

July 25

2 Chronicles 14-16

Hanani the Seer to King Asa: 1Chron 16: 9 **The eyes of the LORD search the whole earth in order to strengthen those whose hearts are fully committed to him. What a fool you have been! From now on you will be at war."**

The LORD searches the whole earth. (His effort, intentionality, pursuit.)

Looking for those whose hearts are fully committed to Him.

Why? To strengthen them.

C. The reign of Asa (14:1–16:14). Asa's attitude of humble dependence on God is shown in his prayer recorded in 2 Chronicles 14:11–12. After a victory against Egypt, an encouraging message from the prophet Azariah motivates Asa to purge the land of idolatrous worship centers and repair the temple altar at Jerusalem. He then leads a great revival worship service (2 Chr. 15:10–15) which causes additional thousands to move to Judah from Israel for freedom to worship God according to His Law.

Asa's forty-year reign does not end as well as it begins. War threatens with Israel and he fails to trust the Lord, relying instead on a pagan nation (16:7–10).¹

ASA, KING OF JUDAH The third king of the southern kingdom of Judah.

Date

The biblical text does not specify Asa's age when he took the throne or when he died. It is also unclear from Scripture whether Asa reigned until his death (either solely or as co-regent with Jehoshaphat) or abdicated the throne prior to it (see Hayes and Hooker, *New Chronology*, 29–30; compare Hughes, *Secrets of the Times*, 99–107). Attempts to date Asa's reign in Judah are thus inconclusive. Three proposed ranges are:

- 906–878/865 BC (Hayes and Hooker, *New Chronology*, 102–4);
- 911–870 BC (Galil, *Chronology*, 26–30);
- 916–876 BC (Hughes, *Secrets of the Times*, 275).

Genealogy

First Kings 15:10, 13 and 2 Chr 15:16 present Asa as the son of Abijah and Maacah. However, the short length of Abijah's reign in comparison to Asa's has led Miller and Hayes to suggest that Asa and Abijah were brothers, with Asa taking the throne after Abijah died at a young age (*History*, 273). It also is unclear whether Maacah and Micaiah were two different women or the same woman (Spanier, "Queen Mother," 187, Cogan, *1 Kings*, 397, Miller and Hayes, *History*, 273, Klein, *2 Chronicles*, 197–8, 231).

Issues with Chronology

First Kings 15:9–24 provides a succinct overview of Asa's 41-year reign. The account in 2 Chr 14–16 is much more detailed but poses multiple problems. Kings is generally considered more reliable than Chronicles for reconstructing Asa's reign, despite Chronicles' more extensive dating citations. However, there are questions regarding chronology and historical probability with both accounts. One of the main issues regards the accounts of Asa's conflict with Baasha (1 Kgs 15:16–23; 2 Chr 16:1–6). If the events listed in 1 Kings are taken as

¹ Hayford, J. W., Thomas Nelson Publishers. (1995). [Hayford's Bible handbook](#). Nashville, TN; Atlanta, GA; London; Vancouver: Thomas Nelson Publishers.

historical, Baasha would have been dead for a decade by the time Chronicles (2 Chr 16:1) depicts Asa going to war with him (Japhet, *I & II Chronicles*, 732, Klein, *2 Chronicles*, 210).

Asa in 1 Kings

First Kings lists two notable achievements for Asa: his major religious reforms and his successful war with Israel.

Religious Reforms

Asa's religious reforms included:

- ridding the kingdom of his ancestors' idols (Solomon, Rehoboam and Abijah) (1 Kgs 15:12);
- abolishing the *qedoshim* (קִדְּוֹשִׁים, *qadesh*; often translated "male cult prostitutes" [ESV]; 1 Kgs 15:12);
- removing Maacah from her position as queen mother and destroying the object she made for the goddess Asherah (1 Kgs 15:13).

While the text doesn't specify that Asa attempted to centralize worship in Jerusalem, he did concentrate his religious activities and material wealth on the temple in Jerusalem. First Kings 15:15 records him dedicating gold, silver, and assorted temple furnishings to the Jerusalem temple. However, Asa later stripped "all the silver and the gold that were left in the treasures of the house of the Lord" to pay for Ben-Hadad's help in defeating Baasha of Israel (1 Kgs 15:18; Cogan calls this a "bribe"; *1 Kings*, 400).

Asa's removal of Maacah as queen mother could have been connected to either his religious reforms or the war with Baasha. Cogan and Sweeney suggest that Maacah was the patroness or even the high priestess of the Asherah cult in Jerusalem (Cogan, *1 Kings*, 398; Sweeney, *I & II Kings*, 193). Spanier posits that Maacah was part of a political alliance that the war with Israel made obsolete, such that her position as queen mother became a political liability. Under this interpretation, Asa was asserting his political muscle in removing her (Spanier, "Queen Mother," 192, 194–95).

War with Israel

According to Kings, Asa experienced continual warfare with Israel's king, Baasha (1 Kgs 15:16, 32), driving Asa to seek aid from Ben-Hadad of Aram. Asa appears to have accepted a vassal status for Judah under Aram in exchange for a military invasion into northern Israel and relief from Israel's attack (Knoppers, "Yahweh," 607). The narrative suggests that Asa reacquired territory that Baasha had taken and then fortified Geba as a border fort with the materiel Baasha had been using to fortify Ramah. First Kings presents this war as a great victory for Asa. Some interpreters view 1 King's account of Asa's victory as historical, while others view it as literary invention. In any event, the manner of warfare suggests that Judah was not a military factor under Asa; moreover, Israel and Judah were still fighting over establishing boundaries from the time of Rehoboam and Jeroboam I (Elgavish, "Objective," 149).

Asa in 2 Chronicles

The extensive chronological difficulties in 2 Chronicles' account of Asa preclude it from being considered a reliable source on Asa (Klein, *2 Chronicles*, 210–12; Miller and Hayes, *History*, 274). For example, 2 Chronicles records the war between Judah and Israel as concluding when Abijah was king (2 Chr 13:15–20). However, it is more likely that the antagonism between Judah and Israel continued until the Omride dynasty was able to secure power—at the end of Asa's reign at the earliest.

The Chronicler presents Asa as a classic example of the correlation between obedience to Yahweh and the well-being of a ruler in Judah. The Chronicler's account begins by emphasizing Asa's piety, recording him as clearing away the sanctuaries outside of Jerusalem as part of his religious reforms—an event not carried out in Kings until Josiah. Because of his piety, he has a long period of peace at the beginning of his reign. Upon facing a Cushite invasion, Asa relies solely on God's intervention, and the fear of Yahweh decimates Zerah's

overwhelmingly superior forces. Yamauchi, Klein, and Japhet suggest that this account is likely an exaggeration of a minor incident (Japhet, *I & II Chronicles*, 709–10; Klein, *2 Chronicles*, 217–19; Yamauchi, *Africa*, 108–9).

The period of peace ends when Asa forms an ally with a foreign nation rather than relying on Yahweh. The prophet Azariah ben Oded warns Asa against becoming entangled with Ben-Hadad, but Asa nevertheless negotiates a mutual defense treaty with Aram. The Chronicler implies that Asa's disobedience, poor treatment of God's prophet, and cruelty to his people were the cause of the foot disease he came down with later in life (2 Chr 16:10, 12). The narrator further emphasizes Asa's flawed character by declaring that "even in his disease he did not seek the Lord, but sought help from physicians (2 Chr 16:11). Schipper suggests this may be the author's pun (Schipper, "Deuteronomy," 646). Although it is unclear what type of disease afflicted Asa, the rabbis held that it was gout (*Sotah* 10a). The Chronicler concludes his account of Asa by noting that Asa dug his own tomb, was buried with spices, and was commemorated with a fire.

Asa in Josephus' Writings

The first-century historian Josephus expands the biblical portrait of Asa, depicting him as an exemplary, virtuous ruler. Josephus removes details about Asa's reign that likely would upset Hellenistic readers, including prophetic criticism, his removal of rival religious materials, and his foot disease (Feldman, "Josephus' Portrait," 45–53).

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Rom 9:1-24

God's Faithfulness to Israel (Rom 9:1–11:36)

The Problem of Paul's Own People (Rom 9:1–5). Paul closes Romans 8:28–39 praising God for his blessings to an elect people, who cannot be separated from God's love. That raises the question of another elect people who do not seem to be benefiting from their election: the Jews. Paul wishes himself cut off and accursed for the sake of his own people, even as Christ was cut off and accursed for the sake of humanity. Israel received the adoption as sons, the divine glory, the law, the temple worship, the promises—and from the Jews came Christ, who is God over all. The current plight of the original recipients of God's promises is an obvious objection against the confidence Paul claims for believers in Christ at the end of the prior chapter. Ultimately, the apostle will make clear that God has not rejected the people he foreknew (11:2).

God's Right to Choose (Rom 9:6–29). In the first of three attempts to answer the problem posed by ethnic Israel, Paul affirms God's right to choose a people. Paul rejects the notion that all ethnic Israel is Israel (9:6). God has always worked with a portion of the whole—not all the descendants of Abraham or of Isaac or of Jacob (9:7–13). God's choice is irrespective of what people have done or their ethnic identity (9:6, 11, 16, 18). God reserves the right to show mercy, to harden, and to fashion the clay as he will (9:14–23; compare Exod 33:19),

² Handy, L. K. (2016). [Asa, King of Judah](#). In J. D. Barry, D. Bomar, D. R. Brown, R. Klippenstein, D. Mangum, C. Sinclair Wolcott, ... W. Widder (Eds.), *The Lexham Bible Dictionary*. Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press.

whether Jews or Gentiles (9:17–18, 27–29). Ultimately, election and salvation depend upon God’s unmerited mercy.³

Ps 19

19:1 This psalm appropriately unites the two ways God has revealed Himself to man: by general revelation in His creation (vv. 1-6; Rom. 1:19, 20), and by specific revelation in His inspired Word (vv. 7-14; Heb. 1:1).

19:1 The **firmament** is the stretched-out expanse of the sky.

19:4 Has gone out: The apostle Paul used this verse to show that the Jews have known the word of truth; but, having heard it, they refused to obey it, with the result that a door has been opened to the Gentiles to hear the gospel (Rom. 10:18).

19:6 Circuit: David describes the rotation of the Earth from the viewpoint of a man on Earth and is not teaching that the sun revolves around the Earth. By comparison, we use words like “sunrise” and “sunset” to describe the Earth’s rotation, when technically the sun does neither.

KINGDOM DYNAMICS

19:7 **The Complete Trustworthiness of the Bible, THE WORD OF GOD.** That the “law of the LORD *is* perfect,” is direct reference to the absolute, complete, and entire trustworthiness of the Holy Scriptures, which constitute the Bible. The Word of God is perfect in its accuracy and sure in its dependability. Two terms are generally used to describe these features of God’s Word: 1) Inerrant (perfect) means that, in the original copies of each manuscript written by each Bible book’s respective author, there was nothing mistaken or tinged with error. (Further, the excellence of the Holy Spirit’s protection of the Scriptures over the centuries, has insured that the copies delivered into our hands from generations past, is essentially the same. Even literary critics who claim no faith in the truth of the Bible, attest to its being the most completely reliable of any book transmitted from antiquity, in terms of its actually remaining unchanged and dependably accurate.) 2) Infallible refers to the fact that the Bible is unfailing as an absolutely trustworthy guide for our faith (belief in God) and practice (life and behavior). This is so because God is true (John 3:33; 17:3), because His Word reveals His truth (John 17:17), and because God cannot lie (Num. 23:19; Titus 1:2; Heb. 6:18).

19:7 See section 4 of Truth-In-Action following Ps. 41.

19:7 The general revelation about God was introduced by using the nonspecific name for God (Hebrew *El*, v. 1); but the specific revelation is marked by the revealed name of God (Hebrew *Yahweh*) translated in vv. 7-9 six times as **LORD**.

19:12 Cleanse me: The correct reaction to seeing and hearing God’s revelations is personal introspection (James 1:21-25).

19:12 See section 6 of Truth-In-Action following Ps. 41.

KINGDOM DYNAMICS

³ Das, A. A. (2016). [Romans, Letter to the](#). In J. D. Barry, D. Bomar, D. R. Brown, R. Klippenstein, D. Mangum, C. Sinclair Wolcott, ... W. Widder (Eds.), *The Lexham Bible Dictionary*. Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press.

19:14 “Acceptable” Speech Before God, FAITH’S CONFESSION. This oft-quoted verse attests to the importance and desirability of our words and thoughts being consistent with God’s Word and will. The text literally says, “Let what I speak and what my heart murmurs to itself be a delight to You, Lord.” Clearly, the acceptability of our words in God’s sight is dependent upon their being consistent with what our hearts feel or think. The truth of this text urges us to always speak the kind of words that confirm what we believe or think in our hearts about God, His love, and His power. If we believe, yet contradict that belief with careless words from our mouth, it is not acceptable in God’s sight. Remember the lesson of Cain’s sacrifice (Gen. 4:1-7): what is unacceptable is not only faithless and fruitless; it may also become deadly.⁴

Pro 20:1

Wine *is* a mocker, Strong drink *is* a brawler,
And whoever is led astray by it is not wise.⁵

July 26

2 Chron 17-18

D. The reign of Jehoshaphat (17:1–20:37). Jehoshaphat is the second good king of Judah. He battles the penetration of Baal worship in Judah and sends Levites on itinerant preaching missions to communicate God’s Law to all. His own faith is shown when Judah is invaded by enemies.

His primary errors are to make alliances with Israel and to marry his son Jehoram to one of Ahab’s daughters, who is as evil as her mother Jezebel.⁶

JEHOSHAPHAT, KING OF JUDAH (יְהוֹשָׁפָט, *yehoshaphat*). Son of Asa and sixth king in the Davidic dynasty. Reigned in Jerusalem from 872–848 BC.

Overview

Jehoshaphat—meaning “Yahweh judges/is judge/has judged”—took power as the fourth king of Judah ca. 872 BC. First Kings 22:41–50 summarizes Jehoshaphat’s reign; he is praised for furthering the religious reforms his father Asa initiated and accomplishing even more than Asa.

Accession to the Throne

In contrast to the kings of Israel, who tended to reign in short dynasties punctuated by bloody coups, the kings of Judah were usually succeeded by their sons. Fathers often shared the throne as coregents with their heirs. Jehoshaphat and his father Asa likely shared such a coregency beginning about the time of Asa’s illness (2 Chr 16:12; see Merrill, *Kingdom of Priests*, 357). First Kings states that Asa “did what was right in the eyes of the LORD” and was a righteous king (1 Kgs 15:11–15 ESV). He set the stage for one of the high points in Judah’s history under Jehoshaphat. Asa died in Jehoshaphat’s third year as king, giving his son sole claim to the

⁴ Hayford, J. W. (Ed.). (1997). [Spirit filled life study Bible](#) (electronic ed., Ps 19:1–12). Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson.

⁵ [The New King James Version](#). (1982). (Pr 20:1). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

⁶ Hayford, J. W., Thomas Nelson Publishers. (1995). [Hayford’s Bible handbook](#). Nashville, TN; Atlanta, GA; London; Vancouver: Thomas Nelson Publishers.

kingdom. Jehoshaphat followed in the ways of his father and also “did what was right in the eyes of the LORD” (1 Kgs 22:43 NIV).

Prosperity

Jehoshaphat’s years as king enjoyed prosperity nearly unparalleled during the divided monarchy. Jehoshaphat’s religious reforms paved the way for many other accomplishments. Domestically, he built up the standing military force in personnel as well as armaments—building garrisons, fortifications, and storehouses throughout Judah. Textual clues regarding Philistines and Arabs bringing Jehoshaphat tribute communicate that Judah’s stability turned into political weight, extending both west and east (Rainey and Notley, *Bridge*, 202).

Religious Reforms

Once Jehoshaphat became sole possessor of the throne, he began aggressively pursuing his own religious reforms (Rainey, *Bridge*, 201). Second Chronicles 17:7–9 reports that the king dispatched teachers and Levites along with the “Book of the Law of the Lord” to teach the people of Judah concerning the covenant stipulations contained in the Torah. The Chronicler implies heavily that the religious education and emphasis on the Book of the Law precipitated Jehoshaphat’s climb to power and prestige.

2 Chron 17:6 And his heart took delight in the ways of the LORD; moreover he removed the high places and wooden images from Judah.

7 Also in the third year of his reign he sent his leaders, Ben-Hail, Obadiah, Zechariah, Nethanel, and Michaiah, to teach in the cities of Judah. 8 And with them he sent Levites: Shemaiah, Nethaniah, Zebadiah, Asahel, Shemiramoth, Jehonathan, Adonijah, Tobijah, and Tobadonijah—the Levites; and with them Elishama and Jehoram, the priests. 9 So they taught in Judah, and had the Book of the Law of the LORD with them; they went throughout all the cities of Judah and taught the people.

10 And the fear of the LORD fell on all the kingdoms of the lands that were around Judah, so that they did not make war against Jehoshaphat.

Hebrews 4:12 For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

Connection to Solomon

During his reign, Jehoshaphat reestablished Solomon’s southern borders. Solomon’s influence had reached all the way south through the Arabah to the tip of the Red Sea, where he built a fleet at Ezion-Geber that returned gold from Ophir (1 Kgs 9:26–28). Jehoshaphat built his own ships at Ezion-Geber to retrieve gold from Ophir, which sent a powerful message to outsiders and countrymen alike that Judah was once again a major player in the region, even though the ships never set sail (1 Kgs 22:48). Details such as these, which describe the “great wealth and honor” (2 Chr 17:5 NIV) Jehoshaphat amassed during his reign, present the reader with an echo of the Solomonic era, which had been the highest point in the kingdom’s history (Baly, *Geography*, 215–16).

Jehoshaphat was also like Solomon in that he was connected to ungodly neighbors through marriage or trade alliances, and he ultimately faced divine consequences for these indiscretions (2 Chr 20:35–37).

Foreign Relations

Jehoshaphat allied with Ahab, the king of Israel, and repeatedly clashed with enemies beyond the Jordan. The political marriage of Jehoshaphat’s son, the crown prince Jehoram, to Ahab’s daughter Athaliah, cemented Jehoshaphat and Ahab’s alliance (2 Kgs 8:16–18, 2 Chr 18:1). Ahab and Jehoshaphat’s bond grew so strong

that Jehoshaphat had a throne next to Ahab's in Samaria, Israel's capital at the time (2 Chr 18:9). Their alliance not only granted the two nations respite from conflict, but also allowed them to focus their energies elsewhere.

When Ahab asked Jehoshaphat to help him take Ramoth-gilead from Aram-Damascus east of the Jordan River, Jehoshaphat agreed but asked the king to first consult a prophet (2 Chr 18:2–4). Micaiah the prophet warned Ahab not to attack. However, eager to control the Transjordanian outpost, the kings attacked anyway and Ahab was killed in the battle (Wright, *Greatness*, 62–63).

War with Moab

Upon Ahab's death, Moab—Israel's vassal state at that time—attempted to rebel against Israel's control. To resubjugate the nation, Ahab's son Joram enlisted the help of Jehoshaphat, who in turn gathered his allies in Edom just south of Moab. After Mesha, the king of Moab, captured and killed the prince of Edom (or possibly his own son), the Edomites withdrew their support from the coalition, forcing Israel and Judah to return home (2 Kgs 3; Rainey, *Bridge*, 205).

Perhaps feeling confident from his victory, Mesha later seems to have taken up arms against Judah with his Ammonite allies. Second Chronicles 20:1–30 showcases Jehoshaphat's reliance on God rather than on his allies of questionable character. God miraculously ensures that the battle ends in Judah's favor, communicating to Jehoshaphat, his kingdom, and witnesses that keeping covenant with Him is both sufficient and worth the worldly cost (Wright, *Greatness*, 66).

Control over Edom

First Kings 22:47 reports that during Jehoshaphat's reign there was no king in Edom, but rather a deputy governing the country. Edom likely served as a type of vassal state to Judah at this time, and Jehoshaphat probably appointed a local chief, who was respected by his own people and in turn respected the power over him for the peace of all involved. This type of system was a known practice in the ancient world (Rainey, *Bridge*, 202).

Differing Accounts of Jehoshaphat's Reign

Mesha Stele

Scholars often debate the perceived conflicts between the biblical record and the Mesha Stele (also called the Moabite Stone)—an inscription that the Moabite king Mesha made around the time he battled Jehoshaphat. Some scholars interpret the details of the Moabite Stone as chronologically disparate from those found in the Bible (Dearman, *Reconstruction*, 164–67). For example, the stele records that Mesha rebelled against Israel in the days of Omri's son. Although it is possible Mesha meant Ahab, Omri's immediate offspring, the Bible claims instead that it was Ahab's son (and Omri's grandson), Joram, against whom Mesha rebelled. Because of this discrepancy, scholars also question the historicity of other biblical details, such as the involvement of Jehoshaphat in the revolt or the facts concerning his kingship. However, some scholars address the issue by pointing out that in the ancient world it was common practice to use the term “son” to mean “descendant.” Thus, “Omri's son” could actually refer to Joram.

Kings vs. Chronicles

The varying details concerning Jehoshaphat in Kings and Chronicles also fuel critical discussions and disagreements about the historicity of his life and reign. The account in Kings, typically called the Deuteronomist account, is notably shorter than the parallel version found in Chronicles. The accounts share only two similar stories:

1. Both accounts record the coalition between Jehoshaphat and Ahab to secure Ramoth-gilead. They also both describe events with the prophet Micaiah/Micah.
2. Both accounts give a summary of Jehoshaphat's years as king.

The Chronicler reports several other details concerning Jehoshaphat, including the prophet Jehu's rebuke upon Jehoshaphat's return to Jerusalem after his alliance with Ahab. Beyond this, the Chronicler describes Jehoshaphat's accession and early religious reforms, designation of judges and leaders, and ultimate military dominance over Moab and Ammon (Person, *History*, 115–16).

Similarities between the Deuteronomist and the Chronicler accounts could indicate one was the source for the other, or perhaps that they shared a common source. However, some scholars believe that the additional material in Chronicles comes from a nonhistorical tradition and that the two accounts present incompatible perspectives on Jehoshaphat. Other scholars suggest that the Chronicler could have had access to unique yet historical material that informed his text and that Kings and Chronicles both present a mixed view of Jehoshaphat. The Chronicler praises Jehoshaphat for honoring God by tearing down the high places where the people worshiped foreign gods (2 Chr 17:6), while reporting that he apparently did not remove all the high places as he should have (2 Chr 20:33). The author of Kings similarly praises and criticizes Jehoshaphat in a final analysis (1 Kgs 22:43). Therefore, Person, among others, points out that while the historical details differ, the biblical accounts are unified in perspective (Person, *History*, 118, 152–54).

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Rom 9:25-10:13

Israel's Rejection (Rom 9:30–10:21). God's right to choose does not exonerate Israel from responsibility. Ironically, Israel emphasized the works of the law and missed the righteousness of faith, stumbling over the stone laid in Zion (9:30–33). After restating his heartfelt desire that his own people be saved, Paul explains that they did not submit to God's righteousness with Christ as the end/goal of the law (10:1–4). Paul again contrasts the righteousness that comes from doing what the law requires and the righteousness by faith (10:5–8). All those who confess that Jesus is Lord, whether Jew or Gentile, will be saved (10:9–13). Since faith comes by hearing the message, the good news is being preached to the entire world—but, sadly, Israel has largely rejected that message (10:14–21).⁸

Ps 20

20:1 Trouble: This psalm may have been a typical congregational prayer used with sacrifices offered just before going to war.

20:1 The God of Jacob refers to the fact that God delivered Jacob in times of distress (Gen. 35:3).

20:6 Now I know is a statement of faith that prayer is heard.

20:7 Advanced nations used **chariots** and **horses** in warfare, whereas the Israelites had a more primitive arsenal—thus the total reliance on the **LORD** for victory. Later Solomon acquired a number of chariots and horses (1 Kin. 10:26-29), contrary to the Law (Deut. 17:16).

20:9 Or as the Septuagint Greek version translates: "O LORD, save the king, hear us when we call."⁹

Pro 20:2-3

⁷ Ridley, B. (2016). [Jehoshaphat, King of Judah](#). In J. D. Barry, D. Bomar, D. R. Brown, R. Klippenstein, D. Mangum, C. Sinclair Wolcott, ... W. Widder (Eds.), *The Lexham Bible Dictionary*. Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press.

⁸ Das, A. A. (2016). [Romans, Letter to the](#). In J. D. Barry, D. Bomar, D. R. Brown, R. Klippenstein, D. Mangum, C. Sinclair Wolcott, ... W. Widder (Eds.), *The Lexham Bible Dictionary*. Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press.

⁹ Hayford, J. W. (Ed.). (1997). [Spirit filled life study Bible](#) (electronic ed., Ps 20:1–9). Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson.

² The wrath of a king *is* like the roaring of a lion;
Whoever provokes him to anger sins *against* his own life.

³ *It is* honorable for a man to stop striving,
Since any fool can start a quarrel.¹⁰

20:3 A peacemaker is better than a troublemaker.¹¹

July 27

2 Chron 19-20

REVIEW:

Escaping from the battle with his life, Jehoshaphat returns safely home.

Only to be confronted by Hanani the Seer who says:

2 And Jehu the son of Hanani the seer went out to meet him, and said to King Jehoshaphat, “Should you help the wicked and love those who hate the LORD? Therefore the wrath of the LORD is upon you. 3 Nevertheless good things are found in you, in that you have removed the wooden images from the land, and have prepared your heart to seek God.”

God had granted him safety while he was doing a dumb thing with Ahab (mercy, grace, favor), yet the LORD brings correction & consequences. (good parenting)

Afterwards, Jehoshaphat:

- Goes out among the people to bring them back to the LORD v 4
- He sets judges throughout the land
- He instructs the judges to judge righteously : 19: 6 and said to the judges, “Take heed to what you are doing, for you do not judge for man but for the LORD, who is with you in the judgment. 7 Now therefore, let the fear of the LORD be upon you; take care and do it, for there is no iniquity with the LORD our God, no partiality, nor taking of bribes.”
(interesting...LET the fear of the LORD be upon you.)
V 11b Behave courageously, and the LORD will be with the good.”

2 Chron 20:

Rom 10:14-11:12

The Current Remnant and All Israel (Rom 11:1–36). In Romans 11, Paul returns for a third time to the question of his own people and asks whether God has rejected them (11:1–2). The answer is an emphatic “no.” With logic paralleling 9:1–23, Paul distinguishes God’s elect from the rest of the Israelites. That election depends upon God’s unmerited grace (11:3–10), but some remained hardened.

Paul recognizes that the problem of ethnic Israel’s hardening and rejection remains. He asks if Israel has stumbled so as to fall (11:11), and he offers a glimmer of hope for the future: Although their stumbling and defeat has allowed salvation and riches to come to the Gentiles, “how much more will their full inclusion mean?” (11:11–12). In his ministry to the Gentiles, Paul is intent on making his own people jealous and saving some of them (11:13–14). If their disobedience brought reconciliation to the world, he imagines their future acceptance will bring life from the dead (11:15). He turns to the image of an olive tree: Some of the branches

¹⁰ [The New King James Version](#). (1982). (Pr 20:2–3). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

¹¹ Hayford, J. W. (Ed.). (1997). [Spirit filled life study Bible](#) (electronic ed., Pr 20:3). Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson.

were broken off because of unbelief so that a wild olive shoot, the Gentiles, might be grafted in. “You” Gentiles must not boast, however, because God can just as easily cut off the wild olive shoot to graft back in the natural branches (11:17–24). Paul envisions a present, temporary hardening of a “part” of Israel “until the full number of Gentiles has come in,” which will trigger “all Israel” being saved (11:25–26). God will banish ungodliness from Jacob and take away His people’s sins (11:26–27), thus resolving the plight with which Paul began in 9:1–5. Those who were once disobedient—a disobedience which resulted in mercy for “your” sake (as Gentiles)—will themselves receive mercy (11:28–32). The prospect that God will be merciful to all causes Paul to break forth in doxological praise of God’s unsearchable and inscrutable ways (11:33–36).¹²

Ps 21

21:1 This psalm seems to be a thankful praise for victory in response to the previous pleas in Ps. 20. Some commentators, as well as Jewish rabbis, see here a prophetic type of **king** Messiah (Jesus) ascending in victory.

21:3 For example, after victory over the Ammonites, David received the royal **crown** of the conquered king (2 Sam. 12:30).

21:7 Most High is a title for God (Hebrew *Elyon*).

21:8 Will find means “will seek out the fleeing or retreating enemy.”

21:9 Fiery oven: God’s judgment is often described as **fire** (Mal. 4:1), and it is declared that this will be the means of bringing the final Judgment Day to a conclusion (2 Pet. 3:7).

21:10 Offspring: Having no one to carry on the family name was considered a great curse in Middle Eastern culture.¹³

Pro 20:4-6

The lazy *man* will not plow because of winter;
He will beg during harvest and *have* nothing.

⁵ Counsel in the heart of man *is like* deep water,
But a man of understanding will draw it out.

⁶ Most men will proclaim each his own goodness,
But who can find a faithful man?¹⁴

July 28

2 Chron 21-23

E. The reign of Jehoram (21:1–20). Jehoram’s eight-year reign is short and brutal. He has married Jezebel’s daughter, Athaliah. Now Jehoram follows their religious and moral example. He kills his six brothers to be rid of potential rivals, Edom and Libnah successfully rebel against Judah’s authority, and the Philistines attack Judah and capture the king’s family. When Jehoram dies there is relief in Judah; no one mourns.

¹² Das, A. A. (2016). [Romans, Letter to the](#). In J. D. Barry, D. Bomar, D. R. Brown, R. Klippenstein, D. Mangum, C. Sinclair Wolcott, ... W. Widder (Eds.), *The Lexham Bible Dictionary*. Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press.

¹³ Hayford, J. W. (Ed.). (1997). [Spirit filled life study Bible](#) (electronic ed., Ps 20:9–21:9). Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson.

¹⁴ [The New King James Version](#). (1982). (Pr 20:4–6). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

JEHORAM, KING OF JUDAH (יְהוֹרָם, *yhwrm*; יוֹרָם, *ywrm*) “Yahweh is exalted”. King of Judah (ca. 851–843 BC), son of Jehoshaphat and husband of Athaliah. Details of his reign are given in 2 Kgs 8:16–24 and 2 Chr 21:1–20.

Overview

The reigns of Jehoram/Joram of Judah and Jehoram/Joram of the northern kingdom of Israel largely overlap, causing speculation that the two are really the same person (Barrick, “Another Shaking,” 21–24). In this article, Jehoram will be used to indicate the king of Judah and Joram the king of the northern kingdom of Israel.

Jehoram’s most famous wife was Athaliah; 2 Chr 21:14, 17 indicates that she was not his only wife. Athaliah was the daughter of Ahab (2 Kgs 8:18; 2 Chr 21:6) or the daughter of Ahab’s father Omri (2 Kgs 8:26; 2 Chr 21:2). It is not specified that Jezebel was Athaliah’s mother, but it is likely considering the negative implications of her marriage to Jehoram in 2 Kgs 8:18, and the presence of a temple of Baal in Jerusalem in the following generation (2 Kgs 11:18). Athaliah’s killing off the royal house of Judah (2 Kgs 11:1) reflects her presumed mother Jezebel, who attempted to exterminate the prophets (1 Kgs 18:4).

Chronology of Jehoram’s Reign

The years of Jehoram’s reign illustrate chronology problems in the books of Kings. First Kings 22:42 records that Jehoshaphat of Judah reigned for 25 years, and 1 Kgs 22:52 adds that Ahaziah of Israel began reigning in the 17th year of Jehoshaphat’s reign and was king for two years. Then Ahaziah’s brother, Joram, began to rule over Israel in the 18th (or perhaps 19th) year of Jehoshaphat, and ruled for 12 years (2 Kgs 3:1).

Second Kings 1:17 contradicts the preceding with its notice that Joram of Israel began to reign in the second year of Jehoram of Judah. If we assume the institution of co-regencies, it is possible that Joram started his reign both during the 18th year of Jehoshaphat’s 25-year reign and the second year of Jehoram’s co-regency with his father. Second Kings 8:16 adds one more synchronism: “In the fifth year of Joram King of Israel—and Jehoshaphat king of Judah—Jehoram the son of Jehoshaphat became king of Judah.” This reconciles with the others only if Jehoram of Judah became the sole regent in the fifth year of Joram of Israel, which would be the final year of Jehoshaphat’s reign, approximately his 25th year. However, the phrase “and Jehoshaphat king of Judah” is misleading; it suggests Jehoram became co-regent in the fifth year of Joram; rather, he became the sole regent. Perhaps the text is intimating a previous co-regency. Cogan and Tadmor delete these words as a mistaken duplication of the phrase later in the verse (Cogan and Tadmor, *II Kings*, 95).

Absolute chronology can be achieved by assuming that Jehu’s coup (which terminates the reigns of Joram of Israel and Ahaziah of Judah) occurred in 842 BC; Jehu is mentioned in an Assyrian inscription dated to 841 BC (Younger, “Annals: Calah Bulls,” 267). When we consider one year for the reign of Ahaziah of Judah (ending in 842 BC) and eight years for Jehoram’s reign, then the latter begins to rule as a co-regent of his father in roughly 851 BC, and sole regent perhaps in 846 BC. Edwin Thiele first argued that royal lines of Judah and Israel practiced overlapping kingships, and this is now assumed by most commentators (Thiele, “Coregencies,” 186–7; Cogan and Tadmor, *II Kings*, 95; Gray, *I & II Kings*, 66–7, 465). This policy ensured a smoother transition and decreased the possibility of a disputed succession.

Jehoram in Kings

Jehoram receives a decidedly negative evaluation from the author of Kings.

Alliance with Israel

During the mid-ninth century BC, Judah was closely allied with Israel, a relationship reflected in joint campaigns against Aram and Moab (1 Kgs 22:2–4; 2 Kgs 3:7–8; 8:28–29). This bond was cemented by the marriage of Jehoram and Athaliah. Second Kings 8:18 asserts Jehoram followed the religious practice of the kings of Israel who sponsored the worship of Baal, a policy no doubt supported by his wife. Second Kings 11:18 tells of the destruction of the temple of Baal during the reign of Jehoram’s grandson Jehoash.

Edom’s Rebellion

Second Kings 8:20–22 reports that two of Judah’s subjects rebelled against its hegemony. First, Edom, which had been ruled by Judah since the reign of David, declared itself an independent monarchy (2 Sam 8:13–14; 1 Kgs 11:14–16). Second Kings 3 mentions a “King of Edom” who participates in an Israelite-Judahite campaign against King Mesha of Moab, but it is likely that “king” refers to a vassal. Perhaps Edom was following the example of Moab, which had recently rebelled against Israel (2 Kgs 3:7–8).

The account of Jehoram’s campaign against the Edomites in 2 Kgs 8:21, however, leaves the reader somewhat uncertain about its outcome: “Jehoram crossed over to Zair with all his chariotry. He arose by night and attacked the Edomites, who were surrounding him and the chariot commanders; the people fled to their tents” (author’s translation). The word for “attacked,” *vayyakkeh*, usually indicates a victory. However, if “the people” of the second half of the verse are Jehoram’s troops who fled home, then the raid was a failure, which is confirmed by the following verse: “So Edom has been in revolt against Judah to this day” (2 Kgs 8:22). A slight alteration of the Hebrew text provides a more logical reading, that “Edom attacked him,” i.e., Jehoram, thus causing his army to flee (Japhet, *I & II Chronicles*, 810; Gray, *I & II Kings*, 533). The place name Zair is mentioned only here, but might be the same as Zior of Josh 15:54, a village northeast of Hebron, or Zoar at the southern end of the Dead Sea (Gen 13:10, 19:22).

Libnah’s Rebellion

Libnah, a city in the Judean Shephelah region, also rebelled against Judahite rule during the reign of Jehoram. Gray suggests that its proximity to Philistine country indicates that it was never really part of Judah; he associates it with the report in 2 Chr 21 that Philistines raided Judah during the reign of Jehoram (Gray, *I & II Kings*, 535). Japhet, on the other hand, sees the city-state as principally Canaanite; this aspect of its character was reasserted when the opportunity arose (Japhet, *I & II Chronicles*, 811).

Jehoram in Chronicles

The record of Jehoram’s reign in 1 Chr 21 is three times longer than the one in Kings and decidedly more negative, with greater emphasis on the theme of sin and punishment.

Jehoram’s Rise to the Throne

First Chronicles 21:2–4 informs us that Jehoram’s father, Jehoshaphat, chose Jehoram to succeed him because he was the firstborn. His other sons were given “gifts of silver, gold, and other goods” and transferred out of Jerusalem to fortified cities elsewhere in Judah. This no doubt lessened conflict among the potential rivals to the throne, while furthering royal interests elsewhere in the kingdom. Jehoram took a further step to secure his claim to the throne: He had his half-brothers assassinated. This act of treachery foreshadows the loss of all of his own sons except one in a raid by Philistines and Arabs in 2 Chr 21:17, as well as his wife Athaliah’s extermination of Judah’s royal family, with the exception of Jehoash (2 Kgs 11:1–3). In one generation the Davidic family was reduced to a single heir (Japhet, *I & II Chronicles*, 815).

Leading Judah Astray

Chronicles’ version of Jehoram’s reign emphasizes his role in leading the people of Jerusalem and Judah “astray,” causing them to “whore” in following the idolatrous lead of Ahab’s northern kingdom (2 Chr 21:11, 13). For the Chronicler, not even Manasseh, to whose policies the author of Kings attributes the destruction of Jerusalem (2 Kgs 24:3), is worse than Jehoram. Second Chronicles 33:9, following 2 Kgs 21:9, records that Manasseh led the people astray, but then adds that Manasseh repented and acknowledged that “Yahweh is God” (2 Chr 33:13).

Elijah’s Letter to Jehoram

Chronicles introduces a letter by Elijah the prophet condemning Jehoram for abandoning the ways of his righteous ancestors Jehoshaphat and Asa, for causing the people of Judah to stray as the dynasty of Ahab did in the north, and for killing his brothers. Elijah warns that he will die of a horrible intestinal disorder, and Yahweh

will “inflict a great blow upon your people, your sons, your wives, and all of your possessions” (2 Chr 21:14–15).

The historical nature of Elijah’s intervention here is questionable; his activity in Kings was limited to the northern kingdom, and his ascension in 2 Kgs 2:11 seems to have preceded Jehoram’s reign. The appearance of prophets at important points in Israelite history is a rhetorical tool characteristic of Chronicles to emphasize God’s compassion for His people, or in this case its king: The prophet issues warnings of future disaster to bring his audience to repentance (Japhet, *Ideology*, 164; *I & II Chronicles*, 45–6). For the Chronicler, Jehoram’s unparalleled evil, aggravated by his association with the royal house of Israel, requires a prophet of Elijah’s stature, even if the time and place seem out of joint.

Jehoram’s Downfall

Immediately after Elijah’s warning, 2 Chr 21:16–19 details the fulfillment of Jehoram’s punishment. An army of Philistines, Arabs, and Ethiopians assault Jerusalem and carry off the royal family and their wealth, with the exception of Jehoram’s youngest son, Ahaziah, called Jehoahaz in 2 Chr 21:17 (Barrick, “Another Shaking”; Etz “Genealogical Relationships”). The success of this raid in targeting the royal family is tailored by the Chronicler to fit the king’s role in the corruption of his people and the assassination of his brothers.

Also unique to Chronicler’s version of the reign of Jehoram is his agonizing death from an illness that caused his bowels to “come out.” While 2 Kgs 8:24 uses its usual formula for the death of Judaeans kings, “So Jehoram slept with his ancestors and was buried with them in the city of David,” the Chronicler emphasizes the king’s final disgrace, that he was buried with “no fire in his honor,” he “departed with no one’s regret,” and “they buried him in the city of David, but not in the tombs of the kings” (2 Chr 21:19–20 NRSV). Missing from the Chronicler’s record of Jehoram’s reign is the usual formula for referring to the “rest of the acts of” the king, recorded in another source (2 Chr 9:29; 13:22; 20:34; 25:26; 27:7; 28:26; 32:32; 35:27; 36:8). The absence suggests that there was nothing of value to record for future generations.

Jehoram Outside the Old Testament

In the New Testament, Jehoram is mentioned in the genealogy of Jesus in Matt 1:8. In ancient Near Eastern texts outside of the Bible, there is a likely reference to him in a gap in the Aramaic Tel Dan Inscription, when the probable author, Hazael, King of Aram, brags that he killed “Ahaziah son [of Jehoram, K]ing of the House of David.” The killing of Ahaziah of Judah along with Joram son of Ahab is assigned in 2 Kgs 9:27 to the usurper Jehu rather than to Hazael of Aram, though it is possible that there was an alliance between the two (Schmiedewind, “Tel Dan Stela,” 77, 83).

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F. The reign of Ahaziah (22:1–9). Jehoram’s only remaining son rules just one year. He is killed while visiting Joram of Israel.

AHAZIAH, KING OF JUDAH (אֲחַזְיָהוּ, *achazyahu*), King of Judah. Son of Jehoram. The fifth king of Judah.

Ahaziah in the Bible

¹⁵ Goodfriend, E. (2016). [Jehoram, King of Judah](#). In J. D. Barry, D. Bomar, D. R. Brown, R. Klippenstein, D. Mangum, C. Sinclair Wolcott, ... W. Widder (Eds.), *The Lexham Bible Dictionary*. Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press.

Ahaziah began his reign of Judah around 841 BC. He succeeded his father, Jehoram, when he was 22 years old, and reigned one year in Jerusalem (2 Kgs 8:26). Ahaziah's mother, Athaliah, was the daughter of Ahab (2 Kgs 8:18) and granddaughter of Omri (2 Kgs 8:26), both kings of Israel.

Notably, Ahaziah formed an alliance with Jehoram (son of Ahab, king of Israel) in a battle against Hazael, king of Syria, at Ramoth-gilead (2 Chr 22:4–5). Jehoram was wounded in a battle against Syria (2 Kgs 8:28), and Ahaziah went with him to Jezreel to seek recovery (2 Kgs 8:29). Jehu, a commander in Israel's army, had been anointed as Israel's next king (2 Kgs 9:1–13; compare 1 Kgs 19:16) and gained military support (2 Kgs 9:11–13). After Jehoram was shot in the heart with an arrow (2 Kgs 9:23–24), Ahaziah fled from Jehu toward Beth-haggan and was shot by an arrow near Gur by Ibleam. Wounded, he traveled to Megiddo, where he died (2 Kgs 9:27).

Details in the Chronicler's account differ at this point—it does not mention Ahaziah being wounded or fleeing to Megiddo. The Chronicler records that he was captured while hiding in Samaria, was brought to Jehu, and was subsequently put to death (2 Chr 22:9).

Aramaic Inscription

A ninth-century BC fragment of an Aramaic inscription describes a Syrian king celebrating his killing of a king of Israel and a king of Judah. The inscription was discovered at Tel Dan, in the northern region of Israel at the foot of Mount Hermon, in 1993–1994 (Biran and Naveh, "Aramaic Stela Fragment," 91–98; "Tel Dan Inscription," 1–18).

The significant portion of the inscription reads:

There came up the king of I[s]rael beforetime in the land of my father, [but]

Hadad [ma]de [me] king □

x Hadad went before me [and] I went from x □

*of my king(s) I killed kin[gs?] who harnessed x
[ch]ariots and thousands of horsemen*

□rm son of □

king of Israel and kill[ed]yahu son of [I overthr]ew the house of David

(COS, 2:161–62).

Knoppers notes that a name ending in "–rm" only matches two monarchs—one Judaeans, one Israelite—both with the name Jehoram (or Joram). The ending of the other name, "–yahu," is a Yahwistic ending; in eighth-ninth-century Judah, this only matches either Athaliah or Ahaziah (Knoppers, "The Vanishing Solomon," 39).

If this fragment refers to the Syrian king Hazael and states that he killed [Jeho]ram, king of Israel and [Ahaz]iah of Judah, the inscription and the biblical witness apparently conflict. Na'aman argues for the inscription's authenticity—that the biblical story should be understood as late and legendary (Na'aman, "Aramaic Inscription," 100–04). However, Schneidewind notes that 1 Kgs 19:17 seems to describe an alliance between Hazael and Jehu. The inscription may be hyperbolizing—possibly suggesting that Hazael was in support of Jehu's assassination of the two kings (Schneidewind, "Tel Dan Stela," 82–85).

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G. The reign of Queen Athaliah (22:10–23:15). Athaliah shows herself to truly be the daughter of the cruel and vindictive Jezebel. When her son King Ahaziah is killed, she acts immediately to kill her grandchildren and

¹⁶ Wisley, L. G. (2016). [Ahaziah, King of Judah](#). In J. D. Barry, D. Bomar, D. R. Brown, R. Klippenstein, D. Mangum, C. Sinclair Wolcott, ... W. Widder (Eds.), *The Lexham Bible Dictionary*. Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press.

seize power for herself! No one seems able to withstand the queen mother, and for some six years she holds the throne for herself.

ATHALIAH, QUEEN OF JUDAH (עַתְלִיָּה, *'tlyh*; “God is praised”). Usurped the throne of Judah after the death of her son, Ahaziah, and before Ahaziah’s son Joash could be crowned king. Reigned for approximately six years (842/841–836/835 BC) and was the only female ruler of Judah.

Overview

Athaliah is first mentioned by name in her son Ahaziah’s regnal formula in 2 Kgs 8:25–26. Second Chronicles 22:3 characterizes her as Ahaziah’s counselor “in doing wickedly.” She does not appear again until 2 Kgs 11:1–1/2 Chr 22:10–23:15. Athaliah sees that her son is dead and then sets out to destroy the royal family. However, Jehosheba—Ahaziah’s sister—protects Joash, the rightful heir, by stealing him away.

For six years, Jehoiada, the high priest, hides Joash in the temple while Athaliah reigns as the illegitimate queen of Judah. In her seventh year, Jehoiada crowns Joash king. When Athaliah hears the noise of the crowd at the coronation, she goes to the temple and witnesses the people’s rejoicing. She then tears her clothes—a ritual to invite sympathy and support—and shouts, “Treason! Treason!” (2 Kgs 11:14). She flees from Jehoiada’s command to kill her, but the army catches her and puts her to death in the horses’ entrance to the palace (compare 2 Kgs 9:32–33, in which horses trample Jezebel after the eunuchs throw her from her window).

After her assassination, the people of the land go to the temple of Baal and pull it down, shattering the altars and the images, and killing the priest of Baal (2 Kgs 11:18). It is unclear whether Athaliah was the one responsible for the construction of this temple, but the implication is that she is somehow responsible for the worship of Baal (Bowen, “Quest for the Historical Gēbîrâ,” 607; Ackerman, “Queen Mother and the Cult,” 396).

Relationship to the Omride Dynasty

Athaliah is initially called the daughter of Omri (2 Kgs 8:26; 2 Chr 22:2), but later called the daughter of Ahab (2 Kgs 8:18; 2 Chr 21:6; as Ahaziah is the son of Jehoram, Athaliah would be a wife of Jehoram). Cogan and Tadmor argue that Athaliah is the daughter of Ahab and the granddaughter of Omri, as “daughter” can mean “female descendant” as well as be indicative of a biological daughter (Cogan and Tadmor, *2 Kings*, 98). However, there is no definitive evidence that she was Jezebel’s daughter, even if she was the daughter of Ahab.

Even if she was not the daughter of Jezebel, Athaliah was probably educated under the supervision of Jezebel (Brenner, *The Israelite Women*, 28; Katzenstein, “Parents of Athaliah,” 197). Katzenstein concludes that Athaliah was the daughter of Omri mentioned in 2 Kgs 8:26 and 2 Chr 22:2, but that she grew up under Ahab—he posits she was an orphan—thus explaining “daughter of Ahab” and “house of Ahab” (Katzenstein, “Parents of Athaliah,” 197). Spanier notes that “daughter” may refer to Ahab’s protection of her, just as Tamar was under the protection of her brother, Absalom (2 Sam 14:27; Spanier, “Northern Israelite Queen Mother,” 141n29).

Illegitimate Reign

Athaliah’s reign appears to be illegitimate; she is a usurping queen and a disruption in the royal line of David. Her six regnal years cannot be counted under Ahaziah or Joash without critical emendations to the chronological data (Cogan and Tadmor, *2 Kings*, 133–34). Her rule is not coordinated with any of the other kings, and there is no introductory or concluding formula for her—something usually standard for any ruler of Israel and Judah. Therefore, according to the writer(s) of 2 Kings, Athaliah was not a legitimate ruler. The rejection of her rule may be related to her non-Davidic background, her gender, or her murderous actions against Davidic heirs.

Athaliah’s Roles as Queen Mother and Queen

Counselor to Ahaziah

According to 2 Chr 22:3–4, Athaliah served as a counselor to her son. Taken at face value, Athaliah acted as a counselor in her capacity as queen mother just as those of the house of Ahab did. She could have been an unofficial counselor whose advice carried weight with her son, or she may have actually had executive power (Brenner, *The Israelite Women*, 29). Emerson argues her position was probably not official (Emerson, “Women in Ancient Israel,” 374). Still, Ahaziah considers his mother’s knowledge and intuition superior enough to seek her advice.

Queen Regent

Another theory suggests that Athaliah may not have usurped the throne; she may have simply reigned as Joash’s regent while he was in the custody of Jehosheba (Ishida, *Royal Dynasties in Ancient Israel*, 160; Fritz, *1 & 2 Kings*, 298). Ishida writes: “It is more probable that she put to death only those who might pretend to the throne as rivals of the infant Joash, her own grandson” (Ishida, *Royal Dynasties*, 160). Brenner suggests that since no one from the house of Ahaziah was strong enough to rule after his death (2 Chr 22:9), Athaliah filled the vacancy and stepped in as acting regent. However, this was only initially, as she then took complete control of the throne and sought to eliminate the royal family of Judah (Brenner, *The Israelite Woman*, 29).

Efficient Ruler

Athaliah’s stable six-year reign contrasts with the short, tenuous reigns of the final kings of Israel and Judah, demonstrating a powerful ruling hand. Her knowledge and political savvy probably stemmed from her time as Jehoram’s wife and from support garnered during her tenure as the queen mother (Camp, “1 & 2 Kings,” 111). Athaliah does not appear to have faced any opposition to her rule externally from foreign powers or internally from Judah until Jehoiada’s revolt (Solvang, *A Woman’s Place*, 163).

Unifier of Israel and Judah

Athaliah’s marriage to Jehoram appears to have been part of a treaty—or political alliance—between Israel and Judah (Ackerman, “Queen Mother and the Cult,” 295; Spanier, “Northern Israelite Queen Mother,” 141–42; Brenner, *The Israelite Woman*, 207). Baker posits this political marriage as a peace settlement, putting an end to the political hostilities between Judah and Israel since the division of the monarchy (Baker, “1 & 2 Kings,” 207).

Miller and Hayes point out that the separation of the kingdoms hampered the free flow of trade (Miller and Hayes, *History of Ancient Israel and Judah*, 267). Spanier notes Omri’s negotiations with Phoenicia and Judah in order to engage in commerce with them, gaining access to more remote trading partners; political marriages consummated these treaties and alliances (Spanier, “Queen Mother in the Judaeen Royal Court,” 79). Ishida hypothesizes a unification of Israel and Judah through the marriage. Jehoram and Athaliah establish their reign in full cooperation with the House of Omri (Ishida, *Royal Dynasties*, 159). After Jehoram’s death, his son with Athaliah continues the alliance. Athaliah may have usurped the throne to continue the reign of the House of Omri/Ahab as part of the treaty made between Israel and Judah.

Baal Worshiper

Given the connection of Athaliah to the Baal temple, the Baal cult may explain her usurpation of the throne as a means to institute central Baal worship. Brueggemann views the likeliest motive of Athaliah’s extermination of the royal house to be that she was in prime position to be at the head of a pro-Baal movement in resistance against the reform of zealous Yahwists (Brueggemann, *1 & 2 Kings*, 407–8). Fretheim agrees that Athaliah likely sought to solidify Baal worship in Judah in response to Jehu’s coup in Israel (Fretheim, *First and Second Kings*, 178). Brenner claims that Athaliah proclaimed the cult as official, alongside the worship of Yahweh, because of the existence of a temple dedicated to Baal (Brenner, *The Israelite Woman*, 29–30).

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GINNY BREWER-BOYDSTON¹⁷

H. The reign of Joash (23:16–24:27). Joash is snatched up and hidden from Athaliah in the Jerusalem temple until he reaches the age of seven. Then the high priest, Jehoiada, plans with the Levites and the military to restore this rightful descendant of David to the throne of Judah.

Athaliah hears them rejoicing and comes to investigate. There, just outside the temple, she is killed. Jehoiada leads in a service of covenant renewal, in which all the people again promise to be the Lord's. Immediately the crowds destroy the altars and worship centers of Baal, with great rejoicing.

During Jehoiada's life, Joash follows the Lord and restores the Jerusalem temple. But Jehoiada's death brings a change in Joash. He turns from God to worship idols.

God permits the Aramaeans under Hazael to overcome Judah's superior forces. Joash is wounded, and then is assassinated in bed by those who oppose the apostasy of their king.¹⁸

JHOASH, KING OF JUDAH (יְהוֹאָשׁ, *yeho'ash*). Alternatively Joash (יֹאָשׁ, *yo'ash*), "Yahweh has given." The ninth king of Judah during the divided monarchy.

History

Jehoash reigned in the ninth century BC. His father was Ahaziah, king of Judah, and his mother was Zibiah from Beer-sheba (2 Chr 24:1). Jehoash was the great grandson of Jehoshaphat, the fourth king of Judah during the divided monarchy. His reign is mentioned in 2 Kgs 11–12 and 2 Chr 22–24.

Jehoash's history begins with his grandfather, Jehoram, son of Jehoshaphat. Although Jehoshaphat was a godly king, his son Jehoram was not. He married Athaliah, the daughter of Ahab, king of Israel. During his reign, Jehoram returned Judah to idolatry. He reigned a total of eight years before he died, to no one's regret (2 Chr 21:20).

After his death, the people of Judah placed Ahaziah, his youngest son, on the throne because all of Jehoram's older sons had been killed. Ahaziah reigned only one year before he was killed by Jehu, God's anointed king of Israel (2 Chr 22:9).

After Ahaziah died, Athaliah, his mother, upset over her son's death, decided to put all of the royal family to death and rule in their place. This included Jehoash, the infant son of Ahaziah. However, in a manner reminiscent of Moses' early life, Jehoash was rescued from imminent death by his aunt, Jehosheba, and hidden away in the temple along with his nurse (2 Kgs 11:3; 2 Chr 22:12; Johnstone, *1 & 2 Chronicles*, 122).

¹⁷ Ginny Brewer-Boydston. (2016). [Athaliah, Queen of Judah](#). In J. D. Barry, D. Bomar, D. R. Brown, R. Klippenstein, D. Mangum, C. Sinclair Wolcott, ... W. Widder (Eds.), *The Lexham Bible Dictionary*. Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press.

¹⁸ Hayford, J. W., Thomas Nelson Publishers. (1995). [Hayford's Bible handbook](#). Nashville, TN; Atlanta, GA; London; Vancouver: Thomas Nelson Publishers.

After six years had passed, Jehoiada, the high priest, who was also Jehosheba's husband, arranged a coup against Athaliah. Subsequently, Jehoash would rightfully take the throne and be hailed as the heir of David.

Jehoiada gathered Levites, heads of the families of Israel, and the palace guards (2 Kgs 11:4–8; 2 Chr 23:1–3). Together they arranged to crown Jehoash, read a proclamation that Jehoash was king, execute Athaliah, and make a covenant with the Lord (2 Kgs 11:12; 2 Chr 23:11).

After Jehoash had ascended the throne, he restored temple worship and stability to the monarchy—at least for a time. However, after the death of Jehoiada, he turned away from God to idolatry (2 Chr 24:17–22). Eventually, Jehoash had Jehoiada's son Zechariah murdered (2 Chr 24:21–22) and was himself murdered by his officials as he lay in bed (2 Chr 24:25).

Discrepancies in Chronology

Jehoash began ruling at the age of seven and reigned for 40 years (2 Kgs 12:1; 2 Chr 24:1); however, the dates of his reign have been a point of contention for the past century. The chronologies in the books of Kings and Chronicles are not parallel, and the dates of the kings, when written out sequentially, do not cohere. Numerous attempts have been made to rectify the issue.

- Albright amends the number of years Jehoash reigned from 40 to 38; 837–800 BC (Albright, “Chronology,” 16–22).
- Thiele attempts to resolve the tension by arguing for coregency periods, which would date Jehoash's reign from 835–796 BC (Thiele, *Mysterious Numbers*, 104).
- Galil argues that the Chronicler does not acknowledge the legitimacy of the six years Athaliah ruled Judah. Therefore, in the biblical author's mind, Jehoash began to reign when his father died, not when Athaliah died. Galil thus proposes a reign from 841–801 BC (Galil, *The Chronology*, 47–48).
- Dutcher-Walls argues that the 40-year reign of Jehoash is merely symbolic of the reigns of the revered kings over a unified Israel, David and Solomon (Dutcher-Walls, *Narrative Art*, 87).

Biblical Relevance

Jehoash's reign is important in the biblical narrative for a number of reasons.

- He ended the reign of Athaliah and the last vestiges of the wicked Omride rulers in Judah and ruled as a legitimate heir to the throne of David.
- He initiated the collection of money and the rebuilding of the temple of the Lord.

Even so, his reign and life ended poorly. After Jehoiada died, Jehoash began worshipping false gods and brought an end to any hope of a godly Davidic king.

Overthrow of Athaliah

The overthrow of Athaliah is important because it underscores the desire to have a Davidic king on the throne. The narrative of events that placed Jehoash on the throne (2 Chr 22:10; 23:2–3) is controversial, however. Miller and Hayes claim that Jehoash may have been an imposter brought in by Jehoiada in an attempt to bring legitimacy to the throne of Judah (Miller and Hayes, *History*, 349). Regardless, it is evident that Jehoiada knew two things must happen—eradicating the Omride descendants, and establishing a Davidic king. Neither could happen unless Athaliah was overthrown.

Temple Repairs

The second highlight of Jehoash's reign is the restoration of the temple. The writer of Kings says that “Jehoash did what was right in the eyes of the Lord all his days, because Jehoiada the priest instructed him” (2 Kgs 12:2, ESV). Conversely, the Chronicler writes, “And Joash did what was right in the eyes of the Lord all the days of Jehoiada the priest” (2 Chr 24:2, ESV). From these texts it is evident that Jehoiada played a significant role in the life of young Jehoash.

Because of Jehoiada's influence, Jehoash collected money for the temple and had it repaired from years of neglect during the reigns of Athaliah and Ahaziah (2 Kgs 12:4–16; 2 Chr 24:4–14). However, there are some noticeable differences in the narratives. Chronicles emphasizes that Jehoash took some of the money and made instruments for use in the temple (2 Chr 24:14), but Kings states that Jehoash gave temple objects as tribute to Hazael, the king of Aram (2 Kgs 12:17–18), thus saving Jerusalem from attack.

There are also wording differences between Kings and Chronicles in the summoning of Jehoiada. In 2 Kings 12:7, Jehoash the king summons "Jehoiada the priest." But in 2 Chronicles 24:6 the king summons "Jehoiada the *chief* priest." Kalimi notes that this is the Chronicler's way of creating balance in hierarchy. While Jehoash is the head of state, Jehoiada is the head of the priests (Kalimi, *Reshaping*, 182). This highlights the Chronicler's sensitivity to the status of both Jehoash and Jehoiada in comparison to one another. These differences are not to take away from the overall thrust of the narrative—temple worship is being restored under the reign of Jehoash with the help of Jehoiada.

End of Reign

Although Jehoash "did what was right in the eyes of the Lord" for a time, there were problems during his reign. It is evident that he did not tear down the places of idolatry throughout Judah (2 Kgs 12:3) and that his reign ended tragically after Jehoiada died (2 Chr 24:17–19).

The account of Jehoash in 2 Kings ends abruptly after he pays tribute to Hazael, king of Aram (2 Kgs 12:17–18). Yet the Chronicler continues the narrative to include the tragic ruin of Jehoash's reign. After Jehoiada died, Jehoash began listening to idolaters and turned away from Yahweh. God sent Zechariah, the son of Jehoiada, to pronounce His judgment upon Jehoash. Unwilling to repent, Jehoash commanded Zechariah to be killed by stoning in the courtyard of the temple.

Jehoash died in the aftermath of a Syrian military campaign that left him wounded (2 Chr 24:23–25). His servants, remembering his cruelty to Zechariah the priest, went into his bedroom and killed him on his bed (2 Chr 24:25), thus ending his reign. Although Jehoash began as the Davidic king and legitimate heir, he ended as a disgraced fool. Chronicles forms an *inclusio*. His story begins when his aunt spares him from Athaliah's wrath and hid hides in a bedroom (2 Chr 22:11). It ends with his closest officials murdering him on his bed (2 Chr 24:25).

Scripture returns to this scene in Luke 11:51, when Jesus proclaims judgment on the scribes and Pharisees.

Ancient Near Eastern References

The most recent controversy surrounding Jehoash does not necessarily deal with biblical sources or intent, but rather with an inscription on a tablet supposedly found in excavation debris from the Temple Mount and sold to an Israeli antiquities dealer. The inscription records collections of money and repairs made to the temple during Jehoash's reign (Shanks, "What about the Jehoash Inscription?" 38–39). While the inscription is highly controversial, it was a rather common practice for kings to unearth old building inscriptions and use them for their current building (Na'aman, "Royal Inscriptions").

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¹⁹ Thorpe, D. J. (2016). [Jehoash, King of Judah](#). In J. D. Barry, D. Bomar, D. R. Brown, R. Klippenstein, D. Mangum, C. Sinclair Wolcott, ... W. Widder (Eds.), *The Lexham Bible Dictionary*. Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press.

Rom 11:13-36

See above

Ps 22:1-18

KINGDOM DYNAMICS

22:1 Details of Messiah's Death, MESSIAH'S COMING. Within this psalm are many prophecies that were fulfilled in the death of Jesus; let us look at four. First, the ridicule of the people is predicted (vv. 7, 8). The same expressions of ridicule were actually spoken by the chief priests at the Cross (Matt. 27:36-44). Second, v. 16 specifically predicts that His hands and feet would be pierced. This was fulfilled at the death of Jesus (see John 20:25). Further, the casting of lots for Jesus' clothing (John 19:23, 24) was prophesied in v. 18. But perhaps the most significant statement in the entire psalm is v. 1, which Jesus quoted from the Cross (Matt. 27:46). In that word we see God Himself turning away from His beloved Son who is bearing the sin of the world. Jesus is bearing man's judgment, not only the judgment of death but also the judgment of separation from God. At that moment Jesus is experiencing the darkest moment of His life, and He bore it—for us.

22:1 This psalm is quoted frequently in the NT Gospels with reference to the crucifixion of Jesus. It parallels the Suffering Servant theme of Is. 53.

22:1 My God, My God: While on the Cross, the tortured Jesus cried out these words (Matt. 27:46; Mark 15:34). Hell is total separation from God as a punishment for unrepented sin, a state of being **forsaken**. Jesus went through this hell experience in our place for our sins, so we will not have to.

KINGDOM DYNAMICS

22:3 "Establishing" God's Throne, WORSHIP AND THE KINGDOM. The Psalms were the praise hymnal of the early church, and as such are laden with principles fully applicable for NT living today. Few principles are more essential to our understanding than this one: the presence of God's kingdom power is directly related to the practice of God's praise. The verb "enthroned" indicates that wherever God's people exalt His name, He is ready to manifest His kingdom's power in the way most appropriate to the situation, as His rule is invited to invade our setting.

It is this fact that properly leads many to conclude that in a very real way, praise prepares a specific and present place for God among His people. Some have chosen the term "establish His throne" to describe this "enthroning" of God in our midst by our worshiping and praising welcome. God awaits the prayerful and praise-filled worship of His people as an entry point for His kingdom to "come"—to enter, that His "will be done" in human circumstances. (See Luke 11:2-4 and Ps. 93:2.) We do not manipulate God, but align ourselves with the great kingdom truth: His is the power, ours is the privilege (and responsibility) to welcome Him into our world—our private, present world or the circumstances of our society.

KINGDOM DYNAMICS

22:3 Praise, the Pathway to God's Presence, PRAISE PATHWAY. Unquestionably, one of the most remarkable and exciting things about honest and sincere praise is taught here: Praise will bring the presence of God. Although God is everywhere present, there is a distinct manifestation of His rule, which enters the environment of praise. Here is the remedy for times when you feel alone, deserted, or depressed. Praise! However simply, compose your song and testimony of God's goodness in your life. The result: God enters! His presence will live (take up residence) in our lives. The word "inhabit" (Hebrew *yawshab*) means "to sit down, to remain, to settle, or marry." In other words, God does not merely visit us when we praise Him, but His presence abides with us and we partner with Him in a growing relationship. Let this truth create faith and trust, and lead to deliverance from satanic harassments, torment, or bondage. Notice how this text ties three words together: "praises," "trusted," and "delivered"!

22:3 Since God is **enthroned in the praises**, worship is the key to entering fully into His presence. The concept here is that praise releases God's glory, thus bringing to the worshipers actualized responses of His kingly reign. His enthroned responses through the Holy Spirit can take many forms, such as prophecy, healings, miracles, affirmation to individual hearts, a call to reverential silence and awe, conviction of sin, and salvation of sinners. This verse should be a guiding goal for all personal and corporate worship times.

22:8 The jeers of the mocking crowd at the Cross for God to **deliver** Jesus are found in Matt. 27:40-43.

22:12 Bashan is a grain-growing region east of the Sea of Galilee, ideal for raising cattle. **Bulls** with horns are fearsome when charging a victim, as are hungry **lions** tearing their prey.

22:16 Dogs refers generally to all types of evil men. The piercing was literally fulfilled when Jesus was crucified (John 20:25-27).

22:18 Clothing: This is quoted in all four Gospels concerning Christ's robe being gambled for by the soldiers who carried out the Crucifixion.²⁰

Pro 20:7

⁷ The righteous *man* walks in his integrity;
His children *are* blessed after him.²¹

July 29

2 Chron 24-25

H. The reign of Joash (23:16–24:27). Joash is snatched up and hidden from Athaliah in the Jerusalem temple until he reaches the age of seven. Then the high priest, Jehoiada, plans with the Levites and the military to restore this rightful descendant of David to the throne of Judah.

²⁰ Hayford, J. W. (Ed.). (1997). [Spirit filled life study Bible](#) (electronic ed., Ps 21:9–22:18). Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson.

²¹ [The New King James Version](#). (1982). (Pr 20:7). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

Athaliah hears them rejoicing and comes to investigate. There, just outside the temple, she is killed. Jehoiada leads in a service of covenant renewal, in which all the people again promise to be the Lord's. Immediately the crowds destroy the altars and worship centers of Baal, with great rejoicing.

During Jehoiada's life, Joash follows the Lord and restores the Jerusalem temple. But Jehoiada's death brings a change in Joash. He turns from God to worship idols.

God permits the Aramaeans under Hazael to overcome Judah's superior forces. Joash is wounded, and then is assassinated in bed by those who oppose the apostasy of their king.

I. The reign of Amaziah (25:1–28). Amaziah begins well (*see* Faith, Seed), but then turns to idolatry. His turn toward sin produces defeat for Judah. Judah is defeated by Israel, and the king taken captive. The treasures are taken from Jerusalem, and one wall of the city is torn down.²²

AMAZIAH, KING OF JUDAH (אִמְצִיָּהוּ, *amatsyah*), King of Judah. Son of Joash, king of Judah through Jehoaddin; his reign coincided with those of the Israelite kings Jehoash and Jeroboam II. Amaziah is one of the eight kings of Judah to receive a positive assessment.

Biblical Relevance

Amaziah reigned over Judah from 796–767 BC (Thiele, *Mysterious Numbers*, 217). He succeeded his father, Joash, and was succeeded by his son Azariah (Uzziah), who likely reigned as coregent with Amaziah from 792–767 BC. He was one of the eight good kings of Judah (along with Asa, Jehoshaphat, Joash, Azariah, Jotham, Hezekiah, and Josiah). However, he failed to destroy the pagan shrines in Judah. Second Chronicles 25:1–28 includes the story of Amaziah's idolatry and his refusal to listen to a prophet sent by God.

Amaziah in 2 Kings

Amaziah began his 29-year reign over Judah at the age of 25 following his father's assassination (2 Kgs 14:2; 2 Chr 25:1). Upon taking the throne, he avenged his father's death by executing the assassins; however, in accordance with the Deuteronomic law of retribution, he spared the assassins' children (Deut 24:16; *see* Cogan & Tadmor, *II Kings*, 158).

Second Kings records that Amaziah waged a successful war against Edom and then sent messengers to challenge Jehoash, king of Israel. Jehoash tried in vain to dissuade Amaziah. In the ensuing battle, Jehoash defeated the army of Judah, captured Amaziah, destroyed 600 feet of Jerusalem's wall, looted the temple and royal palace, and carried off hostages (2 Kgs 14:11–14). Archaeological excavations at Tel Beth-Shemesh support the historicity of this account (Hasegawa, *Aram and Israel*, 109). Apparently, Amaziah was later freed; he outlived Jehoash by 15 years and ultimately was assassinated at Lachish (2 Kgs 14:17–19). The identity of his assassins and their motive for killing him is unknown (Cogan & Tadmor, *II Kings*, 159).

Amaziah in 2 Chronicles

The account of Amaziah's reign in 2 Chr 25 follows the account of 2 Kgs 14, but with several significant additions (Graham, "Aspects," 79–80).

Preparations for Battle against Edom

The Chronicler's account of Amaziah's life begins positively. He conducted one of the four censuses taken during the period of the divided monarchy (2 Chr 25:5), each of which was taken by a Judaeen king who "did what was right in the eyes of Yahweh":

- Jehoshaphat (2 Chr 17:12–19);

²² Hayford, J. W., Thomas Nelson Publishers. (1995). [*Hayford's Bible handbook*](#). Nashville, TN; Atlanta, GA; London; Vancouver: Thomas Nelson Publishers.

- Joash (2 Kgs 12:1–21; 2 Chr 24:1–27);
- Amaziah (2 Chr 25:5–10);
- Azariah/Uzziah (2 Chr 26:11–13).

As a result of the census, Amaziah decided to hire an additional 100,000 fighting men from Israel to augment his own army of 300,000 troops in battle against Edom (2 Chr 25:6). A prophet of God confronts Amaziah and calls him to send these Israelite troops home (2 Chr 25:7–9). Amaziah obeys, and the remaining troops are victorious over Edom. However, the dismissed Israelite troops “became very angry” and expressed their wrath by plundering and killing in the villages they passed through on their way back to Israel (2 Chr 25:11–13).

Amaziah after Defeating Edom

The Chronicler’s depiction of Amaziah’s reign takes a decidedly negative turn following the victory against Edom. According to 2 Chronicles 25:14, Amaziah brought “brought the gods of the men of Seir and . . . worshiped them” (2 Chr 25:14 ESV). God sent a prophet to confront Amaziah for worshiping these pagan gods, but Amaziah refused to listen and threatened to kill the prophet. The prophet warned him that God would destroy him for his idolatry and refusal to listen (2 Chr 25:15–16).

According to 2 Chronicles 25:20, Amaziah’s later insistence on battle with Israel was part of God’s punishment of Amaziah for his idolatry (2 Chr 25:20; see Zvi, *History, Literature and Theology*, 65). The Chronicler’s account follows 2 Kings 14 in recording Amaziah’s defeat and capture by Jehoash. The Chronicler then records that Amaziah was assassinated in Lachish after he “turned away from the Lord” (2 Chr 25:27a). Despite the idolatry and ensuing punishment that characterized the latter half of Amaziah’s reign, the Chronicler nevertheless describes him as a king who “did what was right in the eyes of Yahweh” (2 Chr 26:4).

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JEFFERY J. GILBOY²³

Rom 12

A Living Sacrifice in Response to the Mercies of God (Rom 12:1–15:13)

Paul frequently concludes his letters with exhortations. Here, they are firmly anchored in the saving mercies of God that Paul has described in 1:1–11:32, concluding with outright praise in 11:33–36. In Romans 12:1–15:13 Paul describes the behavior that befits those who enjoy salvation in Christ.

Conduct within the Body of Christ toward Others (Rom 12:1–21). Paul begins by encouraging the Romans to present their bodies as a living sacrifice to God, their spiritual worship (12:1–2). Paul then turns to a different “body”—the “body of Christ” to which the Romans belong. Each member of the body enjoys gifts to be used for the benefit of the others (12:3–8). Such other-centered love is to be expressed even toward those hostile to the Christ-believer (12:9–21).²⁴

Ps 22:19-31

²³ Gilboy, J. J. (2016). [Amaziah, King of Judah](#). In J. D. Barry, D. Bomar, D. R. Brown, R. Klippenstein, D. Mangum, C. Sinclair Wolcott, ... W. Widder (Eds.), *The Lexham Bible Dictionary*. Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press.

²⁴ Das, A. A. (2016). [Romans, Letter to the](#). In J. D. Barry, D. Bomar, D. R. Brown, R. Klippenstein, D. Mangum, C. Sinclair Wolcott, ... W. Widder (Eds.), *The Lexham Bible Dictionary*. Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press.

22:18 Clothing: This is quoted in all four Gospels concerning Christ's robe being gambled for by the soldiers who carried out the Crucifixion.

22:21 You have answered Me: The resurrection of Jesus was an answer to His prayer and to the agonizing prayer of every sin-laden human soul.

22:22 The NT equivalent for the OT **assembly** is the "church," which Christ calls His "brethren" (Heb. 2:11, 12).

22:27 When one remembers, one brings to mind and then acts upon the thought.

22:29 This is reflected in Phil. 2:9-11, where it is said every knee **shall bow before** the Lord of all.²⁵

Pro 20:8-10

A king who sits on the throne of judgment
Scatters all evil with his eyes.

⁹ Who can say, "I have made my heart clean,
I am pure from my sin"?

¹⁰ Diverse weights *and* diverse measures,
They *are* both alike, an abomination to the LORD.²⁶

20:8 With his eyes: Clear perception of fact is the talent that defeats injustice in the courtroom.²⁷

July 30

2 Chron 26-28

J. The reign of Uzziah (26:1–23). Uzziah rules for some fifty-two years in Jerusalem. For the first twenty-four he is co-regent with his father, Amaziah. During this time Judah knows a great resurgence of prosperity. Uzziah reorganizes his army, extends his territory, and after the death of Jeroboam II, surpasses Israel in influence.

Uzziah is a godly king, but his successes bring character change. "When he was strong his heart was lifted up [in pride], to his destruction" (2 Chr. 26:16). The king is struck with leprosy and lives in isolation until his death.

UZZIAH, KING OF JUDAH (אֲזַרְיָהּ, *uzziyyah*). The 10th ruler of Judah. Also called Azariah.

Name

Scripture refers to the 10th king of Judah as both Uzziah (אֲזַרְיָהּ, *uzziyyah*, "Yahweh is my strength") and Azariah (אֲזַרְיָהּ, *azaryah*, "Yahweh has helped"). The two names are spelled similarly in Hebrew, suggesting the two forms are variant spellings. Alternatively, they may indicate the king's given and throne name. The book of Kings prefers the name Azariah, while Chronicles prefers Uzziah.

²⁵ Hayford, J. W. (Ed.). (1997). [Spirit filled life study Bible](#) (electronic ed., Ps 22:18–29). Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson.

²⁶ [The New King James Version](#). (1982). (Pr 20:8–10). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

²⁷ Hayford, J. W. (Ed.). (1997). [Spirit filled life study Bible](#) (electronic ed., Pr 20:8). Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson.

Date

Scripture records that Uzziah was made king at age 16 and reigned for 52 years (2 Kgs 15:2; 2 Chr 26:3). However, it is debated whether he reigned until his death or whether his son replaced him as king. Dates posited for his reign reflect this debate:

- Rogerson suggests 767–739 BC (Rogerson, *Chronicle*, 134)
- Hughes proposes 772–747 BC (Hughes, *Secrets of the Times*, 275)
- Hayes and Hooker argue 785–734 BC (Hayes and Hooker, *New Chronology*, 106–108)
- Galil suggests 788~7–736~5 BC (Galil, *Chronology*, 147)

Many scholars have tried to resolve chronological issues by suggesting coregency for Judah's rulers (Hayes and Hooker, *New Chronology*, 106–108). Yet other scholars have rejected this idea (Rogerson, *Chronicle*, 135, Hughes, *Secrets of the Times*, 111–112), and the biblical data is inconclusive. If Uzziah was stricken with a disease that made him ineligible for public duties, it is more likely that he would have had to stop acting as ruler.

Genealogy

Uzziah was the descendant of David and the son of Jecoliah and King Amaziah, who came from the inner circles of power at Jerusalem. He was married to Jerusha, daughter of Zadok, whose name suggests she came from a priestly family. Uzziah's son Jotham succeeded him.

Rise to Power and Rule

The book of Kings provides little detail about Uzziah's 52-year rule. According to Kings, Uzziah took the throne after his father, Amaziah, was killed while fleeing a coup that had arisen in Jerusalem, apparently in the wake of Amaziah's unsuccessful war against Israel. The Judeans enthroned Uzziah either because they expected that he would be a better ruler than Amaziah or believed they could control the young king. Because Uzziah came to the throne of a defeated Judah during the reign of the powerful and politically astute Jeroboam II of Israel, Na'aman suggests Jeroboam II may have served as his overlord (Na'aman, "Azariah," 229). Second Kings 14:22 credits him with restoring Elath to Judah, and 2 Kgs 15:3 states that he did "what was right in the eyes of the Lord, according to all that his father Amaziah had done" (ESV). However, as with all of Judah's rulers to the time of Josiah, Uzziah allowed many sacred places to continue local religious traditions. The author of Kings hints that this is the reason he had to step down from rule.

Chronicles offers a more detailed description of Uzziah's reign. According to the Chronicler, Uzziah began his reign as a good and pious king under the tutelage of Zechariah (2 Chr 26:5). Because of his loyalty to Yahweh, Uzziah was successful in war against the Philistines, extending his influence to Egypt itself (2 Chr 26:8). The Chronicler credits him with having military prowess, building fortifications in Jerusalem, and raising and equipping an enormous army (2 Chr 26:9–10, 11–15). His agricultural program expanded cattle production, vineyard cultivation, and crop raising throughout Judah (2 Chr 26:10–13).

Skin Disease

Kings records that at some point, Uzziah came down with a skin disease that barred him from reigning (2 Kgs 15:5). At that time, his son Jotham took over the actual rule of Judah and the government in Jerusalem. The Chronicler attributes Uzziah's downfall to his pride. According to the Chronicler, "When he [Uzziah] was strong, he grew proud, to his destruction" (2 Chr 26:16). Uzziah entered the temple of Yahweh to act as a priest in offering incense in direct opposition to the priest Azariah (the name of Uzziah as Azariah in Kings as a background for this passage is either intentional irony or a coincidence; Beentjes, "They Saw," 65; Klein, 2 *Chronicles*, 379) and the 80 priests with him (likely an exaggerated number; see Japhet, *I & II Chronicles*, 886). Although some scholars assume that the king of Judah was in fact a priest of Yahweh, the biblical text presents Uzziah's act as an abomination (de Vaux, *Ancient Israel*, 113, 127–28; Grabbe, *Priests*, 28–29, 39–40). In

response to his actions, Yahweh struck him with a skin disease that deformed his face even as he stood holding the censer (which recalls the Dathan and Abiram incident of Num 16:1–40).

Later Years, Death, and Burial

Uzziah's exact status from this time until his death is unclear. He did not live in the palace where Jotham governed, indicating he was not a ruling monarch. Uzziah may have ceased to be the designated ruler; alternatively, Jotham may have served as acting but not crowned king. Most likely, Jotham took over the throne in all aspects and Uzziah became a living, former king.

Kings records Uzziah as having been given a royal burial in Jerusalem. Chronicles only allows the burial to have taken place in a field belonging to the kings of Judah, for he was diseased and not fit for presence among the ritually pure (2 Chr 16:11, Japhet, *I & II Chronicles* 887, Klein, *2 Chronicles*, 369). Matthew 1:8–9 includes Uzziah in Jesus' genealogy, though Luke 3:23–38 does not.

Extrabiblical References

Josephus repeats the Chronicler's narrative regarding Uzziah with several expansions (Begg, "Uzziah," 12–14, 17, 21). He particularly emphasizes Uzziah's military and agricultural endeavors. Josephus also expands on the account of Uzziah's disease, stating that Uzziah threatened the priest Azariah with death if he didn't acquiesce to Uzziah's demands. Josephus records Uzziah as being 68 at the time of his death, accepting that Uzziah's reign lasted to his death.

Bright and Wright assert that an inscription by the Assyrian king Tiglath-Pileser III mentions Azariah (Bright, *History*, 270; Wright, *Biblical Archaeology*, 162). However, the original publication of this inscription had reconstructed the name in a broken section of the text. Aside from this possible mention, there are references to Uzziah outside the Bible in texts dependent on the biblical narratives (Dalley, "Yahweh," 23–25).

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LOWELL K. HANDY²⁸

K. The reign of Jotham (27:1–9). Jotham is one of Judah's good kings. During his reign, religious reforms continued as well as building programs and military victories. Second Chronicles 27:6 says that Jotham "became mighty, because he prepared his ways before the Lord his God."

JOTHAM, KING OF JUDAH (יֹחָזָבָב, *yotham*, Ἰωθαμ, *Iōatham*). Son of Uzziah and Jerusha, daughter of Zadok; reigned in the mid-eighth century BC as Judah's 11th ruler. The name "Jotham" means "the Lord is perfect."

Biblical Relevance

Prior to his official reign, Jotham ruled over Judah when his father, King Uzziah (also called Azariah), contracted a skin disease (2 Kgs 15:5). After the illness forced Uzziah to live in separate quarters, Jotham became king at the age of 25 (Donner, "Separate States," 395). Uzziah had reigned for 52 years and left a

²⁸ Handy, L. K. (2016). [Uzziah, King of Judah](#). In J. D. Barry, D. Bomar, D. R. Brown, R. Klippenstein, D. Mangum, C. Sinclair Wolcott, ... W. Widder (Eds.), *The Lexham Bible Dictionary*. Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press.

mostly positive legacy, but he also allowed the high places of pagan worship to remain. Jotham ruled for 16 years (2 Kgs 15:33; 2 Chr 27:1).

The Chronicler appears to adopt the framework of the 2 Kings account of Jotham, but he adds material in 2 Chr 27:3b–6 about Jotham’s building projects and victories over the Ammonites (Japhet, *I and II Chronicles*, 889). According to Klein, a record of building projects often indicate the Chronicler’s approval of a king (Klein, *2 Chronicles*, 386).

Both accounts recognize Jotham’s rule as being righteous, but 2 Chronicles notes that he did not succumb to his father’s folly: He never entered the temple (2 Kgs 15:34; 2 Chr 26:16–18; 27:2). Myers states that this “may actually be an expression of approval on the part of the Chronicler indicating that Jotham observed his status as a layman and did not violate the sacred precincts as his father had done” (Myers, *II Chronicles*, 156). Second Kings notes that the high places remained during Jotham’s reign, and 2 Chronicles records that the people of Judah continued their corrupt ways (2 Kgs 15:35; 2 Chr 27:2). However, neither text seems to hold Jotham responsible for the people’s persistent sin (Myers, *II Chronicles*, 156). The Chronicler states that “Jotham became strong because he ordered his ways before the Lord his God” (2 Chr 27:6 NRSV).

Unlike his father, who was buried in a field due to his skin disease, Jotham is buried in the city of David (2 Kgs 15:38; 2 Chr 26:23; 27:9).

Chronological Conflict

Several chronological details regarding Jotham’s reign appear to conflict. Although 2 Kgs 15:33, 2 Chr 27:1, and 2 Chr 27:8 all state that Jotham ruled for 16 years (an apparent point of emphasis for the Chronicler, given its repetition), 2 Kgs 15:30 reports that Pekah, King of Israel, was assassinated “in the *twentieth* year of Jotham the son of Uzziah” (italics added). One explanation for the discrepancy is that the reference to Jotham’s 20th year is counting his tenure as coregent due to Uzziah’s skin disease (2 Kgs 15:5; Thiele, *Mysterious Numbers*, 55; Albright, “Chronology”). Another possibility is that Jotham was still alive for four years or more after his son Ahaz came to the throne (in contradiction to 2 Kgs 15:38, 2 Chr 27:9; Thiele, *Mysterious Numbers*, 64).

Archaeological Evidence

Excavations at Tel El-Kheleifeh in 1938–40, headed by Nelson Glueck, led to the discovery of a copper-smelting refinery. The site is believed to be Ezion-geber, a seaport from Solomon’s era that the kings of Judah possibly used at various times—particularly during the reign of Uzziah. Further excavation in a room that dates back to the eighth century BC unearthed a signet ring enclosed in a copper casing and bearing the inscription *LYTM*, “belonging to Jotham.” Glueck, Albright, and Myers accept the ring’s association with Jotham, king of Judah (Glueck, “Third Season,” 15; Albright, “Chronology”; Myers, *II Chronicles*, 151).

The ring also bears two images: a ram and what seems to be a headless person extending his arms upward (Glueck, “Third Season,” 13). The ram (Hebrew: *ayil*) could allude to the city, Eilat, where the refinery was located; parallels for the headless man have been discovered in the tomb of Khnum-hotep III, which has images depicting Asiatics arriving in Egypt with portable bellows used for making copper. Thus, the signet ring might depict the location as well as its chief industry (Avigad, “Jotham Seal,” 20).

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²⁹ Crutchfield, J. A. (2016). [Jotham, King of Judah](#). In J. D. Barry, D. Bomar, D. R. Brown, R. Klippenstein, D. Mangum, C. Sinclair Wolcott, ... W. Widder (Eds.), *The Lexham Bible Dictionary*. Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press.

L. The reign of Ahaz (28:1–27). Ahaz turns his back on the Lord upon the death of his father. He follows the most detestable of the pagan religious practices. God acts in quick judgment. Judah is defeated on every side, and many of her people are taken captive. Ahaz is desperate and appeals to Assyria, thus surrendering any claim to independence, and Judah becomes a vassal state.³⁰

AHAZ, KING OF JUDAH (אָחָז, 'chz; shortened form of אֲחָזְיָהוּ, yhw'chz, meaning “he [Yahweh] has held, grasped”). The 12th king of Judah. Placed his trust in Assyria when faced with military threat. His actions led to divine judgment upon Judah.

Date: Chronology of Reign

According to 2 Kgs 16:1, Ahaz came to the throne at age 20 and ruled Judah for 16 years. He was probably co-regent with his father, Jotham, for four years before his solo reign began. Ahaz shared the throne with his son, Hezekiah, from 728/7–715 BC (Walton, *ZIBBC*, 353). The dates of his reign are circa 735–715 BC (House, *1–2 Kings*, 39–44).

The correlation of Assyrian and Mesopotamian records fixes the date Ahaz paid tribute to Tiglath-Pileser III as 733/32 BC (see Thiele, *Mysterious Numbers*). The prophetic ministries of Hosea, Micah, and Isaiah took place partly during his rule.

Biblical References

The historical books and Isaiah portray Ahaz as an evil, wicked, idolatrous ruler. His sins and failure to heed God’s warnings led to divine judgment upon Judah in the form of invasion by a Syro-Israelite coalition and subjugation to Assyria.

Kings and Chronicles (2 Kgs 15:38–16:20; 17:1; 2 Chr 27:9–28:27; 29:19)

When Ahaz ascended the throne, the nation of Judah was threatened by various military-political powers. These threats came from the resurgence of the Neo-Assyrian Empire (745–612 BC) in Mesopotamia and the diplomatic-military posturing of the countries surrounding Ahaz’s kingdom. After a lull in aggressive military expansion, Assyria, under Tiglath-Pileser III (named Pul in 2 Kgs 15:19), focused on asserting control over the lucrative trade routes that ran past Syria.

Tiglath-Pileser III had received tribute from king Rezin of Syria and king Menahem of Israel in 738–37 BC (*ANET*, 283; *COS*, 2:117A, 285). Rezin and Pekah—the new king of Israel—formed a coalition of nations in the area with the goal to challenge Assyrian hegemony. As punishment for Jotham’s refusal to join their anti-Assyrian coalition, Rezin and Pekah planned military incursions into Judah (2 Kgs 15:37).

While Ahaz was co-regent, Rezin and Pekah pressured him to join their coalition with the threat of military occupation. Isaiah notes that the coalition planned to replace Ahaz with an unknown ruler called the “son of Tabeel” who was loyal to the anti-Assyrian coalition (Isa 7:6b). This Syro-Ephraimite Crisis and Ahaz’s response became the defining event of his reign.

The crisis escalated into a war (735–734 BC) and the Syro-Israelite coalition devastated the nation of Judah. The coalition inflicted heavy losses, and Israel took many Judaeans captives. The Philistines to the West and the Edomites to the South also took advantage of their weakened Judaeans neighbor (2 Chr 28:5–8). In the midst of this catastrophic invasion, the chronicler records the gracious intervention of God through the prophet Oded. Oded persuaded Israel to release their Judaeans captives by reminding them of their kinship with Judah. He also warned them of God’s wrath if they failed to do so (2 Chr 28:9–15).

³⁰ Hayford, J. W., Thomas Nelson Publishers. (1995). [*Hayford’s Bible handbook*](#). Nashville, TN; Atlanta, GA; London; Vancouver: Thomas Nelson Publishers.

Earlier, Isaiah had advised Ahaz to trust in the Lord's promise to deliver Judah (Isa 7:1–12) rather than joining the coalition or becoming an Assyrian vassal state. Ahaz did not realize that Assyria would have to deal with these nations on its own, and relief could come without the immediate necessity of a tribute payment (Sweeney, *1 and 2 Kings*, 380). Isaiah offered Ahaz the choice of any sign he desired to verify the divine promise, but Ahaz refused and appealed to Assyria for help.

Tiglath-Pileser III marched swiftly to quell the Syro-Israelite coalition. He invaded Syria, captured Damascus, and executed King Rezin (732 BC; 2 Kgs 16:9). In order to pay tribute to Assyria, Ahaz plundered the temple, his palace, and his nobles' treasures. It still was not enough (2 Kgs 16:8; 2 Chr 28:21).

In spite of divine intervention through Oded and the guidance offered by Isaiah, Ahaz turned to the Syrian gods for deliverance. He may have reasoned that the Syrian deities had shown their superiority in their victory over Israel (2 Chr 28:23). After traveling to Damascus to affirm his loyalty to Tiglath-Pileser III, Ahaz replaced Solomon's bronze altar in Jerusalem with a replica of the Damascene one. The people were to use this altar, while he reserved the bronze altar for his own private use. Ahaz then began to practice "extispicy," the reading of animal entrails (Walton, *ZIBBC*, 175–76). Ahaz may have been forced to adopt the Damascene altar to show loyalty (see Heger, *Three Biblical Altar Laws*, 260). Ahaz shut down the worship of Yahweh in the Jerusalem temple entirely and created altars to pagan gods throughout Jerusalem and Judah, "provoking the God of his ancestors" (2 Chr 28:26). Second Chronicles notes that Ahaz was buried in Jerusalem, but not in the tombs of the kings (2 Chr 28:27). His son, Hezekiah, attempted to reverse Ahaz's political and religious policies.

Isaiah and Other Prophets

The book of Isaiah contrasts the evil reign of Ahaz and the righteous rule of Hezekiah. Isaiah's condemnation of Judah's sins reflects the moral state of Judah's leaders and people during Ahaz's reign. Isaiah equates the rulers of Jerusalem to "rulers of Sodom" (Isa 1:10). The leaders neglect the defense of the widows and orphans, lead the people astray, worship idols, and depend on alliances and military might instead of God (Isa 1:23; 2:6–8; 3:12).

Isaiah 7 describes the prophet's attempt to persuade Ahaz to trust in the Lord during the Syro-Ephraimite War. When Ahaz refused Isaiah's offer to bring about any sign to assure him of God's protection, God offered His own sign instead. Isaiah reminded the king of God's covenant (2 Sam 7:12–16) with David, which ensured that He would protect and defend the reigns of David's faithful royal descendants (Beyer, *Encountering the Book of Isaiah*, 73). He stated that the king would see a child called Immanuel, meaning "God with us," born to a young "virgin" who would not reach the age of knowing right from wrong before this dangerous coalition would cease to be a threat (Isa 7:16). God also informed Ahaz that the Assyrians would become Judah's greatest menace (Isa 7:17–25).

Micah indirectly references Ahaz's wickedness several times in his prophecy. In his lament over the coming fall of the northern kingdom of Israel in Mic 1:9, he notes that Samaria's idolatry has infected the leadership of "my people in Jerusalem." In his lawsuit against Judah, Micah accuses the people and leadership of implementing the regulations of Omri and the wicked practices of Ahab. The prophet said this would lead to the judgment of Judah (Mic 6:16; Allen, *Joel, Obadiah, Jonah and Micah*, 250; Barker, *Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk and Zephaniah*, 21–25, 54–56, 119–20; Smith, *Micah—Malachi*, 52–53). Ahab's practices included child sacrifice (1 Kgs 16:34) and widespread Baalism (1 Kgs 18). Since Micah prophesies during the reigns of Jotham and Hezekiah and Samaria's judgment has not yet come, he is likely condemning Ahaz.

Other biblical references to Ahaz describe how the effects of his rule were reversed during the reigns of Hezekiah and Josiah. God's healing of Hezekiah took place on Ahaz's stairs, where the shadow retreated 10 steps (2 Kgs 20:11). Hezekiah restored the temple worship his father had forbidden and purified the temple instruments Ahaz had removed (2 Chr 29:19).

In 2 Kings 23:10–12, Josiah destroyed the place of child sacrifice—Topheth in the Valley of Hinnom—where Ahaz and Manasseh had passed their sons through the fire. Josiah also eliminated the pagan altars constructed on the roof of Ahaz's upper room.

New Testament

Ahaz is listed in the genealogy of Jesus Christ in Matt 1:9 as the son of Jotham and father of Hezekiah.

Extrabiblical Inscriptions

The first seal impression of a Hebrew king ever discovered reads “belonging to Ahaz (son of) Yotam, king of Judah.” The king’s name occurred on a clay “bullae,” which was used to seal and validate documents on papyri (Torrey, “Hebrew Seal,” 27; also Avigad below). Ahaz is also noted on a building inscription detailing Tiglath-Pileser III’s actions during military campaigns in Syria and Palestine. He is listed among a group who paid tribute to the Assyrian king, and is called by his longer name (*Ia-u-ha-zi*) or Jehoahaz (*ANET*, 282–84).

Theological Evaluation in the Canon

Kings and Chronicles evaluated the kings of Judah by two standards:

1. Their keeping of the covenant with Yahweh and encouragement of the people to foster the covenant established in the law of Moses (1 Kgs 2:3; 2 Kgs 17:15–16).
2. Their keeping of the Davidic covenant in 2 Sam 7 (1 Kgs 2:4; 2 Kgs 16:2; 2 Chr 34:2).

Since Ahaz had led Judah into idolatry, failed to uphold social justice, and entered into godless political alliances, he failed according to these standards.

Ahaz’s reign is set within the portion of 2 Kings that ends with the fall of the northern kingdom of Israel (2 Kgs 17). Ahaz is the first of Judah’s kings to rule over the sole remaining kingdom occupied by the Davidic descendants. However, Ahaz committed the same sins which caused the exile of the northern kingdom. Just as Israel had, Ahaz drove God out from before his people (2 Kgs 16:3b; 17:8) and sacrificed on the high places (2 Kgs 16:4; 17:9b, 10)—Ahaz even sacrificed his own son. This was a condemned practice (Lev 18:21; Deut 18:10).

The narrator predicts that the future rulers of Judah will not fare any better than Ahaz (2 Kgs 17:19). The warning of coming judgment, however, is tempered by the reign of Hezekiah, whose faithfulness to Yahweh and the Davidic covenant results in God’s protection and deliverance from the continuing Assyrian threat (2 Kgs 18–20).

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Rom 13

Conduct toward the Governing Authorities (Rom 13:1–14). Paul addresses proper behavior toward the governing authorities as instituted by God (13:1–7). Christians are to pay their taxes and to give honor to the

³¹ Pettus, D. D. (2016). [Ahaz, King of Judah](#). In J. D. Barry, D. Bomar, D. R. Brown, R. Klippenstein, D. Mangum, C. Sinclair Wolcott, ... W. Widder (Eds.), *The Lexham Bible Dictionary*. Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press.

authorities, even as they are to love one another, which is the essence of the Ten Commandments and the law (13:7–10). Since the end is near, the Romans should live accordingly, leaving behind the works of darkness and the flesh (13:11–14).³²

Ps 23

23:1 Jesus is the good **shepherd** who went one step beyond David’s list of provisions—He gave His life for the sheep (John 10:11).

23:3 Daily restoration of the anxious, weary **soul** is a major human need (2 Cor. 4:16).

He restores my soul:

Restore: **7725 שׁוּב** [*shuwb* /shoob/] v. A primitive root; TWOT 2340; GK 8740; 1066 occurrences; AV translates as “return” 391 times, “... again” 248 times, “turn” 123 times, “... back” 65 times, “... away” 56 times, “restore” 39 times, “bring” 34 times, “render” 19 times, “answer” 18 times, “recompense” eight times, “recover” six times, “deliver” five times, “put” five times, “withdraw” five times, “requite” four times, and translated miscellaneous 40 times. **1** to return, turn back. **1A** (Qal). **1A1** to turn back, return. **1A1A** to turn back. **1A1B** to return, come or go back. **1A1C** to return unto, go back, come back. **1A1D** of dying. **1A1E** of human relations (fig). **1A1F** of spiritual relations (fig). **1A1F1** to turn back (from God), apostatise. **1A1F2** to turn away (of God). **1A1F3** to turn back (to God), repent. **1A1F4** turn back (from evil). **1A1G** of inanimate things. **1A1H** in repetition. **1B** (Polel). **1B1** to bring back. **1B2** to restore, refresh, repair (fig). **1B3** to lead away (enticingly). **1B4** to show turning, apostatise. **1C** (Pual) restored (participle). **1D** (Hiphil) to cause to return, bring back. **1D1** to bring back, allow to return, put back, draw back, give back, restore, relinquish, give in payment. **1D2** to bring back, refresh, restore. **1D3** to bring back, report to, answer. **1D4** to bring back, make requital, pay (as recompense). **1D5** to turn back or backward, repel, defeat, repulse, hinder, reject, refuse. **1D6** to turn away (face), turn toward. **1D7** to turn against. **1D8** to bring back to mind. **1D9** to show a turning away. **1D10** to reverse, revoke. **1E** (Hophal) to be returned, be restored, be brought back. **1F** (Pulal) brought back.³³

WORD WEALTH

23:4 comfort, *nacham* (nah-chahm); Strong’s #5162: To comfort, console, extend compassion, sigh with one who is grieving; to repent. *Nacham* originally may have meant “to breathe intensely because of deep emotion.” In some references, the word is translated “repent,” the idea being that regret causes deep sighing. In its sense of comfort, *nacham* does not describe casual sympathy, but rather deep empathy. It is like “weeping with those who weep,” or actually “sighing with those who sigh.” From *nacham* are derived the names “Nahum” (“Comforting”) and Nehemiah (“Comfort of Yahweh”).

23:4 The key to provision is the presence of God (Josh. 1:5-9). This awesome thought causes the psalmist to change from mere statements (He . . .) to spontaneous heavenward praise (**You are with me**).

23:5 Of the two kinds of **oil**, the priestly anointing oil and the Oriental perfumed oil, this is the latter. This act shows favor and excellent hospitality.

³² Das, A. A. (2016). [Romans, Letter to the](#). In J. D. Barry, D. Bomar, D. R. Brown, R. Klippenstein, D. Mangum, C. Sinclair Wolcott, ... W. Widder (Eds.), *The Lexham Bible Dictionary*. Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press.

³³ Strong, J. (1995). [Enhanced Strong's Lexicon](#). Woodside Bible Fellowship.

23:6 Mercy (Hebrew *chesed*) is the unfailing, steadfast covenant love of God. This lovingkindness is similar to the NT word “grace” (John 1:16, 17).³⁴

SHEPHERD—a person who takes care of sheep. Figuratively, the Old Testament pictures God as Israel’s Shepherd-Leader (Ps. 80:1; Ezek. 34:14). The New Testament reveals Jesus as the Good Shepherd who gave His life for His sheep. When He said, “I am the good shepherd” (John 10:11), Jesus linked His own divine nature with one of the most ordinary occupations in Israel. New Testament pastors are called shepherds (Greek, *polmenas*), accountable for their flocks (Heb. 13:17) to Jesus the Chief Shepherd (1 Pet. 5:1-4).

Abel is the first shepherd mentioned in the Bible (Gen. 4:2). Kings who led Israel (Jer. 6:3; 49:19) and certain ministers (Jer. 23:4) also are called shepherds. The sons of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob herded sheep (Gen. 13:7; 26:20; 30:36). Rachel was a shepherdess (Gen. 29:3). David (2 Sam. 5:2; Ps. 78:70-72), Moses (Ex. 3:1), and Amos (Amos 1:1) found herding to be excellent preparation for future leadership roles.

Jesus’ life exemplifies these leadership traits. Jesus knows each of His sheep intimately (John 10:3-5). Sometimes several shepherds will pen their sheep together in a cave or a sheepfold at night. The next morning each shepherd calls to his own sheep with his own unique guttural cry. Each sheep knows his shepherd’s voice and responds immediately. Even in a large flock, one individual sheep will run to his shepherd when his own pet name is called (John 10:27).

Sheep are curious but dumb animals, often unable to find their way home even if the sheepfold is within sight. Knowing this fault, the shepherd never takes his eyes off his wandering sheep (Ps. 32:8). Often a sheep will wander into a briar patch or fall over a cliff in the rugged Palestinian hills. The shepherd tenderly searches for his sheep and carries it to safety on his shoulder, wrapped in his own long cloak (Luke 15:6).

In water-hungry Syria and Palestine, shepherds have always had to search diligently for water, sometimes for hours every day. Sheep must be watered daily. The shepherd might find a bubbling stream for the sheep that are always on the move and needing fresh pastures every day (Ps. 23:2). An old well with a quiet pool or trough close by might provide the water (Gen. 29:7, 30:38; Ex. 2:16). Often the shepherd carries a small pail with him, patiently filling it many times for the thirsty sheep who cannot reach the available water.

A trusted shepherd also provides loving protection for his flock. Shepherds on the Bethlehem hillsides still use a sling, made of goat’s hair or leather and immortalized by David against Goliath (1 Sam. 17:49). At times the shepherd will throw his rod at a stubborn, straying sheep that refuses to hear his voice. At other times he gently nudges the stray with the end of his six-foot staff, crooked at one end to fit his strong hand. Both the rod and the staff work together to protect the sheep (Ps. 23:4).

The presence of the shepherd also offers comfort to the flock. David recognized this in Psalm 23. Sheep are content merely to be in the same field with their shepherd; Christians are comforted by the very presence of the Lord. This thought is especially comforting when darkness overshadows the believer. Jesus is our Door (John 10:1-30). Nothing can touch our lives without touching Him first. This is a perfect picture of the shepherd. He literally becomes the living door of the sheepfold. He curls up in the door or in the entrance of a cave. He puts his body between the sleeping sheep and ravenous animals or thieves.

One day Jesus the Chief Shepherd will return, gather His whole flock into one fold, and divide the sheep from the goats (Matt. 25:31-33). Until that time, Jesus continues His search for every lost sheep (Matt. 18:12-14). His sheep are to yield themselves to Him for His useful service until, at last, they “will dwell in the house of the Lord forever” (Ps. 23:6).

SHEPHERD. (John 10:2) *poimen* (poy-mane); *Strong’s #4166*: A herdsman, sheepherder; one who tends, leads, guides, cherishes, feeds, and protects a flock. The New Testament uses the word for a Christian pastor to

³⁴ Hayford, J. W. (Ed.). (1997). [*Spirit filled life study Bible*](#) (electronic ed., Ps 23:1–6). Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson.

whose care and leadership others will commit themselves (Eph. 4:11). The term is applied metaphorically to Christ (John 10:11, 14, 16; Heb. 13:20; 1 Pet. 2:³⁵

Pro 20:11

¹¹ Even a child is known by his deeds,
Whether what he does *is* pure and right.³⁶

July 31

2Chron 29

M. The reign of Hezekiah (29:1–32:33). Details are given of Hezekiah's steps toward religious revival. He gathers the Levites and reassigns them to the duties first planned by David (29:25). They cleanse and purify the temple, and once again make offerings there. Hezekiah sends couriers to all Judah and Israel, inviting them to come and keep the Passover.

HEZEKIAH, KING OF JUDAH Hezekiah, King of Judah. The 13th king of Judah. The name Hezekiah (חִזְקִיָּיָהוּ, *chizqiyyah*) derives from the combination of the verbal root “to strengthen” (חָזַק, *chazaq*) and the shortened form (יָהּ, *yah*) of the divine name Yahweh (יְהוָה, *yhwh*), meaning “the Lord strengthens.” King of the southern kingdom of Judah for 29 years (727–699 BC) during which time the northern kingdom of Israel fell to the Assyrians, and Judah itself was invaded by the Assyrians. Remembered for his religious reforms (2 Kgs 18:4; 2 Chr 29:3–36), for breaking allegiance with Assyria in favor of an alliance with Egypt (2 Kgs 18:13–16; Isa 30; 31; 36:6–9), and for his illness and miraculous recovery (2 Kgs 20; 2 Chr 32; Isa 38).

Overview of the Biblical Account

There are three accounts of Hezekiah's reign in the Bible: 2 Kgs 18–20; 2 Chr 29–32; and Isa 36–39.

Hezekiah in Kings and Isaiah

The accounts in Kings and Isaiah of Hezekiah's reign focus on the Assyrian threat against Judah. Sennacherib's army takes some of Judah's fortified cities. Hezekiah, looking to avoid further damage, sends Sennacherib gold and silver as tribute (2 Kgs 18:13–16). However, Assyria continues its campaign and besieges Jerusalem. Scholars debate whether Assyria attacked once or twice. The Assyrian commander Rabshakeh taunts Hezekiah, saying that he cannot rely on help from Egypt or God (2 Kgs 18:19–25). Rabshakeh addresses the people of Jerusalem directly in an attempt to frighten them, mocking God by saying that just as the gods of other nations did not deliver them, Israel's God will not deliver Jerusalem (2 Kgs 18:28–35).

Hezekiah reacts to this threat by mourning and seeking God through the prophet Isaiah (2 Kgs 19:1–2). Isaiah responds that God will make Sennacherib return home and die there. Eventually, the angel of Yahweh comes and kills 185,000 people in the Assyrian camp (2 Kgs 19:35). Sennacherib returns home and is assassinated (2 Kgs 19:37).

During the Assyrian threat, Hezekiah became terminally ill. He again sought God and was given 15 more years (2 Kgs 20:1–7). God's promise to extend Hezekiah's life was accompanied with the sign of the sun going

³⁵ Hayford, J. W., Thomas Nelson Publishers. (1995). [Hayford's Bible handbook](#). Nashville, TN; Atlanta, GA; London; Vancouver: Thomas Nelson Publishers.

³⁶ [The New King James Version](#). (1982). (Pr 20:11). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

back “ten steps” (2 Kgs 20:8–11) (ESV). After Hezekiah’s illness, he was visited by envoys from Babylon. Hezekiah shows them all of Jerusalem’s treasures. Isaiah rebukes him for this and prophesies the Babylonian exile (2 Kgs 20:14–19).

Hezekiah in Chronicles

The account in Chronicles gives more attention to Hezekiah’s religious reforms, devoting three chapters to them. The chronicler spends only one chapter reporting the Assyrian conflict and Hezekiah’s illness. Rather, the author is more concerned with proper temple worship throughout 1 and 2 Chronicles, and so emphasizes Hezekiah’s reforms. Hezekiah instructs the Levites to cleanse the temple (2 Chr 29:3–19) and gathers Jerusalem’s leaders to restore proper worship (2 Chr 29:20–36).

The chronicler also portrays Hezekiah as an agent of restoration and redemption for remaining members of the exiled northern tribes. Hezekiah sends letters to the northern tribes inviting them to Jerusalem to celebrate Passover (2 Chr 30:1–12). People respond and celebrate in unity and joy (2 Chr 30:25–27).

Extrabiblical References

Sennacherib makes reference to his campaign against Hezekiah in his royal annals. He refers to his campaign throughout Judah as well as his siege of Jerusalem. Sennacherib does not refer to his defeat, however. He writes:

“As to Hezekiah, the Jew, he did not submit to my yoke, I laid siege to 46 of his strong cities, walled forts and to the countless small villages in their vicinity, and conquered [them] by means of well-stamped [earth-] ramps, and battering-rams brought [thus] near [to the walls] [combined with] the attack by foot soldiers, [using] mines, breeches as well as sapper work. I drove out [of them] 200,150 people, young and old, male and female, horses, mules, donkeys, camels, big and small cattle beyond counting, and considered [them] booty. Himself I made a prisoner in Jerusalem, his royal residence, like a bird in a cage” (*ANET*, 288).

The writings of Nabonidus, a Babylonian king, confirm the biblical description of Sennacherib’s death. Nabonidus describes Sennacherib’s son as his own father’s assassin (*ANET*, 309).

The Siloam Inscription, discovered in 1838, records the construction of a particular tunnel associated with other tunnels built by Hezekiah (2 Kgs 20:20; 2 Chr 32:30). It is written in paleo-Hebrew script and most likely dates to the 8th century BC..

Dating Hezekiah’s Reign

Recent archaeological and extrabiblical discoveries raised questions regarding several previously agreed-upon aspects of Hezekiah’s reign, primarily the date. The matter is further complicated by the difficulties in alignment of biblical kingships with other historical events as well as the possibility of coregencies.

There are two predominant methods for dating Hezekiah’s reign.

Conquest of Samaria

The first dating method uses the correlation that 2 Kgs 18:9–10 establishes between the fourth—sixth years of Hezekiah’s reign and the beginning and end of Shalmaneser’s conquest of Samaria. Exact dating depends on archaeological evidence found in Israeli and Assyrian records, with three possibilities.

Dates of Conquest. Scholars have proposed various dates for Samaria’s fall:

- 723 BC (Olmstead, *History of Assyria*, 205; Thiele, *Mysterious Numbers*, 163–72; Becking, *The Fall of Samaria*, 53–56)
- Late 722/early 721 BC (Cogan and Tadmor, 2 Kings/, 195–201; Hayes and Kuan, “The Final Years,” 153–81; Hays and Hooker, *A New Chronology*, 59–70; Barnes, *Studies in the Chronology*, 151–58; Younger, “The Fall of Samaria,” 461–82)
- 720 BC (Laato, “New Viewpoints,” 216–19; Na’aman, “Conquest of Samaria,” 206–25; Galil, “The Last Years,” 52–65; Young, *Hezekiah in History*, 12–18)
- 719 BC (Tetley, *Reconstructed Chronology*, 153–57).

The historical evidence is complicated by many conflicting accounts of the fall of Samaria. Both Shalmaneser V and Sargon II claim to have conquered Samaria (for more on Sargon II, see Young, *Hezekiah in History*, 15–16 n.19). Sargon II's ascension to the throne after the death of Shalmaneser V took place close to the fall of Samaria. This has led some to reconcile the conflicting claims in multiple ways, including:

- Sargon II concluded the siege initiated by Shalmaneser V (Na'aman, "Conquest of Samaria, 206–25).
- The untimely death of Shalmaneser V allowed Sargon II to claim credit for his victory (Olmstead, *Days of Sargon*, 45–47; Reade, "Sargon's Campaigns," 95–104).
- There were two conquests of the city, one by each king (Tadmor, "The Campaigns of Sargon II of Assur," 22–40; Becking, *The Fall of Samaria*).
- There were four conquests of Samaria between 727–719 BC, only the last of which was conducted by Sargon II (Hayes and Kuan, "The Final Years," 153–81; Kuan, *Neo-Assyrian Historical Inscriptions*, 193–207).

Extrabiblical Inscriptions. No extrabiblical inscriptions mention that Samaria was destroyed, indicating it may have survived military defeat, possibly implying multiple campaigns against the city. In addition, the fall, deportation, and repopulation of Samaria that 2 Kgs 17:1–6 describes could have taken place over several years (Younger, "The Fall of Samaria," 479). Shalmaneser died in 722 BC, leaving his son Sargon to claim the throne. Second Kings 18:9 indicates that it was Shalmaneser who conquered Samaria. At the beginning of Sargon's reign, various vassal states rebelled, and he took military action to solidify his power. He spent two years reclaiming power over Babylon in the east before turning his attention west to Samaria. Thus, it is quite possible that Shalmaneser conquered Samaria in 722 BC before his death. His son would then have retaken the city in 720 BC during his consolidation of power. The biblical text, however, clearly dates Hezekiah's reign relative to Shalmaneser's campaign and not Sargon's. Therefore, the fall of Samaria in the Kings account could date to 722 BC, in which case Hezekiah's reign began in 727 BC and ended in 699 BC (for more on the historical evidence supporting this conclusion, see Younger, "The Fall of Samaria," 461–82).

Implications for Dating Hezekiah's Reign

- If Samaria fell in 722 BC, then Hezekiah ascended the throne in 727 BC and reigned till 699 BC (Tadmor, "Chronology of the First Temple Period," 58; Barnes, *Studies in the Chronology*, 154; Hayes and Hooker, *A New Chronology*, 66–80).
- Some scholars, however, date the destruction of Samaria to 721~20 BC, necessitating a 725~24 BC ascension (Galil, *Chronology of the Kings*, 83–107; Begrich, *Die Chronologie der Könige von Israel und Juda*, 155–60).
- If Samaria fell in 719~18 BC, it would imply Hezekiah started to rule in 724 BC (Tetley, *Reconstructed Chronology*, 164).

Campaign against Jerusalem

The second method for dating Hezekiah's rule depends on the correct date of Assyria's campaign against Jerusalem. Scholars have relied on 2 Kgs 18:13 for dating Sennacherib's 701 BC campaign against Jerusalem to the 14th year of King Hezekiah. This information has been used to date the first year of Hezekiah's reign to 716/15 BC (Thiele, "Chronology of the Kings," 164; Albright, "Chronology of the Divided Monarchy," 22; Na'aman, "Hezekiah and the Kings of Assyria, 236–39; "Historical and Chronological Notes," 83–92).

Agreement of Evidence. Various proposals have attempted to reconcile the conflicting evidence. Lewy and Jenkins favor the later date, suggesting 2 Kgs 18:13 refers to Sargon's campaign in 714–712 BC that Kings incorrectly attributes to Sennacherib (Lewy, "Sanherib und Hizkia," 158–59; Jenkins, "Hezekiah's Fourteenth Year," 284–98). Others have proposed reading "24" years instead of "14" in 2 Kgs 18:13, suggesting that textual corruption left the relative dating incompatible with 2 Kgs 18:9–10 (Montgomery, *Book of Kings*, 513–18).

Most scholars reject one date for the sake of the other. Those who defend a late date must conclude that 2 Kgs 18:9–10 is in error, whereas those who advocate an early date must conclude 2 Kgs 18:13 is. Each argument attempts to account for the most data while explaining the appearance of any errors in the records (Young, *Hezekiah in History*, 11).

Two reasons support the higher likelihood of the early date. First, it accounts for most of the evidence in the textual witnesses. Dating Hezekiah's reign to 727–724 BC suggests that Hezekiah was king during both events attributed to his reign in 2 Kgs 18:9–13, with only the year itself being in error in 2 Kgs 18:13. Second, it seems highly unlikely that the editors of 2 Kings would attribute such a significant event (2 Kgs 17) to the reign of the incorrect ruler (Barnes, *Studies in the Chronology*, 83–84; Rowley, *Men of God*, 98–132). To accept the later date, 716–715 BC, as Hezekiah's inaugural year would require accepting that all details in 2 Kgs 18:9–12 are in error.

Political Relationships

Hezekiah was a vassal to the Assyrian Empire until ca. 705 BC, when he abandoned submission in favor of a treaty with Egypt, thereby asserting Judaeian independence.

Assyrian Vassals

Judah was vital to neighboring empires because of its strategic location along important trade routes between Egypt and Mesopotamia. Judah likely complied with Assyrian dominance until early in Hezekiah's reign. Hebrew seals reveal Assyrian authority in the area as early as 785–733 BC during the reign of Azariah/Uzziah (Young, *Hezekiah in History*, 36). During the campaign of Tiglath-pileser III in the south, King Ahaz of Judah submitted to Assyrian authority (2 Kgs 16:7–8). Thus Judah remained independent after the Syro-Ephraimitic War, indicating their submission to Assyrian authority during the campaign (Young, *Hezekiah in History*, 36).

Extrabiblical evidence indicates Hezekiah remained loyal to Assyria early in his reign. The Nimrud inscription (dated to 717–716 BC) records Sargon boasting about subduing Judah, so Judah likely paid tribute during Hezekiah's early years (Cogan, *Raging Torrent*, 100–02; Na'aman, "Sargon II's Nimrud Inscription," 17–20; Crocker, "British Museum Excavations of Nimrud," 68–70; Young, *Hezekiah in History*, 38). Hezekiah likely did not abandon this loyalty until the death of Sargon II in 705 BC (Na'aman, "Ahaz's and Hezekiah's Policy," 5–30). Some suggest Hezekiah even aided Assyrian military interests in the region as a vassal state, and Dalley even suggests Judaeians formed part of Sennacherib's royal body guard (Miller and Hayes, *A History of Ancient Israel and Judah*, 404–07; Dalley, "Recent Evidence from Assyrian Sources," 91–92).

Hezekiah's Rebellion

Sargon's death led to widespread rebellion among Assyria's vassal states, beginning with Babylon (Levine, "Sennacherib's Southern Front," 28–58). Hezekiah moved to establish a treaty with Egypt, joining several neighboring nations in rebelling against Assyrian dominance. The motive for Hezekiah's decision remains unclear (see Gallagher, *Sennacherib's Campaign to Judah*, 263–74).

Assyrian Invasion. The Assyrian invasion is well-attested in both biblical and archaeological material. Most of the coverage of Hezekiah's reign in 2 Kings recounts Sennacherib's campaign into Judah. The destruction layers related to Sennacherib's march reveal much about his movement and tactics against the rebelling cities. Assyrian records attest to three geographical phases of Sennacherib's campaign from the summer of 702 BC to the summer of 701 BC: Phoenicia, Philistia, and Judah (Young, *Hezekiah in History*, 79).

Evidence of Sennacherib's military campaign includes the destruction layer of Lachish, along with relief depictions of the siege. Large quantities of arrowheads and burned wood at the site of a siege ramp indicate that Assyria built large siege ramps, which the Judaeians attempted to disrupt by throwing torches and firing arrows. An additional ramp was found inside the city, constructed by residents to reinforce the wall against battering rams. A cave serving as a mass grave for approximately 1,500 bodies outside the city testifies to the massacre when the city fell (Ussishkin, *The Conquest of Lachish*; Young, *Hezekiah in History*, 63; for more on the campaign, see Young, *Hezekiah in History*, 64–65; Vaughn, *Theology, History and Archeology*, 19–79).

After the fall of Lachish, a commander was dispatched to negotiate the surrender of Jerusalem. Sennacherib blockaded the city and ravaged the Judaeen countryside, but there is no evidence of a formal siege against Jerusalem (Young, *Hezekiah in History*). Hezekiah agreed to pay all of the gold in the temple (2 Kgs 18:16), which satisfied Sennacherib, who then returned to Nineveh (Mayer, “Sennacherib’s Campaign,” 181). Of the 354 Judaeen sites destroyed by Sennacherib, only 39 show evidence of rebuilding within the next 100 years (Stern, *Archeology of the Land of the Bible*, 142).

One Campaign or Two? Debate exists whether Sennacherib launched one or two campaigns against Judah (Noth, *History of Israel*, 265–69; Young, *Hezekiah in History*, 66–73; see also Goldberg, “Two Assyrian Campaigns,” 361–74; Begg, “Sennacherib’s Second Palestinian Campaign,” 685–86). The two-campaign model based on 2 Kgs 18:13–15 indicates Hezekiah repented and gave the temple gold to Sennacherib, who then sent his commander to threaten Jerusalem—a threat alleviated only by the Lord’s intervention in 2 Kgs 19. This view, therefore, proposes that Sennacherib came, received payment, left, and then returned and besieged Jerusalem.

The one-campaign model suggests that either Sennacherib took the money, then proceeded to lay siege; or that he took the money and left, with the 2 Kgs 19 account as a later reinterpretation attributing deliverance to the Lord. Scholars prefer the one-campaign model because it aligns with Sennacherib’s annals, which record only one military incursion (Shea, “Sennacherib’s Second Palestinian Campaign,” 401–18), as well as with the presence of only one destruction layer in the region (Young, *Hezekiah in History*, 68). The biblical material does not necessitate two campaigns. (For a complete survey of scholarship on Sennacherib’s campaign, see Grabbe, “Two Centuries of Sennacherib Study,” 20–36.)

Critical Discussion of Hezekiah’s Kingdom

Judah’s power and size under Hezekiah’s reign is likewise debated. Recent archaeological discoveries such as the Siloam tunnel and the *lmlk* jars provide insight into Jerusalem at the time.

Jerusalem Expansion

Although scholars debate when Jerusalem underwent expansion and fortification, several recent discoveries indicate this occurred during Hezekiah’s reign (see Simons, *Jerusalem in the Old Testament*, 226–29; Geva, “The Western Boundary of Jerusalem,” 84–85; see also Broshi, “Expansion of Jerusalem,” 21–23; Tushingham, “The Western Hill of Jerusalem,” 137–43; Bahat, “Was Jerusalem Really that Large,” 709–12). Pottery fragments from tombs in the valley of Hinnom indicate the expansion of an eighth-century settlement in the area (Young, *Hezekiah in History*, 44–45; Killebrew, “Biblical Jerusalem,” 337; Finkelstein and Silberman, *The Bible Unearthed*, 245–46). Significant residential expansions appeared during this period as well, with civilian expansions preceding military fortifications (as indicated by portions of the wall being constructed over the foundations of domestic dwellings) (Reich and Shukron, “The Urban Development of Jerusalem, 209–18; Avigad, *Discovering Jerusalem*, 55–56; Tatum, “Jerusalem in Conflict,” 296–97; see also Isa 22:10–11). Jerusalem’s population was 6,000–20,000 inhabitants during this time. The increase was likely due to economic and trade growth, as well as the influx of refugees from the Assyrian invasion to the north and the fall of Samaria (Young, *Hezekiah in History*, 48; Avigad, *Discovering Jerusalem*, 55; Broshi, “Expansion of Jerusalem,” 21–26). The military fortifications probably followed Hezekiah’s decision to break with Assyria in favor of a relationship with Egypt; he likely would have anticipated an Assyrian campaign to bring Jerusalem back under Assyrian control (Avigad, *Discovering Jerusalem*, 45–60; Younger, *Hezekiah in History*, 47).

The Siloam Tunnel

The Siloam tunnel connects Jerusalem with the Gihon Spring east of the city, which may have ensured a water supply in the event of a siege. (For alternative proposed functions, see Tatum, “Jerusalem in Conflict,” 297; Ussishkin, “The Water Systems of Jerusalem,” 301–03). The spring itself was flanked with guard towers (Reich and Shukron, “Light at the End of the Tunnel,” 22–23; “The System of Rock-Cut Tunnels,” 5–17). The tunnel channeled water to the pool of Siloam, allowing the city access to water while minimizing enemy accessibility

to the city (Ussishkin, “The Water Systems of Jerusalem,” 289–307). An inscription attributes construction to the rule of Hezekiah (Ussishkin, “Original Length of the Siloam Tunnel,” 82–95). Second Kings 20:20 and 2 Chr 32:2–6, 30 likewise record its construction.

The lmlk Jars

Archaeologists discovered a series of jars in the 1860s, bearing the inscription *lmlk*. The label means “for/of the King,” designating royal property. Found in several urban locations, including Jerusalem, Lachish, and Ramat Rachel, they may have been part of Hezekiah’s preparations for Sennacherib’s campaign (Fox, *In the Service of the King*, 219–20; Vaughn, *Theology, History and Archeology*, 166). Due to the large quantity of them found in the destruction layer of Sennacherib’s march, many scholars date them to the time of Hezekiah, though similar jars may have been used before and after his reign (Ussishkin, “The Destruction of Lachish,” 28–57; see also Maier and Shai, “Pre-LMLK Jars,” 108–23; Vaughn, *Theology, History and Archeology*, 138–40). The inscriptions on the jars occasionally include the name of an official, but this sheds no light on their function (Vaughn, *Theology, History, and Archeology*, 90–93). Though the function of the jars remains a matter of debate (see Mommsen, Perlman, and Yellin, “The Provenience of the *lmlk* Jars,” 89–113; Fox, *In the Service of the King*, 223–25), scholarly opinion favors seeing them as evidence of Hezekiah’s preparation of supplies in areas that would be targeted during an Assyrian campaign (Na’aman, “Sennacherib’s Campaign,” 75; “Hezekiah’s Fortified Cities,” 12–14; Borowski, “Hezekiah’s Reforms,” 152–54). Other opinions are that they were used for storing produce, either for taxation or to support the increased population (Rainey, “Wine from the Royal Vineyards,” 177–87; Young, *Hezekiah in History*, 56–57).

Religious Reforms

The Bible represents Hezekiah’s religious reforms as his most significant action. Hezekiah removed the high places and idols from Judah and kept the commandments of the Lord (2 Kgs 18:1–8, 22).

Critical Debate over Historicity

There is considerable debate as to whether the reforms are historical. Those defending the historicity of the biblical account generally assume the proposed situations justify widespread reform (Rowley, *Men of God*, 98–132; Weinfeld, “Cult Centralization in Israel,” 202–12; McKay, *Religion in Judah*, 15–17; Haran, *Temples and Temple-Service*, 132–42; Cogan and Tadmor, *2 Kings*, 218–20; Lowery, *The Reforming Kings*, 142–68). Challenging the historicity of the account requires that the reform accounts are actually representations of Josiah’s reforms projected onto Hezekiah’s reign (Wellhausen, *Prolegomena zur geschichte Israels*, 25; Na’aman, “Debated Historicity of Hezekiah’s Reform,” 179–95; Edelman, “Hezekiah’s Alleged Cultic Centralization,” 395–434).

Potential Problems. Issues surrounding the historicity of the reforms include:

- How extensive were the reforms?
- Where were they enforced?
- Which destruction layers correspond with Sennacherib?
- Which (if any) destruction layers would indicate Hezekiah’s destruction of a high place?
- Why were the located religious sites decommissioned and subsequently destroyed?

Young, among others, believes the archaeological evidence is inconclusive (e.g., Young, *Hezekiah in History*, 91–121, especially 120–21).

Archaeological Evidence. A Yahwistic temple in Arad was initially claimed as evidence of Hezekiah’s reforms. The temple was destroyed and the courtyard was filled in, covering the altar (Herzog, Aharoni, Rainey, and Moshkovitz, “Israelite Fortress,” 1–34). A subsequent study, however, argued that the temple was not in use during Hezekiah’s time, having been destroyed in 734 BC, prior to Hezekiah’s rise to the throne (Herzog,

“The Fortress Mound at Tel Arad,” 3–109). This site does show evidence of the destruction of a religious center outside of Jerusalem, but because of the conflicting dates, the evidence is inconclusive.

Archaeologists who found a dismantled horned altar in Beer-sheba, in a storehouse destroyed during Sennacherib’s campaign, initially presented it as evidence of Hezekiah’s reforms (Aharoni, “Horned Altar of Beer-sheba,” 2–6; “Excavations at Tel Beer-sheba,” 154–56). Several aspects of this initial claim are questionable, including the dating of the altar, the dating of the destruction level, the identification of the biblical Beer-sheba with Tel Beer-sheba, and the original location of the altar (see Young, *Hezekiah in History*, 96–97). The dismantled altar of Beer-sheba may represent additional evidence of the destruction of cultic sites outside of Jerusalem, but the evidence is still inconclusive due to the debated nature of the artifacts.

Criticism of the Biblical Account

Though archaeological evidence for religious reforms may be inconclusive, the biblical witness clearly attributes these events to Hezekiah’s reign (2 Kgs 18:1–8, 22). Hezekiah’s actions match the prescribed theological standard by which the authors of the Deuteronomistic History (Judges-Kings) judge the nation’s leaders. The theological alignment of the reforms with the ideology of the text has caused some scholars to question the accuracy of the accounts (e.g., Young, *Hezekiah in History*, 101), though this is unnecessary if the ideology was birthed out of the reforms themselves.

The reforms may have served many functions. First, they could have been part of Hezekiah’s declaration of independence from Assyrian dominance by overturning all installations promoting the worship of Assyrian deities (Rosenbaum, “Deuteronomistic Tradition,” 37–38; Bright, *A History of Israel*, 282–84). However, scholars have questioned the imposition of an Assyrian religious system in Judah (Dalley, “Recent Evidence from Assyrian Sources,” 397; Cogan, “Judah under Assyrian Hegemony,” 403–14).

Second, the reforms could have been part of Hezekiah’s preparations for Assyrian invasion. Decommissioning external sanctuaries could have obtained their wealth for state purposes, protected it from the Assyrians (Handy, “Hezekiah’s Unlikely Reform,” 111–15), and prevented the cultic objects from being used as propaganda by the Assyrians (Young, *Hezekiah in History*, 110).

Third, the centralization of the worship of Yahweh could have been because of the influx of refugees from the northern kingdom. This would serve the purpose of establishing Jerusalem as a rival center to the northern Bethel and to create an ideal of a reunified kingdom around Jerusalem leadership (Silberman and Finkelstein, “Temple and Dynasty,” 348–57).

Hezekiah’s reforms are sometimes thought to provide a historical context for the birth of Deuteronomistic theology. The influx of northern refugees leading to the centralization of the worship of Yahweh would explain the preservation of northern traditions in the Deuteronomistic theology while uncompromisingly holding to the idealized centralization of the cult in Jerusalem. The Deuteronomistic school of thought is usually understood as having developed through Josiah’s reforms and into the exile. However, Josiah’s reforms could have started with Hezekiah, which would explain several textual features of the Deuteronomistic corpus (see Young, *Hezekiah in History*, 116–20).

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"May the good LORD provide atonement for everyone who prepares his heart to seek God...and the LORD listened...and healed the people"
(30:18–20). Hezekiah reinstates the Passover nationwide in his reform effort following Ahaz's wicked reign. Although many Israelites receiving Passover had not prepared themselves properly according to sanctuary purification rites, Hezekiah's prayer entreats the Lord for His atonement on behalf of all who sought Him with pure hearts. Despite their failure to observe proper order in worship, the Lord was pleased with the attitude of their hearts, and He heard and healed. Reconciliation with God is the greatest healing miracle of all. God desires to mend the broken and estranged relationship with His people.

³⁷ Werse, N. R. (2016). [Hezekiah, King of Judah](#). In J. D. Barry, D. Bomar, D. R. Brown, R. Klippenstein, D. Mangum, C. Sinclair Wolcott, ... W. Widder (Eds.), *The Lexham Bible Dictionary*. Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press.

In Hezekiah's fourteenth year, Sennacherib of Assyria comes to Jerusalem, ridiculing Hezekiah's god, and demanding surrender and deportation. Hezekiah immediately seeks the Lord's counsel.

God's answer (32:20–23). Isaiah brings God's word to Hezekiah. The Lord has heard his prayer. Judah will survive.

That night 185,000 men in the Assyrian army die! Sennacherib returns to his capital of Nineveh, where he is assassinated by two of his sons. (*see* Angel; Vision.)

“King Hezekiah and the prophet Isaiah...prayed and cried out to heaven”

(32:20–23). Sennacherib's ominous threat provoked no panic or fearful reaction on the part of faith-filled Hezekiah. By partnering in prayer with the prophet Isaiah, he presented the enemy's threat at the throne room. In 2 Kings 19:14–19 we read that Hezekiah took Sennacherib's threatening letter and “spread it before the LORD” (v. 14), recognizing that the Assyrian reproached the living God (16). When facing crisis, faith inspires us to take our requests unto God and to agree in faith with fellow believers and the Lord. We thus resist the enemy's schemes and present ourselves in cooperation with the fulfillment of God's purposes.

38

Rom 14

The Relationship between the Weak and the Strong (Rom 14:1–15:13). The Roman community was experiencing tension between the “weak” and the “strong.” The “weak” observed the distinction between clean (kosher) and unclean food as well as a presumably Jewish calendar (14:2–3, 5, 6, 20–21). This does not necessarily mean that the “weak” of the letter must refer to Jews, however, as these customs were popular among non-Christ-believing Roman Gentiles. Many former godfearers within the Roman synagogues would have continued their Jewish practices in the churches. The “strong,” on the other hand, neither observed such customs nor saw any need for them, and this difference in practice and opinion apparently led to conflict.

Love, which fulfills the law (13:7–10), should express itself in the relationship between the weak and the strong. The weak are not to judge the strong for their exercise of freedom, and the strong are not to judge the weak for their convictions. When they come together, the strong ought to forego their liberty for the sake of the weak so that they do not cause the weak to stumble by enticing them to eat certain foods. The strong could harm the faith of the weak, rather than build them up (15:2). Christ's own self-sacrifice should be the model for the behavior they are to express toward each other (15:3). As Christ welcomed them, they should welcome each other (15:7). Paul closes with a catena of biblical quotations that stresses the full inclusion of the Gentiles among God's people (15:9–12), which he then applies to the Romans (15:13).³⁹

Ps 24

24:1 Some scholars consider this psalm to be a joining of two smaller poems: vv. 1-6 and vv. 7-10. The first one is similar to Ps. 15. These were probably written when the ark was brought to Jerusalem by David.

³⁸ Hayford, J. W., Thomas Nelson Publishers. (1995). [Hayford's Bible handbook](#). Nashville, TN; Atlanta, GA; London; Vancouver: Thomas Nelson Publishers.

³⁹ Das, A. A. (2016). [Romans, Letter to the](#). In J. D. Barry, D. Bomar, D. R. Brown, R. Klippenstein, D. Mangum, C. Sinclair Wolcott, ... W. Widder (Eds.), *The Lexham Bible Dictionary*. Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press.

24:1 The apostle Paul quoted this in 1 Cor. 10:26, 28 to show that all foods were created and “owned” by the Lord, and therefore fully available to His creatures for sustenance.

24:3 Who: This same question is asked in 15:1 and in Is. 33:14-17, with a variety of answers given. Even though every person is the Lord’s creation (v. 1), only certain ones are allowed in His presence.

24:4 Clean hands: Those who can enter into the presence of God are those who have conducted their daily business with integrity. External religiosity is meaningless without inward holiness and practical ethics.

24:6 Or translated, “Who seek Your face, O God of Jacob” (Greek Septuagint), or “Who seek Your face, as Jacob did” (see Gen. 32:22-30).

24:7 While the holy congregation waits inside, the **King** with His procession approaches the gate and asks entry.

24:8 The doorkeeper within asks **who** He is, and the response is shouted back. The password gains Him immediate entry.

24:9 For emphasis the poet repeats the words of the herald of the **King**.

24:10 LORD of hosts (Hebrew *Yahweh Sabaoth*): The Captain of all the angelic armies (Luke 2:13), of the armies of Israel (Josh. 5:14), of all the hosts of nations (Jer. 3:19), in fact, of everything in heaven and Earth (Gen. 2:1)!⁴⁰

Pro 20:12

¹² The hearing ear and the seeing eye,
The LORD has made them both.⁴¹

⁴⁰ Hayford, J. W. (Ed.). (1997). [Spirit filled life study Bible](#) (electronic ed., Ps 24:1–10). Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson.

⁴¹ [The New King James Version](#). (1982). (Pr 20:12). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.