

# israel

*A Study of the Land*

THE HISTORY

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# History of Israel Recounted in the Bible

| History of Israel                    | Dates        | People   | Recounted in the Bible   |
|--------------------------------------|--------------|--|--|
| 1. Ancestral Period                  | 2000-1700 BC | Abraham, Sarah, Isaac, Rebekah, Jacob, Joseph            | Genesis 12-50  |
| 2. Sojourn in Egypt                  | 1700-1275 BC |  | Exodus I   |
| 3. Exodus & Wilderness Wanderings    | 1275-1235 BC | Moses, Aaron, Miriam                                     | Exodus – Deuteronomy   |
| 4. Occupation & Period of the Judges | 1235-1050 BC | Joshua, Deborah, Gideon, Samson                          | Joshua, Judges, Ruth   |
| 5. United Monarchy                   | 1050-922 BC  | Samuel, Saul, David, Nathan, Solomon                     | 1 Samuel — 1 Kings 11  |
| 6. Divided Monarchy                  |              |  |  |
| A. Israel (Northern)                 | 922-722 BC   | Jeroboam I, Ahab, Jezebel, Elijah, Elisha<br>Amos, Hosea | 1 Kings 12 – 2 Kings 17<br>Amos, Hosea   |
| B. Judah (Southern)                  | 922-587 BC   | Rehoboam, Hezekiah, Isaiah, Josiah, Jeremiah             | 1 Kings 12—2 Kings 25<br>Isaiah 1-39, Zephaniah<br>Nahum, Jeremiah<br>Habakkuk |





| Kings of Israel (North)   | Kings of Judah (South)   |
|---|--|
| <b>Jeroboam I:</b> Led secession of Israel                                      | <b>Rehoboam:</b> Son of Solomon; first king  |
| <b>Nadab:</b> Son of Jeroboam I   | <b>Abijah (Abijam; Abia):</b> Son of Rehoboam  |
| <b>Baasha:</b> Overthrew Nadab  | <b>Asa:</b> Probably son of Abijah   |
| <b>Elah:</b> Son of Baasha  | <b>Jehoshaphat:</b> Son of Asa   |
| <b>Zimri:</b> Overthrew Elah  | <b>Jehoram (Joram):</b> Son of Jehoshaphat; husband of Athaliah  |
| <b>Omri:</b> Overthrew Zimri  | <b>Ahaziah:</b> Son of Jehoram and Athaliah  |
| <b>Ahab:</b> Son of Omri; husband of Jezebel                                    | <b>Athaliah:</b> Daughter of King Ahab of Israel and Jezebel; wife of Jehoram; only queen to rule over Judah |
| <b>Ahaziah:</b> Son of Ahab   | <b>Joash (Jehoash):</b> Son of Ahaziah   |
| <b>Jehoram (Joram):</b> Son of Ahab   | <b>Amaziah:</b> Son of Joash   |
| <b>Jehu:</b> Overthrew Jehoram  | <b>Uzziah (Azariah):</b> Son of Amaziah  |
| <b>Jehoahaz (Joahaz):</b> Son of Jehu   | <b>Jotham:</b> Regent, later King; son of Uzziah   |
| <b>Jehoash (Joash):</b> Son of Jehoahaz   | <b>Ahaz:</b> Son of Jotham   |
| <b>Jeroboam II:</b> Son of Jehoash  | <b>Hezekiah:</b> Son of Ahaz; husband of Hephzi-Bah  |
| <b>Zechariah:</b> Son of Jeroboam II  | <b>Manasseh:</b> Son of Hezekiah and Hephzi-Bah  |
| <b>Shallum:</b> Overthrew Zechariah   | <b>Amon:</b> Son of Manasseh   |
| <b>Menahem:</b> Overthrew Shallum   | <b>Josiah (Josias):</b> Son of Amon  |
| <b>Pekahiah:</b> Son of Menahem   | <b>Jehoahaz (Joahaz):</b> Son of Josiah  |
| <b>Pekah:</b> Overthrew Pekahiah  | <b>Jehoiakim:</b> Son of Josiah  |
| <b>Hoshea:</b> Overthrew Pekah; kingdom overthrown by Assyrians under Sargon II | <b>Jehoiachin:</b> Son of Jehoiakim  |
| <div>Good</div> <div>Bad</div> <div>Mixture of good &amp; bad</div>             | <b>Zedekiah:</b> Son of Josiah; kingdom overthrown by Babylonians under Nebuchadnezzar                       |

## Kings of Israel (Northern Kingdom)

| Kings                    | Yrs. of Reign | Dates B.C. | Biblical Reference           |
|--------------------------|---------------|------------|------------------------------|
| <b>Jeroboam I</b>        | 22            | 976-954    | 1 Kings 11:26 - 14:20        |
| <b>Nadab</b>             | 2             | 954-953    | 1 Kings 15:25-28             |
| <b>Baasha</b>            | 24            | 953-930    | 1 Kings 15:27 - 16:7         |
| <b>Elah</b>              | 2             | 930-929    | 1 Kings 16:6-14              |
| <b>Zimri</b>             | (7 days)      | 929        | 1 Kings 16:9-20              |
| <b>Omri</b>              | 12            | 929-918    | 1 Kings 16:15-28             |
| <b>Ahab</b>              | 21            | 918-898    | 1 Kings 16:28 - 22:40        |
| <b>Ahaziah</b>           | 1             | 898-897    | 1 Kings 22:40 - 2 Kings 1:18 |
| <b>Jehoram (Joram)</b>   | 11            | 897-885    | 2 Kings 3:1 - 9:25           |
| <b>Jehu</b>              | 28            | 885-857    | 2 Kings 9:1 - 10:36          |
| <b>Jehoahaz (Joahaz)</b> | 16            | 857-841    | 2 Kings 13:1-9               |
| <b>Jehoash (Joash)</b>   | 16            | 841-825    | 2 Kings 13:10 - 14:16        |
| <b>Jeroboam II</b>       | 40            | 825-773    | 2 Kings 14:23-29             |
| <b>Zechariah</b>         | 1/2           | 773-772    | 2 Kings 14:29 - 15:12        |
| <b>Shallum</b>           | (1 month)     | 772        | 2 Kings 15:10-15             |
| <b>Menahem</b>           | 10            | 772-762    | 2 Kings 15:14-22             |
| <b>Pekahiah</b>          | 2             | 762-760    | 2 Kings 15:22-26             |
| <b>Pekah</b>             | 20            | 760-740    | 2 Kings 15:27-31             |
| <b>Hoshea</b>            | 9             | 740-731    | 2 Kings 15:30 - 17:6         |



## Kings of Judah (Southern Kingdom)

| Kings             | Yrs. of Reign | Dates B.C. | Biblical Reference    |
|-------------------|---------------|------------|-----------------------|
| Rehoboam          | 17            | 976-959    | 1 Kings 11:42 - 14:31 |
| Abijah            | 3             | 959-956    | 1 Kings 14:31 - 15:8  |
| Asa               | 41            | 956-915    | 1 Kings 15:8-24       |
| Jehoshaphat       | 25            | 915-893    | 1 Kings 22:41-50      |
| Jehoram (Joram)   | 8             | 893-886    | 2 Kings 8:16-24       |
| Ahaziah           | 1             | 886-885    | 2 Kings 8:24 - 9:29   |
| Athaliah (Queen)  | 6             | 885-879    | 2 Kings 11:1-20       |
| Joash (Jehoash)   | 40            | 879-840    | 2 Kings 11:1 - 12:21  |
| Amaziah           | 29            | 840-811    | 2 Kings 14:1-20       |
| Uzziah (Azariah)  | 52            | 811-759    | 2 Kings 15:1-7        |
| Jotham            | 18            | 759-743    | 2 Kings 15:32-38      |
| Ahaz              | 19            | 743-727    | 2 Kings 16:1-20       |
| Hezekiah          | 29            | 727-698    | 2 Kings 18:1 - 20:21  |
| Manasseh          | 55            | 698-643    | 2 Kings 21:1-18       |
| Amon              | 2             | 643-640    | 2 Kings 21:19-26      |
| Josiah (Josias)   | 31            | 640-609    | 2 Kings 22:1 - 23:30  |
| Jehoahaz (Joahaz) | (3 months)    | 609        | 2 Kings 23:31-33      |
| Jehoiakim         | 11            | 609-597    | 2 Kings 23:34 - 24:5  |
| Jehoiachin        | (3 months)    | 597        | 2 Kings 24:6-16       |
| Zedekiah          | 11            | 597-586    | 2 Kings 24:17 - 25:30 |

## Old Testament Prophets' Timeline

AUDIENCE COLOR KEY: green=Israel; blue=Judah;  
pink=Exiles in Babylon; tan=misc. nations

*note: exact dates approximate as many reputable sources vary, though general history and timeline valid.*

**Historical setting: After division of the kingdom into Israel and Judah, recorded in 1 Kings 12 - 2 Kings 17**

| Prophet | Audience | Kings who ruled at the same time | Approximate Dates, all BC | Historical happenings at the time of the prophet, plus comments on the content of their books  |
|---------|----------|----------------------------------|---------------------------|--|
| Elijah  | Israel   | Ahab, Ahaziah, Joram             | 870-845                   | Kingdom split about 930, all sinful kings in Israel through Israel's history, kings a mixture of good and bad in Judah.  |
| Elisha  | Israel   | Joram, Jehu, Jehoahaz            | 845-800                   | Disciple of Elijah. Preaches to a sinful people who worshipped idols, not Jehovah God. Some individual (e.g. Naaman) success, no national repentance.  |
| Jonah   | Nineveh  | Jeroboam II                      | 760-753                   | Jonah first a prophet of victory to Israel; then called to preach to Nineveh capital of Assyria, a violent and cruel enemy. Finally obeys and Nineveh repents, though it doesn't last.                               |
| Amos    | Israel   | Jeroboam II                      | 765-754                   | Israel powerful and complacent, pagan worship, neglect of the poor, calls for justice. Restoration after judgement promised which is a pattern in many prophets.   |
| Hosea   | Israel   | Jeroboam II                      | 758-725                   | Though his message is of love and forgiveness, Israel does not repent, continues in spiritual decline. Though materially prosperous and religiously active, Israel goes into captivity in 722, conquered by Assyria. |



**Historical setting: Israel conquered by Assyria, prophecies now warning Judah, recorded 2 Kings 18-2 Kings 25**

**Additional history of Judah primarily in 1-2 Chronicles; fall of Jerusalem and edict to return in 2 Chron. 36**

|           |         |  |         |   |
|-----------|---------|--|---------|---|
| Isaiah    | Judah   | Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, Hezekiah, Manasseh                         | 760-673 | Begins preaching to Judah before Israel falls. Assyria threatens but does not conquer Judah. Book reflects God's eternal view.  |
| Micah     | Judah   | Jotham, Ahaz, Hezekiah, Manasseh                                 | 738-698 | Preaches same time as Isaiah, warns of judgement if no repentance. Defines what God requires in Micah 6:8.  |
| Nahum     | Nineveh | Manasseh, Amon, Josiah   | 658-615 | Assyrian repentance under Jonah doesn't last. Final destruction of Assyria/Nineveh by Babylonians.  |
| Zephaniah | Judah   | Josiah   | 640-609 | Last revival in Judah under Josiah, but not enough.   |
| Habakkuk  | Judah   | Jehoiakim, Jehoiachin  | 608-598 | Babylon conquered Assyria; Judah in process of its downfall. Questions why God uses pagan nations for His purposes.   |
| Jeremiah  | Judah   | Manasseh, Amon, Josiah, Jehahaz, Jehoiakim, Jehoiachin, Zedekiah | 650-582 | Messages not in order. Records the last days of Judah, the prior series of deportations before final destruction in 587 BC. Wrote at the same time as Ezekiel and Daniel who were deported early on. Writes Lamentations after fall of Judah. |
| Obediah   | Edom    | uncertain  | ?       | Judgement of Edom. Date not certain, message timeless. Do not rejoice over or take advantage of the fall of others.   |

**Historical setting: Babylon conquers Judah, a series of deportations, final destruction 607 BC, recorded in 2 Kings 24, 25**

|         |                   |   |         |   |
|---------|-------------------|---|---------|---|
| Ezekiel | Exiles in Babylon | Jehoiachin, Zedekiah, in Judah; Babylonian rulers there           | 620-570 | Under captivity, God continues speaking to his people; obedience still required, he was a priest and spoke to the people in Babylon. Also numerous future, end-time prophecies. |
| Daniel  | Exiles in Babylon | Jehoiakim, Jehoiachin, Zedekiah in Judah; Babylonian rulers there | 620-540 | One of the earliest deported to Babylon, lived there during the destruction, deportation, and return of the people. His prophecies span human history.                          |

**Historical setting: Israel allowed to return & rebuild, recorded in Ezra and Nehemiah, captives who stayed in Esther**

|           |       |   |         |  |
|-----------|-------|---|---------|--|
| Joel      | Judah | Governor Zerubbabel?                            | ?       | Date not certain, message timeless. Restoration promised.  |
| Haggai    | Judah | Governor Zerubbabel                             | 520     | Returned to the land, Temple rebuilding stalled, preached priority of finishing God's work. Preached with Zechariah. |
| Zechariah | Judah | Governor Zerubbabel                             | 522-509 | Messages, challenges to complete the tasks of God.   |
| Malachi   | Judah | not certain, perhaps some overlap with Nehemiah | 435     | People back in the land, Temple rebuilt. The people persisted in sin. Challenges to repent. Blessings for obedience. |

**After these books 400 "Silent years" No written word from God, but God at work in history preparing for the Messiah.**

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## HOW WERE THE 12 TRIBES DIVIDED IN THE 2 KINGDOMS?

- The Northern Kingdom of Israel consisted of the 10 northern tribes: Reuben, Dan, Naphtali, Gad, Asher, Ephraim, Manasseh, Issachar, Zebulun and Simeon (whose territory was originally in the South within the land of the tribe of Judah but later became one of the tribes of the north).
- The Southern Kingdom of Judah consisted of the large tribe of Judah (King David's tribe) and the small tribe of Benjamin, which became part of the tribe of Judah and began using the same name.
- Originally, the Levites did not have a land assigned to them, as their inheritance was the service to the Lord, and were scattered throughout all the territories of the 12 tribes, but after the division of the kingdom, most ended up in Judah, where the Temple stood.

# The Two Kingdoms

Kingdom of Israel

Kingdom of Judah



This map shows the regional powers during the period of the two kingdoms, Iron Age II. The main regional power was the kingdom of Aram-Damascus, which was strong enough to act as a buffer from Assyrian incursions for many years. The kingdoms alternately warred against Aram-Damascus or allied with it against the Assyrians.



# 1 Kings 11

Now King Solomon loved many foreign women along with the daughter of Pharaoh: Moabite, Ammonite, Edomite, Sidonian, and Hittite women, from the nations concerning which the Lord had said to the sons of Israel, “You shall not associate with them, nor shall they associate with you, for they will surely turn your heart away after their gods.” Solomon held fast to these in love. He had seven hundred wives, princesses, and three hundred concubines, and his wives turned his heart away. For when Solomon was old, his wives turned his heart away after other gods; and his heart was not wholly devoted to the Lord his God, as the heart of David his father had been. For Solomon went after Ashtoreth the goddess of the Sidonians and after Milcom the detestable idol of the Ammonites. **Solomon did what was evil in the sight of the Lord, and did not follow the Lord fully, as David his father had done.** Then Solomon built a high place for Chemosh the detestable idol of Moab, on the mountain which is east of Jerusalem, and for Molech the detestable idol of the sons of Ammon. Thus also he did for all his foreign wives, who burned incense and sacrificed to their gods. 1 Kings 11:1-8



Now the Lord was angry with Solomon because his heart was turned away from the Lord, the God of Israel, who had appeared to him twice, and had commanded him concerning this thing, that he should not go after other gods; but he did not observe what the Lord had commanded. So the Lord said to Solomon, “Because you have done this, and you have not kept My covenant and My statutes, which I have commanded you, I will surely tear the kingdom from you, and will give it to your servant. Nevertheless I will not do it in your days for the sake of your father David, but I will tear it out of the hand of your son. However, I will not tear away all the kingdom, but I will give one tribe to your son for the sake of My servant David and for the sake of Jerusalem which I have chosen.” 1 Kings 11:9-13

Then Rehoboam went to Shechem, for all Israel had come to Shechem to make him king. Now when Jeroboam the son of Nebat heard of it, he was living in Egypt (for he was yet in Egypt, where he had fled from the presence of King Solomon). Then they sent and called him, and Jeroboam and all the assembly of Israel came and spoke to Rehoboam, saying, “Your father made our yoke hard; now therefore lighten the hard service of your father and his heavy yoke which he put on us, and we will serve you.” Then he said to them, “Depart for three days, then return to me.” So the people departed.

1 Kings 12:1-5



King Rehoboam consulted with the elders who had served his father Solomon while he was still alive, saying, “How do you counsel me to answer this people?” Then they spoke to him, saying, “If you will be a servant to this people today, and will serve them and grant them their petition, and speak good words to them, then they will be your servants forever.” But he forsook the counsel of the elders which they had given him, and consulted with the young men who grew up with him and served him. So he said to them, “What counsel do you give that we may answer this people who have spoken to me, saying, ‘Lighten the yoke which your father put on us’?” The young men who grew up with him spoke to him, saying, “Thus you shall say to this people who spoke to you, saying, ‘Your father made our yoke heavy, now you make it lighter for us!’ But you shall speak to them, ‘My little finger is thicker than my father’s loins! Whereas my father loaded you with a heavy yoke, I will add to your yoke; my father disciplined you with whips, but I will discipline you with scorpions.’ ” 1 Kings 12:6-11

Then Jeroboam and all the people came to Rehoboam (son of Solomon) on the third day as the king had directed, saying, "Return to me on the third day." The king answered the people harshly, for he forsook the advice of the elders which they had given him, and he spoke to them according to the advice of the young men, saying, "My father made your yoke heavy, but I will add to your yoke; my father disciplined you with whips, but I will discipline you with scorpions." So the king did not listen to the people; for it was a turn of events from the Lord, that He might establish His word, which the Lord spoke through Ahijah the Shilonite to Jeroboam the son of Nebat.

1 Kings 12:12-15

When all Israel saw that the king did not listen to them, the people answered the king, saying, “What portion do we have in David? We have no inheritance in the son of Jesse; To your tents, O Israel! Now look after your own house, David!” So Israel departed to their tents. **But as for the sons of Israel who lived in the cities of Judah, Rehoboam reigned over them.** Then King Rehoboam sent Adoram, who was over the forced labor, and all Israel stoned him to death. And King Rehoboam made haste to mount his chariot to flee to Jerusalem. So Israel has been in rebellion against the house of David to this day. It came about when all Israel heard that Jeroboam had returned, that they sent and called him to the assembly and made him king over all Israel. None but the tribe of Judah followed the house of David. Now when Rehoboam had come to Jerusalem, he assembled all the house of Judah and the tribe of Benjamin, 180,000 chosen men who were warriors, to fight against the house of Israel to restore the kingdom to Rehoboam the son of Solomon. But the word of God came to Shemaiah the man of God, saying, “Speak to Rehoboam the son of Solomon, king of Judah, and to all the house of Judah and Benjamin and to the rest of the people, saying, ‘Thus says the Lord, “You must not go up and fight against your relatives the sons of Israel; return every man to his house, for this thing has come from Me.” ’ ” So they listened to the word of the Lord, and returned and went their way according to the word of the Lord. 1 Kings 12:16-24



Then Jeroboam built Shechem in the hill country of Ephraim, and lived there. And he went out from there and built Penuel. **Jeroboam said in his heart, "Now the kingdom will return to the house of David. If this people go up to offer sacrifices in the house of the Lord at Jerusalem, then the heart of this people will return to their lord, even to Rehoboam king of Judah; and they will kill me and return to Rehoboam king of Judah."** So the king consulted, and made two golden calves, and he said to them, "It is too much for you to go up to Jerusalem; behold your gods, O Israel, that brought you up from the land of Egypt." He set one in Bethel, and the other he put in Dan. Now this thing became a sin, for the people went to worship before the one as far as Dan. And he made houses on high places, and made priests from among all the people who were not of the sons of Levi. Jeroboam instituted a feast in the eighth month on the fifteenth day of the month, like the feast which is in Judah, and he went up to the altar; thus he did in Bethel, sacrificing to the calves which he had made. And he stationed in Bethel the priests of the high places which he had made. Then he went up to the altar which he had made in Bethel on the fifteenth day in the eighth month, even in the month which he had devised in his own heart; and he instituted a feast for the sons of Israel and went up to the altar to burn incense. 1 Kings 12:25-33

Now Rehoboam the son of Solomon reigned in Judah. Rehoboam was forty-one years old when he became king, and he reigned seventeen years in Jerusalem, the city which the Lord had chosen from all the tribes of Israel to put His name there. And his mother's name was Naamah the Ammonitess. Judah did evil in the sight of the Lord, and they provoked Him to jealousy more than all that their fathers had done, with the sins which they committed. For they also built for themselves high places and sacred pillars and Asherim on every high hill and beneath every luxuriant tree. There were also male cult prostitutes in the land. They did according to all the abominations of the nations which the Lord dispossessed before the sons of Israel. Now it happened in the fifth year of King Rehoboam, that Shishak the king of Egypt came up against Jerusalem. He took away the treasures of the house of the Lord and the treasures of the king's house, and he took everything, even taking all the shields of gold which Solomon had made. So King Rehoboam made shields of bronze in their place, and committed them to the care of the commanders of the guard who guarded the doorway of the king's house. Then it happened as often as the king entered the house of the Lord, that the guards would carry them and would bring them back into the guards' room. 1 Kings 14:21-28

Now the rest of the acts of Rehoboam and all that he did, are they not written in the Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Judah? There was war between Rehoboam and Jeroboam continually. And Rehoboam slept with his fathers and was buried with his fathers in the city of David; and his mother's name was Naamah the Ammonitess. And Abijam his son became king in his place. 1 Kings 14:29-31



# 1 Kings 18



A range of fertile, forested hills (Amos 1:2; Isa. 33:9; Nah. 1:4) 15 miles long on the west border of the land allotted to tribe of Asher (Josh. 19:26). It extends from Samaritan hill country west to Mediterranean and south to Mount Carmel headland. Mount Carmel, entrance of the Jezreel Valley, commands an excellent view of the shoreline and rises 556 feet above the harbor of modern Haifa. Because of its height it provided an important strategic position for the control of the fertile valley land. – Harper's Bible Dictionary

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| Elisha  | Israel   | Joram, Jehu, Jehoahaz            | 845-800                   | Disciple of Elijah. Preaches to a sinful people who worshipped idols, not Jehovah God. Some individual (e.g. Naaman) success, no national repentance.  |
| Jonah   | Nineveh  | Jeroboam II                      | 760-753                   | Jonah first a prophet of victory to Israel; then called to preach to Nineveh capital of Assyria, a violent and cruel enemy. Finally obeys and Nineveh repents, though it doesn't last.                               |
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| Hosea   | Israel   | Jeroboam II                      | 758-725                   | Though his message is of love and forgiveness, Israel does not repent, continues in spiritual decline. Though materially prosperous and religiously active, Israel goes into captivity in 722, conquered by Assyria. |



Now it happened after many days that the word of the Lord came to Elijah in the third year (of the famine/drought), saying, “Go, show yourself to Ahab, and I will send rain on the face of the earth.” So Elijah went to show himself to Ahab. Now the famine was severe in Samaria. 1 Kings 18:1-2

\*Elijah - an Israelite prophet in the times of kings Ahab and Ahaziah, during the first half of the ninth century BC.

\*Ahab – King of northern kingdom of Israel (869-850 BC), son of Omri

\*Jezebel – Queen, wife of Ahab, daughter of Ethbaal, king of Tyre, worships Baal

\*Baal - the principal male god of the Phoenicians, a weather god associated with thunderstorms; associated with female goddess Asherah

So Elijah went to show himself to Ahab. Now the famine was severe in Samaria. Ahab called Obadiah who was over the household. (Now Obadiah feared the Lord greatly; for when Jezebel destroyed the prophets of the Lord, Obadiah took a hundred prophets and hid them by fifties in a cave, and provided them with bread and water.) Then Ahab said to Obadiah, "Go through the land to all the springs of water and to all the valleys; perhaps we will find grass and keep the horses and mules alive, and not have to kill some of the cattle." So they divided the land between them to survey it; Ahab went one way by himself and Obadiah went another way by himself. 1 Kings 18:3-6

Now as Obadiah was on the way, behold, Elijah met him, and he recognized him and fell on his face and said, “Is this you, Elijah my master?” He said to him, “It is I. Go, say to your master, ‘Behold, Elijah is here.’ ” He said, “What sin have I committed, that you are giving your servant into the hand of Ahab to put me to death? As the Lord your God lives, there is no nation or kingdom where my master has not sent to search for you; and when they said, ‘He is not here,’ he made the kingdom or nation swear that they could not find you. And now you are saying, ‘Go, say to your master, “Behold, Elijah is here.” ’” 1 Kings 18:7-11



It will come about when I leave you that the Spirit of the Lord will carry you where I do not know; so when I come and tell Ahab and he cannot find you, he will kill me, although I your servant have feared the Lord from my youth. Has it not been told to my master what I did when Jezebel killed the prophets of the Lord, that I hid a hundred prophets of the Lord by fifties in a cave, and provided them with bread and water? And now you are saying, 'Go, say to your master, "Behold, Elijah is here" '; he will then kill me." Elijah said, "As the Lord of hosts lives, before whom I stand, I will surely show myself to him today." So Obadiah went to meet Ahab and told him; and Ahab went to meet Elijah. 1 Kings 18:12-16

When (King) Ahab saw (Prophet) Elijah, Ahab said to him, “Is this you, you troubler of Israel?” He said, “I have not troubled Israel, but you and your father’s house have, because you have forsaken the commandments of the Lord and you have followed the Baals. Now then send and gather to me all Israel at **Mount Carmel**, together with 450 prophets of Baal and 400 prophets of the Asherah, who eat at Jezebel’s table.” 1 Kings 18:17-19



So Ahab sent a message among all the sons of Israel and brought the prophets together at Mount Carmel. Elijah came near to all the people and said, "How long will you hesitate between two opinions? If the Lord is God, follow Him; but if Baal, follow him." But the people did not answer him a word. Then Elijah said to the people, "I alone am left a prophet of the Lord, but Baal's prophets are 450 men. Now let them give us two oxen; and let them choose one ox for themselves and cut it up, and place it on the wood, but put no fire under it; and I will prepare the other ox and lay it on the wood, and I will not put a fire under it. Then you call on the name of your god, and I will call on the name of the Lord, and the God who answers by fire, He is God." And all the people said, "That is a good idea." 1 Kings 18:20-24

Lord is Yahweh יהוה      God is Elohim אֱלֹהִים



So Elijah said to the prophets of Baal, “Choose one ox for yourselves and prepare it first for you are many, and call on the name of your god, but put no fire under it.” Then they took the ox which was given them and they prepared it and called on the name of Baal from morning until noon saying, “O Baal, answer us.” But there was no voice and no one answered. And they leaped about the altar which they made. It came about at noon, that Elijah mocked them and said, “Call out with a loud voice, for he is a god; either he is occupied or gone aside, or is on a journey, or perhaps he is asleep and needs to be awakened.” So they cried with a loud voice and cut themselves according to their custom with swords and lances until the blood gushed out on them. When midday was past, they raved until the time of the offering of the evening sacrifice; but there was no voice, no one answered, and no one paid attention. 1 Kings 18:24-29

Then Elijah said to all the people, "Come near to me." So all the people came near to him. And he repaired the altar of the Lord which had been torn down. Elijah took twelve stones according to the number of the tribes of the sons of Jacob, to whom the word of the Lord had come, saying, "Israel shall be your name." So with the stones he built an altar in the name of the Lord, and he made a trench around the altar, large enough to hold two measures of seed. Then he arranged the wood and cut the ox in pieces and laid it on the wood. And he said, "Fill four pitchers with water and pour it on the burnt offering and on the wood." And he said, "Do it a second time," and they did it a second time. And he said, "Do it a third time," and they did it a third time. The water flowed around the altar and he also filled the trench with water. 1 Kings 18:30-35

At the time of the offering of the evening sacrifice (3 pm), Elijah the prophet came near and said, “O Lord, the God of Abraham, Isaac and Israel, today let it be known that You are God in Israel and that I am Your servant and I have done all these things at Your word. Answer me, O Lord, answer me, that this people may know that You, O Lord, are God, and that You have turned their heart back again.” Then the fire of the Lord fell and consumed the burnt offering and the wood and the stones and the dust, and licked up the water that was in the trench. When all the people saw it, they fell on their faces; and they said, “The Lord, He is God; the Lord, He is God.” 1 Kings 18:36-39



# Israel

## *A Study of the Land*



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**2 Kings 22**

**2 Chronicles 34**

## The Chronology of the Kings of Judah and Israel

### The United Monarchy

|         |                 |
|---------|-----------------|
| Saul    | c. 1020-1004 BC |
| David   | 1004-965        |
| Solomon | 965-928         |

| Judah       | Southern kingdom | Israel    | Northern kingdom |
|-------------|------------------|-----------|------------------|
| Rehoboam    | 928-911          | Jeroboam  | 928-907          |
| Abijam      | 911-908          | Nadab     | 907-906          |
| Asa         | 908-867          | Baasha    | 906-883          |
| Jehoshaphat | 867-846          | Elah      | 883-882          |
| Jehoram     | 846-843          | Zimri     | 882              |
| Ahaziah     | 843-842          | Timri     | 882-878          |
| Athaliah    | 842-836          | Omri      | 882-871          |
| Joash       | 836-798          | Ahab      | 871-852          |
| Amaziah     | 798-769          | Ahaziah   | 852-851          |
| Uzziah      | 769-733          | Jehoram   | 851-842          |
| Jotham      | 758-743          | Jehu      | 842-814          |
| Ahaz        | 733-727          | Jehoahaz  | 814-800          |
| Hezekiah    | 727-698          | Jehoash   | 800-784          |
| Manasseh    | 698-642          | Jeroboam  | 784-748          |
| Amon        | 641-640          | Zechariah | 748-747          |
| Josiah      | 639-609          | Shallum   | 748-747          |
| Jehoahaz    | 609              | Menahem   | 747-737          |
| Jehoiakim   | 608-598          | Pekahiah  | 737-735          |
| Jehoiachin  | 597              | Pekah     | 735-733          |
| Zedekiah    | 596-586          | Hoshea    | 733-724          |

## The Two Kingdoms

### Kingdom of Israel

### Kingdom of Judah



Josiah was eight years old when he became king, and he reigned thirty-one years in Jerusalem (640-609 BC); and his mother's name was Jedidah the daughter of Adaiah of Bozkath. He did right in the sight of the Lord and walked in all the way of his father David, nor did he turn aside to the right or to the left. 2 Kings 22:1-2

\*During his reign world power passed from Assyrian to Babylonian leadership. Nineveh, the capital of Assyria, was destroyed in 612 BC, and the Assyrian Empire fell in 609 BC. (BKC)

\*Josiah was the fourth and final reformer among Judah's kings, following Asa, Jehoshaphat, and Hezekiah. But Josiah's reforms were more extensive than those of any of his predecessors. (BKC)

Josiah was eight years old when he became king, and he reigned thirty-one years in Jerusalem. He did right in the sight of the Lord, and walked in the ways of his father David and did not turn aside to the right or to the left. For in the eighth year of his reign while he was still a youth (16 years old), he began to seek the God of his father David; and in the twelfth year he began to purge Judah and Jerusalem of the high places, the Asherim, the carved images and the molten images. They tore down the altars of the Baals in his presence, and the incense altars that were high above them he chopped down; also the Asherim, the carved images and the molten images he broke in pieces and ground to powder and scattered it on the graves of those who had sacrificed to them. Then he burned the bones of the priests on their altars and purged Judah and Jerusalem. In the cities of Manasseh, Ephraim, Simeon, even as far as Naphtali, in their surrounding ruins, he also tore down the altars and beat the Asherim and the carved images into powder, and chopped down all the incense altars throughout the land of Israel. Then he returned to Jerusalem. 2 Chronicles 34:3-7



Now in the eighteenth year of King Josiah (age 26), the king sent Shaphan, the son of Azaliah the son of Meshullam the scribe, to the house of the Lord saying, “Go up to Hilkiah the high priest that he may count the money brought in to the house of the Lord which the doorkeepers have gathered from the people. Let them deliver it into the hand of the workmen who have the oversight of the house of the Lord, and let them give it to the workmen who are in the house of the Lord to repair the damages of the house, to the carpenters and the builders and the masons and for buying timber and hewn stone to repair the house. Only no accounting shall be made with them for the money delivered into their hands, for they deal faithfully.”

2 Kings 22:3-7

## What happened to the Jewish Temple?

- He (King Manasseh) built altars in the house of the Lord, of which the Lord had said, “In Jerusalem I will put My name.” For he built altars for all the host of heaven in the two courts of the house of the Lord. He made his son pass through the fire, practiced witchcraft and used divination, and dealt with mediums and spiritists. He did much evil in the sight of the Lord provoking Him to anger. Then he set the carved image of Asherah that he had made, in the house of which the Lord said to David and to his son Solomon, “In this house and in Jerusalem, which I have chosen from all the tribes of Israel, I will put My name forever. 2 Kings 21:4-7
- Amon was twenty-two years old when he became king, and he reigned two years in Jerusalem; and his mother’s name was Meshullemeth the daughter of Haruz of Jotbah. He did evil in the sight of the Lord, as Manasseh his father had done. For he walked in all the way that his father had walked, and served the idols that his father had served and worshiped them. 2 Kings 21:19-21

## King Josiah's repairs to the Jewish Temple

Now in the eighteenth year of his reign, when he had purged the land and the house, he sent Shaphan the son of Azaliah, and Maaseiah an official of the city, and Joah the son of Joahaz the recorder, to repair the house of the Lord his God. They came to Hilkiah the high priest and delivered the money that was brought into the house of God, which the Levites, the doorkeepers, had collected from Manasseh and Ephraim, and from all the remnant of Israel, and from all Judah and Benjamin and the inhabitants of Jerusalem. Then they gave it into the hands of the workmen who had the oversight of the house of the Lord, and the workmen who were working in the house of the Lord used it to restore and repair the house. They in turn gave it to the carpenters and to the builders to buy quarried stone and timber for couplings and to make beams for the houses which the kings of Judah had let go to ruin. The men did the work faithfully with foremen over them to supervise: Jahath and Obadiah, the Levites of the sons of Merari, Zechariah and Meshullam of the sons of the Kohathites, and the Levites, all who were skillful with musical instruments. They were also over the burden bearers, and supervised all the workmen from job to job; and some of the Levites were scribes and officials and gatekeepers. 2 Chronicles 34:8-13

Then Hilkiah the high priest said to Shaphan the scribe, “I have found the book of the law (probably the Pentateuch, the first five books of the Bible) in the house of the Lord.” And Hilkiah gave the book to Shaphan who read it. Shaphan the scribe came to the king and brought back word to the king and said, “Your servants have emptied out the money that was found in the house, and have delivered it into the hand of the workmen who have the oversight of the house of the Lord.” Moreover, Shaphan the scribe told the king saying, “Hilkiah the priest has given me a book.” And Shaphan read it in the presence of the king. 2 Kings 22:8-10



Then the king (Josiah) commanded Hilkiah the priest, Ahikam the son of Shaphan, Achbor the son of Micaiah, Shaphan the scribe, and Asaiah the king's servant saying, "Go, inquire of the Lord for me and the people and all Judah concerning the words of this book that has been found, for great is the wrath of the Lord that burns against us, because our fathers have not listened to the words of this book, to do according to all that is written concerning us." 2 Kings 22:12-13

\*Do we see the holiness of God as we read His Word?

\*Will we recognize our sin and confess before the Lord?

So Hilkiah the priest, Ahikam, Achbor, Shaphan, and Asaiah went to Huldah the prophetess, the wife of Shallum the son of Tikvah, the son of Harhas, keeper of the wardrobe (now she lived in Jerusalem in the Second Quarter); and they spoke to her. She said to them, “Thus says the Lord God of Israel, ‘Tell the man who sent you to me, thus says the Lord, “Behold, I bring evil on this place and on its inhabitants, even all the words of the book which the king of Judah has read. Because they have forsaken Me and have burned incense to other gods that they might provoke Me to anger with all the work of their hands, therefore My wrath burns against this place, and it shall not be quenched.” ’ But to the king of Judah who sent you to inquire of the Lord thus shall you say to him, ‘Thus says the Lord God of Israel, “Regarding the words which you have heard, because your heart was tender and you humbled yourself before the Lord when you heard what I spoke against this place and against its inhabitants that they should become a desolation and a curse, and you have torn your clothes and wept before Me, I truly have heard you,” declares the Lord. “Therefore, behold, I will gather you to your fathers, and you will be gathered to your grave in peace, and your eyes will not see all the evil which I will bring on this place.” ’ ” So they brought back word to the king. 2 Kings 22:14-20

\*Josiah’s death in 609 BC was four years before Nebuchadnezzar’s first attack on Jerusalem in 605.

Then the king sent, and they gathered to him all the elders of Judah and of Jerusalem. The king went up to the house of the Lord and all the men of Judah and all the inhabitants of Jerusalem with him, and the priests and the prophets and all the people, both small and great; and he read in their hearing all the words of the book of the covenant which was found in the house of the Lord. The king stood by the pillar and made a covenant before the Lord, to walk after the Lord, and to keep His commandments and His testimonies and His statutes with all his heart and all his soul, to carry out the words of this covenant that were written in this book. And all the people entered into the covenant. 2 Kings 23:1-3

## What did Josiah read?

One guess...

- ‘Cursed is the man who makes an idol or a molten image, an abomination to the Lord, the work of the hands of the craftsman, and sets it up in secret.’ And all the people shall answer and say, ‘Amen.’ Deuteronomy 27:15
- “Now it shall be, if you diligently obey the Lord your God, being careful to do all His commandments which I command you today, the Lord your God will set you high above all the nations of the earth. All these blessings will come upon you and overtake you if you obey the Lord your God” Deuteronomy 28:1-2
- “The Lord will command the blessing upon you in your barns and in all that you put your hand to, and He will bless you in the land which the Lord your God gives you. The Lord will establish you as a holy people to Himself, as He swore to you, if you keep the commandments of the Lord your God and walk in His ways. So all the peoples of the earth will see that you are called by the name of the Lord, and they will be afraid of you. The Lord will make you abound in prosperity, in the offspring of your body and in the offspring of your beast and in the produce of your ground, in the land which the Lord swore to your fathers to give you.” Deuteronomy 28:8-11



Then the king (Josiah) commanded Hilkiah the high priest and the priests of the second order and the doorkeepers, to bring out of the temple of the Lord all the vessels that were made for Baal, for Asherah, and for all the host of heaven; and he burned them outside Jerusalem in the fields of the Kidron, and carried their ashes to Bethel. He did away with the idolatrous priests whom the kings of Judah had appointed to burn incense in the high places in the cities of Judah and in the surrounding area of Jerusalem, also those who burned incense to Baal, to the sun and to the moon and to the constellations and to all the host of heaven. He brought out the Asherah from the house of the Lord outside Jerusalem to the brook Kidron, and burned it at the brook Kidron, and ground it to dust, and threw its dust on the graves of the common people. He also broke down the houses of the male cult prostitutes which were in the house of the Lord, where the women were weaving hangings for the Asherah. 2 Kings 23:4-7

## Baal and Asherah

- Baal** is a Canaanite weather god associated with thunderstorms. The majesty of a thunderstorm and the gift of fertility in nature could be construed as the evidence of Yahweh's work. But Baal was a god of sexual congress whose cult sported erotic acts that offended Israelite sensitivities, and the full identification of Yahweh and Baal was not a possibility. Israel's prophets fought to preserve a vision of transcendent Yahweh over against the Canaanite concept of Baal the nature god. (Harper's Bible Dictionary) This was the name appropriated to the principal male god of the Phoenicians. It is found in several places in the plural BAALIM (Judg. 2:11; 10:10; 1 Kings 18:18; Jer. 2:23; Hos. 2:17). Baal is identified with Molech (Jer. 19:5). It was known to the Israelites as Baal-peor (Num. 25:3; Deut. 4:3), was worshipped till the time of Samuel (1 Sam 7:4), and was afterwards the religion of the ten tribes in the time of Ahab (1 Kings 16:31–33; 18:19, 22). It prevailed also for a time in the kingdom of Judah (2 Kings 8:27; comp. 11:18; 16:3; 2 Chr. 28:2), till finally put an end to by the severe discipline of the Captivity (Zeph. 1:4–6). The priests of Baal were in great numbers (1 Kings 18:19), and of various classes (2 Kings 10:19). Their mode of offering sacrifices is described in 1 Kings 18:25–29. The sun-god, under the general title of Baal, or "lord," was the chief object of worship of the Canaanites. Each locality had its special Baal, and the various local Baals were summed up under the name of Baalim, or "lords." Each Baal had a wife, who was a colourless reflection of himself. (Easton's Bible Dictionary)
- Asherah** was the name of a sensual Canaanite goddess Astarte, the feminine of the Assyrian Ishtar. Its symbol was the stem of a tree deprived of its boughs, and rudely shaped into an image, and planted in the ground. (Easton's Bible Dictionary)

# Baal and Asherah



Asherah



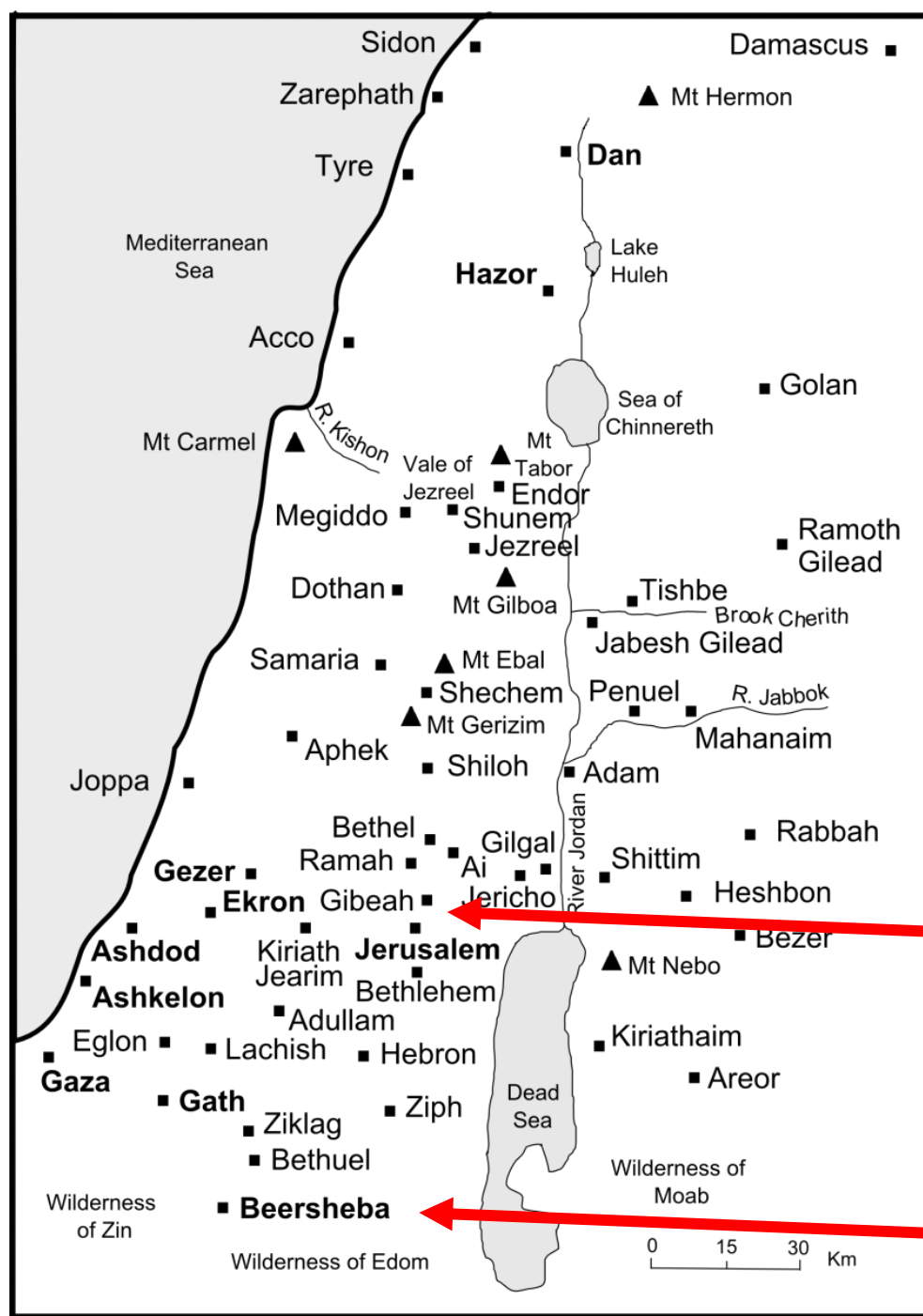
בַּעַל - Baal in Israel



Asherah

Then he (Josiah) brought all the priests from the cities of Judah, and defiled the high places where the priests had burned incense, from Geba to Beersheba; and he broke down the high places of the gates which were at the entrance of the gate of Joshua the governor of the city, which were on one's left at the city gate. Nevertheless the priests of the high places did not go up to the altar of the Lord in Jerusalem, but they ate unleavened bread among their brothers. He also defiled Topheth, which is in the valley of the son of Hinnom, that no man might make his son or his daughter pass through the fire for Molech. 2 Kings 23:8-10





“from Geba on  
Judah’s  
northern  
frontier to  
Beersheba on  
its southern  
border”

2 Kings 23:8

He (Josiah) did away with the horses which the kings of Judah had given to the sun, at the entrance of the house of the Lord, by the chamber of Nathan-melech the official, which was in the precincts; and he burned the chariots of the sun with fire. The altars which were on the roof, the upper chamber of Ahaz, which the kings of Judah had made, and the altars which Manasseh had made in the two courts of the house of the Lord, the king broke down; and he smashed them there and threw their dust into the brook Kidron. The high places which were before Jerusalem, which were on the right of the mount of destruction which Solomon the king of Israel had built for Ashtoreth the abomination of the Sidonians, and for Chemosh the abomination of Moab, and for Milcom the abomination of the sons of Ammon, the king defiled. He broke in pieces the sacred pillars and cut down the Asherim and filled their places with human bones. 2 Kings 23:11-14

Furthermore, the altar that was at Bethel and the high place which Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who made Israel sin, had made, even that altar and the high place he broke down. Then he demolished its stones, ground them to dust, and burned the Asherah. Now when Josiah turned, he saw the graves that were there on the mountain, and he sent and took the bones from the graves and burned them on the altar and defiled it according to the word of the Lord which the man of God proclaimed, who proclaimed these things. Then he said, "What is this monument that I see?" And the men of the city told him, "It is the grave of the man of God who came from Judah and proclaimed these things which you have done against the altar of Bethel." He said, "Let him alone; let no one disturb his bones." So they left his bones undisturbed with the bones of the prophet who came from Samaria. Josiah also removed all the houses of the high places which were in the cities of Samaria, which the kings of Israel had made provoking the Lord; and he did to them just as he had done in Bethel. All the priests of the high places who were there he slaughtered on the altars and burned human bones on them; then he returned to Jerusalem. 2 Kings 23:15-20

Then the king (Josiah) commanded all the people saying, “Celebrate the Passover to the Lord your God as it is written in this book of the covenant.” Surely such a Passover had not been celebrated from the days of the judges who judged Israel, nor in all the days of the kings of Israel and of the kings of Judah. But in the eighteenth year of King Josiah, this Passover was observed to the Lord in Jerusalem. 2 Kings 23:21-23



Moreover, Josiah removed the mediums and the spiritists and the teraphim and the idols and all the abominations that were seen in the land of Judah and in Jerusalem, that he might confirm the words of the law which were written in the book that Hilkiah the priest found in the house of the Lord. Before him there was no king like him who turned to the Lord with all his heart and with all his soul and with all his might, according to all the law of Moses; nor did any like him arise after him. 2 Kings 23:24-25

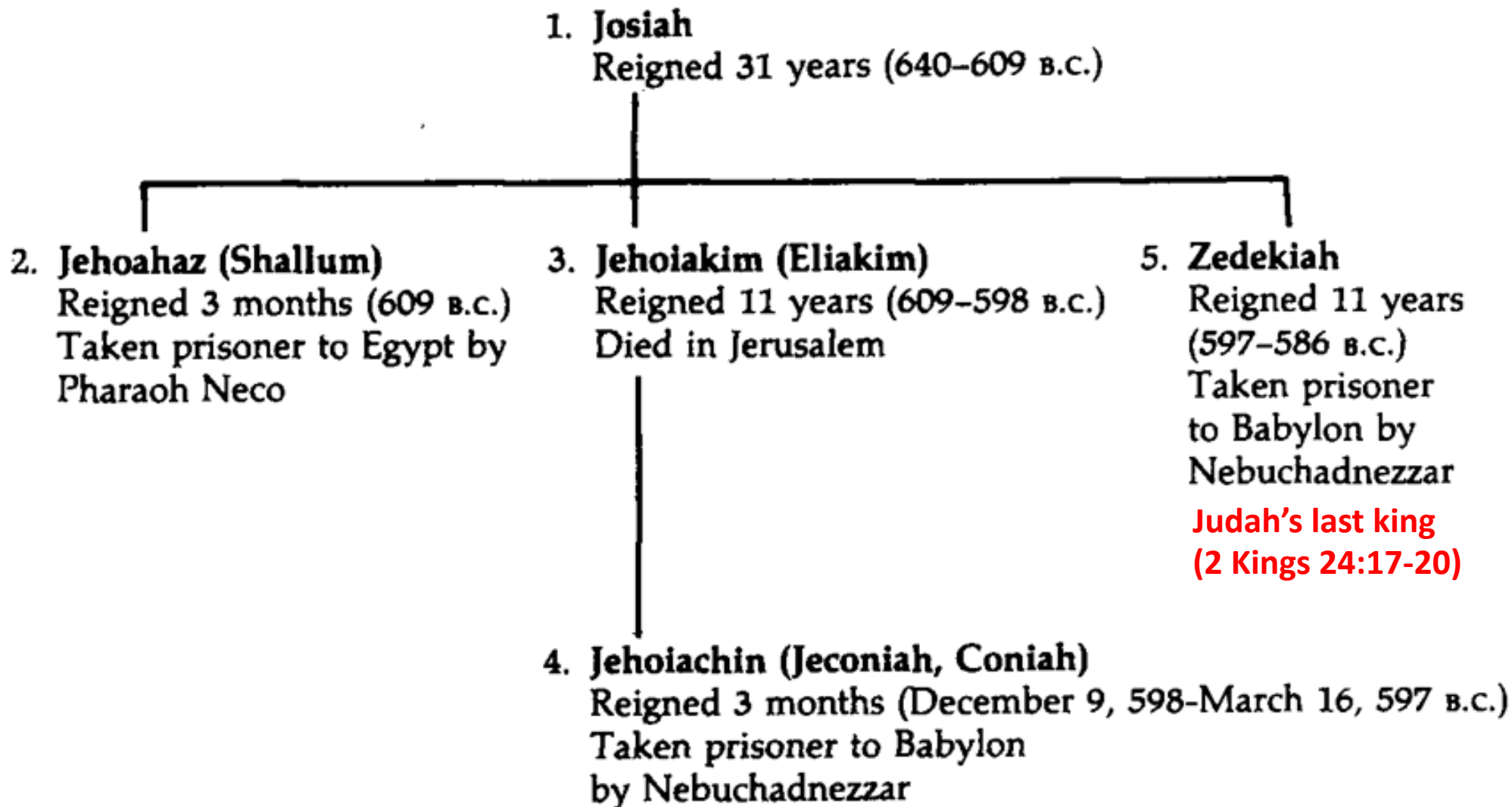
However, the Lord did not turn from the fierceness of His great wrath with which His anger burned against Judah, because of all the provocations with which Manasseh had provoked Him. The Lord said, “I will remove Judah also from My sight, as I have removed Israel. And I will cast off Jerusalem, this city which I have chosen, and the temple of which I said, ‘My name shall be there.’ ” 2 Kings 23:26-27

Now the rest of the acts of Josiah and all that he did, are they not written in the Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Judah? In his days Pharaoh Neco king of Egypt went up to the king of Assyria to the river Euphrates. And **King Josiah went to meet him, and when Pharaoh Neco saw him he killed him at Megiddo** (approx. 609 BC). His servants drove his body in a chariot from Megiddo, and brought him to Jerusalem and buried him in his own tomb. Then the people of the land took Jehoahaz the son of Josiah and anointed him and made him king in place of his father. 2 Kings 23:28-30

After all this, when Josiah had set the temple in order, Neco king of Egypt came up to make war at Carchemish on the Euphrates, and Josiah went out to engage him. But Neco sent messengers to him, saying, “What have we to do with each other, O King of Judah? I am not coming against you today but against the house with which I am at war, and God has ordered me to hurry. Stop for your own sake from interfering with God who is with me, so that He will not destroy you.” However, Josiah would not turn away from him, but disguised himself in order to make war with him; nor did he listen to the words of Neco from the mouth of God, but came to make war on the plain of Megiddo. The archers shot King Josiah, and the king said to his servants, “Take me away, for I am badly wounded.” So his servants took him out of the chariot and carried him in the second chariot which he had, and brought him to Jerusalem where he died and was buried in the tombs of his fathers. All Judah and Jerusalem mourned for Josiah. Then Jeremiah chanted a lament for Josiah. And all the male and female singers speak about Josiah in their lamentations to this day. And they made them an ordinance in Israel; behold, they are also written in the Lamentations. Now the rest of the acts of Josiah and his deeds of devotion as written in the law of the Lord, and his acts, first to last, behold, they are written in the Book of the Kings of Israel and Judah. 2 Chronicles 35:20-27



## The Last Five Kings of Judah



## Why did Israel's Divided Monarchies end?

- Hoshea was the last king of Israel, until the Northern Kingdom was conquered by the Assyrians in 722 BC, under the leadership of Sargon II.
- Zedekiah was the last king of Judah, until the Southern Kingdom was conquered by the Babylonians in 586 BC, under the leadership of Nebuchadnezzar.
- After the Babylonian captivity ended, the people of Israel were ruled by governors who served with the permission of the ruling empires.

# Israel and Judah: Difference Between the Two Kingdoms

BY DUSTIN HERRON 5 MIN READ POSTED JUNE 2ND 2021 BIBLE TEACHINGS ON ISRAEL

## When Judah and Israel Were One

When the people of Israel asked God for a king, the nation officially became a kingdom. But God warned them that it would come with its challenges.

## The Great Divide

In about the 10th century BCE something took place that dramatically affected the people of Israel and still affects them today. What was it? It was the great divide, which split the people into the kingdoms of Israel and of Judah.

1 Kings 12:16-19 tells us:

*"And when all Israel saw that the king did not listen to them, the people answered the king,*

*'What portion do we have in David? We have no inheritance in the son of Jesse. To your tents, O Israel! Look now to your own house, David.'*

*...So Israel has been in rebellion against the house of David to this day."*

## The Kingdom of Israel and the Kingdom of Judah

In that day, there was a great dispute in Israel, the nation chosen by God, about who was to become king. Rehoboam, Solomon's son, was rightful heir to the throne and reigned after Solomon's death. Jeroboam was a servant who rebelled against Solomon.

The 10 tribes of Israel made Jeroboam king and the tribes of Judah and Benjamin, along with the Levites, remained with Rehoboam. The split was prophesied by the Lord (1 Kings 11:11-13, 29-39) because of Solomon's sin.

The northern 10 tribes kept the name of Israel. The once unified tribes of Jacob were now two nations. They were two houses, or two brothers if you will, that had become enemies.

The prophets wept over her fate. They were a people of God after all. But their pride and hunger for power took over.

## Difference between Israel and Judah

We see throughout the rest of the Old Testament how these two nations fought with one another. They each became strong and independent and created two distinct lineages in history. Each had their own kings, and even their own prophets.

Sadly, also both Israel and Judah fell into captivity, although to different powers and at different times. God sent the Babylonians to capture the House of Judah, and He sent the Assyrians to conquer the House of Israel.

And while the Babylonian captivity of Judah lasted for a period of 70 years, Israel never fully came out of the Assyrian captivity. The Samaritans were considered half-breeds from the House of Israel. But many tribes were considered lost.

At first, they were known as the "diaspora", which is a common name for the Jewish people who live away from their land. Eventually, the northern tribes became the "lost sheep of the House of Israel."

## Yeshua Mentions the Two Houses

We know from Scripture that the kingdom line of Messiah had to come through Judah.

Though this divide happened long centuries before Yeshua (Jesus in Hebrew) was born on earth, it was something very relevant to His day. On more than one occasion Yeshua brings up the tension between the two kingdoms.

It happened several times, for example, when Yeshua interacted with the Samaritan woman. Yeshua brings it up also in the “Parable of the Good Samaritan.”

But perhaps the most overlooked reference and teaching that Yeshua delivers on the two houses is in “The Parable of the Prodigal Son.”

## The Father, the Prodigal Son and Brother

This parable is most often taught as a call for an unbelieving family member to come back into relationship with the Father. But could there be a deeper message in this story? Or another layer?

I would like to suggest that the Messiah also wanted to bring attention to the two “brotherly” nations.

In the parable, the younger son asks for his inheritance and departs from his father’s house. The elder son remains at home, yet he does not walk in perfect harmony with the father. Anger and bitterness settle within him.

Even when his brother comes home, the firstborn has an inward struggle to rejoice.



## The Prodigal Brothers, Israel and Judah

The Southern Kingdom of Judah is like the firstborn, who never intended to abandon the father. The kingship rested with him. Judah carried the lineage of the great king David and king Solomon.

Biblical history shows us that Judah remained closer to the LORD and His ways, even though their hearts were far from Him. This lays out the Northern Kingdom of Israel to be the younger son.

The prophet Jeremiah tells us in great detail that neither Israel nor Judah were perfect. Both had evil in their hearts.

But it is Israel who first went out and “sowed their wild oats”, chose other gods and foreigners. Doesn't it sound like the younger son who committed many sins in a foreign land?

In His parable, Yeshua called those who surrounded Him to not be angry and stubborn of heart when their brother returned from his sin.

## Reuniting the Family

Next time you read the Parable of the Prodigal Son, try looking at it in a different light. Consider the two brothers and their relationship. Think about how Yeshua was preparing the hearts of the Jewish people to receive their brothers with gladness.

The northern tribes have been scattered and lost for a long time. Yeshua's death on the cross made a way also for the “lost sheep of the House of Israel” to be brought back into relationship with the Father.

God wants to reunite His chosen people. And Yeshua's death clothes them once again in righteousness and gives them authority. Just like the best robe and the signet ring that the father gives to his son in the parable.

God's desire is for Israel to return to His household, and for His other son to receive Israel with open arms.