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53 People in the [Hebrew] Bible Confirmed Archaeologically

A web-exclusive supplement to Lawrence Mykytiuk's *Biblical Archaeology Review* articles identifying real Hebrew Bible people

Lawrence Mykytiuk

04/12/2017 *This Bible History Daily feature was originally published in 2014. It has been updated.—Ed.*

In “Archaeology Confirms 50 Real People in the Bible” in the March/April 2014 issue of *Biblical Archaeology Review* (BAR), Purdue University Professor Lawrence Mykytiuk lists 50 figures from the Hebrew Bible who have been confirmed archaeologically. His follow-up article, “Archaeology Confirms 3 More Bible People,” published in the May/June 2017 issue of BAR, adds another three people to the list. The identified persons include Israelite kings and Mesopotamian monarchs as well as lesser-known figures. Mykytiuk writes that these figures “mentioned in the Bible have been identified in the archaeological record. Their names appear in inscriptions written during the period described by the Bible and in most instances during or quite close to the lifetime of the person identified.” The extensive Biblical and archaeological documentation supporting the BAR study is published here in a web-exclusive collection of endnotes detailing the Biblical references and inscriptions referring to each of the figures.

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53 Bible People Confirmed in Authentic Inscriptions

Name	Who was he?	When he reigned or flourished B.C.E.
Egypt		
1 Shishak (= Sheshonq I)	Pharaoh	945–924
2 So (= Osorkon IV)	Pharaoh	730–715
3 Tirhakah (= Taharqa)	Pharaoh	690–664
4 Necho II (= Neco II)	Pharaoh	610–595
5 Hophra (= Apries)	Pharaoh	589–570
Moab		
6 Mesha	King	early to mid-ninth century
Aram-Damascus		

Name	Who was he?	When he reigned or flourished B.C.E.
7 Hadadezer	King	early ninth century to 844/842
8 Ben-hadad, son of Hadadezer	King	844/842
9 Hazael	King	844/842–c. 800
10 Ben-hadad, son of Hazael	King	early eighth century
11 Rezin	King	mid-eighth century to 732
Northern Kingdom of Israel		
12 Omri	King	884–873
13 Ahab	King	873–852
14 Jehu	King	842/841–815/814
15 Joash (= Jehoash)	King	805–790
16 Jeroboam II	King	790–750/749
17 Menahem	King	749–738
18 Pekah	King	750(?)–732/731
19 Hoshea	King	732/731–722
20 Sanballat “I”	governor of Samaria under Persian rule	c. mid-fifth century
Southern Kingdom of Judah		
21 David	King	c. 1010–970
22 Uzziah (= Azariah)	King	788/787–736/735
23 Ahaz (= Jehoahaz)	King	742/741–726
24 Hezekiah	King	726–697/696
25 Manasseh	King	697/696–642/641
26 Hilkiah	high priest during Josiah’s reign	within 640/639–609
27 Shaphan	scribe during Josiah’s reign	within 640/639–609
28 Azariah	high priest during Josiah’s reign	within 640/639–609
29 Gemariah	official during Jehoiakim’s reign	within 609–598
30 Jehoiachin (= Jeconiah = Coniah)	King	598–597
31 Shelemiah	father of Jehucal the royal official	late seventh century
32 Jehucal (= Jucal)	official during Zedekiah’s reign	within 597–586
33 Pashhur	father of Gedaliah the royal official	late seventh century
34 Gedaliah	official during Zedekiah’s reign	within 597–586
Assyria		
35 Tiglath-pileser III (= Pul)	King	744–727
36 Shalmaneser V	King	726–722
37 Sargon II	King	721–705
38 Sennacherib	King	704–681
39 Adrammelech (= Ardamullissu = Arad-	son and assassin of Sennacherib	early seventh century

Name	Who was he?	When he reigned or flourished B.C.E.
mullissu)		
40 Esarhaddon	King	680–669
Babylonia		
41 Merodach-baladan II	King	721–710 and 703
42 Nebuchadnezzar II	King	604–562
43 Nebo-sarsekim	official of Nebuchadnezzar II	early sixth century
44 Nergal-sharezer	officer of Nebuchadnezzar II	early sixth century
45 Nebuzaradan	a chief officer of Nebuchadnezzar II	early sixth century
46 Evil-merodach (= Awel Marduk = Amel Marduk)	King	561–560
47 Belshazzar	son and co-regent of Nabonidus	c. 543?–540
Persia		
48 Cyrus II (= Cyrus the Great)	King	559–530
49 Darius I (= Darius the Great)	King	520–486
50 Tattenai	provincial governor of Trans-Euphrates	late sixth to early fifth century
51 Xerxes I (= Ahasuerus)	King	486–465
52 Artaxerxes I Longimanus	King	465-425/424
53 Darius II Nothus	King	425/424-405/404

53 Figures: The Biblical and Archaeological Evidence

EGYPT

1. Shishak (= Sheshonq I), pharaoh, r. 945–924, 1 Kings 11:40 and 14:25, in his inscriptions, including the record of his military campaign in Palestine in his 924 B.C.E. inscription on the exterior south wall of the Temple of Amun at Karnak in Thebes. See *OROT*, pp. 10, 31–32, 502 note 1; many references to him in *Third*, indexed on p. 520; Kenneth A. Kitchen, review of *IBP*, *SEE-J Hiphil* 2 (2005), www.see-j.net/index.php/hiphil/article/viewFile/19/17, bottom of p. 3, which is briefly mentioned in “Sixteen,” p. 43 n. 22. (Note: The name of this pharaoh can be spelled Sheshonq or Shoshenq.)

Sheshonq is also referred to in a fragment of his victory stele discovered at Megiddo containing his cartouche. See Robert S. Lamon and Geoffrey M. Shipton, *Megiddo I: Seasons of 1925–34, Strata I–V*. (Oriental Institute Publications no. 42; Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1939), pp. 60–61, fig. 70; Graham I.

Davies, *Megiddo* (Cities of the Biblical World; Cambridge: Lutterworth Press, 1986), pp. 89 fig. 18, 90; *OROT*, p. 508 n. 68; *IBP*, p. 137 n. 119. (Note: The name of this pharaoh can be spelled Sheshonq or Shoshenq.)

Egyptian pharaohs had several names, including a throne name. It is known that the throne name of Sheshonq I, when translated into English, means, “Bright is the manifestation of Re, chosen of Amun/Re.” Sheshonq I’s inscription on the wall of the Temple of Amun at Karnak in Thebes (mentioned above) celebrates the victories of his military campaign in the Levant, thus presenting the possibility of his presence in that region.

A small Egyptian scarab containing his exact throne name, discovered as a surface find at Khirbat Hamra Ifdan, now documents his presence at or near that location. This site is located along the Wadi Fidan, in the region of Faynan in southern Jordan.

As for the time period, disruption of copper production at Khirbet en-Nahas, also in the southern Levant, can be attributed to Sheshonq’s army, as determined by stratigraphy, high-precision radiocarbon dating, and an assemblage of Egyptian amulets dating to Sheshonq’s time. His army seems to have intentionally disrupted copper production, as is evident both at Khirbet en-Nahas and also at Khirbat Hamra Ifdan, where the scarab was discovered.

As for the singularity of this name in this remote locale, it would have been notable to find any Egyptian scarab there, much less one containing the throne name of this conquering Pharaoh; this unique discovery admits no confusion with another person. See Thomas E. Levy, Stefan Münger, and Mohammad Najjar, “A Newly Discovered Scarab of Sheshonq I: Recent Iron Age Explorations in Southern Jordan. Antiquity Project Gallery,” *Antiquity* (2014); online: <http://journal.antiquity.ac.uk/projgall/levy341>.

2. So (= Osorkon IV), pharaoh, r. 730–715, 2 Kings 17:4 only, which calls him “So, king of Egypt” (*OROT*, pp. 15–16). K. A. Kitchen makes a detailed case for So being Osorkon IV in *Third*, pp. 372–375. See *Raging Torrent*, p. 106 under “Shilkanni.”

3. Tirhakah (= Taharqa), pharaoh, r. 690–664, 2 Kings 19:9, etc. in many Egyptian hieroglyphic inscriptions; *Third*, pp. 387–395. For mention of Tirhakah in Assyrian inscriptions, see those of Esarhaddon and Ashurbanipal in *Raging Torrent*, pp. 138–143, 145, 150–153, 155, 156; *ABC*, p. 247 under “Terhaqah.” The Babylonian chronicle also refers to him (*Raging Torrent*, p. 187). On Tirhakah as prince, see *OROT*, p. 24.

4. Necho II (= Neco II), pharaoh, r. 610–595, 2 Chronicles 35:20, etc., in inscriptions of the Assyrian king, Ashurbanipal (*ANET*, pp. 294–297) and the Esarhaddon Chronicle (*ANET*, p. 303). See also *Raging Torrent*, pp. 189–199, esp. 198; *OROT*, p. 504 n. 26; *Third*, p. 407; *ABC*, p. 232.

5. Hophra (= Apries = Wahibre), pharaoh, r. 589–570, Jeremiah 44:30, in Egyptian inscriptions, such as the one describing his being buried by his successor, Aḥmose II (= Amasis II) (*Third*, p. 333 n. 498), with reflections in Babylonian inscriptions regarding Nebuchadnezzar’s defeat of Hophra in 572 and replacing him on the throne of Egypt with a general, Aḥmes (= Amasis), who later rebelled against Babylonia and was suppressed (*Raging Torrent*, p. 222). See *OROT*, pp. 9, 16, 24; *Third*, p. 373 n. 747, 407 and 407 n. 969; *ANET*, p. 308; D. J. Wiseman, *Chronicles of Chaldaean Kings (626–556 B.C.) in the British Museum* (London: The Trustees of the British Museum, 1956), pp. 94–95.

Cf. *ANEHST*, p. 402. (The index of *Third*, p. 525, distinguishes between an earlier “Wahibre i” [*Third*, p. 98] and the 26th Dynasty’s “Wahibre ii” [= Apries], r. 589–570.)

6. Mesha, king, r. early to mid-9th century, 2 Kings 3:4–27, in the Mesha Inscription, which he caused to be written, lines 1–2; Dearman, *Studies*, pp. 97, 100–101; *IBP*, pp. 95–108, 238; “Sixteen,” p. 43.

ARAM-DAMASCUS

7. Hadadezer, king, r. early 9th century to 844/842, 1 Kings 22:3, etc., in Assyrian inscriptions of Shalmaneser III and also, I am convinced, in the Melqart stele. The Hebrew Bible does not name him, referring to him only as “the King of Aram” in 1 Kings 22:3, 31; 2 Kings chapter 5, 6:8–23. We find out this king’s full name in some contemporaneous inscriptions of Shalmaneser III, king of Assyria (r. 858–824), such as the Black Obelisk (*Raging Torrent*, pp. 22–24). At Kurkh, a monolith by Shalmaneser III states that at the battle of Qarqar (853 B.C.E.), he defeated “Adad-idri [the Assyrian way of saying Hadadezer] the Damascene,” along with “Ahab the Israelite” and other kings (*Raging Torrent*, p. 14; RIMA 3, p. 23, A.0.102.2, col. ii, lines 89b–92). “Hadadezer the Damascene” is also mentioned in an engraving on a statue of Shalmaneser III at Aššur (RIMA 3, p. 118, A.0.102.40, col. i, line 14). The same statue engraving later mentions both Hadadezer and Hazael together (RIMA 3, p. 118, col. i, lines 25–26) in a topical arrangement of worst enemies defeated that is not necessarily chronological.

On the long-disputed readings of the Melqart stele, which was discovered in Syria in 1939, see “Corrections,” pp. 69–85, which follows the closely allied readings of Frank Moore Cross and Gotthard G. G. Reinhold. Those readings, later included in “Sixteen,” pp. 47–48, correct the earlier absence of this Hadadezer in *IBP* (notably on p. 237, where he is not to be confused with the tenth-century Hadadezer, son of Rehob and king of Zobah).

8. Ben-hadad, son of Hadadezer, r. or served as co-regent 844/842, 2 Kings 6:24, etc., in the Melqart stele, following the readings of Frank Moore Cross and Gotthard G. G. Reinhold and Cross’s 2003 criticisms of a different reading that now appears in *COS*, vol. 2, pp. 152–153 (“Corrections,” pp. 69–85). Several kings of Damascus bore the name Bar-hadad (in their native Aramaic, which is translated as Ben-hadad in the Hebrew Bible), which suggests adoption as “son” by the patron deity Hadad. This designation might indicate that he was the crown prince and/or co-regent with his father Hadadezer. It seems likely that Bar-hadad/Ben-hadad was his father’s immediate successor as king, as seems to be implied by the military policy reversal between 2 Kings 6:3–23 and 6:24. It was this Ben-Hadad, the son of Hadadezer, whom Hazael assassinated in 2 Kings 8:7–15 (quoted in *Raging Torrent*, p. 25). The mistaken disqualification of this biblical identification in the Melqart stele in *IBP*, p. 237, is revised to a strong identification in that stele in “Corrections,” pp. 69–85; “Sixteen,” p. 47.

9. Hazael, king, r. 844/842–ca. 800, 1 Kings 19:15, 2 Kings 8:8, etc., is documented in four kinds of inscriptions: 1) The inscriptions of Shalmaneser III call him “Hazael of Damascus” (*Raging Torrent*, pp. 23–26, 28), for example the inscription on the Kurbail Statue (RIMA 3, p. 60, line 21). He is also referred to in 2) the Zakkur stele from near Aleppo, in what is now Syria, and in 3) bridle inscriptions, i.e., two inscribed horse blinders and a horse frontlet discovered on Greek islands, and in 4) inscribed ivories seized as Assyrian war booty (*Raging Torrent*, p. 35). All are treated in *IBP*, pp. 238–239, and listed in “Sixteen,” p. 44. Cf. “Corrections,” pp. 101–103.

10. Ben-hadad, son of Hazael, king, r. early 8th century, 2 Kings 13:3, etc., in the Zakkur stele from near Aleppo. In lines 4–5, it calls him “Bar-hadad, son of Hazael, the king of Aram” (*IBP*, p. 240; “Sixteen,” p. 44; *Raging Torrent*, p. 38; *ANET*, p. 655; *COS*, vol. 2, p. 155). On the possibility of Ben-hadad, son of Hazael, being the “Mari” in Assyrian inscriptions, see *Raging Torrent*, pp. 35–36.

11. Rezin (= Raḥianu), king, r. mid-8th century to 732, 2 Kings 15:37, etc., in the inscriptions of Tiglath-pileser III, king of Assyria (in these inscriptions, *Raging Torrent* records frequent mention of Rezin in pp. 51–78); *OROT*, p. 14. Inscriptions of Tiglath-pileser III refer to “Rezin” several times, “Rezin of Damascus” in Annal 13, line 10 (*ITP*, pp. 68–69), and “the dynasty of Rezin of Damascus” in Annal 23, line 13 (*ITP*, pp. 80–81). Tiglath-pileser III’s stele from Iran contains an explicit reference to Rezin as king of Damascus in column III, the right side, A: “[line 1] The kings of the land of Hatti (and of) the Aramaeans of the western seashore . . . [line 4] Rezin of Damascus” (*ITP*, pp. 106–107).

NORTHERN KINGDOM OF ISRAEL

12. Omri, king, r. 884–873, 1 Kings 16:16, etc., in Assyrian inscriptions and in the Mesha Inscription. Because he founded a famous dynasty which ruled the northern kingdom of Israel, the Assyrians refer not only to him as a king of Israel (*ANET*, pp. 280, 281), but also to the later rulers of that territory as kings of “the house of Omri” and that territory itself literally as “the house of Omri” (*Raging Torrent*, pp. 34, 35; *ANET*, pp. 284, 285). Many a later king of Israel who was not his descendant, beginning with Jehu, was called “the son of Omri” (*Raging Torrent*, p. 18). The Mesha Inscription also refers to Omri as “the king of Israel” in lines 4–5, 7 (Dearman, *Studies*, pp. 97, 100–101; *COS*, vol. 2, p. 137; *IBP*, pp. 108–110, 216; “Sixteen,” p. 43).

13. Ahab, king, r. 873–852, 1 Kings 16:28, etc., in the Kurkh Monolith by his enemy, Shalmaneser III of Assyria. There, referring to the battle of Qarqar (853 B.C.E.), Shalmaneser calls him “Ahab the Israelite” (*Raging Torrent*, pp. 14, 18–19; *RIMA* 3, p. 23, A.0.102.2, col. 2, lines 91–92; *ANET*, p. 279; *COS*, vol. 2, p. 263).

14. Jehu, king, r. 842/841–815/814, 1 Kings 19:16, etc., in inscriptions of Shalmaneser III. In these, “son” means nothing more than that he is the successor, in this instance, of Omri (*Raging Torrent*, p. 20 under “Ba’asha . . .” and p. 26). A long version of Shalmaneser III’s annals on a stone tablet in the outer wall of the city of Aššur refers to Jehu in col. 4, line 11, as “Jehu, son of Omri” (*Raging Torrent*, p. 28; *RIMA* 3, p. 54, A.0.102.10, col. 4, line 11; cf. *ANET*, p. 280, the parallel “fragment of an annalistic text”). Also, on the Kurba’il Statue, lines 29–30 refer to “Jehu, son of Omri” (*RIMA* 3, p. 60, A.0.102.12, lines 29–30).

In Shalmaneser III’s Black Obelisk, current scholarship regards the notation over relief B, depicting payment of tribute from Israel, as referring to “Jehu, son of Omri” (*Raging Torrent*, p. 23; *RIMA* 3, p. 149, A.0. 102.88), but cf. P. Kyle McCarter, Jr., “Yaw, Son of ‘Omri’: A Philological Note on Israelite Chronology,” *Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research* 216 (1974): pp. 5–7.

15. Joash (= Jehoash), king, r. 805–790, 2 Kings 13:9, etc., in the Tell al-Rimah inscription of Adad-Nirari III, king of Assyria (r. 810–783), which mentions “the tribute of Joash [= Iu’asu] the Samarian” (Stephanie Page, “A Stela of Adad-Nirari III and

Nergal-Ereš from Tell Al Rimah,” *Iraq* 30 [1968]: pp. 142–145, line 8, Pl. 38–41; RIMA 3, p. 211, line 8 of A.0.104.7; *Raging Torrent*, pp. 39–41).

16. Jeroboam II, king, r. 790–750/749, 2 Kings 13:13, etc., in the seal of his royal servant Shema, discovered at Megiddo (WSS, p. 49 no. 2; *IBP*, pp. 133–139, 217; “Sixteen,” p. 46).

17. Menahem, king, r. 749–738, 2 Kings 15:14, etc., in the Calah Annals of Tiglath-pileser III. Annal 13, line 10 refers to “Menahem of Samaria” in a list of kings who paid tribute (*ITP*, pp. 68–69, Pl. IX). Tiglath-pileser III’s stele from Iran, his only known stele, refers explicitly to Menahem as king of Samaria in column III, the right side, A: “[line 1] The kings of the land of Hatti (and of) the Aramaeans of the western seashore . . . [line 5] Menahem of Samaria.” (*ITP*, pp. 106–107). See also *Raging Torrent*, pp. 51, 52, 54, 55, 59; *ANET*, p. 283.

18. Pekah, king, r. 750(?)–732/731, 2 Kings 15:25, etc., in the inscriptions of Tiglath-pileser III. Among various references to “Pekah,” the most explicit concerns the replacement of Pekah in Summary Inscription 4, lines 15–17: “[line 15] . . . The land of Bit-Humria . . . [line 17] Peqah, their king [I/they killed] and I installed Hoshea [line 18] [as king] over them” (*ITP*, pp. 140–141; *Raging Torrent*, pp. 66–67).

19. Hoshea, king, r. 732/731–722, 2 Kings 15:30, etc., in Tiglath-pileser’s Summary Inscription 4, described in preceding note 18, where Hoshea is mentioned as Pekah’s immediate successor.

20. Sanballat “I”, governor of Samaria under Persian rule, ca. mid-fifth century, Nehemiah 2:10, etc., in a letter among the papyri from the Jewish community at Elephantine in Egypt (A. E. Cowley, ed., *Aramaic Papyri of the Fifth Century B.C.* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1923; reprinted Osnabrück, Germany: Zeller, 1967), p. 114 English translation of line 29, and p. 118 note regarding line 29; *ANET*, p. 492. Also, the reference to “[]ballat,” most likely Sanballat, in Wadi Daliyeh bulla WD 22 appears to refer to the biblical Sanballat as the father of a governor of Samaria who succeeded him in the first half of the fourth century. As Jan Dušek shows, it cannot be demonstrated that any Sanballat II and III existed, which is the reason for the present article’s quotation marks around the “I” in Sanballat “I”; see Jan Dušek, “Archaeology and Texts in the Persian Period: Focus on Sanballat,” in Martti Nissinen, ed., *Congress Volume: Helsinki 2010* (Boston: Brill, 2012), pp. 117–132.

SOUTHERN KINGDOM OF JUDAH

21. David, king, r. ca. 1010–970, 1 Samuel 16:13, etc., in three inscriptions. Most notable is the victory stele in Aramaic known as the “house of David” inscription, discovered at Tel Dan; Avraham Biran and Joseph Naveh, “An Aramaic Stele from Tel Dan,” *IEJ* 43 (1993), pp. 81–98, and idem, “The Tel Dan Inscription: A New Fragment,” *IEJ* 45 (1995), pp. 1–18. An ancient Aramaic word pattern in line 9 designates David as the founder of the dynasty of Judah in the phrase “house of David” (2 Sam 2:11 and 5:5; Gary A. Rendsburg, “On the Writing ביתדוד [BYTDWD] in the Aramaic Inscription from Tel Dan,” *IEJ* 45 [1995], pp. 22–25; *Raging Torrent*, p. 20, under “Ba’asha . . .”; *IBP*, pp. 110–132, 265–77; “Sixteen,” pp. 41–43).

In the second inscription, the Mesha Inscription, the phrase “house of David” appears in Moabite in line 31 with the same meaning: that he is the founder of the dynasty. There

David's name appears with only its first letter destroyed, and no other letter in that spot makes sense without creating a very strained, awkward reading (André Lemaire, "'House of David' Restored in Moabite Inscription," *BAR* 20, no. 3 [May/June 1994]: pp. 30–37. David's name also appears in line 12 of the Mesha Inscription (Anson F. Rainey, "Mesha and Syntax," in J. Andrew Dearman and M. Patrick Graham, eds., *The Land That I Will Show You: Essays on the History and Archaeology of the Ancient Near East in Honor of J. Maxwell Miller*. (JSOT Supplement series, no. 343; Sheffield, England:Sheffield Academic, 2001), pp. 287–307; *IBP*, pp. 265–277; "Sixteen," pp. 41–43).

The third inscription, in Egyptian, mentions a region in the Negev called "the heights of David" after King David (Kenneth A. Kitchen, "A Possible Mention of David in the Late Tenth Century B.C.E., and Deity *Dod as Dead as the Dodo?" *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament* 76 [1997], pp. 39–41; *IBP*, p. 214 note 3, which is revised in "Corrections," pp. 119–121; "Sixteen," p. 43).

In the table on p. 46 of *BAR*, David is listed as king of Judah. According to 2 Samuel 5:5, for his first seven years and six months as a monarch, he ruled only the southern kingdom of Judah. We have no inscription that refers to David as king over all Israel (that is, the united kingdom) as also stated in 2 Sam 5:5.

22. Uzziah (= Azariah), king, r. 788/787–736/735, 2 Kings 14:21, etc., in the inscribed stone seals of two of his royal servants: Abiyaw and Shubnayaw (more commonly called Shebanyaw); *WSS*, p. 51 no. 4 and p. 50 no. 3, respectively; *IBP*, pp. 153–159 and 159–163, respectively, and p. 219 no. 20 (a correction to *IBP* is that on p. 219, references to *WSS* nos. 3 and 4 are reversed); "Sixteen," pp. 46–47. Cf. also his secondary burial inscription from the Second Temple era (*IBP*, p. 219 n. 22).

23. Ahaz (= Jehoahaz), king, r. 742/741–726, 2 Kings 15:38, etc., in Tiglath-pileser III's Summary Inscription 7, reverse, line 11, refers to "Jehoahaz of Judah" in a list of kings who paid tribute (*ITP*, pp. 170–171; *Raging Torrent*, pp. 58–59). The Bible refers to him by the shortened form of his full name, Ahaz, rather than by the full form of his name, Jehoahaz, which the Assyrian inscription uses.

Cf. the unprovenanced seal of 'Ushna', more commonly called 'Ashna', the name Ahaz appears (*IBP*, pp. 163–169, with corrections from Kitchen's review of *IBP* as noted in "Corrections," p. 117; "Sixteen," pp. 38–39 n. 11). Because this king already stands clearly documented in an Assyrian inscription, documentation in another inscription is not necessary to confirm the existence of the biblical Ahaz, king of Judah.

24. Hezekiah, king, r. 726–697/696, 2 Kings 16:20, etc., initially in the Rassam Cylinder of Sennacherib (in this inscription, *Raging Torrent* records frequent mention of Hezekiah in pp. 111–123; *COS*, pp. 302–303). It mentions "Hezekiah the Judahite" (col. 2 line 76 and col. 3 line 1 in Luckenbill, *Annals of Sennacherib*, pp. 31, 32) and "Jerusalem, his royal city" (ibid., col. 3 lines 28, 40; ibid., p. 33) Other, later copies of the annals of Sennacherib, such as the Oriental Institute prism and the Taylor prism, mostly repeat the content of the Rassam cylinder, duplicating its way of referring to Hezekiah and Jerusalem (*ANET*, pp. 287, 288). The Bull Inscription from the palace at Nineveh (*ANET*, p. 288; *Raging Torrent*, pp. 126–127) also mentions "Hezekiah the Judahite" (lines 23, 27 in Luckenbill, *Annals of Sennacherib*, pp. 69, 70) and "Jerusalem, his royal city" (line 29; ibid., p. 33).

During 2009, a royal bulla of Hezekiah, king of Judah, was discovered in the renewed Ophel excavations of Eilat Mazar. Imperfections along the left edge of the impression in the clay contributed to a delay in correct reading of the bulla until late in 2015. An English translation of the bulla is: “Belonging to Heze[k]iah, [son of] ’A[h]az, king of Jud[ah]” (letters within square brackets [] are supplied where missing or only partly legible). This is the first impression of a Hebrew king’s seal ever discovered in a scientific excavation.

See the online article by the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, [“Impression of King Hezekiah’s Royal Seal Discovered in Ophel Excavations South of Temple Mount in Jerusalem.”](#) December 2, 2015; [a video](#) under copyright of Eilat Mazar and Herbert W. Armstrong College, 2015; Robin Ngo, “King Hezekiah in the Bible: Royal Seal of Hezekiah Comes to Light,” *Bible History Daily* (blog), originally published on December 3, 2015, <https://www.biblicalarchaeology.org/daily/biblical-sites-places/jerusalem/king-hezekiah-in-the-bible-royal-seal-of-hezekiah-comes-to-light/>; Meir Lubetski, [“King Hezekiah’s Seal Revisited.”](#) BAR, July/August 2001. Apparently unavailable as of August 2017 (except for a rare library copy or two) is Eilat Mazar, ed., *The Ophel Excavations to the South of the Temple Mount 2009-2013: Final Reports*, vol. 1 (Jerusalem: Shoham Academic Research and Publication, c2015).

25. Manasseh, king, r. 697/696–642/641, 2 Kings 20:21, etc., in the inscriptions of Assyrian kings Esarhaddon (*Raging Torrent*, pp. 131, 133, 136) and Ashurbanipal (*ibid.*, p. 154). “Manasseh, king of Judah,” according to Esarhaddon (r. 680–669), was among those who paid tribute to him (Esarhaddon’s Prism B, column 5, line 55; R. Campbell Thompson, *The Prisms of Esarhaddon and Ashurbanipal* [London: Trustees of the British Museum, 1931], p. 25; *ANET*, p. 291). Also, Ashurbanipal (r. 668–627) records that “Manasseh, king of Judah” paid tribute to him (Ashurbanipal’s Cylinder C, col. 1, line 25; Maximilian Streck, *Assurbanipal und die letzten assyrischen Könige bis zum Untergang Niniveh’s*, [Vorderasiatische Bibliothek 7; Leipzig: J. C. Hinrichs, 1916], vol. 2, pp. 138–139; *ANET*, p. 294).

26. Hilkiyah, high priest during Josiah’s reign, within 640/639–609, 2 Kings 22:4, etc., in the City of David bulla of Azariah, son of Hilkiyah (*WSS*, p. 224 no. 596; *IBP*, pp. 148–151; 229 only in [50] City of David bulla; “Sixteen,” p. 49).

The oldest part of Jerusalem, called the City of David, is the location where the Bible places all four men named in the bullae covered in the present endnotes 26 through 29. Analysis of the clay of these bullae shows that they were produced in the locale of Jerusalem (Eran Arie, Yuval Goren, and Inbal Samet, “Indelible Impression: Petrographic Analysis of Judahite Bullae,” in *The Fire Signals of Lachish: Studies in the Archaeology and History of Israel in the Late Bronze Age, Iron Age, and Persian Period in Honor of David Ussishkin* [ed. Israel Finkelstein and Nadav Na’aman; Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbrauns, 2011], p. 10, quoted in “Sixteen,” pp. 48–49 n. 34).

27. Shaphan, scribe during Josiah’s reign, within 640/639–609, 2 Kings 22:3, etc., in the City of David bulla of Gemariah, son of Shaphan (*WSS*, p. 190 no. 470; *IBP*, pp. 139–146, 228). See endnote 26 above regarding “Sixteen,” pp. 48–49 n. 34.

28. Azariah, high priest during Josiah’s reign, within 640/639–609, 1 Chronicles 5:39, etc., in the City of David bulla of Azariah, son of Hilkiyah (*WSS*, p. 224 no. 596; *IBP*, pp. 151–152; 229). See endnote 26 above regarding “Sixteen,” pp. 48–49 n. 34.

29. Gemariah, official during Jehoiakim's reign, within 609–598, Jeremiah 36:10, etc., in the City of David bulla of Gemariah, son of Shaphan (WSS, p. 190 no. 470; *IBP*, pp. 147, 232). See endnote 26 above regarding “Sixteen,” pp. 48–49 n. 34.

30. Jehoiachin (= Jeconiah = Coniah), king, r. 598–597, 2 Kings 24:5, etc., in four Babylonian administrative tablets regarding oil rations or deliveries, during his exile in Babylonia (*Raging Torrent*, p. 209; *ANEHST*, pp. 386–387). Discovered at Babylon, they are dated from the tenth to the thirty-fifth year of Nebuchadnezzar II, king of Babylonia and conqueror of Jerusalem. One tablet calls Jehoiachin “king” (Text Babylon 28122, obverse, line 29; *ANET*, p. 308). A second, fragmentary text mentions him as king in an immediate context that refers to “[. . .] sons of the king of Judah” and “Judahites” (Text Babylon 28178, obverse, col. 2, lines 38–40; *ANET*, p. 308). The third tablet calls him “the son of the king of Judah” and refers to “the five sons of the king of Judah” (Text Babylon 28186, reverse, col. 2, lines 17–18; *ANET*, p. 308). The fourth text, the most fragmentary of all, confirms “Judah” and part of Jehoiachin’s name, but contributes no data that is not found in the other texts.

31. Shelemiah, father of Jehucal the official, late 7th century, Jeremiah 37:3; 38:1 and **32. Jehucal (= Jucal), official during Zedekiah's reign, fl. within 597–586, Jeremiah 37:3; 38:1** only, both referred to in a bulla discovered in the City of David in 2005 ([Eilat Mazar, “Did I Find King David's Palace?” BAR 32, no. 1 \[January/February 2006\]](#), pp. 16–27, 70; idem, *Preliminary Report on the City of David Excavations 2005 at the Visitors Center Area* [Jerusalem and New York: Shalem, 2007], pp. 67–69; idem, [“The Wall that Nehemiah Built,” BAR 35, no. 2 \[March/April 2009\]](#), pp. 24–33, 66; idem, *The Palace of King David: Excavations at the Summit of the City of David: Preliminary Report of Seasons 2005-2007* [Jerusalem/New York: Shoham Academic Research and Publication, 2009], pp. 66–71). Only the possibility of firm identifications is left open in “Corrections,” pp. 85–92; “Sixteen,” pp. 50–51; this article is my first affirmation of four identifications, both here in notes 31 and 32 and below in notes 33 and 34.

After cautiously observing publications and withholding judgment for several years, I am now affirming the four identifications in notes 31 through 34, because I am now convinced that this bulla is a remnant from an administrative center in the City of David, a possibility suggested in “Corrections,” p. 100 second-to-last paragraph, and “Sixteen,” p. 51. For me, the tipping point came by comparing the description and pictures of the nearby and immediate archaeological context in Eilat Mazar, “Palace of King David,” pp. 66–70, with the administrative contexts described in Eran Arie, Yuval Goren, and Inbal Samet, “Indelible Impression: Petrographic Analysis of Judahite Bullae,” in Israel Finkelstein and Nadav Na’aman, eds., *The Fire Signals of Lachish: Studies in the Archaeology and History of Israel in the Late Bronze Age, Iron Age, and Persian Period in Honor of David Ussishkin* (Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbrauns, 2011), pp. 12–13 (the section titled “The Database: Judahite Bullae from Controlled Excavations”) and pp. 23–24. See also [Nadav Na’aman, “The Interchange between Bible and Archaeology: The Case of David's Palace and the Millo,” BAR 40, no. 1 \(January/February 2014\)](#), pp. 57–61, 68–69, which is drawn from idem, “Biblical and Historical Jerusalem in the Tenth and Fifth-Fourth Centuries B.C.E.,” *Biblica* 93 (2012): pp. 21–42. See also idem, “Five Notes on Jerusalem in the First and Second Temple Periods,” *Tel Aviv* 39 (2012): p. 93.

33. Pashhur, father of Gedaliah the official, late 7th century, Jeremiah 38:1 and **34. Gedaliah, official during Zedekiah's reign, fl. within 597–586, Jeremiah 38:1** only, both referred to in a bulla discovered in the City of David in 2008. See “Corrections,” pp. 92–96; “Sixteen,” pp. 50–51; and the preceding endnote 31 and 32 for bibliographic details on E. Mazar, “Wall,” pp. 24–33, 66; idem, *Palace of King David*, pp. 68–71) and for the comments in the paragraph that begins, “After cautiously ...”

ASSYRIA

35. Tiglath-pileser III (= Pul), king, r. 744–727, 2 Kings 15:19, etc., in his many inscriptions. See *Raging Torrent*, pp. 46–79; *COS*, vol. 2, pp. 284–292; *ITP*; Mikko Lukko, *The Correspondence of Tiglath-pileser III and Sargon II from Calah/Nimrud* (State Archives of Assyria, no. 19; Assyrian Text Corpus Project; Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbrauns, 2013); *ABC*, pp. 248–249. On Pul as referring to Tiglath-pileser III, which is implicit in *ABC*, p. 333 under “Pulu,” see *ITP*, p. 280 n. 5 for discussion and bibliography.

On the identification of Tiglath-pileser III in the Aramaic monumental inscription honoring Panamu II, in Aramaic monumental inscriptions 1 and 8 of Bar-Rekub (now in Istanbul and Berlin, respectively), and in the Ashur Ostrakon, see *IBP*, p. 240; *COS*, pp. 158–161.

36. Shalmaneser V (= Ululaya), king, r. 726–722, 2 Kings 17:2, etc., in chronicles, in king-lists, and in rare remaining inscriptions of his own (*ABC*, p. 242; *COS*, vol. 2, p. 325). Most notable is the Neo-Babylonian Chronicle series, Chronicle 1, i, lines 24–32. In those lines, year 2 of the Chronicle mentions his plundering the city of Samaria (*Raging Torrent*, pp. 178, 182; *ANEHST*, p. 408). (“Shalman” in Hosea 10:14 is likely a historical allusion, but modern lack of information makes it difficult to assign it to a particular historical situation or ruler, Assyrian or otherwise. See below for the endnotes to the box at the top of p. 50.)

37. Sargon II, king, r. 721–705, Isaiah 20:1, in many inscriptions, including his own. See *Raging Torrent*, pp. 80–109, 176–179, 182; *COS*, vol. 2, pp. 293–300; Mikko Lukko, *The Correspondence of Tiglath-pileser III and Sargon II from Calah/Nimrud* (State Archives of Assyria, no. 19; Assyrian Text Corpus Project; Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbrauns, 2013); *ABC*, pp. 236–238; *IBP*, pp. 240–241 no. (74).

38. Sennacherib, king, r. 704–681, 2 Kings 18:13, etc., in many inscriptions, including his own. See *Raging Torrent*, pp. 110–129; *COS*, vol. 2, pp. 300–305; *ABC*, pp. 238–240; *ANEHST*, pp. 407–411, esp. 410; *IBP*, pp. 241–242.

39. Adrammelech (= Ardamullissu = Arad-mullissu), son and assassin of Sennacherib, fl. early 7th century, 2 Kings 19:37, etc., in a letter sent to Esarhaddon, who succeeded Sennacherib on the throne of Assyria. See *Raging Torrent*, pp. 111, 184, and *COS*, vol. 3, p. 244, both of which describe and cite with approval Simo Parpola, “The Murderer of Sennacherib,” in *Death in Mesopotamia: Papers Read at the XXVie Rencontre Assyriologique Internationale*, ed. Bendt Alster (Copenhagen: Akademisk Forlag, 1980), pp. 171–182. See also *ABC*, p. 240.

A scholarly challenge is the identification of Sennacherib's successor, Esarhaddon, as a more likely assassin in Andrew Knapp's paper, “The Murderer of Sennacherib, Yet Again,” February 2014 SBL/AOS/ASOR Midwest regional conference, Bourbonnais, Ill.

On various renderings of the neo-Assyrian name of the assassin, see *RIA* s.v. “Ninlil,” vol. 9, pp. 452–453 (in German). On the mode of execution of those thought to have been conspirators in the assassination, see the selection from Ashurbanipal’s Rassam cylinder in *ANET*, p. 288.

40. Esarhaddon, king, r. 680–669, 2 Kings 19:37, etc., in his many inscriptions. See *Raging Torrent*, pp. 130–147; *COS*, vol. 2, p. 306; *ABC*, pp. 217–219. Esarhaddon’s name appears in many cuneiform inscriptions (*ANET*, pp. 272–274, 288–290, 292–294, 296, 297, 301–303, 426–428, 449, 450, 531, 533–541, 605, 606), including his Succession Treaty (*ANEHST*, p. 355).

BABYLONIA

41. Merodach-baladan II (=Marduk-apla-idinna II), king, r. 721–710 and 703, 2 Kings 20:12, etc., in the inscriptions of Sennacherib and the Neo-Babylonian Chronicles (*Raging Torrent*, pp. 111, 174, 178–179, 182–183. For Sennacherib’s account of his first campaign, which was against Merodach-baladan II, see *COS*, vol. 2, pp. 300–302. For the Neo-Babylonian Chronicle series, Chronicle 1, i, 33–42, see *ANEHST*, pp. 408–409. This king is also included in the Babylonian King List A (*ANET*, p. 271), and the latter part of his name remains in the reference to him in the Synchronistic King List (*ANET*, pp. 271–272), on which see *ABC*, pp. 226, 237.

42. Nebuchadnezzar II, king, r. 604–562, 2 Kings 24:1, etc., in many cuneiform tablets, including his own inscriptions. See *Raging Torrent*, pp. 220–223; *COS*, vol. 2, pp. 308–310; *ANET*, pp. 221, 307–311; *ABC*, p. 232. The Neo-Babylonian Chronicle series refers to him in Chronicles 4 and 5 (*ANEHST*, pp. 415, 416–417, respectively). Chronicle 5, reverse, lines 11–13, briefly refers to his conquest of Jerusalem (“the city of Judah”) in 597 by defeating “its king” (Jehoiachin), as well as his appointment of “a king of his own choosing” (Zedekiah) as king of Judah.

43. Nebo-sarsekim, chief official of Nebuchadnezzar II, fl. early 6th century, Jeremiah 39:3, in a cuneiform inscription on Babylonian clay tablet BM 114789 (1920–12–13, 81), dated to 595 B.C.E. The time reference in Jeremiah 39:3 is very close, to the year 586. Since it is extremely unlikely that two individuals having precisely the same personal name would have been, in turn, the sole holders of precisely this unique position within a decade of each other, it is safe to assume that the inscription and the book of Jeremiah refer to the same person in different years of his time in office. In July 2007 in the British Museum, Austrian researcher Michael Jursa discovered this Babylonian reference to the biblical “Nebo-sarsekim, the Rab-saris” (*rab ša-rēši*, meaning “chief official”) of Nebuchadnezzar II (r. 604–562). Jursa identified this official in his article, “Nabu-šarrūssu-ukīn, *rab ša-rēši*, und ‘Nebusarsekim’ (Jer. 39:3),” *Nouvelles Assyriologiques Breves et Utilitaires* 2008/1 (March): pp. 9–10 (in German). See also Bob Becking, “Identity of Nabusharrussu-ukin, the Chamberlain: An Epigraphic Note on Jeremiah 39,3. With an Appendix on the Nebu(!)sarsekim Tablet by Henry Stadhouders,” *Biblische Notizen* NF 140 (2009): pp. 35–46; “Corrections,” pp. 121–124; “Sixteen,” p. 47 n. 31. On the correct translation of *ráb ša-rēši* (and three older, published instances of it having been incorrectly translated as *rab šaqê*), see *ITP*, p. 171 n. 16.

44. Nergal-sharezer (= Nergal-sharušur the Sin-magir = Nergal-šarru-ušur the simmagir), officer of Nebuchadnezzar II, early sixth century, Jeremiah 39:3, in a

Babylonian cuneiform inscription known as Nebuchadnezzar II's Prism (column 3 of prism EŞ 7834, in the Istanbul Archaeological Museum). See ANET, pp. 307–308; Rocio Da Riva, "Nebuchadnezzar II's Prism (EŞ 7834): A New Edition," *Zeitschrift für Assyriologie und Vorderasiatische Archäologie*, vol. 103, no. 2 (2013): 204, Group 3.

45. Nebuzaradan (= Nabuzeriddinam = Nabû-zēr-iddin), a chief officer of Nebuchadnezzar II, early sixth century, 2 Kings 25:8, etc. & Jeremiah 39:9, etc., in a Babylonian cuneiform inscription known as Nebuchadnezzar II's Prism (column 3, line 36 of prism EŞ 7834, in the Istanbul Archaeological Museum). See ANET, p. 307; Rocio Da Riva, "Nebuchadnezzar II's Prism (EŞ 7834): A New Edition," *Zeitschrift für Assyriologie und Vorderasiatische Archäologie*, vol. 103, no. 2 (2013): 202, Group 1.

46. Evil-merodach (= Awel Marduk, = Amel Marduk), king, r. 561–560, 2 Kings 25:27, etc., in various inscriptions (ANET, p. 309; OROT, pp. 15, 504 n. 23). See especially Ronald H. Sack, *Amel-Marduk: 562-560 B.C.; A Study Based on Cuneiform, Old Testament, Greek, Latin and Rabbinical Sources* (Alter Orient und Altes Testament, no. 4; Kevelaer, Butzon & Bercker, and Neukirchen-Vluyn, Neukirchener, 1972).

47. Belshazzar, son and co-regent of Nabonidus, fl. ca. 543?–540, Daniel 5:1, etc., in Babylonian administrative documents and the "Verse Account" (Muhammed A. Dandamayev, "Nabonid, A," *RIA*, vol. 9, p. 10; *Raging Torrent*, pp. 215–216; OROT, pp. 73–74). A neo-Babylonian text refers to him as "Belshazzar the crown prince" (ANET, pp. 309–310 n. 5).

PERSIA

48. Cyrus II (=Cyrus the great), king, r. 559–530, 2 Chronicles 36:22, etc., in various inscriptions (including his own), for which and on which see ANEHST, pp. 418–426, ABC, p. 214. For Cyrus' cylinder inscription, see *Raging Torrent*, pp. 224–230; ANET, pp. 315–316; COS, vol. 2, pp. 314–316; ANEHST, pp. 426–430; P&B, pp. 87–92. For larger context and implications in the biblical text, see OROT, pp. 70–76.

49. Darius I (=Darius the Great), king, r. 520–486, Ezra 4:5, etc., in various inscriptions, including his own trilingual cliff inscription at Behistun, on which see P&B, pp. 131–134. See also COS, vol. 2, p. 407, vol. 3, p. 130; ANET, pp. 221, 316, 492; ABC, p. 214; ANEHST, pp. 407, 411. On the setting, see OROT, pp. 70–75.

50. Tattenai (=Tatnai), provincial governor of Trans-Euphrates, late sixth to early fifth century, Ezra 5:3, etc., in a tablet of Darius I the Great, king of Persia, which can be dated to exactly June 5, 502 B.C.E. See David E. Suiter, "Tattenai," in David Noel Freedman, ed., *Anchor Bible Dictionary* (New York: Doubleday, 1992), vol. 6, p. 336; A. T. Olmstead, "Tattenai, Governor of 'Beyond the River,'" *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 3 (1944): p. 46. A drawing of the cuneiform text appears in Arthur Ungnad, *Vorderasiatische Schriftdenkmäler Der Königlichen Museen Zu Berlin* (Leipzig: Hinrichs, 1907), vol. IV, p. 48, no. 152 (VAT 43560). VAT is the abbreviation for the series *Vorderasiatische Abteilung Tontafel*, published by the Berlin Museum. The author of the BAR article and this supplement wishes to acknowledge the query regarding Tattenai from Mr. Nathan Yadon of Houston, Texas, private correspondence, 8 September 2015.

51. Xerxes I (=Ahasuerus), king, r. 486–465, Esther 1:1, etc., in various inscriptions, including his own (P&B, p. 301; ANET, pp. 316–317), and in the dates of documents

from the time of his reign (*COS*, vol. 2, p. 188, vol. 3, pp. 142, 145. On the setting, see *OROT*, pp. 70–75).

52. Artaxerxes I Longimanus, king, r. 465-425/424, Ezra 4:6, 7, etc., in various inscriptions, including his own (P&B, pp. 242–243), and in the dates of documents from the time of his reign (*COS*, vol. 2, p. 163, vol. 3, p. 145; *ANET*, p. 548).

53. Darius II Nothus, king, r. 425/424-405/404, Nehemiah 12:22, in various inscriptions, including his own (for example, P&B, pp. 158–159) and in the dates of documents from the time of his reign (*ANET*, p. 548; *COS*, vol. 3, pp. 116–117).

“Almost Real” People (Not Certain, but Reasonable): The Biblical and Archaeological Evidence

In general, the persons listed in the box at the top of [p. 50 of the March/April 2014 issue of BAR](#) exclude persons in two categories. The first category includes those about whom we know so little that we cannot even approach a firm identification with anyone named in an inscription. One example is “Shalman” in Hosea 10:14. This name almost certainly refers to a historical person, but variations of this name were common in the ancient Near East, and modern lack of information on the biblical Shalman makes it difficult to assign it to a particular historical situation or ruler, Assyrian or otherwise. See Francis I. Andersen and David Noel Freedman, *Hosea* (The Anchor Bible, vol. 24; Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1980), pp. 570–571. A second example is “Osnappar” (=Asnapper) in Ezra 4:10, who is not called a king, and for whom the traditional identification has no basis for singling out any particular ruler. See Jacob M. Myers, *Ezra-Nehemiah* (The Anchor Bible, vol. 14; Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1981), p. 333.

The second category of excluded identifications comes from the distinction between inscriptions that are dug up after many centuries and texts that have been copied and recopied through the course of many centuries. The latter include the books of the Bible itself, as well as other writings, notably those of Flavius Josephus in the first century C.E. His reference to Ethbaal (=’Ittoba’al =’Ithoba’al), the father of Jezebel (1 Kings 16:31), is not included in this article, because Josephus’ writings do not come to us from archaeology. See *IBP*, p. 238 n. 90; cf. *Raging Torrent*, pp. 30, 115–116 (p. 133 refers to an Ethbaal appointed king of Sidon by Sennacherib, therefore he must have lived a century later than Jezebel’s father).

AMMON

Balaam son of Beor, fl. late 13th century (some scholars prefer late 15th century), Numbers 22:5, etc., in a wall inscription on plaster dated to 700 B.C.E. (*COS*, vol. 2, pp. 140–145). It was discovered at Tell Deir ‘Allā, in the same Transjordanian geographical area in which the Bible places Balaam’s activity. Many scholars assume or conclude that the Balaam and Beor of the inscription are the same as the biblical pair and belong to the same folk tradition, which is not necessarily historical. See P. Kyle McCarter, Jr., “The Balaam Texts from Deir ‘Allā: The First Combination,” *BASOR* 239 (1980): pp. 49–60; Jo Ann Hackett, *The Balaam Text from Deir ‘Allā* (Chico, Calif.: Scholars Press, 1984),

pp. 27, 33–34; idem, “Some Observations on the Balaam Tradition at Deir ‘Allā,” *Biblical Archaeologist* 49 (1986), p. 216. Mykytiuk at first listed these two identifications under a strong classification in *IBP*, p. 236, but because the inscription does not reveal a time period for Balaam and Beor, he later corrected that to a “not-quite-firmly identified” classification in “Corrections,” pp. 111–113, no. 29 and 30, and in “Sixteen,” p. 53.

Although it contains three identifying marks (traits) of both father and son, this inscription is dated to ca. 700 B.C.E., several centuries after the period in which the Bible places Balaam. Speaking with no particular reference to this inscription, some scholars, such as Frendo and Kofoed, argue that lengthy gaps between a particular writing and the things to which it refers are not *automatically* to be considered refutations of historical claims (Anthony J. Frendo, *Pre-Exilic Israel, the Hebrew Bible, and Archaeology: Integrating Text and Artefact* [New York: T&T Clark, 2011], p. 98; Jens B. Kofoed, *Text and History: Historiography and the Study of the Biblical Text* [Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbrauns, 2005], pp. 83–104, esp. p. 42). There might easily have been intervening sources which transmitted the information from generation to generation but as centuries passed, were lost.

Baalis, king of the Ammonites, r. early 6th century, Jeremiah 40:14, in an Ammonite seal impression on the larger, fairly flat end of a ceramic cone (perhaps a bottle-stopper?) from Tell el-Umeiri, in what was the land of the ancient Ammonites. The seal impression reveals only two marks (traits) of an individual, so it is not quite firm. See Larry G. Herr, “The Servant of Baalis,” *Biblical Archaeologist* 48 (1985): pp. 169–172; WSS, p. 322 no. 860; *COS*, p. 201; *IBP*, p. 242 no. (77); “Sixteen Strong,” p. 52. The differences between the king’s name in this seal impression and the biblical version can be understood as slightly different renderings of the same name in different dialects; see bibliography in Michael O’Connor, “The Ammonite Onomasticon: Semantic Problems,” *Andrews University Seminary Studies* 25 (1987): p. 62 paragraph (3), supplemented by Lawrence T. Geraty, “Back to Egypt: An Illustration of How an Archaeological Find May Illumine a Biblical Passage,” *Reformed Review* 47 (1994): p. 222; Emile Puech, “L’inscription de la statue d’Amman et la paleographie ammonite,” *Revue biblique* 92 (1985): pp. 5–24.

NORTHERN ARABIA

Geshem (= Gashmu) the Arabian, r. mid-5th century, Nehemiah 2:10, etc., in an Aramaic inscription on a silver bowl discovered at Tell el-Maskhuta, Egypt, in the eastern delta of the Nile, that mentions “Qainu, son of Geshem [or Gashmu], king of Qedar,” an ancient kingdom in northwest Arabia. This bowl is now in the Brooklyn Museum. See Isaac Rabinowitz, “Aramaic Inscriptions of the Fifth Century B.C.E. from a North-Arab Shrine in Egypt,” *Journal of the Near Eastern Studies* 15 (1956): pp. 1–9, Pl. 6–7; William J. Dumbrell, “The Tell el-Maskhuta Bowls and the ‘Kingdom’ of Qedar in the Persian Period,” *BASOR* 203 (October 1971): pp. 35–44; *OROT*, pp. 74–75, 518 n. 26; *Raging Torrent*, p. 55.

Despite thorough analyses of the Qainu bowl and its correspondences pointing to the biblical Geshem, there is at least one other viable candidate for identification with the biblical Geshem: Gashm or Jasm, son of Shahr, of Dedan. On him, see Frederick V. Winnett and William L. Reed, *Ancient Records from North Arabia* (University of Toronto

Press, 1970), pp. 115–117; *OROT*, pp. 75. 518 n. 26. Thus the existence of two viable candidates would seem to render the case for each not quite firm (*COS*, vol. 2, p. 176).

SOUTHERN KINGDOM OF JUDAH

Shebna, the overseer of the palace, fl. ca. 726–697/696, Isaiah 22:15–19 (probably also the scribe of 2 Kings 18:18, etc., before being promoted to palace overseer), in an inscription at the entrance to a rock-cut tomb in Silwan, near Jerusalem. There are only two marks (traits) of an individual, and these do not include his complete name, so this identification, though tempting, is not quite firm. See Nahman Avigad, “Epitaph of a Royal Steward from Siloam Village,” *IEJ* 3 (1953): pp. 137–152; David Ussishkin, *The Village of Silwan* (Jerusalem: Israel Exploration Society, 1993), pp. 247–250; *IBP*, pp. 223, 225; “Sixteen Strong,” pp. 51–52.

Hananiah and his father, Azzur, from Gibeon, fl. early 6th and late 7th centuries, respectively, Jeremiah 28:1, etc., in a personal seal carved from blue stone, 20 mm. long and 17 mm. wide, inscribed “belonging to Hananyahu, son of ‘Azaryahu” and surrounded by a pomegranate-garland border, and (*WSS*, p. 100, no. 165). This seal reveals only two marks (traits) of an individual, the names of father and son, therefore the identification it provides can be no more than a reasonable hypothesis (*IBP*, pp. 73–77, as amended by “Corrections,” pp. 56–57). One must keep in mind that there were probably many people in Judah during that time named Hananiah/Hananyahu, and quite a few of them could have had a father named ‘Azariah/‘Azaryahu, or ‘Azzur for short. (Therefore, it would take a third identifying mark of an individual to establish a strong, virtually certain identification of the Biblical father and/or son, such as mention of the town of Gibeon or Hananyahu being a prophet.)

Because the shapes of the letters of the Hebrew alphabet gradually changed over the centuries, using examples discovered at different stratigraphic levels of earth, we can now date ancient Hebrew inscriptions on the basis of paleography (letter shapes and the direction and order of the strokes). This seal was published during the 19th century (in 1883 by Charles Clermont-Ganneau), when no one, neither scholars nor forgers, knew the correct shapes of Hebrew letters for the late seventh to early sixth centuries (the time of Jeremiah). We now know that all the letter shapes in this seal are chronologically consistent with each other and are the appropriate letter shapes for late seventh-century to early sixth-century Hebrew script—the time of Jeremiah. This date is indicated especially by the Hebrew letter *nun* (n) and—though the photographs are not completely clear, possibly by the Hebrew letter *he’* (h), as well.

Because the letter shapes could not have been correctly forged, yet they turned out to be correct, it is safe to presume that this stone seal is genuine, even though its origin (provenance) is unknown. Normally, materials from the antiquities market are not to be trusted, because they have been bought, rather than excavated, and could be forged. But the exception is inscriptions purchased during the 19th century that turn out to have what we now know are the correct letter shapes, all of which appropriate for the same century or part of a century (*IBP*, p. 41, paragraph 2) up to the word “Also,” pp. 154 and 160 both under the subheading “Authenticity,” p. 219, notes 23 and 24).

Also, the letters are written in Hebrew script, which is discernably different from the scripts of neighboring kingdoms. The only Hebrew kingdom still standing when this

inscription was written was Judah. Because this seal is authentic and is from the kingdom of Judah during the time of Jeremiah, it matches the setting of the Hananiah, the son of Azzur in Jeremiah 28.

Comparing the identifying marks of individuals in the inscription and in the Bible, the seal owner's name and his father's name inscribed in the seal match the name of the false prophet and his father in Jeremiah 28, giving us two matching marks of an individual. That is not enough for a firm identification, but it is enough for a reasonable hypothesis.

Gedaliah the governor, son of Ahikam, fl. ca. 585, 2 Kings 25:22, etc., in the bulla from Tell ed-Duweir (ancient Lachish) that reads, "Belonging to Gedalyahu, the overseer of the palace." The Babylonian practice was to appoint indigenous governors over conquered populations. It is safe to assume that as conquerors of Jerusalem in 586 B.C.E., they would have chosen the highest-ranking Judahite perceived as "pro-Babylonian" to be their governor over Judah. The palace overseer had great authority and knowledge of the inner workings of government at the highest level, sometimes serving as vice-regent for the king; see S. H. Hooke, "A Scarab and Sealing From Tell Duweir," *Palestine Exploration Fund Quarterly Statement* 67 (1935): pp. 195–197; J. L. Starkey, "Lachish as Illustrating Bible History," *Palestine Exploration Fund Quarterly Statement* 69 (1937): pp. 171–174; some publications listed in WSS, p. 172 no. 405. The palace overseer at the time of the Babylonian conquest, whose bulla we have, would be the most likely choice for governor, *if* they saw him as pro-Babylonian. Of the two prime candidates named Gedaliah (= Gedalyahu)—assuming both survived the conquest—Gedaliah the son of Pashhur clearly did not have the title "overseer of the palace" (Jeremiah 38:1), and he was clearly an enemy of the Babylonians (Jeremiah 38:4–6). But, though we lack irrefutable evidence, Gedaliah the son of Ahikam is quite likely to have been palace overseer. His prestigious family, the descendants of Shaphan, had been "key players" in crucial situations at the highest levels of the government of Judah for three generations. As for his being perceived as pro-Babylonian, his father Ahikam had protected the prophet Jeremiah (Jeremiah 26:24; cf. 39:11–14), who urged surrender to the Babylonian army (Jeremiah 38:1–3).

The preceding argument is a strengthening step beyond "Corrections," pp. 103–104, which upgrades the strength of the identification from its original level in *IBP*, p. 235, responding to the difficulty expressed in Oded Lipschits, *The Fall and Rise of Jerusalem: Judah under Babylonian Rule* (Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbrauns, 2005), p. 86 n. 186.

Jaazaniah (= Jezaniah), fl. early 6th century, 2 Kings 25:23, etc., in the Tell en-Naşbeh (ancient Mizpah) stone seal inscribed: "Belonging to Ya'azanyahu, the king's minister." It is unclear whether the title "king's minister" in the seal might have some relationship with the biblical phrase "the officers (Hebrew: *sarîm*) of the troops," which included the biblical Jaazaniah (2 Kings 25: 23). There are, then, only two identifying marks of an individual that clearly connect the seal's Jaazaniah with the biblical one: the seal owner's name and the fact that it was discovered at the city where the biblical "Jaazaniah, the son of the Maacathite," died. See William F. Badè, "The Seal of Jaazaniah," *Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft* 51 (1933): pp. 150–156; WSS, p. 52 no. 8; *IBP*, p. 235; "Sixteen Strong," p. 52.

Hezir (=Hezîr), founding father of a priestly division in the First Temple in Jerusalem, early tenth century, 1 Chronicles 24:15, in an epitaph over a large tomb complex on the

western slope of the Mount of Olives, facing the site of the Temple in Jerusalem. First the epitaph names some of Ḥezîr's prominent descendants, and then it presents Ḥezîr by name in the final phrase, which refers to his descendants, who are named before that, as "priests, of (*min*, literally "from") the sons of Ḥezîr." This particular way of saying it recognizes him as the head of that priestly family. See *CIIP*, vol. 1: Jerusalem, Part 1, pp. 178–181, no. 137.

Also, among the burial places inside that same tomb complex, lying broken into fragments was an inscribed, square stone plate that had been used to seal a burial. This plate originally told whose bones they were and the name of that person's father: "Ovadiyah, the son of G . . . ," but a break prevents us from knowing the rest of the father's name and what might have been written after that. Immediately after the break, the inscription ends with the name "Ḥezîr." Placement at the end, as in the epitaph over the entire tomb complex, is consistent with proper location of the name of the founding ancestor of the family. See *CIIP*, vol. 1, Part 1, p. 182, no. 138.

As for the date of Ḥezîr in the inscriptions, to be sure, Ḥezîr lived at least four generations earlier than the inscribing of the epitaph over the complex, and possibly many more generations (*CIIP*, vol. 1, Part 1:179–180, no. 137). Still, it is not possible to assign any date (or even a century) to the Ḥezîr named in the epitaph above the tomb complex, nor to the Ḥezîr named on the square stone plate, therefore this identification has no "airtight" proof or strong case. The date of the engraving itself does not help answer the question of this identification, because the stone was quarried no earlier than the second century B.C.E. (*CIIP*, Part 1, p.179, no. 137–138). Nevertheless, it is still a *reasonable* identification, as supported by the following facts:

- 1) Clearly in the epitaph over the tomb complex, and possibly in the square stone plate inscription, the Ḥezîr named in the epitaph is placed last in recognition of his being the head, that is, the progenitor or "founding father" of the priestly family whose members are buried there.
- 2) This manner of presenting Ḥezîr in the epitaph suggests that he dates back to the founding of this branch of the priestly family. (This suggestion may be pursued independently of whether the family was founded in Davidic times as 1 Chronicles 24 states.)
- 3) Because there is no mention of earlier ancestors, one may observe that the author(s) of the inscriptions anchored these genealogies in the names of the progenitors. It seems that the authors fully expected that the names of the founders of these 24 priestly families would be recognized as such, presumably by Jewish readers. In at least some inscriptions of ancient Israel, it appears that patronymic phrases that use a preposition such as *min*, followed by the plural of the word *son*, as in the epitaph over the tomb complex, "from the sons of Ḥezîr," functioned in much the same way as virtual surnames. The assumption would have been that they were common knowledge. If one accepts that Israel relied on these particular priestly families to perform priestly duties for centuries, then such an expectation makes sense. To accept the reasonableness of this identification is a way of acknowledging the continuity of Hebrew tradition, which certainly seems unquenchable. See the published dissertation, *IBP*, p. 214, note 2, for 19th- and 20th-century bibliography on the Ḥezîr family epitaph.

Jakim (=Yakîm), founding father of a priestly division in the First Temple in Jerusalem, early tenth century, 1 Chronicles 24:12, on an inscribed ossuary (“bone box”) of the first or second century C.E. discovered in a burial chamber just outside Jerusalem on the western slope of the Mount of Olives, facing the site of the Temple. The three-line inscription reads: “Menahem, from (*min*) the sons of Yakîm, (a) priest.” See *CIIP*, vol. 1, Part 1, pp. 217–218, no. 183, burial chamber 299, ossuary 83.

As with the epitaph over the tomb complex of Ḥezîr, this inscription presents Yakîm as the founder of this priestly family. And as with Ḥezîr in the preceding case, no strong case can be made for this identification, because the inscriptional Yakîm lacks a clear date (and indeed, has no clear century). Nevertheless, it is reasonable to identify Yakîm with the Jakim in 1 Chronicles 24 for essentially the same three reasons as Ḥezîr immediately above.

Maaziah (= Ma‘aziah = Maazyahu = Ma‘azyahu), founding father of a priestly division in the First Temple in Jerusalem, early 10th century, 1 Chronicles 24:18, on an inscribed ossuary (“bone box”) of the late first century B.C.E. or the first century C.E. Its one-line inscription reads, “Miriam daughter of Yeshua‘ son of Caiaphas, priest from Ma‘aziah, from Beth ‘Imri.”

The inscription is in Aramaic, which was the language spoken by Jews in first-century Palestine for day-to-day living. The Hebrew personal name Miriam and the Yahwistic ending –iah on Ma‘aziah, which refers to the name of Israel’s God, also attest to a Jewish context.

This inscription’s most significant difficulty is that its origin is unknown (it is unprovenanced). Therefore, the Israel Antiquities Authority at first considered it a potential forgery. Zissu and Goren’s subsequent scientific examination, particularly of the patina (a coating left by age), however, has upheld its authenticity. Thus the inscribed ossuary is demonstrably authentic, and it suits the Jewish setting of the priestly descendants of Ma‘aziah in the Second Temple period.

Now that we have the authenticity and the Jewish setting of the inscription, we can count the identifying marks of an individual to see how strong a case there is for the Ma‘azyahu of the Bible and the Ma‘aziah being the same person: 1) Ma‘azyahu and Ma‘aziah are simply spelling variants of the very same name. 2) Ma‘aziah’s occupation was priest, because he was the ancestor of a priest. 3) Ma‘aziah’s place in the family is mentioned in a way that anchors the genealogy in him as the founder of the family. (The inscription adds mention of ‘Imri as the father of a subset, a “father’s house” within Ma‘aziah’s larger family.)

Normally, if the person in the Bible and the person in the inscription have the same three identifying marks of an individual, and if all other factors are right, one can say the identification (confirmation) of the Biblical person in the inscription is virtually certain. But not all other factors are right. A setting (even in literature) consists of time and place. To be sure, the social “place” is a Jewish family of priests, both for the Biblical Ma‘azyahu and for the inscriptional Ma‘aziah. But the time setting of the Biblical Ma‘azyahu during the reign of David is not matched by any time setting at all for the inscriptional Ma‘aziah. We do not even know which century the inscriptional Ma‘aziah lived in. He could have been a later descendant of the Biblical Ma‘azyahu.

Therefore, as with Hezîr and as with Yakîm above, we cannot claim a clear, strong identification that would be an archaeological confirmation of the biblical Ma‘azyahu. We only have a reasonable hypothesis, a tentative identification that is certainly not proven, but reasonable—for essentially the same three reasons as with Hezîr above. See Boaz Zissu and Yuval Goren, “The Ossuary of ‘Miriam Daughter of Yeshua Son of Caiaphas, Priests [of] Ma‘aziah from Beth ‘Imri,’” *Israel Exploration Journal* 61 (2011), pp. 74–95; Christopher A. Rollston, “‘Priests’ or ‘Priest’ in the Mariam (Miriam) Ossuary, and the Language of the Inscription,” Rollston Epigraphy (blog), July 14, 2011, www.rollstonepigraphy.com/?p=275, accessed October 10, 2016; Richard Bauckham, “The Caiaphas Family,” *Journal for the Study of the Historical Jesus* 10 (2012), pp. 3–31.

Symbols & Abbreviations

- ANEHST** Mark W. Chavalas, ed., *The Ancient Near East: Historical Sources in Translation* (Blackwell Sources in Ancient History; Victoria, Australia: Blackwell, 2006).
- ABC** A. Kirk Grayson, *Assyrian and Babylonian Chronicles* (Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbrauns, 2000).
- ANET** James B. Pritchard, ed., *Ancient Near Eastern Texts Relating to the Old Testament*, 3rd ed. (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1969).
- B.C.E.** before the common era, used as an equivalent to B.C.
- BAR** *Biblical Archaeology Review*
- BASOR** *Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research*
- c.** century (all are B.C.E.)
- ca.** circa, a Latin word meaning “around”
- cf.** compare
- CAH** John Boardman et al., eds., *The Cambridge Ancient History* (2nd ed.; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1970).
- CIIP** Hanna M. Cotton et al., eds., *Corpus Inscriptionum Iudaeae/Palaestinae*, vol. 1: Jerusalem, Part 1 (Berlin and Boston: De Gruyter, 2010). Vol. 1 consists of two separately bound Parts, each a physical “book.”
- “Corrections”** Lawrence J. Mykytiuk, “Corrections and Updates to ‘Identifying Biblical Persons in Northwest Semitic Inscriptions of 1200–539 B.C.E.’,” *Maarav* 16 (2009), pp. 49–132, free online at docs.lib.purdue.edu/lib_research/129/.
- COS** William W. Hallo and K. Lawson Younger, eds., *The Context of Scripture*, vol. 2: *Archival Documents from the Biblical World* (Boston: Brill, 2000).
- Dearman, *Studies* J. Andrew Dearman, ed., *Studies in the Mesha Inscription and Moab* (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1989).
- esp.** especially
- fl.** flourished
- ibid.** (Latin) “the same thing,” meaning the same publication as the one mentioned immediately before
- IBP** Lawrence J. Mykytiuk, *Identifying Biblical Persons in Northwest Semitic*

Inscriptions of 1200–539 B.C.E. (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2004). This book is a revised Ph.D. dissertation in Hebrew and Semitic Studies, University of Wisconsin-Madison, 1998, which began with a 1992 graduate seminar paper. Most of **IBP** is available on the Google Books web site:

www.google.com/search?tbo=p&tbm=bks&q=mykytiuk+identifying&num=10

idem (Latin) “the same one(s),” meaning “the same person or persons,” used for referring to the author(s) mentioned immediately before.

IEJ *Israel Exploration Journal*

ITP Hayim Tadmor, *The Inscriptions of Tiglath-pileser III, King of Assyria* (Fontes ad Res Judaicas Spectantes; Jerusalem: Israel Academy of Sciences and Humanities, 2nd 2007 printing with addenda et corrigenda, 1994).

n. note (a footnote or endnote)

no. number (of an item, usually on a page)

OROT Kenneth A. Kitchen, *On the Reliability of the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 2003).

P&B Edwin M. Yamauchi, *Persia and the Bible* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker, 1990).

Pl. plate(s) (a page of photos or drawings in a scholarly publication, normally unnumbered.)

r. reigned

Raging Torrent Mordechai Cogan, *The Raging Torrent: Historical Inscriptions from Assyria and Babylonia Relating to Ancient Israel* (A Carta Handbook; Jerusalem: Carta, 2008).

RIA *Reallexikon der Assyriologie und Vorderasiatischen Archäologie* (New York, Berlin: de Gruyter, ©1932, 1971).

RIMA a series of books: *The Royal Inscriptions of Mesopotamia: Assyrian Periods*

RIMA 3 A. Kirk Grayson, *Assyrian Rulers of the Early First Millennium BC, II (858–745 BC)* (RIMA, no. 3; Buffalo, N.Y.: University of Toronto Press, 1996).

“**Sixteen**” Lawrence J. Mykytiuk, “Sixteen Strong Identifications of Biblical Persons (Plus Nine Other Identifications) in Authentic Northwest Semitic Inscriptions from before 539 B.C.E.,” pp. 35–58 in Meir Lubetski and Edith Lubetski, eds., *New Inscriptions and Seals Relating to the Biblical World* (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2012), free online at docs.lib.purdue.edu/lib_research/150/.

Third Kenneth A. Kitchen, *The Third Intermediate Period in Egypt (1100–650 B.C.)* (2nd rev. ed. with supplement; Warminster, England: Aris & Phillips, 1986).

WSS Nahman Avigad and Benjamin Sass, *Corpus of West Semitic Stamp Seals* (Jerusalem: The Israel Academy of Sciences and Humanities, Israel Exploration Society, and The Hebrew University of Jerusalem, The Institute of Archaeology, 1997).

Date Sources

This table uses Kitchen’s dates for rulers of Egypt, Pitard’s for kings of Damascus (with some differences), Galil’s for monarchs of Judah and for those of the northern kingdom of Israel, Grayson’s for Neo-Assyrian kings, Wiseman’s for Neo-Babylonian kings and Briant’s, if given, for Persian kings and for the Persian province of Yehud. Other dates

follow traditional high biblical chronology, rather than the low chronology proposed by Israel Finkelstein.

References

Kenneth A. Kitchen, *The Third Intermediate Period in Egypt (1100–650 B.C.)* (2nd rev. ed. with supplement; Warminster, England: Aris & Phillips, 1986), pp. 466–468.

Wayne T. Pitard, *Ancient Damascus: A Historical Study of the Syrian City-State from Earliest Times until its Fall to the Assyrians in 732 B.C.E.* (Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbrauns, 1987), pp. 138–144, 189.

Gershon Galil, *The Chronology of the Kings of Israel and Judah* (SHCANE 9; New York: Brill, 1996), p. 147.

A. Kirk Grayson, *Assyrian Rulers of the Early First Millennium BC, II (858–745 BC)* (RIMA 3; Buffalo, N.Y.: University of Toronto Press, 1996), p. vii; idem, “Assyria: Ashur-dan II to Ashur-nirari V (934–745 B.C.),” in *CAH*, vol. III, part I, pp. 238–281; idem, “Assyria: Tiglath-pileser III to Sargon II (744–705 B.C.),” in *CAH*, vol. III, part II, pp. 71–102; idem, “Assyria: Sennacherib and Esarhaddon (704–669 B.C.),” in *CAH*, vol. III, part II, pp. 103–141; idem, “Assyria 668–635 B.C.: The Reign of Ashurbanipal,” in *CAH*, vol. III, part II, pp. 142–161.

Donald J. Wiseman, “Babylonia 605–539 B.C.” in *CAH*, vol. III, part II, pp. 229–251.

Pierre Briant, *From Cyrus to Alexander: A History of the Persian Empire* (Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbrauns, 2002), “Index of Personal Names,” pp. 1149–1160.

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