In this study evidence has been presented that suggests that cultic feasts were carried out at the site of Tel Dan in the Iron II period and that the nature of these events may be illuminated by a close look at related biblical texts. In the conclusion that follows, a summary is provided before the possible significance of these feasts in the context of the Northern Kingdom is suggested.

To summarize to this point, after an introduction illustrating the explanatory power of a feast to open windows of insight into various aspects of particular cultures, the biblical texts discussed in Chapter 2 were argued to be suggestive of a Yahwistic and traditional religious context in which sacred feasts at Dan may have been acted out: ambiguity was noted in the deuteronomistic account of 1 Kgs 12:25–33, perhaps suggesting the recognition of an active Yahwistic cult in the North close to the time of composition, and older traditions related to the account, i.e., Exod 32 and Judg 17–18, were thought to contain traces of the Yahwism maintained in the cult of Jeroboam. The archaeological remains from the deposits of Area T presented and analyzed in Chapter 3 were understood to confirm that eating activities charged with religious significance took place there, notably within different spheres of activity, and that change in practice occurred over time. Further, several details of the feasts discussed in Chapter 4 were found to exhibit a close correspondence with the priestly texts, especially in regard to the priestly portions. When this evidence was considered in light of other archaeological features of Area T that also seemed to parallel biblical descriptions of cultic realia (i.e., the “altar kit” and its mizrāq in T-West and the “Solomonic” architecture of the Area T plan)

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1 That is, as part of the DH; see pp. 10–14, above.
and cultic movements (cf. the “syntax of offering” in Area T), the Yahwistic nature of the feasts at Tel Dan was argued to be more plausible.

As noted in the discussion, however, the evidence from Area T could be interpreted in other ways and, barring an inscription explicitly identifying the site as a Yahwistic shrine, the most that can be said, archeologically speaking, is that people participated in eating activities that were likely cultic in nature, apparently within different spheres of activity, and that change may have occurred in these activities over time. But if the basic narrative of the biblical account—namely, that an Israelite king (re)established Yahwistic cult centers in the North when a temple stood in Jerusalem—is granted any degree of historicity, and has been accurately understood in this study, then the convergence of our “monologues” of texts and archaeology would suggest that these events were indeed Yahwistic cult feasts carried out during the days of the Israelite kings.

As such, this study of sacred feasts at Tel Dan may provide one of the best examples of the Yahwistic royal cult in action hitherto presented and invites further exploration of these remains, especially as final reports are underway, as well as a close look at relevant comparanda from other sites and related textual traditions. In fact, in light of the absence of any excavated remains of the First Temple in Jerusalem (and no hope of excavation in light of the current political climate), a modern city on what may be the site of ancient Bethel, and no evidence of a major temple yet from Samaria, Tel Dan will likely retain its place as the most extensive archaeological context in which to explore royal Yahwistic cultic practice in the Iron II period. It is hoped that in this alone, a contribution has been made.

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2 See pp. 116–19.
3 Many historians, with whom this author would concur, find the list of kings and their length of reigns—however complex synchronizing the data may be (cf. Albright 1945; Thiele 1983; Hayes and Hooker 1988; Galil 1996; Tetley 2005)—as well as many of the events surrounding their reigns, to be among the most verifiable information contained in the Hebrew Bible, exhibiting a high degree of correspondence with Assyrian annals, epigraphic sources, and archaeological excavations (see, e.g., Knoppers 1997; 1999; Halpern 1996b; 2000; Miller and Hayes 2006: 239–41). For a discussion of the issues involved in parsing the details of the history of the monarchic period and for a survey of the range of scholarly opinion on this matter, see Moore and Kelle 2011, especially pp. 145–333.
5 On the Aramaean question, see pp. 119–20, above.
6 See p. 1, n. 3, above.
7 To these endeavors this author hopes to turn his attention in the near future.
8 Arad, too, though not as large, will provide another important context for similar exploration, especially once final publications are prepared (see p. 43, n. 1, above).