

# Chronological Framework of Ancient History. 1: Problem, Data, and Methodology

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## Abstract

This series of 20 papers, called the "Chronological Framework of Ancient History," makes the case that a broad consensus of ancient sources, including those favored by mainstream scholars, speaks in harmony with Ussher's chronology of the Bible; as a result, the evidence will show that the 12,000 year conventional history of the Ancient Near East meshes neatly into a collection of interconnected parallel dynasties with a total duration of 2,018 years from the Flood to Alexander the Great. In this first paper the problem is defined, the data set is introduced and the methodology to be employed is described.

**Keywords:** ancient, chronology, Egypt, Bible, history, dispersion, Babel, Flood

## Introduction

This series of papers will make the case that a strong consensus of ancient sources speaks in harmony with Ussher's chronology of the Bible; as a result, the evidence will show that the 12,000 year conventional history of the Ancient Near East (ANE) meshes neatly into a collection of interconnected parallel dynasties with a total duration of 2,018 years from the Flood to Alexander the Great.

This series of historical proofs is an attempt to revise the history of the ANE to be coherent within a framework consistent with the Vulgate and Masoretic Text (MT) of the Old Testament. The resulting framework finds 35 extra-biblical chronological paths that place the Dispersion in 2192/2191 BC and the Flood in 2348/2347 BC (fig. 1).

In this series of papers we will follow seven steps (fig. 2):

1. Define the problem, data set, and methodology.  
Paper 1.
2. Find the book ends, or edges of the jigsaw puzzle, in the form of durations back from known dates to Babel, the Dispersion, the Flood, Creation, and three era dates: the Kali Yuga, Saptarshi Era, and Chinese Grand Cycle.  
Papers 2–4.
3. Define anchor points of ancient history which are given by durations from other known dates.  
Paper 3.
4. Find durations in Egyptian and Babylonian history forward from the Dispersion to the Exodus, the Fall of Akkad, the Expulsion of the Hyksos, the fall of Egypt to Cambyses, the fall of Babylon to Alexander, and Rome gaining world Empire. These confirm that the first set of durations from Babel to Alexander were correct.  
Papers 5–12.

5. Having chronologically fixed dates for the Egyptian kings, identify their counterparts in the Old, Middle, and New Kingdom Hittites in the Neo-Assyrian Annals.

Paper 13.

6. Count durations back again from the sack of Babylon by Mursilis to Hammurabi, the Fall of Akkad, and the Dispersion. This is the second confirmation of the total duration from the Dispersion to Alexander.

Papers 14–18.

7. Apply the results to recalibrate the Three Age System.

Papers 19–20.

## Why Chronological Revision of the Ancient World Is Needed

Those who love both the Bible and the history of the ancient world have a problem. While there is a close correspondence between known history and the Bible from the time of Shalmaneser's siege of Samaria in 722 BC down to the Roman Era, the further we go beyond Shalmaneser into the past, the less the archaeology seems to resemble the history in the Bible. Archaeologists such as Israel Finkelstein deny the historicity of David and Solomon, much less Moses (Finkelstein and Silberman 2002, 5):

biblical history did not take place in either the particular era or the manner described. Some of the most famous events in the Bible clearly never happened at all.

The Three Age system of archaeology tells us that the Stone Age lasted over three million years, followed by 2,000 years of the Bronze Age, followed by the Iron Age which began 12 centuries before Christ. Recent finds such as the temple at Gobekli Tepe, carbon dated to 12,000 BC, seem to completely



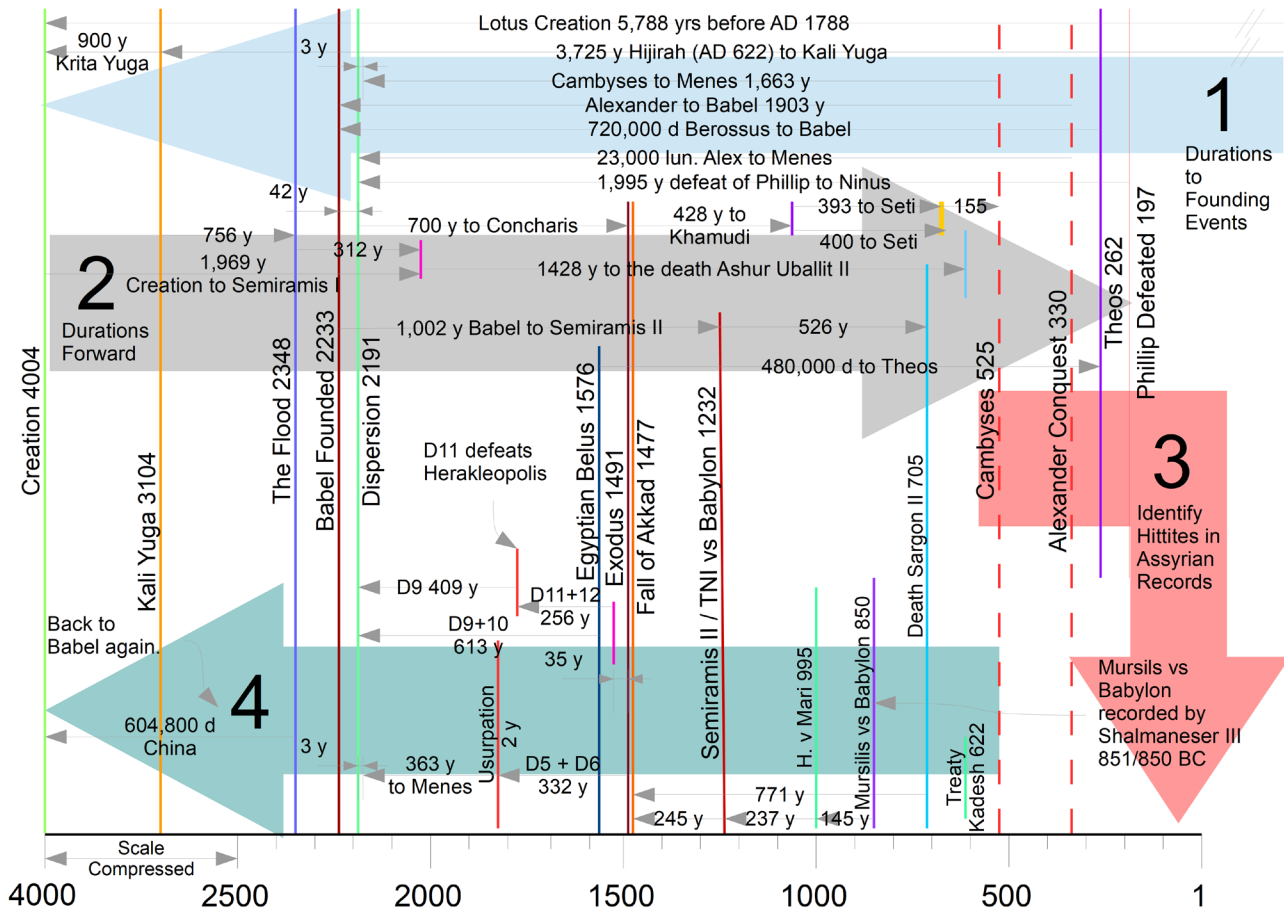


Fig. 2. Chronological proof pathway.

contradict any chronology that can be derived from the Bible. How do we reconcile the two?

While scholars who do not believe in the inerrancy of Scripture have never objected to simply saying the Bible is a semi-mythical collection of stories written in the post-exile period, biblicists who uphold the inerrancy of Scripture cannot just wave these problems away. Such scholars have gravitated toward two possible solutions.

#### Solution A: Add Years Back to the Flood, and Focus on the Most Recent Events

In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries when the discipline of archaeology was in its infancy, its founding scholars, such as George Rawlinson and Flinders Petrie, came from a generally Christian worldview, but did not seem to literally believe in the chronology of Scripture. Seeing as even within the tradition of the Christian church we have two competing chronologies of the Vulgate and the Septuagint (LXX) which differ by about eight centuries, early archaeologists used the chronology of Manetho sequentially for Egypt's dynasties and did not worry about contradicting the Bible.

In the early twentieth century as evolutionary theory became entrenched in universities,

archaeology completely rejected its Christian roots, claiming that the Neanderthals were over 100,000 years old, and dating the Paleolithic Era to 3.3 million years ago. While a few later Christian scholars such as Albright, Wiseman, and Kitchen have continued to defend Biblical history as generally true, archaeology as a scientific discipline was never concerned with the chronology of Scripture.

Not a few Christian archaeologists, historians, and organizations have embraced the LXX as the true record of the original chronogeneologies of the Bible. (ABR 2019; Gertoux 2022a, 7; Rudd 2019, 24).

Since the LXX adds about eight centuries between the Flood and Abraham, this gives these groups space to accept the evolutionist's chronologies for the dynastic periods in Egypt and Mesopotamia which appear to go back to about 3000 BC.

The unspoken underlying assumption dictating these groups' exegesis of Scripture is the belief that Manetho's 31 dynasties of Egypt (*Aegyptiaca*) occurred in sequence and that Egypt's chronology is more certain than the Bible's. Consequently they stitch together passages from either the LXX or the MT, depending on which manuscript tradition supports their chronology on any given point (Petrovich 2016; 2019). Incidentally, most of

them take the opposite position to Josephus, who expounded the LXX chronology, on three of the four controversial eras: the Sojourn in Egypt, the Judges, and the Divided Kingdom.

If the LXX is the most accurate translation of the original Hebrew Old Testament, then it would be consistent to treat the LXX text as infallible, and use its internal chronology in entirety. However, most of these scholars use the LXX for the chronogeneologies; but use the MT for the Sojourn in Egypt and the Judges; and rely on Thiele's chronology for the Divided Kingdom.

Mixing and matching chronological passages from different manuscript traditions creates problems for belief in the infallibility of Scripture. Given that Thiele explicitly claimed that 2 Kings 18:9–10 was incorrect to state that Hezekiah and Hosheah reigned at the same time, (Thiele 1994, 168) he did not seem to hold to infallibility at all.

In our view, the mainstream Christian chronologies merely tweak a long chain of errors and bad assumptions that began with the publisher of *Aegyptiaca* who appears to have added the Greek synchronisms to Manetho's text in the era of Caesar Augustus (Luban 2012).

### **Solution B: Revise Egypt and the ANE to Match the Bible Chronology**

Since 1950, there have been over two dozen revisionists publishing books, papers, and peer-reviewed journals in an attempt to correct ancient history and stratigraphy to fix the perceived misalignments and bring them into coherent agreement with each other, as well as the Bible. These include Velikovsky, Hoeh, Courville, Martin, Danelius, Rohl, Down, Bimson, James, Liel, Sweeney, Keyser, Ginenthal, Zwick, Heisman, Hickman, Osgood, Montgomery, Newgrosh, Stewart, Reilly, Scott, Clapham, Aitchison, Waite, Curnock, Heathcote, and several more.

While these have varied widely in the quality of their work and conclusions, and some of them were even atheists, as a group they have scrutinized the majority of assumptions behind the conventional chronology, and they have turned over some very interesting stones.

Five particular works have been published in the past two decades which have arrived at very nearly the same results as we did by using different methods. These are *Solving the Exodus Mystery* (Stewart 2003), *Revisiting Velikovsky* (Aitchison 2016), *The Bible and Egypt* (Waite 2016), *They Speak With One Voice* (Osgood 2020), and *Ages in Order* (Montgomery 2021). Reilly's (2015) work on the Kassites was also quite good.

We hope in this series of papers to more solidly anchor, fine-tune, and extend their work to cover the entire period from the Flood to Christ, and to more broadly include the Hittites, Sumerians, Babylonians, Assyria, Ireland, China, Persia, and India.

### **The Problem**

The model of ancient history that we have inherited today was not built through a systematic review of all the information. Instead, it has been built on the sequential interpretation of Manetho's 31 dynasties of Egypt by Greco-Roman scholars in the first century before Christ, with various tweaks and additions made over the past 2,000 years. Even Ussher used the sequential reading of Manetho for the Egyptian entries in his *Annals of the World*.

The ancient king lists found in the tablets unearthed in the past two centuries have been grafted into the Manethoan framework, and then that model was further expanded by tens of thousands to hundreds of thousands of years to accommodate evolutionary assumptions about the Stone Age.

The resulting chronology stretches and displaces the true timeline by centuries and millennia to the point that authentic history and real synchronisms with the Bible are completely obscured. Scholars such as Trevor Bryce (1998) are skilled at spinning pseudo-history to fill in the gaps and tape the timelines together, just as evolutionists make up just-so stories about dinosaurs and evolution. The result is that many segments of ancient history taught in universities are either completely out of context, or downright falsehoods.

We see three root problems with the mainstream approach to ancient history:

#### **1. Misplaced Authority**

Authority can be placed in archaeology (monuments, artifacts, radiocarbon dating), in ancient historical records (ancient chroniclers), in Jewish oral traditions such as the Midrash, in Scripture, or some combination of the above.

it is the continuous uninterrupted flowing Hebrew history that should be utilized in amending and interpreting the often fragmented discontinuous records of the kingdoms contiguous to those people—not the reverse, as is the custom in this day. (Jones 2019, 177)

Academia discounts ancient historical records in favor of contemporary inscriptions and seems to intentionally discount Scripture. Summarized by Gertoux (2022b, 2):

Progressively archaeologists are replacing historians and thus are changing history into...scholarly propaganda. How did they succeed [at] such a feat? Archaeologists generally rewrite history by



destroying its two foundations: the testimonies and chronology. Historical testimonies are rejected under the pretext that they contain some errors and the old historical chronology is replaced by archaeological dating.

Since historians tend to compute and record longer durations between eras, but inscriptions rarely have more than the year of the current king, the dominance of archaeology results in a strong academic bias against longer durations.

If you wish to glue a broken vase back together, you start with the largest pieces, and then find where the smaller pieces attach. However, if you first exclude all of the large pieces (that is, historical durations), then using ample resin and glue, the smaller pieces may be arranged into a different shape than that of the original vase. Evolutionists have more than once done similar things with hominid skulls (White 2003).

Screening out the longer durations given by the ancient chroniclers makes it much more difficult to construct an accurate chronology, and also allows academics far more flexibility to bend and glue the pieces to fit whatever picture they want to believe in.

The general approach of Bible chronologists who have followed Albright and Thiele has been to assume that the chronologies of Carthage, Egypt, and Assyria are certain, and then interpret the Bible to match them. Thiele even asserted that the Bible itself is in error about the dates that Hezekiah and Hosheah reigned (Thiele 1994, 168)

Rudd (2019, 1) takes a similar approach of arguing from archaeological chronology to determine the correct manuscript tradition of Scripture, which he asserts is the LXX.

When you get the chronology right, the cartography right and the archaeology right, you will get the Bible text right.

We contend that Scripture must be the first and highest authority. Since the ancient chroniclers tend to agree with Scripture, academia heavily discounts their testimony as well.

In both Bible exegesis and in solving history problems the most reliable way to find the truth is to reason from the clearest information to the most obscure. The hermeneutic by which these scholars have arrived at their chronologies is backwards, because they argue from the uncertain chronologies of Carthage, Egypt, and Assyria to tell us the correct manuscript tradition and chronological interpretation of Scripture, instead of allowing Scripture to shine the light of infallible truth upon the chronology of the ANE.

Associates for Biblical Research (ABR 2019) assert, in bold, that historical revisionism is a lost cause because:

**No single person could possibly have a grasp of all these thousands of implications or the requisite knowledge required to revise the entire chronology of the ANE.**

That statement is a two-edged sword. If no single person can know enough to revise the chronology of the ANE, then neither can any single person know enough to confirm the accepted chronology. If only God can know enough to construct an accurate chronology then perhaps we should begin with the Bible.

Biblicists who accept the LXX chronogeneologies are generally satisfied with the conventional model of ancient history with a few tweaks to cut off the long Paleolithic and Neolithic ages (Wood and Smith 2012).

However, Christians who believe the Vulgate and MT are two witnesses to the original numbers of the Old Testament generally agree that the Flood occurred in the twenty-fourth century before Christ. This creates an unavoidable collision with the accepted chronology of the ANE.

While there have been dozens of revisionists, those who hold to the supremacy of Scripture have only recently attempted to build consistent and comprehensive models of ancient history using the numbers in the Vulgate and MT. These are so few we can count them on two hands. These include Hoeh (1967; 1969), Waite (2016), Osgood (2020), and Montgomery (2021). Courville (1971) made a major contribution to the Egyptian part of the problem. Stewart (2003) and Down (2006) also attempted to reform Egyptian chronology, largely influenced by Velikovsky (1952; 1955; 1960; 1977; 1978) and Rohl (1995).

Though the task is enormous and difficult, our faith demands that we continue to work out such models of ancient history to arrive at a chronology that reflects the truth of Scripture rather than contradicting it. Seeking truth is always worth the effort.

## 2. Misinterpretation and Bias

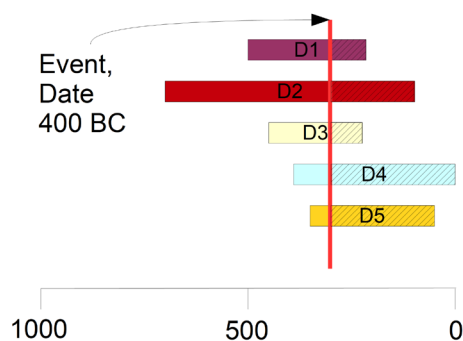
The monuments and artifacts of archaeology are susceptible to misinterpretations and misidentifications. Not unlike evolutionists inventing a hominid called Nebraska Man from a pig's tooth, (Taylor 1991) archaeologists and historians are prone to spinning yarns based on fragmentary evidence as well. The resulting bias is evident in the amount of rampant speculation routinely published in scholarly journals and books compared to the boycotts, censorship, and ostracism that Immanuel Velikovsky received for challenging the accepted chronology of history. Speculations are only allowed, it would seem, if one colors within the lines of the evolutionary chronology.

Several important pillars of conventional history are based on name association alone, which makes them speculative. For example, a governor of Byblos under Neferhotep I, named Intin, is assumed to have been the same person as a Yantin-Ammu of Byblos who sent a gift to the King of Mari in the reign of Zimri Lim. On the basis of this synchronism alone, the Middle Bronze Age II in the Levant is pegged to the thirteenth Dynasty of Egypt.

However, there are no other supporting synchronisms or durations that tie these two timelines together in that era; and substantial evidence suggests they were not contemporary at all.

If we had a complete list of the kings of Byblos, and only one of them was named Yantin or Intin, then we might be able to accept this synchronism.

Event occurs at the same time in history in the timelines of various kingdoms or dynasties.



**Fig. 3.** Event occurs in the timelines of contemporary dynasties.

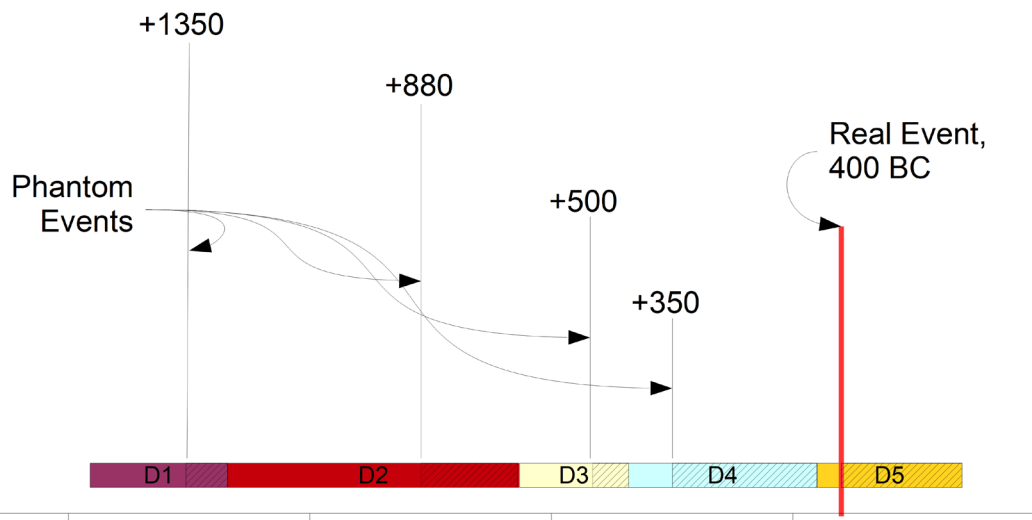
But we know the names of fewer than ten kings of Byblos in the 16 centuries prior to the Fall of Nineveh in 612BC. Therefore this synchronism could be conflating two different men named Yantin who ruled Byblos centuries apart. If that were the case, then this synchronism is akin to taking a pair of pants and sewing the cuff of one leg to the knee of the other leg. Good luck walking in those pants! Such false synchronisms dislocate history by centuries.

A second example is that Manetho's 31 dynasties are interpreted sequentially rather than as parallel city dynasties of the sons of Misraim, as stated by Eusebius and Syncellus (Manetho 1964, 9). This misinterpretation is foundational to secular chronology and forms the standard by which all the histories of the nations are linked together to form the conventional model of history.

The error of serializing dynasties which were parallel results in phantom events in a multiplied timeline (figs. 3 and 4). We will find examples of this for Joseph's Famine, found in Dynasties 2, 5, and 12 in Egypt; the collapse of Egypt after the Exodus, recorded as the First and Second Intermediate Periods; the flight of Taharqa from lower Egypt, which is recorded in multiple Egyptian dynasties; and several other instances.

Some revisionists, such as Aitchison (2016, 485), Reilly (2015), and Down (2002), have argued that the Egyptian, Hittite, Greek, and Assyrian dynasties must be repositioned by a fixed number of years, 631 in Aitchison's case, 450 in Reilly's (fig. 5). However, the problem is not that simple. As seen in fig. 4, the phantom events created by serializing a set of parallel dynasties have different offsets for the event in each

With dynasties serialized, the event is now offset by a different number of years for each dynasty, creating phantom events. Timeline is multiplied as well.



**Fig. 4.** Serializing the dynasties creates phantom events.

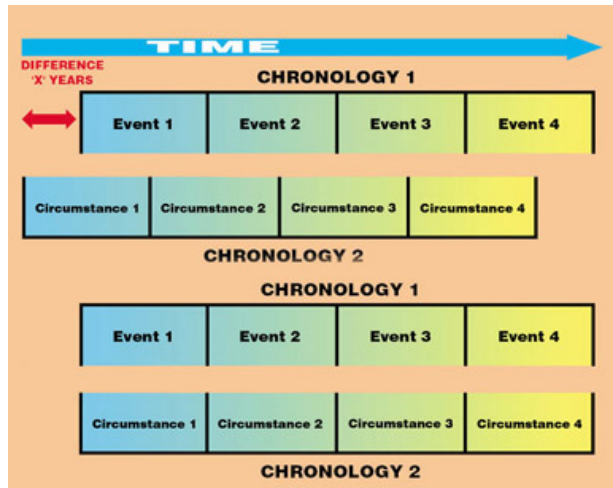


Fig. 5. David Down's shift of X years for all dynasties does not solve the problem (Down 2002).

dynasty that recorded it. In the hypothetical example in figs. 3 and 4, the same event experienced by five dynasties in 400BC, when serialized, will create four phantoms of the event in 750, 900, 1280, and 1750BC. Shifting Dynasties 1–4 down by 350 years will only realign Dynasty 4, leaving the others out of sync.

Therefore, simply shifting all of the dynasties down by X years, as David Down did, will never correct the problem (fig. 5). Instead the dynasties must be carefully studied and placed in parallel based on historical durations and strong synchronisms.

We will examine strong evidence that Manetho's dynasties, The Sumerian King List, and the Babylonian King List were lists of parallel administrations in different cities which have been mistakenly, and in some cases deliberately, serialized by historians both ancient and modern.

### 3. Building Castles on a Foundation of Error

Error begets more error, which results in gaps (nonexistent dark ages) as well as missed history.

#### Gaps

Some examples of gaps caused by this serializing of parallel dynasties include the Bronze Age Collapse and the radiocarbon Hallstatt Plateau.

The Bronze Age Collapse was invented to explain away the missing centuries of habitation layers in Greece and Anatolia caused by Petrie's chronology of Egypt (fig. 6). Not unlike the invention of dark matter and dark energy to fix the broken cosmology of the Big Bang, the dark age that followed the Bronze Age Collapse was created by serializing parallel dynasties.

We will demonstrate that there was no Bronze Age Collapse per se, although there was a world war in the Mediterranean, already known to classical history, and there were no dark ages in Greece or

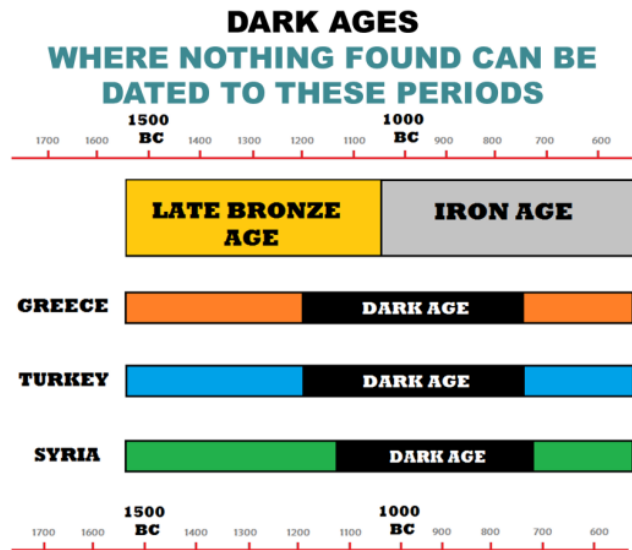


Fig. 6. Stratigraphic dark ages caused by serialized Egyptian chronology (Roger Waite. Used with permission).

Anatolia. Indeed we will argue that there were no prehistoric times either, though in some regions of the world there have been eras of lost history. The ancient chroniclers and tablets give us a recorded history that complements Scripture completely, dating back to Creation in 4004BC.

If dynasties that reigned in parallel in reality are serialized by historians, we would expect that radiocarbon dating will give the same dates for artifacts from dynasties separated by centuries in the conventional chronology. Indeed we find just such a problem in the Hallstatt Plateau. Archaeologists tell us with straight faces that radiocarbon decay effectively paused for four centuries between 800 and 400BC (van der Plicht 2005, 46, 48, 51). The phrase cognitive dissonance cannot even begin to describe how unscientific this claim is. Peter James referred to this as the first millennium radiocarbon disaster (James et al. 1993, Appendix 1). However, this is the expected result if we have mistakenly serialized parallel dynasties.

We also find that radiocarbon dating in general is rife with academic fraud because of the lack of double blinding and access to the samples by other researchers, which results in a lack of accountability (Bergman 2009; Harding 2005).

#### Missed History: David and Solomon, Exodus, Joshua's Conquest, Abimelech

While nearly every city in the ANE was destroyed multiple times, we see a recurring pattern of destructions with peculiar details mentioned in the Bible that are found in the same cities many centuries earlier. The Bible records that Jericho's

walls fell down flat and that Joshua burned the city without plundering it (Joshua 6:20–24).

Jericho was found to have been burned at the close of the Early Bronze III, several centuries before the conventional date for the Conquest. The Early Bronze III destruction of Jericho included the brick walls falling outward and burned grain, indicating the city was burned but not looted—three details peculiar to the biblical account. This was dated by Kenyon to several centuries before Joshua's time (Kenyon 1957, 258–259).

Shechem had a temple to Baal Berith with a tower with people hiding inside, which was destroyed by fire in the era of the Judges (Judges 9). When Shechem was excavated in 1926, a large temple with a tower which had been destroyed by fire was found, complete with charred human remains. However, this structure was dated to the Middle Bronze Age IIC, and the destruction by fire was dated to 1650 BC, four and a half centuries before the time of Gideon's son Abimelech (Courville 1971, 172; Montgomery 2019, chapter 3). Again, we find a city's destruction with details peculiar to the biblical account dated centuries earlier.

Many Early Bronze Age III cities including Heshbon, Arad, Jericho, Hazor, and Ai were completely and permanently destroyed by nomadic invaders of Canaan, but this is dated to the twenty-second century, seven centuries before the traditional date of the Conquest. Archaeologists don't know who the invaders were.

Every town in Palestine that has so far been investigated shows the same break. The newcomers were nomads, not interested in town life, and they so completely drove out or absorbed the old population, perhaps already weakened and decadent, that all traces of the Early Bronze Age civilisation disappeared. (Kenyon 1965, 134)

In this series of papers, we will show additional examples such as diplomatic archives from ancient cities that include actual correspondence with the Israelite kings Ishbosheth, Solomon, and Jehoahaz. These are currently unrecognized lost histories because they have been shifted back by centuries.

These very gaps and missed histories are shouting that the current standard is wrong and in need of serious reinterpretation until everything fits together.

### Revisionist Mushrooms

Kitchen and Wood have complained that amateurs keep attempting to revise the chronology of the ANE (Kitchen 1996, preface; Wood 1999; ABR 2019). Mushrooms grow on dead wood. The reason that revisionists of ancient history, both Christian and Atheist, keep cropping up like mushrooms is

that the chronology of the ANE that academia has been selling us fails to satisfactorily explain all of the known information.

Over and over again archaeologists tell us that the events in the Bible are not found in the ground, but then they find evidence of identical events, including the peculiar details, which occurred many centuries earlier. These, they assure us, cannot be the people or events the Bible was talking about.

If the ancient chroniclers from multiple cultures agree in essence on dates that form the framework of ancient history, and if their affirmations match the chronology of Scripture, which we know to be the real history of the world, then the real history of the ANE can be more reliably determined.

Although our framework is neither absolute nor exhaustively complete, we believe that it is able to demonstrate that the kingdoms of the ANE agree with the Ussher-Jones chronology of the Bible in a reasonable manner, which expands our real knowledge of ancient history while honoring the majority of known information.

We present for review to the creationist community a new model that we believe explains the historical data better than the conventional chronology. This is the first in the Chronological Framework of Ancient History (CFAH) series of 20 papers submitted to the *Answers Research Journal*.

### How Is This Chronological Framework Different?

Most historians believe that scholarship entails focusing on a narrow period and then building upon the most recent research by their peers; however, our first phase of creating a chronological framework by finding anchor points does not fit the normal approach. We examine two questions:

1. Did the ancient chroniclers record accurate information?  
and
2. Do they give consistent results between different cultures?

While chroniclers from one school or nation could be expected to standardize their own chronology, we doubt that chroniclers from multiple ancient cultures would have had the opportunity or authority to do so. Therefore, if we find agreement between chroniclers from many ancient nations, this is strong evidence that their testimony is accurate.

We set out to find out what the ancient chroniclers had to say, to see if they corroborated one another. We found that the majority of the durations formed a consensus which resulted in an affirmation of Ussher-Jones. This is the first section of five papers.

In the second phase we examined additional durations which subdivide the framework being



formed into smaller periods. The ancient chroniclers provided the data for that framework without being forced. These are papers 6–18.

A test of whether we have forced the data would be to see if the major durations can be arranged to support a different set of dates. We have not found any alternative frameworks that work with the data, but we encourage other researchers to attempt it.

### The Data—Table of Durations

We have provided Supplemental material as a companion to this paper, which contains the data used to build this chronological framework. It is divided into the tabs: Durations, Anchor Points, Assumed Synchronisms, and Bibliography. We have attempted to be comprehensive in using the full set of ancient chronological data available to us both in tablets and inscriptions, as well as from chroniclers.

#### Durations

The Durations tab is the primary data set for this project. It lists about 400 durations reported by ancient sources between events.

In addition to fields such as events, duration length, source, and references, we have three more columns that are helpful for looking up sources. The first column uniquely numbers the durations, allowing us to reference them. The Index column lists the length of the duration, allowing the sheet to be sorted by length.

#### Anchor Points

In each paper as we triangulate the dates for events, we number them as anchor points. This tab lists the anchor points in the order they are determined for the first five papers, and lists the paper in this series as CFAH-X where X is the paper. You are currently reading CFAH-1. We will release updates to the spreadsheet with each set of papers until the series is complete.

#### Wrongly Assumed Synchronisms

This tab became necessary because there are so many cases of historians creating synchronisms based on assumed chronology rather than both parties naming the same recorded event in a manner dateable from both sides.

For example, Tukulti Ninurta I of Assyria is often cited as defeating the Hittite King Tudkhaliya IV at the Battle of Nihriya. The problem is that neither king names the other king, and the letters of Tudkhaliya don't even mention a battle. It is assumed because the conventional chronology places them at the same time that they must have been the opponents, though some scholars argue it was Shalmaneser I not Tukulti Ninurta. If it can be shown by other

means that they lived at different times then this synchronism crumbles into dust.

There are many such assumed synchronisms which have made it into history books and encyclopedias that are not supported by the data, and we must also avoid creating them ourselves.

### Methodology

We use the method called triangulation, which was first used by George Rawlinson and later improved by Floyd Nolen Jones, for use with biblical data (Jones 2019, 135–137). We have applied Jones' method to extrabiblical historical data.

### Our Assumptions (Declared Biases)

1. The Bible is the infallible Word of the Creator God to humanity, and it contains the genuine history of the world inasmuch as it records history relevant to the redemption of humanity. Scripture dates many events in the reigns of external kingdoms and empires. Therefore we expect to find synchronisms that tie the sacred history to the other ancient kingdoms.
2. The Genesis Flood was global, and it destroyed all air-breathing terrestrial vertebrates, except those preserved within the Ark. Therefore, we believe all humans on earth today are descended from Noah and the seven passengers who accompanied him in the Ark, and we believe that all terrestrial vertebrates are descended from the animals in the Ark as well. The Flood also destroyed and remade the geography of the earth, so that with the possible exception of cities buried under sedimentary rock, all known archaeological remains are post-flood. Being the oldest bottleneck event common to the history of all nations on earth, the date of the Flood is the most desirable data point for the purpose of calibrating any historical chronology. The founding of Babel and the Dispersion are of similar quality and universality to all nations.
3. The Ancient Chroniclers had access to accurate data from temples and royal libraries, from which they could calculate accurate durations from events of their day back to key events in the past. Temples in Mesopotamian cities were making loans, dated by year names, as far back as the Early Bronze Age, conventionally dated to the fourth millennium BC. Not only did the ancient chroniclers have access to these records, tens of thousands of such tablets have been excavated and translated in the past two centuries. Though some of the chroniclers erred on certain points, when their testimonies confirm one another such that two or three independent witnesses agree without contradicting Scripture, then they establish firm dates for key events of the past.

4. We believe the chronogenealogies of Genesis do not contain chronological gaps and may be relied upon to build an accurate chronology of the period.
5. Due to the fallibility of man, there is no such thing as an absolute chronology. Different calendars and methods of reporting dates lead to an uncertainty of at least one year for most dates in ancient history. Astronomy can help to confirm dates if all of the astronomer's assumptions are correct. The best we can hope for is to achieve a standard chronology with an accuracy of about one year (Jones 2019, v).
6. The Bible contains chronological data which enables us to construct an accurate chronology from Creation to the decree of Cyrus the Great. From there, we must reference the chronology of the ancient empires in order to tie the Bible's chronology into the Anno Domini (AD) era that we use today.

However, given that there are two and sometimes three or four possible interpretations of each of the key passages, it is possible to construct more than 100 different chronologies from the biblical data. Only one of them can be correct at every point. The correct biblical chronology must harmonize all of the durations given in Scripture including applicable prophecies (Montgomery 1998).

We believe that external witnesses should support Scripture, not dictate the interpretation of Scripture. If our scriptural interpretation is correct, and our interpretation of the external data is correct, the two should agree.

When we find conflicts between the Bible chronology and extra-biblical sources, it may be difficult to determine which of our interpretations is mistaken. We should consider whether our interpretation of Scripture could be mistaken, our interpretation of the extra-biblical source could be mistaken, or the extra-biblical source itself may be in error. We will not consider the possibility, as Thiele (1994, 168) asserted, that the Bible itself is in error.

Since the Bible does not give us a complete chronological table, we must make our best attempt to create an accurate chronology based upon the inerrancy of Scripture. Any such chronological table will be a derivative work based on the interpretation of Scripture, and therefore cannot claim inerrancy.

We consider the *Chronology of the Old Testament* by Floyd Nolan Jones (2019) to be the most consistent interpretation of the biblical chronological passages for the dates prior to the Decree of Cyrus in 536 BC, and will refer to his work as the Ussher-Jones Chronology (table 1), though we differ by up to ten years with some of his dates in the era of the Judges.

However, we have avoided bending our results to fit Ussher-Jones. We find that both Ussher and Jones erred on nearly all of their historical

**Table 1.** Biblically derived dates from Ussher and Jones.

Biblically Derived Chronology using Ussher-Jones	
Year (BC)	Event
4004	Creation of Mankind
2348	Flood of Noah
2247	Territorial Division of the Earth
1998	Death of Noah
1996	Birth of Abraham
1921	Abraham Enters Canaan and Egypt
1897	Covenant of Circumcision
1891	Weaning of Isaac, rejection of Ishmael
1715	Joseph Raised to Vizier
1706	Jacob enters Egypt in second year of famine
1491	Exodus
1450	Crossing the Jordan (differs by 1 year from Jones)
1444/1443	Division of the Land, first Sabbatical and Jubilee
1251	Gideon defeats Oreb and Zeeb of Midian and Amalek
1012	Solomon Dedicates the Temple
976	Solomon's Death
721 or 720	Fall of Samaria, see Gertoux (2015, 1–34)
606	First year of Captivity of Daniel
597	Captivity of Jehoiachin and Ezekiel
586	Destruction of Solomon's Temple
536	Cyrus Decree of Return
516	Dedication of the Second Temple by Ezra

identifications of Gentile rulers prior to the Fall of Samaria circa 721 BC.

We present our Chronological Framework of Ancient history in this series of papers as our fallible best effort to reconcile all the sources available to us while being faithful to Scripture, and being aware that we are not the first, nor shall we be the last, to attempt this.

### Durations and Triangulations

By the mouth of two or three witnesses every word shall be established. (2 Corinthians 13:1)

The study of history is not a science with repeatable hypotheses that can be retested with experiments in the present. History is more akin to a court case where we attempt to discern what actually happened on the basis of testimony from ancient witnesses, some of whom were actually there, and others who recorded the testimony of eyewitnesses.

Unlike a court case, we do not have the ability to cross-examine the ancient witnesses by asking them questions. And, in most cases their testimony has been filtered through several other people, thus making much of the testimony hearsay. Even the records of ancient scholars in the library of Ashurbanipal are still hearsay, because they were compiled centuries after the events they describe.

Even with these limitations, if our assumptions are accurate, then a comprehensive review of all the durations given by ancient chroniclers which confirm one another should result in a solid chronological framework. Synchronisms between biblical and extra-biblical histories should result, connecting the nations chronologically.

Our method is to scan citations of ancient texts for durations which meet the following criteria:

1. Credible;
  2. Anchored to well-dated events;
  3. From two or three witnesses;
  4. Confirm one another, via triangulation (Jones 2019, 109).
1. **Credible Durations.** If an ancient chronicler states that an ancient event occurred a precise number of years before a much later event, then one would assume that this chronicler had access to data from which to calculate that duration—until shown otherwise. Credible durations require access to accurate original eyewitness data. “All that we know is...that the later Assyrian monarchs believed they had means of fixing the exact date of events in their own history and that of Babylon up to a time distant from their own as much as sixteen or seventeen hundred years...” (Rawlinson 1879, vol. 1, 152–153).
  2. **Anchored to Well Dated Events.** One end of the duration given must be from a known date. Since “more than 1,200 fragments of astronomical diaries...from 385BC to 61BC...firmly establish the chronology of this period,” dates from the Era of Nabonassar in 747BC to late Antiquity will be accepted as known (Jonsson 1998, 157–158).
  3. **Multiple Independent Ancient Sources.** Two or more witnesses are needed to establish the truth. Testimony from two or more different cultures is a strong witness. Ancient sources will generally be considered those written before the Fall of Rome in 455AD. Durations given by medieval chroniclers and copyists may be accepted if we cannot ascertain an older source and they confirm a stronger witness. For example, our knowledge of Manetho and Berossus was entirely preserved through ancient and medieval chroniclers. What is important is direct access to accurate data or the quoting of a preceding chronicler who had direct access.
  4. **A date can be verified by triangulation** if the same result is given by two different paths. Example, if one source says that Event A happened 50 years before Event B, and a second source says that event B was 75 years before Event C, and a third source says that event A occurred 125 years before Event C, then we have a triangulation, because  $AB + BC = AC$  (Jones 2019, 135).

Though Jones coined the word triangulation to describe this method which was first used by Rawlinson, geometrically this does not form a triangle. The rule actually used is “the whole must be equal to the sum of its parts,” which mathematicians call the “partition postulate.” That is, the longer duration must be equal to the sum of the shorter durations. This is what Jones means by triangulation and we will continue using the term in the same way, noting here that it has nothing to do with a triangle. It means that durations between three different dated events converge on one date.

Three given durations from at least two different sources are found to confirm each other if they meet the conditions of this rule. When this relationship between three durations is demonstrated, then firm dates are established for all three events.

A single triangulation made from durations from different sources is enough to give us confidence that the date derived for the ancient event is correct and that the data used was accurate. If it is indeed correct, it is to be expected that additional durations will be found that also triangulate with it, thus further confirming its accuracy.

Another way to view this is as completing a circuit. If we count back from a known date to an ancient event by one set of durations and then count forward to the same or a different known date using a different set of durations, we can be said to have completed a circuit. Completing a circuit confirms both sets of durations and the date to which they triangulate.

### How Accurate Does a Triangulation Need to Be?

All measurements have a built-in error equal to one-half of the smallest degree of accuracy of the measurement. In our study most durations are given in years, so the default error rate for most durations is  $\pm 6$  months.

Care must be taken not to accumulate excessive error by adding together many small measurements to determine one large one. This is the primary concern with attempts to sum up the dynasties of Kings, Chronicles, Manetho, or the Babylonian King List to arrive at a duration for the dynasty.

Historical durations have some built-in error-checking because most historical dates are given in terms of the year of a reigning king or dynasty. Some of the cultures of the ANE used accession-year dating, which eliminated cumulative error from their chronologies. Others used non-accession year dating which adds up to one additional year of error per king.

For durations which are obviously approximations or rounded numbers, a much wider range can be said to confirm a triangulated date.

For example, about 1,600 years is rounded to the nearest hundred years yielding an error range of  $\pm 50$  years. This means the precise duration could have been between 1,550 and 1,650 years in length. Likewise, the statement over 1,600 years could be said to confirm any precisely triangulated date within the range 1,601 to 1,650 years.

If a date is already established by at least one precise triangulation, then a second duration falling within 1% of the duration of the date in question can be considered to have been triangulated with it, but we would rank it as a loose triangulation.

If two independently calculated durations for the same event overlap within their error ranges, they may be said to make a triangulation.

### Calibrate with the Most Distant Points

As when conducting a land survey the greatest accuracy is achieved by taking the longest possible measurements, by which one avoids the accumulation of small errors. Likewise, the longest durations back to the Flood, Founding of Babel, the Dispersion and founding of the nations, provided they are valid to begin with, may serve as bookends from which to calibrate our chronology for dates in between. This is similar to solving a jigsaw puzzle by finding the corners and edges first. If durations for the oldest events are not available, then smaller durations may be added together, so long as we are aware of the cumulative error.

### Etymological Name Identifications

We will only consider evidence of name associations after the two persons have been chronologically placed in the same time frame by other evidence. We cannot allow name associations by themselves to dictate chronology because there are too many possible coincidental similarities and too many characters in history who took the names of earlier heroes and kings.

### Units of Time

But, beloved, do not forget this one thing, that with the Lord one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. (2 Peter 3:8, NKJV)

A number of the precise durations that we have identified were translated from Akkadian and Egyptian into Greek, and also from Aryan, Sanskrit, and Chinese into English. These are often given in the text as very large numbers of years. However, it has become apparent that the original numbers were in some cases days, months, quarters, or seasons, and in the case of the Hindus, double-hours. There appear to have been at least three other short units of time in use as well that were sometimes cited as years.

In one of the fragments of Manetho preserved by Malalas, we are told that, "Mestraim from the family of Kham reigned over the Egyptians...After him Hephaistos reigned over the Egyptians for 1,680 days, which makes 4 years, 7 months, and 3 days; for the Egyptians then did not know how to measure years, but they called the period of the day 'years'...for neither the Egyptians at that time nor anyone else knew how to calculate a number, but instead some counted the periods of the moon as years, while others counted the period of days as years. Reckoning by the twelve-month periods was developed later, after the names for taxation intervals were introduced." (Verbrugghe and Wickersham 1996, 153)

We will examine strong evidence that, contrary to the reasoning of Malalas, the ancient Egyptians knew perfectly well the difference between a day, a month, and a year. However, in Berossus, Manetho, the Babylonian King List, and the Sumerian King List we see in each case examples of the priests playing with numbers by counting days, months, and other units of time as years.

About a dozen of our 400 durations are recorded in odd units such as days, quadrimestrals, or in the case of the Hindus, double-hours, but reported in the texts as years. These require interpretation, but we are still able to use them if they fit.

### Synchronisms

In the process of reviewing historical arguments we have found that the supposed synchronisms on which the conventional ancient history rests vary widely in quality.

A synchronism is an event which can be identified in the timelines of two different people or kingdoms, allowing the two clocks or histories of those kingdoms to be synchronized with each other.

There are three types of information that we ideally want to see recorded on both sides: the details of the event, the name of the other king, and the date, usually given in regnal years.

Many historical synchronisms are based on a record of only one of the two kingdoms. We would call this a one-sided synchronism, which is of much lower quality than a two-sided synchronism.

In order to qualify as a full two-sided synchronism, the event must be mentioned by both sides and independently dateable by both sides. If both sides name the other king that is an added bonus.

#### *Example: One-sided Synchronism*

The Kurkh Monolith records that Shalmaneser III fought a coalition of 12 kings at the city of QarQar, one of whom was Yaub Srilit. This has been interpreted to mean Ahab of Israel. However, this is a low-quality



synchronism for two reasons. First, there is no record of this battle or campaign in the annals of Israel, and the normal Assyrian word for Israel was Khumri not Srilit. Second, the Bible has five chronological data sets covering this period for Israel and Judah, all of which place the death of Ahab over 40 years before the accession of Shalmaneser III. Therefore this is a weak one-sided synchronism that contradicts the chronology of the Israel side. A better explanation is probably possible.

#### *Example: Two-Sided Synchronism*

The Battle of Pelusium, one of several at that city on the Egyptian border, between the forces of Cambyses the Persian and Psamtik III of the twenty-sixth Dynasty, is recorded by both sides. Herodotus and several other sources record the Persian side of the story. The records of Manetho, the Egyptian priest, allow us to calculate back from Alexander's conquest of Egypt in 332BC to the Battle of Pelusium by summing the reigns of Dynasties 27–31. The Egyptian data comes from three different redactors, who differ slightly, giving a range between 191 and 204 years before 332BC. The Greek and Persian data give the conquest in the fifth year of Cambyses, which is calculated from the other direction, down from the accession of Cyrus over Anshan in 560BC, giving the date 525BC. Since both cultures agree on the details of the event, the general date, and the names of the two opposing kings, this is a strong two-sided synchronism.

One-sided synchronisms may be usable when no contradicting data exist, but two-sided synchronisms have much higher certainty. However, there can be rare cases where even apparent two-sided synchronisms are mistaken, such as when there are two sets of rulers with similar names in different eras of history.

#### **Julian Years**

Cultures in the ANE had different days from which they counted the new year.

The year 747BC on the Babylonian calendar goes from about March 747BC until February 746BC on the Julian calendar.

Years given as Julian years will simply be listed as 747BC, whereas years from cultures with a different new year will be listed in the form 747/746BC to show the Julian years in which they began and ended, if that is known.

#### **Conclusions**

We have made the case here that the conventional model of ancient history is in error because of misplaced authority, reliance on misidentified evidence, and building historical models upon a foundation of errors.

We have defined a method of scanning ancient sources for durations between events and then filtering those durations based on whether they can be found to triangulate with other witnesses.

Using the methods described here, we have systematically processed the available chronological data of the ANE. The resulting framework adds up to the same number of years from Babel to Alexander the Great by three different major pathways and by a total of 49 smaller pathways, external to the Bible.

Our results agree fairly closely with the chronologies of Stewart, Down, Waite, Osgood, and Montgomery, especially for the twelfth and eighteenth dynasties of Egypt. The primary differences are our date for the death of Solomon, which agrees with Ussher-Jones, and our placement of the Hittite, Sumerian, and Babylonian dynasties.

We cannot prove every detail beyond all doubt, and there remain some pieces for which we have not yet found a fit. But the resulting framework seems to solve the biggest problems in reconciling ancient history to the received text of the Old Testament, and specifically, the Usher-Jones chronology derived from it. And as a result, several of the hitherto unrecognized kings of Israel appear in the archaeological record.

In the next paper, we will proceed to solve for the far edge of the puzzle—the founding of the nations after the Dispersion from Babel.

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### Supplementary Material

Available in a single file at <https://assets.answersresearchjournal.org/doc/articles/arj/v15/cfah-data.xlsx>.