

**History, Harmony &**



**The Hebrew Kings**



# **History, Harmony & The Hebrew Kings**

**E. W. FAULSTICH**

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E. W. Faulstich

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## ASTRONOMY, CHRONOLOGY AND NEW TECHNOLOGY

Since chronology is the framework of history, there is a need for dating historical events accurately. Incorrect chronology produces inaccurate history. The historian is obviously dependent upon the chronologist for accuracy. The historian can only achieve the necessary historical accuracy in his reconstruction of the past when the chronologist has achieved and done his best. Both astronomy and the computer has aided the chronologist to accomplish his important task.

It has become a well-established and accepted procedure in academic circles for chronologists to use astronomy as an exact science to verify the chronological data found in the historical records of the ancient Near East and of New Testament times. This procedure was made simple because ancient civilizations are known to have recorded historical events in connection with the observation of the movement of the heavenly bodies. Astronomical dating techniques used by the ancients include planetary alignments, the Venus cycle, lunar dates, Sothic dates, the days of the week, the Sabbatical year and solar dates. Therefore, scholars have recognized the importance of astronomy in achieving exact dating methods. Since most ancient kingdoms preserved king lists which include both the ruler's name and the length of his reign, it is fairly easy for the chronologist to reconstruct exact dates. Furthermore, the historical documentation of solar and lunar eclipses within regal years of certain monarchs has helped to guarantee chronological accuracy.

In the past centuries, such Biblical chronologists as Archbishop James Ussher (1581-1656) and Sir Isaac Newton (1642-1727) based their Hebrew chronology upon astronomical data. More recently, Eduard Meyer, Ludwig Borchardt and Henry James Breasted recognized the importance of reconstructing Egyptian chronology referenced to the helical risings of Sirius (Sothis). R. A. Parker has also done much work in this area in *The Calendars of Ancient Egypt* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1950). Babylonian history has been astronomically reconstructed through the use of tables for calculating the new moon conjunctions by Karl Schoch in S. Langdon and J. K. Fotheringham's *The Venus Tablets of Ammizaduga* (London: Humphrey Milford, 1928). In addition to this is P. V. Neugebauer's *Astronomische Chronologie* (Berlin and Leipzig, 1929) which contains ephemeris tablets for both the old and new crescents. R. A. Parker and W. H. Dubberstein reconstructed an astronomical chronology for the New Babylonian period and the Seleucid era in *Babylonian Chronology 626 B.C.-A.D. 75* (Providence, Rhode Island: Brown University Press, 1956).

According to his claims, Edwin R. Thiele has presented an astronomically verified chronology for the Biblical period of the Hebrew kings in *The Mysterious Numbers of the Hebrew Kings* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan Publishing House, 1983) and in *A Chronology of the Hebrew Kings* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan Publishing House, 1977).

Similarly, scholars have also attempted to date the life of Jesus Christ astronomically; as, for example, Harold W. Hoehner in *Chronological Aspects of the Life of Christ* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan Publishing House, 1977).

While the above materials provide an astronomical approach to determining a valid chronology, the above authors, however, were working at a disadvantage since their research was limited to the use of ephemeris tables and they were limited to certain time spans of history. None had the advantage of an astronomical computer program nor the use of a computer calendar conversion program. Modern technology has given the present-day chronologist several advantages which were not available only a few years ago -- such as computerized astronomical and calendar conversion programs.

The following presentation of *History, Harmony and the Hebrew Kings* is unique, for it is the first scholarly work to utilize the advantage of the modern technological use of astronomy for the reconstruction of a chronological history.

The Chronology-History Research Institute of Rossie, Iowa, through the directorship of E. W. Faulstich has developed an astronomical-computer program which gives the positions of the heavenly bodies for any given day from 5,000 B.C. to A.D. 3000 and has superimposed upon this astronomical program a computer-calendar conversion program. These two programs have become an invaluable tool for chronological studies.

The ephemeris generator is developed from J. Meeus, *Astronomical Formulae for Calculators*. It is the standard formula used by astronomers today and includes the slowing of the rotation of the earth. Absolute precision is necessary for any device designed to calculate the location of heavenly bodies in the remote past. Solar eclipses, for instance, demand a very narrow margin of error to reconstruct the exact hour several thousand years ago when a narrow shadow was cast on a specific location of the earth. Ancients recorded almost every change in the heavens. Consequently, these make beautiful benchmarks to precisely date important events in the past.

After intensive study of evaluating antiquated calendars, the calendar systems of the ancient Near East and New Testament times were superimposed on astronomical software. The computer program was designed so that an amateur could input data and instantly see a transfer of that data to all other calendar systems used by the ancients.

William H. Jefferys, Professor of Astronomy at the University of Texas, Austin, examined the computer calendar's astronomical program and wrote the following comment in a letter, dated August 19, 1986: "It would appear from your confirmation of my conjunctions that your program 'FULL PLAPOS' is basically sound."

The calendar conversion program is able in seconds to convert any given date into all calendars used by ancient Near Eastern civilizations. It is also able to compute an exact moment that the moon and sun were in conjunction within the Gregorian calendar relative to Jerusalem time. Therefore, with the computer calendar-conversion program chronologists no longer need to make use of the conventional method of utilizing outdated ephemeris tables nor do they have to limit their research to one period of history. This computer program has provided the reader with accurate chronological data in this astronomically-reconstructed history of the Hebrew kings.

Oliver R. Blosser, B.D., Ph.D.  
January 15, 1988  
Spencer, Iowa

## PREFACE

Time is the framework of history. An accurate history requires an accurate framework of dating events. The meaning of the past can not be understood without the meaning of time. The difficulty in understanding the nature of time has been well stated by Augustine: "*Si nemo a me quaerat, scio, si quaerenti explicari velim, nescio*" (I know what it is if no one asks me, but if I want to explain it to an inquirer, I do not know how.)

It is often as difficult to date past historical events as it is to give the precise meaning of time. The further that one becomes removed from a given past event the more difficult the time element becomes. Life itself demonstrates this truth. It is easier to relate the time element of personal past events which occurred in the immediate past (last year) than to give the time element of past personal events in the distant past (ten, twenty, thirty, forty *etc.*, years ago). Yet time is so important. When it is compared to life; one has little of it and even knows less about it.

In the Bible, time is regarded as extremely important. That is why the God of the Hebrews has put so many time notations into His Sacred Book. The Bible contains chronological data (the stream of time) from its opening page in Genesis and continues its time frame as its historical events unfold to the reader.

The Bible deals with chronology. As a history book, it cannot be separated from its chronological materials; Biblical history and Biblical chronology go hand in hand. The concept of history in the Bible contains a three-fold time element-- past, present, and future. That is because, as Exodus 3:14 records, God is the great-- I Am That I Am-- present; I Was What I Was-- past; and I Will Become What I Will Become-- future. The past aspect of time relates to 'completed history'; the present aspect of time refers to 'continuous history'; and the future aspect deals with the realm of prophecy or 'incomplete history'. The Hebrew God is both the creator and controller of history and chronology. He is the Lord of History and reveals Himself in time-- past, present and future.

Biblical chronology has been studied for centuries because man has desired to know more about God and His acts-- past, present and future. It was believed that the Bible as a history book contained its own timetable.

Unfortunately, with the advancement of rationalism and the modern development of the theory of evolution, humanistic thinkers considered it better not to be locked in the chronological framework of the Bible. As a result, rationalistic thought began to separate history from chronology in the Bible. Not willing to reject much of the historical data, the rationalists were willing to reject most of the chronological data. The rejection of the chronological notations came with such assertions as: the genealogies contain gaps; prophecy was uttered after the event; certain books contain 'Aramaisms' and have to be dated later; some books had to have more than one author because some of the theological ideas are too advanced for that time period according to the evolutionary concept of religion;

the chronology of the Hebrew kings is hopeless; and, Biblical chronology in general is inaccurate.

As time continued, the study of Biblical chronology was discontinued. However, with the discovery of archaeological materials relevant to the Bible and advancement in technology by inventing the computer, it now becomes possible to recover and reevaluate the chronology of the Bible. In the past, it would have taken a life time to accomplish the same work which can now be accomplished quickly through the use of the computer. Complex mathematical computations can be done in seconds by the computer.

The present research has as its goal the recovery of the chronology of the Hebrew kings so that scholarship might reevaluate and perhaps reclaim the chronology of the Bible.

It has always been the contention of historians that without chronology it is impossible to understand history. It appears that rationalism has made Biblical history 'meaningless'. Biblical history lies in ruins without the *framework of chronology*. Without the time element, Biblical events become fiction rather than fact, myth rather than miracle, inaccurate history rather than precise prophecy and epic magnification rather than divine truth. Often the hearer responds with doubt rather than faith. To say the least, this has hurt the cause of Judaism as well as Christianity, the advancement of the Torah as well as the Gospel and the work of evangelism. Uncertainty in Biblical historicity and accuracy has led to the failure of both Jews and Christians to testify, to confess the truth of the Bible and to witness to others.

It is hoped that the present research will help in a measure to restore the integrity and accuracy of the Biblical text through its recovery of the chronology of the Hebrew kings. The period of the Hebrew kings and the Divided Kingdom has been chosen first for study for two reasons: 1) it is the most difficult area of Biblical chronology, and 2) it is the heart of Hebrew history.

The complex nature of Hebrew chronology in the period of the Hebrew kings makes it the most difficult area of Biblical chronology. This period in history, along with the date of creation, receives the greatest attacks from rationalists. These critics led students of the Bible to believe that it is impossible to find a harmonious scheme in the chronological data of the kings of Israel and Judah and that synchronism, Biblical and secular, appear hopeless. This kind of rationalism concludes that not only is the chronology inaccurate but so is the history if synchronization becomes impossible with the history of the nations who came into contact with Israel.

The age of the Hebrew kings is the heart or center of Hebrew history and certainly, central for the nation of Israel. This is the great period of the Hebrew prophets, Elijah and Elisha, Isaiah and Jeremiah, Amos and Hosea, *etc.*, and their prophecies. It is also the period of the Solomonic Temple and its worship. The recovery of the chronology of the Hebrew kings would be beneficial to Judaism and those of the circumcision. It would contribute to the great heritage of the modern state of Israel.

Before the chronology of the Hebrew kings can be recovered, the Hebrew calendar and principles of Biblical chronology must be rediscovered. Astronomical data will be examined; for it provides reliable dates.

Laying aside any preconceived opinions regarding the chronology of the Hebrew kings, the present research has endeavored to ascertain just what the Hebrews did in matters of chronological procedure. The chronologist must keep in mind that it is not his task to manufacture history but to recover the chronology associated with history.

As the chronologist deals with the numbers of the Hebrew kings, he should remember that he is dealing with something fundamental and absolute, *i.e.*, something altogether fixed that allows no deviation in any way, even by a single year, if the chronology to be recovered is to be entirely accurate. Slight adjustments cannot be made in order to secure some desired result. Bible events-- the what and when-- happened as recorded. Therefore, the task of the chronologist is to fit those events into his *own* chronological framework within history. As the chronologist carefully and correctly completes his work, a chronological scheme will emerge which will be consistent with itself and in perfect harmony with the correct chronological pattern of the nations surrounding Israel.

Where conflict in synchronization arose between Biblical dating in extra-biblical sources, solutions were sought. In every case, the integrity and accuracy of the Bible was upheld. The Bible provides within its own pages a marvelous system of 'checks and balances'-- cross-referencing, cyclical phenomena and time spans. This system has preserved the accuracy of Biblical chronology. Even in the case of scribal error the system provides self-correction. Such is not the case with other historical documents as will be seen.

Since Biblical chronology provides its own system of 'checks and balances' to maintain accuracy, it becomes an apologetic tool defending the Written Word. The present study views Bible chronology, history, archaeology and languages as tools for Biblical apologetics. Therefore, the chronologist who recovers a correct chronology becomes an apologist of the Bible.

Other volumes will be forthcoming in different areas of Biblical chronology. The need is great. Since rationalists ignore the time frame in the Bible, or label it as erroneous, they have redated, rearranged and rejected some of its historical data. No other historical document in human history has been violated as the Book-- in misuse and abuse. No one would write a history of America without using the framework of chronology. Accurate history is impossible without absolute chronology. Yet the Book is read, studied and taught with complete ignorance of its chronological data. With the abandonment of Bible chronology, mankind has lost a portion of 'the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God'.

You are invited to join us in one of the most exciting chronological challenges and adventures in recent history-- to rediscover and to recover the chronology of the Hebrew kings.

## INTRODUCTION

Few challenges facing the chronologist of the Old Testament Scriptures are as formidable as the task of harmonizing the numbers and dates of the Hebrew kings. For centuries scholars have attempted to scale this chronological mountain only to meet disappointment and defeat. The ridges have proved too steep, the chasms too wide, and every prospect of a likely trail has led to a dead end or has been found covered by an avalanche of unsynchronistic data apparently out of harmony with preceding numbers or subsequent dates. Ask any serious scholar who has accepted the challenge and the response will elicit a tale of struggle and endurance, momentary elation and ultimate heartbreak and disappointment that will rival the account of the most seasoned and adventurous of mountaineers.

One of the early attempts to conquer the chronological peaks was made by Jerome in the fourth century. His assessment reveals something of the dimension of the challenge:

Read all the books of the Old Testament, and you will find such a discord as to the number of the years, such a confusion as to the duration of the reigns of the kings of Judah and Israel, that to attempt to clear up this question will appear rather the occupation of a man of leisure than of a scholar.<sup>1</sup>

Similar disappointment can be envisioned as registered on the faces of others whose expeditions led them to similar conclusions. The nineteenth century scholar, Eberhard Schrader, described his attempt to scale the Biblical scheme this way, "Not a few discrepancies yawn within it.... The system must, however, be abandoned in presence of the corresponding statements of the monuments and the eponym canon."<sup>2</sup> Rudolph Kittel, a renowned contemporary of Schrader, came to the same conclusion:

The Israelitish numbers and the parallel numbers referring to Judah do not agree at the points at which we are able to compare them. Besides, the well-established Assyrian dates differ considerably from those deduced from the Old Testament. Both facts show either that the numbers, originally given accurately, of the Book of Kings, were in course of time altered by disturbing influences (errors of scribes, misapprehensions of meaning, etc.) or else that we are no longer in a position to discover the original method of reckoning according to which the sums of the several items were found to agree; or, finally, that both causes have contributed to bring about the present state of things. The latter is most likely the case.<sup>3</sup>

In the present century, Samuel R. Driver, a seasoned veteran of the challenge presented by the Old Testament text, reported, "Errors which have vitiated more or less the entire chronology have crept in.... [A]ny attempt to base a chronological scheme on them may be disregarded."<sup>4</sup> In addition, there is the recent judgment of Cyrus Gordon which he relates in *The World of the Old Testament*:

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The numerical errors in the Books of Kings have defied every attempt to ungarble them. These errors are largely the creation of the editors who set out to write a synchronistic history of Judah and Israel.... But even with due regard for the difficulties involved, the editors did not execute the synchronisms skillfully.<sup>5</sup>

In view of the seeming insurmountable obstacles of the task, why this present volume of study concerning the chronology of the Hebrew kings? Consistent with the analogy of the mountain, a proper response would seem to be, 'Just because it's there!' Such is not the case. The motivation for resolving the chronological problem of the Hebrew kings involves the very integrity of the Biblical text. This factor alone places the issue on a most serious plane far beyond caprice or whim that may appeal to the adventuresome spirit of the climber.

Motivation for this work has grown out of years of involvement in religious education which dramatizes the need of God's people for an understanding of the Biblical text as a reliable document historically, chronologically as well as spiritually. Assertions similar to those above-- Jerome, Schrader, Kittel, Driver and Gordon--are echoed in seminary classrooms around the world in reference to the chronology of the Hebrew kings. It is commonplace to ascribe historical precedence to the secular records of Assyria and Babylonia. The seeds of doubt are sown in regard to the Biblical text and the door is opened to an easy capitulation to the conclusions of historical criticism at the very point where further investigation has demonstrated those conclusions to be both unwarranted and unnecessary.

Proper chronology responds to this need. It is the very factor that makes history alive and real. Apart from chronology, history exists only as a collection of data. Unless this data can be set in a chronological framework, at best it remains merely a prosaic collection; at worst it becomes a subject of derision, a target of scorn or ridicule, a compilation of myths that cannot be taken seriously. In recent years the Biblical record has been the recipient of all of the above. In the midst of this discord, how can this historical record be taken seriously along with the testimony of the pages of Scripture and the faith of the people of God whose lives are portrayed therein? For them history was a serious matter; for in history and in 'the fulness of time', God made Himself known (*cf.*; Hebrews 1:1-2; Galatians 4:4-5).

God is not a philosophical concept in the pages of the Old Testament manuscript. To the Jew, He is the God of history; the God who acts on behalf of His people in the very arena of human drama. To know, serve and adore Him is to take seriously the facts of Biblical history. The God of the Hebrew Scriptures is the Mighty One whose creative word forms the universe and whose hand parts the waters of the sea to bring His people out of Egyptian bondage (Hebrews 11:3; Exodus 14:21-22). It is He who guides them through the wilderness and sets them in a land flowing with milk and honey beyond the Jordan. In triumph and tragedy He deals with His people, Israel, in history. In the desolation of Exile, they can sing. Through the prophet, they have His own assurance that the very One who instituted the Passover and brought them out of Egypt will bring them back from Babylon (Jeremiah 29:1-14). Hebrew faith was founded on God's action in past historical events and in His changeless being. God's chosen people could face tomorrow because of what He had done for them, yesterday, in their history. The

future of Israel, today, lies in understanding the meaning of her past. That Hebrews took history seriously as is seen in repeated references to their past: the creation, the patriarchs, the Exodus, the reign of David, the Covenant, *etc.* A proper study of the pages of the Sacred Record requires that the reader do the same.

This means that the chronologists of the Hebrew court knew what they were doing. Their records are reliable and can be approached with confidence. Solutions can be found to 'the mysterious numbers of the Hebrew kings'. Such a conviction is reflected on the pages of this manuscript.

Chronology deals with history; in fact, it is the very foundation on which history rests, and the skeleton that gives history its structure and shape. If Biblical history is to be taken seriously, then Biblical chronology must be taken seriously. Biblical chronology deals with the God of history and, more specifically, the marvelous plan of redemption which His history reveals. To the Christian, Biblical chronology is the scientific examination of the redeeming activity of God: His creation of the world; His selection of a people, Israel; and the culmination of His plan in the redemptive birth, life, death, burial, resurrection, and ultimate return of His Son, the Messiah. Biblical chronology is, therefore, salvation history.<sup>6</sup> It points to the purpose of history and time, Jesus Christ.

History needs the framework of chronology; it is on this premise that the following research is based. Salvation history has its essential time element. St. Paul underscores the import of Biblical chronology when he writes to the church at Galatia: "...when the fullness of the time was come, God sent forth His Son..." (Galatians 4:4).

There is something very important in Paul's phrase, 'the fulness of the time'. The Greek words are 'the *pleroma* of the *chronos*'. The first word, *pleroma*, means 'filled to the brim'. In chemistry it denotes what transpires when one saturates a solution. Eventually, it reaches a *pleroma* 'fulness' and is no longer fluid, but crystalizes. In the flower garden the *pleroma* is that point at which a bud reaches its 'fulness' and is properly described as a blossom. This word descriptively and appropriately describes God's sending of His Son and causes no surprise to the student of New Testament Greek.

Such is not the case with the next word, *chronos*. Although this is the Greek word for 'time', in other writings Paul employs another Greek word that also means 'time'. It is the word, *kairos*, and can best be translated as 'opportune time' or 'the proper moment or occasion'. It does not refer to the type of time designation for which one employs a calendar or a watch. For example, when a person says that someone was 'in the right place at the right time', or that 'the quarterback's timing was perfect', it usually implies something different than when one boils an egg 'exactly two and one half minutes'. The first examples catch the meaning of *kairos*; the description of the perfectly cooked egg is best rendered by *chronos*, measurable time.

Since Paul uses the word *kairos* in other places (Galatians 6:10; I Corinthians 4:5) to signify 'opportune time' or 'end time', it might be expected that he would employ this word to describe the particular and proper time when God sent His Son. Rather, he uses the word *chronos*, the word for time as it flows in its measurable stream. It was into this 'stream'<sup>7</sup> of measurable time that Scripture

places the entrance of Christ into human history. That gives chronology a whole new perspective.

No longer is Biblical chronology a mere exercise in numbers and dates; it is a theological discipline which has as its goal the examination of 'the fulness of the time', *i.e.*, a period of measurable time. When taken seriously, as this study does, Biblical chronology reveals that the history of the world, from its very creation, has moved with precisely measured steps toward God's intended goal--redemption through divine intervention. A precise and accurate Biblical chronology will reveal a myriad of designs in the flow of redemptive history. The history of Israel's monarchial period is a significant part of that design and its chronological details deserve the most careful and painstaking examination. Therefore, it appears evident to this writer that the study of the genealogical tables and the numbers of the Hebrew kings were included in the Sacred Record because of their Messianic significance in regard to the fullness of time-- *chronos*.

The Bible devotes quite a lot of space to these matters of chronology. Thus it becomes clear that to take Biblical history seriously is to take its chronology seriously. Therefore, when one reads in I Kings 6:1, "And it came to pass, in the four hundred and eightieth year after the children of Israel were come out of the land of Egypt, in the fourth year of Solomon's reign over Israel, in the month of Ziv,<sup>8</sup> which is the second month, that he began to build the house of the LORD," the text is presenting chronological data regarding the Exodus from Egypt as well as the precise month and year in which the Temple construction began. To recover those dates and present them to the reader in present day Gregorian idiom is the task of Biblical chronology and is the ultimate product of this book. How one does it is quite another matter, and forms the substance of the chapters that follow.

It is precisely the methodology, *i.e.*, the 'how to' that has baffled scholars throughout the ages. And it is precisely the methodology, the 'how to' that distinguishes this work from all previous attempts at chronological reconstruction of the period of Israel's Divided Kingdom.

Standard methodology has been of two kinds. One school of thought has attempted to recover Hebrew chronology by taking an assumed established date in contemporary secular history of the Ancient Near East, examining the Biblical record for an apparent synchronistic point of contact between Israel and her Assyrian, Babylonian, or Egyptian neighbors and assigning that date to the Scriptural event. Such a procedure rests on the fallacy that the Assyrian Eponym Canon with its shorter or longer chronology, the royal inscriptions of the Assyrian and Babylonian records, and the Ptolemaic Canon are sources of absolute and accurate chronology. Credence has been given to this assumption because of the attractiveness of such astronomical 'fixes' as the solar eclipse found in the eponym of Bur-Sagale and the assortment of astronomical data in the second century A.D. *The Almagest* of Claudius Ptolemaeus upon which he based his 'canon'.

A second methodology, which attempts to remain 'Biblically oriented', has been to accumulate the dates of the Massoretic text apart from contemporary histories and then to create periods of interregna to satisfy the chronological demands of the accepted history of the Ancient Near East. The problem with such

a procedure is two-fold. First, it ignores the rules of Hebrew chronological reckoning, and secondly, instead of remaining 'Biblically oriented', it does violence to the Biblical text by asserting interregnal periods as a totally contrived and artificial device with no basis in either the Biblical account or in contemporary history.

That both systems have failed to establish an absolute chronology is witnessed by the wide divergence of dating produced by these methodologies. For the beginning date of the Divided Kingdom, for example, those who employ the first system have suggested the following dates: Kittel, Olmstead, 937 B.C.; Robinson, 936 B.C.; Kleber, 932; Couche, Thiele, 931 B.C.; Mowinckel, 930 B.C.; Begrich, 926 B.C.; Albright, Bright, Levy, 922 B.C. Espousers of the second system have presented equally varied proposals: Hales, 990 B.C.; Anstey, 982 B.C.; Graetz, 977 B.C.; Ussher, 975 B.C.; Mahler, 953 B.C., *etc.* Such a divergence is reflective both of the difficulty of the issue as well as the impropriety of the systems employed to establish accurate dating.

It is believed that there is a third, and proper, alternative. This new approach is described and utilized in the chapters that follow and is the unique and distinguishing feature of this work. That methodology relies neither on the assumptions ascribed to secular history or the chronological contrivances that alter the Biblical text in an effort to force its data into contemporary schemes. It is in no way artificial, but relies upon the original Hebrew principles of Biblical chronology based on the Hebrew calendar and its cyclical phenomena of the Mosaic Law (Sabbath days, Sabbath and Jubilee years) and the cycle of the twenty-four sections of the Levitical Priesthood established by David and instituted at the dedication of Solomon's Temple. In other words, it is a truly 'Biblical system' that both takes the text seriously and assigns priority to the historical data of the Hebrew record. This Biblical system of research permits the Bible itself to be its own interpreter of chronological data.<sup>9</sup>

After the chronology of the Hebrew kings is established, then, are the Assyrian and Babylonian histories placed in parallel. Where there appears to be conflict with secular history, *i.e.*, *Sitz im Leben*,<sup>10</sup> new interpretations are sought and found. The result is an accurate chronological interpretation of both Hebrew and secular history for the period of Israel's monarchy. The propriety of the methodology and the accuracy of its results are documented in this study and will become apparent to the reader as he progresses through its chapters.

One final subject remains to be discussed. It concerns the claim of one who asserts that he has conquered the chronological mountain and resolved the issues of 'the mysterious numbers of the Hebrew kings'-- Edwin R. Thiele. Because of the tremendous respect engendered by the significant endeavors of a fellow climber, one hesitates to appear so brash or bold as to challenge such a claim. Yet honesty and scholarship demand it; for if the claim were verifiably demonstrable, the chapters that follow would be an exercise in redundancy.

Anyone acquainted with the difficult issue of Biblical chronology is also acquainted with the monumental efforts of Thiele to resolve those issues, particularly as they pertain to Israel's monarchical period. Over the past forty years, his books and articles on Biblical chronology of this period have received much acclaim and are familiar to scholars worldwide. Few publications of merit dealing with

the history of Israel published in the last several decades fail to acknowledge the chronological contribution of his efforts in establishing an apparently harmonious scheme for the numbers and dates of the regents of Israel and Judah. This volume hastens to do the same, but not without qualification. It is interesting to note that some who acknowledge the efforts of Thiele fail to employ his schematic design in their texts. Perhaps this, too, is evidence of a qualified acknowledgement.

At the conclusion of his initial presentation which appeared in the *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* in July, 1944, entitled, "The Chronology of the Kings of Judah and Israel," Thiele wrote:

Whether or not the dates here provided are actually final and absolute will be determined by the tests of time. If they are final, they have nothing to fear from the most careful and exhaustive research - they will stand. If they are not final, and if indisputable evidence can prove them in error, they have no right to stand.<sup>11</sup>

In 1951 the following sentence was added in his book, *The Mysterious Numbers Of The Hebrew Kings*: "It is only proper that the dates herein set forth for the kings of Judah and Israel should be subjected to every possible test."<sup>12</sup> Subsequent publications, notably the popular handbook, *A Chronology of the Hebrew Kings*,<sup>13</sup> have repeated these statements.

Therefore, at his own invitation, the following chapters will, on occasion, subject Thiele's dates and methodology to the tests of 'careful and exhaustive research'. Significant differences will be identified.<sup>14</sup> Never are the challenges that follow intended to reflect disdain for the Biblical scholarship or historical research evidenced by Thiele's work. Both are deserving of respect and admiration and no remarks are to be interpreted as *ad hominem*. Just as Thiele's work acknowledges the debt to those who went before, so also is this volume indebted to his extensive and skillful labors.

Obviously, the task of producing an accurate chronology of the Hebrew kings was not accomplished 'overnight'. The study represents years of painstaking research involving the Massoretic manuscripts as well as volumes of ancient documents including the Talmud, the Assyrian Eponym Lists, the Assyrian annals texts, the inscriptions of the monuments, dynasty lists, the Babylonian Chronicles, the writings of Claudius Ptolemaeus, and the various contributions of archaeology both past and present. The text of the Septuagint (LXX), the Greek LXX Lucianic revision and the writings of historians from Flavius Josephus and Herodotus to the modern day have been scrutinized carefully.

Every attempt has been made to produce a manuscript that is of value to every student of the Old Testament, whether engaged in in-depth research or preparing a Bible study lesson plan. However, the subject matter is far more varied and involved than can be accommodated by a narrative style of presentation. Chronology is involved in mathematics, and absolute chronology in very precise arithmetic. A number of illustrations have been prepared to clarify the mathematical computations and to identify points of historical synchronisms. In order to gain the optimum from this manuscript, the reader must be prepared to examine the illustrations along with the text and to read and reread certain sections until clarity of the process or mathematics is attained. Moreover,

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chronology employs a vocabulary and concepts foreign to everyday usage such as 'co-regencies', 'accession vs. non-accession reckoning', 'historical synchronisms', 'Assyrian eponyms', *etc.* Therefore, a glossary is included to facilitate a conceptual understanding of the terminology employed.<sup>15</sup> At times, perhaps, only personal determination to understand the Scriptural text and its importance in history will provide the motivation to expend the mental effort necessary to pursue the research to its conclusion.

The reward of such dogged determination will make the effort of climbing the chronological mountain worthwhile. Not only will the reader attain an understanding of Israel and her contemporary neighbors that puts flesh and blood on the heroes and villains of this exciting time frame in God's historical interaction with and design for His people, but the reader will also acquire a renewed appreciation for the authenticity and integrity of the Biblical text and those 'holy Hebrew men of God' whose painstaking efforts first recorded and preserved for us His Written Word (II Peter 1:21).

## Introduction - NOTES

<sup>1</sup>Hieronymus "Ad Vitalem," Volume 1, Epistle 72 (*Patrologia Latina*, Vol. 22; col. 676) J. P. Migne, ed., *Traditio catholica* (Paris: 1864).

<sup>2</sup>Eberhard Schrader, *The Cuneiform Inscriptions and the Old Testament* (London: Williams and Norgate, 1888), Volume 1, pp. 164-165.

<sup>3</sup>Rudolf Kittel, *A History of the Hebrews* (London: Williams and Norgate, 1896) Volume 2, p. 234.

<sup>4</sup>Samuel R. Driver, "Bible, Old Testament Chronology," *Encyclopedia Britannica* 14th ed., Volume 3, pp. 511-512.

<sup>5</sup>Cyrus Gordon, *The World of the Old Testament* (New York: Doubleday & Company, 1958), p. 154.

<sup>6</sup>European theologians have used the term *Heilsgeschichte* for the expression of this concept of history--'redemptive history'.

<sup>7</sup>The word 'chronology' comes from the classical Greek word *chronos*, which signifies time viewed as a flowing stream--a stream that cannot be stopped, but can be measurable. Dating historical events within the 'stream' of time is the definition of chronology.

<sup>8</sup>The King James Version (K.J.V.) spells the second Hebrew month 'Zif' rather than 'Ziv', or 'Ziw'--the more acceptable forms.

<sup>9</sup>This is the basic hermeneutical principle that Scripture interprets itself--*Scriptura scripturam interpretatur* (Latin for 'Scripture interprets Scripture'). This means that a passage is to be understood in the context and light of other passages.

<sup>10</sup>*Sitz im Leben*--this is the German expression which means 'the place or situation in life'; the term is used for the historical context.

<sup>11</sup>Edwin R. Thiele, "The Chronology of the Kings of Judah and Israel," *Journal of Near Eastern Studies*, 3 (1944), p. 186.

<sup>12</sup>Edwin R. Thiele, *The Mysterious Numbers Of The Hebrew Kings* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1951), p. 279.

<sup>13</sup>Edwin R. Thiele, *A Chronology Of The Hebrew Kings* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan Publishing House, 1977), pp. 71-72.

<sup>14</sup>Compare chapter ten regarding anchor dates.

<sup>15</sup>The glossary is designed not only to explain chronological terminology, but also scientific, Biblical and archaeological terms which are interwoven into this study and necessary for the establishment of an accurate and absolute chronology of the Hebrew kings. It is evident that some readers will have no need to refer to the glossary; however, on the other hand, it is provided for those students of the Bible who may not be familiar with all the terminology of this volume.

## **Chapter I - UNDERSTANDING THE RULES OF BIBLE CHRONOLOGY**

### **I. THE ISSUES**

It is surprising to many, after a cursory reading of the text of I and II Kings, to learn that there are deep and weighty problems in regard to the chronology of the Hebrew kings. At first appearance it looks so easy.

#### **A. The Nature Of The Data**

The text is rife with chronological information. Not only are the kings of Israel and Judah all listed, but also their lengths of reign are given: "And the time that Solomon reigned in Jerusalem over all Israel was forty years" (I Kings 11:42); "And the days which Jeroboam reigned were two and twenty years" (I Kings 14:20). In addition to the lengths of reign, the text uses a system of synchronisms to provide the beginning date of the king of one nation referenced to the corresponding year of the other nation's king: "In the twenty and seventh year of Asa king of Judah did Zimri reign seven days in Tirzah" (I Kings 16:15); "In the twelfth year of Joram the son of Ahab king of Israel did Ahaziah the son of Jehoram king of Judah begin to reign" (II Kings 8:25). Even the monarchs' ages at ascendancy to the throne are provided for a number of the kings of Judah: "Thirty and two years old was he (Jehoram) when he began to reign; and he reigned eight years in Jerusalem" (II Kings 8:17); "Seven years old was Jehoash when he began to reign" (II Kings 11:21).

These factors would seem to provide sufficient data upon which a reconstruction of the chronology of the Hebrew kings could be built, but the Scriptural text provides even more information. Historical events are frequently referenced to a regnal year: "In the ninth year of Hoshea the king of Assyria took Samaria, and carried Israel away..." (II Kings 17:6); "And it came to pass in the ninth year of his (Zedekiah's) reign, in the tenth month, in the tenth day of the month, that Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came, he, and all his host, against Jerusalem..." (II Kings 25:1). Added to this, are the historical references not mentioning a regnal year but occurring within the time frame of a given king's reign. Note such references to Egypt (II Kings 23:29), Assyria (II Kings 15:29), and Babylon (II Kings 20:12-13). Also, there are several occasions when the number of years involved in the interval from one event to another is given. Such an example is that the death of Amaziah of Judah took place fifteen years after the death of Jehoash of Israel (II Kings 14:17). One would conclude that the text of I and II Kings is a chronologist's paradise.<sup>1</sup> Unfortunately, it is not that simple.

#### **B. The Problems Of The Data**

The problem obviously does not reside in the scarcity of chronological information available. The frustration comes about when one attempts to develop a harmonious pattern from the numbers and dates supplied by the text. They appear at one point to be self-contradictory and at another point to be in direct con-

flict with other passages. Examples will appear later in this text. A few illustrations will serve to identify the problem. II Kings 8:25 places Judah's Ahaziah and his ascendancy in the twelfth year of Joram of Israel but II Kings 9:29 identifies Ahaziah's accession year as the eleventh year. Even more disconcerting is the apparent mathematical impossibility relative to the reign of Omri, king of Israel, and Asa, king of Judah. Omri is said to have begun his reign of twelve years in the thirty-first year of Asa (I Kings 16: 23). According to I Kings 15:10, Asa ruled forty-one years. However, I Kings 16:28-29 places the death of Omri and the succession of his son, Ahab, to the throne of Israel in Asa's thirty-eighth year. Arithmetic would indicate Asa's death to have taken place two years before Ahab's ascendancy if Omri ruled twelve years. Or else, if Ahab began his reign in the thirty-eighth year of Asa, mathematics would give Omri a reign of only seven, but not twelve years.

Confronted by a myriad of such difficulties, chronologists have been hard-pressed to resolve the conflict. Some have tried to work out harmonious patterns based on the given lengths of reigns of the Hebrew kings only to discover the synchronisms were in discord. Conversely, to attempt the development of a harmonious scheme which emphasized the synchronisms meant abandoning the data regarding the lengths of reign. As indicated in the introduction, scholars of the past have given up in frustration and declared the task to be "impossible."<sup>2</sup>

## II. ESTABLISHING THE RULES

A careful review of prior attempts to harmonize the numbers has served to identify pitfalls, and to illuminate a path void of the chronological traps that have ensnared many. Such a review has revealed that the task is not as formidable as often surmised; as long as proper rules of procedure are established and adhered to in a rigid and disciplined manner. When the rules of Hebrew chronology are bypassed and Hebrew thought patterns are ignored, then the task becomes the nightmare that scholars describe as impossible.

The rules of accurate chronology must be ascertained and obeyed. Kittel, as quoted in the introduction, made an interesting observation regarding this issue: "Either...the numbers...of the Book of Kings were in course of time altered...or else... we are no longer in a position to discover the original method of reckoning according to which the sums of the several items were found to agree."<sup>3</sup> The paragraphs that follow will set forth the 'method of reckoning' and, as subsequent chapters will indicate, the sums have been 'found to agree.'

It must be understood at the outset that this study rests on two premises, both stated in the introduction. First, the pages of the Hebrew Scriptures concern themselves with accurate historical reporting, and a correct chronology is essential to such a historical report. A similar second premise is that the scribal court recorders of the chronology of the Hebrew kings were aware of the chronological sequence of their history with which they were dealing. Consequently, the scribes did not record a history that was mathematical nonsense or in conflict with that of their contemporary neighbors. Concerned with the preservation of their history, the text was originally reliable both historically and chronologically for posterity.

It must further be understood that these premises are in contrast with the

common assumptions brought to the text by earlier scholars who have tried to reconstruct the chronology of this period. Their premises, also, are two-fold: 1) Numerous errors exist in the text of I and II Kings and II Chronicles, and 2) Israel's chroniclers were not concerned with reporting accurate history, therefore, the priority must be given to secular records. It is the conviction of this study that such *a priori* assumptions are invalid and exist because of a failure to establish and apply proper chronological procedure to the Biblical text. That procedure will be identified in the paragraphs that follow.

### **A. The Posting Procedure**

Having considered the issues of Hebrew chronology for the period of the kings, one's attention is now directed to rules for understanding Hebrew chronology. The first Biblical rules concern dates. There are four rules that must be considered in assessing the regnal period of any Hebrew monarch: 1) the accession year, 2) the age when he ascended, 3) his first official year when he became sole regent, and 4) his death year. At times the text provides additional chronological information, such as a king's birth year or the age at which he became a father. This data is useful as a reinforcement of the reasonableness of the chronology, but is not essential to its establishment. The four dates above are essential, and are discussed below.

#### **1. The Accession Year**

The accession year is always the year in which a monarch began his rule. For the Hebrews, the king's reign began the moment he was anointed (or appointed) and continued until his death. Appointment was permanent. It could not be altered by temporal exigencies. A monarch was king for life, even if circumstances required that his successor begin the actual ruling activity before his death. Thus, there are instances in which a king was co-regent with his son or served as co-regent before the death of his predecessor, as was the case with Saul and David. A word of caution is in order here, however. Co-regencies must not be assigned unless clearly indicated in the text. Historically, they have been contrived by those who desire the numbers to harmonize in spite of lack of evidence for a co-regency.<sup>4</sup> The date of accession is the date for calculating the length of a king's reign. This is essential. The counting of the duration of a reign must be referenced from the accession year. The accession year always can be determined by subtracting the total reign from the year of the monarch's death.

#### **2. The Age Of The King At Accession**

The age of the king at accession has been overlooked at times by chronologists. The result of such an oversight has been the production of chronologies in which dates have been assigned to kings before their father's birth. The age, when provided in the text, is always given in reference to the year of accession, rather than the first year of the king's official reign. Where there is no co-regency, of course, the accession year and first official year are the same.

#### **3. The Sole Regency**

The sole regency of a king is the year of the commencement of a king's official reign. This always begins upon the death of his predecessor. For example,

the Hebrew text states that Jehoash began his reign “in the seventh year of Jehu” (II Kings 12:1). One must look to the accession or appointment year of Jehu and add six to determine the official year in which Jehoash began his reign. This case demonstrates the necessity for such distinctions. Jehoash was ‘appointed’ by Jehoiada, the high priest, before the death of Athaliah. Therefore, his first official year did not begin until a year after his accession year (II Kings 11:1-21). The same is true of Jehu, who was appointed to the throne of Israel at the direction of Elisha prior to the assassination of his predecessor, Jehoram (II Kings 9:1-26). His official reign, like that of Jehoash, did not begin until the death of the predecessor.

#### **4. The Death Year**

The death year of the king, as can be deduced from the preceding paragraph, is always the same year in which the king’s successor begins his official reign. It is important to remember that the accession year is determined by subtracting the total reign of a king from the year of his death. If, on the one hand, the death year of a king minus his total reign is the same year as his predecessor’s death, there is no co-regency. On the other hand, if a king’s death year minus his total reign is earlier than the death of his predecessor, that is the indication that there was a co-regency or sworn allegiance *etc.*, involved.<sup>5</sup> It was always necessary to have a king dead before any other king could function. This, was a result of oaths of obedience and respect to elder authority, *etc.*

These four rules regarding regnal dates are essential for an accurate harmonization of the chronology of the Hebrew kings and are a part of the “original method of reckoning”<sup>6</sup> which Kittel refers to as being lost. Unfortunately, these rules have been overlooked by previous studies or only applied in part when their application produced the desired numerical outcome. It is this type of scholarship that has caused many to look with disdain on the integrity of the Hebrew text as a chronological document.

### **B. The First Year Counting**

Some Talmudic rules must be applied when charting the chronology of the Hebrew kings.

#### **1. Tishri vs. Nisan Counting**

One rule concerns the date on which the king’s reign began. The king’s reign was counted from the first day of the Hebrew year, Nisan 1. The Talmud makes this clear:

Our Rabbis learnt: If a king ascended the throne on the twenty-ninth of Adar, as soon as the first of Nisan arrives he is reckoned to have reigned a year. If on the other hand he ascended the throne on the first of Nisan, he is not reckoned to have reigned a year till the next first of Nisan comes around.

The Master has said, ‘If a king ascends the throne on the twenty-ninth of Adar, as soon as the first of Nisan arrives he is reckoned to have reigned a year.’ This teaches us that Nisan is the New Year for kings, and that one day in a year is reckoned as a year. ‘But if he ascended the throne on the first of Nisan he is not reckoned to have reigned a year till the next first of Nisan comes around.’<sup>7</sup>

This reference makes the amazing proposition that a king could begin to reign on the twenty-ninth of Adar and on the very next day, the first of Nisan, be reckoned as having reigned a full year. Some scholars have attempted to explain apparent difficulties in the Hebrew text by ignoring the Talmud and the textual evidence that supports it by suggesting that sometimes the king's reign was counted from the first of Tishri (seventh month) and sometimes from the first of Nisan (first month). Thiele, for example, employs this concept in an attempt to account for apparent difficulties in calculating the regnal years during several periods of Hebrew history.<sup>8</sup> He posits that, in general, Israel employed a Nisan to Nisan year and Judah reckoned from Tishri: "... when a Nisan-to-Nisan regnal year is used for Israel together with a Tishri-to-Tishri year for Judah, the perplexing discrepancies disappear and a harmonious chronological pattern results."<sup>9</sup> He discounts the Talmudic evidence with the following statement: "It is quite possible that, by the time the Mishna statement was prepared, all memory of the exact chronological arrangements of the Hebrew kings had disappeared."<sup>10</sup> It is just as possible that the chronological arrangements of the Hebrew kings were not forgotten by the authors of the Talmud since it was a part of their heritage. Indeed, a proper reading of the Hebrew text and a construct of the chronology indicates that it was not forgotten. There is little evidence, Biblical or ancient extra-biblical, which would indicate that the kingdom of Judah reckoned kings from a Tishri point of reference.

In addition to discounting the Talmud, Thiele claims that there are two possible indications in the Hebrew text that support the Tishri date for Judah's kings. His first suggestion concerns the texts of I Kings 6:1 and I Kings 6:38.<sup>11</sup> The first verse of I Kings 6 indicates that construction of the Temple began in the second month (Ziv) of the fourth year of Solomon and was completed, according to I Kings 6:38, in the eighth month (Bul) of Solomon's eleventh year: "So was he seven years in building it." The mathematics simply does not require a Tishri date for Solomon's ascendancy.

The construction began in the fourth year, the second month. It was completed in the eleventh year, the eighth month, for a total time of seven years and six months. If one were counting the number of times one passed the first of Nisan, one would count seven. If one counted the numbers of times one passed the first of Tishri, one would count eight. In this case, Thiele is inaccurate. This is contrary to the statement of the Hebrew text: "So was he seven years in building it" (I Kings 6:38). It is obvious that the author of Kings is reckoning from Nisan 1. It has been Thiele's assumption that, "If the regnal years of Solomon were figured from Tishri-to-Tishri, this would almost certainly be the method used by the successors of Solomon in the southern kingdom."<sup>12</sup> There is little proof for Thiele's assumption of a Tishri point of reference. In fact, if this were the case, then six months after the Temple construction began, would have been the beginning of Solomon's fifth year of reign. This means that seven years later, a month before the Temple's completion, would have been Solomon's twelfth year rather than the eleventh as the Bible indicates. It appears, then, that the Temple construction and Solomon's reign are reckoned by a Nisan 1 point of reference. It seems unusual for the two kingdoms, Israel and Judah, having the same national origin

to reckon their rulers differently.

The other Tishri inference posited by Thiele is in the texts of II Kings 22:3 and II Kings 23:23.<sup>13</sup> The passages indicate that the Temple repairs were begun by Josiah in his eighteenth year, and that the Passover was celebrated the same year. In this example, Thiele has a case which is hard to explain away, for according to the LXX, the book of the Law was found in the eighth month, and the Passover was held in the first month, both in the eighteenth year of Josiah. There are only two possible solutions: 1) there is a textual error or 2) the kings changed at Passover (Nisan 15) instead of Nisan 1. This may have been the case early in the reigns of the kings, for Solomon was made king the first time by David during the Passover Feast (I Chronicles 29:21ff.).

Several other cases can be cited in defense of the Nisan dating:

Zedekiah became king in the twelfth month on the second day of the seventh year of Nebuchadnezzar according to the Babylonian Chronicles.<sup>14</sup> This would be just before Nisan 1, 598 B.C. He was given eleven years of reign which ended at the destruction of Jerusalem in the fifth month on the ninth day of 588 B.C., in the eighteenth year of Nebuchadnezzar. From this, it can be seen that only ten years and five months of elapsed time are counted as eleven years. This would only be possible if a year was given Zedekiah when Nisan 1 was passed.

Jeconiah (Jehoiachin) ruled for three months and ten days, ending with his captivity on the twelfth month, the second day. Since he did not pass Nisan 1, he was not given a year. The Jerusalem Bible records this capture: "At the turn of the year, King Nebuchadnezzar sent for him and had him taken to Babylon, with the precious furnishings of the Temple of Yahweh, and made Zedekiah his brother king of Judah and Jerusalem in his place" (II Chronicles 36:10).

Jehoahaz, on the other hand, ruled for three months in Jerusalem, yet he was taken captive by Necho of Egypt, who, according to the Babylonian Chronicles, fought against Babylon in the fourth month. Since his three month reign passed Nisan 1, he was given one year by the Hebrews (II Chronicles 36:1-14).

The overwhelming evidence suggests that Nisan was the time for changing kings as far as the Hebrews and the Babylonian kings were concerned. On the first of Nisan, the Babylonian kings 'took the hand of Bel'.

Through the centuries, scholars have disagreed on the starting point reference for reckoning the reigns of the Hebrew kings. Thiele's chronology requires a Tishri reckoning for Judah; he writes, "Perhaps the strongest argument for the use of a Tishri-to-Tishri regnal year in Judah is that this method works, giving us a harmonious pattern of the regnal years and synchronisms, while with a Nisan-to-Nisan regnal year the old discrepancies remain."<sup>15</sup> It is the contention of the present research that the Tishri system of reckoning calls into question the accuracy and integrity of the Biblical text as shown above.

Some scholars, as Kleber, have suggested a Nisan to Nisan year for Judah and a Tishri year for Israel,<sup>16</sup> exactly opposite of that espoused by Thiele. Mowinkel proposes a Tishri to Tishri year for both kingdoms.<sup>17</sup> Others have offered suggestions that perhaps shifts were made from Tishri to Nisan at later periods in the history of both kingdoms. Mahler's text avoids the issue in another way by proposing that the regnal year of the Hebrew kings was counted from the day

on which the king ascended the throne.<sup>18</sup>

In spite of former debates over which month, Nisan or Tishri, began the regnal year during various periods of Hebrew history, there is no data within or without the Hebrew text that supports the reckoning of kings from any date other than Nisan 1 for both kingdoms. None of the systems previously suggested have resolved the apparent discrepancies in the synchronisms.<sup>19</sup> This study will demonstrate the non-validity as well as the non-necessity of adjusting regnal years to meet a particular chronological concern. Again, there simply is no evidence to support the contention that the reigns of a selected number of Hebrew kings are to be reckoned from Tishri. Such manipulation is contrary to Hebrew tradition.<sup>20</sup>

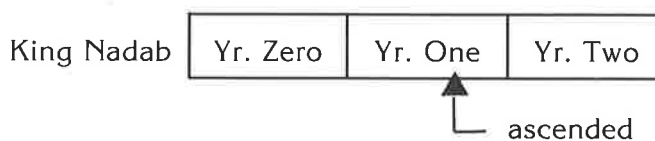
There is, however, the ever-present possibility of a one-year discrepancy occurring when converting the ancient lunar year into its current Gregorian equivalent. The Hebrew year (beginning on Nisan 1: March/April) overlaps two Gregorian years (beginning on January 1). There also is the possibility that a one-year discrepancy may occur when a king was appointed at the very beginning or end of the lunar year. Such factors very likely account for several apparent discrepancies which appear in the Hebrew chronicle.

### 2. Counting The Accession Year As The First Year

When a king's accession year is counted as his first year, a hypothetical year zero occurs in the previous year, and his reign duration is actually one less than stated. This method of counting takes place when kings are referenced to other events or kings. Such was the case during the period when the nation, Israel, had a Divided Kingdom.

For example, according to I Kings 15:25, Nadab ruled as king over Israel for two years, *i.e.*, he reigned during parts of all of two different years, but in actual chronological, years he only ruled for one year. The following chart of one king will illustrate this principle:

#### ILLUSTRATION I: COUNTING ACCESSION YEAR AS YEAR ONE



This is the concept that must be employed when charting the chronology of the Hebrew kings in those cases where a king's reign either in Israel or Judah is used as a cross-reference to a king in the opposite kingdom. A year must be subtracted in order to obtain the correct chronological sum.<sup>21</sup>

This method of counting is a result of counting the first year of contact as year one instead of year zero. It is used in Biblical chronology when referencing one king, person, or event to another king, person, or event. In this method, the first year of a king is year one instead of year zero. For example, consider Exodus 19:10-11 where days are counted:

And the Lord said unto Moses, Go unto the people, and sanctify them to-day and to-morrow, and let them wash their clothes, And be ready against the third

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day: for the third day the Lord will come down in the sight of all the people upon mount Sinai.

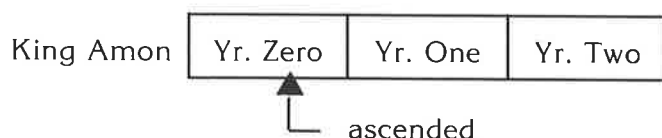
To calculate three days one must reckon as follows: today is day one; tomorrow is day two and the following day is day three. Therefore the first day or year is counted as number one and this forces the chronicler to add one year to the life or reign of an individual king.

### 3. Subtracting Years When Cross-referencing

After the fall of Samaria there was no Northern Kingdom (Israel) and there is no need for the subtraction of one year because cross-referencing is no longer used. The dates ascribed to the kings of Judah can be added without the loss of a year.

This is the method of counting accumulative years by direct addition. The direct adding of years is the simplest chronological concept in the Bible. By this method, one counts the accession year to be year zero and the year following Nisan 1 to be year one. Biblical references to the kings of Judah are counted in this fashion after the fall of Samaria. Each king's reign is added to the previous king's death year; thus, the years accumulate by simple direct addition. Therefore, the rule of thumb to be remembered is: 'When not counting from a reference point, the accession year equals year zero.' A Biblical example of this counting procedure is found in the counting of the ages of the patriarchs: "When Seth was one hundred and five years old he became the father of Enosh. After the birth of Enosh, Seth lived for eight hundred and seven years, and he became the father of sons and daughters. In all, Seth lived for nine hundred and twelve years; then he died" (Genesis 5:6-8, Jerusalem Bible). The following chart would show this method of counting:

#### ILLUSTRATION II: COUNTING ACCESSION YEAR AS YEAR ZERO



### 4. Thiele's Accession Versus Non-Accession Dating

The difference has just been described between the accession dating methods which call out that year either as year zero or as year one depending on whether or not a reference to another king is taken into consideration.

Thiele has recognized the mathematical necessity of this process for the chronology of the Hebrew kings, but his rationale, it is believed, has been mistakenly identified. This can be seen from his following statement:

Since the accession year in one nation is the first year in the other, and the first year in one is the second year in the other, the nation that employs nonaccession-year reckoning always has its regnal years one year higher than the nation that employs the accession-year method. And since in nonaccession-year dating the last year of one ruler was the first official year of his successor, that year was counted twice and, hence, a reign reckoned according to this method

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was one year higher than absolute time. In a nation that employed nonaccession-year dating, the total years of reign of the various kings keeps increasing over absolute time by one year for every king. So in order to keep in accord with absolute time, one year must be deducted from the length of each reign. This will also keep the total years of a nation employing the nonaccession-year method in accord with the years of the kings where the accession-year system is used. It is of vital importance that these points be clearly understood in connection with the data of the Hebrew kings, for only in this way can an accurate toll of elapsed years be obtained. When once these points are understood, many seeming discrepancies will vanish and full harmony may be obtained.<sup>22</sup>

Although Thiele recognized the importance of the subtraction principle when non-accession year dating or cross-referencing is employed, he has mistakenly assigned one kingdom using one system of dating while the opposite kingdom used the other system of dating. Thiele has maintained that variation from one system to another occurred in both kingdoms from time to time:

A careful study of the numbers in Kings reveals that in Judah the accession-year system was employed from Rehoboam to Jehoshaphat inclusive; then the nonaccession-year system was employed from Jehoram to Joash; and with the next ruler, Amaziah, Judah went back to accession-year dating and employed that system to the end of its history.

In Israel the nonaccession-year system was employed from Jeroboam to Jehoahaz inclusive. ... With the next king, Jehoash, however, Israel adopted accession-year reckoning and continued to use it to the end of its history.<sup>23</sup>

Unfortunately, such reasoning has led to the production of complicated charts and has frightened Biblical students away from studying Hebrew chronology. There is neither historical nor textual foundation for the above reasoning. The identified rules, which will aid in the understanding of the chronology of the Hebrew kings are summarized and listed together for future reference and review:

### 5. The Rules Summarized

Basic Rules For Charting The Chronology Of The Hebrew Kings.

#### The Biblical Rules

- Rule 1: The accession year can always be determined by subtracting the total reign from the year of the monarch's death.
- Rule 2: The first official year begins on the date of the death of the monarch's predecessor.
- Rule 3: The death year of the king is always the same year in which the king's successor begins his official reign. If the death year of a king minus his total reign is the same year as his predecessor's death, there is no co-regency. If the king's death year minus his total reign is earlier than the death of his predecessor, that is the indication that there was a co-regency involved.
- Rule 4: The age of the king at accession must not be overlooked. The age of

the kings of Judah, when provided in the text, is always given in reference to the year of accession.

### **The Talmudic Rules**

- Rule 5: In Hebrew reckoning, Nisan is the New Year for monarchs--'If a king ascends the throne on the twenty-ninth of Adar, as soon as the first of Nisan arrives he is reckoned to have reigned a year'.
- Rule 6: When a king's reign (Israel or Judah) is used as a cross-reference to a king in the opposite kingdom, a hypothetical year must be added in order to obtain the correct chronological sum.
- Rule 7: When a Judean king's reign is not cross-referenced as after the fall of Samaria, the accumulative years are directly added to obtain the correct chronological sum.

The Biblical chronologist, who will apply these guidelines to chronological information of the period of the Hebrew kings, will discover that the perplexing discrepancies will disappear and a harmonious pattern will result.

The validity of the identified rules pertaining to Hebrew chronology, although somewhat confusing at first, will become apparent as one proceeds through the text of the Old Testament account of the Hebrew kings of the Divided Kingdom. To facilitate the understanding and application of the rules discussed above, a series of illustrations has been prepared and are referenced at appropriate locations in the chapters that follow. When comparing the data contained in the illustrations to the chronological statements of the Biblical text, it is necessary to bear in mind the rules already established.

With the problem identified and proper rules in hand, one is prepared to examine the text of the books of Kings and begin the arduous, but exciting and challenging, task of reconstructing an accurate and absolute chronology of the Hebrew kings. The guidelines are established and the text is not approached with preconceived notions about its lack of integrity as though every statement of a chronological nature were a disguised trap to prevent the attainment of one's goal. Chronological statements will be found to be precisely what they appear to be. Thus the mountain climbing begins with two distinct assets, a set of functional guidelines and a text that is accurate both historically and chronologically. Neither of them will fail the climber in the difficulties of the rewarding trail that lies ahead.

## Chapter I - NOTES

<sup>1</sup>Six different categories of chronological data have been identified in the narratives of the kings: 1) the length of reign, 2) the Divided Kingdom cross-reference, 3) the ages at ascendancy, 4) the historical events dated to a regnal year, 5) the historical events, undated specifically, but occurring during a king's reign, and 6) the number of years involved in the interval from one event to another.

<sup>2</sup>"The numbers as they have come down to us in Kings, are untrustworthy, being in part self-contradictory, in part opposed to other scriptural notices, in part improbable, if not impossible." G. Rawlinson, *Introduction to the Two Books of Kings, The Holy Bible According to the Authorized Version* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1901), Volume 2, p. 475.

<sup>3</sup>Rudolf Kittel, *A History of the Hebrews* (London: Williams and Norgate, 1896), Volume 2, p. 234.

<sup>4</sup>Cf., Edwin R. Thiele, "Coregencies and Overlapping Reigns," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 93 (1974), pp. 176-189.

<sup>5</sup>Technically, not every instance of this type of overlap is a co-regency. There are times in Israel's history, such as that involving Omri and Tibni, where the overlap is more properly identified by the term 'dual reign' rather than the designation 'co-regency'. Used in its narrow sense, 'co-regency' implies a far more collaborative or co-operative effort than actually existed at some points of overlap in the history of the Hebrew kings. This study uses the term 'co-regency' in its broadest sense to describe any period of overlap that existed between the appointment year of a monarch and the death of his predecessor. Again, it should be noted that the designation of co-regencies has been an object of abuse by chronologists. There is a temptation to designate a period of co-regency whenever it seems advantageous to telescope or otherwise rearrange regnal periods to attain a predetermined outcome. This is not proper or acceptable scholarship. Co-regencies may be identified only when there is strong textual evidence that such an alignment occurred between a monarch and his (her, cf., Athaliah and Josiah) successor or predecessor.

<sup>6</sup>Kittel, *op. cit.*, p. 234.

<sup>7</sup>*The Babylonian Talmud* (London: The Soncino Press, 1948), Mishna Tract, *Rosh Hashanah*, 2a-2b.

<sup>8</sup>Edwin R. Thiele, *A Chronology Of The Hebrew Kings* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan Publishing House, 1977), pp. 14-16.

<sup>9</sup>Edwin R. Thiele, *The Mysterious Numbers Of The Hebrew Kings* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan Publishing House, 1983), p. 53.

<sup>10</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 51.

<sup>11</sup>*Ibid.*, pp. 51-52.

<sup>12</sup>*Ibid.*, pp. 52-53.

<sup>13</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>14</sup>A. K. Grayson, "Assyrian and Babylonian Chronicles" *Texts From Cuneiform Sources*, A. Leo

## Chapter I - Notes

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Oppenheim, *et al.*, eds. (Locust Valley, New York: J.J. Augustin Publisher, 1975), p 102.

<sup>15</sup>Thiele, *op. cit.*, p.53.

<sup>16</sup>Albert M. Kleber, "The Chronology of 3 and 4 Kings and 2 Paralipomenon," *Biblica*, 2 (1921), pp. 3-29, 170-205.

<sup>17</sup>S. Mowinckel, "Die Chronologie der israelitischen und jüdischen Könige," *Acta Orientalia*, 10 (1932), pp. 161-127.

<sup>18</sup>E. Mahler, *Handbuch der jüdischen Chronologie* (Leipzig, 1916), pp. 236-242.

<sup>19</sup>This, of course, did not concern most scholars identified above. Their position has been that the discrepancies are irreconcilable due to textual errors.

<sup>20</sup>*The Babylonian Talmud*, Mishnah Tract, *Rosh Hashanah*, 2a-2b.

<sup>21</sup>The mathematical necessity for subtraction was recognized by Thiele, but the rationale was mistakenly identified. He suggests that Judah employed an accession year system from Rehoboam to Jehoshaphat, a non-accession year system from Jehoram to Joash, and returned to an accession year system until the fall of Jerusalem. He also postulates that Israel employed a non-accession year system from Jeroboam to Jehoahaz and adopted accession year reckoning from Jehoash to the fall of Samaria. An attractive attempt is made to identify the reason for Judah's adoption of Israel's non-accession year methodology in the alliance between the two nations sealed by the marriage of Athaliah of Israel to Jehoram of Judah. Such reasoning contributes to the production of complicated charts, but has no historical or textual foundation. While Assyria and other kingdoms of the Near East employed what has come to be known as accession year dating, there is no evidence that the Hebrews reckoned their monarch's reign from any point other than appointment. Although the Hebrew chronicler would not recognize the term, this best fits the phrase known as 'non-accession year reckoning'. To selectively and hypothetically impose both systems upon Hebrew chronology as Thiele has done merely clouds the issue. *Cf.*, Thiele, *The Mysterious Numbers Of The Hebrew Kings*, pp. 43-51.

<sup>22</sup>Thiele, *A Chronology of the Hebrew Kings*, pp. 16-17.

<sup>23</sup>*Ibid.*, pp. 17-19.

## **Chapter II - ASTRONOMICAL CYCLES AND ABSOLUTE CHRONOLOGY**

### **I. METHODS FOR ESTABLISHING 588 B.C.**

Equipped with proper rules for the chronological reconstruction of the period of the Hebrew kings, the task now is to establish dates for the beginning-- commencement date, and end-- termination date, of the Divided Kingdom. Once these dates are established, the chronological data of the text will provide the rest. The need for the determination of these dates has been recognized by all responsible chronologists of the period. The methodology for such determination has not been recognized.

#### **A. Problems With Conventional Dating Methods.**

Improper methods in the past are found in two erroneous assumptions held by many chronologists. The first assumption is that the Old Testament text contains no dates, and the second is that the chronologies of Assyria and Babylonia do. Both assumptions have led to faulty methods and have produced impossible chronologies of the Hebrew kings. In spite of Thiele's claim to have vindicated the Hebrew text, the assumptions just referred to can be found articulated on the pages of his manuscript. For example, he writes:

In the Old Testament no absolute dates are given, and it becomes our task to establish, if we can, some absolute date in the history of Israel that can be used as a starting point to establish other dates in the desired chronological scheme. Our only hope of doing this is to find some cardinal point of contact where Hebrew history ties with certainty into the history of some other nation whose chronology is known.<sup>1</sup>

Scholars who ascribe to these faulty assumptions generally base their chronologies on two inaccurate dates-- one for the beginning of the Divided Kingdom based on the erroneous claim of Shalmaneser III, a second for the documents given to Tiglath-pileser of Assyria which belong to Pul, inadvertently affecting the Hebrew kings at the time of Jotham, a third which ties the fourteenth year of Hezekiah to the third year of Sennacherib, and a fourth which fixes the reign of Nebuchadnezzar from a faulty chronology of Ptolemy and the erroneous kings list given in the Canon of Ptolemy. All of these four are discussed in detail in future chapters of this book.

#### **1. The Erroneous Claims Of Shalmaneser III**

Basing methods on the claims of Shalmaneser III will affect the commencement date for the division of the kingdom. On the basis of the false assumptions noted above, Thiele and others proceed to tie the history of Israel to an inaccurate claim found in the records of Shalmaneser III of Assyria, which indicates that in his sixth year, he waged battle with Hadad-ezer and twelve kings, including Ahab

of Israel. The method is attractive. The Assyrian Eponym Canon (see Appendix A), with its astronomical fix of 763 B.C. for the eponymy of Bur-Sagale, appears to place the sixth year of Shalmaneser in 854/853 B.C. in the eponymous year of Daian-assur. Where the methodology breaks down is not so much in positing 854/853 B.C. for the eponymy of Daian-assur. With that there is little quarrel, although its precision is open to some debate, depending on whether one accepts the extra eponym name found in one of the four Assyrian Eponym Lists. The error occurs when one ascribes veracity to the claim of Shalmaneser III to have engaged in battle as the king of Assyria, with Ahab in that same year. According to the chronology of the Hebrew kings given in this volume, Ahab was killed in the eponymous year of Daian-urta some fifteen years prior to Shalmaneser's sixth year, as will be demonstrated and detailed in chapter seven, and he could not have paid tribute to or battled with Shalmaneser III in the eponymous year of Daian-assur. There is even a conflict in the Assyrian documents of Shalmaneser as to whether his fourth or sixth year occurred during the eponymous year of Daian-assur. The Black Obelisk Monument places the eponymous year in Shalmaneser's fourth year while the Monolith Inscription places the eponym of Daian-assur in the sixth year of Shalmaneser. The Monolith Inscription fits better into the framework and activities of Ashur-nasir-pal and appears to have been stolen by his son, Shalmaneser III as will be seen in chapter seven. Those who employ the erroneous claim of Shalmaneser go on to date the beginning of the Divided Kingdom around 931/930 B.C., fifteen years later than what will be shown by the present research to be the correct date of 945 B.C.

### **2. The Inaccurate Accession Year Of Nebuchadnezzar**

A similar error occurs in the dating of the fall of Jerusalem. Since the Assyrian Eponym Canon concludes at least sixty years prior to the fall of Jerusalem which occurred in the eighteenth year of Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon (Babylonian reckoning), it is of limited value for the precise reckoning of Babylonian chronology. This fact has been acknowledged by responsible chronologists who then turn to 'the Babylonian Chronicles' and the Second Century A.D. 'Canon of Ptolemy', listed at the conclusion of his *The Almagest*, for data relative to the reigns of the monarchs of Babylon. By inaccurately calculating the accession year of Nebuchadnezzar as 605/604 B.C., instead of 606 B.C. as the present research will show, the date of 587/586 B.C. instead of 588 B.C., is frequently cited as the date for the fall of Jerusalem.

The 587/586 date for Jerusalem's fall is based on Ptolemy's calculations of eclipses and their relationships to his construction of kings for the period involved. Thiele relies completely upon the accuracy of both the astronomical and chronological data of Ptolemy. Regarding the lunar eclipse of 621 B.C. he writes, "The 621 anchor date enables us to arrive at 605 as the twenty-first and last year of Nabopolassar and the accession of Nebuchadnezzar. This also provides fixed dates for the remaining rulers of Babylon and for any Hebrew rulers with whom precise contacts with Babylon took place."<sup>2</sup> Therefore, past chronologies have erred in ascribing accurate dates to both the beginning, commencement date, and the end, termination date, of the period of the Hebrew kings. As might be

expected, the dates in-between reflect these errors.

The issues are far too complex to be considered in this chapter, but are vital to a proper understanding of the impropriety of accepted methods for calculating the dates for the beginning of the Divided Kingdom and the fall of Jerusalem. A thorough examination of the Assyrian Eponym Canon, and the Canon of Ptolemy is contained in chapter eight together with a comprehensive analysis of their use as devices for historical synchronization and Ptolemy's erroneous application to Hebrew chronology. The concern of this chapter, however, is not to discuss the errors of the past, but to establish an accurate method for dating the fall of Jerusalem.

The commonly accepted dates for the destruction of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar are either 586 or 587 B.C., the latter being a more popular date since D. J. Wiseman's publication of the *Chronicles of the Chaldean Kings in the British Museum* in 1956. Occasionally, the dates are written as 587/586 B.C. or 588/587 B.C. acknowledging that a deviation of one or two years may be reflected in the proposed date. Current methods of date determination involve the utilization of Assyrian and Babylonian records and their astronomical data regarding eclipses. It should be noted, however, that the Assyrian Eponym Canon terminates with the year 648 B.C. and the Babylonian records are sparse after 594 B.C. Fragments exist in the Babylonian Chronicle for dates later than 594 B.C., but are of little, if any, value, for the Hebrew kings period of inquiry. There is a near void in contemporary secular history for the years of the siege and fall of Jerusalem. If one were dependent upon the assumptions listed above-- that the Bible contains no dates and that Hebrew history must be based upon the accepted chronology of her contemporaries-- one would experience the same frustration as other chronologists, quickly assign a secular approximation to the division of the kingdom and the fall of Jerusalem, and abandon the task of more precise dating. Since neither assumption is valid, however, one can proceed to the task and fix the date for Jerusalem's fall with a certainty which no contemporary text has provided to date.

### **B. Using Computers For Establishing An Absolute Date**

At this point, the unique method of this study is employed. Turning to the text of Scripture, one finds that therein lies the specific type of data required to make a precise determination of the desired date. The precision resides in the cyclical phenomena of Hebrew timekeeping based on an observed, rather than a calculated calendar. The one requirement is to recreate the Hebrew calendar with absolute certainty. The capabilities of the modern day computer combined with precise astrophysical data provide the means for creating a computer calendar to do just that.

#### **1. Reconstruction Of The Hebrew Calendar via Astronomy**

One must first understand the principles of Hebrew timekeeping. The Hebrews had no calculated calendar such as the Julian or Gregorian utilized in the western world of today. Their calendar was an observed calendar. They looked to the sky to determine months, days, and years, as well as the time of day.

### **a. The Sun-- For The Time Of Day**

The sun played an important role in the Hebrew measurement of time. The setting sun signaled the end of one day and the beginning of the new day. In contrast to pagan mythology, where sunrise represented the daily contention between the opposing forces of light and darkness, Hebrew monotheism attributed the day and night cycle to the single God 'who forms the light and creates darkness' (Isaiah 45:7). The special religious significance attached to this periodicity can be observed in the Temple rites of regular morning and evening sacrifices and morning and evening prayers.

The twenty-four hour cycle starts at sunset. This means that the Sabbath and religious festivals of Israel began in the evening and terminated at the start of the following night. During the light part of the day from sunrise in the east to sunset in the west, the Hebrew could observe the time of the day by the movement of the sun across the sky. No watch would have been necessary. When the sun was directly overhead, it would have been noon or midday.

### **b. The Sabbath-- For The Week**

A second, and most essential, ingredient for Hebrew timekeeping was the week. A Hebrew year, astronomically, would contain either 50.623862 or 54.842518 weeks, depending upon a twelve or thirteen month year. The mathematics was not the concern of the Hebrew, the keeping of the Sabbath was. Hebrew faith regarded the week, with its sanctification of the seventh day (Sabbath) to have been instituted by God at creation; and it has been observed perpetually by the Hebrews since the beginning of the Hebrew nation (Exodus 20:8-11), and by others since creation.

The Hebrew Bible clearly defines day and night and their divisions, such as: 'evening, morning, and noonday' (Psalm 55:17), the watches of the night (Exodus 14:24; Judges 7:19), midnight or half the night (Exodus 11:4; 12:29), and the notion of the 'hour' is not mentioned at all.

### **c. The Moon-- For The Month**

Of prime importance in this means of timekeeping was the moon and its phases. It provided the measurement of time called 'the month'.<sup>3</sup> Astronomy identifies the figure of 29.530587 earth days as the average observed time span which exists from one new moon to another. The occurrence of the new moon was so essential to the recording of dates by the Hebrews and to the accurate observation of the festivals in Israel, that three pairs of witnesses were required to sight its appearance.<sup>4</sup> The 'shofar' (ram's horn) was sounded as the signal that a new month had begun. The first day of the new moon was considered holy to the people of Israel.

The moon established the New Year for the Hebrews as well, and still does. The new moon nearest the vernal equinox was the signal that a New Year was beginning with its first month. In pre-exilic times this month was called, Abib,<sup>5</sup> 'green ears', because at this time the green ears of the barley would appear, *cf.*, Exodus 13:4. In post-exilic writings, the first month was called Nisan, *cf.*, Nehemiah

2:1. Since the first month of the new year was dated from the first full moon after the vernal equinox, the Hebrew year began within the Gregorian equivalent of March/April.

**d. The Sun-- For The Year**

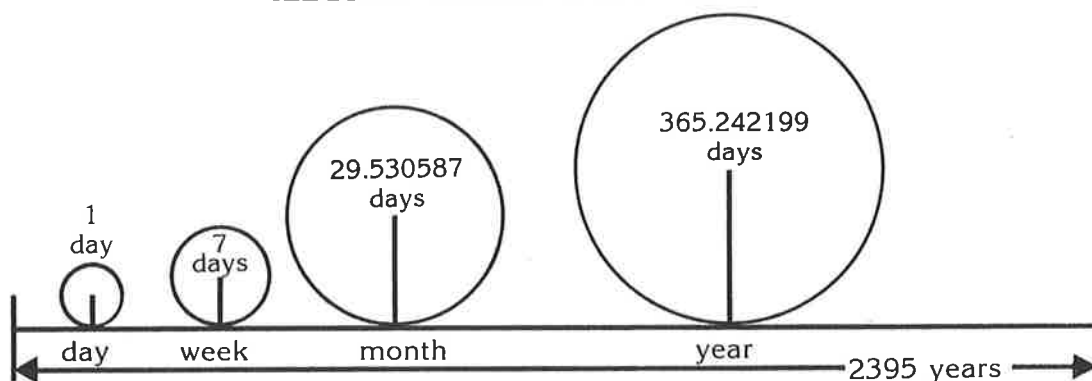
In the Hebrew measurement of time, the harvest (agricultural) seasons measured out a year.<sup>6</sup> Astronomically, the day is determined by the twenty-four hour rotation speed of the earth in relation to the sun, and the solar year is a function of the time required for planet earth to complete its cycle in relation to the sun. Since there are only 29.530587 days in a lunar month, twelve lunar months are 10.87515 days short of a solar year. This presented no problem to the Hebrew, who was not concerned with the number of days *in* the month, but the days *between* new moons. The deficit days were dealt with by nature adding an additional month *i.e.*, a leap month, every two or three solar years. Mathematically, this occurs every 2.7 solar years or approximately seven times in nineteen years.

The need for the additional month, however, was based on observation, not calculation. If the green ears of the barley had not reached maturity before the appearance of the new moon, an additional (thirteenth) month was added. Thus, a leap month year contained 383.89763 days, a twelve-month year had 354.36704 days. The average year remained a solar year with its 365.242199 days. This lunar-solar year is still used in Judaism for festival dating and in Western Christendom to establish the date of Easter, the first Sunday after the first full moon following the vernal equinox.

**e. The Sun, The Moon, The Week And The Day-- For The Calendar**

The remarkable characteristic of an observed calendar is that man is not able to tamper with its accuracy.<sup>7</sup> Days, months, and years are governed by heavenly bodies (Genesis 1:14-18). Man merely was required to keep the weeks.<sup>8</sup> Whereas the Roman calendars have required modification throughout the years, the Hebrew system maintains a fixed accuracy. It can also be observed that these four functions which make up the 'observed calendar', can be compared to four wheels in motion with timing marks on them. In the illustration below, one can see the analogy. The remarkable characteristic of this system is the fact that the speeds of motion are not harmonically related. It has been found that this system will

**ILLUSTRATION III: THE FOUR WHEELS**



not come close to repeating itself, until 2395 years have passed. It makes the system foolproof for evaluating great periods of time precisely. Therefore, it becomes apparent that if one were to reconstruct the Hebrew calendar from the present position of the earth, moon, and sun, it would be possible to evaluate chronological statements of the Biblical text for historical accuracy or inaccuracy.

In order to fix with certainty the date of the fall of Jerusalem, the task of such reconstruction was undertaken. Reconstructing the lunar-solar calendar of the Hebrews has been facilitated by the requirements of space travel and research. Since absolute astronomical accuracy is required for such functions, the means for reproducing the lunar-solar calendar, with its resultant precision, is available to the historian.

The means to accomplish this task resides in the ability of the computer to make calculations at mind-boggling speeds. It is possible to start with any given moment, provide the computer with the precise time of day, the sun's position in relation to the vernal equinox, the day of the lunar month, and the day of the week, and then to extrapolate an absolutely precise (within milliseconds) lunar-solar calendar for any date in history. In simple terms, the computer displays what the ancients saw in the sky-- an observed calendar. This study will return to this exciting development and its application to absolute chronology later in the chapter.

### **2. Computerizing The Mosaic And Davidic Cycles**

In addition to the lunar-solar observations, Hebrew timekeeping utilized a series of 'monitor cycles' that facilitate an accurate chronological recording of time and events. In the Covenant ratified at Sinai, Israel was committed to a faithful observance of three of these cycles. The fourth was instituted at the time of David when his son, Solomon, was commissioned to build the Temple. Students of the Hebrew Scriptures have been aware of these cycles, but their value for precise chronological determination has not been exploited previously. Since a thorough understanding of these cycles becomes essential when one seeks to establish an accurate chronology of the Hebrew text, the cycles are defined briefly in the following paragraphs.

#### **a. Sabbath Days In The Law**

Hebrew faith traced the institution of the week, with its sanctified seventh day to God's design at creation. Through Moses, the observation of the Sabbath became a legal requirement (Exodus 16:22-30; 20:8-11). By cessation from work, Israel was reminded that God ceased His creative work on the seventh day, and that He had redeemed Israel from bondage and sanctified her as a holy people (Exodus 31:12-17; Deuteronomy 5:12-15). So important was the keeping of the Sabbath that even servants were included in its observation, and the death penalty was prescribed for deliberate disobedience to its requirements. The special 'Sabbath' or seventh day was the synchronism. This day is the present 'Saturday.'

#### **b. Sabbath Years In The Law**

Upon Israel's entrance into Canaan, every seventh year was to be observed

## Chapter II - Astronomical Cycles and Absolute Chronology

as a Sabbath or Sabbatical year. During this year, the land was to rest, the fields were left unseeded, and the vineyards unpruned (Exodus 23:10-11; Leviticus 25:1-7). God had pledged to provide an adequate harvest each sixth year so that there would be sufficient produce to carry through the Sabbath and subsequent year (Leviticus 25:20-22). It was also a year of remission in which creditors were instructed to cancel the debts of the poor, and slaves were to be released (Deuteronomy 15:1-18). In addition, the law was to be read publicly throughout the land (Deuteronomy 31:10-13). Therefore, when Scripture describes a context in which the Law is being read, slaves are released, bills are paid or remitted, and the fields lie idle, it is referring to a Sabbath year, and will be a multiple of seven years from every other Sabbath year.

### c. Jubilee Years In The Law

Leviticus 25:8-10 conveys the Jubilee data:

“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<sup>9</sup> sound throughout all your land. And ye shall... proclaim liberty throughout all the land unto all the inhabitants thereof,” (literally: you will proclaim the liberation of all the inhabitants of the land). Leviticus 25:8-10

Leviticus 25 provides that during this year family inheritances were to be restored, slaves were to be set free, and the land was to be left uncultivated (Leviticus 25:11-17; 23-55). As with the Sabbath year (the Jubilee was the seventh Sabbatical year), God promised to provide an adequate crop in the sixth year to suffice for the seventh and until the harvest of the eighth year (Leviticus 25:18-22).

It is important, however, to recognize that the Jubilee year was announced in the middle of the forty-ninth year. The Jubilee years were separated by forty-nine years, but it was counted as the fiftieth year, since it was fifty years since the last Jubilee counting inclusive as the chart shows. This was previously discussed in chapter one, showing how the kings calculated their reigns when making reference to another event. That is exactly the case here; one is counting in relation to the last Jubilee.

### ILLUSTRATION IV: COUNTING JUBILEES

yr. 1		
Jub.		
49	1	2

yr. 50		
Jub.		
49	1	2

Some have argued that the Jubilee is every fifty years; however the text in Leviticus is very clear.<sup>10</sup> The Dead Sea Scrolls also indicate that the Hebrews counted a Jubilee as forty-nine years. The Samaritans, whose religious practices

are based on the first five books of the Old Testament Canon, still count Jubilees today, and count them as a forty-nine year period of separation precisely as described in Leviticus. As with the dating of kings' reigns from Nisan 1 discussed in chapter one, there is no evidence that the Hebrews ever counted Jubilees in any way other than a forty-nine year period of separation<sup>11</sup> as outlined in Leviticus 25. This will be discussed more fully in chapter nine. It is counted exactly as Pentecost, from the day after the Sabbath, count seven full weeks = fifty days (Leviticus 23:15-16).

### **d. Priestly Cycles In The Temple**

The fourth monitor cycle was not contained in the Law, but was arranged by David when Solomon was anointed king some six months before David's death (I Chronicles 23-29). At this time David made provision for the services in the Temple that Solomon was to build. The priests were arranged by lot into twenty-four sections and were to serve consecutively one week at a time. The time required for one complete cycle was a hundred and sixty-eight days ( $24 \times 7 = 168$ ). The order was to continue perpetually.<sup>12</sup>

The sections of the Levitical Priesthood, as indicated in I Chronicles 24:3-19, were:

- |              |               |                                 |
|--------------|---------------|---------------------------------|
| 1. Jehoiarib | 9. Jeshuah    | 17. Hezir                       |
| 2. Jedaiah   | 10. Shecaniah | 18. Happizzetz (Aphses, K.J.V.) |
| 3. Harim     | 11. Eliashib  | 19. Pethahiah                   |
| 4. Seorim    | 12. Jakim     | 20. Jehezkeel                   |
| 5. Malchijah | 13. Huppah    | 21. Jachin                      |
| 6. Mijamin   | 14. Jeshebeab | 22. Gamul                       |
| 7. Hakkoz    | 15. Bilgah    | 23. Delaiah                     |
| 8. Abijah    | 16. Immer     | 24. Maaziah                     |

## **II. The Advantages Of Scientific Testing Procedures**

One can now see that the above cycles could be mentioned in all or part relationship to a given date; one can expect certain probabilities of being correct by accident. If for instance, a day of the month is given along with the day of the week, in addition to the priestly section serving, and the Jubilee year, one can only expect one year in 8232 of filling the data by accident ( $7 \text{ days in a week} \times 49 \text{ years in a Jubilee} \times 24 \text{ sections in the priests} = 8232$ ). One now has at his disposal the data necessary to date with precision the fall of Jerusalem. The 'how to' and the use of the computer calendar will unfold in the paragraphs that follow.

### **A. Computer Testing Of Bible History Superior To Secular History**

As indicated earlier in the chapter, conventional dating methods for the fall of Jerusalem rely on conclusions based on astronomical data purported by Ptolemy to have been gleaned from ancient Babylonian documents and applied to construction of his canon at the end of *The Almagest*. The extent to which such data is useful for dating Hebrew history will be discussed in chapter eight.

Certainly, there is evidence that astronomy had reached a rather sophisticated level during the Golden Age of Babylon (ca. 600 B.C. to 550 B.C.). The present signs of the zodiac are based on constellatory appellations assigned by the

Babylonians to observed astral arrangements. Their belief in astral phenomena apparently resulted in the dating and logging of events in relation to the calculated position of the moon and planets at the time of their occurrence. Unfortunately, as of this time, the bulk of those astronomical logs are yet to be discovered. Exactly what happened to those which Ptolemy claimed to have utilized remains shrouded in mystery.

The Hebrews left no such astronomical records. Monotheism precluded the worship of stellar configurations and its concomitant attempts at divination. The creator God made the heavens and all that is therein to serve, not to control, his creation. For orthodox Israel, the heavenly bodies were never deities to be worshipped, but 'signs' in the sky to show forth the handiwork and glory of the One who set them in place (Psalm 8:3-4; Isaiah 40:26; Genesis 1:14).

Yet, as a result of this Hebrew understanding of the place and purpose of the heavenly bodies, the Biblical text contains a far more accurate record of history than that provided by the sporadic astrological interpretations of its contemporaries. The Hebrews' dating of significant events by means of the lunar-solar calendar, their sacred observation of the Sabbath, and the monitor cycles built into their Law, all served to insure that the history of their God in relation to His chosen ones was never lost. Therefore, the pages of Hebrew history contain a chronology that lends itself to computer-dating in a more complete and superior manner than do the scattered astronomical logs of either Babylon or Egypt.

### **B. New Testing For The Old Testament**

Until recent years, however, the means to recover the dating technique of the Hebrews and its value for chronological reconstruction of the Old Testament text was not available. The technological advances of the computer age have changed all that. Since the speed of the planets is absolute, the recently developed atomic clock, with its remarkable ability to measure movements of the heavenly bodies in milliseconds, has recorded but a fraction of a second loss in the rotational speed of the earth from tidal friction caused by the gravitational pull of the moon. Knowing the speed of these bodies, the computer can be programmed to reproduce lunar-solar calendars for any date: past, present, or future. In this fashion, numerous facts which would have required a lifetime of calculations are accessible to the historian in mere moments.

In simple terms, the computer calendar displays the precise date of each new moon throughout history and provides the time separation in days, weeks, lunations, solar years, *etc.*, between new moons. The concept itself is not new, of course. Such calculations have been performed in various periods of history, but on a very limited basis because of the laborious, time consuming nature of such a tedious process. In addition, such calculation has been fraught with the ever-present possibility of human mathematical error. The computer, therefore, is neither a magical nor mystical device. It does nothing more than the mind of man has performed for years, but it does it with remarkable speed and verifiable precision. It merely reproduces what the ancients observed in the heavens.

### **III. The Year Jerusalem Fell vs. The Year Of Nebuchadnezzar**

Computer calendars (lunar-solar) were produced for all years of inquiry. The

Roman (B.C./A.D.) parallels to the lunar-solar years were programmed to run alongside the lunar-solar dates. This data permitted the establishment of a lunar-solar calendar for every month and day of any year desired in the past, present, or future. There is now available, therefore, a scientific basis for the evaluation of dates in Biblical history and the precise examination of the chronological data of Scripture. The role of the computer calendar in establishing the date of the fall of Jerusalem is now become apparent.

### A. An Examination Of The Various Documents

The first step in establishing the date of the fall of Jerusalem requires an examination of the various documents that record the event to identify any points of disagreement and to determine if a resolution is possible. The Hebrew records are found in II Kings, II Chronicles, Jeremiah, the Septuagint, the Talmud, and the writings of Flavius Josephus. The Babylonian Chronicles, a secular source of information, provide additional, but limited, data for this period in its entries relative to the reign of Nebuchadnezzar. Also, Ptolemy's Canon beginning with the first year of Nabonassar (747 B.C.) would place the eighteenth year of Nebuchadnezzar in 587 B.C. An examination of these sources reveals an apparent lack of uniformity on the data.

The Babylonian Chronicles (Chronicles 5:10, Obverse) indicates that Nebuchadnezzar began his reign as king of Babylon on the first day of Elul:<sup>13</sup>

10 On the eighth day of the month Ab he [Nabopolassar] died. In the month Elul  
Nebuchadnezzar (II) returned to Babylon and

11 on the first day of the month Elul he ascended the royal throne in Babylon.<sup>14</sup>

The Babylonians, employing an accession-year method of reckoning, counted the reign of Nebuchadnezzar from the first of Elul, the date of his coronation. His first year did not begin until the following year on the first day of Nisan. The Babylonian text reckons Nebuchadnezzar's accession year as year zero. Similarly, the Babylonian Chronicles (Chronicle 5:11-13, Reverse), following Babylonian reckoning, date the siege and deportation of Jehoiakin (Jeconiah) from the seventh year of Nebuchadnezzar:

11 The seventh year: In the month of Kislev the king of Akkad mustered his army  
and marched to Hattu.

12 He encamped against the city of Judah and on the second day of the month  
Adar he captured the city (and) seized (its) king.

13 A king of his own choice he appointed in the city (and) taking the vast tribute  
he brought it into Babylon.<sup>15</sup>

In contrast, the court account of the Hebrews disagrees with the Babylonian record. In II Kings, the first deportation which brought Jehoiakin to Babylon and placed Zedekiah on the throne in Jerusalem took place in the eighth year of Nebuchadnezzar:

At that time the servants of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came up against  
Jerusalem, and the city was besieged.... And Jehoiachin the king of Judah went

## Chapter II - Astronomical Cycles and Absolute Chronology

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out to the king of Babylon, he, and his mother, and his servants, and his princes, and his officers: and the king of Babylon took him in the eighth year of his reign. II Kings 24:10-12

This difference is because the Hebrews counted Nebuchadnezzar's accession year as year one. That is why Nebuchadnezzar's seventh year (Babylonian reckoning) becomes the king's eighth year (Hebrew reckoning).

The year of the final destruction of Jerusalem is counted in the book of Kings as Nebuchadnezzar's nineteenth year:

And in the fifth month, on the seventh day of the month, which is the nineteenth year of King Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, came Nebuzaradan, captain of the guard.... And he burnt the house of the Lord, and the king's house, and all the houses of Jerusalem, and every great man's house burnt he with fire. And all the army of the Chaldees, that were with the captain of the guard, brake down the walls of Jerusalem round about. II Kings 25:8-10

The fall of Jerusalem is counted as Nebuchadnezzar's nineteenth year by Hebrew reckoning, but his eighteenth year by Babylonian reckoning. Josephus, with a dating unique to his own work, places the final destruction in the eleventh year of Zedekiah, and the eighteenth year of Nebuchadnezzar: "... he [Nebuzaradan] set fire to the temple in the fifth month, the first day of the month, in the eleventh year of the reign of Zedekiah, and in the eighteenth year of Nebuchadnezzar."<sup>16</sup> Josephus is counting Zedekiah's reign as Hebrews do but Nebuchadnezzar's reign as the Babylonians do.

Jeremiah, in contrast to Josephus, regarding the date of Nebuchadnezzar, dates the tenth year of Zedekiah as the eighteenth year of Nebuchadnezzar. Jeremiah is using the Hebrew reckoning for both dates at this point. The following text describes an event that happened during the year prior to the destruction of Jerusalem: "The word that came to Jeremiah from the Lord in the tenth year of Zedekiah king of Judah, which was the eighteenth year of Nebuchadnezzar," (Jeremiah 32:1).

Lest the number of variations found in the texts thus far become a source of confusion, a review is in order. The Babylonian records, which deal only with the first deportation and not the final destruction, place the siege and first deportation in the seventh year of Nebuchadnezzar. II Kings places this deportation in his eighth year. II Kings dates the final destruction of Jerusalem in the nineteenth year of Nebuchadnezzar. Josephus, in contrast, dates the destruction of Jerusalem in the eighteenth year of Nebuchadnezzar but identifies that year as the eleventh year of Zedekiah. Jeremiah disagrees with Josephus regarding Nebuchadnezzar, however, and in consonance with the book of Kings, places the destruction in the nineteenth year of Nebuchadnezzar (Jeremiah 52:12-14).<sup>17</sup> He indicates that the year prior to the destruction of Jerusalem is his eighteenth year. These apparently conflicting dates are in harmony with one another, but first there is more.

The book of Jeremiah gives evidence of an internal conflict regarding the dating for the first deportation and the final destruction of Jerusalem. Jeremiah 52:12-14 is consistent with Jeremiah 32 as well as with the book of Kings. When using Hebrew reckoning, these verses place the final destruction in the nineteenth

year of Nebuchadnezzar:

Now in the fifth month, in the tenth day of the month, which was the nineteenth year of Nebuchadnezzar [Babylonian spelling of his name] king of Babylon, came Nebuzaradan, captain of the guard, which served the king of Babylon, into Jerusalem, and burned the house of the Lord, and the king's house; and all the houses of Jerusalem, and all the houses of the great men, burned he with fire: And all the army of the Chaldeans, that were with the captain of the guard, brake down all the walls of Jerusalem round about. Jeremiah 52:12-14

Later, in Jeremiah 52 the first deportation is in the seventh year and the fall of Jerusalem in the eighteenth year of Nebuchadnezzar. Both dates are consistent with the Babylonian records, but in conflict by one year with the book of Kings and the rest of Jeremiah:

This is the people whom Nebuchadnezzar carried away captive: in the seventh year three thousand Jews and three and twenty. In the eighteenth year of Nebuchadnezzar he carried away captive from Jerusalem eight hundred thirty and two persons. Jeremiah 52:28-29

At this point, the last section of Jeremiah forms an appendix, or addendum, which Ezra the Scribe, no doubt, added after Jeremiah's death.<sup>18</sup> Since this section deals with the Exilic period, all dates are given in Babylonian reckoning.<sup>19</sup> The addendum of Jeremiah 52:28-34 written in Babylon supplies additional information through the death of Jehoiakin (Jeconiah) *cf.*, verse 34. With a resolution to these variants, a precise date for the fall of Jerusalem now becomes possible. The apparent discrepancy, which is no discrepancy at all, forms a strong argument for the integrity of the Hebrew text and serves as a source of countering the assumption that later scribal copyists altered the text. It should also be pointed out that Jeremiah 52:29-30 does not occur in the Greek text of the Septuagint (LXX).

In conclusion, it would seem that Nebuchadnezzar destroyed Jerusalem in his eighteenth year as the Babylonians counted, or the nineteenth year as the Hebrews count when they reference to another kingdom.

### **B. The Use Of Mosaic And Davidic Cycles**

#### **1. Finding 588 B.C. With The Sabbath Year**

It is important at this point to recall the information cited earlier in the chapter descriptive of the Hebrew Sabbath cycle. The Sabbath (seventh) year was a year of redemption when debts were settled, land redeemed, slaves released, and the Law read. It should be noted that in the Sabbatical year, land could be redeemed by the original owner, but in a Jubilee it was returned to the original owner. Such a Sabbatical year occurred in the tenth year of Zedekiah (Hebrew reckoning), the eighteenth year of Nebuchadnezzar (Hebrew reckoning), the year prior to the fall of Jerusalem. The texts of Jeremiah 32 and 34 are of great value:

The word that came to Jeremiah from the Lord in the tenth year of Zedekiah king of Judah, which was the eighteenth year of Nebuchadnezzar. For then the

## Chapter II - Astronomical Cycles and Absolute Chronology

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king of Babylon's army besieged Jerusalem.... And Jeremiah said, The word of the Lord came unto me saying, Behold Hanameel the son of Shallum thine uncle shall come unto thee saying, Buy my field at Anathoth: for the right of redemption is thine to buy it.... And I bought the field of Hanameel my uncle's son.... Thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel; Take these evidences, this evidence of the purchase, both which is sealed, and this evidence which is open; and put them in an earthen vessel, that they may continue many days. For thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel; Houses and fields and vineyards shall be possessed again in this land. Jeremiah 32:1-15

Additional word came to Jeremiah that year:

This is the word that came unto Jeremiah from the Lord after that the king Zedekiah had made a covenant with all the people which were at Jerusalem, to proclaim liberty unto them; That every man should let his manservant, and every man his maidservant, being an Hebrew or an Hebrewess, go free.... Thus saith the Lord, the God of Israel; I made a covenant with your fathers in the day that I brought them forth out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondmen, saying, At the end of seven years let ye go every man his brother an Hebrew, which hath been sold unto thee; and when he hath served thee six years, thou shalt let him go free from thee, Jeremiah 34:8-9, 13-14

Here a Sabbatical year is described. It is apparent, therefore, that if dates for the Sabbath year cycle were to be identified, the major clue for dating the fall of Jerusalem would be available; for every Sabbath year must be separated from the tenth year of Zedekiah by a number of years divisible by seven. Fortunately, such dates are available and are discussed below.

At least two references to Sabbath years exist that post-date the destruction of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar. The first to be considered is a statement made by Spektor of Kovno in the 1880's A.D. concerning a transaction of Palestinian land involving the Arabs. The second reference to the Sabbath year is found in the Talmud addressing the destruction of Herod's Temple in Jerusalem by Titus in A.D. 70. The two references are reproduced below, beginning with the statement of Rabbi Issac Elhanan Spektor of Kovno:<sup>20</sup> "I was asked several months ago to express my opinion concerning Jewish colonists, who live on the produce of the fields and vineyards of our Holy Land, as the *shemittah* year is approaching in 1889."<sup>21</sup> The next reference to the Sabbath year is found in the Talmud: "The same happened with the second [destruction of the temple]. But how is it possible that the second time it happened at the end of the septennate [the end of the seven-year period which starts the sabbath]?"<sup>22</sup>

The first quotation is speaking of the start of the Sabbath cycle in 1889 A.D., which ended in 1890 A.D. The second reference is speaking of a Sabbath cycle which began in 69 A.D., and ended in 70 A.D.

Thus Moses instructed that the Law be read on the Feast of Tabernacles, which occurs in the seventh month-- Tishri (Deuteronomy 31:9-13). The Sabbath

year to which Spektor of Kovno refers began in the fall of 1889 and continued into the year 1890. Therefore, it is considered the Sabbatical year, 1890. Every other Sabbath year must be separated from this year by a number divisible by seven. The year 589 B.C. is separated from the year 1890 A.D. by 2478 years ( $354 \times 7 = 2478$ ). In the mathematical calculations, when moving from B.C. to A.D., one must subtract one year to account for year zero between 1 B.C. and 1 A.D. The time between 70 A.D., which was a Sabbatical and Jubilee year, the year of the destruction of Jerusalem by Titus, to which the Talmud refers, and 1890 A.D. is 1820 years ( $260 \times 7 = 1820$ ). Therefore, since Jeremiah redeemed his land and Zedekiah made a pact to free the slaves, which he later abrogated (Jeremiah 34:10-11) in the Sabbath year (589 B.C.) prior to the destruction of Jerusalem, the destruction by Nebuchadnezzar, according to Sabbath-year cycles, is indicated by the computer calendar as having taken place in 588 B.C. This year (588 B.C.) would be the eleventh or final year of Zedekiah and the nineteenth year of Nebuchadnezzar (Hebrew reckoning). Simple subtraction places the first deportation, eleven years earlier, the eighth year of Nebuchadnezzar (Hebrew reckoning), in 598 B.C.<sup>23</sup>. According to Babylonian reckoning, 588/587 B.C. would be the eighteenth year of Nebuchadnezzar and 599/598 B.C. would be Nebuchadnezzar's seventh year.

In conclusion, only one in seven years fit the year involved by chance. Therefore, the nineteenth of Nebuchadnezzar must be 588 B.C. (Hebrew counting).

### 2. Finding 588 B.C. With The Sabbath Day

There is, however, other chronological information available in the records of the past. This data concerns the day of the week on which the destruction of Jerusalem occurred. Again, the records appear to complicate rather than elucidate the issue, for the information given below-- II Kings 25, 8-9, the Talmudic statement, Jeremiah 52:12-13, and Josephus seem to reflect disagreement:

And in the fifth month, on the seventh day of the month, which is the nineteenth year of king Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, came Nebuzaradan, captain of the guard, a servant of the king of Babylon unto Jerusalem. And he burnt the house of the Lord, and the king's house, and all the houses of Jerusalem.... II Kings 25:8-9

...[The] day on which the First Temple was destroyed was the eve of the ninth of Ab, a Sunday, and in a year following the Sabbatical year, and the *Mishmar* of the family of Jehoiarib were on duty and the Levites were chanting the Psalms standing on the *Duchan*. Mishna Tract *Ta'anith*, 29a<sup>24</sup>

Now in the fifth month, in the tenth day of the month, which was the nineteenth year of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, came Nebuzaradan, captain of the guard, which served the king of Babylon, into Jerusalem, and burned the house of the Lord, and the king's house; and all the houses of Jerusalem.... Jeremiah 52:12-13

... the holy house; but as for that house, God had for certain long ago doomed it to the fire; and now that fatal day was come, according to the revolution of ages: it was the tenth day of the month Lous, [Ab] upon which it was formerly

burnt by the king of Babylon. (Wars VI.iv.5)

At this point, the computer calendar is of extreme value; for it provides the day of the week for each date in history. According to the Talmud (Mishna Tract, *Ta'anith*, 29a), the eve of the ninth was a Sunday, which in Hebrew calculation from sunset would also be described as the going out of the eighth-- a Sunday. This agrees with the computer calendar for 588 B.C., for if the going out of the eighth and beginning of the ninth was a Sunday, the seventh was a Saturday (Sabbath). The days of the week for the other years near 588 B.C. such as 587/586 B.C. are impossible to reconcile. The following chart gives the days of the weeks as they occurred in Ab, 588 B.C., according to the computer calendar.

#### ILLUSTRATION V: THE WEEK-DAYS OF AB, 588 B.C.

Ab 7	Ab 8	Ab 9	Ab 10
Sat.	Sun.	Mon.	Tue.

Nebuzaradan entered → (points to Ab 7)  
 Fire → (points to Ab 8)  
 Destroyed → (points to Ab 10)

The difference in the day of the month is the only noticeable variation between the text of II Kings 25 and Jeremiah 52 in the Hebrew records. It is reconcilable if examined closely. The Talmud concerns itself very specifically with the destruction of the Temple 'on the eve of the ninth of Ab', the beginning of Monday and the end of Sunday. II Kings is reporting the day on which Nebuzaradan 'came unto Jerusalem'-- the seventh, a Saturday. The entire demolition of Jerusalem, including the breaching of the the walls, did not occur in a single day. However, Jeremiah's and Josephus' date of the tenth of the month is more difficult. They seem to be reporting the entire event from the point at which the burning was completed, *i.e.*, the total destruction of the Temple and the city of Jerusalem. The records of Josephus, who was an eyewitness to the burning of the Temple in A.D. 70, reports that it took three days for the Temple to be consumed by flames.<sup>25</sup> No doubt a similar length of time was involved in 588 B.C. In any event, only the year 588 B.C. meets the requirement of the eve of the ninth of Ab as being a Sunday, and is the only year reconcilable, contextually, with the dates of the seventh and tenth of Ab in II Kings 25, Jeremiah 52, and Josephus.

In conclusion, only 588 B.C. can be identified as the year when Nebuchadnezzar destroyed Jerusalem. Only one year in seven can be correct by chance since there are seven days in a week. Add this to the previous Sabbath year calculation, one has one in forty-nine years possible.

### 3. Finding 588 B.C. With The Priestly Cycles

The final astronomical test to be applied to dating the fall of Jerusalem involves the information in the Talmud concerning the Jehoiarib section of the priesthood. Both the Talmudic quotation from *Ta'anith* (quoted above) and *Arakin* are very specific about the Jehoiarib section being on duty at the time of the

destruction. The latter<sup>26</sup> as well as the former identifies the Psalm the priests were chanting as Psalm 94, verse 23.

The priests were organized by David into twenty-four sections, each rotating on the Sabbath, I Chronicles 24:3-19. It took 168 days (24 x 7) to complete the cycle. If a section can be located with certainty, the computer calendar will provide the data to determine the time in days between that date and any other date, divide that time by 168, and indicate how many full sections have rotated between the two dates. The remaining days, of course, would extend into the next rotation, *e.g.*, days 1 to 7 = section one; days 8 to 15 = section 2, *etc.*

The book of I Maccabees provides the very type of historical data necessary to make such a determination possible. It is found in one of the best known sections of the text; the historical data is quoted from the Jerusalem Bible:

On the fifteenth day of Chislev in the year one hundred and forty five the king erected the abomination of desolation above the altar. I Maccabees 1:57<sup>27</sup>

On the twenty-fifth day of the month sacrifice was offered on the altar erected over the altar of holocaust. Women who had had their children circumcised were put to death according to the edict with their babies hung around their necks, and the members of their household and those who had performed the circumcision were executed with them. I Maccabees 1:60-64<sup>28</sup>

In those days Mattathias son of John, son of Simeon, a priest of the line of Joarib, left Jerusalem and settled in [returned to] Modein. I Maccabees 2:1

These verses deal with the prelude to the Maccabean revolt in response to the Seleucid persecution of the Jews under Antiochus IV. Mattathias (I Maccabees 2:1) was a priest of the Jehoiarib section.<sup>29</sup> He was serving in this section when the statue of the Olympian Zeus was erected over the altar in the Temple by Antiochus Epiphanes on the 15th of Chislev,<sup>30</sup> 145 B.C. (Seleucid calendar) which equals December 8, 167 B.C. (Gregorian calendar). He had returned to his home in Modein, outside Jerusalem, at the end of his section's service. This was just prior to the profanation of the Temple by the pagan act of the sacrifice of the hog on the altar. This act took place on 25 Chislev, 167 B.C. According to the computer calendar, the rotation of the priestly section for the week of 15 Chislev, 167 B.C., occurred on 18 Chislev. Thus, the final date of Mattathias' service in the Temple was 18 Chislev (11-18) 167 B.C. Mattathias served in the Temple from 11 Chislev to 18 Chislev 167 B. C. This accounts for his having witnessed the erection of the statue on the 15th, but having missed the sacrifice of swine on 25 Chislev.<sup>31</sup>

The two Jehoiarib sections beginning on 9/11 167 B.C. and 5/7 588 B.C.,<sup>32</sup> if accurate, must be separated by a number of days divisible by 168. An astronomical evaluation by means of the computer calendar reveals a separation of 153,888 days. This represents a full 916 sections (916 x 168 = 153,888). Only the year 588 B.C. coincides with the Jehoiarib section of the priesthood. It would be impossible for the Jehoiarib section to fall anywhere near 'the ninth of Ab' in any year close to 588 B.C., for two sections cover 336 days (168 x 2) plus or minus the ninth of Ab. The year 586 B.C. has 354 days (29.5 x 12) and 587 B.C., a leap month year, has 383.5 days (29.5 x 13). In fact, it would be fourteen years (574 B.C.) before the Jehoiarib section would again meet the criteria of the Talmud.<sup>33</sup>

In addition, as already discussed, the Talmudic quote contains the phrase, “in a year following the Sabbatical year.”<sup>34</sup> The Sabbatical year has been established as 589 B.C. and confirmed as such by the texts of Jeremiah 32 and 34.

Chapter nine will identify additional Sabbath and Jubilee cycles that confirm the accuracy of the chronology of the Hebrew kings. In order not to belabor the issue at this point, only one more priestly section will be considered. The circumstance was the return of Jeshua and Zerubbabel to Jerusalem recorded in Ezra, chapters 2 and 3. The return took place in the first year of Cyrus, in 549 B.C. following his edict (*cf.*, Cyrus Cylinder)<sup>35</sup> for all nations to return and rebuild their temples. The first offering, as indicated in Ezra 3:6, was made on 1 Tishri 549 B.C.: “From the first day of the seventh month began they to offer burnt offerings unto the Lord. But the foundation of the temple of the Lord was not yet laid.” Jeshua was from the second section of the twenty-four priestly divisions, the Jedaiah section. Astronomically, there are 14,287 days between 7/1 549 B.C. and 5/7 588 B.C. ( $14,287 = 168 \times 85 + 7$ ). The seven-day remainder would end with the beginning of section two of the priestly divisions, Jedaiah. The mathematical probability of such a phenomenon occurring on any other date is astronomical. Again, not only is 588 B.C. verified as accurate for the fall of Jerusalem and 549 B.C. as the return of Zerubbabel and Jeshua to Jerusalem, but this provides strong evidence that the priestly cycles of the Hebrews were not lost during the Exile in Babylon as some have assumed.

In conclusion, there is now a one in twenty-four chance of getting the correct priestly section. Add this probability to the previous day and year calculations, and our selection of years is more than an accident, for it becomes an astounding 1176 to one ( $7 \times 7 \times 24$ ).

### 4. 588 B.C. In Summary

Illustration VI gives the chronological data which pertains to the fall of Jerusalem under Nebuchadnezzar. Four sources are used below to establish the accuracy of this date, II Kings, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and the Talmud. According to the Talmud (*Ta'anith* 29a), it was under the Jehoiarib section of the priests, on the going out of the Sabbath day, 833 years (17 Jubilees) after they received the land (*'Arakin* 12b). According to Jeremiah 32 and 34 it was the year after the Sabbath year. According to II Kings 25:8-9, it was the the nineteenth year of Nebuchadnezzar (Hebrew counting), on 7 Ab. According to Ezekiel 4:1-8, it was to be 430 years after the founding of Jerusalem. Of the twenty-four years listed, only 588 B.C. meets the criteria which satisfies all the data.

Now, it is possible to summarize the plethora of data contained in the preceding paragraphs. The nineteenth year of Nebuchadnezzar (Hebrew reckoning) is equal to the eleventh and final year of Zedekiah which is equal to 588 B.C., the year of the destruction of Jerusalem.<sup>36</sup> This date is supported by three means of computer-verified astronomical testing: 1) the Sabbath year cycle, 2) the Sabbath day cycle, and 3) the priestly cycle. Perhaps no other date in history is more accurately verifiable to synchronize Hebrew history with that of her contemporaries.

Additional support to this date is given when, in later chapters, the date of the Exodus is found with the computer in the same manner in chapter ten. This

**ILLUSTRATION VI: THE CHRONOLOGICAL DATA OF JERUSALEM'S FALL**

<u>YEAR</u>	<u>7TH OF AB</u>	<u>PRIEST</u>	<u>AFTER ENTRANCE</u>	<u>AFTER TEMPLE</u>	<u>SABBATH YR</u>
601	5	17-Hezir	820	417	2
600	3	20-Jehezkeel	821	418	3
599	2	3--Harim	822	419	4
598	6	5--Malchijah	823	420	5
597	5	12-Jakim	824	421	6
596	2	15-Bilgah	825	422	Sabbath
595	Sabbath	17-Hezir	826	423	1
594	6	24-Maaziah	827	424	2
593	3	3--Harim	828	425	3
592	Sabbath	5--Malchijah	829	426	4
591	6	12-Jakim	830	427	5
590	4	15-Bilgah	831	428	6
589	2	22-Gamul	832	429	Sabbath
<u>588</u>	<u>Sabbath</u>	<u>1--Jehoiarib</u>	<u>833</u>	<u>430</u>	1
587	4	3--Harim	834	431	2
586	3	10-Shecaniah	835	432	3
585	Sabbath	13-Huppah	836	433	4
584	5	15-Bilgah	837	434	5
583	4	22-Gamul	838	435	6
582	1	1--Jehoiarib	839	436	Sabbath
581	5	3--Harim	840	437	1
580	4	10-Shecaniah	841	438	2
579	2	13-Huppah	842	439	3
578	1	20-Jehezkeel	843	440	4
577	5	22-Gamul	844	441	5

date is then used in conjunction with the 480 year statement of I Kings 6:1 and the Talmudic statement concerning the 833 years in the land to form an ironclad case for a 588 B.C. date for the fall of Jerusalem.

The work of Ptolemy is also a subject of chapter eight. It will be demonstrated that his work as an astronomer is of the highest order, his work as a chronologist is found wanting.

Such synchronization, however, is not yet the concern of this study. An accurate chronology of the Hebrew kings is, and toward that goal one must proceed with one more tool of great value, an accurate date by the computer calendar for the fall of Jerusalem-- 588 B.C.

## Chapter II - NOTES

<sup>1</sup>Edwin R. Thiele, *The Mysterious Numbers Of The Hebrew Kings* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan Publishing House, 1983) p. 67.

<sup>2</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 181.

<sup>3</sup>It is interesting to note that the Hebrew word 'month' is derived from the word 'moon'. Each word has the same three Semitic root letters; without vowel-indicators, their consonants are identical and thus context would have to determine the meaning of each word. This provides clear indication that the month was determined by moon observations.

<sup>4</sup>The fact that such care was given the sighting of the 'new moon' is indicative of the importance of proper dating to the Hebrew. Obviously, weather conditions could complicate the precision of an observed calendar for the dating of specific days. The advantage is that the phases of the moon remain precisely fixed, and the observed calendar is self-correcting. If weather conditions should mar the precision for a period of time, this correction was automatically made as soon as favorable visibility returned. In other words, whether or not a person may be able to see the moon on a given day or night does not alter the 29.530587-day aspect of its revolution. That remains constant over the years, producing a precision unattainable in a calculated calendar, and providing the basis for the recovery of an accurate chronology.

Because the accuracy of the new moon's sighting was so important to the Hebrew mind, there were three pairs of witnesses. The Talmud relates how the witnesses were tested upon the sighting of the new moon--

"... The pair who arrive first are tested first. The senior of them is brought in and they say to him, tell us how you saw the moon-- in front of the sun or behind the sun? To the north of it or the south? How big was it, and in which direction was it inclined? And how broad was it? If he says [he saw it] in front of the sun, his evidence is rejected. After that they would bring in the second and test him. If their accounts tallied, their evidence was accepted, and the other pairs were only questioned briefly, not because they were required at all, but so that they should not be disappointed, [and] so that they should not be dissuaded from coming." I. Epstein *et al.*, eds. *The Babylonian Talmud* (London: The Soncino Press, 1938) Mishnah Tract, *Rosh Hashanah*, 23b-24a; cf., *Shevu'oth* 48a.

It should be pointed out that the new moon can be seen only about sunset, close to the sun when the sun is travelling towards the north. The expression 'in front of the sun' means 'to the north of the sun' and 'behind the sun' means 'to the south of the sun'.

<sup>5</sup>The Hebrew word means 'ears (of grain)', ripe but still soft, the grains of which are either rubbed or roasted. This month was known as 'the month of ears'.

<sup>6</sup>The Gezer Calendar, found on a school exercise tablet of soft limestone and dated around the division of the kingdom, demonstrates how the agricultural seasons measured out the year:

His two months are (olive) harvest,  
His two months are planting (grain),  
His two months are late planting;

His month is hoeing up of flax,  
His month is harvest of barley,  
His month is harvest and *feasting*;  
His two months are vine-tending,  
His month is the summer fruit.

## Chapter II - Notes

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This translation is by William F. Albright and is found in-- James B. Pritchard, ed., *Ancient Near Eastern Texts: Relating to the Old Testament* (Princeton: New Jersey, Princeton University Press, 1969), p. 320. Hereafter written *ANET*.

<sup>7</sup>Compare note number five. Also, it should be recalled that the lights in the firmament of heaven were to be for signs, seasons, days and years (Genesis 1:14).

<sup>8</sup>It is interesting to note that the Hebrew word 'week', a unit of seven, is derived from the word for 'seven'. The concept of seven was important to the Hebrew mind, especially in relation to weeks. The Hebrews had three sorts of weeks: 1) Weeks of days, which were reckoned from one Sabbath to another; 2) Weeks of years, which were reckoned from one Sabbatical year to another, and which consisted of seven years; 3) Weeks of seven times seven years, or of forty-nine years, which are reckoned from one Jubilee to another. In addition to this, the Hebrews observed the Feast of Weeks, *i.e.*, the seven weeks after Passover, *cf.*, Exodus 34:22. These were the 'weeks' which Israel was required to observe and keep.

<sup>9</sup>The Hebrew word used here is 'shofar' which means 'ram's horn'. According to the Talmud, the Jubilee did not come into effect automatically; it was officially proclaimed by sounding the 'shofar'. The Jubilee year began on the Day of Atonement (Tishri 10) in which there were the sacrifices of the bullock, the kid goat, and the ram and in addition to this, the release of the scapegoat. It is important to see that the Hebrew word translated 'Jubilee' also has the basic meaning of 'ram'. One is reminded how the ram was substituted for Isaac, *cf.*, Genesis 22:1-14. The word 'Jubilee' has messianic significance with its relationship to 'ram', 'redemption', and 'release', *cf.*, Luke 4:16-21; Isaiah 61:1-3.

<sup>10</sup>Leviticus 25:8-9a declares: '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....'

<sup>11</sup>To the Hebrew mind, the Jubilee was 'weeks of seven times seven years'. The counting included the first and last years, however, the forty-ninth year was year fifty from the first year, counting the first year as year one (see chapter nine).

<sup>12</sup>The Jewish historian, Flavius Josephus, in describing how David arranged by lot the twenty-four sections, remarks:

"He divided them also in courses; and when he had separated the priests from them, he found of these priests twenty-four courses, sixteen of the house of Eleazar, and eight of that of Ithamar; and he ordained one course should minister to God eight days, from Sabbath to Sabbath. And thus were the courses distributed by lot, in the presence of David, and Zadok, and Abiathar the high priests, and of all the rulers: and that course which came up first, was written down as first, and according the second, and so on to the twenty-fourth; and this partition hath remained to this day." *Antiquities* VII.xiv.7)

It is evident from the words of Josephus that the priestly cycles were in existence in his day.

Compare Zacharias, of the course of Abijah, who was ministering in the Temple, when the angel Gabriel announced unto him the future conception of John the Baptist (Luke 1:5-24).

<sup>13</sup>The Akkadian name for the Hebrew month 'Elul' is 'Ululu'.

<sup>14</sup>A. K. Grayson, "Assyrian and Babylonian Chronicles." *Texts From Cuneiform Sources* A. Leo Oppenheim *et al.*, eds., Volume 5 (Locust Valley, New York: J. J. Augustin Publisher 1975), pp. 99-100.

<sup>15</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 102.

<sup>16</sup>*Antiquities* X.viii.5.

<sup>17</sup>"If a king ascends the throne on the twenty-ninth of Adar, as soon as the first of Nisan arrives

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he is reckoned to have reigned one year." *The Babylonian Talmud*, Mishna Tract, *Rosh Hashanah*, 2a.

<sup>18</sup>Probably this appendix was added to the book of Jeremiah to show how the prophet's message of doom was fulfilled.

<sup>19</sup>The Babylonian reckoning is used here to demonstrate the fulfillment of the prophet's words. The Southern Kingdom had been destroyed and the Hebrews were under the control of the Babylonians-- that is why the Hebrew reckoning is not used.

<sup>20</sup>Rabbi Isaac Elhaman Spektor of Kovno (1817-1896) attained eminence as a rabbinic authority in Kovno and established a yeshivah for the training of outstanding rabbis. On the question of agricultural labor in the land of Israel in a *shemittah* (Sabbatical) year, he favored its permission by the nominal sale of land to a non-Jew, a measure which is employed to the present day.

<sup>21</sup>Aaron Rothkoff, "Sabbatical Year And Jubilee," Volume 14, Cecil Roth, *et al.*, eds. *Encyclopaedia Judaica*, (Jerusalem: Keter Publishing House, 1972), p. 583.

<sup>22</sup>*The Babylonian Talmud*, Mishna Tract, 'Arakin, 12b.

<sup>23</sup>In this case of B.C. dating, it is addition--  $588 + 11 = 599$  B.C., however, Zedekiah began after the first of the Gregorian year but before the first of the Hebrew year. Therefore his actual Gregorian years would be only ten. See the concluding chapter for details.

<sup>24</sup>*The Babylonian Talmud*, Mishna Tract, *Ta'anith*, 29a. The *Duchan* was the platform in the Temple on which the Levites stood when chanting the Psalms.

<sup>25</sup>Flavius Josephus, *The Wars Of Jews* VI.iv.1-8.

<sup>26</sup>*The Babylonian Talmud*, Mishna Tract, 'Arakin 11b, states the following about the destruction of the Temple in the nineteenth year of Nebuchadnezzar:

The day on which the first Temple was destroyed was the ninth of Ab, and it was at the going out of the Sabbath [*i.e.*, Sunday] and at the end of the seventh [Sabbatical] year. The [priestly] guard was that of Jehoiarib, the priests and Levites were standing on their platform singing the song. What song was it? *And He hath brought upon them their iniquity, and will cut them off in their evil.* They had no time to complete [the psalm with] *'The Lord our God will cut them off'*, before the enemies came and overwhelmed them. The same happened the second time [the second Sanctuary's destruction].

<sup>27</sup>Compare LXX, I Maccabees 1:54.

<sup>28</sup>Compare LXX, I Maccabees 1:59-61.

<sup>29</sup>Hebraists agree that 'Joarib' is a shortened Hebrew form of 'Jehoiarib'. As can be seen from I Maccabees the Hasmoneans-- Mattathias, the father and his five sons: John, Simon, Judas, Eleazar, and Jonathan-- were descended from the Jehoiarib family. It is interesting to note that a later descendant of this family was the historian, Josephus.

<sup>30</sup>This ninth month has also the spelling--'Kislew'.

<sup>31</sup>The date of 9/25 167 B.C. as the date of the profanation of the Temple and 9/25 164 B.C. as the date of its cleansing by Judas Maccabaeus are accepted by historians as being accurate. A variety of synchronizations confirm these dates. It is interesting, however, to observe that their accuracy is verified, also, by the computer calendar. Josephus, *Antiquities* XII.vii. 6, indicates that the altar was profaned on a Sabbath (9/25 167 B.C.) and cleansed on a Sabbath exactly three years later (9/25 164 B.C.) I Maccabees 4:54 attests to the same phenomenon and indicates that the purifica-

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tion took place on the same day that the Temple was profaned three years earlier. As verified by the computer calendar, only the years 167 and 164 B.C. meet this particular and unusual requirement of 25 Chislew falling on a Sabbath day three years apart. Thus, not only is the accuracy of the accepted dates of 9/25 167 B.C. and 9/25 164 B.C. confirmed, but the computer calendar as an astronomically accurate dating device is verified as well.

<sup>32</sup>The Sabbath preceding the cessation of the sacrifice, and the destruction of the Temple by the Babylonians is dated in the text of II Kings 25:8 and attested to in the Talmud. It should be remembered that the priestly section ministered in the Temple from Sabbath to Sabbath.

<sup>33</sup>*The Babylonian Talmud, Ta'anith, 29a and 'Arakin 11b.*

<sup>34</sup>*Ibid., Ta'anith, 29a.*

<sup>35</sup>Cyrus' own inscriptions bear out the Old Testament view of a sympathetic ruler. He claims to have gathered together all the inhabitants who were exiles and returned them to their homes and in the same decree to have restored deities to their renovated temples (*Cf.*, the Cyrus Cylinder, *ANET*, p. 315-316; Ezra 6:1 ff.) The prophet Isaiah foresaw Cyrus, the King of Persia, responsible for the restoration of the Temple at Jerusalem (Isaiah 44:28) and as the 'Messiah-deliverer' of the Jews from Exile in Babylon.

<sup>36</sup>The lunar-solar equivalent of 588 B.C., extends three months into the Roman year 587 B.C. The date of the destruction of Jerusalem, however, in the fifth lunar month falls in 588 B.C. The first new moon (Nisan 1) of the lunar-solar year equivalent to 588 B.C. occurred on Monday, March 28. Five months (lunar) and ten days later, on August 31, 588 B.C. (Gregorian calendar) the Temple and city of Jerusalem lay in ruins.

## Chapter III - HISTORICAL SUMMARY OF THE KINGS

### I. Charting The Chronology Of The Hebrew Kings

With the date of the fall of Jerusalem firmly fixed as Ab (August) 588 B.C., the concepts of logic and mathematics would suggest that one now could take that date and work backwards through the chronological data of the book of Kings and supply the Gregorian equivalents to the respective reigns of the Hebrew monarchs. Hebrew chronology was not written in a format, however, that always lends itself to preconceptions. The issue is not one of either the mathematics or the logic. Hebrew chronology is both accurate and very logical. The issue is one of procedure or methodology.

#### A. Avoiding Anachronisms In Assigning A Date

Hebrew chronology is written in a style, a very precise style, that requires that one work forward, not backwards through the data. To attempt the latter is to commit a similar methodological error as has been done by those who select an apparent synchronistic date in Assyrian history, *e.g.*, the battle of Qarqar or the invasion of Judah by Sennacherib, assign a date to seemingly corresponding data in the Hebrew text, and work backwards to the beginning of the Divided Kingdom, adjusting Hebrew history to correspond to that of Assyria enroute. The impropriety and inaccuracy of such a procedural impossibility is attested to by the total lack of unanimity among scholars regarding the date of the Divided Kingdom as indicated in chapter one. The method works no better with a Hebrew date (588 B.C.) than it does with Assyrian data (853 B.C. or 701 B.C. ).<sup>1</sup>

Thus one is confronted with two questions: How then does one arrive at a proper date for the beginning of the period under consideration, and why is there such a divergence among scholars regarding the date in question? At the risk of appearing cavalier, one must assert that the second question exists because scholars have attempted to short-cut the procedure that addresses the first question. That procedure is detailed in the concluding chapter and charted in Illustration VII.

Because of the complex and detailed nature of the procedure, the reader is provided an option. Those to whom the specifics of the *how* (methodology) of dating the beginning of the Divided Kingdom are paramount should turn their attention to the concluding chapter before proceeding through the present chapter. Those for whom a summation of the *how* will suffice for now and are anxious to get to the *what* (historical dates) may continue through this chapter and consult the concluding chapter at their convenience.

Obviously, the period of the Divided Kingdom began with the death of Solomon and the subsequent schism that gave Jeroboam regnal responsibility over the ten northern tribes of Israel and left Rehoboam as regent of Judah and Benjamin in the south. What is not so obvious, as indicated by the variety of suggestions tendered over the years, is the Gregorian equivalent of that date. As stated,

because of the format employed by the Hebrew chronicler, a proper chronology of the period can be established only by working forward from the date of Solomon's death. Thus, it is not possible to determine the beginning of the Divided Kingdom by taking the date of the fall of Jerusalem and working backwards. To do so is to create a chronological quagmire.

### **B. Identifying A Procedure For Various Periods**

Another alternative was sought and found that provides a satisfactory and chronologically sound resolution to this dilemma. The specifics occupy the pages of the concluding chapter and a summation follows. The procedure, in brief, involves the identification in the Hebrew text of an event from which years are chronologically accumulated in a complete and systematic format. The next step is to assign to that event the chronological value of year zero, and then to work forward through the chronology from that point to the death of Solomon and on until the destruction of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar. Once the number of accumulated years is determined, one need only subtract them from 588 B.C. to ascertain the correct date of the Divided Kingdom.

The Old Testament manuscript provides any number of such events that suit the identified methodology. One such, and the one selected for utilization in this study, is the capture of Jerusalem by David described in II Samuel 5. The significant verses for purposes of the methodology follow: "David was thirty years old when he began to reign, and he reigned forty years. In Hebron he reigned over Judah seven years and six months; and in Jerusalem he reigned thirty and three years over all Israel and Judah" (II Samuel 5:4-5).

As indicated, one can assign the year zero to the date of the capture of Jerusalem and thirty-three to the year of David's death, since thirty-three years accumulated between the two events. One must then continue this process from the reign of Solomon through the eleventh (final) year of Zedekiah. This process forms the substance of the concluding chapter. Meticulously employing the rules described in chapter one, it was discovered that the period of time in accumulated years between the capture of Jerusalem by David and its destruction by Nebuchadnezzar in the eleventh year of Zedekiah was four hundred and thirty years.<sup>2</sup> Subtracting 430 from 588 B.C. (mathematically adding, of course, since B.C. dates progress in reverse sequence), the year of David's capture of Jerusalem was established as 1018 B.C. ( $588 \text{ B.C.} + 430 = 1018 \text{ B.C.}$ ).

Since David ruled in Jerusalem for thirty-three years, his death year is 985 B.C. ( $1018 \text{ B.C.} + 33 = 985 \text{ B.C.}$ ), thirty-three years from the date he captured Jerusalem and made it his capital, (I Kings 2:11). Solomon was anointed king the year before David's death, following the attempt of Adonijah to usurp the throne (I Kings 1:39). He was acclaimed king a second time following the death of David (I Chronicles 29:22). His anointing took place in 986 B.C., the year prior to David's death. Solomon's first official year began in 985 B.C. Since Solomon reigned for forty years (II Chronicles 9:30), his regency extended from 985 B.C. to 945 B.C., the year of his death. Also, this is the year in which Rehoboam and Jeroboam began their official reigns. Hence, 945 B.C. is the date of the beginning of the Divided Kingdom, and the date at which the chronology in Illustration VII begins.

# ILLUSTRATION VII: B.C. DATING OF HEBREW KINGS

NAME . . . . .	Ref .	Yrs .	Age .	Dad .	Born .	Count .	Yr.1.Ref	Died
DAVID	U	40	30	47	1056	1018	1018=07U	985
SOLOMON	V	40	23	21	1009	986	985=40U	945

## ISRAEL

JEROBOAM	A	22				>947	945	925
NADAB	B	02				926	925=02C	924
BAASHA	C	24				925	924=03C	901
ELAH	D	02				902	901=26C	900
ZIMRI	E	7DYS				901	900=27C	900
TIBNI	F					901	900	896
OMRI	G	12				901	896=31C	889
AHAB	H	22				890	>889=38C	868
AHAZIAH	I	02				869	868=17D	867
JEHORAM	J	12				868	>867=18D	856
JEHU	K	*27				>857	>856	830
JEHOAHAZ	L	17				831	830=21H*	814
JOASH	M	16				815	>814=37H	799
JEROBOAM	N	*40				800	>799=15I	760
ZECHARIAH	O	.5				761	760=40J*	760
SHALLUM	P	.1				761	760=40J*	760
MENAHEM	Q	10				761	760=40J*	751
PEKAHIAH	R	02				752	751=49J*	750
PEKAH	S	20				751	>750=50J*	731
HOSHEA	T	09				732	>731=12L	723

## JUDAH

REHOBOAM	A	17	41		987	946	945	929
ABIJAM	B	03				930	929=18A	927
ASA	C	*43				928	>927=20A	885
JEHOSHAPHAT	D	*24	35	26	921	886	>885=04H	862
JEHORAM	E	*07	32	16	895	863	862=05J	856
AHAZIAH	F	01	22	21	879	857	856=11J	856
ATHALIAH	G					857	856	850
JEHOASH	H	40	07	19	858	>851	850=07K	811
AMAZIAH	I	29	25	23	839	>814	811=02M	785
UZZIAH	J	52	16	32	816	>800	785=14N*	748
JOTHAM	K	16	25	15	784	759	748=02S	743
AHAZ	L	16	*25	15	769	744	>743=07S*	728
HEZEKIAH	M	*30	25	43	754	729	728=03T	699
MANASSEH	N	55	12	45	711		699	644
AMON	O	02	22	16	666		644	642
JOSIAH	P	[32]	08	16	650		642	610
JEHOAHAZ	Q	[ 0]	23		634		610	610
JEHOIAKIM	R	11	25	18	635		610	599
JEHOIAKIN	S	[ 1]	18		617		599	598
ZEDEKIAH	T	[10]	21		620		598	588

The reader may wish to refer to the chart in a step-by-step fashion as the chapter progresses. The first column is the name of the monarch, followed by a reference letter. Column 2 indicates the duration of the king's reign, column 3 shows the age of the king at appointment; column 4 indicates his age at fatherhood; column 5 provides the king's birth year; column 6 is the year of appointment in the case of co-regencies (overlapping reigns); column 7 is the first official year of the king, as well as the date of his predecessor's death; and provides the reference to the monarch of the opposite kingdom. For example, 2C indicates that the king's reign began in the second year of king 'C' of the opposite kingdom. This column is useful for indicating the necessity of subtraction when referencing to the opposite kingdom. Column 8 indicates the year in which the king died, which is always the year in which his successor began his first official year. The \*asterisk refers to a deviation from the Massoretic text.

At the risk of *repetitio ad nauseum*, it is important to remember the method of reckoning which the Hebrews employed to determine the duration of a king's reign. The reckoning always began at appointment, but the year of accession is counted as year one before the division of the kingdom and as year zero afterward. This means that one must not forget to subtract one year from a king's reign when cross-referencing to another kingdom while two kingdoms are referenced. As long as there is only one kingdom, which was the case from 723 B.C. until 588 B.C., one counts the full duration of reign.

### 1. Kingship Under Saul

By way of historical background to the setting of this period of Israel's history, it should be noted that 'kingship' was an anomaly to the pious Israelite before Saul. There was only one King. His name was Yahweh, the founder and keeper of the Covenant. The idea of a human king was inconsistent with the sole sovereignty of the Maker of heaven and earth. In the Mesopotamian world of Israel's roots and during her sojourn in Egypt, she had observed kings adored and adulated as deities. Concerned members of the Covenant community recoiled at the thought. Only One was the object of adoration and praise. The abortive attempt of Gideon's son, Abimelech, to establish a monarchy during the period of the judges attests to the prevailing attitude among the faithful in Israel (Judges 9:1-57).

Then things changed. Although oversimplified for the sake of brevity, several factors served as catalysts for the modification of the theocratic confederacy that formed Israel's pre-dynastic state. Samuel, the last great judge of Israel and first in a succession of prophets, had grown old. Israel's Covenant faith and worship had been diluted by the adoption of the pagan practices of her Canaanite neighbors. Her very existence as a people was threatened by the re-emergence of the Philistines as the dominant power in Canaan. Either the tribes of Israel could unite their efforts against this threat or be pushed out of the land of promise. To many, the answer was, 'Make us a king to judge us like all the nations' (I Samuel 8:5-6).

After warning the people of the inherent risks of kingship, Samuel obeyed the direction of Yahweh and anointed Saul, king of Israel. Thus, the confederacy was replaced with a monarchy.

## 2. Kingship Under David And Solomon

Both kings Saul and David were selected to their positions of *nagid*, (the Hebrew word for 'prince') by the direct appointment of Yahweh working through the prophetic-priestly office. Except that their rule included the entire nation, they served in much the same capacity as the *shaphat*, or 'judge' had done previously. By the time of David's death, however, a change had taken place. The Davidic Covenant (II Samuel 7:12-16) assured the line of David the right to the throne in Jerusalem. At David's death, therefore, the issue was not who was to be king, but which son was to inherit the throne. Heredity, rather than charisma, decided the right to the throne of David.

David had succeeded in uniting all of Israel, 'from Dan to Beersheba', under his rule, and that is the kingdom he gave to Solomon. However, at the time of Solomon's death, a schism arose which divided the Israelite empire. The northern tribes, not without reason, accused Solomon of favoritism toward Judah and the south. When Rehoboam, son of Solomon, ascended to the throne, the northern tribes broke away from the union that David had created. Two kingdoms were formed, Israel in the north and Judah in the south. This situation prevailed until Israel was defeated and led into captivity by the army of Shalmaneser V. This period, from Solomon's death to the fall of Samaria (the northern tribes, Israel), is known as the period of the Divided Kingdom.

## 3. Kingship In The Divided Kingdom

During this period the royal line of David ruled in Judah. The anointing of Judah's king was a function of the priesthood which ensured that the lineage of David retained the throne. This concern did not apply to Israel. Her history witnessed the rule of various families. Prior to her destruction by Assyria, there were a number of dynasties in Israel. The houses of Jeroboam, Baasha, Omri, and Jehu all occupied the northern throne. In addition, there were other individual monarchs whose brief regencies can scarcely be described as dynastic. On occasion, the kings of Israel gained access to the throne by the assassination of their predecessor, and they, in turn, were relieved of the regnal responsibility in the same fashion. Since there was no 'royal line of David' to maintain, lineage was not the important issue in Israel that it was in Judah.<sup>3</sup>

Judah maintained something of a positive diplomatic relationship with Assyria during the seventh century, B.C. and escaped the fate of her brothers and sisters in the north. Later, however, a disastrous entanglement in the Near Eastern power struggle between Egypt and Chaldea-Babylonia brought about the eventual demise of the kingdom of Judah. The chronology of the Hebrew monarchs (Israel and Judah) of this period, from the death of Solomon to the fall of Jerusalem, is the subject of the remainder of this chapter. The limited scope of the subject precludes an expanded history of the period. However, it is very much the intent of this and subsequent chapters to provide the chronological foundation upon which a proper history may be built. The chart at Illustration VI and the paragraphs that follow are a part of that foundation. For purposes of clarity and usefulness it will be necessary to progress chronologically through the monarchs of only one kingdom at a time, beginning with the kings of Israel. The concluding chapter follows the

chronological format employed in the book of Kings and systematically and mathematically analyzes its formulae. It is suggested that the reader follow the Biblical text when reading the historical summary.

## **II. Charting The Chronology Of The Kings Of Israel 945 B.C. - 723 B.C.**

Before listing the kings of Israel, it should be noted that there are only two co-regencies<sup>4</sup> (or, overlapping reigns) in the history of Israel's monarchy. Both are supported by the text of Scripture. The first involves the reign of Jeroboam, Israel's first king. He was appointed king by Ahijah the prophet two years before Solomon's death (I Kings 11:26-39). He fled to Egypt, where he married, had a son, and remained until the death of Solomon, (I Kings 11:40; III Kings 12:24, LXX). The other co-regency is that of Jehu and Jehoram, whom Jehu assassinated. Jehu was anointed at the behest of the prophet Elisha during the year prior to his official reign (II Kings 9:1-13). The co-regencies at the times of Jeroboam and Jehu are indicated in Illustration VII by arrows (>) on the first number instead of the second. The first is the date of appointment from which one must measure the duration of reign, the second date is that on which the king began his official reign, and the third, of course, is the date of the king's death. The listing of three dates following the name of Omri indicates his rule over half of Israel until the demise of Tibni. Instead of co-regency, the term, 'dual reign', best describes the circumstances involved in the reigns of Omri and Tibni.

### **A. 947--925 B.C.-- Jeroboam I I Kings 12:20, 14:20.**

Jeroboam I had served as an able administrator and foreman during the reign of Solomon. Among his accomplishments cited in I Kings 11 are the supervision of the construction of Millo and the repair of the walls of Jerusalem. His reputation gained for him a political following. Two years before the death of Solomon, Ahijah the prophet appointed him king of Israel. Through the symbolic act of dividing his new cloak into twelve pieces and giving Jeroboam ten, he prophesied that Solomon's kingdom would be divided and only two tribes would remain to carry on the Davidic Dynasty. Solomon, suspicious of an insurrection, attempted the assassination of Jeroboam who sought Egyptian asylum.<sup>5</sup>

Upon Jeroboam's return at the accession of Rehoboam, Solomon's son, his supporters petitioned the king for leniency, including a reduction in taxation and the policy of forced labor. Rehoboam refused the request, contrary to the advice of the prophet Shemiah. The kingdom divided, and civil war ensued, which continued in sporadic fighting for two generations. Jeroboam I ruled as Israel's first king.

Jeroboam's reign lasted twenty-two years, (Hebrew reckoning). He was appointed in 947 B.C., two years before the death of Solomon. His official reign began at the death of Solomon in 945 B.C. The duration is counted from appointment; thus his twenty-two year reign began in 947 B.C. and ended in 925 B.C. at his death and the accession of his son, Nadab.<sup>6</sup>

**B. 926-924 B.C.-- Nadab**

**I Kings 15:25.**

As indicated in footnote 6, Nadab's reign of two years (Hebrew reckoning) is referenced to the second year of Asa of Judah (*cf.*, Illustration VII). This necessitates the subtraction of one year, placing the end of his reign in 925 B.C.<sup>7</sup> Nadab's death came about in fulfillment of prophecy. Jeroboam's son, Abijah, was seriously ill. He sent his wife in disguise to inquire of the aged prophet, Ahijah, at Shiloh regarding the prognosis. Though blind, Ahijah recognized her immediately through the Lord's intervention and informed her that not only would Abijah die, but that because of Jeroboam's persistent idolatry, his dynasty would end. The reign of his son, Nadab, who ruled less than two years, ended when he was assassinated by Baasha during the siege of the Philistine city of Gibbethon, fulfilling the words of Ahijah.

**C. 925-901 B.C.-- Baasha**

**I Kings 15:33.**

Baasha, of the tribe of Issachar, ruled for twenty-four years (Hebrew reckoning); he is referenced to the third year of Asa and his reign lasted until 901 B.C.<sup>8</sup> His years were marked by continual strife with Judah as well as an invasion by Syria which cost Israel the loss of the fertile land west of the Lake of Galilee and the valuable trade route to Accho in Phoenicia. Throughout his reign, he was admonished by the prophet, Jehu, son of Hanani, to abandon his idolatrous ways, but the message was ignored. His short-lived dynasty, like that of Jeroboam, ended in the second generation with the assassination of his son, Elah, by the charioteer, Zimri.

**D. 902-900 B.C.-- Elah**

**I Kings 16:8.**

Elah was never able, in reality to succeed his father. After a brief reign of two years (his reign is cross-referenced to the twenty-sixth year of Asa of Judah), his kingship ended at the hands of the army officer, Zimri, who found him intoxicated at the home of his chief steward, Arza. His reign ended with his assassination in 900 B.C.

**E. 901-900 B.C.-- Zimri**

**I Kings 16:15.**

The disturbed state of Israel's affairs is evidenced by the circumstances surrounding the short reign of Zimri whose rule endured for a brief seven days, cross-referenced to the twenty-seventh year of Asa of Judah, 900 B.C.

There is no evidence that Zimri had either prophetic or popular support, and Omri, general of Israel's army, moved on the capital at Tirzah with his troops. A fractious disruption occurred, the drama of which easily is camouflaged by merely charting the chronology. Jeroboam's son, Nadab, was assassinated by one of his own officers, Baasha, while on military maneuvers, as indicated previously. Baasha promptly exterminated the house of Jeroboam and was established as regent of Israel, even called *nagid*, the title ascribed to Saul and David. His son,

Elah, however, had problems similar to Nadab, and met his fate at the hands of his officer, Zimri. Although Zimri proceeded to liquidate the house of Baasha, he could not compete with his general, Omri, and, aware of the odds, took his own life a week after claiming the throne. Israel was divided, and the uproar that followed left it quite uncertain as to who the real monarch was-- Omri or Tibni.

#### **F. 901-896 B.C.-- Tibni**

##### **I Kings 16:23.**

Tibni never succeeded in becoming king of all Israel. The circumstances of his reign are described in the following verses of I Kings 16 after the report of Zimri's suicide:

Then were the people of Israel divided into two parts: half of the people followed Tibni the son of Ginath, to make him king, and half followed Omri. But the people that followed Omri prevailed against the people that followed Tibni...so Tibni died, and Omri reigned. In the thirty and first year of Asa king of Judah began Omri to reign over Israel twelve years: six years reigned he in Tirzah. I Kings 16:21-23

Tibni ruled for five years over a portion of Israel. Because of the short (one week) duration of Zimri's rule, Tibni's reference to the twenty-seventh year of Asa of Judah, the same as Zimri's accession year, is not provided in the text. Both Tibni and Omri began their reigns in 901 B.C., the twenty-seventh year of Asa. Since Omri's sole regency began in the thirty-first year of Asa (I Kings 16:23), Tibni's dual reign ended in that year, 896 B.C. Omri's reign, as sole regent of Israel, comprised the subsequent years until his death in 889 B.C.

#### **G. 901-889 B.C.-- Omri**

##### **I Kings 16:23.**

Omri ruled Israel for twelve years (Hebrew reckoning). His reign, like that of Tibni, began at the death of Zimri in 900 B.C. He ruled as dual regent until Tibni's death in 896 B.C. His sole regency is referenced to the thirty-first year of Asa of Judah, 896 B.C.

The brief account of his regency, confined to the verses of I Kings 16:21-28, must not be construed as reflective of the significance of the dynasty he founded. The 'House of Omri' gained more notoriety than any dynasty of Israel and the phrase is found in Assyrian records to describe the kingdom of Israel years after he and his successors had been replaced by the house of Jehu.<sup>9</sup>

Omri moved the capital of Israel from Tirzah to Samaria and strongly fortified it (I Kings 16:24). It served as a virtually impregnable capital until the siege and conquest of it by Assyria, who destroyed it in 723 B.C. The archaeological excavation of Samaria at the beginning of this century by Reisner and Fisher attest to the superior quality of its fortifications.<sup>10</sup> The artistic ivory inlays and nature of the craftsmanship dating to the time of Omri reflect a close relationship in commerce and culture with Phoenicia. The Scriptural attestation to this alliance is reflected in the marriage of Omri's son, Ahab, to the princess Jezebel, daughter of Ethbaal, king of the Zidonians (I Kings 16:31). The fact that his dynasty en-

duced to the fourth generation reflects no small achievement in the early history of Israel's monarchical period.

#### **H. 890-868 B.C.-- Ahab**

##### **I Kings 16:29.**

Ahab, son of Omri, ruled over Israel for twenty-two years (Hebrew reckoning). The beginning of his reign is cross-referenced to the thirty-eighth year of Asa of Judah.

In many respects, Ahab was Israel's most infamous king. Because of the prophetic ministry conducted by Elijah in opposition to the worship of Baal, many pages of Scripture are devoted to the years of Ahab's reign. The story of Naboth's vineyard is known to Sunday School children everywhere. In purely historical terms, Ahab was the foremost of the Omride rulers. He expanded the commercial and economic interests of Israel and fostered the favorable relationship with Phoenicia begun by his father. In addition, he established a positive balance of trade with Syria for much of his reign. He strengthened ties with Judah and sealed them with the marriage of his daughter, Athaliah, to Jehoram, son of the Judean king, Jehoshaphat.

Much to the chagrin of Elijah, Ahab promoted the worship of the Phoenician Baal in Israel (I Kings 16:30-33). He built a temple to the cult in Samaria and allowed his queen, Jezebel, to import hundreds of pagan prophets whose objective it was to make Baalism the religion of Israel. Elijah could not abide such apostasy. Speaking for Yahweh, God of Israel, he announced a drought and famine which was only to end when he gave the word. This was especially significant because the Canaanites believed that the god Baal controlled the seasons and was responsible for storms and rain. For over three years it did not rain, and Elijah was not seen by Ahab (I Kings 17:1--18:46).

When next they met, Ahab and Elijah arranged a contest between the prophets of Baal and Asherah [Asherah is translated in the Authorized Version as 'the grove(s)'] and Elijah (I Kings 18:17-40). It was held on Mount Carmel where Elijah confronted Israel with the challenge to cease attempting to serve Yahweh and Baal at the same time. After defeating the false prophets, Elijah announced to Ahab that the rains were about to return.

Jezebel was informed of the fate of the prophets of Baal and Asherah and sought to kill Elijah in her anger. A dejected and depressed prophet headed for the border to leave Israel behind. Enroute, Elijah was instructed by an angelic messenger to go to Mount Horeb. There, on the mountain of God, Yahweh revealed to Elijah that there were 7000 in Israel who had not followed Baal. He gave Elijah a three-fold commission: To anoint Hazael as king of Syria, Jehu as king of Israel, and to pass his own prophetic mantle to Elisha (I Kings 19:1--II Kings 2:15).

The closing years of Ahab's reign were marred by foreign difficulties.<sup>11</sup> Twice Ben-hadad of Syria and his vassal alliance attacked Israel (I Kings 20:1, 26). Twice he was defeated. But Ahab's victory celebration was dampened by the prophet's warning that because of Ahab's failure to acknowledge Yahweh as the giver of victory, he had forfeited his life. One final encounter took place following the famous incident of Naboth's vineyard (I Kings 21:1-16). Elijah predicted that

because of this gross injustice involving the shedding of innocent blood, the 'House of Omri' would cease to exist (I Kings 21:17-24).

The prophet's words were fulfilled when Ahab was killed by a Syrian arrow while attempting to regain the once Israelite territory of Ramoth-Gilead from the king of Syria. This incident is of special significance for it involved a cooperative military endeavor between Ahab of Israel and Jehoshaphat of Judah. It ended in disaster, as Micaiah the prophet had intimated. Ahab lost his life and was succeeded by his son, Ahaziah, whose reign was to be both brief and tragic (I Kings 22:1-40).

#### **I. 869-867 B.C.-- Ahaziah**

##### **I Kings 22:51.**

The beginning of Ahaziah's brief reign of two years (Hebrew reckoning) is cross-referenced to the seventeenth year of Jehoshaphat of Judah. He was injured in a fall and sought advice from the prophets of the storm-god, Baal. Elijah took exception to this and confronted Ahaziah as he had his father before him. Elijah predicted his death as God's judgment on his support of pagan gods and the rejection of the God of Israel (II Kings 1:2-4).

#### **J. 868-856 B.C.-- Jehoram**

##### **II Kings 3:1.**

Jehoram (Joram) succeeded Ahaziah and reigned for twelve years (Hebrew reckoning). The beginning of his reign is cross-referenced to the eighteenth year of Jehoshaphat. The end of his reign was occasioned by the hand of Jehu, his assassin. Because his reign parallels the ministry of the prophet Elisha, over six chapters of II Kings deal with this period of Israel's history.

Intermittent war between Israel and Syria was conducted during the reign of Jehoram. Ben-hadad, king of Syria, had been smothered to death by his servant, Hazael, who then replaced him on the throne. Jehoram attempted to recover Ramoth-Gilead from Syria as had his grandfather, Ahab. He enlisted the support of his nephew, Ahaziah, king of Judah. The campaign was successful, but Jehoram was wounded in the battle and went to Jezreel to recover. Ahaziah went to visit him (II Kings 8:28-29).

Meanwhile, Jehu, the general in charge of the army at Ramoth-Gilead, had received a visit from one of Elisha's representatives who fulfilled the commission given to Elijah at Horeb. He anointed Jehu king of Israel and charged him with avenging the blood of the prophets, which was to include the termination of the house of Omri (II Kings 9:1-10). Jehu outdid himself in fulfilling that charge.

The final scenes are dramatic. Jehu moved on Jezreel. Jehoram was wounded and died in the very vineyard Ahab took from Naboth. Ahaziah of Judah was killed and his body taken to Jerusalem,<sup>12</sup> and Jezebel was thrown from her window and devoured by wild dogs. Judgment fell on the dynasty of Omri (II Kings 9:11-37). Only Athaliah, queen mother in Jerusalem, remained.

#### **K. 857-830 B.C.-- Jehu**

##### **II Kings 9:3; 10:36.**

The violent circumstances that characterized the beginning of the twenty-

eight year reign of Jehu (Hebrew reckoning) involved both the dynasties of Omri, in Israel, and David, in Judah (actually twenty-seven, see the concluding chapter). In the bloody revolution that resulted, Jehu slew seventy sons of Ahab's house and purged Israel of the prophets of Baal. The beginning of his reign is dated by the simple statement that he followed Jehoram of Israel. His reign is not cross-referenced to Judah for the obvious reason that he was the assassin of Judah's king. As a result of this murder, and the wanton slaughter of the Jerusalem delegation that he encountered enroute to Samaria, the throne of Judah was occupied by the only woman and non-Davidite in its history. Jehu was not a popular figure with the pious in Judah. The Black Obelisk of Shalmaneser III shows Jehu actually kneeling before the Assyrian emperor to whom he paid tribute.<sup>13</sup> Jehu is the only king in either Israel or Judah, of whom we have a picture today.

**L. 831-814 B.C.-- Jehoahaz**

**II Kings 13:1.**

The reign of Jehu's successor, Jehoahaz, is cross-referenced to the twenty-third year<sup>14</sup> of Joash of Judah. He reigned for seventeen years (Hebrew reckoning) before being succeeded by his son, Jehoash, in 814 B.C. The 'savior' of II Kings 13:5 may be a reference to Shamashi-adad V, the Assyrian king, during this time.

**M. 815-799 B.C.-- Jehoash**

**II Kings 13:10.**

Jehoash (Joash) ruled for sixteen years (Hebrew reckoning), until 799 B.C. His reign is cross-referenced to the thirty-seventh year of his namesake, Jehoash of Judah.<sup>15</sup>

**N. 800-760 B.C.-- Jeroboam II**

**II Kings 14:23.**

Jeroboam II, the fourth ruler of the house of Jehu, began his reign in the fifteenth year of Amaziah of Judah. His regency ushered in Israel's 'Golden Age'. Much information regarding the prosperity of his years and the concomitant social ills are gleaned from the books of Amos and Hosea. With the luxurious wealth brought to Israel by the military and commercial enterprise of Jeroboam II came also a moral and religious decline.<sup>16</sup> This, along with the lack of sensitivity to and abuse of the poor elicited stinging rebuke from these prophets. This apostasy, as with that of previous dynasties, spelled doom for the house of Jehu. Jeroboam's son, Zechariah, was murdered after only six months on the throne, and the rule of Jehu's dynasty ended.

There is evidence of a textual discrepancy of one year. The Hebrew text and the LXX of II Kings ascribes forty-one years to the reign of Jeroboam II. Josephus indicates his reign as forty years as required by the mathematics as discussed in the concluding chapter. Unless there is a co-regency involved, for which there is no evidence in the text, it would appear that a scribal error of one year exists in the current Massoretic text that did not exist in the manuscript available to Josephus.<sup>17</sup> The methodology of Hebrew chronology contains its own data for self-

correction and indicates the mathematics in the manuscript of Josephus to be correct. The discrepancy should be noted before proceeding through the chronology.

**O. 761-760 B.C.-- Zechariah**

**II Kings 15:8.**

Zechariah's rule lasted only six months and was abruptly terminated by Shallum, whose reign was even more brief. Again, a two-year discrepancy is disturbing, for Zechariah's reign is cross-referenced in the Hebrew manuscript to the thirty-eighth year of Uzziah. Shallum's reign lasted only one month, and is cross-referenced to the thirty-ninth year of Uzziah. Because of the brevity of his reign, his successor, Menahem, is also cross referenced to the same year of Uzziah. The fortieth year of Uzziah meets the mathematical requirements for all three regents. Again, unless there is an unidentified co-regency, there appears either to be an instance of a reign overlapping the first of Nisan or a one-year scribal error. Since the chronology is self-correcting, the difficulty of the thirty-eighth vs. fortieth year poses no over-all problem, but it does remain an area for continued investigation.

**P. 761-760 B.C.-- Shallum**

**II Kings 15:13.**

Shallum met the same fate as he had imposed upon his predecessor and was assassinated after a reign of only one month. The beginning of his reign is cross-referenced to the thirty-ninth year of Uzziah of Judah.

**Q. 761-751 B.C.-- Menahem**

**II Kings 15:17.**

The information regarding Menahem's reign is limited in II Kings. Obviously, he fared better than his immediate predecessors in that he ruled for ten years (Hebrew reckoning). His reign, like that of Shallum is cross-referenced to the fortieth year of Uzziah and ended in 751 B.C. His greatest menace was the increasing power of Assyria which terrorized the smaller nations of the Near East.<sup>18</sup> The impact of this powerful force on Israel's history (II Kings 15:19-20) will be noted in chapter six.

**R. 752-750 B.C.-- Pekahiah**

**II Kings 15:23.**

Pekahiah, son of Menahem, ruled for two years until his assassination in 750 B.C. His vassalage to Assyria and its resultant imposition of severe taxation made him less popular in Israel and gave rise to the revolt led by his successor, Pekah.

The cross-referencing of both Pekahiah's and Pekah's reign to the fiftieth and fifty-second year of Uzziah is a source of confusion. In both instances, the mathematics regarding the length of reign is correct but requires the reference to be to the forty-ninth and fiftieth years for the inceptions of the reigns of Pekahiah and Pekah. For details, consult the concluding chapter.

**S. 751-731 B.C.-- Pekah**

**II Kings 15:27.**

During the twenty years (Hebrew reckoning) of Pekah's reign, the stage was set for the ultimate demise of the kingdom of Israel. Syria reasserted herself during the regency of her new king, Rezin, who reigned in Damascus. The common foe was Assyria; and Pekah and his ally, Rezin, did their best to persuade Judah to join in their anti-Assyrian alliance. When their persuasion expressed itself as aggressive coercion, Ahaz of Judah ignored the counsel of Isaiah, who urged him to trust in God. When Pekah and Rezin moved on Jerusalem (II Kings 16:5; II Chronicles 28:5-8), King Ahaz of Judah in a panic called Tiglath-pileser for help. The Assyrians marched west, imposing tribute on Judah, Ammon, Edom, and Moab, and taking large numbers of people from the Galilee and Gilead areas of Israel into captivity (II Kings 15:29). At that time the fortress of Hazor was destroyed and the proud kingdom of Israel was reduced to a tiny vassal state only part of its original size. Both Hosea and Isaiah refer to Ephraim, which would have been fairly correct geographically. After Tiglath-pileser's subjugation of Damascus<sup>19</sup> and vassalage of the kingdom of Israel, Pekah was removed from the royal office by the conspiracy of Hoshea<sup>20</sup> in 731 B.C.

**T. 732-723 B.C.-- Hoshea**

**II Kings 17:1.**

Hoshea found himself in possession of a kingdom diminished in size and under obligation as a tributary of Assyria. His nine-year reign is cross-referenced to the twelfth year of Ahaz of Judah. Upon the death of Tiglath-pileser III, Hoshea made a costly error of judgment. Counting on Shalmaneser V as being incapable of controlling the vast Assyrian holdings and relying on an alliance with Egypt, Hoshea ceased his payment of tribute. This was a fatal mistake, for he was wrong on both counts. Shalmaneser V promptly invaded Israel and placed its capital under siege.<sup>21</sup> Although Hoshea held out for three years, the forces of Assyria were too overpowering. In 723 B.C., Samaria fell to the efforts of the Shalmaneser-Sargon army, and the kingdom of Israel abruptly ceased to exist as a nation.<sup>22</sup>

Having considered the Hebrew chronology for the kings of Israel, one's attention is now turned to the kings of Judah.

**III. Charting The Chronology Of The Kings Of Judah  
945 B.C. - 588 B.C.**

Two sources provide the chronological history of Judah: I and II Kings and II Chronicles, chapters 10 to 36. Both records serve as sources for the chronological charting that follows. The text of Scripture places greater emphasis on the monarchs of Judah than of Israel, and includes biographical information such as age at accession or fatherhood. The chronological data relative to lengths of reign and cross-references will be noted as the list of kings progresses. For a more detailed analysis, see the concluding chapter. Five co-regencies are identified in the Scriptural text: Rehoboam, Jehoash, Amaziah, Uzziah, and Jotham. As in the case of Israel's monarchs, these co-regencies will be discussed below under the identification of the king.

**A. 946-929 B.C.-- Rehoboam**

**I Kings 14:21.**

The policies of taxation and conscription of manpower under Solomon were sources of great discomfort among the northern tribes of Israel. For some time, friction and discord marked the relationship between the tribes of Judah in the south and Ephraim in the north. In addition, the apostasy that marked Solomon's later years had not gone unheeded. It all came to a head at the time of Rehoboam's ascendancy to the throne of David. The kingdom divided.

The following simple statement of I Kings typifies the format used to record the chronology of the kings of Judah: "And Rehoboam the son of Solomon reigned in Judah. Rehoboam was forty and one years old when he began to reign, and he reigned seventeen years in Jerusalem," (I Kings 14:21). Since the concern of this study is chronology, rather than detailed history, these are the type of data that will serve as source material for the listings that follow.

Rehoboam reigned for seventeen years and the end of his reign equals the eighteenth year of Jeroboam I of Israel. (Cf., I Kings 15:1, "Now in the eighteenth year of king Jeroboam...reigned Abijam over Judah.") His rule began in 946 B.C., the year prior to Solomon's death, and is charted below:

947 B.C. (appointment year of Jeroboam)  
- 18 \_\_\_\_\_ (years of Jeroboam's reign)  
929 B.C. (eighteenth year of Jeroboam)  
+ 17 \_\_\_\_\_ (years of Rehoboam's reign)  
946 B.C. (appointment year of Rehoboam)

Since the chronological computations are detailed in the concluding chapter, they will not be repeated in the listings that follow. The statements above serve as an example of how the chronology is recorded and how it must be calculated.

The co-regency indicated of Rehoboam is substantiated by the Scriptural text which indicates that Solomon, upon hearing of Jeroboam's designs for the throne, made his son crown prince before his death. Jeroboam, had been appointed king over ten tribes by the prophet Ahijah two years earlier, just prior to his flight to Egypt. Thus, the three dates following Rehoboam reflect a one-year (portion of a year) co-regency with his father, Solomon. Careful attention to the details provided by the Scriptural text ensures the proper charting of the chronology. If one were to ignore such details and merely add seventeen to the death year of Solomon, the accession of Abijam, Solomon's son, would not correspond to the eighteenth year of Jeroboam, and Rehoboam's reign would already be in error by one year.

Historically, the reign of Rehoboam was a tumultuous one. Constant warfare existed with Israel in the north; and the Egyptian king, Shishak, was a constant thorn in Rehoboam's side.<sup>23</sup> Shishak's raid of the Temple in Jerusalem gained for himself such magnificent treasures as the golden shields. Rehoboam's depleted resources only allowed for replacements with bronze shields. The glitter and glamor of Solomon's splendor had begun to disappear from Jerusalem (I Kings 14:25-28).

**B. 930-927 B.C.-- Abijam**

**I Kings 15:1-2.**

Abijam's rule, cross-referenced to the eighteenth year of Jeroboam I of Israel, lasted three years. His first year is the same year in which his father, Rehoboam, died (929 B.C.), followed by his second year (928 B.C.), and finally, the year of his death (927 B.C.) for a total of three years. Recall the method of Hebrew reckoning: 929 B.C. = (accession) year one; 928 B.C. = year two; and 927 B.C. = (death) year three. The reason that this is mentioned so frequently is that failure to understand and employ this Hebrew method of reckoning; the accession year is year one, has generated much confusion and produced irreconcilable numbers when charting the chronology of the Judean kings.

The three years in which Abijam reigned were not dissimilar to the years of his father, Rehoboam. Warfare with Israel continued as did the condoning of the practice of idolatry. Only the Davidic Covenant kept the house of David on the throne in Jerusalem (*cf.*, I Kings 15:4-5).

**C. 928-885 B.C.-- Asa**

**I Kings 15:9-10.**

The method of counting is corroborated by the reference of Asa's accession to the twentieth year of Jeroboam of Israel. One will recall that his father's three-year reign began in the eighteenth year. Asa's lengthy reign saw extensive periods of peace and religious reform in Judah, supported by the prophetic ministry of Azariah. His reform required the removal of Maachah as queen mother, whose continued worship of Asherah was a blight on the true worship of Yahweh in Judah. Unfortunately, the last years of Asa's reign saw a decline in his religious zeal. His Syrian alliance<sup>24</sup> brought a rebuke from the prophet, Hanani, who was imprisoned by Asa, (II Chronicles 16:7-10). When stricken by a fatal disease in the last two years of his reign, Asa failed to turn to God for aid, (II Chronicles 16:12).

There is a chronological problem involving the total of Asa's reign which terminated in the fourth year of Ahab of Israel, 885 B.C. (I Kings 22:41). This gives Asa a duration of forty-three years (Hebrew reckoning). The Massoretic text of I Kings 15:10, however, states "and forty and one years reigned he in Jerusalem." There is no textually satisfactory way to account for the two-year discrepancy. It is apparent that there have been problems with the duration of Asa's regency over the years. A good clue to this is that the Hebrew manuscripts, the Septuagint,<sup>25</sup> and Josephus<sup>26</sup> are all at variance. (See concluding chapter.) None of them, however, provide a reign duration of forty-three years, the only figure that satisfies the mathematics of the text.

There is some indication that an unidentified co-regency may have existed at the end of Asa's reign. Both I Kings 15:23-24 and II Chronicles 16:12 indicate that Asa was beset by a serious illness in the final years of his reign that would provide an implicit textual justification for a co-regency with his son, Jehoshaphat (I Kings 22:41). However, the guidelines established in chapter one do not allow for co-regencies unless explicitly stated in the text, lest they become objects of abuse to make the numbers fit. The chronology of the text further indicates that Asa was very young at the time of his father's death and that Maachah served

as queen mother during the early part of his reign. It is not impossible that the counting of his reign did not begin until he reached an age of accountability and that the first two years belong to Maachah. As an unofficial regent, a non-Davidite, and a worshipper of Asherah, it is likely that the chronicler would be loathe to list her among the monarchs of Judah. All this is conjecture, inconsistent with the established rules of chronology, and borders on the approach which historical criticism brings to the text. Until further evidence can clarify the reason for an apparent discrepancy in arithmetic, it must be noted according to the text that Asa began his rule two years before Nadab of Israel (927 B.C.) and that his reign ended in the fourth year of Ahab of Israel (885 B.C.).

**D. 886-862 B.C.-- Jehoshaphat**

**I Kings 15:23-24; 22:41-42.**

Jehoshaphat reinstated the policies of religious reform that marked the earlier years of his father's regency. He was thirty-five years old at accession and his reign reflected his skill as a mature and able administrator. Economically, his kingdom prospered by the receipt of tribute from neighboring nations. He established friendly relations with Israel in the north, although the sealing of that alliance by the marriage of his son, Jehoram, to the Omride princess, Athaliah, was to prove disastrous in years to come. Upon the invitation of Ahab, Jehoshaphat joined forces with Israel in an ill-fated attempt to regain the territory of Ramoth-Gilead from Ben-hadad of Syria. Micaiah, the prophet had predicted the disaster when Jehoshaphat had consulted him earlier. Fortunate to be alive after the unsuccessful battle, Jehoshaphat returned to Judah and was rebuked by Jehu, son of Hanani. He responded positively to the words of Jehu and continued his policy of religious reform. The final years of his reign, however, witnessed a return to an affiliation with the house of Omri. His shipping alliance with Ahaziah of Israel was a failure as predicted by the prophet Eliezer. Although he accomplished great things during his reign to restore the religious practice and faith of Judah, his efforts were later nullified. His failures were largely due to the association he had established with the idolatrous kingdom to the north.

Chronologically, Jehoshaphat's reign began in the fourth year of Ahab (885 B.C.) and ended in the fifth year of Ahab's son, Jehoram (862 B.C.). The mathematical separation of these dates is firmly established as twenty-four years. There is no explicit textual evidence to account for the apparent discrepancy of one year reflected in II Chronicles 20:31, "he reigned twenty and five years in Jerusalem," unless he is credited with a co-regency with his father. The text of II Chronicles 16:12-- quoted from the Jerusalem Bible-- provides some justification for such a possibility, "A disease attacked Asa from head to foot in the thirty-ninth year of his reign." If Asa appointed his son, Jehoshaphat, as crown prince sometime after contracting this debilitating disease 'in the thirty-ninth year of his reign' the dates of Jehoshaphat would meet the years accorded him. A similar relationship may have existed between Asa and Abijam, but neither are explicitly stated by textual data to be co-regencies.

**E. 863-856 B.C.-- Jehoram**

**II Kings 8:16-17; II Chronicles 21:3.**

Jehoram of *Judah* ascended the throne in the fifth year of Jehoram (Joram) of *Israel* (862 B.C.). The end of his reign is cross-referenced to the eleventh year of Jehoram of Israel (856 B.C.), a mathematical separation of seven years by Hebrew reckoning. This is the last instance of the difficulty in reign duration allocated to kings Asa, Jehoshaphat, and Jehoram. The text of II Kings 8 indicates a total of eight years and finds no apparent conflict with the precise figures identified in the cross-referencing, *i.e.*, to the fifth and eleventh years of Jehoram of Israel. It is curious that two years before his death, he, too, was stricken with a fatal disease that caused great suffering.

Contrast is almost a mild term to describe the reigns of Jehoshaphat and his son, Jehoram. As soon as he had taken the throne, Jehoram murdered his six brothers and other dignitaries in Judah. He actively encouraged the return of Baal worship. Countries formerly subjugated by his father invaded Judah, raided the treasury, and took members of the royal family as hostages. The sad commentary following the account of his death by a terrible disease is that no one regretted his passing. He did not even receive the customary honor of being buried in the kings' tomb.

**F. 857-856 B.C.-- Ahaziah**

**II Kings 9:29.**

Ahaziah scarcely represented 'the people's choice'. The fact of the matter was that he was the only Davidic heir available to occupy the throne of Judah. Jehoram had murdered all his own brothers. His sons, except for Ahaziah (also called Jehoahaz), had been killed or captured by the Philistine/Arabian invaders. When one considers other elements of his pedigree, his uncle was Jehoram - the idolatrous king of Israel, and his mother was Athaliah - the daughter of Ahab and Jezebel, it is no wonder that the affairs of Judah went rapidly from bad to worse during and following his reign.

Ahaziah's regency was abbreviated by Jehu's purge in Israel. When invited by his uncle, Jehoram, to join forces against the new king of Syria, Hazael, in an effort to regain Ramoth-Gilead, Ahaziah accepted. Jehoram was wounded. He went to his summer palace at Jezreel to recover. Unfortunately for Ahaziah, he was visiting the king of Israel at the time of Jehu's revolution. He escaped to Samaria after Jehoram was killed in Jezreel. His escape was temporary, for there Jehu found him, chased him to Megiddo and killed him (II Kings 9:27-28). His reign of one year began and ended in the eleventh year of Jehoram of Israel at the hand of the assassin, Jehu, in 856 B.C.<sup>27</sup>

Since his demise left the throne of Judah with no heir apparent, Athaliah responded by acquisitioning it to herself. She secured her acquisition by the execution of the Davidic family. A reign of terror had come to Jerusalem.

The purge of Jehu with its simultaneous executions of the kings of both Israel and Judah is significant to the chronologist. It provides a means of verification of the accuracy of the charting thus far. The time from Solomon's death until the deaths of both Jehoram of Israel and Ahaziah of Judah must necessarily be equal.

Eighty-nine years, 945 B.C. to 856 B.C., mark the years between the death of Solomon and the blood bath of Jehu that vacated the thrones of both nations.

#### **G. 857-850 B.C.-- Athaliah**

##### **II Kings 11:4.**

Athaliah usurped the throne of Judah in 856 B.C. when her son was assassinated by Jehu of Israel. Since she was not of the house of David, her reign was never considered legitimate by the conservative Hebrews in Judah. To ensure her position, she ruthlessly murdered the Davidites. Only Jehoash (Joash), the infant son of Ahaziah, escaped through the efforts of Ahaziah's sister, Jehosheba, and Jehoiada, the priest. They kept the infant prince hidden in the Temple.

Athaliah's reign ended six years later in the seventh year of Jehu of Israel. Since Jehu was anointed at the direction of Elisha in the year prior to the death of Jehoram and Ahaziah, his accession year was 857 B.C. Therefore, Athaliah's six-year reign of terror terminated in 850 B.C. in the seventh year of Jehu.

#### **H. 851-811 B.C.-- Jehoash**

##### **II Kings 11:12; 12:1.**

Jehoash (Joash) was only seven years old when he was appointed king of Judah. Jehoiada the priest had anointed Jehoash king before the death of Athaliah. When he considered the moment to be right for a public proclamation, he gathered the Temple guards and acclaimed Jehoash, king. Athaliah, curious about the shouts of acclamation, attempted to investigate, was arrested and summarily executed. But her influence, which had dominated the policy of Judah since the death of Jehoshaphat, permeated the religious life of Judah. The young king's task was clear.

Jehoash was guided by Jehoiada and began a religious reform in Judah unequalled prior to his reign. The Baal cult was replaced by the restoration of Temple worship. Support for the revival of true worship was in evidence throughout the kingdom.

When Jehoiada died so did the enthusiastic support of religious renewal on the part of Jehoash. Apostasy replaced orthodoxy. Not only were the warnings of Zechariah, the son of Jehoiada, ignored, but he was stoned in the very Temple courts for his efforts.

Syria had made her presence felt in Israel, and now turned toward Jerusalem. The Temple and royal treasury were looted and Jehoash was left wounded and sick in bed. His own servants eventually took his life and Amaziah became regent in Judah.

#### **I. 814-785 B.C.-- Amaziah**

##### **II Kings 14:1-2; II Chronicles 24:25.**

Amaziah's appointment year is referenced fifteen years before Jeroboam II of Israel, 814 B.C. His official reign began in the second year of Joash of Israel, 811 B.C. The reason for the two-year difference is a co-regency due to the wound and illness which incapacitated his father, Jehoash.

Amaziah began his reign with popular support. This encouraged the development of a military force to combat the army of Syria which had been a source of irritation to both Judah and Israel for some years. Even without the aid of Israel, his army recovered the land of Edom. Amaziah, however, failed to give credit to Yahweh and a cloud of doom appeared on the horizon. In his pride, he foolishly challenged the Israelite army of Jehoash and was soundly defeated at Beth-Shemesh and captured. Although ultimately released, his son, Uzziah, had begun to rule in his absence. His last year is the fourteenth year of Jeroboam II of Israel, 785 B.C. II Kings 14:17 states that Amaziah lived fifteen years after the death of Jehoash of Israel. Thus his total reign, from 814 B.C. to 785 B.C. is twenty-nine years; two years as co-regent with his father, thirteen years as sole regent of Judah, and thirteen years as co-regent with his son.

**J. 800-748 B.C.-- Uzziah**  
**II Kings 15:1-2.**

The beginning of Uzziah's reign in 800 B.C. must be seen in relation to the contest between Amaziah and Jehoash (II Kings 14:13-14). Uzziah (also known as Azariah) was only sixteen at the time, but his father had been captured by the army of Israel and the throne was vacant. Officially, since appointment was for life, Amaziah's rule did not end until thirteen years later, when he was assassinated by Judaites unhappy with his failure to maintain a position of supremacy. At that time, 785 B.C., Uzziah began his official reign.

The historical significance of Uzziah's reign deserves more than the cursory sweep accorded by this chronological study. Starting with a humiliated nation, he was able to restore Judah to a state of national prominence not dissimilar to the kingdom of Solomon two hundred years earlier. He extended Judah's borders south to Aqaba and eastward through Ammon. Agriculture and industry flourished, and tribute from the control of the trade routes enlarged the state coffers. Then Uzziah did a foolish thing. He usurped the priestly prerogative by burning incense on the Temple altar and became defiant when confronted by the priests. He was smitten with leprosy and confined to his quarters. His son, Jotham, served as co-regent for the final ten years of his reign,<sup>28</sup> until his death in the second year of Pekah of Israel. Bible students will recall that Isaiah dates his vision and prophetic call from the year of Uzziah's death (748 B.C.). Although the total duration of his reign was fifty-two years (Hebrew reckoning), only twenty-seven years were spent as sole regent of Judah. Thirteen years were spent in co-regency with his father, and ten years as co-regent with his son.

**K. 759-743 B.C.-- Jotham**  
**II Kings 15:5, 32-33.**

Jotham's reign reflects a ten-year co-regency with his father, Uzziah, who had become leprous following his illicit incense offering on the altar. His official reign is referenced to the second year of Pekah of Israel, and he ruled for sixteen years (Hebrew reckoning). The end of his reign is referenced to the seventh year of Pekah (see concluding chapter for comments).

**L. 744-728 B.C.-- Ahaz**

**II Kings 16:1-2.**

Ahaz began his reign at the death of Jotham and reigned for sixteen years (Hebrew reckoning). The Massoretic text states that he began his reign in the seventeenth year of Pekah of Israel. It is readily apparent that a scribal error of ten years is reflected in the present text, and is discussed in the concluding chapter. His reign began at the death of Jotham. The death of Jotham was in the seventh year of Pekah; therefore the reign of Ahaz began in the seventh year of Pekah. The transcriptional error presents no chronological difficulty for it is corrected by the mathematics of the end of his reign referenced to the third year of Hoshea of Israel. Ahaz had his problems. The prophet Isaiah could have been a most valuable asset, but Ahaz largely chose to ignore his counsel. The main issue was the constant pressure exerted by Syria and Israel who insisted he join them in an anti-Assyrian alliance. When the Syro-Israel pact decided to overthrow Judah and place their own man on the throne, Ahaz panicked. Isaiah assured him that trust in Yahweh was the key to victory. Instead, Ahaz made overtures to Assyria which resulted in vassalage with its accompanying exaction of tribute.<sup>29</sup>

**M. 729-699 B.C.-- Hezekiah**

**II Kings 18:1-2.**

Hezekiah is the last king of Judah cross-referenced to a king of Israel; for Israel fell to the army of Shalmaneser V in Hezekiah's sixth year (729 B.C. + 6 = 723 B.C.). Hezekiah is given a year 'zero' as with the kings previous to him. This gives him an apparent reign of thirty years, but in reality, he only has the twenty-nine shown from his first to his last year. His sixth year is the ninth and final year of Hoshea of Israel (732 B.C. + 9 = 723 B.C.).

The dates of Hezekiah's reign have been subjected to violent abuse at the hands of chronologists. This has been due to an insistence upon a misinterpretation of Assyrian chronology with which historians have attempted to synchronize this period of Israel's history. In spite of the very clear chronological data of the Hebrew text, it has been declared erroneous and precedent given to the misunderstood Assyrian record (II Kings 18:13 - 19:37). This subject is dealt with at length in chapters four and five.

Hezekiah began his rule with the most extensive religious reform in Judah's history. His father was an idolater, Hezekiah was not. Ahaz ignored Isaiah, Hezekiah did not. He recognized the validity of Isaiah's counsel relative to faith in God as the ultimate security.

The Temple worship was reinstated under Hezekiah and a Passover was held to which Israel was invited as well as Judah. The celebration was an event unequalled since the Temple was dedicated at the time of Solomon.

**N. 699-644 B.C.-- Manasseh**

**II Kings 21:1.**

Some chronologists, in an attempt to readjust Hebrew history to meet sup-

posed requirements of the Assyrian record, have created a fictitious co-regency between Hezekiah and Manasseh. The Scriptural text is clear. Manasseh began his reign at the death of his father, Hezekiah, in 699 B.C. (II Kings 21:1). Not only was his reign of fifty-five years the longest in Judean history, it was the most wicked. Manasseh was the opposite of his pious and God-fearing father. In his later days he was fettered and led a prisoner to Babylon. This punishment of his wicked and idolatrous ways led to his repentance and return to the God of his father.<sup>30</sup> Although subsequently released, time had run out for any deep and lasting religious reform, and upon Manasseh's death in 644 B.C., his son, Amon, inherited a kingdom prepared to revert to the worst of his father's policies and practices.

After the sixth year of Hezekiah, there are no more cross-references to the kings of Israel, so the years of Judah's monarchs can be accumulated via simple addition without the need for the one-year subtraction. Thus, the fifty-five year reign of Manasseh, beginning in 699 B.C., ended in 644 B.C. (699 B.C. - 55 = 644 B.C.).

**O. 644-642 B.C.-- Amon**

**II Kings 21:19.**

Amon's two-year reign witnessed a prompt return to the idolatry of Manasseh. In 642 B.C. he was murdered in the palace by his own servants and his son, Josiah, was made king.

**P. 642-610 B.C.-- Josiah**

**II Kings 22:1.**

Josiah was eight years old in 642 B.C. when he became king of Judah, and he reigned for thirty-one years [actually, thirty-two years, see the concluding chapter]. Religious reformation marked his reign, which came to a tragic end with his death at the hands of Egypt in the battle at Megiddo in 610 B.C.

His religious reform brought about a Passover celebration that rivaled that of his great-grandfather, Hezekiah. It was prompted by an event in his eighteenth year. While the Temple was under repair, a copy of the 'Book of the Law given by Moses' was discovered. The prophetess, Huldah, warned of God's judgment. Josiah assembled the people, the Law was read, and a covenant established to observe its teachings. Great care was given to the Passover celebration that followed. Unfortunately, the reform lasted only as long as Josiah. By the time of Jehoiaxim, idolatry again was wide-spread in Judah.

The circumstances of Josiah's death were tragic. Assyria was in a state of revolt. King Necho and his Egyptian army were on their way to assist the Assyrians. Josiah was determined to prevent this alliance.<sup>31</sup> His army was defeated and Josiah killed (II Kings 23:29-30). This was heartbreaking news for the faithful in Judah who mourned the passing of their good and faithful king. The Scriptural account makes a point of stating that the prophet "Jeremiah lamented for Josiah,"-- an enviable epitaph, indeed (II Chronicles 35:25).

**Q. 610-610 B.C.-- Jehoahaz**

**II Kings 23:31.**

The unexpected beginning of Jehoahaz' regency ended almost as abruptly

as it began. Three months after the death of Josiah, the reign of Jehoahaz was terminated by Necho (II Kings 23:31-35). The pharaoh took him prisoner to Egypt where he died, as foretold by Jeremiah. Since the king was appointed for life, the duration of his reign did not officially terminate until his death. He came in Egypt sometime after his three month reign in Jerusalem. Thus, the chronology of the final years of the kingdom of Judah require his reign not to be counted (see Illustration VII).

**R. 610-599 B.C.-- Jehoiakim**

**II Kings 23:36.**

Jehoiakim served at the pleasure of Necho, king of Egypt, who had placed him on the throne. There he reigned for eleven years, subject to Egypt until the tide of history was changed by Babylon's defeat of Egypt at Carchemish.<sup>32</sup> This was a portent of what lay in store for Judah. Jehoiakim stubbornly resisted the prophetic pronouncements of Jeremiah, but one by one his ominous warnings began to become reality. Jerusalem's days were limited.

The exact circumstances surrounding the death of Jehoiakim are not clear in the Biblical account. Jeremiah had predicted his death would be ignominious and without royal burial. He probably met his end in an ill-fated battle; for raiding hordes of Chaldeans, Syrians, Moabites, and Ammonites were permitted by Babylon to plunder the Judean countryside at will (II Kings 24:1-4).

**S. 599-598 B.C.-- Jehoiakin**

**II Kings 24:8.**

Jehoiakin, known later as Jeconiah, scarcely had been seated upon the throne when Jerusalem was surrounded by the armies of Babylon (II Kings 24:10-16). After a reign of three months, he and his mother, along with the leading citizens, statesmen, and artisans of Judah, were taken captive to Babylon.<sup>33</sup> Mattaniah, a twenty-one year old uncle of Jehoiakin, was made king and renamed Zedekiah by Nebuchadnezzar (II Kings 24:17).

The Hebrew text indicates a reign duration of only three months for Jehoiakin. The Babylonian records indicate his deportation as the second of Adar, the twelfth month.<sup>34</sup> The chronological circumstances are similar to that of Jehoahaz. The reign of his successor, Zedekiah, is mathematically assessed to have begun in 598 B.C., for his eleventh year is firmly fixed at 588 B.C. Jehoiakin was taken captive on the twelfth of Adar (Sunday, February 19, 598 B.C.), therefore, he began to reign on Sunday, November 13, 599 B.C. Technically, Jehoiakin continued as the rightful occupant of David's throne as long as he was still alive. Zedekiah, who was appointed by Nebuchadnezzar, was a puppet king (see the concluding chapter for information on dating Jehoiakin).

**T. 598-588 B.C.-- Zedekiah**

**II Kings 24:18.**

Zedekiah was appointed king by Nebuchadnezzar at the deportation, or shortly thereafter, of Jehoiakin to Babylon. His reign lasted for eleven years, until the fall of Jerusalem in 588 B.C. (See concluding chapter).

Zedekiah was not satisfied with his puppet status, and ignored the advice of

Jeremiah by rebelling against Babylon. This was not tolerated by Nebuchadnezzar who surrounded Jerusalem. The siege was lengthy, but in 588 B.C. the walls were breached. Zedekiah was blinded, bound in fetters, and taken to Babylon. The glory had departed from Jerusalem. The Temple and city were reduced to rubble (II Kings 25:1-17).

With this tragic event, the chronology of the Hebrew kings comes to a close. Several observations are in order before comparing the chronology to the historical synchronisms of the period. Whereas the numbers of the kings of Israel accumulate with almost perfect harmony, there are minor difficulties with the numbers relative to the reigns of Judah's monarchs at several points. The numbers, however, are quite manageable when synchronized with the data relative to the kings of Israel. In fact, the manner in which the Biblical text records the numbers and provides cross-referencing to the opposite kingdom allows for the possibility of scribal error when recording the vast amount of numerical data contained in the chronological record. It is this method of logging the information that enables the chronologist to identify the occasional transcriptional inexactitude as well as the correct number when accumulating the figures. This methodology has ensured that an accurate chronological history of God's people during this important period not be lost.

Illustration XXX has been prepared in the conclusion for the benefit of the reader who may desire to compare the chronological data of the Hebrew kings contained in the various records. Such a compilation is of particular value when attempting to access the location of possible oversights in the transcription process. The conclusion compares the chronologies as recorded in the Scriptural (Hebrew) texts of the books of Kings and Chronicles, the Septuagint (Greek) version of Kings and Chronicles, and the writings of Flavius Josephus. The real significance of the chart is not reflected in the variations that can be identified, but in the fact that there are so few. The paucity of major discrepancies reflects great credit on the unknown chronicler of the Hebrew court who designed such an admirable method of recording the data.

Can the dates be tested further for accuracy? Yes, in addition to their synchronization with the opposite kingdoms, there exist at least two other ways of testing for accuracy. One means is their synchronization with parallel histories of the Assyrians, Babylonians, and Egyptians. A final means of testing the accuracy of the chronology is to examine the Hebrew monitor cycles contained in the Law by use of the computer calendar, in the same manner as was done to determine the date of the fall of Jerusalem.

Although discussed elsewhere in the study, the matter of 723 B.C. as the date for the fall of Samaria deserves a final note. Most early texts ascribe the date of 722 B.C. to this event. Some have been influenced, undoubtedly, by the bombastic boast of Sargon II whose later records credit himself with the conquest rather than Shalmaneser V. Since Sargon was not yet king of Assyria in 723 B.C., it has been assumed that the fall did not take place until after his accession. Others, correctly identifying the lunar-solar year 723 B.C. to overlap the Gregorian equivalent of 722 B.C., have written the date 723/722 B.C. allowing for the deviation of a year. The cyclical phenomena verified by astronomical dating, the

### Chapter III - Historical Summary of the Kings

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historical synchronization based on the solar eclipse of 763 B.C. in the eponymy of Bur-Sagale, and scholarly assessment of Sargon's later records have removed the need for this allowance.

Many recent texts provide the proper date of 723 B.C. Both the chronology of Israel's monarchs as outlined in this chapter and the data discussed in subsequent chapters confirm with certainty that the Assyrian captivity, which ended the reign of Hoshea and the existence of the kingdom of Israel, took place in 723 B.C.

## Chapter III - NOTES

<sup>1</sup>Those who select an apparent synchronistic date in Assyrian history chose 853 B.C. for the battle of Qarqar and 701 B.C. for the invasion of Judah by Sennacherib.

<sup>2</sup>From the capture of Jerusalem by David in 1018 B.C. to the fall of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar in 588 B.C. is a period of 430 years ( $1018 - 588 = 430$ ). It is noteworthy that the prophet Ezekiel prophesies that 430 years would be the first life-span of Jerusalem as the capital of Israel (Ezekiel 4:1-8).

<sup>3</sup>It is apparent from the Scriptural text that the kings of Judah were more significant to the Hebrew chronologist than were Israel's monarchs. In his blessing of Judah, Jacob prophesied, "The scepter shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet until Shiloh come..." (Genesis 49:10). It was important to assure that a Davidite retain the Judean throne. To David's dynasty had been given the promise, "...unto his son will I give one tribe, that David my servant may have a light alway before me in Jerusalem..." (I Kings 11: 36). Thus, the text contains additional data concerning the kings of Judah not included in the records regarding Israel's regents.

<sup>4</sup>Co-regency is used here in its broadest sense. Certainly no joint relationship of any of Israel's monarchs was 'co-regent' in the manner descriptive of that between David and Solomon or Jehoash and Amaziah. But neither were the reigns of Jeroboam or Jehu 'dual reigns' like the first years of Tibni and Omri, when the kingdom of Israel was split into two clear and distinct factions each with its own monarch. Perhaps 'overlapping' is the better description for those periods in Israel's history when more than one appointed regent held claim to the throne at the same time.

<sup>5</sup>The Egyptian King Shishak, who harbored the rebellious Jeroboam in the time of Solomon was Sheshonq I of Libyan origin (I Kings 11:40). He was the first king of the Twenty-second Dynasty. Later, he invaded Palestine and took treasure from Jerusalem in the time of Rehoboam (I Kings 14:25-26; II Chronicles 12:2-9). He also invaded the Northern Kingdom despite his previous friendship for Jeroboam. A part of Shishak's stela has been excavated at Megiddo, proving that he actually did take and occupy this important city, as recounted in his Karnak inscription, cf., James Henry Breasted, *Ancient Records Of Egypt* Volume IV, (Referred to as ARE from here) (New York: Russell & Russell, 1962), pp. 344-361.

<sup>6</sup>Following the format of Hebrew chronology as detailed in the conclusion, it is evident that the year of Jeroboam's appointment by Abijah, attained by subtracting the king's total reign from his death year, cannot be established until the beginning of Nadab's, his successor's, reign is determined. The reason for this is that Nadab's reign is referenced to the second year of Asa of Judah, and one must first establish the beginning of the reign of Asa before proceeding to the kings of Israel. Although scholars, wearied by this seemingly circuitous and complicated method of Hebrew reckoning, have traditionally given up on the homework required to chart it, it is this very methodology that assures the accuracy of the Hebrew chronology of Kings and Chronicles. Since that homework is detailed in the concluding chapter, the format of this chapter follows a less complicated design by listing the kings in chronological sequence by kingdom. This can only be done with accuracy, however, because of the former detailed analysis reflected in the concluding chapter. In terms of means and ends, therefore, the content and design of this chapter is the *end* result of the proper *means* applied in the concluding chapter. There is no short cut that avoids the tedious process that leads to this end, an accurate and harmonious chronology of the Hebrew kings.

<sup>7</sup>The requirement for subtraction when cross-referencing is no doubt clear by now, particularly to the reader who has struggled through the concluding chapter. It is verified precisely by such verses as I Kings 15:33 which states, "In the third year of Asa king of Judah began Baasha the son of Ahijah to reign over all Israel in Tirzah, twenty and four years." Since Nadab's reign is referenced to the *second* year of Asa king of Judah in I Kings 15:25, "Nadab the son of Jeroboam began to reign over Israel in the second year of Asa king of Judah, and reigned over Israel two years."

<sup>8</sup>The accuracy of the Hebrew method of reckoning is affirmed when charting the kings of Israel in this fashion. Nadab is referenced to Asa's second year and is said to have reigned two years. Baasha is referenced to Asa's third year. Scholars have declared such a mathematical arrangement to be nonsense. When the text is approached with no understanding of what we have termed non-accession year reckoning and its resultant necessity for subtraction when cross-referencing, does the chronology become confusing and irreconcilable from the very beginning. With such an understanding, the years and their cross-references to the opposite kingdom accumulate in an orderly and mathematically sensible manner. When the propriety of non-accession-year reckoning has been overlooked or misunderstood by students of the Old Testament as it applies to Hebrew chronology, it has resulted in the creation of fictitious and unjustifiable co-regencies or interregna in frantic attempts to force a reconciliation of the numbers. When the rules are employed in a consistent and disciplined manner, the years progress harmoniously.

<sup>9</sup>The initial contact between Israel and Assyria evidently occurred during the time of King Omri, the founder of a new dynasty and a strategic new site for a capital-- Samaria. From Omri's day, Israel appears in cuneiform records as *Bit-Humri* ('House of Omri'). Daniel David Luckenbill, *Ancient Records of Assyria and Babylonia* (Referred to as *ARAB* from here) (New York: Greenwood Press, Publishers, 1968), Volume I, sec. 815, p. 292. The designation of an Israelite king became *mar-Humri* ('son', i.e., 'royal successor of Omri'), *ARAB*, Vol. I, sec. 590, p. 211. The reference to the land of Israel over a century later by Tiglath-pileser III and Sargon II as *Bit-Humria* (Omri's Land) evidences the significance of Omri as a ruler in the history of Israel, *ARAB*, Vol. I, sec. 815, 816, pp. 292, 293, and *ARAB*, Vol. II, sec. 80, 92, 99, 118, pp. 40, 46, 51, 61.

Also the famous Moabite Stone set up by King Mesha of Moab at Dibon (modern Diban), north of the Arnon, after 868 B.C., discovered in 1868, discloses that it was Omri who gained control of northern Moab, occupying its cities and exacting a heavy tribute. The inscribed stele which is archaeologically of great importance reads:

"I am Mesha, son of Chemosh--[...], king of Moab, the Dibonite...Omri, king of Israel,... oppressed Moab many days because Chemosh was angry with his land. And his own son succeeded him, and he also said, I will oppress Moab.... Now Omri annexed all the land of Madeba, and Israel occupied it, his days and half his son's days, forty years, and Chemosh restored it in my days." This is a translation by Merrill F. Unger, *Archaeology And The Old Testament* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan Publishing House, 1977), p. 242. Cf., James B. Pritchard, ed., *Ancient Near Eastern Texts: Relating to the Old Testament* (referred to as *ANET* from here) (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1969), pp. 320-321, for the complete inscription on the Moabite Stone. Also compare the Biblical text of II Kings 3:4-5.

<sup>10</sup>G. A. Reisner, C.S. Fisher, and D. G. Lyon *Harvard Excavation at Samaria 1908-1910* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1924).

<sup>11</sup>The chronological problem of the apparent claim of Shalmaneser III regarding his exaction of tribute from Ahab on the Monolith Inscription will be discussed in chapter seven.

<sup>12</sup>This is a significant point in the chronology of the Hebrew kings. Since both the kings of Israel and Judah lost their lives simultaneously at the hand of Jehu, the time from Solomon's death until this event must be equal for the monarchs of both kingdoms. Conventional methods of reckoning have indicated that they are not equal, and this has been a major factor in discrediting the validity of the numbers in the books of Kings. This study will show that they are, in fact, equal and that

### Chapter III - Notes

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the Hebrew record has accurately recorded the chronology and the history.

<sup>13</sup>The famous Black Obelisk of Shalmaneser III records the annals of the king's military achievements from the year of accession to the thirty-first year. In addition to this inscription there are twenty small reliefs, with annotations, depicting the payment of the tribute of five conquered regions. In the second row of reliefs on the front of the obelisk is Jehu of Israel, kneeling before Shalmaneser. The inscription reads: "Tribute of Jaua [Jehu], son of Omri (*mar Humri*). Silver, gold, a golden bowl, a golden beaker, golden goblets, pitchers of gold, lead, staves for the hand of the king, javelins, I received from him." *ARAB*, Vol. I, sec. 590, p. 211. From a fragment of the annals, giving the events of the king's eighteenth year, there is another reference to Jehu-- "At that time I received the tribute of the men of Tyre, Sidon and of Jehu, son of Omri." *ARAB*, Vol. I, sec. 672, p. 243.

<sup>14</sup>The indication that the text should read twentieth year vs. twenty-third year is discussed in the concluding chapter.

<sup>15</sup>The name of King Joash of Israel has been discovered on an important inscribed stele of Adad-nirai III during the excavations at Tell al Rimah in northern Iraq in 1967. The Assyrian king records that in the first year of his reign, "He received the tribute of Ia'asu (Joash) the Samaritan, of the Tyrian (ruler) and of the Sidonian (ruler)." Stephanie Page, "A Stele of Ada-Nirari III and Nergal-Eresh from Tell al-Rimah," *Iraq*, 30 (1968), p. 143.

<sup>16</sup>The excavations at Samaria have confirmed the splendor of the Israelite capital in the eighth century B.C. King Jeroboam II refortified the city with a double wall, reaching to as much as thirty-three feet in width in exposed sections, comprising fortifications so substantial that it took the Assyrian army three years to capture the city [II Kings 17:5; See J. W. Crowfoot, Kathleen M. Kenyon, and E. L. Sukenik, Volume 1, *The Buildings* (London: Palestine Exploration Fund, 1942).] The more splendid palace, built of limestone and boasting a strong rectangular tower and an extensive outer court, which has hitherto been assigned to Ahab, almost certainly belongs to Jeroboam II. The inscription on the jasper seal 'Shema, servant of Jeroboam' discovered at Megiddo is to be identified with Jeroboam II. The lifelike and magnificently executed lion, which appears on it, furnishes evidence of the efflorescence of art at this time.

In addition to archaeology, Amos' prophecies shed light on the time period. Jeroboam's reign saw vastly increased commerce and wealth together with consequent luxury and moral decline. Tribute from a greatly augmented territory flowed into the coffers of Samaria and created a very wealthy class, consisting largely of the ruling strata and court favorites. Glaring social and economic inequalities were fostered by the selfish and unscrupulous conduct of the rich (Amos 2:6; 8:6).

Simple dwellings of unburned brick gave way to 'houses of hewn stone', and the decorations of King Ahab's palace of ivory were initiated by many of the wealthy of the land (Amos 3:15; 5:11; I Kings 22:39). Luxurious feasts were the order of the day (Amos 6:4-6). The religion of Israel degenerated into mere ritualism, devoid of righteousness and morality (Amos 4:4; 5:5; 8:14).

As a result, the dynasty of Jeroboam II was to be visited with the Assyrian sword (Amos 7:9) and the people were to be carried into captivity (Amos 5:27).

It should be pointed out that during the rule of Jeroboam II, the Assyrian monarchs were weak rulers who were preoccupied with problems at home and, therefore, offered no peril to the Northern Kingdom.

<sup>17</sup>Josephus, *Antiquities* IX.x.1.-- 'In the fifteenth year of the reign of Amaziah, Jeroboam the son of Joash reigned over Israel in Samaria forty years.'

<sup>18</sup>The annals texts below probably belong to the Assyrian ruler whom the Bible calls 'Pul' (II Kings 15:19-20), or Ashur-dan III whom Tiglath-pileser claims to be his father. However, the identification of these texts with Tiglath-pileser is spurious. This chronological problem will be dealt with in chapter six. A fragmentary portion of an annals text from the reign of Tiglath-pileser III refers to Menahem of Israel-- "...the cities of ... --nite, Gaba'za(?), Abilakka, which are on the border of

Bit Humria (House of Omri, Izrael) ... the wide land of Naphtali, in its entirety, I brought within the border of Assyria. My official I set over them as governor. ... As for Menahem(?), terror overwhelmed him, like a bird, alone he fled and submitted to me. To his place I brought him back and ... silver, colored (woolen) garments ... great ... I received (as his tribute). *ARAB*, Vol. I, sec. 815, pp. 292-293. (Cf., I Kings 15:19-20).

Another reference to King Menahem of Israel is found in the annals of Tiglath-pileser which were engraved upon the slabs of the rebuilt central palace of Calah (Nimrud). The inscription reads: "The tribute of ... Rasunnu (Rezin) of Aram, Menihimmu (Menahem) of Samerina (Samaria), Hirammu (Hiram) of Tyre, ..., I received." *ARAB*, Vol. I, sec. 772, p. 276.

<sup>19</sup>In the Assyrian Eponym List for the years 733-732 of Assur-daninani and Nabu-bel-usur, punitive military action is maintained 'Against the land of Damascus'. See Appendix A. In the annals of Tiglath-pileser III, there is reference to this campaign against Damascus and the Syrian King Rezin-- "Hadaru, the father's house of Resin of Aram (Syria) [where] he was born, I besieged, I captured. 800 people, together with their possessions ... their cattle, their sheep, I carried off." The city of Damascus fell in 732 B.C. and 591 towns of "sixteen districts of Aram," the Assyrian monarch says, "I destroyed like mounds left by a flood" (Cf., *ARAB*, Vol. I, sec. 777, p. 279; II Kings 16:9; Isaiah 7:1-4). The death of Rezin, the last of the Aramaean kings, who ruled Damascus for almost two centuries, was reported on a tablet of Tiglath-pileser III found and read by one of the early pioneers in Assyriology, Sir Henry Rawlinson. Unfortunately, this important document was lost without leaving a trace of its fate, when it was left behind in Asia. (Cf., Eberhard Schrader, *The Cuneiform Inscriptions and the Old Testament* Volume 1 (London: William and Norgate, 1888), p. 257.

<sup>20</sup>On another fragmentary annals text of Tiglath-pileser III, there is a reference to the last two kings of Israel-- Pekah and Hoshea-- "The land of Bit-Humria (House of Omri, i.e., Israel) ... all of its people, together with their goods I carried off to Assyria. Pakaha, (Pekah) their king they deposed and I placed Ausi' (Hoshea) over them as king. 10 talents of gold, X talents of silver, as their tribute I received from them and to Assyria I carried them" (*ARAB*, Vol. I, sec. 816, p. 293; II Kings 15:29-30).

<sup>21</sup>With the death of Tiglath-pileser, his son-- Shalmaneser V, plays his part in the final overthrow of Samaria during the reign of Hoshea (II Kings 17:3-6; II Kings 18:9-11). It appears that during the siege, Shalmaneser V evidently died; for Sargon II, who assumed the ancient and venerable name of Sargon (Sargon of Agade was the founder of a great Semitic empire in Babylonia), claims to have taken the city and to have deported 27,270 people, settling them in the eastern provinces of his empire.

Sargon II is one of the best known of the Assyrian emperors. This is the result of the discovery of Sargon's palace at Khorsabad by Paul Emile Botta, the French consular agent at Mosul, in 1843 and by explorations at the site by the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago. In one of the Khorsabad texts, the monarch lists the fall of Samaria as the outstanding event of the first year of his reign-- "[At the beginning of my rule, in my first year of reign]... Samerina (the people of Samaria) ... 27,290 people who lived therein, I carried away ..." *ARAB*, Vol. II, sec. 4, p. 2.

<sup>22</sup>Sargon's capture of Samaria is also mentioned on the Display Inscription from the palace at Khorsabad-- "I besieged and captured Samaria, carrying off 27,290 of the people who dwelt therein. 50 chariots I gathered from among them, I caused others to take their (the deported inhabitants') portion, I set my officers over them and imposed upon them the tribute of the former king" *ARAB*, Vol. II, sec. 55, p. 26.

It is of interest to note that in the Biblical text (II Kings 18:9-12) of the fall of Samaria that Shalmaneser, the king of Assyria "came up against Samaria," verse 9, and that "at the end of three years they took it," verse 10. It is believed that the word 'they' refers to both the efforts of Shalmaneser and Sargon. Then, the reference to "the king of Assyria," verse 11, would refer to Sargon as shown by his annals. It is quite possible that Samaria fell to Shalmaneser before Sargon became 'the king of Assyria'. The Assyrian Eponym for 723 B.C. reads - "Shalmaneser king of Assyria against [Samaria]." The Assyrian Eponym List gives three years of military action against Samaria-- 725

### Chapter III - Notes

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B.C. to 723 B.C. It appears from the Assyrian List that Samaria fell in 723 B.C. *ARAB*, Vol. 2, sec. 1195, p. 437, or see Appendix A. The Assyrian Eponym List at this point is not definitive, for the record is unfortunately badly mutilated. It merely retains the word 'against' for the eponymies of Mahde, Assur-ishmeani, and Shalmaneser in the years 725, 724 and 723. The name of the location is completely missing against which the campaign for those three years was directed. However, the coincidence of these three years with the three years in the Biblical account of the siege of Samaria by Shalmaneser would seem to justify the supplying of the word 'Samaria' to the Eponym Chronicle.

The capture of Samaria by Shalmaneser seems to be confirmed by the testimony of the Babylonian Chronicle 1,i.27-28, where the only citation given concerning the reign of Shalmaneser is his destruction of the city of Sha-ma-ba-ra-in, which Franz Delitzsch identified to be Samaria. The Chronicle records: "On the twenty-fifth day of the month Tebet Shalmaneser (V) ascended the throne in Assyria and Akkad. He ravaged *Samaria*." A. K. Grayson, "Assyrian And Babylonian Chronicles" (Referred to as *ABC* from here) A. Leo Oppenheim, *et al.*, ed., *Texts From Cuneiform Sources*, Volume 5 (Locust Valley, New York: J. J. Augustin Publisher, 1975), p. 73. It should be noted that Hayim Tadmor came to the conclusion also that the word is Samaria.

See Hayim Tadmor, "The Campaigns of Sargon II of Assur: A Chronological-Historical Study," *Journal of Cuneiform Studies* 12 (1958), p. 39f. Sargon II calls himself "conqueror of Samaria and the whole land of Bit-Humria (Omri-land)" *ARAB*, Vol. II, sec. 99, p. 51. It is interesting to note that 'House of Omri' became standard Assyrian nomenclature for Samaria for a century or more after Omri's death, eloquent testimony to the prestige he enjoyed and brought to his nation.

<sup>23</sup>The gold-masked body of Shishak was discovered in his intact burial chamber at Tanis in 1938-1939. His triumphal inscription-- the great Karnak relief-- contains a long list of Shishak's conquests, which include towns in all parts of Judah and extend up the coastal plain, across the Plain of Esdraelon into Gilead, showing that he invaded the Northern Kingdom as well, in spite of his previous friendship for Jeroboam (I Kings 11:40). *Cf.*, James Henry Breasted, *ARE* Vol. IV, pp. 344-361.

<sup>24</sup>Syria was the strongest power in the region when Asa of Judah appealed there for help against Baasha of Israel, who was pushing his frontier southward to within five miles of Jerusalem. Baasha proceeded to fortify Ramah as a border fortress commanding the capital of Judah (I Kings 15:17). In desperation, King Asa sent what was left of the Temple and royal treasure plundered so recently by Shishak to Ben-hadad as a bribe to lure Syria into an alliance with himself against Israel.

<sup>25</sup>The LXX in III Kings 15:10 states that "he reigned forty-one years in Jerusalem," while the LXX in II Paralipomenon 16:12 reads: "Asa ... died in the fortieth year of his reign."

<sup>26</sup>Josephus also mentions the length of his reign: "When he had reigned forty and one years," *Antiquities* VIII.xii.6.

<sup>27</sup>For a discussion of the seeming discrepancy between II Kings 8:25 which dates Ahaziah's accession in the twelfth year of Jehoram and II Kings 9:29 which places it in Jehoram's eleventh year, refer to the concluding chapter.

<sup>28</sup>It is sometime during the end of the co-regency between Uzziah (Azariah) and Jotham that Judah is confronted by the westward advance of Tiglath-pileser [Ashur-dan III]. The Assyrian peril caused Menahem of Israel and Rezin of Damascus to eventually pay tribute. These two kings called for a new Syrian-Palestinian coalition to stem the tide. The natural leader of such an alliance was Judah under Azariah, who headed by far the strongest and most influential state in Syria-Palestine at the time. The Assyrian king makes clear reference in his annals to *Azriyau of Yaudu* in connection with what is obviously such a coalition: "[In] the course of my campaign, I received the tribute of the kings of the seacoast (Mediterranean)... Azariah of Judah, ... -- 19 districts of Hamath, together with the cities of their environs, which (lie) on the shore of the sea of the setting sun, which had gone over to Azariah, in revolt (*lit.*, sin) and contempt of Assyria, I brought within the border of

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Assyria. My officials I set over them as governors." *ARAB*, Vol. I, sec. 770, pp. 274-275.

<sup>29</sup>In an annals inscription of Tiglath-pileser, there is the recording of the payment of tribute by various vassal states of Syria-Palestine, including the kings of Hamath, Arvad, Moab, Gaza, Ashkelon, Edom and others as well as 'Jauhazi [Jehoahaz, i.e., Ahaz] of Yaudu': "The tribute of ... Jauhazi (Jehoahaz) of Judah, ... -- gold, silver, lead, iron, tin, brightly colored (woolen) garments, linen, the purple garments of their land(s), ... all kinds of costly things, the products of the sea and the dry land, the commodities of their land, the royal treasure, horses, mules, broken to the yoke, ... [I received]." *ARAB*, Vol. I, sec. 801, pp. 287-288. (*Cf.*, II Kings 16:5-9).

<sup>30</sup>There is reference to Manasseh of Judah on one of the inscription prisms commemorating the rebuilding of the royal palace at Nineveh by King Esarhaddon. The reference illuminates the account of Manasseh's being carried away captive to Babylon, his repentance and subsequent restoration to his throne according to II Chronicles 33:10-13. On the Senjirli Stele of Esarhaddon, Baalu, King of Tyre, is shown lifting manacled hands in supplication to Assyria and beside him Tirhakah, king of Ethiopia, is portrayed with a hook through his lips and tied by a rope to Esarhaddon's hands. Archaeology has confirmed the Chronicler's account of Manasseh's Babylonian captivity in the annals of Esarhaddon, *ARAB*, Vol. II, sec. 690, p. 265.

The royal palace inscriptions of King Esarhaddon do speak of the compulsory visit of Manasseh to the great Assyrian capital, Nineveh: "[At that time the older palace of Nineveh, [which the kings who went before, my fathers, had built, ... had come (to seem) too small for me ... and the people of the lands my arms (*lit.*, bow) had despoiled, I made to carry the basket and headpad and they made bricks. That small palace I tore down in its totality .... And I summoned the kings of the Hittite-land (Syria) and (those) across the sea-- Ba'lu, king of Tyre, Manasseh, king of Judah, Kaushgabri, king of Edom, Musurri, king of Moab, Sili-Bel, king of Gaza, Metinti, king of Ashkelon, Ikusu, king of Ekron, Milki-ashapa, king of Gebail (Byblos), ... a grand total of 22 kings of the Hittite-land (Syria), the sea-coast and the (islands) in the midst of the sea, all of them. I gave them their orders and great beams...." *ARAB*, Vol. II, sec. 690, pp. 265-266.

Manasseh's captivity in Babylon was once commonly regarded as a mistake on the part of the Chronicler for Nineveh. But Esarhaddon's inscriptions prove that he did in fact rebuild the ancient city of Babylon destroyed by his father, Sennacherib: "I summoned all of my artisans and the people of Karduniash (Babylonia) in their totality. I made them carry the basket and laid the headpad upon them. ...I laid its foundation walls. I raised the headpad to my own head and carried it. ... Babylon the city ... I built anew, I enlarged, I raised aloft, I made magnificent." *ARAB*, Vol. II, sec. 646, p. 244.

It was at the beginning of his reign that Esarhaddon accomplished the splendid achievement of the rebuilding of Babylon. It is not likely that the Assyrian monarch would have allowed Manasseh and the other kings, whom he summoned to Nineveh, to return to their countries without seeing his magnificent evidence of his glory.

<sup>31</sup>At one time, historians were perplexed as to why Josiah advanced 'against' Necho when the Pharaoh was on his way to fight Assyria, the ancient enemy of the Hebrews. Since the publication of 'The Babylonian Chronicles' by C. J. Gadd in 1923, new light has solved the whole situation. The Chronicle shows that Pharaoh-necho did not advance against the Assyrian at all, but went to his aid.

King Josiah, not wishing any aid to reach the hard-pressed Assyrians, went to Megiddo to stop Necho, but was killed by the Egyptian. Later, Necho was overwhelmingly defeated when he eventually clashed with Nebuchadnezzar at Carchemish on the Euphrates. (*Cf.*, II Kings 23:29).

The 'Fall of Nineveh Chronicle' of the Babylonian Chronicles (Chronicle 3) states:

66 The seventeenth year (of Nabopolassar): In the month Tammuz Ashur-uballit (II), king of Assyria, the large army of Egypt [...]

67 crossed the river (Euphrates) and marched against Harran to conquer (it). [...] they [capture]d (it).'

This event, no doubt, occurred after the death of good King Josiah. [A. K. Grayson, *ABC*, Vol. 5, p. 96].

<sup>32</sup>During the reign of Jehoiakim, King Nebuchadnezzar made his first appearance in Hattu.

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According to Chronicle 5: 15-20 (Obverse) of the Babylonian Chronicles, 'all the kings of Hattu (Syro-Palestine) came into his presence' during his first year of reign:

- 15 The first year of Nebuchadnezzar (II): In the month Sivan he mustered his army and
- 16 marched to Hattu. Until the month Kislev he marched about victoriously in Hattu.
- 17 All the kings of Hattu came into his presence and he received their vast tribute.

Grayson, *ABC*, Vol. 5, p. 100.

<sup>33</sup>With King Jehoiakim's death, Jehoiachin, his son, succeeded to the Davidic throne. His reign in Jerusalem lasted only three months when he was carried away captive to Babylon. After being a political prisoner for thirty-seven years, the king of Judah was released by Nebuchadnezzar's successor, Evil-merodach, who gave him a daily allowance of food for the rest of his life (*cf.*, II Kings 25:27-30).

This interesting fact of Biblical history has been singularly confirmed by Babylonian records which list *Yaukin of the land of Yahud*, *i.e.*, Jehoiachin of the land of Judah, as one of the recipients of the royal rations.

(text Babylon 28122, obverse 29-33)

... to [?] *Yaukin*, king ...

to the *qiputu*-house of ...

... for Shalamiamu, the ...

... for 126 men from Tyre ...

... for Zabiria, the Ly[dian] ...

(text Babylon 28178, obverse ii 38-40)

10(*sila* of oil) to *laukin*, king of la[...]

2 1/2 *sila* of (oil) to [...so]ns of the king of Judah

(*la - a - hu - du*)

4 *sila* to 8 men from Judah (*la - a - hu - da - a - a*) ...

(text Babylon 28186, reverse ii 13-18)

1 1/2 *sila* (oil) for 3 carpenters from Arvad, 1/2 *sila* each

11 1/2 *sila* for 8 ditto from Byblos, 1 *sila* each ...

3 1/2 *sila* for 7 ditto, Greeks, 1/2 *sila* each

1/2 *sila* to *Nabuetir* the carpenter

10 (*sila*) to *lakuukinu*, the son of the king of *lakudu*

(*i.e.*, Judah)

2 1/2 *sila* for the 5 sons of the king of Judah (*lakudu*)

through Qanaa [...]

*ANET*, p. 308.

<sup>34</sup>In Chronicle 5.11-13 (Reverse) of the Babylonian Chronicles, the capture of Jerusalem ('the city of Judah') is the highlight of the entry for the seventh year of the reign of Nebuchadnezzar II:

- 11 The seventh year: In the month Kislev the king of Akkad mustered his army and marched to Hattu.
- 12 He encamped against the city of Judah and on the second day of the month Adar he captured the city (and) seized (its) king.
- 13 A king of his own choice he appointed in the city (and) taking the vast tribute he brought it into Babylon.

Grayson, *ABC*, Vol. 5, p. 102. (*Cf.*, II Kings 24:3-17).

## **Chapter IV - ASSYRIAN EPONYM LISTS**

With the completion of the former chapter, it might appear that the chronology of the Hebrew kings has been established once and for all, and no further discussion is necessary. However, unless the proposed dates are compatible with parallel secular histories and with the rest of the Biblical text, no serious historian can be satisfied that the issue is laid to rest. Therefore, the synchronization of the computer calendar chronology of the Hebrew kings with secular history and Biblical data is the subject of this chapter and those that remain. In this chapter, the emphasis will be placed upon synchronization with the chronology of the Hebrew kings and, in particular, with the Assyrian Eponym Canon.

### **I. Comparing Scientifically Tested Chronology With Others**

Several points of variance of the computer calendar with commonly accepted dates are apparent in the chronology charted in Illustrations VII and VIII. The first three dates pose little problem. They are listed below.

#### **A. Minor Variance Between Computer-Tested Chronology And Others**

##### **1. 723 B.C.-- The Date For The Fall Of Samaria**

The first minor variance is 723 B.C. as the date for the fall of Samaria. While many texts of scholars place it in the years 722/721 B.C., few would insist on either of these as any more than approximations. Since the claim of Sargon II in the Assyrian record is that he took Samaria, and because his accession year is considered to be 722 B.C. or 721 B.C., some scholars have come to view the date of Samaria's fall as being 722/721 B.C. Thiele, in his chronology, places the final year of Hoshea and the fall of Samaria in 723 B.C.<sup>1</sup> Since the chronology of Israel's kings accumulate with little textual difficulty, there is no anticipated quarrel with 723 B.C. as the correct date for the end of the Northern Kingdom.

##### **2. 588 B.C.-- The Date For The Fall Of Jerusalem**

Similarly, most texts indicate a date of 587 B.C. for the fall of Jerusalem (Thiele suggests 586 B.C.)<sup>2</sup> but none are based on astronomical evaluation and verification of a computer calendar as presented in this study. Since the 587/86 B.C. indications are normally identified as approximations, then the 588 B.C. date should be readily acceptable to serious students of Biblical and contemporary histories as being accurate. An additional reason for accepting the date of 588 B.C. for the fall of Jerusalem is the verification by the monitor cycles of the computer calendar given in chapter two. This date will be discussed and supported by more evidence in chapter nine under cyclical phenomena, in chapter eight which deals with the Canon of Ptolemy, and in chapter ten, the anchor dates chapter.

### 3. 945 B.C.-- The Date For The Division Of The Kingdom

Likewise, the third variation requires no extensive comment. It concerns the date of Solomon's death and the beginning of the Divided Kingdom as being 945 B.C. Most chronologies place this event either in the vicinity of 931 B.C. as Thiele does or 922 B.C. as William F. Albright does,<sup>3</sup> and judiciously remind the reader that this date also is an approximation. The figure of ca. 922 B.C. is arrived at by starting with the figure of ca. 587 B.C. and attempting to work backwards through the Hebrew kings with an occasional stop along the way to establish a general synchronization with parallel accounts.

Thiele's date of 931/930 B.C. is arrived at by starting with several 'anchor dates'. He writes:

An exact synchronism between Hebrew and Assyrian history is made possible in the early period of the kings by an interesting correlation of events in Israel and Assyria that begins and ends the twelve-year period of 853 to 841 B.C. ... Ahab is listed by Shalmaneser III as one of the kings of the Westland who fought against him in the battle of Qarqar, ... this battle was fought in the year 853. ... Shalmaneser also mentions that he received tribute from Jehu during his expedition to the west in his eighteenth year. This would be in the eponymy of Adad-rimani (841). ...

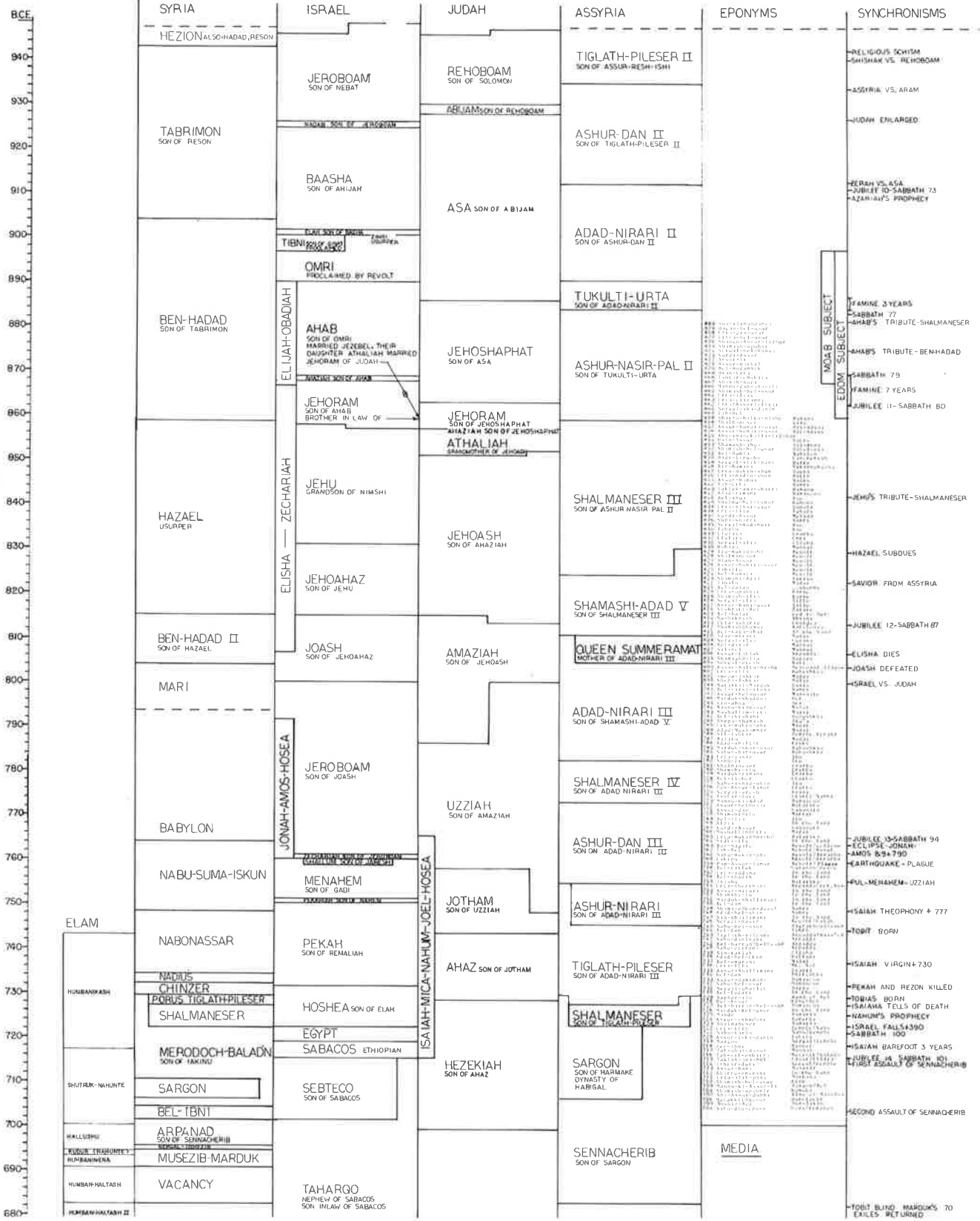
Having established these two dates as a starting point for an absolute chronology of the Hebrew kings, we should be able to go backward and forward, knowing that if our chronology pattern is correct, we will obtain exact synchronisms at all points of contact with any absolute chronology of neighboring states. ...

With an interval of 78 years between the accession of Jeroboam I and the death of Ahab, and with the latter taking place in 853 B.C., we thus secure the date 931/930 B.C. as the year of Jeroboam's accession and the schism between Judah and Israel. ...

A solid synchronism between Judah and Assyria at which our pattern of Hebrew dates could begin is 701 B.C. That is a definitely fixed date in Assyrian history and is the year in which Sennacherib in his third campaign "went against the Hitte-land" (Aram) and shut up "Hezekiah the Jew ...." That took place in the fourteenth year of Hezekiah (2 Kings 18:13), that is, in the year 701. The regnal data in Kings should enable us to work backward from 701 to 841 as the year when Athaliah began to reign in Judah and Jehu began to reign in Israel and to 853 as the year when Ahab was slain in battle and succeeded by Ahaziah.<sup>4</sup>

As demonstrated in the previous chapters, the mathematics of Hebrew chronology are ill-suited to such a pursuit of working backward. In fact it is an impossibility; for the Hebrew chronologists have designed their historical-chronological data to be completed by working forward from the division of the kingdom (945 B.C.) to the fall of Jerusalem (588 B.C.). The Bible gives its own chronological data for establishing the date for the division of the kingdom. But this data has been rejected by both Albright and Thiele who have searched the Assyrian records for a point of synchronization first. This approach by chronologists make the numbers of the Hebrew kings mysterious. Proper rules of procedure, computing dates in the forwards direction, and careful synchronization will reaffirm the date of 945 B.C. as being accurate for the end of the United Kingdom. The date of 945 B.C. for the division of the kingdom has been discussed in chapters two, three and in the closing chapter. It will also be referred to in chapters nine and ten with more supporting evidence.

# ILLUSTRATION VIII: THE KING CHART; 950 - 700 B.C.



### **B. Major Variance Between Computer Tested Chronology And Others**

The fourth and final variation requires further investigation. This is the issue of the date of the fourteenth year of Hezekiah and the third year of Sennacherib. Chapter five has been devoted to a thorough discussion of this subject. Thiele insists that both dates must be the same, and that they are the year 701 B.C.<sup>5</sup> While Thiele assumes that the account in II Kings 18-19 and the record of Sennacherib are parallel, one could put the issue aside, claiming his opinion to be unfounded. Without researching the issue, such an approach is unworthy of accurate Biblical chronology. This chapter will present the synchronization data that supports the chronology of Illustrations VIII and IX. This data will indicate the third year of Sennacherib to be 702 B.C. according to the computer calendar reconstruction of Assyrian chronology, not 701 B.C. as Thiele suggests, and the fourteenth of Hezekiah to be 715 B.C. according to the computer reconstruction of Hebrew chronology.

Illustrations VIII and IX are time-tables that chart the Hebrew and secular histories of the era in parallel columns by yearly increments. This synchronization of both Biblical and secular history maintains the integrity of both and finds them absolutely compatible. The reader is encouraged to refer to these charts throughout the remaining chapters, and to use them as background for whatever individual research and investigation they may stimulate.

## **II. Synchronizing The Records Of Assyria**

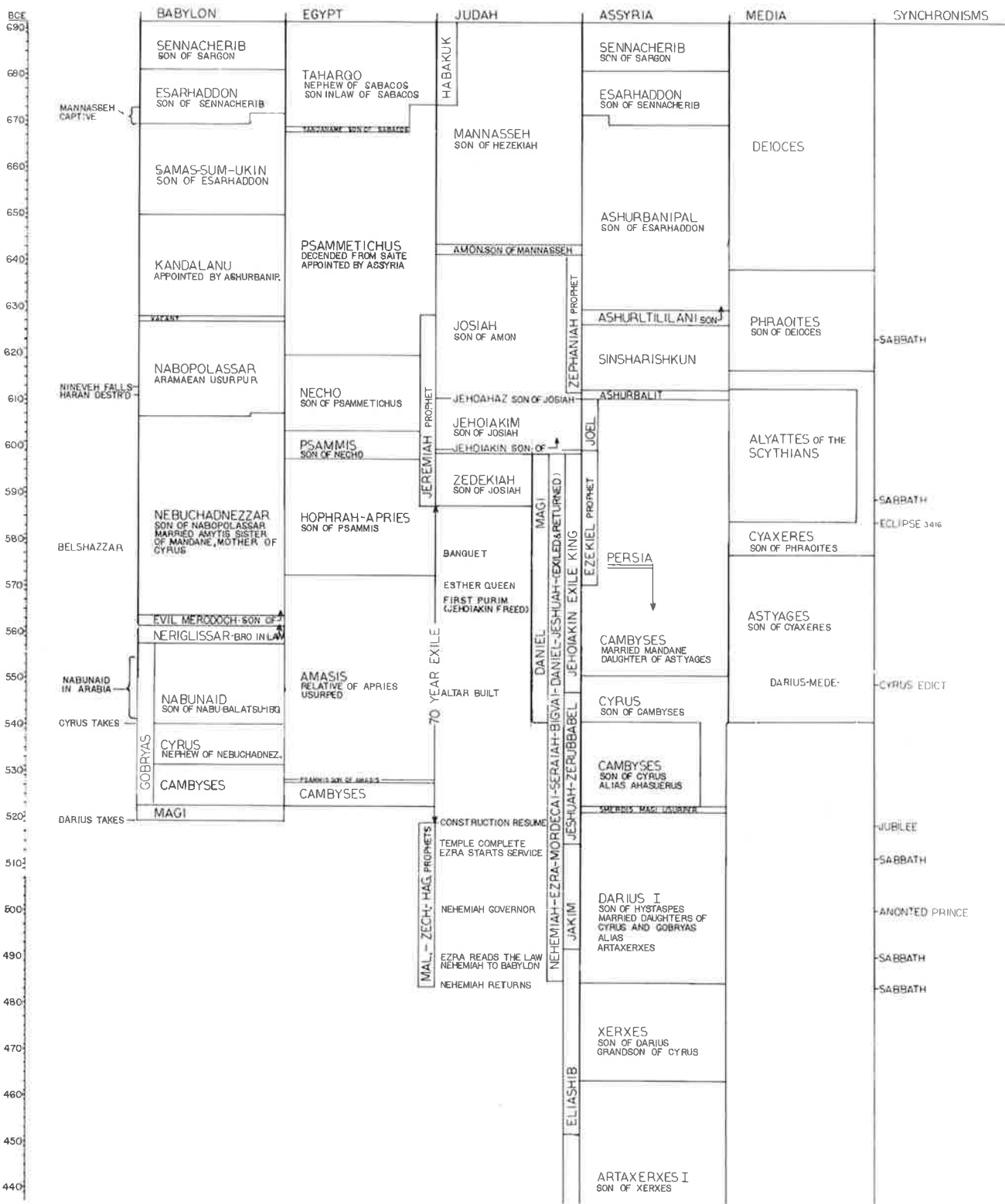
### **A. Examining The Assyrian Eponym Canon**

The Assyrian Eponym Canon is invaluable for historical research. It has been referred to because of its indispensable role in establishing the chronology of eighth century B.C. history.

The Eponym or *Limmu*<sup>6</sup> Lists were established in the kingdoms of the Near East as a means whereby years and events were recorded chronologically. The years were individually named for significant persons in the government. The person is the 'eponym' for his ascribed year. Lists of eponyms were maintained in chronological order, and following the name were listed an event or events that occurred during that particular eponymous year. Upon the occasion of a regnal change in Assyria, the scribe would place a line under the name of the previous eponym indicating that the information which followed was designated under a new monarch.

These lists are invaluable in the process of reconciling the activities of contemporary nations with those listed in the eponymy. The Assyrians pursued this eponymous practice more aggressively than any other Near Eastern kingdom as current archaeological evidence would indicate. The list of Assyrian eponyms for the years 859 B.C. through 703 B.C. is the most complete consecutive list discovered to date. Since this period of Assyrian history parallels that of the Hebrews from the appointment of Jehu in 857 B.C. through most of the reign of Hezekiah which ended in 699 B.C., the value of the Assyrian Eponym Canon for historical research and synchronization is obvious. The eponyms of 879-704 B.C. and their activities are in fine print on the chart at Illustration VIII. For a more legible transcription, the reader may want to consult the work by Daniel David

### ILLUSTRATION IX: THE KING CHART; 690 - 460 B.C.



Luckenbill, *Ancient Records of Assyria and Babylonia* (New York: Greenwood Press Publishers, 1968) Volume II, sec. 1197-1198, pp. 430-438. For the reader who may be unable to obtain Luckenbill's works, the Assyrian Eponym Canon has been placed in Appendix A of this volume.

Note that the Assyrian Eponym List in Appendix A is based on the list from Luckenbill. From 783 B.C.--648 B.C. the dates are the same. Nabu-shar-usur has been transferred from 784 B.C. to 786 B.C. where he occupies the same eponym year with Balatu, thus reducing each eponym before 786 B.C. by one year through 1029 B.C. It is now generally accepted that Tiglath-pileser II should have only thirty-two eponyms to agree with the Assyrian King List rather than thirty-three as the Assyrian Eponym Canon states. Luckenbill has already made this change in his work regarding the reign of Tiglath-pileser II. Also the four Assyrian Eponym Lists give the Assyrian King Tukulti-urta II six eponyms instead of seven years according to the Assyrian King List. An extra eponym-- Naidi-ili-- has been found in the king's annals. In Appendix A, it has been placed with Iari for the year 884 B.C. Luckenbill has omitted it.

Of more interest to the Biblical historian than the name of the eponym is the country or area into which an assault or excursion was made, which is contained in the activity statement following the eponyms of 859 B.C. to 703 B.C. Sometimes, these areas are identified by their ancient names such as: Hatte, Hatti, Hattu, Hatarika. These terms are derived from the word 'Hittite'. They are used in the Assyrian records to refer to the Syro-Palestine area, an area once controlled by the Hittite Empire. Sometimes, the name of the area is readily identifiable, such as: Damascus, Philistia, or Samaria. At this point, a map of the Ancient Near East is a valuable asset. Much information is to be gained by noting the incursion and comparing it with Biblical history and chronology as recorded in the Hebrew text.

### **B. Comparing The Eponym Canon vs. The King List vs. The Inscriptions**

Another part of the process needs to be understood-- synchronization of Assyrian Records. The chronological value of the Eponym List for Assyrian history does not become apparent until it is placed alongside the Assyrian King List and royal records contained in inscriptions on monuments. This invaluable information provides the basis for synchronization of the kings with the activity assigned to a given eponymous year.

The chronologist's first task is to reconcile a specific eponym with a year of an Assyrian king. Here is how the process works: The eponym of Adad-rimani for the year 841 B.C. lists an incursion into Damascus.<sup>7</sup> The records of Shalmaneser III indicate that in his eighteenth year he fought Hazael of Aram (Syria) and exacted tribute from Jehu of Israel.<sup>8</sup> It would seem reasonable that the two accounts refer to the same event. Thus, the eponym Adad-rimani can tentatively be placed in the eighteenth year of Shalmaneser III, i.e., 841 B.C. The eponym seven years prior to Adad-rimani lists an incursion into Hatte in the year of Nergal-alik-pani in 848 B.C.<sup>9</sup> Shalmaneser in his eleventh year, gives the account of an incursion into the area of Hamath where he claims to have fought a coalition of twelve kings, in addition to Hadad-ezer of Damascus.<sup>10</sup> On the basis of this information,

Shalmaneser's eleventh year can be dated at 848 B.C. The records for Shalmaneser's fourteenth year tell of a second incursion into Hatti against the twelve kings.<sup>11</sup> The eponym for the corresponding year is Urta-nadin-shum in 845 B.C. and lists an incursion into Hatti<sup>12</sup> in Shalmaneser's fourteenth year. This is how synchronization works.

Unfortunately, the synchronization of Assyrian records is not always possible. There is a discrepancy in Shalmaneser's annals which will be discussed in detail in chapter seven. The discrepancy concerns an incursion into Hatti listed at the eponym Daian-assur (853 B.C.) in the Assyrian Eponym List and in the Monolith Inscription, which would correspond to the sixth year of Shalmaneser; but according to the Black Obelisk Inscription, Shalmaneser defeated and captured Ahuni and then descended against the land of Zamua in the eponymy of Daian-assur, the fourth year of Shalmaneser.<sup>13</sup>

### C. Matching The Eponym Canon With The King List

Points of synchronism within the Assyrian records allow for the preparation of an Assyrian King List showing the royal accession years and the duration of their reign for each monarch along with eponyms. The accession year of Shalmaneser III, based on these synchronisms, is 859 B.C. The following data<sup>14</sup> is the synchronization of the Assyrian King List with the Assyrian Eponym Canon--

#### ILLUSTRATION X: ASSYRIAN KING LIST SYNCHRONIZED WITH ASSYRIAN EPONYM

Assyrian king	Duration	Accession Year B.C.	Eponym
Shalmaneser II	12 years	1030	
Ashur-nirari IV	6 years	1018	
Ashur-rabi II	41 years	1012	
Ashur-resh-ishi II	5 years	971	
Tiglath-pileser II	32 years	966	
Ashur-dan II	23 years	934	
Adad-nirari II	21 years	911	
Tukulti-urta II	7 years [6]	890	
Ashur-nasir-pal II	25 years	884	
Shalmaneser III	35 years	859	Tab-bel
Shamash-adad V	13 years	824	Iahallu
Adad-nirari III	28 years	811	Shamash-kumua
Shalmaneser IV	10 years	783	Urta-nasir
Ashur-dan III	18 years	773	Mannu-ki-adad
ECLIPSE of June 15th		763	Bur-Sagale
Ashur-nirari V	10 years <sup>15</sup>	755	Ikishu
Tiglath-pileser III	18 years	745	Nabu-bel-user
Shalmaneser V	5 years	727	Bel-harran-bel-user
Sargon II	17 years	722	Urta-ilia
Sennacherib	24 years	705	Nashir-bel
Esarhaddon			

The duration of the reign of each Assyrian monarch from Shalmaneser II to Shalmaneser V is taken from the Assyrian King List [See Appendix C or *ANET* pp. 566]. The duration of the reigns of Sargon II and Sennacherib is known from the Assyrian Eponym Lists by the numbers of eponyms which occur during the rulership of each king. The length of Sargon's rule can also be known from the Babylonian Chronicles--Chronicle 1.ii.6.

While the Assyrian King List gives to Tukulti-urta II a length of seven years for his kingship, it is clear that the four Assyrian Eponym Lists only provide a six year reign. This is known by the number of eponyms between Tukulti-urta II and Ashur-nasir-pal II. That is why six is bracketed under 'duration'. Both Luckenbill<sup>16</sup> and Thiele<sup>17</sup> also follow the shorter chronology at this point. The eponym of Naidi-ili is used twice by Tukulti-urta II in his annals,<sup>18</sup> but is missing from the Assyrian Eponym Canon. Therefore, it seems that there are two eponyms for 884 B.C.-- Iari and Naidi-ili. It appears that one eponymous person died and was replaced during his year by another *limmu* name.

Perhaps a similar situation occurred during the reign of Adad-nirari III; one of the four Assyrian Eponym Lists contains an extra eponym. This would give Adad-nirari twenty-nine years instead of twenty-eight according to the Assyrian King List. Therefore, the eponymous name-- Nabu-shar-usur-- has been transferred from 784 B.C. to 786 B.C. where he occupies the same eponym year with Balatu, the extra eponym. Again, the shorter chronology is accepted. Similarly, Thiele has accepted it.<sup>19</sup>

There is also a conflict between the Assyrian Eponym Canon and the Assyrian King List regarding Tiglath-pileser II. The canon records thirty-three years while the list gives to the king thirty-two years. The shorter chronology is accepted by scholars such as Brinkman and Grayson.<sup>20</sup> As can be seen, the present research has accepted the shorter chronology completely.

The synchronization of the eponyms with the Assyrian kings and their chronological dates is verified by the eponymy of Bur-Sagale which indicates a solar eclipse during his eponymous year. That eclipse is astronomically verified to have occurred on June 15, 763 B.C. (Julian calendar).<sup>21</sup> The eponym (Bur-Sagale) of 763 B.C.<sup>22</sup> is 96 years after the eponymy of Tab-bel, the first year of Shalmaneser III. Both Tab-bel's eponymous year and the first year of Shalmaneser III are verified as 859 B.C.; the other accession years can be determined on the basis of this date by working forward and backwards. Beginning with 859 B.C. military activity and other major events are listed through 703 B.C. With this task completed, it now is possible to compare the records of the Assyrian kings to those of the Hebrew monarchs. The charts at Illustrations VIII and IX will become most helpful here.

### III. Chronology Of The Hebrew Kings vs. The Records Of Assyria

#### A. 1018 B.C.-- The Battle Of David vs. Shalmaneser II

The following historical documents dealing with the wars of David-- II Samuel 8, II Samuel 10:15ff. (Hebrew text), II Kings 10:15ff. (Septuagint), and Josephus (*Antiquities* VII.vi.3)-- indicate that David fought Shalmaneser II of Assyria the year that he captured Jerusalem in 1018 B.C. The Biblical text implies that this battle

took place after David's capture of Jerusalem (II Samuel 5:6-10; 8:1 ff.). I Chronicles 19:16 refers to Shalmaneser, the king of Assyria, 'from beyond the river', *i.e.*, the Euphrates; and the Septuagint (II Kings 10:15) provides the name of the king as 'Chalamak' *i.e.*, 'Shalmaneser'. II Kings 10:15 in the Septuagint (LXX) reads as follows: "And the Syrians saw that they were worsted before Israel, and thy gathered themselves together. And Adraazar (Hadar-ezer) sent and gathered the Syrians from the other side of the river, Chalamak (Shalmaneser), and they came to Aelam; and Sabac (Shobach) the captain of the host of Adraazar was at their head (*i.e.*, before them)." The Assyrian records (*cf.*, list above) indicate that Shalmaneser died that same year (1018 B.C.).<sup>23</sup> Josephus seems to relate the same account and calls Shalmaneser II of Assyria--'Chalaman' and relates how king David of Israel fought against him:

This defeat did not still induce the Ammonites to be quiet, nor to own those that were superior to them to be so, and be still, but they sent to Chalaman, the king of the Syrians, beyond Euphrates, and hired him for an auxiliary. He had Shobach for the captain of his host, with eighty thousand footmen, and ten thousand horsemen. Now when the king of the Hebrews understood that the Ammonites had again gathered so great an army together, he determined to make war with them no longer by his generals, but he passed over the river Jordan himself with all his army; and when he met them he joined battle with them and overcame them, and slew forty thousand of their footmen, and seven thousand of their horsemen. He also wounded Shobach, the general of Chalaman's forces, who died of that stroke; but the people of Mesopotamia, upon such a conclusion of the battle delivered themselves up to David, and sent him presents, who at winter-time returned to Jerusalem. But at the beginning of the spring, he sent Joab, the captain of his host, to fight against the Ammonites, who overran all their country, and laid it waste, and shut them up in their metropolis, Rabbath, and besieged them therein. *Antiquities* VII.vi.3.

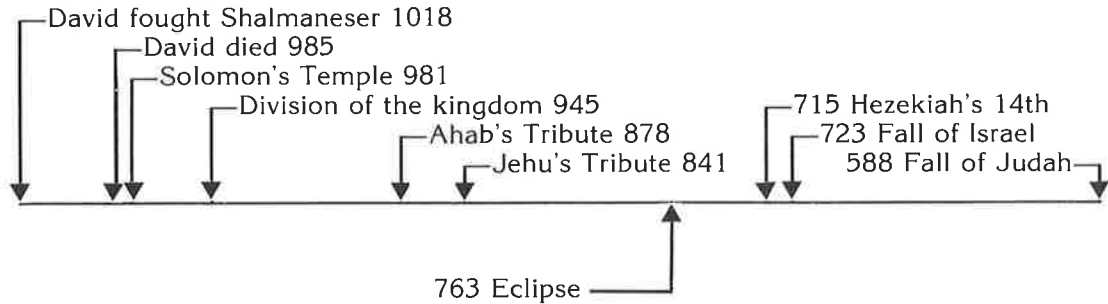
It appears that 'Chalamak' in the LXX and 'Chalaman' in Josephus are Greek forms of the same name for Shalmaneser II.

This data provides a basis for verifying 945 B.C. as the beginning of the Divided Kingdom instead of the more commonly suggested approximations of 931 B.C. and 922 B.C. The David vs. Shalmaneser battle took place in the eighth year of David;<sup>24</sup> for it occurred after David had conquered Jerusalem. David ruled over Judah in Hebron for seven years and six months and then made Jerusalem his capital in 1018 B.C. (II Samuel 5:4-5). His first year was 1026 B.C. during the reign of Saul. Therefore, the Biblical text in II Samuel 5:5 provides a forty-year reign for David (seven and one half in Hebron and thirty-three in Jerusalem) ending in 985 B.C. (1026 B.C. + 40.5 = 985 B.C.). Solomon's forty years of rule in I Kings 11:42 would place his death in 945 B.C. (985 B.C. + 40 = 945 B.C.), the division of the kingdom.

Those who place the reign of David later or the regency of Shalmaneser earlier, insist that the claim of Scripture (David vs. Shalmaneser) is quite impossible. The chronology of the Hebrew kings established in chapters two and three, and verified in the concluding chapter indicates the Hebrew history to be quite compatible with the Assyrian records. The year of the battle is 1018 B.C., the year that David captured Jerusalem, (II Samuel 5:6-10; 8:1 ff.); and 1018 B.C. is the last year of

Shalmaneser II as verified by the Assyrian King List, synchronized by the Assyrian Eponym List, and dated by the eclipse of 763 B.C. Also, note that 'Syria' is a Greek term which is derived from *Assyrios*, 'Assyria(n)'.

**ILLUSTRATION XI: DAVID, SHALMANESER, SOLOMON, AND NEBUCHADNEZZAR TIME LINE**



**B. 882 B.C.-- The Famine Of Ahab vs. Ashur-nasir-pal II**

I Kings 17:1--18:41 describes a severe and extensive famine in the early part of Ahab's reign. The famine ended after three years and six months. The records of Ashur-nasir-pal II for 882 B.C., his eponymous year, relate how he brought the Assyrians home after the end of the great famine. It probably would have taken Ashur-nasir-pal some time to regather his people who went to various lands in search of food and supplies during the great famine related to King Ahab.<sup>25</sup>

Jesus indicates that the famine of Ahab was wide-spread when he says: "But I tell you of a truth, many widows were in Israel in the days of Elias, when the heaven was shut up three years and six months, when great famine was throughout all the land (*lit.*, the earth)" (Luke 4:25). Josephus writes that Menander mentions this drought in his account of the acts of Ethbaal, king of the Tyrians. Josephus then quotes Menander as follows:

Under him, there was a want of rain from the month Hyperberetaeus till the month Hyperberetaeus of the year following; but when he made supplications, there came great thunders. Then Ethbaal built the city Botrys, in Phoenicia, and the city Auza, in Libya. [To this Josephus adds]-- By these words he designated the want of rain that was in the days of Ahab; for at that time it was that Ethbaal also reigned over the Tyrians, as Menander informs us. *Antiquities* VIII.xiii.2.

Unfortunately, this writing of Menander is no longer extant.

With this information, the famine of King Ahab for the 3 1/2 years 887-883 B.C. can be synchronized with the annals of Ashur-nasir-pal and his eponymous year, 882 B.C.

**C. 878 B.C.-- The Twelve King Alliance And Ahab vs. Ashur-nasir-pal**

Shalmaneser III appears to take credit for the events recorded on the Monolith Inscription<sup>26</sup> that belonged to his father, Ashur-nasir-pal II. The events recorded

on the Monolith Inscription as the sixth year of Shalmaneser<sup>27</sup> are all but identical to the records of the sixth year of Ashur-nasir-pal.<sup>28</sup> A battle which included King Ahab of Israel is referred to in the sixth year of Shalmaneser, but is not listed in the sixth year of his father. Shalmaneser lists the activity of Daian-assur (eponym) on the Monolith Inscription as his sixth year<sup>29</sup> but in another inscription, the Black Obelisk, indicates it was his fourth year.<sup>30</sup> The second text mentions the enemy as Ahuni, while the first refers to Sangara; yet history shows their separation by twenty-five years. Shalmaneser may well have been present with his father to battle against the Syro-Alliance and Ahab in 878 B.C. (Ahab's twelfth year), but not as king of Assyria. Ahab was dead a decade before the coronation of Shalmaneser in 859 B.C. It is possible that the records have been confused, but it is more likely that Shalmaneser, being present for the activity of his father's sixth year, subsequently took credit for it by inserting his name and several eponyms including Daian-assur into the Monolith Inscription. Such a possibility had a great deal of precedent in the Near Eastern court of that period. Therefore, the war waged with Ahab referred to in the Assyrian annals belongs to the era of Ashur-nasir-pal II--878 B.C.

#### **D. 841 B.C.-- The Tribute Of Jehu And The Eighteenth Year Of Shalmaneser**

Shalmaneser's records on the Black Obelisk indicate that in his eighteenth year (841 B.C.) he took a tribute from Jehu.<sup>31</sup> This would be Jehu's sixteenth year.<sup>32</sup> There is no chronological problem with either the Biblical or Assyrian records. The eponym for 841 B.C. confirms this event and indicates a campaign into Damascus.<sup>33</sup> Obviously, Shalmaneser in his sixth year could not have taken tribute from Ahab (Ahab's twelfth) and then in his eighteenth year taken tribute from Jehu (Jehu's sixteenth), as Ahab ruled for twenty-two years, followed by Ahaziah (two years) and Jehoram (twelve years) before Jehu ever took the throne in 857 B.C. Therefore, from Ahab's twelfth year (878 B.C.) to Jehu's sixteenth year (841 B.C.) are thirty-seven years, a period longer than the thirty-five years that Shalmaneser III ruled Assyria.

#### **E. 765 B.C.-- The Thirty-Fifth Year Of Jeroboam II**

The prophet Jonah, the son of Amittai, (II Kings 14:25) told Jeroboam II to recover the land from the pass of Hamath to the sea of Arabah, which was considered by Assyria to have been a rightful prize of war. Assyria had gained this territory in 765 B. C. and Pul had deported the trans-jordan tribes at this time. This was the thirty-fifth year of Jeroboam. The eponym activity for 765 B.C. tells of a battle in Hatarika.<sup>34</sup> It seems that in the year 764 B.C. the last Jubilee was celebrated in the land of Israel. Around 763 B.C., the solar eclipse of Bur-Sagale, Jonah told Jeroboam to recover this territory. It appears that by 761 B.C. Jeroboam had regained the lands lost to Assyria (II Kings 14:28).

#### **F. 763 B.C.-- The Solar Eclipse Of Bur-Sagale vs. Amos**

The eponym, Bur(Ishti)-Sagale of 763 B.C., is by far the most well-known for it tells of a solar eclipse in Assyria;<sup>35</sup> an eclipse astronomically verified as June 15, 763 B.C. (Julian calendar). The text neither indicates nor demands it, but Amos,

in 761 B.C., may well be referring to the eclipse of Bur-Sagale when, speaking for Yahweh, he says, "I will cause the sun to go down at noon (again?), and I will darken the earth dark in the clear day," (Amos 8:9-10).<sup>36</sup> His hearers would have been aware of the eclipse of two years earlier, *i.e.*, 763 B.C. The incredible significance for chronology of this dateable eponymy allows the confirmation of the arrangement of the Assyrian King List and its synchronization with contemporary histories of the period.

#### **G. 759 B.C.-- The Earthquake Of Pan-assur-lamur vs. Amos And Uzziah**

The eponym of 759 B.C. (Pan-assur-lamur) tells of a plague or disaster which took place in the area.<sup>37</sup> It should be noted that an earthquake often causes a plague with contamination of the water supply. A great earthquake took place that year. It was the year that Uzziah had presumptuously burned incense on the altar-- the prerogative of the priest, not of the king-- and contracted leprosy through divine judgment. Josephus, in relating how Uzziah contracted leprosy states that an earthquake occurred at the same time: "In the meantime, 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 him immediately" (*Antiquities* IX.x.4.). As a result he was forced to turn over the affairs of the state to his son, Jotham, who began an eleven year co-regency with his father (II Chronicles 26:16-21). Amos dates his prophecy from that earthquake, "...in the days of Uzziah king of Judah, and in the days of Jeroboam, the son of Joash king of Israel, two years before the earthquake" (Amos 1:1). Thus, the disaster of 759 B.C. is synchronized with the earthquake in the prophetic writing of Amos.

#### **H. 755 B.C.-- The Eponym Of Ikishu vs. Uzziah And Menahem**

The eponymous year of Ikishu for 755 B.C. relates an Assyrian incursion into Hatarika.<sup>38</sup> This date is the accession year of Ashur-nirari V, the king of Assyria, whose records consist of a mere fragment which comes from his second year.<sup>39</sup> The year 755 B.C. is the forty-fifth year of Uzziah of Judah and the sixth year of Menahem of Israel. Fragmentary slabs found at Nimrud in the walls of the palace of Esarhaddon, son of Sennacherib, which belong to an earlier palace credit Tiglath-pileser with taking tribute from Uzziah and Menahem.<sup>40</sup> The Scriptural text gives no indication of a tribute having been paid by Uzziah which does not negate the possibility. The Hebrew text mentions a tribute paid by Menahem to a king of Assyria called 'Pul' (I Chronicles 5:26; II Kings 15:19-20).

According to the Biblical record, a tribute was extracted of 50 shekels a head for each of Menahem's soldiers. This figure of fifty shekels is now thought to be the average price of a slave.<sup>41</sup> To attribute this inscription to Tiglath-pileser creates a serious chronological discrepancy, because, according to the computer calendar chronology of the Hebrew kings, Menahem was dead for seven years before Tiglath-pileser ascended to the throne in 745 B.C. The Eponym List itself contradicts the taking of tribute from Menahem by Tiglath-pileser, for he made no incursion into Palestine before 734 B.C., eleven years after Tiglath-pileser's accession to the throne. After this date, he entered Palestine at Damascus during the time of Pekah and Rezin's conflict with Ahaz of Judah.<sup>42</sup> Obviously, Tiglath-

pileser could not have taken tribute from Menahem and Pekah at the same time. Who, then, was the Biblical 'Pul' who invaded Syro-Palestine during the eponymous year of Ikishu in 755 B.C. and extracted tribute from Uzziah and Menahem? An important question, indeed, and one which will be discussed in detail in chapter six.

**I. 734-732 B.C.-- Tiglath-pileser III vs. Rezin, Pekah, And Ahaz**

The eponyms for the reign of Tiglath-pileser record only one major assault in the Palestinian area during his entire regency. This activity covers a three-year span described in the eponymy of 734, 733, and 732 B.C. During this period, Tiglath-pileser claims to have taken tribute from Pekah and that he ultimately replaced him with Hoshea. He records the deportation of Naphtali,<sup>43</sup> the defeat of Rezin,<sup>44</sup> the replacement of Pekah by Hoshea<sup>45</sup> and the exaction of tribute from Ahaz.<sup>46</sup> This activity is exactly as described in the Hebrew text of II Kings 15:29-30; 16:1- 17:2. An examination of the chart at Illustration VII indicates the eponym of 732 B.C. is the last year of Pekah's regency. Josephus reports that Hoshea plotted the death of Pekah-- "About the same time Pekah the king of Israel died, by the treachery of a friend of his, whose name was Hoshea, who retained the kingdom nine years' time" (*Antiquities* IX.xiii.1.).

**J. 727 B.C.-- The Tribute Of Hoshea vs. Shalmaneser V**

The eponym activity for 727 B.C. tells of an incursion into Palestine.<sup>47</sup> Scripture in II Kings 17:3 refers to a tribute paid to Shalmaneser V of Assyria by Hoshea, who later refused to pay and invited the disaster of 723 B.C. (II Kings 17:4-5). This tribute was in the fifth year of Hoshea. The same year was the second year of Hezekiah who apparently refused to pay such tribute to Shalmaneser (II Kings 18:1-8). Tiglath-pileser had previously gone to Babylon to attend to affairs of the state (731-728 B.C.) and his tributaries became somewhat self-assertive after his departure from the area. In the case of Hoshea of Israel, such self-assertion evidently resulted in self-destruction. In 727 B.C. Hoshea saw opportunity in revolting because of the death of Tiglath-pileser and the rise of a new Assyrian monarch-- Shalmaneser V. Apparently the tribute mentioned in the Biblical account was presented to Shalmaneser during his campaign into the area in 727 B.C.

**K. 725-723 B.C.-- The Fall Of Samaria**

The eponyms of 725, 724, and 723 B.C. record a three-year siege of Samaria by Assyria.<sup>48</sup> Tiglath-pileser was dead. Shalmaneser V ruled the Assyrian Empire. According to II Kings 18:9-10, Shalmaneser besieged Samaria for three years, from the fourth through the sixth years of Hezekiah, ultimately ravaging the city and deporting the population. Sargon takes credit for the deportation of Samaria.<sup>49</sup> While some historians have written this statement off as Sargonic bombast, it is not inconceivable that it may contain some truth. The Babylonian Chronicles laud Shalmaneser for the destruction of Samaria and tell of Shalmaneser's death in the month of Tebet (December, 722 B.C.), the year after the fall of Samaria in 723 B.C. The Babylonian Chronicle also indicates that in the same month (December 12, 722 B.C.) Sargon took the throne. At this time, the deportation under Sargon probably took place. Very likely there was some ravaging and depor-

tation yet to be accomplished, if sickness overtook Shalmaneser long before his death. Sargon of Assyria was just the man to complete the task.<sup>50</sup> The Bible corresponds precisely with the Assyrian records regarding the three year siege of Samaria.

Although abbreviated,<sup>51</sup> this examination of significant eponymous years, the Assyrian King List, inscription, monument and annal records of the Assyrians, and the Biblical narrative give every evidence of a proper and harmonious synchronization between the Hebrew and secular records.

There are three major problems with synchronization which remain. The three remaining problem areas will be discussed in the following order: 1) The fourteenth year of Hezekiah, and Sennacherib's siege of Jerusalem, in chapter five; 2) The evidence in support of spurious inscriptions of Tiglath-pileser and the question of the identity of 'Pul', in chapter six; and 3) The apparent claim of Shalmaneser III regarding war with the Syro-alliance including Ahab in chapter seven. The synchronization as established by the Assyrian Eponym List and charted in Illustrations VII and VIII resolve all three issues chronologically. The synchronization of the above issues in the present study is in direct conflict with the Thiele's conclusions in *A Chronology of the Hebrew Kings* and *The Mysterious Numbers Of The Hebrew Kings*. Therefore, these chronological issues will be addressed at some length.

## Chapter IV - NOTES

<sup>1</sup>Note Thiele's statement: "... my date ... [is] 723 for the last year of Hoshea and the fall of Samaria. The almost universally accepted date was 722 as based on Sargon's claim. My chart called for 723 as the year when Samaria fell, but that was a year before Sargon had commenced his reign." Edwin R. Thiele, *The Mysterious Numbers Of The Hebrew Kings* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan Publishing House, 1983), p. 122. Several other scholars have written about the 723 B.C. date as the year of Samaria's fall. See A. T. Olmstead, "The Fall of Samaria," *American Journal of Semitic Languages and Literatures*, 21 (1904-5), p. 179-82. Hayim Tadmor, "The Campaigns of Sargon II of Assur: A Chronological-Historical Study," *Journal of Cuneiform Studies*, 12 (1958), p. 39.

<sup>2</sup>At this point, Thiele's date for the fall of Jerusalem differs from this presentation of Hebrew chronology. He writes: "All these details point conclusively to 586 as the year when Jerusalem fell and the nation of Judah came to its end." Thiele, *op. cit.*, p. 191.

<sup>3</sup>William F. Albright's date for the beginning of the division of the kingdom is 922 B.C. See "The Chronology of the Divided Monarchy of Israel" *Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research*, 100 (1945), pp. 16-22.

<sup>4</sup>Thiele, *op.cit.*, pp. 76-78.

<sup>5</sup>Thiele asserts, "And there is no question concerning 701 as the fourteenth year of Hezekiah when Sennacherib came against him." *Ibid.*, p. 175.

<sup>6</sup>Since the official's name is introduced with the word *limmu*, they are sometimes called *Lim-mu* Lists.

<sup>7</sup>Examine Appendix A. "841 Adad-rimani [(governor) of ... against Damascus]."

<sup>8</sup>The inscription of Shalmaneser III on the Black Obelisk for his eighteenth year reads: "In my eighteenth year of reign I crossed the Euphrates for the sixteenth time. Hazael of Aram (?Damascus) came forth to battle. 1,121 of his chariots, 470 of his cavalry, together with his camp, I captured from him." Daniel David Luckenbill, *Ancient Records Of Assyria And Babylon* (New York: Greenwood Press, Publishers, 1968), Volume I, sec. 575, p. 205. At this point, the paths of Shalmaneser III and Jehu of Israel crossed in history; this is known also from the Black Obelisk Inscription: "Tribute of Iaua (Jehu), son of Omri (*mar Humri*). Silver, gold, a golden bowl, a golden beaker, golden goblets, pitchers of gold, lead, staves for the hand of the king, javelins, I received from him." *ARAB*, Vol. I, sec. 590, p. 211. (*Cf.*, *ARAB*, Vol. I, sec. 672, p. 243).

<sup>9</sup>See Appendix A. Here the *Limmu* List gives the following information-- "848 Nergal-alik-pani (governor) of ... [against Hatte]."

<sup>10</sup>The Black Obelisk inscription for the eleventh year of the Assyrian monarch reads: "In my eleventh year of reign I crossed the Euphrates for the ninth time. Countless cities I captured. Against the cities of the land of Hamath, I descended. 89 cities I captured. Hadad-ezer of Aram (?Damascus) (and) twelve kings of the land of Hatti stood by each other. I accomplished their overthrow." *ARAB*, Vol. I, sec. 568, p. 204-205.

<sup>11</sup>On the Black Obelisk Inscription, it is written: "In my fourteenth year of reign I mustered (all the resources of my) land. I crossed the Euphrates. Twelve kings advanced to meet me. I battled with them, I accomplished their overthrow." *ARAB*, Vol. I, sec. 571, p. 204.

## Chapter IV - Notes

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<sup>12</sup>See Appendix A. The Assyrian Canon at this point reads-- "845 Urtu-nadin-shum [(governor) of ... against Hatte]."

<sup>13</sup>ARAB, Vol. I, sec. 610, pp. 222-223; see also sec. 561, p. 202.

<sup>14</sup>See the Assyrian King List in James B. Pritchard, ed., *Ancient Near Eastern Texts Relating to the Old Testament* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1974), p.566 with Luckenbill's ARAB, Vol. II, sec. 1198, pp. 431-438 or Appendix A. There is no Eponym List prior to 859 B.C. or later than 703 B.C. listing events or activities; therefore, the first date listed is the accession year of Shalmaneser III (eponym: Tab-bel, 859 B.C.) and the last is the accession year of Sennacherib (eponym: Nashir-bel, 705 B.C.) The complete list of eponyms is contained in Illustration VII. The list above indicates only the accession year and duration of reign for the Assyrian kings from 1030 B.C. to 705 B.C. It is important to note that the Assyrian King List is based on accession year reckoning. The 'first year' is a calendar year later than the accession year, e.g., 704 is the 'first year' of Sennacherib. 703 is the 'second year' and 702 is the 'third year' etc.

<sup>15</sup>The older Assyrian King List ends at this point and the remainder of the monarchs are synchronized by the Eponym List. A later copy of the Assyrian King List gives the length of reigns for Tiglath-pileser III and Shalmaneser V.

<sup>16</sup>ARAB, Vol. II, sec. 1197, p. 430.

<sup>17</sup>Thiele, *op. cit.*, p. 221.

<sup>18</sup>Albert Kirk Grayson, *Assyrian Royal Inscriptions* (Abbreviated ARI) Volume II (Wiesbaden, Germany: Otto Harrassowitz, 1972) sec. 469, 483, p. 101, 105.

<sup>19</sup>Thiele has pointed out that one Eponym List, known by the symbol Ca3, contains the extra name Balatu, but on this list the eponym Nabu-shar-usur occupies a different position than it does on the other lists. On Ca3 the sequence is as follows:

788 Sil-Ishtar	785 Marduk-shar-usur
787 Balatu	784 Nabu-shar-usur
786 Adad-uballit	783 Ninurta-nasir

But on the other three lists the following sequence occurs:

787 Sil-Ishtar	784 Marduk-shar-usur
786 Nabu-shar-usur	783 Ninurta-nasir
785 Adad-uballit	

Thus it appears that on the latter three lists the name of Nabu-shar-usur occupies the place which on Ca3 is held by Balatu, following Sil-Ishtar and preceding Adad-uballit. If all four lists are correct in placing these two names in this particular place-- Ca3 in placing Balatu in this position, and the other three in placing Nabu-shar-usur in that place-- then Balatu and Nabu-shar-usur would both have eponyms during the same year. The shorter chronology agrees with the Assyrian King List for the reign of Adad-nirari III. *Ibid.*, pp. 72-76, pp. 221-223. For a discussion of this issue, which lies beyond the scope of this volume, refer to Shea in *Journal of Cuneiform Studies* 29 (1977), pp. 240-242, and Brinkman, *Journal of Cuneiform Studies* 30 (1978), pp. 173-175.

If absolute chronology were not the goal, perhaps one might be tempted to overlook a discrepancy of only one year. However, honesty demands it be recognized, and synchronization requires the adjustment to conform.

<sup>20</sup>A. K. Grayson writes: "The change has been necessitated by Brinkman's collation of the Nassouhi King List ... which revealed that this text has '32' rather than '33' ... as the length of the reign of Tiglath-pileser II. Thus it appears more probable that 32 is the correct figure." *Ibid.*, p. 68.

<sup>21</sup>This solar eclipse occurs during the reigns of Jeroboam II of Israel and Uzziah of Judah; the

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eclipse is related to the book of Jonah and the reign of the Assyrian King, Ashur-dan III.

<sup>22</sup>ARAB, Vol. II, sec. 1198, p. 435. Bur(Ishdi)-Sagale was the governor of Guzana. During his eponymous year, two major events occurred: 1) a revolt in the city of Assur, and 2) an eclipse of the sun in the month *Simanu* (May-June).

<sup>23</sup>The year 1030 B.C. is the accession year of Shalmaneser II. His 'first year' would be 1029 and he reigned for twelve years. 1018 B.C. would be the king's death date (1030 B.C. + 12 = 1018 B.C.). To confirm this, see the '12 years' marking the length of Shalmaneser's reign in the Assyrian Eponym Canon after "1018 Siki-ilani (?) ..." in Appendix A.

<sup>24</sup>The Assyrian Eponym List reads-- "1017 Assur-nirari [the King], who (reigned) after [Shalmaneser]." The year 1017 B.C. is the eponymous year for Assur-nirari IV, king of Assyria; this is also the date for one year after the capture of Jerusalem by David.

<sup>25</sup>One of the largest Assyrian royal inscriptions from any reign is engraved on stone slabs which decorated the walls and floor of the Ninurta temple at Kalach. Assur-nasir-pal II refers to his eponymous year in this text. This is the year 882 B.C. See Appendix A where the Assyrian Eponym Canon reads: "882 Assur-nasir-apli, the king." With the date of the eponym year established, read what the monarch says about the city of Tushha and the famine-- "In the eponym year of my name .... Moving on from the land Nirbu I approached the city Tushha. I took Tushha in hand for renovation. ... A palace for my residence I founded inside. ... That palace I built and completed from top to bottom. I made an image of myself in white limestone (and) wrote thereon praise of the extraordinary power and heroic deeds which I had been accomplishing in the lands Nairi. I erected (it) in the city Tushha. I inscribed my stele (and) deposited (it) in its wall. I brought back the enfeebled Assyrians who, because of hunger (and) famine, had gone up to other lands to the land Shubru. I settled them in the city Tushha. I took over that city myself (and) stored therein barley and straw from the land Nirbu." Grayson, *ARI*, Vol. II, sec. 548-553, p. 125-128.

<sup>26</sup>The 'Monolith Inscription' uncovered at Kurkh and presently in the British Museum, claims to record the military activities of the first six years of Shalmaneser III, and is a traditional source for dating the battle of Qarqar (Karkar). A discussion of the credibility of assigning the events of this inscription to Shalmaneser instead of their true source, his father, will be discussed at an appropriate point later in the chapter seven.

<sup>27</sup>The Monolith Inscription, the earliest annals text of Shalmaneser, is dated in the eponymous year of Daian-Assur (853 B.C.) for the ruler's sixth year. The text gives reference to the battle of Qarqar and lists 'Ahab, the Israelite', as one of the western allies who fought against him--

"In the year of Daian-Assur, in the month of *Airu*, the fourteenth day, I departed from Nineveh, crossed the Tigris, and drew near .... At the fearfulness of my sovereignty, the terror of my frightful weapons, they became afraid .... To Kar-Shalmaneser I drew near. In (goat)skin boats I crossed the Euphrates the second time, at its flood. The tribute of the kings on that side of the Euphrates, --of Sangara of Carchemish, of Kundashpi of Kumuhu (Commagene), of Arame son of Guzi, of Lalli the Milidean, of Haiani son of Gabari, of Kalparuda of Hattina, of Kalparuda of Gurgum, --silver, gold, lead, copper, vessels of copper, at Ina-Assur-uttir-asbat, on that side of the Euphrates, on the river Sagur, which the people of Hatti call Pitru, there I received (it). From the Euphrates I departed, I drew near to Halman (Aleppo). They were afraid to fight with (me), they seized my feet. Silver, gold, as their tribute I received. I offered sacrifices before the god Adad of Halman. From Halman I departed. To the cities of Irhuleni, the Hamathite, I drew near. The cities of Adennu, Barga, Argana, his royal cities, I captured. His spoil, his property, the goods of his palaces, I brought out. I set fire to his palaces. From Argana I departed. To Karkar I drew near.

Karkar, his royal city, I destroyed, I devastated, I burned with fire. 1,200 chariots, 1,200 cavalry, 20,000 soldiers, of Hadad-ezer of Aram (?Damascus); 700 chariots, 700 cavalry, 10,000 soldiers of Irhuleni of Hamath, 2,000 chariots, 10,000 soldiers of Ahab, the Israelite, 500 soldiers of the Guean, 1,000 soldiers of the Musreans, 10 chariots, 10,000 soldiers of the Irkanateans, 200 soldiers

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of Matinuba'il, the Arvadite, 200 soldiers of the Usanateans, 30 chariots, [],000 soldiers of Adunuba'il, the Shianean, 1,000 camels of Gindibu', the Arabian, [],000 soldiers [of] Ba'sa, son of Ruhubi, the Ammonite, -- these twelve kings he brought to his support; to offer battle and fight, they came against me. (Trusting) in the exalted might which Assur, the lord, had given (me), in the mighty weapons, which Nergal, who goes before me, had presented (to me), I battled with them. From Karkar, as far as the city of Gilzau, I routed them. 14,000 of their warriors I slew with the sword. Like Adad, I rained destruction upon them. I scattered their corpses far and wide, (and) covered (*lit.* filled) the face of the desolate plain with their widespreading armies. With (my) weapons I made their blood to flow down the valleys (?) of the land. The plain was too small to let their bodies fall, the wide countryside was used up in burying them. With their bodies I spanned the Arantu (Orontes) as with a bridge (?). In that battle I took from them their chariots, their cavalry, their horses, broken to the yoke." *ARAB*, Vol. I, sec. 610-611, pp. 222-223.

For another translation of this text compare *ANET* pp. 278-279.

<sup>28</sup>The annals of Assur-nasir-pal are written on the pavement slabs of the entrance to the temple of Urta at Calah (Nimrud). The great campaigns of the first six years are dated by *limmus*. Then minor raids follow until his eighteenth year, the eponymy of Shamash-nuri, when he made his last serious campaign.

The campaign for his sixth year appears to be in the eponymy of Dagan-bel-nasir (878 B.C.). Assur-nasir-pal writes:

"On the eighth day of the month *Ululu* I departed from the city of Calah, I crossed the Tigris, (and) I took the road to Carchemish in the land of Hatte. ...

I crossed the Euphrates at its flood in ships made of skins, (and) I drew nigh to Carchemish. The tribute of Sangara, king of the land of Hatte, --twenty talents of silver, a clap(?) of gold, a ring of gold, golden daggers [etc.], I received from him. The chariots, the cavalymen, and the foot soldiers of the city of Carchemish I took with me. The kings of all the lands came unto me and embraced my feet. I took hostages from them. Before me they rose up(?), to the Lebanon they marched. From Carchemish I departed...." *ARAB*, Vol. I, sec. 475-476, pp. 164-165. Notice the similarity between the two texts: 1) crossed the Tigris, 2) Hatte-land is mentioned, 3) crossed Euphrates at its flood in ships made of skin, 4) The tribute of Sangara of Carchemish, 5) overcame a royal confederation of nations. It appears that the Monolith inscription merely adds more details.

<sup>29</sup>*ARAB*, Vol. I, sec. 610, p. 222.

<sup>30</sup>*ARAB*, Vol. I, sec. 561, p. 202; sec. 643, p. 237.

<sup>31</sup>An inscription fragment from Calah speaks of King Shalmaneser III in his eighteenth year receiving tribute from Jehu of Israel-- "In my eighteenth year of reign I crossed the Euphrates for the sixteenth time. Hazael of Aram trusted in the mass of his troops, mustered his armies in great numbers, made Mount Saniru, a mountain peak at the front of the Lebanons, his stronghold. I battled with him. I accomplished his overthrow. 6,000 of his warriors I slew with the sword. 1,121 of his chariots, 470 of his calvary, together with his camp, I took away from him. To save his life, he went (up into the mountain). I followed after him. In Damascus, his royal city, I shut him up. His orchards I cut down. I advanced as far as Mount Hauran. Countless cities I destroyed, I devastated, I burned with fire. Their spoil, without number, I carried off. To Mount Ba'li-ra'si, a head(land) of the sea, I marched. My royal image I set up there. At that time I received the tribute of the men of Tyre, Sidon and of Jehu, son of Omri." *ARAB*, Vol. I, sec. 672, p. 243.

Also the famous 'Black Obelisk' with its twenty small reliefs contains the relief of Jehu of Israel kneeling before Shalmaneser. Jehu is pictured with a short rounded beard, clothed with a sleeveless jacket and a long, fringed skirt with a girdle. A soft cap is on his head. Following Jehu is seen a group of Israelites in long robes carrying precious metals and other tribute. The inscription reads: "Tribute of Iaua (Jehu), son of Omri (mar Humri). Silver, gold, a golden bowl, a golden beaker, golden goblets, pitchers of gold, lead staves for the hand of the king, javelins, I received from him." *ARAB*, Vol. I, sec. 590, p. 211.

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<sup>32</sup>Thiele's chronology requires Jehu's tribute in his first year and contradicts the Biblical assertion that Jehu's humiliation by Shalmaneser resulted from Jehu's increasing apostasy (cf., II Kings 10:31-33). The account fits the activities of Shalmaneser's eighteenth year and Jehu's seventeenth, but not the first year of Jehu. Thiele, *op. cit.*, pp. 76-77; 94-95; 103-104.

<sup>33</sup>See Appendix A where the eponym for the eighteenth year of Shalmaneser III reads: "841 Adad-rimani (governor) of .... Against Damascus."

<sup>34</sup>The eponym of 765 B.C. records the following data: "765 Urta-mukin-nishe (governor) of Kir-ruri against Hatarika. A plague." *ARAB*, Vol. II, sec. 1198, p. 435.

<sup>35</sup>The Eponym List reads: "763 Bur(Ishdi)-Sagale (governor) of Guzana revolt in the city of Assur. In the month of *Simanu* an eclipse of the sun took place." *ARAB*, Vol. II, sec. 1198, p. 435.

<sup>36</sup>If Jonah of II Kings 14 is the same Jonah of the book that bears the name, his trip to Nineveh and his message, 'forty days to repent', would have to be at this time. The text leaves little doubt that it was a hot time of the year. An eclipse was a portentous event to reverers of the sun-god and would not have been taken lightly in Nineveh, which was on direct line with the eclipse. Support for the text of Jonah, which indicates a repentance on the part of the king of Nineveh, may be found in the eponym activity lists following the eclipse. They show a total lack of foreign military incursions and the presence of domestic revolts for the following seven years. There is the possibility that Jeroboam was given the same message, 'a day to count for a year', which went unheeded. In any event, it is a matter of record that the fall of Samaria occurred forty years after the eclipse, in 723 B.C.

<sup>37</sup>The eponym for 759 B. C. states the following information: "Pan-assur-lamur (governor) of Arbailu revolt in the city of Guzana. A plague." The semitic word for 'plague' can also mean 'disaster'. *ARAB*, Vol. II, sec. 1198, p. 435.

<sup>38</sup>*ARAB*, Vol. II, sec. 1198, p. 435. The eponym record at this point states: "755 Ikishu (governor) of Mehinish(?) against Hatarika."

<sup>39</sup>*ARAB*, Vol. I, sec. 749-760, pp. 265-268. The records of all the Assyrian kings from Ashur-dan III to Tiglath-pileser consist of small fragments. There is reason to conjecture that the scarcity and fragmentary nature of the records of this time is neither an accident nor the result of their antiquity alone. There is evidence of an active attempt to destroy or pirate their contents. This evidence will be examined later when reviewing the reign of Tiglath-pileser in chapter six.

<sup>40</sup>This inscription refers to Uziah as 'Azariah of Judah' and speaks of his tribute--

"[In] the course of my campaign, I received the tribute of the kings of the seacoast (Mediterranean) ... Azariah of Judah ... --19 districts of Hamath, together with the cities of their environs, which (lie) on the shore of the sea of the setting sun, which had gone over to Azariah, in revolt (*lit.*, sin) and contempt of Assyria, I brought within the border of Assyria. My officials I set over them as governors. 30,300 people [I carried of from] their cities and placed them in the province of the city of Ku--. 1,223 people I settled in the province of the land of Ulluba." *ARAB*, Vol. I, sec. 770, pp. 274-275.

Further in this inscription is found reference to Menahem of Israel and his tribute--

"... The tribute of Kushtashpi of Kummuhu, Rasunnu (Rezin) of Aram, Menihimmu (Menahem) of Samerina (Samaria) Hirammu (Hiram) of Tyre, Sibittibi'li of Gubla (Gebail), Urikki of Kue, Pisiris of Carchemish, Eni-ilu of Hamath, Panammu of Sam'al, Tarhulara of Gurgum, Sulumal of Melid, Dadi-ilu of Kaska, Uassurme of Tabal, Ushhitti of Tuna, Urballai of Tuhana, Tuhamme of Ishtunda, Urimme of Hubishna, Zabibe, queen of Arabia, -- gold, silver, lead, iron, elephant's hides, ivory, colored (woolen)garments, linen garments, blue and purple wool, maple, boxwood, all kinds of precious royal treasure, fat(?) lambs, whose wool was purple in color (*lit.*, dyed), winged birds of heaven, whose wings were blue in color (*lit.*, dyed), horses, mules, cattle, sheep, camels, female

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camels, together with their young, I received." *ARAB*, Vol. I, sec. 772, p. 276.

<sup>41</sup>J. A. Thompson, *The Bible and Archaeology* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1975), p. 133.

<sup>42</sup>*ARAB*, Vol. II, sec. 1198, pp. 436-437. When Tiglath-pileser took his seat on the throne in 745 B.C. until 734 B.C., he made no campaigns into Palestine. The Eponym List for 734 B.C. reads: "734 Bel-dan (Governor) of Calah against Philistia." It is during the years 733-732 B.C. that he puts down the revolt of Pekah of Israel and Rezin of Syria. For these years the Assyrian Eponym Chronicle reads: "733 Assur-daninani (governor) of Mazamua against the land of Damascus. 732 Nabu-bel-usur (governor) of Si'me against the land of Damascus." Then in the final year of his reign, Tiglath-pileser has another incursion against Damascus-- "727 Bel-harran-bel-usur (governor) of Guzana against Damascus." The fact that the eponyms for 733-732 B.C. read "against the land (area) of Damascus" is an indication that King Pekah of Israel is included in the revolt. Pekah's rule came to an end in 732 B.C. (*Cf.*, II Kings 16:9.)

<sup>43</sup>The deportation of Naphtali is found in a fragmentary annals text of Tiglath-pileser--  
"... the city of Hatarikka, up to Mount Saua ... the cities of Gubla (Gebail), Simirra, Arka, Zimarra, ... the cities of Usnu, Sianu, Ri'a-raba, Ri'a-sisu ... the cities of the upper sea, I brought under my sway. Six of my officials as governors I set over them. The city of Rashpuna, which is on the shore of the upper sea, ... the cities of ... --nite, Gala'za(?), Abiilakka, which are on the border of Bit-Humria (House of Omri, Israel) ... the wide land of Naphtali, in its entirety, I brought within the border of Assyria. My official I set over them as governor. ..." *ARAB*, Vol. I, sec. 815, p. 292.

<sup>44</sup>The defeat of Rezin of Syria in 732 B.C. is recorded in Tiglath-pileser's annals as follows:  
"Hadaru, the father's house of Resin of Aram (Syria), [where] he was born, I besieged, I captured. 800 people, together with their possessions ... their cattle, their sheep, I carried off. 750 captives of the city of Kurussa, ... captives of the city of Irma, 550 captives of the city of Metuna, I carried off. 591 cities ... of 16 districts of Aram (Syria), I destroyed like mounds left by a flood." *ARAB*, Vol. I, sec. 777, p. 279.

Another annals text from Tiglath-pileser III probably dated 731 B.C. speaks of the past defeat of Pekah of Samaria and Rezin of Damascus--

"On my former campaign all of the cities ... I counted ... I had carried off and Samerina (Samaria) ... [Mitinti] of Ashkelon, violated the oath sworn to me, [against me he revolted. The defeat of] Resin he saw and [died] in a conflagration(?). [Rubiktu, son of Mitinti], I set upon his throne for ...." *ARAB*, Vol. I, sec. 779, pp. 279-280.

<sup>45</sup>While Pekah was anti-Assyrian, Hoshea appears to be a loyal Assyrian vassal. If Tiglath-pileser did not actually put Hoshea on the throne, he seems to have approved. His record reads:

"The land of Bit-Humria ... all of its people, together with their goods I carried off to Assyria. Pakaha, their king they deposed and I placed Ausi' (Hoshea) over them as king. 10 talents of gold, X talents of silver, as their tribute I received from them and to Assyria I carried them." *ARAB*, Vol. I, sec. 816, p. 293.

<sup>46</sup>Tiglath-pileser makes mention of the tribute which he received from Jehoahaz (Ahaz) of Judah in the Nimrud Tablet which contains a resume of the first seventeen years of Tiglath-pileser's reign--

"The tribute of Kushtashpi of Kummuhu, Urik of Kue, Sibitti-bi'il [of Gubla] ... [Eni]-ilu of Hamath, Pannammu of Sam'al, Tarhulara of Gurgum, Sulumal of Melid] ... Uassurme of Tabal, Ushhitti of Tunai, Urballa of Tuhan, Tuhamme of Ishtunda] ... Matan-bi'il of Arvad, Sanibu of Beth-Ammon, Sala-manu of Moab, ... Mitinti of Ashkelon. Iauhazi (Jehoahaz) of Judah, Kaucsh-malaku of Edom, Musri ... Hanunu (Hanno) of Gaza, -- gold, silver, lead, iron, tin, brightly colored (woolen) garments, linen, the purple garments of their land(s), ... all kinds of costly things, the products of the sea and the dry land, the commodities of their land, the royal treasure, horses, mules, broken to the yoke, ... [I received]." *ARAB*, Vol. I, sec. 801, pp. 287-288.

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<sup>47</sup>The Eponym Chronicle reads at this point: "727 Bel-harran-bel-usur (governor) of Suzana against Damascus Shalmaneser took his seat on the throne." *ARAB*, Vol. II, sec. 1198, p. 437.

<sup>48</sup>The eponyms of 725, 724, and 723 B.C. are listed as follows:

"725 Mahde	(governor) of Nineveh	against [Samaria]
724 Assur-ishmeani	(governor) of Kakzi	against [Samaria]
723 Shalmaneser	King of Assyria	against [Samaria]"

Unfortunately, the Eponym Chronicle is mutilated at this point and does not have the word 'Samaria'. The coincidence of 725, 724 and 723 B.C. with the three years mentioned in the Biblical text regarding the siege of Samaria by Shalmaneser would seem to justify the supplying of the word 'Samaria'.

<sup>49</sup>From an annals inscription in his palace at Khorsabad, Sargon II reports the deportation of the Israelites--

"[At the beginning of my rule, in my first year of reign] ... Samerina (the people of Samaria) ... [of Shamash] who causes me to attain victory ... [27,290 people, who lived therein] I carried away; 50 chariots for my royal equipment, I selected from [among them] ... [The city I rebuilt], I made it greater than it was before; people of the lands [my hand had conquered, I settled therein. My official I placed over them as governor]. Tribute, tax, I imposed upon them as upon the Assyrians." *ARAB*, Vol. II, sec. 4, p. 2.

In another inscription, Sargon II boasted, "... I plundered the city of Shinuhtu, Samirina (Samaria) and the whole land of Bit-Humria (Israel)." *ARAB*, Vol. II, sec. 80, p. 40.

On an inscription of a general nature from the palace in Khorsabad, Sargon writes--

"(Property of Sargon, etc., king of Assyria, etc.) conqueror of Samaria (*Sa-mir-i-na*) and of the entire (country of) Israel (*Bit-Hu-um-ri-a*) who despoiled Ashdod (and) Shinuhti, who caught the Greeks who (live on islands) in the sea, like fish, who exterminated Kasku, all Tabali and Cilicia (*Hilakku*), who chased away Midas (*Mi-ta-a*) king of Musku, who defeated Musur (*Mu-su-ri*) in Rapihu, who declared Hanno, king of Gaza, as booty, who subdued the seven kings of the country Ia', a district on Cyprus (*Ia-ad-na-na*), (who) dwell (on an island) in the sea, at (a distance of) a seven-day journey." *ANET*, p. 284.

The Cylinder Inscription is found inscribed on barrel cylinders in commemoration of the founding of the new capital at Dur-Sharrukin (Khorsabad). It refers to Sargon as the one "who devastated the wide land of Bit-Humria." *ARAB*, Vol. II, sec. 117, p. 61.

Also, Sargon resettled other conquered tribes in the ruins of Samaria. A Khorsabad annals text referring to the Assyrian's seventh year of reign notes--

"The tribes of Tamud, Ibadid, Marsimanu and Haiapa, distant Arabs, who inhabit the desert, who know neither high nor low official (governors nor superintendents), and who had not brought their tribute to any king,-- with the weapon of Assur, my lord, I struck them down, the remnant of them I deported and settled them in Samaria." *ARAB*, Vol. II, Sec. 17, p. 7.

<sup>50</sup>The reference to the reign and death of Shalmaneser V and Sargon's accession is found in Chronicle 1.i.27-31--

"27 On the twenty-fifth day of the month Tebet Shalmaneser (V) ascended the throne in Assyria and Akkad.

28 He ravaged Samaria (*Sa-ma/ba-ra-'in*).

29 The fifth year: Shalmaneser (V) died in the month Tebet.

30 For five years Shalmaneser (V) ruled Akkad and Assyria.

31 On the twelfth day of the month Tebet Sargon (II) ascended the throne in Assyria."

A. K. Grayson, "Assyrian And Babylonian Chronicles," A. Leo Oppenheim, *et al.*, eds. *Texts From Cuneiform Sources*, Volume 5 (Locust Valley, New York: J. J. Augustin, Publisher, 1975), p. 73.

The problem of whether or not this is a reference to Samaria has long been debated. Franz Delitzsch originally saw the Akkadian words as meaning Samaria; recently Hayim Tadmor has come to the conclusion that it is Samaria. It is of interest to note in Ezra 4:10 that Samaria, normally spelled in Hebrew as *Shomron* is spelled *Shamrayin*, similar to that in the Babylonian Chronicle.

<sup>51</sup>To get a feel for the parallelism between the Biblical and secular accounts, the reader is en-

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couraged to explore the primary source documents given in the footnotes throughout this chapter. For example, the previous foot-note addresses Sargon's claim to take credit for the fall and deportation of Samaria. Here is the account from his own diary: "I besieged and conquered Samaria (Same-ri-na), led away as booty 27,290 inhabitants of it...." *ANET*, pp. 284-285. "... [The town I] re[built] better than (it was) before and [settled] therein people from countries which [I] myself [had con]quered. I placed an officer of mine as governor over them and imposed upon them tribute as (is customary) for Assyrian citizens," *ANET*, p. 284. The Biblical account is recorded in II Kings 17. If one had no access to the records of Sargon's father, Shalmaneser, there would be little reason to suspect his claim; yet no historian today would fully credit Sargon with the destruction of Samaria, but would uphold the record of II Kings 17. This point becomes important relative to similar issues raised in the remainder of this chapter. The claims of the Assyrian kings, though for the most part verifiable by parallel documentation, cannot always be taken at face value without the danger of creating a chronological conundrum. What is true of Sargon as against his records is also true of Shalmaneser III and Tiglath-pileser III in relation to the deeds of their fathers, Ashur-nasir-pal II and Ashur-nirari V.

## **Chapter V - HEZEKIAH VS. SENNACHERIB: THIELE'S ANACHRONISM**

In chapter four the proposed dates for the chronology of the Hebrew kings were examined and found to be compatible with parallel secular histories. This chapter will investigate the Assyrian records which indicate that in his third year, Sennacherib conducted a campaign against Hezekiah of Judah as compared with the Biblical text of II Kings 18:13 which identifies a campaign of Sennacherib against Jerusalem in the fourteenth year of Hezekiah. It will also be pointed out that the fourteenth year of Hezekiah is the seventh year of Sargon, and this will shed important light upon the present subject.

### **I. Computer Verified Chronology vs. Other Chronologies**

Not all scholars view Hezekiah's fourteenth year as identical with Sennacherib's third year.<sup>1</sup> The Assyrian records indicate 702 B.C. as the third year of Sennacherib: his accession year is 705 B.C.; 704 B.C. is his first year; and 703 B.C. is his second year. This dating is not debated by historians for it is firmly fixed by dead reckoning from the eclipse of 15 June, 763 B.C. The assertion of Thiele is that 701 B.C. according to his dating must be the fourteenth year of Hezekiah.<sup>2</sup> On the basis of this assumption, he has taken the liberty to adjust Hebrew chronology to fit the Assyrian record. The result is regnal chronology of the Hebrews that neither corresponds to the Biblical text nor the secular histories.<sup>3</sup>

It is the purpose of this chapter to demonstrate that such presumption is without warrant, as indicated by both the Biblical account and Assyrian records. Neither the Hebrew text nor the chronology of the Assyrian kings need be altered if both are examined in an unbiased and scholarly fashion. Co-regencies in Assyria will be identified together with the recorded justifications that resolve the issue in a satisfactory way.<sup>4</sup>

### **II. Synchronizing Hezekiah And Sennacherib**

There are many striking differences between the Assyrian records and the Biblical account concerning Hezekiah's fourteenth year. The evidence at hand will point to two separate accounts regarding two separate invasions by Sennacherib against Jerusalem. The account in the Bible dealing with Hezekiah's fourteenth year is different from the account given in the Assyrian annals regarding the siege of Jerusalem by Sennacherib in his third year. This chapter will demonstrate the accuracy of both the Assyrian annals and the Hebrew text.

#### **A. 702 B.C.-- Long After Hezekiah's Fourteenth Year**

Simple arithmetic reveals that if 702 B.C. were the fourteenth year of Hezekiah, the destruction and deportation of Samaria by Shalmaneser V in 723 B.C. would have occurred twenty-one years prior to the fourteenth of Hezekiah.

### 1. 723 B.C.-- The Fall Of Samaria vs. Hezekiah's Sixth Year

The Biblical record is insistent that Samaria fell to Shalmaneser V in Hezekiah's sixth year, a separation of only eight years in reference to the fourteenth year of the king of Judah:

And it came to pass in the fourth year of king Hezekiah, which was the seventh year of Hoshea son of Elah king of Israel, that Shalmaneser king of Assyria came up against Samaria, and besieged it. And at the end of three years they took it: even in the sixth year of Hezekiah, that is the ninth year of Hoshea king of Israel, Samaria was taken. II Kings 18:9-10

The invasion of Judah by Sennacherib in Hezekiah's fourteenth year is described several verses later:

Now in the fourteenth year of king Hezekiah did Sennacherib king of Assyria come up against all the fenced cities of Judah, and took them. And Hezekiah king of Judah sent to the king of Assyria to Lachish, saying, I have offended; return from me: that which thou puttest on me will I bear. And the king of Assyria appointed unto Hezekiah king of Judah three hundred talents of silver and thirty talents of gold. And Hezekiah gave him all the silver that was found in the house of the Lord, and in the treasures of the king's house. At that time did Hezekiah cut off the gold from the doors of the temple of the Lord, and from the pillars which Hezekiah king of Judah had overlaid, and gave it to the king of Assyria. II Kings 18:13-16

It is apparent that if 702 B.C. were the fourteenth year of Hezekiah, then his first year would have been 716 B.C. and his sixth year would have been 710 B.C. Samaria fell thirteen years prior to 710 B.C. and Hezekiah's reign would have had to begin seven years *after* the fall of Samaria instead of six years *before* as required by the Biblical text.

### 2. 728 B.C.-- The First Year Passover Of Hezekiah

Further indication of Hezekiah's reign beginning prior to the fall of Samaria is found in II Kings 18:1-8:

Now it came to pass in the third year of Hoshea son of Elah king of Israel, that Hezekiah the son of Ahaz king of Judah began to reign. Twenty and five years old was he when he began to reign; and he reigned twenty and nine years in Jerusalem. His mother's name also was Abi, the daughter of Zachariah. And he did that which was right in the sight of the Lord, according to all that David his father did. He removed the high places, and brake the images, and cut down the groves, and brake in pieces the brasen serpent that Moses had made: for unto those days the children of Israel did burn incense to it: and he called it Nehushtan. He trusted in the Lord God of Israel; so that after him was none like him among all the kings of Judah, nor any that were before him. For he clave to the Lord, and departed not from following him, but kept his commandments, which the Lord commanded Moses. And the Lord was with him; and he prospered whithersoever he went forth: and he rebelled against the king of Assyria, and served him not. He smote the Philistines, even unto Gaza, and the borders thereof, from the tower of the watchmen to the fenced city.

This text describes a revolt by Hezekiah against the king of Assyria. It took place immediately upon Hezekiah's ascendancy to the throne of Judah when "in the third year of Hoshea son of Elah, king of Israel, ... Hezekiah the son of Ahaz king of Judah began to reign." The revolt of Hezekiah was followed by a great Passover celebration described in II Chronicles 30:

And Hezekiah sent to all Israel and Judah, and wrote letters also to Ephraim and Manasseh, that they should come to the house of the Lord at Jerusalem, to keep the passover unto the Lord God of Israel. For the king had taken counsel, and his princes, and all the congregation in Jerusalem, to keep the passover in the second month. For they could not keep it at that time, because the priests had not sanctified themselves sufficiently, neither had the people gathered themselves together to Jerusalem. And the thing pleased the king and all the congregation. So they established a decree to make proclamation throughout all Israel, from Beer-sheba even to Dan, that they should come to keep the passover unto the Lord God of Israel at Jerusalem: for they had not done it of a long time in such sort as it was written. II Chronicles 30:1-5

Thus far, the text scarcely is descriptive of an Israelite kingdom in the north which had been destroyed by Shalmaneser and deported by Sargon and the land resettled by non-Israelites. Those who insist on dating Hezekiah's reign after the fall of Samaria, however, refer to these verses in II Chronicles 30:

So the posts went with the letters from the king and his princes throughout all Israel and Judah, and according to the commandment of the king, saying, Ye children of Israel, turn again unto the Lord God of Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, and he will return to the remnant of you, that are escaped out of the hand of the kings of Assyria. And be not ye like your fathers, and like your brethren, which trespassed against the Lord God of their fathers, who there-fore gave them up to desolation, as ye see. Now be ye not stiffnecked, as your fathers were, but yield yourselves unto the Lord, and enter into his sanctuary, which he hath sanctified for ever: and serve the Lord your God, that the fierceness of his wrath may turn away from you. For if ye turn again unto the Lord, your brethren and your children shall find compassion before them that lead them captive, so that they shall come again into this land: for the Lord your God is gracious and merciful, and will not turn away his face from you, if ye return unto him. II Chronicles 30:6-9

The phrase 'the remnant of you, that are escaped out of the hand of *the kings of Assyria*' has been interpreted to refer to some sort of remnant remaining in Israel after the destruction by Shalmaneser in 723 B.C.<sup>5</sup> However, the key to understanding this reference is found in I Chronicles 5, where both Pul, king of Assyria, and Tiglath-pileser, king of Assyria, are mentioned:

But they were unfaithful to the God of their ancestors and prostituted themselves to the gods of the peoples of the land whom God had destroyed before them. So the God of Israel roused the hostility of Pul king of Assyria and of Tiglath-pileser king of Assyria. He deported Reuben, Gad, and the half-tribe of Manasseh, taking them off to Halah near Habor and the river Gozan. I Chronicles 5:25-26, Jerusalem Bible

The Assyrian eponym of 755 B.C. which records a military invasion probably

by Pul corresponds with the Biblical record of Menahem of Israel paying tribute to the Assyrian king<sup>6</sup> (II Kings 15:19-20). The eponymies of 733, 732 B.C. record the invasion of Palestine by Tiglath-pileser<sup>7</sup> which corresponds to the revolt of Rezin of Syria, Pekah of Israel and the tribute of Ahaz (II Kings 16:1-9).

Therefore, the Passover of 728 B.C., falling immediately after the Sabbatical year of 729/728 B.C. when the Law would have been read, was considered to be very important. The reading of the Law would have called attention to the proper celebration of the Passover. Being in his first year of reign at Passover time, Hezekiah wanted to stir the nation to a proper religious celebration. In fact, the Passover preparation and invitations were so important that its celebration was delayed for one month (II Chronicles 30:12, 13).

The Passover of 728 B.C. would have been close enough to the events mentioned above for the people to recall the campaigns of Pul and Tiglath-pileser as referred to by King Hezekiah in II Chronicles 30:6-9. The Biblical account only refers to the tribes of Ephraim, Manasseh, Zebulun and Asher as coming to the Passover according to II Chronicles 30:11-12: "Nevertheless divers of Asher and Manasseh and of Zebulun humbled themselves, and came to Jerusalem. Also in Judah the hand of God was to give them one heart to do the commandment of the king and of the princes, by the word of the Lord." The deportation of the tribes of trans-jordan (Reuben, Gad and the half tribe of Manasseh) had already occurred by Pul (I Chronicles 5:25-26) as well as the deportation of the tribe of Naphtali by Tiglath-pileser (II Kings 15:29). It is clear that the Passover of Hezekiah in 728 B.C. occurred before the fall of Samaria and after the deportations by Pul and Tiglath-pileser.

## **B. Two Separate Campaigns Against Hezekiah**

It seems reasonable to assume that either Scripture or the Assyrian records are in error if one were to continue to insist on 702 B.C. as the fourteenth year of Hezekiah. Thiele and others have fallen into that trap. But consider a third possibility-- the Assyrian records describing the third year of Sennacherib in 702 B.C. and the Biblical account of the invasion of Judah by Sennacherib in the fourteenth year of Hezekiah are describing *two separate historical events*. As will be demonstrated, the evidence points to this as the proper resolution to the riddle.<sup>8</sup>

### **1. 702 B.C.-- The Third Year Of Sennacherib**

Sennacherib describes Hezekiah's plight during his siege of Jerusalem as being 'shut up like a bird in a cage'. Except for that catchy phrase, the Assyrian record of Sennacherib's invasion of 702 B.C. is frequently referenced but seldom quoted. Therefore, it is presented in its entirety below. An examination will indicate that the account appears to differ, rather than appearing to be parallel to the Biblical account of Hezekiah's fourteenth year invasion. Its content lends strength to the position that there were two separate invasions of Judah by Sennacherib of Assyria:

As for Hezekiah, the Jew, who did not submit to my yoke, 46 of his strong, walled cities, as well as the small cities in their neighborhood, which were without

number - by escalade and by bringing up siege engines(?), by attacking and storming on foot, by mines, tunnels, and breaches(?), I besieged and took (those cities). 200,150 people, great and small, male and female, horses, mules, asses, camels, cattle and sheep, without number, I brought away from them and counted as spoil. Himself, like a caged bird, I shut up in Jerusalem, his royal city. Earthworks I threw up against him,-- the one coming out of his city gate I turned back to his misery. The cities of his, which I had despoiled, I cut off from his land and to Mitini, king of Ashdod, Padi, king of Ekron, and Silli-bel, king of Gaza, I gave them. And (thus) I diminished his land. I added to the former tribute, and laid upon him (*var.*, them) as their yearly payment, a tax (in the form of) gifts for my majesty. As for Hezekiah, the terrifying splendor of my majesty overcame him, and the Urbi (Arabs) and his mercenary(?) troops which he had brought in to strengthen Jerusalem, his royal city, deserted him (*lit.*, took leave). In addition to 30 talents of gold and 800 talents of silver, (there were) gems, antimony, jewels(?), large *sandu*-stones, couches of ivory, house chairs of ivory, elephant's hide, ivory (*lit.*, elephant's 'teeth'), maple(?), boxwood, all kinds of valuable (heavy) treasures, as well as his daughters, his harem, his male and female musicians, (which) he had (them) bring after me to Nineveh, my royal city. To pay tribute and to accept (*lit.*, do) servitude he dispatched his messengers.<sup>9</sup>

A number of variants from the Biblical account (II Kings 18:13-- 19:37) are immediately apparent. Perhaps the most noteworthy in Sennacherib's account of the siege during his third year of 702 B.C. is his account of the earthworks brought against the city. He did not do this according to the Biblical account of his invasion during Hezekiah's fourteenth year. Isaiah brings Hezekiah a message directly from God. The quote is from the Jerusalem Bible:

This, then, is what Yahweh says about the king of Assyria:  
"He will not enter this city,  
he will let fly no arrow against it,  
confront it with no shield,  
throw up no earthwork against it.  
By the road that he came on he will return;  
he shall not enter this city. It is Yahweh who speaks.  
I will protect this city and save it for my own sake and for the sake of my  
servant David." II Kings 19:32-34

This is hardly descriptive of the account as recorded by Sennacherib in the Assyrian records of his third year. During that assault, earthworks were very much a part of his military maneuvers. The Assyrian records require the third year of Sennacherib to be in 702 B.C.

## 2. 715 B.C.-- The Conflict Between Tirhakah And Sennacherib

The Biblical account in II Kings 18:13-- 19:37 indicates that during the invasion in Hezekiah's fourteenth year, Sennacherib was interrupted by a brash act of Tirhakah, king of Egypt. Once again, the Jerusalem Bible is quoted:

The cupbearer went back and rejoined the king of Assyria at Libnah, which he was attacking. The cupbearer had already learned that the king of Assyria had left Lachish, since he had received this news about Tirhakah, king of Cush, 'He had set out to fight you', .... II Kings 19:8-9

That scenario is not detailed in any existing Assyrian or Biblical record, but a plausible sketch could well have followed this outline. Sennacherib left Lachish in Judah to settle the problem with Tirhakah of Egypt.<sup>10</sup> Upon his return from Egypt, he either stopped off at Jerusalem with his army or went to rejoin a contingent which he had left in Judah only to find his troops decimated, which is certainly not the picture of Sennacherib's Judean exploits in his record of 702 B.C. II Kings 19:36 supports this thesis-- Sennacherib struck camp after finding his army depleted by sudden death in the night and left; he returned home and stayed in Nineveh. The account in II Chronicles 32 says he returned to Nineveh 'covered with disgrace', (Jerusalem Bible, verse 21) a phrase which is not descriptive of his account of his invasion during his third year, when he obviously returned as some sort of a triumphant conqueror with all the accompanying spoils of war. It seems reasonable to assume that the Assyrian records are silent concerning the conflict between Tirhakah and Sennacherib, and indeed, about the entire excursion into Palestine during the fourteenth year of Hezekiah.

### **3. 715 B.C.-- The Childless Condition Of Hezekiah**

Having been spared from Sennacherib in his fourteenth year, and given a fifteen year extension of life after a terminal illness, Hezekiah grew proud "and the wrath came on him and on Judah and Jerusalem," (II Chronicles 32:25, Jerusalem Bible). While it is not constructive to speculate too much in the face of total silence, it is not far-fetched to see the phrase 'the wrath' as possibly taking the form of a second invasion by Sennacherib.<sup>11</sup> Earlier in the kingdom of Judah, Jehoshaphat had formed an alliance with King Ahab of Israel to recover Ramoth-Gilead from Syria. Jehoshaphat was rebuked by Jehu the son of Hanani the seer who uttered-- "Shouldest thou help the ungodly, and love them that hate the Lord? therefore is wrath upon thee from before the Lord," (II Chronicles 19:2). This wrath took the form of invading armies-- Moab, Ammon and Edom-- entering the kingdom of Judah (II Chronicles 20:1-30).

When Isaiah reprimanded Hezekiah for indiscriminately exhibiting his wealth to the Babylonian envoy and predicted that his sons would serve as eunuchs in the palace of Babylon, Hezekiah did not seem particularly concerned (II Kings 20:7-19). Josephus has an interesting comment at this point. He says that the reason for Hezekiah's nonchalance is that he had no children at the time.<sup>12</sup> According to II Kings 21:1, Manasseh, son and successor of Hezekiah, was only twelve when his father died. Not only would this evidence require the extension of Hezekiah's life for an additional fifteen years as the text indicates, but it would also rule out the co-regency of Hezekiah and Manasseh that Thiele suggests.<sup>13</sup> Remarkably, however, the Assyrian records tell of taking away 'the daughters of the king'.<sup>14</sup>

### **4. 715-702 B.C.-- The Building Of The Conduit**

Both II Kings 20:20 and II Chronicles 32:30 credit Hezekiah with constructing the conduit from the springs of Gihon into the city of Jerusalem (pool of Siloam).<sup>15</sup> This tunnel, which still exists as constructed, was hewn out of solid rock in dimensions of 4' x 6' and extends for 1,777 feet.<sup>16</sup> The implication of the text

is that this feat was accomplished after the fourteenth year of Hezekiah and the first invasion by Sennacherib in 715 B.C. Therefore, the first invasion by Sennacherib demonstrated the need for the construction of the conduit (II Chronicles 32:1-5). Such an engineering achievement must have taken considerable time to complete, and would have been completed at the time of the second invasion by Sennacherib in 702 B.C., his third year (II Chronicles 32:30).

### **5. 715-702 B.C.-- The Tribute Differences**

The Biblical account indicates that Hezekiah paid tribute to Sennacherib in 715 B.C. and could have paid tribute in 702 B.C. while the Assyrian record only acknowledges the tribute of 702 B.C. The Biblical account indicates that Hezekiah gave all his wealth to Sennacherib, including gold from the Temple doors and pillars (II Kings 18:14-16) in his fourteenth year. Yet at a later date, he was able to display great riches to the emissary of Merodoch-baladan, king of Babylon (II Kings 20:12-13).

According to the Biblical account (II Kings 18:14), the tribute exacted by Sennacherib during Hezekiah's fourteenth year was 300 talents of silver and thirty talents of gold. The record of Sennacherib from the invasion of 702 B.C. indicates a tribute of thirty talents of gold and 800 talents of silver in addition to considerable wealth and booty of various types. The dissimilarity of the two accounts is indicative of two separate events, rather than that one account is inaccurate. Sennacherib boasts that in his campaign of 702 B.C. he took more tribute from Hezekiah than he had taken in 'the former time'.<sup>17</sup> This former tribute appears to be in 715 B.C. during Hezekiah's fourteenth year. It must be remembered that the text of II Kings 18:7 states that in his first year Hezekiah "rebelled against the king of Assyria, and served him not." Therefore, there was no tribute until Sennacherib in the fourteenth year of Hezekiah decided to collect on the arrears. The effort netted considerable booty, but Sennacherib left behind the bodies of 185,000 of his troops (II Kings 19:35). Later, in his annals on the Bull Inscription, Sennacherib writes the following remarks concerning Hezekiah: "I devastated the wide province of Judah; the strong proud Hezekiah, its king, I brought in submission to my feet."<sup>18</sup> This statement certainly does not agree with the Biblical text which relates Sennacherib's first invasion against Jerusalem in 715 B.C. The Assyrian account of the siege of Jerusalem in 702 B.C. contains other indicators that this is not the incident of Hezekiah's fourteenth year. The account in II Kings does not appear to describe the interaction between Hezekiah and Sennacherib as a siege of Jerusalem. In fact, it reads otherwise. The Assyrian record clearly describes a siege. It is clear that synchronization requires two campaigns by Sennacherib against Jerusalem, 715 B.C. and 702 B.C.

### **III. Problems With Sennacherib's Account**

Since the Biblical account and the Assyrian records do not coincide, it seems clear that the fourteenth year of Hezekiah is not the third year of Sennacherib. The ancient documents require two major campaigns by the Assyrian Sennacherib-- 1) the campaign of 715 B.C., the fourteenth year of Hezekiah, and given in the Hebrew text and 2) the campaign of 702 B.C., the third year of Sennacherib, and

given in the Akkadian annals of the king. The records of the Assyrians, while making no mention of the decimation of an Assyrian army outside of Jerusalem, corroborate the 'two campaigns' supposition as seen from the last section.

#### **A. 715 B.C.-- Sargon's Year Seven And Hezekiah's Year Fourteen**

In the seventh year of Sargon, Assyria received a tribute from Egypt.<sup>19</sup> The seventh year of Sargon is the fourteenth year of Hezekiah. The Assyrian records indicate that during his seventh year Sargon was busy conducting a campaign far to the north and was not in the area of Palestine; therefore, it has been assumed that the record must be in error. However, Sargon may not have exacted a tribute from Egypt in his seventh year, but his second in command may well have.

##### **1. 715 B.C.-- Tartan Against Syro-Palestine**

Assyrian records often credit a king with victories, subjugation, tribute, *etc.*, which were in fact executed by a surrogate, usually the second in command. An example is provided in the Assyrian records of Sargon's eleventh year. It describes the campaign against Ashdod:

In my eleventh year of reign ... Azuru, king of Ashdod, plotted in his heart to withhold (his) tribute and sent (messages) of hostility to the kings round about him. Because of the evil he had done, I put an end to his rule over the people of his land and set up Ahimitu, his full brother, as king over them. The Hittites, plotters of iniquity, detested his rule and elevated (to kingship) over them Iatna, who had no claim to the throne and who had (*lit.*, knew) no (more) respect for authority than they (themselves). In the anger of my heart, with my own war chariot and my horse (men) who never depart from my side in any dangerous(?) region, against Ashdod, his royal city, I advanced in haste. Ashdod, Gimtu (Gath) (and) Asdudim-mu, I besieged, I captured. The gods dwelling therein, himself, together with the people of his land, gold, silver, the goods of his palace, I counted as spoil. Their cities I built anew and settled therein the people of the lands my hands had conquered. My official I set over them as governor. I counted them with the people of Assyria and they drew my yoke.<sup>20</sup>

Isaiah 20:1 in the New International Version describes the same event as taking place by Sargon's vicar or supreme commander: "In the year that the supreme commander, sent by Sargon King of Assyria, came to Ashdod and attacked and captured it--."<sup>21</sup> Although there is no historical proof, the supreme commander may well have been Sargon's son, Sennacherib. In any event, the actual regent, Sargon, includes his supreme commander's activity among the achievements of his eleventh year.

The event involving Hezekiah at Jerusalem took place in the seventh year of Sargon (715 B.C.) but not in the third year of Sennacherib (702 B.C.). It is not at all surprising that the Assyrian records contain no evidence of the decimation of Sargon's Palestinian contingent under the command of Sennacherib. No nation in the Ancient Near East, except the Hebrews, recorded their defeats.

The Assyrian record of Sennacherib's siege of Hezekiah in Jerusalem is dated in his third year. Referring to the chart at Appendix B, one sees that 702 B.C. is Sennacherib's third year as king of Assyria. His campaign in the seventh year of Sargon took place thirteen years earlier, in the fourteenth year of Hezekiah, 715 B.C. At that time, he was co-regent or viceroy with his father, Sargon.

In his third year campaign, Sennacherib boasts that this was his fourth campaign into the area:

In my third campaign I went against the Hittite-land (Syria). Lule (Elulæus), king of Sidon,-- the terrifying splendor (*lit.*, terrors of the splendors) of my sovereignty overcame him and far off into the midst of the sea he fled. (There) he died. Great Sidon, Little Sidon, Bit-Zitti, Zaribtu, Mahalliba, Ushu, Akzib, Akku, his strong, walled cities, where there were supplies (*lit.*, fodder and drinking places) for his garrisons, -- the terrors of the weapons of Assur, my lord, overpowered them and they bowed in submission at my feet. Tuba'lu (Ethbaal, Ithbalus) I seated on the royal throne over them, and tribute, gift(s) for my majesty, I imposed upon him for all time, without ceasing. From Minhimmu (Menahem), the Shamsimurunite, Tuba'lu, the Sidonite, Abdi-li'ti, the Arvadite, Urumilki, the Gublite, Mitinti, the Ashdodite, Budu-ilu, the Beth-Ammonite, Kammusunadbi, the Moabite, Malik-rammu, the Edomite, -- kings of Amurru, all of them, lavish gifts, as their heavy tribute, they brought before me for the fourth time, and kissed my feet.<sup>22</sup>

This would only be possible 'in his third year' if he were counting previous campaigns when he was regent in Nineveh and his father, Sargon, was residing in a palace elsewhere. This dual regency is referred to in II Chronicles 32:4. Prior to the events of Hezekiah's fourteenth year, he prepares for the eventuality of an Assyrian invasion. His statement relative to the disguising of the water spring refers to *the kings of Assyria*. "Why should the kings of Assyria come and find much water?" Sennacherib was crown prince in Nineveh at the time, and his father, Sargon, was king in Babylon (II Kings 19:17).

## **2. 704 B.C.-- The End Of Merodach-baladan**

There are other matters to consider in the Assyrian records that shed light on the sequence of activities. The records of Sennacherib's first year (704 B.C.) tell of the defeat of Merodach-baladan and how he fled into the swamp and was never seen or heard from again.<sup>23</sup> Merodach-baladan could not have been around according to Sennacherib's annals regarding his third year. Yet, according to the Bible, the Babylonian monarch sends letters and a present to Hezekiah during his fourteenth year. After the abortive siege of Jerusalem and after Hezekiah's recovery from a serious illness, II Kings 20:12-13 contains the following information:

At that time Berodach-baladan, the son of Bala-dan, king of Babylon, sent letters and a present unto Hezekiah: for he had heard that Hezekiah had been sick. And Hezekiah hearkened unto them, and shewed them all the house of his precious things, the silver, and the gold, and the spices, and the precious ointment, and all the house of his armor, and all that was found in his treasures: there was nothing in his house, nor in all his dominion, that Hezekiah shewed them not.

This passage makes it clear that Hezekiah's fourteenth year preceded Sennacherib's third year. It is interesting to note that this text indicated that Hezekiah had managed to amass a sizeable treasure store after his fourteenth year. There appears to be a clue as to the source of at least some of this wealth mentioned in II Chronicles 32:23. After reporting the massacre of Sennacherib's army in the fourteenth year of Hezekiah, the text reads, "And many brought gifts unto the Lord to Jerusalem, and presents to Hezekiah king of Judah: so that he was magnified in the sight

of all nations thenceforth." Nations, who had felt the heel of Assyria upon their necks, were no doubt prone to express their gratitude in a tangible way to one who dealt a blow of retaliation against the aggressor.

During the invasion of his fourteenth year, Hezekiah had impoverished himself to the point of stripping the inlay from the Temple door jambs to provide tribute to Sennacherib (II Kings 18:16). The treasure that Hezekiah displayed so proudly and yet so indiscreetly to the Babylonian embassy is the source of the treasure listed in the Assyrian records of the third year of Sennacherib in 702 B.C., but not the tribute paid to Sennacherib in 715 B.C.

### **3. 729-699 B.C.-- Hezekiah's Reign vs. The Egyptian Records**

The proper dating of Hezekiah's reign and its synchronization with the Egyptian records is essential to an accurate chronology of the Hebrew kings. The Assyrian annals of Sennacherib refer to *the kings of Egypt* during the third campaign.<sup>24</sup> In 702 B.C., the Egyptian records indicate a dual regency of Sebteco and Taharqo (the Biblical Tirhakah).<sup>25</sup>

In the fourteenth year of Hezekiah, 715 B.C., Sabacos appears to be the sole regent of Egypt. However, the Bible refers to Tirhakah as 'king' (II Kings 19:9; Isaiah 37:9) in the same sense as it regards Sennacherib to be 'king' (II Kings 18:13). Both men in the fourteenth year of Hezekiah were supreme commanders of their respective armies. Sennacherib was a co-regent with Sargon at this time since the Bible refers to 'the kings of Assyria' (II Kings 19:17). But it seems that Tirhakah was not yet in a co-regency during Hezekiah's fourteenth year. Therefore, Isaiah, writing after the event, since this is not prophecy, would have referred to him as 'king'. Perhaps, Tirhakah was king when Isaiah was still writing. Today, an example of this type of writing would be: 'President Reagan was a movie star before he entered the political arena'. Since President Reagan has become President of the United States, it seems natural to use that title when referring to events in his life before he became President; thus, Isaiah did the same. Therefore, Egyptian chronology would indicate a co-regency of Egyptian kings in 702 B.C. during Sennacherib's third year, but it would seem to show a sole regent in 715 B.C. during Hezekiah's fourteenth year.

### **B. Hezekiah's Reign And Sennacherib's Four Campaigns**

On the basis of the examination of both the Biblical and Assyrian accounts, it is now possible to list the chronology of both records. The 'four' campaigns into the Syro-Palestine area with which Sennacherib credits himself are:

717 B.C.-- Sargon's campaign against Carchemish with Sennacherib as Tartan and co-regent.<sup>26</sup>

715 B.C.-- Sargon's seventh year and Hezekiah's fourteenth year with Sennacherib as Tartan and co-regent. This is the first tribute of Hezekiah when 185,000 Assyrian troops were lost at Jerusalem.

711 B.C.-- Sargon's campaign against Ashdod. Sennacherib conducts the campaign as co-regent.<sup>27</sup>

702 B.C.-- Sennacherib's third year as sole regent of Assyria and Hezekiah's twenty-

seventh year. This is the time of the siege against Jerusalem and of the second tribute from Hezekiah.

Hezekiah's corresponding activities and their dating are:

728 B.C.-- Hezekiah's reform and great Passover during his first year in which he gives an invitation to Israel soliciting her participation (II Chronicles 30:1-12; note especially the time element: II Chronicles 29:3, 17; 30:2, 13).

725 B.C.-- Shalmaneser invades Samaria in Hezekiah's fourth year (II Kings 18:9).

723 B.C.-- Destruction of Samaria by Shalmaneser with Sargon as chief general during Hezekiah's sixth year (II Kings 18:10). After this, Shalmaneser dies and Sargon carries out the deportation (II Kings 18:11).

715 B.C. -- Hezekiah's fourteenth year and Sargon's seventh year in which the decimation of Sennacherib's army occurred as described in Biblical accounts, but not in Assyrian records. Sennacherib was viceroy or co-regent with his father, Sargon, at this time (II Chronicles 32:1-4).

702 B.C.-- Sennacherib's second campaign in his third year against Hezekiah as sole regent of Assyria. This is contained in the Assyrian annals, but not telescoped in the Biblical account, and is Hezekiah's twenty-seventh year.<sup>28</sup>

#### **IV. Two Separate Campaigns In Summary**

The evidence for two separate campaigns by Sennacherib against Hezekiah is convincing, however, this historical interpretation requires further resolvment in two areas. Since the Assyrians did not record their defeats or humiliations, it is understandable as to why the Assyrian records are silent about the events of 715 B.C. in Hezekiah's fourteenth year. However, it is necessary to resolve why the otherwise candid Biblical account is silent regarding the siege and tribute of 702 B.C.<sup>29</sup> There is also a need for a better understanding of the Biblical account regarding the death of Sennacherib.

#### **A. The Biblical Text Regarding The Second Siege And Tribute**

The Scripture is probably silent concerning the second invasion by Sennacherib in 702 B.C. because it happened several years before the death of Judah's finest king since David (*cf.* II Kings 18: 3; II Chronicles 30:26). It would not seem proper to close Hezekiah's biography on such a tragic note as a humiliation by Sennacherib. Unlike secular historians, the Hebrews were unafraid to record their leader's failures and short-comings. This is certainly true of the accounts of the reign of Hezekiah. However, the Biblical writers emphasized his tremendous religious reforms, and great spiritual accomplishments.

It has always been Hebrew tradition never to end a Scripture reading or the story of a good man on a sad note. Certainly, such would have been the case with Hezekiah. Other Hebrew writings could have recorded the second invasion against Jerusalem by Sennacherib in 702 B.C. It appears that the chronicler of the book of II Kings was selective in his data, for he writes, "And the rest of the acts of Hezekiah, and all his might, and how he made a pool, and a conduit, and brought water into the city, are they not written in the book of the Chronicles of the kings of Judah?" (II Kings 20:20). Unfortunately, the book of the 'Chronicles Of The Kings Of Judah' is no longer extant which may have certain information regarding the

two sieges against Jerusalem by Sennacherib. The book does not appear to be I and II Chronicles which only gives a summary statement concerning the conduit (II Chronicles 32:30) and not details as promised by the chronicler in the book of Kings (II Kings 20:20). Perhaps, in the future, archaeologists will be able to recover the book of the 'Chronicles Of The Kings Of Judah'. Until then, the silence and tribute of Sennacherib's 702 B.C. campaign in the Biblical text must be viewed as a result of the authors of the books of I and II Kings and I and II Chronicles being selective in their writings concerning Hezekiah's reign.

#### **B. Sennacherib's Death In The Biblical Text-- 681 B.C.**

At first reading, both of the accounts in II Kings and II Chronicles, following the invasion of 715 B.C., would appear to infer that Sennacherib went home to Nineveh, totally humbled, to be assassinated by his own offspring shortly thereafter:

And the Lord sent an angel, which cut off all the mighty men of valour, and the leaders and captains in the camp of the king of Assyria. So he returned with shame of face to his own land. And when he was come into the house of his god, they that came forth of his own bowels slew him there with the sword. II Chronicles 32:21

So Sennacherib king of Assyria departed, and went and returned, and dwelt at Nineveh. And it came to pass, as he was worshipping in the house of Nisroch his god, that Adrammelech and Sharezer his sons smote him with the sword: and they escaped into the land of Armenia. And Esarhaddon his son reigned in his stead. II Kings 19:36-37

The problem is not with the content, for the facts are supported in detail by the Assyrian records.<sup>30</sup> The issue revolves around the time element of the accounts. The Assyrian documents do not allow the assassination of Sennacherib before the year 681 B.C. when he was succeeded by his son, Esarhaddon, as II Kings 19:37 states. The Assyrian record describes Esarhaddon's pursuit of his brothers to avenge the murder of his father, Sennacherib. The annals text relates their escape 'to parts unknown'.<sup>31</sup> This Assyrian chronology corresponds perfectly with the two-campaign position and with the Biblical assignment of a twenty-nine year reign to Hezekiah. The seeming insinuation that Sennacherib was killed shortly after the fourteenth year of Hezekiah is not explained. There is always the possibility that since the assassination of Sennacherib occurred almost twenty years after Hezekiah's death, its recording was done later by the court scribe at the point in the text he felt would be the most appropriate. The record of the ignominious death of Sennacherib in both II Kings and II Chronicles leaves little doubt in the reader's mind that his death is his just punishment for the blasphemies he uttered against Yahweh, for the ill treatment he imposed on Yahweh's anointed one and for his assault on Mount Zion, David's royal city.

#### **V. Summary Of Evidence Indicating Two Campaigns**

It is quite in order to summarize the data identified above that indicates two separate and distinct campaigns of Sennacherib against Hezekiah and Jerusalem,

and to arrange the information into an understandable scenario of events.

Samaria fell in the sixth year of Hezekiah (II Kings 18:10). This event dates Hezekiah's sixth year as 723 B.C. The time from the sixth year of Hezekiah to the fourteenth is eight years (715 B.C.). The time from the fall of Samaria (723 B.C.) until the third year of Sennacherib (702 B.C.) is twenty-one years. Therefore, it becomes evident that the fourteenth year of Hezekiah cannot be the third year of Sennacherib. Rather, the third year of Sennacherib (702 B.C.) is the twenty-seventh year of Hezekiah. Hezekiah was assaulted twice by Sennacherib: in his fourteenth year-- 715 B.C. and in his twenty-sixth year-- 702 B.C.

Samaria was still a nation at the time of the great Passover in King Hezekiah's first year. Therefore, the first year of Hezekiah must have occurred before 723 B.C. It is impossible to date his fourteenth year in 702 B.C.; for his first year would have been 716 B.C., a minimum of seven years too late to include the nation of Israel in his great Passover celebration.

Because Sargon was fighting a war far north of Palestine in his seventh year, his records of a Palestinian/Egyptian campaign that same year have been labelled erroneous. In light of the Biblical record of II Kings 18:13--19:37, however, Sargon was technically correct. He did not personally receive the tribute, but it was collected for him by his son, co-regent, and chief general, Sennacherib. This should not be difficult for any historian to accept when it is common knowledge that Sargon's records credit him with the fall and deportation of Samaria while both the Biblical and Babylonian records correctly identify Shalmaneser V as the victor. Sargon likely was there, but as Shalmaneser's supreme commander, not as king of Assyria, as his records claim.<sup>32</sup> He did not become king of Assyria until Shebat 10 (December 12, 722 B.C.)<sup>33</sup>

Some historians have recognized the difference in quantity and kind between the two tribute accounts-- Biblical and Assyrian. They have concluded that someone was not telling the truth. The solution is that two distinct tributes are involved, and were separated by a thirteen-year interval. It should be noted that the Hebrew account of II Kings 8:13-- 19:37 only tells of Sennacherib sending messengers to Hezekiah, where the Assyrian records very precisely describe a siege of Jerusalem.

Merodoch-baladan disappeared into the swamplands after his defeat in Sennacherib's first year (704 B.C.) although Sennacherib conducted an extensive search for him. He never shows up again in any historical record. Scripture, however, describes him as quite well and alive sometime during Hezekiah's fourteenth year (II Kings 20:12-13). It is imperative, therefore, that the third year of Sennacherib be placed sometime later than Hezekiah's fourteenth year. If they were the same date, Merodoch-baladan would have been dead or camping in the swamplands for several years before he sent messengers to Hezekiah with congratulatory gifts for his decimation of Sennacherib.

All of the evidence discussed in this chapter makes it clear that the account of Sennacherib's invasion against Jerusalem in the Biblical text and in the Assyrian records are two separate events. It is impossible to see the accounts as parallel. Therefore, it is evident that Hezekiah's fourteenth year is parallel to Sargon's seventh year which occurred in 715 B.C. This upholds the integrity of the Hebrew

## Chapter V - Hezekiah Vs. Sennacherib: Thiele's Anachronism

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text. It is also evident that the third year of Sennacherib parallels the Assyrian annal's record which speaks of Sennacherib's siege against Jerusalem in Hezekiah's twenty-seventh year-- 702 B.C.

## Chapter V - NOTES

<sup>1</sup>It should be noted at the outset that some scholars (Albright, Finegan, Bright, *et al.*) have recognized the discrepancies that exist between the Biblical and Assyrian accounts of Sennacherib's siege of Jerusalem and concluded that there must be two separate events described.

<sup>2</sup>Thiele asserts, "And there is no question concerning 701 as the fourteenth year of Hezekiah when Sennacherib came against him." Edwin R. Thiele, *The Mysterious Numbers Of The Hebrew Kings* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan Publishing House, 1983), p. 175. Also, he writes: "A solid synchronism between Judah and Assyria at which our pattern of Hebrew dates could begin is 701 B.C. That is a definitely fixed date in Assyrian history and is the year in which Sennacherib in his third campaign 'went against the Hittite-land' (Aram), and shut up 'Hezekiah the Jew ... like a caged bird in Jerusalem, his royal city.' That took place in the fourteenth year of Hezekiah (2 Kings 18:13), that is, in the year 701." Thiele, *Ibid.*, p. 78.

<sup>3</sup>Thiele, however, makes such unwarranted and unsupported statements as, "The entire record points clearly to the fact that when Hezekiah came to the throne, the nation of Israel had ceased to exist, having fallen prey to Assyria;" and "Since, according to 2 Kings 18:13, it was in the fourteenth year of Hezekiah that Sennacherib came against him, we have 701 B.C. established as the fourteenth year of Hezekiah." *A Chronology Of The Hebrew Kings* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan Publishing House, 1977), pp. 54 and 30. The above statements are not justified on the basis of either Biblical text or Assyrian record. In a perilous attempt to arrange the chronology of the Hebrew kings to fit such fallacious assumptions, Thiele finds it necessary to create 'dual reigns', invent a 'second kingdom' in Israel, and declare an almost incomprehensible co-regency between Hezekiah and his nefarious son, Manasseh.

<sup>4</sup>Chronologists seem willing to assign co-regencies to Hebrew kings at the slightest pretext so as to make the numbers 'come out'. Then they are loathe to do so in regard to contemporary kingdoms even when the records provide every justification. The appointment of a crown prince to the position of regent, in order to handle the affairs of state prior to the death of an aging and infirm father was common and sensible in the western court for centuries. It is somewhat naive to think that the practice in the Near East of earlier years would be any different.

<sup>5</sup>Note the reference in II Chronicles 30 to the kings (plural) of Assyria. The text of I Chronicles describes an invasion of Samaria by Pul and a subsequent deportation by Tiglath-pileser.

<sup>6</sup>Pul's invasion occurred in the sixth year of Menahem of Israel. It is recorded in the Assyrian eponym of 755 B.C. during the reign of Ashur-dan III and in the Hebrew text of II Kings 15:19-20:

"And Pul the king of Assyria came against the land: and Menahem gave Pul a thousand talents of silver, that his hand might be with him to confirm the kingdom in his hand. And Menahem exacted the money of Israel, even of all the mighty men of wealth, of each man fifty shekels of silver, to give to the king of Assyria. So the king of Assyria turned back, and stayed not there in the land."

A parallel passage appears in I Chronicles 5:25-26:

"And they transgressed against the God of their fathers, and went a whoring after the gods of the people of the land, whom God destroyed before them. And the God of Israel stirred up the spirit of Pul king of Assyria, and the spirit of Tiglath-pileser king of Assyria, and he carried them away, even the Reubenites, and the Gadites, and the half tribe of Manasseh, and brought them unto Halah, and Habor, and Hara, and to the river Gozan, unto this day."

It is quite possible that Pul could be the Hebrew's designation for Ashur-dan III and that he deported the trans-jordan tribes of Reuben, Gad, and the half tribe of Manasseh. Possibly, Ashur-dan III and Tiglath-pileser were brothers and Tiglath-pileser served as a second in command to Ashur-dan III.

<sup>7</sup>The second invasion and deportation took place under Tiglath-pileser 'in the days of Pekah king of Israel' when the tribe was deported. The Assyrian Eponym Record is found in the eponymies of 733, 732 B.C. and the Hebrew record is the text of II Kings 15:29: "In the days of Pekah king

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of Israel came Tiglath-pileser king of Assyria, and took Ijon, and Abel-beth-maa-chah, and Janoah, and Kedesh and Hazor, and Gilead, and Galilee, all the land of Naphtali, and carried them captive to Assyria." These events, a few years prior to Hezekiah's invitation to the Passover, would be fresh in the memories of the Israelites of 728 B.C. For a succinct, but excellent discussion of this issue, see John Bright, *A History of Israel* (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1981), p. 282-287.

<sup>8</sup>As noted in footnote 1, some scholars of repute are aware of the problem and recognize that the differences in the accounts point to two separate events. Some see evidence of two accounts in the Biblical text. A discussion of that issue is beyond the limitations of this study. Bright, *op. cit.*, pp. 261-271 provides a fair and scholarly assessment of this particular issue.

<sup>9</sup>Daniel David Luckenbill, *Ancient Records Of Assyria And Babylonia*, Volume II (New York: Greenwood Press, Publishers, 1968), sec. 240, pp. 120-121.

<sup>10</sup>It should be pointed out that the kings of the Twenty-fifth Dynasty in Egypt were kings of the Ethiopian dynasty. That is why Tirhakah is called 'king of Cush' in the Biblical Text. See James Henry Breasted, *Ancient Records Of Egypt*, Volume IV (New York: Russell & Russell, 1962), pp. 451 and 455.

<sup>11</sup>*Cf.*, II Chronicles 32:26; In the light of this verse and II Kings 20:17-19, the real 'wrath' would occur at the hand of Babylon at a later date. But wrath at first did occur in a smaller way for Hezekiah in the second invasion of Sennacherib in 702 B.C.

<sup>12</sup>The possibility that King Hezekiah had no children at this time, would support the proposal of a second invasion by Sennacherib. According to the Biblical text, Hezekiah's illness occurred after the first invasion by Sennacherib. Josephus, the Jewish historian, writes the following about Hezekiah's childless condition at the time of his terminal illness:

"... besides the distemper itself, there was a very melancholy circumstance that disordered the king, which was the consideration that he was childless, and was going to die, and leave his house (dynasty) and his government without a successor of his own body: so he was troubled at the thoughts of this his condition, and lamented himself, and entreated of God that he would prolong his life for a little while till he had some children, and not suffer him to depart this life before he was become a father," *Antiquities* X.ii.1.

The annals of Sennacherib tell us that during his third campaign, he came against Hezekiah and took 'his daughters' and 'his palace women' to Nineveh. *ARAB*, Vol. II, sec. 239-240, pp. 118-121; sec. 309-312, pp. 142-143. This could not be the invasion of II Kings 18:13- 19:37; for according to Josephus, Hezekiah was childless at that time. It appears from the Assyrian records that Sennacherib would only have been the crown prince during his first invasion of 715 B.C.-- the fourteenth year of Hezekiah and that the second invasion of 702 B.C.-- the third year of Sennacherib occurred thirteen years later.

<sup>13</sup>Besides the chronological impossibility of such a co-regency, the textual evidence discourages such an assertion. II Kings 21:9 records in the Jerusalem Bible the wickedness of Manasseh: "Manasseh led them astray, so that they did more evil than those nations Yahweh had destroyed before the sons of Israel." II Chronicles 30:26 of the Jerusalem Bible records in contrast, the righteousness of Hezekiah: "There was a great rejoicing in Jerusalem, for since the time of Solomon son of David, king of Israel, nothing comparable had ever occurred in Jerusalem (in reference to the the keeping of the Passover)." It is hardly possible that these two monarchs reigned simultaneously!

<sup>14</sup>*ARAB*, Vol. II, Sec. 240, p. 121; sec. 312, p. 143.

<sup>15</sup>The 'Siloam Inscription' was found accidentally in 1880 by students exploring the area. The inscription was scratched on the wall by one of the workmen involved in the project. The Siloam inscription (currently in the Museum of Istanbul) contains this description of the final moments of

construction:

"... when] (the tunnel) was driven through. And this was the way in which it was cut through: -- While [...] (were) still [...] axe[s], each man toward his fellow, and while there were still three cubits to be cut through, [there was heard] the voice of a man calling to his fellow, for there was *an overlap* in the rock on the right [and on the left]. And when the tunnel was driven through, the quarrymen hewed (the rock), each man toward his fellow, axe against axe; and the water flowed from the spring toward the reservoir for 1,200 cubits, and the height of the rock above the head(s) of the quarrymen was an 100 cubits." James B. Pritchard, ed. *Ancient Near Eastern Texts* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1969), p. 321.

<sup>16</sup>Hezekiah's tunnel has continued to bring water into Jerusalem from the time of its construction to the present day. The writer of the Apocryphal Book of Ecclesiasticus mentions it (48:17), apparently indicating its existence and purpose were still known in the second century B.C. By the first century A.D., however, it would seem that the tunnel itself had been all but forgotten for Josephus, in a detailed description of Jerusalem and its environs, refers only to the 'fountain' of Siloam (modern 'Ain Silwan) which he locates correctly at the mouth of the Tyropoeon valley-- the valley of the Cheese-mongers (*cf.*, *De Bello Judaico* V.iv.1). Josephus evidently considered the 'fountain' to be a spring rather than the lower end of the tunnel, which by this time had doubtless begun to fill with calcareous deposits.

The first modern explorer of the tunnel was the American scholar, Edward Robinson, who, together with his friend, Eli Smith, a missionary in Syria, traversed its entire length in April of 1838. They discovered the fact that the tunnel, through portions of which it was necessary to crawl, had not been cut in a straight line but wound a serpentine course through the rock. The reason for the zig-zag route is still unknown; it has been supposed that the diggers tried to avoid the royal tombs that were in the vicinity, or that they attempted to follow natural fissures or soft veins of limestone rock. Perhaps their surveying methods were inadequate. At any rate, Robinson noted that the gangs of workmen had done the actual labor of excavation, proceeding toward each other through Ophel hill, one starting from inside the city by the Siloam pool, the other from outside by the Gihon spring.

<sup>17</sup>The former tribute reference is found in the following portion of Sennacherib's third campaign--

"... Himself, like a caged bird, I shut up in Jerusalem, his royal city. Earthworks I threw up against him, -- the one coming out of his city gate I turned back to his misery. The cities of his, which I had despoiled, I cut off from his land to Mitinti, king of Ashdod, Padi, king of Ekron, and Silli-bel, king of Gaza, I gave them. And (thus) I diminished his land. I added to the former tribute, and laid upon him (*var.*, them) as their yearly payment, a tax (in the form of) gifts for my majesty." *ARAB*, Vol. II, sec. 240, p. 120.

<sup>18</sup>*ARAB*, Vol. II, sec. 327, p. 148.

<sup>19</sup>The Assyrian Sargon in the Khorsabad texts writes that in his seventh year he exacted tribute from Pharaoh, king of Egypt. His claim reads:

"In my seventh year of reign, ... From Pir'u, (Pharaoh) king of Egypt, Samsi, queen of Arabia, It'amra, the Sabeans, the kings of the seacoast and the desert, I received gold, products of the mountain, precious stones, ivory, seed of the maple(?), all kinds of herbs, horses, and camels, as their tribute." *ARAB*, Vol. II, sec. 12-18, pp. 6-8.

At this point, it should be recalled that the Biblical account in II Kings 19:9 relates the fact that Tirhakah, the Ethiopian Pharaoh, fought against the king of Assyria. Since this is prior to Tirhakah's accession, the conclusion is that Shabaka sent his nephew in command of the Egyptian and Ethiopian forces against Assyrians.

Also in his seventh year, Sargon speaks of resettling Samaria:

"The tribes of Tamud, Ibadid, Marsimanu and Haiapa, distant Arabs, who inhabit the desert, who know neither high nor low officials (governors nor superintendents), and who had not brought their tribute to any king, -- with the weapon of Assur, my lord, I struck them down, the remnant of them I deported and settled them in Samaria." *ARAB*, Vol. II, sec. 17, p. 7.

Sargon's account of the tribute of Pharaoh and the resettling of Samaria provide evidence of

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the Assyrian military in the area of Jerusalem in 715 B.C. Another inscription, undated but assigned to the early years of his reign and perhaps related to Sargon's seventh year, is the Nimrud Inscription. In this text, Sargon calls himself "subduer of the land of laudu (Judah), which lies far away." *ARAB*, Vol. II, sec. 137, p. 72. One of the two prism inscriptions from Nineveh, which is not dated but certainly must come from Sargon's seventh year because of the reference to Pir'u (Pharoah) king of Egypt, mention the kings of Philistia, Judah, Edom and Moab. The Prism A Inscription reads:

'... To the kings of the lands of Piliste (Philistia), laudi (Judah), Edom, Moab, who dwell by the sea, payers of tribute [and] tax to Assur, my lord, (they sent) numberless inflammatory and disdainful (messages) to set them, at enmity with me, to Pir'u, king of Egypt, a prince who could not save them, they sent their presents (bribes) and attempted to gain him as an ally. ...' *ARAB*, Vol. II, Sec. 195, p. 105.

This Assyrian inscription provides a perfect harmony with the fourteenth year of Hezekiah and the reference to Tirhakah as a prince. The Ethiopian Pharoah in II Kings 19:9 was Tirhakah who would soon share a co-regency and finally become king.

<sup>20</sup>*ARAB*, Vol. II, sec. 29-30, pp. 13-14.

<sup>21</sup>Scholars long had doubted the existence of Sargon since the only reference to him was this reference in Isaiah. Archaeological excavations have since revealed both his existence and his significance in Assyrian history. The King James Version reads: "In the year that Tartan came unto Ashdod ..." (Isaiah 20:1). The Akkadian word *tartanu* which is transliterated in the text means 'chief general'. It should be pointed out that the Assyrian king sent, "Tartan and Rabsaris and Rabshakeh from Lachish to king Hezekiah ..." (II Kings 18:17). These are titles of special representatives of the king.

<sup>22</sup>*ARAB*, Vol. II, sec. 239, pp. 118-119.

<sup>23</sup>On the famous Taylor Prism, Sennacherib's account of his triumph over Merodach-baladan is reviewed--

"In my first campaign I accomplished the defeat of Merodach-baladan, king of Babylonia, together with the army of Elam, his ally, in the plain of Kish. In the midst of that battle he forsook his camp and made his escape alone; (so) he saved his life. The chariots, horses, wagons, mules, which he left behind at the onset of battle, my hands seized. Into his palace, which is in Babylon, joyfully I entered. I opened his treasure-house: --gold, silver, vessels of gold and silver, precious stones of every kind (name), goods and property without limit (number), heavy tribute, his harem, (his) courtiers and officials, singers, male and female, all of his artisans, as many as there were, the servants of his palace, I brought out, I counted as spoil. In the midst of Assur, my lord, 75 of his strong, walled cities, of Chaldea, and 420 small cities of their environs, I surrounded, I conquered, their spoil I carried off. The Arabs, Arameans, and Chaldeans, who were in Erech, Nippur, Kish, Harsagkalamma, Kutha and Sippar, together with the citizens, the rebels (*lit.*, sinners), I brought out, as booty I counted them." *ARAB*, Vol. II, sec. 234, p. 116.

A longer account of only the first campaign by Sennacherib is written on a cylinder, presumably soon after the event. [See *ARAB*, Vol. II, sec. 256-267, pp. 128-133]. In this annals text, the Assyrian monarch relates how Merodach-baladan, king of Babylon '(whose heart is wicked), an instigator of revolt, plotter of rebellion (*lit.*, belly, mind, of rebellion), doer of evil, whose guilt is heavy' was able to escape and to save his life. The Assyrian states: "I hurried after him, sent my warriors to Guzummanu, into the midst of the swamps and marshes and they searched for him for five days, but his (hiding)-place was not found."

<sup>24</sup>In the third campaign of Sennacherib, the Assyrian king records on the Taylor Prism, his contact with Egyptian kings and forces:

"In my third campaign I went against the Hittitland (Syria). The officials, nobles and people of Ekron, who had thrown Padi, their king, bound by (treaty to) Assyria, into fetters of iron and

had given him over to Hezekiah, the Jew (*laudaï*), -- he kept him in confinement like an enemy, -- they (*lit.*, their heart) became afraid and called upon the Egyptian kings, the bowmen, chariots and horses of the king of Meluhha (Ethiopia), a countless host, and these came to their aid. In the neighborhood of the city of Altaku (Eltekeh), their ranks being drawn up before me, they offered battle. (Trusting) in the aid of Assur, my lord, I fought with them and brought about their defeat. The Egyptian charioteers and princes, together with the charioteers of the Ethiopian king, my hands took alive in the midst of the battle." *ARAB*, Vol. II, sec. 240, pp. 119-120.

On a Bull Inscription from the palace at Nineveh, Sennacherib again mentions the Egyptian kings in the annals of the third campaign:

"In the course of my campaign I captured his cities, which had not submitted at my feet, I carried off their spoil. The governors and people of Amkaruna (Ekron), who had thrown into iron fetters Padi, their king, who was bound by oath to Assyria, and had given him to Hezekiah, the Jew, -- he kept him in confinement, -- they became afraid, and appealed (for aid) to the Egyptian kings, the bowmen, the chariots and horses of the king of Meluhha, a countless host. In the plain of Altaka (Eltekeh) I fought with them, I defeated them. The charioteers and Egyptian princes, together with the charioteers of the king of Meluhha, I captured alive with my (own) hand." *ARAB*, Vol. II, sec. 311, pp. 142-143.

<sup>25</sup>The Twenty-fifth Dynasty of Egypt was an Ethiopian dynasty. The king of Meluhha refers to the Ethiopian king. The three Ethiopian Pharaohs were Shabaka, (Sabacos) Shabataka, (Sebtco) and Taharka(h) (Taharqo) or the Biblical Tirhakah. Shabataka is the son of Shabaka and Taharka(h) is the nephew of Shabaka. The Tanis Stela [See Breasted, *Ancient Records Of Egypt*, Vol. IV, sec. 895, pp. 456-457] narrates how Taharka came from Nubia as a youth of twenty years with some king. This would have been on the invasion of the Lower Egypt by Shabaka. It appears that Taharka(h) in 715 B.C. was commander of the Egyptian and Ethiopian forces when he confronted the Assyrians --Sargon's Tartan-- according to the Biblical text. Later, he was co-regent with his cousin, Shabataka, when the Egyptian kings fought Sennacherib in 702 B.C. according to the Assyrian annals.

<sup>26</sup>*ARAB*, Vol. II, sec. 8, p. 4.

<sup>27</sup>*ARAB*, Vol. II, sec. 29, p. 13.

<sup>28</sup>*ARAB*, Vol. II, sec. 239-240, pp. 118-121; sec. 311, pp. 142-143.

<sup>29</sup>Some see evidence of a second assault in the words of II Chronicles 32:25 regarding Hezekiah's recovery from terminal illness: "But Hezekiah made no return for the benefit he received; his heart grew proud and the wrath came on him and on Judah and Jerusalem" (Jerusalem Bible). Yahweh's characteristic means of humbling Israel and Judah was to utilize the domination of a foreign power. The Assyrian annals of Sennacherib's assault against Jerusalem during his third year fits the words, 'the wrath'. Nevertheless, this verse contains no specific information whatsoever as to what particular device Yahweh used to deliver 'the wrath' that came 'on him (Hezekiah) and on Judah and Jerusalem'. That these words are evidence of the 702 B.C. campaign is possible, but speculative, at this point. Other scholars as John Bright, *et al.*, see evidence of the two separate invasions telescoped into one account in the Biblical record. For a discussion of this possibility, see *A History Of Israel*, pp. 282-287.

<sup>30</sup>The historical texts of Esarhaddon contain the plot of his brothers against their father, Sennacherib--

"[In] the month *Nisanu*, on a favorable day, complying with their exalted command, I made my joyful entrance into the royal palace (harem), the awesome place, wherein abides the fate of kings (*lit.*, of kingship). A firm [determination] 'fell upon' my brothers. They forsook the gods and turned to their deeds of violence, plotting evil. Evil word(s) and deed(s) contrary to the will (*lit.*, heart) of god, they perpetrated against me. Unholy hostility they planned behind my back. ... They revolted(?). To gain the kingship they slew Sennacherib, their father]. Assur, Sin, Shamash, Bel



## Chapter VI - PUL: THIELE'S ANACHRONISM

The preceding chapter found a solution to the apparent discrepancy between the Biblical record and the annals of Sennacherib regarding Hezekiah's fourteenth year and the two-fold invasion of Sennacherib against Jerusalem. Now it becomes necessary to turn one's attention to the next problem area in the Assyrian records. This problem area deals with the question of the identity of Pul and the spurious inscriptions given to Tiglath-pileser III.

### I. The Problem Of Pul's Identity

The area of apparent chronological conflict between the records of Assyria and the Biblical narrative involves certain inscriptions ascribed to Tiglath-pileser III, and the identification of the Biblical Pul. The Assyrian documents, as have been assigned to Tiglath-pileser, require his presence in Palestine during the reigns of Uzziah (Azariah) of Judah and Menahem of Israel; for Tiglath-pileser claims to have taken tribute from both of them.<sup>1</sup> Thiele identifies Pul as Tiglath-pileser and regards his reign (745-727 B.C.) as coinciding with the reigns of the following Hebrew kings: Menahem, Uzziah, Pekah, Hoshea and Ahaz who are mentioned in Assyrian documents. As a result of this assumption, he has moved the Hebrew kings forward in this period by approximately ten years in an unwarranted and unnecessary effort to force conformity of the Hebrew text with the Assyrian records.<sup>2</sup>

### A. Pul In Scripture And Josephus

The first issue that needs attention is the almost universal assumption that Tiglath-pileser and Pul are to be identified as separate names for the same individual. Unfortunately, the data for these two kings is sparse, especially that of 'Pul'.<sup>3</sup> Earlier chronologists identified Pul with Vullush or Adad-nirari II (811 B.C.--783 B.C.) who made a campaign into Palestine in 802 B.C., but he could not have made contact with Menahem (761 B.C.--751 B.C.).

#### 1. Pul vs. Tiglath-pileser In Scripture

The assumption that Pul is Tiglath-pileser is immediately contradicted by the following statement from the Hebrew text<sup>4</sup> which identifies the individualness of both Pul and Tiglath-pileser:

And the God of Israel stirred up the spirit of Pul king of Assyria, and the spirit of Tilgath-pilneser king of Assyria, and he carried them away, even the Reubenites, and the Gadites, and the half tribe of Manasseh, and brought them unto Halah, and Habor, and Hara, and to the river Gozan, unto this day. I Chronicles 5:26

The invasion by Pul and the invasion by Tiglath-pileser are both identifiable in the Hebrew record and in the Assyrian Eponym List. The invasion by Pul is

mentioned in II Kings 15--

And Pul the king of Assyria came against the land: and Menahem gave Pul a thousand talents of silver, that his hand might be with him to confirm the kingdom in his hand. And Menahem exacted the money of Israel, even of all the mighty men of wealth, of each man fifty shekels of silver, to give to the king of Assyria. So the king of Assyria turned back, and stayed not there in the land. II Kings 15:19-20

Since the Hebrew texts do not allow a single king to fit both Pul and Tiglath-pileser, one must examine every possible king of this period so that one can identify the real Pul. Sometimes, Assyrian kings had more than one name.

## **2. Pul vs. Tiglath-pileser In Josephus**

From Josephus' statement, it seems certain that the Jewish historian understood Pul to be a different king of Assyria from Tiglath-pileser. He writes--

And after this manner it was that this Menahem continued to reign with cruelty and barbarity for ten years; but when Pul, king of Assyria, had made an expedition against him, he did not think meet to fight or engage in battle with the Assyrians, but he persuaded him to accept of a thousand talents of silver, and to go away, and so put an end to the war. This sum the multitude collected for Menahem, by exacting fifty drachmae as poll-money for every head; after when he died, and was buried in Samaria, and left his son Pekahiah his successor in the kingdom, who followed the barbarity of his father, and so ruled but two years only, after which he was slain with his friends at a feast, by the treachery of one Pekah, the general of his horse, and the son of Remaliah, who had laid snares for him. Now this Pekah held the government twenty years, and proved a wicked man and a transgressor. But the king of Assyria, whose name was Tiglath-Pileser, when he had made an expedition against the Israelites, and had overrun all the land of Gilead, and the region beyond Jordan, and the adjoining country, which is Galilee, and Kadesh, and Hazor, he made the inhabitants prisoners, and transplanted them into his own kingdom. And so much shall suffice to have related here concerning the king of Assyria. *Antiquities IX.xi.1*

Thus, Josephus sees Pul as exacting tribute from Menahem and Tiglath-pileser as deporting some of the inhabitants of the Galilee region, a second deportation. These invasions into Syro-Palestine along with the first deportation of Pul in 765 B.C. form the divine judgment against Israel by 'the spirit of Pul king of Assyria' and 'the spirit of Tiglath-pileser king of Assyria' mentioned in I Chronicles 5:25-26. Since Josephus also shows that the Assyrian king who collected tribute from Menahem of Israel is Pul and not Tiglath-pileser, it would be good to identify the Biblical Pul as one of the kings of Assyria preceding Tiglath-pileser. This will be done after an examination of the texts of the Assyrians.

## **B. Researching The Eponyms of Assyria**

The eponyms show no military activity into Palestine after 841 B.C., the eighteenth year of Shalmaneser III, until 773 B.C.- 772 B.C., the accession year of Ashur-dan III. This seventy year period of history only records one eponym, during the ninth of Adad-nirari III (802 B.C.) where a trip to the seacoast was made.

There are no annalistic inscriptions accredited to the period from 773 B.C.-755 B.C., yet the eponyms show several military incursions into Palestine. At this point, one cannot ignore the eponyms. A major conflict exists between the eponym activity of the kings, and the inscriptions given to them for the period between 756 B.C.-723 B.C. This factor also cannot be ignored. The eponyms must carry more weight than the inscriptions because they show the military activity year by year in the Assyrian Empire. This activity list cannot as easily be changed to make one king look better than another, whereas the inscriptions can mislead the historian in two ways: 1) they can be deliberately defaced by later kings, and 2) they can be incorrectly ascribed to a king by archaeologists and Assyriologists because of their mutilated condition or because of preconceived notions about the chronology of the period. One must categorize the incursions into Palestine for the period from 773 B.C. through 723 B.C. and then make the inscriptions fit into the framework of these eponyms. Correct Bible chronology must also synchronize with these eponyms if the eponyms are reliable. The reader may want to refer to Appendix A which contains the Assyrian Eponym Canon as the Syro-Palestine incursions are outlined:

- 1). 773 B.C.-- Damascus; Year twenty-seven for Uzziah of Judah, and Jeroboam II of Israel, and the accession year of Ashur-dan III.
- 2). 772 B.C.-- Hatarika; Year twenty-eight for Uzziah and Jeroboam II, and year one for Ashur-dan III.
- 3). 765 B.C.-- Hatarika; Year thirty-five for Uzziah and Jeroboam II, and year eight for Ashur-dan III.
- 4). 755 B.C.-- Hatarika; Year forty-five for Uzziah of Judah, year six for Menahem of Israel, and year eighteen for Ashur-dan III.
- 5). 734 B.C.-- Philistia; Year ten for Ahaz of Judah and year seventeen for Pekah of Israel, and year eleven of Tiglath-pileser III.
- 6). 733 B.C.-- Damascus; Year eleven for Ahaz and year eighteen for Pekah, and year twelve for Tiglath-pileser III.
- 7). 732 B.C.-- Damascus; Year twelve for Ahaz, year nineteen for Pekah, and year thirteen for Tiglath-pileser.
- 8). 727 B.C.-- Damascus; Year two of Hezekiah of Judah, year five of Hoshea of Israel, and the accession year of Shalmaneser.
- 9). 725-723 B.C.-- [Samaria]; Years four to six of Hezekiah, years seven to nine of Hoshea and years two through four of Shalmaneser V.

### **C. Researching The Biblical Records.**

The Bible lists several incursions into Israelite territory by Assyrian kings, and calls them out by name. These passages also must be listed and compared to the eponyms:

- 1). Jeroboam II lost lands to the Assyrians (II Kings 14:26).
- 2). Jeroboam recovered the territory lost (II Kings 14:25).

- 3). Pul (LXX; 'Phaloch') and Tiglath-pileser deported the tribes of Reuben, Gad, and the half tribe of Manasseh (I Chronicles 5:26). At that time according to the Talmud, Jubilees were no longer counted.
- 4). Pul (LXX; 'Phua') collected a tribute from Menahem and then left the land unmolested (IV Kings 15:19-20; LXX).
- 5). Tiglath-pileser III assisted Ahaz in the struggle against Pekah of Israel and Rezin of Syria which had continued for several years. He killed Rezin; and Hoshea conspired against Pekah and slew him. Ahaz then went to Damascus to see Tiglath-pileser. At that time, he deported Damascus, and possibly a portion of the Israelite tribes (II Kings 16:5-14).
- 6). Hoshea and Hezekiah revolted against Assyria in the first year of Hezekiah. This prompted Shalmaneser V to come against Samaria and receive a tribute (II Kings 17:3, 18:7).
- 7). Shalmaneser came against Samaria for three years, defeating her in the third year, which was the sixth year of Hezekiah (II Kings 17:5-7, 18:9-11).

#### **D. Comparing The Two Records**

- 1). 773 B.C.-- 772 B.C.-- Jeroboam II suffers defeat under Assyria and Syria
- 2). 765 B.C.-- The deportation of the trans-jordan tribes must coincide with the eponym of 765 B.C.; and the Jubilee year began in year 764 B.C.
- 3). 761 B.C.-- Jeroboam regains the lands lost to Assyria (see the concluding chapter).
- 4). 755 B.C.-- The tribute from Menahem must have taken place in 755 B.C., the only eponym which fits his reign according to the computer calendar chronology.
- 5). 734 B.C.-732 B.C.-- The war between Ahaz of Judah and Pekah of Israel lasted about two-three years, and terminated with the death of Rezin of Syria. The eponyms for years 734 B.C.- 732 B.C. would place this activity in the reign of Tiglath-pileser III. Any inscriptions which describe these activities must be placed in these three years. Tiglath-pileser shows no other military activity during his formal reign.
- 6). 727 B.C.-- The second year of Hezekiah, and the submission of Hoshea by Shalmaneser V of Assyria.
- 7). 725 B.C.- 723 B.C.-- The three year siege against Hoshea by Shalmaneser V, ending in the sixth year of Hezekiah.

#### **E. Researching The Assyrian Inscriptions In Question**

Not all texts autographed or assigned to Tiglath-pileser can belong to him.

Tiglath-pileser was by all appearances a usurper to the throne of Assyria. A fragmentary brick inscription identifies him as the son of Adad-nirari III, four kings prior to his reign.<sup>5</sup> The Assyrian King List identifies Tiglath-pileser III as the son of a different king, Ashur-nirari V who is identified as the son of Adad-nirari III.<sup>6</sup> This same list states that Ashur-nirari V, Shalmaneser IV, and Ashur-dan III were all brothers, and sons of Adad-nirari III.<sup>7</sup> Most likely the latter testimony is correct, since the Assyrian King List appears to be drawn up with less partiality than Tiglath-pileser's personal annals. Tiglath-pileser appears to have usurped the kingdom from Ashur-nirari V. He then destroyed the records of his father, Ashur-nirari V, and uncles, Shalmaneser IV and Ashur-dan III, or had them re-written back to his grandfather, Adad-nirari III, whom he claimed to be his father.<sup>8</sup> The Assyrian records contain very little information about Adad-nirari III, who made one invasion into Palestine during his reign in 802 B.C.,<sup>9</sup> and nothing about Shalmaneser IV and Ashur-dan III. The chronology of the Bible would indicate that Ashur-dan III was the king who repented following the preaching of Jonah in the city of Nineveh.

Perhaps, Tiglath-pileser justified his actions in destroying previous inscriptions and assigning some to himself as a religious act to return Assyria to her former gods. There are approximately 700 extant words ascribed to the thirty year period from Adad-nirari to Tiglath-pileser, whereas the latter's annals contain some 7000 words. It is note-worthy that a significant number of the inscriptions autographed by Tiglath-pileser deal with events preceding his reign. Less circumstantial is the evidence contained on the alabaster Stele of Bel-harran-bel-usur,<sup>10</sup> discovered in 1894 at Tell Abta, west of Mosul, and presently in the Constantinople Museum. The stele contains the words, "... Bel-harran-bel-usur, the major-domo of Tiglath-pileser, (*written over* Shalmaneser) king of Assyria."<sup>11</sup> The name, 'Tiglath-pileser' is written over another Assyrian name on the stele. That other name is 'Shalmaneser IV', immediate successor to Adad-nirari III and two monarchs before Tiglath-pileser.

In conclusion, it seems possible that Tiglath-pileser has written his name over inscriptions and annals which belonged to the Biblical Pul. There is no reason however, to discredit the records of Tiglath-pileser *in toto*. Among his many claims are a substantial number that are supported by other historical data. For example, one would not discredit Tiglath-pileser's claim that he killed Rezin of Damascus, that he removed Pekah of Israel (751 B.C.- 731 B.C.) that he installed Hoshea (732 B.C.- 723 B. C.) to rule Israel, and that he received tribute from Ahaz (Jehoahaz) of Judah (744 B.C.- 728 B.C.). Some of these annals texts are quoted below.

### 1. The Annals Of Tiglath-pileser III

The Biblical campaign by Pul and his extraction of tribute by Menahem would fit the eponymous year of Ikishu, (governor) of Mehinish(?), where the campaign is directed against Hatarika in 755 B.C.<sup>12</sup> An Assyrian texts recording this event have been given to Tiglath-pileser. It is known that the annals texts of Tiglath-pileser were engraved upon the slabs of the rebuilt central palace at Calah (Nimrud) and were later removed by Esarhaddon to be used in his southwest palace of the

same city. Unfortunately, the annals are in a fragmentary state resulting from the removal and retrimming of the stone. Because of the fragmentary condition, it could even be possible that these texts which have been assigned to Tiglath-pileser are really annals of a previous king.<sup>13</sup> Daniel David Luckenbill has written the following regarding the fragmentary condition of the texts: "Without the aid of the Eponym List with Notes it would have been impossible to arrange the fragments in their chronological order, and, even so, future discoveries are likely to show that the arrangement now generally accepted is wrong."<sup>14</sup> The historical text which speaks of Menahem is now quoted--

The tribute of Kushtashpi of Kummuhu, Rasunnu (Rezin) of Aram, Menihim-mu (Menahem) of Samerina (Samaria), Hirammu (Hiram) of Tyre, Sitti-bi'li of Gubla (Gebail), Urikki of Kue, Pisiris of Carchemish, Eni-ilu of Hamath, Panammu of Sam'al, Tarhulara of Gurgum, Sulumal of Melid, Dadi-ilu of Kaska, Uassurme of Tabal, Ushhitti of Tuna, Urballai of Tuhana, Tuhamme of Ishtunda, Urimme of Hubishna, Zabibe, queen of Arabia,-- gold, silver, lead, iron, elephant's hides, ivory, colored (woolen) garments, linen garments, blue and purple wool, maple, boxwood, all kinds of precious royal treasure, fat(?) lambs, whose wool was purple in color (*lit.*, dyed), winged birds of heaven, whose wings were blue in color (*lit.*, dyed), horses, mules, cattle, sheep, camels, female camels, together with their young, I received.<sup>15</sup>

This expedition of Pul to Palestine and his exaction of tribute from Menahem agrees with the eponymy of 755 B.C. At this time, Pul, also, extracted tribute from Uz-ziah according to Assyrian annals but the Bible is silent on this matter.

The above inscription has been mistakenly ascribed to Tiglath-pileser when in reality it belongs to an earlier Assyrian monarch whom the Bible calls 'Pul'.<sup>16</sup> According to the eponymy of 755 B.C., the incident took place ten years before Tiglath-pileser's accession to the Assyrian throne and twenty-three years before the second invasion and deportation of 733-732 B.C.

## 2. The Fragmentary Annalistic Text

At this point, it is necessary to show that there is another annals text which is properly ascribed to Tiglath-pileser because of its reference to both Pekah and Hoshea of Israel. However, the text has the conjecture of the word 'Menahem' written in it, which certainly is impossible in light of the present reconstruction of the chronology of the Hebrew kings by the computer calendar. The Assyrian text is quoted to demonstrate that its contents can only agree with the invasion by Tiglath-pileser and not Pul. The name 'Menahem' is a conjecture by scholars. The reading 'Pekah' would be a better conjecture than 'Menahem' according to the context--

... the town Hatarikka as far as the mountain Saua, [... the towns:] Byb[los], ... Simirra, Arqa, Zimarra, ... Uznu, [Siannu], Ri'-raba, Ri'-sisu, ... the towns ... of the Upper Sea, I brought under my rule. Six officers of mine I installed as governors over them. [... the town R]ashpuna which is (situated) at the coast of the Upper Sea, [the towns ...]nite, Gal'za, Abilakka which are adjacent to Israel! (*Bit Hum-ri-a*) [and the] wide (land of) [Naphta]li, in its entire extent, I united with Assyria. Officers of mine I installed as governors upon them.

As the Hanno of Gaza (*Ha-a-nu-u-nu al Ha-az-za-at-a-a*) who had fled before my army and run away to Egypt, [I conquered] the town of Gaza , ... his personal property, his images ... [and I placed(?)] (the image of) my [... gods] and my royal image in his own palace ... and declared (them) to be (thenceforward) the gods of their country. I imposed upon th[em tribute]. [As for Menahem I ov]erwhelmed him [like a snowstorm] and he ... fled like a bird, alone, [and bowed to my feet(?)]. I returned him to his place [and imposed tribute upon him, to wit:] gold, silver, linen garments with multicolored trimmings, ... great ... [I re]ceived from him. Israel (lit.: "Omri-Land" *Bit Humria*) ... all its inhabitants (and) their possessions I led to Assyria. They overthrew their king Pekah (*Pa-qa- ha*) and I placed Hoshea (*A-u-si*) as king over them. I received from them 10 talents of gold, 1,000 (?) talents of silver as their [trib]ute and brought them to Assyria.<sup>17</sup>

Thus, the reader can see that the word 'Menahem', contained in brackets, is not found in this Assyrian document, but rather is conjectured. Therefore, there is no Assyrian historical text which indicates that Tiglath-pileser collected tribute from Menahem of Israel. In fact, there is only one Assyrian text which mentions the tribute of Menahem, and it also mentions the tribute of Rezin of Syria and Uzziah of Judah. The context of this passage, and the reference in the Assyrian Eponym List require the chronological framework of a king prior to Tiglath-pileser. That king is the Biblical Pul.

The Biblical text of I Chronicles 5:26, as a summary statement requires an expedition to Palestine by Pul and a second expedition by Tiglath-pileser. This second invasion by Tiglath-pileser is referred to in II Kings 15:29-- "In the days of Pekah king of Israel, came Tiglath-pileser king of Assyria and took Ijon, and Abel-beth-maacah, and Janoah, and Kedesh, and Hazor, and Gilead, and Galilee, all the land of Naphtali, and carried them captive to Assyria."

The Assyrian records make mention of this deportation by Tiglath-pileser-- "... the cities ... which are on the border of Bit-Humria (House of Omri, Izrael) ... the wide land of Naphtali, in its entirety, I brought within the borders of Assyria."<sup>18</sup>

This is not the deportation of the tribes of the trans-jordan by Pul mentioned in I Chronicles 5:26-- Reuben, Gad and the half tribe of Manasseh-- which occurred in 765 B.C., the first deportation, according to the Assyrian Eponym List.<sup>19</sup>

Tiglath-pileser's deportation mentioned in II Kings 15:29 refers to cities<sup>20</sup> west of the Jordan River and the deportation of the tribe of Naphtali. This second deportation belongs to the eponymy of 732 B.C. at the time of Pekah's death, twenty-three years after the tribute to Pul at the time of Menahem, and thirty-three years after Pul's deportation of the trans-jordan tribes. The above annal's text is properly ascribed to Tiglath-pileser. Therefore, the recognition of a Biblical Pul with his invasion and deportation of the trans-jordan tribes in 765 B.C. harmonizes with both Scripture and the Assyrian documents. Likewise, Tiglath-pileser's invasion and deportation of the tribe of Naphtali in 733-732 B.C. harmonizes with both Hebrew and Assyrian data. The Hebrew kings-- Menahem and Uzziah-- are affected by Pul's invasions; and the Hebrew kings-- Pekah, Hoshea and Ahaz-- are affected by Tiglath-pileser's invasion.

### 3. The Fragmentary Annals

His Assyrian annals report the death of Rezin-- "[Mitinti of Ashkelon, violated

the oath sworn to me, [Against me he revolted. The defeat of] Resin he saw and [died] in a conflagration(?)."<sup>21</sup> The monarch also refers to the removal of Pekah and the placement of Hoshea upon the throne of Israel--

The land of Bit-Humria ... all of its people, together with their goods I carried off to Assyria. Pakaha, their king they deposed and I placed Ausi' (Hoshea) over them as king. 10 talents of gold, X talents of silver, as their tribute I received from them and to Assyria I carried them.<sup>22</sup>

#### 4. The Nimrud Tablet

In his annalistic report, Tiglath-pileser claims to have taken tribute from Ahaz of Judah--

The tribute of Kushtashpi of Kummuhu, Urik of Kue, Sibitti-bi'il [of Gubla] ... [Eni]-ilu of Hamath, Panammu of Sam'al, Tarhulara of Gurgum, Sulumai of Melid] ... Uassurme of Tabal, Ushhitti of Tunai, Urballa of Tuhan, Tuhamme of Ishtunda] ... Matan -bi'il of Arvad, Sanibu of Beth Ammon, Salamanu of Moab, ... Mitinti of Ashkelon. Iauhazi (Jehoahaz) of Judah, Kaush-malaku of Edom, Musri ... Hanunu (Hanno) of Gaza,-- gold, silver, lead, iron, tin, brightly colored (woolen) garments, linen, the purple garments of their land(s), ... all kinds of costly things, the products of the sea and the dry land, the commodities of their land, the royal treasure, horses, mules, broken to the yoke, [I received].<sup>23</sup>

### F. Examination Of The Hebrew Records

The Hebrew text supports these annalistic statements of the Assyrians, but not in the way the inscriptions are fully accredited.

#### 1. The Death Of Rezin

The following Biblical text tells of the activities of Rezin leading to his death:

Then Rezin king of Syria, and Pekah son of Rem-a-liah king of Israel, came up to Jerusalem to war: and they besieged Ahaz, but could not overcome him. At that time Rezin king of Syria recovered Elath to Syria, and drove the Jews from Elath: and the Syrians came to Elath, and dwelt there unto this day. So Ahaz sent messengers to Tiglath-pileser king of Assyria, saying, I am thy servant and thy son: come up, and save me out of the hand of the king of Syria, and out of the hand of the king of Israel, which rise up against me. And Ahaz took the silver and gold that was found in the house of the Lord, and in the treasures of the king's house, and sent it for a present to the king of Assyria. And the king of Assyria hearkened unto him: for the king of Assyria went up against Damascus, and took it, and carried the people of it captive to Kir, and slew Rezin. II Kings 16:5-9

#### 2. The Conspiracy By Hoshea Against Pekah

The conspiracy by Hoshea against Pekah and Tiglath-pileser's support and establishment of Hoshea upon the throne of Israel is likewise mentioned in the Biblical text:

In the days of Pekah king of Israel came Tiglath-pileser king of Assyria, and took Ijon, Abel-beth-maachah, and Jonoah, and Kedesh, and Hazor, and Gilead, and Galilee, all the land of Naphtali, and carried them captive to Assyria. And

Hoshea the son of Elah made a conspiracy against Pekah the son of Remaliah, and smote him, and slew him, and reigned in his stead, in the twentieth year of Jotham the son of Uzziah. II Kings 15:29-30

As can be seen, the latter records of Tiglath-pileser and the Bible synchronize.

## **II. The Earthquake And Eclipse Recorded By Assyria And Israel**

An earthquake is recorded as taking place in the eponym of 759 B.C. as well as in the Biblical account. An eclipse of the sun is also implied in the Bible as well as recorded in the Assyrian Canon. These two events force the chronologist to look seriously at the synchronistic data involved with the placement of the kings of Israel and Judah in their relationship to the kings of Assyria. An examination of the detailed evidence below will cause one to discard the placement of the kings in history which conforms with Thiele and others.

### **A. 759 B.C.-- The Great Earthquake**

#### **1. In Josephus**

Josephus records the earthquake as taking place when Uzziah burned incense on the altar:

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 altar, which 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 not 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 meantime, a great earthquake shook the ground, and rent 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; and before the city, at a place called Eroge, half the mountain broke off from the rest on the west, and rolled itself four furlongs, and stood still at the east mountain, till the roads, as well as the king's gardens, were spoiled by the obstruction. *Antiquities* IX.x.4.

#### **2. In Scripture**

The Bible records the activity of Uzziah when the earthquake took place according to Josephus:

The words of Amos who was among the herdmen of Tekoa, which he saw concerning Israel in the days of Uzziah king of Judah and in the days of Jeroboam the son of Joash king of Israel, two years before the earthquake. Amos 1:1

But when he was strong, his heart was lifted up to his destruction: for he transgressed against the Lord his God, and went into the temple of the Lord to burn incense upon the altar of incense. And Azariah the priest went in after him, and with him fourscore priests of the Lord, that were valiant men: And they withstood Uzziah the king, and said unto him, It appertaineth not unto thee, Uzziah, to burn incense unto the Lord, but to the priests the sons of Aaron, that are consecrated to burn incense: go out of the sanctuary; for thou hast trespassed; neither shall it be for thine honor from the Lord God. Then Uzziah was wroth, and had censer in his hand to burn incense: and while he was wroth with the priests, the leprosy

even rose up in the house of the Lord, from beside the incense altar. II Chronicles 26:16-19

### 3. In The Assyrian Eponym Canon

The eponym for the year 759 B.C. reads thus: "759 Pan-Assur-lamur (governor) of Arbailu revolt in the city of Guzana. A plague." (See Appendix A).

## B. 763 B.C.-- The Eclipse Of The Sun

### 1. In The Assyrian Eponym Canon

The Assyrian Eponym Canon records the solar eclipse as follows: "Bur- (Ishdi)-Sagale (governor) of Guzana revolt in the city of Assur. In the month of *Simanu* an eclipse of the sun took place." (See Appendix A).

### 2. In Scripture

It appears that Amos, recalling of the eclipse of 763 B.C., predicts a similar occurrence in the future:

That day -- it is the Lord Yahweh who speaks -- I will make the sun go down at noon, and darken the earth in broad daylight. I am going to turn your feasts into funerals, all your singing into lamentation; I will have your loins all in sackcloth, your heads all shaved. I will make it a mourning like the mourning for an only son, as long as it lasts it will be a day of bitterness. Amos 8:9-10, Jerusalem Bible

It was he [Jeroboam] who recovered the territory of Israel from the Pass of Hamath as far as the Sea of the Arabah, in accordance with the word that Yahweh, the God of Israel, had spoken through his servant Jonah son of Amittai, the prophet from Gath-hepher. II Kings 14:25, Jerusalem Bible

An eclipse of the sun is predicted by Amos, two years before the earthquake which has been dated at 759 B.C. in the Assyrian Eponym Canon. This would date the prediction of Amos at 761 B.C. (Amos 1:1, 8:9). It will be shown below how the Jeroboam II passage fits in with the solar eclipse of 763 B.C.

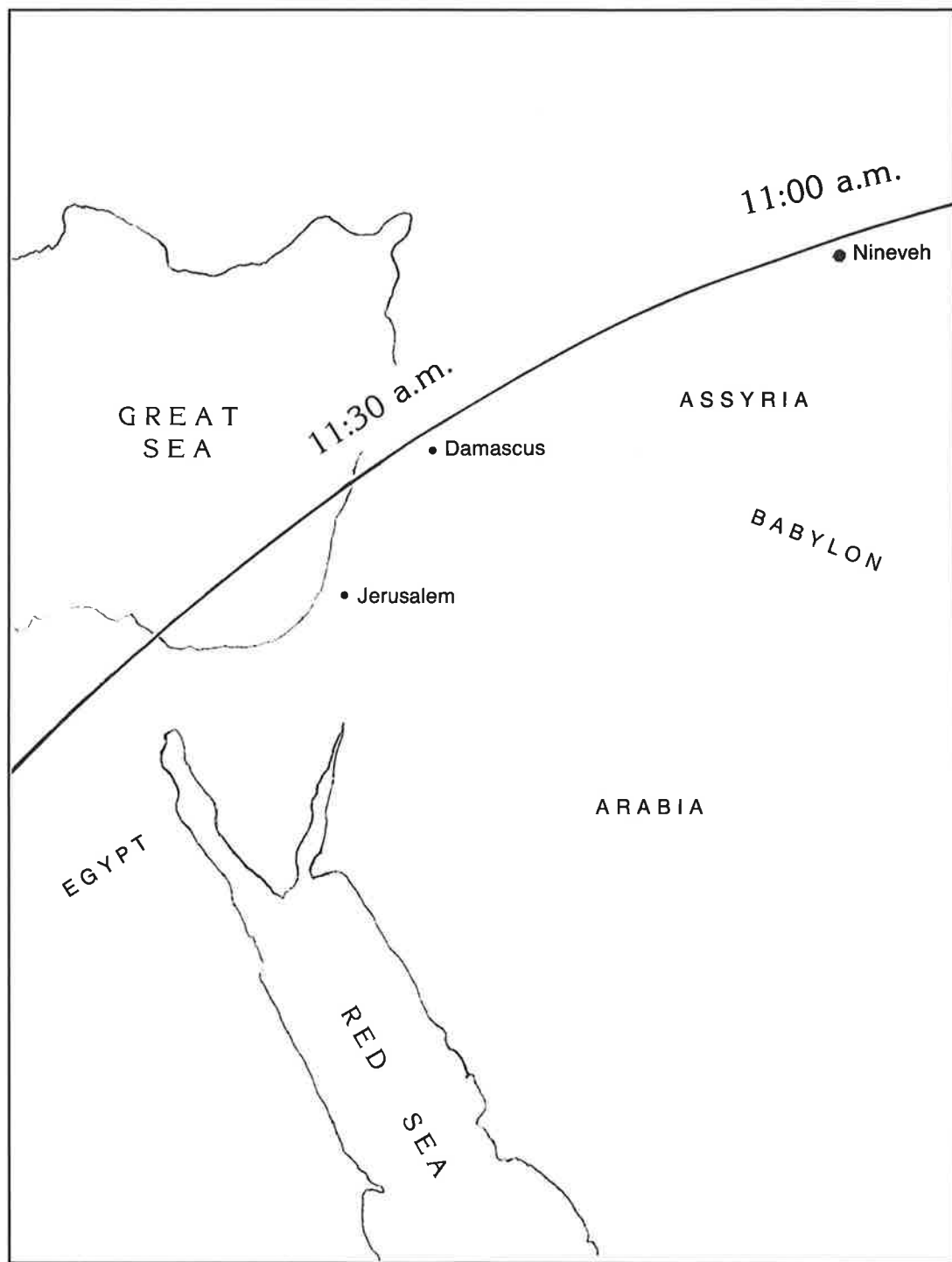
### 3. Computer Verification Of The Records

A computer study has shown an eclipse took place over Nineveh and Israel on Monday, June 7, 763 B.C. (Gregorian calendar), at 11:00 a.m. over Nineveh, and about 10:30 a.m. over Israel (see Illustration XII). This confirms the records of the Assyrian eponyms.

## C. Jonah Spoke To Ashur-dan III

The period from 764 B.C.- 760 B.C. is the only period during the reign of Jeroboam II when Assyria remained in the land, confirming that this is in fact the period when Jonah went to Nineveh, the capital of Assyria. The eclipse took place in the thirty-seventh year of Uzziah and Jeroboam, and in the tenth year of Ashur-dan III. It appears that Jonah's preaching was a divine response to the deportation of the trans-jordan tribes by Pul in 765 B.C. Jonah came preaching first to the people of Nineveh, and then to the king himself (Jonah 3:4-9). Ashur-dan III humbled himself before the Hebrew God according to the book of Jonah, and then declared a fast for all men and beasts. The Assyrian people outside of Nineveh may not have repented, nor liked the notion of monotheism. Nineveh,

## ILLUSTRATION XII: THE SOLAR ECLIPSE OF BUR-SAGALE



like Israel, changed their feasting into sorrow and sackcloth when the sun went down at noon which prompted them to listen to Jonah (Jonah 3:5); for it appeared that something had happened to their sun disc deity, Ashur. The eclipse and the warning from the prophets Jonah and Amos would also have carried the same frightful consequence to those who ignored the signs and warnings. Assyria had forty days to repent. Similarly, Israel had also been warned that an impending doom was coming on her for her lack of repentance. Amos predicted an eclipse of the sun which this writer feels took place in A.D. 30, when the sky darkened over the cross of Jesus. It is interesting to note that forty years afterward, Jerusalem was surrounded by the Romans for destruction.

The eclipse of the sun took place in 763 B.C. when the governor of Guzana is named on the eponym. At that time, the first signs of revolution show in the city of Assur, the center of worship for Ashur, for 763 and 762 B.C. The next two years, 761 B.C. - 760 B.C., Arrapha revolted. Then, in 759 B.C., when the quake took place, Guzana revolted. In 758 B.C., the revolt in Guzana was put down, restoring peace in the land. This peace continued until 755 B.C. when the king went against Hatarika. The significance of this observation is that Guzana is where Bur-Sagale was governor when the revolt started, and it ends also at Guzana.

The eclipse occurred at the time of the conjunction of the new moon when it was absent from the sky. Jonah probably began preaching on Sunday, 28 Sivan (June 6, 763 B.C., Gregorian Calendar). The people no doubt fasted for the full forty days so that they could see if they were going to be destroyed. The end of the forty days fell on the ninth of Ab, a day of repeated disaster in Hebrew history. The Israelites worshipped the golden calf on that day, and their Temple was destroyed twice on that day.

Jonah then went back to Jeroboam II to tell him what had happened at Assyria. This same message of doom, therefore, became a warning to Jeroboam. Forty years later, in the month of Tebet, Shalmaneser V died, and on the twelfth day of the same month (Tuesday, December 12, 722 B.C.; Gregorian calendar), Sargon came to the throne. This would indicate that Shalmaneser was in fact the one who destroyed Samaria as had been told in Scripture (II Kings 18:9-11), and that Sargon continued to move peoples around in his kingdom after Samaria had fallen in 723 B.C.

### **III. The False Identity Of Pul By Thiele And Others**

In order to credit the killing of Pekah, the tribute of Menahem, and the two deportations of Israel to Tiglath-pileser, Thiele has overlooked the eponym of 765 B.C., the deportation of the trans-jordan tribes, and created a second kingdom in Samaria, with Pekah reigning simultaneously with Menahem and Pekahiah.<sup>24</sup> Such misinterpretation of both the sacred and secular texts is no more justified by the data given than the placing of Hezekiah's fourteenth year in 701 B.C. Tiglath-pileser's name during his two-year reign in Babylon appears as 'Porus', or 'Pulu' derived from 'Pileser' in the Babylonian Dynasty Lists such as: the Canon of Ptolemy,<sup>25</sup> and the Babylonian King List A.<sup>26</sup> Thiele, comparing the Babylonian Dynasty Lists with the Babylonian Chronicles (Chronicle 1.i.17-26)<sup>27</sup> concludes that 'Porus' and 'Pulu' is Tiglath-pileser. Then he assumes that the similarity of

these references to 'Pul' of the Bible must identify him as the same individual.<sup>28</sup> Credence has been given to this assumption by the general absence of Pul's name in the existing Assyrian records.

However, scholars recognize the danger of premature argumentation. One need only remember that the existence of Sargon was thought to be mythological until the archaeological excavations in Old Assyria. Prior to these discoveries, the only reference to him was the Hebrew text of Isaiah 20:1. Since Botta's discovery of Sargon's palace at Khorsabad in 1843, Sargon has become one of the most widely known Assyrian kings.

If Tiglath-pileser is not the Biblical Pul, then who is? Judging from the dates of his activity during the reign of Menahem of Israel (761 B.C.- 751 B.C.), he appears to be Ashur-dan III (773 B.C.- 755 B.C.), the uncle of Tiglath-pileser and the brother of Shalmaneser IV and Ashur-nirari V.

Assyrian names are almost always compounds consisting of two, three or more elements. The name of Ashur-dan is comprised of two elements: 'Ashur' and 'dan'. The first part of his name-- 'Ashur' is taken from the great god of the Assyrians. Ashur (Asshur, Assur) is at the head of the Assyrian Pantheon. His place is always first in invocations. Ashur is regarded throughout all the Assyrian inscriptions as the special tutelary deity both of the kings and of the country. He places the monarchs upon their throne, firmly establishes them in the government, lengthens the years of their reigns, preserves their power, protects their forts and armies, makes their name celebrated, and the like. For him they look to give them victory over their enemies, to grant them all the wishes of their heart, and to allow them to be succeeded on their thrones by their sons, and their son's sons to a remote posterity. Their usual phrase when speaking of him is 'Ashur, my lord'. They represent themselves as passing their lives in his service. It is to spread his worship that they carry on their wars. They fight, ravage, destroy in his name. Finally, when the Assyrians subdue a country, they are careful to establish the worship of Ashur.

It is interesting to note that 'the god', 'the country', 'the town-- Asshur', and 'an Assyrian' are all represented by the same Akkadian word, which is written both 'A-shur' and 'As-shur'. The determinative prefixed to the root informs the reader which meaning is intended.

The favorite emblem under which the Assyrians appear to have represented Ashur in their works of art was 'a man with a bow and arrow in the center of the winged sun disc'. Since the Assyrians worshipped Ashur as the god of military prowess and empire, the Assyrian god gave the king and his army both light and power for victory.

Since the primary god of Assyria, Ashur, was represented by the sun disc, and if an eclipse should occur, it would seem that the chief god had taken his eyes off the Assyrian people for a moment and certainly would be interpreted as a bad omen. Such probably was the case in 763 B.C. when the sun disappeared from the sky at noon, during the eclipse of Bur-Sagale.

It is at this time that Jonah tells Jeroboam II to reclaim former Israelite territory which had been lost during Pul's invasion, and this is precisely what King Jeroboam of Israel did. For Scripture states--

He restored the coast of Israel from the entering of Hamath unto the sea of the plain, according to the word of the Lord God of Israel, which he spake by the hand of his servant Jonah, the son of Amittai, the prophet, which was of Gath-hepher. ... Now the rest of the acts of Jeroboam, and all that he did, and his might, how he warred, and how he recovered Damascus, and Hamath, which belonged to Judah, are they not written in the book of the Chronicles of the kings of Israel? II Kings 14:25, 28

This achievement of Jeroboam II (800 B.C.-- 760 B.C.), no doubt, occurred between the years 765 B.C.-- 760 B.C. during the reign of Ashur-dan III (773 B.C.-- 755 B.C.).

When Jonah came to Nineveh during the reign of Ashur-dan III, he would have found the populace psychologically prepared to expect a total catastrophe. For a serious plague (earthquake) had previously befallen the country in 765 B.C.<sup>29</sup> With the awful eclipse of Bur-Sagale coinciding with the prophet's preaching in 763 B.C., divine wrath had prepared the Ninevites for the Hebrew message. This is also the view of Merrill F. Unger who writes: "... the period of Jonah coincides admirably with historical conditions at Nineveh. ... in the reign of Assur-dan III ..., Jonah appeared at Nineveh."<sup>30</sup>

As one examines the eponyms (the only extant evidence for this period) from the archives of Ashur-dan III, one finds that he made an incursion into Damascus in his accession year (773 B.C.), and into Hatarika during his first year (772 B.C.). Then he returned again to Syria-Palestine in his eighth year (765 B.C.) when he deported the trans-jordan tribes. He remained at home in his ninth year (764 B.C.). In his tenth year, there is an eclipse in the land on 7 June, 763 B.C., (Gregorian calendar) which resulted in a political revolution which did not end until another catastrophe took place in the form of an earthquake, recorded in the king's fourteenth year (759 B.C.). From the king's fifteenth year (758 B.C.) through his seventeenth year (756 B.C.), there is peace and the nation does not go to war. This all ends when in Ashur-dan's eighteenth year (755 B.C.), he returns to Hatarika. Then he dies and his brother Ashur-nirari V comes to power.

There is another resolution to the dilemma of Tiglath-pileser's claim to credit himself with deeds which occurred before his reign,-- *i.e.*, his claim to have taken tribute from Menahem, Uzziah, and Rezin of Aram.<sup>31</sup> The chronology of the Hebrew kings would affirm that both Uzziah of Judah and Menahem of Israel were dead before Tiglath-pileser became regent of Assyria, but not before he was active in politics. He may or may not have been present as a 'Tartan', *i.e.*, supreme commander, for his uncle, Ashur-dan III, when the events transpired. Then he merely altered the records later to reflect their transpiration during his regency over Assyria. Such action is not without precedent in the activity of the Ancient Near Eastern monarchs of the time. This reasonable resolution requires no alteration of the Biblical chronology, such as the ten year shift for this period of time applied by Thiele.

Tiglath-pileser's claim of tribute from Ahaz of Judah is not out of line with the Biblical text of II Kings 16:8-- "And Ahaz took the silver and gold that was found in the house of the Lord, and in the treasures of the king's house, and sent

it for a present to the king of Assyria.”

That ‘king of Assyria’ according to II Kings 16:7 was Tiglath-pileser, and there is no reason to question the veracity of either account, historically or chronologically.

Ashur-dan has left to posterity no words at all, *i.e.*, inscriptions. The Biblical Pul is to be best identified with Ashur-dan III who made four incursions into Syro-Palestine during his reign-- 773, 772, 765 and 755 B.C. It is believed that he is the monarch who repented at the preaching of Jonah in 763 B.C. and gave homage to the God of the Hebrews which resulted in five years of revolt (see eponyms for 763 B.C.-- 759 B.C.). This revolt also provided Jeroboam II an opportunity to expand the borders of Israel at this time (II Kings 14:25, 28).

The history of Ashur-dan III fits into the history of the Hebrew kings in such a way as to insure that he is in fact the ‘Pul’ mentioned in the Scripture. It is now necessary to collect additional supportive data and to ask questions which will open new thoughts on this exciting subject concerning the one who first deported Reuben, Gad, and the half tribe of Manasseh in 765 B.C., and then took a tribute from Menahem in 755 B.C., but who also repented at the preaching of Jonah in 763 B.C. The identification of the Biblical Pul with Ashur-dan III, the uncle of Tiglath-pileser, provides a harmony of both the sacred, and secular texts which guards their integrity for several reasons. First, Pul appears in Scripture to be a predecessor of Tiglath-pileser (I Chronicles 5:26; II Kings 15:19-20, 29). Secondly, the death year of Ashur-dan III according to the synchronization of the Assyrian King List and the Assyrian Eponym Canon would be the year 755 B.C. in which a campaign was made against Hatarika. Thirdly, the year 755 B.C. appears to be the point of contact between Menahem of Israel (761 B.C.- 751 B.C.), Uzziah of Judah (800 B.C.- 748 B.C.), and the Assyrian Ashur-dan III (Pul) (773 B.C.- 755 B.C.). Fourthly, it could have been possible that Ashur-dan’s name was originally ‘Ashur-danin-pal’.

It is known that the name ‘Ashur-danin-pal’ was a name given to the eldest son of Shalmaneser III. The Hebrew name ‘Pul’ (‘pal’ is the Akkadian name) was a common dynasty name at this period in Assyrian history. The father of Shalmaneser III was ‘Ashur-nasir-pal II’ (884 B.C.-- 859 B.C.). The second son of Shalmaneser was ‘Shamas-Vul’ (Vul = Pul; for the letters v and p are interchangeable in Semitic languages). He is also known as Shamashi-adad V (824 B.C.- 811 B.C.). Adad-nirari III, the son of Shamas-Vul, was known as Vullush (Pullush) (811 B.C.- 783 B.C.). In the Nimrud Slab Inscriptions, he is called ‘Ramman-nirari’. The son of Adad-nirari III who carried the ‘Pul’ dynasty name was ‘Ashur-dan III’ (773 B.C.- 755 B.C.)-- also known as ‘Ashur-danin-pal III’. The name ‘Pul’ is derived from the Assyrian god ‘Vul’, the god of the atmosphere. He would be identical to the Canaanite god, Baal (the letters v and b are the same letter in Semitic languages). It is obvious that the Hebrew chroniclers of II Kings 15:19-20 and I Chronicles 5:25-26 was referring to Ashur-danin-pal III as the Biblical Pul.

He is the only king who makes incursions into Syria-Palestine between Adad-nirari’s expedition in 802 B.C. and Tiglath-pileser’s campaigns in 734 B.C.- 732 B.C. Ashur-danin-pal made four incursions during the years 773, 772, 765 and 755 B.C. He is a contemporary with Menahem of Israel according to the computer

calendar's reconstruction of the Hebrew kings. Since he was the only Assyrian king who made an invasion during the reign of Menahem of Israel, the Biblical writers simply refer to him as 'Pul'.

There were three other kings who carried the name Ashur-dan. The first ruled from 1180-1134 B.C., the second from 934-911 B.C., and the third 773-755 B.C. Each ruled at a time when the history of Assyria was eclipsed, leaving no historical documents, even though they had lengthy reigns. The kings before and after each of the Ashur-dans, show significant historical activity. It looks as though these kings might have been politically or religiously unpopular, and their records were removed or taken over by others in Assyria who followed them. Perhaps their names were even changed. It is possible that they were 'judged' by the nation, and this name became a permanent part of the warning to those who followed them as kings. This seems especially true of Pul/Ashur-dan; for the name 'Ashur-dan' means 'Ashur judges'. The name brings to memory the three great catastrophes of this time: 1) the earthquake and plague of 765 B.C., 2) the solar eclipse of Bur-Sagale in 763 B.C., and 3) the earthquake and plague of 759 B.C. If the solar eclipse coincided with Jonah's message, then even Ashur of the Assyrians was judged.

#### IV. The Synchronization Of The Documents

773-772 B.C.-- Ashur-dan III, the Biblical Pul, comes to power. Immediately he consolidated his forces against Damascus<sup>32</sup> and Hatarika.<sup>33</sup> These two rival sons had both been appointed kings after their fathers, Amaziah and Jehoash, had fought a trial of strength, *cf.*, II Kings 14.

765 B.C.-- Ashur-dan conducts a second incursion into Hatarika.<sup>34</sup> This is the year that Pul deports the tribes of Reuben, Gad, and the half tribe of Manasseh, and captures the lands from the pass of Hamath to the Sea of the Arabah<sup>35</sup> (Dead Sea). The Talmud states that it is after this deportation when the counting of Jubilees stopped. The last Jubilee began in 764 B.C. Aaron Rothkoff writes regarding the reason for the discontinuation of the Jubilee:

That the Jubilee did not apply during the period of the Second Temple was deduced from the verse 'unto all the inhabitants thereof' (Lev. 25:10) with the corollary that 'from the time that the tribes of Reuben and Gad and the half-tribe of Manasseh were exiled the Jubilees were discontinued' (Sifra, Be-Har 2:3).<sup>36</sup>

To the Hebrew mind, exile from the country was synonymous with the destruction of the Temple.

764 B.C.-- A relocation of people was taking place in the land of Assyria.<sup>37</sup>

763 B.C.-- An eclipse of the sun over Nineveh and Israel took place.<sup>38</sup> Examine Illustration XII to see the trajectory of the shadow over Nineveh at about 11: a.m., which would have been seen about 11:30 a.m. over Israel. Jonah preached to Nineveh and they repented. A revolt took place in the land of Assyria, and Nabu-suma-iskun (763 B.C.-- 748 B.C.) came to power in Babylon after Eriba-Marduk (782 B.C.-- 763 B.C.) regained land which had been lost to Aram. It is believed that the revolt in the city of Assur

for 763-762 B.C. is a result of the preaching of Jonah and the solar eclipse.

- 761 B.C.-- Amos spoke against Israel, 700 years after the Exodus, warning them about their coming destruction, and used the solar eclipse they had seen to warn them of God's example. They obviously were using the same tactics against Aram as Assyria had been using on them. Jeroboam II recovered the lands from the pass of Hamath to the Sea of Arabah which had been lost when Pul deported the trans-jordan tribes in 765 B.C. Amos prophesied against Jeroboam in this same year; Jeroboam only outlived this campaign by one year, for he died in 760 B.C. by the sword (Amos 7:10)-- "For thus Amos saith, Jeroboam shall die by the sword, and Israel shall surely be led away captive out of their own land."
- 759 B.C.-- Uzziah burned incense on the altar and became leperous and his son, Jotham, reigned in his stead. A great earthquake took place in the land at that time. The earthquake is also recorded in the Assyrian Eponyms. Obviously, it causes Assyria to deter further revolt in the land.
- 755 B.C.-- Ashur-dan had become a believer in the Hebrew God for a time, but in 755 B.C. he returned to war against Palestine after remaining away from Israelite borders for ten years.<sup>39</sup> This campaign must have culminated in his death; for his reign ends at this point. He did not die without taking a tribute from Menahem to the tune of fifty shekels per head for every male (II Kings 15:19-20).
- 750 B.C.-- Pekah, king of Israel, comes to power after killing Pekahiah. He brings a new threat against the kingdom of Judah.
- 748 B.C.-- King Uzziah died, and Isaiah received a vision from the Lord concerning the people of Israel in a future sense (Isaiah 6:1-12). Twenty five years later, Israel fell to Shalmaneser V of Assyria in 723 B.C.; 160 years after 748 B.C., Judah fell to Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon in 588 B.C. Then the Davidite heir to the throne, Jesus, died 777 years later on April 5, 30 A.D. (Gregorian calendar). At this time in 748 B.C., Nabonassar started a new dynasty in Babylon.
- 734- 732 B.C.-- Tiglath-pileser III made three campaigns into Syro-Palestine. He finally kills Rezin of Damascus, permits Hoshea to conspire against Pekah of Israel and receives the tribute of Ahaz of Judah.
- 728 B.C.-- In the seventh year of Tiglath-pileser, Nahum prophesied against Nineveh, 115 years before the destruction of the city (*Antiquities* IX.xi.3).<sup>40</sup> The following year, in 727 B.C., Shalmaneser V came against Hoshea of Israel (II Kings 17:3-4).
- 723 B.C.-- Israel fell to Shalmaneser of Assyria, forty years after the eclipse, but twenty-five years after the messages from Isaiah to Judah. The prophet Jonah had related his message forty years earlier. It was not heard by the people who had eyes but did not see the eclipse and ears that did not hear the prophets Jonah and Isaiah.
- 588 B.C.-- Judah fell to Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon, 175 years after the eclipse

God had used to warn them, and 160 years after Isaiah had seen the vision of their unbelief and the coming Messiah.

613 B.C.-- Nineveh fell to the Medes and the Babylonians, 150 years after the preaching of Jonah and the eclipse which gave them the sign in the sky. Nahum also predicted their destruction, 115 years before it took place in the seventeenth year of Tiglath-pileser and the first year of Hezekiah. In contrast to Israel and Judah, the Ninevites did not know their right hand from their left (Jonah 3:11).

This section has demonstrated that the chronology of the Hebrew kings is compatible with the later assertions of Tiglath-pileser, king of Assyria. Certainly, it is not unreasonable to insist that the historicity of the Hebrew text can take precedence over secular history, particularly at a point where there is evidence of deliberate efforts to alter the secular record. By maintaining the integrity of the Hebrew text, it is possible to create an accurate chronology of the Hebrew kings and a sensible alignment of Assyrian monarchs.

## Chapter VI - NOTES

<sup>1</sup>The annals of Tiglath-pileser would seem to indicate that the Assyrian monarch exacted tribute from both Uziah (Azariah) of Judah and Menahem of Israel. This would not be an impossibility if Tiglath-pileser was referring to events which happened while he was Tartan for his uncle, Ashur-dan III. But, if he is speaking of events which occurred while he was sole regent, then this is impossible. When Tiglath-pileser was king of Assyria (745 B.C.-- 727 B.C.), Uziah of Judah and Menahem of Israel were already deceased. Therefore, these annal texts must either refer to the time when Tiglath-pileser was Tartan or the texts belong to another monarch such as the Biblical Pul.

The tribute references are now given. The annalistic text of Uziah's tribute reads:

"[In] the course of my campaign, I received tribute of the kings of the seacoast (Mediterranean)] ... Azariah of Judah, like ... Azariah, the land of Judah ... they heard of the onset of Assur's dense [masses of troops] and [their hearts] became afraid ... I destroyed, I devastated, with fire I burned ... which had gone over to Azariah and had strengthened him. ... the city of Bumame, --19 districts of Hamath, together with the cities of their environs, which (lie) on the shore of the sea of the setting sun, which had gone over to Azariah, in revolt (*lit.*, sin) and contempt of Assyria, I brought within the border of Assyria. My officials I set over them as governors. 30,300 people [I carried off from] their cities and placed them in the province of the city Ku--. 1,223 people I settled in the province of the land of Ulluba." Daniel David Luckenbill, *Ancient Records Of Assyria And Babylonia*, Volume I (New York: Greenwood Press, Publishers, 1968), section 770, pp. 274-275.

Shortly after the tribute of Uziah is mentioned in the annals text, there is a reference to the tribute of Menahem of Israel--

"... The tribute of Kushtashpi of Kummuhu, Rasunnu (Rezin) of Aram, Menihimmu (Menahem) of Samerina (Samaria), Hirammu (Hiram) of Tyre ... --gold, silver, [etc.] ..., I received." *ARAB*, Vol. I, sec. 772, p. 276.

<sup>2</sup>In this connection, Thiele writes, "The well-known contacts of Tiglath-Pileser III with Azariah and Menahem may be of service in testing the accuracy of the biblical and Assyrian dates for this period." Edwin R. Thiele, *The Mysterious Numbers Of The Hebrew Kings* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan Publishing House, 1983), p. 139. He continues, "One of the first questions to arise in this connection is the identity of Pul with Tiglath-Pileser III. According to 2 Kings 15:19-20, Menahem paid tribute to Pul, and in 1 Chronicles 5:26 the names of Pul and Tiglath-Pileser are given." *Ibid.*

Concluding that Pul is Tiglath-pileser III, Thiele declares: "... all evidence points to 743 as the year of Tiglath-Pileser's great campaign in which mention is made of the subjugation of Azariah's allies and the receipt of Menahem's tribute. That date is in perfect accord with the terminal dates of 742/41 for Menahem and 740/39 for Azariah, as called for by the present reconstruction of the chronology of the Hebrew kings." *Ibid.*, p. 159. There is no evidence from the Assyrian Eponym List or the Assyrian annals that Tiglath-pileser came into Syro-Palestine in 743 B.C. The Assyrian Eponym List only offers evidence for campaigns into this region by Tiglath-pileser in the years 734, 733, 732 and 727 B.C. See Appendix A.

Because of his acceptance of the Assyrian documents at face value and his identity of Pul with Tiglath-pileser III, Thiele forces the Biblical text to conform with secular history. His solution is two Hebrew kingdoms in the north as a result of the chronological problem created by Pul's identity with Tiglath-pileser--

"Menahem took the throne in 752 and ruled ten years in Samaria (2 Kings 15:17). He was succeeded by Pekahiah in the fiftieth year of Azariah (2 Kings 15:23), 742. Pekahiah ruled two years (2 Kings 15:23) and was slain by Pekah who began his reign in Samaria in the fifty-second year of Azariah (2 Kings 15:27), 740.

But twelve years earlier, also in 752, Pekah had begun to reign in the north as a rival of Menahem,

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probably in Gilead. That there were two Hebrew kingdoms in the north at this time in addition to Judah in the south is made clear in Hosea 5:5 where we read, 'Therefore shall Israel and Ephraim fall in their iniquity: Judah also shall fall with them.' The twenty years of Pekah's reign (2 Kings 15:27) began in 752 and terminated in 732 when he was succeeded by Hoshea.

There is no difficulty with the regnal data of Pekah when dual dating is recognized and the twenty years of his reign are seen to include twelve years of overlap with Menahem and Pekahiah and eight years of sole reign, and where the synchronism of his accession in the fifty-second year of Azariah is recognized as marking the end of his twelve years of overlap and the beginning of his sole reign. This again is another perfect example of dual dating." Edwin R. Thiele, *A Chronology Of The Hebrew Kings* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan Publishing House, 1977), pp. 46-47. The text of Hosea 5:5 is using Hebrew parallelism. After the deportation of Tiglath-pileser III, the remaining tribes were referred to as 'Ephraim' (I Chronicles 5:25-26; II Kings 16:9). They were later deported by Sargon II (II Kings 17:6). Here the prophet Hoshea is predicting three deportations for the iniquity of God's people:

1. Israel-- the deportation by Pul and Tiglath-pileser
2. Ephraim-- the deportation by Sargon
3. Judah-- the deportation by Nebuchadnezzar.

The assumption by Thiele of 'two Hebrew kingdoms in the north' is unsupported by the Biblical text.

<sup>3</sup>Archaeologists have found a pavement slab in an upper chamber of the North West Nimrud Palace which bears the inscription of Pul. Sir Henry Creswicke Rawlinson considers him to be the Biblical Pul, and Phulukh or Vullush II of the inscription. The translation made by H. F. Talbot reads as follows--

"The palace of Pul, the great king, the powerful king, the king of nations, the King of Assyria; the king who, by the help of Ashur, (.....) his protecting deity, acquired a vast and boundless empire, and planted his royal power firmly over the people of Assyria, and raised his throne upon golden feet. Restorer of noble buildings which had gone to decay ..... Who went forth in the strength of Ashur his lord, and caused the kings of the four regions to bow down to his yoke. Conqueror of all lands as far as the day-spring of the rising sun, I subdued to my yoke the land of the sun, and the countries of Illipi, Karkar, Araziash, Mitzu, *Media*, etc., *Nahiri*, Andiu, whose situation is remote, and the Balkhu mountain, as far as the great sea of the rising sun.

From the River Euphrates, in the land of *Syria*, I subdued to my yoke all the provinces of the land of Akkarri, the lands of *Tyre and Sidon*, *Omri*, *Edom*, and *Palestine*, as far as the great sea of the setting sun, and I imposed upon them a fixed tribute.

Against the land of Tusu I advanced in hostile array. Mariah, King of Tusu, I besieged in Damascus, his royal city. Immense fear of Ashur his lord overwhelmed him; he took upon him my yoke, and performed homage and prostration. 2300 talents of silver, 20 talents of gold, 3000 talents of copper, 5000 talents of iron, fine clothes of various colours, scarlet and yellow, his ivory throne, his ivory palanquin, carved with ornaments, and his other goods and treasure in abundance, in the city of Damascus, his royal city, in the middle of his palace I received.

The Kings of Chaldea, all of them performed homage and prostration, and I imposed a fixed tribute upon them with an equal hand. The cities of Babylon, Borsippa, and Tizza brought out to me the images of Bel, Nebo, and Acherib, then precious victims (*I sacrificed to the gods of those cities*).” L. N. R. (Ellen Ranyard) *Stones Crying Out* (London: The Book Society, 1880), p. 475.

Earlier chronologists believed that the Biblical Pul was Adad-nirari III. However, his reign is too early for contact with Menahem of Israel. The above inscription belongs to Adad-nirari III (811 B.C.- 783 B.C.). Assuming that Pul reigned somewhere between the rule of Shalmaneser III and Tiglath-pileser III, and examining the Assyrian Eponym List for possible incursions in Syro-Palestine, the only possible dates are 802, 773, 772, 765 and 755 B.C. where campaigns are made against the seacoast, Damascus and/or Hatarika. Since Menahem's reign has been fixed by the computer calendar as 761 B.C.- 751 B.C. by the anchor dates of 1018 B.C., the capture of Jerusalem by David, and 588 B.C., the fall of Jerusalem to Nebuchadnezzar and in addition cross-referencing to the kings of Judah, it appears that Pul's tribute from Menahem occurred in 755 B.C. This would agree with the Hebrew text of II Kings 15:19-20.

Luckenbill has assigned the text of Pul to Adad-nirari III in *ARAB*, Vol. I, sec. 739-741, pp. 262-263. James B. Pritchard, ed., *Ancient Near Eastern Texts* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1969), pp. 281-282, has also done the same. However, his incursion into Syro-Palestine in 802 B.C. according to the Assyrian Eponym List does not coincide with the reign of Menahem of Israel. Adad-nirari III (811-783 B.C.) as the Biblical Pul would not fit the chronology of the Hebrew Kings.

It should be recalled that after the reign of the famous Queen Summeramat and her son, Adad-nirari III, the records of Assyria eclipsed and offered very little to say about events which took place. It was during this time, that Jeroboam II was able to extend his power and kingdom. Apparently, the eponyms show revolt and unrest in the land as a result of the mixed feelings concerning the worship of the God of the Hebrews. The rise of power came again with the rule of Tiglath-pileser in 745-727 B.C.

<sup>4</sup>The Hebrew language does not permit the identification of Pul with Tiglath-pileser in I Chronicles 5:26. The phrases 'the spirit of Pul' and 'the spirit of Tiglath-pileser' in the text is followed by the Hebrew sign for the direct object indicating 'definiteness'. The double use of that sign demonstrates two definite spirits of two definite kings.

George Rawlinson, the brother of Henry C. Rawlinson, writes against the argument for identifying Pul with Tiglath-pileser. He declares, "I think that neither the writer of Chronicles nor the writer of Kings could possibly have expressed themselves as they have if they regarded Pul and Tiglath-Pileser as the same person." *The Five Great Monarchies Of The Ancient Eastern World*, Volume II, (New York: Dodd, Mead & Company, Publishers, 1870), p. 123.

<sup>5</sup>Luckenbill writes the following about the brick inscription found at Kalat Sherkat-- "On the Brick Inscription Tiglath-pileser is called 'son of Adad-nirari, king of Assyria'. Whether this is a bit of fiction or whether we err in ascribing these texts to Tiglath-Pileser III is still to be determined." *ARAB*, Vol. I, sec. 822, p. 294. The Brick Inscription reads: "Palace of Tiglath-pileser, king of Assyria, son of Adad-nirari, king of Assyria. (Brick) belonging to the floor of the temple of Assur." *Ibid*.

<sup>6</sup>A later copy of the Assyrian King List gives the following information concerning Tiglath-pileser-- "Tukulti-apil-Esharra (III) son of Ashur-nirari (V); he ruled as king for 18 years." *ANET*, p. 566.

<sup>7</sup>The Assyrian King List presents Adad-nirari as the father of Shalmaneser IV, Ashur-dan III and Ashur-nirari V. This would make Shalmaneser IV, Ashur-dan III and Ashur-nirari brothers. The King List gives the following record--

"Adad-nirari (III) son of Shamshi-Adad; he ruled as king for 28 years.  
Shalmanu-ashared (IV) son of Adad-nirari; he ruled as king for ten years.  
Ashur-dan (III) brother of Shulmanu-ashared; he ruled as king for 18 years.  
Ashur-nirari (V) son of Adad-nirari (III); he ruled as king for 10 years." *Ibid*.

<sup>8</sup>Another possibility is that later individuals may have inadvertently ascribed Tiglath-pileser's name to records that were not his. It is easy to see how this may have happened in the slab inscriptions which Esarhaddon used sixty years later to build his palace. Attention to chronological order was in all likelihood absent from the priority list in the placing of these bricks. Nor are archaeological interpretations exempt from fallibility.

<sup>9</sup>Adad-nirari III came once into Syria-Palestine in 802 B.C. The Assyrian Eponym Canon reads 'against the seacoast'. The Saba'a Stele records this invasion into Palestine--

"[Adad-nirari], the great king, the mighty king, king of the universe, king of Assyria, ... son of Shamshi-Adad, the mighty king, [king of the universe, king] of Assyria, grandson of Shalmaneser, ruler of all princes, destroyer of hostile kings.

In (my) fifth year of reign, when I took my seat on the royal throne, in might, I mobilized (the forces of my) land, (to) the widespreading armies of Assyria I gave the order to advance against Palashtu (Palestine). The Euphrates I crossed at its flood. The [widespreading, hostile] kings, who

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in the time of Shamshi-Adad, my father, had rebelled, and withheld their tribute,-- at the command of Assur, Sin, Shamash, Adad, Ishtar, the gods, my allies, [terror] overwhelmed them and they laid hold of my feet. Tribute and tax, more than that of former days], they brought to Assyria. I received it." *ARAB*, Vol. I, sec. 733-734, p. 261.

This occurred during the time of Joash of Israel and Amaziah of Judah. The Bible does not refer to this invasion.

<sup>10</sup>In the Stele of Bel-harran-bel-usur, the reader learns how Bel-haran-bel-usur, successively high chamberlain under Shalmaneser IV and Tiglath-pileser, founded a city in the desert, west of Nineveh, built a temple, and endowed its cult. This official, not his royal masters, established the freedom of this city from certain taxes and dues. The text of the Stele of Bel-harran-bel-usur is given in *ARAB*, Vol. I, sec. 824-827, pp. 295-296.

<sup>11</sup>*ARAB*, Vol. I, sec. 824, p. 29.

<sup>12</sup>The Assyrian Eponym Canon lists the following data: "755 Ikishu (*var.*, Kisu) (governor) of Mehinish(?) against Hatarika." *ARAB*, Vol. II, sec. 1198, p. 435. See Appendix A.

<sup>13</sup>The fragmentary annals text, which may belong to a monarch(s) prior to Tiglath-pileser, is found in *ARAB*, Vol. I, sec. 762-772, pp. 269-276. These texts coincide with the time framework of the Biblical description of Pul in I Chronicles 5:26 and II Kings 15:19-20.

<sup>14</sup>*ARAB*, Vol. I, sec. 761, p. 269.

<sup>15</sup>*ARAB*, Vol. I, sec. 772, p. 276.

<sup>16</sup>It seems certain that these texts belong to the Assyrian monarch, Pul. The annals refer to the tribute of 'Rasunni [of Aram]' (Rezin) on several occasions. [See *ARAB*, Vol. I, sec. 769, p. 273; sec. 772, p. 276]. Also the texts refer to the tribute of 'Azariah of Judah' (Uzziah) as well as the tribute of 'Menihimmu (Menahem) of Samerina' (Samaria). *ARAB*, Vol. I, sec. 770, pp. 274-275; sec. 772, p. 276. All of these events coincide better with Pul than with the time framework of Tiglath-pileser; for after his accession to the throne in 745 B.C., Tiglath-pileser did not come to Syro-Palestine according to the Eponym List, until the years 734, 733, 732 B.C. at which time both Rezin of Syria and Pekah of Israel were killed in 732 B.C. This, of course, is too late for the tribute of Menahem of Israel and Uzziah of Judah; for Ahaz was sitting upon the Davidic throne at the time of the Syro-Israelite revolt (II Kings 16:1-10).

<sup>17</sup>This text is quoted from the work, *ANET* pp. 283-284, and is a fragmentary annalistic text.

<sup>18</sup>*ARAB*, Vol. I, sec. 815, p. 292.

<sup>19</sup>It seems that the Biblical Pul deported the tribes of the trans-jordan-- Reuben, Gad, and the half tribe of Manasseh-- in 765 B.C. before the solar eclipse of Bur-Sagale in 763 B.C. This appears to be one of the reasons why the Lord sent the prophet Jonah to the region in order to get the Assyrians to repent for their acts. The exiles were in an area of Assyria about a hundred miles west of Nineveh. This invasion in 765 B.C. is confirmed by the military activities recorded in the Assyrian Eponym Canon-- "765 Urta-mukin-nishe (governor) of Kurruri against Hatarika. A plague." *ARAB*, Vol. II, sec. 1198, p. 435. Also see Appendix A.

<sup>20</sup>The reference to Gilead cannot be the mountainous country in trans-jordan. An Assyrian record mentions it as a town near Abel in Naphtali. The use of the word 'Galilee' may be a reference to 'the twenty cities in the land of Galilee' (I Kings 9:11) which Solomon gave to King Hiram as a gift upon completion of the royal palace and Temple. These cities were on the northern frontier in the vicinity of Hiram's territories. The cities were later returned to Solomon (II Chronicles 8:2).

<sup>21</sup>ARAB, Vol. I, sec. 779, p. 280.

<sup>22</sup>ARAB, Vol. I, sec. 816, p. 293.

<sup>23</sup>ARAB, Vol. I, sec. 801, pp. 287-288.

<sup>24</sup>Thiele bases the 'second kingdom' theory on the text of Hosea 5:5, which includes the names of Ephraim and Israel: "The arrogance of Israel is his own accuser, the iniquity of Ephraim knocks him down, and down comes Judah with him," (Jerusalem Bible). Hosea 5 and almost all the rest of the text is written in poetic form. Throughout the text, Israel and Ephraim are used as synonyms to form the basis for the parallelism as in Canaanite poetry. Hosea parallels the words, 'Israel', 'Ephraim', and 'Samaria' in the very same way, Hosea 7:1, but it would be absurd to look for three kingdoms in the north. Likewise, in Hosea 12:2, the Southern Kingdom is called 'Judah' and 'Jacob' in parallelism, yet no one would create two kingdoms in the south.

<sup>25</sup>The Canon of Ptolemy or the Chronological Table of the Kings lists both 'Chinzer and Porus' also known as 'Ukinzer and Pulu' as reigning for five years. Ptolemy, "The Almagest," Robert Maynard Hutchins, *et al.*, eds., *Great Books Of The Western World*, Volume 16, Trans. by R. Catesby Taliaferro (Chicago; William Benton, Publisher, 1978), p. 466.

<sup>26</sup>The Babylonian King List A records the following data concerning Ukinzer and Pulu:  
"3 (years) Ukinzer, dynasty of Shashi 2 Pulu." *ANET*, p. 272.

<sup>27</sup>The Babylonian Chronicles (Chronicle 1.i.17-26) reads as follows:

"17 For one month and two days (Nabu)-[shu]ma-ukin (II) ruled Babylon.

18 (Nabu)-mukin-ze[ri], the Amukkan[ite], removed him from the throne and seized he throne (for himself).

19 The third year of (Nabu)-mukin-zeri:

20 When Tiglath-pileser (III) had gone down to Akkad

21 he ravaged Bit-Amukkanu and captured (Nabu)-mukin-zeri.

22 For three years (Nabu)-mukin-zeri ruled Babylon.

23 Tiglath-pileser (III) ascended the throne in Babylon.

24 The second year: Tiglath-pileser (III) died in the month Tebet.

25 For <eighteen> years Tiglath-pileser (III) ruled Akkad

26 Assyria. For two of these years he ruled in Akkad."

A. K. Grayson, "Assyrian And Babylonian Chronicles," A. Leo Oppenheim, *et al.*, eds., *Texts From Cuneiform Sources*, Volume 5 (Locust Valley, New York: J. J. Augustin Publisher, 1975), pp. 72-73.

It is apparent that 'Porus' or 'Pulu' is Tiglath-pileser when comparing the Babylonian Dynasty Lists with the Babylonian Chronicles. However, this does not mean that 'Pul' of the Bible is Tiglath-pileser.

<sup>28</sup>In this connection, Thiele offers 'proof' for the identification of Pul with Tiglath-pileser in Babylonian sources: "Positive proof that Pul is Tiglath-Pileser III is provided by two Babylonian documents. One of these mentions that Pulu reigned two years in Babylon after a reign of three years by Ukin-zer; the other states that Tiglath-Pileser ruled two years after Ukin-zer had reigned three years. Pul was the Babylonian name of Tiglath-Pileser." *The Mysterious Numbers Of The Hebrew Kings*, p. 125. The two Babylonian documents are 'The Babylonian King List A' where Pulu is the name used for Tiglath-pileser [See *ANET*, p. 272] and 'The Babylonian Chronicles' where the name used is Tiglath-pileser [see A. K. Grayson, *ABC* p. 72]. Certainly, one can see the similarity between 'Pulu' and 'Pileser', but this does not make Tiglath-pileser, the Biblical Pul. Again one can observe the form 'Pul' in the name of the Assyrian king-- Ashur-nasir-pal II, but this does not make him to be the Biblical Pul.

<sup>29</sup>The Assyrian Eponym List reads: "765 Urta-mukin-nishe (governor) of Kirruri against Hatarika.

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A plague." *ARAB*, Vol. II, sec. 1198, p. 435. See also Appendix A. The earthquake that occurred when Uzziah of Judah was in the Temple and to which Amos refers (Amos 1:1) took place in 759 B.C. The Assyrian Canon records it: "759 Pan-Assur-lamur (governor) of Arbailu revolt in the city of Guzana. A plague." *Ibid*.

<sup>30</sup>Merrill F. Unger, *Introductory Guide to the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan Publishing House, 1976), pp. 345-346.

<sup>31</sup>*ARAB*, Vol. I, sec. 769-771, pp. 272-276.

<sup>32</sup>For Ashur-dan's accession year, the Assyrian Canon states: "773 Mannu-ki-Adad (governor) of Salmat against Damascus." *ARAB*, Vol. II, sec. 1198, p. 434.

<sup>33</sup>The Eponym List for Ashur-dan's first year records the following data: "772 Assur-bel-usur (governor) of Calah against Hatarika." *ARAB*, Vol. II, sec. 1198, p. 434.

<sup>34</sup>The Assyrian Eponym Canon records Pul's incursion into Hatarika in which he captured the trans-jordan tribes: "765 Urta-mukin-nishe (governor) of Kurruri against Hatarika. A plague." *ARAB*, Vol. II, sec. 1198, p. 435.

<sup>35</sup>The Arabah was the name given to the depression which extended from the Sea of Galilee southward to the head of the Gulf of Akabah.

<sup>36</sup>Aaron Rothkoff, "Sabbatical Year And Jubilee," Cecil Roth, *et al.*, eds., *Encyclopaedia Judaica*, Volume 14 (Jerusalem, Israel: Keter Publishing House, 1972), p. 579.

<sup>37</sup>Perhaps, this relocation of the tribes is implied by the next eponym entry: "764 Sidki-ilu (governor) of Tushhan in the land." *ARAB*, Vol. II, sec. 1198, p. 435.

<sup>38</sup>The eclipse eponym entry reads "763 Bur-(Is)hdi-Sagale (governor) of Guzana revolt in the city of Assur. In the month of *Simanu* an eclipse of the sun took place." *ARAB*, Vol. II, sec. 1198, p. 435.

<sup>39</sup>For Ashur-dan's last campaign the eponym states: "755 Ikishu (var., Kisu) (governor) of Mehinish(?) against Hatarika" *ARAB*, Vol. II, sec. 1198, p. 435.

<sup>40</sup>Josephus relates the story of Nahum's prophecy against Nineveh--

"Now there was at that time a prophet, whose name was Nahum, who spake after this manner concerning the overthrow of the Assyrians and of Nineveh:-- 'Nineveh shall be a pool of water in motion; so shall all her people be troubled, and tossed, and go away by flight, while they say one to another, Stand, stand still, seize their gold and silver, for there shall be no one to wish them well, for they will rather save their lives than their money; for a terrible contention shall possess them one with another, and lamentation, and loosing of the members, and their countenances shall be perfectly black with fear. And there will be the den of the lions, and the mother of the young lions! God says to thee, Nineveh, that they shall deface thee, and the lion shall no longer go out from thee to give laws to the world.' And, indeed, this prophet prophesied many other things besides these concerning Nineveh, which I do not think necessary to repeat, and I here omit them, that I may not appear troublesome to my readers; all which things happened about Nineveh a hundred and fifteen years afterward:-- so this may suffice to have spoken of these matters." *Antiquities* IX.xi.3.

## Chapter VII - AHAB VS. SHALMANESER III: THIELE'S ANACHRONISM

Having resolved two of the three major problems in Assyrian chronology, namely: 1) the fourteenth year of Hezekiah and Sennacherib's siege of Jerusalem; and 2) the question of the identity of Pul and the spurious inscriptions of Tiglath-pileser III, the third and final problem area to be discussed in this chapter is the battle of Hadad-ezer of Aram and King Ahab of Israel with Shalmaneser III.

### I. 853 B.C.-- Ahab Vs. Shalmaneser III; An Anachronism

Shalmaneser, the Assyrian ruler, is the Black Obelisk monarch (859 B.C.- 824 B.C.) who also exacted tribute from Jehu of Israel (857 B.C.- 830 B.C.), which harmonizes perfectly with the chronology of the Hebrew kings. However, according to the annalistic account of Shalmaneser III, Ahab was one of the twelve kings who came to support Hadad-ezer of Aram in his battle to stop the advance of the Assyrian monarch. This is impossible; for Ahab (890 B.C.- 868 B.C.) was dead nine years before Shalmaneser took his seat on the Assyrian throne in 859 B.C.<sup>1</sup>

#### A. The Records Of Shalmaneser III Incorrectly Assigned

What has been written regarding Tiglath-pileser's untoward behavior against his predecessor's records is not without parallel in the royal house of Assyria. It would appear that his great great grandfather, Shalmaneser III, was already quite adept at modifying records to assign the fame and glory of another monarch to himself. Some monarchs even felt it necessary to ascribe dire curses on anyone so brazen as to change the records they bequeathed to posterity. The following quotes are from Ashur-nasir-pal II, the father of Shalmaneser III, who feared that his name would be removed from his records of achievement by a prince of Assyria--

As for the one who removes my name: May Ashur and the god Ninurta glare at him angrily, overthrow his sovereignty, take away from him his throne, make him sit in bondage before his enemies, (and) destroy his name with mine (and) his seed from the land.<sup>2</sup>

O later prince among the kings my sons whom Ashur will name for the shepherdship of Assyria: [restore] the weakened (portions) of that temple; [write] your name with mine (and) return (my inscription) to their places so that Ashur the great lord (and) the goddess Ishtar, mistress of battle and conflict, [in wars] with kings on the battlefield will cause him to achieve success.<sup>3</sup>

O later prince, do not erase my inscribed name! (Then) Ashur, the great lord, will listen to *your* prayers.<sup>4</sup>

As for the one who sees my stele, reads (it), anoints (it) with oil, makes sacrifices, (and) returns (it) to its place, Ashur, the great lord, will listen to his prayers (and) in wars with kings on the battlefield will cause him to achieve success.<sup>5</sup>

No Assyrian monarch appears to have been more concerned with someone defacing or removing his name from inscriptions than was Ashur-nasir-pal, father of Shalmaneser III. Among his inscriptions which appear in *Assyrian Royal Inscriptions*, no fewer than fifteen are curses against the one who removes his name or alters his stele.<sup>6</sup> The evidence seems to indicate that his concern was not entirely groundless.

According to history, Shalmaneser III began his reign with a complete sweep of the palace officials:

Shalmaneser was no longer a young man when he ascended the throne in 860. His father had reigned no less than twenty-five years, and he himself owned a son already old enough to accompany him on distant journeys. His first step was to make a complete sweep of the palace officials, who were replaced with men nearer his own age. Ashur-bel-uken was appointed turtanu, and Ashur-bania became the chief cellarer. Abi-ina-ekalli-iliberi, whose name, "May my father grow old in the palace," indicated a hereditary position, very appropriately was chosen chamberlain of the palace. Not one of the men who surrounded the person of the king or ruled in the provinces had previously held office high enough to be entered in the eponym list.<sup>7</sup>

Perhaps, this change of personnel gave the new king opportunity to adjust the palace inscriptions to his credit. It should be acknowledged that notes of military action for the early reign of Shalmaneser in the Assyrian Eponym Canon have been supplied to the canon from the annals of Shalmaneser and are not original to the Eponym List. This is evidenced by the use of brackets around the entries. [See Appendix A].

### **B. The Anachronisms In The Records Ascribed To Shalmaneser**

There are a number of inconsistencies or contradictions in the records ascribed to Shalmaneser III. When one considers the Assyrian records regarding the early years of Shalmaneser's reign, there are contradictions regarding the military expeditions. Some of the claims of Shalmaneser are preposterous, and it would be ill-advised to reconstruct the Hebrew chronology to satisfy his inaccurate boasting. For example, he claims that in his sixth year he did battle with Ahab the Israelite who was one of the twelve 'kings of Hatti' which joined Hadad-ezer (Ben-hadad) of Aram in a Syrian coalition against the Assyrian advancement. The sixth year of Shalmaneser as given in the Assyrian Eponym List (853 B.C.) is fifteen years after Ahab was killed (868 B.C.) according to the computer chronology of the Hebrew kings. The claim fits precisely into the chronology of his father, Ashur-nasir-pal II (884 B.C.- 859 B.C.). However, Shalmaneser could have been present in the capacity of crown prince or general of the army, but not as the king of Assyria. He may have correctly considered himself as the prime factor in some of his father's exploits, and later taken the opportunity to ascribe unto himself official recognition as such.

#### **1. Against Hadad-ezer According to the Black Obelisk**

The Black Obelisk Inscription lists only three possible battles against Hadad-ezer of Aram and his allies by the Assyrians under Shalmaneser. The first battle

took place in Shalmaneser's sixth year (853 B.C. according to the Assyrian Eponym List)--

In the sixth year of reign I drew near to the cities on the banks of the Balih. Giammu, governor of their cities, I slew. I entered Til-mar-ahi. The Euphrates I crossed at its flood. I received gifts from all of the kings of Hatti. At that time Hadad-ezer, [king] of Aram (?Damascus), Irhuleni, the Hamathite, together with the kings of Hatti and the seacoast, relied on each other's strength and came out against me to battle (*lit.*, to make battle and war). At the command of Assur, the great lord, my lord, I fought with them, I accomplished their defeat. Their chariots, their cavalry, their weapons of war, I took from them. 20,500 of their warriors I slew with the sword.<sup>8</sup>

The next battle with Hadad-ezer of Aram is listed as having occurred in Shalmaneser's eleventh year (848 B.C.)--

In my eleventh year of reign I crossed the Euphrates for the ninth time. Countless cities I captured. Against the cities of the land of Hamath, I descended. 89 cities I captured. Hadad-ezer of Aram (?Damascus) (and) twelve kings of the land of Hatti stood by each other. I accomplished their overthrow.<sup>9</sup>

It appears that Hadad-ezer of Aram was killed in this battle; for his name is not mentioned again in the Black Obelisk Inscription.

In his fourteenth year (845 B.C.), Shalmaneser fought another battle against the Syrian allies after Hadad-ezer's death. The inscription reads: "In my fourteenth year of reign I mustered (all the resources of my) land. I crossed the Euphrates. Twelve kings advanced to meet me. I battled with them, I accomplished their overthrow."<sup>10</sup>

It appears from the Black Obelisk Inscription that Shalmaneser encountered Hadad-ezer twice. That was during Shalmaneser's sixth and eleventh years. Hadad-ezer is not mentioned after Shalmaneser's eleventh year, but in his fourteenth year, Shalmaneser wars with Syrian allies. In the eighteenth year of his reign, Shalmaneser battles Hazael of Aram-- "In my eighteenth year of reign I crossed the Euphrates for the sixteenth time. Hazael of Aram (?Damascus) came forth to battle. 1,121 of his chariots, 470 of his cavalry, together with his camp, I captured from him."<sup>11</sup> This, of course, harmonizes with the time of Jehu's tribute which is pictured in a relief on the Black Obelisk.<sup>12</sup>

## 2. Inconsistencies: The Black Obelisk Versus The Tigris Inscription

The inconsistencies arise when one examines Shalmaneser's other inscriptions. The inscriptions at the source of The Tigris record that four campaigns were waged against Hadad-ezer, while the Black Obelisk records only two battles against Hadad-ezer and an additional battle against his allies. The assignment of these inscriptions to Shalmaneser has been, in itself, questioned.<sup>13</sup> The Inscriptions At The Source Of The Tigris state that Shalmaneser III advanced his army to the Syro-Palestine region and for the fourth time he fought against Hadad-ezer:

The land of Hatti to its farthest border, the land of Melidi, the lands of Daiani

(and) Suhme, Arzashkun, the royal city of Arame of Urartu, the lands of Gilzanu (and) Hubushkia, from the source of the Tigris to the source of Euphrates, from the sea of the land of Zamua, which is on the inside, to the sea of the land of Kaldu, I brought in submission [to my feet]. To Babylon I marched. I offered sacrifices (there) and went down to the land of Kaldu. Their cities I captured, their tribute I received. Hadad-ezer of Aram (Syria), Irhulini of Hamath, together with 15 cities of the shore of the sea, advanced [against me]. For the fourth time I fought with them, I brought about their overthrow. [Their chariots, their cavalry I destroyed; their battle equipment [I took away from them. To save their lives they fled (*lit.*, went up).]<sup>14</sup>

Another account on the Inscriptions At The Source Of The Tigris speaks of the same campaign--

[Hadad-ezer], king of Aram (Syria) together with 12 kings of the Hittite-land [advanced against me]. For the fourth time I fought with them and I brought about their overthrow. Their chariots, their cavalry,] their battle equipment, I took away from them; to [save their lives they fled.]<sup>15</sup>

Obviously, one of these accounts is inaccurate. The Black Obelisk claims that Shalmaneser fought Hadad-ezer twice and his allies once more, and the Inscriptions At The Source Of The Tigris claim that he fought Hadad-ezer four times. If he killed Hadad-ezer on his second campaign, as is implied by the Black Obelisk, it is unlikely that he encountered him on his later two campaigns. A possible explanation is that Shalmaneser was serving as commander-in-chief for his father during these earlier engagements with the Syrian coalition. The Inscriptions At The Source Of The Tigris may also fit the record of Tukulti-Ninurta (890 B.C.- 884 B.C.), grandfather of Shalmaneser III who was regent of Assyria during the reigns of Ahab of Israel (890 B.C.- 868 B.C.) and Benhadad (Hadad-ezer) of Syria. Yet, they bear Shalmaneser's name. At any rate, the records are certainly inconsistent on these excursions into Syro-Palestine against Hadad-ezer.

### 3. Inconsistencies: The Black Obelisk Versus The Monolith

Another inconsistent aspect of the annalistic texts is the conflict with the eponymy of Daian-assur. The Black Obelisk references the eponymy of Daian-assur to Shalmaneser's fourth year and relates a battle with Ahuni son of Adini on the bank of the Euphrates. There is reference to the king's third year which was immediately prior to the eponymous year of Daian-assur and a reference to his fifth year which immediately follows the inscription of the eponymous year of Daian-assur.<sup>16</sup> On the basis of this arrangement of entries, one can conclude that the eponymous year of Daian-assur is Shalmaneser's fourth year (855 B.C.). The Black Obelisk inscription reads--

In the eponymy of Daian-Assur I departed from Nineveh, crossed the Euphrates at its flood, pursued (*lit.*, went after) Ahuni, son of Adini. He made Shitamrat, a mountain peak, which is on the bank of the Euphrates, his stronghold. The mountain peak I stormed and captured. Ahuni, together with his gods, his chariots, his horses, his sons, his daughters, his troops, I carried off and bought (them) to my city Assur. In that same year I crossed Mount Kullar (and) descended against Zamua, which lies inside. The cities of Nikdiara of the city of Ida (and) Nikdima, I captured.<sup>17</sup>

The Monolith Inscription is the earliest annals text ascribed to Shalmaneser III. It also makes mention of the eponymy of Daian-assur. In contrast to the Black Obelisk Inscription, the Monolith Inscription, together with the Assyrian Eponym List, puts the eponymy of Daian-assur in Shalmaneser's sixth year (853 B.C.). According to the inscription, this is the year that an Assyrian king waged war against Hadad-ezer of Damascus, and his allies, including Ahab of Israel. The Monolith Inscription referring to 'Ahab, the Israelite' reads as follows--

In the year of Daian-Assur, in the month of *Airu*, the fourteenth day, I departed from Nineveh, crossed the Tigris, and drew near to the cities of Giammu, (near) the Balih(?) River. At the fearfulness of my sovereignty, the terror of my frightful weapons, they became afraid; with their own weapons his nobles killed Giammu. Into Kitlala and Til-sha-mar-ahi, I entered. I had my gods brought into his places. In his places I spread a banquet. His treasury I opened. I saw his wealth. His goods, his property, I carried off and brought to my city Assur. From Kitala I departed. To Kar-Shalmaneser I drew near. In (goat)-skin boats I crossed the Euphrates the second time, at its flood. The tribute of the kings on that side of the Euphrates,-- of Sangara of Carchemish, of Kundashpi of Kumuhu (Commagene), of Arame son of Guzi, of Lalli the Milidean, of Haiani son of Gabari, of Kalparuda of Hattina, of Kalparuda of Gurgum-- silver, gold, lead, copper, vessels of copper, at Ina-Assur-uttir-asbat, on that side of the Euphrates, on the river Sagur, which the people of Hatti call Pitru, there I received (it). From the Euphrates I departed, I drew near to Halman (Aleppo). They were afraid to fight with (me), they seized my feet. Silver, gold, as their tribute I received. I offered sacrifices before the god Adad of Halman. From Halman I departed. To the cities of Irhuleni, the Hamathite, I drew near. The cities of Adennu, Barga, Argana, his royal cities, I captured. His spoil, his property, the goods of his palaces, I brought out. I set fire to his palaces. From Argana I departed. To Karkar I drew near.

Karkar, his royal city, I destroyed, I devastated, I burned with fire. 1,200 chariots, 1,200 cavalry, 20,000 soldiers, of Hadad-ezer, of Aram (?Damascus); 700 chariots, 700 cavalry, 10,000 soldiers of Irhuleni of Hamath, 2,000 chariots, 10,000 soldiers of Ahab, the Israelite, 500 soldiers of the Gueans, 1,000 soldiers of the Musreans, 10 chariots, 10,000 soldiers of the Irkanateans, 200 soldiers of Matinuba'il, the Arvadite, 200 soldiers of the Usanateans, 30 chariots, [ ], 1,000 soldiers of Adunu-ba'il, the Shianean, 1,000 camels of Gindibu', the Arabian, [ ], 1,000 soldiers [of] Ba'sa, son of Ruhubi, the Ammonite,-- these twelve kings he brought to his support; to offer battle and fight they came against me. (Trusting) in the exalted might which Assur, the lord, had given (me), in the mighty weapons, which Nergal, who goes before me, had presented (to me), I battled with them. From Karkar, as far as the city of Gilzau, I routed them. 14,000 of their warriors I slew with the sword. Like Adad, I rained destruction upon them. I scattered their corpses far and wide, and) covered (*lit.*, filled) the face of the desolate plain with their widespreading armies. With (my) weapons I made their blood to flow down the valley(?) of the land. The plain was too small to let their bodies fall, the wide countryside was used up in burying them. With their bodies I spanned the Arantu (Orontes) as with a bridge(?). In that battle I took from them their chariots, their cavalry, their horses, broken to the yoke.<sup>18</sup>

The Black Obelisk and the Monolith Inscription do not agree on Shalmaneser's activities during the eponymous year of Daian-assur. The Black Obelisk has him fighting Ahuni on the banks of the Euphrates, while the Monolith Inscription has

Syria engaged in battle with Hadad-ezer and the twelve kings. The first account of the Black Obelisk appears to fit the chronology and the history for Shalmaneser III. The second account on the Monolith Inscription clearly coincides with the chronology and history of the sixth year of Shalmaneser's father, Ashur-nasir-pal. However, the Assyrian King List synchronized by the eclipse of 763 B.C. places the eponymy of Daian-assur (853 B.C.) in the sixth year of Shalmaneser, not the fourth.

#### 4. Inconsistencies: The Black Obelisk Versus The Statue Inscription

Further inconsistency is seen in the reports concerning Hadad-ezer when comparing the Black Obelisk with The Statue Inscription from Assur (Kalat-Sherkat). According to the Obelisk Inscription, the defeat and capture of Ahuni occurred in the eponymy of Daian-assur, the fourth year of Shalmaneser III.<sup>19</sup> The Statue Inscription also relates the defeat of Ahuni, son of Adini, and the devastation of his kingdom by Shalmaneser III. According to the Statue Inscription, the defeat and death of Hadad-ezer of Aram occurred at the same time. A portion of the Statue Inscription follows--

Shalmaneser, the great king, ... conqueror of Enzi, Gilzanu (and) Hulushkia, Urartu -- their overthrow I brought about and like fire I burst (came) upon them. Ahuni, son of Adini, together with his gods, his armies, his land, his household goods (*lit.*, the property of his house), I snatched away from him for the people of my land.

At that time I defeated Hadad-ezer of Aram (Syria) together with 12 princes, his allies, 29(?)000 warriors, his fighters, I brought low like *shubi*. The rest of his armies I cast (*lit.*, poured) into the Orontes River. To save their lives they went up (into the mountain). Hadad-ezer died. Hazael, the son of nobody, seized the throne, mustered his large army and came out against me, offering battle and fight. I battled with him, his defeat I brought about. The wall of his camp I seized from him. To save his life he went up (into the mountain). As far as Damascus, his royal city, I advanced. (*Left Hip*) His orchards [I cut down] ... [for] Anu and Adad ... pacification ... I received ...<sup>20</sup>

The Statue Inscription would put Hadad-ezer's death at the time of Ahuni's defeat. According to the Black Obelisk, this would be Shalmaneser's fourth year (855 B.C.). This is contradictory to the statements of the Black Obelisk Inscription and the Monolith Inscription which do not place the death of Hadad-ezer at the time of Ahuni's defeat in Shalmaneser's fourth year. Actually, the Black Obelisk has him alive and in battle with Shalmaneser during his eleventh year (848 B.C.). In other words, none of these three inscriptions agree concerning the encounters with Hadad-ezer.

#### 5. Inconsistencies: The Black Obelisk vs. The Bull-Colossi

On two large bull-colossi, from the center of the mound at Nimrud, varying copies of a version of Shalmaneser's annals which ended with his eighteenth year were found. This annalistic text places the defeat of Ahuni in Shalmaneser's fourth year. However, the Assyrian's first encounter with Hadad-ezer is year six;<sup>21</sup> the next is years ten<sup>22</sup> and eleven<sup>23</sup> and the final encounter is year fourteen.<sup>24</sup> This is another variation from the previous documents.

### C. Explanations For The Inconsistencies Of Shalmaneser III

The reconstruction of the Hebrew kings chronology would indicate that Shalmaneser's father, Ashur-nasir-pal II was a contemporary of 'Ahab the Israelite'.

#### 1. Contact Between Ashur-nasir-pal And Ahab

The Assyrian records also offer possible supportive evidence that these two kings may have encountered one another. The following references to Ashur-nasir-pal II indicate that his expansion campaigns came in the proximity of Omri-land (Israel)--

On the eighth day of the month Iyyar I moved from Kalach. After crossing the Tigris I set out for the city Carchemish of the land Hatti .... I received tribute from Ahunu, a man of Bit-Adini .... I received tribute from Sangara, king of the land Hatti . ... I took with me the chariots, cavalry, (and) infantry of the city Carchemish. All the kings of the lands came down to me (and) seized my feet. I took from them hostages (and) ... they were kept in my presence on the march to Mount Lebanon. ... At that time I made my way to the slopes of Mount Lebanon (and) went up to the Great Sea of the land Amurru. I cleansed my weapons in the Great Sea (and) made sacrifices to the gods. I received tribute from the kings of the sea coast, from the lands of the men of Tyre, Sidon, Byblos, Mahallatu, Maizu, Kaizu, Amurru (Amorities), and the city Arvad which is (on an island) in the sea.<sup>25</sup>

Certainly, one can see a possible contact with Ahab, king of Israel, in the annals of Ashur-nasir-pal. It is unlikely that the Assyrian advances spared Israel, while conquering all of the neighboring nations. The following text appears on the breast of a limestone statue of Ashur-nasir-pal. The object was found by Henry Layard in the temple of Sharrat-niphi at Kalach--

Ashur-nasir-apli, great king, strong king, king of the universe, king of Assyria, son of Tukulti-Ninurta (II), great king, strong king, king of the universe, king of Assyria, son of Adad-nerari (II) (who was) also great king, strong king, king of the universe, (and) king of Assyria, conqueror from the opposite bank of the Tigris as far as Mount Lebanon (and) the Great Sea, all lands from east to west at his feet he subdued.<sup>26</sup>

Certainly Israel could have been one of the lands 'from east to west' which the king subdued. The geography of the inscription would imply probable contact with Israel. It could be that Shalmaneser later took credit for these incursions which belonged to his father.

#### 2. Evidence Of Plagiarism: Shalmaneser From Ashur-nasir-pal

Apparent duplication of Ashur-nasir-pal's records appears among the memorabilia of Shalmaneser III. Compare, for example, the following tribute lists. The first is taken from the Kurkh Monolith which commemorates the victories of the fifth year of Ashur-nasir-pal's reign (879 B.C.) and lists tribute from Ammaballi, son of Zamani.<sup>27</sup> The second is from year two of Shalmaneser III (857 B.C.) on the Monolith Inscription describing an alleged tribute from 'the Hattinites'.<sup>28</sup>

Ashur-nasir-pal II	Shalmaneser III
2 talents of gold	3 talents of gold
100 talents of lead	100 talents of silver
300 talents of copper	300 talents of copper
300 talents of iron	300 talents of iron
1000 copper vessels	1000 copper vessels
1000 garments of wool	1000 garments of wool
2000 cattle	500 cattle
5000 sheep	5000 sheep
sister and dowry	daughter and dowry

Note that the order in which the tribute items are recorded is the same. It is unlikely that this duplication of amount and order is coincidence. It is more likely that Shalmaneser used his father's tribute list as a pattern when creating his own false accounts. It is doubtful the Monolith Inscription belongs to Shalmaneser, but is an annals text belonging to Ashur-nasir-pal. If so, the above records were Ashur-nasir-pal's method of arrangement for recording tribute.

The inscriptions on the Bronze Gates of Balawat discovered by H. R. Hall and Leonard Wooley at Tell Obeid, near the site of ancient Ur, has been ascribed to Shalmaneser.<sup>29</sup> Yet, in the past, the fact that the gates are ascribed to Shalmaneser has been called into question. Their contents fit better with the recorded activities and achievements of Ashur-nasir-pal.

The throne of the black basalt seated figure of Shalmaneser which was found at Kalat Sherkat contains the Throne Inscription. This inscription of Shalmaneser names eight gates which he had made but the Bronze Gates of Balawat are not mentioned:

The name of the Metal-Workers' Gate of the great wall, the entrance of all lands, is *Sanikal-malke* ('Subduer of Princes'), -- (the name) Metal-Workers' Gate is preferred by its people (artisans). The gate of the entrance of the king, (by) the *mushal*, (is called) *Musharshidat-aratte* ('She Who Firmly Establishes the Throne'). The gate of the temple towers (is called) *Assur-mukannish-shapsute* ('Assur Is Subduer of the Proud'). The Assur-gate (is called) *Banat-[Lamassu-sharri]* ('The King's Guardian Deity Shines'). The gate of the court(?) (is called) *Shamash-nir-multarhi* ('Shamash Is Destroyer of the Arrogant'). The gate of [Shamash] (is called) *Rasinat-kurunu-ilani* ('Wine-pourer of the Gods'). The gate of the river landing(?) (is called) *Ikkib-sha-la-gari* ('Merciless Punishment'). The gate of *tisirri* ....<sup>30</sup>

Although the Throne Inscription is broken at the reading of the eighth gate, the Bronze Gates of Balawat were not among the first eight entries on the Throne Inscription. It is possible that Shalmaneser did not personally take credit for these gates at Balawat.

It is believed that Ashur-nasir-pal constructed the gates according to his own records and description.<sup>31</sup> This information is contained in the Balawat (Ingur-Bel) Inscriptions:

Assur-nasir-pal, the great king, the mighty king, king of the universe, king of Assyria; son of Tukulti-Urta, the great king, the mighty king, king of the universe, king of Assyria....

This city I have settled anew, and have called its name Ingur-Bel. This temple I founded on the ruins of my palace, and a image of Mahir, my lord, I have set up there-in. I marched unto Mount Lebanon and cut down beams of cedar, cypress

and juniper, with the beams of cedar I roofed this temple, door-leaves of cedar I fashioned, and with the sheathing (bands) of copper I bound them, and I hung them in its gates. This temple I adorned and I made glorious, and I caused the great lord Mahir to dwell therein. I inscribed a memorial stele and in his temple I set it up.<sup>32</sup>

It appears that Ashur-nasir-pal's son, Shalmaneser III, could have made entries on the posts and decided to take credit for the events recorded on all the bands.<sup>33</sup>

A close examination of the bands inscriptions found on the Bronze Gates of Balawat indicate, in general, different activity from that found in the military achievements of Shalmaneser III as written on the Black Obelisk Monument. In fact, there is little similarity between the two accounts. The only similarities between the Bronze Gates of Balawat and the Black Obelisk during the eleven years of Shalmaneser's reign would be references to Ahuni, son of Adini, and Sangara of Carchemish.<sup>34</sup> Most scholars who assign the Bronze Gates of Balawat to Shalmaneser believe that they cover only the first eleven years of his reign. References to both Ahuni, son of Adini and Sangara of Carchemish are also found in the Assyrian annal texts of Ashur-nasir-pal<sup>35</sup> for year four of his reign during the eponymy of Dagan-bel-nasir (880 B.C.). This means that the reigns of Ahuni and Sangara spanned at least twenty-five years. This evidence would seem to indicate that the Bronze Gates of Balawat belong to Ashur-nasir-pal rather than Shalmaneser.<sup>36</sup>

The Bronze Gates of Balawat Inscriptions contain more parallels to Ashur-nasir-pal than to Shalmaneser. Several examples will be cited.

The bronze band (I, upper register) reads thus: "I set up an image on the shore of the sea Nairi; I offered sacrifices to my gods."<sup>37</sup> If one were to examine the annals of Shalmaneser, he would discover that there are several references to the land of Nairi outside the Monolith Inscription but none referring to the above image. If the Monolith Inscription did originally belong to Shalmaneser, it also does not refer to the erection of the king's image in the land of Nairi. However, Ashur-nasir-pal refers to his image inscribed with heroic acts performed, placed in the land of Nairi:

An image of my likeness I fashioned out of white limestone, my glory, my exceeding great power and my valorous deeds which I had performed in the lands of Nairi, I inscribed thereon, and in the city of Tushha I set it up; and I inscribed a memorial stele and set it in the wall thereof.<sup>38</sup>

Another bronze band (III, upper register) from Balawat reads: "I received the tribute of the ships of the men of Tyre and Sidon."<sup>39</sup> This refers to a campaign into Phoenicia. Ashur-nasir-pal describes such a campaign:

At that time I marched along the side of Mount Lebanon, and to the Great Sea of the land of Amurru I went up. In the Great Sea I washed my weapons, and I made offerings unto the gods. The tribute of the kings of the seacoast, of the people of Tyre, Sidon, Gebail (Byblos), Mahalata, Maisa, Kaisa, Amurru, Arvad, which lies in the midst of the sea, -- silver, gold, lead, copper, vessels of copper, garments made of brightly colored wool, linen garments, a great *pagutu*, and a small *pagutu*, maple-wood, boxwood, and ivory, and a dolphin ('sea-horse'), a

creature of the sea, I received as tribute from them, and they embraced my feet.<sup>40</sup>

Although Shalmaneser did receive tribute from the Tyrians, Sidonians that did not happen until his twenty-first year.<sup>41</sup> Therefore, the tribute appears to be parallel to the annals of Ashur-nasir-pal. On the same band (III, lower register), the inscription reads: "Smiting of the city of Hazazu."<sup>42</sup> It appears that Shalmaneser does not make reference to the city of Hazazu in his records, but Ashur-nasir-pal does: "To the city of Hazazi, belonging to Lubarna of the land of Hattina, I drew nigh, -- gold, garments (of wool), linen garments I received."<sup>43</sup>

From the above information, it seems reasonable to suggest that the Bronze Gates of Balawat and the inscriptions thereon should be viewed as originally the work of Ashur-nasir-pal, Shalmaneser's father. For his annals texts coincide better than the Black Obelisk Monument and other texts of Shalmaneser's with the Monolith Inscription excluded.

Having established that the Inscriptions of the Bronze Gates are the work of Ashur-nasir-pal, it can now be demonstrated that the Monolith Inscription also belongs to Ashur-nasir-pal who was contemporary with King Ahab of Israel. When one examines the Inscriptions of the Bronze Gates, their information data is remarkably parallel to the Monolith Inscription. Both inscriptions relate the following parallel references: Nairi-land,<sup>44</sup> the capture of Sugunia, the royal city of Arame, the Urartian (Armeinian),<sup>45</sup> the battle with Ahuni, son of Adini,<sup>46</sup> the tribute of Sangara of Carchemish,<sup>47</sup> the capture of the city of Hazazu and the city of Arame,<sup>48</sup> the tribute of the men of Gilzani,<sup>49</sup> and the battle of Qarqar (Karkar).<sup>50</sup> These outstanding parallels could only suggest the fact that the Bronze Gates of Balawat and the Monolith Inscription belong to the military achievements of the same Assyrian Monarch-- Ashur-nasir-pal.

It is interesting to note that outside of the Monolith Inscription there is no reference to Qarqar in the annalistic texts of Shalmaneser. With the number of times in which Shalmaneser makes mention of the conflict with Hadad-ezer, king of Syria, and the kings of Hatti, Qarqar is not once mentioned in this context. Could it be that the Monolith Inscription belongs to Ashur-nasir-pal and that he waged the battle of Qarqar? If Shalmaneser fought this battle in which Ahab of Israel participated, it would seem reasonable to expect other references in his annals to this victory. Why does the Black Obelisk Monument omit such a reference to Qarqar?

Reference is found to Qarqar on the Bronze Gates of Balawat which Ashur-nasir-pal claims to have constructed and which Shalmaneser makes no reference to in his writings: "Karkar, the city of Urhileni [Irhulini] of the land of Hamath, I captured."<sup>51</sup> The military achievements listed on the Bronze Gates of Balawat and the Monolith Inscription are remarkably parallel and in chronological order. The following is a brief reference to Qarqar from the Monolith Inscription:

To Kar-Shalmaneser I drew near. In (goat)-skin boats I crossed the Euphrates the second time, at its flood. ... To Karkar I drew near.

Karkar, his royal city, I destroyed, I devastated, I burned with fire. 1,200 chariots, 1,200 cavalry, 20,000 soldiers of Hadad-ezer, of Aram (?Damascus); 700 chariots, 700 cavalry, 10,000 soldiers of Irhuleni of Hamath, 2,000 chariots, 10,000

soldiers of Ahab, the Israelite, 500 soldiers of the Gueans, 1,000 soldiers of the Musreans, 10 chariots, 10,000 soldiers of the Irkanateans, 200 soldiers of Matinuba'il, the Arvadite, 200 soldiers of the Usanateans, 30 chariots, 11,000 soldiers of Adunuba'il, the Shianean, 1,000 camels of Gindibu', the Arabian, 11,000 soldiers [of] Ba'sa, son of Ruhubi, the Ammonite,-- these twelve kings he brought to his support; to offer battle and fight, they came against me.<sup>52</sup>

By comparing the Bronze Gates of Balawat Inscription with the Monolith Inscription regarding Qarqar, it can be seen that both inscriptions are in perfect harmony.

While Shalmaneser has numerous references to conflict with Hadad-ezer of Syria and the twelve king alliance, the location of battle is never given as Qarqar. The present research has concluded that Shalmaneser has 'stolen' the Monolith Inscription from his father--Ashur-nasir-pal. Shalmaneser has removed his father's name and has removed the eponym years coinciding with his father's reign and has placed his own name there and has placed eponymous persons into the text to parallel his first six years. That is why there is a discrepancy between the year of Daian-assur in the Black Obelisk Inscription-- the fourth year of Shalmaneser, and the Monolith Inscription-- the sixth year of Shalmaneser.

Another name change occurs in the place name of Kar-Ashur-nasir-pal. King Ashur-nasir-pal tells in his annals of his founding of the city: "Two cities I founded upon the Euphrates; the one on this side of the Euphrates I named Kar-Assur-nasir-pal, and the one on the farther side of the Euphrates I named Nibarti-Assur."<sup>53</sup> Shalmaneser calls the same location Kar-Shalmaneser in the Monolith Inscription. By the descriptions, one can tell that this is the same city; for this is the location where the Assyrian kings (father and son) crossed the Euphrates in the springtime during the military activities for westward expansion of the Assyrian Empire. Both Kar-Ashur-nasir-pal and Kar-Shalmaneser were located on the east side of the river Euphrates-- "To Kar-Shalmaneser I drew near. In (goat)-skin boats I crossed the Euphrates the second time, at its flood."<sup>54</sup> It is obvious that a name change has occurred.

It appears that the Bronze Gates of Balawat belong to Ashur-nasir-pal. Since the data of the Bronze Gates of Balawat through the Battle of Qarqar is amazingly parallel and in chronological order to the events recorded on the Monolith Inscription, it seems likely that both documents belong to the same Assyrian ruler--Ashur-nasir-pal. Therefore, the Monolith Inscription does not belong to Shalmaneser, but he gave himself credit for the events on it after his father's death.

Ashur-nasir-pal had other monolith inscriptions made which recorded his achievements as king. The Great Monolith, or sculptured stele of Ashur-nasir-pal from the entrance to the Urta temple at Calah, contained the annals of the first five years of the king's reign. The monolith from Kurkh, some twenty miles south of Diarbekr, was set up to commemorate the victories of the fifth year of Ashur-nasir-pal's reign. It is believed that the Monolith Inscription is also a record of Ashur-nasir-pal's first six years of reign. The Monolith Inscription is more detailed than the above monoliths and also makes reference to Ashur-nasir-pal's sixth year in which the battle of Qarqar was waged (878 B.C.).

The date for the battle of Qarqar would fit into the reign of King Ahab of Israel

(890 B.C.-- 868 B.C.)-- approximately ten years before King Ahab's death.

### **3. Evidence Of Plagiarism: Shalmaneser From Ashur-bel-kala**

The Black Obelisk has an inscription over a relief which lists animals received as tribute from Africa,<sup>55</sup> yet there is no evidence whatsoever that Shalmaneser ever ventured that far south. The almost identical list can be found as having been presented to Ashur-bel-kala, 200 years previously.<sup>56</sup> While much of the Black Obelisk depicts events clearly attributable to Shalmaneser, there are also alarming earmarks of forgery!

One need not be surprised by these observations. A word of caution is provided by Luckenbill in his comments prior to the royal annals of Shalmaneser. Very diplomatically he says, "It is possible that the first of these, which contained a full account of the events of the year of accession, belongs to a much earlier period."<sup>57</sup>

### **4. Evidence Of Deliberate Defacing: Shalmaneser III**

It is very interesting to note the striking absence of the eponym comments *in toto* from the first year of Ashur-nasir-pal until the first year of Shalmaneser. The position held by the eponymous person as well as the military action is even omitted. Their removal makes verification of many of the exploits of Ashur-nasir-pal very difficult, if not impossible. This is probably exactly what Shalmaneser wanted--since he took credit for the Monolith Inscription which relates the important victory of Qarqar.

## **II. Ahab vs. Shalmaneser III: An Impossible Anachronism Of Thiele**

The purpose of this chapter is not merely to discredit the claims of a significant monarch of Assyria. For the most part, Shalmaneser's records like those before and after him give every evidence of attempts to stay somewhere within the recognized boundaries of historical reporting. However, allowance must be made for the arrogance, braggadocio, and hyperbole one expects from such exalted officials. But their inconsistencies must be recognized for what they were. If credence is given to the anachronistic claims of Shalmaneser, a trap which the time-honored work of Thiele fails to avoid, then a great re-alignment in the placement of Israel's monarchs must occur. The chronology of the Hebrew kings becomes historical nonsense when adjusted to fit such corruptions or forgeries. When the secular records are scrutinized with care, the Biblical account is seen to harmonize quite well with existing records of Assyria.

Because Thiele has not examined the Assyrian documents to see their inconsistencies in reference to the various battles with Hadad-ezer of Aram and his twelve king coalition which included Ahab of Israel, he has created a problem with the integrity of the Hebrew text. It is Thiele's supposition that the sixth year of Shalmaneser is Ahab's final end and that the eighteenth year of Shalmaneser is Jehu's first year of reign. He states his supposition regarding Ahab as follows:

During the reign of Ahab an accurately dated event in Assyrian history can for the first time be definitely tied in with Hebrew history. The Assyrian records list Ahab as among the allied powers of western Asia who fought against Shalmaneser III at the battle of Qarqar in Aram during the eponym year of Daian-Ashur, the sixth year of Shalmaneser III, verified as 853. There is no mention of

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the battle of Qarqar in the Bible and thus no direct information as to the year of Ahab's reign when the battle was fought. But by a fortuitous combination of years in Hebrew and Assyrian history, it is possible to place this battle in Ahab's last year.<sup>58</sup>

Thiele has Ahab and Hadad-ezer defeated at the battle of Qarqar in Shalmaneser's sixth year according to the Monolith Inscription. Since 853 B.C. is both the date of the battle of Qarqar and Ahab's last year of reign according to Thiele's chronological pattern, it becomes necessary following Qarqar for Ahab to turn against Hadad-ezer (Ben-hadad) and the Arameans. According to I Kings 22:1-37, King Ahab was slain in the battle for Ramoth-Gilead. Thiele must place the battle of Ramoth-Gilead immediately after the battle of Qarqar--

The battle of Qarqar was thus probably fought during July or possibly early August. This would, however, leave Ahab ample time to return to Samaria and, with his forces already mustered, conduct the campaign at Ramoth Gilead well before the close of the season for that year.<sup>59</sup>

It seems unusual that Ahab of Israel would fight two major wars in one year-- to fight with Ben-hadad against a common foe, Shalmaneser had to fight immediately against Ben-hadad, his recent ally. This does not seem reasonable. According to the computer calendar, these two events are separated from one another by ten years-- the battle of Qarqar (878 B.C.) and the battle for Ramoth-Gilead (868 B.C.). In addition to this, there is even a greater gulf between Thiele and the computer calendar for the battle of Qarqar-- twenty-five years-- the sixth year of Ashur-nasir-pal (878 B.C.) and the sixth year of Shalmaneser (853 B.C.). There is fifteen years difference between Thiele's date and the computer's date for Ahab's death (868 B.C.).

Below are the details of Thiele's supposition regarding Jehu of Israel:

Therefore, Ahab was still alive and reigning in Israel sometime in the year 853. Shalmaneser also mentions that he received tribute from Jehu during his expedition to the west in his eighteenth year. This would be in the eponymy of Adad-rimani (841). ... Since the interval between the battle of Qarqar, at which Ahab fought in 853, and the time when Jehu paid tribute to Shalmaneser in 841 is also a period of just twelve years, it is this period that the reigns of Azariah and Joram must have taken place, with 853 as the last year of Ahab and 841 for Jehu's accession. ... Having established these two dates as a starting point for an absolute chronology of the Hebrew kings, we should be able to go backward and forward, knowing that if our chronological pattern is correct we will obtain exact synchronisms at all points of contact with any absolute chronology of neighboring states.<sup>60</sup>

It has already been shown in this chapter that it would be impossible to date the battle of Qarqar according to the inconsistencies of Shalmaneser's own records. The inconsistencies of the time element in the Assyrian annalistic texts regarding campaigns against Hadad-ezer of Aram and his allies, along with the confusion over the eponymous year of Daian-assur being either the fourth or the sixth year of Shalmaneser, would make it impossible for the historian to accurately date

the battle of Qarqar. The assignment of a date to this event becomes easier when the Monolith Inscription is seen as belonging to Ashur-nasir-pal.

When one examines the feasibility of placing the sixth year of Shalmaneser as the end of Ahab's reign and Shalmaneser's eighteenth year as the accession year of Jehu, as Thiele has done, the contradictions with clear Biblical statements are obvious.

First of all, if in his first year Jehu paid tribute to Shalmaneser, this time element would be out of harmony with the Scripture--

Thus Jehu destroyed Baal out of Israel. Howbeit, from the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who made Israel to sin, Jehu departed not from after him, to wit, the golden calves that were in Bethel, and that were in Dan. And the Lord said unto Jehu, Because thou hast done well in executing that which is right in mine eyes, and hast done unto the house of Ahab according to all that was in mine heart, thy children of the fourth generation shall sit on the throne of Israel. But Jehu took no heed to walk in the law of the Lord God of Israel with all his heart: for he departed not from the sins of Jeroboam, which made Israel to sin.

In those days the Lord began to cut Israel short: and Hazael smote them in all the coasts of Israel: From Jordan eastward, all the land of Gilead, the Gadities, and the Reubenities, and the Manassites, from Aroer, which is by the river Arnon, even Gilead and Bashan. II Kings 10:28-33

It appears from Scripture that the Lord did not begin 'to cut Israel short' until Jehu had proven himself unworthy. This would hardly have been in Jehu's accession year. Thiele parallels Jehu's first year with Shalmaneser's eighteenth year. It is impossible for Hazael to smite Israel at this time and to have been smitten by Shalmaneser in his eighteenth year. From Calah, a fragment of Shalmaneser's annals reads:

In my eighteenth year of reign I crossed the Euphrates for the sixteenth time. Hazael of Aram trusted in the mass of his troops, mustered his armies in great numbers, made Mount Saninu, a mountain peak at the front of the Lebanons, his stronghold. I battled with him. I accomplished his overthrow. 6,000 of his warriors I slew with the sword. 1,121 of his chariots, 470 of his cavalry, together with his camp, I took away from him. To save his life, he went (up into the mountain). I followed after him. In Damascus, his royal city, I shut him up. His orchards I cut down. I advanced as far as Mount Hauran. Countless cities I destroyed, I devastated, I burned with fire. Their spoil, without number, I carried off. To Mount Ba'li-ra'si, a head-(land) of the sea, I marched. My royal image I set up there. At that time I received the tribute of the men of Tyre, Sidon and of Jehu, son of Omri.<sup>61</sup>

In the light of both Biblical and Assyrian texts, it would seem unreasonable to parallel Jehu's accession year to Shalmaneser's eighteenth year. According to the computer calendar, Jehu's first year was 856 B.C. and Shalmaneser's eighteenth year was 841 B.C.-- a difference of fifteen years.

### **III. Scrutinizing Standard Anchor Dates With Modern Technology**

This chapter, and chapters V and VI have demonstrated that several of Thiele's anchor dates which he has synchronized with Assyrian history are in error with both Biblical and secular texts. These anchor dates are crucial for Thiele; for us-

ing these dates he has worked both backwards and forwards to assign numbers to the Hebrew kings. Three of his four major anchor dates have been shown in this section on 'Problems in Assyrian Chronology' to be incorrect when one fully examines all historical sources. Thiele's date for the fall of Samaria (723 B.C.) agrees with the computer calendar, but it did not fall before Hezekiah came to the throne. He gives a list of his anchor dates in the following statement:

Anchor points are as follows: 853, the battle of Qarqar in the sixth year of Shalmaneser III when Ahab fought against Assyria in, according to my pattern, the last year of his reign; 841, the eighteenth year of Shalmaneser III, when he claimed the receipt of tribute from Jehu in, according to my pattern, the year when Jehu began to reign; 723, the last year of Hoshea when Samaria fell to Assyria; and 701, the fourteenth year of Hezekiah when Sennacherib came against him in the fortified cities of Judah.

One of these dates can give all the others. ...

It can hardly be a matter of chance that my pattern of Hebrew years calls for 853 as the correct date of Qarqar, a year later than the formerly accepted date of 854, and that for the fall of Samaria it calls for 723, a year earlier than the formerly accepted date. What we have here is historical truth-- truth for the Hebrews and truth also for the Assyrian years.<sup>62</sup>

The present research has shown that the inconsistencies in Shalmaneser's annals would make it impossible to accurately date the battle of Qarqar. Therefore, the battle of Qarqar when Ahab fought Assyria was neither 853 B.C. nor his last year of reign. The research has concluded that Shalmaneser's eighteenth year when he claimed the receipt of tribute from Jehu was 841 B.C. but not the year that Jehu began to reign. In chapter five, the research has affirmed that the fourteenth year of Hezekiah was not 701 B.C.-- the third year of Sennacherib. The present study has looked for truth in both the Hebrew and Assyrian records. Whenever practical the integrity of the Assyrian records has been maintained, and the integrity of the Hebrew Bible is placed above the documents of Assyria when those writings seem to be in error.

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<sup>1</sup>The famous Assyrian Eponym List with notes begins at the accession of Shalmaneser III. The canon reads: "859 Tab-bel when Shulman-asharidu (Shalmaneser) son of Assurnasirpal [took his seat on the throne]" Daniel David Luckenbill, *Ancient Records Of Assyria And Babylonia*, Volume II (New York: Greenwood Press, Publishers, 1968), sec. 1198, p. 431. See also Appendix A.

<sup>2</sup>Grayson, Albert Kirk, *Assyrian Royal Inscription*, Volume II (Wiesbaden, Germany: Otto Harrassowitz, 1976), sec. 660, p. 168.

<sup>3</sup>ARI, Vol. II, sec. 666, p. 170.

<sup>4</sup>ARI, Vol. II, sec. 771, p. 195.

<sup>5</sup>ARI, Vol II, sec. 697, p. 180.

<sup>6</sup>ARI, Vol. II, sec. 690, 691, 695, 696, 697, 708a, 719, 720, 731, 732, 738, 758, 759, 771, 772, pp. 178, 179, 180, 182, 185, 187, 188, 189, 193, 195.

<sup>7</sup>A. T. Olmstead, *History Of Assyria* (Chicago: The University Of Chicago Press, 1951), p. 110.

<sup>8</sup>ARAB, Vol. I, sec. 563, pp. 202-203.

<sup>9</sup>ARAB, Vol. I, sec. 568, p. 204.

<sup>10</sup>ARAB, Vol. I, sec. 571, pp. 204-205.

<sup>11</sup>ARAB, Vol. I, sec. 575, p. 205.

<sup>12</sup>The eighteenth year of Shalmaneser when he engaged war with Hazael of Aram is also the same year in which Jehu of Israel paid tribute to the Assyrian ruler--

"In my eighteenth year of reign I crossed the Euphrates for the sixteenth time. Hazael of Aram trusted in the mass of his troops, mustered his armies in great numbers, made Mount Saniru, a mountain peak at the front of the Lebanons, his stronghold. I battle with him. I accomplished his overthrow. 6,000 of his warriors I slew with the sword. 1,121 of his chariots, 470 of his cavalry, together with his camp, I took away from him. To save his life, he went (up into the mountain). I followed after him. In Damascus, his royal city, I shut him up. His orchards I cut down. I advanced as far as Mount Hauran. Countless cities I destroyed, I devastated, I burned with fire. Their spoil, without number, I carried off. To Mount Ba'li-ra'si, a head(land) of the sea, I marched. My royal image I set up there. At that time I received tribute of the men of Tyre, Sidon and of Jehu, son of Omri." ARAB, Vol. I, sec. 672, p. 243.

<sup>13</sup>ARI, Vol. II, sec. 462, p. 98.

<sup>14</sup>ARAB, Vol. I, sec. 686, p. 247.

<sup>15</sup>ARAB, Vol. I, sec. 691, p. 248.

<sup>16</sup>See ARAB, Vol. I, sec. 560, 561, 562, p. 202.

<sup>17</sup>ARAB, Vol. I, sec. 561, p. 202. Luckenbill also places the eponymy of Daian-assur at

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Shalmaneser's fourth year. He has placed the eponymy of Daian-assur into the following inscription which has been dated as the fourth year--

"[In the eponymy of Daian-Assur], I departed from Nineveh. [I crossed the Euphrates at its flood]. I pursued Ahuni, son of Adini. Shitamrat a mountain peak] by the bank of the Euphrates, [which hangs like a cloud] in the sky, [he made] his stronghold. [The mountain peak] I stormed, I captured. [Ahuni, with his cities, his chariots], his horses, [his sons, his daughters and his arms] I carried off, [to Assyria I brought (them).] ...." *ARAB*, Vol. I, sec. 670, pp. 242-243.

<sup>18</sup>*ARAB*, Vol. I, sec. 610-611, pp. 222-223.

<sup>19</sup>*ARAB*, Vol. I, sec. 561, p. 202.

<sup>20</sup>*ARAB*, Vol. I, sec. 680-681, pp. 245-246.

<sup>21</sup>Here Shalmaneser reports his first conflict with the Aramaean king--

"In my sixth year of reign I departed from Nineveh, .... The [Euphrates I crossed at its flood. The tribute] of the kings of the land of Hatti I received. From Hatti I departed. To Halman (Aleppo) I drew near. [I offered sacrifices before Adad] of Halman.

From Halman I departed, to the city of Karkar I drew near. Hadad-ezer of Aram (Syria), Irhuleni of Hamath, together with 12 kings of the seacoast, trusted in each other's might and marched forth against me, offering battle and combat. I fought with them. 25,000 of their warriors I slew with the sword. Their chariots, their cavalry, their weapons of war, I took from them. To save their lives they fled (*lit.*, went up). I mounted boats and went into the sea." *ARAB*, Vol. I, sec. 646-647, pp. 237-238.

<sup>22</sup>"In my tenth year I crossed the Euphrates the eighth time ... At that time Hadad-ezer of Aram (Syria), Irhuleni of Hamath, together with 12 kings of the seacoast, trusted in each other's might and advanced against me, offering battle and combat. I fought with them, I defeated them. To save their lives they fled." *ARAB*, Vol. I, sec. 651-652, p. 239

This is new information for the Black Obelisk reports only a campaign against the cities of Sangara of Carchemish and the cities of Arame and his royal city-- Arne.

<sup>23</sup> The next campaign against the Aramaean king is given as follows--

"In my eleventh year of reign I departed from Nineveh. The ninth time I crossed the Euphrates at its flood. ... At that time Hadad-ezer of Aram (Syria), Irhuleni of Hamath, together with 12 kings of the seacoast, trusted in each other's might and advanced against me, offering battle and combat. I fought with them. I defeated them. 10,000 of their warriors I slew with the sword. Their chariots, their cavalry, their weapons of war I took from them." *ARAB*, Vol. I, sec. 653-654, pp. 239-240. This parallels the Black Obelisk Inscription.

<sup>24</sup>The final campaign against Hadad-ezer occurred in Shalmaneser's fourteenth year--

"In my fourteenth year of reign I mustered (the people) of the whole wide land, in countless numbers. With 120,000 of my soldiers I crossed the Euphrates at its flood.

At that time Hadad-ezer of Aram (Syria), Irhuleni of Hamath, together with 12 kings of the seacoast, the upper and lower, mustered their numerous armies, of countless numbers (and) advanced against me. I battled with them. I defeated them. Their chariots, their cavalry, I destroyed, their weapons of war I took from them. To save their lives they fled." *ARAB*, Vol. I, sec. 658-659, pp. 240-241.

<sup>25</sup>*ARI*, Vol. II, sec. 584-586, pp. 141-143. Compare sec. 597, p. 149; sec. 601, p. 150.

<sup>26</sup>*ARI*, Vol. II, sec. 775, p. 196.

<sup>27</sup>*ARAB*, Vol. I, sec. 501, p. 181.

<sup>28</sup>*ARAB*, Vol. I, sec. 601, pp. 216-217.

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<sup>29</sup>ARAB, Vol. I, sec. 612-614, pp. 224-227.

<sup>30</sup>ARAB, Vol. I, sec. 678, p. 245.

<sup>31</sup>ARAB, Vol. I, sec. 540-543, p. 196. Luckenbill gives the following information regarding Ashurnasir-pal's bronze gates: "In the entrance to a palace or temple (at Ingur-Bel, Balawat?) of Assurnasir-pal stood gates covered with bands of bronze in which were depicted scenes from the king's campaigns and hunting expeditions."

<sup>32</sup>ARAB, Vol. I, sec. 537-538, pp. 194-196.

<sup>33</sup>ARAB, Vol. I, sec. 615, p. 227. Luckenbill writes about the 'Gate Inscription': "In addition to the bronze bands which were nailed across the doors and around the massive doorposts, there was a sheathing of bronze running from the top to the bottom of the free edge of each of the doors. On these edgings was engraved the so-called 'Gate Inscription', in duplicate. Only a selected few events from the first four years are recorded, and the inscription closes with a detailed account of the campaigns against Babylonia, years 8 and 9. But in view of the fact that the scenes and inscriptions on the bands include the campaigns against Arne and Ashtamaku, it is possible that the gates were not set up until after the eleventh year."

<sup>34</sup>ARAB, Vol. I, sec. 559-561, pp. 201-202 and sec. 567, p. 204.

<sup>35</sup>ARAB, Vol. I, sec. 474-475, pp. 163-164 and sec. 476, pp. 164-165.

<sup>36</sup>Compare the inscriptions of the Bronze Gates of Balawat (ARAB, Vol. I, sec. 614, pp. 225-227) with the inscriptions of the Black Obelisk (ARAB, Vol. I, sec. 555-593, pp. 200-211). There appears to be very few parallels.

<sup>37</sup>ARAB, Vol. I, sec. 614, p. 225.

<sup>38</sup>ARAB, Vol. I, sec. 446, p. 147.

<sup>39</sup>ARAB, Vol. I, sec. 614, p. 225.

<sup>40</sup>ARAB, Vol. I, sec. 479, pp. 166-167.

<sup>41</sup>In a campaign against Hazael, the Black Obelisk monarch writes, "In my twenty-first year of reign I crossed the Euphrates for the twenty-first time. I advanced against the cities of Hazael and Aram (?Damascus). Four of his cities I captured. The gift of Tyrians, Sidonians, and Gebalites, I received." ARAB, Vol. I, sec. 578, pp. 205-206.

<sup>42</sup>ARAB, Vol. I, sec. 614, p. 226.

<sup>43</sup>ARAB, Vol. I, sec. 476, p. 165.

<sup>44</sup>Compare Balawat Inscription-- Band I (upper register) [ARAB, Vol. I, sec. 614, p. 225] with the Monolith Inscription [ARAB, Vol. I, sec. 598, p. 213-214].

<sup>45</sup>Compare Balawat Inscription--Band I (lower register) and Band II (upper register) [ARAB, Vol. I, sec. 614, p. 225] with the Monolith Inscription [ARAB, Vol. I, sec. 598, p. 213].

<sup>46</sup>Compare Balawat Inscription--Band IV (upper register) [ARAB, Vol. I, sec. 614, p. 226] with the Monolith Inscription [ARAB, Vol. I, sec. 599, pp. 214-215; also sec. 601, pp. 216-217].

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<sup>47</sup>Compare Balawat Inscription--Band VI (upper register) [ARAB, Vol. I, sec. 614, p. 226] with the Monolith Inscription [ARAB, Vol. I, sec. 599-600, p. 215-216; also sec. 601, p. 217].

<sup>48</sup>Compare Balawat Inscription--Band III (lower register) and Band VII (upper register) [ARAB, Vol. I, sec. 614, p. 226] with the Monolith Inscription [ARAB, Vol. I, sec. 600, p. 216; also sec. 605, pp. 219-220].

<sup>49</sup>Compare Balawat Inscription--Band VII (lower register) [ARAB, Vol. I, sec. 614, p. 226] with the Monolith Inscription [ARAB, Vol. I, sec. 607, p. 220].

<sup>50</sup>Compare Balawat Inscription--Band IX (lower register) [ARAB, Vol. I, sec. 614, p. 226] with the Monolith Inscription [ARAB, Vol. I, sec. 610-611, pp. 222-223].

<sup>51</sup>The Balawat Inscription--Band IX (lower register) [ARAB, Vol. I, sec. 614, p. 226].

<sup>52</sup>ARAB, Vol. I, sec. 610-611, pp. 222-223.

<sup>53</sup>ARAB, Vol. I, sec. 473, p. 163.

<sup>54</sup>ARAB, Vol. I, sec. 610, p. 222.

<sup>55</sup>ARAB, Vol. I, sec. 591, p. 211. The tribute inscription reads: "Tribute of the land of Musri. Camels, whose backs are two humps, a river-ox (buffalo), a *sakea*, a *susu*, elephants, monkeys, apes, I received from him."

<sup>56</sup>ARI, Vol. II, sec. 248, p. 55. Ashur-bel-kala, king of Assyria, (1073-1056 B.C.) speaks of his tribute on the Broken Obelisk-- "The king of Egypt sent a large female ape, a crocodile, (and) a 'river-man', beasts of the Great Sea. He displayed (them) to the people of his land."

<sup>57</sup>ARAB, Vol. I, sec. 626, p. 232.

<sup>58</sup>Edwin R. Thiele, *The Mysterious Numbers Of The Hebrew Kings* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan Publishing House, 1978), pp. 94-95.

<sup>59</sup>*Ibid.*, footnote, p. 95.

<sup>60</sup>*Ibid.*, pp. 76-77.

<sup>61</sup>ARAB, Vol. I, sec. 672, p. 243; see Shalmaneser's eighteenth year on the Black Obelisk Inscription-- ARAB, Vol. I, sec. 575, p. 205.

<sup>62</sup>Thiele, *op. cit.*, pp. 121-123.

## Chapter VIII - PTOLEMY'S CANON: ITS ANACHRONISMS

### I. The Need To Examine Ancient Chronological Data

When a student of history picks up a textbook and reads, 'The Babylonians crushed the Egyptian army at Carchemish in 605 B.C.', he is confronted with a choice. Either he can accept the author's statement as historically accurate or address it with interrogatives such as: 'How does the author know the battle took place in 605 B.C.?' or, 'Why do other texts place the battle in 604 or 606 B.C.?' Such questions are legitimate. There were no B.C./A.D. calendars in 605 B.C. In fact, the entire view of the universe, from its size to its supposed 'geocentricity', differed radically from the perspective taken for granted by the most humble of amateur astronomers today. The concern of absolute chronology insists that such questions be addressed in a scientific and serious manner; and the technological advances of the computer age and their application to astronomical calculations provides the tools for responding to such inquiries in a far more sophisticated manner than previously considered possible.

The subject of ancient chronology is too extensive to be considered in detail in a study centered on the chronology of the Hebrew kings. An entire volume would be required merely to outline the issues involved. On the other hand, no serious chronological study of any part of ancient history can divorce itself from an examination of the larger chronological foundation upon which any segment must be based. Testing by modern technology indicates that there may be a number of serious flaws in the ancient foundations which makes further building upon it a most precarious venture.

### II. Sources Of Ancient Astronomical Data Used

There are two basic sources of chronological synchronism for Israel's monarchical period which are generally accepted. They both use astronomical data, a significant source of ancient 'date fixing' but not one without serious problems.

#### A. The Assyrian Eponym List

The first and most frequently quoted astronomical 'fix' is found in the Assyrian Eponym (*limmu*) List which the present study has used and found to be accurate. During the reign of Ashur-dan III of Assyria, an eclipse of the sun is mentioned in the notation for the eponym of Bur-Sagale. This eclipse was calculated in 1887 to have occurred on June 15 (Julian calendar), 763 B.C. This date has served for nearly a century to provide a reliable point in the Eponym List for historical synchronization of Assyrian history with that of neighboring nations. This calculation has been confirmed in recent years through the use of computers.

With the year of the eponymy of Bur-Sagale fixed at 763 B.C., the year of every other name of the complete canon can likewise be fixed. The four Assyrian Eponym Lists extant today provide a reliable record of the annual *limmu* officials

from 892 to 648 B.C. in Assyrian history. Therefore, the chronology of the Hebrew kings can be synchronized with the chronology of Assyria. The Assyrian Canon would possibly indicate contacts between the Assyrian monarchs and the Hebrew kings during the time period from Omri through Hoshea in the north and Jehoshaphat through Hezekiah in the south. This time span would cover the Assyrians from Shalmaneser III to Ashur-bani-pal. Thiele uses the *Limmu* Lists in his computations of the chronology of the Hebrew kings. The eponyms are discussed in greater detail in chapter four.

### B. The Canon Of Ptolemy

The second source of synchronization for this period of history is the 'Canon of Ptolemy'. This list of rulers was prepared in the second century A.D. in Egypt by the Alexandrian astronomer and geographer of the highest rank, Claudius Ptolemaeus.

Little detail is known of Ptolemy's personal life. He was born in the Greek city of Hermii, Egypt, and it appears now that he was not related to the former royal house of Hellenistic Egypt by the same name. His work indicates that he was an extremely gifted individual. His astronomical observations include the years A.D. 127 to 151. An Arabic source gives him a lifespan of seventy-eight years. Since it is estimated that he was born sometime around the end of the first century A.D., his dates commonly appear as ca. A.D. 100 to ca. 178. If this dating represents a close approximation, Ptolemy's life would have covered the time of the Roman rulers: Trajan, Hadrian, Antoninus Pius, and Marcus Aurelius.

Ptolemy reports that he had access to the prior astronomical works of both Babylonian and Greek astrols, which he studied thoroughly. Since all of those records are lost to posterity, Ptolemy's work is valued as a source of preservation for astronomical pioneering no longer extant. In particular, he built upon the work of Hipparchus to whose star list he added several hundred of his own discoveries.

His best known work is called *The Almagest*.<sup>1</sup> The name is a combination of Greek *megiste* and Arabic *al* meaning 'the greatest'. It represents his major astronomical effort. He also wrote works on music, physics, and a major geographic document. Briefly stated, *The Almagest* is a mathematical treatise on the movements, distances, sizes, orbits, etc. of the heavenly bodies. Included in the thirteen books of this massive work are references to a number of lunar eclipses which he uses as points of historical dating. Some observations he apparently made himself; most he credits to Babylonian sources no longer available.

These eclipses, more than the mathematical magnitude of *The Almagest*, are of import to the chronologist. At the conclusion of his lengthy astronomical treatise, Ptolemy produced a list of Assyrian, Babylonian, Median, Persian, Greek and Roman kings known as 'The Canon of Ptolemy'. Methodologically, he employed a process of reckoning the time lapse between recorded or observed lunar eclipses and superimposed this data upon his Canon or 'Chronological Table of the Kings' as it is also called. His basic chronological reference is to the cumulative years between the first year of Nabonassar of Assyria (747-734 B.C.) and the king who was reigning at the time of the eclipse in notation, hence the expression, 'The Era of Nabonassar'. His eclipse information can be verified cor-

rectly to have taken place in the year he demands, but there are serious deficiencies in the chronology he has proposed which ultimately effect ancient history during the period from 669-523 B.C. One must remember that his histories were written almost 1000 years after the events were recorded, and his records have come down to us being almost 2000 years old. To understand the implication of Ptolemy's process for chronology, it is necessary to examine both the calendar and the mathematical principles of reckoning which he employed.

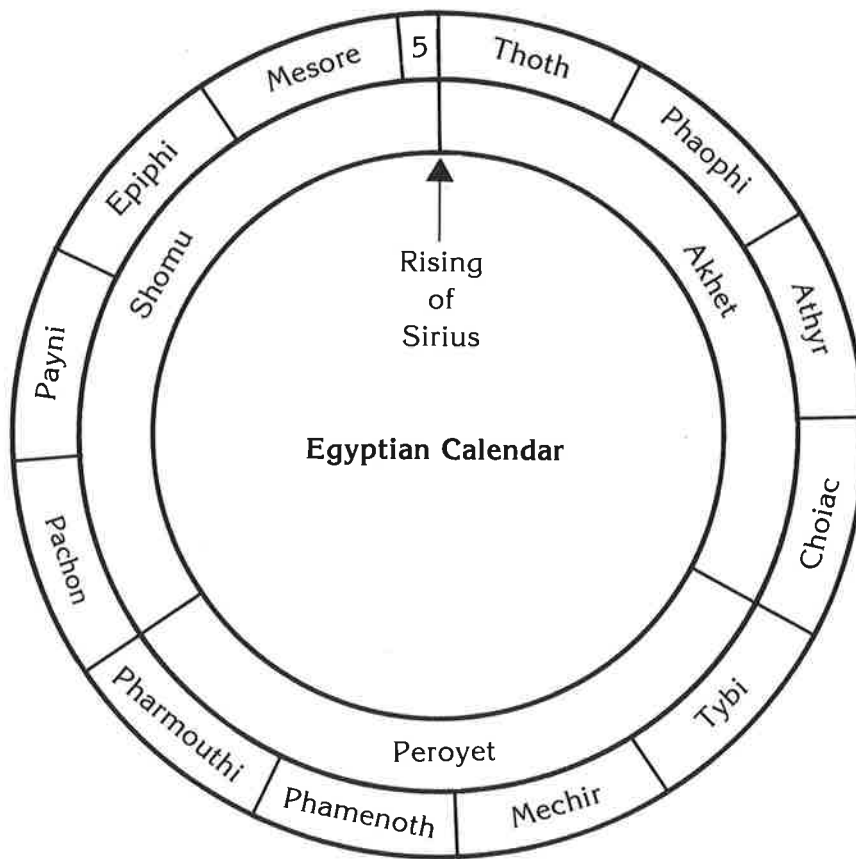
### 1. Ptolemy's Use Of The Egyptian Calendar

Ptolemy used the Egyptian calendar. The ancient Egyptians had divided their year into three seasons. Their year was agriculturally defined. The first season they called *Akhet*, 'inundation'. This was the time of year that the rising waters of the Nile flooded the fields. Next came the season of *Peroyet*, 'coming forth', when the fields were dry enough for plowing, seeding, plant growth, and harvesting. Finally, there was the season called *Shomu*, 'deficiency'. The name is self-explanatory.

Very early in their history, however, the Egyptians recognized and identified astronomical phenomena. Each of the three seasons were observed to comprise a period of about four months. The year began when the flood waters began to rise on the Nile. This also was the time of the year when an additional stellar phenomenon occurred, the annual heliacal rising of Sirius, the brightest star in the sky. In the Greek spelling of its Egyptian name, it was known as Sothis, while the Romans called it Canicula, the Dog Star. They observed that Sirius reappeared in the eastern sky just forty-two minutes before sunrise after several months of invisibility. They also discovered that the annual flood of the Nile River came soon after Sirius reappeared. July 19 (Julian calendar) was the normal date of its reappearance in the latitude of Memphis for many years. The rising of Sothis on July 19 was, therefore, the New Year's feast of the Egyptians (July 19, of course, was not a date used at that time).

The reference point fixed to the heliacal rising of a star would indicate a solar calendar, but the Egyptian year was divided into three seasons, each consisting of four months of thirty days each. This left a solar year deficit of five days annually. These five 'epagomenal' or intercalary days were inserted at the end of each year or before the beginning of the new year. Therefore, the twelve months were equal to 360 days plus five extra days. The five extra days were used as birthday festivals for five principal Egyptian deities. The insertion of the intercalary days still left a deficit of .25 days each solar year. As a result, the rising of Sirius would occur at a later date each year. Four years after the initiation of this calendar, the rising of Sirius would take place one calendar day later than it did four years previously. This sliding would continue for 1460 years until the first day of the first Egyptian month would occur again on the correct starting date (*i.e.*,  $1460 \times .25 = 365$ ). The chart below shows the Egyptian calendar. The three seasons were fixed with the rising of the flood waters and the rising of Sirius. The months would progressively slide backward at a rate of about one day every four years. Thoth 1, the Egyptian first month, is shown at the rising of Sirius. Approximately 120 years later, Sirius would rise on Phaopi 1, *etc.*

### ILLUSTRATION XIII: EGYPTIAN CALENDAR



It is against the backdrop of development of this calendar in Egypt that the astronomical calculations applied to chronology by Claudius Ptolemaeus must be examined. Within this calendar system, Ptolemy applied the Babylonian records and personal observations of lunar eclipses to reconcile his Canon, or 'Chronological Table of the Kings'.<sup>2</sup>

#### 2. Ptolemy's Mathematical Computations

The eclipses recorded by Ptolemy have been shown to have occurred when he has indicated. Little has been found wanting in his astronomical abilities. He has serious deficiencies in the way he has placed history on these eclipses. It must be understood that he did not have records which tied the reigns of kings to the eclipses he recorded, for if he did, there would be no errors present. As it turns out, his records of kings' reigns do not agree with the inscriptions found by archaeologists. This will be discussed in greater detail. Given the variety of calendar adjustments, the somewhat crude tools, and the no-longer extant records available to Ptolemy, one is amazed at the accuracy of his computations when subjected to modern methods of verification. However, the use of precise modern astronomical calculations does reveal a number of difficulties in respect to the

data he recorded and upon which his Canon is based. Absolute chronology requires that these difficulties be recognized and dealt with in a serious manner. For further details, the reader is referred to *The Almagest*, [Ptolemy. 'The Almagest,' Robert Maynard Hutchin, et al, eds., *Great Books Of The Western World*. Volume 16, trans. by Catesby Taliaferro (Chicago: William Benton, Publisher, 1978)].

### 3. Examples Of Ptolemy's Dates

How reliable were the astronomical/chronological documents from which Ptolemy worked? This is one of the questions that beg a response before the Canon of Ptolemy can be cited responsibly as an accurate source for chronological verification of ancient history.

In the light of archaeological discoveries, Ptolemy's Chronological Table of the Kings can no longer be considered absolutely accurate. Here are three examples of Ptolemy's inaccuracies (see the Canon below): Ptolemy's Canon gives four years of rule to Mesesimordak (Ushezib-Marduk) while the Babylonian King List A gives him an extra year and reads: "5 Ushezib-Marduk, dynasty of E."<sup>3</sup> This king is also known as Mushezib-Marduk. The next problem with the Canon is Ptolemy's assignment of thirteen years to Asaradin (Esarhaddon). The Babylonian Chronicles in three of the chronicles offer a different length of rule from Ptolemy's. Chronicle 14:28-33 reads regarding the length of Esarhaddon's reign--

- 28 The twelfth year: the king of Assyria marched to Egypt (but)
- 29 became ill on the way and died on the [tenth] day of the month Marchesvan.
- 30 For twelve years Esarhaddon ruled Assyria.
- 31 For eight years (during the reign of Sennacherib; for twelve years (during the reign of) Esarhaddon--
- 32 twenty years (altogether)-- Bel stayed [in B]altil (Ashur) and the Akitu festival did not take place.
- 33 Nabu did not come from Borsippa for the procession of Bel.<sup>4</sup>

Ptolemy assigns twenty-two years for Kinelanadan (Kandalan) in his Canon; however, the Uruk King List assigns him twenty-one years of rule: "21 years: K[an-da]lan."<sup>5</sup>

By comparing these three errors of Ptolemy's canon with Babylonian documents, Ptolemy has assigned one more year to Assyrian, Babylonian, and Median kings than is necessary. Of his three errors, two become self-corrective by cancelling each other, but one serious error remains-- Esarhaddon's reign. This, of course, would affect the date for the accession year of Nebuchadnezzar and consequently the date for the fall of Jerusalem in Nebuchadnezzar's eighteenth year (Babylonian reckoning).

There are other errors in Ptolemy's Canon. Regarding the Persian kings, there are three errors: 1) The Magi ruled Babylon for over one year before Darius destroyed the city and their records. Yet the Canon of Ptolemy makes no mention of the Magi, 2) The Uruk King List gives five years to Darius III<sup>6</sup> while Ptolemy has considered only four years of rule, and 3) Alexander of Macedonia ruled for eight years according to the Canon while the Uruk King List states that Alexander

ruled for seven years.<sup>7</sup> The errors of Ptolemy for Darius III and Alexander of Macedonia become self-corrective, however, the error of two years for the omission of the rule of the Magi still remains. This error is discussed in more detail in the following paragraphs.

Darius I reportedly destroyed the records as well as much of Babylon following his end to the Magi revolt, and it is unlikely that Ptolemy would have access to any astronomical/chronological data from Babylon for this period of history. Josephus and Herodotus both assign one year or more for the reign of the Magi which Ptolemy excludes (*Herodotus* III, 150-160; *Antiquities* XI.iii.1). It is only logical to assume that a period must be assigned to the Magi since they did in fact usurp the Babylonian Empire for a time between the death of Cambyses and the second year of Darius when he captured Babylon. Before Cambyses left Persia to conquer Egypt, he secretly killed his brother Bardes (Bardiya, Smerdis). A Magian, Gaumata by name, impersonated Bardes, the king's brother, and became king within the lifetime of Cambyses, before he returned from Egypt. No doubt, Cambyses died on his way back from Egypt to end the revolt in Persia. Darius I then killed Gaumata who ruled almost two years. On the Behistun Inscription, Darius merely records the facts:

When Cambyses slew Bardiya it was not known to the people that Bardiya was slain: afterwards Cambyses went to Egypt: when Cambyses had departed into Egypt the people became hostile ... afterwards there was a certain man, a Magian, Gaumata by name ... he lied to the people (saying) 'I am Bardiya the son of Cyrus, brother of Cambyses: afterwards all the people rose in revolt, and from Cambyses they went over to him, both Persia and Media, and the other provinces: he seized on the kingdom ... afterwards Cambyses died.'<sup>8</sup>

According to the course of Herodotus' narrative, this revolt would seem to have taken place some time before Darius' accession. The Behistun Inscription apparently makes it one of the earliest events of his reign. Darius tells of his capture of Babylon from the Magi on the Behistun Inscription, and even records the date with a lunar dating. Herodotus places Darius' siege against Babylon as lasting twenty months (*Herodotus* III, 152-153). Josephus reports the reign of the Magi as one year: "After the slaughter of the magi, who, upon the death of Cambyses, attained the government of the Persians for a year, those families who were called the seven families of the Persians, appointed Darius, the son of Hystaspes, to be their king." (*Antiquities* XI.iii.1). Apparently, the Magi revolt lasted more than one year. Reliance on Ptolemy's Canon will affect Biblical chronology for the period of the Exile and Return as well because of his one year omission of the Magi rule.

Ptolemy's next group of kings is the Macedonian kings. Here again, he is one year in error. He has assigned seven years to Philip while the Uruk King List gives only six years to Philip.<sup>9</sup>

Having examined the Canon for the first three categories of king lists, Ptolemy is seen to be in error for a total of three years. He is in error for one year for the Assyrian, Babylonian and Median kings, two years in error for the Persian Kings with the omission of the Magi rule, and one year in error concerning the Macedonian Kings.

# ILLUSTRATION XIV: PTOLOMY'S CANON COMPARED TO THE ASSYRIAN KING LIST

NAME	REIGN	NABONASSAR ERA	ACC. YEAR	YEAR ONE	DIED
Nabonassar	14	14	748	747	734
Nadius	2	16	734	733	732
Chinzer & Porus	5	21	732	731	727
Iloulaius	5	26	727	726	722
Mardokempad	12	38	722	721	710
Arkean	5	43	710	709	705
First Interregnum	2	45	705	704	703
Bilib	3	48	703	702	700
Aparanad	6	54	700	699	694
Rhegebel	1	55	694	693	693
Mesesimordak	4	59	693	692	689
Second Interregnum	8	67	689	688	681
Asaradin	13 [12]	80 [79]	681	680	668 [669]
Saosdouchin	20	100 [99]	668 [669]	667 [668]	648 [649]
Kinelanadan	22	122 [121]	648 [649]	647 [648]	626 [627]
Nabopolassar	21	143 [142]	626 [627]	625 [626]	605 [606]
Nabokolassar	43	186 [185]	605 [606]	604 [605]	562 [563]
Illoaroudam	2	188 [187]	562 [563]	561 [562]	560 [561]
Nerigasolassar	4	192 [191]	560 [561]	559 [560]	556 [557]
Nabonadius	17	209 [208]	556 [557]	555 [556]	539 [540]
Cyrus	9	218 [217]	539 [540]	538 [539]	530 [531]
Cambyses	8	226 [225]	530 [531]	529 [530]	522 [523]
[Magi]	0 [2]	[227]	522 [523]	521 [522]	522 [521]
Darius I	36	262 [263]	522 [521]	521 [520]	486 [485]
Xerxes	21	283 [284]	486 [485]	485 [484]	465 [464]
Artaxerxes I	41	324 [325]	465 [464]	464 [463]	424 [423]
Darius II	19	343 [344]	424 [423]	423 [422]	405 [404]
Artaxerxes II	46	389 [390]	405 [404]	404 [403]	359 [358]
Ochus	21	410 [411]	359 [358]	358 [357]	338 [337]
Arogus	2	412 [413]	338 [337]	337 [336]	336 [335]
Darius III	4 [5]	416 [418]	336 [335]	335 [334]	332 [330]
Alexander/Macedonia	8 [7]	424 [425]	332 [330]	331 [329]	324 [323]
Philip	7 [6]	431	324 [323]	323 [322]	317
Alexander II	12	443	317	316	305
Ptolemy Lagus	20	463	305	304	285
Philadelphus	38	501	285	284	247
Euergetes I	25	526	247	246	222
Philopater	17	543	222	221	205
Epiphanes	24	567	205	204	181
Philometor	35	602	181	180	146
Euergetes II	29	631	146	145	117
Soter	36	667	117	116	081
Dionysius/Younger	29	696	081	080	052
Cleopatra	22	718	052	051	030

Illustration XIV presents the Canon of Ptolemy and lists inaccurate chronological data from the Canon for those who would attempt to fix dates on the basis of Ptolemy's chronological calculations. It is not intended to denigrate the value of the Canon of Ptolemy as a historical document. The Canon is presented below with several additions to enhance its usefulness for historical synchronization with Hebrew kings. The canon itself is untouched; the kings, years, and totals are exactly as they appear at the end of the *The Almagest*.

The chart lists in order: the name of the king, the length of his reign, the years elapsed since the first year of Nabonassar. Then it lists: the accession year, year one, and the death year of the monarch. Only the first data is original material from the Canon of Ptolemy. Bracketed numbers are those numbers which have been effected by the errors in the chronology proposed by Ptolemy and corrected by the discovery of archaeological inscriptions. These bracketed numbers relate to the era of the Hebrew kings and would affect the chronology in the Bible. It can be seen that those kings whose reign falls in between 669 B.C. and 322 B.C. have been affected. Of course, this is a crucial time period when one is working on an absolute chronology of the Hebrew kings, for the date for the destruction of Jerusalem falls in this time frame. Two amendments which effect the Hebrew Kings are indicated in brackets. The first is the recommended assignment of twelve years instead of thirteen for the reign of Esarhaddon (Asaradin) in accord with the Babylonian Chronicles. The second is the inclusion of the more than one-year rule of the Magi in Babylon from the accession of Darius until his second year when he overthrew the Magi.

#### 4. Accurate Lunar Eclipses

Ptolemy has properly calculated lunar eclipses which took place in Babylonia and which have now been verified with a computer and are shown in the following chart.

#### ILLUSTRATION XV: PTOLEMY'S CALCULATED LUNAR ECLIPSES

KING'S NAME	YEAR	GREGORIAN DATE	EGYPTIAN DATE	TIME
Nabonassar	01	Feb. 18, 747 B.C.	Thoth 1	12:00
Mardokempad	01	Mar. 11, 721 B.C.	Thoth 29	21:30
Mardokempad	02	Feb. 28, 720 B.C.	Thoth 18	24:00
Mardokempad	02	Aug. 24, 720 B.C.	Phamenoth 15	20:30
Nabopolassar	05[06]	Apr. 15, 621 B.C.	Athyr 27	05:48
Cambyses	07[08]	Jul. 10, 523 B.C.	Phamenoth 17	23:00
Darius	20[19]	Nov. 13, 502 B.C.	Epiphi 28	23:36
Darius	31[30]	Apr. 20, 491 B.C.	Tybi 03	23:30

Again, the brackets are shown as corrections in Ptolemy's chronology, or corrections to the transcriptional errors which have accumulated over the past 2731 years since the Babylonians first recorded these lunar eclipses. It must be understood that there is no eclipse in the first year of Nabonassar. Thoth 1 is the first day of the year in the Egyptian calendar which Ptolemy used as a starting point for his calculations. The Roman dates are listed to help the western mind.

Thoth 1, midday, the first year of Nabonassar, begins the Era of Nabonassar. Ptolemy has put the lunar eclipse of April 15, 621 B.C. into Nabopolassar's fifth year rather than his sixth year, because he obviously counted the first year of Nabopolassar as his accession year. That, along with Esarhaddon's error, is why the date of Jerusalem's destruction is placed at 586 B.C. by Thiele instead of 588 B.C.

It seems that the years noted above are years of tension in the nation of Babylon. Mardokempad (Merodoch-baladan) usurped the throne when Iloulaius (Shalmaneser) died, therefore, his early years are noted. The records of Nabopolassar from his third to his tenth years are lost, so the events of that time cannot be known. Cambyses died in his eighth year, and there was an insurrection in Babylonia at that time. A major revolt began in the twentieth year of Darius (502 B.C.), and Darius had just suffered a major defeat at the Battle of Marathon in 490 B.C. These two dates are also mentioned as key years of Artaxerxes of the book of Nehemiah (Nehemiah 5:14). There is strong evidence that Artaxerxes is one and the same with Darius. This evidence will be discussed at great length in another work dealing with Biblical Chronology.

### III. Ptolemy In Conclusion

This present study has not used Ptolemy's chronological data in determining the chronology of the Hebrew kings. This is because of apparent inaccurate chronological data based on his use of the Egyptian calendar and failure to assign correct years of rule and to include all monarchs in his 'Chronological Table of the Kings'. Thiele states his reliance upon Ptolemy when he writes--

Since Ptolemy's canon gives precise and absolutely dependable data concerning the chronology of the period beginning with 747 B.C. and since the Assyrian eponym canon carries us down to 648 B.C., it will be seen that there is a century where these two important chronological guides overlap and where they may be used as a check on each other. ...

When the student has at his disposal chronological materials so dependable as the Assyrian eponym list and the Ptolemaic canon, he may have complete assurance that he has a solid foundation on which to build. And if, in turn, he finds a chronological pattern for some other nation that is in full accord with that of Babylon and Assyria as established by the evidence of Ptolemy and the limmu lists, he may have confidence that his pattern is entirely accurate.<sup>10</sup>

Ptolemy's nineteen lunar eclipses are accurate and have been verified by modern astronomers. However, the problem is in how he relates these dates to the kings and their chronology.

If one would accept the Canon of Ptolemy, as Thiele sees it, then it would become necessary to date the fall of Jerusalem at 586 B.C. He counts the Nabonassar Era as starting with the accession year of Nabonassar, whereas the computer calendar shows that it is his first year. This is the conclusion of Thiele for Jerusalem's fall-- "Any attempt to date the fall of Jerusalem earlier than 586 would call for an earlier date than 597 for Jehoiachin's captivity; but that is not possible, for that date has been fixed by contemporary Babylonian evidence."<sup>11</sup> This reliance upon the Canon of Ptolemy would also place Nebuchadnezzar's accession year at 605 B.C. From Nabonassar's first year 747 B.C. to Nebuchadnezzar's

zar's accession year are 142 years (747 B.C. + 142 = 605 B.C.).

Therefore, the present chapter has shown that there are only 159 years from the first year of Nabonassar to the eighteenth year of Nebuchadnezzar (747 B.C. + 159 = 588 B.C.). Since the eighteenth year of Nebuchadnezzar (Babylonian reckoning) is 588 B.C. (*cf.*, Jeremiah 52:29), the nineteenth year of Nebuchadnezzar (Hebrew reckoning) is also 588 B.C.

The revision of Ptolemy's Canon would place the accession year of Nebuchadnezzar at 606 B.C. (606 B.C. + 18 = 588 B.C.).

While the present research has shown that Ptolemy's 'Chronological Table of the Kings' should be emended in light of archaeological inscriptions which do not dovetail with his king list, a number of post-Renaissance scientists have further challenged Ptolemy. Until recently, Ptolemy was considered one of the outstanding scientists of antiquity and *The Almagest* was viewed as a model of clear exposition in which each result was derived from a set of stated observations by rigorous mathematical procedures that were carefully described. This view has been challenged by Robert R. Newton in *The Crime of Claudius Ptolemy*. He asserts that Ptolemy fabricated all his own observations to fit a predetermined theory; this is, that the observations were made up to agree with the numerical tables, rather than that the tables were based on the observations as Ptolemy asserted. Newton presents the following chart and his assessment of the validity of seven lunar eclipses in question. The chart gives a Julian date, the Babylonian king as stated by Ptolemy, and the year of that king as stated by Ptolemy —

DATE	KING	YEAR	AUTHENTICITY
-720 Mar. 19	Mardokempad	1	May be fabricated
-719 Mar. 8	Mardokempad	2	Fabricated
-719 Sep. 1	Mardokempad	2	May be fabricated
-620 Apr. 22	Nabopolassar	5	Fabricated
-522 Jul. 16	Cambyses	7	Fabricated
-501 Nov. 19	Darius	20	May be genuine
-490 Apr. 25	Darius	31	May be genuine

Newton concludes —

All of his own observations that Ptolemy uses in the *Syntaxis* [*The Almagest*] are fraudulent, so far as we can test them. Many of the observations that he attributes to other astronomers are also frauds that he has committed. His work is riddled with theoretical errors and with failures of comprehension, ...

The *Synataris* has done more damage to astronomy than any other work ever written, and astronomy would be better off if it had never existed.<sup>13</sup>

Outstanding authorities as Noel M. Swerdlow of the University of Chicago, Owen J. Gingerich of Harvard University, and Victor E. Thoren of Indiana University have shown that Newton's case against Ptolemy collapses because it is based on faulty statistical analysis and a disregard of the methods of early astronomy. Only time will show if Ptolemy will be to withstand these charges — some think that he will not withstand modern scholarship.

## Chapter VIII - NOTES

<sup>1</sup>Ptolemy, "The Almagest," Robert Maynard Hutchins, *et al.*, eds., *Great Books Of The Western World*, Trans. by R. Catesby Taliaferro, Volume 16 (Chicago: William Benton, Publisher, 1978), pp. 1-465.

<sup>2</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 466.

<sup>3</sup>James B. Pritchard, ed., *Ancient Near Eastern Texts* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1969), p. 272. See Appendix E.

<sup>4</sup>A. K. Grayson, "Assyrian And Babylonian Chronicles," A. Leo Oppenheim, *et al.*, eds., *Texts From Cuneiform Sources*, Volume 5 (Locust Valley, New York: J. J. Augustin Publisher, 1975), p. 127. The Babylonian Chronicles repeat the same information regarding Esarhaddon's length of reign in Chronicle 1.iv.30-32 and in Chronicle 16.1-4.

<sup>5</sup>*ANET.*, p. 566. See Appendix D.

<sup>6</sup>*Ibid.* See Appendix D.

<sup>7</sup>*Ibid.* See Appendix D.

<sup>8</sup>J. B. Bury, S. A. Cook, and F. E. Adcock, eds. "The Persian Empire And The West," *The Cambridge Ancient History*, Volume IV (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1977), p. 173.

<sup>9</sup>*ANET.*, p. 566.

<sup>10</sup>Edwin R. Thiele, *The Mysterious Numbers Of The Hebrew Kings* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan Publishing House, 1983), pp. 71-72.

<sup>11</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 191.

<sup>12</sup>Robert R. Newton, *The Crime Of Claudius Ptolemy* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1978), p. 373.

<sup>13</sup>*Ibid.*, pp. 378-379.

## **Chapter IX - ASTRONOMICAL CYCLES AND TIME SPANS**

### **I. The Cyclical Phenomena Defined**

The previous chapters have demonstrated the accuracy of the chronology of the Hebrew kings by examining the harmonious synchronization that exists between the Hebrew record and the various accounts of secular history. There is yet another area which is often overlooked. That area is the text of Scripture itself, for unless the chronology of the kings harmonizes with the rest of the Biblical account, serious questions must arise regarding the accuracy and integrity of the Hebrew text.

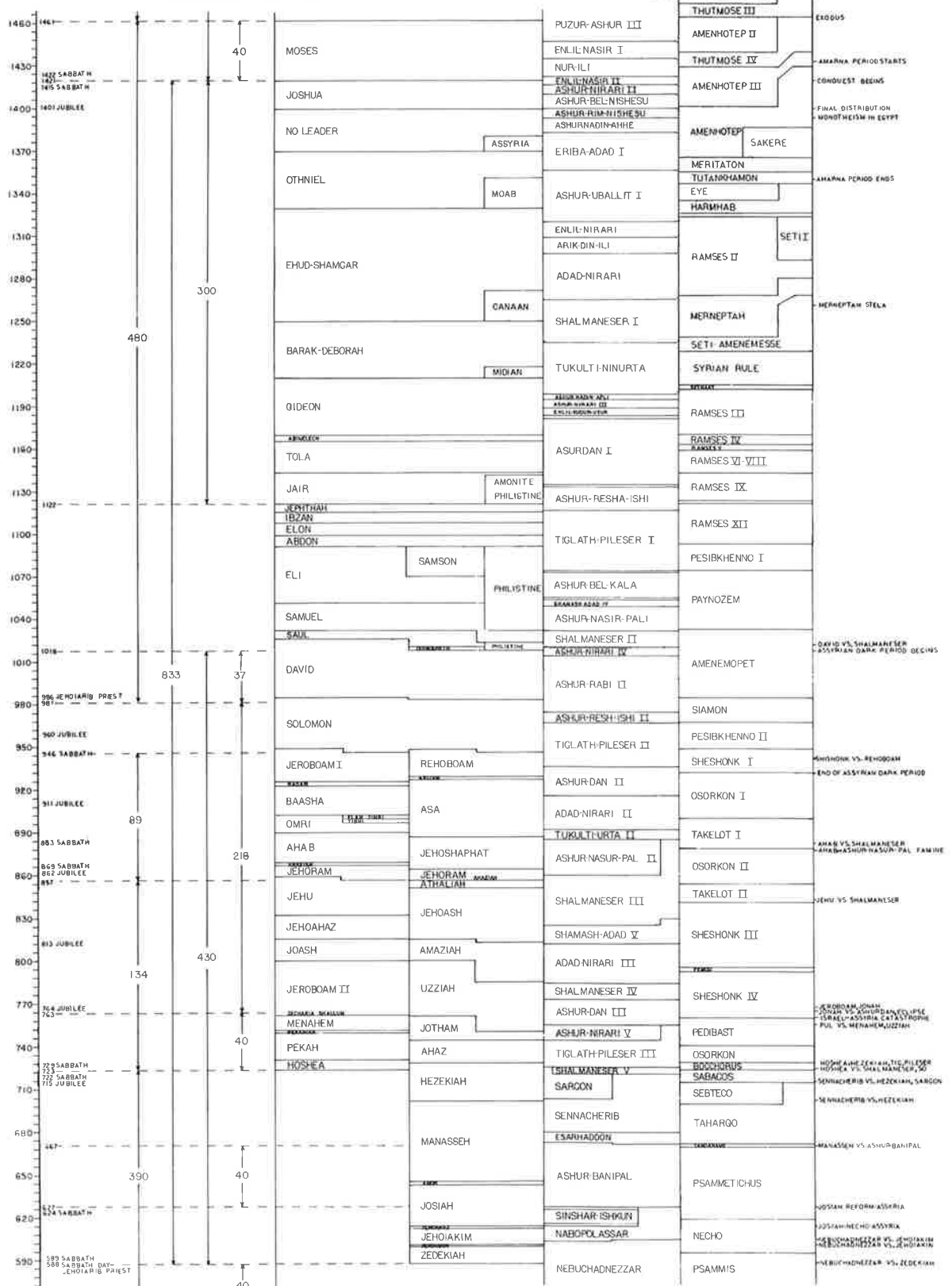
Illustration XVI, page 174, has been prepared to assist in underscoring the significance of this type of synchronistic data. The illustration contains a chronological chart of Israel and her Near Eastern contemporaries from just prior to the Exodus through the period immediately following the destruction of Jerusalem. At the extreme right of the illustration are historical synchronisms; most of which have been addressed in the previous chapters. The feature of Illustration XVI that is the subject of this chapter is the data in the column to the left of Israel's charting. This column contains the chronological identification of a series of Sabbath and Jubilee cycles referenced in the Biblical text. The Jehoiarib section of the priesthood, discussed in chapter two, also appears on the chart. In addition, there are a number of 'time spans' identified that have their source either in the Biblical text or contemporary records of this period.

Chapter two has partially addressed one of the most significant areas of synchronization relative to the fixing of a date for the fall of Jerusalem. This area comprises the 'monitor cycles' contained in the Mosaic Law, particularly the cycles of seven: the Sabbath and Jubilee years. Their usefulness for chronological verification extends far beyond the location of the proper year for the destruction of Jerusalem.

#### **A. The Sabbath Years As Apologetical Tools**

Sabbath years were observed by the Hebrews every seven years. The observation began in the seventh month of the seventh year and ended in the first month of the eighth year. The Sabbath year rest did not follow the Nisan to Nisan year cycle which fixed the dates for regnal years and for legal transactions. Rather, the Sabbath year rest was based on the harvest cycle, even though the Sabbath 'year' began in Nisan. Grain was planted in the ninth month of the sixth year and harvested-- in the first month of the seventh year. This is actually the sixth year crop and was harvested in the early part of the seventh year. There was no plowing and planting in the seventh year; therefore, there was no seventh year harvest in the early part of the eighth year (Deuteronomy 31:10). The Sabbath year ended

# ILLUSTRATION XVI: SYNCHRONISTIC DATA BASED ON CYCLICAL PHENOMENA & TIME SPANS



in Nisan 1 of the eighth year and in the seventh month of the eighth year, plowing and planting resumed for the ninth year crop. (Leviticus 23:34-43)

The Law stipulated specific requirements that were to accompany the observation of the Sabbath year: 1) the Law was to be read publicly in the land during the end of the year; *i. e.*, last six months (Deuteronomy 31:11-13); 2) slaves were to be released (Exodus 21:1-4); 3) the land was to observe a rest, *i.e.*, lie fallow for a year (Exodus 23:10-11; Leviticus 25:1-7); and 4) people were to settle their debts (Deuteronomy 15:1-15).

### B. The Jubilee Years As Apologetical Tools

Jubilee years took place every seventh Sabbath year. The Jubilee was announced on the Day of Atonement, the tenth day of the seventh month, and continued until Nisan 1 of the following year. (Leviticus 25:9) Since the number of years that separate one Jubilee from another has triggered some debate, it will be well to review the issue. The basis for debate springs from the confusion that results from the phrase, 'the fiftieth year' to describe the Jubilee (Leviticus 25:10). Since the Jubilee observation plays a significant role in the internal synchronization of the Hebrew text, it is absolutely essential that any confusion regarding its period of separation be resolved.

The resolution begins with a review of the Hebrew year. The first month of the Hebrew year was Nisan (*cf.*, Exodus 12:1-2). There have been those who would posit that sometimes the Hebrews began their year in Nisan, and sometimes, in Tishri. There is no evidence to support such a vacillation. Nisan was the first month of the year at the time of the building of the Temple, for the eighth month is called 'Bul' (I Kings 6:37-38). In 70 A.D., Josephus still referred to Nisan as the first month (*Wars Of The Jews* V. iii.1). The Rabbis have been divided on how to number or to count the Jubilee year. The Babylonian Talmud expounds on this conflict:

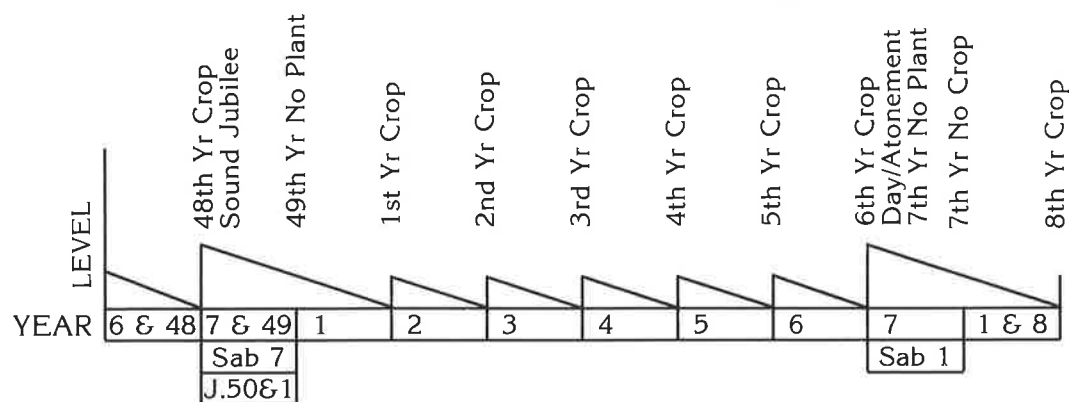
Is the fiftieth year [counted] as before the fiftieth or as after? "Come and hear: For a conflict of R. Judah and the Rabbis has been taught: *And ye shall hallow the fiftieth year*: you must count it as the fiftieth year, but not as the fiftieth and as the first year [of the following jubilee]. Hence they [the Sages] said: The Jubilee is not part of the [following] septennate. R. Judah maintained: The Jubilee is counted as part of the septennate.<sup>1</sup>

There is evidence in both Biblical and extra-biblical documents to demonstrate that the Jubilee is superimposed on the seventh septennate (Sabbath year). Rabbi Judah held that the Jubilee year enters into the calculation of the heptad, *i.e.*, the Jubilee year is the fiftieth year of the the previous Jubilee and thus also the first of the ensuing *shemittah* and Jubilee. (See page 30.)

It is interesting that the Samaritans, who still celebrate the Jubilees, consider them to be spaced by forty-nine years.<sup>2</sup> The Book of Jubilees counts 'a Sabbath of years' as seven years and a Jubilee of years as forty-nine years. Thus, Sarah's

lifespan of 127 years is counted in the Book of Jubilees as “two jubilees (98 years), four heptads (28 years), and one year,” (Jubilees 19:7). The Book of Jubilees was one of the basic texts used by the Essenes because of its method of counting time.<sup>3</sup> The book is in the form of a monologue in the first person on the part of the angel of the ‘Divine Presence’ in which he recapitulates the contents of the Bible: at the same time providing an exact date for the events and stories, calculated according to the Jubilee year, and the year of the Sabbatical cycle, and sometimes giving even the month and the day. Thus, both the Samaritans and the Essenes understood the Jubilee to be the forty-ninth year-- a part of the septennate, and that the Jubilee year was the fiftieth year after the previous Jubilee.

### ILLUSTRATION XVII: FOOD LEVELS FOR THE SABBATH AND JUBILEE CYCLES



One factor of divine command distinguished the Jubilee year from the Sabbath year. This distinguishing feature as recorded in Leviticus 25, required the return of the land to the original owner or his nearest kin in a Jubilee year (Leviticus 25:10, 13, 25-28). The feature had its basis in a fundamental principle of Israel's faith, expressed succinctly by the Psalmist, “The earth is the Lord's!” (Psalm 24:1; Leviticus 25:23-24). The land belonged to Yahweh by virtue of creation. In His grace Yahweh had covenanted with Jacob to give it to his descendants. The recipients of the land were allowed to buy and sell property, within certain restrictions, but all property was to be returned to the original family at the time of the Jubilee:

The land shall not be sold for ever: for the land is mine; for ye are strangers and sojourners with me. And in all the land of your possession ye shall grant a redemption for the land. If thy brother be waxen poor, and hath sold away some of his possession, and if any of his kin come to redeem it, then shall he redeem that which his brother sold. And if the man have none to redeem it, and himself be able to redeem it; Then let him count the years of the sale thereof, and restore the overplus unto the man to whom he sold it; that he may return unto his possession. But if he be not able to restore it to him, then that which is sold shall remain

in the hand of him that hath bought it until the year of jubilee: and in the jubilee it shall go out, and he shall return unto his possession. Leviticus 25:23-28

The Hebrew writings from the intra-testamental period contain numerous references to the Sabbath years. However, nowhere does the Hebrew text announce in specific words that a certain year was either a Sabbath or a Jubilee. This fact has led some to discount the importance of these cycles in the observances of Israel. That is an argument *ex silencio*, and one which does not agree with the textual evidence. It is true that Scripture does not use the words, 'Sabbath' or 'Jubilee' to announce a given year, but that does not discount the fact of their existence and observation. The observance of both the Sabbath and Jubilee were so common place in the cyclical phenomena of religious observation in Israel, that it was quite unnecessary for the writers of the Hebrew Bible to label the observation in any specific way. It would have appeared redundant to the Hebrew reader. It was sufficient to identify the year as a Sabbath year or a Jubilee year by recording typical activities related to these holy years. When these things take place, the text is identifying a Sabbath year or a Jubilee year, which must be a multiple of seven from every other year so identified. The student of the Bible can recognize these elements as a signal to a possible reference to a Sabbath or Jubilee year: 1) land redemption, 2) an assembly gathered, 3) Law publicly read, 4) covenant renewed, 5) emancipation of slaves, 6) payments of debts, 7) remission of debts, and 8) prohibition of land cultivation.

The value of this cyclical phenomena for chronological synchronization and verification is obvious. If one were to list the instances in which Sabbath/Jubilee activities occur in the text, and then were to discover that they are divisible by seven, it would provide significant evidence that the cycles were not lost and that the chronology was accurate. Such an identification and examination follows, and provides sufficient validation for the accuracy of the chronology for the Hebrew kings set forth in this study. At this point it should be acknowledged that there was a widespread tannaitic tradition that with the exile of the tribes of Reuben, Gad and the half tribe of Manasseh, the laws of the Jubilee fell into disuse. It appears that after 764 B.C. when Israel's first tribe was deported, the Jubilee years were not even calculated, but those of the *shemittot*<sup>4</sup> were. The Talmud offers an explanation for the non-observance of the Jubilee after the deportation of the tribes of the trans-jordan. Since the land was no longer occupied by its original trustees, the distinguishing feature of the Jubilee was invalidated.<sup>5</sup>

### C. The Time Spans As Apologetical Tools

In addition to charting the chronology of the Ancient Near East and identifying points of historical and cyclical synchronization, Illustration XVI, page 174, contains another feature of Biblical chronology that has received far too little attention over the years. The Hebrew text and other contemporary sources identify a series of time spans between historical events that place synchronistic demands on the histories of Judah and Israel. If the chronology is accurate, those demands will be satisfied; if it is not, the chronology is improperly arranged and the cyclical and historical synchronisms thus far identified are erroneous. Details are given under section II C, page 187.

## II. The Cyclical Phenomena Employed

### A. The Jubilee Years Used To Synchronize Chronology

It is helpful to identify at least one undisputed date that makes a Sabbath or Jubilee claim. All other Sabbath and Jubilee years, if accurate, must be separated from such a date by a multiple of seven.

#### 1. 70 A.D.-- The Fall Of Jerusalem

This study will use the undisputed date of 70 A.D. as its starting point in calculating the Sabbath and Jubilee cycles. The Talmud identifies the year 70 A.D. in which the destruction of Jerusalem by Titus occurred as a Sabbath year.<sup>6</sup> There is also a prophetic element in Leviticus 26 that serves as a commentary on the date of 70 A.D. as a Jubilee:

And I will scatter you among the heathen, (*lit.*, nations) and I will draw out a sword after you: and your land shall be desolate, and your cities waste. Then shall the land enjoy her sabbaths, as long as it lieth desolate, and ye be in your enemies' land; even then shall the land rest, and enjoy her sabbaths. As long as it lieth desolate it shall rest; because it did not rest in your sabbaths, when ye dwelt upon it. Leviticus 26:33-35

God, who was the original owner, took the land back on the Jubilee from a people too morally bankrupt to pay the redemption. If this interpretation is to have chronological merit, there must be indication that this date relates to other Jubilees by a multiple of forty-nine.

At the time of the deportation under Nebuchadnezzar, God announced to Judah that the Babylonian Captivity would fulfill the Sabbatical years: "This is how the word of Yahweh was fulfilled that he spoke through Jeremiah, 'Until this land has enjoyed its sabbath rest, until seventy years have gone by, it will keep sabbath throughout the days of its desolation'." (II Chronicles 36:21, Jerusalem Bible). Unlike the passage in Leviticus which addresses the scattering of the Jews among the nations, this text addresses the Babylonian exiles. The return of the Jews took place after the second year of Darius, 519 B.C. at the end of the seventy years. This date was also a Jubilee in which God returned the land to its original tenants. It occurred exactly twelve Jubilees before He took it back again in 70 A.D. ( $49 \times 12 = 588$ .  $519 \text{ B.C.} + 588 = 70 \text{ A.D.}$ ).

#### 2. 1401 B.C.-- The First Jubilee

If this apparent pattern of taking and redistributing the land follows the Jubilee cycle, it would be reasonable to assume that the original distribution by Joshua would mark the beginning of the cycle. This can be checked mathematically. The text of I Kings 6:11 indicates that the Exodus occurred 480 years before Solomon began to build the Temple in the fourth year of his reign. From the chronology of the Hebrew kings established in chapter three, the fourth year of Solomon was 981 B.C., which places the Exodus 480 years earlier, in 1461 B.C.

Joshua began the conquest of Canaan in 1421 B.C., forty years after the Exodus. There had been a partial distribution of land before the death of Moses (Numbers 32:1-33). It was conditional and pertained only to the tribes of Reuben,

Gad, and the half tribe of Manasseh. These tribes were promised the land east of the Jordan with the provision that they first were to assist their brothers in the conquest of the remainder of Canaan, west of the Jordan.

Before his death, Moses had gathered the tribes together and read to them the Law (Deuteronomy 1:3; 29:1). This reading took place in 1422 B.C. (the spring of 1421 B.C.). The gathering together of the tribes and the reading of the law is referred to in Deuteronomy 31:11-13 as follows:

When all Israel is come to appear before the Lord thy God in the place which he shall choose, thou shalt read this law before all Israel in their hearing. Gather the people together, men, and women, and children, and thy stranger that is within thy gates, that they may hear, and that they may learn, and fear the Lord your God, and observe to do all the words of this law: And that their children, which have not known any thing, may hear, and learn to fear the Lord your God, as long as ye live in the land wither ye go over Jordan to possess it.

The procedure was to be followed thereafter at intervals of seven (Sabbatical) years. Moses died in 1421 B.C. (Deuteronomy 34:1-6). Seven years after this first reading of the Law, Joshua gathered the tribes together again (Joshua 14:1-3) and made a second distribution of the land (*cf.* Joshua 14-21). The year was 1415 B.C., a Sabbatical year. The boundaries of the territorial claims were established at this time, but the conquest was far from completed (Joshua 13:1-14).

In Joshua 23:6, Israel again was summoned by Joshua and the Law was read. Josephus implies that this reading took place twenty years after the distribution of the land.<sup>7</sup> In reality, the reading took place twenty years after the entering of Canaan in 1421 B.C. Joshua 23:6 refers to 1401 B.C., the fourth Sabbatical year. Moses read the Law in 1422 B.C. (spring of 1421 B.C.), the first Sabbatical year. The second Sabbatical year occurred in 1415 B.C., and the third Sabbatical year in 1408 B.C. Since Joshua's assembly took place when he was 'far advanced in years', preparing for his final departure, the date would be 1401 B.C. The event marked the final distribution of the land at the end of the conquest and initiated the Jubilee cycle.

Since Joshua was old and most of the land was conquered, the Jubilee with its land redemption principle was initiated as Joshua 23:1-8 implies--

And it came to pass, a long time after that the Lord had given rest unto Israel from all their enemies round about, that Joshua waxed old and stricken in age. And Joshua called for all Israel, and their elders, and for their heads, and for their judges, and for their officers, and said unto them, I am old and stricken in age: And ye have seen all that the Lord your God hath done unto all these nations because of you; for the Lord your God is he that hath fought for you. Behold, I have divided unto you by lot these nations that remain, to be an inheritance for your tribes, from Jordan, with all the nations that I have cut off, even unto the great sea westward. And the Lord your God, he shall expel them from before you, and drive them from out of your sight; and ye shall possess their land, as the Lord your God hath promised you. Be ye therefore very courageous to keep and to do all that is written in the book of the law of Moses, that ye turn not aside therefrom to the right hand or to the left; That ye come not among these nations, these that remain among you; neither make mention of the name of their gods, nor cause

## Chapter IX - Astronomical Cycles and Time Spans

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to swear by them, neither serve them, nor bow yourselves unto them: But cleave unto the Lord your God, as ye have done unto this day.

The reference to the assembly gathered together and the book of the law of Moses would strongly imply the initiation of the Jubilee cycle. A renewal of the Covenant took place and Israel returned to her various allocations to begin life as a tribal confederacy in the land of promise as the book of Joshua affirms:

So Joshua made a covenant with the people that day, and set them a statute and an ordinance in Shechem. And Joshua wrote these words in the book of the law of God, and took a great stone, and set it up there under an oak, that was by the sanctuary of the Lord. And Joshua said unto all the people, Behold, this stone shall be a witness unto us; for it hath heard all the words of the Lord which he spake unto us: it shall be therefore a witness unto you, lest ye deny your God. So Joshua let the people depart, every man unto his inheritance. Joshua 24:25-28

Mathematically, this was: eighteen Jubilees (882 years) before the return under Darius in 519 B.C. ( $1401 \text{ B.C.} + 882 = 519 \text{ B.C.}$ ) and thirty Jubilees (1470 years) before God reclaimed the land in 70 A.D. after Israel's perpetual failure to 'keep covenant' ( $1401 \text{ B.C.} + 1470 = 70 \text{ A.D.}$ ).

### 3. 960 B.C.-- The Year After The Dedication Of The Temple

There are earmarks of a somewhat unusual Jubilee observation at the time of Solomon. According to I Kings 6:37-- 7:1, it took Solomon twenty years to complete the Temple and royal palace. In 961 B.C., at the Feast of Tabernacles, a great festival marked the dedication of his building efforts. Solomon had reimbursed Hiram of Tyre annually for his cedar and other contributions to his construction projects (I Kings 5:10-12). However, following the dedication he gave him a special gift of twenty towns in Galilee<sup>8</sup>--

And it came to pass at the end of twenty years, when Solomon had built the two houses, the house of the Lord, and the king's house, (Now Hiram the king of Tyre had furnished Solomon with cedar trees and fir trees, and with gold, according to all his desire,) that then king Solomon gave Hiram twenty cities in the land of Galilee. And Hiram came out from Tyre to see the cities which Solomon had given him; and they pleased him not. And he said, What cities are these which thou hast given me, my brother? And he called them the land of Cabul unto this day. I Kings 9:10-13

Although Solomon's action does not reflect anything of the original intention of the Jubilee, it may well have been inspired by the events surrounding the Jubilee observation (I Kings 8:1-66). It should be noted that the dedication of the Temple occurred at the time of the Feast of Tabernacles, but that five days earlier the Day of Atonement marked the announcement of the Jubilee year--

Then Solomon assembled the elders of Israel, and all the heads of the tribes, the chief of the fathers of the children of Israel, unto king Solomon in Jerusalem, that they might bring up the ark of the covenant of the Lord out of the city of David, which is Zion. And all the men of Israel assembled themselves unto king

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Solomon at the feast in the month Ethanim, which is the seventh month. I Kings 8:1-2

In any event, his 'distribution of land' to Hiram in 960 B.C.-- Solomon's twenty-fifth year-- occurred: nine Jubilees after Joshua's final distribution in 1401 B.C. ( $1401 \text{ B.C.} + 441 = 960 \text{ B.C.}$ ) and twenty-one Jubilees before the reclamation of the land by Yahweh in A.D. 70 through the instrumentation of Titus ( $960 \text{ B.C.} + 1029 = 70 \text{ A.D.}$ ).

### 4. 911 B.C.-- The Fifteenth Year Of Asa

Another apparent Jubilee occurred in 911 B.C. in the fifteenth year of Asa. King Asa was given a word of exhortation and encouragement by the prophet Azariah (II Chronicles 15:1-7). Asa responded by calling an assembly of the tribes and initiating a reform throughout the land.

And he gathered all Judah and Benjamin, and the strangers with them out of Ephraim and Manasseh, and out of Simeon: for they fell to him out of Israel in abundance, when they saw that the Lord God was with him. So they gathered themselves together at Jerusalem in the third month, in the fifteenth year of the reign of Asa. And they offered unto the Lord the same time, of the spoil which they had brought, seven hundred oxen and seven thousand sheep. And they entered into a covenant to seek the Lord God of their fathers with all their heart and with all their soul; That whosoever would not seek the Lord God of Israel should be put to death, whether small or great, whether man or woman. And they swore unto the Lord with a loud voice, and with shouting, and with trumpets, and with cornets. And all Judah rejoiced at the oath: for they had sworn with all their heart, and sought him with their whole desire; and he was found of them: and the Lord gave them rest round about. II Chronicles 15:9-15

Whenever there was a covenant renewal, there was also the reading of the book of the law of Moses. Notice that the trumpets of Jubilee were blown. The year 911 B.C., the fifteenth year of Asa,<sup>9</sup> is twenty Jubilees before the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70, ( $911 \text{ B.C.} + 980 = 70 \text{ A.D.}$ ).

### 5. 862 B.C.-- The Last Year Of Jehoshaphat

There are additional textual indications of Jubilees taking place during the monarchical period of Israel's history. In II Kings 8:1-3 the widow of Shunem returned from the land of the Philistines to reclaim her house and land at the end of the famine.

Then spake Elisha unto the woman, whose son he had restored to life, saying, Arise, and go thou and thine household, and sojourn wheresoever thou canst sojourn: for the Lord hath called for a famine; and it shall also come upon the land seven years. And the woman arose, and did after the saying of the man of God: and she went with her household, and sojourned in the land of the Philistines seven years. And it came to pass at the seven years' end, that the woman returned out of the land of the Philistines: and she went forth to cry unto the king for her house and for her land. And the king talked with Gehazi the servant of the man of God, saying, Tell me, I pray thee, all the great things that Elisha hath done. And it came to pass, as he was telling the king how he had restored a dead body

to life, that, behold, the woman, whose son he had restored to life, cried to the king for her house and for her land. And Gehazi said, My lord, O king, this is the woman, and this is her son, whom Elisha restored to life. And when the king asked the woman, she told him. So the king appointed unto her a certain officer, saying, Restore all that was hers, and all the fruits of the field since the day that she left the land, even until now. II Kings 8:1-6

The famine had begun seven years earlier (II Kings 8:1) in a year of redemption, a Sabbath year. The Jubilee, seven years later, took place in the last year of Jehoshaphat, just prior to Jehoram's ascendancy to the throne of Judah. It should be noted that the Jubilee begins in the seventh month of the regnal year. The Jubilee of 862 was: eleven Jubilees after Joshua's final words to Israel (1401 B.C. + 539 = 862 B.C.), and nineteen Jubilees before the destruction under Titus (862 B.C. + 931 = 70 A.D.).

#### **6. 813 B.C.-- The Beginning of Amaziah's Rule**

A Jubilee occurred in 813 B.C.; near the death of Jehoash of Judah and the beginning of Amaziah's reign. A great assembly of Judah and Benjamin was called (II Chronicles 25:1-10). One should notice verses 3-4 and regard King Amaziah's action as a result of the reading of the Law for the Jubilee of 813 B.C. While Judah was gathered together, Amaziah took a census of his kingdom--

Moreover Amaziah gathered Judah together, and made them captains over thousands, and captains over hundreds, according to the houses of their fathers, throughout all Judah and Benjamin: and he numbered them from twenty years old and above, and found them three hundred thousand choice men, able to go forth to war, that could handle spear and shield. II Chronicles 25:5

This is an important reference, for a census would probably have been illegal except in a Jubilee year.<sup>10</sup> The Jubilee year of 813 B.C. is: twelve Jubilees after Joshua's assembly (1401 B.C. + 588 = 813 B.C.) and eighteen Jubilees prior to Titus' destruction of Jerusalem (813 B.C. + 882 = 70 A.D.).

#### **7. 764 B.C.-- The Thirty-sixth Year Of Uzziah**

A similar circumstance occurred forty-nine years later, in 764 B.C., when Uzziah conducted a census of his army in his thirty-sixth year (II Chronicles 26:11-17). This census also appears to have been legal--

Moreover Uzziah had an host of fighting men, that went out to war by bands, according to the number of their account by the hand of Jeiel the scribe and Maaseiah the ruler, under the hand of Hananiah, one of the king's captains. The whole number of the chief of the fathers of the mighty men of valour were two thousand and six hundred. And under their hand was an army, three hundred thousand and seven thousand and five hundred, that made war with mighty power, to help the king against the enemy. II Chronicles 26:11-13

This Jubilee year occurred: thirteen Jubilees after the first Jubilee of Joshua (1401 B.C. + 637 = 764 B.C.) and seventeen Jubilees before A.D. 70 (764 B.C. + 833 = 70 A.D.). More chronological details can be derived from the concluding chapter.

### **8. 715 B.C.-- The Fourteenth Year Of Hezekiah**

The text of II Kings 19:29 describes yet another Jubilee. It was in the fourteenth year of Hezekiah, during the threat by Sennacherib. Isaiah told the king of Judah: "And this shall be a sign unto thee, Ye shall eat this year such things as grow of themselves, and in 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 commentary regarding this principle concerning the Jubilee year is found in Leviticus 25:

In case you ask: What shall we eat in this seventh year if we do not sow or harvest the produce? I have ordered my blessing to be on you every sixth year, which will therefore provide for you for three years. You will have the old produce to eat while you are sowing in the eighth year and even as late as the ninth; you will eat the old produce, while waiting for the harvest of that year. Leviticus 25:20-22, Jerusalem Bible.

Although this concept is typical of a Sabbatical year as well as a Jubilee year, the reference in Leviticus 25 speaks specifically of a Jubilee. Isaiah's words to Hezekiah are a direct reference to this passage from the book of Leviticus. The same incident is recorded in Isaiah 37:21-37.

Israel no longer existed as a nation in the fourteenth year of Hezekiah, for Shalmaneser had deported her in Hezekiah's sixth year. Judah had been overrun by Sennacherib and Jerusalem was the only major city that had not been attacked by the army of Assyria. Circumstances looked desperate for Hezekiah and Judah. It was then that Yahweh gave Hezekiah 'the sign of the Jubilee'. The land was to be returned to His control. The year was 715 B.C.: fourteen Jubilees after Joshua's final message to Israel and the distribution of the land (1401 B.C. + 686 = 715 B.C.), four Jubilees before the return under Darius (715 B.C. + 196 = 519 B.C.), and sixteen Jubilees before the scattering of Israel among the nations by Titus in A.D. 70 (715 B.C. + 784 = 70 A.D.).

### **9. 519 B.C.-- The Return Under Darius**

On the twenty-fourth day of the ninth month, in the second year of Darius, the prophet Haggai received the word of Yahweh that 'from this day onward I intend to bless you.'

In the four and twentieth day of the ninth month, in the second year of Darius, came the word of the Lord by Haggai the prophet saying, ... Consider now from this day and upward, from the four and twentieth day of the ninth month, even from the day that the foundation of the Lord's temple was laid, consider it. ...

And again the word of the Lord came unto Haggai in the four and twentieth day of the month .... Haggai 2:10, 18, 20

The threefold repetition of this date in Haggai's prophecy proves its importance in Biblical history. The year 519 B.C. was the Jubilee that brought the year of the return. The return after the second year of King Darius was: eighty Jubilees

after Joshua initiated the Jubilee cycle in 1401 B.C. ( $1401 \text{ B.C.} + 882 = 519 \text{ B.C.}$ ) and twelve Jubilees before the destruction of A.D. 70 ( $519 \text{ B.C.} + 588 = 70 \text{ A.D.}$ ). Zedekiah's ninth year, in the tenth month, in the tenth day of the month (Gregorian date-- November 21, 590 B.C., *cf.*, Ezekiel 24:1) is seventy years from the twenty-fourth day of the ninth month, in the second year of Darius (Gregorian date-- December 11, 520 B.C., *cf.*, Haggai 2:10), the end of the Babylonian Captivity. The seventy-year Exile (Jeremiah 25:11) is measured from these two prophetic messages by Ezekiel and Hoshea, and their dates of 590 B.C. and 520 B.C.<sup>11</sup>

## **B. The Sabbath Years Used To Synchronize Chronology**

It is obvious from the preceding paragraphs that the Jubilee activities as recorded in Kings and Chronicles took place in forty-nine year increments between 1401 B.C. and A.D. 70. The same test can be applied to Sabbath year cycles, which must occur in multiples of seven from one another. Again, the texts of Kings and Chronicles do not identify Sabbath years by such specific nomenclature. The text does, however, provide a number of instances where the criteria leave little room for doubt that such a year is being referenced.

### **1. 1422 B.C.-- The First Sabbath Year**

It has been pointed out that Moses read the Law to the assembled tribes in 1422 B.C. (the spring of 1421 B.C.), the year of his death. This was thirty-nine years ('in the fortieth year') after the Exodus. The Exodus is dated in I Kings 6:1 as having occurred 480 years prior to the fourth year of Solomon in 981 B.C. ( $981 \text{ B.C.} + 480 = 1461 \text{ B.C.}$ ). If the Sabbath cycles recorded in the Hebrew text are accurate, they will synchronize by sevens with the year 1422 B.C. as do the Jubilee years identified in the preceding section.

### **2. 1415 B.C.-- The Second Sabbath Year**

Joshua 14-24 contains interesting supportive data for the fixing of these dates. One finds Joshua reading the Law (Joshua 23:6) and making a distribution of the land (Joshua 14-22). Caleb, the son of Jephunneh the Kenazite, identifies the date as forty-five years after Moses sent him to reconnoiter the land in 1460 B.C., the year following the Exodus.

And these are the countries which the children of Israel inherited in the land of Canaan, which Eleazar the priest, and Joshua the son of Nun, and the heads of the fathers of the tribes of the children of Israel, distributed for inheritance to them. ...

Then the children of Judah came unto Joshua in Gilgal: and Caleb the son of Jephunneh the Kenazite said unto him, Thou said unto Moses the man of God concerning me and thee in Kadesh-barnea. 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 swore 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

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Moses, while the children of Israel wandered in the wilderness: and now, lo, I am this day fourscore and five years old. Joshua 14:1, 6-10

Forty-five years from the date 1460 B.C. is 1415 B.C., which is seven years after Moses' reading of the Law in 1422 B.C. Two Sabbath-years later, in 1401 B.C., the Jubilee cycle began at the final distribution of the land after the conquest.

### 3. 946 B.C.-- The Year Before Solomon's Death

In 945 B.C., the year of Solomon's death, a great assembly took place--

And Rehoboam went to Shechem: for all Israel were come to Shechem to make him king. And it came to pass, when Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who was yet in Egypt, heard of it, (for he was fled from the presence of king Solomon, and Jeroboam dwelt in Egypt, ) That they sent and called him. And Jeroboam and all the congregation of Israel came, and spake unto Rehoboam, saying .... I Kings 12:1-3

It was also a year of release according to II Chronicles 10:4-5, *i.e.*, a Sabbath year. The people were pleading for Rehoboam to recognize it as such and release them from their obligation to pay taxes--

Thy father made our yoke grievous: now therefore ease thou somewhat the grievous servitude of thy father, and his heavy yoke that he put upon us, and we will serve thee. And he said unto them, Come again unto me after three days. And the people departed. II Chronicles 10:4-5

Acting on foolish advice, rather than the advice of the old men of Solomon's court, he refused the people's request and the kingdom split. The year 946 B.C. is: sixty-eight Sabbath years after Moses read the Law in 1422 B.C. ( $1422 \text{ B.C.} + 476 = 946 \text{ B.C.}$  ) and 145 Sabbath years before the Roman destruction of Jerusalem in 70 A.D. ( $956 \text{ B.C.} + 1015 = 70 \text{ A.D.}$ ).

### 4. 883 B.C.-- The Third Year Of Jehoshaphat

In II Chronicles 17:7-12 Jehoshaphat is found in his third year ensuring the reading of the Law throughout the land--

Also in the third year of his reign he sent to his princes, even to Ben-hail, and to Obadiah, and to Zechariah, and to Nethaneel, and to Michaiah, to teach in the cities of Judah. And with them he sent Levites, even Shemaiah, and Nethaniah, and Zebadiah, and Asahel, and Shemiramoth, and Jehonathan, and Adonijah, and Tobijah, and Tob-adonijah, Levites; and with them Elishama and Jehoram, priests. And 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.

And the fear of the Lord fell upon all the kingdoms of the lands that were round about Judah, so that they made no war against Jehoshaphat. Also some of the Philistines brought Jehoshaphat presents, and tribute silver; and Arabians brought him flocks, seven thousand and seven hundred rams, and seven thousand and seven hundred he goats. II Chronicles 17:7-11

The year is 883 B.C.-- seventy-seven Sabbath years after Moses read the Law (1422

B.C. + 539 = 883 B.C.) and 136 Sabbath years before A.D. 70 (883 B.C. + 952 = 70 A.D.).

**5. 869 B.C.-- The Year Before Ahab's Death And The Beginning Of A Famine**

King Ahab died in 868 B.C. About that time a certain widow was called to settle her debts (II Kings 4:1-7). Josephus refers to this woman as the widow of Obadiah<sup>12</sup> (*Antiquities* IX.iii.2.). The following passage shows that debts were to be paid during this year--

Now there cried a certain woman of the wives of the sons of the prophets unto Elisha, saying, Thy servant my husband is dead; and thou knowest that thy servant did fear the Lord: and the creditor is come to take unto him my two sons to be bondmen. II Kings 4:1

This Sabbath year was also a Jubilee year, as mentioned earlier. It began the seven year famine of II Kings 8:2. The Sabbath year of 869 B.C. was: seventy-nine Sabbaths after Moses read the Law in 1422 B.C. (1422 B.C. + 553 = 869 B.C.) and 134 Sabbaths before the final destruction of Jerusalem (869 B.C. + 938 = 70 A.D.).

**6. 862 B.C.-- The Second Reform And Last Year Of Jehoshaphat**

The Sabbath year of 862 B.C. was also a Jubilee year, (see above) which occurred at the end of Jehoshaphat's reign over Judah. Jehoshaphat held a second reform at this time, mentioned in II Chronicles 20:1-13. It is a coincidence that the threat of war happened simultaneously with this Jubilee celebration. The people of Judah gathered themselves together not as a reaction to the threat of war or the command of the king, but to celebrate the Jubilee--

Then there came some that told Jehoshaphat, saying, There cometh a great multitude against thee from beyond the sea on this side Syria; and, behold, they be in Hazazon-tamar, which is Engedi. And Jehoshaphat feared, and set himself to seek the Lord, and proclaimed a fast through-out all Judah. And Judah gathered themselves together, to ask help of the Lord: even out of all the cities of Judah they came to seek the Lord. ... And all Judah stood before the Lord, with their little ones, their wives, and their children. II Chronicles 20:2-4, 13.

The presence of children would indicate that this was a Jubilee celebration which was threatened with war. It has been common practice for the enemies of God's people to attack during Jewish religious festivals; in this case it was during the Day of Atonement and the Feast of Tabernacles. This is the Jubilee during which the Shunamite woman returned to reclaim her land in Israel (II Kings 8:3).

This year is eighty Sabbath years after Moses read the Law (1422 B.C. + 560 = 862 B.C.) and 133 Sabbath years before A.D. 70 (862 B.C. + 931 = 70 A.D.).

**7. 589 B.C.-- The Tenth Year Of Zedekiah**

The Sabbath year of 589 B.C. has been discussed at length in chapter two because of its significance in establishing the date of the destruction of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar. The Sabbath year was announced in mid-October of 589 B.C.

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Several additional features surrounding these dates are significant for chronology. The siege of Jerusalem began prior to the Sabbath year of 589 B.C., on November 21, 590 B.C.<sup>13</sup> In Ezekiel 24:1ff., the prophet was instructed to note this date as the time at which Yahweh no longer looked with favor on Jerusalem--

Again in the ninth year, in the tenth month, in the tenth day of the month, the word of the Lord came unto me, saying, Son of man, write thee the name of the day, even of this same day: the king of Babylon set himself against Jerusalem this same day. Ezekiel 24:1-2

The Sabbatical year of 589 B.C. was: 119 Sabbatical years after Moses read the law on the first Sabbatical year (1422 B.C. + 833 = 589 B.C.) and ninety-four Sabbatical years before the fall of Jerusalem to Titus (589 B.C. + 658 = 70 A.D.).

The profound significance of the Sabbath and Jubilee cycles for establishing the accuracy of the chronology of the Hebrew kings becomes apparent when examining Illustration XVI (page 174) and comparing it to the chronological chart of the kings of Israel and Judah in Illustrations VIII and IX (pp. 79 & 81). The Sabbath and Jubilee cycles verify the reigns of the kings of Judah coded as A, C, D, I, J, M, P, and T (Illus. VII, p. 48). At the same time, the reigns of Israel's kings cross-referenced to Judah are verified. These include kings A, B, C, D, E, F, G, H, I, and T of Israel. Sabbath and Jubilee cycles have also verified the reigns of the kings of Israel coded as A, G, H, I, and T, which in turn, verify their Judean counterparts, kings B, C, and M. Seven Sabbath years and nine Jubilee reference years have been identified.

### C. Time Spans Used To Synchronize Chronology

Just as the Jubilee and Sabbath cycles can be used to help establish accurate chronology, the concept of time spans can be valuable. The time elapsed between various historical events carries the added advantage of determining the dates for two major events at once. (See Illustration XVI, p. 174.)

#### 1. 1421-588 B.C.-- The Entrance To The Deportation: 833 Years

Here is another feature of significance regarding the date of 588 B.C. A tradition of the Talmud counts seventeen Jubilees from the time the children of Israel arrived in the land of promise until they were taken from it by Nebuchadnezzar. The Talmud states, "Seventeen jubilee [cycles] did Israel count from the time they entered the Land [of Israel] until they left it."<sup>14</sup> Seventeen Jubilees, *i.e.*, 17 x 49 equals the time span of 833 years. It was an exact 833 year time span from the entrance into Canaan in 1421 B.C. (forty years after the Exodus in 1461 B.C.) until the destruction by Nebuchadnezzar in 588 B.C. (1421 B.C. + 833 = 588 B.C.).

#### 2. 945-856 B.C.-- The Schism To Jehu's Accession: 89 Years

Perhaps the most obvious point of time span synchronistic data is the period of time from the death of Solomon, when the kingdom divided, until the simultaneous assassination of the kings of Israel and Judah by Jehu. The period of time for both kingdoms must be equal. As indicated in Illustration VIII (p. 79),

Israel's history from Jeroboam to Jehu and Judah's history from Rehoboam to Athaliah both comprise eighty-nine years. ( $945 \text{ B.C.} + 89 = 856 \text{ B.C.}$ )

### **3. 856-723 B.C.-- The Accession Of Jehu To The Fall Of Samaria: 134 Years**

A second span that must be equal involves the time from Jehu's first year until the fall of Samaria, the ninth year of Hoshea, and the time from Jehu's first year until the sixth year of Hezekiah. It is equal, for both time frames span 133 years, from 857 B.C. to 723 B.C. ( $857 \text{ B.C.} + 134 = 723 \text{ B.C.}$ )

### **4. 1018-588 B.C.-- The Rise And Fall Of Jerusalem: 430 Years**

After the fall of Samaria, there is no synchronistic information between the two kingdoms. Chapter two of this study has demonstrated that, on the basis of astronomical dating, only the year 588 B.C. meets the requirements of the day of the week, the priestly cycle, and the Sabbath year cycle demanded by the Hebrew text, the Talmud, and other contemporary records. This date is further verified by the application of the time-span criteria. (See Illustration VI, p. 40.)

According to the accumulated chronology charted in Illustration XVI, the time span from David's capture of Jerusalem to its destruction and the beginning of the Babylonian Captivity is 430 years. Although the mathematical accumulation of the chronological process provides the verification for the figure of this 430 year time frame, one cannot overlook the further verification of its accuracy provided by the prophetic message of the fourth chapter of Ezekiel relative to the siege and fall of Jerusalem.

Specifically, Ezekiel was told to make a mock city of Jerusalem and besiege it. Then he was told:

Lie thou also upon thy left side, and lay the iniquity of the house of Israel upon it: according to the number of the days that thou shalt lie upon it thou shalt bear their iniquity. For I have laid upon thee the years of their iniquity, according to the number of the days, three hundred and ninety days: so shalt thou bear the iniquity of the house of Israel. And when thou hast accomplished them, lie again on thy right side, and thou shalt bear the iniquity of the house of Judah forty days: I have appointed thee a day for a year. Ezekiel 4:4-6

According to Ezekiel's prophecy, Jerusalem was given 430 years ( $390 + 40$ ) to exist as a city. The time from the capture of Jerusalem by David in 1018 B.C. until its fall to Nebuchadnezzar in 588 B.C. was 430 years ( $1018 \text{ B.C.} + 430 = 588 \text{ B.C.}$ ) Stated another way, the duration of the Divided Kingdom from 945 B.C. until the fall of Jerusalem in 588 B.C. was 357 years ( $945 \text{ B.C.} + 357 = 588 \text{ B.C.}$ ). The combined reigns of David and Solomon from David's capture of Jerusalem was seventy-three years. King David reigned thirty-three years after he captured Jerusalem and Solomon reigned for forty years. ( $1018 \text{ B.C.} + 73 + 357 = 588 \text{ B.C.}$ )

### **5. 1461-981 B.C.-- The Exodus To The Temple: 480 Years**

Solomon's reign is firmly established as commencing in 985 B.C. This date provides a basis for dating the Exodus. The text of I Kings 6:1 places the Exodus

480 years before the Temple construction began in Solomon's fourth year. Solomon's fourth year was 981 B.C. The Exodus can be placed four hundred and eighty years earlier, in the year 1461 B.C. ( $981 \text{ B.C.} + 480 = 1461 \text{ B.C.}$ ).

### **6. 588-548 B.C.-- The Forty Years Of Judah's Sin Offering**

The prophecy of Ezekiel 4:1-8 mimics the siege of Jerusalem:

Thou also, son of man, take thee a tile, and lay it before thee, and portray upon it the city, even Jerusalem: And lay siege against it, and build a fort against it, and cast a mount against it; set the camp also against it, and set battering rams against it round about. Moreover take thou unto thee an iron pan, and set it for a wall of iron between thee and the city: and set thy face against it, and it shall be besieged, and thou shalt lay siege against it. This shall be a sign to the house of Israel. Lie thou also upon thy left side, and lay the iniquity of the house of Israel upon it: according to the number of the days that thou shalt lie upon it thou shalt bear their iniquity. For I have laid upon thee the years of their iniquity, according to the number of the days, three hundred and ninety days: so shalt thou bear the iniquity of the house of Israel. And when thou hast accomplished them, lie again on thy right side, and thou shalt bear the iniquity of the house of Judah forty days: I have appointed thee each day for a year. Therefore thou shalt set thy face toward the siege of Jerusalem, and thine arm shall be uncovered, and thou shalt prophesy against it. And, behold, I will lay bands upon thee, and thou shalt not turn thee from one side to another, till thou hast ended the days of thy siege.

This prophecy fixes the time from the siege of Jerusalem until the erection of the altar of Zerubbabel and the reinstatement of the sacrifice at forty years. It was exactly forty years from the seige of Jerusalem in 590 B.C., until the sacrifice began again in the third year of Cyrus, 550 B.C. ( $590 \text{ B.C.} + 40 = 550 \text{ B.C.}$ ). Ezra 3:1-6 gives the detail and date of Zerubbabel's altar:

And when the seventh month was come, and the children of Israel were in the cities, the people gathered themselves together as one man to Jerusalem. Then stood up Jeshua the son of Jozadak, and his brethren the priests, and Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, and his brethren, and builded the altar of the God of Israel, to offer burnt offerings thereon, as it is written in the law of Moses the man of God. And they set the altar upon his bases; for fear was upon them because of the people of those countries: and they offered burnt offerings thereon unto the Lord, even burnt offerings morning and evening. They kept also the feast of tabernacles, as it is written, and offered the daily burnt offerings by number, according to the custom, as the duty of every day required; And afterward offered the continual burnt offering, both of the new moons, and of all the set feasts of the Lord that were consecrated, and of every one that willingly offered a freewill offering unto the Lord. From the first day of the seventh month began they to offer burnt offerings unto the Lord. But the foundation of the temple of the Lord was not yet laid.

### **7. 723-333 B.C.-- The 390 Years Of Israel's Sin Offering**

In the same verses of Ezekiel 4, the absence of Israel's sin offering was to be for a period of 390 years. From the fall of Samaria in 723 B.C. until the construction of the temple on Mount Gerizzim at the time of Alexander in 333 B.C.

was 390 years. (723 B.C. + 390 = 333 B.C.) Josephus refers to this newly built temple at the time of Alexander's conquest of Palestine:

So when Alexander had thus settled matters at Jerusalem, he led his army into the neighboring cities; and when all the inhabitants, to whom he came, received him with great kindness, the Samaritans, who had then Shechem for their metropolis, (a city situated at Mount Gerizzim, and inhabited by apostates of the Jewish nation,) seeing that Alexander had so greatly honoured the Jews, determined to profess themselves Jews; for such is the disposition of Samaritans. ... Accordingly, they made their address to the king with splendour, and shewed great alacrity in meeting him at a little distance from Jerusalem; and when Alexander had commended them, the Shechemites approached to him, taking with them the troops that Sanballat had sent him, and they desired that he would come to their city, and do honour to their temple also; to whom he promised that when he returned he would come to them. ... Now when Alexander was dead, the government was parted among his successors; but the temple upon Mount Gerizzim remained. *Antiquities* XI.viii.6.

#### **8. 986-588 B.C.-- The Priestly Cycles: From David To The Deportation**

The twenty-four priestly sections were installed by David in 986 B.C. The sections rotated every Sabbath and a complete cycle required 168 days. According to the Talmud, Mishna Tract, 'Arakin 11b, the Jehoiarib section was serving at the time of the destruction of the Temple. This was the first of the twenty-four sections established in I Chronicles 24:7. The reader may wish to review chapter two for the significance of that phenomenon and its relation to the dating of the fall of Jerusalem.

#### **9. 900-860 B.C.-- The Forty Year Moabite Stone Period**

The events that transpired during the Sabbath year of 862 B.C. hold the key to interpreting the Moabite Stone. Moab allied herself with Edom and Ammon and came against Jehoshaphat in his final year, 862 B.C. In the events recorded in II Chronicles 20, the king of Moab was deceived into thinking he had defeated Judah. At the time of this event, the inscription mentions that Moab had been under subjection to Israel for forty years:

... As for Omri, king of Israel, he humbled Moab many years (*lit.*, days), for Chemosh was angry at his hand. And his son followed him and he also said, 'I will humble Moab.' In my time he spoke (thus), but I have triumphed over him and over his house, while Israel hath perished for ever! (Now) Omri had occupied the land of Medeba, and (Israel) had dwelt there in his time and half the time of his son (Ahab), forty years; but Chemosh dwelt there in my time.<sup>15</sup>

Notice that the word 'Ahab' is in parenthesis and is not part of the original text. The forty year period would start with Omri in 900 B.C. and continue to half the time of his son (Jehoram) to 860 B.C. The year 860 is exactly half of Omri's grandson's reign-- Jehoram, who ruled Israel from 867 B.C. to 856 B.C. It should be noted that the Moabite word for 'son' can be understood to mean 'grandson'. The inscription does not refer to Ahab at all, but rather to Ahab's son-- Jehoram.

If one attempts to apply the text of II Kings 3 to the chronological or historical

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details of the inscription, the two accounts are contradictory in almost every detail. If the stone is referring to Omri and Ahab, as some would have it, forty years is far too long. The text of II Chronicles 20 is the proper backdrop against which the inscription must be read. The historical as well as chronological details match.

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<sup>1</sup>I. Epstein, *et al.*, eds., *The Babylonian Talmud* (London: The Soncino Press, 1938), Mishna Tract, *Nedarim*, 61a.

<sup>2</sup>Aaron Rothkoff notes that, "the Samaritans also reckoned only according to *shemittot*, and even where they divided periods into Jubilees, it was a Jubilee of 49 years." Aaron Rothkoff "Sabbatical Year And Jubilee." Cecil Roth, *et al.*, eds., *Encyclopaedia Judaica*. Volume 14 (Jerusalem, Israel: Keter Publishing House, 1972), p. 579.

<sup>3</sup>The author of the Book of Jubilees, which gives the chronology from the creation by Jubilees, counts a Jubilee period as only forty-nine years throughout his book. This book was found in use among the Essenes who copied the Dead Sea Scrolls at Qumran. It was probably one of the their basic texts.

<sup>4</sup>*Shemittot* is the plural Hebrew word for *shemittah*.

<sup>5</sup>That the Jubilees were discontinued from the time of the deportation of the trans-jordan tribes is mentioned in the Palestinian Talmud, *Sifra*, *BeHar* 2:3.

<sup>6</sup>The Talmud relates the fact that both the first and second Temples were destroyed on the seventh of Ab. In Exodus 34:1-5, the covenant was restored after they worshiped the golden calf. That day fell on the seventh of Ab. The seventh of Ab, therefore, was a day predestinated to disaster due to the lack of obedience. The Talmud indicates that both Temple destructions occurred during the month of Ab at the end of a Sabbatical year--

"The day on which the first Temple was destroyed was the ninth of Ab, and it was at the going out of the Sabbath and at the end of the seventh [Sabbatical] year. The [priestly] guard was that of Jehoiarib, the priests and Levites were standing on their platform singing the song. What song was it? *And He hath brought upon them their iniquity, and will cut them off in their evil*. They had no time to complete [the psalm with] 'The Lord our God will cut them off', before the enemies came and overwhelmed them. The same happened the second time [the second Sanctuary's destruction]." *The Babylonian Talmud*, Mishna Tract, 'Arakin 11b.

<sup>7</sup>Josephus writes:

"So Joshua after that dissolved this great assembly of the people, and sent them to their own inheritances, while he himself lived in Shechem. But in the twentieth year after this when he was very old, he sent for those of the greatest dignity in the several cities, with those in authority, and the senate, and as many of the common people as could be present; and when they were come he put them in mind of all the benefits God had bestowed on them, which could not but be a great many, since from a low estate they were advanced to so great a decree of glory and plenty; and exhorted them to take notice of the intentions of God, which had been so gracious towards them; and told them that Deity would continue their friend by nothing else but their piety; and that it was proper for him, now that he was about to depart out of this life, to leave such an admonition to them; and he desired that they would keep in memory his exhortation to them." *Antiquities* V.i.28.

<sup>8</sup>The towns were not the 'cream of the crop' variety as evidenced by Hiram's less than gratuitous comments in I Kings 9:13.

<sup>9</sup>The chronological data of II Kings indicates this as the seventeenth year of Asa. As discussed

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previously, there is a two-year problem in the early period of Asa's reign which may reflect a two-year co-regency with his father.

<sup>10</sup>One need only recall the disastrous results of David's illegal census recorded in II Samuel 24.

<sup>11</sup>Tradition has placed the beginning of the seventy years either at the death of Josiah or the first year of Nebuchadnezzar and the deportation of Daniel and his three Hebrew friends. The end of the period has been identified, traditionally, with the conquest of Babylon by Cyrus in 538 B.C. The Scriptural basis for the period of seventy years is taken from Jeremiah 25:11 but the beginning and ending dates are found in Ezekiel 24, Haggai 2, and Zechariah 1. Briefly, the difficulty with traditional dating is as follows. The death of Josiah occurred at the hands of the Egyptians, not the Babylonians. Nebuchadnezzar's own records indicate that he went no further than Carchemish before the eighth year of Jehoiakim, his fourth year. The wording of Cyrus' edict has been the source of identifying 538 B.C. as the end of the seventy-year period. In reality, the edict merely gave rise to the circumstances that led to the fulfillment of Jeremiah's prophecy twenty-two years later. According to Jeremiah, the seventy years were to end with the punishment of the king of Babylon. Cyrus did not punish Nabonaidus in 540, but a king, namely Gaumata, was killed, according to Herodotus, in 520 B.C. at the end of the Magi revolt.

<sup>12</sup>Jewish tradition identifies this widow as the wife of Obadiah, Ahab's servant (I Kings 18:3ff.). Cf., I. W. Slotki, *Kings* (London: The Soncino Press, 1978) p. 182. It is not unlikely that these debts were contracted by her husband for the support of those "hundred of the Lord's prophets, whom he maintained by fifty in a cave," in the days of Ahab and Jezebel (I Kings 13:4). Circumstance rendered it highly fit that the prophet Elisha should provide her a remedy, and enable her to redeem herself and her sons from the fear of that slavery which insolvent debtors were liable to by the law of Moses.

<sup>13</sup>This is a Gregorian date based upon Ezekiel's date in Ezekiel 24:1. On this date, the commencement of the siege of Jerusalem began.

<sup>14</sup>*The Babylonian Talmud*, Mishna Tract, 'Arakin 12b, p. 69.

<sup>15</sup>James B. Pritchard, *Ancient Near Eastern Texts* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1969), p. 320.

## **Chapter X - ANCHOR DATES COMPARED: COMPUTER vs. THIELE**

Chronology is the framework of history. In order to grasp the time relationship between Biblical events, it is necessary to know the dates of those Biblical events themselves. In Greek thought, chronology is viewed as a stream that cannot be stopped but can be measured. Therefore, chronology is simply the dating of historical events within the stream of time. The aim of Biblical chronology is to determine the correct dates of events and persons in the Hebrew Scriptures as precisely as possible so that one may better understand their significance. Absolute or anchor dates can help to determine other dates as one uses various Biblical data.

### **I. The Need For An Accurate Chronology Of The Hebrew Kings**

The Bible is unique in that it contains its own time line and has devoted quite a lot of detail to matters of chronology. Some of its detail in chronology is found in the writings of the Hebrew prophets. Most of the Hebrew prophets lived during the time frame of the Hebrew kings. Some of the Hebrew prophets even dated their prophecies to the reigns of specific kings of both Israel and Judah. For example, the prophet Hosea dated his message in this fashion: "The word of the Lord that came unto Hosea, the son of Beer, in the days of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, kings of Judah, and in the days of Jeroboam the son of Joash, king of Israel" (Hosea 1:1). Certain prophets, writing after the fall of Samaria in 723 B.C., only made reference to the kings of Judah as they dated their prophetic materials. Isaiah is a case in point: "The vision of Isaiah the son of Amoz, which he saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem in the days of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, kings of Judah" (Isaiah 1:1). This chronological data gives the background (*Sitz im Leben*) to the prophetic message. These chronological notes help one understand why God said what he said, and why He did what He did at each particular time in history. It can be seen that accuracy in dating the messages of the Hebrew prophets is dependent upon accuracy for the reigns of the Hebrew kings. Therefore, an accurate chronology of the Hebrew kings is essential for the proper interpretation of the prophets of Israel.<sup>1</sup>

### **A. Updating The Old Chronology**

In this present century, William F. Albright<sup>2</sup> and Edwin R. Thiele<sup>3</sup> have contributed more to the clarification of the problems of Near Eastern and Biblical chronology than other scholars. They must be respected for their laborious efforts; for modern Biblical scholarship is based on the foundation of their chronological research. Their anchor dates differ in general from the conclusions of the present volume for several of the following reasons.

### **1. Computer Technology And Astronomy**

The present study has used the computer calendar (a reconstruction of the lunar calendar observed by the Hebrews), the cyclical phenomena of Israel (Sabbath days, Sabbatical years, Jubilee years and the priestly cycles), the religious feasts of Israel (Passover, the Feast of Tabernacles *etc.*), and time spans to help with the reconstruction of the chronology of the Hebrew kings. Since the Bible does not give its chronology to the calendar in use today, it was necessary to establish absolute dates or anchor dates. Unfortunately, both Albright and Thiele did not have the computer available to them when they did their basic work in Biblical Chronology.

### **2. Re-evaluation Of The Assyrian Documents**

Traditionally, Biblical chronology has been interpreted in the light of Assyrian documents which are based on one astronomical eclipse. However, the computer calendar itself is based on astronomical data such as the revolution of the moon, and the Bible contains its own astronomical data in references to 'days' and 'months' reckoned by the moon observation. In the Hebrew Scripture, there is no direct reference to a lunar or solar eclipse such as the solar eclipse of Bur-Sagale on June 15, 763 B.C., mentioned in the Assyrian Eponym Canon; however, a solar eclipse is implied or known in both the writings of Jonah and Amos.<sup>4</sup>

Unlike past chronologies, the present research has not accepted without comment, the accuracy of Assyrian records which appear to be inconsistent without the eponyms or the Bible, and appear to be adopted by a later monarch through name change.

### **3. Editing Past Bible Chronology**

Perhaps the greatest point of conflict between past chronological research and the present study is over the integrity of the Biblical text. Previous chronologists have agreed that the Hebrew text must be largely modified to conform to Assyrian records. David Noel Freedman has stated this assumption quite clearly: "No modern reconstruction of Biblical chronology can ignore the fixed dates provided by extra-Biblical sources; and the Biblical dates must be modified in accordance with the pattern of Near Eastern chronology now firmly established for the second and first millennia B.C. ..." <sup>5</sup> While the present volume has not ignored the fixed dates provided by extra-biblical sources, it also has not ignored the inconsistencies of the Assyrian documents and the possibility of certain succeeding kings crediting themselves with the annals of a preceding monarch(s). In general, former chronologists ignored this latter point and 'modified' Biblical dates in accordance with the pattern of Near Eastern chronology. The present research has upheld the integrity of the Massoretic text and has maintained the integrity of Assyrian sources as well.

### **B. The Reasons For Change**

It has been the practice of former chronologists of this century to have simply assumed that the ancient dynastic lists of the Near Eastern empires are more reliable than the Hebrew dynastic lists found in I and II Kings and II Chronicles.

David Noel Freedman states this assumption as follows: "Since the Biblical records have passed through a long process of transmission, and our earliest documents are many centuries removed from the original archives, we cannot expect to find the same degree of accuracy that we have in the ancient dynastic lists of the Near Eastern empires."<sup>6</sup> It appears to the present research that both the Bible and the dynastic lists of the Ancient Near East have passed through a long process of scribal transmission. All are amazingly well preserved, but the Bible is better preserved. The reason for this is that the chronology of the Hebrew kings is self-corrective--based on points of synchronization, (the beginning date of the king of one nation referenced to the corresponding year of the other nation's king), the length of reign of a given king, the age of the king at accession to the throne, the reference of historical events and foreign kings to a regnal year and the listing of the number of years involved in the interval from one event to another. No other dynastic list of the Ancient Near East offers so much information and provides such self-correction and preservation. This makes the Biblical record unique when compared to other dynastic lists. Where there are variations in anchor dates between the present research and previous chronologists of this century, they occur where the Biblical dates were 'modified' by former chronologists in accordance with the pattern of Near Eastern chronology which they assumed to be absolute.

## **II. The Need For Accurate Anchor Dates**

For the monarchial period of Hebrew history, there are several anchor dates fixed by synchronisms with extra-biblical records, such as a point of contact with a foreign monarch and a Hebrew king or a solar or lunar eclipse occurring during a specific year of a certain king's reign. These anchor dates form the framework within which the Israelite King Lists must be worked out and harmonized.

### **A. Anchor Date 1**

#### **1461 B.C.-- The Exodus From Egypt**

##### **1. The Ten Commandments Dated**

It is compulsory when dealing with the chronology of the Hebrew kings to examine the date of the Exodus in great detail.<sup>7</sup> The date of the Exodus from Egypt has been tied into the chronology of the Hebrew Kings by the author of the book of Kings. In I Kings 6:1, the chronicler gives the time span from the Exodus to the start of the Temple construction in the fourth year of Solomon-- "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."

From the Exodus date to Solomon's fourth year must be 480 years. The following anchor dates are already established in this study: 1018 B.C.-- King David's battle with Shalmaneser II of Assyria, 763 B.C.-- the solar eclipse of Bur-Sagale, and 588 B.C. -- the established date for the fall of Jerusalem. These establish the fourth year of Solomon by dead reckoning as 981 B.C., which was also a Sabbath year. Therefore, the date of the Exodus is 480 years earlier than 981 B.C.; 1461

B.C. is fixed also by several chronological references. The first chronological reference deals with the event when the children of Israel came into the wilderness of Sinai and received the Mosaic Law-- "In the third month, when the children of Israel were gone forth out of the land of Egypt, the same day came they into the wilderness of Sinai" (Exodus 19:1). Two days later the Israelites were given the Law-- "And the Lord said unto Moses, Go unto the people, and sanctify them to-day and to-morrow, and let them wash their clothes, And be ready against the third day: for the third day the Lord will come down in the sight of all the people upon mount Sinai" (Exodus 19:10-11).

The actual month, day and year of the Exodus was Abib 15, 1461 B.C., *cf.*, Exodus 12:3-51; 13:3-4. The date for the Ten Commandments was Sivan 17, 1461 B.C. 'The same day' indicates that they arrived on the fifteenth day of the third month since the Exodus took place on the fifteenth day of the first month. The fifteenth day of the second month they reached Sin (Exodus 16:1), and the fifteenth of the third month they reached Sinai. Hebrew tradition states that the Revelation was given on Pentecost day (the third month, the sixth day), not the third month, the seventeenth day (Mishna Tract, *Shabbath* 86b). They date the worship of the golden calf on the ninth of Ab (the fifth month, the ninth day). This is a later assumption and a chronological impossibility; for there are too many days between these two dates to fit the chronological requirements. The third month the sixth day is the sixty-sixth day of the year ( $29.53 \times 2 + 6$ ). The fifth month the ninth day is day 128 of the year ( $29.53 \times 4 + 9$ ). The time between these two events is, therefore, sixty-two days. The third month the seventeenth day is the seventy-seventh day of the year ( $29.53 \times 2 + 17$ ). Elapsed time between the calf and the Law with this calculation is fifty-one days ( $128 - 77 = 51$ ). Moses went to God on the third month the fifteenth day, and two days later on the seventeenth day (day seventy-seven), the Ten Commandments were given. Then Moses spent one week on the mountain (until day eighty-four), and on the Sabbath day, he went up to the mountain for forty days (Exodus 24:16), coming down on day 124. One must add the days:  $77 + 7 + 40 = 124$  days total from the time of the Revelation until Moses returned from the mountain on the fifth month the sixth day ( $124/29.53 = 4$  months + 6 days). Moses pleaded with God on the sixth day for their sins, then he returned from the mountain, broke the stones, and made them drink the potion. Israelites numbering 3000 men perished that day. The next day (the seventh, Exodus 32:30), Moses spoke to God on the Sabbath day. On Sunday, Ab 8, Moses returned to the mountain for another forty days (Exodus 34:2). Hebrew tradition is not quite correct; for the worship occurred on Ab 6-7 before Moses stopped them. Ab 8 is also the day that the Babylonians and the Romans lighted the Temple in order to burn it (II Kings 24:8; *Wars Of The Jews* VI.iv.1). Ab 9, therefore, was nearly correct, but the Law simply could not have been given two weeks earlier on Pentecost day.

## 2. The Second Reading Of The Law

The second chronological event fixing the date of the Exodus is the second reading of the Mosaic Law. The reference is found in Deuteronomy 1:3-- "And it came to pass in the fortieth year, in the eleventh month, on the first day of the

month, that Moses spake unto the children of Israel, according unto all that the Lord had given him in commandment unto them.”

This event can be dated as Shebat 1, 1421 B.C., thirty-nine years after the Exodus (The Hebrew year did not change until March 20 that year). Also, the reading of the Law was to take place at the end of a Sabbath year:

And Moses commanded them, saying, At the end of every seven years, in the solemnity of the year of release, in the feast of tabernacles, When all Israel is come to appear before the Lord thy God in the place which he shall choose, thou shalt read this law before all Israel in their hearing. Deuteronomy 31:10-11

The reading of the Law by Moses was during the last part of the year, therefore, it was on a Sabbath year (See also Anchor Date 2). This reading also was on a Sabbath day according to Hebrew tradition. The Talmud clearly indicates that the first giving of the Law occurred on a Sabbath day: “Again, all agree that the Torah was given to Israel on the Sabbath.” (Mishna Tract, *Shabbath* 86 b).<sup>8</sup> The computer calendar itself also shows that both days for the first and second reading of the Law occurred on the Sabbath. It is most likely true, for Jesus read on the Sabbath day (Luke 4:16), and Josephus confirms that the Sabbath day was spent in the reading of the Law (*Antiquities* XVI.ii.3).

### 3. Empirically Establishing The Date Of The Exodus

Three requirements were characteristic for these two readings: the Sabbath day, the Sabbath year and the thirty-nine year time span. The first reading occurred on the third month the seventeenth day, a Sabbath day; the second reading occurred on the eleventh month the first day, also a Sabbath day. The second reading also must be in a Sabbath year. Since there are seven days in a week, and seven years in a Sabbath year, and since these two events are dated thirty-nine lunar/solar years apart, one should be able to exclude many potential years normally given to the date of the Exodus, and find only about two or three possibilities in a 300 year period normally ascribed to the date of the Exodus ( $7 \times 7 \times 7 = 343/1$ ). The computer calendar has done wonders in determining the date of the Exodus. The potential dates of the Exodus are shown from the astronomical data which forms the base for the Hebrew calendar (See Illustration XVIII). It can be observed that 1461 B.C. is a possible date. Thiele's date of 1447 B.C. based on his Hebrew king chronology, is not possible. The year 1363 B.C. is possible, but is never given as a possible date for the Exodus. It is half way between the early (fifteenth century) and the late (thirteenth century) dates for the Exodus. The year 1258 B.C. is possible, but it too is beyond the normally accepted dates given, although some scholars have accepted the Exodus as within the period of 1280-1230 B.C.<sup>9</sup> The dates between 1250 and 1230 B.C. dates are not at all possible.

The absolute dating of the Exodus also establishes with certainty the division of the kingdoms of Israel and Judah in 945 B.C. Between the date of the Exodus and the fourth year of Solomon are 480 years. According to the Bible, Solomon ruled Israel for forty years (I Kings 11:42). Therefore, the kingdom was divided thirty-six years after Solomon's fourth year ( $1461 \text{ B.C.} + 480 = 981 \text{ B.C.}$

# ILLUSTRATION XVIII: ASTRONOMICALLY POSSIBLE AND IMPOSSIBLE DATES OF THE EXODUS

First Law Yr. 3/17		Second Law Yr.	11/01	Before Temple
1496	Tuesday	1456	Monday	515
1489	Monday	1449	Sunday	508
1482	Monday	1442	Sunday	501
1475	Sunday	1435	Sunday	494
1468	Sunday	1428	Saturday	487
1461 <i>Bible</i>	Saturday <i>Possible</i>	1421 *****	Saturday ***	480
1454	Saturday	1414	Thursday	473
1447 <i>Thiele</i>	Saturday <i>Impossible</i>	1407	Friday	466
1440	Thursday	1400	Wednesday	459
1433	Saturday	1393	Wednesday	452
1426	Wednesday	1386	Thursday	445
1419	Wednesday	1379	Tuesday	438
1412	Tuesday	1372	Tuesday	431
1405	Tuesday	1365	Monday	424
1398	Tuesday	1358	Monday	417
1391	Monday	1351	Monday	410
1384	Monday	1344	Sunday	403
1377	Sunday	1337	Sunday	396
1370	Sunday	1330	Saturday	389
1363 *****	Saturday <i>Possible</i>	1323 *****	Saturday ***	382
1356	Saturday	1316	Thursday	375
1349	Saturday	1309	Friday	368
1342	Friday	1302	Friday	361
1335	Friday	1295	Wednesday	354
1328	Wednesday	1288	Thursday	347
1321	Wednesday	1281	Tuesday	340
1314	Thursday	1274	Tuesday	333
1307	Tuesday	1267	Monday	326
1300	Tuesday	1260	Monday	319
1293	Monday	1253	Monday	312
1286	Monday	1246	Sunday	305
1279	Sunday	1239	Sunday	298
1272	Sunday	1232	Saturday	291
1265	Sunday	1225	Saturday	284
1258 *****	Saturday <i>Possible</i>	1218 *****	Saturday ***	277
1251 <i>Modern</i>	Saturday <i>Impossible</i>	1211	Friday	270
1244 <i>Modern</i>	Friday <i>Impossible</i>	1204	Friday	263
1237 <i>Modern</i>	Friday <i>Impossible</i>	1197	Thursday	256
1230 <i>Modern</i>	Wednesday <i>Impossible</i>	1190	Thursday	249
1223	Thursday	1183	Tuesday	242
1216	Thursday	1176	Tuesday	235
1209	Tuesday	1169	Wednesday	228
1202	Wednesday	1162	Monday	221

+ 36 = 945 B.C.). For archaeological evidence of early Exodus date, see John J. Bimson's *Redating the Exodus and the Conquest*.

## **B. ANCHOR DATE 2**

### **1422 B.C.-- The First Sabbatical Year**

The Exodus occurred in the year that the Hebrews received the Law at Sinai (Exodus 19:1-- 20:17). The wilderness wanderings lasted for forty years as Moses had predicted:

And your children shall wander in the wilderness forty years, and bear your whoredoms, until your carcasses be wasted in the wilderness. After the number of the days in which ye searched the land, even forty days, each day for a year, shall ye bear your iniquities, even forty years, and ye shall know my breach of promise. Numbers 14:33-34

This was a divine judgment against those who after hearing the spies report, had murmured against Moses, Aaron and the Lord.

Forty years later, the children of Israel came to the plains of Moab where they received the Law for the second time. Deuteronomy 1:3 records this historical event as follows: "And it came to pass in the fortieth year, in the eleventh month, on the first day of the month, that Moses spake unto the children of Israel, according unto all that the Lord had given him in commandment unto them." After the reading of the Law, they were to enter into the Promised Land.

It appears that the year 1422 B.C. (Hebrew reckoning) was the first Sabbatical year; it was instituted the year before the Hebrew conquest of Canaan and occurred again in the seventh year following entrance into Canaan. This reasoning is implied by Leviticus 25:1-5--

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.

Moses further commands that the Law be read once they entered into the land at the end of every seven years, in the solemnity of the year of release, in the Feast of Tabernacles (Deuteronomy 31:10-13). During the original Sabbatical year of 1422 B.C., the law was read on Shebat 1, 1422 B.C., a Saturday (Sabbath). Shebat is the eleventh Hebrew month.

The date 1422 B.C., the first Sabbatical year, is the thirty-ninth year after the Exodus. The fortieth year, 1421 B.C., is 403 years before David fought Shalmaneser II of Assyria in the year that he captured Jerusalem (1018 B.C.). According to the Talmud, there were 833 years from the entrance into the land of Canaan (1421 B.C.) until the destruction of Jerusalem by the Babylonian Nebuchadnezzar (588 B.C.). The Talmud states: "Seventeen jubilee [cycles] did Israel count from the time they entered the Land [of Israel] until they left it."<sup>10</sup>

'Arakin 12 b. (1421 B.C. + 833 = 588 B.C.).

### C. ANCHOR DATE 3

#### 1018 B.C.-- David vs. Shalmaneser II

Both the Septuagint (II Kings 10:15ff.)<sup>11</sup> and Josephus (*Antiquities* VII.vi.3)<sup>12</sup> indicate that King David fought Shalmaneser II the year that he captured Jerusalem. 'Chalamak' in the LXX and 'Chalaman' in Josephus are Greek spellings of the same name referring to King Shalmaneser II of Assyria. The Assyrian Eponym Canon provides information that Shalmaneser died that same year-- 1018 B.C.<sup>13</sup> The Hebrew Bible (I Chronicles 19:16) refers to Shalmaneser, the king of Assyria, beyond the river, *i.e.*, the Euphrates.<sup>14</sup> Both the Assyrian Eponym Canon<sup>15</sup> and the Assyrian King List<sup>16</sup> give Shalmaneser a twelve year reign (1030 B.C.-- 1018 B.C.). These dates of Shalmaneser are based on the shorter chronology of the Assyrian Eponym Canon and are fixed by the solar eclipse of Bur-Sagale on June 15, 763 B.C.

The year 1018 B.C. is very important in another way; for this is the year in which King David captured Jerusalem and made the 'golden city' his capital. The prophet Ezekiel tells of the life and destruction of Jerusalem in a prophetic way (Ezekiel 4:1-8).

He gives the time spans that both Israel and Judah were to be without a sin offering (no altar). The reference to the 390 years that Ezekiel was to bear the iniquity of Israel gives the time span from the destruction of the Samaritan temple by the Assyrians in 723 B.C. to the rebuilding of this temple by Alexander the Great in 333 B.C. (723 B.C. + 390 = 333 B.C.)

The second reference is to the forty years that Ezekiel had to bear the iniquity of Judah. This forty year period covers the time span from the date Jerusalem came under siege by Nebuchadnezzar when God abandoned her in 590 B.C. (Ezekiel 24), until the rebuilding of the altar in 550 B.C., the first year of Cyrus (590 B.C. - 40 = 550 B.C.).

Also, by adding the numbers 390 + 40, one has the total number of 430 years Jerusalem was ruled by the dynasty of David (1018 B.C. + 430 = 588 B.C.). It is believed that the prophet was foretelling Jerusalem's fate after 430 years. The anchor date, 1018 B.C., provides the basis for verifying several additional dates-- 981 B.C., the fourth year of King Solomon when he began construction of the Temple and 945 B.C., the date for the schism which divided the kingdom.

### D. ANCHOR DATE 4

#### 981 B.C.-- The Fourth Year Of Solomon

According to II Samuel 5:4-5, King David reigned over Judah seven years and six months in Hebron.<sup>17</sup> Then he captured Jerusalem from the Jebusites in 1018 B.C. and reigned in Jerusalem for thirty-three years over all Israel and Judah.<sup>18</sup> David's total rule lasted for forty and one half years. He ruled seven and one half years before 1018 B.C. when he captured Jerusalem and thirty-three years later (985 B.C.), he died. The accession year of King Solomon would be 985 B.C. (1018 B.C. + 33 = 985 B.C.) and Solomon's fourth year would be 981 B.C. (985 B.C. + 4 = 981 B.C.). This would place David's reign of forty and one half years (41)

from 1026 B.C. to 985 B.C.

I Kings 6:1 views the fourth year of Solomon to be the year when he began to build the Temple. This year occurred in the four hundred and eightieth year after the children of Israel were come out of the land of Egypt. In other words, Solomon's fourth year fell in the four hundred and eightieth year after the Exodus ( $1461 \text{ B.C.} + 480 = 981 \text{ B.C.}$ ).<sup>19</sup> The year 981 B.C., the fourth year of Solomon, is verified also by the date of the Exodus.

#### **E. ANCHOR DATE 5**

##### **945 B.C.-- The Schism**

King Solomon ruled for forty years: "And the time that Solomon reigned in Jerusalem over all Israel was forty years" (I Kings 11:42). Since he started the Temple construction in his fourth year (I Kings 6:1) this would leave thirty-six years until the division of the kingdom ( $981 \text{ B.C.} + 36 = 945 \text{ B.C.}$ ). A Sabbatical year occurred during the last year of King Solomon's reign in 946 B.C. There are sixty-eight Sabbatical years from 1422 B.C., the first Sabbath year, to 946 B.C., the Sabbatical year of the schism ( $1422 \text{ B.C.} - 946 = 476/7 = 68$ ). Solomon did not observe the requirements of the Sabbatical year, which caused an issue when Rehoboam, Solomon's son, ascended the throne in 945 B.C. (I Kings 12:1-20). Rehoboam's response to the people was: "My father made your yoke heavy, and I will add to your yoke: my father also chastised you with whips, but I will chastise you with scorpions" (I Kings 12:14). Rehoboam's failure to commit himself to the observation of the Mosaic principles of the year of release caused the schism in Israel:

At the end of every seven years thou shalt make a release. And this is the manner of the release: Every creditor that lendeth ought unto his neighbour shall release it; he shall not exact it of his neighbour, or of his brother; because it is called the Lord's release. Of a foreigner thou mayest exact it again: but that which is thine with thy brother thine hand shall release; Save when there shall be no poor among you; for the Lord shall greatly bless thee in the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee for an inheritance to possess it: Only if thou carefully hearken unto the voice of the Lord thy God, to observe to do all these commandments which I command thee this day. For the Lord thy God blesseth thee, as he promised thee: and thou shalt lend unto many nations, but thou shalt not borrow; and thou shalt reign over many nations, but they shall not reign over thee.

If there be among you a poor man of one of thy brethren within any of thy gates in thy land which the Lord thy God giveth thee, thou shalt not harden thine heart, nor shut thine hand from thy poor brother: But thou shalt open thine hand wide unto him, and shalt surely lend him sufficient for his need, in that which he wanteth. Beware that there be not a thought in thy wicked heart, saying, The seventh year, the year of release, is at hand; and thine eye be evil against thy poor brother, and thou givest him nought; and he cry unto the Lord against thee, and it be sin unto thee. Thou shalt surely give him, and thine heart shall not be grieved when thou givest unto him: because that for this thing the Lord thy God shall bless thee in all thy works, and in all that thou puttest thine hand unto. For the poor shall never cease out of the land: therefore I command thee, saying, Thou shalt open thine hand wide unto thy brother, to thy poor, and to thy needy, in thy land.

And if thy brother, an Hebrew man, or an Hebrew woman, be sold unto thee,

and serve thee six years; then in the seventh year thou shalt let him go free from thee. And when thou sendest him out free from thee, thou shalt not let him go away empty: Thou shalt furnish him liberally out of thy flock, and out of thy floor, and out of thy winepress: of that wherewith the Lord thy God hath blessed thee thou shalt give unto him. And thou shalt remember that thou wast a bondman in the land of Egypt, and the Lord thy God redeemed thee: therefore I command thee this thing to-day. Deuteronomy 15:1-15

During Jeroboam's stay in Egypt, he married Ano, the eldest sister of Thekemina, the wife of Shishak, and had a child named Abijah by her (LXX, III Kings 12:24ff). This would require a time period of about two years from the time he was anointed by Ahijah until he returned to become king (I Kings 14:1). Therefore, the date 946 B.C. is astronomically verified by the year 1018 B.C. in which King David captured Jerusalem and defeated Shalmaneser II of Assyria. It is also astronomically verified by the date of the first Sabbatical year-- 1422 B.C.

### F. ANCHOR DATE 6

#### 882 B.C.-- The Great Famine Of King Ahab

The Assyrian ruler, Ashur-nasir-pal, tells in his annals about a severe famine covering much of the Near East. This famine forced his people to go to other lands in search of food. About a year after the famine had ended, his soldiers returned home. The king states that he settled his people in the city of Tushha where he stored barley and straw from the land of Nirbu. This event happened during the king's eponym year--

In the eponym year of my name .... I brought back the enfeebled Assyrians who, because of hunger (and) famine, had gone up to other lands to the land of Shubru. I settled them in the city Tushha. I took over that city myself (and stored therein barley and straw from the land Nirbu.<sup>20</sup>

This famine is referred to by Jesus in Luke 4:25;<sup>21</sup> Josephus records it in *Antiquities* VIII.xiii.2.<sup>22</sup>

The Assyrian Eponym Canon dates the eponymous year of Ashur-nasir-pal to be 882 B.C.<sup>23</sup> This date is also astronomically verified by the solar eclipse of 763 B.C. (Bur-Sagale) and the Assyrian King List. The great famine of three years and six months (I Kings 17:1; 18:1; Luke 4:25) falls within the first part of Ahab's twenty-two year reign (890 B.C.--868 B.C.). The famine occurred during the third through the sixth years (I Kings 18:1) of King Ahab's reign (887, 886, 885, and 884 B.C.). The next year, 883 B.C., a Sabbath year took place, and in 882 B.C., Ashur-nasir-pal was able to return his troops home. The rain had stopped in 887 B.C., and did not start again until 884 B.C. for the fall planting. The spring of 883 B.C. provided the first possible food supply in those three years and six months. After this, in 882 B.C., Ashur-nasir-pal brought his troops home. He came to the Assyrian throne in 884 B.C. at the end of the great famine.

It is interesting to note that a Sabbatical year began at the time when the great famine also came to an end. The Sabbatical year of 883 B.C. is the third year of Jehoshaphat when he sent princes, priests, and Levites to teach in Judah, the Law of the Lord (II Chronicles 17:7-12). This Sabbatical year was a time of

great revival for both kingdoms; for the prophet Elijah in the Northern Kingdom gathered the people of Israel together in the mid-summer of 884 B.C. The prophet challenged them with the question: "How long halt ye between two opinions? if the Lord be God, follow him: but if Baal, then follow him" (I Kings 18:21). The result of this outstanding religious challenge was the remarkable contest between Elijah, Jehovah's prophet and the four hundred and fifty prophets of Baal (I Kings 18:22-40). After that the people of Israel confessed: "The Lord, he is the God; the Lord, he is the God" (I Kings 18:39). With this confession came the sound of the abundance of rain (I Kings 18:41-46). The Sabbatical year was coming and the rain would provide an opportunity for and early fall sowing for the sixth year crop.

#### ILLUSTRATION XIX: THE GREAT FAMINE OF AHAB AND THE ASSYRIANS

Ashur-nasir-	pal	0	1	2	3
Sabbath Years	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	Sabb.Year	Year 1
B.C. Years	886	885	884	883	882
Famine Years	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Rain	Rain
Ahab	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	Year 7	Year 8

The rains were over in July. The forty day journey of Elijah to Mount Horeb and back again would have taken more than eighty days (I Kings 19:1-18), therefore, his confrontation with God would have been in August, and his return to Palestine would have been in October. When Elijah came back to Palestine, he found Elisha, plowing with twelve yoke of oxen (I Kings 19:18-21). This was the preparation of the ground for the fall sowing of the sixth year crop. God had promised to bless them with a double crop when the people confessed Him and were obedient to His Sabbath laws. In the Hebrew agricultural year, the plowing of the fields occurred in the Hebrew month Bul (October - November) and the sowing of the seed occurred in the Hebrew month Kislev (November - December). Thiele's date for Ahab (874 B.C.- 853 B.C.) is fourteen years too late to synchronize with this important chronological record.<sup>24</sup>

#### G. ANCHOR DATE 7

##### 841 B.C.-- Jehu vs. Shalmaneser III

On the basis of the annals of Shalmaneser III of Assyria, it is certain that Shalmaneser in his eighteenth year exacted tribute from Jehu of Israel.<sup>25</sup> The tribute of Jehu is not only mentioned on the Black Obelisk Monument, but on a relief of that monument, Jehu is pictured kneeling before the great Assyrian Monarch. Following Jehu, a group of Israelites are carrying precious metals and other tribute to be presented to the Assyrians.<sup>26</sup>

The Assyrian Eponym Canon for this date reads, "841 Adad-rimani (governor) of ... against Damascus." Thus, there is clear indication of an Assyrian incursion into Syria-Palestine during the year of 841 B.C. This date is also confirmed astronomically by the solar eclipse of Bur-Sagale on June 15, 763 B.C.

Unfortunately, Thiele has assigned 841 B.C. as the accession year of Jehu. This is impossible in light of the Scripture in II Kings 10:31-32. The Lord did not

'begin to cut Israel short' until it was apparent that Jehu 'took no heed to walk in the law of the Lord God of Israel with all his heart.' Nevertheless, the Lord promised Jehu that his children of the fourth generation would sit on the throne of Israel because Jehu did well in executing that which is right in the Lord's eyes and he did unto the house of Ahab according to all that was in the Lord's heart (II Kings 10:30). In light of this Scripture, the tribute of Jehu (his chastisement from Shalmaneser) could not have occurred until the middle of Jehu's reign. For the Lord always gives man a space to repent and change. This is Jehovah's gracious way. When Jehu did not depart from the sins of Jeroboam, which made Israel to sin, then the Bible says, "In those days the Lord began to cut Israel short" (II Kings 10:31-32). It is believed that the ultimate step in cutting Israel short was Jehu's tribute to Shalmaneser.

The computer calendar places Jehu's tribute in his fifteenth year of reign; his total reign lasted for twenty-seven years (857 B.C. — 830 B.C.). It is fortunate for Biblical chronology that Jehu was an efficient butcher; by killing both Jehoram of Israel and Ahaziah of Judah at the same time (856 B.C.), he has provided the chronologist with a firm synchronization for Israelite-Judahite chronology. Therefore, the Biblical chronologist has a fixed period of eighty-nine years from the division of the kingdom (945 B.C.) unto the assassination of Jehoram and Ahaziah by Jehu (856 B.C.) within which to fit the regnal years of the kings of Israel and Judah.

## H. ANCHOR DATE 8

### 856 B.C.-- Jehu's Reign Begins

Since Jehu's tribute to Shalmaneser occurred in 841 B.C., the eighteenth year of Shalmaneser, fifteen years prior to this date would give one the year that Jehu killed both Jehoram and Ahaziah and ascended the throne of Israel.<sup>27</sup> The year 856 B.C. is fifteen years prior to 841 B.C. (856 B.C. + 15 = 841 B.C.). Therefore, the time element for the period from 945 B.C., the division of the kingdom, to 856 B.C.-- a period of eighty-nine years must be equal for both kingdoms because of Jehu's assassination of both Hebrew monarchs.

### ILLUSTRATION XX: CHRONOLOGY FROM SCHISM TO JEHU

Israel		Judah	
Jeroboam	22 — 2 = 20	Rehoboam	17 — 1 = 16
Nadab	2 — 1 = 1		
Baasha	24 — 1 = 23	Abijam	3 — 1 = 2
Elah	2 — 1 = 1		
Zimri	(7 days)	Asa	(+2) 43 — 1 = 42
Tibni	(dual reign)		
Omri	12 — 1 = 11	Jehoshaphat	(—1) 24 — 1 = 23
Ahab	22 — 1 = 21		
Ahaziah	2 — 1 = 1	Jehoram	(—1) 7 — 1 = 6
Jehoram	12 — 1 = 11	Ahaziah	1 — 1 = 0
Totals	98 — 9 = 89		95 — 6 = 89

As can be seen, the above Illustration for the kings of Israel gives ninety-eight years for the total reigns of Jeroboam to Jehu. Since Hebrew chronology counts the accession year as year one when cross referencing, one is forced to subtract one year from each king's reign. Jeroboam I was appointed king two years before Solomon's death (I Kings 11:29-40); so two years must be subtracted from Jeroboam's reign.<sup>28</sup> Notice that Zimri's reign of seven days would not be counted for it is absorbed in the total calculation. Similarly, Tibni's dual reign with Omri is not counted for it is overlapping time with Omri. Therefore, seven years are subtracted from the ninety-eight year total (a year for Nadab, Baasha, Elah, Omri, Ahab, Ahaziah, and Jehoram); in addition to this, two more years must be subtracted for the period between Jeroboam's appointment by Ahijah, the Shilonite, and his accession to the throne of the Northern Kingdom ( $98 - 7 - 2 = 89$  years for the total reigns of the kings of Israel).

Illustration XX shows also a time element of ninety-five years for the total period of the reigns of the kings of Judah. Simple subtraction of one year from the reign of each of the six kings (Rehoboam, Abijam, Asa, Jehoshaphat, Jehoram and Ahaziah), because of counting the accession year as year one, would result in eighty-nine years for the total reigns of the kings of Judah ( $95 - 6 = 89$  years for the total reigns of the kings of Judah).

## I. ANCHOR DATE 9

### 763 B.C.-- The Solar Eclipse Of Assyria And Jonah

On June 15, 763 B.C., (Julian Calendar)<sup>29</sup> the Assyrians recorded a solar eclipse. The notation of the event has been preserved in the Assyrian Eponym Canon during the reign of the Assyrian monarch, Ashur-dan III. The Assyrian Eponym List reads as follows: "763 Bur(ishdi)-Sagale (governor) of Guzana revolt in city of Ashur. In the month of *Simanu* an eclipse of the sun took place."<sup>30</sup> This eclipse fixes all other dates of the Assyrian Eponym Canon for they are verified by astronomy. It establishes with absolute certainty the list of eponyms by dead reckoning from 892 B.C. to 648 B.C., a large portion of the time period connected with the chronology of the Hebrew kings. The solar eclipse of Bur-Sagale also supports the Assyrian King List so that one can assess related information during the period of the Hebrew kings.

The Assyrians show a steady harassment of Palestine from 773 B.C. through 765 B.C. Then in 763 B.C. the eclipse is followed by internal problems in Assyria until 758 B.C. and peace is in the land for three years. They returned again to Palestine in 755 B.C. This ten year period of rest for Israel (765 B.C. - 755 B.C.) is significant in that the book of Jonah tells the reader that the Ninevites and their king repented.<sup>31</sup> The time of the year in which Jonah went to Nineveh was summer; for the sun was very hot (Jonah 4:8).<sup>32</sup> It is likely that the prophet preached as the sun eclipsed, causing the sun worshipping Assyrians to consider Jonah seriously. The eclipse gives a reason for their repentance.

George Rawlinson points out the importance of the Sun-god to the Assyrian mind--

San or Sansi, [Shamash] the sun-god ... is 'the supreme ruler who casts a

favorable eye on expeditions,' 'the vanquisher of the king's enemies,' 'the breaker-up of opposition.' He 'casts his motive influence' over the monarchs, and causes them to 'assemble their chariots and warriors'-- he goes forth with their armies, and enables them to extend their dominions-- he chases their enemies before them, causes opposition to cease, and brings them back with victory to their own countries. Besides this, he helps them to sway the sceptre of power, and to rule over their subjects with authority. It seems that, from observing the manifest agency of the material sun in stimulating all the functions of nature, the Chaldeans came to the conclusion that the sun-god exacted a similar influence on the minds of men, and was the great motive agent in human history.<sup>33</sup>

In the light of this information, a solar eclipse would have tremendous influence on the thinking of the Assyrians. If a solar eclipse coincided with the message of Jonah, it certainly could have brought the Assyrians to their knees and would have had a direct bearing on any military expeditions.

Also, Jonah is mentioned as the prophet who told Jeroboam II to recover the land which had been lost to the Syrians:

He (Jeroboam II) restored the coast of Israel from the entering of Hamath unto the sea of the plain, according to the word of the Lord God of Israel, which he spoke by the hand of his servant Jonah, the son of Amittai, the prophet, which was of Gath-hepher. ... Now the rest of the acts of Jeroboam, and all that he did, and his might, how he warred, and how he recovered Damascus, and Hamath, which belonged to Judah, for Israel, are they not written in the book of the Chronicles of the kings of Israel? II Kings 14:25,28

Jonah not only gave a divine message to Nineveh that the Assyrians had forty days to repent, but also it appears that he gave a similar message to Samaria.

Josephus relates how Jonah foretold that Jeroboam II should reconquer Israel's lost territory--

Now one Jonah, a prophet, foretold to him that he should make war with the Syrians, and conquer their army, and enlarge the bounds of his kingdom on the northern parts, to the city Hamath, and on the southern, to the lake Asphaltitis; for the bounds of the Canaanites originally were these, as Joshua their general had determined them. So Jeroboam made an expedition against the Syrians, and overran all their country, as Jonah had foretold. *Antiquities* IX.x.1.

The ministry of Jonah to Nineveh, the solar eclipse, and the halting of military incursions into Syro-Palestine, certainly provided Jeroboam II an opportunity to reclaim lost territory.

It is a known fact that prophets often used a day for a year as they related their predictions. It is interesting to note that exactly forty years after Jonah had spoken to Nineveh and to Samaria that Samaria fell to the Assyrian army of Shalmaneser V (763 B.C. + 40 = 723 B.C.).<sup>34</sup>

Amos predicted a future eclipse: "And it shall come to pass in that day, saith the Lord God, that I will cause the sun to go down at noon, and I will darken the earth in the clear day" (Amos 8:9). Amos is referring to this solar eclipse of recent memory, but also using it in a predictive way as a message of doom to Israel.<sup>35</sup>

## J. ANCHOR DATE 10

### 759 B.C.-- The Great Earthquake Of Uzziah And Jotham

Flavius Josephus gives the Biblical account of how King Uzziah of Judah attempted to offer incense in the Temple. His acts resulted in both leprosy for the king of Judah and the great earthquake that rocked the Temple as well as a large portion of the Near East. The following is Josephus' account--

While Uzziah was in this state, and making preparations [for futurity,] he was corrupted in his mind by pride, and became insolent, and this on account of that abundance which he had of things that will soon perish, and despised that power which is of eternal duration, (which consisted in piety towards God, and in the observation of his laws;) so he fell by the occasion of the good success of his affairs, and was carried headlong into those sins of his father, which the splendour of that prosperity he enjoyed, and the glorious actions he had done, led him into, while he was not able to govern himself well about them. 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 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 meantime, 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; and before the city, at the place called Eroge, half the mountain broke off from the rest on the west, and rolled itself four furlongs, and stood still at the east mountain, till the roads, as well as the king's gardens, were spoiled by the obstruction. Now, as soon as the priests saw that the king's face was infected with leprosy, they told him of the calamity he was under, and commanded that he should go out of the city as a polluted person. ... So he abode out of the city for some time, and lived a private life, while his son Jotham took the government. *Antiquities* IX.x.4.

The Biblical account in II Chronicles 26:16-21 only records Uzziah's leprosy, but not the earthquake as Josephus does.

The great earthquake of Uzziah at Jerusalem is referred to in the Bible by the prophet Zechariah. In a predictive sense, Zechariah tells of a tremendous earthquake which will occur when the Lord puts his feet on the Mount of Olives. In a historical sense, the prophet states that the reaction of the people will not be unlike the reaction of the people during the great earthquake in the days of Uzziah: And ye shall flee to the valley of the mountains; for the valley of the mountains shall reach unto Azal: yea, ye shall flee, like as ye fled from before the earthquake in the days of Uzziah king of Judah: and the Lord my God shall come, and all the saints with thee' (Zechariah 14:5). Not only does Zechariah mention the great earthquake of Uzziah, but also it is recalled by the prophet Amos: "The words of Amos, who was among the herdmen of Tekoa, which he saw concerning Israel in the days of Uzziah king of Judah, and in the days of Jeroboam the son of Joash king of Israel, two years before the earthquake" (Amos 1:1).

Actually, Amos dates his prophecy by the great earthquake of Uzziah. This event must have covered a large portion of the Near East with death, destruction,

and resulting disease. The Assyrians have noted the catastrophe in the Assyrian Eponym Canon. The earthquake is recorded as follows: "759 Pan-assur-lamur (governor) of Arbailu revolt in the city of Guzana. A plague."<sup>36</sup> It is common knowledge that plague and disease are the results of earthquakes which contaminate the water supplies.

This earthquake date is confirmed astronomically by the solar eclipse of Bur-Sagale in 763 B.C. which took place four years prior to the earthquake of Uzziah.

## K. ANCHOR DATE 11

### 723 B.C.-- The Fall Of Samaria

The Bible informs the reader that Shalmaneser V laid siege to Samaria for three years, from the fourth year of Hezekiah until the sixth year of Hezekiah. The Assyrian Eponym Canon implies an incursion against Samaria for the years 725, 724 and 723 B.C. The military activity for these years only contains the word 'against', but the word 'Samaria' has been suggested by scholars for this would agree with the text of II Kings 18:9-10--

And it came to pass in the fourth year of king Hezekiah, which was the seventh year of Hoshea son of Elah king of Israel, that Shalmaneser king of Assyria came up against Samaria and besieged it. And at the end of the three years they took it: even in the sixth year of Hezekiah, that is the ninth year of Hoshea king of Israel, Samaria was taken.

The annals of Sargon II and the Babylonian Chronicles (Chronicle 1.i.27-31) certify this date for the Assyrian siege of Samaria.

The lack of obedience by the people of both Israel and Judah to observe the Sabbatical years is the Biblical reason given for their deportation. This warning was spoken by the Lord through Moses before the people entered into the Promised Land--

And if ye walk contrary to me, ... [then] I will scatter you among the heathen, and will draw out a sword after you: and your land shall be desolate, and your cities waste. Then shall the land enjoy her sabbaths as long as it lieth desolate, and ye be in your enemies' land; even then shall the land rest, and enjoy her sabbaths. As long as it lieth desolate it shall rest; because it did not rest in your sabbaths, when ye dwelt upon it. Leviticus 26:21, 33-35; compare II Chronicles 36:20-21, Jeremiah 25:8-11

The Talmud also gives the non-observance of Sabbatical years as a reason for the exile--

As a punishment for incest, idolatry, and non-observance of the years of release and jubilee exile comes to the world, they [the Jews] are exiled, and others come and dwell in their place.... Further, in reference to release and jubilee years it is written, *Then shall the land enjoy her sabbaths, as long as it lieth desolate, and ye be in your enemies' land* etc.; and it is written, *As long as it lieth desolate it shall have rest.*<sup>37</sup>

The last Sabbatical year for the kingdom of Israel was 722 B.C. At long last

the Lord's land would enjoy her rest after Sargon deported the people in 722 B.C.<sup>38</sup> The Sabbatical year before the schism that divided Israel and Judah was in 946 B.C. From 946 B.C. to 722 B.C., thirty-two Sabbatical years occurred ( $946 - 722 = 224/7 = 32$  Sabbatical years). From the first Sabbatical year (1422 B.C.), the year before the entrance in Canaan, to the year after the fall of Samaria, there were exactly one hundred Sabbath years ( $1422 - 722 = 700/7 = 100$ ).

The time element from the assassination of Jehoram of Israel and Ahaziah of Judah by Jehu (856 B.C.) to the fall of Samaria, the sixth year of Hezekiah (723 B.C.) must be equal for both kingdoms. This is a period of 133 years ( $856 - 723 = 133$  years). Illustration XXI demonstrates that this time span is equal for both the kingdoms of Israel and Judah.

# ILLUSTRATION XXI: CHRONOLOGY FROM JEHU TO THE FALL OF SAMARIA

<u>Israel</u>		<u>Judah</u>	
Jehu	$27 - 1 = 26$	Athaliah	$7 - 1 = 6$
Jehoahaz	$17 - 1 = 16$		
Joash	$16 - 1 = 15$	Jehoash	$40 - 1 = 39$
Jeroboam	$40 - 1 = 39$		
Zechariah	(.5)	Amaziah	$29 - 3 = 26$
Shallum	(.1)		
Menahem	$10 - 1 = 9$	Uzziah	$52 - 15 = 37$
Pekahiah	$2 - 1 = 1$		
Pekah	$20 - 1 = 19$	Jotham	$16 - 11 = 5$
Hoshea	$9 - 1 = 8$		
		Ahaz	$16 - 1 = 15$
		Hezekiah	$6 - 1 = 5$
Totals	$141 - 8 = 133$		$166 - 33 = 133$

Among the kings of Israel, Zechariah and Shallum, ruled only for a few days; therefore, their rules are not counted in the 141 total years. One year is subtracted from the reigns of eight Israelite Kings: Jehu, Jehoahaz, Joash, Jeroboam, Menahem, Pekahiah, Pekah and Hoshea ( $141 - 8 = 133$  years). Similarly, the total years of reign for the kings of Judah is 166 years. One year is subtracted from regnal years of Athaliah, Jehoash, Ahaz and Hezekiah; for the three coregencies of this period in Judah, three years are subtracted from the regency of Amaziah, fifteen from Uzziah and eleven from Jotham ( $166 - 4 + 3 + - 15 + - 11 = 133$  years). Thus, for this period in both kingdoms-- from Jehu's purge of both thrones (856 B.C.) to the fall of Samaria (723 B.C.) the time span is equal ( $856 - 723 = 133$  years).

Ezekiel's prophecy of his fourth chapter indicates that 390 years after Samaria's destruction, another temple would be built on Mount Gerizzim. The prophet had to lay on his side for a sin offering for Israel a day for a year, that is, for 390 days (Ezekiel 4:4-5). The new temple was permitted to be built by Alexander the Great in 333 B.C. according to Josephus *Antiquities* XI.viii.4. (723 B.C. + 390 = 333 B.C.). This verifies 723 B.C. as the accurate date for the fall of

Samaria.

### The Length Of The Northern Kingdom (Israel)-- 222 Years

Dead reckoning for the kingdom of Israel results in a destruction of 723 B.C. The length of regnal years from the schism to Jehu's purge is eighty-nine years and the length of regnal years from Jehu's purge to the fall of Samaria is 133 years. This data from the Hebrew King List gives a total time span for Israel in the Northern Kingdom of 222 years ( $89 + 133 = 222$  years). This mathematical information confirms the 723 B.C. fall of Samaria to the Assyrians ( $945 \text{ B.C.} - 222 = 723 \text{ B.C.}$ ). The date is fixed by a Jubilee year (715 B.C.) and a lunar eclipse (721 B.C.) recorded by the Babylonians. It is also fixed by dead reckoning of the Babylonian kings and the records of the Babylonians.

## L. ANCHOR DATE 12

### 715 B.C.-- The Fourteenth Year of Hezekiah

The sixth year of King Hezekiah of Judah, parallel to the ninth year of Hoshea of Israel, is the year (723 B.C.). Then Israel's capital city, Samaria, fell to the Assyrian army of Shalmaneser V (II Kings 18:9-10).<sup>39</sup> Therefore, the fourteenth year of Hezekiah in which Sennacherib demanded the unconditional surrender of Jerusalem is eight years after the fall of Samaria ( $723 \text{ B.C.} + 8 = 715 \text{ B.C.}$ ). Biblical data makes this perfectly clear (II Kings 18:13ff.).

The year 715 B.C. was a Jubilee year. This fact is confirmed by the sign that Isaiah gave to King Hezekiah during the Assyrian quest for Jerusalem: "And this shall be a sign unto thee, Ye shall eat this year such things as grow of themselves, and in the second year that which springeth of the same; and in the third year sow ye, and reap, and plant vineyards, and eat the fruits thereof" (II Kings 19:29; Isaiah 37:30; cf., Leviticus 25:11-12).

It appears that the prophet is illustrating preset conditions and predicting a 'God ordained' Jubilee. The sixth year crop had not been planted because of the war, the seventh year crop was not to be planted, and the eighth year crop was to be planted and reaped after the Jubilee year had come to an end. Illustration XXII shows the details of the event.

### ILLUSTRATION XXII: THE JUBILEE YEAR OF HEZEKIAH

Sabbath Yrs.	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	Jub. Year	Year 8
B.C. Yrs.	718	717	716	715	714
Hezekiah's	Year 11	Year 12	Year 13	Year 14	Year 15
Sargon's	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	Year 7	Year 8

The siege against Jerusalem during Hezekiah's fourteenth year must be identified with the seventh year of Sargon II in the Assyrian annals. At this time, Sennacherib was co-regent in Assyria with Sargon. He claims to have taken tribute

from Egypt in his seventh year:

In my seventh year of reign, ... From Pir'u, (Pharaoh), king of Egypt, Samsi, queen of Arabia, It'amra, the Sabea, the kings of the seacoast and the desert, I received gold, products of the mountain, precious stones, ivory, seed of the maple(?), all kinds of herbs, horses, and camels, as their tribute.<sup>40</sup>

The Biblical account gives the information that Tirhakah, the Ethiopian Pharaoh, was coming to fight against the King of Assyria and to offer aid to the ravaged land of Judah (II Kings 19:9; Isaiah 37:9). The tribute would correspond with the encounter of Sennacherib and Tirhakah.

The Prism A Inscription, which is not dated, certainly must come from Sargon's seventh year because of the reference to Pir'u, king of Egypt. The inscription also makes reference to the kings of Philistia, Judah, Edom and Moab--

... To the kings of the lands of Piliste (Philistia), laudi (Judah), Edom, Moab, who dwell by the sea, payers of tribute [and] tax to Assur, my lord, (they sent) numberless inflammatory and disdainful (messages) to set them at enmity with me, to Pir'u, king of Egypt, a prince who could not save them, they sent their presents (bribes) and attempted to gain him as an ally.<sup>41</sup>

During Hezekiah's fourteenth year, as the Assyrian host was ravaging the fenced cities of Judah, Hezekiah paid a heavy tribute to the king of Assyria. The Bible affirms that "the king of Assyria appointed unto Hezekiah king of Judah three hundred talents of silver and thirty talents of gold" (II Kings 18:14). The tribute which Sargon mentions in his annals had to occur during his seventh year for this event is referred to by the author of the book of Kings. The tribute was exacted through Sargon's son, Sennacherib who ruled from Nineveh, during Hezekiah's fourteenth year. Sargon, in the Nimrud Inscription boasted that he was the "subduer of the land of laudu (Judah), which lies far away."<sup>42</sup> It appears that Sargon could only have made this claim during his seventh year through the activity of his Tartan, Sennacherib.<sup>43</sup>

Since the above event is prior to Tirhakah's accession, the conclusion is that Shabaka sent his nephew in command of the Egyptian and Ethiopian forces against the Assyrians. Notice that while the Assyrian document calls Pir'u, the king of Egypt, he is also called a 'prince'. Tirhakah (Pir'u) was a young man at this time but would soon share a co-regency and finally become king. Notice that at this point, the Bible also refers to him as king of Ethiopia (II Kings 19:9). The pharaohs of Egypt during this time were of Ethiopian origin. The use of the word 'king' is an anachronism ascribing to Tirhakah the position that he subsequently occupied.

Also, Sargon speaks of resettling Samaria in his seventh year--

In my seventh year of reign, .... The tribes of Tamud, Ibadid, Marsimanu and Haiapa, distant Arabs, who inhabit the desert, who know neither high nor low official (governors nor superintendents), and who had not brought their tribute to any king,-- with the weapon of Assur, my lord, I struck them down, the remnant of them I deported and settled them in Samaria.<sup>44</sup>

It is certain that Sargon's account of the tribute of Pharaoh, Judah, and the

resettling of Samaria provide evidence of the Assyrian military in the area of Jerusalem in 715 B.C. While it appears that Sargon, himself, was busy conducting a campaign far to the north and was not directly in the area of Palestine, his second in command, the Tartan Sennacherib, was certainly in the area. For he is mentioned in the Biblical account (II Kings 18:13-- 19:37; Isaiah 36:1-- 37:38). The Hebrew text relates that Sennacherib came against the fenced cities of Judah including Lachish, Libnah and Jerusalem (II Kings 18;13-16). The text also speaks of Tirhakah, king of Ethiopia, coming to fight against Sennacherib (II Kings 19:9) and to help Hezekiah as the annals of Sargon would indicate.

In II Kings 19:17, Hezekiah refers to the 'kings' of Assyria; this supports the fact that Sennacherib was a co-regent with Sargon during the fourteenth year of Hezekiah (715 B.C.).

It is not at all surprising that Assyrian documents contain no evidence of the decimation of Sargon's Palestinian contingent under the command of Sennacherib as is recorded in the Biblical text (II Kings 19:35). During Sennacherib's incursion against Jerusalem in Sargon's seventh year, divine intervention left Jerusalem unsubdued and the Assyrian host dead. As discussed in chapter five, all evidence makes it clear that the Biblical account of Sennacherib's invasion against Jerusalem in the fourteenth year of Hezekiah (715 B.C.) and Sennacherib's military siege in his third year (702 B.C.) against Jerusalem as recorded in the annals of Sennacherib are two separate historical events.

## M. ANCHOR DATE 13

### 621 B.C.-- The Sixth Year Of Nabopolassar

The year 621 B.C. has special significance; for the Egyptian astronomer, Claudius Ptolemaeus, indicates a lunar eclipse in this year. In his *The Almagest*, he gives the following notation:

For in the year 5 of Nabopolassar (which is the year 127 of Nabonassar, Egyptianwise Athyr 27-28 at the end of the eleventh hour) the moon began to be eclipsed in Babylon; and the greatest extent of the eclipse was  $\frac{1}{4}$  of the diameter from the south. Since, then, the beginning of the eclipse took place 5 seasonal hours after midnight, and the middle very nearly 6 hours after midnight which in Babylon amounted to  $5 + \frac{1}{2} + \frac{1}{3}$  equatorial hours because of the sun's true position being  $27^{\circ} 3'$  within the Ram, therefore it is clear that the middle of the eclipse, when the greatest part of the diameter fell within the shadow, took place in Babylon  $5 + \frac{1}{2} + \frac{1}{3}$  equatorial hours after midnight, but in Alexandria only 5 hours after. And the total time from the epoch amounts to 126 Egyptian years, 86 days, and 17 equatorial hours simply considered, but in terms of mean solar days  $16 + \frac{1}{2} + \frac{1}{4}$  equatorial hours. The moon's mean longitudinal passage was thus  $25^{\circ} 32'$  within the Balance, and its true position  $27^{\circ} 5'$ ; also it was  $340^{\circ} 7'$  from the epicycle's apogee and  $80^{\circ} 40'$  from the northern limit of the oblique circle. And it is evident that, when the moon's centre (the moon now being near its greatest distance) is  $9 \frac{1}{3}^{\circ}$  along the oblique circle from the nodes, and when the shadow's centre lies on the great circle drawn through the moon at right angles to the oblique circle in which position the greatest obscurations take place, then a quarter of the diameter falls within the shadow.<sup>45</sup>

This is Ptolemy's account of the lunar eclipse which occurred in Babylon on April

15, 621 B.C. (Gregorian calendar).<sup>46</sup>

Ptolemy placed the fifth year of Nabopolassar to coincide with the lunar eclipse. This was year 127 of the Nabonassar Era. Ptolemy used the so-called Era of Nabonassar for his dating of lunar eclipses. The era began on Thoth 1, mid-day, the year one of the reign of Nabonassar in 747 B.C. (historical way).

However, Ptolemy's calculations of the length of the reigns of several kings differs from those found in archaeological documents (The Babylonian King List A The Babylonian Chronicles and The Uruk King List) found within the last 150 years. As shown in chapter eight, the computer calendar has demonstrated that Ptolemy has one extra year for his chronology of the kings associated with the Nabonassar Era from the first year of Nabonassar unto the eighteenth year of Nebuchadnezzar. The problem is essentially with Esarhaddon. Ptolemy assigns him thirteen years while the Babylonian Chronicles in three separate references only accredit him with twelve years of reign.<sup>47</sup> Therefore, this proven factor would put the lunar eclipse in the sixth year of Nabopolassar rather than his fifth year.

The anchor date of 621 B.C., the sixth of Nabopolassar, establishes the reigns of Nabopolassar and his son, Nebuchadnezzar. This date would place the accession year of Nebuchadnezzar in 606 B.C. for Nabopolassar reigned for a total of twenty-one years ( $621 \text{ B.C.} + 15 = 606 \text{ B.C.}$ ). This date also places the eighteenth year of Nebuchadnezzar (Babylonian reckoning) in 588 B.C., the date in which he destroyed Jerusalem ( $621 \text{ B.C.} + 15 + 18 = 588 \text{ B.C.}$ ). The anchor date of 621 B.C. provides fixed dates for the remaining rulers of Babylon and for any Hebrew rulers with whom precise contacts with Babylon took place.

## **N. ANCHOR DATE 14**

### **610 B.C.-- The Death Of Josiah**

Upon hearing of the death of King Josiah, the Bible records that the prophet Jeremiah "lamented for Josiah" (II Chronicles 35:25). Josiah was a great king who began 'to seek after the God of David his father' in his eighth year (II Chronicles 34:3). In his eighteenth year of reign while the Temple was being restored (624 B.C.), the book of the Law was rediscovered (II Chronicles 34:14-33). This occurred in a Sabbatical year and the reading of the Law brought reform and revival throughout the land of Judah. It was the forty-sixth Sabbatical year since the division of the kingdom [ $946 \text{ B.C.} + 322 (46 \times 7) = 624 \text{ B.C.}$ ].

One of the results of the reading of the Law was the great Passover which was celebrated (II Chronicles 35:1-17). The chronicler sums up the story of the Passover by the following statement-- "And there was no passover like to that kept in Israel from the days of Samuel the prophet; neither did all the kings of Israel keep such a passover as Josiah kept, and the priests, and the Levites, and all Judah and Israel that were present, and the inhabitants of Jerusalem" (II Chronicles 35:18). All of this contributed to the greatness of Josiah. The death of Josiah is told in II Kings 23:29--

In his days Pharaoh-nechoh king of Egypt went up against the king of Assyria to the river Euphrates: and king Josiah went against him; and he slew him at Megiddo, when he had seen him. And his servants carried him in a chariot dead from

## Chapter X - Anchor Dates Compared: Computer vs. Thiele

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Megiddo, and brought him to Jerusalem, and buried him in his own sepulchre.  
II Kings 23:29-30

The chronicler has added more information to the accounts--

After all this, when Josiah had prepared the temple, Necho king of Egypt came up to fight against Carchemish by Euphrates: and Josiah went out against him. But he sent ambassadors to him, saying, What have I to do with thee, thou king of Judah? I come not against thee this day, but against the house wherewith I have war: for God commanded me to make haste: forbear thee from meddling with God, who is with me, that he destroy thee not. Nevertheless Josiah would not turn his face from him, but disguised himself, that he might fight with him, and hearkened not unto the words of Necho from the mouth of God, and came to fight in the valley of Megiddo. And the archers shot at king Josiah; and the king said to his servants, Have me away; for I am sore wounded. His servants therefore took him out of that chariot, and put him in the second chariot that he had; and they brought him to Jerusalem, and he died, and was buried in one of the sepulchres of his fathers. And all Judah and Jerusalem mourned for Josiah. II Chronicles 35:20-24

It appears from Necho's statement through his ambassadors to Josiah that Necho and Assyria had already been at war with the Babylonian army-- "I come not against thee this day, but against the house wherewith I have war" (II Chronicles 35:21b). The record of the previous year's war (611 B.C.) the sixteenth year of Nabopolassar, is given in the Babylonian Chronicles (Chronicle 3:58-65). Both Egypt and Assyria had combined forces to stop the westward advancement of the Babylonian army under the direction of King Nabopolassar, the king of Akkad--

- 58 The sixteenth year: In the month Iyyar the king of Akkad mustered his army and marched to Assyria. From [the month ...] until the month Marchesvan
- 59 he marched about victoriously in Assyria. In the month Marchesvan the Ummanmanda, [who] had come [to help] the king of Akkad,
- 60 put their armies together and
- 61 marched
- 60 to Haran [against Ashur-uballit (II) who had ascended the throne in Assyria.
- 61f. Fear of the enemy overcame Ashur-uballit (II) and the army of Eg[yp]t which] had come [to help him] and they aban[doned] the city [...] they crossed.
- 63 The king of Akkad reached Harran and [...] he captured the city.
- 64 He carried off the vast booty of the city and the temple. In the month Adar the kings of Akkad left their [...]
- 65 He went home. The Umman-manda, who had come to help the king of Akkad, withdrew.<sup>48</sup>

The year 610 B.C. is the year in which King Josiah tried to stop King Necho at Meggido. The chronicler states that the Pharaoh is on his way to Carchemish (II Chronicles 35:20). The following account from the Babylonian Chronicles (Chronicle 3:66-75) relates how Necho of Egypt and Ashur-uballit of Assyria tried to re-capture the city of Harran, a few miles east of Carchemish--

## Chapter X - Anchor Dates Compared: Computer vs. Thiele

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- 66 The seventeenth year: In the month Tammuz Ashur-uballit (II), king of Assyria, the large army of Egypt [...]
- 67 crossed the river (Euphrates) and marched against Harran to conquer (it) [...] they [capture]d (it).
- 68 They defeated the garrison which the king of Akkad had stationed inside. When they had defeated (it) they encamped against Harran.
- 69 Until the month Elul they did battle against the city but achieved nothing. (However) they did not withdraw.
- 70 The king of Akkad went to help his army and ... [...] he went up [to] Izalla and
- 71 the numerous cities in the mountains ... [...] he set fire to their [...]
- 72 At that time the army of [...]
- 73 [ma]rched
- 72 as far as the district of Urartu.
- 73 In the land ... [...] they plundered their [...]
- 74 The garrison which the king of [...] had stationed in it set] out.
- 75 They went up to [...] The king of Akkad went home.<sup>49</sup>

It is during the second attempt of King Necho of Egypt together with King Ashur-uballit of Assyria to stop the westward advancement of the Babylonians that Josiah tries to stop the Egyptian forces at Meggido. During his second trip through Palestine, King Necho of Egypt killed Josiah in the seventeenth year of the Babylonian monarch, Nabopolassar (610 B.C.).

Upon the death of Josiah, the people of the land anointed Jehoahaz, the son of Josiah, king of Judah. The historical events that follow are summarized by the chronicler:

Then the people of the land took Jehoahaz the son of Josiah, and made him king in his father's stead in Jerusalem. Jehoahaz was twenty and three years old when he began to reign, and he reigned three months in Jerusalem. And the king of Egypt put him down at Jerusalem, and condemned the land in a hundred talents of silver and a talent of gold. And the king of Egypt made Eliakim his brother king over Judah and Jerusalem, and turned his name to Jehoikim. And Necho took Jehoahaz his brother, and carried him to Egypt. II Chronicles 36:1-4

One can certainly see how these events would coincide with the events recorded in the Babylonian Chronicles for the seventeenth year of Nabopolassar. Notice in the Babylonian account that the battle for Harran lasted for three months from Tammuz (June-July) to Elul (August-September). After the battle for the city of Harran, Pharaoh-necho had Jehoahaz placed in bonds and brought to Riblah in the land of Hamath. This additional information is recorded in II Kings 23:33-- "And Pharaoh-nechoh put him in bands at Riblah in the land of Hamath, that he might not reign in Jerusalem; and put the land to a tribute of a hundred talents of silver, and a talent of gold." Riblah in the land of Hamath is midway between Jerusalem and Harran. When the king of Akkad came to help his army at Harran, it appears that the Egyptian and Assyrian armies may have marched to 'the district of Urartu' (Chronicle 3:72-73). This is possibly Ras Shamra or Ugarit. A few miles south of this location would be 'Riblah in the land of Hamath' as mentioned in

the Bible. To this location Jehoahaz was brought after only three months of rule. 'Urartu' may also refer to the area or locale of Mount Ararat (Genesis 8:4). Later he was taken to Egypt where he died (II Kings 23:33-34).

The seventeenth year of Nabopolassar, the year 610 B.C., is the death year of Josiah; this year contains the three month rule of Jehoahaz, and it is the accession year of Jehoiakim. This is fixed as the seventeenth year of Nabopolassar by the lunar eclipse of 621 B.C. which happened in Nabopolassar's sixth year (621 B.C. + 11 = 610 B.C.). This date is synchronized by the Babylonian Chronicles. Since Nabopolassar's reign lasted for twenty-one years-- four years after Josiah in 610 B.C.-- the accession year of Nebuchadnezzar is 606 B.C. (610 B.C. + 4 = 606 B.C.).

## O. ANCHOR DATE 15

### 599 B.C.-- The Seventh Year Of Nebuchadnezzar

The conquest of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar II, the son of Nabopolassar, according to the Babylonian Chronicles happened in Nebuchadnezzar's seventh year. In Chronicle 5. Reverse. 5-13, Nebuchadnezzar is called 'the king of Akkad'. Here is a summary of the regnal activities for years four through seven--

- 5 The fourth year: The king of Akkad mustered his army and marched to Hattu. [He marched about victoriously] in Hattu.
- 6 In the month Kislev he took his army's lead and marched to Egypt. (When) the king of Egypt heard (the news) he m[ustered] his army.
- 7 They fought one another in the battlefield and both sides suffered severe losses (*lit.* they inflicted a major defeat upon one another). The king of Akkad and his army turned and [went back] to Babylon.
- 8 The fifth year: The king of Akkad stayed home (and) refitted his numerous horses and chariotry.
- 9 The sixth year: In the month Kislev the king of Akkad mustered his army and marched to Hattu. He dispatched his army from Hattu and
- 10 they went off to the desert. They plundered extensively the possessions, animals, and gods of the numerous Arabs. In the month Adar the king went home.
- 11 The seventh year: In the month Kislev the king of Akkad mustered his army and marched to Hattu.
- 12 He encamped against the city of Judah and on the second day of the month Adar he captured the city (and) seized (its) king.
- 13 A king of his own choice he appointed in the city (and) taking the vast tribute he brought it into Babylon.<sup>50</sup>

During the fourth year of Nebuchadnezzar (602 B.C.), he marched victoriously in Hattu. This would be the eighth year of Jehoiakim. At this time, Jehoiakim became the servant of Nebuchadnezzar. This is also recorded in the Bible: "In his days Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came up, and Jehoiakim became his servant three years: then he turned and rebelled against him" (II Kings 24:1).

No doubt, Jehoiakim paid tribute to Nebuchadnezzar for those three years

(605 B.C.- 603 B.C.). The accession year of Nebuchadnezzar is equal to the fourth year of Jehoiakim (*cf.*, Jeremiah 25:1). Then Nebuchadnezzar marched to Egypt and fought with the Egyptian army. As a result of this battle, the Bible states: "And the king of Egypt came not again any more out of his land: for the king of Babylon had taken from the river of Egypt unto the river Euphrates all that pertained to the king of Egypt" (II Kings 24:7).

During the seventh year of Nebuchadnezzar (599 B.C.), the Babylonian king marched his army to Hatti and encamped against the city of Judah, Jerusalem. On the second day of the month Adar, Nebuchadnezzar captured Jerusalem and seized her king, Jehoiachin, who had only reigned in Jerusalem three months. The Hebrew text gives the following parallel account:

At that time the servants of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came up against Jerusalem, and the city was besieged. And Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came against the city, and his servants did besiege it. And Jehoiachin the king of Judah went out to the king of Babylon, he, and his mother, and his servants, and his princes, and his officers: and the king of Babylon took him in the eighth year of his reign. II Kings 24:10-12

Then Nebuchadnezzar carried away Jehoiachin and a vast tribute to Babylon. But before the king of Babylon left Jerusalem, he appointed a king of his own choice in Jerusalem. This was Zedekiah-- "And the king of Babylon made Mat-taniah his father's brother king in his stead, and changed his name to Zedekiah" (II Kings 24:17).

These events occurred in Nebuchadnezzar's seventh year (Babylonian reckoning) and in his eighth year (Hebrew reckoning). The seventh of Nebuchadnezzar is fixed by the lunar eclipse mentioned by Ptolemy. This eclipse occurred on April 15, 621 B.C. in Nabopolassar's sixth year. Ptolemy places the eclipse in Nabopolassar's fifth year because he has assigned thirteen years to Asaradin (Esarhaddon) but the thirteen years is contrary to Babylonian Chronicles which record Esarhaddon's total regnal years in three different places as twelve years. By dead reckoning from this lunar eclipse in the sixth of Nabopolassar to the seventh of Nebuchadnezzar would fix 599 B.C. as the date of Nebuchadnezzar's first siege against Jerusalem. He came against Jehoiakim on November 10, 599 B.C., and captured Jehoiakin on February 18, 598 B.C.

## **P. ANCHOR DATE 16**

### **588 B.C.-- The Destruction Of Jerusalem**

The computer calendar has done much to verify the date for the devastation of Jerusalem by the Babylonian King, Nebuchadnezzar, in 588 B.C. The Hebrew text gives the following account of the siege of Jerusalem:

And it came to pass in the ninth year of his [Zedekiah's] reign, in the tenth month, in the tenth day of the month, that Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came, he, and all his host, against Jerusalem, and pitched against it; and they built forts against it round about. And the city was besieged unto the eleventh year of king Zedekiah. And on the ninth day of the fourth month the famine prevailed in the city, and there was no bread for the people of the land. And the city was broken

up, and all the men of war fled by night by the way of the gate between two walls, which is by the king's garden: (now the Chaldees were against the city round about:) and the king went the way toward the plain. And the army of the Chaldees pursued after the king, and overtook him in the plains of Jericho: and all his army were scattered from him. So they took the king, and brought him up to the king of Babylon to Riblah; and they gave judgment upon him. And they slew the sons of Zedekiah before his eyes, and put out the eyes of Zedekiah, and bound him with fetters of brass, and carried him to Babylon. And in the fifth month, on the seventh day of the month, which is the nineteenth year of king Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, came Nebuzaradan, captain of the guard, a servant of the king of Babylon, unto Jerusalem: And he burnt the house of the Lord, and the king's house, and all the houses of Jerusalem, and every great man's house burnt he with fire. And all the army of the Chaldees, that were with the captain of the guard, brake down the walls of Jerusalem round about. Now the rest of the people that were left in the city, and the fugitives that fell away to the king of Babylon, with the remnant of the multitude, did Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard carry away.  
II Kings 25:1-11

As already pointed out in chapter two, the nineteenth year of Nebuchadnezzar in II Kings 25:8 is Hebrew reckoning. Babylonian reckoning would place the year of Jerusalem's fall in Nebuchadnezzar's eighteenth year. The difference in reckoning is that the Hebrews counted the accession year as year one, whereas the Babylonians did not. While Jeremiah 52:28ff. and the Babylonian documents count the accession year as year zero for the reign of Nebuchadnezzar; the books I and II Kings, II Chronicles 10-36, and the remainder of the book of Jeremiah reckon Nebuchadnezzar's accession year as year one. Josephus, who displays a thorough understanding of the Hebrew method of reckoning, employs both means, depending on whether a Hebrew or non-Hebrew king is the subject. Of course, the date 588 B.C., the eighteenth year of Nebuchadnezzar, can be computed on the basis of the lunar eclipse of 621 B.C., the sixth year of Nabopolassar by means of dead reckoning.

The Talmud offers additional data for the verification of the date of Jerusalem's fall:

The day on which the first Temple was destroyed was the ninth of Ab, and it was at the going out of the Sabbath, and at the end of the seventh [Sabbatical] year. The [priestly] guard was that of Jehoiarib, the priests and Levites were standing on their platform singing the song. What song was it? And He hath brought upon them their iniquity, and will cut them off in their evil. They had no time to complete [the psalm with] 'The Lord our God will cut them off', before the enemies came and overwhelmed them.<sup>91</sup>

The quote from the Talmud involves the cyclical phenomena of Israel (the Sabbath, the Sabbatical year, and the priestly cycle). Therefore, the destruction of Jerusalem came 'at the going out of the Sabbath', at the end of the seventh [Sabbatical] year' and during 'the Jehoiarib section of the priests who were ministering in the Temple'. According to the computer calendar, these above conditions could occur only for the year 588 B.C. See Illustration VI, (chap. II, p. 40) for the years 601 B.C. to 577 B.C. which shows that only the year 588 B.C. meets the criteria which satisfies all the data. According to Jeremiah 32:1-15, there was a

Sabbatical year in the tenth year of Zedekiah which was the eighteenth year of Nebuchadnezzar (Hebrew reckoning). This Sabbatical year (589 B.C.) occurred one year prior to the fall of Jerusalem.

Another means of verifying the date 588 B.C. for the destruction of Jerusalem is the following Talmudic reference: "Seventeen jubilee [cycles] did Israel count from the time they entered the Land [of Israel] until they left it."<sup>52</sup> Seventeen Jubilees would contain 833 years (49 years x 17 = 833 years). The time that Israel entered the Promised Land was forty years after the Exodus (1461 B.C. + 40 = 1421 B.C.). Simple mathematics demonstrate that there are exactly 833 years between the years 1421 B.C. the entrance into the land and 588 B.C., the departure from the land (1421 B.C. + 833 = 588 B.C.).

Yet another means of verifying the date 588 B.C. is the prophecy of Ezekiel 4:1-8. The destruction of the Temple of Solomon pointed forty years ahead to the altar of Zerubbabel described in Ezra 3:1-7 (590 B.C. + 40 = 550 B.C.). This is what the Lord spoke through Ezekiel: "And when thou hast accomplished them, lie again on thy right side, and thou shalt bear the iniquity of the house of Judah forty days: I have appointed thee each day for a year" (Ezekiel 4:6).

The year 550 B.C. ended the period when the Jews were to be without a sin offering. This period of forty years represented the forty years that they were to have no Temple from the curse God placed on Jerusalem at the time Nebuchadnezzar besieged it (Ezekiel 24). It was the first year of Cyrus when this altar was constructed.

The total number of 430 years in Ezekiel's prophecy (Ezekiel 4:4-6) is the length of time from David's capture of Jerusalem in 1018 B.C. to the fall of Jerusalem in 588 B.C. (1018 B.C. + 430 = 588 B.C.). This is the number of years that Jerusalem would be in existence and that the Ark of the Covenant rested there undisturbed.

**ILLUSTRATION XXIII:  
CHRONOLOGY FROM SAMARIA'S FALL TO JERUSALEM'S FALL**

Judah	
Hezekiah	24
Manasseh	55
Amon	2
Josiah	32
Jehoahaz	—
Jehoiakim	11
Jehoiakin	1
Zedekiah	10 (see P. 254)
135 years	

The total number of years in Judah for the time span from the sixth year of Hezekiah unto the fall of Jerusalem is 135 years (723 B.C. + 135 = 588 B.C.) It has already been shown that the time span in Judah from Jehu's purge to the fall of Samaria totaled 133 years (856 B.C. + 133 = 723 B.C.). Also, the time span for the kingdom of Judah from the great schism to Jehu's purge was eighty-nine years (945 B.C. + 89 = 856 B.C.).

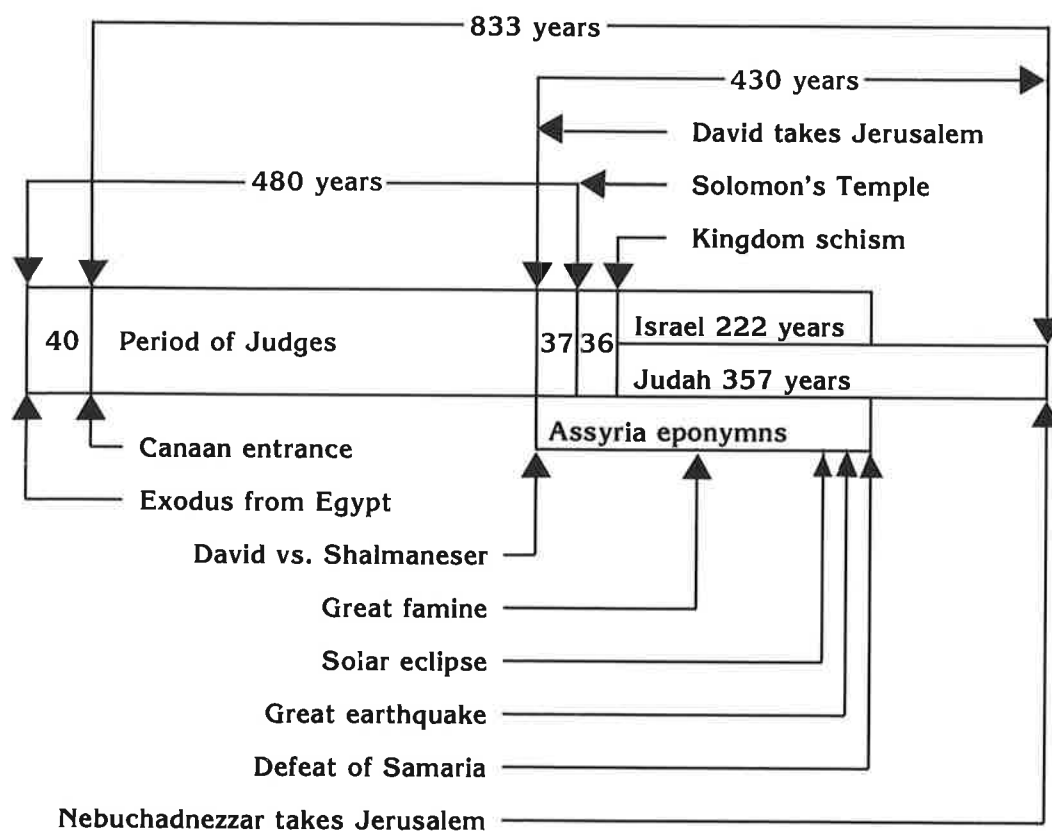
The total number of regnal years, therefore, from the schism (945 B.C.) to the fall of Jerusalem (588 B.C.) for the Davidic dynasty are (945 B.C. + 357 = 588 B.C.) or (89 years + 133 years + 135 years = 357 years total regnal years for the kings of Judah).

### The Length Of The Southern Kingdom (Judah)- 357 Years

The dead reckoning of regnal years of the nation of Judah gives 357 years which corresponds with the fall of Judah in 588 B.C. (945 B.C. - 357 = 588 B.C.). This data from the Hebrew King List gives a total time span for Judah in the Southern Kingdom of 357 years.

The following Illustration XXIV ties together in one picture all the information regarding the chronologies of the history of the Hebrew nation from the time of the Exodus through the time of the Hebrew kings. It ends with the destruction of Jerusalem in the year 588 B.C. The Illustration especially stresses the use of time-spans which help to demonstrate the accuracy of the computer reconstruction of the chronology of the Hebrew kings. The chart covers a time period of 873 years.

**Illustration XXIV: Synchronization Of Chronological Data: 1461 - 588 B.C.**



### III. A Comparative Study of Thiele's Anchor Dates

Having established the fixed anchor dates given in this chapter by means of

the computer calendar, the cyclical phenomena of Israel, Biblical and extra-biblical historical writings and solar/lunar eclipses, it is now possible to examine and compare the anchor dates established by Edwin R. Thiele. Much of modern Biblical scholarship places complete confidence in the chronological research of the Hebrew kings as has been done by Thiele. Certainly, anyone who has devoted so much of his research into the problems of ancient chronology ought to be highly admired and respected. The purpose of this chapter is not to take away the honor that belongs to Thiele.

However, the present research has found several areas of weakness in Thiele's chronology. These areas of weakness will be pointed out through a comparison between Thiele's anchor dates and those anchor dates of the computer calendar. Thiele has made a very important statement regarding Assyrian inscriptions which should be noted from the outset of this comparative study--

Every Assyriologist knows that Assyrian inscriptions are not always reliable in all details. The account given in one place may vary from that found in another place. An achievement of one king may be claimed by his successor. The specific details of a victory reported in one year may grow in magnitude and splendor in the reports of succeeding years."<sup>53</sup>

This fact has also been the conclusion of the present research.

#### **A. ANCHOR DATE 1**

##### **931 B.C.-- The Division Of The Kingdom**

Thiele uses the anchor date 931/30 B.C. as the date when the kingdom divided. He writes:

Having set forth the basic chronological principles used by the ancient Hebrew recorders in the period of the kings and having fixed 931/30 as the year of the division of the monarchy and the beginning of the nations of Judah and Israel, I will proceed with the chronological pattern of the Hebrew rulers as based on the data of the Masoretic Text.<sup>54</sup>

This date seems fourteen years too late for the schism which divided the kingdom in 945 B.C. according to the computer calendar.

At this point, Thiele has overlooked the important point of synchronization with King David of the United Kingdom and Shalmaneser II of Assyria which took place in the same year that David captured Jerusalem in 1018 B.C. From that date, the division of the kingdom can be calculated when one, according to II Samuel 5:4-5, gives David thirty-three years of reign after the capture of Jerusalem and Solomon forty years of rule according to I Kings 11:42. (1018 B.C. + 33 + 40 = 945 B.C.). The date of synchronization between David and Shalmaneser II has been well established.

#### **B. ANCHOR DATE 2**

##### **853 B.C.-- The Battle Of Qarqar**

Thiele points out that this is one of the major anchor dates in his chronological

system--

The year 701, when Sennacherib came against Jerusalem in the fourteenth year of Hezekiah, is a major anchor point in my pattern. That date cannot be changed. But neither can my pattern be adjusted anywhere along the line. This pattern calls for precisely 152 years from the death of Ahab to the fourteenth year of Hezekiah. And Assyrian chronology likewise calls for precisely 152 years from the battle of Qarqar in 853 to Sennacherib's attack on Hezekiah in 701. With my pattern correct at these points, I know it is also correct at all points in between.<sup>55</sup>

Here Thiele shows that he ultimately bases the date 853 B.C. on this most important anchor date which is 701 B.C., the third year of Sennacherib, which he also parallels to Hezekiah's fourteenth year. Chapter five has demonstrated that 702 B.C. (the computer calendar dating), the third year of Sennacherib, is not Hezekiah's fourteenth year. The Biblical account of II Kings 18:13-- 19:37 covers the Jerusalem conflict during Hezekiah's fourteenth year. The Assyrian annals of Sennacherib tell of a Jerusalem siege in the third year of Sennacherib, the twenty-seventh year of Hezekiah.

It is Thiele's conclusion that Shalmaneser III fought Ahab in the battle of Qarqar in Ahab's last year of life--

During the reign of Ahab an accurately dated event in Assyrian history can for the first time be definitely tied in with Hebrew history. The Assyrian records list Ahab as among the allied powers of western Asia who fought against Shalmaneser III at the battle of Qarqar in Aram during the eponym year of Daian-Ashur, the sixth year of Shalmaneser III, verified as 853. There is no mention of the battle of Qarqar in the Bible and thus no direct information as to the year of Ahab's reign when that battle was fought. But by a fortuitous combination of years in Hebrew and Assyrian history, it is possible to place this battle in Ahab's last year.<sup>56</sup>

Chapter seven has shown that the documents of Shalmaneser III contain alarming inconsistencies regarding the battle of Qarqar and other battles in which Hadad-ezer of Syria and the twelve kings of Hatti participated.

It is believed by the present study that the Monolith Inscription does not belong to Shalmaneser but rather to an earlier monarch that was a contemporary with King Ahab of Israel. At this point, the Assyrian records appear to be unworthy of trust. Ashur-nasir-pal in his eponymous year refers to the famine of Ahab's time and it is believed that in his sixth year he fought Ahab, Hadad-ezer, and the other kings of Hatti. This would be the year 878 B.C., the twelfth year of Ahab, not his last year. The computer calendar has placed the reign of Ahab during the years 890 B.C. to 868 B.C. Therefore, his death would have occurred fifteen years before Thiele's dating. Ahab died in his last battle, and was not capable of paying tribute to anyone!

### C. ANCHOR DATE 3

#### 841 B.C.-- The Tribute Of Jehu

The anchor dates of 853 B.C. and 841 B.C. are joined together very closely

by Thiele. He demonstrates this by the following statement:

The date of 841 B.C. is established by Jehu's payment of tribute to Shalmaneser III of Assyria in that year and, together with 853, becomes one of the basic dates in Hebrew history. ... The eighteenth year of Shalmaneser was twelve years after his sixth year, 853, the date of the battle of Qarqar in which Ahab was a participant. Since precisely twelve years elapsed from the death of Ahab to the accession of Jehu, we know 841 was the year when Jehu began to reign.<sup>57</sup>

According to the above statement, there can only be twelve years between the date for Qarqar, the death year of Ahab, and the accession of Jehu. This reasoning is based on the Assyrian annals of Shalmaneser, his sixth year and his eighteenth year. There is no question that Shalmaneser in his eighteenth year exacted tribute from Jehu of Israel in 841 B.C. This date is firmly established. The problem does not lie with Shalmaneser's eighteenth year but with his sixth year. This problem has not only distorted the chronology of Ahab but also the chronology of Jehu.

The Bible would seem to indicate that the tribute of Jehu could not have taken place in his accession. For the Lord did not begin to cut Israel short until Jehu took no heed to walk in the law of the Lord God of Israel with all his heart (II Kings 10:29-33). In the annalistic texts of Shalmaneser for his eighteenth year, he battled Hazael of Aram, the same year that he received tribute from Jehu, the son of Omri. The Bible mentions that Hazael smote all the coast of Israel (II Kings 10:32) in judgment against Jehu. Both events are unlikely to have happened in Jehu's accession year. The computer calendar would place the year 841 B.C. as Jehu's sixteenth year in which he paid tribute to Shalmaneser.

#### **D. ANCHOR DATE 4**

##### **763 B.C.-- The Solar Eclipse Of Bur-Sagale**

There is no question regarding the accuracy of this date. Thiele has stated well the information regarding this date--

One item of unusual importance is a notice of an eclipse of the sun that took place in the month Simanu in the eponymy of Bur-Sagale. Astronomical computation has fixed this as 15 June 763. With the year of the eponymy of Bur-Sagale fixed at 763 B.C., the year of every other name of the complete canon can likewise be fixed. The Assyrian lists extant today provide a reliable record of the annual limmu officials from 891 B.C. to 648 B.C.; and for this period they provide reliable dates in Assyrian history.<sup>58</sup>

#### **E. ANCHOR DATE 5**

##### **743 B.C.-- The Tribute Of Menahem**

The tribute of Menahem is placed under Tiglath-pileser III by Thiele. He states: "From Menahem my chronological pattern as coordinated with Assyria calls for a contact with Tiglath-Pileser III in either 743 or 742."<sup>59</sup> As pointed out in chapter six, there are only two texts in the Assyrian records which mention Menahem by name. The one text has the name 'Menahem' there as a conjecture by scholars. The other text has also been assigned to Tiglath-pileser III which should be credited

to Pul, *i.e.*, Ashur-dan III. The Bible asserts that Pul, the king of Assyria, required payment of tribute from Menahem (II Kings 15:19-20). There is no indication from the Bible that Pul is Tiglath-pileser III; the text of I Chronicles 5:26 would state otherwise.

The Assyrian Eponym Canon for the dates 743/42 B.C. shows no incursion or military activity into Syro-Palestine for these two dates. The computer calendar would place Menahem's tribute in 755 B.C., twelve years earlier. The Assyrian Eponym Canon refers to military involvement in Hatti land for this year. The computer calendar has given 761 B.C.-- 751 B.C. for the reign of Menahem.

## F. ANCHOR DATE 6

### 723 B.C.-- The Fall Of Samaria

There is no question but that 723 B.C. is the date that Samaria fell to the host of the Assyrians. Thiele acknowledges that "there is solid evidence for 723 as the year when Samaria fell."<sup>60</sup>

However, there are several areas of disagreement. First, Thiele writes that Samaria fell before Hezekiah came to the throne-- "There was no overlap between Hoshea and Hezekiah. Hoshea was dead and the kingdom of Israel was no longer in existence when Hezekiah took the throne. The siege of Samaria ended in 723 and Hezekiah did not begin till 716/715."<sup>61</sup> This appears to be inaccurate according to such Biblical statements as found in II Kings 18:1, 9-12.

At this point, Thiele disregards the Biblical data for Hoshea's reign. He writes--

Our discussion of the siege and fall of Samaria will not be complete if it does not include a brief consideration of the synchronisms of 2 Kings 18:9-10 that equate the seventh year of Hoshea with the fourth year of Hezekiah and the ninth year of Hoshea with Hezekiah's sixth year. In those synchronisms the reign is restored to its correct date, the fall of Samaria and the end of Hoshea's rule will be found to have taken place before Hezekiah began his reign.<sup>62</sup>

On the basis of the chronology of the computer calendar, there is no reason to do this adjustment to the Biblical text. It is apparent that Thiele is bound by his acceptance that 701 B.C. must be the fourteenth year of Hezekiah.

The second point of disagreement deals with the solar eclipse which Thiele cites as occurring in 721 B.C. Thiele uses this eclipse to fix the date for the fall of Samaria.<sup>63</sup> There appears to be no known source among ancient astronomical data which records a solar eclipse in the year 721 B.C. However, Ptolemy in *The Almagest* mentions the following lunar eclipse which was observed on March 11, 721 B.C. (Gregorian calendar)--

... the first is recorded as having taken place in the year 1 of Mardokempad, Egyptianwise Thoth 29-30. And the eclipse began, it is stated, more than one hour after the rise of the moon, and the eclipse was total. Now, since the sun was very nearly at the end of the Fishes, and the night was very nearly 12 equatorial hours, evidently the beginning of the eclipse was 4 1/2 equatorial hours before midnight, and the middle of the eclipse, since it was complete, was 2 1/2 hours before midnight. Therefore, in Alexandria, the midtime of this eclipse occurred 3 1/2 equatorial hours before midnight. For we establish hour-positions with respect to its meridan,

## Chapter X - Anchor Dates Compared: Computer vs. Thiele

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and the meridan through Alexandria is west of that through Babylon by  $1/2 + 1/3$  equatorial hour. And at that hour the sun's true position was very nearly  $24 1/2^\circ$  within the Fishes.<sup>64</sup>

It appears that it should not be a solar eclipse to which Thiele refers but rather a lunar eclipse.

### G. ANCHOR DATE 7

#### 701 B.C.-- The Fourteenth Year Of Hezekiah

The major date for Thiele's chronology of the Hebrew kings is 701 B.C. All really hinges on this date as an absolute date in his Hebrew chronology--

The date of 701 for the attack of Sennacherib in the fourteenth year of Hezekiah is a key point in my chronological pattern for the Hebrew rulers. This is a precise date from which we may go forward or backward on the basis of the regnal data to all other dates in our pattern. Full confidence can be placed in 701 as the fourteenth year of Hezekiah, and complete confidence can be placed in any other dates for either Israel or Judah reckoned from that date in accord with the requirements of the numbers in Kings.<sup>65</sup>

Chapter five details the reasons why the year 701 B.C. can not be the fourteenth year of Hezekiah. That chapter has shown clearly that two attacks against Jerusalem are given: both in the Bible and in the annals of Sennacherib. The Bible highlights the siege on the fourteenth of Hezekiah, and Sennacherib highlights the siege of the twenty-seventh of Hezekiah. The attack directed against Jerusalem in the Bible took place in 715 B.C., the fourteenth year of Hezekiah. The siege against Judah's capital in 702 B.C. (not 701 B.C.) occurred in the third year of Sennacherib.

### H. ANCHOR DATE 8

#### 621 B.C.-- The Lunar Eclipse Of Nabopolassar

This date is important for Thiele in his reckoning of the Hebrew kings following Josiah of Judah. This he confirms by the following statement--

With the close of Josiah's reign we find positive contacts with established Babylonian years. Nabonassar [Nabopolassar] was then on the throne in Babylon, and his years have been confirmed by an eclipse of the moon that took place in the fifth year of his reign on 22 April 621 B.C. The 621 anchor date enables us to arrive at 605 as the twenty-first and last year of Nabopolassar and the accession of Nebuchadnezzar. This also provides fixed dates for the remaining rulers of Babylon and for any Hebrew rulers with whom precise contacts with Babylon took place.<sup>66</sup>

This lunar eclipse is cited by Ptolemy in *The Almagest*.<sup>67</sup>

Several comments are in order. The lunar eclipse provides an astronomical fix for the late Judaeans kings, as well as the accession year of Nebuchadnezzar and also the date for Jerusalem's destruction. However, any dating based upon Ptolemy for this time period is in error by one year. This is because Ptolemy assigns

thirteen years to Esarhaddon (Asaradin) rather than twelve as the extant Babylonian Chronicles do. This is discussed in detail in chapter eight. Because of Ptolemy's one year error, the lunar eclipse in 621 B.C. is Nabopolassar's sixth year rather than his fifth year. Any chronology founded on Ptolemaic data must give 605 B.C. as the accession year of Nebuchadnezzar and 587 B.C. as the fall of Jerusalem. Both William F. Albright and D. J. Wiseman used 587 B.C. as the date for Jerusalem's Babylonian devastation.

The computer calendar, however, has advanced those dates by one year backwards-- 606 B.C., the accession of Nebuchadnezzar and 588 B.C., the fall of Jerusalem.

For this dating of Jerusalem's destruction, Thiele tries to establish 605 B.C. as the accession year of Nebuchadnezzar. He does this by citing two eclipses--

Two eclipses establish beyond question 605 as the year when Nebuchadnezzar began his reign. The first took place on April 22, 621, in the fifth year of Nabopolassar, which would make 605 the year of his death in his twenty-first year, and the year of Nebuchadnezzar's accession. The second eclipse was of July 4, 568, in the thirty-seventh year of Nebuchadnezzar, which again gives 605 as the year when Nebuchadnezzar began to reign. No date in ancient history is more firmly established than is 605 for the commencement of Nebuchadnezzar's reign.<sup>68</sup>

The second eclipse is also a lunar eclipse mentioned by Thiele in Appendix C in *A Chronology Of The Hebrew Kings* and dated to the year 568 B.C.<sup>69</sup> The eclipse is not cited by Ptolemy. In 1915, Paul V. Neugebauer and Ernest F. Weidner published the text VAT 4956, dating from year thirty-seven of Nebuchadnezzar, which refers to a calculated eclipse of the moon, which according to their translation failed to occur over Babylon on the fifteenth of an unnamed month, six days after the summer solstice.<sup>70</sup>

This event as an eclipse appears to be questionable.<sup>71</sup> More important is the fact that the summer solstice occurred on the ninth day of the lunar month in Nebuchadnezzar's thirty-seventh year. As one examines astronomically the year in question, the following data becomes available: 1) In 570 B.C., June 21 falls on Tammuz 15; 2) In 569 B.C., June 21 falls on Sivan 26; 3) In 568 B.C., June 21 occurs on Tammuz 9 and 4) In 567 B.C., June 21 occurs on Sivan 18. Only the data from 568 B.C. harmonizes with the data from the text. Therefore, scholars are correct in dating this text to the year 568 B.C. However, scholars have not defined the method of reckoning regnal years. For introducing the following year, the Akkadian text implies that the thirty-eighth year of Nebuchadnezzar should be reckoned as his thirty-seventh. Thus the year 568 B.C. appears to be the thirty-eighth year of the king. Furthermore, a lunar eclipse would hardly have been expected by an expert Babylonian astronomer in 568 B.C., since it can be shown that such an eclipse was observed in the same month of 569 B.C.

Thiele's acceptance of Ptolemy and the above lunar eclipse affects several important dates such as the death of Josiah, the battle for Carchemish and Jehoiachin's captivity with Zedekiah's accession. The first two dates differ from the computer calendar by one year and the last date varies by two years. Thiele

gives his dates as follows: “[Babylonian] tablets have fixed beyond question such dates as 609 for the death of Josiah, 605 for the battle of Carchemish, and 597 for the captivity of Jehoiachin and the accession of Zedekiah.”<sup>72</sup>

## I. ANCHOR DATE 9

### 586 B.C.-- Thiele's Date For The Fall Of Jerusalem

The date which Thiele offers for the fall of Jerusalem is not based entirely on the Canon of Ptolemy which puts Jerusalem's fall at 587 B.C. Thiele applies Ezekiel 40:1 to the date of Jehoiachin's captivity. That date which Thiele gives as 598/7 B.C. is based on Ptolemy. He relates how he arrives at the year of 586 B.C. for the end of the kingdom of Judah--

Although the Babylonian tablets dealing with the final fall and destruction of Jerusalem have not been found, it should be noticed that the testimony of Ezekiel 40:1 is definitive in regard to the year 586. Since Ezekiel had his vision of the temple on the twenty-fifth anniversary of his and Jehoiachin's captivity (28 April 573), and since this was the fourteenth year after Jerusalem's fall, the city must have fallen eleven years after the captivity. Eleven years after 597 is 586. Any attempt to date the fall of Jerusalem earlier than 586 would call for an earlier date than 597 for Jehoiachin's captivity; but that is not possible, for that date has been fixed by contemporary Babylonian evidence. ... All these details point conclusively to 586 as the year when Jerusalem fell and the nation of Judah came to its end.<sup>73</sup>

Thiele is correct in his assumption, but Jeconiah was taken captive on February 18, 598 B.C., which is the twelfth Jewish month of the previous year, *i.e.*, 599 B.C. — 25 years = 574 B.C. + 14 years = 588 B.C. Notice that Thiele uses the 597 B.C. rather than the 599 B.C. which would be based on the errors of Ptolemy and the fact that a year change takes place only days after his captivity. The date of 586 B.C. is two years after the date of 588 B.C. given by the computer calendar.

This examination has shown that the basic difference between Thiele's anchor dates and the anchor dates shown in the present volume. It is believed that Thiele has placed too much confidence in Assyrian inscriptions which may not be *'reliable in all details'* for several of his anchor dates.

And finally, another weakness in Thiele's chronological system is the establishment of 'overlapping reigns' where the Bible is silent.<sup>74</sup> Thiele has created an overlapping reign in Israel with Pekah reigning in Gilead during the reigns of Menahem and Pekahiah in Samaria. The theory of two rival kingdoms in the Northern Kingdom is based on Hosea 5:5-- "Therefore shall Israel and Ephraim fall in their iniquity; Judah also shall fall with them." This verse does not provide conclusive evidence for this theory; for Hosea commonly uses Hebrew parallelism in reference to both kingdoms.

This overlapping reign is created by Thiele in order to make the numbers of the Hebrew kings 'work out'. This overlap is necessitated by the fallacy of his basic premise that the fourteenth year of Hezekiah is 701 B.C. Other overlapping reigns seem to be created where the Bible is silent in order to make Hebrew numbers 'workable' for his particular chronology.

It is hoped that this comparison of anchor dates will demonstrate the importance of careful study in chronology, and the necessity of precision in the chronological framework established by any scholar.

## Chapter X - NOTES

<sup>1</sup>This point can not be stressed too much. An accurate chronology of the Hebrew kings is essential for the proper interpretation of the prophets of Israel.

<sup>2</sup>Cf., William F. Albright, "The Biblical Period," *The Jews: Their History, Culture, and Religion*, Louis Finkelstein, ed. (New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1960). The work was published separately as *The Biblical Period From Abraham to Ezra* (Harper & Row, Publishers, 1963). Also, see "The Chronology of the Divided Monarchy of Israel," *Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research* 100 (1945), pp. 16-22.

<sup>3</sup>Cf., Edwin R. Thiele, *A Chronology Of The Hebrew Kings* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan Publishing House, 1977) and *The Mysterious Numbers of the Hebrew Kings* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan Publishing House, 1983). Compare "The Chronology of the Kings of Judah and Israel," *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 3 (1944) pp. 137-186 and "Coregencies and Overlapping Reigns Among the Hebrew Kings" *Journal of Biblical Literature* 93 (1974) pp. 137-186.

<sup>4</sup>This will be explained in detail in this chapter at the appropriate place. Also see chapter four and the concluding chapter.

<sup>5</sup>David Noel Freedman, "The Chronology Of Israel And The Ancient Near East," G. Ernest Wright, ed., *The Bible And The Ancient Near East* (Garden City, New York: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1965), p. 265.

<sup>6</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 272.

<sup>7</sup>Many students of Scripture still question the date of the Exodus. Two dating schemes have been used for developing a date for the Exodus-- 'an early date' and 'the late date'.

The early date for the Exodus take I Kings 6:1 as a precise note of time. It is believed that ancients knew how to construct a calendar, kept accurate records of time and stated the lengths of time span with chronological exactness. The statement of I Kings 6:1 places 480 years from the year of the Exodus to the fourth year of Solomon when he began the Temple construction. In Judges 11:26, Jephthah, a judge, makes the statement that there have been 300 years from the entrance into Canaan unto his day. This statement provides ample time for the period of the Judges, who ruled various sections of Israel prior to Saul's monarchy.

Students who accept the late date for the Exodus believe that Moses led the Israelites out of bondage during Egypt's nineteenth dynasty, which began in 1318 B.C. The chief line of evidence for the late date is the appearance of new cultural forms in Palestine, specifically the destruction of Jericho by outside invaders at about this date. Scholars who advocate this date point out that Rameses II was the pharaoh at this time and that the Hebrew slaves built the Egyptian store cities of Pithom and Ramses during his reign (Exodus 1:11; 12: 37; Numbers 33:3). Rameses II mentions using slave labor of the *Apiru*-- perhaps the Egyptian word for 'Hebrew'-- to build his grain cities. Other scholars believe an earlier pharaoh first built these cities, and that Rameses II merely rebuilt and named one of them for himself. If the Hebrews built these cities for Rameses II, they would have left Egypt some years later, about 1275 B.C., and conquered Canaan after 1235 B.C.-- a date that these scholars believe is confirmed by archaeological evidence that Canaanite cities were destroyed.

The thirteenth century date for the Exodus creates several chronological difficulties. If the Exodus is dated at about 1275 B.C., and the conquest after 1235 B.C., and if Saul came to the throne

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in about 1043 B.C., only about 230 years would have elapsed from the Exodus until Saul, and only 190 years from the conquest to Saul.

<sup>8</sup>It must be admitted that in the Bible there is no direct reference to the day of the week on which the second reading of the Mosaic Law was given. However, the computer calendar gives the day to be a Saturday (Sabbath). This is the day of the week which the Hebrews normally set aside as the day for the reading of the Torah. The Talmud definitely states that the giving of the Law at Sinai took place on a Sabbath. *The Babylonian Talmud* (London: The Soncino Press, 1948), Mishna Tract *Sabbath* 86b, p. 410.

<sup>9</sup>David Noel Freedman, accepting the late date for the Exodus, states: "A general date in the period 1280-1230 would seem appropriate, with somewhat great probability for the earlier rather than the later figure." *op. cit.*, p. 271.

<sup>10</sup>*The Babylonian Talmud, op. cit.*, Mishna Tract, 'Arakin 12b, p. 69. The Talmud is saying that the 833 years can be understood as equal to seventeen Jubilees.

<sup>11</sup>The Septuagint (LXX) relates the following details regarding King David's defeat of Shalmaneser II of Assyria:

"And the Syrians saw that they were worsted before Israel, and they gathered themselves together. And Adraazar sent and gathered the Syrians from the other side of the river Chalamak, and they came to Aelam: and Sobac the captain of the host of Adraazar was at their head. And it was reported to David, and he gathered all Israel, and went over Jordan, and came to Aelam: and the Syrians set the battle in array against David, and fought with him. And Syria fled from before Israel, and David destroyed of Syria seven hundred chariots, and forty thousand horseman, and he smote Sobac the captain of his host, and he died there. And all the kings the servants of Adraazar saw that they were put to the worse before Israel, and they went over to Israel, and served them: and Syria was afraid to help the children of Ammon any more." II Kings 10:15-19.

<sup>12</sup>Josephus mentions the same battle and David's victory:

"This defeat did not still induce the Ammonites to be quiet, nor to own those that were superior to them to be so, and be still, but they sent to Chalaman, the king of the Syrians, beyond Euphrates, and hired him for an auxiliary. He had Shobach for the captain of his host, with eighty thousand footmen, and ten thousand horsemen. Now when the king of the Hebrews understood that the Ammonites had again gathered so great an army together, he determined to make war with them no longer by his generals, but he passed over the river Jordan himself with all his army; and when he met them he joined battle with them, and overcame them, and slew forty thousand of their footmen, and seven thousand of their horsemen. He also wounded Shobach, the general of Chalaman's forces, who died of that stroke; but the people of Mesopotamia, upon such a conclusion of the battle, delivered themselves up to David, and sent him presents, who at winter-time returned to Jerusalem." *Antiquities* VII. vi. 3.

<sup>13</sup>See Appendix A or Daniel David Luckenbill, *Ancient Records Of Assyria And Babylonia*, Volume II (New York: Greenwood Press, Publishers, 1968), sec. 1196, pp. 428-429. Note that the acceptance of the shorter chronology for the Assyrian Eponym Canon would change Luckenbill's dating for 1019 B.C. to 1018 B.C. for the end of the reign of Shalmaneser II of Assyria. Note that Luckenbill accepts thirty-two years for the kingship of Tiglath-pileser III; this factor is already built into his chronology.

<sup>14</sup>I Chronicle 19:16-19 reads:

"And when the Syrians saw that they were put to the worse before Israel, they sent messengers, and drew forth the Syrians that were beyond the river: and Shophach the captain of the host of Hadarezer went before them. And it was told David; and he gathered all Israel, and passed over Jordan, and came upon them, and set the battle in array against them. So when David had put

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the battle in array against the Syrians, they fought with him. But the Syrians fled before Israel; and David slew of the Syrians seven thousand men which fought in chariots, and forty thousand footmen, and killed Shophach the captain of the host. And when the servants of Hadarezer saw that they were put to the worse before Israel, they made peace with David, and became his servants: neither would the Syrians help the children of Ammon any more."

<sup>15</sup>See Appendix A or *ARAB*, Vol. II, sec. 1196, p. 429.

<sup>16</sup>See Appendix C or James B. Pritchard, ed., *Ancient Near Eastern Texts*, (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1969), p. 566.

<sup>17</sup>II Samuel 5:4-5 would indicate that David captured Jerusalem and made it his capital in his eighth year:

"David was thirty years old when he began to reign, and he reigned forty years. In Hebron he reigned over Judah seven years and six months: and in Jerusalem he reigned thirty and three years over all Israel and Judah."

<sup>18</sup>The account of David's capture of Jerusalem is in II Samuel 5:6-10. This passage offers the following historical information concerning David's capture of Jerusalem from the Jebusites--

"And the king and his men went to Jerusalem unto the Jebusites, the inhabitants of the land: which spake unto David, saying, Except thou take away the blind and the lame, thou shalt not come in hither: thinking, David cannot come in hither. Nevertheless, David took the stronghold of Zion: the same is the city of David. And David said on that day, Whosoever getteth up to the gutter, and smiteth the Jebusites, and the lame and blind, that are hated of David's soul, he shall be chief and captain. Wherefore they said, The blind and the lame shall not come into the house. So David dwelt in the fort, and called it the city of David. And David built round about from Millo and inward. And David went on, and grew great, and the Lord God of Hosts was with him."

<sup>19</sup>The Biblical passage of I Kings 6:1 clearly indicates that the fourth year of Solomon coincides with the four hundred and eightieth year after the Exodus--

"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."

<sup>20</sup>Albert Kirk Grayson, *Assyrian Royal Inscriptions*, Volume II (Wiesbaden, Germany: Otto Harrassowitz, 1972), sec. 548-553, pp. 125-128.

<sup>21</sup>Luke 4:25 records Jesus' statement about the severe famine in the days of King Ahab and the prophet Elijah-- "But I tell you of a truth, many widows were in Israel in the days of Elias, when the heaven was shut up three years and six months, when great famine was throughout all the land."

<sup>22</sup>Josephus records that another historian, the Greek Menander, mentions this drought in his account of the acts of Ethbaal, king of the Tyrians, *Antiquities* VIII.xiii.2.

<sup>23</sup>See Appendix A or *ARAB*, Vol. II, sec. 1197, p. 430. Notice that there is a one year difference between Luckenbill and the present research. This is due to the acceptance of the shorter chronology by the present study.

<sup>24</sup>Even the dead reckoning of the Hebrew King List for Israel from year one of Jeroboam I to the seventh of Ahab is sixty-three years (945 B.C. + 63 = 882 B.C.).

<sup>25</sup>The tribute of Jehu is recorded twice in the annals of Shalmaneser III. The first occurrence is found on the Black Obelisk Monument-- "Tribute of Iaua (Jehu), son of Omri (*mar Humri*). Silver, gold, a golden bowl, a golden beaker, golden goblets, pitchers of gold, lead, staves for the hand

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of the king, javelins, I received from him." *ARAB*, Vol. I, sec. 590, p. 211. The second occurrence is found in a fragment of the annals from Calah-- "In my eighteenth year of reign I crossed the Euphrates for the sixteenth time. ... At that time I received the tribute of the men of Tyre, Sidon, and of Jehu, son of Omri." *Arab*, Vol. I, sec. 672, p. 243.

<sup>26</sup>See the reliefs of the Black Obelisk Monument in James B. Pritchard's *The Ancient Near East In Pictures: Relating to the Old Testament* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1969), pp. 120-121.

<sup>27</sup>According to the computer calendar, the year 841 B.C. was Jehu's fifteenth year being parallel to Shalmaneser's eighteenth year.

<sup>28</sup>The Septuagint offers some interesting information regarding Jeroboam's two year stay in Egypt--

"And Solomon sought to kill him; and he was afraid, and escaped to Susakim king of Egypt, and was with him until Solomon died. And Jeroboam heard in Egypt that Solomon was dead; and he spoke in the ears of Susakim king of Egypt, saying, Let me go, and I will depart into my land; and Susakim said to him, Ask any request, and I will grant it thee. And Susakim gave to Jeroboam Ano the eldest sister of Thekemina his wife, to be his wife: she was great among the daughters of the king, and bore to Jeroboam Abia his son: and Jeroboam said to Susakim, Let me indeed go, and I will depart" (III Kings 12:24, LXX).

This would require a time period of about two years from the time he was anointed by Ahijah until he returned to Israel to become king over the ten tribes in the north. Soon after the Feast of Tabernacles, he lost this son, *cf.*, I Kings 14:1-16. The Pharaoh Susakim is the Greek form for the Biblical king-- Shishak.

<sup>29</sup>The equivalent date for the solar eclipse of Bur-Sagale of the Gregorian calendar would be June 7, 763 B.C.

<sup>30</sup>*ARAB*, Vol. II, sec. 1198, p. 435, or see Appendix A.

<sup>31</sup>The Assyrian king at this time was the monarch, Ashur-dan III, the son of Adad-nirari III. Unfortunately, there are no extant annals of Ashur-dan III; they could have been destroyed because of his repentance by a succeeding ruler such as Tiglath-pileser III.

<sup>32</sup>This is what Jonah says about the sun-- "And it came to pass, when the sun did arise, that God prepared a vehement east wind; and the sun beat upon the head of Jonah, that he fainted, and wished in himself to die, and said, It is better for me to die than to live" Jonah 4:8.

<sup>33</sup>George Rawlinson, *The Five Great Monarchies Of The Ancient Eastern World*, Volume I (New York: Dodd, Mead & Company, Publishers, 1870), pp. 126-127.

<sup>34</sup>Jesus, also, used Jonah as a sign to the people of his day (Matthew 12:39-41, 16:4; Luke 11:29-30). Forty years after Jesus' death, Passover Day, 30 A.D., the Roman armies surrounded Jerusalem for the final desolation.

<sup>35</sup>It is possible that the partial eclipse of the sun during the crucifixion of Jesus is alluded to by the prophet Amos. Luke refers to this event, but does not call it an eclipse: "And it was about the sixth hour, and there was a darkness over all the earth until the ninth hour. And the sun was darkened, and the veil of the temple was rent in the midst" (Luke 23:44-45).

<sup>36</sup>*ARAB*, Vol. II, sec. 1198, p. 435, or see Appendix A.

<sup>37</sup>*The Babylonian Talmud, op. cit.*, Mishnah Tract, *Shabbath* 33a, pp. 152-153.

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<sup>38</sup>Sargon II began the deportation of the Israelites as soon as he became king of Assyria after the death of Shalmaneser V. This fact is known from Sargon's annal texts from Khorsabad--

"[At the beginning of my rule, in my first year of reign] .... Samerinai (the people of Samaria) .... [of Shamash] who causes me to attain victory .... [27,290 people, who lived therein] I carried away...." *ARAB*, Vol. II, Sec. 4, p. 2. In the Display Inscription of Salon XIV, Sargon boasts, "I plundered the city of Shinuhtu, Samirina (Samaria) and the whole land of Bit-Humria (Israel)." *ARAB*, Vol. II, sec. 80, p. 40. Compare the annalistic texts: *ARAB*, Vol. II, sec. 92, p. 46; sec. 99, p. 51; sec. 118, p. 61.

<sup>39</sup>This date is also confirmed by the Assyrian Eponym Canon for the years 725, 724, and 723 B.C. See *ARAB*, Vol. II, sec. 1198, p. 437, or see Appendix A.

<sup>40</sup>*ARAB*, Vol. II, sec. 12, 18, pp. 6-8.

<sup>41</sup>*ARAB*, Vol. II, sec. 195, p. 105.

<sup>42</sup>*ARAB*, Vol. II, sec. 137, p. 72.

<sup>43</sup>Luckenbill states that the Nimrud Inscription of Sargon II "seems to come from the early years of the reign." *ARAB*, Vol. II, sec. 136, p. 71.

<sup>44</sup>*ARAB*, Vol. II, sec. 12, p. 6-- sec. 18, pp. 7-8.

<sup>45</sup>Ptolemy, "The Almagest," *Great Books Of The Western World*, Robert Maynard Hutchins, ed., et al. (Chicago: William Benton, Publisher, 1978), p. 172.

<sup>46</sup>The Julian date for this lunar eclipse is April 22, 621 B.C.

<sup>47</sup>Here is one of those three separate references to the reign of Esarhaddon in the Babylonian Chronicles--

<sup>28</sup> The twelfth year: the king of Assyria marched to Egypt (but)

<sup>29</sup> became ill on the way and died on the [tenth] day of the month Marchesvan.

<sup>30</sup> For twelve years Esarhaddon ruled Assyria. (Chronicle 14:28-30).

Other references include: Chronicle 16:1-4, and Chronicle 1.iv.30-32.

<sup>48</sup>A. K. Grayson, "Assyrian And Babylonian Chronicles," A. Leo Oppenheim, et al., eds. *Texts From Cuneiform Sources* (Locust Valley, New York: J. J. Augustin Publisher, 1975), pp. 95-96.

<sup>49</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 96.

<sup>50</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 101-102.

<sup>51</sup>*The Babylonian Talmud*, op. cit., Mishna Tract, 'Arakin 11b, p. 65.

<sup>52</sup>*Ibid.*, Mishna Tract, 'Arakin 12b, p. 69.

<sup>53</sup>Edwin R. Thiele, *The Mysterious Numbers Of The Hebrew Kings* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan Publishing House, 1983), p. 137.

<sup>54</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 79.

<sup>55</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 24.

<sup>56</sup>*Ibid.*, pp. 94-95.

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<sup>57</sup>*Ibid.*, pp. 103-104.

<sup>58</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 69.

<sup>59</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 162.

<sup>60</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 175.

<sup>61</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>62</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 168.

<sup>63</sup>See Appendix C in Edwin R. Thiele, *A Chronology Of The Hebrew Kings* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan Publishing House, 1977), p. 80.

<sup>64</sup>Ptolemy, *op. cit.*, p. 123.

<sup>65</sup>Thiele, *The Mysterious Numbers Of The Hebrew Kings*, p. 174.

<sup>66</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 181.

<sup>67</sup>Ptolemy, *op. cit.*, p. 172.

<sup>68</sup>Thiele, *A Chronology Of The Hebrew Kings*, p. 69.

<sup>69</sup>*Ibid.*, pp. 80-81.

<sup>70</sup>Paul V. Neugebauer and Ernst F. Weidner, *Ein astronomischer Beobachtungstext aus dem 37 Jahre Nebukadnezars II* (-567/66) (Leipzig: B. G. Feubner, 1915). The text reads —

“Year 37 of Nebuchadnezzar, King of Babylon. Nisannu 30: the moon became visible behind GUD-AN (= Hyades); 14 (?) USH (= 56 minutes) period of visibility [ ... ].

It moved towards the East. On 9th summer solstice. In the evening of the night of the 10th the moon was 3½ yards above Antares and in balance with it. On 12th Mars ⅔ yard above [ ... ]

On 15th the God [the moon] was seen with the God [the sun]. 30 minutes time between sunrise and the setting of the moon next morning. Lunar eclipse, which didn't take place.”

<sup>71</sup>Cf., Bartel L. van der Waerden, *Science Awakening II: The Birth Of Astronomy* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1974), p. 96. Regarding the eclipse data, van der Waerden writes: “On the 15th Simanu we find the interesting remark: ‘Eclipse of the moon, which failed to occur.’ This refers to the eclipse of the moon of 4th July - 567, which was invisible in Babylon because the full moon occurred there shortly after noon.”

<sup>72</sup>Thiele, *The Mysterious Numbers Of The Hebrew Kings*, p. 206.

<sup>73</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 191.

<sup>74</sup>See Thiele's *The Mysterious Numbers Of The Hebrew Kings* for an examination of all his co-regencies and overlapping reigns, pp. 61-65.

## **CONCLUSION - POSTING THE HEBREW KINGS**

A means of posting the Hebrew kings has been established which is in conformity with the methods used by the Hebrews at the time of the kings. This methodology then must be adhered to as much as possible. One must bear in mind that transcription errors might exist in some extent texts. As a result of these scribal errors, it is necessary to consult all the documents which list the records of the kings. These documents include the books of I and II Kings and II Chronicles in the Hebrew and the same books in the Greek Bible, and the historical writings of Flavius Josephus. The variations of these documents, one to another, are shown in Illustration XXV. A careful scrutiny of all the data will reduce the variances to almost nothing. This demonstrates the marvelous preservation which has been maintained by the Hebrew scribes.

The kings of Judah were much more significant than the kings of Israel. This factor is clearly proven by the writings of the chronicler. It is also shown by prophetic writings. It was prophesied, "The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor the mace from between his feet, until he come to whom it belongs, to whom the peoples shall render obedience" (Genesis 49:10; Jerusalem Bible).

Furthermore, David was given a promise that his descendant would stand before God as a lamp (I Kings 11:36, 15:4), and that his dynasty should last forever (Psalm 89:4). Consequently, one can expect to see an unbroken line of descendants from Judah via David as rulers in Judah until the end of the kingdom, and then, in fact, until the coming of the Messiah who in turn would rule forever. After that time, one could expect the genealogies of David's dynasty to disappear. As a result of this expectation, the kings of Judah recorded additional data concerning their kings, such as the age when a Davidite became king. Therefore, David's genealogies have Messianic significance.

In contrast, the kings of Israel frequently changed dynasties. In fact, there were ten different families who ruled Israel in the 222 years during which she existed as a kingdom: Jeroboam, Baasha, Tibni, Omri, Jehu, Shallum, Menahem, Pekah and Hoshea.

### **I. The Procedure For Posting The Kings Of Israel And Judah**

The kings have been posted from the capture of Jerusalem by David for three reasons. The first reason is because it is David's first year over Jerusalem when he defeated Shalmaneser II of Assyria in 1018 B.C. It is also the last year of Shalmaneser II according to the Assyrian Eponym List and the Bible (II Kings 10:16, LXX).

The second is to demonstrate that the 390 and forty years of Ezekiel's prophecies add up to a 430 year life of Jerusalem as the capital of Israel, which properly interprets part of Ezekiel's predictions (Ezekiel 4:5-6). The 430 years is a period of time which is not new to the history of Israel. All Israel spent 430 years

**ILLUSTRATION XXV: COMPARISON BETWEEN LXX,  
MASSORETES, AND JOSEPHUS**

JUDAH NAME OF KING	LXX KINGS			LXX CHRONICLES			HEBREW KINGS			HEBREW CHRON.			JOSEPHUS		
	AGE	SYNC	REIGN	AGE	SYNC	REIGN	AGE	SYNC	REIGN	AGE	SYNC	REIGN	AGE	SYNC	REIGN
REHOBOAM	A	16	12	41		17	41		17	41		17	40		17
ABIJAM	B	18A	3	18A		3	18A		3	18A		3	18A		3
ASA	C	24A	41		38:24C		20A	41		36:24C	41				41
JEHOSHAPHAT	D	35	11G,4H	25	35	25	35	4H	25	35	3:Law	25	35		25
JEHORAM	E	32	5J	8	32	5J	8	32	5J	8	32	8	32		8
AHAZIAH	F	22	11,12J	1	20	1	22	11,12J	1	42	1:1K	1			1
ATHALIAH	G	Became Queen at the death of Ahaziah and at the birth of Jehoash													
JEHOASH	H	7	7K	40	7	40	7	7K	40	7	40	29	7		40
AMAZIAH	I	25	2M	29	25	29	25	2M	29	25	14:17M	29	25	2M	29
UZZIAH	J	16	27N	52	16	52	16	27N	52	16		52	16	14N	52
JOTHAM	K	25	2S	16	25	16	25	2S	16	25		16	25		16
AHAZ	L	20	17S	16	25	16	20	17S	16	20		16	20		16
HEZEKIAH	M	25	3T,6:9T	29	25	29	25	3T	29	25		29	25	4T,7:9T	29
MANNASSEH	N	12		55	12	55	12		55	12		55	12		55
AMON	O	22		2	22	2	22		2	22		2	22		2
JOSIAH	P	8	18:3ab	31	8	31	8		31	8		31	8		31
JEHOAHAZ	Q	23		3 mo.	23	3 mo.	23		3 mo.	23		3 mo.	23		100 dy
JEHOIAKIM	R	25		11	25	11	25		11	25		11	25		11
JEHOIAKIN	S	18		3 mo.	8	100 dy	18		3 mo.	8		3 mo.			100 dy
ZEDEKIAH	T	21	11:19Nb	11	21	11	21		11	21		11	21	11:18Nb	11
<b>ISRAEL</b>															
JEROBOAM	A		22						22						22
NADAB	B		2C	2				2C	2					2C	2
BAASHA	C		3C	24				3C	24						24
ELAH	D			2				26C	2						2
ZIMRI	E			7 dys				27C	7 dys						7 dys
TIBNI	F							27C							
OMRI	G		31C	12				31C	12					30C	12
AHAB	H		2D	22				38C	22						22
AHAZIAH	I		17D	2				17D	2						2
JEHORAM	J		18D	12				18D	12						12
JEHU	K								28						27
JEHOAHAZ	L		23H	17				23H	17					21H	17
JOASH	M		37H	16				37H	16					37H	16
JEROBOAM II	N		15I	41				15I	41					15I	40
ZECHARIAH	O		38J	6 mo.				38J	6 mo.						6 mo.
SHALLUM	P		39J	1 mo.				39J	1 mo.						1 mo.
MENASHEM	Q		39J	10				39J	10						10
PEKAHIAH	R		50J	2				50J	2						2
PEKAH	S		52J	20				52J	20				died about time Ahaz		20
HOSHEA	T		12L, 20K	9				12L, 20K	9					9:7M	9

in Egypt under Egyptian pharaohs (Exodus 12:41). Then they were voluntarily under a theocracy for 430 years until they insisted that Samuel give them a king like other nations. The dynasty of David ruled over the Hebrew people for 430 years in Jerusalem until Jerusalem's destruction under Nebuchadnezzar.

The third reason is to show that by keeping the year beginnings in the spring of the year as did the Hebrews, chronology is much easier to comprehend than it is when the Roman dating, January first, is used as the beginning of a new year. This factor will become especially evident in the closing years of Judah.

Illustration XXVI (0 - 430 year posting) lists each king's information in columns to assist in the posting. This chart also makes it possible to post a lot of chronological information on a one page format so that the variances can be readily seen. The original posting was accomplished by the unfolding of history after the division of the kingdom. One must also use this method of traversing forward from a given point, for to calculate backward as one would do when using B.C. counting, results in a loss of continuity of thought.

The posting of the kings as it appears on Illustration XXVI follows:

- 1). The name of the king.
- 2). A reference letter assigned to the king.
- 3). The duration of his reign.
- 4). The age of the king when he was appointed. This data is given by the Biblical text.
- 5). The age of the king when he became a father. This information is calculated as a verification of the chronology. Without this test, a king might be shown to be too young to father a child as a result of an incorrect chronology.
- 6). The year the king was born.
- 7). A hypothetical year zero or the year a king ascended the throne. The only time it is used to reference from is when there is a dual regency involved. This is evidenced by the arrow ( > ) pointing to that number, and is shown for Israel under Jeroboam and Jehu, but for Judah under Jehoash, Amaziah and Uzziah.
- 8). The first year given to a king. It is always used as the reference year except when a co-regency is shown to exist.
- 9). The reference to the opposite kingdom. As an example, Nadab of Israel began in the second year of Asa of Judah. His first year, therefore, becomes the second year of Asa, *i.e.*, add two years to the first year of Asa since it has the arrow pointing to it, and that becomes the first year of Nadab. After the fall of Samaria, Judah no longer uses the first year of a king as a reference year, hence it becomes the accession year.
- 10). The year the king died, and the last year given to the king. This is also the first year of the following king before the fall of Samaria, but is the accession year of the following king afterward.

## II. The Reliability And Priority Of The Documents

The Assyrian Eponym Records and the Assyrian Inscriptions have been used to assemble chronology. Assyriologists know that the eponyms are far more

# ILLUSTRATION XXVI: 430 YEARS POSTING, DAVID'S DYNASTY

NAME . . . . .	Ref .	Yrs .	Age .	Dad .	Born .	Count .	Yr.1.Ref .	Died
DAVID	U	40	30	47	-38	0	0=07U	33
SOLOMON	V	40	23	21	9	32	33=40U	73

## ISRAEL

JEROBOAM	A	22				> 71	73	93
NADAB	B	02				92	93=02C	94
BAASHA	C	24				93	94=03C	117
ELAH	D	02				116	117=26C	118
ZIMRI	E	7DYS				117	118=27C	118
TIBNI	F					117	118	122
OMRI	G	12				117	122=31C	129
AHAB	H	22				128	>129=38C	150
AHAZIAH	I	02				149	150=17D	151
JEHORAM	J	12				150	>151=18D	162
JEHU	K	*27				>161	162	188
JEHOAHAZ	L	17				187	188=21H*	204
JOASH	M	16				203	>204=37H	219
JEROBOAM	N	*40				218	>219=15I	258
ZECHARIAH	O	.5				257	258=40J*	258
SHALLUM	P	.1				257	258=40J*	258
MENAHEM	Q	10				257	258=40J*	267
PEKAHIAH	R	02				266	267=49J*	268
PEKAH	S	20				267	>268=50J*	287
HOSHEA	T	09				286	>287=12L	295

## JUDAH

REHOBOAM	A	17	41		31	72	73	89
ABIJAM	B	03				88	89=18A	91
ASA	C	*43				90	>091=20A	133
JEHOSHAPHAT	D	*24	35	26	97	132	>133=04H	156
JEHORAM	E	*07	32	16	123	155	156=05J	162
AHAZIAH	F	01	22	21	139	161	162=11J	162
ATHALIAH	G					161	162	168
JEHOASH	H	40	07	19	160	> 167	168=07K	207
AMAZIAH	I	29	25	23	179	> 204	207=02M	233
UZZIAH	J	52	16	32	202	> 218	233=14N*	270
JOTHAM	K	16	25	15	234	259	270=02S	275
AHAZ	L	16	*25	15	249	274	>275=07S*	290
HEZEKIAH	M	*30	25	43	264	289	290=03T	319
MANASSEH	N	55	12	45	307		319	374
AMON	O	02	22	16	352		374	376
JOSIAH	P	31	08	16	368		376	407
JEHOAHAZ	Q	.2	23		384		407	408
JEHOIAKIM	R	11	25	18	383		408	419
JEHOIAKIN	S	.2	18		401		419	419
ZEDEKIAH	T	11	21		398		419	430

reliable than the inscriptions. The eponyms, unlike the inscriptions, are not easily defaced, mutilated, or stolen. The inscriptions contain a great degree of uncertainty in some cases. It is important to stress this; for some scholars would have one believe that the ancient Assyrian records are more accurate and more perfect than the Bible itself. Usually, these defaced records follow usurpation or internal turmoil. Such is the case with Shalmaneser III and Tiglath-pileser III. Luckenbill has expressed this as certain. Regarding several of Shalmaneser's inscriptions, he writes: "It is possible that the first of these, which contained a full account of the events of the year of accession, belongs to a much earlier period."<sup>1</sup> Of Tiglath-pileser's inscriptions, Luckenbill writes:

These slabs were later removed by Esarhaddon to be used in his southwest palace of the same city. As a result of the removal and retrimming of the stone, the annals have come down to us in a fragmentary state. Without the aid of the Eponym List with Notes it would have been impossible to arrange the fragments in their chronological order, and even so, future discoveries are likely to show that the arrangement now generally accepted is wrong.<sup>2</sup>

Again, Luckenbill expresses his concern: On the brick inscription Tiglath-pileser is called 'son of Adad-nirari, king of Assyria'. Whether this is a bit of fiction or whether we err in ascribing these texts to Tiglath-Pileser III is still to be determined.<sup>3</sup>

By admission, Assyriologists are not certain about the accuracy of some of the texts. This means that not all of the texts can be trusted for chronological purposes. If the Assyrian leaders were in some cases known to have stolen documents from their predecessors, is it not valid to keep that possibility open where inconsistencies arise? If the Eponym Lists cannot be reconciled with the claimed achievements of the inscriptions, does this not place the achievement in jeopardy? It would seem far more scholarly to accent the following sources according to their proper priorities:

- 1). The Hebrew manuscripts with their astronomical cycles are by far the most testable data available. Therefore, they must be given top priority where they provide any data at all. The very nature of the Bible has demonstrated that it is not trying to build up a name for anyone except God. Its greatest heroes are painted as sinners in contrast to the historical accounts of the Gentile nations which have always painted their heroes as gods.
- 2). The Assyrian Eponyms and their limited astronomical data would classify as second priority. They are unique for they offer a chronological sequence, not in bits and pieces as found in the inscriptions. They reconcile very well with the various King Lists found on inscriptions, and show military activity in certain regions of the Ancient Near East, which can be tested against Biblical information.
- 3). Finally, the Assyrian Inscriptions would follow. They can be compared to all other data found in priorities--number one and two. In some cases, the inscriptions enlighten the already known information, and in other cases, the Bible will make clear the information found in the inscriptions and in the eponyms. It appears to be certain that the inscriptions from

one Assyrian king have been stolen and used by another Assyrian king in several cases. As a result of this, one must look to these records as secondary or passive information.

The posting of the Hebrew kings will be accomplished in the above manner. Occasional critical remarks will be made about Thiele's work concerning the chronology of the Hebrew kings. These critical remarks are intended to be taken in the most positive manner as one scholar challenges another.

### **III. The Posting Of The Kings Of The United Kingdom**

Before the division of the kingdom, one has no second kingdom to reconcile or to make reference to, and one must simply add the reign of the subsequent king(s) to the previous king's years of rule.

#### **A. DAVID [1018-1018-985 B.C., 0-0-33].**

David ruled Jerusalem for thirty-three years; therefore, he died in year thirty-three (985 B.C.) since the counting starts from the year he captured Jerusalem (I Kings 2:11).

Synchronization Summary:

- 1). The starting synchronism is the last year of Shalmaneser II of Assyria (1018 B.C.). See the Assyrian Eponym Canon and Appendix A and B.
- 2). About two years after the capture of Jerusalem, David is given a rest by God from his enemies, probably a Sabbath year (II Samuel 7:1). He is also given the promise of a descendant who will eternally rule (II Samuel 7:12-16). This Davidic promise is understood to be Messianic by both Jews and Christians. The Sabbatical year was 2/1016 B.C.
- 3). David established the twenty-four priestly sections which were to serve in the Temple (I Chronicles 24:1ff.). He gave the instructions to Solomon, his son, in a religious as well as secular ordination which took place as David gave authority to Solomon (I Kings 1:28-40). The first anointing of Solomon took place in 986 B.C., one year before the death of David. One, therefore, should find a synchronism of the starting of the priestly sections and Passover when Solomon was made king. A computer analysis shows that Nisan 15 of 32/986 B.C. was a Saturday, the start of the Jehoiarib section.

#### **B. SOLOMON [986-985-945 B.C., 32-33-73].**

Solomon was anointed king before the death of David when Adonijah tried to usurp the kingdom (I Kings 1:39). He was crowned a second time when David died (I Chronicles 29:22). His anointing would be in year 32/986 B.C., and his official reign would begin in year 33/985 B.C. Solomon reigned for forty years (II Chronicles 9:30). His reign, therefore, would extend from 33/985 B.C. for forty years to 73/945 B.C.

Synchronization Summary

- 1). He was anointed in 32/986 B.C. by his father at the start of the Jehoiarib section of the priests. Thiele would have his reign beginning in 970 B.C.

The priestly section serving at Passover on that date according to the computer calendar was number twenty, not number one.

- 2). Temple construction started 480 years after the Exodus from Egypt (I Kings 6:1). The Exodus has already been shown to have an absolute date of 1461 B.C. via computer assessment. His fourth year, therefore, is 37/981 B.C. Thiele's date for the Exodus has been shown to be astronomically impossible assuming that he accepts the 480 year statement of I Kings 6:1 to be correct.
- 3). Two slaves left Shimei's employ after Solomon's third year in the year the Temple construction began, indicating that a Sabbath year was in process (I Kings 2:39), also 37/981 B.C. (Compare LXX, III Kings 2:35-39).
- 4). At the completion of the building of the Solomonic Temple, Solomon settled up with Hiram by giving him several cities which would imply a land transfer (II Chronicles 8:1-2). The Temple, begun in 37/981 B.C., was finished and dedicated twenty years afterwards (57/961 B.C.). A Jubilee year took place in the 58/960 B.C. Thiele would have the Temple dedication in 946 B.C., fourteen years out of synchronization with the Jubilee cycle.
- 5). After his death, the question of servanthood was raised which also would imply a Sabbatical year (II Chronicles 10:1-10). Solomon had refused to release the slaves and they asked Rehoboam to do so, but he refused. A Sabbath year existed in the year 72/946 B.C., the last full year of Solomon.

#### IV. The Posting Of The Kings Of Israel Up To Jehu

It was found that the kings of Israel only contained two co-regencies. Jeroboam became king two years before the death of Solomon by the act of Ahijah the prophet (I Kings 11:30). He then fled to Egypt where he stayed until Solomon died. Jehu was anointed by a disciple of Elisha before he terminated the lives of both Jehoram and Ahaziah (II Kings 9:1-10). At one time, the kingdom of Israel was split into two factions, one following Tibni and the other following Omri. One could hardly call that a co-regency. It is suggested that the reader follow Illustration XXVII a graphic view of the chronological data shown in Illustration XXVI. It also shows the eponym activity along with other synchronistic data described below.

**A. JEROBOAM (A) OF ISRAEL [947-945-925 B.C., 71-73-93] (I Kings 12:20, 14:20, *Antiquities* VIII.vii.8).** Jeroboam I ruled for twenty-two years, with two years overlapping that of Solomon, causing his reign to end in year 93/925 B.C.

**B. NADAB (B) OF ISRAEL [926-925-924 B.C., 92-93-94] (I Kings 15:25).**

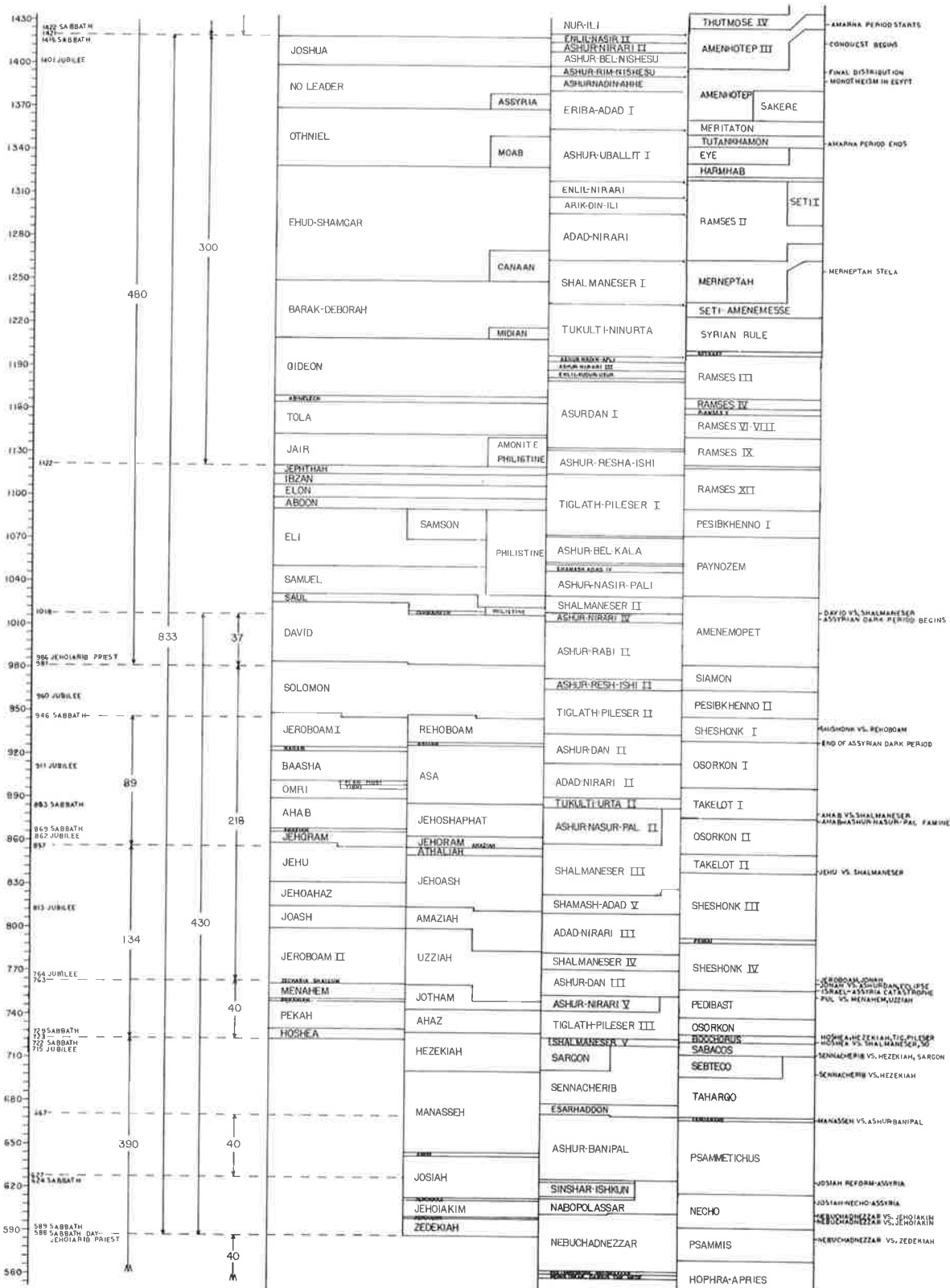
Nadab ruled for two years. He began in the second year of Asa (C) of Judah, and ended in year 94/924 B.C.

**C. BAASHA (C) OF ISRAEL [925-924-901 B.C., 93-94-117] (I Kings 15:33).** Baasha ruled for twenty-four years, his reign ended in 117/901 B.C. He began in the third year of Asa (C) of Judah.

**D. ELAH (D) OF ISRAEL [902-901-900 B.C., 116-117-118] (I Kings 16:8).**

Elah ruled for two years, causing his reign to end in 118/900 B.C. He began in the twenty-sixth year of Asa (C) of Judah.

### ILLUSTRATION XXVII: GRAPHICALLY SHOWING PARALELL KINGDOMS



**E. ZIMRI (E) OF ISRAEL [901-900-900 B.C., 117-118-118] (I Kings 16:15).**

Zimri ruled for seven days; his reign terminating in 118/900 B.C. He began in the twenty-seventh year of Asa (C) of Judah. At his death, Israel split into two factions, half following Tibni while the other half followed Omri.

**F. TIBNI (F) OF ISRAEL [901-900-896 B.C., 117-118-122] (I Kings 16:23).**

Tibni ruled for five years, causing his reign to end in 122/896 B.C. The duration of his reign is not given. It is known that he began in the twenty-seventh of Asa, for Zimri only ruled seven days. He ruled for five years because his reign ends with the first year of Omri, also the thirty-first year of Asa.

**G. OMRI (G) OF ISRAEL [901-896-889 B.C., 117-122-129] (I Kings 16:23).**

Omri ruled for twelve years, and his reign came to an end in 129 (889 B.C.). He began at the death of Zimri, the twenty-seventh of Asa, and ruled half of Israel as long as Tibni ruled, but, afterwards, he ruled all of Israel. His single regency, therefore, began at the death of Tibni, which was in the thirty-first year of Asa (C) of Judah.

**Synchronization Summary:**

The Moabite stone tells of a period of time when Moab was ruled by Israel. It reads: "(Now) Omri had occupied the land of Medeba, and (Israel) had dwelt there in his time and half the time of his son, forty years; but Chemosh dwelt there in my time."<sup>4</sup> Omri began to rule in 117/901 B.C., and forty years later terminates in 157/861 B.C., exactly half the way through the reign of Jehoram who reigned from 868 B.C.- 856 B.C. Jehoram was the son of Ahab who was the son of Omri.

**H. AHAB (H) OF ISRAEL [890-889-868 B.C., 128-129-150], (I Kings 16:29).**

Ahab ruled for twenty-two years; his reign ended in 150/868 B.C. He began to reign in the thirty-eighth of Asa (C) of Judah. Several synchronisms exist between the nation of Israel and the records of the Assyrians during his reign. There are also Sabbath year inferences.

**Synchronization Summary:**

- 1). A three and one half year famine began early in the reign of Ahab which covered a broad land area (I Kings 17:1, 18:1-3). This period would include years three--six of Ahab, years 887, 886, 885, and 884 B.C. Ashur-nasir-pal II of Assyria returned people to his land after the great famine in the eighth year of Ahab (136/882 B.C.), a year he named after himself.<sup>5</sup>
- 2). The chronology of the last years of Ahab follow:
  - a). Year 139/879 B.C.-- A tribute from Ahab in his eleventh year was made to Ashur-nasir-pal II of Assyria in his sixth year.<sup>6</sup> For problems, see item (e) below. The officer or Tartan of Ashur-nasir-pal's army no doubt was his son, Shalmaneser III. Ashur-nasir-pal speaks of recovering lands which had been lost at the time of Shalmaneser II. It was no doubt David who had defeated Shalmaneser and taken these lands 139 years before.<sup>7</sup>
  - b). Year 145/873 B.C.-- In his seventeenth year, Ahab paid a tribute to Ben-hadad of Syria (I Kings 20:1-5).

- c). Year 146/872 B.C.-- Ahab, in his eighteenth year, defeated Ben-hadad (I Kings 20:6-21).
- d). Years 147/871 - 149/869 B.C.-- During Ahab's years nineteen to twenty-one, there was peace in the land (I Kings 22:1).
- e). Year 150/868 B.C.-- Ahab died in his twenty-second year, paying no tribute to anyone (I Kings 22:35). Thiele dates Ahab 874-853 B.C.-- for a tribute was paid by Ahab to Shalmaneser according to the Monolith Inscription.<sup>8</sup> This inscription places the eponym Daian-Assur in year six of Shalmaneser, whereas the Black Obelisk places the same eponym in year four.<sup>9</sup> This conflict places the inscription or the interpretation of it under suspect. The eponym of Daian-Assur is 165/853 B.C., the third year of Jehu, and fourteen years after the death of Ahab. The sixth year of Ashur-nasir-pal, the father of Shalmaneser III, fell in year 139/879 B.C., the eleventh year of Ahab.

**I. AHAZIAH (I) OF ISRAEL [869-868-867 B.C., 149-150-151], (I Kings 22:51).** Ahaziah ruled for two years, causing his reign to end in 151/867 B.C. He began to reign in the seventeenth of Jehoshaphat (D) of Judah. His death is recorded in the Hebrew text as occurring in the second year of Jehoram son of Jehoshaphat (II Kings 1:17). The Septuagint (LXX) correctly dates this event as occurring in the eighteenth year of Jehoshaphat (IV Kings 1:18).

**J. JEHORAM (J) OF ISRAEL [868-867-856 B.C., 150-151-162], (II Kings 3:1).**

Jehoram ruled for twelve years, causing his reign to end in 162/856 B.C. He began to reign in the eighteenth year of Jehoshaphat (D) of Judah.

Synchronization Summary:

- 1). A siege against Israel from Aram took place during the reign of Jehoram (II Kings 6:24-7:6). It began in a Sabbath year (II Kings 4:1-2). The siege ended as a result of the Arameans hearing the sound of another army coming. Ashur-nasir-pal laid siege to the area in 151/867 B.C., the first year of Jehoram of Israel. It was not the Hittite or the Egyptians as they had suspected, but the Assyrians. After the end of the seven year famine (149/869 - 156/862 B.C.), a woman returned for her land (I Kings 8:1-6) which was on the Jubilee year of 862 B.C. Thiele would have the reign of Jehoram from years 852-841 B.C., well outside the Jubilee synchronization.
- 2). The Moabite stone tells of a period of time when Moab was ruled by Israel. It reads: "(Now) Omri had occupied the land of Medeba, and (Israel) had dwelt there in his time and half the time of his son, forty years; but Chemosh dwelt there in my time."<sup>10</sup> Omri began to rule in 117/901 B.C., and forty years later terminates in 157/861 B.C., exactly half the way through the reign of Jehoram who reigned from 150/868 B.C. - 162/856 B.C. Jehoram was the son of Ahab who was the son of Omri.

The death of Jehoram of Israel took place the same year as Ahaziah of Judah, for both were killed by Jehu at the same time. It would, therefore, be appropriate to post the kings of Judah for the same period (73/945 B.C. - 162/856 B.C.) to

make certain that they are synchronistic to those of Israel.

#### IV. The Posting Of The Kings Of Judah To Athaliah

##### **A. REHOBOAM (A) OF JUDAH [946-945-929 B.C., 72-73-89], (I Kings 14:21).**

Rehoboam ruled for seventeen years, causing his reign to begin in 72/946 B.C., for his end (89/929 B.C.) must equal the eighteenth of Jeroboam I of Israel ( $71 + 18 = 89 - 17 = 72/946$  B.C.). He began to rule apparently before the death of Solomon (72/946 B.C.). It is likely that Solomon made him crown prince before his death so that Jeroboam would not get control of his kingdom.

##### **B. ABIJAM (B) OF JUDAH [930-929-927 B.C., 88-89-91], (I Kings 15:1-2).**

Abijam's first year is the eighteenth year of Jeroboam I of Israel, and he ruled for three years ( $71/947$  B.C.  $+ 18 = 89 + 2 = 91/927$  B.C.).

##### **C. ASA (C) OF JUDAH [928-927-885 B.C., 90-91-133], (I Kings 15:9-10).**

Asa began to rule in the twentieth year of Jeroboam I of Israel, and ruled for forty-one years according to the Hebrew text. Jehoshaphat his successor, began to reign in the fourth year of Ahab, which was 132/886 B.C. as determined by the posting of the kings of Israel. There is a difference of forty-three years involved (forty-two from year one). There are other textual problems in this period. As an example, the mother of Asa is the same as his grandmother (cf., I Kings 15:2, 10). The LXX corrects the problem by giving the mother of Asa the name 'Ana', (III Kings 15:10) yet this same text gives a reference year for Asa, the twenty-fourth of Jeroboam. It is possible that a co-regency with his son Jehoshaphat took place in his later two years, for he suffered from a disease of the feet in his thirty-ninth year (I Kings 15:23, II Chronicles 16:12). Another chronological problem presents itself, for the Hebrew text reads that Baasha came against Asa in his thirty-sixth year (II Chronicles 16:1). The last year of Baasha is the twenty-sixth year of Asa (I Kings 16:8). It is possible that a multiplier of ten was lost. The LXX gives another variant, the thirty-eighth year of Asa for the same text.

- 1). A great Jubilee took place as Asa in his fifteenth year, was given a prophecy from Azariah (II Chronicles 15:1-7). The Jubilee year 107/911 B.C., the twenty-sixth year from the end of the reign of Asa. This gives credibility that some must have counted the first year of Asa two years after he ascended, if his reign was forty-one years ( $41 - 26 = \text{year 15 of Asa}$ ). This Jubilee was twenty Jubilees before the destruction in A.D. 70.
- 2). The first year of Asa (91/927 B.C.), is properly synchronized with all the kings of Israel from Nadab through Ahab, kings B through H. This places a final degree of accuracy on the selection of 91/927 B.C. as the year in which the referencing was accomplished.

**D. JEHOSEPHAT (D) OF JUDAH [886-885-862 B.C., 132-133-156], (I Kings 15:23-24, 22:41-42).** Jehoshaphat of Judah seems to have an error which might in some way be connected to the problem of Asa. His reign is listed as twenty-five years, yet the synchronistic data allows only twenty-four years. It seems Asa has two, too many years, Jehoshaphat has one too few. The end of Jehoshaphat (156/862 B.C.) falls in the fifth of Jehoram of Israel.

Synchronization Summary:

- 1). A Sabbatical year is mentioned for the Law was read throughout the land in the third year of Jehoshaphat (II Chronicles 17:7-12). The Sabbath year was 135/883 B.C. It was the seventy-seventh Sabbath year after Moses.
- 2). At the death of Ahab (150/868 B.C.), Jehoshaphat made another reading of the Law throughout the land (II Chronicles 18:28 - 19:7). The Sabbath year was 149/869 B.C. The last year of Ahab was 149/869 B.C. - 159/868 B.C. This also began the seven year famine of the widow of Obadiah which terminated with a Jubilee 156/862 B.C. when she returned to claim her land (II Kings 8:2).
- 3). A Jubilee described above in 156/862 B.C. falls in the last year of Jehoshaphat (II Chronicles 20:1ff.). It is the eleventh Jubilee after Joshua. Thiele would have Jehoshaphat's reign extending from 146/872 B.C. - 170/848 B.C., placing the Jubilee date outside the chronology required. The year 156/862 is the twenty-second year of Ashur-nasir-pal, king of Assyria.

**E. JEHOAM (E) OF JUDAH [863-862-856 B.C., 155-156-162] (II Chronicles 21:3, II Kings 8:16).** Jehoram began to rule in the fifth year of Jehoram of Israel (156/862 B.C.) and ruled for eight years. The beginning of his reign took place when Jehoshaphat of Judah died in 156/862 B.C. The end of his reign took place at the eleventh year of Jehoram of Israel (162/856 B.C.), six years later. Instead of eight years, there seems to be only seven total years of reign. This seems to be the second lost year from Asa. It has been necessary to extend Asa by two years in order to fit all the data, but as a result, one year was removed from each king, Jehoshaphat and Jehoram.

Synchronization Summary:

The last two years before his death (161/857 B.C. - 162/856 B.C.), he was cursed by Elijah. Then incursions were made into his land by the Arabs and Philistines (II Chronicles 21:15). It was the third and fourth year of Shalmaneser III of Assyria. The Arameans were no doubt occupied in their struggles with Assyria, leaving the Philistines and the Arabs in the south free to attack Judah. Thiele has the last two years of Jehoram 842 - 841 B.C., in the seventeenth and eighteenth of Shalmaneser III, a time when he was taking a tribute from Jehu. Certainly not a time when two forces would be fighting against the same territory.

**F. AHAZIAH (F) OF JUDAH [857-856-856 B.C., 161-162-162], II Kings 9:29.**

Ahaziah began to reign in the eleventh year of Jehoram of Israel and ruled for one year. The Bible also states that it was the twelfth year (II Kings 8:25). In both cases the number is correct, one is counting from the accession of Jehoram, the other is counting as is standard, from year one. The end of his reign must be the first year of Jehu of Israel; for he was killed at that time by Jehu as he usurped the kingdom of Israel.

Synchronization Summary:

Ahaziah fought a war against Hazael of Aram right after he killed Ben-

hadad of Aram (II Kings 8:28). Ben-hadad (Hadad-ezer) of Syria is last mentioned by Shalmaneser III of Assyria in his eleventh year (169/849 B.C.), and in his eighteenth year (177/841 B.C.) he mentions Hazael.<sup>11</sup> Ben-hadad died in 156/862 B.C. (II Kings 8:1-15), after the Jubilee in the last year of Jehoshaphat.

The reigns of the Hebrew kings from David to Jehu have been traced, (162 years) and synchronistic evidences were included as they appeared. The only chronological problem with the Hebrew records are a two year period during the reign of Asa which is reflected forward into Jehoshaphat and Jehoram. The Israelite history was flawless and showed some synchronistic data with the Assyrian kings. The Judaic kingdom demonstrated several synchronistic cycles of the Mosaic Law and one from the priestly section established by David.

The chronology from Jehu to Solomon's fall tends to depend on a constant synchronism of data between the two kingdoms from this time in history, so the catalogued data requires frequent moving from the kings of Israel back and forth to the kings of Judah. Now it is necessary to return to the kings (and queen) of Judah.

## V. The Posting Of The Kings Of Israel And Judah To The Fall Of Samaria

**A. ATHALIAH (G) OF JUDAH [857-856-850 B.C., 161-162-168] (II Kings 11:4).** Athaliah began to rule at the same time as Jehu of Israel, for she usurped the throne at the time that Jehu killed Ahaziah. She then ruled for seven years from the time Jehoash was an infant until he was seven years old. Her reign must also end seven years after her usurpation in 168/850 B.C.

**B. JEHOASH (H) OF JUDAH [851-850-811 B.C., 167-168-207], (II Kings 11:12; 12:1).** Jehoash was anointed king the year before Athaliah was killed, therefore, a co-regency existed in Judah. His reference is the seventh of Jehu, for Athaliah ruled until he was seven years old. He was a baby when she killed all his brothers. He ruled for forty years, ending in 207/811 B.C.

### Synchronization Summary:

- 1). In year twenty-three (190/828 B.C.) a repair of the Temple took place (II Kings 12:7). A Sabbath year was 191/827 B.C.
- 2). The later part of his reign, after the death of Jehoiada, he fell from God and then he experienced subjection and paid tribute to Hazael of Aram (190/828 B.C. - 207/811 B.C.) (II Chronicles 24:17ff.). Thiele has his reign extending from 835-796 B.C. The later years of Shalmaneser III of Assyria were racked with revolt and trouble (II Kings 12:18ff.), and he last mentions Hazael in his twenty-first year (179/839 B.C.). Joash of Israel made war against the son of Hazael, placing the death of Hazael some time during the reign of Joash (*Antiquities* IX.viii.7). If the twenty-third year reform of Jehoash were dated by Thiele at 206/812 B.C., Hazael would no longer have been a viable source of trouble; for this date would be his twenty-seventh year. The Bible seems to date the death of Hazael soon after the death of Jehoahaz of Israel (II Kings 13:22ff.). This would be 204/814 B.C. according to the records, giving Hazael a reign of about thirty years. Thiele would require a death after 220/798 B.C., giving Hazael a total reign of

forty-six years minimum. Hazael was already an officer in the army of Ben-hadad when he was anointed which probably meant he was at least thirty years old (II Kings 8:8). He still would necessarily have been an active militarist at a ripe old age of seventy-six!

**C. JEHU (K) OF ISRAEL [857-856-830 B.C., 161-162-188], (II Kings 9:3, 10:36).** Jehu ruled for twenty-eight years according to the Hebrew, but twenty-seven according to Josephus. He was anointed by one of Elisha's prophet-servants before he usurped the kingdom, therefore, he would be given a co-regency. His last year is equal to the twenty-first year of Jehoash of Judah (188/830 B.C.). If he was anointed one year before he usurped the throne, he would have been anointed in 161/857 B.C., giving him a twenty-seven year (*Antiquities* IX.viii.1) rather than a twenty-eight year duration.

Synchronization Summary:

- 1). A great reform took place in the first year of Jehu (II Kings 10:18-27). Baal was removed from the land along with those who worshipped him. The Sabbath year extended from 856-855 B.C., the first year of Jehu. Shalmaneser III claims to have taken a tribute from Jehu in his eighteenth year (841 B.C.).<sup>12</sup> Thiele dates the reign of Jehu 841-814 B.C., and placed the assault in Jehu's first year by Shalmaneser. In contrast to Thiele, the Bible seems to allow a period of time before the judgement of God comes on him for allowing the worship centers at Bethel and Dan to remain (II Kings 10:28-29).
- 2). The death of Ben-hadad took place between the fourteenth and eighteenth years of Shalmaneser III of Assyria, in about 174/844 B.C.<sup>13</sup> This is the thirteenth year of Jehu. Hazael fought Jehu also, probably in about 174/844 B.C., before he took on Assyria (II Kings 10:32).

**D. JEHOAHAZ (L) OF ISRAEL [831-830-814 B.C., 187-188-204], (II Kings 13:1).** Jehoahaz began in the twenty-third of Jehoash (H) of Judah according to the Hebrew text, but the twenty-first according to Josephus (*Antiquities* IX.viii.5). If his reign duration was seventeen years, and his successor began in the thirty-seventh of Joash of Judah, it becomes obvious that the account of Josephus is correct.

**E. JOASH (M) OF ISRAEL [815-814-799 B.C., 203-204-219], (II Kings 13:10).** Joash (Jehoash) ruled for sixteen years, causing his reign to end in 219/799 B.C. He began in the thirty-seventh year of Jehoash (H) of Judah.

Synchronization Summary:

- 1). Adad-nirari III claims he went to Palestine in his fifth year.<sup>14</sup> This would be the ninth year of Joash (212/806 B.C.). There seems to be no military activity recorded in the Bible with Assyria.
- 2). Amaziah of Judah is said to have outlived Joash by fifteen years (II Kings 14:17). These fifteen years become fourteen years since we are still cross referencing to another kingdom. Amaziah's death, therefore, is correctly dated at 233/785 B.C. (799 B.C. - 14 = 785 B.C.).
- 3). Joash of Israel made war against the son of Hazael, placing the death of Hazael before Joash (*Antiquities* IX.viii.7).<sup>15</sup>

**F. AMAZIAH (I) OF JUDAH [814-811-785 B.C., 204-207-233], (II Chronicles 24:25, II Kings 14:1).** Amaziah apparently began to reign before Jehoash died; for Jehoash was a sick man (II Chronicles 24:25). He began to reign in the second year of Joash of Israel, and ruled for twenty-nine years. His appointment year is fifteen years before Jeroboam II of Israel (II Kings 14:17). His last year is the fourteenth year of Jeroboam I of Israel.

Synchronization Summary:

- 1). Immediately upon the beginning of Amaziah, a great reform in the land was made, taking a census and also reading the Law (II Chronicles 25:1-6). The Jubilee year was 205/813 B.C., the first year of Amaziah. Amaziah then fell from God and was taken captive by Joash of Israel (II Chronicles 25:20-23). At the same time, Uziah his son was made king to rule in 800 B.C. by the people (II Chronicles 2:1).
- 2). Joash of Israel must have died (219/799 B.C.), soon after the battle with Amaziah; for Amaziah lived on for fifteen more years after his death until 233/785 B.C. This battle took place in the fourteenth year of Amaziah (*Antiquities* IX.ix.3) in 218/800 B.C.

**G. JEROBOAM II (N) OF ISRAEL [800-799-760 B.C., 218-219-258], (II Kings 14:23).** Jeroboam II ruled for forty-one years according to the Hebrew texts, but forty according to Josephus (*Antiquities* IX.x.1). He began the fifteenth year of Amaziah of Judah. The total time from the beginning of his reign to the end of Samaria is seventy-seven years if one uses forty years for his reign. The figure forty-one years is too many years. Jeroboam's reign covers much of Adad-nirari's reign, all of the reign of Shalmaneser IV and much of the rule of Ashur-dan III. Ashur-dan seems to be the only aggressive king against Palestine; for the only eponyms which show military activity in Syria and Palestine are years 773, 772, 765, and 755 B.C., the first to the last years of Ashur-dan III. The other kings of Assyria seemed to be occupied elsewhere or were friendly with Jeroboam.

Synchronization Summary:

- 1). Eponyms for 773, 772 B.C. are against Damascus and Hatarika.<sup>16</sup> It is likely that the king of Assyria caused some of the affliction described in II Kings 14:26 against Israel.
- 2). The Eponym 765 B.C. shows an incursion into Hatarika. Apparently, a part of Israel was deported at this time; for the Talmud states that Jubilees were no longer counted after the first deportation of Israel. The land lost is described as 'from the pass of Hamath as far as the sea of Arabah' (II Kings 14:25). It is known that a Jubilee year took place in 254/764 B.C. According to Leviticus 25:10, all Israel must be in the land when Jubilees are counted (*Sifra, Be-Har* 2:3). This deportation took place under a king named Pul (I Chronicles 5:26). This deportation is described in the Assyrian annals as taking place between the third and ninth years of Tiglath-pileser III.<sup>17</sup> However, 765 B.C. is the eighth year of Ashur-dan III, the 'Pul' of Scripture. These annalistic texts are not the records of Tiglath-pileser, for the eponyms do not agree with these documents. Among those mentioned is Azariah (Uzziah) of Judah. There is no military activity in the area dur-

ing the third through ninth year of Tiglath-pileser (742 B.C.- 736 B.C.), seriously harming the chronology of Thiele. The year 258/765 B.C. is the year when Pul deported Reuben, Gad, and the half tribe of Manasseh.

- 3). In the eponym for 764 B.C., there was an apparent brief period of reorganization and relocation of peoples. According to the text, 30,300 were brought to the country of Assyria.<sup>18</sup>
- 4). In 763 B.C. the eponym shows a solar eclipse in the land. This eclipse can be shown to have crossed Nineveh and Israel on June 7, (Gregorian calendar), from 9:20 a.m. till 12:42 p.m. (see Illustration XII for the trajectory). Jonah spoke to Jeroboam during his reign (II Kings 14:25). Also, Jonah went to Nineveh to warn the Assyrians about the coming disaster if they did not repent; he gave them forty days to do so (Jonah 1:1). According to the Bible, Nineveh did repent. The eponyms demonstrate this by showing that the Assyrians did not return to Palestine for eight years, until 755 B.C.

Since Jonah was not happy with Assyria for having deported the tribes east of the Jordan, he did not want them to repent and be saved. Prophets oftentimes spoke: 'a day shall be for a year' (cf., Ezekiel 4). It seems that the prophet Jonah gave Samaria the same forty days to repent but they refused. As a result, they were deported forty years later by Shalmaneser V of Assyria. The sun went down at noon in Assyria, resulting in the people's respect for the preaching of Jonah. Their god, the sun disc, had vanished from the sky as Jonah spoke. Two years later, Amos spoke of this eclipse as history and prophecy, "I will cause the sun to go down at noon, and I will darken the earth in the clear day" (Amos 8:9). Amos was telling of another eclipse of the sun which took place at noon on Passover of A.D. 30. The eclipse of A.D. 30 was of a more miraculous nature, but the results were the same; the Gentiles were saved! Judah rejected the message from their Messiah in A.D. 30 as Israel had in 763 B.C., and was also deported after forty years. The Roman armies surrounded Jerusalem during the Passover of A.D. 70, forty years to the day after Jesus' death on Passover of A.D. 30.

- 5). Amos spoke to Jeroboam two years before the earthquake of Uzziah (Amos 1:1) in 761 B.C., telling him that he was going to die by the sword and Israel was going to be deported (Amos 7:11). This warning dates the death of Jeroboam, placing it soon afterward in 258/760 B.C., not as Thiele would suggest, 753 B.C. George Rawlinson also agrees with this conclusion that Pul must have preceded Tiglath-pileser.<sup>19</sup> It appears that Pul must have been Ashur-dan III.

#### **H. UZZIAH (J) OF JUDAH [800-785-748 B.C., 218-233-270], (II Kings 15:1-5).**

Uzziah began to reign in the twenty-seventh year of Jeroboam of Israel and reigned for fifty-two years. The Biblical reference is to the twenty-seventh year of Jeroboam II of Israel, but Josephus dates his sole regency from the fourteenth of Jeroboam (*Antiquities* IX.x.3). It has already been noted that he was made king by the people in 218/800 B.C. when his father Amaziah was captured, and that he was made king officially fifteen years later when his father died in 233/785

B.C., also the fourteenth of Jeroboam II.

Synchronization Summary:

- 1). Uzziah went into the Temple to burn incense against God's will, and as a result he became a leper. His son, Jotham, then ruled in his place (II Chronicles 26:16ff.). A great earthquake took place at this time according to Josephus (*Antiquities* IX. x.4). This same earthquake is mentioned by Amos as occurring two years after his visions. Uniquely, the Assyrian eponyms also tell of the great disaster in 259/759 B.C., the year Jotham became king. Thiele would place Jotham in years 750 B.C. -732 B.C. , at least nine years too late for the Assyrian records.
- 2). A Sabbath year occurs in 219/799 B.C., the early part of the reign of Uzziah. He obeyed God at that time (II Chronicles 26:5).
- 3). Uzziah seems also to have participated in the Jubilee of 254/764 B.C. According to the Bible, the king sought God until the death of Zechariah (II Chronicles 26:3-5).
- 4). A prophecy came to Isaiah the year of Uzziah's death (Isaiah 6:1ff.). This prophecy told of the Prophet who was to come to them but was not going to be heard. He also told of the destruction and dispersion of the people. This Prophet came in A.D. 30, 777 years after the death of Uzziah, and in A.D. 70 the people were dispersed.
- 5). The eponym activity for year 765 B.C. falls inside that of Uzziah and Jeroboam. It was the first deportation of Rueben, Gad, and the half tribe of Manasseh by Pul, the territory east of the Jordan (I Chronicles 5:26). For more details, see Jeroboam II of Israel.
- 6). An Assyrian incursion takes place in the land of Palestine, according to the eponym of 755 B.C. This is in the last year of Ashur-dan III when the country was in a turmoil and records were being defaced. There are no records extent from Shalmaneser IV or Ashur-dan III. An inscription tells of a tribute taken from Uzziah, Resin, and Menahem at the same time.<sup>20</sup> The record was attributed to Tiglath-pileser III, but had been defaced and placed with inscriptions facing the wall by Esarhaddon.<sup>21</sup> It cannot be that of Tiglath-pileser for the eponyms do not match. It is possible that Tiglath-pileser usurped the records and Esarhaddon knew it. The second option is that they have not been correctly ascribed. These most certainly are part of the missing records of Ashur-dan III recording the activities of his last year.

**I. ZECHARIAH (O) OF ISRAEL [761-760-760 B.C., 257-258-258], (II Kings 15:8).** Zechariah ruled for six months, causing his reign to end in 258/760 B.C. He began in the thirty-eighth year of Uzziah of Judah according to the Hebrew text. Josephus does not reference this king to another. It is the fortieth year of Uzziah; for he begins at the death of Jeroboam II which occurs in the fortieth of Uzziah. He rules for less than one year, hence his end also occurs in the fortieth of Uzziah. Shallum murdered him and he became king of *Israel*, not Ephraim as Thiele has suggested.

**J. SHALLUM (P) OF ISRAEL [761-760-760 B.C., 257-258-258], (II Kings 15:13).** Shallum ruled for one month, causing his reign to end the same year he began, also the fortieth of Uzziah. He was killed by Menahem who then became king of *Israel*, again, not Ephraim. (See Zechariah's comments, par. I.

**K. MENAHEM (Q) OF ISRAEL [761-760-751 B.C., 257-258-267], (II Kings 15:17).** Menahem ruled for ten years, also starting in the fortieth of Uzziah, and ending in the forty-ninth year of Uzziah. (See comments on Zechariah, par. I.

Synchronization Summary:

- 1). At the beginning of Menahem, Thiele almost sacrilegiously has created a second kingdom in the northern state of Israel in 752 B.C. with Pekah as king. He has Pekah reigning alongside of Menahem for ten years, and then two years through the reign of Pekahiah without any textual warrant from the Bible or from Josephus except the following statement: "Therefore shall Israel and Ephraim fall in their iniquity; Judah also shall fall with them" Hosea 5:5).<sup>22</sup> A serious blunder takes place with this concept, for Hoshea prophesied during the reign of Jeroboam II, not after the reign of Menahem (Hosea 1:1). If Thiele is correct, the second kingdom he proposes did not even exist yet! The synonyms used by Hoshea alternately calling Israel-- Ephraim-- are hardly justification for establishing a kingdom in the north called 'Ephraim'. The reference given for the beginning of the reign of Menahem is the thirty-ninth of Uzziah, and thirteen years later Pekah is given the reference; the fifty-second of Uzziah. Of course, the thirteen years is made up of the ten year reign of Menahem and the two year reign of Pekahiah. Thiele's *only* purpose, of course, is to place the fourteenth of Hezekiah in the third year of Sennacherib. This has already been shown to be inconsistent with the Assyrian and the Hebrew records.
- 2). Synchronistic details are especially helpful for the eponym of 755 B.C. and the incursion by Pul. For expansion of details, see the synchronisms for Uzziah and Jeroboam II of Israel. Thiele has placed Menahem in the period 752 - 742 B.C. during which time the eponyms show no activity in the land of Hatti at all!

**L. PEKAHIAH (R) OF ISRAEL [752-751-750 B.C., 266-267-268], (II Kings 15:23).** Pekahiah ruled for two years, causing his reign to end in 268/750 B.C. His reign began in the fiftieth year of Uzziah of Judah according to the Hebrew text, yet Menahem ends his rule in the forty-ninth of Uzziah. Scripture tells us that Pekahiah succeeded Menahem in ruling *Israel*, not Ephraim (II Kings 15:22-23).

**M. PEKAH (S) OF ISRAEL [751-750-731 B.C., 267-268-287], (II Kings 15:27).**

Pekah ruled for twenty years, causing his reign to end in 287/731 B.C. He began to reign in the fifty-second year of Uzziah of Judah according to the Hebrew text. He is not referenced by Josephus, but using simple addition, the forty-ninth of Uzziah for Pekahiah plus two year reign of Pekahiah equals the fiftieth year of Uzziah.

Synchronization Summary:

The reign of Pekah parallels part of Ashur-nirari V and Tiglath-pileser

III. There are no eponyms in the Assyrian Eponym Canon which show excursions into the area of Palestine until the end of Pekah's reign in 734, 733, and 732 B.C. These eponyms, along with the records of Tiglath-pileser, tell of the defeat of Pekah and Resin by Tiglath-pileser, and a replacement of Pekah by Hoshea.<sup>23</sup> They describe the activities of Tiglath-pileser against Israel which had been encouraged by Ahaz as a result of Pekah and Rezin's attacks on Judah (II Kings 16:7). Tiglath-pileser also records activity against 'lauhazi' which must make reference to Ahaz of Judah.<sup>24</sup> 'Jehoahaz' is a transliteration of the Akkadian word; hence the Hebrew name, Ahaz.

**N. HOSHEA (T) OF ISRAEL [732-731-723 B.C., 286-287-295], (II Kings 17:1).**

Hoshea ruled for nine years, causing his reign to end in 295/723 B.C. He began to reign in the twelfth year of Ahaz of Judah, a reference which demonstrates the exactness of the references for kings of Israel-- Zechariah through Pekah.

Synchronization Summary:

- 1). The eponyms 725, 724, and 723 B.C. show a three year siege against Samaria. The Biblical records tell that Shalmaneser deported Samaria after a three year siege (II Kings 17:5-6). The Babylonian records state merely that Shalmaneser 'ravaged Samaria'.<sup>25</sup>
- 2). Samaria was deported as a result of their disobedience to the Sabbath years (Mishna Tract, *Shabbath* 33a; II Kings 17:16). The last Sabbath year of Samaria started in the autumn of 296/722 B.C. It was exactly 700 years after Moses had the second reading of the Law (1422 B.C), and took place in the final deportation under Sargon.<sup>26</sup>
- 3). Perhaps the most glaring error of Thiele presents itself when he removes Hoshea's deportation from the sixth year of Hezekiah (II Kings 18:9-10). For more details, see Hezekiah of Judah.
- 4). Israel is to be without a sin offering for 390 years as foretold by the Prophet Ezekiel (Ezekiel 4:5). Their deportation in 295/723 B.C. was exactly 390 years before they built a temple on Mount Gerizim in 333 B.C. (*Antiquities* XI.viii.2).

**O. JOTHAM (K) OF JUDAH [759-748-743 B.C., 259-270-275], (II Kings 15:5,32-33).** Jotham began to reign at the time his father Uzziah burned incense on the altar. He began to reign in the second year of Pekah of Israel and ruled for sixteen years.

Synchronization Summary:

- 1). The earthquake of Uzziah started the reign of Jotham and it is discussed under Uzziah's chronology, mentioned both in the Bible and in the Assyrian records.
- 2). Thiele has changed the reign of Jotham from sixteen years to eighteen based on II Kings 15:30, where Hoshea is said to have killed Pekah in the twentieth year of Jotham.

**P. AHAZ (L) OF JUDAH [744-743-728 B.C., 274-275-290], (II Kings 16:1).**

Ahaz began his reign when Jotham died and reigned for sixteen years. He is also said to have began his reign in the seventeenth of Pekah of Israel. The text

## Conclusion - Posting the Hebrew Kings

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creates problems, for it is the seventh of Pekah. Perhaps, at one time the number written with a character in Hebrew only needed a small 'yod' added to make a seven into a seventeen. However, the yod eventually disappeared from the Hebrew text. The end of his reign occurs at the third of Hoshea of Israel.

### Synchronization Summary:

- 1). The eponym for years 734, 733, and 732 B.C. verify the position of Ahaz in history. It was during these years that he managed to gain the cooperation of Tiglath-pileser III in defeating Pekah and Resin (II Kings 16:7-9). Thiele has given Ahaz twenty years from 735 B.C. - 715 B.C., with his official year beginning in 732 B.C. The Bible does not include Jotham in the activities of Pekah and Resin as Thiele's chronology demands. Thiele has Tiglath-pileser coming into Damascus during the reign of Jotham.
- 2). According to the Hebrew text, Ahaz was twenty when he became king, but the LXX states that he was twenty-five. If he were twenty, Jotham would have become his father at ten, an age out of the question.

## VI. The Posting Of The Last Kings Of Judah

A new method of counting kings takes place after Ahaz. The kingdom of Israel fell in the sixth year of his son, Hezekiah. After Israel fell, it was no longer necessary to reference one kingdom to another, therefore, the extra 'counting' year was dropped since the accession year was no longer counted as also the first year. Hezekiah got caught in this change, and as a result, his duration was a hybrid in that it used a counting year at the start since Samaria had not yet been deported, and yet the reign duration was counted from the accession until the death as is done in all future kings. This resulted in a need to add one year to his total of twenty-nine years, making it thirty.

A lot of unrest also took place in the next 135 years that Judah remained as a nation. Several of her kings were replaced at the time the year changed, in the spring. This does not reconcile with a Gregorian year which changes in the middle of winter. As a result, the total duration of the reigns of some of the kings appear to conflict with the records of the Hebrews. Illustration XXVIII is shown so that one can see why B.C. dating modifies the length of their reign. The abbreviation, A.J. = After Jerusalem, indicates the number of years after David's capture of Jerusalem in 1018 B.C.

The Babylonian records and the Bible state that Jehoiakin was captured, and Zedekiah was made king in his place on the second of Adar<sup>27</sup> (II Chronicles 36:10). This would give Jehoiakin one year in B.C. counting since his three months passed the first of January, but would give him nothing in Hebrew counting since he did not pass the first of Nisan. Zedekiah, therefore, became king before the first of Nisan, giving him an extra year in Hebrew years than one would expect if counting B.C. years. Likewise, Josiah, since he died after January one, but before Nisan one, received thirty-one years in Hebrew counting, but would get thirty-two in B.C. dates. Kings started their campaigns of expansion in the spring of the year (II Samuel 11:1). Jehoahaz was made king also at that time of the year, therefore, we know that his reign must have passed the first of Nisan, giving him one year of reign in Hebrew, but since it did not pass the first of January, he would receive

**ILLUSTRATION XXVIII: B.C. DATING MODIFIES HEBREW DATING**

<b>JOSIAH</b>				
Gregorian	[32 years]	ca.	642 B.C.	to Jan. 30, 610 B.C.
Hebrew	31 years	ca.	376 A.J.	to Adar 29, 407 A.J.
<b>JEHOAHAZ</b>				
Gregorian	[0 years]	ca.	Jan. 30, 610 B.C.	to Apr. 30, 610 B.C.
Hebrew	1 year	ca.	Adar 29, 407 A.J.	to Iyyar 1, 408 A.J.
<b>JEHOIAKIM</b>				
Gregorian	[11 years]	ca.	Apr. 30, 610 B.C.	to Nov. 11, 599 B.C.
Hebrew	11 years	ca.	Iyyar 1, 408 A.J.	to Bul 21, 419 A.J.
<b>JEHOIAKIN</b>				
Gregorian	[1 year]	ca.	Nov. 11, 599 B.C.	to Feb. 19, 598 B.C.
Hebrew	0 years	ca.	Bul 21, 419 A.J.	to Adar 2, 419 A.J.
<b>ZEDEKIAH</b>				
Gregorian	[10 years]	ca.	Feb. 19, 598 B.C.	to Aug. 2, 588 B.C.
Hebrew	11 years	ca.	Adar 2, 419 A.J.	to Ab 9, 430 A.J.

none in B.C. dating methods (*Antiquities* X.v.2). Compare Illustration XXVI with Illustration XXIX for the chronological differences.

Thiele, using B.C. dating methods, has failed to recognize this significant difference and has given Hebrew years to these kings. The significant difference would show in the death year of Josiah and the accession year of Zedekiah, each being one year in error in history. The death of Josiah was 610 B.C., for he was going to meet the king of Assyria at the Euphrates (II Kings 23:29).<sup>28</sup> The king of Assyria had no residence at that time, for both Nineveh and Haran had fallen to the king of Babylon. Thiele has Josiah's death a year later in 609 B.C. According to the present study, the deportation of Jeconiah would then take place in 598 B.C., Thiele suggests 597 B.C. Finally, the deportation of Zedekiah would take place in 588 B.C., whereas Thiele would have 586 B.C.

**A. HEZEKIAH (M) OF JUDAH [729-728-699 B.C., 289-290-319], (II Kings 18:1-2).** Hezekiah is the last king of Judah who is cross-referenced with a king of Israel; for Israel fell to Shalmaneser in his sixth year. Hezekiah began in the third year of Hoshea of Israel and ruled for twenty-nine years. It is necessary to give him thirty years as a result of a change in the way the kings counted after the deportation of Samaria. Notice his father died in 290/728 B.C. and he died in 319/699 B.C. which still gives him the twenty-nine years of reign required by the text. The old method of counting is abandoned after the fall of the northern kingdom. Notice on the chart of the Hebrew kings that there is not a hypothetical year zero in the third column from the right after Hezekiah. His sixth year also must be the ninth year of Hoshea.

Synchronization Summary:

- 1). Hezekiah had a great reform in the first month of his reign, and many from Israel came to Jerusalem to worship (II Chronicles 29:1, 30:1-3). This

# ILLUSTRATION XXIX: HEBREW KINGS POSTED IN 'B.C. YEARS'

NAME . . . . .	Ref .	Yrs .	Age .	Dad .	Born .	Count .	Yr.1.Ref .	Died
DAVID	U	40	30	47	1056	1018	1018=07U	985
SOLOMON	V	40	23	21	1009	986	985=40U	945

## ISRAEL

JEROBOAM	A	22				>947	945	925
NADAB	B	02				926	925=02C	924
BAASHA	C	24				925	924=03C	901
ELAH	D	02				902	901=26C	900
ZIMRI	E	7DYS				901	900=27C	900
TIBNI	F					901	900	896
OMRI	G	12				901	896=31C	889
AHAB	H	22				890	>889=38C	868
AHAZIAH	I	02				869	868=17D	867
JEHORAM	J	12				868	>867=18D	856
JEHU	K	*27				>857	856	830
JEHOAHAZ	L	17				831	830=21H*	814
JOASH	M	16				815	>814=37H	799
JEROBOAM	N	*40				800	>799=15I	760
ZECHARIAH	O	.5				761	760=40J*	760
SHALLUM	P	.1				761	760=40J*	760
MENAHEM	Q	10				761	760=40J*	751
PEKAHIAH	R	02				752	751=49J*	750
PEKAH	S	20				751	>750=50J*	731
HOSHEA	T	09				732	>731=12L	723

## JUDAH

REHOBOAM	A	17	41		987	946	945	929
ABIJAM	B	03				930	929=18A	927
ASA	C	*43				928	>927=20A	885
JEHOSHAPHAT	D	*24	35	26	921	886	>885=04H	862
JEHORAM	E	*07	32	16	895	863	862=05J	856
AHAZIAH	F	01	22	21	879	857	856=11J	856
ATHALIAH	G					857	856	850
JEHOASH	H	40	07	19	858	>851	850=07K	811
AMAZIAH	I	29	25	23	839	>814	811=02M	785
UZZIAH	J	52	16	32	816	>800	785=14N*	748
JOTHAM	K	16	25	15	784	759	748=02S	743
AHAZ	L	16	*25	15	769	744	>743=07S*	728
HEZEKIAH	M	*30	25	43	754	729	728=03T	699
MANASSEH	N	55	12	45	711		699	644
AMON	O	02	22	16	666		644	642
JOSIAH	P	[32]	08	16	650		642	610
JEHOAHAZ	Q	[0]	23		634		610	610
JEHOIAKIM	R	11	25	18	635		610	599
JEHOIAKIN	S	[1]	18		617		599	598
ZEDEKIAH	T	[10]	21		620		598	588

was in the spring of 290/728 B.C. The Sabbath year was year 289/729 B.C., ninety-nine Sabbath years after Moses.

- 2). The fourth through the sixth years of Hezekiah were the last three years of the reign of Hoshea of Israel (II Kings 18:9-11). Thiele has moved the reign of Hezekiah ahead fourteen years so that the deportation of Hoshea did not take place during the sixth year reign of Hezekiah.
- 3). Hezekiah had a sign of the Jubilee given by God to him in his fourteenth year (II Kings 19:29-31). The year 303/715 B.C. is the fourteenth Jubilee after Joshua.
- 4). His fourteenth year is verified by the annals of Sargon II. In his seventh year, Sargon took tribute from Egypt.<sup>29</sup> This tribute has often been considered erroneous because he was fighting a war in Media at the same time. This campaign was a Syro-Palestinian expansion front carried on by Sennacherib who ruled from Nineveh while his father Sargon ruled from Khorsabad (II Chronicles 30:6-7). The Bible tells of the king of Egypt, Tirhakah, coming to the rescue of Hezekiah. Sennacherib interrupted his siege long enough to defeat the king of Egypt (II Kings 19:8-9). Then he came back to Jerusalem only to experience his army's annihilation (II Kings 19:35). It was not the same siege described by Sennacherib as occurring in his third year (702 B.C.). Sennacherib's successes were recorded, but his defeat was not written down in Assyrian annalistic texts.
- 5). Sennacherib defeated Merodach-baladan in his first year (313/705 B.C.), removing him from the scene, never to be a military problem again.<sup>30</sup> He could not have been a problem fourteen years later as Thiele has Hezekiah incorrectly dated.
- 6). Hezekiah grew proud and was humbled again in his later years (II Chronicles 32:25-27). It appears that Sennacherib is the instrument God used to do this, for his annals campaign of 702 B.C. is much differently described from the Biblical account of 715 B.C.<sup>31</sup> This event took place in 316/702 B.C., the twenty-seventh year of Hezekiah.
- 7). Thiele has rearranged the entire chronology of the Hebrew kings who ruled before Hezekiah. He has moved them fourteen years later, simply to satisfy the preconceived notion that Hezekiah's fourteenth year is the same as Sennacherib's third.

**B. MANASSEH (N) OF JUDAH [699 - 644 B.C., 319-374], (II Kings 21:1).**

Manasseh began to rule at the end of Hezekiah (319/699 B.C.) and reigned for fifty-five years.

Synchronization Summary:

- 1). Manasseh was twelve years old when he began to reign (II Kings 21:1). According to Josephus, Hezekiah had no children when Isaiah spoke to him in his fourteenth year (*Antiquities* X.ii.1). It would be impossible to date the overlap of Manasseh with Hezekiah as Thiele has done. Sennacherib also tells us that in 702 B.C. he took daughters of Hezekiah into his harem.<sup>32</sup>
- 2). Esarhaddon shows campaigns into Palestine and Egypt in his tenth year.

He mentions Manasseh as one of twenty-two kings of Hittite-land from which he extracted tribute, gave them orders and great beams for the restoration of the palace of Nineveh.<sup>33</sup> This seems to be year ten of Esarhaddon (671 B.C.), and year twenty-eight of Manasseh. Manasseh repented and removed the alien gods from his land.

- 3). Ezra makes reference to the Samaritan peoples, who claim to have been brought back to the land by Esarhaddon of Assyria (Ezra 4:1-2). Perhaps it was about the same time as Manasseh, somewhere between the tenth and twelfth (last) year of Esarhaddon.

**C. AMON (O) OF JUDAH [644-642 B.C., 374-376], (II Kings 21:19).**

Amon began to reign at the death of Manasseh and ruled for two years.

**D. JOSIAH (P) OF JUDAH [642-610 B.C., 376-407], (II Kings 22:1).**

Josiah began to reign at the death of Amon, and ruled for thirty-one years (thirty-two years in B.C. counting).

Synchronization Summary:

- 1). In the eighth year of his reign (384/634 B.C.), being the thirty-fifth year of Ashurbanipal, he began to seek God (II Chronicles 34:3).
- 2). In his twelfth year he began a reform (388/630 B.C., II Chronicles 34:3). It was the thirty-ninth year of Ashurbanipal of Assyria.
- 3). In his eighteenth year (394/624 B.C.), Temple repairs were initiated (II Chronicles 34:8), and in the process, the Book of the Law was found in the eighth month (IV Kings 22:3, LXX). The Law was then read. The Sabbath year was 394/624 B.C. A period from the eighth month to the first month saw a great reform in the land.
- 4). The book of Kings tells us that the finding of the Law and the Passover were both celebrated in the eighteenth year of Josiah which would not be the case if the Passover were celebrated after the reading of the Law. The text may be misunderstood in this case, for it would seem that the Passover took place in the nineteenth year of Josiah. A second option might be that the year began at Passover (Nisan 15) for kings, not necessarily at the first day of Nisan. Solomon seems to have begun his reign at the Passover festival (II Chronicles 29:21).
- 5). The death of Josiah (407/610 B.C.) took place when King Necho of Egypt went to assist Ashurbanipal of Assyria in his attempts to recapture Haran.<sup>34</sup> It is described in II Chronicles 35:19ff., and II Kings 23:29-30, and is the seventeenth year of Nabopolassar, (610 B.C.), three years after the fall of Nineveh (613 B.C.). The siege took place most likely in the month of Adar of 407/610 B.C., for Jehoahaz was given three months rule after going to meet the king of Egypt in Hamath, Syria. The Babylonian Chronicles tell us that the siege was conducted from the fourth to the sixth months against Haran as the Assyrians and Egyptians tried to recapture it.<sup>35</sup>

**E. JEHOAHAZ (Q) OF JUDAH [610-610 B.C., 407-408], (II Kings 23:31).**

Jehoahaz began to reign at the death of Josiah, and ruled for three months. A year cannot be given to Jehoahaz in B.C. dating, but one year must be given to him by Hebrew dating.

**F. JEHOIAKIM (R) OF JUDAH [610-599 B.C., 408-419], (II Kings 23:36).**

Jehoiakim began when Jehoahaz died and ruled for eleven years. He ruled for eleven years by both Hebrew and B.C. counting.

Synchronization Summary:

- 1). In the fourth year of Jehoiakim (412/606 B.C.), Nebuchadnezzar made his first contact at Carchemish (*Antiquities* X.vi.1; Jeremiah 25:1-2)<sup>36</sup> This was twenty-three years after the thirteenth of Josiah, forcing the accession of Josiah to 642 B.C. (606 B.C. + 23 + 13 = 642 B.C.). Thiele would place this event in 605 B.C., and the accession of Josiah in 640 B.C., a difference of thirty-five years instead of thirty-six as Jeremiah demands.
- 2). In the eighth year of Jehoiakim, Nebuchadnezzar made his first assault on Jehoiakim and collected tribute from him for three years (416/602 B.C., 417/601 B.C., 418/-600 B.C., II Kings 24:1).
- 3). In his eleventh year (419/599 B.C.), Jehoiakim refused to pay tribute and so Nebuchadnezzar came to capture him. This was the seventh year of Nebuchadnezzar (II Kings 24:1).<sup>37</sup> This year also appears to be the end of the third year of Jehoiakim as spoken of in the opening statement of Daniel (1:1), when Daniel was deported. It is the first deportation spoken of by the appendix to Jeremiah (Jeremiah 52:28).

**G. JEHOIAKIN (S) OF JUDAH [599-598 B.C., 419-419], (II Kings 24:8).**

Jehoiakin began at the death of his father and ruled for three months. His reign ended at the turn of the year according to the Hebrew texts, and on the second of Adar according to the Babylonian texts. It becomes necessary to give him one year by B.C. counting, however, one can not give him one year by Hebrew reckoning.

**H. ZEDEKIAH (T) OF JUDAH [598-588 B.C., 419-430], (II Kings 24:18).**

Zedekiah began to rule at the deportation of Jeconiah, and ruled for eleven years Hebrew counting, but ten years B.C. counting. His death occurred in the eighteenth year of Nebuchadnezzar by Babylonian counting and the nineteenth year by Hebrew methods. The 588 B.C. date has been exhaustively discussed in this book in chapter two.

Synchronization Summary:

One added synchronism is the second part of the prophecy of Ezekiel concerning the sins of Judah (Ezekiel 4:6). It was forty years from the time that the Temple was destroyed by Nebuchadnezzar in 428/590 B.C. until the Temple construction began under Zerubbabel in 468/550 B.C., in the first year of Cyrus (Ezra 3:8). The edict for all peoples to return was issued in the first year of Cyrus according to the Cyrus Cylinder and Ezra 1:1, which was in 467/551 B.C.

It is apparent that the records of the kings of Israel are accumulated with almost perfect harmony. The records of the kings of Judah are more difficult, but are manageable if synchronized with the kings of Israel. The final testing is the accumulation of other data, the first being the 430 years of Ezekiel 4:1-8. The second being the synchronizing with the other histories of the Assyrians, the Babylonians, the Egyptians, and the Greeks. Finally, the use of astronomy for Hebrew cycles built into the Law as well as eclipses recorded by the ancients.

### **VII. Viewing The Variances-- Faulstich vs. Thiele**

Illustration XXX lists the dates of Edwin R. Thiele in the same manner and format as was used for the Hebrew kings of the same period in Illustration XXIX. Numbers contained in parenthesis are numbers which show variation from any text: Hebrew, Josephus, or the LXX. It can readily be seen that there are many variances. Compare this to Illustration XXIX where the variances are shown with an asterisk \*. Several of the variances shown with an asterisk are taken from one of the texts other than the Hebrew. It is important to show the agreement and disagreement in the two listings so that the reader will immediately become aware of those textual problems.

Illustration XXXI compares these two charts showing three items, and their variance from the Hebrew text: 1) Synchronistic information 2) Reign duration, and 3) Jubilee synchronization. Those variances which are shared by both Thiele and Faulstich are circled, and then connected. As an example, during the reigns of the kings of Israel, both share similar synchronistic problems which are almost identical except for Pekah, where both are ten years apart. Pekah, of course, had to be moved ten years out of synchronism by Thiele to compress the kings so that the fourteenth year of Hezekiah is equal to the third year of Sennacherib. Dual admission of error at this point in time appears to result in no error at all for the posting of the kings of Israel by Faulstich.

The kings of Judah show one synchronistic change by Faulstich, a ten year variation in the beginning of Ahaz. This variation does not appear with Thiele because he has moved the kings previous to Hezekiah forward by that number of years. It does, however, show up as a discrepancy for the synchronistic data of Hezekiah. Therefore, both recognize a ten year error in that statement. Remove this, and there is no error in the synchronistic data for the kings of Judah by Faulstich.

Several reign duration variances occur during the kings of Judah. As one examines those by Faulstich, one can see that kings C, D, and E add two years, and also subtract two years, therefore, they cancel themselves. King P is not a variance with the Hebrew chronology, but is a bracketed variance caused by converting Hebrew dating to B.C. dating. Kings S, and T have also been recognized by Thiele, hence they are not contended. The one year variance of kings M and N cancel each other out. Having removed these variations of agreement between Thiele and Faulstich, there appears to be no error in Faulstich's chronology.

Jubilee years reconcile perfectly with Faustich's chronology. One need only glance at the data of Thiele to see the many remaining differences between his dates and the literal Hebrew text. Most of them are in the area of one or two years until the Jubilees are considered. At that point, a difference of fourteen- sixteen years exists, showing that the movement of the kings by Thiele is unwarranted. After Hezekiah, Thiele again moves into synchronism with Faulstich, proving that Hezekiah cannot be moved forward by fourteen years as Thiele has chosen to do. Also to be noted is that he has Amaziah becoming a father at the age of thirteen which seems too young.

**ILLUSTRATION XXX: YEARS OF ISRAEL AND JUDAH BEFORE  
THE CHRISTIAN ERA BY THIELE**

NAME	Ref	Yrs	Age	Dad	Born	Count	Yr.1.Ref	Died
DAVID	U	40	30	47	1056	1010	1002=08U	970
SOLOMON	V	40	23	21	1009	970	=40U	930
<i>ISRAEL</i>								
JEROBOAM	A	(21)				930		909
NADAB	B	(01)				909	=(01C)	908
BAASHA	C	(22)				908	=(02C)	886
ELAH	D	(01)				886	=(24C)	885
ZIMRI	E	7DYS				885	=(25C)	885
TIBNI	F					885		880
OMRI	G	(11)				885	=(25C)	874
AHAB	H	(21)				874	=(36C)	853
AHAZIAH	I	(01)				853	=(19D)	852
JEHORAM	J	(11)				852	=(20D)	841
JEHU	K	27				841		814
JEHOAHAZ	L	(16)				814	=21H*	798
JOASH	M	16				798	793=37H	782
JEROBOAM	N	*40				793	782=(03I)	753
ZECHARIAH	O	.5				753	=(39J)	753
SHALLUM	P	.1				752	=(40J)	752
MENAHEM	Q	(17)				752	=(40J)	742
PEKAHIAH	R	02				742	=50J	740
PEKAH	S	20				752	=(40J)	732
HOSHEA	T	09				732	=(03L)	723
<i>JUDAH</i>								
REHOBOAM	A	17	41		971	930		913
ABIJAM	B	03			913		=(17A)	910
ASA	C	41			910		872=20A	869
JEHOSHAPHAT	D	(24)	35	22	907	872	869=(02H)	848
JEHORAM	E	(12)	32	27	885	853	848=(01J)	841
AHAZIAH	F	(0)	22	21	863	841	=11J	841
ATHALIAH	G					841		835
JEHOASH	H	(30)	07	21	842	835	=(06K)	796
AMAZIAH	I	29	25	13	821	796	792=02M	767
UZZIAH	J	52	16	33	808	792	767=(01N)	740
JOTHAM	K	(18)	25	15	775	750	740/735=02S	732
AHAZ	L	(20)	*25	20	760	735	732=17S	715
HEZEKIAH	M	29	25	32	740	715	696=(17T)	686
MANASSEH	N	(54)	12	44	708	696	686	642
AMON	O	02	22	16	664	642		640
JOSIAH	P	31	08	14	648	640		609
JEHOAHAZ	Q	0	23		632	609		609
JEHOIAKIM	R	11	25	18	634	609		598
JEHOIAKIN	S	1	18		616	598		597
ZEDEKIAH	T	11	21		618	597		586

ILLUSTRATION XXXI: COMPARISON OF RECORDS, FAULSTICH vs. THIELE

NAME		FAULSTICH			THIELE		
		Sync.	Reign	Jub.	Sync.	Reign	Jub.
JEROBOAM	A				-1	-1	-16
NADAB	B				-1	-1	
BAASHA	C				-1	-2	
ELAH	D				-2	-1	
ZIMRI	E				-2		
TIBNI	F						
OMRI	G				-6	-1	
AHAB	H				-2	-1	
AHAZIAH	I				+2	-1	
JEHORAM	J				+2	-1	
JEHU	K						
JEHOAHAZ	L					-1	
JOASH	M					-1	
JEROBOAM	N				-13		-6
ZECHARIAH	O	+2			+1		
SHALLUM	P	+1			+1		
MENAHEM	Q	+1			+1	+17	
PEKAHIAH	R	-1					
PEKAH	S	-2			-12		
HOSHEA	T				-9		
<b>JUDAH</b>							
REHOBOAM	A						-16
ABIJAM	B				-1		
ASA	C		+2				-16
JEHOSHAPHAT	D	-1			-2	-1	-14
JEHORAM	E	-1			-4	+5	
AHAZIAH	F					-1	
ATHALIAH	G						
JEHOASH	H				-1	-10	
AMAZIAH	I						
UZZIAH	J				-13		-8
JOTHAM	K					+2	
AHAZ	L	-10				+4	
HEZEKIAH	M	+1			+10		-14
MANASSEH	N					-1	
AMON	O						
JOSIAH	P	+1					-2
JEHOAHAZ	Q						
JEHOIAKIM	R						
JEHOIAKIN	S	+1			+1		
ZEDEKIAH	T	-1			+1		-2

## CONCLUSION - NOTES

<sup>1</sup>Daniel David Luckenbill, *Ancient Records Of Assyria And Babylonia*, Volume I (New York: Greenwood Press, Publishers, 1968), sec. 626, p. 232.

<sup>2</sup>ARAB, Vol. I, sec. 761, p. 269.

<sup>3</sup>ARAB, Vol. I, sec. 822, p. 294.

<sup>4</sup>James B. Pritchard, ed., *Ancient Near Eastern Texts: Relating to the Old Testament* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1969), p. 320.

<sup>5</sup>Albert Kirk Grayson, *Assyrian Royal Inscriptions*, Volume II (Wiesbaden, Germany: Otto Harrassowitz, 1972), sec. 548-553, pp. 125-128.

<sup>6</sup>ARAB, Vol. I, sec. 610-611, pp. 222-223; sec. 475-476, pp. 164-165; sec. 497-502, pp. 177-182.

<sup>7</sup>ARAB, Vol. I, sec. 501, p. 181.

<sup>8</sup>ARAB, Vol. I, sec. 610-611, pp. 222-223.

<sup>9</sup>ARAB, Vol. I, sec. 561, p. 202.

<sup>10</sup>ANET, p. 320.

<sup>11</sup>ARAB, Vol. I, sec. 568, p. 204; sec. 575, p. 205. Cf., sec. 672, p. 243.

<sup>12</sup>ARAB, Vol. I, sec. 590, p. 211; sec. 672, p. 243.

<sup>13</sup>ARAB, Vol. I, sec. 659, p. 240; sec. 663, p. 241.

<sup>14</sup>The reference is on the Saba'a Stele. It is the primary source for the history of the reign of Adad-nirari III. The stele was erected by one of his officers, Nergalerish, and discovered in 1905 in the desert south of the Sinjar Hills. The stele's inscription is of particular interest to the historian because of the king's reference to his accession to the throne in his fifth year. This means that his mother, the famous Semiramis, was actually ruler of Assyria for five years. A portion of the inscription reads:

"In (my) fifth year of reign, when I took my seat on the royal throne, in might, I mobilized (the forces of my) land, (to) the widespreading armies of Assyria I gave the order to advance against Palashtu (Palestine). The Euphrates I crossed at its flood. The widespreading, hostile] kings, who in the time of Shamshi-Adad, my father, had rebelled, and withheld their tribute, -- at the command of Assur, Sin, Shamash, Adad, Ishtar, the gods, my allies, [terror] overwhelmed them and they laid hold of my feet. Tribute and tax, more than that of former days], they brought to Assyria. I received it." ARAB, Vol. I, sec. 734, p. 261.

<sup>15</sup>Josephus gives the information as follows:

"Now upon the death of Hazael, the king of Syria, that kingdom came to Adad, his son, with whom Joash, king of Israel, made war; and when he had beaten him in three battles, he took from all that country, and all those cities and villages, which his father Hazael had taken from the kingdom

## Conclusion - Notes

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of Israel, which came to pass, however, according to the prophecy of Elisha. But when Joash happened to die, he was buried in Samaria; and the government devolved upon his son Jeroboam." *Antiquities* IX.viii.7.

<sup>16</sup>ARAB, Vol. II, sec. 1198, p. 434.

<sup>17</sup>ARAB, Vol. I, sec. 770-772, pp. 274-276.

<sup>18</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>19</sup>George Rawlinson, *The Five Great Monarchies Of The Ancient Eastern World*, Volume II (New York: Dodd, Mead & Company, Publishers, 1870), pp. 123-124.

<sup>20</sup>ARAB, Vol. I, sec. 770-772, pp. 274-276.

<sup>21</sup>ARAB, Vol. I, sec. 761, p. 269.

<sup>22</sup>Edwin R. Thiele, *A Chronology Of The Hebrew Kings* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan Publishing House, 1977), p. 46.

<sup>23</sup>ARAB, Vol. I, sec. 816, p. 293.

<sup>24</sup>ARAB, Vol. I, sec. 801, pp. 287-288.

<sup>25</sup>A. K. Grayson, "Assyrian And Babylonian Chronicles," A. Leo Oppenheim *et al.* (eds.), *Texts From Cuneiform Sources*, Volume 5 (Locust Valley, New York: J. J. Augustin Publisher, 1975), p. 73.

<sup>26</sup>ARAB, Vol. II, sec. 4, p. 2.

<sup>27</sup>Grayson, *ABC*, Vol. 5, p. 102.

<sup>28</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 96.

<sup>29</sup>ARAB, Vol. II, sec. 12, 18, pp. 6-8.

<sup>30</sup>ARAB, Vol. II, Sec. 234, pp. 116-117.

<sup>31</sup>ARAB, Vol. II, sec. 309-312, pp. 142-143.

<sup>32</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>33</sup>ARAB, Vol. II, sec. 554, p. 219; sec. 690, pp. 265-266.

<sup>34</sup>Grayson, *ABC*, Vol. 5, p. 96.

<sup>35</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>36</sup>*Ibid.*, pp. 99-100.

<sup>37</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 102.

## APPENDIX A - ASSYRIAN EPONYM LIST

[NOTE: The following Assyrian eponyms are based on the work of Daniel David Luckenbill, *Ancient Records Of Assyria And Babylonia*, Volume II (New York: Greenwood Press, Publishers, 1968) sec. 1196-1198, pp. 428-439. Since the present study has accepted the shorter chronology, Nabu-shar-user has been transferred from 784 to 786 where he occupies the same eponym year with Balatu, thus reducing each eponym beyond 786 by one year. The dates for the eponyms from 648 to 783 are the same. An asterisk \* marks the eponymous year of each king of Assyria.]

\*1029 Shulmanu-asharidu, king  
 1028 Ilia-shangu-mushab[shi]  
 1027 ... ash(?)-kuder)  
 1026 .....sa(?)-shum-usur  
 1025 .....ku  
 1024 .....lamur  
 1023 .....ash(?)ma(?)  
 1022 .....  
 1021 .....  
 1020 Ni(?).....  
 1019 .....  
 1018 Siki-ilani(?).....  
 12 years

-----  
 \*1017 Assur-nirari, [the king], who (reigned) after [Shalmaneser]  
 1016 " "  
 1015 " "  
 1014 " "  
 1013 " "  
 1012 " "  
 6 years

-----  
 \*1011 Assur-rabi  
 1010 Assur-mushezib  
 1009 Ittab[shi].....  
 1008 Assur-etir[anni  
 1007 Nabu-dan  
 1006 Assur-ballit(?)  
 1005 Kin-.....  
 1004 Ku.....  
 1003 .....

(Break in the list)

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- 966 .....  
 \*965 Tukulti-apil-esharra  
 964 Assur-bel-lamur  
 963 again Assur-bel-lamur  
 962 .....LAL RID  
 961 .....RID  
 960 .....mu.....  
 959 .....  
 958 .....  
 957 .....  
 956 .....  
 955 .....  
 954 .....a.....  
 953 .....tab(?)ilu(?)  
 952 .....du  
 951 Ishtar-dudu  
 950 .....lika  
 949 [Habil]-kinu  
 948 .....dinishe  
 947 Bau-shakin-mati  
 946-940 (*Break in the list*)  
 939 .....  
 938 Urta-.....  
 937 Assur-na-.....  
 936 Tukulti-apil-.....  
 935 Nadin-.....  
 934 Bel-.....  
 933 Nannar-.....  
       33 years  
 \*932 Assur-dan  
 931-893 .....  
 (*Break in the list*)  
 892 .....shar.....  
 891 Urta-zarme  
 890 Tab-etir-Assur  
 889 Assur la-Kinu  
 \*888 Tukulti-Urta, the king  
 887 Tak-lak-ana-bel-ia  
 886 Abi-ili-a-a  
 885 Ilu-milki  
 884 Iari, Naidi-ili  
 883 Assur-shezibani  
 \*882 Assur-nasir-apli, the king  
 881 Assur-iddin  
 880 Shumutti-adur  
 879 Sha-ilima-damka

## Appendix A

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878	Dagan-bel-nasir		
877	Urta-pia-usur		
876	Urta-bel-usur		
875	Shangu-Assur-lilbur		
874	Shamash-upahir (var., ub-la)		
873	Nergal-bel-kumma		
872	Kurdi-Assur		
871	Assur-li'		
870	Assur-natkil		
869	Bel-mudammik		
868	Daian-Urta		
867	Ishtar-emukaia		
866	Shamash-nuri		
865	Mannu-dan-ana-ili		
864	Shamash-bel-usur		
863	Urta-iliai		
862	Urta-etiranni		
861	Urta (var., Assur)-iliai		
860	Nergal-iska-danin		
859	Tab-Bel	when Shulman-asharidu (Shalmaneser) son of Assurnasirpal [took his seat on the throne]	
858	Sharru-baltu-nishe		[against Hamanu]
*857	Shulman-asharid (Shalmaneser)	king of Assur	[against Bit-Adini]
856	Assur-bel-ukin	field-marshal	[against Bit-Adini]
855	Assur-bunaia-usur	chief cup-bearer	[against Bit-Adini]
854	Abu-ina-ekalli-lil-bur	high chamberlain	.....
853	Daian-Assur	field-marshal	[against Hatte]
852	Shamash-abua	governor of Nasibna	[against Til-Abni]
851	Shamash-bel-usur	(governor) of Calah	[against Babylonia]
850	Bel-bunaia	high chamberlain	[against Babylonia]
849	Hadi-lipushu	(governor) of.....	[against Carchemish]
848	Nergal-alik-pani	(governor) of .....	[against Hatte]
847	Bir-Ramana	[(governor) of .....	agaist Pakarhubuna]
846	Urta-mukin-nishe	[(governor) of .....	against laeti]
845	Urta-nadin-shum	[(governor) of .....	against Hatte]
844	Assur-bunua	[(governor) of .....	against Nairi]
843	Tab-Urta	[(governor) of .....	against Namri]
842	Taklak-ana-sharri (var. -Assur)	[(governor) of .....	against Hamanu
841	Adad-rimani	[(governor) of .....	against Damascus]
840	Bel-abua (var., Shamash-)	[(governor)of Ahi-[Suhina]	[against Kue]
839	Shulmu-bel-lumur	(governor) of Rasappa	against [Kumuhi]
838	Urta-kibsi-usur	(governor) of Ahi-Suhina	against Danabi

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837 Urta-ilia	(governor) of Salmat	against Tabali
836 Kurdi-Assur	(governor) of [Kirruri]	against Melidi
835 Shepa-sharri	(governor) of Nineveh	against Namri
834 Nergal-mudammik	the abarakku	against Kue
833 lahalu	(governor) of [Kakzi] against Kue	against Kue The great god went out from Der.
832 Ululaia	(governor) of [Nasibina]	against Urartu(Armenia)
831 Nishpati-Bel	(governor) of [Calah]	against Unki
830 Nergal-ilia	(governor) of Arrapha	against Ulluba
829 Hubaia	(governor) of [Mazamua]	against Mannai
828 Ilu-mukin-ahi	(governor) of .....	revolt
*827 Shulman-asharidu (Shalmaneser)	king of Assyria	revolt
826 Daian-Assur	[field-marshal]	revolt
825 Assur-bunaia-usur	[chief cup-bearer]	revolt
824 lahallu	[abarakku]	revolt
823 Bel-bunaia	[high chamberlain]	revolt
*822 Shamshi-Adad	king of [Assyria]	against Sikris]
821 lahalu	[field-marshal]	against Madai]
820 Bel-daian	high chamberlain	against.....shumme
819 Urta-upahhir	[abarakku]	against Karne]
818 Shamash-ilia	[abarakku]	against Karne]
817 Nergal-ilia	[(governor) of Arrapha]	against Tille]
816 Assur-bana-usur	[chief cup-bearer]	against Tille]
815 Nishpati-Bel	(governor) of [Nasibina]	against Zarate
814 Bel-balat	(governor) of [Calah] against Der	The great god went to Der.
813 Mushiknish	(governor) of [Kirruri]	against Ahsana
812 Urta-asharid	(governor) of [Salmat]	against Chaldea
811 Shamash-kimua	(governor) of Arrapha	against Babylonia
810 Bel-kata-sabat	(governor) of Mazamua	in the land
*809 Adad-nirari	[king] of Assyria	against Madai
808 Nergal-ilia	field-marshal	against Guzana
807 Bel-daian	high chamberlain	against Mannai
806 Sil-bel	chief cup-bearer	against Mannai
805 Assur-taklak	abarakku	against Arpadda
804 [Shamash-ilia]	abarakku	against Hazazi
803 Nergal-eresh	(governor) of Rasappa	against Ba'li
802 Assur-baltu-nishe	(governor) of Arrapha	against the seacoast. A plague.
801 Urta-ilia	(governor) of Ahi-Suhina	against Hubushkia
800 Shepa-Ishtar	(governor) of Nasibina	against Madai
799 Marduk-ishme-ani(?)	(governor) of Amedi	against Madai
798 Mutakkil-Marduk	Rab-shake	against Lusia
797 Bel-tarsi-iluma	(governor) of Calah	against Namri

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796	Assur-bel-usur	(governor) of Kirruri	against Mansuate
795	Marduk-shaddua	(governor) of Salmat	against Der
794	Kin-abua	(governor) of Tushhan	against Der
793	Mannu-ki-Assur	(governor) of Guzana	against Madai
792	Mushallim-Urta	(governor) of Tille	against Madai
791	Bel-ikishani	(governor) of Mehi-nish(?)	against Hubushkia
790	Shepa-Shamash	(governor) of Isana	against Itu'a
789	Urta-mukin-ahi	(governor) of Nineveh	against Madai
788	Adad-Mushammir	(governor) of Kakzi	against Madai
787	Sil-Ishtar	(governor) of [Arba-ilu?]	The foundation of the temple of Nabu in Nineveh was torn up (for repairs)
786	Balatu	(governor) of [Shiba-niba?]	Against Madai. Nabu entered the new temple.
785	Adad-uballit	(governor) of [Rimusi]	against [Kiski]
784	Marduk-shar-usur	(governor) of .....	against Hubushkia. The great god went to Der.
783	Urta-nasir	(governor) of Mazamua	against Itu'
782	Nabu-li'	(governor) of Nasibina	against Itu'
	(Var., 786 Nabu-shar-usur		
	785 Adad-uballit		
	784 Marduk-shar-usur		
	783 Marduk-nasir		
	782 Ilima-li'-)		
*781	Shalman-asharid	king of Assyria	against Urarti
	(Shalmaneser)		
780	Shamshi-ilu	field-marshal	against Urarti
779	Marduk-rimani	chief cup-bearer	against Urarti
778	Bel-lishir	high chamberlain	against Urarti
777	Nabu-ishid-ukin	abarakku	against Itu'
	(var., Shamash-ishidia-ukin)		
776	Pan-Assur-lamur	shaknu	against Urarti
775	Nergal-eresh	(governor) of Rasappa	against Erini
774	Ishtar-duri	(governor) of Nasibina	against Urati (and) Namri
773	Mannu-ki-Adad	(governor) of Salmat	against Damascus
772	Assur-bel-usur	(governor) of Calah	against Hatarika
*771	Assur-dan	king of Assyria	against Gananati
770	Shamshi-ilu	field-marshal	against Marrat
769	Bel-ilia	(governor) of Arrapha	against Itu'
768	Aplia	(governor) of Mazamua	in the land
767	Kurdi-Assur	(governor) of Ahi-Suhina	against Gananati
766	Mushallim-Urta	(governor) of Tille	against Madai
765	Urta-mukin-nishe	(governor) of Kirruri	against Hatarika. A plague.

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764 Sidki-ilu	(governor) of Tushhan	in the land
763 Bur(Ishdi)-Sagale	(governor) of Guzana	revolt in city of Assur In the month of <i>Simanu</i> an eclipse of the sun took place. revolt in the city of Assur.
762 Tab-Bel	(governor) of Amedi	revolt in the city of Assur.
761 Nabu-mukin-ahi	(governor) of Nineveh	revolt in the city of Arrapha
760 Lakipu	(governor) of Kakzi	revolt in the city of Arrapha
759 Pan-Assur-lamur	(governor) of Arbailu	revolt in the city of Guzana. A plague. against Guzana. Peace in the land.
758 Bel-taklak	(governor) of Isana	in the land
757 Urta-iddina	(governor) of Kurban	in the land
756 Bel-shadua	(governor) of Parnunna	in the land
755 Ikishu (var., Kisu)	(governor) of Mehi-nish(?) against Hatarika	
754 Urta-shezibani	(governor) of Rimusi	against Arpadda. Return from the city of Assur.
*753 Assur-nirari	king of Assyria	in the land
752 Shamshi-ilu	field-marshal	in the land
751 Marduk-shallimani	high chamberlain	in the land
750 Bel-dan	chief-cup-bearer	in the land
749 Shamash-ken-dugul	abarakku	against Namri
748 Adad-bel-ukin	shaknu	against Namri
747 Sin-shallimani	(governor) of Rasappa	in the land
746 Nergal-nasir	(governor) of Nasibina	revolt in the city of Calah
745 Nabu-bel-usur	(governor) of Arrapha	On the thirteenth day of the month <i>Airu</i> Tiglath-pileser took his seat on the throne. In the month of <i>Tashritu</i> he marched to the territory between the rivers. against Namri
744 Bel-dan	(governor) of Calah	in the city of Arpadda.
*743 Tukulti-apal-esharra (Tiglath-pileser)	king of Assyria	A massacre took place in the land of Urartu (Armenia).
742 Nabu-daninani	field-marshal	against Arpadda

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741 Bel-harran-bel-usur	high chamberlain	against Arpadda. After three years it was conquered.
740 Nabu-etirani	chief cup-bearer	against Arpadda
739 Sin-taklak	abarakku	against Ulluba. The fortress was taken.
738 Adad-bel-ukin	shaknu	Kullani was captured.
737 Bel-emurani	(governor) of Rasappa	against Madai
736 Urta-ilia	(governor) of Nasibina	To the foot of Mount Nal
735 Assur-shallimani	(governor) of Arrapha	against Urarti
734 Bel-dan	(governor) of Calah	against Philistia
733 Assur-daninani	(governor) of Mazamua	against the land of Damascus
732 Nabu-bel-usur	(governor) of Si'me	against the land of Damascus
731 Nergal-uballit	(governor) of Ahi-Suhina	against Sapia
730 Bel-ludari	(governor) of Tile	in the land
729 Naphar-ilu	(governor) of Kirruri	The king took the hand
728 Dur-Assur	(governor) of Tushhan	The king took the hand of Bel
727 Bel-harran-bel-usur	(governor) of Guzana Shalmaneser	against Damascus took his seat on the throne
726 Marduk-bel-usur	(governor) of Amedi	in the land
725 Mahde	(governor) of Nineveh	against [Samaria]
724 Assur-ishmeani	(governor) of [Kakzi]	against [Samaria]
*723 Shalmaneser	king of Assyria	against [Samaria]
722 Urta-ilia	[field-marshal]	[the foundation of the temple of Nabu was torn up (for repairs)].
721 Nabu-taris	[high chamberlain]	[Nabu entered the new temple].
720 Assur-iska-danin	[field-marshal]	against Tabala]
*719 Sargon	king of [Assyria]	the foundation of the [temple of Nergal] was torn up (for repairs).
718 Zer-ibni	(governor) of Ra.....	against Mannai
717 Tab-shar-Assur	[abarakku]	.... provinces were established
716 Tab-sil-esharra	(governor) of Assur	..... Musasir of Haldia.
715 Taklak-ana-bel	(governor) of Nazibina	great ....in Ellipa
714 Ishtar-duri	(governor) of Arrapha	Nergal entered the new temple.
713 Assur-bani	(governor) of Calah	against Musasir.

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712 Sharru-emurani	(governor) of Zamua	in the land.
711 Urtā-alik-pani	(governor) of Si'me	against Markasa.
710 Shamash-bel-usur	(governor) of [Arzu-hina]	against Bet-zernaid, the king in Kish....
709 Mannu-ki-Assur-li'	(governor) of Tille	Sargon took the hand of Bel
708 Shamash-upahhir	(governor) of Kirruri	Kumuha was captured. A governor was appointed.
707 Sha-Assur-dubbi	(governor) of Tushhan	The king returned from Babylon.
706 Mutakkil-Assur	(governor) of Guzana	... from the city of Durlakin brought out.
705 Nashir-Bel	(governor) of Amedi	the city of Dur-lakin was destroyed.
704 Nabu-din-epush	(governor) of Nineveh	the gods entered into their temples.
703 Kannunnai	(governor) of Kakzi	[the nobles] were in Karalli.
702 Nabu-li'	(governor) of Abailu	
701 Hananai	(governor) of ....bi	
700 Metunu	(governor) of Isana	
699 Bel-sharani	(governor) of [Kurban]	
698 Shulmu-shar	(governor) of .....	
697 Nabu-dur-usur	(governor) of .....	
696 Shulmu-bel	(governor) of Rimusa	
695 Assur-bel-usur	(governor) of .....	
694 Ilu-ittia	(governor) of Damascus	
693 Nadin-ahe	(governor) of .....	
692 Zazai	(governor) of Arpadda	
691 Bel-emurani	(governor) of Carchemish	
690 Nabu-mukin-ahi (var., Nabu-bel-usur)	(governor) of Samaria	
689 Gihilu	(governor) of Hatarika	
688 Nadin-ahe	(governor) of [Simirra]	
*687 Sennacherib	king of Assyria	
686 Bel-emuranni	(governor) of Calah	
685 Assur-daninanni	(governor) of .....ub	
684 Mannu-zirni (var., Man-zirne)	(governor) of Kullania	
683 Mannu-ki-Adad	(governor) of Supite	
682 Nabu-shar-usur	(governor) of Markasi	
681 Nabu-ah-eresh	(governor) of Samalli	
680 Dananu	(governor) of [Mansua]	
679 Itti-Adad-aninu	(governor) of Magidunu	
678 Nergal-shar-usur	chief-cup-bearer	
677 Abi-rama	high minister	

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676 Banba	second minister
675 Nabu-ahi-iddina	chief governor
674 Sharru-nuri	(governor) of Barhalzi
673 Atar-ilu	(governor) of Lahiri
672 Nabu-bel-usur	(governor) of Dur-Sharrukin
671 Kanunai	SAR-TINU-official
670 Shulmu-bel-lashme	(governor) of Der
669 Shamash-kashid- aibi	(governor) of Ashdod
668 Mar-larim	field-marshal
667 Gabbar	(governor) of .....
666 Kanunai	(governor) of Bit-eshshi
665 Mannu-ki-sharri	perfect of the land
664 Sharru-ludari	(governor) of Dur-Sharrukin
663 Bel-naid	field-marshal
662 Tab-shar-Sin	(governor) of Rasappa
661 Arbailai	
660 Gir-zapuna	
659 Silim-Assur	
658 Sha-Nabu-shu	
657 Labasi	
656 Milki-ramu	
655 Amianu	
654 Assur-nasir	
653 Assur-ilai	
652 Assur-dur-usur	
651 Sagabbu	
650 Bel-harran-shadua	
649 Ahu-ilai	
648 Belshunu	

## Appendix B

Assyrian And Babylonian Chronology Between The Accession Of Shalmaneser II  
(1030 B.C.) And The Eighteenth Year Of Nebuchadnezzar (588 B.C.)

1030 0	Shalmaneser	991 21	952 14	
1029 1		990 22	951 15	
1028 2		989 23	950 16	
1027 3		988 24	949 17	
1026 4		987 25	948 18	
1025 5		986 26	947 19	
1024 6		985 27	946 20	
1023 7		984 28	945 21	
1022 8		983 29	944 22	
1021 9		982 30	943 23	
1020 10		981 31	942 24	
1019 11		980 32	941 25	
1018 12	Ashur-nirari	0 979 33	940 26	
1017		1 978 34	939 27	
1016		2 977 35	938 28	
1015		3 976 36	937 29	
1014		4 975 37	936 30	
1013		5 974 38	935 31	
1012 0	Ashur-rabi II	6 973 39	934 32	Ashur-dan II 0
1011 1		972 40	933	1
1010 2		971 41	Ashur-resh-ishi 0 932	2
1009 3		970	1 931	3
1008 4		969	2 930	4
1007 5		968	3 929	4
1006 6		967	4 928	6
1005 7		966 0	Tiglath-pileser 5 927	7
1004 8		965 1	926	8
1003 9		964 2	925	9
1002 10		963 3	924	10
1001 11		962 4	923	11
1000 12		961 5	922	12
999 13		960 6	921	13
998 14		959 7	920	14
997 15		958 8	919	15
996 16		957 9	918	16
995 17		956 10	917	17
994 18		955 11	916	18
993 19		954 12	915	19
992 20		953 13	914	20

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913	21	867 17	821 3	
912	22	866 18	820 4	
911 0	Adad-nirari II 23	865 19	819 5	
910 1		864 20	818 6	
909 2		863 21	817 7	
908 3		862 22	816 8	
907 4		861 23	815 9	
906 5		860 24	814 10	
905 6		859 25	Shalmaneser III 0	813 11
904 7		858	1	812 12
903 8		857	2	811 13
902 9		856	3	810
901 10		855	4	809
900 11		854	5	808
899 12		853	6	807
898 13		852	7	806
897 14		851	8	805
896 15		850	9	804
895 16		849	10	803
894 17		848	11	802
893 18		847	12	801
892 19		846	13	800
891 20		845	14	799
890 21	Tukuti-urta 0	844	15	798
889	1	843	16	797
888	2	842	17	796
887	3	841	18	795
886	4	840	19	794
885	5	839	20	793
884 0	Ashur-nasir-pal 6	838	21	792
883 1		837	22	791
882 2		836	23	790
881 3		835	24	789
880 4		834	25	788
879 5		833	26	787
878 6		832	27	786
877 7		831	28	785
876 8		830	29	784
875 9		829	30	783
874 10		828	31	782
873 11		827	32	781
872 12		826	33	780
871 13		825	34	779
870 14		824 0	Shamshi-adad V 35	778 5
869 15		823 1		777 6
868 16		822 2		776 7

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775 8	729	16 683 22	
774 9	728	17 682 23	
773 10 Ashur-dan III 0	727 0 Shalmaneser V	18 681 24 Esarhaddon	0
772	1 726 1	680	1
771	2 725 2	679	2
770	3 724 3	678	3
769	4 723 4	677	4
768	5 722 5 Sargon II	0 676	5
767	6 721	1 675	6
766	7 720	2 674	7
765	8 719	3 673	8
764	9 718	4 672	9
763	10 717	5 671	10
762	11 716	6 670	11
761	12 715	7 669 0 Saosdouchin	12
760	13 714	8 668 1	
759	14 713	9 667 2	
758	15 712	10 666 3	
757	16 711	11 665 4	
756	17 710	12 664 5	
755 0 Ashur-nirari V	18 709	13 663 6	
754 1	708	14 662 7	
753 2	707	15 661 8	
752 3	706	16 660 9	
751 4	705 0 Sennacherib	17 659 10	
750 5	704 1	658 11	
749 6	703 2	657 12	
748 7	702 3	656 13	
747 8	701 4	655 14	
746 9	700 5	654 15	
745 10 Tiglath-pileser	0 699 6	653 16	
744	1 698 7	652 17	
743	2 697 8	651 18	
742	3 696 9	650 19	
741	4 695 10	649 20 Kinelanadan	0
740	5 694 11	648	1
739	6 693 12	647	2
738	7 692 13	646	3
737	8 691 14	645	4
736	9 690 15	644	5
735	10 689 16	643	6
734	11 688 17	642	7
733	12 687 18	641	8
732	13 686 19	640	9
731	14 685 20	639	10
730	15 684 21	638	11

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637	12	593	13
636	13	592	14
635	14	591	15
634	15	590	16
633	16	589	17
632	17	588	18
631	18		
630	19		
629	20		
628	21		
627	0	Nabopolassar	1 Sin-shum-lishir Sin-shar-ishkun
626	1		
625	2		
624	3		
623	4		
622	5		
621	6		
620	7		
619	8		
618	9		
617	10		
616	11		
615	12		
614	13		
613	14		
612	15		
611	16		
610	17		
609	18		
608	19		
607	20		
606	21	Nebuchadnezzar	0
605		1	
604		2	
603		3	
602		4	
601		5	
600		6	
599		7	
598		8	
597		9	
596		10	
595		11	
594		12	

## Appendix C - Assyrian King List

[Note: The Assyrian King List is taken from James B. Pritchard, ed., *Ancient Near Eastern Texts* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1969), p. 566. This is only the last portion of the Assyrian King List which deals with the accession year of Shalmaneser II (1030 B.C.) to the last year of Shalmaneser V (722 B.C.). Only this portion of the Assyrian King List is relevant to the present study of the chronology of the Hebrew kings. As can be seen, the list gives the total length of years each monarch reigned. The present research has accepted the length of reign for each king as given except for Tukulti-Ninurta II where the Assyrian Eponym Canon appears to give better evidence for a six year reign.]

Shulmanu-ashared (II), son of Ashur-nasir-apli; he ruled as king for 12 years.

Ashur-nirari (IV) son of Shulmanu-ashared (II); ditto six years.

Ashur-rabi (II) son of Ashur-nasir-apli; ditto 41 years.

Ashur-resh-ishi (II) son of Ashur-rabi; he ruled as king for five years.

Tukulti-apil-Esharra (II) son of Ashur-resh-ishi; he ruled as king for 32 years.

Ashur-dan (II) son of Tukulti-apil-Esharra; he ruled as king for 23 years.

Adad-nirari (II) son of Ashur-dan; he ruled as king for 21 years.

Tukulti-Ninurta (II) son of Adad-nirari; ditto seven years.

Ashur-nasir-apli (II) son of Tukulti-Ninurta; he ruled as king for 25 years.

Shulmanu-ashared (III) son of Ashur-nasir-apli; he ruled as king for 35 years.

Shamshi-Adad (V) son of Shulmanu-ashared; he ruled as king for 13 years.

Adad-nirari (III) son of Shamshi-Adad; he ruled as king for 28 years.

Shulmanu-ashared (IV) son of Adad-nirari; he ruled as king for ten years.

Ashur-dan (III) brother of Shulmanu-ashared; he ruled as king for 18 years.

Ashur-nirari (V) son of Adad-nirari (III); he ruled as king for 10 years.

(The earlier copy ends here with the subscript:)

Copy from Ashur; written by (lit.: hand of) Kandalanu, the scribe of the temple inside of Arbela. Month Lulubu, the 20th day; eponym: Adad-bel-ukin, governor of the inner city of Ashur, in his second eponymy.

(The later copy continues:)

Tukulti-apil-Esharra (III) son of Ashur-nirari (V); he ruled as king for 18 years.

Shulmanu-ashared (V) son of Tukulti-apil-Esharra; he ruled as king for 5 years.

Written and checked against its original. A tablet of the *masmasu*-priest, Belshum-iddin, a native of Ashur. May Shamash take away him who takes (this tablet) away.

## Appendix D - The Uruk King List From Kandalanu to Seleucus II

[NOTE: The Uruk King List is taken from James B. Pritchard, *Ancient Near Eastern Texts* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1969), p. 566.]

[x] years [...]

Other *name*: [...]

21 years: K[anda]lan

1 year: Sin-shum-lishir  
and Sin-shar-ishkun

21 years: Nabopolassar

43 [ye]ars: Nebuchadnezzar (II)

2 [ye]ars: Amel-Marduk

[x] + 2 years, 8 months: Neriglissar

[...] 3 months: Labashi-Marduk

[x] + 15 years: Nabonidus

[9 years: Cy]rus

[8 years: Cambys]es

[36 years: Dari]us

(break)

(rev.)

[whose] second name (is) Nidin-B[el]

5 [y]ears: Darius (III)

7 years: Alexander

6 years: Philip

6 years: Antigonos

31 years: Seleucus (I)

22 years: Antiochus (I)

15 years: Antiochus (II)

20 [years]: Seleucus (II)

(break)

## Appendix E - The Babylonian King List A

[This is the last portion of The Babylonian King List A which can be compared to the Canon of Ptolemy. The list is found in James B. Pritchard's *Ancient Near Eastern Texts* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1969), p. 272].

[...] Nabushumishkun [his] s[on]  
[...] Nabun[asir]  
2 (years) Nabunadinzeri, his son,  
1 month 12 days Nabushumukin, his son,  
22 (years of kings ?), dynasty of E.

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3 (years) Ukinzer, dynasty of Shashi  
2 Pulu  
5 Ululaia, dynasty of Bal-til  
12 Mardukaplaiddin, dynasty of Sea Country,  
5 Sargon  
2 Sennacherib, dynasty of Habigal,  
1 month Mardukzakirshumi, son of Ardu,  
9 months Mardukaplaiddin, a native of Habi,  
3 (years) Belibni, dynasty of E,  
6 Ashurnadinshumi, dynasty of Habigal,  
1 Nergalushezib  
5 Ushezib-Marduk, dynasty of E,  
8 Sennacherib  
[...] Esarhaddon  
[...] Shamashshum  
[...] Kandal

## Appendix F - Eclipses Establishing The Chronology Of The Hebrew Kings

King's Name	Year	Kind Of Eclipse	Gregorian Date	Source
Ashur-dan III	10	Solar	June 7, 763 B.C.	Assyrian Canon
Mardokempad	01	Lunar	March 11, 721 B.C.	Ptolemy's Almagest
Mardokempad	02	Lunar	February 28, 720 B.C.	Ptolemy's Almagest
Mardokempad	02	Lunar	August 24, 720 B.C.	Ptolemy's Almagest
Nabopolassar	05 [06]	Lunar	April 15, 621 B.C.	Ptolemy's Almagest
Nebuchadnezzar	24	Solar	September 15, 582 B.C.	Ezekiel 30:3,10,17
Nebuchadnezzar	37	Lunar	July 9, 569 B.C.	Text VAT 4956
Cambyases	07 [08]	Lunar	July 10, 523 B.C.	Ptolemy's Almagest
Darius	20 [19]	Lunar	November 13, 502 B.C.	Ptolemy's Almagest
Darius	31 [30]	Lunar	April 20, 491 B.C.	Ptolemy's Almagest

## Appendix G - Hebrew And Babylonian Months

Hebrew	Babylonian	Gregorian Calendar
Nisan ('Abib)	Nisanu	March-April
'Iyyar (Ziv) (Ziw)	Aiaru	April-May
Sivan (Siwan)	Simanu	May-June
Tammuz	Duzu	June-July
'Ab	Abu	July-August
Elul	Ululu	August-September
Tishri ('Etanim)	Tashritu	September-October
Marcheswan (Bul) (Heshvan)	Arahsmnu	October-November
Kislev (Kislew)	Kislimu	November-December
Tebet (Tebeth)	Tebetu	December-January
Shebat	Shebatu	January-February
'Adar	Addaru	February-March

## GLOSSARY

**ACCESSION YEAR:** The year in which the monarch begins to reign. After Nisan 1, the 'official year' began for the Hebrew kings.

**ALMAGEST, THE:** An astronomical treatise written by Ptolemy (a Greek astronomer of Alexandria) about 140 A.D. Ptolemy has recorded over eighty solar, lunar, and planetary positions together with their dates, which he coordinated with the years beginning with Nabonassar and continuing through a chronological listing of kings until his day. His work in astronomy is shown to be correct, but his work in chronology can be shown lacking. (See Ptolemy)

**ANACHRONISTIC:** Means involving an anachronism. An anachronism is the act of placing a person, thing, or event in some time where he or it does not belong; error in fixing a date or dates; erroneous reference of an event, circumstance or custom to a wrong, especially an earlier, date. It would be an anachronism to speak of George Washington as riding in an automobile.

**APOLOGETIC:** Defending by speech or writing.

**ARAMAISM:** A word occurring in a Biblical text once considered to be late by rationalists. With the recent discovery of the Ugaritic literature and the Ebla tablets, aramaisms can no longer be considered late. They occur in Semitic languages as old or older than Hebrew.

**ASSYRIAN EPONYM CANON:** Among the cuneiform tablets found at Nineveh by Austen Layard, Sir Henry Rawlinson identified four copies of the Assyrian eponym canon; and to these he assigned the numbers I, II, III, and IV. Canon I covered the period from 911 to 659 B.C. II extended from 893 to 692 B.C., III from 792 to 649 B.C. and IV from 753-701 B.C. None of these lists are perfect for the entire period, each being broken in places. Canon IV originally contained some sixty additional names; so it probably ended later than the other three. But where one tablet may be broken, the missing name or names may in many instances be supplied from other tablets. (See Eponym, *Limmu Lists*)

**ASSYRIAN KING LIST:** During the Oriental Institute's 1932-33 campaign at Khorsabad a list of Assyrian rulers was discovered in Sargon's palace. From the thirty-third king on, both the name and the length of reign are given.

**BABYLONIAN CHRONICLE:** One of the chronicles from a series of inscribed clay tablets generally known as 'Babylonian Chronicles'. These tablets present concise accounts of major internal events in Babylonia. The precise dates of the accession and death of a king, his length of reign and usually a synopsis of a

major internal event in each year are given. The so-called 'Babylonian Chronicle' covers the years 605-595 B.C. It provides data for the period relative to the reign of Nebuchadnezzar.

**BATTLE OF QARQAR:** It is mentioned on the Monolith Inscription of Shalmaneser III which states that Ben-hadad of Damascus provided a contingent of 1200 chariots, 1200 horses, and 20,000 infantry. 'Ahab, the Israelite' is said to have provided 2000 chariots--more than Ben-Hadad--but only 10,000 infantry. Shalmaneser III boasts of a decisive victory in which he made the blood of his enemies flow down the valleys and scattered their corpses far and wide. It is believed that Shalmaneser III takes credit for events on this inscription which belong to his father's reign, Ashur-nasir-pal II. (See Monolith Inscription)

**BEHISTUN INSCRIPTION:** Behistun, the ancient Bagistana, was the capital of Media. It is famed for the nearby bas-relief of Darius I on the face of a rock 500 feet above the plain. The inscription contains writing in three languages-- Persian, Elamite and Babylonian. In 1835, Henry Rawlinson, a British officer stationed near Behistun, began the hazardous task of copying the inscription. This tri-lingual inscription unlocked the Assyrio-Babylonian system of cuneiform writing.

**BLACK OBELISK:** The Black Obelisk of Shalmaneser III was discovered by A. H. Layard in 1846 at Calah (Nimrud). It is a four-sided black limestone pillar, 6 1/2 feet high, with five rows of roughly executed bas reliefs extending around the pillar. Cuneiform inscriptions explaining the reliefs were inscribed between and below the reliefs. On the front of the obelisk, Jehu of Israel is seen kneeling before Shalmaneser. Jehu is pictured with a short rounded beard, clothed with a sleeveless jacket and a long, fringed skirt with a girdle. A soft cap is on his head. Following Jehu, a group of Israelites is seen in long robes carrying precious metals and other tribute.

**BOOK OF JUBILEES:** Belongs to that group of Jewish writings which were excluded from the Old Testament Canon and which find no place in the Apocrypha. This is a part of the Pseudepigrapha. In the Book of Jubilees, styled from the Genesis system of dating, the author advocated a 364 day year in order to assist the Jews to keep the feasts on the proper day. The whole book, in fact, purports to be a revelation to Moses on Mt. Sinai and is clearly intended to uphold the eternal validity of the law.

**CALCULATED CALENDAR:** Made its first appearance in 46 B.C. by Julius Caesar. It has been modified by Pope Gregory XIII in 1582 A.D. and is the calendar we now use. Julian and Gregorian calendars are calculated. Another calculated calendar is the Hebrew calendar of Hillel II. In order that the Jews of the Diaspora could celebrate the festivals of Israel at the same time as the Jews in Israel, the patriarch Hillel II, in 358/359 A.D. published a calendar to preserve the unity of Israel, which essentially consisted of the use of the Babylonian nineteen-year cycle with some modifications required by Jewish ritual. The present Jewish calendar is a modified version of Hillel's calendar. (See Julian calendar.)

**CANAANITE:** This term refers to the people who lived in the land of Canaan. Canaan was the name given in the earliest Biblical writings to the land extending from the Taurus Mountains in the north to the region south of Gaza, and from the Mediterranean to the valleys of the Jordan and Orontes rivers. Located east of the Mediterranean, at the western end of the area known as the Fertile Crescent, Canaan was on the main routes of commerce and conquest during man's earliest period of history. A variety of peoples inhabited Canaan before the conquest. The Canaanite (Genesis 12:6) spoke a Semitic language and was known by the Greeks since the time of Homer by the name of Phoenician.

**CANON:** A list of books, persons, events, *etc.* considered to be accurate or infallible.

**CHALDEANS:** The Chaldeans were a Semitic people who first appeared in southern Mesopotamia about 1000 B.C. Chaldea became a term used to denote Babylonia as a whole (Daniel 3:8; 9:1). The prominence of the classes of priests who, at Babylon and other centers, maintained the ancient traditions of astrology and philosophy in the classical Babylonian languages led to the designation Chaldean being applied both to priests (Daniel 3:8) astrologers, and educated persons (Daniel 2:10; 4:7; 11).

**COMPUTER CALENDAR:** The computer calendar displays the precise date of each new moon throughout history and provides the time separation in days, weeks, lunations, solar years, *etc.*, between new moons.

**COVENANT:** The Hebrew word *berith*, occurring over 280 times in the Old Testament, is used to describe a wide variety of agreements between participating parties. The term is used to describe the relationship that existed between God and Israel. Treaties of the Near East always followed a literary pattern of characteristics. The major Biblical covenants would include the Adamic, Noahic, Abrahamic, Mosaic, Davidic and the New Covenant.

**CYCLICAL PHENOMENA:** The 'cycle' of the Sabbath (every seventh day), the Sabbath year (every seventh year) and the Jubilee year (every seventh Sabbath year) were commanded by the Lord in the Mosaic code for Israel to observe. These 'cycles' work hand in hand with the functions of God's clock (the moon, the sun, the stars) to measure and regulate time. In addition to the Mosaic cycles is the priestly cycle commanded by David. The king made provision for the services in the Temple that Solomon was to build. Arranged by lot into twenty-four sections, the priests were to serve consecutively one week at a time. The time required for one complete cycle was 168 days. The order was to continue perpetually. (See Sabbath Days, Sabbath Years, Jubilee Years and Levitical Priesthood)

**CYRUS CYLINDER:** A baked clay barrel about nine inches long, which records the conquest of Babylon by Cyrus of Persia. Despite the loss through breakage of several lines, the main account is clear. Having set forth problems encountered by Babylonian priests with King Nabonidus, the text tells of Marduk, seeking a righteous man, pronouncing the name of Cyrus thus destining him to be ruler of the world. Babylon was taken without battle and Cyrus was welcomed by the

populace. By royal edict captives were released and permitted to return to their homelands, sanctuaries restored, statuary and cultic implements returned to shrines.

**DAVIDIC COVENANT:** The covenant refers to the great promise which the Lord made with King David in II Samuel 7:12-16. The contract promises David an eternal son, throne, kingdom and dynasty. The Davidic Covenant is Messianic in its ultimate fulfillment. (See Covenant)

**DEAD SEA SCROLLS:** A popular name given to collections of manuscript material found in a number of regions west of the Dead Sea in 1947 and the years following. The Dead Sea Scrolls are important in two principal areas of study: in the textual criticism of the Old Testament and in understanding the developments in Judaism during the intertestamental period. The scrolls give light on the background of the New Testament.

**EPONYM:** A short statement recording major events and/or persons for a given Assyrian year. Any Assyrian official whose name was given to some particular year in his honor. Examples: 763 B.C. for Bur-Sagale; 854 B.C. for Daian-Assur; 869 B.C. for Daian-Urta. (See *Limmu* Lists)

**ERA OF NABONASSAR:** Claudius Ptolemaeus, an astronomer and geographer, is famous for his *The Almagest*. He organized the charts of lunar eclipses which would have occurred before his time, and ties them into eclipses which have occurred during his time. He then organized the Babylonian histories from Nabonassar (747-734 B.C.) through his era. He superimposed the eclipses that he had calculated upon the history of Babylon, and related the dates of the eclipses to the first year of Nabonassar as well as the king who was in office at the time of the eclipse. (See Ptolemy, *The Almagest*)

**GEZER CALENDAR:** This little inscription was discovered at Gezer in 1908 by R. A. S. Macalister. It is written on a school exercise tablet of soft limestone. It should be dated around the time of Solomon and the beginning of the Divided Kingdom. The language is good Biblical Hebrew, in a very early script. The calendar is written in verse and seems to have been a kind of mnemonic ditty for children. At present, the calendar is the oldest known Hebrew inscription. It's months are based on agricultural conditions.

**GREGORIAN CALENDAR:** This calculated calendar is now in use in the United States and most other countries, having twelve months and 365 days (366 in leap year). It was introduced by Pope Gregory XIII and first adopted in France in 1582, and adopted in Great Britain and its colonies in 1752. The Gregorian calendar corrected the Julian calendar by eliminating those centenary years not divisible by 400 as leap years and advanced the date to correct previous error. It is called New Style in contrast to the Julian calendar or Old Style.

**HEBREW CALENDAR:** The calendar year was composed of lunar months, which began when the thin crescent of the new moon was first visible at sunset. The day of the new moon thus beginning was considered holy. The month (Hebrew

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*yerah*, 'moon') was reckoned to consist of twenty-nine/thirty days and, since the lunar year was about eleven days less than the solar year, it was periodically necessary to insert a thirteenth month (Adar II or Veadar) in order that New Year's Day should not fall before the Spring of the year (March-April). Agricultural conditions determined the need for Adar II. The extra month occurs in seven out of nineteen of the years constituting a lunar cycle.

**HERMENEUTICAL:** Having to do with the science of interpretation, especially the branch of theology that deals with the principles of Scriptural interpretation.

**HERODOTUS:** The famous Greek historian (484 B.C.- 430 B.C.) who undertook to write the history of the world up to his own time. During his youth, he traveled widely in Greece, the Middle East and North Africa. Everywhere he went he studied the manners, customs, and the religions of the people and learned as much as he could of their history. The Roman orator Cicero called him 'The Father of History'.

**INTERREGNA:** A period of inactivity; such as the time between the end of one ruler's reign and the beginning of his successor's reign.

**JOSEPHUS, FLAVIUS:** He was a Jewish historian who was born A.D. 37/38, and died early in the second century. He was the son of a priest named Matthias, of the order of Jehoiarib (I Chronicles 24:7) and claimed kinship with the Hasmoneans, who belonged to that order. He joined the party of the Pharisees at age nineteen. Later he opposed the First Jewish Revolt against Rome in A.D. 66. During the siege of Jerusalem, he acted as an interpreter for Titus when he wished to offer terms to the defendants of the city. After Jerusalem's fall, he went to Rome, where he settled down as a client and pensioner of the emperor, whose family name, Flavius, he adopted. At Rome he wrote a *History of the Jewish War*, his first work, and the *Jewish Antiquities* his longest work. The works of Josephus are of incomparable value and provide indispensable background material for the student of the Bible. Archaeological evidence has demonstrated Josephus to be a very accurate historian.

**JULIAN CALENDAR:** The calculated calendar in which the average length of a year was 365 1/4 days with a leap year of 366 days every fourth year. It was introduced by Julius Caesar in 46 B.C. and used in France until 1582, and in Great Britain and its colonies until 1752, when it was replaced by the Gregorian calendar. A year in the Julian calendar was about 11 minutes and 14 seconds longer than a solar year.

**KHORSABAD:** Khorsabad, twelve miles northwest of Nineveh, was the palace residence of the Assyrian King Sargon II. Here the Khorsabad King List was discovered. The annals of Sargon II list the fall of Samaria as the outstanding event of the first year of his reign.

**LIMMU LISTS:** The eponym or Assyrian *limmu* lists kept by the ancients record years and events. Each year was named after a key official in the government, and the name, and event which took place was noted. Usually the event con-

cerned itself with a battle location or a catastrophe in the land. When a king changed, the scribe usually drew a line under the eponym indicating that a change in the monarch had taken place. Most often, the second eponym after the king came to office, was named after him. (See Assyrian Eponym Cannon)

**LUCIANIC CANON:** This is another edition of the Septuagint, produced by Lucian of Antioch who became a martyr in 311 A.D. The Lucianic text is known as the Byzantine or Syrian text. According to some scholars, his Greek text in the historical books is most valuable, being often based on a Hebrew text superior to the Massoretic text. Whether Lucian himself had access to this Hebrew text, or whether he culled his readings from an earlier non-LXX translation is a doubted point. Lucian's revision of the LXX is referred to as Greek manuscript C.2 (See Septuagint)

**MASSORETIC TEXT:** The Hebrew manuscripts of the Old Testament preserved by the Massoretes, a group of scribes who lived in the time from 500 A.D. to 1000 A.D.

**MESSIAH:** The Jewish word for the 'Anointed One'. In Greek it is *Christos*. Christians today apply the term to Jesus Christ. This word is the official title of the central figure of Jewish expectation.

**MISHNA:** The collection of interpretations and discussions of the law of Moses by the rabbis codified about 200 A.D. The Mishna, the oral law of the Jews, is written in Hebrew and forms the basic part of the Talmud.

**MONITOR CYCLES:** Hebrew timekeeping utilized a series of 'monitor cycles' that facilitate an accurate chronological recording of time and events. In the covenant ratified at Sinai, Israel was committed to a faithful observance of three of these cycles--Sabbath days, Sabbath years, and Jubilee years. The fourth 'monitor cycled' was arranged by David--the priestly cycle of twenty-four courses which were to continue perpetually, *cf.*, I Chronicles 23-30. Each section was to serve consecutively one week at a time. (See Sabbath Days, Sabbath Years, Jubilee Years and Levitical Priesthood)

**MONOLITH INSCRIPTION:** This Assyrian inscription claims to record the military activities of the first six years of Shalmaneser III and is a traditional source for dating the battle of Qarqar. However, it appears that Shalmaneser III takes credit for the events recorded on the Monolith Inscription that belonged to his father, Ashurnasir-pal II. Ahab is mentioned in the Monolith inscription, but the Biblical records show that Ahab was dead for nine years before Shalmaneser replaced his father. It is very likely that Shalmaneser was present at the war of Ahab vs. Ashur-nasir-pal as described in his sixth year, as crown prince, or perhaps as an officer in the army.

**NIMRUD:** The location is the site of the Assyrian Calah (Genesis 10:11). The Black Obelisk of Shalmaneser III which originally stood in the public square was discovered here.

**NON-ACCESSION YEAR:** This is the portion of the first year of a king's reign after his ascension to the throne before Nisan 1. The official year of his reign begins with this date.

**OBSERVED CALENDAR:** Hebrew observers watched for the 'new moon' so that they might announce the sacred seasons of the Hebrew calendar. A new moon determined a new month.

**PRISM OF SENNACHERIB:** The clay prism contains the annals of Sennacherib, the Assyrian king who besieged Jerusalem twice during the days of Hezekiah. In his annals, Sennacherib's scribes tell of forty-six of Hezekiah's cities which fell to the Assyrians. Although Sennacherib received tribute from Hezekiah, it is clear that he was not able to take Jerusalem (II Kings 18-19).

**PTOLEMY (CLAUDIUS PTOLEMAEUS):** The famous Egyptian astronomer (A.D. 70-161). He prepared a canon in which he enumerates the years of a consecutive series of rulers commencing with Nabonassar of Babylon in 747 B.C. as the first year, and continuing with the succeeding rulers of Babylon; then the rulers of Persia to Darius III, the last ruler of Persia, when he was overthrown by Alexander the Great; next the Greek rulers of Egypt from Alexander and the Ptolemies to Cleopatra; and concluding with the Roman rulers of Egypt from Augustus to Antonius Pius A.D. 138-161. Connected with the canon is his *The Almagest* which records over eighty solar, lunar, and planetary positions together with their dates, which may be co-ordinated with the chronology of the canon. (See *Almagest*)

**PUL:** It does not appear that Pul is to be identified with Tiglath-pileser, *cf.*, I Chronicles 5:26. Pul is Tiglath-pileser's father who is Ashur-nirari. Josephus also does not identify Pul with Tiglath-pileser, *Antiquities* IX.xi.1.

**RASHI:** (Solomon ben Isaac; 1040-1105), leading commentator on the Bible and Talmud. Rashi commented on most, if not all, the books of the Bible. The criterion on which he based his choice of comment is clearly stated by Him: "As for me, I am only concerned with the literal meaning of the Scriptures and with such *aggadot* as explain the biblical passages in a fitting manner" (Genesis 3:8). On one occasion he even declared that the Lord gave him understanding of the Bible: "I have had no one to help me, nor a teacher, in all this edifice, but it is as revealed to me from Heaven." He centered his commentaries on the meticulous analysis of the language of the text.

**SABBATH YEARS:** This term refers to the divine provision of rest made concerning the land of Israel. After six years of sowing, pruning, and gathering, the land lay fallow for one year (Leviticus 25:1-7). To quiet fears of privation, the Israelites were assured by the Lord that the sixth year would provide enough food for three years (Leviticus 25:20-22). Sabbath years begin at the end of every six years, after the Feast of Tabernacles, and end one year later at the same time of the year. When Scripture describes a context in which the Law is being read, slaves are released, bills are paid or remitted, land is redeemed, and the fields lie idle, it is referring to a Sabbath year, and will be a multiple of seven years

from every other Sabbath year.

**SALVATION HISTORY:** The German word is *Heilsgeschichte*. This is a view of history which sees God as being in control and history as having meaning. All history centers in Jesus Christ, the Lord of history, and His cross. History includes redemption Land restoration.

**SAMARITANS:** The term normally applies to an early Israelite sect that lived in the territory of Samaria and had their central sanctuary on Mt. Gerizim. Samaritans believed that Joshua built a sanctuary on Mt. Gerizim, which was the center for all early Israelite worship. They dated the religious break with the Jews to the time of Eli, whom they accused of erecting a rival sanctuary at Shiloh. The Samaritans regarded the fall of Samaria in 723 B.C. as a political loss rather than a religious one. Shechem, not Samaria, had always been and would continue to be their holy city. The Samaritans are best known through the mention of them in the gospel narratives. Their creed has six articles: Belief in one God; in Moses the prophet; in the Law; in Mt. Gerizim as the place of worship appointed by God for sacrifice, (*cf.* Samaritan reading of Deuteronomy 27:4; in the day of judgment and recompense, and in the return of Moses as Taheb, or restorer (something akin to the Messiah). The Jews regarded the Samaritans as schismatics rather than Gentiles. The Samaritan Pentateuch, despite theological modifications, is a very important witness to the original text.

**SEPTENNATE:** A period of seven years.

**SEPTUAGINT:** Commonly denoted by 'LXX', the Septuagint is the most important Greek translation of the Old Testament, and the oldest known influential translation in any language. According to Josephus, Ptolemy Philadelphus (285-246 B.C.) desired to procure the Laws of the Jews to be translated from Hebrew into Greek for his royal library. To win the favor of the Jews, he set many Jewish captives free and dedicated many gifts to be used in the temple service. The king wrote to Eleazar, the Jewish high priest, to send men of good character, elders in age, and six out of every tribe (72), and men who were skillful in the Laws and having abilities to make an accurate interpretation of them. This translation offers students of the Bible an interpretation that pre-dates the Massoretic text. The LXX became the Bible of the Early Christian Church and is much quoted in the Greek New Testament. For more details see Josephus, *Antiquities* XII.ii.1-14.

**SHEMITTAH:** The Hebrew word literally means 'release'. It refers to the Jewish Sabbatical year.

**SHOFAR:** Literally, the shofar was made from the horns of the ram and used as a musical instrument on special days--to proclaim the new month, the Jubilee year, and the New Year (Rosh Ha-Shanah) Leviticus 25:9-10; Numbers 29:1. In Biblical times, it was used as an accompaniment to other musical instruments, Psalm 98:6, in processions, Joshua 6:4ff., as a signal, Joshua 6:12ff., II Samuel 15:10, as a clarion call to war, Judges 3:27, and in order to induce fear, Amos 3:6.

**SILLOAM INSCRIPTION:** The construction of 'the pool and the conduit' by means of which Hezekiah 'brought water into the city' of Jerusalem (II Kings 20:20) is considered to be one of the great engineering feats of antiquity. He first built the Siloam reservoir itself, enclosing it within fortifications located in the southwest quarter of Jerusalem (Isaiah 22:9, 11) and intending then to divert the Gihon waters from the old or lower pool into it through the Siloam tunnel. It has been surmised that the actual hewing of the rock was being done at the very time of the siege of Jerusalem. In 1880 within the tunnel itself, a Hebrew inscription was discovered. The Siloam inscription was written in flowing Hebrew characters datable to the time of Hezekiah, so that 700 B.C. cannot be too far from the actual year of its engraving, probably by a member of one of the crews that dug the tunnel.

**SLIDING CALENDAR:** A calendar based on 365 day which falls short of the 365.242199 day solar year each year, resulting in the vernal equinox which will occur at a later date each year. This 'sliding' will continue so that it would take centuries before the first date of the first month would occur on the correct date. Egypt was the only country that used a sliding calendar. This calendar contained 365 days in a calendar year; no intercalary day was inserted in any given year. It resulted that the opening day of this calendar worked back through the solar year, until a whole cycle of that year had been completed in a period of 1,456 to 1,506 years, according to the definition employed of a 'solar year'. This official Egyptian calendar was in use from the protodynastic period until Roman times.

**STELE OF BEL-HARRAN-BEL-USUR:** The inscription on an alabaster stele, throws an interesting light upon the unsettled period preceding the reign of Tiglath-pileser II. Bel-harran-bel-usur, successively high chamberlain under Shalmaneser IV and Tiglath-pileser, founded a city in the desert, west of Nineveh, built a temple, and endowed its cult. This official, not his royal masters, established the freedom of this city from certain taxes and dues. On the stele, the word, 'Tiglath-pileser', is written over another word on the stele. That other word happens to be 'Shalmaneser', immediate successor to Adad-nirari and two monarchs before Tiglath-pileser.

**TALMUD:** A collection of sixty-three books containing the body of Jewish civil and canonical law derived by interpretation and expansion of the teachings of the Old Testament through the Rabbis. The Talmud is composed of the *Mishnah*, the oral law which was in existence by the end of the second century A.D., and was collected by Rabbi Judah the Prince; and *Gemara*, the comments of the Rabbis from A.D. 200 to 500 on the *Mishnah*. As to contents, the Talmud contains *Halakhah*, legal enactments and precepts with the elaborate discussions whereby decisions were reached; and *Haggadah*, non-legal interpretations. The Talmud is the source from which Jewish law is derived. It is binding for faith and life on orthodox Jews. It is important for our knowledge of how the Jews interpreted the Old Testament.

**TITUS:** The Roman general, who lead the Tenth Roman Legion, and destroyed

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Jerusalem in 70 A.D.

URUK KING LIST: A short list of kings from Kandalanu to Seleucus II giving the king's name and the number of years which he reigned. Nebuchadnezzar, Cyrus, and Alexander the Great are included in the list.

YAHWEH: The Hebrew word *Yahweh* is the sacred Name of God. In the K.J.V., it is usually translated 'the LORD' (note the capitals) and sometimes 'Jehovah'. The latter name originated as follows. The original Hebrew text was not vocalized; in time the 'tetragrammaton' YHWH was considered too sacred to pronounce; so '*adonay* (my Lord) was substituted in reading, and the vowels of this word were combined with the consonants YHWH to give 'Jehovah'. 'J' is an English translation of 'Y', and 'V' is the rendering of 'W'.

ZODIAC: An imaginary belt of the heavens, extending about eight degrees on both sides of the path of the sun and including the paths of the major planets and the moon. The Zodiac is divided into twelve equal parts, called signs, named after twelve constellations.

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