Old Testament Introduction
Chapter 30, David

***Introduction***

In our quest to discover the biblical chronology, we have traveled this far:

* Our anchor point is 1 Kings 6:1. This is our true anchor: for Solomon necessarily connects with the Egyptian chronology in the Bubastite Portal gate at Karnak, five years after his death; and here, in 1 Kings 6:1, four years after his coronation, his ascension to the throne, he connects with Moses. All chronologies are dependent on this anchor point; whether they subscribe to 440 years before, 480 years before, or some other date for Moses and the Exodus.
* Accession dating is a mathematical improbability. We previously employed other views, but are now convinced that all dating systems from 1406 through 4 BC are based on simple counting numbers.[[1]](#endnote-1)
* Dating must proceed from a neutral point of view (NPOV). As much evidence as possible must be considered. The only reason a broader evidence base has not been sought is that we have reached the limits of our mental and research capabilities, and can only hope that others will see our plight, and help us expand our evidentiary boundaries. Thus, we have attempted to place Septuagint, Vulgate, and Masoretic witnesses to the Hebrew prototype face-up and side-by-side, without bias.
* We have formed opinions along the way; yet, our opinions are not such that we are willing to hide or ignore evidence. We fully realize that your opinions may be quite different: what has persuaded us may not have persuaded you. Our opinion thus formed is that the Septuagint is the superior, yet not a flawless witness. We also believe that the Vulgate is a very good witness, and that the least reliable witness, though still having considerable value, is the Masoretic.
* The only way we can conceive of approaching such evidence honestly is to commit to our own opinion; yet leaving all the evidence in plain view; arguing each point, word by word, and verse by verse. So if we differ, we differ, until God makes each and both of us wiser. At least we will have formed our differing opinions on the basis of honest appraisal and respect, with the door left open for discovery of fresh evidence, and hearing of more profound arguments.

We begin with the life of David.

Scripture

1 Samuel 27:7 KJV, “And the time that David dwelt in the country of the Philistines was a full year and four months.”

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| Passage | M | E | G | B | V |
| 1 S 27:7 a | days | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 1 S 27:7 b | 4  | 4  | 4  | 4  | 4  |

KJV is a defective translation here. The Septuagint (LXX), which is the oldest witness, does not have any support for one year. Vulgate (V) is also silent. Only the Masoretic promises any voice; yet, M reads, “And the number of days which David lived in the land of the Philistines was days[[2]](#endnote-2) of four months.” The standard idiom for four full months is four months of days. This expression is very similar to the standard idiom, which is what we believe is meant. Thus David was among the Philistines for four 29.5-day synodic months, or for 118 days in all. We have good reason to believe from all three of our base witnesses that this 118-day period is explicit, and very accurate for reasons that we do not understand.[[3]](#endnote-3)

1 Samuel 29:3 KJV, “Then said the princes of the Philistines, What do these Hebrews here? And Achish said unto the princes of the Philistines, Is not this David, the servant of Saul the king of Israel, which hath been with me these days, or these years[[4]](#endnote-4), and I have found no fault in him since he fell unto me unto this day?”

We recall that the basic meaning of the Hebrew word, shanah, has to do with repetition, a second time, a change, a turning. Thus we have several possibilities that have nothing to do with the turning or repetition of years. Achish may be referring to the turning of days, weeks, or months. More likely, he is making a play on words in reference to David’s previous visit, during which David feigned madness and escaped. So this “shanah” carries a double entendre: 1. David returns for the second time. 2. David is changed from madness to sanity. So we retranslate:

“Then the princes of the Philistines objected, ‘Why are these Hebrews here?’ So Achish interceded with the princes of the Philistines, ‘Is this not David, the servant of Saul the king of Israel, who has been with me these days, who has come a second time as a changed man, and I have found no fault in him from the time he came to me, until today?’ ”

2 Samuel 2:10 KJV, “Ishbosheth Saul’s son was forty years old when he began to reign over Israel, and reigned two years. But the house of Judah followed David.”

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| Passage | M | E | G | B | V |
| 2 S 2:10 a | 40  | 40  | 40  | 40  | 40  |
| 2 S 2:10 b | 2  | 2  | 2  | 2  | 2  |

2 Samuel 2:10 is one of those many chronological passages over which there is no dispute.

2 Samuel 2:11 KJV, “And the time that David was king in Hebron over the house of Judah was seven years and six months.”

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Passage | M | E | G | B | V |
| 2 S 2:11 a | 7  | 7  | 7  | 7  | 7  |
| 2 S 2:11 b | 6  | 6  | 6  | 6  | 6  |

Again, without dispute.

2 Samuel 5:4 KJV, “David was thirty years old when he began to reign, and he reigned forty years.”

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| Passage | M | E | G | B | V |
| 2 S 5:4 a | 30  | 30  | 30  | 30  | 30  |
| 2 S 5:4 b | 40  | 40  | 40  | 40  | 40  |

2 Samuel 5:5 KJV, “In Hebron he reigned over Judah seven years and six months: and in Jerusalem he reigned thirty and three years over all Israel and Judah.”

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Passage | M | E | G | B | V |
| 2 S 5:5 a | 7  | 7  | 7  | 7  | 7  |
| 2 S 5:5 b | 6  | 6  | 6  | 6  | 6  |
| 2 S 5:5 c | 33  | 33  | 33  | 33  | 33  |

2 Samuel 11:1 KJV, “And it came to pass, after the year was expired, at the time when kings go forth to battle, that David sent Joab, and his servants with him, and all Israel; and they destroyed the children of Ammon, and besieged Rabbah. But David tarried still at Jerusalem.”

There is very little chronological information in this verse. Thiele attempts to prove that this means springtime, which seems uncertain and unnecessary.[[5]](#endnote-5) It is strange that the rare use of the Hebrew word, “shub,” is used in this context, rather than the more common “shanah,” which follows it: especially since both words carry the idea of turning or repetition. This idiomatic construct seems to make clear that this turning is of the year and not some other repetition. We do not dispute the idea that Nisan 1 is in view. What seems strange to us is that anyone would even consider Tishri 1 as a candidate.[[6]](#endnote-6)

This, of course, requires time, at least nine months to a year: to commit adultery with Bathsheba, to murder Uriah, to be rebuked by the prophet, and to suffer the death of the baby, the first of four such punitive deaths assigned to David. This event also follows a considerable, yet unspecified period of strife with an Ammonite-Syrian alliance. Tamar’s rape follows all of this. David’s sin extends permission to Amnon to abuse his sister. David does not act by punishing Amnon, so the wound festers.[[7]](#endnote-7)

2 Samuel 13:23 KJV, “And it came to pass after two full years,[[8]](#endnote-8) that Absalom had sheepshearers in Baalhazor, which is beside Ephraim: and Absalom invited all the king's sons.”

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Passage | M | E | G | B | V |
| 2 S 13:23 a | 2  | 2  | 2  | 2  | 2  |

2 Samuel 13:38 KJV, “So Absalom fled, and went to Geshur, and was there three years.”

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Passage | M | E | G | B | V |
| 2 S 13:38 a | 3  | 3  | 3  | 3  | 3  |

Even so, Absalom also goes unpunished, so the bitterness festers. Still God has promised all of this as the punishment for adultery with Bathsheba, and the murder of Uriah. Specifically: a. war would never depart from David’s house until the empire was destroyed; b. four of David’s sons would die for Uriah’s death; c. David’s wives would commit adultery with Absalom in open public view, to avenge David’s secret adultery with Bathsheba. David’s sin is the root cause, but parental failure with Amnon and Absalom are the instruments. Even David’s absolution does not stop the wrath and vengeance of God from working out its inexorable completion. Even the Davidic Covenant appears to be destroyed because of these sins, but God has a better plan in resurrection.

2 Samuel 14:28 KJV, “So Absalom dwelt two full years[[9]](#endnote-9) in Jerusalem, and saw not the king's face.”

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Passage | M | E | G | B | V |
| 2 S 14:28 a | 2  | 2  | 2  | 2  | 2  |

David’s means of coping with his parental responsibility to Absalom, is to refuse to see him, rather than dealing with him. Nor did David take responsibility or even see Absalom’s behavior as reflecting his own behavior. David’s heart rending confessions[[10]](#endnote-10) show great remorse, yet show no depth of understanding of how he has caused all this strife, and that he has no one to blame but himself. By the time David commands his sinful census,[[11]](#endnote-11) he is beginning to understand how destructive his actions are to other people.

2 Samuel 15:7 KJV, “And it came to pass after forty years, that Absalom said unto the king, I pray thee, let me go and pay my vow, which I have vowed unto the Lord, in Hebron.”[[12]](#endnote-12)

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| Passage | M | E | G | B | V |
| 2 S 15:7 a | 40  | 40  | 40  | 40  | 4  |

We now conclude that all of these readings, except V, are defective, even though they are in agreement. We reach this conclusion because all of the combinations of constructions involving 40 appear to be either absurd or physically impossible.

The time spanned from Tamar being raped until Absalom’s revolt was at least 11 years. The span of David’s exile also took time; and after the death of Absalom, David was unable to return to Jerusalem immediately.

2 Samuel 21:1 KJV, “Then there was a famine in the days of David three years, year after year; and David enquired of the Lord. And the Lord answered, It is for Saul, and for his bloody house, because he slew the Gibeonites.”

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Passage | M | E | G | B | V |
| 2 S 21:1 a | 3  | 3  | 3  | 3  | 3  |

2 Samuel 24:13 KJV, “So Gad came to David, and told him, and said unto him, Shall seven years of famine come unto thee in thy land? or wilt thou flee three months before thine enemies, while they pursue thee? or that there be three days’ pestilence in thy land? now advise, and see what answer I shall return to him that sent me.”

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Passage | M | E | G | B | V |
| 2 S 24:13 a | 7  | 3  | 3  | 3  | 7  |
| 2 S 24:13 b | 3  | 3  | 3  | 3  | 3  |
| 2 S 24:13 c | 3  | 3  | 3  | 3  | 3  |

We have already concluded, with the help of 1 Chronicles 21:12 that the M reading of 7 is defective. M cannot be inerrant in both places, since they differ: so the claim that M best represents the inerrant Autographa is lost. There is only one place where the inerrant Autographa may be found, and that is in Revelation 5, in the hands of the King.

1 Kings 2:11 KJV, “And the days that David reigned over Israel were forty years: seven years reigned he in Hebron, and thirty and three years reigned he in Jerusalem.”

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Passage | M | E | G | B | V |
| 1 K 2:11 a | 40  | 40  | 40  | 40  | 40  |
| 1 K 2:11 b | 7  | 7  | 7  | 7  | 7  |
| 1 K 2:11 c | 33  | 33  | 33  | 33  | 33  |

These statistics are repeated in several places.[[13]](#endnote-13) Most of them include an additional period of six months. The exact nature and importance of this six months is not clear. It could have been an interval in Hebron preceding David’s coronation, where he is running things, yet not officially king. It might have been any number of things. It seems strange to us that 7 + 33 = 40; yet, six additional months interferes with the tally. We believe that the figures here represent a simple rounding down of more particular evidence; still, we are at a loss for its meaning. That being said, there is no evidence that either the 7-6 passages or the 7 passages are in error. If chronologies are to be made precise within a year, then what it the significance of counting four and six month intervals?

1 Chronicles 3:1 KJV, “Now these were the sons of David, which were born unto him in Hebron; the firstborn Amnon, of Ahinoam the Jezreelitess; the second Daniel, of Abigail the Carmelitess:”

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Passage | M | E | G | B | V |
| 1 C 3:1 a | 1  | 1  | 1  | 1  | 1  |
| 1 C 3:1 b | 2  | 2  | 2  | 2  | 2  |

1 Chronicles 3:2 KJV, “The third, Absalom the son of Maachah the daughter of Talmai king of Geshur: the fourth, Adonijah the son of Haggith:”

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Passage | M | E | G | B | V |
| 1 C 3:2 a | 3  | 3  | 3  | 3  | 3  |
| 1 C 3:2 b | 4  | 4 | 4 | 4 | 4 |

1 Chronicles 3:3 KJV, “The fifth, Shephatiah of Abital: the sixth, Ithream by Eglah his wife.”

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Passage | M | E | G | B | V |
| 1 C 3:3 a | 5  | 5  | 5  | 5  | 5  |
| 1 C 3:3 b | 6  | 6  | 6  | 6  | 6  |

What concerns us here is that this is the listing if the six sons who were born to David in Hebron, when David was between the ages of 30 and 37. Absalom is the third son of this set. This gives us additional information about the problematic year 40 specified in 2 Samuel 15:7. If 40 is David’s age, Absalom is at most ten years old, far too young to avenge his sister’s rape and mount a rebellion against David. On the other hand, any event associated with Absalom’s life places the vengeance and rebellion after David’s death. Because neither of these options is physically possible, we are left with the conclusion that V, which stands by itself, must be the correct reading.

1 Chronicles 3:4 KJV, “These six were born unto him in Hebron; and there he reigned seven years and six months: and in Jerusalem he reigned thirty and three years.”

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Passage | M | E | G | B | V |
| 1 C 3:4 a | 6  | 6  | 6  | 6  | 6  |
| 1 C 3:4 b | 7  | 7  | 7  | 7  | 7  |
| 1 C 3:4 c | 6  | 6  | 6  | 6  | 6  |
| 1 C 3:4 d | 33  | 33  | 33  | 33  | 33  |

1 Chronicles 13:14 KJV, “And the ark of God remained with the family of Obededom in his house three months. And the Lord blessed the house of Obededom, and all that he had.”

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| Passage | M | E | G | B | V |
| 1 C 13:14 a | 3  | 3  | 3  | 3  | 3  |

1 Chronicles 20:1 KJV, “And it came to pass, that after the year was expired, at the time that kings go out to battle, Joab led forth the power of the army, and wasted the country of the children of Ammon, and came and besieged Rabbah. But David tarried at Jerusalem. And Joab smote Rabbah, and destroyed it.”

1 Chronicles 21:12 KJV, “Either three years’ famine; or three months to be destroyed before thy foes, while that the sword of thine enemies overtakes you; or else three days the sword of the Lord, even the pestilence, in the land, and the angel of the Lord destroying throughout all the coasts of Israel. Now therefore advise thyself what word I shall bring again to him that sent me.

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Passage | M | E | G | B | V |
| 1 C 21:12 a | 3  | 3  | 3  | 3  | 3  |
| 1 C 21:12 b | 3  | 3  | 3  | 3  | 3  |
| 1 C 21:12 c | 3  | 3  | 3  | 3  | 3  |

1 Chronicles 23:24 KJV, “These were the sons of Levi after the house of their fathers; even the chief of the fathers, as they were counted by number of names by their polls, that did the work for the service of the house of the Lord, from the age of twenty years and upward.”

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Passage | M | E | G | B | V |
| 1 C 23:24 a | 20  | 20  | 20  | 20  | 20  |

1 Chronicles 23:27 KJV, “For by the last words of David the Levites were numbered from twenty years old and above:”

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Passage | M | E | G | B | V |
| 1 C 23:27 a | 20  | 20  | 20  | 20  | 20  |

1 Chronicles 26:31 KJV, “Among the Hebronites was Jerijah the chief, even among the Hebronites, according to the generations of his fathers. In the fortieth year of the reign of David they were sought for, and there were found among them mighty men of valor at Jazer of Gilead.”

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Passage | M | E | G | B | V |
| 1 C 26:31 a | 40  | 40  | 40  | 40  | 40  |

1 Chronicles 27:23 KJV, “But David took not the number of them from twenty years old and under: because the Lord had said he would increase Israel like to the stars of the heavens.”

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Passage | M | E | G | B | V |
| 1 C 27:23 a | 20  | 20  | 20  | 20  | 20  |

1 Chronicles 29:27 KJV, “And the time that he reigned over Israel was forty years; seven years reigned he in Hebron, and thirty and three years reigned he in Jerusalem.”

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Passage | M | E | G | B | V |
| 1 C 29:27 a | 40  | 40  | 40  | 40  | 40  |
| 1 C 29:27 b | 7  | 7  | 7  | 7  | 7  |
| 1 C 29:27 c | 33  | 33  | 33  | 33  | 33  |

***The Start***

Finding a starting place for the life of David begins with the Bubastite Portal gate at Karnak. The date is 925 BC: it is five years after Solomon’s death. So allowing for all the various calendar variation, we conclude that Solomon died in 930 BC. Since Solomon reigned for forty years, we suppose that he was coronated and ascended to the throne in 970 BC. The date, 970 BC also marks the death of David. David is also said to have reigned for forty years, which puts us at 1010 BC. Because David is thirty years old at this juncture, we fix his birth at 1040 BC, with a high degree of certainty. The texts involved in reaching this point are sound in any language.

***Summary***

* Birth 1040 BC
* Life as a shepherd
* Divine calling, 1 Samuel 16:1:13
* Defeat of Goliath, 1 Samuel 17
* Appointment to royal singer, 1 Samuel 16:14-23[[14]](#endnote-14)
* Friendship with Jonathan, 1 Samuel 18:1-4
* Growing popularity, 1 Samuel 18:5-7
* Saul’s envy and growing madness, 1 Samuel 18:8-12
* Removal from court by promotion, 1 Samuel 18:13-16
* Manipulation through marriage, 1 Samuel 18:17-30
* Assassination plot, 1 Samuel 19
* Life as a fugitive, 1 Samuel 20
* Help from Ahimelech, 1 Samuel 21:1-9
* First approach to Achish, 1 Samuel 21:10-15
* Hiding at Adullam and Mizpeh, 1 Samuel 22
* Defense of Keilah, 1 Samuel 23:1-5
* Saul lays siege to Keilah, 1 Samuel 23:6-12
* Return to the wilderness, 1 Samuel 23:13-29
* Hiding at Engedi, 1 Samuel 24
* Samuel dies, 1 Samuel 25:1
* Nabal and Abigail, 1 Samuel 25:2-44
* Ziphite betrayal, 1 Samuel 26
* Four month sojourn with Achish, 1 Samuel 27 late 1011 BC
* Saul demonized, 1 Samuel 28
* Philistine army at Jezreel, 1 Samuel 29
* Defense of Ziklag, 1 Samuel 30; 1 Chronicles 12:1-22
* Saul slain, Israel defeated, 1 Samuel 31
* Saul avenged and mourned, 2 Samuel 1
* Seven years at Hebron, 2 Samuel 2:1-7, 11;
1 Chronicles 11:1-3 1010-1003 BC
* Two years, Ishbosheth reigns,
2 Samuel 2:8-10, 12 1010-1008 BC
* War with Ishbosheth, 2 Samuel 2:13-32
* Sons born in Hebron, 2 Samuel 3:1-5; 1 Chronicles 3:1-4
* Absalom born, 1 Chronicles 3:2 1010-1003 BC
* Abner murdered, 2 Samuel 3:6-39
* Ishbosheth murdered, 2 Samuel 4 1008 BC
* War with the Jebusites, 2 Samuel 5:1-8; 1 Chronicles 11:4-6
* Jerusalem, 2 Samuel 5:9-12;
1 Chronicles 11:7-9 1003-970 BC
* Sons born in Jerusalem, 2 Samuel 5:13-16; 1 Chronicles 3:5-9
* War with the Philistines, 2 Samuel 5:17-25; 1 Chronicles 14
* Return of the Ark, 2 Samuel 6;
1 Chronicles 13; 15; 16 soon after 1003 BC[[15]](#endnote-15)
* Temple and Covenant, 2 Samuel 7; 1 Chronicles 17
* Ongoing war, 2 Samuel 8; 1 Chronicles 18
* Mephibosheth honored, 2 Samuel 9
* Ambassadors to Ammon disgraced, 2 Samuel 10;
1 Chronicles 19
* Bathsheba and Uriah, 2 Samuel 11;
1 Chronicles 20 circa 997 BC
* Nathan’s rebuke, 2 Samuel 12:1-13
* The baby dies (1), 2 Samuel 12:14-23 circa 996 BC
* Solomon born, 2 Samuel 12:24-25
* Ammonites defeated, 2 Samuel 12:26-31
* Absalom reaches maturity at 14 996-989 BC
* Tamar raped, 2 Samuel 13:1-20 circa 990 BC
* Two years pass, 2 Samuel 13:23
* Amnon murdered (2), 2 Samuel 13:21-39 circa 988 BC
* Three years pass, 2 Samuel 13:38
* Absalom returns, 2 Samuel 14 circa 985 BC
* Two years pass, 2 Samuel 14:28
* Absalom restored, 2 Samuel 14:33 circa 983 BC
* Four years pass, 2 Samuel 15:7
* Absalom revolts, 2 Samuel 15 circa 979 BC
* David exiled, continued, 2 Samuel 16
* Ahithophel undermined, 2 Samuel 17
* Absalom slain (3), 2 Samuel 18
* David returns, 2 Samuel 19
* Sheba revolts, 2 Samuel 20
* Three year famine, 2 Samuel 21:1-14;
1 Chronicles 21:1-30 circa 976 BC
* War with the Philistines, 2 Samuel 21:15-22
* David’s Todah, 2 Samuel 22
* David’s last words, 2 Samuel 23
* David’s sinful census, 2 Samuel 24; 1 Chronicles 21
* Temple mount selected, 1 Chronicles 21:18-22:19
* Levites and priests set in divisions,
1 Chronicles 23; 24; 25; 26; 27
* Solomon’s Coronation, 1 Kings 1; 1 Chronicles 29 970 BC
* David’s death, 1 Kings 2:11; 1 Chronicles 29:26-30 970 BC
* Adonijah slain (4), 1 Kings 2:24-25

***Gleaning***

1 Chronicles begins with Adam and ends with David at the pinnacle of the Kingdom. 2 Chronicles begins with Solomon at the pinnacle of the Kingdom and ends with the Babylonian Captivity and the Persians in charge. 1 Chronicles could be titled “Paradise Gained.” 2 Chronicles is “Paradise Lost.”

What are the root causes of such disaster. We need not look beyond Jeroboam and Rehoboam, especially Rehoboam. Rehoboam was: cruel, abusive of women, and idolatrous. His people were oppressed by excessive taxes and harsh labor. Where did Rehoboam get the idea that these were principles of good leadership?

He got them from Solomon. If Solomon used whips, Rehoboam would use scorpions. If Solomon had many wives, Rehoboam would try to keep up. If Solomon worshipped idols, Rehoboam would multiply them. Taxes would increase as would forced labor: the yoke would grow from heavy to back breaking. Where did Solomon get the idea that these were principles of good leadership?

Solomon’s parents were David and Bathsheba. David’s sin was not beyond confession, absolution, forgiveness, and restoration. Yet, as inexorably as night follows day, David burned his own empire down on his own head. There is no such thing as a little sin of adultery and murder: both lead inevitably to idolatry.

This is not the trivial error of a child breaking a window in his fathers house. Windows are easily repaired. We want sin to be devoid of punishment. Yet David’s sin cost the lives of four sons, the rape of a daughter, not to mention Uriah. By the end of Chronicles in chapter 36, countless human victims had been slaughtered, while countless others had been crushed by famine, poverty, and other suffering. Even Zedekiah watched his sons being killed, before he was blinded, and carried to Babylon. It seems to me that this was a great deal of punishment for sin.

It is very popular to deny that there is anything juridical in the Crucifixion of Jesus. It’s just a harmless little window repair, isn’t it? Have we never read?

“All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord has laid on Him the iniquity of us all.” — Isaiah 53:6[[16]](#endnote-16)

If that is not the epitome of juridical punishment, I don’t know what is. Isaiah does not say that Jesus, the Christ of God takes up our iniquity willingly, even though it is true that He did. Isaiah emphasizes that the Father laid our iniquity on Him. Sin requires more than repair; it requires punishment; it requires repayment and restitution of damages. Jesus, the Christ of God suffered the ultimate fullness of our punishment for sin.

Sin is a horrible and horrifying act, leading only to dire eternal consequences. David committed just one little adultery and one little murder, and it multiplied until it brought down an entire empire. Yet we in our society commit two to three thousand legal murders every day and think nothing of it. Moreover, adultery is the culture-wide expected practice: fornication is as nothing. These sins will not go unpunished. A weak view of sin and denial of punishment are mutually supportive follies: neither is true.

My own sins are many. Now, as the end of my life approaches, as with David, I am just now beginning to realize the true extent of the damage I have done. There is not a single one of my sins that is not confessed and absolved; yet, seemingly innocent people are being punished and suffer all around me. Of course, only Christ is truly innocent. On the other hand, it is pure mythology to believe that He was not punished for our sins. There is a definitely juridical aspect to the Crucifixion: it is not the only aspect to the Crucifixion; yet, it is most certainly present there.

***Conclusion***

David’s chronology will be stripped to its bare essentials.

* Birth 1040 BC
* Sojourn with Achish late 1011 BC
* Hebron 1010-1003 BC
* Jerusalem 1003-970 BC
* David’s death 970 BC

Yet, we know how much more is involved; especially the scars left by David’s sin, and ours.

[[17]](#endnote-17)

1. The one counting, still chooses to count or not count that first partial year. We believe that the logic of this mathematics tends to always count that first partial year; except in those years where the old king or high priest dies, or more likely retires, on the last day of the year; while the new king or high priest ascends on the first day of the year. Where compulsory retirement is involved, as with Israelite priests and Levites, this could easily be the case. A similar compulsory retirement may also be in place for Israelite combat veterans. Although, no such compulsory retirement system is known to be in place for Israelite kings; we do know that David stepped down and Solomon ascended before David’s death. Some nations may have supported a custom of not counting the first partial year: we need to rethink this issue. So, in nearly every circumstance, the extra first partial year is counted; we will need to reduce the report of most numbers by one to avoid counting the same year twice. This does make the system somewhat more complicated, since we will have to decide which years are exceptions on an individual basis. However, this variation of one year may help us resolve chronological matches that have otherwise perplexed us. The task will still not be easy; yet, it may bring us closer to international agreement with non-biblical documents: which is an important task to the scientist, as well as the NPOV.

Concerning retirement:

Combatants at age 20: Exodus 38:26; Numbers 1:3, 18?, 20, 22, 24, 26, 28, 30, 32, 34, 36, 38, 40, 42, 45; 14:29?; 26:2, 4; 32:11; arguably, retiring at seventy – because that was the normal life span (Psalm 90:10).

Levites were numbered from the first month but served at age 25: Numbers 1:47; 2:33; 8:24; 1 Chronicles 23:3 (age 30), 27 (age 20); 2 Chronicles 31:17 (age 20); Ezra 3:8 (age 20). The variations in age: 30 may express a reluctance for underage service for some tasks if specific birthdates could not be verified; 20 may face a reality of a shortage of workers for specific tasks.

Priestly classes of Kohath, Gershon, and Merari from age 30 to 50: Numbers 4:3, 23, 30, 35, 39, 43, 47; Luke 3:23. LXX has 25-50 in these verses. We believe that 25 is the correct age in keeping with the standards for other Levites.

High Priest no specified date: Aaron – Exodus 7:7; Numbers 33:38-39; Eli – 1 Samuel 2:22; 4:15, 18

Kings no specified date: 2 Samuel 5:4

Prophets no specified date: Moses – Exodus 7:7; Deuteronomy 1:3; 34:7; Joshua – Joshua 13:1, 14:7, 10; 24:29; Judges 2:8 – it appears that Joshua may have retired around age 90; yet, lived another 20 years in retirement; Samuel – 1 Samuel 3:20-21 (prophet); 8:1; 25:1; 28:3, 11-12, 14-16.

Since retirement was not mandated by logos for any but priests and Levites; we expect that there was some sort of understanding for retirement from a basis of ethos. We ought not suppose that priests and Levites retired from anything other than public life; yet, spent their waning years in the pleasantness of their gardens, and the shadiness of their trees. This seems to indicate that retirement was a somewhat personal decision; dignitaries, such as chief priests, prophets, and kings often took no retirement; yet, might retire, if they wished to do so: the last day of the year could be a popular date for making such an occasion official. Annas seems to have been so emerited (John 18:13, 24). However, we must tread lightly: for the Bible is not more specific. [↑](#endnote-ref-1)
2. This is the specific word rendered, “a full year.” Very little in the plural, “days,” suggests a full year in any language or any idiom. The expression, “X of days,” is the Hebrew and Septuagint idiom for a full period. Hence, we may have a week of days, N weeks of days, a month of days, or N months of days; indicating respectively, a full week, several full weeks, a full month (necessarily 29.5 days long), or several full months. What is very improbable for us to understand, as we shall see later, is that a year of days can possibly mean a full year: for the term, year, only has proximate meaning in a lunar calendar. Even using Noah’s standard 30-day months, a year is only 360 days long: not close enough to establish a reliable idiom; ridiculous with 29.5-day months and 354-day years. A year of days, or a full year, would be 365.25 days long, or at least close to that number: we just cannot fathom how to get from 354 to 365.25 in a single step.

Of course it is possible that the idea, “X of days,” always means a full period in both Hebrew and Greek, is forcing the idiom beyond whatever it intends to convey.

By annual correlations with crop cycles, the ancients could arrive at a close agreement between the lunar calendar, and the solar calendar, say in a period of 21 years or so.

Perhaps the Egyptians or the Mesopotamians had developed such finesse at astronomy; yet nothing in Israelite literature suggests that such knowledge developed before Daniel. Actually, the Egyptian chronology drifts with the heliacal rising of Sothis.

Calendars continue to drift well into the modern era (AD), which explains how we ended up with three different church calendars in common use today.

Only, the recent invention of the atomic clock permits the recalibration of dating on a daily basis. The intercalary “leap day” and “leap year” still in use, because of tradition, was still required prior to the invention of the atomic clock. The intercalation methods of the ancients were very crude by comparison. [↑](#endnote-ref-2)
3. There is no reason whatsoever to believe that David was among the Philistines for as long as 472 to 501.5 days. The discrepancy concerning the length of the year arises from the fact that the Israelites used a lunar calendar. Months were alternately 29 and 30 days long. This was complicated by the fact that the new moon had to be seen and recorded in Jerusalem. Since clouds played havoc with such a calendar, alternate observation sites were designated. By careful crosschecking, the first day of the month could be determined for Jerusalem even when the new moon was not seen in Jerusalem, and could be verified just as if it had been seen. Consequently, a year was 354 days long, 11.25 days short of solar reality.

Thus a thirteenth intercalary month was inserted every 2.62 years; which is to say, sometimes every other year, and sometimes every third year, in a very complicated schedule. A schedule of 21 years where 0 represents a 12-month year and 1 represents a 13-month year might look something like this: 0 – 1 – 0 – 0 – 1 – 0 – 1 – 0 – 0 – 1 – 0 – 1 – 0 – 0 – 1 – 0 – 1 – 0 – 0 – 1 – 0. Such a device reconciles the lunar calendar and the solar calendars within approximately six hours of each other. This understanding does not help us at all with this passage; yet, it will help us a great deal later when we need to come to grips with what a year means.

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hebrew_calendar>

By adding either 354 or 383.5 to 118, we arrive at a span of 472 to 501.5 for David’s claimed stay among the Philistines.

We also understand from this exercise that an idiom of a year of days, which is to say a full year, is a meaningless concept. Which year is full? The 354-day-long year? Or the 383.5-day-long year? With such a wide variation in the length of the year it is difficult to see how Hebrew grammar ever thought of a year as anything more than a crude approximation.

As second option to consider, the idiom, two full years could indicate the 0 – 1 combination: 25 months in all, 737.5 days, averaging 368.75 years; which is only 3.5 days longer than the standard year. The 0 – 0 – 1 combination falls 1.5 days short of the standard year. The 0 – 1 – 0 – 0 – 1 combination comes close to perfection, overshooting by a little more than half a day. The point here if we knew that or how such a schedule was used, we would understand that the Israelites may have been tracking the solar year astronomically, to keep the lunar year as close to the solar year as possible. Hence more research and more evidence than what I have is necessary to solve the riddle. [↑](#endnote-ref-3)
4. Here is the problematic word with which we are attempting to cope. [↑](#endnote-ref-4)
5. Thiele, page 186 f [↑](#endnote-ref-5)
6. Exodus 12:2 [↑](#endnote-ref-6)
7. In a system where individuals are urged to love God freely, and no conscience is coerced; where free will is the determining factor in eternal cosmic events; unpunished sin brings incredible, almost unbearable temptation on others to copy the sin. He got away with it; so, why can’t I? God did not strike me dead the last time; therefore, God does not care. Look how happy and prosperous the wicked are; consequently, wickedness must be the best way of life. Unpunished sin is a great evil, in and of itself. [↑](#endnote-ref-7)
8. The expression used here in M is two years of days, which is either 708 or 737.5 days: 737.5 is 7 days longer than two solar years. The expression is meaningless to us in terms of explicit time, beyond generalities, because we have no definition for the meaning of this idiom. LXX has a completely different word, dieterida emeron (διετηρίδα ἡμερῶν), which means a space of two years. V has, “post tempus biennii,” which appears to mean, “after a time of two years” without any emphasis on the fulness of these years. The weight of the phrase appears to bear more upon Absalom’s impatience, rather than on the precision of time: for example, as if Absalom was counting the days until he could avenge his sister. [↑](#endnote-ref-8)
9. Again, M has “two years of days”, almost exactly the same expression as in 2 Samuel 13:23; LXX has, “δύο ἔτη ἡμερῶν;” V has, “duobus annis.” Still we are none the wiser concerning the exact force of the idiom. Perhaps the weight is that nothing less than 24 months is intended. For our chronological purposes, we must simply weight these three verses as 2 + 3 + 2 years, and let it go at that. On the other hand, from a psychological standpoint, each of the two year periods individually, weighed more heavily on Absalom’s heart, than the three year period, which was relatively stress free. The idiom does capture that psychological force, even when simply read as constructio ad sensum. [↑](#endnote-ref-9)
10. Psalm 51 is only one of David’s confessions. [↑](#endnote-ref-10)
11. 2 Samuel 24:1-13; 1 Chronicles 21:1-12 — In Samuel, “The anger of the Lord was kindled against Israel;” in Chronicles, “Satan stood up against Israel.” We should understand from this that mysteries beyond human comprehension are being expressed: it is neither our business nor our duty to figure them out. God’s punishment is real punishment; that punishment is equally well deserved; and Christ bears it for us all. [↑](#endnote-ref-11)
12. Literally, “after 40 years had ended.” [↑](#endnote-ref-12)
13. 2 Samuel 2:11; 2 Samuel 5:4-5; 1 Kings 2:11 (rounded); 1 Chronicles 3:4; 1 Chronicles 29:27 (rounded) [↑](#endnote-ref-13)
14. It becomes apparent that 1 Samuel 16:14-23 is intended as an introduction providing background information leading up to David’s appointment in court. The battle with Goliath is a flashback, for Saul does not even yet know David’s name. David is also said to have returned to the sheep. [↑](#endnote-ref-14)
15. Dates marked with comments like “soon after” or “circa” are based on a certain amount of educated conjecture in an attempt to balance or allow time for the flurry of activity that characterizes David’s life. Feel free to play with these numbers to see how far they can be moved before the fabric of David’s life is ruptured. There is just not a lot of room (wiggle room) for error here. [↑](#endnote-ref-15)
16. The whole of Isaiah 53 is an overwhelming proof that Christ was punished for our sins, and that punishment was absolutely necessary. It is difficult to explain the necessity of such extreme punishment if it is not required by the eternal and infinite justice of Almighty God. It is not my place to question such wisdom. [↑](#endnote-ref-16)
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