BIBLICAL CHRONOLOGY FIXED BY THE ECLIPSES OF CUNEIFORM INSCRIPTIONS

Mr. J. Oppert
Translated by Ward Green

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La Chronologie Biblique Fixée par les
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(Biblical Chronology Fixed by
the Eclipses of Cuneiform Inscriptions)

LETTER TO MR. FRANCOIS LENORMANT

My dear friend,

In response to the assistance that you have lent me, by your lobbying of the astronomers for the rigourous determination of the chronology of the ancient Near East, I can do no better than send you the results that I was fortunate enough to obtain during my recent trip to London.

This first short article has no goal other than to give the exact results, and I must leave to a lengthier memoire the task of developing the proofs that compel me, or to corroborate or modify my former opinions on an issue that is so intimately connected to the Biblical chronology.

But what I can already say is that these new discoveries have completely established the correctness of the chronology of the Books of Kings. Wherever difficulty seems to arise, it is not in the numbers of the Bible, but in our imperfect knowledge of the facts. You will see that such an alteration of the historic system of these ancient writings is like shortening the reign of Napoleon to substitute twenty-nine years of the reign of Louis XVIII.

[editor Ward Green: the greatness of Mr. Julius Oppert is illustrated, in that, by virtue of this letter he becomes the only person I know of to both successfully and substantially add to the original Bible text, doing so in a way which harmonizes all known facts about the issue. If he is to be credited with such a lofty achievement, he may be forgiven when his knowledge of Assyria did not endure perfectly in the light of more recent discovery.]

J. Oppert.

Paris, 11 September 1868.

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[ed., content begins here]

I

We know that the Ninevite Assyrians designated their years according to the names of certain persons called eponyms, which bears similarity to what was done at Athens, ie. the socalled archons of Athens. The Assyrian name found within many dates is called limmu, but I do not know if the term is understood to be the archon himself, or if it applies, which seems indeed more likely, to the eponymous year. I connect it with the root: לאם [ed. transliterates into English as: 'lam'], connect, meet, which also belongs to the Hebrew word: לאם, nation. I transcribe it as: לאמא [ed. transliterates into English as: 'lama'].

The Babylonians dated by the years of the reigns of their Kings; such a simple idea as counting time by the distance that separates it from an important event, the use of Eras, in a word, is not used among mankind until relatively very late. We know that the Greeks only dated by Olympiads from Timaeus of Sicily (c. 290) onwards, and the first popular Era in Greece was that of the Seleucid Empire, dated October 1, 313 BC. (9088 according to my designation) (1).

There must have been a large number of tables provided, for the neccessities of everyday life, which displayed the eponym list to the citizens of Assyria. At Nineveh all events were dated by the eponyms;

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(1) I explained in a short article, still in manuscript, the great disadvantage that accompanies the current counting which uses two sets of dates, with numbers converging and diverging. The interval used in computation by chronologists and by astronomers only increases, and the calculation becomes very inconvenient when it comes to counting by month and day with decreasing year numbers. One has the resources of the Jewish calendar, and the era of Scaliger, but in one case we must add 3760, and in the other 4713, to the years of the Christian era. No one would understand if we were talking about the great principles of 6502, or the treaties of 6528. It is necessary, therefore, to respect the Christian Era. We recall too, the Jewish Year counterpart. One of these reckons the millennia so that it makes of August 18 1808, the day of the great eclipse, Ab 30, 5628; it's a *Big Compute.* The other designates the year by just 628, so we call it the *Little Compute.* For the *Secular Big Compute* we add a *myriad* digit, and so we expand the dates of the Christian Era by 10,000. The death of Caesar falls, according to chronologists, March 15, 44 BC, according to the astronomers, March 15 -43; so, we say Thursday, March 15, 9957 (Julian). There will have been two thousand years from that date to March 15, 1957, or 11957, conserving the myriad number.
Dates are given according to the Julian calendar; for the Gregorian, a few days should be deducted from the dates; the beginning of the Era of Nabonassar, Wednesday, February 26, 747 (9254) Julian, is Gregorian February 20, and corresponds to February 22, exactly, of our time.

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eponyms; contracts, for example, mention these, and it was therefore necessary, if only for the implementation of such private agreements, to know how far the present moment was from such and such a limmu, cited in a given document. We also have, in the British Museum, the fragments of seven different tablets that complement each other; four give only the names in order; the other three further recount the key events (1) which distinguished their administration.

The four, very fragmented documents only provide names lined up, one after the other, occasionally separated by a line that is usually followed by the name of a known King. The purpose of these texts long remained a mystery, until the problem was solved by the sagacity of Hincks. Nobody doubts the truthfulness of the solution, which is supported by hundreds of applications in the texts. At the same time, these documents had the invaluable advantage of providing us, over three centuries, with the list of the Kings of Nineveh.

But no sooner was the discovery made (2), than the author of these lines saw that the list, as it had been preserved for us, must contain a gap of forty to fifty years.

We have the complete sequence of reigns for the undisputed period, that of Sargon and Sennacherib. However, adding the names of all the archons, we arrive at the time of Ahab, Jehu and Hazael in 835 BC. Whatever the authority attached to these Ninevite documents, we must take account of our imperfect knowledge, and in no way put ourselves at odds with historical data as accurate as those of the books of Kings.

Then, something serious, a royal name, known in the Bible, was eliminated in the tables: it was King Pul. Immediately, we invented a host of devices to remove this King from history, we wanted to confuse him

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(1) These seven documents consist of:
a) The four lists given in the work of Mrs. Rawlinson and Norris, *Cuneiform Inscriptions of Western Asia,* vol. II, pl. 68, and to which we refer, as does the Anglophone world, as 2 B. M. 68, 69.
b) A rough paper published in part 2 B. M. 52, entitled: *Principaux officiers du règne de Téglathphalasar II,* including a new small fragment which gave Sir Henry Rawlinson the true sense (see *Athenaeum,* 1867, May and September). We will give, for the first time, the restoration and translation of this document. A small fragment of a copy is also in the British Museum.
c) In a similar document, but more developed in writing, of which only four eponyms are preserved, published 2 B. M. 69.
(2) See our *Sargonides,* p. 15 and prev.

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confuse him with Tiglath-pileser, or strip him of his sovereign character. But it was useless. His deletion expressed the chronological difficulty, exactly.

Pul was Chaldean, so he dated by the years of his reign, without designating eponyms. The tables, made for Assyrians, contained absolutely nothing but names. The Ninevites who used it, without one giving them the slightest hint, nor a superscription, were deemed to know that at one time, prior to a particular King, there had been a taking of Nineveh, a Babylonian takeover, a general upheaval and an interruption in the eponyms.

We will see later that this opinion is the only defensible one, though it has had against it the authority of Sir Henry Rawlinson. But, it must be said, this British scholar does not explain the disappearance of King Pul nor the chronological divergence, and feels obliged to pass over these objections in suspicion of the reality of the Biblical chronology. We can't access his opinion, and we support our own, precisely with the help of a discovery for which we are indebted to the eminent English scholar.

II

It is obvious that to use this list of eponyms with utility, it is necessary to be able to relate it to a chronologically determined fact. On the other hand, it is clear that if this list is continuous, we will only need a single determined point for alignment, whereas if, as we maintain, a continuous solution exists, it will be necessary to have two sections, two different points of interconnection. On the assumption of a continuous list, it will be necessary that all the dates can reasonably subordinate themselves to the one determined date.

However, a point of alignment exists; in year 9, after the separation indicating the reign of *Assur-edil-el* [ed., conventionally called Ashur-Dan III], 91 years after the eponymy which mentions Ahab of Israel, next to the 18th name before reign of Tiglath-pileser, we read:

> *In the year of Pour-el-salkhē, governor of Gozan, a revolt at Libzu. In the month of Sivan (ie. Sivan 30) the sun* (1) *was eclipsed.*

The month

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(1) The translation by *eclipse* of the ideogram "black god," or, as I translate with evidence, "night sky," belongs to Hincks.

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The month of Sivan is the month of June. Now, the list of eclipses, well-known as accurate, of canon Pingré, printed in *l'Art de vérifier les dates,* only provides two solar eclipses, both central, to one of which we might connect the event, according to the two systems:

One of l5 June 763 BC (9,238);

The other 13 June 809 BC (9,192).

The first one, the one Sir Henry Rawlinson believed and professed, was total. According to the abbot Pingré, its point of greatest obscuration took place near 10:15 in the morning (Paris Time); the particulars of his calculation have enabled me to identify that the central trace went over Guyana, Senegal, northwest Africa, the Aegean Sea, Syria, Mesopotamia (between Nineveh and Babylon), Persia, northern India, then disappearing over Tibet. I do not know if any more recent calculations have confirmed the trace resulting from the work of the congregational scholar.

But let's face for a moment, and confess even that, physically, the route of the central eclipse is good enough to meet the most rigorous requirements. Is it chronologically possible? We think not.

To speak no more about the removal of Pul (1), we commence with the lesser of the difficulties. The accession of Sennacherib fell on 13 Ab in the year of Pakharbel (2), according to this arithmetic, in August 705 (9296). However, according to the canon of Ptolemy, the last year of Sargon ended on February 14, 704 (9297), and then there occurred a two-year interregnum, lasting until February 13, 702 (9299). Yet we know that the beginning of the reign of Belibus, which fixes the canon, came immediately after the accession of Sennacherib and, not wanting to forget that the years of the canon of Ptolemy are vague, Egyptian, and artificial, we also know that they never stray more than six months from historic reality. Thus there's already a problem.

Then, and this is much more serious, in the eyes of scientists generally the eponymy Dayan-Asur, the year of the death of Ahab, or at most the one which preceded this event, would fall in 854 BC. Even those who, contrary to all the texts, cut short sacred chronology by the widest margin, have never been able to fix it below 881. The death of Solomon would then fall in 932 BC, and the lowest date that even Phoenician synchronisms can allow

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(1) See, also, what we have said about Pul and Belibus, *Sargonides,* p. 12, 6.
(2) 2 B. M. 69.

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can allow, is that of 969 BC. It is simply impossible to lower a number by 37 years when it is already too low.

Therefore the identification of the eclipse proposed by Sir Henry Rawlinson is unacceptable:

Because of the date of the accession of Sennacherib;

Because of the date that would result, for the death of Solomon;

Because of the suppression of the reign of King Pul of Assyria.

Now consider the date proposed by us for the solar eclipse of Sivan 30 of Pour-el-Salkē.

III

This eclipse is the one of Friday, June 13, 809 BC (9192), Sivan 30 in the Jewish year 2952.

According to the priest Pingré, it took place at a quarter to ten in the morning, it was visible in Europe, Africa, and in Asia, and it was annular, but almost complete for the site of the central trace. Calculations which provide the essentials establish that this line began in the southwest of the Azores, then crossed a part of Spain, later France, Germany, Poland, to continue across Russia, at midday Turkestan, then Tibet and Canton. The phenomenon would have been visible at Nineveh.

Mr. Oeltzen, a skilful astronomer, calculated this eclipse (1), and the data corrected by the emendation tables of the moon and the sun have established that, in accordance with canon Pingré's calculations, the eclipse was annular, but it took place two hours earlier, and its central trace was further south. According to Mr. Oeltzen, the eclipse was almost central to Nineveh, the centers of sun and moon no more than 55 seconds apart, that is to say 1/34 of the apparent solar diameter. It approached totality, since Mr. Oeltzen determines its magnitude as *eleven and a half fingers* (11^{d}·56) and determines the central trace of the annular eclipse as to the south of Nineveh.

Therefore, the eclipse of 13 June 809 (9,192) satisfies the required conditions.

Let us now infer the historical facts.

Let us say, first of all, that the question of the exact determination of the eponyms prior to Tiglath-Pileser remains completely open. We therefore

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(1) We regret not being able to add this work to ours.

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We therefore only have to give attention to the prior events, and limited by the end of the reign of Asur-lihhis.

[ed. see p. 19, 'Asur-lihhis', whose reign shown there as beginning in 799 BC].

The eponymy of Dayan-Asur is set in 900, and the exact date of the beginning of the expedition of Shalmaneser against Ahab and his auxiliaries, Iyar 13 of Dayan-Asur, in May 900 (9101). So it is that we need to put the death of Ahab at 899, a date established by Mr. de Saulcy. Solomon's death was therefore placed in 978 BC, a date that also approximates those generally adopted.

The last eponym of the former empire took place in 792; Mr. de Saulcy had set the first destruction of Nineveh in 788 BC, and even this date may find support (1), taking into account of the four years which, according to Diodorus (II, 25-27) intervene, between the revolt of the subjects of the King of Assyria and the sack of Nineveh.

We have yet another confirmation, this one drawn from Assyrian texts. The King Sardanapalus III ('Asur-na[ṣ]ir-habal' [ed. see p. 15, 9072. 929. Asur-nasir-habal, King of Assyria, also called Ashur-nasir-pal II; however, the character `ṣ' appeared as only as a dot below the line in the printed article, the intended name made clear by the date of 930 BCE for this King, given by Mr. Oppert on the next page]) expressed himself at the beginning of his reign, as follows:

> [ed., Assyrian, bold text ours. Note that in the original the Assyrian alternated with the Latin translation for each of the two lines:]
> **Ina surrat sarrutiya ina mahrē paliya sa Samsu**
> **dayan kibrāti ṣalulsu ṭāba eliya iskun va ina kus'sū rabis usib.**
>
> [ed., Latin, substantially the same as found in the original article:]
> In initio regni mei, in priore anno meo (factum est) ut sol,
> arbiter plagarum, obscurationem suam faustam supra me fecit et in throno magnifice consedi.
>
> [ed., Hebrew, read from right to left:]
> אן שְׁרת שרותי אן מחרי פלי שמשא דין כברתא צללשו
> טבא עלי ישכן ואן כסא רבש אשב
>
> [ed., English, bold text ours:]
> **"In the beginning of my reign, in my first annual period, it happened that the Sun, the arbitrator of the celestial regions, cast its favorable darkening upon me; I seated myself upon the throne with power."**

Evidently, this is a celestial phenomenon, coinciding with the accession of the King. This could not have been a total eclipse, because such a phenomenon was hardly regarded as favorable. But the word *salul* (2), mainly because of ideograms which are substituted for it in some copies

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(1) Mr. F. Lenormant made this judicious remark.
(2) The word ṣalul is substituted for the ideogram: *God, obfuscation,* the second complicated sign is interpreted by the words "darkness," ṣalme, צלמי (2 B. M. 49, 42), and "wither away," אנה (2 B. M. 48.8) or נאה (ib. 48, 6 and *passim*). The group rendered by ṣalul, צלל (1 B. M. 18, 44), is identified with *black sun* (2 B. M. 49, 42). We see that Mr. Norris (*Dict. assyr.,* p. 348) translates it like us: [ed., sic.] *his beneficent shade on me he threw.*

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in some copies of the text, conveys only the meaning of an obscuration partial or total. It would be only to an eclipse seen as very slight from Nineveh, that one could apply the term 'favorable.'

The accession of Sardanapalus III [ed., Ashur-nasir-pal II] having taken place 121 years before the eclipse of 809, it remains to be seen whether before the end of the archon, that is to say *before the autumn* of 930 BC (9071), a phenomenon meeting these required conditions happened. Indeed, there was a total eclipse of 2 June 930, two hours and three quarters in the afternoon, whose central trace extended, according to the canon Pingré, from Mazatlan to the United States, Labrador, northern Europe, as far as Turkestan. The eclipse had to be plainly visible at Nineveh, and it is not possible in the month of June, in the afternoon, that it could have escaped the populace, however small the partial obscuration was, especially when, advised, they were perhaps seeking a *portentum* [ed. Latin for the English: 'portent'] as heralding the new reign.

So we can fix the date of the accession of the reformer of Calah (Nimrud [ed. *sic* Nimrood]) in the month of Sivan of *Asarayi(bana)*, June 2, 930 BC.

As for the dates below the gap, we will establish them more usefully after exhibiting the eponym lists, especially as we can not proceed with the rigor that a solar eclipse allows us to exercise.

VI

[but, evidently, IV, ed.]

Before giving the nomenclature of the archons and events related to it, we must pause to develop a point of great interest to the Jewish and Christian calendar.

We know that the Jews, and Christians for the Paschal cycle, use lunar reckoning. The Israelites, during the second temple, first accepted the Metonic cycle of 19 years, or 235 lunations, and later a rectified Callippic cycle made up of four Meton cycles, or 76 years, from which we subtract one day. The names of the Jewish months of early times, Phoenician months, are lost to us; after the Babylonian exile, right up to our day, the Jews have used the Babylonian names, and these are the names that we read in the Books of Zechariah, Esther, Ezra, and Nehemiah. But these names were equally foreign to the Assyrian language as they are to the idiomatic Hebrew

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Hebrew, and we do not yet know their origin. Here are their Assyrian and Hebrew forms:

Assyrian.	*Hebrew.*
Nisanu.	Nisan.
Airu.	Iyar.
Si'anu.	Sivan.
Dûzu.	Tammouz.
Abu.	Ab.
Ululu.	Eloul.
Tasritu.	Tisri.
Arahsavna.	Marchesvan.
Kit'livu.	Cislev.
Têbitu.	Tebet.
Sabatu.	Sebat.
Addaru.	Adar.
Magru sa Addari.	Veadar (intercalary month) (1).

In the designation of the Assyrian months we will use the Hebrew equivalents.

In the Bible, Nisan is the first month, Tisri the seventh, and so the religious year begins with the time which corresponds approximately to the spring equinox. But ever since the Jews have had an Era, their year has had the seventh month as its starting point, according to an old belief from back in Babylon, that the world was created at the autumnal equinox. The French Republic has followed the same rule. For example, the year 5629 begins September 17, 1868, ending September 5, 1869; the seventh month of 5629 falls thus six months before the first of this same year. The computation that counts years from one autumnal equinox to the next is called the civil [ed. or, secular] year.

However, such a distinction existed among the Assyrians, and it is from them that the Jews took it. Notably, eponyms go Tisri to Elul, not Nisan to Adar. Thus, the eponym of the eclipse of June 809 (9192) began in September 810 (9191). Precise facts

Precise facts establish this curious coincidence between the customs of the Jews and the Assyrians.

Shalmaneser III said that (1), in the inscription of the Obelisk of Nimrod, in the eponymy of Dayan-Asur, he crossed the Euphrates, and led an expedition into Upper Armenia. That same year, he went to Koultar. In his fifth year and into the one following these events, he subdued other tribes of Kurdistan [ed. viz. the vicinity around Armenia]. Then, in his sixth year, he crossed the Balikh (Belias), went to Syria and defeated Bin-idri (Benhadad) of Damascus.

The stele retrieved at the source of the Tigris (2) describes this campaign in yet greater detail, well precious to us, as Ahab of Israel figures here as an auxiliary of Benhadad. It adds the new point that he [ed. Shalmaneser] left Nineveh on Iyar 13 of Dayan-Asur; we needn't insist on the impossibility of his having completed the two previous campaigns in six weeks. The administration of Dayan-Asur had begun seven and a half months earlier, but time enough for the successful completion of the two expeditions.

Another example is this:

A fragment of private interest, preserved in the British Museum, is dated Tebet 30 of the year of Mannu-ki-Bin (3), Year 22 of Sennacherib, King of Assyria.

[ed. see p. 22, 9319. 682. Mannu-ki-Bin, Prefect of Kullab],

However, Sennacherib ascended the throne on Ab 13 Year Pakharbel in August 704 (9297). If the eponymous year began with the month of Nisan, Tebet 30 the first year of the King was Tebet 30 of Pakharbel. The name of Mannu-ki-Bin should be the twenty-first after the name cited. But it is not; Mannu-ki-Bin is the twenty-second after Pakharbel.

[ed. see p. 21, 9297. 704. Pa-har-bel, Prefect of Nineveh]

So, Ab 13 is still Pakharbel, but Tisri 1 already belongs to the following eponymy, that of Nabu-soulournipous (Nebo, we made peace), beginning six weeks later, and so the month of Tebet in Year 1 of Sennacherib will be included within this period.

[ed. see p. 21, 9298. 703. Nabu-sulum-nipus, Prefect of Nineveh; it is the month of Tebet in Year 1 of Sennacherib was within the natural sequence of the months following Sennacherib's accession]

We believe that the word sanat, שנת, applies to the year which runs from Nisan to Adar, and that limmu, אלמא, indicates the year counted from Tisri to Elul. Another expression, pâlu, "sword" is used

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is used by the Kings themselves to indicate their years of reign, counted as anniversaries of their accession (1). In many passages, it is impossible to interpret this word other than as a measure of time.

V

We will now show the corrected, supplemented eponym list (2), aligned in accordance with the invaluable record of celestial phenomena. The names of the eponyms, almost all of which express some meaningful phrase, will be transcribed using our interlinear transliteration system, to render them with the utmost rigor, although in the body of our developments we retain a more galicized [ed. but, in translation, anglicized] style for them.

The numbers indicate the chronological years BC, and it is understood that the first months of limmu fall in the previous year.

Historical data are added by us after registration, except for the years 862 to 726, where we give the first translation of an inscription whose character had been assigned by Sir Henry Rawlinson, and that we offer for the first time in its restored form. Eponym List

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Eponym List.

Reign of Salmanassar II (?) (1).
Salman-asir.
Nabu-eri.
Reign of Belochus III.
951. Bin-ikhsis.

9063. 938. Ninip-zarme.
9064. 937. Damgate-Asur?
9065. 936. Limin (?)-Asur-la-durus (2).

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[ed. after Asur-nasir-habal (aka Sardanapalus III, Ashur-nasir-pal II, 25 years), Salman-asir (Shalmaneser III), ca. 859 BCE conventional]

9097. 904. Salman-asir. King.
9098. 903. Asur-bel-kainini.
9099. 902. Asur-bandya-usur.
9100. 901. Abu-ina-hekal-libur (1).
9101. 900. Dayan-Asur.
9102. 899. Samas-abuya.
9103. 898. Samas-yukin.
9104. 897. Bel-banuya.
9105. 896. Nun-sulum-libus.
9106. 895. Marduk-halik-pani.
9107. 894. Pur-il-raman.
9108. 893. Ninip-yukin-nisi.
9109. 892. Ninip-nadân.
9110. 891. Asur-banuya.
9111. 890. Tab-Ninip.
9112. 889. Takki-ana-sar.
9113. 888. Bin-urhanni.
9114. 887. Bel-abuya.
9115. 886. Sulum-Bel-la-habal.
9116. 885. Ninip-kitsi1-usur.
9117. 884. Ninip-malik.
9118. 883. Qurdi-Asur.
9119. 882. Nire-sar.
9120. 881. Marduk-mudammiq.
9121. 880. Iahalu.
9122. 879. Ukulai.
9123. 878. Sar-pati-bel.
9124. 877. Nirgal-malik.
9125. 876. Hunbâ.
9126. 875. Er-yukin-sh.
9127. 874. Salman-asir. King of Assyria. 873. Dayan-Asur, Tartan.

(1) The aging father in the palace.

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9128. 873. Dayan-Asur, Tartan.
9129. 872. Asur-banuya-usur.
9130. 871. Iahalu.
9131. 870. Bel-banû.

[ed. after Salman-asir (Shalmaneser III, 35 years), Samas-Bin (Sharnshi-Adad V), ca. 824 BCE conventional]

9132. 869. Samas-Bin, King of Assyria.
9133. 868. Iahalu.

9134. 867. Bel-edil-el.
9135. 866. Ninip-upla.
9136. 865. Samas-malik.
9137. 864. Marduk-malik.
9138. 863. Asur-banuya-uṣur.
9139. 862. Sar-pati-bel, of Niṣibin, to the country of Zarāt (1).
9140. 861. Bel-balaṭu of....., to the city of Diri. Malik (Moloch) went to Diri.
9141. 860. Musiknis, country of Kirrur, to Ihs'ana.
9142. 859. Ninip-bel-uṣur of ... to the country. In the Chaldees.
9143. 858. Samas-qumma, of Arrapḥa, to Babylon.
9144. 857. Bel-qaṭ-ṣabat, of Mazamua, at home.

[ed. after Samas-Bin (Shamshi-Adad V, 13 years), Bin-lihhis (Adad-nirari III), ca. 811 BCE conventional]

9145. 856. Bin-liḫḫis, King of Assyria, to the river country (Upper Armenia?).
9146. 855. Marduk-malik, Great Tartan, to Gozan.
9147. 854. Bel-edil-el, Prefect of the Palace, to the country of Van.
9148. 853. Sil-el, Chief Eunuch, to the country of Van.
9149. 852. Asur-takkil, Minister, to the country of Arpad.
9150. 851. El .., Governor of the Country, to Hazaz.
9151. 850. El-halik-pani, of Reseph, to the city of Ba'li.
9152. 849. Asur-ur-nisi, of Arrapḥa, to the sea. Epidemic (2). 848. Ninip-malik

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(1) It is here that the restored document 2 B. H. 52. begins - *of* means "Prefect of," as in other documents.
(2) I do not know if H. Rawlinson had this word in view when speaking of references to earthquakes. The word is *mutanu* and is explained ideographically by *mortality* (2 B. M. 36, 5); it relates to מות, *die.* The Babylonians recorded epidemics as well as eclipses and earthquakes (see Diod. Sic., II).

9153. 848. Ninip-malik, of the city of Ahi-Zuḫina, to Ḥubuskia.
9154. 847. Nire-sar, of Naṣibin, to the country of rivers.
9155. 846. El......., of Amid, to the country of rivers.
9156. 845. Mutakkil-Asur, to the city of Lūsia.
9157. 844. Bel-tarṣi-nalbar, of Calaḥ, to the country of Namri.
9158. 843. Asur-bel-uṣur, of Kirrur, to Mansuat.
9159. 842. Marduk-sadūa....., at home, to the city of Dēri.
9160. 841. Kin-abuya, of Tusḫan, to Dēri.
9161. 840. Mannu-ki-Bel, of Gozan, to the country of rivers.
9162. 839. Musallira-Ninip, of Tillē, to the country of rivers.
9163. 838. Bel-basāni, of Meḫinis, to Ḥubuskia.
9164. 837. Kima-Samas, of the city of Is'ana, to the country of Itūa.
9165. 836. Ninip-Halik-pani, of Nineveh, to the country of rivers.
9166. 835. Bin-musammir, of Kal-napsat, to the country of rivers.
9167. 834. Ṣil-Istar .... Jubilee.
9168. 833. Balaṭu ...., to the country of rivers. Nabo entered into his new temple.
9169. 832. Bin-yuballit of Muzamūa? to the country of Ki...ki.
9170. 831. Marduk-sar-uṣur ....., to Ḥubuskia. Malik went to Dēri.
9171. 830. Nabu-sar-uṣur, of Tusḫan (?) to Ḥubuskia.
9172. 829. Ninip-naṣir, of Mazamūa, to Ituh.
9173. 828. Nalbar-lih of Naṣibin, to Itu.

[ed. after Bin-lihhis (Adad-nirari III, 29 years), Salman-asir (Shalmaneser IV), ca. 783 BCE conventional, only the horizontal line was missing ____________________]

9174. 827. Salman-asir, King of Assyria, to Armenia.
9175. 826. Il-samsi-el, Tartan, to Armenia.
9176. 825. Marduk-urḫanni, Chief Eunuch, to Armenia.
9177. 824. Bel-mustesir, Prefect of the Palace, to Armenia.
9178. 823. Nabu-kun-yukin, Minister, to Ituh.
9179. 822. Pan-Asur-la-har, Governor of the Country, to Armenia.
9180. 821. [sic] Istar-aḫ-téessis, of Reseph, to the country of Erini.
9181. 820. Istar-duri, of Naṣibin, to Armenia, to Namri.
9182. 819. Mannu-ki-Bin, at home, to Damascus.
9183. 818. Asur-bel-uṣur, of Calah, to Hadrah. 817. Asur-edil-el

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[ed. after Salman-asir (Shalmaneser IV, 10 years), Ashur-edil-el (Ashur-Dan III), ca. 773 BCE conventional, horizontal line was on previous page]

9184. 817. Asur-edil-el, King of Assyria, to Gananat.
9185. 816. Samsi-el, Tartan, to the city of Surat.
9186. 815. Bel-malik, of Arrapha, to the country of Itu.
9187. 814. Habliya, of Mazamua, at home.
9188. 813. Qurdi-Asur, of the city of Ahi-Zuḫina, to Gananat.
9189. 812. Musallim-Ninip, of Tille, to the country of rivers.
9190. 811. Nabū-yukin-nisi, of Kirrur, to Hadraḥ. Epidemic.
9191. 810. Ṣidqi-el, of the country of Tusḫan, at home.
9192. 809. Pur-el-salḫē of Gozan. Revolt at Libzu. In Sivan, solar eclipse.
9193. 808. Tab-Bel, of Amed. Revolt at Libzu.
9194. 807. Ninip-bel-uṣur, of Nineveh. Revolt at Arrapḥa.
9195. 806. Laqibu, of Kal-napsat. Revolt at Arrapḥa.
9196. 805. Pan-Asur-la-ḫabal, of Arbela. Revolt at Gozan. Epidemic.
9197. 804. Bel-takkil, of Is'ana, against Gozan. Peace in the country.
9198. 803. Ninip-idin, of the city of Satban, at home.
9199. 802. Bel-sadūa, of Parnunna, at home.
9200. 801. Kis'u of Meḫinis, to Hadrah.
9201. 800. Ninip-muzibani, the city of Rimus'i, to Arpad. Return of Ellassar.

[ed. after Ashur-edil-el (Ashur-Dan III, 18 years), Asur-lihhis (Asur-nirari V, ca. 755 BCE conventional, said to be father of Tiglath-Pileser (Tiglath-Pileser III), 744 BCE, below)]

9202. 799. Asur-liḫḫis, King of Assyria, at home.
9203. 798. Samsi-el, Tartan, at home.
9204. 797. Marduk-sallimanni, Prefect of the Palace, at home.
9205. 796. Bel-Edil-el, Chief Eunuch, at home.
9206. 795. Samas-kin-dugul, Minister, to Namri.
9207. 794. Bin-bel-yukin, Governor of the Country, to Namri.
9208. 793. Sin-sallimanni, of Reseph, at home.
9209. 792. Nirgal-naṣir, of Naṣibin. Revolt at Calaḥ.

[ed. approximately a 46-year gap in the records, shown here as 48]

[ed. while Tiglath-Pileser (Tiglath-Pileser III), below, is said to have been a usurper, he is said to have been the son of Ashur-nirari V, above. In the interim, the Chaldean ruler Pul ruled.)]

9257. 744 Nabu-bel-uḥur, of Arrapḥa. Iyar 13, Tiglath-Pileser sat on the throne, then he went to the river bank.
9258. 743. Bel-el-edil of Calaḥ, to the country of Namri. 742. Tiglath-habal-asar

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9259. 742. Tiglath-habal-asar, King of Assyria, in the city of Arpad. Massacre of Armenia. Enumeration.
9260. 741. Nabu-danninanni, Tartan, to Arpad.
9261. 740. Salman-bel-usur, Prefect of the Country, to the same. For three years, siege [ed. or, headquarters].
9262. 739. Nabu-ediranni, Chief Eunuch, to Arpad.
9263. 738. Sin-takkil, Minister to the country of Ullarba, the city of Birtu. Devastation.
9264. 737. Bin-bel-yukin, Governor of the Country; he besieged the city of Gultani.
9265. 736. Bel-turṣanni, of Reseph, to the country of rivers.
9266. 735. Ninip-malik, of Naṣibin, to the foot of Mount Na'al.
9267. 734. Asur-sallimanni, of Arrapḥa, to Armenia.
9268. 733. Bel-el-edil, of Calaḥ, to Palestine.
9269. 732. Asur-danninanni, of Mazamua, to Damascus.
9270. 731. Nabu-bel-uṣur, of the city of S'imee, to Damascus.
9271. 730. Nirgal-yuballit, of Ahi-Zugina, to the city of Sapiya.
9272. 729. Bel-Ludari, of Tille, to the country.
9273. 728. Napḥar-el, of Kirrur. The King took the hands of Bel.
9274. 727. Dur-Asur, of .....

9275. 726. Bel-kas'-bel-uṣur.
9276. 725. Marduk-bel-uṣur.
9277. 724. Maḥdie.
9278. 723. Asur-ḥalli.
9279. 722. Salman-asir, King of Assyria. [ed., conventionally called Shalmaneser V]

9280. 721. Ninip-malik.
9281. 720. Nabu-tariṣ.
9282. 719. Nabu-izka-dannin.
9283. 718. Sar-yukin, King of Assyria. [ed., conventionally called Sargon II]
9284. 717. Zir-bani.
9285. 716. Ṭāb-sār-Asur.
9286. 715. Ṭāb-ṣil-asar.
9287. 714. Takkil-ana-Bel.
9288. 713. Istar-duri. 712. Asur-bani.

9289. 712. Asur-bani.
9290. 711. Sar-turṣanni.
9291. 710. Ninip-halik-pani.
9292. 709. Samas-bel-uṣur.
9293. 708. Mannu-ki-Asur-lih, Prefect of Tille.
9294. 707. Samas-yupaḥar.
9295. 706. Sa-Asur-dubbu, Governor of Tusḫan. Tisri 22,
consecration of the gods of Dur-Sargon (1).
9296. 705. Mutakkil-Asur, Prefect of Gozan. Ab 6, Dur-Sargon.
9297. 704. Pa-ḥar-Bel, Prefect of Amid... Assassination of Sargon. Ab 12, accession of Sennacherib.

9298. 703. Nabu-sulum-nipus, Prefect of Nineveh.
9299. 702. Kannunaï.
9300. 701. Nabu-lih, Prefect of Arbela.
9301. 700. Ḥananu.
9302. 699. Metenu, Prefect of Is'an.
9303. 698. Bel-sar-uṣur.
9304. 697. Immu-sar.
9305. 696. Asur(?)-dur-usur.
9306. 695. Sulmu-ana-Bel.
9307. 694. Asur-bel-uṣur.
9308. 693. El-ittiya.
9309. 692. Idin-aḥē.
9310. 691. Zazaya, Prefect of Arpad.
9311. 690. Bel-turṣanni.
9312. 689. Nabu-yukin-aḥ.
9313. 688. Giḥilu.
9314. 687. Idin-aḥē.
9315. 686. Sin-aḥē-irib, King of Assyria. [ed., conventionally called Sennacherib]
9316. 685. Bel-turṣanni.
9317. 684. Asur-danninanni.
9318. 683. Sar-zir-eli. 682. Mannu-ki-Bin.

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(1) As according to a small fragment 2 B. M. 69.

9319. 682. Mannu-ki-Bin, Prefect of Kullab.
9320. 681. Nabu-sar-usur.

9321. 680. Nabu-aḥe-issis.... Accession of Esarhaddon.
9322. 679. Dananu, Prefect of Mazamua.
9323. 678. Dan-imnini.
9324. 677. Nirgal-sar-uṣur.
9325. 676. Abu-ramu.
9326. 675. Bambā.
9327. 674. Marduk-aḥē-idin.
9328. 673. Sar-nuri.
9329. 672. Atar-el, Prefect of Lahir.
9330. 671. Nabu-bel-uṣur.
9331. 670. Ṭebitaï.
9332. 669. Sulum-bel-la-asma.
9333. 668. Samas-kasid-aïbi.
9334. 667. Sakan-la arme.
9335. 666. Gabbaru.
9336. 665. Ṯebitaï.

....
Bel-nahid.
Ḥim-Sin.
Irbaelaï.
Girzabuna.
S'ilim-Asur.
....
652 (1). Sa-Nabu-ḳat.
651. Balazu.
650. Milki-ramu.
649. Dayanu.
648. Asur-naṣir.
647. Asur-malik.
646. Asur-dur-uṣur. 645. S'agabbu.

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(1) The dates following are only approximate.

645. S'agabbu.
644. Bel-kas'-sadūa.
643. Asur-malik.

Apart from these names, we have a fairly large number falling in the gaps; those before Belochus are very few, most of these unclassified names belonging to reign of Sardanapalus VI; among others, we see the name Belsoun [sic], during whose archonship an eclipse was expected, but not observed, at the end of Sivan.

VI

After fixing the dates prior to Tiglath-Pileser, we still have to determine those coming after the accession of this King. If we had an indication of the Assyrian total eclipse of March 5, 702 (9299), which had to be visible to Nineveh, at least partially, we would have a point of synchronization equally indisputable for the earlier times, as it fell probably under the eponymy of Kannunai. In the absence of such direct indications, we must content ourselves with other data that might also provide us with very real results, especially as we have, for this period, Ptolemy's canon, whose strict accuracy may not be considered to be in doubt.

This period includes just the reigns of Sargon and Sennacherib, for which historical information does not fail. Here are the dates of Ptolemy, which are adapted to the computation, without straying far from the historical truth.

```
Begin. of the reign of Merodachbaladan, 721 (9280), February 20.
                                Sargon, 709 (9292), February 17.
                           The Anarchy, 704 (9297), February 15.
                               Belibus, 702 (9299), February 15.
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Let's start with the data provided by Sennacherib. This King says in the Bellino Cylinder (1), that at the beginning of his reign he fought the rebel Merodach-baladan (who was helped by the Elamites), and that he defeated him

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(1) *Exp. Més.,* I, p. 298.

defeated him at Kish (Larak?). We know from the story of Berosus, preserved in the Armenian translation of Eusebius, that, in fact, a person who went by this name [ed. Merodach-baladan] had, after the death of the previous King, killed another insurgent named Hagises. The Assyrian King tells us that he had to pursue the rebel, that he [ed. that is to say, King Sennacherib] entered into Babylon, but that to pacify the country he was obliged to take by force 76 cities and 820 towns of Chaldea. He forced the Arab tribes to surrender, and, after all these achievements, he conferred the kingdom to Belibus, a young, high-ranking Ninevite at his palace.

Now, Sennacherib ascended the throne in August (Ab 13 of Pakharbel). He undertook the campaign against Chaldea soon after his accession (**ina rēs sarrutiya** אן ראש שרותי, in capite (i.e. initio) regni mei). From August until February or a few days later, there are only six months, plus this unknown; in any case, not enough time to accomplish all his feats. With the eponymy of Pakharbel expiring in October, it seems difficult to take the next eponymy and place the installation of Belibus there; the accession therefore needs to be dated to the archonship of Kannunai. With the date near February 15, 702 (9299) falling into this eponymy, it is necessary to place this in the period from the autumn of 703 (9298) to the autumn of 702 (9297), coinciding with the Jewish year 3059.

This supposition seems only to agree with the dates of Sargon. We have several data during the reign of Sargon, providing both the years of the reign of this monarch and the eponyms. The dates (1) include only the

time between Tisri and Sebat, and all establish that the first year of Sargon falls, for the months cited, in the eponymy of Naboularis. But since the reign of Sargon had to start before Iyar, as discussed earlier, the accession of the King reached, more so, to the archonship of Ninip-malik.

Sargon says in his Annals, that in Year 12 of his reign, he conquered the Chaldeans, defeated Merodach-baladan and entered Babylon

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(1) I was provided a copy of these dates by Mr. George Smith, a young employee of the British Museum, who is actively engaged in finding fragments of broken tablets. These dates agree among themselves, but they disagree with one single date, from a private document in the Louvre that identifies Marchesvan 13 of Mannu-ki-Asur-lih as Year 12 of Sargon. The position of the months in the year could not remove the contradiction, because he chanced in London upon the identification of Marchesvan 13 of Sa-Asur-dubbu with Year 15 of the same King. Admittedly another way of counting the years is making them coincide with eponym years, following the accession, unless we assume the omission of a line in the Louvre document.

entered Babylon to the great joy of its inhabitants; after all, he came to enjoy the festivities of the month of Sebat (February). Now, the Canon of Ptolemy puts the beginning of the Babylonian reign of Sargon in February 709 (9292). The King said moreover, that in his Year 13, in the month of Iyar three months later, he undertook the complete annihilation of the Chaldean King. The beginning of his reign is thus placed between February and May of Ninip-malik; the beginning of the thirteenth year falling between the cited months of 709, *the accession of Sargon had taken place in the spring of* 721, and the year of Ninip-malik takes place between the autumn of 722 (9279) and the autumn of 721 (9280), corresponding to the Jewish year 3040.

[ed. whilst we may be agreeable to Sargon's accession having occurred *no earlier* than the date mentioned, the reader should be aware that the Assyrian history has contradictory evidence which, in this regard, may be interpreted as Sargon rewriting the history so as to move his accession date higher to include his military victories. In the same spirit did Sennacherib also claim his military campaigns as though they might have been during his own Reign, in order that his later enthronement might dignify the military achievements after the fact. Sargon, for example, claimed the conquest of Samaria as though it had occurred at the beginning of his Reign, but since his Reign did not begin until after the Siege of Samaria had begun, the initiation of that siege could not be claimed as during his Reign unless the date of his accession were moved to an earlier date. This can account for a two-year discrepancy in the dating of Sargon's accession year, between either 721 or 719 BCE, contained in the Assyrian records themselves, with the records written later in Sargon's Reign indicating the earlier accession date of 721, which is apparently false. At the time of Mr. Oppert's writing of this letter, he was not aware of these more recently obtained facts (see, for example, The Great Pyramid: Its Divine Message, Tables and Annotations, Pyramid Records, Annotations (C) To Table XXVI, by David Davidson and Herbert Aldersmith, 1924, p.345, or, alternatively, Journal of Biblical Literature, Vol. 11, No. 2, 1892, `The Date of the Downfall of Samaria', by Willis J. Beecher, pp. 211-213).]

We have specifically confirmed this date by astronomical data. Shalmaneser died in the previous year, the one to which he himself had given his name. The line that separates his name on the list from the one that follows shows that he did not see the end of his archonship, October 722 (9279). So there was an interval, perhaps an interregnum, of at least six months between his death and the accession of Sargon. Now, here is what he says himself in many of his writings:

> [ed., Assyrian, bold text ours. Note that in the original the Assyrian alternated with the Latin translation for each of the two lines:]
> **Sar naphar malki sa eli er Ḥarrana ṣalula lasu iṯruṣu**
> **va kī zab Anu u Dagan iṣturu zakuts'un.**
>
> [ed., Latin, substantially the same as found in the original article:]
> Rex omnium principum qui ante Harran, obscurationem in eum explicaverunt
> et cum sacrificio Oannis and Dagonis scripsere pacta sua.
>
> [ed., Hebrew, read from right to left:]
> שר נפחר מלכי שעלי חרן צללא לשו יתרצו וכי זבה
> ענו ודגן ישטרו זכתסן·
>
> [ed., English, bold text ours:]
> **"King of all princes, opposite the city of Harran, who explained the darkening in his favor and wrote their membership in the presence of sacrifices to Oannes and Dagon."**

The term *salul,* צלל, is the same as we have already met in the registration of Sardanapalus III and which indicated to us the solar eclipse of June 2, 930.

While we have no latitude for determining the phenomenon, it must have occurred in the spring of 721. Now we are here in the presence of a very remarkable coincidence, which proves the reality of our opinion.

It is precisely in the spring of 721 (March 19) that the famous lunar eclipse took place, mentioned by Ptolemy in Almageste (IV, 5), and with two

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and with two other phenomena of the same kind (1), was used to determine the date of Nabonassar. Hipparchus had spoken, and Ptolemy tells us it was observed in Babylon. In that city it began four and a half hours before midnight, and its fullness took place two and a half hours before midnight. The Alexandrian astronomer places it on Thoth 29, Year 1 of Mardocempadus (or Merodach-baladan). The priest Pétau calculated it; it lasted, according to him and in agreement with the Babylonian data, four hours six minutes, and its magnitude was eighteen fingers and thirty minutes, that is to say, the Earth's shadow exceeded the apparent size of the moon by more than one half.

If we apply this phenomenon to the Jewish calendar, we would set it on Veadar 15 [ed. Adar II], 3040.

Applying this computation, it seems that the accession of Sargon took place after Adar II 15 of Ninip-malik, March 19, 721 BC. (9280).

In the same year, the first concern of Sargon was to accomplish the work begun by Shalmaneser, and take Samaria. The Kingdom of Israel fell thus in mid-721 (9280). The Bible (2Kings 18:9,10) then gives us the following events:

```
Beginning of the Siege of Samaria: Year 7 of Hosea, Year 4 of Hezekiah.
Beginning of the reign of Hezekiah: Hosea Year 3.
Duration of Siege: 3 years, that is to say 3 years less a few months.
End of Siege: Year 9 of Hoshea, Year 6 of Hezekiah.
```

This gives us, within a few months, reconciling all data, which is quite difficult, and can only be obtained by indeterminate equations:

```
   Beginning of the reign of Hosea, 730 (9271), November.
Beginning of the reign of Hezekiah, 727 (9274), September.
 Beginning of the Siege of Samaria: 724 (9277), December.
                Capture of Samaria: 721 (9280), July.
```

Now,

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(1) The two other eclipses fall, one on Thoth 18-19, March 8-9, 720 (9281), at midnight, with magnitude, according to the priest Pétau, of only 3 1/3 fingers, and the other on Phamenoth 15-16 of the same year, September 1, with a magnitude of 6 fingers. The one in March 720 was small enough not to get any attention by the princes who elected Sargon, especially seeing as this date of 720 that we had previously accepted, no longer fits the facts concerning Merodach-baladan and Belibus. In our *Sargonides,* we lowered the series of eponyms a unit, but we believe we must abandon this reckoning; the opposition of so many circumstances requires us to do so, and I believe we will one day have conclusive proof of certitude of the correctness of the change.

Now, according to 2Kings 17:1, Hosea began to reign in year 12 of Ahaz; Ahaz reigned 16 years (16 years less several months), after having begun in Year 17 of Pekah of Israel (2Kings 16:1).

Jotham, father of Ahaz, thus ceased to reign in Year 17 of Pekah; he ascended the throne in Year 2 of Pekah, and had reigned 16 years, even 16 years less a few months (2Kings 15:32).

Jotham had succeeded his father Uzziah, who himself had reigned 52 years (2Kings 15:2; 2Chronicles 26:2). Pekah ascended the throne in Year 52 of Uzziah (2Kings 15:27), who had died in Year 2 of Pekah, so Uzziah reigned 52 years, *plus* several months.

Since Ahaz could not have reigned fewer than fifteen years, and he was King two years and several months more of the time of Hoshea, the King of Judah must have governed at least twelve years, *plus* several months, before Hoshea. In order to justify the expression `Year *twelve'* of Ahaz, it must be assumed that twelve years had not been exceeded by much.

Then, in the time of Pekah and Ahaz, Tiglath-Pileser made his expedition into Palestine, which took place, according to the eponym tables, under the archonship of Bel-edil-el, Prefect of Calah, in the year 733 (9268) [ed. see page 20].

Thus, we will have, approximately, within a few months:

```
             Accession of Uzziah, 810 (9191), April.
              Accession of Pekah, 759 (9242), May
Death of Uzziah, reign of Jotham, 758 (9243), July.
  Death of Jotham, reign of Ahaz, 742 (9259), March.
   Expedition of Tiglath-Pileser, 733 (9268).
 Death of Pekah, reign of Hoshea, 730 (9281), November.

Pekah, King of Israel, has thus reigned between 29 and 30 years.
```

But the book of Kings says he reigned in Samaria twenty years (2Kings 15:27).

Many chronologists believe they are allowed to subtract ten years from the reigns, which leads to nonsense, not to mention that it requires changing several numbers in texts which are nonetheless in complete agreement. Others, closer to the truth, have wanted to read twenty-nine or thirty years instead of twenty.

[ed. it is precisely because of just this kind of problem, rarely seen in the Bible text, that men often have abandoned the Bible chronology, turning to their own accounting and to schemes which completely mangle the Bible record, and herein lies the greatness of Mr. Julius Oppert.]

All of this is wrong: Pekah ascended the throne in 759, he was assassinated while ruling in 730, and he only ruled twenty years.

Cuneiform inscriptions give us the answer to the riddle. VII

VII

For a long time, we know a passage from a text of Tiglath-Pileser's, verified by two copies, that, in his Year 8, he received tributes from Menahem of Samaria.

However, the Menahem known from the Bible, who had dealings with Pul (King of Assyria), reigned from 771 to 760.

Hincks and myself had moved back the accession of Tiglath-Pileser to 761.

This is no longer acceptable, since we know that this King ascended the throne in Iyar of Nabu-bel-usur, in May 744 (9257).

Mr. Rawlinson claimed that Tiglath-Pileser was **deceived** and that he wrote Menahem instead of Pekah. This is even less credible, especially since we can now find the name of Pekah in the texts. But despite the astonishment that would induce a boldness in any scholar, here was basically a valid idea: the Menahem of the texts cannot be the Menahem of the Book of Kings.

Let us turn now to the facts.

Pekah ascended the throne in 759. He was still enthroned in 742, at the death of Jotham.

By 737 he held the kingship no longer, and we find the same thing again in 733 and right up to his death.

So there was an interval of nine to ten years, from 742 to 733, where Menahem reigned in Samaria. This person, perhaps the son of Pekahiah, son of Menahem I, also calling himself Menahem, avenged the death of his father Pekahiah, who was murdered by Pekah. Supported by Ahaz of Judah and the King of Assyria, he sent tributes to the latter. But his opponent came to power, and that's when Tiglath-Pileser invaded Palestine, assisted by the King of Judah, and called by him (2Kings 16:7). The inscriptions mention Ahaz in the form of Jehoahaz (Iauhaz), as a tributary of Tiglath-pileser.

So we see that in all cases where the Assyrian texts are complementary, they are in perfect harmony with the Bible.

Twenty years of Pekah the son of Remaliah King of Israel, are divided thus:

```
                 Menahem I, 771-760.

   Pekahiah son of Menahem, 760-759.

                     Pekah, 759-742. Menahem II, 742-733.
```

```
                Menahem II, 742-733.

Pekah, for the second time, 733-730.
```

But it may be asked, why did this interregnum not leave any trace in the current text?

We will say that it is encountered once in the text, obviously mutilated, at the end of Chapter 15 of the Book of 2Kings.

Nobody has taken sufficient account of verses 30 and 31, which, in their current form, are translated as follows:

> **15:30 "And Hoshea the son of Elah conspired against Pekah the son of Remaliah, and smote him, and slew him, and reigned in his place, *in Year 20 of Jotham, son of Uzziah.....*"**
>
> **15:31 "And the rest of the story of Pekah, and all that he did, see, it is written in the book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Israel."**

In its current form, the text is contradictory; first, Jotham only reigned *sixteen* years, and then, at 2Kings 17:1, it places the murder of Pekah in year 12 of Ahaz.

It is therefore contradicted by two passages of the same text. Obviously, something is missing, and what we have is the result of a slight misreading.

The number *twenty* was written by a [ed. Hebrew: kaph=`k'] כ or by substituting this digit for the name of the number [ed. `20'] עשרים, contained in the actual text.

We have:

> [ed., Hebrew, read from right to left:]
> בשנח כ ליותם בן עזיה
> בשנת כלי יותם בן עזיה
> [ed., English, bold text ours:]
> **"In the year of the death of Jotham, son of Uzziah....." (1)**

And here followed the story about Menahem II.

Yet, the death of Jotham is in 742, and the revolt of Menahem followed several months later.

These words are moved, they originally preceded verse 30, and introduced after **"in his place,"** תחתיו, they no longer made sense, by an error of the copyist. There was probably a text like the following:

In (1) year of the death of Jotham, son of Uzziah {{Menahem, son of Pekahiah, rebelled against Pekah and reigned nine years in Samaria.... And in the tenth year, Pekah conspired against Menahem,

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(1) Or, שנת כל ליותם. Although the word כלי is no longer found next to תכלית, כלות, כלה, which have this sense of finality, it is formed regularly as בלי, דמי, חלי, פרי, קרי, שבי, and many others.

Menahem, son of Pekahiah, struck and killed him, and reigned in his place.}} And Hoshea the son of Elah conspired against Pekah the son of Remaliah, and smote him, and slew him, and reigned in his place.

The repetition of a sentence of the same sort could have been the cause of the deletion of the passage concerning Menahem II. [ed. that is, the accession of Pekah to the throne *twice* together with the name of Menahem occurring *twice* (and also acceding to the throne *twice,* albeit two different individuals with the name Menahem) might have been cause enough for a scribe to delete a part of the passage, believing it to be doubtful. The Book of 2Kings 16:1, it should be noted, mentions Year 17 of Pekah, which is the point when Mr. Oppert says Pekah's Reign might have been interrupted. Otherwise, there are three facts that do not agree, which are the 20-year Rule of Pekah, the 30 years space in which his Rule falls, and the name of the tributary to Assyria in Year 8 of Tiglath-pileser, Menahem of Samaria, explained by Mr. Oppert, as according to the preceding logic, and with which all of the evidence of both inscription and the Bible agree.]

VIII

We now return to Ahab. We discussed earlier (1), that the reference to the King of Israel, in the eponymy of Dayan-Asur (900), can only be applied to a fact that dates to just before the end of his reign. This is Year 6 of Shalmaneser, and Jehu, who is after the death of Ahab by 13 years less some days, appears already in Year 18 of this King of Nineveh [ed. that is to say, Shalmaneser III of Assyria].

It follows from the texts of Shalmaneser that his accession as King preceded by a short space of time the month of Iyar (May). Regnal years ran thus from spring to spring. Jehu, already appearing at the end of Year 18, had ascended the throne in late winter of 887. But twelve and a half years is the shortest possible time between Ahab and Jehu. The death of Ahab at Ramoth-Gilead thus must have followed almost immediately his defeat at Karkar. Even before the discovery of new texts, we had the Book of Kings in hand, proof that the loss of 10,000 Israelites coincided with the end of Ahab, and new documents bring these two events even closer together.

Ahab thus died in 900 (October-November) at the latest, and Jehu ascended to the throne in the spring of 887.

This date is obtained with reference to the solar eclipse of June 13, 809.

We have seen, through deductions provided by the eclipse of the moon on March 5, 721, Uzziah had ascended the throne in the middle of 810 (9191) (2). But between Ahab and Uzziah are:

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5 years of Joshaphat, 5 years.
Reign of Joram,       7 years plus a fraction.
                     ____
                      12
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Report....

(1) See also *Histoire des empires de Chaldée et d'Assyrie,* p. 141.
(2) Mr. de Saulcy, in his work on Jewish chronology, arrived at the same time, and he managed to fix all the events to periods which, if not completely accurate, are at least very near to the truth. It should be added that Mr. de Saulcy himself set the error limits that his calculation seemed to him to entail.

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Report. . . . . 12
Reign of Ahaziah,  1 year, less a fraction.
Reign of Athaliah, 6 years, plus a fraction.
Reign of Jehoash, 40 years, id.
Reign of Amaziah, 29 years, id.
                  ___
         TOTAL    89 years, plus something.
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By adding these 89 years and a fraction to 810, we also get the end of 900 (9101). Solomon's death falls therefore in 978 (9023), at the highest.

IX

Summarizing the key dates:

9071. 930. Accession of Sardanapalus III (June 2).
9096. 905. Accession of Shalmaneser III.
9101. 900. (in summer). Defeat of Benhadad and Ahab.
9101. 900. (October-November). Death of Ahab.
9127. 874. Jubilee of Shalmaneser.
9132. 870. Reign of Samas-Bin.
9144. 857. Reign of Belochus and of Semiramis.
9173. 828. Reign of Shalmaneser IV.
9183. 818. Reign of Asur-edil-el.
9191. 810. Accession of Uzziah of Judah.
9192. 809. June 13 solar eclipse.
9201. 800. Reign of Asur-lihhis, the lazy.
9209. 792. First capture of Nineveh. Interruption of eponyms for 47 years.
9242. 759. First reign of Pekah.
9243. 758. Reign of Jotham.
9257. 744. Iyar 13 (May), accession of Tiglath-Pileser.
9259. 742. Reign of Ahaz and Menahem II.
9264. 737. Tribute of Menahem II.
9268. 733. Campaign of the Assyrians against Pekah.
9271. 730. Accession of Hosea.
9274. 727. Accession of Shalmaneser V and Hezekiah (autumn).
9277. 724. Beginning of the Siege of Samaria.
9279. 722. Death Shalmaneser V. 721. Reign of Sargon

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9280. 721. Reign of Sargon (late winter). Capture of Samaria (summer).
9288. 713. Hezekiah disease in his Year 14.
9297. 704. Ab 12 (August). Reign of Sennacherib.
9301. 700. Expedition to Judea (14 years after the King's illness).
9303. 698. Reign of Manasseh.
9321. 680. Reign of Esarhaddon.
9334. 667. Reign of Ashurbanipal and of his brother Samas-suma-ukin (Saosdouchinos of Ptolemy).
9358. 643. Reign of Amon of Judah.
9360. 641. Reign of Josiah.
9391. 610. Reign of Joakim [ed. aka Jehoiakim].
9395. 606. Destruction of Nineveh.
9402. 599. Reign of Jehoiachin and Zedekiah.
9413. 588. Ab 9 (August). Destruction of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar.

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