

No-Stress Evangelism

Introduction:

Do you get stressed at the thought of contriving to share the gospel with people who don't believe in Christ? There is no need, once you understand God's part, your part, and the hearer's part.

Outline:

Four Responsibilities

1. God is responsible to prepare the way.
 2. We are responsible to tell the gospel.
 - We must pray.
 - We must plan.
 - We must present.
 - We must deal with our fear.
 3. God is responsible to persuade the sinner.
 4. The sinner is responsible to obey the gospel.
-

Point One: God is responsible to prepare the way

Illustration: My visit to Singapore is an illustration of God at work:

- I didn't just arrive and start doing things.
- A lot of arrangements had to take place.
- People had to be prepared so that when I came we would work together.
- I had to know what people here wanted.

1. God has a plan for the whole world. Isaiah 14:26

This is the plan determined for the whole world;
this is the hand stretched out over all nations.

2. God's plan is not hidden from us. Amos 3:7

Surely the Sovereign **LORD** does nothing
without revealing his plan to his servants the prophets.

3. God's plan for world evangelism has been running for thousands of years. Acts 17:26-31

"...From one man he made every nation of men, that they should inhabit the whole earth; and he determined the times set for them and the exact places where they should live. ²⁷God did this so that men would seek him and perhaps reach out for him and find him, though he is not far from each one of us. ²⁸'For in him we live and move and have our being.' As some of your own poets have said, 'We

are his offspring.' ²⁹"Therefore since we are God's offspring, we should not think that the divine being is like gold or silver or stone--an image made by man's design and skill. ³⁰In the past God overlooked such ignorance, but now he commands all people everywhere to repent. ³¹For he has set a day when he will judge the world with justice by the man he has appointed. He has given proof of this to all men by raising him from the dead."

4. God prepared the way for Jesus, the gospel-bearer
 - a. The animal slain for atonement in the garden of Eden.
 - b. In the Jewish worship in the Temple—the sacrifice of the lamb.
 - c. In the hearts of the people in Israel—John the Baptist, "Prepare the way of the Lord." The fulfilment of Isaiah 43:5.

"A voice of one calling:
"In the desert prepare
the way for the **LORD**;
make straight in the wilderness
a highway for our God.

4. God prepares for us a way to share the gospel.

- a. "...the **LORD** will watch over your coming and going both now and forevermore." Psalm 121:8

- b. Cornelius was prepared for the gospel. Acts 10:30
"Four days ago I was in my house praying at this hour, at three in the afternoon. Suddenly a man in shining clothes stood before me ³¹and said, 'Cornelius, God has heard your prayer and remembered your gifts to the poor. ³²Send to Joppa for Simon who is called Peter. He is a guest in the home of Simon the tanner, who lives by the sea.' ³³So I sent for you immediately, and it was good of you to come. Now we are all here in the presence of God to listen to everything the Lord has commanded you to tell us."

Illustration: The Romanians

They were born into a Christian background.
They survived communism.
They experienced ornate worship.
She walked under half of John 14:6 on an arch every Sunday.
She and her husband wanted to know God.
They came to New Zealand and crashed with despair.
I walked into a computer shop with a crashing computer and befriended him. I met the wife. We socialized once.
On the way home I talked about finding God.
I disconnected him from evolution.
They were ready to hear the gospel. She from Judy, him from me.
They came to Christ and are now successfully seeking God.
They had to come to New Zealand to find him.
They had been prepared. I had been trained for decades.
My computer had been prepared.
Everything was in place and they came to Christ.

Recommended reading: Theocentric Evangelism by Wong Kim Tok.
Find a copy at <http://www.fairservicenz.com/resources.html>

Point Two: We are responsible to tell the gospel
A. What we should know

How God Reveals Himself			
Method	Content	Man's Response	Reference
Creation	Transcendence	Worship	Psalm 19
Conscience	Holiness—right and wrong	Self control	Romans 1:20 Romans 2:15 Acts 24:16
Scriptures			
The Jews	God's dealings	Example	
The Law	Holiness of God	Obedience	
The Prophets	Holiness of God	Repentance	Romans 15:4
The Gospels	The Lord Jesus	Belief, hope	John 20:31
The Letters	Right living	Obedience	Romans 12:1,2
Revelation	The future	Joy	Revelation 1:3
Messiah, Son of God	Person of God	Obedience Belief	Hebrews 1:1-3
Teaching of Christ	Message of salvation	Belief Salvation, joy Security	John 10:27 Acts 3:19 Matt. 7:24-27
Children of God	Nature of God, Gospel	Belief, Obedience	Matthew 5:16 John 20:21

B. What we should do—Colossians 4:2-6

Devote yourselves to prayer, being watchful and thankful. ³And pray for us, too, that God may open a door for our message, so that we may proclaim the mystery of Christ, for which I am in chains. ⁴Pray that I may proclaim it clearly, as I should. ⁵Be wise in the way you act toward outsiders; make the most of every opportunity. ⁶Let your conversation be always full of grace, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how to answer everyone.

1. Prayer—devote yourselves to prayer

This means pray a lot at every opportunity. On your own as part of your worship of God. With others, whether organised or casual.

2. Planning—ask God to make opportunities

Four examples:

- A strategic survey of the Promised Land

¹⁷When Moses sent them to explore Canaan, he said, "Go up through the Negev and on into the hill country. ¹⁸See what the land is like and whether the people who live there are strong or weak, few or many. ¹⁹What kind of land do they live in? Is it good or bad? What kind of towns do they live in? Are they unwalled or

fortified? ²⁰How is the soil? Is it fertile or poor? Are there trees on it or not? Do your best to bring back some of the fruit of the land." (It was the season for the first ripe grapes.) ²¹So they went up and explored the land from the Desert of Zin as far as Rehob, toward Lebo^A Hamath. ²²They went up through the Negev and came to Hebron, where Ahiman, Sheshai and Talmai, the descendants of Anak, lived. (Hebron had been built seven years before Zoan in Egypt.) ²³When they reached the Valley of Eshcol,^B they cut off a branch bearing a single cluster of grapes. Two of them carried it on a pole between them, along with some pomegranates and figs. ²⁴That place was called the Valley of Eshcol because of the cluster of grapes the Israelites cut off there. ²⁵At the end of forty days they returned from exploring the land.

- [Joe Simmons and the Christchurch YMCA](#)
- [Sandy and Rod at the Caulfield Institute of Technology](#)
- [The Tuesday Community's move towards reaching neighbours through good works](#)

3. Presentation

Clear proclamation of the gospel—you must know it well

Witness by life—your life must embody the gospel—the Beatitudes

Witness by words—gracious, but with *content*

C. Dealing with our fear

Fear is a response to the presence of danger. We could get hurt. It requires some imagination. "Fools rush in where angels fear to tread." We imagine the possible: "If I, as a Westerner, should go to Indonesia, I could be beheaded!" "If I should speak for Christ, I might be killed." In the West it is more subtle. "If I should speak for Christ, I might be patronized and shunned and considered weird."

Nicodemus came to Jesus by night. Why? He was afraid of losing his reputation as one of the Sanhedrin (John 3).

Other leaders

Yet at the same time many even among the leaders believed in him. But because of the Pharisees they would not confess their faith for **fear** they would be put out of the synagogue; ⁴³for they loved praise from men more than praise from God. (John 12:42, 43)

Proper fear

⁴"I tell you, my friends, do not be **afraid** of those who kill the body and after that can do no more. ⁵But I will show you whom you should fear: Fear him who, after the killing of the body, has power to throw you into hell. Yes, I tell you, fear him. ⁶Are not five sparrows sold for two pennies^A? Yet not one of them is forgotten by God. ⁷Indeed, the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Don't be afraid; you are worth more than many sparrows. (Luke 12:4-7.)

The Disciples' fear

Then everyone deserted him and fled. A young man, wearing nothing but a linen garment, was following Jesus. When they seized him, ⁵²he fled naked, leaving his garment behind. (Mark 14: 50-52) **Aside: Fix, Fasten, Forget!**

But when they had kindled a fire in the middle of the courtyard and had sat down together, Peter sat down with them. ⁵⁶A servant girl saw him seated there in the firelight. She looked closely at him and said, "This man was with him." ⁵⁷But he denied it. "Woman, I don't know him," he said.

⁵⁸A little later someone else saw him and said, "You also are one of them." "Man, I am not!" Peter replied. ⁵⁹About an hour later another asserted, "Certainly this fellow was with him, for he is a Galilean." ⁶⁰Peter replied, "Man, I don't know what you're talking about!" Just as he was speaking, the rooster crowed. ⁶¹The Lord turned and looked straight at Peter. Then Peter remembered the word the Lord had spoken to him: "Before the rooster crows today, you will disown me three times." ⁶²And he went outside and wept bitterly. (Luke 22:55-62)

In my culture, I have all but lost my self-serving fear. It has taken many years, and I have to work at it all the time, because the flesh wants to protect itself.

Fear of man will prove to be a snare,
but whoever trusts in the LORD is kept safe. (Proverbs 29:25)

Peter and John

¹³When they saw the **courage** of Peter and John and realized that they were unschooled, ordinary men, they were astonished and they took note that these men had been with Jesus. (Acts 4:13)

Surely the lesson is clear. If you are in fellowship with the Lord Jesus, and know his gospel, you will have courage.

Before the Holy Spirit brought into being the Church, this was the state of the disciples:

¹⁹On the evening of that first day of the week, when the disciples were together, with the doors locked for **fear** of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you!" (John 20:19)

On the day of Pentecost, when they had been filled with the Spirit, the picture of their behaviour could not have been more different:

³¹After they prayed, the place where they were meeting was shaken. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and spoke the word of God **boldly**. (Acts 4:31)

Paul and Barnabas: 9:28; 13:46; 14:3; 18:26; 18:8; 28:31
"speaking/spoke boldly" Six references in Acts.

And you say, "But I am not bold, like Paul and Barnabas. Well, Paul didn't think he was particularly bold, because he considered that he needed people to ask God to give him boldness."

Forget your reputation. Jesus made himself of no reputation. He became nothing!

⁵Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus: ⁶Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, ⁷but made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. ⁸And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient to death—even death on a cross! (Philippians 2:5-8)

Point Three: God is responsible to persuade the sinner

God persuades sinners of three things, as listed by Jesus in John 16:7-11

Unless I go away, the Counselor will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you. ⁸When he comes, **he will convict the world of guilt in regard to sin and righteousness and judgment:** ⁹in regard to **sin**, because men do not believe in me; ¹⁰in regard to **righteousness**, because I am going to the Father, where you can see me no longer; ¹¹and in regard to **judgment**, because the prince of this world now stands condemned.

The Counsellor, who is the Spirit of God, persuades individuals that not believing in Christ is an offence against God—**sin**—whatever they might say. People don't like Christians because their mere presence reminds them of that fact and condemns their attitudes and actions. Try it out: talk to a homosexual about Jesus and see what reaction you get!

The Spirit shows that Jesus Christ is truly **righteous** and that he lived a perfect life and after his death rose from the dead and went to be with the Father. Paul explained that he was declared to be Son of God in power by his resurrection from the dead:

"Paul, a servant of Christ Jesus, called to be an apostle and set apart for the gospel of God-- ²the gospel he promised beforehand through his prophets in the Holy Scriptures ³regarding his Son, who as to his human nature was a descendant of David, ⁴and who **through the Spirit of holiness** was declared with power to be the Son of God by his resurrection from the dead: Jesus Christ our Lord" (Romans 1:4)

"No one but the Holy Spirit can reveal to a person that a righteous status before God does not depend on good works but on Christ's death on the cross... The ascension, which as part of Christ's exaltation placed God's seal of approval on Christ's redemptive act. Christ's exaltation placed God's seal of approval on Christ's redemptive act" (Compton's commentary).

Concerning **judgment**, Jesus was speaking of the defeat of Satan, which was a form of judgment, not simply a victory. More than power is in question. God acts with justice. He said, "Now is the time for judgment on this world; now the prince of this world will be driven out" (John 12:31). And all this happened at the cross.

Jesus broke the tyrant's power; demonic disarray
The loosened gospel has its hour, the Spirit has his day.

Point Four: The sinner is responsible to obey the gospel

"For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that **whoever believes** in him shall not perish but have eternal life. (John 3:16)

"whoever believes" shows that some will believe and some will not.

God made Mankind with free will and he has never forced anyone to believe.

Genesis 2:16 "You are **free** to eat from any tree in the garden; ¹⁷but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat of it you will surely die."

God laid out to Adam and through him to Eve two choices and two results:

For a time Adam and Eve kept within their boundaries. Then they chose to step over them. God didn't make them keep within the boundaries, nor did he stop them from stepping over them, even when he knew the consequences of evil would be cataclysmic, lasting thousands of years and affecting every human descendant with suffering, disease and death, and causing profound pain to humans and to himself, until the return of Christ on the day of judgment. The gospel is wonderful because eventually God's will is done, even by rebels, without violating anyone's free will. (Freedom is engraved in the heart of created Mankind, and any restriction of that freedom is seen as wrong. **Have you considered that this innate cry "Freedom" demonstrates that Mankind was created by God?**)

No wonder, then, that rebels charge God with coercion, pointing out that whoever does not believe is condemned already (John 3:18). "What sort of a choice is that?" they ask.

"Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe stands condemned already because he has not believed in the name of God's one and only Son." (John 3:18)

They might be right, if the choice were between bad and bad. But the choice is between bad and blessing, condemnation and salvation.

So the choice is still ours, as it was with Adam and Eve. Nothing has changed.

obedience—everlasting life
disobedience—death.

It often sounds as if the gospel is a soft option. That it doesn't really matter whether we believe or not, but rebels are commanded to "obey the Gospel." Still, God will not force them. He will only punish them on the day of judgment.

"He will punish those who do not know God and do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus." (2 Thessalonians 1:8)

The King of Egypt—did he have a choice or not? (Romans 9: 17-19)

Some say God forced the king of Egypt to harden his heart against the commands of God delivered through Moses. Similarly, the case of Sihon, king of the Amorites (Deuteronomy 2:30).

The apostle Paul expounds this argument—that God might be thought of as unjust by hardening some people's hearts and by having mercy on others (Romans 9:14 ff). Who can resist the will of God? Why does God then blame us with sin if he causes us to fall into it? But Paul asserts that these are not proper questions for mere man to ask almighty God. The implication is that the questions are asked as a device to excuse the need to submit to God.

As one commentary says, "Paul is not silencing all questioning of God by man, but he is speaking to those with an impenitent, God-defying attitude who want to make God answerable to man for what he does and who, by their questions, defame the character of God." So we can with a clear conscience approach the Scripture for an answer to this conundrum.

1. The King of Egypt did not know Joseph, nor did he seem to know the history of Egypt (Exodus 1:8). (Per-o = Great House=Pharaoh.) **We believe he was Thutmose III. The princess who protected baby Moses was therefore Hatshepsut. But there is controversy, due to a lack of evidence.**
2. He was an ethnic cleanser—one who commits genocide (Exodus 1:16-22).

3. He was willing to kill his adopted son, when he turned Hebrew (Exodus 2:15). About 1428 BC he liquidated the whole royal household, including Hatshepsut. Moses fled to Midian.

Thutmose III— Pharaoh of oppression	Moses flees
Amenhotep II— Pharaoh of hard heart	Moses appeals, Pharaoh rejects
Firstborn son not named Thutmose IV succeeds throne	No military campaigns
New ruler	
Amenhotep IV	Begins cult of Aton, revolutionary monotheism

4. The next King came to power—the other Prince of Egypt (Exodus 4:19). **Amenhotep II.**
5. God said that this king was already obstinate (Exodus 2:19).
6. **God told Moses that he would harden the king's heart** so that he would not free Israel from slavery (Exodus 2:21). The message to the king at the outset included the fact that the consequences

of not letting the people go would be that God would kill his first-born son (Exodus 4:22).

7. At the first powerful confrontation with Moses, the King said he did not know Jehovah and would not let the people go (Exodus 5:2) It is not recorded that the first-born son death threat was given, but we may assume that it was. The king also increased the people's burden of work.
8. God told Moses that it would be because of his own mighty hand that the King would let the people go (Exodus 6:1).
9. In the confrontational miracle of the staffs and snakes, **the king's heart became hard** (Exodus 7:13, 14). God commented on that event to Moses, putting the responsibility on the king.
10. When his magicians imitated Moses' turning the Nile to blood, **the King hardened his heart** (again, more) and did not take to heart Moses' message from God (Exodus 7:22, 23).
11. Moses continued to inflict God's judgment on the king and his country, but when Moses gave relief from the judgments "**he hardened his heart**" and would not listen to God's message.
12. After the plague of boils, the description changes:

"But the LORD hardened Pharaoh's heart and he would not listen to Moses and Aaron, just as the LORD had said to Moses" (Exodus 9:12).

13. Before the hail, God tells the king through Moses:
"But I have raised you up for this very purpose, that I might show you my power and that my name might be proclaimed in all the earth" (Exodus 9:16). Note that even at this stage, the king had been responsible for his own choices. Other officials believed Moses and sheltered their livestock. As the plagues grew more intense, the king appeared to soften, but whenever there was relief, **he and his officials hardened their hearts** (Exodus 9:33). Moses knew that none of them really feared Jehovah (Exodus 9:30).
14. **God said he had hardened the king's heart** so that his mighty power could be demonstrated (Exodus 10:1) and that Israel would know through them who he is.
15. The king knew that he had sinned (Exodus 10:17) and asked for forgiveness, but it didn't last and **the Lord hardened his heart** (Exodus 10:20, 27; 11:10).
16. After the last great judgment, the death of all Egypt's firstborn (including the king's—Exodus 12:31. Not Thutmose IV)) the king let the people go. But God said **that he would harden his heart (Exodus 14:4)** and then **the king hardened his heart** (Exodus 14:5). He realised that the economy was in ruins and had to get the people back. **God said that he would harden the hearts of the Egyptian army** (Exodus 14:17) so that they would pursue Israel, and God would get the glory.
17. The Egyptian army pursued Israel through the gap in the sea, but when the sea closed in again, the whole army was lost. God was glorified, and Israel believed in him, and in Moses, God's servant. (This was about 1446 BC.)
18. Moses wrote a song (Exodus 15) retelling the events of the conquest of Egypt, and glorifying the Lord. The news was to

spread to the nations around, and they feared the day that Israel would be found on their horizon.

Who hardened the heart of the King? **The king himself began with a hard heart, the product of his choices** (points 5 and 10). **God just hardened it some more** (points 5, 14, 15, 16).

There is benefit in God hardening hearts and demonstrating his power: the objects of his mercy learn about the character of God. He has mercy and compassion and hardens whomever he wills, but they have already made the choice.

God never tempts us into sin...

“When tempted, no one should say, **"God is tempting me."** For God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does he tempt anyone; ¹⁴but each one is tempted when, **by his own evil desire**, he is dragged away and enticed. ¹⁵Then, after desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, gives birth to death.” (James 1:13)

God’s dealings with man are just.

God is responsible to prepare the way
We are responsible to tell the gospel

- We must pray
- We must plan
- We must present
- We must deal with our fear

God is responsible to persuade the sinner.

The sinner’s responsibility is to obey the gospel

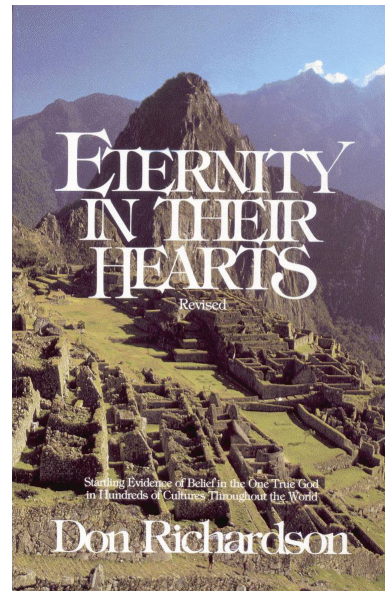
Let me conclude with a story that includes most of these points. It is told by Don Richardson in his classic book, *"Eternity in Their Hearts"* a title from Ecclesiastes 3:11. In this book, Richardson makes two points:

- The knowledge of God exists in the consciousness of all peoples
- They are ready for the gospel.

This is one of many, well-researched stories. I have condensed it.

Scattered through the mountains of northern Burma lived 100,000 head-hunting tribesmen called the Wa. But a benign influence was at work within the folk religion of the Wa. From time to time, prophets of the true God, whom the Wa called Siyeh, rose to condemn head-hunting and spirit appeasement.

One such prophet, whose name is unknown today, but whom the Shan people called Pu Chan, arose and persuaded several thousand



Regal Books, a division of
Gospel Light Publications,
Ventura, California

tribesmen in Pong Lai village and the surrounding areas to abandon these demon-inspired practises. On what grounds? Siyeh, the true God, Pu Chan said, was about to send a long-awaited "white brother with a copy of the lost book." If he came close to Wa territory and heard that the Wa were practising evil things, he might think them unworthy of the true God's book and turn away again! If that happened, Pu Chan warned, surely the Wa would never get another chance to have the lost book restored to them.

One morning Pu Chan saddled a Wa pony. "Follow this pony," he said to some of his disciples. "Siyeh has told me last night that the white brother has finally come near. Siyeh will cause the pony to lead you to him. When you find the white brother, let him mount this pony. We would be an ungrateful people if we made him walk the last part of the journey to us."

While Pu Chan's disciples gaped in astonishment, the pony started walking. Expecting the pony to stop at the nearest stream, they followed it. Would it lead them to a "white brother"? Would he be the right one?

The pony led those amazed disciples over approximately 200 miles of mountainous trails and down into the city of Kentung. Then it turned into the gate of a mission compound and headed straight for a well. The pony stopped beside the well. Pu Chan's disciples looked in all directions, but could see no trace of a white brother or a book. Then they heard sounds inside the well, and looking into it, saw no water, but a pair of clear blue eyes looking out of a friendly, bearded white face.

The man was William Marcus Young, and he had been digging the well. "Hello, strangers," he said in the Shan language. "May I help you?" When he got out, the Wa messengers said, "Have you brought a book from God?" Young nodded. The Wa men, overcome with emotion, fell at his feet and blurted out the message from Pu Chan. Then they added, "This pony is saddled especially for you. Our people are all waiting. Fetch the book. We must be on our way!"

"I can't leave," Young replied. "Thousands of Lahu come here almost daily for teaching. What shall I do?"

What he did was present the situation to the Lahu Christians, and together they accommodated the Wa men in Kentung until they had been taught enough of the Bible to make trips back home to teach their people. Thousands of Wa became Christians, including Pu Chan. About 10,000 Wa converts then spread the gospel in eastern Burma and into south-western China.

The God who led the Magi by a moving heavenly body, which the Bible describes as a star, to find the baby Jesus in Bethlehem, used a pony to guide the gospel to the Wa. So he can guide you to people whose hearts he has prepared to hear the gospel, to the glory of God.

Lord, lead us to people whose hearts you have already touched.

Who Was The Pharaoh Of The Exodus?

The Bible nowhere mentions the name of the pharaoh of the Exodus, but Bible students have always been curious as to who he was. No doubt, some Christians will be wary of trying to discover something the Bible has not clearly revealed; but in studying this question one can come away with his faith increased in the Bible as the unerring word of God. Although the Bible does not specifically name the pharaoh of the Exodus, enough data is supplied for us to be relatively sure who he was.

Admittedly, there are two schools of thought concerning the date of the Exodus (i.e., the early date and late date theories). Proponents of the late date theory (1290 B.C.) are clearly in the majority, but they reject clear Biblical statements with reference to the date of the Exodus. Therefore their arguments in favor of a particular pharaoh will not be considered in this article.

In I Kings 6:1 the Scriptures say: "And it came to pass in the four hundred and eightieth year after the children of Israel were come out of the land of Egypt, in the fourth year of Solomon's reign over Israel, in the month of Zif, which is the second month that he began to build the house of the Lord." One can readily see that the times for both the Exodus and the beginning of the Temple have been specifically stated in God's Word. Scholars have identified the fourth year of Solomon's reign as 966 B.C. (Gleason, *A Survey of Old Testaments Introduction*, 1974, p. 223). Using this 966 B.C. date, we find that the Exodus took place in 1445 B.C. Now, if this information is correct, the Exodus occurred in the third year of the reign of the pharaoh Amenhotep II.

Before concluding that Amenhotep II was, indeed, the pharaoh of the Exodus, we will need to study further other evidence that can be presented. For instance, when comparing Exodus 7:7 with Acts 7:23, we learn that Moses was in Midian approximately forty years. Assuming the pharaohs mentioned in Exodus 1:8, 22 and 2:23 are all the same person, he would have had to reign for over forty years. Amenhotep's predecessor, Thutmose III, is the only pharaoh within the time specified in I Kings 6:1 who reigned long enough (54 years) to have been on the throne at the time of Moses' flight and to die shortly before his return to Egypt. This would make Thutmose III the pharaoh of the Oppression and Amenhotep II the pharaoh of the Exodus.

History tells us that for several years after 1445 B.C. Amenhotep II was unable to carry out any invasions or extensive military operations. This would seem like very strange behavior for a pharaoh who hoped to equal his father's record of no less than seventeen military campaigns in nineteen years. But this is exactly what one would expect from a pharaoh who had lost almost all his cavalry, chariotry, and army at the Red Sea (Exodus 14:23, 27-30).

Furthermore, we learn from the Dream Stela of Thutmose IV, son of Amenhotep II, that he was not the legitimate successor to the throne (J.B. Pritchard (ed.), *Ancient Near-Eastern Texts*, p. 449). This means that Thutmose IV was not the firstborn son, who would have been the legitimate heir. The firstborn son of Amenhotep II had evidently died prior to taking the throne of Egypt. This would agree with Exodus 12:29 which says the pharaoh's first-born son was killed during the Passover.

If the Exodus did take place in 1445 B.C., forty years of wilderness wandering would bring us to 1405 B.C. for the destruction of Jericho. Interestingly enough, John Garstang, who excavated the site of ancient Jericho (city "D" in his survey), came to the conclusion that the destruction of the city took place around 1400 B.C. (Garstang, *The Story of Jericho*, 1948, p. 122). He also concluded that the walls of the city toppled outward, which would compare favorably with Joshua 6:20.

Scholars have been fascinated by a revolutionary religious doctrine which developed shortly after 1445 B.C. that threatened to sweep away the theological dogmas of centuries. These scholars have credited Amenhotep IV, great grandson of Amenhotep II, with founding the religious concept of Monotheism (the idea that there is only one God). The cult of Aton set forth this idea to the Egyptian people and scholars have mistakenly credited this idea to the Egyptians. But it does not seem unusual to me that a people who had been so influenced by the one God of Moses would try to worship the God that had so convincingly defeated their gods. A continually increasing body of evidence indicates that this cult of Aton had its beginning in the reign of Thutmose IV, son of Amenhotep II, pharaoh of the Exodus.

Although the final verdict is not yet in, we can be reasonably sure that Amenhotep II was the pharaoh of the Exodus.
