

## h. Josephus, the Canon, and Chronology

Josephus made use of the Septuagint as consistently as had Luke, the New-Testament writer. The New-Testament writers made only limited use of the Septuagint in places where its meaning differed from that of the Hebrew. But Josephus and later Christian writers made extensive, and sometimes costly, use of the Septuagint in places where it greatly differed from the Hebrew being preserved by the Jews.

Shortly after he wrote the Antiquities in A.D. 93, Josephus wrote Against Apion to counter Greek Anti-Jewish rhetoric.

"Those antiquities contain the history of five thousand years." he pointed out (Against Apion 1:1). "But as for the place where the Grecians inhabit, ten thousand destructions have overtaken it and blotted out the memory of former actions," (1:2). (Whiston's transla

He alleged that Greeks had written fictitious histories to show off their writing abilities. "It has not been the case with us that all alike were allowed to record the nation's history, nor is there with us any discrepancy in the histories recorded. No, the prophets alone obtained a knowledge of the earliest and most ancient things by virtue of the inspiration which was given to them from God, and they committed to writing a clear account of all the events of their own time, just as they occurred," (1:7, The Canon of the Old Testament by Herbert Edward Ryle; London, and New York; MacMillan and Company; Second Edition, 1895; Page 170).

"For it is not the case with us to have vast numbers of books disagreeing and conflicting with one another. We have but two and twenty containing the history of all time, books that are justly believed in (Compare with Eusebius's Church History 2:10). And of these, five are the books of Moses which comprise the laws, and the earliest traditions from the creation of mankind down to the time of his death. This period falls short but by a little of three thousand years. From the death of Moses to the (death) of Artaxerxes king of Persia, the successor of Xerxes, the prophets who succeeded Moses wrote the history of the events that occurred in their own time in thirteen books. The remaining four documents comprise hymns to God and practical precepts to men. From the days of Artaxerxes to our own time, every event has indeed been recorded, but these recent but these recent words have not been deemed worthy of equal credit with those ~~which~~ which preceded them, on account of failure of failure of the exact succession of the prophets. There is practical proof of the spirit with which we treat our scriptures, for although so great an interval of time has now past, not a soul has ventured either to add or to remove or to alter a syllable; and it is the instinct of every Jew, from the day of his birth, to consider those scriptures as the teaching of God, to abide by them, and if need be, cheerfully lay down his life in their behalf," (1:7, (Ryle, Page 170).

Josephus made two unsubstantiated claims: (1.) that there was a twenty-two book canon; and (2.) that inspired accounts have been accurately preserved with every event since the last ~~prophet~~ of the succession of prophets recorded.

These claims can be tested. The following evidence shows what forced the rabbis, after A.D. 90, to enforce permanent standards.

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Writings themselves did not contain a precise list of sacred books. As years passed, they did become gradually more specific (Ryle, "Excursus E," Pages 30-303).

In the Old Testament, any complete book of Moses is mentioned only three times (Ezra 7:6, Neh. 8:1, Mal. 4:4). Without naming its writer, the book of the law is mentioned in 2 Kings 22:8 and is alluded to in Psalms 40:7-8). A collection of prophetic books, possibly including the law as well, is alluded to in Daniel 9:2. Daniel simply called them "the Scrolls."

In the apocrypha, the law is singled out in a number of ways. It is called "the Law," (Ecclus 24:22), "the Book of the Covenant of the Most High God," "the Books of the Law," (1 Mac. 1:56), and "the Book of the Covenant," (1:57). Addressing God, it is called "The Law," in 2 Esdras (called 4 Esdras only when numbered with Ezra and Nehemiah) 14:21-22. The prophets as a collection of books are not mentioned, unless the Law is also mentioned (Ecclus Prologue, and 2 Mac. 15:9). By the time of the Maccabees, the oral prophets had long-since ceased (1 Mac. 9:27).

First, the sacred texts were generally known as the Law. Later, there was the complete collection known as the Law and the Prophets. The earliest known writing which refers to the scriptures as in three divisions is the forward to the Greek translation of "The Wisdom of Joshua, the son of Sirach." His grandson's translation into Greek, commonly known as "Ecclesiasticus", was done in around 132 B.C. In the forward to the translation, the scriptures are referred to as "The Law, and the Prophets, and the others who followed after them," "The Law, and the Prophets, and the Other Books of Our Fathers," and "The Law, The Prophets, and the Rest of the Books," (Ryle, Page 129).

Now the absence of oral prophecy (mentioned in 1 Mac. 9:27 and Against Apion 1:8) is critical in any accounting of this third division of Hebrew Scriptures. The writer of 1 Maccabees, in around 100 B.C., portrayed the Jews who fought against Antiochus as being sensitive of the need for a long-awaited prophet (1 Mac. 4:46, 9:27). The writer is either truthful or is reflecting an attitude of his own time, nearly seventy years later. In either case, it would have been difficult for a recently written prophetic book to gain credibility. Daniel's vision of the little horn at the latter end of the rule of the four Hellenistic kingdoms (Dan. 8:8-9, 22-23) "pertained to the appointed time of the end," (Dan. 8:19). The promised end (Dan. 8:19, 11:35-36, 40-45) was not taking place. Still, Mattathias who died in 166 B.C. allegedly spoke of Daniel and his three co-worker in his last exhortations to his sons (1 Mac. 2:59-60).

Since the Maccabean writer singled out Daniel, it is not surprising that he singled out the psalms. He quoted from Psalm 79:2-3 in 1 Mac. 7:16-17 (Ryle Page 157).

Jesus and the apostles were somewhat more ~~xxxxxxxx~~ clear in their identification of sacred (2 Tim. 3:15) and holy (Romans 1:2) Scriptures. As usual, the law and Moses were often synonymous (Acts 15:21, 2 Cor. 3:15). Like the apocryphal writers, Jesus and the apostles spoke of the scriptures as "the Law and the Prophets," (Matt. 7:12, Luke 16:16), "the Law of Moses and the Prophets," (Acts 28:23), or "Moses and the Prophets," (Luke 16:29, 31). Paul wrote of the Law as including the Prophets. He identified Isaiah 28:11 as a passage in the Law (1 Cor. 14:21).

Remember that Old-Testament writers made clear references to the Law but rarely mentioned the written prophetic books. Later, the third collection of Scriptures was called "the rest of the books."

Later writers were identifying the sacred Scriptures more clearly than their forefathers had done. Jesus spoke of the Scriptures as divided into three parts when He said, "Everything written about me in the law of Moses and the prophets and the psalms must be fulfilled" (Luke 24:44).

The age-old status of the law is unmistakable in New-Testament writings, however. The term "Law" could refer to more than just the first five books. Paul quoted Isaiah 28:11 stating that "In the law it is written," (1 Cor. 14:21). Jesus argued with the Pharisees concerning Psalms 82:6 saying, "Is it not written in your law, . . . and scripture cannot be broken," (John 10:34-35). Long before, Joshua had written "in the book of the law of God," (Josh. 24:26) instructions after Moses's death. If passages written by Joshua, Isaiah, and Asaph were written "in the law," it is not surprising that Jesus proclaimed as law instructions found in the prophets and the proverbs (Matt. 5:22-22-26).

Jesus followed the practice of earlier writers in that He repeatedly spoke of two divisions of scriptures. He came not to abolish the law or the prophets (Matt. 5:17). The so-called "golden rule" "is the law and the prophets," (Matt. 7:12). Moses was so heavily associated with the written law (Acts 15:21, 2 Cor. 3:15), naturally Jesus would have identified the two-part collection of Scriptures as "Moses and the prophets," (Luke 16:29,31). The possibility that New-Testament writers expressed Jesus's teachings in their own words has nothing to do with the general picture as to how the sacred Scriptures were identified.

Jesus had a more intimate attitude toward the prophets than the Maccabean writers did. The Maccabees were perplexed by the prolonged absence of the oral prophets. Jesus did not contradict this observation. Instead, he focused upon the written prophecies by saying, "The law and the prophets were until John," (Luke 16:16). He even had occasion to single out the prophets apart from the law, because "all this has taken place, that the scriptures of the prophets might be fulfilled," (Matt. 26:56). It was rare that the term "The Law and the Prophets" was not used. Remember, Moses wrote prophecies which were being fulfilled (Deut. 18:15-18, John 5:46, 6:14, Acts 3:22-23). The prophet David wrote of the Messiah in the psalms (Acts 2:30-31). So Jesus's statement at the time of His being arrested (Matt. 26:56) is not necessarily singling out one section of the Hebrew scriptures. Mark did single out the prophetic books when he quoted from Mal. 3:1 and Isaiah 40:3 (Mark 1:2-3, Emphatic Diaglott).

The New-Testament writers quoted from all of the Old-Testament books, except from the prophetic books of Obadiah and Nahum, and of "the rest of the books," Ezra (which included Nehemiah), Esther, Song of Songs, and Ecclesiastes (Ryle, Page 161). Obviously, Obadiah and Nahum were part of what Josephus called the "succession of the prophets."

Josephus wrote during the years that the apostle John was outliving the other New-Testament writers. The apostles, unlike Josephus, were not pre-occupied with ancient history. For this reason, Josephus had reasons to make use of the books of Ezra-Nehemiah and Esther which did not concern the apostles. In Ant. 11:5:8, he details an account of Nehemiah's building of Jerusalem's wall quite different from the scriptural account. He relied on the inaccurate Septuagint account about Esther when he wrote Ant. 11:6.

Josephus's use of Scripture shared some, but not all, things in common with the use made by Jesus and His apostles. (1.) "In his description of Solomon, Josephus makes no allusion to his being supposed to have written the books of Ecclesiastes and Song of Songs, nor on the other hand to his having been the writer of the book of Proverbs," (Ryle, Page 169). New-Testament references to the Proverbs are clear (Prov. 26:11, 2 Pet. 2:22, etc.). Paul addressed matters found in Ecclesiastes and at the same time elsewhere (Job 1:21, Ecc. 5:15, 1 Tim. 6:7, Prov. 23:4, 28:22, Ecc. 5:10, 1 Tim. ~~6:9-10~~ 6:9-10, Jer. 17:10, Ps. 1:5, Dan. 11:2, Ecc. 12:13-14, Acts 17:30-31). (2.) Both Josephus and James unexpectedly drew upon unknown sources occasionally (Ant. 11:4:9, see Whiston's note). James referred to his unknown source as "scripture," (James 4:5). (3.) Josephus drew upon the book of 1 Esdras (3 Esdras when placed after Nehemiah) when relating events relating events told of in the Biblical book of Ezra as well (Ant. 11:3). Jude (14-15) quoted 1 Enoch 1:9 and seems to have referred to the missing part of "The Assumption of Moses," in verse 9. (4.) Jesus spoke of Daniel as a prophet (Matt. 24:15), even though the authorities preserved it as part of the third group. Josephus regarded Daniel's book as sacred (Ant. 11:1:7), and seems to have included the book within the prophets.

Josephus's order of books, from the Septuagint collection, was something like this: (1.) Five books of the law: Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy; (2.) Thirteen of the prophets: Joshua, Judges, Ruth, Kings (including Samuel), Chronicles, Ezra (including Nehemiah), Esther, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Lamentations, Ezekiel, Daniel, and the Twelve. Exact order, division, and inclusion of books not listed by the rabbis as among the prophets is uncertain. (3.) Four documents of hymns and practical precepts: Job, Psalms, Proverbs, and the Song of Songs. The influence of Aquila's work in the Greek of Ecclesiastes after the time of Josephus might explain ~~how~~ how it is that Josephus accounted for only four of the five books of hymns and precepts.

Careful conclusions as to when the text and collection of sacred scriptures were standardized should be drawn from the fragmentary facts. Historians ~~apart~~ apart from God naturally ~~have~~ have viewed the chaos of Jerusalem's destruction as the last straw which forced the rabbis to standardize the scriptures. The survival of their religion was at stake. Of course, loyalty to God has assured either well-meaning speculation or illuminated truth.

Often, the loyal have drawn upon human reasoning to explain how it was that Stephen stated that Jacob was involved with seventy-five kindred (Acts 7:14), instead of seventy (Gen. 46:27) when he came to Egypt. The seventy are named in Genesis 46:9-25: thirty-three are numbered from Leah (46:15), sixteen from Zilpah (46:18), fourteen from Rachel (46:22), and seven from Bilhah (46:25). One of Leah's offspring (perhaps Dinah); two dead sons were counted. Three of the seventy were already in Egypt. Of the remaining sixty-eight names, two were female and two were dead, somehow leaving sixty-six (Gen. 46:26), and two, Ohad and Job are omitted later (1 Chr. 4:24, 7:1). So the connection between sixty-six and seventy (Gen. 46:26-27) is unclear.

Joseph, his wife and two sons does not account for it. Stephen read the Septuagint which says, "And the sons of Joseph, who were born to him in the land of Egypt, were nine souls; all the souls of the house of Jacob who came with Joseph into Egypt, were seventy-five souls," (Gen. 46:27). That's nine more than sixty-six.

Stephen's accuracy is obvious, because he accurately quoted the Septuagint. Luke's accuracy is not an issue, because he claimed  
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to write what "Stephen said," (Acts 7:2). The Bible of the Hellenistic Jews, used by Stephen and Josephus, was the Septuagint. We can really understand what a task it was to be accurate by seeing how Jews used the Septuagint when counting the years since Adam was created.

The earliest known Jewish historians used the Septuagint. The first of these was Demetrius who wrote in around the late third century B.C. He may have alleged that the sojourning beginning with Abraham lasted 215 years until Jacob entered Egypt and 217 more years until the Exodus (Josephus In Nine Volumes Translated by H. St. J. Thackeray; Cambridge, Mass.; Harvard University Press; London; William Heinemann, ~~xxxx~~ Limited; 1967; Note on Ant. 2:15:2(300)).

Eupolemus in about 158 B.C. identified 5307 as the year of Adam's being created. He stated that from the creation of Adam to the fifth year of Demetrius I and the twelfth of Ptolemy VII was 5149 years (Clement of Alexandria, Strom. 1:141:4 (Revue de Qumran No. 41; Oct. 1982; "The End of the World In Jewish and Christian Calculations, by Lester L. Grabbe; Page 108)). About thirty years after Eupolemus, the book of Jubilees was written. This book is important, because it shows that the Septuagint was not the only version used. But following in the footsteps of Demetrius and Eupolemus was Josephus.

Josephus was being very general when he stated that the world was about five thousand years old in his own time (Ant. Preface 3(.13), Against Apion 1:1(.1)). For convenience, the Latin expression "Anno Mundi," (meaning XXX year of the world) follows any number of years since an alleged year that Adam was created. It is abbreviated A.M. So Josephus lived in about 5000 A.M.

In Ant. 20:11, Josephus stated "These antiquities contain what has been handed down to us from the time of the creation of man to the twelfth year of the reign of Nero." He claimed that he "accurately recorded . . . everything according to what is written in our sacred books," (Ryle, Page 169). Not only did he have faith in his personal accuracy in representing his sources, but he ~~xxx~~ he wrote concerning the numbers of years from Adam to the flood, "The time is written down in our sacred books, those who then lived having noted down with great accuracy both births and deaths of illustrious men," (Whiston: Ant. Ant. 1:3:3(82)).

Josephus can be checked against himself where ever tampering with his text throughout history does not get in the way. Josephus did something which writers of the Bible rarely did. He restated the number of years between major events on different occasions.

Notice the variety of ways he spelled out the years from Adam to the flood. (1.) He detailed the Biblical account. The Bible lists every patriarch from Adam to Noah, tells how long each lived, and tells how old each father was when his son was born. But while the ten figures adding up to 2262 years in Thackeray's text are like those in the Septuagint of Africanus and Codex Alexandrinus, Whiston's 2256 year total is that of a *corrupt text*. (2.) Josephus introduces this passage by himself giving his calculation of the total, 2202 years according to Thackeray, 2050 according to Whiston. Whiston thought this looked curiously similar to the 1050 year total of the Masoretic text. (3.) The pre-flood world lasted from 3102 to 1400 years before Solomon began to build the temple (Ant. 8:3:1(.1+)). It was from 3113 to 1907 years before this temple was destroyed (Ant. 10:8:5(. )). These two figures, (1002 and 1550 years respectively) are in 90 percent agreement with the 1050 years of the Masoretic text. Whiston in his appendix, "Disertation V," suggested that this 1556 year total was Josephus's own version of what took place.

Discrepancies in figures for years from the flood to Terah's seventieth year are similar in variety. (1.) In Ant. 1:6:5 (.150+), Josephus's compilation of Gen. 11:10-26 has figures totaling 893 years. The ages of Reu and Serug, upon their sons' births, are mistakenly transposed, and Nahor's age ~~IX~~ disagrees with all other texts. Otherwise, this text agrees with Whiston's *Arrived at figures in Dissertation*. Whiston's figures add up to 892 years. This agrees with all Septuagint texts, except that Josephus excludes Cainan II, and this text strangely agrees with the Masorets regarding Nahor. (2.) Josephus's own calculated total is found in Ant. 1:6:5 (.148)). Strangely, Whiston's text says, 292, agreeing with the Masoretic text. Thackeray's figure is 992. (3.) The period from the flood to Abraham's trip to Canaan was from 1440 to 1020 years before the first temple (Ant. 8:3:1 (.61+)). Abraham journeyed to Canaan 75 years after he was born in his father Terah's seventieth year. He journeyed to Canaan 430 years before the Exodus (Ant. 2:15:2+ (.300, 318), Septuagint Ex. 12:40, Gal. 3:17). So Abraham was born 505 years before the Exodus. The period from the flood to the Exodus was from 1957 to 1062 years before the first temple's destruction (Ant. 10:8:5 ( )). By ~~XXXXXX~~ themselves, these figures identify about 345 to 390 years from the flood to Abraham's birth. Here Josephus abandons the Septuagint.

From Abraham's trip to Canaan until the building of the temple, Josephus precisely identified 1022 (not 1020) years. This is 430 until the Exodus (Ant. 2:15:2), plus 592 years from the Exodus to the founding of the temple (Ant. 7: : (.68), 8:3:1 (.61)). The period between the Exodus and the temple was from 1062 to 470 years before the first temple's destruction (Ant. 10:8:5 ( )). Moses died shortly before 3000 A.M. (Against Apion 1:8).

Josephus identified 612 years from the Exodus to the time of the temple building when Zadok became high priest (Ant. 20:10 (.230)). He had no Septuagint text, like some today, which give 440 years from the Exodus to the temple-building three years after Zadok was appointed (1 Kings 6:1).

Josephus listed other figures which point to 631 years from the Exodus to the temple's founding. He stated that there were 947 years from the Exodus to the fall of Samaria, and Samaria's fall was 2-0 years after Israel revolted from Rehoboam (Ant. 9:14:1 ( )). He differs from the Biblical text in writing that Solomon reigned eighty years (Ant. 8:7:8 (.211)). The 76 years from the temple's founding to Solomon's death puts Samaria's destruction 316 years after the temple was ~~XXXXXXXX~~ begun.

Numerical discrepancies in the different Biblical texts of the Kings are very minor compared to those in Genesis 5 and 11. The same is true for discrepancies in Josephus's text. Josephus has three one-year discrepancies for the nineteen kings of Israel. For both the kings of Israel and Judah after Solomon's death, each of ~~IX~~ Josephus's calculated totals differs from a similarly arrived at sum in the Bible by one year.

Josephus calculated that the period of the first temple was 470 years six months and ten days (Ant. 10:8:5). By comparing ~~XXXXX~~ more figures here (given above) with those in Ant. 8:3:1, this period lasted A.M. 3102 to A.M. 3513, from 1440 to 1957 after the flood or from 592 to 1062 after the Exodus. Two of these three figures are of value. The first, 411 years, remarkably agrees with the 410 years of later standard chronology. The second, 557 years, is in error. The third, 470 years, is a reminder that Josephus can be consistent.

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Josephus erroneously numbered 460 years from Solomon's appointment of Zadok to the captivity of Josadak when the temple was destroyed (Ant. 20:10(.232)). Thackeray suggests that "Josephus has carelessly subtracted four years from the 410 years of the temple's duration instead of adding four, since Zadok was high priest in the first year of Solomon's reign, and the temple was built in the fourth year of his reign," (Note B. on Ant. 10:0:5).

Josephus also indirectly identified a period of either 421 or 441 years for the first temple. Based upon a view of 2 Chron. 36:21-2 written by later rabbis, he generally thought of the exile as lasting seventy years (Against Apion 1:19). His Babylonian sources (confirmed by Lech. 1:12 and 7:5) show that the temple was laid waste for 50 years (Against Apion 1:21). The period from the first temple's ground-breaking to the returning of the exiles was from 1130 to 639 years before the second temple's destruction in A.D. 70 (Wars 6:4:8). According to this, the exiles returned in 570 B.C.

The exiles returned in 585 B.C., that is 481 years before the death of Hyrcanus in 104 B.C. (Ant. 13:11:1( )). The list of high priests dates the return of the exiles in either 573 or 580 B.C. depending upon whether Jonathan ruled seven (Ant. 13:6:6) or fourteen years (Ant. 20:10).

Josephus's history when investigated for the accuracy of his sources breaks down into three parts. The first covers the period from Adam to the return of the exiles. It exposes the general state of the Biblical text. The second, which accounts for the errors in his B.C. dates given above, is his apocryphal account. It especially exposes the failure of the Jews to keep track of history at that time. Rabbinic evidence provides drastic confirmation His third section beginning with about Ant. 12:5 is less and less apocryphal and more and more historic. (See III.A.14. here later).

The purpose here is to account for the preservation of the Bible, not to harmonize Josephus's accounts as Whiston tried to do in his appendix. To accomplish this, review the details presented above and see whether or not it confirms the following: (1.) Ant. 1:3:3-4 and 1:6:5 displays Josephus's use of the Septuagint, but the text of Josephus itself has not been perfectly preserved. (2.) Ant. 2:15:2 dealing with the 430 year sojourning confirms Paul's statement in Galatians 3:17. (3.) He comes closest to figures like those in the Masoretic text **IX** for the pre-flood world in Ant. 8:3:1 and 10:8:5. (4.) The vital figure in 1 Kings 6:1 necessary for dating the Exodus was unknown to Josephus. (5.) Where there are many discrepancies in ancient Bibles (Gen. 5 and 11), discrepancies are numerous in Josephus's text, both due to Josephus and the copiers. Where there are comparatively few discrepancies in ancient Bibles (such as in the kings), there are fewer discrepancies in Josephus's text. (6.) Josephus's calculated totals for the divided monarchies (in Ant. 9:1-:1 and 10:8:5) hold a key as to how later rabbis documented the bench mark for the Hebrew calendar.

Three matters had to be resolved. (1.) **IX** Which books were sacred (2.) Which text was sacred? (3.) How were contradictory interpretations of the scriptures to be resolved? All three of these matters were involved in determining the Hebrew canon.

#### Discussion Concerning Josephus, the canon, and Chronology

1. What explains Josephus's defensive statement, "We have not an enumerable multitude of books among us, disagreeing from and contradicting one another," "But only twenty-two books . . . which are justly believed," (Against Apion 1:2)? Is it possible that all of

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Josephus's text are the work of copiests most of the time?

2. Daniel search among "the scrolls" and read what Jeremiah wrote. Ben-sirach's grandson, four hundred years later, knew of the scriptures as "the law and the prophets and the rest of the books." Does a comparison of these two passages really help to show that scriptures often became recognized a sacred over a long period after they were written?

3. No written remains for three hundred years following Malachi, the last of the prophets, mention the sacred scriptures. After that time, the prophetic books were clearly regarded as sacred. Based upon this, what conclusions can be drawn as to when the "prophets" became regarded as sacred?

4. No Jewish prophet after Malachi had the credibility necessary to leave behind any enduring writings. Does this rule out the possibility that a book purporting to be the work of an earlier prophet could have been written ~~XXX~~ after Malachi and accepted as sacr

5. In Daniel 8:19-26, is there an indication that the latter end of the indignation, the time of the end, the latter end of the Hellenistic kingdoms, and the war against Antiochus were at the same time? Could a ~~XX~~ reader at the time of the Maccabees have associated the then present indignation and heroic Jewish stand with the time of the end described in Dan. 11:32-36)?

6. In what way did the writer of 1 Maccabees single out the book of Daniel?

7. The rabbis did not include Daniel's book in the collection of prophetic books. What problem is there in identifying whether Josephus included it among what he knew of as thirteen prophetic books?

8. How did Jesus's attitude toward the prophets differ from that of the writer of 1 Maccabees? When Jesus mentioned the "scripture of the prophets" (Matt. 26:56) at the time He was arrested, could He have referred to Moses and the psalms as well as the prophetic books?

9. To which source was Stephen the Hellenist faithful when he said that Jacob had seventy-five kindred at the time he journeyed to Egypt (Acts 7:14)? What did Luke say he was recording (Acts 7:2)? Many have explained the discrepancy between Gen. 46:27 and Acts 7:14 assuming that both scriptures are intended to tell us something about Jacob's household. What does Stephen's source say in Gen. 46:27?

10. Was Luke setting an example for us in how to be responsible for passing on what we have received? Did Luke correct what inaccuracies may have been in Stephen's source of information?

11. Whiston rejected Josephus's Septuagint-based chronology in Ant. 1:3:3-4 and 1:6:5. Whiston based his disortation V chart upon Ant. 10:8:5, 2:15:2, and the statement that just short of 3000 years passed from Adam to Moses's death (Against Apion 1:8). Is it possible that Josephus was referring to more than one text of Genesis?

12. Josephus's text ~~XX~~ has more chronological discrepancies in places where ancient Biblical texts have the most numeric discrepancies (Gen. 5 and 11). Josephus and ancient Bibles have relatively fewer discrepancies in the kings. How did this happen? Is this because of Josephus himself or because of copiests of his text?

13. Why did New Testament writers avoid dating events in Gen. 5 and 11? Gal. 3:1? suggests that it may not have been merely due to lack of interest.

### III. Ancient Clarifying Evidence

Earlier in this study, we have seen how ancient evidence is relied upon by translators in order to make the Bible as understandable as possible. The study here on "The Bible as Literature" and "The Bible As History" shows the kind of matters which evidence outside of the Bible is helpful in clarifying.

How can useful clarifications be made with speculations kept to a minimum? If the extra-Biblical evidence is to be useful, the emphasis must be upon details in the Bible itself. Anything shedding light upon the origin and preservation of the MEANING of what the Bible contains is useful. In Part III here the study is restricted to the period from creation week to the completion of the New Testament in places ~~XXX~~ where Bible writers were the most heavily influenced. Not until Part IV do we look at ancient Greek evidence which wouldn't make matters clear in the way remains from Egypt and the Semetic world would. After that, we can finally concentrate on evidence after the completion of the Bible itself. Then we would have to be weary of false traditions which would have piled up through the years before the post-Biblical knowledge was put to writing.

Meanwhile, in Part III we look at how long and how far some Biblical accounts were preserved from the time and place of the event until they were written in the form as we have it. Much of the origin of the Old-Testament accounts has been covered here in Part IIB.1.a-e,i. Origins of much of the New-Testament account have been covered in the early pages of Part II.B.2. We have seen that books which no longer remain ~~XX~~ were important in the compiling of Old-Testament history books from Joshua to Ezra. In a look here at Egyptian history, we will see that Genesis 2:13-14 places in the present tense a geography which existed between about 2200 and 1900 B.C.

The overview of written sources in Part A. here will provide a framework for a background in history before tackling the harder-to-account-for ancient artifacts. Ancient writings are often more understandable than believable, while ancient artifacts are more believable than understandable.

#### A. Writings From Biblical Times and Places

The Israelites brought the paganism which they had learned from their ancestors into the promised land. Abraham came from beyond the Euphrates in Mesopotamia to Canaanite country which the Egyptians were increasingly dominating. Joshua instructed, "Put away the gods which your fathers served beyond the River, and in Egypt, and serve the Lord," (Josh. 24:14). Their response was to exchange the old ancestral tendencies and an awe for a generation of miracles by the Eternal for the Canaanite Baals (Judges 2:11-12).

What made each of these civilizations important? In the first place, civilization began in Mesopotamia where Abraham's ancestors lived (Josh. 24:2). Because of this, parts of the Genesis ~~XXXX~~ account and the oldest surviving legends are from the same general setting. Egypt happens to be the second-oldest literate civilization, and Moses was raised in the Egyptian royal court (Ex. 2:10). The people of Israel spoke the language of the Canaanites and were intimidated by the ritual which served the lands local gods (2 Kings ~~XXXX~~ 3:26-27). God's universal identity can be singled out in especially graphic manner when the Bible and the Canaanite legends are placed side-by-side.

Later, it was conquerors--Assyrians, Babylonians, Persians, Greeks, and Romans--who Bible-writers witnessed. While the earlier Mesopotamians, Egyptians, and Canaanites are usually more important as a pagan religious influence than as civil historians, these later conquerors have left a civil history ~~XXXX~~ clearer in its details than the earlier civil accounts.

The most comprehensive source of ancient extra-Biblical writings is James B. Prichard's Ancient Near-Eastern Texts Third Edition, 1969, commonly abbreviated A.N.E.T. The volume of numbered pictures accompanying it initialed A.N.E.P. is referenced according to the picture number, while the writings as usual is referenced by page number. The initials A.N.E. refers to an abridgement of the second edition. I use Table of Contents titles and line numbers provided or the book title and page number when referring to specific texts.

(III.-III.A.)

## 1. Creation Week and the Flood

The Bible gives the most clear and authoritative description of what caused and resulted from the creation week and the corrective deluge in Genesis 1:1--11:9. Extra-Biblical writings concerning these matters are neither ~~XX~~ highly authoritative nor ~~XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX~~ as clear as the Biblical account.

These extra-Biblical sources when compared with the Bible help to display graphically how to distinguish (1.) a faithfulness to Biblical authority which cannot be threatened from (2.) either a defensive faith in the Bible or (3.) a sensible-looking rejection of the Bible.

While inspired writers saw fit to defend reports of Christ's resurrection (Luke 24:18-39, John 20:19-20, Matt. 28:11-15, 1 Cor. 15:2-9), they simply wrote of the deluge and condemned the key assumption of those who "deliberately ignore" it (2 Peter 3:3-7). The false assumption was that "Ever since the fathers fell asleep, all things have continued as they were from the beginning of creation," (2 Peter 3:4). This is the assumption of uniformitarianism (See I.A.4. earlier).

Creationists have correctly observed, "In answering these sceptics of the end time, the apostle Peter points to two events in the past which cannot be explained on the basis of uniformitarianism. The first of these events is the creation of the world: 'There were heavens from of old and an earth by the Word of God,' And the second event is the flood: 'the world--cosmos--that then was, being overflowed with water perished,'" (The Genesis Flood by John C. Whitcomb Jr., and Henry M. Morris; Philadelphia; Presbyterian and Reform Publishing Company; 1961; Page 15.) "These sceptics of the end time," Peter wrote of saying, "Scoffers will come in the last days," (2 Peter 3:3). The fulfillment of what Peter wrote is told of in a textbook which has been in use at Pasadena City College: "James Hutton, generally regarded as the father of modern ~~XXXX~~ geology, stated in 1785 that the landscape of the earth was created by a continuing process of slow, steady, and natural change, not by sudden catastrophes as propounded by other scientists at the time that time. The findings of geologists implied a long history of the earth," (Biology Second Edition by Richie and Carola; Reading, Mass.; Addison Wesley Publishing Company; 1983; Page 506).

Uniformitarian scoffers arose, but with their falsehoods contrary to God came an attack on falsehoods based on a so-called faith in God which could be threatened. The biology text ~~XX~~ remarkably goes on to say, "In order to harmonize these new ideas with Biblical teaching, Baron George Cuvier and others proposed what came to be known as the great compromise. According to Cuvier, the period from the flood of Noah to modern times was six thousand years, the age of the earth and of humans. Prior to the flood, Cuvier proposed, was the supernatural time of geology, when violent catastrophes occurred and all sorts of strange animals existed." Hutton triggered a chain of events which (1.) dramatizes the accuracy of what Peter wrote, and (2.) made the Akkadian Creation Epic worth mentioning here for pointing out WHAT CONFLICT HAPPENED JUST BEFORE MAN WAS FORMED. (A.N.E.T. 60-69).

For over two thousand years from Hellenistic times (2 Mac. 7:28, etc) to Hutton and Cuvier, Bible believers taught that the earth predated Adam by only five days and that the angels first sinned after Adam was created. The geologist-instigated claim that the earth is much older led Bible believers to take another look at Genesis 1:2 and to suggest that the angels who rebelled did so before Adam was formed. Meanwhile during the mid nineteenth century, the Akkadian Creation Epic was recovered ~~XX~~ which tells of a war among the gods prior to the forming of man. (Further details later in V.A.3. and V.D.1-2). What's of immediate importance is that Biblical questions concerning Genesis 1:2 were initiated by the rationalism of geologists not the mysticism of the Akkadian Creation epic.

Don't take for granted the revelation that God made Adam's kind in His own image and gave him dominion over the natural life (Gen. 1:26-29. In the Akkadian epic, Marduk addresses Ea who is to execute his plan, "Blood I will mass and cause bones to be. I will establish a savage; Man shall be his name, varily, savage man I will create. He shall be charged with the service of the gods that

that they might be at ease," (Tablet 6: Lines 3-8). "After Ea the Wise had created mankind, had imposed the service of the gods--that work was beyond comprehension, as artfully planned by Marduk," (6:34-37), "The (assembly) opened their mouths and said to Marduk their lord, 'Now, O Lord, thou who has caused our deliverance, what shall be our homage to thee? Let us build a shrine whose name shall be called Lo, A Chamber for Our Nightly Rest. Let us repose in it (6:47-52). The shrine is built. The assembly grants to Marduk the exercise of kingship of the gods and proclaim further, "Most exalted be the son, our avenger. Let his sovereignty be surpassing, having no rival. May he shepherd the blackheaded ones, His creatures," (6:98-107).

God's taunting parable compared Lucifer, the instigator of the preadamic war, with the king among the very people who worshiped Marduk or Merodach (Is. 14:4-17, Jer. 50:2). "Ia The Wise (who) had created mankind" ~~XXXX~~ is remembered for compassion and justice when rescuing his servant Utanapishtim in the Akkadian Epic of Gilgamesh (A.N.E.T. 72-99, Tablet 11). The Akkadians were not the first to preserve any story about about a deluge of roughly a week. The Sumerians originated literate civilization along the Tigris and Euphrates. Theirs is the oldest flood account (A.N.E.T. 42-44). It singles out five pre-flood cult centers and claims that "the throne of kingship had been lowered from heaven," (Lines 88-89).

Once a tiller of the ground, furious because God rejected his offering from the ground while accepting the firstborns of his brother's flocks, murdered his brother. He was exiled from before the Eternal, and he built the first city, naming it after his son (Gen. 4:1-17). In the Sumerian story of the shepherd and the farmer, the two reach a reconciliation after the meek farmer allows the aggressive herdsman to pasture his herd on the farmland (A.N.E.T. 41-42).

God responded to Adam's disobedience by cursing the ground which Adam tilled (Gen. 3:17). God further cursed the tilling efforts of Cain for the murder of Cain's brother (Gen. 4:12). God ended the curse after delivering Noah from the deluge (Gen. 5:29, 8:21). The Sumerians had no idea that deluges delivered them from any curse! They were concerned with how their "god, Ninurta, subjugated the demonic Asag and kept him confined between the banks of the Euphrates. The myth is frequently represented on Mesopotamian cylinder seals. . . . In Chinese folklore when an overflowing river is confined, it is said that the dragon has been caged. What has to be done at the beginning of each year is conceived as having been done at the beginning of the present era when the earth was first called into being," (The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible Vol. 1: "Cosmogony" Page 706). Chinese and Sumerian evidence alone could be mere ~~XX~~ coincidence. But later Ugaritic and Biblical references to the dragon on the waters (Ps. 74:13) if there were ever any suggestion that the Elohim took quick action to prevent something they feared, it is told of in Genesis 3:22: "Behold, the man has become like one of us, knowing good and evil; (notice the urgency expressed in the following incomplete sentence): and now, lest he put forth his hand and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live for ever". The quest for immortality and ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~ Gilgamesh's failure was in a Sumerian setting. They were so resigned to the reality of mortality that in the story, Gilgamesh snatched up an under-sea plant which could only provide youthful physical condition not immortality. A serpent took off with it (Tablet 11:270-290). A serpent had tricked ~~XXXX~~ Eve into eating the fruit which earned God's death sentence (Gen. 3:1-6).

The imagined immortality granted to Utanapishtim and his wife is like what has confused people concerning how "God took" Enoch (Gen. 5:24). When Utanapishtim was told ~~XX~~ by Ea to build a ship and gather animals, he naturally wanted to know how to explain ~~XX~~ to the people why he was building a ship. Ea masked his reply behind a pun by promising a rain of harvest (Tablet 11: Line 48). The people were supposed to think he meant prosperity when actually a rain of disaster was coming. God "took" Enoch. Josephus wrote concerning the Genesis account, "There is no record in the chronicles of his death," (Ant. 1:3:4). His conclusion was that Enoch "returned to the Divinity whence it comes," (Ibid). "Being taken" can mean either transferred (Heb. 11:5) or made ~~XXX~~ like God: "Utanapishtim has

been but human. Hence forth Utanapishtim and his wife shall be like unto us gods. Utanapishtim shall reside far away at the mouth of the rivers.' 'Thus they took me and made me reside far away at the mouth of the rivers,' (11:191-193). Perceiving the secret of the gods qualified Utanapishtim to become like unto the gods as surely as knowing good and evil qualified any one to become like God. Being taken far away dramatized the obscurity of what it meant to be taken.

What's being made clear is the way in which the written revelation was purposely left incomplete. Men would think that in the written record they had eternal life (John 5:39) which may say that Jesus is Lord (Acts 2:36). Yet no one can say "Jesus is Lord" except by the Holy Spirit (1 Cor. 12:3). The written statement concerning Enoch is insufficient by itself when men are naturally confused as to whether the Greek means he was changed, transformed, or transferred. Hebrews 11:13 curiously says that he, among others, died literally "in accordance with faith", so that so that some have misunderstood this as the death like that at baptism. These deliberately obscured written examples clarify what is really involved when "no one comprehends the thoughts of God except the Spirit of God," (1 Cor. 2:11). Many possess the written revelation, yet diligent study even with reverent intentions has by itself never been a guarantee.

What if the Biblical account of the deluge were true while at the same time "the modern study of geology and comparative mythology has made it impossible to see in the story of the deluge the literal record of an historical event," (Dictionary of the Bible in one volume edited by James Hastings and others; New York; Charles Scribner and sons; 1925; Page 184; "Deluge"). God's capacity to raise up stones has been singled out both in begetting children of Abraham and in repopulating the earth after the deluge. Jews who found security in ~~XXXXX~~ having Abraham as their ancestor had to be reminded, "God is able from these stones to raise up SONS to Abraham," (Matt. 3:10, See Schonfield's Authentic New Testament for the note that their is a pun on the words "stones" and "sons"). A pun was meant to dramatize the unnatural character of an event. The Thessalian-Greek flood-survivor Deucalion cast behind himself and his wife "the bones of the earth, that is, stones which were changed into men," (The World's Great Events ~~PuXXXXX~~ published by P. F. Collier; 1945; "The Deluge" by by Francois Lenormant P. 17). Noah's sons reseeded the earth according to Genesis 9:19, so Deucalion's action dramatizes what God could have orchestrated not what He did do.

Rational objections to the Biblical account of the deluge include statements such as, "it is impossible to imagine how," "or whether it could have," "it is impossible to account for," and that the gathering of far-flung creatures "isn't conceivable," (Hastings Ibid Page 185). ~~EX~~ The equally groundless attitude stated by Whitcomb and Morris is that "Our conclusions must unavoidably be colored by our Biblical presuppositions, and this we have plainly acknowledged. But uniformitarian scholarship is no less bound by its own presuppositions, and these are quite as dogmatic as those of our own. The assumption of historical continuity and scientific naturalism are no more susceptible of genuine scientific proof than are Biblical catastrophism and supernaturalism," (The Genesis Flood Page XXI). Creationist dogma is that geologists misunderstand the physical evidence and that Genesis 1:2 says nothing about an earth to any extent laid waste. Rationalist dogma is that God could not have healed things in his own quick three hundred twenty-four days from the flood's conclusion (Gen. 7:12) to the day the earth was dry (Gen. 8:14).

God had His own thoughts which men who tenaciously defended their own views would naturally overlook. (1.) "I will never again curse the ground because of man, for the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth"; (2.) "neither will I ever again destroy every living creature as I have done," (Gen. 8:21. The covenant guaranteeing no more universal flood would be commemorated in the rainbow (Gen. 9:11-17). Man was left to pollute the ground himself (Is. 24:5). Limitations were imposed upon men's striving and strife first in their being kept from the tree of life (Gen. 3:22) and secondly in the confusion of their languages (Gen. 11:6-7). Some one's necessary submission to the written word would free him of confusion only if the Father was drawing him (John 6:44). For centuries the written word seemed to say that all things began with the week Adam was created. That situation has changed. Since God has reproved His faithful concerning events

leading into creation week, He--not Bible believers and opposers--decides when it is needful to prove the circumstances surrounding the flood account.

#### Discussion Concerning Creation Week and the Flood

1. Events described in Genesis 1:1--11:9 can only be complemented with clarifications from other writings when cautious and careful comparisons are made. Something far more important than points of ancient history is clarified in this study. What is it?

2. Scholars such as Young and Rotherham stuck to evidence ~~XXXXX~~ within the Bible alone when pointing out that the earth existed prior to events of Genesis 1:3. How was this better than making note of either the Geologists or the Akkadian Creation Epic?

3. According to the Akkadian Creation Epic, mankind was fashioned out of the blood of Kingu who had contrived the rebellion which was defeated (Tablet 6: Lines 29-32). By contrast, Adam was formed of dust from the ground, ~~XXX~~ (Gen. 2:7). What other of these contrasts between the Bible and the Akkadian account involve how and why man was fashioned? Do these contradictions in man's apparent purpose still occur in the way people think today?

4. The musical, Oklahoma, makes fun of the effort to resolve conflicts between the needs of the cowboy and the farmer. In the Sumerian story, which one goes more than half way to make reconciliation? Of which profession was Cain? Who established the earliest know civilization in which there was reading and writing according to sources outside of the Bible? Who, according to the Bible, built the first recorded city?

5. The Akkadian account of the deluge was debated over as another witness of the Biblical flood, while Bible believers were not interested in the real point of the story. How does this Epic of Gilgamesh justify the Eternal's urgent concern expressed in Genesis 3:22?

6. Concerning nine of the ten men of Shem's patriarchal ancestry, the Genesis account ends each time with the words, "he died". Who is the exception? Paul made it clear that the only ones who do not "sleep" in death are those who are "changed" at Christ's return. So Enoch died. What has God accomplished by not having this specified in the Genesis account? When Utanapishtim says of the gods, ""They took me and made me reside far away," (Tablet 11:194), what double meaning was he expressing? How does the statement "Utanapishtim shall be like unto us gods," expose Satan's deception in Genesis 3:5? What is the double meaning in the expression "to be like God"? Who snatched the plant of youth away from Gilgamesh (Tablet 11:288)?

7. How have some misapplied the literal statement "These all died "X 'in accordance with' or 'according to' (Kingdom Interlinear) faith"? Is there a similar pattern in the way people have ridiculed what it really means to be "like one of (the Elohim)" (Gen. 3:22)? Who is responsible for misrepresenting ~~XXX~~ what it means to be ~~XXX~~ "like God," (Gen. 3:55)? What has happened when even the most honest of literary efforts apart from God have been exerted to understand these Scriptural doctrines?

8. The Biblical explanation of the deluge and the ~~XXXXXXXX~~ confusion of tongues is clear and concise. Is it ~~XXX~~ fair to say that the proof for these two events is as obscure as the proof as to what it means to "be like God" or "God took (Enoch)"? How have people under-estimated God's capacities and ~~XXXXXXXX~~ concluded that the Biblical flood story is not historic? Is there really any indication that others have "believed" the flood story for the wrong reasons?

9. Is there any reason to conclude that Biblical passages have been obscure as part of God's way of ~~XX~~ influencing who is to understand them? How is this illustrated in the Akkadian rain of harvest (Epic of Gilgamesh 11:48)?

(III.A.1: discussion)

## 2. Mesopotamia, Ebla, and Abraham

From the Ararat landing to Abraham's sojourning after his father's death (Acts 7:4), the Geneses (11:10-32) describe a period of four hundred twenty-seven years (2324-1897 B.C.).

After the deluge, "Noah was the first tiller of the soil. He planted a vineyard; and he drank of the wine," (Gen. 20-21). "One chronological tablet states that the fourth kingdom of Kish was founded by a female wine merchant, Azag-bau, who ruled one hundred years. The queen strengthened the foundation of Kish and is mentioned among the rulers after a Sumerian flood." (The Cambridge Ancient History Edited by Bury, Cook and Adcock; Volume I, Page 370). The hundred years after Noah landed would be 2324-2224 B.C.\* The queen's son, Gimil-sin, and her grandson, Ur-ilbaba, were the second and third kings of the fourth dynasty of Kish. Disregarding an earlier king, one list states that "Gimil-sin, son of Azag-bau, was the first ruler and reigned twenty-five years," (Ibid). Ur-ilbaba was according to one tablet king for six years. The man said to be his cupbearer was Sargon. Sargon began the empire at Agade, later known as Akkad. His total supremacy ended the hundred-year era of Azag-bau (Ibid Page 403).

Lugal-zaggisi was deposed in Sargon's rise to power after a bloody reign of twenty-five years. (Ibid). A lamentation by an overseer for the public worship of the goddess Bau commemorates the destruction of Lagash by Lugal-zaggisi son of Ukush (Ibid Pages 387-388). In a later study on the Hebrew calendar, we will see that the feast of Bau roughly corresponded to what later was sanctified as Trumpets Day. Zaggisi claimed the title "King of the Land" and ~~MX~~ made Uruk or Erech (Gen. 10:10) his capitol. ~~Δ~~ If Ukush and Cush (Gen. 10:8) refer to the same person, then Lugal-zaggisi is Nimrod. Zaggisi by ~~restoring Sumerian custom~~ restoring Sumerian custom was a mighty man before "Enlil". Ea (apparently Yah in Scripture) is said to have relayed through Utanapishtim to the people of Shuruppak, "I have learned that Enlil is hostile to me," (Gilgamesh 11:40). The common saying, "Like Nimrod a mighty hunter situated over against the Lord," (Genesis 9:9) had a double meaning. He was a mighty hunter before Enlil, against Yahweh. ~~Δ~~ Ibid page 369

Sargon seems to have made another claim of conquest, the trading center of Ebla (Ebla: A Revelation In Archaeology by Chaim Vermant and Michael Weitzman; Times Books; 1979; Pages 40,172). "The name of Sargon appears in the tablets as a buyer of Eblaite goods at the time of King Ebrum," (Ibid Page 172). Ebrum was the fourth of five kings of Ebla during the estimated 150 years' worth of Eblaite documents recovered (Ibid 171-172). Sargon's grandson boasted, "In all times since the creation of man, no king among kings has ravaged the land of Armanum and Ebla. Hence forth, the god Nergal, having opened the way for the valiant Naram-sin, has delivered Armanum and Elba into his hand," (Ibid). Counting from the end of Azag-bau's era in 2224, The fifty-five years credited to Sargon on the Nippur king lists would be 2224-2169 B.C., and Naram-sin's fifty-six years were 2147-2091 B.C. (Compendium Volume 1: Chapter 11; Pages 256-257, citing The Sumerian King List by Jacobson; University of Chicago; 1939).

A time indicator for the beginning of the Ebla period is in the account of "the ruler of the vanquished kingdom of Mari as Iblul-il. A king of that name has been known since 1952 when a number of statues bearing his name were excavated from the temple in Mari," (Ebla: a Revelation Page 173). The tattered Mari document preserves enough of the kings' names to suggest that Iblul-il was not among them (Compendium Ibid Pages 263-264). Mari (called ~~MX~~ Maer in the above mentioned Cambridge History, Page 370) was vanquished before the beginning of Azag-bau's hundred years.

\* After Mari's fall, probably Semitic rulers listed with Sumerian cognates ruled at Akshak (Cambridge History Ibid Page 370). The Compendium Vol. I, Pages 269-275 cites Jacobson's The Sumerian King List and concerning the queen, Pallis's The Chronology of the Shub-Ad Culture; Copenhagen, 1941, Pages 359-360, identifying Gimil-shakkan ~~MX~~ also called Puzur-sahan, fourth ruler of Akshak, as her son's immediate predecessor. Her reputation for "pious deeds" aided her son's popularity.   
 ▢ Concerning Sargon see A.N.E.IV.(III.A.2.)

Ebla's religion consisted of the mythology among the priests and the personal local gods' worship among the people. "The myths recorded at Ebla are translations ~~XX~~ into Eblaite of Sumerian myths," concludes Paolo Matthiae (Ebla, an Empire Rediscovered translated by Christopher Holme; Garden City, N.Y.; Doubleday; 1981; Page 189). Among the roughly five hundred local gods, "the principle god of the city seems to have been Dagan. His name appears also under the formula, 'Lord of the land,' an appellation which in Mesopotamia is traditional for Enlil and the deities equivalent to him. Actually it seems that the abbreviation, Lord, to indicate Dagan, was even more frequent at Ebla than the proper name of the god. Certainly many forms of Dagan were worshiped there, and these must have been the local gods of definite major cities." "In the list of offerings," . . . "It is very difficult to ~~XXXX~~ interpret the name, Dagan CC Kananaum, which has been taken to mean Dagan of Canaan. But there are phonetic difficulties in the way of this suggestion which must be explained before it can be considered. Quite frequent in the texts is a particularly interesting formula which, it seems, can be indifferently substituted for Dagan. This is the appellation 'Lord of the gods,' or as an ~~XX~~ alternative 'Lord of the stars,'" (Ibid Pages 186-187). In the parallelism of Job 38:7, "when the morning stars sang together," "all the sons of God shouted for joy."

In their Eblaite-Sumerian vocabularies, the Eblaites did not equate Enlil with dagan, but they left the Sumerian enlil transliterated (The Archives of Ebla An Empire Inscribed In Clay by Giovanni Pettinato; Garden City, N.Y.; Doubleday; 1981; Page 250). Enlil did not draw the praise equal to this given by the Eblaites: "Lord of heaven and earth, the earth was not; you created it. The light of day was not; you created it; the morning light you had not yet made exist. Lord, effective word; Lord, prosperity; Lord, heroism; Lord, untiring; Lord, divinity; Lord, who saves; Lord, have life," (Ibid Page 259). The personal name by which the creator was called depended upon the individual. Among the many personal names addressed is Ilya: "Ilya has given,' 'Ilya has shown favor,' 'protection of Ilya,' ~~XX~~ 'Ilya has united,' 'who is like Ilya,'" (Ibid Page 261).

Much earlier in Seth's time, "Men began to call upon the name of Yahweh (Ya, or Ea)" (Gen. 4:26). Abraham "called on the name of Yahway" (Gen. 12:8). God spoke of Himself to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob as El Shaddi, not by the name by which they occasionally called upon him (Ex. 6:3). When Moses asked for ~~XX~~ a way of identifying Him to the Israelites, God then in a play on the verb of active being spoke of the name by which men had called upon Him as the name by which He was to be remembered (Ex. 3:14-15). Cain went away from Yahweh's personally-acting presence, and the Sumerians accepted the explanation that their Enlil was at odds with Utanapishtim's ~~XX~~ Ea. There are such Eblaite names as Mica-il, Mica-ya, Ishma-il, Ishma-ya, Ena-il, and Ena-ya (Ibid Page 276). In Mesopotamia or Ebla, even if the "ya" ending had another meaning, God used a play on words to give it His intended meaning when He told Moses what to say to the Israelites (Ex. 3:14). As a result, by means of a pun, the name from which "Ea" was derived was replaced by the Hebrew "Yahweh".

This indicates that what the Genesis say about men calling upon the name of Yahweh is witnessed by circumstantial evidence at least! But how do these different languages at Ebla, in Mesopotamia, and China for that matter relate to the confusion of the languages at Babel? God's expressed purpose was not to end men's evil by creating languages but to restrain their evil by stripping them of their common language (Genesis 11:6-7). In around Christ's time, ~~XXXXXX~~ Jews still recognized an effort among Noah's offspring to restore the evil ways of earlier generations. It was blamed on Cainan, either a brother or son of Arpachad (Luke 3:36, Bagster's Septuagint Gen. 10:22, 11:12-13). "He found a writing which former generations had carved on the rock and he read that which was thereon. And he transcribed it, and sinned owing to it," (Jubilees 8:3). Jude quoted Enoch in order to emphasize the hostility of those who "walk in the way of Cain," (Jude 11-16). This is why men's capacity to organize was restrained at Babel.

By confusing the speech of the sons of men at Babel, "the Lord scattered them abroad from there over the face of all the earth, and they left off building the city," (Genesis 11:8). Scripture does not state whether the earth was divided immediately or years later, only that the earth was divided in the days of Peleg (Gen. 10:25). He lived from a hundred one to three hundred ten years after the flood (Massoretic Text Gen. 11:10-19). Dynastic rule in China began in 2204 B.C. according to the common skeme of Chinese tradition and in 1989 B.C. according to the Bamboo Annals (The Chinese Classics The Choo King or the Book of Historical Documents by James Legge; London; Trubner and Company; 1865; Volume 3, Part 1; Page 184). \*

Sargon began the Akkadian dynasty which according to the Weld-Blundel prisin lasted one hundred eighty-one years. Based on a ~~XXXXXXXX~~ harmony of documents A. J. Brinkman listed these years as from from six hundred eighty-nine to five hundred nine years ~~XXXXXXXX~~ inclusively before the Venus observation in Ammisa-duqa's first year of reign (Ancient Mesopotamia: Portrait of a Dead Civilization by A. Leo Oppenheim; University of Chicago Press; 1977; Pages 335-337). Possibilities as to what year ~~XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX~~ B.C. the Venus observation ~~was~~ were detailed in Astronomical Dating of Babylon I and Ur III by Peter J. Huber; Malibu; Undena publications; from Occasional Papers On the Near East Edited by Giorgio Buccellati; Volume I, Issue IV, June 1982. The Mesopotamian and Genesis 11 Massoretic accounts favor no year earlier than 1539-38 B.C. for the Venus citing. From this, the years of Sargon's dynasty would be 2227-2047 B.C.

During this time, there lived ancestors of Abraham whose names ~~was~~ are like places in the region of Harran in central Mesopotamia. Abraham had a great grandfather named Serug and a grandfather and brother ~~XXXXX~~ both named Nahor (Gen. 11:22-26). Sarug and Nahur happened to be places in the region of Harran (The Anchor Bible: Genesis Introduction, translation, and notes by E. A. Speiser; Garden City, N.Y.; Doubleday and company Inc.; 1964; Page 79). "Significantly enough the population of Nahur in Mari times (between 1900 ~~XXXX~~ and around 1670 B.C.) included demonstrably West Semetic elements," (Ibid). Mari texts refer to Nahur (or Nakhur) as the home of some of the Habiru (Harrison's Introduction to the Old Testament Page 106). The Habiru arose in the days of Rim-sin king of Larsa (1715-1656, dating adjusted from that 107 years earlier in the Cambridge Ancient History Third Edition; Volume 1, Part 2, 1971) (Harrison Page 103). Abraham was "a Hebrew" (Gen. 14:13) a Hebrew according to the Septuagint was one who had crossed over from beyond the Euphrates (Gen. 14:13, Josh. 24:2,14). "While there are still some unsolved problems connected with this matter, there seems little valid reason for rejecting the theory that the Hebrews may have been a small ethnic component of the larger Habiru group," (concluded Harrison, Page 104). This proves that Genesis 11 describes a geographical setting which predates Moses. However, the Levites made a later clarification by mentioning the Chaldeans in Genesis 11:28,31. The Chaldeans "are late arrivals in Mesopotamia and could not possibly be dated before the end of the second millenium," (Anchor Bible: Genesis, Page 80). Mari details concerning Nahur and the Chaldean arrival in Mesopotamia some seven hundred years later together show that (1.) Levites after 1000 B.C. would have used geographical knowledge of their own time to explain things and found it hard to reconstruct clearly ancient events if they ~~was~~ were only guessing. (2.) Abraham did not come from a Chaldean background but from an ancient scene around the Balikh Valley in Mesopotamia which the later Levites knew of from accounts of before their time.

Abraham was long before the time of the Levites, since he could not inherit Canaan, "for the iniquity of the Amorites (was) not yet complete," (Gen. 15:8). The Elamites (Gen. 14:1) <sup>and</sup> Subarians destroyed Ur (Lamentation Over the Destruction of Ur, Line 243, A.N.E.T. ~~261~~ 455,460) around 361 years prior to the Venus observation (Compare Brinkman and Cambridge History Ibid). During the power struggle between Babylon and Larsa which followed, the Amorites established a capitol at Mari (Harrison Page 105). Now aproaching 250 years after Naram-Sin's conquest of Ebla, "Ebla was again destroyed. The aggressors according to Professor Matthiae were the Amorites who had been migrating into the area steadily (for about

two centuries) until their sheer numbers caused a breakdown of the economic foundation, culminating in the destruction not only of Ebla but also of other Syrian cities," (Ebla, a Revelation In Archaeology Pages 175-176).

The Bible emphasizes Amorite involvement in Canaan, while Mari documents reveal the identity of the Amorites themselves. "Tablets recovered from the palace archives included correspondence between Zimri-lim, the last ruler of Mari and Hamurabi. . . . One of such records spoke of a Mari diplomat as saying, 'Whenever Hamurabi is occupied with any affair he writes to me and I go to him wherever he may be. Whatever the affairs may be he tells it to me,' (Harrison Page 106). "The Mari documents spoke of Samshi-adad I as Ammorite contemporary of Hamurabi," (Ibid Page 160). Samshi-adad I was the thirty-ninth Assyrian king (Oppenheim Page 344, A.N.E.T. Pages 564-566). Under him, the Ammorites "became the dominant military force in the northern part of the country subsequently known as Assyria," (Harrison Page 105).

#### Discussion Concerning Mesopotamia, Ebla, and Abraham

1. Queen Azag-bau "is included in an Assyrian list of exceptionally famous rulers of early times (Cambridge History 1929 edition; Vol. 1, P. 370). What moral and political role did she play which established her reputation? What time period, general location, or occupation did she share in common with Noah?

2. What did Lugal-Zaggisi share in common with Nimrod regarding location and mentality?

3. In what way do Ebla tablets shed light upon the following Scriptures:  
A. Angels are called Elohim (Hos. 12:3-4, Ps. 8:5) and stars (Is. 14:12, Job 38:7). B. Dagon fell face down before the ark of Yahweh (1 Sam. 5:3). C. Abraham called upon the name of Yahweh (Gen. 12:8), but by the name Yahweh God did not make Himself known to Abraham (Ex. 6:3).

4. How does the evidence that "the whole earth had one (common) language and few words," (Genesis 11:1) shed light upon how God would have confused the languages (Gen. 11:7)?

5. In Peleg's days the earth was divided (Gen. 10:26). What if Nimrod's career ended before Peleg was born?

6. China's ~~51X~~ predynastic emperors respectively ruled 100, ~~XXXXX~~ 78, 63, 100, and 50 years, say the Bamboo Annals. With the seventh emperor began the dynasties and ~~XX~~ barely one in ten reigned over fifty years (Legge's Chinese Classics Volume 3, Part 1). Discuss this in the light of Genesis 11.

7. ~~XXXXXXXX~~ Brinkman harmonized Mesopotamian documents to arrive at a 689 year period from Sargon's first year to the Venus observation on record. Why is it shrewd to date Mesopotamian events as mostly before the Venus observation rather than B.C.?

8. How ~~XXXX~~ do places like Sarug and Nahur in the Balikh valley south of Harran shed light upon the authenticity of Genesis 11? What does the mentioning of Chaldeans in Genesis 11:28,31 suggest about what would happen when the Levites made up stories about ancient events unfamiliar to them? What helpful thing did they accomplish by mentioning the Chaldeans?

9. Who appears to have interfered with affairs in Syria when Abraham first arrived in Canaan? Who retook Ebla at this time? Why according to Genesis 15:16 did Abraham and his offspring have to wait out four centuries and generations before possessing Canaan? Who according to Mari and Assyrian documents were the Amorites?

(III.A.2: discussion)