

A Timeline of the Kings of Israel and Judah

Copyright © 2005 by Frank W. Hardy, Ph.D.

1. Introduction

Chronologies

The present supplementary monograph started out as a graphic representation, for my own use, of Edwin R. Thiele's well-known chronology of the divided monarchy in Israel,¹ i.e., the period from Jeroboam's rebellion and the creation of a separate northern kingdom of Israel after Solomon's death, through the destruction of Israel by the Assyrians in 723/22 and finally the destruction of the southern kingdom of Judah by the Babylonians in 586.

Edwin R. Thiele

Main contribution. In my opinion the great value of Thiele's work derives from this scholar's attitude toward his data. He quotes earlier scholars who hold that the chronological data of 1-2 Kings are not reliable:

In *Britannica* the renowned English scholar Driver stated his conclusions as follows: . . . The lengths of the reigns of the various kings is not the same according to the traditional and the synchronistic figures. Since, however, it is clear on various grounds that these synchronisms are not original, any attempt to base a chronological scheme on them may be disregarded. . . .²

Thiele then counters Driver and the other scholars he quotes by saying,

In the pages to follow, the solutions to the various problems involved will be given. It will be shown that once the methods of chronological procedure employed by the early Hebrew recorders are understood, the data of synchronisms and lengths of reign can be woven together into a pattern of internal harmony that is in accord with the years of contemporary chronology at every point where a precise contact occurs.³

Because of the nature of Thiele's work, and because I consulted the timeline so frequently while writing a recent paper entitled, "The Context for Ezra's Use of a Fall-to-Fall Calendar,"⁴ it seemed that others might find it useful as well and so I have prepared it for publication as a *Historicism* supplement.

Residual problems. In its present form, however, the timeline is not a representation of Thiele's work alone. For the period associated with the end of the northern kingdom, roughly from Shallum to Hoshea, I take Siegfried H. Horn's paper, "The Chronology of King Hezekiah's Reign,"⁵ as my basic point of reference. Horn argues that the difficulties remaining in Thiele's system are virtually all removed by positing a coregency between Ahaz and Hezekiah. This is an uncomplicated proposal and one which is consistent with the principles that Thiele himself

defends elsewhere. But most importantly, adopting it makes possible a genuine explanation for a small set of residual problem data that must otherwise be reinterpreted or set aside. The position which Horn rejects is stated by Thiele as follows:

It is only when Pekah and Hoshea are placed twelve years in advance of their true positions that the synchronisms of 2 Kings 17 and 18 come into being. The commencement of the twenty years of Pekah in 752 brings his death and the accession of Hoshea in the twentieth year of Jotham in accord with 2 Kings 15:30. But when Pekah's twenty years are begun in 740, his death and the accession of Hoshea come in the twelfth year of Ahaz, twelve years beyond their correct position. And it is this that results in the artificial overlap of Hoshea with Hezekiah.⁶

It should be noted that what places Pekah and Hoshea "twelve years in advance of their true positions" is the three-fold synchronism of 2 Kgs 18:1, 9, and 10. Thus, Thiele is at pains to show that the above passages concerning Hezekiah's reign are misleading. To my knowledge there is no writer who otherwise accepts Thiele's conclusions that has accepted this particular feature of Thiele's work.

Siegfried H. Horn

Main contribution. We now turn to the alternative analysis proposed by Horn for the period under discussion. Horn's description of the manner in which his positions were formulated is most instructive:

I was slow to accept the date 723/22 B.C. for the fall of Samaria instead of 722/21, but gradually became convinced of the correctness of Olmstead's and Thiele's observations and reasoning. For several years I also refused to accept Thiele's suggestion that Pekah of Israel counted his regnal years concurrently with the reign of his two predecessors Menahem and Pekaiah [Pekahiah]. It was not until I saw that Pekah had done only what other kings of antiquity had done before him, that I finally accepted his solution, which immediately brought the five texts of Group I into harmony with the rest of my chronological scheme.

Having accomplished this, there remained the troublesome Group II, which is comprised of the same texts for which Thiele has coined the expression "Pattern Twelve-Thirteen," and which he considers as belonging to a super-imposed pattern of a later scribe, an explanation which I at one time also had given to this series of texts as well as to those that constituted my former Group I. However, this interpretation did not satisfy me any longer after I had become convinced that a satisfactory explanation could be found for the five texts of my former Group I.⁷

Horn's reinterpretation of Thiele's views on Hezekiah is a major contribution to the present discussion and should be read in its entirety as an example of exegetical method by anyone with an interest in Old Testament studies, whether or not that interest includes chronology as such. Thiele's system is correct for the most part and has stood the test of time. In the one small subsection of his work referred to above, however, Horn starts where Thiele leaves off, showing that it is not necessary to posit a scribal reinterpretation in order to account for the textual data.

Residual problems. There is one passage that resists explanation even in Horn's paper, but instead of seeing it as part of a reinterpretation based on faulty or inadequate historical information he suggests it is simply a scribal slip.

One text of my former Group II, 2 Ki 17:1, remains unsolved as far as the chronological data it contains are concerned. However, this text, in conjunction with 2 Ki 15:30, proves that a coregency between Jotham and Ahaz existed, for Hoshea became king during the reign of King Jotham of Judah according to the latter text and during the reign of King Ahaz of Judah according to the former passage. However, the figure given in 2 Ki 17:1, stating that Hoshea became king in Ahaz' 12th year, does not agree with the chronological scheme proposed here, and I have no better solution at the present time than to suggest that the figure 12 is a scribal error for three or four.⁸

There are times, of course, when scribes and copyists really do make mistakes. A man does not become more than human when he takes up one of the above professions. This is not the question. The question is whether it is necessary to assume that a mistake was made in 2 Kgs 17:1. My attitude toward this passage is affected by Horn's own attitude toward what he calls his Group I and Group II problem texts, left unresolved by Thiele's pioneering work. In view of Thiele's success in other areas Horn wanted to find a solution that would genuinely account for the data of Hezekiah's relationship to Hoshea as specified in 2 Kgs 18:1, 9, and 10--and he found one. Similarly, in view of Horn's success with 2 Kgs 18:1, 9, and 10, I would like to see one last attempt made to explain 2 Kgs 17:1 before allowing it to be set aside.

In the second volume of the *Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, in the article entitled, "Bible Chronology from Exodus to Exile," 2 Kgs 17:1 receives special comment.⁹ Even though the editors did not feel that they had a solution for the problem presented by this verse, their remarks are valuable and I personally consider them one of the highlights of the article.

6. The greatest difficulty comes in the chronology of Ahaz. Hoshea came to the throne as the result of a conspiracy against Pekah. The Bible says he "made a conspiracy" in the 20th year of Jotham (2 Kings 15:30). The Assyrian annals record that the people overthrew Pekah and that Tiglath-pileser made Hoshea king. This year seems to have been the 12th of Ahaz (2 Kings 17:1); yet this last synchronism with the reign of Ahaz does not harmonize with the rest of the chronological scheme as it has been worked out from the other data in the Bible. This is the incomplete link in the chain. It has been remarked that the arrangement of the kings on which the dating in this commentary is based comes *nearest* to a complete harmony of all the Biblical and non-Biblical data now known. It must not be claimed as complete as long as this synchronism cannot be accounted for and fitted into the rest of the picture. Therefore rather than resort to revision or conjecture, it is better to state frankly that this problem has not been solved.

There is the possibility, of course, that the apparent discrepancy is due to a copyists's error. However, other chronological problems formerly thought to be due to such errors can now be solved because of a better understanding of ancient methods of reckoning. Hence it is not unreasonable to hope that this particular problem will, in time, be similarly solved. Perhaps some further information may be unearthed that will help; perhaps someone can build on what has already been done and arrive at a slightly different alignment of the reigns of this period that will preserve the harmony of the synchronisms and also find a place for this last piece of evidence.¹⁰

I do not know how the above attitudes affect my readers, but to me they are a source of pride. I find it rewarding to be associated with a church that accepts the whole Bible without giving way to blind loyalty or quibbles over such brittle concepts as inerrancy, taking the textual record at face value, yet intelligently, and in a way that is responsible to all the available evidence from whatever quarter. It is also refreshing to see respected scholars writing with candor and even humility when faced with a difficult challenge.

K. A. Kitchen and T. C. Mitchell

It may be that a solution has indeed been found to the problem posed so eloquently in the above quotation. Writing in the *New Bible Dictionary*, K. A. Kitchen and T. C. Mitchell indicate by a single number in a table of dates a promising direction for future research into this difficult passage.¹¹

Their suggestion is somewhat unusual, but it accounts for the data and if what actually happened during Ahaz' reign was unusual, any adequate model for the period would have to share this characteristic.¹² Kitchen and Mitchell start the coregency of Ahaz in 744/43 at a time when his father Jotham was still himself coregent with his father Azariah (Uzziah). Thus, from 744/43 until 739, the year when Azariah died, Ahaz was a third regent. If this position is correct, it represents a situation that is unique in the history of Judah. Coregencies are common in Judah, by contrast with Israel,¹³ but there are no other examples of three men sharing the throne at one time.

Other

In addition to the reigns and synchronisms of the various kings, there are a number of periods of elapsed time in the books of Kings, Chronicles, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel that are marginally regnal in nature or simply nonregal. Examples are discussed in "The Context for Ezra's Use of a Fall-to-Fall Calendar."¹⁴ Briefly, what I proposed in that paper was that when Jeremiah speaks of having a twenty-three year prophetic ministry in Jer 25:3 he is not counting twelve-month periods inclusively but is counting New Years. By applying the same principle I account for the fact that, until Zedekiah ceases to be king, Ezekiel's era of Jehoiachin's exile is identical with Zedekiah's reign (Ezek 24:1-2; 2 Kgs 25:1). No such correspondence would be possible if Ezekiel had counted the years of Jehoiachin's exile inclusively. This fact in turn may be partly responsible for Kitchen and Mitchell's attempted reevaluation of the method used in 2 Kings to calculate Zedekiah's reign and their suggestion that the year when Jerusalem fell was 587 rather than 586. In the present model it is not necessary to move the date for Jerusalem's destruction.

Another example, not discussed in the earlier paper, has to do with Asa's reign and the date for the fortification of Ramah in 2 Chron 16:1. In that case I submit that the era of the kingdom of Judah is initially identical with the reign of Judah's first king, i.e., Rehoboam. 2 Chron 15:10, 19 and 16:1 are dealt with in a separate excursus below.

The net effect of counting how many New Years a period contains is the same as that of counting a king's reign by means of the accession-year method. Thus, the periods of elapsed time found in Jer 25:3, throughout the book of Ezekiel, and in 2 Chron 16:1 are in the first place functionally equivalent to each other and furthermore equivalent to reigns of kings when those reigns are counted using the accession year. Thus, on the timeline in part III, below, I show the era of the kingdom of Judah in 2 Chron 15 and 16 as though it were initially identical with the period of Rehoboam's reign, starting with Rehoboam's accession year. I show the era of

Jehoiachin's exile, on the other hand, as a period in which the item counted is New Years. The two methods of counting give equivalent results and in this sense are interchangeable.

The above suggestions are my own and at this point they remain untested. I welcome comments and alternative suggestions from my readers.

Summary

The main authority for the present timeline is Thiele. In the relatively brief period from Shallum to Hoshea, however, I follow Horn in preference to Thiele. And for the vexed problem of the coregency of Ahaz in 2 Kgs 17:1, which falls within the period from Shallum to Hoshea, I follow Kitchen and Mitchell in preference to Horn. No system is perfect. I am sure the present mixed system is not. And yet, if Horn improves on Thiele's work, which was already good, and if Kitchen and Mitchell improve on Horn's work in regard to 2 Kgs 17:1, then we are closer than ever to understanding what actually took place during the time when Israel and Judah had kings, "such as all the other nations have" (1 Sam 8:5).

Three Excurses

2 Chron 16:1 and the reign of Asa

Horn refers to 2 Chron 16:1 as an erroneously transmitted text¹⁵ and observes that,

2 Chr 16:1 stating that Baasha of Israel built Ramah in the 36th year of Asa of Judah fits no sensible chronological scheme, except one that assumes that an interregnum existed between the reigns of Nadab and Baasha, a solution that creates more problems than it solves. Therefore it seemed to me that this text contains a scribal error, and that the figure 36 cannot be correct, since it cannot be harmonized with other Biblical statements.¹⁶

But these are not the only alternatives. 2 Chron 16:1 is now quoted along with 2 Chron 15:10 and 15:19.

They assembled at Jerusalem in the third month of the fifteenth year of Asa's reign [*malkût*]. (2 Chron 15:10)

There was no more war [*ûmilḥāmâ lô' hāyâtâ*] until the thirty-fifth year of Asa's reign [*malkût*]. (2 Chron 15:19)

In the thirty-sixth year of Asa's reign [*malkût*] Baasha king of Israel went up against Judah and fortified Ramah to prevent anyone from leaving or entering the territory of Asa king of Judah. (2 Chron 16:1)

On a first reading of the passages it would seem that in 895 B.C. a number of people assembled at Jerusalem, that Asa had no foreign wars over the next twenty years, that after those two decades of peace Baasha finally responded to Asa's earlier initiative, and that point 2

above is unrelated to points 1 and 3. This is an impossible interpretation. A reasonable explanation of these difficulties is offered in the following quotation:

The earliest [problem] is not in the series of synchronisms in the books of Kings, but is an isolated statement in Chronicles, that apparently places the building of Ramah by Baasha in the 36th year of the reign of Asa (2 Chron. 16:1; see also 1 Kings 15:17). But Baasha died and was succeeded by his son Elah in the 26th year of Asa (1 Kings 16:6, 8). Hence he could not have built Ramah 10 years later. If, however, we understand this 36th year as referring to Asa's dynasty, not his personal reign, the problem is solved; for the 36th year from the division of the kingdom falls within the reigns of both Asa and Baasha.¹⁷

It is important to realize that *malkût* has more than one shade of meaning. It can mean "kingdom" as well as "reign." In 2 Chron 15:10 the sense of this word is the most obvious one, i.e., "reign," but in 15:19 and 16:1 it is "kingdom." Interpreting *malkût* in this way requires thought but does no violence to the sense or syntax of the verses in question.

If the war referred to in 2 Chron 15:19 is the one initiated by Zerah the Cushite, it would be natural to interpret the thirty-fifth year of Judah as the year when that war was fought, counting thirty-five years inclusively from 931/30. In this case the accession year of Rehoboam is the first year of Judah, the first year of Rehoboam is the second year of Judah, and so on. Thus, the years of the kingdom of Judah are not the same as the reign of Rehoboam, even while Rehoboam is king. On the other hand, if the war referred to in 2 Chron 15:19 is Baasha's response to Asa's religious reforms, it would be natural to interpret the thirty-fifth year of Judah as the year when Baasha becomes alarmed by Asa's religious reforms and takes action to counter them. In this case the years of the kingdom of Judah are identical with those of Judah's kings.

That Asa's relationship with Baasha is in fact what 2 Chron 15:19 has in view is demonstrated by two facts. First, the word "more" is supplied in 2 Chron 15:19. The sense of the passage is not that twenty years of peace will follow for Asa after the attack by Zerah the Cushite. According to 1 Kgs 15:16 Asa's reign was not a peaceful one. He was constantly at war with Baasha. The thrust of 2 Chron 15:19 is that war would begin in the thirty-fifth year of the kingdom Asa ruled, not that war had begun previously and had temporarily stopped but would resume then. Zerah's attack renders the first interpretation meaningless unless the context is limited in some way, as suggested here. Asa had indeed fought before the thirty-fifth year of Judah, but had not fought Baasha before that time. The reference is not to war in the abstract, but to war specifically between Israel and Judah. Here is the point at which we may presume the constant bickering between Asa and Baasha began.

Here also is the context for the assertion, quoted above from the *SDA Bible Commentary*, that in effect the outbreak of hostilities between the third king of Israel and the third king of Judah is dated from the outbreak of hostilities between the first king of Israel and the first king of Judah. The relationship between these two kingdoms is emphasized by the way the passage is dated. There would be no reason to date a reference to foreign invasions from an event that concerned only Israel and Judah and was therefore essentially an internal matter.

As I reconstruct the situation, Asa fights Zerah the Cushite (2 Chron 14), institutes various religious reforms (2 Chron 15:1-8), and invites people from all over Judah, Benjamin, Ephraim, Manasseh, and Simeon to join him in worship (2 Chron 15:9). These people assemble in Jerusalem in the third month of the fifteenth year of Asa's reign (2 Chron 15:10).

Hostilities do not break out with Israel until later the same year--the thirty-fifth year after Israel broke away from Judah (2 Chron 15:19), as contrasted with the thirty-fifth year of the currently reigning king of Judah. The word "more" in 2 Chron 15:19 is supplied and does not belong there. In the fifteenth year of his reign Asa has already been at war with Zerah, but not with Baasha.

It is only after Baasha sees his subjects going to Jerusalem to worship that he becomes alarmed and seeks to stop them by fortifying Ramah (2 Chron 16:1). His running conflict with Asa starts at that point. When exegeting 2 Chron 15 it is important to bear in mind that vs. 19 follows vs. 10. There is no reason to suppose that the narrative is out of sequence,¹⁸ as it is necessary to do when counting the thirty-five years inclusively from 931/30. In my view vs. 10 refers to the third month of Asa's fifteenth regnal year and vs. 19 refers to months 4-6 of the same regnal year. 2 Chron 16:1 refers to months 7 and following of the same calendar year, which would be the beginning of Asa's sixteenth regnal year.

When we remove the inserted word "more" from the translation and realize that *malkût* can have two shades of meaning, the above historical reconstruction follows naturally. Also implied is the reasonable claim that the years of the kingdom of Judah are counted the same way as the years of Judah's kings. It is not the case that the first year of Rehoboam is the second year of Judah. The first year of Rehoboam is the first year of Judah. The two series run in parallel and the one continues on as an extension of the other. In such a model Baasha fortified Ramah in 895/94 and the passages in question are correct just as they read.

2 Kgs 15:30 and the reign of Jotham

Jotham's reign is unusual in more than one way. First there is his retirement or abdication in 735/34, as discussed below. In addition there is some mixed evidence suggesting that Jotham rejected the customary accession-year method for reckoning his reign. If so, he was the only king to do so since Joash.¹⁹ Azariah offered Jotham no precedent in this regard and Ahaz did not follow his example. Jotham's usage is an isolated case. In his summary of the systems used by the kings of Israel and Judah Thiele offers the following useful generalization.

During the early period of the divided monarchy, from Rehoboam to Jehoshaphat in Judah and from Jeroboam to Ahab in Israel, the two nations were using diverse systems of reckoning, the accession-year system in Judah and nonaccession-year method in Israel. But from then on, both nations used identical systems, with Israel continuing to use the nonaccession-year system to Jehoahaz and Judah adopting Israel's nonaccession-year method at the time of Jehoram and employing it through the reigns of Ahaziah, Athaliah, and Joash; and then Judah returned to the accession-year method under Amaziah, at which time Israel also adopted that system under Jehoash.²⁰

But Jotham is an exception to this rule. His total length of reign and also his synchronism with Pekah show he did not claim an accession year. Jotham's reign began in the second year of Pekah (2 Kgs 15:32) and we know that, whether active in public affairs or not, he was at least alive during the twentieth year of Pekah (732/31 spring-to-spring), because Hoshea assassinated Pekah and succeeded him to the throne of Israel in the twentieth year of Jotham (732/31 fall-to-fall, 2 Kgs 15:30). If we go from year 2 to year 20 of Pekah, and if the intervening period is twenty years, it follows that we must both count inclusively and abandon the accession year.

A fact I cannot account for without changing Hoshea's method of reckoning also is that if Hoshea used the accession year while Jotham did not, Hoshea would not have agreed with Jotham on what the twentieth year of his reign was. As the timeline is drawn, they do agree. If different systems were in use we would expect Hoshea to refer to the nineteenth year of Jotham in 2 Kgs 15:30 rather than the twentieth. The synchronism is that of a single system, but because Jotham refers elsewhere to the summer months of 739 as the second year of Pekah rather than the first in 2 Kgs 15:32 we can be sure that Jotham was indeed using a different system of reckoning from Pekah. One unresolved problem therefore is why Jotham alone should abandon the accession year and another is why Hoshea should agree with Jotham as to the identity of his twentieth year.

2 Kgs 17:1 and the reign of Ahaz

The reason for the unusual relationships among the reigns of Azariah, Jotham, and Ahaz, according to 2 Kgs 17:1 and other passages, appears to have had its origin in Azariah's lack of physical well-being during the last years of his life.

The Lord afflicted the king [Azariah] with leprosy until the day he died, and he lived in a separate house. Jotham the king's son had charge of the palace and governed the people of the land. (2 Kgs 15:5)

Although Azariah was still alive during the years 750-739, and although those years are counted as part of his fifty-two years of rule in 2 Kgs 15:2, after he contracted leprosy he did not take part in public affairs. For all intents and purposes Jotham was the only king. As such he felt it expedient to have a coregent of his own on the throne with him to help share the responsibilities of state and to protect the succession in the event that his death should come in an unexpected manner.

When Azariah finally died in 739, after an unusually long reign, Jotham was made king in name as well as fact and Ahaz continued his earlier role as junior partner on the throne. In 735/34, after ruling sixteen years from the time of his coregency with Azariah, Jotham apparently followed his father's example for reasons we do not understand and retired from public life (2 Kgs 15:33), leaving Ahaz fully in charge of the affairs of state (2 Kgs 16:1). We know, however, that Jotham did not die until 732/31 (2 Kgs 15:30). At that point the official sole rule of Ahaz began (2 Kgs 16:2). Ahaz himself died in 716/15, having associated Hezekiah with him on the throne some years previously in 729/28 (2 Kgs 18:1).

The above is consistent with all of the biblical data. Not one verse is left over or needs to be set aside as untrustworthy. Furthermore the course of events described, though unusual, as stated above, is not unreasonable. By dating the coregency of Ahaz to 744/43 instead of 732/31 Kitchen and Mitchell have, in my view, solved the problem of 2 Kgs 17:1 and have done so in a straightforward and convincing manner.

Manner of Presentation

There are twenty-eight synchronisms between the kings of Israel and Judah in 1-2 Kings. In part II of his series of papers entitled, "The Synchronisms of the Hebrew Kings - A Re-Evaluation," Thiele lists thirty-three passages that bear on the discussion,²¹ of which only twenty-eight contain synchronisms,²² as he makes clear. In part III of the present monograph I

It is rarely possible to know the exact month when a given king began to rule, but the time of year can be determined with a good degree of confidence. Thus, it is almost always possible to tell, by comparing more than one passage, whether a king came to power during the winter months numbered 7-12 or the summer months numbered 1-6.²⁷ It is both possible and sufficient to locate the event with reference to a New Year, placing it in the appropriate semitic year and half year. Thus, all beginning and ending points for kings' reigns are given on the timeline as ranges of months delimited by a curly bracket. Dates falling at an unknown point within months 7-12 have the form 910/09, where parts of two Julian years are referred to and where the second is always specified with two digits (910/09 rather than 910/909 or 910/9). Dates falling within months 1-6 and those that can be located precisely have the form 910, where the entire range of months or the exact date is known to fall within only one Julian year.

All twenty-eight synchronisms, each of which identifies one point in terms of two reigns, is footnoted. A line connects the timelines for Israel and Judah showing where the synchronism occurs in terms of the Julian calendar. A footnote number in angle brackets appears at some point on that line and a wedge similar to an arrow point indicates the direction of the comparison being made. Notes appear at the bottom of the page on which the synchronism occurs.

Notes

Note: All Scripture quotations in this paper, except when noted otherwise, are from the Holy Bible, New International Version. Copyright (c) 1973, 1978, 1984 International Bible Society.

¹*The Chronology of the Hebrew Kings* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1977). In this source the author states, "My endeavor has been to set forth the results of my studies as simply and clearly as possible, . . ." (ibid., p. 8). For an earlier and more detailed treatment of the same subject see idem, *The Mysterious Numbers of the Hebrew Kings* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1951). For a general evaluation of Thiele's work see Siegfried H. Horn's paper entitled, "From Bishop Ussher to Edwin R. Thiele," *Andrews University Seminary Studies* 18 (1980): 37-50.

²*Chronology*, p. 13.

³Ibid.

⁴*Historicism* No. 8/Oct 86, pp. 2-65

⁵*Andrews University Seminary Studies* 2 (1964): 40-52.

⁶Thiele, *Chronology*, p. 53.

⁷"Chronology of Hezekiah," pp. 46-47.

⁸Ibid., p. 52.

⁹7 vols. (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald, 1953-57), 2:151.

¹⁰Ibid., 3:151. Notice that the wording in the quotation from the SDA *Bible Commentary* is similar to that in the quotation from Horn. On the one hand, ". . . the figure given in 2 Ki 17:1, stating that Hoshea became king in Ahaz' 12th year, does not agree with the chronological scheme proposed here," and on the other hand, "this last synchronism with the reign of Ahaz does not harmonize with the rest of the chronological scheme as it has been worked out from the other data in the Bible." Horn may have written both statements.

¹¹*New Bible Dictionary*, 2nd ed. (Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House, 1982), s.v. "Old Testament Chronology," p. 197. Kitchen and Mitchell take Thiele's work as their starting point and for the most part follow him closely. In an earlier paper, however, I gave a false impression of the degree to which they depend on Thiele (see Hardy, "Fall-to-Fall Calendar," p. 59, n. 38). Their chronology represents a careful attempt to refine Thiele's work, but contains some unfortunate overcorrections. They suggest for example that Jerusalem fell in 587 rather than 586, which is inconsistent with 2 Kgs 25:8. This is not a mere error. Kitchen and Mitchell state that from 597 "to the final fall of Jerusalem, some uncertainty reigns over the precise mode of reckoning of the Hebrew civil year and of the various regnal years of Zedekiah and Nebuchadrezzar in 2 Kings and Jeremiah" (NBD, p. 193). These issues are addressed in my paper referenced above. Thiele needs no correction here.

Roland Kenneth Harrison, in his *Introduction to the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1969), pp. 735-36, takes the revised chronology of Kitchen and Mitchell as the basis for his discussion of the chronology of the books of Kings in preference to that of Thiele on which it is based. Harrison's restatement of Kitchen and Mitchell is not without innovations of its own. For example, the chronology as originally published in *The New Bible Dictionary* gave Tibni no reign at all, only an unsuccessful coup (885/84). Harrison gives Tibni five years of opposition rule during the time of Omri (885/84-880). Also, by some Freudian slip, Kitchen and Mitchell argue against Thiele for a coregency between Ahaz and Hezekiah (NBD, p. 193) and then omit that period from their summary table (ibid., p. 197). Harrison includes the missing coregency (starting 729 B.C.).

¹²For a solution that is unusual for grammatical rather than historical reasons see Edmund A. Parker, "A Note on the Chronology of 2 Kings 17:1," *Andrews University Seminary*

Studies 6 (1968): 129-33. Parker suggests that malak, normally translated "began to reign" in synchronistic datelines, should be translated "had reigned" in the passage under consideration. Thus, 2 Kgs 17:1 indicates the point at which Hoshea's reign ended rather than the point at which it began. It is possible but unlikely that this is the case.

¹³Nadav Na'aman, in a paper entitled, "Historical and Chronological Notes on the Kingdoms of Israel and Judah in the Eighth Century B.C.," *Vetus Testamentum* 36 (1986): 71-92, deals in one section with eighth century coregencies in Judah. But in fact his discussion is of more general interest than the section heading would imply. Na'aman's paper is stimulating and helpful. It is unfortunate that none of the specific dates he proposes is reliable.

¹⁴See n. 4, above.

¹⁵"Chronology of Hezekiah," p. 43.

¹⁶*Ibid.* Horn does not return to this passage in his paper. The problem is allowed to remain.

¹⁷*Bible Commentary* 2:149.

¹⁸See *ibid.*, 3:248-49.

¹⁹The exactness of Horn's scholarship is illustrated again by the fact that, in "Chronology of Hezekiah," he did not miss or gloss over this obscure fact but incorporated it into his model. See *ibid.*, foldout opposite p. 40.

²⁰*Chronology*, p. 19.

²¹*Andrews University Seminary Studies* 1 (1963): 124. ²²There are no synchronisms for Rehoboam of Judah (1 Kgs 12:1-24; 14:21-31), Jeroboam I of Israel (1 Kgs 12:25-14:20), Tibni of Israel (1 Kgs 16:21-22), Jehu of Israel (2 Kgs 9:30-10:36), and Athaliah of Judah (2 Kgs 11:1-21). Jeroboam I and Jehu are both referred to by other kings (Jeroboam I by Abijam in 1 Kgs 15:1 and by Asa in 1 Kgs 15:9, Jehu by Joash in 2 Kgs 12:1), but none of the five kings or regents indicated relates the beginning of his or her own period of rule to that of another king.

²³See Hardy, "Fall-to-Fall Calendar," pp. 2-13.

²⁴There are mechanical constraints on the production of a timeline such as this, but the amount of space corresponding to the various months of the year is approximately correct as indicated. If the spring New Year came early in March, little more than two months would come between January 1 and Nisan 1; if the fall New Year came early in September, almost four months would come between Tishri 1 and January 1. Thus, while it would be convenient to divide the year into four equal quadrants, placing the spring New Year at the beginning of quadrant 2 and the fall New Year at the beginning of quadrant 4, making the distance from both the spring and fall semitic New Years to January 1 equal, the relationships are actually not that simple. The spring New Year follows January 1 by a smaller margin than that by which the fall New Year precedes January 1.

²⁵One may pose four questions regarding the registration of the chronological data within the books of Kings. (a) Does the age of a king when he ascended the throne point to his commencement of co-regency, or to the beginning of his sole reign? (b) Are the years counted for a king designate his sole rule exclusive of co-regency, or rather his entire term of kingship including the years overlapping with those of his father? (c) Does the synchronism for the accession refer to the beginning of the co-regency, or to the commencement of his sole reign? (d) Are the years of the neighbouring king in this synchronism counted from the commencement of his co-regency, or from the start of his sole reign?" (Na'aman, "Historical and Chronological Notes," p. 85).

²⁶It is more common for Judahite kings to have coregencies than for Israelite kings to do so. See Na'aman's discussion of coregencies in *ibid.*, pp. 88-91. Na'aman's overall discussion is useful, but his proposed dates for individual kings are not.

²⁷See Hardy, "Fall-to-Fall Calendar," pp. 3-4.