The chronology of the Law and the Prophets as a twofold witness to biblical inerrancy

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"Great are the works of the Lord, studied by all who delight in them" Psalm 111:2 (ESV).

The Old Testament contains numerous verifiable details that demonstrate its historical accuracy. These are externally consistent with records from surrounding nations and internally consistent across two biblical counting systems, the regnal year records of Divided Kingdom rulers and the calendar system of Sabbatical and Jubilee years. This article examines the multilayered verification of these chronological details, not just for dates in the Divided Kingdom, but also for earlier dates in Israel's history. It traces the efforts begun by Thiele in 1944 and completed by Young in 2004. Thiele's modified chronology is compared to alternatives advocated by Pierce and Austin in the *Journal of Creation*. Most importantly, this paper explores how a topic like chronology supports the message of the Gospel.

Starting with the Bible—two witnesses in the Old Testament

In the New Testament, the Old Testament is called 'the Law and the Prophets' or 'Moses and the Prophets'. The first part of that title, the Law, encompasses the first five books of the Bible, written by Moses at the time the nation of Israel was entrusted with rules to set them apart as God's people. The second part of the title, the Prophets, covers a collection of works by God's spokespeople, including records of the history of the Hebrew nation. Within the Law, besides the time spans found in chronogenealogies and patriarchal age statements, there is chronological information in the Sabbatical and Jubilee calendar system. The Prophets also supply time spans, but add regnal year records and synchronisms as well. As would be expected from the Bible, since it is authored by God, the dates produced by each method correlate exactly with each other, providing a detailed, verifiable, and internally consistent chronology (figure 1).

Thiele's development of biblical chronology for the Divided Kingdom period

One of the most well-known biblical chronologists is Archbishop James Ussher, who published a two-volume biblical and secular history in Latin in 1650 and 1654, called *The Annals of the World*.[1] Ussher was followed by Edwin Thiele (TEE-luh), who also used biblical data, but had Assyrian and Babylonian sources not available in Ussher's time. Thiele's work analyzed the Divided Kingdom,[2] first through a journal article in 1944,[3] then a book, *The Mysterious Numbers of the Hebrew Kings*, in 1951.[4] Thiele's thorough analysis, plus additional archaeological data, shed new light on biblical dating.

First, Thiele realized that Judah started its calendar year in autumn with the 7th month by biblical numbering, Tishri, while Israel began its year with the 1st month, Nisan, which falls in spring.[5] The biblical basis for a Tishri calendar year came from details on Solomon's construction of the temple[6] and Josiah's activities prior to Passover in his 18th year.[7] In contrast, Ussher had assumed that both Israel and Judah began their year with Nisan, possibly following the Talmud.[8] (For notational clarity, Tishri years will be designated with a 't' next to the BC year in which it began, and Nisan years with an 'n'. The 1st half of the year will be labelled '1' and the 2nd half '2'.)

Second, Thiele noticed that two methods of counting regnal years were employed in the Bible, observing that synchronisms between the two kingdoms developed a discrepancy that increased by one year with each new king in Israel during the early years of the Divided Kingdom. Thiele, familiar with the Assyrian data covered in Luckenbill's comprehensive two-volume publication,[9] examined the Assyrian Eponym Canon,[10] the Kurkh Monolith (figure 2),[11] and the Black Obelisk (figure 3).[12] The Assyrian records showed a passage of only 12 years where two Israelite kings took credit for 14 regnal years. The comparisons revealed that Israel used 'non-accession reckoning' at the time, double counting a transition year to both the outgoing and incoming ruler, calling it 'year one' for the new ruler. Judah, on the other hand, employed 'accession reckoning' at that point, attributing the transition year solely to the outgoing ruler, and labelling the new ruler's initial year an 'accession year'. A king's 'year one' in this system began with the New Year (whether Tishri or Nisan) following the transition year. With non-accession reckoning, a reign length or ordinal year synchronization is always formulated as $x - 1$ from the transition year. For example, if Jeroboam I of Israel started to reign

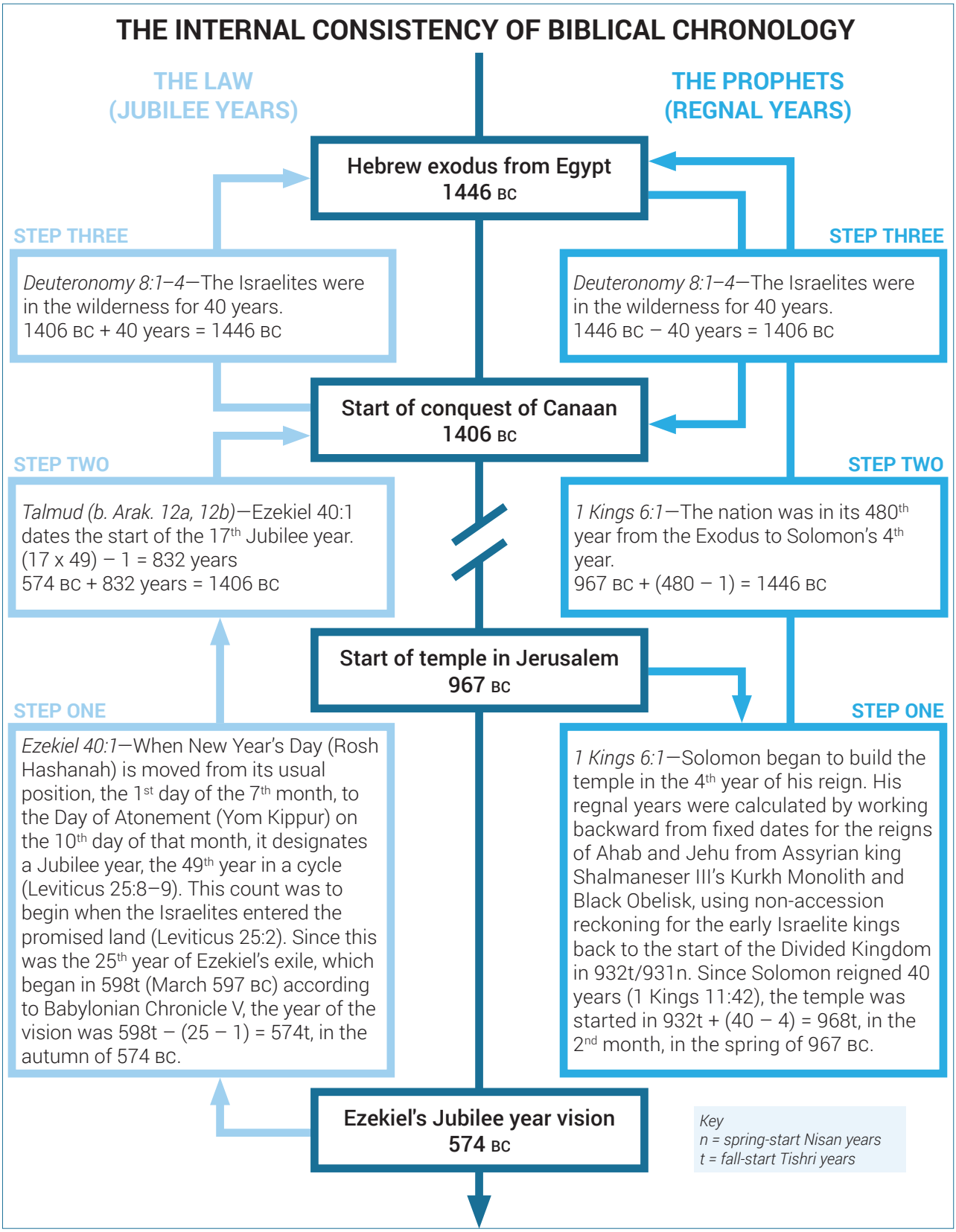

Figure 1. Tying in chronology with Jubilee and regnal years

Figure 2. Kurkh Monolith of Shalmaneser III: This large limestone stela (221 x 87 cm or 7.25 x 2.85 ft) mentions Ahab as an adversary at the Battle of Qarqar in 853 BC. It is also called the Kurkh Stela or Monolith Inscription and is identified by British Museum number 118884.

Figure 3. Black Obelisk of Shalmaneser III: This large limestone obelisk (197 x 45–61 cm or 6.46 x 1.48–2.00 ft) lists tribute from Jehu, which according to Shalmaneser's annals was received in 841 BC. Its British Museum number is 118885.

in 931n and ruled 22 years, his end date is 931n – (22 – 1) = 910n. If Abijam of Judah started his reign in the 18th year of Jeroboam I, then the synchronization is 931n – (18 – 1) = 914n (table 1 and supplementary tables 2a and 2b).[13]

Third, Thiele found coregencies and overlapping reigns missed by others. Two key examples are Azariah's/Uzziah's coregency with his father Amaziah in Judah and a 12-year rivalry in Israel in which Menahem's and Pekahiah's reigns overlapped the first part of Pekah's 20-year reign. Initially, Thiele suggested that Pekah had backdated his reign to take credit for those years,[14] but after 1964, when H. J. Cook pointed out the prophet Hosea's distinction between two parts within Israel,[15] Thiele specifically accepted Hosea 5:5 as evidence of a rival reign instead.[16]

Chronologists who deny Azariah's/Uzziah's coregency and Pekah's rivalry are forced to place two interregna in Israel's history to fit synchronisms together, but the reign of Assyrian king Tiglath-Pileser III makes this impossible. First, Tiglath-Pileser mentions Azariah/Uzziah as part of an allied group in revolt against him.[17] Second, according to 2 Kings 15:19, where Tiglath-Pileser is called Pul, he received tribute from Menahem. (Pul is another name for Tiglath-Pileser according to 1 Chronicles 5:26[18] and Thiele's comparison[19] of Babylonian Chronicle I[20] to Ptolemy's Canon.[21]) Tiglath-Pileser's annals[22] also list this tribute. Third, Tiglath-Pileser claims he replaced Pekah with Hoshea, allowing no passage of time between them.[23] The reigns of Azariah/Uzziah, Menahem, Pekah, and Hoshea only align with Tiglath-Pileser's records if the aforementioned coregency and rivalry are recognized (supplementary table 3).

Finally, Thiele's expertise in archaeology, combined with the work of Olmstead,[24] connected the biblical data on the fall of Samaria to corroborating historical sources. This tragedy, described in 2 Kings 17:3–6, 18:9–11, connects the final years of Hoshea's reign to the military campaign of Assyrian king Shalmaneser V. A badly mutilated portion of the Assyrian Eponym Canon states Shalmaneser was against an unnamed adversary for the years 725–723n, which coincides with the three-year siege against Samaria in Hoshea's 7th to 9th years. An additional source confirmed this connection: Babylonian Chronicle I credited Shalmaneser with destroying Samaria.[25]

Thiele's chronology beautifully tied together most of the regnal year synchronisms of the Divided Kingdom and also connected seamlessly to multiple checkpoints in secular history. As Thiele himself put it:

Table 1. External corroboration of biblical chronology

Thiele's date correlations to secular history with McFall's and Young's modifications					
Judahite king	**Adjusted reign length**	**Dates**	**Israelite king**	**Adjusted reign length**	**Dates**
Rehoboam	*17* years (SA)	932–915t	Jeroboam I	*22* – 1(SN) = 21 years	931–910n
Abijam/Abijah	*3* years (SA)	915–912t	Nadab	*2* – 1(SN) = 1 year	910–909n
Asa	*41* years (SA)	912–871t	Baasha	*24* – 1(SN) = 23 years	909–886n
Jehoshaphat	17th year sole reign (SA)	871–854t	Elah	*2* – 1(SN) = 1 year	886–885n
Jehoshaphat began a coregency with his father in 873t, when Asa's feet became diseased.			Zimri	*7 days* = 0 years	885–885n
			Tibni	rival 6? (1 Kings 16:21–23) = 0 years	885–880n
			Omri	*12* – 1(SN) = 11 years	885–874n
			Ahab	*22* – 1(SN) = 21 years	874–853n
Total year span	78 years	78 years	Total year span	78 years	78 years
854t2/853n1 Kurkh Monolith, Shalmaneser III's 6th year, 853 BC, Ahab at Battle of Qarqar before his death in Ramoth–gilead					
Jehoshaphat	*25* = 3(CN) + 22(SA) [5 left]	854–849t	Ahaziah	*2* – 1(SN) = 1 year	853–852n
Jehoram/Joram	6(CN) + *8* – 1(SN) = 7 years	854–842t	Jehoram/Joram	*12* – 1(SN) = 11 years	852–841n
Ahaziah*	2(CN) + *1* – 1(SN) = 0 years	843–842t			
Total year span	12 years	12 years	Total year span	12 years	12 years
842t2/841n1 Black Obelisk, Shalmaneser III's 18th year, 841 BC, Jehu's tribute after killing the kings of Judah and Israel					
Queen Athaliah	*7* – 1(SN) = 6 years	842–836t	Jehu	*28* – 1(SN) = 27 years	841–814n
Joash/Jehoash	*40* – 1(SN) = 39 years	836–797t	Jehoahaz/Joahaz	*17* – 1(SN) = 16 years	814–798n
Amaziah	6(SA) + 23 under son = *29*(A)	797–768t	Joash/Jehoash*	2(CN) + *16* years (SA)	799–782n
After his capture by Jehoash of Israel, Amaziah may have been seen as secondary to his son.			Jeroboam II	*41* = 12(CN) + 29 years (SA)	793–753n
			Zechariah	*6 months* = 0 years	753–753n
Azariah/Uzziah	*52* = 24(CN) + 28(SA)	791–740t	Shallum	*1 month* over Nisan 1 = 1 year	753–752n
Jotham	*20* = *12*(CN) + *4*(SA) + rival 4 [8 yrs]	751–732t	Menahem	rival *10* = 0 years	752–742n
A political faction for Assyrian appeasement likely considered Jotham deposed after *16* years of reign, when his son's coregency began (2 Kings 15:30–33).			Pekahiah	rival *2* = 0 years	742–740n
			Hosea 5:5 makes Israel and Ephraim two kingdoms.		
Ahaz	5(CN) + 8 of *16*(SA) [8 years]	736–724t	Pekah	*20* years (SA)	752–732n
2 Kings 17:1 treats Ahaz as sole ruler in 736t.			Hoshea	*9* years (SA)	732–723n
Hezekiah	6th yr = 6 – 1(CN) = 5 years [0 yrs]	729–724t	2 Kings 17:1 ties to the end of Hoshea's reign.		
Total year span	118 years	118 years	Total year span	118 years	118 years
724t2/723n1 Babylonian Chronicle I, Shalmaneser V "ravaged Samaria" in 723 BC Assyrian Eponym List, Shalmaneser V, "campaign against [Samaria]," 725–723n, and 2 Kings 18:9–10					
Judahite king	**Adjusted reign length**	**Dates**	**Assyrian and Babylonian records**		
Ahaz	5(CN) + 8 of *16*(SA) [8 left]	724–716t			
Hezekiah	8 of 14(CN) + *29*(SA)	724–687t	Sennacherib's Annals/Prism, 701 BC, Hezekiah's 14th (SA)		
Manasseh	*55* = 11(CN) + 44(SA)	697–643t			
Amon	*2* years (SA)	643–641t			
Josiah	*31* years (SA)	641–610t	Babylonian Chronicle III, Josiah's death		
Jehoahaz	*3 months* over Tishri 1 = 1 year	610–609t	Babylonian Chronicle III, Jehoahaz's captivity		
Jehoiakim	*11* years (SA)	609–598t	Babylonian Chronicle III, Jehoiakim's accession		
Jehoiachin/Jeconiah	*3 months* = 0 years	598–598t	Babylonian Chronicle V, Jehoiachin's captivity		
Zedekiah	*11* – 1 = 10 years (SN)	598–588t	Babylonian Chronicle V, Zedekiah's accession		
Total year span	136 years	136 years			
588t2/587n1 Calculations based on date of Jehoiachin's exile, when Ezekiel was also taken captive, from Babylonian Chronicle V Cross-checked by Babylonian inscriptions from the reigns of Nebuchadnezzar II and Evil–Merodach (Amel–Marduk)					

S = sole reign, C = coregency, N = non–accession reckoning, A = accession reckoning, *numbers* = reign lengths in Bible, t = Tishri (fall–start) years, n = Nisan (spring–start) years, 1 = 1st half, 2 = 2nd half, *McFall's coregency suggestion is accepted here although omitted by Young

> "The best argument for the correctness of [the proposed chronology] is that it works, giving us a chronological scheme of the kings of Israel and Judah in which there is internal harmony and which fits into the chronology of neighboring states."[26]

McFall's contributions to Thiele's chronology

British scholar Leslie McFall fixed some of the issues remaining in Thiele's work.[27] First, he updated Thiele's chronology by adding a coregency, first suggested by Siegfried Horn in 1964, for Hezekiah and Ahaz.[28] Second, McFall accepted a different translation of the verb form of 2 Kings 17:1, an idea originally offered by Edmund Parker in 1968.[29] The verb for 'reign' in this passage is usually translated as 'began to reign'. It should instead read that Hoshea of Israel 'had reigned' in Samaria for nine years.[30]

These two adjustments fixed two synchronisms. The Assyrian siege of Samaria during the 7th to 9th years of Hoshea of Israel corresponded with the 4th to 6th years of Hezekiah's coregency (2 Kings 18:9–10). Also, the end of Hoshea's reign, his 9th year, ties to the 12th year of Hezekiah's father, Ahaz (2 Kings 17:1), when Ahaz is treated as a sole ruler who deposed his father, Jotham.[31]

Young's technological experience applied to biblical chronology

The next contributor to biblical chronology, Rodger Young, came from the computer industry. By employing data analysis methods used there, he discovered that the calendar system of Sabbatical and Jubilee years found in the Law aligned with the regnal year systems recorded by the Prophets, providing internal verification of the accuracy of the biblical historical record.

First, Young made a correction to the date of Solomon's death, placing it in 932t rather than 931t as suggested by Thiele.[32] This, in turn, fixed the math applied to 1 Kings 6:1, where the start of temple construction in Solomon's 4th year was the 480th year after the people left Egypt. Solomon reigned 40 years (1 Kings 11:42), so his 4th is 932t + (40 – 4) = 968t. The regnal year began in autumn, but the temple was started the following spring, in 967 BC. The 480th year places the 1st year in 968t + (480 – 1) = 1447t.[33] This Tishri year started in autumn, but the Israelites left Egypt in the springtime month of Nisan, in 1446 BC. The synchronism, worked out by Young, established the regnal year side of figure 1.

In regard to the 480-year figure, it cannot be modified by adding to it or treating it symbolically. Rabbi Umberto Cassuto observed that in the Hebrew text, if a figure appears in ascending order, for example, with tens before hundreds, this designates a technically exact and precise figure.[34] Archaeologist Bryant Wood noted that 1 Kings 6:1 reads as the 80th and 400th year, pinpointing a meticulously accurate number.[35]

Next, Young turned his attention to the Bible's Jubilee year calendar system and the Talmud's identification of two Jubilee years,[36] one in the 18th year of Josiah[37] and another in the year identified in Ezekiel 40:1, which the Talmud numbers as the 17th Jubilee (supplementary tables 4a and 4b).[38] Josiah's Jubilee precedes Ezekiel's by 49 years, making it the 16th.[39]

The Jewish religious calendar, like civil regnal year systems, had both Nisan and Tishri years. The religious year began in Nisan, the 1st month, but Sabbatical and Jubilee years began in Tishri, the 7th month.[40] This meant that Sabbatical years began with the 2nd half of the 7th Nisan year and finished midway through the 8th Nisan year, which was the 1st Nisan year of the next cycle (Leviticus 25:20–22). Jubilee years, being concurrent with the 7th Sabbatical year, ran through the 2nd half of the 49th Nisan year and the 1st half of the 50th Nisan year, meaning the 1st Nisan year of the next cycle (Leviticus 25:8–12).

The count began when the Israelites entered Canaan (Leviticus 25:1–8). Seventeen cycles back from Ezekiel's Jubilee is 574t + [(49 x 17) – 1] = 1406t.[41] The Tishri year started in the 2nd half of the Nisan year, which places the entry to Canaan in 1406n (Joshua 4:19). This synchronism established the Jubilee year side of figure 1. Young also found allusions to other Sabbatical and Jubilee years in Scripture (table 4a).[42]

The Sabbatical and Jubilee cycle marked by Ezekiel 40:1 is not in alignment with Ussher's count, seemingly determined by working backwards from known post-exilic Sabbatical years. The problem with Ussher's approach is that the first Jewish exiles to return to Jerusalem apparently started a new Sabbatical year count upon arrival, based on Nehemiah 10:31, the Seder 'Olam,[43] and the Talmud,[44] so the post-exilic count does not align with the pre-exilic count (supplementary table 4b).

Young's analysis of Judahite kings and the attacks on Jerusalem

Young then focused on the date of Jerusalem's destruction by the Babylonians.[45] Using a tool called decision tables[46] to analyze chronological data from Ezekiel, 2 Kings, and Jeremiah, he discovered that Jerusalem fell in the summer months of 587 BC, not 586 BC as proposed by Thiele.

Jerusalem was attacked three times during the last days of Judah. First in 605 BC, when Daniel was taken captive to Babylon, then in 597 BC, when Ezekiel and King Jehoiachin were taken, and finally in 587 BC, when Jerusalem and its temple were destroyed. These dates are all determined by comparison of biblical data with Babylonian records.

Young's analysis began with Ezekiel and a chronological peg from the start of his captivity, dated by Babylonian Chronicle V (figure 4).[47] It states that in Nebuchadnezzar II's 7th year, 598n, on the 2nd day of the 12th month (which Parker

Table 4a. Old Testament allusions to Sabbatical and Jubilee years

Young's analysis of Old Testament allusions to Sabbatical and Jubilee years	
Dates and practices	**Synchronisms, calculations, and historical connections**
11th Jubilee (868t) **868t** 1406 BC – [(11 x 49) – 1] 1406 BC entry to Canaan is 'year one' so date formula must be reduced by 1 for first cycle *Reading the Law (Deuteronomy 31:10–13)*	Kurkh Monolith sets Ahab's last year in 853n, and Jehoshaphat's 17th year in 854t (1 Kings 22:51) 854t + 17 = 871t (Jehoshaphat's accession year) 3rd (SA) year of Jehoshaphat of Judah 871t – 3 = **868t** (2 Chronicles 17:7–9)
Sabbatical year (700t)* 721t start of 14th Jubilee=1406 BC – [(14 x 49) – 1] 21 3 x 7 (three Sabbatical cycles) **700t** Sabbatical year 28 4 x 7 (four Sabbatical cycles) 672t start of 15th Jubilee *Land lying fallow (Leviticus 25:1–7)*	Sennacherib's Prism sets the Assyrian invasion in 701 BC, in the 2nd half of Hezekiah's 14th (SA) year (702t2/701n1), crop disruption continued into 701t and Hezekiah received God's promise of food for that year and the **700t** Sabbatical year (2 Kings 18:13, 19:29; Isaiah 36:1, 37:30)
16th Jubilee (623t) 672t start of 15th Jubilee = 1406 BC – [(15 x 49) – 1] 49 7 x 7 (seven Sabbatical cycles) **623t** start of 16th Jubilee = 1406 BC – [(16 x 49) – 1] *Reading the Law (Deuteronomy 31:10–13)*	Babylonian Chronicle III sets Josiah's death in 610t, which places his accession year in 641t (2 Kings 22:1, 23:29, 2 Chronicles 34:1, 35:20–24) 18th (SA) year of Josiah of Judah = 641t – 18 = **623t** (2 Kings 22:3, 23:2, 23) Seder 'Olam, Ch. 24; Talmud, b. Megilah/Megillah 14b
Sabbatical year (588t)—Fall of Jerusalem 623t start of 16th Jubilee = 1406 BC – [(16 x 49) – 1] 21 3 x 7 (three Sabbatical cycles) 602t Sabbatical year (next cycle year 1 = 601n, year 2 = 600n, year 3 = 599n, **year 4** = **598n**) 14 2 x 7 (two Sabbatical cycles) **588t** Sabbatical year 14 2 x 7 (two Sabbatical cycles) 574t start of 17th Jubilee = 1406 BC – [(17 x 49) – 1] *Later tradition of freeing servants in a Sabbatical year rather than at the end of six years of service (Exodus 21:2; Deuteronomy 15:9, 12)*	Babylonian Chronicle V sets Nebuchadnezzar's accession year in 605n and Zedekiah's in **598n**2/598t1 (16 March 597 BC) Zedekiah began to reign in the **4th year of a Sabbatical cycle** (Jeremiah 28:1, Seder 'Olam, Ch. 25) Jerusalem destroyed: 11th (SN) year of Zedekiah of Judah (2 Kings 25:2, Jeremiah 39:2, 52:5) = 598t – (11 – 1) = **588t** (**588t**2/587n1) 19th non-accession year of Nebuchadnezzar (2 Kings 25:8–9, Jeremiah 52:12) = 605n – (19 – 1) = 587n (**588t**2/587n1) Seder 'Olam, Ch. 30; Talmud, b. Arachin/Arakhin 11b, 12a
17th Jubilee (574t) 623t start of 16th Jubilee = 1406 BC – [(16 x 49) – 1] 622n 'year one' after 16th Jubilee 29 calculate 'year 30' from 'year one' **593n** **30th year** (594t2/**593n**1) 19 remainder of years until Jubilee **574t** start of 17th Jubilee = 1406 BC – [(17 x 49) – 1] *Year starting on Tishri 10 (Leviticus 25:8–9)*	Babylonian Chronicle V sets Jehoiachin's/Ezekiel's exile in 598t (16 March 597 BC), 5th year of exile equated to **30th year of a Jubilee cycle** 598t – (5 – 1) = 594t or 594t2/**593n**1 (Ezekiel 1:1–2) 25th year of Ezekiel's exile (Ez. 40:1) = 598t – (25 – 1) = **574t** (598t is 'year one'); 14 years *after* fall of Jerusalem (Ezekiel 40:1) = 588t – 14 = **574t** (588t is 'year zero'), Seder 'Olam, Ch. 11; Talmud b. Arachin/Arakhin 12a, 12b

bold = Sabbatical, Jubilee, or numbered year date, *italic* = practices connected with Sabbaticals/Jubilees, t = Tishri (fall-start) years, n = Nisan (spring-start) years, S = sole reign, A = accession reckoning, N = non-accession reckoning, *One- and two-invasion theories in Young, Seder Olam, Part II

and Dubberstein dated as 16 March 597 BC),[48] Nebuchadnezzar took an unnamed king of Judah captive and placed another on the throne. The Bible identifies the exiled king as Jehoiachin, taken after only three months of reign, and the new king as Zedekiah, his uncle (2 Kings 24:8–17). Ezekiel was also taken at this time since he refers to 'our exile' in Ezekiel 33:21, 40:1. Young noted that 2 Kings 24:12 dated this event by non-accession reckoning to Nebuchadnezzar's 8th year. In contrast, an addendum to the book of Jeremiah, written by someone other than the prophet (Jeremiah 51:64), placed the exile by accession reckoning in Nebuchadnezzar's 7th year (Jeremiah 52:28). By either method, the event took place in the last month of 598n. Since the 2nd half of 598n overlaps the 1st half of 598t, and the end of Jehoiachin's three-month reign fell on the last month of that six-month period, then all of his reign fell within 598t. This also meant the reign of his predecessor, Jehoiakim, ended in 598t. He ruled 11 years (2 Kings 23:36), so the furthest back in time his reign could have begun would be 598t + 11 = 609t. That determined that Jehoiakim's predecessor, Jehoahaz, was taken captive by Egyptian pharaoh Neco/Necho II in 609t, after reigning only three months (2 Kings 23:31-34). But Jehoahaz's father, Josiah, started in 641t and reigned 31 years (2 Kings 22:1), so his rule, with accession reckoning, could only extend as far as 610t, since 641t – 31 = 610t. Thus Jehoahaz's three-month rule began in 610t and crossed Tishri 1 into 609t.

Josiah's death in 610t is corroborated by Babylonian Chronicle III.[49] It says that in the 1st half of 609n (the 2nd half of 610t), Egyptian and Assyrian forces crossed the Euphrates in the 4th month to try to reclaim a city recently lost, but they seemed to have left by the 6th month. This aligns with biblical details, that as Neco/Necho travelled through Israel's former territory to join the Assyrian army, Josiah came out to meet him in battle and was killed (2 Kings 23:29). The people of Judah then placed Jehoahaz on the throne (2 Kings 23:30), where he only reigned for three months (2 Kings 23:31), which, as shown above, crossed from 610t to 609t. As Neco/Necho returned southward, he took Jehoahaz captive and placed Jehoiakim on the throne (2 Kings 23:34).

With Jehoiakim's reign established, Daniel's captivity can be dated as having taken place when Nebuchadnezzar put down the rebellion Jehoiakim attempted in his 3rd year, 609t – 3 = 606t (2 Kings 24:1; Daniel 1:1–6).[50] This is further corroborated by Babylonian Chronicle V, which places the Battle of Carchemish and Nebuchadnezzar's accession to the throne in the 1st half of 605n, overlapping the 2nd half of 606t. Jeremiah employs non-accession reckoning here, since he ties the Battle of Carchemish and Nebuchadnezzar's accession year as a 'first year' to Jehoiakim's 4th year (Jeremiah 25:1, 46:2). This still equates to 606t [609t – (4 – 1) = 606t], and because it was in the 2nd half of the Tishri year, Daniel's captivity took place in 605 BC.

From the original chronological peg placing Jehoiachin's and Ezekiel's exile in 598t, Young also analyzed the events following, especially in regard to Jerusalem's fall. A 586 BC date, suggested by Thiele, is incompatible with Ezekiel 33:21. The destruction of the city was reported in the 12th year of the exile, 598t – (12 – 1) = 587t, on the 5th day of the 10th month, or 18 January 586 BC.[51] Jerusalem, however, fell in the 4th month (2 Kings 25:3–4), during the previous summer. Going back six months from January, 586 BC places the destruction of Jerusalem in 587 BC.

Ezekiel 40:1 similarly sets the city's demise in 587 BC, where the 25th year of the prophet's exile, 598t – (25 – 1) = 574t, is equated to the 14th year after the city's fall, where x – 14 = 574t, solving for x = 588t. The city's demise took place in the 4th and 5th months of the year (2 Kings 25:3–11), in the 2nd half of 588t, which overlaps the 1st half of 587n, again putting Jerusalem's calamity in the summer of 587 BC. Since 574t is also a Jubilee year, the timing indicates that the city fell in a Sabbatical year, since the 14-year difference between 588t and 574t is divisible by seven. Interestingly, the Seder 'Olam held a tradition that the First Temple in Jerusalem was destroyed in the latter half of a Sabbatical year,[52] corroborating the biblical data (supplementary tables 4a and 4b).

Regnal year details for Zedekiah also support 587 BC as the year Jerusalem fell. The date of Jehoiachin's exile, 598t, is also the date of Zedekiah's accession (2 Kings 24:12, 17), and the tie to Nebuchadnezzar's 8th year indicates non-accession reckoning. The siege of Jerusalem began in Zedekiah's 9th year (2 Kings 25:1), parallel to Ezekiel's claim that the siege began in the 9th year of his exile (Ezekiel 24:1–2), here showing non-accession reckoning for Zedekiah, or 598t – (9 – 1) = 590t, with the 10th day of the 10th month falling on 26 January 589 BC.[53] Since both Zedekiah's and Nebuchadnezzar's regnal years were counted by non-accession reckoning, the end of the siege and of Zedekiah's reign came in 598t – (11 – 1) = 588t by Judahite Tishri years, or 605n – (19 – 1) = 587n by Babylonian Nisan years (2 Kings 25:2–9), again placing Jerusalem's fall in 587 BC.

Classical sources that corroborate Assyrian records

Young continued to uncover additional support for Thiele's chronology in its modified form, and reintroduced the work of Belgian priest and professor Valerius Coucke (KUKE).[54] Coucke's conclusions, based on independent historical testimony from classical sources, supported Thiele's modified chronology by providing two additional ways to confirm when temple construction began under Solomon, and thus a 1446 BC Exodus date (supplementary table 5a). Further, the Tyrian king list he used, examined by more recent scholars like F.M. Cross,[55] provided independent

corroboration for dates of the reigns of Ahab and Jehu early in the Divided Kingdom, in a sense coming full circle to the first chronological pegs identified by Thiele (supplementary table 5b).

The chronologies of Pierce and Austin

Christians certainly can disagree, and that is the case with two authors, Larry Pierce and David Austin, who have published alternative chronologies in *Journal of Creation*. Pierce, who translated Ussher's work, criticized Thiele and McFall in a 2001 article.[56] The article also supplied a 53-page download outlining the reasoning behind the chronology Pierce supports.[57] Austin has written four articles from 2007–2019 that are relevant to this discussion,[58] with a markedly different chronology. Both men clearly distrust extra-biblical historical sources; Pierce sets his single secular chronological anchor in 562 BC, following Ussher and Ptolemy's Canon,[59] and Austin sets his in 331 BC, working backward from Alexander the Great to derive dates, with no other ties to external historical records.[60]

Pierce imposed two Talmudic interpretational rules for regnal years on the Bible: 1) they were always counted from the start of a coregency, and 2) they were always reckoned by Nisan years.[61] He did not mention the coregency rule until the conclusion of his article, after using it to falsely accuse Thiele and McFall of calling the biblical text incorrect and changing Jeroboam II's synchronism with Azariah/Uzziah.[62] Pierce twisted their calculations to his own definition; since Azariah/Uzziah started his coregency in 791t and Jeroboam II started his coregency in 793n, then, according to Pierce's application of the Talmudic rule, Azariah/Uzziah began his reign in the 3rd year of Jeroboam II. But Thiele and McFall had tied the start of Azariah/Uzziah's sole reign to the 27th year of Jeroboam II from his coregency (supplementary tables 2a and 2b), honoring the biblical text.

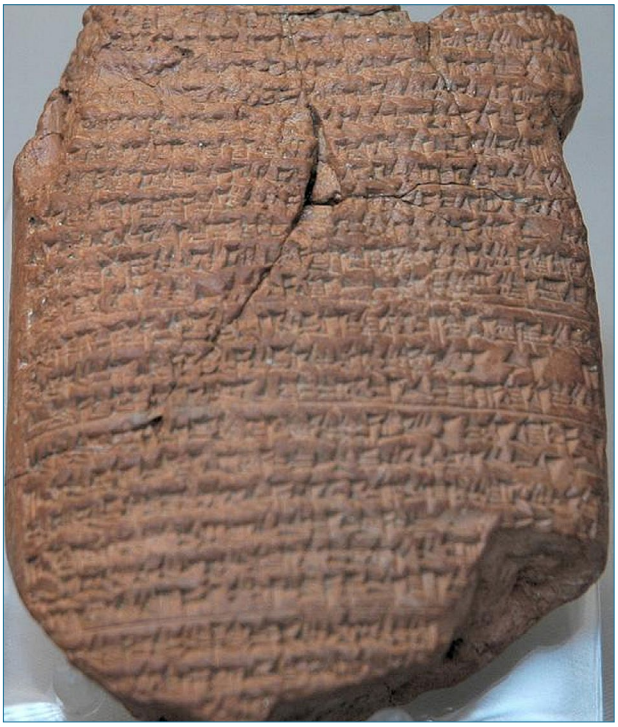

Figure 4. Babylonian Chronicle V. This small clay tablet (8 x 6 cm or 3.15 x 2.36 in) records Nebuchadnezzar II's capture of a king of Judah on 16 March 597 BC. It is also called the Jerusalem Chronicle or the Chronicle Concerning the Early Years of Nebuchadnezzar II and is listed as British Museum number 21946.

Pierce refused to accept a coregency between Azariah/Uzziah and his father (supplementary table 3), pointing to the sequence in which biblical details for their reigns appeared. In contrast, McFall noted that "similar subject matter has taken precedence over chronology" in this timeframe.[63] A synchronism for Azariah/Uzziah appears in discussion of his father's reign (2 Kings 14:21–22) and another follows the discussion of Jeroboam II's reign (2 Kings 15:1–2). Notably, the two synchronisms that tie to the start of Azariah's/Uzziah's coregency (2 Kings 14:21–22, 2 Chronicles 26:1–3) state that the people of Judah made him king "instead of" his father, an event likely prompted by his father's capture (2 Kings 14:13, 2 Chronicles 25:23). Also, Tiglath-Pileser III mentions Azariah of Judah in his records, but Pierce's chronology places Azariah/Uzziah well before him.

Further, Pierce misstates history, citing Ptolemy's Canon and claiming that Babylonian king Merodach-Baladan died in 710 BC.[64] Thiele, in contrast, knew the limitations of Ptolemy's Canon, explaining: "[It] was prepared primarily for astronomical, not historical, purposes. It did not pretend to give a complete list of all the rulers of either Babylon or Persia."[65] Babylonian Chronicle I says that Merodach-Baladan, called Marduk-apla-iddina, was driven out of Babylon by Assyrian king Sargon in 710n. Sargon's son, Sennacherib, went to Babylon in 703n to drive Merodach-Baladan out a second time, but did not succeed in killing him.[66] Pierce also cited two interregna in Babylon during this time,[67] but they are not true interregna: in 704–703n, Babylon revolted against Assyrian kingship, and in 689–681n, Sennacherib destroyed the city and left it in ruins for the remaining eight years of his reign. These were not interregna so much as Babylon trying to throw off foreign rule and refusing to recognize a foreign king.

Pierce also incorrectly used prophecy as if it provided chronological data, imposing a 390-day sign against Israel (Ezekiel 4:4–6) as a chronological statement that the Divided Kingdom lasted 390 years.[68] James Bejon, from Tyndale House Library, astutely observed:

> "[This] does not strike me as a very wise course of action. Why? Because it makes our chronology dependent on a particular interpretation of Ezekiel's prophecy. If chronology devoid of checks and balances has confused its thousands, then prophecy devoid of checks and balances has

> confused its tens of thousands … . The purpose of prophecy is not to derive chronologies; it is to show us how God is at work in the world and how *he* views world history."[69]

In comparison, Austin commits both errors cited by Bejon; he works backward from 331 BC without any historical cross-checks, and his calculations are largely based on his interpretation of prophecy (supplementary figure 5). Austin started with an assumed date for the baptism of Jesus, AD 26,[70] as the endpoint of a prophecy he interpreted as covering 483 years (Daniel 9:25),[71] then worked backward to date the Persian conquest of Babylon (Daniel 9:1). Austin rightfully used 331 BC as the date the Greek Empire began, but his overlay with the 483-year span meant that the length of the Persian Empire came up 82 years short, a mere 126 years in Austin's chronology rather than the 208 years recorded in history.[72] Then, from his date for the beginning of the Persian Empire, Austin went back 70 years for the Jewish captivity to date Daniel's captivity[73] and the 4th non-accession year of Jehoiakim. From this date for Jehoiakim, he derived the year his son succeeded him and was taken captive, in order to find the 5th year of Ezekiel's and Jehoiachin's exile (Ezekiel 1:1–2). Austin made this the end point of a prophetic sign of 390 years (Ezekiel 4:4–5) and went backward to date the beginning of the Divided Kingdom. That date provided the end of Solomon's reign and was used to determine his 4th year. Then Austin added to Scripture's clearly stated figure of precisely 480 years between the temple and the Exodus (1 Kings 6:1) by taking a variant figure from Josephus[74] to justify an extra 114 years of oppression and usurpation from the book of Judges.

Perhaps to legitimize his shortened period for the Persian Empire, Austin speculated that Darius I was the same king as Artaxerxes I,[75] all of which creates three insurmountable problems in his chronology (supplementary figure 5 'Questions'). In the 7th year of Darius, the first group of Jewish exiles to return to Jerusalem celebrated Passover, and in the 7th year of Artaxerxes, Ezra and a second group of exiles came to Jerusalem. Austin suggests these events happened under the same king in the same year, and that the longer chronology in Ptolemy's Canon is unreliable. Austin tries to support this by citing two genealogies which he claims show Ezra was born about the time of Jerusalem's fall, making him too old to have been in the service of a later Persian king. But the genealogy that names Ezra is clearly abbreviated, allowing him to be a grandson or great-grandson of the person Austin claims was Ezra's father (1 Chronicles 6:1–15; Ezra 7:1–6).[76] Austin also misstated history because he, like Pierce, ignored sources used by Thiele. Austin assigned a 12-year reign to Xerxes, citing Ussher, but archeological inscriptions indicate 21 years, in agreement with Ptolemy's Canon.[77] The collection of inscriptions go further, however, corroborating Ptolemy's Canon for the entire Persian period, and eliminating the possibility that Artaxerxes is the same king as Darius.

As to the interpretation of Ezra 6:14, where three Persian kings are listed, historical information sometimes appears in topical rather than sequential order. Ezra was focusing on the Second Temple and the manner in which God directed the actions of foreign kings in regard to it. Artaxerxes' decree was not for building it, but for beautifying and supplying it, and allowing Ezra to go to Jerusalem to serve there (Ezra 7:27–28).

The impact of chronological interpretations on the Gospel

The most distressing error in these alternative chronologies is Pierce's conflation of biblical authority with his own (or Ussher's) interpretation of biblical data, which results in a false dilemma between the Bible and secular archaeology. Half a century earlier, Thiele observed that: "Basically there is, of course, only one chronology; that is correct chronology. Between the absolute chronology of the Hebrews and that of their neighbors there can be no conflict."[78] Any records that reflect true history will be in agreement, even those that come from outside the Bible. It would be very difficult to argue that a particular interpretation of biblical chronology is correct if it continues to disagree with solid evidence from surrounding nations, and yet this is what Pierce endeavours to do.

In contrast to Thiele, Pierce claims, in solid genetic fallacy style: "Very few archaeologists are Christians and most would reject the historicity and authority of the Word of God. Therefore, expect anything they find to be interpreted in a way that is unhelpful to Bible-believing Christians."[79] This is a distraction from the real issue, however. Pierce is equating Ussher's chronology with the Bible itself. He says: "Ussher's results, based on the Bible alone, violate just about every 'absolute date' in archaeology. Amen. All this shows is that we may not know as much about history as God does."[80] In reality, Ussher used secular sources as well as Scripture, and he had imperfect knowledge. His chronology should in no way be construed as inerrant truth like God's Word, and it is fair to point out areas where Ussher's work needed correction.

Young and fellow chronologist Andrew Steinmann point out a simple yet profound principle, that "when a witness has been found truthful in all statements that can be verified by an independent source, that witness should be assumed to be credible when speaking of events that cannot be independently verified."[81] Conversely, if a witness is contradicted by other sources, that witness will be considered unreliable in regard to additional claims. McFall also understood this, explaining:

> "The existence of these so-called glaring errors will dictate and shape one's doctrine of the inspiration and infallibility of God's Word. Where it is possible to remove the suspicion of carelessness in the transmission of God's Word, this will embolden others to investigate other claims of carelessness in God's Word in the hope that these, too,

can receive a satisfactory solution and increase faith in the trustworthiness of the Word of God."[82]

What happens when a student, for example, hears that the Bible's account of history is contrary to well-established secular sources taught in the classroom? If he or she deems Scripture untrustworthy on the past, a mere collection of ancient myths and religious traditions, why investigate the Bible's claims about the future and take seriously the Bible's warnings and promises about the two potential destinations awaiting people after they die? The stakes are too high to allow anyone to be misguided about God's Word. Our Saviour "desires all people to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth (1 Timothy 2:4, ESV)".

Conclusion

With history and chronology, reliable sources will corroborate one another because they reflect real events from the past. It should come as no surprise that the Bible corresponds to other historical records because its Author has witnessed all of history and reveals it to demonstrate that He is God and there is none like Him (Isaiah 41:21–23, 43:9–11, 46:9–10). When people understand that the Bible is accurate about the past, they have reason to believe it will also be right about the future, and it is worthwhile to consider what it says. Our Saviour and Lord wants everyone to repent rather than perish (2 Peter 3:9), but how likely are they to repent if they "do not hear Moses and the Prophets" (Luke 16:30–31, ESV)? For those who will hear, however, the "sacred writings … are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus" (2 Timothy 3:15, ESV).

References

1. Ussher, J. (Archbishop of Armagh, Church of Ireland), *The Annals of the World*, London, printed by E. Tyler, for F. Crook, and G. Bedell, 1658, digital English edition (public domain) from Bennie Blount Ministries International, archive.org/details/AnnalsOfTheWorld/mode/2up.
2. Following a United Monarchy period under Saul, David, and Solomon, national Israel split in two with the Southern Kingdom of Judah under Solomon's son, Rehoboam, and the Northern Kingdom of Israel under Jeroboam I.
3. Thiele, E., The chronology of the kings of Judah and Israel, *J. Near Eastern Studies* (JNES) **3**(3):137–186, July 1944, jstor.org/stable/542915?seq=1.
4. Thiele, E., *The Mysterious Numbers of the Hebrew Kings*, 1st edn, Macmillan, New York, 1951; 2nd edn, Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, MI, 1965; 3rd edn, Zondervan/Kregel, Grand Rapids, MI, 1983.
5. These years were lunisolar; months ran in cycle with the moon, but occasionally an intercalary month was added in order to keep the seasons in line with their associated months. This meant that Nisan 1 could land anywhere from mid-March to mid-April, and Tishri 1 from mid-September to mid-October. Nisan was called Abib prior to the Exile (Exodus 13:4, 23:15, 34:18; Deuteronomy 16:1) and Nisan after (Nehemiah 2:1; Esther 3:7). Tishri is not listed in the Old Testament, but its older name, Ethanim, is associated with the 7th month (1 Kings 8:2). In the Bible, months are always numbered from Nisan as the 1st month (Exodus 12:2, Esther 3:7), whether using Tishri or Nisan years.
6. James Bejon, a researcher at Tyndale House Library in Cambridge, explains this in perhaps a more understandable way than Thiele by updating it for modern terminology. In 1 Kings 6:37–38, Solomon began the temple in the 2nd month of his 4th year and finished it in the 8th month of his 11th year, and the project took seven years. If Solomon came to the throne in AD 2000, for example, and if Nisan (the 1st month) is equated with April, and Tishri (the 7th month) is equated with October, then there are two possible scenarios. With Nisan years, Solomon's 4th year would have begun April 2004, and the temple would have been started in May 2004 and finished in November 2011. Counting inclusively, this stretches over eight calendar years. But with Tishri years, his 4th year would have begun on October 2004, but he would not have started the temple until May 2005, and he would have finished in November 2011. In this scenario, the project only stretches over seven calendar years. Bejon, J., Biblical Chronology: patterns and coherence (unpublished), tyndalehouse.academia.edu/JamesBejon; Thiele, ref. 3, pp. 141–143; Thiele, ref. 4, 1st edn, pp. 29–33.
7. If Josiah's 18th year had started on Nisan 1, he would have only had until the evening of Nisan 14 to accomplish all of the activities listed in 2 Kings 22:3–23:23 that preceded the Passover. Thiele, ref. 3, pp. 142–143; Thiele, ref. 4, 1st edn, p. 32.
8. Talmud, b. Rosh HaShana/Hashanah 2a, chapter I, paragraph 1, halakhah.com or sefaria.org/texts/Talmud.
9. Luckenbill, D.D., *Ancient Records of Assyria and Babylonia* (ARAB), vol. I, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago, IL, 1926, oi.uchicago.edu/research/publications/misc/ancient-records-assyria-and-babylonia-volume-1-historical-records-assyria, vol. II, 1927, oi.uchicago.edu/research/publications/misc/ancient-records-assyria-and-babylonia-volume-2-historical-records-assyria.
10. Assyrian Eponym Canon (Limmu List): Eponym lists and chronicles, University College London, ucl.ac.uk/sargon/eponymlistsandchronicles/; Limmu List (858–699 BCE), livius.org/articles/concept/limmu/limmu-list-858-699-bce/; Rawlinson, H., Assyrian history, *The Athenaeum*, No. 1805, 31 May 1862, pp. 724–725, catalog.hathitrust.org/Record/009663854; Rawlinson, H., Bible history and the Rawlinson Canon, *The Athenaeum*, No. 1812, 19 July 1862, pp. 82–85, catalog.hathitrust.org/Record/009663854; Rawlinson, H., The Assyrian Canon verified by the record of a solar eclipse, B.C. 763, *The Athenaeum*, No. 2064, May 18, 1867, pp. 660–661, catalog.hathitrust.org/Record/009663854; Smith, G., *The Assyrian Eponym Canon*, London, Samuel Bagster and Sons, 1875, pp. 27–28, catalog.hathitrust.org/Record/001596760, chap. v, pp. 101–105).
11. Kurkh Stela (Monolith Inscription) of Shalmaneser III (859n accession, 858–824n), BM 118884, Luckenbill, ARAB, vol. I, ref. 9, §594, 610–611, research.britishmuseum.org/research/collection_online/collection_object_details.aspx?object=20160&objectId=367117&page=1&partId=1&people=92929.
12. Black Obelisk of Shalmaneser III (859n accession, 858–824n), BM 118885, Luckenbill, ARAB, vol. I, ref. 9, §553–554, 590, 671–672, research.britishmuseum.org/research/collection_online/collection_object_details.aspx?objectId=367012&partId=1.
13. Regnal years from table 1 come from Young, R., Tables of reign lengths from the Hebrew court recorders, *J. Evangelical Theological Society* (JETS) **48**(2):225–248, June 2005, rcyoung.org/papers.html; McFall, L., A translation guide to the chronological data in Kings and Chronicles, *Bibliotheca Sacra* **148**:3–45, 1991; lmf12.wordpress.com/published-articles/; Thiele, ref. 4, all editions, Appendices A and B. Young's dates are considered the correct ones where differences exist among the three chronologists, with two exceptions where McFall's dates are accepted instead. (1) Ahaziah (Judah): Two points lean in favour of a coregency of Ahaziah with his father, Jehoram/Joram. First, there are two synchronisms for the start of his reign, one in the 11th year of Jehoram/Joram of Israel (2 Kings 9:29), which would designate the start of Ahaziah's coregency, and one in the 12th year of Jehoram/Joram of Israel (2 Kings 8:25), which would designate the start of Ahaziah's sole reign. Second, Ahaziah's father had a debilitating disease which lasted the final two years of his life (2 Chronicles 21:19), a time period that would match a two-year coregency between father and son from 843t to 842t. McFall, Translation guide (above), pp. 19–20, §26. (2) Joash/Jehoash (Israel): A small mathematical inconsistency appears in Young's table 3, in which he synchronized Jehoahaz of Israel to Joash of Judah by non-accession reckoning, but then synchronized Jehoash of Israel to Joash of Judah by accession reckoning. Joash of Judah used non-accession reckoning, so all synchronisms to his reign require non-accession calculation. Correcting the start of the reign of Joash/Jehoash (Israel) to the 37th non-accession year of Joash/Jehoash (Judah) is 836t – (37 – 1) = 800t, with 800t2/799n1 as the overlap. This makes 799n the start of a coregency of Joash/Jehoash (Israel) with his father, Jehoahaz/Joahaz, in agreement with Leslie McFall's calculation. McFall, Translation guide (above), p. 23, §35.

    Archaeological source in table 1 not cited elsewhere: Records for Nebuchadnezzar II's son, Evil-Merodach/Amel-Marduk, confirm the date of Jehoiachin's captivity. According to 2 Kings 25:27 and Jeremiah 52:31, Jehoiachin was released in his 37th year of exile, in the 12th month (or 2nd half) of Evil-Merodach's/Amel-Marduk's accession year. Inscriptions noted in Parker and Dubberstein, ref. 48, p. 26 indicate the accession year was 562n, and 562n + (37 – 1) = 598n gives the 'year one' of Jehoiachin's exile, confirming the date from Babylonian Chronicle V and biblical synchronisms. Further, Jehoiachin's Rations Tablet identifies a king of Judah by what appears to be the Babylonian version of his name (Weidner Ration List (Jehoiachin's Rations Tablet), jerusalem.nottingham.ac.uk/items/show/127).
14. Thiele, ref. 4, 1st edn, p. 114.

15. Cook also went to great lengths to explain how Pekah's identification as an officer in Pekahiah's court (2 Kings 15:25) did not preclude Pekah from acting as an independent king within Israel, a person who did not necessarily live in Samaria in his likely role as some sort of military commander for Pekahiah. Cook, H.J., Pekah, *Vetus Testamentum* **14**(2):121–135, April 1964; jstor.org/stable/1516376?seq=1.
16. Thiele, ref. 4, 3rd edn, p. 61. See also Young, R., When was Samaria captured? JETS **47**(4):581–582, December 2004, footnote 11, rcyoung.org/papers.html; Young, R., Ussher explained and corrected, *Bible and Spade* **31**(2):45–56, 2018, p. 55, rcyoung.org/papers.html.
17. Luckenbill, ARAB, vol. I, ref. 9, §770.
18. The Bible identifies Tiglath–Pileser III (745n accession, 744–727n) as Pul through the use of an epexegetical *waw* or *vav* (an explanatory Hebrew grammatical construction translated "that is") in 1 Chronicles 5:26, so it reads "the spirit of Pul, king of Assyria, that is, the spirit of Tiglath-Pileser, king of Assyria …". This identification is followed by a singular Hebrew verb, indicating one person took or carried the people into exile. Thiele, ref. 3, p. 155, footnote 34; Thiele, ref. 4, 1st edn, pp. 75–77.
19. Thiele, ref. 3, pp. 155–156; Thiele, ref. 4, 1st edn, pp. 75–77. Further evidence that Tiglath-Pileser and Pul were the same person appeared in 1993 with the discovery of the Incirli Stela, which calls Tiglath-Pileser III by both names, with Pul translated 'Puwal' or 'Pual'. Kaufman, S., The Phoenician inscription of the Incirli Trilingual: a tentative reconstruction and translation, *MAARAV: A J. Study of the Northwest Semitic Languages and Literatures* **14**(2):7–26, 2007, photos pp. 107-120 [sic], academia.edu/41060049/THE_PHOENICIAN_INSCRIPTION_OF_THE_INCIRLI_TRILINGUAL_A_TENTATIVE_RECONSTRUCTION_AND_TRANSLATION).
20. Babylonian Chronicle I, tablet BM 92502, fragments BM 75976 and BM 75977. Pinches, T., The Babylonian Chronicle, *J. Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland* **19**(4):655–681, October 1887, jstor.org/stable/25208882?seq=1; Livius, ABC 1, livius.org/sources/content/mesopotamian-chronicles-content/abc-1-from-nabu-nasir-to-samas-suma-ukin/; hresearch.britishmuseum.org/research/collection_online/collection_object_details.aspx?objectId=802827&page=1%20&partId=1&searchText=92502.
21. The Canon appears in Ptolemy's *Handy Tables*. Depuydt, L., More valuable than all gold: Ptolemy's Royal Canon and Babylonian chronology, *J. Cuneiform Studies* **47**:97–117, 1995, caeno.org/index.php/authors-text-2; Lendering, J., Ptolemy's Canon, livius.org/articles/concept/ptolemys-canon/.
22. Luckenbill, ARAB, vol. I, ref. 9, §761, 772. At the time that Thiele first presented his chronology for the Divided Kingdom period, many Assyriologists had assigned a date of 738 BC to the tribute given by Menahem to Tiglath-Pileser III, based on a reconstruction of fragmented records that placed the tribute sometime between the king's 3rd and 9th years (743 and 737 BC, respectively, with non-accession reckoning). Thiele presented an extensive analysis of the chronological and geographical clues found not only in the Eponym List and Annals, but also in Nimrud Tablet no. 1, Nimrud Slab no. 1, and Nimrud Slab no. 2. He found that the tribute of Menahem was more likely in Tiglath-Pileser's 3rd year, 743 BC, fitting within the regnal years for Menahem. Thiele, ref. 3, pp. 156–163; Thiele, ref. 4, 1st edn, pp. 78–98. This conclusion was later supported by the discovery of the Iran Stela, published in 1994, which indicated tribute lists were summaries of events that could be assigned to dates earlier in the king's reign. Young, R., Evidence for inerrancy from an unexpected source: OT chronology, *Bible and Spade* **21**(2):54–64, 2008, pp. 60, 62, 64, rcyoung.org/papers.html; photo, imj.org.il/en/collections/198926.
23. Luckenbill, ARAB, vol. I, ref. 9, §816.
24. Olmstead, A., The Fall of Samaria, *American J. Semitic Languages and Literatures* **21**:179–182, 1904–1905.
25. Although Shalmaneser's brother and successor, Sargon II, claimed Samaria's defeat occurred under his rule, Olmstead, ref. 24, made a strong case that this appeared to be a boast added to his records later in his reign (Thiele, ref. 3, p. 173, ref. 4, pp. 121–125).
26. Thiele, ref. 3, p. 144.
27. McFall, L., Translation guide, ref. 13.
28. Horn, S., The chronology of King Hezekiah's reign, *Andrews University Seminary Studies* (AUSS) **2**(1):40–52, 1964; digitalcommons.andrews.edu/auss/vol2/iss1/4.
29. Parker, E., A note on the chronology of 2 Kings 17:1, AUSS **6**(2):129–133, 1968; digitalcommons.andrews.edu/auss/vol6/iss2/1/. McFall understood Hebrew verb forms very well because his doctoral dissertation covered this topic. McFall, L., The Hebrew Verbal System (1978 Cambridge University Ph.D. thesis), published by Almond Press, Sheffield, 1982; lmf12.wordpress.com/research-work/.
30. That Hebrew verbs are less specific than English verbs is also observed in Genesis 2:19, where the verb is translated that God "had formed" the animals, indicating the sequence of creation in Genesis 1 is still in agreement with that in Genesis 2.
31. Young, Samaria, ref. 16. These numbers can be tricky, and great respect is due to those who reconciled them. Jotham ruled 20 years, but this includes a 12-year coregency with his father, and coregencies are treated as non-accession reckoning. This is why from the start of Jotham's reign in 751t to its end in 732t there is a span of only 19 years (20 – 1 = 19). Ahaz's reign comes with a twist: although he had a five-year coregency with his father, from 736–732t, there was political factionalism at this time. Ahaz had a policy of Assyrian appeasement, apparently unlike his father, and some considered Jotham to be officially retired or deposed when Ahaz started to reign. So those supporting Ahaz's policy considered him a sole ruler beginning in 736t, and, counting his reign by accession reckoning, they synchronized his 12th year (736t – 12 = 724t) to the 9th year of Hoshea (2 Kings 17:1, where the verb is properly translated that Hoshea "had reigned"). With Hezekiah, calculations return to normal. The 6th year of his coregency with his father, Ahaz, is treated as non-accession reckoning, where 729t – (6 + 1) = 724t.
32. Young, R., When did Solomon die? JETS **46**(4):589–603, December 2003; rcyoung.org/papers.html.
33. This calculation works in the same way as non-accession reckoning because the formula needs to find 'year one', not 'year zero'.
34. Cassuto, U., *The Documentary Hypothesis and the Composition of the Pentateuch*, translated from the Hebrew by Israel Abrahams, Shalem Press, Jerusalem and New York, Lecture 4, pp. 61–63, 2006.
35. Wood, B., The rise and fall of the 13th century Exodus–Conquest theory, JETS **48**(3):475–489, September 2005; biblearchaeology.org/research/chronological-categories/conquest-of-canaan/2579-the-rise-and-fall-of-the-13th-century-exodusconquest-theory.
36. Young, Solomon, ref. 32, p. 600, footnote 12, crediting an internet forum suggestion from 'David Rice of San Diego'.
37. Talmud, ref. 8, b. Megilah/Megillah 14b. The mention of the prophetess Huldah in 2 Kings 22:14 falls between the synchronisms to Josiah's 18th year in 2 Kings 22:3 and 23:23.
38. Talmud, ref. 8, b. Arakin/Arachin/Arakhin 12a to identify a Jubilee year, b. Arak. 12b to identify the 17th cycle.
39. Young, R., The Talmud's two Jubilees and their relevance to the date of the Exodus, *Westminster Theological J.* **68**:71–83, 2006; rcyoung.org/papers.html. Besides the 49-year span between the two Jubilees mentioned in the Talmud, Young points out that other Jewish literature affirms a 49-year Jubilee cycle, such as the 2nd century BC Book of Jubilees and the c. 1st century AD Qumran text 11QMelchizedek. He also notes the 49-year observation practised by Samaritans.
40. According to the Talmud, Sabbatical years started in Tishri (b. Rosh Hash. 1a, per Young, Talmud's two Jubilees, ref. 39, p. 75, but b. Rosh HaShana/Hashanah 2a per the Talmud, ref. 8). See also Steinmann, A., *From Abraham to Paul: A biblical chronology*, Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, MO, pp. 25–36, 2011. The agricultural timing fits with this understanding since sowing took place in the fall months and harvesting during the spring months. Jubilee years clearly began in the 7th month according to Leviticus 25:8–9.
41. This calculation operates under the same rationale as ref. 33.
42. Young, R., Three verifications of Thiele's date for the beginning of the Divided Kingdom, AUSS **45**(2):163–189, 2007, rcyoung.org/papers.html, Second Verification: The Jubilee and Sabbatical Cycles, pp. 173–179. Young, R., Seder 'Olam and the Sabbaticals associated with the two destructions of Jerusalem, parts I–II, *Jewish Bible Quarterly* **34**(3):173–179, **34**(4):252–258, 2006, rcyoung.org/papers.html, 'part II', p. 254, for 4th year of Jeremiah 28:1, p. 257, for Hezekiah and one and two invasion theories. Young, R., When did Jerusalem fall? JETS **47**(1):21–38, March 2004, rcyoung.org/papers.html, p. 28, for 30th year of Ezekiel 1:1–2.
43. Guggenheimer, H., *Seder 'Olam: The Rabbinic view of biblical chronology*, Jason Aronson Inc., Northvale, NJ, p. 257, 1998.
44. Talmud, ref. 8, b. Arakin/Arachin/Arakhin 32b.
45. Young, When did Jerusalem fall?, ref. 42.
46. Decision tables examine all possible combinations of factors and their results. In Young's application to chronology, he considers all assumptions, such as whether Nisan or Tishri years were used, or accession or non-accession reckoning was employed.
47. Babylonian Chronicle V, BM 21946 ,Wiseman, D.J., *Chronicles of Chaldaean* [sic] *Kings (626–556 B.C.) in the British Museum*, London, The Trustees of the British Museum, 1956, Stony Brook University (The State University of New York at Stony Brook), digital.library.stonybrook.edu/cdm/ref/collection/iraqiarcheology/id/85; Livius, ABC 5, livius.org/sources/content/mesopotamian-chronicles-content/abc-5-jerusalem-chronicle/; research.britishmuseum.org/research/collection_online/collection_object_details.aspx?objectId=320055&partId=1.

48. Parker, R. and Dubberstein, W., *Babylonian Chronology 626 B.C.–A.D. 45*, The Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago, Chicago, IL, *Studies in Ancient Oriental Civilization*, No. 24, 1942, oi.uchicago.edu/research/publications/saoc/saoc-24-babylonian-chronology-626-bc-%E2%80%93-ad-45. Since Babylonian Chronicle V states the king of Judah was taken on the 2nd day of the 12th month of 598n, the Parker and Dubberstein tables (p. 25) convert the date to 16 March 597 BC.
49. Babylonian Chronicle III, BM 21901, Gadd, C. J., *The Fall of Nineveh: The Newly discovered Babylonian Chronicle*, Harrison and Sons, London, 1923, https://archive.org/details/C.J.GaddTheFallOfNineveh.TheNewlyDiscoveredBabylonianChronicle/mode/1up; Livius, ABC 3, livius.org/sources/content/mesopotamian-chronicles-content/abc-3-fall-of-nineveh-chronicle/; research.britishmuseum.org/research/collection_online/collection_object_details.aspx?objectId=320101&page=1&partId=1&searchText=21901. Nabopolassar's 17th year roughly dates when Pharaoh Neco/Necho II travelled northward through Megiddo, where he killed Josiah of Judah.
50. Daniel uses accession reckoning since the prophet claimed three years of training in Babylon (Daniel 1:5) before he appeared before Nebuchadnezzar in the 2nd year of his reign (Daniel 2:1). Steinmann, A., *Daniel*, Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, MO, 2008, pp. 111–112.
51. Parker and Dubberstein, ref. 48, p. 26.
52. Young, Seder 'Olam, part I, ref. 42; Guggenheimer, ref. 43, p. 264. Young deals with another translator who places the temple's destruction after a Sabbatical year, and explains why Guggenheimer's translation, placing the event in the latter half of a Sabbatical year, is correct.
53. Parker and Dubberstein, ref. 48, p. 26.
54. Young, R., The Parian marble and other surprises from chronologist V. Coucke, AUSS **48**(2):225–249, 2010; rcyoung.org/papers.html; Young, R. and Steinmann, A., Correlation of select classical sources related to the Trojan War with Assyrian and biblical chronologies, *Journal for the Evangelical Study of the Old Testament* (JESOT) **1**(2):223–248, 2012, rcyoung.org/papers.html; Young, R., Solomon and the kings of Tyre, *Bible and Spade* **30**(3):66–73, 2017, rcyoung.org/papers.html; Young, R., Translation of Coucke's 1928 article on OT chronology (unpublished), rcyoung.org/papers.html.
55. Cross, Jr., F.M., An Interpretation of the Nora Stone, *Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research* (BASOR) **208**:13–19, December 1972, jstor.org/stable/1356374?seq=1, Tyrian King List at footnote 11, p. 17. Josephus took the Tyrian King List from publicly available records which could be verified at the time of his writing (Flavius Josephus, *Against Apion*, translated by William Whiston, EBook #2849, Book I, sect. 17, gutenberg.org/files/2849/2849-h/2849-h.htm), but the individual reign lengths of the kings did not add up to the total in later copies of his work. Fortunately, a mathematical redundancy establishes general reliability for the list at either end (Hiram/Hirom's 12th year, plus 143 additional years, equals 155 years total, sect. 18).
56. Pierce, Evidentialism: the Bible and Assyrian chronology, *J. Creation* **15**(1):62–68, April 2001, https://creation.com/evidentialismthe-bible-and-assyrian-chronology, https://creation.com/images/pdfs/tj/j15_1/j15_1_62-68.pdf.
57. Pierce, Evidentialism, ref. 56, footnote 16 download.
58. Austin, D., Four chronological periods, *J. Creation* **33**(1):57–62, 2019, dl0.creation.com/articles/p130/c13059/j33_1_57-62.pdf; Austin, D., Synchronization of the divided kingdoms of Judah and Israel, *J. Creation* **25**(2):67–73, 2011, creation.com/images/pdfs/tj/j25_2/j25_2_67-73.pdf; Austin, D., Three chronological periods of the Old Testament, *J. Creation* **22**(3):51–58, 2008, creation.com/images/pdfs/tj/j22_3/j22_3_51-58.pdf; Austin, D., Is Darius, the king of Ezra 6:14–15, the same king as the Artaxerxes of Ezra 7:1? *J. Creation* **22**(2):46–52, 2007, creation.com/images/pdfs/tj/j22_2/j22_2_46-52.pdf.
59. Pierce, footnote, ref. 57, p. 2.
60. Austin, Four Periods, ref. 58, pp. 57, 59, and footnote 10.
61. Rule 1 appears in Pierce, Evidentialism, ref. 56, p. 67 (under "Conclusion"), and Pierce, footnote, ref. 57, p. 2 (under "Viceroy"), and p. 3 (under "Assumptions"). Although Pierce claims that this rule comes from the Talmud and the Mishnah, he provides no verifiable citation for this claim. Rule 2 appears in Pierce, footnote, ref. 57, p. 2 (under "Assumptions"). Pierce claims this rule comes from the Talmud and Mishnah as well, and although he does not provide a verifiable citation, the Talmud does claim that kings started their regnal years in Nisan (Talmud, ref. 8, b. Rosh HaShana/Hashanah 2a).
62. Pierce, Evidentialism, ref. 56, p. 65, "According to Thiele, McFall and others the text is incorrect. They say that it should read in the 3rd year of Jeroboam not the 27th."
63. McFall, Translation Guide, ref. 13, pp. 24–25.
64. Pierce, Evidentialism, ref. 56, p. 66.
65. Thiele, ref. 4, 1st edn, Appendix G, p. 293.
66. Babylonian Chronicle I, ref. 20, column II, lines 1–20. Levine, L., Sennacherib's Southern Front: 704–689 B.C., *J. Cuneiform Studies* **34**(1/2):28–58, Jan–Apr, 1982, jstor.org/stable/1359991?seq=1, pp. 31–33; Brinkman, J., Merodach-Baladan II, *Studies Presented to A. Leo Oppenheim*, 7 June 1964, The Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago, pp. 6–53, oi.uchicago.edu/research/publications/misc/studies-presented-leo-oppenheim-june-7-1964, p. 45. Levine and Brinkman offer corroboration from BM 113203 (britishmuseum.org/collection/object/W_1915-0410-1).
67. Pierce, footnote, ref. 57, p. 23; Pierce's reply to McFall, Chronologies, *J. Creation* **16**(2):63–68, 2002, pp. 64–65.
68. Pierce, footnote, ref. 57, pp. 12, 21.
69. Bejon, J., Ezekiels's 390 and 40 Days (unpublished), p. 26, tyndalehouse.academia.edu/JamesBejon/Misc-Papers.
70. Ussher, ref. 1, makes AD 26 the start of Jesus' ministry (§6280), and AD 27 the year of his baptism (§6288).
71. Austin interprets seven weeks (or 'sevens') plus 62 weeks as 69 seven-year periods or 69 x 7 = 483 years. There are many, many proposed interpretations for this prophecy, with different start and end dates and different suggestions of what is intended by the reference to weeks.
72. After the Babylonian empire, the Persian empire ran for 208 years from 539–331 BC. Austin sets the length of the Persian empire by what is left of 483 years after adding 26 years on the AD side to 331 years on the BC side, leaving only 126 years for the Persian Empire.
73. Jeremiah 25:1, 11–12 is dated at Daniel's captivity, and Jeremiah 29:1–2, 10 at Jehoiachin's and Ezekiel's captivity. Steinmann, *Daniel*, ref. 50, p. 435, takes 70 years as a round number.
74. Austin, Three periods, ref. 58, 594 (480 + 114) years, pp. 51–52, 592 years, p. 57. Flavius Josephus, *The Antiquities of the Jews*, translated by William Whiston, EBook #2848, Book VIII, chap. 3, §1, gutenberg.org/files/2848/2848-h/2848-h.htm for 592 years; Josephus, *Against Apion*, ref. 55, Book II, §2 for 612 years.
75. Austin, Darius, ref. 58.
76. A comparison of 1 Chronicles 6:1–15 to Ezra 7:1–6 shows the latter is an abbreviated list. Austin claims both Ezra and Jehozadak were sons of Seraiah, but Austin's reference to 2 Kings 25:18–21 only indicates Seraiah was killed when Jerusalem fell, and sheds no further light on the genealogical line. It is entirely possible that Ezra was Seraiah's grandson, born to Jehozadak some years into the exile, or even that Ezra was Seraiah's great-grandson and Jehozadak's grandson. Ezra did not go to Jerusalem with the first wave of exiles following Cyrus's decree in 538 BC, but rather with the second wave under Artaxerxes I's decree in 458 BC (Ezra 7:7–9). The MacArthur Study Bible (MacArthur, J. (Ed.), English Standard Version, Crossway, Wheaton, IL, 2010), in the introduction to the book of Ezra, points out that Ezra does not mention himself nor use first person pronouns until chapter seven.
77. Austin, Darius, ref. 58, p. 47. Ussher, *Annals*, ref. 1, §1176. Parker and Dubberstein, ref. 48, pp. 11–17.
78. Thiele, ref. 4, 1st edn, p. 2.
79. Pierce, Evidentialism, ref. 56, p. 63.
80. Pierce, footnote, ref. 57, p. 24. Another example of conflation comes from p. 38: "Dr. Thiele firmly declares that Samaria fell in 723 BC and adjusts the biblical chronology two years to shift the biblically deduced date of 721 BC to 723. (If the integrity of the scriptures was not at stake this is no big deal!)."
81. Young and Steinmann, Correlation, ref. 54, p. 247.
82. McFall, L., The chronology of Saul and David, JETS **53**(3):475–533, 2010, p. 505, lmf12.wordpress.com/published-articles/.

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