

along familiar uniformitarian lines.

‘Evidently the environment became stressful, perhaps from heat, or desiccation, or some oxygen-robbing algal bloom, causing the mother to release the pups from her uterus before dying; the lives of the unfortunate babies were all too short, for they barely swam a few centimeters before succumbing to their mother’s fate.’

The more reasonable catastrophic explanation of this event, along with the difficulties with the author’s hypotheses, follows the lines of reasoning on fish tephonomy presented in Woolley’s article.¹

Furthermore, the speculation that the Green River formation would not be the only formation to show a correlation between fish coprolites and fish preservation is strengthened by examining Dr Bruce Cornet’s Web site (where excellent correlation is seen from the graphs of fossil fish remains and presumably the coprolites of *Diplurus*, a coelacanth).³ This is for a site in the state of Connecticut in the United States of America. The layers in the fossil site are part of the Newark Group. However, the remarkable vertical correlation exists only for the lower 80% of the fossil beds of this formation.

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Uranus is special

The article *The age of the Jovian planets*¹ states three times that Uranus’ thermal behaviour is like that of

the other Jovian planets. This is not true. Uranus’ thermal behaviour is distinctive, as discussed in the paper on this topic included elsewhere in this issue.²

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Doppler truth—does it really matter?

It is rather an anomaly, and for good reason, when a non-creationist astronomer receives a favourable book review in a **creationist** publication. How about **two** favourable reviews?^{1,2} Whether Halton Arp appreciates it is perhaps another matter. I am sure it is always rewarding when someone patronises your viewpoint. Meanwhile I doubt that the patronage has done much for Arp’s popularity in the big bang uniformitarian caucus, and probably more of them read the journal than we think.

But let’s face it, Arp’s not looking for citations from creationists, nor expecting them from the above mentioned conjectural empiricists. He just wants to say it like it is, and Oard’s book review highlighted (**along with some very serious censorship protestations**) Arp’s objection, in his saying that ‘the “**big bang**” is “**wildly incorrect**” [emphasis added].’³ I think the reader will agree that Arp is just telling the truth. It’s like the prosecuting attorney who could not shake the testimony of a very young girl facing him on the witness stand. So, after pausing a moment for effect he asked her, ‘Did your father tell you what you were to say?’ She answered, ‘Yes, he

did.’ Smiling triumphantly at the jury he said, ‘Would you tell the court what he told you to say?’ She answered, ‘He told me to tell the truth.’

Does it really matter? Most assuredly! If truth is not the ruling paradigm (and that’s what *Answers In Genesis* is all about) what remains is not the truth but the next thing to downright dishonesty. If the big bang hypothesis is true, Earth was a chance aberration, resulting from an absurdly lengthy sequence of astronomical quirks, and the Answer is not in Genesis!

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3. Ref. 1, p. 42.

Searching for Moses

David Down’s article on Moses was of great interest to me. I would like to comment on two small points in an otherwise excellent article.

Creationists have just begun to appreciate that secular archaeology is having a stronger negative impact on belief in the Bible than evolution. In 1994, Aardsma, then of Institute for Creation Research, even proposed that the Exodus was in the third millennium BC to avoid the rather strong contradictions in the current archaeological interpretations. Unfortunately, the archaeologists are looking for evidence in the wrong places because they have a poor chronology based on poor Egyptian chronology.

Unfortunately, Biblical scholars have inadvertently contributed to the confusion by supporting a poor Biblical chronology. I believe we cannot combat the former before we fix the latter. To this purpose, I constructed

a Biblical chronology in my 1998 paper at the International Conference on Creationism. This demonstrated that the 480 years of I Kings 6:1 were not chronological years because this statement contradicts the sum of the years in Judges and is contrary to the obviously chronological statements of Paul in Acts 13 in his presentation of the gospel to the Jews of Pisidian Antioch. The number of years from the Exodus to Solomon's Temple is 568. This agrees with Judges if one uses Josephus's numbers for Joshua, 25 years, the elders of Joshua, 18 years and the years of Samuel after the end of the Philistines but before the reign of Saul. This yields an Exodus date of 1591 BC—well before the 18th Dynasty in any chronology.

This brings me to the pharaoh of the Exodus. Moses was born during the oppression. After 40 years minimum of oppression, Moses killed an Egyptian in a fight. He fled to Midian and remained there for 40 years until God informed him that those who wanted his death had died. This suggests that the pharaoh who reigned during Moses exile ruled 40 years after Moses departure. I would propose that this is Amemenhet III. After Amemenhet III there were no long reigning pharaohs—9 years at the most. It was his death that allowed Moses to return to Egypt. This scenario would negate the suggestion of Neferhotep I as the pharaoh of the Exodus.

A second point that would also cast doubt on this choice is the fact that Amu or Hyksos were among the early rulers of the 13th Dynasty. Hetepibre I and Amenemhet V both claimed to be pharaohs. The Egyptians would have regarded any such boasting by the Amu as the height of impertinence. They would have put an end to such a claim immediately if it were possible. Apparently, it was not. We must conclude that the 13th Dynasty was either Hyksos or Egyptians who paid tribute to the Hyksos.

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More searching

The article *Searching for Moses* by David Down,¹ presents an Egyptian chronology for which there is no basis and which destroys the many valid Biblical correlations which exist with the conventional chronology. Egyptian chronology has been a major subject of scholarly inquiry for the past two centuries, involving scores of scholars trained in the language, history, and archaeology of ancient Egypt.

Egyptologists are a highly independent breed and are anxious to discredit their fellows and make a name for themselves. The entire process, therefore, has been one of ongoing criticism, correction and refinement. There is now a mountain of evidence that has been analyzed in detail to produce the current Egyptian chronology. See Kitchen² for an up-to-date review of Egyptian chronology, and Wiener³ for an appraisal of the accuracy of Egyptian chronology.

Those attempting to make revisions to Egyptian chronology, such as Mr Down, are usually pseudo-scholars untrained in the specialties needed to deal with the primary data. They simply brush aside the years of careful scholarship that have gone before them and set up their new systems oblivious to the vast array of available technical data and the complexities of chronological issues.

Mr Down begins the article by setting up a straw man. He states, 'Nor is there archaeological evidence for an invasion of Palestine under Joshua during this period [15th century BC]' (p. 53). Quite the contrary, there is solid archaeological evidence for destructions at Jericho, Ai (=Kh. el-Maqatir) and Hazor at the end of the Late Bronze I period, which is the late 15th century BC using conventional Egyptian chronology. Mr Down's revised chronology would place the Conquest half way through the Middle Bronze period, when there is no evidence whatsoever for an Israelite Conquest.

A few lines further Mr Down makes the curious statement, 'There is little

evidence for an invasion of Palestine at the end of the Late Bronze Period' (p. 53). This is inconsistent with his earlier statement since the end of the Late Bronze Period occurred about 1200 BC by conventional Egyptian chronology. Naturally, one would not expect to find evidence for the Conquest at the end of the Late Bronze Period since the Bible clearly places the event 200 years earlier at the end of the 15th century BC.

He goes on to say,

'But at the end of the Early Bronze Period there is evidence of Jericho's fallen walls and the arrival of a new people with a new culture who should be identified as the invading Israelites under Joshua' (p. 53).

This is another puzzling statement since throughout the article Mr Down is advocating lowering Egyptian chronology about 300 years. In order to align the end of the Early Bronze Period with the Conquest, however, Egyptian chronology would have to be lowered approximately 700 years. Others have suggested the end of the Early Bronze Period as a possible time frame for the Conquest. The archaeological data from this period simply does not correlate with the Bible as I have shown.⁴

In order to support his thesis, Mr Down appeals to the work of David Rohl who advocates lowering Egyptian chronology by ca. 350 years (p. 54). I have reviewed Rohl's hypothesis in detail from the Palestinian perspective⁵ and find it totally unworkable and without merit. For example, the Bible tells us that Samson, Eli, Samuel, Saul and David were very much involved in a war against the Philistines. According to Rohl's (and Down's) chronology, however, the Philistines did not arrive in Palestine until the ninth century BC in the time of the Divided Kingdom. Others have examined Rohl's Egyptological arguments and found no basis for his theory (see references in Wood, Ref. 5).

With the conventional chronology we have many points of correspondence between the findings of

archaeology and the Bible for the pre-monarchic period, the time when archaeological dating is dependent upon Egyptian chronology. Working backwards, in the first half of the 11th century BC we have a destruction layer at Shilo corresponding to the Philistine destruction implied in 1 Sam. 4, Jer. 7:12, 14 and 26:6, 9; at Shechem is a destruction level and the Temple of El-Berith dating to the mid-12th century BC recorded in Judges 9; from the early 12th century we have certain evidence from Tel Dan, including a destruction layer, for the migration of the Danites documented in Judges 17–18; Hazor was destroyed in the late 13th century in accordance with Judges 4–5; at Jericho Garstang excavated a palatial structure dating to the second half of the 14th century which meets all the requirements to be Ehud’s palace described in Judges 3; as alluded to above we have graphic evidence for the destructions of Jericho, Ai and Hazor during the Conquest under Joshua, ca. 1400 BC; the store cities of Pithom and Ramesses (Ex 1:11) have been excavated, producing evidence that the Israelites worked there under the Hyksos; at Ramesses, evidence of Israelite settlement in the 19th century BC (Gen. 47:11) has been found; and finally, from ca. 2100 BC, is abundant evidence for the destruction of the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah as described in Gen 19. All of these correlations would be lost if a revised Egyptian chronology were embraced. It is precisely because the archaeological findings line up with and agree with Biblical history that we can have confidence in the conventional Egyptian chronology.

One cannot willy-nilly revise Egyptian chronology to suit one’s fancy. Egyptian chronology is based on solid philological, archaeological and astronomical data and unless it can be demonstrated that these data are in error, the conventional Egyptian chronology must be accepted as correct.

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David Down replies:

The general tone of Professor Wood’s criticism of my article on the identity of Moses and the dynasty in which he lived seems to be his serene confidence in ‘the many valid Biblical correlations which exist with the conventional chronology’, and the ‘mountain of evidence that has been analyzed in detail to produce the current Egyptian chronology’. I wish that such was the case, but it is because there are such major discrepancies that I look for an alternative interpretation.

I am sure Israeli archaeologists would be happy to find that their sacred writings were historically correct but

they have to face reality and admit that there are major problems. Professor Amihai Mazar of the Hebrew University in Jerusalem, in his book *Archaeology of the Land of the Bible* wrote, ‘the biblical stories were formulated as a literary tradition of no historical value when the Israelites began settling this region’.¹

Dr Israel Finklestein of the Bar Ilan University, Tel Aviv, wrote, ‘The Settlement of the Israelites in the 12th and 11th centuries BCE ... the subject as a whole has remained problematic, difficult to understand, and, in some cases, utterly obscure Most of the quandaries that perplexed scholars more than a generation ago have not been resolved ... many have even given up hope that archaeological evidence could help solve the enigmas of this perplexing period.’²

Dr Adam Zertal wrote in the book, *From Nomadism to Monarchy*, ‘The problem of the origin of the settlers in the hill country has been a focus of controversy. The debate has been accelerated by the inconsistency between the biblical narratives and the archaeological finds.’³

We could go on, but anyone who is looking at the conclusions that are being drawn from archaeology in Israel within the framework of traditional chronology would be living in a dream world to say that all is well. Either present archaeological interpretation is correct and the Bible is wrong, or the Bible is correct and present archaeological interpretation is wrong. You can’t have it both ways, and though I excavate in Israel every year and am on the best of terms with Israeli archaeologists, I have to disagree with their conclusions.

Dr Rudolph Cohen and Eyal Israel are exceptions. They place the Exodus and invasion of Canaan at the end of the Early Bronze Period and they ought to know. For 15 years they have been excavating in the Negev where the Israelite invasion began and they claim they have the evidence in MBI pottery. I agree with their conclusions.

The evidence from Egypt is no more comforting than that from Israel. Whether the Exodus from Egypt is placed in the 13th C BC or the 15th C BC, evidence for the existence of Moses and Israelite slavery, and a sudden migration of 2 million people, is sadly lacking. In its 18 December 1995 edition, *Time* magazine summed up current archaeological opinion when it refers to, 'the Old Testament where the evidence is contradictory or still absent, including slavery in Egypt, the existence of Moses, the Exodus and Joshua's military conquest of the Holy Land' (p. 54).

So not everything in the garden is lovely and I see no reason to regard traditional Egyptian chronology as a sacred cow which cannot be touched. Egyptian dates are not 'astronomically fixed' as some would like to believe, and Egyptologists have their problems. Synchronisms between Rameses II and Muwatallis would place the elimination of the Hittites at the end of the 13th century BC, but according to the inscriptions of Shalmaneser III and Sennacherib, the Assyrians were still waging all out war with the Hittites in the 9th and 8th centuries BC, and the Bible even seems to place the Hittites ahead of the great Egyptian armies in the 9th C BC (1 Kings 7:6).

The TIP⁴ is the vulnerable period of Egyptian history, despite Kenneth Kitchen's desperate struggle to prop it up, and I believe that is where centuries need to be dropped out of the time scale. Kitchen described David Rohl's book *A Test of Time* as a 'waste of time', but I agree with Professor Colin Renfrew, Professor of Archaeology at Cambridge University (who is not exactly a pseudo-scholar). He wrote in the forward to James' book, 'I feel that their critical analysis is right, and that a chronological revolution is on its way' (p. XVI).

Concerning Alan Montgomery's letter, I see no reason to question the historicity of the 480 years in 1 Kings 6:1. The periods in the book of Judges are quite consistent with 480 years when it is recognized that these periods are not all consecutive. For instance, the 40 years oppression by

the Philistines in the south west could be contemporary with the 18 years oppression by the Ammonites to the east of Israel.

Concerning Paul's statement in Acts 13:19, I consider the UBS text to be preferable. This is translated in the RSV and others as

'When He had destroyed seven nations in the land of Canaan, He gave them their land as an inheritance for about 450 years [that is from the destruction of the 7 nations until the end of the united monarchy] and after that [that is after he gave them the land] He gave them judges until Samuel the prophet.'

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4. TIP is a recognized archaeological abbreviation for the Third Intermediate Period of Egypt, sometimes referred to as 'The Dark Ages' because we are in the dark as to what happened during this period. According to revisionists, the reason we have so little information about it is that it did not exist as independent dynasties.

The Intelligent Design Movement

I am thankful for the book reviews *TJ* publishes. They are very helpful, not just in summarizing a book's argument but also in analyzing it. I was

interested to read Royal Truman's review of Phillip Johnson's *The Wedge of Truth*.¹ The summary was good, but I would like to go one step further in analysis. While I appreciate very much what the brilliant and articulate Johnson has written about biological evolution and philosophical naturalism, we need to dare to question not only the 'materialist high priests' (as Truman put it), but also the Intelligent Design Movement's (IDM) 'high priest' (Johnson). Truman quotes Johnson from page 151 of his book but leaves out the words which reveal the fatal flaw in Johnson's (and the rest of the IDM's) whole approach. Johnson's full quote reads as follows:

'The place to begin is with the Biblical passage that is most relevant to the evolution controversy. It is not in Genesis; rather, it is the opening of the Gospel of John.'

Johnson makes a bold assertion here (without any Biblical, theological, philosophical or logical justification either before or after the statement) that Christians who want to think rightly about the creation-evolution debate and engage with skeptics on the subject can, indeed should, ignore Genesis! But Genesis is without question **the most important** part of the Bible for this debate and the Apostle John started his Gospel the way he did because he believed, as his Master did, the literal truth of Genesis 1-11. Johnson is seriously wrong in telling Christians (the readers of his IVPress book), in essence, that it does not matter what God said in Genesis.

We need to increasingly alert Christians to the fatal flaw of the IDM on this point. Christians (including leaders in the IDM and those who feel more comfortable with the IDM position than the young-Earth creationist position) need to stop ignoring the most important data in the universe—the inspired, inerrant and abundantly clear words of the Creator in Genesis 1-11. There seems to be a willful ignorance of Scripture by Christians in the IDM, which is something that is warned against in 2 Peter 3:5 (see NIV or KJV for the best translations of the original