

# Possible Outlines of Biblical Chronology

By Raymond C. Faircloth

Because the Scriptures were not written with chronology in mind (see STUDY 9) such cannot be developed from any of the genealogies but only from the chronological markers and certain relational information. Also figures given may be rounded up or down so that, in those cases, **no absolute dates can be established**. i.e. 480 and 430 could be round numbers. Also there is the issue of ordinal numbers with the possibility that the final year is not complete. i.e. 480<sup>th</sup> represents 479 complete years.

## Outline A. With Pivotal Date 586/7 B.C Destruction of Jerusalem

With the almost unanimously accepted date of **586/7 B.C** (a few accept 588 and WTS uses 607) for the **destruction of Jerusalem**, this chronology starts by adding back the total of the rulerships of the kings of Judah from Rehoboam to Zedekiah. This amounts to approximately **390** years.

586 B.C + 389 years = **975 B.C** for the **1<sup>st</sup> year of Rehoboam**.

.....

❖ "...the time that **Solomon** reigned in Jerusalem over all Israel was **40 years**" (*1 Kings 11:42*).

975 B.C + 40 years = **1015 B.C** for the **beginning of Solomon's reign**.

.....

❖ "In the **480<sup>th</sup> year** after the Israelites came out of **Egypt**, in the **fourth year** of Solomon's reign over Israel...he began **building the temple of Yahweh**" (*1 Kings 6:1 NJB*).

1015 B.C less 3 years = **1012 B.C** for **Solomon's fourth year**.

1012 B.C + 479 years = **1491 B.C** for the date of **the Exodus**.

.....

❖ "The time that the **Israelites spent in Egypt was 430 years**. And in the very day the 430 years ended all Yahweh's armies left Egypt" (*Ex. 12:40, 41 NJB*).

1491 B.C. + 430 years = **1921 B.C.** for the date of **Jacob's entry into Egypt**.

.....

❖ "So **Jacob** said to Pharaoh, 'The years of my alien residences are **130 years**; few and distressing the days of **the years of my life** have proved'" (*Gen. 47:9*).

1921 B.C. + 130 years = **2051 B.C.** for the date of **Jacob's birth**.

.....

❖ "...and **Isaac** was **60 years old** at her giving them birth [*Esau and Isaac*]" (*Gen. 25:2*).

2051 B.C + 60 years = **2111 B.C.** for the date of **Isaac's birth**.

.....

❖ "And **Abraham** was **100 years old** when Isaac his son was born to him" (*Gen. 21:5*).

2111 B.C. + 100 years = **2211 B.C.** for the date of **Abraham's birth**.

.....

❖ "Terah lived on for 70 years, after which he became father to Abram, Nahor and Haran" (*Gen. 11:26*).

However, the following Scriptures show that only the first of Terah's sons (not Abram) was born when Terah was 70 years old:

❖ "The days of Terah were 205 years. Then Terah died in Haran" (*Gen. 11:32*).

Soon after Terah died Abram departed for Canaan:

❖ "Abram was 75 years old when he went out from Haran" (*Gen. 12:4*).

So **Terah** was 205 less 75 = **130 years old** when Abram was born.

2211 B.C + 130 years = **2341 B.C.** for the date of **Terah's birth.**

Summary: From the destruction of Jerusalem: 586 B.C.

- + 389 years = 975 B.C. Rehoboam's 1<sup>st</sup> regnal year.
- + 40 years = 1015 B.C. The beginning of Solomon's reign.
- less 3 years = 1012 B.C. Solomon's fourth year.
- + 479 years = 1491 B.C. The Exodus.
- + 430 years = 1921 B.C. Jacob's entry into Egypt.
- + 130 years = 2051 B.C. Jacob's birth.
- + 60 years = 2111 B.C. Isaac's birth.
- + 100 years = 2211 B.C. Abraham's birth.
- + 130 years = **2341 B.C.** Terah's birth.

NOTE 1: It is **390 years** from Rehoboam's first year to Zedekiah's last year, whereas Edwin Thiele reaches his harmonization with many overlapping co-regencies. This seems to be contrived. Evidently there is only one co-regency which is that of Jehoshaphat and his son Jehoram. (2 Kings 3:1; 8:16; 8:25; 9:29).

Sum of the reigns of Judah's monarchs = 394 years 6 months and 10 days.

add the year of 'the captivity' = 395 years 6 months and 10 days.

deduct 4 years for the co-regency = 391 years 6 months and 10 days.

deduct 2 years that Jehoram, Ahaziah and Athaliah laid claim to the throne

= 389 years 6 months and 10 days. This is "in the 390<sup>th</sup> year" and gives certainty to

the 390 years as being the correct figure that runs back to the dividing of the kingdom. This would mean that Thiele's system is 45 years short.

NOTE 2: With reference to the **430 years** in Exodus 12:40 please see STUDY 9.

NOTE 3: With reference to the date of 2211 B.C for **Abram's birth** (but ISBE gives 2167). This does not harmonize with the dating proposed as being early 2<sup>nd</sup> Millennium B.C. given by archaeologists. They date the destruction of Sodom as c.1900 when Abraham was about 99 years old. Only by accepting the 390 years as not applicable to the chronology or taking the 430 years as not the duration of the sojourning in Egypt can agreement be found with the findings of archaeology. Yet the Scriptures do not seem to allow for those proposals.

## Outline B. With Pivotal Date as 926 B.C. as Solomon's Fourth Regnal Year

*THIS KEY DATE* of **926 B.C** was established by Edwin Thiele. This has now been the most widely accepted chronology since the mid 20<sup>th</sup> century in the evangelical world. However, Thiele relied heavily on Assyrian chronology to create a date harmonization with the kings of Israel/Judah. In so doing he contrived many co-regencies of the kings of Israel/Judah. Such a harmonization puts the biblical data as secondary to the Assyrian and therefore it would seem to be scripturally less certain than OUTLINE A. presented above. **Shishak invaded Jerusalem in the fifth year of Rehoboam** (Solomon's successor). This is recorded in Shishak's annals. Also, 1 Kings 11:40 shows that Solomon was contemporary with Shishak. The following Scriptures provide the chronological markers:

- ❖ "It came about in the **fifth year** of King **Rehoboam** that **Shishak** the king of Egypt came up against Jerusalem" (*1 Kings 14:25*).

Therefore **Rehoboam's reign** computes as beginning in **931 B.C.**

.....

**Solomon** reigned **40 years** (1 Kings 11:42) which would be c.971 B.C making *Solomon's fourth year* c. **967 B.C.**

.....

- ❖ "In the **480<sup>th</sup> year** after the Israelites came out of **Egypt**, in the **fourth year** of Solomon's reign over Israel... he began **building the temple of Yahweh**" (*1 Kings 6:1 NJB*).

This date of 967 B.C is accepted by many conservative biblical scholars and several historians as the approximate date for the beginning of temple construction.

So 967 B.C. + 479 years = **1446 B.C.** for the date of **the Exodus.**

.....

- ❖ “The time that the **Israelites spent in Egypt was 430 years**. And in the very day the 430 years ended all Yahweh’s armies left Egypt” (*Ex. 12:40, 41 NJB*).

1446 B.C. + 430 years = **1876 B.C.** for the date of **Jacob’s entry into Egypt**.

.....

- ❖ “So **Jacob** said to Pharaoh, ‘The years of my alien residences are **130 years**; few and distressing the days of **the years of my life** have proved’” (*Gen. 47:9*).

1876 B.C. + 130 years = **2006 B.C.** for the date of **Jacob’s birth**.

.....

- ❖ “...and **Isaac** was **60 years old** at her giving them birth [*Esau and Isaac*]” (*Gen. 25:26*).

2006 B.C + 60 years = **2066 B.C.** for the date of **Isaac’s birth**.

.....

- ❖ “And **Abraham** was **100 years old** when Isaac his son was born to him” (*Gen. 21:5*).

2066 B.C. + 100 years = **2166 B.C.** for the date of **Abraham’s birth**.

.....

- ❖ “Terah lived on for 70 years, after which he became father to Abram, Nahor and Haran” (*Gen. 11:26*).

However, the following scriptures show that only the first of Terah’s sons (not Abram) was born when Terah was 70 years old.

- ❖ “The days of Terah were 205 years. Then Terah died in Haran” (*Gen. 11:32*).

Soon after Terah died Abram departed for Canaan.

- ❖ “Abram was 75 years old when he went out from Haran” (*Gen. 12:4*).

So **Terah** was 205 less 75 = **130 years old** when Abram was born.

2166 B.C + 130 years = **2296 B.C.** for the date of **Terah’s birth**.

Summary: The beginning of temple construction: 967 B.C.

- + 479 years = 1446 B.C. The Exodus.
- + 430 years = 1876 B.C. Jacob’s entry into Egypt.
- + 130 years = 2006 B.C. Jacob’s birth.
- + 60 years = 2066 B.C. Isaac’s birth.
- + 100 years = 2166 B.C. Abraham’s birth.
- + 130 years = 2296 B.C. Terah’s birth.

The date of **2341 B.C** as per OUTLINE A, concerning the birth of Abraham’s father Terah, is the furthest back within a biblical chronology that can be stated with any degree of confidence. Beyond that date one is in the realm of genealogies with their characteristic omissions. This pattern of sometimes providing other genealogies which help fill in the gaps gives a picture so that Adam’s creation could easily have been beyond 7000 B.C. This fits well with the dating of artefacts by archaeologists. The oldest dated culture in the Bible lands is the Mesolithic Natufian culture in the caves at the base of Mount Carmel and dated at between 10,000 and 7000 B.C. Jericho has been demonstrated to be the oldest Neolithic city in the world being c.7000.B.C. Of course, archaeologists recognize a margin of error in their dating methods. This has usually been in the order of 5% and makes little difference to their results in the Mesolithic age. For anybody in modern times to use the Bible in an attempt to fix the date of Adam’s creation as being about 4000 B.C seems to be either irresponsible or demonstrates lack of awareness of the purpose and method of construction of biblical genealogies or of having some personal agenda.