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## BOOK REVIEWS

### BIBLICAL ARCHAEOLOGY

THE first of these works<sup>1</sup> is by Sir Frederic Kenyon, to whom Bible students have long been indebted for his work on the text of Scripture. For forty-five years he has given us a succession of handbooks, in which he combines the sure touch of the expert with a delightful facility in making technical matters plain to less expert readers. We turn with pleasant expectation to his latest contribution to our knowledge, and are not disappointed. He modestly disclaims an expert acquaintance with Biblical archaeology, while pleading his hereditary interest in this field and his close connection with archaeological research over many years, especially the twenty-one years when he was Director of the British Museum. But whether his information be first-hand or secondhand, we know what to expect from his accurate mind, with its critical distinction between fact and theory, and its severe avoidance of wishful thinking, as a result of which we have here a book which must be regarded as the best of its kind published in these islands.

We have heard many complaints that popular works on this subject too often manipulate the results of research in an attempt to make them prove more than they do. In this regard Sir Frederic is above suspicion, and so we may attach the more weight to his conclusion that "the progress of archaeological research will be found to constitute a steady march in the direction of establishing the essential trustworthiness of the Bible narrative, and of greatly increasing our intelligent comprehension of it, and thereby our appreciation of its spiritual message, which constitutes its real value for mankind" (p. 30).

The opening chapter deals with "The Nature of Archaeological Evidence", and we are shown the real value of this evidence, and what we should and should not expect from it. Its relation to the findings of literary criticism is also dealt with. With most of what is said along this line we agree, but doubt

<sup>1</sup>*The Bible and Archaeology*. By Sir Frederic Kenyon. (George G. Harrap & Co., Ltd., London, 1940.) 310 pp. 15s. net.

the wisdom of giving a summary of the Graf-Wellhausen hypothesis as "the conclusions now generally accepted by scholars with regard to the structure and dates of the books of the Old Testament" (p. 21), when later on the writer shows how, in the light of recent evidence, "it is clear that the criticism of the Pentateuchal legislation as too elaborate and as reflecting a much later date than that of Moses will have to be reconsidered. . . . Even if the final form is late there is a greatly increased possibility that the substance of this legislation may be early" (p. 269).

"The doctrine of an infallible Bible will not, indeed, stand the slightest examination," he says (p. 26), adducing the presence of translational and textual errors and uncertainties. But no intelligent Christian, however conservative, contends for the infallibility of any translation, or even of the Massoretic text or Westcott and Hort's Greek Testament. Among some discrepancies which he quotes is that with regard to the person killed by Elhanan. It is not clear whether this is considered a question of textual or of literary criticism; but it is unlikely that the editor of the books of Samuel allowed the statement that Elhanan slew Goliath the Gittite to stand after the story of Goliath's death at the hands of David. A slight emendation in 2 Samuel xxi. 19 changes *beth hallachmi eth Golyath* into *eth Lachmi achi Golyath*, which is what we have in 1 Chronicles xx. 5.

From chapters II to VIII Sir Frederic tells us the fascinating story of the rise and progress of archaeological research in Bible lands up to the outbreak of the present war. This is a tale which never loses its interest, and can compete with the most gripping story of adventure or detection. The decipherment of the hieroglyphic and cuneiform scripts and the hazards endured by early excavators are retold here. In a time of international enmity, it is cheering to see tribute paid with international impartiality (not that anything else was expected) to the archaeological labours of Germans and Czechs, Americans and Italians, French and British, with honourable mention for the French, and (we are glad to see) a special word of praise for our own veteran Sir Flinders Petrie, for his work in raising the standard of excavation technique to so high a level.

These chapters are full of Biblical interest, and we can mention only one or two points out of many—the possibility of a

double campaign by Sennacherib in Judah, which would accord well with the Bible narrative (p. 52); Mr. Sidney Smith's opinion that Hammurabi belongs to the nineteenth and not to the twenty-first century B.C. (p. 108), which would support the LXX rather than the Hebrew text of Exodus xii. 40, if Hammurabi and Amraphel are still to be identified; the significance of the Hammurabi legislation, which cannot be the foundation of the Mosaic code, but proves that there is "nothing anachronistic in the idea of a detailed code of law among the Israelites when they settled in the land of Palestine" (p. 125); the light thrown on the Pentateuch by the discoveries at Ras Shamra and in the country of the Horites (pp. 146ff.), and the Sinai inscriptions, with their importance for the history of the alphabet (pp. 201ff.). Is it then so improbable as is suggested on p. 269 that Israel's literature should have commenced at Kadesh-Barnea, even if they took none from Egypt with them?

Some salutary warnings are given. On the presence of Hittites in Hebron in Abraham's time, he says, "Explanations which depend on the assumption that a later writer attributed to the past the conditions of his own time, though not always impossible, are rarely satisfactory and can at best be only guesses" (p. 96). This holds good also for the presence of Philistines in Gerar in Abraham's time, a question not dealt with in this book, but for which the writings of Dr. J. Garrow Duncan may be consulted. Of those who see in the Ras Shamra texts a reflection of the religion of Israel at the time of the conquest of Canaan he says, "This seems to be going far beyond the evidence. . . . It is argued, for example, that the prohibitions of certain practices in the Pentateuch imply that these practices had at one time been habitual among the Israelites. It may be so; but it is at least equally probable that they were practices prevalent among the Canaanites, which the Israelites might be tempted to follow" (p. 162). "If it is uncritical to weight<sup>3</sup> the balances in favour of the traditional interpretation of Scripture it is just as uncritical to weight them against it. . . . It now needs no special courage or independence of mind to be unorthodox. There were times when unorthodoxy was likely to lead a man to the stake; now, especially on the Continent, it is more likely to lead him to a professorship" (pp. 262f.).

Chapters IX and X deal respectively with "Papyri" and

“Other Manuscripts”; a field which the author has made specially his own. Recent discoveries in this field have added to our knowledge of the Biblical text, and have placed on a firm basis the traditional dating of the New Testament books, particularly the Fourth Gospel. Of the many pseudepigraphical apocalypses recovered he writes, “Even a slight acquaintance with them will convince the reader of the immeasurable superiority of the canonical Apocalypse of St. John” (p. 285). Here, too, we are told about the Codex Sinaiticus, the Didache, the Diatessaron, the Old Syriac and Coptic Versions, the Chester Beatty Papyri, the Aramaic papyri from Elephantine, and many other interesting things. The two last chapters summarize the general results for Old and New Testament studies respectively in a manner calculated to confirm faith in the Bible as the Word of God.

Those who feel that here and there the writer pays too much respect to naturalistic theories of Israel’s religion will find in this very book much to counter these theories. Readers of *The Evangelical Quarterly* know how archaeology has established the priority of monotheism to polytheism (see S. H. Langdon in Vol. IX, pp. 136ff.). That the divine revelation was progressive we know, and yet to Abraham Jehovah was no local deity but “the Judge of all the earth” (Gen. xviii. 25), and that in the earliest stratum of the Pentateuch, according to the Wellhausen theory. But Sir Frederic rightly emphasizes the “vast discrepancy” (p. 275) between the worship of Jehovah and the cults of Israel’s neighbours.

“Avestan” is preferable to “Zend” (p. 34) as the name of the earliest Persian dialect, as is “Nesian” to “Kanesian” (pp. 92, 95) as the name of the Indo-European speaking Hittites (they called their language *nasili* or *nesumnili*, from the city Nesa: see B. Hrozný in *The Evangelical Quarterly*, Vol. II, p. 125). The Horites (p. 146) were not an Indo-European people (attempts have been made to relate their language to one of the modern Caucasian dialects), though their vocabulary contained some Aryan elements and some of their gods and kings bore Aryan names.

To sum up, we have here a most useful and authoritative companion to Biblical studies. Its utility and appearance are enhanced by 31 plates, a map, and an Index.

If Sir F. Kenyon’s book covers a wide field, both in space

and time, our other work<sup>1</sup> concentrates on excavation in one restricted area (but one of the most important), carried out over the period of a few years. Professor John Garstang, of the Chair of Archaeology in Liverpool University, has established a well-merited reputation as a practical archaeologist and as a writer, and now, in collaboration with Mr. J. B. E. Garstang, he has produced a most interesting and authoritative account of the recent excavations at Jericho. Commendation of this handsome volume is unnecessary: the name of Garstang speaks for itself where archaeology is concerned, and especially the archaeology of Jericho. Nor need we emphasize its importance for Biblical history, dealing as it does with that city cursed by Joshua and blessed by the presence of his greater Namesake, the city linked with Elijah's translation and the parable of the Good Samaritan.

The history of human settlement on the site of Jericho is traced back to the Neolithic Age, as early as 4500 B.C. It is "one of the oldest known communities of Palestine, indeed, one of the earliest settlements of man found anywhere" (p. 6), "perhaps indeed the oldest in the world" (p. 40). Its position in the Jordan Rift, at the meeting place of trade routes from all directions, gave it an early importance.

Four successive cities, belonging to the Bronze Age, have been traced on the site, the first and the second, from 3000 to 2000 B.C., showing Babylonian influence. The third (1900-1600) shows Canaanite influence, and was latterly a stronghold of the Hyksos. Shortly after their expulsion from Egypt it was destroyed, and was succeeded by the fourth, under Egyptian suzerainty, which after suffering greatly from an earthquake about 1450 B.C., was completely destroyed some fifty years later. Five hundred years passed before another city (of the Iron Age) was built on the site, and with this agrees the statement in 1 Kings xvi. 34, that in the reign of Ahab (c. 875 B.C.) Hiel the Bethelite rebuilt Jericho.

The authors give a description of the technique of archaeology, including an account of how sites are determined (here we learn the exciting story of how the site of Hazor was discovered in the course of one morning), and of the methods of excavation. Particular emphasis is laid on the great importance

<sup>1</sup> *The Story of Jericho*. By John Garstang and J. B. E. Garstang. (Hodder & Stoughton, Ltd, London, 1940.) xv, 200 pp. 8s. 6d. net.

of pottery for establishing cultural contacts and also for wonderfully accurate dating. The cultural development of the cities is fully treated and aptly illustrated.

Of interest to Bible students are the tribute to the remote antiquity of the genealogies in Genesis xi (p. 16); the early origin of the practice of mixing mud for brick-making with straw and chaff to give it greater cohesion (pp. 46, 55); the historical value of Genesis xiv ("perhaps the most reliable indication as to the course of local issues in which old Jericho and its neighbours became submerged", p. 86); the coming of the Canaanites in the Middle Bronze Age: one verse, Numbers xiii. 29, "is found to convey in four lines an admirable impression of the new ethnographical distribution" (p. 90). A most pleasing feature of this book is its readiness to take an unsupported Bible statement as valid evidence, thus, apparently depending only on Ezekiel xvi. 3, the writers say, "The Jebusites were a particular clan, of mixed Hittite and Amorite stock" (p. 91). The chief interest, however, is the way in which the story of the taking of the city by Joshua (identified with the destruction of the fourth city) has been "confirmed in all material particulars" (p. 6), the fall of the double wall (on which houses were built) and the total and deliberate destruction of the city by fire (the very food in the houses was found charred).

The fall of the walls and the drying up of Jordan by its damming at Adam, the modern El Damieh (this has been repeated as recently as 1927) are attributed to seismic and volcanic action, not uncommon in the Rift. To the same agency the writers ascribe some of the Plagues of Egypt, the drying of the Red Sea, the phenomena at Sinai, the cloudy and fiery pillar, and the fate of Korah, Dathan and Abiram. Certainly something of the kind seems to lie behind the events described in Psalm cxiv. Such a suggestion does not mean that it was not God who brought these things to pass, but simply that these were the means He employed.

The date of the Exodus is discussed in the light of the findings at Jericho, which corroborate the statement of 1 Kings vi. 1. This dating is supported by the contemporary Egyptian situation, and also by the famous stele of Merneptah. On the other hand, the excavations at Ai (not mentioned in this book, but see Sir F. Kenyon's book, p. 190) are thought to prove that that site was unoccupied from 2000 to 1200 B.C. But some

potsherds of the late Bronze Age (c. 1600-1200) have been found there, and though the site may not have been in regular occupation at that time, the natural strength of the position is such as to make very reasonable Père Vincent's suggestion that the Canaanites occupied it temporarily as a stronghold to bar the Israelite advance.

The authors show how the situation of the city, 800 feet below sea-level, in a semi-tropical oasis, rich in corn, fruit, and palm-trees, presented a continual temptation to the shepherds in the surrounding hill-country (as Sodom did to Lot), and how the respite from hard work which it afforded enervated its inhabitants and made them an easy prey to the hardy invaders from the desert. These things have a lesson for us.

The book is one of real importance and absorbing interest to all who love the Bible story, and indeed to all interested in the history of civilization. A frontispiece, giving an artist's impression of the city before its fall, 19 plates, 24 figures in the text, maps, chronological tables, notes on the illustrations and an index add to its value.

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### THE WAR WITH SATAN<sup>1</sup>

DR. ATKINSON has produced in this book a very creditable piece of work which it has been a pleasure to read through. He writes, as we might expect him to do, from the standpoint of a convinced, believing Protestant and he does not hide his light under a bushel. Taking the Revelation to be without doubt a book given by Divine inspiration he strikes no uncertain note as to its heavenly origin and authority.

The Apocalypse which pronounces a blessing on him that reads and on those that hear its words and keep the things that are written in it has been treated by different schools of commentators as a plaything of exegesis and the vagaries of interpretation to which it has been subjected are almost without number. We may feel sure of one thing, that its blessing does not put a premium upon mistakes as to its meaning. In regard

<sup>1</sup> *The War with Satan: An explanation of the Book of Revelation.* By F. C. Atkinson, M.A., Ph.D. (The Protestant Truth Society (Inc.), 31 Cannon Street, London, E.C.4.) 224 pp.