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## Amenhotep II and the Historicity of the Exodus Pharaoh

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**EXCERPT** The present in-depth work examines the trustworthiness of Biblical history by using the Hebrew exodus from Egypt as a test case. More specifically, an examination of the exodus-pharaoh's life will reveal whether Biblical history can be harmonized and synchronized with Egyptian history, and whether Biblical chronology is clear and trustworthy when relevant passages are interpreted literally. The need for evaluating the former premise is that many Egyptologists are leading the charge to deny the veracity of the exodus, attempting to persuade Biblical scholars and the Christian populace at large that the exodus never actually occurred... Continue reading

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## I. INTRODUCTION

Few disciplines related to Biblical inerrancy are scrutinized more intensely than historicity. Accordingly, questioning the Bible's historicity is nothing new to Biblical studies, as evidenced by Ladd's remark, "It is the author's hope that the reader may be helped to understand that the authority of the Word of God is not dependent upon infallible certainty in all matters of history and criticism."<sup>1</sup> A more extreme recent trend, popular in the study of ancient Israel's storied past, is a revisionistic version of Biblical history.<sup>2</sup> A prime example is seen in 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."<sup>3</sup>

Such attacks on the inerrancy of the Bible's historicity necessitate a reasoned defense of its historical accuracy. As 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."<sup>4</sup> The danger of compromising the inerrancy of Biblical historicity became vivid to the present writer when he learned that a transfer student who entered the seminary where he teaches was taught in another theological institution that Biblical inerrancy does not even extend into the realm of history. Such a position is unacceptable, and it must be opposed rigorously.

The present work examines the trustworthiness of Biblical history by using the Hebrew exodus from Egypt (hereinafter, simply "exodus") as a test case. More specifically, an examination of the exodus-pharaoh's life will reveal whether Biblical history can be harmonized and synchronized with Egyptian history, and whether Biblical chronology is clear and trustworthy when relevant passages are interpreted literally. The need for evaluating the former premise is that many Egyptologists are leading the charge to deny the veracity of the exodus, attempting to persuade Biblical scholars and the Christian populace at large that the exodus never actually 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.”<sup>5</sup> Redford then betrays his affinity with this fraternity, stating that “despite 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.”<sup>6</sup>

The need for evaluating the latter premise is that many Biblical scholars who affirm the historicity of the exodus now date it to the 13th century BC, a step that requires a redefinition of concrete numbers in Biblical passages that, if taken literally, would indisputably place the exodus in the 15th century BC. 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.”<sup>7</sup> While Kitchen is a vital contributor in the field of OT history and chronology, the accuracy of his conclusion here is disputable, along with whether he has evaluated “*all of the data*” *correctly*.

Wood rejects the theory of a 13th-century-BC exodus, originally propagated by Albright, appealing to a reevaluation of the archaeological evidence pertinent to key Palestinian cities in question.<sup>8</sup> 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.”<sup>9</sup> Just as Young established a 15th-century date for the exodus by chronological means, the present writer seeks to accomplish this goal by historical means, namely by examining the reign of Pharaoh Amenhotep II (ca. 1455–1418 BC),<sup>10</sup> which coincides with that of the exodus-pharaoh if adhering to conventional views of Biblical and ancient Egyptian chronology.

By answering the following questions, it will be seen whether Amenhotep II remains a viable candidate for the exodus-pharaoh, and whether Biblical history can be exonerated under the scrutiny of synchronization with Egyptian history. Does Amenhotep II qualify as the pharaoh who lived through the tenth plague because he was not his father’s eldest son? Could the eldest son of Amenhotep II have died during the tenth plague, which must be true of the exodus-pharaoh’s son? Did Amenhotep II die in the Red Sea, as the Bible allegedly indicates about the exodus-pharaoh?<sup>11</sup> Can any of Amenhotep II’s military campaigns be related to the exodus events? 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? Is there any 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 attributed to backlash from the exodus events?

## II. THREE INTRODUCTORY BACKGROUND MATTERS

### 1. *The Reason for Moses’ Omission of the Exodus-Pharaoh’s Throne-Name.*

Every time Moses wrote the dynastic title of the exodus-pharaoh, it was devoid of the pharaoh’s throne-name (e.g. Sesostris, Amenhotep, etc.), which is known in Egyptology as the

praenomen.<sup>12</sup> This, however, was not the practice of later Biblical writers—especially writers of the historical books, who routinely transliterated each pharaoh’s praenomen—beginning with the reign of Pharaoh Shishak. For example, Shishak is named in the OT seven times, though never is he referred to merely as “pharaoh.”<sup>13</sup> The same is true of Pharaoh Neco, whose name appears nine times.<sup>14</sup> The only exception to this rule—apart from the 21 references in the prophetic books of Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel, where the Egyptian monarch is referred to only as “pharaoh”—is when the Hebrew authors retrospectively write about the exodus-pharaoh, always leaving him unnamed.<sup>15</sup> The question that arises is why Moses consistently omitted the throne-names of pharaohs, especially in the historical book of Exodus.

a. *Omission of Pharaoh’s Throne-Name not Theologically Motivated.*

The absence of pharaoh’s praenomen in the biblical history of the second millennium BC is often used either to support the assertion of the legendary nature of the exodus narrative, or to demonstrate that the Hebrew writers were not truly interested in history. These criticisms, however, dissipate under a closer examination of the practice of Moses’ day. Hoffmeier nobly suggests that “the absence of pharaoh’s name may ultimately be for theological reasons, because the Bible is not trying to answer the question, ‘Who is the pharaoh of the exodus?’ to satisfy the curiosity of modern historians; rather, it was seeking to clarify for Israel who was the God of the exodus.”<sup>16</sup> To support this idea, Hoffmeier appeals to Exod 5:1, which he uses to suggest that pharaoh not only rejects Moses’ petition to allow the Hebrews to worship Yahweh in the desert, but rebuffs Yahweh by denying knowledge of him, setting the stage for a subsequent series of plagues in which Yahweh manifests his power both to pharaoh and to Israel.<sup>17</sup> Moses thus avenges pharaoh’s reproach of God by leaving him unnamed.

Hoffmeier is certainly correct that Yahweh intended to demonstrate to the Israelites that he is the Lord their God (Exod 6:7), and to show the Egyptians that he is the Lord (Exod 7:5). However, Hoffmeier is not justified in suggesting that the absence of pharaoh’s name is motivated by a desire to exact revenge on pharaoh, since Exod 7:5 clearly states that Yahweh’s “message” was directed not toward pharaoh, but toward the Egyptian people. Moreover, the battle that waged throughout the days of Moses’ audiences with pharaoh was not between Yahweh and pharaoh, but between Yahweh and the gods of Egypt, who—during God’s invoking of the ten plagues—were proven to be powerless. The God of Israel himself said, “And against all the gods of Egypt, I will execute judgments—I am Yahweh” (Exod 12:12b). This conclusion is supported by the statement of Jethro, Moses’ father-in-law, who had just heard a first-hand account of all the events: “Now I know that the Lord is greater than all the gods; because in the very thing in which they were proud, he *proved to be* above them” (Exod 18:11). Jethro understood the point: Yahweh resoundingly won “the Battle of the Gods,” proving both to Israel, to Egypt, and to the rest of the Ancient Near East (hereinafter, “ANE”) that he alone is divine.

b. *Pharaoh’s Throne-Name Omitted in accordance with Contemporary Egyptian Historiography.*

If Moses did not omit pharaoh’s personal name for theological reasons, then why did he omit it? The answer is found in the historical development of monarchical terms. The dynastic title, “pharaoh,” derives from the word that literally means, “great house.” During Egypt’s Old Kingdom (ca. 2715–2170 BC), the word was used of the royal palace. Not until sometime during

the middle of the 18th Dynasty, slightly before the reign of Thutmose III (ca. 1506–1452 BC), the father of Amenhotep II, was it used as an epithet for the Egyptian monarch. However, the standard practice of Thutmose III's time was to leave enemy kings unnamed on official records. The campaign of Thutmose III against a rebellious coalition at Megiddo, instigated by the Empire of Mitanni, was fomented by the King of Kadesh (on the Orontes River), who—in *The Annals of Thutmose III*—merely was called, “that wretched enemy of Kadesh.” Moreover, when Egyptian scribes listed the booty that was confiscated after the Battle of Megiddo, they did not name the opposing king whose possessions the Egyptians plundered, referring to him only as “the prince,” or “the Prince of Megiddo.”<sup>19</sup> The Amada Stele of Amenhotep II, which boasts of the king's successful battles against seven Syrian tribes of Takhsi, identifies these foreign rulers only as “seven chieftains,” whose names are all left unrecorded.<sup>20</sup>

In the Memphis Stele of Amenhotep II, reference is made to his campaigns in Edom, Canaan, and Syria. All of the foreign kings whom he defeated, deposed, or killed also went unnamed in this victory stele. Mention was even made of the chieftains of Naharin (the land to the east of the Euphrates River), Khatti (the Hittites), and Babylon. Despite the prominence of these kings, they nonetheless remain anonymous as well.<sup>21</sup> During the Ramesside period (ca. 1300–1100 BC), the singular term “pharaoh” was widely used, continuing to be popular until the late period. As Hoffmeier states, “From its inception until the tenth century [BC], the term ‘Pharaoh’ stood alone, without juxtaposed personal name. In subsequent periods, the name of the monarch was generally added on.”<sup>22</sup> Therefore, Moses' practice of omitting pharaoh's throne-name next to the dynastic title, “pharaoh,” followed the standard practice of the day in ancient Egypt, not coincidentally the site of his literary training.

Moreover, Moses also refrained from writing the names of other pharaohs who are attested in the Pentateuch, including the “good pharaoh” whom Jacob blessed and Joseph faithfully served (Gen 47:7). What theological reason could there be for omitting the name of this blessed pharaoh? Certainly the answer cannot be, “To keep him humble!”, since Moses wrote centuries after both this pharaoh and his dynasty had disappeared from the earth. Therefore, the exodus-pharaoh's name was neither omitted for theological reasons, nor to discourage the curiosity of modern historians who desire to identify him. Instead, the exodus-pharaoh's throne-name is absent for one reason alone: a skilled writer named Moses, born in Egypt and trained as a prince in all of the ways of the royal court of Egypt (Acts 7:22), followed the standard practice of his day by leaving unnamed the foreign monarch who assumed the role of a dreaded enemy of his own nation, in this case Israel.

## 2. *Biblical Chronology: Precisely Dating the Exodus.*

Before proceeding, the exact date of the exodus must be established. The central text for this crucial historical event, 1 Kgs 6:1, connects the exodus 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.<sup>23</sup> All but the minimalists agree that the counting of the 479+ years should begin with May of 967 or 966 BC, depending on whether one accepts Young's or Thiele's version of Solomon's regnal dates.<sup>24</sup> Thus the 479+ years began either in 1446 or 1445 BC, either of which can be substantiated by the Biblical text and harmonized with the conclusions drawn from the present work.

a. *The Case for Dating the Exodus to 1446 BC.*

A compelling argument for choosing 1446 BC is that the Jubilee cycles agree with this date exactly, 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 BC (cf. Lev 25:2–10). The Talmud (*'Arakin* 12b) lists 17 cycles from Israel's entry into Canaan until the last Jubilee in 574 BC, which is 14 years after Jerusalem's destruction by using the Tishri calendar, a statement also found in chap. 11 of *The Seder 'Olam*, which predates the Talmud.<sup>25</sup> Consequently, 1446 BC is preferred over 1445 BC.<sup>26</sup>

b. *The Case for Dating the Exodus to 1267 BC.*

Some prefer dating the exodus to 1267 BC, 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."<sup>27</sup> One reason for this surge 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 BC, and (2) no evidence of the Israelites in Canaan from ca. 1400–1200 BC even exists. However, late-exodus proponents should remember that there is also an "invisibility of the Israelites in the archaeology of Canaan between ca. 1200 and 1000" BC,<sup>28</sup> so the extension of their invisibility by two more centuries should create no additional burden. 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 BC.<sup>29</sup>

A second reason for this surge is that Rameses, the store-city that the Israelites built (Exod 1:11), is usually identified with Pi-Rameses, which flourished from ca. 1270–1100 BC and was comparable to the largest cities of the ANE, but was built only during the reign of Rameses II (ca. 1290–1223 BC).<sup>30</sup> Shea rebuts that "Raameses" was used of the land to which the patriarchs traveled several centuries earlier (Gen 47:11), when no ruler bore the name "Rameses," suggesting that both references may be a divinely-overseen updating of an earlier place-name.<sup>31</sup> Whether or not Exod 1:11 is anachronistic, there is no guarantee that Pi-Rameses is biblical Rameses. 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."<sup>32</sup> Yet the presumption that Biblical Rameses could not have been inhabited before Rameses II has driven the movement to advance the date of the exodus forward by two centuries, with the view's proponents interpreting "480th" in 1 Kgs 6:1 as being merely a symbolical number.

Two options exist for allegorizing "the 480th year." The first option is that the number 480 is the sum of 12 eras consisting of 40-year generations: 20 years for one generation to live to child-bearing age, then 20 years for their children to do likewise. When totaled, these 12 eras of 22–25 actual years supply the 288–300 years needed to support the late-exodus theory.<sup>33</sup> By counting back 300 years from 967 BC, the exodus dates to ca. 1267 BC, which falls within the exceedingly long reign of Rameses II.<sup>34</sup> The second option for the number 480 is what Kitchen calls "the nonoppressions aggregate theory." Here, the 480 years consist of nine

periods of 40 years (=360 years), the third of which is actually 80 years (2 x 40), plus five aggregate periods of varying lengths. When totaled, the sum is a neat 480 years.<sup>35</sup>

*c. The Inadequacy of Interpreting the 480th Year of 1 Kgs 6:1 Allegorically.*

One weakness with any allegorical interpretation is that in 1 Kgs 6:1, the author 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* 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 fulfilling 40 years of age” (Acts 7:23). Only “after 40 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 40 years, a criterion not met by the modest reign of Seti I (ca. 1305–1290 BC), Rameses II’s predecessor. In contrast, Thutmose III, the father and predecessor of Amenhotep II, who ruled just under 54 years, is the only other pharaoh of the 18th or 19th Dynasty to rule over 40 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.”<sup>36</sup>

Finally, 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 Exod 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 is to be trusted to correctly allegorize the number, which otherwise is shrouded in mystery? Opponents of biblical inerrancy even recognize the folly of such allegorization, with 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.”<sup>37</sup> Simply put, no such creative ingenuity is necessary.

*d. The Preference for Interpreting the 480th Year of 1 Kgs 6:1 Literally.*

Cassuto studied ascending and descending Hebrew numbers.<sup>38</sup> As Wood notes from this study, a number written in ascending order—as with “eightieth and four-hundredth” in 1 Kgs 6:1, where the smaller number (80th) is followed by the larger number (400th)—is always “intended to be a technically precise figure.”<sup>39</sup> Moreover, no subjectively allegorical use of “480th” justifies the rejection of its natural use. Since the advocates of a late exodus are more driven by arguments from silence about the Israelites’ habitation of Canaan before the 13th century BC than by textual evidence, this number should be taken literally, reinforcing 1446 BC as the exact year of the exodus.

*3. Egyptian Chronology: Precisely Dating the Pharaonic Reigns of the 15th Century BC.*

The final step before determining whether Amenhotep II is a viable candidate for the exodus-pharaoh is to synchronize the date of the exodus with Egyptian history. While inspiration does not extend to extra-Biblical literature or ancient inscriptions, many extant writings do possess a high degree of trustworthiness.

a. *The Astronomical Date in the Ebers Papyrus.*

The Ebers Papyrus, an ancient Egyptian MS that dates the heliacal rising of Sothis to Year 9, Month 3, Season 3, Day 9 (*ca.* 15 May) of Amenhotep I's reign (*ca.* 1550–1529 BC), records this astronomical event that fixes its composition to an identifiable time in the 18th Dynasty.<sup>40</sup> Since astronomers can pinpoint this event by charting the positions of stars in antiquity, the papyrus can be dated to *ca.* 1541 BC, making his initial regnal year *ca.* 1550 BC. This dating, accepted by numerous Egyptological scholars, 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 BC.<sup>41</sup> While the Egyptians never stated from where they observed the Sothic rising, Olympiodorus noted in AD 6 that it was celebrated at Alexandria, after having been observed at Memphis.<sup>42</sup> Therefore, Memphis is taken to be the correct point of observation for the rising recorded in the Ebers Papyrus.

b. *The Reliability of the Dating of the 18th Dynasty.*

Even without depending on astronomical dating, the chronology of Egypt in the mid-1400's BC 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."<sup>43</sup> As for the 18th 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.<sup>44</sup>

c. *The Regnal Dates of the 18th-Dynasty Pharaohs from the Time of the Ebers Papyrus to the Exodus.*

With firm regnal dates for Amenhotep I, the reigns of the subsequent 18th-Dynasty pharaohs down to Amenhotep II are fixed with relative certainty: Thutmose I (*ca.* 1529–1516 BC), Thutmose II (*ca.* 1516–1506 BC), Queen Hatshepsut (*ca.* 1504–1484 BC), Thutmose III (*ca.* 1506–1452 BC), and Amenhotep II (*ca.* 1455–1418 BC).<sup>45</sup> With these reigns chronologically ordered, the evaluation of Amenhotep II's candidacy for the exodus-pharaoh may proceed.

### III. THE SURVIVAL OF AMENHOTEP II DURING THE 10TH PLAGUE

The tenth plague upon Egypt specified that the firstborn of all classes of people, from pharaoh who sat on the throne to the lowest slave girl behind the millstone, along with the firstborn among the livestock, would all die at the hands of the Death Angel (Exod 11:5). Being that the throne was included in this edict, one might expect that pharaoh himself—if he actually was the firstborn son of his father, which was the normal protocol for succession under Egypt's dynastic rule—would have died during this last and most terrible plague (Exod 12:29–30). However, since



the exodus-pharaoh obviously lived through the final plague, he could not have been “the king’s eldest son,” a title the Egyptians liberally used of pharaoh’s eldest son, who stood in line behind his father as the heir apparent to the Egyptian throne. Therefore, in order for Amenhotep II to qualify as a legitimate candidate for the exodus-pharaoh, he could not have been “the king’s eldest son.”

Amenhotep II indeed would have survived the tenth plague, because he was not the firstborn son of Thutmose III. In the words of Redford, the idea that Amenhotep II was the eldest son of Thutmose III “does not seem possible in the light of our present knowledge.”<sup>46</sup> Toward the middle of Thutmose III’s reign, in Year 24, the heir to the throne was not Amenhotep II, but Amenemhet, who was called “the king’s eldest son.” There is little doubt that he was the older half-brother of Amenhotep II who died before he could assume the throne. In an inscription from the Karnak Festival Hall that dates to Year 24, Amenemhet was being appointed to an administrative position in the temple of Amun: “. . . appointing the king’s eldest son [Amen]emhet as overseer of cattle.”<sup>47</sup> Since Amenemhet probably was no longer a child when the inscription was composed, he would have been born fairly early in the coregency of Thutmose III and Hatshepsut.<sup>48</sup> Therefore, Amenhotep II would not have died during the tenth plague, as the record bears out that he was not the firstborn son of Thutmose III.

#### IV. THE TENTH PLAGUE AND THE FIRSTBORN SON OF AMENHOTEP II

##### 1. *God Predicts the Death of Pharaoh’s Eldest Son.*

God told Moses that he would harden pharaoh’s heart, and that pharaoh would refuse to free the Israelites from bondage (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 had passed, God repeated this prediction, stating that “all the firstborn in the land of Egypt will die, from the firstborn of the pharaoh who sits on his throne” (Exod 11:5). Therefore, the eldest son of the exodus-pharaoh must have died in the plague. Who are the candidates for the eldest son of Amenhotep II?

##### 2. *Thutmose IV as a Candidate for the Eldest Son of Amenhotep II.*

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 without the chance to rule, which the historical record should confirm. The son who succeeded Amenhotep II was Thutmose IV (*ca.* 1418–1408 BC), whose Dream Stele—located between the paws of the Great Sphinx—reveals that he was not the original heir to the throne.<sup>49</sup> Moreover, inscriptional and papyritic evidence confirms that Thutmose IV was not the eldest son of Amenhotep II.

##### 3. *Prince Amenhotep as a Candidate for the Eldest Son of Amenhotep II.*

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.”<sup>50</sup> To which Amenhotep is the scribe referring? Although the year is completely lost from the regnal date on this MS, the

surviving month (4) and day (1) mark precisely the date of Amenhotep II's accession, implying that Prince Amenhotep undoubtedly was his son.<sup>51</sup> This prince almost certainly resided in or near Memphis<sup>52</sup>, due to his office being connected to the high priesthood of Ptah.<sup>53</sup>

The late 18th Dynasty attests to numerous high priests of Ptah, and 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 be filled partially 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.<sup>54</sup> Three factors support the identification of Prince B with Prince Amenhotep: (1) both were the son of a king; (2) Amenhotep II was the father of both; and (3) they both resided at Memphis, functioning there 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."<sup>55</sup> 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.<sup>56</sup> If Prince B/Amenhotep was the heir to the throne without being the firstborn son of Amenhotep II, then who was the eldest son of this noted pharaoh?

#### 4. An Unattested "Thutmose" as a Candidate for the Eldest Son of Amenhotep II.

Redford, who considers the exodus account to be 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."<sup>57</sup> Redford suggests that the practice of these pharaohs was not to name their firstborn sons after themselves, but to use an alternative birth-name. If Prince Amenhotep was not the eldest son of Amenhotep II, who by custom may have named his first son "Thutmose," then the Thutmose sitting on the lap of the royal tutor Hekreshu in a wall painting at Thebes may be "the eldest son" of the king.<sup>58</sup> Therefore, if Amenhotep II was the exodus-pharaoh, perhaps his eldest son was Thutmose, who died in the plague without leaving a trace, thus satisfying both the Egyptological and Biblical records (Exod 12:29).

## V. THE 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, there is no such statement to this effect in Exodus, the only first-hand source for the event, or anywhere else in Scripture.<sup>59</sup> One of the most important

principles that was taught to the present writer during his seminary studies is this: "Say everything the text says; say no more, and say no less!" Saying more than what is written in the text is known as eisegesis, or reading into the text what the interpreter presupposes it to say. Eisegesis must be avoided here. What does the text actually say about the fate of this pharaoh? Moses only states that the Lord would "be honored through pharaoh" by the destruction of his army (Exod 14:4), but throughout the entire narrative of Exodus, Moses never explicitly states that pharaoh died along with his army.

### 1. *Psalm 106:11 as a Proof-Text for the Death of the Exodus-Pharaoh in the Red Sea.*

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 "so that he might make known his power" (Ps 106:8). After describing the parting (Ps 106:9), the psalmist adds, "And he saved them from the hand of the hater and redeemed them from the hand of the enemy, and the water covered their adversaries; not one of them remained" (Ps 106:10–11). The adversaries are obviously the Egyptian soldiers, the enemies who were haters of the Jews. The sea covered them, and not one of them remained alive.

Allegedly, pharaoh—the chief adversary—was among the smitten Egyptians. If Amenhotep II actually was the exodus-pharaoh, then his reign would have ended abruptly during the year of the exodus, or *ca.* 1446 BC. Since he ruled at least 26 years, which will be proven below, his reign must have begun by *ca.* 1471 BC. The weakness with the death-in-the-Red-Sea theory, though, is that it cannot be synchronized with the reigns of the previous five pharaohs, whose regnal dates are known, being fixed by the Ebers Papyrus. Since regnal dates are known—except for that of Thutmose II, whose rule lasted from four to twelve years—Amenhotep II's ninth year could not have begun in or before *ca.* 1471 BC. Even if Thutmose II ruled for the minimum of four years, the reign of Amenhotep II had to begin in *ca.* 1462 BC or later, leaving nine years too few for the reigns of all of the intervening monarchs. Therefore, due to limitations that represent fixed points in Biblical and Egyptian chronologies, if Amenhotep II was the exodus-pharaoh, he 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 drowned with his army. 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, that is, in relation to Pharaoh's entire army that followed them into the sea; not one of them remained" (Exod 14:28).

### 2. *Psalm 136:15 as a Proof-Text for the Death of the Exodus-Pharaoh in the Red Sea.*

The text most frequently used to assert 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.<sup>60</sup> However, the Hebrew verb *נָעַר* (*n'ar*, "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, as both lines of this synonymous parallelism indicate his feeling of being cast away, or discarded. The picture painted by the verb is that David has become as a locust that is casually flicked away from a man's garment. Surely David was not describing his own demise and death! The context of Ps 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, thus accentuating the ease with which he shook off Israel's adversary: the mighty Egyptian army.

Another argument against the view that Ps 136:15 signals the death of pharaoh is that this verse is probably taken from Exod 14:27, which uses the same verb, "to shake off," but (purposefully?) omits pharaoh from the list of those whom the Lord shook off from the Israelites' garments. 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.<sup>61</sup> In Ps 136:15, the psalm writer was not rejoicing over the death of anyone, but that almighty God shook off the Egyptians from Israel's garments by freeing them from their enemy's clutches.

### 3. *The Death and Regnal Length of Amenhotep II.*

Under what circumstances, then, did Amenhotep II die? Fortunately, his mummified corpse has been preserved.<sup>62</sup> 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 9 March 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.<sup>63</sup>

#### a. *An Indisputable Regnal Length of at Least 26 Years.*

While 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.<sup>64</sup> 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.<sup>65</sup> Wentz and Van Siclen dispute this assertion, though, showing evidence for 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.<sup>66</sup>

#### b. *A Possible Regnal Length of at Least 30 or 35 Years.*

One source contributing to the argument that Amenhotep II reigned *beyond* 26 years is BM 10056. At least 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.”<sup>67</sup> If one of these readings is correct, Amenhotep II’s reign lasted at least 30 or 35 years. Many scholars have postulated that he reigned beyond 30 years because he observed a regnal jubilee called a *sed* festival, a celebration that historically marked the 30th year of a pharaoh’s reign. While the *sed* festival was used for centuries to honor this regnal anniversary,<sup>68</sup> 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.”<sup>69</sup>

### c. A Possible Regnal Length of Exactly 37 1/3 Years.

Certainly caution must be exercised before assigning a 30-year reign automatically to every pharaoh who celebrated this event, but the *sed* festival of Amenhotep II just may signify that his reign exceeded 30 years. More conclusive than the *sed*-festival evidence is that from Thutmose IV’s Lateran Obelisk, which was erected a full 35 years after the death of Thutmose III, to whom it was dedicated. Wentz and Van Siclen suggest that the 35 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.<sup>70</sup> If their argumentation is correct, Amenhotep II reigned exactly 37 1/3 years, making him 55 years of age at the time of his death.

### d. A Lifespan of 55 Years.

A lifespan of 55 years for Amenhotep II is deduced by adding his 37 1/3-year reign to the 18 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.”<sup>71</sup> An X-ray investigation of the royal mummies may assist in dating his regnal length. After an examination of the mummy of Amenhotep II, he was estimated to have died at 44 years of age,<sup>72</sup> meaning that a 55-year lifespan exceeds the projections of the X-ray evidence, and thus is “an impossibly high result according to the medical evidence.”<sup>73</sup> Yet Robins 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.<sup>74</sup> Support for this criticism is found in the discrepancy over Thutmose III’s lifespan.<sup>75</sup> While he lived at least until age 55, his mummy reportedly displays skeletal features of a man of 40–45 years old, meaning that the X-ray evidence makes him appear no less than 10–15 years younger than his actual age at death.<sup>76</sup> Thus the 10-year discrepancy with Amenhotep II’s mummy is not problematic, and a reign of 37 1/3 years remains a fully realistic option.

## VI. THE SECOND ASIATIC CAMPAIGN AS THE RESULT OF THE EXODUS

### 1. The Great Reduction in Campaigning and Expansionism.

The renowned conqueror Thutmose III led 17 military campaigns into the Levant, but his son—in stark contrast—led only two or three. While many scholars have attempted to determine the

exact number, there exists a virtual dearth of discussion about this sharp decline. Aharoni 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."<sup>77</sup> 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."<sup>78</sup> 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."<sup>79</sup>

While 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-14th century BC, Egypt held only nominal control of Palestine, as they no longer struck fear into the Canaanite rulers.<sup>80</sup> One author notes that "this relative military inertness lasted until Horemheb's coming to power" in ca. 1335 BC.<sup>81</sup> 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?

## 2. *The Motivation for the Recording of Amenhotep II's Asiatic Campaigns.*

The relative shortage of military activity during Amenhotep II's reign cannot be attributed to timidity. He recorded his few military excursions into Asia in *The Annals of Amenhotep II*, which contain not a complete, daily record of each stop on the various routes, but only a selection of the events that accentuate his courage and present him in a positive light.<sup>82</sup> Pritchard adds that "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."<sup>83</sup> Thus Amenhotep II's exploits were motivated by a thirst to attain universal fame and glory.

## 3. *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, as recounted on the fragmentary Karnak Stele, and the operations against Takhsi, 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.<sup>84</sup> However, its text presents a dilemma: "The translator finds it impossible to reconcile the dates in these several stelae."<sup>85</sup> The available evidence allows for two views: (1) Amenhotep II conducted three Asiatic campaigns; (2) Amenhotep II conducted two Asiatic campaigns. Relevant inscriptional evidence from antiquity solves this dispute, which is critical to this pharaoh's biography.

### a. *The Evidence from the Memphis Stele.*

Two sources record multiple Asiatic campaigns under Amenhotep II: the Memphis and Karnak Stelae, which are partially duplicates in content. Both stelae are attributable to this pharaoh with confidence, as they begin with his complete titulary. The Memphis Stele, later reused by a 21st-Dynasty prince as part of the ceiling of his burial chamber (*ca.* 875 BC), 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).<sup>86</sup>

*b. The Evidence from the Karnak Stele.*

Another source that attests to the Asiatic campaigns, lying to the south of the Eighth Pylon at Karnak, is the Karnak Stele, which survives in a more damaged state than the Memphis Stele. The Karnak Stele consists of a two-part relief, with each displaying a pharaoh who is presenting an offering to Amun-Re. Between the two parts is a vertical line of text that records Seti I's restoration of the monument.<sup>87</sup> Whether this stele originally bore the same dates as those on the Memphis Stele is unknown, but that it recounts the same two campaigns described on the Memphis Stele is now clear. Hoffmeier even 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.<sup>88</sup> Both stelae were hacked-up during the Amarna Revolution and restored during the 19th Dynasty, with the Karnak Stele betraying poorer restoration.<sup>89</sup> Its postscript names Thutmose as the erector, assumed to be Thutmose IV, who evidently erected the stele after his accession.<sup>90</sup>

*c. The Evidence from the Amada and Elephantine Stelae.*

The Amada and Elephantine Stelae also offer evidence regarding the number of campaigns, as both 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."<sup>91</sup> His majesty came joyously to his father Amun, having slain with his own bludgeon the seven chiefs who were in the district of Takhsi."<sup>92</sup> 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.<sup>93</sup> This date demonstrates that the "first victorious campaign" transpired no later than Year 3 of Amenhotep II. How can this date be resolved with the Year-7 date on the Memphis Stele, when both describe his first campaign? These ancient sources allow for two theories on how many campaigns were launched.

*d. The Theory of Three Asiatic Campaigns Launched by Amenhotep II.*

Many scholars believe that Amenhotep II campaigned into Asia three times, with two options offered to resolve the conflicting information on the stelae. (1) 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.<sup>94</sup> Thus the scribe merely used

“first” and “second” to distinguish from one another the two campaigns commemorated on the stele. The problem with this theory is that within Egyptian historiography, this supposed method of dating military campaigns is unparalleled. The practice would be strange indeed among 18th-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.<sup>95</sup> The 17 campaigns of Thutmose III, for example, are numbered successively throughout his reign.

(2) 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 the phrase, “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 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.<sup>96</sup> Yet once again, 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 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 a sole ruler, in response to the Syro-Palestinian revolt waged after his father’s death.

By way of evaluation, insurmountable obstacles plague both versions of the three-campaign theory, thus rendering this option insufficient and unacceptable. 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.”<sup>97</sup> 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 surely refer to a singular Asiatic campaign.<sup>98</sup>

#### e. *The Theory of Two Asiatic Campaigns.*

The inadequacies of the three-campaign theory have caused many scholars to propose that Amenhotep II launched only two Asiatic campaigns, despite the victory stelaes attributing campaigns to Years 3, 7, and 9. This theory also has two variations. (1) 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 stelaes 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.”<sup>99</sup> One problem with this variation is the lack of precedent for dating pharaonic regnal years using two different methods: sometimes coregent numbering, and other times sole-regent numbering. Another problem is that the coregency now is known to have lasted exactly  $2 \frac{1}{3}$  years, making it mathematically impossible to equate the two campaigns, since the coregency would have to



have lasted for a minimum of three years and one day for Pritchard to be correct.

(2) 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 19th Dynasty stela-restoration crew that attempted to repair the damage it 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 restoration.”<sup>100</sup> He concludes, “Thus the initial date of Year 7 on the Memphis Stele is a[n inaccurate] restoration made by the Ramesides.”<sup>101</sup>

#### f. *Conclusion for the Number of Asiatic Campaigns.*

Both variations of the three-campaign theory proved to be weak and 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.”<sup>102</sup> Therefore, based on the strong 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,<sup>103</sup> even provides a *terminus ad quem* for the first campaign, as line 26 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.”<sup>104</sup> 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, located to the east of the Euphrates River, the inscription of which confirms that the first Asiatic campaign occurred before Year 4 ended.<sup>105</sup>

#### 4. *The First Asiatic Campaign of Amenhotep II.*

For the sake of brevity, Amenhotep II’s first campaign will be referred to as A1, while his second campaign will be called A2. As was proven already, he launched A1 in Year 3, and the events surrounding this campaign can be dated chronologically in the following sequence: (1) Thutmose III died on ca. 22 March 1452 BC; (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 the nearby garrisoned cities; and (5) Amenhotep II launched A1, arriving at his first destination on ca. 15 May 1452 BC.

The death of Thutmose III led to a massive revolt in his Syro-Palestinian territories, which propelled the launching of A1.<sup>106</sup> 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."<sup>107</sup> His 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 BC, just as his father had done on his first Asiatic campaign, exactly 32 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*. Undoubtedly, the coastal cities of Syria—and perhaps Palestine, as well—had rebelled, and hence the young pharaoh was forced to proceed by land in order to quell this revolt.<sup>108</sup>

### 5. *The Second Asiatic Campaign of Amenhotep II.*

Amenhotep II indisputably launched A2 in Year 9. If his reign began in ca. 1455 BC, 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 BC. Therefore, the exodus date of ca. 25 April 1446 BC 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 also. Ancient sources and modern commentators both expend far less energy writing about A2 than they do 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.

#### a. *The Second Asiatic Campaign Launched to Finish the Task of the First Campaign.*

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."<sup>109</sup> Aharoni sees in A1 an excursion that never accomplished its primary mission: the conquest of Mitanni. Grimal concurs, noting that "these two campaigns were the last to pit Egypt against Mitanni."<sup>110</sup>

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 crumbles from within, due to the longevity of the interval. Of even greater weight, the failure of A1 would have resulted in another campaign directed principally into Syria, if not into Mitannian territory further to the north, not simply a brief raid into southern Palestine that accomplished little more than the acquisition of slaves and booty.

#### b. *The Second Asiatic Campaign Launched to Replenish Egypt after Their Losses.*

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 is related to the exodus. If the exodus and Amenhotep II's Year-9 campaign transpired in the same year, which is highly possible given the chronological harmonization demonstrated earlier, a brief campaign into southern Palestine

to recover some of his critical losses would be both logical and expected. The feasibility of this theory will be determined by a study of the details related to A2.

#### 6. *The Unique, Pre-Winter Launching of the Second Asiatic Campaign.*

The date of Year 9, Month 3, Season 1, Day 25 (or ca. 16 November 1446 BC) recorded on the Memphis Stele represents either the Egyptian army's launching date from Memphis or the arrival date at their first destination, though more likely the latter. Either way, in antiquity a November date represents an extremely odd time for a military campaign. "The present date would fall in the early part of November, an unusual season for an Egyptian campaign in Asia."<sup>111</sup> The reason for November being an unusual launch-time is that 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.<sup>112</sup> 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."<sup>113</sup> 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."<sup>114</sup> Amenhotep II's decision to lead an attack force into Palestine in November was extremely unorthodox, so obviously the situation did require urgent Egyptian intervention, which Vandersleyen perceptively notes. But in what did Amenhotep II need to intervene? Unlike A1, which was launched to quell a rebellion, A2 had no obvious occasion.

#### 7. *The Contrast between the Two Asiatic Campaigns Launched by Amenhotep II.*

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 in relation to one another.<sup>115</sup> 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 *closer to* Egypt.

#### 8. *The Drastic Change in Foreign-Policy after the Second Asiatic Campaign of Amenhotep II.*

Another oddity of A2 is that after its conclusion, the Egyptian army—established by Thutmose III as the 15th century BC's most elite fighting force—went into virtual hibernation. Their previous policy of unwavering 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.<sup>116</sup> 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).”<sup>117</sup> 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.”<sup>118</sup> 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.”<sup>119</sup> 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.”<sup>120</sup> Why would Amenhotep II do the unthinkable, and opt to make a treaty with Mitanni?

This mysterious reversal in foreign policy would remain unexplainable and unthinkable 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 their Israelite slave-base would be paramount. Certainly the Egyptians would have needed time to rally their remaining forces together, however small 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 would seem vulnerable. If this scenario represents what actually transpired in ANE history, however, tangible proof is needed to verify its veracity.

## VII. THE 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, which does not include the 22,000 Levite males of Num 3:39. When women and children are added, they well would have exceeded 2,000,000 people.<sup>121</sup> A populace of this magnitude must have provided the backbone of the Egyptian slave-force, given both their vast numbers and rigorous labors (Exod 1:11–14). To most Egyptology students, however, the exodus-narrative is considered 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 serves only to bolster this skepticism. One prominent Egyptologist suggests that

to 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.<sup>122</sup>

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

### 1. *The Absence of an Exodus-Account in the 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.<sup>123</sup> Nonetheless, the Hebrew slaves not only exited Egypt *en masse*, but they were responsible for the extermination of pharaoh's vast army, the mightiest military force on earth at the time. Yet the proud Egyptians should not be expected to have documented their own humiliating defeat, which would smear their records and tarnish the glorious 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."<sup>124</sup>

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."<sup>125</sup> 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.<sup>126</sup> He combined strength with a cruelty intended to demoralize his enemies,<sup>127</sup> 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."<sup>128</sup> 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.

### 2. *The Booty Lists from the 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.<sup>129</sup> 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 the 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."<sup>130</sup> Regarding the "89,600" total prisoners, the sum is actually 101,128 when the numbers are added.<sup>131</sup> The error may be a mere mistake in addition, as the individual numbers are probably more reliable than the recorded sum.<sup>132</sup> Therefore, a final tally of 101,128 is preferred over 89,600 for the total number of prisoners. Before contrasting A2 with other contemporary campaigns, it should be noted that the Egyptians confiscated 1,082 chariots,

which, along with the 13,500 weapons, would be critical for replacing the "600 select chariots and all the other chariots of Egypt" that were lost in the Red Sea (Exod 14:7).

The military campaigns of Thutmose III, which derive from *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: T1 = 5,903 captives; T6 = 217 captives; T7 = 494 captives; A1 = 2,214 captives; and A2 = 101,128 captives.<sup>133</sup> 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 46-times more prisoners than all of the other campaigns combined! Why is there such a tremendous disparity? Is it merely coincidental that such a vast number of prisoners was taken during the last Asiatic campaign of the 18th 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.<sup>134</sup>

### 3. *The Goal of Amenhotep II to Impress the Kings of Egypt's Rival Empires.*

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

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.'<sup>135</sup>

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 affect 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.

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 his rivals 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 as 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). Thus news of the exodus also would have spread to the distant empires that posed a threat to Egypt's expanded domain.

### 4. *A 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, when considered 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 question is begged by the implication that the booty-list reveals an Israelite connection to A2 and its material acquisitions: is there tangible evidence that links the Israelites to A2?

## VIII. THE APPEARANCE OF 3,600 APIRU ON THE BOOTY LIST

### 1. *The Identification of the Term "Apiru/Habiru" and Its Early Association with the Hebrews.*

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.<sup>136</sup> Who are the Apiru whom Amenhotep II captured during A2? Earlier Biblical scholars unashamedly equated the Apiru/Habiru with the Hebrew word עִבְרִי ('*bri*, "Hebrew").

### 2. *The Later Trend to Reject the Association of the Apiru with the Hebrews.*

Subsequently, many have rejected the equation of 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."<sup>137</sup> 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.<sup>138</sup>

### 3. *The Case for Identifying the 3,600 Apiru of A2 with the Hebrews.*

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.<sup>139</sup> But should one concede that the designation of outlaw-marauders, if accurate, actually preceded that of the ethnically distinct Hebrews? While it goes beyond the present work to identify the limitations of the term "Habiru," it must be addressed whether or not the Apiru of A2 might be Hebrews. Either way, the appearance of the Apiru on a formal list of Asiatic captives is quite unusual.<sup>140</sup>

#### a. *Renewed Support for the General Association of the Apiru with the Hebrews.*

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.<sup>141</sup>

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).<sup>142</sup>

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."<sup>143</sup>

#### b. *The Impossibility of the Apiru as Marauding Brigands.*

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,"<sup>144</sup> elsewhere notes, "If the large numbers are to be believed, Apiru/Habiru were not just small bands of marauders in Amenhotep's day."<sup>145</sup> This number far exceeds that of a loosely-organized gang of bandits, and without proof from antiquity that bandits congregated in such large numbers, it cannot be accepted that the 3,600 Apiru of A2 were mere brigands or thieves. Besides, would a makeshift army on a slave raid attempt to enslave a mobile outfit of bandits when the acquisition of peaceful townspeople was far simpler? Moreover, why would pharaoh desire to pollute his subservient slave population with rank bandits?

The Amarna Letters, written as early as the reign of Amenhotep III (from ca. 1395 BC), provide more reason why the Apiru cannot be brigands. Two dispatches of the King of Hazor are among the Letters, and two others mention Hazor and its king. In EA 227, the King of Hazor, writing to the ruling pharaoh, refers to himself as the "king of the city of Hazor," which throughout the el-Amarna archive is an unparalleled royal title for a Canaanite ruler. Furthermore, in EA 148, the ruler of Tyre refers to him by the same kingly title. In the fragmentary EA 227, the King of Hazor reassures pharaoh that he is safeguarding the cities of pharaoh until the Egyptian monarch's arrival.<sup>146</sup> As Yadin writes, "This indicates that the King of Hazor's rule embraced more than the city itself," which "is further corroborated by the letters of the rulers of Tyre and Ashtaroth."<sup>147</sup>

In EA 228, the King of Hazor, who names himself 'Abdi Tirshi, loyally informs pharaoh of hostile acts perpetrated against Hazor and its king: "Let my lord, the king (of Egypt), remember all that was done against Hasura (Hazor), your city, and against your servant."<sup>148</sup> However, a change in the allegiance of Hazor's king is seen in EA 148, written by 'Abi-Milki, King of Tyre, who abruptly blurts, "The King of Hasura has abandoned his house and aligned himself with the Apiru." 'Abi-Milki concludes his letter by warning, "Let the king (of Egypt) know that they (the Apiru) are hostile to the palace attendants. These are treacherous fellows. He (the King of Hazor) has taken over the land of the king (of Egypt) for the Apiru. Let the king inquire of his commissioner, who is familiar with Canaan."<sup>149</sup>



It is unclear why the once-loyal King of Hazor forsook pharaoh, his overlord, and aligned himself with the Apiru, but EA 228 implies that the Apiru wore down and eventually overpowered Hazor and its king, which is confirmed by this act of treason. The King of Hazor was the only so-called "king" in Canaan, overseeing numerous Canaanite cities for pharaoh. This exalted status matches well with the 14th-century-BC account in the book of Judges, as Hazor's King Jabin is referred to four times as the "King of Canaan," while only once is he called the "King of Hazor." He is even called "the King of Canaan, who ruled in Hazor" (Judg 4:2).<sup>150</sup> Why would mighty Hazor align itself with a group of bandits, exchanging allegiance to powerful Egypt, as their longstanding overlords, to allegiance to meddling thieves, as their new overlords? Would its king truly fear wandering brigands more than pharaoh's army? How could a band of social misfits subvert Hazor, the greatest local dynasty in Canaan? It is absurd to assert that mere nomadic bandits could persuade mighty Hazor and its great king simply to surrender their municipal and regional sovereignty to hoodlums such as they. If the Apiru were national Israel, however, opposing the peoples of Canaan with divine assistance as portrayed in Judges, one can easily envisage the King of Hazor buckling under the enormous pressure that was applied to him by the persistent Hebrews. Wood correctly concludes that "[t]he 'apiru' of the highlands of Canaan described in the Amarna Letters of the mid-14th century BC conform to the biblical Israelites."<sup>151</sup>

*c. The Apiru of A2 Recognized by the Egyptians as a Distinct Ethnic Group.*

Beitzel, who zealously opposes the association of the Apiru with the Hebrews, states that "the Amarna Hapiru seems to be composed of diverse ethnic elements from various localities."<sup>152</sup> While the dispersion of the Apiru throughout Canaan should be expected if they are the 2,000,000+ Israelite settlers (Josh 11:23), nothing in the Amarna Letters implies or requires that the Apiru be characterized as ethnically diverse, leaving Beitzel's claim curious and unfounded. Hoffmeier even underscores the certainty of the Apiru's ethnic homogeneity: "It is clear from the occurrence in the [Memphis] stele of Amenhotep II that they were identified as a specific group like the other ethnic groups taken as prisoners by the king."<sup>153</sup> This claim of homogeneity is correct for two reasons.

(1) The ethnic homogeneity of the Apiru is certain since 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."<sup>154</sup> 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.<sup>155</sup> Grimal compares the ethnic distinctiveness of both the Apiru and the Shasu Bedouin: "Among the prisoners of war were said to be 3,600 Apiru, an ethnic group clearly distinct from the Shosu Bedouin, who are enumerated separately."<sup>156</sup> The Annals of Thutmose III confirm the Kharu's ethnicity:

That feeble enemy of Kadesh has entered Megiddo, and he is [there] at this moment, having rallied to himself the chieftains of [every] foreign land [who had been] allies of Egypt, as well as (those) from as far away as Naharin in/being [. . .], Kharu, and Kedy, their horses, their armies, and [their people].<sup>157</sup>

Since the Kharu are listed among peoples with armies and horses, along with Mitanni (Naharin), their distinct ethnicity—and thus that of the Apiru, as well—cannot be doubted.

(2) The ethnic homogeneity of the Apiru is certain due to 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.<sup>158</sup> The scribe of the Memphis Stele attributes the initial position to royalty, and only afterward does he name 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 half of a year before A2. Amenhotep II obviously would desire to accentuate his enslavement of loathsome Israelites, whom he held responsible for humbling Egypt's pantheon and depleting her mighty army, even if their number paled in comparison to the 2,000,000+ whom he had lost.

#### *d. Accounting for the Bible's Silence about the 3,600 Captured Israelites.*

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 14th 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.<sup>159</sup>

## IX. AMENHOTEP II AND THE DESECRATION OF HATSHEPSUT'S IMAGE

Egyptian history itself may confirm that Amenhotep II was the exodus-pharaoh. The Thutmosid succession entered into an extraordinary phase at the death of Thutmose II, as the throne was given first to his son, Thutmose III, and later assumed as well by his widow, Hatshepsut. Her rise to power resulted from her position 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.<sup>160</sup> Sometime between Year 2 and Year 4 of Thutmose III, Hatshepsut assumed full royal titulary, making herself a female pharaoh of equal rank.<sup>161</sup>

### *1. 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).<sup>162</sup> Was she old enough during her father's second regnal year, most likely the time in which Moses was born (*ca.* 1527 BC), to qualify as his Egyptian stepmother?

#### *a. Hatshepsut's Age Viewed as Being Insufficient.*

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. Egyptians generally were not reserved about recording ranks and titles, so this reticence may indicate that Ahmose was not a pharaoh’s daughter, and thus was neither the daughter nor the sister of Amenhotep I. Instead, she may have been the sister or half-sister of Thutmose I. If this were true, a brother-sister marriage almost certainly would have occurred after Thutmose I was promoted to heir apparent, as incestuous marriages are extremely rare outside of the immediate royal family, and such political matches that consolidated a would-be successor’s claim to the throne were standard procedure in ancient Egypt.<sup>163</sup> Perhaps, then, Hatshepsut was born after Thutmose I was coronated (*ca.* 1529 BC), and thus was barely over twelve years old when she married her (half-)brother (*ca.* 1516 BC). This means that Hatshepsut would have been less than three years of age at the time of Moses’ birth, at which age she hardly could have ventured down to the Nile, let alone draw out an infant-bearing reed basket from the river.

*b. Hatshepsut’s Age Viewed as Being Sufficient.*

Yet there is no proof that Hatshepsut was born after her father’s accession, and the current lack of attestation to Queen Ahmose being a “King’s Daughter” does not preclude her from being 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 before he ruled alone. Hatshepsut thus would have been of sufficient age to draw Moses out of the Nile during her father’s second regnal year, so she remains a legitimate candidate for Moses’ Egyptian adoptive-mother, especially since her father was already over 35 years old when he assumed the throne.

*c. Hatshepsut’s Sister Akhbetneferu as a Candidate.*

Is Hatshepsut the only candidate for Moses’ royal adoptive-mother? Confusion exists over the number of children actually born to Thutmose I and Queen Ahmose. Only two daughters, Hatshepsut and her sister, Princess Akhbetneferu, are known to have been born to the royal couple. However, Princess Akhbetneferu died in infancy, so she cannot qualify as a candidate for the princess who found Moses, leaving Hatshepsut as the only known daughter of Thutmose I who does qualify.<sup>164</sup>

*d. Hatshepsut’s Potential Step-Sister as a Candidate.*

One other option exists for Moses’ adoptive-mother, but not through Queen Ahmose. Thutmose I had a secondary wife named Queen Mutnofret, the mother of Thutmose II. Little is known of her but that she was a person of rank, probably even royal blood, as an inscription at Karnak calls her “the King’s Daughter.” Mutnofret, and not Ahmose, actually appears in the king’s mortuary chapel alongside the royal princes Ramose and Wadjmose, both of whom probably died before their father.<sup>165</sup> Therefore, perhaps even numerous princes were born before their father married Ahmose. No princesses are known to have been mothered by Mutnofret, but the possibility does exist; if Mutnofret did bear a daughter, undoubtedly this princess—given the ages of the princes—would have been old enough to qualify.

*e. Hatshepsut’s Position as the Most Likely Candidate.*

All of the evidence points to Hatshepsut as the most likely candidate for Moses' stepmother, for several reasons: (1) Hatshepsut's blood-sister, Princess Akhbetneferu, was the only other daughter whom Queen Ahmose is known to have borne, but her death in infancy eliminates her candidacy. (2) Lady Mutnofret bore several sons to Thutmose I before she died, but there is no indication that she ever bore him any daughters.<sup>166</sup> (3) The text of 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 obviously lived a considerable length of time *after* she retrieved him from the Nile, increasing the likelihood that an account of this "Daughter of Pharaoh" (Exod 2:5) would be documented and preserved somewhere in the Egyptians' detailed records, a qualification true of Hatshepsut alone.

## 2. *Identifying the Defacer of Hatshepsut's Image.*

At some indeterminable time after Hatshepsut's death, a serious attempt was made to obliterate all record of her from history. Many inscribed cartouches of her were erased, while her busts were smashed or broken into pieces, perhaps by gangs of 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, usually that of Thutmose I or II.<sup>167</sup> At Karnak, her obelisks were walled-up and incorporated into the vestibule in front of Pylon V, while at Djoser-Djeseru her statues and sphinxes were removed, smashed, and cast into trash dumps.<sup>168</sup>

### a. *Thutmose III as the Defacer of Hatshepsut's Image.*

According to most Egyptologists, this massive effort to destroy all record of Hatshepsut's existence 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.<sup>169</sup> "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."<sup>170</sup> But was Thutmose III actually the perpetrator? Did he seethe with hatred and resentment toward his former coruler before viciously attacking all remnants of her? Are cavalier accusations of sexism justifiable? The theory that Thutmose III was the culprit behind this vicious crime is severely weakened by several factors.

(1) If Thutmose III did deface her image, it would be inconsistent with how he otherwise related to her memory. A scene on the dismantled Chapelle Rouge at Djoser-Djeseru portrays Hatshepsut and identifies her as "The Good God, Lady of the Two Lands, Daughter of Ra, Hatshepsut."<sup>171</sup> Thutmose III, who is pictured as 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. Such preservation of her handiwork and further construction on her building projects would be extremely unlikely if he truly despised Hatshepsut so greatly. Furthermore, Thutmose III planned the construction of his own temple to Amun, called Djoser-Akhet, which was to be built at Deir el-Bahri, directly south of Djoser-Djeseru. Since Hatshepsut greatly built-up Deir el-Bahri, including massive terraces and her own

temple next to the one that Thutmose III subsequently built, this construction site is inexplicable if he felt such overwhelming, sexist hatred toward her.<sup>172</sup>

(2) If Thutmose III was the culprit, he waited at least 20 years after she left office before whimsically desecrating her image. He could not have accomplished the feat before his 42nd regnal year, a full 20 years after Hatshepsut left office. Thutmose III's construction projects at Karnak—which include the Hall of Annals, whose texts were written no earlier than Year 42—inadvertently concealed a few inscriptions and illustrations related to Hatshepsut. The scenes were in place by Year 42, yet show no signs whatsoever of any desecration. Conversely, those parts of the scenes that were unprotected by his post-Year-42 construction were defaced during the anti-Hatshepsut campaign. It seems impossible that he would wait until over 20 years after she had left office to initiate a campaign of anti-feminism out of personal hatred. "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."<sup>173</sup> Moreover, this whim would have been a schizophrenic one, given Thutmose III's recent positive disposition toward Hatshepsut, as displayed by his completion of her projects at Djeser-Djeseru and Armant.

(3) If Thutmose III was the culprit, 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. For him to live forever in the Field of Reeds, his body, image, or name must survive on earth. If all memory of him were lost or destroyed, the spirit too would perish, initiating the much-dreaded "second death," a total obliteration from which there could be no return. This act against Hatshepsut was an attempt to condemn her to oblivion – a fate worse than death for an Egyptian.<sup>174</sup> 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.<sup>175</sup> Such reprisal seems far too severe to fit the motive of mere sexism.

(4) 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 record in or after Hatshepsut's 19th regnal year (*ca.* 1488/7 BC)? Occasionally his name was violated while his image remained intact, but some of his statues were smashed and literally thrown out of temples.<sup>176</sup> This attack upon her *male* chief-advisor's image can hardly be justified if Thutmose III was motivated purely by anti-feministic hatred toward Hatshepsut. Other 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.<sup>177</sup> (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 of these options, however, addresses why Thutmose III would wait so long before beginning his anti-Hatshepsut campaign. 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 20 years of sole rule, his reign was secure, and his successful campaigning already had solidified for him a lasting legacy, so defiling her image would not, in any conceivable way, further legitimize his reign.

#### b. Amenhotep II as the Defacer of Hatshepsut's Image.

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 possible motive there could be for such a severe act of rage. Since the responsible person carried out the act only after Year 42 of Thutmose III, the desecration occurred no earlier than *ca.* 1464 BC. It is also difficult to envision that the culprit lived long after both Hatshepsut and her memory disappeared from the earth, since the movement of time and the existence of motive are inversely proportionate. Accordingly, two possible scenarios exist that could incriminate Amenhotep II as culpable for the crime.

(1) Amenhotep II contributed in the campaign to destroy Hatshepsut's image, but he was not the initial perpetrator. Tyldesley observes that "[i]t 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 personal involvement in the campaign, may have been content to allow the vendetta to lapse."<sup>178</sup> Tyldesley does not explain why without personal involvement. Bryan believes 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."<sup>179</sup>

(2) 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 if Hatshepsut raised 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), so he would have had 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, as they also were mourning 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 even 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.<sup>180</sup>

Perhaps Year 9 was when it all began.

## X. CONCLUSION

Now it is possible to answer the questions posed earlier.

Does Amenhotep II qualify as the pharaoh who lived through the tenth plague because he was not his father's eldest son? *Yes, records show that Amenemhet was the eldest son of Thutmose III, allowing Amenhotep II to have lived through the tenth plague.*

Could the eldest son of Amenhotep II have died during the tenth plague, which must be true of the exodus-pharaoh's son? *Yes, the eldest son of Amenhotep II could have died then. In fact,*

*none of Amenhotep II's sons claimed to be his firstborn, and one prominent Egyptologist theorizes that the eldest son died inexplicably during childhood.*

Did Amenhotep II die in the Red Sea, as the Bible allegedly indicates about the exodus-pharaoh? *No, he died in typical fashion, and his mummified body is still preserved. Yet despite popular belief, this conclusion does not conflict with the Bible, since no Biblical text actually 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 so 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 many futile attempts to disprove the association of the Hebrews with the Apiru of the New Kingdom, far more evidence exists that favors their being one-in-the-same.*

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 only logical candidate for the pharaoh who ordered this nationwide campaign of desecration. If Hatshepsut indeed was Moses' Egyptian stepmother—and she is the only 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 prove not only that Amenhotep II is the only legitimate candidate for the exodus-pharaoh, but that the Biblical chronology of that era functions as a canon against which Egyptian history may be synchronized.

It is hoped that the principal purpose of this article has not been lost in the extensive historical detail contained within 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 invariably will 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.<sup>181</sup>

Unfortunately, however, even the strongest argumentation cannot remove presuppositions or persuade readers of the Bible's life-impacting truths.

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## Footnotes:

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*, ed. 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.
5. Donald B. Redford, *Egypt, Canaan, and Israel in Ancient Times* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1992), 408–409.
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.
10. Both here and throughout the present work, any dating that follows the formula, "ca. xxxx–yyyy BC," 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 simplicity. 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 Press, 1996], 199).
12. While any given pharaoh of Egypt's New Kingdom received a throne-name (praenomen) upon his accession—either as the sole monarch or as the coregent for a senior pharaoh who wanted a smooth regnal-transition at the time of his imminent death—he merely appended this praenomen to his nomen, the birth name that had always been with him. Each name was enclosed in a cartouche.
13. See 1 Kgs 11:40, 14:25; and 2 Chr 12:2, 5 (twice), 7, and 9. The fact that this new trend began during the reign of Shishak (Shoshenq I) should be of no surprise to the student of Biblical history, since Shishak's reign signaled both the beginning of a new ruling dynasty, the 22nd Dynasty of Egypt, and the beginning of foreign rule under pharaohs who hailed from Libya.



14. See 2 Kgs 23:29, 33, 34, 35; 2 Chr 35:20, 21, 22; 36:4; and Jer 46:2. Pharaoh Hophra is named once as well, though his name appears only in a prophetic writing, where God calls him, "Pharaoh Hophra, King of Egypt" (Jer 44:30).

15. Any temptation to doubt the historicity of the Biblical text on account of the presence of an unnamed pharaoh should be avoided vigorously, since "surely historians would not dismiss the historicity of Thutmose III's Megiddo campaign because the names of the kings of Kadesh and Megiddo are not recorded" in the ancient Egyptian accounts (Hoffmeier, *Israel in Egypt*, 110).

16. *Ibid.*, 109.

17. *Ibid.*

18. 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, Netherlands: Brill, 2000), 21.

19. Hoffmeier, *Israel in Egypt*, 87, 109; Wood, "The Rise and Fall," 478.

20. Hoffmeier, *Israel in Egypt*, 109–110. Hoffmeier incorrectly identifies these enemies of Egypt from the first Asiatic campaign of Amenhotep II as "Nubian tribes," and "Nubian chieftains," thus attributing them to the nation of Nubia, or Cush, located directly to the south of Egypt. The partly defaced geographical name on the Memphis Stele is certainly not *t3 Nhsy*, "the Nubian Land," as some have restored it to read, but *Takhsi* (Anson F. Rainey, "Amenhotep II's Campaign to Takhsi" *JARCE* 10 [1973], 71). Der Manuelian remarks that the location of the district of Takhsi has been settled with little dispute, with the only difference being whether it was situated north or south of Kadesh on the Orontes River (Peter Der Manuelian, *Studies in the Reign of Amenophis II* [Hildesheim: Gerstenberg, 1987], 51–52). Redford adds that the Syrian district of Takhsi "probably lay close to, and perhaps northwest of, Damascus" (Donald B. Redford, "The Coregency of Tuthmosis III and Amenophis II," *JEA* 51 [Dec 1965], 119).

21. Hoffmeier, *Israel in Egypt*, 110.

22. *Ibid.*, 87.

23. 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 "440year" (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. "[The MT] has repeatedly been demonstrated to be the best witness to the [OT] text. Any deviation from it therefore requires justification" (Ernst Würthwein, *Text of the Old Testament*, 2nd ed., trans. Erroll Rhodes [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995], 116). Moreover, the LXX has been shown to be inferior to the MT in chronological matters (Edwin R. Thiele, *The Mysterious Numbers of the Hebrew Kings* [Grand Rapids: Kregel, 1994], 90–94). Since no scribal error led to a faulty reading in the MT, "480th year" is taken to be the original reading. See [http://exegesisinternational.org/index.php?option=com\\_content&task=view&id=73&Itemid=85](http://exegesisinternational.org/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=73&Itemid=85) for a complete resolution of this textual variant in 1 Kgs 6:1.

24. Young, "When Did Solomon Die?," 601–602; Thiele, *Mysterious Numbers*, 80. As does Young and the present writer, Kitchen also prefers 967 BC as the year of the inception of the Temple's construction (Kitchen, *Reliability of the OT*, 203).

25. Young, "When Did Solomon Die?," 599–603. Advocates of a 13th-century-BC exodus have yet to explain the remarkable coincidence of the Jubilee cycles, which align perfectly with the date of 1446 BC for the exodus.

26. Moreover, the exact month and day of 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 the month of Nisan in 1446 BC reportedly occurred at 19:48 UT (Universal Time) on 8 April (as detailed on the webpage <http://sunearth.gsfc.nasa.gov/eclipse/phase/phases-1499.html>), 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, two variables must be factored into the equation: (1) The date used to mark the new moon varies slightly according to the point of observation. In the Eastern Nile Delta, where the land of Goshen and the Egyptian royal city of Memphis were located, the time is 2.1 hours ahead of longitude zero at the Greenwich meridian, so the new moon should have been observable in Egypt at 21:42 + 2.1 hours = 23.48 hours, or 11:48 pm. Since 11:48 pm was after sunset on 8 April, and sunset was the standard time for Egypt's priests to declare a new moon upon observing the moon's crescent, they would not have declared a new month that night. Instead, they would have waited until the next night, which for now can be assumed to be 9 April. However, (2) the earth's rotational velocity has varied on two prior occasions, beyond the variable of 25 seconds per century, a factor not acknowledged by NASA. The first occasion was the "long day" of Joshua, in which "the sun stood still and the moon stopped, until the nation took vengeance on their enemies," an event that transpired "for about a full day" (Josh 10:13). Strictly speaking, the earth—and not the sun—stood still, and of necessity the moon's relative proximity to the earth did not vary, so the moon stopped moving as well. The second occasion was during the days of Hezekiah, in ca. 703 BC, when the shadow went back "ten steps" on the dial (2 Kgs 20:10), a terrestrial phenomenon that represents a retrograde motion of the earth. Since the length of these ten steps and the position of the sun at the time are unknown, exactly how much time this represents is unclear, but it probably did not exceed a few hours. Thus these two events together represent a variation of about one full day, meaning that the first day of Nisan in Egypt actually fell on Friday, 10 April. 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 15th 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 15th 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 BC.

27. Hoffmeier, *Israel in Egypt*, 124.

28. Alan Millard, "Amorites and Israelites: Invisible Invaders—Modern Expectation and Ancient Reality," in *The Future of Biblical Archaeology: Reassessing Methodologies and Assumptions*, ed. James K. Hoffmeier and Alan Millard (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2004), 152–153.

29. *Ibid.*, 152.

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

31. William Shea, "Amenhotep II as Pharaoh of the Exodus," *Bible and Spade* 16:2 (Spr 2003), 43. Shea compares such updating to that which occurred with Moses' reference to Dan (Gen 14:14), which was called Laish until sometime after Moses died. He likely implies that this divinely-overseen updating was accomplished long before the OT canon closed, though this is not stated. Wood criticizes Kitchen for allowing an editorial updating for Dan in Gen 14:14, and for Rameses in Gen 47:11, but not for Raamses in Exod 1:11 (Wood, "The Rise and Fall," 479). Kitchen's inconsistency is both troubling and unexplainable.

32. Benjamin Edidin Scolnic, "A New Working Hypothesis for the Identification of Migdol," in *Future of Biblical*

*Archaeology*, 91.

33. Kitchen, *Reliability of the OT*, 203.

34. Hoffmeier, *Israel in Egypt*, 125.

35. Kitchen, *Reliability of the OT*, 308–309. The nine, 40-year periods include the following: (1) the journey from Egypt to Sinai to Jordan (Num 11:33); (2) Othniel's rule (Judg 3:11); (3–4) 80 years of peace after Ehud's victory over Moab (Judg 3:30); (5) peace after the deeds of Deborah (Judg 5:31); (6) peace after the deeds of Gideon (Judg 8:28); (7) Eli's judgeship (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 the following: (1) 48 years for Abimelek, Tola, and Jair; (2) 31 years for Jephthah, Ibzan, Elon, and Abdon; (3) 32 years for Saul's reign, (4) four years for Solomon's reign; and (5) five proposed years for the rule of Joshua and the elders of his era.

36. John Rea, "The Time of the Oppression and Exodus," *Grace Journal* 2:1 (Win 1961), 11.

37. Redford, *Egypt, Canaan, and Israel*, 259.

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

39. Wood, "The Rise and Fall," 482.

40. The 18th Dynasty of Egypt (*ca.* 1560–1307 BC) not only saw the reunification of Egypt after an era of foreign rule under the Hyksos, but it initiated a radically new era. The northward thrusts of these Theban dynasts continued until Thutmose I crossed the Euphrates River in *ca.* 1524 BC. Egypt also expanded into Sudan, building temples on a grand scale at Gebel Barkal, about 1,280 mi south of Memphis. The vast riches that the state accrued through these foreign expeditions changed the fabric of Egyptian society. No longer did the nation function in isolation, but in an age of intense political and diplomatic activity, 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*, 2nd ed. [Fort Worth: Harcourt Brace College Publishers, 1998], 253).

41. 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. "The absolute chronology of Egypt has been one of the major time-frames for ancient chronology in general, and it is important that scholars in other disciplines understand that absolute dates for Egypt are not as clear and well established as they are often thought to be" (*Ibid.*, 53). Ward suggests that "as long as there is uncertainty as to whether any given coregency of the New Kingdom existed, and if so, how long it lasted, any system of absolute dates must remain inexact" (*Ibid.*, 54). Uncertainty about dates, however, does not characterize all regnal dating, but rather only that of selected rulers. Direct evidence of co-regnal lengths often exists, providing a greater level of certainty about the exact regnal lengths of many rulers. Therefore, if 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.

42. *Ibid.*, 59.

43. *Ibid.*, 56. Egypt's New Kingdom (*ca.* 1560–1069 BC) consists of Dynasties 18–20.

44. *Ibid.*

45. Egyptologists disagree over the year of Thutmose III's accession, with three views predominant: the "high chronology" dates it to ca. 1504 BC; the "middle chronology" dates it to ca. 1490 BC; and the "low chronology" dates it to ca. 1479 BC (Redford, *Egypt, Canaan, and Israel*, 104). The high chronology is preferred here because of its exclusive agreement with the Ebers Papyrus when assuming a Memphite point of observation for the rising of Sothis. Shea also asserts that the high-chronology view is correct (Shea, "Amenhotep II as Pharaoh," 43). The high-chronology date used by the present writer dates back two years from the standard number, due to the need to harmonize it with the second Palestinian campaign of Amenhotep II, which will be discussed subsequently. This alteration is justified both 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 BC*, vol. 1 [London: Routledge, 1995], 191; Sir Alan Gardiner, *Egypt of the Pharaohs* [New York: Oxford University Press, 1976], 191), and by the existence of a variable of  $\pm 6$  years after calculating the date for the rising of Sothis (W. S. LaSor, "Egypt," in *ISBE*, vol. 2 [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1982], 40).

46. Redford, "Coregency of Tuthmosis III," 109.

47. Der Manuelian, *Amenophis II*, 19.

48. Redford, "Coregency of Tuthmosis III," 108.

49. Der Manuelian, *Amenophis II*, 40.

50. Redford, "Coregency of Tuthmosis III," 111.

51. *Ibid.*, 110.

52. Upon Amenhotep I's death, Thebes was the most prominent city of the native Egyptians, who recently had regained control of their land and embarked on what would become over 150 years of unbroken prosperity. Yet 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 BC). Memphis also became the headquarters of the pharaonic braintrust, where the 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, which had become the residence for pharaonic successors who came into office as coregents (Kuhrt, *Ancient Near East*, vol. 1, 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, UK: Blackwell, 1992], 220). This makes Thutmose I an excellent candidate for the pharaoh who personally spoke with the chief Hebrew midwives and instructed them to execute the newborn Israelite boys (Exod 1:15). The numerous summonings of these midwives, whose authoritative rank necessitates their having resided among the core of national Israel in Goshen, also implies an extremely close proximity between them and pharaoh. This requirement can be satisfied easily if pharaoh resided in Memphis, but not if he resided 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). Even if one traveled at a similarly slow pace from Goshen to Memphis, which did not entail the same grade of ascent as did a trip to Thebes, the journey could be made in a mere 1½ to 2½ days. At a more realistic pace, the trip would be even faster. Pharaoh's messengers probably traveled to Goshen on horseback, which would shorten the travel time even more. 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 site indeed may have possessed two palace structures of the 18th Dynasty (*Ibid.*, 483; Manfred Bietak, *Avaris: The Capital of the Hyksos* [London: British Museum Press, 1996], 68–72), there is no epigraphical evidence confirming that Amenhotep II ever resided there, even periodically. Moreover, the discovery of a scarab

there with his royal cartouche no more proves his personal occupation of the city (Wood, "The Rise and Fall," 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 and the headquarters for all of the Asiatic military campaigns of the era, is currently a better candidate for the site where the exodus-pharaoh resided, though Ezbet Helmi does remain a legitimate candidate.

53. 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. This prince is attested on a canopic box, where he is called "the king's eldest son, his beloved, high priest of Ptah and *sm*-priest." He doubtlessly is to be identified with the king's son and *sm*-priest, Thutmose, who appears on a statuette in the Louvre (Redford, "Coregency of Tuthmosis III," 111).

54. *Ibid.*, 112, 114.

55. *Ibid.*, 114.

56. *Ibid.*, 110, 114.

57. *Ibid.*, 114.

58. In Tomb 64 of the Theban necropolis is an important wall painting that displays two royal tutors: Hekreshu and his son, Hekerneh, who are in the company of their princely charges: Thutmose and Amenhotep. Hekreshu is seated, facing right, with the young heir apparent, Thutmose, on his lap. Standing before him is Hekerneh and a small Prince Amenhotep, who is carrying a bouquet. Hekreshu is specifically stated to be a "tutor of the king's eldest bodily son, Thutmose," whose nomen is represented in a cartouche. Hekerneh's title is "tutor of the king's son, Amenhotep." Behind Hekerneh appear six other princes, originally all named, but the hieroglyphs are now almost completely destroyed. One name alone can be made out, that of a certain Amenemhet. All of the princes, including the seated Thutmose, wear pectorals bearing the nomen and praenomen of Thutmose IV (*Ibid.*, 114, 115). The presence of the birth name and throne-name of Thutmose IV on each of the princes drove Newberry to conclude that the child on Hekreshu's knee was undoubtedly the later Thutmose IV, and that the other princes, including Amenhotep, were his sons. The prince named Amenhotep, according to Newberry, eventually ruled as Amenhotep III (Percy Edward Newberry, "Akhenaten's Eldest Son-in-Law 'Ankhkhe-prure'," *JEA* 14 [1928], 83-84). Redford points out that Newberry's argument is not compelling, as all of the others in the scene could easily be wearing the cartouche of Thutmose IV out of deference to the son who succeeded to the throne. He further suggests that perhaps the six princes in the background are sons of Thutmose IV, while Amenhotep could be a brother, and for that reason was singled out to be depicted in a position of honor (Redford, "Coregency of Tuthmosis III," 113). The problem, however, with the suggestion that the six princes are the sons of the seated Thutmose is that Thutmose and Amenhotep themselves, whoever they might be in reality, are depicted in the scene as children, and it would be odd to depict in the same scene both a father and his children as children. A possible rebuttal against Redford's suggestion that Thutmose and Amenhotep are brothers might take the following form: Hekreshu is specifically stated to be the tutor of the king's eldest son, Thutmose, while Hekerneh is the tutor of the king's son, Amenhotep. Since a father-son relationship existed between the tutors, perhaps a father-son relationship existed between their charges. Redford dismisses this idea by offering a parallel depiction found in graffiti from Konosso. A king's son, Amenhotep, is mentioned twice at Konosso, once with Hekreshu and a second time with Hekerneh. The presence of the cartouches of Thutmose IV in the immediate vicinity lends support to the dating of the graffiti to his reign. More importantly, Amenhotep's name is accompanied by that of another prince, Okheprure, and the parallelism in the graffiti between the two names strongly suggests a fraternal relationship. Okheprure again is shown on the knee of an unidentified scribe in Tomb 226 of the Theban necropolis, along with three of his brothers. If, as his name

would indicate, he was a son of Amenhotep II, then most likely Prince Amenhotep was also his son. On the wall painting from Tomb 64, therefore, Prince Amenhotep also should be considered a brother to Thutmose IV, and not a son (Ibid.). If Princes Thutmose and Amenhotep from Tomb 64 are indeed brothers, who are the six princes in the background? Certainly the fact that all of the princes, including the seated Thutmose, are wearing pectorals that bear the nomen and praenomen of Thutmose IV seems to indicate that the princes are all on the same level, and therefore brothers, as was the case with the Konosso graffiti and Tomb 226. The problem that remains, then, is that Thutmose IV is universally accepted as not having been the firstborn child, which is both confirmed by Thutmose IV's own account on the Great/Sphinx Stele and by the fact that Prince Amenhotep was shown to be the rightful heir to the throne of Amenhotep II before Thutmose IV. Thus one of two options must be true: either (1) the Tomb-64 painting is falsifying the truth by assigning Thutmose IV the status of "the king's eldest son," or (2) the Thutmose who sits on the lap of Hekreshu is intended to portray a different Thutmose. The former option hardly seems possible, since the tomb-wall painting is located in a deeply secluded place, not at all prominently displayed where one would expect to see propagandistic depictions of a king's grandeur. If Redford is correct that Prince Amenhotep, who never is called "the king's eldest son," was not the eldest son of Amenhotep II, and that by custom a king named "Amenhotep" would name his first son "Thutmose," and thus that Amenhotep II did name his first son "Thutmose," the Thutmose sitting on the lap of the royal tutor indeed may be "the eldest son" of Amenhotep II, who could have died a premature death during the tenth and most gruesome of the plagues on Egypt. The painting may be depicting the entire entourage of Amenhotep II's sons during the time when his firstborn son was still alive. The presence of Thutmose IV's praenomen on the pectorals of all of the princes, even on that of the long-deceased plague-son, may indicate that the painting was made during the reign of Thutmose IV. Newberry, for one, was convinced that Tomb 64 was constructed for Hekerneheh during the reign of Thutmose IV (Newberry, "Akhenaten's Eldest," 82). The reason for the cartouche of Thutmose IV next to each of the princes, which could be a later addition to the painting if instead it originally was painted during the reign of Amenhotep II, may simply be that the painter wanted to demonstrate the sovereignty of Thutmose IV over all of his brothers, being that he was the only one from among them who rose to the position of pharaoh. Certainly this interpretation would better explain why Amenhotep, who was in line for the throne before his younger brother Thutmose IV, was being depicted as smaller in stature than the Thutmose who sat on his tutor's lap. This detail is highly problematic for any view that instead purports Thutmose IV to be "the king's eldest son," since Prince Amenhotep is known to have been in line for the throne before him.

59. 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).

60. Wood, "The Rise and Fall," 478.

61. 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 statement, though well intended, is not true whatsoever. God displayed his glory by decimating Sennacherib's army when the Assyrians marched against Judah (2 Kgs 19:35), but his glory was not diminished when Sennacherib returned to Assyria unscathed. A far greater shame for a defeated monarch is to be left in humiliation to rule over a shell of his former empire after being defeated by God, depleted of his army, and—in the case of the exodus-pharaoh—stripped of his servile workforce.

62. No doubt exists among Egyptologists that this mummy is the corpse of Amenhotep II. Although he was taller than both his father and his son who succeeded him, his physical features bear a marked resemblance to theirs, especially his son's, particularly in respect to their crania and teeth (James E. Harris and Kent R. Weeks, *X-Raying the Pharaohs* [New York: Scribners, 1973], 138).

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

64. 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).

65. Redford asserts that since pottery jars are relatively porous, the wine within them was consumed not long after the bottling process, and since mortuary complexes were fully stocked with wine only after a king's (imminent) death, the Year-26 wine-juglet was produced at the end of Amenhotep II's life, and the mortuary temple probably was under construction until the king's death and the stocking of the wine (Donald B. Redford, "On the Chronology of the Egyptian Eighteenth Dynasty," *JNES* 25:2 [Apr 1966], 119).

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

67. Redford, "Coregency of Tuthmosis III," 110.

68. The 12th-Dynasty pharaoh Sesostri I (ca. 1960–1916 BC) erected two obelisks in front of the temple pylon at Heliopolis on the occasion of his first *sed* festival, commemorating his 30th regnal year (Grimal, *History of Ancient Egypt*, 164). During the 18th Dynasty, Thutmose III seemingly celebrated a *sed* festival in his 30th 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).

69. Der Manuelian, *Amenophis II*, 43.

70. Wente and Van Siclen III, "Chronology of the New Kingdom," 227–228. 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*, in *Studies in Ancient Oriental Civilization* 35 (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1969), 228. Nevertheless, Shea firmly disputes the notion of such a coregency, though formerly he advocated one. His current position is built on a foundational presupposition, namely that Amenhotep II died in the Red Sea. The proof Shea presents for his position 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 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 outlandish theory, however, is fraught with difficulties, creating far more problems than it solves, the foremost being that this entire leap of speculation is based on the false—yet completely handicapping—presupposition that the exodus-pharaoh died in the Red Sea. Since this presumption was demonstrated to be inaccurate, only Shea's arguments stand to be evaluated. If the two "first campaigns" of Amenhotep II were actually one campaign, which will be proven subsequently, then Shea loses all impetus for his fantastic claim. Moreover, he provides no precedent in Egypt's long history for the practice of two pharaohs ruling under the same name, with the latter using his predecessor's nomen and praenomen as his own. Surely such an act would incite a court rebellion and turn the royal family against the officials who secretly placed the imposter on the throne. Shea also asserts that the two coronation celebrations for Amenhotep II—one after his father died on ca. 22 March, and the other on ca. 22 November, as recorded on the Memphis Stele—represent a contradiction, implying the reigns of different rulers. However, three inescapable problems plague this assertion: (1) if Amenhotep IIB was coronated on 22 November, the deception of the court officials would have been exposed; (2)

the exodus occurred on 15 Nisan (25 April), which would render inconceivable Amenhotep II's coronation as late as 22 November; and (3) the attestation of "two accession dates" actually supports a coregency. In *The Biography of Amenemheb*, it is stated that Thutmose III died on vii, 30 (ca. 22 March) of his 54th year, and that on the very next day Amenhotep II was "established on the throne of his father" (Der Manuelian, *Amenophis II*, 20). However, both the Semna Stela and BM 10056 offer iv, 1 (ca. 22 November) as his accession date, and since on BM 10056 the year-number even changes immediately after the mention of 22 November, a definitive conclusion can be made that Amenhotep II's regnal years were numbered from ca. 22 November, not from 23 March (Redford, "Coregency of Tuthmosis III," 121). Shea claims that if indeed Amenhotep II was inaugurated when he became coregent on 22 November of an earlier year, there would be no need for an installation ceremony on the day after Thutmose III died. Actually, the Egyptian texts never refer to an installation ceremony on 23 March; they note only that he was established on his father's throne. Before Thutmose III died, Amenhotep II ruled as a coregent with his father, with full pharaonic authority; only after his father died, however, did he actually take the throne as the pharaoh with ultimate authority. Yet even if there was a ceremony immediately after his father's death, such an event at the outset of his sole rule would serve to establish him on the throne and lessen the chance of a usurpation attempt by a potential challenger. In addition to all of these problems with Shea's argumentation, what pharaoh of the proud and powerful 18th Dynasty would equate himself with a deceased predecessor, especially one who lost his slave-base, lost the firstborn child of every Egyptian citizen, lost the world's most powerful army, and died shamefully in a mass drowning? Moreover, could such a grand scheme be expected never to be challenged, or to surface at some later time during Egypt's entire storied history? Thus the notion of two Amenhotep II's is resolutely rejected.

71. Redford, "Coregency of Tuthmosis III," 117.

72. 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 44 years of age (Claude Vandersleyen, *L'Égypte 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 45 at death (Harris and Weeks, *X-Raying*, 138).

73. Der Manuelian, *Amenophis II*, 44.

74. G. Robins, "The Value of the Estimated Ages of the Royal Mummies at Death as Historical Evidence," *Göttinger Miszellen* 45 (1981), 63–68.

75. While Thutmose III's exact age at his accession is unknown, his reign lasted into his 54th 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), while Tyldesley claims that he reigned 53 years, 10 months, and 26 days (Tyldesley, *Hatchepsut*, 96, 215).

76. Harris and Weeks, *X-Raying*, 138.

77. Yohanan Aharoni and Michael Avi-Yonah, *The Macmillan Bible Atlas* (New York: Macmillan, 1977), 34.

78. Vandersleyen, *L'Égypte*, vol. 2, 341.

79. Der Manuelian, *Amenophis II*, 59.

80. "Previously, on seeing a man from Egypt, the kings of Canaan fled before him, but now the sons of Abdi-



Ashirta make men from Egypt proud about [like do]gs" (*The Amarna Letters*, ed. and trans. William L. Moran [Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1992], 183).

81. Vandersleyen, *L'Égypte*, vol. 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 BC.

82. Yohanan Aharoni, "Some Geographical Remarks Concerning the Campaigns of Amenhotep II," *JNES* 19:3 (Jul 1960), 177.

83. James B. Pritchard, *ANET* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1950), 245.

84. Redford, "Coregency of Tuthmosis III," 118.

85. Pritchard, *ANET*, 245.

86. *Ibid.*, 245, 246; Redford, "Coregency of Tuthmosis III," 119.

87. Henry Breasted, *Ancient Records of Egypt*, vol. 2 (Champaign, IL: University of Illinois Press, 2001), 305.

88. Hoffmeier, "Memphis and Karnak Stelae," in *Context of Scripture*, vol. 2, 19.

89. Pritchard, *ANET*, 245; Redford, "Coregency of Tuthmosis III," 119.

90. Breasted, *Ancient Records*, vol. 2, 309.

91. 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 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*, vol. 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.

92. Redford, "Coregency of Tuthmosis III," 119.

93. Pritchard, *ANET*, 245.

94. Eitienne Drioton and Jacques Vandier, *L'Égypte* (Paris: Les Presses Universitaires de France, 1938), 406, 663.

95. Redford, "Coregency of Tuthmosis III," 120.

96. Ibid.

97. Ibid., 121.

98. Rainey, "Amenhotep II's Campaign to Takhsi," 71.

99. Pritchard, *ANET*, 245.

100. Vandersleyen, *L'Égypte*, vol. 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).

101. Vandersleyen, *L'Égypte*, vol. 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 damage by alteration and subsequently faulty reparation.

102. Vandersleyen, *L'Égypte*, vol. 2, 323, 324.

103. 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. For one, 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 of them 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. Its brief allusion to the expedition in Syria is included to note that Amenhotep II captured seven rulers of Takhsi, executed them by his own hand to make an example of them, and had six of them hanged upside down for public exhibition on the walls at Thebes, while the seventh was to be hanged similarly at Napata, just downstream from the Fourth Cataract in Nubia. This graphic display functioned to remind the Nubians that pharaoh was to be revered and obeyed. The Memphis and Karnak Stelae had only one goal in mind: to boast of pharaoh's military victories in Asia (Vandersleyen, *L'Égypte*, vol. 2, 323–324; Hallo and Simpson, *Ancient Near East*, 261–262). Since the commissioners of these stelae had no need to mention the capture of the rulers of Takhsi, which was only one of the regions on the campaign's itinerary, they simply chose not to include the term.

104. Redford, "Coregency of Tuthmosis III," 119–120.

105. Wolfgang Helck, *Urkunden der 18. Dynastie*, no. 18 (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 1956), 1448; Vandersleyen, *L'Égypte*, vol. 2, 324.

106. The view that A1 was launched in response to an Asiatic revolt is held by Breasted and most modern Egyptologists (Breasted, *Ancient Records*, vol. 2, 304; Redford, *Egypt, Canaan, and Israel*, 163; Grimal, *History of Ancient Egypt*, 218).

107. Dennis Forbes, "Menkheperre Djehutymes: Thutmose III, A Pharaoh's Pharaoh," *KMT* 9:4 (Win 1998–1999), 65.

108. Breasted, *Ancient Records*, vol. 2, 304. Curiously, the universally accepted location of Syria as the site of the rebellion is in stark contrast to the opinion of Vandersleyen, who states that "the first campaign, instead of reaching Ugarit and the middle of the Orontes Valley, hardly crossed the latitudinal equivalent of Lake Hula and the city of Tyre; as a result, it was no more significant than the second campaign" (Vandersleyen, *L'Égypte*, vol. 2, 328). On the contrary, A1 was far more significant, especially considering the post-victory celebration, the post-campaign executions at Thebes, and the erecting of the Elephantine Stele in Year 4. Moreover, during A1, the Egyptians passed so far up the Western Levant that they probably reached the border of Mitannian territory, which is known from *The Annals of Amenhotep II*. Aharoni even infers an unsuccessful Egyptian invasion of Mitanni, relying on the passage, "His majesty, going south, reached Niy (in the Northern Orontes Valley)" (Aharoni and Avi-Yonah, *Macmillan Atlas*, 34). The Egyptians later encountered a Mitannian spy during the concluding phase of A1, making Aharoni's conclusion quite believable. When Amenhotep II was passing through the Sharon Plain, a messenger of the King of Mitanni, called the "Prince of Naharin" here, was captured by the Egyptians. This messenger was carrying with him a letter in the form of a clay tablet that hung from his neck like a necklace, which undoubtedly dealt with matters that concerned the Mitanni-inspired rebellion (*Ibid.*). All of this demonstrates the great importance of this vassal-rebellion, both to Egypt and to Mitanni, as Mitanni was seeking to usurp Egypt's stranglehold on the prestigious position of the ANE's dominant super-power. In contrast to all of this international intrigue revolving around A1, A2 was far less significant on an international level and far less illustrious, as will be seen momentarily.

109. Aharoni and Avi-Yonah, *The Macmillan Atlas*, 34.

110. Grimal, *History of Ancient Egypt*, 219.

111. Pritchard, *ANET*, 246.

112. Examples of campaigns launched in spring are plentiful: (1) Thutmose III's first Asiatic campaign, as he arrived at his first destination (the border fortress of Tjel) on ca. 20 April 1484 BC; (2) Amenhotep II's first Asiatic campaign, as he arrived at his first destination (Shamash-Edom) on ca. 15 May 1452 BC; (3) Raamses II and his battalions of infantry and squads of chariotry, who departed for Kadesh in late April of ca. 1274 BC (Kenneth A. Kitchen, *Pharaoh Triumphant: The Life and Times of Ramesses II* [Warminster, Eng.: Aris & Phillips, 1982], 53); (4) Nabopolassar's expedition against mountain tribes in the month of Sivan, or ca. May/June of 607 BC (D. J. Wiseman, *Chronicles of the Chaldean Kings* [London: Trustees of the British Museum, 1961], 65); and (5) Nebuchadnezzar's expedition to Syria in Sivan of the first full year of his reign, or ca. 604 BC (*Ibid.*, 28, 69).

113. Der Manuelian, *Amenophis II*, 59. As proven above, "seventh year" should be corrected to "third year."

114. Vandersleyen, *L'Égypte*, vol. 2, 321.

115. *Ibid.*, 324–325.

116. Redford, *Egypt, Canaan, and Israel*, 163.

117. *Ibid.*, 164.

118. Ibid.

119. Ibid., 165.

120. Ibid., 164.

121. John MacArthur, *The MacArthur Study Bible* (Nashville: Word, 1997), 198.

122. Redford, *Egypt, Canaan, and Israel*, 408.

123. A notable exception to this trend 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 kinglist that was begun during the Middle Kingdom, fixes a 108-year rule (*ca.* 1668 to 1560 BC) for the Hyksos (Ibid., 107), who were driven out by the native Egyptians of the 17th Dynasty. Yet such documentation about the Hyksos is warranted, as they played a prominent role in Egyptian history, having produced pharaohs who ruled in place of the native Egyptians. Moreover, when Moses wrote that the Egyptians feared the possibility that the Hebrews "will multiply, and in the event of war, they will also join themselves to those who hate us, and fight against us and depart from the land" (Exod 1:10), he probably was referring to the Hyksos, who just beforehand had retreated to southern Canaan after their expulsion.

124. Kitchen, *Reliability of the OT*, 11. The Biblical text to which Kitchen alludes is 2 Chr 14:9–15.

125. Aharoni and Avi-Yonah, *The Macmillan Atlas*, 34.

126. Hallo and Simpson, *Ancient Near East*, 262.

127. Grimal, *History of Ancient Egypt*, 218.

128. Breasted, *Ancient Records*, vol. 2, 310.

129. Redford, *Egypt, Canaan, and Israel*, 408.

130. Hoffmeier, "Memphis and Karnak Stelae," in *Context of Scripture*, vol. 2, 22; Pritchard, *ANET*, 247.

131. Pritchard laments, "Even though two of the figures give questionable readings, no clear alternatives will supply the total given on the stele" (Pritchard, *ANET*, 247). Although Pritchard does not elaborate, the "questionable readings" most likely are the 36,300 Kharu and the 30,652 family members of the Nagasuites/Neges. But since this part of the stele shows no sign of damage or repair, there is no reason to doubt these numbers.

132. "The total given, 89,600, is actually wrong, the correct total being 101,128!" (Hoffmeier, "Memphis and Karnak Stelae," in *Context of Scripture*, vol. 2, 22).

133. Ibid., 21; Pritchard, *ANET*, 239, 246; Hoffmeier, "The Annals of Thutmose III," in *Context of Scripture*, vol. 2, 12. These are the only campaigns of Thutmose III that list the amount of captives taken.

134. 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).
135. Ibid.; Hoffmeier, "Memphis and Karnak Stelae," in *Context of Scripture*, vol. 2, 22. The Prince of Shanhar, or Biblical Shinar, is to be equated with the King of Babylon (Pritchard, *ANET*, 247).
136. Hoffmeier, "Memphis and Karnak Stelae," in *Context of Scripture*, vol. 2, 22.
137. Barry J. Beitzel, "Habiru," in *ISBE*, vol. 2, 588, 589.
138. Hoffmeier, "Memphis and Karnak Stelae," in *Context of Scripture*, vol. 2, 22. SA.GAZ, the Sumerian logographic equivalent of Habiru, and its variants are found in cuneiform texts from ca. 2500 BC to the 11th century BC. In light of this early attestation, many are unwilling to associate the Apiru of the 15th century BC with the Hebrews. However, Abram was known as a Hebrew in the 21st century BC (Gen 14:13), so the solution to the dilemma is that the two non-guttural consonants found in the triconsonantal root of `bri, the exact consonants that appear in Akkadian and Ugaritic (*br*, possibly meaning "cross over, go beyond"), are also found 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; Barry J. Beitzel, "Hebrew (People)," in *ISBE*, vol. 2, 657).
139. Hoffmeier, "Memphis and Karnak Stelae," in *Context of Scripture*, vol. 2, 22.
140. Pritchard, *ANET*, 247.
141. Bryant G. Wood, "One Thousand Years Missing from Biblical History? A Review of a New Theory," *Bible and Spade* 6:4 (Aut 1993), 98.
142. Grimal, *History of Ancient Egypt*, 219.
143. Aharoni and Avi-Yonah, *The Macmillan Atlas*, 34.
144. Hoffmeier, *Israel in Egypt*, 124.
145. Hoffmeier, "Memphis and Karnak Stelae," in *Context of Scripture*, vol. 2, 22.
146. Yigael Yadin, *Hazor: The Head of all those Kingdoms*, The 1970 Schweich Lectures of the British Academy (London: Oxford University Press, 1972), 7–8.
147. Ibid., 8.
148. *Amarna Letters*, ed. and trans. Moran, 290, with modifications according to Yadin, *Hazor: The Head*, 8.
149. Ibid., 235, with modifications according to Yadin, *Hazor: The Head*, 8.

150. For a fuller treatment of the destructions of Hazor described in Joshua 11 and Judges 4, see Douglas Petrovich, "The Dating of Hazor's Destruction in Joshua 11 by Way of Biblical, Archaeological, and Epigraphical Evidence," *JETS* 51:3 (Sept 2008), 489–512.
151. Wood, "The Rise and Fall," 489.
152. Beitzel, "Habiru," in *ISBE*, vol. 2, 588.
153. Hoffmeier, "Memphis and Karnak Stelae," in *Context of Scripture*, vol. 2, 22.
154. Hoffmeier, *Israel in Egypt*, 124.
155. Pritchard, *ANET*, 247.
156. Grimal, *History of Ancient Egypt*, 219.
157. Hoffmeier, "The Annals of Thutmose III," in *Context of Scripture*, vol. 2, 9.
158. Pritchard, *ANET*, 247.
159. 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 40th years after the exodus (MacArthur, *Study Bible*, 195).
160. Hallo and Simpson, *Ancient Near East*, 259.
161. William Petty, "Redating the Reign of Hatshepsut," *KMT* 13:4 (Win 2002–2003), 51, 53.
162. Rea, "Oppression and Exodus," 10.
163. Tyldesley, *Hatchepsut*, 65, 77.
164. *Ibid.*, 75.
165. *Ibid.*, 77.
166. *Ibid.*
167. *Ibid.*, 79. See the webpage [http://exegesisinternational.org/index.php?option=com\\_content&task=view&id=77&Itemid=89](http://exegesisinternational.org/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=77&Itemid=89) for photos of the erasure of Hatshepsut's image from various artifacts.

168. Tyldesley, *Hatchepsut*, 114–115, 216.

169. Hallo and Simpson, *Ancient Near East*, 259, 261; Redford, *Egypt, Canaan, and Israel*, 156; Tyldesley, *Hatchepsut*, 216.

170. Tyldesley, *Hatchepsut*, 225.

171. *Ibid.*, 219.

172. *Ibid.*, 219–220; Grimal, *History of Ancient Egypt*, 216.

173. Tyldesley, *Hatchepsut*, 220, 224–225. Bryan asserts that the dishonoring of Hatshepsut began in *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 Before the Amarna Period," in *The Oxford History of Ancient History*, ed. Ian Shaw [New York: Oxford University Press, 2000], 248).

174. Grimal, *History of Ancient Egypt*, 216.

175. Tyldesley, *Hatchepsut*, 216.

176. *Ibid.*, 206, 222.

177. *Ibid.*, 8, 225.

178. *Ibid.*, 224.

179. Bryan, "Eighteenth Dynasty," in *Oxford History*, 250, 251.

180. *Ibid.*, 240.

181. Shea, "Amenhotep II as Pharaoh," 42.

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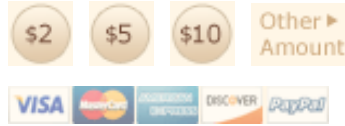
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## Comments

2/19/2010 12:55 PM #

Bietag's excavations at Avaris/Pi-Ramses has proven that this city was

- 1) the seat of Royal power at the time of the exodus
- 2) was hit by the Biblical plagues
- 3) was largely inhabited by Semitic peoples not related to the Hyksos
- 4) contained military power the equal to the Egyptian forces that followed the hebrews into the wilderness

The excavations at Akrotiri I have conclusively dated (via pottery samples) the Proxymal event at Thera to 1479 BC and was the origin of SOME of the plagues.

This date exactly fits the death of Tutmosis II and the reign of his widow Hatshepsut...and explains her mysterious message at Speos Artimios....do I have your attention yet?

email me at ahmosis123@yahoo.com if you want the proof that the Exodus really occurred....in 1479 BC...

....and for goodness sake take the chronologies contained in the Hebrew Bible as totally accurate!

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**Robert Brock - 2/19/2010 12:55:23 PM**

2/19/2010 10:42 PM #

Dear Dr. Petrovich... Enjoyed your article on the Exodus and its true date. I, myself, have been teaching for over 20 years that Amenhotep II did not go into the Sea with his army, but lived another 25 years in shame (returning without his army). I also teach that Akenaton becomes a Henotheist precisely because he learns of Israel's emergence from the desert after 40 years! You see, we are never told what Amenhotep II and his bodyguards told the Egyptian people when they returned without "Our Army". It's a good chance that they spread the myth that the Egyptian Army died WHILE slaughtering the Israelites. I have my chart from 1987 that I will attempt to send to you. Blessings. Joe Gambino

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**Joseph F. Gambino - 2/19/2010 10:42:48 PM**



2/20/2010 12:50 AM #

Dr. Brock...Dr. Petrovich seems to take the chronologies of the Hebrew Bible quite seriously: 966+480=1446 (I Kings 6)

Still, for a difference of 30 years we can still 'walk together'. If the co-regency of Hatshepsut & Thutmose III was somewhat longer...or if we have to slide the WHOLE scale of dates up 30 years...this certainly precludes a 13th Century Exodus which is Dr. Petrovich's point all along.

Again, for a difference of only 30 years after about 3000 years we can 'walk together', which I find hard to do with the 13th Century People and their RaMesses II Exodus.

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**Joseph F. Gambino - 2/20/2010 12:50:35 AM**

2/20/2010 6:26 AM #

What a lengthy yet valuable essay. I have two disagreements in minor.

1) The year 1446 is compelling. But one must remember that the bc dating system is not totally parallel with the lunar calendar system. Six months were lost in 70 C.E. when the Jews returned to a pre-Mosaic calendar system, thereby losing half a year when they restarted their year at the Fall Equinox. Another 5 months were lost when Moses began his lunar Mosaic calendar on the Spring Equinox on what would now be known as 1445 b.c.e. The Bible uses Egyptian years in Exodus prior to the Spring Equinox of 1445, which began its year around the time of our August.

2) At the time of the Exodus, there were two "Pharaohs", just as there were a King and co-regent at the time of Daniel's handwriting on the wall. Pharaoh Hatshepsut was reigning from Thebes over the whole kingdom of Egypt. But Thutmose IV was also a co-regent ruling from Zoan. Evidence of this must be added up; first by the black stela written concerning the only Egyptian war loss ever documented. This stone stands in the area of the Suez Canal, and is presented by the scholarly world as by Hatshepsut. Second, if She was ruling from Thebes, another "Pharaoh" had to be in the Delta during the start of the Exodus. By calculating the overlapping dates, Thutmose IV is the most likely candidate.

God Bless

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**Dennis L Oberholtzer - 2/20/2010 6:26:31 AM**

2/21/2010 9:16 AM #

I am thrilled that some of you ABR enthusiasts already have read my article, which is no small task, to be sure. I would encourage you to read my comments at the end of Dr. Wood's "Recent Research on the Date and Setting of the Exodus" article, which is the one below mine on the Exodus-Conquest page. These comments were added long after most already had finished reading and commenting about his article. I think you'll find these comments worth reading.

To Mr. Brock, I first would respond that you are walking on awfully thin ice if you want to hang your hat on dates from Thera. First of all, these dates change almost weekly, every time being the end-all dating-solidification, and there are established camps that are centuries apart.

Picking a precise year out of this melee and calling it the exact year of the exodus is far beyond what I ever would be willing to do. I will say one thing for you, though: you certainly are a man of great faith!

But there are numerous problems here. First, your assumption that Thera is linked with the plagues is a Mr.-Fantastic-like stretch. Thera, as magnificent as it may have been, may have nothing remotely to do with the plagues. Attractive does not necessarily imply connection. We just do not know, and so we have to be careful before making such huge leaps. Moreover, though I do not have the exact information in front of me, I believe that the material cultural remains (pottery, etc.) associated with that point in time do not match with the chronological requirements established by synchronisms between biblical and ancient Egyptian history.

Most importantly, you are using a suggested synchronism (Thera = plagues) as your fixed chronological peg to establish your synchronism. This is immeasurably weaker than the synchronism established for us in the far, far more reliable written sources: the OT chronological references and the precise dating of the Egyptian papyri, which are connected to a known and datable astronomical event. And since we have to fudge on the dating of the exodus (from 1 Kgs 6:1, etc.), from 1446 to 1479, to make everything match your proposed synchronism, I have to repeat your own words to you: "...and for goodness sake take the chronologies contained in the Hebrew Bible as totally accurate!" (misspellings corrected). I'll take my rock over your sand any day.

As for Pi-Ramesses, my view has altered somewhat since I published my article 4 years ago. I now am convinced that this city is the Ramses of the Bible, though it was not known as Ramses in the days of Moses. However, I am NOT convinced that this is where pharaoh resided. His campaigns were launched from Memphis, the capital from Thutmose I's time, and there is no reason to put pharaoh in Pi-Ramesses just to try to simplify the biblical story. This is a mistake that Dr. Wood makes, unfortunately.

That rabbit-trail notwithstanding, either Moses wrote this toponym prophetically, or we have an anachronistic use of Ramses (i.e. the biblical text was modified by later Jewish scribes, once the name of the city of Avaris was changed to Pi-Ramesses by the Ramesside dynasts). The location of the Ramesside construction actually was on a different part of the overall site, making it--in many ways--a new site altogether, though they did rob out a lot of material from Avaris.

I have 10 or 12 pages of an article finished, which is entitled, "The Hermeneutical and Biblio-Historical Flaws in Hoffmeier's Late-Exodus Apology". In this article, I document the historical elements of the city of Avaris that demonstrate amazing evidence of Israelite occupation (and construction!) of the site during the pre-exodus era (conveniently neglected by the good Dr. Hoffmeier in his publications). You will be interested to know that royal scarabs are attested there for all of the 18th-Dynasty pharaohs from Amenhotep I through Amenhotep II. Yet, they end abruptly with Amenhotep II. Hmmm, what does that say about your Thutmose-II-as-exodus-pharaoh theory? There is much more, but I will save it for the article.

Anyway, my view is that later scribes, either of the period of the judges or the early monarchy, altered the toponym in their text from Avaris (however it would have been written in Hebrew) to Ramses. It took a while for me to accept this reality, given my ultra-high view of inerrancy. Ultimately, though, I am content with considering it to be a God-allowed alteration designed to make the toponym understandable to "modern" readers who knew nothing of Avaris, but knew a great deal of Ramses. This is NOT an act of anti-inerrant barbarism on the part of otherwise

faithful Hebrew scribes; it's a sincere attempt to make the text accessible to its readership. And, it correctly calls the same site by its new and well-known name.

To postulate that Moses prophetically looked into the future, knowing that several centuries later the name would be changed, is far beyond what I am willing to accept. Moses did not write to Iron-Age (1200 BC ff.) readers of later Israel, nor did he write to 15th-century-BC psychics; he wrote to 15th-century-BC Jews who wanted to read and understand exactly what he was writing (or to the literate who would read aloud to them). For my money, this prophetic-anticipation position is "a high view of inerrancy gone hog-wild", in an attempt to ensure that we can't have errors in the Bible.

Folks, those of you who may be hyper-inerrantists, just relax. Take a deep breath. Everything is fine and in order. God's word has NOT come to be errant. It was simply modified, in this isolated instance, to make current a toponym that had gone out of service. Not one scribe ever, to our knowledge, transmitted every word of his text word-for-word according to his exemplar in front of him. But these are transmissional alterations, NOT alterations in the autographa. This is a hugely critical point to understand.

Was this right for the scribes to do? Well, let the arguments ensue. I don't know. But, it was done. That I do know. Yet, in the case of Avaris/Ramses, this DOES NOT open up some sort of Pandora's box. Again, relax. Breathe deeply. This is not something done often, or carelessly. The Hebrew scribes were meticulous, especially in comparison to the NT scribes. I wrote a ThM thesis on a NT textual variant, and I would amaze you by recounting some of the intentional and unintentional alterations that NT scribes made throughout church history. This occurred on virtually every leaf of their mss.

I will stop now, and add more in a subsequent posting or three. Thanks again for reading the article, and I am glad that many of you are reading critically. The good news is that truth and time go hand in hand. It does not matter who is right on this or any issue, only that the truth eventually will rise to the top. Our job is to seek that truth in hot pursuit, always being willing to change our views if the evidence leads us to no other conclusion. But certainly is it hard to teach new tricks to old dogs.

Yours for the King,

Doug Petrovich

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**Douglas Petrovich - 2/21/2010 9:16:38 AM**

2/22/2010 1:25 AM #

Petrovich's work here is truly admirable--no doubt one of the finest contributions in support of Amenhotep II as the pharaoh of the Exodus. But some issues should be addressed:

1) Footnote 26 places the Exodus, which occurred on the 15th day of the first month, on a Friday night and Saturday. However, Exodus 16 seems to connect Israel's arrival at Elim on the 15th day of the second month with the people crying out for food and God answering with the giving of quail in the evening and the commencement of the weekly manna cycle the next morning. This would make the 16th day of the second month a Saturday night and Sunday.

Counting backwards and giving 30 days for the first month according to the fixed Hebrew calendar, the 15th day of the first month (the date of the Exodus) would fall on a Wednesday night and Thursday. (Allowing a 29-day first month according to possible observation-method of month determination would mean a Thursday night and Friday Exodus--in neither case a Friday night and Saturday Exodus.)

2) According to the regnal dates here, Hatshepsut was still in power (living to 1484) when Moses fled Egypt (in 1486, i.e. 1446+40). It seems that other adjustments could be made to allow Hatshepsut's death in or prior to 1486--so that Moses would have been fleeing from a sole-ruling Thutmose III. Perhaps the following regnal dates would work: Amenhotep I (1550-1529); Thutmose I (1529-1518); Thutmose II (1518-1507); Hatshepsut (1507-1487); Thutmose III (1507-1453); Amenhotep II (1453-1427); Thutmose IV (1427-1418); Amenhotep III (1406-1399). This would place Amenhotep II's ninth year in 1445 instead of 1446--giving at least a little more time for reconstituting Egypt's military.

3) It is still troublesome that Egypt would be able to launch any kind of military campaign soon after the massive devastation of the country in the ten plagues and Red Sea. The nation's food supply was eradicated, both crops and livestock--as was much of it's wealth. I suppose that does make a good argument for the fact that the Egyptians in desperation had to go and take it from elsewhere or else perish. But how they were able to take it from elsewhere still seems problematic. The Red Sea account says that ALL the chariots of Egypt pursued the Israelites. No doubt there were some remaining forces down in Thebes though. Perhaps the biblical Mizraim was limited to the northern land? This would be a helpful discussion.

4) In the same vein, one wonders how just three or four decades after the Exodus, Egypt was able to enter one of the peaks of its civilization under the reign of Amenhotep III the Magnificent. As noted at Wikipedia, "His lengthy reign was a period of unprecedented prosperity and artistic splendour, when Egypt reached the peak of her artistic and international power." This helps the argument of those who make HIM the pharaoh of the Exodus (as it was downhill after his reign and seeing Akenaten's reign in response to it) and those who claim that the Exodus did not happen in the 18th dynasty at all (arguing for a new Egyptian chronology).

5) It is worth noting that Josephus, in mistakenly trying to identify the Israelites with the Hyksos, rejects historians placing the Exodus during the reigns of "Thummosis," "Tethmosis" or "Amenophis," whom he wrongly labels fictitious (Against Apion, Book 1, Sections 14, 15 and 24-35). This lends support to an 18th-dynasty Exodus--but does not narrow it down enough.

6) Petrovich's criticism of Shea's conclusion regarding two Amenhotep II's is certainly valid, as this seems highly unlikely. However, some specifics of his criticism are not justified. First, Petrovich contends that the royal family would be opposed to the imposter, but Shea argues that the imposter would be a brother who was part of the royal family and a legitimate claimant to the throne anyway. Second, Petrovich says that no pharaoh would assume the identity of a defeated and discredited predecessor. This ignores the fact that by assuming the identity, there would be no such defeated and discredited predecessor--it would be as if no humiliation had occurred, and as if this new pharaoh was not a successor but the same person whose death was covered up. Third, a new ruler could have a very good reason for such a cover up, as the legitimacy of pharaonic rule in general was at stake. If the people knew that their divine pharaoh was destroyed by a foreign god, why should they follow a successor in his place? Still, this extraordinary circumstance seems far-fetched--and it is not required to fit what is stated in Scripture, as Petrovich shows.

**T Robinson - 2/22/2010 1:25:26 AM**

2/23/2010 6:51 PM #

I have a few more things to say in response to Robert Brock's comments.

First of all, Bietak's excavations do not prove all of the things that you so ambitiously believe, though I will agree that this IS the site that the Israelites built-up for pharaoh at the outset of the 18th Dynasty, the timing of which is clearly implied in Exodus 1:10-11.

The only disagreement I'll mention is where you say that Avaris was THE seat of Egyptian power. This is not something that Beitak says, nor is it something that we know from the ancient sources.

The fact is that we do know something from the ancient sources. In the Karnak Stele, which recounts Amenhotep II's first Asiatic campaign (cf. Amada & Memphis Stelae), in Year 3, we read of this pharaoh's return to Memphis: ". . . day 27; his majesty went forth from the house of the Beautiful-of-Face (Ptah) and proceeded to Memphis, bearing the plunder which he had taken in the country of Retenu" (Breasted, vol. II, 309).

In the Memphis Stele, the scribe also recounts the arrival at Memphis at the end of the first (corrected to Year-3) campaign of Amenhotep II: "His majesty arrived at Memphis, he being elated as a strong bull." (Context of Scripture, vol. 2, 21; trans. Hoffmeier).

Later in the Memphis Stele, at the time of Amenhotep II's return from the 2nd Asiatic campaign (Year 9), we read, "His majesty arrived at the city of Memphis, he being satisfied because every foreign country and every land is under his sandals." (Ibid., 22).

And just to take us back a bit before Amenhotep II's time, we read (in the Armant Stele) this of Thutmose III's Year-22 Asiatic campaign to crush the rebellion led by the king of Qadesh, which battle took place at Megiddo: "[Regnal Year 22, 4th month of winter, day 20(?)] from Memphis in order to slay the lands of feeble Retenu on the first occasion of victory." (Ibid., 19).

Now, here we won't worry about going back before Thutmose III. Suffice it to say that at least from the time of Thutmose III's Year 22 (1484 BC) until Amenhotep II's Year 9 (the exodus year, according to my synchronism), some 38 years later, THE seat of royal power was at Memphis.

So, we have to be careful before we try to do too much with Avaris/Pi-Ramesses just because this is biblical Ramses. This kind of extrapolation I have seen from a few of you, and even from Dr. Wood at least once.

It actually reminds me of what we've seen the Catholics and the Orthodox do in Israel: every time they find a site where they think there is a biblical connection, they build a church on it and declare it to be a holy site. As evangelicals, we laugh at this, followed by a frown.

However, we are doing the same thing as they are, only by building with grandiose historical reconstruction, in an eisegetical sense (i.e. reading something into), rather than with brick and mortar. This is wrong. We cannot read more into the historical sources than what is there, just because it is a place where some biblical event transpired.

But to the defense of Memphis, this site has yet to be excavated. I think that if we COULD excavate Memphis, you would be amazed at how much more extravagant it was than Avaris. Then you would know why the ancient sources draw attention to Memphis as the true seat of royal power, rather than any one of the numerous "other" important cities of the time.

Next, you seem to have implied that Thutmose II was the exodus-pharaoh, and that Hatshepsut, as his widow, took over for him when he died. I have attempted already to prove in my article that the Bible NEVER says that pharaoh died in the Re(e)d Sea, and I added to that in my comments following Dr. Wood's "Recent Research on the Date and Setting of the Exodus" article (on the ABR site, just below my article).

But as for Thutmose II as the exodus-pharaoh, now you have some major, major problems to solve. Do the work yourself. Take the biography of this pharaoh and critique it against the requirements I have listed for you in my article, which--incidentally--is not an exhaustive list. See for yourself how many of the requirements are fulfilled by this pharaoh.

To give you a jump-start, there is the requirement that the exodus-pharaoh MUST HAVE succeeded a predecessor who reigned on the throne of Egypt for over 40 years. You can't get around this, if biblical inerrancy means anything to you.

Thutmose II was preceded by Thutmose I, his father, whose reign was approximately 13 years. Thutmose I celebrated no sed-festival, which during this dynasty was done by those kings whose reigns had reached 30 years in length. Even if you were to hypothesize that he lived over 40 years anyway, you then disrupt the 18th-Dynasty chronology to such an extent that you cannot make all of the reigns fit into the allowable historical window. You just create far more problems than you solve.

But this just comes back to the point I made several times now. We have to be careful that we consider all of the evidence before coming up with a view. It is not enough to see what would be two neat correlations: 1) Thera is now datable to Thutmose II's reign; and 2) Thutmose II would work neatly as the exodus-pharaoh, since his widow succeeded him.

This is taking a blind eye to the mountain of other factors that must be taken into account. There is a huge grocery list of requirements that must be true of the exodus-pharaoh. If you are going to pick a favorite candidate, you had better make sure first that your candidate meets EVERY SINGLE ONE of those requirements before you go public with your theory.

Otherwise, you are left looking pretty foolish when your candidate is seen to be exposed under scrutiny as an impossible candidate. So, please be VERY careful before making such proclamations. I would not want to see your credibility diminished in anyone's eyes. And I am not saying that they should look down on you for this, just that they will.

And incidentally, since you have chosen 1479 as your year of 1) Thutmose II's death, and 2) the exodus, you have more problems to solve. Thutmose II died in ca. 1506, according to (my rendition of) the higher chronology. The year 1479 would be just into the start of Thutmose III's sole rule. The biggest problem, of course, is that biblical chronology does not allow us to take the exodus back so far into the 15th century BC.

To tell you the most loving thing that I can say, I strongly recommend for you to delete

everything on your website (or elsewhere) related to exodus-era chronology, and start from scratch. This may be a painful and radical thing for you to do, but it will help put you back on the track that leads to a true understanding of these events and times. Yes, you have my attention. I hope that I have yours.

I certainly intend to get to everyone else's comments, too, but please be patient with me, as my own time constraints require me to chip-away at this rather than blow-through it, all at once, which I would prefer.

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**Douglas Petrovich - 2/23/2010 6:51:18 PM**

2/23/2010 10:12 PM #

I found this article both enlightening and helpful. Last year I read Redford's Egypt, Canaan, and Israel in Ancient Times. His work was rhetorically well crafted to have the desired effect of undermining faith in the factual accuracy of the Bible. It sent me, as a church historian, on a renewed search in the scholarship of OT studies, especially as relates to the Exodus and Conquest of Canaan.

I would like to see professional scholars address the claims by Ron Wyatt that the location of the crossing of the Red Sea and Mount Sinai are misplaced, and that Sinai should be located in Saudi Arabia. I'm especially curious about his photographic evidence of alleged Egyptian chariot wheels and a carved pillar (in Phoenician style) dating to the reign of Solomon commemorating the crossing in the Gulf of Aqaba... Being a church historian I do not feel competent to judge his claims. I would like to hear from qualified OT scholars and archeologists.

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**AJ Smith - 2/23/2010 10:12:53 PM**

2/24/2010 8:59 PM #

Dear AJ Smith,

Thanks for your contacting us and for your interest in the ABR ministry.

Ron Wyatt's claims have been, frankly, shown to be in error and should not be used as support for the Bible. Ron Wyatt, now deceased, was not a credible scholar. He was an anesthetist with no training in archaeology or the ancient Near East. He was merely an adventurer. Wyatt was a Seventh Day Adventist and has been thoroughly refuted by his own denomination (Holy Relics or Revelation—Recent Astounding Archaeological Claims Evaluated, by Russell R. and Colin D. Standish, published by Heartland Publications in 1999. Perhaps the best product out there that deals with Mr. Wyatt's material is this book we have here:

[www.biblearchaeology.org/.../product.aspx?id=108](http://www.biblearchaeology.org/.../product.aspx?id=108)

Also, here is a word from our Director of Research, Dr. Bryant Wood:

ABR has published a research article debunking the claim that Mt. Sinai is located in Saudi Arabia:

[www.biblearchaeology.org/.../...Saudi-Arabia.aspx](http://www.biblearchaeology.org/.../...Saudi-Arabia.aspx).

In short, the Bible records that the sea crossing took place at the beginning of the Exodus journey, closer to Egypt, rather than at the end of the journey, closer to Mt. Sinai, as Wyatt's theory would have it. Even more damaging is the fact that it took the Israelites but 60 days to reach Mt. Sinai (Exod. 19:1). Travelling by foot with all of their animals, they only would be able to make 5–6 miles per day, much too slow to reach Saudi Arabia in 60 days. See:

[www.biblearchaeology.org/.../...f-Mount-Sinai.aspx](http://www.biblearchaeology.org/.../...f-Mount-Sinai.aspx)

According to the requirements of Scripture, the sea crossing took place in the Isthmus of Suez. I believe it was at Lake Ballah, no longer seen today since it was drained when the Suez Canal was cut. See:

[www.biblearchaeology.org/.../...ossing-Part-I.aspx](http://www.biblearchaeology.org/.../...ossing-Part-I.aspx)

[www.biblearchaeology.org/.../...ssing-Part-II.aspx](http://www.biblearchaeology.org/.../...ssing-Part-II.aspx)

Mt. Sinai should be located somewhere in the northeast Sinai. See:

[www.biblearchaeology.org/.../...with-Mt-Sinai.aspx](http://www.biblearchaeology.org/.../...with-Mt-Sinai.aspx)

Note that the so-called "chariot wheels" at the bottom of the Gulf of Aqaba shown in the presentation have four spokes whereas Egyptian chariot wheels have six spokes.

And, also, a brief comment from another staff member, Rick Lanser (this written to another person asking about Mr. Wyatt)

Ron Wyatt did not discover anything that has held up to close examination. For example, the chariot wheel in the YouTube video was found to have been put there for making the video, and is not even an ancient Egyptian wheel. The YouTube videos are designed not to give scientific facts, but to get you to send in money to the Wyatt supporters. There is much evidence the claims are fraudulent at <http://www.tentmaker.org/WAR/> and [www.answersingenesis.org/.../report.asp](http://www.answersingenesis.org/.../report.asp).

ABR wants to promote any discoveries that uphold the historical reliability of the Bible, regardless of who makes them. But we refuse to promote self-serving and apparently fraudulent information. There are many out there who make a living doing just that. I hope this information has helped you be a discerning reader of such information.

In His service---Rick Lanser

We hope that this information is helpful to you. Thanks for trusting us as a source for answers.

Blessings,  
ABR

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**ABR - 2/24/2010 8:59:35 PM**



2/25/2010 5:37 PM #

Dear Mr. Gambino,

I am very pleased that you enjoyed the article. I am glad also that for 20 years you have been teaching that the exodus-pharaoh lived through the Re(e)d Sea debacle. Well done! It looks as though I took away your opportunity to publish it first, though. Sorry about that.

But again, the key is that we have something extensive in print about the historical aspects of these events, so it does not really matter who publishes, just that it is out there. But for you, I would think it is quite rewarding to know that such extensive and compelling argumentation from the Bible and Egyptian historical sources can be made in defense of this position, and in defense of Amenhotep II as the only 18th- or 19th-Dynasty pharaoh who can qualify as the exodus-pharaoh.

Now you can have materials to back-up your long-held view. I remember when the article first came out. A guy who took over for me as one of the assistant pastors in the church in California that I served enjoyed the article so much that he used it as complementary material to help him teach (an adult Sunday School class) through Exodus. He was REALLY stoked about how much it helped him. This alone made it worth all of the enormous effort. The other great thrill for me was that my dear grandmother, in her upper 90's, loved reading it. What a soldier she is!

I also share your view about Akenaten, that much of his motivation for turning away from the Egyptian pantheon and turning to the worship of the Sun-god exclusively was the result of the long-term effects of the exodus-era events. These historical events, though (to our knowledge) not recorded in Egyptian historical sources, would have made/left a strong and long-lasting impression on the Egyptians. God Himself predicted that this would happen!

I suppose it is possible that the army tried to cover-up the actual events by spreading the myth that the army's demise was in battle while slaughtering the Israelites. However, two things tell me that this is quite unlikely.

1) The Egyptians all had experienced the miraculous events of the plagues, which were real and devastating. The sting was still VERY fresh. It seems a bit of a stretch to me to think that they would have been so naive after these life-altering events. I also do not take pharaoh as being so foolish as to think that he could pull-off something like this with his subjects when he returned potentially (or, at minimum, "virtually") all by himself.

2) If the Egyptians actually had been victorious in the battle, they would have returned with their army intact, mostly if not entirely (Remember, the Israelites were NOT warriors). To return with no army whatsoever proves inherently that the battle was lost. I believe that the populous understood this principle acutely. Mind you, we are talking about the ANE, which experientially knew warfare and all of its facets. Again, pharaoh would not have been so foolish as to think that he could deceive his people about such success, when in fact he did not bring back any of his army with him.

I would enjoy seeing your chart from 1987. Please send it to me at the following e-mail address:

Doug Petrovich  
dp@exege-sisinternational.org

**Douglas Petrovich - 2/25/2010 5:37:42 PM**

2/28/2010 9:40 PM #

Thank you for your detailed, informative, and insightful response to my question.

AJ Smith

**AJ Smith - 2/28/2010 9:40:50 PM**

3/2/2010 1:11 AM #

Dear Mr. Gambino,

I would like to reply to a couple of the comments you made in your second posting. First, you said, "Dr. Brock...Dr. Petrovich seems to take the chronologies of the Hebrew Bible quite seriously:  $966+480=1446$  (I Kings 6)."

I appreciate this very much. As a former senior pastor of mine said (some years back) to a number of us assistant pastors and other church leaders at a time when he was being accused with bogus accusations, "The best thing would be if YOU men would defend me, because I am not about to defend myself."

He was exactly right, and we did defend him. So based on this principle, I thank you for coming to my side. I would have expected to be accused of various things after my article was read, but never in my wildest thoughts would I have anticipated that a failure to take seriously the biblical chronologies would be one of them. Either my own words in the article are incomprehensible to me, or my article was not read carefully enough.

"Still, for a difference of 30 years we can still 'walk together'. If the co-regency of Hatshepsut & Thutmose III was somewhat longer...or if we have to slide the WHOLE scale of dates up 30 years . . . . [Etc.] for a difference of only 30 years after about 3000 years we can 'walk together', which I find hard to do with the 13th Century People and their Ramesses II Exodus."

I would want to be both less generous and more generous than you in this matter, at the same time. Allow me to explain. First of all, I can "walk together" with the 13th-century people, because (as far as I know) they love God and attempt to understand and follow His word and His will for their lives. In this sense, late-exodus proponents such as Hoffmeier and Hawkins are as much with me as early-exodus folks such as Dr. Wood (Yet surely their hermeneutics are problematic, as well as their priorities when assigning relative value to biblical vs. archaeological/historical data.).

However, I would not be so willing to concede the 30 years, as if it is something negotiable. In this case, it is not negotiable. The 30-year error leads us to the wrong pharaoh, which destroys the precise synchronism that we have when we stick with the 1446-BC date. And when it comes down to it, what is the difference between a wrong exodus-pharaoh of the right dynasty vs. a wrong exodus-pharaoh of the right dynasty??

That, in turn, leads to historical impossibilities with regard to the biblical text. As I exemplified in

a previous comment above, we have major problems when we assert that Thutmose II was the exodus-pharaoh. If Thutmose II was in fact the exodus-pharaoh, either the Bible is in error, or the biographical sketch of Thutmose II provided by the ancient Egyptian historical sources are all in error in recording many specific details related to his biography and chronology.

Frankly, I am not comfortable with either one of those options. Ergo, Thutmose II CANNOT be the exodus-pharaoh, and we CAN trust the historical sources (both biblical and Egyptian) that 1446 BC is the right date for the exodus, and Amenhotep II is the right candidate for the exodus-pharaoh.

So the place where I would prefer to stand is that we cannot just give away those 30 years as if it is such an insignificant compromise that we can just "walk with" Dr. Brock's minor historical alteration as a minor concession.

But there is a definable principle by which we can work, as it related to biblical history and chronology: to the extent to which the Bible is precise, we must be precise; to the extent to which the Bible is ambiguous or general, we can be ambiguous or general.

If God gave specific dates, in precise years, for particular historical events, we can be (at least) as precise as those given years. And in relation to the exodus, we have VERY precise dating, to the year. In fact, the month and day are even given, so we can be as specific as that, which case I attempted to argue in my article (25 April 1446 for the day of the exodus).

In contrast, for example, we have a different situation in Acts 13:20, where it says that these events took "about (Greek hOs) 450 years". Here the Greek word for "about, roughly" is critical to a proper interpretation.

In fact, from my study, I have deduced that the period of which Paul spoke amounts to either 477 years, or 447 years. There is an interpretive choice involved with some of the historical data, so this is why we are left with a discrepancy of either 3 or 27 years, which--either way--represents a variation from the number "450".

Such an imprecision, either way, is fine and perfectly legitimate with the biblical text, since the inspired author was vague in his dating. However, the writer of 1 Kings left nothing to the imagination. He tells us that there is a period of "479 years and change" between these two major events. This is precision to a specific year, removing all opportunity for 30 years of leeway. I hope that this makes perfect sense, and that it can help your understanding.

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**Douglas Petrovich - 3/2/2010 1:11:28 AM**

3/2/2010 8:58 PM #

Now I would like to respond to the two disagreements of Dennis Oberholtzer. Obviously it is fine to disagree, but since the goal is for us to stand behind what is true and accurate, I would ask you to consider these thoughts. Your first disagreement was this:

"The year 1446 is compelling. But one must remember that the bc dating system is not totally parallel with the lunar calendar system. Six months were lost in 70 C.E. when the Jews returned to a pre-Mosaic calendar system, thereby losing half a year when they restarted their

year at the Fall Equinox. Another 5 months were lost when Moses began his lunar Mosaic calendar on the Spring Equinox on what would now be known as 1445 b.c.e. The Bible uses Egyptian years in Exodus prior to the Spring Equinox of 1445, which began its year around the time of our August."

For the majority of my answer to what you have expressed here, I received helpful insight from Rodger C. Young, whom I would say is one of, if not the leading of, the top chronologists among evangelicals today. His work is extremely important, and I rarely disagree with him on anything he has attempted to prove or on any position he has taken. So my thanks again go to him, as he helped me with both of the articles that I have published.

The Mishna (a predecessor to the Talmud) and the Babylonian Talmud (tractate Rosh HaShanah) state that there are four New Years. "On the first of Nisan is the New Year for kings and for festivals. On the first of Elul is the New Year for the tithe of cattle . . . On the first of Tishri is the New Year for years . . . On the first of Shebat is the New Year for trees . . ."

The Mishna dates to ca. the 2nd century AD, so it is a comparatively late composition compared to the Hebrew Bible. It is wrong in its statement that Nisan 1 was the New Year for Judahite kings; although this was true for the northern kingdom, it was never true for Judah (southern kingdom). The Mishna, however, does recognize that the civil or agricultural year began on 1 Tishri. In none of this reckoning was any year or month ever "lost."

According to Exodus 12:2, Nisan was to be considered the first month, and whenever in the Hebrew Bible the month is identified by a number, this convention is followed. In Lev. 25, the regulations for the Sabbatical and Jubilee years are all based on a reckoning that starts in the fall, at the time of the fall planting. For Jubilee years, the New Year was to start on the 10th of Tishri, the Day of Atonement (Lev. 25:8). Nine days were not "lost" when this was done; the priests were perfectly capable of keeping track of their calendar for a Jubilee year. Nor did they lose six months every seven years when a Sabbatical year came around just because the Sabbatical year started in the seventh month.

If you have any evidence that the priests were incapable of understanding or following these basic principles, and so somehow lost six months in their reckoning, please let us know. Suggesting it is one thing, but proving it is something completely different.

It should be added, too, that Rodger Young went to great pains to demonstrate that the Jubilee cycle clearly prefers 1446 BC over 1445 BC as the exact year of the exodus, thus clearing-up the question as to which of these two years is the proper one, given that the lack of congruity between our yearly calendar and that of the ancient Judahites makes both years possible. I cited Rodger's article in mine above, which can be found with a search for the word "Jubilee" (which corresponds to footnote 25).

Moving on to your second disagreement, you stated this:

"At the time of the Exodus, there were two "Pharaohs", just as there were a King and co-regent at the time of Daniel's handwriting on the wall. Pharaoh Hatshepsut was reigning from Thebes over the whole kingdom of Egypt. But Thutmose IV was also a co-regent ruling from Zoan. Evidence of this must be added up; first by the black stele written concerning the only Egyptian war loss ever documented. This stone stands in the area of the Suez Canal, and is presented by the scholarly world as by Hatshepsut. Second, if She was ruling from Thebes,

another "Pharaoh" had to be in the Delta during the start of the Exodus. By calculating the overlapping dates, Thutmose IV is the most likely candidate." [with corrections]

As for your statement that there were two pharaohs ruling at the time of the exodus, I am curious as to what proof you have for this conviction. I have studied the exodus-era inside-out, and I have yet to see a shred of evidence that would support this conclusion. Please provide the proof for it, and we can discuss it further. Until then, I am at a loss, and I cannot agree with your conviction. If you prove it to me, then I will believe.

I do believe that the coregency between Hatshepsut and THUTMOSE III overlapped with the event of Moses slaying the Egyptian, but it is difficult to prove conclusively. The one bit of circumstantial evidence available is that since we can be sure that the exodus-pharaoh's predecessor, who chased Moses out of Egypt, was male, this pharaoh's presence in Memphis (i. e. in close range with Goshen) can best be explained if he is the more active pharaoh in the north, while Hatshepsut is at Thebes, as you have said.

However, you have made one important error. Hatshepsut had no overlap with Thutmose IV. The former ruled long before the exodus, while the latter ruled long after the exodus. In fact, he was the grandson of her stepson. Their lives did not overlap whatsoever. This is common knowledge, and any introductory textbook on ancient Egypt/ANE (Redford, Grimal, Kuhrt, etc.) will make this clear to you.

And if you meant Thutmose III instead of Thutmose IV, you now have a different problem to solve. While it is true that Thutmose III was the true coregent along with Hatshepsut, he is the ONLY pharaoh of the 18th Dynasty who ruled for over 40 years, making him the only possible candidate for the predecessor of the exodus-pharaoh. He cannot be the exodus-pharaoh, but he MUST (in this case) be the predecessor to the exodus-pharaoh, which fits perfectly with Amenhotep II as the right choice for the exodus-pharaoh.

As for your suggestion that there was a coregent ruling from Zoan, I am curious as to what led you to this odd conclusion. There is no evidence from Egyptian history whatsoever that an 18th-Dynasty pharaoh ruled from there, whether a coregent or not.

I wrote something about this in a previous reply to Dr. Wood's article (on the ABR site), and perhaps it is from his writings that you have this notion. I am not sure. But as I went-on to say in my article (footnote 52), the presence of a royal scarab or two at Avaris/Ramses no more proves a pharaoh's personal occupation of the city than the presence of a scarab with that same pharaoh's royal cartouche at Gibeon proves that he resided on the Central Benjamin Plateau (Amenhotep II being the pharaoh of whom I was speaking).

This is simply a logical leap that must be avoided. And as I said earlier in this very thread (of comments to my article and replies by me), we cannot infer the residence of the/a pharaoh in the Delta just because we see interaction between the Hebrew midwives and pharaoh. It sounds neat, but it is a terrible reconstruction of ancient history. Egyptologists would tear this notion to shreds, and rightly so.

Pharaoh was known to rule at Memphis, which is virtually on the border between Lower Egypt and Middle Egypt, but he was NOT known to rule in the Delta, at least not during this dynasty. The biblical text states that Hebrews lived all over Egypt. So either the midwives lived in the city of pharaoh's residence--which is Memphis, from all indications from the ancient sources--or

there was travel that led to face-to-face communication between the two parties, such as the pharaoh sending chariots to take these women to his court at Memphis, which is certainly in the realm of possibility.

As to which of these options should be preferred, I probably would call it a coin flip. Yet I do not think whatsoever that pharaoh himself was traveling from Memphis to visit the midwives in Goshen. This simply is not something that a pharaoh would do. If you study Egyptology, you will understand.

Thank you kindly for your wish of blessing. And may the Lord richly bless you, He who generous has shared so much with us, for us to enjoy.

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**Douglas Petrovich - 3/2/2010 8:58:02 PM**

3/3/2010 12:58 AM #

The ABR staff did a wonderful job of responding to the second paragraph in the posting by A. J. Smith. I would like to respond to the first paragraph.

Mr. Smith writes, "I found this article both enlightening and helpful. Last year I read Redford's Egypt, Canaan, and Israel in Ancient Times. His work was rhetorically well crafted to have the desired effect of undermining faith in the factual accuracy of the Bible. It sent me, as a church historian, on a renewed search in the scholarship of OT studies, especially as relates to the Exodus and Conquest of Canaan."

I am so glad that you found the article to be enlightening and helpful. This was the goal, so thanks go to the Lord for putting it on my heart to write it. If it can lead to further study and research, as well, my prayer would be that God would use it to inspire others to go far beyond where I have gone. As I used to tell my students, "The sign of a great teacher is the number of his students who surpass him." (obviously the same applies to female teachers), which quote comes from a famous Christian figure who has done amazing things for the kingdom of God.

As for Dr. Redford, there is much that can be said. First of all, he is a top-rate Egyptologist, perhaps even unmatched in our day. He taught for many years here at the University of Toronto, where I am working on a PhD in Syro-Pal Archaeology with a first minor in Egyptian language and a second minor in Egyptian archaeology.

Dr. Redford's work has benefited me enormously. You can detect this if you glance through all of my footnotes. For fun, maybe you can search his name and see how many times it comes up on this webpage alone. Not a few! So to him and his efforts I owe a great debt. Probably my favorite insight of his is that Amenhotep II probably had a firstborn son named Thutmose who died in infancy or youth, and left virtually no trace in the written record. When I first read this, in an article of his, I almost fell back and crashed on the ground. My jaw must have been visibly open, probably enough to stuff an orange inside.

While his work in Egyptology is stellar, his work in Israel's history, oddly enough, is of a completely different nature. Where he shows himself to be a 1st-class scholar when writing in the former discipline, with the latter he shows himself to be a biased and incompetent "ranter" with a clear-cut agenda to undermine any notion of historical parallels and consistencies

between the Bible and the actual history of the Jewish people.

I remember the impression I had when I first read "Egypt, Canaan, and Israel in Ancient Times". I was so excited to come to the part about Israel because I expected the same precision and convincing argumentation that he showed throughout the book. I was devastated to discover that he has a vendetta against biblical historicity, and to find his treatment of Israel to be almost totally and completely worthless.

With such scholars, you can only have pity and great sorrow. I heard the same from him some weeks ago when he came here to speak. Out of nowhere, he just blasted-away at biblical historicity, without provocation from anyone in the audience. It was ugly and grossly out of place. Of course, the reality is that due to spiritual warfare, the enemy of God has so blinded his eyes and corrupted his heart that there is no end to the ways that he can use his influence to attempt to undermine the Word of God.

Ultimately, the good news is that God is still on the throne. Moreover, God is not mocked. Such men, without repentance, sit under the judgment of God. Their scoffing will not go unseen, nor will it go unpunished. Therefore, since vengeance is the Lord's, we need not worry whatsoever. God is the Great Equalizer. All will be brought to order, in His time.

Meanwhile, we can praise Him that He patiently allows such men and women the opportunity to repent and come to believe in the gospel of Jesus Christ. Amen? This frees us to be able to use, with great respect and appreciation, the aspects of such scholars' positive and fruitful contributions, without even focusing on their attempt to undermine biblical truth. Since vengeance is not ours, we must not judge, and we must not discount or undervalue any part of their work that is truly beneficial. This is the right way to respond, and it must be our response as those who want to walk according to the way that Christ walked.

On a final note, you also mentioned the Conquest. If you do not know, I published an article in JETS last year, entitled, "The Dating of Hazor's Destruction in Joshua 11 via Biblical, Archaeological, & Epigraphical Evidence". This article deals directly with the Conquest, and most pointedly with the destruction of Hazor, where I dug with Ben-Tor.

I hope that one day this article also will appear on the Exodus-Conquest page of ABR. However, there is no real rush. Meantime, if you would like to read that article presently, you can download a PDF version of it from my website at the following link:

[exegesisinternational.org/index.php](http://exegesisinternational.org/index.php)

I think that you will enjoy this article greatly. I attempt to be as thorough with the destruction of the Hazor of Joshua's day as I was with the exodus-pharaoh. If you enjoy the Conquest, and you believe in the integrity of God's Word and in grammatical-historical hermeneutics, I do not know how you will not be able to get excited by it.

This leaves me to reply to the posting by T. Robinson, which came before Mr. Smith's reply. However, since this reply was much shorter and less involved, I made it first. So, by the end of the week I hope to complete that reply, which should just about catch-me-up completely on all of the comments. If more come in, I will do my best to reply to them, as well.

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**Douglas Petrovich - 3/3/2010 12:58:15 AM**

4/6/2010 12:31 PM #

Hello Mr. Petrovich,

I was very interested to read your article and its exploration of potential ties of Egyptian history with the Exodus. I currently am taking a New Kingdom Egypt class from Egyptologist Gregory Mumford (PhD. from University of Toronto), a marvelous teacher, at the University of Alabama in Birmingham. He has some first-hand archaeological experience in the Sinai (see his site: [www.deltasinai.com](http://www.deltasinai.com)) and has done at least one dig with Dr. James Hoffmeier, and had Donald Redford as one of his instructors at Toronto. He is very knowledgeable on Egyptian history and I am interested in the topic it for its own merits as well as for potential tie-ins between Egyptian history and Biblical history in Canaan and the Transjordan. The course is not oriented toward making such tie-ins but I try to glean any relevant information as I go along.

When we went over Thutmose IV in class some bells went off in my head from some of the things Dr. Mumford said in class while going over his slides on the subject. The behavior of Thutmose IV was extremely peculiar, and it made me wonder if it did not have some connection to the dramatic events of the Exodus which might have occurred prior to that time. I realize that, as you stated earlier, that an "appealing" or convenient tie-in does not necessarily constitute evidence but I would like to cite some of the information which I think is worth stating from what we went over in class. The relevant slides on Thutmose IV which Dr. Mumford created read as follows (in part - using hyphens for original bulleted points):

\*[My note: Thutmose in the slides is shortened to T and Amenhotep to A (e.g. T-IV and A-II)]

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(Slide 1)

Background:

- A-II succeeded by younger son: T-IV
- Heir-apparent died prematurely.
- Like other princes since the time of T-I, Prince T-IV = raised & educated at Memphis (north of capital: Thebes)
- Unlike most earlier Theban princes, T-IV displays unusual piety to deities in Memphite region.
- T-IV Memphite construction projects:
  - A. completing temple by Great Sphinx
  - B. construction in Ptah Temple (foundation deposit names T-IV)

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(Slide 2)

Legitimizing his unexpected rule:

- T-IV's unusual piety to Memphis can be explained through events preceding his unexpected succession to the throne (in conjunction with Memphite assistance).
  - Memphite assistance materializes through divine will of Great Sphinx: (= deity Hormachis)
  - Great Sphinx promises the throne in exchange for freeing it from encroaching desert sands.
  - T-IV dedicated Dream Stela before Great Sphinx (Hormachis)
  - This stela relates T-IV's dream, whilst resting in shade of Sphinx after hunting:
- [quotes stela]



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Dr. Mumford went on to discuss the possibility of it being a real dream conjured by his subconscious or the more likely scenario of him creating this story to legitimize his unexpected ascension to the throne. It was the unexpectedness, the premature death of the heir-apparent (especially), and his extraordinary piety which led me to think he could be a surviving son of the Pharaoh of the Exodus and that his brother (the first born) had been slain in the tenth plague. His piety could have been induced from the terror of the plagues that occurred previously (quite in contrast to his hard-hearted father), albeit directing his piety toward Egyptian deities.

I am no Egyptologist or professional scholar, but upon a cursory observation these were the things that first struck me. I saw some echoes of this idea about Thutmose IV in your paper. It may be wishful thinking but I thought I would share these observations and possibly hope for some feedback from you. Also if you would like to see Dr. Mumford's slides about Amenhotep II, Thutmose IV, and Amenhotep III you can contact me by e-mail (see below) and I may be able to upload them to my website briefly for you to download them (they are too large for an email attachment I'm afraid).

In summary I thank you for taking up this idea from a fresh and unique perspective and I hope to see further ideas develop around this theory in the future to further test it to see if it holds up to scrutiny.

Best Regards,

Josh Nielsen  
jmn Nielsen@rocketmail.com

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**Joshua Nielsen - 4/6/2010 12:31:31 PM**

4/8/2010 9:47 AM #

Dear Josh,

This is some insightful thinking on your part. Please continue to soak-up all that you can from Dr. Mumford, and continue to study what you can about Thutmose IV. Yes, many unusual events took place during his reign, which will need to be recounted and brought out into the light.

I can only offer a short and preliminary response for now, but more will come when I have a few less pressing responsibilities bearing down on me.

"The behavior of Thutmose IV was extremely peculiar, and it made me wonder if it did not have some connection to the dramatic events of the Exodus which might have occurred prior to that time."

True, but I would go so far as to say that these dramatic events of the exodus unquestionably occurred prior to Thutmose IV, removing any need for doubt or uncertainty. The late-exodus view does exist, but that does not make it a realistic option, necessarily. My research has proven to me that it has no place in the list of legitimate options where biblical disputes have arisen. Others may disagree, but careful and thorough study bears out the boldness of my

statement.

As for the slides, most certainly I would enjoy looking through them. I will work that out with you via e-mail. I do look forward to replying to your post more thoroughly, though.

Doug Petrovich

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**Douglas Petrovich - 4/8/2010 9:47:20 AM**

6/12/2010 6:16 AM #

Well, i must say, this entire debate has been most interesting. It is rare to find such in-depth analysis and peer review, but in a spirit of evangelical fellowship and respect, while still wrestling with robust - and complex - issues of chronology and interpretation. That is how I want scholarly debate to be, and the circles I'm happy to revolve through (yes, British spelling their friends. Artefacts, not artifacts, I'm afraid).

I find D P's position, and stance, most convincing. It is well researched, logically argued, adequately defended, without recourse to personal attacks and scholarly 'nastiness' (which i detest). As one who has wrestled with Egyptian chronology (during my masters thesis on the origins of the biblical Philistines - to be published by W&S shortly in the US) it is a veritable Re(e)d Sea quagmire. We do need to hold claims lightly. I find D P's approach (to humility) and the evolving discovery of truth (or perhaps "gradual revelation of" is a better phrase) commendable.

One point on "Pharaoh" and the drowning of his chariotry. While it is clear he was present, the biblical text does appear to suggest that HE DID NOT GO DOWN into the sea with the army, which makes military and political sense. It has been said previously that the Bible does not say he was drowned, which is correct. But I believe the text is stronger than that.

In the early part of the story, Pharaoh is personally involved.

Ex 14: 5 "When the king of Egypt was told..."

"Pharaoh AND his officials changed their minds..."

"What have WE done?..."

Ex 14:6 "So Pharaoh had his chariot made ready AND took his army with him" etc.

However, later in the story, during the final chase and drowning, a clear separation and disparity emerges in the language:

Ex 14: 23 "THE EGYPTIANS pursued them..."

"...Pharaoh's...horsemen followed them into the sea."

Ex 14:24 "[God looked down on] THE EGYPTIAN ARMY.."

Every reference at this point is to "The Egyptians" distinct from the earlier references to "Pharaoh" personally. And to finalise the point, in the concluding Song of Moses and Miriam, its says...

Ex 15: 4 "Pharaoh's chariots AND HIS ARMY he has thrown in to the sea..."

"The BEST OF PHAROAH'S OFFICERS are drowned in the sea.."

Ex 15: 21 "The horse and rider he has hurled into the sea."

Early part of Ex 14 - Pharaoh in the first person;  
second half of 14 and 15 (the exultant victory song) - Pharaoh's servants and minions. If Pharaoh himself had been killed, you can be sure this would have been exulted, as it is elsewhere in scripture.

Its obvious absence is strong evidence I think that Pharaoh WAS NOT drowned himself in the 'battle' and thus slunk back to Memphis.

It's great to think that it may have been - for once - just like Yule Brunner in the Ten Commandments, up on some high promontory imperiously watching the slaughter and roundup of mere slaves below (hardly the work of the Son of Ra himself) only to witness the overthrow from above, detached, and witness to the great God of Israel in action. That would also accord with ancient military practice (ala Xerxes and the naval battle of Salamis, sat imperiously atop his hill to watch events from a special throne) and is what I think happened here.

Doug, I look forward to reading more of your material, and contributing myself on other topics.

John Stringer (MA classical studies) (pastor)  
Christchurch, New Zealand.

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**john stringer - 6/12/2010 6:16:49 AM**

8/24/2010 9:11 AM #

Hello again, I would like to address the reply by Doug Petrovich. Since I am no longer working on this topic, it is taking me awhile to locate some references. But first I would like to address the Jewish New Year.

I will quote my "Galactic Calendar" page 178 which I wrote in 2004:

The Seven Calendars of the Cross reveals the one day difference between the Aramaic Lunar and the Essene Lunar Calendars. Sometime after the Destruction of Jerusalem and the Diaspora of Jews from Palestine, the Jewish Community began using the Essene Calendar as the regular timekeeper. There is no proof of this, except for the event of 359 CE. In that year, the Jews added one day to their calendar to be in line with the Aramaic Calendar. If the Jews would still have been using the calendar from the Second Temple Period, it would have put them a day ahead of the Aramaic, because the two were one and the same. This is strong evidence the remnant in Palestine returned to the Essene Calendar, which was one and the same as the ancient Mosaic Calendar used before the Babylonian Captivity.

Since 359 CE, the Jewish Calendar now runs a day ahead of the Mosaic. Also, after the Destruction of Jerusalem, the calendar returned to the First of Tishri as New Year's Day. [ I add now that you can find the present day Jewish calendar, and it calculates from Tishri 1.] Therefore, from the time of the Exodus until the destruction of Herod's Temple the New Year

began on the New Moon after the Spring Equinox. Prior to the Exodus, and after Herod's Temple the New Year began on the First of Tishri. How do I prove that? All you need to do is look at the Biblical texts from the three time zones. Noah got drunk on the 1st day of the 1st month of the year, at the fall equinox [Tishri 1]. The birth of Abraham was on the Fall Equinox [Tishri 1]. Jewish tradition also claims Adam to have been born on the Fall Equinox. The first of Tishri is equal to the Fall Equinox - Tractate Erubin, Jerusalem Talmud.

The Egyptian Calendar is called in Exodus 12:18 "the 13th of Thout. The Hebrews counted the beginning of the day from sunset, the Egyptians reckoned from sunrise." - Worlds in Collision While much of this book is not accurate, this statement matches all calendar systems.

Moses started the New Year on the Spring Equinox, proven in the reaping of Barley, which was always done just after the Spring Equinox, and perpetually used during the First Temple.

I do not have space to show my Seven Calendars of the Cross, but it reveals a harmony of the Scriptures during the Crucifixion and Resurrection. The Apostle John wrote with the Essene Calendar, which was one and the same as the Mosaic. The Synoptic Gospels were written with the Aramaic Calendar, which ran one day ahead of the old Mosaic. Thus the need to add a day to the Jewish Calendar in 359 CE to "catch up" [but actually get one day ahead of the Mosaic].

The idea of having four New Years is only according to the festivals. But the Biblical references reveal a multiple calendar system built into the text. No one has taken the time to figure out which calendar system was being used in the text, until I spent 3 years doing so. It is time consuming, but my Galactic calendar reveals a harmony of the calendars never before seen.

Pi-Tum [Tell Ertabeh] was built with bricks, top layers without straw additive. - Story in Holy Land of Israel, and there are pictures of the archaeological site.

As to who the Pharaoh of the Exodus was, I still hold to Hatshepsut as being in Thebes, and her co-regent being in Zoan. My references are issues from an expensive Egyptian magazine, which I do not have, but have read and agree 100% with; and it too has 1445 as the year of the Exodus. One must remember that the Exodus began right at the start of the Spring Equinox, thus to say 1446 would not be incorrect if you are referring to the first sets of plagues. My other reference would be an article from BAR Magazine on the archaeological layout of Zoan, and Pharaoh's Temple complex built there.

Also, the Scripture states that the Exodus happened "in stages". This is the most ignored statement in the Bible. Also, when you put the Exodus accounts into time sequence, there was less than a week to get the people together in Pi-Tum, go to Succoth & stay the night, and go to the "hills" on the opposite side of present Suez Canal. From my experiences in hiking, and historical studies of the first settlers in Lancaster County [who were my ancestors], it has been proven that families without wagons, cars, wheels, can only travel about 4 mile per day. There simply was not enough time for Jews to have come from Memphis, Thebes, or even Alexander. These people either traveled at a later time, or as I believe at least some did, stayed as subjects of the deflated Egypt.

In God's Grace, Dennis L Oberholtzer

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**Dennis Oberholtzer - 8/24/2010 9:11:54 AM**

9/17/2010 3:41 AM #

Hello, I would like to first thank you Doug Petrovich for your time spent studying this fascinating topic. I came across this fabulous website as I was studying through Exodus recently and wondered if there was any information out there as to who the Pharaoh of the Exodus might be. I was very excited to find your work on this subject and read through it several times.

I do however have some questions for you if you don't mind answering them or at least pointing me to the right direction. 1.) you dated the Exodus to 1446, based on the 1 Kings 6:1 passage and the understanding that Solomon's reign was 966. Well how is Solomon's reign dated? How do we know the 4th year of his reign? As I am not a scholar and really know very little of this subject. I'm just trying to figure it all out as your website says these dates and suggests Amenhotep II, yet My NKJV Chronological Study Bible says Thutmose III was the ruler at this time, then Ussher gives the Exodus date as 1491, and Solomon's date to be 1012. It is all so very confusing! Which is the right date? Who is correct and why are there so many differences? Please help!

Kevin Johnson

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**Kevin Johnson - 9/17/2010 3:41:37 AM**

9/20/2010 10:04 PM #

Kevin,

Hello. To begin, you are welcome, and you are right about the time that went into writing my article. You don't want to know how many years and how many man-hours were required. My high-school, English-lit teacher once told us of a poet who never submitted his work for publication until after he edited it at least 75 times. I have never forgotten that story, and I always have sought to use that principle in anything I produce or publish. Time and others will have to be the judges as to how well I have done.

I am quite pleased that you found the article to be helpful. One thing is for certain: if you managed to read through it several times, you qualify for an endurance award or two. You NOW can imagine how much joy and amazement I experienced when I first discovered all of these historical truths, many of which had never been published, if ever uncovered by believers, who have reason to integrate Egyptian and biblical history.

I will give a shot at answering your questions, and you can tell me if this is not enough for you. First, I will address how well Solomon's reign is dated. We can have full confidence that the date for Solomon's reign is correct with a + or - of 1 year. If you look at my footnote #9, there I cite an article by Rodger Young, entitled, "When Did Solomon Die?".

This article will prove to you that Solomon's death dates between 932 and 930 BC. Young argues convincingly that it can be dated specifically to (some unspecified day between Nisan 1 and Tishri 1 of) 931 BC. The article is a bit complex, and you may have to read it more times than you read mine, but it is sound and brilliant work on Young's part. I can send you a PDF if you have no seminary library close, or cannot find it online.

I have been in contact with Rodger for almost 10 years now, and I can say that he is an absolute whiz-chronologist. He is a computers-and-mathematics specialist by profession, but he

is a weekend warrior at biblical chronology. You would be wise to read as much of his work as you can consume.

One further note. His work is based on that of biblical chronologists who have gone before us, most notably Edwin Thiele, who is to this field what Darwin was to evolutionary theory (P.S. please just enjoy the humor [and analogy] here; I am NOT an evolutionist by any stretch of the imagination).

Thiele devoted much of his life to synchronizing historical events in the Bible with chronology derived from ANE historical studies, most notably the dates provided by Assyriology, as the Assyrians were the most accurate and detailed recorders of history in the ancient world. If you want to see the connections for yourself, please consult Thiele's work.

Incidentally, Thiele's book is cited in my footnote #23, which brings up a greater point. If you did not yet glance through my footnotes, please do so, as the sources there are a virtual goldmine for answering questions that you might have. Credit goes to all of these wonderful authors, whose work was indispensable to my article, and without whom I never would have had a platform on which to build. To learn more, see which writings might be of help to you, then go to those sources and do your own research.

Now let me move on to your comment about the NKJV telling you that Thutmose III was the ruler at this time. First of all, as you may know, my article spares no expense to prove that this pharaoh CANNOT POSSIBLY be the exodus-pharaoh. To put it bluntly, his biography unequivocally eliminates him from contention. Study my arguments for more on this.

I can add a bit to this, though. In my footnote #45, I delineate the three different views (among Egyptologists) as to the precise chronology of the Egypt of the mid-2nd millennium BC. Like with most fields, "popular consensus" plays a big part in views taken by Egyptological scholars (in said field and, by extrapolation, in other related fields, such as biblical studies). This can be a bad--as well as a sad--reality. In this case, it is.

About 20 or 25 years ago, the high chronology was in vogue. Since then, many Egyptologists have begun to down-date events previously thought to be 25 or less years earlier in time. This "problem" arose mainly from scholars in other fields who already had "fixed dates" for their fields (eg. Hittitologists), who then scolded Egyptologists when synchronisms were shown to prove that one or the other field had an imprecise absolute chronology. Obviously, they implied that Egyptologists were the ones who were wrong and had to move their dates.

This resulted in the popularity of the middle and low chronologies [Note: technically, Egyptologists fudged by suggesting that dates for the rising of Sothis--which astronomical event was recorded in several ancient papyri--could be reinterpreted as having been observed from different places in Egypt than the traditionally held site of Memphis, thus automatically dropping down the dates in their absolute chronology, but I don't know if this is of importance to you or not, so I will leave it at that].

At present, the vogue view in the field is the low chronology. However, not all have succumbed, and others have begun to doubt the current view because they came across data that cannot support a low chronology. Bottom line: the current popularity of the low chronology DOES NOT prove that it is the CORRECT chronology. All it proves is that popularity contests are of value even to scholars, whether they should be or not.

Now back to your question. Most biblical scholars are blind as bats when it comes to Egyptology. Just a fact. As a result, the few sources they do consult probably (if not undoubtedly) use the low chronology. The producers of the NKJV study Bible undoubtedly were suckered into this position, whether or not they even knew that there is a dispute about dating and chronology. Their choice was a bad one: it doomed them to picking the wrong guy for their pharaoh of 1446 BC.

But if you want to prove it for yourself, study the biography of Thutmose III, and show me how in the world he can overcome the biographical incongruities (with the exodus-pharaoh) that I have accentuated in my article. Prove me wrong, and I will be the first one to believe. But until someone proves my argumentation to be wrong, there is no way any pharaoh but Amenhotep II can be identified as the actual exodus-pharaoh.

As for Ussher's dates, the work of Thiele and Young will show you why a date of 1491 is way too early for the exodus. Who is correct? The early-date proponents--such as Thiele, Young, and many others--who hold to 1446 as the date of the exodus are correct.

I have studied this issue ad-infinitum, and with complete confidence I can now state that there is no other realistic possibility. But this took me years of study. Better for you to do your own homework first, so that the facts will have led you to your convictions, rather than a chosen surrogate-voice or scholar. There is a reason why God does not have any grandchildren.

Finally, you asked why there are so many differences about dating. Believe me, I could write for hours about other positions (i.e. suggested dates) and arguments for these views that you probably have never encountered. It's much worse than you think.

But the basic reason for this is that there are so many historical events, and they go so far back into time, and there are so many actual and supposed synchronisms, that every scholar out there has the potential to formulate a slightly (or even "vastly") different view than his comrade. Moreover, we operate on a different calendar than theirs. And even many of them (in antiquity) operated with different systems than did those of other cultures.

Since there were various systems employed, was so little overlapping, and such large gaps between recorded events (from antiquity until today), the margin for error and disagreement is as wide as the Marianas Trench. But once you have become confident in your own view, especially if your % of certainty reaches near 100%, then you will not be bothered nearly as much by the large number of folks who have yet to get it right. Of this I am sure, and in this you can take comfort. It's not a matter of being stubborn about 1 position or of "being right"; it's just the natural outcome of zeroing-in-on truth. There is nothing more securing than finding and resting on truth.

Doug Petrovich

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**Douglas Petrovich - 9/20/2010 10:04:32 PM**

9/20/2010 10:15 PM #

Rodger Young's article, "When Did Solomon Die?", can be found on the JETS website at this link:

[www.etsjets.org/.../46-4-pp589-603\\_JETS.pdf](http://www.etsjets.org/.../46-4-pp589-603_JETS.pdf)

Blessings,

ABR

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**ABR - 9/20/2010 10:15:23 PM**

9/21/2010 12:36 AM #

To Doug Petrovich:

Thanks for all your work and in answering the people leaving comments here. I've been following the thread with interest. You noted back on March 3 that you were intending to answer the points that I raised on Feb. 22--which I was very much looking forward to--but it appears that you never got around to doing so. Do you still intend to address those? Thanks.

Tom Robinson

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**T Robinson - 9/21/2010 12:36:28 AM**

12/13/2010 6:52 PM #

Tom,

Thanks for your interest in following the thread and posting a number of questions and concerns with issues that you wanted to raise regarding the article. First off, I apologize for not getting to your post much sooner, which I wanted to do in the summer, but unintentionally never ended up doing. Once the semester started, life became a bit too rushed for me to reply, as I knew that my replies to you would not be very short ones, at all. So now that my break has arrived, and I can do some of the things I have been wanting to do, I am ready to address your concerns. I will not treat them at once, but in piecemeal, though not in the order that you listed them.

"2) According to the regnal dates here, Hatshepsut was still in power (living to 1484) when Moses fled Egypt (in 1486, i.e. 1446+40). It seems that other adjustments could be made to allow Hatshepsut's death in or prior to 1486--so that Moses would have been fleeing from a sole-ruling Thutmose III. Perhaps the following regnal dates would work: Amenhotep I (1550-1529); Thutmose I (1529-1518); Thutmose II (1518-1507); Hatshepsut (1507-1487); Thutmose III (1507-1453); Amenhotep II (1453-1427); Thutmose IV (1427-1418); Amenhotep III (1406-1399). This would place Amenhotep II's ninth year in 1445 instead of 1446--giving at least a little more time for reconstituting Egypt's military."

My first comment is that I fail to understand why you want to give Hatshepsut an early death, why you want Thutmose III to be a sole-ruler at the time of Moses' murder and flight out of Egypt, and why you want to push the Year-9 campaign forward a year. Does this all just seem to make it tidier? More logical? Such historical revisionism is a dangerous practice, and I am not



sure you would want to start down this path. Our job as historians is to understand what happened, when it happened, and why it happened. Establishing the correct synchronism comes first. Reconciling one ethnic peoples' account with that of another becomes a secondary issue, our own puzzle to solve. We cannot simply modify the record and insert what seems more logical.

There is nothing in the biblical text that requires a sole ruler in Egypt at the time when Moses fled. Moreover, this would not be the first time for it in a biblical narrative. Almost assuredly, when Joseph interpreted the dream of the 12th-Dynasty pharaoh in 1887 BC, there were two pharaohs sitting on the throne: Amenemhet II and his son, Sesostris II. The Bible has no problem with this. Next, when Joseph was made the second ruler over Egypt (Gen 41:46) in 1885 BC, this was one year before Amenemhet II died. At this time (1885 BC), when co-regencies were the absolute norm in Egypt, Sesostris II would have been the active ruler at the capital (Itj-Tawy), while Amenemhet II was in semi-retirement at Dahshur, where his pyramid and mortuary complex were located. This was the regular practice in both the 12th and the 18th Dynasties. I can site many examples of this, but hopefully you would not require a slew of examples to accept it. So, we have no reason at all to require a sole-regent during the moment of Moses' departure.

Then comes the matter of Hatshepsut. Why do you want her dead at Moses' departure? What drives this deduction? I see no reason whatsoever for this. Moreover, Egyptologists are quick and careful to point out that her departure from office is not linked to any information we have about her death. In other words, the evidence strongly seems to imply that her exit from office was not due to her death, but due to some reason(s) unknown to the carefully kept records of ancient Egypt. This non-documentation of her departure from office being connected to her death is not the norm for the 18th Dynasty, to be sure. But such a pre-death abdication would make a great deal of sense if it were tied to the murder committed by her adoptive son, Moses. Perhaps she was forced out of office as a repercussion of Moses' heinous crime. Perhaps she herself was so emotionally scarred after this event that she removed herself from office, either out of shame or emotional trauma. In any case, such a chain of events as this actually accords better with the biblical record than an unwarranted proposal that she must have been dead when Moses fled.

In relation to your regnal lengths for the pharaohs of the 18th Dynasty, I would suggest that you have 2 years too short for the reign of Thutmose I, 1 year too many for Thutmose II, and a fundamental misunderstanding of the start-dates for the reigns of Thutmose III and Hatshepsut. To solve this third problem, I would suggest that you consult the following article: William Perry, "Redating the Reign of Hatshepsut," KMT 13:4 (Win 2002/03), 51, 53. If you would like to dispute the regnal lengths of Thutmose I or Thutmose II, I would ask you to present your argument first.

My final question from this post of yours is why you want to push the 9th-Year campaign of A2 (Amenhotep II) forward by a year. Again, this is unnecessary revisionism. Moreover, it is actually overthinking. If you try pushing that campaign into 1445 BC, you actually create a far bigger problem (or two!) than you solve. Let's assume that the November-campaign was not launched in the year of the exodus, as you suggest. Yet we both admit that there is an urgency involved, though in your case you want to say that a Nov-campaign in the year of the exodus is too soon for the Egyptians to marshal a makeshift army to invade southern Palestine.

Well, let's say that the Egyptians make it (or "fake it", however you want to put it) through the

winter, when campaigns are never launched. Here then is the \$65,000 question for you: why then did the Egyptians not launch their campaign in the spring, when kings did launch campaigns, instead of waiting until November of that same year (according to our calendar, of course), when kings did not launch campaigns? Does the weightiness of this dilemma register with you? This is a huge problem. The urgency dissipates completely if you wait 1½ years to launch the campaign, and the logic of it dissipates as well, moving from a spring-departure to a near-winter-departure. I do not think there is any way that your proposal could be unshackled from this.

But there is another problem, one that is documented in an ancient historical text of the day. The Memphis Stele of Amenhotep II, which I translated during this calendar year, carefully provides a/the goal of the 2nd military campaign of A2: "Now the ruler of Naharin (Mitanni), the ruler of Hatti (Hittites), and the ruler of Shinar (Babylonia) heard of the great victories that he (A2) had accomplished. Each one was giving praise to his counterpart in relation to every diplomatic gift from every foreign land. They were speaking in their hearts to their forefathers in order to beg for peace from his majesty and to beseech the one (i.e. the king) to give to them the breath of life."

Amenhotep had an explicit goal in his rushed campaign: he wanted the rulers of the other superpowers (or "rising superpowers", as the case may be with at least one of them) of the ancient world to know that they should be in fear and awe of him, and Egypt. Now really, how much sense would it make for A2 to launch a campaign 1½ years after the embarrassment of the exodus/Reed Sea-fiasco, if he wanted to save face with these superpowers? If he waits that long, what he does—in all truth!—is to give one or more of them reason to invade and subjugate some or all of his Syro-Palestinian holdings once that next spring (after the exodus) rolls around. This point is a slam dunk. Again, you are faced with a web that is far too tightly spun for your proposal to escape. More replies to come.

Doug Petrovich

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**Doug Petrovich - 12/13/2010 6:52:15 PM**

12/13/2010 6:53 PM #

Tom,

"3) It is still troublesome that Egypt would be able to launch any kind of military campaign soon after the massive devastation of the country in the ten plagues and Red Sea. The nation's food supply was eradicated, both crops and livestock--as was much of it's wealth. I suppose that does make a good argument for the fact that the Egyptians in desperation had to go and take it from elsewhere or else perish. But how they were able to take it from elsewhere still seems problematic. The Red Sea account says that ALL the chariots of Egypt pursued the Israelites. No doubt there were some remaining forces down in Thebes though. Perhaps the biblical Mizraim was limited to the northern land? This would be a helpful discussion."

If you contrast carefully the differences between A2's Year-9 campaign with all of the other campaigns of his and his father's, you will see that this final campaign hardly even deserves to be called a military campaign. It was nothing more than a glorified slave-raid. One of the staunch differences that distinguish this campaign is that it was conducted only in southern

Palestine and the Negev, far from the powerful and well-fortified cities further to the north. Thus there were virtually no tactics needed, nor any siege machines, nor massive amounts of weaponry, nor even trained soldiers.

In light of all of this, the Egyptian "army" involved in this raid may have consisted almost entirely of new recruits, comprised of non-firstborns throughout Egypt who can be considered as mere survivors of the holocaust. I do not think I would be comfortable with saying that there were reserve troops in Thebes that did not go to the Sea of Reeds. The implication of the text seems to be that the entire army of Egypt went with pharaoh. The only possible exception I could see would be distant Egyptian garrisons in Syro-Palestine (or Nubia?), which would have been far too removed from earshot when pharaoh called for his army to assemble in the Delta.

I certainly could not agree that the entire food supply (crops and livestock) was eradicated. The text never spells this out. After the 5th plague (pestilence), which struck the livestock, there were still livestock alive for the effects of the 7th plague (hail), which was intended to target and destroy all living creatures exposed in the fields, those that were not under protective shelter. The text never states that no livestock survived (i.e. that there were no sheltered Egyptian animals), and we have no reason to think that the result after the 7th plague was any different than the result after the 5th plague. It is fully reasonable to suggest that some animals survived, and some grain survived. Thus they had the necessary sustenance to hold-out until the November campaign, if not longer. If God wanted to starve-out the Egyptians completely, He would have done so. Plus, the purpose of the Year-9 campaign was to replenish the lost slave base, not to acquire food.

"Perhaps the biblical Mizraim was limited to the northern land?" I don't really think you want to assert this kind of revisionism. Mizraim, in Hebrew, is in the dual. The reason for it is that Egypt considered itself "The Two Lands" (Egyptian: Tawy, also in dual!), implying the unification of Upper Egypt and Lower Egypt. Every pharaoh wanted to be Neb Tawy, the Lord of the Two Lands, which signified his sovereignty over a united Egypt. Most importantly for our purposes, ALL of the 18th Dynasty's pharaohs carried this title. So the notion that biblical Mizraim was limited to Lower Egypt alone completely contradicts the historical situation in Egypt during the mid-15th century BC.

"6) Petrovich's criticism of Shea's conclusion regarding two Amenhotep II's is certainly valid, as this seems highly unlikely. However, some specifics of his criticism are not justified. First, Petrovich contends that the royal family would be opposed to the imposter, but Shea argues that the imposter would be a brother who was part of the royal family and a legitimate claimant to the throne anyway."

What you seem to fail to appreciate here is that even if Amenhotep IIB—would one actually have existed—were a brother with a legitimate claim to the throne (or at least a claim to royalty), he would have to convince the entire royal family to accept the terms of his grand scheme, then hope that none of them would blow the whistle on him or leak the information somehow. The other problem, of course, is that you have an entire class of people, known to us as scribes, who would need to buy-into the whole plan, as well. These scribes, who aimed at precision and the proper keeping of the maat (Egyptian for the rightness of everything, which leads to peace and tranquility), would be much more difficult to persuade to deceive the nation and blot its history, since they would be risking the upsetting of the maat just to fool the world into thinking that Amenhotep II was still alive. So, my actual contention is that the royal family would oppose the imposter under any circumstances (for any of a number of reasons), even if

that imposter himself were one of its members, not to mention that the Egyptian scribal order would do likewise, due to their devotion to the keeping of the maat.

"Second, Petrovich says that no pharaoh would assume the identity of a defeated and discredited predecessor. This ignores the fact that by assuming the identity, there would be no such defeated and discredited predecessor--it would be as if no humiliation had occurred, and as if this new pharaoh was not a successor but the same person whose death was covered up."

Hmmm. Now, this logic is approaching borderline bizarre. I went to great lengths to prove that Egyptian monarchs, especially imperialists, were careful not to record their defeats. Perhaps you have taken this point a bit too far. Just because there was no recording of the plagues or the massive defeat at the Sea of Reeds, we cannot assume that 1) there was no defeat; 2) the entire Egyptian nation was oblivious to the proceedings; and/or 3) word of the defeat did not reverberate around the entire ANE world as a boisterous gong.

I already cited the importance A2 gave to using his Year-9 campaign as ideological propaganda designed to strike fear into the kings of his rival superpowers. Thus even pharaoh was smart enough to know that these major events were international news. What I did not mention was that God Himself brought about all of these monumental acts as part of a greater plan, which was to reveal His glory to the nations through the humiliation of Egypt, the world's #1 superpower at the time (from the days of Thutmose III's expansionary exploits). This goal can be seen in the similar story of the drying-up of the waters of the Sea of Reeds expressly so that all the peoples of the earth would know of God's might (Josh 4:23, 24; cf. Josh 2:9, 10, where Rahab speaks of how this goal was still realized 40 years after the event had transpired). Thus, there WAS a discredited "predecessor", a fact that none of the ancients did or could try to sweep under the rug. To operate from the position that assumes the opposite is to enter a world of non-reality.

"Third, a new ruler could have a very good reason for such a cover up, as the legitimacy of pharaonic rule in general was at stake. If the people knew that their divine pharaoh was destroyed by a foreign god, why should they follow a successor in his place?"

Pharaonic rule was never at stake. The issue was settled in about 3050 BC, according to conventional chronology, and was never challenged. Moreover, as a result of the unquestioned legitimacy of the institution of royal rule, the Egyptian people would have followed pharaoh up to the top of Mt. Fuji, if that is what he told them was decreed for them to do. Nobody would have questioned him. Nobody would have doubted him, even if their lives would be at risk. Their devotion was unequivocal. If you can cite one reputable Egyptologist who would agree with you on your point here, I would be so bold as to say that I myself would climb to the top of Mt. Fuji.

"Still, this extraordinary circumstance seems far-fetched--and it is not required to fit what is stated in Scripture, as Petrovich shows.

At least you came out OK in the wash. 😊

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**Doug Petrovich - 12/13/2010 6:53:37 PM**

12/17/2010 5:42 PM #

Tom,

Here's the last installment of my responses to the questions that you raised. Thanks again for the interaction, which is truly an "iron sharpening iron" type of experience.

"5) It is worth noting that Josephus, in mistakenly trying to identify the Israelites with the Hyksos, rejects historians placing the Exodus during the reigns of 'Thummosis,' 'Tethmosis' or 'Amenophis,' whom he wrongly labels fictitious (Against Apion, Book 1, Sections 14, 15 and 24-35). This lends support to an 18th-dynasty Exodus--but does not narrow it down enough."

I won't go into this one, except to say that Josephus is to be commended for knowing that no Thutmose or Amenhotep should be attributed to either of the Hyksos dynasties (#'s 15 & 16).

"4) In the same vein, one wonders how just three or four decades after the Exodus, Egypt was able to enter one of the peaks of its civilization under the reign of Amenhotep III the Magnificent. As noted at Wikipedia, 'His lengthy reign was a period of unprecedented prosperity and artistic splendor, when Egypt reached the peak of her artistic and international power.' This helps the argument of those who make HIM the pharaoh of the Exodus (as it was downhill after his reign and seeing Akhenaten's reign in response to it) and those who claim that the Exodus did not happen in the 18th dynasty at all (arguing for a new Egyptian chronology)."

If Amenhotep III's alleged international prowess and Egypt's prosperity under his reign is anyone's reasoning for selecting him as the exodus-pharaoh, then I would characterize such scholarship as the equivalent of playing "Pin the Tail on the Donkey" with a blindfold, wildly and aimlessly wandering around, vainly hoping to find the target without sight, and pinning that sucker on the first thing he bumps into. There is no better way to characterize it.

As for Wikipedia, the rule of thumb is always the following principle: You get what you pay for. I do not want to say that you cannot find valid information on Wikipedia, because you can (at times, at least), but this online source should be consulted "as a teaser", but not as serious scholarship. Your citation of their entry for Amenhotep III (now A3) is a perfect case in point.

So, Wikipedia actually wants us to believe that A3 experienced unprecedented prosperity and under him Egypt reached its height of international power? As a PhD student whose first minor is Egyptology, I can confidently tell you that any Egyptologist who reads this statement will have one of the deepest belly-laughs that he/she has experienced in a long, long time. The only question is whether this picture of A3's reign is more farcical or more humorous, and I'm not really sure that I can choose between them.

If we are going to talk about true scholarship here, it is worth noting that probably the best single source on A3 is a book entitled, "Amenhotep III: Perspectives on His Reign," ed. by David O'Connor and Eric Cline (Ann Arbor: U. of Michigan Press, 2001). Let me just make two short footnotes related to this publication, before proceeding with the topic at hand.

First, I have my own copy of this book, which compiles articles by various scholars, making it a comprehensive study of this pharaoh's reign. But as a diehard Ohio State Buckeye fan, this is perhaps the only time you will see me plugging a book published by UM Press. Otherwise, I wash my hands of anything that wreaks of Maize and Blue. Go Bucks!

Second, I'd like to add a word on Eric Cline, who is a reputed archaeologist, and long has been involved with Finkelstein in the dig at Megiddo. Cline is a rather boisterous archaeologist, and it's fair to say that he has a chip on his shoulder regarding his repudiation of the notion of biblical historicity. When he blasted away at our view of Jericho's supporting the destruction under Joshua, I privately challenged him to a debate on Jericho. I told him that he can pick the university campus, and I would be there to give him the chance to humiliate someone who would present and defend the conservative view. He replied by suggesting that we instead have the debate in Israel, where—of course—there would be almost NO interest, NO audience, and NO media attention. When I pointed this out to him, and again pushed for a university in the US, he flat-out refused the debate. Well, what does this say about his confidence in his view?

Now back to A3. On p. 19 of Perspectives, Lawrence Berman notes that, yes, according to official ideology, "The pharaoh [A3] was master of the world. . . . so even Amenhotep III claimed sovereignty over Troy and Mycenae [pre-Philistine Sea Peoples], Assyria and Babylon." Rows of bound captives portray hundreds of exotic conquered foreign peoples, complete with name-rings. What is Berman's commentary on this propaganda? "The picture thus presented of worldwide Egyptian domination is greatly exaggerated. The Aegean world and the lands of the Tigris and the Euphrates were, and always remained, well outside Egypt's sphere of influence."

In short, A3 was a master-deceiver, and while he intended primarily to mislead his own contemporaries, we would be quite the fools if 3400 years later we also were duped into this scheme of deception. If you want to have a true and accurate picture of Egypt's international involvement and imperialism, focus on the reign of Thutmose III, whose 17 Asiatic campaigns pushed further up the Levant, and eventually led to an excursion in which they sacked and burned towns along the distant Euphrates River. This is well documented, AND supported by archaeological discovery of artifacts (scarabs, etc.) and victory stelae.

Yes, A3's reign displays a large amount of wealth, but there is no evidence whatsoever that would lead one to conclude that he was richer than Thutmose III or any of the intervening pharaohs. He just flaunted his wealth. But the fact is that A3's wealth is absolutely connected to the exploits of his predecessors; he never led military campaigns that filled Egypt's coffers to the hilt. This ended with A2's First Asiatic Campaign! And yes, some of Egypt's wealth was lost to the plundering Israelites during the exodus-era of A2's reign, but there was far too much there in Egypt for the Israelites even to approach a complete ransacking. This would be impossible! There was way, way too much. The Israelites did not turn the Egyptians into paupers; they just took enough to have wealth for themselves. Let's be sure that we do not confuse ourselves with overblown suppositions.

"1) Footnote 26 places the exodus, which occurred on the 15th day of the first month, on a Friday night and Saturday. However, Exodus 16 seems to connect Israel's arrival at Elim on the 15th day of the second month with the people crying out for food and God answering with the giving of quail in the evening and the commencement of the weekly manna cycle the next morning. This would make the 16th day of the second month a Saturday night and Sunday. Counting backwards and giving 30 days for the first month according to the fixed Hebrew calendar, the 15th day of the first month (the date of the Exodus) would fall on a Wednesday night and Thursday. (Allowing a 29-day first month according to possible observation-method of month determination would mean a Thursday night and Friday Exodus--in neither case a Friday night and Saturday Exodus.)"

I'm glad that you read through this long and detailed footnote, and the fact that you've thought through it is more than most readers can say, so I salute you. Most lunar calendars of antiquity—including the Hebrew, Chinese, and Hindu versions—are actually lunisolar, meaning that they have a variable number of months in the year, which would have to be "made up for" in time. The reason for this is that a year is not evenly divisible by an exact number of lunations, so intercalary months are added to keep seasons from drifting. The Hebrew and Egyptian calendars were based on the first sighting of the lunar crescent before sunset, not based on a rigidly-held-to cycle of 30-day intervals.

Using the same webpage cited in my article, the following (i.e. 2nd Israelite) month's new moon was observed on (what would be, if it weren't for the two variables I detailed) May 8, at 6:49 UT (Greenwich time). Calculating this to applicable Egyptian time (UT + 2.1 hrs.), the sighting would have occurred at 8:55 am, local time. This means that with this 2nd month—unlike the previous month, whose sighting transpired after dusk—we would not have to "push forward" the official sighting-day by one day when adapting their system to our own calendar's system.

Then, we have to factor-in the modifications due to the 1 day of supra-NASA variation that I explained in the footnote. Therefore, for the 2nd Hebrew month of the exodus-year, May 9 would be the proper day for the official observance of the new moon (i.e. new month). Since April has 30 days, then the movement from April 10 (day 1 of month 1) to May 9 (day 1 of month 2) would make the daytime hours (our calendar) of May 9 the 30th day after the beginning of the previous month. The new moon (month) would have been declared at dusk (the start of the new day in their system) of May 9. Here is the 30-day interval that you were so desperately seeking.

The following scheme thus develops, with the 1st "Day 1" representing Month 1, and the 2nd "Day 1" representing Month 2:

Day 1 = 10/11 Apr = Fri/Sat

Day 15 = 24/25 Apr = Fri/Sat

Day 1 = 9/10 Apr = Sat/Sun

Day 15 = 23/24 Apr = Sat/Sun

Day 16 = 24/25 Apr = Sun/Mon

The Israelites arrived at Sin (Ex 16:1) on Day 15 of Month 2, as you noted. This means that they arrived either on Saturday (after dusk) or on Sunday (before dusk). The text does not make clear either option, so we cannot rule-out one or the other at this point. After their arrival, the people complained about a lack of food, as you note. Moses then explains to the people that the regular regimen that God will establish is to give them meat (quail) by evening and bread (manna) by morning (Ex 16:6-8, 12).

It seems FASCINATING and INSTRUCTIVE that what first came to the Israelites was meat, in the evening. Therefore, THAT VERY EVENING on which they arrived, God immediately (i.e. within hours) provided them with quail meat (Ex 16:13a). There was virtually no waiting. In the morning, God provided the manna, which they gathered and ate (Ex 16:13b-17). This scenario can take place if the Israelites arrived after dusk on Saturday (Day 15), a completely legitimate possibility according to the calendar I've proposed.

The manna collecting thus would have commenced on Sunday morning, the beginning of the

weekly manna-cycle to which you referred. And finally, on the 6th day of gathering (Fri AM), they would gather double the amount of manna (Ex 16:5), so that they would not have to gather it on Saturday morning (on the Sabbath). Therefore, as a result of all of this, your objection is answered adequately, and the scheme fits precisely with the events in Ex 16.

In fact, what we learned historically actually answers for us the question left open by the biblical text: Did the Israelites arrive at the Wilderness of Sin on Saturday or Sunday (both being possible, since both are part of the Israelites' Day 15). But I have to thank you, Tom, because you have helped to solidify even further the veracity of the scenario that a synchronization of Israelite and Egyptian history has led me to conclude and articulate. To God be the glory for His matchless precision!!

Doug Petrovich

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**Douglas Petrovich - 12/17/2010 5:42:08 PM**

4/26/2011 11:01 PM #

I just wanted to comment that I quoted part of your article on a post i did on the Exodus where I argue that the Exodus did not happen according the the bible. I use historical/materialist evidence to show it most likely was composed in the 7th century BCE as an ideological story written to elevate the status of the Jewish kings, and to serve their political, economic, and social interests.

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**Cathy Cooper - 4/26/2011 11:01:26 PM**

5/13/2011 3:30 PM #

Cathy,

Thanks for letting me know that you've interacted with my article, and for posting a link to it on the webpage where you did so (which I found through a Google search). Certainly the view you advocate as a self-proclaimed atheist is one that is popular among scholars who are committed to a position that does not see the Bible as being historically accurate (whether in part or in whole). The one variable is the century chosen for this alleged falsified composition.

What I always have found amazing is how much faith is required to hold such a view that suggests a mass-conspiracy that transpired for almost 1000 years, which had at its roots the conscious, evil decision to falsify the entire historical record for a single ethnic people. Yes, this is truly a "faith-position" of the highest degree, since it requires that 100% of the "evidence" to uphold the view is found in modern conjuring of ancient, recorded events. In other words, there is no evidence whatsoever from antiquity that would verify or support such a radical view, at least among the Israelites themselves, if not across the ANE as a whole: no record of its falsification, nobody speaking to its non-truthfulness, no known dissenters, and nothing whatsoever in the epigraphical or archaeological record.

The other mind-boggling assumption that one has to make to hold your view is that this alleged falsification of historical events, clearly written in the form of factual history (rather than mythical



or legendary), is that the entire nation of ancient Israelite people--and a whole scribal class from the 7th century BC (in the case of your version) through at least the 10th century AD (when the Leningrad Codex was copied)--uniformly supported the perpetuation of this history of lies. More than this, they showed an unparalleled rigor and commitment to its preservation in the form of textual transmission not found with any other nation or by any other people of antiquity. How could so many people over so many centuries commit so much time, energy, financial backing, and commitment to the careful and meticulous preservation of abject lies?

How one is able to hold to such a position as this, quite frankly, is beyond me. All of the evidence, as well as reason alone, grates against the integrity of a view like yours. In summary, a view that reinterprets clearly stated facts in the Bible and assigns a national conspiracy over the period of a millennium to support the propagandistic lying about their national history requires far more faith than I am willing to muster. To use a phrase dear to many of your fellow atheists, this requires "blind faith". Moreover, this practice certainly grates against good scientific principle (which necessitates empirical or circumstantial evidence to back the view), which normally is what atheists are supposed to champion as their rallying cry. But if you have enough faith to hold to your view with honest conviction, more power to you. As for me, I would rather stick with the position supported by well reasoned faith. Both views do require faith, but the basis for this faith in these diametrically opposed views is at opposite ends of the spectrum of reason.

Sincerely,

Douglas Petrovich

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**Doug Petrovich - 5/13/2011 3:30:20 PM**

5/18/2011 10:31 AM #

Dear Dr. Petrovich, Sorry for taking so long to contact you again, but the last year has found me involved in New Testament studies. Cathy Cooper's note to you got me back to your article.

I concede nothing to Dr. Brock but the FAR possibility of some calendrical lash after 3000 years. At no time do I assert or concede a Thutmose II Exodus Event; nor do I expect you to do so. T II was a blip on the historical screen 50 years before the Exodus. I've taught, recorded and distributed a Amenhotep Exodus Event since 1987; after over 20 years I still concede little on that view. (BTW,I've finally mailed you a hard copy of my chart from 1987)

I mostly distributed the charts to New York area churches back when they started to use the "Brothers in Egypt" book in their church schools ca. 1999. (Nice way to teach the Kiddos a low-view of the Scriptures)

What I find interesting is that a Amenhotep II Exodus Event (and his survival) has been treated as a 'discovery' in the last couple of years. I worked from Joseph ruling under the Senuseret boys (II & III) forward to A II being the Pharaoh of the Exodus, and didn't think I 'discovered' anything. I only documented it in a chart for a Genesis class I taught back in the Late 80's. My focus was on Joseph in Egypt.

I'm glad to hear you share my view that AkenAton was profoundly affected by the Hebrews

coming out into Canaan. This is also on my 1987 chart.

Here are a few other 'discoveries' found on my chart and in my classes that others might make in the coming years: (don't laugh, it happened once before)

1. Senuseret II worked on the Faiyum and Bahr Yusuf systems in response to Joseph's directives.
2. Senuseret III was younger than Joseph, so Joseph was as a father to him. (Joseph's comment to his Brothers was virtually true; not an Egyptianism)
3. Jacob's Sons went into Egypt with 4 Wives. (This is how I read the MT, not LXX)
4. You already know (and per my Chart) Hatshepsut was Moses' step-mother.
5. An Alphabet was invented by Joseph and the Hebrews while in Egypt.
6. Moses retrieves documentation from the Memphis Library, put there by Joseph, BEFORE he leaves for Midian. (Moses knew of a 7 Day Creation before he got to Sinai)
7. From the Exodus Event of 1446 through out the 18th Dynasty the Egyptians no longer referred to the Egyptian Army with any personal pride.

To Cathy Cooper: If your argument is that the Exodus Account is an etiological construct made to raise the image of Jewish Kings, then it is the worst etiological piece of work in human history. Everyone in the early part of the Work fails God, and He wants to destroy them!!

Blessings of Jesus upon you Dr.

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**Joseph F. Gambino - 5/18/2011 10:31:21 AM**

5/18/2011 2:48 PM #

Dear Mr. Gambino,

Thanks so much for your response. The time it took you to respond is not a problem, and besides, I myself have taken longer to reply to some of the other respondents to the article. I agree completely with the vast majority of what you have to say, and I appreciate your input and your long-time commitment to the same synchronization. I will reply only to a selected number of points that you made.

"What I find interesting is that an Amenhotep II Exodus Event (and his survival) has been treated as a 'discovery' in the last couple of years."

I'm not sure who's calling it a discovery, as there are many who have held this view going back far into the 20th century. What my article attempts to do, however, is interact extensively with the Egyptian sources and writings of Egyptologists, which is something that has not been done almost at all by early-exodus proponents such as you and I.

"I worked from Joseph ruling under the Senuseret boys (II & III) forward to A II being the Pharaoh of the Exodus, . . . My focus was on Joseph in Egypt."

What's interesting here is that over the last few years I have done an enormous amount of research into the time period of Joseph. In fact, at the NEAS national meetings in 2009 and

2010, I presented historical and archaeological evidence for Joseph's impact on Egypt in a 1-hour slide show each year. I have part of this in written-form for an article I am writing, which I hope to submit for publication over the summer.

You are absolutely correct that Sesostris II is the abundance-pharaoh, and that Sesostris III is the famine-pharaoh. Even though you may have held to this view for a long time, I think you will be amazed to see what kind of evidence is out there that confirms this synchronization.

"Senuseret II worked on the Faiyum and Bahr Yusuf systems in response to Joseph's directives."

I agree completely with this, with the exception that I would say Joseph did the work in response to Sesostris II's directive to accomplish whatever was necessary to prepare Egypt for the events revealed in his dream, since he said to Joseph, "according to your command all my people shall do homage" (Gen 41:40). Pharaoh probably "let him take the ball and run with it", as we would say. Incidentally, a large portion of my article will focus on both the Fayyum and the Bar Yusef.

"You already know (and per my Chart) Hatshepsut was Moses' step-mother."

True, but the important qualification here is that this is "as far as we know" about the daughters of Thutmose II. We cannot be 100% conclusive here, as much as I would like to say that we can be. But certainly we are in the upper extremities of the 90's as far as our percentile of certainty.

"An Alphabet was invented by Joseph and the Hebrews while in Egypt."

I'm not really sure whether we can say this or not. I never actually have looked for or come across evidence in Genesis or elsewhere that might lead us to believe that the Israelites had a script before Moses' day. If you have any such evidence, please inform me, whether it be conclusive or not. The other possibility is that Moses—raised in the Egyptian court, and undoubtedly skilled in numerous languages, including Phoenician—constructed the alphabet based on his knowledge of Phoenician, given that the Hebrew alphabet seems to be a derivative of this language, which scholars almost universally accept as being true.

"Moses retrieves documentation from the Memphis Library, put there by Joseph, BEFORE he leaves for Midian."

Although this is conceivable, I am not sure how we would go about proving it. I'm also not sure how plausible it would be to assume that late 12th-Dynasty material such as this, written by a foreigner, would have survived the turbulent transitions that occurred between the end of the 19th century (BC) and 1500 (BC), or whenever you would suggest that Moses accessed it for the first time. Time and internal turmoil have a way of losing important documents (cf. the OT Scripture lost until Josiah's day, per 2 Kgs 22).

"From the Exodus Event of 1446 throughout the 18th Dynasty the Egyptians no longer referred to the Egyptian Army with any personal pride."

True, and more importantly, they inexplicably go from the world's foremost elite, imperialistic force to an afterthought soon after the reign of Thutmose III. Egypt went from the premier

superpower to a super-ghost without any indication as to how or why. I have yet to read one Egyptologist's reasoned theory to account for this. Occasionally there is a sentence or two about it, but no reasoned theory or construct of events.

"Blessings of Jesus upon you Dr."

Thank you kindly, and blessings upon you. But you give me too much credit. I only just completed the coursework for my PhD (at the University of Toronto, from where Dr. Wood graduated). But here is something that may be of interest to you.

I just completed a course in Nubian archaeology. The topic for my research paper was the Nubian forts (immediately to the south of Egypt), a couple of which were built by Sesostris I, but most of which were built by Sesostris III (referred to mainly as the "2nd-Cataract Forts"). These forts were amazing. Not only that, they ALL contained mega-granaries that had the capacity to store enough grain to feed the occupants and the local residents for several years in advance, if filled to capacity.

One of the forts, the one at Askut, had such a super-mega-granary that the area for the silos accounted for virtually half of the space utilized within the fort (vs. space for quarters, armory, etc.). One scholar referred to Askut as a fortified grainstore. This is virtually the same thing we see at the late-12th-Dynasty sites in Egypt: large granaries that could hold a surplus of grain able to feed the residents for up to 10 years or more. I made a PowerPoint presentation for the evidence from the Nubian forts, as well, and maybe sometime I will have an occasion for presenting it somewhere.

Yours for the King,

Doug Petrovich

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**Douglas Petrovich - 5/18/2011 2:48:34 PM**

5/23/2011 2:33 PM #

Dr. Petrovich,

I got back to you a lot sooner this time, but can now only give some of my reasons for my point #5: An Alphabet was invented by Joseph and the Hebrews while in Egypt. I would make 5 observations.

1. Horizontal writing becomes the rule in the 12th Dynasty, which would show pressure from an outside group that needed to write horizontally. Further, writing from Right to Left seems to predominate after this period.
2. The miners in the Sinai use an Alphabet just around 80 years after Joseph takes charge. This same Alphabet may also be found in Upper Egypt (as you know from your Nubian studies, a place where a lot of economic activity took place). These new letters are showing up too soon and too far away from Phoenician influence.
3. This early Alphabet is made by those who work with the Egyptian system of acrophones.

4. The first words employing this Linear Alphabet are Semitic.

5. Phoenician IS "Paleo"-Hebrew. From the Greek view point the letters are Phoenician, but from the Geo-Political view they are 'spoken' Hebrew in dynamic contact with the Egyptian system of writing.

While this does NOT prove my assertion, there is no proof that the Phoenicians invented the Linear Alphabet. What we DO KNOW is that the Hebrews had motive and opportunity. There is only one group from this period of time that was in intimate economic contact with Egypt and needed a quick and precise way of recording the sale of food to the "whole world"; especially Nubia! While the Phoenicians had the opportunity, they had no motive for adopting/modifying the Egyptian system. A new political construct and crisis is the most likely force behind daring to introduce a new system into a world where writing was sacred. The Phoenicians don't utilize this Alphabet until around 300 years later.

Thank you for the news on Nubia and Askut. This caught my eye some years back, but there was no decisive information on the structures. I'll be looking to find more info. on this subject from your website.

I'll argue point 6 when I get the chance...if I can remember why I argued it in the first place!

The Blessings of Jesus upon you, Joe.

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**Joseph F. Gambino - 5/23/2011 2:33:25 PM**

4/3/2012 9:28 AM #

In the article, if I remember correctly, you said that the Apiru later captured by Amenhotep II could have been cut off without much notice in the Bible. I don't know enough about the ancient empires, locations, etc. With that in mind, I ran across this quote from Duet. 25:17-19 about how Amalek cut off the tail of Israel, the laggards. Moses called Israel to take down Amalek when they were settled. Could these "cut off" people be those later taken by Amenhotep II, either from Amalek directly or indirectly? If not, the passage is surely evidence that not all who left Egypt remained with the main body for one reason or another.

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**David Adams - 4/3/2012 9:28:33 AM**

6/24/2012 8:07 PM #

Doug,

Thank you for your work on this. I have been teaching World History till 1500 and Western Civilization: Classical Period on and off for six years at Citrus Community College and at the California State Polytechnic University in Pomona's English Language Institute. I have always felt Akhenaton was more likely influenced by the Hebrews rather than vice versa and that Ramses II as the pharaoh of the exodus was too close to Merneptah's Israel Stele to make sense. Plus, Ramses II is way too far from Senuseret II to be about 450 years from Joseph.

Now I have the material to present an historical argument for Amenhotep II as the exodus pharaoh and I have with joy altered my lecture notes and power points.

Bill

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**Bill Zeman - 6/24/2012 8:07:03 PM**

7/8/2012 8:17 PM #

Dear David,

Yes, you are correct that this passage in Deut. 25 bears out that not all of the Israelites remained with the main body at all times. Evidently, this also implies 1) that the stragglers were far enough away from the main body to be exposed and easy targets, and 2) that the main body either chose to let them fall prey to the Amalekites or were not able to save/rescue them. It is far more likely that they were unable to save them, implying a considerable distance between the main body and the stragglers at the time of their capture.

As for whether this incident might be synonymous with the Egyptians' capture of the 3,600 Israelites on Amenhotep II's (2nd) campaign, I would call the chances "slim to none", and probably far closer to none. The Amalekites lived to the southeast of the Dead Sea, and it is highly unlikely that they would have encountered their Israelite stragglers until the Israelites were near Kadesh Barnea or to the east of it.

Yet with the Egyptian military campaign, they undoubtedly maintained a non-deviating course on/along the Way of Horus (i.e. "the Way of the Philistines", which--by the way--absolutely is an anachronism, which my future publications will make clear) during their trip to/into Palestine. Thus the Egyptians would have remained far to the northwest of the Amalekites as they progressed toward western Palestine.

Most likely the splinter group of Israelites captured by Amenhotep II was much further removed--spatially and temporally--from the main body. Perhaps they even found a convenient place for settlement, regardless how long they intended to be there. Maybe they even had migrated into Palestine already. Wherever they were, they could not have been too far from the aforementioned international highway (a.k.a. The Great Trunk Road). If you trace the route of Amenhotep II, it will make clear where these Israelites could and could not have been during their capture.

I would even suggest strongly that the 3,600 Israelites captured by the Egyptians were intentionally and permanently separated from the main body, whether due to rebellion or some other cause. This seems to fit with the fact that there are no instructions given to the Israelites to go and kill any of the Egyptians. The stragglers of Deut. 25 were innocents, and had no intention of separating themselves from the rest of the Israelites. Thus their capture led to God's burning anger and desire to execute retribution.

Yours for the King,

Doug Petrovich

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**Douglas Petrovich - 7/8/2012 8:17:45 PM**

7/8/2012 8:46 PM #

Bill,

You are quite welcome, and I am overjoyed that you were able to implement this into your class notes and presentations. The good news is that I now have much more exciting data to publish regarding the exodus era. I have hard-evidence from Egyptian archaeology that is going to equate the very moment the Israelites left Egypt to the reign of Amenhotep II. The evidence includes the remains of the very Passover itself.

And yes, I am absolutely serious, brother. It may take about a year before it all gets to publication, as I first will publish in an Egyptological journal, without biblical connections, then publish in a biblical archaeology journal, with biblical connections. I actually will begin writing the first article tomorrow. I have read over 20 articles that will contribute data, with another 20 or so to read. Some of them are in German.

Anyway, stay tuned, because this is some earth-shattering data, and the archaeological team that recently published the excavations at this site has no idea what to make of their findings (in this way). And of course, the late-exodus proponents were looking for all of this for years, but their chief hindrance was that they looked in all of the wrong haystacks, thanks to the teensy-weensy little problem of seeking evidence from 2 centuries later.

Yours for the King,

Doug Petrovich

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**Douglas Petrovich - 7/8/2012 8:46:51 PM**

7/9/2012 11:12 AM #

Wow, that is awesome Doug. It reminds me of the data collected on Mitochondrial Eve and Y-Chromosome Adam that has the oldest common male ancestor for all men tens of thousands of years younger than the oldest common female ancestor of all women. The geneticists have no idea how to reconcile the data, but the flood story provides the perfect solution. All the men who went on the ark had Noah as their oldest common male ancestor (his three sons), but all the women had someone much older, (Noah's and his son's wives). Of course I can't teach this in history class, because the flood has no other scientific evidence that I know of and plenty of pseudo scientific stuff out there to make applying the genetic data to it unpalatable.

I earnestly await your first article in the Egyptological journal. Please make it available electronically and notify us here.

An eager consumer,

Bill

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**Bill Zeman - 7/9/2012 11:12:44 AM**

7/9/2012 5:22 PM #

Bill,

Hey, that's some fascinating data on the genetics that go through the Flood bottleneck. It sure does make a lot of sense. By the way, have you ever considered that the Neanderthals might be the nephilim/sons of God who lived on the earth up until the Flood? This is my working theory, though I won't go into it too deeply here. If you are interested, I can send you my OT History notes, and you can read about my thoughts there. E-mail: dp@exegesisinternational.org

I'm glad that I have at least one person eagerly awaiting the publication of my first article. I just started it today. I can send you the title and abstract upon request. Of course, it's the follow-up article that's going to be the one that hits the fan. I decided that I will try publishing the first one in the Journal of Egyptian History, which is a younger journal, but one that will not have much lag-time for getting it from submission to publication. It's an arm of Brill Publishers (the ones with the steep prices), from Netherlands.

And yes, I will be sure to get you a copy if you don't have access to this journal. Most universities that subscribe to it do so only electronically. This is the age in which we now live! Finally, I will be in Orange County in 2 weeks, in case you are interested in having a grape Nehi together (sorry, but I'm an old M.A.S.H. fan). If so, just let me know.

Yours from Toronto,

Doug Petrovich

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**Douglas Petrovich - 7/9/2012 5:22:00 PM**

1/25/2013 11:13 PM #

Can someone please explain the deficiencies in Dr. Elizabeth Mitchell's article on the Answer's in Genesis website.

[www.answersingenesis.org/.../doesnt-egyptian-chronology-prove-bible-unreliable](http://www.answersingenesis.org/.../doesnt-egyptian-chronology-prove-bible-unreliable)

She comes to the conclusion that the Exodus occurred in the 13th dynasty, during the reign of Neferhotep I. She also equates Hatshepsut with the Queen of Sheba.

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**Joshua - 1/25/2013 11:13:42 PM**

1/31/2013 2:05 PM #

Dear Joshua,

Greetings to you!



Thanks for writing to ABR and for your question.

Let me preface the answer by saying we are close friends with the folks at AIG, and affirm them in many of their positions on the authority and inerrancy of the Bible.

That being said, we do not believe the Biblical material, nor the historical and archaeological evidence, warrants such reconstructions of Egyptian and other ANE chronologies. We have an incredible number of excellent synchronisms between the Bible and the archaeological and historical records already. Our website has dozens of articles which argue first from the Bible, and then find correlations in the archaeological record. These attempts at radical reconstruction end up destroying the plethora of connections we have from the conventional data that has already been developed. (The exception to this would be the era between the Flood and Abraham, especially before the Tower of Babel incident, where the archaeology is more scant, and many of the secular dates are based solely on C-14 dating.) Further, the level of knowledge and expertise in multiple fields of study that is required to make such sweeping changes is not present in these articles. Such an endeavor would require expertise in Egyptian, Syro-Palestinian, Hittite, Philistine, and other areas of ANE culture.

An article that deals with the implications of these sweeping changes was written by Dr. Bryant Wood a number of years ago, showing how rewriting Egyptian chronology ends up destroying the correlations in Israel.

See: [www.biblearchaeology.org/.../...rom-Palestine.aspx](http://www.biblearchaeology.org/.../...rom-Palestine.aspx)

The extremely precise correlations we have in Egyptian records and the Exodus can be found in the article on which you commented, by Doug Petrovich. Petrovich's article pretty much shows these reconstructions are unwarranted, unnecessary, and based on very limited scholarship and expertise.

Hatshepsut is NOT the Queen of Sheba. Her dates also correlate perfectly with the Bible, early 15th century BC, as mentioned in Petrovich's article and this one by Col. David Hansen: [www.biblearchaeology.org/.../...nd-Hatshepsut.aspx](http://www.biblearchaeology.org/.../...nd-Hatshepsut.aspx)

We are unable to draft a point by point refutation, due to time constraints. I do hope, however, that this information is helpful to you.

Thanks for your interest in the ABR ministry.

Blessings,

Henry Smith

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**ABR - 1/31/2013 2:05:34 PM**

6/24/2013 1:44 PM #

Dear Mr. Petrovich:

I so enjoyed reading your article and believe you to be undoubtedly correct. I look forward to

reading your future studies as I believe so much more will come to light in the days ahead.

In His Service,  
Carol Corbin

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**Carol Corbin - 6/24/2013 1:44:28 PM**

6/24/2013 4:22 PM #

Dear Carol,

I am so glad that you enjoyed the article and agree with my findings. Bless your heart. You are absolutely correct. There is much more that has come to light, and as soon as I can get it through the process, it will be available to read and see. I am just now (today) in touch with a German publisher that runs a series entitled, "Egypt and the Old Testament" (in German, of course).

I am eagerly awaiting their reply. That series is now my top choice for a publisher. It will be published in English, to be sure, and hopefully distributed in the States. Even if not, you would be able to buy it somehow, either through ABR or directly from the publisher.

In case you live in the Eastern U.S., keep a watch out over the upcoming months for an announcement from ABR. I am in discussions to put on a 10-hour weekend seminar in the Raleigh, NC area, which will be the first public presentation of these findings. This will be taped for a DVD set.

With warm wishes,

Doug

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**Douglas Petrovich - 6/24/2013 4:22:00 PM**