This document contains the following articles:

Chronological articles by Rodger C. Young (also see his website and his academia page).

Also

Ancient Manuscripts And Biblical Exposition

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Ancient manuscripts have been the subject of many books, journal articles, and essays, but few have dealt with their relationship to biblical exposition. Yet the expositor has a vital role in preserving what those ancient manuscripts of the Bible contribute to an accurate knowledge of Old and New Testaments. Few works on systematic theology deal with the important doctrine of preservation, yet Scripture itself deals extensively with that doctrine. To do his part in implementing that doctrine, the expositor must examine his text in the original languages, identify the text's original statement, and expound that original text. He must practice the doctrine of preservation by participating in that preservation.

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Nineteen ninety-seven marked the fiftieth anniversary of the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls. The impact of these scrolls on Bible translations, textual criticism, and biblical exposition is still being assessed. The scrolls are part of a larger body of ancient manuscripts that the footnotes and margins of a number of current Bible translations cite in support of their renderings of the OT. The ancient versions to which those footnotes refer include the Samaritan Pentateuch (4th century B.C.[1]), the biblical manuscripts from Qumran (3rd century B.C.-1st century A.D.), the Greek Septuagint (3rd-2nd centuries B.C.), the Aramaic Targums (1st-4th centuries A.D.[2]), the Syriac Peshitta (1st-2nd centuries A.D.), and the Latin Vulgate (ca. A.D. 400).

Those manuscripts have been subjects of many books, journal articles, and essays. Many of the published items deal with the significance and history of the ancient manuscripts. Various scholarly journals contain a large number of technical articles on the application of ancient manuscript evidence to the textual criticism of both the OT and NT. One area of application often goes unnoticed, however. That is the area of biblical exposition or preaching. How do the ancient manuscripts affect the exposition of the biblical text? What effect might those manuscripts have upon present-day expositors of God's Word? What is the expositor's responsibility in light of those manuscripts?

The Expositor Is Accountable For His Role In The Preservation Of The Biblical Text

The accountability of biblical expositors goes beyond the integrity they must demonstrate in their interpretation of the Word. It involves the integrity of the Scriptures themselves. The expositor who does a magnificent job of interpreting and explaining the Scriptures may yet sow a seed of doubt about the actual text or may even indulge in unwarranted emendations of the text. The

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[1] Dating the Samaritan Pentateuch is not an easy matter. It may date from as early as the fifth century B.C. or as late as the second century B.C. See Emanuel Tov, *Textual Criticism of the Hebrew Bible* (Minneapolis: Fortress; Assen/Maastricht: Van Gorcum, 1992) 82-83.

[2] The tradition of the Aramaic translations or paraphrases dates back to the time of Ezra (cf. Neh 8:8). See F. F. Bruce, *The Books and the Parchments: Some Chapters on the Transmission of the Bible*, 3d rev. ed. (Westwood, N. J.: Revell, 1963) 52-53, 133–45.

commentaries and modern translations he utilizes in sermon preparation may affect his treatment of the biblical text. Many of those sources have sought to recover the original text so that they might translate or interpret the Scriptures more accurately.[3]

The Bible expositor's goal should be the accurate presentation of God's written revelation. That accuracy relates directly to the degree to which the expounded text conforms to what God originally revealed. Thus the Bible expositor becomes an active participant in the determination, transmission, and preservation of the biblical text. In order to place the expositor's role in proper perspective, an adequate understanding of the doctrine of the preservation of Scripture is necessary.

Biblical Indications of the Doctrine of Preservation

Traditionally the church has declared its belief that the preservation of the Scriptures is the result of God's providential activity. The Second London Confession (1677) made the following declaration: "The Old Testament in *Hebrew* … and the New Testament in *Greek* … being immediately inspired by God, and by his singular care and Providence kept pure in all Ages, are therefore authentical; so as in all controversies of Religion, the Church is finally to appeal unto them."[4] The belief that God's written Word has been preserved without undue alteration is the basis for confidence in the teachings of the Bible.

Like the Second London Confession, W. Graham Scroggie attributed the preservation of Scripture to the providence of God.[5] God must have a role in the preservation of His Word if it is to be kept inviolate. The active preservation of the Scriptures is necessary because the sinful nature of mankind is antagonistic to God and His Word. Such antagonism breeds both contempt for Scripture and the neglect of Scripture. It is fully within the capacity of sinful mankind to allow the Word to perish and to alter its wording intentionally or unintentionally.

The Great Omission. Is the doctrine of the preservation of Scripture still a part of the evangelical creed? If so, what is its importance? In his book *Christian Theology*, Millard J. Erickson entitled the chapter on biblical inspiration, "The Preservation of the Revelation:

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[3] Harold Scanlin, *The Dead Sea Scrolls & Modern Translations of the Old Testament* (Wheaton, Ill.: Tyndale House, 1993), is a recent evaluation of the effects the Qumran manuscripts have had on a number of English translations. Among the translations evaluated were the Revised Standard Version (RSV), the New Revised Standard Version (NRSV), the New English Bible (NEB), the Revised English Bible (REB), the New American Bible (NAB), the Jerusalem Bible (JB), the New Jerusalem Bible (NJB), the New Jewish Version (NJV), the New International Version (NIV), the Good News Bible (GNB), and the New King James Bible (NKJV). Individual translation projects have also published explanations of their procedures in utilizing evidence from ancient manuscripts. Cf. Kenneth L. Barker, ed., *The Making of the NIV* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1991); Bruce M. Metzger, Robert C. Dentan, and Walter Harrelson, *The Making of the New Revised Standard Version of the Bible* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1991).

[4] William L. Lumpkin, *Baptist Confessions of Faith*, rev. ed. (Valley Forge, Pa.: Judson, 1969) 251.

[5] W. Graham Scroggie, *Is the Bible the Word of God?* (Chicago: Moody, 1922) 14-16.

Inspiration."[6] However, the chapter does not deal with biblical preservation. In fact, Erickson's volume does not treat the doctrine of the preservation of the Scriptures anywhere. The chapter title indicates that Erickson believes that preservation relates in some way to inspiration. Apparently, he would attribute preservation to divine action. Erickson defined inspiration as the "supernatural influence of the Holy Spirit upon the Scripture writers which rendered their writings an accurate record of the revelation."[7] If preservation is accomplished by inspiration, then it too must stem from divine intervention.

Elsewhere, Erickson refers to Scripture's permanence, citing Matt 5:18 as his proof-text.[8] The only mention he gives to biblical passages dealing with addition to and subtraction from Scripture (e.g., Deut 4:2; Prov 30:5–6; Rev 22:18–19) is in the context of a discussion concerning the biblical canon's composition.[9]

Lewis Sperry Chafer's *Systematic Theology* is among the few theologies to dedicate any space at all to the topic of the preservation of Scripture.[10] There it merits a separate, though brief, chapter. Chafer defines the matter in the following fashion:

> The Bible is eternal in its own right. It abides because of the fact that no word Jehovah has spoken can be removed or shaken. In fact, it is by means of His written Oracles that God announces His binding declarations concerning the "all things" which cannot be shaken. The Scriptures are the legal instrument by which God obligates Himself to execute every detail of His eternal covenants and to fulfill every prediction His prophets have made. The legal instrument which secures this vast consummation must continue,and shall continue, until the last promise, for which it stands as surety, has been realized.[11]

Chafer quotes Ps 119:89, [12] but does not discuss its specific contribution to the doctrine of the preservation of Scripture. Unfortunately, he does not discuss human responsibility or textual criticism as they relate to preservation.

The vast majority of the theological resources utilized by pastors fall short in discussing this important doctrine.[13] That omission in theological literature is a disturbing reflection on what

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[6] Millard J. Erickson, *Christian Theology* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1985) 199.
[7] Ibid.
[8] Ibid., 203.
[9] Ibid., 211.
[10] Lewis Sperry Chafer, *Systematic Theology* (Dallas: Dallas Theological Seminary, 1947) 1:124–25.
[11] Ibid.
[12] Ibid., 1:124.
[13] The introductory articles in volume 1 of *The Expositor's Bible Commentary*, Frank E. Gaebelein, ed. (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1979), do not deal with the doctrine of preservation. The nearest thing to it is the discussion of textual transmission in the article by F. F. Bruce ("The Transmission and Translation of the Bible" 1:39–60). The following is a brief listing of various theological resources that fail to mention or discuss the doctrine of the preservation of Scripture: *Evangelical Dictionary of Biblical Theology*, Walter A. Elwell, ed. (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1996);

must be taking place in Bible college and seminary classrooms. When a large body of Christian literature ignores an aspect of biblical theology, one can rest assured that it is also getting short shrift academically. If this omission is not corrected, future expositors may be unable to define the doctrine and unaware of their role in the preservation of God's written Word.

The Biblical Definition. A definition of preservation as it relates to the Scriptures is best derived from the Scriptures themselves. The presentation of the biblical witness concerning preservation in Chart 1 reveals: (1) that God preserves His Word forever, (2) that God preserves His Word unchanged, and (3) that God preserves His Word primarily in heaven. Psalm 119:89 is the key biblical reference. God's revelatory Word is fixed firmly in heaven. Regardless of what might happen to His Word on earth, it is securely preserved in His mind. The primary residence of God is heaven, so it is only logical that the psalmist would define the presence of the eternal Word as the divine abode.

Chart 2 presents the flip side of the preservation of Scripture. God is the chief operative in preserving His Word unchanged in heaven. On earth, however, God's people are responsible for preserving and transmitting the Scriptures. A series of repeated prohibitions in Scripture defines the accountability for preservation on earth. It should be obvious to the reader that God does not prohibit something that is impossible for an individual to do. When He prohibits lying, it is because an individual is capable of lying. If no one could tell a lie, God would not need to prohibit lying. That God prohibits the addition to and subtraction from His Word is testimony to the fact that His people can and, at times, do add to His written Word or subtract from it. Whether these passages refer to text or to canon, the bearing on the doctrine of preservation remains the same. The responsibility for preservation in this world rests squarely upon human shoulders.[14]

Chart 1: Biblical Descriptions of Preservation

Reference	Extent	Content	Nature	Location
Ps 119:89	forever	Yahweh's word	settled	in heaven

G. C. Berkouwer, *Holy Scripture*, Jack B. Rogers, trans. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1975); Donald G. Bloesch, *Holy Scripture: Revelation, Inspiration & Interpretation* (Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity, 1994); *The Foundation of Biblical Authority*, James Montgomery Boice, ed. (London: Pickering & Inglis, 1978); F. F. Bruce, *The Canon of the Scriptures* (Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity, 1988); Lewis Sperry Chafer, *Major Bible Themes*, rev. John F. Walvoord (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1974); Wayne Grudem, *Systematic Theology* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1994); Terry L. Miethe, *The Compact Dictionary of Doctrinal Words* (Minneapolis: Bethany House, 1988).

[14] One need not deny the doctrine of preservation in order to respond to those in the Textus Receptus camp. *Contra* Daniel B. Wallace, "Inspiration, Preservation, and New Testament Criticism," *Grace Theological Journal* 12/1 (1992):21-50.

:152	forever	Yahweh's testimonies	founded	----------
Isa 40:8	forever	Yahweh's testimonies	stands	----------
Matt 5:18	till heaven and earth pass away till all be fulfilled	(every) "jot or tittle" of the law	not ever pass	
24:35	----------	Jesus' words	not ever pass	----------
Luke 16:17	----------	(every) "tittle of the law"	away	----------
1 Pet 1:23,	forever	the incorruptible word	(not) fail	----------
25		of God	abides	----------

Matt 24:35 = Mark 13:31 = Luke 21:33

Isa 40:8 = 1 Pet 1:25

Note: Isa 40:8 (1 Pet 1:25) and all gospel references may refer to fulfillment rather than to preservation

MSJ 9:1 (Spring 98) p. 30

Chart 2: Biblical Imperatives Concerning Preservation

Reference	"Do not add!"	"Do not diminish!"

Deut 4:2	X	X
12:32	X	X
Prov 30:6	X	
Jer 26:2		X
Rev 22:18–19	X	X

Biblical Illustrations of the Doctrine of Preservation

Jeremiah 36:1–32 is an exceptionally clear case study in the preservation of Scripture. During the reign of Jehoiakim, God revealed His Word to the prophet Jeremiah and commanded him to write the words in a scroll (vv. 1–2). Then the scribe Baruch inscribed the prophecies as dictated to him by the prophet (v. 4).[15] Next, in accord with Jeremiah's instructions, Baruch read the scroll to worshipers in the Temple (vv. 5–10). One of those present reported the reading to the royal officials (vv. 11–12). The officials in turn ordered Baruch to appear before them and to read the scroll to them (vv. 13–15). Following the reading, the officials took steps to protect Jeremiah and Baruch as well as to inform the king of the scroll's existence and its contents (vv. 16–20).

Upon receiving the report from his officials, Jehoiakim sent Jehudi to retrieve the scroll from the secretary's chamber (v. 21). As Jehudi read the scroll to the king in the presence of his royal officials, Jehoiakim cut away three or four columns of text at a time and threw the pieces into the nearby fire where the flames consumed them (vv. 22–23). An original manuscript (one of the autographa) of God's written revelation thus perished forever from the earth because of the act of one man. In accord with the biblical passages prohibiting any subtraction of God's Word, Jehoiakim obviously placed himself in danger of divine judgment.

God could have allowed that portion of His revealed Word to remain unknown to future generations. He chose, however, to remind Jeremiah of all that had been written so that he could

[15] It is significant that the dictation was from prophet to scribe, not from God to the prophet. Dictation was involved, but not mechanical inspiration.

dictate it a second time to Baruch for recording (vv. 27–32; cf. John 14:26). Those prophecies had been destroyed, but they still survived unchanged in the mind of God in heaven. The second manuscript added many other prophetic utterances to the former collection. That addition was not human, but divine. Charles Feinberg summed up the matter as follows:

Jehoiakim's destruction of the scroll was one of many attempts through the centuries to destroy God's Word. But the Word of the Lord is indestructible. The God who inspires the Word will see to its preservation. It is certain that our present text of the Book of Jeremiah is longer than the original portions that had brief abstracts of Jeremiah's earlier prophecies. The additions doubtless included the doom of the godless king. After the Israelites broke the Ten Commandments, the Lord rewrote them and gave them to Moses (cf. Exod 31:28; 32:15–16; 34:1; also 1 Peter 1:25). Theodore Watts-Dunton wisely said, "When murdered Truth returns she comes to kill" (so Lewis).[16]

The evidence of Scripture is that God might, on occasion, allow a portion of His written Word to be destroyed (Exod 31:18–34:28; Jeremiah 36). At times He might choose not to restore what was lost. According to 2 Kgs 22:8–10 (cf. 2 Chron 34:14–16), God allowed the priests to misplace the entire five books of Moses[17] for at least fifty years. The Lord sovereignly orchestrated the recovery of those books at the right time. The recovered revelation sparked Josiah's revival.

In yet another passage it is evident that at least two words dropped from the text and have yet to be recovered over two thousand years later. The Hebrew grammar and context of 1 Sam 13:1 indicate that some numbers have been lost.[18] Such examples are evidence that the preservation of Scripture on earth is not some sort of perpetual miracle. Even John William Burgon refrained from attributing the preservation of Scripture to such a miracle:

That a perpetual miracle was wrought for their [the Scriptures'] preservation—that copyists were protected against all risk of error, or evil men prevented from adulterating shamefully copies of the Deposit—no one, it is presumed, is so weak as to suppose.[19]

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[16] Charles L. Feinberg, "Jeremiah," *The Expositor's Bible Commentary*, Frank E. Gaebelein, ed. (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1986) 6:609. The reference to Exod 31:28 is an error not caught by the proofreaders of *EBC*. It should be Exod 31:18. The quote from Watts-Dunton is evidently taken from Howell E. Lewis, *The Book of the Prophet Jeremiah* (London: Religious Tract Society, 1924).

[17] For a discussion of the various views concerning the content of the Book of the Law that influenced Josiah's reforms, see Paul R. House, *1, 2 Kings*, vol. 8, *The New American Commentary*, E. Ray Clendenen, ed. (Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 1995) 382-84.

[18] Cf. Ronald F. Youngblood, "1, 2 Samuel," *The Expositor's Bible Commentary*, Frank E. Gaebelein, ed. (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1992) 3:653–54; Gleason Archer, Jr., *A Survey of Old Testament Introduction*, rev. ed. (Chicago: Moody, 1994) 314.

[19] John William Burgon, *The Traditional Text of the Holy Gospels Vindicated and Established*, Edward Miller, ed. (London: George Balland Sons, 1896) 11; cf. Edward F. Hills, "The Magnificent Burgon," *Which Bible?*, 3d rev. ed., David Otis Fuller, comp. (Grand Rapids: Grand Rapids International, 1972) 91.

Rather than acting openly in some miraculous fashion to preserve His written Word, God has placed the responsibility into His people's hands. That responsibility falls primarily upon pastors and teachers whom He commands to preach and teach the Word (Acts 10:42; 16:10; 1 Tim 4:11; 6:2; 2 Tim 2:2; 4:2). The example of the careful transmission of Scripture by the prophets and apostles is a worthy model to be followed by modern expositors (cf. 2 Cor 4:2; Gal 3:16).[20] It may be concluded, therefore, that the Bible expositor must be among those accountable for the preservation of God's written revelation on earth.

The Expositor Must Be Active In The Preservation Of The Biblical Text

The accountability of the expositor in regard to the preservation of Scripture goes beyond merely believing that one is accountable. He must also actively involve himself in the actual preservation of the biblical text. Expositors must involve themselves in at least three activities: (1) examining the biblical text in the original languages, (2) identifying the original text, and (3) expounding the original text.

The Expositor Must Be Active in Examining the Text in the Original Languages

Those who believe in verbal, plenary inspiration ought to be in the forefront of scholarship in the biblical languages (Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek)—if not as students and teachers, then at least as encouraging patrons. Expositors of the Scriptures must approach the text as it has been preserved. They must fully support any alteration they might make in the text. Exegesis is the explication of what the text says, not what one wishes the text might say. Every interpretation must be rooted and grounded in the original languages. Ultimately, reading the text in translation is not a viable substitute.

One who made it his life's work to interpret French literature, but who could only read it in an English translation, would not be taken seriously; yet it is remarkable how many ministers of religion week by week expound a literature that they are unable to read save in translation![21]

Exposition must start with the text. The expositor must read it, interpret it, and expound it within its syntactical, lexical, literary, historical, social/cultural, geographical, and theological contexts.

Just as a sentence is more revealing than a single word, so the examination of a writer's syntax and style is that much more important to a biblical commentator. It is not surprising that fewer books have been written on this subject than on vocabulary, because whereas students of vocabulary can quickly look up lists of words in concordances and indices, in the field of syntax the study is more circuitous. There is no help except in a few selective grammars and monographs, so that the worker really must work his way through all the texts in Greek.[22]

It is reported that an old prospector summed up his life in the following words: "I spent five years looking for gold and twenty years looking for my burro." Striking expository gold has

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[20] For a full discussion of expository preaching, see Richard L. Mayhue, ed., *Rediscovering Expository Preaching* (Dallas: Word, 1992).
[21] H. H. Rowley, "Recent Foreign Theology," *ExpTim* 74/12 (1963):383; cf. Nigel Turner, *Grammatical Insights into the New Testament* (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1965) 2-3.
[22] Ibid.

about the same ratio of labor to results. For every nugget the expositor finds, he can expect to spend hours, days, weeks, or months looking for it. The expository examination of the Scriptures is not for the lazy or the quitter. It is a labor of love requiring commitment and perseverance.

According to the biblical testimony itself, even the individual inflection of its words is significant and authoritative (cf. Gal 3:16). The expositor must, therefore, assume that the author (or Author) made deliberate choices for phrases, words, and inflections in order to best convey the divine intent. The concept of deliberate, intelligent selection of words and inflections is sufficient justification for the expositor to concern himself with the problem of what was originally written. It made a difference to the author (or Author); it should make a difference to us.

Cicero somewhere has written of the *scientia iuris: res enim sunt parvae, prope in singulis litteris atque interpunctionibus verborum occupatae* ["knowledge of law: the matters are indeed small, mainly occupied with individual letters and also the punctuation of words"]. Delete the *prope* and you have a fair description of the matter of textual criticism. Whether Euripides wrote δεῖ ["it is necessary"] or χρή ["it is fitting"] in a given passage is hardly of metaphysical import. But we must assume that he made a choice between them. This is sufficient justification for concerning ourselves with the problem. It made a difference to the poet; it should make a difference to us. This planet, I do not doubt, shall never want for people to despise such problems and those who try to resolve them. Such contempt is founded upon the remarkable premise that one who manifests a concern for minutiae must of necessity be both indifferent to and unequal to profound problems. The Greeks, on the contrary, in their simplicity had contrived a word to express this reverence before even the smallest truth; and that word is φιλαλήεια ["love of truth"]. The sacred writer speaks not idly when he reminds us that ὁ ἐξουθενῶν τὰ ὀλίγα κατά σμικρὸν πεσεῖται ["the one despising the little things shall fall because of the insignificant"].[23]

Many examples could be cited to demonstrate how important it is for the expositor to examine the biblical text in its original languages. In the NT, Matt 1:16 illustrates the significance of the gender of a relative pronoun. The verse is part of the genealogy of Christ. The association of Christ with the lineages of Joseph and Mary is expressed by a relative pronoun ("by whom," NASB). The English is ambiguous because of its lack of gender in such pronouns. Therefore, from the English translation alone the expositor cannot determine if the antecedent is Joseph or Mary. The Greek, however, is very clear. The Greek pronoun is feminine in gender. Mary is the proper antecedent. Christ's lineage is linked directly to Mary rather than to Joseph. The text indicates that Mary was the only human parent of Jesus Christ.[24]

In the OT account of Jacob meeting Esau after many years of separation from him, some English translations have utilized identical phrases in Gen 33:9 and 11 ("I have enough" in KJV and NKJV; "I have plenty" in NASB). In the Hebrew text, however, Esau said, "I have much," but

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[23] Robert Renehan, *Greek Textual Criticism: A Reader* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University, 1969) 134 [English translations added].

[24] William G. Bellshaw and William D. Barrick, *The Language of Our Faith: Exploring New Testament Words* (Denver: Baptist Publications, 1974) 56; Daniel B. Wallace, *Greek Grammar Beyond the Basics: An Exegetical Syntax of the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1996) 336-37.

Jacob said, "I have everything."[25] The narrator of the event recorded that Jacob intentionally chose a term different from the one his brother Esau used to describe the extent of his possessions. It is the expositor's responsibility to draw his audience's attention to that fact and to explain its significance.

Although the carefully worded Hebrew original of Gen 33:9 and 11 can be adequately translated, elements of the Hebrew text in other passages are more difficult to translate. Isa 24:17–18 is just such an example. The NASB reads,

Terror and pit and snare
Confront you, O inhabitant of the earth.
Then it will be that he who flees the report of disaster will fall into the pit,
And he who climbs out of the pit will be caught in the snare.

The Hebrew highlights the three terms at the beginning of verse 17 by alliteration and assonance. "Terror and pit and snare" (פַּחַד וָפַחַת וָפָּח, paḥaḏ wāpaḥaṯ wāpāḥ) are first identified in verse 17 and then employed in special wordplay in verse 18.[26]

The context is one of judgment in the eschatological Day of the LORD (see esp., vv. 18*b*-23). The rhetorical paronomasia involves the forms of the words rather than their meanings. Their sounds as they are pronounced build to a crescendo and culminate in the onomatopoetic force of the third and final term פָּח(pāḥ) that sounds like a trap snapping shut on its victim. Neither of these elements is available to the reader of the translations. The three like-sounding terms produce a cumulative effect that heightens the reader's or listener's interest and personal involvement in what is being said.

Walter Kaiser very appropriately employed the words of a Jewish poet from Poland as a reminder of the importance of reading the OT in its original Hebrew. Hayim Nachman Bialik (1873–1934) said, "Reading the Bible in translation is like kissing your bride through a veil."[27]

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[25] The NKJV indicates in a marginal note that "enough" in Gen 33:11 is literally "all." NIV renders verse 9's phrase as "I already have plenty" and verse 11's phrase as "I have all I need." Victor P. Hamilton, *The Book of Genesis: Chapters 18–50*, The New International Commentary on the Old Testament, R. K. Harrison and Robert L. Hubbard, eds. (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 1995), translates the distinction in the two phrases (340–41), but fails to discuss its significance (345–46).

[26] "Terror" (v. 17) and "disaster" (v. 18) are the same Hebrew word. Cf. J. Alec Motyer, *The Prophecy of Isaiah: An Introduction & Commentary* (Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity, 1993) 204. For discussions of assonance and paronomasia, see the following: John Ellington, "Wit and Humor in Bible Translation," *The Bible Translator* 42/3 (1991):301-13; Nick Lunn, "Paronomastic Constructions in Biblical Hebrew," *Notes on Translation* 10/4 (1997):31-52; P. P. Saydon, "Assonance in Hebrew As a Means of Expressing Emphasis," *Biblica* 36 (1955):36-50; Wilfred G. E. Watson, *Classical Hebrew Poetry: A Guide to Its Techniques*, Journal for the Study of the Old Testament Supplement Series, no. 26 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1995 reprint of 2d ed. of 1986) 212, 224, 237–50.

[27] Walter C. Kaiser, Jr., "The Future Role of the Bible in Seminary Education," *Concordia Theological Quarterly* 60/4 (1996):253. "Haim Nacham Bialik" in Kaiser's article might be

The expositor must be wedded to the biblical text and enjoy it without any unnecessary veil intervening to distort his clear view and enjoyment of its God-breathed beauty.

The Expositor Must Be Active in Identifying the Text's Original Statement

Textual criticism is the technique of restoring the original readings of texts. It has often been criticized heavily because of the excesses of some of its practitioners. Such opposition, however, is not a recent development. The Helvetic Concensus Formula (1675) made the following declaration:

Therefore we can by no means approve the opinion of those who declare that the *text* which the Hebrew Original exhibits was determined by man's will alone, and do not scruple at all to remodel a Hebrew reading which they consider unsuitable, and amend it from the Greek Versions of the LXX and others, the Samaritan Pentateuch, the Chaldee Targums, or even from other sources, yea, sometimes from their own reason alone; and furthermore, they do not acknowledge any other reading to be genuine except that which can be educed by the critical power of the human judgment from the collation of editions with each other and with the various readings of the Hebrew Original itself—which, they maintain, has been corrupted in various ways…. Thus they bring the foundation of our faith and its inviolable authority into perilous hazard.[28]

The integrity and purity of the Hebrew OT and the Greek NT as they are presently preserved are not in any "perilous hazard." Due to the extraordinary care with which the Massoretes transmitted the OT Hebrew text, a minute portion of the text is subject to question.[29] In the NT the expositor only needs to give attention to textual critical matters in about one-half of one percent of the text.[30]

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either a variation in the transliteration of the poet's name or a spelling error. The spelling utilized above was taken from T. Carmi, ed., *The Penguin Book of Hebrew Verse* (Hammondsworth, England: Penguin Books, 1981) 132. Another excellent article dealing with the necessity (and, possibility) of knowing Hebrew for expounding the OT is Stephen J. Andrews, "Some Knowledge of Hebrew Possible to All: Old Testament Exposition and the *Hebraica Veritas*," *Faith & Mission* 13/1 (1995):98-114.

[28] John H. Leith, ed., *Creeds of the Churches* (New York: Doubleday/Anchor Books, 1963) 310-11.

[29] On the subject of the transmission and integrity of the biblical texts of both Testaments, cf. Ellis R. Brotzman, *Old Testament Textual Criticism: A Practical Introduction* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1994) 17-24, 37–62; Bruce, *The Books and the Parchments* 114–24, 176–90; Josh McDowell, *Evidence That Demands a Verdict: Historical Evidences for the Christian Faith* (San Bernardino, Calif.: Campus Crusade for Christ, 1972) 43-68; John Owen, "Of the Integrity and Purity of the Hebrew and Greek Text of the Scripture," *The Works of John Owen*, William H. Goold, ed. (London: Johnstone and Hunter, 1853) 16:345–421; René Pache, *The Inspiration and Authority of Scripture*, Helen I. Needham, trans. (Chicago: Moody, 1969) 186-98.

[30] Norman L. Geisler and William E. Nix, *A General Introduction to the Bible*, rev ed. (Chicago: Moody, 1986) 473-74.

A detailed examination of the theories and practices of the textual criticism of the OT and NT must be left to another time. Bible expositors must look into the biblical text with a determination to know the truth of God's Word. In the translations and commentaries that they consult they will find discussions of textual critical matters. It is necessary that they remember the true nature of the different pieces of evidence.

(1) The ancient versions are human translations, not primary manuscripts. These include the Greek Septuagint and its daughter versions (Aquila, Theodotion, and Symmachus), the Aramaic Targums, the Syriac Peshitta, and the Latin Vulgate.[31]

(2) The Samaritan Pentateuch covers only the first five books of the OT. In addition, it gives evidence of having been modernized, supplemented, and altered in ways that prevent it from being a solid witness to the original text of the Pentateuch.[32]

(3) The manuscripts from Qumran may include popularized Hebrew versions "developed to meet the requirements of a particular audience."[33]

(4) All ancient manuscripts and versions must themselves be subject to careful textual criticism. They were all humanly produced and may contain scribal errors of both the unintentional and intentional kind.

(5) In the terms of legal *a priori* evidence, the Massoretic Text of the OT must remain as the accepted text unless there is evidence of equal authenticity and antiquity to the contrary.[34]

At regular intervals in the church's calendar the Lord's Table or communion is observed by individual congregations of believers. At the time of partaking of the bread, the pastor traditionally recites the words of 1 Corinthians 11:24 in something akin to the KJV: "Take, eat: this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me."[35] Is the text correctly preserved and transmitted by the traditional observance of this ordinance? The expositor with a good foundational knowledge of the contents of Scripture should question the text utilized in the

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[31] A thoughtful consideration of the value of ancient translations in textual criticism is presented by Emanuel Tov, *Textual Criticism of the Hebrew Bible* 121–33. Basically, differences created by the translators do not qualify as legitimate textual variants.

[32] Cf. Bruce K. Waltke, "The Samaritan Pentateuch and the Text of the Old Testament," *New Perspectives on the Old Testament*, J. Barton Payne, ed. (Waco Tex.: Word, 1970) 212-39.

[33] Joseph R. Rosenbloom, *The Dead Sea Isaiah Scroll: A Literary Analysis* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1970) xiii. Rosenbloom's study of the St. Mark's Isaiah Scroll (1QIs^{a}) reaches the conclusion that its variations from the Massoretic Text are often due to liberties taken by the Qumran scribes that modern textual critics would be reluctant to take.

[34] Robert Dick Wilson, *A Scientific Investigation of the Old Testament* (Chicago: Moody, 1959), has the classic presentation of the application of the principles of *a priori* evidence in the study of the OT.

[35] The NKJV follows the same text with a marginal note observing that the Nestle-Aland Greek NT (26th ed.) and the United Bible Societies' Greek NT (3d ed.) omit "broken." The NASB has "This is My body, which is for you" with a marginal note mentioning that "Some ancient mss. read *is broken*." NIV's translation is the same as NASB for this phrase.

ordinance. John 19:31–36 records that the soldiers came to break Jesus' legs, but when they saw that He was already dead they did not do so. According to the text, "these things were done that the Scripture should be fulfilled, *'Not one of His bones shall be broken'"* (v. 36, NKJV).

If John 19:36 is authentic and accurate, how can "broken" be correct in 1 Corinthians 11:24? Further investigation in the gospel accounts reveals that Christ Himself did not use "broken" either. Matthew reported that the words of Christ were "Take, eat, this is My body" (26:26, NKJV). Luke's Gospel says, "This is My body which is given for you" (22:19, NKJV). Therefore, if the self-witness of Scripture means anything, it must be obvious that "broken" in some of the Greek manuscripts of 1 Cor 11:24 is an erroneous reading. It may be classified as an addition to the original text by human hands. Those who made such an addition are subject to God's judgment because they did not rightly preserve His written Word (cf. Deut 4:2; 12:32; Prov 30:6; Rev 22:18–19). The pastor or expositor who continues to propagate the corrupted Word in the public observance of the Lord's Table will be held accountable for actively perverting the Scriptures rather than preserving them.

The Expositor Must Be Active in Expounding the Original Text

It is not sufficient merely to examine the original biblical text and to identify what the reading of the text should be. It is the responsibility of the expositor to expound the text faithfully.

Consider the example of Isa 24:17–18 that was discussed above. The expositor who has the elements of the Hebrew text clearly in mind can bring out the imminent demise of those who live under the judgment of God. Those who are subject to God's judgment might flee from the fearful consequences, but they will only fall into a pit. If they manage to pull themselves up out of that pit and resume their flight, they will step into a snare or trap—*WHAM!* (The sense of the last part of this statement could be further emphasized by clapping the hands together with force.) There is no excuse—there is no escape. Be sure your sins will find you out. When they do, it will be too late.

An exposition of 1 Cor 11:23–26 prior to observing the Lord's Table gives an expositor the opportunity to define and illustrate the authority by which the church observes the ordinance. The church's authority for the ordinance is derived from the written revelation of God, not from human opinion or directives. Today, as in the past history of the church, it is the responsibility of believers to observe the ordinance in the form in which it was received from Christ Himself (1 Cor 11:23). No individual or assembly has the authority to alter what the Lord Himself has delivered to the church. That holds true for the scribes copying the Greek manuscripts, the editors compiling Greek NT editions, the translators, and the expositors.

Conclusion

The biblical doctrine of the preservation of Scripture consists of two parts: (1) God preserves His Word unchanged forever in heaven and (2) He gave His people the privilege and responsibility of preserving it on earth. The second part of the doctrine of the preservation of Scripture applies to the Bible expositor. The doctrine is not just an article of faith; it is something to be practiced. The expositor must participate in the preservation of God's written Word. He will be held accountable by a holy and omniscient God for any adulteration of the biblical text. He must

diligently examine the original language of the biblical text. To the best of his ability, he must identify its original wording. He should tolerate no emendation or alteration without undeniable evidence of equal authenticity and antiquity. Then he must expound the text with integrity, accuracy, and enthusiasm.[1]

[1] William D. Barrick, "Ancient Manuscripts and Biblical Exposition," *Master's Seminary Journal* 9, no. 1 (1998): 23–38.

Rodger Young, "Ussher Explained and Corrected," *Bible and Spade* 31/2 (2018): 47-58.
https://biblearchaeology.org/research/topics/biblical-chronologies/4508-ussher-explained-and-corrected

Ussher Explained and Corrected

By Rodger C. Young

In 1650 and 1654 James Ussher, archbishop of Armagh in Ireland, published the two parts of his history of the world, extending from Creation until the time of the Roman emperor Vespasian. Both parts were in Latin. An English translation was made available in 1658, two years after Ussher's death. Bishop William Lloyd put Ussher's chronology, with some of his own modifications, in the margins of a 1701 edition of the Bible. For many years the King James Version was printed with these dates. This led many to believe that Ussher's dates were "the" Bible chronology, a position which is defended by some writers to this day.

We shall follow Ussher on the road of time to see how he handled the Bible's chronological data, starting with Creation, which he placed in 4004 BC, down to the Hebrew kingdom period. At that point we shall leave the good archbishop and his traveling companions as they journey farther on to the time of the end of the Jewish commonwealth at the hand of the Romans.

From Adam to the Exodus

Rapid progress can be made on the road from Adam to the Flood. Using the genealogical list in Genesis 5 as it appears in the Hebrew (Masoretic) text as his guide, Ussher calculated the date of the Flood as AM (*Anno Mundi*: year of the world) 1656, 2349 BC. After the Flood, the ages of the patriarchs at the birth of their son (not necessarily the firstborn[1]) give AM 1878, 2126 BC for the birth of Terah, father of Abram (Abraham). A rough place in the road then appears. Genesis 11:26 says that after 70 years, Terah became the father of Abram, Nahor, and Haran. Did Terah's wife have triplets, or did he have three wives who gave birth to three individuals in one year? How does this fit with Stephen's statement in Acts 7:4 that Abram, at age 75 (Gn 12:4) left Haran after the death of his father (at age 205), making Terah 130 years old when Abram was born? Ussher wisely decided that Abram, although named first, was not the first of the three sons to be born, thereby placing Abram's birth in Terah's 130th year, AM 2008.

After this there are good highway markers down to the entry of Jacob into Egypt. Isaac was born when Abram was 100, Jacob when Isaac was 60, and Jacob's descent into Egypt was at age 130 (Gn 21:5, 25:26, 47:9), in AM 2298. At this marker there is a fork in the road: how long were Jacob's descendants in Egypt? Exodus 12:40–41 says that the sojourning of the descendants of Israel who dwelt in Egypt was 430 years. At first reading, this would suggest 430 years from the time Jacob's family entered Egypt. In Galatians 3:16–17, however, Paul says that the giving of the Law, which happened in the year of the Exodus, was 430 years after the promise to Abraham, or possibly after the confirmation of the promise. If the starting point of the 430 years is the original promise to Abraham, this reduces the time Israel spent in Egypt to 215 years (the Short Sojourn). If the 430 years measure from the giving of the Law back to when the promise was previously confirmed (προκεκυρωμένην, Gal 3:17) by its repetition to Jacob (Gn 46:2–4, 1 Chr 16:16, 17; Ps 105:9, 10), then the Exodus must be placed 430 years after Jacob's descent (the Long Sojourn).

The controversy of the Long Sojourn vs. the Short Sojourn continues to our day, and it is not our purpose to resolve it, but to follow Ussher on the fork he took. He decided on the Short Sojourn and the Exodus in AM 2513. Ussher gives the BC date for the Exodus as 1491 BC, but it must be remembered that his BC dates are measured upward from the chronology of the divided kingdom, while his AM dates are measured downward from Creation. If Ussher's dates for the kingdom period need adjustment, then his BC dates for the Exodus and all prior periods will also need adjustment.

The Divided Kingdom

After the Exodus and the subsequent 40 years of wilderness wandering, there is a text that allows an overflight of the hilly country and chronology of the Judges period. In 1 Kings 6:1, the beginning of construction of the Jerusalem temple is dated in the 480th year of the Exodus era, which was also the fourth year of King Solomon. For Israel, the departure from Egypt started a new era in their history. Events were dated from this event in Exodus 16:2, 19:1, Numbers 1:1, 9:1, 10:11, 33:38, Deuteronomy 1:3, and finally 1 Kings 6:1. When 1 Kings 6:1 relates that it was the 480th year of the "going-out" (Exodus), it means that 479 years passed from the departure from Egypt to the beginning of construction on Solomon's Temple. This date, spring of 967 BC as derived from the modern biblical-based chronology, is in quite exact agreement with the date that archival records of Tyre gave for that island city sending material to Solomon for building the Temple, as detailed in my article "Solomon and the Kings of Tyre" (*Bible and Spade*, Summer 2017).

967 BC, however, is 45 years later than Ussher's date for the start of Temple construction. Explaining the difference requires entering the forest of chronological data for the divided kingdom. Here it is regrettable that, instead of

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When Did Solomon Die?
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The work of Edwin Thiele has become the starting place for all subsequent studies of OT chronology that take seriously the text of the Hebrew Scriptures as preserved in the Masoretic tradition.[1] It is to be lamented that Thiele's original working hypothesis, that the text as received was without factual error when referring to these "mysterious numbers," was abandoned when he was unable to reconcile certain data related to the reign of Hezekiah. It was therefore left to later scholars to point out that the problems that led Thiele to reject the authenticity of the biblical synchronisms for the time of Hezekiah could be overcome by positing a coregency of Hezekiah and Ahaz, under which Hezekiah's sole reign began in 716 or 715 BC.[2]

Any study which is faithful to the text of Kings and Chronicles must be solidly based on an understanding of certain fundamental questions that must be addressed. Thiele presented these questions as five variables.[3] They are: (1) Were the king's years counted according to the accession system, in which the year he came to the throne was his "accession" or zero year, and was thus not counted in the total years for his reign, or was the non-accession system in use, whereby that first partial year was counted in the sum? (2) In which month was the year considered to begin? (3) When reference is made to the years of a king in the rival kingdom, does such a reference reckon the time of reign according to the system of the rival kingdom, or according to the system used in the writer's homeland? (4) Is a coregency involved? (5) Did the same method of chronological procedure continue without change during the period in question?

Thiele resolved these issues to his satisfaction as follows. (1) For the first few kings, Judah applied accession reckoning and Israel non-accession reckoning for their own kings. (2) Judah always began its regnal years in Tishri (the fall), while Israel always began its regnal years in Nisan (the spring). (3) Regarding references from one kingdom to another, Thiele wrote that "both Judah and Israel used their own systems for the years of the neighboring kings."[4]

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[1] Edwin R. Thiele, *The Mysterious Numbers of the Hebrew Kings* (2d ed.; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1965). There was an earlier edition published in 1951, and a third edition published by Zondervan (Grand Rapids) in 1983. References to Thiele in the present article cite page numbers in the second edition.

[2] See, for example, K. A. Kitchen and T. C. Mitchell in *NBD* (ed. J. D. Douglas; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1962) 217; Harold Stigers, "The Interphased Chronology of Jotham, Ahaz, Hezekiah, and Hoshea," *BETS* (1966) 81-90; R. K. Harrison, *Introduction to the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1969) 734; and Leslie McFall, "Did Thiele Overlook Hezekiah's Coregency?" *BSac* (1989) 393-404. McFall's article, by a careful study of the Hebrew texts related to the reigns of Ahaz and Hezekiah, showed that all synchronisms for these two monarchs are consistent with the ending of their coregency fourteen years before the invasion of Sennacherib in 701 BC.

[3] *Mysterious Numbers* 17–22.

[4] Ibid. 25.

Regarding item (4), a careful study of the dates given requires coregencies for certain kings. For item (5), the scriptural data requires and even signals that a change in reckoning methods occurred in the middle of the 9th century BC.

Thiele established the absolute chronology of the kings of Israel based on synchronisms with Assyria. He then combined this data with regnal years and synchronisms for the southern kingdom to produce the chronology of Judah, at the same time using the Judean synchronisms and reign lengths to refine the dates for Israel. The results of this process are shown in Table 1 for the first ten kings of Israel. The middle column shows the beginning year of the king according to the Nisan calendar employed in Israel. The third column shows how the dates are more exactly defined from the Judean synchronisms; in this column, a figure like 931t/930n means a time span beginning on the first of Tishri, 931, but ending before the first of Nisan, 930.

There are two problems related to Thiele's solution for issue number 3 (whether references to the rival kingdom used that kingdom's counting practices). The first is that, in Thiele's chronology, the two kingdoms only partially used the system of their own kingdom when referring to the other kingdom, because they used the starting month of the year that the other kingdom used while rejecting the method of counting years. The other problem is that although Thiele demonstrated that his assumption works, he did not show that no other assumption can give equally satisfactory answers.

The purpose of the present paper is to show that there is an alternate solution to issue 3 which makes sense of the biblical data just as well as, or better than, the approach used by Thiele. Before dealing with the details of this solution, however, there are some statements that can be made about what is affected and what is not affected by this alternate chronology.

(1) None of the accession times or reign lengths for the northern kingdom after Jeroboam will be changed in any way. These are firmly established by the Assyrian synchronisms, and to change them by as much as six months in either direction would wreak havoc in the whole chronological structure.

(2) The only dates that will be affected are the starting date for Jeroboam I and dates for the southern kingdom for the period from Solomon through Jehoshaphat. The chronology after Jehoshaphat will not be changed, because the alternate chronology and Thiele's chronology give the same dates for Jehoshaphat's successor Jehoram, and from that time onward both kingdoms used the same system, whether accession or non-accession, so that issue 3 is no longer relevant.

The thesis to be discussed is now the following: that Solomon died in the first half of the year that began in Nisan, 931 BC, rather than in the second

Table 1. *Starting years for first ten kings of Israel (after Thiele)*

King	*Starting Year (Nisan years)*	*Refined Starting date*
Jeroboam 1 (Thiele)	931	931t/930n

(J 1 advocated in this article)		931n/931t
Nadab	910	910t/909n
Baasha	909	909t/908n
Elah	886	886t/885n
Zimri	885	885t/884n
Tibni	885	885t/884n
Omri (rival to Tibni)	885	885t/884n
Ahab	874	874t/873n
Ahaziah	853	853n/853t
Joram	852	852n/852t

half of the year as assumed by Thiele. A corollary of this thesis is the requirement that Judah used the complete method of the other kingdom (not just the yearly starting time) when referring to reign lengths of the kings of Israel, in the time span from Rehoboam through Jehoshaphat.

Just when did Solomon die? Thiele established that the divided monarchy had to begin in the time period from Nisan 1, 931 BC to the day before Nisan 1, 930 BC. We may write this in a

shorthand way as 931n or, more fully, 931n/930n, with the understanding that the time span ends at the end of the month before Nisan of the second number given. Without explaining why, Thiele assumed that Solomon died in the latter half of year 931n,[5] which we may represent as 931t/930n, the "t" representing the month of Tishri. But there is nothing in the Scripture that would rule out his dying in the first half of 931n. For a natural death (that is, one not occurring in warfare), dying in the first six months of the year was just as likely as dying in the latter six months.

If Solomon died in the first six months of 931n, then according to the Judean method of starting the year in the fall (Tishri), his last year official year was 932t/931t, not the 931t/930t assumed by Thiele. This simple change will move back one year the regnal years of all Judean kings from Solomon through Jehoshaphat, except that Jehoshaphat's last year remains the same. It will be shown that this change is consistent with all the biblical data for the period, as long as we assume (contra Thiele) that Judean scribes of this period used Israel's non-accession method when referring to the kings of Israel.

Thus the present thesis is not really a contradiction of Thiele's monumental work in establishing the principles of Hebrew chronology. Instead, it may be regarded as the investigation of a possibility that Thiele, by an oversight, failed to consider. But that brings up another question: If such a thoroughgoing scholar as Thiele overlooked a viable alternative scheme, could we be doing the same? Could there be other ways to combine the basic data that also produce chronologies consistent with the biblical and extra-biblical data?

The answer to this question is "No." There are only two sets of assumptions for the time period in question that satisfy the data. These are either the assumptions made by Thiele, or the assumptions that Solomon died in 931n/931t and Judean scribes used non-accession reckoning for Israelite kings.

I. Ruling Out All Combinations Except Two

In order to demonstrate that these two sets of assumptions, and only these two sets, satisfy the data, we can make use of Decision Tables. For those unfamiliar with Decision Tables, beyond what might be seen on the U.S. federal tax form, the next section could be quite tedious. If the reader does not care to see the demonstration that rules out the other alternatives he can skip forward to Table 3, which shows the comparative years of Judean kings based on the two sets of assumptions. In the table, "Rule 2" refers to the assumption that Solomon died in the first half of the year 931n and that Judean scribes used non-accession years for synchronisms with Israel. "Rule 3" refers to the assumption that Solomon died in the second half of the year and that Judean scribes used accession years for synchronisms with Israel (Thiele's assumption).

Decision tables are a method of considering all the parameters that affect an outcome or series of outcomes, and of making sure that no combination of conditions is overlooked. The top left section of a decision table lists all the conditions that affect the results of interest. The values that these conditions can assume are put in the top right section. A column number (also called rule number) is put at the top of the columns for easy reference.

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[5] Ibid. 54.

The bottom left section of a decision table lists all the results that are affected by the conditions above them. The bottom right section has, in each column (rule), the value that the result will have if all the conditions in the top part of the column are satisfied.

When considering the chronology of Judean kings from Solomon through Asa, we look at the synchronisms given, from a Judean standpoint, in 1 Kgs 15, verses 1, 2, and 9. The conditions that affect the results are the following: (1) Did Judean chroniclers use Tishri or Nisan years when counting the regnal year of an Israelite monarch? (2) Did Solomon die in the first or second half of the year 931n? (3) Do the references use accession or non-accession years for Israelite reign lengths?

These three conditions allow for eight possible combinations among them. Possibilities 1 through 4 have been chosen to reflect the hypothesis that Judah recognized Nisan years for Israelite monarchs. The table for possibilities 5 through 8 is not shown here, but if the reader constructs it he will see that no combination of hypotheses will work when associated with the hypothesis that Judah applied Tishri months to Israel for the synchronisms of 1 Kings 9.

Table 2. *Table which assumes the Judean chronicler used Nisan years in counting regnal years of Israelite kings in 1 Kgs 15:1, 2, 9.*

	1	**2**	**3**	**4**
Did Solomon die before or after Tishri 1, 931?	Before	Before	After	After
Accession or non-accession years used for synchronisms of 1 Kgs 15:1, 9?	acc.	non-acc.	acc.	non-acc.
A. Death of Solomon and accession of Rehoboam and Jeroboam	932t (=931n/931t)	932t (=931n/931t)	931t (=931t/930n)	931t (=931t/930n)
B. 17th year of Rehoboam-	915t	915t	914t	914t

accession of Abijah (1 Kgs 14:21)				
C. 3 years later (death of Abijah and accession of Asa, 1 Kgs 15:2, 9)	912t	912t	911t	911t
D. Accession (or 1st) year of Jeroboam	931n	931n	931n	931n
E. “18th” year of Jeroboam (1 Kgs 15:1)	913n	914n	913n	914n
F. “20th” year of Jeroboam (1 Kgs 15:9)	911n	912n	911n	912n
G. Overlap between B and E: death of Rehoboam & accession of Abijah	none	914n/914t	913n/913t	914t/913n
H. Overlap between C and F: death of Abijah and accession of Asa	911n/911t	912t/911n	911t/910n	none

In Table 2, Rule 3 corresponds to the conditions assumed by Thiele's chronology. To see this, start at the top of column (Rule) 3 and go down; Solomon is here assumed to die on or after Tishri 1, 931n, and the Judean scribe is assumed to use accession reckoning for the synchronisms of chap. 15. The results that follow, below the thick bar, are then the dates given by these assumptions of Thiele. The results in column (Rule) 2 are those that follow from assuming that Solomon died before Tishri 1, 931, and that the Judean scribes used non-accession years for Israelite monarchs.

Any hypothesis must be rejected which does not show an overlap between the months possible for the accession of Abijah (row B) and the "eighteenth" year of Jeroboam (row E), and another overlap between the accession of Asa (row C) and the "twentieth" year of Jeroboam (row F). Hypotheses 1 and 4 do not fulfill these conditions. The only viable hypotheses remaining are 2 and 3. (The corresponding table that assumes that the Judean chronicler used his own Tishri years in synchronisms with Israel would show that no columns have overlap in both Rows G and H.)

Before going further, we should consider the reverse side of this, that is, synchronisms from Israel to Judah. In this early period, did the Israelite scribes use accession years or non-accession years when referring to a Judean king? Thiele assumed they would use their own non-accession method, but there is no *a priori* reason for this assumption, except that it worked for Thiele.

Let us examine the possibilities. The first to be considered is the assumption that Rule 3 holds, and that Israel is using accession years when referring to a Judean king. Then consider the reference in 1 Kgs 15:25, which says that Nadab of Israel began his reign in the second year of Asa of Judah. Asa began in 911t (Rule 3), and his second year would be 909t/908t under the assumed accession reckoning. Nadab's accession year in terms of Nisan years is well established as 910n/909n, which is too early for the 909t/908t timeframe under these assumptions. We therefore conclude that the combination of Rule 3 with accession years used for the synchronisms from Israel to Judah is not possible. With Rule 3, Israel must use non-accession reckoning for Judean kings in this time period, as Thiele assumed.

Can Rule 2 be used with non-accession references for the synchronisms from Israel to Judah? To test this, consider the case of Ahaziah of Israel, who, according to the Israelite record, began in the seventeenth of Jehoshaphat (1 Kgs 22:51). Under Rule 2, the end of Asa's forty-one year reign and the beginning of the sole reign of Jehoshaphat occurred in 912t-41 = 871t. Jehoshaphat's seventeenth year, for an Israelite scribe using his own non-accession reckoning, was thus 871t-16 = 855t. But there is no overlap of this date with the known beginning for Ahaziah in 853n. For accession reckoning, the seventeenth year is 854t and there is an overlap, namely 853n/853t. We conclude that for Rule 2, Israel must use accession reckoning for Judean kings.[6]

From Table 2, we thus have only two alternatives. They are (1) Rule 2 with accession references by the Israelite scribe, and (2) Rule 3 with non-accession references by the Israelite scribe. A

[6] To exhaust all possibilities, the supposition that Israel used Nisan years when referring to the kings of Judah can be examined. It would be seen that this is not possible for Rule 2 in the case of Ahaziah, or for Rule 3 in the case of Nadab.

little thought will show that these have exactly the same results when it comes to examining a synchronism from Israel to Judah; Rule 3 has the Judean kings start one year later, but the non-accession reference removes that year from the subtraction, so the end result is the same as for Rule 2. This means we will not be able to make a choice between Rules 2 and 3 based on simple synchronisms from Israel. This is also the reason that, if Rule 2 reflects the true state of affairs, Thiele would not have discovered any errors in his analysis, except the one that will be mentioned later regarding Jehoshaphat.

Although the use of Rule 3 with accession references gives the same starting dates for kings of Israel after Jeroboam as does Rule 2 with non-accession references, the rules have this fundamental difference: under Rule 2, the first Judean kings began their reigns one year earlier than in Thiele's chronology (Rule 3).

In summary: Rule 2 necessarily contains the further proviso that, in the early years of the divided monarchy, both kingdoms used the correct system from the other kingdom in synchronisms. Rule 3 necessarily contains the proviso that the two kingdoms were not entirely consistent in imposing their methods on data from the other kingdom; they used the other kingdom's starting month, but not its means of counting years.

II. Refining the Dates of the First Kings of Judah

Let us look at what Table 2 tells us about the first few kings of Judah and Israel, comparing the results of assuming Rule 2 with the results of assuming Rule 3.

1. *Rehoboam*.

a. *Rehoboam, Rule 2*. This assumes that Rehoboam began in 931n/931t. His first official year was thus 932t. According to 1 Kgs 14:21, he ruled seventeen years, which is an accession (= acc.) figure, as are all reign-lengths for these first Judean kings. Therefore his ending year must be 932t-17 = 915t. He died in the eighteenth year of Jeroboam, which is treated as a non-accession number under the conditions of Rule 2, so the synchronism to Jeroboam's Nisan years is 931n-17 (ace.) = 914n. Overlap of 915t/914t and 914n/913n is 914n/914t, the time of death of Rehoboam and beginning of reign of Abijah if Rule 2 is true.

b. *Rehoboam, Rule 3*. Starting year is 931t and seventeen years later is 914t. Jeroboam's eighteenth year, under conditions of Rule 3, must be calculated on an accession basis, so we have 931n-18 = 913n. Overlap of 914t and 913n is 913n/913t, the date of Rehoboam's death and Abijah's start according to Rule 3.

2. *Abijah*.

a. *Abijah, Rule 2*. Start is 914n/914t (see above). 1 Kgs 15:2 gives him three (acc.) years, so subtracting this from his first official year, 915t, gives 912t for his death. This is correlated with the twentieth year of Jeroboam

(1 Kgs 15:9), which must be 931n-19 (acc.) = 912n under the conditions of Rule 2. Overlap with 912t is 912t/911n, the date of Abijah's death and Asa's start under Rule 2.

b. *Abijah, Rule 3*. He began in 913n/913t, so three years later is 914t-3 = 911t. Under conditions of Rule 3, the twentieth (acc.) year of Jeroboam is 931n-20 = 911n. The overlap of 911t and 911n is 911t/910n for Abijah's death and Asa's start.

3. *Asa*.

a. *Asa, Rule 2*. He began in 912t/911n and reigned forty-one years (1 Kgs 15:10), so his date of death is 912t-41 = 871t. This is called the fourth of Ahab (1 Kgs 22:41), which must be 874n-3 (acc.) = 871n under the assumptions of Rule 2. Overlap is 871t/870n for death of Asa and beginning of (sole) reign of Jehoshaphat.

b. *Asa, Rule 3*. Forty-one years after 911t is 870t. Overlap with fourth (ace.) year of Ahab, 870n, is 870t/869n for death of Asa.

Comparative results for Rules 2 and 3 are shown in Table 3. Dates for Jehoshaphat, Jehoram, and Ahaziah in this table are calculated in the text following the table.

III. Coregencies of Jehoshaphat

We can now use dates from the northern kingdom to shed light on the coregencies related to the reign of Jehoshaphat. We shall follow Thiele's method of going forward in time to the reign of Ahaziah of Judah and working backward from there.

Ahaziah of Judah and Joram of Israel were killed by Jehu at about the same time (2 Kings 9). Jehu's accession year, 841n, is thus the last year of Ahaziah and the twelfth (eleventh, acc.) and last of Joram. There are two texts in 2 Kings which give the time that Ahaziah reigned: 2 Kgs 8:25, 26 says he began in the twelfth year of Joram and reigned one year, whereas 2 Kgs 9:29 says he began to reign in the eleventh of Joram and no total of years is given. As Thiele pointed out, the first reference is by non-accession reckoning and the second by accession reckoning; both of them imply that he may have reigned for a few months but his reign did not cross a Tishri 1 boundary that would have assigned to him a year by accession counting or two years by non-accession counting. These two verses, which would seem to be a contradiction, are actually a red flag to the chronologist, as if to say "Warning! A change is taking place and previous assumptions may no longer be valid."

It is also important when considering the reign of Ahaziah to assume that his death took place before Tishri 1, 841. This is rendered very likely because of the record of Shalmaneser III, who in his eighteenth year (841n) received tribute from Jehu of Israel. If Amaziah began after Tishri 1, 841, then all of his reign and at least part of Jehu's reign would have to occur before Jehu paid tribute, which would put the synchronism between Jehu and Shalmaneser in the late fall or winter, contrary to the usual campaign season of the Assyrians. Thiele thus assumed that Ahaziah reigned for a few months between Nisan 1, 841, and Tishri 1, 841.

Table 3. *Chronology of Judean kings, Rehoboam through Ahaziah, showing differences between Rules 2 and 3*

King	*Rule*	*Begin co-regency*	*Begin sole reign*	*End sole reign*
Rehoboam	Rule 2		931n/931t	914n/914t
	Rule 3		931t/930n	913n/913t
Abijah	Rule 2		914n/914t	912t/911n
	Rule 3		913n/913t	911t/910n
Asa	Rule 2		912t/911n	871t/870n
	Rule 3		911t/910n	870t/869n
Jehoshaphat	Rule 2	873t/872t	871t/870n	848n/848t
	Rule 3	873t/872t	870t/869n	848n/848t
Jehoram	Rule 2	854t/853t	848n/848t	841n/841t
	Rule 3	854t/853t	848n/848t	841n/841t
Ahaziah	Rule 2		841n/841t	841n/841t

Rule 3	841n/841t	841n/841t

Ahaziah was preceded by his father Jehoram, who is given eight years in 2 Kgs 8:17, The entire passage in chap. 8 uses non-accession years for a Judean monarch, as is evident from a consideration that if Jehoram reigned eight years and ended in 841n/841t, his accession year would be 850t for accession counting. This does not overlap the fifth year of Joram of Israel (2 Kgs 8:16), which would be 848n under the non-accession counting assumed for Rule 2 or 847n for the accession counting assumed under Rule 3. Therefore Judah was using the non-accession method at this point, and we are safe in assuming that it was in effect for both kingdoms. Jehoram's first year of sole reign was thus 849t (842t + 7), and this overlapped the fifth (fourth, acc.) of Joram, 848n, in 848n/848t. This is independent of whether Rule 2 or Rule 3 is used for earlier dates. 848n/848t thus marks the death of Jehoram's father Jehoshaphat.

A coregency between Jehoram and Jehoshaphat is implied by 2 Kgs 1:17, where it is said that Joram of Israel began in the second year of Jehoram of Judah. This same year is called the eighteenth year of Jehoshaphat in 2 Kgs 3:1; the eighteenth year was 853t whether measured from the death of his father Asa in an accession sense (Rule 2) or non-accession sense (Rule 3). 853t overlaps Joram's known beginning year, 852n, in 852n/852t. The "second of Jehoram" (2 Kgs 1:17) is thus 852n/852t. If this number is to be taken in an accession sense, then the coregency of Jehoshaphat and Jehoram began in 855t; if a non-accession sense is assumed, it was 854t.

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Thiele assumed that the years of a coregency are measured in a non-accession sense.[7] A reason for this might be that the reigning king was likely to install his son as coregent at the beginning of a new regnal year. Since the son shared rule for the full year, rather than the normal partial year of an accession year, that year may have been imputed to him as his first full year. We shall follow this rule also; it does not affect the beginning or ending dates of the monarch's sole reign. The beginning of the Jehoshaphat/Jehoram coregency is then 854t. For Jehoshaphat's "twenty-five" year (non-acc.) reign, we measure from his 848n/848t ending date as given above back to the beginning of his coregency with Asa in 849t + 24 (acc.) = 873t. This date is the same under both Rule 2 and Rule 3, but under Rule 2, in which Asa began in 912t, this would be Asa's thirty-ninth year, whereas under Rule 3 it would be his thirty-eighth year-a point that will be returned to shortly.

We have now filled in all the numbers for Table 3, showing comparative dates for the kings of Judah from Rehoboam through Amaziah, and demonstrating how the assumptions of Rules 2 and 3 affect the chronology of the period. Whether Rule 2 or Rule 3 is chosen does not affect any dates from the time of Jehoram and later.

IV. Deciding Between Rules 2 and 3

[7] *Mysterious Numbers* 159.

Table 3 shows the differences given by following Rules 2 or 3. How are we to decide between them? One way would be if a synchronism were found with an Assyrian king, such as were found for the kings of Israel. There are currently no similar exact synchronisms for these early kings of Judah, although it is possible that such might come to light in the future.[8]

There are, however, two considerations that can help in determining which rule is the more likely. The first consideration is a consequence of the dates we have already established. The second consideration examines an extra-biblical reference that offers an interesting and entirely independent piece of evidence. The two considerations are:

(1) The beginning of the coregency of Jehoshaphat, 873t under both Rule 2 and Rule 3, argues in favor of Rule 2. Thiele cited 2 Chr 16:12 as giving a very good reason for establishing Jehoshaphat as coregent in Asa's thirty-ninth year; that was the year that Asa "became diseased in his feet. His disease was severe ..." (NASB).[9] Although Thiele gave this as a reason for the coregency, under his chronology (Rule 3) the year in which the coregency began, 873t, is the thirty-eighth year of Asa, not the thirty-ninth; the coregency began before the reason for it. Under Rule 2, the coregency also begins in 873t, but that year is indeed the thirty-ninth of Asa and the reason for the coregency and its beginning date are synchronized.[10]

(2) Rule 2 positions Solomon's first year as 972t, or 971t if his forty-year reign is to be taken in a non-accession sense, as for other coregencies. His fourth year, in which the construction of the Temple began (1 Kgs 6:1) was 968t, whether accession years (start in 972t and subtract 4) or non-accession years (start in 971t and subtract 3) are used for Solomon. Construction began in the second month of the year (months are always counted from Nisan), that is, the spring of 967

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[8] If Egyptian chronology for this period were well established independently of the scriptural tradition, and we knew from Egyptian records that the invasion of "Shishak" occurred in, say, the spring of 925 BC, then by referring to 1 Kgs 14:25 we could conclude that Rehoboam's accession year was 931t, establishing Rule 3 as correct. However, any textbook which says that Pharaoh Sheshonq of Egypt invaded Israel in 925 BC got this information from assuming that Shishak = Sheshonq, and the year is taken from a conjectural biblical chronology, not from any independent Egyptian chronology. Since Sheshonq is dated from the scriptural chronology, his dates cannot be used to establish biblical dates.

[9] *Mysterious Numbers* 70.

[10] Apparently Thiele later realized that the disparity he had glossed over in his second edition needed fixing. In the third edition, he moved the reign of Jehoshaphat, and with it those of Jehoram and Ahaziah, down one year, so that he was able to claim that the coregency of Jehoshaphat began in the same year that Asa's disease started. By doing so, however, he ran into an immovable rock, namely the first year of Athaliah, which is dated by its synchronism with the first year of Jehu to 842t. Compare the chart on page 101 of the third edition, which shows Ahaziah beginning in 841t, with the statement on page 104 which places the beginning of Athaliah's reign in 842t. Since Athaliah seized the throne after the death of her husband Ahaziah, these dates cannot agree. Thiele must have been aware that things were not right, because the tables of starting years at the beginning of the third edition are consistent with those of the second edition for these monarchs. The proper solution to the problem is to move the starting year of Jehoshaphat's sole reign back one year, and with it the reigns of all the kings of Judah who preceded him.

BC for Rule 2. Under Rule 3, this would be one year later, the spring of 966 BC. The next section will show why 967 BC for the start of the Temple is in exact agreement with an extra-biblical chronological reference that so far has not entered into most discussions of the chronology of the kings of Israel.

V. Jubilees, the Exodus, and the Conquest

The chronologist, muddling his or her way through the seemingly discordant figures of Kings and Chronicles, must often wonder if there was not a better way to keep track of dates-even given the obvious fact that "BC" and "AD" had not yet been invented. Many have probably noted that there indeed was a much better way to measure time given in the Bible itself-in the Pentateuch. That was the institution of sabbath years and Jubilees.

According to the system of sabbath years, every seventh year was to be marked by leaving the ground fallow for that year. The seven-year cycle was short enough that there was no possibility of any confusion as to when the next sabbath year was to begin, and the events that were supposed to occur had such an impact on the life of the nation that the effect of these years could not be overlooked, even if observed in a half-hearted way. In addition to this seven-year cycle, there was a longer cycle called the Jubilee, described in Leviticus 25 and 27. For the Jubilee, there was even a more marked effect on the daily lives of the people; they were to leave the ground fallow for two years, and property that had been sold was to return to the ownership of the family that sold it. The value for which property could be sold was to be measured, at any time, according to the years remaining to the Jubilee.

Whatever the effect this must have had on the people, for the chronologist it is a system marvelously suited to keeping track of the years over a long period of time. Alas, that the people of Israel through their recorded history seemed to disobey the commands of the Lord to observe the sabbath years and the Jubilee cycle! How convenient it would be to have an occasional reference like this: "In year x of king Jehoshaphat, the Jubilee was observed," then about fifty years later "In year y of Joash the land was left fallow for two years because of the Jubilee." With these kind of checkpoints along the way, Hebrew chronology could have been put on a sound basis centuries, if not millennia, before the present time.

As it is, there seems to be only one reference to the observance of a sabbath year in the scriptural record. That is in Isa 37:30 and its parallel passage in 2 Kings, where the prophet says during the invasion of Sennacherib, "You shall eat this year what grows of itself, in the second year what springs from the same, and in the third year sow, reap, plant vineyards, and eat their fruit" (NASB). The crop of the current year apparently had been ruined by the besieging Assyrians; in spite of that the people were to observe a sabbath for the land in the fall of the next year.[11]

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[11] The actual year involved is problematic. A cursory reading of the relevant passages in 2 Kings, Isaiah, and Chronicles would give the impression that there was only one invasion of Sennacherib that is described, in which Hezekiah first bought off the Assyrian monarch with a heavy tribute of gold and silver (2 Kgs 18:14–16), but then the Assyrian king immediately besieged Jerusalem anyway (2 Kgs 18:17–19:36). The tribute of gold and silver is supported by the annals of Sennacherib for the year 701 BC. Many biblical scholars, however, believe that the siege of Jerusalem came a few years later than the tribute. They would date it some time between

There is evidence, nevertheless, that the people of Israel, or at least their priests, were aware of when the Jubilee should be observed, however lax the nation may have been in obeying its provisions. The Talmud records the occasion of two Jubilees: one in the eighteenth year of Josiah (*b*. Meg. 14b) and one which was announced on the Day of Atonement specified in Ezek 40:1 (*b*. *Arak*. 12a). The Jubilee associated with Ezek 40:1 is specifically called the seventeenth and last by the Talmud, which makes the one in the days of Josiah the sixteenth. The seventeenth Jubilee could not be observed because the people were in captivity.[12]

An important reason for believing that the Talmud account is authentic is the following: it is exactly forty-nine years from the eighteenth of Josiah to the Day of Atonement fourteen years after the city was conquered (Ezek 40:1), on which the seventeenth Jubilee was announced. Josiah began in 641t, so his eighteenth year was 623t. The Jubilee would have been announced on the Day of Atonement in Tishri, 623.[13] Jerusalem fell on the ninth day of the fourth month, 587 BC. By Tishri reckoning this was the year 588t.[14] Fourteen years later was 574t. In Tishri of that year the Jubilee was announced, according to the Talmud and its reference to Ezek 40:1. The difference between 623t and 574t is forty-nine years, which establishes that the fiftieth year, or Year of Jubilee, was counted as the first year of the next Jubilee cycle, thus keeping the seven-year cycle in harmony with the Jubilees, a point that is debated interminably in the Talmud. Further support for forty-nine years rather than fifty is found in the practice of the Samaritans, who kept the Jubilee as a forty-nine year cycle.[15] The apocalyptic *Book of Jubilees*, usually dated to the Second Century BC, also used a Jubilee cycle of forty-nine years.

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the beginning year of Pharaoh Tirhaka (2 Kgs 19:9), who began to reign in 690 or 689 BC, but before the death of Sennacherib in 681 BC. See an excellent summary of the arguments for a second Assyrian in vasion in the discussion by Harvey Finley, *Beacon Bible Commentary* (10 vols.; Kansas City: Beacon Hill Press, 1965) 2.478–81.

[12] The references to the Jubilees in the Talmud were first brought to the attention of the author by David Rice of San Diego in an internet forum.

[13] The 623 date for the announcement of the sixteenth Jubilee explains a reference to the "thirtieth year" in Ezek 1:1 that has always puzzled commentators. According to some, it referred to the thirtieth year of the prophet's life, but this is not the usual way to express such an idea. Various rabbis had speculated that it was the thirtieth year of a Jubilee cycle, while Jerome and the *Targum of Jonathan* interpreted it as the thirtieth year from the reforms of Josiah that re-instituted the Passover (Harrison, *Introduction* 837). By establishing this date as the fourth month of 594t (the fifth of the exile of Jehoiachin as measured from the start of exile in 598t, Ezek 1:1, 2), it is shown that both these last two opinions were correct; it was the thirtieth year measured from either the announcement of the Jubilee in 623t or from the reforms of Josiah in that same year.

[14] That Ezekiel used Tishri years is shown by comparing Ezek 33:21 with 2 Kgs 25:2, 3. That the city fell in 587 BC, not a year later as is often assumed, can be seen by comparing the accession figure of the eighteenth year of Nebuchadnezzar in Jeremiah 52:29 with the non-accession nineteenth year in 2 Kgs 25:8. Both of these calculate as 587n, so the fourth month was in the summer of 587 BC.

[15] A. Neubauer, *Chronique Samairitaine* (1873) 3, 8 ff., cited in *Encyclopedia Judaica* (Jerusalem: Keter, 1972) 14.579.

It is extremely unlikely that these pieces of information could have been contrived to establish someone's ideas of chronology. We thus have no reason to reject these important observations from the Talmud. They can be taken as a historical reference independent of the scriptural record, the same as if some ancient document from the Near East mentioned a date that could be tied independently to a biblical date. As such, the Talmud reference is of great historical value in corroborating the chronology that was worked out by Thiele and later scholars.

Once these dates for the sixteenth and seventeenth Jubilees are established, they can be used to determine when the Jubilee cycles began. Since the sixteenth cycle ended with a Jubilee that was announced in Tishri, 623, the first Jubilee must have been announced 15 × 49 = 735 years earlier, in 1358 BC. If Tishri of 1358 BC was in the forty-ninth year of the first cycle, then the first year, forty-eight years earlier, was 1406 BC.

According to Lev 25:2, 8–10, counting of the sabbath and Jubilee cycles was to start when Israel entered the Promised Land. Since the first year of the Jubilee cycle was observed in 1406, the beginning of the Conquest occurred in Nisan of that year (Josh 4:19). The exodus, forty years earlier, occurred in 1446 BC.

In 1 Kgs 6:1, it is said that the foundation of the Temple was laid in the fourth year of Solomon, in the second month of the year (the month after Nisan). As was shown above, this was the spring of 967 BC for Rule 2, or the spring of 966 BC for Rule 3. The Kings passage also says that it was the 480th year of the departure from Egypt, a phrase that has long been recognized (often in an attempt to discredit it) as establishing the biblical date of the exodus. Since this is an important phrase, it bears careful exegesis.

Literally, the verse says, "In the 480th year 'of the going-out' (לְאֵת) of the descendants of Israel from the land of Egypt ..." The phrase לְאֵת refers, in the language we have become familiar with, to non-accession reckoning. It is similar, in English, to speaking of our first year of college, meaning the time before we had been there one full year. To show that it is to be taken in a non-accession sense, consider first Exod 16:1, which says that the people came to the wilderness of Sin "on the fifteenth day of the second month 'of their going-out' (לְאֵתָם) from the land of Egypt." Most commentators would agree that only one month had passed, not two. More conclusive is the repetition of the same phrase in Num 33:38, regarding the death of Aaron. Aaron died "in the fortieth year `of the going-out' (לְאֵת) of the descendants of Israel from the land of Egypt, on the first day of the fifth month." The forty years in the wilderness had not yet expired, as is evident from Josh 5:6. If the date of the exodus were to be calculated from the date that Aaron died, in the "fortieth year of the going-out," we would have to subtract thirty-nine years, not forty, to get the correct date for the departure from Egypt.[16]

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[16] It is unfortunate that most English translations use the word "after" in 1 Kgs 6:1, which suggests that a full 480 years had elapsed since the exodus. The Hebrew preposition used, לְ, does not bear the meaning "after," but is better translated "of," which yields the literal translation "In the 480th year of the departure ..." This is consistent with phrases such as, "In the twenty-fifth year of our exile" (Ezek 40:1), but it is somewhat ambiguous in English. A translation which resolves the ambiguity and brings out the proper sense of the verse is, "In the 480th year, as measured from the departure of the people of Israel from the land of Egypt,..."

The proper way to derive the date of the exodus from 1 Kgs 6:1 is therefore to add 479 years, not 480, to the year in which the foundation of the Temple was laid. For Rule 2, this gives 967 + 479 = 1446 BC, with the beginning of the Conquest in Nisan, 1406. Rule 3, starting from 966 BC, gives 1445 BC and 1405 BC for these two dates. The Jubilee cycles affirm the earlier of these two sets of dates: 1446 for the exodus, 1406 for the Conquest, and the beginning of the Temple in 967 BC. They also help us to answer the question, "When did Solomon die?" by saying that these figures support a date between Nisan 1 and Tishri 1 of 931, rather than between Tishri 1 of 931 and Nisan 1 of 930, as assumed by Thiele.

The correspondence between the date for the exodus, as derived from the Jubilee cycles, and the date as derived from the text of 1 Kgs 6:1, is so remarkable that it can hardly be assigned to coincidence. If the date for laying the foundation of the Temple is not exactly right, and if the 480 years of 1 Kgs 6:1 is also not exactly right, then it is extremely unlikely that these two figures would produce precisely the same date for the beginning of the exodus as calculated from the Jubilee cycles. Conversely, if the years remembered in the Talmud for the last two observances of the Jubilee were not exactly right, it would be extremely unlikely that these years would somehow mysteriously match the dates for the exodus as derived from 1 and 2 Kings. Neither can the correspondence of these two witnesses to the dates of the exodus and Conquest be assigned to the conniving of a Talmudic redactor who was trying to doctor the data so that, hundreds of years later when the principles of OT chronology were finally understood, everything would come out right. Even the forty-nine year difference between the sixteenth and seventeenth Jubilees bears testimony to the authenticity of the Talmudic tradition, because the lack of understanding of how to interpret the dates of the kings weighs against this being contrived.

The 'coincidence,' then, is due to the fact that both traditions are authentic. In the case of the Scriptures, this means that 1 Kgs 6:1 is not the corrupt and mistaken guess of a later tradition which had forgotten the true time spans involved.[17]

A date for the exodus in the mid-fifteenth century BC has been much maligned because of favorite theories that identified various pharaohs of a later date with the pharaohs of the oppression and exodus. There has always been difficulty with such theories, and some scholars, finding little evidence to substantiate the biblical exodus in the annals of whichever thirteenth-century pharaoh is currently favored, end up casting doubts that the exodus ever occurred. It is hoped that the present study has strengthened the case for the accuracy of the chronological numbers as preserved in the Masoretic text, and at the same time has helped to discredit theories which put the exodus anywhere but in the middle of the fifteenth century BC.[2]

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[17] Jubilees were possibly the means, from a practical human standpoint, why the number of years was remembered exactly from the time of the exodus to the days of Solomon. This "natural explanation" of the reason for the Bible's accuracy in this matter is not meant to detract from the wisdom of God in instituting the Jubilees in the first place, thereby providing one method for preserving accurate chronological data for his inerrant word.

[2] Rodger C. Young, "When Did Solomon Die?," *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 46, no. 4 (2003): 588–603.

2206 Master's Seminary article by Petrovich Amenhotep 2

Amenhotep II And The Historicity
Of The Exodus-Pharaoh
Douglas Petrovich[a]

A belief in biblical inerrancy necessitates an accompanying belief in the Bible's historical accuracy. Biblical history can be harmonized with Egyptian history, claims to the contrary notwithstanding. Israel's exodus from Egypt in 1446 B.C. fits with the chronology of the 18th Dynasty pharaohs in Egyptian records. The tenth biblical plague against Egypt fits with what is known about the death of Amenhotep II's firstborn son. If this Amenhotep was the exodus pharaoh, biblical data about the perishing of his army in the Red Sea should not be understood as an account of his death. His second Asiatic campaign very possibly came as an effort to recoup his reputation as a great warrior and recover Egypt's slave-base after the loss of two million Israelite slaves through the exodus. The record of 3,600 Apiru on the booty list for his second Asiatic campaign appears to be a small number of the escaped Hebrews whom he recaptured and brought back to Egypt. If Hatshepsut is identified with the biblical Moses' adoptive mother, attempts to erase her memory from Egyptian records may have come from efforts of Amenhotep II because of her part in rescuing Moses when he was a baby and becoming his adoptive mother. Such scenarios show the plausibility of harmonizing the biblical account of the exodus with secular history and supporting the position of biblical inerrancy.

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I. Introduction

Historical accuracy has been and is a major issue in attacks on the inerrancy of the Bible. Ladd's words reveal his yielding to such an attack: "[T]he authority of the Word of God is not dependent upon infallible certainty in all matters of history and criticism."[1] A recent revisionistic version of Israel's history has questioned the Bible's account of that history.[2] A prime example is the words of Finkelstein, who speaks of "the rise of the true national state in Judah [in the eighth century BC]. . . . That national state produced a historical saga so powerful that it led biblical historians and archaeologists alike to recreate its mythical past—from stones and potsherds."[3] Such attacks on biblical inerrancy necessitate a reasoned defense of the Bible's historical accuracy. Lindsell writes, "When inerrancy is lost, it is palpably easy to drift into a mood in which the historicity of Scripture along with inerrancy is lost."[4]

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[1] George Ladd, *The New Testament and Criticism* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1967) 16.
[2] William G. Dever, *What Did the Biblical Writers Know and When Did They Know It?* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2001) 4.
[3] Israel Finkelstein, "City-States to States," in *Symbiosis, Symbolism, and the Power of the Past*, eds. William G. Dever and Seymour Gitin (Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbrauns, 2003) 81.
[4] Harold Lindsell, *The Battle for the Bible* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1976) 206.

The following discussion examines the trustworthiness of biblical history by using the Hebrew exodus from Egypt (hereafter, simply "exodus") as a test case. More specifically, an examination of the exodus-pharaoh's life will show whether biblical history can be harmonized and synchronized with Egyptian history and whether biblical chronology is clear and trustworthy in light of a literal interpretation of relevant passages.

The need for examining the former issue is that many Egyptologists are denying the veracity of the exodus, attempting to show that the exodus never occurred. Renowned Egyptologist Donald Redford concludes, "The almost insurmountable difficulties in interpreting the exodus-narrative as history have led some to dub it 'mythology rather than. .. a detailed reporting of the historical facts' and therefore impossible to locate geographically."[5] Redford then allies himself with this view when he states, "[D]espite the lateness and unreliability of the story in exodus, no one can deny that the tradition of Israel's coming out of Egypt was one of long standing."[6]

The need for discussing the latter premise is that many biblical scholars who affirm the historicity of the exodus now date it to the thirteenth century B.C., questioning concrete numbers in the Bible that taken literally would place the exodus in the fifteenth century B.C. The eminent Egyptologist and biblical scholar Kenneth Kitchen is foremost among them: "Thus, if all factors are given their due weight, a 13th-century exodus remains—at present—the least objectionable dating, on a combination of *all* the data (biblical and otherwise) when those data are rightly evaluated and understood in their context."[7] Though Kitchen is a noted scholar in OT history and chronology, the accuracy of his conclusion is disputed.

Wood rejects the 13th-century-exodus theory by a reevaluation of the archaeological evidence pertinent to key Palestinian cities.[8] Young also opposes this trend:

A date for the exodus in the mid-fifteenth century BC has been much maligned because of favorite theories that identified various pharaohs of a later date with the pharaohs of the oppression and exodus.. .. It is hoped that the present study has strengthened the case for the accuracy of the chronological numbers as preserved in the Masoretic text, and at the same time has helped to discredit theories which put the exodus anywhere but in the middle of the Fifteenth Century BC.[9]

Young established a fifteenth-century date for the exodus through chronological evidence, but this article seeks to accomplish it through historical evidence, evidence from the reign of

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[5] Donald B. Redford, *Egypt, Canaan, and Israel in Ancient Times* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University, 1992) 408-9.
[6] Ibid., 412.
[7] Kenneth A. Kitchen, *On the Reliability of the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003) 310.
[8] Bryant G. Wood, "The Rise and Fall of the 13th-Century Exodus-Conquest Theory," *JETS* 48/3 (Sep 2005):476.
[9] Rodger C. Young, "When Did Solomon Die?," *JETS* 46/4 (Dec 2003):603.

Pharaoh Amenhotep II (*ca*. 1455-1418 B.C.).[10] That reign coincides with the one of the exodus-pharaoh according to conventional views of biblical and Egyptian chronology.

Answers to the following questions will show whether Amenhotep II is a viable candidate for the exodus-pharaoh and whether biblical history synchronizes with Egyptian history. Could the eldest son of Amenhotep II have died during the tenth plague as the exodus-pharaoh's son did? Did Amenhotep II die in the Red Sea as the exodus-pharaoh allegedly did ?[11] Can any of Amenhotep II's military campaigns be related to the exodus events? Can the loss of over two million Hebrew slaves be accounted for in the records of Amenhotep II's reign? Is there evidence to confirm that Amenhotep II interacted with the Hebrews after they left Egypt? If Amenhotep II is the exodus-pharaoh, could the obliteration of Hatshepsut's image from many Egyptian monuments and inscriptions be a backlash from the exodus?

II. Two Background Matters

Biblical Chronology: Dating the Exodus

The central text for establishing the exact date of the exodus, 1 Kgs 6:1, connects it to later Israelite history by noting that Solomon began constructing the Temple in the 480th year after the exodus, signifying an elapsed time of 479 years.[12] All but the minimalists agree that the 479 years begin with May of 967 or 966 B.C., depending on whether one accepts Young's or Thiele's version of Solomon's regnal dates.[13] Thus the 479 years began in either 1446 or 1445 B.C., either of which can be substantiated by the biblical text and agree with the conclusions of this article.

Case for dating the exodus in 1446 B.C. A compelling argument for choosing 1446 is that the Jubilee cycles agree exactly with that date, yet are completely independent of the 479 years of 1 Kgs 6:1. The Jubilee dates are precise only if the priests began counting years when they entered the land in 1406 B.C. (cf. Lev 25:2–10). The Talmud (*'Arakin* 12b) lists seventeen cycles from Israel's entry until the last Jubilee in 574 B.C., fourteen years after Jerusalem's destruction, a

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[10] Both here and throughout the present work, any dating that follows the formula, "*ca*. xxxx-yyyy B.C.," signifies the regnal years of a given monarch, unless otherwise noted. The reason for settling on these dates will be discussed subsequently.

[11] It is probably more accurate to refer to the Red Sea as the "Sea of Reeds," but the traditional designation will be used here. For an excellent study on this topic, see Hoffmeier's chap. 9, "The Problem of the Re(e)d Sea" (James K. Hoffmeier, *Israel in Egypt: The Evidence for the Authenticity of the Exodus Tradition* [New York: Oxford University, 1996] 199).

[12] Young, "When Did Solomon Die?," 602. A textual variant has arisen in 1 Kgs 6:1, with the original text reading either "480th year" (MT and Vg) or "440th year" (LXX). Though the antiquity of the LXX renders its text important for determining the originality of any variant in the Hebrew Bible, the MT possesses greater authority than any ancient translation, including the LXX (cf. Ernst Würthwein, *Text of the Old Testament*, 2d ed., trans. Erroll Rhodes [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995] 116; Edwin R. Thiele, *The Mysterious Numbers of the Hebrew Kings* [reprint, Grand Rapids: Kregel, 1994] 90-94). The "480th year" is taken to be original.

[13] Young, "When Did Solomon Die?" 601–2; Thiele, *Mysterious Numbers*, 80. Kitchen also prefers 967 B.C. (Kitchen, *Reliability of the OT* 203).

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statement also found in chap. 11 of *The Seder 'Olam*, which predates the Talmud.[14] Consequently, 1446 is preferred over 1445.[15]

Case for dating the exodus to 1267 B.C. Some prefer dating the exodus late, in 1267 B.C., interpreting "480th" figuratively. Actually, "Dating the period of the oppression and exodus to the fifteenth century B.C. has largely been replaced in favor of a thirteenth-century date."[16] One reason for this change is an alleged superior correspondence with the historical and archaeological record, since (1) the earliest extra-biblical attestation to Israel's presence in Canaan is the Merneptah Stele of *ca*. 1219 B.C., and (2) no evidence of the Israelites in Canaan from *ca*. 1400-1200 B.C. exists. However, late-exodus proponents should remember the "invisibility of the Israelites in the archaeology of Canaan between ca. 1200 and 1000" B.C., so the extension of their invisibility by two more centuries should create no additional problem.[17] Moreover, Millard notes by analogy that the Amorites are absent from the archaeology of Babylonia, as only the texts attest to their presence, yet no scholar doubts their impact on Mesopotamia's history in the early second millennium B.C.[18]

A second reason for this change is that Raamses, the store-city that the Israelites built (Exod 1:11), is usually identified with Pi-Ramesses, which flourished from *ca*. 1270-1100 B.C. and was

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[14] Young, "When Did Solomon Die?" 599–603. Advocates of a thirteenth-century-B.C. exodus have yet to explain the remarkable coincidence of the Jubilee cycles, which align perfectly with the date of 1446 B.C. for the exodus.

[15] Moreover, an exact month and day for the exodus can be deduced, as God both established for Israel a lunar calendar that began with the month of Nisan (originally "Abib," per Exod 13:4) and precisely predicted the day of the exodus. The new moon that began Nisan of 1446 B.C. reportedly occurred at 19:48 UT (Universal Time) on 8 April (Fred Espenak, "Phases of the Moon: -1499 to -1400," http://sunearth.gsfc.nasa.gov/eclipse/phase/phases-1499.html, accessed on 02/20/06), assuming there were no significant variations in the earth's rotation, apart from the roughly 25 seconds per century that NASA allows for the tidal retardation of the earth's rotational velocity. However, factoring in variations caused by differences in points of observation and by the "long day" of Josh 10:13 and the reversed shadow of 2 Kgs 20:10, one can estimate that the first day of Nisan in Egypt fell on Friday, 10 April, 1446 B.C. From here, the biblical text can extrapolate the exodus date. The Lord said that on the tenth day of the month (19 April), each Jewish family was to slaughter an unblemished lamb and eat the Passover Feast (Exod 12:3). On the fifteenth day of the month (before sunset on 25 April), the morning after the Death Angel came at about midnight and struck down all of the firstborn of Egypt (Exod 12:12, 29), the Israelites began their exodus (Exod 12:33, 34, 39; Num 33:3). Since they counted their days from dusk to dusk, the fifteenth day of the month included both the Friday night in which the Death Angel passed over them and Saturday's daytime hours, during which they departed. Therefore, the exodus may be dated with relative confidence to 25 April 1446 B.C.

[16] Hoffmeier, *Israel in Egypt* 124.

[17] Alan Millard, "Amorites and Israelites: Invisible Invaders—Modern Expectation and Ancient Reality," in *The Future of Biblical Archaeology: Reassessing Methodologies and Assumptions*, eds. James K. Hoffmeier and Alan Millard (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2004) 152-53.

[18] Ibid., 152.

comparable to the largest cities of the Ancient Near East (hereafter, "ANE"), but was built only during the reign of Ramses II (*ca*. 1290-1223 B.C.).[19] Whether or not Exod 1:11 is prophetic, that Pi-Ramesses is biblical Raamses, is not guaranteed. Scolnic warns, "The truth is that there are very few sites indeed that yield the kind of evidence required to make the site identifications that we, especially we who are openly interested in religion, yearn to make."[20] Yet presumptuous external arguments have prompted many to advance the date of the exodus forward by two centuries, and have taken 1 Kgs 6:1 as symbolical.

Scholars have proposed two explanations to explain "the 480th" year allegorically, one based on calculating a generation as being twenty years[21] and another based on equal and non-equal components.[22] One weakness with any allegorical interpretation is that in 1 Kgs 6:1, Moses used an ordinal number, not a cardinal, making a figurative use even more inexplicable. Another weakness is that the exodus-pharaoh *followed* an exceedingly lengthy reign, not *boasted* of one, as does Ramses II. Moses fled from pharaoh, who sought to execute him for killing an Egyptian (Exod 2:15), departing from Egypt when he "was approaching the age of forty" (Acts 7:23). Only "after forty years had passed" did the angel speak to him at the burning bush (Acts 7:30), which immediately follows the statement that "in *the course of* those many days, the king of Egypt died" (Exod 2:23). Thus the pharaoh who preceded the exodus-pharaoh must have ruled beyond forty years, a criterion not met by the modest reign of Seti I (*ca*. 1305-1290 B.C.), Ramses II's predecessor.[23]

Additionally, if "480th" merely represents a collection of equally or non-equally divisible components, what is to prevent the subjective periodization of other numbers within Scripture? In Exodus 12:40–41, Moses notes that "at the end of 430 years—to the very day—all the hosts of the Lord departed from the land of Egypt." Does 430 also represent a compilation of time periods? If so, are they divided into 10-year spans, since the number is indivisible by 20? Is the inclusion of the qualifier, "to the very day," simply to be dismissed as a later scribal gloss? Moreover, who can allegorize the number enshrouded in mystery correctly? Even opponents of

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[19] Hoffmeier, *Israel in Egypt* 119, 125; Wood, "The Rise and Fall" 478; Kitchen, *Reliability of the OT* 255.

[20] Benjamin Edidin Scolnic, "A New Working Hypothesis for the Identification of Migdol," in *Future of Biblical Archaeology* 91.

[21] Hoffmeier, *Israel in Egypt* 125.

[22] Kitchen, *Reliability of the OT* 308–9. The nine, 40-year periods include, (1) Egypt to Sinai to Jordan (Num 11:33); (2) Othniel's rule (Judg 3:11); (3–4) Eighty years of peace after Ehud (Judg 3:30); (5) Peace after Deborah (Judg 5:31); (6) Gideon (Judg 8:28); (7) Eli (1 Sam 4:18); (8) Samson's judgeship and Samuel's floruit (Judg 15:20; 1 Sam 7:2); and (9) David's reign (1 Kgs 2:11). The five aggregate periods include, (1) Forty-eight years for Abimelek, Tola, and Jair; (2) Thirty-one years for Jephthah, Ibzan, Elon, and Abdon; (3) Thirty-two years for Saul's reign, (4) four years for Solomon's reign; and (5) five theoretical years for the rule of Joshua and the elders of his era.

[23] In contrast, Thutmose III, the father and predecessor of Amenhotep II who ruled just under fifty-four years, is the *only* other pharaoh of the Eighteenth or Nineteenth Dynasty to rule over forty years. This factor, combined with all of the other evidence, causes one writer to declare, "Thutmose III must be the ruler whose death is recorded in Exodus 2:23" (John Rea, "The Time of the Oppression and Exodus," *Grace Journal* 2/1 [Winter 1961]:11).

biblical inerrancy recognize the folly of such allegorization, one calling it the devising of "ingenious solutions. The most common trick has been to reduce time spans to generations: thus the 480 figure must really represent twelve generations."

The preference must be for understanding 1 Kgs 6:1 literally. Cassuto studied ascending and descending Hebrew numbers.[24] As Wood notes from this study, a number written in ascending order—as with "eightieth and four-hundredth" in 1 Kgs 6:1—is always "intended to be a technically precise figure."[25] Besides, no allegorical use of "480th" adequately replaces its natural use. Since the advocates of a late exodus are more driven by arguments from silence that the Israelites could not have inhabited Canaan before the thirteenth century B.C. than by textual evidence, this number should be taken literally, reinforcing 1446 B.C. as the year of the exodus.

Egyptian Chronology: Dating the Pharaonic Reigns

Before determining whether Amenhotep II is a viable candidate for the exodus-pharaoh, one must synchronize the date of the exodus with Egyptian history. Though inspiration does not extend to extra-biblical literature or ancient inscriptions, some extant writings are trustworthy. Several factors are relevant.

First, the Ebers Papyrus, an ancient Egyptian manuscript that dates the heliacal rising of Sothis in Year 9, Month 3, Season 3, Day 9 (*ca*. 15 May) of Amenhotep I's reign, records this astronomical event that assigns its composition to an identifiable time in the Eighteenth Dynasty.[26] Since astronomers can pinpoint this event by charting the positions of stars in antiquity, the papyrus can be dated to *ca*. 1541 B.C., making the initial regnal year *ca*. 1550 B.C.. This widely accepted dating is based on the ancient capital of Memphis as the point of observation, despite the Theban provenance of the papyrus. A Theban point of observation, which is accepted by other Egyptologists, dates the papyrus to *ca*. 1523 B.C.[27] Though the

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[24] Umberto Cassuto, *The Documentary Hypothesis and the Composition of the Pentateuch* (Jerusalem: Magnes, 1961) 52.

[25] Wood, "The Rise and Fall" 482.

[26] The Eighteenth Dynasty of Egypt (*ca*. 1560-1307 B.C.) saw the reunification of Egypt after an era of foreign rule under the Hyksos and initiated a radically new era. The northward thrusts of Theban dynasts continued until Thutmose I crossed the Euphrates River in *ca*. 1524 B.C.. Egypt also expanded into Sudan, building many temples at Gebel Barkal, about 1,280 mi south of Memphis. The state accrued vast riches through foreign expeditions that changed Egyptian society. The nation no longer functioned in isolation, but Egypt interacted with Mitanni, the Hittites, Assyria, Babylonia, and a host of principalities in Syria and Palestine (William W. Hallo and William Kelly Simpson, *The Ancient Near East: A History*, 2d ed. [Fort Worth, Tex.: Harcourt Brace College Publishers, 1998] 253).

[27] William A. Ward, "The Present Status of Egyptian Chronology," *BASOR* 288 (Nov 1992):58-59. Not all scholars are convinced that astronomical evidence provides "benchmark dates" for the reigns of given pharaohs (ibid., 53, 54). Uncertainty about dates, however, does not characterize all regnal dating, but rather only that of selected rulers. Therefore, if direct evidence of an absolute date that is fixed to a time in the reign of a pharaoh is connected to a series of predecessors or successors whose regnal lengths are certain, benchmark dates can be assigned to their reigns.

Egyptians never stated where they observed the Sothic rising, Olympiodorus noted in A.D. 6 that it was celebrated at Alexandria, after being observed at Memphis.[28] Therefore, Memphis is the probable correct point of observation for the rising.

Second, even without astronomical dating, the chronology of Egypt in the mid-1400s B.C. remains sure. Ward notes that "New Kingdom chronology can be fairly well established on the basis of the monuments and synchronisms, without recourse to the astronomical material."[29] As for the Eighteenth Dynasty, he adds that the 25-year gap separating current theories on its starting date narrows to a scant three or four years by the middle of the dynasty, meaning that most mainstream Egyptologists consider the dating of Egypt's exodus-era history to be fixed and reliable.[30]

Last, regnal dates of Eighteenth-Dynasty pharaohs from the Ebers Papyrus to the exodus are fixed with relative certainty. With firm regnal dates for Amenhotep I, the reigns of the subsequent Eighteenth-Dynasty pharaohs down to Amenhotep II are as follows: Thutmose I (*ca*. 1529-1516 B.C.), Thutmose II (*ca*. 1516-1506 B.C.), Queen Hatshepsut (*ca*. 1504-1484 B.C.), Thutmose III (*ca*. 1506-1452 B.C.), and Amenhotep II (*ca*. 1455-1418 B.C.).[31] With these reigns chronologically ordered, a positive evaluation of Amenhotep II's candidacy for the exodus-pharaoh is possible.

III. The Tenth Plague and the Firstborn Son of Amenhotep II

God told Moses that he would harden pharaoh's heart and that pharaoh would refuse to free the Israelites (Exod 4:21). God then instructed Moses to tell pharaoh, "Thus says the Lord, 'Israel is my son, my firstborn. And I said to you, "Let my son go, that he may serve me." But you have refused to let him go. Behold, I will kill your son, your firstborn'" (Exod 4:22b–23). After the ninth plague, God repeated this prediction: "[A]ll the firstborn in the land of Egypt will die, from the firstborn of the pharaoh who sits on his throne" (Exod 11:5). The challenge is to identify the eldest son of Amenhotep II. Several candidates are possible.

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[28] Ibid., 59.
[29] Ibid., 56. Egypt's New Kingdom (*ca*. 1560-1069 B.C.) consists of Dynasties 18–20.
[30] Ibid.
[31] Egyptologists disagree over the year of Thutmose III's accession, with three views predominant: *ca*. 1504 B.C., *ca*. 1490 B.C., and *ca*. 1479 B.C. (Redford, *Egypt, Canaan, and Israel* 104). The year 1504 is preferred because of its exclusive agreement with the Ebers Papyrus when assuming a Memphite point of observation for the rising of Sothis. Shea agrees (William Shea, "Amenhotep II as Pharaoh," *Bible and Spade* 16/2 [2003]:43). The date used here dates back two years from the standard number, in order to harmonize with the second Palestinian campaign of Amenhotep II to be discussed later. This alteration is justifiable either by the uncertain regnal length of Thutmose II, whose reign lasted no less than four years or more than twelve years (Amélie Kuhrt, *The Ancient Near East ca. 3000-330 B.C*., vol. 1 [London: Routledge, 1995] 1:191), or by the existence of a variable of ±6 years after calculating the date for the rising of Sothis (W. S. LaSor, "Egypt," in *ISBE*, vol. 2 [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1982] 40).

Was it Thutmose IV? For the exodus-pharaoh, the worst part of God's prediction of judgment was that his own firstborn son would die. If Amenhotep II was the exodus-pharaoh, his firstborn son had to die before ruling, which the historical record should confirm. The son who succeeded Amenhotep II was Thutmose IV (*ca*. 1418-1408 B.C.), whose Dream Stele—which is located between the paws of the Great Sphinx—reveals that he was not the original heir to the throne.[32] Moreover, inscriptional and papyritious evidence confirms that Thutmose IV was not the eldest son of Amenhotep II.

Was it Prince Amenhotep? The papyrus British Museum 10056 (hereinafter BM 10056) speaks of "Prince Amenhotep." The only title used of him, apart from "king's son," is "*sm*-priest."[33] To which Amenhotep is the scribe referring? Although the year is completely lost from the regnal date on this manuscript, the surviving month (4) and day (1) mark precisely the date of Amenhotep II's accession, implying that Prince Amenhotep was his son.[34] This prince almost

[32] Peter Der Manuelian, *Studies in the Reign of Amenophis II* (Hildesheim: Gerstenberg, 1987) 40.
[33] Donald B. Redford, "The Coregency of Tuthmosis III and Amenophis II," *JEA* 51 (Dec 1965):111.
[34] Ibid., 110.

certainly resided in or near Memphis,[35] due to his office being connected to the high priesthood of Ptah.[36]

The late Eighteenth Dynasty attests to numerous high priests of Ptah. Their order and tenures in no way prohibit counting the Prince Amenhotep of BM 10056 among them. Actually, a significant gap occurs in the *sm*-priest list between the end of Thutmose III's reign and the beginning of Thutmose IV's reign. This gap, which encompasses the reign of Amenhotep II, can partially be filled with the service of Prince Amenhotep. Redford confidently identifies this prince with another royal personage: the king's son whom Selim Hassan dubbed "Prince B," who erected the wall-carved stele in the Sphinx temple of Amenhotep II.[37] Three factors support the identification of Prince B with Prince Amenhotep: (1) both were the son of a king; (2)

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[35] Upon Amenhotep I's death, Thebes was the most prominent city of the native Egyptians, but Thutmose I, who did not descend from his predecessor, moved the chief residence of the Egyptian court from Thebes to Memphis, where he constructed a royal palace that was used until the reign of Akhenaten (*ca*. 1369-1352 B.C.). Memphis was also the headquarters of the pharaonic braintrust, where great military campaigns were planned, and Egyptian soldiers were "armed before pharaoh." In fact, all of the Asiatic military campaigns of Thutmose III and Amenhotep II were launched from Memphis, the residence for pharaonic successors who were coregents (Kuhrt, *Ancient Near East* 191; Sir Alan Gardiner, *Egypt of the Pharaohs* [New York: Oxford University, 1976] 177). Regarding Amenhotep II's youth, Grimal notes, "That the young prince should have been active at Memphis is no surprise, for it was there that all young heirs to the throne had been brought up since the time of Thutmose I" (Nicolas Grimal, *A History of Ancient Egypt*, trans. Ian Shaw [Oxford: Blackwell, 1992] 220). Thus Thutmose I was an excellent candidate for the pharaoh who instructed the chief Hebrew midwives, requesting the execution of the newborn Israelite boys (Exod 1:15). Numerous summonings of these midwives, whose authoritative rank necessitated their proximity to national Israel in Goshen, implies their proximity to pharaoh, a requirement easily satisfied if pharaoh was in Memphis, but not in Thebes. "The journey from Memphis to Thebes [alone] would have been a slow one of perhaps two to three weeks" (Joyce Tyldesley, *Hatchepsut: The Female Pharaoh* [London: Viking, 1996] 36). A slow pace from Goshen to Memphis, which did not require the same upward walk as did a trip to Thebes, required a mere 1½ to 2½ days. Pharaoh's messengers probably traveled to Goshen on horseback with even a shorter travel time. Wood identifies Ezbet Helmi, located just over one mile southwest of Pi-Ramesses, as the royal residence of the exodus-pharaoh during the Israelites' stay in Goshen (Wood, "The Rise and Fall" 482). Though this may have been the site of two palace structures (ibid., 483), no epigraphical evidence confirms that Amenhotep II ever resided there. The discovery of a scarab with his royal cartouche at Ezbet Helmi no more proves his personal occupation of the city (ibid., 484) than the discovery of a scarab with his cartouche at Gibeon proves he resided on the Central Benjamin Plateau (James B. Pritchard, *Gibeon: Where the Sun Stood Still* [Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1962] 156). Memphis, a known royal residence of Amenhotep II, is a far better candidate for the Delta site where the exodus-pharaoh interacted with Moses.

[36] Other New-Kingdom princes who were *sm*-priests also functioned as chief pontiffs at Memphis, such as "the king's son and *sm*-priest, Thutmose," who appears with his father, Amenhotep III, at his burial in the Serapeum (Redford, "Coregency of Tuthmosis III" 111).

[37] Ibid., 112, 114.

Amenhotep II was the father of both; and (3) they both resided at Memphis, functioning in the role of *sm*-priest.

Prince B/Amenhotep undoubtedly was an important figure, as he was called the "one who enters before his father without being announced, providing protection for the King of Upper and Lower Egypt," and "commander of the horses."[38] Since his name was enclosed in a cartouche, he was the heir apparent when the stele was carved, meaning that he stood in line for the throne ahead of Thutmose IV, who obviously was his younger brother. Therefore, some conclusions about this prince may be drawn: (1) he was the royal son of Amenhotep II; (2) he was never called "the king's eldest son"; (3) he served as the *sm*-priest and lived in the royal palace at Memphis; (4) he was once the heir to the throne; (5) he lived approximately until Year 30 or 35 of his father's reign; and (6) he never ascended to the throne.[39] If this prince was the heir to the throne without being firstborn, who was the eldest son?

Another candidate for the eldest son of Amenhotep II is an unattested "Thutmose." Redford, who considers the exodus as mythical, may supply the answer: "The fact that he (Prince B/Amenhotep) was named Amenhotep like his father might be taken to indicate that he was not the firstborn, that an older son named Thutmose had been born to Amenhotep II. It would be necessary to assume, however, that this Thutmose had passed away in childhood without leaving a trace."[40] Redford suggests that the practice of these pharaohs was not to name their firstborn sons after themselves, but to use the alternate birth-name. If Prince Amenhotep was not the eldest son of Amenhotep II, who by custom would have named his first son "Thutmose," then the Thutmose sitting on the lap of Hekreshu, the royal tutor, on the wall of Tomb 64 in Thebes may be "the eldest son" of the king.[41] Therefore, if Amenhotep II was the exodus-pharaoh, perhaps his eldest son Thutmose died early in the reign without leaving a trace, thus satisfying both the historical and biblical records (Exod 12:29).

IV. Theory of the Exodus-Pharaoh Dying in the Red Sea

Although the Christian community historically has accepted that the exodus-pharaoh died in the Red Sea when his army drowned, Exodus has no such statement, nor is it stated anywhere else in Scripture.[42] One of the most important principles that seminary studies taught the present writer is, "Say everything the text says; say no more, and say no less!" Saying more than what is written is eisegesis, i.e., reading into the text what the interpreter presupposes it to say. Regarding the fate of this pharaoh, Moses states that the Lord would "be honored through pharaoh" by the destruction of his army (Exod 14:4), but he never speaks of pharaoh's death.

Ps 106:11 as Proof of the Exodus-Pharaoh's Death in the Red Sea

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[38] Ibid., 114.
[39] Ibid., 110, 114.
[40] Ibid., 114.
[41] Ibid., 114-15.
[42] Wood, "The Rise and Fall," 478. Shea correctly notes that "Ex 14–15 is not directly explicit upon this point," though he subsequently takes an unjustified logical leap by extrapolating, "but it is the logical inference there [that pharaoh also drowned]" (Shea, "Amenhotep II as Pharaoh" 46).

Supporters of the view that pharaoh died in the Red Sea often appeal to Ps 106:11. The setting is the Red-Sea rebellion that was instigated by "the (Israelite) fathers [who were] in Egypt" (Ps 106:7). God parted the waters "that he might make his power known" (Ps 106:8). After describing the parting (Ps 106:9), the psalmist adds, "And he saved them from the hand of the one who hated them and redeemed them from the hand of the enemy; the waters covered their adversaries; not one of them was left" (Ps 106:10–11). The adversaries are obviously the Egyptian soldiers, the enemies who were haters of the Jews.

Allegedly, pharaoh—the chief adversary—was among the smitten Egyptians. If Amenhotep II actually was the exodus-pharaoh, then his reign ended abruptly during the year of the exodus, or *ca*. 1446 B.C.. Since he ruled at least 26 years, which will be shown below, if he was the exodus-pharaoh, his reign had to begin by *ca*. 1471 B.C. The weakness with the Red-Sea-death theory, though, is that it cannot be synchronized with the reigns of the previous five pharaohs, whose regnal dates are known, and fixed by the Ebers Papyrus. Since they are known—except for that of Thutmose II, whose rule lasted between four and twelve years—Amenhotep II's ninth year could not have begun in or before *ca*. 1471 B.C. Even if Thutmose II ruled for a minimum of four years, the reign of Amenhotep II had to begin in *ca*. 1462 B.C. or later, leaving nine years too few for the reigns of all of the intervening monarchs. Therefore, due to the limitations that represent fixed points in biblical and Egyptian chronologies, if he was the exodus-pharaoh, Amenhotep II could not have died in the Red-Sea incident.

If the exodus-pharaoh lived through the Red-Sea massacre, Ps 106:11 remains uncompromised. The text never specifically mentions pharaoh, so there is no reason to conclude that he died by drowning. The hater and enemy of Israel is Egypt as a collective whole, and certainly not every Egyptian drowned in the Red Sea when "the water covered their adversaries," so God delivered his people from Egypt itself. Only those Egyptian adversaries—as national representatives—who chased the Israelites into the sea were consumed by water, and since they were the taskforce dispatched on this mission, their defeat signals the demise of the entire nation. Moreover, not one of these representatives, who comprised the bulk of pharaoh's vast imperial army, survived after the dividing walls of the sea collapsed. This is confirmed by the Mosaic text that probably provided the basis for the psalmist's words: "The waters returned and covered the chariots and the horsemen, even in Pharaoh's entire army that had gone into the sea after them; not even one of them remained" (Exod 14:28).

Ps 136:15 as Proof of the Exodus-Pharaoh's Death in the Red Sea

The text most frequently used to prove that pharaoh died with his army is Ps 136:15: "But He overthrew pharaoh and His army in the Red Sea.. . ." A cursory reading of the text leads most to believe that because God "overthrew" pharaoh and his army, both parties must have died.[43] However, the Hebrew verb נער (nʿr, "he shook off") shows that God actually "shook off" the powerful pharaoh and his army, who were bothersome pests that God—whose might is far greater than theirs—merely brushed away. The same Hebrew verb is used in Ps 109:23, where David laments, "I am gone like a shadow when it lengthens; I am shaken off like the locust." Here, he describes the sad condition of his suffering and being cast away. The verb indicates that David has become as a locust that is casually flicked away from a garment. David was not

[43] Wood, "The Rise and Fall" 478.

describing his own death. The context of Psalm 136, which states that God "brought Israel out from their midst. .. with a strong hand and an outstretched arm" (Ps 136:11–12), confirms that the unequalled might of God is the thrust of the passage, accentuating the ease with which He shook off Israel's adversary, pharaoh and the mighty Egyptian army.

Another argument against the view that Ps 136:15 signals the death of pharaoh is that the verse probably alludes to Exod 14:27, which uses the same verb for "shake off," but omits pharaoh from among those whom the Lord shook off. Instead, the text clearly states, "I [God] will be honored through pharaoh and all his army, and the Egyptians will know that I am the Lord" (Exod 14:4; cf. 14:17). God was honored through pharaoh in the mass destruction of his army, but pharaoh did not have to die for this to occur.[44] In Ps 136:15, the psalm writer was not rejoicing over the death of anyone, but that almighty God shook off the Egyptians by freeing Israel from their enemy's clutches.

The Death and Regnal Length of Amenhotep II

Under what circumstances did Amenhotep II die? Fortunately, his mummified corpse has been preserved.[45] Victor Loret, fresh from his discovery of the tomb of Thutmose III in the Valley of the Kings, discovered the royal tomb of Amenhotep II on March 9, 1898. Confirmation that this burial chamber belonged to Amenhotep II came when Loret identified his nomen and praenomen on the painted, quartzite sarcophagus. This magnificent sepulcher represented a first for the excavations in the Valley of the Kings, as the king actually was found in place in his own sarcophagus, albeit lying in a replacement cartonnage coffin.[46]

The length of the reign and the date of death of Amenhotep II is open to question. Though Thutmose III is documented to have died in Year 54, no evidence exists to date explicitly the regnal year of Amenhotep II's death. The highest known regnal date among the indisputable evidence, Year 26, is inscribed on a wine juglet from the king's Theban funerary temple.[47] Redford, using questionable logic, asserts that since the juglet was found in the king's funerary temple, Year 26 represents the end of his reign.[48] Wente and Van Siclen dispute this assertion,

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[44] Shea disagrees: "Yahweh says that he will get glory over pharaoh. While some of that glory could be maintained by his loss of troops in the Sea of Reeds, if he escaped with his own life, some of that glory could have been diminished" (Shea, "Amenhotep II as Pharaoh" 46). This is not true. God displayed his glory by decimating Sennacherib's army when the Assyrians marched against Judah and Sennacherib escaped (2 Kgs 19:35), but it was not diminished when Sennacherib returned unscathed.

[45] No doubt exists among Egyptologists that this mummy is the corpse of Amenhotep II. His physical features bear a marked resemblance to his father and his son (James E. Harris and Kent R. Weeks, *X-Raying the Pharaohs* [New York: Scribners, 1973] 138).

[46] Nicholas Reeves, *Ancient Egypt: The Great Discoveries* (London: Thames & Hudson, 2000) 103.

[47] The king's praenomen is inscribed on one side of the jar, while the other side is inscribed with "Year 26" and "Panehsy," the name of the king's vintner (Der Manuelian, *Amenophis II* 42).

[48] Redford's assumes that wine had to be consumed not long after the bottling process (Donald B. Redford, "On the Chronology of the Egyptian Eighteenth Dynasty," *JNES* 25 [1966]:119).

though, showing evidence of the long-term storage of wine, and the active functioning of Egyptian mortuary temples long before the deaths of the pharaohs for whom they were built.[49]

Another possible length of his reign is 30 or 35 years. One source contributing to the argument that Amenhotep II reigned *over* 26 years is BM 10056. One scholar dates a fragmentary regnal year in v. 9, 8 of this papyrus to "Year 30, " though he admits that the number also could be read differently, such as "Year 35."[50] If one of these readings is correct, Amenhotep II's reign lasted at least thirty years, maybe thirty-five. Many scholars have postulated that he reigned beyond thirty years because he observed a regnal jubilee called a *sed* festival, a celebration that historically marked the thirtieth year of a pharaoh's reign. Though the *sed* festival was used for centuries to honor this regnal anniversary,[51] Der Manuelian warns against concluding too much about the regnal length of Amenhotep II just because he celebrated one: "No dates accompany the jubilee monuments (of Amenhotep II), and our understanding of the jubilee institution is too imperfect to allow us to assign an automatic '30th year' at every mention of a *hb-sed* festival."[52]

Caution must be exercised before automatically assigning a thirty-year reign to every pharaoh who celebrated this event, but the *sed* festival of Amenhotep II may just signify that his reign exceeded thirty years. More conclusive than the *sed*-festival evidence is that on Thutmose IV's Lateran Obelisk, which was erected thirty-five years after the death of Thutmose III, to whom it was dedicated. Wente and Van Siclen suggest that the thirty-five years marks the length of the interceding reign of Amenhotep II minus the coregency with his father, which is known to be 2 1/3 years.[53] If their argumentation is correct, Amenhotep II reigned 37 1/3 years, and was fifty-five at death.[54]

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[49] E. F. Wente and C. C. Van Siclen III, "A Chronology of the New Kingdom," in *Studies in Honor of George R. Hughes*, Studies in Ancient Oriental Civilization 39 (Chicago: University of Chicago, 1976) 228.

[50] Redford, "Coregency of Tuthmosis III" 110.

[51] The Twelfth-Dynasty pharaoh Sesostris I (*ca*. 1960-1916 B.C.) erected two obelisks in front of the temple pylon at Heliopolis on the occasion of his first *sed* festival, commemorating his thirtieth regnal year (Grimal, *History of Ancient Egypt* 164). During the Eighteenth Dynasty, Thutmose III seemingly celebrated a *sed* festival in his thirtieth year as well; Redford suggests that the year of rest from Asiatic campaigning between Thutmose III's sixth and seventh campaigns, which corresponds precisely to his Year 30, signifies a "holiday year" used to celebrate this landmark anniversary (Redford, *Egypt, Canaan, and Israel* 158).

[52] Der Manuelian, *Amenophis II* 43.

[53] Wente and Van Siclen III, "Chronology of the New Kingdom" 227–28. The occurrence of a coregency under Thutmose III and Amenhotep II is essentially undisputed among conservative Egyptologists, as supporting evidence for it is plentiful. See Redford, "Coregency of Tuthmosis III" 116; Der Manuelian, *Amenophis II* 24; and Richard A. Parker, "Once Again the Coregency of Thutmose III and Amenhotep II," in *Studies in Honor of John A. Wilson*, Studies in Ancient Oriental Civilization 35 (Chicago: University of Chicago, 1969) 228.

[54] Shea disputes the notion of a coregency under Thutmose III and Amenhotep II, though he formerly advocated one. He builds his position on the presupposition that Amenhotep II died in the Red Sea. The proof Shea presents is that Amenhotep II reportedly launched two "first campaigns." According to Shea's theory, a successor (Amenhotep IIB) was secretly and deceitfully placed on the throne after Amenhotep IIA drowned in the Red Sea, but with the

If this last regnal-year estimate is accurate, a lifespan of fifty-five years for Amenhotep II is deduced by adding his 37 1/3-year reign to the eighteen years he lived before his coronation, a number taken from the larger of the two Sphinx Stelae of Amenhotep II: "Now his majesty appeared as king as a fine youth. .. having completed 18 years in his strength. ..; now after these things, his majesty appeared as king."[55] An X-ray investigation of the royal mummies may assist in dating his regnal length. The mummy of Amenhotep II is estimated to have been forty-five at death,[56] meaning that a fifty-five-year lifespan exceeds the projections of the X-ray evidence, and thus is "an impossibly high result according to the medical evidence."[57] Robins, however, is convinced that when identifying a pharaoh's age at death, there is good reason to cast doubt on X-ray evidence as a whole.[58] Support for this criticism is found in the discrepancy related to Thutmose III's lifespan.[59] Though he lived at least until age fifty-five, his mummy reportedly displays skeletal features of a 40–45 year-old man, meaning that with X-ray evidence his mummy appears no less than 10-15 years younger than his actual age at death.[60] Thus the 10-year discrepancy for Amenhotep II is not problematic, and a reign of 37 1/3 years appears realistic.

V. The Second Asiatic Campaign as a Result of the Exodus

Great Reduction in Campaigning and Expansionism

The renowned conqueror, Thutmose III, led seventeen military campaigns into the Levant, but his son—in stark contrast—led only two or three. Though many scholars have attempted to determine the exact number, a virtual dearth of discussion deals with this sharp decline. Aharoni

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caveat that the later pharaoh used the same birth name and throne name as his deceased predecessor, thus completing the reign of "Amenhotep II" as an imposter (Shea, "Amenhotep II as Pharaoh" 44–46). This theory is weak, however, because it is based on the presupposition that the exodus-pharaoh died in the Red Sea, a presumption already shown to be inaccurate. If the two "first campaigns" of Amenhotep II were only one campaign, which will be proven subsequently, Shea loses all impetus for his fantastic claim. Moreover, he provides no precedent for two pharaohs ruling under the same name.

[55] Redford, "Coregency of Tuthmosis III" 117.

[56] Vandersleyen notes that in spite of the good physical development of Amenhotep II, an examination of his mummy reveals that he was of average height and died at about forty-four years of age (Claude Vandersleyen, *L'Egypte et la Vallée du Nil*, vol. 2 [Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1995] 336). Harris and Weeks, adding that his wavy hair was brown with gray at the temple, suggest that he was forty-five at death (Harris and Weeks, *X-Raying* 138).

[57] Der Manuelian, *Amenophis II* 44.

[58] G. Robins, "The Value of the Estimated Ages of the Royal Mummies at Death as Historical Evidence," *Göttinger Miszellen* 45 (1981):63-68.

[59] Though Thutmose III's exact age at his accession is unknown, his reign lasted into his fifty-fourth regnal year. According to Brugsch-Bey, he reigned 53 years, 11 months, and 1 day (Heinrich Brugsch-Bey, *Egypt Under the Pharaohs* [London: Bracken Books, 1902] 193), and Tyldesley claims that he reigned 53 years, 10 months, and 26 days (Tyldesley, *Hatchepsut* 96, 215).

[60] Harris and Weeks, *X-Raying* 138.

attributes it to an underlying diminishment of Egyptian power: "Already in the days of Amenhotep II, the son of Thutmose III, cracks began to appear in the structure of the Egyptian Empire."[61] Vandersleyen hints at the dissipation of Egypt's might by the end of Amenhotep II's reign: "It seems possible to consider this reign as unsuccessful, a time of decline: a few exploits abroad, a few preserved memorials, an almost complete absence of sources after the ninth year of the reign."[62] Yet the intervening years featured neither Egypt's engagement/loss in war nor a significant change in the political climate. Der Manuelian writes, "Despite Thutmose III's military success, Mitanni remained Egypt's primary adversary in Dynasty 18, and there is no reason to doubt her continued aggressive policy in the reign of the young king Amenhotep II."[63]

Although this may be true, Amenhotep II's Year-9 campaign was the last to pit Egypt against Mitanni. During the reign of Thutmose IV, Mitanni—under threat from the Hittite King Tudhaliyas II—attempted to forge an alliance with its Egyptian arch enemy, demonstrating a complete reversal in relations between these formerly incompatible superpowers. EA (Amarna Letter) 109 reveals that by the mid-fourteenth century B.C., Egypt held only nominal control of Palestine, as they no longer struck fear into the Canaanite rulers.[64] One author notes that "this relative military inertness lasted until Horemheb's coming to power" in *ca*. 1335 B.C.[65] How does one explain this great disparity in Egypt's campaigning, the uncharacteristic change in political policy toward their bitter enemy to the north, and Egypt's general loss of power and imperialistic dominance?

Shortage of records of Amenhotep II's relative military inertness cannot be accounted for by his modesty. He recorded his military excursions into Asia in *The Annals of Amenhotep II*, which contain not a complete, daily record of each stop on the routes, but only a selection of the events that accentuate his courage and present him in a positive light.[66] Pritchard adds, "Amenhotep II gloried in his reputation for personal strength and prowess. His records, therefore, contrast with those of his predecessor and father, Thutmose III, in emphasizing individual achievement."[67] Amenhotep II's exploits were motivated by a thirst for universal fame and glory.

The Number of Amenhotep II's Asiatic Campaigns

Prior to the discovery of the Memphis Stele, most scholars assumed that both Amenhotep II's Asiatic campaign recounted on the fragmentary Karnak Stele and the operations against Takhsi

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[61] Yohanan Aharoni and Michael Avi-Yonah, *The Macmillan Bible Atlas* (New York: Macmillan, 1977) 34.
[62] Vandersleyen, *L'Egypte* 2:341.
[63] Der Manuelian, *Amenophis II* 59.
[64] "Previously, on seeing a man from Egypt, the kings of Canaan fled bef[ore him, but] now the sons of Abdi-Ashirta make men from Egypt prowl about [like do]gs" (*The Amarna Letters*, ed. and trans. William L. Moran [Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University, 1992] 183).
[65] Vandersleyen, *L'Egypte* 2:333. This and all subsequent quotes by Vandersleyen are translated into English from the original French by Lydia Polyakova and Inna Kumpyak. Horemheb reigned from *ca*. 1335-1307 B.C.
[66] Yohanan Aharoni, "Some Geographical Remarks Concerning the Campaigns of Amenhotep II," in *JNES* 19/3 (July 1960):177.
[67] James B. Pritchard, *ANET* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University, 1950) 245.

mentioned in the Amada and Elephantine Stelae describe one event. With the Memphis Stele's discovery, it is still possible that the Karnak, Amada, and Elephantine Stelae refer to a common campaign, but the notion of only one campaign was proven false, since the Memphis Stele clearly delineates two distinct, separately numbered campaigns.[68] However, its text presents a dilemma: "The translator finds it impossible to reconcile the dates in these several stelae."[69] The available evidence allows for two views: (1) Amenhotep II conducted three Asiatic campaigns; (2) Amenhotep II conducted two Asiatic campaigns. Relevant ancient evidence solves this dispute, which is critical to this pharaoh's biography.

Two sources record multiple Asiatic campaigns under Amenhotep II, the Memphis and Karnak Stelae—partial duplicates in content. Both stelae are attributed to him, as they begin with his complete titulary. The Memphis Stele, later reused by a Twenty-First-Dynasty prince as part of the ceiling of his burial chamber (*ca*. 875 B.C.), offers the more extensive text. It presents both an earlier campaign in central and northern Syria, and a later one in Palestine, dating "his first victorious campaign" to Year 7, Month 1, Season 3, Day 25 (*ca*. 15 May) and "his second victorious campaign" to Year 9, Month 3, Season 1, Day 25 (*ca*. 15 November).[70]

Another source, the Karnak Stele, which lies to the south of the Eighth Pylon at Karnak, is more damaged than the Memphis Stele. It consists of a two-part relief, each displaying a pharaoh who is presenting an offering to Amun-Re. Between the two parts is a vertical line of text that records the restoration of the monument by Seti I.[71] Whether this stele originally bore the same dates as the Memphis Stele is unknown, but that the Karnak Stele describes the same two campaigns as the Memphis Stele is clear. In fact, Hoffmeier refers to them as "two nearly identical stelae," though the Karnak Stele devotes much less space to the second campaign than does the Memphis Stele.[72] Both stelae were hacked-up during the Amarna Revolution and restored during the Nineteenth Dynasty, with poorer restoration on the Karnak Stele.[73] Its postscript names Thutmose as the erector, assumed to be Thutmose IV, who apparently erected the stele after his accession.[74]

The Amada and Elephantine Stelae also offer evidence regarding the number of campaigns. They speak of a "first victorious campaign" of Amenhotep II, during which seven Syrian chiefs were captured in the region of Takhsi. Both texts state that they were erected "after his majesty returned from Upper Retenu, having felled all those who had rebelled against him while he was extending the borders of Egypt.[75] His majesty came joyously to his father Amun, having slain

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[68] Redford, "Coregency of Tuthmosis III" 118.
[69] Pritchard, *ANET* 245.
[70] Ibid., 245-46; Redford, "Coregency of Tuthmosis III" 119.
[71] Henry Breasted, *Ancient Records of Egypt*, vol. 2 (Champaign, Ill.: University of Illinois, 2001) 305.
[72] James K. Hoffmeier, "The Memphis and Karnak Stelae of Amenhotep II," in *The Context of Scripture: Monumental Inscriptions from the Biblical World*, vol. 2, ed. William W. Hallo (Leiden: Brill, 2000) 19.
[73] Pritchard, *ANET* 245; Redford, "Coregency of Tuthmosis III" 119.
[74] Breasted, *Ancient Records* 2:309.
[75] The word "Retenu," an Egyptian term used of Syro-Palestine, is found in the account of Thutmose III's first Asiatic campaign, during which the Egyptians besieged Megiddo for seven

with his own bludgeon the seven chiefs who were in the district of Takhsi."[76] Both stelae commence with this date: Year 3, Month 3, Season 3, Day 15 (*ca*. 4 July), which coincides with a celebration after the Egyptians returned from the first campaign.[77] This date demonstrates that the "first victorious campaign" transpired no later than Year 3 of Amenhotep II. How can the Year-3 date on these stelae be resolved with the Year-7 date on the Memphis Stele when both describe his first campaign?

Through use of these sources one can evaluate the two theories of how many campaigns. (1) Many scholars believe that Amenhotep II campaigned three times into Asia, with two options offered to resolve the conflicting information on the stelae. Option one: The numbering of campaigns is particular to individual stelae. Drioton and Vandier suggest that Amenhotep II undertook Asiatic campaigns in Years 3, 7, and 9, and that the "first victorious campaign" on the Memphis Stele is the first of two campaigns described on *that particular* stele.[78] Thus the scribe merely used "first" and "second" to distinguish from one another the two campaigns on the stele. The problem with this theory is that within Egyptian historiography, this method of dating military campaigns is unparalleled. The practice would be strange indeed among Eighteenth-Dynasty pharaohs, since the expression consistently refers not to successively numbered campaigns in one record, but to chronologically tallied campaigns that occurred over the course of a king's reign.[79] The 17 campaigns of Thutmose III, for example, are numbered successively throughout his reign.

Option two: The numbering of campaigns differs from coregent status to sole-ruler status. This variation dates one victorious campaign to his coregency with Thutmose III, and the other to his sole rule. Like Drioton and Vandier, Badawy, Edel, and Alt also separate the Takhsi campaign from those described on the Memphis Stele, postulating Asiatic campaigns in Years 3, 7, and 9. Alt asserts that "first victorious campaign" is used correctly on the Amada, Elephantine, and Memphis Stelae. The earlier "first victorious campaign" occurred in Year 3, during the coregency, while the latter one transpired in Year 7, on his first military excursion as an independent monarch. To accent his own achievement, Amenhotep II simply restarted his numbering once he stepped out of his father's shadow.[80] Once again, though, no precedent exists for pharaohs dating their military campaigns separately: first as a coregent, then as a sole ruler. This theory would be far more tenable if an inscription were found that dubbed the initial

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months. When the city fell in December of Year 22, all of the Canaanite leaders—with the exception of the king of Kadesh, who had fled—fell in one stroke. Once these petty kings were in Egyptian hands, they were required to take this vow: "The lands of Retenu will not rebel again on another occasion," and, "We will never again act evilly against Men-kheper-Re (Thutmose III)—who lives forever, our good lord—in our lifetime" (Pritchard, *ANET* 238; Hoffmeier, "Memphis and Karnak Stelae," in *Context of Scripture* 2:16). Since city-states throughout Syro-Palestine were involved in this rebellion, the territory of the kings of Retenu who pledged perpetual loyalty to Thutmose III must have comprised both Syria and Palestine.

[76] Redford, "Coregency of Tuthmosis III" 119.

[77] Pritchard, *ANET* 245.

[78] Eitienne Drioton and Jacques Vandier, *L'Egypte* (Paris: Les Presses Universitaires de France, 1938) 406, 663.

[79] Redford, "Coregency of Tuthmosis III" 120.

[80] Ibid.

campaign described on the Memphis Stele as "the first victorious campaign of Amenhotep II's sole rule." Moreover, a crippling weakness is that Amenhotep II launched his Year-3 campaign as sole ruler, in response to the Syro-Palestinian revolt waged after his father's death.

Insurmountable obstacles plague both versions of the three-campaign theory. The greatest problem is the lack of precedent for any such dual numbering of military campaigns by New-Kingdom pharaohs. Redford rightly notes, "[T]hat two separate systems of year-numbering were employed by Amenophis (II) is without other foundation and is *a priori* unlikely."[81] Moreover, a comparison of lines 2–3 on the Memphis Stele with lines 16–19 on the Amada Stele—both of which describe his "first victorious campaign"—reveals some strong similarities, particularly in the choice of words and the parallel actions depicted, so all of the various "first campaigns" of Amenhotep II must refer to a single Asiatic campaign.[82]

(2) The inadequacies of the three-campaign theory have caused many scholars to propose that Amenhotep II launched only two Asiatic campaigns, despite the victory stelae attributing campaigns to Years 3, 7, and 9. This theory also has two options. Option one: The Year-3 campaign is synonymous with the Year-7 campaign due to differing regnal counting systems. Its proponents assert that the Amada and Elephantine Stelae record the same campaign as the Memphis Stele's first campaign, but with the stipulation that the latter stele counts regnal years from the beginning of the coregency, while the former stelae count them from the outset of the sole rule. As Pritchard calculates, "A possible reconciliation would be that the 7th year after the coregency began was the 3rd year of the sole reign."[83] One problem with this variation is the lack of precedent for dating pharaonic regnal years using two differing methods: sometimes coregent numbering, and other times sole-regent numbering. Another problem is that the coregency lasted a mere 2 1/3 years, making it mathematically impossible to equate the two campaigns, since the coregency would have to last for a minimum of three years and one day for Pritchard to be correct.

Option two: The Year-3 campaign is synonymous with the Year-7 campaign due to an inaccurate date displayed on the Memphis Stele. This version also assumes that the first campaign on the Karnak Stele, the campaigns described on the Elephantine and Amada Stelae, and the first campaign on the Memphis Stele, all refer to the same event. However, it purports that the Amada and Elephantine Stelae correctly date the "first victorious campaign" to Year 3, while the Memphis Stele displays a wrongly-reconstructed date etched onto it by a Nineteenth-Dynasty stelae-restoration crew that attempted to repair the damage the stelel suffered during the Amarna Age. Vandersleyen observes that "the Memphis date is on the part of the memorial that was seriously damaged in the Amarna Age; the date that we read today is the result of Rameside

[81] Ibid., 121.
[82] Anson F. Rainey, "Amenhotep II's Campaign to Takhsi," *JARCE* 10 (1973):71.
[83] Pritchard, *ANET* 245.

restoration."[84] He concludes, "Thus the initial date of Year 7 on the Memphis Stele is a[n inaccurate] restoration made by the Ramesides."[85]

Both variations of the three-campaign theory are indefensible. Vandersleyen perceptively notes, "The simplest and most logical solution is that there was only one 'first campaign,'. .. more plausibly in Year 3 than in Year 7."[86] Therefore, based on the likelihood of a singular error on the Memphis Stele—due to inaccurate restoration by Ramesside craftsmen—as the best explanation to harmonize the conflicting evidence on the stelae, the two-campaign theory is preferred. The Elephantine Stele, whose events are set in Takhsi,[87] even provides a *terminus ad quem* for the first campaign, as line twenty-six dates the stele to Year 4. "It is only reasonable to conclude that the events including the Takhsi campaign recounted in the text before this postscript are earlier than Year 4. Thus there is no reason to deny the clear implication of the text that the expedition against Takhsi transpired before [the end of] Year 3."[88] Also supporting the view that the Memphis Stele's first campaign was waged in Year 3, and not in Year 7, is the evidence from Amenhotep II's cupbearer. During Year 4, the cupbearer Minmès remarks that a stele was built for pharaoh in Naharin, to the east of the Euphrates River, the inscription of which confirms that the first Asiatic campaign occurred before Year 4 ended.[89]

The First Asiatic Campaign of Amenhotep II

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[84] Vandersleyen, *L'Egypte* 2:324. Rainey affirms the activity of later restoration on the Memphis Stele, remarking that its opening lines are difficult to read due to faulty restoration by a later scribe (Rainey, "Amenhotep II's Campaign to Takhsi" 72).

[85] Vandersleyen, *L'Egypte* 2:325. Shea correctly asserts that "the identification of the campaign of Year 7 is not a scribal error because the campaign of Year 9 is identified as 'his second campaign of victory' in the same text" (Shea, "Amenhotep II as Pharaoh" 46), but he fails to account for the possibility that while the original scribe etched the year of the pharaoh's first campaign onto the stele correctly, it was subject to intentional alteration and potentially faulty reparation.

[86] Vandersleyen, *L'Egypte* 2:323–24.

[87] Critics of the two-campaign theory argue that "Takhsi," a region in Syria already known as such at the time of Thutmose III, does not appear on the Memphis and Karnak Stelae, where another "first campaign" is discussed, thus suggesting a variance in destinations. Shea objects that while the Year-3 campaign identifies Takhsi as the region of the campaigning, this term is never mentioned in the account of the Year-7 campaign, thus implying that these two accounts cannot describe the same campaign (Shea, "Amenhotep II as Pharaoh" 46), despite both accounts documenting a campaign that was waged in Syria. This objection is weak, however, since the purpose of the Amada Stele was not to boast of military exploits, but rather to commemorate the work completed on the Amada temple in Nubia. The Memphis and Karnak Stelae had only one goal in mind: to boast of pharaoh's military victories in Asia (Vandersleyen, *L'Egypte* 2:323–24; Hallo and Simpson, *Ancient Near East* 261–62). Since the commissioner of these stelae had no need to mention the capture of the rulers of Takhsi, only *one* of the regions on the campaign's itinerary, they simply chose not to use the term.

[88] Redford, "Coregency of Tuthmosis III" 119–20.

[89] K. Sethe and W. Helck, eds., *Urk. Urkunden des ägyptischen Altertums: Urkunden der 18 Dynastie*, vol. 4 (Berlin: Leipzig, 1906-1958) 1448; Vandersleyen, *L'Egypte* 2:324.

For brevity, the first campaign of Amenhotep II will be referred to as A1, while his second campaign will be called A2. As indicated, he launched A1 in Year 3, and the dating of events related to this campaign is as follows: (1) Thutmose III died on *ca*. 22 March 1452 B.C.; (2) Amenhotep II presided over the funeral and was confirmed as sole ruler; (3) the Syro-Palestinian city-states rebelled after hearing of Thutmose III's death; (4) Amenhotep II assembled his army from throughout Egypt and nearby garrisoned cities; and (5) Amenhotep II launched A1, arriving at his first destination on *ca*. 15 May 1452 B.C..

The death of Thutmose III led to a massive revolt in his Syro-Palestinian territories, prompting the launching of A1.[90] Amenhotep II officiated at his father's funeral as the "new Horus," as Thutmose III was buried on the west bank of the Nile River at Waset, in his elevated, cliff-cut "mansion of eternity."[91] Amenhotep II's presence at the funeral, combined with the nearly two-month gap between his father's death and the army's arrival at their first destination, dispels the notion that he was already engaged in A1 when his father died. The energetic son of Egypt's greatest imperialist wasted no time, as he probably left Egypt in April of *ca*. 1452 B.C., just as his father had done on his first Asiatic campaign, exactly thirty-two years prior. The undisputed epicenter of the rebellion was the coastal cities of Syria, the focal point of the discussion in *The Annals of Amenhotep II*, though perhaps Palestine also rebelled. The young pharaoh proceeded by land to quell this revolt.[92]

The Second Asiatic Campaign of Amenhotep II

Amenhotep II indisputably launched A2 in Year 9. If his reign began in *ca*. 1455 B.C., which harmonizes with the Ebers Papyrus and the regnal lengths of the intervening pharaohs, his ninth year lasted from *ca*. 22 November 1447 – 22 November 1446 B.C. Therefore, the exodus date of *ca*. 25 April 1446 B.C. should be placed within this particular regnal year, unless the Year-9 reading on the Memphis Stele is ever proven to be an inaccurate reconstruction. Both ancient sources and modern commentators are far quieter about A2 than they are about A1. Clearly, A1 was launched to squelch a rebellion, but why did Amenhotep II embark on a second trip into Asia six years later? Two principal theories have been proposed to identify the occasion.

The first theory for the motive of A2 is that it was launched to correct the shortcomings of A1. According to Aharoni, "The failure of the first campaign may be inferred by Amenhotep II's setting out two years later on a second campaign in order to put down revolts in the Sharon and in the Jezreel Valley."[93] Aharoni sees in A1 an excursion that never accomplished its primary mission: the conquest of Mitanni. Grimal concurs: "[T]hese two campaigns were the last to pit Egypt against Mitanni."[94]

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[90] The view that A1 was launched in response to an Asiatic revolt is held by Breasted and most modern Egyptologists (e.g., Breasted, *Ancient Records*, 2:304; Redford, *Egypt, Canaan, and Israel* 163; Grimal, *History of Ancient Egypt* 218).
[91] Dennis Forbes, "Menkheperre Djehutymes: Thutmose III, A Pharaoh's Pharaoh," *KMT* 9/4 (Winter 1998–1999):65.
[92] Breasted, *Ancient Records*, 2:304.
[93] Aharoni and Avi-Yonah, *The Macmillan Atlas* 34.
[94] Grimal, *History of Ancient Egypt* 219.

The first problem with this view is its dependence on the three-campaign theory, since Aharoni assumes that a Year-7 campaign was fought two years prior to the Year-9 campaign. However, there was no Year-7 campaign, as the "first campaign" of the Memphis Stele actually occurred in Year 3. Given the six-year gap between the two campaigns, the theory that A2 was launched to rectify the failures of A1 is invalid. Of even greater weight, the failure of A1 would have resulted in another campaign directed principally into Syria, if not into Mitannian territory farther to the north, not a brief raid into southern Palestine to accomplish little more than the acquisition of slaves and booty.

The second theory for the motive of A2 is that it was launched to replenish the Egyptian slave base and many of the valuable commodities that were lost when the Israelites plundered and fled Egypt. According to this theory, pharaoh's motive relates to the exodus. If the exodus and Amenhotep II's Year-9 campaign transpired in the same year, which is possible given the chronological coincidences, a brief campaign into southern Palestine to recover some of his losses would be both logical and expected. The feasibility of this possibility will be evaluated in light of the details related to A2.

Pre-Winter Launching of the Second Asiatic Campaign

The date of Year 9, Month 3, Season 1, Day 25 (or *ca*. 16 November 1446 B.C.) recorded on the Memphis Stele represents either the Egyptian army's launching date from Memphis or the arrival date at their first destination, more likely the latter. Either way, in antiquity a November date for a military campaign was extremely rare. "The present date would fall in the early part of November, an unusual season for an Egyptian campaign in Asia."[95] It was unusual because the campaign would be fought throughout the cold, rainy winter, when ancient monarchs typically remained within their borders, dealt with internal affairs, and planned for springtime military campaigns.[96] The biblical text confirms the normalcy of springtime launchings: "Then it happened in the spring, at the time when kings go out to battle, that Joab led out the army and ravaged the land of the sons of Ammon, and he came and besieged Rabbah" (1 Chr 20:1).

Der Manuelian comments on A1: "Hardly one to break with the blossoming military tradition of the early New Kingdom, Amenophis set out in April of his seventh year, the preferred season for embarking on such ventures."[97] Vandersleyen contrasts this with the unprecedented timing of A2: "The second Asiatic campaign began on the 25th day of the 3rd month (*akhet*) of the 9th year, during an unusual season for military campaigns. It was probably induced by the necessity of urgent intervention." Amenhotep II's decision to lead an attack force into Palestine in November was extremely unorthodox, so obviously the situation required urgent Egyptian

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[95] Pritchard, *ANET* 246.

[96] Examples of campaigns launched in spring are plentiful. Thutmose III's first Asiatic campaign, as he arrived at his first destination (the border fortress of Tjel) on *ca*. 20 April 1484 B.C.; Amenhotep II's first Asiatic campaign, as he arrived at his first destination; Raamses II departure for Kadesh in late April, ca. 1274 (Shamash-Edom) on *ca*. 15 May 1452 B.C. are examples (Kenneth A. Kitchen, *Pharaoh Triumphant: The Life and Times of Ramesses II* [Warminster, Eng.: Aris & Phillips. 1982] 53).

[97] Der Manuelian, *Amenophis II* 59. As shown above, "seventh" should be corrected to "third."

intervention. But in what did he need to intervene? Unlike A1, which was launched to quell a rebellion, A2 had no obvious occasion.

Contrast between the Two Asiatic Campaigns

Marked differences exist between A1 and A2. The names of the geographical sites on A1 are mostly unknown, and those that are considered known are too far apart to belong to one region. In contrast, the sites mentioned on A2 are located only in Central Palestine, between Aphek and Anaharath. When comparing the courses of both campaigns, the disproportionate nature of the two routes is striking, as the locations on A1 are distant and scattered, while the sites on A2 are nearby and closely positioned.[98] Moreover, every early campaign of Thutmose III through his illustrious eighth campaign into Mesopotamia, which represents the maximum extent of Egypt's expansionism, pushed further into foreign territory. In contrast, A1 and A2 followed exactly the opposite trend, going from an itinerary *further away from* to one *closer to* Egypt.

Change in Foreign-Policy after the Second Asiatic Campaign

Another oddity of A2 is that after its conclusion, the Egyptian army—established by Thutmose III as the fifteenth-century-B.C.'s most elite fighting force—went into virtual hibernation. Its previous policy of aggressiveness toward Mitanni became one of passivity and the signing of peace treaties. The reason for this new policy is missing from the historical record, but Amenhotep II evidently was the pharaoh who first signed a treaty with Mitanni, subsequent to A2.[99] Redford connects this event to "the arrival (after year 10, we may be sure) of a Mitannian embassy sent by [Mitanni's King] Saussatar with proposals of 'brotherhood' (i.e., a fraternal alliance and renunciation of hostilities)."[100] Redford adds that "Amenophis II seemed susceptible to negotiations"and that he "was apparently charmed and disarmed by the embassy from 'Naharin,' and perhaps even signed a treaty."[101] Yet such a treaty is completely out of character for imperial Egypt and this prideful monarch, especially since "the pharaonic state of the Eighteenth Dynasty could, more easily than Mitanni, sustain the expense of periodic military incursions 800 km into Asia."[102] Support for Amenhotep II being the first to sign a pact with Mitanni is found in the actions of Thutmose IV: "Only by postulating a change of reign can we explain a situation in which the new pharaoh, Thutmose IV, can feel free to attack Mitannian holdings with impunity."[103] Why would Amenhotep II do the unthinkable, and opt to make a treaty with Mitanni?

This mysterious reversal in foreign policy would remain inexplicable if not for the possibility of a single, cataclysmic event. If the Egyptians lost virtually their entire army in the springtime disaster at the Red Sea in Year 9, a desperate reconnaissance campaign designed to "save face" with the rest of the ancient world and to replenish the Israelite slave-base would be paramount. Certainly the Egyptians needed time to rally their remaining forces together, however small

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[98] Vandersleyen, *L'Egypte* 2:324–25.
[99] Redford, *Egypt, Canaan, and Israel* 163.
[100] Ibid., 164.
[101] Ibid.
[102] Ibid., 165.
[103] Ibid., 164.

and/or in shambles their army may have been, and it would explain a November campaign that was nothing more than a slave-raid into Palestine as a show of force. The Egyptians could not afford to live through the winter without the production that was provided by the Hebrew workforce, and they could not allow Mitanni or any other ancient power to consider using the winter to plan an attack on Egyptian territories, which seemed vulnerable. If this scenario represents what actually transpired in ANE history, however, tangible proof is needed to verify its veracity.

VI. Loss of the Egyptian Slave-base

According to Num 1:45–46, the Israelites' post-exodus male population over 20 years old totaled 603,550, not including the 22,000 Levite males of Num 3:39. When women and children are added, they would have well exceeded 2,000,000.[104] That many Israelites probably provided the backbone of the Egyptian slave-force, considering their rigorous labors (Exod 1:11–14). To most Egyptology students, however, the exodus-narrative is little more than a fanciful folktale designed to impress Jewish children with grand illusions of a glorious ethnic past. The virtual absence of historical and archaeological evidence to verify the Israelite occupation and mass exodus from Egypt bolsters this skepticism. One prominent Egyptologist suggests,

[T]o the historian, [the exodus] remains the most elusive of all the salient events of Israelite history. The event is supposed to have taken place in Egypt, yet Egyptian sources know it not.. .. The effect on Egypt must have been cataclysmic—loss of a servile population, pillaging of gold and silver (Exod. 3:21–22, 12:31–36), destruction of an army—yet at no point in the history of the country during the New Kingdom is there the slightest hint of the traumatic impact such an event would have had on economics or society.[105]

But is there truly no hint of a traumatic impact on Egypt?

Absence of an Exodus-Account in Egyptian Records

Redford alludes to the most popular reason for rejecting the veracity of the exodus, namely that nowhere in Egypt's vast records is there any documentation of it. However, this dearth can be explained by the lack of Egyptian censuses and the tendency to write comparatively little about foreigners, especially slaves.[106] Nonetheless, the Hebrew slaves not only exited Egypt *en masse*, but they were responsible for the extermination of pharaoh's vast army, which—at the time—was the mightiest military force on earth. Yet the proud Egyptians would not be expected to document their own humiliating defeat, which would smear their records and tarnish the glorious

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[104] John MacArthur, gen. ed., *The MacArthur Study Bible* (Nashville: Word, 1997) 198, note on Num 1:46.

[105] Redford, *Egypt, Canaan, and Israel* 408.

[106] A notable exception to this rule is the Hyksos, the western Asiatics who overtook Egypt and controlled her commerce. The Royal Turin Canon, a papyrus that derives from Ramesside times and reflects a king list that was begun during the Middle Kingdom, fixes a 108-year rule (*ca*. 1668 to 1560 B.C.) for the Hyksos (ibid., 107), who were driven out by the native Egyptians of the Seventeenth Dynasty. Yet such documentation is warranted as they played a prominant role in Egyptian history.

legacy left behind by Thutmose III. Kitchen articulates this principle with an example from a later pharaoh: "No pharaoh ever celebrates a defeat! So, if Osorkon [I] had ever sent out a Zerah [the Cushite], with resulting defeat, *no* Egyptian source would ever report on such an incident, particularly publicly. The lack (to date) of external corroboration in such a case is itself worth nothing, in terms of judging history."[107]

Such a non-reporting of personal defeat would be standard practice for Amenhotep II. Aharoni observes, "Amenhotep [II]—more than any other pharaoh—set up monuments to glorify his personal valor, passing over, however, some of the major but less complementary events of his campaigns, especially his defeats."[108] Amenhotep II spared no effort to portray himself as a great warrior who could pierce metal targets with his bow and arrow during shooting practice.[109] He combined strength with a cruelty intended to demoralize his enemies,[110] which the Amada Stele affirms: "His strength is so much greater than (that of) any king who has ever existed, raging like a panther when he courses through the battlefield; there is none fighting before him,. .. trampling down those who rebel against him, instantly prevailing against all the barbarians with people and horses."[111] A king with such enormous pride cannot be expected to have commissioned his scribes to preserve the exodus-tragedy in the annals of Egyptian history for subsequent generations to read and memorialize.

Booty Lists from Asiatic Campaigns of Amenhotep II and Thutmose III

Redford declares that "at no point in the history of the country during the New Kingdom is there the slightest hint of the traumatic impact [that] such an event" as the "loss of a servile population" must have had upon Egypt.[112] This bold declaration must be strongly contested. At the conclusion of both campaign narratives recorded on the Memphis Stele, the scribe meticulously listed the spoils, with their quantities, that were taken as plunder. By comparing the booty lists recorded after the conquests of Amenhotep II and Thutmose III, it will be seen whether A2 is distinguished among these campaigns, and if it might attest to the exodus or the post-exodus events.

The focus of A2 was upon spoils that Amenhotep II reaped. "A record of the plunder that his majesty carried off: 127 princes of Retenu; 179 brothers of princes; 3,600 Apiru; 15,200 Shasu; 36,300 Kharu; 15,070 Nagasuites/Neges; 30,652 of their family members; total: 89,600 people, and their endless property likewise; all their cattle and endless herds; 60 chariots of silver and gold; 1,032 painted chariots of wood; 13,500 weapons for warfare."[113] Regarding the "89,600" total prisoners, the sum is actually 101,128 if the individual numbers are added together.[114] The

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[107] Kitchen, *Reliability of the OT* 11. The biblical text to which Kitchen alludes is 2 Chron 14:9–15.
[108] Aharoni and Avi-Yonah, *The Macmillan Atlas* 34.
[109] Hallo and Simpson, *Ancient Near East* 262.
[110] Grimal, *History of Ancient Egypt* 218.
[111] Breasted, *Ancient Records* 2:310.
[112] Redford, *Egypt, Canaan, and Israel* 408.
[113] Hoffmeier, "Memphis and Karnak Stelae" 2:22; Pritchard, *ANET* 247.
[114] Pritchard laments, "Even though two of the figures give questionable readings, no clear alternatives will supply the total given on the stele" (*ANET* 247).

error may be nothing more than a mistake in addition, as the individual numbers are probably more reliable than the recorded sum.[115] Therefore, the number 101,128 is preferred over 89,600. Before contrasting A2 with its predecessors, attention must be drawn to the confiscation of 1,092 chariots, which, along with the 13,500 weapons, would be critical for replacing the "600 select chariots and all the *other* chariots of Egypt" lost in the Red Sea (Exod 14:7).

The military campaigns of Thutmose III, which are described in *The Annals of Thutmose III*, also will be abbreviated: his first Asiatic campaign (T1), sixth (T6), and seventh (T7). The prisoners taken on the various campaigns are compiled as follows: A1 = 2,214 captives; A2 = 101,128 captives; T1 = 5,903 captives; T6 = 217 captives; and T7 = 494 captives.[116] The most glaring detail is obviously the disparity between the number of captives taken during A2 versus the other four campaigns, which together averaged 2,207 prisoners, or 2.2% of the prisoners taken during A2. Put differently, A2 yielded forty-six times more prisoners than all of the other campaigns combined! Why this tremendous disparity? Is it merely coincidental that such a vast number of prisoners was taken during the last Asiatic campaign of the Eighteenth Dynasty? If the exodus and A2 occurred in the same year, Amenhotep II would have had just cause to launch a November campaign, as he desperately would need to fill the enormous void left behind by the evacuation of the Hebrew slaves.[117]

Goal of Impressing the Kings of Egypt's Rival Empires

Other information on the booty lists may attest to the connection between the exodus events and A2.

> Now when the Prince of Naharin, the Prince of Hatti, and the Prince of Shanhar heard of the great victories that I had made, each one tried to outdo his competitor in offering gifts, from every foreign land. They thought on account of their grandfathers to beg his majesty for the breath of life to be given to them: 'We will carry our taxes to your palace, son of Re, Amenhotep (II), divine ruler of Heliopolis, ruler of rulers, a panther who rages in every foreign land and in this land forever.'[118]

Amenhotep II makes the fascinating statement that the King of Mitanni, the King of the Hittites, and the King of Babylon all "heard of the victories" that he had accomplished in southern Palestine. This reference to the effect of a military campaign upon kings of distant nations, all of whom ruled empires in their own right, is unique among contemporary Egyptian booty lists and annals.

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[115] "The total given, 89,600, is actually wrong, the correct total being 101,128!" (Hoffmeier, "Memphis and Karnak Stelae" 2:22).
[116] Ibid., 21; Pritchard, *ANET* 239, 246; Hoffmeier, "The Annals of Thutmose III" 2:12.
[117] As Shea notes, "While some have questioned the very high number given here, if one looks at the needs for state labor right after the exodus, the number does not look so high after all" (Shea, "Amenhotep II as Pharaoh" 47).
[118] Ibid.; Hoffmeier, "Memphis and Karnak Stelae" 2:22. The Prince of Shanhar, or biblical Shinar, is equated with the King of Babylon (Pritchard, *ANET* 247).

Why was Amenhotep II so concerned with how these kings viewed his Year-9 conquests? Not many propositions suffice, especially considering the exceedingly limited scope of A2. Yet if he needed to save face after the devastating loss of his army, a victorious campaign could convince them of his continued ability to wage war successfully. Joshua notes that the Lord "dried up the waters" of the Red Sea expressly so that "all the peoples of the earth may know that the hand of the Lord is mighty" (Josh 4:23, 24). This goal was realized even 40 years after the exodus, as Rahab of Jericho testified that "all the inhabitants of the land. .. have heard how the Lord dried up the water of the Red Sea" (Josh 2:9–10), and the Hivites of Gibeon told Israel of "the fame of the Lord your God," since they "heard the report of Him and all that He did in Egypt" (Josh 9:9).

Summary of Egypt's Losses after the Exodus

Thus Amenhotep II's boasting to his rival kings, the weapons and chariots taken as booty, and the disproportion of slaves taken during A2 together argue strongly in favor of a connection between A2 and Egypt's losses after the exodus. This circumstantial evidence obviously will not satisfy critics whose presuppositions militate against tying the exodus to A2. For objective onlookers, though, one important question is whether the booty-list reveals an Israelite connection to A2 and its material acquisitions: Is there tangible evidence that links the Israelites to A2?

VII. Appearance of 3,600 Apiru on the Booty List

Among the conquered peoples listed on A2 were 3,600 "Apiru," the Egyptian equivalent of the Akkadian "Habiru," a word that also appears in the Amarna Letters.[119] Who are the Apiru whom Amenhotep II captured during A2? Earlier biblical scholars unashamedly equated the Apiru/Habiru with the Hebrew word עִבְרִי(ʿbri, "Hebrew").

Subsequently, many have rejected equating the Apiru with the Hebrews, often arguing that "Apiru" has more of a sociological than an ethnic connotation. Beitzel advocates the "impossibility of (the) equation of Habiru and Hebrews in Biblical studies."[120] The fashionable scholarly opinion is that the Amarna Letters portray the Apiru as marauding brigands who seize, loot, burn towns, and generally ravage the landscape. Moreover, since the Habiru are found at different locations and times around the ANE, the term allegedly cannot refer to the Hebrews.[121]

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[119] Hoffmeier, "Memphis and Karnak Stelae" 2:22.

[120] Barry J. Beitzel, "Habiru," in *ISBE*, vol. 2 (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1982) 588-89.

[121] Hoffmeier, "Memphis and Karnak Stelae" 2:22. SA.GAZ, the Sumerian logographic equivalent of Habiru, and its variants are found in cuneiform texts from *ca*. 2, 500 B.C. to the eleventh century B.C.. In light of this, many are unwilling to associate the Apiru of the fifteenth century B.C. with the Hebrews. However, Abram was known as a Hebrew in the twenty-first century B.C. (Gen 14:13), so the solution to the dilemma is that the two non-guttural consonants found in the tri-consonantal root of *'bri*, the exact consonants that appear in Akkadian and Ugaritic (*br*, possibly meaning "cross over, go beyond"), are also used in "Eber" (Gen 10:21), the ancestor of Abram from whom the word undoubtedly derives. Thus Abram is one of numerous Eberite peoples, all of whom are known as Habiru due to their retention of Eber's ancient namesake (R. F. Youngblood, "Amarna Tablets," in *ISBE*, vol. 1 [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1979] 108; Beitzel, "Hebrew (People)," in *ISBE* 2:657).

Yet scholars have not completely abandoned the association of the Habiru with the Hebrews. Many who equate them say that perhaps "Habiru" originally designated groups of outlaws or was a derogatory expression, and only later it was used of the Hebrews as a distinct ethnic group.[122] But should one concede that the designation of outlaw-marauders actually preceded that of the ethnically distinct Hebrews? Though the present work cannot identify the limitations of the term "Habiru," whether or not the Apiru of A2 might be Hebrews must be addressed. Either way, the appearance of the Apiru on a formal list of Asiatic captives is quite unusual.[123]

Bryant Wood notes that "the [Amarna] Letters are taken up with. .. the hostilities of the *Habiru* in the hill country. The references to the *Habiru* in the Amarna Letters appear to be allusions to the mopping-up operations of the Israelites at this time, but no individual *Habiru* is mentioned by name."[124] At least one Egyptologist also considers that the Apiru "are synonymous with the Hebrews mentioned in the Amarna correspondence; by Amenhotep II's time, they seem to have become integrated into the societies to which they had emigrated, playing marginal roles as mercenaries or servants, as in the events described in *The Taking of Joppa*. In Egypt, they appear during the reign of Thutmose III as wine-makers in the Theban tombs of the Second Prophet of Amun Puyemre (TT 39) and the herald Intef (TT 155)."[125] While Apiru served in Egypt as winemakers during the days of Thutmose III, there is no record of Egyptians having captured any as slaves before A2, which is consistent with the biblical record. In his discussion of A2, Aharoni concludes, "Apiru-Habiru = Hebrews."[126]

The popular designation of the Habiru as a band of marauding brigands faces a major obstacle in that 3,600 Apiru were captured on A2. Hoffmeier, calling this number "a rather large figure,"[127] elsewhere notes, "If the large numbers are to be believed, Apiru/Habiru were not just small bands of marauders in Amenhotep's day."[128] This number far exceeds that of a loosely-organized gang of bandits. Wood correctly concludes that "[t]he *'apiru* of the highlands of Canaan described in the Amarna Letters of the mid-14th century B.C. conform to the biblical Israelites."[129]

Beitzel, who zealously opposes the association of the Apiru with the Hebrews, states, "[T]he Amarna Hapiru seems to be composed of diverse ethnic elements from various localities."[130] Yet the dispersion of the Apiru throughout Canaan is expected if they are the 2,000,000+ Israelite settlers (Josh 11:23). Beitzel's claim is unfounded, because nothing in the Amarna Letters requires that the Apiru be ethnically diverse. Hoffmeier underscores the certainty of the Apiru's ethnic homogeneity: "It is clear from the occurrence in the [Memphis] stele of

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[122] Ibid.
[123] Pritchard, *ANET* 247.
[124] Bryant G. Wood, "One Thousand Years Missing from Biblical History? A Review of a New Theory," *Bible and Spade* 6/4 (Autumn 1993):98.
[125] Grimal, *History of Ancient Egypt* 219.
[126] Aharoni and Avi-Yonah, *The Macmillan Atlas* 34.
[127] Hoffmeier, *Israel in Egypt* 124.
[128] Hoffmeier, "Memphis and Karnak Stelae" 2:22.
[129] Wood, "The Rise and Fall" 489.
[130] Beitzel, "Habiru" 2:588.

Amenhotep II that they were identified as a specific group like the other ethnic groups taken as prisoners by the king."[131] Two items support this homogeneity.

First, they were listed among the ethnic groups on the booty list of A2. "Listing the habiru alongside of other ethnic groups from Hurru, Retenu, and the Shasu suggests that the Egyptians may have viewed the habiru as a distinguishable ethnic group."[132] The Apiru appear third on the list, preceded by princes and brothers of the princes, and followed by three names with geographic connotation: the Shasu, who were Bedouin to the south of Palestine; the Kharu, who were "Horites," residents of Syro-Palestine; and the Nagasuites/Neges, who dwelled in Upper Retenu, near Aleppo.[133] *The Annals of Thutmose III* confirm the Kharu's ethnicity. Since the Kharu are listed among peoples with armies and horses, along with Mitanni (Naharin), their distinct ethnicity—and thus that of the Apiru—cannot be doubted.[134]

Second, their prominent position among the ethnic groups on the booty list of A2. The 3,600 Apiru are notably more numerous than the princes and brothers of the princes who appear before them, and notably fewer than the three people-groups listed after them.[135] The scribe of the Memphis Stele attributes the initial position to royalty, and then he names distinct ethnic groups, among which the Apiru appear first, despite their number being far fewer than that of the subsequent ethnic groups. This initial, prominent position among non-royal captives is easily explainable if these were Hebrews, and the exodus had occurred not seven months before A2.

How does the Bible account for the Egyptians' capture of 3,600 Hebrews when the main body of Israelites was wandering in the wilderness in the distant Sinai Peninsula under Moses' leadership (Num 14:33)? The date for A2 in November of the exodus year coincides with a silent period in biblical history. Exodus concludes with Israel near Mount Sinai, though Moses parenthetically adds a retrospective summary of how the Lord guided them during their subsequent journeys (Exod 40:36–38). Meanwhile, Numbers begins in the fourteenth month after the exodus (Num 1:1), about five months after A2 concluded. Therefore, A2 fits into this silent period, with no inherent conflict between the capture of the 3,600 Israelites—who probably left the Israelite camp and journeyed toward southern Palestine, near the travel route of A2—and the biblical events that transpired after the exodus.[136]

VIII. Amenhotep II and the Desecration of Hatshepsut's Image

Egyptian history itself may confirm Amenhotep II as the exodus-pharaoh. At the death of Thutmose II, the throne was given first to his son, Thutmose III, and later also assumed by his

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[131] Hoffmeier, "Memphis and Karnak Stelae" 2:22.
[132] Hoffmeier, *Israel in Egypt* 124.
[133] Pritchard, *ANET* 247.
[134] Hoffmeier, "The Annals of Thutmose III" 2:9.
[135] Pritchard, *ANET* 247.
[136] Such periods of silence are not unusual. "The book of Numbers concentrates on events that take place in the second and fortieth years after the exodus. All incidents recorded in 1:1–14:45 occur in 1444 B.C., the year after the exodus. Everything referred to after 20:1 is dated ca. 1406/1405 B.C.," while there is a complete "lack of material devoted to this 37 year period" that intervenes between the second and fortieth years after the exodus (MacArthur, *Study Bible* 195).

widow, Hatshepsut. Her rise to power came from her role as the child-king's regent; given his youthfulness, her self-appointment to the rank of coregent probably met little or no opposition within the royal court.[137] Sometime between Year 2 and Year 4 of Thutmose III, Hatshepsut assumed full royal titulary, making herself a female pharaoh of equal rank.[138]

Identifying Moses' Adoptive Mother

Moses evidently was born during the reign of Thutmose I, whose daughter, Hatshepsut, qualifies as a legitimate candidate for the pharaoh's daughter who drew Moses from the Nile River (Exod 2:5).[139] Was she old enough during her father's second regnal year, when Moses was probably born (*ca*. 1527 B.C.) to qualify as his Egyptian stepmother?

One scenario may preclude Hatshepsut from being the princess who drew Moses from the Nile. The chief wife of Thutmose I, Queen Ahmose, was called "the King's Sister," but never "the King's Daughter," a title given only to a princess, meaning that she may have been the sister or half-sister of Thutmose I. If this were true, a brother-sister marriage probably occurred after Thutmose I was promoted to heir apparent, as such political matches that consolidated a would-be successor's claim to the throne were standard procedure in ancient Egypt.[140] Perhaps, then, Hatshepsut was born after Thutmose I was coronated (*ca*. 1529 B.C.), and thus was a little over twelve years old when she married her (half-) brother (*ca*. 1516 B.C.). This would make her under three years old at Moses' birth, at which age she could hardly venture down to the Nile, let alone draw out an infant-bearing reed basket.

There is no proof that Hatshepsut was born after her father's accession, though, and she could have been the daughter of Amenhotep I. In addition, the uncertainty about when Thutmose II's reign began means that he may have served as co-regent with his father, Thutmose I, for several years. Hatshepsut thus would have been old enough to draw Moses out of the Nile during her father's second regnal year, so she is a legitimate candidate for Moses' Egyptian adoptive-mother, since her father was already over 35 years old when he assumed the throne.

All the evidence points to Hatshepsut as the most likely candidate for Moses' stepmother, because her blood-sister, Princess Akhbetneferu, died in infancy, because Lady Mutnofret—according to existing records—never bore a daughter to Thutmose I,[141] and because Exod 2:10 states that after "the child [Moses] grew, she [his mother] brought him to Pharaoh's daughter, and he became her son." Therefore, Moses' Egyptian stepmother lived long enough *after* she retrieved him from the Nile, increasing the likelihood that an account of this "daughter of Pharaoh" (Exod 2:5) would be documented somewhere in the Egyptians' detailed records, a qualification held by Hatshepsut alone.

The Defacer of Hatshepsut's Image

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[137] Hallo and Simpson, *Ancient Near East* 259.
[138] William Petty, "Redating the Reign of Hatshepsut," *KMT* 13/4 (Winter 2002–2003):51, 53.
[139] Rea, "Oppression and Exodus" 10.
[140] Tyldesley, *Hatchepsut* 65, 77.
[141] Ibid.

Some indeterminable time after Hatshepsut's death, someone attempted to obliterate any historical record of her. Many inscribed cartouches of her were erased, while her busts were smashed or broken into pieces, perhaps by workmen dispatched to various sites throughout Egypt. In some cases, the culprits carefully and completely hacked out the silhouette of her image from carvings, often leaving a distinct, Hatshepsut-shaped lacuna in the middle of a scene, often as a preliminary step to replacing it with a different image or royal cartouche, such as that of Thutmose I or II.[142] At Karnak, her obelisks were walled-up and incorporated into the vestibule in front of Pylon V, while at Djeser-Djeseru her statues and sphinxes were removed, smashed, and cast into trash dumps.[143]

According to most Egyptologists, this massive effort to destroy all records of Hatshepsut was launched by Thutmose III, with a predictable motive: out of sexist pride, he attempted to eliminate every trace of this dreaded female pharaoh's rule, intending to rewrite Egyptian history to portray a smooth succession of male rulers from Thutmose I to himself.[144] "Wounded male pride may also have played a part in his decision to act; the mighty warrior king may have balked at being recorded for posterity as the man who ruled for 20 years under the thumb of a mere woman."[145] But several factors weaken the theory that Thutmose III was the perpetrator.

First, that Thutmose III defaced her image is inconsistent with how he otherwise related to her memory. A scene on the dismantled Chapelle Rouge at Djeser-Djeseru portrays Hatshepsut, and the inscription identifies her: "The Good God, Lady of the Two Lands, Daughter of Ra, Hatshepsut."[146] Thutmose III, who is pictured steering his barque toward Deir el-Bahri, actually completed the Chapelle Rouge, added the topmost register of decorations in his own name, then claimed the shrine as his own. Also, Hatshepsut's name is still preserved in her Monthu temple at Armant, which Thutmose III enlarged. Furthermore, Thutmose III planned the construction of his own temple to Amun, which was to be built Deir el-Bahri, a site that Hatshepsut built up greatly, including massive terraces and here own temple next to the one that he subsequently built.[147]

Second, if he did it, Thutmose III waited at least 20 years after her death before desecrating her image. That he would wait until over 20 years after she had departed to initiate an anti-feminism campaign out of hatred seems impossible. "While it is possible to imagine and even empathize with Thutmose III indulging in a sudden whim of hatred against his stepmother immediately after her death, it is far harder to imagine him overcome by such a whim some 20 years later."[148]

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[142] Ibid., 79. For pictures of Hatshepsut's image and cartouches hacked-out of various monuments and statutes, see http://w ww.nbts-ru.org/EN/DPet/HatPic.html, accessed 02/27/06.
[143] Tyldesley, *Hatchepsut* 114–15, 216.
[144] Hallo and Simpson, *Ancient Near East*, 259, 261; Redford, *Egypt, Canaan, and Israel*, 156; Tyldesley, *Hatchepsut*, 216.
[145] Tyldesley, *Hatchepsut*, 225.
[146] Ibid., 219.
[147] Ibid., 219-20; Grimal, *History of Ancient Egypt* 216.
[148] Tyldesley, *Hatchepsut* 220, 224–25. Bryan asserts that the dishonoring of Hatshepsut began *ca*. Year 46 or 47, and that this event may have paved the way for the joint rule with Amenhotep II, but she provides no support for her conclusions (Betsy M. Bryan, "The Eighteenth Dynasty

Third, if Thutmose III was the culprit, as proven by his construction project at Karnak, he must have had sufficient motive to attempt to prevent her from living eternally. According to Egyptian religion, removing the name or image of a deceased person was a direct assault on his/her spirit and amounted to a total obliteration from which there was no return. This act against Hatshepsut was an attempt to "condemn her to oblivion—a fate worse than death for an Egyptian."[149] Thus the extermination of Hatshepsut's image from the earth was indeed a drastic step: the removal of her spirit from its perpetual existence in the afterlife.[150] Such seems far too severe to fit the motive of mere sexism.

Fourth, if Thutmose III was the culprit, why were there also attacks against the name and monuments of Senenmut, the foreign chief-advisor of Hatshepsut who disappeared from the record in or after Hatshepsut's nineteenth regnal year (*ca*. 1488/7 B.C.)? Occasionally his name was violated while his image remained intact, but some of his statues were smashed and physically thrown out of temples.[151] This attack upon her *male* chief-advisor's image can hardly be justified if Thutmose III was motivated purely by anti-feminist hatred.

Several options are offered to justify this extreme act committed by Thutmose III. (1) He wanted to atone for the offense of a female pharaoh against *maat* ("justice, truth"), a word used to describe the continuity in the universe that derived from the approval of the gods.[152] (2) The unorthodox coregency might have cast serious doubt on the legitimacy of his own right to rule, so he wanted to ensure both the legitimacy of his reign and his legacy. Neither option, however, addresses why Thutmose III would wait to start his anti-Hatshepsut campaign until at least twenty years after his sole rule began. Certainly he did not learn of the compromise that Hatshepsut's reign was to the state of *maat* only after he was an aged king; likewise, after twenty years of sole rule, his reign was secure, and his successful campaigning already had solidified for him a lasting legacy.

No Egyptologist has answered satisfactorily the nagging question of who was responsible for the widespread campaign to obliterate Hatshepsut's image from Egypt's annals and what was the motive for such a severe act. Whoever was responsible carried out the act only after Year 42 of Thutmose III, meaning that the desecration occurred no earlier than *ca*. 1464 B.C. Also, to envision that the culprit lived long after both Hatshepsut and her memory disappeared from the earth is difficult, since elapsed time would tend to diminish motive. Accordingly, two possible scenarios could incriminate Amenhotep II as culpable.

First, Amenhotep II contributed to the campaign to destroy Hatshepsut's image, but he was not the initial perpetrator. Tyldesley observes, "It is perhaps not too fanciful a leap of the imagination to suggest that Thutmose III, having started the persecution relatively late in the reign, may have died before it was concluded. His son and successor, Amenhotep II, with no

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Before the Amarna Period," in *The Oxford History of Ancient History*, ed. Ian Shaw [New York: Oxford University, 2000] 248).

[149] Grimal, *History of Ancient Egypt* 216.

[150] Tyldesley, *Hatchepsut* 216.

[151] Ibid., 206, 222.

[152] Ibid., 8, 225.

personal involvement in the campaign, may have been content to allow the vendetta to lapse."[153] Tyldesley does not explain why Amenhotep II would continue this campaign without personal involvement. Bryan agrees that "Amenhotep II himself completed the desecration of the female king's monuments," adding that "when [he] had finished his programme of erasures on the monuments of Hatshepsut at Karnak, he was able to concentrate on preparations for the royal jubilee at this temple."[154]

Second, Amenhotep II was the sole culprit in the campaign to destroy Hatshepsut's image. The responsible individual likely possessed pharaonic authority, and one legitimate motive for Amenhotep II to have committed this act is Hatshepsut's rearing of Moses as her own son in the royal court (Acts 7:21). After the Red Sea incident, Amenhotep II would have returned to Egypt seething with anger, both at the loss of his firstborn son and virtually his entire army (Exod 14:28), and he would have just cause to erase her memory from Egypt and remove her spirit from the afterlife. The Egyptian people would have supported this edict, since their rage undoubtedly rivaled pharaoh's because of their mourning over deceased family members and friends. The nationwide experience of loss also would account for the unified effort throughout Egypt to fulfill this defeated pharaoh's commission vigorously. A precedent exists for Amenhotep II's destruction of her monuments early in his reign: "At Karnak Hatshepsut left. .. the Eighth Pylon, a new southern gateway to the temple precinct.. .. Ironically, evidence of Hatshepsut's building effort is today invisible, since the face of the pylon was erased and redecorated in the first years of Amenhotep II."[155] Perhaps Year 9 was when it all began.

IX. Conclusion

Now it is possible to answer the questions posed earlier. Could the eldest son of Amenhotep II have died during the tenth plague, which must be true of the exodus-pharaoh's son? The answer is yes. In fact, none of Amenhotep II's sons claimed to be his firstborn, and one Egyptologist theorizes that the eldest son died inexplicably during childhood. Did Amenhotep II die in the Red Sea, as the Bible allegedly indicates regarding the exodus-pharaoh? No, he died in usual fashion, and his mummified body is still preserved. Yet this does not conflict with the Bible, since no biblical text explicitly states that the exodus-pharaoh died there with his army.

Can any of Amenhotep II's military campaigns be related to the exodus events? Yes, his second Asiatic campaign coincides extremely well with the exodus events, and many of the details related to it and Egypt's post-exodus future cannot be explained without these connections. Can the loss of over two million Hebrew slaves, certainly Egypt's "slave-base" at the time, be accounted for in the records of Amenhotep II's reign? Yes, the loss of the Israelite slaves can be accounted for by Amenhotep II's acquisition of 101,128 slaves in Canaan during his second Asiatic campaign, the only such campaign of its era that was launched in late fall and took many captives. Is there any evidence to confirm that Amenhotep II interacted with the Hebrews after they left Egypt? Yes, Amenhotep II captured 3,600 "Apiru" (Hebrews) during his second campaign, which was launched just under seven months after the exodus. Despite attempts to

[153] Ibid., 224.
[154] Bryan, "Eighteenth Dynasty" 250–51.
[155] Ibid., 240.

disprove the association of the Hebrews with the Apiru of the New Kingdom, more evidence favors their being the same people.

If Amenhotep II is the exodus-pharaoh, could the obliteration of Hatshepsut's image from many Egyptian monuments and inscriptions be attributed to backlash from the exodus events? Yes, Amenhotep II surfaces as the most logical candidate for the pharaoh who ordered this nationwide campaign of desecration. If Hatshepsut indeed was Moses' Egyptian stepmother—and she is the most legitimate candidate—Amenhotep II and all of Egypt had adequate motive to remove her image from Egypt and her spirit from the afterlife. These answers identify Amenhotep II as the most legitimate candidate for the exodus-pharaoh, but that biblical chronology of that era functions as a canon with which Egyptian history may be synchronized.

Hopefully, the principal purpose of this article has not been lost in the extensive historical detail in it. In this analysis of the exodus-pharaoh and ancient Egyptian history, the arguments of those who compromise biblical historicity proved unable to undermine biblical inerrancy. Compromising the Bible's inspired historical framework will invariably lead to the demise of its reliability as an accurate source for determining doctrine and enhancing spiritual growth. Conversely, "to connect the book more directly with ancient history can only enhance its theological meaning."[156] Though the strongest argumentation cannot remove negative presuppositions of those with doubts about biblical inerrancy, such argumentation can strengthen the faith of those with a high view of the Bible's accuracy.[3]

[156] Shea, "Amenhotep II as Pharaoh" 42.

[3] Douglas Petrovich, "Amenhotep II and the Historicity of the Exodus-Pharaoh," *Master's Seminary Journal* 17, no. 1 (2006): 78–110.

Smith, Henry B., Jr., and Kris J. Udd. "On the Authenticity of Kainan, Son of Arpachshad." ***Detroit Baptist Seminary Journal*** **24 (2019): 119–154.**

ON THE AUTHENTICITY OF KAINAN, SON OF ARPACHSHAD

by
Henry B. Smith Jr., with Kris J. Udd[1]

Kainan, the son of Arpachshad in Luke 3:36, is considered original to Luke's messianic genealogy by the editors of *Novum Testamentum Graece* 28 (NA[28]) and *UBS* 5.[2] A few scholars have argued instead that his name originated as a scribal error in an early manuscript of Luke's Gospel. Then, Christian scribes across the Mediterranean world almost universally accepted his name as original to Luke, interpolating Kainam/n[3] into the forty plus manuscripts of Luke presently extant. According to this theory, Christian scribes also added Kainan to all known Septuagint (LXX) manuscripts of Genesis 11:13b–14b[4] dated prior to the 12th century AD. While doing so, they allegedly borrowed the begetting age (130) and remaining years of life (330) from Shelah in the next verse (LXX Gen 11:15–16) and falsely assigned them to Kainan. They also added Kainan to some manuscripts of LXX Genesis 10:24 and 1 Chronicles 1:18, 24. Additionally, Christian scribes also amended extant copies of the pseudepigraphical *Book of Jubilees* by fabricating a biography for Kainan in chapter eight and inserting it between the lives of Arpachshad and Shelah.

This article will examine several lines of textual and historical evidence and demonstrate that this explanation for Kainan's origin cannot be sustained. Other untenable theories of Kainan's origin will also be explored. Instead of being spurious, Kainan's originality in LXX Genesis 10:24 and 11:13b–14b, the *Book of Jubilees*, and Luke 3:36 is virtually certain. Moreover, we will also propose that the most viable explanation for the known matrix of evidence is that Kainan appeared in the original Hebrew text of Genesis, but first disappeared from Genesis 11 by a combination of scribal and mental error in a very ancient archetypal Hebrew manuscript. This was followed by a complex sequence of events that occurred over the span of several centuries.

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[1] Dr. Udd and Mr. Smith have co-authored § 1.1–3. The remainder of the article reflects the research and conclusions of Mr. Smith.

[2] Barbara Aland and Kurt Aland, eds., *Novum Testamentum Graece*, 28th ed. (Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 2012), 191; Barbara Aland et al., eds., *The Greek New Testament*, 5th rev. ed. (Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 2014), 410.

[3] Καιναμ is indicated as the original reading in NA[28] instead of the close variant, Καιναν. The variant endings (μ/ν) are found in both LXX and NT manuscripts. We will use "Kainan" throughout this article unless a distinction is required. The importance of the spelling variation is briefly discussed in § 1.3 and 2.3.

[4] The Masoretic Text (MT) in Gen 11:12–13 reads, "When Arpachshad had lived 35 years, he fathered Shelah. And Arpachshad lived after he fathered Shelah 403 years and had other sons and daughters." We will designate the verses in the LXX with Kainan's inclusion between Arpachshad and Shelah as 11:13b–14b.

LXX Septuagint

LXX Septuagint

LXX Septuagint

1. NEW TESTAMENT AND SEPTUAGINT PAPYRI

1.1. 𝔓⁷⁵, Papyrus Bodmer XIV–XV

𝔓⁷⁵ contains large portions of the Gospels of Luke and John. It has been paleographically dated between AD 175 and 250 by several New Testament text critical scholars.[5] Overall, it is considered a well-preserved manuscript and its textual affinities are close to those of Codex Vaticanus (B). Its age and proximity to B make 𝔓⁷⁵ an important witness to the early history and textual transmission of the New Testament.[6]

NA²⁸ lists 𝔓⁷⁵ as one of two manuscripts which omit Kainan from Luke 3:36.[7] Since 𝔓⁷⁵ is generally considered the earliest known manuscript of Luke, some scholars who reject Kainan as original appeal to his alleged absence in 𝔓⁷⁵ and its conventional date of origin as evidence for their position.[8]

NA²⁸ qualifies its listing of 𝔓⁷⁵ with the superscripted designation *vid* (=*videtur*). As it turns out, this term, "apparent reading, but not certain," is there for very good reasons.[9] Martin and Kasser

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[5] See a list in Pasquale Orsini and Willy Clarysse, "Early New Testament Manuscripts and Their Dates: A Critique of Theological Paleography," *Ephemerides Theologicae Lovanienses* 88 (2012): 471. This generally accepted date range has recently been challenged by Brent Nongbri, "Reconsidering the Place of Papyrus Bodmer XIV–XV (𝔓⁷⁵) in the Textual Criticism of the New Testament," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 135 (2016): 405–37. Nongbri proposes that a 4th century AD date is also possible. In this article, we will follow the conventional dating, but also acknowledge that Nongbri's challenges to the *status quo* require consideration.
B Codex Vaticanus
[6] Juan Hernandez Jr., "The Early Text of Luke," in *The Early Text of the New Testament*, ed. Charles E. Hill and Michael J. Kruger (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 130–38.
NA *Novum Testamentum Graece* 28
[28] *Novum Testamentum Graece* 28
[7] NA²⁸, 191.
[8] Andrew E. Steinmann, "Challenging the Authenticity of Cainan, Son of Arpachshad," *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 60 (2017): 702–3; Jonathan Sarfati, "Biblical Chronogenealogies," *Creation ex Nihilo Technical Journal* 17 (2003): 17; idem, "What about Cainan?" *Creation ex Nihilo Technical Journal* 18 (2004): 43; Larry Pierce, "So-Called Error in Luke 3:36," *Creation ex Nihilo Technical Journal* 14 (2000): 49–51. J. Paul Tanner suggests that Kainan was a later insertion into the LXX. He relies on 𝔓⁷⁵ to argue against Kainan's inclusion in Luke, but provides no explanation for how it originated ("Old Testament Chronology and Its Implications for the Creation and Flood Accounts," *Bibliotheca Sacra* 172 [January–March 2015]: 33–34).
NA *Novum Testamentum Graece* 28
[28] *Novum Testamentum Graece* 28
[9] The fragment can be also seen online: "Papyrus Hanna 1 (Mater Verbi)," Digital Vatican Library, accessed January 16, 2019 https://digi.vatlib.it/view/MANUSCRIPTS_Pap.Hanna.1(Mater.Verbi)/0002. 𝔓⁷⁵ has been renamed Papyrus Hanna 1.

published a reconstruction of the text of Luke 3:34–36 in 1961, reproduced here.[10] The bracketed text is conjectured and letters recorded as extant appear in bold. We have added the number of letters per line.

Column 1

Line 1	…… **τογ**	
Line 2	**ιογδα**[34][τογ ιακωβ τογ ισαακ τογ α	(25 letters)
Line 3	**βρα**[αμ] **τογ θαρ**[α τογ ναχωρ[35]τογ σερογχ	(29 letters)
Line 4	**τογ**[ραγα]**γ τογ φ**[αλεκ] **τογ** [εβερ	(23 letters)
Line 5	**τ]ογ** [σαλα[36]τογ α]**ρφα**[ϩαδ το]**γ** [σημ	(23 letters)[11]

The Institut für Neutestamentliche Textforschung (INTF) Virtual Manuscript Room presents a reconstruction of Luke 3:33–36 with more letters as extant. INTF combines Martin and Kasser's reconstruction with a study done in 2007 by Lakmann,[12] as follows:

Column 1 Folio 7^{r}

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[10] Victor Martin and Rodolphe Kasser, *Papyrus Bodmer XIV. Évangile de Luc, Chap. 3–24* (Cologny-Genève: Bibliotheca Bodmeriana, 1961), 33. Martin and Kasser have placed spaces between the names and the definite articles, presumably for ease of reading.

[11] This font was created by Kris J. Udd. It replicates the letter shapes and relative letter spacing of $\mathfrak{P}^{75}$ as much as possible.
INTF Institut für Neutestamentliche Textforschung

[12] Marie-Luise Lakmann, "Papyrus Bodmer XI–XV ($\mathfrak{P}^{75}$): Neue Fragmente," *Museum Helveticum* 64 (2007): 26. Lakmann calls the fragment "folio 7^{r}," while it is listed as "7^{v}" on the INTF website. We follow Lakmann's designation here.

Line 1	[33][τογ αρνι τογ εσρωμ τογ φαρες]τογ	(26 letters)
Line 2	ιογδα[34][τογ ιακωβ τογ ισαακ τολ α]	(25 letters)
Line 3	βρα[αμ]τογ θαρ[α]τογ ναχω[ρ[35]τογ σεροογχ]	(29 letters)
Line 4	τογ[ραγα]γ τογ φαλε[κ]τογ[εβερ]	(23 letters)
Line 5	[τ]ογ[σαλα[36]τολ α]ρφα[ζ]αδ τ[ογ]σ[νμ][13]	(23 letters)

Looking closely at line 5, there seem to be enough letters to establish the reading for Arpachshad (α]ρφα[ζ]αδ). To his right, Shem is preserved as τ[ογ]σ[νμ]. Moving up to line 4, there is space for Reu, as the upsilon seems to confirm his placement there ([ραγα]γ). Peleg seems beyond

[13] Institut für Neutestamentliche Textforschung, accessed January 18, 2019, http://ntvmr.uni-muenster.de/manuscript-workspace?docID=10075&pageID=30. Lakmann's reconstruction is the same as INTF's version for Luke 3:35–36. She does not include verses 33 and 34. We have added verses and letters per line. According to Robinson, ultraviolet photographs of $\mathfrak{P}^{75}$ produced by the British Museum in the 1980s were examined by Lakmann (James M. Robinson, "Fragments from the Cartonnage of $\mathfrak{P}^{75}$," *Harvard Theological Review* 101 [April 2008]: 231–35). For folio 7[r], Lakmann states that there was "kein photo," referring to the infrared versions. Lakmann's black and white photo on page 35 is the same image as the one on the Vatican website (see below). The folios had been glued together (3:34–36 and 4:1–2), so Lakmann used Martin and Kasser's reconstruction as a guide ("Papyrus Bodmer," 26). This is explained by Robinson (239): "The transcriptions of the *editio princeps* [by Martin and Kasser] have the following captions: … ('Luke 3:33–4:2 [binding*]'), with the following footnote at the bottom of page 32 to explain the asterisks: … ('Leaves used in making the binding, see the introduction, pages 11–13'). At the bottom of page 33, we read the following footnote: … ('* This page of a leaf used in making the binding [see the introduction, pages 5, 9, and 11–13] could not be photographed')."

question, even in Martin and Kasser's reconstruction. Eber is conjectured, but his placement after Peleg is based on many other NT manuscripts. Both reconstructions omit Kainan.

We propose there is an equally viable reconstruction that would include Kainan. Note how the INTF/Lakmann reconstruction on line 4 ends with Eber after 23 letters, then moves down to line five. There, **ογ** from a definite article is recorded as extant, and **cαλα** is conjectured as the next patriarch. However—and this is most significant—there is no visual or previously documented evidence for any letters from Shelah's name.

Observe at the end of line 3 that Serug (**τογcερογχ**) is conjectured, jutting out the furthest to the right, 29 letters in all. Serug cannot appear at the beginning of line 4, as Peleg (**τογφαλε**[κ]) allows only enough room for Reu (**τογ**[ραγα]**γ**) to be placed before him. Since Serug extended the line length to 29 letters, there was originally room on the papyrus for several letters right beneath his name. If the conjecture for Serug is correct, then **τογcαλα** could easily have fit beneath Serug's name after Eber at the end of line four instead of at the beginning of line five. Since line 3 is 29 letters long when **cαλα** is added, we propose that the last alpha may have been written at the beginning of line five. There is plenty of room for **τογcαλ**(α) to appear at the end of line 4 after Eber, *and*, there is no previously documented or present visible evidence from $\mathfrak{P}^{75}$ itself that **cαλα** appeared at the beginning of line five.

The inclusion of **ατογκαιναν** at the beginning of line 5 would only increase its line length to 26 letters, fitting the context well. Therefore, we propose that the following textual reconstruction, with Kainan included in $\mathfrak{P}^{75}$ on line 5, is equally plausible:

Line 3	**βρα**[αμ]**τογ θαρ**[α]**τογ** **ναχω**[ρ τογ cερογχ]	(29 letters)
Line 4	**τογ**[ραγα]**γ τογ** **φαλε**[κ]**τογ**[εβερ τογ cαλ]	(29 letters)
Line 5	**α**τ]**ογ**[καιναν τογ α]**ρφα**[ϫ]**αα τ**[ογ]**c**[ημ]	(26 letters)

ατογκαιναν (or **καιναμ**) is only 3 letters longer than **τογχαλα**, so his name could have fit at the start of line five. In particular, the iota (**ι**) is thin, taking up little additional space. Moreover,

letters were not uniformly spaced nor written in the exact same size by the scribe who copied 𝔓[75]. There is considerable variation in both features throughout the manuscript.[14]

We used the above reconstruction by INTF/Lakmann to present the "most generous" number of extant letters recorded by scholars. Martin/Kasser, Comfort/Barrett,[15] and Swanson[16] record even fewer letters as extant. Amongst all these sources, there has been no documented evidence that ⲥⲁⲗⲁ *must* have appeared at the beginning of line five.

The present condition of this folio is extremely poor and the fragment presently reveals far less than what scholars have recorded as extant. Since the photo from the Vatican website is exactly the same one that appears in Lakmann's article, this confirms it is the same folio that she examined for her reconstruction. In other words, it has not changed since Lakmann examined it in 2007 (figure 1).

Figure 1: The fragment of 𝔓75 identified by Lakmann and the Vatican website as containing Luke 3:34–35/36 (folio 7[r]). Image enhancement in black and white by Susan Gliatta. Credit: Courtesy of the Hanna Family and Solidarity Association and the Vatican Digital Library.

Figure 2: The text of Luke 3:34–36 without Kainan, laid over folio 7[r]. Credit: Kris Udd.

In figure 2, we have attempted to match up the ⲁ and ⲇ from ⲁⲣⲫⲁϫⲁⲇ with the extant letter(s) on the bottom left of the fragment since it seems to most closely resemble what is visible there. However, this requires us to shift the verse too far to the left. If we shifted line 3 back to the right to align it properly, there is no other combination of letters from ⲧⲟⲩⲁⲣⲫⲁϫⲁⲇ that can match up with the extant text.

Magnification of the fragment on the bottom left in figure 3 allows us to make a more plausible identification. We propose that the extant letter is a ⲙ, not a combination of ⲁ and ⲇ or any other

[14] The reader can observe first-hand the variations in letter and word size in a well preserved section of Luke 8:5–16, available on the Vatican website: https://digi.vatlib.it/view/MANUSCRIPTS_Pap.Hanna.1(Mater.Verbi)/0015. INTF Institut für Neutestamentliche Textforschung

[15] Philip W. Comfort and David P. Barrett, eds., *The Complete Text of the Earliest New Testament Manuscripts* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1999), 497. According to them, the following are also missing: (1) All of Nahor's name, (2) all but the Φ in Peleg, (3) the A and Δ at the end of Arpachshad, and (4) the Σ in Shem.

[16] Reuben Swanson, ed., *New Testament Greek Manuscripts: Luke* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1995), 59. According to him, the following are also missing: (1) All of Nahor's name, (2) all but the Φ in Peleg, (3) the A and Δ at the end of Arpachshad, (4) the T in Shem's definite article, and (5) the Σ in Shem. Swanson documents the Y in Shem's definite article as extant, while INTF/Lakmann and Comfort/Barrett do not.

letters from Arpachshad. To confirm this, we have included a well-preserved section of Luke 8 on the right, written by the same hand. There, we can see multiple instances of ϻ, which look very much like the extant text in folio 7^{r}. A survey of 𝔓^{75} on the Vatican website confirms that the scribe consistently wrote ϻ with a deep dip in the middle, and each peak in the ϻ regularly appears straight up and down. There is a ϻ only in Abraham, Shem or Kainam(!) throughout verses 34–36, but none of the names match up with the extant ϻ on the fragment. Moreover, the letter next to the ϻ appears to be a ⊓ (figure 4), which is not found in any of the names from Luke 3:33–36.

Figure 3: Magnified bottom left portion of folio 7^{r} compared to a well-preserved section of Luke 8:15–16, lines 6–8 (right). Credit: Courtesy of the Hanna Family and Solidarity Association and the Vatican Digital Library.

Figure 4: Magnified bottom left portion of folio 7^{r} (fig. 3) compared to well-preserved sections of Luke 10:21 (left) and 36 (right), each with a ϻ and ⊓ next to one another. Credit: Courtesy of the Hanna Family and Solidarity Association and the Vatican Digital Library.

This fragment (folio 7^{r}) seems to be a better fit for the text of Luke 1:33–34, illustrated below in figure five.[17] The extant letters of the third line in particular appear to align with this passage much better than Luke 3:36. Since the fragment was found in the binding and contains glued layer(s), it becomes even more likely that it has either been misidentified or cannot be identified at all.

Figure 5: The text of Luke 1:33–34 laid over folio 7^{r} of 𝔓^{75}. Credit: Kris Udd.

In any case, it is not possible to draw any definitive conclusions about Kainan from 𝔓^{75} based on what remains of the fragment, nor from previous text critical reconstructions. When we consider the real possibility of misidentification or our equally plausible textual reconstruction with Kainan included, it can no longer be claimed that Kainan is definitively (or even likely) absent from 𝔓^{75}. If folio 7^{r} does contain Luke 3:34–36, it remains equally likely that it originally included Kainan. Based on this reassessment, we recommend that updated versions of NA and UBS eliminate references to Kainan's inclusion or exclusion in Luke 3:36 of 𝔓^{75}.

[17] Kris Udd searched for a match for this fragment in the surrounding chapters of Luke. He attempted to find a μ followed by π, along with an ου combination about 25–30 letters earlier, and the combination του 25–30 letters before that. Candidates which emerged were Luke 1:6, 33–34; 2:18–19; 4:23, 30–31; 5:19; 6:24–25, 39. The only verse that fit is Luke 1:33–34, and in our view, it is the best candidate.

In his doctoral thesis, Gordon Fee agreed that Kainan's alleged absence from $\mathfrak{P}^{75}$ is "not demonstrable from the extant text."[18] Our investigation of the fragment itself and previous academic studies confirm Fee's observation.[19] Since opponents of Kainan's inclusion depend heavily on $\mathfrak{P}^{75}$ being "the oldest extant manuscript of Luke,"[20] one of the primary arguments against Kainan's appearance in the original text of Luke 3:36 is negated.

1.2. $\mathfrak{P}^{4}$ (Suppl. Gr. 1120)

$\mathfrak{P}^{4}$ is housed at the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris. $\mathfrak{P}^{4}$ is one of the earliest manuscripts containing Luke's Gospel. The text of $\mathfrak{P}^{4}$ is in 90% agreement with $\mathfrak{P}^{75}$ and Codex Vaticanus (B).[21] Comfort and Barrett date $\mathfrak{P}^{4}$ to AD 150–175.[22] Despite their strong criticisms of Comfort's dating of other papyri, Orsini and Clarysse similarly date $\mathfrak{P}^{4}$ to *c*. AD 175–200.[23] This late second century date is based in part on $\mathfrak{P}^{4}$'s close affinities with $\mathfrak{P}^{64}$ and $\mathfrak{P}^{67}$,[24] generally dated to AD 200 or earlier.[25] All three were likely written by the same scribe.[26] Other scholars have proposed an early third century date for $\mathfrak{P}^{4}$.[27]

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[18] Gordon Fee, "The Significance of Papyrus Bodmer II and Papyrus Bodmer XIV–XV for Methodology in New Testament Textual Criticism" (PhD Dissertation, University of Southern California, 1966), 295. Fee's proposed solution to the problem, however, is inadequate.
[19] Even if Kainan were absent originally from $\mathfrak{P}^{75}$, there is the real possibility of omission by simple scribal error. Unlike Codices Sinaiticus, Alexandrinus, and Bezae, the scribe did not create space between the definite article TOY and each name. The text in $\mathfrak{P}^{75}$ is tight and repetitive, and if the scribe was copying from a manuscript with a similar lack of spacing, haplography is possible. TOY appears over 75 times in the span of just 14 verses, magnifying this possibility. To illustrate this just briefly, in verse 33 alone, Αμιναδαβ is omitted by B (4th century); Αρνι is omitted by A (5th century), D, and several manuscripts; and Φαρες is omitted by A (NA[28], 191). Haplography is the most obvious mechanism that can account for these omissions. Despite this evidence, Steinmann claims, "there is no obvious trigger for parablepsis that would account for an accidental omission of Cainan" ("Challenging the Authenticity," 702).
[20] Ibid.; Pierce, "So-Called Error," 51. If Nongbri's date range expansion for $\mathfrak{P}^{75}$ to the 4th century AD were to be upheld, it would further negate the use of $\mathfrak{P}^{75}$ against Kainan's original inclusion in Luke.
[21] Hernandez, "Early Text of Luke," 126; also Tommy Wasserman, "A Comparative Textual Analysis of $\mathfrak{P}^{4}$ and $\mathfrak{P}^{64+67}$," *TC: A Journal of Biblical Textual Criticism* (2010): 1–26.
[22] Philip W. Comfort and David P. Barrett, *The Text of the Earliest New Testament Greek Manuscripts* (Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House, 2001), 43, 52–53.
[23] Orsini and Clarysse, "Early New Testament Manuscripts," 461, 470.
[24] Wasserman, "Comparative Textual Analysis," 1–26.
[25] Orsini and Clarysse, "Early New Testament Manuscripts," 461, 470; Comfort and Barrett, *Text of the Earliest New Testament Greek Manuscripts*, 52–53.
[26] Wasserman, "Comparative Textual Analysis," 2, n. 4.
[27] Hernandez Jr., "Early Text of Luke," 124.

To our knowledge, except for a brief article by Williams,[28] studies about Kainan's veracity have not included analyses of $\mathfrak{P}^4$.[29] NA[28] signifies *vid* for $\mathfrak{P}^4$ for Luke 3:37, but no mention of $\mathfrak{P}^4$ is made for 3:36.[30] Comfort examined $\mathfrak{P}^4$ in July 1998 and documented the following reconstruction of Luke 3:34–36,[31] echoed on the INTF website.[32] The bold letters were documented as extant, with bracketed reconstructions due to erasures or lacunae:[33]

Column 2

Line 13	[34]**ΙΑΚΩΒ ΤΟΥ**[ΙΣΑΑΚ]
Line 14	**ΤΟΥ ΑΒΡΑΑΜ Τ**[ΟΥ ΘΑ]
Line 15	**ΡΑ** [Τ]**ΟΥ Ν**[ΑΧΩΡ[35]ΤΟΥ]
Line 16	**ΣΕΡΟΥ**[Χ ΤΟΥ ΡΑΓΑΥ]
Line 17	**ΤΟΥ ΦΑΛ**[ΕΚ ΤΟ]**Υ ΕΒΕΡ**
Line 18	**ΤΟΥ ΣΑΛ**[Α[36]ΤΟ]**Υ ΚΑ**[Ι]**Ν**[ΑΜ]

[28] Pete Williams, "Cainan: in or out?" *Creation Ex Nihilo Technical Journal* 14, no. 2 (2000): 54–56. Though brief and too conciliatory towards Kainan's alleged absence in $\mathfrak{P}^{75}$, Williams's letter to the editor is cautiously reasoned.

[29] "Studies" refer to articles or other publications that go beyond merely recording the raw data and discuss the viability of the name in Luke, the LXX, etc.
NA *Novum Testamentum Graece* 28

[28] *Novum Testamentum Graece* 28

[30] NA[28], 191. No scholar we are aware of who opposes the inclusion of Kainan in Luke demonstrates awareness of $\mathfrak{P}^4$.

[31] Comfort and Barrett, *Text of the Earliest New Testament Greek Manuscripts*, 50, n. 13.
INTF Institut für Neutestamentliche Textforschung

[32] The Instituts für Neutestamentliche Textforschung, accessed January 15, 2019 http://ntvmr.unimuenster.de/community/vmr/api/transcript/get/?docID=10004&pageID=40&format=html.

[33] Comfort and Barrett, *Text of the Earliest New Testament Greek Manuscripts*, 61.

[34] A full color photograph of $\mathfrak{P}^4$ appears in Henry B. Smith Jr., "New Evidence for Kainan in New Testament and LXX Papyri," *Bible and Spade* 31 (Summer 2018): 70–77.

Line 19 **ΤΟΥ ΑΡΦΑΞΑΔ ΤΟΥ**[Σ]**Η**[Μ]

Comfort observed three letters which are extant for Kainan at the end of line 18. His reconstruction is confirmed by the image of 𝔓[4] below, where the **K** and **A** (and part of the **N**) for Kainan are indisputably visible.[34]

To the left of Kainan, there is a remnant of his definite article. Above Kainan is evidence for Eber. To the left of Kainan is a lacuna, preceded by the definite article and 3 letters for Shelah (**ΤΟΥΣΑΛ**). Beneath Shelah is Arpachshad, where **ΦΑΞΑ** can be clearly seen. To the right of Arpachshad is the definite article for Shem, and below Shem one can easily see letters for Noah's father, Lamech (**ΥLAM**). The direct visual evidence combined with the restrictions of the textual matrix and the column widths make Kainan's inclusion in the late second or early third century AD manuscript 𝔓[4] beyond dispute.

Figure 6: An image of 𝔓4. The enlarged section reveals Kainam/n as extant. Enhancement by Susan Gliatta. Credit: Bibliothèque nationale de France, Paris.

1.3. 𝔓[4], 𝔓[75] and Text-Critical Praxis

Since the evidence in 𝔓[4] is certain, we can now assert that Kainan appears in the earliest known extant NT manuscript adequately preserving Luke 3:36. 𝔓[4] was discovered in Egypt,[35] far from Asia Minor where Luke's Gospel likely originated. It appears that Kainan was already deeply rooted in the textual tradition of Luke 3:36 by the late second or early third century AD.

In addition to 𝔓[4], Kainam/n also appears in more than 45 additional extant NT manuscripts preserving Luke 3:36.[36] There is only one exception: the 5th century AD Codex Bezae (D). While D certainly contributes to our understanding of NT textual transmission, "no known

[35] Numerous academic sources state that 𝔓[4] was found in the wall of a house in Coptos, Egypt. Brent Nongbri has traced out the story in detail and concludes, at best, we can only say𝔓[4] was found on the antiquities market in Luxor in the late 19th century. Nongbri also argues for a broader date range for 𝔓[4], AD 150 to 350 (*God's Library: The Archaeology of the Earliest Christian Manuscripts* [New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2018], 247–68).

[36] Του Καιναμ is found in manuscripts ℵ B E07 L019 1 33 209 1346 1582 2358. Του Καιναν is found in A G011 H013 K017 M021 N S U Y Δ Θ Λ Π Ψ Ω 2 13 28 35 69 118 124 157 346 700 788 1005 1424 2372, all known Greek minuscules, and Latin manuscripts, a b c e f ff[2] and q (H. Milton Haggard Center for New Testament Textual Studies, *The Center for New Testament Textual Studies' New Testament Critical Apparatus*, Bible Works 9 [New Orleans, LA: New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary, 2004]).
D Codex Bezae

manuscript has so many and such remarkable variations from what is usually taken to be the normal New Testament text."[37] In particular, it displays marked inferiority in the immediate context: it completely omits Luke 3:24–31 and inserts a reversed Matthew 1:6–16 in its place.[38] Bezae also inserts other names from the OT not attested in other manuscripts of Luke 3.[39] "This manuscript therefore provides a very precarious basis for omitting Cainan's name"[40] and it cannot stand alone against the force of $\mathfrak{P}^4$ and the deluge of manuscript evidence favoring Kainan's original inclusion.[41] Snoeberger concludes, "The parade of textual support offered in NA[28] for the inclusion of Καιναμ/ν in Luke 3:36 is decisive—the text-critical equivalent of a slam-dunk."[42]

A number of scholars have theorized Kainan originated as a scribal error in Luke 3:36 when it was accidentally picked up from the Kainan in Luke 3:37 in the mid-late third or early fourth century AD.[43] Shortly thereafter, he was widely accepted as authentic. For this theory to be true, it would have required Christian scribes across the Mediterranean world to universally accept his

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[37] Bruce M. Metzger and Bart D. Ehrman, *The Text of the New Testament: Its Transmission, Corruption, and Restoration*, 4th ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), 71; Mark Snoeberger, "Why Commitment to Inerrancy Does Not Demand a Strictly 6000–Year-Old Earth: One Young Earther's Plea for Realism," *Detroit Baptist Seminary Journal* 18 (2013): 8, n. 18.

[38] Swanson, *New Testament Greek Manuscripts: Luke*, 60; NA[28], 190–91.

[39] For the portion of the genealogy that runs from Joseph to David, the scribe substituted the material from the genealogy in Matthew, except in reverse order (to fit the direction Luke was listing names). But he did not use Matthew's genealogy exactly. Between Jehoram and Uzziah he supplied Ahaziah, Joash, and Amaziah; between Josiah and Jehoiachin he supplied Jehoiakim. Those four names do not appear in Matthew's genealogy, so the scribe had to refer to the OT narrative itself in order to supply them. If the scribe of Bezae (or perhaps its predecessor) was willing to add four names to the genealogy based on their appearance in the text of the Old Testament, perhaps he was willing to remove Kainan based on his absence in the Hebrew manuscripts.

[40] Williams, "Cainan: in or out?" 54.

[41] Steinmann states, "When D agrees with other early important witnesses, it lends strong support to the authenticity of that reading" ("Challenging the Authenticity," 703). Since the witness of $\mathfrak{P}^{75}$ is completely uncertain, D's witness subsequently falls apart.

NA *Novum Testamentum Graece* 28

[28] *Novum Testamentum Graece* 28

[42] Snoeberger, "Why Inerrancy Does Not Demand a 6000–Year-Old Earth," 8.

[43] While Clark does not refer specifically to $\mathfrak{P}^{75}$, he concludes a scribal error is "the most plausible reason" for Kainan's appearance in Luke 3:36 (H. David Clark, "The Genealogies of Genesis Five and Eleven" [ThD Dissertation, Dallas Theological Seminary, 1967], 91). Also, Henry M. Morris, *The Genesis Record* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1976), 282; William Brown Galloway, *The Chain of Ages, Traced in Its Prominent Links by Holy Scripture* (London: Sampson, Low, Marston, Searle & Rivington, 1881), 131. Bock implies Kainan is the result of a scribal error: "There is a good possibility that the name should be omitted in Luke, since $\mathfrak{P}^{75}$ and D omit the name here and it reappears in 3:37" (Darrell L. Bock, *Luke*, vol. 1: *1:1–9:50*, Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament [Grand Rapids: Baker, 1994], 359). While Steinmann proposes a date range for the alleged error, others do not. Pushing the date back in time does not solve the theory's problems.

name as original, even though Kainan had not yet appeared in any other manuscripts of Luke, nor in the Church's widely used OT text, the Septuagint.

Scribes at large would also have had to agree to interpolate Kainan back into known manuscripts of Luke (sans Bezae) and into LXX manuscripts containing Genesis 11. The theory also requires the deliberate suppression and emendation of other extant manuscripts which did not contain Kainan previously, covering the entire spectrum of Byzantine, Western, and Alexandrian text types, and including the 4th century AD Old Latin manuscript, Codex Vercellensis.[44]

The variation on the final letter of Καιναμ/ν also militates against this theory. If the Church were actually able to institute this universal change, then the spelling would have been universally consistent. Instead, the variation points to disagreement or uncertainty amongst scribes about the correct spelling, pointing to originality and not universal interpolation. The Church lacked the infrastructure and centralized control required to carry out this task.

Additionally, it is highly doubtful that Kainan's appearance in Luke 3:37 serves as a reasonable explanation for Kainan's addition to 3:36. Some have suggested dittography (the erroneous repetition in a text) as the mechanism by which Kainan was first introduced.[45] However, dittography repeats a letter, word, or phrase in the same place, not elsewhere. These are places where the eye of the scribe skips over a section of text (known as haplography), but this produces lacunae in the text rather than insertions of new material. It might be easier to blame a scribal error for a new insertion of Kainan if there were similar words preceding or following the other occurrence. However, there are no such similarities in the names (bold) leading up to Arpachshad when compared to those leading up to the original Kainan:

… ΒΡΑΑΜ ΤΟΥΘΑΡΑ ΤΟΥΝΑΧΩΡ ΤΟΥΣΕΡΟΥΧ

ΤΟΥΡΑΓΑΥ ΤΟΥΘΑΛΕΚ **ΤΟΥΕΒΕΡ ΤΟΥΣΑΛΑ**

ΤΟΥΑΡΦΑΞΑΔ ΤΟΥΣΗΜ ΤΟΥΝΩΕ ΤΟΥΛΑ

ΜΕΧ ΤΟΥΜΑΘΟΥΣΑΛΑ ΤΟΥΕΝΩΧ **ΤΟΥΙΑ**

ΡΕΔ ΤΟΥΜΑΛΕΛΕΗΛ ΤΟΥΚΑΙΝΑΝ ΤΟΥ ΕΝ

ΩΣ ΤΟΥΣΗΘ ΤΟΥΑΔΑΜ ΤΟΥΘΕΟΥ…[46]

LXX Septuagint

[44] Francis Aidan Gasquet, *Codex Vercellensis*, vol. 3, *Collectanea Biblica Latina* (Rome: Fridericus Pustet, 1914), 22.

[45] Sarfati ("What about Cainan?" 41) proposes that Kainan in verse 37 may have appeared at the end of a line of text, then was duplicated by a scribe as a result. His reconstruction is untenable: the visual similarities are lacking for dittography to have occurred, and his line widths are radically uneven and follow no particular manuscript. Steinmann appears to follow Sarfati, but presents no reconstruction or citation ("Challenging the Authenticity," 702).

[46] The line width here approximates 𝔓[75].

Indeed, how could the scribe have skipped over 8 names after writing Shelah, picked up Kainan, then returned to Arpachshad and continued on, without catching his mistake when he came to Kainan once again? Moreover, if his eye had jumped down to Kainan in verse 37, he would have continued on with the next name, Enosh. There is no reason to suppose his eye would have gone back up to write Arpachshad, since his name does not remotely resemble either Kainan or Enosh. There is one place where names are similar enough to possibly cause a scribal error. The last half of Methuselah's name (ΟΥΣΑΛΑ) is visually similar to Shelah's (ΤΟΥΣΑΛΑ). But again, the expected error would be haplography (skipping over six names from Shelah to Enoch), not dittography. The claim that Kainan was accidentally inserted requires some extraordinary explanation. The theory does not fit the common categories of scribal errors. Conversely, omitting a name would have been fairly easy (skipping from TOY to TOY), and there are numerous instances of haplography in manuscripts of Luke.

Modern works on NT textual criticism correctly reject the use of a single reading from one dubious manuscript to bypass the weight of the textual and historical evidence allied against it:[47]

Textual difficulties should not be solved by conjecture, or by positing glosses or interpolations, etc., where the textual tradition itself shows no break; such attempts amount to capitulation before the difficulties and are themselves *violations of the text*.[48]

1.4. The Berlin Genesis Fragment: Papyrus 911

Kainan appears in the earliest extant Genesis LXX manuscript. Dated to the late third century AD,[49] papyrus 911 is written in a cursive Greek script containing Genesis 1:16–22 and 2:5–35:8.[50] It is mutilated with extensive lacunae. Folio 66 I can be seen online.[51] Folio 66 II, which

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[47] Kurt Aland and Barbara Aland, *The Text of the New Testament*, trans. Erroll F. Rhodes, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995); M. M. Mitchell and D. P. Moessner, eds., *New Testament Textual Criticism: The Application of Thoroughgoing Principles*, Supplements to Novum Testamentum 137 (Leiden: Brill, 2010), 13–52, 177–325; Eldon Jay Epp, "Issues in New Testament Textual Criticism," in *Rethinking New Testament Textual Criticism*, ed. David Alan Black (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2002), 1–76; Eldon Jay Epp and Gordon D. Fee, *Studies in the Theory and Method of New Testament Textual Criticism* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1993); Metzger and Ehrman, *Text of the New Testament*, 300–343.

[48] Aland and Aland, *Text of the New Testament*, 280, emphasis added.

LXX Septuagint

[49] John W. Wevers, ed., *Septuaginta. Vetus Testamentum Graecum: Genesis*, vol. 1 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1974), 24. Steinmann cites Codex Vaticanus (B) as the earliest LXX text containing Kainan ("Challenging the Authenticity," 711). This attribution entails two significant errors: First, it overlooks papyrus 911, which predates B entirely; second, the uncial text of Genesis 1:1–46:27 is missing from the original text of B. Minuscule script was added in the 15th century AD (John W. Wevers, *Text History of the Greek Genesis* [Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1974], 33).

[50] Carl Schmidt and Henry A. Sanders, *The Minor Prophets in the Freer Collection and the Berlin Fragment of Genesis* (NY: Macmillan, 1927), 238.

[51] "Berlin, Cod. Gr. Fol. 66 I" Papyri in the Department of Papyrology, University of Warsaw, accessed January 28, 2019, http://www.papyrology.uw.edu.pl/papyri/berlincodgr.htm.

includes Genesis 10/11, can be seen in a facsimile published by Sanders in 1927.[52] The original was destroyed during the second World War.

Schmidt and Sanders reconstructed 911, presented here with visible readings in bold and reconstructions in brackets:

Page 16, Column b

Verse	Line	
11:12	[και εζησεν αρφαξ]**αδ εκατ**[ον τρι]	15
	[ακοντα πεντε ετη κ]**αι εγενν**[ησεν]	16
11:13	[τον καιναν και εζης]**εν αρφαξ**[αδ]	17
	[μετα το γεννησα]**ι** [αυτο]**ν τον καινα**[ν]	18
	[τετρακοσια τρια]**κοντα ετη και εγε**[ν]	19
	[νησεν υθιος κ]**αι θυγατερες και απ**[ε]	20

[52] Henry A. Sanders, *Facsimile of the Washington Manuscript of the Minor Prophets in the Freer Collection and the Berlin Fragment of Genesis* (Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan, 1927), 16.

[θανεν και εζ]**ησεν καιναν εκα**	21
[τον τριακοντ]**α ετη και εγεννησεν**	22
[τον σαλα και] **εζησεν καιναν με**	23
[τα το γενν]**ησαι αυτον τον σαλα τρι**	24[53]

Line 17 contains a conjecture, but based on the spacing, Kainan was most likely there. There are 3 visible instances of Kainan in lines 18, 21 and 23 of Genesis 11:13. The evidence is certain.

Kainan's original inclusion in LXX Genesis 11:13b–14b is further supported by the extensive manuscript evidence documented in the Göttingen Septuagint critical edition of Genesis. Kainan appears in all known LXX MSS of Genesis 11 before AD 1100, including Codices Alexandrinus (A), Cottonianus (D), Coislinianus (M), and papyrus 833.[54] Kainan was considered original by Wevers in 1974, and he reaffirmed this position nearly twenty years later.[55] Weighty and persuasive text critical arguments would be required to overturn his conclusions. Indeed, "no Septuagint scholar would argue that this Cainan was not present in the original manuscript of the Genesis G [LXX]."[56]

2. EXTERNAL WITNESSES TO KAINAN

2.1. Hippolytus of Rome (c. AD 170–236)

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[53] Schmidt and Sanders, *Berlin Fragment*, 294.
LXX Septuagint
LXX Septuagint
[54] Kainan may have appeared originally in Papyrus 961 as well (Smith Jr., "New Evidence for Kainan," 71–72.) Kainan is absent from minuscules 82 (12th century AD), 376 (15th century AD), and 53 (1439 AD) (Wevers, *Genesis*, 15, 14, 17, 144).
[55] John W. Wevers, *Notes on the Greek Text of Genesis* (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1993), 140–42, 153–55.
LXX Septuagint
[56] Benjamin Shaw, "The Genealogies of Genesis 5 and 11 and Their Significance for Chronology" (PhD dissertation, Bob Jones University, 2004), 89.

Hippolytus produced a chronology from Adam to his own day, the *Chronicon*.[57] Most of this work was completed in Rome by AD 222.[58] His relevant citations closely resemble LXX Genesis 11:10–14:[59]

These are the descendants of Shem. When Shem was 100 years [old], he fathered Arpachshad, the second year after the Flood. And Arpachshad lived 135 years, and he fathered Kainan. And Kainan lived 130 years and he fathered Shelah. And Shelah lived 130 years and he fathered Eber.[60]

Hippolytus also documents the names from Genesis 10 descending from Noah's sons after the Flood, then connects them to an extensive list of people groups as they were understood in his day (verses 56–186).[61] Using a LXX text of Genesis 10:24, Hippolytus writes, "And Arpachshad fathered Kainan.… And Kainan fathered Shelah.… And Shelah fathered Eber."[62] Hippolytus later lists "the names of the created," a genealogy beginning with Adam and ending with Jesus. Luke 3:31e–38c is mimicked (in reverse order) and explicitly includes Kainan (verse 718.13).[63]

The dates for Hippolytus's LXX and Lukan manuscripts would likely have predated his chronology by at least several decades, placing manuscripts of Genesis 10:24; 11:13b–14b and Luke 3:36 containing Kainan in Rome in the late second century AD. Almost 1500 miles from their counterparts $\mathfrak{P}^4$ and papyrus 911 in Egypt,[64] Hippolytus's texts confirm that Kainan had already been firmly established in the textual tradition of LXX Genesis and in Luke at an early time.

2.2. The Gospel of Luke (c. AD 60–70)

For the section of his genealogy from Abraham back to Adam, it is logical to surmise that Luke drew directly from LXX 1 Chronicles 1:1–4, 24–27, since it provides a concise list of names which Luke could efficiently copy for his particular purposes. Transliteration from a Hebrew text probably would have produced spelling differences, suggesting Luke copied directly from the

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[57] T. C. Schmidt and Nick Nicholas, *Hippolytus of Rome: Commentary on Daniel and 'Chronicon'* (Piscataway, NJ: Gorgias Press, 2017).
[58] Ibid., *Hippolytus*, 27. The *Chronicon* was fully completed around AD 235 (Jack Finegan, *Handbook of Biblical Chronology*, rev. ed. [Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1998], 158).
LXX Septuagint
[59] Wevers, *Genesis*, 143.
[60] Adolf Bauer and Otto Cuntz, eds., *Die Chronik des Hippolytos im Matritensis Graecus 121* (Leipzig: J. C. Hinrichs'sche Buchhandlung, 1906), 42 (our translation).
[61] Schmidt and Nicholas, *Hippolytus*, 200–19.
LXX Septuagint
[62] Bauer and Cuntz, *Die Chronik*, 88 (our translation).
[63] Schmidt and Nicholas, *Hippolytus*, 278–79.
LXX Septuagint
[64] Schmidt and Sanders, *Berlin Fragment*, 233.
LXX Septuagint
LXX Septuagint

LXX instead. A comparison between the names in Luke 3:34–38 in NA[28] and LXX 1 Chronicles[65] reveals close spelling agreements. Luke 3:34d–38 resembles LXX Genesis 5/11 as well, leading Steyn to conclude that Kainam was in Luke's LXX Genesis text.[66] Since Kainan's original inclusion in Luke's Gospel is certain, it serves as an inspired and divinely authorized external witness to the presence and authenticity of Kainan in Luke's LXX text in the mid-first century AD.

2.3. The Book of Jubilees (c. 160 BC)[67]

Kainan's biography is found in verses 8:1–5 of *Jubilees*:

In the twenty-ninth jubilee, in the first week—at its beginning—Arpachshad married a woman named Rasueya.… She gave birth to a son for him in the third year of this week, and he named him Kainan. When the boy[68] grew up, his father taught him (the art of) writing. He went to look for a place of his own where he could possess his own city. He found an inscription which the ancients had incised in a rock. He read what was in it, copied it, and sinned on the basis of what was in it, since in it was the Watcher's teaching by which they used to observe the omens of the sun, moon, and stars and every heavenly sign. He wrote (it) down but told no one about it because he was afraid to tell Noah about it lest he become angry at him about it. In the thirtieth jubilee, in the second week—in its first year—he married a woman whose name was Melka, the daughter of Madai, Japheth's son. In its fourth year he became the father of a son whom he named Shelah.[69]

Citing Charles and Artom for support, Steinmann claims that Kainan was inserted into *Jubilees* by Christian scribes. The insertion would have occurred after Kainan's initial appearance as a

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LXX Septuagint
NA *Novum Testamentum Graece* 28
[28] *Novum Testamentum Graece* 28
LXX Septuagint
[65] Alan E. Brooke, Norman McLean, and Henry St. John Thackeray, eds., *The Old Testament in Greek*, vol. 2: *The Later Historical Books*, Part 3: I and II Chronicles (London: Cambridge University Press, 1932), 391–92.
LXX Septuagint
LXX Septuagint
[66] Gert J. Steyn, "The Occurrence of 'Kainam' in Luke's Genealogy: Evidence of Septuagint Influence?" *Ephemerides Theologicae Lovanienses* 65 (1989): 409–11. Steyn does not discuss Luke's possible use of 1 Chronicles.
LXX Septuagint
[67] On its date of origin, see James C. VanderKam, *Textual and Historical Studies in the Book of Jubilees*, ed. Frank Moore Cross, Harvard Semitic Museum 14 (Missoula, MT: Scholars Press, 1977), 207–85.
[68] The Syriac reads "Kainan" (James C. VanderKam, *Jubilees 1: A Commentary on the Book of Jubilees Chapters 1–21*, ed. Sidnie White Crawford, vol. 1, Hermeneia [Minneapolis: Fortress, 2018], 359).
[69] James C. VanderKam, trans., *The Book of Jubilees*, Corpus Scriptorum Christianorum Orientalium. Scriptores Aethiopici 88 (Louvain: Peeters, 1989), 50–51.

scribal error in a manuscript of Luke 3:36 in the mid-late 3rd or early 4th century AD. According to Steinmann, it took until the 5th century AD for Kainan to become a "standard feature in manuscripts of Luke."[70] After widespread acceptance, then Kainan would have been interpolated into LXX and Ethiopic Genesis. Sometime afterwards, his name and biography were inserted into *Jubilees* "to harmonize it with LXX and Ethiopic Genesis."[71] Since it took at least until the 5th century AD for Kainan to become widely accepted in Luke, the insertion into *Jubilees* would need to be dated later (late 5th or 6th century AD) to provide time for reception and interpolation. This theory cannot overcome several insurmountable obstacles.

First, the alleged Christian interpolation would have taken place 600–700 years after *Jubilees* originated. For its first 250 to 300 years, *Jubilees* was only in Jewish hands. It was an authoritative text at Qumran.[72] While its popularity in broader Judaism is more difficult to assess,[73] its use by the early Church demonstrates it was preserved by Jewish scribes and used outside of Qumran before copies eventually found their way into the hands of Christian theologians.

Jerome (AD 347–420) reveals knowledge of Hebrew and Greek versions in a letter to Fabiola.[74] Epiphanius of Salamis (AD 315–403) knew of a Greek version and used it extensively.[75] *Jubilees* citations in the Byzantine chronologists have been traced back to a Greek version known to Julius Africanus, *c*. AD 221.[76] The Greek (before AD 221), Syriac (2nd to 5th century AD), Latin (5th century AD), and Ethiopic (6th century AD) versions[77] were already in existence by the time Christian scribes allegedly added Kainan and his biography. *Jubilees* had already been copied, translated, and dispersed for at least six centuries, far too long and late for Christian scribes to contaminate the entire textual stream by adding Kainan to a Hebrew or Greek hyper-archetype.

Second, from the perspective of a lone scribe, the insertion of Kainan into a bald list of names might have been a relatively simple task. But Steinmann's theory requires far more than that. A complete biography consisting of about four verses had to be invented. Then, multiple scribes in disparate locales would not only have to agree to insert the verses into their respective texts, they would also have to reach a consensus on the contents of Kainan's biography. Manuscripts

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[70] "Challenging the Authenticity," 711.
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[71] Ibid., 709–11.
[72] Aharon Shemesh, "4Q265 and the Authoritative Status of Jubilees at Qumran," in *Enoch and the Mosaic Torah: The Evidence of Jubilees*, ed. Gabriele Boccaccini and Giovanni Ibba (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2009), 247–60.
[73] Charlotte Hempel, "The Place of the Book of Jubilees at Qumran and Beyond," in *The Dead Sea Scrolls in Their Historical Context*, ed. Timothy Lim et al. (London: T&T Clark, 2004), 187–98.
[74] Anne Kreps, "*From Jewish Apocrypha to Christian Tradition: Citations of* Jubilees *in Epiphanius's* Panarion," *Church History* 87 (2018): 345–46.
[75] Ibid., 345–70.
[76] VanderKam, *The Book of Jubilees*, XI–XIV.
[77] Idem, *Textual and Historical Studies*, 8–15.

circulating in the Greek, Syriac, Latin, and Ethiopic (Ge'ez) languages would then have to be changed, a scenario requiring consent amongst diverse Christian sects in different regions around the Mediterranean. Moreover, the Ethiopian Church viewed *Jubilees* as part of the OT canon.[78] Any organized effort to insert Kainan's biography into it and their Ethiopic text of Genesis 11 would have entailed convincing the Church leaders there to alter what they considered to be sacred and canonical texts.

Third, his name ends with "m" in the Ethiopic texts of *Jubilees*, but with an "n" in Syriac.[79] Codex A spells his name with an M in Genesis 10:24.[80] Manuscripts of Luke spell it with both. Bauckham proposes his name may originally have been קינם.[81] This variation is best explained as originating from a Hebrew exemplar, not a universally agreed upon interpolation.

Fourth, the chronology of *Jubilees* is extremely precise, entailing 2450 years (50 jubilees of 49 years each) from Adam to Joshua's Conquest.[82] Almost every patriarchal birth from Adam to Abraham is dated from creation, expressed in weeks, years, and jubilees.[83] By inserting Kainan, the Christian scribe(s) would have disrupted the timeline and would have had to change the data for Shelah (8:5) in order to keep the chronology intact. No manuscript evidence supports this. Moreover, Kainan's begetting age in *Jubilees* is 57, diverging significantly from the 130 allegedly added to the LXX.[84] This figure should be consistent if Kainan was a product of universal and deliberate Christian interpolation.

Fifth, no manuscript of *Jubilees* preserving 8:1–5 excludes Kainan and his biography. They only exhibit minor variations.[85] To these we can add the Syriac Chronicle,[86] a Greek version of

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[78] Ibid., 15.

[79] Wintermute, "Jubilees," 71, n. *b*.

A Codices Alexandrinus

[80] Wevers, *Genesis*, 138.

[81] Richard Bauckham, "More on Kainam the Son of Arpachshad in Luke's Genealogy," *Ephemerides Theologicae Lovanienses* 67 (1991): 96–97, n. 5. Bauckham analyzes the generational scheme of weeks found in 1 Enoch 93:3–10; 91:11–17, the Apocalypse of Weeks (98–101). Without Kainam, "the otherwise precise placings of Abraham and the building of the Temple at the ends of the third and fifth weeks would not be possible" (101). While we reject Bauckham's suggestion that Luke's genealogy was "inspired by the Enoch literature" (102), his argument that Kainam was known in the Enoch traditions prior to *Jubilees* merits consideration.

[82] James M. Scott, *On Earth As in Heaven: The Restoration of Sacred Time and Sacred Space in the Book of Jubilees* (Leiden: Brill, 2005), 73–158, 235–249; VanderKam, *From Revelation to Canon*, 523–44.

[83] Ibid., 528–30.

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[84] For the numbers *Jubilees* applied to the patriarchs in Gen 5/11, see Henry B. Smith Jr., "MT, SP, or LXX? Deciphering a Chronological and Textual Conundrum in Genesis 5," *Bible and Spade* 31 (Winter 2018): 23, 25.

[85] VanderKam, *Jubilees 1*, 359.

[86] Ibid., 8–9; idem, *The Book of Jubilees*, XVI, 334.

Jubilees cited by Cedrenus,[87] and catenae referring to Kainan in *Jubilees*.[88] While complete manuscripts of *Jubilees* are only extant in Ge'ez and appear in the 14th century and later, a conjectured, large-scale insertion must have manuscript support or other attestation. Instead, it has none:

There are several reasons why one should not think that the text of Jub, though it is available *in toto* only in Ethiopic (a translation of a translation), has been altered to any appreciable extent by translators or copyists: in the relatively small amount of text where the Ethiopic can be compared with the published Hebrew fragments … the two texts agree very closely … a high percentage of the 80 readings in Ethiopic Jub which agree with the Ethiopic Pentateuch alone among ancient versions is also supported by the Latin manuscript of Jub and the Latin translation of Jub was hardly influenced by the Ethiopic Bible.[89]

Sixth, retroversions should be performed on the Ge'ez text of 8:1–5 to demonstrate that there was an interpolation. A close analysis would betray grammatical or linguistic evidence that the verses did not ultimately originate from a Hebrew exemplar. To our knowledge, this has never been done, making it incumbent upon proponents of the Kainan interpolation theory to do so.

Seventh, a textual variant in *Jubilees* 8:2b demonstrates Kainan's biography originates from a Hebrew original. It reads, "He [Kainan] went to look for a place of his own where he could *possess* his own city." VanderKam translates the word "possess" from the Ethiopic and considers it original.[90] Wintermute follows the Syriac reading instead, and translates the word as "build," explaining:

The reading "build" is supplied by the [Syriac]. The [Ethiopic] reads "acquire" or "possess." As Tisserant pointed out in his discussion of the Syr., the confusion is probably due to a misreading of the [Hebrew] *bn'* [בנה] as *qn'* [קנה].[91]

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[87] VanderKam, *The Book of Jubilees*, XIII, 334.

[88] Idem, *Jubilees 1*, 12. Catenae are compilations of exegetical comments from ancient Christian writers.

[89] James C. VanderKam, *From Revelation to Canon: Studies in the Hebrew Bible and Second Temple Literature* (Leiden: Brill, 2002), 456–57. See also n. 37.

[90] *Jubilees 1*, 358. Charles translates the Ethiopic phrase "seize for himself a city" (Robert H. Charles, ed., *The Book of Jubilees, or, The Little Genesis*, trans. Robert H. Charles [London: Adam and Charles Black, 1902], 66).

[91] O. S. Wintermute, "Jubilees: A New Translation and Introduction," in *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, vol. 2, ed. James H. Charlesworth (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1983), 71, n. *b*. The word בנה means "build"; קנה means "acquire, buy" (William L. Holladay, *A Concise Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament* [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1988], 42, 320). The variant could not have originated at the Greek level, since the terms for "build" (οικοδομειν) and "acquire" (κτασθαι) are visibly dissimilar (Edwin Hatch and Henry A. Redpath, *A Concordance to the Septuagint and the Other Greek Versions of the Old Testament, Including the Apocryphal Books*, vol. 2 [Graz, Austria: Akademishche Druck-U. Verlagsanstalt, 1954], 970–72, 793).

The variant for "build" comes from an anonymous Syriac chronicle. According to Wintermute, Tisserant's in-depth study concludes the Syriac text of *Jubilees* used by the chronicler was translated directly from a Hebrew text, not a Greek one.[92] No matter which reading is chosen as original, only a Hebrew *Vorlage* of *Jubilees* explains these variants. A later Christian interpolation could not have caused them, nor can it explain them.

Eighth, there are other indications 8:1–5 came from a Hebrew exemplar:

a. Arpachshad marries Rasueya, who gave birth to Kainan (8:1). Her name probably comes from רצה, meaning "desirable."[93] The name also appears in Syriac.[94]

b. Kainan marries Melcha (8:3), a name likely derived from מלכה, "queen."[95]

c. *Jubilees* draws upon elements of 1 Enoch, which predate it. The reference to the Watchers in 8:3 and its parallels with 1 Enoch 8[96] point to originality.

d. Josephus likely alluded to *Jubilees* 8:3,[97] long predating any ostensible Christian interpolation.

e. After closely examining the Ethiopic text of 8:1–5, James C. VanderKam, widely considered the world's foremost expert on *Jubilees*, concludes, "The entire Kainam section has a Hebraic ring to it. One telling feature is the paratactic syntax so characteristic of Biblical Hebrew. In addition, the word order entails the same, especially placement of verbs before their subjects."[98]

Despite these obstacles, Steinmann appeals to internal evidence for Kainan's insertion:

There is good reason to suspect that this text has been inserted into *Jubilees* at a later date. According to *Jub*. 2:23, there were twenty-two leaders of humanity from Adam to Jacob. This is the number of persons in the genealogy *without Cainan* that traces from Adam through Noah to Jacob, and Jubilees compares it to twenty-two works of God during creation (cf. *Jub*. 2:15).[99]

To sustain this argument, one must assume Jacob is counted amongst the twenty-two. Is the numerical reckoning inclusive or exclusive? In other words, does the verse mean "up to and including Jacob?" If so, Kainan's inclusion in 8:1–5 would ruin the series of 22, incorrectly

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[92] "Jubilees," 42; VanderKam, *Textual and Historical Studies*, 9.
[93] Charles, *Book of Jubilees*, 66, n. 1.
[94] Ibid.
[95] Ibid., 67, n. 5.
[96] VanderKam, *Jubilees 1*, 364, n. 13.
[97] Ibid., 364. Josephus's knowledge of *Jubilees* seems fairly certain (Betsy Halpern-Amaru, "Flavius Josephus and the Book of Jubilees: A Question of Source," *Hebrew Union College Annual* 72 [2001]: 15–44).
[98] Personal correspondence between Henry B. Smith Jr. and James C. VanderKam, February 5, 2019. Used with permission.
[99] "Challenging the Authenticity," 709. Steinmann provides no analysis of the context or the syntax.

placing Jacob in the 23nd position. If it means, "up to but not including," then Kainan is integral and original to *Jubilees*. Once the literary structure and larger context are examined, it is certain the 22 leaders of humanity beginning with Adam *cannot include Jacob*.

Here is why: *Jubilees* 2:2–16 indicates God performed 22 kinds of works only within the six days of creation, proper. None is performed on the seventh day, which is set apart/sanctified. In verse 17, the author continues to emphasize that the seventh day is the Sabbath, and God's people should refrain from working, just as God did.[100] Verses 19–22 turn to God separating a people for himself who will keep the Sabbath, Jacob and his descendants. Then he writes:

There were 22 leaders of humanity from Adam *until* him [Jacob]; and 22 kinds of works were made *until* the seventh day. The latter is blessed and holy and the former, too, is blessed and holy. Both were made together for holiness and blessing (*Jub*. 2:23).[101]

The parallelism between Jacob and the seventh day (the Sabbath) is the key to understanding that author is using exclusive numerical reckoning:

22 leaders until → Jacob = the former, blessed and holy = made for holiness and blessing

22 works until → the 7th day = the latter, blessed and holy = made for holiness and blessing

The three expressions "latter/former," "blessed and holy," and "made for holiness and blessing" poetically equate the Sabbath with Jacob. Just as the Sabbath/seventh day is separated/sanctified from the 22 works that precede it, so is Jacob separated/sanctified from the 22 leaders of humanity that precede him. This separation between and Jacob and all of his 22 predecessors is verified by 2:31, which states that Israel alone, namely Jacob and his seed, are the only people on earth set apart by God to keep the Sabbath. Ironically, Charles observes the structure in 2:23, but misses its relevance to Kainan's inclusion in *Jubilees*.[102] The Sabbath and Jacob are "intimately related." He observes, "As the Sabbath comes at the close of the twenty-two works, so Jacob comes at the close of the twenty-second generation. Not until Jacob's time, therefore, could the Sabbath be rightly observed on earth."[103]

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[100] "He gave us the sabbath day as a great sign so that we should perform work for six days and that we should keep sabbath from all work on the seventh day" (VanderKam, *Book of Jubilees*, 12).

[101] Idem., *Jubilees 1*, 168 (emphasis added). Wintermute ("Jubilees," 57) translates "until him [Jacob]" as "before him" which more precisely separates Jacob from the previous 22 patriarchs. The phrase "(up) until him" עד אליו, is extant in 4Q216 (VanderKam, *Jubilees 1*, 197).

[102] Charles writes, "Without this name [Kainan] there would only have been twenty-one heads from Adam to Jacob. The same motive may have led to its insertion in the LXX" (*Book of Jubilees*, 66, n. 1). Using exclusive reckoning, the figure from Adam to Jacob is 22 without Kainan, not 21. Nonetheless, Charles undermines his assertion with his own exegesis of *Jubilees* 2.

[103] Ibid., 18, n. 23.

To include Jacob in the list of 22 patriarchs is to destroy the entire point that the author of *Jubilees* is making.[104] As such, Jacob stands as the 23rd patriarch from Adam, not the 22nd. VanderKam concludes, "The generation of Kainan is thus integral to the message of the author."[105] Therefore, Kainan and his biography were in the original Hebrew text of *Jubilees*. While the chronology of *Jubilees* is radically different than the original Genesis text, in no other place does the author invent new patriarchs. There is no evidence the author of *Jubilees* invented the name, nor is there any discernable motive for doing so. Kainan's independent appearance in the LXX and Luke 3:36 confirm his name was not invented by the author. Since *Jubilees* definitively used a Hebrew base text of Genesis,[106] it is logical to conclude that Kainan was extant in a Hebrew text of Genesis 11 in Israel around 160 BC.

2.4. Demetrius the Chronographer (c. 220 BC)

Demetrius was a Jewish historian who wrote during the reign of Ptolemy IV (221–205 BC),[107] and is "the earliest datable Alexandrian-Jewish author we know."[108] Demetrius's writings are preserved in Eusebius's *Praeparatio Evangelica* and Clement of Alexandria's *Stromata*.[109] He wrote in Greek, used the LXX,[110] and "his knowledge of its contents is detailed and exact."[111]

In fragment 2:18, Demetrius chronologically tethers three events to the time Jacob enters Egypt:

[1] from Adam until the time when the brothers of Joseph came into Egypt, there were 3624 years; [2] and from the Deluge until Jacob's arrival in Egypt there were 1360 years; [3] and from the time Abraham was chosen from among the nations and came from Haran into Canaan until the time when those with him [Jacob] came into Egypt, there were 215 years.[112]

These figures yield the following chronological results:

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[104] "As this additional Kainam forms an integral part of the author's system of counting in 2,23 the twenty-two generations from Adam to Jacob, not including the latter, not the assumed Greek translator but the author of the book was responsible for the inclusion of Kainam" (Adolph Büchler, "Studies in the Book of Jubilees," *Revue des etudes juives* 82 [1926]: 258).
[105] *Jubilees 1*, 362. VanderKam repeatedly argues that Kainan is original to *Jubilees* (see 85; 175; 197–98, n. 121; 363, n. 7).
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[106] Ibid., 197–98; idem, *From Revelation to Canon*, 448–61.
[107] J. Hanson, "Demetrius the Chronographer: A New Translation and Introduction," in *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, vol. 2, ed. James H. Charlesworth (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1983), 844; Carl R. Holladay, *Fragments from Hellenistic Jewish Authors:* vol. 1: *Historians*, ed. Harold W. Attridge, Texts and Translations 20 (Chico, CA: Scholars Press, 1983), 51.
[108] Finegan, *Handbook*, 141.
[109] Holladay, *Fragments*, 51, 55.
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[110] Hanson, "Demetrius," 843–44, n. 6.
[111] Holladay, *Fragments*, 52.
[112] Ibid., 73.

1. 2264 years from Adam to the Flood (3624–1360). The LXX yields 2262 years for this period.[113] 1360 is abbreviated (ατξ)[114] and should be corrected to 1362 (ατξβ). The β (2) could easily have disappeared due to scribal error.[115]

2. "The time Abraham was chosen among the nations, and came from Haran into Canaan" is at age 75 (Gen 12:4).[116]

3. The time from Abraham's departure at age 75 to Jacob's entry is 215 years, reiterated in fragment 2:16–17:

From the time when Abraham was chosen among the nations and migrated to Canaan, they dwelt in the land of Canaan as follows: Abraham—25 years; Isaac—60 years; Jacob—130 years; in all, 215 years were spent in the land of Canaan. In the third year of famine in Egypt Jacob came into Egypt.[117]

Thus, there were 290 years from Abraham's birth to Jacob's descent (215+75).

4. The time from the Flood to Jacob's descent is 1362 years. Since Abraham was born 290 years before Jacob's descent, we can determine the time period from the Flood to Abraham's birth: 1362–290=1072 years.

5. This period in the LXX with Kainan included also equals 1072 years. 1072 is further confirmed by the SP. It excludes Kainan, but otherwise matches the LXX, yielding a total of 942 years from the Flood to Abraham. Eusebius's total from his LXX, sans Kainan, also equals 942 (*Chronicle* 27).[118] When Kainan's 130 is added to 942, we reach the exact same total as the LXX

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[113] Wevers, *Genesis*, 102–108; *Notes on the Text of Genesis*, 72–73. We follow Wevers's numbers, except his choice of 167 for Methuselah. It should be 187 instead (Henry B. Smith Jr., "Methuselah's Begetting Age in Genesis 5:25 and the Primeval Chronology of the Septuagint: A Closer Look at the Textual and Historical Evidence," *Answers Research Journal* 10 [2017]: 169–79).

[114] Holladay, *Fragments*, 73.

[115] Charles Hayes, *A Dissertation on the Chronology of the Septuagint* (London: T. Woodward, 1741), 71.

[116] Wevers, *Genesis*, 150.

[117] Holladay, *Fragments*, 71.

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LXX Septuagint

LXX Septuagint

[118] Josef Karst, *Eusebius Werke: Die Chronik*, vol. 5 (Leipzig: J. C. Hinrichs'sche Buchhandlung, 1911), 45.

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and Demetrius: 1072 years. Augustine explicitly includes Kainan, and reaches the same total (*City of God* 16.10).[119]

Because of Demetrius's chronological precision, and the evidence from four other independent sources, we can decisively conclude that Kainan and his 130-year begetting age appeared in his LXX Genesis text in Alexandria, *c*. 220 BC.[120]

2.5 The Septuagint as a Witness to Kainan in a Hebrew Vorlage *of Genesis* (c. *281 BC)*[121]

A number of untenable theories have been proposed to reject the validity of Kainan in the original Septuagint translation of Genesis. These include LXX inflation hypotheses,[122] the "red

[119] Boniface Ramsey, ed., *The City of God (De Civitate Dei)*, trans. William Babcock, vol. 7: Books XI–XXII, in The Works of Saint Augustine: A Translation for the 21st Century (Hyde Park, NY: New City Press, 2013), 199.
LXX Septuagint
[120] According to Finegan (*Handbook*, 145), the creation date derived from Demetrius is 5307 BC, the same date derived from the chronology of the Jewish historian Eupolemus (*c*. 160 BC). This points to the possibility Kainan was included in Eupolemus's biblical text(s) of Gen 11 as well. For more, see Michael Russell, *A Connection of Sacred and Profane History, from the Death of Joshua to the Decline of the Kingdoms*, ed. J. Talboys Wheeler, 2nd ed., 2 vols. (London: William Tegg, 1865), 1:89–90.
[121] Nina Collins, "281 BCE: The Year of the Translation of the Pentateuch into Greek under Ptolemy II," in *Septuagint, Scrolls, and Cognate Writings*, ed. George J. Brooke and Barnabas Lindars (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 1992), 403–503.
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[122] The primary hypothesis asserts the Septuagint's primeval chronology was deliberately inflated by the Alexandrian Jews to conform it with Egyptian chronology. For reasons why LXX inflation hypotheses fail, see Henry B. Smith Jr., "The Case for the Septuagint's Chronology in Genesis 5 and 11," in *Proceedings of the Eighth International Conference on Creationism*, ed. John H. Whitmore (International Conference on Creationism, Pittsburgh, PA: Creation Science Fellowship, 2018), 120–21. Hasel suggests Kainan was added to inflate the chronology even further (Gerhard F. Hasel, "Genesis 5 and 11: Chronogenealogies in the Biblical History of Beginnings," *Origins* 7 [1980]: 36).

flag,"[123] the millennial scheme,[124] and the symmetry theories.[125] These theories are drawn upon to argue that the erroneous Kainan was subsequently interpolated into Luke by Christians due his initial but dubious presence in the LXX.[126] None holds up to scrutiny.[127]

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[123] According to this theory, the Jews did not inflate the chronology voluntarily. Rather, the Ptolemies forced them to inflate the chronology to conform it with Egyptian chronology. Kainan (resembling the evil Cain) was a "red flag" the translators secretly inserted into the text to "warn" those reading it. To further alert the reader, they "borrowed" Shelah's numbers and assigned them to Kainan (Richard Niessen, "A Biblical Approach to Dating the Earth: A Case for the Use of Genesis 5 and 11 as an Exact Chronology," *Creation Research Society Quarterly* 19 [1982]: 64).

[124] "This view argues that many of the early church fathers were enamored of a schematic view of the ages of the world … [which] was to consist of six thousand years, divided evenly into two three-thousand-year periods, the first concluding and the second beginning at the one hundred thirtieth year of Peleg, which is the age at which he fathered Reu. In order to achieve [this], some of the numbers had to be juggled. Included in this number juggling was the addition of the second Cainan. According to Anstey, this millenary scheme accounts not only for the addition of the second Cainan but also for the textual variants in the ages of other patriarchs, especially Methuselah" (Shaw, "Genealogies of Genesis 5 and 11," 86).

[125] Jeremy Hughes argues Kainan was borrowed from Gen 5 to create genealogical symmetry with Gen 11: *Secrets of the Times: Myth and History in Biblical Chronology*, Journal for the Study of the Old Testament Supplement 66 (Sheffield, England: JSOT, 1990), 9. Conversely, Steinmann ("Challenging the Authenticity," 699–700) claims a lack of symmetry is caused by Kainan's inclusion. This points to Kainan being spurious, partly because it places Abraham in the 21st position (which Steinmann deems unimportant). While the observation is interesting, it proves nothing. One might interpret the symmetry, instead, that Gen 5 ends with a significant father (Noah), who had three sons (Shem, Ham, Japheth), in the tenth position. With Kainan included in Gen 11, Terah would parallel Noah as a significant father, who also had three sons (Abram, Haran, Nahor), in the tenth position. Terah's significance is demonstrated by his own *toledoth* (Gen 11:27), paralleling Noah's (Gen 6:9). Therefore, Kainan is essential to the symmetry.

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[126] Niessen, "A Biblical Approach," 64; C. Robert Fetter, "A Critical Investigation of 'the Second Cainan' in Luke 3:36" (BD thesis, Grace Theological Seminary, 1956), 85.

[127] Travis Freeman collates these theories to argue against Kainan's authenticity ("Do the Genesis 5 and 11 Genealogies Contain Gaps?" in *Coming to Grips with Genesis: Biblical Authority and the Age of the Earth*, ed. Terry Mortenson and Thane H. Ury [Green Forest, AR: New Leaf, 2008], 308–13). Drawing on Fetter, he adds the "legendary theory" (313), which posits that Kainan was inserted into the LXX by Christian scribes because he was in *Jubilees*. Kainan appeared in other, unnamed literature as well, hence the designation "legendary." Hasel suggests Kainan was added to the LXX by *homoioteleuton* ("Genesis 5 and 11," 32). Kainan in Gen 5:12–13 would have been too far removed from Gen 11 in a scroll or codex for this to have happened.

The begetting age (130) and remaining years (330) for Kainan and Shelah match one another in most LXX manuscripts. Some scholars claim this demonstrates Kainan was added to LXX Genesis 11 because his numbers were "borrowed" from Shelah's.[128] This argument must assume it was impossible for both Kainan and Shelah to father their named sons and to die at the same age. While the coincidence may appear superficially odd, the argument rests entirely on intuition. From a probability standpoint, a father and son undoubtedly could have the same begetting age and lifespan.[129]

Second, and more significantly, this argument ignores the textual evidence, and presumes Shelah's remaining years in the LXX were 330 originally. The MT preserves Shelah's original figure of 403.[130] Eusebius's *Chronicle* (27) reads 406.[131] This was most likely 403 in Eusebius's LXX text, matching the MT, and reflecting the original. The original number in the LXX's Hebrew *Vorlage* was probably not 330, but 403 instead.[132]

The error is easily explained. An early scribe could have made 403 (έτη τετρακόσια τρια) into 330 (έτη τριακοσια τριακοντα) by accident. Seven appearances of τριακόντα (30) within a tight textual matrix, numerous instances of κόντα, κόσια, and έτη, visual similarities between τετρα and τρια, and Kainan's 330 are all possible triggers for scribal error.[133] Ironically, the 330-year figure for Shelah's remaining years in the LXX may have been accidentally "borrowed" from Kainan!

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[128] Fetter, "Critical Investigation," 73; Clark, "Genealogies of Genesis Five and Eleven," 93; Hughes, *Secrets of the Times*, 9; Ronald S. Hendel, *The Text of Genesis 1–11: Textual Studies and Critical Edition* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), 146. Montague S. Mills says the numbers "appear suspicious" ("A Comparison of the Genesis and Lukan Genealogies: The Case for Cainan" [ThM Thesis, Dallas Theological Seminary, 1978], 48, n. 56). Steinmann ("Challenging the Authenticity," 704) appeals to the fact that a similar repetition does not occur elsewhere in Gen 5/11. But we must ask: what bearing would a second instance have on the veracity of Kainan/Shelah? And why must there be second instance for Kainan/Shelah to be authentic?
[129] Shaw, "Genealogies of Genesis 5 and 11," 94.
LXX Septuagint
[130] Smith Jr., "Case for the Septuagint's Chronology," 131.
[131] Karst, *Eusebius*, 42.
LXX Septuagint
LXX Septuagint
[132] The 403-year figure appears in manuscripts 82, 376, and 53 (Wevers, *Genesis*, 144).
[133] Wevers documents numerous variants in manuscripts of LXX Gen 11:12–19. Most were probably caused by these visual similarities (*Genesis*, 144–45).
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Additionally, Septuagint scholars such as Marcos,[134] Hiebert,[135] Scarlata,[136] and Wevers[137] all have found that the Hebrew Genesis text was treated conservatively by the translators. Tov has concluded that the most salient feature of the variants between the MT and LXX of Genesis 1–11 (sans the numbers) is small-scale internal harmonization in the LXX, not deliberate large scale additions.[138] There is simply no evidence that the translators deliberately added Kainan to the LXX.

In summary, none of the known theories positing the spurious addition of Kainan to LXX Genesis can withstand close examination. Instead, the evidence and Septuagint studies suggest that the LXX serves as a witness to a 3rd century BC Hebrew *Vorlage* of Genesis with Kainan included in it.

3. A PROPOSAL FOR KAINAN'S ORIGINAL INCLUSION IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

The evidence for Kainan's inclusion in Hippolytus, Luke, the Hebrew text of Genesis 11 underlying *Jubilees*, Demetrius, LXX Genesis 11 and its corresponding Hebrew *Vorlage*, is virtually certain. While we do not presently possess a Hebrew manuscript including Kainan, *Jubilees* and the original LXX Genesis necessitate independent Hebrew *Vorlagen* containing his name. These sources provide us with eyewitness evidence—two geographically separated "snapshots" if you will—of two biblical Hebrew texts of Genesis containing Kainan.

To complicate matters however, Kainan is missing from the Masoretic Text, the Samaritan Pentateuch, Josephus, *Seder Olam Rabbah*, Theophilus of Antioch, Julius Africanus, the

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[134] Natalio Fernandez Marcos, *The Septuagint in Context: Introduction to the Greek Version of the Bible*, trans. Wilfred G. E. Watson (Leiden: Brill, 2000), 260.

[135] Hiebert analyzes verses from LXX Genesis where various translation techniques were employed, finding no evidence of deliberate divergences from the Hebrew *Vorlage* (Robert J. V. Hiebert, "Translation Technique in the Septuagint of Genesis and Its Implications for the NETS Version," *Bulletin of the International Organization of Septuagint and Cognate Studies* 33 [2000]: 76–93).

[136] Mark W. Scarlata, "Genesis," in *T&T Clark Companion to the Septuagint*, ed. James K. Aitken (New York: Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2015), 13–28.

[137] *Notes on the Text of Genesis*, 1–161.

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[138] Emanuel Tov, "The Harmonizing Character of the Septuagint of Genesis 1–11," in *Textual Criticism of the Hebrew Bible, Qumran, Septuagint*, vol. 3, Supplements to Vetus Testamentum 167 (Leiden: Brill, 2015), 470–89.

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Aramaic Targums, and Eusebius.[139] How can Kainan's absence in these witnesses be explained if he is original to the witnesses discussed above?[140]

We propose that a scribal error caused by a combination of haplography and mental error in a very ancient Hebrew archetypal manuscript of Genesis set off a chain of events that led to the complex matrix of evidence we have presently. Consider the following:

1. The Babylonian Exile in the early 6th century BC created geographically separated archetypal Hebrew texts.[141] The texts taken to Babylon were subsequently transmitted independently of those in Egypt or Israel, and were only reintroduced back into Israel during the Maccabean era, or perhaps even later.[142] A temple and Aramaic papyri[143] discovered at Elephantine, Egypt verify that Jews lived there in the 6th century BC, possibly even before the Exile.[144] The literature on the textual history of the OT is replete with theories on the development of the Hebrew text during this early period. For our purposes here, we need not adopt any particular theory.[145] OT text critical scholars agree there were, at minimum, biblical texts in three important Jewish population centers: Palestine, Babylon, and Egypt.

During this time, we propose that Kainan accidentally fell out of Genesis 11:13b–14b[146] in a major Hebrew archetypal manuscript (see § 5 for a proposed reconstruction). Since the Exile

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[139] Steinmann, "Challenging the Authenticity," 698–702, 706–707; Tanner, "Old Testament Chronology," 34.

[140] Only one LXX manuscript of Gen 10:22 contains Kainan. Codex A places Kainam after Aram, but "*sup ras*" (above the erasure; Wevers, *Genesis*, 138). Gen 10:22 lists the direct offspring of Shem (Elam, Asshur, Arpachshad, Lud, and Aram). But Kainan is Arpachshad's son, not Shem's, so his name is out of place. Hippolytus omitted Kainan from his recitation of 10:22 (verses 159–165; Schmidt and Nicholas, *Hippolytus*, 217). Although Wevers considers Kainan original to LXX Gen 10:22 (ibid.), the textual evidence and the context are against it. The addition to A is surely a deliberate interpolation.

[141] Ellis R. Brotzman and Eric J. Tully, *Old Testament Textual Criticism: A Practical Introduction*, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2016), 29.

[142] Ibid., 31.

[143] A recent study proposes that Papyrus Amherst 63 (4th century BC) contains Psalm 20 (Karel van der Toorn, "Egyptian Papyrus Sheds New Light on Jewish History," *Biblical Archaeology Review* 44 [August 2018]: 33–39, 66, 68).

[144] Lester L. Grabbe, *The History of the Jews and Judaism in the Second Temple Period*, vol. 1: *Yehud: A History of the Persian Province of Judah* (New York: T&T Clark, 2004), 54–55, 210–14, 316–19. According to one letter, "The [Jewish] colony [at Elephantine] was flourishing with its own temple when Cambyses conquered Egypt about 525 BCE" (318).

[145] For a survey, see Paul D. Wegner, *A Student's Guide to Textual Criticism of the Bible: Its History, Methods and Results* (Downers Grove, IL: Inter-Varsity Press, 2006), 58–70.

[146] This suggestion has been made in general terms, but to our knowledge, it has not been explored in detail previously. Snoeberger leaves the possibility open ("Inerrancy Does Not Demand," 9), along with Shaw ("Genealogies of Genesis 5 and 11," 92) and David Noel Freedman and David Miano, "Is the Shorter Reading Better? Haplography in the First Book of Chronicles," in *Emanuel: Studies in the Hebrew Bible, the Septuagint, and the Dead Sea Scrolls in Honor of Emanuel Tov*, ed. Shalom M. Paul et al., Supplements to Vetus Testamentum 94

created geographically dispersed archetypes, it would have been possible for one major archetype to preserve Kainan (in Egypt), while another accidentally lost his name (in Babylon): "Once that paragraph was omitted, its omission would be impossible to detect, unless a later copyist had access to another manuscript that included the paragraph."[147]

2. When scribes discovered Kainan was absent from Genesis 11, they could have viewed the name as spurious in Genesis 10:24, and removed it. Internal harmonization was a common phenomenon in scribal activity, and was not generally intended to be nefarious.[148] Since Genesis 11 would already have dropped Kainan completely, harmonization would have required the easy removal of only four words from[149]. את־קינן וקינן ילד, 10:24

Kainan could have dropped out of Genesis 10:24 by scribal error as well. It is somewhat difficult to argue (though not impossible) that he disappeared from *both* Genesis 10 and 11 by accident. Moreover, it would strain credulity to argue that a third and fourth error omitted Kainan in 1 Chronicles. Internal harmonization remains the most plausible explanation overall, although the possibility exists that Kainan fell out of both 10/11 by accident, and then was harmonized out of only 1 Chronicles.

3. The omission of Kainan from Genesis 11 would require the accidental loss of about 25 words. While they are infrequent, larger omissions do have precedent in the MT tradition: thirteen words absent in 1 Kings 8:16,[150] sixteen in Judges 16:13–14,[151] twenty in Joshua 21:36–37,[152] twenty-four in 1 Samuel 14:41, and forty-five in 1 Samuel 11. Similar errors have also occurred in the transmission of the LXX, illustrating further how scribes occasionally made significant

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(Leiden: Brill, 2003), 689. Jacobus argues that Kainan was original to the PROTO-MT and SP, but was expunged due to his involvement in astrology (Helen R. Jacobus, "The Curse of Cainan [Jub. 8.1–5]: Genealogies in Genesis 5 and Genesis 11 and a Mathematical Pattern," *Journal for the Study of the Pseudepigrapha* 18 [March 2009]: 207–32).

[147] Shaw, "Genealogies of Genesis 5 and 11," 92.

[148] Emanuel Tov, *Textual Criticism of the Hebrew Bible: Revised and Expanded*, 3rd ed. (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2011), 258–59. The omission of Kainan would have begun with the primary, controlling verse in Gen 11, not vice versa. If Kainan had disappeared from Gen 10:24 first, scribes would then have had to deliberately remove a substantial section of text from Gen 11 to harmonize the verses. In this scenario, Kainan most likely would have been restored to 10:24 because of the influence of Gen 11, rather than being expunged from Gen 11 because he first dropped out of 10:24.

[149] "Arpachshad fathered [Kainan and Kainan fathered] Shelah."

[150] Tov, *Textual Criticism*, 223.

[151] Emanuel Tov, *The Text-Critical Use of the Septuagint in Biblical Research*, 3rd ed. (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2015), 70–71.

[152] Idem., *Textual Criticism*, 223.

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mistakes. Sixty-three words have been skipped in 1 Chronicles 1:10–17 (LXX A) and a staggering 97 words (1:17–24) have been skipped in LXX B.[153]

First Samuel 11 is analogous to our Kainan proposal. An expanded description of Nahash's violent relationship with Israel was only known for centuries from Josephus (*Ant*. 6.68–71). When 4QSam[a] was studied, 45 words not found in the MT were discovered. The narrative was consistent with Josephus, and the total evidence favors its originality.[154] Since the narrative is also absent from the LXX, the omission probably occurred prior to 200 BC, the general period we propose that Kainan dropped out of a Hebrew archetype of Genesis 11.

The omission in MT 1 Samuel 14:41 due to haplography is also analogous. The original is found only in the LXX and the Vulgate. No Hebrew manuscript of 14:41 exists, and it is clear that the LXX and V preserve the original, and the MT has been corrupted.[155] While it is certainly preferable to have an extant Hebrew manuscript, LXX texts such as 1 Samuel 14:41 and Judges 16:13–14[156] serve as important exceptions to this rule. Retroversions from Greek back into Hebrew are warranted if the evidence allows for it. In our view, the evidence from the LXX, *Jubilees* and other witnesses supports such a retroversion for Kainan in Genesis 11.

While MT Genesis contains no other large-scale omissions, this fact alone cannot logically eliminate the possibility that Kainan accidentally dropped out of Genesis 11. The repetitive textual matrix found in Genesis 11:10–32 enhances the plausibility of Kainan's omission by haplography (§ 5). All of the evidence should be carefully weighed before this explanation for Kainan's origin is rejected. A viable alternative theory should be offered to explain Kainan's spurious addition to the two independent Hebrew *Vorlagen* that the LXX and *Jubilees* attest to.

4. There are two scenarios that could explain Kainan's absence from the SP. The general academic consensus is that the SP underwent significant changes in the 2nd century BC, including harmonization.[157] A Hebrew text lacking Kainan could have influenced the SP during

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LXX Septuagint
A Codices Alexandrinus
LXX Septuagint
B Codex Vaticanus
[153] Freedman and Miano, "Is the Shorter Reading Better?" 693, 695.
[154] Tov, *Textual Criticism*, 311–13. Some scholars consider this longer text to be a midrashic addition (313). While this possibility should be considered, Tov's case for originality is quite persuasive.
LXX Septuagint
LXX Septuagint
LXX Septuagint
[155] Idem, *The Text-Critical Use of the Septuagint*, 139–40.
LXX Septuagint
[156] Tov cites additional examples (ibid., 70–72).
LXX Septuagint
LXX Septuagint
[157] Peter J. Gentry, "The Text of the Old Testament," *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 52 (2009): 24.

this time. It is also possible that the present-day SP descends from the Hebrew archetype that lost Kainan around the time of the Exile or shortly thereafter.

5. Kainan is absent from the MT of 1 Chronicles 1:18 and 24. Later scribes copying manuscripts of 1 Chronicles could have easily "corrected" or harmonized the text because the governing Hebrew texts of Genesis 10/11 no longer contained Kainan.[158] According to Tov, there is a "high level of agreement" between Genesis 10:1–29 and 1 Chronicles 1:4–23 in the MT.[159]

6. A Hebrew archetype of Genesis which had not lost Kainan was used by the Alexandrian translators (*c*. 281 BC). Kainan appeared in their Hebrew *Vorlage* and was included in the original LXX of Genesis 11:13b–14b and 10:24.[160]

7. Demetrius the Chronographer (*c*. 220 BC) is the earliest known witness to the LXX and to Genesis 5/11. He used a LXX text in Alexandria which necessarily included Kainan.

8. The Hebrew text of Genesis 11 containing Kainan used by the author of *Jubilees* in Israel around 160 BC may have been an offshoot of an archetype that had gone to Egypt, or had descended from a text that had remained in Israel after the Exile. VanderKam's description meshes with our proposal:

The Jub material suggests that there was in Palestine a biblical text that fell somewhere between (and slightly outside) the fixed points embodied in the MT, Sam and LXX. Its readings show that at some time after 200 B.C.E, there was in Judea at least one copy of Genesis-Exodus that agreed more often with the LXX and Sam than with the MT but was an independent witness.[161]

9. The post-Pentateuchal Greek translations were completed around 130 BC,[162] perhaps in Israel. The translators used Hebrew texts that differed from those used 100–150 years earlier for the

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[158] We should emphasize that the original author of Chronicles, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, would not have made an error. In our reconstruction, the removal of Kainan by harmonization would have been undertaken by later scribes.

[159] *Textual Criticism*, 13, n. 18; 12–13. First Chronicles 1:24 reads שֵׁם אַרְפַּכְשַׁד שֶׁלַח. First Chronicles 1:18 reads וְאַרְפַּכְשַׁד יָלַד אֶת־שֶׁלַח וְשֶׁלַח יָלַד אֶת־עֵבֶר, mimicking Gen 10:24. Harmonization in both would have been simple.
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[160] LXX manuscripts of Gen 10:24 with Kainam/n include Codices A (above the erasure) and M, 72', 108, 55, 730, the Catena Group, and the *s* group (minus 343), (Wevers, *Genesis*, 138).
LXX Septuagint
LXX Septuagint
LXX Septuagint
LXX Septuagint

[161] VanderKam, *From Revelation to Canon*, 460.

[162] Gentry, "Text of the Old Testament," 24.

Pentateuch.[163] Variations in translation techniques, literary styles and the dissemination of biblical books in individual scrolls contributed to their heterogeneous character.[164]

10. During the 2nd century BC, Jewish scribes modified circulating LXX/OG translations with the goal of updating and improving them.[165] It appears they mainly used PROTO-MT texts for this task. The 1st century BC Greek Minor Prophets Scroll from Naḥal Ḥever in the Judean Desert and Papyrus Fouad 266 are evidence for this phenomenon.[166]

During this period, Jewish scribes would have encountered Kainan in their old LXX of Genesis 10/11, but found him absent from their PROTO-MT text. Some scribes would have removed Kainan from their new translations, thinking the name was erroneous because it was not in their Hebrew *Vorlage*.[167] They would have viewed this as an improvement to the text. Conversely, Jewish scribes who were more conservative in their text-critical decisions and/or held the LXX in high(er) regard would have allowed Kainan to remain in their Greek translations, leaving the tension between the Greek and Hebrew texts intact.

11. The original 2nd century BC translator of LXX 1 Chronicles probably used a Hebrew text that had already removed Kainan. Copies of LXX 1 Chronicles were probably then harmonized

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[163] Emanuel Tov, "Reflections on the Septuagint with Special Attention Paid to the Post-Pentateuchal Translations," in *Textual Criticism of the Hebrew Bible, Qumran, Septuagint*, vol. 3, Supplements to Vetus Testamentum 167 (Leiden: Brill, 2015), 434–43.

[164] Emanuel Tov, "The Coincidental Nature of Ancient Scriptures," in *Textual Criticism of the Hebrew Bible, Qumran, Septuagint*, vol. 3, Supplements to Vetus Testamentum 167 (Leiden: Brill, 2015), 20–35.

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OG Old Greek

[165] Strictly speaking, "LXX" refers to the original Greek translation of the Pentateuch completed in Alexandria. "OG" (Old Greek) refers to the original post-Pentateuchal translations. "Recensions" refer to emedations/retranslations of the LXX/OG to conform more closely with the PROTO-MT (Karen H. Jobes and Moisés Silva, *Invitation to the Septuagint*, 2nd ed. [Grand Rapids: Baker, 2015], 14–17).

[166] Marcos, *Septuagint in Context*, 191–92.

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[167] For example, Kainan is absent from Gen 10:24 in Papyrus 961. Albert Pietersma argues that a correction towards the MT "presents itself as the least objectionable solution." He appeals to readings from Origen's Hexapla omitting Kainan to support his argument (*Chester Beatty Biblical Papyri IV and V: A New Critical Edition with Text-Critical Analysis*, vol. 16, American Studies in Papyrology [Toronto: Samuel Stevens Hakkert and Company, 1977], 161). Parablepsis is also possible (Wevers, *Notes on the Text of Genesis*, 141).

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with LXX Genesis 10/11 by the removal or addition of Kainan. Codex B excludes Kainan, while Codex A includes him.[168]

12. Accidental scribal errors during the transmission of the LXX over several centuries would have amplified the problems even further. Instances of large-scale haplography have occurred in LXX A and B of 1 Chronicles.[169] Schmidt and Sanders omit Kainan in their reconstruction of Genesis 10:24 in papyrus 911 since there is not enough space in the manuscript. However, they conclude τον καιναν και καιναν εγεννησεν was accidentally omitted by *homoioteleuton* previously.[170]

13. Josephus (*c*. AD 90) used a Genesis text in Rome that excluded Kainan (*Ant*. 1.150).[171]

14. The Aramaic Targums (Onkelos,[172] Pseudo-Jonathan,[173] and Nefotiti[174]) were based almost exclusively on the PROTO-MT.[175] They exclude Kainan.

15. Origen's Hexapla (*c*. AD 235)[176] placed old LXX/OG readings alongside those from Hebrew texts extant in Palestine (along with LXX readings from Aquila, Symmachus and Theodotion).

LXX Septuagint
B Codex Vaticanus
A Codices Alexandrinus
[168] Brooke and McLean, *Old Testament in Greek*, 392.
LXX Septuagint
LXX Septuagint
A Codices Alexandrinus
B Codex Vaticanus
[169] Freedman and Miano, "Is the Shorter Reading Better?" 693, 695.
[170] *Berlin Fragment*, 375.
[171] For a discussion of Josephus's Gen 5/11 chronology and the type of text he most likely used, see Smith Jr., "Case for the Septuagint's Chronology," 125–27.
[172] Bernard Grossfeld, trans., *The Targum Onquelos to Genesis*, The Aramaic Bible, vol. 6 (Wilmington, DE: Michael Glazier, 1988). Some scholars argue that Onquelos was the mid–2nd century Jewish translator, Aquila.
[173] According to Michael Maher, Pseudo-Jonathan did not reach its final form until the 7th or 8th century AD (*Targum Pseudo-Jonathan: Genesis*, The Aramaic Bible, vol. 1B [Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1992], 12).
[174] According to Martin McNamara, Neofiti may have originated in the 4th century AD (*Targum Neofiti 1: Genesis*, The Aramaic Bible, vol. 1A, [Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1992], 42–45).
[175] "Deviations [from the PROTO-MT] are based mainly on exegetical traditions, not on deviating texts" (Gentry, *Text of the Old Testament*, 26).
[176] Jobes and Silva, *Invitation to the Septuagint*, 39–46.
LXX Septuagint
OG Old Greek
LXX Septuagint

Origen introduced significant confusion and complexity into our understanding of the LXX's history. Jobes and Silva summarize the situation in Jerome's time:

In his preface to Chronicles, Jerome complained that the Christian world was in conflict over three forms (*trifaria varietas*) of the Septuagint text: (1) one in Egypt, attributed to Hesychius; (2) a second form dominant from Constantinople to Antioch and attributed to Lucian; and between them (3) Origen's (Hexaplaric) recension, used in Palestine.[177]

16. Given the circumstances described by Jerome, it should be no surprise that the evidence from the Church fathers is mixed. Theophilus of Antioch (d. AD 183),[178] Julius Africanus (AD 221),[179] and Eusebius of Caesarea (AD 310)[180] possessed LXX manuscripts that excluded Kainan. Conversely, Hippolytus of Rome (AD 225) explicitly includes Kainan from texts of LXX Genesis 10/11 and from Luke 3:36 and Augustine's LXX texts of Genesis 10/11 (AD 354–430) also included Kainan.[181]

17. Lastly, we turn to the most significant and reliable witness of all: Luke. Luke used a LXX text of 1 Chronicles and/or Genesis 11 that included Kainan (§ 1.1–3). Luke's Gospel is not only an authoritative and inspired witness *to* a LXX text containing Kainan in *c*. AD 60–70, Luke 3:36 sanctions the legitimacy of Kainan's presence *in* the LXX translation itself. Logically, this would then validate both the presence *and* authenticity of Kainan in the Hebrew *Vorlage* from which Luke's particular LXX text was ultimately derived. There can be no greater endorsement of Kainan's authenticity than this.

4. CONCLUSION

Instead of being an indictment against Kainan, the totality of evidence, along with the textual and historical complexities outlined above, support a larger argument favoring his original inclusion in both the Old and New Testaments. Conversely, the theory that Kainan originated as a scribal

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LXX Septuagint
[177] Ibid., 29.
[178] Grant notes that Theophilus's *Ad Autolycum* might exhibit some features of the Lucianic text of the LXX (Robert M. Grant, "The Bible of Theophilus of Antioch," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 66 [1947]: 173–75). The Lucianic text is not considered a recension towards the Hebrew, but it does exhibit variations from LXX/OG (Jobes and Silva, *Invitation to the Septuagint*, 46). This might explain Kainan's absence from Theophilus.
[179] Martin Wallraff, Umberto Roberto, and Karl Pinggera, eds., *Iulius Africanus Chronographiae: The Extant Fragments*, trans. William Adler (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2007), 29–41.
[180] Ibid.
LXX Septuagint
LXX Septuagint
LXX Septuagint
[181] Ramsey, *City of God*, 189, 199.
LXX Septuagint
LXX Septuagint
LXX Septuagint
LXX Septuagint

error in Luke and then was interpolated back into both the OT and NT is an overly simplistic attempt to resolve a highly complex problem, and is not possible based on all the known evidence. Kainan's inclusion in *Jubilees*, Demetrius's chronology and LXX Genesis are particularly devastating to this theory.

Other theories which postulate that Kainan was a spurious addition to Luke, *Jubilees*, and the LXX are not viable and cannot even remotely account for the textual and historical data. The most reasonable explanation for the known evidence is that Kainan was originally in Genesis 10:24; 11:13b–14b, and 1 Chronicles 1:18, 24, but initially disappeared from Genesis 11 by haplography and mental error. The multifaceted evidence can best be explained by this initial, triggering mistake.

5. APPENDIX: A PROPOSED RECONSTRUCTION OF THE ACCIDENTAL REMOVAL OF קינן FROM GENESIS 11:13B–14B BY HAPLOGRAPHY AND MENTAL ERROR[182]

Line 1 וארפכשד חי חמש ושלשים שנה ומאת שנה ויולד את־**קינן** ויחי ארפכשד

Line 2 אחרי הולידו את־**קינן** שלשים שנה **וארבע** מאות שנה ויולד בנים ובנות

Line 3 ויחי **קינן** שלשים שנה ומאת שנה ויולד את־שלח ויחי **קינן** אחרי הולידו **את־שלח**

Line 4 **שלשים שנה ושלש מאות שנה** ויולד בנים ובנות ושלח חי שלשים שנה מאות שנה

Line 5 ויולד את־עבר ויחי שלח אחרי הולידו את־עבר שלש שנים **וארבע** מאות שנה

Line 6 ויולד בנים ובנות…

Rigid Translation (the omitted text appears in italics):

(Line 1) [12]When Arpachshad had lived 5 and 30 years, and 100 years, he fathered *Kenan.* [13b]*And Arpachshad*

(Line 2) *lived after he fathered Kenan 30 years and* 4*00 years, and he fathered* [other] *sons and daughters.*

(Line 3) [14b]*When Kenan had lived 30 years and 100 years, he fathered* Shelah. *And Kenan* [13] lived after he fathered Shelah

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[182] The text represents a Hebrew *Vorlage* with the numbers found in the LXX translation. They follow Wevers (*Septuaginta: Genesis*, 144), with the exception of Shelah's remaining years, which are presented here as 403 instead of 330 (Smith Jr., "Case for the Septuagint's Chronology," 131; Hendel, *Text of Genesis 1–11*, 73). Hendel's Hebrew reconstruction with Kenan is similar (ibid., 146–47).

(Line 4) 30 years and *3*00 years and he fathered [other] sons and daughters. [14] When Shelah had lived 30 years and 100 years

(Line 5) he fathered Eber. [15]And Shelah lived after he fathered Eber 3 years and 400 years

(Line 6) and he fathered [other] sons and daughters …

Step One: The scribe begins by accurately recording Arpachshad's begetting age (135). Then, he accidentally skips over Kenan (את־קינן) as the direct object, dropping his eye to Shelah instead (את־שלח), who first appears in line 3 (double underline). The two sections of text highlighted in gray leading up to the first appearances of both Kenan and Shelah are exactly the same. The eye of the scribe easily jumped from line 1 (gray) to line 3 (gray), picking up Shelah as the direct object (את־שלח) of Arpachshad's begetting instead of Kenan (את־קינן). This one simple eye slip would have caused the scribe to skip over 3 of the 4 instances of Kenan (single, bold underline*), a total of 23 words.

Step Two: Now Shelah has become the direct object instead of Kenan, and the scribe pauses since there is a natural break in the syntax. However, instead of his eyes going back up to the end of line 1 to pick up Arpachshad again, he merely repeats the name from immediate memory and writes "and Arpachshad lived after …" (ויחי ארפכשד אחרי).

Step Three: Once the scribe writes "and Arpachshad lived after," his eye goes to the end of line 3, and he picks back up with Shelah. The Arpachshad/Shelah pairing would have been immediately in his mind, and on his scroll. Since he had made Shelah the direct object the first time, he now sees Shelah as the direct object of the infinitive construct (אחרי הולידו)) at the end of line 3 (**את־שלח**), and continues on with the verse. This simple mental error only requires skipping 2 additional words (ויחי קינן). The scribe has now fully omitted Kenan from the text of Genesis 11, and Shelah has been double-substituted as the direct object of Arpachshad's begetting.

Step Four: The scribe's eye is now down to the beginning of line four. There, the remaining years (*ry*) are 330 (tiny dotted underline*). These belong to Kenan, but due to his error, the scribe is instead assigning *ry* to Arpachshad after he fathers Shelah. The *ry* for Arpachshad was most likely 430 originally.[183] Thus, the 330 assigned to Kenan must be now replaced by 430 for Arpachshad. This only requires accidentally placing 4 (ארבע) instead of 3 (שלש, line 4) in the hundred's position before מאות. Four appears in line 2 in Arpachshad's *ry*, and in line 5 in Shelah's *ry* (larger dotted underline*). The text surrounding both instances of ארבע in lines 2 and

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* In the electronic edition, this text is blue, underline & bold.

* In the electronic edition, this text is bold & underline.

[183] Almost all LXX MSS read 430 or 330 for Arpachshad's remaining years (Wevers, *Septuaginta: Genesis*, 144). The LXX translators most likely had a Hebrew *Vorlage* with 430. The MT reads 403. The PROTO-MT could easily have lost the suffix ים at the end of 30 (שלשים) making the number 403 instead. Or, 403 could have accidentally come from Shelah's *ry*. The 430 *ry* is found in the Aramaic Targums (Steinmann, "Challenging the Authenticity," 701). LXX manuscripts with 330 are the result of a scribal error from 430 in the Greek (Shaw, "Genealogies of Genesis 5 and 11," 68).

* In the electronic edition, this text is bold & double underline.

5 is almost exactly the same (single underline). Four also appears as part of Eber's begetting age in Gen 11:16 (ארבע ושׁלשׁים). The scribe could have accidentally picked up ארבע from one of these three places.

Summary: The highly repetitive nature of the textual matrix from Genesis 11:11–26 increased the possibility of the accidental omission of Kenan. In lines 1–6 alone, the following words appear on multiple occasions:

[ים]שׁלשׁ	"three/thirty"	7 times
הולידו/ויולד	"fathered"	9 times
ומאת	"100"	6 times
את	direct object marker	6 times
שׁנה/ שׁנים	"year/s"	14 times

The total number of skipped words is 25, well within the range of other similar omissions in the MT tradition (§ 3.3), adding to the viability of this reconstruction.[4]

[4] Henry B. Smith Jr. and Kris J. Udd, "On the Authenticity of Kainan, Son of Arpachshad," *Detroit Baptist Seminary Journal* 24 (2019): 119–154.

Sexton, Jeremy. "Primeval Chronology Restored: Revisiting The Genealogies Of Genesis 5 and 11." *Bible and Spade Volume 29* (2016).

Primeval Chronology Restored: Revisiting The Genealogies Of Genesis 5 and 11

Jeremy Sexton
and
Henry B. Smith Jr.

Prologue

For a number of years, the ABR staff has been endeavoring to conduct research on the genealogies of Genesis 5 and 11. As we worked toward the launching of this important project, Pastor Jeremy Sexton was independently working on a paper, now published in *The Westminster Theological Journal*, that is very much in accord with the direction of our research. While his article reflects many of the observations we had made in the course of our research, we give Pastor Sexton full credit for his detailed work. We also thank him for republishing his entire article on the ABR website. The article that you are reading now is primarily a reiteration of Pastor Sexton's original essay, though the present article advances the argument by making several important contributions of its own. Page numbers in parenthetical references refer to the *WTJ* article, which we encourage you to read in concert with this one to contemplate the full import of our arguments. As a member of the ABR staff, I consider it a privilege to head up this project and to have Pastor Sexton make such an important contribution. ABR expects to publish many more articles on this important, ancient, and complex topic. We hope that the results will have positive ramifications in archaeology, textual criticism, anthropology, and apologetics.

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William Henry Green became the chair of Biblical and Oriental Literature at Princeton Theological Seminary when he was twenty-six years old in 1851. A strong opponent of the Documentary Hypothesis, Green published numerous books and articles on the theology and authority of the Old Testament. *Primeval Chronology* is perhaps his best known work, still having a significant impact on modern evangelical scholarship.

Part I: Primeval Chronology Lost

Until the latter part of the 19th century, both Jewish and Christian theologians and historiographers interpreted the genealogies of Genesis 5:3–32 and Genesis 11:10–32 as yielding a continuous chronology of human history from the creation of Adam to the birth of Abraham. Biblical chronologists had been interpreting the genealogies in Genesis as intact chronologies since before Christ (e.g., see the histories of Demetrius and Eupolemus). This ultra- majority understanding of these biblical texts held sway for millennia. In 1890, William Henry Green of Princeton Seminary published his influential essay *Primeval Chronology*, in which he concluded that "the Scriptures furnish no data for a chronological computation prior to the life of Abraham" (193). With vital support from B.B. Warfield, Green's theory eventually supplanted the long-held chronological view in conservative scholarship. Today, Green's article is often lauded by

evangelicals as the definitive and final word on why Genesis 5 and 11 should never have been used to construct a chronology from Adam to Abraham.

Green's hypothesis is attractive to evangelicals because it removes the conflict between Scripture and the age of mankind espoused in scientific academia. According to the Masoretic Text (MT), God created Adam ca. 4000 BC; according to the Septuagint (LXX), ca. 5500 BC. Neither of these dates is acceptable to secular anthropologists. Green's interpretation also removes discrepancies between the Hebrew Bible's date for the Flood and the conventional dates for the establishment of ancient Near East (ANE) cultures. For example, the Hebrew Bible (interpreted chronologically) dates the world-effacing Flood to ca. 2400 BC, but most ancient historians believe we can trace Egyptian civilization back to ca. 3000 BC. Chronological gaps of unknown size in Genesis 5 and 11 eliminate these two apologetic problems rather easily. Warfield surmised that these genealogies could span 200,000 years, allowing the Bible to accommodate the scientific claims of that time.[1]

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The Case For Genealogical Gaps

In the first half of his essay, Green demonstrates that genealogies in the Bible sometimes omit unimportant links, appealing to the well-known genealogical gaps in Matthew 1:1–17 and Ezra 7:1–5 as parade examples. He also argues that the Hebrew verb *yālad* ("to bear, give birth to, bring forth, beget") can be used of remote ancestors as well as immediate offspring. Deuteronomy 4:25 and 2 Kings 20:18 illustrate this point well (196). We have no dispute with Green so far.

We also agree with Green on an important semantic point regarding *yālad*. Green recognizes that throughout Genesis 5 and 11, the verb *yālad* (translated as "begat" in the KJV) describes the event of someone's birth. For example, in a comment on Genesis 5:9 ("When Enosh had lived 90 years, he *begat* Kenan"), Green says that "when Enosh had lived 90 years … [some]one was born." Green likewise affirms in eight other places that the genealogies specify the age of each patriarch at the "birth" of a "son." Modern OT scholars—for example, Hamilton, Waltke-O'Connor, Tov, Oswalt, Young, and Lessing-Steinmann—all concur with Green's assessment of *yālad*. This semantic consensus is supported by several passages outside of Genesis 5 and 11 in which *yālad* refers to literal or metaphorical birth: Genesis 21:2, 3, 5, 7, 9; 40:20; Deuteronomy 4:25; 2 Kings 20:18; Isaiah 39:7; 45:10; 55:10; 59:4; 66:9; Ezekiel 16:4, 5 (195–96, 199–201). In the last ten of these verses, *yālad* occurs in the H-stem. In Genesis 5 and 11, *yālad* occurs in the H-stem all 55 times. At every begetting age given throughout Genesis 5 and 11, *someone* was born. This is undisputed. A descendent was brought to birth at the specified age of each patriarch named throughout the primeval genealogies.

Since other genealogies in Scripture omit generations, and since *yālad* can be used of descendants beyond the first generation, Green concludes in the second half of his essay that the

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[1] Benjamin B. Warfield, "The Manner and Time of Man's Origin," in B.B. Warfield: *Evolution, Science, and Scripture: Selected Writings*, ed. David N. Livingstone and Mark A. Noll (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 2000), 222.

author of Genesis 5 and 11 may have left out some "unimportant names" (202). Kenan, for example, may have been "a remote descendant of Enosh" (197). For the sake of argument, we concede Green's point that the primeval genealogies may contain genealogical gaps.

Do Genealogical Gaps Imply Chronological Gaps?

Without explicit argument, Green asserts that if *genealogical* gaps exist in Genesis 5 and 11, then *chronological* gaps necessarily exist as well. However, an unbroken chronology does not demand an unbroken genealogy. If Seth was born when Adam was 130 (Gn 5:3), and Enosh was born when Seth was 105 (Gn 5:6), and Kenan was born when Enosh was 90 (Gn 5:9), etc., the nature of their relationships is immaterial, and the chronology remains intact. Even if Kenan was Enosh's great-great grandson, the text still says that Kenan was born when Enosh was 90 years old. The recurring formula throughout Genesis 5 and 11—"When patriarch A had lived X years, he had [*yālad* Hiphil] patriarch B"— explicitly tells us how old each patriarch was when he brought his named descendent to birth. Table 1 uses Genesis 5:9 to illustrate the grammar of this repeated formula.

The Hiphil form of *yālad* ("he had" or "he brought to birth") describes the actual birth of someone throughout the genealogies. Green and every other OT scholar agree on this semantic point. But whose birth does it describe, for example, in Genesis 5:9 (see Table 1)? Who was born when Enosh was 90? The untranslatable direct object marker *ʼet* specifies Kenan as the recipient of the verb's action. Hence Kenan was born when Enosh was 90. And *ʼet* is not merely a direct object marker, but also an "emphatic particle" (Waltke-O'Connor) that stresses the noun—in this case, the name—that follows it (197, n. 37). *Kenan* was born when Enosh was 90. In Genesis 21:5; 40:20 and Ezekiel 16:4–5, which use passive forms of *yālad*, the author puts an *ʼet* before each verb's passive *subject* to emphasize the one born (in the last three of these verses, *yālad* occurs in the Hophal, the passive of Hiphil). Thus Kühlewein concludes that *ʼet*, when used with *yālad*, identifies the person born (198, n. 137).

Is it possible that Genesis 5:9 describes the birth of someone other than Kenan? Green and advocates of his non-chronological interpretation must suppose so. To break the chronology, Green suggests that Enosh's anonymous son ("from whom Kenan sprang") could have been born when Enosh was 90 (198). In this scenario, Kenan is a descendant of the unnamed and unknown son born to Enosh in his 90th year; and Kenan could have been born centuries or millennia after this son was born. However, the grammar and lexical semantics indicate quite explicitly that Kenan himself was the recipient of the verb's action, and not someone else. When Enosh was 90, Kenan received the action of *yālad* (the Hiphil form in Genesis 5:9 is *wayyôled)*, that is, the action of being born. Green has created chronological gaps by inserting an unstated direct object—the unnamed son "from whom Kenan sprang"—into the text. Yet this move is semantically impermissible, and Green provides no evidence to the contrary. *The Hiphil of* yālad *always refers to the birth of its grammatical object, whether that object is an immediate offspring or a remote descendant* (198–201). The descendent born to Enosh in his 90th year of life cannot be anyone except Kenan. Therefore, the chronology is necessarily unbroken.

Table 1: The Grammar of Genesis 5:9

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Green's Purposeless Begetting Ages

If the intent of Genesis 5 and 11 were to present mere genealogies, rather than chronogenealogies, then the nineteen begetting ages, one for each patriarch from Adam to Terah, serve no purpose. No other genealogy in Scripture or in any other extant ANE writing includes begetting ages (194). They are unique to the primeval genealogies. And yet according to Green, these numbers may only indicate how old the fathers were when their unnamed and (to use Green's word) "unimportant" sons were born (202), a scenario that we have already shown to be semantically impossible. Green does not explain why the author of Genesis took great pains to tell us when so many unknown and unimportant people were born. In 1896, Goodenow published a critique of Green's hypothesis, noting that this "theory *takes away all purpose* on the part of the sacred writer in giving the birth- dates he has so carefully arranged" (202). We have been unable to find any published interpretation that attempts to explain the purpose of the begetting ages aside from a chronological one.

Moreover, begetting ages are unnecessary for constructing a mere genealogy, as illustrated in Genesis 4:17–26; 10:1–32; 22:20–24; 25:1–4, 12–18; 35:23–26; 46:8–27; Exodus 6:14–25; Numbers 1; 3; 26; Ruth 4:18–22; 1 Chronicles 1–9; Ezra 7:1–5; Matthew 1:1–17; Luke 3:23–38. The genealogy in Exodus 6 is especially instructive, because it even gives the fathers' life spans without using begetting ages. For example, v. 18 says, "The sons of Kohath: Amram, Izhar, Hebron, and Uzziel, the years of the life of Kohath being 133 years." If the only goals of Genesis 5 and 11 were to record genealogies and life spans, then Genesis 5:9–11 would look like this: "[9]Enosh had Kenan. [10]And Enosh had other sons and daughters. [11]And all the days of Enosh were 905 years, and he died." This would be far more efficient. In reality, these verses look like this: "[9]*When Enosh had lived 90 years*, he had Kenan. [10]*And Enosh lived 815 years after he had Kenan*, and he had other sons and daughters. [11]And all the days of Enosh were 905 years, and he died." The inspired text first specifies (v. 9a) and then accentuates (v. 10a) the year in which the important son, Kenan, was born (203).

Green contends that since the number of years that each patriarch lived after he begat his descendant is of no chronological use, and since each patriarch's age at death (given in Genesis 5 alone) is of no chronological use, we should not use *any* of the numbers for a chronological purpose. But why must we reduce all the numbers in Genesis 5 and 11 to one and the same purpose? Historically, interpreters have discerned two primary purposes of the numerical statements: to provide a chronology of humanity (and the world) and to show the deteriorating effects of sin on mankind's longevity (203).

Green believes it significant that no biblical author ever sums the years for the two epochs in Genesis 5 and 11. He notes that Scripture computes other important time spans, citing Exodus 12:40 and 1 Kings 6:1. His implicit argument is that if the interval from Adam to Abraham were important for us to know, then we might expect the Bible to compute it for us. First, however, the numbers in Exodus 12:40 and 1 Kings 6:1 are not computations of other numbers in the Bible; they are simply chronological data points, summaries of time spans. We could not deduce these numbers from the rest of Scripture. Second, and related, Green fails to recognize that each begetting age in Genesis 5 and 11 is similarly a chronological data point, a summary of a time

span. We could not deduce any of the begetting ages from the rest of Scripture. Adding together the begetting ages in Genesis 5:3, 5:6, 5:9, etc., to determine the interval between Adam and Abraham is no different in principle from adding together the numbers in Exodus 12:40 and 1 Kings 6:1 to determine the interval between the beginning of Israel's sojourning and the beginning of the temple's construction. The "430 years" in Exodus 12:40 is like the "130 years" in Genesis 5:3 and the "105 years" in Genesis 5:6, and so on. Green would have us believe that the "430 years" in Exodus 12:40 is like the sum of all the begetting ages; then he can point out that such a sum does not exist in Scripture. Third, Green himself recognizes that Scripture does not even total all the important intervals *within the primeval genealogies themselves*. Genesis 11 does not provide the total years of each father's life, but still Green believes that the life span of each postdiluvian can be deduced by adding his begetting age to the number of years he lived after his son's birth. If these life spans are important, as Green affirms, even though Scripture does not compute them, so also might the overall chronology be important, even though Scripture does not compute it. Green implies that the Bible sums significant time spans for us, and yet the Bible does not even sum several significant time spans within the genealogies themselves. Fourth, that no biblical author ever totals the timeline in Genesis 5 and 11 is ultimately irrelevant, because the semantics, grammar, and syntax of the genealogies inescapably link the begetting ages together chronologically, as we have shown.

Green says that "each genealogy includes ten names, Noah being the tenth from Adam, and Terah the tenth from Noah," and concludes that "the symmetry of these primitive genealogies is artificial" (203–204). Of course, a ten-ten structure, if we assumed it to be artificial, would only entail genealogical gaps, not chronological ones, so this is a moot point. Nevertheless, it is worth noting that the MT and the Samaritan Pentateuch (SP) of Genesis 11 consist of only nine names, not ten. To make the structure appear symmetrical, Green includes Noah in both genealogies, even though Noah's name appears nowhere in Genesis 11. Later Green corrected this error (204). One might count Abram in the second genealogy (Gn 11:26), but then to be consistent he must include Shem in the first one (Gn 5:32), giving Genesis 5 eleven links instead of ten. A ten-ten symmetry is unachievable in the MT and in the SP (204, n. 68).

Furthermore, Green's argument yields the most incredible of coincidences. On Green's hypothesis, we cannot know when Methuselah died in relation to the Flood, because we cannot know the gap of time between him and Noah. Accordingly, Methuselah could have died thousands of years before the Flood. But when we subject the begetting ages in MT Genesis 5 to chronological computation, Methuselah dies in the very year of the Flood. If chronological computation were truly unwarranted, as Green insists, Methuselah's death in the year of the Flood would be an unbelievable coincidence of the chronological interpretation. To get around this, one might concede that a chronological construction is permissible from Methuselah to Lamech to Noah, but nowhere else. However, this requires extreme special pleading. The syntax of these verses (Gn 5:25–29)

is identical to that of the previous verses (Gn 5:3–24). The chronological intent of Genesis 5:25–29 places Green's 1890 proposal in a profound exegetical quandary, of which Green seemed unaware. The simplest explanation of the data is that the author of the primeval history provided all the begetting ages, not just Methuselah's and Lamech's, for chronological computation (204).

Green may have shown the possibility of *genealogical* gaps, but he failed to establish the possibility of *chronological* gaps. He failed to demonstrate that *yālad*, in the case of a genealogical gap, may describe the birth of the named descendant's unnamed ancestor. He failed to explain why *yālad* does not necessarily describe the birth of its named object throughout Genesis 5 and 11, even though it does everywhere else in the Hebrew Bible, including in places where the verb's object refers to remote descendants (Dt 4:25; 2 Kgs 20:18). He failed to provide a purpose for the unique and carefully placed begetting ages. Finally, he failed to account for the striking coincidence (so it is on his premises) discussed in the previous paragraph (205).

Part II: A Case For The Septuagint's Primeval Chronology

Green's hypothesis, which left the begetting ages with no purpose, effectively halted any serious discussion among conservative scholars on the numerical divergences in the three main textual witnesses of Genesis 5 and 11 (MT, LXX, SP). Most evangelicals have lost all interest in the text-critical issues related to the begetting ages and have simply accepted the figures in the MT. Those who do discuss the textual differences tend to repeat superficial arguments for the MT. The pro-MT position on Genesis 5 and 11, however, is primarily a post-Reformation phenomenon (210). The overwhelming majority of Christians before the Reformation subscribed to the Septuagint's primeval chronology. The Reformers, in their zeal for returning "to the sources," uncritically accepted the begetting ages in the MT. But many Bible-believing chronologists during the centuries after the Reformation argued that the ancient Jews and historic church were correct all along, concluding that the LXX fundamentally preserves the original chronology and that the numbers in the MT are the result of a second-century corruption (210, 212). In fact, no known historical work written before the second century AD reflects the MT's timeline. While we maintain that the MT is generally reliable, the doctrine of preservation does not demand that only the MT preserves the OT. Scripture contains many promises that God will preserve His Word, but it does not specify exactly how He will do so. God does not promise to preserve the Scriptures in only one textual tradition. Bible- believing Christians are at liberty to consider the compelling text-critical arguments for the numbers in LXX Genesis 5 and 11. The following material outlines some of the external and internal evidences for the authenticity of the Septuagint's primeval chronology.

External Evidence For LXX Genesis 5 And 11

Table 2 on the next page shows how the begetting ages vary among the three textual witnesses, along with Josephus. While a few of the minor differences may be ascribed to accidental errors, scholars universally acknowledge that the divergences of 100 years and 50 years signify deliberate alterations of the text. The LXX (with its higher begetting ages) dates Noah's flood 780 years earlier, and the creation of Adam 1, 386 years earlier, than the MT does. These differences are quite significant, especially when we attempt to evaluate and date archaeological evidence between the Flood and Abraham.

The higher begetting ages in the LXX go all the way back to when the Jewish scribes in Alexandria, Egypt, originally translated the Torah into Greek (ca. 280 BC). This means one of two things: either (a) the LXX translators used a Hebrew text with the higher begetting ages in it or (b) the LXX translators fabricated the higher begetting ages. If (a) is true, it means that a very old Hebrew text contained the longer chronology. To avoid this conclusion, many proponents of

the MT have assumed that (b) must be true, speculating that the Alexandrian translators intentionally inflated the chronology to reconcile it with Egyptian history. Although no ancient evidence supports this supposition, scholars have often repeated it as established fact anyway. (To bolster this bald assertion, many also have accused the Alexandrian Jews of maintaining less reverence for the text than the Palestinian Jews, even though there is no historical support for this characterization either.) A desire to reconcile biblical history with Egyptian chronology cannot account for such a grand-scale corruption of the sacred text, an egregious violation of Deuteronomy 4:2. The Septuagint exhibits no inclination to accommodate any aspect of Egyptian cosmogony, theogony, or anthropogony. There is no reason to think that the Jewish scribes in Alexandria would capitulate to Egyptian worldview claims *only in the area of primeval chronology*. Additionally, it is inexplicable that the Alexandrian scribes would imagine that they could get away with introducing such a horrendous and impious fraud into the biblical text. It is impossible that they would have gotten away with it. The ancient Jews, who prized their chronologies and genealogies, never would have forgiven a deliberate textual alteration of this magnitude in the foundational chronogenealogies of Genesis 5 and 11. And yet for four hundred years this corruption supposedly was not just overlooked, but also adopted by all the Jewish historians of that time (see below). Such a scenario is utterly implausible.

Until the second century AD, the Jews universally regarded the Greek translation of the OT as a faithful interpretation of the original Hebrew.[2] Philo and Josephus lauded the Greek version, the Sanhedrin authorized it to be read in the Greek-speaking synagogues, and the apostles quoted from it freely. Russell notes that "before the second century of the Christian religion, no traces can be found of any controversy as to the differences supposed to exist in the Greek and Hebrew texts of the sacred books" (216, n. 129). The unanimous Jewish approval of the LXX during the first four centuries of its existence can only be explained if it was a generally accurate translation of the Hebrew text in circulation during that time. What happened in the second century? The Palestinian Jews suddenly began repudiating the original translation of the Greek OT and replacing it with new translations (by Aquila, Symmachus, and Theodotion). We shall explore the reasons for this presently.

A major problem with the LXX inflation hypothesis, in

Table 2: The Begetting Ages of Genesis 5 and 11

[2] A Greek version of the OT existed before the apostolic era. The term "Septuagint" or "LXX" technically refers only to the Greek Pentateuch, translated ca. 280 BC by the Jews in Alexandria, Egypt. The remaining books of the Hebrew Bible were translated into Greek by different people in various places over the next few centuries; these books go by the term "Old Greek" or "OG." The LXX and OG compose the original Greek OT, which should be distinguished, at least in principle, from the revisions and new translations that the Jews produced during the second century AD.

addition to the complete lack of historical evidence for it, is that it cannot account for the allegedly inflated siring ages in SP Genesis 11, which match those in LXX Genesis 11 exactly. The SP scribes, known for their sectarian tendencies, were not driven to compete with Egyptian chronology; they probably had no knowledge of it. And the source of the higher begetting ages in the Hebrew text of SP Genesis 11 is certainly not the Greek text of LXX Genesis 11. There is no evidence that the SP is in any way dependent on the LXX for its higher begetting ages, and much evidence suggests the independence of these two major textual witnesses, especially regarding the primeval chronologies. In Genesis 5, the SP's chronology differs drastically from the LXX's (see Table 2). In Genesis 11, two important differences corroborate the independence of the SP and the LXX: unlike the SP, the LXX includes the generation of Cainan (cf. Lk 3:36) and leaves out the total years of each patriarch's life. What are the chances that these two independent textual traditions inflated the begetting ages of Genesis 11 identically? The begetting ages in the LXX and the SP of Genesis 11 go back to a common Hebrew text—a text that dates back at least to the translation of the LXX in ca. 280 BC.

The LXX inflation hypothesis also bypasses the significant strides made during the past century in Septuagint studies, a broad area of research that requires much more attention in evangelical scholarship. For example, textual scholars generally recognize that LXX Genesis was translated from a Hebrew text (*Vorlage*) that differs from the MT in numerous places (212). Tov, Hendel, Klostermann, and many others have demonstrated that

the numbers in LXX Genesis 5 and 11 should be ascribed to the *Vorlage*, not to the Alexandrian translators (213).

Evidence abounds for the existence of the LXX's longer chronology in the Hebrew texts circulating during the centuries before and the century after Christ's birth. Jewish historians Demetrius (ca. 200 BC) and Eupolemus (ca. 160 BC) bear witness to the Septuagint's siring ages. Eupolemus had access to both the Hebrew text and the LXX, which apparently contained the same numbers, for Eupolemus was a Palestinian Jew who would not have used in his chronology the Greek's higher numbers if they did not also exist in the Hebrew. The higher begetting ages also appear in Josephus (*Ant.* 1.67, 83–87, 149–50). This is highly significant historical evidence, since Josephus explicitly states that he worked from the Hebrew text (*Ant.* 10.218; *Ag. Ap.* 1.1). The only numbers in Josephus that match the MT are known corruptions of summation figures in *Ant.* 1.82 and 1.148. The subsequent lists of begetting ages in *Ant.* 1.83–87 and 1.149–50 essentially match the LXX's numbers (see Table 2). Altering the begetting age of each patriarch in the lists that followed would have been too difficult, so only the summation figures were changed. These reduced totals are blatant attempts to alter Josephus towards the MT. In accordance with the longer chronology, Josephus states that the history recorded in the Hebrew Bible—a history that commences with creation and terminates more than 400 years before Christ— covers 5,000 years: "Those antiquities contain the history of five thousand years; and they are taken out of our sacred books, but translated by me into the Greek tongue" (*Ag. Ap.* 1.1). The MT's timeline, which does not show up in any witness before the second century AD, appears to be a calculated reduction of the original chronology, which existed in Hebrew texts until the second century AD (213–14).

The ancient Jewish witnesses betray no demonstrable attempt to inflate biblical or intertestamental chronology. However, the Jewish tendency toward chronological *deflation* is demonstrated in several places: (1) the scribal reductions in Josephus toward the MT's chronology, discussed above; (2) the SP's antediluvian chronology, which is 349 years shorter than the MT's; (3) the antediluvian chronology in *Jubilees*, which closely resembles the deflated one in the SP; (4) a lost Hebrew text that Whiston calls "Jerome's Samaritan [Pentateuch]" and that Jackson calls "the Babylonian Hebrew Text…followed by the Eastern Jews," whose antediluvian chronology was 100 years shorter than the MT's (cf. endnote 4); and (5) the *Seder Olam Rabbah*, a famous second-century Jewish chronology that reduces postexilic history by about 185 years (214–15).

The *Seder Olam Rabbah*, known for its severe reduction of the timeline between the exile and Christ, is the earliest witness to the chronology in MT Genesis 5 and 11. That is, the earliest witness to the MT's begetting ages is a corrupted second-century Jewish history that reduces postexilic chronology to avoid the Christian interpretation of the Messianic prophecy in Daniel 9:26 (see below). Even aside from considerations of the *Seder Olam*'s compromised nature, the earliest witness to the longer chronology (LXX) predates the earliest witness to the MT's shorter chronology by about 400 years. If the MT's chronology is original, why did it disappear until the second century AD, and why did the longer chronology prevail in both Hebrew and Greek sources until then? Any defender of the MT's numbers must address this question first (215–16).

What could have motivated the second-century Jews to deflate their sacred chronology so significantly? Prevalent among Jews and early Christians was the belief that the Messiah would arrive during the sixth millennium after creation, between AM 5000 and AM 6000 (AM = Anno Mundi, "in the year of the world"). The Babylonian Talmud further suggests that according to some Jews, "the period of the Messiah" spanned from AM 4000 to AM 6000 (216). The LXX's chronology puts the birth of Jesus at ca. AM 5500, clearly "qualifying" him (with respect to the age of the world) to be the Messiah. Many scholars have argued that the Palestinian Jews living in the second century AD shortened the chronology to remove Jesus from the sixth millennium of the world, thereby disqualifying Him as the Messiah (215–16, n. 129). This reduction is likely reflected in the *Seder Olam*, which (dating creation to 3761 BC) even manages to put Jesus outside "the period of the Messiah," while situating the second-century Jews right on the verge of it. After all, the authors of the *Seder*

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Romanticized image of Flavius Josephus, born Joseph ben Matityahu. His work, *Antiquities of the Jews*, details the history of the Jewish people from the creation of the world until his own time, ca. AD 94. His work is an important first century AD witness to the numbers found in the primeval chronology.

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Olam were not opposed to manipulating Jewish chronology for Messianic (anti-Christian) reasons, for they indisputably reduced the interval between the Babylonian captivity and the

Second Temple's destruction by about 185 years, supporting the Jewish attempt to correlate the Messianic prophecy in Daniel 9:26 with the events of AD 70 instead of with Jesus Christ.

We propose, then, an adequate motive for Palestinian Jewish scribes to alter the sacred text, a motive that is supported by historical and theological evidence: discrediting the Lord Jesus as Messiah.

Judaism was facing a crisis of biblical proportions (literally) during the second century of the Christian era. The gospel of Messiah Jesus was spreading like wildfire across the Roman world, the Temple had been razed to the ground, and the holy city of God had been burned. The rest of Israel had been ravaged by Roman aggression in the events of AD 66–73 and AD 132–136. The small core of Judaism that rose from the ashes had complete and autonomous control over the Hebrew manuscripts that survived the Roman devastations,[3] providing ample opportunity for wholesale chronological changes that would go undetectable in later copies. Most of the world around them would have been unable to read the Hebrew texts, greatly minimizing their usefulness and dissemination outside of Palestinian Judaism. These remaining manuscripts were the precursors to the Masoretic Text, which solidified during the last part of the first millennium AD. The circumstances in Palestine during the middle of the second century AD provided an ideal opportunity for the keepers of the remaining Jewish Scriptures to corrupt their texts without leaving behind a trail of evidence in the Hebrew manuscripts.

Numerous church fathers testify to the lengths to which orthodox Judaism went to discredit Jesus' Messianic office, a phenomenon also recorded throughout the book of Acts. Justin Martyr says that the Rabbis deliberately expunged or altered Messianic verses from their Scriptures in their project of discrediting Lord Jesus as Messiah (e.g., see *Dial*. 71). According to Justin, the second-century Jews were still promulgating the lie that the disciples had stolen Christ's body from the tomb (cf. Mt 28:13–15). Augustine writes that "the Jews, envying us for our translation of their Law and Prophets, have made alterations in their texts to undermine the authority of ours" (*Civ*. 15.11). In a spiritual context that included the crucifixion of Jesus, the murder of Stephen, the attempted murder of Paul, virulent second-century opposition to the gospel, and a willingness to alter and even take away from the words of Scripture, the deliberate corruption of the primeval chronology easily falls within the realm of possibility.

The theory that the second-century Palestinian Jews deflated the primeval chronology for anti-Christian reasons supplies the motive, means, and opportunity that no other theory can.

Internal Evidence For LXX Genesis 5 And 11

A critical analysis of the internal data confirms that the aim of the textual alterations in Genesis 5 and 11 was chronological deflation. Comparing the MT and the LXX in Table 2, we see 100-year adjustments for the begetting ages of Adam, Seth, Enosh, Kenan, Mahalalel, Enoch, Arpachshad, Shelah, Eber, Peleg, Reu, and Serug; a 50-year adjustment for the begetting age of Nahor; and essentially no adjustments for the begetting ages of Jared, Methuselah, Lamech,

[3] In particular, Rabbi Akiba had the authority and power to order the removal of older MSS and institute the use of new ones. See Étienne Nodet, "Josephus and the Pentateuch," *Journal for the Study of Judaism in the Persian, Hellenistic and Roman Period* 28, no. 2 (May 1997): 193.

Noah, Shem, and Terah. The scope of these alterations suggests that they are the products of a systematic chronological reduction. Consider that the task of deflating the primeval chronology would face definite limitations. For example, a chronological deflation would be unable to subtract 100 years from *every* begetting age, because to do so would imply that patriarchs besides Noah lived beyond the Flood. This limitation is on display in the MT, whose begetting ages for Methuselah and Lamech remain high, barely allowing these two antediluvians to avoid outliving the worldwide Deluge.[4] (The numbers for Noah, Shem, and Terah had to remain unaltered, because their lives are intertwined with numerous other chronological texts.) Chronological deflation was also limited in the number of years it could uniformly reduce the begetting ages that were altered; a reduction of more than 100 years would have made the postdiluvians too young. On the other hand, if we understand that the adjustments to the chronology are the products of systematic inflation, we do not find the supposedly enlarged begetting ages bumping up against limitations in the same way. The LXX's chronology could be made much longer than it is without causing any problems. One could increase the lower begetting ages in the MT by far more than 100 years (or in Nahor's case, by far more than 50 years) without creating inconsistencies.

Nahor's begetting age, which reads 79 in the LXX/SP and 29 in the MT, serves as strong internal evidence for deliberate chronological deflation. If we assume that the MT preserves Nahor's original begetting age, and that the LXX/SP number is the result of chronological inflation, *we must ask why the corruptors only added 50 years this time instead of 100*. Nothing prevented them from increasing Nahor's begetting age by 100 instead of 50. So Nahor's begetting age in LXX/SP should be 129, not 79. Not only would 129 have been consistent with the alleged 100-year inflations elsewhere in the primeval chronology, but this number would also fit in better with the previous LXX/ SP begetting ages in Genesis 11. Now consider that if the goal of the alterations was deflation, and if Nahor's original begetting age was 79, then the Jewish scribes realistically could only reduce this number by 50 years to 29. Perhaps they could have pushed the issue and lowered it to 19, but 29 (already the lowest begetting age in the genealogies) is more consistent with the rest of the MT's numbers from Arpachshad to Serug. The 50-year adjustment of Nahor's begetting age can only be explained as an intentional chronological deflation.

Ultimately, the MT could not avoid bearing some signs of its monumental chronological reduction. For example, a significant problem arises in Genesis 25:8, which says that the 175-year-old Abraham "died in a good old age, an old man and full of years," even though Eber was still alive and far more than twice Abraham's age at this point, according to the MT. Similarly, Shem's death at 600 occurs in the MT just before (or just after by some reckonings) Abraham's death at 175. In the LXX, however, Shem had been dead for about eight centuries, and Eber for

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[4] Jared's begetting age is the only higher one remaining in the MT that could have been reduced by 100, from 162 to 62, without creating problems. In fact, Whiston, Jackson, Russell, and Goodenow point to a lost Hebrew text, "Jerome's Samaritan," likely an early version of the Samaritan Pentateuch, whose antediluvian chronology is 100 years shorter than the MT's. It appears that Jared's begetting age was reduced by 100 in this Hebrew text, thereby carrying the MT's reductional scheme "to its utmost practicable limits" (215, n. 125). Jared's reduced siring age of 62 survives in the SP (see Table 2).

about four, when Abraham died, and life spans had dropped to the point where Genesis 25:8 becomes coherent. We also might ask why Terah was the only patriarch who went

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with Abraham "to go into the land of Canaan" (Gn 11:31) if, as the MT necessitates, four other fathers in the line of promise— namely Shem, Arpachshad, Shelah, and Eber—were still alive at the time. Naturally, it makes immediate sense that Terah was the only patriarch who went with Abraham if, as in the LXX, Terah was Abraham's only living ancestor at that point.

The careful selection of the begetting ages that were altered, as well as the amount that each number was adjusted, confirms that the chronology was reduced. The internal evidence fits precisely and solely with the goal of chronological deflation.

A Popular But Misguided Objection

Many reject out of hand the Septuagint's primeval chronology because some LXX manuscripts contain 167 for the begetting age of Methuselah, putting his death 14 years after the Flood. However, other LXX manuscripts (such as Codexes Alexandrinus, Cottonianus, and Coislinianus) contain Methuselah's correct begetting age of 187, putting his death six years before the Flood.[5] And our oldest LXX- based chronology, written by Demetrius in the third century BC, implies 187, which is also attested by Eupolemus (second century BC), Josephus, and the MT (211). It is unlikely that the LXX translators intentionally lowered Methuselah's begetting age from the original 187 to 167. Such a move would be inexplicable, especially since the Septuagint's begetting ages are always higher than the Hebrew variants. The external and internal evidence has led many scholars in the last few hundred years (including E.H. Merrill recently) to conclude that the original begetting age for Methuselah in the LXX was 187, and that 167 is a later transmissional error (211).[6] Yet even if the original Greek translation did read 167, the only plausible explanation for this would be that it was an accident. For by everyone's account, the Greek translators were not motivated to reduce the chronology, and we have no reason to think that they deliberately put Methuselah's death beyond the Flood. An accidental alteration from 187 to 167 by the original scribe would have no bearing on the case for the anteriority and superiority of the overall chronology in LXX Genesis 5 and 11. Appealing to the variant 167 in an attempt to discredit the LXX is merely a distraction from the real text-critical issues.

Conclusion

Our thesis on the text of Genesis 5 and 11 is far from being new. It has a long pedigree in the Christian church. We remain open in principle to other proposals that attempt to explain the numerical divergences, but so far we have seen no other theory that makes room for all the

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[5] For a complete list of extant textual witnesses to LXX Genesis 5 and 11, see Paul J. Ray, "An Evaluation of the Numerical Variants of the Chronogenealogies of Genesis 5 and 11, " *Origins* 12/1 (1985): 26-37.

[6] See also Alan England Brooke and Norman McLean, ed., *The Old Testament in Greek* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1906), 1:12

textual and historical data. The Jewish attempt to discredit Jesus as the Messiah is to our knowledge the only explanation with enough explanatory power to account for the deliberate chronological alterations in Genesis 5 and 11. According to the Septuagint's chronology, the creation of Adam dates to ca. 5500 BC, and the Flood to ca. 3200 BC. A secure Flood date derived from Scripture would establish a reliable framework for dating archaeological remains from the pre-Abrahamic era.

Further research must be conducted in a variety of areas to support or falsify the direction of our thesis. The literature and potential subject matter is massive. We welcome prayers and constructive feedback from our supporters. Suggestions in the spirit of Christian scholarship and charity can be sent to the following address: comments@biblearchaeology.org.

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[5] Jeremy Sexton, "Primeval Chronology Restored: Revisiting The Genealogies Of Genesis 5 and 11," *Bible and Spade Volume 29* 29, no. 1 (2016): 27.

WHO WAS BORN WHEN ENOSH WAS 90? A SEMANTIC REEVALUATION OF WILLIAM HENRY GREEN'S CHRONOLOGICAL GAPS

Jeremy Sexton*

I. *The Genesis of the Primeval Chronology Debate*

In 1890, William Henry Green, professor of Oriental and Old Testament Literature at Princeton Theological Seminary, published his seminal essay "Primeval Chronology."[1] He argued that "the genealogies in Genesis 5 and 11 were not intended to be used, and cannot properly be used, for the construction of a chronology."[2] He concluded that "the Scriptures furnish no data for a chronological computation prior to the life of Abraham."[3]

Green's proposal challenged the long-established approach to Gen 5 and 11. Biblical interpreters had been reading the genealogies as chronologies since before Christ. Jewish historians Demetrius (ca. 200 BC), Eupolemus (ca. 160 BC), and Josephus (ca. AD 93), as well as the authors of *Jubilees* (ca. 150 BC) and *Seder Olam Rabbah* (ca. AD 150), used the genealogies for chronological computation.[4] Several early and medieval churchmen—for example, Theophilus of Antioch (ca. 168), Julius Africanus (ca. 218), Origen (ca. 230), Eusebius (ca. 315), Augustine (ca. 354), Bede (ca. 723), and Cedrenus (ca. 1060)—did likewise.[5] Luther dated creation to 3960 BC, Melanchthon to 3963 BC, and "Geneva" to 3943 BC.[6] During the interval between the Reformation and the publication of Green's essay, Ussher dated creation to 4004 BC, Vossius to 5590 BC, Playfair to 4007 BC, Jackson to 5426 BC, Hales to 5411 BC, and Russell to 5441 BC.[7] This is merely a small sampling of those who used Gen 5 and 11 for the construction of a chronology. By 1890 the chronological interpretation had deep roots.

Chronological computation has always been so inviting because Gen 5 and 11 specify the age of each patriarch at the birth of his descendant, unlike any other genealogies in Scripture or in

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[1] William Henry Green, "Primeval Chronology," *BSac* 47 (1890): 285–303.

[2] Ibid., 286.

[3] Ibid., 303.

[4] E. H. Merrill, "Chronology," in *Dictionary of the Old Testament: Pentateuch*, ed. T. Desmond Alexander and David W. Baker (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2002), 117–18.

[5] William Hales, *A New Analysis of Chronology and Geography, History and Prophecy*, 2nd ed. (London: C. J. G. & F. Rivington, 1830), 1:211–12; Hugh Magennis, *The Cambridge Introduction to Anglo-Saxon Literature* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 100–101.

[6] Zacharias Ursinus, *The Commentary of Dr. Zacharias Ursinus on the Heidelberg Catechism*, trans. G. W. Williard, 2nd ed. (Columbus, OH: Scott & Bascom, 1852), 145.

[7] Michael Russell, *A Connection of Sacred and Profane History*, rev. J. Talboys Wheeler, 2nd ed. (London: William Tegg, 1865), 1:31–32, 88–90. The earlier dates for creation (ca. 5500 BC) are based on the Septuagint's longer primeval chronology, to which most Christian interpreters before the Reformation, and many afterward, subscribed (see Appendix B below).

extant ancient Near Eastern writings.[8] The text says that when Adam was 130, he begat Seth (Gen 5:3); when Seth was 105, he begat Enosh (5:6); when Enosh was 90, he begat Kenan (5:9); and so forth. It appears that one can construct a chronology from Adam to Abraham by adding up the patriarchs' begetting ages. Green conceded that Gen 5 and 11 give "the *prima facie* impression" of a chronology, but he attempted to refute the chronological interpretation by arguing for the possibility of genealogical gaps created by the biblical author's "omission of unimportant names."[9]

During the twentieth century, Green's proposal became the consensus view among evangelical OT scholars. Walter C. Kaiser Jr. included Green's landmark paper in his compilation of *Classical Evangelical Essays in Old Testament Interpretation*, considering it one of "the finest moments in Old Testament scholarship."[10]

Green's hypothesis is attractive because it reconciles Scripture with the academically accepted antiquity of mankind. According to the chronological interpretation of Gen 5 and 11 in the Masoretic Text (MT), God created Adam ca. 4000 BC. The Septuagint (LXX), with its higher begetting ages, puts the creation of Adam ca. 5500 BC. Few anthropologists accept such recent dates for the origin of the human race. Green's theory also removes any discrepancy between the conventional chronology of ancient Egypt and the date of the flood. A deluge that destroyed all of mankind must have happened before Egypt's first dynasty, whose accepted date of commencement is ca. 3000 BC.[11] The problem is that Noah's flood, according to the chronology in the MT, dates to ca. 2500 BC at the earliest (Ussher dated it to 2348 BC). The longer chronology in the LXX puts the flood before Egyptian history, but Green insisted on the accuracy of the MT's begetting ages.[12] He proposed an appealing solution: gaps in Gen 5 and 11 that do not impose a timeline on the interpreter.

II. *Green's Gaps*

1. *The Case for Genealogical Gaps*

In the first half of his essay, Green shows that biblical genealogies are sometimes "abbreviated by the omission of unimportant names."[13] He appeals first to the familiar omissions in the

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[8] Gerhard F. Hasel, "The Meaning of the Chronogenealogies of Genesis 5 and 11," *Origins* 7 (1980): 53, 62; see also Gerhard F. Hasel, "The Genealogies of Gen 5 and 11 and Their Alleged Babylonian Background," *AUSS* 16 (1978): 361–74.
[9] Green, "Primeval Chronology," 285–86.
[10] Walter C. Kaiser Jr., ed., *Classical Evangelical Essays in Old Testament Interpretation* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1972), 7.
[11] See, e.g., Anthony J. Spalinger, "Chronology and Periodization," *The Oxford Encyclopedia of Ancient Egypt*, ed. Donald B. Redford (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), 1:267.
MT Masoretic Text
LXX Septuagint
MT Masoretic Text
[12] Green, "Primeval Chronology," 300.
[13] Ibid., 286.

genealogy of Jesus in Matt 1.[14] For example, Matt 1:8 says that "Joram begat Uzziah," even though Uzziah (also called "Azariah") was Joram's great-great-grandson (1 Chr 3:11–12). Green then points out omissions in OT genealogies (e.g., Ezra 7:1–5; cf. 1 Chr 6:3–14).[15] He also discusses OT passages that use the Hebrew verb ילד ("to bear, give birth to, bring forth, beget").[16] The *hiphil* of דלי occurs fifty-three times in Gen 5 and 11:10–26, thirty-six times as וַיּוֹלֶד ("he begat") and seventeen times as הוֹלִידוֹ ("[after] he begat").[17] Green's purpose is to show that this verb can be used of remote descendants as well as immediate offspring.

Green recognizes that the *hiphil* verbs וַיּוֹלֶד and הוֹלִידוֹ describe the event of birth throughout Gen 5 and 11. Commenting on Gen 5:9 ("When Enosh had lived 90 years, he begat [וַיּוֹלֶד] Kenan"), Green affirms that "when Enosh was ninety … one was born."[18] Eight more times Green acknowledges that the genealogies specify the age of each patriarch at the "birth" of his "son."[19] Modern OT scholars concur. Hamilton states that וַיּוֹלֶד and הוֹלִידוֹ refer to "the birthing process," that is, "the actual delivery of a son or daughter."[20] He notes in his commentary on Genesis that the genealogies provide "the age of the father at the birth" of his son, for וַיּוֹלֶד "repeatedly" describes "the son's birth."[21] Lessing and Steinmann agree that the genealogies furnish "the age of each ancestor at the birth of his descendant."[22] Waltke and O'Connor show that the *hiphil* and *hophal* (the causative forms) of ילד describe the "event" of birth.[23] They translate וַיּוֹלֶד בָּנִים וּבָנוֹת in Gen 5:4 as "he *begat* (*Hiphil*) sons and daughters (lit., *caused* sons and daughters *to be born* [as an event])."[24] They translate יוֹם הֻלַּדְתּ אֶת־פַּרְעֹה in Gen 40:20 as "on Pharaoh's *birthday* (*Hophal*) (lit., on the day of Pharaoh's *having been caused to be born* [as an event])."[25] One is "caused to be born" on the day, and in the event, of birth. Isaiah 45:10 illustrates well that the *hiphil* of ילד refers to delivery. The child *in utero* asks his father, "What will you bring forth [מַה־תּוֹלִיד]?" (Isa 45:10), which indicates that the father has not yet "brought forth" or "begotten" (ילד, *hiphil*) the child. Oswalt says that the *hiphil* verb תּוֹלִיד in this verse makes "future reference" to the time when the unborn child will be "brought to birth."[26] Young similarly explains that this

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[14] Ibid.

[15] Ibid., 286–93.

[16] Ibid., 290–94; see BDB, *HALOT, DCH, NIDOTTE, TLOT, TDOT*, and *TWOT*, s.v. "**ילד**."

[17] **ילד** occurs only in the *hiphil* stem throughout Gen 5 and 11.

[18] Green, "Primeval Chronology," 298.

[19] Ibid., 296–97, 300–301.

[20] Victor P. Hamilton, "**ילד**," *NIDOTTE* 2:456. Hamilton wrote the following to me: "The Hebrew word *yalad* refers to the actual delivery of a son or daughter. That is what I mean by 'the birthing process.' The birthing process begins and ends with delivery" (quoted with permission).

[21] Victor P. Hamilton, *The Book of Genesis: Chapters 1–17*, NICOT (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1990), 255.

[22] R. Reed Lessing and Andrew E. Steinmann, *Prepare the Way of the Lord: An Introduction to the Old Testament* (St. Louis: Concordia, 2013), 55–56.

[23] Bruce K. Waltke and Michael P. O'Connor, *Introduction to Biblical Hebrew Syntax* (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1990), 447–48.

[24] Ibid., 447 (parentheses, brackets, and italics original).

[25] Ibid., 448 (parentheses, brackets, and italics original).

[26] John N. Oswalt, *The Book of Isaiah: Chapters 40–66*, NICOT (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998), 209.

verse points ahead to the time when the father "will bring forth" (תּוֹלִיד) his already conceived child.[27] A father "begets" or "brings forth" (ילד, *hiphil*) his child on the day in which his child is "brought to birth." Tov argues that the *hiphil* of ילד throughout the genealogies "refers to the birth of the son rather than the fathering [of the son]."[28] The translation "begat" (as well as "fathered") potentially obscures this point. English Bibles convey the "birthing" sense of ילד in Gen 5 and 11 when they translate it as "had." For example, the NIV, ESV, NKJV, NASB, CEB, RSV, NRSV, and NLT say that Enosh "had [וַיּוֹלֶד]" other sons and daughters (Gen 5:10b). Throughout the genealogies, the *hiphil* of ילד describes "the birthing process" or "the actual delivery" of descendants. Neither Green nor modern Hebrew scholars dispute this semantic reality. A descendant was "brought to birth" at the specified age of each patriarch in Gen 5 and 11.

Green argues that ילד can be used "of descendants beyond the first generation."[29] He supports this conclusion initially with some biblical passages that use ילד in the *qal*.[30] Then he cites two verses (Deut 4:25 and 2 Kgs 20:18) that use the *hiphil* of ילד and that uphold his contention unquestionably.[31] Deuteronomy 4:25 contains the following dependent clause: "when you have had [תּוֹלִיד] children and grandchildren and have grown old in the land." Here the *hiphil* verb תּוֹלִיד takes as its direct objects both immediate offspring ("children") and remote descendants ("grandchildren"). Second Kings 20:18 records Isaiah's prediction that Hezekiah "will bring forth [תּוֹלִיד]" remote "sons" who will be taken into exile. These "sons" turn out to be Hezekiah's great-great-great-grandson Jehoiachin and great-great-grandson Zedekiah (2 Kgs 24:12–17; 25:1–7). We must agree with Green that ילד can be used "without restriction to the immediate offspring."[32]

In the second half of his essay, Green turns to the genealogies in Gen 5 and 11. He contends that the inspired author may have condensed these genealogical tables by omitting unimportant links. For example, Kenan may have been "a remote descendant of Enosh."[33] We concede Green's point, granting for argument's sake that Gen 5 and 11 contain genealogical gaps.

2. *From Genealogical Gaps to Chronological Gaps*

Green assumes, without explicit argument, that chronological gaps are a corollary of genealogical gaps. He states that if the author of Genesis had intended to provide a gapless chronology, then "he must of course have aimed to make his list complete. The omission of even a single name would create an error."[34] However, an unbroken *chronology* does not logically or semantically require an unbroken *genealogy.* As long as Seth was born when Adam was 130, and

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[27] Edward J. Young, *The Book of Isaiah*, NICOT (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1972), 3:204.
[28] Emanuel Tov, "Genealogical Lists in Genesis 5 and 11 in Three Different Versions," in *Textual Criticism of the Hebrew Bible, Qumran, Septuagint*, vol. 3 of *Collected Essays*, VTSup 167 (Leiden: Brill, 2015), 222n3.
[29] Green, "Primeval Chronology," 293.
[30] Ibid., 291–93.
[31] Ibid., 294.
[32] Ibid.
[33] Ibid., 297.
[34] Ibid., 296.

Enosh was born when Seth was 105, and Kenan was born when Enosh was 90 (whether Kenan was Enosh's son, grandson, great-grandson, or great-great-grandson), and so on, the chronology would remain intact.

The formula that links together the generations in Gen 5 and 11 is "When A had lived X years, he had [וַיּוֹלֶד] B."[35] This construction communicates how old each patriarch was when he "had" or "brought to birth" his descendant. Table 1 uses Gen 5:9 to illustrate the grammar of this recurring formula:

Table 1: The Grammar of Genesis 5:9

אֶת־קֵינָן	וַיּוֹלֶד	שָׁנָה	תִּשְׁעִים	אֱנוֹשׁ	וַיְחִי
Kenan	he had	years	90	Enosh	when he had lived

"When Enosh [A] had lived 90 [X] years, he had Kenan [B]."

Who was born when Enosh was 90? The untranslatable particle אֶת marks קֵינָן ("Kenan") as the direct-object accusative of וַיּוֹלֶד ("he had"). A "*direct-object accusative* is the recipient of a transitive verb's action."[36] The transitive verb וַיּוֹלֶד describes birth. Therefore Gen 5:9 refers to Kenan's birth when Enosh was 90.[37]

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[35] See Gen 5:3, 6, 9, 12, 15, 18, 21, 25, 28; 11:12, 14, 16, 18, 20, 22, 24, 26. Gen 5:32 and 11:10 replace "had lived X years" with "was X years old."

[36] Waltke and O'Connor, *Introduction to Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, 164, italics original.

[37] The particle אֶת, which precedes "B" in the formula "When A had lived X years, he had B," is not merely an object marker. This "emphatic particle" can also precede the subject of ילד in its passive forms (Waltke and O'Connor, *Introduction to Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, 177–82). Genesis uses אֶת with the *qal, hiphil, niphal*, and *hophal* of ילד to mark the name of the person born:

(1) *Qal.* Gen 10:24: "Shelah had [יָלַד] Eber [אֶת־עֵבֶר]."

(2) *Hiphil.* Gen 11:14: "Shelah … had [וַיּוֹלֶד] Eber [אֶת־עֵבֶר]."

(3) *Niphal.* Gen 21:5: "Abraham was 100 years old when there was born [בְּהִוָּלֶד] to him Isaac [אֵת יִצְחָק]."

(4) *Hophal.* Gen 40:20: "… the day on which was born [הֻלַּדְתּ] Pharaoh [אֶת־פַּרְעֹה]."

When אֶת is used with ילד, it identifies the one born (J. Kühlewein, "ילד," *TLOT* 2:544).

Could Gen 5:9 be describing the birth of someone other than Kenan when Enosh was 90? Green supposes so. He suggests that Enosh's anonymous son "from whom Kenan sprang" could have been born that year.[38] Thus Gen 5:9 may mean "When Enosh had lived 90 years, he had [the son from whom sprang] Kenan." On Green's reading, we have no way of knowing when Kenan himself "sprang." He could have been born thousands of years later. Green asserts this semantic premise directly:

When it is said, for example, that "Enosh lived ninety years and begat Kenan," the well-established usage of the word "begat" makes this statement equally true and equally accordant with analogy, whether Kenan was an immediate or a remote descendant of Enosh; *whether Kenan was himself born, when Enosh was ninety years of age or one was born from whom Kenan sprang.*[39]

Green assumes that asking "whether Kenan was an immediate or a remote descendant of Enosh" (a semantically legitimate question) is tantamount to asking "whether Kenan was himself born, when Enosh was ninety years of age or one was born from whom Kenan sprang." Green's contention is unwarranted. Whether Kenan was an immediate or a remote descendant of Enosh, the text says that when Enosh was 90, he had *Kenan*, not Kenan's ancestor. Kenan himself was born when Enosh was 90.

Green complicates what is lexically and grammatically straightforward. He inserts an unstated direct object, B's unnamed ancestor, into the text, creating chronological gaps. Yet he offers no semantic evidence that ילד in any active form can describe the birth of someone other than its stated object. Here is Green's argument presented as a syllogism:

Premise 1: Gen 5 and 11 may contain genealogical gaps (that is, B may be a remote descendant of A in some cases).

Premise 2: Where B is a remote descendant of A, the formula "When A had lived X years, he had B" means "When A had lived X years, he had [the son from whom sprang] B."

Conclusion: Gen 5 and 11 may contain chronological gaps.

We grant P1. However, we find several problems with P2.

(1) As noted above, in general, "the *direct-object accusative* is the recipient of a transitive verb's action."[40] With a *hiphil* verb in particular, "the object participates in the event expressed by the verbal root."[41] For example, Lev 23:30b ("*I will cause* that soul *to perish* from among his people"), which uses the *hiphil* verb וְהַאֲבַדְתִּי, "presents the object, that soul, as an actor in the event of perishing."[42] Similarly, Gen 5:9b ("*he caused* Kenan *to be born*"), which uses the *hiphil* verb וַיּוֹלֶד, presents the object, Kenan, as an actor in the event of being born. Kenan himself

[38] Green, "Primeval Chronology," 298.
[39] Ibid., 297–98, emphasis added.
[40] Waltke and O'Connor, *Introduction to Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, 164, italics original; see n. 36 above.
[41] Ibid., 435.
[42] Ibid.

received the action of וַיּוֹלֶד when Enosh was 90. Kenan, not his anonymous ancestor, participated in the event expressed by the root of וַיּוֹלֶד (the event of birth) when Enosh was 90.[43]

(2) P2 does not follow from P1, but actually undermines it. On the one hand, P1 affirms that ילד can be used of "a remote descendant," that is, "without restriction to the immediate offspring."[44] On the other hand, P2 restricts the use of ילד to the birth of the immediate son "from whom [the remote descendant] sprang."[45]

(3) The standard Hebrew lexicons (BDB, *HALOT, DCH*) lend no credence to P2. None of them suggests that ילד ever describes the birth of an unstated object instead of its grammatical object.

(4) P2 cannot be established from usage. Nowhere does ילד (or either of its Greek counterparts, τίκτω and γεννάω) take a remote descendant as its object while describing the birth of the remote descendant's anonymous ancestor. No text is clarified by positing that ילד describes the birth of an unmentioned object instead of its explicit object.

(5) It is counterintuitive to think that the statement "When A had lived X years, he had B" describes the birth of someone other than B when A was X years old. Green illustrates this when he refers to "the ages of different patriarchs at the birth of the son named."[46] This slip of the pen betrays the natural reading: "the son *named*" (not an unnamed ancestor of the son named) was born at the specified age.

(6) The evidence from usage shows that the *hiphil* of ילד describes the birth of its grammatical object *even when its grammatical object is a remote descendant* (contra the logic of P2). Unambiguous examples of this occur in Deut 4:25 and 2 Kgs 20:18 //Isa 39:7, to which we now return.

(a) *Deuteronomy 4:25.* In Deut 4:25, Moses utters this temporal clause: "when you have had [תּוֹלִיד] children and grandchildren and have grown old in the land."[47] This supports P1, confirming that the *hiphil* of ילד can take as its grammatical object "grandchildren" (בְּנֵי בָנִים) as well as "children" (בָּנִים). But it defies P2, because the verb תּוֹלִיד describes the *births* of both objects, the grandchildren as well as the children.

Let us apply the logic of P2 to this clause: "when you have had children and [children from whom will spring] grandchildren and have grown old in the land." On this reading, Moses awkwardly refers to the births of the same immediate offspring twice ("when you have had children and children"). This interpretation also ignores the progression of thought in the clause,

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[43] The translations of Gen 5:10a in the New Jewish Publication Society *Tanakh* ("After the birth of Kenan, Enosh lived 815 years") and the Holman Christian Standard Bible ("Enosh lived 815 years after the birth of Kenan") capture well that Kenan was born when Enosh was 90. So also the RSV and NRSV.
[44] Green, "Primeval Chronology," 294, 297.
[45] Ibid., 298.
[46] Ibid., 300.
[47] Cf. the NIV: "After you have had children and grandchildren and have lived in the land a long time."

for Moses intends to give an overview of life in the land: God's people will have children, then grandchildren, as they grow old in Canaan.

This example is instructive because it comes from the Pentateuch and because ילד appears in the *hiphil* with a masculine subject. It illustrates that when the *hiphil* of ילד is used of grandchildren, it describes the births of the grandchildren, not the births of the children from whom the grandchildren spring.

(b) *Second Kings 20:18 //Isaiah 39:7.*[48] In 2 Kgs 20:12–15, Hezekiah shows the envoys from Babylon all the treasures in his storehouses. In response, Isaiah tells Hezekiah that one day the Babylonians will come and take back to Babylon all these treasures, along with some of Hezekiah's descendants (vv. 16–18). In v. 18 (//Isa 39:7) Isaiah tells Hezekiah that the Babylonians "will take away some of your sons, who will issue forth from you, whom *you will bring forth* [תּוֹלִיד]." Isaiah's prediction here, uttered in the late eighth century BC, is that Hezekiah "will bring forth" or "will have" remote "sons" who will be taken to Babylon. This prophecy was fulfilled in the early sixth century BC when Jehoiachin (Hezekiah's great-great-great-grandson) and Zedekiah (Hezekiah's great-great-grandson) were taken captive (2 Kgs 24:12–17; 25:1–7). Isaiah's usage supports P1, but it challenges P2, because Isaiah is describing the births of Hezekiah's distant grandsons, not the birth of the son (Manasseh) from whom Hezekiah's grandsons sprang.

Isaiah is not predicting, as the logic of P2 would require, that Hezekiah will bring forth the *ancestor* of the remote sons who will be taken into exile. The second relative clause in Isaiah's prophecy ("whom you will bring forth"), no less than the first ("who will issue forth from you"), makes future reference to the births of the remote sons themselves, not the birth of their ancestor Manasseh.[49] According to Thiele, Hezekiah's son Manasseh was already born when Isaiah spoke this prophecy.[50] And Hezekiah died before his grandson, Manasseh's son Amon, was born. Thus Isaiah's "whom you will bring forth" refers to the births of descendants born after Hezekiah's death. Hezekiah had Jehoiachin and Zedekiah postmortem just as Joram had Uzziah postmortem (Matt 1:8).

To save P2, one OT scholar proposed to me that an unmentioned immediate son must have been born to Hezekiah sometime after Isaiah's prophecy, and that Isaiah's "whom you will bring forth" refers to the birth of this unknown son, whose descendants must have been exiled to Babylon in fulfillment of Isaiah's prophecy. This unprecedented interpretation reverts to

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[48] These two verses are identical in the Hebrew (*qere*).

[49] The ESV translates וּמִבָּנֶיךָ אֲשֶׁר יֵצְאוּ מִמְּךָ אֲשֶׁר תּוֹלִיד in 2 Kgs 20:18 as "and some of your sons, who shall be born to you." This recognizes that both of Isaiah's relative clauses ("who will issue forth from you, whom you will bring forth"), which the ESV reduces to one clause ("who shall be born to you"), describe the births of the remote sons themselves.

[50] Isaiah spoke his prophecy to Hezekiah at some point during the last 15 years of Hezekiah's life (2 Kgs 20:6). According to Edwin R. Thiele in *The Mysterious Numbers of the Hebrew Kings*, 3rd ed. (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1983), 173–77, Manasseh co-reigned with his father Hezekiah during the last 10 years of Hezekiah's life, beginning when Manasseh was 12 years old (2 Kgs 21:1). Thus Manasseh would have been about (12 + 10 =) 22 when Hezekiah died and so at least (22 − 15 =) 7 when Isaiah prophesied.

speculation for the sole purpose of upholding the semantic logic of P2. Moreover, 2 Kgs 24:12–17 and 25:1–7 unmistakably identify the captivity of Manasseh's descendants, Jehoiachin and Zedekiah, as the fulfillment of Isaiah's prophecy. Provan affirms that the deportations of Jehoiachin and Zedekiah constitute the prophecy's realization.[51] Additionally, *Mart. Isa.* 1:2 states that Manasseh was Hezekiah's only son.

Deuteronomy 4:25 and 2 Kgs 20:18 //Isa 39:7 reinforce the implausibility of Green's ad hoc conjecture (P2). The *hiphil* of ילד describes the birth of its grammatical object, whether that object is an immediate or a remote descendant.

III. *Goodenow's Little-Known Response to Green's Essay*

Shortly after Green published his paper, Smith Bartlett Goodenow wrote a critical response in which he showed that "the 'begat' indicates *the birth of the person named* after it; and the date of that birth being given, it matters not how many un-named generations intervene. The *chronology* is fixed and unchanged. No such anomaly is known in Scripture, or in reason, as a dating given to an *un-named ancestor's* birth."[52] Goodenow submitted his critique of Green's hypothesis to *Bibliotheca Sacra*, along with a second manuscript titled "Primeval Man."[53] The editor, G. Frederick Wright, wrote the following in an acceptance letter to Goodenow dated June 29, 1893: "The two Mss. which I have in my hand ought to be published in the Bibliotheca, and I can say to you positively, that if you will let them remain in my hands, I will work them into the January and April numbers."[54] Inexplicably, Goodenow's response to Green's essay never appeared in the journal.[55]

IV. *Green's Unimportant Begetting Ages*

We noted above that in all of Scripture and known ancient Near Eastern literature, only the genealogies in Gen 5 and 11 contain begetting ages. Even if Green were correct that the genealogies technically allow for chronological gaps, we would need to ask why the author provided nineteen begetting ages, one for each patriarch, if not for the purpose of indicating when the named descendants were born. According to Green, these temporal qualifiers may only record how old the fathers were when they brought forth "unimportant names."[56] Green does not explain why the author would date the births of unimportant (that is, unnamed) names.

The biblical author did not need to include begetting ages for *genealogical* purposes; every ancient genealogy outside of Gen 5 and 11 communicates lineage without using begetting ages. In the immediate context, for example, Gen 4 and 10 illustrate the genealogical conventions that

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[51] Iain W. Provan, *1 and 2 Kings*, NIBCOT 7 (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1995), 278–80.
[52] Smith Bartlett Goodenow, *Bible Chronology Carefully Unfolded* (New York: Fleming H. Revell, 1896), 322, italics original.
[53] Smith Bartlett Goodenow, "Primeval Man," *BSac* 51 (1894): 158–64.
[54] Goodenow, *Bible Chronology*, 317.
[55] Goodenow's response (later published in Goodenow, *Bible Chronology*, 317–27) also includes a critique of Frederic Gardiner's attempt (in 1873) to provide a non-chronological interpretation of Gen 5 and 11 (see Appendix A below).
[56] Green, "Primeval Chronology," 286.

do not use begetting ages: "to Seth also was born a son, and he called his name Enosh" (4:26); "the sons of Shem: Elam, Asshur, Arpachshad, Lud, and Aram" (10:22); "Arpachshad had Shelah, and Shelah had Eber" (10:24). The genealogy in 1 Chr 1:1–27 goes from Adam to Abraham without using begetting ages. The genealogy in Ruth 4:18–22 links its patriarchs together with the *hiphil* of ילד, but without using begetting ages. I have been unable to find a published interpretation that posits a reason why the author of Gen 5 and 11 included the begetting ages if not for a *chronological* purpose.

In response to this point, one dialog partner proposed to me the following non-chronological purpose: the begetting ages in Gen 5, when compared to the lower ones in Gen 11, suggest the virility of the antediluvians. This scholar noted more broadly that the intent of Gen 5 and 11 is to continue the themes (developed in Gen 1–4) of life, death, and reproduction. First, the themes of life, death, and reproduction could have remained in Gen 5 and 11 without the begetting ages. Second, the begetting ages indicate neither when the patriarchs became virile nor when they became sterile. Adam fathered children before he had Seth at age 130 (Gen 4:25; 5:3), "which shows it to be no purpose of these birth-dates to give the age of beginning paternity."[57] And the fathers on both sides of the flood stayed virile indefinitely after their specified ages of begetting, having "other sons and daughters." So we know when the patriarchs were born, when they had their important sons, and when they died, but not when they gained or lost virility. Nothing suggests that the antediluvians were virile for a larger percentage of their lives than the postdiluvians. It is difficult to deny that Green's "theory *takes away all purpose* on the part of the sacred writer in giving the birth-dates he has so carefully arranged."[58]

Green assigns importance only to the patriarchs' life spans, which reveal "the original term of human life. They show what it was in the ages before the Flood. They show how it was afterwards individually narrowed down."[59] We agree that Gen 5 and 11 communicate each father's length of life. However, if the author of the genealogies had wanted to supply life spans, but not chronology, he could have accomplished this more efficiently without begetting ages. The genealogy in Exod 6:16–20 gives the fathers' life spans without using begetting ages.[60] For example, Exod 6:18 says, "The sons of Kohath: Amram, Izhar, Hebron, and Uzziel. And the years of the life of Kohath were 133." Genesis 5:9–11 would still provide Enosh's life span if v. 9 did not specify how old Enosh was when he had Kenan, and if v. 10 did not mention how long Enosh lived after he had Kenan. It would read thus: "[9]Enosh had Kenan. [10]And Enosh had other sons and daughters. [11]And all the days of Enosh were 905 years, and he died." As the text stands, v. 9 specifies and v. 10 accentuates the year in which the important son, Kenan, was born: "[9]When Enosh had lived 90 years, he had Kenan. [10]Enosh lived 815 years after he had Kenan, and had other sons and daughters."

Green argues that since the genealogies provide numbers that are of no use chronologically (i.e., "how long each patriarch lived after the birth of his son, and what was the entire length of his

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[57] Goodenow, *Bible Chronology*, 324.
[58] Ibid., 322, italics original.
[59] Green, "Primeval Chronology," 297.
[60] James B. Jordan, "The Biblical Chronology Question: An Analysis (Part 1)," *Creation Social Science and Humanities Quarterly* 2, no. 2 (1979): 14.

life"), we ought not to think that *any* of the numbers were intended for a chronological purpose.[61] However, the author surely could have had one aim for the begetting ages (to provide a chronology) and another for the ages at death (to show the patriarchs' longevity and humanity's declining life span).

Green says that the author of Genesis "nowhere sums these numbers [that is, nowhere sums the begetting ages], nor suggests their summation," and that "there is no computation [of primeval chronology] anywhere in Scripture."[62] However, the author of Genesis does more than merely suggest the summation of the begetting ages. He uses words and grammar that inescapably link these numbers together chronologically (as I have demonstrated in this article). That Scripture never computes the chronology is irrelevant, inasmuch as the semantics and syntax of the genealogies support chronological computation. Green himself acknowledges that the author of these genealogies expected his readers to make some important computations with the numbers provided. Genesis 11 does not total the length of the fathers' lives, but Green determines that we can know the life span of each postdiluvian patriarch by adding his begetting age to the number of years he lived after his son's birth.[63] Thus Green deduces that "the term of human life" was "individually narrowed down" after the flood.[64]

One of Green's own arguments for genealogical gaps (P1) involves tallying the names in each genealogy: "Each genealogy includes ten names, Noah being the tenth from Adam, and Terah the tenth from Noah."[65] Green sees this as one of the "striking numerical coincidences" in Gen 5 and 11, and concludes that "the symmetry of these primitive genealogies is artificial."[66] While an artificial ten-and-ten symmetry would only entail genealogical (not chronological) gaps, it is worth noting that MT Gen 11 comprises only nine names.[67] To arrive at ten names in each genealogy, Green includes Noah in both genealogies, even though Noah does not appear in the second one. In a later publication, Green acknowledges that the two genealogies have "nearly the same number of links (one ten, the other nine)."[68]

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[61] Green, "Primeval Chronology," 297. See James B. Jordan, "The Biblical Chronology Question: An Analysis (Part 2)," *Creation Social Science and Humanities Quarterly* 2, no. 3 (1980): 17–19, 21–22, who demonstrates the "implicit reductionism in this line of reasoning" (21).

[62] Green, "Primeval Chronology," 297.

[63] Ibid.

[64] Ibid.

[65] Ibid., 302.

[66] Ibid.

MT Masoretic Text

[67] The Septuagint alone includes ten generations in each genealogy (Gordon J. Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, WBC 1 [Waco: Word Books, 1987], 251).

[68] William Henry Green, *The Unity of the Book of Genesis* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1895), 146. Some seek to arrive at ten links in the second genealogy by counting Abram (Gen 11:26). However, this logic requires that we also count Shem in the first genealogy (Gen 5:32), giving it eleven links (Hasel, "Meaning of the Chronogenealogies," 60). Ten-and-ten symmetry is unachievable in the MT.

Actually, it is Green's interpretation that generates the most striking numerical coincidence. According to Green, we cannot know when Methuselah died in relation to the flood, because we cannot know how big the chronological gap was between him and Noah. Methuselah could have died thousands of years before the flood. According to the chronological interpretation, however, Methuselah died in the very year of the deluge (Gen 5:25–29; 7:6).[69] Green does not discuss this phenomenon, but on his premises, it is a mere happenstance of unsanctioned chronological computation. To avoid this improbability, one must concede that the author of MT Gen 5 expected his readers to use the begetting ages of Methuselah and Lamech for chronological computation. To maintain Green's hypothesis, however, one must restrict the author's chronological intent to the begetting ages of Methuselah and Lamech. Such a restriction requires much special pleading, and it still contradicts Green's claim that the author "nowhere … suggests" the summation of the begetting ages.[70] The simplest explanation of the data is that the author provided all the begetting ages, not just Methuselah's and Lamech's, for chronological computation.

V. *Summary*

Green's hypothesis must bear five burdens. (1) It must show that Gen 5 and 11 may contain genealogical gaps (P1). (2) It must demonstrate that ילד, in the case of a genealogical gap, can describe the birth of the named descendant's unnamed ancestor (P2). (3) It must explain why ילד functions according to the logic of P2 in Gen 5 and 11, but not in Deut 4:25 or 2 Kgs 20:18 //Isa 39:7. (4) It must establish a purpose for the nineteen begetting ages. (5) It must account for the striking numerical coincidence discussed in the previous paragraph. Green and subsequent proponents of his gaps have only borne the first burden, at most.[71]

VI. *Green's Offspring*

In 1911, Benjamin B. Warfield published his essay "On the Antiquity and the Unity of the Human Race," using as his exegetical starting point Green's "illuminating article."[72] Warfield's commendation helped to propel Green's gaps into wider acceptance among conservative scholars.

Green's hypothesis became a staple of evangelical literature during the second half of the twentieth century. Leading the way, Francis Schaeffer argued that because "the word *begat* in Gen 11 does not require a first-generation father-son relationship" (P1), "it can mean, *fathered someone who led to*" (P2).[73] However, P1 does not imply that וַיּוֹלֶד ("he begat") can describe the

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[69] Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, 130; see also the note on Gen 5:27 in the ESV Study Bible.
MT Masoretic Text
[70] Green, "Primeval Chronology," 297.
[71] Wenham notes that even Green's notion of genealogical gaps in Gen 5 and 11 (P1) "requires special pleading" (*Genesis 1–15*, 133).
[72] Benjamin B. Warfield, "On the Antiquity and the Unity of the Human Race," *Princeton Theological Review* 9 (1911): 3.
[73] Francis A. Schaeffer, *Genesis in Space and Time: The Flow of Biblical History* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1972), 155, italics original.

birth of "*someone who led to*" its named object. The action of וַיּוֹלֶד is accomplished only when its grammatical object is born.

K. A. Kitchen rehearses Green's semantics in his book *On the Reliability of the Old Testament.* Kitchen defends P1 and then asserts P2: "A fathered B" may mean "A fathered [P, who fathered Q, who fathered R, who fathered S, who fathered T, who fathered …] B."[74] He does not show how P2 follows from P1, and his ensuing comments indicate that the impetus for positing chronological gaps is extra-biblical data: "Thus we can neither date the flood before Abraham nor the creation before Noah merely by counting the Genesis figures continuously as did the worthy Archbishop Ussher in the carefree days when no evidence from outside the Bible was even imagined," for "in the context of that external data, any such literalism fails.… So an Ussherite solution is ruled out."[75] Kitchen's use of "literalism" here is a distraction, because Green's approach, which Kitchen adopts, is no less literal than the chronological interpretation. Kitchen contends for chronological gaps precisely because he believes the text communicates literal history, and he wants to show how that history can be reconciled with the "evidence from outside the Bible." Kitchen puts forth the semantics of P2 because he realizes that we may not rule out the chronological interpretation until we can demonstrate that the words and grammar of Gen 5 and 11 literally allow for time gaps.

C. John Collins, professor of Old Testament at Covenant Theological Seminary and Old Testament editor of the *ESV Study Bible*, has made regular use of Green's theory. In 1994, Collins wrote, "W. H. Green showed, however, that these genealogies have an unknown number of omissions; that is, when we read that X *begat* Y, this need only mean that X *became the ancestor of* Y (as in the NIV margin)."[76] We grant that Enosh, at 90, may have become Kenan's "ancestor" rather than his immediate father (P1). However, this still means that Kenan was born when Enosh was 90, for a man only "becomes the ancestor of" his descendant when the descendant himself is born. Hence the translation "became the ancestor of" creates genealogical gaps (P1), but not chronological gaps (P2). In 2003, Collins opted for the translation "fathered an ancestor of."[77] This wording incorporates both P1 and P2. Like Green, though, Collins never defends P2; he merely assumes that it follows from P1. In his 2006 commentary on Gen 1–4, Collins begins his defense of Green's hypothesis with the subheading "*Do biblical genealogies have gaps?*"[78] The entire section merely argues for P1. In his 2011 book on Adam and Eve, Collins again fails to differentiate genealogical gaps from chronological gaps when he says that the genealogies "do not claim to name every person in the line of descent, and thus are not aimed at providing detailed chronological information."[79] This non sequitur epitomizes Green's argument.

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[74] K. A. Kitchen, *On the Reliability of the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003), 440–41.
[75] Ibid., 441.
[76] C. John Collins, "How Old Is the Earth? Anthropomorphic Days in Genesis 1:1–2:3," *Presbyterion* 20 (1994): 115–16, italics original.
[77] C. John Collins, *Science and Faith: Friends or Foes?* (Wheaton: Crossway, 2003), 108.
[78] C. John Collins, *Genesis 1–4: A Linguistic, Literary, and Theological Commentary* (Phillipsburg, NJ: Presbyterian & Reformed, 2006), 203, italics original.
[79] C. John Collins, *Did Adam and Eve Really Exist? Who They Were and Why You Should Care* (Wheaton: Crossway, 2011), 115.

The *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament*, the only lexicographical work known to me that affirms the possibility of P2, says that when ילד points to a remote descendant (P1), the verb nevertheless may describe the birth of the offspring at "the beginning" of the line (P2).[80] For support, *TWOT* cites only Matt 1:1, where "Christ is called a son of David and a son of Abraham."[81] But Jesus did not become Abraham's son when Isaac was born, or David's son when Solomon was born. Jesus became "the son of David, the son of Abraham" (Matt 1:1) when *Jesus* was born.

TWOT also makes this supporting claim: "In Hebrew thought, an individual by the act of giving birth to a child becomes a parent or ancestor of all who will be descended from this child."[82] This appears to say that an individual becomes an ancestor of his grandchildren, not when his grandchildren are born, but when his child leading to the grandchildren is born ("by the act of giving birth to a child"). The author does not cite where this notion exists in so-called Hebrew thought. Perhaps the author had in mind Heb 7:9–10, which says that Levi existed figuratively ("so to speak," v. 9) "in the loins of his ancestor [Abraham]" (v. 10). Still, Abraham did not become Levi's ancestor when Isaac was born. Figuratively, Abraham already was Levi's ancestor before Isaac was born (Levi existed in Abraham's loins). Literally, Abraham was "childless" (Gen 15:2) before he had children and "grandchildless" before he had grandchildren. A man only "becomes a parent or ancestor of" a descendant when that descendant himself is born. This analysis of Heb 7:9–10 applies equally to *b. Sanh.* 37a, which says that every "soul of Israel" contains "an entire world" of descendants.[83] None of this suggests that וַיּוֹלֶד אֶת־קֵינָן, "he had Kenan," can mean "he [in the act of having Kenan's ancestor] had Kenan."

VII. *Conclusion*

Many evangelicals treat Green's chronological gaps as a settled conclusion, but the crucial P2 remains unwarranted. Green conflated genealogical gaps and chronological gaps, and failed to provide a raison d'être for the begetting ages. In Deut 4:25 and 2 Kgs 20:18 //Isa 39:7, the *hiphil* of ילד describes the births of its grammatical objects, which are remote descendants. Green needed to show why the *hiphil* of ילד does not necessarily describe the births of its grammatical objects throughout Gen 5 and 11. He also needed to account for the striking numerical coincidence that exists in a chronological interpretation of the MT, Methuselah's death in the year of the flood.

We commend Green for seeking a scriptural response to the aspersions of skeptics, but we must conclude that he did not find a tenable one. A computable chronology of the human race, going back to Adam on the sixth day of creation (Gen 1:26–27; 5:1–3), is lexically and grammatically inescapable. If we suppose that the genealogies in Gen 5 and 11 do not communicate chronology, then the possibility of a chronogenealogy becomes difficult to imagine, for "no

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[80] "ילד," *TWOT* 1:379 (no author listed).
[81] Ibid.
[82] Ibid.
[83] Thanks to Joel Garver for this observation.
MT Masoretic Text

mode of speech could be contrived to give successive dates to Bible generations if those tables in Genesis be denied as such."[84]

VIII. *Appendix A: Other Non-chronological Interpretations*

1. *Gardiner's Hypothesis*

One of Green's contemporaries, Frederic Gardiner, suggested that the begetting ages indicate how old each patriarch was at the birth of his firstborn, and that the named son, though an immediate offspring, was not necessarily the firstborn; thus, the named son could have been born at any point in the patriarch's life after the birth of the firstborn.[85] According to Gardiner, then, "Seth, e.g., might have begun to be a father at 105, but might have actually begotten Enos[h] at any reasonable time during the 807 years which he afterward lived."[86] Gardiner's proposal, unlike Green's, does not allow for unlimited time gaps in Gen 5 and 11, for it requires that the named son be born during the father's lifetime.

Gardiner first appeals to Gen 5:32, which lists all three of Noah's sons, only the oldest of whom was born when Noah was 500. Gardiner shows persuasively that Shem, though named first, was not the oldest. Gardiner makes the same point about Terah's three sons in Gen 11:26, demonstrating that Abram, though named first, was not the oldest. (These interpretations of Gen 5:32 and 11:26, which I uphold below, are not original to Gardiner.) Gardiner extrapolates from this that "any of the patriarchs named may have been begotten at any reasonable time in the life of their fathers subsequent to the date given for the beginning of paternity."[87] Thus Gen 5:6 may mean "When Seth had lived 105 years, he had [his unnamed firstborn, and later in life had] Enosh."[88]

Gardiner's hypothesis has severe problems. (1) Genesis 5:7 says, "Seth lived 807 years *after he had Enosh*, and had other sons and daughters." According to Gardiner, Enosh may have been one of the "other sons and daughters" born in the final "807 years" of Seth's life. The text, however,

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[84] Goodenow, *Bible Chronology*, 323. In response to this, an interlocutor suggested to me that the use of a passive form of ילד throughout Gen 5 and 11 would have ensured an intact chronology. But if we accept the semantic logic of P2 in the active voice, we must allow its application in the passive voice as well. Had the author used a passive form of ילד throughout the genealogies, a proponent of chronological gaps might insist that Gen 5:9 can mean, "When Enosh had lived 90 years, there was born to him [a son from whom sprang] Kenan." Such an assertion would indeed be unjustifiable, but not more so than Green's hypothesis. The active-voice version of P2 is not more plausible than its passive-voice equivalent. A chronogenealogy is as achievable in the active voice as it is in the passive voice.

[85] Frederic Gardiner, "The Chronological Value of the Genealogy in Genesis V," *BSac* 30 (1873): 323–33.

[86] Ibid., 325.

[87] Ibid., 329.

[88] Gardiner's argument resurfaced recently in Mark A. Snoeberger, "Why a Commitment to Inerrancy Does Not Demand a Strictly 6000-Year-Old Earth: One Young Earther's Plea for Realism," *Detroit Baptist Seminary Journal* 18 (2013): 11–12.

says that these other sons and daughters were born to Seth "after he had Enosh" and that the final 807 years of Seth's life likewise came "after he had Enosh." Gardiner never explains how this recurring temporal clause, "after he had B," fits into his theory.

(2) Another "great fault of [Gardiner's] theory" is that it leaves "*no adequate motive* for giving the dates."[89] This problem besets both Gardiner's and Green's proposals.

(3) Gardiner provides no criteria for determining when the begetting ages apply to "the beginning of paternity." If they always do, then Adam was 130 when his first son Cain was born (Gen 5:3). That is implausible. Adam was 130 when *Seth* was born. Consequently, Gardiner uses Seth and Enosh (Gen 5:6–8), rather than Adam and Seth (Gen 5:3–5), to illustrate his hypothesis (see the quote in the opening paragraph of this section). Genesis 5:3 establishes at the beginning of the genealogy that the begetting ages date the births of sons named in the text.

(4) As for Gen 5:32 and 11:26, each of these verses names the son born at the specified date; he does not remain anonymous. That he is not named first is a literary move in keeping with the theology of Genesis, wherein younger brothers (e.g., Seth, Isaac, Jacob, Judah, Joseph, Perez, and Ephraim) often replace, or are chosen over, their older brothers. It is therefore fitting that Shem and Abram, listed first because of their theological significance, are younger brothers.

Furthermore, Genesis fills in the chronological gaps created by 5:32 and 11:26, indicating how old Noah and Terah were when their sons Shem and Abram were born. Noah was 600 at the flood (Gen 7:6). Shem was (100–2 =) 98 at the flood (Gen 11:10). Therefore Noah was (600–98 =) 502 at Shem's birth.[90] Terah died at 205 (Gen 11:32). Abram was 75 at Terah's death (Gen 12:4; Acts 7:4). Therefore Terah was (205–75 =) 130 at Abram's birth.[91] The Bible displays its chronological meticulousness here.

2. *Non-literal Numbers*

In his commentary on Genesis, Gordon Wenham questions whether the ages in the genealogies are literal. He determines that non-literal numbers would avoid the "historical problems" of a chronology that "is hard to correlate with archeological discoveries about the origins of mankind."[92] However, non-literal ages do not help Wenham, who both accepts that all the names in Gen 5 and 11 refer to "real people" and rejects Green's gaps.[93] To lengthen the chronology between Adam and Abraham, Wenham would need the actual begetting ages to be higher than

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[89] Goodenow, *Bible Chronology*, 321, italics original.
[90] The translation of Gen 10:21 in the Septuagint confirms that Shem was a younger "brother of Japheth the elder [ἀδελφῷ Ιαφεθ τοῦ μείζονος]." The KJV, NKJV, and NIV (see also the NASB margin) similarly translate the Hebrew to show that Japheth was older. Ham, though listed second in Gen 5:32, was the youngest (Gen 9:24).
[91] R. C. H. Lenski, *The Interpretation of the Acts of the Apostles 1–14* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 2008), 262–63; Henry Girdlestone, *Genesis: Its Authenticity and Authority Discussed: The First Eleven Chapters* (London: James Nisbet & Co., 1864), 183–86; see also the note on Acts 7:4 in the NIV Study Bible.
[92] Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, 133–34.
[93] Ibid.

those in the text (lower begetting ages would shorten the chronology and so exacerbate the historical problems). However, only exceedingly higher begetting ages would satisfy most anthropologists. For example, to date Adam to ca. 40,000 BC (a recent date by mainstream standards), the average begetting age of the nineteen patriarchs would need to be roughly 2,000 years old. An average begetting age of 1,000 years old (still unreasonably high) would not get us much beyond 20,000 BC.

I am unaware of any interpreter who argues that the actual begetting ages were higher on average than the ones in the text. Proponents of non-literal numbers generally attempt to account for the high figures in Gen 5 and 11 by positing that the actual ages were *lower* than those in the text. Theories about non-literal numbers do not readily serve to extend the primeval chronology.

IX. *Appendix B: Was Enosh 90 or 190 at Kenan's Birth? A Textual Reevaluation of the Chronology in Genesis 5 and 11*

The conventional Egyptian chronology presents the most concrete challenge to the primeval timeline in the Hebrew Bible (MT). Even some "young earthers," who maintain literal creation days, point to the accepted antiquity of Egypt as evidence for chronological gaps in Gen 5 and 11. Snoeberger, for example, contrasts scientific arguments that are based on "uniformitarian presuppositions" with "a class of much 'harder' evidence," namely, "a well-established Egyptian chronology that extends back many centuries before the flood date demanded by the chronogenealogist."[94] Green acknowledged that some interpreters adopted the Septuagint's longer chronology, which affords "the needed relief," but he insisted on the "incontrovertibly established" accuracy of the MT's lower begetting ages.[95] The evidence, however, does not show the incontrovertibility of the MT at this point.

Before the Reformation, the church in the east and the west subscribed to the longer chronology (that is, the higher begetting ages) in LXX Gen 5 and 11.[96] Jewish histories written before the second century AD (e.g., the chronologies of Demetrius and Eupolemus, and Josephus's *Jewish Antiquities*) also adopted the higher begetting ages.[97] The Septuagint dates Noah's flood 780 years earlier, and the creation of Adam 1,386 years earlier, than the MT does (see Table 2).

MT Masoretic Text
[94] Snoeberger, "Why a Commitment to Inerrancy Does Not Demand," 13.
MT Masoretic Text
[95] Green, "Primeval Chronology," 300.
MT Masoretic Text
LXX Septuagint
[96] Franz Delitzsch, *A New Commentary on Genesis*, trans. Sophia Taylor, 5th ed. (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1888), 1:206.
[97] Josephus, *Ant.* 1.67, 83–87, 149–50; Jeremy Hughes, *Secrets of the Times: Myth and History in Biblical Chronology*, JSOTSup 66 (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1990), 241; John Jackson, *Chronological Antiquities* (London: J. Noon, 1752), 1:69–73; Hales, *New Analysis of Chronology*, 1:289–303; Russell, *Connection of Sacred and Profane History*, 1:33–37; Goodenow, *Bible Chronology*, 222, 302, 325, 383–84.
MT Masoretic Text

Although Jerome used the MT's lower begetting ages in his Vulgate, in his *Chronicon* he followed Eusebius's LXX-based chronology, which "gained general acceptance in the west."[98] The Venerable Bede in the eighth century was castigated as an innovator for constructing a chronology from the smaller numbers in the Vulgate.[99] The Roman Catholic Church officially regarded the Septuagint's higher begetting ages as original until after the Reformation.[100]

The Reformers, in their return *ad fontes*, broke with the consensus and subscribed to the MT's shorter chronology. However, many biblical scholars in the west during the seventeenth, eighteenth, and nineteenth centuries (e.g., Vossius, Pezron, Des Vignoles, Hayes, Jackson, Hales, Faber, Russell, Seyffarth, Rawlinson, Budd, and Goodenow) called for a return to the numbers in the Septuagint.[102] This text-critical discussion lost steam after the publication of Green's essay, which left the begetting ages with no clear purpose.

Table 2: The Begetting Ages in Genesis 5 and 11[101]

	MT	LXX	SP	Josephus
Adam	130	230	130	230
Seth	105	205	105	205
Enosh	90	190	90	190

MT Masoretic Text
LXX Septuagint

[98] Hughes, *Secrets of the Times*, 260.

[99] Delitzsch, *New Commentary on Genesis*, 1:206; see also Thomas Wright, *Biographia Britannica Literaria: Anglo-Saxon Period* (London: John W. Parker, 1842), 295–96.

[100] Delitzsch, *New Commentary on Genesis*, 1:206.

MT Masoretic Text

[102] Ibid.; G. Seyffarth, *Summary of Recent Discoveries in Biblical Chronology, Universal History and Egyptian Archaeology*, 2nd ed. (New York: Henry Ludwig, 1859), 114–59; Russell, *Connection of Sacred and Profane History*, 1:1–6, 94; Goodenow, *Bible Chronology*, 301–16; Martin Anstey, *The Romance of Bible Chronology* (New York: Marshall Bros., 1913; repr., Mountain City, TN: Sacred Truth, 2012), 1:50–53.

[101] Cf. the table in Merrill, "Chronology," 115; see Josephus's begetting ages in *Ant.* 1.67, 83–87, 149–50.

MT Masoretic Text
LXX Septuagint
SP Samaritan Pentateuch

Kenan	70	170	70	170
Mahalalel	65	165	65	165
Jared	162	162	62	162
Enoch	65	165	65	165
Methuselah	187	187[*]	67	187
Lamech	182	188[†]	53	182
Noah	500	500	500	—
Shem	100	100	100	—

[*] In some minuscules and manuscripts of the Greek Bible (e.g., Codex Vaticanus and Berlin Papyrus 911) Methuselah begets at 167, while in others (e.g., Codexes Alexandrinus, Cottonianus, and Coislinianus) he begets at 187. The chronologies of Demetrius (ca. 200 BC) and Eupolemus (ca. 160 BC), who used the Septuagint, imply 187 (Hughes, *Secrets of the Times*, 241; Jackson, *Chronological Antiquities*, 1:69–72; Russell, *Connection of Sacred and Profane History*, 1:33–34). Swete's edition of the Septuagint, though based on Codex Vaticanus, prefers 187 (Henry Barclay Swete, ed., *The Old Testament in Greek According to the Septuagint* [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1887], 1:8). Hayes, Shuckford, Hales, and recently Merrill put forth 187 as the original begetting age for Methuselah in the LXX (Charles Hayes, *A Dissertation on the Chronology of the Septuagint* [London: T. Woodward, 1741], 91, 136; Samuel Shuckford, *The Sacred and Profane History of the World Connected*, rev. James Creighton, 5th ed. [London: William Baynes, 1819], 1:50; Hales, *New Analysis of Chronology*, 1:272; Merrill, "Chronology," 115); contra Hughes, *Secrets of the Times*, 6n1, 14n9; Ronald S. Hendel, *The Text of Genesis 1–11: Textual Studies and Critical Edition* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), 66.

[†] Jackson presents evidence for both 182 (MT) and 188 (LXX), ultimately favoring 182 (*Chronological Antiquities*, 1:37–39).

Arpachshad	35	135	135	135
Cainan	—	130	—	—
Shelah	30	130	130	130
Eber	34	134	134	134
Peleg	30	130	130	130
Reu	32	132	132	130‡
Serug	30	130	130	132
Nahor	29	79	79	120
Terah	70	70	70	70

1. *The Case for LXX Genesis 5 and 11*

The higher begetting ages have existed in the Septuagint since its inception in Alexandria in the third century BC, and this raises an important question: Did the LXX translators use a Hebrew text with these higher begetting ages or did they fabricate the longer chronology? A common assumption in the west since the Reformation has been that the Alexandrian Jews, who

‡ Apparently Josephus accidentally transposed Reu's and Serug's begetting ages.
LXX Septuagint
LXX Septuagint

supposedly "had none of that almost superstitious veneration for the letter of Scripture, which characterized the Jews of Palestine," intentionally expanded the chronology in Gen 5 and 11 to reconcile it with Egyptian antiquity.[103] A major difficulty with this supposition is that "no ancient author says any such thing."[104] Green was loath to accept this theory because it assumes that "the original intent with which these textual changes were made, was after all a chronological one."[105] He proffered instead that the numbers in the Septuagint were invented "to make a more symmetrical division of individual lives" and "to introduce something like a regular gradation" to the begetting ages.[106] This speculation similarly lacks historical grounding and plausibility. The evidence, as we shall see, suggests that the Greek translators used a Hebrew text with the higher begetting ages.

Textual scholars generally recognize a distinct Hebrew *Vorlage* behind the Septuagint, that is, a Hebrew text used by the LXX translators that differs from the MT in many places. "For books other than Isaiah," write Jobes and Silva, "the LXX translation offers a larger proportion of genuine variants, that is, readings that very likely reflect a *Vorlage* different from the MT."[107] Anneli Aejmelaeus, leader of the Research Project for Textual Criticism of the Septuagint at the University of Helsinki, says,

The scholar who wishes to attribute deliberate changes, harmonizations, completion of details and new accents to the translator is under the obligation to prove his thesis with weighty arguments and also to show why the divergences cannot have originated with the *Vorlage.* That the translator *may* have manipulated his original does not mean that he necessarily did so. All that is known of the translation techniques employed in the Septuagint points firmly enough in the opposite direction.[108]

According to Tov, the LXX "variants are equally as important for text-critical analysis as the readings found in Hebrew sources. Some scholars even claim that they are more important than these sources since the [LXX] readings are often superior to elements in [the MT]."[109] Tov

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[103] Anstey, *Romance of Bible Chronology*, 1:15.
[104] Seyffarth, *Summary of Recent Discoveries*, 123.
[105] Green, "Primeval Chronology," 300.
[106] Ibid., 300–301.
LXX Septuagint
MT Masoretic Text
LXX Septuagint
MT Masoretic Text
[107] Karen H. Jobes and Moisés Silva, *Invitation to the Septuagint* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2000), 149.
[108] Anneli Aejmelaeus, *On the Trail of the Septuagint Translators* (Kampen: Kok Pharos, 1993), 92–93, italics original; quoted in Jobes and Silva, *Septuagint*, 149.
LXX Septuagint
LXX Septuagint
MT Masoretic Text
[109] Emanuel Tov, *Textual Criticism of the Hebrew Bible*, 3rd ed. (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2012), 136.

concludes that "the assumption is unavoidable that the Hebrew scrolls used for the Greek translation were valuable, authoritative, and sometimes more ancient than [the MT]."[110]

Textual scholars specifically recognize a distinct Hebrew *Vorlage* behind the Septuagint's primeval chronology. Tov states that the variants in LXX Gen 5 and 11 "should not be ascribed to the translator, but to his Hebrew *Vorlage.*"[111] Tov also cites Klostermann's defense of the Septuagint's longer chronology, "which, according to Klostermann, was based on Hebrew sources."[112] The historical evidence points to the Hebrew origin of LXX Gen 5 and 11. As noted above, the chronologies of Jewish historians Demetrius (ca. 200 BC) and Eupolemus (ca. 160 BC) bear witness to the Septuagint's higher begetting ages. Eupolemus was a Palestinian Jew who "utilized the Hebrew text as well as the LXX."[113] Eupolemus's Hebrew and Greek texts must have shared the same numbers in Gen 5 and 11, for Eupolemus likely did not choose the Septuagint over a differing Hebrew text. The higher begetting ages in the LXX also appear in Josephus (*Ant.* 1.67, 83–87, 149–50).[114] This is especially noteworthy, because Josephus worked directly from the Hebrew (*Ant.* 10.218; *Ag. Ap.* 1.1).[115] Hales states that the "book of *Enoch*, as cited by *Alexander Polyhistor*" in the first century BC, puts the patriarch Enoch in the "1286th year of the world, which exactly accords with the *Greek* chronology."[116] The Septuagint's longer chronology existed in Hebrew texts during the centuries before and the century after Christ's birth.

Modern textual critics have rightly questioned whether the MT preserves the original primeval chronology.[117] Hughes says that "it is far from obvious that the original figures are preserved in

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MT Masoretic Text
[110] Ibid., 140.
LXX Septuagint
[111] Tov, "Genealogical Lists in Genesis 5 and 11," 221.
[112] Tov, *Textual Criticism*, 306.
LXX Septuagint
LXX Septuagint
[113] Merrill, "Chronology," 117.
LXX Septuagint
[114] For thorough discussions of the chronology and corruptions in Josephus, see Hayes, *Dissertation on the Chronology of the Septuagint*, 127–220; Goodenow, *Bible Chronology*, 351–84.
[115] Dov Gera, "Unity and Chronology in the Jewish Antiquities," in *Flavius Josephus: Interpretation and History*, ed. Jack Pastor, Pnina Stern, and Menahem Mor (Leiden: Brill, 2011), 125; Hales, *New Analysis of Chronology*, 1:274; Russell, *Connection of Sacred and Profane History*, 1:36–37.
[116] Hales, *New Analysis of Chronology*, 1:281, italics original.
MT Masoretic Text
[117] See, e.g., Hendel, *Text of Genesis 1–11*, 61–80; Tov, *Textual Criticism*, 138, 306; R. W. Klein, "Archaic Chronologies and the Textual History of the Old Testament," *HTR* 67 (1974): 255–63; Hughes, *Secrets of the Times*, 5–30, 267; Tov, "Genealogical Lists in Genesis 5 and 11," 237; Ronald S. Hendel, "A Hasmonean Edition of MT Genesis? The Implications of the Editions of the Chronology in Genesis 5," *HBAI* 1 (2012): 448–64.

MT," and Hendel concludes more decisively that it is "no longer tenable" to maintain that the MT perfectly reflects the archetypal chronology.[118] Yet we should question the general assumption among western textual critics that "the higher set of figures" in LXX Gen 5 and 11, SP Gen 11, and three generations of MT Gen 5 "was secondarily derived from the lower set" in SP Gen 5, MT Gen 11, and six generations of MT Gen 5 (SP = Samaritan Pentateuch).[119] The evidence indicates that the lower begetting ages are secondary and the higher ones original. While the ancient Jewish witnesses betray no demonstrable attempt to inflate chronology, the tendency toward chronological deflation is confirmed in several places. (1) The text of *Ant.* 1.148 has been altered (the interval between the flood and the birth of Abraham having been reduced by 700 years) to make Josephus reflect the timeline in MT Gen 11, contra Josephus's longer postdiluvian chronology in *Ant.* 1.149–50.[120] (2) A similar corruption was attempted in *Ant.* 1.82 (the interval between Adam and the flood having been reduced by 600 years in the

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MT Masoretic Text
MT Masoretic Text
[118] Hughes, *Secrets of the Times*, 6; Hendel, *Text of Genesis 1–11*, 63.
LXX Septuagint
SP Samaritan Pentateuch
MT Masoretic Text
SP Samaritan Pentateuch
MT Masoretic Text
MT Masoretic Text
[119] Hughes, *Secrets of the Times*, 19. Hendel and Hughes, building on Klein, argue that Jared, Methuselah, and Lamech outlived the flood in the original antediluvian chronology, and that the three editions of Gen 5 in the MT, the LXX, and the SP represent three scribal recensions aimed at resolving this exegetical problem. Accordingly, the minimal revisions in the SP essentially preserved the original begetting ages, but adjusted the life spans of Jared, Methuselah, and Lamech so that they die in the year of the flood; the moderate revisions in the MT put Jared's and Lamech's deaths before, and Methuselah's death in the year of, the flood; the major revisions in the LXX ironically failed to accomplish their chief end, with Methuselah still outliving the flood (this view maintains that Methuselah begat at 167 in the LXX instead of 187). This theory, which focuses internally on "the differences concerning who dies before, in, or after the flood," fails to account adequately for Jared's higher begetting age in the MT and most of the higher begetting ages in the LXX, which could have remained lower and still avoided the postulated "problem of the aquatic antediluvians" (Hendel, "Hasmonean Edition of MT Genesis?," 454–55). A more plausible explanation of the internal data emerges when we focus externally on the documented tendency toward chronological reduction among ancient Jews, and on a discernible motivation behind this tendency (see below). We shall find that the higher set of begetting ages predates the lower set and prevails in our earliest witnesses. The begetting ages in LXX Gen 5 and 11, SP Gen 11, and three generations of MT Gen 5 compose the original chronology, to which the oldest Jewish writings bear ample witness.
MT Masoretic Text
[120] Hayes, *Dissertation on the Chronology of the Septuagint*, 211–20; Goodenow, *Bible Chronology*, 304, 384; Jackson, *Chronological Antiquities*, 1:67; see also William Whiston, "Dissertation 5: Upon the Chronology of Josephus," in *Josephus: The Complete Works*, trans. William Whiston (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1998), 1037.

bracketed insertion of "1,656") to make Josephus reflect the timeline in MT Gen 5, contra Josephus's longer antediluvian chronology in *Ant.* 1.83–87.[121] "Plainly," notes Goodenow, "a mighty effort has been made by corruptors to make Jos. seem to endorse the present Heb. text."[122] (3) The antediluvian chronology in the SP is 349 years shorter than the one in the MT (see Table 2).[123] (4) The antediluvian chronology in *Jubilees* "agrees for the most part with SP's antediluvian chronology."[124] (5) The antediluvian chronology in "Jerome's Samaritan" (no longer extant) was 100 years shorter than the one in the MT.[125] (6) *Seder Olam Rabbah* (ca. AD 150), a Jewish chronology that dates creation to 3761 BC, reduces the interval between the Babylonian captivity and the destruction of the second temple in AD 70 by approximately 185 years.[126] Notably, we find in this compromised Jewish history "the first mention of the present Hebrew values of Gen. 5; 11."[127] That is, the chronologically corrupted *Seder Olam Rabbah* is our earliest witness to the MT's begetting ages. Even apart from the unreliable nature of *Seder Olam Rabbah*, it is significant that our earliest witness to the longer chronology (the LXX)

MT Masoretic Text

[121] Hayes, *Dissertation on the Chronology of the Septuagint*, 127–210; Goodenow, *Bible Chronology*, 304, 384. The non-bracketed number in *Ant.* 1.82 is also corrupted, reading "2656" instead of "2256," which is the sum of the begetting ages in *Ant.* 1.83–87.

[122] Goodenow, *Bible Chronology*, 304.

SP Samaritan Pentateuch

MT Masoretic Text

[123] The timeline in SP Gen 5 is also thirty-five years shorter than Hendel's (as well as Klein's) reconstructed antediluvian chronology, and two years shorter than Hughes's (Hendel, "Hasmonean Edition of MT Genesis?," 463–64; Hughes, *Secrets of the Times*, 21, 267).

SP Samaritan Pentateuch

[124] Hughes, *Secrets of the Times*, 22.

MT Masoretic Text

[125] Whiston, "Dissertation 5: Upon the Chronology of Josephus," 1037. Jackson, Russell, and Goodenow also discuss a lost Hebrew text (what Whiston calls "Jerome's Samaritan [Pentateuch]") whose anteduluvian chronology was 100 years shorter than the MT's (Jackson, *Chronological Antiquities*, 1:51–52; Russell, *Connection of Sacred and Profane History*, 1:48–49; Goodenow, *Bible Chronology*, 311). The difference between the antediluvian chronology in the MT and that in Jerome's Samaritan is the latter's reduction of Jared's begetting age from 162 to 62 (this lower number survives in the SP). In reducing Jared's begetting age by 100, Jerome's Samaritan (or in Jackson's terms, "the Babylonian Hebrew Text, which was followed by the Eastern Jews") carried the MT's revisional scheme "to its utmost practicable limits" (Russell, 1:49) (Jared's is the only higher begetting age remaining in the MT that could have been reduced by 100 without creating problems).

[126] Goodenow, *Bible Chronology*, 306, 311; see also J. Paul Tanner, "Is Daniel's Seventy-Weeks Prophecy Messianic? Part 1," *BSac* 166 (2009): 184–85; Merrill, "Chronology," 118.

[127] Goodenow, *Bible Chronology*, 311; see also Hayes, *Dissertation on the Chronology of the Septuagint*, 89; Jackson, *Chronological Antiquities*, 1:xxxi; Russell, *Connection of Sacred and Profane History*, 1:45.

MT Masoretic Text

LXX Septuagint

predates our earliest witness to the MT's chronology (*Seder Olam Rabbah*) by about 400 years. The evidence suggests that the chronology in the MT did not exist before the second century of the Christian era. Russell concludes that "in the days of Josephus, as well as in those of the annalists who preceded him as compilers from the Jewish Scriptures, there was no difference in the numerical statements of the Greek version, as compared with the text of the original Hebrew."[128]

Interpreters have discussed what likely motivated the second-century Jews to reduce the interval between creation and Christ to less than 4,000 years (3,761 years in *Seder Olam Rabbah*). Prevalent among the ancient Jews and early Christians was the belief that the Messiah was supposed to come in the sixth millennium after creation (between AM 5000 and AM 6000). The Septuagint's primeval chronology, which existed in Hebrew texts before the second century AD, puts the birth of Jesus at ca. AM 5500. Many scholars have argued that during the second century AD, the Palestinian Jews shortened the chronology in the Hebrew copies of Gen 5 and 11 to remove the life of Jesus far from the sixth millennium of the world.[129] A similar tendency may exist in *Seder Olam Rabbah*'s postexilic chronology, which (having been reduced by roughly 185 years) artificially lays the groundwork for the Jewish interpretation of Daniel's seventy weeks (Dan 9:24–27), specifically the belief that the cutting off of the מָשִׁיחַ ("anointed one") in Dan 9:26 was fulfilled ca. AD 70.[130] This manufactured timeline in *Seder Olam Rabbah* was apparently an attempt to undermine the Christian interpretation of Daniel's messianic prophecy. Goodenow concludes, "Since the Jews of that day did thus fabricate a false [postexilic] chronology in their attempt to defeat Christianity; the only question is, Did they go further, and corrupt the numbers of Genesis for the same purpose?"[131] Additionally, Hughes notes that "according to the Babylonian Talmud, the Rabbinic 'school of Elijah' calculated that the world would last for a total of 6000 years: 'the first 2000 years are to be void, the next 2000 years are the period of the Law, and the following 2000 years are the period of the Messiah' (T.

MT Masoretic Text
MT Masoretic Text
[128] Russell, *Connection of Sacred and Profane History*, 1:38.
[129] See, e.g., Seyffarth, *Summary of Recent Discoveries*, 114–23; Jackson, *Chronological Antiquities*, 1:92–100; Russell, *Connection of Sacred and Profane History*, 1:41–43; Goodenow, *Bible Chronology*, 304–8. Tov writes, "The frequent use of [the LXX] by Christians caused the Jews to dissociate themselves from it and to initiate new translations" (*Textual Criticism*, 141). Says Jackson, "For had they not altered their *Hebrew* Copies, there could have been no Occasion for a new Translation, because it was confessed but about thirty-five Years before it was made, by the *Jews* themselves universally, and especially by their two most learned Writers, *Philo* and *Josephus*, that the Septuagint was an accurate and faithful Interpretation of the Law of *Moses.* But as soon as the new *Greek* Version was published, there appeared numerous Differences between that and the old Translation of the Septuagint, and particularly in the Computation from the Creation to *Abraham*" (*Chronological Antiquities*, 1:93, italics original). Russell states that "before the second century of the Christian religion, no traces can be found of any controversy as to differences supposed to exist in the Greek and Hebrew texts of the sacred books" (*Connection of Sacred and Profane History*, 1:38).
[130] See Tanner, "Is Daniel's Seventy-Weeks Prophecy Messianic?," 184–85.
[131] Goodenow, *Bible Chronology*, 306–7.

b. *Abodah Zarah* 9a; T. b. *Sanhedrin* 97b)."[132] This may explain why the second-century Jews reduced the chronology as much as they did: their new timeline removed Jesus from (and put themselves on the verge of) "the period of the Messiah." The view that the Palestinian Jews in the second century AD condensed the primeval chronology in the Hebrew text to discredit Jesus as the Messiah extends back at least to Christian theologian Ephraem Syrus (325–378).[133]

2. *The Particularly Strong Case for LXX Genesis 11*

(1) The begetting ages in LXX Gen 11 are attested not only in Demetrius, Eupolemus, and Josephus, but also in the SP, and there is no evidence of dependence between the LXX and the SP at this point. Two important differences corroborate the independence of these two major textual witnesses: unlike the SP, the LXX in Gen 11 closes each generation with "and he died" (as does Gen 5) and includes the generation of Cainan (as does Luke 3:36). The higher begetting ages shared by the LXX and the SP in Gen 11 are not likely the result of a desire to inflate the chronology, for the SP exhibits a tendency to deflate the chronology in Gen 5 (see Table 2), and any explanation for the higher begetting ages must apply to the SP as well as the LXX.[134]

(2) Cainan's begetting age of 130 in LXX Gen 11:13 is accounted for in the computations of Demetrius and Eupolemus.[135] The book of *Jubilees*, which "attests an independent form of the Hebrew text," also includes Cainan (*Jub.* 8:1–5).[136] More significantly, Luke 3:36 puts Cainan between Arpachshad and Shelah in agreement with the LXX. The MT omits Cainan and says that Arpachshad was only 35 at Shelah's birth (Gen 11:12). If Arpachshad was 35 at Shelah's

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[132] Hughes, *Secrets of the Times*, 261.
[133] Anstey, *Romance of Bible Chronology*, 1:46.
LXX Septuagint
LXX Septuagint
SP Samaritan Pentateuch
LXX Septuagint
SP Samaritan Pentateuch
SP Samaritan Pentateuch
LXX Septuagint
LXX Septuagint
SP Samaritan Pentateuch
SP Samaritan Pentateuch
SP Samaritan Pentateuch
LXX Septuagint
[134] Benjamin Shaw, "The Genealogies of Genesis 5 and 11 and Their Significance for Chronology" (PhD diss., Bob Jones University, 2004), 72–73.
LXX Septuagint
[135] Russell, *Connection of Sacred and Profane History*, 1:89–90; Hales, *New Analysis of Chronology*, 1:289.
[136] *The Book of Jubilees or The Little Genesis*, ed. and trans. R. H. Charles (London: Adam & Charles Black, 1902), xxxviii.
LXX Septuagint
MT Masoretic Text

birth, as MT Gen 11:12 says, and if Cainan belongs between Arpachshad and Shelah in Luke 3:36, as every NT editor has determined, then Arpachshad must have had Cainan at about 17, and Cainan must have had Shelah at a similar age. Far more likely, the Septuagint preserves the original chronogenealogical data in Gen 11.[137]

An objection to LXX Gen 11 is that its higher begetting ages (in the 130s) make Isaac's birth when Abraham was 100 seem unexceptional, whereas Gen 17:17 says that Abraham laughed at the thought of begetting the promised son at the century mark (cf. Rom 4:19).[138] But Abraham's laughter, whatever it means, does not imply that 100 years old was an unusual age for a man to have children. Terah had Abraham at 130.[139] Jacob had Benjamin at about 105.[140] Abraham himself had six children by Keturah (Gen 25:1–2) at some point after he was 86 (Ishmael's birth), most likely after he was 137 (Sarah's death). Abraham had six children by Keturah in his late eighties and nineties at the earliest. His laughter in Gen 17:17 must have been tied specifically to the thought of fathering a son through his wife Sarah at this point in their marriage.[141]

MT Masoretic Text

[137] Hughes concludes that Cainan "is clearly secondary, since he borrows his name from the fourth antediluvian ancestor, and his age of begetting [130] and remaining years [330] are borrowed from Shelah, whom he precedes" (*Secrets of the Times*, 9). Hughes assumes here that Cainan was inserted into the chronology sometime *after* the number of Shelah's remaining years was changed to 330. We agree with Hughes that Shelah's remaining years did not originally number 330 in the proto-LXX tradition. However, we best explain this corruption by maintaining that Cainan existed in the proto-LXX tradition *before* the number of Shelah's remaining years became 330. Hughes suggests that 330 evolved from 403 (the supposed original), becoming 430 and then 330. He thinks that this evolution from 403 to 430 to 330 "presumably occurred before" the addition of Cainan, "whose remaining years also number 330" (p. 18). But once again our thesis that Cainan and the higher begetting ages are original yields a simpler and more compelling explanation: In the original chronology, Shelah's remaining years numbered 303. This number survives in the SP. It is reflected in the MT's 403 (which was increased by 100 to offset the reduction of Shelah's begetting age by 100). In the LXX, or in its Hebrew *Vorlage*, the original 303 was altered to the graphically similar 330, an accidental assimilation to the number of Cainan's remaining years.

LXX Septuagint

[138] Hughes, *Secrets of the Times*, 11.

[139] See discussion in Appendix A.

[140] Andrew E. Steinmann, *From Abraham to Paul: A Biblical Chronology* (St. Louis: Concordia, 2011), 76–78.

[141] According to Hendel, "Hasmonean Edition of MT Genesis?," 457–58, the notorious exegetical problem in MT Gen 11 suggests that the MT's postdiluvian chronology is original: "The chronological revisions in the MT of Genesis 5 were, I have argued, motivated by a local exegetical problem. A comparable situation exists in Genesis 11, where the chronology also differs among MT, SP, and LXX. As Klein has convincingly maintained, this is also due to an exegetical problem. To the dismay of many commentators, in MT all of the postdiluvian ancestors of Abraham are alive during his lifetime, including Noah. Hence, according to rabbinic midrash, Isaac studied Torah at the academy of Shem (*Genesis Rabbah* 56.11)." Hendel concludes that while the scribes in the proto-MT tradition "apparently did not perceive this

The chronology in LXX Gen 11 relieves any discrepancy between the accepted antiquity of Egypt and the date of Noah's flood. On the assumption that Abraham was born in 2166 BC (a standard dating), the flood dates to 3298 BC in the Septuagint. According to the conventional Egyptian chronology, the first dynasty dates to ca. 3000 BC.[142] Yet regardless of which begetting ages accurately reflect the autograph, we must accept the chronological intent of Gen 5 and 11. We may question *where* the original chronology exists text-critically, but not *whether* it exists lexico-grammatically.[1436]

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cluster of living ancestors as a problem," the scribes in the proto-SP and proto-LXX traditions "did respond to this problem" by inflating the postdiluvian chronology. This theory forces us to imagine that the original author created a problematic chronology. More likely, this "cluster" problem in the MT is recensional rather than original, the unavoidable consequence of a grand-scale chronological reduction. (Gen 25:8 potentially sharpens the problem. It says that Abraham, at 175, "died in a good old age, an old man and full of years," even though in the MT's chronology Eber was still alive and far more than twice Abraham's age at this point.)
LXX Septuagint

[142] Peter James and four of his colleagues, all non-evangelical antiquarians, have made a plausible argument that the conventional Egyptian chronology is inflated "by some 250 years" (Peter James et al., *Centuries of Darkness: A Challenge to the Conventional Chronology of Old World Archaeology* [London: Pimlico, 1992], 257). Bimson, an evangelical expert in Near Eastern chronology, shows that *Centuries of Darkness* has not been refuted (John Bimson, *(When) Did It Happen? New Contexts for Old Testament History* [Cambridge: Grove, 2003], 9–27). Snoeberger dismisses *Centuries of Darkness* as one of several works in which "Velikovsky's theories have been preserved, with substantial modification" ("Why a Commitment to Inerrancy Does Not Demand," 17n47). But this description of *Centuries of Darkness* as a continuation of Immanuel Velikovsky's discredited ideas is entirely baseless. Bimson responds, "I cannot agree with that description as the two schemes have insufficient common ground to justify it. They are similar only in the very general sense that both propose a revision of Egyptian chronology. The differences are enormous and the *Centuries of Darkness* revision does not rely on Velikovsky at any point" (quoted from private correspondence with permission). According to James, the "conventional scheme" dates Egypt's first dynasty to ca. 2920 BC (*Centuries of Darkness*, 223). Thus, James implicitly dates the first dynasty to ca. (2920–250 =) 2670 BC, more than 600 years after the Septuagint's flood date.

[143] Thanks to Peter Green for reading several drafts of this paper and suggesting its title. Thanks also to Jonathan Barlow and Robert Murphy for their invaluable feedback.

[6] Jeremy Sexton, "Who Was Born When Enosh Was 90? A Semantic Reevaluation of William Henry Green's Chronological Gaps," *The Westminster Theological Journal* 77, no. 2 (2015): 193–218.

When Was Samaria Captured?
The Need for Precision In Biblical Chronologies

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1 Factors That Produce Wrong Chronologies

The major factors that continue to produce confusion in the field of OT chronology are (1) the scholar imposes his schemes and presuppositions on the information available from the Scripture texts rather than first determining the methods used by the authors of Scripture and then accommodating his ideas to the methods of those authors; (2) even when the methods of Scripture are determined, the scholar fails to consider all the possibilities inherent in the scriptural texts; and (3) the scholar's methodology lacks precision and accuracy in the expression of dates and in the calculations based on those dates.

The first factor results in the largest amount of confusion, because the chronologies produced are generally very free in discarding the scriptural data that does not agree with the theories of the investigator, and those theories and their resultant chronologies are only acceptable to the narrow group that shares the same presuppositions about which data should be rejected.

For the second factor, the scholar may have determined the methods of the scriptural author and then adapted his presuppositions to those methods, but he still can overlook possibilities that are in keeping with his approach simply because he did not think of them. This was discussed in my two previous articles.[1] In those articles, examples were given of the consequences when a combination of factors was overlooked, and it was demonstrated that these overlooked possibilities can resolve problems that the original author could not adequately explain. The best-known example of this is Edwin Thiele's failure to consider a coregency between Ahaz and Hezekiah,[2] even though Thiele argued for a coregency to solve problems with other reign lengths—this will be discussed further below. Another example was the failure of most scholars to explore non-accession reckoning for the reign of Zedekiah, which is the main reason that many chronologies place the capture

of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar one year too late.[3] Unlike the first factor, this kind of oversight may not be due to any willful desire to advance a theory at the expense of the data, but because

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[1] Rodger Young, "When Did Solomon Die?" *JETS* 46 (2003) 589-603; "When Did Jerusalem Fall?" *JETS* 47 (2004) 21-38.

[2] Thiele's conclusions are presented in *The Mysterious Numbers of the Hebrew Kings,* which appeared in three editions: New York: Macmillan, 1951; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1965; Grand Rapids: Zondervan/Kregel, 1983. Unless otherwise specified, page numbers cited are from the third edition

[3] In Young, "Jerusalem," it was shown that the years for Zedekiah are given by the non-accession method in both 2 Kings and Jeremiah. This was not recognized earlier because the switch to non-accession counting came right at the end of the Judean kingdom and no simple

chronologists have not had the proper methodology which allows them to state all their presuppositions and then to lay out all the possibilities that are inherent in the combination of those presuppositions. My previous papers explained that there exists such a methodology and showed how it can be used to produce fruitful results in the chronological and historical disciplines.

The third factor, imprecise expressions and inaccurate arithmetic, is the subject of the present paper. Much of the advancement in science comes as a result of the development of more precise means of measurement. It is therefore surprising that when the greatest biblical chronologist of the twentieth century produced the third and final edition of his classic work on the subject, his figures were generally less precise, and the calculations by which he arrived at his results were more obscured, than was the case in his second edition. In the third edition, a single BC date was sometimes given instead of a notation that would indicate that the time span being discussed began in the autumn of a BC year and ended in the spring (or autumn) of the next year. Despite Thiele's explanation that this single BC figure was used "to simplify the discussion,"[4] anyone who tries to use these inexact dates, and to check Thiele's calculations by which he arrived at the dates, will find that the more precise figures of the second edition are easier to use. Imprecision fosters confusion, not simplicity.

2 The Confusion Caused By Inexactness

As an example of the confusion that can be caused by this kind of inexactness, consider Thiele's treatment of the reign of Athaliah. His dates for

clues are given to indicate that the change was taking place. By applying a proper methodology that first asks how Jeremiah and 2 Kings 25 treat the reign of Zedekiah, we can determine that the authors used non-accession reckoning, but this still does not provide the reason for the change in the method of counting. The reason, indeed, can be as arbitrary as the whim of the reigning king. Zedekiah could have said, "This is the way we're going to count my years. Don't ask any more questions." Although we do not know why the change took place, if we refused to consider anything but accession years for Zedekiah we would be guilty of a Factor One error (forcing our presuppositions on the data).
One scholar who explored non-accession counting for Zedekiah was Alberto Green ("The Chronology of the Last Days of Judah: Two Apparent Discrepancies," *JBL* 101/1 [1982] 70). Green rejected this hypothesis when he showed that non-accession reckoning would not work for the reign length given to Jehoiakim in 2 Kings 23:36. He then assumed that because non-accession years were not possible for Jehoiakim in 2 Kings 23, neither were they possible for Zedekiah in Jeremiah or 2 Kings 25. Green was correct in saying that non-accession reckoning is not used for Jehoiakim in 2 Kings, but both Jeremiah and 2 Kings use non-accession reckoning for Zedekiah. It is unfortunate that Green missed this, because his article exhibits one of the best examples of attempting to examine all the possibilities before settling on a solution to a chronological problem

[4] Thiele, *Mysterious Numbers* 87, footnote.

her are given in BC terms as 841 to 835.[5] At first glance, this seems consistent with the statement on the same page giving her reign as "seven years, non-accession reckoning, or six actual years," because it is indeed six years from 841 BC to 835 BC. However, the date for the death of Athaliah was also specified more exactly as "some time between Nisan and Tishri of 835." This means her last official year by Judean (Tishri) reckoning was between Tishri 1 of 836 BC and Tishri 1 of 835 BC, and her six-year (accession) reign began in Tishri of 842, in contradiction to the last year of Ahaziah and beginning year of Athaliah which Thiele calculated on a previous page as starting in Tishri of 841 BC.[6] When the dates are written like this in the necessarily inexact BC form, a problem can be hidden and the necessary corrective steps will not be taken. It is like de-focusing a microscope, with the result that hidden flaws in the material being investigated are not revealed.

To avoid confusion caused by such inexact dating, scholars would do well to adopt a notation that expresses the kind of year that was actually used by the nation being studied. For the history of Judah, this would be a year beginning in the month of Tishri (the autumn), whereas dates from Israel, Babylon, or Assyria would be expressed in years beginning in Nisan (the spring). Many writers have already done this, of course, but no uniform method of representing Nisan-years or Tishri-years has been agreed upon.

This lack of a common nomenclature for the basic building blocks of the trade is rather strange. It is a hindrance to the unambiguous expression of ideas and an impediment to progress in the field. Compare this with the situation in other areas of research, for example in the field of chemistry. Once chemists had formulated the basic concept of an element, symbols were agreed upon to represent the various elements. Then a convention for formulas was developed in order to express the interaction between elements to form compounds. In chronology, these basic steps have not been taken; there is no standard way to express those two fundamental building blocks of the biblical chronologist, the Tishri year and the Nisan year. Another fundamental building block is the six-month time period representing the overlap of a Nisan year from Israel (or Babylon) and a Tishri year from Judah. Along with a common nomenclature for these basic concepts, there should be a standard method of writing elapsed-time formulas, one that demonstrates clearly whether the time is measured in an accession or non-accession sense.

Perhaps at some meeting of an archaeological or historical society there will be a sufficient number of scholars present who want to bring uniformity to this field, and they will be able to establish a standard. Until that is done, it would be a benefit to all readers if the writer of a technical article would first declare a simple method of expressing both Tishri and Nisan years, and then adhere to that symbolism through the development parts of the paper, *in particular those parts dealing with synchronisms.* At the end, after all

[5] Ibid. 104.
[6] The resolution of this difficulty is explained in ray "Solomon" paper. Thiele's ending date for Athaliah is correct, but the regnal years of Ahaziah and the previous kings of Judah must be moved back one year.

the "chronology arithmetic" has been worked out, the resultant dates could be displayed in a BC format, if that is desirable.

In the present paper the expression "931n" will be used to represent the year beginning on Nisan 1, 931 BC and ending the day before Nisan 1, 930 BC. "931t" will represent the year beginning Tishri 1, 931 BC and ending the day before Tishri 1, 930 BC. The six-month overlap of these two dates will be written as 931t/930n. The overlap of 932t and 931n will be written as 931n/931t. When an elapsed-time figure is given in non-accession terms, then the accession equivalent will be used in formulas with "(acc)" following; thus a king who began in 931t and reigned for eleven years by non-accession reckoning would have his terminal date calculated as 931t-10 (acc) = 921t. All this may be called the "Nisan/Tishri" notation.

In the three sections following, these conventions will be applied to the chronological data in the Scriptures for the eighth century BC. This will not affect the precise dates given in Thiele's second edition for the last kings of Israel, except that it will narrow the end of Hoshea's reign to the first half of 723n. The regnal dates of Judean kings will then be calculated based on the dates from Israel and the Scripture texts. For these Judean kings, it will be shown that there is a general consensus among several writers who have attempted to set straight the confusion introduced when Thiele rejected the scriptural synchronisms between Hezekiah of Judah and Hoshea of Israel.

Thiele's rejection of the Hezekiah/Hoshea synchronisms has puzzled many commentators. The synchronisms are explained readily enough by positing a coregency between Ahaz and Hezekiah. Thiele assumed that Hezekiah's predecessors in the eighth century—Uzziah, Jotham, and Ahaz—had co-regencies with their fathers, so why not Hezekiah? Several authors put forth this rather obvious solution, among whom were Kenneth Kitchen and T. C. Mitchell, Siegfried Horn, Harold Stigers, R. K. Harrison, Leslie McFall, and Eugene Merrill.[7] All of these authors except McFall and Merrill published before Thiele's third edition was printed, and the *NBD* article (Kitchen and Mitchell) appeared before Thiele's second edition, as did the Horn article. Yet in neither the second edition nor the third did Thiele address the solution—even to refute it—that all of these authors offered, namely an Ahaz/Hezekiah coregency that ended with the death of Ahaz in approximately 716 BC. This is especially puzzling since Thiele knew Horn personally, and both men were on the faculty of Andrews University at the same time. In various places in *Mysterious Numbers,* Thiele chides those who do not accept the principle of "dual dating," that is, counting regnal years from the beginning of a coregency, which explains so many otherwise contradictory reign lengths and synchronisms. Yet the Ahaz/Hezekiah coregency, which makes

[7] K. A. Kitchen and T. C. Mitchell in *NBD* 217; S. H. Horn, "The Chronology of King Hezekiah's Reign," *AUSS* 2 (1964) 48-52; Harold Stigers, "The Interphased Chronology of Jotham, Ahaz, Hezekiah and Hoshea," *BETS* 9/2 (1966) 88-90; R. K. Harrison, *Introduction to the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1969) 734; Leslie McFall, "Did Thiele Overlook Hezekiah's Coregency?" *BSac* 146/584 (Oct-Dec 1989) 400–402; Eugene H. Merrill, *Kingdom of Priests* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1987) 410.

sense out of the one area where he rejected biblical inerrancy, was apparently never treated as an option.[8]

In order to undo the confusion that this introduced into the chronology of the eighth century BC, we must carefully review the Scriptures that allow us to reconstruct regnal dates for this period for both Israel and Judah.

3 Dates for the Last Kings of Israel

Our starting point will be the fall of Samaria. Thiele's argument[9] that this occurred in 723n during the reign of Shalmaneser 5 will not be repeated. From this date, the reigns of the six last kings of Israel will be derived. In the text of the third edition *of Mysterious Numbers,* the calculation of precise dates for these kings is omitted; only the years (BC) are given. The following discussion will reconstruct the precise dates in a fashion similar to that of Thiele's second edition, but will add information from the Hoshea/Hezekiah synchronisms (rejected by Thiele) so that the terminal date for Hoshea can be specified more precisely.

The year 723n when Samaria fell was Hoshea's 9th year (2 Kgs 18:10), so his first year was 732n, when he slew his predecessor, Pekah. All these last kings of Israel used accession reckoning.[10] The contention of Cook and Thiele that Pekah, in Gilead, began a rival reign to Menahem's rule in Samaria after Shallum's death will be accepted here as the only solution that has explained adequately the chronological data associated with Pekah.[11] Pekah's

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[8] "Thiele's omission of Hezekiah's coregency in the third edition of his book is inexcusable, given the number of reviews that were published following the appearance of his work in 1951 and 1965 challenging his treatment of 2 Kings 17–18. Several reviewers pointed Thiele in the right direction by suggesting a coregency for Hezekiah, which made perfectly good sense of the text as it stood…and which conformed to Thiele's own principles of interpreting similar data. Horn noted the fact that such a coregency was suggested as long ago as 1905 and 1911. "Leslie McFall," A Translation Guide to the Chronological Data in Kings and Chronicles," *BSac* 148/589 (1991) 33, 34.

[9] *Mysterious* Numbers chapter 8.

[10] Ibid. 105.

[11] The interested reader is referred to H. J. Cook, "Pekah," *VT* 14/2 (1964) 121-35, and to Thiele, *Mysterious Numbers* 129–32. However, Thiele and Cook could have said more about one verse in Hosea that clearly distinguishes Israel and Ephraim as different entities at the time that Hosea wrote, and which therefore provides a definitive biblical support for the brief existence of two rival kingdoms in the north. That verse is Hosea 5:5, which appears as follows in the MT:

וְעָנָה גְאוֹן־יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּפָנָיו
וְאֶפְרַיִם יִכָּשְׁלוּ עָוֹנָם
כָּשַׁל גַּם־יְהוּדָה עִמָּם׃

for which a literal translation is
And the pride of Israel testifies against him (to his face).
Both Israel and Ephraim will stumble in their sin;
Judah also stumbled with them.

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twenty-year reign and the rivalry with Menahem began in 732n + 20 = 752n. This year is called the thirty-ninth of Uzziah in 2 Kings 15:17. The year-figure for Uzziah must be reckoned from a coregency with his father Ama-ziah, and so this will be taken as a non-accession number, as with other coregencies.[12] But the question arises: did Menahem begin in the first half of the year

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Thiele and Cook noticed the plural "them" in the third line, showing that Israel and Ephraim were considered separate entities in the second line. But neither of these commentators remarked on the construction of the second line, where "Israel" and "Ephraim" are both preceded by a *vav.* This is the normal mode of expressing "both…and" in Hebrew, and it shows that the construction "Israel, even Ephraim" taken by many translations is not warranted. The 70 translates this literally, using και…και, which is the Greek way of expressing "both…and." This verse then is a direct substantiation of the existence of two distinct kingdoms in the north when Hosea wrote, and the verses related to Pekah, Menahem, and Pekahiah in 2 Kings show the identity of the rival rulers.

The objections to Pekah being a rival to Menahem usually center on Pekah's position as an officer in the army of Pekahiah, Menahem's son and successor (2 Kgs 15:25). But there is nothing inherently unreasonable about two rivals reaching a detente under which one contender accepts a subordinate position, and he then bides his time until the opportunity comes to slay his rival (or his rival's son) in a coup. Once the rivalry had begun, the external threat (Assyria) provided compelling reasons for a detente.

Events in the life of Thutmose 3 of Egypt's Eighteenth Dynasty have several resemblances to the career of Pekah. On the death of Thutmose 2, there was some confusion about the succession to the throne. Thutmose 3, the heir apparent, was the son of a minor wife of the deceased monarch and was still a child. The chief wife, Hatshepsut, had no male offspring. Within a few years after the death of her husband, Hatshepsut had become more than just a guardian regent for her stepson. She assumed the full pharaonic regalia and had herself crowned as pharaoh. Like Pekah, Thutmose 3 found that he had a rival for the throne, and he was subjugated under a more powerful personage, in this case his stepmother. Like Pekah, Thutmose after a few years was given a position as commander in the army. Like Pekah, he strengthened his hand in this position until one day there came a chance to seize the throne. It is possible that Thutmose killed his stepmother. There is no direct evidence of this, but the circumstantial evidence is that Hatshepsut's mummy has never been found, and the new pharaoh defaced her monuments, erasing her image from them. Like Pekah, Thutmose also dated his years from the beginning of the time when the rivalry began. Thus the campaign in his first year of full possession of the kingdom is dated in his monuments to his twenty-second year, whereas anyone who recognized Hatshepsut as a legitimate pharaoh would have called it his first year. Further, as in the case of Pekah, the full story of this rivalry and why Thutmose's first year is also his twenty-second year is not spelled out in the extant records of the time, but must be inferred as a reasonable deduction from the records we do have.

Do those who reject the Menahem/Pekah rivalry as improbable also reject as improbable this reconstruction from Egypt's Eighteenth Dynasty that Egyptologists use to explain the regnal dates of Thutmose 3? How do they explain Hosea 5:5?

[12] Thiele (*Mysterious Numbers* 109, 111) desired to bring the beginning of the Amaziah/Uzziah coregency as close as possible to the beginning of the Jehoash/Jeroboam 2 coregency in Israel, and so he used accession reckoning when calculating the beginning of Uzziah's coregency,

(752n/752t) or in the latter half (752t/751n)? If the former, then Uzziah's thirty-ninth year by Judean (Tishri) reckoning was 753t and his starting year was 753t + 38 (acc) = 791t. If the latter, then Uzziah's starting year was 752t + 38 (acc) = 790t.

790t is not possible as a starting date for Uzziah for the following reason. His fiftieth year, in which Menahem died (2 Kgs 15:23), would then be 790t-49 (acc) = 741t, which has no overlap with the end of Menahem's ten-year reign in 752n-10 = 742n. A 791t starting date for Uzziah puts his fiftieth year in 742t, which overlaps 742n in 742t/741n. This marks the end of Menahem's reign and the beginning of Pekahiah's.

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Zechariah's reign began in the thirty-eighth year of Uzziah (2 Kgs 15:8), that is in 791t-37 (acc) = 754t. He reigned six months, which must have crossed the 753-Tishri boundary, since his successor Shallum started in the thirty-ninth of Uzziah (2 Kgs 15:13); so we start Zechariah's reign in 753n/753t and end it in 753t/752n.

Zechariah	**Shallum**
Elul 753-Adar 752	**Adar 752-Nisan 752**

Shallum killed Zechariah and reigned one month, at the end of which he was assassinated by Menahem. Previously we had determined that Menahem began in 752n. This means that Shallum, beginning in 753t/752n and therefore before Nisan of 752, must have started his one-month reign in Adar (the month before Nisan) of 752, ending in Nisan of 752. The starting date for Menahem and his rival Pekah was therefore Nisan 752. The dates for Zechariah, starting six months before Shallum, were Elul (the month before Tishri, approximately September) of 753 to Adar of 752.

Menahem	**Pekahiah**
Nisan 752-742t/741n	**742t/741n-740t/739n**

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contrary to his practice for coregencies elsewhere. Although this is possible, there is nothing that requires it, and for the sake of consistency we shall treat synchronisms to the reign of Uzziah as non-accession numbers. Thus Thiele would reckon the thirty-ninth year of Uzziah, when Menahem began, by subtracting 39 from 792t, whereas we shall reckon it in a non-accession sense by subtracting 38 from 791t.

Menahem's reign was shown to end in 742t/741n. His son Pekahiah's two-year reign ended in the fifty-second of Uzziah (2 Kgs 15:23, 27), which was 791t-51 (acc) = 740t. By Nisan reckoning the two years ended in 742n-2 = 740n, so the overlap is 740t/739n for the death of Pekahiah by the hand of Pekah.

The synchronisms between Hezekiah and Hoshea, given in 2 Kings 18, will now be used to establish the years for Hezekiah and then to specify more exactly the dates for Hoshea.

Hezekiah's coregency with Ahaz began in the third year of Hoshea, which was 732n-3 = 729n (2 Kgs 18:1). If it was in the first half of the year, then by Judean reckoning Hezekiah began in 730t; if it was in the second half of Hoshea's third year, then it was 729t. But 730t is not possible, since it makes Hezekiah's fourth year to be 730t-3 (acc) = 727t, which has no overlap with Hoshea's seventh year, 732n-7 = 725n, as required by 2 Kings 18:9. Starting Hezekiah in 729t gives his fourth year as 729t-3 (acc) = 726t, which overlaps 725n in 725n/725t. Therefore the Ahaz/Hezekiah coregency began in 729t, or more exactly, 729t/728n.

Samaria was captured in Hezekiah's sixth year, 729t-5 (acc) = 724t (2 Kgs 18:10). This overlaps with the date that Thiele had established, 723n, in 723n/723t, showing that Samaria fell and Hoshea was killed in the first half of the year. This interesting conclusion reinforces the well-reasoned claim of Olmstead, Thiele, and Tadmor that it was Shalmaneser and not Sargon who captured Samaria.[13] Since Samaria fell before Tishri 1 of 723 BC, Sargon's accession in Tebeth of 722n (December 722 BC or January 721 BC) was at least fifteen months later.

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Pekah	**Hoshea**
740t/739n-732t/731n	**732t/731n-723n/723t**

Rival To Menaheni, Nisan 752

Hoshea's accession is placed in the twentieth year of Jotham by 2 Kings 15:30. Twenty years before 732n is well before the death of Uzziah (see 2 Kgs 15:23, 27), so we are justified in assuming that Jotham's twentieth year is measured from the beginning of a coregency with Uzziah and is therefore a non-accession figure. The Uzziah/Jotham coregency thus began in either 733t + 19 (acc) = 752t or 732t + 19 (acc) = 751t. The first alternative is not possible, since there is no overlap of 752t with the second year of Pekah in which Jotham began to reign (2 Kgs 15:32), which was 752n-2 = 750n. The second alternative, 751t, overlaps 750n in 750n/750t,

[13] Ibid, chapter 8. Using the same reasoning regarding the sixth year of Hezekiah, Leslie McFall ("Translation Guide" 35) also concluded that the date of Hoshea's death could be restricted to 723n/723t.

which must therefore define the start of the Uzziah/Jotham coregency. A further consequence is that Jotham's twentieth year, in which Hoshea began, must be 751t-19 (acc) = 732t. Overlap of this figure with the 732n time frame that was established earlier for Hoshea's accession restricts that date to the six-month interval 732t/731n. This marks also the death of Pekah, whose beginning date of Nisan 752n was derived earlier, as was the date of his assassination of Pekahiah in 740t/739n.

The table for the last six kings of Israel may now be filled in as below. These dates are in agreement with those of Thiele's second edition except that the date of Hoshea's death is narrowed from 723n to 723n/723t. The text and table in Thiele's third edition give dates in terms of BC years, which was a step backward in exactness and in providing testability of the figures.

Table 1. Dates for last six kings of Israel

King	Began rivalry reign	Began sole reign	Ended
Zechariah		753 Elul (Sept.)	752 Adar (March)
Shallum		752 Adar	752 Nisan (April)
Menahem		752 Nisan	742t/741n
Pekahiah		742t/741n	740t/739n
Pekah	752 Nisan	740t/739n	732t/731n
Hoshea		732t/731n	723n/723t

4 Kings of Judah in The Eighth Century BC

Dates for the last six kings of Israel may now be used to establish beginning and ending dates for the kings of Judah in the eighth century BC.

Amaziah
796n/796t-767n/767t

1. *Amaziah.* Amaziah began in the second year of Jehoash (2 Kgs 14:1), which was 798n-2 = 796n (Thiele's dates will be used for Jehoash and Jeroboam 2). His accession year, by Judean reckoning, could have been either

797t or 796t. 796t is ruled out because Amaziah's fifteenth year, in which Jeroboam 2 began (2 Kgs 14:23), would then be 796t-15 = 781t,[14] which has no overlap with the established date of 782n for the beginning of Jeroboam's sole reign. Starting Amaziah in 797t makes his fifteenth year to be 782t, which overlaps Jeroboam's starting year in 782t/781n. Amaziah thus began his reign in 796n/796t. Since he ruled for twenty-nine years, his last year must have been 797t-29 = 768t. This can be refined further by placing it in the twenty-seventh year from the beginning of the Jehoash/Jeroboam 2 coregency (2 Kgs 15:1), which was 793n-26 (acc) = 767n. The overlap is 767n/767t for the death of Amaziah.

Uzziah
767n/767t-740t
Coregent 791t

2 *Uzziah.* The beginning of his coregency with Amaziah was estab lished in Section 3 as 791t. His fifty-two year reign ended in 791t-51 (acc) = 740t. His sole reign began on the death of his father in 767n/767t.

3 *Jotham.* Jotham began as coregent with Uzziah in 750n/750t, as was determined in the discussion of Hoshea. His son Ahaz was installed in the seventeenth year of Pekah (2 Kgs 16:1), which was 752n-17 = 735n. In some sense it must have been considered that this date marked the termination of the effective rule of Jotham, because Jotham is only given sixteen years by the reference in 2 Kings 15:33, which would end his reign in 751t-15 (acc) = 736t. The overlap with the seventeenth of Pekah, 735n, is 735n/735t for the termination of Jotham's sixteen years. However, Jotham did not die at that time, because a twentieth year is ascribed to him by the synchronism to Hoshea in 2 Kings 15:30.

Thus, according to one record, Jotham reigned only sixteen years, ending when Ahaz came to the throne, while according to another record he was alive and was considered the king at least four years beyond that date. This suggests that 735n/735t did not mark the start of a normal coregency, but the events of that year were more in the nature of a coup, brought about by a

[14] It can be shown by synchronisms between Judah and Israel that the reign of Amaziah must be measured in an accession sense. My "Jerusalem" article showed that the thirty-one years of Jesiah (2 Kgs 22:1) were also by accession reckoning. As a consequence, it will be assumed that the regnal years for the intervening kings of Judah whose reign lengths are measured from their sole reign (Ahaz, Hezekiah, and Anion) are expressed in the same way.

faction which feared the growing power of Assyria. In this regard, Thiele wrote that "[1]n 735 it is altogether likely that a pro-Assyrian group felt itself strong enough to force Jotham into retirement and to place Ahaz on the throne. Although Jotham continued to live to his twentieth year (2 Kings 15:30), 732/31, it was Ahaz who directed affairs from 735."[15] Ahaz and his court represented a pro-Assyrian policy that was in contrast to the anti-Assyrian policies of Jotham who preceded him and of Hezekiah who followed.

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The reigns of Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah were marked by this bitter factionalism over the policy toward Assyria, and also over the accommodations that were made to foreign customs and religion during the time of Ahaz (2 Kgs 16; 2 Chr 28). Although Thiele saw that such factionalism explains why one record gave Jotham sixteen years and another record gave him twenty years of reign, he did not see that it also explains why in one place the reign of Hoshea is synchronized with Ahaz (2 Kgs 17:1), whereas other records synchronize Hoshea with the anti-Assyrian kings, Jotham (2 Kgs 15:30) and Hezekiah (2 Kgs 18:1, 9, 10). The court records made during the days while Ahaz was in control are responsible for the synchronism of Hoshea to Ahaz and the granting of only sixteen years to Jotham. With the religious and political reform that took place after Hezekiah took full control, however, the viewpoint prevailed that Jotham was still a legitimate ruler until his twentieth year. This same viewpoint recognized Hezekiah as a legitimate ruler during the Ahaz/Hezekiah coregency and synchronized events in the reign of Hoshea of Israel with the years of Hezekiah (2 Kgs 18:9, 10), even though Ahaz was the senior partner in the coregency during those years.[16]

Whereas Thiele discarded the Hoshea/Hezekiah synchronisms as an error and the invention of a later redactor, the proper understanding of these records shows that they reflect the political situation of the time. The fact that the pro-Ahaz synchronisms have been preserved at all after the ultimate triumph of the anti-Assyrian policy under Hezekiah indicates strongly that the final editor of Kings was preserving official court records from the days of Ahaz as well as the later records from the days of Hezekiah.

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[15] Thiele, *Mysterious Numbers* 2d ed. 127.

[16] In AD 15, the Romans deposed Annas from the office of high priest and installed in his place his son-in-law Caiaphas. Many Jews, however, continued to consider Annas as the legitimate holder of the office. This difference in viewpoint regarding who was the high priest is reflected in the Gospels and Acts, and is one of the many evidences that these accounts were not written in a later generation when people had no direct knowledge of the times. It would be a very shallow criticism to maintain that the divergence over who was to be called high priest in the Gospels and Acts was due to mistakes by the authors. In the same way, the difference in viewpoint regarding who was the legitimate king in the days of Ahaz reflects accurately the turmoil of the period. It would defy reason to maintain that the tension inherent in these records and reflecting the two opposing factions of the times could have been contrived by a later editor. More specifically, it is most unlikely that the pro-Ahaz and anti-Jotham synchronisms could have originated at any time later than the death of Ahaz and the reforms of Hezekiah in 716t.

Thiele provided the insight that the sources of the Books of Kings were the annals kept by the schools of the prophets, with one or more schools active in Judah and one or more in Israel.[17] This is certainly consistent with the general idea that the principal authors, and certainly the final editors, of the various books of the Bible were holy men of God who were led by the Holy Spirit. At the same time, these prophets who gave us the Books of Kings must have been careful in their writings to reflect the official policy in their days regarding who was the legitimate ruler and when he began to reign. The "book of the annals of the kings of Judah" and the "book of the annals of the kings of Israel," to which repeated references are made in

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Kings, sound like the titles of official court records rather than the titles of records kept by the prophets themselves.[18] The phrase used to describe these sources, ספר דברי הימים למלכי (יהורה) ישׂראל, is similar to that used for court records from the days of David (1 Chr 27:24) as well as the court records of Persia (Esth 2:23, 6:1, 10:2). The prophets who wrote the Books of Kings, then, had access to the official court records of Israel and Judah, but they kept their own records which included a moral evaluation of each king's reign, as Thiele maintained. The vacillation regarding "who's on first" was inherent in the court records, explaining why one set of synchronisms in Judah favored Jotham and Hezekiah while another favored Ahaz.

A similar situation held for references to rulers of the northern kingdom. Some synchronisms recognized Pekah as the legitimate ruler while others recognized Menahem and Pekahiah. According to Thiele, "While Pekah ruled in Gilead, Menahem was on the throne in Samaria, and Jotham's accession could have been synchronized with him. The reason why Pekah was recognized in the synchronism of Jotham's accession was probably because of his strong anti-Assyrian stand, as against the conciliatory attitude of Menahem. Judah at this time was strongly anti-Assyrian."[19] It is again the factionalism preserved from the official court records that explains the conflict over who was recognized as legitimate ruler during the Pekah/Menahem rivalry.

Jotham
740t-735n/735t
Coregent 750n/750t
Deposed 735n/735t, Died 732t

To conclude Jotham's dates, we notice that his sole reign must have begun when Uzziah died, in 740t. For now, we shall assume that the last year mentioned for Jotham, his twentieth, was also the year of his death (732t). This assumption will be shown to be reasonable in the discussion for Ahaz.

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[17] *Mysterious* Numbers chapter 10.
[18] Siegfried Horn came to a similar conclusion. "The compilers of the books of Kings and Chronicles used official sources containing chronological data. Except in a few cases (see below Group 1 and 2) these data were taken over and incorporated into Kings and Chronicles without changes and without any attempts to harmonize them with each other." Horn, *Hezekiah's Reign* 42.
[19] Thiele, *Mysterious Numbers* 132.

Ahaz
732t-716t/715n
Coregent 735n/735t

4. *Ahaz.* The date when Jotham was deposed and Ahaz took the throne was established above as 735n/735t. Ahaz's death may be established as occurring fourteen years before the invasion of Sennacherib in the first half of 701n (2 Kgs 18:13), that is in 702t + 14 = 716t. This date may be further restricted to the first half of 716t, because Hezekiah's reforms started at the beginning of Nisan 715 (2 Chr 29:3, 17–19), at which time Ahaz is spoken of as if he were no longer alive (2 Chr 29:19).[20] His sixteen years of sole reign

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(2 Kgs 16:2) started in 716t + 16 = 732t. This establishes the fact that 732t was indeed the year that Jotham died and gives legitimacy to his kingship during the last four years of his life. By the "documentary hypothesis" we have advocated above, any record such as 2 Kings 16:2 that recognized these last four years for Jotham must have come from the annals of the anti-Assyrian and anti-Ahaz court that prevailed after the death of Ahaz. Ahaz is given sixteen years in these annals, measuring from the start of his sole reign, instead of the twenty or twenty-one years that he would be credited with if the counting started from 736t, when he deposed Jotham. Whether the alternate starting date of 736t was ever used to measure the years of Ahaz's reign will be discussed below, in the section dealing with 2 Kings 17:1.

Hezekiah
716t/715n-687t
Coregent 729t/728n

5. *Hezekiah.* Hezekiah's sole reign began at the death of Ahaz in 716t/715n. His coregency with Ahaz started in 729t/728n, as was shown in the discussion of Hoshea. His reign was twenty-nine years long; this does not give sufficient time if measured from 729t, so it must measure from the start of his sole reign.[21] His death occurred in 716t-29 = 687t.

Dates for the eighth-century kings of Judah are shown in Table 2. The ending date in parentheses for Jotham is the date he was deposed, as discussed above—it was the date the court recorders under Ahaz considered that his effective kingship ended.

Table 2. Dates for the kings of Judah, Amaziah through Hezekiah

King	Began coregency	Began sole reign	Ended

[20] McFall, *"Translation Guide"* 36.
[21] Hezekiah's age of twenty-five years cannot refer to the time when he became coregent with his father, because Ahaz would not have been old enough to have a twenty-five-year-old son at that time. The age of twenty-five for Hezekiah must refer to the start of his sole reign in 716t, as does the twenty-nine year figure for the length of reign. This means that Hezekiah was twelve years old in 729t, the year he became coregent. Later, Hezekiah was to choose his own successor and coregent "at the earliest opportunity…when Manasseh was twelve (2 Kings 21:1), when he had become *gadol*" (Thiele, *Mysterious Numbers* 177).

Amaziah		796n/796t	767n/767t
Uzziah	791t	767n/767t	740t
Jotham	750n/750t	740t	(735n/735t) 732t
Ahaz	735n/735t	732t	716t/715n
Hezekiah	729t/728n	716t/715n	687t

5 The Troublesome Passage 2 Kings 17:1

For the six kings of Israel and the five kings of Judah in the discussion above, a complete chronology was developed without making use of a

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synchronism in 2 Kings 17:1 that relates the reign of Hoshea of Israel to the twelfth year of Ahaz. Thiele wrote regarding this verse that it erroneously placed the accession of Hoshea twelve years beyond its proper time,[22] and he then used it as a key to explain what he regarded as a series of blunders performed by the final editor of the Books of Kings. It would have been better if Thiele had accepted it as a text that needed emending because of a copyist's error, instead of using it as a reason to reject the plainly stated synchronisms between Hezekiah and Hoshea in 2 Kings 18.

A more cautious approach was taken by Siegfried Horn. Horn has been mentioned above as one of the authors who accepted the Ahaz/Hezekiah coregency implied by the synchronisms of 2 Kings 18. But regarding 2 Kings 17:1, Horn wrote that "[o]ne text of my former Group 2, 2 Ki 17:1, remains unsolved as far as the chronological data it contains are concerned…the figure given in 2 Ki 17:1, stating that Hoshea became king in Ahaz' 12th year, does not agree with the chronological scheme proposed here, and I have no better solution at the present time than to suggest that the figure 12 is a scribal error for three or four."[23] Later events were to show the wisdom of Horn's caution.

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[22] Ibid. 137.
[23] Horn, *Hezekiah's Reign* 51, 52.

In most English translations, 2 Kings 17:1 associates the beginning of the reign of Hoshea with the twelfth year of Ahaz. The problem with this is that other verses, as we have developed above, begin the Jotham/Ahaz coregency in 736t. If 732t/731n, when Hoshea began, was the twelfth year of Ahaz, then his starting year for a coregency should have been 732t + 11 (acc) = 743t. Ahaz would then have three starting years: 732t for his sole reign based on the death of Jotham; 735n/735t based on the beginning of a coregency with Jotham in the seventeenth of Pekah (2 Kgs 16:1); and this new date, 743t, twelve years before Hoshea's first year.

Measuring twelve years back from 732t at least made sense out of the anomalous synchronism, and so the year 743t was posited as the real beginning of the Jotham/Ahaz coregency and 735n/735t was regarded as another stage in the coregency when Ahaz took full control. Given the strife between the pro-Assyrian and anti-Assyrian factions at the time, this solution seemed reasonable. It was proposed by Kitchen and Mitchell (Ahaz coregent from 744/43 BC, senior partner from 735), and adopted by R. K. Harrison (same dates and explanation as Kitchen and Mitchell), by Harold Stigers, and by Eugene Merrill.[24] These authors thus agreed that the first phase of the coregency between Ahaz and Hezekiah was to be dated twelve years before the accession of Hoshea.

Four years after the publication of Siegfried Horn's article in which he expressed his perplexity with 2 Kings 17:1, Horn as editor published an

article in the *AUSS* by Edmund Parker which dealt specifically with this text.[25] Parker's idea was simple and seemingly audacious: the synchronism to Ahaz's twelfth year referred not to the beginning of the reign of Hoshea, but to its end.

Before investigating the reason for Parker's claim, let us see how the numbers come out. We have already established from other texts that the Jotham/Ahaz coregency began (at least in one sense) in 735n/735t. If we treat this like any other coregency, then the twelve years should be taken as a non-accession figure, so that the twelfth year of Ahaz was 736t-11 (acc) = 725t. Since this has no overlap with the last year of Hoshea, 723n, should we reject Parker's interpretation without further investigation?

Recall that, according to our "documentary hypothesis" about the factionalism of the time and its influence on the court records, there were two competing ways of reckoning who was the legitimate authority in Judah during the reigns of Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah. The pro-Jotham and pro-Hezekiah faction synchronized the reign of Hoshea with Jotham (2 Kgs 15:30) and also with Hezekiah (2 Kgs 18:1, 9, 10). On the other hand, the pro-Ahaz court synchronized the reign of Hoshea with Ahaz (2 Kgs 17:1), and did not recognize Jotham as regent during the last four years of his life (2 Kgs 15:33; compare 15:30). For these court recorders of Ahaz, 735n/735t did

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[24] Kitchen and Mitchell, *NBD* 220; Harrison, *Introduction* 734, 736; Stigers, "Interphased Chronology" 86, 87; Merrill, *Kingdom* 403. Stigers measured Ahaz's sixteen years from 736/35 BC rather than from the death of Jotham in 732t, so he introduced another date, 720/719 BC, to end those sixteen years, at which time Stigers said he became king "emeritus."

[25] Edmund A. Parker, "A Note on the Chronology of 2 Kings 17:1, " *AUSS 6/2* (1968) 129-33.

not mark the beginning of a coregency—it marked the beginning of a "sole reign," even though Jotham was still alive. The year 724t, in which the court of Ahaz learned of Hoshea's death, was for them not the thirteenth year of Ahaz, as it would be by the non-accession reckoning for a coregency, but his twelfth, by accession reckoning for a sole reign. In short, the same court recorders who did not recognize Jotham as a legitimate king after 735n/735t also started counting Ahaz's years in an accession sense from that time, making his twelfth year to be 724t, which overlaps Hoshea's last year in 723n/723t and again indicates that Hoshea died, and Samaria was destroyed, in the first half of 723n. (Parker came to the same conclusion that Samaria fell in the first half of 723n, although he did not enter into any discussion of accession versus non-accession counting.)

Parker's argument that 2 Kings 17:1 refers to the end of Hoshea's reign, not its beginning, is based on a careful look at the Hebrew text for the verse, and requires some understanding of the tense system of Hebrew verbs. Let us consider this last issue first.

The beginning student of NT Greek or modern Russian quickly learns that these languages have a system of tenses that is more specific or precise than the system of verbal tenses in English. A consequence of this is that sometimes there is a loss in precision in translating from Greek or Russian into English. Usually the student has little difficulty in grasping the concept of a more specific tense system, however much trouble he or she may have in learning the actual paradigms of the tenses. When it comes to biblical Hebrew, an opposite phenomenon occurs: the Hebrew tense system is far less specific than we are accustomed to in Indo-European languages. To express

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action-in-time, the Hebrew verb has basically two modes, perfect and imperfect, plus a participial form that can be used to express action in the present. As a general rule, the perfect tense expresses an action in the past and the imperfect an action in the future, and this means that the Hebrew perfect may be translated by any of the English past tenses, with the context determining the appropriate translation. For example, הָלַךְ can mean either "walked," "had walked," "was walking," or even "began to walk." The paradigm shift to this lack of specificity is harder to understand for someone whose native language is an Indo-European tongue than is the shift to a language which has a more precise tense system, such as Greek or Russian.

With this background, let us consider the Hebrew verb הָלַךְ, which is in the perfect form. The identical form of the verb, in both written appearance and pronunciation, is commonly translated into English as "reigned" or "began to reign," depending on the context. It may also be rendered as "had reigned," which is a reasonable translation in places like Genesis 36:31 and Joshua 13:10, 12. Thus the NIV of Joshua 13:12 reads as follows: "…Og in Bashan, who had reigned in Ashtoroth and Edrei…"

In 2 Kings 17:1 there is only one verb, despite various English translations that supply a second verb that is not in the Hebrew. Writing out a literal rendering into English that leaves untranslated the single verb in the sentence, and ignoring any questions of punctuation, we would have, "In the twelfth year of Ahaz king of Judah מָלַךְ Hoshea son of Elah in Samaria over Israel nine years." Parker's contribution was to suggest that מָלַךְ here should be translated "had

reigned," making this a comment referring to the end of Hoshea's reign rather than to its beginning. He was followed in this interpretation by Leslie McFall, who had written his doctoral dissertation on the Hebrew verbal system.[26] We have already observed that this solution is consistent with a beginning of the reign of Ahaz in 736t. It also avoids the problem of Jotham having a coregency with both Uzziah and Ahaz between 743t and 740t. Since it is always context that determines whether מָלַךְ should be translated "began to reign," "reigned," or "had reigned," the broader context here favors "had reigned," which is entirely allowed by the rules of Hebrew grammar and the ambiguity of Hebrew tenses.

The solution of Parker and McFall therefore does not require two stages in the transfer of power from Jotham to Ahaz, as is required by the solution of Kitchen and Mitchell *et al.* It is the interpretation that has been adopted in the present paper (Table 2), but those who are more comfortable with translating the ambiguous מלך as "began to reign" should not have any problem with the idea that all this implies is an extra starting date for Ahaz in 743t. Both viewpoints preserve the coregency (in some sense) of Jotham and Ahaz from 735n/735t to 732t, and allow the sole reign of Ahaz to begin in 732t and his death to occur in 716t. This essential agreement should not be obscured by a difference in opinion on the proper translation of מלך in 2 Kings 17:1.

If a comparison is made among the chronologies of the various authors cited above who accept the Ahaz/Hezekiah coregency and the Pekah/Menahem

rivalry, it will be seen that the divergence on the interpretation of 2 Kings 17:1 represents the only major difference in their regnal dates for the eighth century BC. This uniformity does not result from a thoughtless copying of each other's ideas; it results because the Scriptures provide the necessary information so that these dates may be derived by anyone who accepts their testimony.

6 Reasons for Precision in Chronological Expressions

The derivation of starting and ending dates for the various kings discussed above has given as an example of how precise dates may be derived from the scriptural data. Following are the reasons for carrying out this kind of careful analysis, seeking always to maximize the precision that can legitimately be derived from the data.

1. *For clarity.* The treatment of Athaliah's reign cited at the beginning of this paper shows the difficulties and errors that can arise or be hidden when our language and symbols are not precise.

2. *For cross-checking of numbers.* The reasoning that established that Menahem began in Nisan of 752 BC was only possible because the reign lengths of each of the kings whose reigns affected Menahem's were written out in as precise a manner as the data permitted. Writing out the dates precisely allows us to follow the reasoning. It is also necessary for the kind of logic that eliminates wrong conjectures—see the discussion above that ruled out 790t as a possible starting date for Uzziah, in favor of 791t.

[26] McFall, "Hezekiah's Coregency" 398; "Translation Guide" 33.

3. *For vulnerability.* If we feel confident that our theories are correct, we ought to express them in a way that affords maximum vulnerability—that is, that makes them easiest to disprove if they are not correct. One way to do this is to provide all the precision to which our theories lead. It then be comes easy to disprove the theory if it is wrong—just demonstrate that its numbers are in error. By way of comparison, in the early part of the twentieth century the theories of quantum mechanics predicted the fine structure of some hundreds of emission lines from the hydrogen atom with very specific numbers. These predictions were eminently vulnerable: showing that if any of the emission lines was missing or not where it was predicted to be would have meant that there was something wrong with the basic presuppositions of quantum mechanics.

Vulnerable in this sense does not mean weak. The proper kind of vulnerability will produce confidence and strength when the idea being tested is true. Thus Paul declares Christianity to be "vulnerable" by his great statement that "if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain" (1 Cor 15:14, KJV). Christianity can be disproved by disproving the resurrection of Christ. The vulnerability of this doctrine is really its strength—it should be easy to disprove it if it is not true. But the validity of the case for the bodily resurrection of Christ is shown not only by the failure of all attempts to explain away the historicity of the event, but by the

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transformed lives of many who set out to disprove this central doctrine of Christianity but instead became convinced that it was true. The skeptic should beware of approaching the "vulnerable" (or falsifiable) doctrine of Christ's resurrection with an open mind lest he, like many before him, turn into a flaming evangelist for the truth.

4. *For confidence in our chronological scheme.* The quantum mechanical model of the hydrogen atom, mentioned above, led to predictions for the emission spectrum that were verified to the finest detail by the most sensitive spectrometers available. Thus the "vulnerability" of these predictions, and their subsequent verification, produced great confidence in quantum mechanics as an explanation of physical reality. Similarly, if our chronological scheme is as precise as we can reasonably make it, and if the dates it gives are both internally consistent and consistent with well-established external dates, then we have much more confidence that our theories are correct than if we had given only a general range of dates. An example of the usefulness of such precision was Thiele's conclusion that according to his chronology, the Battle of Qarqar must have been fought in 853 BC and not 854 BC, a conclusion in which he was vindicated and which greatly strengthened his (and others') confidence in his chronological ideas.

5. *For using the biblical chronology to settle extra-biblical dates.* Kenneth Strand warns against the misconception that Thiele, in order to derive his chronological system, started with extra-biblical dates from Assyria and elsewhere and then attempted by trial-and-error to fit the chronological references in Scripture to these external dates.[27] Thiele's actual procedure was quite different: first he tried to establish the methods of dating used in the Scriptures, and from this he determined how the scriptural reign-lengths fit together among themselves. According to

[27] Kenneth A. Strand, "Thiele's Biblical Chronology As a Corrective for Extra biblical Dates," AUSS 34/2 (1996) 295-317.

Thiele, "Only when my arrangement was completed would I insert dates that would give me information concerning the overall passage of time."[28] Feeling confident that he had constructed a viable chronology based on the Hebrew text, Thiele discovered that his chronology required that the Battle of Qarqar was fought in 853 BC, as mentioned above. Also, the Fall of Samaria was required to take place under Shalmaneser 5 and not under Sargon 2, as was believed by most Assyriologists. The fact that Thiele's dates for these events are now generally accepted shows the respect that his work has gained among historians. More than that, it has shown that his figures were not artificial and contrived (as those who do not understand his methods have maintained), but represented a well-disciplined approach to determining the principles used by the biblical writers and then developing a chronology based on those principles.

Thiele, then, concentrated on developing the internal consistency of his chronological system, and only after it was developed were checks made against extra-biblical data. Strand mentions three other extra-biblical events

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for which Thiele's chronology provided dates that became widely accepted by historians: Nebuchadnezzar's first attack on Jerusalem in 605 BC, Jehoiachin's captivity in 597 BC, and the destruction of Jerusalem, which Thiele (incorrectly) dated to 586 BC.[29]

Once a biblical chronology is established so that we may have confidence in it, and we have done a credible enough job so that historians from outside the biblical field have confidence in it, then that biblical chronology can be used to establish dates in the histories of the surrounding kingdoms, or it can be used to decide between alternate dates when there is disagreement among scholars in the field of Near Eastern antiquities. This is all the more reason to have dates that are precise and a chronology that can be demonstrated to be internally consistent.

7 Conclusion

1. Using precise dates and exact formulas sometimes provides insights that would otherwise be missed. An example is the observation that if we accept Parker's and McFall's interpretation of 2 Kings 17:1, then the twelve years for Ahaz in that verse must have been measured in an accession sense, as would be done by the court recorders in the days of Ahaz who did not recognize Jotham as coregent after 736t. This, in turn, reinforces the theory that there were two different viewpoints represented in the synchronisms of 2 Kings 15–18, and these viewpoints were inherent in the original court records and were preserved by the final editor of Kings.

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[28] Thiele, *Mysterious Numbers* 122.

[29] Strand, "Corrective" 310–13. See my "Jerusalem" article for the correct date of 587 BC for the destruction of Jerusalem. Although the primary reason for Thiele's wrong date probably was his failure to consider non-accession reckoning for Zedekiah, he would have seen that the 586 date could not possibly be maintained if he had been more accurate and explicit in his treatment of Ezekiel 40:1. The only date that this text allows when precision is used is 587 BC. This affords another example of the need for explicit, precise formulas in the development of chronologies for a culture that uses a calendar system different from our own.

Another example of the value of precision is the restricting of the date for the fall of Samaria to the first half of 723n.

2. The factionalism of the time explains why one set of records emphasizes Ahaz and minimizes Jotham and Hezekiah in synchronisms to Israel, while another set does just the opposite. The pro-Assyrian faction was also more likely to recognize Menahem and Pekahiah in Samaria, while the other faction was more likely to recognize their anti-Assyrian rival, Pekah. These insights lend credibility to the idea that the figure of twenty years for Pekah is not an error or a later false claim on Pekah's part, but represents a legitimate rivalry that was recognized by one of the record-keeping factions. This difference in viewpoint was not glossed over by any later harmonizing editor. Indeed, the clash of opinions represented by these various texts argues in favor of their derivation from the official court records of the time, rather than their being the erroneous interpolations of a later redactor.

3. Perhaps the most important contribution of the present paper is in showing that there is a general agreement about the chronology of Judah

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and Israel for the eighth century BC among those scholars who recognize the Ahaz/Hezekiah coregency and the Menahem/Pekah rivalry, and who have accepted fully the received text in building their chronologies. The small differences in their dates, it is suggested, can usually be resolved by adopting more precise methods of expressing time units and synchronisms. It is further suggested that most of these chronologies are converging to the figures represented in Tables 1 and 2. Indeed, those for Table 1 have been stable for over half a century.[30] There has been no such convergence of opinion among scholars who begin their studies with presuppositions that the scriptural data is not allowed to be correct, and who then declare that the Scripture is in error and needs emending to make it consistent with their scheme.[31] Along with the lack of agreement among these artificial schemes, it should be noted that none of them has had the success that Thiele's chronology for Israel has had in correcting erroneous dates in the history of Assyria.

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[30] Thiele's table of dates for the kings of Israel in his third edition (1983) shows no change from the same table published in his first edition (1951). These are dates for which Thiele accepted all the biblical synchronisms and reign lengths as authentic, and fifty years of examination have not required that his dates for the northern kingdom need changing except by making them slightly more precise, as was demonstrated for Hoshea in this article, or by the contention that Thiele was not justified in restricting the start of the reign of Jeroboam 1 to the second half of 931n, as was shown in my "Solomon" article.

[31] Strand ("Corrective" 317) displays a table of eight scholars who published their chronologies before Thiele published his. All these eight altered the biblical data to fit their schemes. Summarizing what the table shows, Strand wrote, "…there is no basic agreement among the eight scholars themselves…not even one of them has a preponderance of correct information." If the disagreements are less among more recent scholars who hold to the various radical documentary hypotheses, it is largely because the successes of Thiele and those who followed him have greatly restrained the tendency to declare the scriptural texts in error.

4. All the tedious chronology arithmetic of the present paper, plus the necessary consideration of various viewpoints, should not obscure one essential fact: that it is possible to construct a chronology of the nations of Judah and Israel in the eighth century BC which is not in irreconcilable conflict with any of the scores of scriptural texts that refer to this period. More than that, these texts are given in such a way that the dates for each king—the beginning date of his coregency (if any), the beginning date for his sole reign, and the date of his death—may be determined to within six months in most cases, and in some cases to the actual month. There is an ambiguity in many of the texts, to be sure; it is only by painstaking work that we can determine whether a given synchronism, for instance, refers to the start of a sole reign or a coregency. But all the information is there that allows us to resolve the ambiguities, as long as we have the patience to persevere and we use a proper methodology that extracts all the precision that is inherent in these "mysterious numbers." It is indeed amazing that if we do not resort to the short-cut of correcting the relevant texts to fit our schemes, then a precise chronology for the kings of Judah and Israel can be constructed without the necessity of declaring that any of the underlying texts are in error or that they represent a statement that cannot be reconciled with the history of the time.[7]

[7] Rodger C. Young, "When Was Samaria Captured? The Need for Precision in Biblical Chronologies," *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 47, no. 3–4 (2004): 547–595.

Tables of Reign Lengths From The Hebrew Court Recorders

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I. Understanding The Tables

The tables at the end of this article summarize the results of my previous three papers dealing with the chronology of the kingdoms of Judah and Israel.[1] These tables are meant to display the chronological data in a format that will make it easy for writers of Study Bibles or commentaries to incorporate the reign lengths and starting and ending years of the kings into their texts. The present paper avoids the various calculations that derived these dates (those calculations were done in the earlier papers) and seeks to focus on how to use the tables, and also on their importance for our understanding of the Scriptures and the doctrine of inspiration.

To use the tables, it may be helpful to review how the calendar of the Hebrews differs from our own. The Hebrew calendar was (and is) lunar-solar. Each month started with the new moon. Since twelve lunar months fall short of a full solar year, in some years a thirteenth month was added. In later years the formula was worked out with some exactitude as to when this should be done. The month that began near the spring equinox was called Nisan. The northern kingdom (Israel) considered the year to start in Nisan throughout its history, whereas for civil purposes Judah considered the year to start in the seventh month, Tishri, corresponding roughly to our October. The Scriptures often give the number of the month instead of the month's name, and when this is done the numbering always starts from Nisan, independently of whether the official year started in Nisan or Tishri.

In the tables, the expression "931n" is used to represent the year beginning on Nisan 1, 931 bc and ending the day before Nisan 1, 930 bc. This is the kind of year that would be used in the court records of the northern kingdom. "931t" represents the year beginning Tishri 1, 931 bc and ending the day before Tishri 1, 930 bc; this is the kind of year that would be used in Judah. The six-month overlap of these two dates is written as 931t/930n, meaning the time period that began on Tishri 1 of 931 bc and ended the day before Nisan 1 of 930 bc. The overlap of 932t and 931n is written 931n/931t. This method of expressing dates may be called the "Nisan/Tishri" notation.

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In column 6 ("Years reigned") of the first two tables and in column 4 ("in") of tables 3 and 4 there is often a number followed by another number in parentheses. When this is the case, it means that the first number is the length of years given in the scriptural text, but that number must be taken in a non-accession or inclusive-numbering sense, so that the second number (always one less than the first) is to be used in formulas for the passage of time. Non-accession numbering means that when a king died, that year was counted as part of his reign, but it was

[1] Rodger Young, "When Did Solomon Die?" *JETS* 46 (2003) 589-603; "When Did Jerusalem Fall?" *JETS* 47 (2004) 21-38; and "When Was Samaria Captured? The Need for Precision in Biblical Chronologies," *JETS* 47 (2004) 577-95.

also counted in the total number of years of the king who succeeded him. In this way, a king who died one year after he started would be given two years instead of one, which is the reason that reign length formulas use a number that is one less than the non-accession number.

In the histories of Israel and Judah the decision whether to use accession or non-accession years for the current king was always an arbitrary choice, perhaps made by the king himself. We owe a great debt to Edwin Thiele[2] for determining when the scriptural texts use accession reckoning and when they use non-accession reckoning in giving the total years of a king's reign or the year of that reign in which a king of the rival kingdom began (a synchronism). One general principle is that non-accession years are used when the years are measured from the start of a king's coregency with his father. In Table 2, there are two non-accession numbers where Thiele assumed accession reckoning. The first is for Uzziah, where Thiele went against the usual rule for coregencies and considered that Uzziah's fifty-two years were by accession reckoning, so his starting year for the Amaziah/Uzziah coregency is one year earlier than the 79 It shown in Table 2. Thiele's reasoning for this exception is weak and is not adopted in the chronology presented here. The second is for Zedekiah, the last king of Judah. The reason for this is explained in my "Jerusalem" paper.

For the general reader the Nisan/Tishri dates of the tables will need to be expressed in terms of bc years. This might be done as follows.

1. 931n would be written as 931/930, since the Nisan year falls in both these bc years. 93 It would be written in the same way, even though it represents a time period that is six months later than 93 In.

2. The six-month interval 931t/930n would also be written as 931/930 bc.

3. 931n/931t may be written as simply 931 bc.

II. Where These Dates Come From

1. *Dates for the kings of Israel.* Thiele's third edition generally expressed starting and ending years as bc dates. By doing this, all the exactness of the dates for Zechariah, Shallum, Pekah, and Menahem was lost. Therefore dates for Israel will be compared to those in Thiele's second edition. The chronology

of Table 1, for Israel, is identical to that of the second edition, except that the ending date for Hoshea is refined from Thiele's 723n to the first half of that year, as demonstrated by my "Samaria" paper and the various authors cited there. Except for this minor change, the dates for the northern kingdom have needed no alteration since they were published in the first edition of *Mysterious Numbers* in 1951, and they have proved to be useful in settling some issues in Assyrian chronology.

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[2] Edwin Thiele, *The Mysterious Numbers of the Hebrew Kings* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan/Kregel, 1983); earlier editions were in 1951 (New York: Macmillan) and 1965 (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans). Page numbers cited in this article refer to the third edition.

2. *Dates for Judah, Saul to Ahaziah (105It to 842t).* My "Solomon" paper demonstrated that Solomon died and Rehoboam began before Tishri of 931 bc, not in the six-month interval beginning with Tishri of that year as assumed by Thiele.[3] This slight adjustment for the date of Solomon's death resolved the problem that Thiele's chronology produced in the reign of Jehoshaphat; Thiele's attempt to fix this in his third edition only extended the problem into the reigns of Ahaziah and Athaliah. Since the death of Solomon occurred before Tishri of 931 bc, by Judean reckoning this moved the beginning date for Solomon and his immediate successors one year earlier than in Thiele's chronology.

The beginning year of Solomon is calculated by taking his forty years as a non-accession number, because it is assumed that it is measured from the beginning of his coregency with David. The length of the coregency is not given in Scripture, so we cannot be very specific about when David died. (Actually there were two anointings of Solomon as coregent—1 Kgs 1:39; 1 Chr 23:1; 29:22.) There was enough time after Solomon was installed for David to accumulate some of the building materials for the Temple (1 Chronicles 22), and if we assume that David was dead by the fourth year of Solomon when the foundation of the Temple was laid (spring of 967 bc; 1 Kgs 6:1; 2 Chr 3:2), then we might guess a two-year overlap of the reigns of David and Solomon. Using this assumption, the conjectural dates for David and Saul in Table 1 are provided for convenience. Since we lack precise information about when David's forty years ended, his dates and Saul's cannot be specified as exactly as those of Solomon and all the subsequent kings of Judah and Israel.

3. *Dates for Judah, Athaliah to Hezekiah (842t to 6871).* For Athaliah and Joash the years agree with those in Thiele's second edition; the third edition contradicts itself for the beginning date of Athaliah. The dates for Amaziah through Hezekiah were calculated in my "Samaria" paper, where the differences with Thiele's figures were noted. The major difference was that Thiele did not recognize the Ahaz/Hezekiah coregency.

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4. *Dates for Judah, Manasseh to Zedekiah (697t to 588t).* The years for Manasseh and his son Anion present no special problem and their dates in Table 2 are the same as Thiele's. My "Jerusalem" paper showed that Josiah's thirty-one years (2 Kgs 22:1) are to be taken in an accession sense. That paper also demonstrated that there was a change to non-accession reckoning in 2 Kings for the reign of Zedekiah. It can be shown that the change took place after the reign of Jehoiakim. Zedekiah's eleven years are given by non-accession counting in both 2 Kings and Jeremiah (2 Chronicles follows 2 Kings in its dates). This means that 2 Kings and Jeremiah are in harmony with Ezekiel's dates for the fall of Jerusalem; all three sources date that event in 587 bc.

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[3] Although my "Solomon" paper showed that Solomon died and Rehoboam began before Tishri of 931 bc, I was not justified in assuming that Jeroboam's reign also began before Tishri of that year. Some weeks or even months were necessary for the news of Solomon's death to reach Egypt and for Jeroboam to return from there and be installed as king of the breakaway tribes. Whether this time extended past Tishri 1 of 931 is not known. The scriptural data only allows us to narrow the beginning of Jeroboam's reign to some time in 93 In and the beginning of Rehoboam's to some time in 932t.

III. Areas Of Controversy

Tables 1 through 4 are meant to be an aid to the writers of commentaries and Study Bibles who want to provide dates for the Hebrew kings or who want to show how the various reign lengths and synchronisms given in Scripture are calculated. Such writers will want to know how solid the reasoning was that produced these dates and formulas. They will also want to know which dates are controversial and likely to be challenged. I have touched briefly on the reasons behind the dates in the section immediately preceding; for the complete reasoning my "Solomon," "Jerusalem," and "Samaria" papers must be consulted. But no matter how much I may be convinced that the calculations are sound in the three papers, it would be naive to expect that no disagreement will arise regarding these figures, particularly where they disagree with Thiele's dates. Allow me to anticipate where the areas of controversy will be.

1. *My revision for the years of the kings of Judah, Solomon to Ahaziah.* I do not expect much controversy over this, unless it comes from someone who has not understood the method I used to arrive at the results in my first paper. No one, to my knowledge, has written anything justifying Thiele's restriction of the death of Solomon to the last half of 93 In—consequently I might hope that my statement that he died before Tishri of that year will be accepted as entirely possible. Further than that, placing Solomon's death before Tishri, i.e. in 932t instead of 93It, solves problems that Thiele was never able to resolve, as explained in the "Solomon" paper. The chronology of this period affects the biblical date for the exodus that is calculated from 1 Kgs 6:1, since it places the laying of the Temple's foundation in the spring of 967 bc instead of in 966 bc as required by Thiele's dates.[4] Accepting 967 bc for laying the foundation of the Temple determines that the exodus was in the spring of 1446 bc, a date which many of those who accepted

Thiele's 966 bc date arrived at anyway by incorrectly going back 480 years instead of 479 to determine the time of the exodus.[5]

2. *Dates for the eighth century BC: Ahaz and Hezekiah, Menahem, Pekah, and Hoshea.* In my "Samaria" paper, the dates I derived for the Judean kings of the eighth century bc are consistent with those of other conservative scholars who accept the Ahaz/Hezekiah coregency that is so definitely implied in Scripture. Some non-conservative scholars continue to reject the coregency but none offer any compelling reason for the rejection. Hezekiah's father, grandfather, and great-grandfather had coregencies with their fathers, and Hezekiah had a coregency with his son; why then rule out a coregency of Hezekiah with his father Ahaz?

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[4] Given that Solomon died in 932t, his fourth year calculates to 968t whether accession reckoning is used for his forty years (start in 972t and subtract 4) or non-accession reckoning is used (start in 971t and subtract 3). The second month of the year 968t, when the foundation of the Temple was laid, was Ziv in the spring of 967 bc.

[5] See my "Solomon" paper for an independent verification of the 1446 date from the Jubilee cycles.

Regarding the Pekah/Menahem rivalry there may continue to be controversy. I entered into the fray in my "Samaria" paper with observations about the source documents of the period, and also by comparing the dual-dating for the reign of Pekah with the dual-dating for the reign of Thutmose III, whose career in many ways was similar to that of Pekah. (After submitting the paper, I learned that Gleason Archer had also made this comparison between the careers of Thutmose III and Pekah.)[6] Those who, like myself, accept Thiele's thesis that Menahem and Pekah became rivals on the death of Shallum are able to show that thereby harmony is demonstrated in the scriptural data for the reigns of Jotham, Ahaz, Menahem, Pekahiah, Pekah, and Hoshea—a rather impressive argument for the reasonableness of the assumption. Authors who reject the Pekah/Menahem rivalry can demonstrate no such agreement among the scriptural synchronisms and dates for the period. Neither is there any consensus among these authors regarding their dates for Pekah.

Those who object to the rivalry can make the point that it is not stated explicitly in the Scriptures but must be inferred from the various synchronisms that are given to the reign of Pekah in 2 Kings 15 and 16. It is true that the rivalry is not explained explicitly, although Thiele and Cook[7] give examples of some Scriptures outside of 2 Kings that assume the rivalry. Also, Hos 5:5 clearly distinguishes Ephraim and Israel as separate kingdoms at that point in history (the Hebrew says, "Both Israel and Ephraim. .. ," as does the lxx). There are many places in Scripture and in other historical writings where we could wish for a fuller explanation, and where inference must be used to fill in the details of what happened. Inference is a standard *modus operandi* of historians.

Perhaps surprisingly, there continues to be some ferment over the date of the fall of Samaria, and again there is general disagreement among scholars who do not accept the scriptural data or who read into it unnecessary assumptions. A recent example is Christine Tetley's conjecture that the king to whom Hoshea paid tribute "year by year" (2 Kgs 17:4) was Shalmaneser, rather

than his predecessor Tiglath-Pileser.[8] By this unwarranted assumption, plus the *a priori* decision that no coregencies would be allowed for the kings of Judah, a chronology is provided which contradicts several Scriptures besides just those referring to the reign of Hoshea.

3. *The date of the fall of Jerusalem (ending date for Zedekiah).* In an article published in 1982, Alberto Green listed twenty-eight scholarly articles or books that were published after Wiseman's publication of the Babylonian Chronicle in 1956 and that took the Babylonian dates in the Chronicle into consideration when trying to determine the chronology of the last days of the Judean monarchy.[9] Other articles on this question have appeared in the years following Green's paper. It was not my intent when I approached the subject to review or evaluate this

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[6] Norman Geisler, ed., *Inerrancy* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1979) 71.
[7] Thiele, *Mysterious Numbers* 129–32; H. J. Cook, "Pekah," *VT* 14 (1964) 128-34.
[8] M. Christine Tetley, "The Date of Samaria's Fall as a Reason for Rejecting the Hypothesis of Two Conquests," *CBQ* 64 (2002) 63.
[9] Alberto Green, "The Chronology of the Last Days of Judah: Two Apparent Discrepancies," *JBL* 101 (1982) 57-58 footnote.

literature; rather it was to apply the same methods I had used in my "Solomon" paper to the question of when Jerusalem fell. When I began to look into the issue, I had no firm conviction about whether it was 587 or 586 bc, but I had the notion that 587 was accepted by the more recent scholars, among whom were two that I especially esteemed, Donald Wiseman and Kenneth Kitchen.[10] On the other hand, I also respected the work of Thiele, and he settled on 586.[11]

My procedure was to apply the completely neutral tools of Decision Analysis to each of the three biblical sources that bear on this question: Ezekiel, Jeremiah, and 2 Kings (2 Chronicles mirrors 2 Kings). It was possible that the analysis would show that these Scriptures could not be brought into agreement on the date of the fall of Jerusalem and the other dates and reign lengths associated with it. This is the result that would have been predicted by proponents of the various theories that say that the books of Scripture were not authored by contemporaries of the events described, such as Jeremiah and Ezekiel, but were the handiwork of anonymous and late-date editors or post-exilic pretenders who wrote in the name of Jeremiah or Ezekiel. But instead of finding a conflict among the various writings, the results showed that the three scriptural sources were internally consistent, consistent with each other, and consistent with a date for the fall of Jerusalem in 587 bc.

The date of the destruction of Jerusalem by the armies of Nebuchadnezzar is one of the most important dates in world history. For that reason, along with the great number of scholarly papers and popular articles that have already been written on the subject, it is easy to predict that those who have advocated 586 for the fall of Jerusalem may not readily change their minds, however convincing a case I or anyone else could make for the 587 date. The only primary sources we have at present describing the fall of Jerusalem are the scriptural texts, so anyone who declares a date for that

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event must justify it from the Scriptures, relating the pertinent texts to the latest dates before the fall that are preserved in the Babylonian Chronicle. I would hope that all those who hold a high view of the inspiration of Scripture and who previously advocated 586 will come around to the 587 figure, since it is the only date that can be reconciled with all the texts involved. Even among these scholars, however, there might be some who hold onto the 586 date for some reason such as their presupposition that Zedekiah absolutely must have used accession reckoning for his reign. Why Zedekiah switched to non-accession reckoning I do not know. But anyone who insists that he could not have made a decree to switch to non-accession reckoning should be obliged to tell us why it was impossible for him to do so.

Before someone asserts that I arrived at 587 by forcing my preconceptions on the scriptural data and then manipulating the numbers to come up with this conclusion, let me spell out what my preconceptions might be in the matter.

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[10] *NBD* 217.
[11] Thiele, *Mysterious Numbers* 187, 189–91.

First, as someone with mathematical training, I would not allow any reign lengths to be measured in a non-accession sense. It is scandalous that one year could be counted for each of two kings, thus throwing into confusion what should be a simple addition of reign lengths to show elapsed time. Non-accession counting will not be allowed.

A second preconceived idea results from my being enough of a moralist to say that we ought to obey the commandments of God. Since God told Moses that the year was to start in Nisan (Exod 12:2), all years must be reckoned that way. But, says someone, the Jewish people to this day celebrate the New Year in Tishri! Such disobedience will not be tolerated; the year starts in Nisan.

My third presupposition arises because I see nothing foolish in consistency, so I must be one of those little minds that Emerson complained about.[12] If a kingdom starts measuring its reign lengths in one way, it ought to keep measuring them that way as long as it exists, even if it got started on the wrong foot (i.e. non-accession reckoning).

Now imagine how I felt when the analysis for the reign of Zedekiah showed that (1) he used non-accession reckoning; (2) he started his years in Tishri; and (3) he changed the reckoning system from that used by his immediate predecessors. Should I force my eminently reasonable preconceptions on the data, declaring that every text that does not agree with my scheme is the late-date invention of an incompetent redactor? Or should I take the place of a learner and think that maybe I need to change some of my ideas?

IV. The Unexpected (Incredible) Result

The major lessons to be learned from the four tables accompanying this paper are not the dates and the calculations shown in the tables, but the generalities and truths that may be inferred from them. These generalities

bear the same relation to the figures of the tables that the theories of science bear to a notebook showing the results from an experiment that was testing one of those theories. The results of the experiment are a means to an end, and that end is either verifying or disproving the theory. The results are especially important if the experiment is designed in such a way that the data, properly collected and interpreted, can be used to show which of two competing theories offers the better explanation of physical reality. To use an example from my "Samaria" paper, emission lines from the hydrogen atom were found on the spectrographs plate exactly where they were predicted to be by the theories of quantum mechanics, and the location of these lines could not be predicted by the laws of classical electromagnetism. The immediate result of the experiment was a set of tables representing wave lengths taken from a spectroscopic plate; the ultimate result was the replacement of one theory with another for the explanation of phenomena on the atomic level. Before any "ultimate results" are deduced from the tables in the present article, some observations need to be made about the characteristics of these tables.

[12] A foolish consistency is the hobgoblin of little minds"—Ralph Waldo Emerson.

1. *The tables are internally consistent and consistent with each other.* The starting and ending years match with the length of the king's reign, and the end of each reign matches the starting year of the next king's sole reign. The starting dates used in the tables of synchronisms are the same as the starting dates in the reign length tables.

2. *The tables are consistent with several fixed dates in Middle Eastern history.* This point is less trivial than the preceding one, which would have been satisfied by most, but not all, chronologies that appeared before Thiele's work.[13] Thiele's chronology (which differs from that of the present paper in only a few places) won the respect of historians because its dates agree with the following dates in Assyrian and Babylonian history: the Battle of Qarqar in 853 bc; the tribute of Jehu to Shalmaneser III in 841 bc; the capture of Samaria by Shalmaneser V in 723 bc; the invasion of Sennacherib in 701 bc; the Battle of Carchemish in 605 bc; and the first capture of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar in 597 bc.

3. The four tables are consistent with all texts in Kings and Chronicles that give reign lengths or that match the starting year of a king to the regnal year of a king in the rival kingdom. These are the familiar texts that either give the reign length by itself or that have the form "In year x of y, king of Israel, z became king of Judah and he reigned w years." My "Samaria" paper, and articles which preceded it by other authors, argued that this stereotyped formula represents extracts taken from the official court records of Judah and Israel. Every scriptural text that has one of these extracts or simple reign lengths, from the time of David to Zedekiah, is represented in the four tables.

4. The four tables are consistent with the texts in Jeremiah and Ezekiel that give synchronisms or dates for the last years of the Judean monarchy.

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My "Jerusalem" paper listed all synchronisms (seven) in Jeremiah and three in Ezekiel,[14] and these are consistent with the dates of Table 2 of the present article. A similar statement cannot be made for any chronology that places the fall of Jerusalem in 586 bc.

All of the numbers in the tables (reign lengths, dates, and synchronisms) were determined by first ascertaining the methods of measurement used in the Scriptures. None of them represents an emendation of the text. To explain these observations and the characteristics listed above, the following conclusion, generalizing theory, or thesis will be stated: Tables 1 through 4 represent the reign length formulas of the official court recorders of Judah and Israel, preserved for us without alteration by the Masoretic and prior scribal traditions.

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[13] The older interpreters introduced interregna in their chronologies, so that reign lengths do not always match beginning dates of the kings.

[14] There is some uncertainty about a fourth possible synchronism in Ezekiel, which is the "thirtieth year" mentioned in Ezek 1:1. It is possible that this refers to the thirtieth year of a Jubilee cycle if Ezekiel was using an archaic method of counting Jubilee years, or it is also possible that it refers to the thirtieth year of the prophet's life. This synchronism has been left out of the present summation.

According to a great number of scholars who have written in this field, for anyone to be able to produce a chronology of the Hebrew kings that is consistent with all the scriptural texts and also consistent with fixed external dates is a most surprising and unexpected result. Many have expressed the opinion that it could never be done. In an article in the *AUSS,* Thiele listed fourteen authors who stated quite dogmatically that the dates and synchronisms in the Books of Kings were in error and no consistent chronology could be constructed from these texts.[15] These were eminent scholars, and their opinions as cited by Thiele included the following:

- S. R. and G. R. Driver: "Since, however, it is clear on various grounds that these synchronisms are not original, any attempt to base a chronological scheme on them may be disregarded."

- R. Kittel: "Wellhausen has shown, by convincing reasons, that the synchronisms within the Book of Kings cannot possibly rest on ancient tradition, but are on the contrary simply the products of artificial reckoning. . ."

- Theodore H. Robinson: "Wellhausen is surely right in believing that the synchronisms in Kings are worthless, being merely a late compilation from the actual figures given."

- R. H. Pfeiffer: "In spite of these discrepancies, inaccuracies, and errors, the chronology of Kings is not fantastic."

- K. Marti: "Almost along the whole line, the discrepancy between synchronisms and years of reign is incurable."

- C. H. Gordon: "The numerical errors in the Books of Kings have defied every attempt to ungarble them. Those errors are largely the creation of the editors. .. the editors did not execute the synchronisms skillfully."

To this list of "assured results" may be added the observation of W. F. Albright: "It is incredible that all these numbers can have been handed down through so many editors and copyists without often becoming corrupt.. . ."[16]

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The context here shows that by "incredible" Albright meant that no one should believe that an authentic chronology could have been passed down to us. But our thesis is that, all these scholars notwithstanding, this is precisely what has happened: the internal and external consistencies of Tables 1 through 4 are the characteristics that we would expect if we did indeed have the original and authentic figures from the period of the Hebrew monarchs. This consistency does not amount to proof of authenticity, but it would be very difficult to understand how it could have come about unless the synchronisms and reign lengths are authentic, i.e. represent historical fact. As was mentioned above, the tables contain *all* the numbers representing exact reign length figures and synchronisms for the thirty-seven kings and one queen who reigned in two kingdoms from Solomon to Zedekiah. The time from the first year of Solomon to the last synchronism

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[15] Edwin Thiele, "Synchronisms of the Hebrew Kings," *AUSS* 1 (1963) 124-25.
[16] W. F. Albright, "The Chronology of the Divided Monarchy of Israel," *BASOR* 100 (1945) 17.

given in 2 Kgs 25:27 is 409 years; to describe events in this time span, sixty-five reign length figures and forty-two synchronisms to the rival kingdom are given in Kings and Chronicles. Furthermore, there are six exact synchronisms to events that can be dated in Assyrian and Babylonian history, plus one synchronism to an event (the exodus) that can be independently dated by references in the Talmud. To this should be added the seven synchronisms in Jeremiah and three in Ezekiel that are also consistent with these tables. Altogether this makes 124 exact statistics that are summarized in the chronology of the tables at the end of this article. As Albright said, it is "incredible" that this complexity of numbers and their interdependencies could have been transmitted to us without error, or that all these figures could represent the actual dates of the kings of Judah and Israel. Yet it is our thesis that this is exactly what we have. How could this "incredible" result have come about?

There seem to be three alternatives: (1) a naturalistic explanation; (2) a miracle; or (3) it is all due to the clever manipulation of figures by Thiele and those who followed him; the chronology is not authentic, but is a synthetic formulation of writers who were "trying to prove that the Bible is true." Let us examine these alternatives.

V. Possible Explanations Of The Incredible Result

1. The naturalistic explanation.

a. *Jeremiah and Ezekiel.* As a naturalistic explanation, it can be maintained that the books of Jeremiah and Ezekiel were written by the two seventh/sixth-century prophets of that name—or if not by them, by someone who lived at the same time, although this is more difficult to imagine than is the simple proposition that Jeremiah really wrote Jeremiah and Ezekiel really wrote Ezekiel, since it would be clear that a fraud was taking place if the two prophets were still alive when the fraud was perpetrated. The authors then would have had direct knowledge of the events that are mentioned in the two books. All dates and synchronisms would be authentic because they were recorded by men who lived through the times.

b. *Kings and Chronicles.* For the Books of Kings and Chronicles, the naturalistic explanation would be that there was a school of scholars simi-

lar to, if not identical to, the schools of the prophets that Thiele maintained were the sources of the Book of Kings.[17] The school somehow felt responsible for keeping annals of the history of the two kingdoms, and it passed on this responsibility through the centuries. Parallels to this can be found in the schools of Jewish rabbis who preserved learning during the Middle Ages or in the academy of Plato, which endured for nine centuries after its founding.

c. *Transmission to the present.* Finally, there would have to be a tradition of scribes who instituted very careful procedures and checks to make sure that the copying process was as accurate as it was possible to make it, so that the original writings could be preserved through the centuries. This might be hard to envision if we did not have the example of a scholastic tradition that did exactly these things: the Masoretes. All that is necessary is to imagine a similar

[17] Thiele, Mysterious Numbers chap. 10.

reverence and care for the sacred writings among their custodians for the centuries intervening between the original compositions and the beginning of the Masoretic tradition.

These assumptions would explain why the chronology represented by Tables 1 through 4 is internally consistent, consistent with every Scripture in the six books of the OT that gives exact chronological details over a span of four centuries, and consistent with fixed external dates in Assyria and Babylonia. The consistency would be because the dates and numbers are all in accord with reality, and they have been transmitted to us correctly by the scribal schools, many of whose methods of assuring accuracy we know from the traditions of the Masoretes. These are all plausible assumptions, and there is nothing inherently supernatural about them. They offer an explanation that is almost identical to the historic position of Judaism and Christianity, but differing in this one essential: the supernatural supervision of the Holy Spirit, who determined the content of the texts, and who also guaranteed that the autographs were without error and that the copying process preserved for us a text that is close enough to the autographs so that we can have confidence in the doctrines presented. The traditional approach, then, incorporates something from the naturalistic explanation and the supernatural explanation presented next.

2. *A miracle.* If Jeremiah and Ezekiel were not actually written by contemporaries of the events described, and if Kings and Chronicles were not derived from written records preserved by some such school as was envisaged under the naturalistic explanation, then the alternative is that these various books were written by people of a later time who had no direct knowledge of the events recorded. At this point the imagination can run wild in hypothesizing what the sources utilized by these authors might have been. Anyone who is familiar with the history of biblical criticism in the last two centuries knows that such wild hypothesizing is exactly what has happened. The resultant theories are marked by the scholar imposing his imaginative ideas on the scriptural data, and as would be expected, there arose a great confusion of theories about which sections of Scripture came from which

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imagined source. The lack of consensus on what the source documents were should have served as a warning that there was something radically wrong with these theories. They did, however, have one thing in common: they all agreed that the persons responsible for the final form of the OT documents lived later, often much later, than the events described in those documents.

If that were the case, then how could these various late-date authors and editors produce synchronisms and dates that without exception are internally consistent, consistent with those of the other late-date editors and pseude-pigraphic authors, and consistent with long-forgotten events from the surrounding nations? The only answer seems to be a miracle: the supernatural intervention of the Holy Spirit somehow made all things come out right, overruling the ignorance and mistaken ideas of the writers of Scripture. The greater the distance of the writer from the events described, the greater the miracle must have been. The more radical the form critic (as measured by how late he dated the writings), the greater he must imagine the miracle to be so that his late-date writer or editor could have come up with a harmonious chronology for events long past, when even the method of measuring years or assigning reign lengths had been forgotten.

Radical form critics, however, seem from their writings to have a tendency not to believe in the supernatural, so it is doubtful that any who have this outlook will resort to miracles to explain the consistencies found in Tables 1 through 4. They will surely prefer the next alternative, since the first (naturalistic) alternative is contrary to their one unifying principle, which is that Scripture is almost always written later than the date that would be assumed by taking the scriptural texts at face value.

3. *The consistencies and apparent authenticity of these tables are due to manipulation by Thiele and those who followed him.* In this section it will be demonstrated that the harmony in the chronology of Tables 1 through 4 is not the result of a clever manipulation of figures by Thiele and those who corrected the few errors in his work, but is the result of applying a method which is more logical and better suited for determining a chronology from historical data than is the method used by most of Thiele's critics.

To substantiate this statement, some misconceptions about Thiele's method need to be dealt with. Fortunately, that was done very well in a paper by Kenneth Strand, which is highly recommended as an overview that helps us to understand Thiele's approach.[18] Refuting the idea that Thiele, by trial and error, juggled dates until he could match fixed dates in Assyrian and Babylonian history, Strand wrote, "His only 'trial and error' procedure was in seeing how the variable factors used by the Hebrew scribes were involved in producing the numbers given in the MT for the lengths of reign and synchronisms of the monarchs of the two Hebrew kingdoms. No dates whatever—either biblical or extrabiblical—were placed in his charts until he had established a pattern of internal consistency based solely on the bib-

lical data."[19] This is corroborated by Thiele himself, who wrote, "Let it be repeated that the pattern of reign lengths set forth in the present book is not the product of certain arbitrary adjustments to secure a series of predetermined results. Rather, it resulted from a quest to ascertain whether or not the numbers now found in Kings could be brought together into some harmonious arrangement of reigns, and whether or not such an arrangement once produced was in harmony with the established dates of Near Eastern history."[20]

The most important point to understand about Thiele's approach, then, is that he started with the scriptural texts and as the first step sought to find the methods used by the authors of Scripture in recording their chronological data. This is the key that explains the successes that eventually came from his efforts. These successes could not have come if the texts were corrupt, as the scholars cited above imagined them to be. Although it was arduous work to ascertain the measuring methods used by the scriptural authors, Thiele wrote of his progress once the methods were discovered as follows: "It was four years after I had begun a serious study of the chronological involvements of the Hebrew kings before I was able to work my way through the

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[18] Kenneth A. Strand, "Thiele's Biblical Chronology as a Corrective for ExtraBiblical Dates," *AUSS* 34 (1996) 295-317.
[19] Ibid. 297.
[20] Thiele, Mysterious Numbers 18.

data for the first two or three kings of Israel and Judah. But then, having once discovered the various principles involved, in only a few weeks I made my way through to the end."[21]

In contrast with this approach is the method of all those who come to the Scriptures with preconceived ideas and who then force those ideas onto the data. This approach invariably leads to conflict with the scriptural data, which the older conservative scholars attempted to resolve by introducing interregna, and which more liberal scholars explained by saying that the data was in error, which of course reinforced their philosophical presupposition about the unreliability of the Scriptures. In my previous papers I have argued that this method of approaching biblical chronology is the single largest source of confusion in the field; my "Samaria" paper labeled it the "Factor One" source of errors. An early example of this was the chronology of Thomas Lydiat, who used an old Jewish notion that it would be 4000 years from the creation to the coming of the Messiah. Lydiat thus set the creation of the world in 4004 bc, a date which became familiar to the world through the writings of Archbishop Ussher.[22] The goal of Lydiat and Ussher was doubtless to reinforce the faith of God's people, but later scholars have produced artificial schemes as a means to try to show that the scriptural texts dealing with chronology were contrived and mythical, as I discussed briefly in a footnote to my "Jerusalem" paper regarding Wellhausen and one of his modern followers.[23]

The relevance to our present discussion is this: It is not Thiele who should be accused of juggling the texts to come up with an artificial and synthetic

scheme; instead it is those like Wellhausen who had some preconceived idea that they imposed on the Scripture, declaring that everything that did not fit their scheme represented a factual error introduced by the mistaken notions of a late-date editor. "Artificial" and "synthetic" are adjectives that should not be applied to Thiele's method; they are more aptly applied to those who produced these artificial chronologies and consequent "Factor One" errors that are the chief source of confusion in the field.

The reason that Thiele found harmony in his chronology was therefore not because he cleverly manipulated the dates; it was because he started with the proper methodology, and that methodology uncovered the harmony that was inherent in the scriptural texts. The harmony, however, remained hidden until Thiele (and to some extent Coucke before him) discovered the basic dating methods that were used by the kingdoms of Judah and Israel (Tishri years for Judah, Nisan years for Israel, etc.).

Thiele's chronology needed emending in a few places, not because his basic approach was wrong, but rather because it was incomplete: the thesis of my three former papers was that there were combinations of factors that Thiele overlooked, and these combinations resolved some

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[21] Ibid. 21.
[22] Jeremy Hughes, *Secrets of the Times* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1990) 262.
[23] Young, *Jerusalem* 28–29 n. 13.

problems that he tended to gloss over.[24] In the first two papers I introduced a method that can help eliminate this kind of oversight. It is to be hoped that future technical papers in the area of biblical chronology will adopt this method—Decision Tables—in the treatment of knotty problems with synchronisms and reign lengths.

Most of the scholars who write in this field are proficient in at least two (usually more) languages besides their native tongue. The effort needed to become proficient in the use of Decision Tables is far less than that required to learn a foreign language. Therefore it should not be too much to ask that this skill be learned by any who, in the future, want to deal with the kind of problems represented by the chronology of the divided kingdoms. Hopefully I have made it clear that Thiele's lack of acquaintance with this methodology sometimes made him overlook more satisfactory solutions than the ones he settled for. But the failure to explore all the possibilities characterizes far more research in this area than that of Thiele. On the negative side, the consequence has been declarations that the Scripture was in error when this had not been demonstrated, and when in fact it was the scholar's method that was deficient, not the Scripture. On the positive side, applying a methodology that reveals all the possibilities can open up rewarding insights. My paper on "Solomon" resulted when I applied Decision Tables to the beginning of the divided monarchy and discovered what Thiele had overlooked there. Even more rewarding was the application to the scriptural texts dealing with the fall of Jerusalem, out of which was revealed an agreement in

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all the texts involved that I had never seen before. The method is logically sound; it is not a means of imposing the scholar's views on the data—it is the opposite of that. In a real sense it completes the methodology that Thiele pursued when his first goal was to find the means by which the scriptural authors treated the history of their times, since it can provide all the possibilities that are consistent with foundational principles.

If, however, writers ignore this tool when they examine some problem in the chronology of the kingdom period, they are not justified in declaring that the Scripture is in error because it does not fit their scheme. The number of papers that have done this in the past is legion, but now discerning readers should have the knowledge that enables them to determine when an author has declared that the Scripture is in error, but he or she has not done the necessary analysis to validate that conclusion. Unless a competent use of Decision Tables, or their logical equivalent, has been carried out to show that no reasonable combination of factors can account for these chronological texts, no writer is justified in declaring that the scriptural texts are in error.

The techniques of Decision Tables can be learned from several books that are commercially available. As of the present writing, there is a web

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[24] My "Solomon" paper dealt with Thiele's failure to examine the possibility that Solomon died in the first half of 93 In rather than the last half. My "Jerusalem" paper examined possibilities for the ways Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and 2 Kings treated chronological data that Thiele apparently had not explored. My "Samaria" paper dealt with the Ahaz/Hezekiah coregency that many scholars suggested but which Thiele did not consider. All these oversights were called "Factor Two" errors in my "Samaria" paper.

site,www.cems.uwe.ac.uk/~jharney/table.html, that offers a good introduction. The basic idea can also be learned from my first two papers, particularly the "Jerusalem" paper.

What all this means for the third "explanation"—that the harmony in Tables 1 through 4 is a result of clever manipulation of the data—is that this explanation is simply not tenable. Scholars who follow Thiele's approach of letting the Scriptures dictate which options are possible have far less freedom to produce arbitrary schemes than do authors who invent their own schemes that contradict the Scriptures, such as Wellhausen and his followers. The only reasonable alternative we are left with is that the harmony of the chronology displayed in Tables 1 through 4 exists because we have in these tables the authentic reign lengths and synchronisms as given by the official court recorders of Israel and Judah, who began their task three thousand years ago and finished it some four centuries later.

VI. Limited Inspiration

Theories of limited inspiration generally hold that there are major theological doctrines to be found in the Bible and these are inspired and should be believed, but it is too much to expect that the Scriptures are accurate in all matters of history and science. This necessarily produces a contradiction, since one of the major theological doctrines of the Bible is that the Scripture is without error in all its parts.

Despite the logical contradiction, theories of limited inspiration maintain that in matters of minute historical detail we must expect some errors. The authors cited by Thiele whose statements were included in Section IV all believed in limited inspiration. Their advocacy of that doctrine led them to expect that the detailed chronological notes of Kings and Chronicles, spread over more than four centuries and hence necessarily coming from different

authors, could not have all been recorded and transmitted correctly. If errors are to be found, what better place to go fishing for them than in this well-stocked pool, teeming with an abundance of dates, reign lengths, and synchronisms? Any theory of limited inspiration would recognize this as the prime place in the whole Bible to find the errors assumed by those who hold to an errant Scripture. But a diligent search finds no such errors! What is found instead is that *all* of the scriptural texts dealing with exact chronological details in these four books, plus the texts in Jeremiah and Ezekiel, have the characteristics of authenticity. Such a finding strikes at the heart of theories of limited inspiration. It is hard to imagine how a more damaging blow could have been delivered to this doctrine. In an area where, if it were true, we had every reason to expect results, it produced nothing.

Those who, because of their theological or moral standpoints, feel compelled to continue in a doctrine of a defective Scripture can try to ignore this argument (for the authenticity of all exact chronological details in six major books of the Bible), or they can seek refuge in some other area of Scripture where errors are assumed to exist. If they attempt to take the argument for errancy to other areas, this question must be answered: Why do we find apparent authenticity and complete trustworthiness in the one area where previously the holders of this doctrine were confident that we would find not just one, but multiple errors?

Take the example of two witnesses in a murder trial. Witness One has just given a testimony that has 124 details that can be checked by independent means. His testimony also includes statements in areas that the court cannot check. Witness Two comes to the stand and makes several sweeping statements about the unreliability of the details given by Witness One; he alleges that certain individuals were not in the place that Witness One said they were at the time stated, and that many of the time periods in Witness One's testimony are false.

Now suppose that an outside expert is brought in, and the expert's testimony shows that all 124 statements of exact particulars that Witness One gave are consistent with his findings. Furthermore, these 124 items are not matters of common knowledge, but are obscure details that could have been known only by first-hand experience. After this expert testimony, the only reasonable conclusion is that Witness One was telling the truth about these items; the testimony of Witness One must be accepted in this area that was checked by the expert's testimony. But there is another consequence: the statements of Witness One would have great weight in the areas that cannot be checked. The entire testimony of Witness One must be given the most serious consideration in any further deliberations of the court.

Having established the integrity and credibility of Witness One, the court would necessarily decide that the testimony of Witness Two could not be true in the area where Witness One was vindicated, since Witness Two contradicted Witness One in that area. Furthermore, since Witness Two was wrong in the area that could be checked, all statements that Witness Two made in other areas that could not be checked would necessarily be called into ques-

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tion; his testimony no longer has weight in any area. Witness Two's credibility has been destroyed.

The analogy can be made more sweeping. Witness Two could have been represented not as a single witness, but as a whole series of witnesses who cannot agree among themselves on what actually happened, and who contradict each other in their sequences of events (chronologies). The one unifying principle in their testimony is that the statements of Witness One must be false somewhere. When asked why they are so hostile to the testimony of Witness One, they reply that it is nothing personal, but they find it incredible that Witness One could have been right in all of 124 precise statements. Their philosophical commitments do not allow them to believe that anyone, in heaven or on earth, could be completely truthful in all that he says.

VII. Some Cautions

It is possible to make some unwarranted assumptions based on the arguments presented thus far. This section cautions against a few of these.

First, it should not be assumed that all scriptural texts dealing with chronological issues anywhere in Scripture are free from possible textual problems. It is remarkable and even unexpected that the 124 exact synchronisms and reign lengths dealt with in this paper, covering the period from Solomon to Jehoiachin and Zedekiah, fit together harmoniously and not one of them requires emendation. However, when we leave these texts and go back to the time of Saul, we encounter difficulty with the MT of 1 Sam 13:1. Another problem text is Exod 12:40, where

the Samaritan version of the verse is more consistent with other chronological texts than is the MT version. It is interesting, however, that in places like this we can find other Scriptures that allow us to state with some confidence what the original reading was.

A second caution is about the use of Decision Tables: it must be realized that the range of issues they can address is limited. There are many problems in chronology for which they can offer no assistance. An example might be the chronology of the book of Judges. The kinds of problems they should be used with are those for which several parameters affect a result, and different values for the parameters combine to produce different values for the result.

Another caution is that the major thrust of my work has been to show that the scriptural texts regarding the chronology of the time are in agreement with each other, while only minimal attention was devoted to external consistency with events in the surrounding nations. It should not be presumed that because internal harmony has been demonstrated, therefore all chronological problems of the period have been solved. There will continue to be debate by Assyriologists, for example, over the dating of contacts of Tiglath-Pileser III with Uzziah and Menahem. Discussions like this over how the Hebrew chronology interfaces with extra-biblical events will still be necessary, but the demonstration of a chronology of the period for Israel and Judah that is internally consistent should lend credibility to the biblical evidence in resolving issues in the chronologies of neighboring kingdoms.

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VIII. Conclusions

1. The proper approach to use in constructing a chronology for the kings of Judah and Israel is one which first determines the methods of dating used in the scriptural texts. Use of this approach is a primary reason for the successes of Thiele's chronology. Failure to use it is the primary reason for the confusion of systems produced by authors who followed a different approach.

2. This approach could not have produced a chronology that is internally consistent and consistent with fixed extra-biblical dates unless the scriptural texts were characterized by internal harmony and harmony among the six books of Scripture that give exact chronological data for the kingdom period.

3. The most logical explanation of the internal harmony and harmony with external dates is that all these texts give us the true chronology of the time.

4. No reign lengths or synchronisms of an exact nature from six books that give chronological details (1 and 2 Chronicles, 1 and 2 Kings, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel) were omitted from the studies that produced the chronology of Tables 1 through 4.

5. The explanation that this harmony, internal consistency, and agreement with fixed external dates from Assyria and Babylonia were brought about by clever manipulation of data by Thiele and those who followed him is not tenable.

6. Although Thiele's basic approach was correct, his methodology was incomplete. Occasionally he overlooked possibilities that offered a better explanation of the relevant texts than the explanation he settled on.

7. The use of Decision Tables can provide all the possibilities that are consistent with an author's working hypotheses, and this methodology is therefore recommended as the logical completion of Thiele's approach. It should be utilized in any study which has to deal with the various options (Tishri or Nisan years, accession or non-accession counting, etc.) that characterize the period of the Hebrew monarchies.

It might be contended that Thiele and those who followed him were unduly influenced by a philosophical or theological disposition—namely the doctrine of scriptural inerrancy. The answer to this is simple: there is no place where such a presupposition has produced a result (a date, reign length, or synchronism) that is contrary to reason and to the best historical method that would be used for any other text from ancient times. Rather than being unreasonable, the basic postulates in Thiele's system are simpler and more consistent with the demonstrated practices of the ancient Near East than are the presuppositions of the radical form critics.[25] Inerrancy, then, is not an

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irrational principle that produces unreasonable conclusions in an unreasonable chronology. Instead it was a working hypothesis that led Thiele, as long as he pursued it, to very fruitful results. His abandonment of the principle for the reign of Hezekiah produced the one area of his chronology where he has found very few followers, and where the solution proposed by Kitchen, Mitchell, Horn, and others has all the advantages of simplicity, agreement with the scriptural texts involved, and consistency with the basic principles that Thiele used elsewhere.

There is no doubt that the success of this approach (the approach of assuming that the biblical records were correct until they were proved wrong) has made a strong statement in favor of the doctrine of inerrancy. But even if it could be proved that all the scriptural dates and synchronisms for the kingdom period are authentic, this demonstration would still not be the primary reason why we should believe in inerrancy. Studies which show that the Bible is accurate and true, even in the most unexpected places such as in the minute details of chronology, can never "prove" the doctrine of the inerrancy of Scripture—any proof would have

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[25] Thus coregencies have been substantiated in the dynasties of Egypt (E. Bell, "The Co-Regency of David and Solomon (I Kings 1)," *VT* 27 [1977] 268-79). Tishri years for Judah are suggested by Josephus's remark *(Ant.* 1.3.3) that before the exodus the years were considered to start in Tishri, as well as by Jewish practice to this day. By observing the New Year in Nisan, the northern kingdom was adopting the system used in Babylonia and Assyria. As for rival reigns (Omri and Tibni, Pekah and Menahem), the case of Hatshepsut and Thutmose III in Egypt offers a parallel; indeed, Egyptologists say that whole dynasties from Manetho's list were contemporaneous rivals. Compare these well-substantiated practices with some of the postulates of, for example, Wellhausen: that writing was not known among the Hebrews in the time of Moses; that there were no coregencies in Judah and Israel; that the use of dual divine names implies dual sources (disproved at Ugarit); etc.

to establish all facts external to the Bible, and then prove that every item in the Bible is consistent with those facts, which is impossible. The doctrine of inerrancy has an altogether different basis: inerrancy must always find its origin in the belief that it is a major doctrine taught in the Bible itself (Deut 8:3; Ps 12:6; 93:5; 111:7–8; 119:89, 140, 160; 2 Tim 3:16; Titus 1:2; 1 Pet 1:25), that it is unmistakably the position of our Savior, who knows all things (Matt 5:18; Luke 16:17; 24:25; John 5:46, 47; 10:35; 17:17), and that God promises blessing to those who believe his Word (Gen 15:6; 2 Chr 20:20; Rom 4:3; Jas 2:23). To this can be added the philosophical reason that if there is a God and we are his creatures, then there is a certain moral obligation for the Divine Being to make his thoughts known to us in a revelation that is completely trustworthy. No amount of proof of a scientific or historical sort will ever go beyond these reasons for believing in the doctrine of inerrancy of the Scriptures.

Although the demonstration of harmony between any set of scriptural texts and historical fact cannot prove the doctrine of inerrancy, what can be said is that the internal harmony of all the figures in Tables 1 through 4, plus their consistency with fixed extra-biblical dates, are exactly what we would expect if the doctrine of inerrancy of God's Word is true. Furthermore, the consistency and harmony of these tables are not what would be predicted by any theory of the limited inspiration of the Scriptures. Such theories fail to explain the apparent authenticity of the chronology in the tables, and approaches based on these theories (approaches which assumed that the

scriptural data was wrong and needed correcting by the author's scheme) have not been able to achieve the success that Thiele's approach has had in predicting the correct dates of events in Assyrian history. It can therefore be said that in the area of chronology, approaches which assume an errant scripture have failed, and progress will only be made when we follow the path on which Thiele (and Coucke, and others) initially set out, of first humbling ourselves enough that we can approach the Scriptures as if they really are the Word of God, a Word from which we need to learn before we brashly produce theories that show our cleverness.

To summarize: the apparent authenticity of all the chronological details shown in Tables 1 through 4 would never have been predicted by a theory of limited inspiration. Any such theory would produce, instead, the confident assertions of the authors cited in Section IV, that the chronological details of the OT are the locus where we can be sure that errors are found. Such "Witness Two" type statements are no longer credible; the apparent authenticity of the chronological details of Scripture is precisely what would be expected if the doctrine of limited inspiration is false and that of inerrancy is true. But, as said before, our reasons for believing in the doctrine of inerrancy are not based on demonstrations like this; the most that we can say is that these findings in the field of chronology are consistent with such a belief. The doctrine will not be finally proven until our Redeemer returns and asks why we did not believe everything that was written in his eternal, inerrant Word.

IX. Tables Of Reign-Lengths And Synchronisms

For instructions on how to read the figures in these tables, see Section I, "Understanding the Tables."

Table 1. Chronology Of The Kings Of Israel

King	Overlapping reigns	Began sole reign	Ended	Official start and end	Years reigned
Jeroboam I		93 1n	910t/909n	931n-910n	22 (21)
Nadab		910t/909n	909t/908n	910n-909n	2(1)
Baasha		909t/908n	886t/885n	909n-886n	24 (23)
Elah		886t/885n	885t/884n	886n-885n	2(1)
Zimri		885t/884n	885t/884n	885n	7 days
Tibni		885t/884n	880n/880t	885n-880n	(not stated)
Omri	885t/884n	880n/880t	874t/873n	885n-874n	12(11)
Ahab		874t/873n	853n/853t	874n-853n	22(21)
Ahaziah		853n/853t	852n/852t	853n-852n	2(1)
Joram		852n/852t	841n/841t	852n-841n	12(11)

Jehu		841n/841t	814t/813n	841n-814n	28 (27)
Jehoahaz		814t/813n	798n/798t	814n-798n	17(16)
Jehoash		798n/798t	782t/781n	798n-782n	16
Jeroboam II	793n	782t/781n	753, Elul (Sep)	793n-753n	41 (40)
Zechariah		753, Elul	752, Adar (Mar)	753n-753n	6 mo.
Shallum		752, Adar	752, Nisan (Apr)	753n-752n	1 mo.
Menahem		752, Nisan	742t/741n	752n-742n	10
Pekahiah		742t/741n	740t/739n	742n-740n	2
Pekah	752, Nisan	740t/739n	732t/731n	752n-732n	20
Hoshea		732t/731n	723n/723t	732n-723n	9

Column 5 has the king's start and end dates (in Nisan/Tishri notation) that were used by the court recorders in determining the length of the king's reign. Column 6 has the elapsed years based on those start and end dates. When there are two figures in column 6, this indicates that the reign

length given in Scripture (the first figure) is by non-accession counting. The comparison of column 5 with the beginning and ending dates and with column 6 shows that the court recorders of Israel always kept in mind the official starting year of a king and were exact in all their representations of his reign length.

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Table 2. Chronology Of The Kings Of Judah (Dates Are Conjectural For Saul And David)

King	Began co-regency	Began sole reign	Ended	Official start and end	Years reigned
Saul		1051t?	1009t?	1051t-1009t?	42?
David		1009t?	969t?	1009t-969t?	40
Solomon	971t	969t?	932t	971t-932t	40 (39)
Rehoboam		932t	914n/914t	932t-915t	17
Abijah		914n/914t	912t/911n	915t-912t	3
Asa		912t/911n	871t/870n	912t-871t	41
Jehoshaphat	873t	871t/870n	848n/848t	873t-849t	25(24)
Jehoram	854t	848n/848t	841n/841t	849t-842t	8(7)
Ahaziah		841n/841t	841n/841t	842t-842t	1(0)

Athaliah		841n/841t	835n/835t	842t-836t	7(6)
Joash		835n/835t	796n/796t	836t-797t	40 (39)
Amaziah		796n/796t	767n/767t	797t-768t	29
Uzziah	791t	767n/767t	740t	791t-740t	52(51)
Jotham	750n/750t	740t	(735n/735t) 732t	751t-736t	16(15)
Ahaz	735n/735t	732t	716t/715n	732t-716t	16
Hezekiah	729t/728n	716t/715n	687t	716t-687t	29
Manasseh	697t	687t	643t	697t-643t	55 (54)
Anion		643t	64 It	643t-641t	2
Josiah		641t	609 Tammuz (Jul)	641t-610t	31
Jehoahaz		609 Tammuz	609 Tishri (Oct)	610t-609t	3 mo.

Jehoiakim	609 Tishri	598 21 Heshvan (about 7 Dec 598)	609t-598t	11
Jehoiachin	598 21 Heshvan	597 2 Adar (Mar 16)	598t	3 mo. 10 d.
Zedekiah	597 2 Adar	587 9 Tammuz (Jul)	598t-588t	11(10)

Some reign lengths are measured from the start of a coregency. Jotham's sixteen (fifteen) years ended when his son Ahaz was installed by the pro-Assyrian faction in Judah, in 735n/735t, although some considered him the rightful ruler until his death in 732t, thus giving him the twenty years mentioned in 2 Kgs 15:30. The comparison of column 5 with the beginning and ending dates and with column 6 shows that the court recorders of Judah always kept in mind the official starting year of a king and were exact in all their representations of his reign length.

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Table 3. Synchronisms, Israel To Judah

Reference	King	began	in	Formula	More exact date
1 K 15:25	Nadab	sole reign	2 Asa	912t-910t = 2	910t/909n
1 K 15:28, 33	Baasha	sole reign	3 Asa	912t-909t = 3	909t/908n
1 K 16:8	Elah	sole reign	26 Asa	912t-886t = 26	886t/885n
IK 16:10, 15	Zimri	sole reign	27 Asa	912t-885t = 27	885t/884n

1 K 16:21–23	Omri	sole reign	31 Asa	912t-881t = 31	880n/880t
1 K 16:29	Ahab	sole reign	38 Asa	912t-874t = 38	874t/873n
IK 22:51	Ahaziah	sole reign	17 Jehoshaphat	871t-854t = 17	853n/853t
2K3:1	Joram	sole reign	18 Jehoshaphat	871t-853t = 18	852n/852t
2 K 1:17	Joram	sole reign	2 (1) Jehoram	854t-853t = 1	852n/852t
2 K 9; 2 Ch 22	Jehu	same time as	Athaliah	841n/841t	841n/841t
2 K 13:1	Jehoahaz	sole reign	23 (22) Joash	836t-814t = 22	814t/813n
2 K 13:10	Jehoash	sole reign	37 Joash	836t-799t = 37	798n/798t
2 K 14:23	Jeroboam II	sole reign	15 Amaziah	797t-782t = 15	782t/781n
2 K 15:8	Zechariah	sole reign	38 (37) Uzziah	791t-754t = 37	Elul, 753
2 K 15:13	Shallum	sole reign	39 (38) Uzziah	791t-753t = 38	Adar, 752
2 K 15:17	Menahem	rivalry	39 (38) Uzziah	791t-753t = 38	Nisan 752

2 K 15:23	Pekahiah	rivalry	50 (49) Uzziah	791t-742t = 49	742t/741n
2 K 15:27	Pekah	sole reign	52 (51) Uzziah	791t-740t = 51	740t/739n
2 K 15:30	Hoshea	sole reign	20(19)Jotham	751t-732t = 19	732t/731n
2 K 17:1	Hoshea	ended	12 Ahaz	736t-724t = 12	723n/723t

Column 5 has the years that elapsed for the Judean king, giving the synchronism to Judah provided by the court recorders of Israel. Although the court recorders would not have written things in this fashion, the dates they used correspond to those displayed here in Nisan/Tishri notation and their calculations correspond to those shown in column 5. By comparison with column 4 and Table 2, it will be seen that the court recorders of Israel always used an official starting year (a Tishri year) from Judah, and they were always exact in their calculation of the synchronism.

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Table 4. Synchronisms, Judah To Israel

Reference	King	began	in	Formula	More exact date
IK 15:1; 2 Ch 13:1	Abijah	sole reign	18(17) Jeroboam	931n-914n = 17	914n/914t
1 K 15:9	Asa	sole reign	20(19) Jeroboam	931n-912n = 19	912t/911n
IK 22:41	Jehosh.	sole reign	4 (3) Ahab	874n-871n = 3	871t/870n

2 K 8:16	Jehoram	sole reign	5 (4) Joram	852n-848n = 4	848n/848t
2 K 8:25	Ahaziah	sole reign	12 (11) Joram	852n-841n = 11	841n/841t
2 K 9:29	Ahaziah	sole reign	11 Joram	852n-841n = 11	841n/841t
2K9; 2Ch22	Athaliah	same time as	Jehu	841n/841t	841n/841t
2 K 12:1	Joash	sole reign	7 (6) Jehu	841n-835n = 6	835n/835t
2 K 14:1	Amaziah	sole reign	2 Jehoash	798n-796n = 2	796n/796t
2 K 15:1	Uzziah	sole reign	27 (26) Jeroboam	793n-767n = 26	767n/767t
2 K 15:32	Jotham	coregency	2 Pekah	752n-750n = 2	750n/750t
2 K 16:1	Ahaz	coregency	17 Pekah	752n-735n = 17	735n/735t
2 K 18:1	Hezekiah	coregency	3 Hoshea	732n-729n = 3	729t/728n
2 K 18:9	Hezekiah 4 (3) = Hoshea 7			729t-726t = 3 732n-725n = 7	725n/725t

2 K 18:10	Hezekiah 6 (5) = Hoshea 9	729t-724t = 5 723n/723t 732n-723n = 9
2 K 14:17;	Amaziah outlived Jehoash 15	782n-767n = 15 767n/767t
2 Ch 25:25	years	

Column 5 has the years that elapsed for the Israelite king, giving the synchronism to Israel provided by the court recorders of Judah. Although the court recorders would not have written things in this fashion, the dates they used correspond to those displayed here in Nisan/Tishri notation and their calculations correspond to those shown in column 5. By comparison with column 4 and Table 1, it will be seen that the court recorders of Judah always used an official starting year (a Nisan year) from Israel, and they were always exact in their calculation of the synchronism.

The Date Of The Exodus-Conquest Is Still An Open Question: A Response To Rodger Young And Bryant Wood

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In my 2007 article,[1] I sought to simply set forth two lines of evidence— one biblical and the other archaeological—for considering the possibility of a late-date exodus-conquest. Young and Wood appear to believe that my short article was a response to Wood's article of 2006,[2] based on their notations of my failure to comprehensively respond to it. My article, however, had been accepted for publication prior to the appearance of Wood's 2006 article, and was therefore not written as a response to it. In any case, Young and Wood's critical response to my article has provided me with an opportunity to elaborate further on these matters. Since I have been invited to respond to Young and Wood's article rather than to write a full-fledged one of my own, I will limit my treatment to the topics outlined in their paper.

At the outset, I would like to clarify my intentions regarding the quest to zero in on a date for the exodus-conquest and reconstruct the Israelite settlement. Young and Wood repeatedly charge me with seeking to "discredit" the Bible, to negate its credibility, of "seeking ways to show that the Bible is not to be trusted in historical matters," and of either supporting or directly advancing "radical revisionism." These accusations about my intentions are untrue. I believe in the inspiration and authority of Scripture, and my efforts to reconstruct the background and history of the Israelite settlement are motivated by a belief that the biblical accounts reflect real events that occurred in real time, which means that historical and archaeological contexts do exist for them. The challenge for contemporary scholars is determining what those historical and archaeological contexts are. Evangelical scholars may not always reach the same conclusions regarding various historical reconstructions, but unless the methodologies or conclusions of those with whom we disagree are in direct contradiction to Scripture, we should use caution in our criticism. I will seek to show here that my methodologies and conclusions remain within the realm of possibility, despite the criticisms of Young and Wood.

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I. Textual Arguments

1. *The 480 years of 1 Kings 6:1 and the chronology of Judges.* Young writes that "the 479 years of elapsed time indicated by 1 Kgs 6:1 are entirely consistent with the chronology of the book of Judges … whereas a thirteenth-century exodus cannot be reconciled with its time spans and sequences." Young notes that the length of the period of the judges cannot be reconstructed by

[1] "Propositions for Evangelical Acceptance of a Late-Date Exodus-Conquest: Biblical Data and the Royal Scarabs from Mt. Ebal," *JETS* 50 (2007) 31-46.
[2] Bryant G. Wood, "The Rise and Fall of the 13th-Century Exodus-Conquest Theory," *JETS* 48 (2006) 475-89.

simply added up the numbers in Judges,[3] but that pericopes must be distinguished based on whether they are sequenced or unprovenanced. Once unprovenanced pericopes have been identified, the interpreter must then "seek the most reasonable time to assign to the unprovenanced passages," after which the sequenced and unprovenanced pericopes can be harmonized. Young concludes that "with the proper literal approach to the text, the pericopes in Judges are compatible with the 480th-year datum of 1 Kgs 6:1."

I do not deny the possibility of a literal interpretation of the number 480 based on a literal harmonization of the numbers in Judges. Indeed, Robert Boling suggested that the "most plausible" solution "is one which simply adds together the first 4 years of Solomon's rule, the 42 regnal years of Saul and David, the 136 years from Tola to Eli, the 200 years of peace under the saviors, the 53 years of oppression, and the 45 years implied in Josh 14:1. The total is 480."[4] This tabulation, however, is still a harmonization. The point that I was trying to make,[5] however, and that Hoffmeier argued in his response to Wood,[6] is that, on a straightforward reading, the lengths of time recorded as having transpired between the exodus and the beginning of construction on the Temple seem to have exceeded 480 years. Whereas Wood insists that there is a "biblical" chronology laid out with regard to the exodus-conquest,[7] Hoffmeier argues that "biblical chronology does not provide us with an absolute date for the exodus."[8] I showed that a literal reading of the numbers could produce a duration of 515 years from the exodus to the beginning of construction on the temple;[9] Block reached an aggregate total of 593 years;[10] and Hoffmeier tabulated 633 years.[11] There was apparently confusion about the duration from the exodus to the beginning of construction on Solomon's Temple as well. The lxx records 440 years instead of 480 (1 Kgs 6:1). Josephus gives two different numbers for the period. In his *Antiquities* he reports the duration as covering 592 years,[12] and in *Against Apion* he recounts it as

612 years.[13] Surely the authors of the lxx were concerned to give the "scriptural" length of the period from the exodus to the founding of the temple! And surely Josephus did not want to be regarded as unreliable in his reporting. The point, however, is simply that the actual length of time spanned by this period is not as unambiguous as Young and Wood want to insist.

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[3] A point I implied in "Propositions" 35.
[4] Robert G. Boling, *Judges: Introduction, Translation, and Commentary* (AB; New York: Doubleday, 1975) 23.
[5] "Propositions" 35.
[6] James K. Hoffmeier, "What is the Biblical Date for the Exodus? A Response to Bryant Wood," *JETS* 50 (2007) 227-29.
[7] Wood, "Rise and Fall of the 13th-Century Exodus" 475.
[8] Hoffmeier, "Response to Wood" 226.
[9] "Propositions" 35.
[10] Daniel I. Block, *Judges, Ruth* (NAC 6; Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 1999) 61.
[11] "Response to Wood" 228.
[12] 8.3.1.
[13] 2.2.19.

Young notes recent articles by Paul Ray[14] and Andrew Steinmann,[15] both of whom have sought to harmonize the 480 years of 1 Kgs 6:1 with the chronology of Judges. While these authors recognize that there is some degree of overlap among some of the judgeships, they seem generally to view the appearance of the judgeships in the book of Judges as occurring more or less in chronological order. On the basis of his determinations of which judgeships overlap and which do not, Steinmann even reconstructs an "absolute" chronology.[16] K. L. Younger, on the other hand, notes several problems with working out a chronology for the period, including the unknown amount of overlap, the author's use of numbers, and the inadequate historical presentation of all of the judges, especially the "minor" judges.[17] Younger also notes that, though many scholars believe Eli and Samuel functioned as judges in Israel, they are not included in the book of Judges.[18] These difficulties were observed long ago by the Jewish statesman, philosopher, and Bible commentator Don Isaac Abravanel (1437–1508), who noted that Samuel may not, in fact, belong at the *end* of the period of the judges.[19] Abravanel also observed that the two stories at the end of the book of Judges could have taken place at any time during the period of the judges. Rabbi Felix observes the fact that the book of Judges begins with the Hebrew ו *(vav)* and suggests on that basis that the placement of 1 Samuel after Judges in the canon may not necessarily be to indicate that the events it records follow chronologically after those in the preceding book. He proposes instead that the placement of the book there may be to provide a contrast between Judges and Samuel.[20] Younger concludes that "it is important to remember that the book is very much a selective presentation designed to reinforce the author's didactic message" and that "the precise chronology of the period of the judges is unknown."[21]

2. *480 years as 12 generations.* Young argues that "the reduction of the 480 years into twelve generations of forty years fails because of [the] wrong practice of equating the 'generation' with a period of forty years." Throughout

the OT, however, forty years is considered both a generation (e.g. Ps 95:10) and an era (e.g. Jdg 3:1; 5:31; 1 Sam 4:18; etc.). As Hoffmeier noted in his reply to Wood,[22] the connection with a generation probably began with such statements as: "For the people of Israel walked forty years in the wilderness, till all the nation, the men of war that came forth out of Egypt, perished" (Josh 5:6); and "For forty years I loathed that generation" (Ps 95:10). Through regular usage as such,

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[14] Paul J. Ray, "Another Look at the Period of the Judges," in *Beyond the Jordan* (ed. Glenn A. Carnagey, Sr.; Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2005) 93-104.
[15] Andrew E. Steinmann, "The Mysterious Numbers of the Book of Judges," *JETS* 48 (2005) 491-500.
[16] Ibid. 498-500.
[17] K. Lawson Younger, Jr., *Judges, Ruth* (NIVAC; Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2002) 24-25.
[18] Ibid. Younger notes that 1 Sam 12:11 makes Samuel's judgeship explicit.
[19] Cited by Rabbi Yehuda Felix, "Hannah, the Mother of Prayer," in *The Tanakh Companion to the Book of Samuel* (ed. Nathaniel Helfgot; Teaneck, NJ: Ben Yehuda, 2006) 26.
[20] Ibid. 27.
[21] Younger, *Judges* 25.
[22] Hoffmeier, "Response to Wood" 237.

the number forty appears to have come to mean something to the effect of "a long time," which is how Hess recently rendered it in line 5 of his translation of the Moabite Stone.[23]

Young also argues here that the word דּוֹר ("generation") does not refer in any of the passages under discussion to a period of time. He explains that "this could not be the meaning in the case of Israel in the wilderness because every parent who had children twenty years old or older died together with those children; this would have been two generations dying in the wilderness if the meaning were a lapse between the birth of the parent and the birth of the child." While the term דּוֹר is usually translated as "generation," the study of the Hebrew word and its Semitic cognates suggests that it may be more accurately translated as "a lifetime" or even "a cycle of time."[24] D. N. Freedman and J. Lundbom note that "with this meaning *dor* becomes a measure of time or a period of time."[25] They explain that:

Like other ancient peoples, the early Hebrews dated long periods by lifetimes. They divided long periods of time into segments corresponding to the life-span of a generation. This is the meaning of *dor* in Gen. 15:16. The difficulty came in attaching numerical values to a generation, and the *ʾarbaʿ meʾoth* in Gen. 15:13 were reckoned as 400 years (4 generations of 100 years each). The idea that four generations equals 400 years, which lies behind Gen. 15:13, is undoubtedly based on an artificial scheme which assigns 100 years to a generation.[26]

The years included within a דּוֹר are not consistent, but vary from one passage to another. For example, in Job 42:16, four generations cover 140 years. The dynasty of Jehu is said to have included four generations, which reigned for only 70 years (815–745 bc; 2 Kgs 10:30; cf. 15:12). It appears that in these and other cases דּוֹר can and does describe a period of time.[27]

3. *The 480 years as a symbolic number.* Young reads a lot into my brief mention of Burney, in which I simply noted Burney's calculation of 480 years as having elapsed between the time of the first temple and that of the return from exile, without commenting on his methodology. Young suggests that I

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apparently follow Wellhausen in believing that the regnal data for Solomon and his successors were "manipulated" and "falsified" to produce a "fictitious" 480 years, and that what I have proposed suggests that the regnal data of Kings are "not genuine history." Nowhere in my article did I say that I subscribed to Wellhausen's reconstruction of the process of composition for Kings or that I believed the data for Solomon and his successors were "falsified." In fact, I did not cite Wellhausen, nor do I draw upon his theories for the composition of biblical books.

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[23] Richard S. Hess, *Israelite Religions: An Archaeological and Biblical Survey* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 2007) 275.

[24] Cf. S. R. Driver, "Notes and Studies," *JTS* 36 (1935) 403; W. F. Albright, "Abram the Hebrew: A New Archaeological Interpretation," *BASOR* 163 (1961) 50-51.

[25] Cf. D. N. Freedman, J. Lundbom, and G. J. Botterweck, "דּוֹר," *TDOT* 3:174.

[26] Ibid.

[27] In addition, "generations" are interpreted in *1 Enoch* and in *Jubilees* as a series of weeks. See *1 Enoch* 10:12; *Jub.* 5:10.

Young himself explains the theory that an ancient editor added up the numbers from the time of the first temple to the return from the exile, derived a 480-year figure, and then projected this figure back into the time between the exodus and the start of the temple construction. In this theory, the 480 of 1 Kgs 6:1 is derived from the subsequent regnal data of 1-2 Kings. While the correspondence of the 480 of 1 Kgs 6:1 with the 480[28] of the period from the first temple to the return from exile may be due to the hand of an editor who wanted to draw a connection between the two eras, I do not see this as a necessary explanation.[29] I noted above the plausible solution proposed by Robert Boling, and others have offered similar reconstructions.[30] Based on the aforementioned difficulties with working out a chronology of the period of the judges, I am inclined to take it as a figurative number, an approximation of the duration from the exodus to the beginning of construction on the first temple. Regardless of exactly how the author of 1 Kings derived the number 480 in 1 Kgs 6:1, it corresponds, at least generally, to the length of the time that transpired in the subsequent period to the return from exile. This correspondence does not imply that any of the numbers are "falsifications." As Clyde Miller cogently observed, "God, who was providentially guiding the affairs of Israel, could have so utilized [specific periods of time] as to give them symbolic significance as a result of Israel's actual history. This certainly seems to be what God was doing with those many regulations in the law which gave the number seven symbolic significance."[31]

Young argues, however, that "[the] problem with these schemes is that they are just too clever." He wonders "what purpose this might serve, since the pattern had to wait until modern times to be discovered." Young assumes that the notion that the 480 of 1 Kgs 6:1 corresponded with another period of 480 spanning the era between the first temple and the return from exile originated with Wellhausen,[32] and he argues that "there is no indication that ancient readers would have understood it in any other sense." However,

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Abravanel observed this correspondence over 300 years before Wellhausen, and noted that there must have been some unknown divine plan behind these time frames.[33] The contemporary rabbinic commentaries on the *haftarot* generally follow this view.[34] As I noted in my previous article, Nahum Sarna suggested that the plan behind this arrangement may have been to portray

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[28] Whether approximate or exact.
[29] Noth also rejected the view that the 480 years had to do with the period from the construction of Solomon's temple to the return from exile. Cf. M. Noth, *Überlieferungsgeschichtliche Studien* (Darmstadt: Halle M. Niemeyer, 1943) 18-27.
[30] E.g. S. J. De Vries, "Chronology, OT," *NIDB* Supplement (gen. ed. Keith Crim; Nashville: Abingdon, 1976) 162.
[31] Clyde M. Miller, *First and Second Kings* (The Living Word Commentary on the Old Testament vol. 7; Abilene, TX: ACU, 1991) 140.
[32] See his note 14.
[33] Isaac Abravanel, Peyrush *ʿal Neviʾiym riʾshoniym* (Jerusalem: [s.n.], 1969) 484ff.
[34] David L. Lieber, ed., *Etz Hayim: Torah and Commentary* (New York: The Rabbinical Assembly and the United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism, 2001) 500; Michael Fishbane, *JPS Bible Commentary: Haftarot* (Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society, 2002) 121.

the building of the first temple as "the central point in the biblical history of Israel."[35] Interestingly, rabbinic commentators have viewed the number 480 as recurrent throughout their history. Based on the midrashic principle that "the actions of the forefathers are a sign for the children,"[36] rabbinic commentators have believed that, through the story of the forefathers, the Torah also teaches the outline of what to expect in later periods of Jewish history.[37] According to this timeline, there were approximately 480 years from Abraham's recognition of God until the emergence of the Hebrews as a free nation.[38] The same number of years then passed from the exodus until the building of the first temple in Jerusalem. After the building of the first temple, 480 years elapsed until the second one was built. Another 480 years transpired until the rebellion of Bar Kochba. After an equal amount of time, the Talmudic period ended and that of the Geonim began. After another 480 years, the Rif and Rabbeinu Gershom lived, ushering in the period of the Rishonim in Spain and Germany. This period also lasted about 480 years until the time of Rav Yosef Karo and Rav Moshe Isserles, the authors of the *Shulchan Aruch.* The production of this work inaugurated the period of the Acharonim, during which Jewish scholarship and life was centered in and around Europe. This period came to an end some 480 years later with the Holocaust.[39] The point is, Orthodox Jews have regarded their history as having occurred in these cycles or eras. The tendency to break history into eras has been a feature of numerous cultures from antiquity,[40] and so the possibility of its presence in the Bible should not be surprising.

4. *Young's identification of Jubilee and Sabbatical cycles.* A large portion of Young's half of the article is devoted to a discussion of the Jubilee and

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Sabbatical cycles,[41] which he argues show that the 480 years are literal years. I will discuss here the two Jubilee years to which Young points in the Talmud, as well as some of the years he claims were Sabbatical years. The first passage which Young argues points to a Jubilee year is Ezek 40:1, in which Ezekiel notes that he received a vision in the twenty-fifth year of the captivity, and that it was בְּרֹאשׁ הַשָּׁנָה, "at the beginning of the year." The *Seder ʿOlam* and the

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[35] Cf. Nahum M. Sarna, *Exploring Exodus: The Origins of Biblical Israel* (New York: Schocken Books, 1986) 9.

[36] מעשה אבות סימן לבנים(Bereishit Rabba 40).

[37] See, for example, Rabbi David Cohen, *Templates for the Ages: Historical Perspectives through the Torah's Lenses* (Brooklyn, NY: Mesorah, 1999).

[38] These numbers are viewed as approximations.

[39] Cf. Rabbi Hersh Goldwurn, *History of the Jewish People: The Second Temple Era* (Brooklyn, NY: Mesorah, 1982); Meir Holder, *History of the Jewish People: From Yavneh to Pumbedisa* (Brooklyn, NY: Mesorah, 1986).

[40] Cf. Jack Finegan, *Handbook of Biblical Chronology: Principles of Time Reckoning in the Ancient World and Problems of Chronology in the Bible* (rev. ed.; Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1998)92-116.

[41] Cf. R. K. Harrison, *Leviticus: An Introduction and Commentary* (TOTC; Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 1980); John E. Hartley, *Leviticus* (WBC 4; Dallas: Word, 1992); Baruch Levine, *Leviticus* (The JPS Torah Commentary; Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society, 1989); Jacob Milgrom, *Leviticus 23–27* (AB; New York: Doubleday, 2001).

Talmud claim that a Jubilee year occurred at this time.[42] While Young[43] asserts that Ezekiel's notation that it was "the beginning of the year" is a reference to the seventh month of the year, Tishri, this is not agreed upon among commentators. While some commentators have understood this to be a reference to Tishri,[44] most have interpreted it as a reference to Abib (Nisan).[45] The following reasons suggest that it should be understood as a reference to Abib (Nisan):

(1) The Torah stipulated that the New Year was to be inaugurated with Abib (Nisan).[46] In the course of the instructions about the departure from Egypt and the Passover, Exod 12:2 states that "this month shall mark for you the beginning of the months; it shall be the first month of the year for you." While the year of Jubilee was to begin on 7/10, the Day of Atonement, no autumnal month is ever called the first month.[47] The custom of beginning the year with Tishri was eventually adopted, but not until long after the captivity.

(2) It seems doubtful that Ezekiel, a priest (1:3), would have contradicted the Torah with regard to such an important issue as the liturgical calendar.[48] Hummel notes that the liturgical rituals he prescribes in Ezek 45:18–25, which also presuppose a spring New Year, confirm that he did not.[49] Hummel concludes that "even if a calendar whose year began in the autumn had already been accepted in everyday life in the OT era, there is no indication that the liturgy had ever abandoned its ancient method of beginning the year in the spring (Nisan)."[50] Keil suggests that בְּרֹאשׁ הַשָּׁנָה "is a contracted repetition of the definition

contained in Ex. 12:2, וֹאשׁ חֳדָשִׁים רִאשׁוֹן לְחָדְשֵׁי הַשָּׁנָא, and signifies the opening month of the year, i.e., the month Abib (Nisan)."[51]

(3) The usage of the civil calendar throughout the book of Ezekiel corresponds with an interpretation of Ezek 40:1 as a reference to Abib (Nisan) as the beginning of the year.[52]

(4) Young argues that the fact that the date is given as "on the tenth day of the month" is indicative that Ezekiel saw his vision at the beginning of a Jubilee year. Ezekiel's calendrical

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[42] *S. Olam* 11; *b. Arak.* 12a.
[43] Following *Arak.* 12a.
[44] E.g. Keith W. Carley, *The Book of the Prophet Ezekiel* (London: Cambridge, 1974) 268.
[45] See the citations in the following four points.
[46] As observed by C. F. Keil, *Ezekiel, Commentary on the Old Testament* vol. 9 (trans. James Martin; Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1865-1892) 343-44.
[47] James C. Vanderkam, "Calendar," *NIDB* 1:524.
[48] Ralph H. Alexander, "Ezekiel," *The Expositor's Bible Commentary* (ed. Frank E. Gaebelein; Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1986) 953.
[49] Horace D. Hummel, *Ezekiel 21–48* (Concordia Commentary; Saint Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 2007) 1194.
[50] Ibid.
[51] Keil, *Ezekiel* 344.
[52] As observed in Walter Eichrodt, *Ezekiel: A Commentary* (OTL; Philadelphia: Westminster, 1970) 540.

reference, however, is not indicative, as the tenth day of the month carries importance in the first as well as in the seventh month.[53] Eichrodt suggests that the tenth day may have held special significance in the priestly terminology.[54] May observes that it was on the tenth day of the first month that the Hebrews entered into the Promised Land (Josh 4:19; cf Exod 12:3). In addition, following its construction and dedication, the glory of Yahweh filled the Tent of Meeting on the first day of the first month (Exod 40:1–38), an occasion with which Ezekiel may intend to draw a parallel, since it will be on this same day that Yawheh will enter the new temple (43:1–5).[55] Keil concludes that "the tenth day of this month was the day on which the preparations for the Passover, the feast of the elevation of Israel into the people of God, were to commence, and therefore was well adapted for the revelation of the new constitution of the kingdom of God."[56]

The rabbinic traditions on which Young relies *(Arak* 12a) are attempts to resolve the chronographic indicators in Ezek 40:1, which explains the lengthy discussion among the sages attested to therein. These discussions witness to the academic speculation that took place in the Jewish academies, in which the various phrases in Ezek 40:1 were discussed and interpreted. Michael Fishbane explains that the assignment of a seventeenth Jubilee to the passage is a back-assessment, and the conclusions drawn about Ezek 40:1 are midrashic speculation, as Rabbi Eleazar of Beaugency (12th century) pointedly acknowledged in his commentary on Ezek 40:l.[57]

The second Jubilee to which Young points is one that *Seder ʿOlam* and the Talmud claim was observed in the eighteenth year of Josiah.[58] The claim that a Jubilee was celebrated at this time is very weak.[59] The account

in 2 Kings only records two phases of Josiah's reform: first, the purification of Judean religion (23:1–20, 24–27); and second, an effort to centralize worship in Jerusalem along with the celebration of the Passover in Jerusalem. The celebration of the Passover festival during the Josianic reform is very significant, as the text reports that this marked the first time that this holy day had been observed since the days of Joshua (2 Kgs 23:21–23). If the priests had allowed the Passover to go unobserved since the days of Joshua, it seems extremely unlikely that they would have kept meticulous track of the sabbatical and Jubilee cycles.

Young identifies a number of Sabbatical years in Scripture, though none of them is identified as such in Scripture. The first case he cites is that of Jer 34:8–10, which reports a release of slaves

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[53] Cf. Exod 12:3; Lev 23:27; 25:9; Num 29:7.
[54] Eichrodt, *Ezekiel* 540.
[55] Herbert G. May, "Exegesis of the Book of Ezekiel" (IB 6; ed. G. A. Buttrick; New York: Abingdon, 1956) 284.
[56] Ibid.
[57] March 25, 2008 letter, in the writer's files. Cf. Eleazar De Beaugency, Peyrush *ʿal Neviʾiym ʿachroniym*.
[58] *S. Olam* 24; *b. Meg.* 14b.
[59] Young has already noted the spurious nature of the rabbinic traditions on which this is based. See Rodger Young, "The Talmud's Two Jubilees and Their Relevance to the Date of the Exodus," *WTJ* 68 (2006) 72-73.

during the Babylonian siege of the sixth century bc. After the Babylonian siege had begun (ca. 588 bc), the people made a solemn covenant to release their slaves, apparently hoping thereby to gain the favor of Yahweh. However, after some time, the Egyptians extended aid to Israel, and the Babylonians consequently lifted the siege (Jer 37:6–11). Following the cessation of the Babylonian siege, the Israelite slave owners took back their slaves. Young argues that, based on the release of the slaves, this must have been a Sabbatical year. However, the term used here is דְּרוֹר (*dror*), "release," from the legislation in Leviticus 25 regarding the Jubilee year, instead of שְׁמִטָּה (*shemittah*) or "remission," which is the term used for the year of remission in the legislation for the Sabbatical year (Deut 15:9). This is indeed a perplexing passage, as verses 8b-ll seem to refer to a general liberation of slaves, as in a Jubilee year (Lev 25:39–55), while verses 14–15 refer to the release of slaves who have served six years, in accordance with the legislation for the Sabbatical year (Deut 15:12–18). The release proclaimed by Zedekiah does not, therefore, conform to either passage, but seems to combine them both in a kind of mass manumission. Hyatt suggested that the action described here must have been a release by special proclamation of the king under an emergency situation,[60] much like the ancient Near Eastern practice of *mesharum* acts. Keown, Scalise, and Smothers describe the *mesharum* as follows:

The king, usually on the occasion of his accession to the throne, would declare a temporary measure of debt relief. F. Kraus's study of Old Babylonian *mesharum* texts reveals that they were not enacted at fixed intervals of years but rather in response to specific needs. They provided a way to exalt the new king as protector of the weak by alleviating excessively oppressive debt loads resulting from wartime disturbances of the economy or poor harvests. Law codes published later in the reign usually included provisions for gaining release from debt slavery. If such regulations had been followed during the previous king's reign, the *mesharum* act would have been unnecessary.[61]

Keown, Scalise, and Smothers suggest that Zedekiah's proclamation of release is like the Babylonian *mesharum* acts. "Neglect of the customary means of

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limiting the servitude of debtors (Deut 15) had created a situation ripe for the king's proclamation (v 14b)."[62] That the customary means had been neglected is made clear by verses 12–14, which reviews the law of release and then notes that it had not been followed in Israel's history:

The word of the LORD came to Jeremiah from the LORD: Thus says the LORD, the God of Israel: I myself made a covenant with your ancestors when I brought them out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery, saying, "Every seventh year each of you must set free any Hebrews who have been sold to you and have served you six years; you must set them free from your service." But your ancestors did not listen to me or incline their ears to me. (Jer 34:12–14)

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[60] James Philip Hyatt, "The Book of Jeremiah: Exegesis" (IB 5; ed. G. A. Buttrick; New York: Abingdon, 1956) 1056.
[61] Gerald L. Keown, Pamela J. Scalise, and Thomas G. Smothers, *Jeremiah 26–52* (WBC 27; Dallas: Word, 1995) 185.
[62] Ibid.

Verse 15 states that the people had only recently repented of this and did what was right in the eyes of Yahweh "by proclaiming liberty to one another." Apparently, the law had been disregarded for years. The people's repentance was short-lived, however, and it was not long after the release had been put into effect before the Hebrews recaptured their slaves "and brought them again into subjection to be your slaves" (v. 16). This was a case of "foxhole religion" or "death-bed repentance."[63] During a time of siege, Zedekiah sought to compel the people to act in a way that reflected the values of the Law, but when the siege was lifted, they took their slaves back. If the entire passage reveals anything, it surely highlights the perpetual neglect by Israel of its Sabbatical year laws and their concomitant provisions of justice and, since these years culminated in the year of Jubilee, it also suggests that observance of the year of general manumission was also not regularly practiced in the life of Israel.

Another of Young's supposed Sabbatical years is connected with a sign offered by Isaiah in the midst of the Assyrian siege: "This year eat what grows of itself, and in the second year what springs from that; then in the third year sow, reap, plant vineyards, and eat their fruit." Young states that "this has no explanation unless that year was a Sabbatical year." The natural reading of this passage, however, followed by most commentators, is that the context for this passage has to do with the fact that the land had been ravaged by the Assyrian siege, not that it was a Sabbatical year. The sign given by Isaiah is a promise of restitution offered to a remnant of Judah and Jerusalem, with the understanding that the change in fortune would only unfold gradually, over a three-year period. Hans Wildberger writes:

It is assumed in the present case that the inaction caused by the war has hindered people from planting the fields. Since working the fields fully would not be possible in the second year either, only "wild growth" would be available for food. This would indicate that the need would be even more severe the second year, since one could expect only a very minimal harvest that would grow from the few seeds that would have fallen as the first harvest was gathered. But the third year would bring normalcy back to what had been a threatening situation. One would sow again and would get to harvest—a miracle that would be seen

as a sign from Yahweh for his people, assuring them that he had turned back toward them again.[64]

The second year of Isaiah's prophecy, in which the people would be dependant on volunteer growth, is probably simply an indication that the land was in a sad condition due to the occupation of the Assyrians, and there are no indications in the text that this was a Sabbatical year.[65]

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[63] John Bright, *Jeremiah* (AB; New York: Doubleday, 1965) 224.
[64] Hans Wildberger, *Isaiah 28–39* (A Continental Commentary; Minneapolis: Fortress, 2002) 430.
[65] Most commentators subscribe to this view. E.g. Franz Delitzsch, *Isaiah: Commentary on the Old Testament* vol. 7 (trans. James Martin; Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1865-1892) 367-68; Otto Kaiser, *Isaiah 13–39:A Commentary* (OTL; Philadelphia: Westminster, 1974) 396-97; John N.

In the case of the Sabbatical year Young finds in the eighteenth year of Josiah, the reading of the Law (2 Kgs 23:2) was not on the occasion of a Sabbatical year since, as we saw above, Israel's ancestors had failed to implement the Sabbatical year system (Jer 34:14).[66] Instead, the text states explicitly that this was a covenant renewal (2 Kgs 23:3),[67] which also included the reading of the covenant document.[68] Far from showing the continuity of Israel's piety, the text suggests that the contents and commands of this newly discovered document had long since been forgotten and had therefore gone unobserved. Brueggemann persuasively explains that,

The negative counterpoint of this act, implied and not stated, is that over long years of carelessness and indifference, covenantal dimensions of life have been forgotten and neglected, so that through ethical carelessness, religious indifference, and theological heterodoxy, Israel's peculiar identity and vocation in the world have been abandoned. Thus, the narrative presents Josiah's act as an act of such profound importance that it parallels the founding act of Moses at Sinai and the renewing act of Ezra. This act is nothing less than the recovery of a lost destiny.[69]

As in the case of Zedekiah's *mesharum* act, rather than showing the people's piety, this occasion reinforces the fact of Israel's neglect of the Law and the revolutionary nature of Josiah's reinauguration of its observance. Young's other postulated Sabbatical years are either inferred or depend entirely on rabbinic tradition. Just as is the case with the Jubilee years, "there is no direct reference to a sabbatical year being observed in the OT period."[70]

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5. *Young's use of his hypothetically identified Sabbatical year and Jubilee cycle data.* On the basis of the two Jubilees he has identified in the Talmud, Young then points to Lev 25:1–10, which states that the Israelites were to begin counting tithes, Sabbatical years, and Jubilees upon their entrance into the land of Canaan.[71] On this basis, Young counts backward from the seventeenth Jubilee (Ezek 40:1) in increments of 49 years[72] to 1406 bc as this inaugural date. There are at least three problems with Young's methodology and conclusions.

Oswalt, *The Book of Isaiah: Chapters 1–39* (NIC; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1986) 664-65; Edward J. Young, *The Book of Isaiah* (NICOT; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1969) 498-501.

[66] Or, if they had implemented it at all, they had failed to follow it for very long.

[67] E.g. T. R. Hobbs, *2 Kings* (WBC 13; Waco, TX: Word, 1985) 332; Paul R. House, *1, 2 Kings* (NAC 8; Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 1995) 387; Volkmar Fritz, *1 &2 Kings* (ACC; Minneapolis: Fortress, 2003) 402-3; Donald J. Wiseman, *1 & 2 Kings: An Introduction and Commentary* (TOTC; Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 1993) 299-300.

[68] George E. Mendenhall and Gary Herion, "Covenant," *ABD* 1:1179–1202; P. R. Williamson, "Covenant," in *Dictionary of the Old Testament: Pentateuch* (ed. T. Desmond Alexander and David W. Baker; Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 2003) 139-55.

[69] Walter Brueggemann, *1 & 2 Kings* (Smyth & Helwys Bible Commentary; Macon, GA: Smyth & Helwys, 2000) 554.

[70] Christopher J. H. Wright, "Sabbatical Year," *ABD* 5:860.

[71] Young and Wood, "Critical Analysis" 15.

[72] Young argues that the Jubilee cycle was 49 years in length, rather than the 50 years that is typically assumed. See Young, "The Talmud's Two Jubilees" 75.

First, the conclusions Young draws from the dating are not in accordance with the rabbinic chronology that serves as the basis of his work. Based on the postulated seventeenth Jubilee of Ezek 40:1, which Young dates to the Day of Atonement, Tishri 10 of 574 bc, Young counts backward to 1406 bc, at which he places the Israelite entrance into Canaan. Since Israel was to start counting the cycles when they entered the land of Canaan (Lev 25:1–10), Young dates this as the first Jubilee and counts forward accordingly. This is not in accordance, however, with the rabbinic materials which Young claims substantiate his early-date exodus-conquest. According to the *Seder ʻOlam Rabbah,* the Israelites did not begin counting Sabbatical and Jubilee cycles until fifteen years after their entrance into the land of Canaan:

One has to say that 14 years Israel spent at Gilgal, seven when they were conquering and seven when they were distributing. After that (Jos. 18:1) "All the congregation of the Children of Israel assembled at Shiloh and there they put up the Tabernacle." At that moment, they started to count years for tithes, sabbatical years, and Jubilee years. (Jos. 22:1–2) "Then Joshua called the Reubenites, the Gadites, and the semi-tribe of Manasse and said to them: you kept everything that Moses, the Servant of God, had commanded you; you listened to my voice for all orders that I gave you." Joshua sent them to their tents and blessed them. On their return they built a big altar for view. Joshua celebrated with them the first sabbatical year; he died before he finished the second one.[73]

An interesting problem emerges here. The author(s) of the *Seder ʿOlam Rabbah* note that fourteen years passed after the Israelites first entered Canaan, and then state that Israel "started to count years for tithes, sabbatical years, and Jubilee years." *Seder ʿOlam* seems to say that what occurred upon the Israelites' entrance into Canaan was that they began counting, not that they celebrated a Jubilee year. The injunction in Lev 25:1–7 has also been variously interpreted. Verse 2b states that, "When you enter the land that I am giving you, the land shall observe a Sabbath for the Lord," and the following verses go on to explain how the regulations for the Sabbath year are to be observed:

Six years you shall sow your field, and six years you shall prune your vineyard, and gather in their yield; but in the seventh year there shall be a sabbath of complete rest for the land, a sabbath for the LORD: you shall not sow your field or prune your vineyard. You shall not reap the aftergrowth of your harvest or gather the grapes of your unpruned vine: it shall be a year of complete rest for the land. You may eat what the land yields during its Sabbath-you, your male and female slaves, your hired and your bound laborers who live with you; for your livestock also, and for the wild animals in your land all its yield shall be for food. You shall count off seven weeks of years, seven times seven years, so that the period of seven weeks of years gives forty-nine years. Then you shall have the trumpet sounded loud; on the tenth day of the seventh month-on the day of atonement-you shall have the trumpet sounded throughout all your land. And you shall hallow the fiftieth year and you shall proclaim liberty throughout the land to all its inhabitants. It shall be a jubilee for you: you shall return, every one of you, to your property and every one of you to your family. (Lev 25:3–10)

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[73] Heinrich W. Guggenheimer, *Seder Olam: The Rabbinic View of Biblical Chronology* (Lanham, MD: Rowan & Littlefield, 2005) 116-17.

Some interpreters have understood Lev 25:2 as saying that, upon entering the land of Canaan, Israel immediately celebrated a Sabbatical year.[74] In this case, "it resembles the practice of the *mišarum* issued by the Babylonian kings during the year of their accession to the throne."[75] It seems more natural, however, to understand Lev 25:3–8 as an explanation of how the Sabbath mentioned in verse 2 was to be carried out. If this is correct, then "the principle of Sabbath rest is now applied to a seven-year period in which the final year is to be observed as a Sabbath to the Lord."[76] If *Seder ʿOlam Rabbah* is correct that that the Israelites only "started to count years for tithes, sabbatical years, and Jubilee years" after they had been in the land for fourteen years, and if they began counting the first year of the first Sabbath year cycle in the following year, then they would not have celebrated a Jubilee until they had been in the land some sixty-five years.

In any case, Young counts backwards from a hypothetical Jubilee year in 574 bc, based on Ezek 40:1, to 1406 bc, the year in which he argues that Israel entered Canaan. The date of the exodus according to *Seder ʿOlam Rabbah,* however, has been calculated to about 1313 bc[77] or 1312/1311 bc.[78] Subtracting 40 from 1312/1311, the rabbis reached a date of about 1272/ 1271 bc for the entry into Canaan.[79] The rabbinic chronology is not, in fact, in accordance with the early date.

The second problem has to do with Young's methodology for utilizing the rabbinic materials. Young admits that rabbinic calculations were inaccurate,

noting, for example, that "rabbinical calculation methods were not capable of correctly calculating that there were forty-nine years between Josiah's eighteenth year and Ezekiel's vision," and yet he argues that their traditions regarding the Jubilee are correct. Young accepts as historical the rabbinic traditions that support his argument, while ignoring the many egregious errors in rabbinic chronology. The scheme of *Seder ʿOlam Rabbah* begins at creation and ends with the destruction of the temple in AD 70. The chronology is very condensed, with the length of the Egyptian sojourn abbreviated by taking the figure in Exod 12:40 to include the patriarchs' years in Canaan. Its dates for the exile are inaccurate by over a century and a half, dating the exile to 423 bc. The discussion of the post-biblical period in *Seder ʿOlam Rabbah* is controlled by Daniel's 70 weeks, or 490 years,[80] in which the Persian period is allotted only 34 years,

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[74] Milgrom, *Leviticus 23–27* 2152.
[75] Ibid.
[76] Harrison, *Leviticus* 224.
[77] Roger T. Beckwith, *Calender and Chronology, Jewish and Christian: Biblical, Intertestamental and Patristic Studies* (Leiden: Brill, 2001) 257.
[78] Jack Finegan, *Handbook of Biblical Chronology* (rev. ed.; Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1998) 111.
[79] Edgar Frank, *Talmudic and Rabbinical Chronology: The Systems of Counting Years in Jewish Literature* (New York: Philipp Feldheim, Inc., 1956) 19.
[80] Neither Young nor Keil take the 70 weeks, or 490 years, mathematically. See C. F. Keil, *Daniel, Commentary on the Old Testament* vol. 9 (trans. M. G. Easton; Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1865-1892) 725-60; E. J. Young, *The Prophecy of Daniel: A Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Eerd-mans, 1978) 201-21.

abbreviating it by some 165 years.[81] The idea that *Seder ʿOlam* contains "genuine historical memory" is very weak. The fact that it depends on biblical numerology (especially Daniel's prophecy of the 490 years) to calculate reign lengths and other figures both demonstrates its author's lack of extrabiblical historical information and leads to egregious errors. I have already mentioned the problems with the Talmudic materials. Young argues that these rabbinic materials "can be taken as a historical reference independent of the scriptural record, the same as if some ancient document from the Near East mentioned a date that could be tied independently to a biblical date."[82] There are very serious problems with using a source from the 5th century ad (or later), namely the Babylonian Talmud, to determine the date of events that took place in the late second millennium bc.[83] The bottom line, however, is that "rabbinic and/or Talmudic information is almost never considered reliable for chronology."[84] Not only that, but their traditions about the Jubilee cannot be considered as reliable. The fact is that "there is simply no evidence of a national jubilee in the extant historical documents of Israel."[85] The silence of the historical documents does not prove that it never happened, but it does prevent us from reconstructing a biblical chronology on that basis.

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A third area which I would identify as problematic in Young's argument is the idea that symbolic numbers can not be used in a narrative. Young began his discussion of the Jubilee and Sabbatical cycles by suggesting that only scholars influenced by redaction criticism would "seek to impose a non-literal 480 years in the midst of an otherwise historical account." The inclusion of a symbolic number in the midst of a historical account would not, however, be evidence that a document had been redacted. Indeed, biblical materials regularly incorporate genre changes.[86] In the midst of the narratives of the conquest, we have nine chapters comprising a series of border descriptions (Joshua 13–19);[87] in the midst of the narrative of Abimelech's attempt to establish a

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[81] Cf. Judah M. Rosenthal, "Seder Olam," *Encyclopedia Judaica* 2d ed. vol. 18 (ed. Fred Skolnik; Jerusalem: Keter, 2007) 235-36.
[82] Rodger C. Young, "When Did Solomon Die?," *JETS* 46 (2003) 601.
[83] Young appears to want to regard the rabbinic traditions the same way archaeologists and biblical scholars would regard a material or inscriptional discovery contemporaneous with some biblical event as providing a contemporary, independent witness to that event. The Talmudic materials, however, are not contemporaneous with the events under discussion here (the exodus and conquest), but are removed from them by about a millennium and a half. They are the product of another age and culture, and their purposes for writing and their understanding of history and its uses are all different from those of the biblical authors. See Jacob Neusner, *The Idea of History in Rabbinic Judaism* (The Brill Reference Library of Judaism vol. 12; Leiden: Brill, 2004).
[84] Marc Brettler, March 23, 2008 letter, in the writer's files.
[85] Christopher J. H. Wright, "Jubilee, Year of," *ABD* 3:1028.
[86] Cf. John Barton, "Form Criticism (OT)," *ABD* 2:838–41.
[87] Cf. Richard S. Hess, "Asking Historical Questions of Joshua 13–19:Recent Discussion Concerning the Date of the Boundary Lists," in *Faith, Tradition & History: Old Testament Historiography in Its Near Eastern Context* (ed. A. R. Millard, J. K. Hoffmeier, and D. W. Baker; Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1994) 191-205; Z. Kallai, *Historical Geography of the Bible: the Tribal Territories of Israel* (Jerusalem: Magnes/Leiden: Brill, 1986) 277-325.

monarchy, we have a fable about trees (Jdg 9:7–15). Prophetic books often contain passages belonging to different genres, even within the same chapter. For example, Isaiah 5 begins with a poem (w. 1–7), shifts to a series of oracles of woe (vv. 8–23), turns next to a series of proclamations of divine judgment (vv. 24–25), and concludes with a poetic description of the Assyrian army (vv. 26–30). The NT is no different. In the midst of narratives about the life of Jesus, we have sermons (e.g. Matt 5:1–7:28), prayers (e.g. Matt 6:9–13), and even fictional parables (e.g. Matt 22:1–14). Bruce Chilton notes that "throughout the Bible, differing genres often appear within individual works, which indicates that genres do not represent fixed types of communication to which biblical books can be made to conform."[88] Arguing that a symbol cannot occur in the midst of a historical account is unreasonable.

6. *Conclusions.* At present, it seems to me that two possible options present themselves as the best contenders for understanding the 480 years of 1 Kgs 6:1. The first is that the 480 years constitute an Israelite *Distanz-angabe,* or given distance,[89] a term denoting a large block of time linking the founding of a temple or the restoration of a cult to earlier events. Hoffmeier points to the case of Tukulti-Ninurta's declaration that 720 years had elapsed between the time of the initial construction of the Ishtar temple in Ashur and his own reconstruction of it at the beginning of his reign. Julian Reade suggests that the reference to 720 years is probably not literal, but that it may derive either from "12 times 60" or from multiplying the number of kings listed in the king list between the two monarchs, which is 45, and multiplying that number by 16, thought to be the average reign

length, thus producing the number 720.[90] Hoffmeier concludes his discussion of the number 480 with these questions:

Could it be that the 480 years of 1 Kgs 6:1 is an Israelite *Distanzangabel* If so, its purpose was not to provide a historical datum per *se,* but rather to create a link between the building of Israel's temple and the event that led to YHWH becoming the God of Israel. The same is true of Assyrian and Egyptian *Distanz-angaben.* The connection of all these texts to the construction of a temple must be taken seriously. Is the 480-year figure in 1 Kgs 6:1 an example of the use of a large symbolic number rather than a literal number and does it represent a "convention of the penman's milieu"?[91]

The second option is the previously discussed idea of the number 480 as a product of 12 x 40. In a recent discussion of this, Dale Manor has noted that a careful reading of Chronicles, in

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[88] Bruce Chilton, "Genre," *NIDB* 2:556.
[89] As suggested in Hoffmeier, "Response to Wood," 237–39. Cf. Wiseman, *1 &2 Kings,* 104; K. A. Kitchen, *On the Reliability of the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003) 307-8; idem, "Chronology," in *Dictionary of the Old Testament: Historical Books* (ed. Bill T. Arnold and H. G. M. Williamson; Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 2005) 181-82.
[90] Julian Reade, "Assyrian Kinglists, The Royal Tombs of Ur, and Indus Origins," *JNES* 60 (2001) 3-4, cited in Hoffmeier, "Response to Wood" 238. Reade also discusses other examples of *Distanzangabe.*
[91] Hoffmeier, "Response to Wood" 239.

combination with Exodus, reveals that there were 12 generations from the Exodus to the high priest who presided over the construction of Solomon's Temple.[92] Based on the possibility that 12 generations were involved, Manor notes the prospect that the number 40, instead of always functioning as an arithmetic number, may have sometimes functioned as a metaphor for a generation. Noting that some Egyptian sources indicate that his twenties would often be the time when a man would father a child,[93] Manor suggests that if one rounds the number to 25 and multiplies it by 12 generations, the result is 300 years. Adding 300 years to the fourth year of Solomon's reign produces a date of about 1266 bc, "well embedded in the reign of Rameses."[94] These two approaches are closely related, both viewing the number 480 as designed to constitute an "era" between the time of the exodus and the beginning of the construction of the first temple.

II. Archaeological Arguments

In my original article, I discussed the Mt. Ebal structure under the heading of "new archaeological evidence." In Wood's critical analysis, he puts "new" in quotations, calling this description into question. Even though the Mt. Ebal site was discovered over 20 years ago, it is still "new" in that its material remains are still being processed by The Zinman Institute of Archaeology at the University of Haifa. A final report has not yet been published for the Ebal site, because work is still being carried out there. A new, small-scale excavation season was launched in 2007 in order to collect C-14 samples

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for the final publication report. Unfortunately, this expedition was canceled by the Israeli army due to security conditions in the area. The Ebal data is also "new" in the sense that, for a variety of reasons, few are familiar with it. There has never been a scholarly colloquium held regarding the Ebal materials, nor has it received any sustained examination from the academy. In addition, new insights continue to arise from archaeological surveys, which are still being carried out.[95]

1. *Settlement data and the emergence of Israel.* Wood argues that "the Iron I settlement data … undermine Hawkins's thesis since the material culture of the Iron I settlers exhibits continuity with the previous Late Bronze culture, indicating they were not newcomers at all, but had been in the land for a considerable period of time." Wood states that "this continuity is best seen in the pottery." Wood apparently agrees with Dever's understanding of the Israelite pottery forms as

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[92] Cf. Dale Manor, "Joshua," in *Old Testament Introduction* (ed. Mark Mangano; Joplin, MO: College Press, 2005) 216-18. Manor points to 1 Chr 6:3–10 and Exod 6:16–25, which imply that Phineas was alive when the exodus commenced.

[93] Miriam Lichtheim, *Ancient Egyptian Literature,* vol. 3:*The Late Period* (Berkeley: University of California, 1980) 168.

[94] Manor, *Joshua* 217.

[95] See Ralph K. Hawkins, review of *The Manasseh Hill Country Survey* vol. 1:*The Shechem Syncline,* by Adam Zertal, Culture and History of the Ancient Near East 21 (ed. R. Halpern, M. H. E. Weippert, Th. P. J. van den Hout, and I. Winter; Leiden: Brill, 2004), in *NEASB* 51 (2006) 50-51.

having evolved from Canaanite predecessors.[96] Based on the affinities he finds between the Late Bronze prototypes and the Israelite pottery, Dever concludes that the Israelites must have originated from among the Canaanite population that lived in the coastal areas of Canaan.[97] While the Pentateuchal sources and Joshua both speak of an entrance into Canaan from the east, across the Jordan, Dever argues that "there is simply no archaeological evidence that 'Earliest Israel' was ever in Transjordan."[98] Dever proposes instead that ancient Israel was made up of disaffected Canaanites who withdrew to the hill country during and following the LB/Iron 1 transition.[99] Recent studies of the settlement patterns and accompanying archaeological data demonstrate that there was an increase in settlement in central and northern Transjordan in the Late Bronze II.[100] The process of sedentarization is evidenced by the establishment of a series of both walled and unwalled settlements, which increased in the early Iron Age I.[101] Collared-rim jars and four-room houses appeared at a number of

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these sites, a fact which, though it does not prove the ethnicity of the inhabitants of these sites, is characteristic of the Israelite settlement in Canaan.[102] Larry Herr has noted the strong similarities of the material culture of Tell al-ʿ*Umayri* with that of the highlands of Cisjordan.[103] Tell al-ʿ*Umayri* is one of the earliest Iron I sites in Palestine, contemporary with Mt. Ebal and Giloh, contains the same limited repertoire of pottery and finds as highland sites in Cisjordan, and shares a material culture most similar to the hill-country north of Jerusalem, particularly from the region of Shechem. The most frequent bowl type at ʿ*Umayri* is the "Manasseh bowl"; two collared-rim storage jars bear the same potter's mark as some jar rims from Ebal; some of the seals from ʿ*Umayri* are similar to trapezoidal seals from Ebal; and over 30 seals are similar to a

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[96] William G. Dever, *Who Were the Early Israelites and Where Did They Come From?* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003) 121-25.
[97] Ibid. 121.
[98] William G. Dever, "Archaeological Data on the Israelite Settlement: A Review of Two Recent Works," *BASOR* 184 (1991) 77-90.
[99] Ibid. 191-221.
[100] C.-H. C. Ji, "Settlement Patterns in the Region of Hesban and 'Umeiri, Jordan: A Review of 1973–1992 Archaeological Survey Data," *NEASB* 43 (1998) 1-21; Ø. S. LaBianca and R. W. Younker, "The Kingdoms of Moab and Edom: The Archaeology of Society in Late Bronze/Iron Age Transjordan (ca. 1400–500 BCE)," in *The Archaeology of Society in the Holy Land* (ed. T. E. Levy; London: Leicester University, 1995) 399-411; E. J. van der Steen, "Aspects of Nomadism and Settlement in the Central Jordan Valley," *PEQ* 127 (1995) 141-58.
[101] C.-H. C. Ji, "Israelite Settlement in Transjordan: The Relation between the Biblical and Archaeological Evidence," *NEASB* 41 (1996) 61-67; E. J. van der Steen, "Survival and Adaptation: Life East of the Jordan in the Transition from the Late Bronze Age to the Early Iron Age," *PEQ* 131 (1999)176-92.
[102] C.-H. C. Ji, "The East Jordan Valley During Iron Age I," *PEQ* 129 (1998) 19-32.
[103] Larry G. Herr, Tell el-ʿ*Umayri* and the Madaba Plains Region During the Late Bronze-Iron Age I Transition," in *Mediterranean Peoples in Transition: Thirteenth to Early Tenth Centuries BCE* (ed. S. Gitin, A. Mazar, and E. Stern; Jerusalem: Israel Exploration Society, 1998) 251-64.

kind of Cisjordanian seal.[104] It appears that finds from Tell al-ʿ*Umayri*, along with those of a handful of other sites in the Madaba plains, bear a striking similarity and may represent "a contemporaneous regional cultural entity."[105] Rainey has recently published a chart that demonstrates the derivation of the Cisjordanian pottery forms not from Canaanite predecessors, but from Transjordanian forms.[106] The archaeological data suggests that the Hebrews came into Canaan from east of the Jordan before and during the LB/Iron Age I transition, and that they brought some of their material culture with them, not that they had been in the Cisjordanian central hill country since the 15th-century bc, sharing the material culture of the Canaanites.[107]

2. *The Ebal structure and Joshua 8:30–35.* I never specifically stated that the Ebal structure was, in fact, Joshua's altar. The presence of the structure on Mt. Ebal, however, does beg the question of whether or not it has any association with the biblical account. In any case, Wood's criticisms are aimed at three aspects of my discussion of the Mt. Ebal site: date, location, and size. I will respond to each of these in turn.

a. *The chronological problem.* Wood states that "in order to relate Zertal's altar to Joshua, Hawkins, by necessity, must date the entry of Israel to ca. 1200 bc, the time when the altar was constructed." I did not assign a specific date for the Israelite entrance into Canaan, though I did note that the two

scarabs from Mt. Ebal establish a *terminus post quern* of the mid-to-late 13th century BC.[108] I would date the exodus to sometime after 1279 bc and the beginning of the conquest/settlement to sometime before 1210 bc, when, as Wood notes, the Merneptah Stele attests to its presence in Canaan.

b. *The location problem.* With regard to the issue of location, Wood raises legitimate concerns. It is not on the very peak of Mt. Ebal; instead, it is located on the second of four terraces descending the eastern side of the mountain. Mt. Gerizim cannot even be seen from the site. This may seem to be in contradiction to the injunction of Deut 11:29–30 and 27:2–8. However, as Zertal noted, while Deut 11:29 does state that the curses are to be read עַל־הַר עֵיבָל, or *"on* Mount Ebal," Deut 27:4 and Josh 8:30 state that the structure is to be built בְּהַר עֵיבָל, or *"in* Mount

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[104] Larry G. Herr, "The Settlment and Fortification of Tell al-ʿ*Umayri* in Jordan during the LB/ Iron I Transition," in *The Archaeology of Jordan and Beyond: Essays in Honor of James A. Sauer* (ed. L. E. Stager, J. A. Green, and M. D. Coogan; Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2000) 175-76.
[105] Ibid. 177.
[106] Anson F. Rainey, "Whence Came the Israelites and Their Language?," *IEJ* 57 (2007) 51.
[107] For more archaeological data that points to an Israelite migration into the land of Canaan in the Late Bronze Age and the Iron Age I, see Ralph K. Hawkins, "The Survey of Manasseh and the Origin of the Central Hill Country Settlers," in *Critical Issues in Early Israelite Origins* (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, forthcoming).
[108] "Propositions" 39–45.

Ebal."[109] Zertal suggested that the use of the ב rather than עַלmay hint "that Joshua's altar was not at the top of the mountain."[110] Indeed, Pitkänen noted that the ceremony need not have taken place at the site of the altar.[111]

Another factor that may have a bearing on the issue of the location of the Ebal structure in relation to Mt. Gerizim is the possibility that the traditional location of Mt. Gerizim may be incorrect. This is not a new suggestion, but is connected with the ancient debate about the Samaritan Pentateuch's version of Deut 27:4, which reads "Mt. Gerizim" in place of the Masoretic Text's "Mt. Ebal."[112] Eusebius believed that the Samaritan identification of Jebel et-Tor as Mt. Gerizim was incorrect.[113] Indeed, no Iron Age remains have been discovered on Jebel et-Tor.[114] Zertal has recently proposed an alternative identification of Mt. Gerizim with Jebel Kebir, the mountain adjacent to Ebal on its eastern side, in the direction of the Jordan River.[115] If this identification is correct, then the Ebal structure would be visible to parties standing both on Mt. Ebal and on Mt. Gerizim.

c. *The size and shape problem.* Wood notes that the Ebal structure is "monumental" in proportion and rectangular in shape, "not square as prescribed by Mosaic law." Wood overlooks the fact, however, that Mosaic Law mentions and gives legislation for multiple kinds of altars, including an earthen altar (Exod 20:24), an altar of unworked stones (Exod 20:25), and

the tabernacle altar (Exod 27:1–8). With respect to the altar of unworked stones, completely lacking are "any specifications concerning the dimensions of the altar, its length, width, and height, whether it was round, square or oblong, whether its base and the top were equal or there was a gradual decrease of its size, and whether there were horns."[116] The only concern the text does specify is the height of the stone altars, which would preclude the maintenance of modesty during their ascent. In order to address this problem, the text stipulates that steps not be used

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[109] The preposition ב (*beth*) has "in" as its primary meaning. Cf. F. Brown, S. R. Driver, and C. A. Briggs, *The New Brown-Driuer-Briggs-Gesenius Hebrew and English Lexicon* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1979) 88.

[110] A. Zertal, "Has Joshua's Altar Been Found on Mt. Ebal?" BAR 11 (1985) 43.

[111] P. Pitkänen, *Central Sanctuary and Centralization of Worship in Ancient Israel: From the Settlement to the Building of Solomon's Temple* (2d ed.; Gorgias Dissertations 6, Near Eastern Studies 4; Piscataway, NJ: Gorgias, 2004) 227.

[112] Debate about the SP's presumed change from Ebal to Gerizim is quite ancient. See Josephus, *Ant.* 13.3.4, sees. 74–79.

[113] *Onom.* 65.

[114] I. Magen "Gerizim, Mount," *NEAEHL* 2:484–92.

[115] See Adam Zertal, *A Nation is Born: The Altar on Mount Ebal and the Emergence of Israel* (Tel Aviv: Yedioth, 2000) 225-39 (Hebrew).

[116] Paul Heger, "Comparison and Contrast Between the Two Laws of the Altar: Ex. 20:22 כי חרבן הנפת and Deut. 27:5 לא תניף עליהם ברזל in Consideration of Their Historical Setting," in *Proceedings of the Twelfth World Congress of Jewish Studies, Jerusalem, July 29-August 5, 1997* (Jerusalem: World Union of Jewish Studies, 1999) 106.

(Exod 20:26). This explicit prohibition "implies that another means such as a ramp would be acceptable."[117] The Mt. Ebal structure is most evocative of the altar of unworked stones.[118] The command for the building of the Ebal altar in Deut 27:5–6 repeats the prohibition of Exod 20:25 against working the stones to be used in its construction. Likewise, Josh 8:31 specifically cites Exod 20:24–25 in its account of Joshua's fulfillment of that command. Zevit concluded that the Ebal structure "may be considered a most elaborate example of the stone field altar."[119] Wood seeks to compare the Ebal structure with two "contemporary" Israelite altars, the tabernacle altar, and the altar at the Arad sanctuary. Neither of these, however, is contemporary. The tabernacle altar only survives in the literary record, which places it in the Mosaic period, which would date to the Late Bronze Age I (1550–1400 bc) or the Late Bronze Age II (1400–1200 bc), depending on whether one followed the early or late date for the exodus. The Arad altar, which dates to Iron Age II (1000–586),[120] is similar to the Ebal structure in terms of its construction. It is built of unhewn stones with a fill. The Arad construction, however, is a medium-sized altar and does not have the special characteristics of the larger structure at Mt. Ebal.[121] Wood states that the Ebal structure "would have been totally out of keeping with known Israelite altars of the period." The fact is, however, that there are no known Israelite altars contemporary with the Ebal structure.[122] The

site is essentially anomalous in terms of physical parallels. However, when one compares the Ebal structure with the literary traditions of the Hebrew Bible and extra-biblical Second Temple sources which include descriptions of ancient Israelite altar sites, it appears that the central structure conforms to most of the biblical principles of Israelite altar architecture.[123] Based on the altar typology outlined by Robert Haak,[124] the construction on Mt. Ebal most closely

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[117] Ziony Zevit, *Religions of Ancient Israel: A Synthesis of Parallactic Approaches* (London: Continuum, 2001) 199.
[118] Ralph K. Hawkins, "The Iron Age I Structure on Mount Ebal: Excavation and Interpretation" (Ph.D. diss., Andrews University, 2007) 260.
[119] Zevit, *Religions in Ancient Israel* 199–200.
[120] Wood dates it to Iron Age I. The dating of the sanctuary has been vigorously debated. For recent discussion, see Anson F. Rainey, "Hezekiah's Reform and the Altars at Beer-sheba and Arad," in *Scripture and Other Artifacts: Essays on the Bible and Archaeology in Honor of Philip J. King* (ed. M. D. Coogan, J. C. Exum, and L. E. Stager; Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1994) 333-54; William G. Dever, "Were There Temples in Ancient Israel? The Archaeological Evidence," in *Text, Artifact, and Image: Revealing Ancient Israelite Religion* (ed. G. Beckman and T. J. Lewis; Providence, RI: Brown University, 2006) 300-316.
[121] For Ebal's special characteristics, see Hawkins, "The Iron Age I Structure on Mt. Ebal" 34–100.
[122] See ibid. 181-216. "Manoah's altar," near Zorah, and the four-horned altar near Shiloh, may date to the Iron Age I.
[123] See ibid. 224-67.
[124] Robert D. Haak, "Altar," *ABD* 1:162–67.

resembles the type lb open-air altar in that it is unassociated with a sacred building, though it was constructed of unworked stones instead of carved from the natural rock.[125]

Finally, Wood writes that "it makes little sense that Joshua would erect an altar as large as Zertal's for a one time ceremony." However, altars played an important role in centralizing peoples in the ancient world.[126] According to the discussions in Deut 27:1–10 and Josh 8:30–35, the cultic site on Mt. Ebal played a central role in crystallizing ancient Israel's national consciousness at this early stage in their history. A monumental altar was warranted by the momentousness of this event.

III. Conclusions

Young and Wood conclude their article by suggesting that my arguments for a late-date exodus-conquest "do not hold up to critical analysis." In this rejoinder, I have sought to show that the date of the exodus-conquest is still an open question. As one can see from my discussion of the settlement data and the Ebal site, I am inclined at present toward the later date. I agree, however, with Hoffmeier, who wrote that, "should … new evidence emerge that would support the 15th-century theory, I would shift my position, because I am not ideologically committed the 13th-century date."[127] Hoffmeier concluded his article by urging evangelical scholars "not to expend all their energies on defending a date for the exodus when the real debate today is whether the books of Exodus-Judges contain any history at all and if there was a sojourn and an exodus."[128] The Mt. Ebal site, which has largely been ignored by the scholarly community, has much to contribute to our understanding of early Israelite society. If the structure on Mt. Ebal was an Israelite cultic site-whether Joshua's altar or not-then it may attest to social organization, centralization of cult, and a crystallizing national consciousness at this early stage in the people's history.[129] The origin of the Ebal site is also "consistent with the dramatic settlement activity in the central hill country

early in the twelfth century B.C."[130] These are important implications that may substantiate the biblical portrayal of early Israel as a people unified by their faith in Yahweh even in this early

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[125] An example of the type lb open altar is Altar 4017 at Megiddo, though it is fundamentally different from the Ebal structure in its shape and design. The Ebal structure also resembles the Iron Age I structure at Giloh, which may be a *bamah* or other cultic structure. For a brief discussion, see Ralph K. Hawkins, "Giloh," *NIDB* 2:574.
[126] Haak, "Altar" 162–67.
[127] Hoffmeier, "Response to Wood" 247.
[128] Ibid.
[129] Hawkins, "Iron Age I Structure on Mt. Ebal" 268–83.
[130] George L. Kelm, *Escape to Conflict: A Biblical and Archaeological Approach to the Hebrew Exodus and Settlement in Canaan* (Fort Worth, TX: IAR Publications, 1991) 280.

period when they entered the land of Canaan.[131] These data should stimulate further inquiry into Israel's early history with a view toward the recovery of the OT past.[132] [8]

[131] See Ralph K. Hawkins, "From Disparate Tribes to 'All Israel," *NEASB* 50 (2005) 27-39.

[132] I would like to thank Anthony J. Tomasino and James K. Hoffmeier for reading preliminary drafts of this article and offering useful suggestions for improvement. Any errors are solely my responsibility.

[8] Ralph K. Hawkins, "The Date of the Exodus-Conquest Is Still An Open Question: A Response to Rodger Young and Bryant Wood," *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 51, no. 2 (2008): 243–266.

The Chronology Of 2 Kings 15–18

Andrew E. Steinmann*

For centuries the apparent contradictions in the chronology of the kings of Israel and Judah remained a mystery to Bible readers and scholars alike. Edwin R. Thiele, however, has now essentially solved the problems of chronology in the books of 1 and 2 Kings.[1] He showed that the chronological information of the books of Kings does not contain errors and that generations of scholars had been ignorant of the methods used in ancient times to record the lengths of the reigns of kings. By recognizing the unique methods used in Biblical times to record the history of the kings, Thiele showed that the book of Kings was an historically accurate record of the ancient monarchs' reigns.

The chronology of the reign of Hezekiah remains particularly troublesome, however. When did Hezekiah reign? How accurate is the present MT of 2 Kings 17—18? Did the original author make a mistake in chronology? Or did a subsequent scribe mistakenly alter the text?

I. The Solution Of Thiele

Thiele's comprehensive harmonization of the chronology of the kings of Israel and Judah[2] rests on three important facts.

1. One must recognize differences in the way the reigns of kings were reckoned. If a king began his reign in the middle of a calendar year, was he counted as reigning for the entire year (nonaccession-year dating) or was he counted as starting his reign at the beginning of the next year (accession-year dating)? Both methods were used in Judah, but only the nonaccession-year method was used in Israel. Not recognizing these different methods can cause a one- or two-year difference in reckoning the dates of a king's reign.

2. One must recognize co-regencies. Occasionally a son would be made king along with his father to insure a smooth transition of power at the death of a king. This often results in dual dating, where the length of a king's reign is given as his total years of reign, including the time he was a co-regent, but his year of accession to the throne is counted as the year he became sole ruler.

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3. One can establish dates with the help of non-Biblical sources (e.g. Assyrian or Egyptian chronology).[3]

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[1] E. R. Thiele, *Mysterious Numbers of the Hebrew Kings* (2d ed.; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1965).
[2] Thiele, *Numbers.* The first edition appeared in 1954.
[3] For a simpler summary of this approach see E. R. Thiele, *A Chronology of the Hebrew Kings* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1977).

Using these three methods Thiele was able to harmonize all of the Biblical chronology of the divided monarchy with the exception of 2 Kgs 17:1; 18:1, 9–10. He was unable to make the chronological assertions of chaps. 17 and 18 harmonize with those of chaps. 15 and 16. All these passages involve the reign of Hoshea in Israel and thus directly affect the dating of the reign of Hezekiah.

Basically, Thiele recognized a conflict between the synchronizations for the reign of Hoshea given in chaps. 15 and 16 and those given in chaps. 17 and 18. According to Thiele the synchronizations in chaps. 15 and 16 point to Pekah beginning his reign in 752 B.C., while chaps. 17 and 18 point to Pekah beginning his reign twelve years later in 740. It is the latter date that puts Hoshea, the last ruler of Israel, on the throne during the early years of the reign of Hezekiah in Judah.

Thiele believe the synchronizations given in chaps. 17 and 18 to be in error. He based his reasoning on two factors: (1) Assyrian chronology,[4] and (2) the Passover observed at the beginning of the reign of Hezekiah. Concerning the Passover, Thiele states:

Invitations to attend this passover were sent not only to Judah, but "to all Israel and Judah," including Ephraim, Manasseh, Zebulun, and Asher (2 Chron. 30:1, 6, 10, 11), areas that once had been the domain of the northern kingdom but that now were free to the envoys of Judah. Hezekiah's decree shows clearly that the former domain of Israel was now open to Judah, for Hezekiah sent his decree to the people "throughout all Israel, from Beersheba even to Dan, that they should come to keep the passover unto the Lord God of Israel at Jerusalem: for they had not done it of a long time in such sort as it was written. So the posts went out with the letters from the king and his princes throughout all Israel and Judah, and according to the commandment of the king, saying, Ye children of Israel, turn again unto the Lord God of Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, and he will return to the remnant of you that are escaped out of the hand of the kings of Assyria" (2 Chron. 30:5, 6).

The entire record points clearly to the fact that when Hezekiah came to the throne, the nation of Israel had ceased to exist, having fallen prey to Assyria.[5]

Certainly 2 Chr 30:6 seems to support Thiele's contention that Israel had fallen by the time Hezekiah reached the throne, for the decree of Hezekiah mentions those who escaped "the hand of the kings of Assyria."

Thus Thiele disregards the synchronizations given in 2 Kings 17—18. He credits them to an error in the understanding of the author of the book of Kings: "He was a man deeply concerned about the truth, but who did not understand all the truth."[6] For the writer of Kings, therefore,

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the exact situation that prevailed in 752 B.C. was not understood and the employment of dual dating for the synchronism of 2 Kings 15:27 for the accession of Pekah was not perceived. So his

[4] Thiele, *Chronology* 50–51.
[5] Ibid., pp. 53-54.
[6] Thiele, *Numbers* 542.

twenty years were treated as commencing in 740, not in 752 … With Hoshea seeming to begin in the twelfth year of Ahaz rather than the twentieth year of Jotham, and with Hezekiah seeming to have begun in the third year of Hoshea, the synchronisms of 2 Kings 17 and 18 were brought into being.[7]

Thiele's dating of the reigns of the last kings of Israel and the corresponding kings of Judah are as follows:

Israel		*Judah*	
Pekah	752–732	Jotham	750–732
Hoshea	732–723	Ahaz	735–715
		Hezekiah	715–686

Thiele's attribution of an error to the divinely inspired author of Kings produces a problem for the believer in the inerrancy of Scripture. For this reason others have tried to follow Thiele's basic chronology for the book of Kings but have offered different solutions for the chronology of Hezekiah's reign.

II. The Solution Of Kitchen And Mitchell

In the *New Bible Dictionary* K. A. Kitchen and T. C. Mitchell[8] propose to harmonize the synchronizations presented in 2 Kings 17 and 18 by postulating a thirteen-year co-regency of Hezekiah with his father Ahaz. This approach is favored by R. K. Harrison as well.[9] Thus the reigns of the above-mentioned kings would be dated as follows:

Israel	*Judah*

[7] Thiele, *Chronology* 59.
[8] *New Bible Dictionary* 217ff. according to R. K. Harrison, *Old Testament Introduction* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1969) 734.
[9] Harrison, *Introduction* 734–736.

Pekah	740–732	Jotham	750–732
Hoshea	732–723	Ahaz	744–715
		Hezekiah	729–686

Seemingly this solves the problem of the synchronizations given in 2 Kings 17 and 18, but in reality it produces more problems than it solves. It extends the total reign of Ahaz to thirty years, though his reign is mentioned as only sixteen years in the text (2 Kgs 16:2). Thus 2 Kings is silent about his fourteen years of co-regency. The same could be said of Hezekiah's forty-three years, of which only twenty-nine are mentioned in 2 Kgs 18:2.

Furthermore, Ahaz was twenty years old when he began to reign (16:2). His father Jotham was twenty-five years old when he began to reign (15:33). If Ahaz was twenty years old in 744, then he was born in 764. But his father was born only nine years earlier (in 775). If Ahaz was twenty years old when he assumed the throne as sole regent in 732, however, then according to Kitchen and Mitchell he was only eight years old when he was made co-regent. One

might imagine the case of a kingdom being ruled by counselors on behalf of a regent who had to reign at a young age because of the death of his father, such as the case of Manasseh (21:1), but why would a son be made co-regent at such a young age?

The postulate of Kitchen and Mitchell creates a corresponding problem concerning Hezekiah. Either he was born when Ahaz was ten years old or he was made co-regent at the age of eleven.

Thiele's reconstruction faces fewer difficulties. Under his scheme Ahaz was born when Jotham was twenty and Hezekiah when Ahaz was fifteen, both within the realm of possibility.

Furthermore, Hezekiah's great Passover becomes a problem for Kitchen and Mitchell. If it took place in the early part of his co-regency, how was it that his messengers could freely go about inviting the Israelite tribes to Jerusalem? It might be asserted that this Passover happened when Samaria was being besieged by the Assyrians. But why would the Assyrians allow messengers from Judah to roam freely in Israel, considering that Assyria also was hostile to Judah? How could Hezekiah refer to the remnant of the people of Israel who escaped out of the hand of the Assyrians if Samaria had not yet fallen (see 2 Chr 30:6)?

Still another problem with the reconstruction of Kitchen and Mitchell is recognized by Gleason Archer.[10] He notes that 2 Kgs 18:13 would conflict with the other chronological information in chaps. 17 and 18 because the date of Sennacherib's invasion of Judah is well established by Assyrian sources. 2 Kgs 18:13 relates that in the fourteenth year of Hezekiah the Assyrian siege of Jerusalem took place. But if Kitchen and Mitchell are correct, this invasion is placed about ten years too early by the author of Kings. Archer seeks to emend the reading to "twenty-fourth year" of Hezekiah's reign. This introduces another problem, however. The author of Kings clearly sets Hezekiah's reign as twenty-nine years. He also notes that "in those days" (referring to the days of the invasion of Sennacherib) Hezekiah became sick and nearly died before God granted his request to live (2 Kings 20). God grants Hezekiah fifteen more years (2 Kgs 20:6). It is obvious that the author wishes to show that Hezekiah's reign was fourteen years before Sennacherib's invasion and fifteen years afterward for a total of twenty-nine years. Archer's emendation destroys this.

III. Another Solution

But another solution to the chronology of 2 Kings 17 and 18 exists. Before it is offered, however, a few things need to be noted about the chronological information given in Kings.

The information concerning the year of a king's accession to the throne, his age, and the number of years he ruled is normally given at the report of the beginning of his reign. Only rarely is any information given at the end of a reign, and then only the years of rule are given (1 Kgs 2:11; 11:42; 2 Kgs 10:36; 18:10). Never is the end of a king's reign synchronized with the reign of another

king (with the exception of 18:10, one of the passages under discussion here).[11] A king's reign is almost never synchronized more than once with another king of the other kingdom (either Israel or Judah, as the case may be). The lone exceptions are Joram (who is synchronized with both Jehoram and Jehoshaphat: 1:17; 3:1) and Hoshea (15:30; 17:1).

From these observations it is obvious that the synchronizations in 2 Kings 17 and 18 are peculiar. 2 Kgs 17:1 is the second synchronization of Hoshea's reign (15:30 with Jotham, 17:1 with Ahaz). 2 Kgs 18:9 synchronizes the middle of the reign of Hoshea with the middle of the reign of Hezekiah, a type of synchronization unknown in the rest of Kings. 2 Kgs 18:10 synchronizes the end of Hoshea's reign with the middle of Hezekiah's reign, again unique to Kings.

What do all these rare (for Kings) forms of chronological information indicate? Perhaps the hand of a second author. Someone after the original time of writing may have added the synchronizations of 17:1; 18:1, 9–10. Thiele is basically correct in stating that, for this "author,"

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[10] G. L. Archer, *A Survey of Old Testament Introduction* (Chicago: Moody, 1974) 291-292.
[11] 1 Kgs 15:28; 16:10 may be seen as synchronizing the ends of the reigns of Nadab and Elah with the kings of Judah. Actually, however, they serve to synchronize the dates of the successful rebellions in the northern kingdom. For this reason they stress the reign of the next king, stating that the successor "reigned in his [the predecessor's] stead."

"the exact situation that prevailed in 752 B.C. was not understood and the employment of dual dating for the synchronism of 2 Kings 15:27 for the accession of Pekah was not perceived. So his twenty years were treated as commencing in 740, not 752." [12] That is, a later scribe, not the inspired author of Kings, may have added these syn-chronizations. Perhaps he was trying to make sense of the historical information contained in 2 Kings and did not understand the concept of"dual dating" associated with co-regencies. Thus, as Thiele states: "With Hoshea seeming to begin in the twelfth year of Ahaz rather than the twentieth year of Jotham, and with Hezekiah seeming to have begun in the third year of Hoshea, the synchronisms of 2 Kings 17 and 18 were brought into being."[13]

Therefore a later scribe's additions of his chronology to the record of Hoshea and his reign in 2 Kgs 17:1; 18:1, 9–10 are not part of the inspired text. The length of reign for Hoshea given in 18:10 may be original, since the lengths of the reigns of other kings are occasionally recorded at the end of their reigns. To understand what the original text of each of these verses may have said, it is necessary to examine each separately.

"In the twelfth year of Ahaz king of Judah, Hoshea the son of Elah began to reign in Samaria over Israel, and he reigned nine years" (17:1).

This synchronization was added to make chap. 17 consistent with chap. 18. It is unnecessary, for the synchronization of 15:30 of Hoshea's reign with that of Jotham is sufficient to place Hoshea in his proper sequence. The reign of Hoshea is not immediately treated following 15:30, however. After relating the history of the reigns of Jotham and Ahaz, the narrative returns to the reign of Hoshea in chap. 17. But there is no need to synchronize the reign of Hoshea

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with a king of Judah a second time. There is no need to give the total length of Hoshea's reign, for this is done when the end of his reign is recorded (17:6). 2 Kgs 17:1 may have originally read: "Now Hoshea son of Elah began to reign in Samaria over Israel … "

"In the third year of Hoshea son of Elah, king of Israel, Hezekiah the son of Ahaz, king of Judah, began to reign. He was twenty-five years old when he began to reign … "(18:1–2).

Here the beginning of Hezekiah's reign is synchronized with Hoshea's reign. However, this again is a case of an added synchronization by a later author. The author had already explained the fall of Samaria and the reasons for it in chap. 17. Now he has to explain why Judah did not fall, because it also sinned against God (17:19). The answer is found in chap. 18, the subject of which is the faithfulness of Hezekiah. For the sake of Hezekiah, Judah was spared. 2 Kgs 18:1–8 makes this clear and tells us why Hezekiah was able to successfully rebel against Assyria. The scribe who added the synchronization of 18:1 failed to see that Kings relates not just history but God's dealing in history, and so he added the synchronization where none was needed. The original text may have read: "Hezekiah the son of Ahaz was twenty-five years old when he began to reign … "(cf. 21:1; 22:1; 23:36; 24:8, 18).

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[12] Thiele, *Chronology* 59.
[13] Ibid.

"In the fourth year of King Hezekiah, which was the seventh year of Hoshea son of Elah, king of Israel, Shalmaneser king of Assyria carne up against Samaria and besieged it and at the end of three years he took it. In the sixth year of Hezekiah, which was the ninth year of Hoshea king of Israel, Samaria was taken" (18:9–10).

2 Kgs 18:9–12 repeats the account of the fall of Samaria. The purpose here is to contrast the fall of disobedient Samaria and the survival of obedient Judah under Hezekiah. The purpose is to explain why God allowed Hezekiah to rebel against Assyria but gave Israel into the hand of Assyria. No synchronizations are needed. In fact, no chronological information is needed at all. That is not the point here. The information on the length of Hoshea's reign may have been repeated here, even though it was not necessary. But considering that 18:10–12 is closely parallel to 17:5–6 it most likely was part of the inspired text. The original text of 18:9–11 may have read: "Shalmaneser king of Assyria came up against Samaria and besieged it and at the end of three years he took it. In the ninth year of Hoshea king of Israel, Samaria was taken. The king of Assyria carried the Israelites away to Assyria … "

The Biblical author's point is not that the fall of Assyria took place during Hezekiah's reign. The point is that, unlike Israel, Judah with God's help was able to repel the attacks of Assyria.

IV. Conclusion

In a sense Thiele was correct. The synchronizations of 2 Kings 17 and 18 are in error. But he was wrong to attribute it to the inspired author. The hand of a later scribe most likely is responsible for these errors. Certainly scribes did alter other portions of Scripture, though not in so dramatic a fashion. Gen 14:14 is an example. The city of Dan was called Laish until long after Moses' day (Josh 19:47; Judg 18:29). Moses probably wrote "Laish," but a later scribe

wrote "Dan," the name he was used to using for that city. Aling has proposed the same type of change in the case of the city of Avaris (Ramses in the extant text of Genesis and Exodus).[14]

There is, admittedly, one problem with this thesis. No manuscript known supports the alterations proposed above. But the thesis has important advantages over the other proposed solutions. It does not deny the inerrancy or inspiration of Scripture. It solves the apparent difficulty with the introduction of only one problem—that of scribal additions to the text. All other proposed solutions increase the problems of the text more than they solve the problems. Perhaps in future years a better solution will present itself through archeological discovery of Biblical or extra-Biblical texts. I doubt this possibility, however, and prefer to preserve both the historical integrity of the author of Kings and harmonize its various historical references in the least objectionable way.[9]

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[14] C. F. Aling, "The Biblical City of Ramses," *JETS* 25 (1982) 129-137.

[9] Andrew E. Steinmann, "The Chronology of 2 Kings 15–18," *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 30, no. 4 (1987): 390–397.