
2This also recognizes the selective nature of what the Bible says that only provides part of that picture. As evangelicals we need to be cautious about overstating what a given biblical description affirms. For example, as we will develop below, in the Iron Age Jerusalem was a regionally significant city and was the center for the Israelite monarchy under David and Solomon. However, the bureaucracy of that monarchy was developing and not as impressive as it was later in parts of the Divided Monarchy.

3The primary objective of this section is not to pursue the issue of the date of the exodus from Egypt and Conquest of Canaan.


6According to Hershel Shanks, James Hoffmeier and Shmuel Ahituv do not agree that the third image can be read “Israel”; “When Did Israel Begin?,” *BAR* 38/1 (January/February 2012) 61.

7These three scholars make no attempt to connect their discovery with Israel’s conquest of Canaan and issues of the historicity of that set of events.


9Michael D. Coogan, et al., eds., *The New Oxford Annotated Bible* (3d ed.; New York: Oxford University Press, 2001) 275–76. The writer also affirms that this account in Joshua 6 “reads like a description of the later liturgical celebration of what must have been a conflict over the spring that watered the plains of Jericho” (ibid. 276).


21 Ibid. 162–94.
22 Ibid. 198.
23 Ibid. 199–202. Figures 47 and 48 on pp. 199 and 201 provide examples of Cypriot bichrome pottery.
Many other archaeological issues deserve consideration for a complete understanding of the date of Jericho’s destruction. The above summary has selected only a small part of the evidence with which scholars interact.


More evidence of calcined bedrock and refired pottery was found during the 2012 dig season; Wood, “Outstanding Finds Made at Khirbet el-Maqatir: May 28–June 8, 2012.”


Jane Cahill, “Jerusalem in David and Solomon’s Time: It Really Was a Major City in the Tenth Century B.C.E,” BAR 30/6 (November/December 2004) 20. Since 1992, of course, a number of other substantive excavations have been conducted as well.


David M. Howard Jr., “History as History: The Search for Meaning,” in Giving the Sense 45. For example, N.P. Lemche states: “I propose that we decline to be led by the Biblical account and instead regard it, like other legendary materials, as essentially ahistorical, this is, as a source which only exceptionally can be verified by other


52David Ord and Robert Coote (minimalists) contend that “[m]any biblical stories are like Animal Farm.They are true, though not historically accurate or factual. They are concerned with proclaiming a message, not with providing us with a chronology of events from the history of Israel or the life of Jesus of Nazareth. We must learn to read them not as history but as message.” David R. Ord and Robert B. Coote, Is the Bible Really True? (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1994) 33, cf. 120.

53Davies writes, “I doubt whether the term ‘Deuteronomistic History’ should continue to be used by scholars as if it were a fact instead of a theory” (Davies, In Search of “Ancient Israel” 131; cf. Lemche, “The Old Testament—A Hellenistic Book?” 163–93).


57 Steiner, “It’s Not There” 27.

58 Ortiz, “Archaeology of David and Solomon” 497–98.


60 Biran and Naveh, “Aramaic Stele Fragment” 93, 95–96.

61 Knoppers, “Vanishing Solomon” 36.

62 Lemche that the “House of David” reference in the Tel Dan inscription only indicates the Judah existed. It does not prove that David was historical, that he ever lived, or that he ever ruled southern Palestine. It is only “circumstantial evidence” for David’s existence. Niels Peter Lemche, The Old Testament between Theology and History: A Critical Survey (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2008) 115.

63 Cartledge, 1 & 2 Samuel, 9.

64 Dever has expended great energy in excoriating the minimalists for the absolute rejection of numerous archaeological discoveries that he regards as compelling evidence for the credibility of various persons and customs found in the Bible. For example, see Dever, What Did the Biblical Writers Know? 124–56; idem, “Save Us from Postmodern Malarkey,” BAR 26/2 (March/April 2000) 28–35, 68–69.

65 Israel Finkelstein, “Digging for the Truth: Archaeology and the Bible,” in The Quest for the Historical Israel: Debating Archaeology and the History of Early Israel (ed. Brian B. Smith; Archaeology and Biblical Studies 17; Atlanta: SBL, 2007) 10–12. It should be noted that by “conservatives” Finkelstein does not refer to evangelicals, but to scholars of the Albright school like William G. Dever and Nelson Glueck. For others he includes in this “conservative” category, see ibid., 200. In that bibliography, Kenneth Kitchen and
the contributors to *The Future of Biblical Archaeology* are labeled as “ultra-conservative.”


68Ibid., 80.

69Ibid. 94, 122–23.

70Ibid. 96–97.

71Ibid. 159–61.

72Ibid. 282–84. Finkelstein and Silberman focus on Tell el-Kheleifah, a site 15 miles north of Elath and contend that there is no evidence of copper mining there. However, the narratives describing Solomon’s reign do not name where he mined copper. See the below section dealing with Khirbet en-Nahas, further to the northeast.


74Finkelstein and Silberman, *David and Solomon* 50–53.

75Ibid. 98–106.

76Ibid. 112.

77Ibid. 90.

78Ibid. 87.

79Ibid. 154–77. The biblical account of the Queen of Sheba’s visit to Solomon is “an anachronistic seventh-century set piece meant to legitimize the participation of Judah in the lucrative Arabian trade” (ibid. 171).


81Dever, *What Did the Biblical Writers Know?* 56.

82Of course, this belief is not at all the same as an evangelical acceptance of the historical reliability of the biblical narratives as a whole.

83Yigael Yadin, “Solomon’s City Wall and Gate at Gezer,” *IEJ* 8 (1958) 80–86.

84Ortiz, “Archaeology of David and Solomon” 499. Ammon Ben Tor’s recent excavations at Hazor confirm Yadin’s conclusions concerning the six-chambered gate structure at Hazor; A. Ben-Tor, “Hazor and the Archaeology of the Tenth Century,” *IEJ* 48 (1998) 1–37; idem, “Excavating Hazor: Solomon’s City Rises from the Ashes,” *BAR* 25/2 (March/April 1999) 26–37, 60.
Amihai Mazar, “Archaeology and the Biblical Narrative: The Case of the United Monarchy,” in One God—One Cult—One Nation: Archaeological and Biblical Perspectives (ed. R. G. Kratz and H. Spieckermann; BZAW 405; Berlin: de Gruyter, 2010) 51–52. In another article, he writes that he believes that “the Bible has reserved data taken from early written documents and oral traditions based on a longlived common memory, although these early traditions were dressed in literary and sometimes mythological clothing, and were inserted into the later Israelite historiographic narrative, with its substantial theological and ideological mantle. Archaeology can help to uncover the historical kernels in the biblical traditions in those cases where they survived, but it is also capable of invalidating the historicity of those texts, as in the case of the conquest narratives” (emphasis added); A. Mazar, “Israeli Archaeology: Achievements and the Current State of Research,” Strata: Bulletin of the Anglo-Israel Archaeological Society 29 (2011) 20.


Steiner, “It’s Not There” 26–30, 32–33, 62–63.


Cahill, “Jerusalem in David and Solomon’s Time” 21.


MacAlister dated this structure to the Jebusite period while Shiloh and Mazar date it to the beginning of Iron Age II, the tenth century. Shiloh wrote: “We assume that it served as a sort of huge supporting wall for a superstructure rising at the top of the eastern slope, at the northern end of the hill of the City of David” (*Excavations at the City of David* 27).


Mazar, *Preliminary Report on the City of David Excavation* 63; Mazar, “Did I Find King David’s Palace?” 25–26. Amihai Mazar points out that the Stepped Stone Structure and the Large Stone Structure are bonded and that the pottery found by all three excavations (Kenyon, Shiloh, and E. Mazar) is homogenous and uncontaminated. Consequently, A. Mazar concludes that the Iron Age I pottery is as close as it can be to the construction date of this large architectural complex. A. Mazar, “Archaeology and the Biblical Narrative” 41.


A. Mazar, “Archaeology and the Biblical Narrative” 45.


Cahill, “Jerusalem at the Time of the United Monarchy” 73.


Mazar, “Archaeology and the Biblical Narrative” 49.


In his essay (ibid. 488–96), Hasel offers ten ways that the discoveries at Khirbet Qeiyafa contribute to our understanding of the tenth century BC and the identification and emergence of Judah. For additional potential areas of contribution, see Yosef


109 Ibid. 488–89. Hasel points out that the survey conducted by Tel Aviv University identified hardly any early Iron II sites in the Shephelah or the Hill Country, creating the false impression that Judah and the Shephelah was a relatively empty land during the tenth and ninth centuries BC (ibid. 489).

110 Ibid. 491.

111 Ibid. 488.

112 Ibid. 490.

113 Ibid. 492.


116 Levin identifies Khirbet Qeiyafa with Saul’s fortified camp (ma’gal—1 Sam 17:20); Y. Levin, “The Identification of Khirbet Qeiyafa: A New Suggestion,” BASOR 367 (August 2012) 81–84. Levin makes no conclusions about the historicity of the event or Saul based on his identification of the settlement.

117 I. Finkelstein originally identified Qeiyafa as a Canaanite city (“A Great United Monarchy? Archaeological and Historical Perspectives,” in One God—One Cult—One Nation: Archaeological and Biblical Perspectives 17–19. However, in a more recent article Finkelstein and A. Fantalkin contend that the settlement was occupied by northern Israelites (“Khirbet Qeiyafa: An Unsensational Archaeological and Historical Interpretation,” TA 29 [2012] 52–54). This goes along with their belief that the northern kingdom developed before the southern kingdom.


119 Mazar, “Archaeology and the Biblical Narrative” 49.

120 This place name means “ruins of copper” in Arabic.


123Ibid. 40.

124Levy and Najjar, “Edom and Copper” 27.

125Ibid. 26.

126Nelson Glueck, *The Other Side of the Jordan* (Cambridge, MA: American Schools of Oriental Research, 1970) 67–73. Glueck (ibid. 73) concluded that, based on the pottery fragments he found, the most important periods of mining activity were during and after the reign of Solomon.


128Piotr Bienkowski, “The Edomites: The Archaeological Evidence from Transjordan,” in *You Shall Not Abhor an Edomite for He Is Your Brother: Edom and Seir in History and Tradition* (*Archaeology and Biblical Studies* 3; ed. Diana V. Edelman; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1995) 44. This king is mentioned on Prism B of Esarhaddon (c. 673–672 BC) and in a description of the first campaign of Ashurbanipal (c. 667 BC). Although he argues for this late dating of Edom as an organized society, he does mention evidence unpublished in 1995 that pointed to the possibility of a tenth-century BC dating for charcoal samples taken from various mining sites in the area of Khirbet en-Nahas (ibid. 45–46).

129Levy and Najjar, “Edom and Copper” 32.

130Ibid. 32–33. The twelfth-century BC date for the earliest layers of their dig is confirmed by the discovery of an Egyptian scarab from the earliest level of a worker’s building that had a radiocarbon date of twelfth or eleventh century BC (ibid. 33). For a fuller treatment of the radiocarbon evidence, see Thomas E. Levy and others, “Reassessing the Chronology of Biblical Edom” 869–77, and Thomas E. Levy and others, “High-Precision Radiocarbon Dating and Historical Biblical Archaeology in Southern Jordan,” *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* 105/483 (October 28, 2008) 16461–65.

131Four-chambered gates in Israel generally preceded the peak of Solomon’s reign in the middle of the tenth century BC when he installed six-chambered gates as part of refortifying strategic Israelite cities (1 Kgs 9:15–19).


In other words, Edom was able to construct major buildings, defend itself with strong fortifications, and create a technologically sophisticated organization to draw copper from ore, and probably able to field an army; Levy and Najjar, “Edom and Copper” 35.

Excavations that have been conducted southwest of Khirbet en-Nahas (Timna) have come to conclusions that are quite similar to the ones offered by Levy and Najjar. See E. Ben-Yosef, R. Shaar, L. Tauxe, and H. Ron, “A New Chronological Framework for Iron Age Copper Production at Timna (Israel),” *BASOR* 367 (August 2012) 31–71.

In an interview conducted by National Geographic, Finkelstein rejects a tenth-century dating for Khirbet en-Nahas without evidence. He compares the fortress at the copper mines with eighth-century Assyrian fortresses built in Israel. He regards the carbon dating of various items at Khirbet en-Nahas as meaningless (Draper, “David and Solomon, Kings of Controversy” 87).


Draper, “David and Solomon, Kings of Controversy” 87.