

Article

Temple Dedication and Construction Texts of the Ancient Near East with Elapsed Years: Implications for Long Duration Chronologies

Titus Kennedy

Center for Science and Culture, Discovery Institute, Seattle, WA 98101, USA; titus.kennedy@biola.edu

Abstract: Ancient texts dedicating or commemorating temples that can be associated with archaeological remains such as architecture and inscriptions, along with identifiable kings who built or commemorated those temples and the specification of the elapsed number of years from a past event, are known from Mesopotamia, Egypt, and the Levant over the span of several centuries. Although the texts originate from differing religious, cultural, and geographic contexts and were recorded on various mediums, the similarity in content, style, and objective indicates a shared tradition and allows the grouping of these texts into a distinctive category. These temple construction and dedication texts document a king or kings involved in the construction, reconstruction, or remembrance of a temple, a deity with whom the temple was connected, the location of the temple, and the specific number of years elapsed between construction or dedication and another significant cultural or religious event. Known examples come from Assyria, Babylon, Egypt, Phoenicia, and Israel, spanning the 13th to the 2nd centuries BC, along with a text from ancient Rome that was likely influenced by this practice. Because the kings named are known from various historical documents and inscriptions, archaeological remains related to the temples have often been recovered; since the construction or dedication texts record elapsed years in reference to another event, these texts can be analyzed in regard to their viability as sources for the history and chronology of the ancient Near East in the context of religion and official records of the state. Investigation of these texts alongside king lists and temples reveals that temple construction and dedication texts of the ancient Near East that included mention of elapsed years provide valuable, detailed, and accurate information that can be used to identify the existence of ancient temples in time, corroborate periods of kingship or other important events, and contribute to understanding a method of historical chronology used by the ancients.

Keywords: temple dedication; *Distanzangaben*; chronology; Nabonidus; Avaris; Year 400 Stela; Solomon; Exodus; long-duration years; Assyria; Egypt; Phoenicia; Israel; Baalshamem; temple construction; Babylon; religion; history; temple; archaeology



Citation: Kennedy, Titus. 2024. Temple Dedication and Construction Texts of the Ancient Near East with Elapsed Years: Implications for Long Duration Chronologies. *Religions* 15: 408. <https://doi.org/10.3390/rel15040408>

Academic Editors: M. Le Roux, A. M. Harcombe, E. C. Swart and Arndt Büssing

Received: 30 October 2023

Revised: 16 March 2024

Accepted: 17 March 2024

Published: 26 March 2024



Copyright: © 2024 by the author. Licensee MDPI, Basel, Switzerland. This article is an open access article distributed under the terms and conditions of the Creative Commons Attribution (CC BY) license (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>).

I. Introduction

A temple dedication and construction genre, as it relates to long-duration years and historical chronology in the context of ancient Near Eastern archaeology, history, and religion, has only been discussed in limited scope. While the designation of a distinctive genre restricted only to this category of texts might not be appropriate, certainly, hundreds of inscriptions about temple construction, dedication, rededication, and commemoration have been recovered from the ruins of the ancient world and can be classified as a category of text or inscription. Works on the general topic of the “building account” type suggest that this category was a recognized and fixed literary form in ancient times that spread from one culture to another or was reproduced independently due to common ideas; unfortunately, the aspect of specific chronological information regarding elapsed years, or the chronological and historical implications of this segment of those texts, has been largely ignored (Hurowitz 1992, pp. 230–33; Davis 2019, pp. 5–154; Van Seters 1997, pp. 45–57;

Kamlah and Michelau 2012). Other publications referring to ancient texts that relate to the dedication, rededication, or commemoration of a temple in connection with chronological issues have usually done so as a side note to debates about broader chronological issues in the context of *Distanzangaben* (long-period time spans), but the usefulness of these types of temple dedication texts and their mentions of elapsed years for discovering the correct years of ancient kings and dynasties is noted (Mahieu 2021, pp. 67–85; Van Wyk 2017, pp. 114–40; Blum 2012, pp. 291–316; Reade 2001, pp. 3–5; Na’aman 1984, pp. 117–19). Several publications have claimed that examination of temple dedication texts of the ancient Near East, specifically a temple related subset of *Distanzangaben* texts, indicate that the years are usually symbolic or ambiguous long-duration years; the focus of understanding years as symbolic has usually revolved around a particular interpretation of a temple dedication text about Solomon and the Jerusalem temple found in the Hebrew Bible (Kitchen 1966, pp. 72–75; Kitchen 2003, pp. 307–9; Hoffmeier 2007, pp. 235–39; Hurowitz 2010, p. 294; Machinist 2019, pp. 217–19; Rendsburg 1992, pp. 510–27; Hoffmeier 2021, pp. 57–58; Van Bekkum 2022, pp. 39–47; cf. 1 Kings 6:1). Yet, contrary to this view, it has been noted that ancient scribes and officials used king lists, eponym lists, and other chronological documents as sources in their *Distanzangaben* year totals, including the long duration time spans found in certain temple dedication texts (Hagens 2005, p. 25; Pruzsinszky 2005, pp. 23–31). The hypothesis that long duration years in temple dedication texts supposedly recording ambiguous or symbolic years, possibly connected to an idea of generations or, alternatively, a select number of aggregate years of specifically chosen overlapping reigns and periods, particularly selected events, and hypothesized reign lengths, is flawed in light of the extant temple dedication texts and historical chronologies that instead appear to have the intention of communicating an actual number of solar years connected to a past event that can be mathematically confirmed. While this is a crucial angle of inquiry, most have completely omitted any discussion, comparison, and analysis of various ancient temple dedication and construction texts including elapsed years when examining chronological data connected to the particular temple dedication text about Solomon and Jerusalem (e.g., Berman 2020, pp. 33–34; Geraty 2015, pp. 56–58; Wood 2005, pp. 475–89; 2007, pp. 225–47; Wiseman 1993, p. 104; Bimson 1981, pp. 74–83; Rowley 1950, pp. 77–99).

The analysis of temple dedication, rededication, or commemoration texts from the ancient world suggests that these texts mentioned historical events that connect the temples to a particular ruler and year, along with a specific number of elapsed years between the events that are recorded as actual solar years and can be corroborated by external archaeological and historical data. Thus, it appears that the authorial intent of these texts was to convey historical and chronologically accurate data, even if their calculations might have been in error by a small margin or intentionally rounded. While there are hundreds of texts from the ancient Near East that could be categorized as a temple dedication, only in rare cases was an elapsed number of years between a past event and the dedication of a temple recorded (e.g., Boda and Novotny 2010, pp. 447–509). For example, there are around 1500 temples mentioned in the known ancient texts of Mesopotamia, yet only a small fraction of these temples have preserved dedication texts (George 1993, pp. 63–171). Currently, seven known published texts from Mesopotamia note elapsed years connected to temple dedication, with two of these texts containing overlapping information authored by the same king.¹ The rarity of temple dedications using long duration years also indicates that the inclusion of elapsed years data was done with intentional purpose to communicate specific information for a chronological, historical, and ideological framework rather than generalized symbolism. This type of text, although scarce, has a widespread geographic distribution throughout the ancient Near East from Assyria, Babylon, Egypt, Phoenicia, and Israel. The chronological distribution ranges from the 18th century BC to the 2nd century BC. Another relevant text from the Roman Republic may also be included for comparison since the temple dates back to the 6th century BC and an associated 4th century BC dedication inscription likely has roots in this tradition of the ancient Near East. Other ancient cultures, such as the Hittites, Philistines, Urartu, Elam, and Achaemenid Persia,

also created temple dedication inscriptions that inserted types of chronological markers, but either these cultures did not record elapsed years between temple related past events in this type of text, or examples of this have not yet been discovered or published.

II. Temple Dedication and Construction

II.1. Assyria

From Assyria, five examples of temple dedication and construction texts using long duration years are known from the 13th century BC to the 7th century BC, in addition to a similar and earlier temple dedication text that instead employed a specific number of generations rather than years. It is also apparent that the Assyrian texts of this type are overwhelmingly concerned with temples in the city of Assur, suggesting that the significance of this city played a role in why these particular temple dedication texts recorded long duration years.²

- (A) A temple rededication commissioned by Tukulti-Ninurta I in the 13th century BC is a prime example of a “temple dedication” or rededication and construction text. In this document, Tukulti-Ninurta I stated that 720 years had elapsed from the time since his ancestor Ilu-Shumma had constructed the temple of Ishtar until the time that he rebuilt the Ishtar temple (Grayson 1987, pp. 253–56; Figure 1). The two particular Ishtar temples at Assur referred to in this text are known archaeologically, designated as Temple D and Temple A, and fit the archaeological periods of Ilu-Shumma and Tukulti-Ninurta I (Bär 2003; Schmitt 2012; Meinhold 2009). The reign of Tukulti-Ninurta was ca. 1243–1207 BC, while Ilu-Shumma reigned during the 20th century BC. Erishum I, the son and successor of Ilu-Shumma, ruled ca. 1940–1910 BC (Short Chronology) or 1974–1935 BC (Middle Chronology), allowing the probable end of the reign of Ilu-Shumma to be placed around 1940 BC.³ This means that 720 years prior to the reign of Tukulti-Ninurta I, when he issued the edict about the Ishtar temple, would have been the period of approximately 1963–1927 BC, and it would have been exactly during the reign of Ilu-Shumma when construction on the Ishtar temple was previously carried out.⁴ The years stated in this temple dedication text of Tukulti-Ninurta I, even though tracing back more than seven centuries, can be confirmed as an accurate reckoning, plus or minus a few years due to chronological uncertainties of ancient Mesopotamia. Rather than in error by centuries, symbolic, or figurative, this long duration year number reflects a real and accurate number of solar years that is confirmed by Assyrian king lists and archaeological remains of the Ishtar temple phases at Assur.
- (B) In the 13th century BC, Shalmaneser I left an early record about his reconstruction of the Esarra temple in Assur and the duration of time between an earlier repair by Erishum I and the reconstruction by Shamshi-Adad I, then the elapsed time between his own dedication and the previous build and dedication by Shamshi-Adad I (Grayson 1987, p. 189). Between the event associated with Erishum I and the construction by Shamshi-Adad I, 159 years supposedly passed, according to the text. With the reign of Erishum I placed tentatively during 1974–1935 BC and Shamshi-Adad I situated ca. 1808–1776 BC (Middle Chronology), the elapsed time of 159 years indeed fits from the middle or second half of the reign of Erishum I to the time of Shamshi-Adad I. The larger duration figure between Shamshi-Adad I and Shalmaneser I, recorded as 580 years elapsed between the kings and their temple dedications, comes extremely close to exact when used with currently accepted reign lengths and king list reconstructions. When the reign of Shamshi-Adad I is placed beginning ca. 1808 BC and the reign of Shalmaneser I ends as late as ca. 1235 BC, there can be 575 years inclusive counted between the two kings. If there is an error in elapsed years, it is only a miniscule 0.9% or five years, and well within an acceptable margin of error. These two long duration temple construction periods, when examined alongside the probable reigns of the kings involved, demon-

strate an accurate rendering of elapsed years in another temple reconstruction and dedication text.

- (C) A 12th century BC temple text of Tiglath-Pileser I concerning the Anu-Adad temple at Assur contains a single long duration statement regarding the time between the construction of the temple by Shamshi-Adad and its demolition by Assur-Dan I (Grayson 1991, p. 28). The relevant portion states that 641 years had elapsed between the construction and demolition by these respective kings. The text mentions a Shamshi-Adad and a Ishme-Dagan, which must be referring to Shamshi-Adad I and his son Ishme-Dagan I, further supported in that this period also fits the architecture of the excavated temple in question (Reade 2001, p. 4). Therefore, the elapsed time of 641 should be compared with the period between the reigns of Shamshi-Adad I ca. 1808–1776 BC and Ashur-Dan I ca. 1178–1133 BC. Indeed, 641 years after the reign of Shamshi-Adad I falls precisely into the reign of Ashur-Dan I, and yet another Assyrian long duration temple text can be verified as using precise, real years to communicate the time in between religiously significant events.
- (D) A fragmentary inscription commissioned by an unknown king or official from the Middle Assyrian period, possibly one of the heirs of Ashur-resh-ishi I in the 11th century BC, notes that between the restoration of the Assur temple by Shalmaneser I and the reconstruction of the temple by Ashur-resh-ishi I, a total of 132 years had elapsed (Boese and Wilhelm 1979, pp. 29–33). When the period of 132 years is subtracted from the period of Shalmaneser I ca. 1273–1244 BC, the time falls into the range from the beginning to the end of the reign of Ashur-resh-ishi I ca. 1132–1115 BC. The duration of elapsed years in this instance is shorter than other Assyrian temple construction or dedication texts, but nonetheless it clearly provides another example showing that the elapsed years in these types of texts were meant to be read as real solar years and were recorded with a high degree of accuracy.
- (E) The Esarhaddon Prism “Assur A” of the 7th century BC is another relevant Assyrian text that records multiple long duration periods in between temple dedications and rebuilds of various kings involved with the Esarra temple in Assur with the text situating the restoration by Esarhaddon in the first year of his reign ca. 681 BC (RINAP 4, Esarhaddon 057 n.d.; Nissinen 1998, pp. 15–16). Beginning with the mention of the period from Erishum I to Shamshi-Adad I, 126 years is stated as the elapsed time between temple dedications or constructions. Next, Shalmaneser I oversaw a temple rebuild that was supposedly 434 years following that of Shamshi-Adad I. Finally, Esarhaddon himself oversaw another temple rebuild that was allegedly 580 years after Shalmaneser I. Beginning with the dedication by Erishum I ca. 1974–1935 BC, exactly 126 years elapse from the end of the period of Erishum I until the dedication during the reign of Shamshi-Adad I ca. 1808–1776 BC.⁵ This was followed by a temple dedication or rebuild of Shalmaneser I ca. 1273–1244 BC, counted as 434 elapsed years in between the two kings and events, bringing the date to approximately 1342 BC. However, this appears to be in error and short by at least 69 years, since the reign of Shalmaneser I cannot be placed prior to 1273 BC. This has been speculated as a textual error that was supposed to read as 494 years rather than 434 years, bringing the elapsed time into an acceptable margin of error around 1.8% and explaining the potential problem. Still, 434 years rather than the currently accepted 503 years between the two kings based on the Assyrian King List would only be an error of 13.7% and not grounds for interpreting the figure as symbolic or historically useless. Finally, the elapsed time between the temple work by Shalmaneser I and Esarhaddon (ca. 681–669 BC) was stated as 580 years, a number of years which fits perfectly between the reign of Shalmaneser I ca. 1273–1244 BC and the restoration in the first year of Esarhaddon ca. 681 BC. This temple dedication and rededication text, which includes three different periods of long duration elapsed years, can be shown as completely correct for at least two of the three, with a possible textual error for the third or a calculation error of about 13.7%. Thus, this prism of Esarhaddon also indicates that

the long duration years in temple dedication texts use real and accurate years rather than symbolic or figurative numbers.

- (F) A related yet distinct temple dedication text that contains a long duration timespan between kings and events comes from a Shamshi-Adad I inscription of the 18th century BC about repairing or rebuilding the temple of Emeneu that Manishtushu, son of Sargon, had built (Grayson 1987, pp. 51–55). However, this text differs from the others discussed in that it uses a number of generations for the long duration timespan rather than a specific number of years, stating that seven generations had passed since the fall of Akkad. Those seven elapsed generations seem to be in reference to the Puzur-Ashur dynasty immediately preceding Shamshi-Adad I, who rose to power during the founding of Assyria as an independent state after the power vacuum left by the fall of Akkad. If Puzur-Ashur came to power in ca. 2025 BC and Shamshi-Adad I began his reign in 1808 BC, then those seven generations would represent a total of 217 years or 31 years each. Although the seven generations of elapsed time noted in the inscription is plausible since it fits historical reconstructions and indicates that the elapsed time could be understood as intending a real rather than figurative calculation, the imprecision also necessitates a tentative conclusion about total years in this particular case. Yet, this text is important in demonstrating that elapsed years and generations were seen as two completely distinct methods of counting time, and that generations were specified as generations rather than the ancient writers of temple dedication texts cryptically inferring ambiguous numbers of generations or symbolic time into a long duration number of years written in a text.



Figure 1. Temple of Ishtar at Assur foundation inscription of Tukulti-Ninurta I.

II.2. Egypt

Temple dedication and commemoration texts have also been found in Egypt, but only one currently known example includes elapsed years between a temple commemoration and another historical event. The Year 400 Stela of 19th Dynasty Egypt contains a reference to the 4th day of the 4th month of year 400, counting back from a commemoration to the initiation of an era connected to the founding of the temple of Seth in Avaris when the cult of Seth was officially established in the region (Sethé 1930, pp. 85–89; Montet 1931, pp. 191–215; Habachi 1975, pp. 41–44; Figure 2). Discovered at Tanis, the stele had originally been erected at Avaris before being relocated in antiquity.⁶ The exact date of the commemoration, while not specified, seems to be near the end of the reign of Seti I, or possibly but less likely early in the reign of Ramesses II when the stele was commissioned, as both Seti I and Ramesses II are depicted on the stele. The inscription was ordered by Ramesses II who memorialized the event, but refers to his predecessor and father Seti I whose name reflected the deity Seth and was probably the king honoring the deity.⁷ An alternative view speculates that the 400-year period began late in the reign of Horemheb when Ramesses I and Seti I were appointed as successors (Bietak and Rendsburg 2021, p. 56). This Horemheb view hypothesizes that there could have been an older stele depicting and naming Horemheb that was later replaced by the stele with Ramesses II and Seti I, but there is no evidence to indicate the existence of this Horemheb stele commemorating the dedication of the temple of Seth at Avaris. In the Year 400 Stela, Horemheb is nowhere mentioned or depicted, while Ramesses II is pictured on the stele with his cartouche and Seti I is also pictured honoring Seth and mentioned on the stele. Relating the stele and dedication to Horemheb rather than Seti I would also be peculiar and unexpected since the name Seti means “the one belonging to Seth”, while the name Horemheb is totally unrelated to the deity Seth. Even if this speculative Horemheb dedication scenario were correct, if the hypothetical missing stele was commissioned late in the reign of Horemheb when Ramesses I and Seti I were promoted, about 13 years prior to the reign of Ramesses II, this would only introduce a possible error of around 13 years or approximately 3.25% if counting from 1680 BC as the dedication of the Seth temple. The ruins of this temple of Seth at Avaris are known archaeologically and have been excavated near the location of the ancient harbor, with the establishment of this temple dated to the 14th Dynasty and more specifically around 1700–1680 BC (Bietak and Forstner-Muller 2008, pp. 28–50; Bietak 2015, pp. 17–37). This date for the founding of the Seth temple and the prominence of the cult of Seth is further indicated in that the earliest attestation of the title “Beloved of Seth, Lord of Avaris” appears with Nehesy, who ruled briefly around 1700 BC (Bietak and Forstner-Muller 2008, p. 28). If the temple was dedicated around 1700–1680 BC, and the commemoration of this temple occurred 400 years later, then it would be expected that the king mentioned on the Year 400 Stela would be Seti I, who was in power until around 1280 BC. Indeed, Seti I is referenced on the stele, and his son Ramesses II appears to have commissioned the stele early in his reign. Although the specific year of the founding of the temple cannot be established with absolute certainty at this time, and debates about the exact regnal dates of Seti I persist, the margin of error for the long duration 400 years would be extremely small at about 3% to 5%. Thus, the long duration year total of 400 years on the stele seems to be at least 95% correct, and it is clear that its intent was to reflect the total number of actual years between the founding of the temple and its later commemoration in the 19th Dynasty rather than a purely symbolic number.⁸ Also possibly significant, and similar to the Assyrian texts of this type connected to Assur, is the fact that this Seth temple and the temple construction commemoration stele was commissioned and erected in Avaris when adjacent Pi-Ramesses was the location of the royal palace and the capital of Egypt.

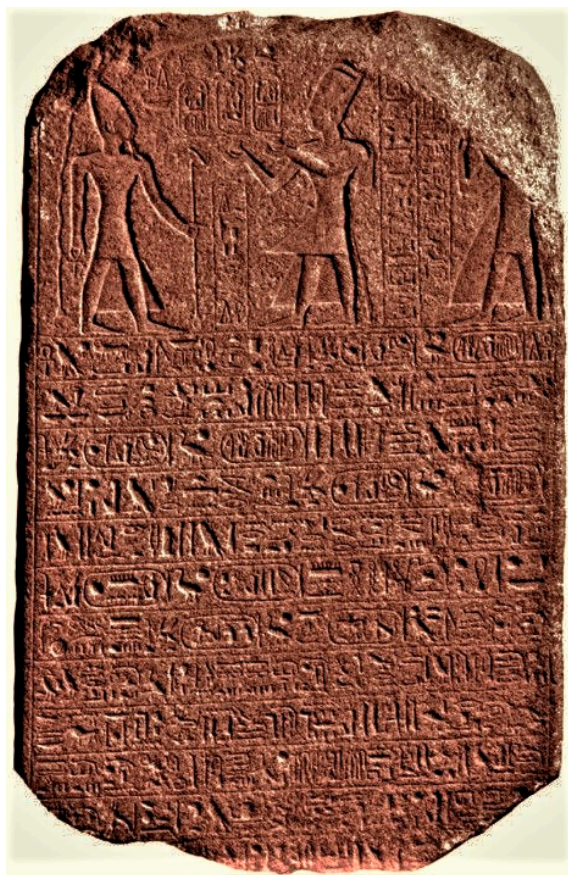


Figure 2. The Year 400 Stela.

II.3. Babylon

Babylonian temple dedication texts specifying totals of long duration years are only known currently from two examples commissioned by Nabonidus which contain overlapping information. Both texts mention Sippar rather than Babylon proper, the capital of the empire, in contrast to the geographic focus of similar texts from other cultures which were usually associated with the capital city.

- (A) The Sippar Cylinder of Nabonidus, beginning in his 3rd year ca. 553 BC, discusses the reconstruction and dedication of the Ebabbar temple of Shamash in Sippar and the Anunitu temple Eulmash in Sippar-Anunitu, specifying the number of years from the dedications of Nabonidus back to the times of Nebuchadnezzar II, Shagarakti-Shuriash son of Kudur-Enlil, and Naram-Sin son of Sargon the Great (Hallo and Younger 2000, pp. 312–13; Beaulieu 1989, p. 25; Leichty 1986, p. 212; BM 91109; Figure 3). The text refers back to earlier temple work by Nebuchadnezzar II as having occurred 45 years prior to the 13th year of Nabonidus ca. 543 BC, placing the previous undertaking of Nebuchadnezzar II in ca. 585 BC. Nabonidus had access to many Neo-Babylonian records, and it is unlikely that he would have made an error with this short period of time. This text, however, also claims that Nabonidus rebuilt a temple to Anunitu and mentions Shagarakti-Shuriash son of Kudur-Enlil supposedly being 800 years before his time. Yet, 800 years prior to Nabonidus would be no later than approximately 1340 BC, but the reign of Shagarakti-Shuriash is placed ca. 1245 BC (Short Chronology) or around 1300 BC (Middle Chronology). Therefore, Nabonidus may have either rounded up to 800 years with an error of 5%, or his calculations were in error by as much as 11.9% if using the Short Chronology. This indicates that either Nabonidus was not concerned with relaying an exact number of elapsed years, or he lacked sufficient records that would allow him or his officials to make a more precise calculation back in time over seven centuries. The third long duration

year span in this text, mentioning Naram-Sin and a 3200 year period, is perplexing and completely erroneous. While Nabonidus does reference an authentic ruler in Naram-Sin and has historical knowledge of the distant past, this king ruled closer to 1700 years before Nabonidus rather than 3200 years. The reason for this extreme error can only be speculated, but the rulers were separated by many empires, cultures, and changes in language and writing. It is plausible to assume that there was no set of available records and lists that would have allowed Nabonidus to reconstruct a viable chronology going back to the time of Naram-Sin, so he made an estimate. Alternatively, because Nabonidus uses slightly different language and states that “no king among my predecessors had found in 3200 years,” perhaps he added together all of the regnal years of various overlapping kings in the region to arrive at the massive figure. Perhaps significantly and in recognition of the error, a slightly later text of Nabonidus that includes long duration elapsed years and mentions Naram-Sin does not make the claim of 3200 years. Although this particular long duration figure is wrong, the other instances of elapsed years recorded by Nabonidus demonstrate that his intent was to give real numbers of years, at least roughly accurate, but he was probably hampered by unavailability of the necessary data.

- (B) A text of Nabonidus similar to the Sippar Cylinder, also addressing the Ebarra temple of Shamash reconstruction and dedication, differs in that it counts from the 10th year of his reign and notes that 52 years had elapsed from the actions of Nebuchadnezzar II in addition to recording 700 years between the temple construction by Hammurabi and the time of Burnaburiash (Langdon 1916, pp. 110–16; BM 104738). This text also references the temple Eulmash, Sargon and Naram-Sin, and other historically known kings, but it does not include the 3200 years of searching that is mentioned in the Sippar Cylinder. The period of 52 years from the 10th year of Nabonidus to the time when Nebuchadnezzar II worked on the temple is accurate and in agreement with the previously discussed cylinder of Nabonidus. However, the elapsed time of 700 years between Hammurabi and Burnaburiash presents difficulties. Unless this calculation of 700 years is an egregious error, it cannot be a reference to either Burna-Buriash I or Burna-Buriash II. Alternatively, it could have been an unknown Burnaburiash around the tangled and tumultuous times of the end of the 2nd Isin Dynasty, 2nd Sealand Dynasty, the Bazi Dynasty, the Elamite Dynasty, or the beginning of Dynasty E, approximately 700 years after Hammurabi of Babylon and in a period lacking comprehensive information about kings and regnal lengths. While the 700 years could have been intended as the period between Hammurabi and an unknown king named Burnaburiash perhaps in early Dynasty E, or alternatively an error by Nabonidus, the data are insufficient to make a definitive determination.



Figure 3. The Sippar Cylinder of Nabonidus.

II.4. Phoenicia

While many Phoenician texts contain mention of temple construction and dedication, only one known Phoenician inscription referring to a religious building also records the year at the time of construction and reference to an earlier historical event with specified years. The Ba'al-shamem Inscription (KAI 18) recounts the construction of a monument, shrine, or temple dedicated to the deity Ba'al-shamem by Abd'ilim, noting that this dedication was made in year 180 of the Lord of Kings and year 143 of the people of Tyre (Donner and Rölig 1966, pp. 3–4; Clermont-Ganneau 1895, pp. 37–77; Figure 4). The title “Lord of Kings” in the inscription refers to Ptolemy I, with that era beginning ca. 312 BC at the battle of Gaza in the Third war of the Diadochi. The era of the people of Tyre began in 275 BC when the city became a republic, and thus the date of the inscription to Ba'al-shamem would have been about 132 BC, with a total of 180 elapsed years between the earliest event and the dedication. The format of this Phoenician dedication text differs slightly from the other ancient Near Eastern examples, but the inscription is still concerned with and communicates accurate chronological information, correct recording of the number of years, and reference to past historical events.

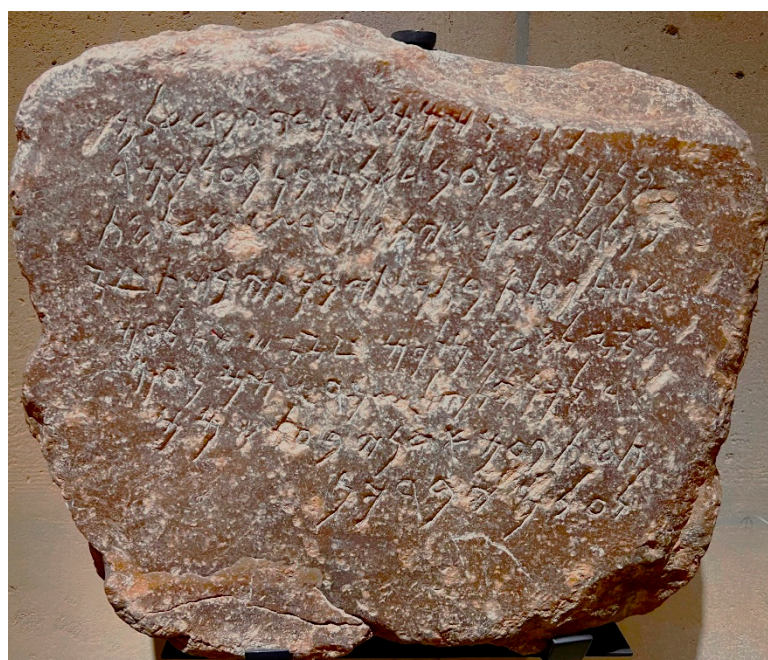


Figure 4. The Ba'al-shamem Inscription.

II.5. The Roman Republic

Although the Roman Republic of the 6th and 4th centuries BC was outside the bounds of the ancient Near East, one dedication inscription that follows the same general conventions as examples with long duration elapsed years may have been influenced by traditions from the ancient Near East. If so, this Roman text suggests the widespread convention of connecting temple dedications to historical events with a specific number of years, and serves as yet another instance from antiquity of temple constructions and dedications using elapsed years connected to another historical event. The Temple of Jupiter Optimus Maximus, located on the Capitoline Hill in Rome, was dedicated in ca. 509 BC while Horatius was consul, just after the transition from the Roman Kingdom to the Roman Republic (Livy, *Ab Urbe Condita* 2.8–22 and 1.55–56.1; Dionysius of Halicarnassus, *Roman Antiquities* 3.69 and 4.61). There is no surviving dedication text using long duration elapsed years from this 6th century BC temple construction, but there is record of an inscribed brass tablet mentioning the number of years since that temple was consecrated. This inscription was made for a shrine to Concord, originally intended to be a temple, and the text stated that

the shrine was dedicated 203 years after the consecration of the Jupiter Optimus Maximus temple and 449 years after the foundation of Rome (Pliny, *Naturalis Historia* 33.5–6). Since the approximate date of the Jupiter Optimus Maximus temple is known from other sources as ca. 509 BC, and the foundation of Rome was traditionally set at around 754–750 BC, this shrine would have been dedicated in approximately 306 BC. Thus, the practice of specifying an accurate number of elapsed years from another significant historical event in a temple construction or dedication text had apparently become so geographically widespread in antiquity, that even the Romans of the 4th century BC employed it.

II.6. Israel

The final example is one of the most challenging and debated from an archaeological perspective; nonetheless, it has been a source of significant discussion and speculation. From ancient Israel, one temple construction and dedication text making reference to elapsed years and a significant religious event in the past is preserved in the Hebrew Bible. This text reports that in the 4th regnal year of Solomon, the king began to build the temple of Yahweh in Jerusalem, and that this was the 480th year since the Israelites departed Egypt (1 Kings 6:1).⁹ The 4th year of Solomon has been calculated to be situated in approximately 967 BC, counting from the termination of his reign around 931 BC, and is a widely accepted general date even if debates continue about slight refinements to the chronology (Thiele 1983, pp. 67–79; Green 1978, pp. 355–56). This Jerusalem temple dedication text continues with a description of the construction and states that the temple was completed in the 11th year of Solomon (1 Kings 6:38). This temple of Yahweh dedication and construction of Solomon in Jerusalem might also be connected with the earlier tabernacle of Yahweh dedication by Moses, which was ordered in year 1 but was erected in year 2 of the Exodus from Egypt, and thus this period of 479 elapsed years preceding the Jerusalem temple dedication seems to connect back not only to an important past event, but to an earlier construction and dedication, similar to the style of the Mesopotamian texts (Exodus 25:9, 40:17).¹⁰ Although temple rebuilds and restorations are known from other Hebrew Bible texts, none meet the criteria of temple construction and dedication texts using long duration years.¹¹ Reference to this temple, the “house of Yahweh,” might be made in Iron Age II inscriptions such as the ca. 600 BC Arad Ostrakon 18 and the debated Jehoash Inscription possibly of the 9th century BC, but definitive archaeological evidence of the actual building constructed by Solomon has not yet been identified and published (Cohen 2007, pp. 1–69; Ilani et al. 2008, pp. 2966–72; Levine 1969, pp. 49–51; Aharoni 1968, pp. 16–25). However, the temple dedication with elapsed years referring to an important past event follows the conventions of similar ancient Near Eastern temple construction and dedication texts with long duration year information, and it connects to the capital city of Jerusalem, similar to the Assyrian, Egyptian, and Roman examples with their connections to capital cities. While it is often assumed or argued that the 480th year, or 479 elapsed years duration, in the Solomon temple construction and dedication text is a symbolic number referring to generations or an ambiguous but much shorter period of time, none of the similar texts of this type from the ancient Near East support that hypothesis.¹² On the contrary, the parallel examples from Mesopotamia, Egypt, and the Levant refute the idea of purely symbolic years in temple construction and dedication texts, and instead demonstrate that the intent of the authors was to relay an accurate number of years even if errors in calculations were made, while one cited example from Mesopotamia demonstrates that generations were specified when intended in these types of texts.¹³ Thus, based on the characteristics of this type of ceremonial text from the ancient Near East, the authorial intent of the Solomon temple dedication text likewise also appears to be that 479 years supposedly elapsed between the departure from Egypt and the 4th year of Solomon in approximately 967 BC, situating the earlier event and beginning point in the dedication to around 1446 BC, even if this year total and reference cannot be conclusively established at this time through archaeological data.

III. Conclusions

Temple construction and dedication accounts that reference a specific number of years that have elapsed since a significant past event are known from sources spanning Assyria, Babylon, Egypt, Phoenicia, Israel, and even Rome between the 13th century BC and the 2nd century BC, demonstrating that the practice was widespread both geographically and chronologically (Table 1). Further, the relative rarity of long duration elapsed years in temple texts indicates their importance and historical significance, while cryptic symbolic years or ambiguous generations contributes nothing beneficial to the original audience. When the years recorded in these temple construction and dedication texts are examined alongside their archaeological and historical context, it becomes clear that one of the objectives of the writers was to attempt to relay accurate chronological information using actual rather than symbolic years. Additionally, numbers of generations were specified as such when the writers chose to communicate chronological data via generations. Significantly, none of the known examples used purely symbolic years or intended to communicate numbers of generations when specifying years elapsed. Debates about the viability of particular chronological systems, such as the Mesopotamian Middle Chronology versus Short Chronology or debates about the exact reign dates of specific kings across the ancient Near East, will continue and result in correction and refinement; however, those minor alterations and improvements do not and will not affect the general accuracy of the long duration elapsed years noted in various temple construction and dedication texts. Although the Babylonian texts of Nabonidus contain one unverifiable timespan and one instance of a perplexingly large number, these inaccuracies are the outliers when viewed alongside all cases, and the extant examples from other kingdoms display an astonishing level of reliability for such long periods of time when verification by external chronological data is possible. Regardless of shifts by a few years or even several years in each direction, it is apparent that the elapsed years in temple dedication texts were not only intended to be understood as real years, but in instances where they are able to be evaluated by external data, the vast majority of duration year figures have been demonstrated to be remarkably accurate.

Table 1. Temple Dedication and Construction Texts, Kingdoms, Rulers, and Years.

Kingdom	Temple	Person	Dedication	Start	End	Total	Error
Assyria	Ishtar	Tukulti-Ninurmta I	720 years	Ilu-Shumma	Tukulti-Ninurmta I	720	~0
Assyria	Esarra	Shalmaneser I	159 years	Erishum I	Shamshi-Adad I	159	~0
			580 years	Shamshi-Adad I	Shalmaneser I	575	~0.9%
Assyria	Anu-Adad	Tiglath-Pileser I	641 years	Shamshi-Adad I	Ashur-Dan I	641	~0
Assyria	Assur	Unknown	132 years	Shalmaneser I	Ashur-resh-ishi I	132	~0
Assyria	Esarra	Esarhaddon	126 years	Erishum I	Shamshi-Adad I	126	~0
			434 (494?) years	Shamshi-Adad I	Shalmaneser I	503	~1.8–13.7%
			580 years	Shalmaneser I	Esarhaddon	580	~0
Assyria	Emeneu	Shamshi-Adad I	7 generations	Puzur-Ashur	Shamshi-Adad I	217 years?	?
Egypt	Seth	Ramesses II	400 years	Neheesy?	Seti I	~400	~0–5%
Babylon	Shamash Anunitu	Nabonidus	45 years	Nabonidus	Nebuchadnezzar	45	~0
			800 years	Nabonidus	Shagarakti-Shuriash	760	~5–11.9%
			3200 years	Nabonidus	Naram-Sin	1700	~1500
Babylon	Shamash Anunitu	Nabonidus	52 years	Nabonidus	Nebuchadnezzar	52	~0
			700 years	Burnaburiash	Hammurabi	?	?
Phoenicia	Ba'al-shamem	Abd'ilim	Year 180	Ptolemy I	132 BC	180	~0
			Year 143	Tyre Republic	132 BC	143	~0
Rome	Concord	Flavius	203 years	Jupiter temple	306 BC	203	~0
			449 years	Rome founding	306 BC	449	~0
Israel	Jerusalem	Solomon	479 years	Exodus	Solomon 4th year	?	?

Funding: This research received no external funding.

Data Availability Statement: No new data were created or analyzed in this study. Data sharing is not applicable to this article.

Conflicts of Interest: The author declares no conflict of interest.

Notes

- ¹ Many other temple dedication texts exist, and numerous texts even include the year of the dedication. However, what these other texts lack is a reference to a past historical event and an elapsed number of years between the two events. For example, the dedication of the Shamash Temple by Yahdun-Lim notes the year of dedication and connects it to the year in which various kings rebelled against him, but there is no mention of another event in the past along with the number of years between the two events (Frayne 1990, pp. 602–3).
- ² The year durations for Assyria are calculated according to the generally accepted chronology for ancient Mesopotamia, which utilizes Limmu lists, astronomical observations, king lists, dendrochronology, radiocarbon dates, various inscriptions and documents with chronological data, and synchronisms from international correspondence and interaction. Although the Limmu lists (Assyrian Eponym Canon) are often prized for their contribution to an accurate chronology, the Assyrian Limmu lists only provide sufficient coverage spanning the years ca. 1972–1718 BC (Middle Chronology) and ca. 911–631 BC. Therefore, other sources of data must be used for the chronology of Mesopotamia. The Eponymous Archon system of the Greeks, which became limited to one year beginning in ca. 682 BC, and the Roman yearly consuls, which began in 509 BC, were similar to the Assyrian Limmu list practice, but prior to the 7th century BC this type of yearly dating is unattested outside of Assyria.
- ³ For convenience, the standard Middle Chronology for Mesopotamia is used except where specifically noted. However, using either Middle or Short chronology in this case does not affect the idea of the 720 years elapsed time reflecting approximately 720 solar years rather than a symbolic number representing an ambiguous amount of time.
- ⁴ The 720 elapsed years of this text, and the various numbers of elapsed years in other temple construction and dedication texts in this study, differ from era systems such as the Olympiad (beginning ca. 776 BC) which eventually became more standardized and widespread. However, for each of the temple texts, the elapsed years can be understood as individual, specified eras of a particular temple or event. Those distinctive temple chronological markers simply were not used as a standardized point from which to date all later events in a particular culture.
- ⁵ The earlier temple dedication text of Shalmaneser I calculates 159 years between the temple rebuilds of Erishum I and Shamshi-Adad I. This difference is not explained, but perhaps Esarhaddon counted only the years between the two kings while Shalmaneser I counted the years from the actual event or from the beginning of the reign of Erishum I.
- ⁶ Before the sites were excavated, a connection between Avaris and Pi-Ramesses was indicated by the continuity of the worship of Seth at Pi-Ramesses on the Year 400 Stela from the 19th Dynasty. Along with many other monumental artifacts from the area of Avaris and Pi-Ramesses, the stela was discovered at Tanis.
- ⁷ This situation appears to be similar to the Middle Assyrian inscription of one of the heirs of Ashur-resh-ishi I memorializing a temple dedication completed earlier by Ashur-resh-ishi I.
- ⁸ That the stela contains the repetition of fours using 4th day, 4th month, year 400 does not necessitate that all of the figures or some of the figures are fabricated or only symbolic. Rather, the commemoration day or inscription was probably purposely chosen for a date with reduplicating fours for additional significance.
- ⁹ There is a variant found in the Septuagint that reads 440th year. However, this variant is not present in all Septuagint manuscripts, with others reading 480th year.
- ¹⁰ Josephus, publishing *Antiquities of the Jews* around AD 93, commented on the temple dedication of Solomon found in 1 Kings 6:1 and calculated a sum total of 592 years between the dedication and the Exodus by simply adding together all years mentioned in the biblical text between Solomon and the Exodus (Josephus, *Antiquities* 8.61–62). It is noteworthy that no textual variant exists in support of the 592 years calculation of Josephus. Josephus also postulated a total of 1020 years from Abraham leaving Mesopotamia to the time of the temple dedication, but this has mathematical and textual conflicts with his prior 592 years calculation. Josephus then claimed a figure of 240 years from the Solomon temple dedication to the building of Tyre, which appears mistaken in light of historical and archaeological data about Tyre. Although Josephus elsewhere refers to Menander of Ephesus for chronological information about Tyre, in this passage no such reference is made, and Josephus may have created this figure from faulty data or misunderstandings. Unfortunately, the commentary of Josephus from the 1st century AD about the period between the temple dedication of Solomon and the Exodus refers to no ancient source, does not relay an independent witness to the much earlier temple dedication text, and appears to be merely a result of his speculation based on erroneous chronological methodology.
- ¹¹ The renovations of the temple in Jerusalem by Jehoash mentioned in the 23rd year of his reign situate the renovations at a specific point in time, but the number of years since the original building of the temple are not stated in the immediate context (2 Kings 12:4–18). Another restoration of the temple in Jerusalem by Josiah is recorded as occurring in the 18th year of his reign, but once again the total number of years since the original construction of the temple are not noted (2 Kings 22:3–23:23).

- ¹² One can see in the Hebrew Bible an apparent attempt by the Israelites to count years in smaller segments in addition to recording long duration timespans, including reign lengths of kings, reign lengths of judges, years of oppression by specific enemy groups, years reckoned after coming out of Egypt, years after Kadesh, years living in a particular territory, years in the lives of persons, etc. Based on numerous year figures for various periods of time in the Hebrew Bible, there have been possibilities presented for calculating 479 years between the temple dedication of Solomon and the Exodus (e.g., [Van Bekkum 2022](#), p. 46). However, due to lack of external archaeological data, these various shorter year spans cannot all be independently evaluated.
- ¹³ It is also often alleged that every use of 40 years in the Hebrew Bible is purely symbolic and cannot represent actual years based on parallel usage in the Iron Age Levant. Yet, the inscription of Mesha of Moab on the Mesha Stele records 40 elapsed years for a period spanning the reigns of Omri, Ahab, Ahaziah, and Jehoram for approximately 40 years ca. 884–844 BC (cf. [Lemaire 2021](#), pp. 20–39).

References

Primary Sources

- Dionysius of Halicarnassus. 1939. *Dionysius of Halicarnassus: Roman Antiquities*. Vol. II, Books 3–4. 1939. Translated by Earnest Cary. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- Josephus, Flavius. 1987. *The Works of Josephus: Complete and Unabridged*. Translated by William Whiston. Peabody: Hendrickson.
- Livy, Titus. 1912. *History of Rome, Books 1–10*. Edited by Canon Roberts. Medford: E. P. Dutton and Co.
- Pliny the Elder. 1855. *The Natural History*. Edited by John Bostock. Medford: Taylor and Francis.

Secondary Sources

- Aharoni, Yohanan. 1968. Arad: Its Inscriptions and Temple. *The Biblical Archaeologist* 31: 1–32. [[CrossRef](#)]
- Bär, Jürgen. 2003. *Die älteren Ishtar-Tempel in Assur (Wissenschaftliche Veröffentlichungen der Deutschen Orient Gesellschaft 105)*. Berlin: Harrassowitz.
- Beaulieu, Paul-Alain. 1989. *The Reign of Nabonidus, King of Babylon 556–539 B.C.* New Haven: Yale University.
- Berman, Joshua. 2020. *Ani Maamin: Biblical Criticism, Historical Truth, and the Thirteen Principles of Faith*. Jerusalem: Maggid.
- Bietak, Manfred. 2015. On the Historicity of the Exodus: What Egyptology Today Can Contribute to Assessing the Biblical Account of the Sojourn in Egypt. In *Israel's Exodus in Transdisciplinary Perspective*. Edited by Thomas E. Levy, Thomas Schneider and William H. C. Propp. Berlin and Heidelberg: Springer, pp. 17–37.
- Bietak, Manfred, and Gary Rendsburg. 2021. Egypt and the Exodus. In *Ancient Israel, From Abraham to the Roman Destruction of the Temple*. Edited by Hershel Shanks and John Merrill. Washington: Biblical Archaeology Society.
- Bietak, Manfred, and Irene Forstner-Muller. 2008. The Topography of New Kingdom Avaris and Per-Ramesses. *Journal of Egyptian Archaeology* 94: 23–51.
- Bimson, John. 1981. *Redating the Exodus and Conquest*. Sheffield: Almond.
- Blum, Erhard. 2012. Der Tempelbaubericht in 1 Könige 6, 1–22. Exegetische und historische Überlegungen. In *Temple Building and Temple Cult Architecture and Cultic Paraphernalia of Temples in the Levant*. Edited by Jens Kamlah and Henrike Michelau. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, pp. 291–316.
- Boda, Mark, and Jamie Novotny, eds. 2010. *From the Foundations to the Crenellations: Essays on Temple Building in the Ancient Near East and Hebrew Bible*. Munster: Ugarit-Verlag.
- Boese, Johannes, and Gernot Wilhelm. 1979. Assur-dan I, Ninurta-apil-ekur und die Mittelassyrische Chronologie. *WZKM* 71: 19–38.
- Clermont-Ganneau, Charles. 1895. Nouvel essai d'interprétation de la première inscription phénicienne D'Oumm El-Awamid. In *Études d'Archéologie Orientale*. Paris: Librairie Emile Bouillon, pp. 37–77.
- Cohen, Chaim. 2007. Biblical Hebrew Philology in the light of research on the new yeho'ash Royal Building Inscription. In *New Seals and Inscriptions: Hebrew, Idumean, and Cuneiform*. Edited by Meir Lubetski. Sheffield: Sheffield Phoenix Press, pp. 1–69.
- Davis, Andrew. 2019. *Reconstructing the Temple: The Royal Rhetoric of Temple Renovation in the Ancient Near East and Israel*. Oxford: University Press.
- Donner, Herbert, and Wolfgang Röllig. 1966. *Kanaanäische und Aramäische Inschriften*. Band I: Text. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz.
- Frayne, Douglas. 1990. *Old Babylonian Period (2003–1595 BC)*. *The Royal Inscriptions of Mesopotamia Early Periods*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, vol. 4.
- George, Andrew R. 1993. *House Most High: The Temples of Ancient Mesopotamia*. Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns.
- Geraty, Lawrence. 2015. Exodus Dates and Theories. In *Israel's Exodus in Transdisciplinary Perspective: Text, Archaeology, Culture, and Geoscience*. Edited by Thomas E. Levy, Thomas Schneider and William H. C. Propp. Berlin and Heidelberg: Springer International, pp. 55–64.
- Grayson, Kirk. 1987. *Assyrian Rulers of the Third and Second Millennia BC (to 1115 BC)*. Toronto: University of Toronto.
- Grayson, Kirk. 1991. *Assyrian Rulers of the Third and Second Millennia BC (1114–859 BC)*. Toronto: University of Toronto.
- Green, Alberto. 1978. Solomon and Siamun: A Synchronism between Early Dynastic Israel and the Twenty-First Dynasty of Egypt. *Journal of Biblical Literature* 97: 353–67. [[CrossRef](#)]
- Habachi, Labib. 1975. The Four Hundred Year Stela Originally Standing in Khata'na-Qantir or Avaris-Piramesse. In *Actes du XXIXe Congrès International des Orientalistes*. Edited by Georges Posener. Egyptologie 1–2. Paris: Asiatheque, pp. 41–44.
- Hagens, Graham. 2005. The Assyrian King List and Chronology: A Critique. *Orientalia* 74: 23–41.

- Hallo, William, and K. Lawson Younger. 2000. *Context of Scripture Volume II*. Boston: Brill.
- Hoffmeier, James. 2007. What is the Biblical Date for the Exodus? A Response to Bryant Wood. *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 50: 225–47.
- Hoffmeier, James. 2021. Response. In *Five Views on the Exodus*. Edited by Mark Janzen. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, pp. 53–59.
- Hurowitz, Victor. 1992. *I Have Built You an Exalted House: Temple Building in the Bible in Light of Mesopotamian and North-West Semitic Writings*. Sheffield: JSOT Press.
- Hurowitz, Victor. 2010. Solomon Built the Temple and Completed It: Building the First Temple According to the Book of Kings. In *From the Foundations to the Crenellations: Essays on Temple Building in the Ancient Near East and Hebrew Bible*. Edited by Mark J. Boda and Jamie Novotny. Munster: Ugarit-Verlag, pp. 281–302.
- Ilani, Shimon, Amnon Rosenfeld, Howard R. Feldman, Wolfgang E. Krumbein, and Joel Kronfeld. 2008. Archaeometric analysis of the “Jehoash Inscription” tablet. *Journal of Archaeological Science* 35: 2966–72. [CrossRef]
- Kamlah, Jens, and Henrike Michelau. 2012. *Temple Building and Temple Cult Architecture and Cultic Paraphernalia of Temples in the Levant*. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz.
- Kitchen, Kenneth. 1966. *Ancient Orient and the Old Testament*. Downers Grove: InterVarsity.
- Kitchen, Kenneth. 2003. *On the Reliability of the Old Testament*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans.
- Langdon, Stephen. 1916. New Inscriptions of Nabuna'id. *The American Journal of Semitic Languages and Literatures* 32: 102–17. [CrossRef]
- Leichty, Erle. 1986. *Catalogue of the Babylonian Tablets in the British Museum: Volume VI: Tablets from Sippar, I*. London: British Museum.
- Lemaire, Andre. 2021. The Mesha Stela: Revisited Texts and Interpretation. In *Epigraphy, Iconography, and the Bible*. Edited by Meir Lubetski and Edith Lubestki. Sheffield: Sheffield Phoenix Press, pp. 20–39.
- Levine, Baruch A. 1969. Notes on a Hebrew Ostrakon from Arad. *Israel Exploration Journal* 19: 49–51.
- Machinist, P. 2019. Periodization in Biblical Historiography. The Domestication of Stranger Kings: Making History by List in Ancient Mesopotamia. In *Historical Consciousness and the Use of the Past in the Ancient World*. Edited by Johna Baines, Henriette van der Blom, Yi Samuel Chen and Tim Rood. Sheffield and Bristol: Equinox, pp. 215–37.
- Mahieu, Bieke. 2021. The Assyrian Distanzangaben in Relation to The Regnal Years Recorded in the Assyrian King List. *Iraq* 83: 67–85. [CrossRef]
- Meinhold, Wiebke. 2009. *Ištar in Aššur. Untersuchung eines Lokalkultes von ca. 2500 bis 614 v. Chr. (Alter Orient und Altes Testament 367)*. Münster: Ugarit-Verlag.
- Montet, Pierre. 1931. La stèle de l'an 400 retrouvée. *Kemi* 4: 191–215.
- Na'aman, Nadav. 1984. Statements of Time-Spans by Babylonian and Assyrian Kings and Mesopotamian Chronology. *Iraq* 46: 115–23. [CrossRef]
- Nissinen, Martii. 1998. *References to Prophecy in Neo-Assyrian Sources. State Archives of Assyria Studies* 7. Helsinki: The Neo-Assyrian Text Corpus Project.
- Pruzsinszky, Regine. 2005. Zum Verständnis der Assyrischen Distanzangaben: Beiträge zur Assyrischen Chronologie. *State Archives of Assyria Bulletin* 14: 23–31.
- Reade, Julian. 2001. Assyrian King-Lists, the Royal Tombs of Ur, and Indus Origins. *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 60: 1–29. [CrossRef]
- Rendsburg, Gary. 1992. The Date of the Exodus and the Conquest-Settlement: The Case for the 1100s. *Vetus Testamentum* 42: 510–27. [CrossRef]
- RINAP 4, Esarhaddon 057. ORACC. n.d. Available online: <http://oracc.museum.upenn.edu/rinap/rinap4/corpus> (accessed on 5 December 2023).
- Rowley, H. H. 1950. *From Joseph to Joshua: Biblical Traditions in the Light of Archaeology*. London: Oxford University.
- Schmitt, Aaron. 2012. *Die jüngeren Ištar-Tempel und der Nabû-Tempel in Assur (Wissenschaftliche Veröffentlichungen der Deutschen Orient Gesellschaft 137)*. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz.
- Sethe, Kurt. 1930. Der Denkstein mit dem Datum des Jahres 400 der Ära von Tanis. *Zeitschrift für Ägyptische Sprache* 65: 85–89. [CrossRef]
- Thiele, Edwin R. 1983. *The Mysterious Numbers of the Hebrew Kings*, 3rd ed. Grand Rapids: Zondervan.
- Van Bekkum, Koert. 2022. Competing Chronologies, Competing Histories. In *The Ancient Israelite World*. Edited by Kyle Keimer and George Pierce. London: Routledge, pp. 34–53.
- Van Seters, John. 1997. Solomon's Temple: Fact and Ideology in Biblical and Near Eastern Historiography. *The Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 59: 45–57.
- Van Wyk, Koot. 2017. Reconsidering Cuneiform and Biblical Distanzangaben or “Long Period” References. *International Journal of Research in Social Sciences and Humanities* 7: 114–40.
- Wiseman, Donald. 1993. *1 and 2 Kings: An Introduction and Commentary*. London: IVP Academic.
- Wood, Bryant. 2005. The Rise and Fall of the 13th-century Exodus-Conquest Theory. *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 48: 475–89.
- Wood, Bryant. 2007. The Biblical Date for the Exodus is 1446 BC: A Response to James Hoffmeier. *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 50: 249–58.

Disclaimer/Publisher's Note: The statements, opinions and data contained in all publications are solely those of the individual author(s) and contributor(s) and not of MDPI and/or the editor(s). MDPI and/or the editor(s) disclaim responsibility for any injury to people or property resulting from any ideas, methods, instructions or products referred to in the content.