

transmit accurately. 2) In dealing with numbers there is always the possibility that some factor with which we are not familiar is involved. Thus until recently the numbers given for the reigns of the kings of Israel and Judah were considered quite impossible to harmonize. We are grateful to E. R. Thiele for having brought to the interpretation of these numbers some previously unrecognized principles of chronology. In his introduction to Thiele's book, Professor William A. Irwin of the University of Chicago, who is certainly no conservative on Biblical matters, said, "It is a matter of first-rate importance to learn now that the books of Kings are reliable in precisely that feature which formerly excited only derision." While the possibility of an occasional textual error must be admitted, particularly in the case of numbers, Professor Irwin mentions the fact that even in pre-Christian times these numbers were thought to be quite corrupt, but says: "The vast bulk of them are precise to the point of astonishment."^{#0}

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 The fifth point mentioned is that "the speeches in Acts and elsewhere are abbreviated versions of what was actually said and to that extent do not precisely represent the situation." It should be pointed out that it is never possible to 'precisely' represent a historical situation since there are always innumerable facts involved. One has to make a selection and can be precise only to a certain point. We can trust what the Bible says, but should not read into it a degree of precision beyond what is intended. If it says an event follows another event, that makes the order clear. If it simply mentions two events without indicating which came first we have no right to be sure,