AMENHOTEP II AND THE HISTORICITY OF THE EXODUS-PHARAOH

BY DOUGLAS PETROVICH

I. INTRODUCTION

Many Egyptologists have led the charge to deny the veracity of the Israelite exodus from Egypt. Renowned Egyptologist Donald Redford concluded, "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."[1] Redford then betrayed his affinity with this fraternity when he stated 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."[2] Although the affirmation or disputation of Redford's claim is a legitimate pursuit, the present work will concentrate on a completely different goal.

While debate long has raged over the trustworthiness of the biblical narrative describing an Israelite presence in Egypt in the middle of the 2nd millennium BC, less of the focus has been placed on the identification of the exodus-pharaoh who would have ruled over Egypt at the time of the Israelite exodus. If there is to be any possibility of an Israelite presence in Egypt or an exodus during this era, a synchronization of ancient Israelite and Egyptian chronology would have to validate a specific pharaoh who not only fits the mold chronologically, but one who meets the stringent biographical requirements presented by the biblical text.

Thus the goal of the present work, after Israelite and Egyptian history have been synchronized, is to examine the exodus-pharaoh's biographical sketch, in order to determine whether this biblical figure not only meets the chronological requirement, but also meets the biographical requirements of the Egyptian monarch described in the Bible. Two views dominate the landscape for the dating of the exodus: the early date view (15th century BC) and the late date view (13th century BC). The candidate for the late date view is Ramses II (*ca.* 1290–1223 BC), while the candidate for the early exodus view is Amenhotep II (*ca.* 1455–1418 BC).

Many scholars now date the exodus 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."[3] While Kitchen has been a major 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*.

Bryant Wood rejects the theory of a 13th-century-BC exodus, which originally was propagated by William F. Albright in the 1930's,[4] appealing to a reevaluation of the archaeological evidence pertinent to key Palestinian cities in question.[5] Chronologist Rodger 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."[6] Since the early exodus view will surface as the sounder view after a discussion of the relevant chronological matters, Amenhotep II's candidacy will be tested in great detail here.

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[1]Donald B. Redford, *Egypt, Canaan, and Israel in Ancient Times* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1992), 408–409.
[2]Ibid., 412.
[3]Kenneth A. Kitchen, *On the Reliability of the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003), 310.
[4]For a more fully developed articulation of Albright's theory, see John J. Bimson, *Redating the Exodus and Conquest* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1981), 30–73.
[5]Bryant G. Wood, "The Rise and Fall of the 13th-Century Exodus-Conquest Theory," *JETS* 48:3 (Sep 2005), 476.
[6]Rodger C. Young, "When Did Solomon Die?," *JETS* 46:4 (Dec 2003), 603.

By answering the following questions, it will be seen whether Amenhotep II remains a viable candidate for the exodus-pharaoh, as the biblical text will be scrutinized after being synchronized 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?[7] Can any of Amenhotep II's military campaigns be related to the exodus events? Can the loss of an exorbitant number of Hebrew slaves, potentially 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.[8] 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."[9] The same is true of Pharaoh Neco, whose name appears nine times.[10] 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.[11] 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."[12] 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.[13] Moses thus avenges pharaoh's reproach of God by leaving him unnamed.

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[7]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).

[8]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.

[9]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.

[10]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).

[11]Any temptation to doubt the reliability of the biblical text's reference to 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).

[12]Ibid., 109.

[13]Ibid.

Hoffmeier certainly is 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 monarchial 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,[14] 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."[15]

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.[16] 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.[17] During the Ramesside period (*ca*. 1300–1100 BC), the singular term "pharaoh" was used widely, 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."[18] 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

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[14]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.

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

[16]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 Verlag, 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).

[17]Hoffmeier, *Israel in Egypt*, 110.

[18]Ibid., 87.

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 of 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.[19] 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.[20] 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.[21] Consequently, 1446 BC is preferred over 1445 BC.[22]

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[19]Young, "When Did Solomon Die?," 602. A textual variant has arisen in 1 Kgs 6:1, with the original text reading either "480th year" (MT and Vg), or "440th year" (LXX). Though the antiquity of the LXX renders its text important for determining the originality of any variant in the Hebrew Bible, the MT possesses greater authority than any ancient translation, including the LXX. "[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 for a complete resolution of this textual variant in 1 Kgs 6:1.

[20]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).

[21]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.

[22]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 as 14 Nisan (Exod 12:6). The new moon that began the month of Nisan in 1446 BC reportedly occurred at 21:42 UT (Universal Time) on Wednesday, 8 April (as detailed on the webpage http://eclipse.gsfc.nasa.gov/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, events 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 10th day of the month (Sunday, 19 April),

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."[23] 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,[24] 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.[25]

A second reason for this surge is that Raamses, the store-city that the Israelites built (Exod 1:11), is usually identified with Pi-Ramesses, which flourished from *ca*. 1270–1100 BC and was comparable to the largest cities of the ANE, but was built only during the reign of Ramses II (*ca*. 1290–1223 BC).[26] Shea rebuts that "Raamses" was used of the land to which the patriarchs traveled several centuries earlier (Gen 47:11), when no ruler bore the name "Ramesses," suggesting that both references may be a divinely-overseen updating of an earlier place-name.[27] Whether or not Exod 1:11 is anachronistic, there is no guarantee that Pi-Ramesses is biblical Raamses. 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."[28] Yet the presumption that biblical Raamses could not have been inhabited before Ramses 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.[29] By counting back 300 years from 967 BC, the exodus dates to *ca*. 1267 BC, which falls within the exceedingly long reign of Ramses II.[30] 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.[31]

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each Jewish family was to take an unblemished lamb in preparation for Passover (Exod 12:3). On the 14th day of the month, they were to slaughter the lamb at twilight (at sunset, the beginning of the day) and eat the Passover Feast (Exod 12:6). That night, the Death Angel came at about midnight and struck down all of the firstborn of Egypt (Exod 12:12, 29), and on the next morning (still 14 Nisan) the Israelites began their departure from Egypt (Exod 12:33, 34, 39; Num 33:3). Since they counted their days from dusk to dusk, the 14th day of the month included both the Thursday night in which the Death Angel passed over them, and Friday's daytime hours, during which time they departed. Therefore, the exodus may be dated with relative confidence to Friday, 24 April 1446 BC.

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

[24]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.

[25]Ibid., 152.

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

[27]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.

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

[29]Kitchen, *Reliability of the OT*, 203.

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

[31]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)

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), Ramses 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."[32]

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."[33] 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.[34] 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."[35] 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.[36] Since astronomers can pinpoint this event by charting the positions of stars in antiquity, the papyrus

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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.

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

[33]Redford, *Egypt, Canaan, and Israel*, 259.

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

[35]Wood, "The Rise and Fall," 486.

[36]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

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.[37] 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.[38] 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."[39] 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.[40]

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), Hatshepsut (*ca*. 1506/4–1484 BC), Thutmose III (*ca*. 1506–1452 BC), and Amenhotep II (*ca*. 1455–1418 BC).[41] 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

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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).

[37]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.

[38]Ibid., 59.

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

[40]Ibid.

[41]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 ±6 years after calculating the date for the rising of Sothis (W. S. LaSor, "Egypt," in *ISBE*, vol. 2 [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1982], 40).

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."[42] 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."[43] 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.[44] 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.[45] Moreover, inscriptional and papyritious 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."[46] 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.[47] This prince almost certainly resided in or near Memphis,[48] due to his office being connected to the high priesthood of Ptah.[49]

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[42]Redford, "Coregency of Tuthmosis III," 109.
[43]Der Manuelian, *Amenophis II*, 19.
[44]Redford, "Coregency of Tuthmosis III," 108.
[45]Der Manuelian, *Amenophis II*, 40.
[46]Redford, "Coregency of Tuthmosis III," 111.
[47]Ibid., 110.
[48]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

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.[50] 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."[51] 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.[52] 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."[53] 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

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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.

[49]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).

[50]Ibid., 112, 114.

[51]Ibid., 114.

[52]Ibid., 110, 114.

[53]Ibid., 114.

Thutmose sitting on the lap of the royal tutor Hekreshu in a wall painting at Thebes may be "the eldest son" of the king.[54] 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

[54]In Tomb 64 of the Theban necropolis is an important wall painting that displays two royal tutors: Hekreshu and his son, Hekerneheh, 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 Hekerneheh and a small Prince Amenhotep, who is carrying a bouquet. Hekreshu is stated specifically to be a "tutor of the king's eldest bodily son, Thutmose," whose nomen is represented in a cartouche. Hekerneheh's title is "tutor of the king's son, Amenhotep." Behind Hekerneheh 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 easily could 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 Hekerneheh 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 Hekerneheh. 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.

event, or anywhere else in Scripture.[55] 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.[56] However, the Hebrew verb וְנִעֵר (*n'r*, "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

[55]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).

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

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.[57] 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.[58] 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.[59]

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.[60] 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.[61] Wente 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.[62]

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."[63] 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

[57]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 servantile workforce.

[58]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).

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

[60]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).

[61]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).

[62]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.

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

centuries to honor this regnal anniversary,[64] 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."[65]

c. *A Possible Regnal Length of Exactly 37⅓ 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. Wente 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 2⅓ years.[66] If their argumentation is correct, Amenhotep II reigned exactly 37⅓ years, making him 55 years of age at the time of his death.

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[64]The 12th-Dynasty pharaoh Sesostris 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).

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

[66]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 IIB'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.

d. *A Lifespan of 55 Years*. A lifespan of 55 years for Amenhotep II is deduced by adding his 37⅓-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."[67] 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,[68] 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."[69] 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.[70] Support for this criticism is found in the discrepancy over Thutmose III's lifespan.[71] 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.[72] Thus the 10-year discrepancy with Amenhotep II's mummy is not problematic, and a reign of 37⅓ 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."[73] 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."[74] 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."[75]

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.[76] One author notes that "this relative military inertness lasted until Horemheb's coming to power" in *ca*. 1335 BC.[77] How

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

[68]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'Egypte et la Vallée du Nil*, vol. 2 [Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1995], 336). Harris and Weeks, adding that his wavy hair was brown with gray at the temple, suggest that he was 45 at death (Harris and Weeks, *X-Raying*, 138).

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

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

[71]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).

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

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

[74]Vandersleyen, *L'Egypte*, vol. 2, 341.

[75]Der Manuelian, *Amenophis II*, 59.

[76]"Previously, on seeing a man from Egypt, the kings of Canaan fled bef[ore him, but] now the sons of Abdi-Ashirta make men from Egypt prowl about [like do]gs" (*The Amarna Letters*, ed. and trans. William L. Moran [Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1992], 183).

[77]Vandersleyen, *L'Egypte*, 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.

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.[78] 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."[79] 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.[80] However, its text presents a dilemma: "The translator finds it impossible to reconcile the dates in these several stelae."[81] 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).[82]

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.[83] 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.[84] Both stelae were hacked-up during the Amarna Revolution and restored during the 19th Dynasty, with the Karnak Stele betraying poorer restoration.[85] Its postscript names Thutmose as the erector, normally assumed to be Thutmose IV, who evidently erected the stele after his accession.[86]

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,

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[78]Yohanan Aharoni, "Some Geographical Remarks Concerning the Campaigns of Amenhotep II," *JNES* 19:3 (Jul 1960), 177.
[79]James B. Pritchard, *ANET* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1950), 245.
[80]Redford, "Coregency of Tuthmosis III," 118.
[81]Pritchard, *ANET*, 245.
[82]Ibid., 245, 246; Redford, "Coregency of Tuthmosis III," 119.
[83]Henry Breasted, *Ancient Records of Egypt*, vol. 2 (Champaign, IL: University of Illinois Press, 2001), 305.
[84]Hoffmeier, "Memphis and Karnak Stelae," in *Context of Scripture*, vol. 2, 19.
[85]Pritchard, *ANET*, 245; Redford, "Coregency of Tuthmosis III," 119.
[86]Breasted, *Ancient Records*, vol. 2, 309.

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.[87] His majesty came joyously to his father Amun, having slain with his own bludgeon the seven chiefs who were in the district of Takhsi."[88] 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.[89] 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.[90] 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.[91] 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.[92] 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."[93] Moreover, a comparison of lines 2–3 on the Memphis Stele with lines 16–19 on the Amada Stele—

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[87]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.

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

[89]Pritchard, *ANET*, 245.

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

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

[92]Ibid.

[93]Ibid., 121.

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.[94]

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 stelae 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 stelae count them from the outset of the sole rule. As Pritchard calculates, "A possible reconciliation would be that the 7th year after the coregency began was the 3rd year of the sole reign."[95] 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 2⅓ 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 stelae-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."[96] He concludes, "Thus the initial date of Year 7 on the Memphis Stele is a[n inaccurate] restoration made by the Ramesides."[97]

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."[98] 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,[99] even provides a *terminus ad quem*

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[94]Rainey, "Amenhotep II's Campaign to Takhsi," 71.

[95]Pritchard, *ANET*, 245.

[96]Vandersleyen, *L'Egypte*, 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).

[97]Vandersleyen, *L'Egypte*, 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.

[98]Vandersleyen, *L'Egypte*, vol. 2, 323, 324.

[99]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'Egypte*, vol. 2, 323–

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."[100] 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.[101]

4. *The First Asiatic Campaign of Amenhotep II*. For the sake of brevity, Amenhotep II's first campaign will be referred to as A_1, while his second campaign will be called A_2. As was proven already, he launched A_1 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 A_1, 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 A_1.[102] 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."[103] 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 A_1 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.[104]

5. *The Second Asiatic Campaign of Amenhotep II*. Amenhotep II indisputably launched A_2 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

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.

[100]Redford, "Coregency of Tuthmosis III," 119–120.

[101]Wolfgang Helck, *Urkunden der 18. Dynastie*, Heft 18 (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 1956), 1448; Vandersleyen, *L'Egypte*, vol. 2, 324.

[102]The view that A_1 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).

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

[104]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'Egypte*, vol. 2, 328). On the contrary, A_1 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 A_1, 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 A_1, 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 A_1, A_2 was far less significant on an international level and far less illustrious, as will be seen momentarily.

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 A_2 than they do about A_1. Clearly A_1 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 A_2 is that it was launched to correct the shortcomings of A_1. 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."[105] Aharoni sees in A_1 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."[106]

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 A_2 was launched to rectify the failures of A_1 crumbles from within, due to the longevity of the interval. Of even greater weight, the failure of A_1 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 A_2 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 A_2.

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."[107] 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.[108] 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 A_1, "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."[109] Vandersleyen contrasts this with the unprecedented timing of A_2: "The second Asiatic

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[105]Aharoni and Avi-Yonah, *The Macmillan Atlas*, 34.

[106]Grimal, *History of Ancient Egypt*, 219.

[107]Pritchard, *ANET*, 246.

[108]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).

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

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."[110] 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 A_1, which was launched to quell a rebellion, A_2 had no obvious occasion.

7. *The Contrast between the Two Asiatic Campaigns Launched by Amenhotep II*. Marked differences exist between A_1 and A_2. The names of the geographical sites on A_1 are mostly unknown, and those that are considered known are too far apart to belong to one region. In contrast, the sites mentioned on A_2 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 A_1 are distant and scattered, while the sites on A_2 are nearby and closely positioned in relation to one another.[111] 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, A_1 and A_2 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 A_2 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 A_2.[112] 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)."[113] 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."[114] 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."[115] 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."[116] 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

[110]Vandersleyen, *L'Egypte*, vol. 2, 321.
[111]Ibid., 324–325.
[112]Redford, *Egypt, Canaan, and Israel*, 164.
[113]Ibid.
[114]Ibid.
[115]Ibid., 165.
[116]Ibid., 164.

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.[117] 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."[118] 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.[119] 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."[120]

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."[121] 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.[122] He combined strength with a cruelty intended to demoralize his enemies,[123] 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."[124] 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.

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[117]John MacArthur, *The MacArthur Study Bible* (Nashville: Word, 1997), 198.

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

[119]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.

[120]Kitchen, *Reliability of the OT*, 11. The biblical text to which Kitchen alludes is 2 Chr 14:9–15.

[121]Aharoni and Avi-Yonah, *The Macmillan Atlas*, 34.

[122]Hallo and Simpson, *Ancient Near East*, 262.

[123]Grimal, *History of Ancient Egypt*, 218.

[124]Breasted, *Ancient Records*, vol. 2, 310.

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.[125] 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 A_2 is distinguished among these campaigns, and if it might attest to the exodus or the post-exodus events.

The focus of A_2 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."[126] Regarding the "89,600" total prisoners, the sum is actually 101,128 when the numbers are added.[127] The error may be a mere mistake in addition, as the individual numbers are probably more reliable than the recorded sum.[128] Therefore, a final tally of 101,128 is preferred over 89,600 for the total number of prisoners. Before contrasting A_2 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 (T_1), sixth (T_6), and seventh (T_7). The prisoners taken on the various campaigns are compiled as follows: T_1 = 5,903 captives; T_6 = 217 captives; T_7 = 494 captives; A_1 = 2,214 captives; and A_2 = 101,128 captives.[129] The most glaring detail is obviously the disparity between the number of captives taken during A_2 versus the other four campaigns, which together averaged 2,207 prisoners, or 2.2% of the prisoners taken during A_2. Put differently, A_2 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 A_2 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.[130]

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 A_2 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.'"[131] 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

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

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

[127]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.

[128]"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).

[129]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.

[130]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).

[131]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).

in southern Palestine. This reference to the effect of a military campaign upon kings of distant nations, all of whom ruled empires in their own right, is unique among contemporary Egyptian booty lists and annals.

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 A_2. 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 disproportionate number of slaves taken during A_2, when considered together, argue strongly for a connection between A_2 and Egypt's losses after the exodus. This circumstantial evidence obviously will not satisfy critics whose presuppositions militate against tying the exodus to A_2. Yet for objective onlookers, one question is begged by the implication that the booty-list reveals an Israelite connection to A_2 and its material acquisitions: is there tangible evidence linking the Israelites to A_2?

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 A_2 were 3,600 "Apiru," the Egyptian equivalent of the Akkadian "Habiru," a word that also appears in the Amarna Letters.[132] Who are the Apiru whom Amenhotep II captured during A_2? 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."[133] 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.[134]

3. *The Case for Identifying the 3,600 Apiru of A_2 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.[135] 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

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[132]Hoffmeier, "Memphis and Karnak Stelae," in *Context of Scripture*, vol. 2, 22.

[133]Barry J. Beitzel, "Habiru," in *ISBE*, vol. 2, 588, 589.

[134]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 tri-consonantal 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).

[135]Hoffmeier, "Memphis and Karnak Stelae," in *Context of Scripture*, vol. 2, 22.

identify the limitations of the term "Habiru," it must be addressed whether or not the Apiru of A_2 might be Hebrews. Either way, the appearance of the Apiru on a formal list of Asiatic captives is quite unusual.[136]

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."[137] 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)."[138] 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 A_2, which is consistent with the biblical record. In his discussion of A_2, Aharoni concludes, "Apiru-Habiru = Hebrews."[139]

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 A_2. Hoffmeier, calling this number "a rather large figure,"[140] elsewhere notes, "If the large numbers are to be believed, Apiru/Habiru were not just small bands of marauders in Amenhotep's day."[141] 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 A_2 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*. 1379 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.[142] 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."[143]

In EA 228, the King of Hazor, who names himself ʿAbdi 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."[144] However, a change in the allegiance of Hazor's king is seen in EA 148, written by ʾAbi-Milki, King of Tyre, who abruptly blurts, "The King of Hasura has abandoned his house and aligned himself with the Apiru." ʾAbi-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."[145]

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[136]Pritchard, *ANET*, 247.

[137]Bryant G. Wood, "One Thousand Years Missing from Biblical History? A Review of a New Theory," *Bible and Spade* 6:4 (Aut 1993), 98.

[138]Grimal, *History of Ancient Egypt*, 219.

[139]Aharoni and Avi-Yonah, *The Macmillan Atlas*, 34.

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

[141]Hoffmeier, "Memphis and Karnak Stelae," in *Context of Scripture*, vol. 2, 22.

[142]Yigael Yadin, *Hazor: The Head of all those Kingdoms*, The 1970 Schweich Lectures of the British Academy (London: Oxford University Press, 1972), 7–8.

[143]Ibid., 8.

[144]*Amarna Letters*, ed. and trans. Moran, 290, with modifications according to Yadin, *Hazor: The Head*, 8.

[145]Ibid., 235, with modifications according to Yadin, *Hazor: The Head*, 8.

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).[146] Why would mighty Hazor align itself with a group of bandits, exchanging allegiance to powerful Egypt, as their longstanding overlords, to allegiance to meddlesome thieves, as their new overlords? Would its king truly fear wandering brigands more than pharaoh's army? How could a band of social misfits subserviate 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 easily can 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."[147]

c. *The Apiru of A_2 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."[148] 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."[149] 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 A_2. "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."[150] 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.[151] 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."[152] *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]."[153] 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 A_2. 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.[154] The scribe

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[146]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.

[147]Wood, "The Rise and Fall," 489.

[148]Beitzel, "Habiru," in *ISBE*, vol. 2, 588.

[149]Hoffmeier, "Memphis and Karnak Stelae," in *Context of Scripture*, vol. 2, 22.

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

[151]Pritchard, *ANET*, 247.

[152]Grimal, *History of Ancient Egypt*, 219.

[153]Hoffmeier, "The Annals of Thutmose III," in *Context of Scripture*, vol. 2, 9.

[154]Pritchard, *ANET*, 247.

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 A_2. 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 A_2 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 A_2 concluded. Therefore, A_2 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 A_2—and the biblical events that transpired after the exodus.[155]

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.[156] Sometime between Year 2 and Year 4 of Thutmose III, Hatshepsut assumed full royal titulary, making herself a female pharaoh of equal rank.[157]

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).[158] 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.[159] 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

[155]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).

[156]Hallo and Simpson, *Ancient Near East*, 259.

[157]William Petty, "Redating the Reign of Hatshepsut," *KMT* 13:4 (Win 2002–2003), 51, 53.

[158]Rea, "Oppression and Exodus," 10.

[159]Tyldesley, *Hatchepsut*, 65, 77.

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.[160]

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.[161] 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.[162] (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.[163] At Karnak, her obelisks were walled-up and incorporated into the vestibule in front of Pylon V, while at Djeser-Djeseru her statues and sphinxes were removed, smashed, and cast into trash dumps.[164]

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[160]Ibid., 75.
[161]Ibid., 77.
[162]Ibid.
[163]Ibid., 79. See the webpage 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.
[164]Tyldesley, *Hatchepsut*, 114–115, 216.

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.[165] "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."[166] But was Thutmose III actually the perpetrator? Did he seethe with hatred and resentment toward his former co-ruler 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 Djeser-Djeseru portrays Hatshepsut and identifies her as "The Good God, Lady of the Two Lands, Daughter of Ra, Hatshepsut."[167] 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 Djeser-Akhet, which was to be built at Deir el-Bahri, directly south of Djeser-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.[168]

(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."[169] Moreover, this whim clearly 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."[170] 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.[171] Such reprisal seems far too severe to fit the motive of mere sexism.

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

[166]Tyldesley, *Hatchepsut*, 225.

[167]Ibid., 219.

[168]Ibid., 219–220; Grimal, *History of Ancient Egypt*, 216.

[169]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).

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

[171]Tyldesley, *Hatchepsut*, 216.

(4) If Thutmose III was the culprit, why were there also attacks against the name and monuments of Senenmut, the chief-advisor of Hatshepsut who disappeared from record in Year 16–20 of Hatshepsut's reign (*ca*. 1490–1486 BC)? Occasionally his name was violated while his image remained intact, but some of his statues were smashed and literally thrown out of temples.[172] 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.[173] (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."[174] Tyldesley does not explain why Amenhotep II would continue this campaign 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."[175]

(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."[176] Perhaps Year 9 was when it all began.

X. CONCLUSION

[172]Ibid., 206, 222.
[173]Ibid., 8, 225.
[174]Ibid., 224.
[175]Bryan, "Eighteenth Dynasty," in *Oxford History*, 241, 243.
[176]Ibid., 240.

The goal of the present work was to synchronize Israelite and Egyptian history and to examine the life of the Egyptian monarch who corresponds chronologically to the biography of the exodus-pharaoh, in order to determine whether this historical figure, who turned out to be Amenhotep II, meets these requirements. Thus it is possible now 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 an exorbitant number of Hebrew slaves, potentially Egypt's "slave-base" at the time, be accounted for in the records of Amenhotep II's reign? Yes, the loss of an exceedingly large number of 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 precisely with Israelite history. The Israelite exodus would have taken place in Amenhotep II's Year 9, which corresponds to the absolute date of 1446 BC, and April 2? would be the date for this event.