

Isaiah



The Book of Isaiah

Isaiah was the first of the so-called Major Prophets, and is widely regarded as the greatest of the Old Testament prophets.

Isaiah began his ministry in 741 B.C. (the year that King Uzziah died see [here](#)) and his ministry lasted through the siege of Jerusalem by the Assyrian army in 701 B.C. However, the Assyrian army did not take the city; Jerusalem was delivered. An angel of the Lord struck down the Assyrian army at the gates of Jerusalem without a single arrow being fired. It was Isaiah's preaching that saved the city from destruction. So it is appropriate that the name "Isaiah" means "The Salvation of the Lord".

As you will see, Isaiah not only left us with a prophecy of the Messiah, his entire book is a miniature version of the whole Bible, and its central figure is Christ crucified. Isaiah wrote his book 770 years before the New Testament Gospel was preached, yet Isaiah clearly foresaw that Gospel, and the whole Bible in its entirety. What you will read is proof of this. It seems that Isaiah's hand was "guided".

The Book of Isaiah divides into Old and New Testament Parts:

The Book of Isaiah is an interesting document. It consists of 66 chapters, just as our present day Bible has 66 books. And just as our present day Bible divides into the Old Testament (with 39 books) and the New Testament (with 27 books), so also does the Book of Isaiah divide into 2 distinct parts, one of 39 chapters and the other of 27 chapters.

Chapters 1-39 of the Book of Isaiah are known as the "Book of Judgement", and (like the 39 books of the Old Testament) are filled with judgement upon immoral idolatrous men. Judah has sinned; the surrounding nations have sinned; the whole earth has sinned. Judgement must come, for God cannot allow such blatant sin to go unpunished forever.

The last 27 chapters of the Book of Isaiah (chapters 40-66) are known as the "Book of Comfort". These 27 chapters (like the 27 books of the New Testament) declare a message of hope. The Messiah is coming as a Saviour and a Sovereign to bear a cross and to wear a crown.

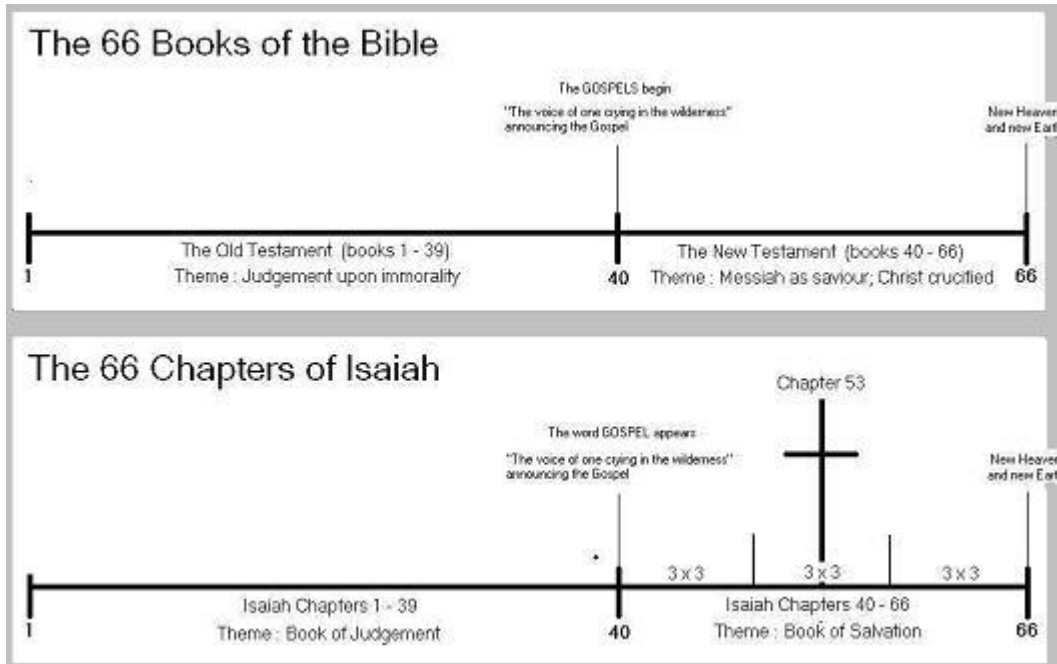
So in its structure, and thematic content, the 2 parts of the Book of Isaiah closely match the structure and themes of the whole Bible – its Old Testament and New Testament.

Central Figure of the New Testament Part is Jesus Christ:

On close examination of the last 27 chapters of Isaiah (corresponding to the New Testament), we find something quite remarkable. These 27 chapters divide into three groups of 9 (3 groups of 3 x 3). Each of these groups is separated by the phrase "There is no rest for the wicked".

The central group of 9 chapters deals with the Servant Messiah, and the central chapter within this central group is chapter 53. Chapter 53 of Isaiah describes the DEATH OF JESUS ON THE CROSS. So the central figure of Isaiah chapters 40-66 is the crucified Christ.

In summary, chapters 40 to 66 (the last 27 chapters) of the Book of Isaiah correspond to the New Testament (the last 27 books of the Bible). We have seen that the theme of these chapters is salvation, and the central figure (found in the central chapter – chapter 53) is that of Christ crucified.



The Beginning of the Gospel of Isaiah Corresponds with the beginning of the New Testament:

Incredibly, the very text of chapter 40 of the Book of Isaiah corresponds to the text of the 40th book of the Bible, which is the first book of the New Testament.

1) John the Baptist

Chapter 40 v 3 of Isaiah reads

"The voice of him that crieth in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way for the LORD, make straight in the desert a highway for our God. Every valley shall be exalted, and every mountain and hill shall be made low: and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough places plain: And the glory of the LORD shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together: for the mouth of the LORD hath spoken it."

These words find a precise correspondence in the 40th Book of the Bible – the Gospel of Matthew.

Matthew (40th Book) Chapter 3 reads –

"In those days came John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judea, And saying, Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand. For this is he that was spoken of by the prophet Isaiah, saying, 'The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the LORD, make his paths straight.'"

These are the words spoken by John the Baptist who announced the coming of the Kingdom of God and the Gospel.

2) Explicit reference to the word GOSPEL:

Richard McGough, on his website www.biblewheel.com, points out an even deeper level of connection.

The connection between Isaiah 40 and the Gospel is made explicit in the text of Isaiah 40 v 9 –

“O Zion, that bringest good tidings, get thee up into the high mountain; O Jerusalem, that bringest good tidings, lift up thy voice with strength; lift it up, be not afraid; say unto the cities of Judah, ‘Behold your God!’ Behold, the Lord GOD will come with strong hand, and his arm shall rule for him: behold, his reward is with him, and his work before him. He shall feed his flock like a shepherd: he shall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry them in his bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with young.”

Behold your God!” and “all flesh shall see” refer to the physical incarnation of God in Jesus Christ, who, becoming physical, was visible to all flesh.

This passage from Isaiah contains the FIRST OCCURRENCE in the Bible of the Hebrew word MAVESERET, meaning BRINGER OF GOOD TIDINGS. The Greek Septuagint version of Isaiah 40 v 9 translates “that bringest good tidings” into the word EVANGELIZEMONOS. This word is used in the New Testament, where it is translated as PREACH THE GOSPEL (Romans 9 v 18). It is from the root EVANGELIDZO from which we get the word EVANGELIZE. It is the root of the word translated GOSPEL throughout the New Testament.

So Isaiah chapter 40 uses the very words spoken by John the Baptist, the announcer of the Gospel, and introduces the word GOSPEL, just as The Book of Matthew (The 40th Book) starts with John the Baptist announcing the Gospel and is the first book of the New Testament (The Gospel). The phrases “Good Tidings” and “Good News” occur 6 times in the 27 chapters of Isaiah that correspond to the New Testament, and these phrases are completely absent from the 39 chapters of Isaiah that correspond to the 39 books of the Old Testament.

In summary:

We have a familiar series of events –

- Isaiah's name means "Salvation of God" ; just as Jesus' name means "Salvation"
 - Isaiah preached for 40 years before the siege of Jerusalem in 701 B.C.; just as the Gospel was preached for 40 years before the siege of Jerusalem in 70 A.D.
 - Isaiah leaves us a Gospel of Salvation, which -
1. Has 27 chapters corresponding to the 27 books of the New Testament,
 2. Has the central character of Christ crucified – in chapter 53 (the central chapter)
 3. Introduces the word GOSPEL in chapter 40 corresponding to the 40th Book of the Bible, Matthew – which is the first book of the New Testament,.
 4. In chapter 40 Isaiah uses the very words spoken by John the Baptist – the announcer of the Gospel.
 5. The last chapter of Isaiah, Chapter 66 uses the words “New Heavens and New Earth”, the very words found in the 66th book of the Bible and last book of the New Testament – the Book of Revelation

Isaiah 53, the central chapter of Isaiah's "New Testament" foretold that the Messiah would come as a suffering servant to suffer and die for the sins of many.

“Surely he took up our infirmities and carried our sorrows, yet we considered him stricken by God, smitten by him, and afflicted. But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was upon him, and by his wounds we are healed. We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to his own way; and the Lord

has laid on him the iniquity of us all." Isaiah 53

770 years

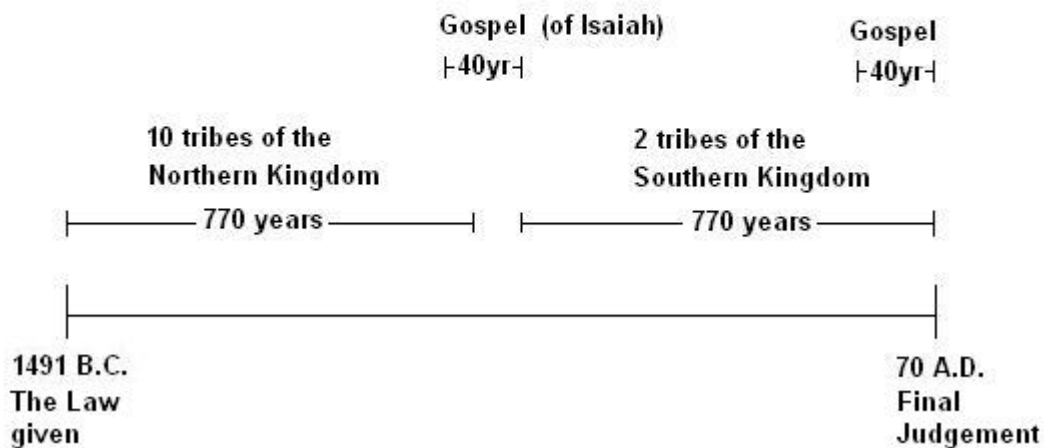
In the time of Isaiah, Israel consisted of two "kingdoms" - the Northern Kingdom - centred on the capital Samaria, and the Southern Kingdom - with it's capital at Jerusalem. The Northern Kingdom perished in 721 B.C., 770 years after the Exodus (1491 B.C.). However the Southern Tribes escaped destruction and were miraculously delivered in 701 B.C.

Northern Kingdom 1492 - 721 = 770 years

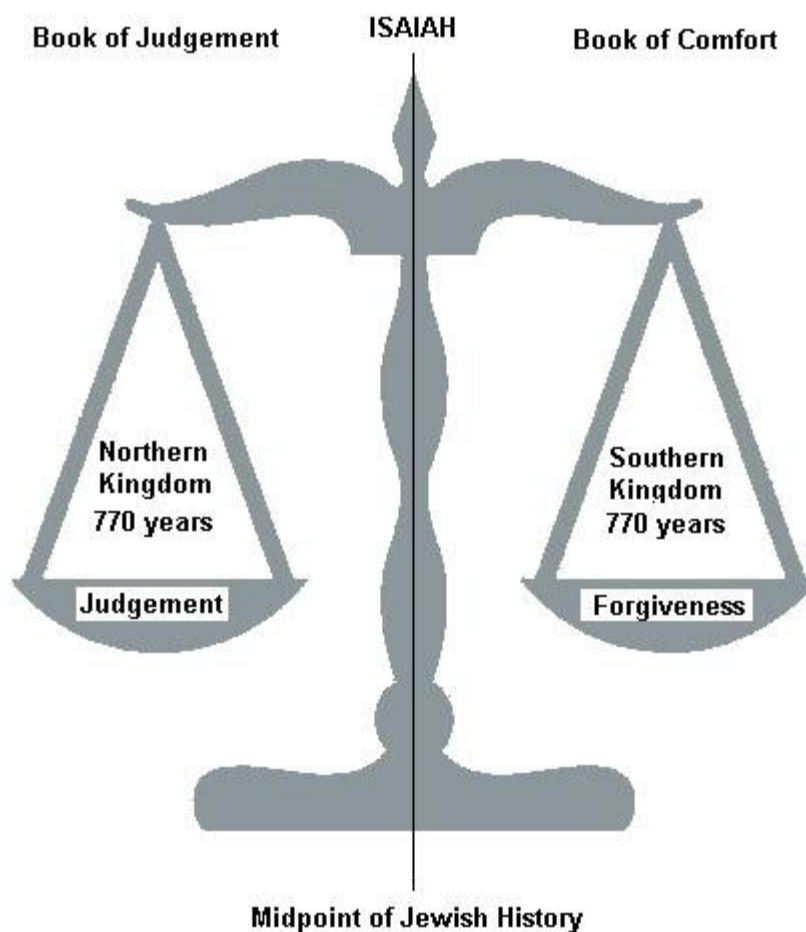
Southern Kingdom 701 + 70 = 770 years (we do not count 0 B.C.)

The Northern Kingdom perished after 770 years. It was utterly destroyed by the Assyrians. However Hezekiah repented, and the Southern Kingdom was spared. Just as Hezekiah was given an extension of his life, so the Southern Kingdom was given an extension for 770 years - a second chance.

Isaiah's Gospel appears at the midpoint of Jewish history. Curiously it occupies a point between the judgement of the Northern Kingdom and the salvation of the Southern Kingdom.



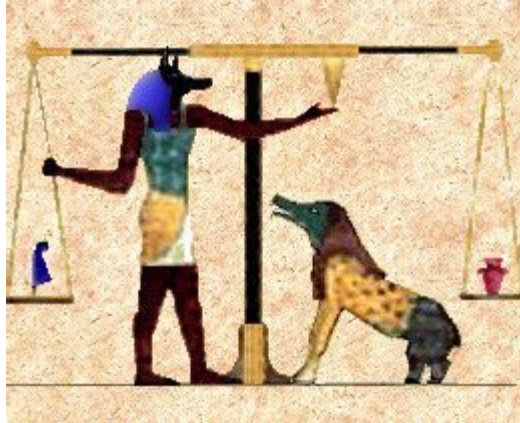
So the "Gospel of Isaiah" appeared at the precise midpoint of Jewish history, between the JUDGEMENT of the Northern Kingdom and the SALVATION of the Southern Kingdom. And this theme of judgement and salvation is mirrored in Isaiah.



What is more remarkable still is that Isaiah preached his gospel during the 40 years prior to the siege of Jerusalem (from 741 B.C. till 701 B.C.). In the same way, Jesus' disciples would later preach the Gospel for 40 years prior to the siege of Jerusalem in 70 A.D. (from 30 A.D till 70 A.D.). One ministry perfectly reflects the other - in content , in duration, and in the final ending. So, 770 years before the time of Christ, Isaiah had given the Jews a "Gospel in miniature". His prophetic foresight of the Gospel was fulfilled 770 years later (from 741 B.C. till 30 A.D.) when the true Gospel was preached.

Perhaps it was because of the preaching of Isaiah's gospel that the southern kingdom repented and was spared from destruction in 701 B.C. It's final destruction came in 70 A.D. - 770 years later, at the hands of the Roman army. Peter had once asked Jesus -

"Lord, how many times shall I forgive my brother when he sins against me? Up to seven times?" Jesus answered, "I tell you, not seven times, but seventy-seven times." Matthew 18v21.



"Who do people say that I am?"

In the New Testament, different people had different opinions as to who Jesus was. Some said he was Elijah, some said he was a prophet and others thought he was just a good teacher. "Who do people say that I am?". John's gospel provides the answer in 7 "I AM" sayings

There are the seven [distinct] "I AM" sayings in John:

- 6v35 "I am the bread of life"
- 8v12 "I am the light of the world"
- 10v7 "I am the gate for the sheep"
- 10v11 "I am the good shepherd"
- 11v25 "I am the resurrection and the life"
- 14v6 "I am the way, the truth and the life"
- 15v1 "I am the true vine"

Similarly, there are seven 'I AM' sayings in Isaiah 43:

- v 3: "I am the Lord, your God"
- v10 "so that you may know and believe me and understand that I am he"
- v 11 "I, even I, am the Lord"
- v12 "I am God"
- v13 "from ancient days I am he." [KJV: Before the day was, I am he.]
- v15 "I am the Lord"
- v25 "I, even I, am he who blots out your transgressions."

John also records the signs or miracles that Jesus performed with each "I AM" saying. John records seven of these signs, echoing the work of creation:

- 2v1 Turning water into wine
- 4v46 the official's son
- 5v1 the sick man
- 6v5 the feeding of the 5000
- 6v16 walking on water
- 9v1 the man born blind
- 11v1 the raising of Lazarus

Appendix 1

Date of the Exodus

1. Based on Bible Data

During his lifetime, Ussher was outstanding as a theologian, textual critic, linguist, and historian. But he is known today as a historian--and only for one of his works, though he actually wrote three compendious histories in all. The one for which he became so infamous was his final one, written in retirement during the final years of his life; it wasn't actually released in his native language until after his death.

To start out with, I'll allow a [hostile witness](#) to explain the facts concerning how *Annals* was compiled:

"James Ussher (1581-1656) was the Anglican archbishop of Armagh Ireland, and "Primate of All Ireland", meaning the head of the Anglican church in Ireland. He was one of the most respected scholars and theologians of his time, and traveled widely in search of original documents, or at least the oldest versions of them he could find. The many books and documents he collected through his life were to form the nucleus of the great library at Trinity College in Armagh.

"Ussher is primarily known today for his chronological work, in particular for the precise date he fixed for the Creation of the world. This date is so often misquoted, usually to get a cheap chuckle from the reader or a lecture audience, that I think it is worth not only putting Ussher's work in its proper historical perspective, but also to make his words on the matter available for people to read for themselves.

"Contrary to popular misconception, Ussher did not simply count up years by following who begat whom in the Book of Genesis. Rather, he undertook a careful, critical synthesis of historical documents including Biblical, Middle Eastern and Mediterranean sources, knowledge of the calendrical systems of antiquity, Roman history, and any ancient documentary sources he could get acquire and verify (then as now the lucrative traffic in antiquities lead to numerous counterfeits in circulation). His scholarship was impeccable, and the end of that scholarship was not so much to fix the date of Creation (although that was the one result we remember), but rather to compile as complete and historically correct a chronology of human history as the documentary evidence would allow. It is well to remember that in the 17th century this was a topic of great scholarly interest, as it is now. Ussher was instrumental in putting this endeavor on a sound scholarly basis, as well as for exposing numerous counterfeit documents. "

[James Ussher](#), in [The Annals of the World](#), placed the Exodus at 1491 BC. He based his calculations on -

1. Accepting 586/7 BC for the destruction of Jerusalem
2. A direct reckoning of the dates-of-accession of the Kings of the Divided Kingdoms [Northern](#) and [Southern](#).
3. The Bible's explicit statement that [Solomon](#) broke ground on the [Temple of Jerusalem](#) exactly 479 years after the Exodus.^[22]

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 ruler-ships of the kings of Judah from Rehoboam to Zedekiah. This amounts to approximately **390** years. Ussher took a literal reading of the Bible. He did not try to reinterpret the Bible in the light of any non-biblical source.

586 B.C + 389 years = 975 B.C for the 1st year of Rehoboam.

1 Kings 11:42:

“...the time that Solomon reigned in Jerusalem over all Israel was 40 years.”

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

1 Kings 6:1 NJB:

“In the 480th 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.”

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.

It is **390 years** from Rehoboam's first year to Zedekiah's last year. During this period there is only one co-regency which is that of Jehoshaphat and his son Jehoram, whose rulerships overlap by 4 years (2 Kings 3:1; 8:16; 8:25; 9:29).

Ussher assumed:

1. That he knew for certain the date of the death of [Nebuchadnezzar II](#)--which was 562 BC. [\[1\]\[2\]\[3\]](#)
2. That this was also the date that Nebuchadnezzar's son [Evil-Merodach](#) began to reign.

From this date, he worked backward, using the meticulous dates that appear throughout I and II Kings, each of which gives a date of a king's accession with references to a year of reign of another king--except that kings of the [Southern Kingdom](#) after the conquest of the [Northern Kingdom](#) are listed only with their ages and lengths of reign, and King [Jehoiachin](#) is referenced by how many years he had been a captive when Evil-Merodach acceded to his throne. That sequence definitely places the division of the kingdoms at 975 BC, and the beginning of Solomon's reign at 1015 BC. [I Kings 6:1](#) states that Solomon broke ground on the Temple in the fourth year of his reign--and that this event took place in the *four hundred eightieth year since the [Exodus of Israel](#)*. This places the Exodus at 1491 BC. (The sequence also places the [Fall of Jerusalem](#) at 588 BC, because it happened 11 years after [Jehoiachin](#) was taken captive.)

2. Based on Assyrian Data

Modern scholars seek to make the Bible fit in with the chronologies of other nations. For example, Thiele makes a number of assumptions from observations of Assyrian stone tablets that, he believes, warrant a *revision* of the king list in I and II Kings. **Thiele's sole warrant for favoring his date over Ussher's is his attempt to reconcile the king lists of the Divided Kingdoms Northern and Southern with the chronology of the Assyrians.** The point being that in the absence of non-biblical sources, Thiele too would adopt Ussher's chronology, since Ussher's Chronology is based on exactly what the Bible says when taken at face value.

Ussher calculated King Jehu as having acceded to the throne of Israel (and also killed King [Ahaziah](#) of Judah) in 884 BC. However Thiele argues that The Black Obelisk of Shalmaneser III mentions a king identified as Jehu, son of Omri as paying tribute to King Shalmaneser III in 841

B.C. Shalmaneser III mentions that in the eighteenth year of his reign he went against "Hazael of Aram", shut him up in "Damascus, his royal city", and "received tribute of the men of Tyre, Sidon and of Jehu, the son of Omri".'

This is a 43 year difference with the Bible. Which is correct - the Bible or the Assyrian inscription? Thiele opts for the later and *moves forward the date of Jehu's campaign* from 884 BC to 841 BC. **That movement alone accounts for 43 of the 45 years by which the Ussher and Thiele dates of the Exodus and the Temple are discrepant.**

Thus Thiele assumes that the Assyrian inscription is correct, and that the Bible is in error.

Is the Assyrian inscription correct?

Faulstich discovered that much of the information on the Black Obelisk that is attributed to Shalmaneser was taken from earlier monuments. This plagiarism was so common in Assyrian history that the father of Shalmaneser III pronounced a special curse on kings who tried to steal his fame by ascribing to themselves deeds he had done. Faulstich goes on to document inconsistencies among the Black Obelisk, the Tigris Inscriptions, the Statue Inscriptions and the Bull-Colossi. This type of historical revisionism results in the collapsing of historical events into a shorter time frame. Ref: Faulstich, E.W., *History, Harmony & The Hebrew Kings*, Chronology Books, Spencer, Iowa, pp. 143—157, 1986.

Does Thiele's proposed revision fit in with the rest of the Bible?

To make the Bible fit in with the Black Obelisk, Thiele was forced to compress greatly the history of the [Northern Kingdom](#) after Jehu. To collapse the Biblical history, he created overlapping reigns of kings so that the total length of the period is significantly shortened.

For example, the Bible says that Uzziah was 16 years old when his father (King Amaziah) died, and Uzziah was made king. And Uzziah reigned 52 years. Thiele argues that Uzziah's reign overlaps with that of his father, so when his father died, Uzziah had already been reigning 24 years!! This would mean that Uzziah began to reign 8 years before he was even born!! This is illustrative of how much Thiele has to twist the straightforward reading of the Bible in order to fit it in with the Assyrian chronology. He has to insist that a person was made king eight years before that person was even born - and in direct contradiction to the clear reading of Scripture. Scripture actually says -

'And they brought him [Amaziah, Uzziah's father] on horses, and he was buried at Jerusalem with his fathers in the city of David. And all the people of Judah took Azariah [Uzziah] who was sixteen years old, and made him king in place of his father Amaziah' (2 Kings 14:20,21).

'In the twenty-seventh year of Jeroboam king of Israel, Azariah [Uzziah] the son of Amaziah king of Judah began to reign. He was sixteen years old when he began to reign, and he reigned fifty-two years in Jerusalem ...' (2 Kings 15:1,2).

By all rules of exegesis, one would conclude that Uzziah was made king after the death of his father when he was 16 years old. This event happened in the 27th year of Jeroboam.

A second example.

The Bible clearly says that: 1) Menahem began to reign in the 39th year of Uzziah, and Menahem reigned for 10 years, followed by his son, Pekahiah, who reigned for two years (Tables 1 & 2); 2) Pekahiah was murdered by his commander, Pekah, who in turn reigned for 20 years. By normal rules of exegesis, this would be the most normal way to understand the text. 'In the thirty-ninth year of Azariah [Uzziah] king of Judah, Menahem the son of Gadi began to reign over Israel, ten years in Samaria' (2 Kings 15:17).

'And Menahem slept with his fathers. And Pekahiah his son reigned in his place. In the fiftieth year of Uzziah [Azariah] king of Judah, Pekahiah the son of Menahem began to reign over Israel in Samaria, two years. ... But Pekah the son of Remaliah, a commander of his, conspired against him and struck him in Samaria, in the palace of the king's house, with Argob and Arieah, and fifty men of the Gileadites with him. And he killed him and reigned in his place. ... In the fifty-second year of Uzziah [Azariah] king of Judah, Pekah the son of Remaliah began to reign over Israel in Samaria, twenty years' (2 Kings 15:22—27).

However Thiele states that Pekah began to reign in the 39th year of Uzziah!!! This is not a reinterpretation of Scripture. It is a direct contradiction. Thiele is throwing the Bible out of the window.

Once again, a simple reading of Scripture DOES NOT SUPPORT the secular chronology proposed by Thiele. Rather a straight forward reading of Scripture gives the Ussher chronology. This may vary from our current understanding of secular history, archaeology or evolution, but IT IS WHAT THE BIBLE ACTUALLY SAYS.

While Ussher assumed the primacy of Scripture, Thiele assumed the primacy of secular historical records (what Ussher called "profane history"). Pierce in particular contends that Thiele had no right, according to the accepted canons of Biblical scholarship, to impart different meanings to verses that follow the same pattern without sufficient reason--an argument that [William of Occam](#) might have made. Even if Thiele did have that right, Pierce maintains that Thiele's clues, such as they are, are not even grounded in anything approaching certainty.

In summary

A straight forward reading of Scripture fixes the date of the Exodus at 1491 B.C. **THIS IS THE DATE GIVEN BY A STRAIGHT FORWARD READING OF THE BIBLE.** This is only contested by the existence of a single Assyrian tablet that mentions a king named Jehu, son of Omri. If we follow through with Thiele's adjustment, we are forced to compress or deliberately omit many succeeding reigns and so are forced to deny the overt meaning of Scripture in many places. See <http://www.answersingenesis.org/tj/v15/i1/chronology.asp>

Conclusion

The date of the Exodus, derived from a straight forward reading of Scripture, is 1491 B.C.

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