Notes


4 Albright built his approach on Herman Gunkel’s liberal-critical methodology (Ibid., 2–10).

5 Ibid., 6; emphasis added.

6 This phrase need not be limited to denominations, though such is probably what Albright largely had in mind. It can refer to any professing-Christian commitment to the divine origin of Scripture.


11 Todd Beall has documented how modern evangelicals have embraced several liberal-critical theories about the OT that were strongly repudiated by conservative scholars just a generation or two ago (“Evangelicalism, Inerrancy, and Current OT Scholarship,” Bible and Spade 28/1 [Winter 2015]: 18–24).


13 For a refreshing rebuttal of this response and similar ones, see D. A. Carson, “But That’s Just Your Interpretation!” Themelios 44/3 (2019): 425–32.

14 Brevard S. Childs, “The Old Testament as Scripture of the Church,” Concordia Theological Monthly 43/11 (December 1972): 721. While I am citing Childs here and using the term “canonical hermeneutic,” I am not endorsing his (or anyone else’s) adoption of Karl Barth’s neo-orthodoxy. In the Barthian construct, Scripture “becomes” the Word of God upon human encounter, and is a “witness” to revelation, not revelation itself. Neo-orthodoxy employs a faulty ontology of Scripture, is built on a Kantian theory of knowledge, and allows for limitless historical errors in Scripture’s propositional content. Thus, while I am using the term “canonical hermeneutic,” which Collett and Childs also employ, I am certainly not endorsing any sort of Barthian neo-orthodoxy or allowing for errors in sacred Scripture. For more, see Cornelius Van Til, Christianity and Barthianism (Philadelphia: P&R Publishing, 1962); David Gibson, “The Answering Speech of Men: Karl Barth on Holy
17 Bryant G. Wood, “The Rise and Fall of the 13th-Century Exodus-Conquest Theory,” Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society 48/3 (September 2005): 484. Indeed, “[n]owhere in the Bible is it hinted that a ‘full’ or ideal generation was 40 years in length.”
20 Watch the ABR staff discuss the date of the Exodus and Conquest in episodes 41 and 42 of Digging for Truth TV, available on ABR’s website at www.biblearchaeology.org.
21 From Heman the musician, who lived in the days of David, back to Korah, who lived in the days of Moses, there were 18 generations. One additional generation takes us to Solomon, or 19 generations.
22 Ironically, when the dubious idealized interpretation is applied to this text, it yields a result of 475 years (19 times 25).
23 Egyptologist James Hoffmeier argues that the meaning of 1 Kings 6:1 is not ultimately determined by a careful exegesis of all relevant sacred texts in canonical context. Instead, its true meaning is to be found in Assyrian or Egyptian practices that employ time spans as “an approximation relating to the distant past” (Scott Stripling et al., Five Views on the Exodus: Historicity, Chronology, and Theological Implications, ed. Mark D. Janzen, Counterpoints: Bible & Theology, ed. Stanley N. Gundry [Grand Rapids: Zondervan Academic, 2021], 57–58; see Stripling’s response in the same volume). 1 Kings 6:1 is not “an approximation relating to the distant past.” No, it is specifying with great precision and with inclusive ordinal numbering the length of the time between the Exodus and the start of the Temple’s construction—479 years. The 480th year from the Exodus equates to the 4th year and 2nd month of Solomon’s reign. There is no evidence of an approximation in the text, nor is there evidence that the biblical author knew of such an ANE practice. Hoffmeier’s interpretation renders 1 Kings 6:1 incoherent: “In an approximate date related to the distant past after the people of Israel came out of Egypt, in the fourth year of Solomon’s reign over Israel, in the second month, which is the month of Ziv, he began to build the house of the Lord.” “In the 80th and 400th year” cannot be read as 300 years or some other time approximation. Moreover, 1 and 2 Kings are replete with precise chronological markers, which serve as internal indicators that 1 Kings 6:1 is to be understood in the same manner. Hoffmeier does not apply the same hermeneutical rationale to Exodus 12:40, which he treats as a genuine span of time. To undercut the force of 1 Kings 6:1, Hoffmeier also argues that 15th-century BC advocates should read the Judges era as chronologically consecutive, which would push the Exodus back into the 16th century BC. But if so, how can the Exodus be in the 13th century? To get a 13th-century Exodus, the Judges era must be collapsed to a length it cannot bear. Moreover, no mention is made of the scholarship making the careful exegetical case for overlapping reigns in Judges that result in correlation between the length of the Judges era and the 479 years of 1 Kings 6:1 (see David L. Washburn, “The Chronology of Judges: Another Look,” Bibliotheca Sacra 147/588 (October–December 1990): 414–25; Andrew Steinmann, From Abraham to Paul: A Biblical Chronology (St. Louis: Concordia, 2011), 87–109; Sean M. Warner, “The Dating of the Period of the Judges,” Vetus Testamentum 28/4 (October 1978): 455–63). Beyond resulting in incoherent exegesis, these interpretive gymnastics hermeneutically ground divine revelation in an outside authority structure. The Church could not and did not know the true meaning of 1 Kings 6:1 until ANE scholars came along to enlighten us. Like Scott Stripling, I highly commend Dr. Hoffmeier for his arguments for a historical Exodus and his grasp of the archaeological and literary evidence. In this regard, he is brilliant. And he is well respected here at ABR. But his hermeneutical method is fatally flawed and should be rejected by anyone who holds to the primacy of divine revelation. Other evangelical 13th-century advocates include Steven Ortiz, Ralph Hawkins, and Kenneth Kitchen. They employ similarly flawed hermeneutical and exegetical methods.
25 Ibid., 314.
26 “I believe there is a viable option to Albright's view, namely, that Josh 8:1–29 reflects a conquest of Ai in Iron Age I, or in the twelfth century B.C.” (Ibid., 316). Callaway also asserted that the Israelite Conquest was “less glorious than the enterprise the traditionaries have made it,” and that Canaan was infiltrated by other people groups around the same time (320).
29 Stripling makes this same basic point in Ibid., 210–15.
31 A scribal gloss most likely occurred in the Hebrew *Vorlage* prior to the Greek translation. “In the fourth year” (אֶלֶף הַשָּׁנָה הַרְביעָה) appears in the same verse. “Fourth” could easily have been substituted for 80th (שמונים שנה) because of mental and visual error. This is the best explanation for the LXX’s faulty reading. Alternatively, at the Greek level, “40th” (τεσσαρακοστῆ) in the LXX could be the result of parablepsis. The original of “8” in “80th” (ὀκτακοστῆ) could have been replaced by the “4” in “40th” (τεσσαρακοστῆ), the “4” being found in the next verse (6:2) of the LXX in “τεσσαράκοστα πήχεων” (forty cubits). The 40-year difference might also be the result of an exegetical/interpretive decision made by the original translator or an early transcriber of LXX 1 Kings. In any case, there is not enough evidence presently available to demonstrate that the LXX reading is superior to the MT’s.
33 A clear and concise sketch of Collins’s method can be found in Michael A. Grisanti, *Recent Developments in Patriarchal Chronology: Key Issues and Overview of the Big Picture* (paper, 71st Annual Meeting of the Evangelical Theological Society, San Diego, CA, November 2019).
36 Ibid., 5; emphases added.
37 Ibid., 32.
38 Ibid., 32.


46 Mark D. Thompson, “The Generous Gift of a Gracious Father: Toward a Theological Account of the Clarity of Scripture,” in Carson, Enduring Authority, 618.

47 Thompson, “Generous Gift,” 615–43.

48 Thompson, Clear and Present Word, 68–69.


50 Ibid., 148–59.

51 “To affirm the clarity of Scripture in this way need not compromise the genuine humanity of the biblical texts, since neither obscurity nor error is a necessary corollary of genuine humanity, even in a fallen world” (Thompson, “Generous Gift,” 618). Also Thompson, Clear and Present Word, 69; John M. Frame, “God and Biblical Language: Transcendence and Immanence,” in Montgomery, God’s Inerrant Word, 159–77.

52 “Contemporary Hermeneutics,” 139.


54 I am allowing here for the possibility that Matthew was originally written in Hebrew, as claimed by Irenaeus. It is beyond our purpose here to explore this issue.


60 As Grudem notes, teaching in the Church can also be “informal.” This includes parents and others who are mature in the faith. In no case does the teacher possess secret knowledge that is otherwise inaccessible to the layperson (“The Perspicuity of Scripture,” 296, n. 20).


62 True knowledge of the text’s meaning does not necessitate having exhaustive knowledge of its meaning (Carson, “Claritas Scripturarum,” 191).


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65 Part of Westminster Confession 1:5 reads, “…our full persuasion and assurance of the infallible truth and divine authority thereof, is from the inward work of the Holy Spirit bearing witness by and with the Word in our hearts” [Westminster Divines, “The Westminster Confession of Faith (1647)”].


Bibliography


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Date Exodus-Conquest. *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 51/2 (June): 225–43.