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The second Sequential Account

(2 Chronicles)

Introduction

The *Second Chronicles* account is the continuation of *First Chronicles* account (and they're considered as just one account in the book form of the Hebrew Scriptures, the TaNaK). This document includes the account of Shelomoh (Solomon) becoming king, then the rebellion of the northern tribes against his son Rehav'am becoming king. That rebellion was led by Yarov'am (Jeroboam) and resulted in the split between the northern kingdom (called 'Yisrael/Israel' or sometimes 'Efrayim/Ephraim') and the southern kingdom (called 'Yehudah/Judah' and consisting mostly of the tribes of Yehudah and Benyamin). This document then ends with the accounts of the kingdom of Yehudah (Judah) and the defeat of Yerushalem (Jerusalem) in 586 B.C.

Main components of this account

Shelomoh's reign *1:1–9:31*
- a. The first years *1:1-17*
- b. The temple construction *2:1–7:10*
- c. The final years *7:11–9:31*

The rebellion of the southern tribes *10:1-19*
The kings of Yehudah *11:1–36:12*
The defeat of Yerushalem *36:13-23*

Lighter type marks additions. Underscores join parts of a single source word.
Struck words are untranslated. The ◘ sign marks a verse with no text.
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Readers' Version

The requesting of Shelomoh of wisdom · Full kingdom[1]

1:1 David's son Shelomoh (Solomon) became established over his kingdom, and his god, Yahweh, was with him and made him very powerful.

2 Shelomoh spoke to all of Yisrael (Israel), to the army commanders of thousands and of hundreds, to the judges, to all of Yisrael's leaders, including the clan leaders. **3** So Shelomoh led the whole assembly to the worship place at Giveon, because the sacred tent was there that Yahweh's servant Mosheh (Moses) had made in the wilderness. **4** David had brought God's box uphill from Kiryat-Yearim, and he'd erected a tent for it in Yerushalem (Jerusalem).[2] **5** The bronze altar made by Betsalel (son of Uri, son of Hur) was there in front of Yahweh's tent,[3] and Shelomoh and the assembly requested Yahweh's guidance there. **6** So Shelomoh went up to the bronze altar there at the sacred tent, and in front of Yahweh, he sacrificed a thousand burnt offerings on it.

7 That night, God appeared to Shelomoh and told him, "Ask for what you want me to give you."

8 "You showed outstanding loyal commitment to my father David," Shelomoh replied to God, "and you've made me king in his place. **9** Now, Yahweh God, may your promise to my father David be confirmed, because you yourself have made me king over a people group as numerous as the dust on the ground. **10** Give me wisdom and knowledge now as I come and go in front of these people, because who could make good judgements for this huge people group of yours?"

11 "Because that was in your heart," God replied to Shelomoh "and you didn't ask for wealth, riches, or fame, or the lives of those who hate you, and also you didn't ask for a long life, but you've asked for wisdom and knowledge for yourself to help you lead my people that I've made you king over, **12** then I'll give you that wisdom and knowledge, along with wealth and riches and fame. You'll have more than any king that preceded you or any that follows."

Shelomoh's honour and wealth · Full kingdom[4]

13 Then Shelomoh (Solomon) left the sacred tent at Giveon and returned to Yerushalem (Jerusalem), where he reigned over Yisrael (Israel). **14** Then Shelomoh built up his chariots and horsemen, and soon had 1,400 chariots and 12,000 horsemen,[5] which he stationed in the chariot cities and with him in Yerushalem. **15** The king made silver and gold in Yerushalem as common as stones, and he made imported cedar timber as common as the local sycamore trees that were plentiful in the lowlands. **16** Shelomoh's horses were imported from Mitsrayim (Egypt)[6] and from the traders in Kue (in modern southern Türkiye/Turkey). **17** Mitsri (Egyptian) chariots cost six hundred silver coins and horses cost one hundred and fifty. (The Hiti and Aramean kings were able to get them for the same price.)

Preparations for temple construction · Full kingdom[7]

2:1 Then Shelomoh (Solomon) decided to build a temple to honour Yahweh, as well as a palace for himself, **2** so he conscripted seventy thousand men as porters, eighty thousand as stone-cutters in the hillside quarries, and 3,600 supervisors.

3 Shelomoh contacted King Huram in Tsor (Tyre), saying, "In my father David's time, you sent cedar timber to him so he could build himself a palace to live in. **4** Listen, I'm building a

1 **RV 1:1 · Parallel** 1 Kgs 3:1-15

2 **RV 1:4 · Cross-ref.** 2Sam 6:1-17; 1Ch 13:5-14; 15:25–16:1.

3 **RV 1:5 · Cross-ref.** Exo 38:1-7.

4 **RV 1:13 · Parallel** 1 Kgs 10:26-29

5 **RV 1:14 · Cross-ref.** 1Ki 4:26.

6 **RV 1:16 · Cross-ref.** Deu 17:16.

7 **RV 2:1 · Parallel** 1 Kgs 5:1-18

temple to honour my god Yahweh, to consecrate to him. There we'll burn spiced incense for him, plus we'll have the regular bread display, and burnt offerings in the morning and in the evening, on rest days and on the new moons, and at Yahweh our god's other appointed times. Yisrael (Israel) is required to do this forever. **5** We want to build an impressive building, because our god is more powerful than all the other gods. **6** But who could stay strong enough to build a house for him, since the sky and the heavens of the heavens can't contain him?[8] And who am I that I could build a house for him—maybe I'm good enough to burn incense for him? **7** So then, send me a skilled man who can work in gold, and in silver, and in bronze, and in iron, and with purple, red, and blue threads, and who knows how to engrave. He'll work with the skilled craftsmen who my father David appointed and who are with me here in Yerushalem (Jerusalem) and across Yehudah (Judah). **8** Also, send me cedar, cypress, and algum timber from there in Levanon, because I myself know that your servants know how to cut the trees from Levanon's forests. And listen, my servants will help your servants **9** so they can supply me with plenty of timber, because the temple I'm building will be large and beautiful. **10** I'll pay your wood-cutters three thousand tonnes of ground wheat, and the same amount of barley, and four hundred thousand litres of wine, and the same amount of olive oil.

11 King Huram of Tsor wrote back to King Shelomoh, "Yahweh has appointed you as king over his people because he loves them.
12 Blessed be Yisrael's god Yahweh who made the heavens and the earth, who's given King David a wise son with insight and understanding, who'll build a temple for Yahweh and a palace for his kingdom.

13 "I'll send Huram-Avi to you—he's a skilled craftsman. **14** His mother's from the tribe of Dan, and his father's from Tsor. He knows how to work in gold and silver, in bronze and iron, in stone and in timber, with purple and blue threads, with fine white linen and with crimson thread, and do any kind of engraving. He can follow any pattern that's given to him by your designers, and the designers of my master, David, your father. **15** So then go ahead and send the wheat, barley, olive oil, and wine that you promised to send to us, **16** then we'll cut the trees you need from Levanon and raft them to Yafo (Joppa) by sea. The responsibility of getting them up the hills to Yerushalem (Jerusalem) will be yours.

Temple construction begins · Full kingdom[9]

17 Shelomoh (Solomon) had all the foreign men living in Yisrael (Israel) counted (similar to what his father David had done), and it came to 153,600. **18** He conscripted seventy thousand as porters, eighty thousand as stone-cutters, and 3,600 as supervisors to keep the others working.

3:1 Then Shelomoh began to build Yahweh's temple on Mt. Moriyah[10] in Yerushalem (Jerusalem), where Yahweh had appeared to his father David. It was at Ornan the Yevusi's threshing floor where David had planned for it, **2** and they began the construction in early-May of the fourth year of Shelomoh's reign.[11] **3** The temple foundation was twenty-seven metres long and nine metres wide, **4** and the nine metre long front entrance porch was nine metres high.[12] Shelomoh overlaid the inside walls with pure gold. **5** For the main building, he overlaid it first with cypress planking, then with pure gold, then carved palm trees and chains along the walls. **6** The gold they used came from Par-

8 **RV 2:6 · Cross-ref.** 1Ki 8:27; 2Ch 6:18.

9 **RV 2:17 · Parallel** 1 Kgs 6:1-38

10 **RV 3:1 · Cross-ref.** Gen 22:2.

11 **RV 3:2 · Note** Probably in 966 B.C.

12 **RV 3:4 · Note** Most modern translations assume that the Hebrew 'fifty-five metres high' is an error.

vayim.[13] The main building was also overlaid with valuable gemstones. 7 He overlaid the temple beams, thresholds, walls, and doors with gold, and he engraved winged creatures on the walls.

8 Then he made the most sacred room inside the temple.[14] It was nine metres long (the full width of the temple) and the same width. He overlaid it with thirty kilograms of pure gold (beaten into thin sheets). 9 Each gold nail weighed half a kilogram, and he also overlaid the upper rooms with gold.

10 He cast molten metal into two winged creatures in the most sacred room and overlaid them with gold.[15] 11 Each of the creatures had two wings, each 2.3 metres long. One of the wings reached the temple wall, and the other wing was stretched out to touch the other creature's wingtip, 12 and the same for its companion, 13 so the total span of the two winged creatures was nine metres. They were made standing on their feet, and placed with their faces towards the opening into the main hall. 14 The curtain separating the two rooms was made from fine-linen with blue, purple, and red thread, and with winged creatures embroidered onto it.[16]

The two bronze pillars · Full kingdom[17]

15 For the front of the temple he made two sixteen metre tall pillars, which each had a 'capital' topping that was another two metres high. 16 Ornamental chains were made for the inner sanctuary and to go around the tops of the pillars, and there were one hundred pomegranate models hanging on the chains. 17 There was one pillar on each side of the east-facing entrance—the lefthand one was named Yakin and the righthand one was named Boaz.

The temple equipment · Full kingdom[18]

4:1 Then he made a square bronze altar, nine metres on each side and 4.5m high,[19] 2 and he made the large round metal water tank (called 'The Sea'), which was 4.5m in diameter and over two metres high. 3 Below the outer rim were two rows of small ornamental bulls spaced 45cm apart, which were part of the same casting. 4 Supporting 'The Sea' were twelve large cast bulls—facing outwards, with three facing each of the four compass points. 5 The sides of the tank were eight centimeters thick. The tank's brim was fashioned like the brim of a cup, resembling a lily blossom. The tank held sixty-six thousand litres of water. 6 Then he made ten washbasins, placing five on each side for the priests to rinse the burnt offerings in. The priests used 'The Sea' to wash in.[20]

7 He made the ten gold lampstands as per their design, and placed them in the temple with five on each side.[21] 8 He made ten tables and also placed them in the temple with five on each side,[22] plus he made a hundred gold basins.

9 He made the courtyard for the priests, as well as the large courtyard with its doors overlaid with bronze, 10 and he placed 'The Sea' in the southeast corner.

11 Meanwhile, Huram made the tubs and shovels (for the ashes from the altar) and other small bowls.

So Huram finished the work for God's temple

13 **RV 3:6 · Note** Probably somewhere south of Yisrael in the Aravi peninsula, but possibly to the east.

14 **RV 3:8 · Cross-ref.** Exo 26:33-34.

15 **RV 3:10-13 · Cross-ref.** Exo 25:18-20.

16 **RV 3:14 · Cross-ref.** Exo 26:31.

17 **RV 3:15 · Parallel** 1 Kgs 7:15-22

18 **RV 4:1 · Parallel** 1 Kgs 7:23-51

19 **RV 4:1 · Cross-ref.** Exo 27:1-2.

20 **RV 4:6 · Cross-ref.** Exo 30:17-21.

21 **RV 4:7 · Cross-ref.** Exo 25:31-40.

22 **RV 4:8 · Cross-ref.** Exo 25:23-30.

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that King Shelomoh (Solomon) had assigned to him: 12 the two pillars, the bowl-shaped capitals on top of each pillar, the two sets of lattice-work to cover those two capitals' bowls, 13 and the four hundred pomegranates for the lattice-work—two rows of pomegranates to cover each of the two bowls of the capitals that decorated the tops of the pillars. 14 He also made the washbasins and their stands, 15 'The Sea' and the twelve bulls that hold it up, 16 and the tubs and shovels, the forks, and other utensils.

Those were all items made of polished bronze that Huram-Avi made for King Shelomoh for Yahweh's temple.

17 The king had them cast in the clay between Sukot and Tseredah down by the Yarden (Jordan) River. 18 Shelomoh had so many items made that they didn't even try to weigh all the bronze.

19 Shelomoh had all the items for God's temple made, including the gold altar and the tables for displaying the sacred bread, 20 the pure gold lampstands and their lamps for the inner sanctuary according to their designs, 21 the pure gold flower ornaments, lamps, tongs, 22 the pure gold lamp trimmers, the basins and spoons, and the fire pans. Also the temple entrance, its inner doors into the very sacred room, and the outer temple doors were all gold.

5:1 After all the work which Shelomoh did for Yahweh's temple was completed, Shelomoh brought in his father David's sacred things.[23] He put the gold and silver, and all the other items, in the temple treasuries.

Bringing the sacred box into the temple · Full kingdom[24]

2 Then Shelomoh (Solomon) assembled the Israeli elders, and all the heads of the tribes, the Israeli clan leaders, in Yerushalem (Jerusalem), to bring the box containing Yahweh's agreement up the hill from the city of David, that is, Tsiyon (Zion).[25] 3 So in October, all those Israeli leaders gathered to be with the king for a feast, 4 and once everyone was there, the Levites lifted up the sacred box 5 and carried it up towards the temple. The priests (who are also Levites) carried it, along with the sacred tent and everything that had been in it. 6 Then King Shelomoh, and all the assembled Israelis with him, gathered in front of the box, sacrificing sheep and cattle which were too many to count. 7 The priests then took the box containing Yahweh's agreement in to its place in the house's inner room (the holiest place)—to under the winged creatures, 8 whose outstretched wings would now be over the sacred box and even over the top of its carrying poles. 9 Those long poles stuck out and could be seen from the front of that inner room, but couldn't be seen from the main room, and they're still there to this day. 10 There was nothing in the box except the two stone tablets that Mosheh (Moses) had put in at Horev,[26] which represented the agreement that Yahweh had made with the Israelis after they'd left Mitsrayim (Egypt).

Yahweh's splendour · Full kingdom

11 Then the priests left the holy place in the temple. All the priests who were there consecrated themselves to do the priestly duties, irrespective of which division they were part of. 12 All the Levites who were singers (Asaf, Heyman, Yedutun, and their sons and their brothers) stood on the east side of the altar. They were dressed in fine linen, and had cymbals, and harps and lyres, along with 120 priests playing trumpets. 13 The trumpeters and singers performed together to praise and thank Yahweh, with the trumpets and cymbals on the highlights of the song to praise Yahweh:

"Yahweh is good to us,
because his loyal commitment continues forever."[27]

23 RV 5:1 · Cross-ref. 2Sam 8:11; 1Ch 18:11.

24 RV 5:2 · Parallel 1 Kgs 8:1-9

25 RV 5:2 · Cross-ref. 2Sam 6:12-15; 1Ch 15:25-28.

26 RV 5:10 · Cross-ref. Deu 10:5.

27 RV 5:13 · Cross-ref. 1Ch 16:34; 2Ch 7:3; Ezr 3:11; Psa 100:5; 106:1; 107:1; 118:1; 136:1; Jer 33:11.

Readers' Version

Then Yahweh's temple filled with a cloud,
14 and the priests weren't able to stay on their
feet and continue ministering, because Yah-
weh's brilliance had filled the temple.

Shelomoh's blessing · Full kingdom[28]

6:1 Then Shelomoh (Solomon) prayed, "Yah-
weh, you said that you would live in a dark
cloud, 2 but I've built a beautiful residence for
you—a place for you to live in forever."
3 Then, while all the people stood there, Sh-
elomoh turned toward them and spoke a bless-
ing over them, 4 saying, "Yahweh, Yisrael's (Is-
rael's) god, is blessed, who spoke physically to
my father David, and then caused it to actually
happen, when he said back then,[29] 5 'When I
brought my people out of Mitsrayim (Egypt), I
hadn't chosen a city from all of Yisrael's tribes
as a place to build a house so my name could be
there. Nor had I chosen a man to be leader over
my people, Yisrael, 6 but now I've chosen
Yerushalem (Jerusalem) to be my place of resi-
dence, and I've chosen you, David, to be over
my people, Yisrael.'
7 "My father David wanted to build a temple
for Yisrael's god Yahweh, 8 but Yahweh told
him, 'It's good that you wanted to build a house
to honour me, 9 but you won't be the one to
build it. It'll be your own biological son who'll
build the temple to honour my reputation.'
10 "Now Yahweh has fulfilled what he said,
and I'm here sitting on Yisrael's throne instead
of my father David, just as Yahweh said, and
I've had this temple built to honour Yisrael's
god Yahweh. 11 I've placed the sacred box in
there—the box that contains the agreement
Yahweh made with Yisrael's descendants."

Shelomoh's prayer · Full kingdom[30]

12 Then Shelomoh (Solomon) stood in front
of the altar to Yahweh in front of all the assem-
bled Israelis, and spread out his hands, 13 be-
cause he'd made a bronze platform and had it
placed in the centre of the courtyard. The
square platform was just over two metres on
each side, and stood just over a metre off the
ground. Firstly he stood on it, then he knelt
down in front of all the assembled Israelis and
spread his hands out to the sky 14 and said,
"Yahweh, Yisrael's (Israel's) god, there isn't any
god like you in the heavens or on the
earth—one who keeps his agreement and shows
loyal commitment to your servants who are
walking with total integrity as you watch them.
15 Everything you verbally told my father David
that you'd do, you've used your power to make
it all happen, including this today. 16 And now,
Yahweh, Yisrael's god, keep another promise
you made to your servant David my father,
when you told him, 'There'll always be one of
your descendants sitting on Yisrael's throne, as
long as they obey my instructions just like you
have.'[31] 17 So now, Yahweh, Yisrael's god, may
what you said to your servant, to David, be con-
firmed.
18 "But will God really live with humans here
on the earth? Wow, the skies and the heavens
of the heavens can't contain you—how much
less this house that I've built.[32] 19 Nevertheless
Yahweh my god, listen to your servant's prayer
and request and take notice. 20 Watch over this
building where you said you'd be present,[33] and
hear my prayers when your servant prays to-
wards this place. 21 Listen to what your servant
and your Israeli people are requesting when
they pray towards this place. Listen from where
you live in the heavens, and hear and forgive.
22 "If someone is accused of wronging their
neighbour, and is forced to make a sworn state-
ment in front of your altar in this temple,
23 then listen from the heavens and decide
who's telling the truth. Then punish the guilty

28 RV 6:1 · Parallel 1 Kgs 8:12-21
29 RV 6:4-9 · Cross-ref. 2Sam 7:1-13; 1Ch 17:1-12.
30 RV 6:12 · Parallel 1 Kgs 8:22-53
31 RV 6:16 · Cross-ref. 1Ki 2:4.
32 RV 6:18 · Cross-ref. 2Ch 2:6.
33 RV 6:20 · Cross-ref. Deu 12:11.

party as they deserve, and do good to the other side as a reward for their innocence.

24 "And if your Israeli people are defeated by their enemies because they've disobeyed you, but they return to you and confess, and pray, and in this place they request your favour, 25 then listen to them from the heavens and forgive your Israeli people's disobedience, and bring them back to this land that you gave to their ancestors and to them.

26 "When the clouds hold back and give no rain because your Israeli people have disobeyed you, but then they pray towards this place and acknowledge you and turn away from their disobedience because you've punished them, 27 then listen to them from the heavens and forgive the disobedience of your servants and your Israeli people. Teach them the right way to live their lives, and give rain to your land which you gave your people as a permanent inheritance.

28 "If this land suffers from famine, or if there's blight or mildew, or locusts or grasshoppers, deadly diseases or sickness, or if an enemy army surrounds them, 29 then if any person, or all your Israeli people, stretch out their hands towards this temple with their prayers and requests because they each acknowledge their individual pain and suffering, 30 then listen to them from where you live there in the heavens, and forgive them. Reward each person according to their behaviour, because you know people's motives—only you know what's in people's minds. 31 Do that so they'll respect you and live how you want them to, as they live in this country that you gave to our ancestors.

32 "Also, any foreigners who don't belong to your Israeli people, who come to this land because they've heard that you're very great and powerful, if they turn toward this temple and pray, 33 then listen to them as well from where you live there in the heavens. Do whatever that foreigner requests from you, so that all the people groups in the world will learn about your reputation, and honour and obey you like your Israeli people do, and know that this temple that I've built is called by your name.

34 "When you send your people off to battle their enemies, and they pray towards this city that you've chosen and this temple that I've had built to honour your name, 35 then listen from the heavens to their prayer and their requests, and uphold their cause.

36 "When they disobey you (and there's no one who doesn't), and you're angry with them and allow an enemy to get the upper hand, and their captors take them to a distant or nearby land as captives, 37 and then in that land where they're captives, they turn and admit their wickedness and their disobedience, and request your favour, 38 and they turn to you with total sincerity in that other country, and pray towards the land that you gave their ancestors, and the city that you chose, and toward the temple that I've built to honour your name, 39 then listen from where you live in the heavens to their prayer and their requests, and uphold their cause and forgive your people who've disobeyed you.

40 "Now my god, please let your eyes be open and your ears attentive to prayers offered towards this place.

41 "So now Yahweh God, along with the sacred box representing your strength, come and enter your place for resting. Yahweh God, may your priests be dressed in your rescue, and your faithful ones enjoy your goodness.[34] 42 Yahweh God, don't ignore those who you've chosen. Remember your servant David's loyal commitment."

The temple dedication · Full kingdom[35]

7:1 When Shelomoh (Solomon) finished praying, fire came down from the skies and consumed the burnt offering and the sacrifices, and Yahweh's brilliant light filled the temple.[36] 2 The priests weren't able to go

34 **RV 6:41-42 · Cross-ref.** Psa 132:8-10.

35 **RV 7:1 · Parallel** 1 Kgs 8:62-66

36 **RV 7:1 · Cross-ref.** Lev 9:23-24.

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into Yahweh's temple because of Yahweh's brilliant light, 3 and when all the Israelis saw the fire come down and saw the bright light above the temple, they fell to their knees with their faces bowed down low to the stone pavement, and worshipped and thanked Yahweh, saying, "He's certainly good—his loyal commitment really will continue forever."[37]

4 Then the king and all the people offered sacrifices to Yahweh— 5 King Shelomoh sacrificed twenty-two thousand cattle and one hundred and twenty thousand sheep, and so the king and all the people dedicated God's temple.
6 The priests were standing in their positions, as well as the Levites with the instruments King David had made to give thanks to Yahweh. When they assisted David in praising Yahweh, they would sing, "Yes, his loyal commitment continues forever," and the priests would blow their trumpets in front of them as all the Israelis stood there.

7 Then Shelomoh consecrated the middle of the courtyard in front of Yahweh's temple building so he could offer burnt offerings and the fat of the peace offerings there, because the bronze altar that he'd made wasn't able to handle the large number of burnt offerings and grain offerings, and the fats.

8 Then Shelomoh and all of Yisrael (Israel) feasted for the next seven days—the huge gathering spread from Levo-Hamat in the far north, all the way to the Mitsri (Egyptian) riverbed in the far south. 9 On the eighth day, they had a solemn service, because they'd observed seven days of celebration for the altar with seven days of feasting. 10 Finally, after some three weeks, Shelomoh sent the people home—they were cheery and encouraged because of the goodness Yahweh had displayed to David and Shelomoh, and to his Israeli people.

Yahweh appears to Shelomoh again · Full kingdom

11 So Shelomoh (Solomon) finished Yahweh's temple and the king's palace—he'd succeeded in implementing everything he'd envisaged. 12 One night, Yahweh appeared to Shelomoh in a dream and told him, "I've heard your prayer, and I've chosen this temple to be the place where my people will offer sacrifices to me. 13 If I restrain the skies so there's no rain, or if I command locusts to devour the land, or if I send disease among my people, 14 then if my people who are known by my name humble themselves and pray, and request my help and turn away from their evil customs, then I myself will hear them from the heavens, and I'll forgive their sin and heal their land. 15 My eyes will be open and my ears will be attentive to prayers offered towards this place, 16 as I've chosen and consecrated this temple to be associated with my name forever—I'll be permanently present there. 17 Also, if you'll obey me like your father David did, and do everything that I've instructed you, and keep my rules and regulations, 18 then I'll ensure that your descendants rule your kingdom, just as I promised your father David when I said, 'You won't fail to have one of your descendants ruling over Yisrael (Israel).' 19 However, if you collectively turn away, and abandon my rules and instructions that I gave you, and decide to serve other gods and worship them, 20 then I'll remove these people from my land that I gave them. Also this temple that I consecrated for myself, I'll throw it away where I can't see it, and I'll make it an object of scorn and ridicule among all the other nations.

21 Then this temple, which everyone admires as they pass by, will be devastated, and people will ask, 'Why did Yahweh do such terrible things to that temple and to that land?'

22 'It happened because they abandoned Yahweh, their ancestors' god,' others will reply. 'He brought them out from slavery in Mitsrayim (Egypt), but then they obtained other gods and worshipped them and served them—that's why he sent them all this misery.' "

37 **RV 7:3 · Cross-ref.** 1Ch 16:34; 2Ch 5:13; Ezr 3:11; Psa 100:5; 106:1; 107:1; 118:1; 136:1; Jer 33:11.

Readers' Version

King Shelomoh's achievements · Full kingdom[38]

8:1 After the twenty years that it took Shelomoh (Solomon) to build Yahweh's temple and his palace, **2** he rebuilt the cities that King Huram had given to him, and he got Israelis to live in them.

3 Then Shelomoh attacked Hamat-Tsovah and captured it. **4** He rebuilt Tadmor in the wilderness, and storage cities in the Hamat region. **5** He rebuilt the fortified cities of Upper Beyt-Horon and Lower Beyt-Horon with walls and barred gates, **6** as well as Ba'alat and all the storage cities, and all the cities for Shelomoh's chariots and horsemen that he wanted to build in Yerushalem (Jerusalem) and Levanon, and throughout his kingdom. **7** All the people who lived in Yisrael (Israel) but who were actually remnants of the Hitim, Amorim, Perizim, Hivim, and Yevusim, **8** who were descendants of groups that the Israelis hadn't completely destroyed, were forced to become Shelomoh's labourers, and they still continue in that role. **9** However, Shelomoh didn't make the Israelis become labourers, because they became his soldiers, officers, chariot commanders, and horsemen. **10** Some 250 Israelis were also King Shelomoh's chief officials who had authority over the people.

11 Shelomoh brought his wife, Par'oh's (Pharaoh's) daughter, up from the city of David to the house he'd built for her, because he said, "My wife mustn't live in the palace of Yisrael's King David, because the places where Yahweh's box has been are sacred."

12 Then Shelomoh sacrificed burnt offerings to Yahweh on the altar that had been built in front of the temple's porch. **13** He followed Mosheh's (Moses') instructions about the daily sacrifices for the rest days[39] and the new moons,[40] and for the three appointed occasions each year: the Festival of Flat Bread, the Harvest Festival, and the Celebration Living in Shelters.[41] **14** Then, as his father David had instructed, he assigned the priests to divisions for their various tasks, and the Levites who would praise and minister in front of the priests and help in their daily tasks, and gatekeepers in their divisions at the various gates. All that was what David, the man of God, had commanded. **15** The priests and Levites followed the king's instructions concerning all their duties, as well as their supervision of the treasuries.

16 So now, all of Shelomoh's work on Yahweh's temple was completed—from the foundation through to its completion and operation.

17 Then Shelomoh went to Etsyon-Gever and to Eylot on the edge of the ocean, in the Edom region. **18** King Huram (from Tsor (Tyre)) sent ships to him, as his servants knew the sea well. Then Shelomoh's men boarded the ships and sailed with them to Ofir, where they obtained fifteen tonnes of gold and brought it back to King Shelomoh.

The queen from Sheva visits · Full kingdom[42]

9:1 The queen from the Sheva region had heard all about Shelomoh (Solomon), and she came to Yerushalem (Jerusalem) with some hard questions.[43] Her party included a large number of camels carrying lots of spices and gold and valuable gemstones. She came to Shelomoh and discussed with him everything that was on her mind. **2** Shelomoh responded to all her queries, and there wasn't any subject that he wasn't able to speak about. **3** When the queen from Sheva saw Shelomoh's wisdom, and saw the palace that he'd built **4** and the food at his table, as well as his servants' stations, his well-dressed ministers standing by, his cup-bearers in their uni-

38 RV 8:1 · Parallel 1 Kgs 9:10-28

39 RV 8:13 · Cross-ref. Num 28:9-10.

40 RV 8:13 · Cross-ref. Num 28:11-15.

41 RV 8:13 · Cross-ref. Exo 23:14-17; 34:22-23; Num 28:16–29:39; Deu 16:16.

42 RV 9:1 · Parallel 1 Kgs 10:1-13

43 RV 9:1-9 · Cross-ref. Mat 12:42; Luk 11:31.

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forms, and the burnt offerings that he sacrificed at Yahweh's temple, it took her breath away **5** and she told the king, "Everything I heard in my own country about you and your wisdom was true. **6** I didn't believe what they reported to me until I saw it with my own eyes, and wow, the reports I heard didn't even cover *half* the extent of your wisdom! **7** Your men are blessed, and even your servants are blessed to be able to continually stand in front of you and listen to your wisdom. **8** Your god Yahweh ought to be blessed—the one who delighted in you and placed you on his throne as his king. Your god loved Yisrael (Israel) and wanted to establish them forever, so he's placed you over them as king—to give justice and do what's right."

9 Then she gave the king four tonnes of gold, a very large quantity of spices, and valuable gemstones. Nobody before had ever seen such a large amount of spices as what the queen from Sheva gave to King Shelomoh.

10 (Also, King Huram's servants working together with Shelomoh's servants brought gold from Ofir, as well as algum wood and valuable gemstones. **11** The king made the algum wood into staircases for Yahweh's temple and for the king's palace, and into lyres and harps for the singers. Nothing like that had been seen before in Yehudah (Judah).)

12 King Shelomoh gave the queen from Sheva everything she wanted—more than what she'd brought to the king. Then she departed with her servants and went back to her country.

Shelomoh's wealth · Full kingdom[44]

13 In one year, Shelomoh (Solomon) received about twenty tonnes of gold, **14** as well as what the merchants and traders brought in. All the Aravi kings and all the local governors brought gold and silver to Shelomoh. **15** King Shelomoh made two hundred large shields of beaten gold—six hundred gold coins' worth of beaten gold went into each shield. **16** Also, three hundred smaller shields—three hundred gold coins' worth of beaten gold went into each shield.

17 Then the king made a large ivory throne and overlaid it with pure gold. **18** There were six steps leading up to the throne, and a gold footstool was attached to it. It had an armrest on each side, with a lion statue beside each armrest. **19** There were twelve statues of lions standing on the six steps—one at each end of each step. No throne like that existed in any other kingdom.

20 All of King Shelomoh's cups were made of gold, and all the various dishes in 'The House of the Levanon Forest' were refined gold. Nothing was made of silver, because during Shelomoh's reign, silver wasn't considered valuable, **21** because the king's ships went to Tarshish with Huram's servants. Every three years the fleet would bring back gold, silver, ivory, and apes and baboons, **22** so King Shelomoh became greater than all the other kings in the world, both in wealth and in wisdom.

23 Kings from all over the world wanted to come and listen to the wisdom that God had given Shelomoh. **24** Each of them would bring gifts: gold and silver items, clothes, myrrh and spices, horses and mules. (This continued year after year.)

25 Shelomoh had four thousand stalls for horses and chariots, and twelve thousand horsemen, and he kept some in the chariot cities and some close by in Yerushalem (Jerusalem).[45] **26** He ended up ruling over all the kings in the region, from the Perat (Euphrates) River in the northeast, west to the area of the Pelishtim, and south down to the Mitsri (Egyptian) border.[46] **27** The king made silver as common as stones, and cedar timber as common as the sycamore fig trees in the lowlands.

28 Horses were brought in from Mitsrayim (Egypt)[47] for Shelomoh, and from other coun-

44 **RV 9:13 · Parallel** 1 Kgs 10:14-25

45 **RV 9:25 · Cross-ref.** 1Ki 4:26.

46 **RV 9:26 · Cross-ref.** Gen 15:18; 1Ki 4:21.

47 **RV 9:28 · Cross-ref.** Deu 17:16.

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tries as well.

Summary of Shelomoh's reign · Full kingdom[48]

29 Everything else that Shelomoh (Solomon) did, from the beginning to the end, was written down by the prophet Natan (Nathan), and in the prophecy by Ahiyah (from Shiloh), and the prophet Ido's visions about Nevat's son Yarov'am (Jeroboam) were also written down. 30 Shelomoh reigned from Yerushalem (Jerusalem) over all of Yisrael (Israel) for forty years, 31 then he died and was buried with his father in 'The City of David', and his son Rehav'am (Rehoboam) replaced him as king.

Yisrael splits in two · Full kingdom[49]

10:1 Then Rehav'am (Rehoboam) went to Shekem, where all of Yisrael (Israel) had gathered for his coronation. 2 Meanwhile, Nevat's son Yarov'am (Jeroboam) had fled from King Shelomoh (Solomon) and was down in Mitsrayim (Egypt), but when he heard about the coming coronation, he returned from Mitsrayim. 3 So the leaders of the northern tribes summoned Yarov'am, and he went with them to speak to Shelomoh's son Rehav'am and all of Yisrael, saying, 4 "Your father made us work very hard, but now, lighten the demands that your father made on us, and we'll serve you."

5 "Come back to me in three days." Rehav'am answered, so the people departed.

6 Then King Rehav'am consulted with the older men who'd advised his father Shelomoh when he was still alive, asking them, "How do you advise me to answer the people?"

7 "If you're good to those people and do things that please them, and speak kindly to them," they answered, "then they'll serve you for a long time to come."

8 However, Rehav'am rejected their advice, and consulted some of the young men there who'd grown up with him. 9 "How would you guys suggest I answer the people who've asked me to lighten the burden on them, compared to my father's time?"

10 "Those people tell you that your father was hard on them and that you should lighten their load," his contemporaries advised him. "But you should tell them that your little finger is thicker than your father's waist, 11 and that whereas he required them to contribute, you'll be even more demanding. Tell them that he might have whipped them with leather whips, but that you'll whip them with scorpions!"

12 So Yarov'am (Jeroboam) and all the people returned to King Rehav'am on the third day as he'd prearranged, 13 and ignoring the advice of the older men, the king answered the people harshly. 14 He passed on the younger men's suggestion, telling the people, "I'll make your burden even heavier. My father rebuked you people with whips, but I'll do it with scorpions."

15 So the king took no notice of the people's request, because it was God turning events around, so that what Yahweh had said to Yarov'am (Nevat's son) through Ahiyah (from Shiloh) would come to pass.

16 When all the Israelis saw that the king hadn't listened to them, the people from the northern tribes answered the king, "What did David have to do with us anyway? We had nothing to gain from Yishay's (Jesse's) son. You might as well all head home, and then they'll see what happened to David's dynasty."[50]

So they all went home, 17 and Rehav'am ended up only ruling over the Israelis living in the Yehudah (Judah) region.

18 King Rehav'am (still in Shekem) sent out Hadoram, his supervisor of the forced labourers, but the Israelis hurled stones at him and killed him. When he heard about that, King Rehav'am forced his way into his chariot and escaped to Yerushalem (Jerusalem), 19 and northern Yisrael (Israel) has rebelled against David's descendants to this day.

48 **RV 9:29 · Parallel** 1 Kgs 11:41-43

49 **RV 10:1 · Parallel** 1 Kgs 12:1-20

50 **RV 10:16 · Cross-ref.** 2Sam 20:1.

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The scolding of prophet Simayass to Rehav'am · Southern kingdom[51]

11:1 When Rehav'am (Rehoboam) arrived in Yerushalem (Jerusalem), he assembled Yehudah's (Judah's) and Benyamin's warriors: 180,000 chosen to fight against Yisrael (Israel) to bring the kingdom back to Rehav'am. **2** But Yahweh spoke to the prophet Shemayah, saying, **3** "Go and tell this to Shelomoh's (Solomon's) son King Rehav'am of Yehudah, and to all the Israeli people from the Yehudah and Benyamin tribes: **4** Yahweh says that you mustn't go and fight with your relatives. Everyone should just go home again, because everything that's happened came from me." So they listened to the message from Yahweh, and called off the planned attack against Yarov'am (Jeroboam).

Rehav'am fortifies the cities · Southern kingdom

5 So Rehav'am (Rehoboam) lived in Yerushalem (Jerusalem) and fortified the cities throughout Yehudah (Judah): **6** Beyt-Lehem (Bethlehem), Eytam, Tekoa, **7** Beyt-Tsur, Sokoh, Adulam, **8** Gat, Mareshah, Zif, **9** Adorayim, Lakish, Azekah, **10** Tsor'ah, Ayalon, and Hevron (all in Yehudah and Benyamin). **11** He strengthened the fortifications in those cities and towns, appointed an army commander, and stocked their storehouses with food and oil and wine. **12** He also equipped each of them with shields and spears, and made sure they were well-protected. So Yehudah and Benyamin were under his control.

Priests and Levites go down to Yehudah · Southern kingdom

13 The priests and Levites throughout all of Yisrael (Israel) supported Rehav'am (Rehoboam) from every part of the country. **14** The Levites abandoned their property and their pastureland and moved to Yerushalem (Jerusalem) and across the rest of Yehudah (Judah), because Yarov'am (Jeroboam) and his sons stopped them from serving as Yahweh's priests. **15** Instead Yarov'am established his own priests for his hilltop shrines and for the goat and calf idols that he'd made.[52] **16** As well as the priests and Levites, people from all the Israeli tribes who wanted to serve Yisrael's god Yahweh came to Yerushalem to sacrifice to Yahweh, their ancestors' god. **17** So they strengthened the kingdom of Yehudah, and as the people followed David's and Shelomoh's (Solomon's) examples, they strengthened Rehav'am's rule for three years.

Rehav'am's family · Southern kingdom

18 Rehav'am (Rehoboam) married Mahalat. She was the daughter of David's son Yerimot, and her mother was Avihayil, the daughter of Eliav and granddaughter of Yishay (Jesse). **19** They had three sons: Ye'ush, Shemaryah, and Zaham. **20** After her, he married Avshalom's (Absalom's) daughter Ma'akah, and they had four sons: Aviyah, Atay, Ziza, and Shelomit. **21** Rehav'am loved Ma'akah the most out of his eighteen wives and sixty slave-wives. He fathered twenty-eight sons and sixty daughters, **22** but he appointed Ma'akah's son Aviyah to be the leader of his older and younger brothers, because that would mark him as the future king. **23** He wisely sent his other sons to fortified cities across all the regions in Yehudah (Judah) and Benyamin, where he set them up generously and asked the local people to give them wives.

Mitsrayim attacks Yehudah · Southern kingdom[53]

12:1 However, after Rehav'am (Rehoboam) had become established and in firm control of his kingdom, he and all the people abandoned Yahweh's instructions. **2** Because they were unfaithful to Yahweh, King Shishak from Mitsrayim (Egypt) came to attack Yerushalem (Jerusalem) in the fifth year of Rehav'am's reign, **3** with 1,200 chariots and sixty thousand horsemen, along with a huge number of troops, including Mitsrim (Egyptians), Luvim (Libyans), Sukim, and Kushim. **4** He captured Yehudah's (Judah's) fortified cities, then moved towards Yerushalem.

51 RV 11:1 · Parallel 1 Kgs 12:21-24

52 RV 11:15 · Cross-ref. 1Ki 12:31.

53 RV 12:1 · Parallel 1 Kgs 14:25-28

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5 Then the prophet Shemayah and the leaders of Yehudah who'd fled to Yerushalem because of Shishak's attacks came to Rehav'am. Shemayah told them, "Yahweh says that it was you people who abandoned me, so now I've also abandoned you to be defeated by Shishak."

6 Then the king and the Israeli leaders humbled themselves and said, "Yahweh always does what's right and fair."

7 When Yahweh saw that they'd humbled themselves, he gave this message to Shemayah, "They've humbled themselves, so I won't destroy them—my rage won't pour out on Yerushalem through Shishak's attack, and I'll give them a way to recover in the future. 8 Nevertheless, they'll become his servants, and they'll learn the difference between serving me versus serving other nations' kings.

9 When Mitsrayim's (Egypt's) King Shishak invaded Yerushalem, he took the treasures from Yahweh's temple and the king's palace. He took everything valuable, including the gold shields that Shelomoh (Solomon) had made.[54] 10 King Rehav'am replaced them with bronze shields, and distributed them to the leaders of the people who guarded the entrance to the king's palace. 11 After that, whenever the king went to Yahweh's temple, the guards went with him carrying those bronze shields. Then when the king left again, they'd return them to the guardroom. 12 Because Rehav'am humbled himself, Yahweh stopped being angry with him and didn't eliminate him, so things were reasonably good in Yehudah (Judah).

13 King Rehav'am consolidated his rule in Yerushalem. He reigned for a total of forty-one years—seventeen of which were from Yerushalem city, which Yahweh had chosen from all the tribes in Yisrael (Israel) as the place to establish his reputation. (Rehav'am's mother was the Amonit, Na'amah.) 14 Rehav'am did evil things because he didn't make it his priority to get direction from Yahweh.

15 The account of everything Rehav'am did while he was king, including genealogical records, was recorded in the scrolls written by the prophets Shemayah and Ido. Rehav'am and Yarov'am (Jeroboam) were at war with each other for his entire reign. 16 Then Rehav'am died, he was buried with his ancestors in 'The City of David', and his son Aviyah replaced him as king.

Aviyah defeats Yarov'am · Both kingdoms[55]

13:1 In the eighteenth year of King Yarov'am's (Jeroboam's) reign, Aviyah started his reign over Yehudah (Judah). 2 He ruled from Yerushalem (Jerusalem) for three years. (His mother was Uriel's daughter Mikayah from Giveah.)

However, war started between Aviyah and Yarov'am.

3 Aviyah launched the attack with four-hundred thousand strong warriors, and Yarov'am drew up in formation against him with eight-hundred thousand strong warriors in his army.

4 Aviyah stood on the top of Mt. Tsemarayim in the Efrayim (Ephraim) hill-country and shouted, "Yarov'am and all of Yisrael (Israel), listen to me. 5 Don't you all understand that Yisrael's god Yahweh made a formal agreement that the kingdom of Yisrael was given forever to David and his descendants? 6 But Nevat's son Yarov'am, who was a servant of David's son Shelomoh (Solomon), took action and rebelled against his master, 7 and a bunch of wicked good-for-nothings gathered around Yarov'am and created a force against Shelomoh's son, Rehav'am (Rehoboam), when Rehav'am was still an inexperienced, young man and couldn't stand up to them. 8 So now you Israelis are saying that you'll stand against the kingdom that Yahweh established through David's descendants. There are certainly many of you, and you have the gold calves that Yarov'am made as gods for you. 9 Didn't you people drive out the Levites, as well as Yahweh's priests who were Aharon's (Aaron's) descendants? Then you ap-

54 **RV 12:9 · Cross-ref.** 1Ki 10:16-17; 2Ch 9:15-16.

55 **RV 13:1 · Parallel** 1 Kgs 15:1-8

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pointed for yourselves 'priests' like they have in other countries, so that anyone who comes to consecrate himself by bringing a young bull from the herd and seven rams can become a 'priest' of your non-gods.

10 "But as for us, Yahweh is our god and we haven't abandoned him. Our priests who minister to Yahweh are Aharon's descendants, and the Levites assist them. 11 Every morning and every evening, they sacrifice burnt offerings to Yahweh, and spiced incense. There's sacred bread on the display table, and the lamps in the gold lampstand give light every evening because we're following our god Yahweh's instructions, but you people have abandoned him. 12 So listen! God is guiding us, and his priests will blast their trumpets to signal battle against you people. Listen, you Israelis: don't fight against Yahweh, your ancestors' god, because you won't succeed."

13 But meanwhile, Yarov'am had sent some men around to ambush them from behind, so they were both in front of the army from Yehudah (Judah) and in ambush behind them.

14 When the warriors from Yehudah turned, wow, they realised they were being attacked from in front and from behind. They called out to Yahweh for help while the priests blew their trumpets. 15 Then the men from Yehudah shouted a loud battle cry, and God defeated Yarov'am and all of Yisrael in front of Aviyah and Yehudah. 16 Yisrael's soldiers fled away from Yehudah's army, and God enabled Yehudah to defeat them. 17 Aviyah and his men thrashed them badly, and some five-hundred thousand of their chosen warriors were killed. 18 So the Israelis were subdued at that time, and the people from Yehudah were victorious because they trusted in Yahweh, their ancestors' god.

19 Aviyah chased after Yarov'am and they captured from Yisrael (Israel) the cities of Beyt-El (Bethel), Yeshanah, and Efron, and their surrounding villages. 20 Yarov'am never regained military strength during Aviyah's reign, and after a time Yahweh struck him with sickness and he died.

21 Meanwhile, Aviyah became more powerful. He took fourteen wives for himself, and had twenty-two sons and sixteen daughters. 22 The rest of what Aviyah did, including his sayings and his behaviour, was written down by the prophet Ido.

King Asa's rule over Yehudah · Southern kingdom

14:1 Then Aviyah died, and they buried him with his ancestors in 'The city of David', and his son Asa reigned in his place. During his rule, the country was peaceful for ten years. 2 Asa did what was good and right in his god Yahweh's eyes— 3 he removed the pagan altars and the hilltop shrines, smashed the sacred stone pillars, and cut the Asherah poles down. 4 He ordered the people in Yehudah (Judah) to worship Yahweh, their ancestors' god, and to obey his instructions and regulations. 5 He removed all the hilltop shrines from Yehudah's cities, and also the incense altars, and the kingdom was peaceful under his rule. 6 He fortified Yehudah's cities, as the place was quiet without war during those years, because Yahweh had given him peace, 7 and he'd told Yehudah, "Let's build these cities with walls around them, and towers, doors, and bars, while the land's quiet around us, because we've asked our god Yahweh for guidance. We've made our request, and he's given us rest on all our borders." So they built and they prospered. 8 King Asa had an army of three-hundred thousand men from Yehudah who carried large shields and spears, as well as 280,000 men from Benyamin who also carried shields, along with bows and arrows. They were all powerful warriors.

The Kushi invasion repelled · Southern kingdom

9 But then Zerah the Kushi came out against them with an army of a million soldiers and three hundred chariots, and he advanced to Mareshah. 10 Asa went out to oppose them, and they deployed for battle in the Tsefat valley near Mareshah. 11 Then King Asa called out to his god Yahweh, "Yahweh, it makes no difference to you if there's one against you, or one million. Help us, Yahweh our god, because we rely on you, and we've come against this massive force, trusting in

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your reputation. Yahweh, you're our god—don't let mere humans prevail against you."

12 So Yahweh helped Asa and the army from Yehudah (Judah) to defeat the Kushim, and they fled. **13** Asa and his army chased them southwest as far as Gerar. So many Kushim were killed that the rest couldn't save themselves, because they'd been destroyed in front of Yahweh and his army, and the men of Yehudah carried away a large amount of plunder. **14** They struck all the cities around Gerar, because the Kushim there were terrified of Yahweh. The men from Yehudah plundered all those cities, because they contained a lot of valuable goods. **15** They also attacked the Kushi cattle herdsmen, as well as capturing lots of sheep and camels before returning to Yerushalem (Jerusalem).

Azaryah's prophecy gives courage to Asa · Southern kingdom

15:1 Then God's spirit came down onto Oded's son Azaryah, **2** and he went out to King Asa and told him, "Listen to me, Asa, and all of Yehudah (Judah) and Benyamin: Yahweh is with you southerners when you're with him. And if you look for him, you'll find him, but if you abandon him, he'll also abandon you. **3** Yisrael (Israel) has been without the true God for a long time, as there hasn't been a priest teaching, so God's instructions have been forgotten. **4** However, they turned to Yisrael's god Yahweh when they were in distress, and requested his help, and he helped them.

5 "In those times, it wasn't safe to travel away, because there was wide unrest among the inhabitants of the surrounding regions. **6** Nation crushed nation, and city crushed city, because God sent them one trouble after another. **7** But you southerners, be strong and don't give up striving, because your hard work will be rewarded."

8 When King Asa heard those words and the prophecy from the prophet Oded's son, he took courage and removed all the detestable idols from across Yehudah and Benyamin, and from the cities he'd captured from the Efrayim (Ephraim) hill country. Also, he repaired the altar to Yahweh that stood in front of Yahweh's temple.

9 He assembled all the people from Yehudah and Benyamin, as well as the many people who'd joined them from the tribes of Efrayim, Menasheh (Manasseh), and Shim'on (Simeon). (Many people had emigrated from Yisrael into Yehudah when they realised that his god Yahweh was helping him.) **10** They gathered together in Yerushalem (Jerusalem) in June of the fifteenth year of King Asa's reign **11** and sacrificed seven hundred bulls to Yahweh and seven thousand sheep—all of which had come from the recent plunder. **12** They solemnly agreed to sincerely and diligently devote themselves to Yahweh, their ancestors' god. **13** They decided that anyone who didn't worship Yisrael's god Yahweh must be killed, man or woman, regardless of whether or not they had an important position. **14** Together they loudly promised that to Yahweh, then shouted and blew trumpets and horns, **15** and all of Yehudah celebrated that promise because they were totally sincere and committed. They asked Yahweh to give them guidance, which he did, and he enabled them to have peace throughout their country.

16 King Asa also removed his mother Ma'akah from her position as queen because she made a disgusting Asherah pole. Asa cut down the pole and crushed it, and burnt it at the Kidron brook, **17** although they didn't remove the hilltop shrines from Yisrael. Nevertheless, Asa maintained his singular devotion to Yahweh for his whole life, **18** and he brought his father's sacred things, and his own, into God's temple—gold and silver items. **19** There was no more war in Yehudah until the thirty-fifth year of Asa's reign.

Yisrael comes to invade Yehudah · Both kingdoms[56]

16:1 In the thirty-sixth year of King Asa's reign, Yisrael's (Israel's) king Baesha invaded Yehudah (Judah) and built Ramah to prevent anyone from leaving or en-

56 RV 16:1 · Parallel 1 Kgs 15:17-22

tering the land controlled by Yehudah's King Asa. 2 Asa took gold and silver from the temple treasuries and the king's palace, and he sent it to King Ben-Hadad of Aram (Syria) (modern Aram), who lived in Damesek (Damascus), requesting, 3 "I want a peace treaty between you and me, and between your family and mine. Listen, I've sent gold and silver to you. Go and break your agreement with Yisrael's King Baesha, so he'll give up on his attack against me."

4 Ben-Hadad accepted King Asa's suggestion and sent his army captains to fight against Yisrael's cities. They struck Iyon, Dan, and Avel-Mayim, and all the storehouses in the Naftali (Naphtali) cities. 5 When King Baesha heard about that, he stopped fortifying Ramah and abandoned the project, 6 so King Asa took men there from Yehudah. They carried away all the building stones from Ramah, along with the timber which Baesha had been using, and used it all to build Geva and Mitspah (north of Yerushalem (Jerusalem)).

Hanani's prophecy about coming wars · Southern kingdom

7 At that time, the prophet Hanani went to Yehudah's (Judah's) King Asa and told him, "Because you relied on the king of Aram (Syria) rather than on your god Yahweh, the Aramean king's army has escaped from being defeated by you. 8 Didn't the Kushim and the Luvim (Libyans) have a vast number of chariots and horsemen? Yet because you relied on Yahweh, he helped you defeat them, 9 because Yahweh sees everything that's happening all over the world, and he strengthens the people who trust him completely. You've been foolish in what you've just done, so from now on, you'll be facing wars." 10 But King Asa was angry at the prophet, very angry, and had him put in prison, and after that Asa oppressed some of his people.

The end of Asa's reign · Southern kingdom[57]

11 All of Asa's projects from the beginning of his reign to the end are written in the scroll about the kings of Yehudah (Judah) and Yisrael (Israel). 12 King Asa got a disease that started in his feet in the thirty-ninth year of his reign. Even as it got worse, he didn't try to get Yahweh to help him, only doctors. 13 Then Asa died in the forty-first year of his reign, 14 and he was buried in the tomb that he'd had carved out in 'The City of David'. They laid his corpse on a bed of prepared spices and perfumes that had been mixed ready. Then they lit a large bonfire in his honour.

Yehoshafat becomes king · Southern kingdom

17:1 Then Asa's son Yehoshafat (Jehoshaphat) replaced him as king, and he strengthened their defenses against Yisrael (Israel). 2 He placed troops in all of Yehudah's (Judah's) fortified cities, and posted garrisons across Yehudah and in the cities in Efrayim (Ephraim) that his father Asa had captured. 3 Yahweh helped Yehoshafat because he followed his ancestor David's example at the beginning, and didn't ask the Baals for guidance, 4 because he asked his father's god, and he followed God's instructions rather than doing the evil things that were done in Yisrael. 5 So Yahweh enabled him to maintain control of his kingdom, and all of Yehudah brought tribute to Yehoshafat, causing him to become very wealthy and highly respected. 6 He was completely devoted to doing what pleased Yahweh, even removing the hilltop shrines and the Asherah poles from Yehudah.

7 In the third year of his reign he sent his officials, Ben-Hayil, Ovadyah (Obadiah), Zekaryah (Zechariah), Netanel, and Mikayah, to teach in Yehudah's cities. 8 They were accompanied by the Levites Shemayah, Netanyah, Zevadyah, Asahel, Shemiramot, Yonatan (Jonathan), Adoniyah, Toviyah, and Tov-Adoniyah, along with two priests, Elishama and Yehoram (Jehoram). 9 They took a scroll with Yahweh's instructions written on it, and went around Yehudah's cities teaching the people.

Yehoshafat's rise · Southern kingdom

10 All the surrounding kingdoms were afraid of Yahweh, so they didn't attack Yehoshafat (Je-

57 **RV 16:11 · Parallel** 1 Kgs 15:23-24

Readers' Version

hoshaphat). **11** Some of the Pelishtim brought tribute to Yehoshafat, including lots of silver. Also, the Aravim brought him flocks totalling 7,700 rams and 7,700 goats. **12** So Yehoshafat continued to become more powerful, and he built palaces in Yehudah (Judah), as well as storehouses in the cities. **13** He accumulated many supplies in Yehudah's cities.

He also had many powerful warriors in Yerushalem (Jerusalem). **14** These are the leaders and numbers from each tribe:

From the tribe of Yehudah, Adnah was the commander, and he had three-hundred thousand warriors,

15 His assistant Yehohanan commanded 280,000,

16 Next was Zikri's son Amasyah, who volunteered for Yahweh and commanded two-hundred thousand warriors.

17 From the tribe of Benyamin, Elyada led two-hundred thousand men equipped with bows and shields,

18 next to him was Yehozavad with 180,000 equipped for war.

19 Those were the ones who served the king, along with the ones the king had placed in Yehudah's (Judah's) fortified cities.

prophet Mikiyas and King Ahav · Both kingdoms[58]

18:1 King Yehoshafat (Jehoshaphat) became very wealthy, and was highly honoured, but then he allied himself by marriage to Yisrael's (Israel's) King Ahav. **2** Some years later, he went up to Ahav in Shomron (Samaria), and Ahav sacrificed lots of sheep and cattle for him and for the people who were with him, and he incited him to attack Ramot-Gilead— **3** Yisrael's King Ahav suggested to Yehudah's (Judah's) King Yehoshafat, "Will you join me to attack Ramot-Gilead?"

"Wherever you'll be, I'll be there," he responded. "Your people are like my own people, and we're with you in battle." **4** Then he added, "But we should get Yahweh's advice first."

5 So Yisrael's king gathered four hundred of his prophets and asked them, "Should we attack Ramot-Gilead or not?"

"Go ahead," they answered, "and God will give victory to the king."

6 But Yehoshafat asked, "Is there no prophet of Yahweh here that we can ask?"

7 Yisrael's king told Yehoshafat, "There's still one man who would ask Yahweh, but personally I hate him because he never prophesies anything good about me—it's always something evil. He's Yimla's son, Mikayah."

"You shouldn't talk like that," said Yehoshafat.

8 So Yisrael's king ordered an official, "Get Yimla's son Mikayah here as quick as possible."

9 Now the kings of Yisrael and Yehudah (Judah) were both clothed in their royal robes and sitting there on their thrones near Shomron's (Samaria's) entrance gate. They were up on a threshing floor, and all the prophets were prophesying in front of them. **10** Kena'anah's son Tsidkiyah (Zedekiah) made himself some iron horns and said, "Yahweh says you'll use these to gore Aram (Syria) and destroy them." **11** All the rest of Ahav's prophets agreed, saying, "Yes, go and attack Ramot-Gilead and you'll succeed—Yahweh will give the king victory."

12 The messenger who went to fetch Mikayah warned him, "Listen, the king is pleased with what the other prophets agreed on. Just say the same as them and give a favourable message."

13 But Mikayah responded, "As sure as Yahweh lives, I'll only say what my god tells me to say."

14 When he got to the king, King Ahav asked him, "Mikah, should we attack Ramot-Gilead for battle, or should I hold back?"

"Go ahead and succeed," he answered. "You'll be given victory over them."

15 But the king said to him, "How many times must I keep making you promise that you'll only say what Yahweh says—not just what I want to hear?" **16** So Mikayah responded, "I saw all of Yisrael (Israel) scattered on the hills like

58 RV 18:1 · Parallel 1 Kgs 22:1-28

Readers' Version

sheep without shepherds,[59] and Yahweh said,
'They don't have any master, so they'll all just
go home in peace.' "
17 Ahav remarked to Yehoshafat (Je-
hoshaphat), "Didn't I tell you that he wouldn't
prophesy anything good about me—only disas-
ter?"
18 But Mikayah continued, "Well, listen to
what Yahweh says. I saw Yahweh sitting on his
throne, and all the heavenly soldiers standing
on each side of him, 19 and Yahweh said, 'Who'll
entice Yisrael's King Ahav so he'll attack and
then die at Ramot-Gilead?' Some suggested one
thing, and others suggested something else.
20 Then a spirit went out and stood in front of
Yahweh and said, 'I myself will entice him.'
'How would you do it?' Yahweh asked him.
21 The spirit replied, 'I'll go and inspire all of
Ahav's prophets to tell lies.' Yahweh said,
'That'll work. Go and do it.'
22 "So now, listen. Yahweh placed a deceiving
spirit in the mouths of those prophets of yours,
and Yahweh has decreed that you'll face disas-
ter."
23 Then Kena'anah's son Tsidkiyah (Zedekiah)
went up to Mikayah and slapped him hard on
the cheek, saying, "Yeah? Since when did Yah-
weh's spirit leave me and start speaking to
you?"
24 "Well, you'll find out soon," answered
Mikayah, "on the day when you go room by
room in some house to try to hide."
25 "Arrest Mikayah," ordered King Ahav, "and
return him to Amon the city governor, and to
my son Yoash. 26 Tell them that the king's or-
dered that this man be put in prison, and be
given only strictly-rationed bread and water
until I return safely."
27 "If you return safely," Mikayah retorted,
"then Yahweh mustn't have spoken to me."

The death of Ahav · Both kingdoms[60]

28 So Yisrael's (Israel's) King Ahav and Yehudah's (Judah's) king Yehoshafat (Jehoshaphat) went to Ramot-Gilead. 29 Ahav told Yehoshafat, "I'll get changed, so I'm not recognised, and go into the battle, but you wear your royal robe." So Yisrael's king disguised himself, and they went into the battle.
30 Meanwhile, Aram's (Syria's) king had ordered his chariot commanders, "Only attack Yisrael's king—don't bother fighting anyone else." 31 However, when those chariot commanders saw King Yehoshafat, they mistook him for Yisrael's king, and wheeled around to fight him, but Yehoshafat cried out to Yahweh for help, and he helped him—God drew them away from him, 32 because when the chariot commanders realised that it wasn't Yisrael's king, they turned back from chasing him. 33 However, one Aramean warrior drew his bow without knowing where Ahav was, and struck Yisrael's king at a joint in his armour. Ahav ordered the charioteer, "Turn around and get me out of here, because I've been seriously wounded." 34 The battle continued for the whole day, and Yisrael's king was propped up in his chariot to watch the Arameans, but he died as the sun was setting.

Yehoshafat gets scolded · Southern kingdom

19:1 Yehudah's (Judah's) king Yehoshafat (Jehoshaphat) returned safely to his home in Yerushalem (Jerusalem), 2 but Hanani's son, the prophet Yehu (Jehu), confronted him, "Should you have helped the wicked, and befriended those that Yahweh hates? Yahweh's angry with you because of what you've done. 3 However, you have some good points, because you removed the Asherah poles from the country, and you've been sincere in wanting to follow God."

The neneyimu of Hihusapat

4 Yehoshafat (Jehoshaphat) lived in Yerushalem (Jerusalem), but one time he went out to the people of Be'er-Sheva (Beersheba) in the Efrayim (Ephraim) hill country and encouraged them back to Yahweh, their ancestors' god. 5 He appointed judges in Yehudah's (Judah's) fortified cities to serve across the coun-

59 **RV 18:16 · Cross-ref.** Num 27:17; Eze 34:5; Mat 9:36; Mrk 6:34.
60 **RV 18:28 · Parallel** 1 Kgs 22:29-35

Readers' Version

try, 6 and he told them, "Take care in what you do, because as judges, you're not serving people, but serving Yahweh when you make judicial decisions. 7 So revere Yahweh and judge cases carefully, because our god Yahweh doesn't tolerate injustice, partiality, or bribery."

8 Yehoshafat also appointed some Levites and priests in Yerushalem, as well as leaders from some Israeli families, to be judges on Yahweh's behalf based in Yerushalem, 9 and he instructed them, "You must revere Yahweh and be trustworthy and sincere. 10 When any of your fellow Israelis who live in the cities bring any case to you involving violent crime, or interpreting laws or regulations, and so on, you must caution them so they won't sin against Yahweh and induce his anger to come against you or them, so do that, and you won't be guilty. 11 And listen, the chief priest Amaryah is superior to you judges in any religious matter, and Yishmael's (Ishmael's) son Zevadyah is Yehudah's leader for any civil matter concerning the king. Also, you have the Levite officials to assist you judges. Act with courage, and let Yahweh assist people who are doing what's right."

Yehoshafat handles a massive invasion · Southern kingdom

20:1 Sometime after that, the Moavim and Amonim, along with some of the Meunim,[61] came to battle against King Yehoshafat (Jehoshaphat). 2 Some men came and told Yehoshafat, "A huge army is coming from Aram (Syria) beyond the Dead Sea to attack you, and take note: they're already in Hatsatson-Tamar, also known as Eyn-Gedi." 3 Yehoshafat was alarmed and decided to request advice from Yahweh, and he ordered that all of Yehudah (Judah) should fast. 4 So Yehudah assembled to request Yahweh's help—they came to Yerushalem (Jerusalem) from all of Yehudah's cities to ask Yahweh for help.

5 Yehoshafat stood in front of all the people from Yerushalem and across Yehudah, in front of the new temple courtyard, 6 and prayed, "Yahweh, the god of our ancestors, aren't you the god who lives in the heavens? And you rule in all the kingdoms around the world, and you have full power and control—no one can stand against you. 7 Weren't you our god who drove the previous inhabitants of this land out ahead of your Israeli people? Didn't you give it to the descendants of Avraham—the one you loved forever?[62] 8 Our ancestors lived in this land and built a temple to honour you, saying, 9 'If disaster, like war, judgement, epidemic, or famine comes on us, we'll stand in front of this temple, and in front of you, because your name is honoured here. And we'll cry to you because of our distress, and you'll hear and rescue us.'

10 You didn't allow our Israeli ancestors to enter the countries of Amon, Moav (Moab), or Edom when they were travelling from Mitsrayim (Egypt) to Kena'an (Canaan). So our ancestors turned away from those areas and didn't destroy them,[63] but now they're coming here to attack us. 11 Look how they're repaying us for not destroying them—they come here to drive us out from the land you gave us as an inheritance. 12 So, our god, please punish them, because we're not strong enough to battle this huge army that's on its way. We simply don't know what to do, so we're looking to you to rescue us."

13 At that time, all of Yehudah (Judah) (men, women, and children) were standing in front of Yahweh, 14 and Yahweh's spirit came on Yahaziel. (Yahaziel was the son of Zekaryah (Zechariah), son of Benayah, son of Yeiel, son of Matanyah the Levite, and a descendant of Asaf.) In the middle of the assembly 15 he said, "Pay attention, all of Yehudah, inhabitants of Yerushalem, and King Yehoshafat. Yahweh has this to say to you all, 'Don't be afraid, and don't be dismayed by this huge force, because it's not your battle, but God's.[64] 16 Tomorrow, go down

61 **RV 20:1 · Note** Following the Septuagint for this.

62 **RV 20:7 · Cross-ref.** Isa 41:8; Jam 2:23.

63 **RV 20:10 · Cross-ref.** Deu 2:4-19.

64 **RV 20:15-17 · Cross-ref.** Deu 20:1-4.

Readers' Version

against them. Listen, they're coming uphill near the Ascent of Tsits, and you'll find them at the end of the valley, facing the Yeruel wilderness. **17** You won't need to fight them—just take your positions, people from Yerushalem and wider Yehudah, and watch Yahweh save you.[65] Don't be afraid or discouraged. Go out there tomorrow and Yahweh will be with you.' "

18 Then King Yehoshafat (Jehoshaphat) bowed with his face to the ground, and all the people from Yerushalem (Jerusalem) and across Yehudah fell to their knees in front of Yahweh to worship him. **19** Then some of the Levites who were descendants of Kohat and Korah stood up to loudly praise Yisrael's (Israel's) god Yahweh.

20 They rose early the next morning and went out to the Tekoa wilderness, and as they were leaving, Yehoshafat stood and called out, "Hear me, inhabitants of Yerushalem and Yehudah. Believe in our god Yahweh, and be confident. Believe his prophets and succeed." **21** Then he consulted with the people, and he appointed some to sing to Yahweh and some to praise him for his splendour and sinlessness as they went out in front of the enemy army, and they were saying, "Give thanks to Yahweh, because his loyal commitment endures forever."

22 As they began to sing and praise Yahweh, he sent ambushers against the Amonim, Moavim, and Edomim who were attacking Yehudah, and they were defeated. **23** Then the Amonim and Moavim turned on the Edomim and completely annihilated them, and after that they slaughtered each other. **24** When Yehudah's men arrived at the place overlooking the wilderness, wow, they saw corpses all over the ground. No one had escaped.

25 Then Yehoshafat and his people went to plunder the spoils, and they found lots of goods among them, as well as clothing,[66] and valuable items. They took that for themselves until there was nothing left to carry away—there was so much plunder that it took three days to collect it all. **26** On the fourth day, they assembled in Berakah Valley and praised Yahweh there. That's why it's called Berakah Valley (which means 'praise/blessing') to this day. **27** Then all the men from Yerushalem and across Yehudah returned to Yerushalem with King Yehoshafat leading them—celebrating because Yahweh had enabled them to defeat their enemies. **28** When they arrived at Yerushalem, they went to the temple, playing harps, lutes, and trumpets. **29** The nearby kingdoms were all very afraid of God when they heard that Yahweh had fought against Yisrael's (Israel's) enemies, **30** so Yehoshafat's kingdom was untroubled, and his god gave him peace from all his neighbours.

The end of Yehoshafat's kingdom · Southern kingdom[67]

31 Yehoshafat (Jehoshaphat) was thirty-five years old when he became king, and he reigned over Yehudah (Judah) from Yerushalem (Jerusalem) for twenty-five years. His mother was Shilhi's daughter, Azuvah. **32** He had similar priorities to his father Asa, doing what pleased Yahweh, and he didn't deviate from that. **33** However, he never removed the hilltop shrines, and the people weren't really serious about obeying their ancestors' god.

34 Everything else that Yehoshafat did, from the beginning to the end of his reign, was written down by Hanani's son Yehu (Jehu) in the scroll about Yisrael's (Israel's) kings.

35 Later on, Yehudah's King Yehoshafat made an alliance with Yisrael's King Ahazyah (which was a wicked thing to do), **36** and they worked together to make ships at Etsyon-Gever to sail to Tarshish. **37** Then Dodavahu's son Eliezer from Mareshah prophesied against Yehoshafat, saying, "When you allied yourself with Ahazyah, Yahweh destroyed what you created." In due course, the ships were damaged and unable to sail to Tarshish.

21:1 Then Yehoshafat died and was buried with his ancestors in 'The City of David', and

65 RV 20:17 · Cross-ref. Exo 14:13-14.

66 RV 20:25 · Note The Hebrew 'bodies/corpses' seems wrong here.

67 RV 20:31 · Parallel 1 Kgs 22:41-50

Readers' Version

his son Yehoram (Jehoram) replaced him as king.

Yehudah's King Yehoram · Southern kingdom[68]

2 Yehoram's (Jehoram's) younger brothers were Azaryah, Yehiel, Zekaryah (Zechariah), Azaryah, Mika'el (Michael), and Shefatyah, **3** and their father gave them many gifts of gold and silver and precious things, along with fortified cities in Yehudah (Judah), however he handed the kingdom over to Yehoram because he was the oldest son. **4** After Yehoram established firm control of his father's kingdom, he had all his brothers killed, as well as some of Yisrael's (Israel's) leaders.

5 Yehoram was thirty-two years old when he became the king, and he ruled from Yerushalem (Jerusalem) for eight years. **6** He did many of the evil things that Yisrael's kings had done, because he married one of King Ahav's daughters and did things that Yahweh had said were evil. **7** Despite that, Yahweh wouldn't eliminate David's descendants, because of the promise he'd made with David to 'keep his lamp burning' forever.[69]

8 Meanwhile, Edom had been under Yehudah's control, but during Yehoram's reign they rebelled and appointed their own king.[70] **9** Yehoram took his commanders and all his chariots, and crossed the Yarden (Jordan) River, then at nighttime he attacked the Edomim who'd surrounded him and his chariots.[71] **10** However, Edom successfully rebelled against Yehudah's control, then Livnah also did the same, because Yehoram had abandoned Yahweh, his ancestors' god. **11** He also built hilltop shrines around Yehudah, and he caused Yerushalem's inhabitants to prostitute themselves,[72] and he drove Yehudah away from Yahweh.

12 Then King Yehoram received a written message from the prophet Eliyah (Elijah): "Your father David's god Yahweh says that you decided not to follow your father Yehoshafat's (Jehoshaphat's) example, or good King Asa's, **13** but rather you imitated the behaviour of Yisrael's (Israel's) king, so because of that, you've caused Yerushalem's inhabitants, as well as wider Yehudah, to commit adultery like Ahav's family did. Also, you've killed your own blood brothers—people who were better than you. **14** So listen, now Yahweh is going to severely afflict your people, including your sons and your wives, as well as all your possessions, **15** and you yourself will get an intestinal disease that'll get worse every day until your innards fall out."

16 Then Yahweh stirred the Pelishtim up against Yehoram, as well as the Arabs who lived beside the Kushim, **17** and they attacked Yehudah. They did a lot of damage and took away everything valuable from the king's palace. They also took his wives and sons, other than Yehoahaz, his youngest son.

18 After that, Yahweh caused an intestinal disease in Yehoram that couldn't be cured, **19** and it progressed day after day until, after two years, his intestines fell out, and he died in a lot of pain. His people didn't make a bonfire in his honour like they'd done for his ancestors.

20 Yehoram was thirty-two when he became king, and he ruled from Yerushalem (Jerusalem) for eight years. No one regretted it when he died, and his body was buried in 'The City of David', but not in the royal tombs.

Yehudah's king Ahazyah · Both kingdoms[73]

22:1 The inhabitants of Yerushalem (Jerusalem) made his youngest son

68 RV 21:2 · Parallel 2 Kgs 8:17-24

69 RV 21:7 · Cross-ref. 1Ki 11:36.

70 RV 21:8 · Cross-ref. Gen 27:40.

71 RV 21:9 · Note The meaning of the second half of this sentence is confusing, so other translations might differ.

72 RV 21:11 · Note This sentence is about worship, not physical adultery, so the reference to prostitution most likely refers to idol worship. Also see verse 13 below.

73 RV 22:1 · Parallel 2 Kgs 8:25-29; 9:21-28

Readers' Version

Ahazyah[74] king in his place, because all his older brothers had been killed by the Aravi invaders. So Yehoram's (Jehoram's) son Ahazyah reigned as Yehudah's (Judah's) king. **2** He was twenty-two[75] when he became king, and he reigned from Yerushalem for one year. His mother was Atalyah (Athaliah), a granddaughter of Yisrael's (Israel's) King Omri. **3** King Ahazyah behaved just like King Ahav's family had done, because his mother gave him evil advice, **4** so he did what Yahweh had said was evil, just like Ahav's family, because after his father's death, they'd become Ahazyah's advisors, giving destructive suggestions. **5** He followed their advice and joined King Yehoram (son of Yisrael's King Ahav) to fight against Aram's (Syria's) King Hazael at Ramot-Gilead, where Yehoram was wounded by the Arameans. **6** Yehoram returned to Yizre'el (Jezreel) to recover, because he'd been wounded at Ramah in the battle against Aram's King Hazael. So Yehudah's King Ahazyah went up to Yizre'el to see Yehoram.

7 God caused Ahazyah's downfall through his visit to Yoram (Joram). When Ahazyah arrived, he went with Yehoram to meet Nimshi's son Yehu (Jehu), who Yahweh had appointed to kill all of Ahav's descendants. **8** While Yehu was executing judgement on Ahav's descendants, he discovered Yehudah's officials there, including Ahazyah's nephews who'd been serving him, and he killed all of them as well. **9** Then Yehu went searching for Ahazyah and found him hiding in Shomron (Samaria) city. They captured him and took him to Yehu, and killed him. They did bury him, because they said, "He was the grandson of King Yehoshafat (Jehoshaphat) who tried hard to please Yahweh." After that, there were no descendants of Ahazyah who were powerful enough to become Yehudah's king.

Yehudah's queen Atalyah · Southern kingdom[76]

10 When Ahazyah's mother Atalyah (Athaliah) found out that her son had died, she took action and destroyed all his family members who could become king of Yehudah (Judah). **11** However, a princess named Yehoshav'at took Ahazyah's son Yoash, and she sneaked him away from among the king's sons who were about to be killed, and she hid him and his nurse in a bedroom. Yehoshav'at was the daughter of the late King Yehoram (Jehoram) and the wife of Yehoyada the priest (she was Ahazyah's sister), and she hid Yoash from Atalyah so she couldn't kill him. **12** He stayed in hiding with them in the temple for six years while Atalyah ruled over Yehudah.

Revolt against queen Atalyah · Southern kingdom[77]

23:1 The following year, the priest Yehoyada took courage and made an agreement with the commanders of units of a hundred soldiers: Azaryah (Yehoram's (Jehoram's) son), Yishmael (Ishmael) (Yehohanan's son), another Azaryah (Oved's son), Ma'aseyah (Adayah's son), and Elishafat (Zikri's son). **2** They went throughout Yehudah (Judah) and gathered all the Levites and the clan leaders from all the cities. When they came to Yerushalem (Jerusalem), **3** the whole assembly made an agreement with the young king in the temple, and Yehoyada told them, "Listen, the late king's son will reign, just as Yahweh said about David's descendants.[78] **4** Now this is what you need to do: one third of you priests and Levites who are on duty on the Rest Day must guard the temple entrances. **5** Another third of you must guard the king's palace, and the final third guard the Foundation Gate and all the people in the temple courtyard. **6** Don't let anyone enter Yahweh's temple other than the

74 RV 22:1 · Note Called Yehoahaz in 21:17 above. (Replace 'Yeho' at the front with 'Yah' at the end—the meaning 'Yahweh has held' remains the same.)

75 RV 22:2 · Note The Hebrew has forty-two here, but we've corrected it from 2 Kgs 8:26.

76 RV 22:10 · Parallel 2 Kgs 11:1-3

77 RV 23:1 · Parallel 2 Kgs 11:4-16

78 RV 23:3 · Cross-ref. 2Sam 7:12.

Readers' Version

priests and the Levites who are on duty, because they're consecrated. Every one else must respect Yahweh's instructions not to enter.
7 You Levites must be armed and surround the young king. You must kill anyone else who tries to enter the temple, but stay close to the king wherever he goes.

8 So the Levites and the other people did everything Yehoyada the priest had instructed. Each leader took his men, both those starting duty on the Rest Day, as well as the others finishing their duties that day, because Yehoyada didn't dismiss any of the groups. **9** Then Yehoyada the priest gave each of those commanders the spears, and the large and small shields which had been put in the temple by King David. **10** He stationed all the people, each one holding their weapon, right across the end of the temple, around the altar and the temple, and all around the king. **11** Then they brought out young Yoash, put a crown on his head, gave him a scroll with the agreement on it, and proclaimed him as king. Then Yehoyada and his sons anointed him with olive oil and shouted, "Long live the king!"

12 When Atalyah (Athaliah) heard the sound of people running, and people praising the king, she went to the temple **13** to look, and wow, the young king was standing where previous kings had stood by the pillar at the temple entrance, with the commanders and trumpeters beside him. The people were all cheering and blowing trumpets, and singers with instruments were leading the praise. Then Atalyah tore her robe and shouted out, "Treason! Treason!"

14 Then Yehoyada the priest instructed the commanders, "Kill her, but not here at Yahweh's temple. March her outside and kill anyone who sticks up for her."

15 They seized her as she reached the Horse Gate in front of the palace and killed her there.

Yehoyada leads back to Yahweh · Southern kingdom[79]

16 Then Yehoyada the priest got the people to formally agree that they and the king would be loyal to Yahweh, **17** so all the people went to Ba'al's temple and tore it down. They smashed its altars and idols, and killed Ba'al's priest Matan in front of the altars. **18** Then Yehoyada created the roster for the temple duties of the priests and Levites that King David had previously assigned, including offering burnt offerings to Yahweh with happiness and singing, following Mosheh's (Moses') written instructions. **19** He also stationed guards at the temple gates so that no one could enter if they were ceremonially 'unclean'.

20 Then Yehoyada took those commanders, and the leading citizens and leaders, and all the people, and they brought the king out of the temple and down into the palace through the Upper Gate, and sat him on the royal throne. **21** Then all of Yehudah's (Judah's) people celebrated, and then the city was peaceful and quiet, as Atalyah (Athaliah) had been put to death with a sword.

Yehudah's king Yoash · Southern kingdom[80]

24:1 Yoash was seven years old when he became Yehudah's (Judah's) king, and he reigned from Yerushalem (Jerusalem) for forty years. His mother was Tsivyah from Be'er-Sheva (Beersheba). **2** Yoash did what pleased Yahweh throughout the lifetime of Yehoyada the priest. **3** Yehoyada procured two wives for him, and they bore him sons and daughters.

4 Sometime later, Yoash decided it would be good to repair Yahweh's residence, **5** and he gathered the priests and Levites, and told them, "Go out to Yehudah's cities and collect enough money across the country to renovate God's house in the next few years. Make this a priority." But the Levites didn't get on to it, **6** so the king summoned Yehoyada and demanded, "Why haven't you followed up on sending the Levites throughout Yerushalem and across

79 RV 23:16 · Parallel 2 Kgs 11:17-20
80 RV 24:1 · Parallel 2 Kgs 12:1-16

Readers' Version

Yehudah to collect the annual tax instituted by Yahweh's servant Mosheh (Moses) for the people to contribute to the costs of the sacred tent?"[81]

7 (The wicked Atalyah's (Athaliah's) people had previously broken into Yahweh's residence and taken some of the sacred items from Yahweh's temple to use for Ba'al worship.)

8 The king ordered that a chest be made and placed outside the main temple entrance. 9 They made an announcement in Yerushalem and throughout Yehudah that people were to bring to Yahweh the tax that was instituted by God's servant Mosheh when they were still in the wilderness. 10 All the officials and the people agreed with this policy, so they brought their contributions and dropped them into the chest until it filled up. 11 Every day, when the Levites who'd been given oversight over the chest by the king saw that it was full, they'd fetch one of the king's secretaries along with one of the head priest's officials, and they'd empty the box and return it to its place, so they amassed a large sum of money.

12 The king and Yehoyada the priest gave the collected funds to the people who worked on the temple renovations. They used them to hire stone-workers and carpenters to restore the temple building, as well as for iron and bronze craftsmen. 13 So they started on the work, and the temple restoration went ahead. They rebuilt the temple following its original specifications, and strengthened it. 14 Whey they'd finished, they brought the remainder of the funds back to the king and Yehoyada, and they made items for the temple, items used in ministry and for burnt offerings, and dishes and gold and silver items. During Yehoyada's time, they were offering regular burnt sacrifices in Yahweh's temple.

15 By then, Yehoyada was getting old, and he died at the age of 130, 16 and they buried him with the kings in 'The City of David', because he'd done so much good for Yisrael (Israel), and for God and his temple.

17 After Yehoyada's death, Yehudah's (Judah's) leaders went to young King Yoash and declared their loyalty to him, and he listened to them. 18 Then they abandoned the temple of their ancestors' god Yahweh, and they worshipped the Asherah poles and idols, and God was angry at Yerushalem (Jerusalem) and Yehudah because of their disobedience. 19 He sent prophets to tell them to return back to him, and although they warned the people, the people didn't take any notice.

20 Then God's spirit enveloped Zekaryah (Zechariah), the son of Yehoyada the priest,[82] and he stood up and told the people, "God asks why you people are violating his commands. Because you abandoned Yahweh, he's abandoned you people." 21 However, the people conspired against Zekaryah, and the king ordered him to be executed by stoning him in the temple courtyard. 22 King Yoash disregarded the loyal commitment that Yehoyada had shown to his father, and killed his son. As Zekaryah was dying, he said, "Yahweh will see this and find a way to avenge."

23 Around the end of the year, the Aramean army attacked Yehudah and Yerushalem, and killed all the people's leaders. They sent all their plunder back to their king in Damesek (Damascus). 24 Actually, the Arameans only had a smallish army, but Yahweh allowed them to defeat the much larger army from Yehudah and bring punishment to King Yoash, because they'd abandoned Yahweh, their ancestors' god. 25 When they withdrew, they left Yoash with severe wounds, and then his servants conspired against him because he'd killed the son of the priest Yehoyada. So they killed him in his bed, and although they buried him in 'The City of David', he wasn't buried with the other kings. 26 The ones who'd conspired to kill him were: Zavad (a son of the Amoni woman Shim'at) and Yehozavad (a son of the Moavi woman Shimrit).

81 **RV 24:6 · Cross-ref.** Exo 30:11-16.

82 **RV 24:20-21 · Cross-ref.** Mat 23:35; Luk 11:51.

Readers' Version

27 The list of King Yoash's sons, the many
prophecies concerning him, and his renovations of the temple, are all written on 'The
Scroll of the Kings'. His son Amatsyah replaced
him as king.

Yehudah's King Amatsyah · Southern kingdom[83]

25:1 Amatsyah was
twenty-five when he became Yehudah's (Judah's) king, and he reigned from Yerushalem
(Jerusalem) for twenty-nine years. His mother
was Yeho'adin from Yerushalem. 2 He mostly
followed Yahweh's instructions, but not
whole-heartedly.

3 Once his rule was established, he killed
those of his servants who'd assassinated his father Yoash. 4 However, he didn't order their
sons to be executed, because he obeyed Yahweh's instructions that had been written down
by Mosheh (Moses), "Parents mustn't die because of what their children did, and children
mustn't die because of what their parents did,
but each individual should be punished for
their own disobedience."[84]

5 Then Amatsyah summoned Yehudah's men
and appointed some, clan by clan, to be leaders
of hundreds and of thousands, for all of Yehudah and Benyamin. They counted three-hundred thousand men who were twenty and over,
and suitable for fighting with a spear and
shield. 6 He also hired a hundred thousand
powerful warriors from Yisrael (Israel) for
three tonnes of silver.

7 However, a man of God came and told him,
"Your majesty, don't let Yisrael's soldiers go
with you, because Yahweh isn't with Yisrael—those people of Yisrael (Israel; Heb.
Efrayim).[85] 8 Even if you go and fight courageously in battle, God will cause you to be defeated by the enemy, because God has the
power to help and the power to overthrow."

9 "So what should I do about all the silver that
I've already paid to the troops from Yisrael?"
Amatsyah asked.

"Yahweh can do much more for you than
that," God's man replied.

10 So King Amatsyah told the troops from Yisrael to go home again, but they were extremely
angry with Yehudah, and they got home still
feeling furious.

11 Then Amatsyah took courage and led his
army out to the Salt Valley, where they slaughtered ten thousand Edomi soldiers. 12 Yehudah
rounded up another ten thousand and herded
them to the top of a cliff, where they drove
them over to kill them.

13 However, during that time, the warriors
that Amatsyah had sent back to Yisrael raided
Yehudah's cities all the way from Shomron
(Samaria) to Beyt-Horon. They'd killed three
thousand people and taken back a large amount
of plunder.

Amatsyah worships false gods · Southern kingdom

14 After King Amatsyah
returned from fighting
the Edomim, he brought
back their idols and set them up to be his
gods—bowing down to them and offering sacrifices. 15 That made Yahweh very angry at Amatsyah, and he sent a prophet to tell him, "Why
did you want those gods who weren't even able
to save their own people from your army?"

16 While he was still speaking, the king
snapped at him, "Who asked you to be my
counsellor? Stop right this minute or they'll
strike you down!"

So the prophet stopped talking, but then he
added, "I know that God has decided to destroy
you because you've done that, and because you
didn't listen to my advice."

Yehudah brings trouble on itself · Both kingdoms

17 Some time later,
Yehudah's (Judah's) King
Amatsyah consulted his
advisors, then sent a challenge to Yisrael's (Israel's) King Yoash (son of Yehoahaz, son of
Yehu (Jehu)), "Let's face each other on the bat-

83 RV 25:1 · Parallel 2 Kgs 14:2-6

84 RV 25:4 · Cross-ref. Deu 24:16.

85 RV 25:7 · Note The northern kingdom of Yisrael also came to be known as 'Efrayim' (similar how the area of the tribes of Yehudah and Benyamin (plus others who moved in—see 11:16) became known as 'Yehudah').

Readers' Version

tlefield." 18 But Yisrael's King Yoash replied, "A thistle in Levanon sent a message to a cedar in Levanon, saying, 'Give your daughter to my son for a wife,' but some random animal passed through the Lebanese countryside and trampled the thistle. 19 You defeated Edom and now it's gone to your head. So stay in your chair at home and don't get over-excited, otherwise both you and Yehudah will be toppled."

20 But King Amatsyah took no notice, because God was planning for him to be defeated for worshipping Edom's gods. 21 So Yisrael's King Yoash advanced, and the two armies faced each other at Beyt-Shemesh (Heliopolis) in Yehudah, 22 and Yehudah was badly defeated by Yisrael, and all their warriors fled back home. 23 Yisrael's King Yoash captured King Amatsyah (son of Yoash, son of Yehoahaz) at Beyt-Shemesh and took him to Yerushalem (Jerusalem). Then he tore down Yerushalem's wall from the Efrayim Gate to the Corner Gate—a section about 180m long. 24 He took back to Shomron (Samaria) all the gold and silver and other valuable items that Oved-Edom had been guarding in the temple, as well as the valuables from the palace and some hostages.

25 After the death of Yisrael's King Yoash (son of Yehoahaz), Yehudah's King Amatsyah lived for a further fifteen years. 26 The account of everything else Amatsyah did was written in the scroll of 'The Kings of Yehudah and Yisrael'. 27 From the time that Amatsyah had turned from following Yahweh, there was a conspiracy to assassinate him in Yerushalem, but he fled to Lakish. However, they traced him to Lakish and killed him there. 28 They used horses to carry his body back to Yerushalem, and he was buried with his ancestors in 'The City of David'.[86]

Yehudah's King Uziyah · Southern kingdom[87]

26:1 Then all the people took sixteen-year-old Uziyah and made him king to replace his father Amatsyah. 2 Uziyah restored Eylot City to Yehudah (Judah) and rebuilt it after his father's death.

3 Uziyah was sixteen when he became king, and he reigned from Yerushalem (Jerusalem) for fifty-two years. His mother was Yekaleyah from Yerushalem. 4 He did the things that Yahweh said were good, like his father Amatsyah had done. 5 He strived to follow God during the lifetime of Zekaryah (Zechariah), who instructed him. During the time that he obeyed Yahweh, God made him successful.

6 Uziyah went to attack the Pelishtim, and successfully broke through the walls at Gat, Yavneh, and Ashdod. He rebuilt Ashdod and other cities in the Peleshet region. 7 God helped him against the Pelishtim, against the Aravim who were living in Gur-Ba'al, and against the Meunim. 8 The Amonim paid tribute to Uziyah, and his fame spread as far as the Mitsri (Egyptian) border because he was becoming more powerful.

9 King Uziyah built fortified towers in Yerushalem at the Corner Gate, the Valley Gate, and at the angle in the wall. 10 He also built towers in the wilderness, and dug a lot of wells, because he had a lot of cattle—both in the lowlands and in the plains. He was also interested in horticulture, so he had workers stationed in his vineyards and in his fertile fields.

11 Uziyah's army was trained for fighting battles, and organised into divisions set up by Yeiel the scribe and the commander Ma'aseyah, under the supervision of Hananyah, one of the king's officials. 12 There were 2,600 clan leaders who led the powerful warriors, 13 and the full force of 37,500 was under their authority, to support the king against his enemies. 14 Uziyah supplied shields, spears, helmets, armoured vests, bows, and slingshots for the entire army. 15 Using a local invention, he made war machines in Yerushalem to be placed on the towers and corners of the walls to fire arrows and large stones. His fame now spread widely because he'd received a lot of help that had made him very powerful.

86 **RV 25:28 · Note** The Hebrew actually has the unusual 'The City of Yehudah' here.

87 **RV 26:1 · Parallel** 2 Kgs 14:21-22; 15:1-7

Readers' Version

16 However, at the peak of his strength, he became very arrogant, and that led to his destruction. He disobeyed his god Yahweh and went into the temple to burn incense on the incense altar. **17** The high priest Azaryah and eighty other brave priests went in after him. **18** They confronted King Uziyah and challenged him, "It's not permitted for you, Uziyah, to sacrifice to Yahweh, only for Aharon's (Aaron's) descendants the priests—the ones consecrated to sacrifice.[88] Leave the sanctuary, because you've disobeyed Yahweh God, so now he won't honour you."

19 Then Uziyah, who was holding an incense pan, became very angry, but when he started raging at the priests, spots of leprosy suddenly appeared on his forehead while he was still there beside the incense altar in front of the priests. **20** The high priest Azaryah looked more closely, and confirming that it was indeed leprosy on his forehead, hurried him outside. The king was now also in a hurry, because Yahweh had afflicted him.

21 King Uziyah had leprosy until he died, so he had to live in an isolated residence and wasn't allowed to approach the temple. His son Yotam (Jotham) stood in for him—supervising the palace and ruling Yehudah (Judah).

22 The record of all the other things Uziyah did while he was king was written by the prophet Yeshayah (Isaiah) (son of Amots). **23** When Uziyah died,[89] because of his leprosy they buried him with his ancestors in a royal grave in the countryside, and his son Yotam replaced him as king.

Yehudah's King Yotam · Southern kingdom[90]

27:1 Yotam (Jotham) was twenty-five when he became king, and he reigned from Yerushalem (Jerusalem) for sixteen years. His mother was Yerusha, daughter of the priest Tsadok. **2** He did the things that Yahweh said were good like his father Uziyah had done (except that he didn't trespass in Yahweh's temple). However, the people were still behaving corruptly.

3 He rebuilt the temple's Upper Gate and extended the Ofel wall. **4** He built cities in the Yehudah (Judah) hill country, and built fortresses and towers in the forests. **5** He attacked the Amonim' king and dominated them. Then for the next three years, the Amonim brought him three tonnes of silver, and 2,000 tonnes each of wheat and barley each year. **6** Yotam became more powerful because he'd established a pattern of obeying his god Yahweh. **7** The record of all the other things Yotam did while he was king, including all his battles, was written on the scroll 'The kings of Yisrael (Israel) and Yehudah'. **8** He was twenty-five when he became king, and he reigned from Yerushalem for sixteen years. **9** Then (at forty-one years old), Yotam died and was buried in 'The City of David', and his son Ahaz replaced him as king.

Yehudah's King Ahaz · Southern kingdom[91]

28:1 Ahaz was twenty-five when he became king, and he reigned from Yerushalem (Jerusalem) for sixteen years, but he didn't do what Yahweh wanted, like his ancestor David had. **2** Instead, he followed the example of Yisrael's (Israel's) kings, including casting metal idols for the Ba'al. **3** He offered incense in the Ben-Hinom valley and he burnt his children with fire,[92] following the detestable customs of the nations that Yahweh had driven away as the Israelis had entered the region, **4** plus he offered sacrifices and burnt incense at the hilltop shrines, and on the hills, and under every large, green tree.

88 RV 26:18 · Cross-ref. Exo 30:7-8; Num 3:10.

89 RV 26:23 · Cross-ref. Isa 6:1.

90 RV 27:1 · Parallel 2 Kgs 15:32-38

91 RV 28:1 · Parallel 2 Kgs 16:1-4

92 RV 28:3 · Note Probably, but not definitely, referring to the practice of child sacrifice.

Readers' Version

War between Aram and Yisrael · Both kingdoms[93]

5 So his god Yahweh allowed King Ahaz to be defeated by Aram's (Syria's) king—they attacked and took many prisoners back to Damesek (Damascus). In addition, Yahweh allowed Yisrael's (Israel's) king to be victorious, and they slaughtered many fighters.[94] 6 Yisrael's King Pekah (Remalyah's son) killed 120,000 powerful warriors in Yehudah (Judah) in one day, after they'd abandoned their ancestors' god. 7 A warrior from Efrayim (Ephraim) named Zikri killed King Ahaz's son Ma'aseyah, Azrikam the palace supervisor, and Elkanah the king's second-in-command. 8 Yisrael's soldiers captured two-hundred thousand of their relatives, including their wives and children. They also took a lot of plunder back to Shomron (Samaria) with them.

The prophet Oded

9 Now there was a prophet of Yahweh named Oded, and he went out to Yisrael's (Israel's) army as it was returning to Shomron (Samaria), and told them, "Listen, your ancestors' god, Yahweh, was angry with Yehudah (Judah), so he helped you defeat them. However, you people killed them in rage, and God has taken notice. 10 Now you want to keep the people of Yerushalem (Jerusalem) and Yehudah as your own male and female slaves, but that would certainly make you people guilty in your god Yahweh's view. 11 So then, listen to me and return those captives, because they're your own relatives, and Yahweh is extremely angry at you people."

12 Then some of the leaders of Yisrael (Israel; Heb. Efrayim) took action and confronted those returning from battle: Azaryah (Yehohanan's son), Berekyah (Meshilemot's son), Yehizkiyah (Shalum's son), and Amasa (Hadlay's son) 13 told the ones returning, "Don't bring those captives here, because that would be disobedience, and add to the rest of our disobedience and wrongdoing, because Yahweh's already angry at us here in Yisrael." 14 So the returning soldiers released the captives in front of the leaders and all the assembled people, and dropped all the plunder there as well. 15 Then some men from Yisrael were called out by name to come and search the plunder to find clothes and dress the naked captives from Yehudah and give them sandals. Then they gave them food and drink, as well as oil to rub on their wounds. They gave donkeys to those who couldn't easily walk, and took them to Yeriho (Jericho) (Yeriho, the Palm City) which was nearer their relatives, then those men returned to Shomron.

16 Around that time, King Ahaz requested help from the Assyrian kings, 17 because the Edomim had been and attacked Yehudah and taken captives. 18 Also the Pelishtim had raided the lowland cities and the Negev, and they'd captured Beyt-Shemesh (Heliopolis), Ayalon, and Gederot, as well as Sokoh, Timnah, and Gimzo with their surrounding villages, 19 because Yahweh was humbling Yehudah because King Ahaz had thrown off restraint there and been very unfaithful to Yahweh. 20 So the Assyrian King Tiglat-Pileser came, but he ended up adding to his troubles rather than helping. 21 Ahaz gave the Assyrian king valuables from the temple and the palace and from other leaders, but that didn't help.

Ahaz's disobedience · Southern kingdom

22 While King Ahaz was experiencing those troubles, he disobeyed Yahweh even more 23 and sacrificed to the gods of Damesek (Damascus) (because Aram (Syria) had defeated him). He reasoned, "Since the gods of the Aramean kings helped them, I'll sacrifice to them, and then they'll help me." However, that led to Ahaz's fall, and to the fall of all of Yehudah (Judah).[95] 24 Then Ahaz gathered all the furnishings that were used in the temple, and broke them into pieces and locked the temple doors. Then he

93 RV 28:5 · Parallel 2 Kgs 16:5

94 RV 28:5-6 · Cross-ref. 2Ki 16:5; Isa 7:1.

95 RV 28:23 · Note Sometimes in 2 Chronicles, Yehudah is referred to as Yisrael, but as that can be confusing for readers, we've made adjustments.

Readers' Version

set up pagan altars at every Yerushalem (Jerusalem) intersection, **25** and in every Yehudah city he set up hilltop shrines to make sacrifices to other gods, thus angering Yahweh, his ancestors' god.

26 The record of all the other things Ahaz did while he was king was written on the scroll 'The kings of Yehudah and Yisrael' (Israel). **27** Then Ahaz died[96] and was buried in 'The City of David', but not in the tombs of the other kings of Yisrael. Then his son Hizkiyah (Hezekiah) replaced him as king.

Purifying the temple · Southern kingdom[97]

29:1 Hizkiyah (Hezekiah) was twenty-five when he became king, and he reigned from Yerushalem (Jerusalem) for twenty-nine years. His mother was Zekaryah's (Zechariah's) daughter Aviyah. **2** He did what pleased Yahweh, like his ancestor King David had done.

3 In the very first month of his reign, he unlocked the temple doors and repaired them. **4** Then he summoned the priests and the Levites, assembled them in the eastern temple courtyard, **5** and told them, "Now you Levites, listen to me. You need to consecrate yourselves now, and consecrate the residence of Yahweh, your ancestors' god, and remove any defilement from the sacred place, **6** because our ancestors were unfaithful and disobeyed our god Yahweh. Then they abandoned him, lost interest in this temple, and turned their back on it all. **7** They extinguished the lamps and locked the temple up. After that, they didn't burn any incense or offer any burnt sacrifices in the sacred place of Yisrael's (Israel's) god. **8** That's why Yahweh was angry at Yerushalem and all of Yehudah (Judah), and allowed us to become a place of terror and horror and scorn, as you've all seen with your own eyes. **9** As a result, our fathers died in battle, and our wives and children have been captured and taken to other countries.

10 Now I sincerely want to make an agreement with Yisrael's god Yahweh, so that his fierce anger will turn away from us. **11** So lads, don't mess around, because Yahweh has chosen you to stand in his presence to serve him, and to be ministering and burning incense.

12 Then these Levites took action:

from the Kohatites: Mahat (Amasay's son) and Yoel (Joel) (Azaryah's son),

from the descendants of Merari: Kish (Avdi's son) and Azaryah (Yehalel'el's son),

from the Gershonim: Yoah (Zimah's son) and Eden (Yoah's son),

13 from Elitsafan's descendants: Shimri and Yeiel,

from Asaf's descendants: Zekaryah (Zechariah) and Matanyah,

14 from Heyman's descendants: Yehiel and Shimei, and

from Yedutun's descendants: Shemayah and Uziel.

15 They assembled their relatives and consecrated themselves, then they entered the temple to purify it, as the king had ordered as a result of Yahweh's message. **16** The priests entered the inner part of the temple to purify it, and they took everything they found that shouldn't be in there and brought it out to the temple courtyard, and then the Levites took it all out to be burnt, down in the Kidron valley.

17 They began the purification at the beginning of March and worked outwards, reaching the porch by the eighth, and then it took eight more days for the courtyard, so they finished on the sixteenth.

18 Then they reported to King Hizkiyah (Hezekiah), "We've purified the whole of Yahweh's temple, including the altar for burnt offerings and all its utensils, and the bread display table and all its utensils. **19** We've prepared and consecrated all the items which King Ahaz rejected during his unfaithful reign, and they're back in front of Yahweh's altar."

Temple sacrifices restored

20 Early the next morning, King Hizkiyah

96 RV 28:27 · Cross-ref. Isa 14:28.

97 RV 29:1 · Parallel 2 Kgs 18:1-3

Readers' Version

(Hezekiah) assembled the city officials and went to Yahweh's residence, 21 taking seven bulls, seven rams, seven male lambs, and seven male goats to be a sin offering for the kingdom, the sanctuary, and Yehudah (Judah). He instructed the priests (Aharon's (Aaron's) descendants) to sacrifice the animals to Yahweh on the altar. 22 So they slaughtered the bulls and took the blood and sprinkled it on the altar. Then they did the same for the rams, and then the lambs. 23 Finally, they brought the goats for the sin offering to the front, and the king and the people placed their hands on them, 24 and then the priests slaughtered them and splashed their blood on the altar so Yahweh would forgive all of Yisrael's (Israel's) disobedience. (The king had ordered the burnt offerings and the sin offering be for all of Yisrael.)

25 Then he told the Levites to stand in the temple with cymbals, harps, and lyres—obeying what David and his prophets Gad and Natan (Nathan) had commanded. (Yahweh had actually given those orders through his prophets.) 26 The Levites stood with David's instruments, and the priests with their trumpets, 27 then Hizkiyah said to offer the burnt offering on the altar. When they started to slaughter the animals, the people sang and praised Yahweh as the trumpets were blown and the other instruments played. 28 The entire assembly were bowing down and worshipping as the singers sang and the trumpeters played, until the burnt offering was completed, 29 then the king and everyone with him bowed down and worshipped. 30 Then King Hizkiyah and his officials ordered the Levites to sing praises to Yahweh using compositions by David and the prophet Asaf, so they cheerfully sang praises and bowed down and worshipped.

31 Then Hizkiyah responded, "You've consecrated yourselves to Yahweh, so come near and bring your sacrifices and thanksgiving gifts into Yahweh's house." So the assembly brought in their sacrifices and thanksgiving gifts, plus those who wanted to brought their sacrifices to be burnt.

32 Altogether they brought seventy bulls, a hundred rams, and two hundred lambs to be completely burnt on the altar, 33 as well as six hundred bulls and three thousand sheep as dedicated offerings. 34 There weren't enough priests to skin all the burnt offerings, so their relatives the Levites helped them until the work was finished and until all the priests had consecrated themselves, because the Levites had worked quicker to consecrate themselves than the priests had. 35 In addition to the burnt offerings, there was the fat from the peace offerings, and there were drink offerings.

So the service in Yahweh's temple was reinstituted, 36 and Hizkiyah and all the people celebrated about what God had prepared for the people, because it had all happened fairly quickly.

Hizkiyah orders a pass-over celebration · Both kingdoms

30:1 Then King Hizkiyah (Hezekiah) sent invitations to all of Yisrael (Israel) and Yehudah (Judah) (including Efrayim (Ephraim) and Menasheh (Manasseh)) to come to Yahweh's temple, 2 because the king had consulted with his officials and the whole assembly in Yerushalem (Jerusalem) and decided to have a late celebration of the Passover in April.[98] 3 (They couldn't have done it at the proper time because the priests hadn't consecrated themselves sufficiently then, and so the people hadn't gathered in Yerushalem.) 4 The plan pleased the king and all the people, 5 so they sent messages across all of Yisrael and Yehudah, from Be'er-Sheva (Beersheba) in the south to Dan in the far north, for the people to come to Yerushalem to celebrate the Passover to honour Yisrael's god Yahweh. (They hadn't previously been observing the written instructions.) 6 Runners took the letters from the king and his officials, going to all of Yisrael and Yehudah with the king's command: "Descendants of Yisrael, return to Yahweh, the god of Avraham, Yitshak (Isaac), and Yisrael, and he'll

98 **RV 30:2-3 · Cross-ref.** Num 9:9-11.

Readers' Version

return to you—the group that escaped from the control of the Assyrian kings. 7 Don't be like your fathers and brothers who weren't faithful to Yahweh, their ancestors' god, provoking him to leave them decimated, as you can see. 8 So don't be stubborn like your ancestors were. Obey Yahweh and come to the sanctuary that he's consecrated forever, and serve your god Yahweh so he'll turn his anger away from you. 9 If you descendants of Yisrael return to Yahweh, your brothers and sons will be shown mercy by their captors and be able to return to this land, because your god Yahweh is gracious and compassionate, and he won't ignore you if you'll turn back to him.

10 The messengers went from city to city in the Efrayim (Ephraim) and Menasheh (Manasseh) regions, as far north as Zevulun, but many people there laughed at them and mocked them. 11 However, some of the people from Asher, Menasheh, and Zevulun humbled themselves and went to Yerushalem. 12 Also in Yehudah, God moved the people to want to obey the king and his officials and Yahweh's instructions.

The pass-over celebration · Both kingdoms

13 The next month, a huge crowd gathered in Yerushalem (Jerusalem) to celebrate the Festival of Flat Bread. 14 They took action and removed the altars to Ba'al in Yerushalem, and all the incense altars, and threw them down into the Kidron valley to be burnt there. 15 In the middle of the month, they slaughtered the Passover lambs. The priests and Levites had been ashamed, so they'd consecrated themselves, then they brought the burnt offerings into the temple. 16 They stood at their stations, following the instructions written by Mosheh (Moses), then the Levites handed the bowls of blood to the priests to sprinkle on the altar. 17 Because many people in the assembly hadn't consecrated themselves, the Levites assisted them by slaughtering the lambs and consecrating them to Yahweh. 18 Although most of the people who'd travelled down from Efrayim (Ephraim), Menasheh (Manasseh), Yisakar (Issachar), and Zevulun hadn't purified themselves, they ate the Passover food anyway despite the written instructions, because Hizkiyah (Hezekiah) had prayed to Yahweh for them, "May Yahweh, who is good, declare as innocent 19 everyone who sincerely wants to honour and obey Yahweh, their ancestors' god, even if they haven't completed the formal purification ceremonies for the temple." 20 Yahweh took notice of Hizkiyah's request, and forgave the people, 21 so the Israelis who'd come to Yerushalem celebrated the Festival of Flat Bread for seven days with great excitement. The Levites and priests enthusiastically praised Yahweh every day using their musical instruments.
22 Hizkiyah sincerely thanked all the Levites who were very insightful about worshipping Yahweh. Then everyone ate for the prescribed seven days—sacrificing peace offerings and confessing to Yahweh, their ancestors' god.

The pass-over celebration gets extended · Southern kingdom

23 Then the whole group decided to celebrate for seven more days, so they enthusiastically celebrated for another whole week, 24 because Yehudah's (Judah's) King Hizkiyah (Hezekiah) had provided a thousand bulls and seven thousand sheep for the people, and the officials had also contributed another thousand bulls and ten thousand sheep. Many more priests also consecrated themselves. 25 All the people from Yehudah celebrated, including the priests and Levites, and everyone who'd come down from Yisrael (Israel) to stay in Yehudah (whether just for the occasion, or to live permanently), plus others living in Yehudah. 26 Everyone in Yerushalem (Jerusalem) was very happy, because nothing like that had happened in Yerushalem since the time when David's son Shelomoh (Solomon) was king. 27 Finally, the priests and Levites stood up and prayed a blessing on the people, and their voice was heard because their prayer reached God's holy residence in the heavens.

Hizkiyah's religious reforms · Southern kingdom

31:1 When that was all over, all those Israelis went out to Yehudah's

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(Judah's) cities and shattered the pillars and cut down the Asherah poles, and they tore down the hilltop shrines and altars from the entire Yehudah-Benyamin region, and also up in the Efrayim-Menasheh region. Once they'd finished that, they all returned to their own land and cities.

2 King Hizkiyah (Hezekiah) allocated the priests and Levites into divisions for the various different types of duties: for doing burnt offerings and peace offerings, for other services, and for thanksgiving and praise at the temple gates. **3** The king contributed some of his own funds for burnt offerings to be sacrificed each morning and evening, as well as for the Rest Days and the New Moon celebrations, and on the other special days as per the written instructions that had come from Yahweh.[99]

4 He told the people living in Yerushalem (Jerusalem) to give the prescribed portions to the priests and Levites,[100] so that they could focus on serving Yahweh, **5** and as soon as the message reached them, the Israelis started giving the first portions of their harvests of grain, new wine, oil, and honey, and of all the produce from the countryside, so they brought a tenth of the harvests of all their crops. **6** The people from Yisrael (Israel) and Yehudah who were living in Yehudah's cities also brought a tenth of their cattle and sheep, as well as a sacred tenth consecrated to their god Yahweh, and it was all put in big piles. **7** That all began in May and was finished by September, **8** and when King Hizkiyah and his officials came and saw the piles, they praised Yahweh and his Israeli people. **9** When Hizkiyah asked the priests and Levites about the piles, **10** Azaryah the chief priest (a descendant of Tsadok) told him, "Since the people started bringing their contributions to the temple, we've been eating well, and even had left-overs, because Yahweh has blessed his people, and all this is the remainder."

11 So then Hizkiyah ordered them to prepare the temple storerooms, which they did, **12** and they brought in the contributions and the tenths that had been given, and the things faithfully dedicated to Yahweh. A Levite, Konaniyah, was appointed as supervisor, with his brother Shimei as deputy. **13** Those two supervised Yehiel, Azazyah, Nahat, Asahel, Yerimot, Yozavad, Eliel, Yismakyah, Mahat, and Benayah, by the arrangement of King Hizkiyah and Azaryah the temple supervisor.

14 The Levite Yimnah's son, Kore, who guarded the temple's eastern gate, was put in charge of the free-will offering to God—to distribute those offerings that were made to Yahweh, as well as any consecrated items. **15** Eden, Minyamin, Yeshua, Shemayah, Amaryah, and Shekanyah faithfully assisted him in the priests' cities to distribute those things to the different divisions of priests, regardless of their status or size. **16** Every male who was at least three years old, and was listed in the genealogical records, received a portion for their service in the temple, as each division performed their assigned duties. **17** Each priestly clan kept genealogical records and received a portion, and so did the Levites who were at least twenty years old, all according to their divisions, **18** as well as their wives and young children, and sons and daughters whose names were on the genealogies, because they'd also faithfully consecrated themselves for the sacred work. **19** Also, there were people chosen by name to give a portion to each male among Aharon's (Aaron's) descendants, the priests, who had pasture land around their cities, as well as to each Levite included on the genealogical records.

20 So King Hizkiyah did that throughout Yehudah (Judah), and he continued to faithfully follow his god Yahweh's instructions. **21** He tried hard to be diligent and sincere in whatever he did for the temple operation, as he followed God's rules and commands, and he prospered.

99 RV 31:3 · Cross-ref. Num 28:1–29:39.

100 RV 31:4-5 · Cross-ref. Num 18:12-13,21.

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The Assyrians threaten Yerushalem · Southern kingdom[101]

32:1 After all those acts of faithfulness by Hizkiyah (Hezekiah), the Assyrian King Sanheriv (Sennacherib) invaded Yehudah (Judah). He besieged the fortified cities and prepared to capture them for himself. **2** When King Hizkiyah saw that Sanheriv had entered the country and clearly intended to attack Yerushalem (Jerusalem), **3** he consulted with his officials and army leaders about blocking up the springs outside the city, and they helped him. **4** Many people gathered and blocked the springs from feeding the stream that flowed through the area, saying, "Why should the Assyrian kings come and find plenty of water?" **5** Then he strengthened his fortifications, repairing broken sections of the wall, and built towers and an outer wall. He strengthened the supporting wall on the east side of 'The City of David'. He also manufactured many weapons and shields, **6** and he appointed army commanders and assembled them at the plaza by the city gate, and encouraged them with these words, **7** "Be strong and be courageous. Don't be scared or discouraged because of the Assyrian king, or by his massive army, because we have someone on our side who's more powerful than him. **8** They can only rely on human strength, but we have our god Yahweh to help us and fight our battles for us." So the people took strength from King Hizkiyah's encouragement.

9 Later, when the Assyrian King Sanheriv was surrounding Lakish city with his army, he sent some servants to Yerushalem, to Yehudah's (Judah's) King Hizkiyah and all the residents, saying, **10** "I,Sanheriv, the king of Ashur (Assyria), am asking what you're all trusting in as you're staying there in Yerushalem while it's besieged. **11** Hizkiyah tells you, 'Our god Yahweh will rescue us from the Assyrian king,' but he's misleading you, and you'll all die of hunger and thirst! **12** Wasn't it Hizkiyah who removed his hilltop shrines and his altars, and spoke to the people of Yerushalem and all of Yehudah, telling you to bow down at only one altar and offer sacrifices on it? **13** Don't you people know what my ancestors and I have done to the people groups from other countries? Were any of their gods able to save them from me? **14** Which one of those nations' gods which my ancestors destroyed is a precedent showing that your god can rescue anyone from me? **15** So don't let Hizkiyah deceive you or mislead you like this. Don't believe him, because no god of any nation or kingdom has been able to save his people from my ancestors or from me. So your god certainly won't be able to protect you from my army.

16 Then Sanheriv's servants said even more against the god Yahweh, and against his servant Hizkiyah, **17** plus he wrote letters insulting Yisrael's (Israel's) god Yahweh and speaking against him, writing, "Just like the other nations' gods couldn't save their people from me, so too Hizkiyah's god won't be able to protect his people from my strength." **18** Then the Assyrians shouted loud threats in Hebrew to the people of Yerushalem who were on the wall, to try to frighten and terrify them so they could capture the city— **19** telling them Yerushalem's god was just another god made by people, and just as useless as other countries' gods.

20 Then King Hizkiyah and Yeshayah (Isaiah) (son of the prophet Amots) called out to the heavens requesting God's help, **21** and Yahweh sent a messenger who destroyed the powerful warriors, and the leaders and chiefs in the Assyrian army, and then their king had to return home in shame. When he went into the temple of his god, some of his sons ran him through with a sword.

22 So that's how Yahweh saved Hizkiyah and Yerushalem's inhabitants from the Assyrian King Sanheriv, and from the power of other nations, and he gave them peace on all sides. **23** Many people came to Yerushalem to bring offerings for Yahweh and valuable gifts for Yehudah's (Judah's) King Hizkiyah, and after all that, he was highly respected by the other na-

101 RV 32:1 · Parallel 2 Kgs 18:13-37; 19:14-19,35-37; Isa 36:1-22; 37:8-38

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tions.

Hizkiyah's illness · Southern kingdom[102]

24 Some time afterwards, King Hizkiyah (Hezekiah) became very sick and was expected to die, but he prayed to Yahweh, and Yahweh answered him with a miracle. 25 However, Hizkiyah was very proud and didn't thank Yahweh, so his anger fell on Yerushalem (Jerusalem) and Yehudah (Judah). 26 Then Hizkiyah and Yerushalem's inhabitants humbled themselves, and so Yahweh's anger didn't affect them during Hizkiyah's lifetime.

Hizkiyah's wealth · Southern kingdom

27 King Hizkiyah (Hezekiah) had become very wealthy, and he was highly respected. He established treasuries for gold and silver, for gemstones and spices, and for shields and other valuable things, 28 as well as storehouses for grain, wine, and olive oil, and stalls for his flocks and all kinds of livestock. 29 He built cities for himself, and acquired large numbers of sheep and goats, and also cattle, because God had made him very prosperous.

30 Hizkiyah blocked off the upper outlet at the Gihon spring and directed the water down the western side of 'The City of David'. All his projects were successful, 31 and so when the Babylonian leaders sent messengers to ask about the miracle that had been done in the country, God left him alone to test him and see what he really believed.

Hizkiyah's reign ends · Southern kingdom[103]

32 The record of all the other things Hizkiyah (Hezekiah) did while he was king, which includes a record of his loyal commitment, was written on the scroll 'The kings of Yehudah (Judah) and Yisrael' (Israel). 33 Then Hizkiyah died and was buried in the upper tombs with David's other descendants, and everyone in Yerushalem (Jerusalem) and across Yehudah honoured him. Then his son Menasheh (Manasseh) replaced him as king.

Yehudah's king Menasheh · Southern kingdom[104]

33:1 Menasheh (Manasseh) was twelve when he became king, and he reigned from Yerushalem (Jerusalem) for fifty-five years. 2 He did was what Yahweh had said was evil, like the disgusting things of the people groups that Yahweh had driven out ahead of the Israelis.[105] 3 The hilltop shrines that his father Hizkiyah (Hezekiah) had torn down, he turned around and rebuilt them and erected altars to the Baals, and he made Asherah poles, and he bowed down to all the stars in the sky and served them. 4 He built altars in Yahweh's temple in Yerushalem that Yahweh had previously said that his name would always be associated with.[106] 5 He built altars for all the stars in the sky in both of the temple courtyards, 6 and he made his sons pass through the fire in the Ben-Hinom valley, and he practiced fortune-telling and sorcery and magic, and connected with mediums and spirits. He did so much evil in Yahweh's eyes that it provoked him into getting angry.

7 He made an idol and put it in the temple, yes, where God had told David and his son Shelomoh (Solomon), "My name will be associated with that building forever, there in Yerushalem, which was chosen from among all of Yisrael's (Israel's) tribes.[107] 8 If Yisrael will be careful to do everything that I've instructed them and follow all the regulations and statutes that were given to them through Mosheh (Moses), then I won't force them to leave the land again that I gave to their ancestors." 9 So Menasheh led Yerushalem's inhabitants astray, and all of Yehudah (Judah)—doing more evil than the nations that Yahweh had de-

102 **RV 32:24 · Parallel** 2 Kgs 20:1-3,12-19; Isa. 38:1-3; 39:1-8

103 **RV 32:32 · Parallel** 2 Kgs 20:20-21

104 **RV 33:1 · Parallel** 2 Kgs 21:1-9

105 **RV 33:2 · Cross-ref.** Jer 15:4.

106 **RV 33:4 · Cross-ref.** 2Ch 6:6.

107 **RV 33:7-8 · Cross-ref.** 1Ki 9:3-5; 2Ch 7:12-18.

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stroyed ahead of the Israelis.

10 Then Yahweh spoke to King Menasheh and
his people, but they paid no attention, 11 so
Yahweh brought in the Assyrian king's army
leaders and they captured Menasheh. They put
a hook in his nose and bronze chains around
his feet, and they took him away to Bavel
(Babylon). 12 When he was there suffering, he
humbled himself in the presence of his ancestors' god Yahweh, and pleaded with him for
help. 13 When he prayed, Yahweh listened to
him and answered his request and brought him
back to Yerushalem to his kingdom. Then
Menasheh realised that Yahweh really is God.

14 After that, he rebuilt the outer wall for 'The
City of David' on the west of Gihon to the Fish
Gate and around the hill—also making it higher.
Then he stationed army commanders in all of
Yehudah's fortified cities. 15 He removed the
foreign gods and idols from the temple, as well
as all the altars that he'd built on the temple
mount and throughout Yerushalem, and he
dumped them all outside the city. 16 Then he
rebuilt Yahweh's altar and sacrificed peace offerings and thank offerings on it, and he told
Yehudah to serve Yisrael's god Yahweh. 17 However, the people continued to offer sacrifices at
the hilltop shrines, but now only to their god
Yahweh.

18 The record of all the other things
Menasheh did while he was king, including his
prayer to his god and the messages spoken to
him by the prophets, was written on the scroll
'The kings of Yisrael' (Israel). 19 It's written in
'The Words of Hozay' about his disobedience
and unfaithful activities, and how he built the
hilltop shrines and Asherah poles and idols before he humbled himself, as well as the response to his pleading in his prayer. 20 Then
Menasheh died and was buried at his palace,
and his son Amon replaced him as king.

Yehudah's King Amon · Southern kingdom[108]

21 Amon was
twenty-two when he became king, and he ruled
from Yerushalem (Jerusalem) for two years.
22 He did what Yahweh had said was evil, just
like his father Menasheh (Manasseh) had done,
and he sacrificed to all the idols his father had
made, and served them. 23 He didn't humble
himself and turn to Yahweh like his father had,
so Amon's guilt was even worse.

24 Then Amon's servants conspired against
him, and assassinated him in his palace, 25 but
the local people executed everyone who'd conspired against King Amon, and made his son
Yoshiyah (Josiah) king in his place.

Yehudah's King Yoshiyah · Southern kingdom[109]

34:1 Yoshiyah (Josiah)
was eight when he became king, and he
reigned from Yerushalem (Jerusalem) for
thirty-one years.[110] 2 He did what Yahweh had
said was right, and made similar decisions to
his ancestor David—not deviating to the right
or the left.

3 In the eighth year of his reign, while he was
still a teenager, he began to learn more about
the god of his ancestor David, and in the
twelfth year, he began to remove the hilltop
shrines from Yerushalem and across Yehudah
(Judah), as well as the Asherah poles, and the
carved and cast metal idols. 4 He watched while
they tore down the altars for the Baals and cut
down the incense altars that were above them.
He shattered the Asherah poles and the idols,[111]
then crushed them to powder, which he scattered over the graves of the people who'd sacrificed to them. 5 He burnt the bones of those
priests on their altars,[112] and that's how he purified Yerushalem and all of Yehudah, 6 as well
as the cities in the tribes of Menasheh (Manasseh), Efrayim (Ephraim), Shim'on (Simeon),
and as far north as Naftali (Naphtali), including

108 **RV 33:21 · Parallel** 2 Kgs 21:19-26

109 **RV 34:1 · Parallel** 2 Kgs 22:1-2

110 **RV 34:1 · Cross-ref.** Jer 3:6.

111 **RV 34:4 · Cross-ref.** 2Ki 21:3; 2Ch 33:3.

112 **RV 34:5 · Cross-ref.** 1Ki 13:2.

Readers' Version

in the ruins around them. 7 He tore down the altars and the Asherah poles, ground the idols into pieces, and cut down the incense altars in all of Yisrael (Israel), before returning to Yerushalem.

8 In his eighteenth year as king, in order to purify the land and the temple, he sent Atsalyah's son Shafan, Ma'aseyah the city official, and Yo'ahaz's son Yoah the secretary, to repair his god Yahweh's residence. 9 They went to Hilkiyah the high priest and handed over the funds that had been donated for God's house, which had been collected by the Levites as doorkeepers—the money was from the tribes of Menasheh, Efrayim, and other places in the northern kingdom of Yisrael, as well as from Yerushalem's inhabitants and people across all of Yehudah and Benyamin. 10 The priests then paid the workers who'd been assigned to work in Yahweh's temple to repair and strengthen it. 11 They also paid the carpenters and builders to buy cut stone and timber for the beams and braces which Yehudah's kings had allowed to deteriorate, 12 and the workers did their work faithfully. Their supervisors were Yahat and Ovadyah (Obadiah) (Levites descended from Merari), as well as Zekaryah (Zechariah) and Meshulam (descendants of Levi's son Kohat), and all the Levites who were good on their musical instruments. 13 They also supervised the porters and people working on various other tasks. Some of the Levites were secretaries, officials, and guards.

14 When they were bringing the money out of the temple, Hilkiyah the high priest found a scroll containing Yahweh's instructions that had been given via Mosheh (Moses). 15 Hilkiyah informed the scribe Shafan that he'd found a Torah scroll in the temple, and he gave him the scroll. 16 Shafan took the scroll with him to the king and reported to him, "Your servants are doing everything they were assigned to do. 17 They've taken the cash that was in Yahweh's residence, and passed it on to the supervisors of the workers." 18 Then Shafan told the king, "I've brought a scroll that the priest Hilkiyah gave me," and then he started reading it out to the king.

19 When the king heard the words of God's instructions, he tore his clothes in grief. 20 Then he commanded Hilkiyah, Shafan's son Ahikam, Mikah's son Avdon, Shafan himself, and the king's special advisor Asayah, 21 "Go and ask Yahweh on my behalf, and on behalf of everyone in Yisrael (Israel) and Yehudah (Judah), what he wants us to do with respect to the instructions on the scroll that's just been found, because it seems that Yahweh will be very angry at us because our ancestors haven't followed all of Yahweh's instructions as they're written on that scroll."

22 So Hilkiyah and the others went to Yerushalem's (Jerusalem's) Second District, to the prophetess Huldah (wife of Shalum, son of Tokahat, son of Hasrah who took care of the temple robes). They passed on the king's question, 23 and she replied, "Yisrael's god Yahweh says to tell the king: 24 Yahweh says, 'Listen, I'm going to bring disaster on this place and its inhabitants, as per all the curses written on that scroll that was read to Yehudah's king, 25 because they've abandoned me and offered incense to other gods. That's made me angry, and so my rage will be poured out on this place, and it can't be prevented.' 26 However, Yehudah's king sent you all to ask for Yahweh's direction, so tell him, 'Yisrael's god Yahweh says that after hearing the scroll's words, 27 you were sincere, and you humbled yourself in front of God when you heard his words about this place and its inhabitants. Yes, Yahweh declares you've humbled yourself in front of me and torn your clothes, and wept in front of me, and I've personally heard you. 28 So listen, I'll allow you to die and be buried in peace, and so your eyes won't see the disaster that I'll send to this place and its inhabitants.' "
So they took that response back to the king.

29 Then the king summoned all the elders from Yerushalem (Jerusalem) and from across Yehudah, 30 and they all walked up to the temple, with the inhabitants of Yerushalem and all of Yehudah, and the priests and the Levites, and all the people, irrespective of their stand-

ing in the community. Then the king read everything out to them that was on the Torah scroll that had been found in the temple.
31 Then the king stood at his normal place and made an agreement with Yahweh: to obey Yahweh and follow his instructions and his regulations and statutes, sincerely and with all his energy—doing what was in the joint understanding that had been written on the scroll. **32** Then he had everyone from Yerushalem and Benyamin take a stand in agreement to it, and so Yerushalem's inhabitants renewed their agreement with their ancestors' god. **33** So King Yoshiyah (Josiah) removed all the disgusting idols from all the Israeli regions, and he made everyone in Yisrael (Israel) serve their god Yahweh—during his lifetime they never turned away from Yahweh, their ancestors' god.

Celebrating the messenger's 'passing-over' · Southern kingdom[113]

35:1 Then King Yoshiyah (Josiah) prepared a 'pass-over' celebration in Yerushalem (Jerusalem), and they slaughtered the lambs at the end of March. **2** He assigned the priests to the various tasks that needed to be done, and encouraged them to do their work well. **3** He told the Levites (they'd been separated from the other tribes in order to serve Yahweh) who were teaching all of Yisrael (Israel), "Place the sacred box in the house that was built by David's son, Yisrael's King Shelomoh (Solomon)—it won't be a burden any more for your shoulders. Now serve your god Yahweh and his Israeli people, **4** and prepare yourselves in your clan divisions as per the instructions written by Yisrael's King David and his son Shelomoh.[114] **5** Then stand in the temple area, grouped by your clans and ready to help the other tribes. **6** Consecrate yourselves and slaughter the 'pass-over' lambs for the people as per the instructions given through Mosheh (Moses) by Yahweh.

7 King Yoshiyah provided thirty thousand lambs and young goats from his own flocks for the 'pass-over' sacrifices, and three thousand bulls from his own herds. **8** His officials also contributed for the benefit of the people, priests, and Levites. The chief temple officials Hilkiyah, Zekaryah (Zechariah), and Yehiel donated 2,600 lambs and three hundred cattle to the priests. **9** The Levite leaders Konaniyah and his younger brothers Shemayah and Netanel, along with Hashavyah, Yeiel, and Yozavad, together contributed five thousand lambs and three hundred bulls.

10 So everything was prepared as the king had commanded, and the priests stood at their places, and the Levites were there in their various divisions, **11** and they slaughtered the 'pass-over' lambs, then the priests sprinkled the blood while the Levites skinned the animals. **12** They set aside the animals to be burnt on the altar, in order to give them to the various family groups to offer to Yahweh, following the instructions Mosheh had written down. They did the same thing with the cattle.
13 They roasted the 'pass-over' meal over the fire as per the instructions,[115] and they boiled the meat of the sacred offerings in pots and kettles and pans, and served the meat immediately to all the people who were there. **14** Afterwards, the Levites prepared the meal for themselves and for the priests (Aharon's (Aaron's) descendants), because the priests had been busy sacrificing the burnt offerings and the fat portions right through to the evening. **15** The singers (Asaf's descendants) were at their posts, as they'd been commanded by King David, Asaf, Heyman, and the king's prophet Yedutun.[116] The men guarding the gates didn't have to leave their posts, because their fellow Levites prepared food for them.

16 So on that day, everything that needed to be done for worshipping Yahweh was done.

113 **RV 35:1 · Parallel** 2 Kgs 23:21-23

114 **RV 35:4 · Cross-ref.** 2Ch 8:14.

115 **RV 35:13 · Cross-ref.** Exo 12:8-9.

116 **RV 35:15 · Cross-ref.** 1Ch 25:1.

Readers' Version

They celebrated the 'pass-over' festival, and they sacrificed burnt offerings as King Yoshiyah (Josiah) had commanded. **17** The Israelis who were there celebrated the 'pass-over' that day, then they celebrated the 'Festival of Flat Bread' for seven days.[117] **18** There hadn't been a 'pass-over' celebration done like that in Yisrael (Israel) since the time of the prophet Shmuel (Samuel), and none of Yisrael's kings had ever done it like Yoshiyah did, along with the priests and Levites and the people from Yerushalem (Jerusalem) and all of Yehudah (Judah) and Yisrael. **19** They celebrated that festival in the eighteenth year of Yoshiyah's reign.

The death of Yehudah's King Yoshiyah · Southern kingdom[118]

20 After all of Yoshiyah's (Josiah's) work on temple restoration, Mitsrayim's (Egypt's) King Nekoh went to attack Karkemish city on the Perat (Euphrates) river, and Yoshiyah went out to confront him. **21** Nekoh sent messengers to tell Yoshiyah, "What's this got to do with you, King of Yehudah (Judah)? We're not attacking you at present, because we're in a different fight, and God told me to hurry. Don't oppose God, who's with me, and don't make him destroy you." **22** However, Yoshiyah wouldn't listen, but disguised himself before going into battle. He didn't listen to Nekoh even though he was speaking for God, so he went to fight on the Megidon plain.

23 King Yoshiyah was hit by the archers, and he told his servants, "Get me away from here, because I'm badly wounded." **24** So his servants lifted him off his chariot and took him on his reserve chariot back to Yerushalem (Jerusalem), where he died. He was buried in a tomb with his ancestors, and all of Yerushalem and Yehudah mourned over him.

25 The prophet Yirmiyah (Jeremiah) wrote a funeral song for him, which the male and female singers still use at funerals to this day. That became a custom in Yisrael (Israel) —the words of that song are written in a scroll of funeral songs.

26 The record of all the other things Yoshiyah did while he was king, and his loyal commitment to following Yahweh's instructions, **27** including his actions from the beginning to the end of his reign, was written on the scroll 'The kings of Yisrael and Yehudah'.

Yehudah's King Yehoahaz · Southern kingdom[119]

36:1 Then the people of Yehudah (Judah) took Yoshiyah's (Josiah's) son Yehoahaz and made him king in Yerushalem (Jerusalem) to replace his father. **2** Yehoahaz was twenty-three when he became king, and he reigned from Yerushalem for only three months. **3** Then Mitsrayim's (Egypt's) king deposed him and forced the country to pay an annual tribute of thirty kilograms of gold and three tonnes of silver. **4** Mitsrayim's King Nekoh took Yehoahaz to Mitsrayim,[120] and then the king made his younger brother Elyakim king over Yehudah and Yerushalem, although he changed Elyakim's name to Yehoyakim.

Yehudah's King Yehoyakim · Southern kingdom[121]

5 Yehoyakim was twenty-five when he became king, and he reigned from Yerushalem (Jerusalem) for eleven years. He did many things that Yahweh had said were evil.[122] **6** Bavel's (Babylon's) King Nevukadnetsar (Nebuchadnezzar) attacked and captured Yehoyakim and took him to Bavel in bronze chains,[123] **7** along with some items from Yahweh's temple that were taken to Bavel and placed in the king's temple there.

117 RV 35:17 · Cross-ref. Exo 12:1-20.

118 RV 35:20 · Parallel 2 Kgs 23:28-30

119 RV 36:1 · Parallel 2 Kgs 23:30-35

120 RV 36:4 · Cross-ref. Jer 22:11-12.

121 RV 36:5 · Parallel 2 Kgs 23:36–24:7

122 RV 36:5 · Cross-ref. Jer 22:18-19; 26:1-6; 35:1-19.

123 RV 36:6 · Cross-ref. Jer 25:1-38; 36:1-32; 45:1-5; Dan 1:1-2.

Readers' Version

8 The record of all the other things Yehoyakim did while he was king, including the disgusting things he did, was written on the scroll 'The kings of Yisrael (Israel) and Yehudah' (Judah), and his son Yehoyakin replaced him as king.

Yehudah's King Yehoyakin · Southern kingdom[124]

9 Yehoyakin was eighteen[125] when he became king, and he reigned from Yerushalem (Jerusalem) for just ten days. He did many things that Yahweh had said were evil. 10 At the beginning of the next year, King Nevukadnetsar (Nebuchadnezzar) sent soldiers to bring him to Bavel (Babylon), bringing valuable items from the temple,[126] and he made his younger brother Tsidkiyah (Zedekiah) king over Yehudah (Judah) and Yerushalem.[127]

Yehudah's king Tsidkiyah · Southern kingdom[128]

11 Tsidkiyah (Zedekiah) was twenty-one when he became king, and he reigned from Yerushalem (Jerusalem) for eleven years.[129] 12 He did many things that Yahweh had said were evil, in fact, he didn't even humble himself when the prophet Yirmiyah (Jeremiah) brought him a message from Yahweh. 13 He'd become very stubborn and wouldn't return to Yisrael's (Israel's) god Yahweh, and he also rebelled against King Nevukadnetsar (Nebuchadnezzar), who'd made him promise in front of God to be loyal.[130] 14 In addition, all the leaders of the priests and the people of Yehudah (Judah) became more and more unfaithful, doing disgusting things often done in other nations, and then they defiled Yahweh's residence, which he'd consecrated in Yerushalem.

15 So Yahweh, their ancestors' god, sent many messages via his prophets, because he felt compassion for his people and his residence, 16 but they mocked God's messengers and rejected the messages—ridiculing his prophets until Yahweh became so angry that he couldn't be stopped. 17 So Yahweh sent the Chaldean king against them, and the Kasdim (Chaldeans) ran Yehudah's young men through with the sword, even in the temple, and they didn't spare any of the young men or women, or even those who were older or elderly—God allowed Nevukadnetsar to thoroughly defeat them.[131] 18 Then he took everything valuable, big or small, from God's temple, as well as from the king and his officials. 19 They set God's temple on fire,[132] and tore down some of the wall surrounding Yerushalem, burnt all its palaces, and destroyed everything valuable. 20 Anyone else who was still alive was taken to Bavel (Babylon), where they became servants to the king and his children until the time when the Persians came to power. 21 That fulfilled God's message that Yirmiyah (Jeremiah) had previously proclaimed, that the land would become desolate to make up for the Rest Days that had been ignored—that took seventy years.[133]

Koresh sends the exiles back to Yehudah · Southern kingdom[134]

22 During the first year that King Koresh (Cyrus) reigned over Paras (Persia), in order to further fulfil what Yahweh had said via the prophet Yirmiyah (Jeremiah), Yahweh worked on the

124 RV 36:9 · Parallel 2 Kgs 24:8-17

125 RV 36:9 · Note Using 2 Kings 24:8 to (hopefully) correct the Hebrew here which has 'eight'.

126 RV 36:10 · Cross-ref. Jer 22:24-30; 24:1-10; 29:1-2; Eze 17:12.

127 RV 36:10 · Cross-ref. Jer 37:1; Eze 17:13.

128 RV 36:11 · Parallel 2 Kgs 24:18-20; Jer. 52:1-3a

129 RV 36:11 · Cross-ref. Jer 27:1-22; 28:1-17.

130 RV 36:13 · Cross-ref. Eze 17:15.

131 RV 36:17 · Cross-ref. Jer 21:1-10; 34:1-5.

132 RV 36:19 · Cross-ref. 1Ki 9:8.

133 RV 36:21 · Cross-ref. Jer 25:11; 29:10.

134 RV 36:22 · Parallel Ezra 1:1-4

Readers' Version

spirit of King Koresh who then wrote this ruling and sent messengers to announce it throughout his kingdom: **23** "I, Paras's King Koresh, declare that Yahweh, the god of the heavens, has given me all these earthly kingdoms, and he's given me the job of building a house for him in Yerushalem (Jerusalem), which is in Yehudah (Judah).**135** To help with that, anyone who's from there is allowed to return, and may their god Yahweh be with them and help them.

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135 RV 36:23 · Cross-ref. Isa 44:28.