

Author - STEVEN R. DOUGLAS 2017

THE HOLY BIBLE **NKJV** REFERENCE GUIDE

OLD TESTAMENT

BOOK 12

2 KINGS



The Dream of Elijah by Philippe de Champaigne

SUMMARY

Moab, which had been under Israelite control since David, rebels after the death of Ahab. Ahaziah is injured in a fall in his house, sends messengers to the god Baal-Zebub. Elijah prophesies against Ahaziah.

Two sets of fifty soldiers who try to arrest Elijah are consumed by fire. A third set of soldiers asks Elijah to spare their lives, so he does and comes before the king, and repeats his prophecy against Ahaziah, who then dies.

Elisha follows Elijah. Elisha's followers are called the sons of the prophets. Elijah strikes the water of the Jordan with his mantle, and it is divided into two. A chariot of fire carries Elijah to heaven in a whirlwind.

Elisha receives the spirit of Elijah and divides the water with his mantle. Elisha heals the water of Jericho so it is no longer bad. Bears maul youths who mock Elisha's baldness.

Jehoram of Israel (who puts away the pillar of Baal but still does evil in the sight of the Lord) and Jehoshaphat fight against the rebellious Moabites. Elisha predicts victory for Israel, and water is miraculously produced in the valley. Moab is defeated. The king of Moab desperately sacrifices his own son.

Elisha works miracles. A widow's single jar of oil fills many vessels and is sold to pay debts and save her sons from becoming slaves. A barren Shunammite woman who offers Elisha hospitality is promised a son.

The son is later killed in a harvesting accident and brought by Elisha back to life. During a famine, Elisha purifies a stew made of poisonous herbs and wild gourds. Twenty loaves are multiplied to feed a hundred men.

Naaman, commander of the Syrian army, gets leprosy. Elisha instructs him to wash in the Jordan seven times, and he does so, despite initial resistance to such humbling instructions. Elisha refuses a reward.

Naaman asks pardon for being compelled to worship Syrian gods and is told to go in peace. Gehazi, Elisha's servant, follows after Naaman and takes a reward from him. Gehazi lies about what he did to Naaman and is punished with leprosy.

The sons of the prophet go to build a bigger house for themselves. While cutting down a tree at the Jordan, an axe drops into the water. Elisha takes a stick, throws it in the water, and the axe floats. Elisha gives the king of Israel information from divinely inspired espionage, so the king of Syria conspires to kidnap him at Dothan.

Elisha and Israel are protected by a mountain full of horses and chariots of fire. The Syrians are blinded and taken to Samaria – their lives are spared, but they do not raid Israel again. Samaria is later besieged by Ben-Hadad, and people resort to cannibalism. The king is angry at Elisha for this calamity and seeks his head.

Elisha predicts that food will be cheaper the following day. Four leprous men surrender to the Syrian army – the Syrians have abandoned their camp, however, hearing the noises of chariots and horses.

SUMMARY Continued

The lepers enjoy the abandoned food and wealth, then spread the good news. A officer who doubted Elisha's prophecy is trampled to death.

The Shunammite woman whose son Elisha has restored to life leaves Israel for seven years, warned by Elisha to depart because of a famine. When she returns, she manages to reclaim her own land when Gehazi, who is dealing with her case, is told of all the wonderful things Elisha has done.

Ben-Hadad becomes ill and asks Hazael to consult Elisha as to whether he will recover. Elisha tells Hazael he will become the next king. Hazael kills Ben-Hadad. Jehoram follows Jehoshapat as king of Judah. He does evil.

An Edomite rebellion started against Judah that continues to this day. Joram dies, and is replaced as king by Ahaziah, who reigns for one year. He does evil, and battles against Hazael of Syria. Ahaziah forms an anti-Syrian alliance with Joram of Israel after Joram is injured in battle against the Syrians at Ramah.

Elisha calls a prophet's son to anoint Jehu, son of Jehoshapat, king of Israel. The Lord intends to use Jehu as a tool of judgment against the house of Ahab. Jehu approaches Jezreel, where Joram king of Israel (son-in-law of Ahab and Jezebel) is recovering.

Jehu kills Joram, whose body is dumped in Naboth's vineyard. Jehu also kills the wicked king Ahaziah of Judah. Jehu also defenestrates Jezebel, whose body is eaten by dogs (fulfilling a previous prophecy).

Jehu bullies Jezreel into the killing of Ahab's seventy sons. He also kills Ahaziah's forty-two brothers. Jehu executes the remainder of Ahab's family at Samaria. Jehu gathers all Baal worshippers in Israel and kills them. The golden calves remain at Bethel and Dan, however. Syria captures large parts of Israel's territory. Jehu reigns 28 years, and is replaced by Jehoahaz.

Athaliah, the mother of Ahaziah, kills all the heirs of Ahaziah and reigns. Joash, the son of Ahaziah, is saved by Jehosheba, the daughter of king Joram. After six years, Jehoiada reveals Joash, and has him proclaimed king when he is seven. Athaliah is killed at the orders of Jehoiada the priest. Baal worship is eliminated.

Joash rules in Jerusalem 40 years, obeys God (though the high places are not taken away), rebuilds temple, gives temple items to Hazael of Syria to appease him, and is killed by his servants. His son, Amaziah, reigns.

Jehoahaz, the son of Jehu, reigns in Israel, does evil, is delivered into the hands of Syria, and dies. Jehoash, his son, reigns, does evil, and dies. Elisha is sick and dies. A man is buried with Elisha and is revived when his corpse touches his bones.

Amaziah, the son of Joash, reigns. He is good, though does not remove the high places. Amaziah kills the servants who murdered his father, but not their children, because of what Moses had said regarding not punishing children for the sins of the parents.

Amaziah fights Jehoash of Israel, loses, and is taken captive. Jehoash loots the temple, dies, and is replaced by his son, Jeroboam, who does evil.

SUMMARY Continued

Presumably released after the death of Jehoash, Amaziah is deposed, flees, is killed, and replaced by his sixteen year old son Azariah. Jeroboam is replaced by Zechariah.

Azariah reigns for 52 years. He does right, though does not remove the high places. He dies a leper, and is replaced by Jotham, who does good. Zachariah, Shallum, Menahem, Pekahiah and Pekah reign in Israel and disobey God. Jotham's Judah is attacked by Syria. Jotham dies and is replaced by Ahaz.

Ahaz rules Judah and reigns for sixteen years. He was a bad king, making human sacrifices with fire to Molech. Judah is attacked by Syria and Israel. Ahaz asks Assyria for help, so Assyria attacks Damascus and forcibly deports its people. Ahaz builds a false altar like the one he sees at Damascus altar. Ahaz dies, to be replaced by Hezekiah.

Hoshea rules Israel for 9 years and disobeys God. Assyria imprisons Hoshea after uncovering his conspiracy against them, besieges Samaria, and takes Israel away as captives. The reason for Israel's demise is its disobedience, and its rejection of repeated warnings. Assyrians settle in Samaria, which is now characterized by a mish-mash of different religions and religious practices, including Yahwehism.

Hezekiah rules Judah, and obeys God, removing the high places and destroying the bronze serpent of Moses which was worshipped idolatrously. Hezekiah defies Assyria and subdues the Philistines. Assyria takes Israel captive. Assyria takes the fenced cities of Judah.

Hezekiah tries to buy peace from the Assyrians, but Assyria threatens nonetheless. Rabshekah, the general of the Assyrian king Sennacherib, delivers an insulting speech about defying the Assyrians, trusting in the Lord, and trusting in the Egyptians. He speaks in Hebrew so all can understand him.

Hezekiah consults Isaiah, who speaks words of assurance on behalf of God to Hezekiah: Sennacherib will be defeated and killed in his own land. Hezekiah prays. Isaiah prophesies against Sennacherib. An angel kills 185,000 Assyrian soldiers. Sennacherib returns home and is killed by his sons while worshipping in a pagan temple.

Hezekiah is very sick and is told by God via Isaiah to put his house in order, because he will die. He asks God for more life and is told (again by Isaiah) that he will recover and live another 15 years. As a sign, he makes the shadow on a sundial move backwards rather than forwards.

Hezekiah bares the treasures of his kingdom to the son of the king of Babylon. Isaiah says the Lord is displeased, and that a day will come when the Babylonians carry the treasures and people of Judah away. Hezekiah dies, replaced by Manasseh.

Manasseh rules Judah for 55 years, rebuilds the high places, and worships other gods. Prophets predict Jerusalem's destruction – it will be wiped as one wipes a dish. Amon rules Judah for two years and turns from God. He is killed by his servants and replaced by Josiah.

SUMMARY Continued

Josiah becomes king at 8 years old. He does right and rebuilds the temple. Hilkiah, the high priest, finds a book of law (probably an earlier version of Deuteronomy), which is read to the king. Josiah tears his clothes. Huldah the prophetess warns that judgment is coming against Jerusalem, but not in Josiah's time.

Josiah publicly reads book of law to all Judah. Josiah set a thorough program of religious reform in motion. He also destroys the pagan altar at Bethel (fulfilling the prophecy of 1 King 13), and the high places in Samaria. A centralized Passover is held in Jerusalem.

Josiah is killed fighting at the battle of Megiddo, fighting king Necho of Egypt, who was travelling through Judah to assist the Assyrians. Josiah's son, Jehoahaz, takes over, and does evil. He reigns for three months, then is taken prisoner by Necho. Necho installs Jehoiakim on the throne of Judah. Jehoiakim is an Egyptian puppet, and reigns for eleven years.

Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon make Jehoiakim his vassal. Judah is attacked by raiders from Babylon, Syria, Moab and Ammon. Jehoiachin, the son of Jehoiakim, rules next and does evil. The Egyptians leave Judah alone, because the Babylonians become the dominant local power.

Nebuchadnezzar besiege Jerusalem and takes Jehoiachin prisoner. Jerusalem is stripped of its wealth, and all but the poorest are forcibly deported. Zedekiah, the uncle of Jehoiachin, is installed on the throne of Judah by Nebuchadnezzar. Zedekiah reigns for eleven years, and rebels against Nebuchadnezzar.

Nebuchadnezzar besieges Jerusalem again. The sons of Zedekiah are killed, and Zedekiah himself blinded and taken prisoner. Nebuchadnezzar destroys the temple and the city, taking valuables and people to Babylon.

Gedaliah is made the governor of the few who remain. Gedaliah is assassinated, whereupon the remnant in Judah flee to Egypt. Jehoiachin leads a more comfortable life in Babylon.

NKJV SELECTED SCRIPTURE

- 1:7** Then he said to them, "What kind of man was it who came up to meet you and told you these words?"
- 1:8** So they answered him, "A hairy man wearing a leather belt around his waist." And he said, "It is Elijah the Tishbite."
- 1:10** So Elijah answered and said to the captain of fifty, "If I am a man of God, then let fire come down from heaven and consume you and your fifty men." And fire came down from heaven and consumed him and his fifty.
- 2:8** Now Elijah took his mantle, rolled it up, and struck the water; and it was divided this way and that, so that the two of them crossed over on dry ground.
- 2:11** Then it happened, as they continued on and talked, that suddenly a chariot of fire appeared with horses of fire and separated the two of them; and Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven.

NKJV SCRIPTURE Continued

- 2:19** Then the men of the city said to Elisha, "Please notice, the situation of this city is pleasant, as my lord sees; but the water is bad, and the ground barren."
- 2:20** And he said, "Bring me a new bowl, and put salt in it." So they brought it to him.
- 2:21** Then he went out to the source of the water, and cast in the salt there, and said, "Thus says the Lord: 'I have healed this water; from it there shall be no more death or barrenness.' "
- 2:22** So the water remains healed to this day, according to the word of Elisha which he spoke.
- 2:23** Then he went up from there to Bethel; and as he was going up the road, some youths came from the city and mocked him, and said to him, "Go up, you baldhead! Go up, you baldhead!"
- 2:24** So he turned around and looked at them and pronounced a curse on them in the name of the Lord. And two female bears came out of the woods and mauled forty-two of the youths.
- 4:32** When Elisha came into the house, there was the child, lying dead on his bed.
- 4:33** He went in therefore, shut the door behind the two of them, and prayed to the Lord.
- 4:34** And he went up and lay on the child, and put his mouth on his mouth, his eyes on his eyes, and his hands on his hands; and he stretched himself out on the child, and the flesh of the child became warm.
- 4:35** He returned and walked back and forth in the house, and again went up and stretched himself out on him; then the child sneezed seven times, and the child opened his eyes.
- 13:20** Then Elisha died, and they buried him. And the raiding bands from Moab invaded the land in the spring of the year.
- 13:21** So it was, as they were burying a man, that suddenly they spied a band of raiders; and they put the man in the tomb of Elisha; and when the man was let down and touched the bones of Elisha, he revived and stood on his feet.
- 14:5** Now it happened, as soon as the kingdom was established in his hand, that he executed his servants who had murdered his father the king.
- 14:6** But the children of the murderers he did not execute, according to what is written in the Book of the Law of Moses, in which the Lord commanded, saying, "Fathers shall not be put to death for their children, nor shall children be put to death for their fathers; but a person shall be put to death for his own sin."
- 17:13** Yet the Lord testified against Israel and against Judah, by all of His prophets, every seer, saying, ***"Turn from your evil ways, and keep My commandments and My statutes, according to all the law which I commanded your fathers, and which I sent to you by My servants the prophets."***
- 17:14** Nevertheless they would not hear, but stiffened their necks, like the necks of their fathers, who did not believe in the Lord their God.
- 17:17** And they caused their sons and daughters to pass through the fire, practiced witchcraft and soothsaying, and sold themselves to do evil in the sight of the Lord, to provoke Him to anger.
- 17:18** Therefore the Lord was very angry with Israel and removed them from His sight; there was none left but the tribe of Judah alone.

NKJV SCRIPTURE Continued

21:6 Also he made his son pass through the fire, practiced soothsaying, used witchcraft, and consulted spiritists and mediums. He did much evil in the sight of the Lord, to provoke Him to anger.

CHARACTER Definitions

ELISHA - Elisha's story is related in the Book of Kings in the Hebrew Bible. He was a prophet and a wonder-worker of the Northern Kingdom of Israel who was active during the reign of Joram, Jehu, Jehoahaz, and Jehoash (Joash). Elisha was the son of Shaphat, a wealthy land-owner of Abel-meholah; he became the attendant and disciple of Elijah.

His name first occurs in the command given to Elijah to anoint him as his successor. After learning in the cave on Mount Horeb, that Elisha, the son of Shaphat, had been selected by Yahweh as his successor in the prophetic office, Elijah set out to find him.

On his way from Sinai to Damascus, Elijah found Elisha "one of them that were ploughing with twelve yoke of oxen". Elisha delayed only long enough to kill the yoke of oxen, whose flesh he boiled with the wood of his plough. He went over to him, threw his mantle over Elisha's shoulders, and at once adopted him as a son, investing him with the prophetic office.

Elisha accepted this call about four years before the death of Israel's King Ahab. For the next seven or eight years Elisha became Elijah's close attendant until Elijah was taken up into heaven. During all these years we hear nothing of Elisha except in connection with the closing scenes of Elijah's life.

After he had shared this farewell repast with his father, mother, and friends, the newly chosen prophet "went after Elijah, and ministered unto him." He went with his master from Gilgal to Bethel, to Jericho, and thence to the eastern side of the Jordan, the waters of which, touched by the mantle, divided, so as to permit both to pass over on dry ground. Elisha then was separated from Elijah by a fiery chariot, and Elijah was taken up by a whirlwind into Heaven.

Before Elijah was taken up into the whirlwind, Elisha asked to "inherit a double-portion" of Elijah's spirit. Some scholars see this as indicative of the property inheritance customs of the time, where the oldest son received twice as much of the father's inheritance as each of the younger sons.

In this interpretation Elisha is asking that he may be seen as the "rightful heir" and successor to Elijah. Critics of this view point out that Elisha was already appointed as Elijah's successor earlier in the narrative and that Elisha is described as performing twice as many miracles as Elijah.

In this interpretation the "double-portion" isn't merely an allusion to primacy in succession, but is instead a request for greater prophetic power even than Elijah. Much of this confusion comes from translations which incorrectly translate the phrase as a "double portion" while in Hebrew Elisha asks for "two thirds of a portion" of the prophetic spirit that imbued Elijah.

CHARACTERS Continued

By means of the mantle let fall from Elijah, Elisha miraculously crossed the Jordan again, and Elisha returned to Jericho, where he won the gratitude of the people by purifying the unwholesome waters of their spring and making them drinkable.

Before he settled in Samaria, Elisha passed some time on Mount Carmel. When the armies of Judah, Israel and Edom, then allied against Mesha, the Moabite king, were being tortured by drought in the Idumean desert, Elisha consented to intervene.

His double prediction regarding relief from drought and victory over the Moabites was fulfilled on the following morning. When a group of boys (or youths!) from Bethel taunted the prophet for his baldness, Elisha cursed them in the name of Yahweh and two female bears came out of the forest and tore forty-two of the boys.

He became noted in Israel, and for six decades (892–832 B.C.) held the office of "prophet in Israel". He is called a patriot because of his help to soldiers and kings. To relieve the widow importuned by a hard creditor, Elisha so multiplied a little oil as to enable her, not only to pay her debt, but to provide for her family needs.

To reward the rich lady of Shunem for her hospitality, he obtained for her from Yahweh, at first the birth of a son, and subsequently the resurrection of her child, who had died. To nourish the sons of the prophets pressed by famine, Elisha changed into wholesome food the pottage made from poisonous gourds.

Elisha cured the Syrian military commander Naaman of leprosy but punished his own servant Gehazi, who took money from Naaman. Naaman, at first reluctant, obeyed Elisha, and washed seven times in the Jordan.

Finding his flesh "restored like the flesh of a little child", the general was so impressed by this evidence of God's power, and by the disinterestedness of His Prophet, as to express his deep conviction that "there is no other God in all the earth, but only in Israel".

In the Christian tradition, Jesus referred to this event when he said, "And there were many lepers in Israel in the time of Elisha the prophet: and none of them was cleansed but Naaman the Syrian".

Elisha's public political actions included repeatedly saving King Jehoram of Israel from the ambushes planned by Ben-Hadad, ordering the elders to shut the door against the messenger of Israel's ungrateful king, bewildering with a strange blindness the soldiers of the Syrian king, making iron float to relieve from embarrassment a son of a prophet, confidently predicting the sudden flight of the enemy and the consequent cessation of the famine, and unmasking the treachery of Hazael.

Other miracles Elisha accomplishes include multiplying the twenty loaves of new barley into a sufficient supply for a hundred men, and for a disciple of the schools of the prophets, he recovers an axe fallen into the waters of the Jordan.

He administered the miracle at Dothan, half-way on the road between Samaria and Jezreel, and at the siege of Samaria by the king of Syria, Elisha prophesied about the terrible sufferings of the people of Samaria and their eventual relief.

CHARACTERS Continued

Elisha then journeyed to Damascus and prophesied that Hazael would be king over Syria; thereafter he directs one of the sons of the prophets to anoint Jehu, the son of Jehoshaphat, king of Israel, in place of Ahab.

Mindful of the order given to Elijah, Elisha delegated a son of one of the prophets to quietly anoint Jehu King of Israel, and to commission him to cut off the house of Ahab.

The death of Jehoram, pierced by an arrow from Jehu's bow, the ignominious end of Jezebel, the slaughter of Ahab's seventy sons, proved how faithfully executed was the Divine command.

After predicting to Jehoash his victory over the Syrians at Aphek, as well as three other subsequent victories, ever bold before kings, ever kindly towards the lowly, "Elisha died, and they buried him".

While Elisha lay on his death-bed in his own house, Jehoash, the grandson of Jehu, came to mourn over his approaching departure, and uttered the same words as those of Elisha when Elijah was taken away, indicating his value to him: "My father, my father! the chariot of Israel, and the horsemen thereof."

The touch of his corpse served to resuscitate a dead man. A year after Elisha's death and burial a body was placed in his grave. As soon as the body touched Elisha's remains the man "revived and stood up on his feet". It has been said, that this dead man was Shallum (son of Tikvah), keeper of the temple-wardrobe in the reign of Josiah and husband of Huldah the prophetess.

JEHU - Before his reign as king, Jehu functioned as a commander in the army of Ahab in the northern kingdom of Israel. Jehu was the son of Jehoshaphat, although he is more commonly mentioned as son of Nimshi, his grandfather, perhaps because Nimshi was more well-known. Jehu's name, meaning "Yahweh is he," portrays well his future, God-given task: to obliterate the house of Ahab along with the worship of Baal that pervaded Israel at the time.

Jehu was a reformer of sorts who was used by God to clean up the mess that Ahab had made. Of King Ahab it is recorded that he "did more evil in the eyes of the Lord than any of those before him". Marrying Jezebel, daughter of the king of the Sidonians, Ahab was seduced into her idolatrous worship of Baal and Ashtoreth.

Although God was patient for a time with Ahab, his many sins eventually brought God's judgment upon his family line. This judgment first lands upon Ahab's own head, as he is shot and killed in a battle against the Arameans.

God chose Jehu as one of three men who would enact His judgment upon Ahab's family. God told the prophet Elijah, Anoint Hazael king over Aram. Also, anoint Jehu son of Nimshi king over Israel, and anoint Elisha son of Shaphat from Abel Meholah to succeed you as prophet. Jehu will put to death any who escape the sword of Hazael, and Elisha will put to death any who escape the sword of Jehu. One way or another, Ahab's dynasty would be destroyed.

CHARACTERS Continued

God also chose Jehu to be the king of Israel. After he was anointed king, Jehu immediately took steps to secure the throne. Knowing that Joram, son of Ahab, had recently gone to Jezreel to recover from wounds in a battle against the Arameans, Jehu ordered his men to seal the city so that no one could alert Joram of Jehu's anointing.

Jehu made haste to Jezreel and killed two of Ahab's sons—Joram, king of northern Israel, and Ahaziah, king of Judah. Jehu then proceeded to Jezebel's palace in Jezreel, where the queen stood watching for him at her window.

At Jehu's command, eunuchs surrounding Jezebel threw her down from the window. Jezebel's blood splattered over the pavement, and, just as had occurred to Ahab, her blood was licked up by the dogs and her body eaten.

Jehu left no man standing who was in alliance with King Ahab, as God had commanded long before through Elijah. Entering the temple of Baal, Jehu slaughtered all the priests of Baal and destroyed the temple and its sacred stone, thus eradicating Baal worship in Israel.

The Lord blessed Jehu for his obedience, granting him a dynasty that would last to the fourth generation. However, because Jehu continued to hold on to the idolatrous worship of King Jeroboam, God began to reduce the size of Israel, gradually giving them over to the power of even Hazael of Syria. Jehu reigned over Israel a total of twenty-eight years and was succeeded by his son Jehoahaz.

AHAB— Ahab was one in a line of increasingly evil kings in Israel's history, starting with the reign of Jeroboam. King Ahab "did more evil in the eyes of the LORD than any of those before him".

Among the events chronicled in Ahab's life that led to his downfall was his marriage to an evil woman named Jezebel who had a particular hatred for God's people. Because of his marriage to a pagan woman, Ahab devoted himself to the worship of the false gods Baal and Asherah in Israel.

The evil of King Ahab was countered by the prophet Elijah who warned Ahab of coming judgment if he did not obey the Lord. Ahab blamed Elijah for bringing trouble on Israel, but it was Ahab's promotion of idolatry that was the true cause of the three-and-a-half-year famine. In a dramatic confrontation between Elijah and Ahab's false prophets, God proved to Israel that He, not Baal, was the true God. All of Ahab's men of Baal were killed that day.

King Ahab also disobeyed the Lord's direct command to destroy Ben-Hadad, the king of Aram. God set it up so that Ahab would lead Israel to victory, but Ahab made a treaty with the king he was supposed to kill. Therefore, God told Ahab through an unnamed prophet, "it is your life for his life, your people for his people".

The event that sealed Ahab's doom was his murder of an innocent man. Ahab coveted a vineyard belonging to a man named Naboth. The king offered to buy the vineyard, but Naboth refused, because the Law forbade him to sell it.

CHARACTERS Continued

While Ahab sulked about it in his palace, his wife arranged Naboth's murder. Once the vineyard's owner was out of the way, King Ahab took the vineyard for himself.

Elijah came to Ahab and told him the Lord would deal with him by cutting off all his descendants. Also, Ahab himself would suffer an ignoble fate: "In the place where dogs licked up Naboth's blood, dogs will lick up your blood—yes, yours!"

Upon hearing this, Ahab "tore his clothes, put on sackcloth and fasted. He lay in sackcloth and went around meekly". In response to Ahab's repentance, God mercifully postponed the destruction of Ahab's dynasty until after Ahab was dead.

The prophesied judgment against Ahab came true exactly as Elijah predicted. God used Ahab's own false prophets to entice him into going to the battle at Ramoth-Gilead, where he was hit by a "random" arrow and slowly bled to death in his chariot.

Later, "they washed the chariot at a pool in Samaria (where the prostitutes bathed), and the dogs licked up his blood, as the word of the Lord had declared". After Ahab's death, Jehu killed Jezebel and all of Ahab's descendants.

HEZEKIAH – Hezekiah was one of the few kings of Judah who was constantly aware of God's acts in the past and His involvement in the events of every day. The Bible describes Hezekiah as a king who had a close relationship with God, one who did "what was good and right and faithful before the LORD his God".

Hezekiah, a son of the wicked King Ahaz, reigned over the southern kingdom of Judah for twenty-nine years, from c. 726 to 697 BC. He began his reign at age 25. He was more zealous for the Lord than any of his predecessors. During his reign, the prophets Isaiah and Micah ministered in Judah.

After Ahaz's wicked reign, there was much work to do, and Hezekiah boldly cleaned house. Pagan altars, idols, and temples were destroyed. The bronze serpent that Moses had made in the desert was also destroyed, because the people had made it an idol.

The temple in Jerusalem, whose doors had been nailed shut by Hezekiah's own father, was cleaned out and reopened. The Levitical priesthood was reinstated, and the Passover was reinstated as a national holiday. Under Hezekiah's reforms, revival came to Judah.

Because King Hezekiah put God first in everything he did, God prospered him. Hezekiah held fast to the Lord and did not stop following him; he kept the commands the Lord had given Moses. And the Lord was with him; he was successful in whatever he undertook.

In 701 BC, Hezekiah and all of Judah faced a crisis. The Assyrians, the dominant world power at the time, invaded Judah and marched against Jerusalem. The Assyrians had already conquered the northern kingdom of Israel and many other nations, and now they threatened Judah. In their threats against the city of Jerusalem, the Assyrians openly defied the God of Judah, likening Him to the powerless gods of the nations they had conquered.

CHARACTERS Continued

Faced with the Assyrian threat, Hezekiah sent word to the prophet Isaiah). The Lord, through Isaiah, reassured the king that Assyria would never enter Jerusalem. Rather, the invaders would be sent home, and the city of Jerusalem would be spared.

In the temple, Hezekiah prays a beautiful prayer for help, asking God to vindicate Himself: “Now, Lord our God, deliver us from his hand, so that all the kingdoms of the earth may know that you alone, Lord, are God”.

God, faithful as always, kept His promise to protect Jerusalem. That night the angel of the Lord went out and put to death a hundred and eighty-five thousand in the Assyrian camp.

When the people got up the next morning they found all the dead bodies. The remaining Assyrians quickly broke camp and withdrew in abject defeat. The Lord saved Hezekiah and the people of Jerusalem. He took care of them on every side.

Later, Hezekiah became very sick. Isaiah told him to set things in order and prepare to die. But Hezekiah prayed, beseeching God to be merciful and to remember all the good he had done. Before Isaiah had even left the king’s house, God told Isaiah to tell Hezekiah that his prayer had been heard and that his life would be extended fifteen years. Isaiah applied a poultice, and Hezekiah was healed.

However, soon after his healing, Hezekiah made a serious mistake. The Babylonians sent a gift to Hezekiah, for they had heard Hezekiah had been sick. In foolish pride, Hezekiah showed the Babylonians all his treasures, all the silver and gold, and everything in his arsenal.

There was nothing Hezekiah did not parade in front of them. Isaiah rebuked Hezekiah for this act and prophesied that all the king had shown the Babylonians would one day be taken to Babylon—along with Hezekiah’s own descendants.

During the years following his illness, Hezekiah fathered the heir to Judah’s throne, Manasseh, who would turn out to be the vilest king ever to reign in Judah. Tradition has it that Manasseh is the one who murdered Hezekiah’s friend, Isaiah.

Hezekiah’s life is a model of faithfulness and trust in the Lord. His faith was more than superficial, as his bold reforms show. Hezekiah’s trust in the Lord was rewarded with answered prayer, successful endeavors, and miraculous victory over his enemies.

When faced with an impossible situation, surrounded by the dreadful and determined Assyrian army, Hezekiah did exactly the right thing—he prayed. And God answered.

BIBLE TIMELINE

852 BC	Moab Rebels	2 Kings 1
851 BC	Elijah Taken up to Heaven	2 Kings 2
851 BC	Elisha Succeeds Elijah	2 Kings 2:12
850 BC	Jehoram Meets Moab Rebellion	2 Kings 3
849 BC	Elisha Raises The Shunammite boy	2 Kings 4:8
848 BC	Elisha Floats an Axhead	2 Kings 6
848 BC	Elisha Promises Plenty in Samaria	2 Kings 7
847 BC	The Shunammite's Land	2 Kings 8
841 BC	Jehu Reigns in Israel	2 Kings 9
841 BC	Jehu Kills Joram	2 Kings 9:11
841 BC	Ahab's Family Killed	2 Kings 10
841 BC	Joash escapes Athaliah	2 Kings 11
835 BC	Joash Reigns Well	2 Kings 12
812 BC	Jehoahaz's wicked reign	2 Kings 13
796 BC	Amaziah's good reign	2 Kings 14
790 BC	Azariah's good reign	2 Kings 15
742 BC	Wicked Reign of Ahaz	2 Kings 16
725 BC	Hoshea the Last King of Israel	2 Kings 17
722 BC	Israel Led into Captivity	2 Kings 17:6
721 BC	Strange Nations Transplanted into Samaria	2 Kings 17:24
712 BC	Hezekiah's Illness and Healing	2 Kings 20
711 BC	Hezekiah Shows Treasures	2 Kings 20:12
701 BC	Sennacherib Threatens Jerusalem	2 Kings 18
701 BC	Hezekiah's Prayer	2 Kings 19
687 BC	Manasseh's Wicked Reign	2 Kings 21
640 BC	Josiah's good reign	2 Kings 22
621 BC	Hilkiah finds the lost Book of the Law	2 Kings 22:8
621 BC	Josiah Celebrates the Passover	2 Kings 23
601 BC	Rebellion of Jehoiakim	2 Kings 24
597 BC	Jehoiachim exiled	2 Kings 24:10
597 BC	Zedekiah reigns in Judah	2 Kings 24:18
588 BC	Siege of Jerusalem Begins	2 Kings 25
586 BC	The Fall of Jerusalem	2 Kings 25

MAP REFERENCES

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

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Saul- Samuel

David- Samuel, Nathan

Solomon- Gad

Israel (north)

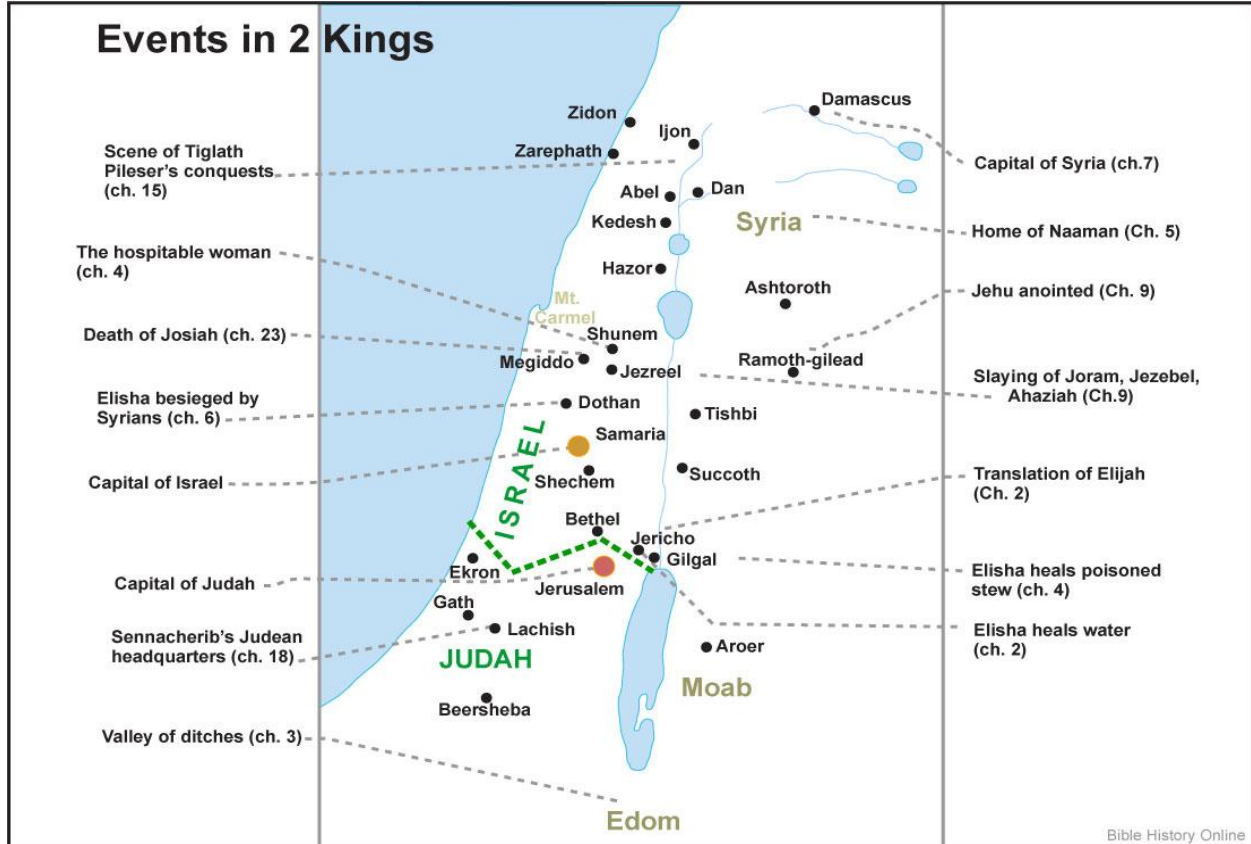
Divided Kingdom

Judah (south)

931 BCE

Prophet	King	King	Prophet
Abijah	Jeroboam I	Rehoboam	Shemaiah
	Nadab	Abijah	Shemaiah
Jehu	Baasha	Asa	Shemaiah/Hanani
	Elah	Jehoshaphat	
Micaiah	Zimri	Jehoram	
Elijah	Omri	Ahaziah	
Elijah	Ahab	Athaliah	
Elisha	Ahaziah	Joash	Joel
Elisha	Joram	Amaziah	
Elisha	Jehu	Uzziah	Isaiah/Micah
	Jehoahaz	Jotham	Isaiah/Micah
	Jehoash	Ahaz	Isaiah/Micah
Amos/Hosea	Jeroboam II	Hezekiah	Isaiah/Micah
Amos/Hosea	Zechariah	Manasseh	
Amos/Hosea	Shallum	Amon	
Amos/Hosea	Menahem	Josiah	Habakkuk
Amos/Hosea	Pekahiah	Jehoahaz	Zephaniah
Amos/Hosea	Pekah	Jehoiakim	Jeremiah
Jonah (?)	Hoshea	Jehoiachin	Ezekiel
		Zedekiah	(Lamentations)
Nahum Obadiah	722 BCE Israel crushed by Assyrians	586 BCE Judah taken into Babylonian captivity. Began to resettle in 539	Daniel Haggai Zechariah Malachi

MAP REFERENCES Continued



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