

Recalibrating
**ANCIENT NEAR EAST
CHRONOLOGY**

*A Methodological Harmonization of
Hebrew, Egyptian, and Assyrian Timelines
between 1,006 BCE and 560 BCE*



DAN BRUCE

Author of SACRED CHRONOLOGY OF THE HEBREW KINGS

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All Scripture quotations are from the *King James Version* unless noted otherwise. The 1987 edition quoted in this book is a public domain document online at the Bible Gateway website (www.biblegateway.com). Hebrew words are from the Masoretic text, *Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia* (Fourth Edition) published by Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft.

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Acknowledgment of Scholarship

The research presented in this book would not have been possible without the labor of countless scholars, researchers, translators, archaeologists, linguists, historians, astronomers, and scribes who have preserved, recovered, translated, and analyzed the records of the ancient world. I stand upon the shoulders of many generations of dedicated men and women whose knowledge, diligence, and scholarship far exceed my own.

For the record, my purpose is not to diminish their contributions, nor to dismiss the value of their specialized research. On the contrary, the data assembled by specialists forms the foundation upon which this work rests. Without their efforts, there would be no evidence to examine and no chronology to evaluate.

At the same time, specialization can sometimes make it difficult for specialists to see how evidence from different fields relates to the larger picture. My contribution, if it has any value, lies not in possessing greater expertise than the specialists—indeed, except for Bible exposition, I readily acknowledge that in most cases my expertise is considerably less—but in attempting to harmonize the evidence they have provided.

The questions raised in this book arise not from a desire to overturn established scholarship, but from a desire to understand how the various chronological, historical, archaeological, astronomical, and biblical data may fit together into a single coherent account of the past. Where apparent conflicts exist, my purpose is not to diminish the work of specialists, but to examine whether assumptions within one or more fields may merit further consideration in light of the broader body of evidence.

Where my conclusions differ from those commonly accepted, I ask only that they be evaluated on the basis of the evidence presented. If I have correctly identified a point requiring further examination, the credit belongs largely to those whose scholarship made such examination possible. If I am mistaken, the fault is mine alone. Above all, I remain grateful to the many scholars upon whose work this research depends.

IF IT AIN'T BROKE, DON'T FIX IT

As the old adage goes, “If it ain’t broke, don’t fix it!” However, in the case of the traditional chronology for the Ancient Near East (ANE) currently found in textbooks and taught in academia, there is ample evidence that it is broken—or, more to the point, in need of recalibration and realignment prior to 745 BCE. The problem arises from the fact that important chronological and historical data have been omitted from the mix. So, in the interest of seeking truth, this book will present a recalibrated ANE timeline by incorporating all available chronological and historical information, including the well-documented chronological data preserved in the Bible, to provide what your author believes to be a more accurate and complete understanding of ANE chronology and history.

Three primary sources have supplied most of the chronological data used to assemble the alternative timeline presented in this book:

EGYPTIAN CHRONOLOGY: from various research publications from the field of Egyptology, but primarily relying on the history and timeline documented in *The Third Intermediate Period in Egypt 1100-650 BC* by Ken Kitchen.¹

MESOPOTAMIAN CHRONOLOGY: from the Assyrian Eponym Canon and Assyrian and Babylonian Chronicles, using the timelines published in various books such as *The Assyrian Eponym Canon* by George Smith and *The Writings from the Ancient World: Mesopotamian Chronicles* by Jean-Jacques Glassner.²

SACRED CHRONOLOGY: from the New Hebrew Kings Chronology, first published in your author’s book *Sacred Chronology of the Hebrew Kings*, which uses data recorded in the Masoretic text to create the harmonization of the reigns of the Hebrew kings of the kingdoms of Israel and Judah; shown on pages 31-42.³

In addition, books and papers published in academia that discuss various aspects of ancient ANE chronology were used to a lesser degree to supplement the traditional Assyrian and Egyptian data, with those sources noted in the text.

¹ Kenneth A. Kitchen, *The Third Intermediate Period in Egypt 1100-650 BC* (Oxford: Aris & Phillips, an imprint of Oxbow Books, 2004).

² George Smith, *The Assyrian Eponym Canon* (London: Samuel Bagster and Sons, 1875; reissued by Forgotten Books, available online); and Jean-Jacques Glassner, *Mesopotamian Chronicles: Writings from the Ancient World* (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature; 2004).

³ Masoretic text: *Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia* (Leningrad Codex) published by Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft (German Bible Society); and Dan Bruce, *Sacred Chronology of the Hebrew Kings*, complete book available for download in PDF format at no charge on your author’s website: www.prophecysociety.org

Preface

The methodology used to assemble the recalibrated timelines set forth in this book reverses the approach used by secular scholars. They typically start their harmonization by assuming that the Assyrian timeline is sacrosanct and use it as their base timeline. Then they require the biblical and all other timelines to align with it. The alternative ANE timeline presented in this book assumes instead that the ancient biblical data is the most complete and accurate chronological record, and then it seeks to harmonize all other timelines with its chronology. The comparison shows that the ancient Hebrew and traditional Egyptian timelines align with one another. On the other hand, when the harmonized Hebrew-Egyptian timeline is compared to the eponym-derived Assyrian timeline, the dates simply do not align. Considering that the Hebrew regnal and the standard Egyptian pharaonic timelines are in agreement, it is logical to conclude that it is the Assyrian timeline that is in error and/or incomplete, containing defects that have led to misunderstanding of various aspects of the ANE region's chronology and history before 745 BCE. After that year, all three ancient timelines are in agreement.

Your author is on firm ground when interpreting the Bible's chronological data for the kingdoms of Israel and Judah, not so much when venturing into the intricacies and vagaries of the contemporaneous chronologies of Egypt, Assyria, Tyre, Babylon, and Urartu during the period covered by this book, the years from 1,006 BCE to 560 BCE. Thus, reliance on the works of many scholars—archaeologists, linguists, and specialists in related disciplines who have assembled the often sparse and disparate pieces of the ancient Near East chronological and historical puzzle into a seemingly coherent whole—is readily acknowledged. And, your author is quick to admit that, when reading a seminal work like George Smith's *The Assyrian Eponym Canon*, or when studying a more recent work, such as Ken Kitchen's *The Third Intermediate Period in Egypt 1100-650 BC*, he always marvels at the years of research and insight that have produced such repositories of knowledge.

Still, it never hurts to take a fresh look at accepted assumptions established by past researchers when new information and insights become available. Even when a scholar's research has gained wide-spread acceptance, your author is certain that, if faced with a choice between maintaining that research as the "final word" or recognizing an updated truth resulting from new evidence and new research, the most respected scholars involved in doing chronological research today will choose the latter. It is with confidence in the academic spirit of seeking truth, no matter where the evidence originates or leads, that the chronological speculations in this book are put forth for consideration and debate.

BRIEF HISTORY OF ANE CHRONOLOGY

Ancient Near East chronology is built on a framework defined by the reigns of the kings and pharaohs who ruled the various kingdoms and empires that comprise what we now call the ANE region. In modern times, the chronology of the reigns of the kings of the Neo-Assyrian Empire that are documented in the Assyrian Eponym and Chronicles has been accepted as providing the most accurate ancient timeline for that region. Consequently, the timelines of all surrounding kingdoms have been made to conform to it. Such has been the case for the reigns of the Hebrew kings.

The dates for the kings of Israel and Judah given in the Bible have been forced to harmonize with the Assyrian timeline by adjusting the biblical data to fit within the time constraints of the eponym chronology. To get everything to align, error in the biblical data has been assumed. As previously stated, your author has taken the opposite approach for considering the matter of ANE chronology. The biblical data, with its unambiguous details and cross-checks, is considered to be more accurate and complete and, when properly understood and aligned, can serve as the base timeline around which a trustworthy ANE chronology can be constructed.¹

Establishing a harmonized chronology for the Hebrew kings from biblical data alone, without employing the Assyrian timeline, has never been an easy task. In 1945, writing in the *Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research*, the esteemed archaeologist and Bible scholar William F. Albright introduced an essay on biblical chronology with these words: “For many years I have occupied myself periodically with the somewhat thankless task of reconstructing the chronology of Judah and Israel between the death of Solomon and the fall of Jerusalem.” His statement expresses the inherent frustration that anyone who has expended years of effort in trying to harmonize the reigns of the Hebrew kings eventually comes to experience. Albright’s statement also goes directly to the reason for the frustration. Anyone attempting to reconstruct a chronology of those kings must know where in time to start and where in time to end.²

In other words, a time frame into which the reigns of the kings of Israel and Judah will exactly fit, without hypothesizing undocumented coreigns and rejecting the idea of scribal error in the biblical text, must be used if the result is to be true

¹ See discussion about problems with anchoring the Eponym Canon timeline in history on page 7.

² William F. Albright, “The Chronology of the Divided Monarchy of Israel” (*Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research*, No. 100; December, 1945); p. 16-22.

to the events of history. On one end of that time frame must be the date when the divided kingdoms began after the death of Solomon. On the other end must be the date for the fall of Samaria, signifying the end of the northern kingdom of Israel, and another for the fall of Jerusalem, signifying the end of the southern kingdom of Judah. After the beginning and ending points have been fixed, the chronological information about the kings—as specified in the Books of 1 and 2 Kings, 1 and 2 Chronicles, and the prophets—must then be harmonized so that the reigns exactly fit within those end points. Furthermore, the chronology obtained from the biblical text cannot ignore the cross-checks contained in other ANE chronologies that have been identified by secular historians and scholars in other disciplines. As anyone who has tried will affirm, reconstructing a harmonized chronology of the Hebrew kings that meets all of those requirements is a daunting task.

The modern history of “kingdoms chronology” (your author’s term for the branch of biblical studies that deals with locating the reigns of the kings of Israel and Judah in time) begins with the publication of *Annales Veteris Testamenti*¹ in 1650 and *Annalium pars posterior* in 1654, both authored by Archbishop James Ussher, Primate of the Church of Ireland. Ussher’s books are best known for setting a specific date and time for the creation of the world, but, in developing his continuous chronology for the entirety of Bible history, he had to specify dates for the reigns of the Hebrew kings. Like all kingdoms chronologists since, Ussher faced challenges pertinent to the chronology of the divided monarchy period. The first challenge he had to face was that of which source text to use. The figures given for the number of years in the reigns of the kings differed in the source texts available to him. For instance, some figures given in the Septuagint differed from those found in the Masoretic text. As a biblical literalist, that was a major problem for Ussher, one which he solved by relying exclusively on the Masoretic text. This book follows his example unless noted otherwise.²

A second but not as easily solved challenge was to figure out how to identify the year when the kingdom of United Israel divided into the two kingdoms

¹ The full title of Ussher’s work is *Annales Veteris Testamenti, a prima mundi origine deducti, una cum rerum Asiaticarum et Aegyptiacarum chronico, a temporis historici principio usque ad Maccabaicorum initia producto* (Annals of the Old Testament, deduced from the first origins of the world, the chronicle of Asiatic and Egyptian matters together produced from the beginning of historical time up to the beginnings of the Maccabees).

² As is always the case with biblical research, especially when working with chronological questions, Ussher benefitted from the work of many other scholars, and especially from the work of his predecessor chronologists, such as Rabbi Jose ben Halafta (2nd century CE, probable author of *Seder Olam Rabbah*), Venerable Bede (673-735 CE), and Joseph Justus Scaliger (1540- 1609), an early scholar of Persian, Babylonian, Jewish and Ancient Egyptian history.

of Israel and Judah. Ussher found a continuous sequence of years given in the Masoretic text between Abraham and the entry of the children of Israel into the land of Canaan, so he simply added the years together to arrive at a chronology for that period. That continuous sequence came to an end after the children of Israel entered the land, and the Bible did not pick up with a new sequence until the time of Saul and the kings of Israel and Judah that followed him, then it ended when the Hebrew Scriptures were completed *circa* 400 BCE. Because of the discontinuities in the chronology of the Jews after that date, no certain anchor point could be identified to pinpoint the beginning of the kingdoms period. So, Ussher had to rely on cross-referencing the reigns of the Hebrew kings with what was then known from the secular history of the surrounding nations to arrive at a starting date for the division of United Israel into its two successor kingdoms. Considering that he did not have the benefit of modern scholarship (or perhaps because of that circumstance), Ussher made a remarkably accurate contribution to the field of biblical chronology, and his chronology is still being used by some branches of fundamentalist Christianity today. This book rejects Ussher's overall chronology and some of the methodology he used to define the time period of the Hebrew kings, but it embraces his belief that the biblical text is accurate and dependable.

Champollion's Discovery

The Ussher chronology was the gold standard among scholars for almost two-hundred years with its authority being unquestioned. As the arts and sciences blossomed in the universities of Europe, however, the authority of the Bible began to give way to human reasoning and scholarship that derived its authority from a long process of academic research and peer review. For the first time, scholars, especially those versed in the discoveries and theories of the new science of Geology and its speculations about the age of the Earth, began to feel that they had an empirical basis for challenging the faith-based Ussher chronological interpretation of the biblical text. The reevaluation of the Ussher dates for the divided monarchy gained momentum in 1822 with one of the most far-reaching developments in the field of biblical studies—the decipherment of Egyptian hieroglyphics by Jean-François Champollion. The effect of that event on the field of kingdoms chronology cannot be overemphasized. Prior to the publication of Champollion's translation of the Rosetta Stone hieroglyphs, along with his phonetic dictionary and principles of grammar, the artifacts and monuments of ancient Egypt had successfully secreted

a treasury of historical knowledge. No one could understand the inscriptions, and no one could use them to synchronize the details of Egyptian history with the details of biblical history. Thanks to the research done by Champollion, that synchronization seemed possible.

Immediately after the publication of Champollion's breakthrough linguistic research, scholars began to head for Egypt, most of them looking not only to discover and reveal the secrets of the pharaohs to a history-hungry world, but many of them were aggressively seeking physical evidence of the accuracy of the biblical narrative concerning the things of Egypt. Champollion himself was not immune to the lure of exploring the unknown glories of the Nile River culture. In July of 1828, he boarded a ship for Cairo, leading what was called the Franco-Tuscan Expedition. It was his one and only visit to Egypt, financed by the grand-duke of Tuscany, Leopold II, and the King of France, Charles X, with the announced purpose of validating and perfecting his system of translating hieroglyphs. During his three-plus years in Egypt, Champollion, together with his expedition partner and fellow philologist, Ippolito Rosellini, examined and translated hundreds of monuments and inscriptions found in the Nile Valley and elsewhere in Egypt. Then, when he reached Karnak, Champollion made the discovery of his young life. An account of that discovery was published in an 1857 edition of *Harper's New Monthly Magazine*, written by the 19th-century travel writer William Cowper Prime, supposedly based on a first-person account by Champollion himself, who reported:

"There is on the south wall of the temple of Karnak a sculptured group, in which a god is represented as offering to a king a host of captured cities and countries. The king's name was known as Sheshonk, or Shishak, as our translation of the Old Testament has it; but although a hundred scholars had seen the rows of captives, no one of them had read here any thing by which to connect this with the Scripture history. Champollion landed at Karnak on his way to Upper Egypt, and remained an hour or two in the vast halls that are the wonder of modern wanderers. But his keen eye was not idle, and as he passed this group, reading name by name in it silently, he started [*sic*] astonished at the blindness of his friends who were before him, and read aloud to them the name Melek Aicdah, or the King of Judah. The oval in which it was inclosed represents a fortified place, and the sign at the bottom, as I have before remarked, represents a country. It was like a voice out of the ancient ages, that sound among the ruins of Karnak, as the great scholar read the story of the son of Solomon on the wall of his conqueror's temple. It was the greatest, as it was almost the first of the new discoveries, and a tribute to the truth of God's revelation that at once consecrated and

sealed the truth of the scholar's investigations and their results. That wall at Karnak is the most interesting spot among the fallen temples of the land of the Pharaohs. While other records have been effaced, that one seems to have been kept expressly that the world might discover it.”¹

The two hours that Champollion spent at Karnak standing before the reliefs located on the Bubastite Portal outside the Temple of Amun—triumphal scenes depicting a military campaign in Canaan by the pharaoh Shoshenq I—were minutes that would change the world's perception of Bible history. Champollion identified the real-life Shoshenq I as the biblical Shishak, an interpretation that electrified the world of scholarship. Kingdoms chronologists were ecstatic, of course. At long last, there was physical evidence that could possibly allow scholars to pinpoint the year of the rending of the kingdom of Israel from Rehoboam and the subsequent beginning of the divided monarchy. After all, if Shishak invaded Judah in Rehoboam's fifth year, then all that was needed to identify the year of the division was to locate the reign of Shoshenq I in time. Using the chronological information in the writings of the ancient Egyptian historian Manetho and other ancient writers, the reign of Shoshenq I was tentatively pegged to a year occurring somewhere between 980 BCE and 908 BCE. Still, the lack of exactitude about the years for the reign of Shoshenq I (now correctly assumed to be Shishak) disappointed kingdoms chronologists. The inability to precisely date his reign meant that they could not use it to arrive at an exact date for the rending of the kingdom of United Israel from Rehoboam. Fortunately for kingdoms chronologists, a way to date the reign of Rehoboam would soon come from a non-Egyptian source, namely, the rapidly maturing field of Assyriology.

Rawlinson's Eclipse

The artifacts and ruins of ancient Mesopotamia were essentially closed to pre-18th-century western scholars while those lands languished under Moslem rule. The few scholars studying ancient Mesopotamian cultures prior to then had to content themselves with information gleaned from a limited collection of classical writings, many of which had dubious historical value. In the late 1700s, exploration

¹ William Cowper Prime, “From Thebes to the Pyramids” (*Harper's New Monthly Magazine*, Volume XIV, December, 1856, to May, 1857); p. 468.

societies in Europe began gaining access and sending expeditions to Mesopotamia to study inscriptions and collect artifacts at the ancient sites. The first recorded archeological excavation in Mesopotamia was led by Abbé Beauchamp, papal vicar general in Baghdad. His memoirs, published in 1790, created intense interest in anything Mesopotamian among European scholars and soon generated archeological expeditions to the Middle East. Systematic excavation of Mesopotamian sites was begun in 1842, with major discoveries being reported annually. Over time, fields of specialization developed to deal with the plethora of new information. One of those specialized fields was Assyriology, which would be of special importance to the study of Bible chronology.

The most important Assyrian discovery pertaining to kingdoms chronology was made public by Sir Henry Rawlinson in 1867. Among the cuneiform tablets that had been brought back from Nineveh and stored in the British Museum, Rawlinson found and deciphered four lists of eponyms that comprise what has come to be called the Assyrian Eponym Canon. In the Neo-Assyrian Empire, each year was named after its *limmu*, a title given to a royal official who would preside over that year's New-Year Day celebrations. Each of Rawlinson's four lists was incomplete, but they seemed to overlap one another to reveal what was assumed to be a continuous record of the number of years in the reigns of all of the kings of the Neo-Assyrian Empire. In the ninth (or non-accession tenth) year of Ashur-dan III was mention of a solar eclipse during the eponymy of a man named Bûr-Saggilê. Rawlinson determined that the eclipse had occurred on June 15, 763 BCE.¹ For the first time, calculating a date for the beginning year in the reign of Rehoboam of Judah became possible by using Rawlinson's astronomically calculated and thus assumed-certain anchor date for the reigns of the Neo-Assyrian kings. The Rawlinson chronology was used to date the reign of Rehoboam, as follows:

“With regard to the year when these occurrences took place, some new chronological data are afforded by a recent discovery of Sir H. Rawlinson by which certain Assyrian dates are fixed with astronomical certainty. A chronicle upon a brick tablet in the British Museum, makes distinct mention of an eclipse, the exact date of which has been fixed, and from it the relative dates of the events chronicled can be exactly known. It results from this that a battle in which Ahab, king of Israel, and his allies, were defeated by the king of Assyria happened

¹ Henry Creswicke Rawlinson, “The Assyrian Canon Verified by the Record of a Solar Eclipse, B.C. 763” (*The Athenaeum: Journal of Literature, Science and the Fine Arts*; number 2064; May 18, 1867); p. 660-661.

in the year B. C. 853, and supposing this to be the battle recorded in the books of Kings and Chronicles, where Ahab lost his life, the last year of Ahab's reign is hereby fixed. This happened in the 17th year of Jehoshaphat king of Judah, and taking the regnal years of his predecessors Asa, Abijah, and Rehoboam as 41, 3 and 17 as given by the Hebrew records, it follows that Rehoboam's first year must have been about B. C. 930.”¹

Inscriptions on various stelae found by Assyriologists over the years revealed that the Assyrian king Shalmaneser III fought a battle at Qarqar in his sixth year, and that he had battled against a coalition of kings that included Ahab of Israel. It was known from 1 Kings 22:35 that Ahab was killed in battle at Ramoth-gilead. That action was assumed by scholars to have been part of the Battle of Qarqar, or a separate battle somehow associated with the Qarqar campaign. By such reasoning, Ahab's final year was equated with the year of the Battle of Qarqar. Biblical chronologists could thus pinpoint the reign of Ahab by equating his last regnal year at Ramoth-gilead with the sixth regnal year of Shalmaneser III. Since Shalmaneser's sixth year was identified as the year 853 BCE by counting back in time ninety eponyms from Rawlinson's 763 BCE date for the Bûr-Saggilê eclipse, and since that year was assumed to be Ahab's final regnal year, kingdoms chronologist could count back from Ahab's last year to Rehoboam's first year as king of Judah to identify the year when the kingdom of United Israel had divided into two kingdoms. That year was initially calculated to have been 930 BCE.

The result of being able to identify the year for the beginning of the divided kingdoms, combined with knowing their ending years (*circa* 722 BCE for Israel and *circa* 586 BCE for Judah), provided the time frame necessary for Bible scholars to begin making a serious attempt to harmonize the reigns of the Hebrew kings. Finally, the long-sought kingdoms chronology seemed to be within reach. Still, chronologists would have to wait almost a century before the next big advance in understanding—a credible system for harmonizing the reigns—was introduced.

Thiele's Mysterious Numbers

Edwin R. Thiele would be the person who would make that advance. Born in Chicago in 1895, he grew up in an age when men and women of letters and science

¹ C. W. Goodwin, “On an inscription by Takelot II” (*Ägyptische Sprache und Alterthumskunde*, published by Professor Dr. R. Lepsius of Berlin; March, 1868); p. 28.

still honored the Bible as a repository of wisdom and truth, and that attitude was reflected in his biblical research. After graduating from Emmanuel Missionary College (later renamed Andrews University) with a Bachelor of Arts degree in ancient languages, Thiele served as a Seventh-day Adventist missionary to China for twelve years. In 1932, he returned to America to pursue advanced studies in graduate school at the University of Chicago. Five years later, in 1937, he received a Master of Arts degree, then proceeded to complete his doctoral work, being awarded a Doctor of Philosophy in Biblical Archaeology degree in 1943. His doctoral dissertation—finished sometime in 1942 (coincidentally the year of your author's birth)—was published in book format under the title *The Mysterious Numbers of the Hebrew Kings*¹ in 1951. Today, that book, updated and revised by Thiele and his disciples over the course of thirty-two years and three editions, is widely accepted by many biblical and secular scholars as the definitive work on the chronology of the Hebrew kings.

Early in his academic career, Thiele became obsessed with finding a way to harmonize the reigns of the Hebrew kings. He began his research with knowledge of the general framework into which the reigns had to fit. The anchoring of the reigns of the Assyrian kings listed on the Assyrian Eponym Canon that had been achieved by Rawlinson had allowed kingdoms chronologists to calculate the year 931/930 BCE as the probable date for the start of the reigns of Rehoboam of Judah and Jeroboam of Israel. The kings list had also allowed the identification of the year 722/721 BCE as the date for the fall of Samaria to Sargon II, the event which ended the northern kingdom of Israel. In addition, it had allowed scholars to align the chronology of the Neo-Babylonian Empire with that of the late Neo-Assyrian Empire, making it possible to identify the year 587/586 BCE as the date for the fall of Jerusalem to Nebuchadnezzar II. So, by the time of Thiele's initial efforts to harmonize the reigns of the Hebrew kings, the chronological framework into which they had to fit, give or take a year or so on either end, was well established in scholarly circles. The real challenge for Thiele, as it had been for all kingdoms chronologists in the years since Rawlinson's chronology had been published, became that of getting all of the reigns of the kings of Israel and the kings of Judah to line up as specified by the chronological cross-references in the biblical text. Thus, the task of harmonizing the reigns is where Thiele focused his attention.

¹ Edwin R. Thiele, *The Mysterious Numbers of the Hebrew Kings* (1st ed.; New York: Macmillan, 1951; 2d ed.; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1965; 3rd ed.; Grand Rapids: Zondervan/Kregel, 1983).

Thiele limited his research by using only the Masoretic text, recognizing from his own early struggles to harmonize the reigns of the kings that the differences in chronological data found in other source texts, such as the Septuagint, were probably nothing more than ancient attempts to do the same. He also made a deliberate attempt to distance himself from what he termed “certain preconceived opinions” held by kingdoms chronologists of his day, and instead to try to “ascertain just what the Hebrews did in the matter of chronological procedure.” Over the course of his studies, Thiele tried to put himself into the mind of the ancient scribes, to think as they thought. By so doing, he was able to discern that the kingdoms of Israel and Judah had used different methods for recording their chronologies. One kingdom had used the accession-year system for counting its regnal years, the other had not. One had begun the year in Nisan, the first month of the Jewish year, while the other had begun its year in Tishri, the seventh month. Thiele hypothesized that both had used coregencies from time to time, although he did not always find support for his assumed coregencies in the biblical text. Additionally, he found that the years of rule in a coregency were sometimes counted in the total regnal years for a king as recorded in the biblical text, sometimes not. Over time, as he refined his chronology by using his new insights, Thiele was able to show where the scribes were inconsistent in the way they recorded details about their kings. But, despite the fact that his work was original and provided important new insights about the reigns of the kings, Thiele ultimately chose to rely on a secular timeline—the Assyrian timeline anchored by the date for the Bûr-Saggilê eclipse identified by Rawlinson almost a century earlier—for anchoring his chronology in time.

When it was published, Edwin Thiele’s harmonized chronology for the reigns of the Hebrew kings was generally applauded by secular scholars and religious professionals across academic and theological spectrums, but his system did come with an important caveat. Thiele himself, in the first paragraph of the concluding section of his book, offered the following assessment of his research:

“The vital question concerning the chronological scheme set forth in these pages is whether or not it is a true arrangement of reigns of Hebrew kings. Certainly, this system has brought harmony out of what was once regarded as hopeless confusion. But is it necessarily the true restoration of the original pattern of reigns? At the least this research shows that such a restoration is possible. However, we must accept the premise of an original reckoning of reigns in Israel according to the nonaccession-year system with a later shift to the accession-year method; of the early use in Judah of accession-year reckoning, a shift to the nonaccession-year system, and then a return

to the original accession-year method; of the need to begin the regnal year in Israel with Nisan and with Tishri in Judah; of the existence of a number of coregencies; ***and of the fact that at some late date—long after the original records of the kings had been set in order and when the true arrangement of the reigns had been forgotten—certain synchronizations in 2 Kings 17 and 18 were introduced by some late hand twelve years out of harmony with the original pattern of reigns.*** When all of this is understood, we see that it may be possible to set forth an arrangement of reigns for the Hebrew kings in which there are both internal harmony and agreement with contemporary history” (*Mysterious Numbers of the Hebrew Kings*, 1983 edition, p. 205).

Today, anyone familiar with the field of kingdoms chronology will agree that Thiele did a masterful job of harmonizing the reigns of the Hebrew kings. Time has shown that most of the harmonization principles he used are still valid. Yet, Thiele himself revealed the one glaring weakness of his system, the requirement that a portion of the biblical text be disregarded as unreliable. In the final analysis, Thiele found that he had to ignore chronological details in 2 Kings, chapters 17 and 18, to allow his system to fully harmonize with both Hebrew and Assyrian chronologies. The decision to ignore portions of the biblical text was a serious compromise on his part, and an unacceptable exegetical tool. Furthermore, it was unnecessary.

EARLY ON MISTAKES WERE MADE

Jean-François Champollion, Sir Henry Rawlinson, and Edwin Thiele are giants in the field of ANE chronology, each having made major advances in the understanding of the enigmatic chronologies and histories of the kingdoms and empires of that long-ago region. As pioneers working with sparse and incomplete data, they laid a solid foundation on which later researchers could build.

Unfortunately, mistakes were made. In Champollion's case, his decipherment of Egyptian hieroglyphs provided the key to understanding a vast amount of Egyptian literature and history. However, his initial interpretations sometimes lacked the context provided by later discoveries, leading to occasional misdating of events or misidentification of historical figures. Similarly, Rawlinson's work on cuneiform scripts opened up the histories of Mesopotamian civilizations, especially those of the Assyrians and Babylonians. His translations, though remarkable, were sometimes based on incomplete texts and could be affected by the limited understanding of the languages at the time. Thiele's work on the chronology of the Hebrew kings was a ground-breaking effort to synchronize biblical records with external historical data. Yet, his reconstructions often relied on assumptions and interpretations that have been challenged by later chronologists.

The errors embedded in their foundational research mean that today's ANE scholars have to not only advance the field with new findings but also continuously reassess and correct earlier conclusions based on older findings. That process has been essential for refining understanding of ANE chronologies and histories. Over time, improved techniques in archaeology, better preservation and analysis of texts, and more interdisciplinary approaches have helped to correct many of the early mistakes, leading to a more accurate and nuanced historical record. However, the shadow of the early errors serves to stress the importance of critical evaluation and the ongoing need for reexamination of past scholarship. That search for ultimate truth through reassessment is the sole motivation for writing this book.

My own interest in the field of Ancient Near Eastern (ANE) chronology and its relationship to biblical chronology dates back to 1973, the year that saw my introduction to the intricate timelines of the region's ancient civilizations. My initial research focused on the chronology and history of ancient Israel, the understanding of which was a basic requirement for giving context to a commentary on the Book of Daniel that I was planning to write. As I delved deeper into this subject, I quickly

realized the necessity of understanding the broader context of ANE chronology so as to accurately frame the historical and prophetic narratives found in the Bible.¹

One of the pivotal influences in my research effort was the Thiele chronology set forth in his book *Mysterious Numbers of the Hebrew Kings*, which I immediately recognized as presenting a well-reasoned framework for dating the reigns of the Hebrew kings. Thiele's meticulous work, which harmonized the chronological data from the Hebrew Bible with extrabiblical sources, provided a crucial foundation for my studies. His approach addressed the complex and seemingly contradictory details of the reigns recorded in the books of 1 and 2 Kings and 2 Chronicles, offering a coherent timeline that aligned with the traditional archeological and historical ANE chronology popular in academia.

As I looked at Thiele's chronology, though, I began to question his assumptions. For me as a believer in the doctrine of inerrancy,² his belief that the Assyrian chronology was more trustworthy than the Bible's chronology was an unacceptable exegetical approach. Specifically, the way he had achieved harmonization of the reigns of the last four kings of Israel with the reign of Tiglath-pileser III by claiming errors introduced into the biblical text by unknown scribes in order to squeeze the Hebrew timeline into his truncated Assyrian time frame, was rejected.

Missing Years of Tiglath-Pileser III

The length of the reign of the Assyrian king Tiglath-pileser III as recorded in the Assyrian Eponym Canon is too short. That document, which is composed of multiple cuneiform clay tablets with lists of reigns that seemingly overlap are assumed by modern scholars to provide a continuous record of the kings of Assyria. It says that Tiglath-pileser III reigned for eighteen years from 745 BCE to 727 BCE. But, those dates do not align with the biblical data. Edwin Thiele, who worked to harmonize the chronology of the Hebrew kings with the Assyrian time line, hypothesized scribal error in the biblical text at that point and forced its timeline to submit to the authority of the assumed-more-accurate Assyrian chronology.

¹ Dan Bruce, *Daniel Unsealed*, complete book available for download in PDF format at no charge on your author's website: www.prophecysociety.org

² The doctrine of biblical inerrancy as I understand it asserts that the Bible, in its original manuscripts, is free from error in all its teachings, whether those teachings pertain to matters of faith, morality, history, or science. This belief holds that the scriptures are completely accurate and trustworthy, reflecting the divine inspiration and authority of God. In addition, I believe that the text of the Bible has been transmitted down to this age so that none of its original God-given meaning has been lost.

Early On Mistakes Were Made

Kings of Israel during the reign of Tiglath-pileser III				
<i>Length of Reign</i>	CASE I	CASE II	CASE III	CASE IV
Menahem - 10 yrs.	1 yr. (tribute paid in last yr.)	1 yr. (tribute paid in last yr.)	9 yrs. (tribute paid in 1st yr.)	9 yrs. (tribute paid in 1st yr.)
Pekahiah - 2 yrs.	1.5 yrs.	1.5 yrs.	2 yrs.	2 yrs.
Pekah - 20 yrs.	17.5 yrs.	17.5 yrs.	18.5 yrs.	18.5 yrs.
<i>Years with no king (Seder Olam)</i>	n/a	8 yrs.	n/a	8 yrs.
Hoshea - 9 yrs.	4 yrs. (until TP III's death)	4 yrs. (until TP III's death)	5 yrs. (until TP III's death)	5 yrs. (until TP III's death)
TOTALS	24 yrs.	32 yrs.	34.5 yrs.	42.5 yrs.

Here's the problem: The Bible says that Menahem of Israel paid tribute to Pul (*aka* Tiglath-pileser III). The Iran Stele confirms the payment of tribute to Tiglath-pileser III by Menahem sometime during the latter's ten-year reign, but which year is not specified. The Assyrian documents also indicate that Tiglath-pileser III, in the waning years of his reign, appointed Hoshea as king in Israel. Taken together, those two references from the Bible and Assyrian documents indicate that Tiglath-pileser III had a reign that spanned the regnal years of the four kings in Israel from Menahem to its last king Hoshea. Between Menahem and Hoshea, there were two additional kings of Israel, Pekahiah and Pekah, both mentioned in the Bible, and the *Seder Olam* reveals an eight-year period with no king but only a provincial governor over Israel. The Assyrian timeline recognized in academia says that Tiglath-pileser III reigned as king of Assyria for eighteen years. The biblical and Assyrian records require a longer reign, suggesting that years may be missing from the surviving eponym tradition. The biblical data requires that his reign be longer.

CASE I: If it is assumed that Menahem paid tribute in his last regnal year, that Pekahiah succeeded Menahem and ruled for more than one but not more than two years, that Pekahiah was killed by Pekah who then ruled over Israel for about 17+ years (the first two years of his 20-year reign being concurrent with the reign of Pekahiah), and that Hoshea, who murdered Pekah in 738 BCE, was appointed king *circa* 731 BCE after Tiglath-pileser's 732 BCE western campaign and five years before the Assyrian king's death in 727 BCE, then the numbers don't add up to reveal an 18-year reign. The minimum possible length of reign is one lasting 24 years.

CASE II: If Menahem paid tribute in his final year, and if the *Seder Olam* statement that Israel had no king for eight years prior to Hoshea being appointed is applied, then the minimum total length of Tiglath-pileser's reign was 32 years.

CASE III: If the maximum possible regnal years during Tiglath-pileser's reign are used for each Hebrew king, the minimum length of his reign is 34.5 years

CASE IV: If the *Seder Olam* years in which there was no king over Israel are added to that maximum in Case III, the figure once again advances, this time to a minimum possible reign of 42.5 years.

All of the minimum lengths for the reign of Tiglath-pileser III shown above are longer than the traditional figure of eighteen years accepted in academia.

The period between the end of the reign of Ashur-nirari V and the accession of Tiglath-pileser III is recognized as one of political disruption in Assyria. The northern regions were subjected to repeated pressure from the kingdom of Urartu. One possible explanation for the scarcity of regnal evidence from this period is that effective authority was no longer exercised by a single centralized government. Instead, administration may have been divided among regional centers.

Under this hypothesis, a regional commander known as Pul gradually consolidated authority over these centers while conducting operations that reduced the Urartian threat and restored Assyrian control over its full territory. Once political unity had been reestablished, Pul was recognized as king and assumed the throne name Tiglath-pileser III in 745 BCE. The absence of recorded *limmu* officials during this period may reflect the breakdown of centralized administration and the interruption of the normal process by which annual eponyms were appointed and preserved. With the restoration of the monarchy under Tiglath-pileser III, the *limmu* system again appears in the historical record.

Completion Year of Solomon's Temple

Another indication that there is something wrong with the Assyrian eponym chronology is that it leads to a date for the completion of Solomon's Temple that disagrees with the chronological details preserved in the *Babylonian Talmud* and *Seder Olam*, both ancient Jewish documents that outline the history of the world from creation to the Bar Kochba revolt (*circa* 135 CE). Its authorship is traditionally attributed to Rabbi Yose ben Halafta, a prominent 2nd century CE Jewish scholar. The full name of the work is *Seder Olam Rabbah*, meaning "The Great Order of the World," and it serves as a foundational text for Jewish chronology. Although some

secular-oriented scholars view the chronology of any ancient Jewish sources as suspect, your author has found the *Seder Olam* to be useful for cross-checking dates of biblical events prior to the Exile of the Jews to Babylon in 586 BCE.

Traditional biblical chronology says that Solomon's Temple was completed *circa* 960/959 BCE. That date is not given in the biblical text, of course, but is instead a date calculated by using the secular Assyrian Eponym Canon anchored in time by the date for the Bûr-Saggilê eclipse. Sir Henry Rawlinson, working together with Queen Victoria's astronomer royal, said that the eclipse occurred in 763 BCE. The Assyrian Eponym Canon was then used to calculate that the battle of Qarqar occurred in 853 BCE, which an ancient inscription says took place the sixth year of Shalmaneser III. Bible scholars assumed that Ahab of Israel died that year, killed in battle at Ramoth-Gilead presumably fighting against Shalmaneser. Since the biblical text says that Ahab died in the seventeenth year of Jehoshaphat of Judah, adding the regnal years of Jehoshaphat's predecessors Asa, Abijah, and Rehoboam (respectively 41, 3, and 17 years) to his seventeen years reveals that the first year of the kingdom of Judah under Rehoboam occurred in 931/930 BCE. If Rehoboam's predecessor Solomon reigned for forty years, then his reign began in 971/970 BCE. Since the Bible says that the Temple was completed in the eleventh year of Solomon's reign, that yields 960/959 BCE as the completion year.

On the other hand, if Rawlinson's 763 BCE date for the Bûr-Saggilê eclipse is incorrect, which this book asserts is the case, and the year 791 BCE is used instead, Rehoboam's reign over the kingdom of Judah after the northern tribes departed, using the same method of traditional calculation as explained in the paragraph above, began in the year 961/960 BCE, not 931/930 BCE. Adding the four-plus years Rehoboam reigned over united Israel before the division and the forty years of Solomon's reign yields the first year of Solomon's reign to have occurred in 1,006 BCE. Since the Temple was completed in his eleventh regnal year, a simple calculation says that Solomon's Temple was completed in 996/995 BCE. That Temple completion year is supported by two separate references in Jewish writings that preserve the chronology the ancient Hebrew sages handed down from antiquity, with both cross-checks indicating that Solomon's Temple was completed in 996 BCE and dedicated in 995 BCE.

The first cross-check is found in the *Babylonian Talmud* (Tractate Yoma 9a), which says that Solomon's Temple stood for 410 years. Since it was destroyed in 586 BCE, counting back 410 Passovers, one per year, confirms the year 996 BCE as the year of the Temple's completion, with dedication a year later in 995 BCE.

The second cross-check is found in *Seder Olam Rabbah*, which says that Joash king of Judah renovated the Temple in his twenty-third year, 155 years after the Temple was dedicated by Solomon and 218 years before Josiah of Judah renovated the Temple in his eighteenth year. Scholars agree that Josiah renovated the Temple in 622 BCE. Counting backwards 218 Passovers takes the timeline back to the year 840 BCE, which identifies the year Joash did his Temple renovation. Counting back another 155 years takes the timeline to the year 996 BCE, the year the Temple was completed by Solomon. with dedication of the building in 995 BCE.

1ST CROSS-CHECK ~ THE BABYLONIAN TALMUD	
996 BCE	Temple building completed by Solomon, with the dedication ceremony held a year later
410 Passovers <i>counted between completion and destruction</i>	
586 BCE	Temple destroyed by the Babylonians

SECOND CROSS-CHECK ~ SEDER OLAM RABBAH	
622 BCE	Josiah renovated the Temple in his 18th year
218 Passovers <i>622 BCE + 218 years = 840 BCE</i>	
840 BCE	Joash renovated the Temple in his 23rd year
155 Passovers <i>840 BCE + 155 years = 995 BCE</i>	
996 BCE	Solomon completed the Temple in his 11th year, with the building dedicated in his 12th year

When using 996 BCE as the year for the completion of Solomon's Temple, a simple calculation shows that date diverges by thirty years from the traditional 966 BCE date used in academia. That discrepancy raises an important question: Which year is correct? To address that question, the traditional methodology and assumptions used to anchor the Assyrian Eponym Canon in history must be examined.

Year of the Bûr-Saggilê Eclipse

Most people do not realize that the dates shown in their study Bibles and commentaries for events prior to 745 BCE, such as the reign of King David or dedication of Solomon's Temple, are not derived from the biblical text. Instead, those dates for biblical events are derived by anchoring them to the timeline for ancient Assyria developed by secular scholars who set aside the chronology of the Bible in favor of the timeline dictated by the Assyrian Eponym Canon and Assyrian and Babylonian Chronicles, a process that began in the late eighteenth century.

The solar eclipse that occurred when the Assyrian governor by the name of Bûr-Saggilê was holding the office of *limmu*¹ anchors all of Assyrian chronology before 745 BCE. After that year, Assyrian chronology can be verified by cross-checks from Babylonian chronology, but prior to that year there is only the date of the Bûr-Saggilê eclipse with which to align the reigns of the kings in the history of Assyria prior to Tiglath-pileser III. So, a correct identification of the year of the eclipse is of paramount importance to establishment of a timeline for all ancient Near East chronological events. In 1867, Sir Henry Creswicke Rawlinson (*d.* 1895), a British Orientalist who is often called the Father of Assyriology, after consulting with Sir George Airey, Queen Victoria's Astronomer Royal, published a date for the Bûr-Saggilê eclipse—June 15, 763 BCE—thus anchoring the entire Assyrian Eponym Canon in time. But, did Rawlinson pick the correct eclipse?

The only mention of the Bûr-Saggilê eclipse is the single inscription found on one of the cuneiform tablets that comprise the Assyrian Eponym Canon. Those tablets were brought back from Nineveh to the British Museum by the early archaeologist Sir Austen Henry Layard, and the inscription reads as follows:

*During the eponymy of Bûr-Saggilê, governor of Gûzanâ, revolt in Libbi-âli; in Siwan, eclipse of the sun.*²

That brief inscription is all that is known about the eclipse and, for that matter, all that is known about the person named Bûr-Saggilê, since he is not mentioned anywhere else in Assyrian history. From the placement of the name Bûr-Saggilê on the list of *limmu* during the reign of the Assyrian king Ashur-dan III, it can be

¹ The *limmu* was an official who presided over the New Year celebrations and for whom the remainder of the year was named.

² Jean-Jacques Glassner, *Mesopotamian Chronicles: Writings from the Ancient World* (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature; 2004), p. 171.

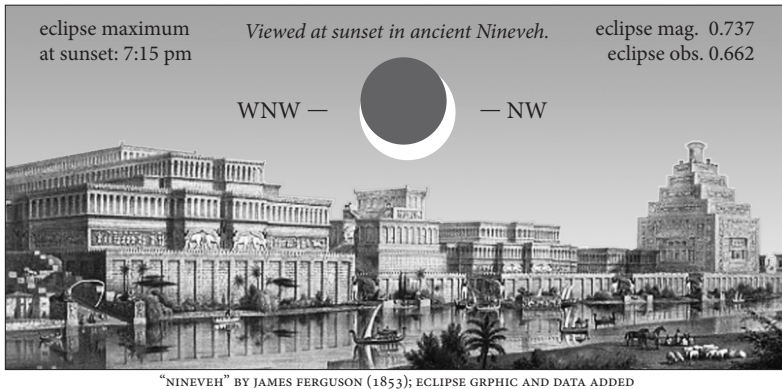
determined that the eclipse occurred in the king's ninth regnal year (or tenth year if using the non-accession year counting). Notice that the inscription does not say whether the eclipse of the sun was total or partial, each being an equal possibility since nothing is said about it, nor does it say where the observation was made (Nineveh or Ashur are the most probable locations). It simply says that a solar eclipse (the original wording on the inscription can be read as "bent sun") was observed when Bûr-Saggilê was governor and that it happened in the month of Siwan (or Simanu), which always overlapped parts of what today are called the Gregorian months of May and June.

The 763 BCE date for the eclipse chosen by Rawlinson featured an almost total solar eclipse of 0.987 magnitude in the narrow central shadow area, and was observable in varying degrees of totality in all parts of Assyria on June 15, 763 BCE. It matches the eclipse description in the inscription. However, that eclipse is not the only solar eclipse during that general time period that meets all of the requirements specified in the inscription. There is another possibility, a partial solar eclipse visible in Assyria twenty-eight years earlier that had a magnitude 0.737 and was visible in Nineveh on June 24, 791 BCE. It, too, totally agrees in all respects with the ancient eclipse description used by Rawlinson to choose his eclipse date.

It is easy to understand how the 763 BCE eclipse, with its greater magnitude, was the obvious eclipse for Rawlinson to choose as the solar eclipse recorded in the Assyrian Eponym Canon. However, the magnitude of the eclipse is irrelevant, since the only requirement specified by the inscription that can be used to identify the eclipse is that Bûr-Saggilê had to have been *limmu* at the time of the eclipse, something equally possible for either date since the years when Bûr-Saggilê was alive were unknown to Rawlinson in 1867, and they remain unknown today.

As concerning the impression made by the 791 BCE eclipse, it was certainly unusual enough to be recorded in the royal chronicles. It displayed a crescent (or bent) sun diminishing as it set. The sight of the sun being eclipsed as it was setting must have been unsettling to the ancients. Rawlinson's 763 BCE eclipse was at its maximum mid-morning, and, except for the small central shadow area, would have dimmed the Assyrian landscape without achieving anything close to nighttime darkness, then after a few minutes everything would have returned to normal. In the 791 BCE event, maximum eclipse occurred at sunset. The ancients watching the sun set and eclipse simultaneously would have looked for special meaning in such an unusual juxtaposition. That is speculation, of course, but the point being made is that the 791 BCE partial solar eclipse event was spectacular enough to warrant

Early On Mistakes Were Made



Depiction of the Solar Eclipse on June 24, 791 BCE

being recorded by the scribes. Additional reason for preferring the 791 BCE date is the fact that the ninth year of Ashur-dan III, when moved twenty-eight eight years back in time as required by using that date for the Bûr-Saggilê eclipse, more closely aligns the entire Assyrian kings list with the Hebrew-Egyptian timeline.

However, moving the ninth year of Ashur-dan III back the required twenty-eight years does not achieve exact alignment between the New Hebrew Kings Chronology and Assyrian eponym years for every king, the most important exception being the alignment of years in the reign of Shalmaneser III with the reign of Ahab of Israel. Thus, one more adjustment is necessary, since Assyrian inscriptions claim that Ahab was defeated in the Battle of Qarqar in Shalmaneser III's sixth regnal year, as follows:

[from the Kurkh Monolith] *I destroyed [the king of] Karkar ... [he] brought 12 kings to his support; they came against me to offer battle and fight: 1,200 chariots, 1,200 cavalry, and 20,000 soldiers belonging to Hadad-ezer of Damascus; 700 chariots, 700 cavalry, and 10,000 soldiers belonging to Irhuleni of Hama; 2,000 chariots, and 10,000 soldiers belonging to Ahab, the Israelite.*

[from the Black Obelisk] *In my sixth year, I crossed the Euphrates ... and received gifts from all the kings of Hatti. At that time Hadad-ezer of Damascus, and Irhuleni the Hamathite, along with the kings of Hatti and the seacoast, relied on each other's strength and came out against me to engage in battle ... I fought with them and was able to defeat them.*¹

¹ D. D. Luckenbill, *Ancient Records of Assyria and Babylonia*, University of Chicago Press: 1926), pp. 200-252; language and place names updated by Alan Humm.

The regnal dates for Shalmaneser III after adding twenty-eight years to the traditional dates for his reign would be 887-851 BCE, making 881 BCE his sixth regnal year. However, that year is two years after the assumed death of Ahab in the year 883 BCE as calculated for the New Hebrew Kings Chronology used in this book. Thus, Shalmaneser's reign must be moved back two additional years to align precisely, but can such an adjustment be justified?

Yes, it can be made without making unreasonable assumptions, as follows: Shalmaneser's eldest son, Ashur-danin-pal, led a revolt in his father's final years. It took Shalmaneser's younger son, the future Shamshi-adad V, two years to depose his brother after Shalmaneser's death. Apparently no eponyms were recorded during the brothers' struggle for the throne, or perhaps the victorious Shamshi-adad V erased his brother's rule by not recognizing any eponyms the "illegitimate" Ashur-danin-pal had appointed after their father's death. Adding those two years moves the reign of Shalmaneser III back to 889-853 BCE, aligning his sixth year with the year of Ahab's death in 883 BCE (889 BCE minus 6 years = 883 BCE).

At least one respected ANE scholar claims that Rawlinson's 763 BCE date is "unambiguously" verified by an eclipse in the first year of the Babylonian king Mukin-zeri, saying:

*... it may be helpful to present independent astronomical evidence for the dating of Assyrian kings and thereby of the Eponym List ... In a collection of Babylonian lunar eclipses, an eclipse in Month 1, Year 1 of king Mukin-zeri is mentioned. By the structure of the text, the date of this eclipse (not visible in Babylon but calculated in advance) may unambiguously be established as April 9, 731 B.C. However, it is known that Mukin-zeri fought against Tiglath-pileser III and that his first regnal year coincided with the 14th year of the Assyrian king. This evidence is provided from the Babylonian Chronicle. Thus, the 14th year of Tiglath-pileser III is identified as the year 731/730 B.C.*¹

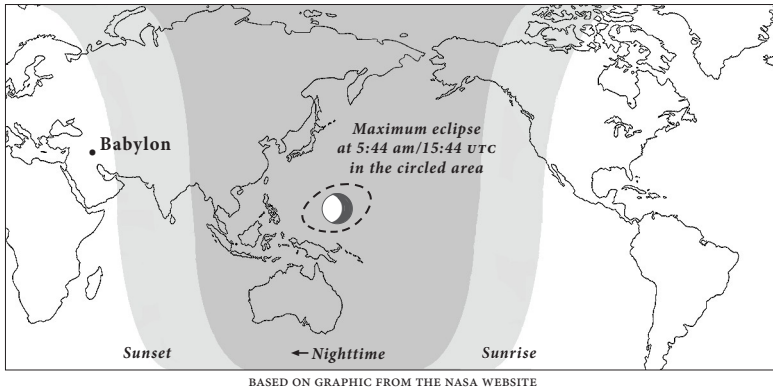
The description of the Mukin-zeri eclipse is detailed on a cuneiform tablet stored in the British Museum [BM 35769 (= LBAT 1414)] that says:

*Year 1 Ukin-zer, month I, [lunar eclipse] which passes (sa DIB). (Began) at 1,0 (i.e., 60) degrees after sunrise.*²

On that tablet, the Babylonian astronomers predicted a lunar eclipse on April 9, 731 BCE, an eclipse that would "pass," which was their way of saying that it would

¹ Dr. Hermann Hunger, "About the Dating of the Neo-Assyrian Eponym List" (*Altorientalische Forschungen*, volume 35; 2008); pp. 323-325; excerpt condensed from English translation.

² F. Richard Stephenson, *Historical Eclipses and Earth's Rotation* (Cambridge University Press, 1997), p. 122.



Zone of Visibility for the Lunar Eclipse on April 9, 731 BCE

not be observed in Babylon. NASA records confirm that a partial lunar eclipse did occur over the Pacific Ocean on that date (see depiction above). If that eclipse was the one predicted for Mukin-zeri's first year, which was equated with Tiglath-pileser III's fourteenth year in the Babylonian Chronicles, then it does validate that both occurred in 731 BCE. However, that is all it does. The eclipse in 731 BCE does not provide any validation of Assyrian history further back than the year 745 BCE, and so it says absolutely nothing at all about the year when the person Bûr-Saggilê was serving as *limmu* in Assyria. The key element (the year when Bûr-Saggilê was *limmu*) needed to reach any "unambiguous" conclusion that the 731 BCE eclipse adds information that can be used to date the Bûr-Saggilê eclipse is missing.

Since no definitive date for the Bûr-Saggilê eclipse can be determined from Assyrian or Babylonian documents alone, additional evidence must be considered when trying to pin down the actual year of the eclipse. That evidence is available from the New Hebrew Kings Chronology, since it is verified in time by its alignment with the standard Egyptian timeline. The Assyrian timeline will agree with that Hebrew-Egyptian timeline if it is moved back in time by thirty years to adjust it to a 791 BCE date for the Bûr-Saggilê eclipse. Those who favor the traditional Assyrian timeline derived from using Rawlinson's 763 BCE date claim that their system agrees with Babylonian and Hebrew chronologies. As indicated above, though, the Babylonian astronomical data can shed no light on the period before 745 BCE, or on the year when Bûr-Saggilê served as *limmu*.

And, even if the Mukin-zeri eclipse of 731 BCE does indicate that the year 745 BCE was the fourteenth year in the reign of Tiglath-pileser III, that by itself does not prove that there are not missing eponyms in the Assyrian record between the

ninth year of Ashur-dan III and the first year of Tiglath-pileser III. The Assyrian records used to compile the Babylonian Chronicles [BM 86379; *circa* 625-605 BCE] equating the first year of Mukin-zeri with the fourteenth year of Tiglath-pileser III may have already been corrupted when compilation took place more than 150 years after the Bûr-Saggilê eclipse. Likewise, the Thiele-based kings chronology is useless for verifying the Rawlinson date since it is derived by using the timeline based on the 763 BCE date and thus will agree with it by default.

As a final argument, proponents of the traditional Assyrian timeline point to its assumed alignment with Egyptian history as verification of its accuracy by calling attention to the invasion by Shishak, which the traditional Hebrew kings chronology based on Assyrian chronology and Rawlinson's 763 BCE eclipse date says happened during the reign of Rehoboam in 925 BCE. As the discussion about Shishak's invasion of Judah in the following section will demonstrate, that claim of synchronization is incorrect and thus actually undermines their position.

Two Invasions of Canaan by Shishak

The most informative cross-references between the chronologies of Egypt and the Hebrew kings are the biblical references that connect pharaoh Shishak and Rehoboam, king of the southern kingdom of Judah. The Bible records in 1 Kings 14:25 and 2 Chronicles 12:2 that Shishak went to Jerusalem, took the Temple treasures, looted the king's palace, then returned to Egypt, all of those events happening in the fifth year of Rehoboam. In 1828, Jean-François Champollion equated Shishak in the Bible as the pharaoh known to history as Shoshenq I, that identification being based on his interpretation of reliefs he read on a wall at Karnak. Interestingly, the Karnak inscriptions interpreted by Champollion do not mention Rehoboam and the city of Jerusalem is not mentioned at all, but they do recount in detail a military expedition into the northern kingdom of Israel. Thus, the biblical account of the exploits of Shishak, which focus exclusively on conquests in Judah and Jerusalem, and the Karnak accounts of the triumphs of Shoshenq I, which focus mainly on conquests in the northern kingdom of Israel, simply do not seem to be in agreement. That inconsistency raises the question: Is Karnak's Shoshenq I really Shishak in the Bible, as Champollion said, or is there a better explanation?

It is worthwhile to review what is known for certain about Shishak and Shoshenq I before tackling the identity question. Shishak, according to the Bible, gave refuge to the future king Jeroboam during the last years of Solomon's reign.

It also records that it was Shishak who moved against Jerusalem in the fifth year of Rehoboam, taking the treasures of the Temple and the golden shields made by Solomon. All of that information is found in 1 Kings, chapters 11-14, and 2 Chronicles, chapter 12. Furthermore, from the data given in those chapters, Shishak and Jeroboam of Israel had a close relationship over a long period of time. The Septuagint even records that Shishak (before he was pharaoh Shoshenq I) gave his wife's sister, Ano, to Jeroboam in marriage (3 Kings 12:24; LXX).

Shoshenq I is not mentioned by that name in the Bible. Everything we know about him comes from extra-biblical sources. Of primary interest for our purpose are the reliefs at Karnak, which tell us about a military foray into the land of Canaan. Egyptologists have dated that campaign to 925 BCE, based on identifying 945-924 BCE for the reign of Shoshenq I, and that date aligns with the fifth year of Rehoboam in the incorrect chronology of the kings as calculated using Rawlinson's year for the Bûr-Saggilê eclipse. But, as previously stated, the inscription at Karnak reveals that Shoshenq's army fought battles predominantly in the northern kingdom of Israel and along its border with Syria, with dozens of northern cities mentioned in the list of battle locations. Only a few of the fortified cities of Judah listed in 2 Chronicles 11:5-10 are mentioned at Karnak, the ones that would be encountered if skirting Judah to go northward into Israel, and no information is given about any sacking and looting of the Temple and the king's palace in Jerusalem.

Egypt and Jeroboam's kingdom of Israel should have been close allies, with Egypt depending on Jeroboam and his kingdom to serve as a buffer state between Egypt and its regional enemy Benhadad of Syria. On the other hand, the Judah of Rehoboam would probably have been estranged from Egypt because Shishak had so recently given aid and comfort to Rehoboam's rival Jeroboam prior to the division of the kingdom of United Israel into the two separate kingdoms. Since the inscriptions at Karnak depict a campaign to conquer cities in the northern kingdom of Israel, and not a foray against Jerusalem and Judah, Champollion's association of those inscriptions with the Bible's Shishak narrative simply makes no geopolitical sense.

In the harmonized chronology of the Hebrew kings that is presented in this book, the invasion of Judah and looting of Jerusalem in the fifth year of Rehoboam is calculated to have occurred in the year 961 BCE, which does not align with the 925 BCE date for the military campaign by Shoshenq I into Canaan described at Karnak. So, the new chronology for the kings offered herein means that Shishak's invasion of Judah and pharaoh Shoshenq's later campaign in Israel were two separate events. According to the adjusted chronology, Shishak invaded in 961 BCE during the reign

of Rehoboam and, as pharaoh Shoshenq I, invaded thirty-six years later in 925 BCE during the reign of Asa of Judah. That scenario aligns with what is known about the history of the pharaohs during that period, which includes the last years of Dynasty 21 and the early years of Dynasty 22. Looking at the events of Egyptian history on either side of 925 BCE, only two invasions in the direction of or into the land of Canaan are documented on Egyptian monuments, the one undertaken by Shoshenq I that is recorded at Karnak, dated to 925 BCE, and a previous campaign into the Levant during the reign of pharaoh Siamun. That earlier event, which is recorded on a wall at Tanis,¹ would have occurred in 961 BCE, thirty-six years before Shoshenq's 925 BCE invasion according to this book's ANE timeline. The accepted regnal years for Siamun are 978-959 BCE, which makes that possible. It is also probable that Shoshenq (Shishak), then commander of Siamun's army (but himself not yet a pharaoh), would have led the campaign against Jerusalem.

Can the Karnak invasion by Shoshenq I be aligned with the reign of Asa of Judah? Yes, it can be, through a person the Bible calls Zerah the Ethiopian, who attacked Asa and Judah as recounted in 2 Chronicles 14:9-12: *And there came out against them Zerah the Ethiopian [commander of an Egyptian army of Shoshenq I] with an host of a thousand thousand, and three hundred chariots; and came unto Mareshah. Then Asa went out against him, and they set the battle in array in the valley of Zephathah at Mareshah. And Asa cried unto the Lord his God, and said, Lord, [it is] nothing with thee to help, whether with many, or with them that have no power: help us, O Lord our God; for we rest on thee, and in thy name we go against this multitude. O Lord, thou [art] our God; let not man prevail against thee. So the Lord smote the Ethiopians before Asa, and before Judah; and the Ethiopians fled.*

The Bible explains in 2 Chronicles 16:1 that, after Zerah and his army were defeated, Asa and the people of Judah had a victory feast in Jerusalem. Meanwhile, Baasha, king of the northern kingdom of Israel, had fortified Ramah and cut off all access to Jerusalem from the north. That meant that Jerusalem was hemmed in on all sides, since the Egyptians were encamped on Judah's southern border. The reference to Baasha's fortification of Ramah happening in the thirty-sixth year² identifies Zerah's invasion as occurring late in the year 926 BCE or early 925 BCE. When Asa appealed to Damascus for help, Benhadad I attacked Baasha from the north. That

¹ K.A. Kitchen, *The Third Intermediate Period in Egypt 1100-650 BC* (Oxford: Aris & Phillips, an imprint of Oxbow Books, 2004); p. 280-281.

² Baasha died in Asa's twenty-fifth year, so he could not have moved against Judah in Asa's thirty-sixth year. The phrase "thirty-sixth year" refers to the thirty-sixth year after the division of the kingdoms.

is when Baasha's ally in Egypt, Shoshenq I, marshaled his troops and campaigned in the northern kingdom of Israel to defend it.

A close look at the evidence from the Bible and from Karnak indicates that the events of 926/925 BCE probably took place in four stages, as follows (the stage numbers below match the numbers on the map on the following page):

Stage ❶: Zerah the Ethiopian¹ launched his invasion of Judah by attacking Hebron ² from the south, overcoming the defenders at that important fortified city. Zerah then attacked the fortified city of Mareshah. Zerah and his task force were badly defeated by Asa and his Judean army at Mareshah, then were chased south as far as Gerar near Gaza. In the battle, Asa and his Judean forces took much spoil from Zerah and afterwards celebrated their victory in Jerusalem with a feast of thanksgiving, taking an oath to be loyal to God (see 2 Chronicles 14:9-15).

Stage ❷: Baasha, king of the northern kingdom of Israel and ally of Egypt, had previously negotiated a non-aggression pact with Benhadad I of Damascus. He was thus free to move southward against Judah, and did so by fortifying the border town of Ramah to cut off access to Jerusalem from the north, possibly doing so simultaneously as Zerah was attacking Judah from the south.

Stage ❸: Asa, fearing invasion by Baasha, sent gold and other treasures to Damascus, asking Benhadad to renounce his non-aggression pact with Baasha and attack Israel on its northern border with Syria. Benhadad agreed and sent troops south to fight Baasha, in that way relieving the military threat to Judah as Baasha withdrew his troops from the south to defend his northernmost territories.

Stage ❹: Baasha, now under attack from Damascus in the north, sent to Egypt for help from Shoshenq I, who was still aggrieved at the earlier defeat of his army under Zerah (from Karnak: "*Now, My [Maj]esty found that ... [they] were killing ... [my soldiers?, and] my army leaders. His majesty was troubled about them*").³ Not wanting to have Syria overrun the northern kingdom and control all of Canaan, Shoshenq mustered his army and moved to confront Benhadad in northern Israel, skirting the fortified cities of Judah (except Ajalon) before moving northward into Israel to begin his main campaign to protect Baasha's northern kingdom. Shoshenq proceeded to neutralize the threat to Israel by Benhadad, then returned to Egypt.

¹ Zerah is never referred to in the Bible as "pharaoh" or "king" and was probably a general in pharaoh Shoshenq's Egyptian army. Use of Libyan and Ethiopian mercenaries in the army of Egypt during that period is well documented.

² Hebron was denoted by its ancient name "Rubuti" on the Karnak inscription.

³ Kitchen, *The Third Intermediate Period in Egypt 1100-650 BC*, p. 294



Admittedly, an invasion of Canaan by Shoshenq I during the reign of Asa as proposed herein is speculative, but much less so than the traditional explanations that associate the Karnak reliefs, which do not mention Jerusalem or the Temple, with the invasion of Canaan during the reign of Rehoboam. The advantage of having Shoshenq as commander Shishak of pharaoh Siamun's army moving against Jerusalem and Rehoboam in 961 BCE and then thirty-six years later as pharaoh Shoshenq I moving to defend his ally Baasha, king of the northern kingdom of Israel, against Benhadad in 925 BCE is that it fits both the biblical account and the Karnak inscriptions. Hypothesizing that Shoshenq I moved against Judah as "king of Egypt" in the fifth year of Rehoboam simply does not match the evidence. Based on the adjusted ANE chronologies in this book, Shishak's invasion of Judah happened during the reign of Siamun (c. 978-959), when Shishak was still the commander of Siamun's army before he succeeded Siamun as pharaoh. The biblical reference to Shishak as "king of Egypt" can be explained as an anachronism. Siamun's general Shishak had become pharaoh Shoshenq I by the time the Hebrew scribes recorded the 961 BCE invasion event in the Books of 1 and 2 Kings and 2 Chronicles.

Applying the Recalibrated Timeline

In this section, your author has set forth basic errors and incorrect assumptions that he believes were made in the development of the Ancient Near East timeline widely accepted in academia today. Based on those anomalies, he maintains that a significant recalibration of that timeline is warranted.

Firstly, the traditional ANE chronology fails to account for the years missing from the reign of Tiglath-pileser III. Scholars have identified gaps in the annals of his reign, particularly during the years when he was consolidating power and expanding the empire. The missing years suggest that the traditional timeline does not accurately reflect the real-life sequence of events.

Secondly, the traditional chronology does not align with dates for Solomon's Temple recorded in the most trustworthy ancient rabbinical records of Hebrew chronology, namely the *Seder Olam* and the *Babylonian Talmud*. Discrepancies arise when comparing the Hebrew dates with the traditional Assyrian timeline.

Furthermore, the alignment of the Assyrian timeline relies on identifying the solar eclipse that occurred in 763 BCE as the Bûr-Saggilê eclipse mentioned in the eponym canon. Recent analysis of other ANE events, as well as the failure of the Assyrian eponym timeline to harmonize with the Hebrew and Egyptian timelines,

suggests that choosing that date for the eclipse, which provides the most prominent data point for anchoring the Assyrian eponyms in time, may have been incorrect. An alternative eclipse, the solar eclipse in 791 BCE, offers an equally good (actually better) fit with the other available historical data, implying that the foundational date of 763 BCE is almost certainly in error. Such a misidentification has caused distortions in the entirety of ANE and biblical chronology.

Lastly, the traditional chronology does not take into account the two invasions of Canaan by Shishak (Shoshenq I) that are documented in Egyptian inscriptions at Tanis and Karnak, the first in 961 BCE and the second in 925 BCE, both key events that can be used to align Egyptian and Israelite histories. Shishak's campaign into Canaan after he became the pharaoh Shoshenq I is correctly dated to 925 BCE, but his earlier invasion as commander of pharaoh Siamun's army in 961 BCE has been overlooked.

With multiple examples of chronological anomalies explained in this section, your author has raised legitimate questions about the accuracy of the Ancient Near East chronology currently featured in academia. The anomalies suggest a need for substantial reinterpretation of the chronological details provided in the Assyrian Eponym Canon to address the missing years during the reign of Tiglath-pileser III, the contradiction with Jewish dates for Solomon's Temple, the probable misidentification of the Bûr-Saggilê eclipse, and the failure to reconcile the dual invasions of Canaan by Shishak with both Egyptian and biblical history.

Of course, the ultimate test of the usefulness of any ANE timeline is whether it clarifies the historical reality of the kingdoms and empires of that period in history. In other words, when using the chronology, does everything fit together to tell one continuous story? The remainder of this book presents the results of applying what your author claims is a more accurate ANE timeline derived from making the needed adjustments described earlier in this chapter. The revised timeline is used throughout the remainder of this book to resolve the chronological difficulties that have long prevented an exact harmonization of the various chronologies and histories of the Ancient Near East.

NEW HEBREW KINGS CHRONOLOGY

King Solomon of Israel died in 966 BCE. After his death, his son Rehoboam ruled over the kingdom of United Israel for four years. In his fifth regnal year, the united kingdom separated into the northern kingdom of Israel under king Jeroboam, while the southern kingdom of Judah continued with Rehoboam as king. The year for the beginning of the divided kingdoms was 961 BCE.¹ Using that date, the subsequent reigns of the kings of Israel and Judah can be harmonized with one another by using the details given in the Books of 1 and 2 Kings, 2 Chronicles, and the prophets. The following accounting practices were employed:

- The kingdom of Israel used regnal years that began on the 1st of Nisan (the first month), and the portion of a king's reign occurring before his initial 1st of Nisan was counted as Year One in his reign (the non-accession-year system).
- The kingdom of Judah used regnal years that began on the 1st of Tishri (the seventh month), and the portion of a king's reign occurring before his initial 1st of Tishri was not counted as a numbered year in the king's reign but was considered to be an unnumbered accession year (the accession-year system).
- In both kingdoms there were instances in which a king and his successor coreigned. The years in the successor king's coreign were sometimes included in the total years recorded for his reign, but sometimes not.
- The kingdom of Israel experienced periods in which two claimants for the throne controlled separate parts of the kingdom of Israel at the same time.
- The kingdom of Israel switched to the accession-year system after 768 BCE, but omitted an accession year in the reign of Pekah since he was a rival king already ruling from Gilead when he usurped the throne in Samaria.
- The kingdom of Judah sometimes omitted counting an accession year if there was a less-than-smooth transition from the reign of one king to another.

Fortunately, there is only one way that the reigns will harmonize exactly if they are aligned as specified by the biblical data. On pages 33-41, the reigns of the thirty-eight kings (and one queen) who ruled during the period of the divided kingdoms of Israel and Judah are displayed side-by-side for comparison.

¹ The year for the beginning of the divided kingdoms is traditionally given as 931/930 BCE. However, this book uses the year 961 BCE; see discussion on pages 16-24 explaining why that date is used.

Chronology of the Hebrew Kings from the Bible

All years BCE, I = Israel, J = Judah

<i>King / Length of Reign</i>	<i>Regnal Years</i>	<i>Cross-referenced in Scripture to ...</i>	<i>Chronological References</i>		
I - Jeroboam - 22 yrs.	961-940	5th year of Rehoboam as king of United Israel	1 Kings 14:20	---	---
J - Rehoboam - 17 yrs.	961-944	5th year of his reign as king of United Israel	1 Kings 14:21	2 Chronicles 12:13	Daniel 4
J - Abijah - 3 yrs.	944-942	18th year of Jeroboam	1 Kings 15:1-2	2 Chronicles 13:1-2	---
J - Asa - 41 yrs.	942-900	20th year of Jeroboam	1 Kings 15:9-10	---	---
I - Nadab - 2 yrs.	940-939	2nd year of Asa	1 Kings 15:25	---	---
I - Baasha - 24 yrs.	939-916	3rd year of Asa	1 Kings 15:33	---	---
I - Elah - 2 yrs.	916-914	26th year of Asa	1 Kings 16:8	---	---
I - Zimri - 7 days	914	27th year of Asa	1 Kings 16:15	---	---
I - Omri - 12 yrs.	914-904	27th year of Asa	1 Kings 16:16, 23	---	---
I - Ahab - 22 yrs.	904-883	38th year of Asa	1 Kings 16:29	---	---
J - Jehoshaphat - 25 yrs.	900-875	4th year of Ahab	1 Kings 22:41-42	---	---
I - Ahaziah - 2 yrs.	883-882	17th year of Jehoshaphat	1 Kings 22:52	---	---
I - Joram - 12 yrs.	(882)/879-867	18th year of Jehoshaphat (<i>Jehoram of Judah regent for his first two years</i>)	2 Kings 1:17	---	---
J - Jehoram - 8 yrs.	875-868	5th year of Joram	2 Kings 8:16-17	2 Chronicles 21:20	---
J - Ahaziah - 1 yrs.	868-867	11th year of Joram (<i>or 12th year of Joram using a non-accession-year system</i>)	2 Kings 8:25-26	2 Chronicles 22:2	---
I - Jehu - 28 yrs.	867-840	probably anointed as king in Gilead in 868	2 Kings 10:36	---	---
J - Athaliah - 6 yrs.	867-861	usurped throne after death of Ahaziah	2 Kings 11:13	---	---
J - Joash - 40 yrs.	861-822	7th year of Jehu	2 Kings 12:1-2	2 Chronicles 24:1	---
I - Jehoahaz - 17 yrs.	840-824	23rd year of Joash	2 Kings 13:1	---	---
I - Jehoash - 16 yrs.	825/824-808	37th year of Joash	2 Kings 13:10	---	---
J - Amaziah - 29 yrs.	822-794	2nd year of Jehoash	2 Kings 14:1-2	2 Chronicles 25:1	---
I - Jeroboam II - 41 yrs.	808-768	15th year of Amaziah	2 Kings 14:23	---	Amos 1:1
J - Uzziah - 52 yrs.	805/794-754	27th year of Jeroboam II (<i>or Uzziah was 27 years old during reign of Jeroboam II</i>)	2 Kings 15:1-2	2 Chronicles 26:3	Amos 1:1
I - Zachariah - 6 months	768	38th year of Uzziah (Azariah)	2 Kings 15:8	---	---
I - Shallum - 1 month	767	39th year of Uzziah (Azariah)	2 Kings 15: 13	---	---
I - Menahem - 10 yrs.	767-757	39th year of Uzziah (Azariah)	2 Kings 15:17	---	---
I - Pekahiah - 20 yrs.	757-755	50th year of Uzziah (Azariah)	2 Kings 15:27	---	---
I - Pekah - 2 yrs.	(758)/757-738	52nd year of Uzziah (Azariah)	2 Kings 15:23	---	---
J - Jotham - 16 yrs.	757/754-738	2nd year of Pekah	2 Kings 15:32-33	2 Chronicles 27:1	---
J - Ahaz - 16 yrs.	742-727	17th year of Pekah	2 Kings 16:1-2	2 Chronicles 28:1	---
I - Hoshea - 9 yrs.	731-721	12th year of Ahaz	2 Kings 15:30, 17:1	---	---
J - Hezekiah - 29 yrs.	727-698	3rd year of Hoshea	2 Kings 18:2,13	2 Chronicles 29:1	Isaiah 36:1
J - Manasseh - 55 yrs.	698-643	NOTE The thirty-plus biblical cross-checks for the reigns of the kings of Israel and Judah that are listed in this column are displayed along with their corresponding Scripture references in the chronological tables on pages 11-24.	2 Kings 21:1	2 Chronicles 33:1	---
J - Amon - 2 yrs.	643-641		2 Kings 21:19	2 Chronicles 33:21	---
J - Josiah - 31 yrs.	640-609		2 Kings 22:1	---	---
J - Jehoahaz - 3 months	609		2 Kings 23:31	2 Chronicles 36:2	---
J - Jehoikim - 11 yrs.	609-598		2 Kings 23:36	2 Chronicles 36:5	---
J - Jehoiachin - 3 months	598-597		2 Kings 24:8	2 Chronicles 36:9	---
J - Zedekiah - 11 yrs.	597-586		2 Kings 24:18, 25:8	2 Chronicles 36:11	Jeremiah 52:12

Kings of Israel and Judah, 966-930 BCE

(years shown in center column are proleptic Gregorian years; A = accession or partial year; sabbath years in bold type)

		START HERE	United Kingdom of Israel (966-961 BCE) Kingdom of Judah (after 961 BCE) (regnal years counted Tishri to Tishri)	
	YEAR BCE			
Rehoboam becomes king of the United Kingdom of Israel in 966 BCE (regnal years counted Nisan to Nisan)	---	966	A	← Rehoboam (966-961) Note 2 page 83
	---	965	1st	
Rehoboam rejected as king by northern ten tribes; three years of realignment begin	---	964	2nd	← Kingdom rent from Rehoboam in 964 BCE, Levites and priests moved to Judah, Judah secured for the next three years ¹
	---	963	3rd	1st yr.
	---	962	4th	2nd yr.
	---	961	5th	3rd yr.
Jeroboam (961-940) →	1st yr.	1st	1st	Rehoboam (961-944) Note 2 page 83
	2nd yr.	2nd	2nd	
	3rd yr.	3rd	3rd	
	4th yr.	4th	4th	
	5th yr.	5th	5th	
	6th yr.	6th	6th	
	7th yr.	7th	7th	
	8th yr.	8th	8th	
	9th yr.	9th	9th	
	10th yr.	10th	10th	
	11th yr.	11th	11th	
	12th yr.	12th	12th	
	13th yr.	13th	13th	
	14th yr.	14th	14th	
	15th yr.	15th	15th	
	16th yr.	16th	16th	
	17th yr.	17th	17th/A	
	18th yr.	18th	1st	← Abijah (944-942)
	19th yr.	19th	2nd	
	20th yr.	20th	3rd/A	← Asa (942-900) See page 24
	21st yr.	21st	1st	
	22nd yr.	22nd	2nd	
Nadab (940-939) →	22nd yr.	22nd/1st	3rd	
Baasha (939-916) → See page 24	23rd yr.	23rd/1st	4th	
	24th yr.	24th	5th	
	25th yr.	25th	6th	
	26th yr.	26th	7th	
	27th yr.	27th	8th	
	28th yr.	28th	9th	
	29th yr.	29th	10th	
	30th yr.	30th	11th	
	31st yr.	31st		
	32nd yr.	32nd		

During 942-937 BCE, Asa purified the land and fortified Judah, which was granted ten years of rest from the threat of war until 926 BCE when Zerah the Ethiopian, leading an Egyptian army of pharaoh Sheshonq I, attacked Asa and Judah from the south

cont'd

Kings of Israel and Judah, 929-893 BCE

(years shown in center column are proleptic Gregorian years; A = accession or partial year; sabbath years in bold type)

Kingdom of Israel (regnal years counted Nisan to Nisan)			Kingdom of Judah (regnal years counted Tishri to Tishri)		
<i>Baasha (cont.)</i>			YEAR BCE		
	33rd yr.	11th	929	12th	8th yr.
	34th yr.	12th	928	13th	9th yr.
	35th yr.	13th	927	14th	10th yr.
<i>Baasha attacked Judah and fortified Ramah in the 36th year after the kingdoms were divided¹</i>	36th yr.	14th	926	15th	<i>Asa repelled attack by Zerah²</i>
		15th	925	16th	
		16th	924	17th	² Ethiopians and Lubims led by Zerah attack Judah in the thirty-sixth year after the kingdoms divided, Asa defeats Zerah, then celebrates victory in Jerusalem in his fifteenth regnal year, swears an oath to be obedient to God; see 2 Chronicles 15:9-15.
		17th	923	18th	
		18th	922	19th	
		19th	921	20th	
		20th	920	21st	
		21st	919	22nd	
		22nd	918	23rd	
		23rd	917	24th	
		24th	916	25th	
		25th	915	26th	
 <i>Zimri (914) for 7 days</i>		26th	914	27th	<i>Baasha blockaded Judah in the thirty-sixth year after the kingdoms divided, Asa bribed Benhadad I of Syria to attack Baasha, causing Shoshenq I to invade⁴</i>
		27th	913	28th	
		28th	912	29th	
		29th	911	30th	
		30th	910	31st	
		31st	909	32nd	
		32nd	908	33rd	
		33rd	907	34th	
		34th	906	35th	
		35th	905	36th	
		36th	904	37th	⁴ The invasion by Shoshenq I of Egypt in 925 BCE, as recorded on a temple wall at Karnak, is usually equated with the invasion of the Bible's Shishak of Egypt during the fifth regnal year of Rehoboam, but chronologically it is better explained as a move by Shoshenq to aid his ally Baasha of Israel, who attacked Judah in 925 BCE but was then attacked by Benhadad I of Syria after Asa appealed for help; Shoshenq's army bypassed the southern kingdom to move into the Jordan valley and then into the cities of the north to counter the move south into Israel by Ben-Haddad (see 1 Kings 15; also see discussions on page 24).
 <i>Elah (916-914)</i>	→	24th/1st	916	26th	
		25th	915	27th	
 <i>Omri (914-904)</i>	→	2nd/A/1st	914	28th	
		3rd	913	29th	
		4th	912	30th	
		5th	911	31st	
		6th	910	32nd	
		7th	909	33rd	
		8th	908	34th	
		9th	907	35th	<i>Asa diseased in his feet</i>
<i>Omri defeated Tibni, became sole ruler in 31st year of Asa³</i>	→	31st	906	36th	
		32nd	905	37th	
		33rd	904	38th	
		34th	903	39th	
		35th	902	40th	
		36th	901	41st/A	
		37th	900	1st	
		38th	899	2nd	
		39th	898	3rd	
		40th	897	4th	<i>In his 3rd year, Jehoshaphat sent officials and priests to the cities of Judah for a public reading of the Law, indicating a sabbath year beginning in Nisan of the year 897 BCE (see 2 Chronicles 17:7-9)</i>
		41st	896	5th	
		42nd	895	6th	
		43rd	894	7th	
		44th	893		
		45th			

³ The Seder Olam says that the struggle between Omri and Tibni for sole rule of the northern kingdom of Israel was resolved in favor of Omri after four years.

² Ethiopians and Lubims led by Zerah attack Judah in the thirty-sixth year after the kingdoms divided, Asa defeats Zerah, then celebrates victory in Jerusalem in his fifteenth regnal year, swears an oath to be obedient to God; see 2 Chronicles 15:9-15.

⁴ The invasion by Shoshenq I of Egypt in 925 BCE, as recorded on a temple wall at Karnak, is usually equated with the invasion of the Bible's Shishak of Egypt during the fifth regnal year of Rehoboam, but chronologically it is better explained as a move by Shoshenq to aid his ally Baasha of Israel, who attacked Judah in 925 BCE but was then attacked by Benhadad I of Syria after Asa appealed for help; Shoshenq's army bypassed the southern kingdom to move into the Jordan valley and then into the cities of the north to counter the move south into Israel by Ben-Haddad (see 1 Kings 15; also see discussions on page 24).

Kings of Israel and Judah, 892-856 BCE

(years shown in center column are proleptic Gregorian years; A = accession or partial year; sabbath years in bold type)

Kingdom of Israel			Kingdom of Judah		
(regnal years counted Nisan to Nisan)			(regnal years counted Tishri to Tishri)		
Ahab (cont.)		YEAR BCE		Jehoshaphat (cont.)	
	13th ¹	892	8th		
	famine 14th	891	9th		
	famine 15th	890	10th		
	famine 16th	889	11th	Shalmaneser III (889-854?)	
	war 17th	888	12th	1st	
	war 18th	887	13th	2nd	<u>BATTLE OF QARQAR</u>
	peace 19th	886	14th	3rd	The Battle of Qarqar occurred in the summer of 883 BCE; an account is recorded on the Kurkh Monolith, which mentions Ahab as being a participant, although the Bible says that Ahab was wounded and died after a Battle at Ramoth-gilead (Qarqar) in 883 BCE.
	peace 20th	885	15th	4th	
	peace 21st	884	16th	5th	
→ Ahaziah (883-882)	22nd/1st	883	17th	6th	
→ Joram ² (882/879-867) →	2nd / R	882	18th	7th	
Note 6 page 84	R	881	19th	8th	
→ Jehoram of Judah (R = regent)	R	880	20th	9th	Elijah the prophet died in the nineteenth year of Jehoshaphat according to the Seder Olam.
Note 6 page 84	R	879	21st	10th	
→ Joram rules Israel	1st	879	22nd	11th	
as king (no regent),	1st 2nd	878	23rd	12th	
Note 6 page 84	2nd 3rd	877	24th	13th	
	3rd 4th	876	25th/A	14th	
	4th 5th	875	1st	15th	← Joram (875-868)
	5th 6th	874	2nd	16th	Note 6 page 84
	6th 7th	873	3rd	17th	
	7th 8th	872	4th	18th	
	8th 9th	871	5th	19th	← BLACK OBELISK
	9th 10th	870	6th		The obelisk shows Jehu bowing and paying tribute to Shalmaneser III in his eighteenth regnal year, 871 BCE.
	10th 11th	869	7th		
	11th 12th	868	8th/A/(-1st)		
→ Jehu (867-840) ³ →	1st	867	(2nd)		← Ahaziah (868-867) ⁴
Note 7b page 86.	2nd	866	(3rd)		Note 7a page 86
Note 25 page 101	3rd	865	(4th)		→ Athaliah (867-861)
	4th	864	(5th)		usurped throne in same year Ahaziah was killed,
	5th	863	(6th)		Note 7c page 86
	6th	862	1st (no AY)		
	7th	861	2nd		← Joash (861-822)
	8th	860	3rd		Note 8 page 86
	9th	859	4th		
	10th	858	5th		
	11th	857	6th		
	12th	856			
		cont'd			

¹ The Seder Olam says that a three-year famine began in Ahab's thirteenth year, followed by two-plus years of war with Benhadad II, followed by three years of peace, followed by the war against Ramoth-gilead.

² Joram was apparently not of age to rule when Ahaziah died, so Jehoram of Judah, who was married to Ahab's daughter and Ahaziah's sister Athaliah, served as his regent for two-plus years.

³ Jehu, a captain in Israel's army, was sent by Joram to pay tribute to Assyria in Shalmaneser III's eighteenth year, 871 BCE (tribute payment is recorded on the Black Obelisk but is not mentioned in the Bible); then, in 867 BCE, Jehu was anointed as king by a prophet sent from Elisha (2 Kings, 9-10), and was thereafter recognized as king of Israel by the army in Ramoth-gilead; he then traveled to Jezreel to kill Joram of Israel and Ahaziah of Judah; Jehu's regnal years are counted from the time he began to reign from Samaria as king in 867 BCE.

⁴ Ahaziah became king in the twelfth year of Joram when using the non-accession year counting in Israel, or in the eleventh year of Joram when using the accession-year counting of Judah; the Bible has instances of both for the reign of Ahaziah.

Kings of Israel and Judah, 855-819 BCE

(years shown in center column are proleptic Gregorian years; A = accession or partial year; sabbath years in bold type)

Kingdom of Israel (regnal years counted Nisan to Nisan)		Kingdom of Judah (regnal years counted Tishri to Tishri)	
	YEAR BCE		
Jehu (cont.)			Joash (cont.)
	13th	855	7th
	14th	854	8th
	15th	853	9th
	16th	852	10th
	17th	851	11th
	18th	850	12th
	19th	849	13th
	20th	848	14th
	21st	847	15th
	22nd	846	16th
	23rd	845	17th
	24th	844	18th
	25th	843	19th
	26th	842	20th
	27th	841	21st
		840	22nd
👑 Jehoahaz (840-824) →	-- 28th/1st --	839	23rd
	2nd	838	24th
	3rd	837	25th
	4th	836	26th
	5th	835	27th
	6th	834	28th
	7th	833	29th
	8th	832	30th
	9th	831	31st
	10th	830	32nd
	11th	829	33rd
	12th	828	34th
	13th	827	35th
	14th	826	36th
	15th	825	37th
👑 Jehoash (825/824-808) ¹ →	16th/(1st)	824	38th
	17th/(2nd)	823	39th
	1st	822	40th/A
	2nd	821	1st
	3rd	820	2nd
	4th	819	3rd
	5th		
	cont'd		
			← 👑 Amaziah (822-794)

¹ Jehoash coreigned with his father for two years, according to the *Seder Olam*. When Adad-nirari III of Assyria resumed his western campaigns in Syria in 827 BCE, the power of Syria was weakened, so Jehoash was able to free Israel from Syrian control in 824 BCE, coinciding with Adad-nirari's campaign against Mansuate in the Lebanon valley (*Massyus* according to Strabo 16:2, 18); at that time, the king of Assyria also attacked Damascus, defeated the Syrian armies, and exacted a heavy tribute from Benhadad III, the king of Syria. - adapted from the online article titled "Jehoash" at www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org; also, see 2 Kings 13:5; payment of tribute to Adad-nirari III by Jehoash recorded on the Tel-al-Rimah Stele discovered in 1967.

² The *Seder Olam* records that Joash began renovating the Temple during his twenty-third regnal year, 155 years after Solomon dedicated the Temple in 996 BCE, and 218 years before Josiah began renovating the Temple in his eighteenth regnal year, which began in 623 BCE.

Kings of Israel and Judah, 818-782 BCE

(years shown in center column are proleptic Gregorian years; A = accession or partial year; sabbath years in bold type)

Kingdom of Israel (regnal years counted Nisan to Nisan)		YEAR BCE	Kingdom of Judah (regnal years counted Tishri to Tishri)	
Jehoash (cont.)	6th	818	4th	Amaziah (cont.)
	7th	817	5th	
	8th	816	6th	
Elisha the prophet died in the tenth year of Jehoash of Israel according to the <i>Seder Olam</i> . -->	9th	815	7th	
	10th	814	8th	
	11th	813	9th	
	12th	812	10th	
	13th	811	11th	
	14th	810	12th	
	15th	809	13th	
👑 Jeroboam II (808-768) -->	16th/1st	808	14th	
	2nd	807	15th	
	3rd	806	16th	
	4th	805	(17th)/1st	16 yo. <--- Uzziah 16 years old, began serving as king in his father's place after Amaziah had fled to Lachish (see 2 Chronicles 25:27)
	5th	804	(18th)/2nd	17 yo.
	6th	803	(19th)/3rd	18 yo.
	7th	802	(20th)/4th	19 yo.
	8th	801	(21st)/5th	20 yo.
	9th	800	(22nd)/6th	21 yo.
	10th	799	(23rd)/7th	22 yo.
	11th	798	(24th)/8th	23 yo.
	12th	797	(25th)/9th	24 yo.
	13th	796	(26th)/10th	25 yo.
	14th	795	(27th)/11th	26 yo.
Amaziah died in fifteenth year after death of Jehoash, --->	15th	794	(28th)/12th	27 yo. ← 👑 Uzziah (794-754) ¹ Uzziah 27 years old, became sole ruler of Judah during the reign of Jeroboam II, ² Note 10 page 87
	16th	793	(29th)/13th	28 yo.
	17th	792	14th	
	18th	791	15th	
Bûr-Saggilê solar eclipse on ---> June 24, 791 BCE	19th	790	16th	
	20th	789	17th	
	21st	788	18th	
	22nd	787	19th	
	23rd	786	20th	
	24th	785	21st	
	25th	784	22nd	
	26th	783	23rd	
	27th	782	24th	

cont'd

¹ Uzziah is also called Azariah.

² Uzziah became sole ruler of Judah in the twenty-seventh year of his life, not in the twenty-seventh regnal year of Jeroboam II of Israel as incorrectly translated in KJV; see 2 Kings 15:1.

Kings of Israel and Judah, 781-745 BCE

(years shown in center column are proleptic Gregorian years; A = accession or partial year; sabbath years in bold type)

Kingdom of Israel (regnal years counted Nisan to Nisan)		Kingdom of Judah (regnal years counted Tishri to Tishri)	
	YEAR BCE		
<i>Jeroboam II (cont.)</i>	28th	781	25th
	29th	780	26th
	30th	779	27th
	31st	778	28th
	32nd	777	29th
	33rd	776	30th
	34th	775	31st
	35th	774	32nd
	36th	773	33rd
	37th	772	34th
	38th	771	35th
	39th	770	36th
	40th	769	37th
	41st/A	768	38th
👑 Zachariah ¹ (768) →	1st/A/A	767	39th
👑 Shallum ² (767) →	1st	766	40th
👑 Menahem ³ (767-757)	2nd	765	41st
Note 12 page 89	3rd	764	42nd
	4th	763	43rd
	5th	762	44th
	6th	761	45th
	7th	760	46th
	8th	759	47th
	9th/(1st)	758	48th
👑 Pekah (king in Gilead) →	10th/A/(2nd)	757	49th/1st
👑 Pekahiah (757-755) →	1st/(3rd)	756	(50th)/2nd
👑 Pekah (758/757-738)	2nd/(4th)	755	(51st)/3rd
king in Gilead in 758 BCE;	5th	754	(52nd)/4th
king in Israel in 755 BCE,	6th	753	5th
52nd year of Uzziah, ⁴	7th	752	6th
Note 13 page 89	8th	751	7th
	9th	750	8th
	10th	749	9th
	11th	748	10th
	12th	747	11th
	13th	746	12th
	14th	745	13th
	cont'd		
			👑 Jotham (757/754-738)
			2nd year of Pekah in
			Gilead, Jotham began
			judging Judah as king
			in place of Uzziah, who
			had become a leper.
			Note 14 page 90

¹ Zachariah reigns 6 months starting in the thirty-eighth year of Uzziah into the thirty-ninth year.

² Shallum reigns for one month in the thirty-ninth year of Uzziah.

³ Menahem pays tribute to Pul, king of Assyria, between 767-757 BCE.

⁴ Both Pekahiah and Pekah had control of large parts of Israel after Menahem died in 757 BCE, and each claimed the throne of Israel until Pekah murdered Pekahiah in 755 BCE and became the sole ruler as king in Samaria; his regnal years are counted from the year he began claiming the throne as king in Gilead, 758 BCE; numerous cities in Israel were annexed by Tiglath-pileser III during Pekah's reign.

Kings of Israel and Judah, 744-721 BCE

(years shown in center column are proleptic Gregorian years; A = accession or partial year; sabbath years in bold type)

Kingdom of Israel (regnal years counted Nisan to Nisan)		Kingdom of Judah (regnal years counted Tishri to Tishri)	
	YEAR BCE		
Pekah (cont.)	15th	744	14th
	16th	743	15th
	17th	742	16th/1st
	18th	741	17th/2nd
	19th	740	(18th)/3rd
	20th/ ?	739	(19th)/4rd
Pekah killed by Hoshea --->	?	738	(20th)/5th
in 20th year of Jotham.	?	737	6th
Note 15 page 90	?	736	7th
No king in Israel	?	735	8th
738-731 BCE ¹	?	734	9th
	?	733	10th
	?	732	11th
☞ Hoshea (731-721) ¹ →	? / A	731	12th
Note 16 page 90	1st	730	13th
	2nd	729	14th
	3rd	728	15th
	4th	727	16th/A
	5th	726	1st
	6th	725	2nd
Samaria besieged (724) --->	7th	724	3rd
	8th	723	4th
Fall of Samaria (721)	9th	722	5th
Note 17 page 90 --->		721	6th

☞ **Ahaz** (742-727)²

²Ahaz ruled in place of Jotham for four-plus years (Jotham was either a prisoner of Tiglath-pileser or ill or in some way unable to rule); in 2 Kings 16:2, Ahaz was twenty years old when he began to rule as king, which would have made him only nine years old when Hezekiah was conceived, highly unlikely; more than likely the original Bible text meant that Ahaz began his rule as king in the twentieth regnal year of Jotham, a reference mirroring the construct about Jotham's reign that was used in 2 Kings 15:30; the *Seder Olam* says that Pekah was killed in the fourth regnal year of Ahaz (true if using the accession-year system).

☞ **Hezekiah** (727-698)
third year of Hoshea,
Note 18 page 91

¹ The *Seder Olam* says that Hoshea killed Pekah in Jotham's twentieth year, which coincided with the fourth year of Ahab's reign. It also says that Ahab and Hoshea were vassals of Tiglath-pileser for eight years. The only way all of that is possible is if Hoshea became a vassal king over Assyrian-controlled lands east of the Jordan, ruling from Gilead for eight years from 738-731 BCE before becoming king of all Israel, ruling from Samaria, in Ahab's twelfth year in 731 BCE.

Regnal years for Kings of Judah
after the fall of Samaria in 721 BCE
are continued on the next page.

Kings of Judah after the fall of Samaria, 727-654 BCE

(years shown in left column are proleptic Gregorian years; A = accession or partial year; sabbath years in bold type)

Kingdom of Judah (regnal years counted Tishri to Tishri)

YEAR BCE			YEAR BCE		
727	A	← Hezekiah (727-698)	690	8th	Manasseh (cont.)
726	1st	became king in third	689	9th	
725	2nd	year of Hoshea, Temple	688	10th	
724	3rd	cleansed and Passover	687	11th	
723	4th	kept in his first year,	686	12th	
722	5th	Note 18 page 91	685	13th	
721	6th	← --- Fall of Samaria (721)	684	14th	
720	7th	Note 17 page 90	683	15th	
719	8th		682	16th	
718	9th		681	17th	677-673 BCE: Remaining
717	10th		680	18th	Jews in kingdom of Israel
716	11th		679	19th	deported to Assyria by
715	12th		678	20th	Esarhaddon and replaced
714	13th	← --- Hezekiah's life-threatening	677	21st	with foreigners.
713	14th	illness, when God gave him	676	22nd	← --- Manasseh taken captive
712	15th	fifteen extra years of life	675	23rd	to Babylon by captains of
711	16th		674	24th	Esarhaddon in 677 BCE ¹
710	17th	← --- b. Manasseh (710)	673	25th	Note 19 page 96
709	18th	1 yo.	672	26th	
708	19th	2 yo.	671	27th	¹ Year is based on a passage
707	20th	3 yo.	670	28th	in the Seder Olam that says
706	21st	4 yo.	669	29th	Manasseh was taken captive in
705	22nd	5 yo.	668	30th	his twenty-second regnal year;
704	23rd	6 yo.	667	31st	see 2 Chronicles 33:11.
703	24th	7 yo.	666	32nd	
702	25th	8 yo.	665	33rd	
701	26th	9 yo. Sennacherib's invasion,	664	34th	
700	27th	← --- future pharaoh Taharqa	663	35th	
699	28th	leads Shebitku's army out	662	36th	
698	29th/A	of Egypt to oppose him	661	37th	
697	1st	12 yo. ← Manasseh (698-643)	660	38th	
696	2nd	13 yo.	659	39th	
695	3rd		658	40th	
694	4th		657	41st	
693	5th		656	42nd	
692	6th		655	43rd	
691	7th		654	44th	

cont'd

cont'd

Kings of Judah after the fall of Samaria, 653-586 BCE

(years shown in left column are proleptic Gregorian years; A = accession or partial year; sabbath years in bold type)

Kingdom of Judah (regnal years counted Tishri to Tishri)

YEAR BCE			YEAR BCE		
653	45th	Manasseh (cont.)	616	24th	11th Josiah (cont.)
652	46th		615	25th	12th
651	47th		614	26th	13th
650	48th		613	27th	14th
649	49th		612	28th	15th Note 21 page 96
648	50th	← - - b. Josiah	611	29th	16th
647	51st	1 yo.	610	30th	17th
646	52nd	2 yo.	609	31st/A	18th
645	53rd	3 yo.	608	1st/A	19th ← Jehoahaz (609) ¹
644	54th	4 yo.	607	1st	20th Jehoiakim (609-598)
643	55th/A	5 yo.	606	2nd	21st
642	1st	6 yo.	605	3rd	22nd
641	2nd/?	7 yo.	604	4th	23rd/1st ← - - Nebuchadnezzar II
640	A	8 yo.	603	5th	2nd (r. 605-562) became king shortly after the Battle of Carchemish;
639	1st	9 yo.	602	6th	3rd the city of Jerusalem and Solomon's Temple
638	2nd	← Josiah (640-609)	601	7th	4th burned in 19th year of Nebuchadnezzar
637	3rd	made king by the people sometime after 1st of Tishri in year 641 BCE	600	8th	5th
636	4th		599	9th	6th Note 22 page 96
635	5th		598	10th	7th
634	6th	The Babylonian Talmud (tractate Arakin 12b) says that Solomon's Temple was destroyed in the third year of a sabbath cycle, a cross check confirming that the year 586 BCE was the year that the Babylonian army destroyed the Temple.	597	11th/A/A	8th ← Jehoiachin (598-597) ²
633	7th		596	1st	9th Zedekiah (597-586) ³
632	8th		595	2nd	10th
631	9th		594	3rd	11th
630	10th		593	4th	12th
629	11th		592	5th	13th
628	12th		591	6th	14th
627	13th	← - - Jeremiah began to prophesy to Judah for twenty-three years in Josiah's thirteenth year (Jeremiah 25:3)	590	7th	15th
626	14th	1st sabbath yr.	589	8th	16th
625	15th	2nd	588	9th	17th - Siege of Jerusalem (589) (10th month of 9th year) ⁴
624	16th	3rd	587	10th	18th
623	17th	4th	586	11th	19th - Fall of Jerusalem (586) (4th month of 11th year) Note 22 page 96
622	18th	5th ← - - Hilkiah found Book of the Law during repair of the Temple in Josiah's eighteenth regnal year; as a result, celebration of the "Great Passover" took place in 622 BCE		end	
621	19th	6th			
620	20th	7th			
619	21st	8th			
618	22nd	9th			
617	23rd	10th			

cont'd

¹ Jehoahaz ruled for 3 months in 609 BCE, including a month of Tishri to begin a regnal year, before being deposed by pharaoh Necho and exiled to Egypt.

² Jehoiachin was king for 3 months and 10 days in late 598 BCE until early 597 BCE, but not in a month of Tishri.

³ Zedekiah was appointed king by Nebuchadnezzar sometime before Tishri in 597 BCE and had a short accession year before his first Tishri later that year.

Recalibrating Ancient Near East Chronology

Key Dates Published by Other ANE Chronologists				
Name of Chronologist	Published (CE)	Kingdoms Divide	Fall of Samaria	Fall of Jerusalem
Orthodox Judaism ¹	circa 180-200	794 BCE	none	420 BCE
James Ussher (d. 1656) ²	1650	975 BCE	722/721 BCE	588 BCE
W. F. Albright (d. 1971) ³	1953	922 BCE	721 BCE	587 BCE
Edwin R. Thiele (d. 1986) ⁴	1983	930 BCE	723/722 BCE	586 BCE
John Hayes (d. 2013) ⁵	1988	927/926 BCE	722 BCE	586 BCE
Jeremy Hughes ⁶	1990	937 BCE	724 BCE	587 BCE
Gershon Galil ⁷	1996	931/930 BCE	722 BCE	586 BCE
John Rogerson (d. 2018) ⁸	1999	931 BCE	722/721 BCE	587 BCE
Christine Tetley (d. 2013) ⁹	2005	981 BCE	719 BCE	---
Rodger C. Young ¹⁰	2005	932/931 BCE	723 BCE	588 BCE
Floyd Nolen Jones ¹¹	2007	975 BCE	721 BCE	586 BCE
Leslie McFall (d. 2015) ¹²	2008	931 BCE	723 BCE	586 BCE

¹ Orthodox Judaism bases its chronology on chronological references in *Seder Olam Rabbah* (a 2nd century CE book of rabbinic chronology attributed to Rabbi Yose ben Halafta).

² James Ussher, *Annals of the World* (London, 1650) [updated as, *Annals of the World: James Ussher's Classic Survey of World History*; ed. Larry and Marion Pierce, Green Forest, Arkansas: Master Books, 2003].

³ W. F. Albright, "The Chronology of the Divided Monarchy of Israel" (Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research, No. 100, 1945; p. 16-22); "New Light from Egypt on the Chronology and History of Israel and Judah" (Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research, No. 130, 1953; p. 4-11).

⁴ Edwin R. Thiele, *The Mysterious Numbers of the Hebrew Kings*. 3rd edition (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan, 1983) [reprinted: Grand Rapids, Michigan: Kregel, 1994; first edition, 1951].

⁵ John H. Hayes and Paul K. Hooker, *A New Chronology for the Kings of Israel and Judah and Its Implications for Biblical History and Literature* (Atlanta: John Knox Press, 1988) [reprinted: Eugene, Oregon: Wipf and Stock, 2007].

⁶ Jeremy Hughes, *Secrets of the Times: Myth and History in Biblical Chronology* (Journal for the Study of the Old Testament Supplement Series, No. 66; Sheffield: Journal for the Study of the Old Testament Press, 1990) [reprinted: Library of the Hebrew Bible/Old Testament Studies; London: Continuum, 2009].

⁷ Gershon Galil, *The Chronology of the Kings of Israel and Judah* (Studies in the History and Culture of the Ancient Near East, 9;

⁸ John Rogerson, *Chronicle of the Old Testament Kings: The Reign-by-Reign Record of the Rulers of Ancient Israel* (London: Thames & Hudson, 1999). Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1996).

⁹ M. Christine Tetley, *The Reconstructed Chronology of the Divided Kingdom* (Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 2005); out of print.

¹⁰ Rodger C. Young, "Tables of Reign Lengths from the Hebrew Court Recorders" (Journal of the Evangelical Theological Seminary 48/2; June, 2005; p. 225-48).

¹¹ Floyd Nolen Jones, *The Chronology of the Old Testament* (Green Forest, Arkansas: Master Books, 2007).

¹² Leslie McFall, "Chronology of the Hebrew Kings" (2008, published online at http://www.btinternet.com/~lmf12/HEBREW_REVISED_KINGS.pdf).

SYNCHRONIZED ANE CHRONOLOGY

Sufficient chronological data has been preserved from the remnants of the five most prominent ancient Near East kingdoms and empires—Israel, Judah, Egypt, Assyria, and Babylon—to allow the chronological data for each to be interpreted in a way that yields a reasonably accurate timeline for their separate histories, and then to assemble those separate individual national timelines into a harmonized composite timeline that sheds even greater light on the chronology and history of the entire ancient Near East region. The latter goal is the purpose of the synchronized ANE chronology tables in this chapter.

Unlike most ANE synchronizations that use as their base timeline the traditional Assyrian chronology defined by the Eponym Canon and Chronicles and anchored by Sir Henry Rawlinson's 763 BCE date for the Bûr-Saggilê eclipse, the ANE synchronization in this chapter instead uses the New Hebrew Kings Chronology from Chapter Two in this book as its base timeline, and all other ancient ANE chronologies are aligned with it. It is the opinion of your author that the New Hebrew Kings Chronology, supported as it is by: (1) the biblical text without having to assume scribal error or emendation, (2) its agreement with the timeline of Egyptian chronology as defined by Professor Ken Kitchen in his book, *The Third Intermediate Period in Egypt 1100-650 BC*, (3) the precise calculations for eclipses available from modern astronomy, and (4) chronological cross-references in ancient Jewish sources, offers a more accurate representation of the sequence of events that happened in the Ancient Near East.

How to Read the Tables

The reigns of the one-hundred or so kings, and one queen, who ruled over the kingdoms and empires of the ancient Near East from 1,006 BCE to 560 BCE, plus the reigns of the kings in the less-well-documented kingdom of Tyre, are displayed graphically in the synchronized ANE chronology tables that begin on the next page. The reigns of the monarchs are shown using side-by-side columns of years to indicate their place in time, and to reveal the relationship of one monarch's reign to another at a glance. For the first occurrence of a monarch in the tables, his or her name is shown in boldface type preceded by the appropriate royal icon as indicated in the list of symbols below. If the monarch had an accession year, that

is indicated by an “AY” in superscript following the name, otherwise it is indicated by the notation “1st” for the initial non-accession year. Regnal years are numbered sequentially thereafter. On Plates 1-6, the kings of Tyre are shown in the right-hand column, whereas the kings of Babylon are shown in that column on Plates 9-14. The years for the kingdom of Judah are aligned to begin in autumn (September/October), while all other kingdoms are aligned to begin in spring (March/April). Note that the Hebrew sabbath years are shown in boldface type, with jubilee years shown in parenthesis as well.

Key to Symbols and Abbreviations

- ☐ King of Israel or Judah
- ☐ Ruler of Israel or Judah (but not king)
- ▲ Pharaoh of a Dynasty of Egypt
- ☐ King of the Neo-Assyrian Empire
- ☐ King of the Babylonian Empire
- ☐ King of Tyre
- AY Accession year
- CR Coreign
- || End of reign
- ⚡^E Conflict with Egypt
- ⚡^A Conflict with Assyria
- ⚡^B Conflict with Babylon
- ☼ Solar eclipse
- Lunar eclipse

Synchronized ANE Chronology

Important ANE Anchor Points and Cross-checks		BCE
1.	Solomon's 4th year equivalent to Hirom's 12th year <i>Josephus, Against Apion 1.18; 1 Kings 6:1</i>	1002
2.	Shishak's invasion equivalent to Rehoboam's 5th year (Siamun's 17th year?) <i>1 Kings 14: 25 and 2 Chronicles 12: 2</i>	961
3.	Shoshenq I (<i>aka</i> Shishak) campaigned in Israel during reign of Asa <i>Bubastite Portal at Karnak; 2 Chronicles 14:9-15</i>	925
4.	Ahab's 22nd year (his year of death) equivalent to Shalmaneser III's 6th year <i>Kurkh Monolith and Black Obelisk; 1 Kings 22:29-37</i>	883
5.	Jehu paid tribute to Assyria in Shalmaneser III's 18th year <i>Black Obelisk</i>	871
6.	Solar (Bûr-Saggilê) eclipse on June 24, 791 BCE occurred in Ashur-dan III's 9th year; <i>Assyrian Eponym List and Chronicles</i>	791
7.	Uzziah (Azariah) paid tribute to Tiglath-pileser III <i>Annals of Tiglath-pileser III (3rd year)</i>	ca. 771-770
8.	Menahem paid tribute to Tiglath-pileser III <i>2 Kings 15:19-20; Annals of Tiglath-pileser III (8th year)</i>	ca. 767-766
9.	Lunar eclipse on February 6, 747 BCE occurred on Nabonassar's accession year <i>Babylonian Chronicle, Ptolemy's Royal Canon</i>	747
10.	Hoshea as governor in Gilead paid tribute to Tiglath-pileser III, who appointed him king of Israel; <i>Annals of Tiglath-pileser III (Tadmor, Summary Inscriptions 4 and 9)</i>	731
11.	Lunar eclipse on April 9, 731 BCE occurred in Mukin-zeri's 1st year <i>Astronomical Diaries</i>	731
12.	Mukin-zeri's 1st year equivalent to Tiglath-pileser III's 14th year <i>Babylonian Chronicle</i>	731
13.	Siege/Fall of Samaria occurred in Shalmaneser V's last year, Sargon II's accession year <i>2 Kings 17:3-6 and 18:9-11; Babylonian Chronicle</i>	722-721
14.	Lunar eclipse on April 22, 621 BCE occurred in Nabopolassar's 5th year; <i>Ptolemy's Almagest</i>	621
15.	Josiah's 31st year (his year of death) equivalent to Necho II's 1st year; <i>2 Kings 23:28-30 and 2 Chronicles 35:20-24; Babylonian Chronicle</i>	609
16.	Destruction of Solomon's Temple in Nebuchadnezzar II's 19th year; <i>2 Kings 25:8 and Jeremiah 52:12; tablet VAT 4956 (to verify 37th year)</i>	586
17.	Jehoiachin's release from prison occurs in Amil-merodach's 1st year; <i>2 Kings 25:27; tablet VAT 4956 (to verify 37th year)</i>	560

Recalibrating Ancient Near East Chronology

1	1006-970 BCE	Years are Gregorian years [January to December]; AY = accession year; CR = coreign; R = regent; sabbath years in bold type; jubilee years in parenthesi
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United Israel (reigns begin in Tishri/Autumn; accession year system)		Egypt (reigns begin in Spring)	
		DYNASTY 21	DYNASTY 22
David dies in 1006 BCE -----> Note 1a page 81	☞ Solomon ^{AY}	Psusennes I ^{32nd}	
	1st	33rd	
Solomon married daughter of pharaoh Psusennes I Note 1b page 81	2nd	34th	
	3rd	35th	
Temple construction started ---> in tenth month of the 4th year, in 1002 BCE, which was both a sabbath and jubilee year Note 1c page 81	4th	36th	
	5th	37th	
Temple construction finished in eighth month of 11th year Note 1d page 81 ----->	6th	38th	
	7th	39th	
Temple dedicated in seventh ----> month of the year following its completion, in a sabbath year Note 1e page 82	8th	40th	
	9th	41st	
Construction of Solomon's -----> royal palace completed	10th	42nd	
	11th	43rd	
	12th	44th	
	13th	45th	
	14th	46th ▲ Amenemope ^{AY}	
	15th	47th? 1st	
	16th	48th? 2nd	
	17th	3rd	
	18th	4th	
	19th	5th	
	20th	6th	
	21st	7th	
	22nd	8th	
	23rd	9th ▲ Osochor ^{AY}	
	24th	1st	
	25th	2nd	
	26th	3rd	
	27th	4th	
	28th	5th	
	29th	6th ▲ Siamun ^{AY}	
	30th	1st	
	31st	2nd	
	32nd	3rd	
	33rd	4th	
	34th	5th	
	35th	6th	
	36th	7th	
		8th	

continued

Synchronized ANE Chronology

Symbols:  king of Israel or Judah ( ruler but not king);  king of Egypt;  king of Assyria;  king of Tyre;
 king of Babylon; || = end of reign; ⚡ = conflict with Egypt (E), Assyria (A), or Babylon (B)

Egypt <i>cont'd</i> (reigns begin in Spring)			Assyria (reigns begin in Spring)	Tyre (reigns begin in Spring)
DYNASTY 23	DYNASTY 24	DYNASTIES 25/26		
			<i>Ashur-rabi IV</i> ^{36h}	<i>Hirom</i> ^{7th}
			37th	8th
			38th	9th
			39th	10th
			40th	11th
			41st  <i>Ashur-res-ishi II</i> ^{AY}	12th
			1st	13th
			2nd	14th
			3rd	15th
			4th	16th
			5th  <i>Tiglath-pileser II</i> ^{AY}	17th
			1st	18th
			2nd	19th
			3rd	20th
			4th	21st
			5th	22nd
			6th	23rd
			7th	24th
			8th	25th
			9th	26th
			10th	27th
			11th	28th
			12th	29th
			13th	30th
			14th	31st
			15th	32nd
			16th	33rd
			17th	34th  <i>Baleazarus</i> ^{AY}
			18th	1st
			19th	2nd
			20th	3rd
			21st	4th
			22nd	5th
			23rd	6th
			24th	7th  <i>Abdastartus</i> ^{AY}
			25th	1st
			26th	2nd
			27th	3rd

Recalibrating Ancient Near East Chronology

2	969-932 BCE	Years are <i>Gregorian years</i> [January to December]; <i>AY</i> = <i>accession year</i> ; <i>CR</i> = <i>coreign</i> ; <i>R</i> = <i>regent</i> ; <i>sabbath years</i> in bold type ; <i>jubilee years</i> in <i>parenthesi</i>
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United Israel/Judah (reigns begin in Tishri/Autumn; accession year system)			Egypt (reigns begin in Spring)	
			DYNASTY 21	DYNASTY 22
Solomon ^{37th}			Siamun ^{9th}	
38th			10th	
Note 2 pages 82 39th			11th	
Solomon dies in 966 BCE -----> 40th Rehoboam ^{AY}			12th	
1st			13th	
Northern ten tribes reject Rehoboam -----> 2nd			14th	
Israel (reigns begin in Nisan/Spring; non-accession system)			15th	Shishak invades Judah, Jerusalem Note 3 page 83
Levites migrate to Judah during next three years 3rd			16th	
4th			17th	
E 5th <-----			18th	Psusennes II ^{AY}
1st yr. Jeroboam 1st			19th	▲
2nd yr. Rehoboam 1st (Judah only)				1st
2nd 2nd yr.				2nd
3rd 3rd yr.				3rd
4th 4th yr.				4th
5th 5th yr.				5th
6th 6th yr.				6th
7th 7th yr.				7th
8th 8th yr.				8th
9th 9th yr.				9th
10th 10th yr.				10th
11th 11th yr.				11th
12th 12th yr.				12th
13th 13th yr.				13th
14th 14th yr.				
15th 15th yr.				
16th 16th yr.				
17th 17th yr.				
-----18th 18th yr.-----17th Abijah ^{AY}			Shoshenq I ^{AY} ▲ 14th	
19th 19th yr.				1st
20th 20th yr.				2nd
-----21st 21st yr.-----3rd Asa ^{AY}				3rd
22nd Nadab 1st 22nd yr.				4th
-----2nd Baasha 1st 23rd yr.				5th
2nd 24th yr.				6th
3rd 25th yr.				7th
4th 26th yr.				8th
5th 27th yr.				9th
6th 28th yr.				10th
7th 29th yr.				11th
8th 30th yr.				12th
				13th

continued

Synchronized ANE Chronology

Symbols:  king of Israel or Judah ( ruler but not king);  king of Egypt;  king of Assyria;  king of Tyre;
 king of Babylon; || = end of reign; ⚡ = conflict with Egypt (E), Assyria (A), or Babylon (B)

Egypt cont'd (reigns begin in Spring)			Assyria (reigns begin in Spring)	Tyre (reigns begin in Spring)
DYNASTY 23	DYNASTY 24	DYNASTIES 25/26		
			<u>Tiglath-pileser II ^{28th}</u>	<u>Abdastartus ^{4th}</u>
			29th	5th
			30th	6th
			31st	7th
			32nd  Ashur-dan II ^{AY}	8th
			1st	9th  (eldest son) ^{AY}
			2nd	1st
			3rd	2nd
			4th	3rd
			5th	4th
			6th	5th
			7th	6th
			8th	7th
			9th	8th
			10th	9th
			11th	10th
			12th	11th
			13th	12th  Astartus ^{AY}
			14th	1st
			15th	2nd
			16th	3rd
			17th	4th
			18th	5th
			19th	6th
			20th	7th
			21st	8th
			22nd	9th
			23rd  Adad-nirari II ^{AY}	10th
			1st	11th
			2nd	12th  Aserymus ^{AY}
			3rd	1st
			4th	2nd
			5th	3rd
			6th	4th
			7th	5th
			8th	6th
			9th	7th
			10th	8th

Recalibrating Ancient Near East Chronology

3

931-894
BCE

Years are Gregorian years [January to December]; AY = accession year;
CR = coreign; R = regent; sabbath years in bold type; jubilee years in parentheses

Israel

(reigns begin in Nisan/Spring;
non-accession system)

<i>Baasha</i> 9th	31st yr.
10th	32nd yr.
11th	33rd yr.
12th	34th yr.
13th	35th yr.
14th	36th yr.
15th	Zerah attacked Asa in the 36th year after the kingdoms divided, Asa defeated Zerah, then
16th	Baasha attacked. Asa appealed for help from Ben-hadad I, who then
17th	attacked Baasha from the north. Shoshenq I came to defend Baasha, as recorded on wall at Karnak. (see page 24)
18th	
19th	
20th	
21st	
22nd	
23rd	
24th	Elah 1st
2nd	Zimri 1st Omri 1st
3rd	Note 4 page 84
4th	1
5th	2
6th	3
7th	4
8th	5
9th	6
10th	7
11th	8
12th	9
Ahab 1st	10
2nd	11
3rd	12
4th	13
5th	14
6th	15
7th	16
8th	17
9th	18
10th	19
11th	20

The Seder Olam says that Omri defeated Tibni in his fourth year (after Omri had subdued Moab?)

Judah

(reigns begin in Tishri/Autumn;
accession year system)

Asa 10th	6th yr.
11th	7th yr.
12th	8th yr.
13th	9th yr.
14th	10th yr.
15th	end peace
16th	
17th	
18th	
19th	
20th	
21st	
22nd	
23rd	
24th	
25th	
26th	
27th	
28th	
29th	
30th	
31st	
32nd	
33rd	
34th	
35th	
36th	
37th	
38th	
39th	
40th	
41st	Jehoshaphat AY
1st	
2nd	
3rd	
4th	
5th	
6th	

Jehoshaphat sent princes, priests, and Levites to the cities of Judah to read the Law in the sabbath year Note 5 page 84

YEAR
BCE
GREGORIAN

931
930
929
928
927
926
925
924
923
922
921
920
919
918
917
916
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914
913
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911
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908
907
906
905
(904)
903
902
901
900
899
898
897
896
895
894

Egypt

(reigns begin in Spring)

DYNASTY 21

DYNASTY 22

	Shoshenq I 14th
	15th
	16th
	17th
	18th
	19th
	20th
Osorkon I AY	21st
	1st
	2nd
	3rd
	4th
	5th
	6th
	7th
	8th
	9th
	10th
	11th
	12th
	13th
	14th
	15th
	16th
	17th
	18th
	19th
	20th
	21st
	22nd
	23rd
	24th
	25th
	26th
	27th
	28th
	29th
	30th

continued

Synchronized ANE Chronology

Symbols:  king of Israel or Judah ( ruler but not king);  king of Egypt;  king of Assyria;  king of Tyre;
 king of Babylon; || = end of reign; ⚡ = conflict with Egypt (E), Assyria (A), or Babylon (B)

Egypt <i>cont'd</i> (reigns begin in Spring)			Assyria (reigns begin in Spring)	Tyre (reigns begin in Spring)
DYNASTY 23	DYNASTY 24	DYNASTIES 25/26		
			<i>Adad-nirari II</i> ^{11th}	<i>Aserymus</i> ^{9th}  Pheles ^{AY}
			12th	1st  Ithobalus ^{AY}
			13th	1st
			14th	2nd
			15th	3rd
			16th	4th
			17th	5th
			18th	6th
			19th	7th
			20th	8th
			21st  Tukulti-ninurta ^{AY}	9th
			1st	10th
			2nd	11th
			3rd	12th
			4th	13th
			5th	14th
			6th	15th
			7th  Ashur-nasir-pal II ^{AY}	16th
			1st	17th
			2nd	18th
			3rd	19th
			4th	20th
			5th	21st
			6th	22nd
			7th	23rd
			8th	24th
			9th	25th
			10th	26th
			11th	27th
			12th	28th
			13th	29th
			14th	30th
			15th	31st
			16th	32nd  Badezorus ^{AY}
			17th	1st
			18th	2nd
			19th	3rd
			20th	4th

Recalibrating Ancient Near East Chronology

4

893-856
BCE

Years are Gregorian years [January to December]; AY = accession year;
CR = coreign; R = regent; sabbath years in bold type; jubilee years in parentheses

Israel (reigns begin in Nisan/Spring; non-accession system)			Judah (reigns begin in Tishri/Autumn; accession year system)			Egypt (reigns begin in Spring)		
						DYNASTY 21		DYNASTY 22
<i>Ahab</i> 12th			<i>Jehoshaphat</i> 7th					<i>Osorkon I</i> 31st
13th			8th					32nd
14th			9th					33rd
15th			10th					34th CR Shoshenq II
16th			11th			Takeloth I AY ▲		35th
17th			12th					1st
18th			13th					2nd
19th			14th					3rd
20th			15th					4th
21st			16th					5th
A 22nd Ahaziah 1st			A 17th					6th
Ahaziah 2nd			18th					7th
(Jehoram served as regent in Israel, Note 6 page 84)			19th					8th
A Joram 1st			20th					9th
1st 2nd			21st					10th
2nd 3rd			22nd					11th
3rd 4th			23rd					12th
4th 5th			24th					13th
5th 6th			25th Jehoram AY					14th
6th 7th			1st			Osorkon II AY ▲		15th
7th 8th			2nd					1st
8th 9th			3rd					2nd
9th 10th			4th					3rd
10th 11th			5th					4th CR Harsiese
11th 12th (no king)			6th					5th CR Harsiese
Jehu 1st			7th					6th CR Harsiese
Note 25 page 101 2nd			8th Ahaziah AY Athaliah 1st					7th CR Harsiese
3rd Note 7 page 86			Athaliah 2nd					8th CR Harsiese
4th			3rd usurped throne in					9th CR Harsiese
5th			4th same year					10th CR Harsiese
6th			5th Ahaziah					11th CR Harsiese
7th			6th was killed					12th CR Harsiese
8th			Note 8 page 86 6th					13th CR Harsiese
9th			Joash 1st (no AY)					14th CR Harsiese?
10th			2nd Joash was					15th
11th			3rd made king					16th
12th			4th before 1st					17th
			5th of Tishri in					18th
			6th 861 BCE					

continued

Synchronized ANE Chronology

Symbols:  king of Israel or Judah ( ruler but not king);  king of Egypt;  king of Assyria;  king of Tyre;
 king of Babylon; || = end of reign; ⚡ = conflict with Egypt (E), Assyria (A), or Babylon (B)

Egypt (reigns begin in Spring)			Assyria (reigns begin in Spring)	Tyre (reigns begin in Spring)
DYNASTY 23	DYNASTY 24	DYNASTIES 25/26		
			Ashur-nasir-pal ^{21st}	Badezorus ^{5th}
			22nd	6th  Mategenus ^{AY}
			23rd	1st
			24th	2nd
			25th  Shalmaneser III ^{AY}	3rd
			1st	4th
			2nd	5th
			3rd	6th
			4th	7th
			Battle of Qarqar (Ahab killed)	8th
			5th	9th  Pygmalion ^{AY}
			6th	1st
			7th	2nd
			8th	3rd
			9th	4th
			10th	5th
			11th	6th
			12th	7th
			13th	Dido fled Tyre to found Carthage
			14th	8th
			15th	9th
			16th	10th
			17th	11th
			18th	12th
		Jehu sent by Joram to pay tribute to Assyria in Shalmaneser III's 18th year 871 BCE (tribute payment recorded on the Black Obelisk but is not mentioned in the Bible) Note 25 page 101	19th	13th
			20th	14th
			21st	15th
			22nd	16th
			23rd	17th
			24th	18th
			25th	19th
			26th	20th
			27th	21st
			28th	22nd
			29th	23rd
			30th	24th
			31st	25th
			32nd king was limmu	26th
			33rd Ashur-danin-pal rebelled,	27th

Recalibrating Ancient Near East Chronology

5

855-818
BCE

Years are Gregorian years [January to December]; AY = accession year;
CR = coreign; R = regent; sabbath years in bold type; jubilee years in parentheses

Israel (reigns begin in Nisan/Spring; non-accession system)		Judah (reigns begin in Tishri/Autumn; accession year system)	YEAR BCE GREGORIAN	Egypt (reigns begin in Spring)	
				DYNASTY 21	DYNASTY 22
Jehu ^{13th}		Joash ^{7th}	(855)		Osorkon II ^{19th}
14th		8th	854		20th
15th		9th	853		21st
16th		10th	852		22nd
17th		11th	851		23rd
18th	The Seder Olam records that Joash of Judah renovated the Temple in his 23rd year, 155 years after construction of the Temple was completed by Solomon, and 218 years before Josiah renovated the Temple in his 18th year in 623/622 BCE.	12th	850		
19th		13th	849	Takeloth II ^{AY} ▲ 24th	
20th		14th	848		1st
21st		15th	847		2nd
22nd		16th	846		3rd
23rd		17th	845		4th
24th		18th	844		5th
25th		19th	843		6th
26th		20th	843		7th
27th		21st	841		8th
28th ☐ Jehoahaz ^{1st}		22nd	840		9th
2nd		23rd	839		10th
3rd		24th	838		11th
4th		25th	837		12th
5th		26th	836		13th
6th		27th	835		14th
7th		28th	834		15th
8th		29th	833		16th
9th		30th	832		17th
10th		31st	831		18th
11th		32nd	830		19th
12th		33rd	829		20th
13th		34th	828		21st
14th		35th	827		22nd
15th		36th	826		23rd
Note 9 page 86		37th	825		24th
16th ☐ Jehoash ^{CR}		38th	824	Shoshenq III ^{AY} ▲ 25th	
17th ☐ Jehoash ^{CR}		39th	823		1st
☐ Jehoash ^{1st}		40th ☐ Amaziah ^{AY}	822		2nd
2nd		1st	821		3rd
3rd	Jehoash began 2-year coreign in the 37th year of Joash, became sole ruler in the year 824 BCE	2nd	820		4th
4th		3rd	819		5th
5th		4th	818		6th
6th					7th

continued

Synchronized ANE Chronology

Symbols:  king of Israel or Judah ( ruler but not king);  king of Egypt;  king of Assyria;  king of Tyre;
 king of Babylon; || = end of reign; ⚡ = conflict with Egypt (E), Assyria (A), or Babylon (B)

			Assyria	Tyre
			(reigns begin in Spring)	(reigns begin in Spring)
			Shalmaneser III ^{33rd}	
Egypt			▼ Ashur-danin-pal rebelled,	
(reigns begin in Spring)				
DYNASTY 23	DYNASTY 24	DYNASTIES 25/26	34th briefly secured the throne;	Pygmalion ^{28th}
			35th he and his brother, the future	29th
		missing eponym	36th? Shamshi-adad V, battled.	30th
		missing eponym	37th? Note 26 page 101	31st
			👑 Shamshi-adad V ^{AY}	32nd
			1st	33rd
			2nd	34th
			3rd	35th
			4th	36th
			5th	37th
			6th	38th
			7th	39th
			8th	40th
			9th	41st
			10th	42nd
			11th	43rd
			12th	44th
			13th 👑 Adad-nirari III ^{AY}	45th
			1st	46th
			2nd	47th
			3rd	Tyrean regnal data after Pygmalion's reign uncertain until circa 750 BCE
			4th	
			5th	
			6th	
			7th	
			8th	
			9th	
			10th	
			11th	
			12th	
			13th	
			14th	
			15th	
			16th	
			17th	
			18th	
			19th	
			20th	
▲ Pedubast I ^{1st}				

Recalibrating Ancient Near East Chronology

6

817-780
BCE

Years are *Gregorian years* [January to December]; AY = *accession year*;
CR = *coreign*; R = *regent*; *sabbath years in bold type*; *jubilee years in parentheses*

Israel (reigns begin in Nisan/Spring; non-accession system)		Judah (reigns begin in Tishri/Autumn; accession year system)	YEAR BCE GREGORIAN	Egypt (reigns begin in Spring)	
				DYNASTY 21	DYNASTY 22
Jehoash ^{7th}		Amaziah ^{5th}	817		Shoshenq III ^{8th}
8th		6th	816		9th
9th		7th	815		10th
10th		8th	814		11th
11th		9th	813		12th
12th		10th	812		13th
13th		11th	811		14th
14th		12th	810		15th
15th		13th	809		16th
16th ☛ Jereboam II ^{1st}		14th	808		17th
2nd		15th	807		18th
3rd		Note 10 page 87 16th	(806)		19th
4th		17th ☛ Uzziah ^{1st} 16 yo.	805		20th
5th		18th Uzziah ^{2nd} 17 yo.	804		21st
6th		19th Uzziah ^{3rd} 18 yo.	803		22nd
7th		20th Uzziah ^{4th} 19 yo.	802		23rd
8th		21st Uzziah ^{5th} 20 yo.	801		24th
9th		22nd Uzziah ^{6th} 21 yo.	800		25th
10th		23rd Uzziah ^{7th} 22 yo.	799		26th
11th		24th Uzziah ^{8th} 23 yo.	798		27th
12th		25th Uzziah ^{9th} 24 yo.	797		28th
13th		26th Uzziah ^{10th} 25 yo.	796		29th
14th	Amaziah died in	27th Uzziah ^{11th} 26 yo.	795		30th
15th	15th year after	28th Uzziah ^{12th} 27 yo.	794		31st
death of Jehoash		29th Uzziah ^{13th} 28 yo.	793		32nd
16th		14th	792		33rd
17th	Uzziah (aka Amaziah)	15th	791	←	34th
18th	began reigning as king	16th	790		35th
19th	when he was 16 years	17th	789		36th
20th	old; as sole ruler when	18th	788		37th
21st	he was 27 years old,	19th	787		38th
22nd	during the reign of	20th	786		39th
23rd	Jereboam II, but not	21st	785		40th
24th	in Jereboam II's 27th	22nd	784		41st
25th	regnal year as in KJV	23rd	783		42nd
26th		24th	782		43rd
27th		25th	781		44th
28th		26th	780		45th
29th					

continued

Synchronized ANE Chronology

Symbols:  king of Israel or Judah ( ruler but not king);  king of Egypt;  king of Assyria;  king of Tyre;
 king of Babylon; || = end of reign;  = conflict with Egypt (E), Assyria (A), or Babylon (B)

Egypt			Assyria		
(reigns begin in Spring)			(reigns begin in Spring)		
DYNASTY 23	DYNASTY 24	DYNASTIES 25/26			
<i>Pedubast I</i> ^{2nd}			<i>Adad-nirari III</i> ^{21st}		
3rd			22nd		
4th			23rd		
5th			24th		
6th			25th		
7th			26th		
8th			27th		
9th			28th  Shalmaneser IV ^{AY}		
10th			1st		
11th			2nd		
12th			3rd		
13th			4th		
14th			5th		
15th ^{CR} Iuput I			6th		
16th ^{CR} Iuput I			7th		
17th			8th		
18th			9th		
19th			10th  Ashur-dan III ^{AY}		
20th			1st		
21st			2nd		
22nd			3rd		
23rd			4th		
24th			5th		
25th			6th		
26th  Shoshenq IV ^{1st}			7th		
2nd			8th		
3rd			9th		
4th			10th		
5th			11th		
6th			12th		
7th  Osorkon III ^{1st}			13th		
2nd			14th		
3rd			15th		
4th			16th		
5th			17th		
6th			18th  Ashur-nirari V ^{AY}		
7th			1st		
8th		 Alara ^{AY}	2nd		

 Bûr-Saggilê Eclipse
June 24, 791 BCE
See pages 19-24

Recalibrating Ancient Near East Chronology

7

779-742
BCE

Years are *Gregorian years* [January to December]; AY = *accession year*;
CR = *coreign*; R = *regent*; *sabbath years in bold type*; *jubilee years in parentheses*

Israel (reigns begin in Nisan/Spring; non-accession system)		Judah (reigns begin in Tishri/Autumn; accession year system)		YEAR BCE GREGORIAN	Egypt (reigns begin in Spring)	
Jeroboam II ^{30th}		Uzziah ^{27th}		779	DYNASTY 21	DYNASTY 22
31st		28th		778		Shoshenq III ^{46th}
32nd	<i>Accession Year System</i>	29th		777		47th
33rd	<i>Starting with Zachariah,</i>	30th		776		48th
34th	<i>the kingdom of Israel</i>	31st		775		49th
35th	<i>adopted the accession-</i>	32nd		774		50th
36th	<i>year system (but it was</i>	33rd		773		51st
37th	<i>not always followed as</i>	34th		772	Pimay ^{1st} ▲	52nd
38th	<i>indicated below); the</i>	35th <-----		771		2nd
39th	<i>Nisan-to-Nisan system</i>	36th		770		3rd
40th	<i>of counting months was</i>	37th		769		4th
	<i>apparently retained.</i>	38th		768		5th
	<i>Note 11 page 89</i>	39th		767		6th
41st		40th		766	Shoshenq V ^{1st} ▲	7th
42nd		41st		765		2nd
43rd		42nd		764		3rd
44th		43rd		763		4th
45th		44th		762		5th
46th		45th		761		6th
47th		46th		760		7th
48th		47th		759		8th
49th		48th <i>Note 14 page 90</i>		758		9th
50th		49th Jotham ^{1st}		(757)		10th
51st		50th Jotham ^{2nd}		756		11th
52nd		51st Jotham ^{3rd}		755		12th
53rd		52nd Jotham ^{4th}		754		13th
54th		53rd		753		14th
55th		54th		752		15th
56th		55th		751		16th
57th		56th		750		17th
58th		57th		749		18th
59th		58th		748		19th
60th		59th		747		20th
61st		60th		746		21st
62nd		61st		745		22nd
63rd		62nd		744		23rd
64th		63rd		743		24th
65th		64th		742		25th
66th		65th				26th

continued

Synchronized ANE Chronology

Symbols: king of Israel or Judah (ruler but not king); king of Egypt; king of Assyria; king of Tyre;
 king of Babylon; || = end of reign; ⚡ = conflict with Egypt (E), Assyria (A), or Babylon (B)

Egypt (reigns begin in Spring)			Assyria (reigns begin in Spring)		
DYNASTY 23	DYNASTY 24	DYNASTIES 25/26			
<i>Osorkon III</i> ^{9th}		<i>Alara</i> ^{1st}	<i>Ashur-nirari V</i> ^{3rd}		
10th		2nd	4th		
11th		3rd	5th		
12th		4th	6th		
13th		5th	7th		
14th		6th	8th Pul (later T-P III)		
15th		7th			
15th		8th			
17th		9th			
18th		10th			
19th		11th			
20th		12th			
21st		13th			
22nd		14th			
23rd		15th			
24th		16th			
25th CR Takeloth III		17th			
26th CR Takeloth III		18th			
27th CR Takeloth III		19th			
28th CR Takeloth III	Kashta ^{AY}	20th			
29th CR Takeloth III		1st			
▲ Takeloth III		2nd			
2nd ▲ Rudamun ^{1st}		3rd			
2nd		4th			
3rd		5th			
4th ▲ Iuput II ^{1st}		6th			
2nd		7th			
3rd		8th			
4th		9th			
5th		10th			
6th		11th			
7th		12th			
8th	Piankhy ^{AY}	13th			
9th		1st			
10th		2nd			
11th		3rd	▲ Tiglath-pileser III ^{AY}		
12th		4th	1st		
13th		5th	2nd		
			3rd		

For a discussion of the evidence for an extended period associated with Tiglath-pileser III (aka Pul), see page 14

Some fragmentary inscriptions of Tiglath-pileser III mention a ruler called Azriaou of Ya'udi/Yauda, equated with Azariah of Judah by some scholars.

Menaheam paid tribute to Pul, later known as Tiglath-pileser III (once he had been recognized as king of Assyria in the year 745 BCE), tribute being paid in his first year as king of Israel.

One possible explanation for the scarcity of evidence from this period is that effective authority was no longer exercised by a single centralized government. Instead, administration may have been divided among regional centers located south of the areas most affected by Urartian occupation and military activity. Under this hypothesis, a regional commander known as Pul gradually consolidated authority over these centers while conducting operations that reduced the Urartian threat and restored Assyrian control over its territory.

Once political unity had been re-established, Pul was recognized as king and assumed the throne name Tiglath-pileser III in 745 BCE. The absence of recorded limmu officials during this period may reflect the breakdown of centralized administration and the interruption of the normal process by which annual eponyms were appointed and preserved. With the restoration of the monarchy under Tiglath-pileser III, the limmu system again appears in the historical record.

February 6, 747 BCE
 Note 27 page 101

Babylon
 (reigns begin in Spring)

Nabonassar ^{AY}	
○ 1st	
2nd	
3rd	
4th	
5th	
6th	

Recalibrating Ancient Near East Chronology

8

741-704
BCE

Years are *Gregorian years* [January to December]; AY = *accession year*;
CR = *coreign*; R = *regent*; *sabbath years in bold type*; *jubilee years in parentheses*

Israel (reigns begin in Nisan/Spring; non-accession system)		Judah (reigns begin in Tishri/Autumn; accession year system) A		Egypt (reigns begin in Spring)	
			YEAR BCE GREGORIAN	DYNASTY 21	DYNASTY 22
Pekah 18th		Jotham 17th Ahaz 2nd 1st	741		Shoshenq V 27th
19th		18th 3rd	740		28th
20th		19th 4th	739		29th
20th		20th 5th	738		30th
Note 15 page 90		6th	737		31st
		7th	736		32nd
No king in Israel 738-731 BCE ¹		8th	735		33rd
		9th	734		34th
		10th	733		35th
		11th	732		36th
		12th	731		37th
		13th	730		
1st		14th	729	Osorkon IV 1st ▲ 38th	2nd
2nd		15th	728		3rd
3rd		16th Hezekiah AY	727		4th
4th		Note 18 page 91 1st	726		5th
5th		2nd	725		6th
6th		3rd	724		7th
7th	siege begins	4th	723		8th
8th		5th	722		9th
9th Fall of Samaria		6th	721		10th
Kingdom of Israel ends, people deported to Assyria Note 17 page 90		7th	720		11th
		8th	719		12th
		9th	718		13th
		10th	717		14th
		11th	716		15th
		12th	715		16th
		13th	714		17th
		14th	713		18th
		15th	712		
		16th	711		
		17th	710		
		18th	709		
		19th	(708)		
		20th	707		
		21st	706		
		22nd	705		
		23rd	704		

¹ The Seder Olam says that Hoshea killed Pekah in Jotham's twentieth year, which coincided with the fourth year of Ahab's reign. It also says that Ahab and Hoshea were vassals of Tiglath-pileser for eight years. The only way all of that is possible is if Hoshea became a vassal king over Assyrian-controlled lands east of the Jordan, ruling from Gilead for eight years from 738-731 BCE before becoming king of all Israel, ruling from Samaria, in Ahab's twelfth year in 731 BCE.

continued

Synchronized ANE Chronology

Symbols: king of Israel or Judah (ruler but not king); king of Egypt; king of Assyria; king of Tyre;
 king of Babylon; || = end of reign; ⚔ = conflict with Egypt (E), Assyria (A), or Babylon (B)

Egypt (reigns begin in Spring)			Assyria (reigns begin in Spring)		Babylon (reigns begin in Spring)	
DYNASTY 23	DYNASTY 24	DYNASTIES 25/26				
<i>Iuput II</i> ^{14th}		<i>Piankhy</i> ^{6th}	<i>Tiglath-pileser III</i> ^{4th}		<i>Nabonassar</i> ^{7th}	
15th		7th	5th		8th	
16th		8th	6th		9th	
17th		9th	7th		10th	
18th		10th	8th		11th	
19th		11th	9th		12th	
20th		12th	10th		13th	
21st		13th	11th	14th	Nabu-nadin-zeri ^{AY}	
22nd		14th	12th		Nabu-suma-ukin ^{1st}	
23rd		15th	13th	2nd	1 month Mukin-zeri ^{AY}	
24th		16th	14th	1st	○ 731 BCE <i>Note 28 page 101</i>	
25th		17th	15th		2nd	
26th		18th	16th	3rd	Tiglath-pileser III (Pul)	
27th	Tefnakht ^{AY}	19th	17th		1st	
28th	1st	20th	18th Shalmaneser V ^{AY}	2nd	Ululayu	
29th	2nd	21st	1st		1st	
30th	3rd	22nd	2nd		2nd	
31st	4th	23rd	3rd		3rd	
32nd	5th	24th	4th		4th	
33rd	6th	25th	5th Sargon II ^{AY}	5th	Merodach-baladan ^{AY}	
34th	7th	26th	1st		1st	
35th (36th)	8th	27th	2nd		2nd	
37th? 2nd	1st	28th	3rd		3rd	
38th? 3rd	2nd	29th	4th		4th	
39th? 4th	3rd	30th	5th		5th	
40th? 5th	4th	31st Shabako ^{AY}	6th		6th	
41st? 6th	5th	32nd? 1st	7th		7th	
	6th?	2nd	8th		8th	
		3rd	9th		9th	
		4th	10th		10th	
		5th	11th		11th	
		6th	12th		12th Sargon II	
		7th	13th		1st	
		8th	14th		2nd	
		9th	15th		3rd	
		10th	16th		4th	
		11th	17th		5th	
		12th	18th Sennacherib ^{AY}	6th	Sennacherib ^{AY}	

Years are Gregorian years [January to December]; AY = accession year;
CR = coreign; R = regent; sabbath years in bold type; jubilee years in parentheses

Judah (reigns begin in Tishri/Autumn; accession year system)		YEAR BCE GREGORIAN	Egypt (reigns begin in Spring)	
			DYNASTY 21	DYNASTY 22
Hezekiah ^{24th}		703		
25th		702		
↗ ^A 26th		701	Sennacherib invades	
↗ ^A 27th		700	Judah, besieges Jerusalem	
28th		699	in Hezekiah's 14th year	
29th ♣ Manasseh ^{AY}		698	Note 18 page 81	
1st		697		
2nd		696		
3rd		695		
4th		694		
5th		693		
6th		692		
7th		691		
8th		690		
9th		689		
10th		688		
11th		687		
12th		686		
13th		685		
14th		684		
15th		683		
16th		682		
17th		681		
18th		680		
19th		679		
20th		678		
Manasseh taken captive to Babylon by captains of Esarhaddon in 677 BCE (based on a passage in the Seder Olam that says Manasseh was taken captive in his twenty- second regnal year); see 2 Chronicles 33:11. Note 19 page 96	----->	21st	677	677-673 BCE: Remaining
		↗ ^A 22nd	676	Jews in kingdom of Israel
		23rd	675	deported to Assyria by
		24th	674	Esarhaddon and replaced
		25th	673	with foreigners.
		26th	672	
		27th	671	
		28th	670	
		29th	669	
		30th	668	
		31st	667	
		32nd	666	

continued

Synchronized ANE Chronology

Symbols: king of Israel or Judah (ruler but not king); king of Egypt; king of Assyria; king of Tyre;
 king of Babylon; || = end of reign; ⚡ = conflict with Egypt (E), Assyria (A), or Babylon (B)

Egypt (reigns begin in Spring)		Assyria (reigns begin in Spring)	Babylon (reigns begin in Spring)
DYNASTY 23	DYNASTY 24	DYNASTIES 25/26	
		<i>Shabako</i> ^{13th}	<i>Sennacherib</i> ^{1st}
		14th Shebitku ^{AY}	↓ <i>kingless period, Merodach-baladan led revolt and ruled for</i>
		1st	9 months as king, 703-702 BCE
		2nd	Ashur-nadin-shumi ^{AY}
		3rd	1st
		4th	2nd
		5th	3rd
		6th	4th
		7th	5th
		8th	6th Nergal-ushezib ^{Elamite}
		9th	1st Mushhezib-Marduk ^{Elamite}
		10th	1st
		11th	2nd
		12th Taharqa ^{AY}	3rd
		1st	4th <i>Babylon destroyed by</i>
		2nd	<i>Sennecherib in 689 BCE,</i>
		3rd	<i>kingless period began</i>
		4th	(no king)
		5th	(no king)
		6th	(no king)
		7th	(no king)
		8th	(no king)
		9th	(no king)
		10th	25th Esarhaddon ^{AY}
		11th	Esarhaddon
		12th	1st
		13th	2nd
		14th	3rd
		15th	4th
		16th	5th
		17th	6th
		18th	7th
		19th	8th
		20th	9th
		21st	10th
		22nd	11th
		23rd	Ashurbanipal ^{AY} Shamash-shum-ukin ^{AY}
		24th	1st
			2nd

Years are Gregorian years [January to December]; AY = accession year;
CR = coreign; R = regent; sabbath years in bold type; jubilee years in parenthesi

Judah		Egypt	
(reigns begin in Tishri/Autumn; accession year system)		(reigns begin in Spring)	
	YEAR BCE GREGORIAN	DYNASTY 21	DYNASTY 22
Manasseh ^{33rd}	665		
34th	664		
35th	663		
36th	662		
37th	661		
38th	660		
39th	(659)		
40th	658		
41st	657		
42nd	656		
43rd	655		
44th	654		
45th	653		
46th	652		
47th	651		
48th	650		
49th	649		
50th	648		
51st	647		
52nd	646		
53rd	645		
Note 20 page 96 54th	644		
55th  Amon AY	643		
1st	642		
2nd	641		
 Josiah AY	640		
1st	639		
2nd	638		
3rd	637		
4th	636		
5th	635		
6th	634		
7th	633		
8th	632		
9th	631		
10th	630		
11th	629		
12th	628		

Amon assassinated
before the 1st of Tishri
in year 641 BCE, throne
empty until assassins
are killed by the people,
Josiah made king by
the people sometime
after 1st of Tishri in
year 641 BCE,

continued

Synchronized ANE Chronology

Symbols:  king of Israel or Judah ( ruler but not king);  king of Egypt;  king of Assyria;  king of Tyre;
 king of Babylon; || = end of reign; ⚡ = conflict with Egypt (E), Assyria (A), or Babylon (B)

Egypt (reigns begin in Spring)		Assyria (reigns begin in Spring)		Babylon (reigns begin in Spring)
DYNASTY 23	DYNASTY 24	DYNASTIES 25/26		
	<i>Taharqa</i> ^{25th}	<i>Psammetichus</i> ^{AY}	<i>Ashurbanipal</i> ^{3rd}	<i>Shamash-shum-ukin</i> ^{3rd}
	 <i>Tantamani</i> ^{AY}	26th 	4th	4th
		1st 1st	5th	5th
		2nd 2nd	6th	6th
		3rd 3rd	7th	7th
		4th 4th	8th	8th
		5th 5th	9th	9th
		6th 6th	10th	10th
		7th 7th	11th	11th
		8th 8th	12th	12th
		9th	13th	13th
		10th	14th	14th
		11th	15th	15th
		12th	16th	16th
		13th	17th	17th
		14th	18th	18th
		15th	19th	19th
		16th	21st	20th
		17th	22nd	21st  <i>Kandalanu</i> ^{AY}
		18th	23rd	1st
		19th	24th	2nd
		20th	25th	3rd
		21st	26th	4th
		22nd	27th	5th
		23rd	28th	6th
		24th	29th	7th
		25th	30th	8th
		26th	31st	9th
		27th	32nd	10th
		28th	33rd	11th
		29th	34th	12th
		30th	35th	13th
		31st	36th	14th
		32nd	37th  <i>Ashur-etil-ilana</i> ^{AY}	15th
		33rd	1st	16th
		34th	2nd	17th
		35th	3rd	18th
		36th	4th	19th

Years are Gregorian years [January to December]; AY = accession year;
CR = coreign; R = regent; sabbath years in bold type; jubilee years in parentheses

Judah (reigns begin in Tishri/Autumn; accession year system)		YEAR BCE GREGORIAN	Egypt (reigns begin in Spring)	
Josiah ^{13th}			DYNASTY 21	DYNASTY 22
	14th	627	1st	Jeremiah began to
	15th	626	2nd	prophesy to Judah for
	16th	625	3rd	twenty-three years in
	17th	624	4th	Josiah's thirteenth year
	18th	623	5th	(Jeremiah 25:3)
	19th	622	6th	
	20th	621	7th	
	21st	620	8th	
	22nd	619	9th	
	23rd	618	10th	
	24th	617	11th	
	25th	616	12th	
	26th	615	13th	
	27th	614	14th	
	28th	613	15th	
	29th	612	16th	
	30th	611	17th	
		(610)	18th	
Note 21 page 96	☞ ^E 31st ☞ ^{AY} Jehoahaz	609	19th	
	1st ☞ ^{AY} Jehoiakim	608	20th	
	1st	607	21st	
	2nd	606	22nd	
	☞ ^B 3rd	605	23rd	
	4th	604		
	5th	603		
	6th	602		
	7th	601		
	8th	600		
	9th	599		
	☞ ^B 10th	598		
	☞ ^B 11th ☞ ^{AY} Jehoiachin ☞ ^{AY} Zedekiah	597		
Jehoiachin's captivity - Year 1	Zedekiah ^{1st}	596		
Year 2	2nd	595		
Year 3	3rd	594		
Year 4	4th	593		
Year 5	5th	592		
Year 6	6th	591		
Year 7	7th	590		

continued

Synchronized ANE Chronology

Symbols: king of Israel or Judah (ruler but not king); king of Egypt; king of Assyria; king of Tyre;
 king of Babylon; || = end of reign; ⚔ = conflict with Egypt (E), Assyria (A), or Babylon (B)

Egypt (reigns begin in Spring)			Assyria (reigns begin in Spring)		Babylon (reigns begin in Spring)
DYNASTY 23	DYNASTY 24	DYNASTIES 25/26	Ashur-etil-ilana ^{5th}		
		Psammetichus ^{37th}	Sin-sar-ishkun ^{AY}		Kandalanu ^{20th}
		38th	1st	21st Nabopolassar ^{AY}	
		39th	2nd		1st
		40th	3rd		2nd
		41st	4th		3rd
		42nd	5th		4th
		43rd	6th	5th 621 BCE <i>Note 29 page 102</i>	
		44th	7th		6th
		45th	8th		7th
		46th	9th		8th
		47th	10th		9th
		48th	11th		10th
		49th	12th		11th
		50th	13th		12th
		51st	14th		13th
		52nd	15th <i>Fall of Nineveh</i>		14th
		53rd	Ashur-uballit II ^{AY}		15th
	Necho II ^{AY} 54th		1st		16th
		1st	2nd		17th
		2nd	3rd		18th
		3rd	Assyrian Empire ends		19th
		4th			20th
		5th		21st Nebuchadnezzar II ^{AY}	
		6th			1st
		7th	Nebuchadnezzar II (r. 605-562) became king shortly after the Battle of Carchemish in August 605 BCE <i>Note 30 page 103</i>		2nd
		8th			3rd
		9th			4th
		10th			5th
		11th			6th
		12th			7th
		13th			8th
		14th			9th
		15th Psammetichus II ^{AY}			10th
		1st			11th
		2nd			12th
		3rd			13th
		4th			14th
		5th			15th

Recalibrating Ancient Near East Chronology

12	589-560 BCE	Years are Gregorian years [January to December]; AY = accession year; CR = coreign; R = regent; sabbath years in bold type; jubilee years in parentheses
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Judah (reigns begin in Tishri/Autumn; accession year system)		YEAR BCE GREGORIAN	Egypt (reigns begin in Spring)	
			DYNASTY 21	DYNASTY 22
Jehoiachin's captivity - Year 8	Zedekiah 8 th	589	sabbath yr.	
Year 9	9 th	588	1st yr.	
Year 10	↗ ^B 10 th	587	2nd yr.	
Year 11	↗ ^B 11 th <-----	586	3rd yr.	
Year 12	End of the	585	The Babylonian Talmud (tractate Arakin 12b) says that Solomon's Temple was destroyed in the third year of a sabbath cycle, a cross check confirming that the year 586 BCE was the year that the Babylonian army destroyed the Temple.	
Year 13	Kingdom of Judah	584		
Year 14	Note 22 page 96	583		
Year 15		582		
Year 16		581		
Year 17		580		
Year 18		579		
Year 19		578		
Year 20		577		
Year 21		576		
Year 22		575		
Year 23		574		
Year 24		573		
Year 25		572		
Year 26		571		
Year 27		570		
Year 28		569		
Year 29		568		
Year 30		567		
Year 31		566		
Year 32		565		
Year 33		564		
Year 34		563		
Year 35		562		
Year 36		(561)		
Jehoiachin released - Year 37 <-----		560		
Note 23 page 99		end of tables		

Synchronized ANE Chronology

Symbols:  king of Israel or Judah ( ruler but not king);  king of Egypt;  king of Assyria;  king of Tyre;
 king of Babylon; || = end of reign; ⚡ = conflict with Egypt (E), Assyria (A), or Babylon (B)

Egypt			Babylon
(reigns begin in Spring)			(reigns begin in Spring)
DYNASTY 23	DYNASTY 24	DYNASTIES 25/26	
	<i>Psammetichus II</i> ^{6th}  Apries ^{AY}		<i>Nebuchadnezzar II</i> ^{16th}
		1st	17th
		2nd	18th
		3rd	19th
		4th	20th
		5th	21st
		6th	22nd
		7th	23rd
		8th	24th
		9th	25th
		10th	26th
		11th	27th
		12th	28th
		13th	29th
		14th	30th
		15th	31st
		16th	32nd
		17th	33rd
		18th	34th
		19th  Amasis ^{AY}	35th
		1st	36th
		2nd	37th
		3rd	38th
		4th	39th
		5th	40th
		6th	41st
		7th	42nd
		8th	43rd  Amil-merodach ^{AY}
		9th	1st
		10th	2nd

*Nebuchadnezzar destroys
Jerusalem, burns Temple
in his nineteenth year
(See Note 13)*

Recalibrating Ancient Near East Chronology

Accession-year/Non-Accession-Year Pattern in Egypt							
NAME OF PHARAOH / REGNAL YEARS BCE		DYNASTY					
<i>Accession-year Kings</i>	<i>Non-accession-year Kings</i>	21st	22nd	23rd	24th	25th	26th
Psusennes I (1039-991)	---	✓					
Amenemope (993-984)	---	✓					
Osochor (984-978)	---	✓					
Siamun (978-959)	---	✓					
Psusennes II (959-945)	---	✓					
Shoshenq I (945-924)	---		✓				
Osorkon I (924-889)	---		✓				
Shoshenq II (ca. 890)	---		✓				
Takeloth I (889-874)	---		✓				
Osorkon II (874-850)	---		✓				
Harsiese (870-860)	---		✓				
Takeloth II (850-825)	---		✓				
Shoshenq III (825-773)	---		✓				
	Pedubast (818-793)			✓			
	Iuput I (804-803)			✓			
	Shoshenq IV (793-787)			✓			
	Osorkon III (787-759)			✓			
---	Pimay (773-767)		✓				
	Shoshenq V (767-730)		✓				
---	Takeloth III (763-757)			✓			
---	Rudamun (757-754)			✓			
---	Iuput II (754-720/715?)			✓			
---	Osorkon IV (730-713)		✓				
---	Shoshenq VI (720-715)			✓			
Tefnakht I (728-720)	---				✓		
Bakenranef (720-714)	---				✓		
Alara (780-760)	---					✓	
Kashta (760-747)	---					✓	
Piankhy (747-716)	---					✓	
Shabako (716-702)	---					✓	
Shebitku (702-691)	---					✓	
Taharqa (691-664)	---					✓	
Tantamani (664-656)	---					✓	
Psammetichus I (664-610)	---						✓
Necho II (610-595)	---						✓
Psammetichus II (595-589)	---						✓
Apries (589-570)	---						✓
Amasis (570-526)	---						✓
Psammetichus III (526-525)	---						✓

ASSYRIA-URARTU SYNCHRONIZATION

Dr. Paul Zimansky, an expert on all things Urartian, once said: “While the history of the Kingdom of Van played out within a reasonably well-defined time frame, specific dates can only be assigned on the basis of a small number of synchronizations in Assyrian records. We cannot confidently give beginning or end dates to the reign of any Urartian ruler.”¹ With that caveat in mind, this section will speculate a bit in an attempt to do so, as follows:

Dates for reigns of the kings of Urartu displayed in this book prior to and including the reign of Argishti I are based on those shown in the book *Historical Dictionary of the Hittites* by Charles Burney.² Dates for the reigns of all kings reigning after Rusa II are based on those shown in the book *The Kingdom of Armenia: A History* by M. Chahin.³ The starting date for Arame has been arbitrarily moved back so as to have his reign overlap the last years of the Assyrian king Ashur-nasir-pal, based on a reference in *The Cambridge Ancient History* by John Boardman⁴ that says Shalmaneser III moved against Urartu during the last year of his father’s reign. In addition, dates prior to and beginning with the reign of Sarduri II have been moved back twenty-eight years in order to align those reigns with the adjusted Assyrian chronology used in this book. That change is necessitated by the adjustments made to the reign of the Assyrian king Tiglath-pileser III, with whom Sarduri was a contemporary as indicated by numerous conflicts the Assyrian king had with Sarduri that are recorded in the Assyrian records. The dates for the kings of Urartu after Sarduri II follow the traditional Urartian chronological pattern. The years of conflict between Assyria and Urartu are based on the Assyrian Eponym List and Chronicles. Note that your author has assumed without any documentary support that the Urartian scribes employed an accession-year system and began their regnal years in spring, as did their neighbors Assyria and Babylon.

It is documented that Assyria and Urartu contended militarily for almost two-hundred years. An eighty-year period of Assyrian decline began with the disputed succession and the associated civil war between Ashur-danin-pal and the future

¹ Trevor Bryce, *The Routledge Handbook of the Peoples and Places of Ancient Western Asia* (New York: Routledge, 2009; p. 801).

² Charles Burney, *Historical Dictionary of the Hittites* (Scarecrow Press, 2004), p. 187.

³ Michael Chahin, *The Kingdom of Armenia: A History* (New York: Dorsett Press, 1991), p. 45.

⁴ John Boardman, *The Cambridge Ancient History* (Cambridge Press, 2nd. ed, 1982); vol. 3, Part 1, p. 264.

Shamshi-adad V, sons of Shalmaneser III (r. 889-852?). That period of Assyrian decline allowed the rise of Urartian power in the northern Mesopotamian and Levantine regions. For example, Argishti I (r. 815-784) reigned during the reigns of Adad-nirari III, Shalmaneser IV, and Ashur-dan III of Assyria. During his reign, the borders of Urartu expanded in every direction and Urartu gained control over the principal trade routes to the west, replacing Assyria as the dominant power in Mesopotamia. Argishti was succeeded by Sarduri II (r. 784-735), who continued his father's policies, extending Urartian domination to the Tigris River and northern parts of Syria, areas formerly part of the Assyrian hegemony.¹ In his second year, Sarduri claimed that he defeated Ashur-nirari V of Assyria.²

Commenting on the duration of maximum Urartian power and influence in the region, Armenian professor Michael Chahin wrote: "For over 80 years from the death of Shalmaneser III ... the ascendancy of Van over Assyria was secure. That period could be considered the Golden Age of Vannic power, when Assyria was continuously confined to the left bank of the southern Euphrates. Parsua and Mannai to the east of Assyria and Hubushkia and Carchemish in the north-west were occupied by Urartian troops. Even the territories of Babylon in the valley of the Diyala fell to Urartu. The Nairi lands were inaccessible to and safe from such military power as was left to Assyria, and indeed the arms of the northern empire pressed hard against the very gates of Assyria's magnificent city of Nineveh." ³

Admittedly speculating, perhaps the military pressure on Assyria by Urartu between the end of the reigns of Shalmaneser III in 852 BCE and the early part of the reign of Sarduri II resulted in disruption so great that, during the early years in the reign of Tiglath-pileser III (r. 774-727), the rule of the young king was initially confined only to southern Assyria below the Tigris, and possibly even below the left bank of the Euphrates. Beginning sometime after 773 BCE, Tiglath-pileser III was able to begin the process of regaining control over the Urartian-dominated Assyrian provinces and re-establish hegemony over the rebellious former border-allies in the north and west. In the year 735 BCE, Tiglath-pileser III finally brought the Urartian threat to Assyria to a permanent end with an invasion of Urartu that witnessed a decisive defeat of Sarduri II in his homeland, ending the Vannic threat for good. He was then able to look southward and conquer Babylon in 729 BCE.

¹ D. T. Potts, *A Companion to the Archaeology of the Ancient Near East* (Wiley-Blackwell; 1st ed., 2012), p. 881.

² Piotr Bienkowski and Alan Millard, eds., *Dictionary of the Ancient Near East* (University of Pennsylvania Press; 1st ed., 2000).

³ Michael Chahin, *The Kingdom of Armenia: A History*, p. 78-79.

Assyria-Urartu Synchronization

911-848 BCE		Years in right column are Gregorian years [January to December]; AY = accession year; 𐎶 king of Assyria; 𐎶 king of Urartu; = end of reign; 𐎶 ^A = conflict with Assyria	
Assyria (reigns began in spring)		Assyria (reigns began in spring)	Urartu (Van) (reigns began in spring)
YEAR BCE GREGORIAN		YEAR BCE GREGORIAN	
911	Ashur-nasir-pal II 3rd	879	Shalmaneser III 10th
910	4th	878	11th
909	5th	877	12th
908	6th	876	13th
907	7th	875	14th
906	8th	874	15th
905	9th	873	16th
(904)	10th	872	17th
903	11th	871	18th
902	12th	870	19th
901	13th	869	20th
900	14th	868	21st
899	15th	867	22nd
898	16th	866	23rd
897	17th	865	24th 𐎶 Lutipri AY
896	18th	864	1st
895	19th	863	2nd
894	20th	862	3rd
893	21st	861	4th
892	22nd	860	5th
891	23rd	859	𐎶 ^A 6th
890	24th	858	7th
889	25th 𐎶 Shalmaneser III AY	857	8th
888	1st	856	9th
887	2nd (king was limmu)	(855)	10th 𐎶 Sarduri I AY
886	3rd	854	1st
885	4th	853	2nd
884	5th	852	3rd
883	6th	851	4th
882	7th	850	5th
881	8th	849	𐎶 ^A 6th 𐎶 Ishpuini AY
880	9th	848	𐎶 ^A 1st
continued		continued	2nd

Shalmaneser's eldest son,
Ashur-danin-pal, rebelled
and briefly seized power;
he and his younger brother,
the future Shamshi-adad V,
battled for the throne for about
6 years.
(Note 27, p. 103)

START
URARTU
HERE



Urartu (Van)
(reigns began in spring)

𐎶 Arame AY

𐎶^A 1st

2nd

3rd

𐎶^A 4th

5th

6th

7th

8th

9th

10th

13th Dido fled Tyre
to found Carthage

32nd (king was limmu)

36th? || ???

???

𐎶 Shamshi-adad V AY

1st

2nd

3rd

Recalibrating Ancient Near East Chronology

847-784 BCE			Years in right column are Gregorian years [January to December]; AY = accession year; 𐎶 king of Assyria; 𐎶 king of Urartu; = end of reign; 𐎶 ^A = conflict with Assyria		
YEAR BCE GREGORIAN	Assyria (reigns began in spring)	Urartu (Van) (reigns began in spring)	YEAR BCE GREGORIAN	Assyria (reigns began in spring)	Urartu (Van) (reigns began in spring)
847	Shamshi-adad V ^{4th}	Ishpuimi ^{3rd}	815	Adad-nirari III ^{23rd}	Menua ^{20th}
846	5th	4th	814	24th	𐎶 ^A 21th
845	6th	5th	813	25th	22th
844	7th	6th	812	26th	23th
843	8th	7th	811	27th	24th 𐎶 Argishti I ^{AY}
843	9th	8th	810	28th 𐎶 Shalmaneser IV ^{AY}	𐎶 ^A 1st
841	10th	9th	809	1st	𐎶 ^A 2nd
840	11th	10th	808	2nd	𐎶 ^A 3rd
839	12th	11th	807	3rd	𐎶 ^A 4th
838	13th 𐎶 Adad-nirari III ^{AY}	12th	(806)	4th	5th
837	1st	13th	805	5th	𐎶 ^A 6th
836	2nd	14th	804	6th	7th
835	3rd	15th 𐎶 Menua ^{AY}	803	7th	𐎶 ^A 8th
834	4th	1st	802	8th	9th
833	5th	2nd	801	9th	10th
832	6th	𐎶 ^A 3rd	800	10th 𐎶 Ashur-dan III ^{AY}	11th
831	7th	4th	799	1st	12th
830	8th	5th	798	2nd	13th
829	9th	6th	797	3rd	14th
828	10th	7th	796	4th	15th
827	11th	8th	795	5th	16th
826	12th	9th	794	6th	17th
825	13th	10th	793	7th	18th
824	14th	11th	792	8th	19th
823	15th	12th	791	-----> 9th ⚙	20th
822	16th	𐎶 ^A 13th	790	10th Bûr-Saggilê Eclipse	21st
821	17th	14th	789	11th June 24, 791 BCE	22nd
820	18th	15th	788	12th (Note 28, p. 103)	23rd
819	19th	16th	787	13th	24th
818	20th	17th	786	14th	25th
817	21st	18th	785	15th	26th
816	22nd	19th	784	16th	27th
continued			continued		

Assyria-Urartu Synchronization

783-720 BCE		Years in right column are Gregorian years [January to December]; AY = accession year; 𐎶 king of Assyria; 𐎶 king of Urartu; = end of reign; 𐎶 ^A = conflict with Assyria	
YEAR BCE GREGORIAN	Assyria (reigns began in spring)	Urartu (Van) (reigns began in spring)	YEAR BCE GREGORIAN
783	Ashur-dan III 17th	Argishti I 28th	751
782	18th 𐎶 Ashur-nirari V AY	29th	750
781	1st	30th 𐎶 Sarduri II AY	749
780	2nd	𐎶 ^A 1st	748
779	3rd	2nd	747
778	4th	3rd	746
777	5th	4th	745
776	6th	5th	744
775	7th	6th	743
774	8th ???	7th	742
773	???	8th	741
772		9th	740
771	The period between the end of the reign of Ashur-nirari V and the accession of Tiglath-pileser III appears to have been one of political weakness and disruption within Assyria. During this time, the northern regions of the empire were subjected to repeated pressure from the kingdom of Urartu, whose military incursions challenged Assyrian control over portions of its territory. One possible explanation for the scarcity of evidence from this period is that effective authority was no longer exercised by a single centralized government. Instead, administration may have been divided among regional centers located south of the areas most affected by Urartian occupation and military activity. Under this hypothesis, a regional commander known as Pul gradually consolidated authority over these centers while conducting operations that reduced the Urartian threat and restored Assyrian control over its territory. Once political unity had been reestablished, Pul was recognized as king and assumed the throne name Tiglath-pileser III in 745 BCE; see page 59.	10th	739
770		11th	738
769		12th	737
768		13th	736
767		14th	735
766		15th	734
765		16th	733
764		17th	732
763		18th	731
762		19th	730
761		20th	729
760		21st	728
759		22nd	727
758		23rd	726
(757)		24th	725
756		25th	724
755		26th	723
754		27th	722
753		28th	721
752		29th	720
continued			continued
YEAR BCE GREGORIAN	Assyria (reigns began in spring)	Urartu (Van) (reigns began in spring)	YEAR BCE GREGORIAN
751	???	Sarduri II 30th	751
750	???	31st	750
749	???	32nd	749
748	???	33rd	748
747	???	34th	747
746	???	35th	746
745	𐎶 Tiglath-pileser III AY 29th yr.	36th	745
744	1st	37th	744
743	2nd	𐎶 ^A 38th	743
742	3rd	39th	742
741	4th	40th	741
740	5th	41st	740
739	6th	𐎶 ^A 42nd	739
738	7th	43rd	738
737	8th	44th	737
736	9th	45th	736
735	10th	𐎶 ^A 46th 𐎶 Rusa I AY	735
734	11th	1st	734
733	12th	2nd	733
732	13th	3rd	732
731	14th	4th	731
730	15th	5th	730
729	16th	6th	729
728	17th	7th	728
727	18th 𐎶 Shalmaneser V AY 47th yr.	8th	727
726	1st	9th	726
725	2nd	10th	725
724	3rd	11th	724
723	4th	12th	723
722	5th 𐎶 Sargon II AY	13th	722
721	1st	14th	721
720	2nd	15th	720
continued			continued

Recalibrating Ancient Near East Chronology

719-656 BCE		Years in right column are Gregorian years [January to December]; AY = accession year; 𒊕 king of Assyria; 𒊕 king of Urartu; = end of reign; 𐎶 ^A = conflict with Assyria	
Assyria (reigns began in spring)		Urartu (Van) (reigns began in spring)	
YEAR BCE GREGORIAN			YEAR BCE GREGORIAN
719	Sargon II ^{3rd}	𐎶 ^A Rusa I ^{16th}	687
718	4th	𐎶 ^A 17th	686
717	5th	𐎶 ^A 18th	685
716	6th	𐎶 ^A 19th	684
715	7th	𐎶 ^A 20th	683
714	8th	𐎶 ^A 21st 𒊕 Argishti II ^{AY}	682
713	9th	1st	681
712	10th	2nd	680
711	11th	3rd	679
710	12th	4th	678
709	13th	𐎶 ^A 5th	677
(708)	14th	6th	676
707	15th	7th	675
706	16th	8th	674
705	17th	9th	673
704	18th 𒊕 Sennacherib ^{AY}	10th	672
703	1st	11th	671
702	2nd	12th	670
701	3rd	13th	669
700	4th	14th	668
699	5th	15th	667
698	6th	16th	666
697	7th	17th	665
696	8th	18th	664
695	9th	19th	663
694	10th	20th	662
693	11th	21st	661
692	12th	22nd	660
691	13th	23rd	(659)
690	14th	24th	658
689	15th	25th	657
688	16th	26th	656
continued			
Assyria (reigns began in spring)		Urartu (Van) (reigns began in spring)	
	Sennacherib ^{17th}		Argishti II ^{27th}
	18th		28th
	19th		29th
	21st		30th
	22nd		31st
	23rd		32nd
	24th		33rd
	25th 𒊕 Esarhaddon ^{AY}		34th 𒊕 Rusa II ^{AY}
	1st		1st
	2nd		2nd
	3rd		3rd
	4th		4th
	5th		5th
	6th		6th
	7th		𐎶 ^A 7th
	8th		8th
	9th		9th
	10th		10th
	11th		11th
	𒊕 Ashurbanipal ^{AY}		12th
	1st		13th
	2nd		14th
	3rd		15th
	4th		16th
	5th		17th
	6th		18th
	7th		19th
	8th		20th
	9th		21st
	10th		22nd, etc.
	11th		Urartian influence began to decline during subsequent years, although the Kingdom of Van outlived its Assyrian rival
	12th		

IT'S JUST A MATTER OF TIME

Chronological errors embedded in traditional Ancient Near East (ANE) timelines and histories—errors unidentified and overlooked in academia—are explored in this book. By examining anomalies found in the traditional timeline, and explaining how they can be resolved, your author calls for serious evaluation of the recalibrated timeline set forth herein, which presents a framework for a more accurate ANE chronology and understanding of its history.

A prime example of an error needing attention is the traditional eighteen-year reign for Tiglath-pileser III. By comparing the duration of Tiglath-pileser III's reign with the reigns of concurrent Hebrew kings documented in the biblical text, the conventional chronology for his reign begins to break down. That is just one example. Another error is exposed by applying the Temple chronology documented in the *Seder Olam Rabbah* to the traditional Hebrew timeline accepted by biblical scholars. Yet another example is the error caused by the misidentification of the year of the Bûr-Saggilê eclipse by Rawlinson, which produces a truncated Assyrian chronology before the year 745 BCE. Additionally, when the first invasion of Canaan by Shoshenq I (*aka* Shishak) is not taken into account, that omission results in a skewed Hebrew chronology, compounding the errors even further. Lastly, by dismissing the chronological data in the Bible as undependable and inferior to other chronologies, any hope for a comprehensive understanding that harmonizes ANE chronologies and histories is made all but impossible.

The call for scholarly verification of the recalibrated chronology presented in this book is not merely an academic exercise but a necessary endeavor if a more accurate ANE chronology reflecting the reality of its history is to be achieved. By recognizing the key anomalies that raise legitimate questions and then offering resolutions, a path to a deeper understanding of that part of the ancient world can be opened. The revised chronology in this book can not only enhance historical accuracy but can also provides a more solid foundation for future research and discovery in the field of Ancient Near Eastern studies.

No doubt the challenge to the conventional ANE chronology put forth in this book, and your author's advocacy for reassessment of its timeline, will be met with skepticism in academic circles (a good thing), and in some cases an assumption of sciolism on his part (not so good). That latter reaction is to be expected, and is okay if readers set aside focusing on the author and instead address the legitimate

questions raised by what is written. This book encourages scholars and researchers, those in both secular and sacred institutions, to reexamine their assumptions about ANE chronology and history and consider the alternative perspectives proffered herein. Such an endeavor will require open-mindedness in the pursuit of accuracy, which is not too much to ask since the proposed recalibrated timeline laid out in this book, if verified, can result in a more nuanced and accurate reconstruction of the chronology and history of the ancient past.

Consideration of the recalibrated ANE timeline offered in this book will require an interdisciplinary search for true chronology, drawing on sources ranging from archaeological findings to biblical texts and historical records from neighboring cultures. By integrating diverse sources of evidence, this book has utilized a comprehensive approach to ancient chronology that transcends the limitations of traditional methods. Such a holistic perspective, if followed, will not only enhance further understanding of ANE chronology but can also serve to inspire a reevaluation of historical methodologies in general. Through out-of-the-box thinking, this book hopefully has opened renewed appreciation of and interest in the complexities of the Ancient Near East period in history.



“History cannot be satisfactory without chronology.”

GEORGE SMITH, *The Assyrian Eponym Canon*

APPENDICES

NOTES AND OBSERVATIONS

Note 1 (see page 46)

(a) **SOLOMON BECAME KING:** Solomon succeeded David as king of United Israel in the year 1,006 BCE, shortly before David's death (1 Kings 2:10-12). That year is thirty-six years earlier in history than the traditional date for the start of Solomon's reign. The date for the start of Solomon's reign is one of the most chronologically important dates in the Bible, because it identifies the dates for the Temple's construction and dedication, and it provides a way to calculate the date for the Exodus from Egypt.

(b) **SOLOMON MARRIED PHAROAH'S DAUGHTER:** Psusennes I is revealed by the alignment on Plate 1 as the king of Egypt who gave his daughter to Solomon in marriage soon after he succeeded David as king of Israel, but the year of Solomon's marriage is not specified in the Bible.

(c) **SOLOMON BEGINS BUILDING THE TEMPLE:** Temple construction was begun in the month of Ziv, the second month on the Jewish sacred timeline (*i.e.*, counting from Nisan as the first month) during Solomon's 4th regnal year (1 Kings 6:1), which was the year 1,002 BCE (*see timeline for Solomon's early years on the next page*). That year was both a sabbath and a jubilee year, as shown by Table 6 on page 99. It makes sense that Solomon would begin construction of the Temple during a sabbath-jubilee period when planting and harvesting were prohibited and non-Jewish agricultural workers would be available. The biblical text verifies that Solomon used foreign workers to do most of the construction on the Temple, as recorded in 2 Chronicles 2:17-18:

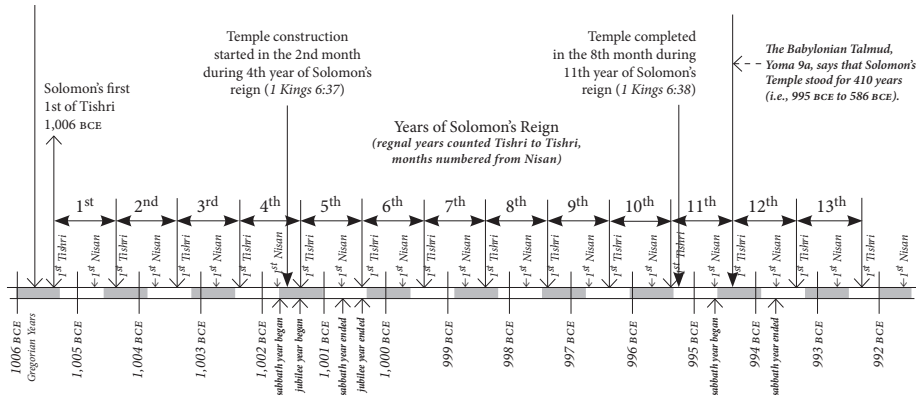
"And Solomon numbered all the strangers that were in the land of Israel, after the numbering wherewith David his father had numbered them; and they were found an hundred and fifty thousand and three thousand and six hundred. And he set threescore and ten thousand of them to be bearers of burdens, and fourscore thousand to be hewers in the mountain, and three thousand and six hundred overseers to set the people a work"

(d) **THE TEMPLE IS COMPLETED:** Construction on the Temple was completed in the eighth month (after the Day of Atonement and Feast of Tabernacles in the seventh month) during Solomon's 11th regnal year. Dedication was delayed until the following year's seventh month, which occurred in a sabbath year.

Recalibrating Ancient Near East Chronology

Solomon's official anointing
as king (1 Chronicles 29:22) after
David's death; David died before
Tishri 1,006 BCE

Temple was dedicated
in the 7th month of year
following its completion
(1 Kings 8:2)



Timeline of Solomon's Early Regnal Years

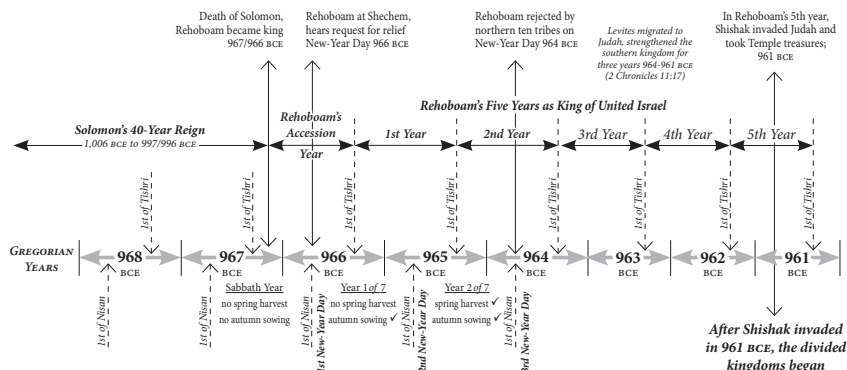
(revealing the fourth regnal year of Solomon as the year 1,003-1,002 BCE)

(e) **TEMPLE IS DEDICATED:** Solomon dedicated the Temple in the seventh month of the year after its completion, a time picked because it coincided with the sabbath year that spanned 995/994 BCE. The dedication followed the Day of Atonement. The year 995 BCE is verified by the *Babylonian Talmud* and *Seder Olam Rabbah* as the year of the Temple's dedication (see Para. 4 and 5, page 39).

Note 2 (see pages 33, 48)

(a) **REHOBAM BECAME KING:** Rehoboam succeeded Solomon as king of United Israel sometime after the 1st of Tishri in 967 BCE (1 Kings 11:43) and before the 1st of Nisan the following year. He was recognized as king in Judah and began an accession year, but apparently had to travel to Shechem in 966 BCE to obtain fealty from the northern ten tribes in a ceremony held on the 1st of Nisan, the date that was celebrated as New-Year Day in the north. As a pre-condition for their fealty to Rehoboam, relief from taxes imposed by Solomon for building the Temple was requested. The request was made at the end of the sabbath year that spanned 967/966 BCE, a year when no crops had been harvested. Rehoboam told the tribes to return for his answer on the third day, meaning the third New-Year Day, which would occur in 964 BCE, after the people had enjoyed the first harvest season possible after the end of the sabbath year.

Notes and Observations



Timeline of Rehoboam's First Five Regnal Years

(revealing the year 961 BCE as the year of Shishak's invasion of Jerusalem)

(b) **KINGDOM RENT FROM REHOBOAM:** On the third day (in 964 BCE, the third year of tithing, cf. Deu. 26:12), the northern ten tribes gathered at Shechem to hear Rehoboam's reply. When he rejected their request for relief, the ten tribes rejected him as king and selected Jeroboam, who had returned from exile and refuge in the house of Shishak (future pharaoh Shoshenq I) to be king in the north. A period of turmoil in Israel ensued, with Jeroboam setting up temple centers and golden calves in Bethel and Dan as a substitute for the Temple system in Jerusalem.

(c) **MIGRATION OF LEVITES TO JUDAH:** The biblical text reveals a three-year migration of Levites to the southern kingdom in 2 Chronicles 11:13-17:

For the Levites left their suburbs and their possession, and came to Judah and Jerusalem: for Jeroboam and his sons had cast them off from executing the priest's office unto the Lord: And he ordained him priests for the high places, and for the devils, and for the calves which he had made. And after them out of all the tribes of Israel such as set their hearts to seek the Lord God of Israel came to Jerusalem, to sacrifice unto the Lord God of their fathers. So they strengthened the kingdom of Judah, and made Rehoboam the son of Solomon strong, three years: for three years they walked in the way of David and Solomon.

Note 3 (see pages 33, 48)

DIVIDED KINGDOM BEGINS: Shishak (future pharaoh Shoshenq I) invaded Judah and Jerusalem in 961 BCE, looted the Temple and took its treasures back to Egypt

(or did he give them to Jeroboam?), the purpose for Shishak's move against Jerusalem being to diminish the appeal of the Jerusalem Temple in the eyes of the people in the northern ten tribes, thus giving his ally Jeroboam and his alternative temple system and kingship credibility. Shishak let Rehoboam remain as king in Judah. For a full discussion of Shishak's invasion, see page 24.

Note 4 (see pages 34, 50)

OMRI DEFEATS TIBNI: The *Seder Olam* says that Omri and Tibni contended for control of Israel after the deaths of Elah and Zimri, and that Omri defeated his rival Tibni in his fourth regnal year.

Note 5 (see pages 34, 50)

JEHOSHAPHAT'S SABBATH YEAR: In the third year of Jehoshaphat's reign, he called his princes to teach the people in the cities of Judah, and with them he sent Levites and priests. The biblical text records that *"they taught in Judah, and had the book of the law of the Lord with them, and went about throughout all the cities of Judah, and taught the people"* (2 Chronicles 17:7-9), that done in obedience to the command in Deuteronomy 31:10-11.

Note 6 (see pages 35, 52)

JEHORAM OF JUDAH AS REGENT: Two verses in 2 Kings are key to understanding the chronology of the reigns of Joram of Israel and Jehoram of Judah:

Verse 1:17 - *So he [Ahaziah] died ... And Jehoram reigned in his stead in the second year of Jehoram the son of Jehoshaphat king of Judah; because he had no son.*

Verse 8:16 - *And in the fifth year of Joram the son of Ahab king of Israel, Jehoshaphat [having been] then king of Judah, Jehoram the son of Jehoshaphat king of Judah began to reign.*

Note that verse 1:17 says that Jehoram began his reign in the second year of Jehoram of Judah. Verse 8:16 says that Jehoram of Judah began his reign in the fifth year of Joram of Israel. Taken at face value, the two verses clearly contradict one another. The two events cannot be true at the same time, so a meaning that can reconcile the contradiction must be discerned. From the biblical text, it is apparent

Notes and Observations

that the relationships of the various individuals in the house of Ahab and the house of Jehoshaphat were intertwined with one another. The patriarch of the northern kingdom, Ahab of Israel, had at least three children with his wife Jezebel—the eldest a son named Ahaziah, a daughter named Athaliah, and a younger son named Joram, all three of whom eventually ruled Israel or Judah, or, in two cases, both. Athaliah married Jehoram of Judah, son of Jehoshaphat of Judah, and they had a son, Ahaziah (named after his uncle Ahaziah, the son of Ahab and the future king of Israel) who became king of Judah. To complicate interpretation of the text, Joram of Israel sometimes seems to be called Jehoram in the text, and Jehoram of Judah is sometimes called Joram.

Based on the requirements of the biblical text, and taking note of the convoluted use of kings' names in verse 1:17, the chronology aligns as follows:

891 BCE	Athaliah, daughter of Ahab of Israel, married Jehoram, son of Jehoshaphat of Judah (2 Kings 8:18), and bore a son, Ahaziah of Judah.
883 BCE	Ahab was killed at Ramoth-gilead (during Shalmaneser III's Qarqar campaign); his eldest son Ahaziah became king of Israel in the seventeenth year of Jehoshaphat of Judah and reigned for between one and two years (1 Kings 22:51).
882 BCE	Ahaziah of Israel died, leaving no heir. His younger brother Joram of Israel became king, but was too young to rule so his sister Athaliah through her husband, Jehoram of Judah who served as regent, ruled Israel for two years (two-year regency implied by verse 1:17, which can be paraphrased as follows, " <i>So Azahiah died according to the word of the Lord which Elijah had spoken. And Joram his younger brother became king, because Azahiah had no son; but because Joram was not old enough to rule, Jehoram the son of Jehoshaphat king of Judah ruled in his stead for two years.</i> ")
879 BCE	Joram of Israel came of age and assumed the office of king in Israel in the eighteenth year of Jehoshaphat, and he reigned for twelve years, eleven by accession year counting (2 Kings 3:1).
875 BCE	Jehoshaphat died in the fifth year of Joram of Israel, was succeeded by his son Jehoram as king of Judah for eight years (2 Kings 8:16).
868 BCE	Jehoram of Judah died, was succeeded by his son Ahaziah of Judah who reigned for less than one year (2 Kings 8:25-26).
867 BCE	Jehu killed Joram of Israel and then killed Ahaziah of Judah (2 Kings 9:24-27). Athaliah seized the throne after Ahaziah was killed.

Note 7 (see pages 35, 52)

(a) **AHAZIAH BECAME KING:** Ahaziah became king in Joram's 12th regnal year if counting by the non-accession-year system as was used in Israel (2 Kings 8:25), but in the 11th regnal year of Joram if counting by the accession-year system used in Judah (2 Kings 9:29).

(b) **JEHU BECAME KING:** The chronology of Jehu's reign is admittedly difficult to discern. He definitely became king of Israel after killing first Joram of Israel, and then Ahaziah of Judah (2 Kings 9 and 10). Prior to the regicides, Jehu had been anointed king by a prophet sent from Elisha, fulfilling an earlier commandment of Elijah. No year is given for the anointing, but it seems to have been some time before he became king in Israel. The Black Obelisk records that Jehu paid tribute to Shalmaneser III of Assyria in the latter's 18th regnal year, but Jehu is called a "son of Omri" on the obelisk, not king. The re-adjusted chronology for Shalmaneser says that his 18th year was 871 BCE. Since Jehu killed Joram and Ahaziah and became king three to four years later in the year 867 BCE, either Jehu was delivering tribute for Joram (probable) or he had already rebelled and was making his own alliance with Assyria in order to later seize the throne of Israel.

(c) **ATHALIAH USURPED THRONE:** After her son Ahaziah of Judah was killed by Jehu, Athaliah seized the throne of Israel. She immediately set about to destroy the royal seed of Judah so that she would have no legitimate claimant to threaten her rule, but a nurse hid the infant Joash in the Temple, where he remained under the protection of his uncle, the high priest (Kings 11:13).

Note 8 (see pages 35, 52)

JOASH BECAME KING OF JUDAH: After six years of bad rule by Athaliah, the high priest Jehoiada, who had been hiding the legitimate king Joash, sent and fetched the rulers over hundreds, with the captains and the guard, and assembled them in the Temple. They surrounded the young Joash and declared him king of Judah. When Athaliah tried to oppose them, she was killed. Joash did not have an accession year, so his years were counted from his recognition (2 Kings 11 and 12; 2 Chronicles 24:1).

Note 9 (see pages 36, 54)

JEHOASH BEGAN 2-YEAR COREIGN: Jehoash coreigned with his father Jehoahaz for two years according to the *Seder Olam*. When Adad-nirari III of Assyria resumed his western campaigns in Syria in 827 BCE, the influence of Syria was weakened.

Jehoash was able to free Israel from Syrian control in 824 BCE, coinciding with Adad-nirari's campaign in the Lebanon valley (Strabo 16:2, 18). In the same year, the king of Assyria attacked Damascus, defeated the Syrian army, and exacted a heavy tribute from Ben-hadad III, king of Syria. Payment of tribute to Adad-nirari III by Jehoash is recorded on the Tel-al-Rimah Stele discovered in 1967.

Note 10 (see pages 37, 56)

UZZIAH BECAME KING: Uzziah (*aka* Azariah), son of Amaziah, became king of Judah at the age of sixteen when the leaders of Judah lost confidence in his father Amaziah. They deposed Amariah and placed Uzziah on the throne in his place, and he reigned for fifty-two years. *“And all the people of Judah took Azariah, which was sixteen years old, and made him king instead of his father Amaziah”* (2 Chronicles 26:3). The *Seder Olam* elaborates that when Uzziah was recognized as king, Amaziah fled to Lachish, staying there until his death in 794 BCE. Apparently, Uzziah ruled Judah for nine years or so from Jerusalem while Amaziah held separate court in Lachish.

Scripture says, *“In the twenty and seventh year of Jeroboam king of Israel began Azariah son of Amaziah king of Judah to reign”* (2 Kings 15:1), which is chronologically impossible according to the timeline of the New Hebrew Kings Chronology in this book, indicating that verse was mistranslated in the KJV, or perhaps the text was poorly transmitted through the centuries. Whatever happened, the text does preserve all of the important chronological elements intact. Uzziah began to reign while Jeroboam II was king of Israel and a period of twenty-seven years was involved. Verse 15:1 can be more accurately paraphrased as, *“When he was twenty-seven years old, while Jeroboam II was king of Israel, Uzziah son of Amaziah began to reign as king of Judah”* (Au). That paraphrase is supported by Jewish tradition, which says that Jeroboam II and Uzziah began to reign at about the same time, and the kingdoms chronology in this book shows that they did, in 808 BCE and 805 BCE respectively. It also agrees with the precedent of recording an event in Uzziah's life by referencing the event to his age at the time of the event (*see the parallel usage in verse 26:3 quoted on the previous page*).

In the early part of his reign, Uzziah *“did that which was right in the sight of the Lord”* (2 Kings 15:3), and his kingdom prospered. Uzziah was a vigorous military leader, fortifying Jerusalem's walls and gates, building towers in the desert, and equipping an army of three-hundred thousand soldiers with weaponry. To secure his borders, he conducted successful campaigns against the Philistines, the

Arabians, the Mehunims, broke down the walls of Gath, Jabneh, and Ashdod, and built fortified cities in the region around Ashdod and among the Philistines. Scripture records that the Ammonites paid tribute and that *“his name spread far abroad”* (2 Chronicles 26:15).

In his forty-ninth regnal year, though, Uzziah overstepped his authority. In the year 757 BCE, at the start of a jubilee year, probably on the Day of Atonement, he tried to offer incense on the Temple altar. The Jewish historian Josephus describes the events as follows. *“Accordingly, when a remarkable day was come, and a general festival was to be celebrated, he put on the holy garment, and went into the temple to offer incense to God upon the golden altar, which he was prohibited to do by Azariah the high priest, who had fourscore priests with him, and who told him that it was not lawful for him to offer sacrifice, and that ‘none besides the posterity of Aaron were permitted so to do.’ And when they cried out that he must go out of the temple, and not transgress against God, he was wroth at them, and threatened to kill them, unless they would hold their peace. In the mean time a great earthquake shook the ground and a rent was made in the temple, and the bright rays of the sun shone through it, and fell upon the king’s face, insomuch that the leprosy seized upon him immediately ... Now, as soon as the priests saw that the king’s face was infected with the leprosy, they told him of the calamity he was under, and commanded that he should go out of the city as a polluted person. Hereupon he was so confounded at the sad distemper, and sensible that he was not at liberty to contradict, that he did as he was commanded, and underwent this miserable and terrible punishment for an intention beyond what befitted a man to have, and for that impiety against God which was implied therein. So he abode out of the city for some time, and lived a private life, while his son Jotham took the government; after which he died with grief and anxiety at what had happened to him, when he had lived sixty-eight years, and reigned of them fifty-two; and was buried by himself in his own gardens.” ... Antiquities 9.10.4 (Whiston translation).*

As indicated in Josephus, an earthquake occurred in conjunction with Uzziah’s unlawful acts in the Temple in his forty-ninth regnal year. However, the prophet Amos indicates that the earthquake occurred in the early years of Uzziah’s reign, when Jeroboam II was king of Israel, two years after the start of Amos’ own ministry according to Amos 1:1, so there is conflicting data. By examining dates when Uzziah and Jeroboam II reigned at the same time (*see page 17*), the earliest that both were reigning concurrently was the year 794 BCE. Assuming that Amos began his prophetic ministry that year—the same year that Uzziah became sole ruler in Judah—the earthquake would have occurred two years later in 792 BCE. On the other

hand, if the wording in the first verse of Amos can be interpreted so that it does not require Uzziah and Jeroboam II to have been occupying their respective thrones at the same time, then the earthquake could have happened in 757 BCE, Uzziah's forty-ninth year when he acted unlawfully in the Temple, as Josephus recorded. The year of the earthquake is important to archaeologists, since many ancient sites contain a rubble layer that can be attributed to it. The year 760 BCE $\pm$ 35 years is the traditional date scholars use for the earthquake. Of course, there may have been two earthquakes, both being recorded as separate events.

Note 11 (see pages 38, 58)

ISRAEL ADOPTS JUDAH'S ACCESSION-YEAR SYSTEM: Starting with the reign of Zachariah, the kingdom of Israel switched to the accession-year system for recording the reigns of its kings, probably due to the influence of the much stronger kingdom of Judah under the long reign of Uzziah. The Nisan-to-Nisan system for numbering the months was retained. Since Pekah was already recognized as king in Gilead, his years were counted from his reign there before he killed Pekahiah to become king in Samaria, and the non-accession-year system continued to be employed to count his regnal years thereafter.

Note 12 (see pages 38, 58)

MENAHM PAYS TRIBUTE: Menahem became king in Uzziah's 39th year. The Bible indicates that Menahem paid tribute to Pul, king of Assyria by levying a heavy tax on landowners. The Assyrian records confirm that Menahem paid tribute to Tiglath-pileser III. The two taken together indicate Pul and Tiglath-pileser III can be assumed to be the same person (the assumption used in this book). The Bible does not clarify the chronology of the tribute payment, saying only that Menahem paid it. The Assyrian record seems to indicate that Menahem paid tribute to Tiglath-pileser III's in the Assyrian king's eighth regnal year, which would have been in Menahem's accession year or first regnal year, sometime around 767/766 BCE.

Note 13 (see pages 38, 58)

TWO KINGS IN ISRAEL: The growing power of Assyria had a destabilizing effect on the entire Near East region, including the kingdom of Israel. Menahem, by paying tribute, had placed Israel under the Assyrian hegemony. Pekah, a military commander, apparently broke away in opposition to Menahem's submission of

Israel to Assyria, establishing a power base in Gilead (west of the Jordan, closer to the influence and military power of Damascus than Nineveh) during the final year of Menahem's reign. When Menahem died, Pekahiah apparently followed his father's policy of submission to Assyria, so Pekah murdered the king in his second year in 755 BCE and moved into the king's palace in Samaria. Pekah's regnal years are counted from 758 BCE, the year that he broke away to rule over part of Israel from Gilead. Pekah later allied himself with Rezin of Damascus to oppose Ahaz of Judah, who was allied with Tiglath-pileser III of Assyria.

Note 14 (see pages 38, 58)

THE REIGN OF JOTHAM: The Bible says that Jotham reigned for sixteen years in Jerusalem (2 Chronicles 27:1). If the four-year coreign with his father Uzziah is counted, the 16th regnal year would have ended in Pekah's 17th year, not in his 20th year as required by both the biblical text and the *Seder Olam*. It has been speculated that Ahaz was placed on the throne of Judah in his father's place by Tiglath-pileser III and that Jotham was taken hostage to Assyria to ensure the loyalty of Ahaz. That scenario would explain how Jotham began his reign in the 2nd year of Pekah and how Pekah, who had a 20-year reign, could be killed in Jotham's 20th year.

Note 15 (see pages 39, 60)

HOSEA KILLED PEKAH: The Bible says that Hoshea killed Pekah in Jotham's 20th year (2 Kings 15:30). The *Seder Olam* also says that Pekah was killed in Jotham's 20th year, and equates that year with Ahaz's 4th year (when using accession-year accounting, but it was the 5th year of Ahaz's coreign with Jotham).

Note 16 (see page 39, 58)

HOSHEA AND AHAZ VASSALS TO ASSYRIA: The *Seder Olam* says that Ahaz and Hoshea were vassals of Tiglath-pileser for eight years, spanning the years 738-731 BCE, during which time the throne of Israel in Samaria was vacant (some sources speculate that Hoshea was governor in Gilead). Tiglath-pileser appointed Hoshea king of Israel in 731 BCE, the 12th year of Ahab, and he began to rule as king from Samaria.

Note 17 (see pages 39, 60)

FALL OF SAMARIA: Tiglath-pileser III died in 727 BCE. Hoshea, encouraged by the Egyptian pharaoh So (Osorkon IV), refused to pay tribute to the new Assyrian

king, Shalmaneser V, who reacted by invading Israel in 724 BCE and laying siege to Samaria. Some scholars postulate that Hoshea was captured and taken back to Assyria before the siege commenced, but there is no definitive record of that being the case. Shalmaneser V died three years later before the fall of Samaria in late 722 BCE or early 721 BCE. He was succeeded by Sargon II, who took credit in the Assyrian chronicles for capturing Samaria and bringing the northern kingdom to an end.

Note 18 (see pages 39, 40, 60, 61)

HEZEKIAH’S BECOMES KING: Hezekiah succeeded Ahaz as king of Judah in 727 BCE and reigned in Jerusalem for twenty-nine years. The Bible describes the chronological details of his reign in 2 Kings 18-20, 2 Chronicles 29-32, and Isaiah 36-39. The reign of Hezekiah is displayed diagrammatically as a timeline on the opposite page. The fifteen extra years that the Bible says were added to the life of Hezekiah, about which the Lord said in Isaiah 26:6a: “*And I will add unto thy days fifteen years,*” are included on the timeline.

Traditional interpretations of the reign of Hezekiah often assume that the biblical details about his reign, and specifically the part about the extra fifteen years, are flawed, and many scholars outright dismiss that “extra-fifteen-years” part as myth that should not be included in any serious chronological discussion. Whether a chronologist or historian believes that Hezekiah was given fifteen extra years of life by God or not, the writers of the Bible did believe it, and thus their chronological details must be interpreted in that context. In fact, the details of Hezekiah’s reign can be made to align *only* if those fifteen extra years are assumed to be real. Otherwise, confusion results if that part of the chronological record is not applied as written. From a purely secular academic standpoint, who can say if Hezekiah’s twenty-nine years on the throne included fifteen extra God-given years or not? What is important for chronological purposes is how the scribes intended his reign to be understood. They recorded that he reigned for twenty-nine years and that the extra fifteen years was part of that accounting.

Since the invasion of Judah by Sennacherib has been pinpointed to 701 BCE by traditional scholarship, and since the Bible says that it happened in the fourteenth year of Hezekiah’s reign, simple math says that Hezekiah had to begin his reign in 715 BCE. However, the Bible states in 2 Kings 18:1 that Hezekiah began his reign in the third regnal year of Hoshea of Israel (c. 731-721 BCE), which is identified by the harmonized chronology of the Hebrew kings featured in this book and by most

scholars as having occurred in 727 BCE (*see pages 39-40 showing the reigns of Hoshea and Hezekiah side by side*). Obviously, that contradiction involving the year for the beginning of the reign of Hezekiah means that something is wrong with the traditional interpretation.

In addition to the extra fifteen years given to Hezekiah, the king is promised a sign about the deliverance of Jerusalem from the king of Assyria. That sign is described in Isaiah 37:30, as follows: “*And this shall be a sign unto thee, Ye shall eat this year such as groweth of itself; and the second year that which springeth of the same: and in the third year sow ye, and reap, and plant vineyards, and eat the fruit thereof.*” The traditional interpretation assumes that the two years without crops were a sabbath year followed by a jubilee year during which no crops could be planted or harvested, followed by a third year in which crops were planted and harvested. It is also assumed that the observance of that sabbath-jubilee cycle coincided with the invasion of Judah by Sennacherib in 701 BCE. Fortunately, having a correct calendar of sabbath and jubilee years (*see pages 111-113*), as well as understanding how planting and harvesting were done in sabbath and jubilee years (*see Diagram A on page 110*), can help to sort out the chronology of Hezekiah's reign. The sabbath-jubilee calendar shows that the year of Sennacherib's invasion, 701 BCE, was a sabbath-only year. So, the assumption of a jubilee year required by the traditional interpretation is not necessary as an explanation for the two years without crops, since the amount of time without a harvest would be the same in either case. No harvesting could be done for two years in either a sabbath-only year or a sabbath-jubilee combination.

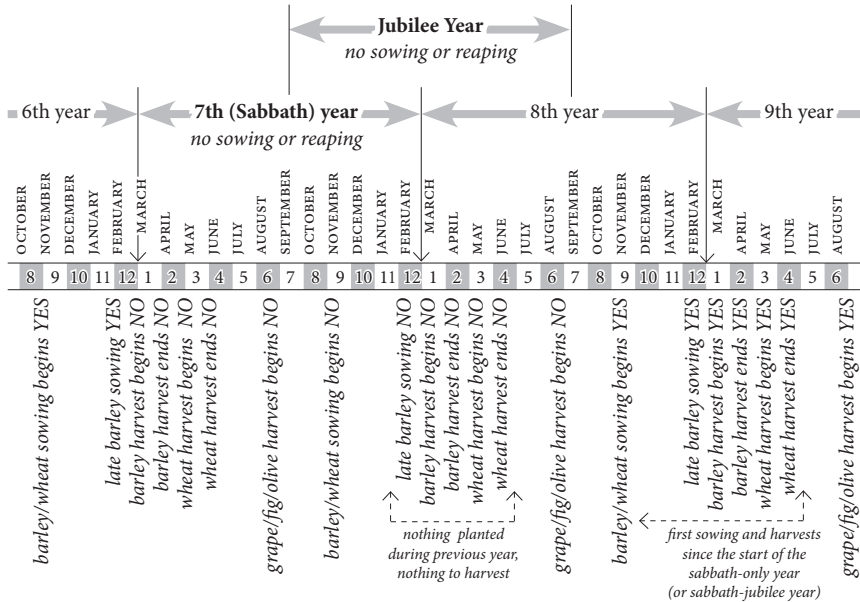
Since the year 701 BCE saw the start of a sabbath-only year, which began in the twenty-sixth regnal year of Hezekiah (*see diagram on opposite page*), that year must be considered as the first year in the two-year period when no crops were harvested. Soon thereafter, Sennacherib invaded and devastated the cities of Judah and began his siege of Jerusalem. The account of his campaign is given in the Bible and a secular account is recorded on the Taylor Prism (also called Sennacherib's Prism, *ca.* 691 BCE). From the diagram, it is obvious that the sabbath year, plus the disruption caused by Sennacherib's invasion of Judah in the spring of 701 BCE, prevented planting of barley and wheat from being done in the fall and winter of that year, making those crops unavailable for harvest in the spring of 700 BCE. That means both planting and harvesting could not have been carried out normally in Hezekiah's twenty-seventh regnal year, the second year with no crops. The Bible records that Sennacherib's army was thereafter devastated by an angel that

Hezekiah's Regnal Years and 3rd-Year Sign

A = accession or partial year; sabbath and jubilee observances shown below are not mentioned in the Bible)

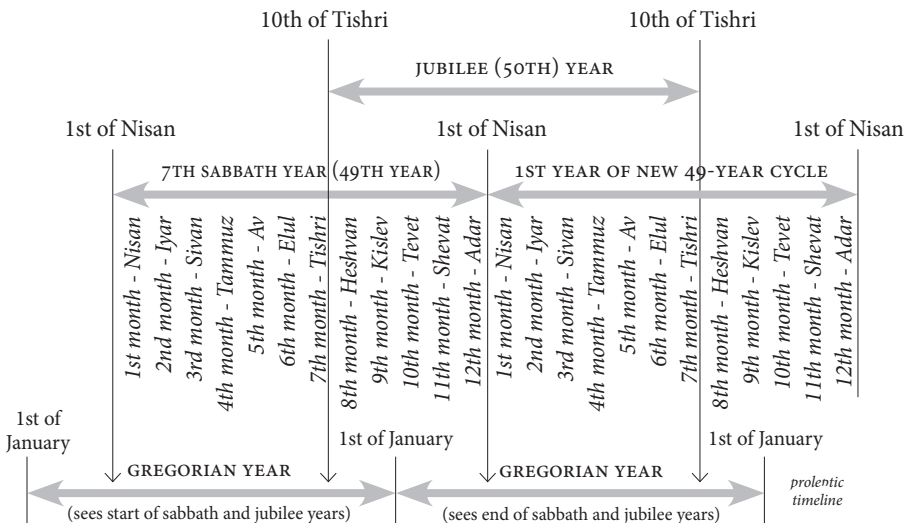
^dThe commander (and future pharaoh) Taharqa lead Shebitku's army out of Egypt to oppose Sennecherib.

Recalibrating Ancient Near East Chronology



Jewish months are shown as numbers, with Nisan = 1; corresponding Gregorian months shown by name above.

Diagram A - Planting and Harvesting During Sabbath and Jubilee Years



(relationship to the Jewish year to the Gregorian years varies somewhat from year to year)

Diagram B - Relationship of Sabbath, Jubilee, and Gregorian Years

overnight killed 185,000 Assyrians, requiring Sennacherib to withdraw back to Assyria, all of that taking place during Passover week in the year 700 BCE according to Jewish records. So, after two seasons with no crops harvested, the land was at peace again in the third year, late in 700 BCE, and barley and wheat were planted that fall and harvested the following spring in 699 BCE. Thus, the “3rd-year sign” given by God to Hezekiah through the prophet Isaiah was fulfilled as foretold. No crops could be planted or harvested in Hezekiah’s twenty-sixth and twenty-seventh regnal years (the first and second years in the prophecy). In his twenty-eighth regnal year (the third year), crops were planted and harvested.

A big question: If Hezekiah began his reign in the year 727 BCE and was invaded by Sennacherib in 701 BCE, how could the invasion have taken place in the fourteenth year of Hezekiah, as required by 2 Kings 18:13 and Isaiah 36:1? That apparent inconsistency is quite easy to explain if one recalls the viewpoint of the biblical scribes, who believed that Hezekiah had been given fifteen extra years of life (and notice that the Hebrew text does not say fourteenth year of reign; it says only that Sennacherib invaded Judah in Hezekiah’s fourteenth year). Since the writers believed that God had extended Hezekiah’s life, the invasion was referenced to the extended period. Sennacherib invaded in the fourteenth year of the fifteen-year extension, not in the fourteenth year of Hezekiah’s total reign of twenty-nine years. That the deliverance of Jerusalem would signal the end of the extra fifteen years is indicated in 2 Kings 20:6, which says: “*And I will add unto thy days fifteen years; and I will deliver thee and this city out of the hand of the king of Assyria; and I will defend this city for mine own sake, and for my servant David’s sake.*” The extra fifteen years given to Hezekiah ended with the deliverance of Jerusalem and the planting and harvesting of crops, after which Hezekiah lived out the remainder of his days, not knowing the exact time of his death beforehand (*cf.* Ecclesiastes 9:12).

The chronology of Hezekiah’s reign is admittedly complicated, but it can be reconciled to incorporate all of the details given in the biblical text, specifically: a reign beginning in the third regnal year of Hoshea of Israel, with no long coregency with Ahaz (as proposed by Edwin Thiele *et al* without biblical support), a siege of Samaria beginning in Hezekiah’s fourth regnal year, a God-given fifteen extra years of life, the fall of Samaria occurring in Hezekiah’s sixth regnal year, and the end of the extra fifteen years and fulfillment of the 3rd-year sign both signaled by the deliverance of Jerusalem in 701 BCE. All of those details fit together perfectly without having to assume scribal error or emendation of the biblical text, or myth-making on the part of the ancient Hebrew scribes.

Note 19 (see pages 40, 62)

MANASSEH TAKEN TO BABYLON: Manasseh was taken to Babylon by captains of Esarhaddon in the year 677 BCE, that date based on a passage in the *Seder Olam* that says he was taken captive in his twenty-second regnal year. Jews remaining in the kingdom of Israel were deported to Assyria by Esarhaddon during 677-673 BCE (2 Chronicles 33:11).

Note 20 (see pages 41, 64)

AMON ASSASSINATED: Amon was assassinated before the 1st of Tishri in 641 BCE, leaving the throne empty until the assassins were killed by the people. Josiah was made king sometime after 1st of Tishri in year 641 BCE.

Note 21 (see pages 41, 66)

PERIOD OF DISRUPTION IN JUDAH: Jehoahaz ruled for 3 months in 609 BCE before being exiled to Egypt by pharaoh Necho. Jehoiachin was king for 3 months and 10 days in late 598 BCE until early 597 BCE. Zedekiah, the last king of Judah, was appointed king by Nebuchadnezzar II in 597 BCE.

Note 22 (see pages 41, 68)

FALL OF JERUSALEM: Nebuchadnezzar inherited the throne of Babylon after the Battle of Carchemish, which most scholars agree happened sometime between April and August in the year 605 BCE. Upon the death of his father Nabopolassar in Babylon that year, in the twenty-first year of Nabopolassar's reign according to the Babylonian Chronicle [from tablet BM 22047 (96-4-9, 152)], the crown prince Nebuchadnezzar became king while in the field with the army. He was crowned as king Nebuchadnezzar II in a formal coronation ceremony in Babylon in early September. Biblical scribes considered Nebuchadnezzar's first regnal year as beginning in the first month of Nisan that came after the battle, which was the Nisan that occurred in March/April 604 BCE. The Bible, in two citations (2 Kings 25:8 and Jeremiah 52:12), records that Nebuchadnezzar's commander Nabuzaradan destroyed the Temple and Jerusalem in the king's nineteenth regnal year, where it is assumed that the biblical scribes who recorded 2 Kings and Jeremiah used the accounting system of Babylon for recording the regnal years of Babylonian kings. As shown in the chart below, Nebuchadnezzar's nineteenth regnal year began in Nisan (March/April) of 586 BCE, and Jerusalem and Solomon's Temple were destroyed later that same year.

Chronology of the Babylonian period after 605 BCE:

605 BCE

- Battle of Carchemish fought sometime between April and August 605 BCE.
- Nebuchadnezzar's forces besieged Jerusalem between April and August in 605 BCE during his western campaign, captured Jehoiakim.
- Jehoiakim became a vassal of Babylon for three years until 601 BCE.
- Death of Nabopolassar in Babylon in August 605 BCE.
- Nebuchadnezzar II crowned in Babylon in September 605 BCE.
- Jehoiakim's Year 4 began in Tishri (September) 605 BCE.

604 BCE

- **Nebuchadnezzar's Year 1** began in Nisan (March/April) 604 BCE.
- Jeremiah received word concerning people of Jerusalem in the fourth year of Jehoiakim and the first year of Nebuchadnezzar (Jer. 25:1).
- Jehoiakim's Year 5 began in Tishri 604 BCE.

603 BCE

- **Nebuchadnezzar's Year 2** began in Nisan 603 BCE.
- Jehoiakim's Year 6 began in Tishri 603 BCE.

602 BCE

- **Nebuchadnezzar's Year 3** began in Nisan 602 BCE.
- Jehoiakim's Year 7 began in Tishri 602 BCE.

601 BCE

- **Nebuchadnezzar's Year 4** began in Nisan 601 BCE.
- Nebuchadnezzar's invasion of Egypt failed, consequently Jehoiakim became a vassal of Egypt.
- Jehoiakim's Year 8 began in Tishri 601 BCE.

600 BCE

- **Nebuchadnezzar's Year 5** began in Nisan 600 BCE.
- Jehoiakim's Year 9 began in Tishri 600 BCE.

599 BCE

- **Nebuchadnezzar's Year 6** began in Nisan 599 BCE.
- Jehoiakim's Year 10 began in Tishri 599 BCE.

598 BCE

- **Nebuchadnezzar's Year 7** began in Nisan 598 BCE.
- 3,023 Jews exiled (Jer. 52:28), Jerusalem besieged in November 598 BCE.
- Jehoiakim's Year 11 began in Tishri 598 BCE, he died in December 598 BCE.
- Jehoiachin became king in December 598 BCE.

597 BCE

- **Nebuchadnezzar's Year 8** began in Nisan (March 21) 597 BCE.
- Jehoiachin went out to Nebuchadnezzar in late March 597 BCE.
- Jehoiachin was deposed, Zedekiah made king, began accession year in late March 597 BCE.
- Jehoiachin, Ezekiel, and 7,000 Jews deported after Passover in 597 BCE.
- Zedekiah's Year 1 began in Tishri 597 BCE.
- Jehoiachin and Ezekiel's Year 1 in captivity began in Tishri 597 BCE.

596 BCE

- **Nebuchadnezzar's Year 9** began in Nisan 596 BCE.
- Zedekiah's Year 2 began in Tishri 596 BCE.
- Jehoiachin and Ezekiel's Year 2 in captivity began in Tishri 596 BCE.

595 BCE

- **Nebuchadnezzar's Year 10** began in Nisan 595 BCE.
- Zedekiah's Year 3 began in Tishri 595 BCE.
- Jehoiachin and Ezekiel's Year 3 in captivity began in Tishri 595 BCE.

594 BCE

- **Nebuchadnezzar's Year 11** began in Nisan 594 BCE.
- Zedekiah's Year 4 began in Tishri BCE.
- Jehoiachin and Ezekiel's Year 4 in captivity began in Tishri 594 BCE.

593 BCE

- **Nebuchadnezzar's Year 12** began in Nisan 593 BCE.
- Zedekiah's Year 5 began in Tishri 593 BCE.
- Jehoiachin and Ezekiel's Year 5 in captivity began in Tishri BCE.

592 BCE

- **Nebuchadnezzar's Year 13** began in Nisan 592 BCE.
- Zedekiah's Year 6 began in Tishri 592 BCE.
- Jehoiachin and Ezekiel's Year 6 in captivity began in Tishri BCE.

591 BCE

- **Nebuchadnezzar's Year 14** began in Nisan 591 BCE.
- Zedekiah's Year 7 began in Tishri 591 BCE.
- Jehoiachin and Ezekiel's Year 7 in captivity began in Tishri 591 BCE.

590 BCE

- **Nebuchadnezzar's Year 15** began in Nisan 590 BCE.
- Zedekiah's Year 8 began in Tishri 590 BCE.
- Jehoiachin and Ezekiel's Year 8 in captivity began in Tishri 590 BCE.

589 BCE

- **Nebuchadnezzar's Year 16** began in Nisan 589 BCE.
- Zedekiah's Year 9 began in Tishri 589 BCE. (2 Kings 25:25)
- Jehoiachin and Ezekiel's Year 9 in captivity began in Tishri 589 BCE.

588 BCE

- Nebuchadnezzar besieged Jerusalem in tenth month, January 588 BCE.
(some scholars place the beginning of the siege in late December 589 BCE)
- **Nebuchadnezzar's Year 17** began in Nisan 588 BCE.
- Zedekiah's Year 10 began in Tishri 588 BCE.
- Jehoiachin and Ezekiel's Year 10 in captivity began in Tishri 588 BCE.

587 BCE

- **Nebuchadnezzar's Year 18** began in Nisan 587 BCE.
- 832 Jews carried away captive from Jerusalem in eighteenth year (Jer. 52:29)
- Zedekiah's Year 11 began in Tishri 587 BCE.
- Jehoiachin and Ezekiel's Year 11 in captivity began in Tishri 587 BCE.

586 BCE

- **Nebuchadnezzar's Year 19** began in Nisan (March/April) 586 BCE.
- Nebuzaradan enters Jerusalem in fifth month of the nineteenth year,
TEMPLE DESTROYED in fifth month Ab (July/August) 586 BCE.
- Zedekiah fled Jerusalem, reign ended, taken to Babylon (August) 586 BCE.
- Jehoiachin and Ezekiel's Year 12 in captivity began in Tishri 586 BCE.

Note 23 (see page 68)

JEHOIACHIN RELEASED FROM CAPTIVITY: The Bible records that Jehoiachin was released in the twelfth month of the first year of Amil-merodach (Jeremiah 52:31), after the Babylonian king's father Nebuchadnezzar II died in his forty-third regnal year. The reign of Amil-merodach aligns as shown below. It is interesting to note that Jehoiachin was released during the Jubilee year that began in Tishri 561 BCE and ended in Tishri (Sept/Oct) 560 BCE.

Chronology of Amil-merodach and Jehoiachin:

562 BCE

- **Nebuchadnezzar's Year 43** began in Nisan 562 BCE.
- Nebuchadnezzar dies 562 BCE.
- **Amil-merodach's Accession Year** began 562 BCE.
- Jehoiachin/Ezekiel's Year 36 in captivity began in Tishri 562 BCE.

561 BCE

- **Amil-merodach's Year 1** began in Nisan 561 BCE.
- Jehoiachin and the prophet Ezekiel's thirty-seventh year in captivity began in Tishri 561 BCE. (2 Kings 25:27)
- JUBILEE YEAR BEGAN on 10th of Tishri 561 BCE.

560 BCE

- Amil-merodach freed Jehoiachin in twelfth month (February/March) 560 BCE.
- **Amil-merodach's Year 2** began in Nisan 560 BCE.
- Jubilee Year ended on 9th of Tishri 561 BCE.

Note 24 (see page 50)

MESHA STELE (MOABITE STONE): The Mesha Stele, *aka* Moabite Stone, refers to “Omri, King of Israel,” saying that Moab was oppressed by Omri and that Mesha won a great victory against his son. Mesha is mentioned in the Bible, *“And Mesha king of Moab was a sheepmaster, and rendered unto the king of Israel an hundred thousand lambs, and an hundred thousand rams, with the wool. But it came to pass, when Ahab was dead, that the king of Moab rebelled against the king of Israel”* (2 Kings 3:4-5). The stele (the “Moabite Stone”) itself says:

“I am Mesha, son of Kemosh[-yatti], the king of Moab, the Dibonite. My father was king over Moab for thirty years, and I became king after my father. And I made this high-place for Kemosh in Qarcho ... Omri was the king of Israel, and he oppressed Moab for many days, for Kemosh was angry with his land. And his son reigned in his place; and he also said, “I will oppress Moab!” In my days he said so. But I looked down on him and on his house, and Israel has been defeated; it has been defeated forever! And Omri took possession of the whole land of Medeba, and he lived there in his days and half the days of his son: forty years.”¹

Note that the inscription says that the house of Omri held sovereignty over Moab for forty years. Omri reigned over Israel for only twelve years, so his reign and those of his son and grandson were needed to produce that forty-year total. If Omri reasserted authority over Moab at the time he began his reign, in the year 914 BCE, subtracting forty years gives the year 874 BCE, which is exactly the mid-point year in the reign of Joram of Israel. So, the inscription is actually referring to the mid-point year of the twelve-year reign of Omri's grandson, Joram, not to his son Ahab, with the sixth year (“half his days”) occurring in 874 BCE (*see pages 50, 52*).

¹ Translation by K. C. Hanson, from W. F. Albright, “Palestinian Inscriptions.” ANET (3rd ed. Princeton: Princeton Univ. Press, 1969), pp.320-322.

Note 25 (see pages 35, 52)

JEHU PAID TRIBUTE TO SHALMANESER: Jehu paid tribute to Assyria in Shalmaneser III's 18th year, which was the year 871 BCE according to the new Hebrew kings chronology. Payment of tribute is recorded on the Black Obelisk (but not in the Bible), where Jehu is called a "son of Omri," but not a king. Either Jehu was delivering tribute for Joram or he had already rebelled and was making his own alliance with Assyria (*also, see Note 7b, p. 86*).

Note 26 (see page 55)

CIVIL WAR AFTER SHALMANESER III: At the end of the reign of Shalmaneser III, his eldest son Ashur-danin-pal tried to usurp the throne. He gained control of 27 cities, including Ashur and Nineveh, but the army apparently remained loyal to the aging king and backed a younger son, Shamshi-adad, to succeed him on the throne. Ashur-danin-pal briefly gained the throne when Shalmaneser died, but, over the following two years, was gradually defeated and deposed by the army under the command of Shashi-adad, who, at the conclusion of the two years of civil war, was recognized as king using the name Shamshi-adad V. Apparently, no *limmus* were appointed in the conflict years 853 BCE and 852 BCE, or, if *limmus* were appointed by the usurper, Ashur-danin-pal, during those years (likely, since he controlled the religious centers during that period), they were erased from the record by the victorious Shamshi-adad V.

Note 27 (see page 59)

NABONASSAR'S LUNAR ECLIPSE: The chronology of ancient Babylon essentially started with the reign of Nabonassar, when the astronomical and historical record keeping seemed to improve dramatically in quality and quantity. The reigns of its kings were correlated with celestial events, such as eclipses. The overall chronology has been preserved in the Babylonian Chronicle and in the later works of Ptolemy of Alexandria, both of which were based on the older Babylonian archives. The beginning of Nabonassar's reign has been fixed as following a lunar eclipse that has been backdated by modern calculations to have occurred on February 6, 747 BCE.

Note 28 (see page 61)

MUKIN-ZERI LUNAR ECLIPSE: The lunar eclipse that occurred on April 9, 731 BCE was not visible from Babylon since it occurred over the Pacific Ocean. Nevertheless, it was predicted by Babylonian astronomers, and it is recorded to have occurred

during the first month of the first year in the reign of Mukin-zeri. That year is equated with the fourteenth year of Tiglath-pileser III. The Mukin-zeri eclipse has been erroneously cited as “proof” of the accuracy of Rawlinson’s 763 BCE date for the Bûr-Saggilê eclipse. (*See discussion beginning in para. 2, p. 27*).

Note 29 (see page 67)

LUNAR ECLIPSE IN BABYLON: The eclipse that occurred on April 22, 621 BCE is important because it allows the **BATTLE OF CARCHEMISH** and the reign of Nabopolassar (and Nebuchadnezzar II) to be located precisely in time, as follows:

625 BCE - Nabopolassar was crowned king in January,

and his accession year began

625 BCE - Nabopolassar’s Year 1 began in Nisan (March/April)

624 BCE - Nabopolassar’s Year 2 began

623 BCE - Nabopolassar’s Year 3 began

622 BCE - Nabopolassar’s Year 4 began

621 BCE - Nabopolassar’s Year 5 began

April 22, 621 BCE - lunar eclipse in the 5th regnal year of Nabopolassar

620 BCE - Nabopolassar’s Year 6 began

619 BCE - Nabopolassar’s Year 7 began

618 BCE - Nabopolassar’s Year 8 began

617 BCE - Nabopolassar’s Year 9 began

616 BCE - Nabopolassar’s Year 10 began

615 BCE - Nabopolassar’s Year 11 began

614 BCE - Nabopolassar’s Year 12 began

613 BCE - Nabopolassar’s Year 13 began

612 BCE - Nabopolassar’s Year 14 began

611 BCE - Nabopolassar’s Year 15 began

610 BCE - Nabopolassar’s Year 16 began

609 BCE - Nabopolassar’s Year 17 began

608 BCE - Nabopolassar’s Year 18 began

607 BCE - Nabopolassar’s Year 19 began

606 BCE - Nabopolassar’s Year 20 began

605 BCE - Nabopolassar’s Year 21 began

August 605 BCE - Battle of Carchemish; Nabopolassar died in the year of the battle, which that year as the accession year for his son Nebuchadnezzar II.

Note 30 (see page 67)

THE BATTLE OF CARCHEMISH 605 BCE: The reign of Nebuchadnezzar II, and thus the events in the final years of the kingdom of Judah, can be located precisely in time by the Battle of Carchemish, which in turn can be located precisely in time by the lunar eclipse that occurred in the 5th regnal year of Nebuchadnezzar's father, Nabopolassar. (*also, see Note 29*).

Miscellaneous Observations

While examining the Bible's chronological details, your author has noticed several patterns and usages that have proven helpful for understanding and interpreting the chronological and historical data recorded in the biblical text:

Passover accounting: In compiling the charts for the reigns of the Hebrew kings, it became apparent that the number of years stated for a particular king reflected the number of Passover observances that had occurred while the king was reigning. For example, if King A was said to have reigned for thirty years, that meant that thirty Passover observances had occurred from the time he took the throne until he died or removed. When King B succeeded him, the count for the number of years in his reign began with the next Passover after the former king's death or removal. That method of counting Passovers instead of the actual time prevented the numbers for the reigns recorded by the scribes from overlapping one another and thus skewing the timeline. In practice, King B could have come to the throne the day after the last Passover of King A was observed, celebrated nine Passovers on the throne, and then died the day before the first Passover of his successor King C, thus reigning for a total of ten actual years (minus two days) while the duration of his reign would have been recorded as only nine years in the sacred text because he was enthroned for only nine Passovers (see example below). The ancient Hebrew scribes kept track of how much time had passed by counting the number of Passovers that had occurred between two points in time, reflecting what God had commanded in Exodus 12:14, "*This day shall be for you a memorial day, and you shall keep it as a [annual] feast to the Lord; throughout your generations, as a statute forever, you shall keep it as a feast.*"

King A's last Passover	King B ascends one King B on throne dies one day day after Passover for 9 Passovers before Passover ← King B on throne for 10 years (minus two days) → <td data-bbox="906 1407 1022 1534">King C's first Passover</td>	King C's first Passover
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Army commanders named instead of the pharaoh: The Bible records that Shishak attacked Jerusalem and looted the Temple in the fifth year of Rehoboam, king of the united Kingdom of Israel. Champollion equated the person Shishak with the person pharaoh Shoshenq I based on the inscriptions at Karnak, which turned out to be a correct association. But, as shown in the discussion of the two invasions of Canaan by the person named Shishak beginning on page 24, he was not yet king of Egypt (as anachronistically described in the Bible) when he invaded Judah and plundered Jerusalem. Instead, he was the commander of pharaoh Siamun's army. It seems that the Hebrew scribes who were documenting events in the early years of the divided kingdoms recorded the name of the commander of any attacking military force rather than the name of the king or pharaoh of the attacking nation. That pattern finds support in the fact that Zerah the Ethiopian is recorded in 2 Chronicles 14:9-15 as leading a vast army against Asa, the king of Judah. The exact identity of Zerah the Ethiopian is not clear from historical records outside the Bible. Some scholars suggest that he could have been a ruler or military leader from the region of Cush (ancient Ethiopia). His army was defeated, and the Egyptian records show that his pharaoh, Shoshenq I, was aggrieved at the earlier defeat of his army under the command of Zerah, as an inscription of Shoshenq I at Karnak attests: "*Now, My [Maj]esty found that ... [they] were killing ... [my soldiers?, and] my army leaders. His majesty was troubled about them*").¹ So, once again the name of the commander is recorded in place of the pharaoh or king, as happened with Shishak earlier in the sacred text.

¹ Kitchen, *The Third Intermediate Period in Egypt 1100-650 BC*, p. 294

TIMEKEEPING IN ANCIENT ISRAEL

The earliest reference to biblical timekeeping is found in Genesis, chapter 1, verse 14: *“And God said, Let there be lights in the firmament of the heaven to divide the day from the night; and let them be for signs, and for seasons, and for days, and years.”* As that verse demonstrates, timekeeping was related to astronomy from the very beginning of biblical history. Unfortunately, the Bible does not describe the actual calendar system used by the ancients, so we can only guess about its structure, astronomical associations, and accuracy.

The first calendar component with a numerical notation is found in the Book of Exodus, when God commanded that the Passover be observed in the first month, called Abib. The early books of the Bible mention only four months by name: Abib, the first month (Exodus 12:2, 13:4); Zif, the second month (1 Kings 6:1); Ethanim, the seventh month (1 Kings 8:2); and Bul, the eighth month (1 Kings 6:38). From these few mentions, some have assumed that the ancient Hebrew calendar was a strict lunar calendar. There is evidence, however, that the movement of the sun was also taken into account by the early Hebrews. The Gezer Calendar, dating from the 10th century BCE, the earliest written example of a Hebrew calendar so far found by archeologists, shows a twelve-month year which is correlated with the major agricultural seasons in ancient Israel—olive harvest, early grain planting, late grain planting, hoeing of flax, barley harvest, wheat harvest, and so on. That correlation of months to seasons confirms that the early Hebrew calendar was not exclusively lunar, but was instead lunisolar in practice, coordinated in some manner with the sun-regulated seasons in addition to the monthly waxing and waning of the moon, so as to keep the calendar aligned with the planting and harvest climatic requirements year after year.

After the Exodus, there were twelve months in the ancient calendar used by the Israelites, with months alternating between 29 and 30 days in length, which averages out to 29½ days per month. The resulting lunar year was composed of 354 days. Since that 354-day lunar year was eleven days shorter than the solar year, an adjustment by intercalation (probably a leap month added every three or four years, but the exact method is still unknown) was made to keep the seasons synchronized with the sun. While captive in Egypt, the Hebrews probably followed the Egyptian civil calendar, which had twelve months, each having 30 days, with five leap days added to prevent calendar creep, resulting in a year of 365 days, which is very close

to the astronomically-correct 365¼-day year. There is no evidence that the Israelites ever adopted the 365-day Egyptian calendar for sacred purposes after the Exodus, though. Some Bible expositors have postulated a 360-day “prophetic year” that they claim can be used for interpreting biblical chronology and prophecies. However, the Bible itself does not stipulate any specific number of days in a Hebrew year, probably because its length had to be adjusted from time to time to reconcile the twelve lunar-determined Jewish festival months with their corresponding solar seasons.

Until the Exodus, the basic components of the Hebrew calendar were all derived from physical observation of the heavens—the day from the recurring rising of the sun, the month from the recurring crescent of the new moon, and the year from the recurring equinoxes and solstices. After the Exodus, the new nation of Israel was given a non-astronomical time unit to add to its calendar system, the week. Every seventh day was to be observed by the Israelites as a reminder of their deliverance from bondage, as recorded in Deuteronomy, chapter 5, verses 12-15: *“Keep the sabbath day to sanctify it, as the Lord thy God hath commanded thee. Six days thou shalt labour, and do all thy work; But the seventh day is the sabbath of the Lord thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, nor thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thine ox, nor thine ass, nor any of thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates; that thy manservant and thy maidservant may rest as well as thou. And remember that thou wast a servant in the land of Egypt, and that the Lord thy God brought thee out thence through a mighty hand and by a stretched out arm: therefore the Lord thy God commanded thee to keep the sabbath day.”* Thus, the seven-day week became a unit of time in Jewish life.

In addition to the sabbath day, festivals and religious days to be observed throughout the year were added to the calendar by God through Moses at Sinai, and sabbath and jubilee years were ordained. The Jewish new year was originally celebrated in the first month, Nisan, as God had commanded, but when Israel became a kingdom there is evidence that a parallel civil year was instituted with its New-Year Day observed in the seventh month, Tishri. That seems to have been true when the people returned to Jerusalem after the Exile. In later times, the religious and civil new years were combined into one Jewish new-year observance on the first day of the seventh month, and that holiday is called *Rosh Hashanah* (literally, “head of the year”) today. Other changes were to happen over time as well. The Exile in Babylon that began after Carchemish in 605 BCE resulted in major changes to the Hebrew calendar. The most obvious change was the adoption of Babylonian names for the

Timekeeping in Ancient Israel

Months of the Jewish Year				
<i>Number</i>	<i>Pre-Exilic Name</i>	<i>Post-Exilic Name</i>	<i>Length (days)</i>	<i>Gregorian Equivalent</i>
1st	Abib	Nisan	30	March-April
2nd	Zif	Iyar	29	April-May
3rd		Sivan	30	May-June
4th		Tammuz	29	June-July
5th		Av	30	July-August
6th		Elul	29	August-September
7th	Ethanim	Tishri	30	September-October
8th	Bul	Heshvan	29 or 30	October-November
9th		Kislev	30 or 29	November-December
10th		Tevet	29	December-January
11th		Shevat	30	January-February
12th		Adar	29 (or 30 in LY)	February-March
13th (LY)		Adar II	29	March-April
<i>In a leap year (LY), the month of Adar II is inserted and all other months are moved back accordingly; a leap month is inserted in the 3rd, 6th, 8th, 11th, 14th, 17th and 19th years of the 19-year cycle.</i>				

months, and those names are still being used today. The first month Abib became Nisan, the seventh month Ethanim became Tishri, and so on (see list of Jewish months above). More important for accuracy, the 19-year cycle of calendar synchronization (later called the Metonic cycle), with its schedule for adding leap months to seven specified years in every nineteen-year cycle, became standard, and it is found reflected in the chronology of the Book of Daniel.

The ancient Hebrew calendar had a high degree of accuracy. Before 70 CE, it was based on priestly observations from Jerusalem, the sighting of the new moon being the most important calendric event. All other Jewish calendars were coordinated with the Temple calendar, so that the festivals would be celebrated on the correct day everywhere. After the Temple was destroyed in 70 CE and the priesthood ceased to function, the calendar was maintained by rabbis in various locations. Since observations from the Temple were no longer possible, and since the Jewish people were becoming so widely dispersed that timely dissemination of calendric information was impossible from one central location, a Hebrew calendar employing mathematical calculation was developed by Rabbi Hillel II

Major Festivals on the Ancient Jewish Priestly Calendar			
<i>Order</i>	<i>Post-Exilic Name</i>	<i>Day of Month and Festival</i>	<i>Pilgrimage</i>
1st Month	Nisan	14th - Passover (Pesach) and 15th - 22nd - Feast of Unleavened Bread 16th - First Day, Feast of Weeks, First Fruits (barley)	✓
2nd Month	Iyar	14th - Second Passover	
3rd Month	Sivan	50th Day, Feast of Weeks (Shavuot), First Fruits (wheat)	✓
4th Month	Tammuz	- - -	
5th Month	Av	- - -	
6th Month	Elul	First Fruits (figs, pomegranates, dates)	
7th Month	Tishri	1st - New Year (Rosh Hashanah) 10th - Day of Atonement (Yom Kippur) 15th-22nd - Feast of Tabernacles (Sukkot), First Fruits (wine and oil)	✓
8th Month	Heshvan	- - -	
9th Month	Kislev	25th - Feast of Dedication (Hanukkah)	
10th Month	Tevet	- - -	
11th Month	Shevat	- - -	
12th Month	Adar	14th - Purim (with Fast of Esther)	
<i>Since the creation of the State of Israel in 1948, the Chief Rabbinate of Israel has established four new Jewish holidays: Jerusalem Day (Yom Yerushalayim); Holocaust Remembrance Day (Yom HaShoah); Memorial Day (Yom Hazikaron); Israel Independence Day (Yom Ha'atzmaut).</i>			

in the 4th century CE. A derivative of that universal calendar is used by many Jews today. It standardized the length of months and formalized the addition of leap months over the course of a 19-year cycle, so that the lunar calendar is regularly realigned with the solar year. The Hillel II calendar also ensured that Yom Kippur would not fall adjacent to a Sabbath and Hoshanah Rabba would not fall on a Saturday, extra-biblical prohibitions instituted by the rabbis. A day is added to the month of Heshvan or subtracted from the month of Kislev of the previous year to prevent those things from happening.

In reality, the rules for computing the Jewish calendar, both in antiquity and in more modern times, are much more detailed than has been outlined here, but this presentation covers all aspects that are important for using the ancient Hebrew calendar system as a tool for understanding the Bible.

Sabbath and Jubilee Years

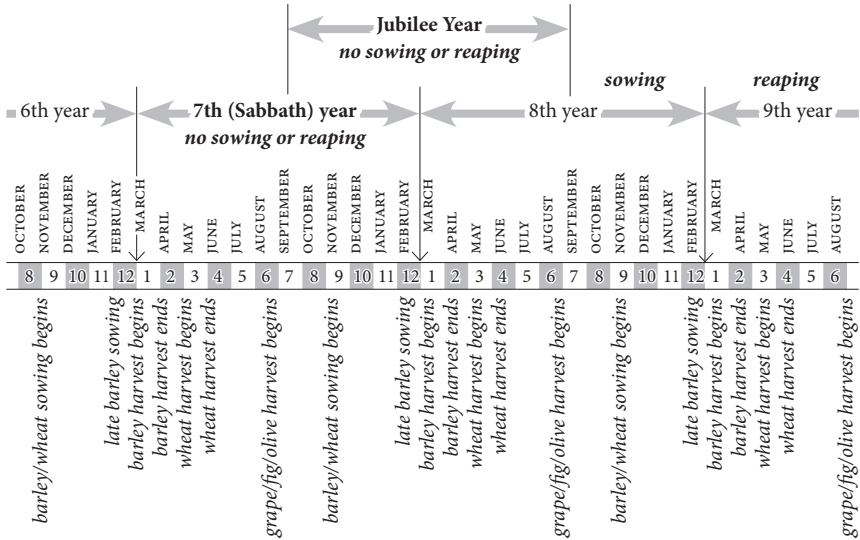
The Children of Israel were commanded to begin observing both sabbath and jubilee years (which, in practice, meant that they were to begin counting the number of memorial Passovers) once they had taken possession of the promised land, as recorded in Leviticus, chapter 25, verses 1-12:

“And the Lord spake unto Moses in mount Sinai, saying, Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, When ye come into the land which I give you, then shall the land keep a sabbath unto the Lord. Six years thou shalt sow thy field, and six years thou shalt prune thy vineyard, and gather in the fruit thereof; But in the seventh year shall be a sabbath of rest unto the land, a sabbath for the Lord: thou shalt neither sow thy field, nor prune thy vineyard. That which groweth of its own accord of thy harvest thou shalt not reap, neither gather the grapes of thy vine undressed: for it is a year of rest unto the land. And the sabbath of the land shall be meat for you; for thee, and for thy servant, and for thy maid, and for thy hired servant, and for thy stranger that sojourneth with thee, And for thy cattle, and for the beast that are in thy land, shall all the increase thereof be meat. And thou shalt number seven sabbaths of years unto thee, seven times seven years; and the space of the seven sabbaths of years shall be unto thee forty and nine years. Then shalt thou cause the trumpet of the jubilee to sound on the tenth day of the seventh month, in the day of atonement shall ye make the trumpet sound throughout all your land. And ye shall hallow the fiftieth year, and proclaim liberty throughout all the land unto all the inhabitants thereof: it shall be a jubilee unto you; and ye shall return every man unto his possession, and ye shall return every man unto his family. A jubilee shall that fiftieth year be unto you: ye shall not sow, neither reap that which groweth of itself in it, nor gather the grapes in it of thy vine undressed. For it is the jubilee; it shall be holy unto you: ye shall eat the increase thereof out of the field.”

Leviticus, chapter 25, verses 20-22, clarified that the people of Israel would not go hungry because of their obedience to the commandment:

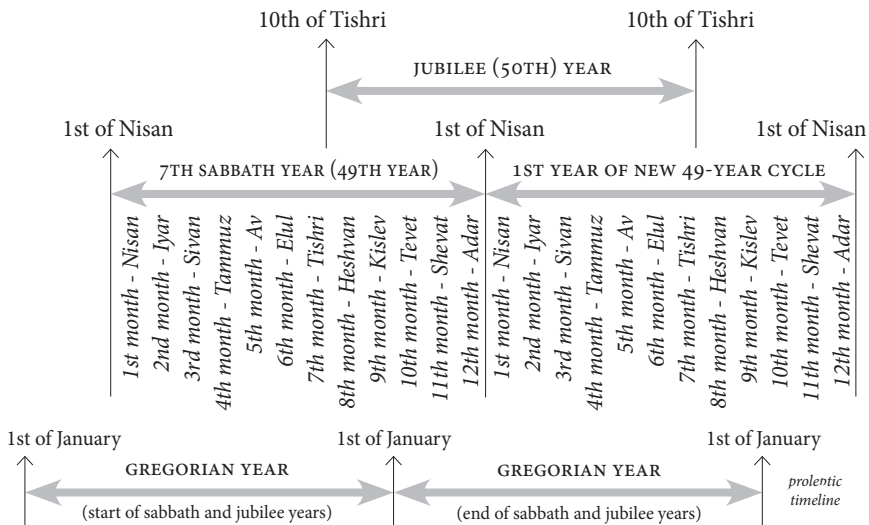
“And if ye shall say, What shall we eat the seventh year? behold, we shall not sow, nor gather in our increase: Then I will command my blessing upon you in the sixth year, and it shall bring forth fruit for three years. And ye shall sow the

Diagram A - Relationship of Seasons to Sabbath and Jubilee Years



Jewish months are shown as numbers, with Nisan = 1; corresponding Gregorian months shown above.

Diagram B - Relationship of Sabbath, Jubilee, and Gregorian Years



(exact relationship to the Jewish year varies somewhat from year to year)

eighth year, and eat yet of old fruit until the ninth year; until her fruits come in ye shall eat of the old store.”

In practical terms, the people would sow barley and wheat in November of the fifth year, then reap the bounteous threefold “sixth-year” yield of both grains during the following March through June harvest months, then possibly sow barley again in November (the month for sowing) of the sixth year to harvest whatever they could harvest in early spring before the start of the seventh year on the 1st of Nisan (March-April). There would be no sowing at all in November of the seventh year, and thus no harvest of wheat or barley the following March through June in the eighth year. However, in November of the eighth year, both barley and wheat would once again be sown and then harvested in the spring and early summer of the ninth year. That schedule meant that there were two harvest seasons when no harvesting was done. Under that schedule, though, no additional provisions were needed for a sabbath-jubilee combination year since the jubilee ended on the 10th of Tishri (September-October in the eighth year), so sowing could still be done in November of the eighth year as during the sabbath-only years. Sabbath years were to be observed every seventh year, beginning on the 1st of Nisan, and were to extend until the following 1st of Nisan, whereas a jubilee year began on the 10th of Tishri in the forty-ninth year of a 49-year (seven sabbath-year) cycle, and it continued until the 10th of Tishri in the following year. Both sabbath and jubilee years began in one proleptic Gregorian year and ended in the following year. A jubilee year, although called a “fiftieth year,” was not a separate year, but overlapped the last five months in the forty-ninth year and the first seven months in the first year in the next 49-year cycle, as shown in Diagram B on the opposite page.

Table of Sabbath and Jubilee Years from 1,700 CE to 2,037 CE

JUBILEE	7th Sabbath	6th Sabbath	5th Sabbath	4th Sabbath	3rd Sabbath	2nd Sabbath	1st Sabbath
2037/2038	2037/2038	2030/2031	2023/2024	2016/2017	2009/2010	2002/2003	1995/1996
1988/1989	1988/1989	1981/1982	1974/1975	1967/1968	1960/1961	1953/1954	1946/1947
1939/1940	1939/1940	1932/1933	1925/1926	1918/1919	1911/1912	1904/1905	1897/1898
1890/1891	1890/1891	1883/1884	1876/1877	1869/1870	1862/1863	1855/1856	1848/1849
1841/1842	1841/1842	1834/1835	1827/1828	1820/1821	1813/1814	1806/1807	1799/1800
1792/1793	1792/1793	1785/1786	1778/1779	1771/1772	1764/1765	1757/1758	1750/1751
1743/1744	1743/1744	1736/1737	1729/1730	1722/1723	1715/1716	1708/1709	1701/1702

Recalibrating Ancient Near East Chronology

Table of Sabbath and Jubilee Years from 1 CE to 1,695 CE							
JUBILEE	7th Sabbath	6th Sabbath	5th Sabbath	4th Sabbath	3rd Sabbath	2nd Sabbath	1st Sabbath
1694/1695	1694/1695	1687/1688	1680/1681	1673/1674	1666/1667	1659/1660	1652/1653
1645/1646	1645/1646	1638/1639	1631/1632	1624/1625	1617/1618	1610/1611	1603/1604
1596/1597	1596/1597	1589/1590	1582/1583	1575/1576	1568/1569	1561/1562	1654/1655
1547/1548	1547/1548	1540/1541	1533/1534	1526/1527	1519/1520	1512/1513	1505/1506
1498/1499	1498/1499	1491/1492	1484/1485	1477/1478	1470/1471	1463/1464	1456/1457
1449/1450	1449/1450	1442/1443	1435/1436	1428/1429	1421/1422	1414/1415	1407/1408
1400/1401	1400/1401	1393/1394	1386/1387	1379/1380	1372/1373	1365/1366	1358/1359
1351/1352	1351/1352	1344/1345	1337/1338	1330/1331	1323/1324	1316/1317	1309/1310
1302/1303	1302/1303	1295/1296	1288/1289	1281/1282	1274/1275	1267/1268	1260/1261
1253/1254	1253/1254	1246/1247	1239/1240	1232/1233	1225/1226	1218/1219	1211/1212
1204/1205	1204/1205	1197/1198	1190/1191	1183/1184	1176/1177	1169/1170	1162/1163
1155/1156	1155/1156	1148/1149	1141/1142	1134/1135	1127/1128	1120/1121	1113/1114
1106/1107	1106/1107	1099/1100	1092/1093	1085/1086	1078/1079	1071/1072	1064/1065
1057/1058	1057/1058	1050/1051	1043/1044	1036/1037	1029/1030	1022/1023	1015/1016
1008/1009	1008/1009	1001/1002	994/995	987/988	980/981	973/974	866/867
959/956	959/956	952/953	945/946	938/939	931/932	924/925	917/918
910/911	910/911	903/904	896/897	889/890	882/883	875/876	868/869
861/862	861/862	854/855	847/848	840/841	833/834	826/827	819/820
812/813	812/813	805/806	798/799	791/792	784/785	777/778	770/771
763/764	763/764	756/757	749/750	742/743	735/736	728/729	721/722
714/715	714/715	707/708	700/701	693/694	686/687	679/680	672/673
665/666	665/666	658/659	651/652	644/645	637/638	630/631	623/624
616/617	616/617	609/610	602/603	595/596	588/589	581/582	574/575
567/568	567/568	560/561	553/554	546/547	539/540	532/533	525/526
518/519	518/519	511/512	504/505	497/498	490/491	483/484	476/477
469/470	469/470	462/463	455/456	448/449	441/442	434/435	427/428
420/421	420/421	413/414	406/407	399/400	392/393	385/386	378/379
371/372	371/372	364/365	357/358	350/351	343/344	336/337	329/330
322/323	322/323	315/316	308/309	301/302	294/295	287/288	280/281
273/274	273/274	266/267	259/260	252/253	245/246	238/239	231/232
224/225	224/225	217/218	210/211	203/204	196/197	189/190	182/183
175/176	175/176	168/169	161/162	154/155	147/148	140/141	133/134
126/127	126/127	119/120	112/113	105/106	98/99	91/92	84/85
77/78	77/78	70/71	63/64	56/57	49/50	42/43	35/36
28/29	28/29	21/22	14/15	7/8	1 CE/1 BCE	- - -	- - -

Timekeeping in Ancient Israel

Table of Sabbath and Jubilee Years from 1 BCE to 1,393 BCE							
JUBILEE	7th Sabbath	6th Sabbath	5th Sabbath	4th Sabbath	3rd Sabbath	2nd Sabbath	1st Sabbath
---	---	---	---	---	CE 1/1 BCE	7/8	14/15
21/22	21/22	28/29	35/36	42/43	49/50	56/57	63/64
70/71	70/71	77/78	84/85	91/92	98/99	105/106	112/113
119/120	119/120	126/127	133/134	140/141	147/148	154/155	161/162
168/169	168/169	175/176	182/183	189/190	196/197	203/204	210/211
217/218	217/218	224/225	231/232	238/239	245/246	252/253	259/260
266/267	266/267	273/274	280/281	287/288	294/295	301/302	308/309
315/316	315/316	322/323	329/330	336/337	343/344	350/351	357/358
364/365	364/365	371/372	378/379	385/386	392/393	399/400	406/407
413/414	413/414	420/421	427/428	434/435	441/442	448/449	455/456
462/463	462/463	469/470	476/477	483/484	490/491	497/498	504/505
511/512	511/512	518/519	525/526	532/533	539/540	546/547	553/554
560/561	560/561	567/568	574/575	581/582	588/589	595/596	602/603
609/610	609/610	616/617	623/624	630/631	637/638	644/645	651/652
658/659	658/659	665/666	672/673	679/680	686/687	693/694	700/701
707/708	707/708	714/715	721/722	728/729	735/736	742/743	749/750
756/757	756/757	763/764	770/771	777/778	784/785	791/792	798/799
805/806	805/806	812/813	819/820	826/827	833/834	840/841	847/848
854/855	854/855	861/862	868/869	875/876	882/883	889/890	896/897
903/904	903/904	910/911	917/918	924/925	931/932	938/939	945/946
952/953	952/953	959/960	966/967	973/974	980/981	987/988	994/995
1001/1002	1001/1002	1008/1009	1015/1016	1022/1023	1029/1030	1036/1037	1043/1044
1050/1051	1050/1051	1057/1058	1064/1065	1071/1072	1078/1079	1085/1086	1092/1093
1099/1100	1099/1100	1106/1107	1113/1114	1120/1121	1127/1128	1134/1135	1141/1142
1148/1149	1148/1149	1155/1156	1162/1163	1169/1170	1176/1177	1183/1184	1190/1181
1197/1198	1197/1198	1204/1205	1211/1212	1218/1219	1225/1226	1232/1233	1239/1240
1246/1247	1246/1247	1253/1254	1260/1261	1267/1268	1274/1275	1281/1282	1288/1289
1295/1296	1295/1296	1302/1303	1309/1310	1316/1317	1323/1324	1330/1331	1337/1338
1344/1345	1344/1345	1351/1352	1358/1359	1365/1366	1372/1373	1379/1380	1386/1387
1393/1394 - Land allotted to the twelve tribes as the first jubilee year after the Exodus							
<i>In the table for years BCE above, note that the land was allotted in the first jubilee year after the Exodus, 1394 BCE. The next year, 1393 BCE, started the sabbath cycle in the land of Canaan, and the next five years in that first sabbath cycle after the land was allotted were 1392 BCE, 1391 BCE, 1390 BCE, 1389 BCE, 1388 BCE. Also, note that there was no year "0" (no year zero) when going from years BCE on this chart to years CE on the chart on the opposite page, since the year 1 BCE was followed by the year 1 CE as time moves forward in history.</i>							

Verifying Sabbath and Jubilee Years

After crossing the Jordan River in 1,402 BCE, the Children of Israel began the process of subduing the land of Canaan. In the forty-ninth year after the Exodus from Egypt (identified by counting forward in time for forty-nine Passovers, starting with the first Passover in Egypt), the warfare had ended and the land of Canaan was at rest. It was at this time, in the forty-ninth year (essentially a first jubilee year after the Exodus) that the land was allotted to the twelve tribes. Once the land was allotted, the Children of Israel possessed the promised land and the sabbath-year count began, with 1,393 BCE marking the first year in the sabbath count in the land. Counting forward in time from that year in one-year increments reveals the proleptic Gregorian date for the first sabbath year observed by the Israelites in the land to be the year 1,387 BCE, calculated as follows:

- 1,394 BCE ... 49th year after Exodus, land allotted to the twelve tribes
- 1,393 BCE ... 1st year in the seven-year sabbath cycle
- 1,392 BCE ... 2nd year in the seven-year sabbath cycle
- 1,391 BCE ... 3rd year in the seven-year sabbath cycle
- 1,390 BCE ... 4th year in the seven-year sabbath cycle
- 1,389 BCE ... 5th year in the seven-year sabbath cycle
- 1,388 BCE ... 6th year in the seven-year sabbath cycle
- 1,387 BCE ... **7th year, and first sabbath year observed in the land**

The first sabbath year is shown in the sabbath and jubilee table for years BCE on the previous page (see bottom row, far right column), and all subsequent sabbath and jubilee years from that first sabbath year down to the present day have been calculated from the date for that first sabbath year. The resulting sabbath and jubilee years are shown in the tables on pages 111-113. The validity of the tables can be verified by comparing the sabbath and jubilee years listed in them with other sabbath and jubilee events and chronological details mentioned in the Bible, the works of Josephus, the *Seder Olam*, and the *Talmud*.

Cross-check #1 - The chronology of Caleb's jubilee year request

A first cross-check of the sabbath-jubilee dates is provided by the chronology associated with Caleb as recorded in the Book of Joshua. In the year that the land

was at rest and was ready to be allotted to each tribe, Caleb asked for his share of land that had been promised specifically to him because of his faithfulness at Kadesh-Barnea. That incident is recorded in Joshua, chapter 14, verses 7-10: *“Forty years old was I when Moses the servant of the Lord sent me from Kadesh-barnea to espy out the land; and I brought him word again as it was in mine heart. Nevertheless my brethren that went up with me made the heart of the people melt: but I wholly followed the Lord my God. And Moses sware on that day, saying, Surely the land whereon thy feet have trodden shall be thine inheritance, and thy children’s for ever, because thou hast wholly followed the Lord my God. And now, behold, the Lord hath kept me alive, as he said, these forty and five years, even since the Lord spake this word unto Moses, while the children of Israel wandered in the wilderness: and now, lo, I am this day fourscore and five years old.”*

Caleb was forty years old when he was sent by Moses from Kadesh-Barnea into the land of Canaan as a spy, and he was eighty-five years old when he asked for his promised allotment as the land was ready to be assigned to the twelve tribes. Since the spies were sent from Kadesh-Barnea in the second year after the Exodus and thirty-eight years before the Israelites crossed the Jordan River in 1,402 BCE (Deuteronomy 2:14), that would mean they were sent in 1,440 BCE. Subtracting forty-five years (Passovers) from that year yields the year 1,394 BCE as the year that the land was at rest and Caleb made his request for his promised allotment of land. That result coincides with the year for the first sabbath year seven years later, namely 1,387 BCE, and it is a cross-check on the accuracy of the sabbath-jubilee tables presented in this book. A diagram showing the years of Caleb is provided on page 119 (second column from right).

Cross-check #2 - The destruction of Solomon’s Temple

A second cross-check is provided in the Babylonian Talmud. Tractate Arakin 12b says that Solomon’s Temple was destroyed in the third year of a sabbath cycle. The Temple was destroyed by the Babylonians in 586 BCE, which would make the year 589 BCE a sabbath year, confirming the sabbath tables (see page 111-113).

Cross-check #3 - The sabbath in the third year of Jehoshaphat

A third cross-check is provided in 2 Chronicles, chapter 17, verses 7-9, which record that Jehoshaphat, in his third regnal year, sent his princes, accompanied

by Levites and priests, to teach the Law to the people in the cities of Judah. That was in keeping with the commandment given by Moses in Deuteronomy, chapter 31, verses 10-13, for observing the sabbath year. The third regnal year of Jehoshaphat (r. 900-875) was 897 BCE, which was indeed a sabbath year.

Cross-check #4 - The destruction of Herod's Temple in a sabbath year ...

A fourth cross-check is provided in the *Seder Olam*, which mentions that Herod's Temple and the city of Jerusalem were destroyed during a sabbath year.¹ Since we know from secular history that the destruction took place in August of the year 70 CE, that would mean that the Jewish year from Nisan 70 CE to Nisan 71 CE was a sabbath year, and that is in agreement with the sabbath and jubilee tables (see table for years CE on page 112, second row from bottom).

Cross-check #5 - The year Solomon's Temple was begun ...

A fifth, albeit circumstantial, cross-check on the observance of sabbath years in ancient times is provided in the *Seder Olam*, which provides two references for determining the year Solomon finished building the Temple. It refers to the major Temple renovations mentioned in the Bible, the first undertaken by Joash of Judah (see 2 Chronicles, chapter 24) and the second done by Josiah of Judah (see 2 Kings, chapter 22). Joash began his renovations in his twenty-third regnal year, 218 years before Josiah began his renovations, and 155 years after Solomon finished the Temple.² Josiah began his renovations in his eighteenth regnal year, which began in the year 623 BCE. Counting back 218 Passovers from that year gives the year 840 BCE for Joash's twenty-third regnal year. Counting back 155 Passovers identifies 996 BCE as the year Solomon finished building the Temple, in the eighth month of his eleventh regnal year. Since it took Solomon seven years to build the Temple, that means that the construction was begun after Passover in 1,002 BCE and completed in 996 BCE. Both were sabbath years when no agricultural work could be done, ensuring that ample manpower would have been available for starting and completing such a large construction project.

¹ Heinrich W. Guggenheimer, *Seder Olam: The Rabbinic View of Biblical Chronology* (Lanham, Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 1998, 2005), p. 264.

² Guggenheimer, *Seder Olam*, p. 161-162.

SYNCHRONIZED BIBLE TIMELINE

The chronology embedded in the Book of Daniel provides a framework for the history of the Jewish people from the time of the reign of Solomon down to events occurring in modern times. Using chronological information from other books of the Bible together with the anchor date provided by the chronology in Daniel, chapter 4, a biblical timeline can be synchronized with the timeline of secular history all the way back to the birth of Abram in Ur.

The Exodus from Egypt

The anchor date revealed by the chronology of Daniel, chapter 4, is the year 964 BCE, the year that the kingdom of United Israel was rent from Rehoboam (see timeline on page 83). From that year, Solomon's reign can be located in time, and the year spanning 1,003-1,002 BCE can be identified as his fourth regnal year (see page 46). The fourth regnal year in Solomon's reign is an important year from a chronological standpoint, because that is the year when he began building the Temple, a month after Passover in 1,002 BCE, and all sacred chronology prior to the beginning of the kingdom period of Israel can be calculated from that event once the date for Solomon's fourth regnal year is known.

The key for extending biblical chronology back beyond the reign of Solomon is found in 1 Kings, chapter 6, verse 1, which says, "*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 Zif, which [is] the second month, that he began to build the house of the Lord.*" Going back 480 years from the year 1,002 BCE, Solomon's fourth regnal year, would seemingly reveal the year of the Exodus to be 1,482 BCE. However, using the 480 years specified by the Masoretic text as the time span between the Exodus and Solomon's fourth regnal year creates chronological problems. The most serious problem is that the events in the timeline resulting from using the 480-year figure cannot be made to reconcile with the calendar of sabbath and jubilee years that can be generated from other sabbath-jubilee data provided in the *Tanakh* (OT), *B'rit Hadashah* (NT), *Seder Olam*, Josephus, and the *Talmud*. Thus, the accuracy of 480-year Masoretic figure must be questioned. As it turns out, the 480-year Masoretic figure is not universally documented. The Septuagint contradicts it in

3 Kings, chapter 6, verse 0, which says, “*And it came to pass in the four hundred and fortieth year after the departure of the children of Israel out of Egypt, in the fourth year and second month of the reign of king Solomon over Israel, that the king commanded that they should take great and costly stones for the foundation of the house, and hewn stones. And the men of Solomon, and the men of Chiram hewed the stones, and laid them for a foundation*” (LXX).¹ In the Septuagint, the 480-year Masoretic figure is replaced by a 440-year figure. That change moves the date for the Exodus forward in time from 1,482 BCE to 1,442 BCE, allowing events surrounding the Exodus to synchronize perfectly with the sabbath and jubilee dates calculated from the Bible and various related Jewish sources.

For determining the year of the Exodus, the date for that event is calculated by using the Septuagint’s 440-year figure rather than the Masoretic text’s 480-year figure, the latter of which is assumed to include the forty years Moses spent in Midian after he fled Egypt (that made him the first of the Children to depart Egypt). In this one instance, the figure recorded in the Septuagint produces a better synchronization with the strict chronological requirements of the sabbath and jubilee calendar, which have been verified by multiple chronological cross-checks, and it yields a timeline that agrees with the Masoretic verses describing the duration of Israel’s conquest of Canaan (see Timeline A on the opposite page showing the various timelines from the Exodus to the first sabbath year in Canaan).²

Also, as an added benefit, a chronology for the life of Moses based on the 440-year Septuagint figure produces a timeline that fits into the historical narrative of Egypt’s Dynasty 18. Another interesting synchronization results from locating the Exodus in the year 1,442 BCE. That places the initial allotment of the land of Canaan to the twelve tribes in the year 1,394 BCE. That means the allotment is revealed to have happened after the forty-ninth Passover, counting the Passover in Egypt as the first, or, in other words, the land was allotted in the first jubilee year, the symbolic fiftieth year after the Exodus, the year designated by God in the Law of Moses for returning land to its owners (see facing page).

¹ Sir Lancelot Brenton, *The Septuagint with Apocrypha; Greek and English* (Hendrickson, 1986).

² In the process of harmonizing the reigns of the kings of Israel and Judah (see pages 21-29), your author developed great confidence in the chronological information about the kings preserved in the Masoretic text. Chronological details and numerous cross-checks about the reigns given in the Masoretic text converge with other chronological elements derived from the biblical text to produce exact harmonization. However, that is not the case with the 480-year figure given in 1 Kings 6:1 for the duration of the time span between the Exodus and the fourth regnal year of Solomon. It cannot be made to fit the sabbath-jubilee calendar. Perhaps the 480 years was originally a measurement made from the time Moses fled from Egypt in 1,483 BCE.

Synchronized Bible Timeline

The Exodus to the First Sabbath Year in the Land of Canaan

(starting year of every sabbath/seventh year shown in bold type; all years BCE)

Gregorian years		Jubilee count (yrs.)	Caleb's age (yrs.)	Moses' age (yrs.)
1442	The Exodus from Egypt <-----	1st		80
1441	Law given at Sinai	2nd	39	81
1440	Spies sent to Canaan <-----	3rd	40	82
1439		4th	41	83
1438		5th	42	84
1437		6th	43	85
1436		7th	44	86
1435		8th	45	87
1434		9th	46	88
1433		10th	47	89
1432		11th	48	90
1431		12th	49	91
1430		13th	50	92
1429		14th	51	93
1428		15th	52	94
1427		16th	53	95
1426		17th	54	96
1425		18th	55	97
1424		19th	56	98
1423	<i>In the Wilderness</i>	20th	57	99
1422		21st	58	100
1421		22nd	59	101
1420		23rd	60	102
1419		24th	61	103
1418		25th	62	104
1417		26th	63	105
1416		27th	64	106
1415		28th	65	107
1414		29th	66	108
1413		30th	67	109
1412		31st	68	110
1411		32nd	69	111
1410		33rd	70	112
1409		34th	71	113
1408		35th	72	114
1407		36th	73	115
1406		37th	74	116
1405		38th	75	117
1404		39th	76	118
1403	d. Moses (120 years old) <-----	40th	77	119
1402	Israel crossed Jordan River, <-----	41st	78	120
1401	conquest of land began	42nd	79	
1400		43rd	80	
1399		44th	81	
1398	<i>Conquest of the Land</i>	45th	82	
1397		46th	83	
1396		47th	84	
1395	Caleb (85 years old) asked for land	48th	85	
1394	land apportioned at start of jubilee	49th	86	
1393	1st year in sabbath count	1st		
1392	2nd year in sabbath count	2nd		
1391	3rd year in sabbath count	3rd		
1390	4th year in sabbath count	4th		
1389	5th year in sabbath count	5th		
1388	6th year in sabbath count	6th		
1387	7th year; first sabbath year observed <-----	7th		

Recalibrating Ancient Near East Chronology

Abram (Abraham) to Solomon

BCE

▲ denotes a pharaoh; using High Chronology* after 1,900 BCE

2162	— b. Abram in Ur, <i>Genesis</i> 11. [Abraham = 1st generation]		
2087	— Abram (75 years old) left Haran, entered Canaan, <i>Genesis</i> 12.		
2062	— b. Isaac (Abraham 100 years old), <i>Genesis</i> 21. [Isaac = 2nd generation]		
2002	— b. Jacob (Isaac 60 years old), <i>Genesis</i> 25. [Jacob = 3rd generation]		
1911	— b. Joseph (Jacob 91 years old), <i>Genesis</i> 30.		
1897	— ▲ <i>Senusret II</i> d. 1878 BCE.		
1894	— Joseph (17 years old) taken captive to Egypt, <i>Genesis</i> 37.		
1881	— Joseph (30 years old) stood before Pharaoh, <i>Genesis</i> 41.		
1878	— ▲ <i>Senusret III</i> d. 1841 BCE.		
---	... coregency with Amenemhat III ca. 1860 BCE.		
1872	— Israel (aka Jacob, 130 years old) went to Egypt, <i>Genesis</i> 47.		
---	... Joseph about 39 years old (30+7+2), <i>Genesis</i> 41-42; sojourn of		
---	Children of Israel in Egypt began [Children of Israel = 4th generation]		
1855	— d. Israel (147 years old); "blessing" given, <i>Genesis</i> 47, 49.		
1842	— ▲ <i>Amenemhat III</i> d. 1797 BCE (coreign after 858 BCE).		
1842	— 400 years of affliction began, <i>Genesis</i> 15, <i>Acts</i> 7.		
1801	— d. Joseph (110 years old), <i>Genesis</i> 50.		
1570	— ▲ <i>Ahmose I</i> d. 1546 BCE.		
1551	— ▲ <i>Amenhotep I</i> d. 1524 BCE.		
1524	— ▲ <i>Thutmose I</i> d. 1518 BCE.		
1523	— b. Moses, <i>Exodus</i> 2.		
1518	— ▲ <i>Thutmose II</i> d. 1504 BCE.		
1516	— Hatshepsut becomes a pharaoh (<i>Thutmose II</i> 's 2nd year)		
1504	— ▲ <i>Thutmose III</i> d. 1450 BCE (coreigned with Hatshepsut).		
1498	— ▲ <i>Hatshepsut</i> d. 1482 (primary king after 1498 BCE).		
1486	— Hatshepsut's sed year (her 30th year as a pharaoh)		
1483	— Senenmut disappeared from history.		
1483	— Moses (40 years old) fled to Midian, <i>Exodus</i> 2.		
---	... see expanded timeline on page 123.		
1482	— <i>Thutmose III</i> became sole ruler.		
1453	— ▲ <i>Amenhotep II</i> d. 1419 BCE.		
1443	— Moses (80 years old) returned to Egypt.		
1442	— The Exodus (late March), <i>Exodus</i> 12.		
1441	— <i>Amenhotep II</i> campaigned in Canaan in his 9th year.		
1419	— ▲ <i>Thutmose IV</i> d. 1386 BCE.		
1403	— d. Moses (120 years old), <i>Deuteronomy</i> 34.		
1402	— Joshua led Israelites across the Jordan River; <i>Joshua</i> 3, 5.		
1394	— Jubilee year; Israelites allotted the promised land, <i>Joshua</i> 12.		
1387	— Israelites observed first sabbath year in the promised land.		
1002	— ☞ Solomon (4th year), began First Temple, <i>1 Kings</i> 6.		

130 years
Genesis 47:9

430 years (*Exodus* 12:40, also, *Genesis* 15 as explained in *Galatians* 3:17)

400 years (*Genesis* 15:13, *Acts* 7:6)

453 years (*Acts* 13:20 - "about 450 years")

440 years
3 Kings 6:1 (LXX)

* from *Chronicle of the Pharaohs* by Peter A. Clayton (New York: Thames & Hudson; 2006)

Abram (Abraham) to Solomon

Once the year of the Exodus is known, the information provided in Exodus, chapter 12, verses 40-41, “*Now the sojourning of the children of Israel, who dwelt in Egypt, [was] four hundred and thirty years. And it came to pass at the end of the four hundred and thirty years, even the selfsame day it came to pass, that all the hosts of the Lord went out from the land of Egypt.*” can be used to calculate the year that Jacob (*aka* Israel) and his descendants (the Children of Israel) went down to Egypt. As shown on Timeline B on the opposite page, going back 430 years in time from the Exodus year 1,442 BCE yields the year 1,872 BCE as the date for the beginning of the sojourn of the Children of Israel in Egypt.¹

From the year that the sojourn began, the year of the birth of Jacob can be calculated from the information given in Genesis, chapter 47, verses 8-9, “*And Pharaoh said unto Jacob, How old [art] thou? And Jacob said unto Pharaoh, The days of the years of my pilgrimage [are] an hundred and thirty years ...*” Going back 130 years in time from 1,872 BCE gives the year 2,002 BCE as the year for the birth of Jacob. From the year of the birth of Jacob, the year of the birth of Isaac can be calculated from the information given in Genesis, chapter 25, verse 26, “*And after that came his brother out, and his hand took hold on Esau’s heel; and his name was called Jacob: and Isaac was threescore years old when she bare them.*” Going back 60 years in time from 2,002 BCE gives the year 2,062 BCE as the year for the birth of Isaac. From the year of the birth of Isaac, the year for the birth of Abram (later renamed Abraham) can be calculated from the information given in Genesis, chapter 21, verse 5, “*And Abraham was an hundred years old, when his son Isaac was born unto him.*” Going back 100 years in time from 2,062 BCE gives the year 2,162 BCE for the birth of Abram, which places his birth as occurring in the last years of the Akkadian Empire.

Other time periods shown on the diagram can be calculated as follows: In Genesis, chapter 15, verse 13, Abraham is told by God, “*Know of a surety that thy seed shall be a stranger in a land [that is] not theirs, and shall serve them; and they*

¹ The 430-year figure for the period of sojourn in Egypt has been questioned by biblical scholars. The duration of the sojourn in Egypt has been shortened by some from 430 years to about 215 years, primarily for the purpose of trying to agree with archeological findings, such as those at Jericho that suggest a 13th-century BCE invasion of Canaan. That change is usually justified by asserting that the 400 years of affliction included the time of the patriarchs in Canaan before Jacob moved to Egypt. However, Psalm 105: 9-15, states in no uncertain terms that no oppression was experienced during the lifetimes of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob while in Canaan. Both the 430-year and 400-year figures are correct.

shall afflict them four hundred years.” Going back in time 400 years from the Exodus in 1,442 BCE gives the year 1,842 BCE for the beginning of the affliction. That chronology from the *Tanakh* is verified by a comment made in the *B’rit Hadashah*, in the Book of Acts, chapter 13, verses 16-20, by the Apostle Paul, who studied the Hebrew Scriptures at the feet of the esteemed Rabbi Gamaliel, so it can be assumed that he is recounting the chronological understanding that was being espoused by the most authoritative Jewish scribes and Pharisees of the first century CE. Paul said: “*Men of Israel and you who fear God, listen. The God of this people Israel chose our fathers and made the people great during their stay in the land of Egypt, and with uplifted arm he led them out of it. And for about forty years he put up with them in the wilderness. And after destroying seven nations in the land of Canaan, he gave them their land as an inheritance. All this took about 450 years. And after that he gave them judges until Samuel the prophet*” (ESV).¹ From the time the fathers were chosen by Jacob when giving his death-bed blessing in 1,855 BCE until the Israelites crossed the Jordan River in 1,402 BCE yields a period of 453 years, which is, as Paul says, **about** (but not exactly) 450 years in duration.

The start of the 400-year period of affliction is shown by the timeline to have coincided with the first regnal year in the reign of the Amenemhat III (r. 1842-1797) as sole ruler after a sixteen coreign with his father Senusret III, the pharaoh who had made Joseph his second in command. That chronology conforms to the biblical text, which says that the affliction began in the reign of a new pharaoh, “*Now there arose up a new king over Egypt, which knew not Joseph*” (Exodus 1:8). Amenemhat, having been around Joseph for decades, obviously knew Joseph as a person, but did not continue to acknowledge (honor and recognize) him as had his father, as second in command.

The chronological reference in Genesis, chapter 15, verse 16, which records what Abraham was told by God: “*But in the fourth generation they [Abraham’s seed] shall come hither [to Canaan] again,*” gives insight as to the meaning of the word “generation” as applied to Israel as a people. The Bible lists at least twelve genetic generations of Israelites during the 430-year stay in Egypt prior to the Exodus, so it seems that the term “fourth generation” was used spiritually, with Abraham being the first generation, Isaac the second generation, Jacob the

¹ The translation for that verse from the ESV Bible quoted here is preferred, since the King James translation incorrectly indicates that the period of the judges was about 450 years in duration, a length of time that cannot be supported chronologically.

third generation, and all subsequent descendants of Jacob (the Children of Israel) thereafter referred to collectively as the fourth generation.

Locating Moses in Egyptian History?

Moses was born in the second year of Thutmose I, the first Egyptian king to have the *nomen* (birth name) Thutmose *dhwtꜣ-ms* (born of Thoth). Some have associated the name Moses with the last two hieroglyphs in the pharaoh's name, *ms*, which mean “bear” as in “bear a child,” and it is similar to the last syllables in the name Ramose (born of Ra), which was the name of the father of Hatshepsut's great steward Senenmut. Shown below is an expansion of the timeline on page 120, which reveals some interesting chronological Senenmut-Moses correlations.

Expanded Timeline for Senenmut and Moses

BCE

▲ denotes a pharaoh; using High Chronology*

- ca. 1536 — b. Thutmose II (born at about the same time as Hatshepsut, see below).
- ca. 1535 — b. Hatshepsut, daughter of the future Thutmose I (her birth calculated from
--- her estimated age of about 52 years old at her death in 1482 BCE).
- 1524 — ▲ Thutmose I became pharaoh, decreed death for all Hebrew male infants.
- 1523 — b. Moses, Exodus 2; found by pharaoh's daughter Hatshepsut (12 years old).
- 1518 — d. Thutmose I.
- 1518 — ▲ Thutmose II became pharaoh, with his sister Hatshepsut as wife-consort.
- 1516 — ▲ Hatshepsut recognized as pharaoh in the second year of Thutmose II's reign,
--- according to an inscription in the Chapelle Rouge, block 287, that describes
--- a festival of Amen during which Hatshepsut is made a pharaoh unified with
--- the Ka in the presence of an unnamed king (her husband Thutmose II).
- ca. 1506 — b. Thutmose III, son of Thutmose II and a secondary wife, Iset.
- 1504 — d. Thutmose II.
- 1504 — ▲ Thutmose III became king as an infant (less than 2 years old).
- 1504 — Hatshepsut continued as pharaoh, coreigning with her step-son, Thutmose III,
--- who, at less than 2 years old, was too young to rule as king.
- 1498 — Hatshepsut assumes male pharaonic identity, ruling as primary king.
- 1486 — Hatshepsut celebrated her “sed year” (her 30th year as a pharaoh).
- 1483 — Hatshepsut's great steward Senenmut disappeared from history (inscriptions
--- place his disappearance in Hatshepsut's sixteenth year as king).
- 1483 — Moses (40 years old) fled to Midian, Exodus 2.
- 1482 — Thutmose III became sole ruler when Hatshepsut died.

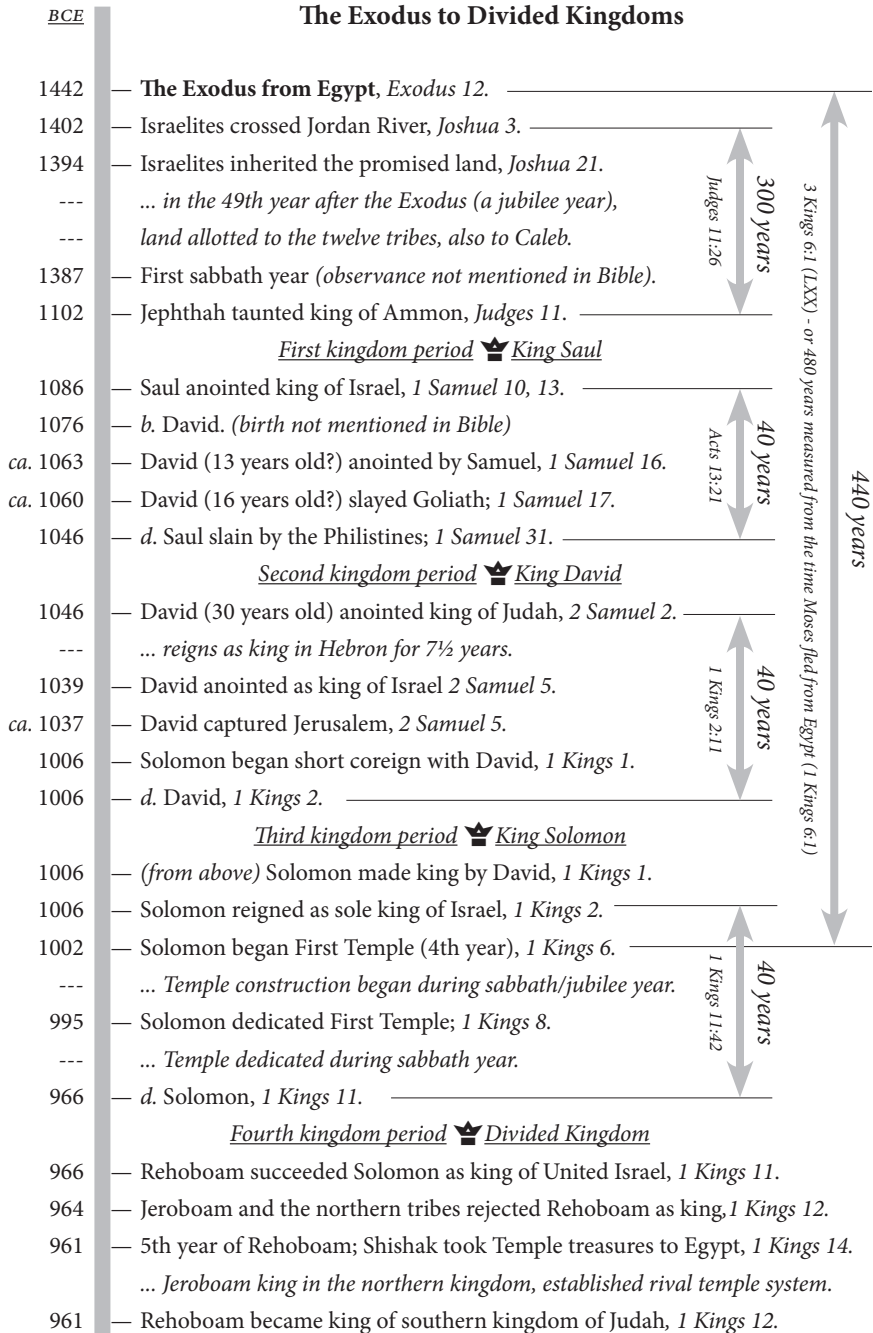
* from *Chronicle of the Pharaohs* by Peter A. Clayton (New York: Thames & Hudson; 2006)

Hypothesis: Thutmose I became pharaoh in 1,524 BCE. The new king decreed that all male Hebrew infants be killed. The following year, in 1,523 BCE, his twelve-year-old daughter Hatshepsut rescued the infant Moses from the Nile with the intention of raising him as a member of her household. When Thutmose I died in 1,518 BCE, his son Thutmose II became pharaoh and his half-sister Hatshepsut became his wife and queen. In the second year of his reign, according to inscriptions on block 287 from the Chapelle Rouge, the deceased Thutmose I presided over a festival of Amen during which Hatshepsut was recognized as a pharaoh, *circa* 1516 BCE. Hatshepsut produced no male heir with Thutmose II, but he did sire a son, Thutmose III, with a secondary wife. When Thutmose II died in 1,504 BCE, Hatshepsut continued as a pharaoh, at first sharing her reign with her step-son Thutmose III, who, being less than two years old, was too young to rule. Seven years later, in 1,498 BCE, Hatshepsut assumed a masculine public identity and reigned as king of Egypt for the next seventeen years, with Thutmose III serving in a subordinate role. Sometime after her recognition as king, Hatshepsut elevated Senenmut to be her chief steward (top official), but Senenmut disappeared from history in 1,483 BCE, about a year before Hatshepsut's death and at precisely the same time that the biblical Moses fled to Midian after murdering an Egyptian. Was Senenmut the "Moses" who fled to Midian (unlikely), or did Moses kill Senenmut and then flee from Hatshepsut's wrath before returning to Egypt forty years later as the prophet Moses? The chronological correlations and historical details do allow such questions.

The Exodus to Divided Kingdoms

The periods of the judges and the kingdom of United Israel can be derived from the year of the Exodus, 1,442 BCE, as shown by Timeline C on the opposite page. One insight about the chronology of the period of the judges is worth a comment. The information given in Judges, chapter 11, verse 26, in which Jephthah the Gileadite, who was chosen to defend Israel when the king of Ammon demanded return of lands taken from them when the Israelites crossed the Jordan River, is recorded as taunting the king by asking, "*... Israel [has] dwelt in Heshbon and her towns, and in Aroer and her towns, and in all the cities that be along by the coasts of Arnon, three hundred years, why therefore did ye not recover them within that time?*" Many chronologists, especially those who believe that the Exodus happened in the thirteenth century BCE instead of the fifteenth-century BCE date used in this

Synchronized Bible Timeline



book, have voiced doubts about the accuracy of that statement, saying that there was not enough time between **their** date for the Exodus (*circa* 1,250 BCE) and **their** date for the beginning year of the reign of Saul (*circa* 1,045 BCE) so as to allow for a period of judges lasting more than three-hundred years, as Jephthah's boast to the king of Ammon obviously requires. However, when all of the available chronological information is correctly interpreted, placing the Exodus in the year 1,442 BCE, in the fifteenth century, and arranging the details as shown on the diagram on the previous page, a three-hundred-year-plus period for the judges is shown to fit within the biblical chronology exactly as the Bible says.

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