

THE FACTS ABOUT RICHARD BALDWIN'S 'FACTS'

A critique of Gulf Coast Community College (Panama City, Florida) lecturer Dr. Richard Baldwin's class notes
"Hebrews – The Hebrew Religious Revolution" & "Mesopotamia: The First Civilization"¹

GENERAL OBSERVATIONS:

- The majority of the "facts" Dr. Baldwin quotes in his notes "*The Hebrew Religious Revolution*" are taken from a single source, which immediately raises questions of credibility.
- Many of his more controversial statements and attacks simply parrot unsupported allegations by Graf, Wellhausen & other "*Higher Critics*" of a century and a half ago—the vast majority of which have been debunked & refuted by some of the world's finest archaeologists, linguists, and Old Testament scholars both past & present.

An example of Dr. Baldwin's bogus scholarship: "*Daniel [was] probably written in the 2nd c. B.C. (125 B.C.) [sic] under the pseudonym.*" [i.e. the name Daniel].

- The first problem with the above statement is the Septuagint (LXX). Even if the book of Daniel was translated 165-150 B.C (which I totally reject) it makes no sense for Dr. Baldwin to claim the Hebrew/Aramaic original didn't come into existence until 25-50 years later in 125 B.C.
- While the claim that the book of Daniel was written very "late" (e.g. 165 B.C.) continues to be popular among liberal academics the arguments used to support that position², were thoroughly refuted almost a century ago by Dr. Robert Dick Wilson.³ If the book of Daniel, as well as the rest of the Old Testament books were written anywhere near the times they are purported to be, then Dr. Baldwin's statements and his position is totally destroyed.

Baldwin: "*The spiritual perspective of the Hebrews evolved over time. Early Israelites probably worshiped many gods, including nature spirits dwelling in trees and rocks.*" (p. 1)

– **The Real Facts:** This statement is based on the a priori assumptions of Graf-Wellhausen thinking adapted from Hegel & his theory of "*dialectic*." Wellhausen and his comrades decided to superimpose Darwin's theory of evolution onto religion, the idea being that the Israelite religion "evolved" through various stages. They then went looking for anything that they could take out of context and try to shoe horn into the theory they already were convinced was true. Dr. Gleason Archer responds: "**It is an incontestable fact of history that no other nation (apart from those influenced by the Hebrew faith) ever did develop a true monotheistic religion which commanded the general allegiance of its people... This is the verdict of history: only Israel appeared with a monotheistic religion on a national basis. This is a fact that demands a reasonable explanation in [the] face of the utter contrast which the Hebrew nation presented to all its ancient neighbors.** It does not reduce the difficulty to hypothecate a polytheistic origin for Israel's religion, for this only accentuates the problem of explaining how in Israel—and only in Israel—polytheism gave way to monotheism. ..So far as this writer is aware, there is no other reasonable explanation of this fact except that which is given by the Old Testament itself, that Israel derived this monotheistic faith by direct revelation from God. It was no product of natural Hebrew '*genius for religion*' (as is often asserted), for the Scripture record [& history] witnesses rather to the natural Hebrew genius for irreligion and apostasy."⁴

William F. Albright: "*The discovery of relatively wide limits of textual variation antedating the third century B.C. makes the minute analysis of the Pentateuch which became fashionable after Wellhausen completely*

¹ By Rev. Mike Edwards, B.A., M. Min. – March, 2010. Email address: mike.edwards876@gmail.com (Note: Dr. Baldwin was at the time a teacher at Gulf Coast Community College, & his online notes which I quote from were accessed & printed out by one of his students on 1/25/2010 & 1/21/2010 respectively).

² Walvoord summarizes the main areas where critics have raised objections: "(1) rejection of its canonicity; (2) rejection of detailed prophecy; (3) rejection of miracles; (4) textual problems; (5) problems of language; & (6) alleged historical inaccuracies." [John F. Walvoord, "*Daniel: The Key to Prophetic Revelation*" (Moody Press: Chicago, Illinois, 1971), p. 7]

³ See Robert Dick Wilson, "*Studies in the Book of Daniel*"; "*A Scientific Investigation of the Old Testament*"; "*Is the Higher Criticism Scholarly?*"; Gleason Archer, "*A Survey of Old Testament Introduction*" pp. 421-447; & pages 1-10 of my lecture notes on Daniel-mwe.

⁴ Gleason Archer, Jr., "*A Survey of Old Testament Introduction*" (Moody Press: Chicago, IL, 1994 revised edition), pp. 99, 151-152.

absurd...Such a subjective approach to literary-historical problems was always suspect and has now become irrational.”⁵

Baldwin: “Many scholars today doubt that the early books of the Hebrew Bible reflect the true history of the early Israelites. They argue that the early books of the Bible, written centuries after the events described, preserve only what the Israelites came to believe about themselves and that recently discovered archaeological evidence often contradicts the details of the biblical account.” (p. 1)

– **The Real Facts:**

- a. **There is an enormous amount of evidence supporting the veracity, accuracy & historical integrity of the entire Hebrew Old Testament, including, perhaps surprisingly, the earliest books!** A few examples: The names of the five cities mentioned in *Genesis 14* have been found even listed in the very same order on tablets at the massive Ebla archaeological site;⁶ “Charnel houses” (i.e. above ground tombs or burial houses) have been excavated by archaeologists near the Dead Sea in the general location of Sodom & Gomorrah (*Gen. 18-19*) and directly confirm the Genesis account in amazing detail; The book of *Deuteronomy* is written in the form of a Suzerainty Treaty of the 2nd millennium B.C., not in the form of later such treaties (see below); Excavations at the site of the city of *Jericho* (*Joshua 6*) provide incontrovertible evidence for the accuracy of the Old Testament account, Dr. Baldwin’s statements notwithstanding (see below); etc.

- b. **The early books of the Bible were NOT written centuries after the events described.** Most “*Higher Critics*” claim that Deuteronomy and the other books of the Pentateuch, etc, were written around the time of Josiah (c. 650-620 B.C.). However archaeological discoveries at sites such as those at Nuzi, Mari, etc., describe customs, laws and traditions of the 2nd millennium B.C. which were long forgotten by 650 B.C. but which are incredibly accurately described in the Pentateuch (first five books of the Bible), thus clearly attesting to an early date for its writing! Unfortunately, the prejudicial bias of skeptics and higher critics continues to blind them to this truth. Furthermore, they continue to hold out against any admission that the Old Testament text could have been written when it claims to have been written, perhaps not realizing that many of their liberal comrades who have some intellectual integrity have surrendered on that point. Archer notes, “It is because of the cumulative impact of all these findings [archaeological evidence] that archaeologists like W.F. Albright felt constrained to concede the essential accuracy of the Pentateuch. Albright puts it this way: ‘*The contents of our Pentateuch are, in general, very much older than the date at which they were finally edited; new discoveries continue to confirm the historical accuracy or the literary antiquity of detail after detail in it...It is accordingly, sheer hype-criticism to deny the substantially Mosaic character of the Pentateuchal tradition*’”⁷ Archer comments, “Against the background of this confidence, it is interesting to compare the treatment of the Josianic date (so pivotal to the whole Documentary Hypothesis) accorded by the twentieth-century critics from 1919 onward. Some of these insurgents shifted the date of D’s origin to a much earlier period than 621 B.C., while others preferred to transfer it to the post-exilic age. **But both groups were unanimous in condemning the Josianic date as altogether unthinkable in view of the data of the text itself and of the historical conditions known to have prevailed at that time.**”⁸

- c. **Statements in Genesis clearly attest to an incredible knowledge & understanding of the culture and customs of the time of the patriarchs, that is inexplicable, unless written it claims to have been written.** Some examples: Servants being allowed to become an heir if the couple had no son [*Gen. 13*]; that contract being allowed to be abrogated if the couple later had a son [*Gen. 15*]; “The Tell Mardikh tablets (ca.2300 B.C.) contain the name Jerusalem and hundreds of other place and personal names like Hazor, Megiddo, Gaza, Abram, and Israel”⁹ [*Gen. 14*, etc]; Marriage & burial customs and

⁵ W. F. Albright, “*Yahweh and the Gods of Canaan*” (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1968), p. 29; quoted in Archer, p. 102.

⁶ See McDowell, Archer, etc.

⁷ Archer, p. 186 (interior quote by Albright from AP, p. 224).

⁸ Archer, p. 108.

⁹ Charles C. Ryrie, “*The Ryrie Study Bible*” (Moody Press: Chicago, IL, 1994), p. 25.

land purchase rules e.g. “Abraham wanted to buy only the *cave of Machpelah*, but Ephron wished also to sell him the *field* in which it was located [because] Hittite law required Ephron to be responsible for dues on the entire property if he sold Abraham only the cave, but not if he sold him the entire parcel.”¹⁰ [*Gen. 23, 24*]; Marriage only within the family line [*Gen. 24*]; “Birthright” rules & the importance of the “blessing” [*Gen. 25; 27*]; marriage traditions & the importance of family “idols” in regard to inheritance [*Gen. 29; 31*]; the Suzerainty treaty format in Deuteronomy which is specific to the time period of around 1500 B.C. in uncanny detail and accuracy, etc). In addition, the earliest copy of part of the Old Testament was recently discovered dated at c. 1250 B.C., 600 years before Dr. Baldwin & his higher critical sources claim the Old Testament was put together. Obviously, if we have copies of part of the Old Testament in 1250 B.C., it was not written 600 years later!

- d. **Archaeological discoveries and inscriptions support the historicity of the book of Genesis nearly to the dawn of human history** (e.g. *Gen. 10, 12, 14, 15, 19, 24*, etc.—as well as confirming much of the material in the other early books of the Old Testament. For example, *Genesis 10*: “In 1974 to 1976 excavations at Tell Mardikh (ancient Ebla, south of Aleppo in northern Syria) uncovered about 15,000 clay tablets inscribed in the cuneiform script with an early NW Semitic dialect of c. 2300 B.C.—the time of the Babylonian king Naram-Sin (equated by some with Nimrod of *Gen. 10:9*) who campaigned in the area. The texts include parts of the Epic of Gilgamesh, which includes the Babylonian accounts of the Flood, the epic of creation, the Babylonian ‘Job,’ literary, historical, administrative, and school texts of a type well known in later Syria (Ugarit). They thus attest an early literary tradition as already previously well known from Babylonia. New light is now thrown on the kingdom of Ebrum (cf. Eber of *Gen. 10:21*) who had Diddiya as his vassal in Assyria (Ashur). The latter, as Tudia, is mentioned in the early genealogy heading the Assyrian King List as one of their ancestors ‘who lived in tents.’ He was [previously] assumed to be a ‘fictitious’ eponymous ancestor. The texts mention Cyprus, Mesopotamia (Erbil), Palestine, and Canaan, as well as Hazor, Lachish, Gezer, Dor, Megiddo, and possibly Urusalem (Jerusalem) and Sinai. The naming of such individuals as Abarama and Isma’el, names that occur elsewhere in the ancient Near East, is not a direct reference to the later biblical characters of the name. At this time Syro-Palestine seems to have been the home of many nomadic groups... [and] it should, moreover, counter the prevalent tendency of some scholars to belittle the reliability of the patriarchal narratives.”¹¹
- e. **The entire “Documentary Hypothesis” theory has been debunked and discredited by many conservative scholars**¹² (i.e. the idea that a bunch of different writers/editors i.e. “redactors” got together hundreds of years after the fact and compiled pretend historical accounts long after the fact). As noted above, it is based on a priori reasoning and assumptions. Albright (who was himself a Documentarian) admits, “Wellhausen still ranks in our eyes as the greatest Biblical scholar of the nineteenth century [sic]. But his standpoint is antiquated and his picture of the early evolution of Israel is sadly distorted.”¹³ Perhaps surprisingly, in “a book endorsed by an editorial board consisting of American Liberal clergymen...A more recent author, John Elder, states: ‘It is not too much to say that it was the rise of the science of archaeology that broke the deadlock between historians and the orthodox Christian. Little by little, one city after another, one civilization after another, one culture after another, whose memories were enshrined only in the bible, were restored to their proper places in ancient history by the studies of archaeologists...Contemporary records of Biblical events have been unearthed and the uniqueness of Biblical revelation has been emphasized by contrast and comparison to newly discovered religions of ancient peoples. Nowhere has archaeological discovery refuted the

¹⁰ Ryrie, p. 38, italics in the original.

¹¹ Wiseman, op cit., pp. 13-14.

¹² for thorough refutations see Gleason Archer, “*A Survey of Old Testament Introduction*”; Josh McDowell, “*Evidence That Demands a Verdict-Vol. 2*”; Eugene Merrill, “*A Survey of the Old Testament*”; Raymond Dillard & Tremper Longman III, “*An Introduction to the Old Testament*”; Bill Arnold & Bryan Beyer, “*Encountering the Old Testament*” the writings of Oswald Allis, Edward Young, Robert Dick Wilson, etc)

¹³ W. F. Albright, “*Japheth in the Tents of Shem,*” in *The American Scholar*, 42:692-94 (1941), p. 181, quoted by Archer, p. 174.

bible as history.”¹⁴ Archer quotes J.A. Thompson who states, “Finally, it is perfectly true to say that biblical archaeology has done a great deal to correct the impression that was abroad at the close of the last [19th] century and in the early part of this [20th] century...If one impression stands out more clearly than another today, it is that on all hands the over-all historicity of the Old Testament tradition is admitted.”¹⁵ Archer bluntly states, “To sum up, it is very doubtful whether the Wellhausen hypothesis is entitled to the status of scientific respectability. There is so much of special pleading, circular reasoning, questionable deductions from unsubstantiated premises, that it is absolutely certain that its methodology would never stand up in a court of law. Scarcely any of the laws of evidence respected in legal proceedings are honored by the architects of this Documentary Theory. Any attorney who attempted to interpret a will or statute or deed of conveyance in the bizarre and irresponsible fashion of the Source Critics of the Pentateuch would find his case thrown out of court without delay.”¹⁶

Baldwin: “*There is no evidence that the ‘patriarchs’ Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob ever existed, were ever more than legendary characters of myth.*” (p.1)

– **The Real Facts:** a) Ur, rediscovered in 1854 and thoroughly excavated by Sir Arthur Wooley in the 1920’s & 30’s, was found to be an advanced civilization with writing, mathematics, etc. One particularly interesting discovery there was two stone artifacts that have the name Abram on them! Scholars are divided on whether these were personal names or titles, but it’s truly incredible that Abram’s very name has been found in writings discovered at Ur & other locations as well!¹⁷ The name Abraham has also been found elsewhere (Archer quote). Wiseman adds, “The patriarchs fit best into the early Middle Bronze Age (MBA I)...The Genesis narrative accords well with the archaeologically known occupation of the city-states that were a dominant feature of Palestine. The occupation of Bethel, Shechem, Hebron (Kirjath-Arba), and the Dead Sea region of Sodom and Gomorrah is confirmed, as is that of the Negeb in southwest Palestine where flocks and herds (cf. Gen. 18:7; 20:1; 24:62) and grain crops (Gen. 26:12; 37:7) are traced to MBA I. There is valuable evidence of the verisimilitude of the patriarchal personal and place names at this time. Thus, the name ‘Abram’ occurs in a text from Dilbat (Aba[m]rama) and Aburahana (Abraham) and Zabilan (Zebulon) in Egyptian execration texts. Turahi (terah), Nahur (Nahor), Sarugi (Serug), Laban, and Mar (Ben)-Yamin (Benjamin) are in eighteenth-century texts from Mari with reference to the Harran area and Ya’qub-il (Jacob) from nearby Chagar-Bazar.”¹⁸[!] b) All of the cultural information and customs described in the Genesis account if Abraham, Isaac & Jacob accords precisely with everything we know about the culture and customs of the day—many of which had been lost and were completely undiscovered until the last couple of centuries, thereby testifying to the truthfulness of the Genesis accounts and conversely refuting the entire idea that the books of the Pentateuch, etc., were composed around 620 B.C. during the time of king Josiah. A few examples:

Baldwin: “*Ur was long gone before the Chaldees, so Ur of the Chaldees is an anachronism.*” (p. 1)

– **The Real Facts:** a) The archaeological facts regarding the city of Ur is enormous and irrefutable! A number of the greatest archaeologists of history, including Sir Leonard Woolley, who headed up the largest and lengthiest dig on the site of Ur (1922-1934) on behalf of British Museum, have testified that Ur was a thriving city at the time Abraham would have left it (see immediately below). b) As to it being referred to as “*Ur of the Chaldees*” when, as Dr. Baldwin says, the Chaldeans had not lived there yet would be similar to saying “*When President Clinton was the governor Arkansas.*” Mr. Clinton didn’t become president until after he had served as governor in Arkansas, but places, like people are sometimes given a name or title that it may not have held until later, chronologically speaking (e.g. Ramses, which was also probably named after the fact in the book of Genesis). c) As far as Ur itself is concerned, for a very long time the very existence of Ur was denied by critics and it was considered “legendary” & a “myth”, much as Dr. Baldwin now labels Abraham, Isaac & Jacob (see above).

¹⁴ Archer, p. 174 (interior quote, John Elder, “*Prophets, Idols and Diggers*” [New York: Bobbs Merrill, 1960], p. 16.

¹⁵ Archer, p. 174.

¹⁶ Archer, p. 116. It should be pointed out that Dr. Archer, in addition to holding a variety of academic degrees (B.A., M.A., Ph.D, Harvard University & B.D. from Princeton University) also holds an L.L.B. from the Suffolk Law School, so is well equipped to render such a legal judgment.-mve

¹⁷ See Archer, p. _____

¹⁸ Wiseman, pp. 16-17.

However, much to such skeptics' surprise and chagrin, Ur was discovered in 1854 and it turns out people had unknowingly been walking over the top of Ur, which was buried under the sands of time, for centuries and they didn't even know it! And the skeptics of Dr. Baldwin's ilk had to eat their words. Woolley, who led the archaeological effort relates some of the details and describes with a bit of humor and British spelling, what they found:

“Nothing helps an excavator [i.e. archaeologist] like violent destruction. If a building has fallen slowly into decay, one can be sure that the impoverished inhabitants have removed everything of value. The best thing that can happen is a volcanic eruption which buries a place so deeply that nobody goes back to [salvage] his belongings; but the ideal conditions of a Pompeii are seldom met with, and one must be thankful for smaller mercies. If an enemy sacks a temple or a town, he is sure to overlook some objects at least which were of small intrinsic value for him, but may be very precious for the archaeologist; and if he was so considerate as to set fire to the place and overthrow its walls, there is the further probability that his search was hurried and that no one else troubled to look for what he left behind. So it was here [in Ur]. The ashes represented the ceilings and the paneling of the walls, and below them, lying on the brick pavement, there were hundreds of fragments of alabaster and soapstone vases and splinters of broken statues. One small statue we found entire, a heavy and clumsy figure carved in black stone representing the goddess Bau seated on a throne supported by geese; only her nose (which was made separately) was missing, and round the head were the small drilled holes to secure the gold crown which the robbers had torn off before discarding the statue... One object was of peculiar interest. We found part of a stone cup inscribed with a dedication by the daughter of King Dungi, herself a high priestess of the Moon-god; another cup fragment bore the name of Sargon of Akkad, the great king who reigned 200 years before Dungi; and then it was found that the two fragments joined together and that both inscriptions belonged to one and the same cup. How it came about that the princess owned what had been so long before the property of King Sargon we cannot tell, but that she did so is another proof of the way in which in the ancient as in the modern world, objects might long survive their generation...

“Scattered at random in the chambers of the temple we found a number of inscribed clay tablets, part of the ordinary business records of the building. Such tablets are very often dated by the years of the reigning king, and on these we had represented most of the kings of Larsa, several years of Hammurabi, and the reign of his son almost continuously down to the eleventh year, and that was the last of the series ... we had expected to find very modest dwellings one story high and built of mud brick consisting of three or four rooms opening on to a court: instead of this we discovered that in Abraham's time men lived in houses built with walls of burnt brick below, rising in mud brick above, plaster and white wash hiding the change in material, two stories high, and containing as many as thirteen or fourteen rooms round a central paved court which supplied light and air to the house... the corners of the narrow [streets] were carefully rounded off to prevent injury to goods or riders. Through the front door of a house one passed into a tiny lobby with a drain in its floor where the visitor might wash his hands or feet, and from that into the central court. On one side rose the brick stairs leading to the upper floor, and behind the stairs was a lavatory with its terra-cotta drain; then came the kitchen, distinguished by its fireplace and the stone grinders left on the ground; a reception-room with two doors or one door unusually wide was for guests... Though the walls stood in some places as much as 10 feet high, there was no sign of ceiling-beams, so the ground-floor rooms must have been lofty, a great advantage in this hot climate... In the middle of each courtyard there was a drain to carry off water ... An omen quoted on a contemporary tablet states that 'rooms opening out of each other are unlucky, but those opening on to the court bring good luck...

“We must revise considerably our ideas of the Hebrew patriarch when we learn that his earlier years were spent in such sophisticated surroundings; he was the citizen of a great city and inherited the tradition of an ancient and highly organized civilization. The houses themselves bespoke comfort and even luxury... one or two stores of tablets [bore] witness to their intellectual interests. We found copies of the hymns which were used in the service of the temples, and with them mathematical tables ranging from plain sums in addition to formulae for the extraction of square and cube roots, and other texts in which the writers had copied out the old building inscriptions extant in the city and had compiled in this way an abbreviated history of the principal temples. And another illuminating discovery was that of the private chapels attached to the houses... sometimes beneath the floors we found... single burials, the bodies set under inverted clay coffins shaped like baths. It was the custom that the dead man continued to inhabit the house in which he had lived and his heirs dwelt on in the rooms above

his grave: the custom, barbarous as it may seem at first sight, accords with that feeling of family continuity which is so strong, for example, in the ancient Hebrews. Occasionally we unearthed in the house ruins some of the small clay figures of which very many examples have been found in other parts of the residential site, figures representing gods and their worshippers...these clay copies afford invaluable material for the study of contemporary art. They have a further interest in that they are the *teraphim*, the household images which Rachel stole from her father and Jacob buried under an oak in Shechem...

“One other aspect of life in the City of Abraham is brought into relief by our excavations...there was found a hoard of many hundreds of tablets belonging to the business archives of the building. As king and landowner the god received rent and tithes and offerings of all sorts, and since there was no coined money, all these dues were paid in kind and required storage-room in the temple; hence the need of the magazines which surround every sanctuary [cf. The Temple in Jerusalem]. The Sumerians were essentially business-like, and no transaction was recognized in law unless it was witnessed to by a written document, and so for all incomings the priests drew up formal receipts of which copies were filed in the temple archives; whether it were a herd of sheep or a single cheese, a bale of wool or copper ore from foreign parts, the receipt was duly made out and entered. As the stores were drawn upon for the use of the temple, animals required for sacrifice, oil for squeaking door-hinges, wood for make a statue or gold for adorning it, the responsible official drew out an issue voucher giving the name of the recipient and his authority for the demand, and copies of these too were filed; a great hoard of these such as we found Dublal-makh throws no little light on the secular activities of a religious house...Further there were on the temple premises regular factories where the raw materials paid as tribute were manufactured into finished goods, and we have elaborate balance-sheets of such a factory in which women attached to the service of the gods were employed in spinning wool and weaving cloth, balance-sheets drawn up every month and three months with a nominal roll of the workers...It is all very practical and curiously modern, and again we see how very different from what we might have thought were the antecedents of the Hebrew people.”¹⁹

Masters adds: “Excavations at Ur were carried out by Sir Leonard Woolley between 1922 and 1934...In the materials from these excavations there is no direct evidence of the presence of Abraham’s family, but they entirely confirm the descriptive language of the Genesis record. The city was clearly an extremely wealthy and sophisticated place, and the royal Tombs of Ur have yielded up magnificent treasures. According to the bible, Abraham grew up in or outside the city during the 22nd century BC. The Ur excavations centred on the great Ziggurat (a temple to the moon god) ...The city had two-storied houses, main drainage, and a commercial system based on written contracts, money, receipts and similar tokens of a trading system. [on display in the British Museum] Several beautiful objects of art also illustrate the authenticity of biblical descriptions, although they predate the time of Abraham. The depiction of an army or, as it used to be thought, a wealthy family on the move, helps us picture the long journey of Abraham and his family...The statuette of a ram made of gold, silver, lapis and shell, depicts ‘a ram caught in a thicket’. Two like this were discovered. For to this have been subject of an artist show that this situation was not so rare. Once again, the statue pre-dates the offering of Isaac, but helps to authenticate the narrative...There are impressive items of literature, advanced mathematics, and science, and evidence of widespread literacy among the people. (A recipe for glass is displayed in Room 55 [of the Museum] from which Pilkington’s once successfully made small cups.) The exhibits help the viewer to appreciate the advanced culture of Ur, and the great test of faith for Abraham when he left (in all probability) a secure house, forsook all and set out for the land which God would show him.”²⁰

Baldwin: “*The repeated references to camels though we know through archaeology that camels were not domesticated as beasts of burden earlier than the late second millennium and were not widely used in that capacity in the ancient Near East until well after 1000 BC*” (sic) (p. 1)

– **The Real Facts:** Dr. Gleason Archer destroys Dr. Baldwin’s statement with nearly a page of citations from more than half a dozen different sources establishing that camels *WERE* in use in the time of Abraham. He writes: “It was the contention of many archaeologists, Albright included, that the references to camels...were anachronistic embellishments coming from later centuries...This deduction was drawn from a lack of clear extra-biblical reference to camels prior to the twelfth century in any of the archaeological discoveries made before

¹⁹ Sir Leonard Woolley, “*Ur of the Chaldees*” (Penguin Books: Harmondsworth/Middlesex, England, 1952 revised version), pp. 121-132.

²⁰ Masters, pp. 65-72 (including photos of the various artifacts on display in the British Museum).

1950. But like so many arguments from silence, this contention must be abandoned as discredited by subsequent findings., Kenneth Kitchen points out²¹ that even apart from a probably (but disputed) eighteenth century allusion to camels in a fodder list from Tell Atshana, there is undoubtedly a reference to the domestication of camels in some of the lexical lists from the Old Babylonian period (2000-1700 B.C.). An early Sumerian text from Nippur alludes to camel's milk.²² Back in the twenty-fifth century B.C., the bones of a camel were interred under a house at Mari.²³ Similar discoveries have been made in Palestinian sites in levels dating from 2000 B.C. onward. From Byblos in Phoenicia comes an incomplete camel figurine dating from the nineteenth or eighteenth century.²⁴ More recent discovery has further shown this negative judgment to be unjustified.²⁵ Forbes cites an early Dynastic limestone vessel shaped like a recumbent pack camel; also discovered are pottery camels' heads from Hierakonpolis and Abydos in the Egyptian First Dynasty²⁶[!] . Also included is a figurine of a recumbent camel at Byblos during the Middle Kingdom Period²⁷ Oppenheim found at Gozan (tell Halaf) an orthostat of an armed camel rider which was dated 3000 B.C. or at least early 3rd millennium. A small camel figurine discovered at Megiddo closely resembles Dynasty I types. Middle Kingdom camel bones were found at Gezer²⁸ The Akkadian term for male camel, *ibulu/udra/uduru*; for female camel, *udrate*; for dromedary, *gammalu*: (E-G v:116.10) in Coptic (*jamul*). (The Sumerian term was ANSE A-AABBA: 'an ass of the sea-lands or dromedary'). Once again the Old Testament record has been vindicated as a completely trustworthy and historical account, despite the temporary lack of archaeological confirmation.²⁹ Famed Assyriologist Dr. D. J. Wiseman succinctly summarizes: "Camel bones from Mari c. 2500; representations on seals, plaques, and figurines from Byblos, Babylonia, and Egypt; and references in Sumerian and Babylonian texts show that the citing of camels in Abraham's time is no anachronism. At that time camels were ridden behind the hump and, with donkeys, were used as slow-moving beasts of burden, though their major domestication and use in war did not occur until c. 1500-1250 B.C."³⁰ Can you say "Toasted"?

Baldwin: "The Philistines had not established their settlements along the coastal plain of Canaan until sometime after 1200 BC." (p. 1)

– **The Real Facts:** Dr. D.J. Wiseman unequivocally states: "Just before 1900 B.C., a new civilization emerged that was to dominate Palestine without any apparent break for seven hundred years. These peoples, coming mainly from Syria and Phoenicia, brought with them a new type of wheel-made pottery. Once more the incursions appear to have been gradual and can be traced at Megiddo, Tell Beit Mirsim, and Tell el-pAjjul. Egyptian execration texts show that Palestine and Transjordan were still occupied by semi-nomads who controlled the areas between the Canaanite cities that were once more expanding on their earlier sites."³¹ Dr. Baldwin surely is aware of the Merneptah Stele, a massive stele that contains the first usage of the name "Israel" and is dated ca. 1227-1212 B.C. Incidentally, it was found in Egypt, the country where he brashly asserts that not one scrap of archaeological evidence has ever been found that supports the Old Testament story of Israel, etc. The Amarna Letters also provide solid evidence that there were people groups living in cities in Canaan from the 1400's onward, and that they were being attacked—probably by Joshua and the Israelites—and were crying out to Egypt for military help! What a coincidence. (add textbook quotes 1900, then 1200)

(cont.)

²¹ AOOT, p. 79.

²² cf. *Chicago Assyrian Dictionary* [1960]: 7:2b.

²³ Andre Parrot, in *Syria* 32 [1955]: 323.

²⁴ Roland de Vaux, in *Revue Biblique*, 56 [1949]: 9.

²⁵ Cf. R.J. Forbes, *Studies in Ancient Technology*, vol. 2 [Brill, 1965], chap. 4, pp. 194-213; 'The Coming of the Camel,' p. 197.

²⁶ *Ibid*, p. 198.

²⁷ *Ibid*, p. 203.

²⁸ p. 209.

²⁹ Archer, *op cit.*, pp. 180-181.

³⁰ Donald J. Wiseman & Edwin Yamauchi, "Archaeology and the Bible: An Introductory Study" (Zondervan Publishing House: Grand Rapids, MI, 1979), p. 18.

³¹ Wiseman, p. 16.

Baldwin: “*The obvious derivation of several biblical stories from the earlier Mesopotamian tradition (the Creation, the Flood, the Garden of Eden).*” (p. 1)

– **The Real Facts:** Anyone can see that there are similarities between writings such as Hammurabi’s [alt. Hammurapi’s] Law Code (c.1700 B.C.) & some of the laws recorded in the Pentateuchal books. What is amazing is how advocates for late dating the Old Testament such as Dr. Baldwin miss the obvious implication: such similarities clearly point to the books of the Pentateuch being composed very early i.e. at least around Hammurabi’s time—not hundreds of years later. By the way, isn’t it strange too how such critics never express any doubt regarding the authenticity and early date for items such as Hammurabi’s law code, yet they dismiss out-of-hand similar claims of early composition for the biblical writings. Do I detect a bit of an agenda here, and more than a bit of anti-Christian bias? Finally, while there are some surface similarities between such ancient documents, there are *very major* differences between such Babylonian writings and the early books of the Old Testament. Masters points out in regard to a tablet from the Royal Library at Nineveh: [It] is one of seven copied in the seventh century BC from a much older version, thought to have been handed down from around 1800 BC. It calls for comment because cynics have claimed that this ancient epic (along with others) was the source of the *Genesis* account of creation. In the Mesopotamian story the two original gods Apsu, the male, and Tiamat, the female, are created from water. They then beget all other gods, but these ‘children’ make so much noise that Apsu is unable to sleep and decides to kill them. However, before he can do so, one of the offspring puts a spell on him and kills him. Tiamat, to avenge his death, takes up the cudgels [clubs-used for beating], but Marduk (another offspring) eliminates her, splitting her in two, and the two parts of her corpse become the heavens and the Earth. Marduk relieves the other gods of all manual work by creating man (from the blood of a defeated giant god), and Marduk then becomes the chief god. **Needless to say, none of this has anything in common with the biblical account of creation.** Such legends do, however, bear witness to an instinctive human awareness that the universe was created by a superior power. As far as creation is concerned, the bible says that man was made in the image of one holy and almighty God. Then man disobeyed and lost his spiritual life, becoming a corrupt rebel. The Mesopotamian creation legend, by contrast, is a polytheistic fairyland, full of petty, corrupt, ill-tempered and even vicious gods who are merely a reflection of sinful people, and therefore a human literary creation.”³²

Observations regarding the *Epic of Gilgamesh* flood story: “[is] one of several ancient Mesopotamian flood stories...telling the adventures of Gilgamesh, a legendary ruler who searches for immortality...Once again, biblical cynics claim that the *Genesis* account of Noah’s flood was derived from ancient legends such as this. Rather wild remarks have been made to the effect that the *Epic of Gilgamesh* story ‘follows the lines of Noah closely’. However, as many scholars have pointed out, there are vast respects.

“The flood story in the *Gilgamesh Epic* has some elements which are similar to the *Genesis* flood, although it must be said that a number of similarities are surely inevitable. To escape a flood, for example, one needs a boat, and to maintain life afterwards, one needs to take animals on board. Accordingly, the hero, Utnapishtim, had a boat (a cube 180 feet across) and took some animals with him, though not quite as Noah did. He also took gold and silver – a sure sign of human fiction because he would hardly need such things if his family were to be the sole survivors of a worldwide flood. In the *Genesis* flood, as the waves abated Noah sent out a raven and a dove, while the *Gilgamesh* boat sends out a dove, swallow and raven.

“Overall, however, the accounts are characterized by numerous *dissimilarities* – such as when Utnapishtim offers a sacrifice to the gods which touches off a row between them. The gods of this epic always emerge as materialistic, greedy, violent, proud, frightened and vindictive creatures capable of unbelievably crude barbarism.

“Any similarities which occur between the *Genesis* and the *Gilgamesh Epic* flood stories may be accounted for by the assumption that the latter has its roots in an oral tradition stretching right back to a literal, historic flood. Though subsequently evolving into pagan mythology, the surviving Babylonian legend of a great flood bears witness to a past reality. It is inconceivable that the writer of the overwhelmingly more sophisticated narrative of *Genesis* would have stolen anything from the primitive polytheistic legend. Far from such ‘versions’ undermining

³² Masters, op cit., pp. 85-86, italics in the original.

the *Genesis* record, we believe that the superior dignity, theology and language of the *Genesis* narrative marks it out as being inspired and true.”³³

Baldwin: “There is no archaeological or historical evidence for the story of Joseph or the Hebrews’ enslavement in Egypt!” (p. 2)

– **The Real Facts:**

a) This is an “*argument from silence*” and as Dr. A.E. Wilder-Smith, a man with three earned doctorates once remarked in regard to a similarly weak logical fallacy called circular reasoning, “*it is not exactly the highest form of reasoning.*”³⁴ To say that because you haven’t found an inscription or other archaeological artifact in a given location referring to a certain person or event, that it proves that the event didn’t happen, is a very weak argument. As R. D. Wilson stated long ago, “*When we once attempt to argue on the basis of what is not contained in documents, one man’s conjecture is just about as good as another’s.*”³⁵

b) To the allegation that we find nothing in official Egyptian writings and statements by the Pharaohs about a massive cataclysm of plagues and the destruction of an empire such as is described in the book of Exodus, if true, it should certainly come as no surprise. [I say “if” in light of some evidence cited below, as well as in other parts of this paper. Furthermore, archaeological evidence may surface in the future.] The Pharaohs like most other kings of their day were well known for exaggerating their “triumphs” and not recording anything negative that may have occurred during their reign (cf. Sennacherib’s description of his [failed] attempt to capture Jerusalem described on the Taylor Prism, as well as on an eight-sided prism & a burnt inscription from Nineveh, all three of which are on display in the British Museum) Vos agrees and points out that one obvious reason that we don’t find records in Egypt of such a devastating event that wreaked incredible havoc on their country and highlighted the impotence of their many gods and inability of their great pharaoh to prevent a huge workforce of lowly slaves from just walking right out of their country; is due to the fact that “**the Egyptians never preserved in their inscriptions anything uncomplimentary to themselves; therefore we gain no help from such sources as to when the Exodus occurred or even whether or not there was such an event.** So, when seeking to solve problems of this nature, we must turn to other avenues of information. [adding]...It is always a good idea to begin with scriptural evidence [though biased anti-Bible critics would not agree]. As far as the date of the Exodus is concerned, direct assistance is afforded in I Kings 6:1, where the assertion is made that the Exodus took place 480 years before the fourth year of Solomon’s reign—when he began the temple...Confirming evidence to this same effect is provided by the Garstang expedition at Jericho (1930-1936) [which has been confirmed by Dr. Bryant Wood in 1990]. The excavator reported that the Canaanite city fell about 1400 B.C., and allowing for a forty-year wandering in the wilderness, the date of the Exodus approximates 1440...Furthermore, an approximate date of 1400 B.C. for the conquest of Palestine is not an impossibility from the standpoint of Egyptian history, because about this time the Amarna Age begins; and Egyptian control in Canaan rapidly disintegrates. To elucidate, the Amarna Period (about 1400-1350 B.C.) is a time when the kings of Egypt are much more interested in making religious reforms and expending the energies of the nation on the gratification of their personal desires than they are on maintaining a powerful empire...the Egyptian puppet rulers of Palestine sent the Pharaohs frequent calls for help (see above pt.) during this half century. Local disturbances and the invasion of the Habiru (possibly to be equated with the Hebrews) were the occasion of such requests.”³⁶ Vos adds: “It still remains, however, to identify the Pharaoh of the oppression and Exodus. If we follow the Steindorff and Seele Chronology of Egyptian history, the early date of the Exodus would fall within the reign of Amenhotep II (1450-1425), while Pharaoh of the great oppression would be Thutmose III (1482-1450). Moreover, if Moses were eighty years old at the time of the Exodus, his birth probably took place during the reign of Thutmose I (1525-1508), and his famous daughter was Hatshepsut, possibly the princess who rescued Moses from the reeds along the Nile. In further interesting relationship to the whole narrative is the Dream Inscription of Thutmose IV (1425-1412), the successor of Amenhotep II. As the story goes, one day Prince Thutmose was hunting in the desert and fell asleep in the shadow of the Sphinx, which appeared to him in a dream and told him that he was to be the next king and asked him to rehabilitate the Sphinx. Since Thutmose was so surprised at the announcement, he apparently was not the next in

³³ Masters, pp. 86-88, italics in the original, underlining added.

³⁴ from a film series in which he was narrator and a main speaker.

³⁵ Robert Dick Wilson, p. 43.

³⁶ Howard F. Vos, “*An Introduction to Bible Archaeology*” (Moody Press: Chicago, IL, 1956), pp. 59-61.

line for the throne and therefore not the oldest son. It may be, then, that his elder brother was killed in the tenth plague. Incidentally, a red granite slab commemorating this dream still stands between the paws of the Sphinx, and any traveler to Egypt may see it there.”³⁷

Actually, after all the false allegations and mistaken assertions that higher critics have made against the Bible over the past couple of centuries, from which they have had to retreat from, apologize for, or eat crow over, one would think that critics would learn their lesson and be a bit more cautious in attacking the veracity of the Bible—especially by using an argument from silence, as Dr. Baldwin has done here. But as the saying goes, “*Fools rush in where angels fear to tread.*”

c) Furthermore, it should be carefully noted that “*Archaeology is not an exact science. Therefore its results may undergo subjective selection and interpretation [I would suggest that Finkelstein, whom Dr. Baldwin quotes multitudinous times, is a prime example of this!-mwe], though the methodology and excavation techniques are basically agreed upon among scholars of various nationalities. However...only a fraction of antiquity has survived or been recovered. In Palestine alone, of more than six thousand sites surveyed, fewer than two hundred have been excavated, and of these, only twenty-eight to any major extent. Roughly the same proportion applies to Syria, Jordan, Iraq, and Iran but not to Egypt. Some sites are still occupied (e.g. Damascus, Jerusalem, Erbil) and can therefore be only partially examined. The precise location of some prominent OT places...is still questioned....of the estimated half a million documents from OT times—mostly those on clay and sherds from outside Palestine—fewer than ten percent have as yet been published.*”³⁸

d) Descriptions contained in the books of Genesis and Exodus evidence a truly amazing familiarity with Egyptian culture and customs. For example, “In Egypt the Joseph history (Gen 37-50 fits well into the late Middle Kingdom (Dynasty XIII) and Hyksos period. The Wilbur papyri (c. 1740 B.C.) shows in a list of one hundred slaves that more than half were ‘Asiatics,’ i.e. Semites from Palestine, among them ‘s-ra (Asher) and sp-ra (cf. Shiophra, Exod 1:15). Some of these rose to higher positions and some were domestic servants. The twenty silver shekels paid for Joseph (Gen. 37:28) was the average slave price for the eighteenth century[B.C.], whereas later the price rose until by the fifteenth to fourteenth centuries it was from forty to fifty shekels. A Ras Shamra text (RS 20.21) tells of a man in southern Syria who was sold by his companion to passing Egyptians, who, however, abandoned him, taking only his goods. The use of contemporarily attested technical terms (e.g., ‘butler,’ ‘baker’ as courtiers [saris]), the prison procedure, and proper names, parallels with the Egyptian Tale of Two Brothers: the court etiquette (Gen. 41:14), the investiture, and economic milieu all bear witness to the validity of the Joseph narratives. The fact that some Egyptian names (Potiphar, Asenath, Zaphenath-Paneah) are not attested in texts till the twelfth to tenth centuries B.C. could be due to the sparsity of earlier documentary evidence rather than to the proposal that modern substitutes were inserted during the transmission of the text.”³⁹ (e.g. that Joseph did not wear a beard and wore his hair in the style of the Egyptians, the use of Egyptian names such as Zaphnath-Paneah, knowledge of agricultural customs of the day, etc). e) Examination of bricks in walls at Pithom appear to fit precisely with the story described in the book of Exodus (5:6-19) i.e. bricks in the lowest courses were found to be composed of fine chopped straw, those further up contain sticks and stubble (as though people were using anything they could quickly grab), and finally, the bricks in the uppermost courses [i.e. the last to be laid down] contain no reinforcing material at all but are composed merely of mud, f) The etymology of the words throughout the book of Genesis unequivocally support its claims to have been written beginning with Babylonian characters and eventually moving to an Egyptian scene (quote RD Wilson), e) (quote by Archer) (quote Masters, etc).

Baldwin: “A major problem with the whole story is that the ‘Israelites emerged only gradually as a distinct group in Canaan, beginning at the end of the thirteenth century BCE’” (p. 2)

– **The Real Facts:**

a) The internal Old Testament record contradicts that assertion completely.

³⁷ Vos, pp. 63-64.

³⁸ D. J. Wiseman, pp. 4-5.

³⁹ Wiseman, pp. 19-20.

b) the Merneptah Stela written in the 1200's B.C. clearly depicts Israel as a distinct nation or people group that obviously had been living in the land of Canaan for quite some time.

Masters writes: "This 7&1/2 foot tall basalt stela carries the earliest mention of Israel outside Scripture. Pharaoh Merneptah (1236-1223 BC) mounted a campaign to Canaan about 1231 BC (in the time of the Judges). Here he claims: '*Israel is laid waste, bare of seed.*' This inscription shows Merneptah's invasion (possibly at the time of Deborah and Barak) is not mentioned in the Bible, and is thought to have affected only the Jezreel area, if carried out at all. There are many vain boasts in Egyptian records, but the testimony to Israel's known existence in the land of Canaan is clear. Discovered in 1896 in Merneptah's mortuary at Thebes, it is now in the Cairo Museum... This famous and highly significant monument... confirms the settlement of the Israelites in the land of Canaan, in accordance with the books of *Exodus*, *Joshua* and *Judges*."⁴⁰ c) the **Moabite stone** (900 B.C.) further non-biblical evidence for the Israelites. d) "**The Shasu of the worship (or land) of Yahweh**"! 2 Egyptian inscriptions from 1400 B.C. & 1200's!

c) **In the Amarna Letters** [letters that were sent from various cities in Canaan circa 1390 B.C.] the heads of the towns are writing to the pharaoh in Egypt **pleading for help against attacks against their cities by the "Apiru" or "Habiru."** It appears that the word refers to nomadic people who were living in Canaan—interestingly, at the very time Israel had entered the land and began its campaign to displace the Canaanites under Joshua's leadership! While the meaning of "Apiru" is debated and may be a term for nomadic peoples in general who lived in Canaan, it more likely appears to provide additional empirical evidence in support of the existence of the Israelites in Canaan, exactly as the Old Testament describes things in the book of Joshua.⁴¹ "In 1887 a store of 382 ancient letters was discovered in Egypt at the site of Tell el-Amarna. These clay tablets had been written to two pharaohs (Amenophis III and IV) over a period from 1390 BC. The senders were officials and 'kinglets' of the Canaanite cities of Palestine about the time that Joshua and the children of Israel were settling in the land. Palestine was then part of the Egyptian empire. Soon after 1380 BC Amenophis IV (also spelled Amenhotep) moved the Egyptian capital, together with the 'Foreign Office' [i.e. Dept. of State] files relating to his father's reign, from Thebes to Amarna.

Many of the letters refer to impending invasions and hostilities by the 'Apiru (and by another group which is thought to be a code logogram for the same people). In all probability the 'Apiru were not strictly the Israelites but a marauding nomadic people who had been in Canaan before the arrival of the Israelites. But to the Canaanites, the Israelites were the same as the 'Apiru, this having become a pejorative term for any unsettled and hostile group. Conservative scholars, therefore, equate the 'Apiru with the Israelites who had by this time arrived in the land, had completed their initial conquests, and were taking other cities.

The governor of Jerusalem wrote several letters to pharaoh, pleading for help to resist these invaders. In one he cries – '*The 'Apiru plunder all the lands of the king. If archers are here this year then the lands of the king, my lord, will remain. But if the archers are not here, then the lands of the king, my lord, are lost...All the lands of the king, my lord, are going to ruin.*' Pharaoh Amenophis made no response to such appeals, not being greatly interested in his Palestine possession. According to the dating information of the Bible, Joshua entered the Promised Land around 1406 BC. The *Amarna Letters* tells us about the state of Palestine after the entry of Joshua into the land, not before it. The book of *Joshua* refers to 31 independent city-states that had their own kings (Joshua 12:9-24). As Dr. John J. Davis points out: '*the success of Israel brought about the end of many of the independent states, thus leaving only a few self-sufficient political entities in southern Canaan.*' The *Amarna Letters* confirm this picture of Joshua's work, for they reflect the survival of only *four* independent city-states with their own kings. Even if the marauding 'Apiru were not the Israelites, they *Amarna Letters* certainly testify to the results of Joshua's conquest as recorded in the Bible. If the 'Apiru were other than the Israelites, they subsequently vanished from history startlingly quickly, which is barely credible."⁴²

⁴⁰ Masters, p. 55, italics in the original.

⁴¹ Cf. Dr. Clyde Billington, *Bible and Spade*, Vol. 22, No. 4, p. 115.

⁴² Masters, op cit., pp. 52-54. Italics in the original with the exception of Davis' quote, underlining added. Note: photos of three of the Amarna Letters are included with this material, from Megiddo, Gezer & Hazor. One is "from Yapahu, king of Gezer who begs pharaoh for help in defending his city against raids by the 'Apiru. He writes '*Because the 'Apiru are stronger than we are, may the king, my lord, help me to escape from the 'Apiru, that the 'Apiru do not destroy us.*'" Another letter "From the king of Hazor...tells pharaoh that he is loyal and is keeping his cities." (ibid)

Baldwin: *“The border between Canaan and Egypt was so closely controlled that ‘If a great mass of fleeing Israelites had passed through the border fortifications of the pharaonic regime, a record should exist. Yet in the abundant Egyptian sources describing the time of the New Kingdom in general and the thirteenth century in particular, there is no reference to the Israelites, not even a single clue...we have no clue, not even a single word, about early Israelites in Egypt...as a possible foe of Egypt, as a friend, or as an enslaved nation’”* (p. 2) –

- The Real Facts:

a) Who in the world said that “a great mass of fleeing Israelites passed through the border fortifications of the pharaonic regime”? There are at least 3 different routes that have been proposed regarding the Exodus. Any intelligent leader would have avoided the northern option (i.e. the *Via Mara*, or “*Way of the Sea*”) specifically because that route was well guarded and controlled by Egyptian border guards.

b) Not only that, the biblical account *specifically states* that they went not by way of the *Via Mara* [*the Way of the Sea*] but rather through the *Red Sea* [a literal sea!], which would have completely avoided the Egyptian border security forces. **c)** And yes, it is clearly depicted as a miracle, the higher critics’ a priori philosophical objections not withstanding.

Baldwin: *“Neither is there evidence for the myth of Israelite wandering in the wilderness: ‘Repeated archaeological surveys in all regions of the peninsula, including the mountainous area around the traditional site of Mount Sinai...have yielded only negative evidence: not even a single sherd (sic), no structure, not a single house, no trace of ancient encampment. One may argue that a relatively small band of wandering Israelites cannot be expected to leave material remains behind. But modern archaeological techniques are quite capable of tracing even the meager remains of hunter-gatherers and pastoral nomads all over the world.’”* (p. 2)

– **The Real Facts:** The Old Testament account makes clear that:

a) the people did not build permanent dwellings, but lived in tents, wore shoes made out of skins, etc., so it would not be a surprise if we did not find archaeological evidence such as we find in “Tells” and other permanent locations—especially 3,500 years later.

b) The account in the book of Numbers unapologetically and as clearly as possible portrays their wanderings in the wilderness in a miraculous way i.e. they were fed miraculously (via manna, quail, & water from a rock). Obviously one can choose to believe in or deny that such miracles occurred, or are even possible. But that certainly does not prove whether an ancient historical record is true or false. (A&B quote). (Numbers notes quotes)

Baldwin: *“The conclusion—that the Exodus did not happen at the time and in the manner described in the Bible—seems irrefutable when we examine the evidence.”* (p. 2)

– **The Real Facts:**

a) One reason Dr. Baldwin considers the evidence “that the Exodus didn’t happen at the time and in the manner described in the Bible...irrefutable” I would suggest is because he is looking at the wrong time period! As mentioned earlier, there are two dates put forward for the Exodus, ca. 1446 B.C. or ca. 1290 B.C. I would assert that the earlier date, while it has some difficulties, fits quite well with the biblical description, and has archaeological and historical evidence that is quite solid.

b) As mentioned earlier, the descriptions in Genesis & Exodus of Egyptian culture, customs, religious beliefs & practices, etc., appears to be true to everything we know and have discovered archaeologically, historically and culturally concerning Egypt, Canaan, and that time period,

c) the Canaanite peoples were familiar with the incredible, miraculous stories of what had happened in and to Egypt when God delivered the Israelites out of Egypt (e.g. Josh. 3-6),

d) A careful examination of Egyptian history using the earlier date for the Exodus leads to some very interesting circumstantial evidence which appears to support the story of the death of pharaoh's firstborn son as described in the book of Exodus i.e. that Pharaoh Amenhotep II apparently had an elder son who died and was replaced by a younger one—which fits in very nicely with the biblical story. After giving a defense of the early date (ca. 1446 B.C.) for the Israelites departure from Egypt with Thutmose III as the pharaoh who “*after many days*” passed away in Exodus 2:23, Archer explains:

No other known pharaoh fulfills all the specifications besides Thutmose III [as the pharaoh who died in Ex. 2:23]. He alone, besides Rameses II, was on the throne long enough (fifty-four years, including the twenty-one years of Hatshepsut's regency) to have been reigning at the time of Moses' flight from Egypt, and to pass away not long before Moses' call at the burning bush, thirty or forty years later. In character he was ambitious and energetic, launching no less than seventeen military campaigns in nineteen years, and engaging in numerous building projects **for which he used a large slave-labor task force**. His son, Amenhotep II, who doubtless hoped to equal his father's military prowess, **seems to have suffered some serious reverse in his military resources**, for he was unable to carry out any invasions or extensive military operations after his fifth year (1445 B.C.) until the modest campaign of his ninth year... This relative feebleness of his war effort (by comparison with that of his father) would well accord with a catastrophic loss of the flower of his chariotry in the waters of the Red Sea during their vain pursuit of the fleeing Israelites. In further confirmation of Amenhotep II as the pharaoh of the Exodus we have the ‘*Dream Stela*’ of Thutmose IV (1421-1412), his son and successor. Although Adolf Erman demonstrated quite convincingly that the inscription comes from a later period, nevertheless there can be little doubt that it represents faithfully the substance and much of the actual wording of an authentic inscription set up by Thutmose himself in the fifteenth century. Apparently the older stela had been seriously damaged and was copied (as well as its condition would allow) in a later century, when once again the sand was removed from the Sphinx at Gizeh. In this text the god *Har-em-akht* (*‘Horus in the horizon’*), in whose honor the Sphinx was thought to be made, appears to young Thutmose in a dream while the latter was a mere prince in his father's household. He promises him the throne of Egypt upon the implied condition that he will remove the sand from the Sphinx. **It is quite obvious that if Thutmose II had at that time been the oldest son of his father, Amenhotep II, there would have been no need for a divine promise that he should some day become king**. He would naturally have succeeded to the throne if he simply survived his father. **It is a necessary inference, therefore that the oldest son of Amenhotep must have later predeceased his father, thus leaving the succession to his younger brother Thutmose IV**. This well accords with the record in Ex. 12:29 that the eldest son of pharaoh died at the time of the tenth plague... Even more conclusive than this is the situation in Goshen during the reign of Thutmose III as compared to that which existed under Rameses II [in the 1200s]. In the time of Rameses, some of his main building activity was right in the region of Wadi Tumilat, or Goshen, and this meant that Egyptians must have been living all around this region and in the midst of it as well. But the details of the plagues of flies, of hail, and of darkness (Ex. 8:22; 9:25-26; 10:23) make it clear enough that Goshen was at the time of the Exodus inhabited almost exclusively by the Hebrews, and plagues which befell the rest of Egypt made no appearance at all in Goshen. **So far as we can tell from the archaeological evidence presently at hand, there were no Egyptians living there during the reign of Thutmose.**⁴³

e) The Jewish stories and traditions such as the institution of the Passover, which have endured worldwide for 3,500 years, virtually demand an historical basis. Clearly the idea that it is a fictitious story made up in 600 B.C. cannot account for such enduring traditions and practices—particularly since the books of the Pentateuch give every indication of dating from well before 1000 B.C., Dr. Baldwin notwithstanding.

Baldwin: “*According to the biblical authors, the Israelites arrived in Palestine around 1220 B.C. and were joined by other Hebrews already in Palestine, and the Israelites formed a confederacy of twelve tribes. They became an agricultural nation...*” (p. 2)

– **The Real Facts:** Once again, the statement is false. Dr. Baldwin is apparently either unaware, or unwilling to acknowledge the fact that there are two different views held by scholars regarding the date of the Exodus. By only mentioning the latter date, when the text of the Bible and archaeology seems to supply strong support for the

⁴³ Archer, pp. 245-46 (a photo of the Sphinx at Gizah with the Dream Stela of Thutmose IV is included).

earlier date (c. 1446-45 B.C. -see I Kings 6:1 cf. Judges 11:26), Baldwin has created a contrived problem. While both dates have some difficulties, generally speaking the earlier date appears to fit much better with what we know historically e.g. the date & archaeological evidence of Jericho's destruction fits hand in glove with the 1406 B.C. biblical account and description of the arrival of the Israelites into Canaan [after a 40 year sojourn in the wilderness as described in Numbers], etc. (See information on Jericho which follows immediately below).

Baldwin: "*Cities that the Bible says were conquered by Joshua, such as Jericho and Ai, were uninhabited at the time of Joshua.*" (p. 2)

– **The Real Facts:** This is a terribly uninformed and incorrect statement by Dr. Baldwin.

Regarding Jericho: The eminent archaeologist Dr. John Garstang & his team excavated Jericho in the 1930's and provided powerful evidence that Jericho had been destroyed precisely as the book of Joshua describes it (i.e. the walls fell down flat [i.e. outward], the grain and other food supplies were not eaten since they were under a ban, but were burned, as described in the book of Joshua, etc). In the 1950's archaeologist Kathleen Kenyon led further excavations in Jericho and asserted that Garstang's dating was wrong, that Jericho was destroyed, but not at the time that the Israelites would have entered the land (i.e. 1445 B.C.). However Dr. Bryant Wood led a recent team in further archaeological research at Jericho publishing his findings in 1990 and *convincingly and conclusively demonstrated* that Kenyon was wrong. She had based her challenge entirely on not finding a type of pottery there. However Wood, who is an ancient pottery expert, found that very type of pottery, refuting Kenyon and establishing the veracity of the Old Testament account. Even TIME magazine— no friend to conservative Christianity—wrote an article about Wood's discovery titled, "*Score One for the Bible!*"⁴⁴ When secular magazines (as well as scholarly journals) admit that the Bible account is right and liberal higher criticism is wrong, you know it's time to "hang it up."⁴⁵ Scholar D. J. Wiseman adds, "The break with the Early Bronze Age is marked by violent destruction of the towns (e.g. Jericho)."⁴⁶ My suggestion, if Dr. Baldwin has any academic integrity, is that he rewrite his notes and issue an apology to all of his past and present GCCC students!

Regarding Ai: It appears that Dr. Wood & the ABR team have finally discovered the correct site for the town called Ai. The ABR team has been excavating a site for nearly a decade (Khirbet el Maqatir) and all the evidence so far indicates that it appears to be the site of the original Ai. One reason Baldwin and other critics may think Ai was uninhabited is due to the fact that they've been looking at the wrong site (one proposed by W.F. Albright in the 1920's), since it is now quite clear that what had earlier been identified as Ai was completely in error.

Baldwin: "*It appears that the Israelites were actually originally Canaanites themselves.*" (p. 2)

– **The Real Facts:** There is no genuine evidence for such an assertion. Everything we know about Abraham from the biblical account of him as a real person (Dr. Baldwin notwithstanding) who had come from Ur fits very well with everything we know about ancient Ur, its culture and its customs.

Baldwin: "*The truth is that 'As far as we can see on the basis of the archaeological surveys, Judah remained relatively empty of permanent population, quite isolated, and very marginal right up to and past the presumed time of David and Solomon.'*" (p. 2)

– **The Real Facts:** Again, this is simply false. Archaeological finds clearly show that.

Baldwin: "*David was no more than a tribal chief and there was NEVER a united monarchy!*" (p. 2)

– **The Real Facts:** This statement is so absurd it is to be rejected out of hand. To deny the historicity of David & his kingdom is an amazing leap into incredulity.

⁴⁴ Michael D. Lemonick, "*Science: Score One for the Bible.*" (TIME, March 05, 1990).

⁴⁵ See for instance, Dr. Bryant Wood, "*Researching Jericho*" (Bible & Spade, Vol. 22 No. 3, Summer 2009), pp. 82-84.

⁴⁶ Wiseman, p. 15.

Baldwin: “A close reading of the biblical description of the days of Solomon clearly suggests that this was a portrayal of an idealized past, a glorious Golden Age. The reports of Solomon’s fabulous wealth...and his legendary harem...are details too exaggerated to be true.” (p. 3)

– **The Real Facts:** Again, this statement defies belief. Virtually all archaeologists recognize Solomon’s historicity and the wealth and power of his political kingdom.

Baldwin: “Moreover, for all their reported wealth and power neither David nor Solomon is mentioned in a single known Egyptian or Mesopotamian text. And the archaeological evidence in Jerusalem for the famous building projects of Solomon are non-existent.” (p. 3)

– **The Real Facts:** This is a ridiculous statement to make in light of what archaeology has turned up. It also flies in the face of the entire unchallenged historical record of the Middle East at that time such as Solomon’s control of the critical cities on the main trade route running from Assyria & Mesopotamia to Egypt (Hazor, Megiddo & Lachish). It should be added that Ethiopia (previously Abyssinia) has a very significant historical and written tradition regarding the Queen of Sheba and Solomon (e.g. the *Kehbra Nagast*). Interestingly, Rastafarianism is rooted in the belief that Solomon fathered a son by the Queen, and that a man called *Ras* [i.e. Prince] *Tafari* (i.e. *Tafari Mekonnen* or *Haili Selassie*) was directly descended from him. While the legitimacy of that claim can & should certainly be challenged, it is one more evidence for the power and fame of King Solomon.

Baldwin: “According to the biblical account, after Solomon’s death there were two kingdoms: Israel in the north (10 tribes) with a capital at Damascus...” (p. 3)

– **The Real Facts:** First of all, Damascus was *never* the capital of the northern kingdom of Israel or even ever a part of Israel, and betrays an abysmal ignorance of bible geography! In fact, Damascus was approximately 50 miles northeast of Dan, which was the northern extremis of the northern kingdom of Israel.

Baldwin: “The truth is that ‘there were always two distinct highland entities, [sic] of which the southern was always the poorer, weaker, more rural, and less influential—until it rose to sudden, spectacular prominence after the fall of the northern kingdom of Israel.’” (p. 3)

– **The Real Facts:** Denial that there was ever a united kingdom is a mind-boggling statement that would be rejected by the vast majority of Old Testament scholars. To deny that Solomon reigned over a united kingdom is stunning. It is a well-known, archaeologically confirmed fact as mentioned above, that during Solomon’s reign he fortified the three main cities of Megiddo, Hazor & Lachish, thus controlling *THE* main highway (*Via Mara*, i.e. *the Way of the Sea*) between Assyria & Egypt, essentially controlling world trade, exacting taxes from all those coming and going, etc.

Baldwin: “As far as we can see on the basis of the archaeological surveys, Judah remained relatively empty of permanent population, quite isolated, and very marginal right up to and past the presumed time of David and Solomon, with no major urban centers and with no pronounced hierarchy of hamlets, villages, and towns.” (p. 3)

– **The Real Facts:** This is another unbelievable statement by Dr. Baldwin. (see Gleason Archer)

Baldwin: “The existence of high places and other forms of ancestral and household god worship was not—the books of Kings imply—apostasy from an earlier purer faith. It was part of the timeless tradition of the hill country settlers of Judah, who worshiped YHWH along with a variety of gods and goddesses known or adapted from the cults of neighboring peoples. YHWH, in short, was worshiped in a wide variety of ways—and sometimes pictured as having a heavenly entourage...So the clearest archaeological evidence of the popularity of this type of worship throughout the kingdom is the discovery of hundreds of figurines of naked fertility goddesses at every late monarchic site in Judah...” (p. 3)

– **The Real Facts:** There is no question that the various Canaanite people groups worshipped at “high places.” Indeed it is a well-known fact that they engaged in the most depraved and degenerate activities in such worship (e.g. public sexual orgies and child sacrifice). That is exactly why God gave the Israelites strict order to destroy the Canaanite peoples when they entered the land (something they failed to completely follow through on—with extremely disastrous results—since they eventually then picked up and engaged in those very same sinful practices (which is exactly what God had warned them would happen!). That is why the figurines of fertility goddesses, may be found at sites where the Israelites later claimed to be worshipping YHWH. It is a well known fact that the Israelites later departed from the correct worship of God. However, to read backwards into that the idea that it’s evidence that the Israelites had always worshipped YHWH on high places and in a great variety of ways is a total misrepresentation of the historical facts. In point of fact, never in Israel’s history, nor in archaeology do we find any evidence of Israel making images of YHWH. The whole higher critical presupposition that the Hebrews began in polytheism and later evolved to monotheism is totally without foundation. Every indication is that the Hebrews were monotheistic from the outset, only going into the worship of false gods much later in their history.

Dr. Baldwin clearly implies that the written form of the Old Testament began with some of the Minor Prophets (Amos, Micah, Hosea, 750-550 B.C.) who allegedly were also the first to begin to speak of a Messiah at that time.

-- **The Real Facts:** The case for the theory that the Old Testament books (including the earliest books i.e. the books of the Pentateuch) were written after the Babylonian exile (i.e. c. 550-600 B.C.) is bankrupt. a) The most recent evidence supporting that statement is the recent announcement (Jan. 15, 2010) that “Scientists have discovered the earliest known Hebrew writing—an inscription dating from the 10th century B.C., during the period of King David’s reign.” The article goes on to state, “The breakthrough could [does] mean that portions of the Bible were written centuries earlier than previously thought [by skeptical higher critics]...In indicates that the Kingdom of Israel already existed in the 10th century BCE and that at least some of the biblical texts were written hundreds of years before the dates presented in current [skeptical] research said Gershon Galil, a professor of Biblical Studies at the University of Haifa in Israel, who deciphered the ancient text...The writing was discovered more than a year ago on a pottery shard dug up during excavations at Khirbet Qeiyafa, near Israel’s Elah valley. The excavations were carried out by archaeologist Yosef Garfinkel of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem...In English, it reads (by numbered line): ‘1-you shall not do (it), but worship the (Lord). 2-Judge the sla(ve) and the wid(ow)/Judge the orph(an) 3-(and) the stranger. (Pl)ead for the infant/plead for the po(or and) 4-the widow. Rehabilitate (the poor) at the hands of the king. 5-Protect the po(or and) the slave/(supp)ort the stranger.’ The content, which has some missing letters, is similar to some Biblical scriptures, such as Isaiah 1:17; Psalm 72:3; and Exodus 23:3; but does not appear to be copied from any Biblical text.”⁴⁷. b) The idea that the Old Testament books were not written down in some sort of organized form until the time of Josiah has always been bogus. The books of the Pentateuch give abundant internal evidence of being composed centuries earlier, and to be based on even earlier records and writings. This is obvious by the Babylonian & Egyptian words found in correct chronological order, for instance, in the book of Genesis; the Suzerainty Treaty format found in the book of Deuteronomy; the archaeological and historical evidence that fits hand in glove with what is described in Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Deuteronomy, Joshua, Judges, etc. c) That being the fact, the Minor Prophets then, clearly are not the first to speak of the Messiah, Dr. Baldwin notwithstanding (cf. Gen. 3:15; 49:10). Other earlier books such as Job, Isaiah, Psalms, etc., unquestionably speak of the Messiah (e.g. Job 23:10; Isa. 35:5-6; 40-49; 53; Ps. 2; 16; 22-24; 110; etc.).

Baldwin: “...in 722 BC the Assyrians took the northern (Israel) capital of Samaria...Judah was still too poor and backward for the Assyrians to bother with: ‘Israel was destroyed and Judah survived because in the grand scheme of Assyria’s imperial designs, Israel—with its rich resources and productive population—was an incomparably more attractive target than poor and inaccessible Judah’. Indeed, it is only after the destruction of Israel that a southern kingdom of Judah begins to emerge...” (p. 4)

⁴⁷ Clara Moskowitz, “Bible Possibly Written Centuries Earlier, Text Suggests” (Live Science; Yahoo News, Jan. 15, 2010) (http://news.yahoo.com/s/livescience/20100115/sc_livescience/biblepossiblywrittencenturie...)

– **The Real Facts:** The above statement totally ignores the historical biblical accounts which relate what actually happened and why Assyria did not conquer the southern kingdom of Judah. Undoubtedly Dr. Baldwin doesn't believe the biblical accounts. However, he does so to his own intellectual peril. He apparently is ignorant of the enormous confirming archaeological evidence contained on such items as the Taylor Prism, and several other prisms and artifacts housed at the British Museum. The Taylor cylinder, along with the official account given by the Sennacherib the king of Assyria himself glosses over the fact that he didn't take Jerusalem. And it's no wonder. The Bible says that 185,000 of his soldiers were killed by God in answer to king Hezekiah & the peoples' prayers for deliverance. All one has to do is read between the lines of Sennacherib's words on these archaeological artifacts to realize that something drastic happened which prevented him from taking Jerusalem.

Baldwin: “*beginning with Israel's fall, suddenly...Judah's population swelled... [and] its capital city became a national religious center and bustling metropolis for the first time. Intensive trade began with surrounding nations.*” (p. 4)

– **The Real Facts:** Jerusalem had been the central focus for 500-600 years by the time of the fall of the northern kingdom in 722 B.C. and intensive trade had been going on since the time of Solomon [who contrary to Dr. Baldwin was a major international figure] around 1000 B.C.

Baldwin: “*Now with Judah no doubt cooperating with Assyria and prospering, a new 'YHWH-alone' movement takes shape and will be read back into the history of the Israelites.*” (p. 4)

– **The Real Facts:** Frankly, *Dr. Baldwin* is the one who is reading things back into history...the history of the Israelites! It is an incontrovertible fact that Israel, unlike virtually every other religion, did *NOT* begin with animism, then evolve to polytheism, etc. This is a standard Higher Critical assumption that is based on Wellhausen and his predecessors' slavish devotion to and a priori belief in of Hegel's dialectic and Darwin's evolutionary theories, which were all the rage in the second half of the 19th century, but which are based on circular reasoning and an assuming of what they wanted to prove i.e. that Israel's religion had evolved. The amazing thing is that such groundless ideas are still disseminated today. But as Archer succinctly puts it, “*For want of a better theory, therefore, most non-conservative institutions continue to teach the Wellhausian theory, at least in its general outlines, as if nothing had happened in Old Testament scholarship since the year 1880.*”⁴⁸ He then quotes the liberal H.H. Rowley who honestly admits the same: “*That it (the Graf-Wellhausen theory) is widely rejected in whole or in part is doubtless true, but there is no view to put in its place that would not be more widely and emphatically rejected...The Graf-Wellhausen view is only a working hypothesis, which can be abandoned with alacrity when a more satisfying view is found, but which cannot with profit be abandoned until then.*”⁴⁹

A primary error that such critics of the Old Testament make is that they begin by jettisoning any trust whatsoever in the reliability of any biblical documents, while at the same time naively assuming complete trust in any secular, non-biblical source they find! As Archer observes: “All too frequently the tendency has been to regard any biblical statement as unreliable and suspect, though the very antiquity of the Old Testament (even by the critics' own dating) should commend it for consideration as an archaeological document. In case of any discrepancy with a pagan document, even one of a later age, the heathen source has been automatically given the preference as a historical witness. Where there happens to be no corroborative evidence at hand from non-Israelite sources or archaeological discoveries of some sort, the biblical statement is not... trusted unless it happens to fall in with the theory. It makes no difference how many biblical notices, rejected as unhistorical by nineteenth-century pundits, have been confirmed by later archaeological evidence (such as the historicity of Belshazzar, the Hittites, and the Horites), **the same attitude of skeptical prejudice toward the Bible has persisted, without any logical justification.**”⁵⁰ Archer then adds, “It would be naïve to suppose that pagan Egyptian, Babylonian, and Assyrian records—in contrast to the Hebrew Scriptures with their lofty ethical standards—were free from propagandistic

⁴⁸ Archer, p. 96.

⁴⁹ H.H. Rowley, “*The Growth of the Old Testament*” (New York: Longmans, 1950), p. 46, quoted by Archer, p. 96.

⁵⁰ Archer, pp. 114-115.

Tendenz or party bias.” In doing so, Baldwin and his skeptical forefathers display an a priori bias that does not stand up under intellectual scrutiny and which has been discarded even by many “higher critics.”⁵¹

Baldwin: “*Second Isaiah (chapters 40-55) were clearly written by a second author...*” (p. 4)

– **The Real Facts:** Obviously, Dr. Baldwin has “bought into” the “*Trito-Isaiah*” theory concerning the authorship of the book of Isaiah. However in actual fact the entire book is attributed to Isaiah, and there is no legitimate reason to think otherwise. Archer, McDowell, Allis, Young, etc, have all convincingly defended the unity of Isaiah.

Baldwin: “*He [i.e. the alleged ‘Second Isaiah’] lived at the end of the Babylonian Captivity.*” (p. 4)

– **The Real Facts:** “Second Isaiah,” is a figment of the Higher Critics imagination. As Ryrie has observed, “If [‘Second Isaiah’] lived in Babylon, as is claimed, he shows little knowledge of Babylonian geography but great familiarity with Palestine (41:19; 43:14; 44:14). Further, it is asserted that differences in language and style can only be accounted for by assuming different authors, a theory which, if applied to Milton, Goethe, or Shakespeare, would force us to conclude that many of their writings were spurious. On the contrary, one can point out 40 or 50 sentences and phrases that appear in both sections of the book and that therefore argue for single authorship (cf. 1:20 with 40:5 and 58:14; 11:6-9 with 65:25; 35:6 with 41:18; etc.). To claim two or more authors for this book is also to contradict the evidence of the New Testament. Quotations from chaps. 40-66 are found in Matthew 3:3; 12:17-21; Luke 3:4-6; Acts 8:28; Romans 10:16, 20, and all are attributed to Isaiah. Moreover, in John 12:38-41, quotations from Isaiah 6:9-10 and 53:1 appear together, and both are ascribed to the Isaiah who saw the Lord in the Temple vision of chap. 6. We must therefore conclude that the same author was responsible for the entire book and that no part of it was written at the time of the Babylonian captivity.”⁵² (detailed refutations of the Deutero-Isaiah & Trito-Isaiah positions can be found in many of the sources referenced previously). In addition, the real Isaiah lived c.740-680 B.C., not 150 years later, as Dr. Baldwin states.

Dr. Baldwin, having bought into the late dating of the writing of the Old Testament, goes out on a huge limb claiming that Zoroastrianism “greatly influenced the Hebrew understanding of God and the universe. The Zoroastrian beliefs that influence the Hebrews were: dualism...Eschatology: messiah (a spiritual savior), resurrection from the dead & a divine judgment...it was not until after they had had some contact with Persia that such ideas as resurrection of the dead at the end of the world, a final judgment, the making of a new earth, and heaven and hell, became important in the Old Testament. These ideas, all part and parcel of Zoroastrianism entered the biblical tradition after the exile of the Hebrews to Babylon.” (pp. 5-6)

– **The Real Facts:** There is no legitimate reason to believe the Pentateuch was not written by Moses, i.e. 800-900 years before Zoroaster made his appearance. If so, then obviously the Old Testament teachings mentioned above [a kingdom of good and a kingdom of evil, a future messiah, belief in the resurrection from the dead & a divine judgment, etc] did not come from Zoroastrianism. If anything, it’s the other way around i.e. Zoroaster took them from the Hebrew Scriptures. That the Old Testament taught all of those concepts is undeniable (e.g. Job 1-2; 2:10b; 5:7; 19:25-26; 27:8; Gen. 3:1-15; 35:18; Num. 24:17; Dan. 12:2; etc.)

The Hittites. While as far as I know Dr. Baldwin has not questioned the existence of the Hittites, it was not very many years ago that critics like him were constantly trashing Genesis and the rest of the early books of the Old Testament and stating that such “mythical” people were yet another example of the false statements in the Bible. “Because they were unknown to secular historians, the Hittites were dubbed ‘a mythical people’ and ‘a figment of biblical imagination’, but archaeological discovery (mainly in 1906 in Turkey) has provided considerable information about them. These ‘mythical’ people of the Bible turned out to be a major force in the ancient world. Indeed, we now know that their empire once stretched from Mesopotamia to Syria and Palestine, and that they spoke in an Indo-European language.”⁵³

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⁵² Charles C. Ryrie, “*The Ryrie Study Bible*” (Moody Press: Chicago, IL, 1994), p. 1007.

⁵³ Masters, p. 89. (photos of a stela of a Hittite goddess and a relief of a Neo-Hittite king from the British Museum are included with the text quoted here).

“The great confession of Judaism, the Shema (‘Hear, O Israel’; Deut. 6:4-9), probably dates from about the time of Josiah’s reform (621 BC), although it surely rests on a much older religious tradition.” (The Hebrew Religious Revolution, p. 4)

- **The Real Facts:** Dr. Baldwin is apparently not aware of fairly recent archaeological discovery of 2 silver amulets in the Hinnom Valley outside Jerusalem, which have been dated at least “to the late seventh century BC, or very early sixth century BC (Barkay 1992).”⁵⁴ These amulets contain the famous priestly blessing in Numbers 6:24-26 [*‘The LORD bless you and keep you; the LORD make his face to shine upon you, and give you peace.’*]. “There is at least one important implication for biblical studies. According to the critical scholars, Numbers 6:23-27 should be attributed to the so-called ‘P’ source, which is generally dated to the Post-Exilic, or Persian Period. It is obvious that we now have two examples of this text that were written prior to the Babylonian captivity. This makes it impossible to assume that the Priestly Benediction was crystallized during the Post-Exilic Period.” (Franz, *ibid*)

⁵⁴ Gordon Franz, “Remember, Archaeology is not a Treasure Hunt” (Bible & Spade, Vol. 22 No. 3, Summer 2009), p. 81.