

BOOK REVIEWS

Aling, Charles F. *Egypt and Bible History: From Earliest Times to 1000 B.C.* Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker Book House, 1981. iv + 145 pp. Paperback, \$5.95.

This book is a very good addition to the series of "Baker Studies in Biblical Archaeology." Its goal is to communicate to the general reader a concise account of Egyptian history, with special emphasis upon those historical points for which an integration with biblical history may be suggested, and it achieves this goal well. The Egyptian period of time recovered is from the rise of the Old Kingdom to the 20th Dynasty. The biblical period covered is from Abraham to Solomon. The brief introduction treats Egyptian geography, the periodization of Egyptian history, and the chronology of ancient Egypt.

After discussing the pre-Abrahamic period of Egyptian history and the Old Kingdom, chap. 2 deals with the first direct contact of an individual with Egypt—Abraham's visit there, described in Gen 12. Aling follows a high chronology, which allows a full 430 years for the length of the sojourn of the Israelites in Egypt, in contrast to the shorter sojourn of 215 years advocated by some scholars. Working backwards from his 15th-century date for the Exodus through the Sojourn and the patriarchal period provides Aling with a date early in the 21st century B.C. for Abraham's entry into Egypt. This places that contact within the First Intermediate Period of Egyptian history, during which the 10th Dynasty controlled the northern portion of the country. This view seems essentially correct to me.

Following the same high chronology for the biblical patriarchs, Aling dates Joseph's arrival in Egypt during the rule of the 12th Dynasty or Middle-Kingdom period of Egyptian history (chap. 3). This reconstruction runs contrary to the more commonly held idea that the eisodus of Jacob and his family took place later, during the days of the Hyksos rulers of Dynasty 15 of the Second Intermediate Period. Aling discusses these different dates to some extent, concluding that the case for a later date for the entry into Egypt is not compelling, and that just as good a case can be made for an earlier entry. Again, I am in essential agreement with his point of view.

Having established a working date for Joseph, Aling devotes the rest of chap. 3 and the whole of chap. 4 to the Egyptian background for the Joseph narratives and the Israelite Sojourn. In his discussion of what we can learn about the conditions of the Sojourn, he gives most of his attention to the early 18th Dynasty, which introduced the New-Kingdom

period of Egyptian history towards the end of the Sojourn. For a lack of both biblical and extra-biblical evidence, the Hyksos get short shrift.

In this section, Aling also discusses the location of the cities of Pithom and Ramses (Exod 1:11), which are of considerable importance to any discussion of the Exodus. In harmony with the current state of the evidence, he correctly locates Ramses at Qantir, in contrast to the older view that it was located at Şan el-Hajar or Tanis. The location of Pithom is more difficult to determine, hence Aling is reasonably more tentative here. He offers the two possibilities of locating it either at Tell er-Retaba or at Heliopolis. The excavations of the University of Toronto in the Wadi-Tumilat project may provide some further illumination on this point in the future.

In the important chapter on the date of the Exodus, Aling has evaluated four main different theories that place the Exodus either in the early or middle 15th century B.C. (1470 or 1446) or in the early or late 13th century B.C. (1280 or 1220). Aling weighs the pros and cons of each theory and finally opts, again correctly in my opinion, for the mid-fifteenth-century-B.C. date. His work is quite up to date here, for it includes a discussion and evaluation of the new high date of 1470 B.C. recently proposed by J. J. Bimson.

It is inevitable that Palestinian archaeology has to be introduced into any discussion of the date of the Exodus, since the date of the Israelite Conquest is obviously linked to that of the Exodus. This subject is dealt with in the last half of chap. 5. In the next chapter, the Egyptian background for the Exodus is treated in more detail.

While I agree with Aling's mid-15th-century date for the Exodus, I disagree with his selection for the ruling pharaoh at that time. In this general period of history only Thutmose III or Amenhotep II can fit the identification. Aling has chosen Amenhotep II as his preferred selection, while I prefer to identify Thutmose III as the pharaoh of the Exodus. My own views on this subject are discussed in some detail in the article "Exodus, Date of," now published in the second volume of the revised edition of the *International Standard Bible Encyclopedia* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1982).

The next to the last chapter of Aling's volume takes up the subject of a brief review of the history of the 19th and 20th Dynasties and the contacts of the Egyptians at that time with the Philistines, with Palestine in a broader sense, and especially with Solomon. The final chapter discusses more general cultural contacts between Egypt and Israel.

From the number of points mentioned above where I have noted my general agreement with views expressed in this book, it is evident that I give the volume a strong recommendation. This book is also well-written and nicely illustrated. It can serve well as an introduction to the subject of

Egypt in relationship to early biblical history for pastors, seminary students, and interested lay readers.

Andrews University

WILLIAM H. SHEA

Beker, J. Christiaan, *Paul the Apostle: The Triumph of God in Life and Thought*. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1980. xi + 452 pp. \$22.95.

With this volume Beker, who has enjoyed a well-deserved reputation as an excellent teacher of biblical theology at Princeton, establishes himself as a major contributor to the ongoing dialogue in NT theology. This contribution to Pauline studies is a major effort to argue for the fact that to understand Paul, his life and thought must be viewed in terms of the "apocalyptic connection" (p. 195)—meaning that at the center of Paul's thought is not Christ but God. Therefore righteousness by faith, Christ-mysticism, the unity of the Church, the mission to the Gentiles, etc., cannot be construed as the Pauline "core."

Beker finds that previous attempts to interpret Paul have failed because of their refusal to take apocalypticism seriously. Most interpreters simply ignore the apocalyptic element, but even those who take apocalypticism into account do not take it seriously. In terms of the basic alternatives for understanding Paul as an interpreter with theological roots, R. Bultmann set up Paul in total discontinuity with the OT, but understood salvation as a kerygmatic event anchored in the past. Oscar Cullmann saw continuity with the OT and pointed toward the final victory in the future, but his salvation-history schema that gives ontological priority to the midpoint in time robs eschatology of God's triumph at the end. E. P. Sanders sets Paul and rabbinic Judaism on parallel courses that never meet and understands Paul in purely christological terms. A. Schweitzer, who saw the importance of apocalyptic, transformed Paul's thought into a Christ-mysticism. J. Moltmann, who gives to apocalyptic an eschatologic-cosmic outlook, sees only in the Cross the divine self-disclosure. And E. Käsemann, who argues for apocalyptic as "the mother of theology," refuses to understand Jesus in that light. Beker insists on the necessity of the apocalyptic connection that links the Christ-event with the future triumph of God.

In his analysis of Paul, Beker is at his best in chap. 9, "The Scandal of the Cross." He argues there that in order for the Cross and the Resurrection to play the role they actually play in Paul's thought, they must be given "their ontological, 'cosmic'-apocalyptic significance." This is possible only when they are linked to the still-future triumph of God that embraces not only human history but the whole creation. Thus, salvation cannot be collapsed into a theology of glory or an individualized theology