

Ancient Israelite Chronology

I. The dates of the patriarchs and of the conquest of Canaan depend in part upon the date of the exodus from Egypt. It is thus important to determine the date of the exodus first.

A. One evidence for the date of the exodus is found in I Kings 6:1. It dates _____ to _____ years after _____.

When, according to most scholars, did the later event occur? _____

What, then, would this tell us about the approximate date of the earlier event?

How would this date fit into the archaeological context of the time of Egypt, specifically the excavations of John Garstang at Jericho?

What difficulties does this date pose, specifically in reference to the more recent archaeological work of Kathleen Kenyon?

B. What evidence concerning the exodus is furnished by Exodus 1:11?

If Pithom and Rameses were built with Israelite slave labor, at what date would they have been built? _____ Under what Pharaoh(s)? _____

How would this date fit into the archaeological context of the time (independent excavations in Egypt)?

What difficulties does this date pose?

C. Which of these two positions (A. and B. above) is more acceptable to you? Why?

II. With reference to the date of the patriarchs, the following data should be taken into account:

A. In Genesis 15:13, God says to Abraham that _____ will last _____ years.

In Exodus 12:40, 41, it is stated that _____ lasted _____ years.

How does Galatians 3:17 reflect these traditions?

To what date then, would you assign to the beginning of the Israelites' bondage in Egypt?

B. According to Genesis 12:4 and 21:5 and 25:26 and 47:9, how long were the patriarchs in Canaan? _____ years

What estimate would you make of the date of Abraham? _____ Why?

How does this relate to the archaeological data, specifically the excavations at Tanis-Avaris?

What difficulties would such a date pose?

III. A. What does the Bible tell us about the length of the wilderness wandering?

Numbers 14:33-34: _____

Deuteronomy 2:7; 8:2,4; 29:5: _____

B. According to your date for the Exodus, what date would you suggest for the beginning of the conquest of Canaan? _____

How would this date fit into the archaeological contexts in Egypt and Canaan, specifically excavations at Ai, Bethel, Lachish, Debir, Pithom and Rameses?

What difficulties would this date pose?

IV. Now summarize your findings and report your conclusions about the dates for the patriarchs, the exodus, the wilderness wanderings, and the beginning of the conquest of Canaan. What does this assignment teach you about the nature of biblical literature and the work of biblical scholars?