

in the Old Testament, until it reaches its climax, as far as the Bible is concerned, in the conquest of the kingdom of Syria and of the northern kingdom of Israel.

The voluminous material from Assyria contains a number of references to Israelite kings. The Bible contains a number of references to Assyrian rulers. The contexts of these two types of references are often very different, since neither one attempted to give a complete political history of their relationship.

It is interesting to examine these various specific references, in order to see what light they throw on the authenticity of the Biblical statements. Without precise information from contemporary sources, it would be very difficult to write such a history as the Bible contains, with the references to the foreign kings in the right order and in the proper relationship to one another. At point after point, Mesopotamian evidence corroborates the accuracy of the Biblical record.<sup>1</sup>

Another phase of investigation consists of examination of the spelling of the names. The Assyrian names were foreign to the Israelites, and, in addition, had to be written in a type of writing quite different from that used by the Assyrians themselves. When foreign names are expressed in another language and with another type of writing, it is sometimes difficult to recognize exactly what they are. Any comparison of present-day English spelling of

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<sup>1</sup> Reliable translations of many of the ancient Assyrian records are contained in James B. Pritchard, Ancient Near Eastern Texts Relating to the Old Testament (2nd edition, Princeton University Press, 1955). Pictures of many of the Assyrian monuments and reliefs may be found in James B. Pritchard, The Ancient Near East in Pictures Relating to the Old Testament (Princeton University Press, 1954). A useful selection of portions from both of these volumes is presented in The Ancient Near East: An Anthology of Texts and Pictures, by the same author (Princeton University Press, 1958).