

the Jewish era at 3760 B.C. This divergence in the reckoning made by various students shows the fact that the Biblical data are incomplete and do not enable us to set exact dates as far back as that. In the Old Testament dates are set sometimes by an important event as in Isaiah 6:1 or Amos 1:1, sometimes by a man's age, as in Genesis 17:1, and sometimes by the number of years the reigning king had been in power, as in II Kings 18:13. Often no indication of the date is given. In comparing Biblical chronology with that based upon archaeological discoveries it is well to distinguish carefully between those matters which are clearly stated in the Bible, and those on which the data are incomplete or the interpretation doubtful.

It is equally true that chronology is one of the great problems of archaeology, for the evidence is very vague at many points. Recent discoveries are gradually permitting far more certainty regarding many points of dating, but many problems still remain, particularly for the earlier periods. Thus it is interesting to note that Winckler's History of Babylonia and Assyria (1907) dates Hammurabi at 2267-2213, Meissner's Babylonien und Assyrien (1925) dates him 1955-1913, while W.F. Albright in 1945 dates him between 1728 and 1686. This last date is the result of new evidence recently discovered; ten years ago most scholars would have regarded it as fantastically late. Our knowledge of ancient chronology is slowly growing. Statements in the Bible have their contribution to make to it; archaeological evidence, on the other hand, will more and more prove useful in clarifying and filling out our knowledge of Biblical chronology.

One of the most difficult problems in this field is the dating of the exodus and the conquest of Canaan. The evidence is far from complete, and it is wise to reserve judgment until more ~~of it~~ available.