

It certainly need not upset anyone's faith in the Bible to find that <sup>at</sup> various points Archbishop Usher's dates, often printed in the margin of the Bible, are not correct. The data available to him was insufficient to build a complete system of chronology.

#### General framework

For general corroboration of the factual nature of the Old Testament it is important to note how ~~the~~ it fits the general framework of contemporary history. At the time of Abraham we find strong powers established in Mesopotamia and in Egypt, just as the statements of Genesis ~~presuppose~~ assume. At about 1000 B.C. we find a strong empire established in Palestine and vicinity by David and continued by Solomon. At ~~many~~ ~~most~~ periods of ancient history such a development would have been cut short by intervention on the part of either Egypt or one of the Mesopotamian empires. Both centres of power are at a low ebb at that time, and unable to interfere. During the next few centuries the power of Egypt is gradually declining, and the Bible pictures it as retaining great prestige, but actually doing little (~~it~~/~~to~~compare, for instance, Isaiah 30 and 31). Meanwhile Assyrian power is gradually rising, and overcoming everything in its way, and we find this reflected in its increasing prominence in the historical and prophetic books of the Old Testament, until, a century after the exile of the northern Israelite kingdom, Assyria disappears from the scene and the neo-Babylonian empire takes its place as the great