935-914 B.C.) plundered Jerusalem in 926 B.C., in the fifth year of Rehoboam (1 K. 14:25). So he concludes that Rehoboam's grandfather, David, was born about 1040 B.C.: David was 42 generations from Christ, which averages about 25 years per generation—well in harmony with the modern actuarial basis.

We now come to a great difficulty; there are only 13 generations from Abraham to David, to cover about 1000 years. An earlier writer realised this discrepancy and, according to Ogden, tried to cover it by expanding lifetimes to an incredible length (Abraham 175 years, Isaac 180 years, Jacob 147 years et alii):

the historian was forced to this expediency by the two dating points found in I Kings 6:1 and Exod. 12:40, which state: (a) that Solomon founded the Temple "in the 480th year after the Children of Egypt had come out of the land of Egypt"; (b) that the children of Israel spent 430 years in Egypt. This gives a total of 910 years, and hence 80 years per generation.

He examines the story in the light of the statistically probable life-span of each character, and tries to fit the results into the conditions of what would then be contemporary history. He concludes that Abraham was born about 1505 B.C. and that the date of Isaac's birth is "the inaugural year of the Chosen People" (Gen. 17); he believes that the 480 years of I K. 6:1 dates from this year which he pinpoints as 1450 B.C., and quotes other biblical evidence which supports this date. The crucial point in his argument is that he believes that some later historian came to believe that this "inaugural year" was that of the giving of the Covenant at Sinai rather than that of the fulfilment of the Promise at the birth of Isaac, and that this later historian adapted the chronology of the records in all good faith in an attempt to make circumstances fit the mistaken date of the "inaugural year". Ogden does not suggest who this historian may have been, but the reviewer, following Martin Noth: *Überlieferungsgeschichtliche Studien I*, Halle, would indicate that the Judaeen historian who wrote the single work we know as the books *Joshua* to *II Kings* may well have edited the dating in a well-meaning attempt to provide a chronological harmony. He particularly had trouble in the passage Gen. 15:13-16 mentioned above; there is no doubt that this altered chronology was already sanctified by age and acceptance by the time of Josephus whose evidence elsewhere provides support for Ogden's hypothesis.

Ogden then suggests what the reviewer has believed for many years on other grounds—that Egyptian Aton-worship had its origin in Canaan and he connects it with Melchizedek. The suggestion made by Ogden is so radical that many will find it hard to accept, yet it seems to fit the facts of Egyptian religion, politics and history: it is a tremendous pity that Ogden touches so briefly and inadequately on this momentous fact. His conclusion is that Israel *entered* Egypt about 1344 B.C., spent four generations there (Gen. 15:13-16) and *left* after 124 years. This makes Rameses II the Pharaoh of the oppression, Merneptah Moses' uncle-by-adoption and the usurper Amenmeses the Pharaoh of the Exodus. He sees in the reference to Israel in the Stele of Merneptah—erected in 1219 by the latter's son, Seti II, after the mysterious disappearance of Amenmeses—the Exodus from

the Egyptian point of view as an expulsion of undesirables (cf. Exod. 6:1); Ogden quotes a passage from Tacitus which seems to support this contention.

Following up his theory that there has been an artificial tampering with figures to fit facts Ogden then examines the numbers involved in the Exodus and related incidents. He asserts what the reviewer suggested in an article *Date of the Foundation of the Jewish Colony at Elephantine* (JNES, April, 1968)—that a group of non-Hebrews formed part of the Exodus, and identifies them with the remnants of Akhnaton's Aton worshippers. He shows that the piecemeal account of the Settlement suddenly seems to become coherent on this dating.

He then turns his attention to the history of Moses, and argues that Moses was a "dove" whose ideals Isaiah and Jeremiah were later to follow. The "dove" was defeated politically by the "hawk" Joshua and to a considerable extent disappeared into oblivion until the discovery of the Book of Law in the Temple which he believed was basically of Mosaic authorship (p. 130, Deut. 31:20), a theory put forward recently by Meredith G. Kline, *The Treaty of the Great King* (Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, 1963). This is probably the most important section of the book in that it shows that the non-nationalistic spiritual side of Hebrew religion is Mosaic in origin and is hence the core of Judaism.

The reviewer believes that the book makes some valuable suggestions which Ogden would do well to expound more fully.

E. C. B. MACLAURIN

JUDGES AND KINGS, by C. F. Burney. Ktav Publishing House, Inc., New York, 1970.

Ktav is to be congratulated upon this excellent reproduction of the two greatest works of the notable English scholar C. F. Burney. One wishes that the title page had included Burney's full title and academic standing instead of the bare initials and surname; this would have entailed no problem for the new publisher and avoids the reviewer's suspicion that the omission may have had something to do with the fact that Burney was a Christian clergyman of British nationality. Apart from this example of pettiness the reproduction is most commendable and I, for one, welcome the reissue as making available once more a most useful text book for students in my department. Stanley A. Cook, Regius Professor of Hebrew at Cambridge during my first year, introduced his class to Burney's works by saying that if one had a good knowledge of the *Introduction to the Book of Judges*, one had a good acquaintance with the bulk of the problems in the early history of Israel. This statement is still true: and the sixty-seven

years that have elapsed since *The Book of Judges* first appeared has been competently bridged by an excellent *Prolegomenon* from the hands of that versatile veteran, C. F. Albright.

Albright's contribution takes account of recent archaeological, linguistic, and literary research. Thus he follows the pioneering work of Burney whose use of Archaeology—a science whose credentials at that time were not yet fully established—was ignored outside Britain, largely due to the obtuseness of Wellhausen and his followers (*Prolegomenon*, p. 4). This gap of two-thirds of a century has seen Biblical Archaeology emerge as one of the most useful tools at the use of the Old Testament scholar.

Albright begins by referring to the enormously important discovery by Martin Noth (*Überlieferungsgeschichtliche Studien I*) that all the Old Testament books from the Deuteronomist to II Kings inclusive comprise "a single work written by a Judean historian who may conveniently be called the Deuteronomist".

Burney's preference for a 13th century date for the Exodus is supported by Albright who claims that towns in the Shepaleh were occupied about 1234 B.C. (fourth year of Memeptati's reign).

He brings out an extremely significant point on Israel's origins, indicating that both the Banu-sim'al (children of the North) and the Banu-yamina (children of the South) were 'Apiru, the southern tribes of the Mesopotamian 'Apiru being the 'Awnanum (blood-kin of the first Dynasty of Babylon), the Yahrurum (who gave the dynasty of Shamshu-Adad I to Assyria) the legendary Raphe' of Hebrew mythology, and the Yama' ammu from which the Hyksos chieftains sprang.

He accepts G. E. Wright's conclusions that Judges I has less claims to originality than Joshua.

The historicity of the name Sisera (Jud. 4:2ff) is now vindicated; he was a Luvian, speaking the same language as the Philistines. It would have been most interesting if Albright had developed this point, for what was a Luvian doing in the Syrian army? Have we here some confirmation of Baramki's belief that the Phoenicians were the result of a fusion of sea-peoples with Semites?

Albright points out that Burney's work on the Midianite Invasion, Gideon and Abimelech still stands as authoritative. He deals with the nomadic condition of the Ammonites until the time of Jephthah, traditionally 300 years *before* the Israelite conquest

of Gilead and Moab (Jud. 11:26): (this statement on p. 21 is obviously due to a confusion of thought, and *after* should be substituted for *before*). He shows that Milkum of the Ammonites and Kammush of the Moabites are the same deity, generally known as Resheph, and reasserts that the story of Samson, who was a real person, reflects real conditions in the Shephalah of the twelfth century B.C.

The history of the story of Micah and the Danites is reaffirmed, and Albright discusses the nature of the ephod; on the other hand the story of the Levite of Benjamin and his concubine's murder is held to be a later insertion. Albright then proceeds to vindicate the Book of Chronicles as history; a modern development with which the reviewer is in complete sympathy.

Albright makes the quite untenable suggestion that the story of the Queen of Sheba involves the visit to Solomon of some wealthy noblewoman; this bears a family resemblance to the attitude of Burney which simply ignores the tale. Albright repeats the present view that South Arabian inscriptions are comparatively late; the writer believes that this view will not outlast the present decade and that further research will reveal very considerable Sumerian and Akkadian influence with corresponding inscriptional material.

New discoveries have led to a revision of the dating assigned to various Hebrew monarchs. Surprisingly recent finds have greatly expanded the number of Hebrew kings whose names are now mentioned in non-Hebrew or secular literature.

The Prolegomenon closes with a brief curriculum vitae of Charles Fox Burney. It is interesting to note that, in spite of his great attainments, recognition only came to him within the last eleven years of his life, and even that recognition was only partial, for he was, for example, never elected a fellow of the British Academy.

E. C. B. MACLAURIN

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