

Correct and Incorrect Areas

in Ancient History

Yesterday a student brought up the question, "How can I know when the statements made in Langer or other history books are correct or not? How can I be sure?"

There are some general guides that I have mentioned which you should already be aware of. You will notice that that there was no direct purpose in restoring any of the material of Pergis except that I introduced the Persian list as a part of Egyptian chronology for your use (vol. one, pages 219-220). Thus it is there if you needed to refer to it in relation to Daniel but especially in regard to Ezra 7. (See the article on Ezra in the Good News of April-May, 1966, page 9.)

There is no need to restore anything for Babylon from 747 B.C. onward. However, I have placed the list in the Compendium (vol. one, pages 288-290) to show what is otherwise difficult to have access to in other volumes—the material that would link up the whole story before that with what we know in the Biblical record beginning with Nebuchadnezzar. But on the other hand, there are many misunderstandings: Not with Nebuchadnezzar's reign, but about how to equate the Biblical record with it!

Now with respect to Greece: That which is from Alexander's time on presents no problem; that which goes back probably to the 600's normally presents no problem. There may be a few questions in Greece in the 600's B.C. in certain areas, but that is incidental.

With respect to Assyria, from 745 B.C. onward we would have no basic chronological problem. You will have, in Sennacherib's time, a basic misinterpretation of the relationship of Sennacherib to the story of Hezekiah. The dates given will not be incorrect but the events will be misassociated because there were two attacks, not one! The initial attack is not recorded in history because Sennacherib (704-681—see vol. one, page 296) was not then sole king. The attack that is recorded in history is the one that is not particularly discussed in the Bible except that we find "great wrath" came on Judah [the reference seems to be to II Kings 23:27], but this is all that's said. We have a similar case in respect to the Book of Jeremiah and the Battle of Carchemish (Jeremiah 46:2): You will discover that historical records speak of one battle of Carchemish, the Biblical record clearly speaks of another one (note pages 171-2 of vol. one of the Compendium). The first one (605 B.C.), as far as I know, is not alluded to in the Bible; the second one (603 B.C.) is mentioned in the Bible and is alluded to in history and would have been completely discussed by the Babylonians had the ancient document been complete! The story of the smassing of the army is discussed but not against what city.

When we come to China, chronologically, if you use the basic framework that is found in volume one of the Compendium (pages 349-353)—which is the old, traditional form—there is nothing wrong! China is the only nation that has what might have been called a standard record which has been correct going all the way back to the Tower of Babel—the only one! Not a single other secular record of history has ever been left alone. Now even the Chinese record is not being left alone. So far the Russians continue to use the material on China in its original, traditional form; but I am not sure how long even scholars in China and Russia will retain this approach. If it pays them to follow tradition in a matter, they will; if, for propoganda reasons, it pays them to break with the past, they won't! That's the rule they will follow.

Archaeologically we have major problems in China in all areas including the earliest part of China in some regions, but I do think that most of the dates for Chinese material are basically correct; the only reason is that they haven't been able to apply radiocarbon to it, and therefore it's much later than it should be if radiocarbon were used as a method to check the age. So this means that, if they use any radiocarbon dating at some time in the future, it'll be in disagreement; presently it's acceptable but you can't integrate it, you have to leave it with the Chinese record.

How about Italy? This new edition of Langer begins with the date 753 B.C. for the founding of Rome which is interesting because this is the first time in probably two generations that they have used a right approach—the old, traditional one has come back with respect to the history of Italy! (Note page 82 in Langer.)

I have never discussed Korea in the Compendium but, as an illustration, should you want to know something about it, the Korean history is correct all the way back to 1122 B.C. when there was a break in the Chinese record at which point you can pick up the Korean material. Therefore I didn't even touch it.

Anything before the dates that I have discussed here would not normally be correctly presented! In many nations, there may be no incorrect historical presentation prior to the time that history takes up, but what you would find is that there is no presentation historically at all. It's all archaeological! Thus we would have no information of early Persia, of early India that is valid.

And India, since this will probably be coming up more than some other nation, I doubt that anything before the time of Asoka is correctly stated. And even there I think you should very carefully examine Eggermont's work if you want to know the background for anything prior to the reign of the Mauryas which is after the time of Alexander the Great (317 B.C.) (See chapter 15 of vol. one.) From then on you will normally find "circa" used in Indian records. Frankly I don't see why circa needs to be used; but the reason it is used is that though they have a clear ending point, there are many things in between that they cannot be sure of because they have no solid beginning point. If they had established Asoka based on the Chinese record, and the clear evidence originally, then they would not have had to have the circa. So don't let "circa" fool you in all the statements made; for all practical purposes the dates will probably be correct.

The same is true of Parthia. I have not attempted to restore its chronology in detail in the Compendium. As far as I know, probably 99 out of 100 dates are correct though every one would be labelled "circa" because they have thrown out the initial date—which they have right but they don't accept it as proved. (See pp. 95-96 in the new Langer on Parthia and the comments on it by Dr. Hoeh in Chapter 17 of vol. two of the Compendium.)

There is a peculiar feature with respect to the Anglo-Saxon world. Here you will probably not pick up the story correctly until the 6th century A.D.! The 5th century with the coming of the Angles and the Saxons and a traditional date of 449 A.D. is probably still dismissed by historians (page 179 in Langer). So England, you see, can be perhaps 500 or more years A.D. before there will be a correct evaluation. The same is true of France though we have the whole record of most of these nations on back correctly preserved. But the modern-day approach dictates that anything which is not confirmed by contemporary source material is rejected!

**Geologic Column and Scale of Time**  
(Ages increase from top downward, as in a sequence of sedimentary rocks)

System and Period	Series and Epoch	Distinctive Records of Life	1000 Years*	
<b>CENOZOIC ERA</b>				
Quaternary	Recent	Modern man	11,000	
	Tertiary	Pleistocene	Early man	1,000
		Pliocene	Large carnivores	(11,000)
		Miocene	Woolly apes, grazing forms	(11,000)
		Oligocene	Large browsing mammals	(11,000)
		Eocene	First flowering plants	(11,000)
Paleocene	First placental mammals	(11,000)		
<b>MESOZOIC ERA</b>				
Cretaceous		First appearance of dinosaurs, birds	(11,000)	
	Jurassic	Woolly mammoth	(11,000)	
	Triassic	First appearance of dinosaurs	(11,000)	
<b>PALEOZOIC ERA</b>				
Permian		Corals abundant, corals developed	(11,000)	
Carboniferous	Upper (Pennsylvanian)	First reptiles, great coal forests	(11,000)	
	Lower (Mississippian)	Shells abundant	(11,000)	
Devonian		Amphibians appeared, fishes abundant	(11,000)	
Silurian		Earliest land plants and animals	(11,000)	
Ordovician		First primitive fishes	(11,000)	
Cambrian		First forms of marine invertebrates	(11,000)	
<b>PRE-CAMBRIAN TIME</b>				
		Plants and animals with soft tissues, few fossils	(11,000)	
<p>*Italicized figures are from radiocarbon analyses, figures in parentheses are reliable values from radioactive minerals found in rocks that belong in time divisions indicated; plain figures give estimated dates at start of corresponding time units.</p>				

### TIME SCALE OF EARTH HISTORY

Total time represented, 2,000,000,000+ years

Time since beginning of Pleistocene, 1,000,000+ years

(Oldest time divisions at bottom of table, progressively younger upward)

Major Divisions of Time	Subdivisions of Time	Important Crustal Revolutions	Dominant Life
<b>CENOZOIC</b> 70,000,000 years long	Epochs	Pleistocene	Man
		Pliocene	WORLD BETWEEN RE-CREATION AND FLOOD
		Miocene	
		Oligocene	Earliest strong deformation in Alps
		Eocene	Warm-blooded animals and flowering plants
		Paleocene	Folding in the Rocky Mountain region
<b>MESOZOIC</b> 130,000,000 years long	Jurassic	Folding in lands bordering the Pacific Ocean	Reptiles and medieval plants
	Triassic	PRE-ADAMIC WORLD	
	Permian		
	Paleozoic	Pennsylvanian	Folding in the Appalachian region, in Europe, and in other continents
Mississippian		Folding in western Europe and eastern North America	Earliest land animals and the first forests
Devonian			
Silurian	Shelled invertebrates and the first fishes		
Ordovician			
<b>PRE-CAMBRIAN</b> 1,800,000,000+ years	LATE	Some folding and intrusion of granite	Primitive invertebrates, chiefly without shells
	MIDDLE	Widespread folding, metamorphism, and intrusion of granite	
	EARLY		Most primitive life, probably minute and soft tissue
<b>UNDECIPHERED RECORD</b>			

Notes: Heights of spaces in table are not proportional to lengths of time intervals. All time divisions before the Cambrian represent much longer spans than divisions in same column above them. Epochs of the Cenozoic had shorter duration than subdivisions given for Mesozoic and Paleozoic.

