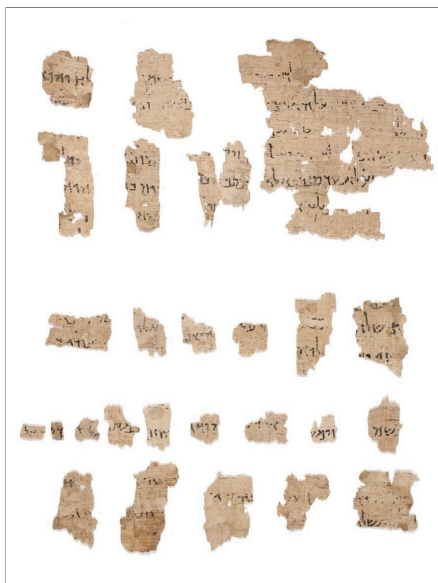


2 KINGS

Where Things Start To Go Downhill

AUTHOR	The book does not name its author. Jewish tradition in the Talmud says Jeremiah wrote Kings. Many scholars think a writer during the exile put it together from older records the book names, like the Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Judah, 8:23.
EVENTS TOOK PLACE	About 290 years, from Ahaziah of Israel, about 852 BC, to King Jehoiachin let out of prison in Babylon, about 560 BC.
DATE	About 852 to 560 BC. Samaria fell to Assyria in 722 BC, and Jerusalem fell to Babylon in 586 BC.
WRITTEN TO	God's people in exile, to show why they lost their land: they kept turning away from God, even after He warned them again and again.
KEY VERSE	2 Kings 17:13. Yet through all His prophets and seers, Yahweh warned Israel and Judah, saying, Turn from your wicked ways and keep My commandments and statutes.



THE OLDEST COPY OF 2 KINGS

These pieces of papyrus, a kind of paper made from a tall water plant, come from 6QpapKings, a scroll of Kings found in Cave 6 at Qumran, near the Dead Sea. It was copied about 150 to 75 BC. Its pieces hold bits of 2 Kings 5 to 10, and of 1 Kings 3, 12 and 22. It is the only Dead Sea Scroll with any of 2 Kings, so it is the oldest copy of 2 Kings known. The 1 Kings introduction shows the same scroll.

The oldest complete Hebrew copies of Kings are more than a thousand years younger: the Aleppo Codex, about 930 AD, and the Leningrad Codex, 1008 AD.

Photo Shai Halevi, Israel Antiquities Authority, Leon Levy Dead Sea Scrolls Digital Library.

Historical Setting

2 Kings moves between two capitals: Samaria in the north and Jerusalem in the south. Elisha travels from Jericho and Bethel to Shunem, Mount Carmel, Dothan and Damascus. Assyria comes from the far north and east, takes Samaria and carries Israel away to Halah, Gozan and the cities of the Medes. Then Babylon carries Judah away to Babylon.

What Was Going Wrong

ONLY THREE LIKE DAVID. After Solomon, Israel had 19 kings and Judah had 19 kings and one queen. Not one king of Israel followed God. Only three kings of Judah, Asa, Hezekiah and Josiah, followed Him with their whole heart like David did 1 Kings 15:11, 2 Kings 18:3, 22:2. God finally had enough of the idols and child sacrifice 17:7 to 18, 21:10 to 15, 24:3 to 4.

CHILD SACRIFICE. The king of Moab burned his oldest son on the city wall 3:27. King Ahaz burned his son 16:3, Israel burned their sons and daughters 17:17, and King Manasseh burned his son 21:6.

THE GOLDEN CALVES STAYED. Even Jehu, who wiped out Baal worship, kept Jeroboam's calves at Bethel and Dan 10:29.

A QUEEN WHO KILLED HER GRANDCHILDREN. Athaliah tried to wipe out David's royal family so she could rule 11:1.

IGNORING THE PROPHETS. God sent prophet after prophet, and they would not listen 17:13 to 14.

MANASSEH. The worst king of all filled Jerusalem with innocent blood and idols in the temple 21:1 to 16.

The Idiot Proof Summary

2 Kings is where things start to go downhill. Elijah goes up to heaven in a whirlwind, and Elisha takes his cloak and carries on his work with many miracles. Jehu wipes out Ahab and Jezebel's family and Baal worship, but the golden calves stay. Israel's kings keep doing evil, and Assyria keeps getting stronger, until Samaria falls in 722 BC and Israel is carried away. Judah lasts longer. Hezekiah trusts God, and the angel of Yahweh destroys the Assyrian army. Josiah finds God's book in the temple and cleans out the idols. But Manasseh's sins go too deep, and Babylon burns Jerusalem and the temple in 586 BC. Even then, the last scene shows a son of David alive, eating at the king's table.

2 Kings at a Glance

CH 1 to 8

ELISHA TAKES OVER

Elijah goes up, and Elisha's miracles begin.

CH 9 to 10

JEHU

A new king wipes out Ahab's house and Baal.

CH 11 to 16

KINGS COME AND GO

Good kings, bad kings and Assyria.

CH 17

ISRAEL FALLS

Samaria falls to Assyria in 722 BC.

CH 18 to 23

HEZEKIAH AND JOSIAH

Two good kings and the worst one between them.

CH 24 to 25

JUDAH FALLS

Babylon burns Jerusalem in 586 BC.

Where Jesus Shows Up

2 KINGS 2:11 Elijah was taken up into heaven alive. Jesus rose from the dead and was taken up into heaven in front of His followers, Acts 1:9.

2 KINGS 4:42 TO 44 Elisha fed a hundred men with twenty barley loaves, with some left over. Jesus fed 5,000 with five barley loaves, with twelve baskets left over, John 6:9 to 13.

2 KINGS 5:14 Naaman, a foreigner, was healed. Jesus said this showed that God's mercy was for the nations too, Luke 4:27.

GOD'S NAMES IN 2 KINGS

Yahweh, again and again, Yahweh of Hosts, 3:14 and 19:31, the Holy One of Israel, 19:22, and Yahweh, God of Israel, enthroned between the cherubim, 19:15. See Why We Say Yahweh in the Old Testament Introduction.

What to Watch for in 2 Kings

MESSIANIC FORESHADOW	2:11
PROPHECIES FULFILLED IN SCRIPTURE	1:4, 1:16, 2:10, 2:12, 2:15, 3:17-18, 3:20 and 50 more
THE HEART	5:26, 10:15, 10:31, 12:4, 14:10, 20:3, 22:19 and 2 more
ARCHAEOLOGY	1:17, 3:4-5, 8:24, 8:28-29, 9:2, 13:3, 13:9 and 24 more
MIRACLES	1:3, 1:9-15, 2:8, 2:14, 2:19-24, 3:16, 3:19 and 8 more
DEMONIC	1:2, 1:5-6, 3:2, 3:27, 5:17-18, 5:27, 9:22 and 20 more
NOTABLE	2:9, 19:15-17, 19:19, 22:13
GOD SPEAKING	Words in red are God speaking. Only the words He actually said are red.
BLOODLINE OF CHRIST	Names underlined in red are in the family line of Jesus.

Cool Stuff Most People Miss

1, 2, 3 AND 4 KINGS

In old Greek and Latin Bibles, 1 and 2 Samuel and 1 and 2 Kings were four books of Kingdoms or Kings, because they tell one long story. That makes this the Fourth Book of the Kings, 4 Kingdoms in Greek and 4 Kings in Latin. The King James calls it The Second Book of the Kings, commonly called The Fourth Book of the Kings.

TOPHETH CLOSED

Josiah ruined Topheth, the place where children were burned, so no one could sacrifice a son or daughter there again, 23:10.

How Did It Turn Out?

Both kingdoms fell, just as God warned. But the book ends with King Jehoiachin, a son of David, let out of prison and eating at the king's table, 25:27 to 30. God's promise to David was still alive, and Jesus came from his line, Matthew 1:12.

PROPHECIES FULFILLED IN SCRIPTURE

MIRACLES

DEMONIC

GOD SPEAKING

1

CHAPTER 1 IN 30 SECONDS

King Ahaziah of Israel falls through a lattice and sends messengers to ask a Philistine god if he will get better. Elijah meets them on the road: Is there no God in Israel? The king sends soldiers to arrest Elijah. That goes badly for the first two groups of fifty. The third captain begs for mercy, and he gets to live.

ELIJAH DENOUNCES AHAZIAH // 1 KINGS 22:51-53

¹After the death of Ahab, Moab rebelled against Israel.

²Now Ahaziah had fallen through the lattice of his upper room in Samaria and injured himself. So he sent messengers and instructed them: "Go inquire of Baal-zebub, the god of Ekron, whether I will recover from this injury."

³But the angel of Yahweh said to Elijah the Tishbite, "Go up to meet the messengers of the king of Samaria and ask them, 'Is it because there is no God in Israel that you are on your way to inquire of Baal-zebub, the god of Ekron?'" ⁴Therefore this is what Yahweh says: "You will not get up from the bed on which you are lying. You will surely die."

So Elijah departed.

⁵When the messengers returned to the king, he asked them, "Why have you returned?"

⁶They replied, "A man came up to meet us and said, 'Go back to the king who sent you and tell him that this is what Yahweh says: Is it because there is no God in Israel that you are sending these men to in-

■ **2KI 1:1 [NOTE]** FOURTH BOOK OF THE KINGS. 1 and 2 Kings were once one book, so 2 Kings picks up right where 1 Kings stopped, with Ahab's son Ahaziah on Israel's throne.

■ **2KI 1:2 [DEMONIC]** Ahaziah sends to ask Baal zebub, the god of Ekron

■ **2KI 1:2 [FIELD NOTES]** BAAL ZEBUB means lord of the flies, likely a mocking twist on Baal zebul, prince Baal. Jesus' enemies called the devil Beelzebul, Matthew 12:24. A stone naming the kings of Ekron has been found. See The Ekron Inscription Field Notes page.

■ **2KI 1:3 [MIRACLE]** The angel of Yahweh sends Elijah to meet the king's messengers

■ **2KI 1:3 [DEMONIC]** Elijah rebukes the king for asking the god of Ekron

■ **2KI 1:3 [NOTE]** THE ANGEL OF YAHWEH. His words print red, like the angel of Yahweh in Judges and 1 Kings 19:7. Some think he was an angel God sent, and others think it was God Himself appearing.

■ **2KI 1:4 [PROPHECY]** Elijah told Ahaziah he would not get up from his bed but die → 2KI 1:17 p.-

quire of Baal-zebub, the god of Ekron?

Therefore you will not get up from the bed on which you are lying. You will surely die."

⁷The king asked them, "What sort of man came up to meet you and spoke these words to you?"

⁸"He was a hairy man," they answered, "with a leather belt around his waist."

"It was Elijah the Tishbite," said the king.

FIELD NOTES · ARCHAEOLOGY · CONFIDENCE: HIGH

THE EKRON INSCRIPTION

2 KINGS 1:2 TO 16 · 1 SAMUEL 5:10 · 6:17 · MATTHEW 12:24



The Ekron Inscription in the Israel Museum, Jerusalem. Photo Oren Rozen, CC BY SA 4.0.

WHAT IT IS

A stone block with five lines of writing, set up in a temple by a king of Ekron. It says Achish son of Padi, ruler of Ekron, built the temple for his goddess and asks her to bless him.

HOW OLD IT IS

The early 600s BC, nearly 200 years after King Ahaziah sent his messengers to Ekron.

WHERE AND WHEN FOUND

At Tel Miqne in Israel, in 1996, inside the ruins of a large temple. Seymour Gitin and Trude Dothan led the dig. It is in the Israel Museum in Jerusalem.

IT SETTLED WHERE EKRON WAS

Ekron was one of the five big Philistine cities, 1 Samuel 6:17. Nobody knew for sure which mound it was until this stone named the city. Padi king of Ekron is also named on Sennacherib's Prism.

BAAL ZEBUB

Ahaziah sent to ask Baal zebub, the god of Ekron, if he would get well, 1:2. The name means lord of the flies. Many

PROPHECIES FULFILLED IN SCRIPTURE

ARCHAEOLOGY

MIRACLES

GOD SPEAKING

BLOODLINE OF CHRIST

think it mocks the real name Baal zebul, prince Baal. Jesus' enemies called the devil Beelzebul, Matthew 12:24.

WHAT IT DOES NOT PROVE

The stone does not name Baal zebub. It shows that Ekron was a real city with its own temples and kings, right where the Bible puts it.

⁹ Then King Ahaziah sent to Elijah a captain with his company of fifty men. So the captain went up to Elijah, who was sitting on top of a hill, and said to him, "Man of God, the king declares, 'Come down!'"

¹⁰ Elijah answered the captain, "If I am a man of God, may fire come down from heaven and consume you and your fifty men."

And fire came down from heaven and consumed the captain and his fifty men.

¹¹ So the king sent to Elijah another captain with his fifty men. And the captain said to Elijah, "Man of God, the king declares, 'Come down at once!'"

¹² Again Elijah replied, "If I am a man of God, may fire come down from heaven and consume you and your fifty men."

And the fire of God came down from heaven and consumed the captain and his fifty men.

¹³ So the king sent a third captain with his fifty men. And the third captain went up, fell on his knees before Elijah, and begged him, "Man of God, may my life and the lives of these fifty servants of yours please be precious in your sight. ¹⁴ Behold, fire has come down from heaven and consumed the first two captains of fifty, with all their men. But now may my life be precious in your sight."

¹⁵ Then the angel of Yahweh said to Elijah, "Go down with him. Do not be afraid of him."

So Elijah got up and went down with him to the king.

■ 2KI 1:9 [MIRACLE] Fire from heaven burns up two captains and their fifty men sent to Elijah

■ 2KI 1:10 [ALLUDED TO] The New Testament refers to this → LK 9:54 p.~

■ 2KI 1:10 [ALLUDED TO] The New Testament refers to this → REV 20:9 p.~

¹⁶ And Elijah said to King Ahaziah, "This is what Yahweh says: **Is there really no God in Israel for you to inquire of His word? Is that why you have sent messengers to inquire of Baal-zebub, the god of Ekron? Therefore you will not get up from the bed on which you are lying. You will surely die."**

JEHORAM SUCCEEDS AHAZIAH

¹⁷ So Ahaziah died according to the word of Yahweh that Elijah had spoken. And since he had no son, Jehoram succeeded him in the second year of the reign of Jehoram son of Jehoshaphat over Judah.

¹⁸ As for the rest of the acts of Ahaziah, along with his accomplishments, are they not written in the Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Israel?

2

CHAPTER 2 IN 30 SECONDS

Elijah and Elisha take one last walk together. Elijah parts the Jordan with his cloak, and Elisha asks for a double portion of his spirit. A chariot of fire appears, and Elijah goes up to heaven in a whirlwind. Elisha picks up the cloak, parts the Jordan himself, heals a bad spring, and some young mockers meet two angry bears.

ELIJAH TAKEN UP TO HEAVEN

¹ Shortly before Yahweh took Elijah up to heaven in a whirlwind, Elijah and Elisha were on their way from Gilgal, ² and Elijah said to Elisha, "Please stay here, for Yahweh has sent me on to Bethel."

But Elisha replied, "As surely as Yahweh lives and as you yourself live, I will not leave you."

So they went down to Bethel.

³ Then the sons of the prophets at Bethel came out to Elisha and said, "Do you know that Yahweh will take your master away from you today?"

■ 2KI 1:16 [PROPHECY] Elijah told Ahaziah he would not get up from his bed but die → 2KI 1:17 p.~

■ 2KI 1:16 [DEMONIC] Ahaziah will die for seeking the god of Ekron

■ 2KI 1:17 [ARCHAEOLOGY] Jehoram of Israel, also called Joram, is most likely named on the Tel Dan Stele, though part of the name is broken, see the note on 8:28

■ 2KI 1:17 [FULFILLS] Elijah told Ahaziah he would not get up from his bed but die ← 2KI 1:4, 16 p.~

■ 2KI 2:1 [NOTE] ELIJAH TAKEN UP. Only Enoch and Elijah left this world without dying, Genesis 5:24. See the Big Question pages Elijah's Whirlwind.

MESSIANIC FORESHADOW

PROPHECIES FULFILLED IN SCRIPTURE

MIRACLES

NOTABLE

"Yes, I know," he replied. "Do not speak of it."

⁴ And Elijah said to Elisha, "Please stay here, for Yahweh has sent me on to Jericho."

But Elisha replied, "As surely as Yahweh lives and as you yourself live, I will not leave you."

So they went to Jericho.

⁵ Then the sons of the prophets at Jericho came up to Elisha and said, "Do you know that Yahweh will take your master away from you today?"

"Yes, I know," he replied. "Do not speak of it."

⁶ And Elijah said to Elisha, "Please stay here, for Yahweh has sent me on to the Jordan."

But Elisha replied, "As surely as Yahweh lives and as you yourself live, I will not leave you."

So the two of them went on.

⁷ Then a company of fifty of the sons of the prophets went and stood at a distance, facing Elijah and Elisha as the two of them stood by the Jordan. ⁸ And Elijah took his cloak, rolled it up, and struck the waters, which parted to the right and to the left, so that the two of them crossed over on dry ground.

⁹ After they had crossed over, Elijah said to Elisha, "Tell me, what can I do for you before I am taken away from you?"

"Please, let me inherit a double portion of your spirit," Elisha replied.

¹⁰ "You have requested a difficult thing," said Elijah. "Nevertheless, if you see me as I am taken from you, it will be yours. But if not, then it will not be so."

¹¹ As they were walking along and talking together, suddenly a chariot of fire with horses of fire appeared and separated the

two of them, and Elijah went up into heaven in a whirlwind.

¹² As Elisha watched, he cried out, "My father, my father, the chariots and horsemen of Israel!" And he saw Elijah no more. So taking hold of his own clothes, he tore them in two.

¹³ Elisha also picked up the cloak that had fallen from Elijah, and he went back and stood on the bank of the Jordan. ¹⁴ Then he took the cloak of Elijah that had fallen from him and struck the waters. "Where now is Yahweh, the God of Elijah?" he asked.

And when he had struck the waters, they parted to the right and to the left, and Elisha crossed over.

ELISHA SUCCEEDS ELIJAH

¹⁵ When the sons of the prophets who were watching him from Jericho saw what had happened, they said, "The spirit of Elijah rests on Elisha." And they went to meet him and bowed down to the ground before him.

¹⁶ "Look now," they said to Elisha, "we your servants have fifty valiant men. Please let them go and search for your master. Perhaps the Spirit of Yahweh has taken him up and put him on one of the mountains or in one of the valleys."

"Do not send them," Elisha replied.

¹⁷ But when they pressed him to the point of embarrassment, he said, "Send them." And they sent fifty men, who searched for three days but did not find Elijah.

¹⁸ When they returned to Elisha, who was staying in Jericho, he said to them, "Didn't I tell you not to go?"

■ 2KI 2:8 [MIRACLE] Elijah parted the Jordan with his mantle

■ 2KI 2:9 [NOTABLE] Elisha could have asked for anything. He asked for more of God's Spirit to carry on Elijah's work. The double portion was the oldest son's share, Deuteronomy 21:17.

■ 2KI 2:9 [NOTE] A DOUBLE PORTION. See the Big Questions pages The Double Portion.

■ 2KI 2:10 [PROPHECY] If Elisha saw Elijah taken up he would receive the double portion → 2KI 2:12; 2KI 2:15 p.-

■ 2KI 2:11 [PROPHECY] Elijah's bodily ascension foreshadows Christ's bodily ascension → LK 24:51 · MEDIUM p.-

■ 2KI 2:11 [MIRACLE] Elijah taken up in a whirlwind with chariot of fire

■ 2KI 2:12 [FULFILLS] If Elisha saw Elijah taken up he would receive the double portion ← 2KI 2:10 p.-

■ 2KI 2:14 [MIRACLE] Elisha parts the Jordan, showing he received the double portion

■ 2KI 2:15 [FULFILLS] If Elisha saw Elijah taken up he would receive the double portion ← 2KI 2:10 p.-

DEBATED THE BIG QUESTION

ELIJAH'S WHIRLWIND

What Happened

2 KINGS 2:1 TO 18 · GENESIS 5:24 · HEBREWS 11:5

THE LAST WALK

Elijah and Elisha walked from Gilgal to Bethel to Jericho to the Jordan. At every stop Elijah said, Stay here, and Elisha said, I will not leave you. Groups of prophets at Bethel and at Jericho already knew Elijah was about to be taken, 2:3 and 2:5.

THE JORDAN PARTS

Elijah rolled up his cloak and struck the water, and the river divided, so the two crossed on dry ground, 2:8. Moses had parted the Red Sea, and Joshua crossed the Jordan near this same spot.

CHARIOTS OF FIRE

As they walked and talked, a chariot of fire with horses of fire came between them, and Elijah went up into heaven in a whirlwind, 2:11. Paintings often show Elijah riding in the chariot, but the Bible says the whirlwind took him up.

ONLY TWO

Only two people in the Bible left this world without dying: Enoch, who walked with God, and God took him, Genesis 5:24 and Hebrews 11:5, and Elijah.

THE SEARCH

Fifty strong men searched the hills for three days, in case the Spirit had dropped him somewhere. They found nothing, 2:16 to 18.

THE QUESTION

Where did Elijah go, and will he come back?

Every View

MALACHI 4:5 · MATTHEW 11:14 · 17:3 · JOHN 1:21 · 3:13 · REVELATION 11:3 TO 6

VIEW 1: TO GOD IN HEAVEN

Most Jews and Christians through history believe God took Elijah, body and all, to be with Him, like Enoch. He did not die.

VIEW 2: UP INTO THE SKY

Jesus said no one has gone up into heaven except the One who came down from heaven, John 3:13. So some think Elijah went up into the sky, the heavens

where birds fly, and God took him to a place we are not told about. Some point to a letter from Elijah in 2 Chronicles 21:12 to 15, sent to a later king. Others answer that he wrote it before he was taken.

HIS RETURN

Malachi 4:5 says God will send Elijah before the great day of Yahweh. Jews still set a cup for Elijah at the Passover meal. Jesus said John the Baptist was the Elijah who was to come, Matthew 11:14, though John said he was not Elijah himself, John 1:21. Luke 1:17 says John came in the spirit and power of Elijah.

ON THE MOUNTAIN

Elijah and Moses appeared with Jesus on the mountain and talked with Him, Matthew 17:3.

THE TWO WITNESSES

Revelation 11:6 says God's two witnesses can shut the sky so no rain falls, like Elijah. Many think one of them will be Elijah. Others think they stand for the church's witness. This Bible does not take a side.

WHAT ALL SIDES AGREE ON

God took Elijah, and the work went on through Elisha. Elijah's going up points ahead to Jesus, who rose from the dead and went up into heaven, Acts 1:9.

DEBATED THE BIG QUESTION

THE DOUBLE PORTION

What Elisha Asked For

2 KINGS 2:9 TO 15 · DEUTERONOMY 21:15 TO 17 · 1 KINGS 19:16 TO 21

THE ASK

Before he was taken, Elijah said, Tell me, what can I do for you? Elisha said, Please, let me inherit a double portion of your spirit, 2:9.

WHAT IT MEANT

Under God's law, the firstborn son got a double portion, twice what each other son got, Deuteronomy 21:17. Elisha was asking to be Elijah's heir, the one who carried on his work.

A HARD THING

Elijah said, You have asked a hard thing. If you see me when I am taken, it will be yours, 2:10. Elisha saw.

MIRACLES GOD SPEAKING

THE CLOAK

Elisha picked up Elijah's cloak, struck the Jordan and cried, Where is Yahweh, the God of Elijah? The water parted again, 2:13 to 14.

THE PROOF

The prophets at Jericho saw it and said, The spirit of Elijah rests on Elisha, and they bowed down to him, 2:15.

ELISHA'S CALL

Years before, Elijah threw his cloak over Elisha while he was plowing with twelve pairs of oxen. Elisha burned his plow, cooked the oxen for a farewell meal, and followed him, 1 Kings 19:19 to 21.

THE QUESTION

Did Elisha get twice the power of Elijah, or did he get the oldest son's share?

Every View

2 KINGS 13:20 TO 21 · JOHN 14:12 · ACTS 1:8 TO 9 · 2:1 TO 4

VIEW 1: THE OLDEST SON'S SHARE

Most scholars say Elisha was asking to be Elijah's main heir, the firstborn among the prophets, not to be twice as great. Elisha called Elijah My father, 2:12.

VIEW 2: TWICE THE POWER

Many teachers say Elisha really did get double. The Bible tells about more of his miracles than Elijah's.

COUNTING THE MIRACLES

One old Jewish count lists eight miracles for Elijah and sixteen for Elisha. In that count, the last one happened after Elisha died, when a dead man touched his bones and came back to life, 13:21. Other counts come out different.

VIEW 3: A PICTURE OF THE SPIRIT

Some Christians see a picture of Jesus going up and sending the Holy Spirit on His followers, Acts 1:8 to 9 and 2:1 to 4. Jesus said those who believe would do even greater works, because He was going to the Father, John 14:12.

WHAT HE DID NOT ASK FOR

Elisha could have asked for anything. He did not ask for money, safety or fame. He asked for more of God's Spirit to do God's work.

WHAT ALL SIDES AGREE ON

The power was never Elisha's own, or Elijah's. Where is Yahweh, the God of Eli-

jah? was the right question, 2:14. God was still with His people when their great prophet was gone.

ELISHA HEALS THE WATERS OF JERICHO

¹⁹ Then the men of the city said to Elisha, "Please note, our lord, that the city's location is good, as you can see. But the water is bad and the land is unfruitful."

²⁰ "Bring me a new bowl," he replied, "and put some salt in it."

So they brought it to him, ²¹ and Elisha went out to the spring, cast the salt into it, and said, "This is what Yahweh says: ¹ I have healed this water. No longer will it cause death or unfruitfulness."

²² And the waters there have been healthy to this day, according to the word spoken by Elisha.

ELISHA MOCKED

²³ From there, Elisha went up to Bethel, and as he was walking up the road, a group of boys came out of the city and jeered at him, chanting, "Go up, you bald-head! Go up, you baldhead!"

²⁴ Then he turned around, looked at them, and called down a curse on them in the name of Yahweh.

Suddenly two female bears came out of the woods and mauled forty-two of the boys.

²⁵ And Elisha went on to Mount Carmel, and from there he returned to Samaria.

DEBATED THE BIG QUESTION

THE BEARS AND THE BOYS

What Happened

2 KINGS 2:19 TO 25 · 1 KINGS 12:28 TO 29 · LEVITICUS 26:21 TO 22

RIGHT AFTER A KIND MIRACLE

Just before this, Elisha healed the bad water of Jericho so the city could live, 2:19 to 22. Then he walked up the road to Bethel.

- 2KI 2:19 [MIRACLE] Elisha healed the waters of Jericho with salt
- 2KI 2:23 [MIRACLE] Bears from the woods mauled 42 mocking youths after Elisha's curse
- 2KI 2:23 [NOTE] BOYS. The Hebrew words can mean anything from small boys to young men. See the Big Question pages The Bears and the Boys.

ARCHAEOLOGY DEMONIC BLOODLINE OF CHRIST

BETHEL

Bethel was the home of one of Jeroboam's golden calves, the center of false worship in Israel, 1 Kings 12:28 to 29.

THE CROWD

A group came out of the city and jeered at him, chanting, Go up, you baldhead! Go up, you baldhead! 2:23. Forty two of them were hurt, so the group must have been large.

THE CURSE

Elisha turned, looked at them, and called down a curse on them in the name of Yahweh. Two female bears came out of the woods and mauled forty two of them, 2:24.

WHAT THE BIBLE DOES NOT SAY

It does not say the bears killed them, though many think some died. It does not say how old they were, or what Elisha expected to happen.

BALDHEAD

Baldness was a shame in that world, Isaiah 3:24. Nobody knows if Elisha was really bald. Either way, it was meant as an insult.

THE QUESTION

Why would God's prophet curse a crowd of youths, and why would God send bears?

Every View

GENESIS 37:2 · 2 SAMUEL 18:5 · LUKE 6:28 · GALATIANS 6:7

VIEW 1: YOUNG MEN, NOT LITTLE KIDS

The Hebrew words can mean little boys, but the same word is used for Joseph at seventeen, Genesis 37:2, and for Absalom as a grown man, 2 Samuel 18:5. Many think this was a gang of young men, big enough to be a real threat to one man on a lonely road.

VIEW 2: MOCKING GOD

Go up may have mocked Elijah being taken up: go away like your master. Shouting it at God's prophet from the city of the golden calf was mocking Yahweh. God's law warned that if Israel kept rebelling, He would send wild animals against them, Leviticus 26:22.

VIEW 3: A STORY TOLD AS A WARNING

Some scholars think this was a story told

among the prophets to warn people to respect God's messengers, without saying how it happened.

ELISHA DID NOT SEND THE BEARS

He spoke a curse in Yahweh's name. God decided what happened next. Jesus later taught His followers to bless those who curse them, Luke 6:28.

STILL HARD

Many Christians admit this is one of the hardest stories in the Bible, and that it should not be used to make God seem cruel or quick to hurt kids.

WHAT ALL SIDES AGREE ON

Mocking God is serious, and God is not mocked, Galatians 6:7. And the same God healed Jericho's water in the verses right before, 2:19 to 22.

3

CHAPTER 3 IN 30 SECONDS

Moab stops paying its tribute of lambs and wool. Israel, Judah and Edom march out together and run out of water in the desert. Elisha says, Dig ditches, and the next morning they are full of water. Moab sees the water shining red in the sun, thinks it is blood, and charges into a trap. Then the king of Moab does something horrible on his city wall.

MOAB'S REBELLION

¹In the eighteenth year of Jehoshaphat's reign over Judah, Jehoram son of Ahab became king of Israel, and he reigned in Samaria twelve years. ²And he did evil in the sight of Yahweh, but not as his father and mother had done. He removed the sacred pillar of Baal that his father had made.

³Nevertheless, he clung to the sins that Jeroboam son of Nebat had caused Israel to commit; he did not turn away from them.

⁴Now Mesha king of Moab was a sheep breeder, and he would render to the king of Israel a hundred thousand lambs and the wool of a hundred thousand rams. ⁵

■ 2KI 3:2 [DEMONIC] Joram removes the sacred pillar of Baal

■ 2KI 3:4 [ARCHAEOLOGY] Mesha king of Moab tells how he broke free from Israel

■ 2KI 3:4 [FIELD NOTES] Mesha bragged about this very revolt on a stone. See The Mesha Stele Field Notes page in Ruth, p.-.

PROPHECIES FULFILLED IN SCRIPTURE MIRACLES GOD SPEAKING BLOODLINE OF CHRIST

But after the death of Ahab, the king of Moab rebelled against the king of Israel.⁶

So at that time King Jehoram set out from Samaria and mobilized all Israel.⁷ And he sent a message to Jehoshaphat king of Judah: "The king of Moab has rebelled against me. Will you go with me to fight against Moab?"

"I will go," replied Jehoshaphat. "I am as you are, my people are your people, and my horses are your horses."⁸ Then he asked, "Which way shall we go up?"

"By way of the Desert of Edom," replied Joram.

⁹ So the king of Israel, the king of Judah, and the king of Edom set out, and after they had traveled a roundabout route for seven days, they had no water for their army or for their animals.

¹⁰ "Alas," said the king of Israel, "for Yahweh has summoned these three kings to deliver them into the hand of Moab!"

¹¹ But Jehoshaphat asked, "Is there no prophet of Yahweh here? Let us inquire of Yahweh through him."

And one of the servants of the king of Israel answered, "Elisha son of Shaphat is here. He used to pour water on the hands of Elijah."

¹² Jehoshaphat affirmed, "The word of Yahweh is with him." So the king of Israel and Jehoshaphat and the king of Edom went down to him.

¹³ Elisha, however, said to the king of Israel, "What have we to do with each other? Go to the prophets of your father and of your mother!"

"No," replied the king of Israel, "for it is Yahweh who has summoned these three kings to deliver them into the hand of Moab."

¹⁴ Then Elisha said, "As surely as Yahweh of Hosts lives, before whom I stand, were it not for my regard for the presence of Jehoshaphat king of Judah, I would not look at you or acknowledge you."¹⁵ But now, bring me a harpist."

And while the harpist played, the hand of Yahweh came upon Elisha¹⁶ and he said,

"This is what Yahweh says: 'Dig this valley full of ditches.'¹⁷ For Yahweh says, 'You will not see wind or rain, but the valley will be filled with water, and you will drink—you and your cattle and your animals.'¹⁸ This is a simple matter in the sight of Yahweh, and He will also deliver the Moabites into your hand."¹⁹ And you shall attack every fortified city and every city of importance. You shall cut down every good tree, stop up every spring, and ruin every good field with stones."

²⁰ The next morning, at the time of the morning sacrifice, water suddenly flowed from the direction of Edom and filled the land.

²¹ Now all the Moabites had heard that the kings had come up to fight against them. So all who could bear arms, young and old, were summoned and stationed at the border.²² When they got up early in the morning, the sun was shining on the water, and it looked as red as blood to the Moabites across the way.

²³ "This is blood!" they exclaimed. "The kings have clashed swords and slaughtered one another. Now to the plunder, Moab!"

²⁴ But when the Moabites came to the camp of Israel, the Israelites rose up and attacked them, and they fled before them.

So the Israelites invaded their land and struck down the Moabites.²⁵ They destroyed the cities, and each man threw stones on every good field until it was covered. They stopped up every spring and cut down every good tree. Only Kir-haraseth was left with stones in place, but men with slings surrounded it and attacked it as well.

²⁶ When the king of Moab saw that the battle was too fierce for him, he took with

■ 2KI 3:16 [MIRACLE] Trenches filled with water without rain or wind

■ 2KI 3:17 [PROPHECY] The dry valley would fill with water without rain and Moab would be defeated → 2KI 3:20; 2KI 3:24 p. -

■ 2KI 3:20 [FULFILLS] The dry valley would fill with water without rain and Moab would be defeated ← 2KI 3:17-18 p. -

■ 2KI 3:24 [FULFILLS] The dry valley would fill with water without rain and Moab would be defeated ← 2KI 3:17-18 p. -

PROPHECIES FULFILLED IN SCRIPTURE MIRACLES DEMONIC

him seven hundred swordsmen to break through to the king of Edom, but they could not prevail. ²⁷ So he took his first-born son, who was to succeed him, and offered him as a burnt offering on the city wall.

And there was great fury against the Israelites, so they withdrew and returned to their own land.

4

CHAPTER 4 IN 30 SECONDS

Elisha's miracle month. A widow's last jar of oil fills every jar she can borrow. A kind couple in Shunem builds Elisha a guest room, and God gives them a son. When the boy dies, Elisha brings him back to life. A pot of poison stew is fixed with flour, and twenty loaves feed a hundred men with food left over.

THE WIDOW'S OIL

¹ Now the wife of one of the sons of the prophets cried out to Elisha, "Your servant, my husband, is dead, and you know that your servant feared Yahweh. And now his creditor is coming to take my two children as his slaves!"

² "How can I help you?" asked Elisha. "Tell me, what do you have in the house?"

She answered, "Your servant has nothing in the house but a jar of oil."

³ "Go," said Elisha, "borrow empty jars from all your neighbors. Do not gather just a few. ⁴ Then go inside, shut the door behind you and your sons, and pour oil into all these jars, setting the full ones aside."

⁵ So she left him, and after she had shut the door behind her and her sons, they kept bringing jars to her, and she kept pouring. ⁶ When all the jars were full, she said to her son, "Bring me another."

But he replied, "There are no more jars." Then the oil stopped flowing.

⁷ She went and told the man of God, and he said, "Go, sell the oil, and pay your debt. Then you and your sons can live on the remainder."

THE SHUNAMMITE WOMAN // MATTHEW 10:40-42

⁸ One day Elisha went to Shunem, and a prominent woman who lived there persuaded him to have a meal. So whenever he would pass by, he would stop there to eat.

⁹ Then the woman said to her husband, "Behold, now I know that the one who often comes our way is a holy man of God."

¹⁰ Please let us make a small room upstairs and put in it a bed, a table, a chair, and a lamp for him. Then when he comes to us, he can stay there."

¹¹ One day Elisha came to visit and went to his upper room to lie down. ¹² And he said to Gehazi his servant, "Call the Shunammite woman."

And when he had called her, she stood before him, ¹³ and Elisha said to Gehazi, "Now tell her, 'Look, you have gone to all this trouble for us. What can we do for you? Can we speak on your behalf to the king or the commander of the army?'"

"I have a home among my own people," she replied.

¹⁴ So he asked, "Then what should be done for her?"

"Well, she has no son," Gehazi replied, "and her husband is old."

¹⁵ "Call her," said Elisha.

So Gehazi called her, and she stood in the doorway. ¹⁶ And Elisha declared, "At this time next year, you will hold a son in your arms."

"No, my lord," she said. "Do not lie to your maidservant, O man of God."

¹⁷ But the woman did conceive, and at that time the next year she gave birth to a son, just as Elisha had told her.

■ 2KI 3:27 [DEMONIC] The king of Moab burns his son as an offering

■ 2KI 3:27 [NOTE] CHILD SACRIFICE. The king of Moab burned his oldest son as an offering to his god, in front of both armies. GREAT FURY: the Hebrew does not say whose. Some think Moab was stirred to fight harder, some think Israel was horrified and went home, and some think it was God's anger.

■ 2KI 4:1 [MIRACLE] Widow's oil multiplied to fill all available jars

■ 2KI 4:16 [PROPHECY] Elisha told the Shunammite woman she would hold a son in a year → 2KI 4:17 p.-

■ 2KI 4:16 [MIRACLE] The Shunammite woman has a son as Elisha promised

■ 2KI 4:17 [FULFILLS] Elisha told the Shunammite woman she would hold a son in a year ← 2KI 4:16 p.-

MIRACLES

ELISHA RAISES THE SHUNAMMITE'S SON // ACTS 20:7-12

¹⁸ And the child grew, and one day he went out to his father, who was with the harvesters.

¹⁹ "My head! My head!" he complained to his father.

So his father told a servant, "Carry him to his mother."

²⁰ After the servant had picked him up and carried him to his mother, the boy sat on her lap until noon, and then he died. ²¹ And she went up and laid him on the bed of the man of God. Then she shut the door and went out.

²² And the woman called her husband and said, "Please send me one of the servants and one of the donkeys, that I may go quickly to the man of God and return."

²³ "Why would you go to him today?" he replied. "It is not a New Moon or a Sabbath."

"Everything is all right," she said.

²⁴ Then she saddled the donkey and told her servant, "Drive onward; do not slow the pace for me unless I tell you." ²⁵ So she set out and went to the man of God at Mount Carmel.

When the man of God saw her at a distance, he said to his servant Gehazi, "Look, there is the Shunammite woman. ²⁶ Please run out now to meet her and ask, 'Are you all right? Is your husband all right? Is your child all right?'"

And she answered, "Everything is all right."

²⁷ When she reached the man of God at the mountain, she clung to his feet. Gehazi came over to push her away, but the man of God said, "Leave her alone, for her soul is in deep distress, and Yahweh has hidden it from me and has not told me."

²⁸ Then she said, "Did I ask you for a son, my lord? Didn't I say, 'Do not deceive me?'"

²⁹ So Elisha said to Gehazi, "Tie up your garment, take my staff in your hand, and go! If you meet anyone, do not greet him,

and if anyone greets you, do not answer him. Then lay my staff on the boy's face."

³⁰ And the mother of the boy said, "As surely as Yahweh lives and as you yourself live, I will not leave you." So he got up and followed her.

³¹ Gehazi went on ahead of them and laid the staff on the boy's face, but there was no sound or response. So he went back to meet Elisha and told him, "The boy has not awakened."

³² When Elisha reached the house, there was the boy lying dead on his bed. ³³ So he went in, closed the door behind the two of them, and prayed to Yahweh.

³⁴ Then Elisha got on the bed and lay on the boy, mouth to mouth, eye to eye, and hand to hand. As he stretched himself out over him, the boy's body became warm.

³⁵ Elisha turned away and paced back and forth across the room. Then he got on the bed and stretched himself out over the boy again, and the boy sneezed seven times and opened his eyes.

³⁶ Elisha summoned Gehazi and said, "Call the Shunammite woman." So he called her and she came.

Then Elisha said, "Pick up your son."

³⁷ She came in, fell at his feet, and bowed to the ground. Then she picked up her son and went out.

ELISHA PURIFIES THE POISONOUS STEW

³⁸ When Elisha returned to Gilgal, there was a famine in the land. As the sons of the prophets were sitting at his feet, he said to his attendant, "Put on the large pot and boil some stew for the sons of the prophets."

³⁹ One of them went out to the field to gather herbs, and he found a wild vine from which he gathered as many wild gourds as his garment could hold. Then he came back and cut them up into the pot of stew, though no one knew what they were.

■ 2KI 4:32 [MIRACLE] Elisha raised the Shunammite's son

■ 2KI 4:36 [ALLUDED TO] The New Testament refers to this → HEB 11:35 p.~

■ 2KI 4:38 [MIRACLE] Poison pot of stew healed with flour

PROPHECIES FULFILLED IN SCRIPTURE MIRACLES GOD SPEAKING

⁴⁰ And they poured it out for the men to eat, but when they tasted the stew they cried out, "There is death in the pot, O man of God!" And they could not eat it.

⁴¹ Then Elisha said, "Get some flour." He threw it into the pot and said, "Pour it out for the people to eat." And there was nothing harmful in the pot.

FEEDING A HUNDRED MEN // MATTHEW 15:29–39; MARK 8:1–10

⁴² Now a man from Baal-shalishah came to the man of God with a sack of twenty loaves of barley bread from the first ripe grain.

"Give it to the people to eat," said Elisha.

⁴³ But his servant asked, "How am I to set twenty loaves before a hundred men?"

"Give it to the people to eat," said Elisha, "for this is what Yahweh says: 'They will eat and have some left over.'"

⁴⁴ So he set it before them, and they ate and had some left over, according to the word of Yahweh.

5

CHAPTER 5 IN 30 SECONDS

Naaman is a mighty Aramean general with leprosy. A captured Israelite girl tells him about the prophet in Samaria. Elisha does not even come to the door. He just says, Wash seven times in the Jordan. Naaman is insulted, then obeys, and his skin becomes like a little boy's. Elisha's servant Gehazi chases Naaman for money and goes home with the leprosy instead.

NAAMAN CURED OF LEPROSY // LUKE 17:11–19

¹ Now Naaman, the commander of the army of the king of Aram, was a great man in his master's sight and highly regarded, for through him Yahweh had given victory to Aram. And he was a mighty man of valor, but he was a leper.

² At this time the Arameans had gone out in bands and had taken a young girl from the land of Israel, and she was serving Naaman's wife. ³ She said to her mistress, "If only my master would go to the prophet who is in Samaria, he would cure him of his leprosy."

⁴ And Naaman went and told his master what the girl from the land of Israel had said.

⁵ "Go now," said the king of Aram, "and I will send you with a letter to the king of Israel."

So Naaman departed, taking with him 750 pounds of silver, 150 pounds of gold, and ten sets of clothing.

⁶ And the letter that he took to the king of Israel stated: "With this letter I am sending my servant Naaman, so that you may cure him of his leprosy."

⁷ When the king of Israel read the letter, he tore his clothes and asked, "Am I God, killing and giving life, that this man expects me to cure a leper? Surely you can see that he is seeking a quarrel with me!"

⁸ Now when Elisha the man of God heard that the king of Israel had torn his clothes, he sent a message to the king: "Why have you torn your clothes? Please let the man come to me, and he will know that there is a prophet in Israel."

⁹ So Naaman came with his horses and chariots and stood at the door of Elisha's house.

¹⁰ Then Elisha sent him a messenger, who said, "Go and wash yourself seven times in the Jordan, and your flesh will be restored, and you will be clean."

¹¹ But Naaman went away angry, saying, "I thought that he would surely come out, stand and call on the name of Yahweh his God, and wave his hand over the spot to cure my leprosy. ¹² Are not the Abanah and Pharpar, the rivers of Damascus, better than all the waters of Israel? Could I not have washed in them and been

■ 2KI 4:42 [MIRACLE] 20 loaves fed 100 men with leftovers

■ 2KI 4:42 [NOTE] BARLEY LOAVES. Jesus fed 5,000 with five barley loaves, and there were leftovers then too, John 6:9 to 13.

■ 2KI 4:43 [PROPHECY] Twenty loaves would feed a hundred men with food left over → 2KI 4:44 p. –

■ 2KI 4:44 [FULFILLS] Twenty loaves would feed a hundred men with food left over ← 2KI 4:43 p. –

■ 2KI 5:1 [NOTE] NAAMAN. Jesus said there were many lepers in Israel in Elisha's day, but only this foreigner was healed, Luke 4:27. See the Big Question pages Naaman.

■ 2KI 5:10 [PROPHECY] Naaman would be healed if he washed seven times in the Jordan → 2KI 5:14 p. –

■ 2KI 5:10 [MIRACLE] Elisha tells Naaman to wash seven times in the Jordan

PROPHECIES FULFILLED IN SCRIPTURE **DEMONIC**

cleansed?" So he turned and went away in a rage.

¹³ Naaman's servants, however, approached him and said, "My father, if the prophet had told you to do some great thing, would you not have done it? How much more, then, when he tells you, 'Wash and be cleansed'?"

¹⁴ So Naaman went down and dipped himself in the Jordan seven times, according to the word of the man of God, and his flesh was restored and became like that of a little child, and he was clean.

GEHAZI'S GREED AND LEPROSY

¹⁵ Then Naaman and all his attendants went back to the man of God, stood before him, and declared, "Now I know for sure that there is no God in all the earth except in Israel. So please accept a gift from your servant."

¹⁶ But Elisha replied, "As surely as Yahweh lives, before whom I stand, I will not accept it." And although Naaman urged him to accept it, he refused.

¹⁷ "If you will not," said Naaman, "please let me, your servant, be given as much soil as a pair of mules can carry. For your servant will never again make a burnt offering or a sacrifice to any other god but Yahweh. ¹⁸ Yet may Yahweh forgive your servant this one thing: When my master goes into the temple of Rimmon to worship there, and he leans on my arm, and I bow down in the temple of Rimmon, may Yahweh forgive your servant in this matter."

¹⁹ "Go in peace," said Elisha.

But after Naaman had traveled a short distance, ²⁰ Gehazi, the servant of Elisha the man of God, said, "Look, my master has spared this Aramean, Naaman, by not accepting what he brought. As surely as Yahweh lives, I will run after him and get something from him."

- **2KI 5:14 [MIRACLE]** Naaman's flesh is restored like a young boy's
- **2KI 5:14 [ALLUDED TO]** The New Testament refers to this → LK 4:27 p.~
- **2KI 5:14 [FULFILLS]** Naaman would be healed if he washed seven times in the Jordan ← 2KI 5:10 p.~
- **2KI 5:17 [DEMONIC]** Naaman vows to worship only God but must enter Rimmon's temple

DEBATED **THE BIG QUESTION**
NAAMAN
A General Healed

2 KINGS 5:1 TO 27 · LEVITICUS 13 · LUKE 4:27

A GREAT MAN WITH A PROBLEM

Naaman was the commander of the army of Aram, a brave hero, but he had leprosy, 5:1. In the Bible, leprosy means a skin disease that made people unclean.

A LITTLE GIRL'S FAITH

A young girl taken captive from Israel served Naaman's wife. She said, If only my master would go to the prophet in Samaria! 5:2 to 3.

THE WRONG DOOR

The king of Aram sent Naaman to the king of Israel with money and a letter. The king of Israel tore his clothes: Am I God, to heal leprosy? 5:5 to 7.

WASH SEVEN TIMES

Elisha did not even come outside. He sent a messenger: Wash seven times in the Jordan. Naaman was furious. Are not the rivers of Damascus better? His servants said, If he had asked you to do something great, would you not have done it? So he washed, and his skin became like a little boy's, 5:10 to 14.

NO GOD BUT ISRAEL'S

Naaman went back and said, Now I know there is no God in all the earth except in Israel. Elisha would not take a single gift, 5:15 to 16.

THE QUESTION

Why did Naaman ask for dirt, and why did Elisha let him go into the temple of Rimmon?

Every View

2 KINGS 5:15 TO 19 · LUKE 4:24 TO 30 · MATTHEW 8:5 TO 13

THE DIRT

Naaman asked for two mule loads of Israel's soil, 5:17. People then believed each god belonged to his own land. Naaman wanted to worship Yahweh on Israel's ground, even back home in Damascus.

THE TEMPLE OF RIMMON

Rimmon, also called Hadad, was the storm god of Damascus. Naaman's king

THE HEART MIRACLES DEMONIC

leaned on his arm when he bowed there. Naaman asked Yahweh to forgive him for bowing with his king, 5:18. Elisha said, Go in peace, 5:19.

VIEW 1: GOD WAS PATIENT

Many think Elisha did not approve of idols, but trusted God to keep working in a brand new believer who was far from home.

VIEW 2: ONLY A GOODBYE

Others say Go in peace was a normal farewell, not a yes. Elisha did not answer the question. He left it to God.

JESUS AND NAAMAN

Jesus said there were many lepers in Israel in Elisha's day, but only Naaman, a foreigner, was healed. The people of Nazareth were so angry they tried to throw Him off a cliff, Luke 4:27 to 29.

WHAT ALL SIDES AGREE ON

God's mercy reached an enemy general. Healing came by simple obedience, not by money. And Gehazi, who chased Naaman for silver, went home with the leprosy instead, 5:20 to 27.

²¹ So Gehazi pursued Naaman. And when Naaman saw him running toward him, he got down from the chariot to meet him and asked, "Is everything all right?"

²² "Everything is all right," Gehazi replied. "My master has sent me to say, 'Look, two young men from the sons of the prophets have just now come to me from the hill country of Ephraim. Please give them 75 pounds of silver and two sets of clothing.'"

²³ But Naaman insisted, "Please, take 150 pounds." And he urged Gehazi to accept them. Then he tied up 150 pounds of silver in two bags along with two sets of clothing and gave them to two of his servants, who carried them ahead of Gehazi.

²⁴ When Gehazi came to the hill, he took the gifts from the servants and stored them in the house. Then he dismissed the men, and they departed.

²⁵ When Gehazi went in and stood before his master, Elisha asked him, "Gehazi, where have you been?"

"Your servant did not go anywhere," he replied.

²⁶ But Elisha questioned him, "Did not my heart go with you when the man got down from his chariot to meet you? Is this the time to accept money and clothing, olive groves and vineyards, sheep and oxen, menservants and maidservants?" ²⁷ Therefore, the leprosy of Naaman will cling to you and your descendants forever!"

And as Gehazi left his presence, he was leprous—as white as snow.

6

CHAPTER 6 IN 30 SECONDS

A borrowed axe head floats. The king of Aram keeps getting ambushed because Elisha tells Israel's king every plan, so he sends an army to capture one prophet. Elisha's servant panics, and God opens his eyes to see hills full of horses and chariots of fire. Then Samaria is surrounded, and the famine gets so bad that people do unthinkable things.

THE AXE HEAD FLOATS

¹ Now the sons of the prophets said to Elisha, "Please take note that the place where we meet with you is too small for us. ² Please let us go to the Jordan, where each of us can get a log so we can build ourselves a place to live there."

"Go," said Elisha.

³ Then one of them said, "Please come with your servants."

"I will come," he replied.

⁴ So Elisha went with them, and when they came to the Jordan, they began to cut down some trees. ⁵ As one of them was cutting down a tree, the iron axe head fell into the water. "Oh, my master," he cried out, "it was borrowed!"

⁶ "Where did it fall?" asked the man of God.

And when he showed him the place, the man of God cut a stick, threw it there, and made the iron float.

■ **2KI 5:26 [HEART]** Elisha's heart went with Gehazi. God's prophet saw what was done in secret.

■ **2KI 5:27 [DEMONIC]** Naaman's leprosy fell on Gehazi and his descendants forever

■ **2KI 6:5 [MIRACLE]** Axe head floated when Elisha threw in a stick

PROPHECIES FULFILLED IN SCRIPTURE MIRACLES

⁷ "Lift it out," he said, and the man reached out his hand and took it.

ELISHA CAPTURES THE BLINDED ARAMEANS

⁸ Now the king of Aram was at war against Israel. After consulting with his servants, he said, "My camp will be in such and such a place."

⁹ Then the man of God sent word to the king of Israel: "Be careful not to pass by this place, for the Arameans are going down there."

¹⁰ So the king of Israel sent word to the place the man of God had pointed out. Time and again Elisha warned the king, so that he was on his guard in such places. ¹¹ For this reason the king of Aram became enraged and called his servants to demand of them, "Tell me, which one of us is on the side of the king of Israel?"

¹² But one of his servants replied, "No one, my lord the king. For Elisha, the prophet in Israel, tells the king of Israel the very words you speak in your bedroom."

¹³ So the king said, "Go and see where he is, that I may send men to capture him."

On receiving the report, "Elisha is in Dothan," ¹⁴ the king of Aram sent horses, chariots, and a great army. They went there by night and surrounded the city.

¹⁵ When the servant of the man of God got up and went out early in the morning, behold, an army with horses and chariots had surrounded the city. So he asked Elisha, "Oh, my master, what are we to do?"

¹⁶ "Do not be afraid," Elisha answered, "for those who are with us are more than those who are with them."

¹⁷ Then Elisha prayed, "O Yahweh, please open his eyes that he may see."

And Yahweh opened the eyes of the young man, and he saw that the hills were full of horses and chariots of fire all around Elisha.

¹⁸ As the Arameans came down against him, Elisha prayed to Yahweh, "Please

strike these people with blindness." So He struck them with blindness, according to the word of Elisha.

¹⁹ And Elisha told them, "This is not the way, and this is not the city. Follow me, and I will take you to the man you are seeking." And he led them to Samaria.

²⁰ When they had entered Samaria, Elisha said, "O Yahweh, open the eyes of these men that they may see."

Then Yahweh opened their eyes, and they looked around and discovered that they were in Samaria.

²¹ And when the king of Israel saw them, he asked Elisha, "My father, shall I kill them? Shall I kill them?"

²² "Do not kill them," he replied. "Would you kill those you have captured with your own sword or bow? Set food and water before them, that they may eat and drink and then return to their master."

²³ So the king prepared a great feast for them, and after they had finished eating and drinking, he sent them away, and they returned to their master. And the Aramean raiders did not come into the land of Israel again.

THE SIEGE AND FAMINE OF SAMARIA

²⁴ Some time later, Ben-hadad king of Aram assembled his entire army and marched up to besiege Samaria.

²⁵ So there was a great famine in Samaria. Indeed, they besieged the city so long that a donkey's head sold for two pounds of silver, and a cup of dove's dung sold for two ounces of silver.

²⁶ As the king of Israel was passing by on the wall, a woman cried out to him, "Help me, my lord the king!"

²⁷ He answered, "If Yahweh does not help you, where can I find help for you? From the threshing floor or the winepress?" ²⁸ Then the king asked her, "What is the matter?"

■ 2KI 6:15 [MIRACLE] Elisha's servant's eyes opened to see fiery horses and chariots

■ 2KI 6:16 [NOTABLE] The servant saw an army. Elisha saw the hills full of horses and chariots of fire. God's help is often there before we can see it.

■ 2KI 6:18 [MIRACLE] Aramean army struck blind, then sight restored in Samaria

■ 2KI 6:25 [NOTE] DOVE'S DUNG. Some think this was a nickname for a cheap food, like a kind of bean or wild bulb. Others think hungry people really used it for food or fuel.

PROPHECIES FULFILLED IN SCRIPTURE MIRACLES GOD SPEAKING

And she answered, "This woman said to me, 'Give up your son, that we may eat him, and tomorrow we will eat my son.' ²⁹ So we boiled my son and ate him, and the next day I said to her, 'Give up your son, that we may eat him.' But she had hidden her son."

³⁰ When the king heard the words of the woman, he tore his clothes. And as he passed by on the wall, the people saw the sackcloth under his clothes next to his skin. ³¹ He announced, "May God punish me, and ever so severely, if the head of Elisha son of Shaphat remains on his shoulders through this day!"

³² Now Elisha was sitting in his house, and the elders were sitting with him. The king sent a messenger ahead, but before he arrived, Elisha said to the elders, "Do you see how this murderer has sent someone to cut off my head? Look, when the messenger comes, shut the door to keep him out. Is not the sound of his master's footsteps behind him?"

³³ While Elisha was still speaking with them, the messenger came down to him. And the king said, "This calamity is from Yahweh. Why should I wait for Yahweh any longer?"

7

CHAPTER 7 IN 30 SECONDS

Elisha says that by this time tomorrow food will be cheap. A royal officer laughs. That night God makes the Aramean army hear a huge army coming, and they run, leaving everything behind. Four men with leprosy find the empty camp, have a feast, then tell the city. Food is cheap the next day, and the officer gets trampled in the gate.

ELISHA'S PROPHECY OF PLENTY

¹ Then Elisha said, "Hear the word of Yahweh! This is what Yahweh says: 'About this time tomorrow at the gate of Samaria, six quarts of fine flour will sell for half an ounce of silver, and twelve quarts of barley will sell for half an ounce of silver.'"

² But the officer on whose arm the king leaned answered the man of God, "Look, even if Yahweh were to make windows in heaven, could this really happen?" "You will see it with your own eyes," replied Elisha, "but you will not eat any of it."

THE ARAMEANS FLEE

³ Now there were four men with leprosy at the entrance of the city gate, and they said to one another, "Why just sit here until we die? ⁴ If we say, 'Let us go into the city,' we will die there from the famine in the city; but if we sit here, we will also die. So come now, let us go over to the camp of the Arameans. If they let us live, we will live; if they kill us, we will die."

⁵ So they arose at twilight and went to the camp of the Arameans. But when they came to the outskirts of the camp, there was not a man to be found. ⁶ For the Lord had caused the Arameans to hear the sound of chariots, horses, and a great army, so that they said to one another, "Look, the king of Israel must have hired the kings of the Hittites and Egyptians to attack us."

⁷ Thus the Arameans had arisen and fled at twilight, abandoning their tents and horses and donkeys. The camp was intact, and they had run for their lives.

⁸ When the lepers reached the edge of the camp, they went into a tent to eat and drink. Then they carried off the silver, gold, and clothing, and went and hid them. On returning, they entered another tent, carried off some items from there, and hid them.

⁹ Finally, they said to one another, "We are not doing what is right. Today is a day of good news. If we are silent and wait until morning light, our sin will overtake us. Now, therefore, let us go and tell the king's household."

¹⁰ So they went and called out to the gatekeepers of the city, saying, "We went to the Aramean camp and no one was

■ 2KI 6:28 [FULFILLS] In siege, people would eat their own children ← LEV 26:29 p.-

■ 2KI 7:1 [PROPHECY] Elisha predicted: famine over in 24 hours, food prices would crash; the king's officer would see it but not eat → 2KI 7:16-20 p.-

■ 2KI 7:6 [MIRACLE] The Lord makes the Aramean army hear chariots and flee

PROPHECIES FULFILLED IN SCRIPTURE

there—not a trace—only tethered horses and donkeys, and the tents were intact.”

¹¹ The gatekeepers shouted the news, and it was reported to the king's household.

¹² So the king got up in the night and said to his servants, “Let me tell you what the Arameans have done to us. They know we are starving, so they have left the camp to hide in the field, thinking, ‘When they come out of the city, we will take them alive and enter the city.’”

¹³ But one of his servants replied, “Please, have scouts take five of the horses that remain in the city. Their plight will be no worse than all the Israelites who are left here. You can see that all the Israelites here are doomed. So let us send them and find out.”

¹⁴ Then the scouts took two chariots with horses, and the king sent them after the Aramean army, saying, “Go and see.” ¹⁵ And they tracked them as far as the Jordan, and indeed, the whole way was littered with the clothing and equipment the Arameans had thrown off in haste. So the scouts returned and told the king.

ELISHA'S PROPHECY FULFILLED

¹⁶ Then the people went out and plundered the camp of the Arameans. It was then that six quarts of fine flour sold for half an ounce of silver, and twelve quarts of barley sold for half an ounce of silver, according to the word of Yahweh.

¹⁷ Now the king had appointed the officer on whose arm he leaned to be in charge of the gate, but the people trampled him in the gateway, and he died, just as the man of God had foretold when the king had come to him. ¹⁸ It happened just as the man of God had told the king: “About this time tomorrow at the gate of Samaria, twelve quarts of barley will sell for half an ounce of silver, and six quarts of fine flour will sell for half an ounce of silver.”

¹⁹ And the officer had answered the man of God, “Look, even if Yahweh were to

make windows in heaven, could this really happen?”

So Elisha had replied, “You will see it with your own eyes, but you will not eat any of it!”

²⁰ And that is just what happened to him. The people trampled him in the gateway, and he died.

8

CHAPTER 8 IN 30 SECONDS

The woman from Shunem gets her land back after a famine, right while Gehazi is telling the king her story. Elisha weeps when he sees what Hazael will do to Israel, and Hazael murders the king of Aram the next day. In Judah, King Jehoram marries Ahab's daughter and follows Ahab's ways.

THE SHUNAMMITE'S LAND RESTORED

¹ Now Elisha had said to the woman whose son he had restored to life, “Arise, you and your household; go and live as a foreigner wherever you can. For Yahweh has decreed that a seven-year famine will come to the land.”

² So the woman had proceeded to do as the man of God had instructed. And she and her household lived as foreigners for seven years in the land of the Philistines.

³ At the end of seven years, when the woman returned from the land of the Philistines, she went to the king to appeal for her house and her land.

⁴ Now the king had been speaking to Gehazi, the servant of the man of God, saying, “Please relate to me all the great things Elisha has done.”

⁵ And Gehazi was telling the king how Elisha had brought the dead back to life. Just then the woman whose son Elisha had revived came to appeal to the king for her house and her land. So Gehazi said, “My lord the king, this is the woman, and this is the son Elisha restored to life.”

⁶ When the king asked the woman, she confirmed it. So the king appointed for her an officer, saying, “Restore all that was

2KI 7:16 [FULFILLS] Elisha predicted: famine over in 24 hours, food prices would crash; the king's officer would see it but not eat ← 2KI 7:1-2 p.-

2KI 8:1 [PROPHECY] Elisha warned of a famine that would last seven years → 2KI 8:2-3 p.-

2KI 8:2 [FULFILLS] Elisha warned of a famine that would last seven years ← 2KI 8:1 p.-

PROPHECIES FULFILLED IN SCRIPTURE ARCHAEOLOGY BLOODLINE OF CHRIST

hers, along with all the proceeds of the field from the day that she left the country until now."

HAZAEI MURDERS BEN-HADAD

⁷ Then Elisha came to Damascus while Ben-hadad king of Aram was sick, and the king was told, "The man of God has come here."

⁸ So the king said to Hazael, "Take a gift in your hand, go to meet the man of God, and inquire of Yahweh through him, 'Will I recover from this illness?'"

⁹ So Hazael went to meet Elisha, taking with him a gift of forty camel loads of every good thing from Damascus. And he went in and stood before him and said, "Your son Ben-hadad king of Aram has sent me to ask, 'Will I recover from this illness?'"

¹⁰ Elisha answered, "Go and tell him, 'You will surely recover.' But Yahweh has shown me that in fact he will die."

¹¹ Elisha fixed his gaze steadily on him until Hazael became uncomfortable. Then the man of God began to weep.

¹² "Why is my lord weeping?" asked Hazael.

"Because I know the evil you will do to the Israelites," Elisha replied. "You will set fire to their fortresses, kill their young men with the sword, dash their little ones to pieces, and rip open their pregnant women."

¹³ "But how could your servant, a mere dog, do such a monstrous thing?" said Hazael.

And Elisha answered, "Yahweh has shown me that you will be king over Aram."

¹⁴ So Hazael left Elisha and went to his master, who asked him, "What did Elisha say to you?"

And he replied, "He told me that you would surely recover." ¹⁵ But the next day

Hazael took a thick cloth, dipped it in water, and spread it over the king's face.

So Ben-hadad died, and Hazael reigned in his place.

JEHORAM REIGNS IN JUDAH // 2 CHRONICLES 21:1-7

¹⁶ In the fifth year of the reign of Joram son of Ahab over Israel, Jehoram son of Jehoshaphat succeeded his father as king of Judah. ¹⁷ Jehoram was thirty-two years old when he became king, and he reigned in Jerusalem eight years.

¹⁸ And Jehoram walked in the ways of the kings of Israel, just as the house of Ahab had done. For he married a daughter of Ahab and did evil in the sight of Yahweh.

¹⁹ Yet for the sake of His servant David, Yahweh was unwilling to destroy Judah, since He had promised to maintain a lamp for David and his descendants forever.

EDOM AND LIBNAH REBEL // 2 CHRONICLES 21:8-11

²⁰ In the days of Jehoram, Edom rebelled against the hand of Judah and appointed their own king. ²¹ So Jehoram crossed over to Zair with all his chariots. When the Edomites surrounded him and his chariot commanders, he rose up and attacked by night. His troops, however, fled to their homes.

²² So to this day Edom has been in rebellion against the hand of Judah. Likewise, Libnah rebelled at the same time.

²³ As for the rest of the acts of Jehoram, along with all his accomplishments, are they not written in the book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Judah?

²⁴ And Jehoram rested with his fathers and was buried with them in the City of David. And his son Ahaziah reigned in his place.

- 2KI 8:10 [PROPHECY] Elisha said Ben hadad would die, not recover → 2KI 8:15 p.-
- 2KI 8:12 [PROPHECY] Elisha's tearful prophecy to Hazael → 2KI 10:32-33; 2KI 13:3; 2KI 13:22 p.-
- 2KI 8:13 [PROPHECY] Elisha said Hazael would become king of Aram → 2KI 8:15 p.-
- 2KI 8:13 [FULFILLS] Elijah was told to anoint Hazael, Jehu, and Elisha, and judgment would come through them ← 1KI 19:15-17 p.-

■ 2KI 8:15 [FULFILLS] Elisha said Ben hadad would die, not recover ← 2KI 8:10 p.-

■ 2KI 8:15 [FULFILLS] Elisha said Hazael would become king of Aram ← 2KI 8:13 p.-

■ 2KI 8:20 [FULFILLS] Isaac's prophecy that Esau would live by the sword and eventually break Jacob's yoke ← GEN 27:39-40 p.-

■ 2KI 8:24 [ARCHAEOLOGY] Ahaziah of Judah is most likely named on the Tel Dan Stele, though part of the name is broken, see the note on 8:28

■ 2KI 8:24 [NOTE] TWO JORAMS. Judah's king Jehoram, also called Joram, and Israel's king Joram, also called Jehoram, ruled at the same time and were brothers in

PROPHECIES FULFILLED IN SCRIPTURE ARCHAEOLOGY GOD SPEAKING BLOODLINE OF CHRIST

AHAZIAH REIGNS IN JUDAH // 2 CHRONICLES 22:1-7

²⁵In the twelfth year of the reign of Joram son of Ahab over Israel, Ahaziah son of Jehoram became king of Judah. ²⁶Ahaziah was twenty-two years old when he became king, and he reigned in Jerusalem one year. His mother's name was Athaliah, the granddaughter of Omri king of Israel.

²⁷And Ahaziah walked in the ways of the house of Ahab and did evil in the sight of Yahweh like the house of Ahab, for he was a son-in-law of the house of Ahab.

²⁸Then Ahaziah went with Joram son of Ahab to fight against Hazael king of Aram at Ramoth-gilead, and the Arameans wounded Joram. ²⁹So King Joram returned to Jezreel to recover from the wounds that the Arameans had inflicted on him at Ramah when he fought against Hazael king of Aram. Then Ahaziah son of Jehoram king of Judah went down to Jezreel to visit Joram son of Ahab, because Joram had been wounded.

9

CHAPTER 9 IN 30 SECONDS

A young prophet runs in, pours oil on Jehu's head, and runs out. Jehu becomes king and drives like a madman to Jezreel. He shoots King Joram of Israel with an arrow, has King Ahaziah of Judah shot too, and Jezebel is thrown out a window. The dogs leave almost nothing, just as Elijah said.

JEHU ANOINTED KING OF ISRAEL

¹Now Elisha the prophet summoned one of the sons of the prophets and said to him, "Tuck your cloak under your belt, take this flask of oil, and go to Ramoth-gilead. ²When you arrive, look for Jehu son of Jehoshaphat, the son of Nimshi. Go in, get him away from his companions, and take him to an inner room. ³Then take the flask of oil, pour it on his head, and

declare, 'This is what Yahweh says: **I anoint you king over Israel.**' Then open the door and run. Do not delay!"

⁴So the young prophet went to Ramoth-gilead, ⁵and when he arrived, the army commanders were sitting there. "I have a message for you, commander," he said. "For which of us?" asked Jehu.

"For you, commander," he replied.

⁶So Jehu got up and went into the house, where the young prophet poured the oil on his head and declared, "This is what Yahweh, the God of Israel, says: **'I anoint you king over Yahweh's people Israel. 7 And you are to strike down the house of your master Ahab, so that I may avenge the blood of My servants the prophets and the blood of all the servants of Yahweh shed by the hand of Jezebel. 8 The whole house of Ahab will perish, and I will cut off from Ahab every male, both slave and free, in Israel. 9 I will make the house of Ahab like the houses of Jeroboam son of Nebat and Baasha son of Ahijah. 10 And on the plot of ground at Jezreel the dogs will devour Jezebel, and there will be no one to bury her.'**"

Then the young prophet opened the door and ran.

¹¹When Jehu went out to the servants of his master, they asked, "Is everything all right? Why did this madman come to you?"

"You know his kind and their babble," he replied.

¹²"That is a lie!" they said. "Tell us now!" So Jehu answered, "He talked to me about this and that, saying, 'This is what Yahweh says: **I anoint you king over Israel.**'"

■ **2KI 9:2 [ARCHAEOLOGY]** An Assyrian king's carving shows King Jehu of Israel, or his messenger, bowing with tribute → FIELD NOTES p.21

■ **2KI 9:2 [FIELD NOTES]** An Assyrian king carved a picture of Jehu, or his messenger, bowing before him. See the Jehu on the Black Obelisk Field Notes page.

■ **2KI 9:6 [PROPHECY]** Elisha sent a prophet to anoint Jehu and command him to wipe out Ahab's house → 2KI 9:24; 2KI 9:35-36; 2KI 10:11 p.-

■ **2KI 9:6 [NOTABLE]** The oil set Jehu apart for the hard job God gave him: to judge the house of Ahab.

■ **2KI 9:6 [FULFILLS]** Elijah was told to anoint Hazael, Jehu, and Elisha, and judgment would come through them ← 1KI 19:15-17 p.-

law. Judah's Jehoram is in Jesus' family line, Matthew 1:8, so only his name is underlined.

■ **2KI 8:28 [ARCHAEOLOGY]** Aramaic inscription that names the House of David

■ **2KI 8:28 [FIELD NOTES]** THE TEL DAN STELE. An Aramean king, most likely Hazael, bragged on a stone that he killed Joram king of Israel and Ahaziah of the House of David. Parts of both names are broken. The Bible says Jehu killed them, 9:24 and 9:27. See the Tel Dan Stele Field Notes page in 2 Samuel, p.-.

FIELD NOTES · ARCHAEOLOGY · CONFIDENCE: HIGH

JEHU ON THE BLACK OBELISK

2 KINGS 9:1 TO 10:36 · 1 KINGS 19:16



The Jehu panel on the Black Obelisk, British Museum. The man bowing to the ground is Jehu, or his messenger, before Shalmaneser III. Photo Steven G. Johnson, CC BY SA 3.0.

WHAT IT IS

A black stone pillar about 6½ feet tall, carved on all four sides by Shalmaneser III, king of Assyria. Its five rows of pictures show kings bringing him gifts. One row shows a man bowing with his face to the ground.

HOW OLD IT IS

About 825 BC. The scene with Jehu comes from 841 BC, the year Jehu took the throne.

WHERE AND WHEN FOUND

At Nimrud in Iraq, ancient Calah, by Austen Henry Layard in 1846. It is in the British Museum in London.

WHAT IT SAYS

The words over the picture say: The tribute of Jehu, son of Omri. Silver, gold, a golden bowl, golden cups, golden buckets, tin, a staff for the king's hand and spears. Assyria called Israel the house of Omri, so even Jehu, who wiped out Omri's family, is called son of Omri.

THE ONLY PICTURE

This is the only known picture of a king of Israel, or of his messenger, made in his own lifetime. The Bible does not mention this gift. Jehu may have paid to keep Assyria on his side against Hazael of Aram, 10:32.

THE OTHER FOUR ROWS

The other rows show gifts from four other

lands. Servants lead in two humped camels, an elephant and monkeys, and carry metal, cloth and tusks. Lions and a deer are carved on one row. A line of writing over each row names the king or land that sent them.

JEHU IN OTHER RECORDS

Shalmaneser's written records of his eighteenth year, 841 BC, also say he took tribute from Jehu, after he marched against Hazael of Damascus.

WHY JEHU BOWED

In 841 BC Jehu had just killed Joram of Israel and Ahaziah of Judah, 9:24 to 27. Hazael of Aram was pressing on his borders. Bowing to Assyria may have looked like the safest way to keep his new throne.

THE HOUSE OF OMRI

Assyria kept calling Israel the house of Omri for more than a hundred years after Omri died. Jehu wiped out Omri's family, 10:11, yet to Assyria he was still the son of Omri, the name of his country.

WHAT IT DOES NOT PROVE

Some think the bowing man is Jehu's messenger, not Jehu himself. A few scholars think the name means Joram. Most read it as Jehu, the king 2 Kings 9 to 10 describes.

PROPHECIES FULFILLED IN SCRIPTURE | DEMONIC | GOD SPEAKING | BLOODLINE OF CHRIST

¹³ Quickly, each man took his garment and put it under Jehu on the bare steps. Then they blew the ram's horn and proclaimed, "Jehu is king!"

JEHU KILLS JORAM AND AHAZIAH // 2 CHRONICLES 22:8-9

¹⁴ Thus Jehu son of Jehoshaphat, the son of Nimshi, conspired against Joram.

(Now Joram and all Israel had been defending Ramoth-gilead against Hazael king of Aram, ¹⁵ but King Joram had returned to Jezreel to recover from the wounds he had suffered at the hands of the Arameans in the battle against Hazael their king.)

So Jehu said, "If you commanders wish to make me king, then do not let anyone escape from the city to go and tell it in Jezreel."

¹⁶ Then Jehu got into his chariot and went to Jezreel, because Joram was laid up there. And Ahaziah king of Judah had gone down to see him.

¹⁷ Now the watchman standing on the tower in Jezreel saw Jehu's troops approaching, and he called out, "I see a company of troops!"

"Choose a rider," Joram commanded.

"Send him out to meet them and ask, 'Have you come in peace?'"

¹⁸ So a horseman rode off to meet Jehu and said, "This is what the king asks: 'Have you come in peace?'"

"What do you know about peace?" Jehu replied. "Fall in behind me."

And the watchman reported, "The messenger reached them, but he is not coming back."

¹⁹ So the king sent out a second horseman, who went to them and said, "This is what the king asks: 'Have you come in peace?'"

"What do you know about peace?" Jehu replied. "Fall in behind me."

²⁰ Again the watchman reported, "He reached them, but he is not coming back. And the charioteer is driving like Jehu son of Nimshi—he is driving like a madman!"

²¹ "Harness!" Joram shouted, and they harnessed his chariot.

Then Joram king of Israel and Ahaziah king of Judah set out, each in his own chariot, and met Jehu on the property of Naboth the Jezreelite.

²² When Joram saw Jehu, he asked, "Have you come in peace, Jehu?"

"How can there be peace," he replied, "as long as the idolatry and witchcraft of your mother Jezebel abound?"

²³ Joram turned around and fled, calling out to Ahaziah, "Treachery, Ahaziah!"

²⁴ Then Jehu drew his bow and shot Joram between the shoulders. The arrow pierced his heart, and he slumped down in his chariot.

²⁵ And Jehu said to Bidkar his officer, "Pick him up and throw him into the field of Naboth the Jezreelite. For remember that when you and I were riding together behind his father Ahab, Yahweh lifted up this burden against him: ²⁶ 'As surely as I saw the blood of Naboth and the blood of his sons yesterday, declares Yahweh, so will I repay you on this plot of ground, declares Yahweh.' Now then, according to the word of Yahweh, pick him up and throw him on the plot of ground."

²⁷ When King Ahaziah of Judah saw this, he fled up the road toward Beth-haggan. And Jehu pursued him, shouting, "Shoot him too!"

So they shot Ahaziah in his chariot on the Ascent of Gur, near Ibleam, and he fled to Megiddo and died there. ²⁸ Then his servants carried him by chariot to Jerusalem and buried him with his fathers in his tomb in the City of David.

²⁹ (In the eleventh year of Joram son of Ahab, Ahaziah had become king over Judah.)

■ 2KI 9:22 [DEMONIC] Jehu condemns the idolatry and witchcraft of Jezebel

■ 2KI 9:24 [FULFILLS] Elisha sent a prophet to anoint Jehu and command him to wipe out Ahab's house ← 2KI 9:6-10 p.-

■ 2KI 9:25 [FULFILLS] Because Ahab humbled himself, the ruin of his house would come in his son's days ← 1KI 21:29 p.-

PROPHECIES FULFILLED IN SCRIPTURE GOD SPEAKING

JEZEBEL'S VIOLENT DEATH

³⁰ Now when Jehu arrived in Jezreel, Jezebel heard of it. So she painted her eyes, adorned her head, and looked down from a window. ³¹ And as Jehu entered the gate, she asked, "Have you come in peace, O Zimri, murderer of your master?"

³² He looked up at the window and called out, "Who is on my side? Who?"

And two or three eunuchs looked down at him.

³³ "Throw her down!" yelled Jehu.

So they threw her down, and her blood splattered on the wall and on the horses as they trampled her underfoot.

³⁴ Then Jehu went in and ate and drank. "Take care of this cursed woman," he said, "and bury her, for she was the daughter of a king."

³⁵ But when they went out to bury her, they found nothing but her skull, her feet, and the palms of her hands.

³⁶ So they went back and told Jehu, who replied, "This is the word of Yahweh, which He spoke through His servant Elijah the Tishbite: 'On the plot of ground at Jezreel the dogs will devour the flesh of Jezebel. ³⁷ And Jezebel's body will lie like dung in the field on the plot of ground at Jezreel, so that no one can say: This is Jezebel.'"

10

CHAPTER 10 IN 30 SECONDS

Jehu wipes out the rest of Ahab's family. Then he throws a big party for Baal and invites every worshiper of Baal in Israel. It is a trap. Baal's temple becomes a public toilet. But Jehu keeps Jeroboam's golden calves, and Hazael begins to cut pieces off Israel.

AHAB'S SEVENTY SONS KILLED

¹ Now Ahab had seventy sons in Samaria. So Jehu wrote letters and sent them to Samaria to the officials of Jezreel, to the elders, and to the guardians of the sons of

Ahab, saying: ² "When this letter arrives, since your master's sons are with you and you have chariots and horses, a fortified city and weaponry, ³ select the best and most worthy son of your master, set him on his father's throne, and fight for your master's house."

⁴ But they were terrified and reasoned, "If two kings could not stand against him, how can we?"

⁵ So the palace administrator, the overseer of the city, the elders, and the guardians sent a message to Jehu: "We are your servants, and we will do whatever you say. We will not make anyone king. Do whatever is good in your sight."

⁶ Then Jehu wrote them a second letter and said: "If you are on my side, and if you will obey me, then bring the heads of your master's sons to me at Jezreel by this time tomorrow."

Now the sons of the king, seventy in all, were being brought up by the leading men of the city. ⁷ And when the letter arrived, they took the sons of the king and slaughtered all seventy of them. They put their heads in baskets and sent them to Jehu at Jezreel.

⁸ When the messenger arrived, he told Jehu, "They have brought the heads of the sons of the king."

And Jehu ordered, "Pile them in two heaps at the entrance of the gate until morning."

⁹ The next morning, Jehu went out and stood before all the people and said, "You are innocent. It was I who conspired against my master and killed him. But who killed all these? ¹⁰ Know, then, that not a word Yahweh has spoken against the house of Ahab will fail, for Yahweh has done what He promised through His servant Elijah."

¹¹ So Jehu killed everyone in Jezreel who remained of the house of Ahab, as well as all his great men and close friends and priests, leaving him without a single survivor.

■ 2KI 9:35 [FULFILLS] Elijah told Ahab: dogs would lick his blood where they licked Naboth's; Jezebel would be eaten by dogs ← 1KI 21:19-23 p.-

■ 2KI 9:35 [FULFILLS] Elisha sent a prophet to anoint Jehu and command him to wipe out Ahab's house ← 2KI 9:6-10 p.-

PROPHECIES FULFILLED IN SCRIPTURE

THE HEART

DEMONIC

GOD SPEAKING

BLOODLINE OF CHRIST

¹² Then Jehu set out toward Samaria. At Beth-eked of the Shepherds, ¹³ Jehu met some relatives of Ahaziah king of Judah and asked, "Who are you?"

"We are relatives of Ahaziah," they answered, "and we have come down to greet the sons of the king and of the queen mother."

¹⁴ Then Jehu ordered, "Take them alive." So his men took them alive, then slaughtered them at the well of Beth-eked—forty-two men. He spared none of them.

¹⁵ When he left there, he found Jehonadab son of Rechab, who was coming to meet him. Jehu greeted him and asked, "Is your heart as true to mine as my heart is to yours?"

"It is!" Jehonadab replied.

"If it is," said Jehu, "give me your hand."

So he gave him his hand, and Jehu helped him into his chariot, ¹⁶ saying, "Come with me and see my zeal for Yahweh!" So he had him ride in his chariot.

¹⁷ When Jehu came to Samaria, he struck down everyone belonging to Ahab who remained there, until he had destroyed them, according to the word that Yahweh had spoken to Elijah.

JEHU KILLS THE PRIESTS OF BAAL

¹⁸ Then Jehu brought all the people together and said, "Ahab served Baal a little, but Jehu will serve him a lot. ¹⁹ Now, therefore, summon to me all the prophets of Baal, all his servants, and all his priests. See that no one is missing, for I have a great sacrifice for Baal. Whoever is missing will not live."

But Jehu was acting deceptively in order to destroy the servants of Baal.

²⁰ And Jehu commanded, "Proclaim a solemn assembly for Baal." So they announced it.

²¹ Then Jehu sent word throughout Israel, and all the servants of Baal came; there was not a man who failed to show. They entered the temple of Baal, and it was filled from end to end.

²² And Jehu said to the keeper of the wardrobe, "Bring out garments for all the servants of Baal." So he brought out garments for them.

²³ Next, Jehu and Jehonadab son of Rechab entered the temple of Baal, and Jehu said to the servants of Baal, "Look around to see that there are no servants of Yahweh here among you—only servants of Baal."

²⁴ And they went in to offer sacrifices and burnt offerings. Now Jehu had stationed eighty men outside and warned them, "If anyone allows one of the men I am delivering into your hands to escape, he will forfeit his life for theirs."

²⁵ When he had finished making the burnt offering, Jehu said to the guards and officers, "Go in and kill them. Do not let anyone out."

So the guards and officers put them to the sword, threw the bodies out, and went into the inner room of the temple of Baal.

²⁶ They brought out the sacred pillar of the temple of Baal and burned it. ²⁷ They also demolished the sacred pillar of Baal. Then they tore down the temple of Baal and made it into a latrine, which it is to this day.

JEHU REPEATS JEROBOAM'S SINS

²⁸ Thus Jehu eradicated Baal from Israel, ²⁹ but he did not turn away from the sins that Jeroboam son of Nebat had caused Israel to commit—the worship of the golden calves at Bethel and Dan.

³⁰ Nevertheless, Yahweh said to Jehu, "Because you have done well in carrying out what is right in My sight and have done to the house of Ahab all that was in My heart, four generations of your sons will sit on the throne of Israel."

2KI 10:11 [FULFILLS] Because Ahab humbled himself, the ruin of his house would come in his son's days ← 1KI 21:29 p. –

2KI 10:11 [FULFILLS] Elisha sent a prophet to anoint Jehu and command him to wipe out Ahab's house ← 2KI 9:6–10 p. –

2KI 10:15 [HEART] Jehu asked Jehonadab if his heart was true, as Jehu's heart was true to him.

2KI 10:18 [DEMONIC] Jehu traps and destroys the worshippers of Baal

PROPHECIES FULFILLED IN SCRIPTURE THE HEART BLOODLINE OF CHRIST

³¹ Yet Jehu was not careful to follow the instruction of Yahweh, the God of Israel, with all his heart. He did not turn away from the sins that Jeroboam had caused Israel to commit.

³² In those days Yahweh began to reduce the size of Israel. Hazael defeated the Israelites throughout their territory ³³ from the Jordan eastward through all the land of Gilead (the region of Gad, Reuben, and Manasseh), and from Arer by the Arnon Valley through Gilead to Bashan.

JEHOAHAZ SUCCEEDS JEHU IN ISRAEL

³⁴ As for the rest of the acts of Jehu, along with all his accomplishments and all his might, are they not written in the Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Israel?

³⁵ And Jehu rested with his fathers and was buried in Samaria, and his son Jehoahaz reigned in his place. ³⁶ So the duration of Jehu's reign over Israel in Samaria was twenty-eight years.

11

CHAPTER 11 IN 30 SECONDS

Athaliah, Ahab's daughter, sees her son is dead and kills the royal family so she can rule Judah. But baby Joash is hidden in the temple for six years. In the seventh year the priest Jehoiada brings out the boy king, the people clap and shout, Long live the king! and Athaliah's reign is over.

ATHALIAH AND JOASH // 2 CHRONICLES 22:10–12

¹ When Athaliah the mother of Ahaziah saw that her son was dead, she proceeded to annihilate all the royal heirs. ² But Jehosheba daughter of King Joram, the sister of Ahaziah, took Joash son of Ahaziah and stole him away from among the sons of the king who were being murdered. She put him and his nurse in a

bedroom to hide him from Athaliah, and he was not killed.

³ And Joash remained hidden with his nurse in the house of Yahweh for six years while Athaliah ruled the land.

JOASH ANOINTED KING OF JUDAH // 2 CHRONICLES 23:1–11

⁴ Then in the seventh year, Jehoiada sent for the commanders of hundreds, the Carites, and the guards, and had them brought into the house of Yahweh. There he made a covenant with them and put them under oath.

He showed them the king's son ⁵ and commanded them, "This is what you are to do: A third of you who come on duty on the Sabbath shall guard the royal palace, ⁶ a third shall be at the gate of Sur, and a third at the gate behind the guards. You are to take turns guarding the temple— ⁷ the two divisions that would go off duty on the Sabbath are to guard the house of Yahweh for the king. ⁸ You must surround the king with weapons in hand, and anyone who approaches the ranks must be put to death. You must stay close to the king wherever he goes."

DEBATED THE BIG QUESTION

JEHU: HERO OR BUTCHER?

What Happened

2 KINGS 9:1 TO 10:36 · 1 KINGS 19:16 TO 17 · 21:21 TO 24

ANOINTED FOR A JOB

God had told Elijah to anoint Jehu, 1 Kings 19:16. Years later a young prophet poured oil on his head and gave God's command: strike down the house of Ahab, 9:6 to 10.

HE DRIVES LIKE A MADMAN

The watchman knew Jehu from far away by the way he drove, 9:20.

THE KILLINGS

Jehu shot Joram king of Israel, 9:24, had Ahaziah king of Judah shot, 9:27, and had Jezebel thrown from a window, 9:33. Then came the heads of Ahab's seventy sons, 10:7, forty two relatives of Ahaziah, 10:14, Ahab's officials and priests, 10:11, and every worshiper of Baal, 10:25.

■ **2KI 10:30 [PROPHECY]** God told Jehu his sons would sit on Israel's throne to the fourth generation → 2KI 15:12 p. 11

■ **2KI 10:30 [NOTE]** JEHU. God praised him for wiping out Ahab's house, but Hosea 1:4 later judges his house for the blood of Jezreel. See the Big Question pages Jehu: Hero or Butcher?

■ **2KI 10:31 [HEART]** Jehu did some good things but was not careful to follow God with all his heart.

■ **2KI 10:32 [FULFILLS]** Elisha's tearful prophecy to Hazael → 2KI 8:12 p. 10

■ **2KI 11:1 [NOTE]** ATHALIAH was the daughter of Ahab and Jezebel, and the only queen who ruled Judah on her own. If she had found baby Joash, David's royal line would have ended.

DEMONIC BLOODLINE OF CHRIST

GOD'S PRAISE

God said to Jehu, You have done well, and your sons will sit on Israel's throne to the fourth generation, 10:30.

BUT

Jehu kept the golden calves at Bethel and Dan, 10:29, and was not careful to follow God with all his heart, 10:31.

THE QUESTION

Less than 100 years later God said through Hosea, I will punish the house of Jehu for the blood of Jezreel, Hosea 1:4. Was Jehu a hero or a butcher?

Every View

HOSEA 1:4 TO 5 · 2 CHRONICLES 22:7 TO 9 · 2 KINGS 15:8 TO 12

VIEW 1: THE RIGHT JOB, THE WRONG HEART

Many think God commanded the judgment on Ahab's house, but Jehu went further for his own power, like killing Ahaziah's relatives from Judah. Hosea judged the extra blood and the heart behind it.

VIEW 2: HIS SONS, NOT HIM

Others think Hosea judged Jehu's family for keeping up the same violence and idols in his name, not Jehu for obeying God's command.

VIEW 3: BOTH ARE TRUE

Some say God can praise the part a man obeyed and still judge the rest. God used Jehu, but He never praised his methods.

AHAZIAH OF JUDAH

2 Chronicles 22:7 to 9 says God brought about Ahaziah's death when he went to visit Joram, because he followed the house of Ahab.

FOUR GENERATIONS

Jehoahaz, Jehoash, Jeroboam II and Zechariah followed Jehu. Zechariah was murdered after six months, and God's word to Jehu came true, 15:8 to 12.

WHAT ALL SIDES AGREE ON

Zeal for God without a whole heart for God is not enough. Jehu wiped out Baal, but he never let go of the calves.

⁹So the commanders of hundreds did everything that Jehoiada the priest had ordered. Each of them took his men—those coming on duty on the Sab-

bath and those going off duty—and came to Jehoiada the priest. ¹⁰Then the priest gave to the commanders of hundreds the spears and shields of King David from the house of Yahweh. ¹¹And the guards stood with weapons in hand surrounding the king by the altar and the temple, from the south side to the north side of the temple.

¹²Then Jehoiada brought out the king's son, put the crown on him, presented him with the Testimony, and proclaimed him king. They anointed him, and the people clapped their hands and declared, "Long live the king!"

THE DEATH OF ATHALIAH // 2 CHRONICLES 23:12–15

¹³When Athaliah heard the noise from the guards and the people, she went out to the people in the house of Yahweh. ¹⁴And she looked out and saw the king standing by the pillar, according to the custom. The officers and trumpeters were beside the king, and all the people of the land were rejoicing and blowing trumpets.

Then Athaliah tore her clothes and screamed, "Treason! Treason!"

¹⁵And Jehoiada the priest ordered the commanders of hundreds in charge of the army, "Bring her out between the ranks, and put to the sword anyone who follows her." For the priest had said, "She must not be put to death in the house of Yahweh."

¹⁶So they seized Athaliah as she reached the horses' entrance to the palace grounds, and there she was put to death.

JEHOIADA RESTORES THE WORSHIP OF YAHWEH // 2 CHRONICLES 23:16–21

¹⁷Then Jehoiada made a covenant between Yahweh and the king and the people that they would be Yahweh's people. He also made a covenant between the king and the people.

¹⁸So all the people of the land went to the temple of Baal and tore it down. They smashed the altars and idols to pieces, and they killed Mattan the priest of Baal in front of the altars.

THE HEART DEMONIC BLOODLINE OF CHRIST

And Jehoiada the priest posted guards for the house of Yahweh.¹⁹ He took with him the commanders of hundreds, the Carites, the guards, and all the people of the land, and they brought the king down from the house of Yahweh and entered the royal palace by way of the Gate of the Guards. Then Joash took his seat on the royal throne,²⁰ and all the people of the land rejoiced. And the city was quiet, because Athaliah had been put to the sword at the royal palace.

²¹ Joash was seven years old when he became king.

12

CHAPTER 12 IN 30 SECONDS

King Joash collects money to repair the temple. Years go by, and nothing gets fixed. So Jehoiada puts a box with a hole in the lid next to the altar, and the money finally goes to the workers. Later Joash pays Hazael with the temple treasures to go away, and his own servants kill him.

JOASH REPAIRS THE TEMPLE // 2 CHRONICLES 24:1–14

¹ In the seventh year of Jehu, Joash became king, and he reigned in Jerusalem forty years. His mother's name was Zibiah she was from Beersheba. ² And Joash did what was right in the eyes of Yahweh all the days he was instructed by Jehoiada the priest.

³ Nevertheless, the high places were not removed; the people continued sacrificing and burning incense there.

⁴ Then Joash said to the priests, "Collect all the money brought as sacred gifts into the house of Yahweh—the census money, the money from vows, and the money that comes into anyone's heart to bring into the house of Yahweh." ⁵ Let every priest receive it from his constituency, and let it be used to repair any damage found in the temple."

⁶ By the twenty-third year of the reign of Joash, however, the priests had not yet

repaired the damage to the temple. ⁷ So King Joash called Jehoiada and the other priests and said, "Why have you not repaired the damage to the temple? Now, therefore, take no more money from your constituency, but hand it over for the repair of the temple."

⁸ So the priests agreed that they would not receive money from the people and that they would not repair the temple themselves.

⁹ Then Jehoiada the priest took a chest, bored a hole in its lid, and set it beside the altar on the right side as one enters the house of Yahweh. There the priests who guarded the threshold put all the money brought into the house of Yahweh.

¹⁰ Whenever they saw that there was a large amount of money in the chest, the royal scribe and the high priest would go up, count the money brought into the house of Yahweh, and tie it up in bags. ¹¹ Then they would put the counted money into the hands of those who supervised the work on the house of Yahweh, who in turn would pay those doing the work—the carpenters, builders, ¹² masons, and stonecutters. They also purchased timber and dressed stone to repair the damage to the house of Yahweh, and they paid the other expenses of the temple repairs.

¹³ However, the money brought into the house of Yahweh was not used for making silver basins, wick trimmers, sprinkling bowls, trumpets, or any articles of gold or silver for the house of Yahweh. ¹⁴ Instead, it was paid to those doing the work, and with it they repaired the house of Yahweh.

¹⁵ No accounting was required from the men who received the money to pay the workmen, because they acted with integrity. ¹⁶ The money from the guilt offerings and sin offerings was not brought into the house of Yahweh; it belonged to the priests.

THE DEATH OF JOASH // 2 CHRONICLES 24:23–27

¹⁷ At that time Hazael king of Aram marched up and fought against Gath and captured it. Then he decided to attack

■ 2KI 11:18 [DEMONIC] The people tear down Baal's temple and kill his priest

■ 2KI 12:3 [DEMONIC] The high places were not removed

■ 2KI 12:4 [HEART] Joash collected money that came into anyone's heart to give for the temple.

ARCHAEOLOGY DEMONIC BLOODLINE OF CHRIST

Jerusalem. ¹⁸ So King Joash of Judah took all the sacred objects dedicated by his fathers—Jehoshaphat, Jehoram, and Ahaziah, the kings of Judah—along with his own consecrated items and all the gold found in the treasuries of the house of Yahweh and the royal palace, and he sent them to Hazael king of Aram. So Hazael withdrew from Jerusalem.

¹⁹ As for the rest of the acts of Joash, along with all his accomplishments, are they not written in the Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Judah?

²⁰ And the servants of Joash rose up and formed a conspiracy and killed him at Beth-millo, on the road down to Silla. ²¹ His servants Jozabad son of Shimeath and Jehozabad son of Shomer struck him down, and he died. And they buried him with his fathers in the City of David, and his son Amaziah reigned in his place.

13

CHAPTER 13 IN 30 SECONDS

Israel's kings keep doing evil, and Aram keeps beating them. Elisha is dying and tells King Jehoash to strike the ground with arrows. He strikes three times and stops, so he will beat Aram only three times. Elisha dies, and later a dead man thrown into his grave touches his bones and comes back to life.

JEHOAHAZ REIGNS IN ISRAEL

¹ In the twenty-third year of the reign of Joash son of Ahaziah over Judah, Jehoahaz son of Jehu became king of Israel, and he reigned in Samaria seventeen years. ² And he did evil in the sight of Yahweh and followed the sins that Jeroboam son of Nebat had caused Israel to commit; he did not turn away from them. ³ So the anger of Yahweh burned against Israel, and He delivered them continually into the hands of Hazael king of Aram and his son Ben-hadad.

⁴ Then Jehoahaz sought the favor of Yahweh, and Yahweh listened to him because He saw the oppression that the king of

Aram had inflicted on Israel. ⁵ So Yahweh gave Israel a deliverer, and they escaped the power of the Arameans. Then the people of Israel lived in their own homes as they had before.

⁶ Nevertheless, they did not turn away from the sins that the house of Jeroboam had caused Israel to commit, but they continued to walk in them. The Asherah pole even remained standing in Samaria.

⁷ Jehoahaz had no army left, except fifty horsemen, ten chariots, and ten thousand foot soldiers, because the king of Aram had destroyed them and made them like the dust at threshing.

⁸ As for the rest of the acts of Jehoahaz, along with all his accomplishments and his might, are they not written in the Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Israel?

⁹ And Jehoahaz rested with his fathers and was buried in Samaria. And his son Jehoash reigned in his place.

JEHOASH REIGNS IN ISRAEL

¹⁰ In the thirty-seventh year of the reign of Joash over Judah, Jehoash son of Jehoahaz became king of Israel in Samaria, and he reigned sixteen years. ¹¹ And he did evil in the sight of Yahweh and did not turn away from all the sins that Jeroboam son of Nebat had caused Israel to commit, but he walked in them.

¹² As for the rest of the acts of Jehoash, along with all his accomplishments and his might, including his war against Amaziah king of Judah, are they not written in the Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Israel?

¹³ And Jehoash rested with his fathers, and Jeroboam succeeded him on the throne. Jehoash was buried in Samaria with the kings of Israel.

ELISHA'S FINAL PROPHECY

¹⁴ When Elisha had fallen sick with the illness from which he would die, Jehoash

■ 2KI 13:6 [DEMONIC] The Asherah pole remained standing in Samaria

■ 2KI 13:9 [ARCHAEOLOGY] An Assyrian stone names Joash the Samarian paying tribute → FIELD NOTES p.29

■ 2KI 13:13 [ARCHAEOLOGY] A seal from Megiddo belonged to Shema, servant of Jeroboam → FIELD NOTES p.30

■ 2KI 13:3 [ARCHAEOLOGY] Ben hadad son of Hazael is named as Bar hadad son of Hazael, king of Aram, on the stone of Zakkur king of Hamath

■ 2KI 13:3 [FULFILLS] Elisha's tearful prophecy to Hazael
← 2KI 8:12 p.-

PROPHECIES FULFILLED IN SCRIPTURE

FIELD NOTES · ARCHAEOLOGY · CONFIDENCE: HIGH

JOASH THE SAMARIAN

2 KINGS 13:5 · 13:9 TO 25 · 14:8 TO 16



The Tell al Rimah Stele of Adad nirari III in the Iraq Museum, Baghdad. The king stands before the signs of his gods, and the writing runs across his robe. Photo Osama Shukir Muhammed Amin, CC BY SA 4.0.

WHAT IT IS

A stone with a rounded top, about four feet tall, carved with Adad nirari III, king of Assyria. Its writing tells about his wars in the west. One line says: I received the tribute of Joash the Samarian, of the Tyrian and of the Sidonian.

HOW OLD IT IS

The war it tells about is usually dated about 796 BC, early in the reign of Jehoash of Israel. Some scholars date it a few years earlier. The stone was set up not long after.

WHERE AND WHEN FOUND

At Tell al Rimah in northern Iraq, in 1967, inside a temple. David Oates led the British dig, and Stephanie Page published the stone in 1968. It is in the Iraq Museum in Baghdad.

SAMARIA IN STONE

Joash and Jehoash are two spellings of the same name. This is the first time the name Samaria shows up in Assyrian writing. Assyria usually called Israel the house of Omri.

A DELIVERER?

2 Kings 13:5 says God gave Israel a deliverer, so they escaped from Aram. Many think Adad nirari III was that deliverer, because his attacks weakened Damascus. The stone does not say so. Others think the deliverer was Jehoash or Jeroboam II, 13:25 and 14:27.

WHAT IT DOES NOT PROVE

The stone tells nothing about Elisha or the arrows, 13:14 to 19. It shows that a king of Israel named Joash paid Assyria at the time the Bible gives.

king of Israel came down to him and wept over him, saying, "My father, my father, the chariots and horsemen of Israel!"

¹⁵ Elisha told him, "Take a bow and some arrows."

So Jehoash took a bow and some arrows.

¹⁶ Then Elisha said to the king of Israel, "Put your hand on the bow."

So the king put his hand on the bow, and Elisha put his hands on the king's hands.

¹⁷ "Open the east window," said Elisha.

So he opened it and Elisha said, "Shoot!"
So he shot.

And Elisha declared:

"This is Yahweh's arrow of victory, the arrow of victory over Aram, for you shall strike the Arameans in Aphek until you have put an end to them."

¹⁸ Then Elisha said, "Take the arrows!"

So he took them, and Elisha said to the king of Israel, "Strike the ground!"

So he struck the ground three times and stopped.

¹⁹ But the man of God was angry with him and said, "You should have struck the ground five or six times. Then you would have struck down Aram until you had put an end to it. But now you will strike down Aram only three times."

PROPHECIES FULFILLED IN SCRIPTURE | MIRACLES

FIELD NOTES · ARCHAEOLOGY · CONFIDENCE: MEDIUM

THE SEAL OF SHEMA

2 KINGS 13:13 · 14:23 TO 29 · AMOS 1:1 · 7:9 TO 11



Tel Megiddo, where the seal was found. The seal itself was lost long ago and is not shown. Photo Carole Raddato, CC BY SA 2.0.

WHAT IT IS

A jasper seal, about an inch and a half long, carved with a roaring lion and the words: Belonging to Shema, servant of Jeroboam. Servant of the king was a title for a high royal officer.

HOW OLD IT IS

Most date it to the 700s BC, the reign of Jeroboam II, about 793 to 753 BC. A few scholars think it belonged to an officer of Jeroboam I, about 150 years earlier.

WHERE AND WHEN FOUND

At Megiddo, by Gottlieb Schumacher's dig, in 1904. It was sent to the Ottoman sultan in Constantinople and was never seen again. A bronze cast made before it left, and old photos, are all that remain.

WHO WAS SHEMA?

Nobody knows. The Bible does not name him. His seal shows that Jeroboam's kingdom had officers with fine seals of their own, as a strong and rich kingdom would.

THE BIBLE'S JEROBOAM II

He reigned 41 years, won back Israel's borders as Jonah had said, 14:25, and did evil like the first Jeroboam, 14:24. Amos and Hosea preached in his day, Amos 1:1 and Hosea 1:1.

WHAT IT DOES NOT PROVE

Since the seal is lost, scholars can

study only the cast and the photos. A clay seal print with the same words was bought in the early 1980s. It was made by a smaller seal, not this one, and experts still argue whether it is real. The Megiddo seal itself was dug up by archaeologists, so nobody doubts it.

²⁰ And Elisha died and was buried.

Now the Moabite raiders used to come into the land every spring. ²¹ Once, as the Israelites were burying a man, suddenly they saw a band of raiders, so they threw the man's body into Elisha's tomb. And as soon as his body touched the bones of Elisha, the man was revived and stood up on his feet.

²² And Hazael king of Aram oppressed Israel throughout the reign of Jehoahaz. ²³

But Yahweh was gracious to Israel and had compassion on them, and He turned toward them because of His covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. And to this day, Yahweh has been unwilling to destroy them or cast them from His presence.

²⁴ When Hazael king of Aram died, his son Ben-hadad reigned in his place. ²⁵ Then Jehoash son of Jehoahaz took back from Ben-hadad son of Hazael the cities that Hazael had taken in battle from his father Jehoahaz. Jehoash defeated Ben-hadad three times, and so recovered the cities of Israel.

14

CHAPTER 14 IN 30 SECONDS

King Amaziah of Judah beats Edom and gets a big head. He challenges King Jehoash of Israel, who answers with a story about a thistle and a cedar. Amaziah does not listen, loses badly, and Jerusalem's wall is broken down. In Israel, Jeroboam II wins back land, just as the prophet Jonah said he would.

■ 2KI 13:20 [MIRACLE] Dead man revived by touching Elisha's bones

■ 2KI 13:22 [FULFILLS] Elisha's tearful prophecy to Hazael
← 2KI 8:12 p.~

■ 2KI 13:25 [FULFILLS] King Jehoash would beat Aram only three times ← 2KI 13:19 p.~

■ 2KI 13:19 [PROPHECY] King Jehoash would beat Aram only three times → 2KI 13:25 p.~

THE HEART DEMONIC GOD SPEAKING BLOODLINE OF CHRIST

AMAZIAH REIGNS IN JUDAH // 2 CHRONICLES 25:1-4

¹In the second year of the reign of Jehoash son of Jehoahaz over Israel, Amaziah son of Joash became king of Judah. ²He was twenty-five years old when he became king, and he reigned in Jerusalem twenty-nine years. His mother's name was Jehoaddan she was from Jerusalem. ³And he did what was right in the eyes of Yahweh, but not as his father David had done. He did everything as his father Joash had done.

⁴Nevertheless, the high places were not taken away, and the people continued sacrificing and burning incense on the high places.

⁵As soon as the kingdom was firmly in his grasp, Amaziah executed the servants who had murdered his father the king. ⁶Yet he did not put the sons of the murderers to death, but acted according to what is written in the Book of the Law of Moses, where Yahweh commanded: "Fathers must not be put to death for their children, and children must not be put to death for their fathers; each is to die for his own sin."

⁷Amaziah struck down 10,000 Edomites in the Valley of Salt. He took Sela in battle and called it Joktheel, which is its name to this very day.

JEHOASH DEFEATS AMAZIAH // 2 CHRONICLES 25:17-24

⁸Then Amaziah sent messengers to the king of Israel Jehoash son of Jehoahaz, the son of Jehu. "Come, let us meet face to face," he said.

⁹But Jehoash king of Israel replied to Amaziah king of Judah: "A thistle in Lebanon sent a message to a cedar in Lebanon, saying, 'Give your daughter to my son in marriage.' Then a wild beast in Lebanon came along and trampled the thistle. ¹⁰You have indeed defeated Edom, and your heart has become proud. Glory in that and stay at home. Why should you

stir up trouble so that you fall—you and Judah with you?"

¹¹But Amaziah would not listen, so Jehoash king of Israel advanced. He and King Amaziah of Judah faced each other at Beth-shemesh in Judah. ¹²And Judah was routed before Israel, and every man fled to his home.

¹³There at Beth-shemesh, Jehoash king of Israel captured Amaziah king of Judah, the son of Joash, the son of Ahaziah.

Then Jehoash went to Jerusalem and broke down the wall of Jerusalem from the Ephraim Gate to the Corner Gate—a section of 600 feet. ¹⁴He took all the gold and silver and all the articles found in the house of Yahweh and in the treasuries of the royal palace, as well as some hostages. Then he returned to Samaria.

JEROBOAM II SUCCEEDS JEHOASH IN ISRAEL

¹⁵As for the rest of the acts of Jehoash, along with his accomplishments, his might, and how he waged war against Amaziah king of Judah, are they not written in the Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Israel?

¹⁶And Jehoash rested with his fathers and was buried in Samaria with the kings of Israel. And his son Jeroboam reigned in his place.

THE DEATH OF AMAZIAH // 2 CHRONICLES 25:25-28

¹⁷Amaziah son of Joash king of Judah lived for fifteen years after the death of Jehoash son of Jehoahaz king of Israel. ¹⁸As for the rest of the acts of Amaziah, are they not written in the Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Judah?

¹⁹And conspirators plotted against Amaziah in Jerusalem, and he fled to Lachish. But men were sent after him to Lachish, and they killed him there. ²⁰They carried him back on horses and buried him in Jerusalem with his fathers in the City of David.

■ 2KI 14:4 [DEMONIC] The high places were not taken away

■ 2KI 14:6 [NOTE] The writer quotes God's law, Deuteronomy 24:16, so those words print red.

■ 2KI 14:10 [HEART] Jehoash told Amaziah his heart had become proud after beating Edom. Pride came before his fall.

PROPHECIES FULFILLED IN SCRIPTURE | ARCHAEOLOGY | BLOODLINE OF CHRIST

FIELD NOTES • ARCHAEOLOGY • CONFIDENCE: MEDIUM

THE UZZIAH PLAQUE

2 KINGS 14:21 TO 22 • 15:1 TO 7 • 2 CHRONICLES 26 • ISAIAH 6:1



The Uzziah burial plaque in the Israel Museum, Jerusalem. The two white spots are glare from the museum lights. Public domain photo.

WHAT IT IS

A stone plaque about 14 inches square, carved in Aramaic, the language most Jews spoke in Jesus' day. It reads: Here were brought the bones of Uzziah, king of Judah. Do not open.

HOW OLD IT IS

It was carved more than 700 years after Uzziah died, sometime between about 100 BC and AD 70, when his bones were moved to a new grave.

WHERE AND WHEN FOUND

Eleazar Sukenik spotted it in 1931 in a collection of old objects at a Russian church on the Mount of Olives. Nobody knows where it was found before that. It is in the Israel Museum in Jerusalem.

SEALS FROM HIS OWN TIME

Two seals from the 700s BC belonged to officers called servant of Uzziah, one named Abiyaw and one named Shebanyaw. Both are in museums in Paris.

AZARIAH OR UZZIAH?

2 Kings calls him Azariah, Yahweh has helped, and also Uzziah, Yahweh is my strength, 15:13. 2 Chronicles 26:23 says he was buried in a field near the kings' tombs, because he had leprosy.

WHAT IT DOES NOT PROVE

The plaque is not from Uzziah's time. A few scholars have doubted it. One called it a modern fake, and another thinks it was faked in ancient times. Most think it is real. It shows that Jews in Jesus' day remembered King Uzziah and honored his bones. The seals are from his own time.

AZARIAH SUCCEEDS AMAZIAH IN JUDAH // 2

CHRONICLES 26:1-2

21 Then all the people of Judah took

Azariah, who was sixteen years old, and made him king in place of his father

Amaziah. **22** Azariah was the one who rebuilt Elath and restored it to Judah after King Amaziah rested with his fathers.

JEROBOAM II REIGNS IN ISRAEL

23 In the fifteenth year of the reign of Amaziah son of Joash over Judah, Jeroboam son of Jehoash became king of Israel, and he reigned in Samaria forty-one years. **24** And he did evil in the sight of

Yahweh and did not turn away from all the sins that Jeroboam son of Nebat had caused Israel to commit.

25 This Jeroboam restored the boundary of Israel from Lebo-hamath to the Sea of the Arabah, according to the word that Yahweh, the God of Israel, had spoken through His servant Jonah son of Amittai, the prophet from Gath-hepher. **26** For Yahweh saw that the affliction of the Israelites, both slave and free, was very bit-

■ **2KI 14:25 [PROPHECY]** Jonah son of Amittai foretold that Jeroboam II would win back Israel's borders → 2KI 14:25 p. -

■ **2KI 14:25 [FULFILLS]** Jonah son of Amittai foretold that Jeroboam II would win back Israel's borders ← 2KI 14:25 p. -

■ **2KI 14:25 [NOTE]** JONAH. The same Jonah who was swallowed by the great fish, Jonah 1:1. See the Big Question pages Jonah Son of Amittai.

■ **2KI 14:21 [ARCHAEOLOGY]** Seals of his officials and a later burial plaque name King Uzziah, the Bible's Azariah → FIELD NOTES p.32

ter. There was no one to help Israel, ²⁷ and since Yahweh had said that He would not blot out the name of Israel from under heaven, He saved them by the hand of Jeroboam son of Jehoash.

²⁸ As for the rest of the acts of Jeroboam, along with all his accomplishments and might, and how he waged war and recovered both Damascus and Hamath for Israel from Judah, are they not written in the Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Israel?

²⁹ And Jeroboam rested with his fathers, the kings of Israel. And his son Zechariah reigned in his place.

DEBATED THE BIG QUESTION

JONAH SON OF AMITTAI

The Prophet in Kings

2 KINGS 14:23 TO 29 · JONAH 1:1 · JOSHUA 19:13 · JOHN 7:52

ONE VERSE

2 Kings 14:25 says Jeroboam II won back Israel's old borders, from Lebo hamath to the Dead Sea, just as Yahweh had said through His servant Jonah son of Amittai, the prophet from Gath hepher. Jonah 1:1 gives the same name.

GOD'S MERCY ON A BAD KING

Jeroboam II did evil, 14:24. But God saw how bitter Israel's suffering was, and that there was no one to help, so He saved them through Jeroboam, 14:26 to 27.

GATH HEPHER

Jonah's town was in Zebulun, Joshua 19:13, a few miles from Nazareth. Jesus' enemies said no prophet comes from Galilee, John 7:52, but Jonah did.

WHEN

Jeroboam II ruled about 793 to 753 BC. Assyria, with its capital Nineveh, was Israel's great enemy, and it would destroy Israel about 30 years after Jeroboam died.

THE SAME NAME

Jonah means dove, and Amittai means my truth. Jonah son of Amittai is named in only two places, 2 Kings 14:25 and Jonah 1:1, so almost everyone agrees they are the same man.

THE QUESTION

Is the Jonah of the great fish a real man of history, and why would he run from God?

Every View

MATTHEW 12:39 TO 41 · JONAH 4:1 TO 11 · NAHUM 3:1 TO 7

VIEW 1: A REAL PROPHET AND A REAL STORY

Most Jews and Christians through history take the book of Jonah as real history. 2 Kings puts Jonah in a real king's reign. Jesus spoke of Jonah's three days in the fish and of Nineveh turning to God as real events, Matthew 12:39 to 41.

VIEW 2: A REAL PROPHET, A TEACHING STORY

Some scholars agree Jonah was a real prophet, but think the book of Jonah tells a story about him to teach a lesson, like a parable, about God's mercy on enemies.

WHY JONAH RAN

Nineveh was Israel's enemy. Jonah knew God was gracious and slow to anger, and he did not want Nineveh spared, Jonah 4:2.

TWO KINDS OF MERCY

Jonah brought good news to Israel under a bad king, and later a warning that saved Nineveh. Both times God showed mercy no one deserved.

HIS TOMB

A mosque on a mound at Nineveh, Nebi Yunus, was said to hold Jonah's tomb. ISIS blew it up in 2014. Another old tradition puts his grave near Gath hepher.

WHAT ALL SIDES AGREE ON

God cares about people His prophets would rather see judged. Should I not have compassion on Nineveh? Jonah 4:11.

15

CHAPTER 15 IN 30 SECONDS

A quick parade of kings. Azariah of Judah reigns 52 years but gets leprosy. In Israel, Zechariah lasts six months, Shallum one month, and Menahem pays off the king of Assyria. Pekah kills Pekahiah, and Hoshea kills Pekah. Assyria starts carrying Israelites away.

PROPHECIES FULFILLED IN SCRIPTURE

ARCHAEOLOGY

DEMONIC

GOD SPEAKING

BLOODLINE OF CHRIST

AZARIAH REIGNS IN JUDAH // 2 CHRONICLES 26:3-23

¹In the twenty-seventh year of Jeroboam's reign over Israel, Azariah son of Amaziah became king of Judah. ²He was sixteen years old when he became king, and he reigned in Jerusalem fifty-two years. His mother's name was Jecoliah she was from Jerusalem. ³And he did what was right in the eyes of Yahweh, just as his father Amaziah had done.

⁴Nevertheless, the high places were not taken away; the people continued sacrificing and burning incense there.

⁵And Yahweh afflicted the king with leprosy until the day he died, so that he lived in a separate house while his son Jotham had charge of the palace and governed the people of the land.

⁶As for the rest of the acts of Azariah, along with all his accomplishments, are they not written in the Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Judah?

⁷And Azariah rested with his fathers and was buried near them in the City of David. And his son Jotham reigned in his place.

ZECHARIAH REIGNS IN ISRAEL

⁸In the thirty-eighth year of Azariah's reign over Judah, Zechariah son of Jeroboam became king of Israel, and he reigned in Samaria six months. ⁹And he did evil in the sight of Yahweh, as his fathers had done. He did not turn away from the sins that Jeroboam son of Nebat had caused Israel to commit.

¹⁰Then Shallum son of Jabesh conspired against Zechariah, struck him down and killed him in front of the people, and reigned in his place.

■ 2KI 15:1 [NOTE] AZARIAH is also called Uzziah, 15:13 and Isaiah 6:1. 2 Chronicles 26:16 to 21 says he got leprosy for burning incense in the temple, which only priests could do.

■ 2KI 15:4 [DEMONIC] The high places were not taken away

■ 2KI 15:5 [ARCHAEOLOGY] King Jotham is named as the father of Ahaz on a clay seal impression, see The Seal of Ahaz Field Notes page

■ 2KI 15:8 [FULFILLS] I will avenge the blood of Jezreel on the house of Jehu; I will break the bow of Israel in the Valley of Jezreel ← HOS 1:4-5 p.-

■ 2KI 15:8 [FULFILLS] God would rise against the house of Jeroboam with the sword ← AMOS 7:9 p.-

¹¹As for the rest of the acts of Zechariah, they are indeed written in the Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Israel. ¹²So the word of Yahweh spoken to Jehu was fulfilled: "Four generations of your sons will sit on the throne of Israel."

SHALLUM REIGNS IN ISRAEL

¹³In the thirty-ninth year of Uzziah's reign over Judah, Shallum son of Jabesh became king, and he reigned in Samaria one full month.

¹⁴Then Menahem son of Gadi went up from Tirzah to Samaria, struck down and killed Shallum son of Jabesh, and reigned in his place.

¹⁵As for the rest of the acts of Shallum, along with the conspiracy he led, they are indeed written in the Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Israel.

¹⁶At that time Menahem, starting from Tirzah, attacked Tiphsah and everyone in its vicinity, because they would not open their gates. So he attacked Tiphsah and ripped open all the pregnant women.

MENAHEM REIGNS IN ISRAEL

¹⁷In the thirty-ninth year of Azariah's reign over Judah, Menahem son of Gadi became king of Israel, and he reigned in Samaria ten years. ¹⁸And he did evil in the sight of Yahweh, and throughout his reign he did not turn away from the sins that Jeroboam son of Nebat had caused Israel to commit.

¹⁹Then Pul king of Assyria invaded the land, and Menahem gave Pul 75,000 pounds of silver in order to gain his support and strengthen his own grip on the kingdom. ²⁰Menahem exacted this money from each of the wealthy men of Israel—1¼ pounds of silver from each man—to give to the king of Assyria. So

■ 2KI 15:12 [FULFILLS] God told Jehu his sons would sit on Israel's throne to the fourth generation ← 2KI 10:30 p.-

■ 2KI 15:14 [ARCHAEOLOGY] King Menahem of Samaria is named on the Iran Stele of Tiglath pileser III, see the Menahem's Tribute Field Notes page

■ 2KI 15:19 [ARCHAEOLOGY] Assyrian records say Menahem of Samaria paid tribute to Tiglath pileser III → FIELD NOTES p.35

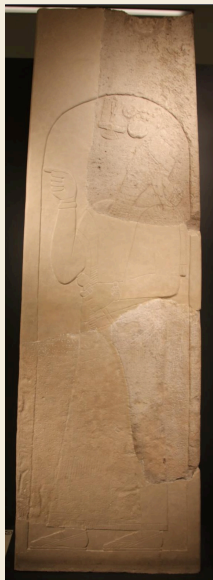
■ 2KI 15:19 [FIELD NOTES] PUL is a nickname for Tiglath pileser III, king of Assyria, 1 Chronicles 5:26. His own stone names Menahem of Samaria. See the Menahem's Tribute Field Notes page.

ARCHAEOLOGY BLOODLINE OF CHRIST

FIELD NOTES · ARCHAEOLOGY · CONFIDENCE: HIGH

MENAHEM'S TRIBUTE

2 KINGS 15:17 TO 22 · 1 CHRONICLES 5:26



The Iran Stele of Tiglath pileser III in the Israel Museum. The king stands with his hand raised. Writing runs across the lower part. Photo Gary Todd, CC0.

WHAT IT IS

A tall stone with a carving of Tiglath pileser III, king of Assyria from 745 to 727 BC. Its writing lists kings who paid him tribute. One of them is Menahem of Samaria.

HOW OLD IT IS

About 737 BC, in Menahem's own lifetime.

WHERE AND WHEN FOUND

It is said to come from western Iran, but nobody knows the exact spot. It was first published in 1972 and is in the Israel Museum in Jerusalem. The king's annals from his palace at Nimrud also name Menahem.

WHO WAS PUL?

2 Kings 15:19 calls the king Pul. Babylonian records call Tiglath pileser by the name Pulu, and 1 Chronicles 5:26 names both. They are the same man.

THE BIBLE AND THE STONE

The Bible says Menahem paid 75,000 pounds of silver so Assyria would back him, and he made every rich man pay 1¼ pounds of silver, 15:19 to 20. The stone agrees that Menahem paid, along with Rezin of Damascus and Hiram of Tyre.

WHAT IT DOES NOT PROVE

The stone does not give the amount Menahem paid. It shows that the king of Israel the Bible names really paid the king of Assyria the Bible names.

the king of Assyria withdrew and did not remain in the land.

²¹ As for the rest of the acts of Menahem, along with all his accomplishments, are they not written in the Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Israel?

²² And Menahem rested with his fathers, and his son Pekahiah reigned in his place.

PEKAHIAH REIGNS IN ISRAEL

²³ In the fiftieth year of Azariah's reign over Judah, Pekahiah son of Menahem became king of Israel and reigned in Samaria two years. ²⁴ And he did evil in the sight of Yahweh and did not turn away from the sins that Jeroboam son of Nebat had caused Israel to commit.

²⁵ Then his officer, Pekah son of Remaliah, conspired against him along with Argob, Arieah, and fifty men of Gilead. And at the citadel of the king's palace in Samaria,

Pekah struck down and killed Pekahiah and reigned in his place.

²⁶ As for the rest of the acts of Pekahiah, along with all his accomplishments, they are indeed written in the Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Israel.

PEKAH REIGNS IN ISRAEL

²⁷ In the fifty-second year of Azariah's reign over Judah, Pekah son of Remaliah became king of Israel, and he reigned in Samaria twenty years. ²⁸ And he did evil in the sight of Yahweh and did not turn away from the sins that Jeroboam son of Nebat had caused Israel to commit.

²⁹ In the days of Pekah king of Israel, Tiglath-pileser king of Assyria came and captured Ijon, Abel-beth-maacah, Janoah, Kedesh, Hazor, Gilead, and Galilee, in-

■ 2KI 15:25 [ARCHAEOLOGY] King Pekah is named in Tiglath pileser III's records, see the Pekah and Hoshea Field Notes page

ARCHAEOLOGY DEMONIC BLOODLINE OF CHRIST

cluding all the land of Naphtali, and he took the people as captives to Assyria.

³⁰ Then Hoshea son of Elah led a conspiracy against Pekah son of Remaliah. In the twentieth year of Jotham son of Uzziah, Hoshea attacked Pekah, killed him, and reigned in his place.

³¹ As for the rest of the acts of Pekah, along with all his accomplishments, they are indeed written in the Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Israel.

JOTHAM REIGNS IN JUDAH // 2 CHRONICLES 27:1–9

³² In the second year of the reign of Pekah son of Remaliah over Israel, Jotham son of Uzziah became king of Judah. ³³ He was twenty-five years old when he became king, and he reigned in Jerusalem sixteen years. His mother's name was Jerusha daughter of Zadok. ³⁴ And he did what was right in the eyes of Yahweh, just as his father Uzziah had done.

³⁵ Nevertheless, the high places were not taken away; the people continued sacrificing and burning incense there.

Jotham rebuilt the Upper Gate of the house of Yahweh.

³⁶ As for the rest of the acts of Jotham, along with his accomplishments, are they not written in the Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Judah?

³⁷ (In those days Yahweh began to send Rezin king of Aram and Pekah son of Remaliah against Judah.)

³⁸ And Jotham rested with his fathers and was buried with them in the City of David his father. And his son Ahaz reigned in his place.

■ **2KI 15:29 [ARCHAEOLOGY]** Tiglath pileser III inscriptions name Pekah and Hoshea → FIELD NOTES p.36

■ **2KI 15:29 [FULFILLS]** Before the boy Maher shalash baz could say Father or Mother, Damascus's and Samaria's wealth would be carried off by Assyria ← IS 8:3–4 p.~

■ **2KI 15:29 [FIELD NOTES]** Assyrian carvings show whole families carried off in ox carts. See the Pekah and Hoshea Field Notes page.

■ **2KI 15:35 [DEMONIC]** The high places were not taken away

■ **2KI 15:37 [ARCHAEOLOGY]** King Rezin of Damascus is named on the Iran Stele and in Tiglath pileser III's records, see the Menahem's Tribute Field Notes page

■ **2KI 15:38 [ARCHAEOLOGY]** A clay seal impression reads, Belonging to Ahaz son of Jotham, king of Judah → FIELD NOTES p.37

FIELD NOTES · ARCHAEOLOGY · CONFIDENCE: HIGH

PEKAH AND HOSHEA

2 KINGS 15:27 TO 31 · 16:5 · 17:1 TO 6 · ISAIAH 7:1 TO 9



People carried away by Assyria in an ox cart, from Tiglath pileser III's palace at Nimrud, British Museum. These captives came from another land, but Israel's captives were taken away the same way. Photo Osama Shukir Muhammed Amin, CC BY SA 4.0.

WHAT IT IS

Writing on stone slabs and clay tablets from the palace of Tiglath pileser III at Nimrud. The king tells how he took land from Israel, which he calls the house of Omri, and carried its people away.

HOW OLD IT IS

The events are from 733 to 732 BC. The records were written soon after.

WHERE AND WHEN FOUND

In the ruins of Nimrud, ancient Calah, in Iraq. Layard found palace slabs there in the 1840s, and later British digs found more of the king's records. Many are in the British Museum.

WHAT IT SAYS

The king says the people of Israel overthrew Pekah their king, and he set Hoshea as king over them, and took tribute from him. The Bible says Hoshea killed Pekah and became king, 15:30. Both say Hoshea took Pekah's place.

CARRIED AWAY

The Bible says Tiglath pileser took Galilee, Gilead and the land of Naphtali and carried the people to Assyria, 15:29. Assyria moved whole towns to new lands, so they could not rebel. The carving shows a family riding away in an ox cart.

WHAT IT DOES NOT PROVE

Parts of the writing are broken, and the Assyrian king tells it his way. But two kings of Israel named in the Bible, and the way one followed the other, are in his records.

DEMONIC BLOODLINE OF CHRIST

16

CHAPTER 16 IN 30 SECONDS

King Ahaz of Judah burns his own son in the fire. When Aram and Israel attack him, he sends the temple's silver and gold to the king of Assyria and says, I am your servant. Then he visits Damascus, likes an altar he sees there, and has a copy built for the temple in Jerusalem.

AHAZ REIGNS IN JUDAH // 2 CHRONICLES 28:1-4

¹In the seventeenth year of Pekah son of Remaliah, Ahaz son of Jotham became king of Judah. ²Ahaz was twenty years old when he became king, and he reigned in Jerusalem sixteen years. And unlike David his father, he did not do what was right in the eyes of Yahweh his God. ³Instead, he walked in the ways of the kings of Israel and even sacrificed his son in the fire, according to the abominations of the nations that Yahweh had driven out before the Israelites. ⁴And he sacrificed and burned incense on the high places, on the hills, and under every green tree.

⁵Then Rezin king of Aram and Pekah son of Remaliah king of Israel came up to wage war against Jerusalem. They besieged Ahaz but could not overcome him.

⁶At that time Rezin king of Aram recovered Elath for Aram, drove out the men of Judah, and sent the Edomites into Elath, where they live to this day.

FIELD NOTES · ARCHAEOLOGY · CONFIDENCE: MEDIUM

THE SEAL OF AHAZ

2 KINGS 15:38 · 16:1 TO 20 · ISAIAH 7:1 TO 12



Not the seal of Ahaz. This is the seal of his son, which reads Hezekiah son of Ahaz, king of Judah, so it names Ahaz too. Photo Ouria Tadmor. Copyright Elliot Mazar.

WHAT IT IS

A tiny lump of clay stamped with a royal seal. It reads: Belonging to Ahaz son of Jotham, king of Judah. It names two kings at once. The back still shows the marks of the papyrus and string it once sealed.

HOW OLD IT IS

The 700s BC. Ahaz reigned about 732 to 716 BC.

WHERE AND WHEN FOUND

Nobody knows. It was sold on the antiquities market and bought by the collector Shlomo Moussaieff in the mid 1990s. Robert Deutsch published it in 1998. A fingerprint on its edge may be from the man who sealed it.

WHY SOME DOUBT IT

Objects bought from dealers, not dug up by archaeologists, can be fakes, and some seals like this have been. Many experts think this one is real. Others say it cannot be trusted, because nobody knows where it came from.

AHAZ ELSEWHERE

A Tiglath pileser III tablet dug up at Nimrud names him by his full name, Jehoahaz of Judah. See the Ahaz Pays Assyria page. And his son's seal, shown here, reads Hezekiah son of Ahaz, king of Judah.

■ 2KI 16:3 [DEMONIC] Ahaz burns his son as an offering

■ 2KI 16:3 [NOTE] CHILD SACRIFICE. 2 Chronicles 28:3 says Ahaz burned his sons in the Valley of Ben hinnom.

FIELD NOTES · ARCHAEOLOGY · CONFIDENCE: HIGH

AHAZ PAYS ASSYRIA

2 KINGS 16:5 TO 18 · 2 CHRONICLES 28:16 TO 21 · ISAIAH 7:1 TO 17



Tiglath pileser III in his royal chariot, part of a carving of his war that shows the capture of Astartu, Ashtaroth in the Bible. From his palace at Nimrud, British Museum. The tablet naming Ahaz is not shown. Photo Osama Shukir Muhammed Amin, CC BY SA 4.0.

WHAT IT IS

A clay tablet with a list of kings who paid tribute to Tiglath pileser III. One of them is Jehoahaz of Judah, the full name of King Ahaz.

HOW OLD IT IS

The payment it records was made about 734 BC.

WHERE AND WHEN FOUND

At Nimrud, ancient Calah, in Iraq, in the 1800s. It is in the British Museum in London.

THE BIBLE AND THE TABLET

When Aram and Israel attacked Judah, Ahaz sent silver and gold from the temple to the king of Assyria and said, I am your servant and your son, 16:7 to 8. Isaiah had begged him to trust God instead, Isaiah 7:4 to 9.

JEHOAHAZ OR AHAZ?

The name Jehoahaz means Yahweh has taken hold. The Bible always calls him Ahaz, without the part that means Yahweh. Many think the Bible's writers would not tie God's name to a king who burned his own son, 16:3.

WHAT IT DOES NOT PROVE

The tablet lists names and gifts, not the story. It shows that Ahaz of Judah did pay Tiglath pileser, just as 2 Kings 16 says.

WHAT IT DOES NOT PROVE

Even without this seal, Ahaz is in Assyria's records. The Bible's line of kings, Jotham, then Ahaz, then Hezekiah, 15:38 and 16:20, matches the seals.

⁷ So Ahaz sent messengers to Tiglath-pileser king of Assyria, saying, "I am your servant and your son. Come up and save me from the hands of the kings of Aram and Israel, who are rising up against me."

⁸ Ahaz also took the silver and gold found in the house of Yahweh and in the treasuries of the king's palace, and he sent it as a gift to the king of Assyria. ⁹ So the king of Assyria responded to him, marched up to Damascus, and captured it.

He took its people to Kir as captives and put Rezin to death.

THE IDOLATRY OF AHAZ // 2 CHRONICLES 28:16-27

¹⁰ Then King Ahaz went to Damascus to meet Tiglath-pileser king of Assyria. On seeing the altar in Damascus, King Ahaz sent Uriah the priest a model of the altar and complete plans for its construction. ¹¹ And Uriah the priest built the altar according to all the instructions King Ahaz had sent from Damascus, and he completed it before King Ahaz returned.

¹² When the king came back from Damascus and saw the altar, he approached it and presented offerings on it. ¹³ He offered his burnt offering and his grain offering, poured out his drink offering, and splattered the blood of his peace offerings on the altar. ¹⁴ He also took the bronze altar that stood before Yahweh from the front

■ 2KI 16:7 [ARCHAEOLOGY] Tiglath pileser III tribute list names Ahaz of Judah → FIELD NOTES p.38

■ 2KI 16:7 [FIELD NOTES] Tiglath pileser III listed Ahaz of Judah among the kings who paid him. See the Ahaz Pays Assyria Field Notes page.

■ 2KI 16:9 [FULFILLS] Before a particular child knew good from evil, both Syria and Israel would be devastated and 3 more ← IS 7:16; IS 8:3-4; IS 17:1-3; AMOS 1:3-5 p.--

PROPHECIES FULFILLED IN SCRIPTURE

ARCHAEOLOGY

DEMONIC

BLOODLINE OF CHRIST

of the temple (between the new altar and the house of Yahweh) and he put it on the north side of the new altar.

¹⁵ Then King Ahaz commanded Uriah the priest, “Offer on the great altar the morning burnt offering, the evening grain offering, and the king’s burnt offering and grain offering, as well as the burnt offerings, grain offerings, and drink offerings of all the people of the land. Splatter on the altar all the blood of the burnt offerings and sacrifices. But I will use the bronze altar to seek guidance.”

¹⁶ So Uriah the priest did just as King Ahaz had commanded.

¹⁷ King Ahaz also cut off the frames of the movable stands and removed the bronze basin from each of them. He took down the Sea from the bronze oxen that were under it and put it on a stone base. ¹⁸ And on account of the king of Assyria, he removed the Sabbath canopy they had built in the temple and closed the royal entryway outside the house of Yahweh.

¹⁹ As for the rest of the acts of Ahaz, along with his accomplishments, are they not written in the Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Judah?

²⁰ And Ahaz rested with his fathers and was buried with them in the City of David, and his son Hezekiah reigned in his place.

17

CHAPTER 17 IN 30 SECONDS

Hoshea stops paying Assyria and asks Egypt for help. Assyria surrounds Samaria for three years, and in 722 BC the northern kingdom of Israel falls. The people are carried away. The writer stops to explain why: they worshiped idols, burned their children and ignored every prophet God sent. New people move into the land, and they worship Yahweh and their own gods.

HOSHEA THE LAST KING OF ISRAEL

¹In the twelfth year of the reign of Ahaz over Judah, Hoshea son of Elah became king of Israel, and he reigned in Samaria nine years. ²And he did evil in the sight of

Yahweh, but not like the kings of Israel who preceded him.

³ Shalmaneser king of Assyria attacked him, and Hoshea became his vassal and paid him tribute. ⁴But the king of Assyria discovered that Hoshea had conspired to send envoys to King So of Egypt, and that he had not paid tribute to the king of Assyria as in previous years. Therefore the king of Assyria arrested Hoshea and put him in prison.

ISRAEL CARRIED CAPTIVE TO ASSYRIA

⁵ Then the king of Assyria invaded the whole land, marched up to Samaria, and besieged it for three years.

⁶ In the ninth year of Hoshea, the king of Assyria captured Samaria and carried away the Israelites to Assyria, where he settled them in Halah, in Gozan by the Habor River, and in the cities of the Medes.

⁷ All this happened because the people of Israel had sinned against Yahweh their God, who had brought them out of the land of Egypt from under the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt. They had worshiped other gods ⁸ and walked in the customs of the nations that Yahweh had driven out before the Israelites, as well as in the practices introduced by the kings of Israel.

⁹ The Israelites secretly did things against Yahweh their God that were not right. From watchtower to fortified city, they built high places in all their cities. ¹⁰ They set up for themselves sacred pillars and Asherah poles on every high hill and under every green tree. ¹¹ They burned in-

■ 2KI 17:3 [ARCHAEOLOGY] Shalmaneser V of Assyria is named in his own inscriptions and in a Babylonian Chronicle that says he ruined Samaria, see The Fall of Samaria Field Notes page

■ 2KI 17:5 [FULFILLS] The plot of Aram and Israel would fail and Ephraim would be shattered within 65 years and 2 more ← IS 7:7-8; HOS 13:16; MIC 1:6 p.~

■ 2KI 17:6 [FULFILLS] Israel’s eventual idolatry would lead to exile and scattering and 7 more ← DT 4:25-28; 1KI 14:15; IS 5:13; IS 7:16; IS 17:1-3; HOS 1:6-7; AMOS 5:27; AMOS 7:17 p.~

■ 2KI 17:6 [ARCHAEOLOGY] Sargon II’s records say he captured Samaria and carried its people away → FIELD NOTES p.40

■ 2KI 17:6 [FIELD NOTES] Sargon II claimed the capture of Samaria. See The Fall of Samaria Field Notes page and the Big Question pages Why Israel Fell.

■ 2KI 17:7 [DEMONIC] Israel worships idols, calves, Asherah, the stars, and Baal

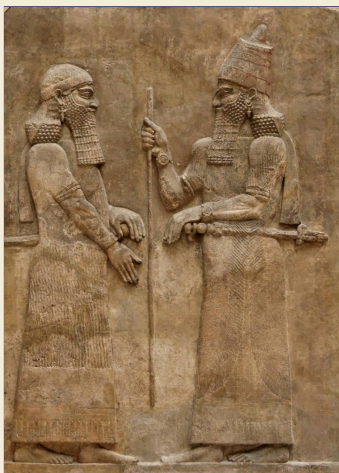
■ 2KI 16:20 [ARCHAEOLOGY] King Hezekiah is named on his own seal and in Sennacherib’s records, see the Hezekiah’s Seal Field Notes page

PROPHECIES FULFILLED IN SCRIPTURE DEMONIC GOD SPEAKING

FIELD NOTES · ARCHAEOLOGY · CONFIDENCE: HIGH

THE FALL OF SAMARIA

2 KINGS 17:1 TO 6 · 18:9 TO 12 · ISAIAH 20:1



Sargon II, right, in the tall crown, talking with an official. From his palace walls at Khorsabad. Louvre Museum, Paris.

WHAT IT IS

Writing from the palace of Sargon II, king of Assyria from 722 to 705 BC. He says he took Samaria and carried away 27,290 of its people, then brought in people from other lands to live there.

HOW OLD IT IS

Samaria fell in 722 BC. Sargon's records were carved soon after, about 717 to 707 BC.

WHERE AND WHEN FOUND

At Khorsabad in Iraq, Sargon's new capital, by Paul Emile Botta in 1843. A clay prism from Nimrud tells the same story.

WHICH KING TOOK SAMARIA?

2 Kings 17:3 to 6 names Shalmaneser V as the king who came against Hoshea and laid siege for three years. Then it says the king of Assyria captured Samaria. A Babylonian record says Shalmaneser V ruined Samaria. A Babylonian record says Shalmaneser V took the throne about then and claimed it too. Many think Shalmaneser took the city and Sargon carried off the people.

THE FORGOTTEN KING

For a long time Sargon was known only from one verse, Isaiah 20:1, and scholars were not sure who he was. Then Botta found his palace.

WHAT IT DOES NOT PROVE

Assyrian kings bragged and liked round numbers. But the fall of Samaria and the carrying away of Israel, 17:6, are in Assyria's own records.

cense on all the high places like the nations that Yahweh had driven out before them. They did wicked things, provoking Yahweh to anger.¹² They served idols, although Yahweh had told them, **"You shall not do this thing."**

¹³ Yet through all His prophets and seers, Yahweh warned Israel and Judah, saying, **"Turn from your wicked ways and keep My commandments and statutes, according to the entire Law that I commanded your fathers and delivered to you through My servants the prophets."**

¹⁴ But they would not listen, and they stiffened their necks like their fathers, who did not believe Yahweh their God.¹⁵ They rejected His statutes and the covenant He had made with their fathers, as well as the

decrees He had given them. They pursued worthless idols and became worthless themselves, going after the surrounding nations that Yahweh had commanded them not to imitate.

¹⁶ They abandoned all the commandments of Yahweh their God and made for themselves two cast idols of calves and an Asherah pole. They bowed down to all the host of heaven and served Baal.¹⁷ They sacrificed their sons and daughters in the fire and practiced divination and soothsaying. They devoted themselves to doing evil in the sight of Yahweh, provoking Him to anger.

¹⁸ So Yahweh was very angry with Israel, and He removed them from His presence. Only the tribe of Judah remained,¹⁹ and

■ 2KI 17:13 [NOTE] The writer quotes God's own warnings here and in 17:35 to 39, so those words print red.

■ 2KI 17:17 [DEMONIC] Israel practiced divination and sorcery

PROPHECIES FULFILLED IN SCRIPTURE BLOODLINE OF CHRIST

even Judah did not keep the commandments of Yahweh their God, but lived according to the customs Israel had introduced.²⁰ So Yahweh rejected all the descendants of Israel. He afflicted them and delivered them into the hands of plunderers, until He had banished them from His presence.

²¹ When Yahweh had torn Israel away from the house of David, they made Jeroboam son of Nebat king, and Jeroboam led Israel away from following Yahweh and caused them to commit a great sin.²² The Israelites persisted in all the sins that Jeroboam had committed and did not turn away from them.²³ Finally, Yahweh removed Israel from His presence, as He had declared through all His servants the prophets. So Israel was exiled from their homeland into Assyria, where they are to this day.

DEBATED THE BIG QUESTION

WHY ISRAEL FELL

What the Book Says

2 KINGS 17:1 TO 23 • DEUTERONOMY 28:36 TO 37 • 28:63 TO 64

THE END

Hoshea, Israel's last king, stopped paying Assyria and asked Egypt for help. The king of Assyria put him in prison, besieged Samaria for three years, and in 722 BC carried Israel away, 17:3 to 6.

THE WRITER STOPS

Here the writer stops the story for his longest explanation, 17:7 to 23.

THE LIST

Israel worshiped other gods, built high places in every town, set up sacred pillars and Asherah poles, made two golden calves, bowed to the stars, served Baal, burned their sons and daughters in the fire, and practiced divination and sorcery, 17:7 to 17.

THE WARNINGS

God warned them through all His prophets and seers: Turn from your wicked ways. But they were stubborn and would not listen, 17:13 to 14.

JEROBOAM'S SIN

The kingdom started with Jeroboam's calves, and Israel never stopped walking in that sin until they were removed from God's sight, 17:21 to 23.

THE LAST KINGS

Four of Israel's last six kings were murdered, 15:10 to 30. Hoshea, the very last, ended up in an Assyrian prison, 17:4.

THE QUESTION

Why did God let His people be destroyed, and what happened to the ten tribes?

Every View

2 CHRONICLES 11:16 • 30:11 • LUKE 2:36 • JAMES 1:1 • EZEKIEL 37:15 TO 22

GOD'S REASON

Moses had warned that if Israel turned to other gods, they would be scattered among the nations, Deuteronomy 28:36 and 28:64. God was patient for about 200 years and sent prophet after prophet: Elijah, Elisha, Jonah, Amos and Hosea.

WHERE THEY WENT

Assyria sent them to Halah, to Gozan by the Habor River, and to the cities of the Medes, in what is now Syria, Iraq and Iran, 17:6. Then it brought other peoples to live in Israel, 17:24.

VIEW 1: LOST AMONG THE NATIONS

Many think most of the northern tribes married into the nations where they were sent and over time forgot who they were.

VIEW 2: NEVER FULLY LOST

Others point out that many from the northern tribes had already moved to Judah, 2 Chronicles 11:16 and 30:11. Anna in the temple was from the tribe of Asher, Luke 2:36, and James writes to the twelve tribes, James 1:1.

LEGENDS

Many groups around the world claim to come from the lost tribes. A few have real Jewish roots. Others, like the idea that the British are the lost tribes, have no good evidence.

WHAT ALL SIDES AGREE ON

God kept His word, both His warnings and His patience. And the prophets promised that one day the two kingdoms

■ 2KI 17:18 [FULFILLS] Israel's eventual idolatry would lead to exile and scattering ← DT 4:25–28 p.–

PROPHECIES FULFILLED IN SCRIPTURE DEMONIC

would be one again under one King, Ezekiel 37:15 to 22.

SAMARIA RESETTLED

²⁴ Then the king of Assyria brought people from Babylon, Cuthah, Avva, Hamath, and Sepharvaim and settled them in the towns of Samaria to replace the Israelites. They took possession of Samaria and lived in its towns.

²⁵ Now when the settlers first lived there, they did not worship Yahweh, so He sent lions among them, which killed some of them. ²⁶ So they spoke to the king of Assyria, saying, "The peoples that you have removed and placed in the cities of Samaria do not know the requirements of the God of the land. Because of this, He has sent lions among them, which are indeed killing them off."

²⁷ Then the king of Assyria commanded: "Send back one of the priests you carried off from Samaria, and have him go back to live there and teach the requirements of the God of the land."

²⁸ Thus one of the priests they had carried away came and lived in Bethel, and he began to teach them how they should worship Yahweh.

²⁹ Nevertheless, the people of each nation continued to make their own gods in the cities where they had settled, and they set them up in the shrines that the people of Samaria had made on the high places. ³⁰ The men of Babylon made Succoth-benoth, the men of Cuth made Nergal, the men of Hamath made Ashima, ³¹ the Avvites made Nibhaz and Tartak, and the Sepharvites burned their children in the fire to Adrammelech and Anammelech the gods of Sepharvaim.

³² So the new residents worshiped Yahweh, but they also appointed for themselves priests of all sorts to serve in the

shrines of the high places. ³³ They worshiped Yahweh, but they also served their own gods according to the customs of the nations from which they had been carried away.

DEBATED THE BIG QUESTION

WHO WERE THE SAMARITANS?

Where They Came From

2 KINGS 17:24 TO 41 · EZRA 4:1 TO 3 · JOHN 4:9 TO 22

NEW NEIGHBORS

After Israel was carried away, the king of Assyria brought people from Babylon, Cuthah, Avva, Hamath and Sepharvaim to live in the towns of Samaria, 17:24.

LIONS

They did not worship Yahweh, and God sent lions among them. They told the king, These people do not know what the god of the land requires, 17:25 to 26.

A PRIEST SENT BACK

The king sent back one of Israel's priests, who lived at Bethel and taught them how to worship Yahweh, 17:27 to 28.

MIXED WORSHIP

Each nation still made its own gods. Some even burned their children to their gods. They worshiped Yahweh, but they also served their idols, 17:29 to 33.

TO THIS DAY

The writer says their children kept doing it to his own day, 17:41.

SAMARIA

The name comes from the city of Samaria, which Omri built on a hill he bought from a man named Shemer, 1 Kings 16:24. Later the whole region around it was called Samaria.

THE QUESTION

Are these the Samaritans of the New Testament, and why did Jews and Samaritans not get along?

■ 2KI 17:24 [FULFILLS] The plot of Aram and Israel would fail and Ephraim would be shattered within 65 years ← IS 7:7-8 p. 6.

■ 2KI 17:24 [NOTE] THE SETTLERS of Samaria were the ancestors of the Samaritans, John 4:9. See the Big Question pages Who Were the Samaritans?

■ 2KI 17:29 [DEMONIC] The new settlers of Samaria worship God and their idols

PROPHECIES FULFILLED IN SCRIPTURE

ARCHAEOLOGY

DEMONIC

GOD SPEAKING

BLOODLINE OF CHRIST

Every View

JOHN 4:20 • LUKE 10:30 TO 37 • 17:15 TO 18 • ACTS 8:4 TO 25

VIEW 1: THE OLD JEWISH VIEW

Josephus and the rabbis called the Samaritans Cutheans, people from Cuthah, 17:24. They saw them as foreigners, not true Israelites. When the Jews came back from Babylon, they would not let them help rebuild the temple, Ezra 4:1 to 3.

VIEW 2: THE SAMARITAN VIEW

The Samaritans call themselves Shamerim, keepers of the Law. They say they come from the tribes of Ephraim, Manasseh and Levi, who never left the land, and that Mount Gerizim, not Jerusalem, is the place God chose, John 4:20.

VIEW 3: SOME OF BOTH

Many scholars think the Samaritans came from Israelites who stayed behind, mixed with the newcomers, and that the split with the Jews grew wider over hundreds of years. The Jewish ruler John Hyrcanus destroyed their temple on Mount Gerizim about 110 BC.

THEIR BIBLE

Samaritans keep only the five books of Moses, the Samaritan Pentateuch, written in an old Hebrew script.

JESUS AND THE SAMARITANS

Jews did not associate with Samaritans, John 4:9. Jesus talked with a Samaritan woman at a well, made a Samaritan the hero of a story, Luke 10:33, and praised the one leper who came back, a Samaritan, Luke 17:16. Philip preached in Samaria, Acts 8:5. About 900 Samaritans still live in Israel and the West Bank today.

WHAT ALL SIDES AGREE ON

An old wall stood between Jews and Samaritans for centuries, and Jesus walked right through it.

³⁴ To this day they are still practicing their former customs. None of them worship Yahweh or observe the statutes, ordinances, laws, and commandments that Yahweh gave the descendants of Jacob, whom He named Israel.

³⁵ For Yahweh had made a covenant with the Israelites and commanded them, **“Do not worship other gods or bow down to them; do not serve them or sacrifice to them.”** ³⁶ Instead, worship Yahweh, who brought you out of the land of Egypt with great power and an outstretched arm. You are to bow down to Him and offer sacrifices to Him. ³⁷ And you must always be careful to observe the statutes, ordinances, laws, and commandments He wrote for you. Do not worship other gods. ³⁸ Do not forget the covenant I have made with you. Do not worship other gods, ³⁹ but worship Yahweh your God, and He will deliver you from the hands of all your enemies.”

⁴⁰ But they would not listen, and they persisted in their former customs. ⁴¹ So these nations worshiped Yahweh but also served their idols, and to this day their children and grandchildren continue to do as their fathers did.

18

CHAPTER 18 IN 30 SECONDS

Hezekiah is a different kind of king. He smashes the idols and even breaks Moses' bronze snake. He trusts Yahweh like no king before him. Then Sennacherib of Assyria takes the walled towns of Judah, and his spokesman stands outside Jerusalem mocking Yahweh in Hebrew, so everyone on the wall can hear.

HEZEKIAH DESTROYS IDOLATRY IN JUDAH // 2 CHRONICLES 29:1-2

¹ In the third year of the reign of Hoshea son of Elah over Israel, Hezekiah son of Ahaz became king of Judah. ² He was twenty-five years old when he became king, and he reigned in Jerusalem twenty-nine years. His mother's name was Abi, the daughter of Zechariah. ³ And he did what was right in the eyes of Yahweh, just as his father David had done. ⁴ He re-

■ 2KI 18:1 [ARCHAEOLOGY] A clay seal impression reads, Belonging to Hezekiah son of Ahaz, king of Judah → FIELD NOTES p.45

■ 2KI 18:1 [FIELD NOTES] Hezekiah's own seal has been found. See the Hezekiah's Seal Field Notes page.

■ 2KI 18:2 [FULFILLS] God would add fifteen years to Hezekiah's life and save the city from Assyria ← 2KI 20:5-6 p.-

■ 2KI 18:2 [FULFILLS] Hezekiah's life extended 15 years; sundial sign confirmed ← IS 38:5-8 p.-

PROPHECIES FULFILLED IN SCRIPTURE ARCHAEOLOGY BLOODLINE OF CHRIST

moved the high places, shattered the sacred pillars, and cut down the Asherah poles. He also demolished the bronze snake called Nehushtan that Moses had made, for up to that time the Israelites had burned incense to it.

⁵ Hezekiah trusted in Yahweh, the God of Israel. No king of Judah was like him, either before him or after him. ⁶ He remained faithful to Yahweh and did not turn from following Him; he kept the commandments that Yahweh had given Moses.

⁷ And Yahweh was with Hezekiah, and he prospered wherever he went. He rebelled against the king of Assyria and refused to serve him. ⁸ He defeated the Philistines as far as Gaza and its borders, from watchtower to fortified city.

⁹ In the fourth year of Hezekiah's reign, which was the seventh year of the reign of Hoshea son of Elah over Israel, Shalmaneser king of Assyria marched against Samaria and besieged it. ¹⁰ And at the end of three years, the Assyrians captured it.

So Samaria was captured in the sixth year of Hezekiah, which was the ninth year of Hoshea king of Israel. ¹¹ The king of Assyria exiled the Israelites to Assyria and settled them in Halah, in Gozan by the Habbor River, and in the cities of the Medes.

¹² This happened because they did not listen to the voice of Yahweh their God, but violated His covenant—all that Moses the servant of Yahweh had commanded—and would neither listen nor obey.

SENNACHERIB INVADES JUDAH // 2 CHRONICLES 32:1-8; PSALM 46:1-11

¹³ In the fourteenth year of Hezekiah's reign, Sennacherib king of Assyria attacked and captured all the fortified cities of Judah. ¹⁴ So Hezekiah king of Judah sent word to the king of Assyria at

Lachish, saying, "I have done wrong; withdraw from me, and I will pay whatever you demand from me."

And the king of Assyria exacted from Hezekiah king of Judah eleven tons of silver and one ton of gold. ¹⁵ Hezekiah gave him all the silver that was found in the house of Yahweh and in the treasuries of the royal palace.

¹⁶ At that time Hezekiah stripped the gold with which he had plated the doors and doorposts of the temple of Yahweh, and he gave it to the king of Assyria.

SENNACHERIB THREATENS JERUSALEM // 2 CHRONICLES 32:9-19; ISAIAH 36:1-22

¹⁷ Nevertheless, the king of Assyria sent the Tartan, the Rabсарis, and the Rabshakeh, along with a great army, from Lachish to King Hezekiah at Jerusalem. They advanced up to Jerusalem and stationed themselves by the aqueduct of the upper pool, on the road to the Launderer's Field. ¹⁸ Then they called for the king. And Eliakim son of Hilkiah the palace administrator, Shebna the scribe, and Joah son of Asaph the recorder, went out to them.

¹⁹ The Rabshakeh said to them, "Tell Hezekiah that this is what the great king, the king of Assyria, says: What is the basis of this confidence of yours? ²⁰ You claim to have a strategy and strength for war, but these are empty words. In whom are you now trusting, that you have rebelled against me?

²¹ Look now, you are trusting in Egypt, that splintered reed of a staff that will pierce the hand of anyone who leans on it. Such is Pharaoh king of Egypt to all who trust in him. ²² But if you say to me, 'We trust in

■ **2KI 18:4 [DEMONIC]** Hezekiah destroys the high places and the bronze snake

■ **2KI 18:4 [NOTE]** NEHUSHTAN means a bronze thing. Moses' bronze snake, Numbers 21:9, was about 700 years old and had become an idol. Jesus compared His cross to it, John 3:14.

■ **2KI 18:9 [FULFILLS]** Samaria would bear her guilt and her people would fall by the sword ← HOS 13:16 p.-

■ **2KI 18:9 [FULFILLS]** Samaria would become a heap of rubble and her stones poured into the valley ← MIC 1:6 p.-

■ **2KI 18:13 [FULFILLS]** God would bring the king of Assyria against Ahaz and Judah and 2 more ← IS 7:17; IS 8:7-8; MIC 1:9 p.-

■ **2KI 18:13 [ARCHAEOLOGY]** Sennacherib says he took 46 walled cities and shut Hezekiah up like a bird in a cage, but he never says he took Jerusalem

■ **2KI 18:13 [FIELD NOTES]** Sennacherib wrote his own story of this war. See the Sennacherib's Prism Field Notes page in Isaiah, p.-, The Lachish Reliefs in Micah, p.-, and The Lachish Siege Ramp Field Notes page.

■ **2KI 18:14 [ARCHAEOLOGY]** Lachish Reliefs of Sennacherib

■ **2KI 18:18 [FULFILLS]** Shebna would lose his office and Eliakim would take it ← IS 22:19-20 p.-

■ **2KI 18:18 [FIELD NOTES]** SHEBNA. A tomb with a royal steward's name has been found in Jerusalem. See The Royal Steward's Tomb Field Notes page.

FIELD NOTES · ARCHAEOLOGY · CONFIDENCE: HIGH

HEZEKIAH'S SEAL

2 KINGS 18:1 TO 8 · 20:1 TO 21 · ISAIAH 36 TO 39



The clay seal impression of King Hezekiah, with the winged sun in the middle. Photo Ouria Tadmor. Copyright Eilat Mazar.

WHAT IT IS

A tiny lump of clay, about half an inch across, stamped with King Hezekiah's own seal. It was pressed onto a string that tied up a rolled document. It reads: Belonging to Hezekiah son of Ahaz, king of Judah.

HOW OLD IT IS

Hezekiah ruled about 715 to 686 BC, so the seal is from his reign.

WHERE AND WHEN FOUND

In 2009, in a dump of old rubbish near a royal building on the Ophel, just south of the Temple Mount in Jerusalem. Eilat Mazar's team found it, and it was announced in 2015.

THE PICTURE

In the middle is a sun with two wings, and on each side an Egyptian sign for life. Many royal jar handles from Hezekiah's time carry a similar winged sign.

THE BIBLE'S HEZEKIAH

2 Kings 18:3 to 5 says Hezekiah did right like David, removed the high places, and trusted Yahweh like no king of Judah before or after him.

HOW SEALS WORKED

A king or an official pressed his stone seal into soft clay over the string tied around a letter or a sack. The back of this lump shows marks of thick cords and rough cloth, so it may have sealed a sack of food.

FIRST FROM A DIG

Other clay seals with Hezekiah's name are in private collections, but nobody knows where they came from. This was the first seal of a king of Israel or Judah found by archaeologists in a dig.

A SEAL OF ISAIAH?

In 2018 the same team announced another clay seal found about ten feet away. It reads Isaiah, and the next letters may spell prophet, but the end is broken off, so scholars are not sure.

WHAT IT DOES NOT PROVE

The seal does not tell us about his faith or his reforms. It shows that Hezekiah son of Ahaz really was king of Judah, in Jerusalem, as the Bible says. Some think the Egyptian symbols fit a time when Judah looked to Egypt for help, 18:21.

BLOODLINE OF CHRIST

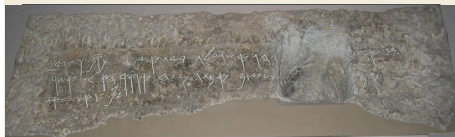
Yahweh our God,' is He not the One whose high places and altars Hezekiah has removed, saying to Judah and Jerusalem: 'You must worship before this altar in Jerusalem'?

²³ Now, therefore, make a bargain with my master, the king of Assyria. I will give you two thousand horses—if you can put riders on them! ²⁴ For how can you repel a single officer among the least of my master's servants when you depend on Egypt for chariots and horsemen? ²⁵ So now, was it apart from Yahweh that I have come up against this place to destroy it? Yahweh Himself said to me, 'Go up against this land and destroy it.'

FIELD NOTES · ARCHAEOLOGY · CONFIDENCE: MEDIUM

THE ROYAL STEWARD'S TOMB

2 KINGS 18:18 · 18:26 · 18:37 · 19:2 · ISAIAH 22:15 TO 25



The doorway inscription from the royal steward's tomb in Silwan, with the letters filled in white. British Museum, London. Photo by Mustafa, CC BY SA 3.0.

WHAT IT IS

Writing cut over the door of a tomb in the rock, in the village of Silwan across from the City of David. It reads: This is the tomb of ...yahu, who is over the house. There is no silver and no gold here, only his bones and the bones of his wife with him. Cursed be the man who opens this.

HOW OLD IT IS

About 700 BC, from the time of Hezekiah.

WHERE AND WHEN FOUND

Charles Clermont Ganneau found it in 1870 and had it cut out and taken to the British Museum. Nahman Avigad first read it in 1953.

SHEBNA

Over the house was the title of the king's chief steward. Isaiah scolded a steward named Shebna for cutting himself a fancy tomb in the rock, and said he would lose his job to Eliakim, Isaiah

22:15 to 20. In 2 Kings 18:18, Eliakim is over the house and Shebna is now the secretary.

THE NAME

The first part of the name is broken off. Only the ending yahu is left. Many think it was Shebnayahu, a longer form of Shebna.

WHAT IT DOES NOT PROVE

Nobody can be sure the tomb was Shebna's. It shows that a royal steward of Hezekiah's day had a rock tomb in this very place, just as Isaiah described. The Isaiah Field Notes page tells more, p. 3.

²⁶ Then Eliakim son of Hilkiah, along with Shebna and Joah, said to the Rabshakeh, "Please speak to your servants in Aramaic, since we understand it. Do not speak with us in Hebrew in the hearing of the people on the wall."

²⁷ But the Rabshakeh replied, "Has my master sent me to speak these words only to you and your master, and not to the men sitting on the wall, who are destined with you to eat their own dung and drink their own urine?"

²⁸ Then the Rabshakeh stood and called out loudly in Hebrew: "Hear the word of the great king, the king of Assyria! ²⁹ This is what the king says: Do not let Hezekiah deceive you; he cannot deliver you from my hand. ³⁰ Do not let Hezekiah persuade you to trust in Yahweh when he says, 'Yahweh will surely deliver us; this city will not be given into the hand of the king of Assyria.'

³¹ Do not listen to Hezekiah, for this is what the king of Assyria says: Make peace with me and come out to me. Then every one of you will eat from his own vine and his own fig tree and drink water from his own cistern, ³² until I come and take you away to a land like your own—a land of grain and new wine, a land of bread and vineyards, a land of olive trees and honey—so that you may live and not die. But do not listen to Hezekiah, for he misleads you when he says, 'Yahweh will deliver us.'

PROPHECIES FULFILLED IN SCRIPTURE

ARCHAEOLOGY

DEMONIC

NOTABLE

GOD SPEAKING

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³³ Has the god of any nation ever delivered his land from the hand of the king of Assyria? ³⁴ Where are the gods of Hamath and Arpad? Where are the gods of Sepharvaim, Hena, and Ivvah? Have they delivered Samaria from my hand? ³⁵ Who among all the gods of these lands has delivered his land from my hand? How then can Yahweh deliver Jerusalem from my hand?"

³⁶ But the people remained silent and did not answer a word, for Hezekiah had commanded, "Do not answer him."

³⁷ Then Hilkiah's son Eliakim the palace administrator, Shebna the scribe, and Asaph's son Joah the recorder came to Hezekiah with their clothes torn, and they relayed to him the words of the Rabshakeh.

19

CHAPTER 19 IN 30 SECONDS

Hezekiah takes Sennacherib's threatening letter into the temple and spreads it out before Yahweh. Isaiah sends God's answer: He will not enter this city. That night the angel of Yahweh strikes down 185,000 in the Assyrian camp. Sennacherib goes home, and years later his own sons kill him while he worships his god.

ISAIAH'S MESSAGE OF DELIVERANCE // ISAIAH

37:1–7

¹ On hearing this report, King Hezekiah tore his clothes, put on sackcloth, and entered the house of Yahweh. ² And he sent Eliakim the palace administrator, Shebna the scribe, and the leading priests, all wearing sackcloth, to the prophet Isaiah son of Amoz ³ to tell him, "This is what Hezekiah says: Today is a day of distress, rebuke, and disgrace; for children have come to the point of birth, but there is no strength to deliver them. ⁴ Perhaps Yahweh your God will hear all the words of the Rabshakeh, whom his master the king of Assyria has sent to defy the living God, and He will rebuke him for the words that Yahweh your God has heard. Therefore lift up a prayer for the remnant that still survives."

■ 2KI 18:33 [DEMONIC] Assyria boasts that no nation's gods could save them

⁵ So the servants of King Hezekiah went to Isaiah, ⁶ who replied, "Tell your master that this is what Yahweh says: '**Do not be afraid of the words you have heard, with which the servants of the king of Assyria have blasphemed Me.** ⁷ Behold, I will put a spirit in him so that he will hear a rumor and return to his own land, where I will cause him to fall by the sword.'"

SENNACHERIB'S BLASPHEMOUS LETTER // ISAIAH 37:8–13

⁸ When the Rabshakeh heard that the king of Assyria had left Lachish, he withdrew and found the king fighting against Libnah.

⁹ Now Sennacherib had been warned about Tirhakah king of Cush: "Look, he has set out to fight against you."

So Sennacherib again sent messengers to Hezekiah, saying, ¹⁰ "Give this message to Hezekiah king of Judah:

'Do not let your God, in whom you trust, deceive you by saying that Jerusalem will not be delivered into the hand of the king of Assyria. ¹¹ Surely you have heard what the kings of Assyria have done to all the other countries, devoting them to destruction. Will you then be spared? ¹² Did the gods of the nations destroyed by my fathers rescue those nations—the gods of Gozan, Haran, and Rezeph, and of the people of Eden in Telassar? ¹³ Where are the kings of Hamath, Arpad, Sepharvaim, Hena, and Ivvah?'"

HEZEKIAH'S PRAYER // ISAIAH 37:14–20

¹⁴ So Hezekiah received the letter from the messengers, read it, and went up to the house of Yahweh and spread it out before Yahweh. ¹⁵ And Hezekiah prayed before Yahweh:

"O Yahweh, God of Israel, enthroned between the cherubim, You alone are God over all the kingdoms of the earth. You made the heavens and the earth. ¹⁶ Incline

■ 2KI 19:7 [PROPHECY] Sennacherib would hear a rumor, go home, and die by the sword in his own land → 2KI 19:37; IS 37:38 p. 6

■ 2KI 19:9 [ARCHAEOLOGY] Tirhakah is Pharaoh Taharqa of Egypt, known from his own statues and temples and from Assyrian records

■ 2KI 19:12 [DEMONIC] Assyria mocks the gods of the conquered nations

DEMONIC NOTABLE GOD SPEAKING BLOODLINE OF CHRIST

Your ear, O Yahweh, and hear; open Your eyes, O Yahweh, and see. Listen to the words that Sennacherib has sent to defy the living God.

FIELD NOTES · ARCHAEOLOGY · CONFIDENCE: HIGH

THE LACHISH SIEGE RAMP

2 KINGS 18:13 TO 17 · 19:8 · 2 CHRONICLES 32:9 · MICAH 1:13



The Assyrian siege ramp at Tel Lachish, the slope of loose stones against the side of the mound. Photo Wilson44691, CC BY SA 3.0.

WHAT IT IS

A huge ramp of stones piled against the side of Lachish so soldiers and battering rams could reach the wall. It is the oldest siege ramp found anywhere in the world.

HOW OLD IT IS

701 BC, from Sennacherib's attack on Lachish.

WHERE AND WHEN FOUND

At Tel Lachish in Israel. James Starkey's British team dug there in the 1930s. David Ussishkin of Tel Aviv University led new digs there from 1973 to 1994. His team dug into the ramp and showed it was the one Sennacherib built.

WHAT ELSE WAS FOUND

Inside the wall, the people of Lachish piled up their own ramp to make the wall higher. Hundreds of iron arrowheads, sling stones and pieces of armor lay in the ruins, along with a burned city.

IT MATCHES THE PANELS

The ramp is right where the Lachish Reliefs show the Assyrians attacking, by the city gate side. The panels and the ground tell the same story.

WHAT IT DOES NOT PROVE

Lachish fell, but Jerusalem did not. Isaiah said Sennacherib would not build a siege ramp against Jerusalem, 19:32, and none has ever been found there.

- ¹⁷ Truly, O Yahweh, the kings of Assyria have laid waste these nations and their lands. ¹⁸ They have cast their gods into the fire and destroyed them, for they were not gods, but only wood and stone—the work of human hands.
- ¹⁹ And now, O Yahweh our God, please save us from his hand, so that all the kingdoms of the earth may know that You alone, O Yahweh, are God."

SENNACHERIB'S FALL PROPHESED // ISAIAH 37:21–35

²⁰ Then Isaiah son of Amoz sent a message to Hezekiah: "This is what Yahweh, the God of Israel, says: I have heard your prayer concerning Sennacherib king of Assyria. ²¹ This is the word that Yahweh has spoken against him:

'The Virgin Daughter of Zion
despises you and mocks you;
the Daughter of Jerusalem
shakes her head behind you.

²² Whom have you taunted and blasphemed?
Against whom have you raised your voice
and lifted your eyes in pride?
Against the Holy One of Israel!

²³ Through your servants you have taunted the Lord,
and you have said:

"With my many chariots
I have ascended
to the heights of the mountains,
to the remote peaks of Lebanon.
I have cut down its tallest cedars,
the finest of its cypresses.
I have reached its farthest outposts,
the densest of its forests.

²⁴ I have dug wells
and drunk foreign waters.
With the soles of my feet

2KI 19:15 [NOTABLE] Hezekiah took the enemy's threatening letter into the temple, spread it out before God and prayed. A simple picture of what to do with a scary letter.

2KI 19:18 [DEMONIC] Their gods were only wood and stone

PROPHECIES FULFILLED IN SCRIPTURE ARCHAEOLOGY GOD SPEAKING BLOODLINE OF CHRIST

I have dried up all the streams of Egypt."

25 Have you not heard?

Long ago I ordained it;
in days of old I planned it.

Now I have brought it to pass,
that you should crush fortified cities
into piles of rubble.

26 Therefore their inhabitants, devoid of
power,

are dismayed and ashamed.
They are like plants in the field,
tender green shoots,
grass on the rooftops,
scorched before it is grown.

27 But I know your sitting down,
your going out and coming in,
and your raging against Me.

28 Because your rage and arrogance
against Me
have reached My ears,
I will put My hook in your nose
and My bit in your mouth;
I will send you back
the way you came.'

29 And this will be a sign to you, O
Hezekiah:

This year you will eat
what grows on its own,
and in the second year
what springs from the same.

But in the third year you will sow and reap;
you will plant vineyards and eat their
fruit.

30 And the surviving remnant of the house
of Judah
will again take root below
and bear fruit above.

31 For a remnant will go forth from
Jerusalem,
and survivors from Mount Zion.
The zeal of Yahweh of Hosts
will accomplish this.

32 So this is what Yahweh says about the
king of Assyria:

'He will not enter this
city or shoot an arrow
into it. He will not come before it with a
shield
or build up a siege ramp against it.

33 He will go back the way he came,
and he will not enter this city,
declares Yahweh.

34 I will defend this city
and save it
for My own sake
and for the sake of My servant David."

**JERUSALEM DELIVERED FROM THE ASSYRI-
ANS** // 2 CHRONICLES 32:20–23; ISAIAH 37:36–38

35 And that very night the angel of Yahweh
went out and struck down 185,000 men in
the camp of the Assyrians. When the peo-
ple got up the next morning, there were all
the dead bodies! 36 So Sennacherib king
of Assyria broke camp and withdrew. He
returned to Nineveh and stayed there.

37 One day, while he was worshiping in the
temple of his god Nisroch, his sons
Adrammelech and Sharezer put him to the
sword and escaped to the land of Ararat.
And his son Esar-haddon reigned in his
place.

■ 2KI 19:32 [PROPHECY] Isaiah predicted Sennacherib would NOT enter Jerusalem; he would return the way he came → 2KI 19:35–36 p.~

■ 2KI 19:35 [FULFILLS] Isaiah predicted Sennacherib would NOT enter Jerusalem; he would return the way he came and 7 more ← 2KI 19:32–34; 2KI 20:5–6; IS 8:7–8; IS 10:12; IS 10:27; IS 17:13–14; IS 31:8; HOS 1:6–7 p.~

■ 2KI 19:35 [MIRACLE] Angel of Yahweh struck 185,000 Assyrians in one night

■ 2KI 19:35 [NOTE] 185,000. See the Big Question pages The 185,000 Assyrians.

■ 2KI 19:36 [FULFILLS] God would send Sennacherib back the way he came ← IS 37:29 p.~

■ 2KI 19:37 [ARCHAEOLOGY] Death of Sennacherib → FIELD NOTES p.51

■ 2KI 19:37 [DEMONIC] Sennacherib is killed while wor-
shiping his god Nisroch

■ 2KI 19:37 [FULFILLS] Sennacherib would hear a rumor,
go home, and die by the sword in his own land ← 2KI 19:7
p.~

■ 2KI 19:37 [FULFILLS] Sennacherib would hear a rumor,
go home, and fall by the sword in his own land ← IS 37:7
p.~

■ 2KI 19:37 [FIELD NOTES] Babylonian and Assyrian
records also say Sennacherib was killed by a son. See
The Death of Sennacherib Field Notes page.

THE HEART GOD SPEAKING BLOODLINE OF CHRIST

DEBATED THE BIG QUESTION

THE 185,000 ASSYRIANS

What Happened

2 KINGS 18:13 TO 19:37 · ISAIAH 36 TO 37 · 2 CHRONICLES 32:1 TO 23

THE THREAT

Sennacherib had taken Judah's walled cities. His spokesman, the Rabshakeh, stood outside Jerusalem and shouted in Hebrew that no god had saved any nation from Assyria, so why would Yahweh save them? 18:28 to 35.

HEZEKIAH PRAYS

Hezekiah took the king's letter into the temple, spread it out before Yahweh and prayed, Save us, so that all the kingdoms of the earth may know that You alone, Yahweh, are God, 19:14 to 19.

ISAIAH'S ANSWER

God said through Isaiah that the king of Assyria would not enter the city or shoot an arrow there. He will go back the way he came, 19:32 to 33.

THAT NIGHT

The angel of Yahweh went out and struck down 185,000 in the Assyrian camp. In the morning, there were the dead bodies, 19:35.

HE WENT HOME

Sennacherib broke camp, went home to Nineveh and stayed there, 19:36.

GOD'S PLAN, NOT ASSYRIA'S

God's message said it was He who had planned long ago that Assyria would crush cities, 19:25. Now He would put His hook in Sennacherib's nose and send him home, 19:28.

THE QUESTION

What happened to the army, and why does Sennacherib's own record not mention it?

Every View

EXODUS 12:23 · 2 SAMUEL 24:15 TO 16 · PSALM 46 · ISAIAH 10:12

VIEW 1: AN ANGEL STRUCK THEM

Most Jews and Christians read it as written: God's angel struck down the army in one night, like the destroyer in Egypt, Exodus 12:23.

VIEW 2: A PLAGUE SENT BY GOD

Some think the angel used a deadly sickness, as the angel of Yahweh

brought a plague in David's day, 2 Samuel 24:15 to 16. That would still be God's doing.

THE MICE

The Greek writer Herodotus, about 430 BC, heard a story from Egyptian priests that Sennacherib's army was beaten in Egypt when mice chewed up their bowstrings in the night. Some see a memory of the same disaster, maybe a plague spread by mice.

SENNACHERIB'S SILENCE

Kings did not carve their defeats on stone. His prism says he shut Hezekiah up like a bird in a cage, but never says he took the city. He reigned twenty more years and never came back to Judah.

HOW MANY?

The Hebrew number is 185,000. Some scholars think the word for thousand can also mean a unit of soldiers, which would make the number smaller. Others take it as written.

WHAT ALL SIDES AGREE ON

Jerusalem was not taken in 701 BC, and Hezekiah kept his throne. Even Sennacherib's own record agrees on that.

20

CHAPTER 20 IN 30 SECONDS

Hezekiah gets sick, and Isaiah tells him to get ready to die. Hezekiah prays and weeps, and God adds fifteen years. As a sign, the shadow on the stairway goes back ten steps. Then Hezekiah proudly shows the envoys from Babylon all his treasures, and Isaiah says Babylon will one day carry it all away.

HEZEKIAH'S ILLNESS AND RECOVERY // 2

CHRONICLES 32:24-31; ISAIAH 38:1-8

¹In those days Hezekiah became mortally ill. The prophet Isaiah son of Amoz came to him and said, "This is what Yahweh says: **'Put your house in order, for you are about to die; you will not recover.'**"

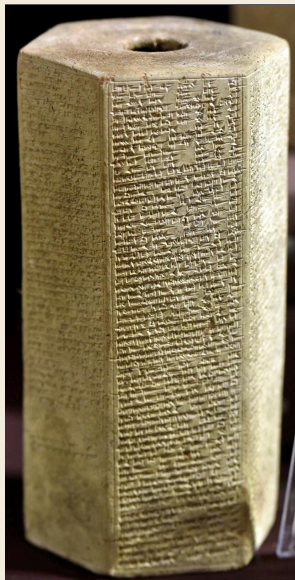
²Then Hezekiah turned his face to the wall and prayed to Yahweh, saying, ³**"Please, O Yahweh, remember how I have walked before You faithfully and with wholehearted devotion; I have done what is good in Your sight."** And Hezekiah wept bitterly.

PROPHECIES FULFILLED IN SCRIPTURE · MIRACLES · GOD SPEAKING · BLOODLINE OF CHRIST

FIELD NOTES · ARCHAEOLOGY · CONFIDENCE: HIGH

THE DEATH OF SENNACHERIB

2 KINGS 19:36 TO 37 · ISAIAH 37:37 TO 38 · 2 CHRONICLES 32:21



A six sided clay prism of Esarhaddon, the son who took Sennacherib's throne, from Nimrud. Iraq Museum, Baghdad. This prism tells of his building work. His story of his brothers' revolt is on another prism like it. Photo Osama Shukir Muhammed Amin, CC BY SA 4.0.

WHAT IT IS

Records from Babylon and Assyria about Sennacherib's murder. A Babylonian Chronicle tablet says Sennacherib was killed by his son in a revolt. His son Esarhaddon wrote on clay prisms about how his brothers rebelled and how he chased them away and took the throne.

HOW OLD IT IS

Sennacherib died in 681 BC, twenty years after he left Judah. The records were written soon after.

WHERE AND WHEN FOUND

The Babylonian Chronicle tablet is in the British Museum. Esarhaddon's prisms come from Nineveh and Nimrud, in Iraq.

THE KILLER'S NAME

2 Kings 19:37 names two sons, Adrammelech and Sharezer, who fled to the land of Ararat. In 1980 Simo Parpola showed that an Assyrian letter names the guilty son Arda Mulissu. Many scholars think that is the Bible's Adrammelech. Ararat is Urartu, a kingdom in the mountains to the north.

THE TEMPLE OF NISROCH

The Bible says he was killed while worshiping in the temple of his god Nisroch. The Assyrian records do not say where he died. Nobody is sure which god Nisroch was.

WHAT IT DOES NOT PROVE

The records do not mention Isaiah's word. They do show that Sennacherib went home and was killed by the sword in his own land, as Isaiah said, 19:7.

⁴ Before Isaiah had left the middle courtyard, the word of Yahweh came to him, saying, ⁵ "Go back and tell Hezekiah the leader of My people that this is what Yahweh, the God of your father David, says: ¹ "I have heard your prayer; I have seen your tears. I will surely heal you. On the third day from now you will go up to the house of Yahweh. ⁶ I will add fifteen years to your life. And I will deliver you and this city from the hand of the king of Assyria. I will defend this city for My sake and for the sake of My servant David."

⁷ Then Isaiah said, "Prepare a poultice of figs." So they brought it and applied it to the boil, and Hezekiah recovered.

⁸ Now Hezekiah had asked Isaiah, "What will be the sign that Yahweh will heal me and that I will go up to the house of Yahweh on the third day?"

⁹ And Isaiah had replied, "This will be a sign to you from Yahweh that He will do what He has promised: Would you like the shadow to go forward ten steps, or back ten steps?"

■ **2KI 20:3 [HEART]** Hezekiah prayed that he had walked before God faithfully, with his whole heart.

■ **2KI 20:5 [PROPHECY]** God would add fifteen years to Hezekiah's life and save the city from Assyria → 2KI 18:2; 2KI 19:35-36 p.-

■ **2KI 20:5 [NOTABLE]** God said no, then changed His answer when Hezekiah wept and prayed. God sees our tears.

■ **2KI 20:7 [MIRACLE]** Hezekiah recovers after the fig poultice is applied

■ **2KI 20:8 [MIRACLE]** Sun's shadow went backward 10 steps as a sign to Hezekiah

■ **2KI 20:9 [PROPHECY]** The shadow on the stairway would go back ten steps as a sign → 2KI 20:11 p.-

■ **2KI 20:9 [NOTE]** THE SHADOW. See the Big Question pages Hezekiah's Sundial.

PROPHECIES FULFILLED IN SCRIPTURE ARCHAEOLOGY MIRACLES GOD SPEAKING BLOODLINE OF CHRIST

¹⁰ "It is easy for the shadow to lengthen ten steps," answered Hezekiah, "but not for it to go back ten steps."

¹¹ So Isaiah the prophet called out to Yahweh, and He brought the shadow back the ten steps it had descended on the stairway of Ahaz.

HEZEKIAH SHOWS HIS TREASURES // ISAIAH 39:1–8

¹² At that time Merodach-baladan son of Baladan king of Babylon sent letters and a gift to Hezekiah, for he had heard about Hezekiah's illness. ¹³ And Hezekiah received the envoys and showed them all that was in his treasure house—the silver, the gold, the spices, and the precious oil, as well as his armory—all that was found in his storehouses. There was nothing in his palace or in all his dominion that Hezekiah did not show them.

¹⁴ Then the prophet Isaiah went to King Hezekiah and asked, "Where did those men come from, and what did they say to you?"

"They came from a distant land," Hezekiah replied, "from Babylon."

¹⁵ "What have they seen in your palace?" Isaiah asked.

"They have seen everything in my palace," answered Hezekiah. "There is nothing among my treasures that I did not show them."

¹⁶ Then Isaiah said to Hezekiah, "Hear the word of Yahweh: ¹⁷ The time will surely come when everything in your palace and all that your fathers have stored up until this day will be carried off to Babylon. Nothing will be left, says Yahweh. ¹⁸ And some of your descendants, your own flesh and blood, will be taken away to be eunuchs in the palace of the king of Babylon."

■ 2KI 20:11 [FULFILLS] The shadow on the stairway would go back ten steps as a sign ← 2KI 20:9 p.–

■ 2KI 20:11 [FULFILLS] Hezekiah's life extended 15 years; sundial sign confirmed ← IS 38:5–8 p.–

■ 2KI 20:12 [ARCHAEOLOGY] Merodach baladan, Marduk apla iddina II, king of Babylon, is named in Assyrian records and on his own boundary stone

■ 2KI 20:16 [PROPHECY] Isaiah told Hezekiah his descendants would be carried to Babylon as eunuchs → 2KI 24:13–15; DAN 1:3 p.–

¹⁹ But Hezekiah said to Isaiah, "The word of Yahweh that you have spoken is good." For he thought, "Will there not at least be peace and security in my lifetime?"

DEBATED THE BIG QUESTION

HEZEKIAH'S SUNDIAL

What Happened

2 KINGS 20:1 TO 11 · ISAIAH 38:1 TO 8 · 2 CHRONICLES 32:24 TO 26

SICK TO DEATH

Hezekiah became mortally ill, and Isaiah told him, Put your house in order, for you are about to die, 20:1.

THE PRAYER

Hezekiah turned his face to the wall, prayed and wept bitterly, 20:2 to 3.

FIFTEEN YEARS

Before Isaiah had left the courtyard, God sent him back: I have heard your prayer; I have seen your tears. I will add fifteen years to your life, 20:4 to 6.

THE SIGN

Hezekiah asked for a sign. Isaiah said, Should the shadow go forward ten steps, or back ten steps? Hezekiah said going forward is easy, so let it go back. Isaiah cried out to Yahweh, and the shadow went back ten steps on the stairway of Ahaz, 20:8 to 11.

WHAT THE YEARS BROUGHT

In those fifteen years Hezekiah showed off his treasures to Babylon, 20:12 to 13, and his son Manasseh was born, 21:1.

ISAIAH'S CURE

Isaiah told them to put a lump of figs on Hezekiah's boil, and he recovered, 20:7. God healed him, and He used a simple remedy too.

THE QUESTION

What was the stairway of Ahaz, and did the sun really move backward?

Every View

2 CHRONICLES 32:31 · JOSHUA 10:12 TO 14 · ISAIAH 38:8

THE STAIRWAY

The Hebrew word means steps or stairs. Many think it was an outdoor stairway in the palace where the shadow crept up or down the steps as the day went on, like a clock. Others think it was a sundial Ahaz brought in from Assyria or Egypt.

ARCHAEOLOGY · DEMONIC · BLOODLINE OF CHRIST

VIEW 1: A MIRACLE IN THE SKY

Some think God turned back the sun itself, or the turning of the earth, the biggest kind of miracle.

VIEW 2: A MIRACLE OF THE SHADOW

Many think God moved the light and shadow in that place only. 2 Chronicles 32:31 says envoys from Babylon came to ask about the sign that happened in the land, which may mean it was seen in Judah, not everywhere.

VIEW 3: AN ECLIPSE OR BENT LIGHT

Some have suggested a partial eclipse of the sun or an unusual bending of light. Others answer that a sign that came on request, at the time God said, is still a miracle.

THE NASA STORY

A popular story says NASA computers found a missing day in time, from Joshua's long day plus Hezekiah's ten steps. It is not true. NASA says it never happened, and no computer can find a missing day.

WHAT ALL SIDES AGREE ON

God heard a sick man's prayer and saw his tears, 20:5. The sign was given to help Hezekiah believe God's promise.

MANASSEH SUCCEEDS HEZEKIAH

²⁰ As for the rest of the acts of Hezekiah, along with all his might and how he constructed the pool and the tunnel to bring water into the city, are they not written in the Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Judah?

²¹ And Hezekiah rested with his fathers, and his son Manasseh reigned in his place.

■ **2KI 20:20 [ARCHAEOLOGY]** An underground water tunnel and a Hebrew inscription about its digging, about 701 BC

■ **2KI 20:20 [FIELD NOTES]** Hezekiah's tunnel can still be walked today. See The Siloam Tunnel Inscription Field Notes page in Isaiah, p. -, and The Broad Wall Field Notes page.

■ **2KI 20:21 [ARCHAEOLOGY]** Assyrian records list Manasseh king of Judah among the kings who served Esarhaddon and Ashurbanipal → FIELD NOTES p.54

21

CHAPTER 21 IN 30 SECONDS

Manasseh becomes king at twelve and reigns 55 years, the longest in Judah. He undoes everything his father did, builds altars to Baal and the stars inside the temple, practices sorcery and burns his own son. He fills Jerusalem with innocent blood. God says, I will wipe out Jerusalem as one wipes out a bowl.

MANASSEH REIGNS IN JUDAH // 2 CHRONICLES 33:1–9

¹Manasseh was twelve years old when he became king, and he reigned in Jerusalem fifty-five years. His mother's name was Hephzibah. ²And he did evil in the sight of Yahweh by following the abominations of the nations that Yahweh had driven out before the Israelites. ³For he rebuilt the high places that his father Hezekiah had destroyed, and he raised up altars for Baal. He made an Asherah pole, as King Ahab of Israel had done, and he worshiped and served all the host of heaven.

FIELD NOTES · ARCHAEOLOGY · CONFIDENCE: HIGH

THE BROAD WALL

2 CHRONICLES 32:5 · ISAIAH 22:10 · NEHEMIAH 3:8 · 2 KINGS 20:20



The Broad Wall in the Jewish Quarter of Jerusalem, with modern homes built around it. Photo by Ian Scott, CC BY SA 2.0.

WHAT IT IS

Part of a city wall about 23 feet thick, built of big rough stones. It protected new neighborhoods on Jerusalem's western hill.

■ **2KI 21:1 [NOTE] MANASSEH.** See the Big Question pages Manasseh.

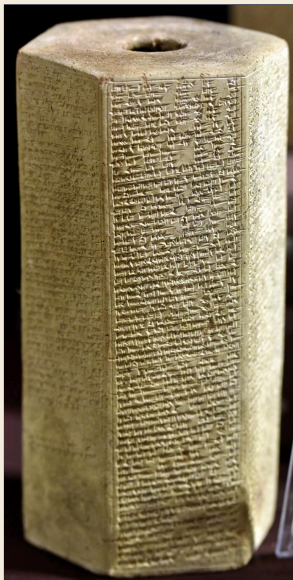
■ **2KI 21:2 [DEMONIC]** Manasseh rebuilds high places and altars for Baal and the stars

DEMONIC · GOD SPEAKING · BLOODLINE OF CHRIST

FIELD NOTES · ARCHAEOLOGY · CONFIDENCE: HIGH

MANASSEH IN ASSYRIA'S RECORDS

2 KINGS 20:21 · 21:1 TO 18 · 2 CHRONICLES 33:10 TO 13



A clay prism of Esarhaddon from Nimrud, Iraq Museum. The prism that names Manasseh is a different one, in the British Museum, and is not shown. Photo Osama Shukir Muhammed Amin, CC BY SA 4.0.

WHAT IT IS

Clay prisms of two Assyrian kings, Esarhaddon and his son Ashurbanipal. Both list the kings of the west who served them, and both name Manasseh king of Judah.

HOW OLD IT IS

Esarhaddon's prism is from about 673 BC.

Ashurbanipal's list tells about his war on Egypt in 667 BC.

WHERE AND WHEN FOUND

In the ruins of Nineveh, in Iraq. R. Campbell Thompson's dig found the Esarhaddon prism in 1927 to 1928. It is in the British Museum in London.

WHAT THEY SAY

Esarhaddon says he made 22 kings, among them Baal king of Tyre and Manasseh king of Judah, carry timber and stone to Nineveh for his palace. Ashurbanipal says Manasseh and the others brought him gifts and sent soldiers with his army to Egypt.

CHAINS IN BABYLON

2 Chronicles 33:11 says the Assyrians took Manasseh to Babylon in chains. No Assyrian record tells that story.

Many point out that Esarhaddon ruled Babylon too, so the trip fits the time. Others doubt it happened.

WHAT IT DOES NOT PROVE

The prisms say nothing about Manasseh's idols or his turn to God. They show that Manasseh was a real king of Judah who served Assyria for a long time, which fits his 55 year reign, 21:1.

HOW OLD IT IS

About 700 BC, the time of Hezekiah.

WHERE AND WHEN FOUND

In the Jewish Quarter of Jerusalem's Old City, by Nahman Avigad in 1970. Part of it can still be seen today.

HOUSES TORN DOWN

The wall cuts right through older houses. Isaiah said, You counted the houses of Jerusalem and tore them down to strengthen the wall, Isaiah 22:10. 2 Chronicles 32:5 says Hezekiah built up the broken wall and built another wall outside it.

A CITY THAT GREW

Jerusalem grew fast in Hezekiah's day, maybe because people fled south when Israel fell in 722 BC. The wall showed that the city had spread far beyond the

old City of David. Nehemiah later names the Broad Wall, Nehemiah 3:8.

WHAT IT DOES NOT PROVE

No writing on the wall names Hezekiah. Its date, its size and the houses it cuts through fit the Bible's picture of Hezekiah getting Jerusalem ready for Assyria. The Isaiah Field Notes page tells more, p.---

⁴ Manasseh also built altars in the house of Yahweh, of which Yahweh had said, "In Jerusalem I will put My Name." ⁵ In both courtyards of the house of Yahweh, he built altars to all the host of heaven. ⁶ He sacrificed his own son in the fire, practiced sorcery and divination, and consulted mediums and spiritists. He did great evil in the sight of Yahweh, provoking Him to anger.

DEMONIC GOD SPEAKING BLOODLINE OF CHRIST

⁷Manasseh even took the carved Asherah pole he had made and set it up in the temple, of which Yahweh had said to David and his son Solomon, "In this temple and in Jerusalem, which I have chosen out of all the tribes of Israel, I will establish My Name forever. ⁸I will never again cause the feet of the Israelites to wander from the land that I gave to their fathers, if only they are careful to do all I have commanded them—the whole Law that My servant Moses commanded them."

⁹But the people did not listen and Manasseh led them astray, so that they did greater evil than the nations that Yahweh had destroyed before the Israelites.

THE BIG QUESTION

MANASSEH

The Worst King

2 KINGS 21:1 TO 18 · 23:26 · 24:3 TO 4 · JEREMIAH 15:4

THE BOY KING

Manasseh became king at twelve and reigned 55 years, longer than any other king of Judah, 21:1.

UNDOING HIS FATHER

He rebuilt the high places Hezekiah had torn down, built altars to Baal, made an Asherah pole like Ahab, and bowed to the stars, 21:3.

IDOLS IN THE TEMPLE

He built altars for the stars in the courts of the temple and set up a carved Asherah pole in the very house where God put His Name, 21:4 to 7.

THE OCCULT AND HIS SON

He burned his own son in the fire, practiced sorcery and divination, and consulted mediums and spiritists, 21:6.

INNOCENT BLOOD

He shed so much innocent blood that he filled Jerusalem from one end to the other, 21:16. An old Jewish tradition says he had Isaiah sawed in two, and many think Hebrews 11:37 remembers it.

GOD'S VERDICT

God said Manasseh did more evil than the Amorites who lived in the land before Israel, 21:11, and that He would wipe

out Jerusalem as one wipes out a bowl, 21:13.

THE QUESTION

Was Manasseh beyond God's mercy? And why was Judah still punished for his sins after he died?

Every View

2 CHRONICLES 33:1 TO 20 · HEBREWS 11:37 · JEREMIAH 3:10

THE REST OF THE STORY

2 Chronicles 33:11 to 16 says the king of Assyria took Manasseh to Babylon with hooks and bronze chains. There he humbled himself and prayed, and God brought him back to Jerusalem. Then Manasseh knew that Yahweh is God, and he removed the idols from the temple.

WHY KINGS LEAVES IT OUT

Many think Kings tells how much damage Manasseh did to the nation, and Chronicles tells what happened in his own heart. Assyrian records list Manasseh of Judah among kings who served Assyria, so a trip in chains fits his time. Some critical scholars doubt the Chronicles story.

THE PRAYER OF MANASSEH

A short prayer of repentance in his name is in some old Bibles, among the books between the Testaments. Eastern Orthodox Christians read it as Scripture. Jews, Catholics and Protestants do not.

WHY JUDAH STILL FELL

2 Kings 24:3 to 4 says Judah fell for the sins of Manasseh and the innocent blood he shed, which God would not pardon. The people had followed him for 55 years. Even under Josiah, Jeremiah said Judah turned back only in pretense, Jeremiah 3:10.

FORGIVEN, BUT THE DAMAGE STAYED

Many say God forgave the man, but the nation never let go of what he taught it.

WHAT ALL SIDES AGREE ON

If God could forgive Manasseh, He can forgive anyone who turns to Him. But sin's damage can outlive the sinner.

- 2KI 21:6 [DEMONIC] Manasseh practiced soothsaying, used witchcraft and sorcery, consulted mediums
- 2KI 21:7 [DEMONIC] Manasseh sets up an Asherah pole in God's temple

PROPHECIES FULFILLED IN SCRIPTURE DEMONIC GOD SPEAKING BLOODLINE OF CHRIST

MANASSEH'S IDOLATRIES REBUKED // 2 CHRONICLES 33:10–20

¹⁰ And Yahweh spoke through His servants the prophets, saying, ¹¹ “Since Manasseh king of Judah has committed all these abominations, acting more wickedly than the Amorites who preceded him, and with his idols has caused Judah to sin, ¹² this is what Yahweh, the God of Israel, says: ‘Behold, I am bringing such calamity upon Jerusalem and Judah that the news will reverberate in the ears of all who hear it.

¹³ I will stretch out over Jerusalem the measuring line used against Samaria and the plumb line used against the house of Ahab, and I will wipe out Jerusalem as one wipes out a bowl—wiping it and turning it upside down. ¹⁴ So I will forsake the remnant of My inheritance and deliver them into the hands of their enemies. And they will become plunder and spoil to all their enemies, ¹⁵ because they have done evil in My sight and have provoked Me to anger from the day their fathers came out of Egypt until this day.’”

¹⁶ Moreover, Manasseh shed so much innocent blood that he filled Jerusalem from end to end, in addition to the sin that he had caused Judah to commit, doing evil in the sight of Yahweh.

¹⁷ As for the rest of the acts of Manasseh, along with all his accomplishments and the sin that he committed, are they not written in the Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Judah?

¹⁸ And Manasseh rested with his fathers and was buried in his palace garden, the garden of Uzza. And his son Amon reigned in his place.

AMON REIGNS IN JUDAH // 2 CHRONICLES 33:21–25

¹⁹ Amon was twenty-two years old when he became king, and he reigned in Jerusalem two years. His mother’s name was Meshullemeth daughter of Haruz; she was from Jotbah. ²⁰ And he did evil in the sight of Yahweh, as his father Manasseh

■ 2KI 21:11 [DEMONIC] Manasseh’s idols cause Judah to sin

■ 2KI 21:12 [PROPHECY] I am bringing calamity on Jerusalem and Judah; I will wipe Jerusalem as one wipes a dish, wiping it and turning it upside down → Fulfilled in Babylonian destruction 586 BC p.~

had done. ²¹ He walked in all the ways of his father, and he served and worshiped the idols his father had served. ²² He abandoned Yahweh, the God of his fathers, and did not walk in the way of Yahweh.

²³ Then the servants of Amon conspired against him and killed the king in his palace. ²⁴ But the people of the land killed all those who had conspired against King Amon, and they made his son Josiah king in his place.

²⁵ As for the rest of the acts of Amon, along with his accomplishments, are they not written in the Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Judah? ²⁶ And he was buried in his tomb in the garden of Uzza, and his son Josiah reigned in his place.

22

CHAPTER 22 IN 30 SECONDS

Josiah becomes king at eight. While the temple is being repaired, the high priest finds the Book of the Law. When it is read to Josiah, he tears his clothes. The prophetess Huldah says disaster is coming, but because Josiah’s heart was tender, it will not come in his lifetime.

JOSIAH REIGNS IN JUDAH // 2 CHRONICLES 34:1–2

¹ Josiah was eight years old when he became king, and he reigned in Jerusalem thirty-one years. His mother’s name was Jedidah daughter of Adaiah; she was from Bozkath. ² And he did what was right in the eyes of Yahweh and walked in all the ways of his father David he did not turn aside to the right or to the left.

FUNDING THE TEMPLE REPAIRS // 2 CHRONICLES 34:8–13

³ Now in the eighteenth year of his reign, King Josiah sent the scribe, Shaphan son of Azaliah, the son of Meshullam, to the house of Yahweh, saying, ⁴ “Go up to Hilkiah the high priest and have him count the money that has been brought into the house of Yahweh, which the doorkeepers have collected from the people. ⁵ And let them deliver it into the hands of the supervisors of those doing the work on the

■ 2KI 21:21 [DEMONIC] Amon worships the idols his father served

PROPHECIES FULFILLED IN SCRIPTURE THE HEART NOTABLE GOD SPEAKING

house of Yahweh, who in turn are to give it to the workmen repairing the damages to the house of Yahweh—⁶ to the carpenters, builders, and masons—to buy timber and dressed stone to repair the temple.⁷ But they need not account for the money put into their hands, since they work with integrity."

HILKIAH FINDS THE BOOK OF THE LAW // 2 CHRONICLES 34:14–21

⁸ Then Hilkiah the high priest said to Shaphan the scribe, "I have found the Book of the Law in the house of Yahweh!" And he gave it to Shaphan, who read it.

⁹ And Shaphan the scribe went to the king and reported, "Your servants have paid out the money that was found in the temple and have put it into the hands of the workers and supervisors of the house of Yahweh."

¹⁰ Moreover, Shaphan the scribe told the king, "Hilkiah the priest has given me a book." And Shaphan read it in the presence of the king.

¹¹ When the king heard the words of the Book of the Law, he tore his clothes¹² and commanded Hilkiah the priest, Ahikam son of Shaphan, Achbor son of Micaiah, Shaphan the scribe, and Asaiah the servant of the king: ¹³ "Go and inquire of Yahweh for me, for the people, and for all Judah concerning the words in this book that has been found. For great is the wrath of Yahweh that burns against us because our fathers have not obeyed the words of this book by doing all that is written about us."

HULDAH'S PROPHECY // 2 CHRONICLES 34:22–28

¹⁴ So Hilkiah the priest, Ahikam, Achbor, Shaphan, and Asaiah went and spoke to Huldah the prophetess, the wife of Shalum son of Tikvah, the son of Harhas, the keeper of the wardrobe. She lived in Jerusalem, in the Second District.

¹⁵ And Huldah said to them, "This is what Yahweh, the God of Israel, says: 'Tell the man who sent you¹⁶ that this is what Yahweh says: I am about to bring calamity on this place and on its people, according to all the words of the book that the king of Judah has read,¹⁷ because they have forsaken Me and burned incense to other gods, that they might provoke Me to anger with all the works of their hands. My wrath will be kindled against this place and will not be quenched.'

¹⁸ But as for the king of Judah, who sent you to inquire of Yahweh, tell him that this is what Yahweh, the God of Israel, says: 'As for the words that you heard,¹⁹ because your heart was tender and you humbled yourself before Yahweh when you heard what I spoke against this place and against its people, that they would become a desolation and a curse, and because you have torn your clothes and wept before Me, I have heard you,' declares Yahweh.

²⁰ 'Therefore I will indeed gather you to your fathers, and you will be gathered to your grave in peace. Your eyes will not see all the calamity that I will bring on this place.'"

So they brought her answer back to the king.

DEBATED THE BIG QUESTION

JOSIAH AND THE BOOK OF THE LAW

What Was Found

2 KINGS 22:1 TO 23:25 • 2 CHRONICLES 34 TO 35 • DEUTERONOMY 31:24 TO 26

AN EIGHT YEAR OLD KING

Josiah became king at eight, after his father Amon was murdered, 21:23 to 22:1. 2 Chronicles 34:3 says he began to seek God at sixteen.

■ 2KI 22:8 [NOTE] THE BOOK OF THE LAW. See the Big Question pages Josiah and the Book of the Law.

■ 2KI 22:13 [NOTABLE] When Josiah heard God's word read, he did not argue with it. He tore his clothes and asked what God wanted. That is how revival starts.

■ 2KI 22:14 [NOTE] HULDAH was a prophetess, like Miriam and Deborah. Her message from God prints red, like the other prophets.

■ 2KI 22:16 [PROPHECY] Huldah said disaster would come on Jerusalem because the people served other gods → 2KI 25:9 p. 57

■ 2KI 22:17 [DEMONIC] Judah burned incense to other gods

■ 2KI 22:19 [HEART] Josiah's heart was tender and he humbled himself when he heard God's word, so God heard him.

■ 2KI 22:20 [PROPHECY] Josiah would die before the disaster and not see it → 2KI 23:29–30 p. 57

THE HEART

THE REPAIRS

In his eighteenth year, 622 BC, Josiah sent money to repair the temple, 22:3 to 7.

THE FIND

Hilkiah the high priest said, I have found the Book of the Law in the house of Yahweh, 22:8. Shaphan the secretary read it to the king.

THE KING TORE HIS CLOTHES

When Josiah heard the words, he tore his clothes and sent to ask Yahweh what to do, because God's anger burned against them for not obeying, 22:11 to 13.

THE REFORM

Josiah read the book to all the people, made a covenant, cleaned out the idols, and held a Passover like none since the judges, 23:1 to 25.

A PROPHECY 300 YEARS OLD

Josiah burned bones on Jeroboam's altar at Bethel, just as a man of God had said about 300 years before, naming Josiah, 1 Kings 13:2 and 2 Kings 23:15 to 16.

THE QUESTION

What book did they find, and how could God's law be lost in God's own temple?

and that Deuteronomy fits the time of Moses.

HOW COULD IT BE LOST?

Manasseh had filled the temple with idols for 55 years. Books were copied by hand and were rare. Many think the copy had been hidden or forgotten in a storeroom.

HULDAH'S WORD

The prophetess Huldah said the book's warnings would come true, but not in Josiah's lifetime, because his heart was tender, 22:15 to 20.

WHAT ALL SIDES AGREE ON

When God's word was read, a king humbled himself, and the greatest revival in Judah's history began.

23

CHAPTER 23 IN 30 SECONDS

Josiah reads the book to everyone and makes a covenant with God. Then he cleans house: Baal, Asherah, the horses for the sun, the altars on the roof, the high places, and the place where children were burned. He even burns bones on Jeroboam's altar at Bethel, just as a man of God said 300 years before. Then he dies fighting Pharaoh Neco.

JOSIAH RENEWS THE COVENANT // 2 CHRONICLES 34:29–33

¹ Then the king summoned all the elders of Judah and Jerusalem. ² And he went up to the house of Yahweh with all the people of Judah and Jerusalem, as well as the priests and the prophets—all the people small and great—and in their hearing he read all the words of the Book of the Covenant that had been found in the house of Yahweh.

³ So the king stood by the pillar and made a covenant before Yahweh to follow Yahweh and to keep His commandments, decrees, and statutes with all his heart and all his soul, and to carry out the words of the covenant that were written in this book. And all the people entered into the covenant.

Every View

DEUTERONOMY 12:1 TO 14 · 18:9 TO 12 · 28:15 TO 68 · JEREMIAH 11:1 TO 8

VIEW 1: DEUTERONOMY

Most scholars, and many who hold the traditional view, think it was Deuteronomy, or a large part of it. Josiah's reforms match it: one place to worship, Deuteronomy 12, no mediums, Deuteronomy 18, and the curses in Deuteronomy 28 that frightened the king.

VIEW 2: THE WHOLE LAW OF MOSES

Others think it was a copy of all five books of Moses, maybe the copy Moses had placed beside the ark, Deuteronomy 31:26.

VIEW 3: WRITTEN NEAR JOSIAH'S TIME

Since W. M. L. de Wette in 1805, many critical scholars have thought Deuteronomy was written or put together not long before it was found, to support the reform. Others answer that the people were afraid because the book was old,

■ 2KI 23:3 [HEART] Josiah promised before Yahweh to keep His commands with all his heart and soul.

PROPHECIES FULFILLED IN SCRIPTURE DEMONIC BLOODLINE OF CHRIST

JOSIAH DESTROYS IDOLATRY // 1 KINGS 13:1-10; 2 CHRONICLES 34:3-7

⁴ Then the king commanded Hilkiah the high priest, the priests second in rank, and the doorkeepers to remove from the temple of Yahweh all the articles made for Baal, Asherah, and all the host of heaven. And he burned them outside Jerusalem in the fields of Kidron and carried their ashes to Bethel.

⁵ Josiah also did away with the idolatrous priests ordained by the kings of Judah to burn incense on the high places of the cities of Judah and in the places all around Jerusalem—those who had burned incense to Baal, to the sun and moon, to the constellations, and to all the host of heaven.

⁶ He brought the Asherah pole from the house of Yahweh to the Kidron Valley outside Jerusalem, and there he burned it, ground it to powder, and threw its dust on the graves of the common people. ⁷ He also tore down the quarters of the male shrine prostitutes that were in the house of Yahweh, where the women had woven tapestries for Asherah.

⁸ Then Josiah brought all the priests from the cities of Judah and desecrated the high places, from Geba to Beersheba, where the priests had burned incense. He tore down the high places of the gates at the entrance of the gate of Joshua the governor of the city, which was to the left of the city gate. ⁹ Although the priests of the high places did not come up to the altar of Yahweh in Jerusalem, they ate unleavened bread with their fellow priests.

¹⁰ He also desecrated Topheth in the Valley of Ben-hinnom so that no one could sacrifice his son or daughter in the fire to Molech. ¹¹ And he removed from the entrance to the house of Yahweh the horses

that the kings of Judah had dedicated to the sun. They were in the court near the chamber of an official named Nathan-melech. And Josiah burned up the chariots of the sun.

¹² He pulled down the altars that the kings of Judah had set up on the roof near the upper chamber of Ahaz, and the altars that Manasseh had set up in the two courtyards of the house of Yahweh. The king pulverized them there and threw their dust into the Kidron Valley.

¹³ The king also desecrated the high places east of Jerusalem, to the south of the Mount of Corruption, which King Solomon of Israel had built for Ashtoreth the abomination of the Sidonians, for Chemosh the abomination of the Moabites, and for Milcom the abomination of the Ammonites. ¹⁴ He smashed the sacred pillars to pieces, cut down the Asherah poles, and covered the sites with human bones.

¹⁵ He even pulled down the altar at Bethel, the high place set up by Jeroboam son of Nebat, who had caused Israel to sin. Then he burned the high place, ground it to powder, and burned the Asherah pole. ¹⁶ And as Josiah turned, he saw the tombs there on the hillside, and he sent someone to take the bones out of the tombs, and he burned them on the altar to defile it, according to the word of Yahweh proclaimed by the man of God who had foretold these things.

¹⁷ Then the king asked, "What is this monument I see?"

And the men of the city replied, "It is the tomb of the man of God who came from Judah and proclaimed these things that you have done to the altar of Bethel."

¹⁸ "Let him rest," said Josiah. "Do not let anyone disturb his bones."

So they left his bones undisturbed, along with those of the prophet who had come from Samaria.

■ 2KI 23:4 [DEMONIC] Josiah destroys the idols, high places, and Molech's Topheth

■ 2KI 23:4 [FULFILLS] God would cut off every remnant of Baal and the pagan priests from Jerusalem ← ZEPH 1:4 · MEDIUM p. -

■ 2KI 23:10 [NOTE] TOPHETH. Josiah ruined the place in the Valley of Ben hinnom where children were burned, so no one could do it again. The valley's name, Ge Hinnom, became Gehenna, the word Jesus used for hell, Matthew 10:28.

■ 2KI 23:15 [FULFILLS] A man of God named King Josiah about 300 years before he reigned ← 1KI 13:1-2 p. -

■ 2KI 23:15 [FULFILLS] The altars of Bethel would be destroyed and the horns of the altar cut off ← AMOS 3:14 · MEDIUM p. -

PROPHECIES FULFILLED IN SCRIPTURE

THE HEART

ARCHAEOLOGY

DEMONIC

GOD SPEAKING

BLOODLINE OF CHRIST

¹⁹ Just as Josiah had done at Bethel, so also in the cities of Samaria he removed all the shrines of the high places set up by the kings of Israel who had provoked Yahweh to anger. ²⁰ On the altars he slaughtered all the priests of the high places, and he burned human bones on them. Then he returned to Jerusalem.

JOSIAH RESTORES THE PASSOVER // 2 CHRONICLES 35:1-19

²¹ The king commanded all the people, "Keep the Passover of Yahweh your God, as it is written in this Book of the Covenant."

²² No such Passover had been observed from the days of the judges who had governed Israel through all the days of the kings of Israel and Judah. ²³ But in the eighteenth year of Josiah's reign, this Passover was observed to Yahweh in Jerusalem.

²⁴ Furthermore, Josiah removed the mediums and spiritists, the household gods and idols, and all the abominations that were seen in the land of Judah and in Jerusalem. He did this to carry out the words of the law written in the book that Hilkiah the priest had found in the house of Yahweh.

²⁵ Neither before nor after Josiah was there any king like him, who turned to Yahweh with all his heart and with all his soul and with all his strength, according to all the Law of Moses.

²⁶ Nevertheless, Yahweh did not turn away from the fury of His burning anger, which was kindled against Judah because of all that Manasseh had done to provoke Him to anger. ²⁷ For Yahweh had said, "I will remove Judah from My sight, just as I removed Israel. I will reject this city, Jerusalem, which I chose, and the temple of which I said, 'My Name shall be there.'"

■ 2KI 23:24 [DEMONIC] Josiah removes the mediums and spiritists

■ 2KI 23:25 [HEART] No king before or after Josiah turned to Yahweh with all his heart, soul and strength.

■ 2KI 23:25 [NOTABLE] Josiah lived out the greatest command, Deuteronomy 6:5, and Jesus quoted it, Mark 12:30. He started seeking God at sixteen, 2 Chronicles 34:3.

■ 2KI 23:27 [PROPHECY] God would remove Judah and reject Jerusalem and the temple → 2KI 25:9; 2KI 25:21 p.-

THE DEATH OF JOSIAH // 2 CHRONICLES 35:20-24

²⁸ As for the rest of the acts of Josiah and all his accomplishments, are they not written in the Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Judah?

²⁹ During Josiah's reign, Pharaoh Neco king of Egypt marched up to help the king of Assyria at the Euphrates River. King Josiah went out to confront him, but Neco faced him and killed him at Megiddo.

³⁰ From Megiddo his servants carried his body in a chariot, brought him to Jerusalem, and buried him in his own tomb. Then the people of the land took Jehoahaz son of Josiah, anointed him, and made him king in place of his father.

JEHOAHAZ SUCCEEDS JOSIAH // 2 CHRONICLES 36:1-4

³¹ Jehoahaz was twenty-three years old when he became king, and he reigned in Jerusalem three months. His mother's name was Hamutal daughter of Jeremiah; she was from Libnah. ³² And he did evil in the sight of Yahweh, just as his fathers had done.

³³ And Pharaoh Neco imprisoned Jehoahaz at Riblah in the land of Hamath so that he could not reign in Jerusalem, and he imposed on Judah a levy of 7,500 pounds of silver and 75 pounds of gold. ³⁴ Then Pharaoh Neco made Eliakim son of Josiah king in place of his father Josiah, and he changed Eliakim's name to Jehoiakim. But Neco took Jehoahaz and carried him off to Egypt, where he died.

³⁵ So Jehoiakim paid the silver and gold to Pharaoh Neco, but to meet Pharaoh's demand he taxed the land and exacted the silver and the gold from the people, each according to his wealth.

■ 2KI 23:29 [ARCHAEOLOGY] Pharaoh Neco is Necho II of Egypt, named on Egyptian monuments and by the Greek writer Herodotus

■ 2KI 23:29 [FULFILLS] Josiah would die before the disaster and not see it ← 2KI 22:20 p.-

■ 2KI 23:29 [NOTE] PHARAOH NECO was marching north to help Assyria against Babylon, 609 BC. 2 Chronicles 35:20 to 24 tells how Josiah died. See the Pharaoh Neco Field Notes page there, p.-.

■ 2KI 23:34 [FULFILLS] Shallum, also called Jehoahaz, would die in exile and never see Judah again ← JER 22:11-12 p.-

PROPHECIES FULFILLED IN SCRIPTURE ARCHAEOLOGY BLOODLINE OF CHRIST

JEHOIAKIM REIGNS IN JUDAH // 2 CHRONICLES

36:5-8

³⁶ Jehoiakim was twenty-five years old when he became king, and he reigned in Jerusalem eleven years. His mother's name was Zebidah daughter of Pedaiah; she was from Rumah. ³⁷ And he did evil in the sight of Yahweh, just as his fathers had done.

24

CHAPTER 24 IN 30 SECONDS

Judah's last kings are puppets of Egypt and Babylon. Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon comes, and young King Jehoiachin surrenders after three months. He is taken to Babylon with the craftsmen, the soldiers and the temple treasures, and his uncle Zedekiah is made king.

BABYLON CONTROLS JEHOIAKIM

¹ During Jehoiakim's reign, Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon invaded. So Jehoiakim became his vassal for three years, until he turned and rebelled against Nebuchadnezzar.

² And Yahweh sent Chaldean, Aramean, Moabite, and Ammonite raiders against Jehoiakim in order to destroy Judah, according to the word that Yahweh had spoken through His servants the prophets. ³

Surely this happened to Judah at Yahweh's command, to remove them from His presence because of the sins of Manasseh and all that he had done, ⁴ and also for the innocent blood he had shed. For he had filled Jerusalem with innocent blood, and Yahweh was unwilling to forgive.

⁵ As for the rest of the acts of Jehoiakim, along with all his accomplishments, are they not written in the Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Judah?

JEHOIACHIN REIGNS IN JUDAH // 2 CHRONICLES

36:9-10

⁶ And Jehoiakim rested with his fathers, and his son Jehoiachin reigned in his place.

■ 2KI 24:1 [ARCHAEOLOGY] Nebuchadnezzar II is named on thousands of bricks and records from Babylon, see The Babylonian Chronicle Field Notes page

■ 2KI 24:1 [FULFILLS] God would raise up a Chaldean (Babylonians) to punish Judah ← HAB 1:5-6 p.-

⁷ Now the king of Egypt did not march out of his land again, because the king of Babylon had taken all his territory, from the Brook of Egypt to the Euphrates River.

⁸ Jehoiachin was eighteen years old when he became king, and he reigned in Jerusalem three months. His mother's name was Nehushta daughter of Elnathan; she was from Jerusalem. ⁹ And he did evil in the sight of Yahweh, just as his father had done.

THE CAPTIVITY OF JERUSALEM // LAMENTATIONS

1:1-22

¹⁰ At that time the servants of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon marched up to Jerusalem, and the city came under siege. ¹¹ And Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came to the city while his servants were besieging it. ¹² Jehoiachin king of Judah, his mother, his servants, his commanders, and his officials all surrendered to the king of Babylon.

So in the eighth year of his reign, the king of Babylon took him captive. ¹³ As Yahweh had declared, Nebuchadnezzar also carried off all the treasures from the house of Yahweh and the royal palace, and he cut into pieces all the gold articles that Solomon king of Israel had made in the temple of Yahweh. ¹⁴ He carried into exile all Jerusalem—all the commanders and mighty men of valor, all the craftsmen and metalsmiths—ten thousand captives in all. Only the poorest people of the land remained.

¹⁵ Nebuchadnezzar carried away Jehoiachin to Babylon, as well as the king's mother, his wives, his officials, and the leading men of the land. He took them into exile from Jerusalem to Babylon. ¹⁶ The

■ 2KI 24:6 [ARCHAEOLOGY] King Jehoiachin is named on ration tablets from Babylon, see The Jehoiachin Ration Tablets Field Notes page

■ 2KI 24:8 [TEXT] 18 OR 8? Most Hebrew copies of 2 Chronicles 36:9 say eight. Some copies say eighteen, like this verse, and this Bible follows them there too.

■ 2KI 24:10 [ARCHAEOLOGY] Babylonian Chronicle of Nebuchadnezzar → FIELD NOTES p.62

■ 2KI 24:13 [FULFILLS] Isaiah told Hezekiah his descendants would be carried to Babylon as eunuchs ← 2KI 20:16-18 p.-

■ 2KI 24:14 [ALLUDED TO] The New Testament refers to this → MT 1:11 p.-

■ 2KI 24:14 [FULFILLS] Pashhur the priest and all his household would go into Babylonian captivity and die there ← JER 20:4-6 · MEDIUM p.-

FIELD NOTES · ARCHAEOLOGY · CONFIDENCE: HIGH

THE BABYLONIAN CHRONICLE

2 KINGS 24:1 TO 17 · 2 CHRONICLES 36:9 TO 10 · JEREMIAH 46:2



The Babylonian Chronicle tablet for 605 to 594 BC, British Museum. The lines about Jerusalem are on the back. Photo Osama Shukir Muhammed Amin, CC BY SA 4.0.

WHAT IT IS

A clay tablet from Babylon's own yearly records of the first years of Nebuchadnezzar II. It tells about his wars from 605 to 594 BC.

HOW OLD IT IS

It was copied from Babylon's records kept at the time.

WHERE AND WHEN FOUND

The British Museum bought it from a dealer in 1896. Nobody knows exactly where it was dug up. D. J. Wiseman published it in 1956.

WHAT IT SAYS

In his seventh year, the king of Babylon marched to the land of Hatti and camped against the city of Judah. On the second day of the month Adar he seized the city and captured the king. He appointed a king of his own choice and took heavy tribute to Babylon.

AN EXACT DATE

The second of Adar in Nebuchadnezzar's seventh year was March 15 or 16, 597 BC. It is one of the most exact dates in all of Bible history. The Bible says Jehoiachin gave himself up after three months as

king, and Zedekiah was put in his place, 24:8 to 17.

THE LAND OF HATTI

Babylon called all the land west of the Euphrates River, Syria and Israel included, the land of Hatti, after the old Hittite kingdom.

A WHOLE SERIES

This tablet is one of a set of chronicles that list each year's main events in short, plain lines. Others in the set tell of the fall of Nineveh in 612 BC and of Cyrus taking Babylon in 539 BC.

DANIEL'S DAY

In 605 BC, the year of Carchemish, Nebuchadnezzar became king. Daniel 1:1 to 6 says that about this time Daniel and other young men of Judah were first taken to Babylon.

WHAT IT DOES NOT PROVE

The tablet does not name Jehoiachin or Zedekiah. But it tells the same event as 2 Kings 24:10 to 17, from Babylon's side. The same tablet records the battle of Carchemish in 605 BC, Jeremiah 46:2.

PROPHECIES FULFILLED IN SCRIPTURE BLOODLINE OF CHRIST

king of Babylon also brought into exile to Babylon all seven thousand men of valor and a thousand craftsmen and metalsmiths—all strong and fit for battle.

¹⁷ Then the king of Babylon made Mattaniah, Jehoiachin's uncle, king in his place and changed his name to Zedekiah.

ZEDEKIAH REIGNS IN JUDAH // 2 CHRONICLES

36:11-14; JEREMIAH 52:1-3

¹⁸ Zedekiah was twenty-one years old when he became king, and he reigned in Jerusalem eleven years. His mother's name was Hamutal daughter of Jeremiah; she was from Libnah.

¹⁹ And Zedekiah did evil in the sight of Yahweh, just as Jehoiakim had done. ²⁰

For because of the anger of Yahweh, all this happened in Jerusalem and Judah, until He finally banished them from His presence.

And Zedekiah also rebelled against the king of Babylon.

25

CHAPTER 25 IN 30 SECONDS

Zedekiah rebels, and Babylon burns Jerusalem and the temple. But the book ends with a small light: King Jehoiachin is let out of prison and eats at the king's table.

NEBUCHADNEZZAR BESIEGES JERUSALEM // 2

CHRONICLES 36:15-21; JEREMIAH 39:1-10

¹ So in the ninth year of Zedekiah's reign, on the tenth day of the tenth month, Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon marched against Jerusalem with his entire army. They encamped outside the city and built a siege wall all around it. ² And the city was kept under siege until King Zedekiah's eleventh year.

³ By the ninth day of the fourth month, the famine in the city was so severe that the people of the land had no food. ⁴ Then the

city was breached; and though the Chaldeans had surrounded the city, all the men of war fled by night by way of the gate between the two walls near the king's garden.

They headed toward the Arabah, ⁵ but the army of the Chaldeans pursued the king and overtook him in the plains of Jericho, and his whole army deserted him. ⁶ The Chaldeans seized the king and brought him up to the king of Babylon at Riblah, where they pronounced judgment on him.

⁷ And they slaughtered the sons of Zedekiah before his eyes. Then they put out his eyes, bound him with bronze shackles, and took him to Babylon.

THE TEMPLE DESTROYED // JEREMIAH 52:12-23

⁸ On the seventh day of the fifth month, in the nineteenth year of Nebuchadnezzar's reign over Babylon, Nebuzaradan captain of the guard, a servant of the king of Babylon, entered Jerusalem. ⁹ He burned down the house of Yahweh, the royal palace, and all the houses of Jerusalem—every significant building. ¹⁰ And the whole army of the Chaldeans under the captain of the guard broke down the walls around Jerusalem.

¹¹ Then Nebuzaradan captain of the guard carried into exile the people who remained in the city, along with the deserters who had defected to the king of Babylon and the rest of the population. ¹² But the captain of the guard left behind some of the poorest of the land to tend the vineyards and fields.

¹³ Moreover, the Chaldeans broke up the bronze pillars and stands and the bronze

■ 2KI 24:15 [FULFILLS] Coniah and his mother would be hurled into a foreign land and die there ← JER 22:24-26 p.~

■ 2KI 24:20 [FULFILLS] The king who broke his oath to Babylon would die in Babylon ← EZK 17:16 p.~

■ 2KI 25:1 [FULFILLS] Yahweh will bring a nation against you from afar, from the ends of the earth, as swift as the eagle flies, whose language you shall not understand; a nation of fierce countenance and 4 more ← DT 28:49-52; IS 3:25-26; EZK 4:1-3; EZK 21:21-22; EZK 24:1-2 p.~

■ 2KI 25:3 [FULFILLS] A third would die of plague and famine, a third by sword, a third scattered ← EZK 5:12 p.~

■ 2KI 25:4 [FULFILLS] A day of trampling and broken walls would come on Jerusalem ← IS 22:5 · MEDIUM p.~

■ 2KI 25:4 [FULFILLS] The prince would leave at dusk through a hole in the wall with his face covered ← EZK 12:12 p.~

■ 2KI 25:6 [FULFILLS] Zedekiah and the survivors would be handed over to Nebuchadnezzar ← JER 21:7 p.~

■ 2KI 25:7 [FULFILLS] Zedekiah would be brought to Babylon but not see it (his eyes blinded) ← EZK 12:13 p.~

■ 2KI 25:8 [FULFILLS] God would raise up the Chaldeans (Babylonians) to punish Judah ← HAB 1:5-6 p.~

■ 2KI 25:9 [FULFILLS] Israel's cities and sanctuaries would be laid waste if they disobeyed and 10 more ← LEV 26:31-32; 1KI 9:7-8; 2KI 22:16-17; 2KI 23:27; JER 7:14; JER 13:9-10; JER 19:10-11; JER 37:7-8; AMOS 2:5; MIC 3:12; ZEPH 1:13 p.~

■ 2KI 25:11 [FULFILLS] Israel's eventual idolatry would lead to exile and scattering and 4 more ← DT 4:25-28; IS 5:13; IS 6:11-12; JER 20:4-6; MIC 4:10 p.~

PROPHECIES FULFILLED IN SCRIPTURE ARCHAEOLOGY BLOODLINE OF CHRIST

Sea in the house of Yahweh, and they carried the bronze to Babylon. ¹⁴ They also took away the pots, shovels, wick trimmers, dishes, and all the articles of bronze used in the temple service. ¹⁵ The captain of the guard also took away the censers and sprinkling bowls—anything made of pure gold or fine silver.

¹⁶ As for the two pillars, the Sea, and the movable stands that Solomon had made for the house of Yahweh, the weight of the bronze from all these articles was beyond measure. ¹⁷ Each pillar was 27 feet tall. The bronze capital atop one pillar was 4½ feet high, with a network of bronze pomegranates all around. The second pillar, with its network, was similar.

CAPTIVES CARRIED TO BABYLON // JEREMIAH 52:24-30

¹⁸ The captain of the guard also took away Seraiah the chief priest, Zephaniah the priest of second rank, and the three doorkeepers. ¹⁹ Of those still in the city, he took a court official who had been appointed over the men of war, as well as five royal advisors. He also took the scribe of the captain of the army, who had enlisted the people of the land, and sixty men who were found in the city.

²⁰ Nebuzaradan captain of the guard took them and brought them to the king of Babylon at Riblah. ²¹ There at Riblah in the land of Hamath, the king of Babylon struck them down and put them to death. So Judah was taken into exile, away from its own land.

GEDALIAH GOVERNS IN JUDAH // JEREMIAH 40:1-

16

²² Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon appointed Gedaliah son of Ahikam, the son

of Shaphan, over the people he had left behind in the land of Judah.

²³ When all the commanders of the armies and their men heard that the king of Babylon had appointed Gedaliah as governor, they came to Gedaliah at Mizpah—Ishmael son of Nethaniah, Johanan son of Kareah, Seraiah son of Tanhumeth the Netophathite, and Jaazaniah son of the Maacathite, as well as their men. ²⁴ And Gedaliah took an oath before them and their men, assuring them, "Do not be afraid of the servants of the Chaldeans. Live in the land and serve the king of Babylon, and it will be well with you."

THE MURDER OF GEDALIAH // JEREMIAH 41:1-10

²⁵ In the seventh month, however, Ishmael son of Nethaniah, the son of Elishama, who was a member of the royal family, came with ten men and struck down and killed Gedaliah, along with the Judeans and Chaldeans who were with him at Mizpah. ²⁶ Then all the people small and great, together with the commanders of the army, arose and fled to Egypt for fear of the Chaldeans.

JEHOIACHIN RELEASED FROM PRISON // JEREMIAH 52:31-34

²⁷ On the twenty-seventh day of the twelfth month of the thirty-seventh year of the exile of Judah's King Jehoiachin, in the year Evil-merodach became king of Babylon, he released King Jehoiachin of Judah from prison. ²⁸ And he spoke kindly to Jehoiachin and set his throne above the thrones of the other kings who were with him in Babylon.

²⁹ So Jehoiachin changed out of his prison clothes, and he dined regularly at the king's table for the rest of his life. ³⁰ And the king provided Jehoiachin a daily portion for the rest of his life.

■ **2KI 25:13 [FULFILLS]** The temple articles would be carried to Babylon and later brought back ← JER 27:21-22 p.~

■ **2KI 25:13 [FULFILLS]** The wealth of Jerusalem would be plundered and its houses laid waste ← ZEPH 1:13 p.~

■ **2KI 25:17 [TEXT]** 4½ OR 7½ FEET? 1 Kings 7:16 says 7½. A copy may have slipped.

■ **2KI 25:21 [FULFILLS]** Israel's eventual idolatry would lead to exile and scattering and 3 more ← DT 4:25-28; 1KI 9:7-8; 2KI 23:27; IS 6:11-12 p.~

■ **2KI 25:21 [PROPHECY]** Judah was taken into exile away from its land, a pattern of being scattered and brought back → Many Christians see this in the Jewish return to the land in 1948; others read it differently. · MEDIUM p.~

■ **2KI 25:27 [ARCHAEOLOGY]** Evil merodach is Amel Marduk, king of Babylon, named in Babylonian records and on a vase found at Susa

■ **2KI 25:27 [NOTE]** EVIL MERODACH is Amel Marduk, man of Marduk. It has nothing to do with the English word evil.

■ **2KI 25:29 [ARCHAEOLOGY]** Jehoiachin Ration Tablets → FIELD NOTES p.65

FIELD NOTES · ARCHAEOLOGY · CONFIDENCE: HIGH

THE JEHOIACHIN RATION TABLETS

2 KINGS 25:27 TO 30 · 24:12 TO 15 · JEREMIAH 52:31 TO 34



A clay tablet from Babylon that lists rations and names Jehoiachin, king of Judah. Vorderasiatisches Museum, Berlin. Photo Osama Shukir Muhammed Amin, CC BY SA 4.0.

WHAT IT IS

Clay tablets from the royal storerooms of Babylon that list how much oil was given out to people who lived at the king's court. They name Jehoiachin, king of the land of Judah, and his five sons.

HOW OLD IT IS

One tablet is dated to Nebuchadnezzar's thirteenth year, 592 BC, about five years after Jehoiachin was taken to Babylon.

WHERE AND WHEN FOUND

In Babylon, in Iraq, by Robert Koldewey's German team, which dug there from 1899 to 1917. They were found near the Ishtar Gate and first published by Ernst Weidner in 1939. They are in Berlin.

THE BIBLE AND THE TABLETS

2 Kings 25:29 to 30 says that 37 years after Jehoiachin was taken away, the new king Evil merodach let him out of prison, and he ate at the king's table and got a daily portion for the rest of his life.

A KING WITH SONS

The tablets list Jehoiachin's sons. Jeremiah said none of his descendants would prosper on David's throne, Jeremiah 22:30, and none of his sons ever ruled.

Yet his line went on. Matthew 1:12 names his son Shealtiel and grandson Zerubbabel in Jesus' family line.

HIS NAME ON THE CLAY

The tablets spell his name Yaukin, king of the land of Yahud, which is Judah. Other lines list men from Ashkelon, Tyre, Egypt and the Greek coast, prisoners and workers who also got food from Babylon's palace.

WHERE KINGS ENDS

2 Kings ends with this scene, and Jeremiah 52:31 to 34 tells it the same way. Jerusalem has fallen and the temple is burned, but a son of David is still alive, eating at the king's table. Readers took it as a sign that God had not forgotten His promise to David.

WHAT IT DOES NOT PROVE

The tablets are older than the release in 25:27, so they do not record it. They show that the captive king of Judah the Bible names really lived at Babylon's court and was fed there.