

The Kings Of Israel

I. The Formation of the United Kingdom

Saul:

1030-1010

Saul, son of Kish, was from the tribe of Benjamin (smallest of the tribes). He met Samuel the prophet trying to find information about his father's lost donkeys. Samuel anointed Saul and he was appointed by lots as King of Israel. Yahweh rejected Saul after his sacrifice in Ch. 13 and his refusal to carry out the curse of destruction against the Amalekites.

Saul became jealous of David and tried to kill him. A war broke out against the Philistines where the Witch of Endor was consulted. Saul later died in battle.

1030

David:

1010-970

Samuel anointed David in Bethlehem. David soothed Saul with the harp and came into Saul's service. David killed Goliath, gained the affection of Jonathan, and made Saul jealous. Saul attempted to kill David by requiring 100 foreskins for his daughter in marriage, trying to spear him, and sending agents after him. David escaped and spared the life of Saul twice. David gathered a set of followers who formed a band of warriors and found refuge with the Philistines.

David was made king of Judah at Hebron and reigned there for seven years and six months. After Ishbaal was murdered David became king of the North as well as the South. David expanded the borders and captured the Jebusite city of Jerusalem and made it the capital.

David was important liturgically since he brought the ark of the covenant to Jerusalem making it the religious center. The Davidic promise of enduring progeny developed the kingly and messianic theology. He was known as a poet and was the inspiration for the Psalms. David balanced the earthly and the heavenly kingship and was the model for all future kings.

Despite his influence and success, he did have failings. The adultery with Bathsheba and the arranged death of Uriah the Hittite was the occasion of Nathan's rebuke and the cause of his "sin". Also, there was the census that was taken against the wishes of God causing pestilence.. The mismanagement of his sons caused rebellion by Absalom, exile, and death of many.

1010

1000

Solomon:

970-931

Solomon was consecrated king through the intercession of his mother, Bathsheba and Nathan. Adonijah, who began to reign when David was dying, was put to death by Solomon as well as Joab and Shimei who conspired with Adonijah.

Solomon began his reign well asking for and receiving wisdom from God. His reputation was well known and brought the Queen of Sheba to visit. His wisdom became the inspiration for the Wisdom Books. The vacuum that existed due to the weakness of the neighboring countries caused the greatest expanse of the kingdom. Solomon controlled the trade routes and gained much wealth. The temple was built through his desire and worship was standardized. He was involved in the liturgies through intercessory prayers and sacrifices.

Later Solomon fell from the ideals set forth by David. His numerous concubines brought their gods with them and tainted the pure worship. Solomon divided the country into 12 districts that took no account of the old tribal divisions. Forced labor and heavy taxation burdened the people. The later events show the bitterness and oppression felt by the people.

The writer of Chronicles gives only a positive view of both David and Solomon.

970

II. The Divided Kingdom:

Judah:

Rehoboam:

931 - 913

An assembly of Israel met with Rehoboam and said they would follow him if he lightened his burden. Rehoboam rejected the advise of the elders in favor of the young and gave the answer that he would have a heavier yoke than even his father. This caused the split of the North and South and fulfilled the prophecy of Ahijah to Jeroboam. Rehoboam was going to attack the North but heeded the advise of Shemaiah who said that the split was Yahweh's plan.

He strengthened many of the cities but increased the idolatrous worship introduced by his father, Solomon. He did what is displeasing to Yahweh arousing his resentment more than his ancestors by all the sins which they had committed. They built high places, set up pillars and poles on every hill and under every spreading tree.

The attack of the Pharaoh Shishak and the spoiling of the temple happened during his reign.

Abijah:

913 - 911

Reigning for three years he walked in the sins of his father and his heart was not wholly with Yahweh.

According to Chronicles Abijah defeated Jeroboam even though he was outnumbered and ambushed. Abijah captured Bethel, Ephron, and Jeshanah and grew mighty with fourteen wives and twenty-two sons.

Asa:

911-870

Asa succeeded his father Abijah and reigned in a time of prosperity. He was known for his religious zeal, reformed the worship, removed male prostitutes and idols, and deposed his grandmother of her dignity as queen mother for her obscenity, but did not remove all the high places.

Israel:

Jeroboam I:

931 - 910

Jeroboam was head of the forced labor of the house of Joseph. He was prophesied to by Ahijah that he would take over 10 of the tribes as the cloth showed. Solomon tried to kill him and he fled to Egypt only to return after Solomon's death. He together with the assembly asked for a lighter yoke to which Rehoboam refused. Jeroboam with the North following him became king of all but Judah and Benjamin.

He set up two golden calves in Bethel and Dan to compete against the temple worship in Jerusalem. He consecrated and organized a new priesthood not of the house of Levi. A Man of God from Judah condemned the altar in Bethel and predicted doom for his sons and the priests he appointed by Josiah. He wilted Jeroboam's hand and the altar burst apart.

When Jeroboam's son was sick he sent his wife to Abijah in disguise. Abijah predicted the destruction of his house.

931

915

Nadab:

910-909

Nadab followed the way of his father in sin and caused Israel to sin. He was killed in a coup by Baasha, son of Ahijah. The house of Jeroboam was then wiped out according to the prophecy of Ahijah.

910

According to Chronicles he abolished foreign altars and high places, broke the pillars, cut down the sacred poles, and urged Judah to seek Yahweh and observe his commandments. He defeated the Cushites outnumbered 4 to 1 but was reproved for making an alliance with Aram against Israel and ill treated some people.

Jehoshaphat:

870 - 848

Jehoshaphat did right in the sight of Yahweh like Asa his father. He got rid of the rest of the male prostitutes, but did not take away the high places and the people still sacrificed and burned incense on them.

His alliance with Ahab and the arrangement that his son should marry Ahab's daughter was rebuked by Jehu. He won a large battle against the Moabites and Ammonites by foreign ambush according to Chronicles. Since he had a relatively peaceful reign he expanded in wealth and built a fleet of ships that were wrecked.

Baasha:

909 - 886

Baasha did what was evil in the sight of Yahweh and walked in the way of Jeroboam.

Jehu prophesied against Baasha saying he and his house would be swept away. Baasha's son was conspired against and killed by Zimri who also killed the rest of the house.

Elah:

886 - 885

Elah was killed by his servant Zimri, commander of half his chariots, while drunk in the house of Arza.

Zimri:

885 (for 7 days)

Zimri killed all of the house of Baasha. The army preferred Omri so they invaded the city Tirzah and burned the king's house with Zimri in it.

Omri:

885 - 874

Omri reigned for six years in Tirzah and six years in Shemer. He bought the hill of Samaria named Shemer (after the prior owner) for two talents of silver. He fortified this city making it the capital.

Omri did what was evil and did more evil than all who were before him walking in the way of Jeroboam.

Ahab:

874 - 853

Ahab did more evil than all before him. Not only did he walk in the way of Jeroboam, but he took Jezebel as his wife and served Baal. Elijah prophesied against Ahab and hid from him until after the Mt. Carmel contest. Elijah had the Baal priests slaughtered which gave Jezebel reason to seek his life. Elisha also began his call during the Ahab's reign.

Ahab successfully defeated Ben-Hadad the king of Syria although greatly outnumbered but refused to kill him as Yahweh commanded. Therefore a prophet cursed him with the punishment.

900

885

870

Jehoram:

848 - 841

Jehoram slew all of his brothers, married the daughter of Ahab, and walked in the way of the kings of Israel. He did not walk in the way of Jehoshaphat (his father) or Asa.

According to Chronicles Elijah sent a letter predicting a plague over his people, wives, children, and possessions. Finally a disease of the bowels was predicted. The Philistines and Arabs invaded and carried off the possessions of the king except for Jehoahaz (Ahaziah) his youngest son.

Edom revolted during his time and set up their own king.

Ahaziah:

841

Ahaziah did evil in the sight of Yahweh as the house of Ahab had done.

He went with Joram, son of Ahab, to fight against Hazael, king of Aram.

Jehu killed Ahaziah when Ahaziah was visiting Joram after Joram had been wounded in war. Jehu then murdered all of his brothers except Jehoash who was rescued by Ahaziah's sister.

Ahab allowed the murder of Naboth at Jezebel's conniving. Elijah pronounced God's sentence, Ahab repented, and the punishment went to his sons.

Ahab and Jehoshaphat teamed up against the Aramaeans against the advise of Micaiah. Ahab died in the battle.

Ahaziah:

853 - 852

Ahaziah walked in the way of his father, mother, and Jeroboam.

Moab rebelled. Ahaziah fell from his balcony. Dying, he sent his servants to inquire Baal-Zebub god of Ekron. Elijah intercepted them and prophesied his death. Ahaziah sent three captains with 50 men each to Elijah. Elijah killed two of the three groups by fire before seeing Ahaziah and telling him personally that he would die.

Jehoram:

852 - 841

Hehoram did evil but did away with the pillar his father made to Baal.

He teamed up with Judah and Edom against Moab's refusal to pay tribute. They won as the Moabites thought they saw blood of a battle between the three. Moab was routed but the three stopped once the king offered his son as sacrifice to Chemosh.

During this time Elisha had miracles of the widow's oil, the healing of the woman of Shunem's son, cleansing of the poisoned soup, multiplied loaves, healing of Naaman's skin disease, the floating axehead, and taming the Aramaen raiders. He predicted the draught and the coup of Hazael.

Jehoram and his family were all put to death by Jehu.

Jehu:

841 - 814

Jehu was anointed king by a follower of Elisha. He killed both Joram, king of Israel, and Ahaziah, king of Judah. After, he killed Jezebel who called him a "Zimri," all of Ahab's sons, and the kin of Ahaziah.

Jehu collected all the Baal priests in deception in their temple and killed them all. He then burned the pillar that was inside the temple and demolished the house of Baal making it a latrine.

Athaliah:

841 - 835

Athaliah was the daughter of Ahab and Jezebel and wife of Jehoram (king of Judah). She was the only woman to occupy the throne in Judah. She did this after killing off all other members of the royal family that Jehu didn't already kill. Jehoash, however was saved by his aunt before hand and was brought up secretly in the temple under Jehoiada the high priest. She was put to death by Jehoiada's command once Jehoash was seven.

It was during this time that Jehoiada made a covenant between Yahweh, the king, and the people that they would remain Yahweh's people. Then the people smashed the temple of Baal and its altars and priest, Mattan.

Jehoash:

835 - 796

Jehoash reigned for 40 years. All his life he did what Yahweh regards as right, having been instructed by Jehoiada. The high places, however, were not abolished and people offered incense on them.

Jehoash devised an upkeep of the temple by tax, temple dues, and voluntary donations to be administered by the priests. The priests were to live on expiation sacrifice money.

According to Chronicles, after the death of Jehoiada, his character lessened and he killed the prophet Zechariah, son of Jehoiada, who had rebuked the king and the people, stoning him to death in the court of the temple.

King Hazel of Aram threatened invasion and was paid off by temple gold and treasuries. Jehoash was murdered in a conspiracy by a number of his servants.

Amaziah:

796 - 781

Amaziah did right in the eyes of Yahweh, but not as David his father. The high places were not removed.

He killed the servants that killed his father but not the servants' children.

Jehu did not turn totally from the sins of Jeroboam since he left the golden calves in Bethel and Dan. Yet, because he had carried out what is right in Yahweh's eyes, he was promised sons for four generations to sit on the throne.

840

835

Jehoahaz:

814 - 798

Jehoahaz, son of Jehu copied the sin which Jeroboam had led Israel. He and the Israelites were delivered over to Hazael of Aram and his son. Israel was oppressed by the Aramites fulfilling what Elisha said after receiving Hazael.

800

Jehoash:

798 - 783

Jehoash did what was displeasing to Yahweh and did not give up the sin of Jeroboam.

When Elisha was dying he thrust an arrow into the ground only three times. Elisha said that he should have done it six times to completely defeat Aram. It was after the death of Elisha that a dead person was healed after being placed on Elisha's bones. Aram was defeated by Jehoash three times.

790

He killed 10,000 Edomites in battle and became proud. Chronicles has him take the Edomite gods in spoil and worship them which caused a prophet to prophesy his destruction.

Amaziah went to war with Israel and lost all the treasures in the temple and the king's palace. There was a conspiracy against him and he was murdered in Lachish after fleeing from Jerusalem.

Uzziah:

781 - 740

After the death of his father, Amaziah, Uzziah received the throne. He did what was right in the sight of Yahweh like his father Amaziah, but the high places remained and the people still sacrificed and burned incense on them.

In battle he was successful defeating the Philistines, the Arabs at Gur-Baal, and the Meunites which expanded his borders. Once he became strong he also became proud and burned incense in the temple. The priests confronted him and Yahweh struck him with a skin disease. His son Jotham managed the kingdom after that time.

Jotham:

740 - 736

Jotham did right as his father had done but the high places were not removed. He was responsible for building the Upper Gate of the Temple.

He also built up the wall of Ophel and constructed cities, forts, and towers on the hills.

Micah appears during this time.

Jeroboam II:

783 - 743

Jeroboam II did what was evil in the sight of Yahweh and did not depart from the sins of Jeroboam. He extended the borders of the North from the Pass of Hamath to the Sea of Arabah in accordance with the word of Yahweh spoken through Jonah, son of Amittai, the prophet from Gath-Hepher.

Amos and Hosea begin prophesying after 750.

Zechariah:

743

Zechariah, son of Jeroboam II, did what was displeasing to Yahweh as his fathers had done and did not give up the sins that Jeroboam had led Israel.

Shallum, son of Jabesh, plotted against him, murdering him at Ibleam and succeeding him.

Shallum:

743

Shallum murdered Zechariah to gain the throne for a month. Menahem, son of Gadi, marched from Tirzah into Samaria murdering Shallum and assuming the throne.

Menahem:

743 - 738

Menahem did what was displeasing to Yahweh and did not give up the sins which Jeroboam had led Israel.

Pul, king of Assyria, invaded the country. Menahem gave Pul a thousand talents of silver levied from all the men of rank at the rate of 50 shekels a head. Pul withdrew and did not stay.

745

740

Ahaz:

736 - 716

Ahaz, son of Jotham, did not do what Yahweh his God regards as right as his ancestor David had done. He followed the example of the kings of Israel even sacrificing his own son in fire.

Ahaz sent messengers to Tiglath-Pileser with the silver and gold of the temple and treasury asking for help against Israel and Aram. He visited Damascus and had Uriah the priest copy an altar of Assyria and sacrificed on it. He removed the altar of Yahweh from the front of the temple and placed it at the north side of the new altar, ordered morning offerings and evening oblations, and arranged the ceremonial structures.

Pekahiah:

738 - 737

Pekahiah, son of Menahem, did what was displeasing to Yahweh following the way of Jeroboam.

Pekah, son of Remaliah, his equerry, plotted against him and assassinated him in the palace with 50 Gileadites with him..

Pekah:

737 - 732

Pekah, who assassinated Pekahiah for the throne, did what was displeasing to Yahweh and did not give up the sins of Jeroboam.

Tiglath-Pileser, king of Assyria, came and captured Ijon, Abel-beth-Maacah, Janoah, Kedesh, Hazor, Gilead, Galilee, and the whole territory of Naphtali and deported the population to Assyria.

Hoshea, son of Elah, plotted against Pekah, murdered him, and succeeded him as king.

735

Hoshea:

732 - 724

Hoshea did what was displeasing to Yahweh, but not like the preceding kings..

Shalmaneser made war on Hoshea whom submitted to him and paid tribute. Later the king of Assyria discovered a plot of Hoshea who sent the tribute to Egypt in an attempt to gain their help. Shalmaneser had Hoshea placed in chains.

Shalmaneser invaded the whole country laying siege to it for three years. He deported the Israelites to Assyria and settled them in Halah and in the cities of the Medes.

To replace the Israelites Shalmaneser brought in five groups of people from Babylon, Cuthah, Avva, Hamath, and Sepharvaim. They mixed the religion of Yahweh with their local gods.

The end of the Northern Kingdom.

730

722

Hezekiah:

716 - 687

Hezekiah, son of Ahaz, did what was right in the eyes of Yahweh according to all that David his father had done. He abolished the high places and put his trust in Yahweh.

He purified the temple and resumed legal sacrifice. Regular sacrifices on Sabbaths, New Moons, and the three annual feasts (Passover, Booths [Tabernacles], and Weeks) were reestablished. Priestly and Levitical orders were purified and reorganized.

Sennacherib, king of Assyria, was preparing to invade Jerusalem. He sent messengers who taunted the people and Yahweh. Hezekiah and Isaiah prayed and Yahweh answered with an angel striking down 185,000 from the army that camped against Jerusalem.

Hezekiah was ill and recovered after three days by Isaiah's intervention. Babylon sent messengers to congratulate him on his recovery and saw all of the riches. Isaiah predicted Babylonian pillage.

700

Manasseh:

687 - 642

Manasseh did what was evil in the sight of Yahweh according to the practices of the nations whom Yahweh drove out of before the people of Israel. He rebuilt the high places, erected altars for Baal, put an image of Asherah in the Temple, and shed innocent blood.

The prophets prophesied that Jerusalem would be laid waste and Judah would be delivered into the hands of the enemy.

Chronicles has Manasseh carried off by the Assyrians to Babylon. He repented, returned to Jerusalem, and restored the Yahwistic worship with exception of the high places.

675

650

Amon:

642 - 640

Amon did what was evil in the sight of Yahweh as Manasseh did and served the idols as his father did.

His servants conspired against him and killed him in his house. The people killed those who killed Amon and placed his son, Josiah, as king.

Josiah:

640 - 609

Josiah did what was right in the eyes of Yahweh and walked in all the way of David his father.

During his reign the temple was repaired and the workers paid off. The high priest Hilkiah found the Book of the Law. His secretary, Shaphan, read it aloud in the king's presence. Huldah the prophetess prophesied disaster after the reign of Josiah due to the sins of the people. The king read the Book (Dt.) and committed all to keeping the covenant.

Josiah then began his reform. He had removed all cult items, killed the priests that apostated, removed the sacred pillars, outlawed high place worship, rid of the mediums, reinstated Passover, and extended the reform to the North after Assyria lessened in power.

Josiah died attempting to intercept Necho of Egypt who was on way to meet with the king of Assyria near the Euphrates. Chronicles has him die after Necho warned him to leave.

Zephaniah began prophesying about 630, Jeremiah after 627, and Nahum about 612.

610

Jehoahaz:

609

Jehoahaz, son of Josiah, did what was evil in the sight of Yahweh according to all that his fathers had done.

Necho put him in bonds at Riblah in Hamath and took tribute of a hundred talents of silver and a talent of gold. Jehoahaz was taken to Egypt where he died. Necho made Eliakim, the brother of Jehoahaz, king and changed his name to Jehoiakim.

609

Jehoiakim:

609 - 598

Jehoiakim did what was evil in the sight of Yahweh.

He taxed to pay tribute to Necho. Later, he became a vassal king of Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, and rebelled against him. Yahweh sent against Judah bands of Syrians, Moabites, and Ammonites to destroy it for the sins of Manasseh.

Chronicles has him bound, set in fetters, and sent to Babylon where he died. Possibly the time of Habakkuk.

600

Jehoiachin:

598 - 597

Jehoiachin reigned only three months. He did what was evil in the sight of Yahweh according to all that his father had done.

Jehoiachin was carried off to Babylon by Nebuchadnezzar as well as his mother, servants, princes, palace officials, mighty men of valor, 10,000 captives, and all the craftsmen. All the treasures of the king's palace and the temple were also taken. The only ones left were the poor. Nebuchadnezzar made Mattaniah, Jehoiachin's uncle, king and changed his name to Zedekiah.

Jeremiah battles the false prophets and Ezekiel predicts the ruin of Jerusalem,

Zedekiah:

597 - 587

Zedekiah did what was evil in the sight of Yahweh. Because of Yahweh's anger he cast Jerusalem and Judah out of his presence.

Zedekiah rebelled against Babylon and did not humble himself before Jeremiah. Nebuchadnezzar came with his army against Jerusalem. Zedekiah tried to escape with his army but was captured in the plains of Jericho, his sons were killed before him, his eyes were pulled out, and he was bound in fetters and taken to Babylon.

587

Epilogue:

Nebuchadnezzar burned the temple, king's palace, and all of the houses. He took off the rest of the people except the poor which he left as vinedressers and plowmen.

Gedaliah was placed as governor but was killed soon after.

Jehoiachin was freed and elevated to the table of the king of Babylon, Evil-merodach.

Cyrus of Persia in the first year of his reign allowed the return to Jerusalem.

538