

of movement. But it would not say how I traveled, whether I came by train, by plane, on horseback, afoot, or by coastal steamer, whether I came straight through or made several stopovers. There are a thousand questions that might be asked that would not be answered in my simple statement. The statement would be true as far as it went, but there would be many things it did not attempt to explain.

Now the matter of chronology is a matter that interests us greatly in modern times. Nevertheless, it is amazing how little a great many people really know about it. If you ask the average person to tell you the dates at which each of his eight great-grandparents were born, you would be amazed to find how few could give you these precise dates for even one of them. Many people would not even know the names of their great-grandparents. When we are so ignorant as this about such comparatively recent facts, it shows how little interest most of us really have in chronology. The thing that makes us feel that it should be possible to explain chronology precisely is that it is so easy to give an exact date for the life of Napoleon, or of Julius Caesar, or of George Washington. However, the habit of arranging dates with numbers running in consecutive order as we do, was largely unknown before the fifth century A.D.. It was only then that the system of figuring from about the time of the birth of Christ was introduced. Before that, for a few centuries, there had been a system in use among the Syrians of figuring dates from the time when Seleucus the Great entered Babylon, ~~dates were figures 1, 2, 3, after that,~~ but no great number of people were aware of this system. In most cases they simply dated according to the reign of the king or the general events of the time. As a result, the working out of the details of ancient chronology has been one of the most difficult and baffling matters in modern study and most dates before 1000 B.C. are still far from certain.

This being the case, we naturally have to ask the question, is it the Lord's intention to give us in the genealogies material <sup>from</sup> which we could construct a complete chronology, or not? We cannot take for granted that it is.

When we examine the genealogies we soon find that the words "son" and "beget" are used in the Bible in a different sense from that in which we use them in modern times. Thus we read at the beginning of the gospel of Matthew: "the generation of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham." No one today would call a man the son of an ancestor of his who died hundreds of years before. It is easy to show that in the Bible the word "son" has the meaning of our English word "descendant." It may be used of a descendant in the very next generation, whom we would call a son, or it may be used of a descendant in any later generation. Similarly, the word "beget" is used in the Bible to mean that one becomes an ancestor. When a child is born, its father becomes an ancestor of that child, but he also becomes an ancestor of all the descendants that that child will ever have in later times.

In Matthew 1 we have the names of ancestors of Christ. These names include many kings of ancient Judah. These kings of Judah were doubtless known to every Israelite school child. They were very proud of the history of their nation