

History of Israel – 1000-537 BC

Harmony of Samuel, Kings, Chronicles – Part 11

HISTORY OF ISRAEL – THE DIVIDED KINGDOM

Text – 1 Kings 12 through 2 Kings 25; 2 Chronicles 10-36

From this point in the text on, we must always keep in mind that Israel is separated from Judah. Israel is now the nation of the 10 tribes of the North. Judah is the nation of one tribe, Judah. However, we will see that Benjamin is also under Judah. The Levites are scattered between both nations but come back to Judah and Jerusalem after being excluded by the king of Israel in 2 Chronicles 11:13-14.

The ten tribes of Israel are Reuben, Simeon, Issachar, Zebulun, Dan, Manasseh, Ephraim, Naphtali, Gad, and Asher.

TRANSITION FROM SOLOMON TO THE DIVIDED KINGDOM

Review:

Solomon had sinned against the Lord in that his foreign wives turned his heart away from the Lord and he, in the end, served idols and the Ashtoreth and Milcom (1 Kings 11:4-8). As a result, YHWH judged the house of David and told Solomon that He would tear the kingdom away, not from him but from his son and heir, Rehoboam. Furthermore, the kingdom would be given to his servant. That servant is Jeroboam. The Lord spoke to Jeroboam in 1 Kings 11:29-39, and YHWH gave Jeroboam a covenant (1 Kings 11:31-39).

Because Solomon sought to kill Jeroboam, he exiled himself to Egypt until Solomon died. 1 Kings 12 picks up after the death of Solomon.

1 Kings 12:1-24; 1 Chronicles 10:1-11:4

These passages record the attempted coronation of Rehoboam over all Israel. In verse 2, we see that Jeroboam returned from Egypt and immediately took a leading role in Israel and came to Rehoboam along with the elders of Israel to make a request of Rehoboam. They wanted Rehoboam to lessen the burden of both taxes and required labor. After some counsel, this is the response from Rehoboam to Jeroboam and the elders of Israel: 1 Kings 12:12-15.

Israel returned to their territories without pledging to Rehoboam. But in 1 Kings 12:17-19, the tribes of Israel that were living in Judah rebelled against Rehoboam.

After Rehoboam returned to Jerusalem, he gathered his army from the house of Judah and the house of Benjamin (180,000 warriors) to go and fight against Israel to restore the kingdom to Rehoboam. But the Lord intervened (1 Kings 12:22-24).

THE KINGS OF ISRAEL

Beginning with Jeroboam, the Kingdom of Israel lasted from about 975-721, a total of 254 years. There were 19 kings of Israel and none of them was good. One king, Jehu, who was once a captain over the armies of Israel did some good, but he did not depart from all the sin of the previous kings and, therefore, still is counted among the wicked kings of Israel.

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Even though Jeroboam was chosen by God to be the first king of Israel after the division and was promised blessing if he walked in the way of the Lord, he immediately departed from the truth of God and disregarded the Law and the Covenant of YHWH.

1 Kings 12:25-30; 2 Chronicles 11:13-15 – Yes, Jeroboam immediately reestablished golden calf worship! An unnamed prophet came to him and gave him a warning and a sign from the Lord. When Jeroboam pointed his hand for him to be seized, his hand shriveled, and he could not bring his hand back to his body.

Jeroboam then asked the prophet to entreat for him so that his hand would be restored, and it was done. Jeroboam then asked the prophet to come to his house and eat with him, but the prophet said that he would not by command of the Lord. Afterward, Jeroboam sought him out again and lied to the prophet saying that the Lord told him that it was permitted for the prophet to come and eat with Jeroboam. Because of this, the prophet was killed by a lion, but Jeroboam did not return to the Lord (1 Kings 13:33-34).

One of Jeroboam's sons became ill and he sent his wife in disguise to Ahijah, the same prophet that gave him the news of his rule over Israel. But Ahijah gave her a harsh message (1 Kings 14:6-14).

Jeroboam became the standard of evil for all of Israel. When they did evil, it is stated that they were “doing evil in the sight of the LORD, walking in the way of Jeroboam.” This or a variation of this statement is used at least 22 times.

Jeroboam reigned 22 years and his son, Nadab, became king.

Nadab did evil in the sight of the Lord. He reigned 2 years and was killed by Baasha, and all the line of Jeroboam was also killed by Baasha (1 Kings 15:25-30).

Baasha reigned 24 years, but he also did evil in the sight of the Lord. Also, Baasha warred with Judah perpetually (1 Kings 15:27-34). After he died, his son, Elah, ruled.

Elah reigned 2 years and was killed by Zimri, the commander of half of Elah's chariots. Zimri killed all of Baasha's line and became king.

Zimri ruled for seven days and did evil in the sight of the Lord. When he saw that he was defeated, he killed himself in a burning building (1 Kings 16:17-19). There was a civil war in Israel (not Judah), and Omri became king in Israel.

Omri reigned for 12 years and did evil in the sight of the Lord and did more wickedness than all the others before him. After Omri died, his son, Ahab, ruled. (1 Kings 16:21-28).

Ahab reigned for 22 years and did even more evil than all who were before him. He married Jezebel, a Sidonian, and worshipped and served Baal. Ahab did more to provoke the Lord than all of the kings before him. It was in the days of Ahab that Hiel built Jericho, which cost him the life of his firstborn, the curse in Joshua 6:26. It was during the time of Ahab and Jezebel that Elijah first comes on the scene (1 Kings 17). Ahab died in battle and his son, Ahaziah, became king (1 Kings 22:29-40).

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Ahaziah ruled for 2 years and did evil in the sight of the Lord. Ahaziah fell and was sick from the fall. He sent messengers and a company of men to inquire from Baal-zebub, but Elijah stood in their way and fire came from heaven and smote the company of men. Ahaziah eventually died from his complications. Ahaziah had no son, so Jehoram, son of Jehoshaphat king of Judah and son-in-law of Ahab the previous king, became king. (2 Kings 1:1-18).

Jehoram rules for 12 years. He is killed by Jehu by the Word of the Lord, and Jezebel is executed as well. So, the house of Ahab is overthrown, and Jehu is placed as king (2 Kings 8-10).

Jehu works at the behest of the Lord through Elisha the prophet and destroys all the Baal worshippers, but he did not get rid of the golden calves, and for that God is not fully pleased with Jehu (Read 2 Kings 10:28-33). After he dies, his son, Jehoahaz, becomes king (2 Kings 10:34-36).

Jehoahaz reigned 17 years but did evil in the sight of the Lord, following in the sins of Jeroboam. They were perpetually under siege from Aram, so Jehoahaz sought after the Lord and the Lord delivered them. But he did not turn away from the golden calf worship of Jeroboam. In Jehoahaz's fifteenth year, his son Jehoash became co-regent of Israel, and they ruled together for 3 years. When Jehoahaz died, Jehoash (Joash) became the sole king in Israel.

Jehoash (Joash) was king for 16 years but did evil in the sight of the Lord. It was during this time that Elisha dies. Judah and Israel go to war and Israel prevailed destroying a portion of Jerusalem and looting the city. After Jehoash (Joash) dies, Jeroboam II becomes king (2 Kings 10-14).

Jeroboam II reigns for 41 years and did evil in the sight of the Lord and he did not depart from the sins of Jeroboam. When Jeroboam II dies, his son, Zechariah (not the prophet), becomes king (2 Kings 14:15-27).

Zechariah reigns for 6 months and did evil in the sight of the Lord. For one-month, Shallum was king but then Menahem killed him and became king. (2 Kings 15:1-16).

Menahem reigns for 10 years and did evil in the sight of the Lord. Menahem submitted himself to Pul, King of Assyria, and gave him bounty so that he would be permitted to remain in power. When Menahem died, Pekahiah becomes king over Israel.

Pekahiah was king for 2 years and did evil.... One of his officers, Pekah, conspired against him and killed Pekahiah and became king.

Pekah became king in Israel and ruled for 20 years and he did evil.... During his days as king, Tiglath-pileser, king of Assyria, came and took great portions of Israel captive. Hoshea conspired against Pekah and killed him and became king in his place.

Hoshea reigns for 9 years and did evil but not as the kings before him. In Hoshea's ninth year, Assyria captures the rest of Israel and takes the rest away to Assyria. 2 Kings 17:6-18.