

Sabbath's impact on the culture. Where Bernard Bailyn made colonial political tracts a living embodiment of New England society, Winton Solberg's Sabbath laws remain bloodless abstractions.

Finally, one wonders whether Harvard University Press felt that no editor was needed for Solberg's manuscript. The prose is lifeless, repetitive, and sometimes hard to follow. It quickly becomes an effort to continue turning the pages. Perhaps his style was influenced by extensive readings of Puritan theological tracts. At any rate, one hopes that as Solberg continues his study into the nineteenth century, he will consider the wider implications of the Sabbath, for the later period could hold an even more interesting tale.

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Thiele, Edwin R. *A Chronology of the Hebrew Kings*. Contemporary Evangelical Perspectives. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Zondervan, 1977. 93 pp. Paperback, \$2.95.

Edwin R. Thiele's outstanding contributions to biblical chronology are well known to OT scholarship, and his reconstruction for the reigns of the kings of Israel and Judah as presented first in *JNES* 3 (1944): 137-186 and then in more detail in *The Mysterious Numbers of the Hebrew Kings* (Chicago, 1951; rev. ed., Grand Rapids, Mich., 1965) has justly been recognized as a "breakthrough"; and he has, of course, amplified those treatments with articles in various scholarly journals.

The present volume covers in a more popular style the same general ground as does the larger *Mysterious Numbers*, whose revised edition was reviewed by Siegfried H. Horn in *AUSS* 5 (1967): 213-214. The first chapter of this new book illustrates the kinds of problems that have long baffled scholars concerning the chronology of the Divided Monarchy, and seven succeeding chapters are devoted to the solutions of such problems.

It is noteworthy that four chapters (chaps. 4 through 7) deal with questions relating to *dual dating*—a matter of utmost importance, for the "single greatest cause for misunderstandings concerning the chronological data of the Books of Kings has been the failure, both in ancient and modern times, to recognize the employment of what may be termed 'dual dating' in connection with the regnal data in certain coregencies and overlapping reigns" (p. 33). Moving from the earliest and relatively simple instance of this type of dating—involving Omri and Tibni—, Thiele considers several other cases, clearing up three major problem areas in the very confusing period from 798 to 723 B.C. It should be observed that the complicated situation relating to the reign of Pekah in Israel and the subsequent history of both Israel to the fall of Samaria and Judah to the reign of Hezekiah has been presented in a simplified fashion, with the confusing data explained under the rubrics of "Pattern 752" and "Pattern 740" (the Patterns "Two-Seventeen" [or "752-686"] and "Twelve-Twenty" [or "740-686"] of the second edition of *Mysterious Numbers*).

The volume is enhanced throughout with many diagrams to illustrate various points of chronology discussed in the text. These are most illuminating; and in the opinion of this reviewer, they are much more helpful for this particular type of publication than would have been the inclusion of the extensive chronological chart that was inserted as a foldout in the first edition of *Mysterious Numbers*, or even the more abundant (and more complicated) tables, charts, and diagrams amplifying the text in the second edition of that more detailed work.

Several appendices will be useful to scholars and laymen alike: Appendix A (p. 75) gives the complete list of dates of the rulers of Judah and Israel; Appendix B

(pp. 76-79) provides a list of data concerning the rulers, together with Scripture references and dates; and Appendix C (pp. 80-85) furnishes coordinations between ancient astronomically established years and the dates of the Hebrew kings.

There is a short glossary of terms (pp. 87-89), which is obviously a useful inclusion in a book of this sort. A general index is lacking, but the Scripture index (pp. 91-93) will in any event probably prove more helpful for locating the type of information desired from this kind of publication.

Although this particular volume is much shorter than Thiele's *Mysterious Numbers*, it covers the essentials of the subject very well. In fact, it is truly amazing that so complex and extensive a subject could be treated in such a clear and effective manner in a book of fewer than 100 pages!

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KENNETH A. STRAND

Wogaman, J. Philip. *A Christian Method of Moral Judgment*. Philadelphia: Westminster, 1976. xi + 270 pp. \$12.50/\$6.95.

According to J. Philip Wogaman, we have entered an age of moral uncertainty. In this book, the Dean of Wesley Theological Seminary claims that the modern loss of confidence is world-wide, affecting both Christians and non-Christians. In the past, Christians may have relied uncritically on the Bible, the Church, natural law, or simply on custom. But such absolute trust no longer seems tenable. The net effect has been to increase uncertainty at a time when moral dilemmas have increased in complexity. But in spite of the uncertainties, Wogaman argues that Christian faith must be capable of guiding our moral decisions, or else such faith is surely nonsense. The question is: What method of moral judgment can be consistent with a whole-hearted commitment to the values of the Christian faith while realistically taking into account the inevitable uncertainties of all human decision-making?

Wogaman believes that the method he offers has such a capacity. Moreover, he believes that his approach avoids the deficiencies of situation ethics on the one hand and of a more rule-oriented ethic on the other. Situation ethics, because it is basically intuitive, is inadequate and can bring but little precision to our moral decision-making. The anti-situationalists, on the other hand, have failed to provide a convincing method of judgment which properly takes into account the "margin of uncertainty" which must be considered in the application of any moral decision.

Wogaman calls his own approach one of "methodological presumption." A moral presumption is a considered *prejudgment*. It is a strong bias in favor of a moral value or course of moral action. Wogaman's analogy is the Anglo-American legal system's presumption of innocence for the accused. Such presumptions are not exceptionless, but any exception must meet stiff criteria. As Wogaman puts it, the exception must "bear the burden of proof." E.g., one exception-making criterion is that an action contrary to a moral presumption will likely produce more good in the long run. But if after consideration of the exception doubt still remains, then the moral presumption stands.

Can such moral presumptions be derived from the Christian faith? Wogaman thinks so. He offers as examples four positive and two negative moral presumptions. On the positive side, he claims that Christian faith presumes (1) the goodness of created existence, (2) the value of individual life, (3) the unity of all humanity, and (4) the equality of each person. And on the negative side, Christianity teaches that humans are (1) finite and (2) sinful. Wogaman also discusses several other kinds of presumptions supposedly derived from the Christian faith, including presumptions of human