

While the title of K. A. Kitchen's recent book, Ancient Orient and Old Testament, may give the impression of a popularized survey of ancient Near Eastern parallels to the Old Testament,<sup>1</sup> nothing could be more misleading. This book is, for the most part, a carefully reasoned study of those parallels and a masterpiece of organization. As is so seldom done, but is so crucially necessary, Kitchen begins with a chapter devoted to methodology (pp. 15-34). Only after his methodological principles are set forth does he allow himself to deal with ancient Near Eastern parallels to the Hebrew Bible. Chapters 2-8, which comprise the bulk of the work, may be considered a critique of modern biblical scholarship. Such problems as the date of the patriarchs, the date of the exodus, historical anachronisms, creation and flood stories, literary criticism, and Aramaisms are all discussed in considerable detail. Modern biblical scholarship's solutions are found wanting in almost every case, mainly due to methodological considerations. In chapter 9, Kitchen occupies himself with what he considers parallels that are methodologically sound and "... can further our understanding of the Old Testament by helping to clear up individual textual difficulties and by lending

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<sup>1</sup> Compare the titles of the following popular accounts on the same subject: C. H. Gordon, The Ancient Near East (New York, 1965); J. Gray, Archaeology and the Old Testament World (New York, 1965); J. B. Pritchard, Archaeology and the Old Testament (Princeton, 1958). (Kitchen's book is hereafter abbreviated "Kitchen.")









