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I.

THE CHRONOLOGY OF THE KINGS OF ISRAEL AND JUDAH.

SMITH'S Dictionary of the Bible, in the article on the First and Second Books of Kings, by Lord Arthur C. Hervey, publishes a good many statements like the following :

“It must, however, be admitted that the chronological details expressly given in the books of Kings form a remarkable contrast with their striking historical accuracy.”

“When, therefore, we find that the very first date introduced is erroneous, and that numerous other dates are also certainly wrong, because contradictory, it seems a not unfair conclusion that such dates are the work of an interpolator trying to bring the history within his own chronological system ; a conclusion somewhat confirmed by the alterations and omissions of these dates in the LXX. As regards these chronological difficulties, it must be observed they are of two essentially different kinds. One kind is merely the want of the data necessary for chronological exactness. Such is the absence, apparently, of any uniform rule for dealing with the fragments of years at the beginning and end of the reigns.” “And this class of difficulties may probably have belonged to these books in their original state, in which exact scientific chronology was not aimed at. But the other kind of difficulty is of a totally different character, and embraces dates which are *very exact* in their mode of expression, but are erroneous and contradictory. Some of these are pointed out below, and it is such which it seems reasonable to ascribe to the interpolation of later professed chronologists.”

“Now, when to all this we add that the pages of Josephus are full in like manner of a multitude of inconsistent chronological schemes, which prevent his being of any use, in spite of Hales' praises, in clearing up chronological difficulties, the proper inference seems to be that no authoritative, correct, systematic chronology was originally contained in the books of Kings, and that the attempts to supply such afterwards led to the introduction of many erroneous dates, and probably to the corruption of some true ones which were originally there. Certainly the present text contains what are either conflicting calculations of antagonistic chronologists, or errors of careless copyists, which no learning or ingenuity has ever been able to reduce to the consistency of truth.”

Abundant similar statements, in regard to either the chronology of the Israelite and Judaite kings as a whole, or to particular dates in this chronology, may be found in other ar-

ticles in Smith's Bible Dictionary, in the pages of the Bible Commentary, and of the commentaries of Lange, of Keil and Delitzsch, and in other equally respectable works. It is alleged, not merely that an occasional error of transcription has crept into the text, but that these errors are so numerous and glaring as materially to impair the credit of the Old Testament as a witness to facts of chronology. And these allegations are made, not by some low-bred, ignorant infidel, but by men of whom it is claimed that they are the leading Christian scholars of Europe and America. They are propounded, not as questions for learned men to puzzle over and settle, but as received matters of fact, to be circulated in the most widely-known "helps" to Bible study. They are in the volumes which are issued by the evangelical publishing houses, and commended by all the evangelical churches, and used by hundreds of thousands of the more intelligent of evangelical Christians in the preparation of Sunday-school lessons and Bible-studies and sermons.

Even many scholars who claim to be pronounced defenders of the numerals of the Bible—such scholars, for example, as the Rawlinsons and George Smith—yet defend them with a defence, which to many lovers of the Bible, seems like an attack. Smith says, for example ("The Assyrian Canon," page 154):

. . . . "and, although there are undoubtedly some errors in the numbers given in the Books of Kings, yet I believe that the Biblical chronology of the period following the death of Solomon is in the main correct, or very nearly so; for this reason I cannot agree with the school of Bunsen and Brandes, who reduce the Biblical dates by over forty years." "In common with several other chronologists, I read fifty-one years instead of forty-one for the reign of Jeroboam II., and thirty instead of twenty for the reign of Pekah, but this makes no difference to the general scheme of chronology."

Is such a defence as this the best that is available? Are we shut up to the alternative of supposing that the Bible, as it now stands, is either remarkably untruthful in this class of statements, or else somewhat untruthful, though not remarkably so? The former of these views is the one most widely promulgated and studied.

In this state of things, these dates have an interest entirely different from that which attaches to them as matters of chronological fact. *If our present copies of the Scriptures are untruthful in their numerical statements, to the serious extent*

thus charged upon them, then how much is their testimony worth as to other matters of fact, and as to matters of morals and religion? Even on this supposition, it is worth something; but it is far from being the unimpeachable evidence that we who believe in plenary inspiration are accustomed to consider it. Most of the prominent events in these narratives are dated. Remove the dates, and the accounts become largely unintelligible. The dates are essential parts of the history. But it is alleged, that in our present copies, errors of number are so frequent that they even constitute the rule rather than the exception. If this be the case, and if our present copies are accurate transcriptions of the originals, then can the originals be said to be as trustworthy as the inspired Word of God ought to be? And if the errors be charged to transcribers, and not to the original documents, then what reliance can be placed on copies so badly transcribed, as evidence of the contents of the originals?

These questions are of grave import. If the views maintained in the standard religious works above mentioned are to prevail, they require a definition of inspiration and a defence of the Word of God, considerably different from those laid down in the creeds of most of the Churches. It is useless for us to maintain, in general, the marvellous supernatural credibility of the Scriptures, if we must then deny this credibility, in detail, in hundreds of important instances. There may be sufficient defence of the Bible as the rule of our faith, even if all these charges of historical inaccuracy are made out; but it will be a defence puzzling to plain men, and materially unlike that which has most currently been made by evangelical apologists.

If such a change of base is necessary, we certainly ought to be about it, with all diligence and thoughtfulness. *But it is not necessary.* Demonstrably, it is these modern scholars that are mistaken, and not the writers or the transcribers of our Old Testament books.

It is the purpose of this article to vindicate the Bible chronology of the kings of Israel and Judah, subsequent to the death of Solomon.

The statements cited above, and other statements of the same sort, lay great stress upon the alleged falsity of the date

given in First Kings, for the building of Solomon's Temple. We must not now, however, discuss that date, because it belongs to an earlier period than the one we are considering. Within this period, among all the chronological numbers given in the Hebrew or English texts, we shall find very few that can fairly be called either erroneous or doubtful.

The evidence for this assertion is contained, partly in the records in which the Hebrew chronology is handed down to us, and partly in sources external to those records. That found within the records is partly contained in the current accounts of the affairs whose dates are given, and partly in certain "long numbers" independent of those dates. The whole body of the evidence warrants us in affirming the following propositions :

I. The current narratives which contain these dates are of such a character as to render certain the detection of numerical errors, if they contain any.

II. In recording dates, these narratives evidently follow a simple and consistent system.

III. An analysis of the dates given, in the light of this system, proves their entire trustworthiness.

IV. This result is corroborated by the "long numbers."

V. What exceptions there are to it, are of the sort that "prove the rule."

The limits of this article forbid us to discuss the abundant, striking, minute, and decisive corroborations of the view herein advocated, to be found in the Ptolemaic Canon, the Assyrian Eponym Canon, and other external sources. Yet a brief statement concerning these will introduce our discussion of the fourth of the above propositions.

I. First, the current accounts in which the Hebrew chronology is transmitted, afford quite abundant facilities for checking and testing the dates given, and determining their value.

These dates have been transmitted, not in a single literary work, but in several literary works. A very large proportion of them appear in each of the three distinct historical sources, Kings, Chronicles, and Josephus. A considerable number are additionally given in Isaiah, Jeremiah, and other Old Testament books. Comparatively few of the dates depend on the testimony of one author only. Most of them are supported

by the testimony of two, three, or more authors. It may be true that these authors have copied from one another, or from some common source, so that they are not, in the highest sense, independent witnesses. But independent witnesses they are, at least, as to how any given statement stood as long ago as when they copied it.

The number of witnesses is increased by the fact that the Old Testament was transmitted in the Septuagint and other versions, as well as in the Hebrew. The citation made in the beginning of this article speaks of "the alterations and omissions of these dates in the Septuagint" as disparaging to the dates given in the Hebrew. Curiously enough, the passages adduced in Bishop Hervey's article in proof of this assertion are all either inapplicable, or else taken from what the same article calls the "apocryphal" additions to the Vatican copy of the Septuagint. It would not have been difficult, however, to adduce instances that would really have been to the point. Several such instances will presently be mentioned. The copies of the Septuagint differ somewhat, in this matter of dates, both from one another and from the Hebrew text. And whether or no this fact has any weight against the Hebrew chronology, it certainly has no small weight in accrediting the Greek copies, as distinct from the Hebrew, with something of the character of independent witnesses.

As to the relative value of these several lines of evidence, we might be entitled, at the outset, to claim superior credibility for the Scriptural books in the Hebrew text, both on the ground that the Scriptures are inspired, and on that of their known reputation for historical fidelity. It is simpler, however, to waive all such claims, and to credit all the witnesses to the same extent, until, in the natural course of our investigation, we find reasons for making a difference between them.

Of Josephus we shall find it to be true, as affirmed in the citation at the beginning of this article, that his pages "are full" of a "multitude of inconsistent chronological schemes." Instances of this will presently be given. We shall also find reason to believe that the numbers in our present editions of Josephus have been carelessly copied. It does not follow, however, that these defects "prevent his being of any use, in spite of Hales' praises, in clearing up chronological difficulties."

This very state of things proves that Josephus used chronological materials not found in the Scriptures. It also proves that the person or persons to whom our copies of Josephus owe their present form, were inadequate to the task of accurately computing numbers. When, therefore, we find numbers in Josephus that cannot be accounted for either as careless transcriptions of the Bible numerals, or as parts of some evident chronological scheme, we have a strong presumption that such numbers are data from some independent historical source. And if such numbers are found to agree with and *check* other numbers, in the most unexpected and surprising ways, it must be because both sets of numbers are correct. It cannot be because the numbers have been manipulated. Such results are utterly beyond the reach of such manipulation as everywhere appears in the pages of Josephus. When we come to consider the "long numbers" given by Josephus, we shall find instances sufficiently illustrating these statements.

The evidence of the Bible dates is thus made the more decisive by its being given by several witnesses, who are, to a degree, independent one of another. Still further opportunity for testing it is afforded in the circumstance that most of the dates are given in parallel lines, so that the items of one line may be used to check and prove those of another. Thus the dates of the kings of Israel are parallel with those of the kings of Judah. And when this parallelism ceases, at the close of the kingdom of the ten tribes, it is replaced by lines of Assyrian, Babylonian, and Tyrian dates, and of dates in the lives of individuals, Jeremiah, for instance, and by other similar materials.

Again, the dates in the Hebrew chronology are given in several different modes of statement. They are presented, though vaguely, in the form of genealogical tables. They are occasionally given, as we shall see below, in the form of years of an era. They are currently stated, in the Bible, in cardinal numbers. Jehoshaphat was thirty-five years old when he began to reign, and reigned twenty-five years. Similar data are currently given in Josephus, in the form of a cardinal number and the difference between that and a greater. Jehoshaphat lived sixty years, of which he reigned

twenty-five. This difference of statement diminishes very materially the chances for the existence of undetected errors. And what is of chief importance, the dates given in cardinal numbers are constantly repeated in ordinal numbers of altogether different value. One statement is that Nadab reigned two years. Another statement of the same fact is that he began to reign in the second year of Asa, and gave place to his successor in the third of Asa.

With all this material for cross-examining the witnesses, and severely testing the evidence, it is scarcely credible that we should fail to break it down, if it is untrustworthy. Certainly it did not come into its present form by collusion. Those who are in such haste to pronounce it contradictory in its present form, are surely precluded from claiming that it has been thrown into its present form in order to give it the appearance of truthfulness. If, therefore, the evidence agrees with itself, it is conclusive, even without the additional corroborations to be hereafter introduced. Beyond a doubt there is enough of it. The only question is whether it harmonizes. If it can be made to harmonize, even by some effort, it is probably true. If, on the establishing of an intelligent point of view, it falls, without effort, into substantial harmony, its truth will thus be placed beyond reasonable doubt.

II. We thus reach a second proposition. In recording dates, these narratives evidently follow a simple and consistent system.

In the quotations made at the beginning of this article, the unsatisfactory nature of what is described as the original chronology of the books of Kings, as distinguished from the contradictory nature of what are asserted to be the later interpolations, is partially attributed to "the absence, apparently, of any uniform rule for dealing with the fragments of years at the beginning and end of the reigns." Now, such absence of rule has certainly characterized most of the views that have been presented on the dates given in the Scriptures. Just as certainly, it does not characterize the Scriptures themselves. The following rules are obeyed, with entire uniformity, in all the dates of the period under consideration.

1. All the years mentioned are current years of a consecutive system. The first year of a king is not a year's time, be-

ginning with the month and day of his accession, but a year's time, beginning with the preceding or following new year's day. New year's day was doubtless at the new moon before the Passover. See Ex. xii. 2, and similar passages.

2. When a reign closes and another begins, during a year, that year is counted to the previous reign. A less accurate statement of the same fact would be that the closing reign is counted as extending through the year. Still another statement of this fact, less accurate though more frequently repeated, is that the fragment of a year is counted as an entire year.

3. Regularly in the case of the earlier kings of the ten tribes, and occasionally in other cases, the broken year is counted to the following reign as well as to the previous reign. This, too, might be less accurately stated by saying that the reign is counted as beginning with the previous new year, or that a fragment of a year, at the beginning of a reign, is counted as an entire year. For distinction, the mode of counting which gives a broken year to both the preceding and the following reigns may be called the *Israelite* mode; and that which gives it to the preceding reign only, the *Judaite* mode.

4. When we use the ordinal numbers which date the beginning or end of a reign, to check the cardinal numbers which denote its duration, we must, of course, count both sets of numbers as designating complete years. That is, we must count the date given in the ordinal as being either the opening or the close of the year designated by the ordinal. Otherwise the units represented by the two sets of numbers are of different sorts and cannot be numerically compared. If Asa began to reign the twentieth year of Jeroboam, his actual accession may have occurred at any time during that year. But the year which is counted the first of Asa and that which is counted the twentieth of Jeroboam alike begin at the new year's day of some current year. Hence the year which is counted as the first of Asa must begin either at the beginning or at the end of the year which is counted as the twentieth of Jeroboam. In other words, the ordinal number represents, *for purposes of comparison with the cardinal*, the point of time between two years. The year following this point of time is the one denoted by the ordinals in somewhat more than half the in-

stances that occur. But the year preceding this point of time is denoted in nearly half the instances. The usage is not at all decided. It probably follows somewhat the actual order of events. If an accession actually occurred during a given year, but was counted from the following new year, it was more likely to be described by the ordinal number of the current year than by that of the new year. The Bible usage is precisely like current usage in this respect. If some event took place at the point of time between the years 90 and 91 A.D., we might describe it as taking place either in the ninetieth or in the ninety-first year of the Christian era. Which number we used would be quite likely to depend on some accidental association.

Now these four rules are just as simple and just as difficult as any other rules in ordinary practical arithmetic. Scarcely any one will master them by a single desultory reading. Scarcely any one will fail to master them, who will take the trouble to work out a dozen examples by them. Little else than the simple application of them is needed, to reduce all the numerals of the period following the death of Solomon to an orderly and intelligible system.

This circumstance alone sufficiently demonstrates the correctness of the rules, and the correctness or incorrectness of particular numbers as tested by them. The reaching of such a result, in the case of any system of dates newly deciphered from ancient inscriptions, would be taken as establishing the correctness, not alone of the system, but of the deciphering process also. The fact that the key opens the lock is sufficient proof of its adequacy to open the lock.

Before proceeding, however, to turn our key in this lock, let us notice that it opens many other locks. The rules which have just been laid down, derived as they are by induction from the Bible and Josephus, are yet precisely the same which George Smith and others have derived, by induction, from the Assyrian documents, and applied to the interpretation of the chronology of those documents. This, of course, has great weight to prove that both systems have been correctly analyzed. Our rules are likewise confirmed by the familiar testimonies of the Jewish fathers. "The numerals for the kings are not counted otherwise than from

Nisan." "This is taught only of the kings of Israel." And again: "Nisan is the beginning of the year to the kings, and one day in a year is counted a year." "One day in the end of a year is counted a year." Statements like these evidently agree with the four rules formulated above. They are commonly cited to establish those rules in some of the cruder forms in which they are sometimes given; but they are equally applicable to the riper forms as to those which are less perfect.

In computing dates, under this system of rules or any other, we need carefully to guard against certain very common vicious processes.

For example, it is an incorrect mode of reaching results, to take the numbers given in any Biblical list of monarchs, and simply add them together. This mode of operation takes no account of the broken years at the changes of reigns. It takes no account of possible interregna. It takes no account of instances in which two kings reign together as associates, so that the years assigned to one overlap those assigned to another. Moreover, since some of these items can only be obtained by comparing the dates themselves, we cannot use the items to correct any results we may have obtained by adding the dates. Still further, since any conclusions thus reached are positive mistakes, and not mere inaccuracies, we are precluded from correcting them by making averages, or computing mean results. All processes of this kind are utterly and hopelessly vicious. If such processes have sometimes reached correct results, it has been by accident.

Again, the process of reducing these ancient dates, before comparing them one with another, to years of the Christian era, or of some other era now in current use, is one that leaves room for very considerable errors. To begin with, the years of the Christian era, as we now compute them, begin the 1st of January; those of the chronology of the Hebrew kings began in March or April. Two events might be in the same year, by our present count, and yet in different years, by their count, or the reverse. And even if the years were the same, yet, when we reduce the dates of one system to the numerals of another, we often reach only proximate results. We are uncertain whether our conclusion may not be erroneous, by a

year or two. And if there are errors, they may neutralize one another, when we come to combine the numbers, or may augment one another. Hence, in a long computation, errors amounting to many years may be introduced, merely through this vicious method of reduction. And the method affords no opportunity for either correcting or detecting such errors.

It is, indeed, convenient to have a common standard for comparing the different sets of dates. But until these different sets of dates are adjusted to one another, the common standard, to be of any real use, must have the same unit with the dates themselves, and must afford a measure to which the dates can be accurately reduced. None of the modern eras satisfy these conditions.

It is possible, however, to arrange a table, in which will appear the years of the successive kings, in parallel columns with a succession of numbers representing units of the same sort, in which the parallel numerals will check one another, and will leave no room for omissions or doublings.

The year when the two separate kingdoms came into existence, beginning with its New Year's day, is counted as the first year, alike of Jeroboam and of Rehoboam. To secure a homogeneous standard of comparison, let us call this the year One of the Disruption, that is, *Annus Discidii 1*, that is, *A. Di. 1*.

Now write in a column, headed *A. Di.*, the numerals 1, 2, 3, 4, etc., up to 450 or more. Write in a parallel column the numerals of the successive reigns of the kings of the ten tribes; and in a third column, those of the kings of Judah. Add a fourth column, to be filled up, when you reach the time of Cyrus, with the years *B. C.*; and a fifth and a sixth, if you please, for Assyrian, Babylonian, or other parallel dates. In writing your numerals, be careful to make the parallel dates check one another. If you do the work correctly, you will thus tabulate, in the methods of written arithmetic, a solution of our problem. The following division of this article gives the same solution, in terms of mental arithmetic.

III. We turn, then, to the examination of the dates themselves. In this examination we shall simultaneously accomplish three things: First, we shall find complete inductive proof of the validity of the four rules above given. Secondly, we shall ascertain the correct interpretation of the dates, under the

rules. Thirdly, we shall establish, with substantial conclusiveness, the remarkable accuracy of the dates themselves. Simply by applying the rules, without a word of further explanation, nearly all the dates given in the Hebrew text and in the English Bible, including a large majority of those that have been disputed, fall into their places, and are shown to be undoubtedly correct. All those which remain, with not more than two or three exceptions, are easily explicable as correct; and that, in most instances, not merely by a hypothetical explanation, but by one that can be shown to be true, in preference to all others. And the two or three mistaken dates are shown to be mistaken, by marks so clear that the absence of these marks from the other dates is proof, of some weight, in their favor.

The induction now to be entered upon is designed to include all the chronological numerals given, for the period under consideration, both in the Hebrew text of all the Scriptural books, in the variant readings of the Septuagint, and in Josephus. Inadvertent omissions have doubtless been made, but probably none that affect the final conclusion. Such of these numerals as are not explicitly mentioned in the analysis, will be described and accounted for at its close.

According to Chronicles, Josephus, and 1 Kings xiv. 21, Rehoboam reigned seventeen years. These are evidently the first seventeen years A.D.I., and the first seventeen of Jeroboam.

He was succeeded by Abijah, who began, according to Chron., Jos., and 1 Kings xv. 1-2, in the 18th year of Jeroboam, and reigned three years. His three years are evidently the years 18, 19, 20 A.D.I. Since the ordinal number here is 18 and not 17, that is, since his reign is dated from the beginning of the eighteenth and not from the close of the seventeenth, we may infer that it actually began with the new year, and that Rehoboam's life extended through the whole, or substantially the whole of his 17th regnal year.

According to 1 Kings xv. 9, Asa came to the throne in the 20th year of Jeroboam. Since the year 20 A.D.I. is already counted as the 3d of Abijah, this is likely to mean that Asa's first year is the one which begins at the close of the 20th year of Jeroboam; or, in other words, is the year 21 A.D.I. This conclusion is made certain by the subsequent dates. This

dating of Asa's first year from the close of the 20th of Jeroboam, and not from the beginning of the 21st, doubtless indicates that his actual accession took place within the 20th; that is, that Abijah died and was followed by Asa, at some time during the year that is counted as the 3d of Abijah.

The Roman copies of the Septuagint date the death of Asa, and in a separate place, the accession of Abijah, in the 24th year of Jeroboam. This is certainly a mistake, for it contradicts all the other witnesses, and also the subsequent dates, as given by this witness in common with all the others.

According to Jos. and 1 Kings xiv. 20, Jeroboam reigned twenty-two years. According to Jos. and 1 Kings xv. 25, Nadab followed him in the second year of Asa. The second of Asa is the year 22 A.D.I. Therefore this year is counted both as the 22d of Jeroboam, and as the 1st of Nadab.

Nadab reigned two years, according to Jos. and 1 Kings. Baasha succeeded him in the 3d year of Asa, as we are informed in 1 Kings xv. 28, 33. The 3d year of Asa is the year 23 A.D.I. Therefore Nadab's two years are the years 22 and 23 A.D.I.; and the latter of these two years is counted both as the 2d of Nadab and as the 1st of Baasha.

According to Jos. and 1 Kings xv. 33, Baasha reigned twenty-four years. According to 1 Kings xvi. 8, Elah took the kingdom in the 26th year of Asa. Therefore Baasha's twenty-four years are from the 3d to the 26th of Asa, that is, A.D.I. 23-46; and A.D.I. 46 is counted both as the 24th of Baasha, and as the 1st of his successor.

According to Jos. and 1 Kings xvi. 8, Elah reigned two years. From 1 Kings xvi. 10, 15, we learn that he was followed by Zimri, in the 27th year of Asa. Therefore, Elah's two years were the 26th and 27th of Asa, A.D.I. 46, 47.

From Jos. and 1 Kings xvi. 15, 23, we learn that Omri succeeded Zimri, after only seven days, and reigned twelve years. The passage in 1 Kings xvi. 29 affirms that Ahab succeeded him in the 38th year of Asa. Hence Omri's twelve years were from the 27th to the 38th of Asa, 47-58 A.D.I. The 27th of Asa, A.D.I. 47, is counted both to Omri and his predecessor; and the 38th, A.D.I. 58, both to him and his successor. This is confirmed by the addition to the Roman copies of the Septuagint, mentioned below, which identifies the 11th of Omri with the 37th of Asa.

But 1 Kings xvi. 23 dates the accession of Omri from the 31st year of Asa; and Jos. Ant. 8, 12, 5, dates the same event from the 30th of Asa. An entirely satisfactory explanation of these numerals is found in the view that from the close of Asa's 30th year and the opening of his 31st, Omri was recognized as sole king, the previous years of his reign having been disputed by his rival, Tibni, 1 Kings xvi. 21, and Jos.

According to Chron., Jos. and 1 Kings xv. 10, Asa's reign lasted forty-one years. His last year, therefore, was A.D. 61. According to 1 Kings xxii. 41, Jehoshaphat followed him in the 4th year of Ahab, which was likewise A.D. 61. Are we to count Jehoshaphat's accession from the beginning of this year, or from the end of it? Evidently from the end of it, both because this is a case in which the *Judaite* mode of counting should prevail, and because only this mode of counting can be reconciled with the dates given below for the accessions of Ahaziah and Jehoram of Israel. Jehoshaphat's first year, therefore, is the 5th of Ahab, A.D. 62. This is dated at the close of the 4th year of Ahab, and not at the beginning of the 5th, because the death of Asa and the actual reign of Jehoshaphat began during the year that is counted as the 41st of Asa, 2 Chron. xvi. 13.

The addition to the current text of 1 Kings xvi. 28, found in the Vatican copy of the Septuagint, says that Jehoshaphat became king in the 11th year of Omri, and Ahab in the second of Jehoshaphat. If these numerals are understood as contradictory to those above given, they are worthless; for on that supposition they are the self-contradictory testimony of a single witness, opposed to several better witnesses. But if we understand them as indicating that Jehoshaphat reigned along with Asa, during the five years before his own twenty-five years began, we find in them a statement quite probable in itself, and altogether in agreement with all the other statements. These co-reigns were pretty frequent, and are not made any the less so by using such adjectives as "absurd" and "gratuitous" in regard to them. Bishop Hervey says: "The whole notion of these joint reigns has not the smallest foundation in fact, and unluckily does not come into play in the only cases where there might be any historical probability of their having occurred, as in the case of Asa's illness and

Uzziah's leprosy." "Unluckily" for this statement, the notion of a joint reign does come into play, as we have just seen, in explaining a part of the evidence "in the case of Asa's illness." There is no question as to the *fact* of frequent coregency. This is explicitly mentioned in the case of Uzziah's leprosy, and in half a dozen other instances. The only question is whether the years of a joint reign shall be counted to one king, or to the other, or to both. Here the usage differs. Sometimes they are counted in one way, and sometimes in another. Something may have depended on the degree of formality with which the junior regent assumed royal titles and prerogatives.

We have seen that Ahab came to the throne in the 38th year of Asa. He reigned twenty-two years, according to Jos. and 1 Kings xvi. 29. These twenty-two must have been the last four of Asa and the first eighteen of Jehoshaphat, that is, A. Di. 58-79.

But we are informed in 1 Kings xxii. 51, that Ahaziah of Israel came to the throne in the 17th year of Jehoshaphat, and reigned two years; and in 2 Kings iii. 1, that Jehoram succeeded him in the 18th year of Jehoshaphat. The two years of Ahaziah must therefore be the 17th and 18th of Jehoshaphat, A. Di. 78-79, the same with the 21st and 22d of Ahab. The latter of these two years is also counted as the first of Jehoram. In other words, Ahaziah reigned with Ahab during the whole or a part of the 21st year of the latter, and during the small part of the 22d year which elapsed before the death of Ahab. Then he reigned alone for some months, but died and was succeeded by Jehoram before the end of the year. In this case, the time of the co-reign is counted as a part of that of the reign.

According to Jos., Chron., and 1 Kings xxii. 42, Jehoshaphat reigned twenty-five years. Since, as we have just seen, his 18th year was the first of Jehoram of Israel, his 25th was the 8th of Jehoram, namely, A. Di. 86.

But in 2 Kings viii. 16, we are told that Jehoram of Judah came to the throne in the 5th year of Jehoram of Israel. The text, however, explicitly calls this a co-reign; the first four years counted to Jehoram are coincident with the last four counted to his father.

According to Jos., 2 Kings iii. 1, vii. 25, ix. 29, Jehoram of Israel reigned twelve years, that is, A.D. 79-90.

According to 2 Chron. xxi. 18-19, Jehoram of Judah died just at the end of a year, doubtless living over a few hours into the new year. Hence, the usual reckoning, as found in Chron., Jos., and 2 Kings viii. 17, assigns that year to him, making him to have reigned eight years, from the 5th to the 12th of Jehoram of Israel, A.D. 83-90. In pursuance of the same reckoning, Ahaziah is said to have succeeded him in the 12th year of Jehoram of Israel, in 2 Kings viii. 25. But in 2 Kings ix. 29, a different mode of reckoning is used. The small fraction of time by which Jehoram survived the new year is disregarded, and the reign of Ahaziah is dated from the close of the 11th year of Jehoram of Israel.

If we follow this last reckoning Ahaziah reigned one year by the *Judaite* mode of counting. If we follow the other, he reigned one year by the *Israelite* mode of counting. In either case, his one year, Jos. and 2 Kings viii. 26, coincides with the 12th of Jehoram of Israel, A.D. 90.

The nearly simultaneous death of these two kings, during the year 90 A.D., probably near its close, terminates a distinct period in the chronology of the kings. From this point, what we have hitherto known as the *Israelite* mode of reckoning falls into disuse, save in a few exceptional instances. The *Judaite* mode of reckoning is used for the kings of both lines.

Athaliah, according to Chron., Jos., and 2 Kings xi. 3, 4 and xii. 1, reigned six years, and was succeeded by Joash, in the 7th year of Jehu. Her reign, therefore, is A.D. 91-96. A few copies of the Vulgate in Kings make her reign seven years. The Vatican copy of the Septuagint, in 2 Chron. xxiii. 1, assigns the accession of Joash to the 8th year of Jehu. If these numerals deserve any attention, they indicate merely a variant method of counting, in which the last part of A.D. 90 is counted as the first year of Athaliah and Jehu. But as Athaliah reigns in Judah, her first year should naturally be counted, according to the *Judaite* method, as the year A.D. 91. And as the reigns of the immediate successors of Jehu are counted according to this method, it is natural to suppose that his is so counted also.

According to 2 Kings x. 36, Jehu reigned twenty-eight years. According to 2 Kings xiii. 1, Jehoahaz succeeded him in the 23d year of Joash. The twenty-eight years of Jehu, therefore, must coincide with the six of Athaliah and the first twenty-two of Joash, A.Di. 91-118.

According to Jos. and 2 Kings xiii. 1, Jehoahaz reigned seventeen years. This makes his last year coincident with the 39th year of Joash, and the first year of his successor, Jehoash of Israel, coincident with the 40th year of Joash. This is confirmed by the statement of Chron., Jos., and 2 Kings xii. 1, that Joash reigned forty years; together with the statement of Jos., and of 2 Kings xiv. 1, that he was followed by Amaziah in the 2d year of Jehoash of Israel.

But Jos. and 2 Kings xiii. 10 declare that Jehoash began to reign in the 37th year of Joash of Judah. If both these sets of numerals are true, and they both seem beyond dispute, they prove a co-reign of Jehoahaz and Jehoash, during the last three years of the former, which were the 37th, 38th, and 39th of Joash of Judah, which were 133-5 A.Di. These years of co-reign are not included in the sixteen years of the reign of Jehoash.

Jehoahaz, therefore, reigned seventeen years, A.Di. 119-135. Joash of Judah reigned forty years, A.Di. 97-136. After Jehoahaz, according to Chron., Jos., and 2 Kings xiii. 10, Jehoash reigned sixteen years. These, according to the dates given in the Bible, were A.Di. 136-151. Amaziah reigned twenty-nine years, according to Chron., Jos., and Kings, beginning the 2d year of Jehoash of Israel, according to Jos. and 2 Kings xiv. 1, 2. The 29 are A.Di. 137-65.

Jeroboam II. succeeded Jehoash of Israel in the 15th year of Amaziah, according to Jos. and 2 Kings xiv. 23, and, according to the latter, reigned forty-one years. Hence, his years were A.Di. 151-191, and the first of these years is counted both to him and to his predecessor.

Instead of the numerals thus given, Jos. 9, 8, 1 assigns but twenty-seven years to Jehu, and Jos. 9, 8, 5 dates the accession of Jehoahaz in the 21st year of Joash of Judah. The closing year of Jehoahaz is thus made to synchronize with the 37th of Joash of Judah. This can be made to agree with the following numbers by making the first year of Jehoash

to begin at the close of the 37th of Joash; and counting the 40th year of Joash as also the first of Amaziah, which would thus begin at the close of the 2d year of Jehoash. Then the 16th year of Jehoash would fall the year before the first of Jeroboam II., in the 15th year of Amaziah. The dates, as expressed in years A.D., would thus be considerably changed from those given above, between A.D. 133 and 150, and all dates above 150 would be lowered one year.

Josephus, moreover, Ant. 9, 10, 3, assigns forty years to Jeroboam II., instead of the forty-one given in Kings; and says that Uzziah came to the throne in the 14th year of Jeroboam, the date given in the Kings being the 27th of Jeroboam. To make these numerals consistent with those just given, we must suppose that Josephus counts the reign of Uzziah as beginning at the *close* of the 14th year of Jeroboam, which was the 28th of Amaziah. On this supposition, the next year is counted both as the 29th of Amaziah and as the 1st of Uzziah.

These numerals, therefore, date the 1st year of Uzziah as A.D. 164, which is thirteen years earlier than the date apparently assigned to it in Kings. It is an argument of some weight, in favor of the numerals of Josephus, that they make, in this part of the chronology, a continuous list, without interregnum or co-reign; while those of Kings apparently make Jehoash and Jehoahaz to have reigned together for three years, and also an interregnum of eleven years between Amaziah and Uzziah. The received chronology of the margins of our English Bibles counts this interregnum so improbable, that it is necessary to get rid of it by supposing, instead, a co-reign for eleven years of Jeroboam and Jehoash.

But, on the other hand, it is against these numerals of Josephus that they need so much explanation. Too many adjustments are required in order to harmonize them. It is further against them, that they can readily be accounted for as a somewhat complicated attempt to reconcile seeming discrepancies in the chronology, while those of the Bible cannot. It is further against them, that the Bible is, on any estimate of evidence, decidedly a better witness than Josephus. It is also against them, as we shall see, that they require some very clumsy readjustments a little further on; and, finally, as we shall also see, that they do not fit the long numbers given

by Josephus and others, nearly as well as do the dates given in the Bible.

The chronologists are, doubtless, correct when they say that we have no right to assume an interregnum. But to *assume* the existence of an interregnum is one thing, and to *infer* it from a comparison of well-established dates is quite a different thing. To avoid such an inference by the hypothesis of a co-reign, of which there is no other evidence, is, at best, inconclusive reasoning. If Uzziah came to the throne in the 27th year of the reign of Jeroboam II., counted from the death of Jehoash, then the interregnum of eleven years is easily accounted for by the anarchy that characterized the last half of Amaziah's reign; 2 Kings xiv. 17-20, 2 Chron. xxv. 25-28, Jos. Ant. 9, 9, 3. We are, therefore, justified in accepting, provisionally, at least, this understanding of the date, and fixing the fifty-two years of Uzziah as the years 177-228 A.D. This view, as opposed to that of Josephus and the received chronology, will be hereafter established by yet more conclusive proof.

According to 2 Kings xv. 8, Zechariah followed Jeroboam II. in the 38th year of Uzziah, A.D. 214. There was, therefore, an interregnum of twenty-two years. The view of the received chronology as to the accession of Uzziah, admits the interregnum before Zechariah, but, of course, shortens it to eleven years. Josephus gives no dates.

From 2 Kings xv. 17, we learn that Menahem came to the throne of Israel in the 39th year of Uzziah. His ten years, mentioned by Kings and Josephus, are counted from the close of the 39th, and are, therefore, the 40th to the 49th of Uzziah, A.D. 216-225.

The two years assigned to Pekahiah by Josephus and Kings, are, according to 2 Kings xv. 23, the 50th and 51st of Uzziah, A.D. 226, 227.

The twenty years assigned to Pekah by Josephus and Kings began, according to 2 Kings xv. 27, with the 52d year of Uzziah, and are, therefore, A.D. 228-247

The first of the sixteen years assigned to Jotham by Kings, Chron., and Jos., was, according to 2 Kings xv. 32, the 2d year of Pekah. The sixteen years, therefore, were from the 2d to the 17th of Pekah, A.D. 229-244.

Ahaz began to reign, according to 2 Kings xvi. 1, *Judaite* count, at the close of the 17th year of Pekah. According to Kings, Chron., and Jos., he reigned sixteen years, namely, A.D. 245-260.

According to 2 Kings xvii. 1, Hoshea of Israel began to reign in the 12th year of Ahaz. In order to make his nine years, as given by Kings and Josephus, reach to the 6th of Hezekiah, we must date the beginning of his 1st year from the *close* of the 12th year of Ahaz, and make his reign to have been 257-265 A.D. This gives an interregnum of nine years, A.D. 248-256, from the time when he smote Pekah, at the beginning of the 20th year from the accession of Jotham, 2 Kings xv. 30, and the close of Pekah's 20th year, 2 Kings xv. 27, and Josephus. The received chronology allows this interregnum. Josephus avoids precise dates.

This interregnum of nine years, together with that following the reign of Jeroboam II., which the received chronology fixes at eleven years, accomplish, it will be noticed, precisely the same ends which George Smith, in the passage cited above, seeks to accomplish by adding ten years to the reign of Jeroboam II., and ten to the reign of Pekah. And certainly it is better to accomplish the end by following the evidence, as we have done, than by interpolating arbitrary rectifications of the evidence, such as he proposes. And if these two interregna are admitted, who can interpose any reasonable objection to admitting, on evidence exactly similar, the interregnum of eleven years between the reigns of Amaziah and Uzziah?

Hezekiah came to the throne in the 3d year of Hoshea, according to 2 Kings xviii. 1; the 4th, according to Jos. Ant. 9, 13, 1. His 4th year was the 7th of Hoshea, according to 2 Kings xviii. 9. The close of the siege of Samaria was in Hoshea's 9th year, according to 2 Kings xvii. 6; xviii. 10; Jos. Ant. 9, 14, 1. This was the 6th year of Hezekiah, according to 2 Kings xviii. 10; the end of the 6th, according to the Septuagint of the same passage; the 7th, according to Josephus. These numerals are all entirely accordant. Hezekiah's reign is counted, in the *Israelite* mode of reckoning, from the close of the 3d year of Hoshea or the beginning of the 4th; his 1st year being also counted the 16th of

Ahaz, and his twenty-nine years being A.D. 260–288, and the deportation, at the end of his 6th year, being at the close of the year 265 A.D.

At this point the dates of Josephus again coincide with those of the Bible. But if we add the years of the kings of Judah, as given by him, from the 1st year of Uzziah to the 6th of Hezekiah, we can hardly make them less than eighty-nine years. A similar addition will not give more than sixty-nine years for the corresponding reigns of the kings of Israel. Either his numbers are contradictory, or else they imply the existence of coreigns among the kings of Judah, or of interregna among the Israelitish reigns. Doubtless the most feasible disposition of the matter is to say that these statements of Josephus are to be interpreted by the ordinal numbers given in the Bible, and that they therefore imply the two interregna mentioned above, one of nine years between Pekah and Hoshea, and one of eleven years between Jeroboam II. and Zechariah. This brings the taking of Samaria, according to Josephus, just at the close of A.D. 252. The difference between Josephus and Kings at this point is precisely the difference between the two numbers given for the 1st year of Uzziah, namely, the 14th and the 27th of Jeroboam II. All the other differences have been balanced, by the different reckonings of the ordinal numbers, that became necessary in order to make the numerals of Josephus intelligible.

Manasseh reigned fifty-five years. So say Chron., Jos., 2 Kings xxi. 1. The years were 289–343 A.D.

Amon is said by Jos., Chron., and 2 Kings xxi. 19 to have reigned two years. Since the long numbers hereafter to be considered, as well as the Assyrian and Babylonian Canons, require the number of years between the captivity of Israel and that of Judah to be two years less than a full count of the reigns, according to the *Judaite* reckoning, would make it; and since the three accessions of Manasseh, Amon, and Josiah, are the only ones which are not fixed by check numbers; and since a short, troubled reign, like that of Amon, is more likely than the longer reigns to be counted after the *Israelite* manner; we assume that this reign is so counted, and that A.D. 343 is at once the 55th of Manasseh, and the 1st of Amon; and A.D. 344 the 2d of Amon and the 1st of Josiah. Let it be noticed, however, that this is the only point *assumed* in this whole analysis. All other points used have been proved.

Then Josiah's thirty-one years, see Chron., Jos., and 2 Kings xxii. 1, are A.D. 344-374.

Since Jeremiah prophesied twenty-three years from the 13th of Josiah to the 4th of Jehoiakim, Jer. xxv. 3, 1, Jehoiakim's 1st year was what we should naturally suppose it to be, the year after the last of Josiah, A.D. 375; and his eleven years ended A.D. 385.

Since Jehoiakim's 4th year was Nebuchadnezzar's 1st, and Zedekiah's 11th year was Nebuchadnezzar's 19th (see Jer. xxv. 1; 2 Kings xxv. 8, and many other references), Zedekiah's eleven years are A.D. 386-396. Of course, it is through inadvertence that Josephus calls the 11th of Zedekiah the 18th of Nebuchadnezzar. The burning of the temple was A.D. 396.

The first year of the captivity of Jehoiachin was the 8th of Nebuchadnezzar, 2 Kings xxiv. 12, A.D. 385. Therefore, the 1st year of Evil Merodach, which was the 37th of the captivity of Jehoiachin, was A.D. 421. This computation follows the usual Biblical method, in such cases, counting the 8th of Nebuchadnezzar as the first of the thirty-seven. Ezekiel apparently computes by this method when he intends to speak principally of duration of time, as in xxxiii. 21. But when he uses a numeral to date an event, rather than to describe duration of time, he counts the years of the captivity of Jehoiachin as beginning with the following new year, thus making them the same with the current years of the reign of Zedekiah. This is proved by comparing Ezek. xxiv. 1, 2, for example, with 2 Kings xxv. 1, and Jer. lii. 4. This latter way of speaking of these dates is certainly the one most used by Ezekiel. It is difficult to decide whether his book shows more than one exception. But it must be that in xxxiii. 21, at least, he counts "the 12th year of our captivity" as including the year in which Jehoiachin was carried away, and not as beginning with the following new year; for on the latter supposition, the news of the smiting of the city would have been an entire year longer than the usual time in reaching him.

On these principles, the "fifth year" of Ezek. i. 2 is the same with the 5th of Zedekiah, namely A.D. 390. The "thirtieth year" of Ezekiel i. 1, whatever this numeral may indicate, counts back to A.D. 361, the famous 18th year of Josiah. The

dates in Ezekiel viii. 1; xx. 1; xxvi. 1; xxix. 1; xxx. 20; xxxii. 1, 17; xl. 1, and xxix. 17, may be similarly estimated.

If the seventy years of the captivity be counted from the 3d of Jehoiakim, when Daniel and his companions were carried away, Daniel i. 1, they are A.D. 377 to 446, including the whole of the year of the first of the final deportations, and the whole of the year of the first return. It is also just seventy years from the close of the year A.D. 396, in which the first temple was destroyed, to that of A.D. 466, in which the second temple was finished.

Besides the numerals which present special difficulties, and which are reserved to be examined by themselves, this analysis has omitted a few which are mere repetitions; and a few others as irrelevant, as, for instance, those denoting the ages of kings at their accession, or the duration of the desolation of Tyre or of Egypt; and yet a few others, which are hardly intelligible, except by the aid of profane chronology, or of the long numbers.

The year counted in the Bible as the first of Cyrus is B.C. 536. This corresponds, as we have just seen, to A.D. 446, and thus enables us, if we choose, to reduce the dates we have fixed, to terms of the Christian era.

IV. It would greatly facilitate a compact presentation of the whole subject if we were now to turn from the Israelitish records to those of other history. Our limits forbid this, but an assertion or two in regard to these foreign chronologies will be of value in introducing our discussion of the "long numbers" of Josephus and the Scriptures.

The impression is prevalent that the numerals of the Ptolemaic Canon, of Berosus, of the Assyrian Canon, and of the other Assyrian records are discrepant among themselves and decidedly in conflict with those of the Israelitish records. But, if we are to judge by the evidence now before the public (which seems to be both abundant and explicit enough for the purpose), both parts of this impression are mistaken. The agreement between all these old chronologies is probably closer than the most sanguine antiquarian has dared to claim. A large number of supposed discrepancies are wiped out, and, with them, a great many ingenious reconciliations proposed by experts, by merely establishing a correct understanding of the Biblical numerals.

For illustration, the chronology given in the margins of most of our reference Bibles agrees more nearly than that of most other schemes with that proposed in this article. The most important single difference is, as we have seen, that the chronology as given in our Bibles omits the interregnum of eleven years before the reign of Uzziah, thus shortening the whole period by that amount. Then, with an evident consciousness that the period thus shortened is too short, it lengthens it again by a year at a time by giving the longest possible interpretation to particular numbers. These differences, slight as they are, have marked importance when we come to compare the numerals of the Bible narratives either with those of the foreign chronologies or with the long numbers. Coincidences which, on the one scheme, are merely general and vague and pointless, become, on the other, minute and striking and full of evidential value.

The argument from the long numbers of Josephus does not greatly depend on the question whether Josephus himself is a trustworthy witness. It turns rather on the improbability of such coincidences as are now to be enumerated, except on condition of the truth of each of the coinciding statements. But it happens to be a fact that all the numerals found in our present copies of Josephus, which belong exclusively to the period of which we are now treating, and to Hebrew chronology as distinguished from foreign chronology, are either trustworthy or else too clumsily untrustworthy to mislead any one. The following is designed as an exhaustive list of the Josephan long numbers which neither depend on foreign dates nor on dates outside this period.

In Ant. 10, 4, 4, he says of Josiah: "And he burnt the bones of the false prophets upon that altar which Jeroboam had first built. And as the prophet who came to Jeroboam when he was offering sacrifice, and, when all the people heard him, foretold what would come to pass, namely, that a certain man of the house of David, Josiah by name, should do what is here mentioned; it also happened that those predictions took effect after 361 years." Turn to the analysis given above and notice that the 18th year of Josiah—the year in which he overthrew the altar in Bethel—was the year 361 A.D. Can the coincidence be better accounted for than

on the supposition that Josephus in this instance told the truth and that our interpretation of the dates is correct?

In Ant. 10, 9, 7, he says: "But the entire interval of time which passed from the captivity of the Israelites to the carrying away of the two tribes, proved to be a hundred and thirty years, six months, and ten days." Now the burning of the temple occurred, according to the Bible, in the fifth month of the 19th year of Nebuchadnezzar—that is, A.D. 396. It probably extended through several days. Jos. Ant. 10, 8, 5 dates it on the first day of the month; 2 Kings xxv. 8, the seventh; and Jer. lii. 12, the tenth. Take the last as properly the date of the most important event in the captivity of the two tribes. From 395 years, 5 months, and 10 days subtract 130 years, 6 months, and 10 days, and we have as remainder 264 years, 11 months,—that is, the closing month of the year 265 A.D.; the same as the date given above for the taking of Samaria, the most important event in the deportation of the ten tribes. For the period covered by this long number, the dates of Josephus agree with those of the Bible, except that he makes the burning of the temple to have been a year earlier. It would, of course, be possible so to readjust the dates of the period as to make the long number correspond to the 18th of Nebuchadnezzar instead of the 19th. But such readjustment would be unnatural, and would not agree so well with either the preceding or the following long numbers.

In the subtraction just made, we took the numbers as they are given. As Josephus, however, constantly uses the fraction six months and ten days in this connection, it is probable that for some reason, good or bad, he has substituted this for the five months and one, seven, or ten days, and then neglected all other fractions of a year. In that case we should have, instead of the above subtraction, the following: 130 years, 6 months, and 10 days subtracted from 395 years, 6 months, and 10 days, leaves 265 years. At all events, this form of computation will be most convenient for the numbers that follow. If it is inaccurate, the inaccuracy is yet too small materially to affect the result.

In Ant. 10, 8, 5, in the section where he dates the burning of the temple in the 18th of Nebuchadnezzar, he says: "Now

the temple was burnt four hundred and seventy years, six months, and ten days after it was built." According to the mistaken reckoning of Josephus, which he uses in this section, the temple was burnt (if our computation of the Bible dates be correct), 394 years, 6 months, and 10 days after the Disruption. Add to this the eighty years which Josephus mistakenly assigns to Solomon (*Ant.* 8, 7, 8), and we have 474 years, 6 months, and 10 days. Subtract from this the four years of Solomon's reign which elapsed before the building of the temple, and we have the 470 years, 6 months, and 10 days.

Add to this again these four years of Solomon's reign and the forty years of the reign of David, and the result will be 514 years, 6 months, and 10 days—the sum given in *Jos. Ant.* 10, 8, 4,* as that of the reigns of the twenty-one kings of the house of David.

In *Ant.* 10, 8, 4, Josephus assigns twenty years to Saul, and eighteen years to Saul, before the death of Samuel, in *Ant.* 6, 14, 9. Add eighteen to the number just given, and we have the 532 years, six months, and ten days assigned, in some copies of *Ant.* 11, 4, 8, as the entire duration of the kingly government, including the reign of Saul.

Josephus is doubtless mistaken in giving eighty years to Solomon, and twenty or eighteen to Saul. But that does not change the fact that each of the three instances just given assumes that the 18th year of Nebuchadnezzar was the year 395 of the Disruption. There can hardly be any doubt of this, because it can hardly be doubted that the numbers were made up in the way that has been described.

In *Ant.* 20, 10, 1, it is said that there were eighteen high-priests during the 466 years, 6 months, and 10 days from Solomon to Josedek, whom Nebuchadnezzar carried captive. Comparing this passage with *Ant.* 10, 8, 5, and 6, we conclude that this list includes Zadok at the beginning, and Josedek at the end. As we know the dates neither of the accession of Zadok, nor of the deposition of Josedek, we can compare this numeral with the preceding, only so far as to notice that there is no contradiction.

* Sixteen days are given in some copies.

Nor is there any necessary contradiction between the numbers given and the 477 years 6 months mentioned in the Wars 6, 10, 1, as the interval between the settlement of Jerusalem by David and its entire demolition by the Babylonians; though this latter number, if correct, is doubtless differently made up from the previous numbers.

In Ant. 9, 11, 3, it is said that Nahum, in the time of Jotham, foretold the destruction of Nineveh, 115 years before it happened. In Ant. 11, 1, 2, Isaiah is said to have prophesied 140 years before the destruction of the temple. Both data agree with the views taken in this article, but are too general to be of great use in confirming them.

In Ant. 9, 11, 1, Josephus says: "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 Pilezer, 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 called Galilee, and Kadesh and Hazor, made the inhabitants prisoners, and transplanted them into his own kingdom." In the next chapter, and apparently later in chronological order, is the account of the invasion of Judah by Pekah and Rezin, and of the interference of Tiglath Pilezer in behalf of Ahaz. This account states that Tiglath Pilezer "transplanted the people of Damascus into the Upper Media, and brought a colony of Assyrians, and planted them in Damascus. He also afflicted the land of Israel, and took many captives out of it." Now, the first of the two events thus described is evidently the beginning of the deportation of the ten tribes, and is either identical with the second or antecedent to it. Hence it occurred before the death of Pekah, which the received chronology places at A.D. 236, but which a more correct computation of the elements used in the received chronology, or of the numerals of Josephus, would fix at A.D. 234.

Now, in Jos. Ant. 9, 14, 1, we read: "So the ten tribes of the Israelites were removed out of Judea 947 years after their forefathers were come out of the land of Egypt, and possessed themselves of this country, but 800 years after Joshua had been their leader, and, as I have already observed, 240 years, seven months, and seven days after they revolted from Reho-

boam." Perhaps none of these numerals deserve much consideration. But so far as they are worthy of notice, it is certain that the 240 years cannot refer to the deportation when Samaria was taken; for that, according to Josephus and the received chronology, was at least as late as A. D. 252; and according to the numerals given in this article, checked, as they are, by long numbers already examined, was A. D. 265. And if we refer the 240 years to the deportation under Tiglath Pilezer, it disagrees with what we have just found to be the dates given by Josephus and our marginal Bibles; but is entirely consistent with those claimed in this article. According to these dates, if this first deportation occurred 241 A. D., it preceded, by a few years, the interference in behalf of Ahaz.

Hales, Vol. I., p. 103, lays great stress on this date, which he calls "another genuine date of 240 years," and "this curious and admirable date;" and ascribes to Josephus as "the greatest proof" "of his great skill in adjusting this period of his chronology." Hales deals with this marvel of chronological skill, by first adding together all the reigns of the kings of *Judah*, without regard to the fact that some of them were co-reigns up to the 6th or 7th of Hezekiah. This aggregate he makes to be 271 or 272 years. Then he subtracts from it 32 years for *Israelitish* interregna, and, wonderful to tell, the result is about 240! As if Josephus here professed to give an aggregate of the reigns of Israelitish kings, instead of the duration of their residence in the country! And as if a remainder, varying by a unit or two from the one required, and produced by adding six or seven to the minuend, were a marvel of chronological coincidence!

We speak of what took place in "sixty-five," or in "seventy-six," or of the presidential election that is to take place in "eighty," thus briefly designating some year of the present or some other well-known century. The same usage, according to Hales, Vol. I., p. 14, prevails among Jewish chronologists. "Thus the epoch of the *Deluge*, is written contractedly 656, instead of A. M. 1656; *Abraham's* migration to *Charran*, 18, instead of A. M. 2018." This usage may be very ancient. With this in mind, one feels tempted to translate Is. vii. 8, "And within *the year sixty-five* shall Ephraim be broken, that it be not a people." The year sixty-five of the century then current

was A.D. 265, the year when Samaria was taken. If this translation were accepted it would meet, remarkably well, all the requirements of the context. The usual explanation of the passage, however, is equally well adapted to our present purpose. The prediction was doubtless spoken in the first year of Ahaz, which our numerals make to be A.D. 245, and the deportation of the ten tribes is supposed to have been completed by Esar Haddon, the year of his great expedition to Egypt, exactly sixty-five years later.

In Ezek. iv. 5, we read, "For I have laid upon thee the years of their iniquity, according to the number of the days, 390 days: so shalt thou bear the iniquity of the house of Israel." This seems to be dated, Ezek. i. 2, in or a little after the fifth year of Jehoiachin's captivity. Of this George Smith says: "The latter date will fall in B.C. 594 or 593, and if Solomon died B.C. 981, there will be 388 years difference between the two events, which is very close to Ezekiel's statement." If, instead of this approximation, we turn over the dates advocated in this article, we find that the 5th year of Jehoiachin's captivity is A.D. 390.

Now about half the instances thus given are either vague, or else not very intelligible. These have only a negative weight in our argument. Their evidence being in, all the evidence of this class is in, and we know that none of it is inconsistent with our view; but, so far as these instances are concerned, it is worth little for establishing either our view or any other. But the other half of the instances are entirely pointed and definite. How does it happen that, different as they are, they all alike fit the current numerals, as we have worked them out? They do not thus fit any possible adjustment of the numerals given by Josephus himself. They do not fit the chronology of Usher, and they fit still less any of the more recent schemes. We paid no attention to them, except in dating the single reign of Amon, while we were working out the current dates. We simply took the dates as they were given, and adjusted them according to certain rigid rules of arithmetic. Even in regard to the reign of Amon, we only used the long numbers to enable us to choose between two adjustments, otherwise equally tenable. How does it happen, then, that these different long numbers fit our dates,

all along the line, and that without explanation or manipulation? If both sets of numerals have been accurately handed down from some one who knew them to be true, the whole is accounted for. Can it be accounted for in any other way?

V. Our subject loses interest as we turn to the numerals which yet remain to be disposed of. They are so few in number, and so unimportant, that one might easily concede them all to be mistakes of transcription, merely to save himself the labor of looking them up. Whatever becomes of the instances which remain, the remarkable accuracy of the Biblical numerals is already vindicated, and vindicated with no other explanation of any numeral than the simple pointing out of its natural meaning.

There are two instances of evidently mistaken numbers.

One of these is that for the age of Jehoiachin at his accession. In the Hebrew text, and in the Vatican copy of the Septuagint of 2 Chron. xxxvi. 9, this is given as eight years; but in 2 Kings xxiv. 8, and in the Alexandrian copy of the Septuagint of 2 Chron., and in 1 Esdras i. 43, it is eighteen years. Certainly, one of the two is mistaken. The preponderance of proof is clearly in favor of the numeral eighteen, and this view seems to be placed beyond a doubt by the exploits attributed to Jehoiachin in Ezek. xix. 5-9, 2 Kings xxiv. 9, 15, and elsewhere.

The other evidently mistaken numeral is in 2 Chron. xxii. 2, where Ahaziah is said to have been forty-two years old at his accession, instead of twenty-two, as in 2 Kings viii. 26. There can be no doubt as to which number is correct, for if he was forty-two, he was older than his father, as the numerals for the age and reign of Jehoram show. The oldest Greek copies here make the numeral to be twenty. It looks as if the translator began to correct the number, and in the excitement of making the correction, forgot to put in the "two." Some of the recent Greek manuscripts and editions have completed the correction, making the number twenty-two, to agree with that in the Kings.

These two instances have many points in common. The mistakes are both in Chronicles, and not in Kings. In both instances, some or all of the Greek copies differ with the Hebrew, in regard to the mistaken reading. Yet, in both in-

stances, the very oldest Greek copies seem to recognize the mistaken reading as already in the Hebrew text. It is a very ancient blunder, and not a modern one. This is confirmed by the fact that Josephus, in both instances, omits the numeral, as if he found the discrepant numbers in existence, and was unwilling to take the responsibility of deciding between them. Neither instance is particularly encouraging to the wise men who explain numerical difficulties by guessing that some ancient copy must have expressed the numerals by letters, and some copyist have mistaken one letter for another. On this theory the change from eighteen to eight would require the dropping of a letter, and not the mere changing of one. If the change, in the other instance, had been from forty-two to twenty-two, instead of the opposite, it might be plausibly explained by this sort of conjecture. An imperfect Mem might easily have been mistaken for a Kaph; but a Kaph would hardly be taken for a Mem in any alphabet in which Hebrew was ever written. The same mental and physical condition which caused the copyist to write "forty" in 2 Chron. xxii. 2, instead of the "twenty" he meant to write, also caused him to write "Azariah" for "Ahaziah" a few lines further on. In 2 Chron. xxxvi. 9, the transcriber doubtless intended to write "sh'moneh esreh," but having written the final *h* of the first word, he carelessly mistook it for the final *h* of the second, and proceeded to write the following words, and thus wrote the *eight* and omitted the *een*.

This comment would, perhaps, be trivial were it not that the practice of emending Bible numerals has intrenched itself so elaborately behind this theory of a supposed alphabetical notation of the numbers in the ancient copies. On this account, it is worth noticing, that just in the places where, if at all, we should expect to find evidence of the truth of this theory, what little evidence there is, all favors the contrary view.

In distinct contrast with these two genuine instances of mistaken numerals, let us turn to the alleged mistake concerning the age of Rehoboam when he became king. In 1 Kings xiv. 21, and 2 Chron. xii. 13, this is said to have been forty-one. But on the current assumption that he succeeded Solomon immediately, or after an interval of only a few months, this

numeral is beset with difficulties. In the accounts of the disruption, Rehoboam certainly appears to be hardly more than a child in age. The men of his own years are represented as equally crude and rash with him. In 2 Chron. xiii. 7, Abijah affirms that the revolt occurred "when Rehoboam was young and tender-hearted, and could not withstand them." Both the Scriptures and Josephus contain statement after statement to the same effect. Moreover, it is not easy to reconcile the character assigned to Solomon at the beginning of his reign, with the notion of his having then been for some time married to an Ammonite wife, with a boy already a year old.

The Bible Commentary proposes as "the best way of removing the whole difficulty" to read "twenty-one" for "forty-one." It says, "The corruption is one which might easily take place, if letters were used for numerals." "It is evident that an ill-written Kaph might be mistaken by a copyist for a faded Mem." Lange's Commentary on 1 Kings, says that twenty-one "is indisputably the right reading."

But if laws of evidence are worth anything, if historical testimony of any sort is anywhere to be depended upon, then these learned commentators are "indisputably" mistaken, and the forty-one "is indisputably the right reading." They do not pretend that there is a particle of evidence worth noting in favor of the emendation, except the difficulties of the present reading; for the few manuscripts that have the number 21, would not be claimed as representing anything more than the opinion of some puzzled scholar, trying to clear up the text by emending it. And on the other side, all the known trustworthy copies of the Hebrew, Septuagint, Syriac, Chaldee, and Vulgate texts testify that this numeral, in the book of Kings, is 41. The same witnesses testify that the numeral in the Chronicles is 41. Josephus says that Rehoboam lived fifty-seven years, of which he ruled seventeen. Certainly, we are not at liberty to set aside such a body of testimony, without an atom of conflicting evidence, merely for the purpose of obviating difficulties, no matter how real or how great the difficulties may be.

Besides, if Rehoboam was but twenty-one at his accession, then he was less than thirty-eight at his death. But for some time before this, his son Abijah had been known as a veteran

warrior and statesman, the husband of many wives, and the father of a growing family. If Rehoboam was less than thirty-eight at his death, how old was Abijah when he made that speech in regard to his father's youth and tender-heartedness at twenty-one years of age? If Rehoboam was but twenty-one at his accession, then in less than forty-one years from his birth, his grandson Asa was already engaged in carrying out those broad, mature plans by which he built up the kingdom. According to 1 King xv. 23, and 2 Chron. xvi. 12, Asa "was diseased in his feet" "in his old age," in the thirty-ninth year of his reign. Josephus says that he attained to "a long and blessed old age." Suppose him to have been only sixty when he reached this period of marked old age, and, therefore, only twenty-one when he began his reign with such an appearance of veteran wisdom and vigor, and even then, according to our *improved* text, he was born when his grandfather was but twenty years old, and a year before the time when the extreme youth of that grandfather is mentioned, to account for his failure in public affairs!

Rehoboam was forty-one at his accession, just as certainly as Jehoiachin was eighteen, and Ahaziah but twenty-two. The only semblance of proof to the contrary is that found in the long addition to the Vatican copy of the Septuagint, which says that Rehoboam was sixteen years old when he began to reign, and reigned twelve years. Beyond a doubt, this is either entirely untrustworthy, or else marks a double accession of Rehoboam, and a long interval between the death of Solomon and the completed disruption.

We turn to an instance of more doubtful character. The numerals given for the ages of Hezekiah and of Ahaz, 2 Kings xvi. 2, xviii. 2, and 2 Chron. xxviii. 1, xxix. 1, and Josephus, are such as make Hezekiah to have been born when his father was not more than eleven years old. If the numbers are correct, either here is a case of precocious paternity, or else Hezekiah was son to Ahaz in the sense of being his kinsman and heir, and not lineally. The evidence in favor of the dates is weaker than that in the case of Rehoboam, for there is one point that is relatively vulnerable. In 2 Chron. xxviii. 1, one Hebrew manuscript, the Vatican copy of the Septuagint, and the Syriac and Arabic versions give twenty-five instead of

twenty for the age of Ahaz at his accession. If this were counted the true number, it would solve the difficulty. With this exception, all the numerals concerned have the combined evidence of all the copies and versions both of Kings, Chronicles, and Josephus. On this showing, can any one write against this numeral any stronger verdict than doubtful? In view of the marked accuracy which we have found characterizing the numerals of the Hebrew text for this period, one may be pardoned if he holds that a modified use of the word son, as applied to Hezekiah, or even precocious paternity on the part of Ahaz, is less improbable than a numerical mistake in the passage.

In view of the same characteristic accuracy, we can hardly discredit the numerals in 2 Chron. xv. 19, and xvi. 1. According to prevalent usage, indeed, we should expect the phrases "the 35th year to the kingdom of Asa," "the 36th year to the kingdom of Asa," to denote the 35th and 36th years of his personal reign over the kingdom; but there is nothing to prevent their meaning the 35th and 36th years of the separate existence of the kingdom over which he reigned. Such a mode of expression, though unusual, is entirely consistent with the current chronological nomenclature of the time. It is easier to suppose that an accurate witness uses a word in a modified though natural sense, than to suppose that he makes a downright mistake.

In 2 Kings i. 17 it is said that Jehoram of Israel acceded to the throne in the second year of Jehoram of Judah. This statement is omitted in the Vatican and Alexandrian copies of the Septuagint, which add, instead of it, the statement made in 2 Kings iii. 1, that Jehoram's reign began in the 18th of Jehoshaphat. In 2 Kings viii. 16, Jehoram of Judah is said to have come to the throne in the 5th year of Jehoram of Israel. These latter dates we have found to be established by checks and tests that are conclusive. We have also found that the first four years of the reign of Jehoram of Judah, dating from the beginning of the 5th of Jehoram of Israel, were years in which he was co-regnant with Jehoshaphat.

Now if the date in 2 Kings i. 17 be also correct, it shows that Jehoram of Judah had two separate accessions, both of them to co-regnant position, the second dating from the 5th

of Jehoram of Israel, and the first from the year before the 1st of Jehoram of Israel, which was the 21st of Ahab, and the 1st of Ahaziah of Israel. Is this theory more tenable than that of an inaccurate numeral?

It is believed to be an entirely new view of the case. It differs from that sometimes held, that the first date marks Jehoram's accession to co-regnancy with Jehoshaphat, and the second the beginning of his sole reign. This latter hypothesis cannot stand for a moment. But its fall is no disproof of the very different hypothesis that Jehoram of Judah was made co-king shortly before the battle of Ramoth Gilead, was deposed shortly after that battle, and was again elevated to the same position several years later. If such a double accession as this be assumed, it gives fresh meaning to Jehoshaphat's famous visit to Ahab. It shows how his having "made affinity with Ahab," a dozen years before, in the marriage of Jehoram and Athaliah, became, just at this time, the subject of special divine rebuke. It explains the peculiar administrative changes made by Jehoshaphat immediately after the battle of Ramoth Gilead. It suggests the existence of a Baalite influence in his court and kingdom, centring in Jehoram and Athaliah, causing general treachery, distrust, and consequent weakness; and something of this sort is needed to account for the fact that such an invasion as that described in 2 Chron. xx. should be so peculiarly to be feared by a monarch of the military resources of Jehoshaphat. It accounts for the remarkable statement in 2 Chron. xxi. 3, 4, that, at his final accession, though his father had given him the kingdom, he yet "*rose up upon* the kingdom of his father, and strengthened himself, and killed off all of his brothers with the sword, and also some of the captains of Israel;" thus obtaining the kingdom by violence, and keeping it, doubtless, by compromise and intrigue. In short, it illustrates a multitude of other particulars in the history, which are otherwise somewhat difficult to understand. Additional evidence may at some time overthrow this view; but it is, in the present condition of the evidence, at least probable enough to obviate any necessity for changing the text.

The only remaining instances of alleged difficulty are those which are supposed to be in conflict with Assyrian or other

profane dates. These, of course, we cannot now discuss. We can only reiterate the affirmation that there is no conflict of this sort which disturbs the validity of the Biblical numerals.

Here, then, is the final verdict. For the chronology of the period covered by the present article, the Books of Chronicles contain two mistaken numerals, and probably no others—certainly not more than two or three others. In the Kings and the other Books there is probably not a single mistaken number; certainly not more than one or two.

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