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THE MYSTERIOUS NUMBERS OF THE HEBREW KINGS

By Edwin R. Thiele

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Enemies of verbal inspiration have often pointed to the chronology of the books of Kings and Chronicles as conclusive evidence that no dependence can be placed upon the precise words of the Bible. There are indeed a number of places where the statements in these books about the relationships of the two kingdoms seem at first sight to be completely unreconcilable. A few years ago, any supporter of the higher criticism would have scoffed at the idea that it was possible to present an interpretation that would hold that these figures were actually true and correct. The appearance of this book is striking evidence of the way that archaeology has influenced scholars, in leading them to greater acceptance of the accuracy and dependability of the historical statements of the Bible. Prof. William A. Irwin, of the Divinity School of the University of Chicago, a man who has been widely known for his acceptance of destructive Biblical theories, has written an introduction to Prof. Thiele's book in which he makes some remarkable statements. Thus he says: "Prof. Thiele...has taken passages commonly regarded as patent disclosures of carelessness, if not of ignorance, on the part of the Hebrew historians, and has shown them to be astonishingly reliable. It is an achievement of far-reaching significance.....it is a matter of first-rate importance to learn now that the books of Kings are reliable in precisely that feature which formerly excited only derision."

The book develops theories as to various chronological