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The second summary of the
Kings of Yisrael and Yehudah

Introduction

The second summary of the kings of Yisrael/Israel and Yehudah/Judah is a continuation of the first summary about the northern kingdom of Yisrael and the Southern kingdom of Yehudah (Judah). This account can be divided into two: **1.** The account about the two kingdoms from around 850 before Yeshua/Jesus (B.C.) through to the defeat of Shomron (Samaria) and the fall of the northern king in 721 before Yeshua/Jesus (B.C.) **2.** The account about the Southern kingdom of Yehudah from the defeat of the northern kingdom of Yisrael through to the capture and destruction of Yerushalem (Jerusalem) by the Babylonian King Nevukadnetsar in 586 before Yeshua/Jesus (B.C.) This account ends with Gedalyah governing Yehudah under Babylonian instructions, and then the release of King Yehoyakin who'd been imprisoned in Bavel.
Those disasters and destruction occurred because the leaders and inhabitants of the divided kingdom didn't obey God. The demolition of Yerushalem and the exile of most of the people of Yehudah was a major tragedy in Yisrael's history.
Prophet Elisha is highlighted here in this second summary. Elisha was the dominant prophet who continued on after Eliyah's death.

Main components of this account

The divided kingdom (1:1–17:41)
- a. The prophet Elisha (1:1–8:15)
- b. The kings of Yehudah and Yisrael (8:16–17:4)
- c. The defeat of Shomron/Samaria (17:5-41)

The kingdom of Yehudah (18:1–25:30)
- a. From Hizkiyah going to Yoshiyah (18:1–21:26)
- b. The kingdom of Yoshiyah (22:1–23:30)
- c. Yehudah's final king (23:31–24:20)
- d. The defeat of Yerushalem (25:1-30)

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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Yahweh punishes King Ahazyah · Northern kingdom

1:1 After the death of Yisrael's (Israel's) King Ahav, Moav (Moab) rebelled against Yisrael.

2 One day, King Ahazyah fell through a lattice in his upper room in Shomron (Samaria) and was injured, so he sent messengers to go and ask Ekron's god Ba'al-Zevuv if he would recover. **3** But Yahweh's messenger told Eliyah (Elijah) (from Tishbeh), "Leave here and go and meet the Shomron king's messengers and ask them, 'Is it because there's no god in Yisrael that you're all going to inquire from Ekron's god Ba'al-Zevuv? **4** Because of that, Yahweh says that the king won't get out of the bed that he's lying in—he's definitely going to die."

So Eliyah told them and continued on his way. **5** When the messengers returned to the king, he asked them, "What's this? Why are you back here so soon?"

6 "A man came to meet us," they told him, "and he said to us, 'Go and return to the king who sent you, and tell him that Yahweh says this: Is it because there's no god in Yisrael that you are sending messengers to inquire from Ekron's god Ba'al-Zevuv? Therefore you'll never leave that bed that you're lying in but you'll certainly die in it.' "

7 "What was the man like," the king asked them, "who met you and gave you all that message?"

8 "He had a cloak made of animal hair," they answered, "and was wearing a leather belt."

"Ah," said the king. "That's Eliyah from Tishbeh."

9 So he sent a captain with his fifty soldiers to look for Eliyah and they found him sitting on the top of a hill. The captain called out, "Man of God, the king wants to see you."

10 But Eliyah replied, "Well, if I am a man of God, let fire come down from the sky and consume you and your men," and fire came down from the sky, and it burnt up the captain and his men.

11 So the king sent another captain with his fifty men and they went to where Eliyah was and called out to him, "Prophet, the king commands that you come with us right now."

12 Again Eliyah replied, "If I am a man of God, let fire come down from the sky and consume you and your men," and God's fire came down from the sky, and it burnt up the captain and his men.

13 So the king sent a third captain with his fifty men. They went to where Eliyah was and the officer knelt down in front of him and pleaded, "Prophet, I beg you, be kind to me and my fifty soldiers, and don't kill us. **14** Listen, fire came down from the sky and burnt up the first two captains and their men, but please treat my life as valuable in your sight."

15 Then Yahweh's messenger told Eliyah, "Go with them. Don't be afraid of him."

So Eliyah went with them to the king **16** and told him, "Yahweh says that you sent messengers to inquire from Ekron's god Ba'al-Zevuv, as if there's no god in Yisrael (Israel) to ask. Therefore, he says, you certainly won't get off that bed that you're on because you'll die in it."

17 So King Ahazyah died just as Yahweh had said via Eliyah. Then Ahazyah's younger brother Yehoram (Jehoram) became king in his place, because Ahazyah didn't have any sons. This happened in the second year of the reign of Yehoshafat's (Jehoshaphat's) son King Yehoram over Yehudah (Judah). **18** Everything else that Ahazyah said and did is written in the book of the events of the kings of Yisrael.

Eliyah is taken up to heaven · Northern kingdom

2:1 One day as Eliyah (Elijah) and Elisha had left Gilgal, Yahweh took Eliyah up to heaven in a storm. **2** Eliyah had told Elisha, "Now, you stay here because Yahweh has told me to go to Beyt-El (Bethel)."

"By the life of Yahweh," Elisha had responded, "and by the life of your spirit, I won't leave you." So they'd headed to Beyt-El.

3 Also the prophets-in-training who were in Beyt-El had gone out to Elisha and told him, "Do you know that today Yahweh is going to take your master away from you?"

"I already know that," he'd replied. "Don't say anything."

4 Then Eliyah had informed Elisha, "Yahweh

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has sent me to Yeriho (Jericho). You stay here."

He'd answered, "By the life of Yahweh and the life of your spirit, I won't leave you." So they'd gone to Yeriho.

5 The prophets-in-training who were in Yeriho had approached Elisha and briefed him, "Do you know that today Yahweh is taking your master away from you?"

"Yes, I realise that," he'd responded. "Say no more."

6 Again Eliyah had told him, "You stay here, because Yahweh has sent me to the Yarden (Jordan)."

And he'd countered, "By the life of Yahweh and the life of your spirit, I won't leave you." So the two of them had gone there together. **7** Fifty of the prophets-in-training had also gone, but they'd stood back watching from a distance, so the two of them had stood there by the Yarden. **8** Then Eliyah had taken off his cloak and doubled it over and hit the river with it. The water divided leaving a dry path and the two of them had walked across to the other side. **9** As they'd crossed over, Eliyah had told Elisha, "Tell me what you'd like me to do for you before I get taken away."

"Please," Elisha had answered, "I'd like a double amount of the spirit that you have."

10 "Oh, that's a difficult request," Eliyah had responded. "Well, if you see me being taken away from you, then you'll get what you asked for, but if you miss seeing me go, you won't."

11 Then it had happened while they were walking and talking together. Wow, a chariot of fire and horses of fire drove between the two of them, separating them. Then Eliyah went up to the heavens in the gale. **12** Elisha was watching, and he cried out, "My father, my father, Yisrael's (Israel's) chariot and its horsemen!"

But then Elisha could no longer see him, and he grabbed his own cloak, and tore it in half, **13** and he picked up Eliyah's cloak that had fallen down to the ground. Then he went back and stood on the bank of the Yarden (Jordan), **14** and he took Eliyah's cloak and hit the river with it, saying, "Where is Eliyah's god Yahweh?" Then as he hit the water, the river divided into two parts and Elisha crossed through the middle. **15** The prophets-in-training who were on the Yeriho (Jericho) side, affirmed, "Elisha now has the spirit that Eliyah had." Then they came forward to meet him and knelt down in front of him as a sign of respect, **16** and they requested, "Listen please, fifty of us here have military training. Please, let them go to search for your master, in case Yahweh's spirit lifted him and dropped him on a hill somewhere or into one of the valleys."

"Don't waste your time," he replied. **17** But they kept insisting so much that Elisha was embarrassed and he said, "Ok then."

So they sent fifty men, and they searched for three days, but they didn't find Eliyah. **18** When they returned to Elisha (he was staying in Yeriho), he said to them, "Didn't I tell you not to bother?"

19 Then the leaders of Yeriho city said to Elisha, "Please, this city is a good place to live, just as my master can see, but the water supplies around here are bad so our crops don't thrive."

20 "Bring me a brand new bowl," he said, "and put salt there." So they brought one to him, **21** and he went out to the spring and threw the salt at it, and announced, "Yahweh says that he's healed these water supplies and they'll no longer cause death or barrenness." **22** So now those water supplies have been healthy and beneficial until this day, just as Elisha had said.

23 From there Elisha went to Beyt-El (Bethel), and as he was going up on the road, some young men came out from the city, and started mocking him, saying, "Keep moving, baldy. Keep moving, baldy."

24 Then Elisha turned back around and looked at them, and he cursed them in Yahweh's name. Just then, two female bears came out from the forest and mauled forty-two of them.

25 Elisha carried on from there to Mt. Karmel, and from there, he returned to Shomron (Samaria).

The war between Yisrael and Moav · Northern kingdom

3:1 Ahav's son Yehoram (Jehoram) became king over Yisrael (Israel) in

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the eighteenth year of King Yehoshafat's (Jehoshaphat's) reign over Yehudah (Judah), and he reigned from Shomron (Samaria) for twelve years. 2 He did what Yahweh had said was evil, but not as bad as his father and mother had been, and he did remove the pillar of Ba'al that his father had made. 3 However, he committed similar sins to those of Nevat's son Yarov'am (Jeroboam) who had caused Yisrael to sin and didn't stop doing them. 4 Now Moav's (Moab's) King Meysha was a sheep breeder, and he would pay an annual tribute to Yisrael's king of a hundred thousand young rams, plus the wool of a hundred thousand rams. 5 However, after King Ahav died, Moav's king rebelled against Yisrael's control over them. 6 So King Yehoram set out from Shomron and mustered all of Yisrael's fighters. 7 Then he sent this message to King Yehoshafat of Yehudah, "Moav's king has rebelled against me. Will you join in battle with me against them?"

"I'll join you," he replied. "You and me are together. My people are your people, and my horses are your horses. 8 What's our strategy? Which way should we go in?" he asked.

"Through the Edom wilderness," he replied.

9 So the kings of Yisrael, Yehudah, and Edom took their armies on a seven day trip circling around, but they didn't find enough water for the men or their animals, 10 and Yisrael's king complained, "Oh dear, it seems that Yahweh has sent in us three kings to allow Moav to defeat us." 11 But Yehoshafat asked, "Isn't there one of Yahweh's prophets here, so we might inquire from Yahweh through him?"

"There's Elisha," one of the servants of Yisrael's king answered, "Shafat's son, the prophet who was Eliyah's (Elijah's) assistant."

12 "Yes, he receives Yahweh's messages," said Yehoshafat.

So the kings of Yisrael, Yehudah, and Edom, went to see him. 13 But Elisha asked Yisrael's king, "What do you and me have in common? Go and inquire from your father's prophets and your mother's prophets."

"No," the king of Yisrael said. "We came because Yahweh has called for us three kings to allow us to be defeated by Moav."

14 "As Commander-in-chief Yahweh lives," Elisha responded, "the one who I serve, I wouldn't be talking to you or even face you, if I hadn't recognised King Yehoshafat of Yehudah. 15 So now bring me a musician.

Then while the musician played, Yahweh spoke to him 16 and he said, "Yahweh says that this valley will store lots of water.[1] 17 He says that you all won't see any wind or rain, yet this valley will be filled with water, and you and your animals will have plenty to drink. 18 That's a piece of cake for Yahweh. What's more, he'll give you victory over Moav. 19 You'll all attack every important city, including their fortified ones. You can chop down their fruit trees, block up their springs, and ruin their good land with stones."

20 The next day at the time of the morning sacrifice, to their amazement there was water flowing from Edom and covering the ground.

21 By then, the people of Moav had heard that the kings had come to battle them, so they summoned everyone who could wear a sword and stationed them beside the border. 22 But when they got up early the next morning and the sun rose, from the direction where they were, the water appeared to be red like blood. 23 "That's blood," they exclaimed. "Those three kings must have turned against each other and killed each other. So let's go, Moav, and collect the spoil."

24 But when they reached the allied camp, the allies attacked and they fled away. Then the allies entered Moav and attacked there. 25 They tore down the cities, and each person threw a stone onto the good land, making it useless. They blocked up every spring, and they chopped down every good tree. Eventually, only their capital city of Kir-Hareset remained standing with its stone walls, but they attacked

1 **RV 3:16 · Note** It's not really clear if he's saying that Yahweh will fill natural pools in the valley with water, or if he's instructing the armies to dig trenches or scrape pools that Yahweh will then fill with water.

that as well using slingshots.

26 When Moav's king saw that the attackers were stronger than them, he took a team of seven hundred swordsmen to try to break through to the king of Edom, but they failed. **27** So he took his oldest son (who would have become the next king) and sacrificed him publicly on top of the city wall. This made their people crazy furious against Yisrael (Israel), so they left and returned home.

Elisha helps a poor widow · Northern kingdom

4:1 One day a woman who was a wife of one of the prophets-in-training, called out to Elisha, "Your servant, my husband, died, and you yourself know that your servant served Yahweh. Now the moneylender has come to take two of my children in payment to become his slaves."

2 "Hmmh, what could I do to help you?" Elisha responded. "Tell me, what have you got in your house?"

"Your servant's got nothing in the house except a flask of oil," she replied.

3 He told her, "Go and ask for empty containers from all of your neighbours. Make sure you get plenty of them. **4** Then go and shut the door behind you and your sons, and pour oil into all those containers. Once each one's full, set it aside." **5** So she went and she shut the door of her house with her and her sons inside. They would bring the empty containers to her, and she poured the oil. **6** Eventually when she told one of her sons to bring the next container, he told her that there wasn't any more, and at that point, the oil stopped flowing.

7 Then she went and informed the man of God, and he told her, "Go and sell the oil and pay off your debt. Then you and your sons can live on the rest."

Elisha brings a child back to life · Northern kingdom

8 One day, Elisha went to Shunem, and there was a wealthy woman there who invited him in for a meal. After that, he dropped in there for a meal whenever he was going past, **9** and the woman said to her husband, "You know, I'm sure that this man who often drops in on us is a holy man of God. **10** Please, can we make a small upstairs room on our flat roof? And we could put a bed and a lampstand in it for him, plus a table and chair. Then whenever he's passing through here, he'll have his own spot to stay."

11 Another day when Elisha arrived, he went up to his room and lay down. **12** Then he told his servant Geyhazi to call the Shunamit woman, so he called her and she came and stood in front of Elisha. **13** He told Geyhazi, "Now tell her that we've noticed how she looks after us, and ask her what we can do for her? Can we speak to the king for her or to the captain of the army?"

But she replied, "I have family and friends all around me."

14 After she'd left again, he asked Geyhazi, "Well, what can I do for her?"

"Hmmh," Geyhazi replied. "She doesn't have a son, and her husband is old."

15 "Call her then," Elisha said. So he called her and she came and stood in the doorway, **16** and Elisha told her, "In due course after the normal months, you'll have a son to hold."

"No, my master, man of God," she stammered. "Don't lie to your female servant."

17 Then the woman became pregnant and gave birth to a son after the normal time, just as Elisha had told her.

18 The child grew up and one day he went out to his father who was with the harvesters, **19** and he called to his father, "My head, my head."

His father told one of the servants, "Carry him home to his mother."

20 So the servant carried him back to his mother, and he sat on her knees until noon when he died. **21** His mother carried him up and laid him on the bed of the man of God, shutting the door behind her as she went out. **22** Then she called her husband and told him, "Please send one of the young men and one of the donkeys to me so I can run and see the man of God and then come back." **23** "Why are you going there today?" he asked. "It's not a religious holiday."

"It'll be okay," she answered, **24** and she sad-

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dled the donkey, and told the young man, "Now, let's go! You lead and don't slacken off for my comfort unless I tell you to." 25 So they set off to seek out the man of God at Mt. Karmel.

When Elisha saw her coming from a distance, he told Geyhazi, "Look, there's the Shunamit woman. 26 Now, please, run to meet her and ask her, 'Are you all right? Is your husband all right? Is your child all right?' "

"Everything's all right," she answered.
27 Then she got to the mountain and to the man of God, and she knelt and grabbed his feet. Geyhazi came over to push her away, but the man of God said, "Leave her because she's upset, but Yahweh has hidden the problem from me—he hasn't informed me."

28 "Did I ask for a son from you, my master?" she said. "No, but didn't I say, 'Don't mislead me?' " 29 Then he told Geyhazi, "Tuck in your robe and take my staff in your hand, and go quickly. If you meet anyone, just keep going and don't stop to bless them, and if someone blesses you, don't stop to answer them. When you get there, lay my staff on the young man's face."

30 But the mother of the young man said, "By the life of Yahweh and the life of your spirit, I won't leave without you." So he got ready, and went with her. 31 However, Geyhazi had gone ahead and he put the staff on the young man's face, but he didn't open his eyes or make a sound. So he returned to meet Elisha and told him that the young man didn't wake up.

32 When Elisha reached the house, it was a shock to see the young man lying on his bed, dead. 33 He went in and he shut the door behind the other two, and he prayed to Yahweh.
34 Then he got on the bed, and he lay on the child and bent down near him, putting his mouth on his mouth, and his eyes on his eyes, and his palms on his palms. Then the child's body started getting warmer, 35 and he got down and walked around the room several times. Then he got on the bed again, and bent down near him. The young man gasped several times, and then opened his eyes. 36 Then he called to Geyhazi, and told him to call the Shunamit woman, and he called her, and she came and Elisha told her, "Here, take your son."
37 Then she came in and fell to her knees in front of him with her face to the ground. Then she picked up her son and went out, 38 and Elisha returned to Gilgal.

Two more miracles · Northern kingdom

At that time, there was a drought and the prophets-in-training were sitting facing him, and Elisha told his servant, "Get the large pot and boil a stew for these prophets-in-training."
39 One person went out to the countryside to gather herbs, and he found a wild vine, and he collected wild fruit from it—as many as he could hold in the fold of his robe. Then not realising that they were poisonous, he came and he sliced them into the pot of stew. 40 Then they served it up for the men to eat, but when they ate it, they called out, "Man of God, there's poison in that pot!" 41 "Bring me some flour," Elisha said. Then he threw it into the pot, and said, "Serve it up for the people to eat," and no one was harmed.

42 One day a man came from Ba'al-Shalishah, and he brought to the man of God an offering from the beginning of his harvest: twenty loaves of barley bread, and newly-harvested corn in his sack, and Elisha said to his servant, "Give it to our people so they can eat."

43 "How can I divide that out to one hundred men?" asked his servant.

"Give them to the people so they can eat," he replied, "because Yahweh says that they can eat and have left-overs." 44 So he laid it out in front of them and they ate and had left-overs, just like Yahweh had said would happen.

Na'aman's healing · Northern kingdom

5:1 Now Na'aman was the captain in Aram's (Syria's) army. He was highly respected by Aram's king, and was promoted to a high position because Yahweh had helped Aram win many battles because of him. However, despite his military prowess, he suffered from a serious

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skin disease called leprosy.[2] 2 Previously troops
that had been sent out from Aram, had taken a
young Israeli girl captive and she had become
Na'aman's wife's servant. 3 One day she said to
her mistress, "I wish that my master would go
and see the prophet who lives in Shomron
(Samaria), and then he would cure him of his
leprosy." 4 In due course, Na'aman heard and
went and told his master what the young Israeli
girl had said. 5 The king of Aram responded,
"Ok, I'll write a letter to the king of Yisrael (Is-
rael) for you to take."

So Na'aman set off, taking along 70kg of gold,
300kg of silver, and ten sets of fine clothes,
6 and he took the letter to the king of Yisrael.
The letter said, "Greetings. When this letter
gets to you, see, I've sent my servant Na'aman
to you so that you can heal his skin disease."

7 However when Yisrael's king read the letter,
he tore his clothes in despair, and he said, "Do
they think that I'm God who ends people's lives
and gives life to others? Why's this person
sending a man here for me to take away his
skin disease? Surely he must be creating a situ-
ation so he has an excuse to attack me!"

8 Later when Elisha the man of God heard that
Yisrael's king had torn his clothes, he sent a
message to the king, "Why did you tear your
clothes? Please, let that man come to me so he
can know that there *is* a prophet in Yisrael."
9 So Na'aman came on his chariots and horses,
and he stood at the entrance to Elisha's house.
10 Elisha sent a messenger out to him to tell
him, "Go and wash seven times in the Yarden
(Jordan) river, and then you'll be better and
your skin will go back to normal."

11 But Na'aman was furious, and he left, say-
ing, "Listen, I said to myself that he'd surely
come out and stand there and call on the name
of his god Yahweh, then he'd wave his hand
over my body and take away the skin disease.
12 Aren't the Damesek (Damascus) rivers
Avanah and Parpar better than any river in Yis-
rael? Can't I bathe in them instead and get
healed?" So he turned and he went off angrily.

13 Then some of his servants approached him
and suggested, "My master, if the prophet had
told you to do something more significant,
wouldn't you have done it? So maybe you could
do the simple thing that he told you: wash and
get better."

14 So Na'aman went down to the Yarden river
and dipped in it seven times like the man of
God had told him to. Then his skin became
clear again, like the skin of a young boy, and he
was healed. 15 Then he returned to the man of
God along with his entire retinue. Standing in
front of him, he said, "Look, please. I know that
there is no god in all the earth except in Yis-
rael. Now, please, accept a blessing from your
servant."

16 "By the life of Yahweh who I serve," he re-
sponded, "I won't take anything."

Na'aman urged him to take something, but he
kept refusing. 17 Then Na'aman said, "Well if
not, please, at least may we load a pair of mules
with some soil to take back with us, because
from now on, your servant will no longer make
a burnt offering or a sacrifice to other
gods—only to Yahweh. 18 However, I'll ask in
advance: May Yahweh forgive your servant
when my master goes to the house of the god
Rimon to prostrate himself there, and he's
leaning on my hand, and I prostrate myself in
the house of Rimon. When I prostrate myself in
the house of Rimon, please may Yahweh forgive
your servant for this one activity."

19 "Go in peace," Elisha replied.

After they'd gone a short distance, 20 Elisha's
servant said to himself, "Hmmh, my master
wouldn't take anything from that Na'aman the
Aramean. By the life of Yahweh, I think I should
run after him and take something that he
brought." 21 So Geyhazi hurried after Na'aman.
When Na'aman saw a person running after him,
he got down from his chariot to meet him, and
he said, "Is there a problem?"

22 "Peace," he said, "My master sent me to tell
you that two young prophets-in-training ar-
rived from the hill country of Efrayim

2 RV 5:1-14 · Cross-ref. Luk 4:27.

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(Ephraim). Can we please have 30kg of silver and two sets of clothing for them?"

23 "Sure," said Na'aman. "Take 60kg," he urged him. Then he separated 60kg of silver into two bags along with two sets of clothes, then he gave them to two of his young men to carry back for him. 24 When Geyhazi reached the hill, he sent the men back and they returned to Na'aman. Then he took the sacks that they'd brought and hid them in the house. 25 When he went back in to his master, Elisha asked him, "Where did you go, Geyhazi?"

"Your servant hasn't been anywhere," he replied.

26 "Wasn't I there in spirit when a man turned from on his chariot to meet you?" Elisha said to him, "Is this a time to take silver or clothing, or to take olive trees or vineyards, or sheep or cattle, or male or female servants? 27 Because of that, Na'aman's leprosy will transfer to you and to your offspring forever." When Geyhazi left the room, his skin had gone white as snow and he was now a leper.

The floating axe head · Northern kingdom

6:1 One day, the prophets-in-training said to Elisha, "Please look, The place where we're sitting to learn from you is too narrow to fit us all in. 2 Please, let us go down by the Yarden (Jordan) river, and let each of us cut down and bring back a log from there to make a new classroom for us to sit in."

"Go ahead," he answered.

3 One of them insisted, "Please, say that you'll come with your servants."

"Okay then, I'll come," he said. 4 So he went with them to the Yarden valley to cut down some trees, 5 but while one of them was chopping down a tree, suddenly the axe head separated from the handle and went flying into the water. The man called out to Elisha, "Oh, Master, what should I do? It's not my axe—I borrowed it!"

6 "Where did it fall in?" the man of God asked. After the man had shown him the place, Elisha cut off a stick and threw it there, and the iron axe head rose to the surface. 7 "Now get it out," he said, and the man stretched out and grabbed it.

The Arami army is defeated · Northern kingdom

8 In those days, the king of Aram (Syria) was fighting against Yisrael (Israel), and he'd instruct his servants, "Set up our camp in such and such a place." 9 However, the man of God sent to Yisrael's king to warn him, "Beware of passing by such and such a place, because the Aramean army will be attacking there." 10 So the king would send messengers to the people at that place to warn them to watch and be prepared.

That happened several times 11 and the Aramean king got very upset about it. He called in his servants and demanded, "Which one of you is a traitor—passing military intelligence to the king of Yisrael?"

12 "No, my master the king," a servant answered. "It's the prophet Elisha in Yisrael who tells their king the things that you say even in your bedroom."

13 "Go and find out where he is," he instructed, "and I'll send some men there to capture him."

"He's in Dotan," he was told later. 14 So he sent chariots and horses and a large contingent, and they arrived there at night and surrounded the town.

15 Early the next morning, the servant of the man of God got up, and going outside he was shocked to see chariots and horses and an army surrounding the town, so he called Elisha, "Oh, my master! What will we do?"

16 "Don't be afraid," he said, "because we have many more than that on our side." 17 Then Elisha prayed, "Yahweh, please enable his sight so he can see." Then Yahweh enabled the eyes of the young man, and he was stunned to see that the hill was covered with chariots of fire and horses all around Elisha.

18 When the Arameans approached to swoop in, Elisha prayed to Yahweh, "Please, strike those warriors with blinding light." So Yahweh struck them with blinding light just as Elisha had requested, 19 and Elisha told them, "This isn't the right way, and this isn't the town. Follow me, and let me lead you to the man you're

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looking for."

Then he led them to Shomron (Samaria),
20 and when they'd entered the city, Elisha said,
"Yahweh, open the eyes of these people so they
can see." So Yahweh opened their eyes, and
then they were stunned to see that they were
in the middle of Shomron.

21 When he saw them, the king of Yisrael (Is-
rael) asked Elisha, "Should I kill them? Should I
kill them, my father?" 22 "No, don't kill them,"
he replied. "Would you cold-bloodedly kill your
prisoners of war? No, give them bread and wa-
ter and let them eat and drink, and then they
can return to their master." 23 So the king pre-
pared a large meal for them, and they ate and
drank, and he sent them off to return to their
master. After that, the Aramean troops didn't
continue their ventures into Yisrael.

Ben-Hadad besieges Shomron/Samaria · Northern kingdom

24 Sometime after that,
King Ben-Hadad of Aram
(Syria) assembled all of
his warriors and attacked Shomron (Samaria),
and besieged it. 25 Being surrounded like that
caused a terrible famine inside the city, until a
donkey's head would be sold for eighty silver
coins, and a cup of doves' droppings was sold
for five silver coins.

26 One day as the king of Yisrael (Israel) was
walking past on the top of the city wall, a
woman cried out to him, "Save me, my master,
the king!"

27 "If Yahweh won't save you, how could I
possibly save you?" he snapped. "Some grain
from the threshing floor or some wine from the
wine-pressing pit?" 28 Then he asked her,
"Okay, what's your problem?"

"This woman said to me, 'Let's have your son
and we'll eat him today, then we'll eat my son
tomorrow,' " she answered. 29 "So we boiled my
son and ate him, and then the next day I said,
'Hand over your son and we'll eat him,' but
she'd hidden him."

30 When he heard that, the king (standing up
on the wall) tore his clothes, and the people
could see to their astonishment that he was
wearing sackcloth underneath, 31 and he said,
"May God do that to me and more, if Shafat's
son Elisha still has his head on him by the end
of the day."

32 Meanwhile, Elisha was sitting at home,
joined by the city elders. The king had sent a
warrior ahead of him, and before he'd arrived
at the house, Elisha had told the elders, "Well
now, that son of a murderer has sent an assas-
sin to separate me from my head. Listen, when
that hit-man arrives, shut the door and lean
against it. His master won't be far behind him."
33 He was still talking with them, when, wow,
the warrior was coming towards the house
soon followed by the king who said, "Listen,
Yahweh caused this disaster so why should I
trust him any longer?"

7:1 "Listen to what Yahweh says," Elisha re-
sponded, "Yahweh says that at this time tomor-
row, a drum of flour will be sold for a shekel,
and two drums of barley will be sold for a
shekel at the city gate."

2 "That's impossible," interjected the captain
at the king's side. "Yahweh would have to make
windows in the sky."

"Oh, it'll happen," the man of God answered,
"and you'll see it with your own eyes, but you
won't get to eat any of it."

3 That day, four men who were isolated due to
a skin disease were at the city gate, and they
asked each other, "Why are we just sitting here
until we starve? 4 If we go into the city, we'll
starve to death in there, but if we sit here, we'll
die anyway. Why don't we go into the Aramean
army camp—if they kill us then we'll die, but if
they let us live, then we'll live." 5 So as it was
getting dark, they went to go into the camp,
but as they came to the edge of it, to their sur-
prise there wasn't a person in sight. 6 It turned
out that the master had caused the Aramean
army to hear the sounds of chariots and horses
and a large army, so they'd said to each other
that the king of Yisrael (Israel) must have hired
the Hiti and Mitsri (Egyptian) kings to join to-
gether to fight them. 7 As a result, they'd taken
off and fled in the twilight. They'd abandoned
their tents and horses and donkeys—leaving
the camp just as it was, and fled for their lives.

8 So those four men with leprosy approached

Readers' Version

the edge of the camp and went into the first tent, and ate and drank. Then they took some gold and silver and clothes out, and they went and hid it. Then they returned and went into another tent, and stole some stuff from that one, and went and hid that. **9** Then they said to each other, "We shouldn't really be doing this today. It's a day of good news, but we've been keeping it to ourselves. If we wait until the light of the morning, we'll get punished for it, so let's go now and inform the king's household." **10** So they went and called out to one of the city gatekeepers, and they informed them, "We went to the Aramean camp, but listen, there wasn't anyone there, or any voices. The horses and donkeys were still tethered, and the tents were left just as they were."

11 The gatekeepers called out, and the news was reported to the palace. **12** Although it was already night-time, the king got up and warned his servants, "I'll tell you what's going on here: The Arameans know that we're hungry, so they left their camp to go and hide in the countryside, thinking that we'd go out from the city, and then they could capture us and take over the city."

13 But one of his servants answered, "Sir, please, let us take five of the remaining horses. They're pretty much finished anyway, like the remaining population of Yisrael (Israel), so there's not much to lose. Let us go and investigate." **14** So with the king's permission, they took two chariot horses and went to check out the Aramean camp. **15** They went as far as the Yarden (Jordan) river, and were amazed that the whole road was full of clothing and equipment that the Arameans had thrown off in their rush, and the messengers returned and informed the king. **16** So the people went out and plundered the camp. Then it happened: a drum of fine flour was sold for a shekel, and two drums of barley for the same amount, just as Yahweh had said would happen.

17 The king had appointed the captain who had argued with Elisha to be in charge at the city gate, but the people trampled him there and he died, just as the man of God had said when the king had gone to his place. **18** When the man of God had told the king that two drums of barley would be sold for a shekel, and a drum of flour also sold for a shekel the next morning at the city gate, **19** the captain was the one who'd answered the man of God and had said that Yahweh would have to make windows in the sky to do that, and Elisha had told him that he'd see it, but wouldn't be able to eat any of it. **20** That's exactly what happened, because he got trampled by the rush of people at the gate and died.

The Shunamit woman gets her land back · Northern kingdom

8:1 One day Elisha spoke to the Shunamit woman whose son he'd brought back to life, "Pack up and leave here, you and your household, and go and stay somewhere else, because Yahweh's going to send a seven-year drought." **2** So the woman got up, and she did what the man of God told her: She packed up her household and left to go and live in the Pelishtim' region for seven years.

3 Then eventually after seven years, the woman returned from the Pelishtim' region and she went to petition the king about her house and land. **4** When she arrived, the king had asked Geyhazi, the servant of the man of God, "Please tell me all the incredible things that Elisha has done." **5** Then Geyhazi was telling the king that Elisha had made the dead live, and how the woman who he made her son live was petitioning the king on behalf of her house and her field. Then Geyhazi exclaimed, "My master, the king, this is the woman, and that's her son, who Elisha made live!" **6** So the king questioned the woman and she told him her story. Then the king appointed a court official to attend to her case, saying, "Return everything that belongs to her plus the profit from her field from the day she left until now."

Hazael murders Ben-Hadad · Northern kingdom

7 Elisha went to Aram's (Syria's) capital Damesek (Damascus) at a time when King Ben-Hadad of Aram was very sick, and someone told him that the man of God was in town. **8** The king instructed an official named

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Hazael, "Take a gift with you and go and meet the man of God. Then inquire from Yahweh through him to find out if I'll recover from this sickness." **9** So Hazael went to meet Elisha and took presents with him loaded on forty camels—some of every good thing that he could find in Damesek. He went and stood in front of him and asked, "Your servant, King Ben-Hadad sent me to ask you if he'll recover from his sickness?"

10 "Go and tell him that he'll surely live," Elisha answered. "But Yahweh has shown me that he'll definitely die." **11** Then Elisha stared at him until Hazael felt embarrassed, and then the man of God started to cry.

12 "Why are you crying, my master?" Hazael asked.

"Because I know what evil things you'll do to the Israelis," he said. "You'll burn down their fortresses and kill their young men with the sword. You'll smash their children's heads on rocks, and rip open the bellies of their pregnant women."

13 Hazael asked, "But how could your servant be in a position to do such a major thing when he's only minor, like a dog in the palace?"

"Yahweh has let me see you as king over Aram (Syria)." Elisha replied.

14 Then he left Elisha and went back to his master who asked him, "What did Elisha tell you?"

And he answered, "He told me that you'll certainly live." **15** the very next day, Hazael dipped Ben-Hadad's blanket in water and held it over his face until he died, and then Hazael started to reign in his place.

Yehoram reigns over Yehudah · Southern kingdom[3]

16 In the fifth year of the reign of Ahav's son Yoram (Joram) as king of Yisrael (Israel), Yehoshafat's (Jehoshaphat's) son Yehoram (Jehoram) became king of Yehudah (Judah). **17** He was thirty-two when he became king and he reigned from Yerushalem (Jerusalem) for eight years. **18** He followed in the evil ways of the kings of the northern kingdom of Yisrael, just as Ahav's descendants had done, because he'd married one of Ahav's daughters. He did what Yahweh had said was evil, **19** but Yahweh wasn't willing to destroy Yehudah, for the sake of his servant David—he'd promised David that his descendants would always rule Yehudah.

20 It was during King Yehoram's time that Edom rebelled from Yehudah's control, and they appointed their own king. **21** So Yoram took his army and chariots and crossed the valley towards Tsa'ir in Edom. They attacked at night, but as the Edomi army and chariots started to surround them, they had to retreat back to their tents. **22** So Edom has been out from under the control of Yehudah to this day. Then Livnah revolted at the same time.

23 Everything else that Yoram said and did is written in the book of the events of the kings of Yehudah. **24** Then Yoram died and was buried with his ancestors in the city of David, and his son Ahazyah replaced him as king.

Ahazyah reigns over Yehudah · Southern kingdom[4]

25 In the twelfth year of Ahav's son Yoram's (Joram's) reign over Yisrael (Israel), Yehoram's (Jehoram's) son Ahazyah became the king of Yehudah (Judah). **26** Ahazyah was twenty-two when he became king, and he reigned from Yerushalem (Jerusalem) for one year. (His mother's name was Atalyah (Athaliah), the daughter of King Omri of Yisrael.) **27** He followed Ahav's customs and did what Yahweh had said was evil like Ahav's descendants, because he was a son-in-law of a descendant of Ahav. **28** He joined Ahav's son Yoram to battle against Aram's (Syria's) King Hazael at Ramot-Gilead, but the Arameans wounded Yoram. **29** King Yoram returned to Yizre'el (Jezreel) to recover from the wounds that Arameans had given him at Ramah when he'd fought with Aram's King Hazael. Later, King Ahazyah of Yehudah (Yehoram's son), went down to see (Ahav's son) Yoram in

3 **RV 8:16 · Parallel** 2 Chr. 21:1-20

4 **RV 8:25 · Parallel** 2 Chr. 22:1-6

Readers' Version

Yizre'el because he was wounded.

Yihu is selected to rule Yisrael · Northern kingdom

9:1 Then the prophet Elisha called to one of the prophets-in-training and told him, "Tuck your robe in, take this flask of oil, and hurry to Ramot-Gilead. **2** When you get there, you'll see Yehu (Jehu) (the son of Nimshi's son Yehoshafat (Jehoshaphat)) there. Take him into a private inner room, away from his brothers, **3** and pour some of the olive oil over his head and tell him that Yahweh says that he's anointed him as king over Yisrael (Israel). Then open the door and get out of there fast." **4** So the young prophet went to Ramot-Gilead, **5** and when he arrived, he was surprised to see the army captains sitting there. He said, "I need to talk to you, captain."

"Which one of us?" Yehu asked.

"It's a message for *you*, captain," he said. **6** So Yehu got up, and went over to the house where the prophet poured the oil on his head and told him, "Yisrael's god Yahweh says that he's anointed you as king over Yahweh's people—over Yisrael. **7** You should attack the house of Ahav your master so Yahweh can avenge the murder of his servants, the prophets, and avenge the murder of all his servants who were killed by Izevel (Jezebel). **8** All of Ahav's household should be killed, and Yahweh won't allow any of his male descendants to live, either before or after they've left home. **9** Yahweh wants Ahav's descendants to be eliminated like the descendants of Nevat's son Yarov'am (Jeroboam) and Ahiyah's son Baesha were. **10** The dogs will eat Izevel's body where she dies in Yizre'el (Jezreel)—she won't be buried." Then he opened the door and rushed away.

11 When Yehu came back to the room where the servants of his masters were, and they asked him, "Is everything okay? What did that madman want with you?"

"You yourselves know that man and the sort of stuff that he says," he said.

12 "You're lying," they insisted. "Tell us what he told you."

"Well, he said several things," Yehu answered, "and then he told me that Yahweh says he's anointed me as king over Yisrael (Israel)."

13 Then they all spread their cloaks on the steps of the building for Yehu to walk out on, and they blew a trumpet and shouted, "Yehu is now the king!"

The killing of Yoram and Ahazyah · Northern kingdom

14 So Yehu (Jehu) (the son of Nimshi's son, Yehoshafat (Jehoshaphat)) conspired against Yoram (Joram). Yoram was busy with the army guarding Ramot-Gilead from King Hazael of Aram (Syria). **15** Then King Yoram returned to Yizre'el (Jezreel) to heal from the wounds from the Arameans when he'd fought with their King Hazael.

So Yehu told his men, "If you all want me as king, then don't let anyone leave this city of Ramot-Gilead in case they go to Yizre'el city and tell them our plans." **16** Then Yehu rode to Yizre'el himself because Yoram was recuperating there in bed, and King Ahazyah had gone up north from Yehudah (Judah) to visit him.

17 The watchman was standing on the watchtower in Yizre'el, and he could see Yehu's party in the distance as they began approaching the city, and he reported, "I can see a large group."

King Yoram ordered, "Send out a chariot and go and ask them if they're coming in peace." **18** So the horse and chariot went out to meet them and called out, "The king wants to know if you're all coming in peace?"

But Yehu answered, "What's that got to do with you? Turn around and follow us."

Meanwhile the watchman announced, "The messenger has met them, but he isn't returning."

19 So the king sent out a second horse and chariot, and he approached and asked, "The king wants to know if you're all coming in peace?"

Again Yehu replied, "What's that got to do with you? Turn around and follow us."

20 Then the watchman declared, "He also met with them but didn't return. The leader is riding like Nimshi's son Yehu, because he's riding like crazy."

21 "Quick, get my chariot ready!" Yoram (Jo-

ram) ordered. They harnessed his chariot and
King Yoram of Yisrael (Israel) and Yehudah's
(Judah's) King Ahazyah both went out—each
man in his chariot. They went out to meet Yehu
and they found him at Navot's field (the
Yizre'eli). 22 When Yoram saw Yehu, he asked,
"Have you come in peace, Yehu?"

"How could there be peace," he answered,
"when your mother Izevel (Jezebel) is serving
idols and embracing witchcraft?"

23 Then Yoram swung the chariot reigns
around and fled, shouting to Ahazyah, "It's
treason, Ahazyah!" 24 Yehu grabbed his bow,
and the arrow struck Yoram between his shoul-
der blades and came out from his heart, and he
slumped down dead in his chariot. 25 Then
Yehu said to his third officer Bidkar, "Pick up
his body and throw it out into the field of
Navot, the Yizre'eli. I'm sure you remember
how you and I were riding as pairs after his fa-
ther Ahav, when Yahweh said this against him:
26 'Yesterday I saw Navot and his sons killed
here, declared Yahweh, and I will repay you in
this very place, declares Yahweh.' So now,
throw his body down here because Yahweh de-
clared that it would happen."

27 Yehudah's (Judah's) King Ahazyah saw that
happen, and he sped away through the garden
by a house with Yehu chasing after him shout-
ing, "Get him too in his chariot when he starts
climbing upwards to Gur near Yivleam." So as
he fled towards Megidon, he was killed there,
28 and his servants took his body to Yerushalem
(Jerusalem), where they buried him in his an-
cestral tomb in the City of David.

29 (Ahazyah had become king over Yehudah
in the eleventh year of the reign of Ahav's son
Yoram over Yisrael (Israel).)

The killing of Queen Izevel · Northern kingdom

30 Then Yehu (Jehu)
came to Yizre'el (Jezreel)
and Queen Izevel
(Jezebel) heard about it. She painted her eyelids
and did her hair nicely, then she looked down
through the window, 31 and when Yehu came in
the gate, she said, "Greetings, Zimri the second,
murderer of his master."[5] 32 Yehu looked up at
the window and called out, "Who is with me?
Who?" And two or three servants poked their
heads out windows and looked down to him.
33 "Okay," he called up, "toss her out!"

So they tossed her out the window, and some
of her blood splashed onto the wall and onto
the horses as she was trampled by them.
34 Then Yehu and his men went in and ate and
drank, and then he said, "Now, you all better at-
tend to that evil woman and bury her, because
she's a king's daughter." 35 But when they went
to bury her, they could only find her skull and
her hands and feet. 36 They came back inside
and told him, "It's just like what Yahweh said
via his servant the Tishbi Eliyah (Elijah), when
he said that the dogs would eat Izevel's flesh
just outside Yizre'el, 37 and then her body
would become like dung on the ground and no
one would be able to recognise her specific
bones."

Ahav's descendants are eliminated · Northern kingdom

10:1 King Ahav had sev-
enty sons who lived in
Shomron (Samaria), so
Yehu (Jehu) sent letters to the leaders and el-
ders of Yizre'el (Jezreel), and to the guardians
of Ahav's children, saying, 2 "When you all re-
ceive this letter, you'll have the sons of your
masters with you, as well as chariots and
horses, and weapons within your fortified city.
3 So select the best and the most honest one
out of your masters' sons or nephews, and es-
tablish him on his father's throne, and then be
prepared to defend your masters' family." 4 But
they were extremely frightened and said, "Lis-
ten—those two kings couldn't stand against
Yehu, so how could we?" 5 Then the man who
was now in charge of the household and lead-
ing the city elders sent a message to Yehu, "We
are your servants and we'll do whatever you
tell us to. We don't plan to select a king. Do
whatever you think best."

6 So Yehu sent a second letter saying, "If
you're all on my side and ready to follow me,
come and meet me at Yizre'el tomorrow with

5 **RV 9:31 · Cross-ref.** 1Ki 16:10.

Readers' Version

the heads of your masters' sons."

The late King Ahav had seventy sons who were being brought up by the city leaders, **7** and when that letter arrived, they killed and beheaded all of them, put the heads in baskets, and sent them to him at Yizre'el.

8 A messenger went and informed Yehu that the heads had been brought, and he instructed them to pile them up in two piles at the city gate until the next morning. **9** In the morning he went out and stood there, and he told all the people, "You are innocent. Listen—it was me myself who conspired against my master and killed him. But who killed all these? **10** You all should know that when Yahweh says something will happen, then it will happen. He said via his servant Eliyah (Elijah) that this is what would happen to Ahav's family, and so it has." **11** Then Yehu killed all Ahav's remaining family members in Yizre'el, and all his chosen leaders, and his associates and priests, leaving no survivors.

The relatives of Ahazyah are killed · Northern kingdom

12 Then Yehu (Jehu) left Yizre'el (Jezreel) and headed towards Shomron (Samaria). When he reached the shepherds' shearing house, **13** he met the late King Ahazyah's brothers there, and he asked them, "Who are you?"

"We're King Ahazyah's brothers," they said, "and we're coming to look after the sons of the king and of the queen mother."

14 "Arrest them," he ordered, so they grabbed and slaughtered them near the pit at the shearing house. There were forty-two men and none were spared.

All Ahav's other relatives are killed · Northern kingdom

15 Then continuing on from there, Yehu (Jehu) found Rekav's son Yonadav coming to meet him. Yehu greeted him and asked, "Are you wanting to do what is right just like I am?" IS THAT WHAT HE WAS REALLY ASKING???

"Yes, I am." Yonadav replied.

"Great," Yehu said. "Give me your hand," and he gave him his hand, and Yehu pulled him up to join him in the chariot, **16** telling him, "Come with me and see my zeal for Yahweh." So they rode together in the chariot. **17** When they got to Shomron (Samaria), Yehu killed the remainder of Ahav's family who were there, until they were finally exterminated, just as Yahweh had said via Eliyah (Elijah).

18 Then Yehu assembled all the people and told them, "Ahav served Ba'al a little, but Yehu will serve him a lot. **19** So now, call all the prophets of Ba'al to come here—all his servants and all his priests. Don't let anyone stay away because I'm going to make a large sacrifice to Ba'al. Anyone who's absent will be executed." However Yehu was being cunning in order to destroy Ba'al's followers. **20** Yehu ordered, "Announce a special holiday to assemble and worship Ba'al," and so they did. **21** On that day, Yehu brought in all the people, and all the servants of the Ba'al came, leaving no one out. They entered the temple of the Ba'al and it was packed full. **22** He told the wardrobe supervisor, "Bring out uniforms for all the servants of the Ba'al," so he brought robes out for them. **23** Then Yehu and Rekav's son Yonadav entered the temple of the Ba'al and instructed the servants of the Ba'al, "Make sure that it's only the servants of Ba'al in here—we don't want any servants of Yahweh." **24** So they entered to make sacrifices and burnt offerings.

Meanwhile, Yehu had stationed eighty men outside, and had told them, "Don't let any of the ones I send you escape, or it will be *your* life in place of theirs."

25 Then when he finished making the burnt offering in the outer area, Yehu told the guards and officers, "Come in now and strike them down. Don't let any of them get out." So they attacked them with swords, and the guards and officers threw the bodies over the fence. Then they went inside the temple, **26** and pulled the sacred posts outside and burnt them. **27** They broke down the pillar of the Ba'al, and they broke down the temple. Since then it's been used as an out-house.

28 That's how Yehu put an end to Ba'al worship in Yisrael (Israel). **29** There was only one of the things with which Nevat's son Yarov'am

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(Jeroboam) had caused Yisrael to sin that Yehu
didn't destroy: the golden calves at Beyt-El
(Bethel) and Dan. **30** Then Yahweh told Yehu,
"Because you did good by following my princi-
ples and doing what I've said is right, including
what you did to Ahav's family, you'll have four
generations sitting on Yisrael's throne." **31** But
Yehu didn't take care to follow the instructions
of Yisrael's god Yahweh whole-heartedly—he
didn't reject all of Yarov'am's evil customs
which had caused Yisrael to sin.

Yehu's death · Northern kingdom

32 During that period,
Yahweh began to reduce
the size of Yisrael's (Israel's) territory and
Aram's (Syria's) King Hazael attacked along
their border **33** from the Yarden (Jordan) river
in the east as far south as Aroer city on the
Arnon river—capturing the Gilead and Bashan
regions where the tribes of Gad, Re'uven, and
Menasheh (Manasseh) lived.

34 Everything else that Yehu (Jehu) said and
did is written in the book of the events of the
kings of Yisrael. **35** Then Yehu died and was
buried in their ancestral tomb in Shomron
(Samaria), and his son Yehoahaz replaced him
as king. **36** Yehu had ruled from Shomron as the
king of Yisrael for twenty-eight years.

Queen Ataliya's reign over Yehudah · Southern kingdom[6]

11:1 When Ahazyah's
mother Atalyah
(Athaliah) saw that her
son had been killed, she went and had all of his
descendants executed so that none of them
could claim the throne. **2** However, King
Yoram's (Joram's) daughter Yehosheva took
Yoash, the son of her sister Ahazyah, and hid
him in the bedroom along with his wet-nurse.
Although he was on the list of the king's sons to
be executed, they hid him from Atalyah, and so
he wasn't killed. **3** Then he was able to stay hid-
den with her in the temple for the six years
while Atalyah ruled Yehudah (Judah).

4 In the seventh year, Yehoyada the priest
sent for the officers over the royal bodyguards
and the palace bodyguards to come to him in-
side Yahweh's temple. He made them agree to
take an oath of secrecy and loyalty in the tem-
ple, then he let them see the king's son. **5** Then
he commanded them, "This is what you all
need to do: On the Rest Day, one third of you
must go and guard the king's palace. **6** The sec-
ond third must guard the Sur gate, and the re-
mainder must stay behind the others roaming
back and forth, **7** and the two off-duty groups
must guard the temple and protect the young
king. **8** You'll surround the king—each man
holding his weapons at the ready right around
him—killing any person who approaches your
ranks, and accompanying the king when he
goes out or comes in.

9 So the officers over the royal bodyguards
did everything that the priest Yehoyada had
commanded. Both the on-duty and the off-duty
men fulfilled their roles under Yehoyada's di-
rection that Rest Day. **10** The priest had taken
the spears and the shields out of the temple
that had belonged to King David and given
them to the officers over the royal bodyguards,
11 and they all stood in position, each man
holding his weapons ready in his hand, right
around the palace and the temple and the altar,
and the king. **12** Then the priest brought young
Yoash out and put the crown on his head. He
handed him the official scroll, and they
anointed him and made him king. Then they
clapped their hands and shouted, "Long live
the king!"

13 When Atalyah (Athaliah) heard the sound
of the people and the guards, she came to the
people gathered at Yahweh's temple **14** and was
stunned to see the young, new king standing
near the pillar as was the custom, with the cap-
tains and the trumpeters near the king, and all
the people of the land rejoicing and sounding
trumpets. Then Atalyah tore her clothes and
shouted out, "Treachery! Treason!" **15** Then
Yehoyada the priest commanded the officials
over the bodyguards and the army officers,
"Bring her out away from these public build-
ings. Don't kill her in the temple, but kill any-
one who tries to rescue her. **16** So they grabbed

6 RV 11:1 · Parallel 2 Chr. 22:10–23:15

Readers' Version

her by each arm and took her out through the entrance for the horses to the palace, and she was executed there.

Yehoyada's reforms · Southern kingdom[7]

17 Then Yehoyada led the making of an agreement between Yahweh and the king and the people, for the people to serve Yahweh, and also between the king and between the people. 18 Then people from all over the country went to the temple of Ba'al and broke down the altars. They smashed his images to pieces and killed Matan the priest of the Ba'al in front of the altars. Meanwhile, Yehoyada the priest placed guards over Yahweh's temple. 19 Then he organised the officers over the royal guard and the palace guards to bring the king down from the temple of Yahweh, and along with all the people, they entered the palace via the gate usually used by the king's bodyguards, and he sat on the throne. 20 All the people celebrated and the city was quiet because Atalyah (Athaliah) had been put to death with the sword at the palace.

21 Yoash was only seven when he became king of Yehudah (Judah).

Yoash reigns over Yehudah · Southern kingdom[8]

12:1 Yoash became king in Yerushalem (Jerusalem) in the seventh year of Yehu's (Jehu's) reign over Yisrael (Israel). (His mother was Tsivyah from Be'er-Sheva (Beersheba).) He reigned for forty years 2 and all his life, he did what Yahweh had said was correct because he was instructed by Yehoyada the priest. 3 However, they didn't remove the hilltop shrines where the people continued sacrificing and burning incense.

4 Then Yoash told the priests, "You all must collect all the money that's donated to Yahweh's temple, whether it's the money they're required to pay or the money that they themselves decide to give as sacred offerings to buy things for the temple. 5 Each priest must bring what they've collected from their acquaintances, and use it to make repairs wherever they find that there's been damage to the temple."

6 However, when the priests still hadn't repaired the damaged portions by the twenty-third year of Yoash's reign, 7 he sent for Yehoyada the priest and the other priests, and questioned them, "Why aren't you all strengthening the temple where it was damaged? From now on, you all won't take any money from acquaintances, but you'll give it directly for repairing the damage." 8 So the priests agreed to not accept money from the people, and that they themselves wouldn't be the ones to repair the temple.

9 Then Yehoyada the priest took a wooden chest and he made a hole in the top, and he placed it at the right of the altar. When a person came into the temple, the priests guarding the entrance would place any donated money into the chest. 10 Whenever they noticed the chest getting full, the king's secretary and the high priest would go and count the money as they bagged it up. 11 They used the funds to pay the supervisors and inspectors and the tradesmen doing the repair work: carpenters and builders, 12 and the masons and stone-cutters. They also paid for the timber and stones, and everything else that was needed for the temple repairs. 13 However, they didn't use the donated silver coins that were brought to the temple to make silver bowls, snuffers, basins, or trumpets, or for any other gold or silver instruments within the temple, 14 because they passed on the donations to the people doing the work, and in this way Yahweh's residence got repaired. 15 They didn't audit the men who took the silver coins to the workers because the whole system was based on trust. 16 The silver coins that came as part of the guilt offering and the sin offerings were not used for temple repairs—they belonged to the priests.

17 Then Aram's (Syria's) King Hazael attacked Gat and captured it, after which he decided to attack Yerushalem (Jerusalem). 18 Yehudah's

7 **RV 11:17 · Parallel** 2 Chr. 23:16-21

8 **RV 12:1 · Parallel** 2 Chr. 23:16-23

Readers' Version

(Judah's) King Yoash took all the sacred things that his ancestors Yehoshafat (Jehoshaphat) and Yehoram (Jehoram) and Ahazyah, the previous kings of Yehudah, had consecrated and his sacred things, and all of the gold that was found in Yahweh's temple treasuries and in the king's palace, and he sent them to Aram's King Hazael who then cancelled his planned attack on Yerushalem.

19 Everything else that Yoash said and did is written in the book of the events of the kings of Yehudah.

20 However, his servants got together and planned his assassination, and they ambushed Yoash in Beyt-Milo on the road going down to Sila. **21** His servants Yozavad (Shim'at's son) and Yehozavad (Shomer's son) struck him and he died, and they buried him in his ancestral tomb in the city of David, and his son Amatsyah replaced him as king.

Yehoahaz reigns over Yisrael · Northern kingdom

13:1 In the twenty-third year of Ahazyah's son Yoash reigning over Yehudah (Judah), Yehu's (Jehu's) son Yehoahaz became king over Yisrael (Israel) and reigned seventeen years from Shomron (Samaria). **2** He did what Yahweh had said was evil and he imitated the customs of Nevat's son Yarov'am (Jeroboam) who had caused Yisrael to sin—Yehoahaz didn't end them. **3** So Yahweh got angry with Yisrael and he allowed them to be defeated by Aram's (Syria's) King Hazael and his son Ben-Hadad throughout Yehoahaz's reign. **4** Then Yehoahaz prayed to Yahweh for help, and Yahweh listened to him because he saw how much Yisrael was being oppressed by the Aramean king. **5** So Yahweh sent a saviour to Yisrael, and they were able to stand up against the Arameans, and only then were the Israelis able to live peacefully again from day to day. **6** Despite that, they didn't stop imitating the sins of Yarov'am's family who caused Yisrael to sin—no, Yehoahaz kept doing them, and even the Asherah pole remained standing in Shomron.

7 The Aramean king had thoroughly destroyed much of Yisrael's forces only leaving fifty horsemen, ten chariots, and ten thousand foot soldiers for Yehoahaz.

8 Everything else that Yehoahaz said and did, including his great achievements, is written in the book of the events of the kings of Yisrael. **9** Then Yehoahaz died and was buried in Shomron, and his son Yehoash replaced him as king.

Yehoash reigns over Yisrael · Northern kingdom

10 In the thirty-seventh year of King Yoash reigning over Yehudah (Judah), Yehoahaz's son Yehoash became king over Yisrael (Israel) and reigned sixteen years from Shomron (Samaria). **11** He did what Yahweh had said was evil and he imitated the customs of Nevat's son Yarov'am (Jeroboam) who had caused Yisrael to sin—Yehoash didn't end them. **12** Everything else that Yehoash said and did, including his great achievements fighting along with Yehudah's King Amatsyah, is written in the book of the events of the kings of Yisrael. **13** Then Yehoash died and was buried in Shomron with the former kings of Yisrael, and his son Yarov'am replaced him on the throne.

Elisha's death · Northern kingdom

14 Meanwhile Elisha had been sick and heading for his last days, so Yisrael's (Israel's) king Yehoash had been to see him, and cried as he stood in front of him and said, "My father, my father, Yisrael's chariot and its horsemen!"[9]

15 Then Elisha had told him, "Bring a bow and arrows." So he'd brought them, **16** and he'd told Yisrael's king, "Grab the bow ready to draw." So he did that, and then Elisha put his hands over the king's hands. **17** Then he said, "Open that window facing east." The king opened it and Elisha said, "Shoot." So he shot the arrow and Elisha said, "That's an arrow of victory for Yahweh and an arrow of victory against Aram (Syria). You will thoroughly defeat Aram at Afek." **18** Then he continued, "Take the rest of the arrows." Yisrael's king took them, and Elisha told him, "Strike the ground with them." So he banged the arrows on the ground three

9 RV 13:14 · Note This was the same as what Elisha had said when Eliyah had been taken to heaven. See 2:12.

Readers' Version

times. 19 But the man of God was angry with him, and said, "You should have bashed them five or six times, then you would have bashed Aram up completely, but now you'll defeat them three times."

20 Then Elisha died and was buried.

Every year in the spring, bands of Moavim would make raids on Yisrael, 21 and once there was a group of Israelis burying a man. When they saw the raiding party, they quickly threw the body into Elisha's tomb, and when it touched his bones, the man came back to life and stood up.

War between Yisrael and Aram/Syria · Northern kingdom

22 Aram's (Syria's) King Hazael oppressed Yisrael (Israel) all through Yehoahaz's reign, 23 but Yahweh showed favour to the Israelis and felt compassionate towards them. Because of his agreement with Avraham, Yitshak (Isaac), and Ya'akov (Jacob), he didn't want to destroy them, and he hasn't tossed them out even to this day.

24 When Aram's King Hazael died, his son Ben-Hadad replaced him as king. 25 Then Yehoahaz's son Yehoash attacked Aram three times, and he took back the cities from Hazael's son Ben-Hadad that had been taken in the war in his father Yehoahaz's time.

Amatsyah reigns over Yehudah · Southern kingdom[10]

14:1 In the second year of the reign of Yehoahaz's son Yehoash over Yisrael (Israel), Amatsyah replaced his father Yoash as king of Yehudah (Judah). 2 He was twenty-five when he became king, and he reigned from Yerushalem (Jerusalem) for twenty-nine years. (His mother's name was Yeho'adin from Yerushalem.) 3 He did what Yahweh had said was correct behaviour, although not as thoroughly as his ancestor David—his behaviour was more like that of his father Yoash. 4 However, the hilltop shrines weren't removed—people were still sacrificing and burning incense at them.

5 Once he was firmly established as king, Amatsyah had the servants executed who had assassinated his father Yoash,[11] 6 but he didn't have their sons executed, because in the scroll where Mosheh (Moses) had written the laws, Yahweh had commanded, "Fathers shouldn't be executed for what their sons do, nor should sons be executed for the crimes of their ancestors—rather an individual should only be executed for their own crime."

7 He led the victory over ten thousand Edomim in the Salt Valley, seizing Sela in the battle and renaming it as Yakete'el which it's still called today.

8 Then Amatsyah sent messengers to Yisrael's (Israel's) King Yehoash (the son of Yehoahaz, the son of Yehu (Jehu)) challenging, "Come on, let's have it out with each other." 9 But King Yehoash replied to Yehudah's King Amatsyah, "The thistle that was in the Levanon forest sent to the cedar that was in the Levanon, saying, 'Give your daughter to my son as a wife.' But a wild animal that was in the Levanon passed by and it trampled the thistle. 10 It's true that you won a battle with Edom and you're feeling encouraged. Accept that honour, but stay home now. Why would you stir up trouble only to fall again—you and all Yehudah with you?"

11 But Amatsyah wouldn't listen so the armies of Yisrael's King Yehoash and Yehudah's (Judah's) King Amatsyah faced each other in Yehudah at Beyt-Shemesh (Heliopolis). 12 However, Yehudah was overcome by Yisrael, and its warriors had to flee home from the battlefield. 13 So Yisrael's King Yehoash captured Yehudah's King Amatsyah (the son of Yehoash, the son of Ahazyah) in Beyt-Shemesh. Then he went to Yerushalem (Jerusalem), and he broke down the city wall from the Efrayim Gate up to the Corner Gate—almost two hundred metres of it. 14 He took all the gold and silver, and all the equipment that was found in Yahweh's temple and in the palace treasuries. Then taking some hostages as well, he returned to

10 **RV 14:1 · Parallel** 2 Chr. 25:1-24

11 **RV 14:5 · Cross-ref.** 12:20-21.

Readers' Version

Shomron (Samaria).

15 Everything else that Yehoash said and did, including his battle with Yehudah's King Amatsyah, is written in the book of the events of the kings of Yisrael. 16 Then Yehoash died and was buried in Shomron with the former kings of Yisrael, and his son Yarov'am (Jeroboam) replaced him as king.

The death of Yehudah's King Amatsyah · Southern kingdom[12]

17 Yehudah's (Judah's) King Amatsyah (Yoash's son) lived another fifteen years after the death of Yisrael's (Israel's) King Yehoash (Yehoahaz's son). 18 Everything else that Amatsyah said is written in the book of the events of the kings of Yehudah.

19 Some people in Yerushalem (Jerusalem) had plotted to assassinate him, but he fled to Lakish. However, they followed him there and killed him in the city. 20 His body was carried back on horses, and he was buried in his ancestral tomb in Yerushalem in the city of David. 21 Then all the people of Yehudah took sixteen year old Azaryah and made him king to replace his late father Amatsyah. 22 Azaryah built up Eylot and he reestablished it as part of Yehudah before he died.

Yarov'am II reigns over Yisrael · Northern kingdom

23 In the fifteenth year of Yoash's son King Amatsyah's reign over Yehudah (Judah), Yehoash's son Yarov'am (Jeroboam) became king of Yisrael (Israel) and reigned from Shomron (Samaria) for forty-one years. 24 He did what Yahweh had said was evil—he imitated the customs of Nevat's son Yarov'am who'd caused Yisrael to sin. 25 Yarov'am restored Yisrael's border from Levo-Hamat through to the Sea of the Desert, as Yisrael's god Yahweh had foretold via his servant Yonah (Jonah)—the son of the prophet Amitay from Gat-Hahefer. 26 That was because Yahweh had seen how Yisrael had suffered badly and had been unable to control their own destinies, and that no other country would help them. 27 But Yahweh had said that he wouldn't allow Yisrael to be destroyed, so he'd used Yehoash's son Yarov'am to save them.

28 Everything else that Yarov'am said and did, including how he fought and restored Damesek (Damascus) and Hamat to Yisrael, is written in the book of the events of the kings of Yisrael. 29 Then Yarov'am died and was buried with the former kings of Yisrael, and his son Zekaryah (Zechariah) replaced him as king.

Azaryah/Uziyah reigns over Yehudah · Southern kingdom[13]

15:1 In the twenty-seventh year of King Yarov'am's (Jeroboam's) reign over Yisrael (Israel), Amatsyah's son Azaryah[14] became king of Yehudah (Judah). 2 He was sixteen when he became king, and he reigned from Yerushalem (Jerusalem) for fifty-two years. (His mother's name was Yekaleyah from Yerushalem.) 3 He did what Yahweh had said was correct behaviour like his father Amatsyah had done, 4 although the hilltop shrines weren't removed—the people continued to sacrifice at them and burn incense. 5 Yahweh caused Azaryah to become a leper and he had to live separately from others for the rest of his life, so his son Yotam (Jotham) ran the palace and dealt with the people's problems.

6 Everything else that Azaryah said and did is written in the book of the events of the kings of Yehudah. 7 Azaryah died[15] and was buried in the ancestral tomb in the city of David, and his son Yotam replaced him as king.

Zekaryah reigns over Yisrael · Northern kingdom

8 In the thirty-eighth year of King Azaryah's reign over Yehudah (Judah), Yarov'am's (Jeroboam's) son Zekaryah (Zechariah) became king over Yisrael (Israel) and ruled for six months from Shomron (Samaria). 9 He did what Yahweh had said was

12 **RV 14:17 · Parallel** 2 Chr. 25:25-28

13 **RV 15:1 · Parallel** 2 Chr. 26:1-23

14 **RV 15:1 · Note** Azaryah was also known as Uzziyah, especially from v13 onwards.

15 **RV 15:7 · Cross-ref.** Isa 6:1.

Readers' Version

evil, just as his ancestors had done—he didn't avoid the kinds of behaviour that had been done by Nevat's son Yarov'am who had caused Yisrael to sin. **10** Then Yavesh's son Shalum plotted to assassinate him, and he attacked him in front of the people and killed him, and he replaced him as king.

11 Everything else that Zekaryah said and did is written in the book of the events of the kings of Yisrael.

12 Previously Yahweh had told King Yehu (Jehu) that his descendants would sit on the throne for four generations, and that had come true.[16]

Shalum reigns over Yisrael · Northern kingdom

13 Yavesh's son Shalum became king in the thirty-ninth year of King Azaryah's reign over Yehudah (Judah), but he only reigned from Shomron (Samaria) for one month. **14** Then Gadi's son Menahem came to Shomron from Tirtsah, and he attacked Yavesh's son Shalum there in Shomron and killed him, replacing him as king. **15** Everything else that Shalum said, including his assassination plot, is written in the book of the events of the kings of Yisrael (Israel). **16** At that time, Menahem attacked Tifsah and everyone in the city, and its borders from Tirtsah, because they wouldn't open their gates. Then he ripped open the bellies of all the pregnant women there.

Menahem's reign over Yisrael · Northern kingdom

17 In the thirty-ninth year of King Azaryah's reign over Yehudah (Judah), Gadi's son Menahem became king over Yisrael (Israel) and he reigned from Shomron (Samaria) for ten years. **18** He did what Yahweh had said was evil—he didn't avoid the kinds of behaviour that had been done by Nevat's son Yarov'am (Jeroboam) who had caused Yisrael to sin.

During his reign, **19** King Pul of Ashur (Assyria) attacked Yisrael, and Menahem gave Pul over thirty tonnes of silver, so he would support Menahem's reign. **20** (Menahem had taxed all the wealthy families across Yisrael—fifty silver coins per adult male.) As a result, the Assyrian king cancelled his plans to attack and returned home.

21 Everything else that Menahem said and did is written in the book of the events of the kings of Yisrael. **22** Then Menahem died and was buried, and his son Pekahyah replaced him as king.

Pekahyah reigns over Yisrael · Northern kingdom

23 In the fiftieth year of King Azaryah's reign over Yehudah (Judah), Menahem's son Pekahyah became king over Yisrael (Israel) and reigned from Shomron (Samaria) for two years. **24** He did what Yahweh had said was evil—he didn't avoid the kinds of behaviour that had been done by Nevat's son Yarov'am (Jeroboam) who had caused Yisrael to sin. **25** But Pekah the son of Remalyah, Pekahyah's third officer, plotted to assassinate him, and he attacked him in the palace in Shomron with the assistance of Argov and Aryeh and fifty Giladim. So Pekah killed King Pekahyah and replaced him as king. **26** Everything else that Pekahyah said and did is written in the book of the events of the kings of Yisrael—look at it.

Pekah's reign over Yisrael · Northern kingdom

27 In the fifty-second year of King Azaryah's reign over Yehudah (Judah), Remalyah's son Pekah became king over Yisrael (Israel) and reigned from Shomron (Samaria) for twenty years. **28** He did what Yahweh had said was evil—he didn't avoid the kinds of behaviour that had been done by Nevat's son Yarov'am (Jeroboam) who had caused Yisrael to sin.

29 During the reign of King Pekah over Yisrael, Ashur's (Assyria's) King Tiglat-Pileser came, and he captured the cities of Iyon, Avel-Beyt-Ma'akah, Yanoah, Kedesh, and Hatsor, and the regions of Gilead, Galil, and Naftali (Naphtali), and he exiled their people to Ashur.

30 Then Elah's son Hoshea plotted to assassinate Remalyah's son Pekah, and he attacked him, killing him and replacing him as king in the twentieth year of King Yotam's (Jotham's)

16 RV 15:12 · Cross-ref. 2Ki 10:30.

reign over Yehudah. **31** Everything else that Pekah said and did is written in the book of the events of the kings of Yisrael.

Yotam's reign over Yehudah · Southern kingdom[17]

32 In the second year of Remalyah's son Pekah's reign over Yisrael (Israel), Azaryah's son Yotam (Jotham) began to reign over Yehudah (Judah). **33** He was twenty-five when he became king, and he reigned from Yerushalem (Jerusalem) for sixteen years. (His mother's name was Yerusha, the daughter of Tsadok.) **34** He did what Yahweh had said was correct behaviour like his father Azaryah/Uziyah had done, **35** although the hilltop shrines weren't removed—the people continued to sacrifice at them and burn incense. Yotam built the upper gate to Yahweh's temple.

36 Everything else that Yotam said and did is written in the book of the events of the kings of Yehudah. **37** In those days, Yahweh began to send Aram's (Syria's) King Retsin and Remalyah's son Pekah against Yehudah. **38** Then Yotam died and was buried in their ancestral tomb in the city of his ancestor David, and his son Ahaz replaced him as king.

Ahaz's reign over Yehudah · Southern kingdom[18]

16:1 In the seventeenth year of Remalyah's son Pekah's reign over Yisrael (Israel), Yotam's (Jotham's) son Ahaz began to reign over Yehudah (Judah). **2** Ahaz was twenty when he became king and he reigned from Yerushalem (Jerusalem) for sixteen years, but he didn't follow what his god Yahweh had said was correct behaviour like his ancestor David had done. **3** Actually he followed the behaviour of the kings of Yisrael, and he even sacrificed his son as a burnt offering[19] like they do in the nations that Yahweh hated and which Yahweh had driven out of the land as the Israelis had entered. **4** Also he sacrificed on the hilltop shrines and burnt incense on them, and on the hills and under every large tree.

5 Then Aram's (Syria's) King Retsin and Yisrael's King Pekah (Remalyah's son) came uphill to attack Yerushalem, and they laid siege against King Ahaz but they weren't able to conquer the city.[20] **6** At that time, Aram's King Retsin recaptured Eylot City for Aram, then he drove the Yehudim (Judeans) out of Eylot and Arameans moved in instead and they have lived there to this day. **7** So Ahaz sent messengers to Ashur's (Assyria's) King Tiglat-Pileser, "I'm your servant and your son. Come up and rescue me from the kings of Aram and Yisrael who are here attacking me." **8** Ahaz took the gold and silver from Yahweh's temple and from the palace treasuries, and sent it as a gift to the Assyrian king. **9** The king of Ashur listened to him and went in and attacked Damesek (Damascus), and he captured it and exiled its people to Kir, and he executed King Retsin.

10 King Ahaz went to meet the Assyrian King Tiglat-Pileser in Damesek, and he saw the altar that was there. So he sent a drawing and the detailed measurements of the altar to the priest Uriyah. **11** So Uriyah built the altar according to the plans that King Ahaz had sent from Damesek and had it finished before King Ahaz returned from Damesek. **12** When the king got back to Yerushalem and saw the altar, he went up onto it **13** and made his burnt offering and his grain offering, and he poured out his drink offering, and he sprinkled the blood of his peace offerings onto the altar. **14** He got the bronze altar[21] that had been dedicated to Yahweh moved back away from the temple and placed beside the newer, bigger altar. **15** Then King Ahaz ordered Uriyah, "Use the large altar for the morning burnt offerings and the evening grain offerings, and for the king's burnt offerings and grain offerings, and for the

17 RV 15:32 · Parallel 2 Chr. 27:1-9

18 RV 16:1 · Parallel 2 Chr. 28:1-27

19 RV 16:3 · Cross-ref. Deu 12:31.

20 RV 16:5 · Cross-ref. Isa 7:1.

21 RV 16:14 · Cross-ref. Exo 27:1-2; 2Ch 4:1.

Readers' Version

people's burnt offerings and grain offerings and drink offerings. Use it for sprinkling all the blood of the burnt offerings and of the sacrifices on. But I will use the bronze altar for seeking guidance." **16** So Uriyah the priest put everything into effect that King Ahaz had commanded.

17 Then King Ahaz cut the frames off the stands outside the temple, and he removed the basins off them. He took down 'The Sea' that had been sitting on top of bronze bulls and put it on the stone floor.[22] **18** He also removed the canopy that had been built at the temple for use on the Rest Days, and blocked up the king's outer entrance to the temple so that the Assyrian king couldn't use it.

19 Everything else that Ahaz said and did is written in the book of the events of the kings of Yehudah (Judah). **20** Then Ahaz died[23] and was buried in their ancestral tomb in the city of David, and his son Hizkiyah (Hezekiah) replaced him as king.

Hoshea's reign over Yisrael · Northern kingdom

17:1 In the twelfth year of King Ahaz's reign over Yehudah (Judah), Elah's son Hoshea became king over Yisrael (Israel) and he reigned from Shomron (Samaria) for nine years. **2** He did what Yahweh had said was evil, although nothing like the Israeli kings who'd preceded him. **3** Ashur's (Assyria's) King Shalmaneser attacked and defeated him, and Hoshea became his servant and paid tribute to him. **4** But the Assyrian king discovered that Hoshea was planning a revolt and had sent messengers to the Mitsri (Egyptian) King So and hadn't kept up the annual tribute payment. So the Assyrian king arrested Hoshea and imprisoned him.

The fall of Shomron/Samaria · Northern kingdom

5 Then the Assyrian king attacked the whole country, including besieging Shomron (Samaria) for three years. **6** In the ninth year of Hoshea's reign, the Assyrian king captured Shomron. He exiled the Israelis to Ashur (Assyria) and settled them in Halah, and in Havor along the Gozan River, and in the cities of the Madim (Medes).

7 That happened because the Israelis had sinned against their god Yahweh who had rescued them from King Par'oh (Pharaoh) in Mitsrayim (Egypt). They had sinned by worshipping other gods **8** and imitating the customs of the people groups who Yahweh had driven out of the country ahead of them. They had also followed their kings in doing evil things. **9** The Israelis had done things secretly that their god Yahweh had said weren't right, and they'd built hilltop shrines everywhere from the largest fortified cities to the smallest towns. **10** They'd also erected stone pillars to honour gods and Asherah poles on every high hill and under every large tree,[24] **11** and they'd burnt incense there on all those hilltops just like the people groups that Yahweh had driven off the land ahead of them—doing those evil things had made Yahweh angry. **12** They'd served idols even when Yahweh had forbidden them from doing that.

13 So Yahweh had warned Yisrael (Israel) and Yehudah (Judah) by the declarations by all of his prophets who said, "Turn from your evil ways and obey my commands and statutes, following all of the instructions that I gave your ancestors and which I delivered to you through my servants, the prophets." **14** However, they hadn't listened and had hardened their attitudes just like their ancestors who wouldn't put their trust in their god Yahweh. **15** They rejected his statutes and the agreement that he made with their ancestors, and the warning that he gave them. They chose to worship lifeless objects, and they became hollow and empty themselves, just like the people of the surrounding countries which Yahweh had commanded them not to imitate. **16** They disobeyed the instructions given to them by their god

22 RV 16:17 · Cross-ref. 1Ki 7:23-39; 2Ch 4:2-6.

23 RV 16:20 · Cross-ref. Isa 14:28.

24 RV 17:10 · Cross-ref. 1Ki 14:23.

Readers' Version

Yahweh by molding two metal calves for themselves[25] and making an Asherah pole. Then they bowed down and worshipped the sun, moon, and stars, and they served Ba'al. 17 They sacrificed their sons and daughters, and used fortune-tellers and witchcraft[26]—making themselves slaves to evil by doing what Yahweh had forbidden, and so making him angry. 18 So that's why Yahweh had become very angry at the northern kingdom of Yisrael and caused them to be removed from the land. Only the Southern kingdom of Yehudah remained, 19 but even they didn't obey the commands of their god Yahweh, but copied much of the bad behaviour of the northern kingdom. 20 So Yahweh rejected all the Israelis and he caused them to suffer, including being plundered by enemy armies, until he banished them from his presence.

21 Firstly he'd torn the northern kingdom out from the leadership of David's descendants and they'd made Nevat's son Yarov'am (Jeroboam) king. Then Yarov'am had driven them away from following Yahweh, and had induced them into serious sin. 22 So the Israelis had followed Yarov'am into sin and then didn't turn away from it, 23 and finally Yahweh had removed the people of the northern kingdom of Yisrael from his presence just like he'd warned he would through the messages of his servants, the prophets. So the people were deported to Ashur (Assyria) where they remain to this day.

The Assyrians settle in the northern kingdom · Northern kingdom

24 Then the Assyrian king sent people from Bavel (Babylon) and from Kut and from Ivah and from Hamat and Sefarvayim, and he settled them in the cities of the northern kingdom in place of the Israelis. And they possessed Shomron (Samaria) and lived in its towns. 25 At first the new inhabitants living there didn't respect Yahweh, however he sent lions among them and they started killing them. 26 They told the Assyrian king, "The people groups that you exiled from their own countries and settled in the towns around Shomron, don't know the customs of the god of the land. So he's sent lions against them, and look at them—killing them because they don't know the customs of the god of the land." 27 "Send one of the priests back that was brought from there," the Assyrian king commanded. "He can go back there and settle there again, then he can teach them the customs of the god of that place." 28 So they found one of the priests who had been exiled from Shomron and sent him back to Yisrael (Israel). He settled in Beyt-El (Bethel) and taught the people how Yahweh wanted to be served.

29 But each people group had made their own gods and put them in the hilltop shrines that the Israelis had made before being exiled. Each people group did that in the area where they'd been resettled. 30 Those from Bavel made their god Sukot-Benot, those from Kut made Nergal, those from Hamat made their god Ashima, 31 and the Avim made Nivhaz and Tartak. The Sefarvim sacrificed their own sons in the fire to their gods Adramelek and Anamelek. 32 At the same time, they tried placating Yahweh, but they also made their own priests to make sacrifices for them in their hilltop shrines. 33 So they were worshipping Yahweh along with their own gods—they'd brought those customs with them from the countries they'd been exiled from 34 and which they still follow to this day.

They're not actually obeying Yahweh because they're not obeying the statutes or laws, or instructions or behaviour that Yahweh commanded the descendants of Ya'akov (Jacob) (who he'd renamed to 'Yisrael').[27] 35 Yahweh had made an agreement with them and had commanded them, "You all must not honour other gods or bow to them. You all must not

25 **RV 17:16 · Cross-ref.** 1Ki 12:28.

26 **RV 17:17 · Cross-ref.** Deu 18:10.

27 **RV 17:34 · Cross-ref.** Gen 32:28; 35:10.

Readers' Version

serve them or sacrifice to them.[28] 36 Only serve Yahweh who used his incredible power to rescue you all out of Mitsrayim (Egypt). Honour him, and only bow to him and sacrifice to him.[29] 37 Always take care to obey the statutes and customs, and the law and the instructions that he wrote for you, and you all must not honour other gods. 38 Don't forget the agreement that I made with you all, and don't honour other gods— 39 only your god Yahweh, and then he himself will rescue you from all your enemies." 40 However, they didn't listen, preferring to follow the customs from their former places of residence.

41 So those people groups honoured Yahweh, but also served their idols. This continued through the generations with their descendants continuing the same behaviour.

Hizkiyah's reign over Yehudah · Southern kingdom[30]

18:1 In the third year of Elah's son King Hoshea's reign over Yisrael (Israel), Ahaz's son Hizkiyah (Hezekiah) became king of Yehudah (Judah). 2 He 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 Avi.) 3 He did what Yahweh had said was correct behaviour like his ancestor King David had done. 4 He demolished the hilltop shrines and shattered their pillars, and he cut down the Asherah poles. He crushed the bronze serpent that Mosheh (Moses) had made,[31] because the Israelis had named it 'Nehushtan' and had been offering incense to it until then. 5 Hizkiyah fully trusted in Yisrael's god Yahweh, and no other king was like him among all the kings of Yehudah that either preceded or followed him. 6 He relied completely on Yahweh—not turning away from following him, and he obeyed the instructions that Yahweh had commanded Mosheh. 7 So Yahweh helped him and he was successful in everything he did. He rebelled against the Assyrian king and refused to submit to his demands. 8 He attacked and defeated the Pelishtim as far as Azah (Gaza) and its borders—both the smaller towns and the fortified city.

9 Then in the fourth year of King Hizkiyah's reign (it was the seventh year of Elah's son Hoshea's reign over Yisrael), the Assyrian King Shalmaneser had attacked Shomron (Samaria) and besieged it. 10 They had finally captured the city after three years. That was the sixth year of Hizkiyah's reign over Yehudah and the ninth year of Hoshea's reign over Yisrael. 11 So that was when the Assyrian king had exiled the people of the northern kingdom of Yisrael to Halah and to Havor along the Gozan River, and to the cities of the Madim (Medes). 12 That happened because they didn't obey their god Yahweh, but instead they broke the agreement with him—everything that Yahweh's servant Mosheh had commanded. They didn't take notice of it and they didn't obey it.

Sanheriv invades Yehudah · Southern kingdom[32]

13 In the fourteenth year of King Hizkiyah's (Hezekiah's) reign, Assyrian King Sanheriv (Sennacherib) attacked all the fortified cities in Yehudah (Judah) and captured them. 14 So King Hizkiyah of Yehudah sent messengers to the Assyrian king at Lakish, saying, "I apologise for my mistake. Stop attacking me and I'll give you whatever you demand of us." Then the Assyrian king demanded a tribute of ten tonnes of gold and ten tonnes of silver. 15 So Hizkiyah gave him all the silver out of the temple and from the palace treasuries. 16 He cut the doors off Yahweh's temple and the pillars that he'd overlaid gold onto, and gave them to the Assyrian king.

17 However, the Assyrian king still sent his general and some of his top officials from Lak-

28 **RV 17:35 · Cross-ref.** Exo 20:5; Deu 5:9.

29 **RV 17:36 · Cross-ref.** Deu 6:13.

30 **RV 18:1 · Parallel** 2 Chr. 29:1-2; 31:1

31 **RV 18:4 · Cross-ref.** Num 21:9.

32 **RV 18:13 · Parallel** 2 Chr. 32:1-19; Isa 36:1-22

Readers' Version

ish to King Hizkiyah in Yerushalem (Jerusalem). They arrived at Yerushalem with a large army and camped by the aquifer supplying the upper pool that was near the field where the people washed their clothes. **18** They called out to the king, and Hilkiyah's son Elyakim who was the palace manager, and the scribe Shevna, and Asaf's son Yoah the secretary, went out to them.

19 Then the top Assyrian commander said to them, "Now, tell Hizkiyah that the great Assyrian king asks him who he thinks he's trusting in. **20** He claims to be powerful enough to fight us. Who is he trusting to help you all that gives you confidence to rebel against us? **21** Listen, your king's trusting in a broken stick to lean on which will just splinter and pierce his hand. That's what King Par'oh (Pharaoh) of Mitsrayim (Egypt) is like to everyone who puts their trust in him. **22** Ah, but he might tell me that he's trusting in your god Yahweh to help you all. If so, I'd ask him if he isn't the one whose hilltop shrines King Hizkiyah demolished when he told you people in Yerushalem and all Yehudah (Judah) that you have to worship at the altar there?

23 "So now ask your king if he'll make a deal with my master, the king of Ashur (Assyria): He'll give you two thousand horses, on the condition that you can supply two thousand horsemen who can ride them. **24** If you can't do that, how could you all possibly repel even one of our army units? Haha, but of course you trust in Mitsrayim to supply chariots and horsemen. **25** Do you think that we've come here to destroy this place without Yahweh's permission? No, no, it was Yahweh himself who told us to attack and destroy you."

26 But Elyakim and Shevna and Yoah asked the Assyrian commander, "Please speak Aramit to your servants because we understand it. Don't speak our language because our people on the nearby city wall will be able to understand it."

27 "Ha ha, do you think my master sent this message just to you three and your king?" he replied. "No, don't you think that this message is also for the hungry people sitting on the wall who'll soon have to eat their own dung and drink their own urine along with you?"

28 Then he stood up and called out loudly in Hebrew, "Everyone listen to what the great king from Ashur says: **29** He's warning you all not to let Hizkiyah (Hezekiah) deceive you, because he's unable to save you all from our army. **30** And don't let him force you all to trust in Yahweh thinking that we won't capture your city and that Yahweh will somehow rescue you all. **31** Don't listen to Hizkiyah because the Assyrian king is offering you all a chance to come out of the city and surrender. In exchange for saving me some trouble, you'll be able to drink fresh water again and enjoy the fruit off your own trees out here **32** until he comes here. Then he'll take you to another country like your own—with grain and wine, and bread and vineyards, olive oil and honey. That way you'll live and not die of starvation. So don't listen to Hizkiyah when he misleads you saying that Yahweh will rescue you all." **33** Did the gods of any of the other countries rescue their people from the power of the Assyrian king? **34** Where were the gods of Hamat and Arpad? Where were the gods of Sefarvayim, Hena, and Ivah? Were they able to save Shomron (Samaria) from the king's power? **35** From all the other countries, which of their gods was able to save their people, that might give confidence that Yahweh might be able to rescue Yerushalem (Jerusalem) from the king's power?"

36 But the people on the wall listening remained silent—they didn't say a word because the king had already ordered them not to answer the Assyrians. **37** Then Hilkiyah's son Elyakim the palace manager, Shevna the scribe and Asaf's son Yoah the secretary went back in the city to Hizkiyah, tearing their clothes as they went, and they relayed the words of the chief commander to him.

Readers' Version

Hizkiyah/Hezekiah consults Yeshayah/Isaiah · Southern kingdom[33]

19:1 When King Hizkiyah (Hezekiah) heard the threats from the Assyrian king, he tore his clothes and dressed in sackcloth, and went into Yahweh's temple. **2** He sent his palace manager Elyakim and the scribe Shevna, along with the elders of the priests, all dressed in sackcloth, to Amots's son Yeshayah (Isaiah) the prophet **3** to tell him, "Hizkiyah says: 'Today is a day of distress and rebuke and disgrace, as if the baby is right there ready to be delivered, but the mother has lost all her strength. **4** Perhaps your god Yahweh has heard everything that the chief commander said when his master the Assyrian king sent him: he defied the living God, and so maybe your god Yahweh will punish him for his words. Lift up a prayer on behalf of the people that are still left here.' "

5 When King Hizkiyah's servants got to Yeshayah, **6** he told them, "This is what you all should tell your master: Yahweh says that you needn't be afraid of what you heard when those young men from the Assyrian king insulted him. **7** Listen, Yahweh will cause him to hear a report and he'll place a fearful spirit in him so he'll decide to return to his own country where he'll be assassinated."

The Assyrians threaten again · Southern kingdom[34]

8 When the chief commander returned to the Assyrian king, he discovered that they'd pulled out of Lakish and were now fighting against Livnah city. **9** Then the king heard that the Kushi (Ethiopian) King Tirhakah was preparing to attack, so he decided to return home but he sent messengers to Hizkiyah (Hezekiah) to say, **10** "Tell Yehudah's (Judah's) King Hizkiyah not to let the god he trusts in deceive him by telling him that Yerushalem (Jerusalem) won't be captured by the king of Ashur (Assyria). **11** Tell him that he must have heard how the Assyrian armies have completely devastated other countries, so he shouldn't think that he will be saved from it. **12** The gods of the countries destroyed by my ancestors never saved them—those in Gozan, Haran, Retsef, or Eden's descendants in Telasar. **13** Where's the king of Hamat, or the king of Arpad, or the kings of the cities of Sefarvayim, Hena, or Ivah now?"

14 Hizkiyah took the letter that the messengers had brought and read it, then he went up to the temple and spread it out in front of Yahweh **15** and prayed to him, "Yahweh the god of Yisrael (Israel), who lives above the winged creatures.[35] You alone are God—the one over all the kingdoms of the earth. You yourself made the heavens and the earth. **16** Lean this way, Yahweh, and look, and listen to Sanheriv's (Sennacherib's) words mocking the living God. **17** Yes Yahweh, the Assyrian kings have certainly destroyed many countries and their lands. **18** The Assyrians burnt the peoples' gods because they weren't living gods, but rather gods of wood and stone made by people and they've destroyed them. **19** But now Yahweh our god, please save us from his army, then all the kingdoms in the world will know that you, Yahweh, are God—you alone."

Yahweh's response to Hizkiyah via Yeshayah · Southern kingdom[36]

20 Then Amots's son Yeshayah (Isaiah) sent this message to Hizkiyah (Hezekiah): Yisrael's (Israel's) god Yahweh says, "Because you prayed to me concerning the Assyrian King Sanheriv (Sennacherib), I have listened. **21** This is what Yahweh says about that king:

Tsiyon's (Zion's) daughter despises you and derides you.

Yerushalem's (Jerusalem's) daughter shakes her head at you.

22 Who did you think you were teasing and insulting?

Who did you think you were shouting at?

33 **RV 19:1 · Parallel** Isa. 37:1-7

34 **RV 19:8 · Parallel** Isa. 37:8-20

35 **RV 19:15 · Cross-ref.** Exo 25:22.

36 **RV 19:20 · Parallel** Isa. 37:21-38

Readers' Version

Did you raise your eyebrows against Yisrael's holy one?
23 You sent messengers that mocked me.
You said that you went over the highest mountains with your many chariots.
That you went to the highest parts of Levanon and harvested its tallest cedars—its best trees.
That you've been to the end of the inhabited world with its densest forest.
24 You said that you've dug wells far away and drunk their water,
yet with your own feet you dried up all of Mitsrayim's (Egypt's) rivers.
25 Haven't you heard that I made plans long ago—
that what I previously planned, I'm now making it happen?
Fortified cities will collapse into heaps of rubble.
26 Their inhabitants will be powerless—dismayed and ashamed.
They'll be as vulnerable as plants in the countryside,
or like the grass that grows on the rooftops—
they wilt and wither before they can grow tall. DOUBLE-CHECK
27 Yes, I know when you sit down and when you go out.
When you come in and rage against me.
28 Because you've raged against me and your arrogance has come to my ears,
I'll put my hook in your nose and my bit in your mouth,
and I'll lead you back on the road that you came here on.
29 "So this will be a sign to you Hizkiyah (Hezekiah):
This year you'll eat what grew by itself,
and next year whatever seeded by itself,
but in the third year you'll sow crops and plant vineyards, and eat what you harvest.
30 Yehudah's (Judah's) surviving descendants will send their roots downwards and will produce fruit above,
31 because a remnant will survive Yerushalem's (Jerusalem's) siege,
and Mt. Tsiyon (Zion) will have survivors
because Yahweh's enthusiasm will make sure it happens.
32 "So this is what Yahweh says to the Assyrian king:
He won't enter this city or shoot an arrow into it.
He won't push a large shield towards it or make a ramp up into it.
33 He'll return on the same road that he arrived on,
and Yahweh declares that he won't enter this city,
34 because Yahweh will defend this city
to save it for his own sake
and for the sake of his servant David."
35 That very night, Yahweh sent an angel out to kill 185,000 warriors, so when the army got up early the next morning there were dead bodies all over the place. 36 So the Assyrian King Sanheriv (Sennacherib) pulled out and went back to live in Nineveh. 37 While he was bowing in the temple of his god Nisrok, Adramelek and Sharetser ran him through with a sword before escaping to the Ararat region, and so his son Esar-Hadon replaced him as king.

Hizkiyah's sickness and recovery · Southern kingdom[37]

20:1 By that time, King Hizkiyah (Hezekiah) was terminally ill and Amots's son the prophet Yeshayah (Isaiah) came to him and told him, "Yahweh says to get your affairs in order because you're dying and won't recover."
2 But Hizkiyah rolled over to face the wall and prayed to Yahweh, 3 "Oh Yahweh, please remember that I've served you faithfully, and done what you asked with total sincerity." Then Hizkiyah cried loudly.
4 As Yeshayah was leaving, Yahweh gave him this message before he'd even reached the middle courtyard, 5 "Go back and tell Hizkiyah, the leader of my people, 'Your ancestor David's god Yahweh says that he's heard your prayer and

37 **RV 20:1 · Parallel** Isa. 38:1-8,21-22; 2 Chr. 32:24-26

Readers' Version

seen your tears. He's decided to heal you and you'll be well enough to go to the temple within three days. **6** He's added fifteen years to your life, plus he'll rescue you and this city from the Assyrian king. Yahweh will defend Yerushalem (Jerusalem) for his own sake and for the sake of his servant David."

7 Then Yeshayah told them to bring some pressed figs, and they brought them and placed them on the sore, and Hizkiyah started getting better.

8 Hizkiyah asked Yeshayah, "What's the sign that Yahweh will heal me and that I'll be able to go to the temple on the third day?"

9 "Yes, Yahweh will give you a sign that he'll do what he said," Yeshayah replied. "Do you want the shadows to advance suddenly or go back?"

10 "It's easy for the shadows to go forward," said Hizkiyah. "So make them go backwards ten steps."

11 So the prophet Yeshayah called to Yahweh, and he made the shadow go back on the steps made by King Ahaz—the shadow went ten steps backward.

Hizkiyah shows off his treasures · Southern kingdom[38]

12 At that time, Baladan's son former King Merodak-Bal'adan of Bavel (Babylon) heard that Hizkiyah (Hezekiah) was sick and sent him letters and a gift. **13** When the messengers arrived, Hizkiyah listened to them, then he showed them his entire treasure house: the gold and silver, the spices and the best oil, the house of his armour, and everything that was in his treasuries. He didn't keep anything in his palace or in his kingdom secret from them. **14** Later the prophet Yeshayah (Isaiah) came to King Hizkiyah and he asked him, "Where were those men from and what did they say?"

"They came from a distant land—from Bavel," he replied.

15 "What did they see in your house?" Yeshayah asked.

"They saw everything that's in my house," he replied. "There wasn't anything in my treasuries that I didn't show them."

16 Then Yeshayah told Hizkiyah, "Listen to Yahweh's message: **17** He says that days are coming when everything in your house, and everything that your ancestors stored carefully away until this day will be carried to Bavel. Nothing will be left behind.[39] **18** What's more, some of your own biological descendants will be taken and they'll be castrated to become servants of the Babylonian king."

19 "What you said from Yahweh is fine," Hizkiyah replied to Yeshayah. "At least I might have peace and stability in my time."

Hizkiyah's death · Southern kingdom[40]

20 Everything else that Hizkiyah (Hezekiah) said and did, including his making the pool and tunnel to bring water into the city, is written in the book of the events of the kings of Yehudah (Judah). **21** In due course, Hizkiyah died and his son Menasheh (Manasseh) replaced him as king.

Menasheh's reign over Yehudah · Southern kingdom[41]

21:1 Menasheh (Manasseh) was twelve when he became king, and he reigned over Yehudah (Judah) from Yerushalem (Jerusalem) for fifty-five years. (His mother was Heftsi-Bah.) **2** He did what Yahweh had said was evil like the evil behaviour of the people groups that Yahweh had driven out of the region ahead of the Israelis.[42] **3** In fact he went backwards from his father and rebuilt the hilltop shrines that Hizkiyah (Hezekiah) had destroyed, and he made altars for Ba'al, and he made an Asherah pole, just like Yisrael's (Israel's) King Ahav had, and he worshipped the constellations and followed astrology. **4** Also he

38 RV 20:12 · Parallel Isa. 39:1-8

39 RV 20:17 · Cross-ref. 2Ki 24:13; 2Ch 36:10.

40 RV 20:20 · Parallel 2 Chr. 32:32-33

41 RV 21:1 · Parallel 2 Chr. 33:1-20

42 RV 21:2 · Cross-ref. Jer 15:4.

Readers' Version

built altars in Yahweh's residence, where Yahweh had said, "I will establish my reputation in Yerushalem."[43] 5 Menasheh built altars to all the constellations in the two temple courtyards. 6 He even sacrificed his own son as a burnt offering. He practised divination and read omens, and consulted mediums and fortune-tellers. He did so much that Yahweh had said was evil, provoking Yahweh to get angry. 7 He placed the Asherah idol that he'd made in the temple about which Yahweh had said to David and to his son Shelomoh (Solomon), "I will establish my reputation forever in this house and in Yerushalem in Yehudah, which I've chosen out of all the tribes of Yisrael.[44] 8 If only the Israelis will take care to obey everything that I've commanded them, and all the instructions that my servant Mosheh (Moses) gave them, then I won't continue to cause them to leave the area that I gave to their ancestors." 9 But they didn't listen and Menasheh led them astray to do more evil things even than the people groups that Yahweh had destroyed as the people had entered the region.

10 So Yahweh announced via his servants the prophets, 11 "Because Yehudah's King Menasheh has done such terribly evil things, worse even than the Amorim who were there before him, and because he's even made Yehudah sin with his idols, 12 then Yisrael's god Yahweh says: Listen, I'll bring such terrible disaster to Yehudah including Yerushalem that people won't even be able to handle hearing the news about it. 13 I'll use the same tape measure for Yerushalem that I used for Shomron (Samaria), and I'll use the same plumb line that I used for Ahav's extended family. I'll wipe Yerushalem away, just like someone dries a bowl—they wipe it dry and then turn it upside down. 14 I'll abandon the small remainder of my people here, and I'll hand them over to their enemies—they'll become the spoil and plunder of all their enemies, 15 because they've done what I told them was evil, and they've been making me angry from the time that their ancestors were brought out of Mitsrayim (Egypt) right up to this day."

16 Menasheh even poured out so much innocent blood that he filled Yerushalem with it from one side to the other, and that was on top of his other sin of leading Yehudah into doing what Yahweh had said was evil.

17 Everything else that Menasheh said and did, including the sins that he committed, is written in the book of the events of the kings of Yehudah. 18 Then Menasheh died and was buried in the palace garden (made by Uza), and his son Amon replaced him as king.

Amon's reign over Yehudah · Southern kingdom

19 Amon was twenty-two when he became king, and he reigned from Yerushalem (Jerusalem) for two years. (His mother was Haruts's daughter Meshulemet from Yotvah.) 20 He did what Yahweh had said was evil, just like his father Menasheh (Manasseh) had done. 21 In fact, he followed everything that his father had done, including serving the same idols and bowing to them. 22 He abandoned Yahweh, the god of his ancestors, and didn't obey his instructions.

23 But Amon's servants plotted to assassinate him, and they killed him in the palace. 24 However, the people executed everyone who'd been involved in the conspiracy against King Amon, and they installed his son Yoshiyah (Josiah) as king in his place.

25 Everything else that Amon said and did is written in the book of the events of the kings of Yehudah (Judah). 26 He was buried in his tomb in the garden made by Uza, and his son Yoshiyah replaced him as king.

Yoshiyah's reign over Yehudah · Southern kingdom[45]

22:1 Yoshiyah (Josiah) was eight when he became king, and he reigned from Yerushalem (Jerusalem) for

43 **RV 21:4 · Cross-ref.** 2Sam 7:13.

44 **RV 21:7-8 · Cross-ref.** 1Ki 9:3-5; 2Ch 7:12-18.

45 **RV 22:1 · Parallel** 2 Chr. 34:1-2

Readers' Version

thirty-one years.[46] (His mother was Adayah's daughter Yedidah from Batsekat.) 2 He did what Yahweh had said was correct behaviour, following all the customs of his ancestor King David, and obeying Yahweh's instructions.

A scroll is discovered in the temple · Southern kingdom[47]

3 In the eighth month of the eighteenth year of King Yoshiyah's (Josiah's) reign, he sent the scribe Shafan (the son of Atsalyah the son of Meshulam) to the temple, saying 4 "Go to the high priest Hilkiyah and get him to count the silver that was brought into Yahweh's temple, which the door-keepers collected from the people. 5 Then have it given to the supervisors of the temple repairs, and then they can pay the workers who are repairing the damage— 6 the craftsmen, builders, and masons, as well as buying wood and quarried stones for the repairs." 7 They won't need to submit detailed accounts for it because they're trustworthy people.[48]

8 During the repairs, the high priest Hilkiyah told the scribe Shafan, "I found a scroll in the temple with Yahweh's instructions written on it." So Hilkiyah gave the scroll to Shafan to read. 9 Then Shafan the scribe went to the king with this report, "Your servants handed over the money that had been collected in the temple, and they gave it to the supervisors of the workers doing the repairs." 10 Then he added, "And the priest Hilkiyah gave me a scroll." Then he read it out loud to King Yoshiyah.

11 When the king heard the contents of the scroll, he tore his clothes 12 and commanded the priest Hilkiyah, Shafan's son Ahikam, Mikayah's son Akbor, the scribe Shafan, and the king's servant Asayah, 13 "Go and inquire from Yahweh on my behalf and on behalf of the people and all Yehudah (Judah), concerning the words of this scroll that was found. Because it sounds like Yahweh must be very angry at us because our predecessors didn't listen to what's written on this scroll and didn't do what was expected of us."

14 So Hilkiyah the priest and Ahikam, Akbor, Shafan, and Asayah went to the prophetess Huldah (the wife of Shalum, the son of Tikvah, the son of Harhas, the one in charge of looking after the priests' uniforms who lived in the newer part of Yerushalem (Jerusalem)), and they spoke to her. 15 She told them that Yisrael's (Israel's) god Yahweh had said, "Tell the man who sent you all to me 16 that Yahweh says this: I'm going to bring disaster to this place and its inhabitants, just like it's written in the scroll that the king read 17 because they abandoned me. They offered sacrifices to other gods in order to make me angry at everything they do, so now my anger will be directed against this place and it's not stoppable. 18 But to the king of Yehudah who sent you all to seek Yahweh, tell him that Yisrael's god Yahweh says: The words that you heard from the scroll, 19 because you're open to learn and because you humbled yourself in front of Yahweh when you heard my promise that this place and its inhabitants would become a horror and a curse, and because you've torn your clothes and wept in front of me, then Yahweh said that he's taken notice of you. 20 Because of that, he'll allow you to die and be buried peacefully, and you yourself won't witness the destruction that will come to this place."

So they relayed those messages back to King Yoshiyah (Josiah).

Yoshiyah removes false gods · Southern kingdom[49]

23:1 Then King Yoshiyah (Josiah) summoned all the elders of Yerushalem (Jerusalem) and across Yehudah (Judah), 2 and he went to the temple, and all the inhabitants of Yerushalem and from all across Yehudah went with him, along with the priests and prophets, and all the people from the most to

46 **RV 22:1 · Cross-ref.** Jer 3:6.

47 **RV 22:3 · Parallel** 2 Chr. 34:8-28

48 **RV 22:7 · Cross-ref.** 2Ki 12:15.

49 **RV 23:1 · Parallel** 2 Chr. 34:3-7,29-33

Readers' Version

the least important. Then he read to them every word on the scroll of the agreement that had been found in Yahweh's residence. 3 Then the king stood by the pillar and he made a commitment in front of Yahweh to follow Yahweh and to obey his commands and testimonies and statutes with all sincerity, and with every desire to respect the words of that agreement that had been written on that scroll. All the people were also included in that commitment.

4 Then the king commanded the high priest Hilkiyah and the other priests, and the temple guards to bring out all the utensils that were made for Ba'al and Asherah and for all the constellations, and he burnt them outside Yerushalem in the Kidron countryside, and carried their ashes to Beyt-El (Bethel). 5 He got rid of the pagan priests that the kings of Yehudah had appointed to burn incense in the hilltop shrines around Yerushalem and across the rest of Yehudah, and the ones who burnt incense to Ba'al, and to the sun and moon and to the planets and constellations. 6 He got the Asherah pole out from Yahweh's temple and burnt it in the Kidron valley outside Yerushalem, then he pounded the ashes to dust and threw it over people's graves. 7 He demolished the cubicles of the male temple prostitutes that were inside Yahweh's temple where the women were weaving Asherah coverings.[50] 8 He brought all the priests to Yerushalem from the cities of Yehudah, and he desecrated the hilltop shrines where the priests had burnt incense, from Geva to Be'er-Sheva (Beersheba). He demolished the hilltop shrines that Yehoshua (Joshua) (a city official) had built near the city gate (on the left of the gate as you entered the city). 9 However those priests from those hilltop shrines weren't allowed to serve at the altar in Yerushalem, but they were allowed to eat unleavened bread like the other priests.

10 Yoshiyah (Josiah) also desecrated the Tofet, which was in the Ben-Hinom valley, so that the people couldn't sacrifice their children to Molek. 11 The horses that the kings of Yehudah had offered to the sun, he prevented from approaching the hall of the official Netan-Melek that was in the courtyards of Yahweh's temple, and he set fire to the chariots of the sun. 12 Then the king tore down the altars that were on the roof in Ahaz's upper chamber that the kings of Yehudah made, and the altars that Menasheh (Manasseh) made in the two courtyards of Yahweh's temple and he threw the rubble into the Kidron valley. 13 The king desecrated the hilltop shrines that faced Yerushalem—they were south of the Mt. of Destruction' (the Mt. of Olives). King Shelomoh (Solomon) had built shrines for Ashtarot (the disgusting god of the Tsidonim (Sidonians)) and for Kemosh (the disgusting god of Moav (Moab)) and for Molek (the disgusting god of the Amonim). 14 He also smashed the sacred pillars and cut down the Asherah poles, then he desecrated those places by filling them with human bones.

15 He also demolished the altar that was in Beyt-El (Bethel)—the hilltop shrine that Nevat's son Yarov'am (Jeroboam) had made when he'd caused Yisrael (Israel) to sin. He demolished both that altar and the hilltop shrine, then he burnt the shrine. He crushed everything to dust, and he burnt the Asherah pole. 16 As Yoshiyah turned around, he noticed some graves that were there on the hillside, so he had some bones removed from the graves, and he burnt them on the altar to desecrate it. This fulfilled what Yahweh had said through the man of God who'd proclaimed these things.[51] 17 Yoshiyah turned again and asked, "Whose tomb is that?"

"It's the prophet's tomb," the people of Beyt-El replied, "The one who came from Yehudah and predicted that what you just did to that altar would happen." 18 "Don't disturb it then," the king ordered. "Don't let anyone remove his bones."

So they left his bones alone, along with the

50 RV 23:7 · Note It's not exactly clear what these woven objects were, or how or where they were used.

51 RV 23:16 · Cross-ref. 1Ki 13:2-3.

Readers' Version

bones of the other prophet who came from Shomron (Samaria). **19** So King Yoshiyah removed all the hilltop shrines that the Israeli kings had made in the cities of Shomron, provoking Yahweh's anger. The king destroyed them just like he'd done to the ones in Beyt-El. **20** He executed all the priests from those hilltop shrines on the altars there, and then he burnt human bones on them to desecrate them. Then he returned to Yerushalem (Jerusalem).

The celebration of 'pass-over' · Southern kingdom[52]

21 Then the king commanded all the people, "Celebrate 'pass-over' for your god Yahweh according to what's written on this scroll with the agreement." **22** Since the days of the leaders who judged Yisrael (Israel), or in all the days of the kings of Yisrael and Yehudah (Judah), a 'pass-over' had never been celebrated like that one **23** in the eighteenth year of King Yoshiyah's (Josiah's) reign. That 'pass-over' celebration in Yerushalem (Jerusalem) was to honour Yahweh.

King Yoshiyah's other activities · Southern kingdom

24 King Yoshiyah (Josiah) also removed the ritual pits and the soothsayers, and the images and idols, and all the abhorrences that were seen in Yerushalem (Jerusalem) and in the Yehudah (Judah) region, in his diligence to obey everything that was written on the scroll that the priest Hilkiyah found in the temple. **25** No other king had been like Yoshiyah who'd led the people back to obeying Yahweh—following Mosheh's (Moses') written instructions with all his heart and all his spirit and all his energy. What's more, there's never been a king like him since then either.

26 However, Yahweh's anger against Yehudah hadn't cooled down after everything that King Menasheh (Manasseh) had done[53] to make him angry, **27** and Yahweh said, "I will also remove Yehudah out of my sight, just like I removed Yisrael (Israel). I'll also reject this city of Yerushalem that I chose, as well as the house where I'd said that my name would be established."

28 Everything else that Yoshiyah said and did is written in the book of the events of the kings of Yehudah. **29** While he was still king, the Mitsri (Egyptian) king Par'oh (Pharaoh) Nekoh attacked the Assyrian king near the Perat (Euphrates) River. King Yoshiyah went to meet him, but Nekoh killed him at Megidon when he saw him. **30** His servants brought his body back to Yerushalem from Megidon, and they buried him in his own tomb. Then the people got his son Yehoahaz, and they anointed him and made him king in place of his father.

Yehoahaz's reign over Yehudah · Southern kingdom[54]

31 Yehoahaz was twenty-three when he became king, and he reigned from Yerushalem (Jerusalem) for only three months. (His mother was Yirmiyah's (Jeremiah's) daughter Hamutal from Livnah.) **32** He did what Yahweh had said was evil like many of his ancestors had done. **33** Par'oh (Pharaoh) Nekoh took him from Yerushalem and imprisoned him at Rivlah in the Hamat region, and he forced the residents of Yehudah (Judah) to pay him thirty kilograms of gold and three tonnes of silver. **34** Then Nekoh appointed Yoshiyah's (Josiah's) son Elyakim as the new king but changed his name to Yehoyakim. Then he took Yehoahaz to Mitsrayim (Egypt) where he eventually died. **35** So Yehoyakim paid the gold and silver to Par'oh by assessing the wealth of the people and then forcibly collecting the gold and silver from them to send to Par'oh Nekoh.

Yehoyakim's reign over Yehudah · Southern kingdom[55]

36 Yehoyakim was twenty-five when he became king, and he reigned from Yerushalem (Jerusalem) for eleven years. (His mother was Pedayah's

52 RV 23:21 · Parallel 2 Chr. 35:1-19

53 RV 23:26 · Cross-ref. 2Ki 21:1-18.

54 RV 23:31 · Parallel 2 Chr. 36:2-4

55 RV 23:36 · Parallel 2 Chr. 36:5-8

Readers' Version

daughter Zevidah from Rumah.) 37 He did what Yahweh had said was evil like many of his ancestors had done.

24:1 During his reign, the Babylonian King Nevukadnetsar (Nebuchadnezzar) attacked, and Yehoyakim ruled under him for three years before rebelling against him. 2 Then Yahweh sent troops of Kasdim (Chaldeans), troops from Aram (Syria), troops from Moav (Moab), and Amoni troops against Yehudah (Judah) at different times to destroy them, just as Yahweh had said through his servants the prophets. 3 Those things troubled Yehudah at Yahweh's command to remove them out of his sight because of all of King Menasheh's (Manasseh's) sins 4 and because he'd killed innocent people—Yahweh wouldn't forgive him because he'd filled Yerushalem with innocent blood.

5 Everything else that Yehoyakim said and did is written in the book of the events of the kings of Yehudah. 6 Then Yehoyakim died and his son Yehoyakin replaced him as king.

7 The Mitsri (Egyptian) king didn't continue his attacks on other countries, because the Babylonian king captured land all the way from the Mitsri river as far as the Perat (Euphrates) River—everything that had been controlled by Mitsrayim (Egypt).

Yehoyakin's reign over Yehudah · Southern kingdom[56]

8 Yehoyakin was eighteen when he became king, but he reigned from Yerushalem (Jerusalem) for only three months. 9 He did what Yahweh had said was evil just like his father had done.

10 At that time, the Babylonian king Nevukadnetsar (Nebuchadnezzar) sent his army to besiege Yerushalem, 11 and Nevukadnetsar himself travelled there to observe the operation. 12 Yehudah's (Judah's) King Yehoyakin went out to surrender to the Babylonian king, along with his mother, his servants, his captains, and his officials. So the Babylonian king took him captive in the eighth year of his reign. 13 Then all the valuables were brought out of Yahweh's temple and the palace. All the gold furnishings that had been made for the temple by King Shelomoh (Solomon) were cut into pieces. 14 Then all the army leaders and officials, and all the craftsmen and blacksmiths from Yerushalem (some ten thousand people) were taken into exile, leaving only the poorer people behind.

15 King Yehoyakin was exiled from Yerushalem to Bavel (Babylon), along with his mother and wives, his officials, 16 seven thousand top soldiers, and a thousand skilled craftsmen and blacksmiths—leaving no one behind to fight or make weapons.

17 Then the Babylonian king appointed Yehoyakin's uncle Matanyah as king in his place and he changed his name to Tsidkiyah (Zedekiah).

Tsidkiyah/Zedekiah's reign over Yehudah · Southern kingdom[57]

18 Tsidkiyah (Zedekiah) was twenty-one when he became king and he reigned from Yerushalem (Jerusalem) for eleven years. (His mother was Yirmiyah's (Jeremiah's) daughter Hamutal from Livnah.) 19 He did what Yahweh had said was evil, just like Yehoyakin had done. 20 Because Yahweh was still very angry, he had the people of Yerushalem and all Yehudah (Judah) driven away out of his sight.

Then Tsidkiyah rebelled against the Babylonian king.

Yerushalem's defeat · Southern kingdom

25:1 In the ninth year of Tsidkiyah's (Zedekiah's) reign, on the tenth day of the tenth month, the Babylonian King Nevukadnetsar (Nebuchadnezzar) brought all his army to Yerushalem (Jerusalem). They made their camp outside the city, and then built attack structures all around it 2 and besieged the city for two years. 3 The people didn't have enough to eat and the famine became severe. 4 Then the Babylonians began breaking into the city, but the local fighters sneaked out at night through a gate between two walls near the king's garden and escaped down to the desert plain. 5 However, the

56 **RV 24:8 · Parallel** 2 Chr. 36:9-10

57 **RV 24:18 · Parallel** 2 Chr. 36:11-12; Jer. 52:1-3a

Readers' Version

Babylonian soldiers chased after the king and they overtook him on the Yeriho (Jericho) plains, and his army scattered. **6** King Tsidkiyah was captured and taken to the Babylonian king at Rivlah, where he was sentenced— **7** He was forced to watch as his sons were slaughtered, then his eyes were gouged out and he was taken to Bavel (Babylon) restrained with two bronze chains.

The demolition of the temple · Southern kingdom[58]

8 On the seventh day of the fifth month of Babylonian King Nevukadnetsar's (Nebuchadnezzar's) nineteenth year as king, his servant Nevuzar-Adan, who was his chief bodyguard, went to Yerushalem (Jerusalem). **9** He set fire to Yahweh's temple and the palace, and all of Yerushalem's houses, so no important building remained. **10** Then the army under the command of Nevuzar-Adan tore down the walls surrounding Yerushalem. **11** He exiled all the rest of the people from the city, all the surrendered soldiers, and the rest of the population, **12** but he let some of the poorest people remain on the land to look after the vineyards and as farmers.

13 The Babylonians smashed the bronze pillars and the bases and the bronze 'sea' from the temple, and took all the bronze to Bavel (Babylon). **14** They also took the pots and shovels, the snuffers and spoons, and all the bronze utensils used in the temple activities. **15** They took the fire-pans and the gold and silver bowls. **16** The bronze from the two pillars, the 'sea', and the bases that had been made for the temple by Shelomoh (Solomon) was too heavy to be weighed. **17** Each pillar was over eight metres high, plus a bronze capital on top that was over a metre high. They were decorated with latticework with bronze pomegranates all around.

The people of Yehudah get exiled to Bavel · Southern kingdom[59]

18 Nevuzar-Adan exiled to Bavel (Babylon) the high priest Serayah, the second priest Tsefanyah (Zephaniah), and the three temple entrance guards. **19** From the city, he took one official who was a military inspector, five of the king's advisors, and the army commander's secretary in charge of recruitment, plus sixty other important men. **20** Nevuzar-Adan took them all to the Babylonian king at Rivlah **21** in the Hamat region, but the king had them all executed there.

The governor there to Yehudah Gidaliyas · Southern kingdom[60]

So the large majority of the people of Yehudah (Judah) were exiled out of their country. **22** From those who the Babylonian King Nevukadnetsar (Nebuchadnezzar) allowed to remain, he appointed Gedalyah (son of Shafan's son Ahikam) over them. **23** When all the army captains and their men heard that the Babylonian king had appointed Gedalyah, they came to Gedalyah at Mitspah. This was Netanyah's son Yishmael (Ishmael), Kareah's son Yohanan, Tanhumet's son Serayah the Netofati, and the Ma'akati's son Ya'azanyah, along with their men.
24 Gedalyah made an agreement with them and their men, telling them, "Don't be afraid of the Babylonian officials. Stay in the land and serve the Babylonian king, and he'll be good to you."
25 But in the seventh month, Yishmael (the son of Netanyah, the son of Elishama who was a descendant of King David) brought ten men with him and attacked Gedalyah, and killed him, along with the Yehudim (Judeans) and the Kasdim (Chaldeans) who were with him at Mitspah. **26** After that, all the people, with or without any official status, along with the army commanders fled to Mitsrayim (Egypt) because they were afraid of what the Babylonians might do to them.

58 RV 25:8 · Parallel Jer. 52:12-33

59 RV 25:18 · Parallel Jer. 52:24-27

60 RV 25:22 · Parallel Jer. 40:7-9; 41:1-3

Readers' Version

Yehoyakin gets released from prison · Southern kingdom[61]

27 Thirty-seven years after Yehudah's (Judah's) King Yehoyakin had been exiled to Bavel (Babylon), Evil-Merodak had just become the new king of Bavel and he released Yehoyakin from prison on the 27th of the twelfth month. **28** He spoke kindly to Yehoyakin and honoured him more than the other kings who'd been taken to Bavel. **29** He was allowed to change out of his prison clothes, and was permitted to eat at the king's table for the rest of his life, **30** as well as being given a daily monetary allowance.

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61 RV 25:27 · Parallel Jer. 52:31-34