The Downward Spiral
2 Chronicles 18-36

2 Chronicles Context

- Israel, the northern kingdom, was apostate.
- Ahab had married Jezebel princess of Sidon
- Jezebel introduced gross idolatry and sexual perversion into Israel.
- Prophets of the Lord such as Elijah and Micaiah opposed Ahab.

2 Chronicles Context

- Meanwhile, Judah was led by the godly king Asa.
- Asa loved the Lord.
- The prophet Azariah encouraged him to follow the Lord. 2 Chron 15:7 *But you be strong and do not lose courage for there is a reward for your work.*
- So Asa gathered all of Judah and also Benjamin, Ephraim, Manasseh and Simeon and they sacrificed to the Lord together!
- And they all made an oath to the Lord.

2 Chronicles Context

- Asa even removed his own mother, Maacah from the position of *Queen Mother*, because she had made a horrid image, and Asherah.
- Asa cut it down, and crushed it and burned it in the brook Kidron.
- And he restored the House of God.

Jehoshaphat son of Asa

- After Asa died, the kingdom passed to his son Jehoshaphat.
- Like his father Asa, Jehoshaphat loved the Lord.
- But he made four disastrous alliances with Israel.
  - A military alliance with Ahab: 1 Kings 22, 2 Chron 18.
  - A military alliance with Jehoram: 2 Kings 3. It was a very similar incident! Jehoshaphat did not learn!
  - A commercial alliance 2 Chron 20:35-37
  - A marriage alliance 2 Chron 21:6
- The worst was the marriage alliance.

Jehoshaphat's Marriage Alliance

- Ahab had married Jezebel, a princess of the Sidonians.
- Jezebel brought massive Baal worship and sexual immorality into Israel.
- Ahab died in battle, and Jezebel was executed by Jehu.
- But the idolatry and sexual immorality they introduced into Israel lived on.

Jehoshaphat's Marriage Alliance

- Jehoshaphat arranged a marriage alliance between his son Jehoram (Joram) and Athaliah daughter of Jezebel (wife of Ahab the king of Israel).
- Thus, the corruption was brought into Judah!
- Now the line of succession of the kings of Judah would have the corruption of Jezebel.
- Still, there were a few bright lights in Judah!

Summary of Jehoshaphat

- Jehoshaphat reigned for 25 years.
- 2 Chron 20:32 *He walked in the way of his father Asa and did not depart from it, doing right in the sight of the Lord*.
- He encouraged people to follow the Lord.
- However, he did not remove the high places where Judah committed idolatry.
- He twice supported Israel militarily.
- And he brought corruption into Judah by the unwise marriage alliance of his son Jehoram with Athaliah.

Jehoram son of Jehoshaphat

- Jehoram's wife was Athaliah, daughter of Jezebel.
- To make himself secure, he killed all of his brothers (2 Chron 21:4)! He was probably instigated by his evil wife Athaliah.
- He walked in the idolatry of Israel.
- And made high places to cause the inhabitants of Jerusalem to play the harlot.
- And he led Judah astray.

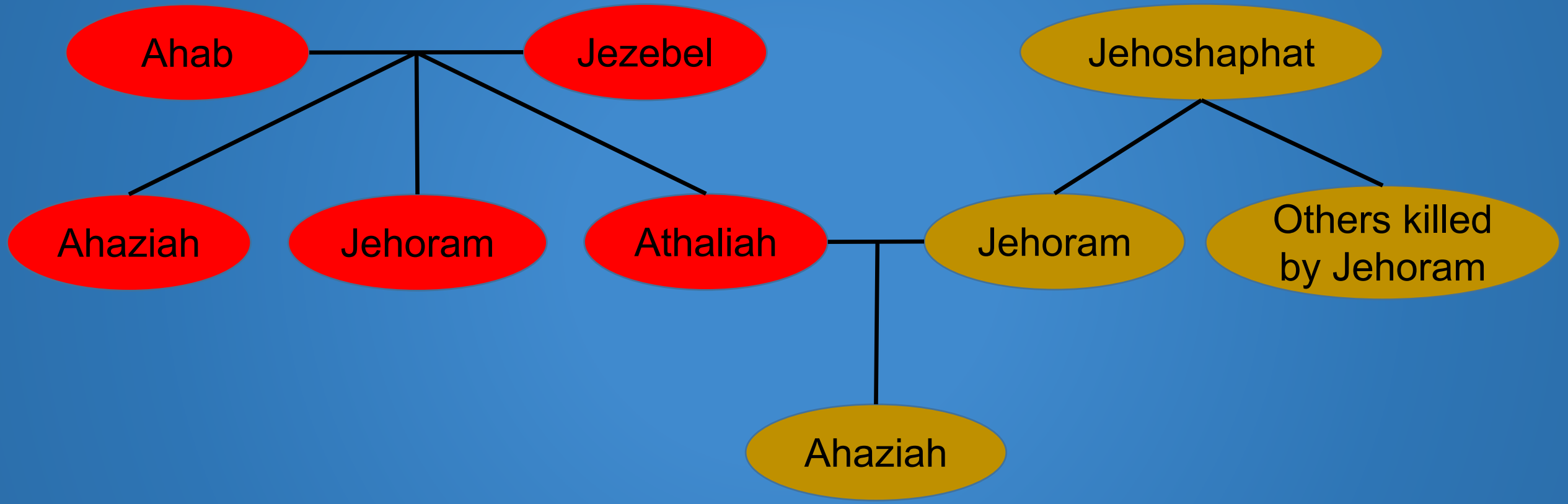
Jehoram son of Jehoshaphat

- Elijah the prophet sent Jehoram a warning from God.
- 2 Chron 21:14 *Behold the Lord is going to strike your people, your sons, your wives and all your possessions with great calamity; and you will suffer a sickness, a disease of the bowels until your bowels come out because of the sickness day by day.”*

Ahaziah son of Jehoram

- So the Lord smote Jehoram with sickness, and his bowels came out, as predicted.
- 2 Chron 21:20 *… and he departed with no one's regret …*
- Ahaziah, his son reigned after him … for one year!
- He did evil, and was killed by Jehu, the Lord's executioner for the house of Ahab.

The Corruption of Judah



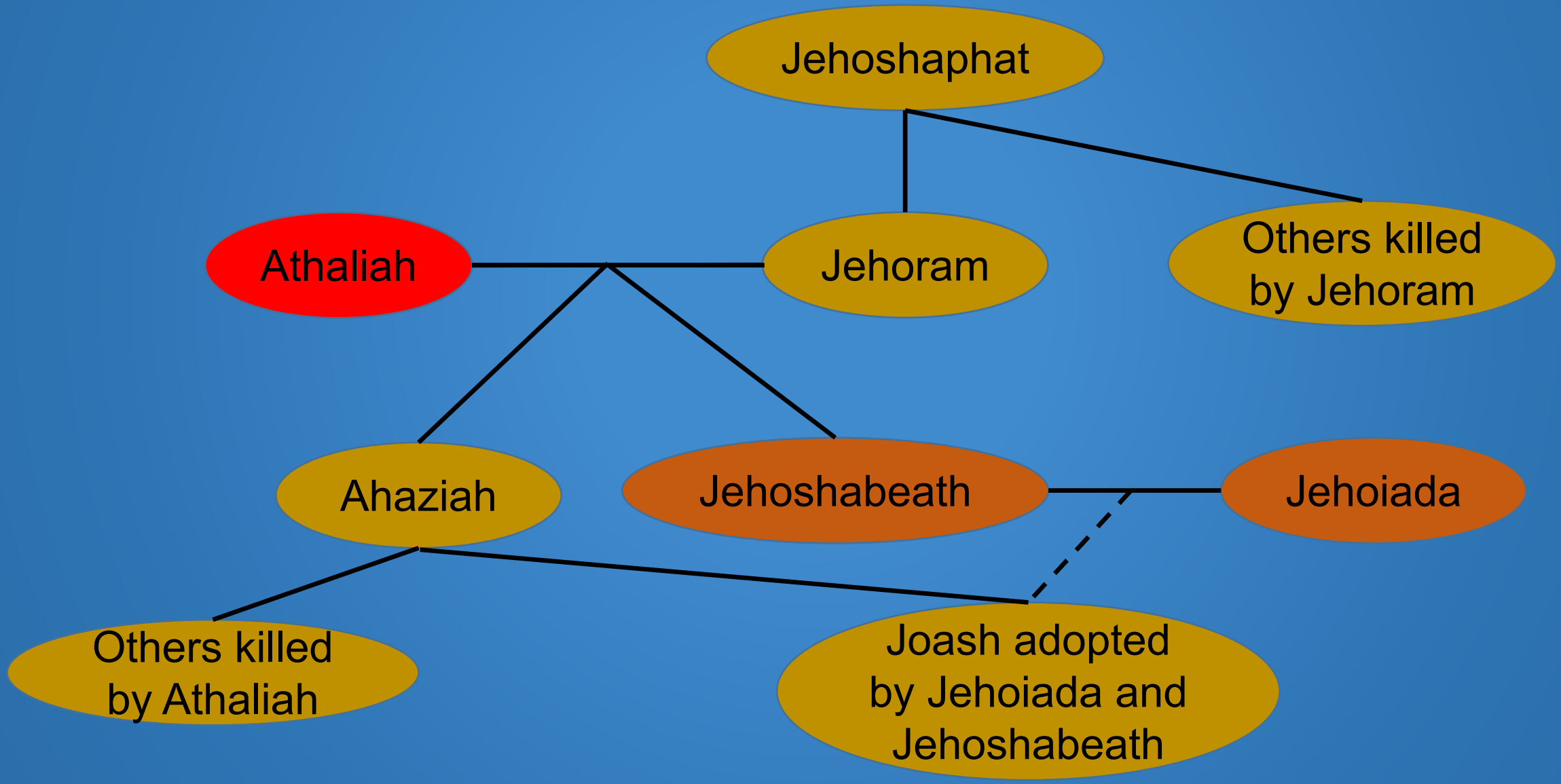
Athaliah's Coup

- Now Athaliah, mother of Ahaziah, saw her son was dead, executed by Jehu.
- So she brought out a coup!
- She killed all but one of her own grandchildren, children of her dead son Ahaziah (2 Chron 22:10)!
- And she called herself Monarch of Judah!
- No surprise, this was the daughter of Jezebel!

Athaliah's Coup

- But God had plans for the royal line, even in this disaster.
- Jehoshabeath was a sister of Ahaziah, married to Jehoiada a priest.
- Jehoiada and Jehoshabeath loved the Lord.
- Jehoshabeath saved Joash, son of Ahaziah from the massacre of Athaliah.

The Corruption of Judah



Joash son of Jehoram

- Joash was adopted when he was 1 year old!
- And lived in secret as the son of Jehoshabeath and Jehoiada for 6 years.
- Then Jehoiada organized a coup, and killed Athaliah.
- Joash was then installed as king.

Joash son of Jehoram

- Joash followed the Lord while Jehoiada, his adoptive father was alive.
- But then, when Jehoiada died, he listened to the officials of Judah, and served Asherim and the idols.
- Zechariah, son of Jehoiada, and hence his half-brother, warned Joash.
- Joash added to his sin by killing Zechariah, Jehoiada's son (2 Chron 24:21)!

Joash son of Jehoram

- God judged Joash.
- 2 Chron 24:24 *Indeed the army of the Arameans came with a small number of men; yet the Lord delivered a very great army into their hands, because they had forsaken the Lord, the God of their fathers. Thus they executed judgment on Joash.*
- Then Joash got sick, and his own servants murdered him.

Amaziah son of Joash
Uzziah son of Amaziah

- Joash's son Amaziah took over as King of Judah.
- Amaziah at first followed the Lord, and then he forsook Him. He too was murdered.
- Amaziah's son Uzziah at first followed the Lord.
- But later he became proud and forsook Him. Uzziah took on the function of the priests.
- God cursed him with leprosy.

Jotham son of Uzziah

- Uzziah was followed by Jotham.
- Jotham followed the Lord!
- 2 Chron 27:6 *So Jotham became mighty because he ordered his ways before the Lord his God.*
- But unfortunately he was not a good leader. He did not use his position to lead the people back to God.
- Jotham died a natural death, and Jotham's son Ahaz took over.

Ahaz son of Jotham

- Jotham was a good king.
- But Ahaz his son walked in the ways of the kings of Israel.
- He even burned his own son as an offering.
- Ahaz went to Damascus, and saw a heathen altar there. He made a copy of it (2 Kings 16:12-15).
- He then replaced the bronze altar of the Lord with his heathen altar!

Ahaz son of Jotham

- The Lord delivered Ahaz of Judah into the hand of the Aramites, the Israelites and the Edomites.
- He sent to Assyria for help, but Assyria instead attacked him!
- 2 Chron 28:20 *So Tilgath-pilneser king of Assyria came against him and afflicted him instead of strengthening him.*
- Somehow, this ungodly father raised one of Judah's best kings, Hezekiah.

Hezekiah son of Ahaz

- 2 Chron 29:2 *He did right in the sight of the Lord, according to all that his father David had done.*
- Finally … a man like David, who loved the Lord!
- He started by encouraging the Levites to cleanse the Temple, and perform a country-wide worship.
- 2 Chron 29:24 *… to atone for all Israel, for the king ordered the burnt offering and the sin offering.*

Hezekiah son of Ahaz

- 2 Chron 29:36 *Then Hezekiah and all the people rejoiced over what God had prepared for the people, because the thing came up suddenly.*
- He then led a massive revival in all Judah!
- He even sent messengers to northern Israel, to win them back to the Lord.
- But they laughed the messengers to scorn and mocked them.

Hezekiah son of Ahaz

- Still Hezekiah persevered.
- He broke the idolatrous pillars and altars and cut down the Asherim.
- He restarted the daily sacrifices.
- 2 Chron 31:20 *Thus Hezekiah did through all Judah; and he did what was good, right and true before the Lord His God.*

Hezekiah son of Ahaz

- 2 Chron 31:21 *Every work which he began in the service of the house of God in law and in commandment, seeking his God, he did with all his heart and prospered.*
- Hezekiah had immense riches and honor.
- God greatly blessed Hezekiah, because he fully followed the Lord.
- He also strongly led his people to follow the Lord.

Hezekiah son of Ahaz

- Sennacherib, king of Assyria then came to attack Judah.
- They insulted Hezekiah and Judah.
- Is 37:23 *Whom have you reproached and blasphemed? Against whom have you raised your voice and haughtily lifted up your eyes? Against the Holy one of Israel!*
- A reproach against the people of God is a reproach against God!

Hezekiah son of Ahaz

- God gave Hezekiah a supernatural victory over Sennacherib!
- His entire army, 185000 strong, was destroyed, probably by a virulent plague.
- Sennacherib went back home in defeat,
- And then two of his own sons murdered him as he worshiped in the house of Nisroch his god.

Hezekiah son of Ahaz

- But then Hezekiah got sick.
- The Lord sent Isaiah to him to tell him to be ready to go home to the Lord.
- Hezekiah cried out to the Lord to save him from death.
- And God granted him 15 more years.
- In those 15 years two unfortunate things happened.

Hezekiah son of Ahaz

- Firstly Hezekiah sired a son, Manasseh.
- The godly Hezekiah sired the most ungodly and evil king Judah had ever had, Manasseh!
- Secondly, Hezekiah became proud.
- He showed off his wealth to envoys from Babylon.
- Still, on the whole, Hezekiah was a man of God.

Manasseh son of Hezekiah

- When Hezekiah became sick, God healed him and granted him 15 more years.
- 3 years later, he sired Manasseh.
- Manasseh was 12 when he started to reign.
- He rebuilt high places of worship.
- He built heathen altars in the Temple of God.
- He killed his sons in child sacrifice.
- He used witchcraft, divination, sorcery, mediums and spiritists.

Manasseh son of Hezekiah

- The Lord spoke to Manasseh and his people, but they paid no attention.
- So the Lord sent the king of Assyria to capture Manasseh and bring him to Babylon with hooks and chains.
- When he was in distress, Manasseh humbled himself before God greatly, and prayed to Him.
- And God heard him, and brought him back to Jerusalem.

Manasseh son of Hezekiah

- The Lord heard the prayer of Manasseh and delivered him.
- Is 55:7 *Let the wicked forsake his way and the unrighteous man his thoughts; and let him return to the Lord, and He will have compassion on him, and to our God, for He will abundantly pardon.*
- God forgave Manasseh and restored him!
- And then Manasseh followed the Lord with a whole heart.

Amon son of Manasseh

- Manasseh died and his son Amon reigned.
- Amon only reigned for 2 years!
- Amon was evil, and he practiced idolatry.
- He never repented, as had his father, Manasseh.
- He was murdered.
- Then his son Josiah took over as king of Judah.

Josiah son of Amon

- Another good king in Judah!
- He was only 8 years old when he started to reign!
- 2 Chron 34:2 *He did right in the sight of the Lord, and walked in they ways of his father David and did not turn aside to the right or to the left.*
- When he was 16 years old, he started to seek God.
- When he was 20, he began a purge of idolatry in Judah.

Josiah son of Amon

- He tore down Baal altars and the Asherim and sacred pillars.
- He destroyed the “horses of the sun”.
- He broke down the houses of the cult prostitutes.
- He burned the bones of the idolatrous priests on the heathen altar Jeroboam built in Bethel.
- He then destroyed the altar.

Josiah son of Amon

- 1 Kings 13:3 *…Behold the altar shall be split apart and the ashes which are on you shall be poured out.*
- King Josiah was predicted by name, and his actions were predicted in detail, 300 years before his time!
- God had planned for Josiah, long before he was born!

Josiah son of Amon

- In the 18’th year of his reign (he was 26) he started repairs on the temple.
- During repairs they found a copy of the Law.
- He had the Law read to him, and he trembled in fear.
- He humbled himself before God, and entreated Him.

Josiah son of Amon

- He then sent an inquiry to Huldah, a prophetess.
- Huldah confirmed the reading, that the Lord would bring judgement on Judah.
- But, she also said 2 Kings 22:19 "*because your heart was tender and you humbled yourself before the Lord … I have truly heard you" declares the Lord.*
- God promised that during Josiah's reign, no evil would fall on the land.

Josiah son of Amon

- Then Josiah made a covenant before the Lord to walk after the Lord and to keep His commandments and testimonies.
- He also led his people to make a covenant before the Lord.
- Then Josiah and all Judah observed a passover, the like of which had not been celebrated since the time of Samuel.

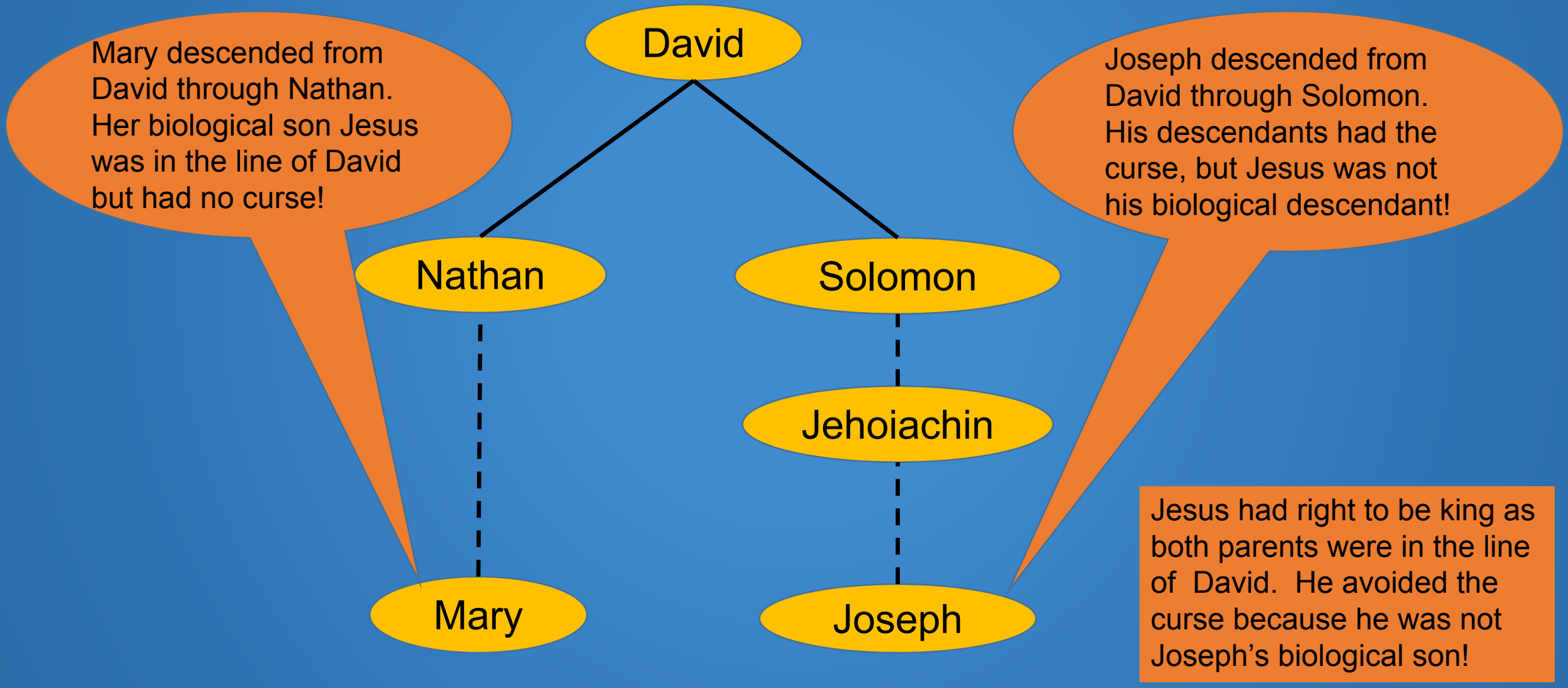
Straight down after Josiah!

- All the following kings were evil.
- Jehoahaz son of Josiah was king after him.
- The king of Egypt got rid of Jehoahaz, and installed his brother Jehoiakim as king after him.
- Jer 22:19 *He (Jehoiakim) will be buried with a donkey's burial, dragged off and thrown out beyond the gates of Jerusalem.*

The curse of Jehoiachin

- Jehoaichin, son of Jehoiakim reigned after him.
- Jehoiachin was also called Jeconiah or Coniah.
- Jehoiachin did evil, and God cursed him.
- Jer 22:30 *… For no man of his descendants will prosper sitting on the throne of David …*
- No biological descendant of Jehoiachin, that is of the royal line of Solomon could sit on the throne of David.
- What then of Jesus?

Jesus' Genealogy



The Plan of Redemption

- Romans 11:33-36 *Oh the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and the knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgements and unfathomable His ways!*
- *For who has known the mind of the Lord, or who became His counselor? Or who has first given to Him that it might be paid back to him?*
- *For from Him and through Him and to Him are all things. To Him be the glory forever. Amen.*

Summary

- Beware of compromises, like Jehoshaphat, especially in marriage. It eventually brought a curse on an entire dynasty!
- 2 Cor 6:14 *Do not be bound together with unbelievers …*
- Confess your sin to the Lord like Manasseh.
- Is 55:7 *Let the wicked forsake his way … and let him return to the Lord … for He will abundantly pardon.*

Summary

- Your destiny is not dictated by evil in your ancestry.
- Uzziah, Jotham, Hezekiah and Josiah were good kings who all had Jezebel as their ancestor.
- Your destiny is not even dictated by evil you have done, for your sins are forgiven.
- 2 Cor 5:17 *Therefore if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creature; the old things passed away; behold new things have come.*