

THE SYNCHRONISMS OF THE HEBREW KINGS— A RE-EVALUATION: II¹

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Another period of Hebrew history that has provided serious chronological perplexities is the century covering the reigns of Athaliah to Azariah in Judah and Jehu to Pekahiah in Israel. The reigns of this period are as follows:

<i>Judah</i>		<i>Israel</i>	
Athaliah	7 years	Jehu	28 years
Joash	40 years	Jehoahaz	17 years
Amaziah	29 years	Jehoash	16 years
Azariah	52 years	Jeroboam II	41 years
Total	128 years	Zachariah	6 months
		Shallum	1 month
		Menahem	10 years
		Pekahiah	2 years
		Total	114 years, 7 months

Since Athaliah and Jehu began their reigns simultaneously, and since Pekahiah terminated his reign in the fifty-second and last year of Azariah (2 Ki 15: 27), the totals of Israel and Judah for this period should be identical, but we notice that there is an excess of approximately 13 years in Judah over Israel.

From Assyrian sources the length of this period can be fixed at about a century, for it was in 841 B.C. that Jehu paid tribute to Shalmaneser III, and it was during the great

¹ The first part of this article was published in *AUSS*, I (1963) 121-138.

campaign of Tiglath-pileser III against the Westland in 743-738 B.C. that Azariah and Menahem are mentioned in the Assyrian records.

Noticing the seeming discrepancies between Hebrew and Assyrian history for this period, Albright has proposed the following solution for Judah: "The excess of some 24 years can be eliminated entirely by disregarding the total reigns attributed to the kings of Judah and basing our revised estimates of their reigns solely on the synchronisms with Israel (which throughout contradict the regnal totals of the kings of Judah)." ² Thus by a reduction of the reign of Athaliah from 7 years to 6, of Joash from 40 to 38, of Amaziah from 29 to 18, and Azariah from 52 to 42, Albright endeavors to bring the chronology of Judah into line with that of Assyria.

Dealing with this same century Sanders declared: "The exact chronology of this century is beyond any historian's power to determine . . . What to do with the extra twenty-five years is uncertain." ³

To Oppert the chronological discrepancies of this area seemed so distracting that he has used the following rather strong terms in regard to the data and methods employed: "flagrant contradiction," "intentional mutilation," "suppression of all notice," and "ruthlessly altered." ⁴

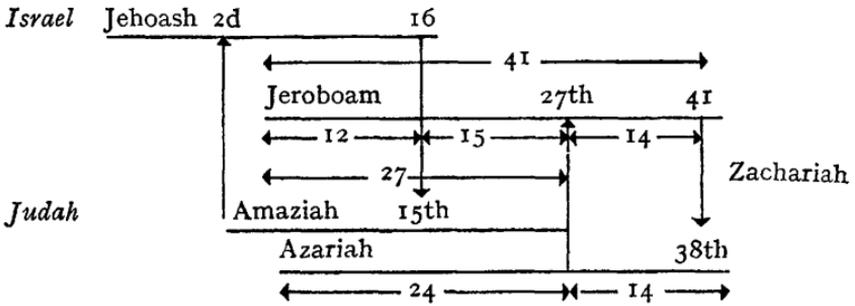
Discordant with each other though the data may seem, and out of harmony with contemporary Assyria though they may appear, a careful study of the problem reveals a pattern that is completely harmonious with itself and that provides full accord with contemporary Assyria. The essential section of this pattern is as follows: ⁵

² Albright, "The Chronology of the Divided Monarchy of Israel," *BASOR*, No. 100 (Dec., 1945), 19.

³ Frank Knight Sanders, *History of the Hebrews* (New York, 1928), p. 149.

⁴ Jules Oppert, "Chronology," *Jewish Encyclopaedia*, IV, 64-68.

⁵ For a fuller discussion of this pattern see the author's *The Mysterious Numbers of the Hebrew Kings*, pp. 67-72, and *A Stubborn Faith*, pp. 43-50.



According to the biblical data Amaziah came to the throne in Judah in the second year of Jehoash of Israel (2 Ki 14: 1) and lived 15 years after that ruler's death (2 Ki 14: 17). Jehoash after a reign of 16 years (2 Ki 13: 10) was succeeded by his son Jeroboam II in the fifteenth year of Amaziah (2 Ki 14: 23). In the twenty-seventh year of Jeroboam, Azariah began to reign. If at the time when Amaziah died and Azariah succeeded him on the throne, Jeroboam had already reigned 27 years, and if Jehoash had died only 15 years before, then Jeroboam must have reigned 12 years while his father was still alive.

Jeroboam reigned 41 years (2 Ki 14: 23), which would bring his death 14 years after Amaziah's death and Azariah's accession. Jeroboam was succeeded by Zachariah in the thirty-eighth year of Azariah (2 Ki 15: 8). If Azariah had reigned 38 years at that time and his father Amaziah had died only 14 years before, then Azariah must have reigned 24 years while Amaziah was still alive.

It will be noticed that this 12-year coregency between Jeroboam and Jehoash in Israel and a 24-year overlap of Azariah with Amaziah in Judah are distinctly required by the biblical data. Once these overlapping reigns are understood all seeming discrepancies between the biblical data of this period disappear and there is full harmony between Hebrew and Assyrian chronology.

Let it be observed that it is the synchronisms that provide the solution of this involved problem of reigns. Baffling though

they at first may appear, no solution of the chronological problems of this period is possible without them. Careful note should be taken of the fact that while the datum for the length of Jeroboam's reign, 41 years, gives the years from the beginning of his coregency, the synchronism of his accession is expressed in terms of the beginning of his sole reign, at the time when Jehoash died. And it should also be noticed that while the length of Azariah's reign, 52 years (2 Ki 15: 2), gives the total since he first took the throne while Amaziah was still alive, the synchronism of his accession in the twenty-seventh year of Jeroboam is expressed in terms of the beginning of his sole reign. Complex though this may appear, it is just these factors that make possible the solution of this perplexing problem.

The two overlapping reigns of this period in Israel and Judah are unquestionably associated with Amaziah's rash challenge of war to Jehoash, following his victory over Edom, and the ensuing struggle in which Amaziah was captured and Jerusalem was taken (2 Ki 14: 7-14; 2 Chr 25: 6-25). Before engaging in battle, Jehoash placed his son Jeroboam on the throne, and upon the capture of Amaziah, the people of Judah gave the throne to the youthful Azariah. At the death of Jehoash, Amaziah was no doubt released to live another 15 years before his death (2 Ki 14: 17; 2 Chr 25: 25).

Unquestionably the most complicated and difficult area of Hebrew chronology is that involving the closing years of Israel's history, and covering the reigns of Menahem to Hoshea in Israel, and Azariah to Hezekiah in Judah. And once more it is the synchronisms, involved and perplexing though they may appear, that make possible the solution of the problems involved.

Closely connected with the solution is the matter of the arrangement of reigns in the books of Kings. A glance at Table II reveals the fact that the endeavor was made to arrange the records of the kings in accord with the order of sequence with which the rulers began their reigns. The

Table II
The Arrangement of Reigns in the Books of Kings

Order of sequence	Reference	Judah	Israel	Date of Commence- ment of reign according to the synchronisms B.C.
1.	I Ki 12: 1-24; 14: 21-31	<i>Rehoboam</i>	No synchronism	931
2.	I Ki 12: 25 - 14: 20	No synchronism	<i>Jeroboam I</i>	931
3.	I Ki 15: 1-8	<i>Abijam</i>	18th of Jeroboam	913
4.	I Ki 15: 9-24	<i>Asa</i>	20th of Jeroboam	911
5.	I Ki 15: 25-31	2d of Asa	<i>Nadab</i>	910
6.	I Ki 15: 32 — 16: 7	3d of Asa	<i>Baasha</i>	909
7.	I Ki 16: 8-14	26th of Asa	<i>Elah</i>	886
8.	I Ki 16: 15-20	27th of Asa	<i>Zimri</i>	885
9.	I Ki 16: 21, 22	No synchronism	<i>Tibni</i>	885
10.	I Ki 16: 23-28	31st of Asa	<i>Omri</i>	880
11.	I Ki 16: 29 - 22: 40	38th of Asa	<i>Ahab</i>	874
12.	I Ki 22: 41-50	<i>Jehoshaphat</i>	4th of Ahab	870
13.	I Ki 22: 51 - 2 Ki I: 18	17th of Jehosh.	<i>Ahaziah</i>	853
14.	2 Ki 3: 1 - 8: 15	18th of Jehosh.	<i>Joram</i>	852
15.	2 Ki 8: 16-24	<i>Jehoram</i>	5th of Joram	848
16.	2 Ki 8: 25 - 9: 29	<i>Ahaziah</i>	12th of Joram	841
17.	2 Ki 9: 30 - 10: 36	No synchronism	<i>Jehu</i>	841
18.	2 Ki 11: 1-21	<i>Athaliah</i>	No synchronism	841
19.	2 Ki 12: 1-21	<i>Joash</i>	7th of Jehu	835
20.	2 Ki 13: 1-9	23d of Joash	<i>Jehoahaz</i>	814
21.	2 Ki 13: 10-25	37th of Joash	<i>Jehoash</i>	798
22.	2 Ki 14: 1-22	<i>Amaziah</i>	2d of Jehoash	796
23.	2 Ki 14: 23-29	15th of Amaziah	<i>Jeroboam II</i>	782
24.	2 Ki 15: 1-7	<i>Azariah</i>	27th of Jeroboam	768
25.	2 Ki 15: 8-12	38th of Azariah	<i>Zachariah</i>	753
26.	2 Ki 15: 13-15	39th of Azariah	<i>Shallum</i>	752
27.	2 Ki 15: 16-22	39th of Azariah	<i>Menahem</i>	752
28.	2 Ki 15: 23-26	50th of Azariah	<i>Pekahiah</i>	742
29.	2 Ki 15: 27-31	52d of Azariah	<i>Pekah</i>	740
30.	2 Ki 15: 32-38	<i>Jotham</i>	2d of Pekah	738
31.	2 Ki 16: 1-20	<i>Ahaz</i>	17th of Pekah	723
32.	2 Ki 17: 1-41	12th of Ahaz	<i>Hoshea</i>	720
33.	2 Ki 18: 1 - 20: 21	<i>Hezekiah</i>	3d of Hoshea	716

synchronisms should here be carefully observed, for they have a vital bearing in determining the order of arrangement of reigns followed in the books of Kings.

The first king of the period of the divided monarchy was Rehoboam, whose record appears first. He was closely followed by Jeroboam, whose record comes next. Third was Abijam in Jeroboam's eighteenth year, and fourth, Asa, in the twentieth year. Then come in sequence seven kings of Israel, all of whom came successively to the throne during the long reign of Asa. After Asa's death came Jehoshaphat, twelfth in the list, in the fourth year of Ahab.

When once this order of sequence is understood, we may know that when the record of one king succeeds another, he is thought to have begun his reign next after that of the preceding ruler.

Coming to Azariah, twenty-fourth in the listing, it will be found that five kings of Israel are recorded as having begun their reigns in various years of his reign. Twenty-fifth was Zachariah in the thirty-eighth year, 753 B.C.; twenty-sixth, Shallum in the thirty-ninth year, 752 B.C.; twenty-seventh, Menahem, also in the thirty-ninth year, 752 B.C.; twenty-eighth, Pekahiah in the fiftieth year, 742 B.C.; and twenty-ninth, Pekah, in the fifty-second year, 740 B.C. Then, number thirty, is Jotham, in the second year of Pekah (2 Ki 15: 32). Occupying this position in the order of sequence, is proof of the fact that it is at this juncture that Jotham was regarded as having begun his reign, next after Pekah and after Azariah's death in 740 B.C. This conclusion is inescapable when once the sequential arrangement of reigns is understood.

In the following diagram will be seen the arrangement of reigns and the dates when the rulers of this period began their reigns according to the present sequential order of Kings:

841	835	814	798	796	782	768	753	752	752	742	740	741	731
Jehu	7th												
19	Joash	23d	37th										
	20	Jehoahaz											
	21	Jehoash	2d										
		22	Amaziah	15th									
		23	Jeroboam	27th									
		24	Azariah	38th	39th	39th	50th	52d					
		25	Zachariah										
			26	Shallum									
				27	Menahem								
					28	Pekahiah							
						29	Pekah	2d					
							30	Jot					

It will be noticed that when the synchronism for Pekah's accension is given as the fifty-second year of Azariah (2 Ki 15: 27), that is Azariah's last year, for he had a reign of 52 years (2 Ki 15: 2). The natural conclusion would be that with the death of Azariah in 740 B.C., the next reign would be that of Jotham, also in 740 B.C., but shortly after the commencement of the reign of Pekah in Azariah's last year.

The last item recorded for Pekah is that he was slain and succeeded by Hoshea in the twentieth year of Jotham (2 Ki 15: 30). Since Pekah had a reign of 20 years (2 Ki 15: 27), that would appear to place the twentieth year of Jotham and the termination of Pekah's reign both in the same year, 720 B.C., 20 years after Azariah's death in 740 B.C.

But there are difficulties in such a pattern. The synchronism of Jotham's accession is the second year of Pekah (2 Ki 15: 32), which would be 738 B.C., 2 years after Azariah's death. Not only was there no gap between the death of the aged, incapacitated Azariah and the beginning of Jotham's reign, but there was a coregency explicitly mentioned, due to Azariah's leprosy (2 Ki 15: 5). Thus Jotham must have begun his reign not in 738 B.C. or even 740, but at some time before 740, and at some time before his position in the sequential order of Kings would seem to indicate. And if it is true that he began

his reign in the second year of Pekah, then it is also true that Pekah must have commenced his reign before 740 B.C., and before his place in the record might seem to indicate.

Moreover, if Pekah and Jotham began their reigns in 740 B.C. and terminated them in 720, then 720 would have been the year when Hoshea came to the throne in Israel and Ahaz began in Judah. But we know from Assyrian sources that Pekah was succeeded by Hoshea in 732 B.C., 12 years before 720. And if Hoshea began his 9-year reign in 720, then it terminated in 711, 12 years after Samaria's fall. And 720 B.C. is also too late for the beginning of the reign of Ahaz, for according to both the biblical record (2 Ki 16: 7-10) and the claims of Tiglath-pileser III, he paid tribute to that Assyrian king, whose reign ended in 727 B.C.

Still another difficulty in the present arrangement would be an overlap between Hezekiah and Hoshea, for according to the Biblical picture, Israel must have come to its end before Hezekiah's great passover in the first year of his reign, an occasion to which all Israel were invited and in which many from the northern tribes participated for the first time since the days of Solomon (2 Chr 29: 3, 24; 30: 1, 5, 6, 10, 11, 18, 25, 26; 31: 1), which would have been an impossibility had Hoshea still been on his throne and the northern kingdom still been in existence.

Inasmuch, then, as we have evidence from Assyrian sources that the termination of the reign of Pekah and the beginning of the reign of Hoshea must be thrown back a dozen years beyond 720 B.C., and since the Biblical evidence indicates that Jotham and Pekah must have commenced their reigns before 740 B.C., and Hoshea's reign must have terminated before the first year of Hezekiah, the question arises whether any Biblical evidence exists as to how far these reigns must be thrown back in order to occupy their correct positions in the historical pattern.

The record of Pekah's reign closes with the statement that he was slain and succeeded by Hoshea in the twentieth

year of Jotham (2 Ki 15: 30). But the official synchronism of Hoshea's accession is given as the twelfth year of Ahaz (2 Ki 17: 1), which according to the present pattern would make 720 B.C. the end of Pekah and the beginning of Hoshea, and would also provide that date as the twelfth year of Ahaz. But if it should be a fact that Ahaz began his reign of 16 years (2 Ki 16: 2) at the end of Jotham's 20 years, then the year of Jotham's death would have to be pushed back 12 years beyond 720 B.C., to 732. And that would likewise be true of the dates of Pekah and Hoshea in this pattern. It is a fact of singular significance that a pattern of reigns based on such dates will meet all the historical requirements of the various rulers involved,—Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah in Judah, and Pekah and Hoshea in Israel, thus solving the vexing chronological problems of this period.

If Ahaz's twelfth year was 720 B.C., his sixteenth and last year would be 716/15 and that would bring Hezekiah's fourteenth year in 701, the correct year according to Assyrian evidence for Sennacherib's famous third campaign against the fenced cities of Judah (2 Ki 18: 13). And the date 732 B.C. for Pekah's twentieth and last year and Hoshea's accession, would also be in harmony with contemporary Assyrian evidence.

If Pekah's reign of 20 years terminated in 732 B.C., it began in 752, the year when Menahem took the throne in Samaria. I formerly held the view that Pekah, as the destroyer of the dynasty of Menahem, threw back his reign to begin with the year when that dynasty came to power.⁶ Now, however, it seems clear to me that the evidence points definitely to Pekah actually having begun to rule in Gilead as a rival to Menahem at the time of Menahem's murder of Shallum. Shallum is said to have been "the son of Jabesh" (2 Ki 15: 10). If this means that Shallum was from Jabesh-Gilead, it would indicate Gileadite efforts toward the control of Israel's crown. When Pekah later eliminated Pekahiah,

⁶ See my *The Mysterious Numbers of the Hebrew Kings*, pp. 133-34.

it was with the aid of a group of Gileadites (2 Ki 15: 25). The elimination of Gileadite Shallum would secure for Pekah the support of that area in making him its king. In close proximity to Syria, he might be expected to carry on a policy of friendship with his northern neighbour, a policy which was later pursued in the activities of the Syro-Ephraimitic league when Rezin joined Pekah in the effort to replace Ahaz with "the son of Tabeal" (Isa 7: 6). Albright has called attention to the fact that "Ayanur the Tabelite" mentioned in an Assyrian letter discovered at Nimrud in 1952, "bears a name typical of the desert fringes of Palestine and Syria."⁷ Such a native of Gileadite ancestry would, under the circumstances, be a logical nominee by Pekah and Rezin for Judah's throne.

Perhaps the outstanding reason for placing the beginning of Pekah's reign in 752 B.C. is the fact that when Jotham came to the throne as regent in 750 B.C., his accession is dated to Pekah's second year (2 Ki 15: 32). Such a synchronism would hardly be possible had not Pekah at that time been in the second year of his kingship. And the accession of Ahaz is likewise dated in the seventeenth year (2 Ki 16: 1) of a reign of Pekah beginning in 752 B.C. These synchronisms are not artificial and they are not late. No scribe of a late period unacquainted with the complicated historical details of the time would or could have invented them.

That Menahem must have had a rival and that he did not feel his hold on the throne secure, is indicated by the fact that at the time of Tiglath-pileser's invasion in 743 B.C., he gave him a thousand talents of silver "that his hand might be with him to confirm the kingdom in his hand" (2 Ki 15: 19).

The scribes of Judah must have had some reason for recognizing Pekah rather than Menahem. Pekah's inexorable opposition to Assyrian encroachments is universally recognized, in sharp contrast to the vacillating attitude of Menahem, who gave tribute to secure Assyrian support.

⁷ Albright, "The Son of Tabeel (Isaiah 7: 6)," *BASOR*, No. 140 (Dec., 1955), 35-36.

Already in the days of the preceding king, Assur-nirari V (755-745 B.C.), there were Assyrian encroachments against the West, Arpad in Syria having been the center of Assyrian attention in 754 B.C. as it was again in 743, 742, 741, and 740 B.C. It is altogether probable that in Judah during the days of Azariah a prevailing anti-Assyrian group had come to an understanding with a like group in Israel headed by Pekah. Although Tiglath-pileser makes claim to the receipt of tribute from Menahem, there is no such claim of tribute from Pekah. And with a pro-Assyrian group replacing Jotham by Ahaz, the reason for Pekah's and Rezin's determined efforts to remove him (Isa 7: 1-6) becomes clear. Tiglath-pileser's records reveal him highly exultant when Pekah was replaced by Hoshea in 732 B.C. Thus the synchronism of 2 Ki 15: 32 would make an important historical contribution in pointing to a rival reign of Pekah in Israel which in 751/50 B.C. was already in its second year.

If, however, Pekah actually began his reign in 752 B.C. simultaneously with that of Menahem, and if Jotham came to the throne in 751/50, in Pekah's second year, those two reigns should occupy earlier positions in the record of Kings than is at present the case.

There is every evidence that these data of Kings, together with the present arrangement of reigns, point to two distinct chronological patterns, the first of which places the reigns of Pekah and Jotham as beginning in 740 B.C., the fifty-second year of Azariah, and terminating in 720; and commencing the reign of Hoshea in 720/19 B.C., the third year of which would synchronize with the beginning of the reign of Hezekiah in Judah.

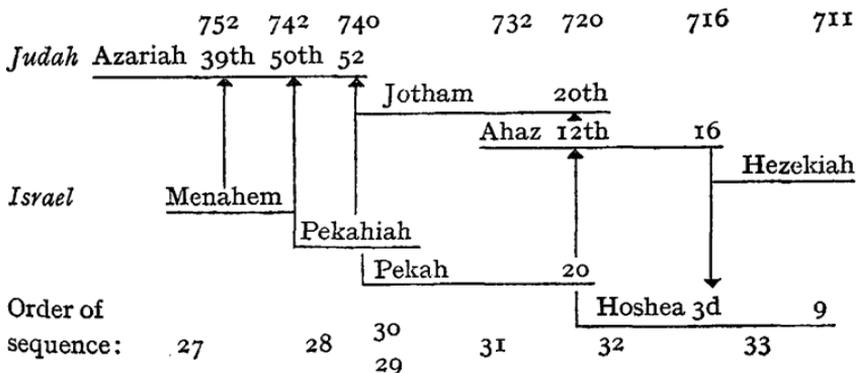
The other pattern would push those reigns back 12 years, with Pekah beginning in 752 B.C., and Jotham commencing his coregency in 751/50, and terminating his 16-year reign (2 Ki 15: 33) in 735, the seventeenth year of Pekah when he was replaced by Ahaz (2 Ki 16: 1). Ahaz was undoubtedly placed on the throne by a strong pro-Assyrian party, thus

incurring the wrath of Pekah (2 Ki 16: 5; Isa 7: 1-6) and bringing a call to Tiglath-pileser for succor (2 Ki 16: 7-10). Jotham, although replaced by Ahaz, continued to live till 732 B.C., his twentieth year, when his death took place and Ahaz began his sole reign of 16 years. That there was such an overlap of the reigns of Jotham and Ahaz is indicated not only by the synchronisms but also by the fact that the war of Pekah and Rezin against Judah is recorded not only as belonging to the reign of Ahaz (2 Ki 16: 5, 6) but also to that of Jotham (2 Ki 15: 37).

In the following diagrams A and B are presented these two arrangements of reigns:

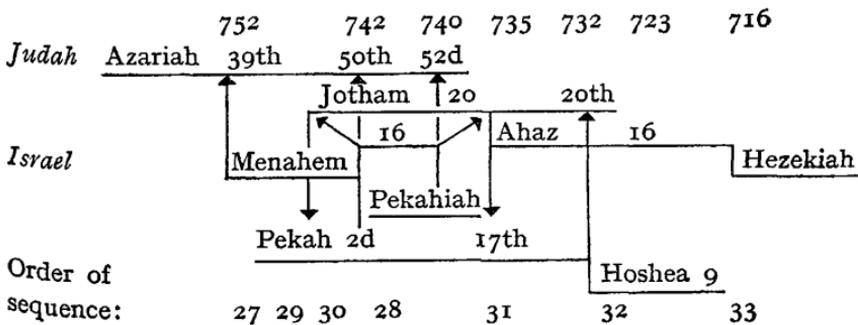
A.

Reigns of Pekah, Jotham, and Hoshea According to Their Sequence in Kings



B.

Reigns of Pekah, Jotham, and Hoshea in Accord With Their Historical Beginnings



As these two patterns, A and B, are carefully examined, it will be found that they are in accord with all the data in the books of Kings, and with the facts of contemporary history. Neither one of them alone, however, is in accord with all the data, and no single pattern is possible that will provide such accord, but both put together are in complete harmony with the entire picture as presented in Kings. The data of the various reigns together with the sequence in which they occur call for these two specific patterns. "A" calls for a 20-year reign of Pekah beginning in 740 B.C. during the last year of Azariah, but while Azariah was still alive, and ending in 720. And it also calls for a 20-year reign of Jotham, likewise beginning in 740 B.C., but at Azariah's death, and likewise terminating in 720. On that pattern the year 720 would thus be the year of Hoshea's accession, and would also be the twelfth year of a 16-year reign of Ahaz. But that pattern would make no provision for the coregency of Jotham with Azariah, nor for the synchronisms of 2 Ki 15: 32 and 16: 1, calling for the accessions of Jotham and Ahaz in the second and seventeenth years of Pekah. That this is the pattern the final redactor of Kings had in mind is unquestionably evidenced by the sequence in which he arranged these reigns, and by the synchronisms of 2 Ki 17: 1 and 18: 1, 9, 10.

I have shown, however, that according to pattern A, the reigns of Pekah, Jotham, and Hoshea are all some 12 years in advance of their original and correct positions. When pushed back 12 years, to bring the end of a 20-year reign of Jotham not in 720 B.C. but in 732, to synchronize with a 16-year reign of Ahaz beginning that same year, the reign of Jotham will be in its correct historical position, but it will not occupy its present place in the sequence of Kings. And the reign of Pekah if pushed back 12 years, to terminate in 732 B.C. instead of 720, and to begin in 752 instead of 740, would likewise occupy its correct historical position. The synchronism of 2 Ki 15: 27 would call for the beginning, not of Pekah's 20-year reign when he first took the throne as a

rival of Menahem, but of his undisputed reign in 740 B.C. at the elimination of Pekahiah.

At some late period, however, such explicit details would no longer be known, and it would have been natural to have interpreted the synchronism of the fifty-second year of Azariah for the beginning of Pekah's reign, calling for the commencement of his 20-year reign in accord with pattern A. With Pekah beginning his reign in 752 B.C., however, it would terminate in 732 in agreement with contemporary Assyrian requirements. And that likewise would bring the beginning of Hoshea's 9-year reign in 732 B.C. and the ending in 723/22, again in accord with contemporary historical requirements.⁸ This pattern would call for a 4-year overlap of the reigns of Jotham and Ahaz, beginning with the deposition of Jotham in 735 B.C. by a pro-Assyrian group after a reign of 16 years, and the elevation of Ahaz to the throne that year in accord with the notation of Tiglath-pileser III and in agreement with 2 Ki 16: 1, and in accord with the facts of Pekah's and Rezin's attack on Ahaz as recorded in 2 Ki 16: 5, 6 for the reign of Ahaz, and also in 2 Ki 15: 37 for the reign of Jotham, and terminating in Jotham's 20th year when Ahaz began his own independent reign of 16 years.

Following are the details of patterns A and B as regards dates and sequence of reigns:

Pattern A			Pattern B		
Present order of sequence in Kings	Ruler	Year of accession B.C.	Historical order of sequence	Ruler	Year of accession B.C.
27	Menahem	752	27	Menahem	752
28	Pekahiah	742	28 instead of 29	Pekah	752
29	Pekah	740	29 instead of 30	Jotham	751/50
30	Jotham	740	30 instead of 28	Pekahiah	742
31	Ahaz	732	31	Ahaz	735
32	Hoshea	720	32	Hoshea	732
33	Hezekiah	716/15	33	Hezekiah	716/15

⁸ For a discussion of the question of the fall of Samaria in 723/22 B.C. in the reign of Shalmaneser V rather than in 721 in accord with Sar-

The two patterns here presented for this involved and important period of Hebrew history will be found to account for all the data of Kings, they will explain the reason for the present arrangement of the records in Kings, and they will also be found to agree with the requirements of contemporary Assyrian chronology. It is the synchronisms in Kings that make for the extreme difficulties of the problems involved but that also provide the key to their solution.

In another discussion I will show how the synchronisms of 2 Ki 17 and 18 arose, and the vital part they play in establishing the correct dates for the Hezekiah-Hoshea period.

We have observed how the problems raised by the synchronisms of Kings have brought about a widespread conviction that they are largely late, artificial, erroneous, and worthless as regards the construction of a sound chronological scheme. But we have also observed that careful analysis reveals the fact that often they have meanings far different from what casual observation might seem to indicate, that important historical facts of the Hebrew kingdoms are frequently thus brought to light, and when these facts together with the basic chronological procedures are understood, a harmonious chronological pattern is revealed.

In the patterns here set forth it should be recognized that no efforts at modification of data have been made, but we have accepted them as they are, allowing them to establish their own chronological framework in accord with their own particular requirements.

The ancient Hebrew scribes have not been taken to task for not having pursued methods which would have made problems easier for us, nor have they been condemned as having been inept, uninformed, careless, or lacking in common

gon's claims, see *The Mysterious Numbers of the Hebrew Kings*, pp. 121-132; A. T. Olmstead, "The Fall of Samaria," *AJSL*, XXI (1904-5), 179-82; Olmstead, *Western Asia in the Days of Sargon*, 45 ff. n. 9; Hayim Tadmör, "The Campaigns of Sargon II of Assur: A Chronological-Historical Study," *JCS*, XII (1958), 33-40.

honesty. They have not been told how they should have carried out their responsibilities, for the work was theirs, not ours. Certainly they did not tell us exactly how they chose to keep their records nor did they express the reasons for their ways. But such information is not to be expected. The course followed by them, however, does not prevent us from ferreting out their secrets, as becomes investigators in all lines of historical, linguistic, or scientific research.

Nor has the endeavor been made to create ancient history in line with modern modes of thought. What was anciently done, was done, without consultation as to whether or not it would meet the minds of scholars of our modern age. The part of wisdom for us is to take the evidence as it is and accept its verdict. If the data reveal historical situations heretofore not surmised, who are we to criticize or condemn? If father chose to put son upon the throne, as the evidence at times positively reveals, what right have we to protest or to issue denials? If kingdoms were divided and rivals at times reigned simultaneously over different parts of the same land, who are we to tell them it should have been otherwise?

If the data reveal the fact that Asa and Azariah in times of illness placed their sons upon the throne, if the evidence exists that in periods of national emergency Jehoshaphat and Jehoash chose courses of national prudence in their endeavors to make their thrones secure, if all the indications are that when Amaziah was taken captive to Israel the people placed the youthful Azariah on the vacant throne, that at a time of international intrigue Jotham was dethroned and replaced by his irresolute son, or that Tibni and Omri, or Menahem and Pekah ruled simultaneously over certain portions of their divided land, why not follow where the evidence leads and acknowledge fact as fact?

Yet again, if there are clear-cut indications that already in ancient times the exact details of what had taken place in Israel or Judah were no longer clear and that the surviving data were interpreted in accord with what seemed to be the

obvious facts, who are we to say that it did not happen because of a conviction that it should not have happened? Evidence is evidence and facts are facts, and where the one points there the other stands. Ancient facts are never at the mercy of modern convictions or opinions.

The men of Israel and Judah were men as we are today, differing in outlook and experience, in purpose and personal ability, in attitudes and convictions. Certainly their different modes of thought and courses of action have left problems for us to solve. But those problems will not be solved by methods suited only to our personal interests, convenience, or convictions. Oversimplification might be an attempt at an easy way out, but it might not be the right way out. If problems are complex they will not be solved by appeals to simplicity.

In the accompanying Table III are recorded the various details concerning the chronological data of the Hebrew kings that careful analysis reveals. These details when put together make up the structural historical framework of Israel and Judah as based on the data of the synchronisms and lengths of reign.

Over and over again it is the synchronisms that provide evidence of the highest importance. With their aid, and only with their aid, may the problems be solved and the original patterns restored. Without them, much maligned though they have been, the reconstruction of the true chronological framework of Hebrew history would be an impossibility. Difficult and complex though they are, it is because they portray times that were complex and procedures that were involved. Confused and chaotic though they appear to be, once their true meaning is understood, they may be woven into patterns of reign that reveal a remarkable harmony and an amazingly exact historicity. Each recorded synchronism has its value, place, and meaning, performing its own particular function in making possible the restoration of the original chronological framework of the period of the divided Hebrew monarchies.

Table III

The Chronological Details of the Kings of the Divided Monarchy

Reference	Judah King	System used	King	Israel System used	Synchronism	Synchronism begins	Reign overlaps	Official length of reign	Beginning of sole reign to death
1 Ki 14: 20			<i>Jeroboam I</i>	non ac				22 yrs	21 yrs
1 Ki 14: 21	<i>Rehoboam</i>	ac yr						17 yrs	17 yrs
1 Ki 15: 1	<i>Abijam</i>	ac yr			18th of Jeroboam	sole reign			
1 Ki 15: 9	<i>Asa</i>	ac yr			20th of Jeroboam	sole reign	Jehoshaphat 4 yrs	41 yrs	41 yrs
1 Ki 15: 25			<i>Nadab</i>	non ac	2d of Asa	sole reign		2 yrs	1 yr
1 Ki 15: 28			Nadab slain	non ac					
1 Ki 15: 33			<i>Baasha</i>	non ac	3d of Asa	sole reign		24 yrs	23 yrs
1 Ki 16: 8			<i>Elah</i>	non ac	26th of Asa	sole reign		2 yrs	1 yr
1 Ki 16: 15			<i>Zimri</i>	non ac	27th of Asa	sole reign		7 d	7 d
1 Ki 16: 21			<i>Tibni</i>		not given		Omri	5 yrs	none
1 Ki 16: 23			<i>Omri</i>	non ac	31st of Asa	sole reign	Tibni	5 yrs	12 yrs
1 Ki 16: 29			<i>Ahab</i>	non ac	38th of Asa	sole reign		22 yrs	21 yrs
1 Ki 22: 41	<i>Jehoshaphat</i>	ac yr			4th of Ahab	sole reign	Asa Jehoram	4 yrs 6 yrs	25 yrs 21 yrs
1 Ki 22: 51			<i>Ahaziah</i>	non ac	17th of Jehoshaphat	sole reign		2 yrs	1 yr
2 Ki 1: 17			Ahaziah died	non ac	2d of Jehoram				
2 Ki 3: 1			<i>Joram</i>	non ac	18th of Jehoshaphat	sole reign		12 yrs	11 yrs
				non ac	2d of Jehoram				
2 Ki 8: 16	<i>Jehoram</i>	non ac			5th of Joram	sole reign	Jehoshaphat 6 yrs	8 yrs	7 yrs
2 Ki 8: 25	<i>Ahaziah</i>	non ac			12th of Joram	sole reign		1 yr	part of yr
2 Ki 9: 29		ac yr			11th of Joram				
2 Ki 9: 30			<i>Jehu</i>	non ac	not given			28 yrs	27 yrs
2 Ki 11: 1	<i>Athaliah</i>	non ac			not given			not given	7 yrs
2 Ki 12: 1	<i>Joash</i>	non ac			7th of Jehu	sole reign		40 yrs	39 yrs
2 Ki 13: 1			<i>Jehoahaz</i>	non ac	23d of Joash	sole reign		17 yrs	16 yrs
2 Ki 13: 10			<i>Jehoash</i>	ac yr	37th of Joash	sole reign	Jeroboam	12 yrs	16 yrs
2 Ki 14: 1	<i>Amaziah</i>	ac yr			2d of Jehoash	sole reign	Azariah	24 yrs	29 yrs
2 Ki 14: 23			<i>Jeroboam II</i>	ac yr	15th of Amaziah	sole reign	Jehoash	12 yrs	41 yrs
2 Ki 15: 1	<i>Azariah</i>	ac yr			27th of Jeroboam	sole reign	Amaziah Jotham	24 yrs 12 yrs	52 yrs 28 yrs
2 Ki 15: 8			<i>Zachariah</i>	ac yr	38th of Azariah	sole reign		6 m	6 m
2 Ki 15: 13			<i>Shallum</i>	ac yr	39th of Azariah	sole reign		1 m	1 m
2 Ki 15: 17			<i>Menahem</i>	ac yr	39th of Azariah	sole reign	Pekah *	10 yrs	10 yrs
2 Ki 15: 23			<i>Pekahiah</i>	ac yr	50th of Azariah	sole reign	Pekah *	2 yrs	2 yrs
2 Ki 15: 27			<i>Pekah</i>	ac yr	52d of Azariah	sole reign	Menahem Pekahiah	10 yrs 2 yrs	20 yrs 8 yrs
2 Ki 15: 30			Pekah slain		20th of Jotham				
2 Ki 15: 32	<i>Jotham</i>	ac yr			2d of Pekah	joint reign	Azariah Ahaz	12 yrs 4 yrs	16 yrs 16 yrs
2 Ki 16: 1	<i>Ahaz</i>	ac yr			17th of Pekah	joint reign	Jotham	4 yrs	16 yrs
2 Ki 15: 30			<i>Hoshea</i>	ac yr	20th of Jotham	sole reign		9 yrs	9 yrs
					12th of Ahaz				
2 Ki 18: 1	<i>Hezekiah</i>	ac yr			3d of Hoshea	sole reign	Manasseh	11 yrs	29 yrs

* Throughout the reigns of Menahem and Pekahiah, Pekah was ruling over part of Israel, probably in Gilead. Synchronisms are expressed in terms of the year when he first ascended the throne.