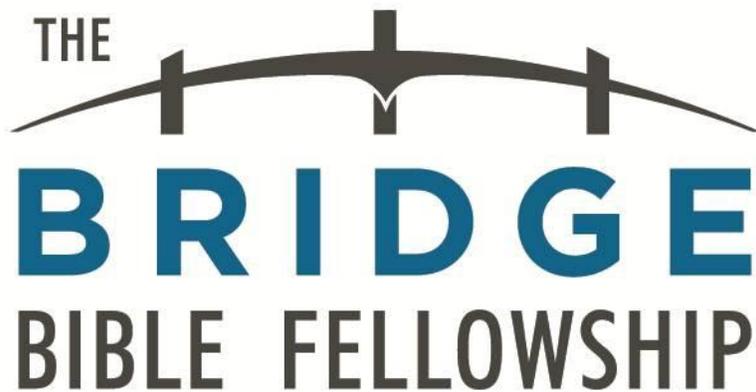


Outline Studies
in
Biblical Chronology

**A Continuous Chronology
from
Creation to the Cross**

**Chapter 4
The Exodus to The Monarchy**

A Harmonized Chronology of the Joshua-Judges Period



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Chapter 4 The Exodus to The Monarchy

A Harmonized Chronology of the Joshua–Judges Period

Contents:

Introductory Comments	1
Chronology of the ' <i>Period of the Judges</i> ' – the Biblical Data	2
Determination of the ' <i>Period of Conquest</i> ' Following the Exodus	3
'The Division of the Land' to 'The Beginning of the Judges'	4
A Consistent Chronology to the ' <i>Exodus–Conquest–Judges</i> ' Period	6
Chronology of the ' <i>Exodus–Joshua–Judges</i> ' Period	8
Summary of the 'Genesis-Exodus Connection' Chronology and the 'Exodus – Joshua – Judges' Chronology	9
Appendix #1: Chronological Considerations Pertinent to the Book of Ruth	10

The Exodus to The Monarchy

A Biblical Chronology

Alternate Title:

A HARMONIZED CHRONOLOGY OF THE JOSHUA—JUDGES PERIOD

Expanded Title:

A Detailed Chronological Analysis Pertaining to a Continuous Chronology Encompassing 'The Conquest and Division of the Land' and 'The Times of the Judges'

Introductory Comments:

Continuing with the thesis that the OT Scripture contains, entirely within itself, and devoid of any indeterminable gaps, a self-consistent chronology beginning with creation and continuing until the crucifixion, resurrection and ascension of Messiah, we proceed in this chapter to analyze Biblical accounts that lead to a fully-harmonized chronology extending from the conclusion of the exodus until the beginning of the monarchy – from the beginning of the campaign of conquest until the anointing of Saul as first king of national Israel.

An analysis of the Biblical data providing chronological markers covering this period exposes several difficult, but yet quite resolvable, interpretive challenges. To set forth the challenges in clear terms, and to demonstrate that a tenacious commitment to internal consistency yields a wholly satisfying resolution, several 'more technical' discussions appear in this chapter. For those ready to accept the outcomes derived from these technical sections, several charts are included to give a summary overview of the chronology of this period. The principal summaries appear on pages 38, 44 & 45.

An appendix is added where a chronological conundrum exists relative to the genealogy listed in the Book of Ruth. Some perspectives are offered, but the issue is left in a somewhat perplexing state if one insists that full genealogical accuracy resides in the received texts. Stated another way, the received genealogy and the developed, fully-consistent chronology challenge one's straightforward acceptance of the text, leading some to presume a liberty to arbitrarily insert additional generations into the received genealogy – a genealogy which appears with identical data in three 'time-separated' accounts in holy Scripture. It is the author's conviction that we ought to accept the genealogical data as authoritative, and therefore also the implied ages of the four mentioned heads of families.

Chronology of the 'Period of the Judges' – The Biblical Data

Scripture Reference	Description of Period and Persons	Years (duration)	Years (cumulative)
<i>Judges 3:8</i>	Served Cushan (King of Mesopotamia)	8	8
<i>Judges 3:11</i>	Deliverance by Othniel → period of rest	40	48
<i>Judges 3:14</i>	Served Eglon (King of Moab)	18	66
<i>Judges 3:30</i>	Deliverance by Ehud → period of rest	80	146
<i>Judges 4:1-3</i>	Served Jabin (King of Canaan)	20	166
<i>Judges 5:31</i>	Deliverance by Barak & Deborah → period of rest	40	206
<i>Judges 6:1</i>	Served Midian	7	213
<i>Judges 8:28</i>	Deliverance by Gideon → period of rest	40	253
<i>Judges 9:22</i>	Abimilech seizes authority and rules	3	256
<i>Judges 10:1-2</i>	Judged by Tola	23	279
<i>Judges 10:3</i>	Judged by Jair	22	301
<i>Judges 10:8</i>	Served Ammon (and Philistia)	18	319
<i>Judges 12:7</i>	Deliverance by Jephthah → period of rest	6	325
<i>Judges 12:8-10</i>	Judged by Ibzan	7	332
<i>Judges 12:11</i>	Judged by Elon	10	342
<i>Judges 12:13-14</i>	Judged by Abdon	8	350
<i>Judges 13:1</i>	Served Philistia	40	390
	<u>Note:</u> Samson judged Israel for 20 years during this 40 year servitude. (see <i>Judges 16:31</i> and also <i>15:20</i>)		
<i>I Sam. 4:18</i>	Judged by Eli	40	430
<i>I Sam. 7:2,6,15-17</i>	Judged by Samuel	20	450

Acts 13:16-23 (KJV)

16. "Then Paul stood up, and beckoning with his hand said, "Men of Israel, and ye that fear God, give audience.
17. The God of this people of Israel chose our fathers, and exalted the people when they dwelt as strangers in the land of Egypt, and with an high arm brought He them out of it.
18. And about the time of 40 years suffered He their manners in the wilderness.
19. And when He had destroyed 7 nations in the land of Canaan, He divided their land to them by lot.
20. And after that He gave unto them judges about the space of **450 years**, until Samuel the prophet.
21. And afterward they desired a king: and God gave unto them Saul the son of Cis, a man of the tribe of Benjamin, by the space of 40 years.
22. And when He had removed him, He raised up unto them David to be their king; to whom also He gave testimony, and said, 'I have found David the son of Jesse, a man after Mine own heart, which shall fulfill all My will.'
23. Of this man's seed hath God according to His promise raised unto Israel a Savior, Jesus:" "

Comment: The text of vs. 19-20 in some modern translations (e.g., *ESV*, *NASB* & *NIV*) vary from the *Geneva*, *KJ* & *NKJ* versions, containing somewhat different and imprecise statements with respect to the given chronology in the Book of Judges.

'The Division of the Land' to 'The Beginning of the Judges'

We explore here the chronological thread line that ties the close of Israel's conquest of the land with the "Period of the Judges". To this end we observe, in *Judges 11:26*, mention of a particular period of 300 years noted by Jephthah as he is moved to deliver Israel from a lengthy period of servitude under Ammon. Reference to this 300 year period, and some historical background, is provided in the following quotes taken from *Judges 10 & 11*.

"Then the sons of Ammon were summoned, and they camped in Gilead. And the sons of Israel gathered together and camped at Mizpah. And the people, the leaders of Gilead, said to one another, 'Who is the man who will begin to fight against the sons of Ammon? He shall become head over all the inhabitants of Gilead. Now Jephthah the Gileadite was a valiant warrior, ...'"
Judges 10:17-11:1

"Now Jephthah sent messengers to the king of the sons of Ammon, saying, 'What is between you and me, that you have come to me to fight against my land?' ... 'While Israel lived in Heshbon and its villages, and Aroer and its villages, and in all the cities that are on the banks of the Arnon, **300 years**, why did you not recover them within that time? I therefore have not sinned against you, but you are doing me wrong by making war against me; may the LORD, the Judge, judge today between the sons of Israel and the sons of Ammon. But the king of the sons of Ammon disregarded the message which Jephthah sent him.'" *Judges 11:12, 26-28*

The history in view in these texts goes back to Israel's initial time of conquest in the 38th year of the exodus (see *Deut. 2:14*). Israel began their campaign of conquest by capturing Heshbon and defeating their king Sihon (*Deut. 2-3*). As their campaign of conquest continued, they were told by Yahweh not to attack Ammon, nor to lay siege to any of their territory. The reason was specific and clear:

"for I will not give you the land of the sons of Ammon as a possession, because I have given it to the sons of Lot as a possession (*Duet. 2:19*)."

Now Ammon was a territory neighboring Heshbon, and east of the area of Gilead where several other cities & territories were consolidated under Israel's dominion in their early campaign on the eastern side of the Jordan. The territory solidified east of the Jordan was assigned to the tribes of Gad, Rueben, and half of Manasseh. Now, by Jephthah's time, over 300 years later, Israel was subjugated by Ammon and living under a heavy servitude. This servitude was initially limited to territory east of Jordan, which began during the judgeship of Jair. However, after Jair's death, the dominion of Ammon spread west across the Jordan to include the tribes of Judah, Benjamin & Ephraim.

With that historical background, we now frame the key issue with respect to chronology:

Issue: How should this 300 year period be reckoned, and how might its definition establish a definitive chronological link connecting the end of Joshua's time of conquest and the beginning of the period of the judges?

The answer to these questions lies in careful textual analysis of *Judges 10* – one of the admittedly difficult passages to translate unambiguously from the Hebrew, yet a most pivotal passage in the formation of a continuous chronology of the OT. In brief, some of the key elements to note include:

- ◆ *Judges 10:6-16* is an interlude – it forms a retrospective and prospective summary that sits between the account of the first four servitudes (*3:7-9:57*) and that of the last two servitudes – servitudes which are delineated subsequently in *10:17-12:6* & *13:1-16:31*, respectively.
- ◆ The last two servitudes were under the sons of Ammon and the Philistines (see *10:7* – a text that is inserted, at least partially, to provide a 'summary preview' of these last two servitudes).
- ◆ Jair, a Gileadite (i.e., territory east of the Jordan), ruled as judge for 22 years (*10:3*). His judgeship is given specific mention in this interlude, and is a key to discerning the proper understanding of the onset of the 300 year period mentioned by Jephthah in *11:26*.
- ◆ Because of Israel's spiritual declension ("they forsook the LORD and did not serve Him"; *10:6*), they were "sold" into oppression to both the Philistines and the sons of Ammon (*10:7*).

Key Question: When did this oppression begin? That is, when did Israel lose possession of Heshbon to the sons of Ammon?

This oppression began in “that year” (10:8). But, with respect to deducing the chronology of the period, what specific year is in view? That is, what is the antecedent to “that year”?

Ans. The answer (the only answer that seems to make sense linguistically, and that yields chronological consistency) is: “the 1st year of Jair”. It is Jair’s reign that is being elaborated in this interlude paragraph, following the summary of his life in 10:3-5. Jair and his rule form the antecedent to “And they afflicted and crushed the sons of Israel that year”.

Point: During the 22 years of Jair’s reign, Heshbon had been captured and held by the sons of Ammon, and the tribes east of the Jordan were in servitude to Ammonite rule for this whole period. Then, following the 22 years of Jair’s rule, and Jair’s death, the sons of Ammon became emboldened further. They proceeded to cross to the west side of the Jordan, enlarging their oppression further to also encompass Judah, Benjamin & Ephraim (10:9). This extended oppression continued for an additional 18 years beyond the 22 years of Jair’s rule.

It is at the end of this latter 18-year oppression that Jephthah rises to the challenge of leadership, and he valiantly takes charge of a the campaign to throw off the oppression of the sons of Ammon, thereby ending a 40 year period (22 + 18) when Heshbon was outside of national Israel’s control.

The text of *Judges 10:8-9* is key, and it can be best understood by the following paraphrase ... one derived from both an analysis of the structure of *Judges* plus a linguistic unfolding of the Hebrew.

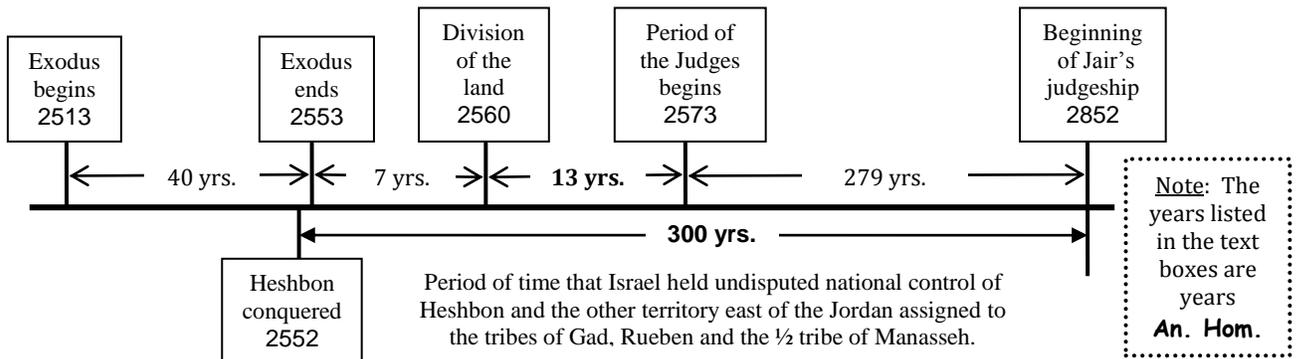
“And they [the Philistines & the sons of Ammon] afflicted (*lit.*, shattered) and crushed the sons of Israel,

- a) in that year (→ the 1st year of Jair; national Israel lost control of Heshbon to the sons of Ammon at the beginning of Jair’s rule ... the antecedent time reference);
 - b) for 18 years (that is, 18 years after the death of Jair; the sons of Ammon significantly enlarged the reach of their oppression of Israel after the first 22 yrs.);
- they [the sons of Ammon] afflicted all the sons of Israel who were beyond the Jordan in the land of the Amorites (that is, the reach of Ammon’s oppression for 22 years was limited to the land of the Amorites – which is Gilead, territory east of the Jordan).

And the sons of Ammon crossed the Jordan to fight also against Judah, Benjamin, and the house of Ephraim, so Israel was greatly distressed (there was a ‘whole nation’ distress for 18 years beyond the initial 22 years of distress limited to the tribes on the east of Jordan).”

Comment: The Hebrew in this text is such that the verb applies for both parts. Hence, the text is speaking of two consecutive periods of oppression.

With this background, the chronology pertaining to this 300 year period unfolds as follows.



The point is that the proper interpretation of the 300 year period of Jephthah leads to a clear determination of the period between the division of the land and the beginning of the period of the judges → namely, 13 years ... a period sometimes referred to as ‘The Joshua-Judges Chasm’.

Conclusion: The 300 year period noted by Jephthah allows the definition of a 13 year period separating the end of the time of conquest and the beginning servitude of Cushan, launching the period of the judges. This conclusion alone yields full consistency with the 450 and 480 year periods noted in *Acts 13:20* and *1 Kings 6:1*, respectively. (Note: These periods are elaborated further in these notes.)

A Consistent Chronology of the ‘Exodus–Conquest–Judges’ Period

Identification of the years devoted to conquest of the land of Canaan is not sufficient to obtain a definitive chronological link between the period of the Exodus and the onset of kingly administration in Israel. The issue can be set forward clearly by the following considerations.

First: Consider the sum of years obtained by adding the following explicitly defined time periods:

- ◆ The Exodus – from the 1st Passover in Egypt until the 1st Passover in Canaan: 40 years
- ◆ The period of conquest of pagan nations in Canaan under Joshua’s command: 7 years
- ◆ The sum of years detailed in the Book of Judges – the Period of the Judges: 450 years

Total: 497 years

Second: Consider the specific chronological period, encompassing the same historical period, given in the following text:

“Now it came about in the **480th year** after the sons of Israel came out of the land of Egypt, in the *4th year of Solomon’s reign* over Israel, in the month of Ziv which is the 2nd month, that he began to build the house of the LORD.” *I Kings 6:1*

This text assigns a period of time extending from the beginning of the Exodus (2513 *An. Hom.*) until the 4th year of King Solomon’s reign – a reign that followed immediately the successive 40-year reigns of King Saul and King David.

- Reign of King Saul: 40 years
- Reign of King David: 40 years
- 4th yr, of King Solomon: 4 years

Obvious Chronological Conflict
497 + 84 > 480

Sum: 84 years

Issue: There appears to be a contradiction between the span of years allocated to the period of the judges as implied in *I Kings 6:1* and the chronological data given in the books of Joshua & Judges. The question is: How can these contradictory time spans be reconciled? The possible options for the chronologist seems to be:

- ◆ A contradiction in the chronological data contained in Scripture must be embraced – that is, the Scriptures as received are in error and cannot provide a reliable chronology of this section of the OT period;
- ◆ The years apportioned to the spans of rest and servitude, and the rule of specific judges, might involve overlapping periods which are undefined;
- ◆ The listed years in the chronological texts in the Book of Judges is in error;
- ◆ The 480 year span referred to in *I Kings 6:1* is in error;
- ◆ The text of *I Kings 6:1* is indeed an inerrant statement of fact, and must be seen as referring to a particular subset of the full accounting of chronological information given in the Book of Judges – that is, a consistent interpretation must be sought by careful analysis of all relevant texts containing chronological information.

With respect to the accounting of the dates in the Book of Judges, yielding a total span of 450 years, we must note that an acceptance as inerrant is corroborated by the statement in *Acts 13:20* from the sermon by the Apostle Paul at Antioch of Pisidia (see comment at the end of the text box on page 38 quoting the *KJV* of *Acts 13:16-23*). Hence, it behooves the serious chronologer to examine all relevant texts carefully and engage a studious search for both coherency and consistency involving all texts.

Resolution: Unity and consistency between all listed chronological information in Scripture is realized by understanding the 480 year period in *I Kings 6:1* as referring only to the time when Israel was under self-rule (existing as a non-subjugated nation). That is, the years when Israel was in servitude under pagan nations is excluded from the 480 years that pertain to “the sons of Israel”.

Careful accounting of the all the time periods given in the Book of Judges when Israel was under servitude yields a sum of 114 years. Now, if this sum of 114 years is added to the 480 year period noted in *1 Kings 6:1*, a total span of 594 years is obtained for the period extending from the beginning of the Exodus until the “4th year of Solomon’s reign”.

$$114 + 480 = 594$$

Thus, we are left with the following accounting of years based on explicit chronological data:

- ◆ Period of Exodus: 40 year
- ◆ Period of Conquest: 7 years
- ◆ Period of Judges: 450 years
- ◆ Kingly Reigns: 84 years

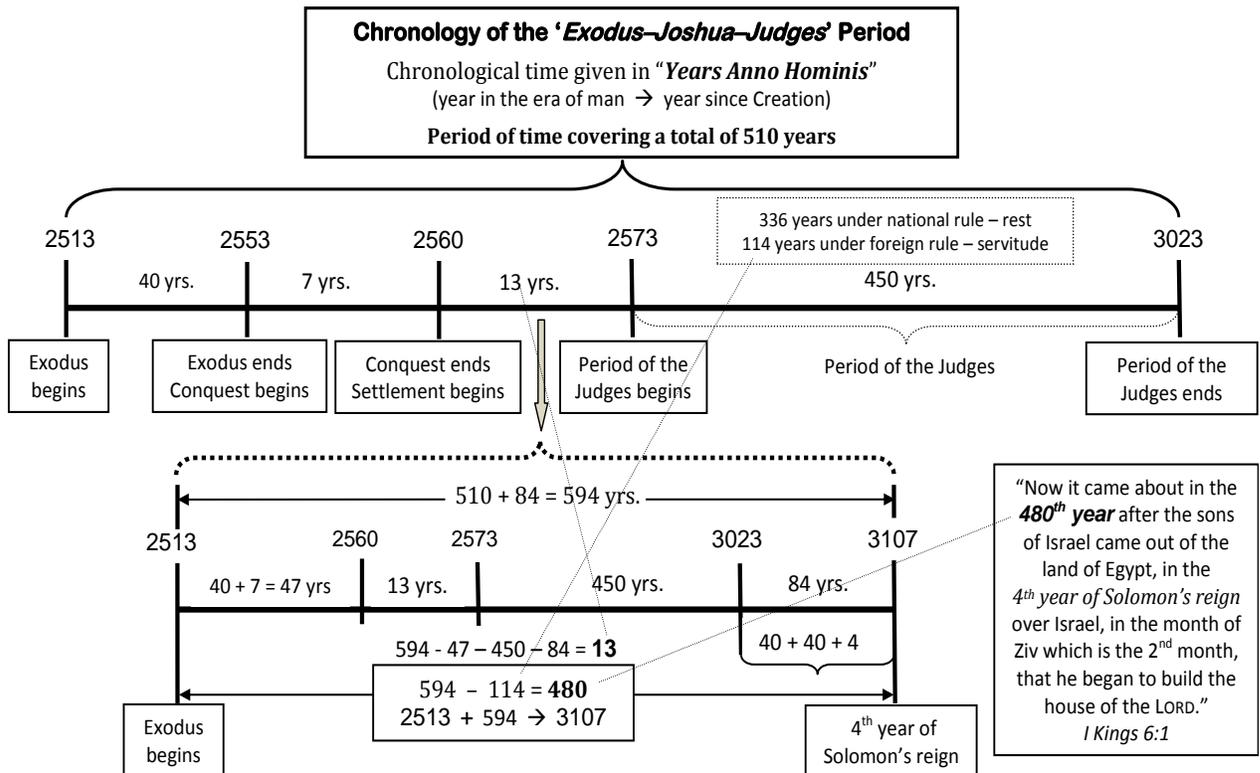
Total: 581 years 594 - 581 = 13

❖ A span of 13 yrs. remains unaccounted in the 114 + 480 = 594 year period.

The conclusion is that a period of 13 years must be inserted following the 7 years of conquest and before the beginning of the period of the judges. Now such a period of years following the beginning of the settlement of the tribes west of the Jordan is entirely reasonable and, even more to the point of a true Biblical chronology, is necessary from a careful study of the life of Joshua following the initiation of settlement described in *Joshua 14-22*. The texts of *Joshua 23 & 24* imply that Joshua continued to assert national leadership following settlement and before the 450 year span of the judges began.

“Now it came about after many days, when the LORD had given rest to Israel from all their enemies on every side, and Joshua was old, advanced in years, that Joshua called for all Israel, for their elders and their heads and their judges and their officers, and said to them, ...” *Josh. 23:1-2*

“Then Joshua gathered all the tribes of Israel to Shechem, ... Then Joshua dismissed the people, each to his inheritance. And it came about after these things that Joshua the son of Nun, the servant of the LORD died, being 110 years old. ... And Israel served the LORD all the days of Joshua and all the days of the elders who survived Joshua, and had known all the deeds of the LORD which He had done for Israel.” *Josh. 24:1, 28-29, 31*



**Summary of the
'Genesis-Exodus Connection' Chronology
and the
'Exodus-Joshua-Judges Connection' Chronology**

Year (An. Hom.)	----- Event -----	----- Time Intervals -----
2083	Covenant Promise given to Abraham	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> <div style="text-align: center;"> ↑ 100 ↓ </div> <div style="text-align: center;"> ↑ 30 ↓ </div> <div style="text-align: center;"> ↑ </div> </div>
2108	Isaac born	
2113	Isaac becomes the (sole) seed Isaac weaned/Ishmael sent away	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> <div style="text-align: center;"> ↓ 60 ↑ </div> <div style="text-align: center;"> ↓ 30 ↑ </div> <div style="text-align: center;"> ↓ </div> </div>
2168	Jacob born	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> <div style="text-align: center;"> ↓ 91 ↑ </div> <div style="text-align: center;"> ↓ </div> <div style="text-align: center;"> ↓ </div> </div>
2259	Joseph born	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> <div style="text-align: center;"> ↓ </div> <div style="text-align: center;"> ↓ </div> <div style="text-align: center;"> ↓ </div> </div>
2289	Joseph begins rulership in Egypt	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> <div style="text-align: center;"> ↓ </div> <div style="text-align: center;"> ↓ </div> <div style="text-align: center;"> ↓ </div> </div>
2298	Jacob moves family to Egypt	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> <div style="text-align: center;"> ↓ </div> <div style="text-align: center;"> ↓ </div> <div style="text-align: center;"> ↓ </div> </div>
2315	Jacob dies in Egypt	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> <div style="text-align: center;"> ↓ 17 ↑ </div> <div style="text-align: center;"> ↓ 80 ↑ </div> <div style="text-align: center;"> ↓ 147 ↑ </div> <div style="text-align: center;"> ↓ </div> <div style="text-align: center;"> ↓ </div> </div>
2369	Joseph dies in Egypt	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> <div style="text-align: center;"> ↓ 54 ↑ </div> <div style="text-align: center;"> ↓ 80 ↑ </div> <div style="text-align: center;"> ↓ 198 ↑ </div> <div style="text-align: center;"> ↓ 215 ↑ </div> <div style="text-align: center;"> ↓ 224 ↑ </div> <div style="text-align: center;"> ↓ 400 ↑ </div> </div>
2433	Moses born	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> <div style="text-align: center;"> ↓ 64 ↑ </div> <div style="text-align: center;"> ↓ 144 ↑ </div> <div style="text-align: center;"> ↓ </div> <div style="text-align: center;"> ↓ </div> <div style="text-align: center;"> ↓ </div> </div>
2513	Exodus begins	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> <div style="text-align: center;"> ↓ 80 ↑ </div> <div style="text-align: center;"> ↓ 144 ↑ </div> <div style="text-align: center;"> ↓ </div> <div style="text-align: center;"> ↓ </div> <div style="text-align: center;"> ↓ </div> </div>
2553	Exodus ends	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> <div style="text-align: center;"> ↓ 40 ↑ </div> <div style="text-align: center;"> ↓ 60 ↑ </div> <div style="text-align: center;"> ↓ </div> <div style="text-align: center;"> ↓ </div> <div style="text-align: center;"> ↓ </div> </div>
2573	Period of Judges begins	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> <div style="text-align: center;"> ↓ </div> <div style="text-align: center;"> ↓ 450 ↑ </div> <div style="text-align: center;"> ↓ </div> <div style="text-align: center;"> ↓ </div> <div style="text-align: center;"> ↓ </div> </div>
3023	Period of Judges ends Saul begins reign as King of Israel	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> <div style="text-align: center;"> ↓ </div> <div style="text-align: center;"> ↓ 510 ↑ </div> </div>

Appendix: Chronological Considerations Pertinent to the Book of Ruth

The difficulty related to setting forth a definitive chronology of the Book of Ruth stems from the received genealogical record of the line extending from Abraham to David. This record is organized in the table below, with some attendant comment.

Genealogical Data: Abraham to David

Name	Generation	Age @ death	Year <i>An. Hom.</i>	Comment
Abraham	1	175 Gen. 25:7	Birth 2008 Death 2183	Age at birth of Isaac 100 yrs.
Isaac	2	180 Gen. 35:28-29	Birth 2108 Death 2288	Age at birth of Jacob 60 yrs.
Jacob	3	147 Gen. 47:28	Birth 2168 Death 2315	Age at birth of Joseph 91 yrs.
Judah	4			
Perez	5			
Hezron	6			
Ram	7			
Amminadab	8			
Nahshon	9			
			2513	Exodus from Egypt
			2553	Entrance to Promised Land Conquered Jericho
			2560	Division of Canaan to Tribes
Salmon	10			Married Rahab of Jericho
Boaz	11			Mother's name = Rahab Married to Ruth
Obed	12			Son of Boaz & Ruth
Jesse	13			Father of David
			3023	End of the 450 yr. Period of the Judges
David	14	70	Birth 3033 Death 3103	

Perspectives to Ponder:

- ◆ There are only 4 generations (Salmon, Boaz, Obed, Jesse) listed between 2553 and 3033 *An. Hom.*, encompassing a period of 480 years. This yields an average of 120 years per generation – which seems excessively long. Yet, it is admittedly not outside the realm of possibility.
- ◆ We know that the successor generations in many of the 14 listed in the table consist of direct “father-son” pairs, so it seems quite problematic to assume straightway that gaps exist, and to resolve an apparent dilemma by claiming that one must insert additional generations.
- ◆ This genealogy is listed in *Ruth 4:18-22*, *1 Chron. 2:11-15*, and *Matt. 1:2-6*. A three-time repetition may imply a copy error in the first reference, which was then simply perpetuated in later texts. However, it might be equally valid to see the ‘thrice-repeated record’ as a firmly attested account validated by repetitive appearance in God’s breathed-out, infallible word.
- ◆ Furthermore, it can be noted that *Matt. 1:17* speaks of the genealogical record from Abraham to David as consisting of precisely 14 generations. On what interpretive basis does one presume latitude to claim there are missing generations in this record?