

The Conquest

The god of the Hebrews was a god of war, and it was only natural that the entry into the Promised Land should be portrayed as a triumphant invasion. Archaeology has recently confirmed Alt's theory of a more gradual entry.

(38) Khirbet el-Masterah is a site near Jericho. It was occupied by a small band of Hebrews, who later grew strong enough to conquer Jericho and Ai. These real events are exaggerated in . . .

(39) Joshua. There was no Conquest and no Joshua to lead it. We might skip it (as one recent commentator actually suggests we do), but there is interest in its later part (Josh 13-22), which differs from its earlier part (Josh 1-12).

(40) The Song of Deborah, thought by many to be the oldest thing in the Bible, is here considered separately, lest it confuse our understanding of . . .

(41) Judges, a long and invented argument against the idea of the kingship. Its final section (Judg 17-21) urges instead . . .

(42) The Need for a King, to bring to an end such heterodoxy of worship as that of Dan, and such atrocities as those committed by the Benjaminites.

(43) The Philistines. Their presence on the coast, as an organized league of five cities, showed in another and more urgent way the need for a king.

In the next section, the increasingly urgent Kingdom will finally happen.