

Read the Bible in A Year: Chronological

Readings for June 14-20, 2020

This week's readings narrative of the history of Israel and Judah from 1 and 2 Kings and 2 Chronicles.

The 2 Kings reading will be in italic type and the 2 Chronicles reading will be in regular type.

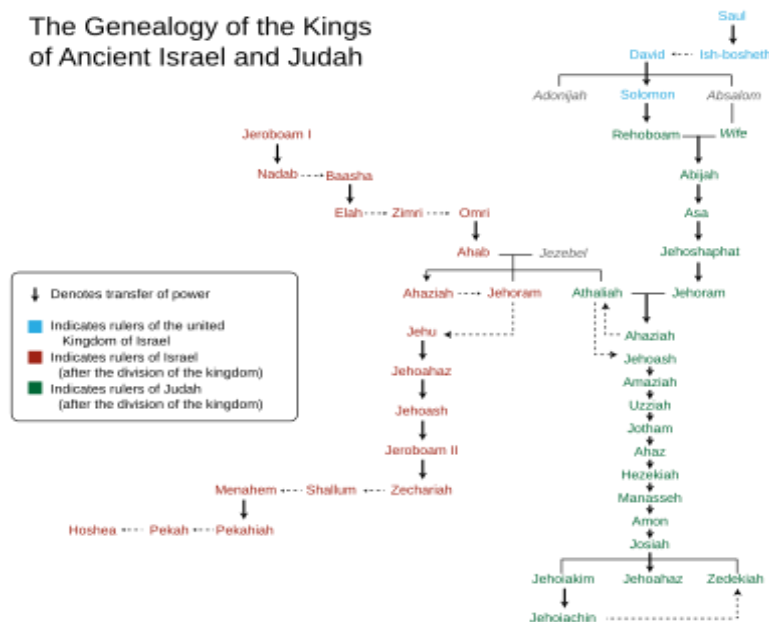
Sometimes the readings will seem repetitive as the same account is retold in a different place.

This week, we also visit the story of Jonah as it is placed in its historical setting.

If you recall, the nation of Israel is divided into two kingdoms: The Kingdom of Israel to the north, and the Kingdom of Judah in the south. Last week's readings left at the point in history when Jehosaphat was in his last years as King of Judah, and Ahaziah had taken the reign as King of Israel following the death of Ahab. Elijah was serving as a prophet to the people of Israel and was training Elisha to continue his work when he was gone.



The Genealogy of the Kings of Ancient Israel and Judah



The narrative continues with events in the Kingdom of Israel (northern kingdom)



Then Moab rebelled against Israel after the death of Ahab. Ahaziah fell down through a lattice in his upper chamber that was in Samaria and became ill. So he sent messengers and said to them, "Go, inquire of Baal-Zebub the god of Ekron whether I will recover from this illness." But the angel of the LORD said to Elijah the Tishbite, "Arise, go up to meet the messengers of the king of Samaria, and say to them, 'Is it because there is not a God in Israel, that you go to inquire of Baal-Zebub the god of Ekron?' Therefore thus says the LORD, 'You will not come down from the bed on which you have gone up but will surely die.'" Then Elijah departed.

When the messengers returned to the king, he said to them, "Why have you returned?" And they said to him, "A man came up to meet us and said to us, 'Go, return to the king that sent you and say to him: Thus says the LORD: Is it because there is no God in Israel that you are sending to inquire of Baal-Zebub the god of Ekron? Therefore you will not come down from the bed on which you have gone up, but you will surely die.'" He said to them, "What sort of man was he who came up to meet you and told you these things?" They answered him, "He was a hairy man with a leather belt around his waist." He said, "It was Elijah the Tishbite."

Then the king sent to him a captain of fifty with his fifty men. He went up to Elijah, and there he was, sitting on the top of a hill, and he said to him, "Man of God, the king says, 'Come down.'" But Elijah answered the captain of fifty: "If I am a man of God, then let fire come down from heaven and consume you and your fifty men." Then fire came down from heaven and consumed him and his fifty men. Again, the king sent to him another captain of fifty with his fifty men. He said, "Man of God, thus says the king: Come down quickly." Elijah answered them, "If I am a man of God, let fire come down from heaven and consume you and your fifty men." Then the fire of God came down from heaven and consumed him and his fifty men. Then again, the king sent a third captain of fifty with his fifty men. The third captain of fifty went up, came and fell on his knees before Elijah, and pleaded with him, "Man of God, may my life and the life of these fifty servants of yours be precious in your sight. See, fire came down from heaven and consumed the two captains of the former fifties with their fifty men. May my life now be precious in your sight."

Then the angel of the LORD said to Elijah, "Go down with him. Do not be afraid of him." So, he arose and went down with him to the king. Then he said to him, "Thus says the LORD: Have you sent messengers to inquire of Baal-Zebub the god of Ekron, because there is no God in Israel to inquire of His word? Therefore you will not come down from the bed on which you have gone up, but you will surely die." So Ahaziah died according to the word of the LORD which Elijah had spoken.

Then Jehoram, Ahaziah's brother, reigned in his place in the second year of Jehoram son of Jehoshaphat, king of Judah, because he had no son. Now the rest of the acts of Ahaziah which he did, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel?

Now Jehoram son of Ahab reigned over Israel in Samaria in the eighteenth year of Jehoshaphat king of Judah and reigned twelve years. He did evil in the sight of the LORD, but not like his father and mother,

for he removed the pillar of Baal that his father had made. Nevertheless, he clung to the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who had caused Israel to sin. He did not depart from them.

Now Mesha king of Moab was a sheep-breeder and gave back to the king of Israel a hundred thousand lambs and the wool of a hundred thousand rams. But when Ahab died, the king of Moab rebelled against the king of Israel. King Jehoram went out of Samaria at that time and mustered all Israel. He went and sent to Jehoshaphat the king of Judah, saying, "The king of Moab has rebelled against me. Will you go with me to Moab to battle?"

He said, "I will go up. I am as you are, my people as your people, and my horses as your horses." Then he said, "Which way should we go up?" And he said, "The way through the Wilderness of Edom."

So the king of Israel, the king of Judah, and the king of Edom went, and they marched around seven days. But there was no water for the camp or for the livestock that followed them. The king of Israel said, "Alas! The LORD has called these three kings to give them into the hand of Moab!" But Jehoshaphat said, "Is there a prophet of the LORD here, through whom we may inquire of the LORD?" Then one of the king of Israel's servants answered, "Elisha the son of Shaphat, who poured water on the hands of Elijah, is here." Jehoshaphat said, "The word of the LORD is with him." So the king of Israel and Jehoshaphat and the king of Edom went down to him.

Elisha said to the king of Israel, "What have I to do with you? Go to your father's prophets, or to your mother's prophets." Then the king of Israel said to him, "No. The LORD has called these three kings to deliver them into the hand of Moab." Elisha said, "As the LORD of Hosts lives, before whom I stand, surely, were it not for my regard for Jehoshaphat the king of Judah, I would not look at you nor see you. Now bring me a musician." And when the musician played, the hand of the LORD came upon him. He said, "Thus says the LORD, 'Make this valley full of pools.' For thus says the LORD, 'You will not see wind, nor will you see rain, yet that valley will be filled with water, that you may drink, both you and your livestock, and your cattle.' This is an easy thing in the sight of the LORD, and He will give the Moabites into your hand. You will strike every fortified city and every choice city, and will cut down every good tree, and stop every spring of water, and you will ruin every good piece of land with stones." So in the morning as the offering was offered up, suddenly water flowed from the way of Edom, and the land was filled with water.

When all the Moabites heard that the kings had come up to fight against them, all who were able to bear arms and older were summoned and stood at the border. They got up early in the morning, and the sun shone on the water, and the Moabites saw the water opposite them was as red as blood. Then they said, "This is blood. The kings have surely fought together; and they have killed one another. Now therefore, Moab, to the spoil!" When they came to the camp of Israel, the children of Israel arose and struck the Moabites, so that they ran from them. And they went forward into their land, killing the Moabites. They demolished the cities, and on every good piece of land every man threw a stone and filled it with stones, and they stopped every spring of water and cut down every good tree. Only in Kir Hareseth did the stones in the wall remain, until the slingers surrounded it and struck it. When the king of Moab saw that the battle was overwhelming him, he took with him seven hundred swordsmen to break through to the king of Edom, but they were unable. Then he took his firstborn son, who would have reigned in his place, and offered him for a burnt offering on the wall. And great wrath came upon Israel, and they departed from him and returned to their own land.

And then in Judah (southern Kingdom)...

Jehoshaphat the son of Asa began to reign over Judah in the fourth year of Ahab king of Israel. Jehoshaphat was thirty-five years old when he began to reign, and he reigned twenty-five years in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Azubah, the daughter of Shilhi. He walked in all the ways of Asa his father. He did not turn aside, doing that which was right in the eyes of the LORD. Nevertheless, the high places were not taken down, and the people continued to offer sacrifices and burn incense there. Jehoshaphat made peace with the king of Israel. Now the rest of the acts of Jehoshaphat and the strength he showed and how he warred, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah? And he exterminated from the land the remnant of the male cult prostitutes who remained in the days of his father Asa. At that time there was no king in Edom, and a regent sat in the king's place. Jehoshaphat made ships of Tarshish to go to Ophir for gold, but they never made it there, for the ships were broken at Ezion Geber. Then Ahaziah the son of Ahab said to Jehoshaphat, "Let my servants go with your servants in the ships." But Jehoshaphat did not agree.

And Jehoshaphat reigned over Judah. He was thirty-five years old when he began his reign, and he was king in Jerusalem for twenty-five years. The name of his mother was Azubah the daughter of Shilhi. He walked in the way of his father Asa, and he did not turn aside from doing what was right in the eyes of the LORD. Only the high places were not taken down. The people had yet to set their hearts to the God of their fathers. And the remainder of the acts of Jehoshaphat, from beginning to end, are written in the annals of Jehu son of Hanani, which are taken up in the book of the kings of Israel. Also, Jehoshaphat king of Judah was united with Ahaziah king of Israel, who acted wickedly. Jehoshaphat joined with him to make ships to travel to Tarshish, and they made ships in Ezion Geber. And Eliezer son of Dodavahu from Mareshah prophesied against Jehoshaphat saying, "Because you have joined with Ahaziah, the LORD will tear down your works." So the ships were wrecked, so that they were not able to journey to Tarshish.

Jehoshaphat slept with his fathers and was buried with his fathers in the City of David his father, and Jehoram his son reigned in his place.

So Jehoshaphat slept with his fathers and was buried with them in the City of David, and Jehoram his son ruled in his place. And he had brothers, sons of Jehoshaphat king of Israel, Azariah, Jehiel, Zechariah, Azariahu, Michael, and Shephatiah. And their father gave them great gifts of silver, gold, and excellent items, along with fortified cities in Judah, but he gave the kingdom to Jehoram because he was the firstborn. Then Jehoram rose up over the kingdom of his father and he became strong. And he killed all his brothers with the sword and even some of the officials in Israel.

*In the fifth year of Jehoram the son of Ahab, king of Israel, Jehoram the son of Jehoshaphat, king of Judah, became king. **(yes, both kings of Israel and Judah have the same name at this time)** He was thirty-two years old when he became king, and he reigned eight years in Jerusalem. He walked in the way of the kings of Israel, just as the house of Ahab had done, for the daughter of Ahab was his wife. He did evil in the sight of the LORD. Yet the LORD was not willing to destroy Judah, for the sake of His servant David, since He promised to give a lamp to him and his sons perpetually. In his days Edom rebelled against the rule of Judah, and they put a king over themselves. So Jehoram crossed over to Zair, all his chariots with him, and he rose at night and struck Edom and the captains of their chariots who had surrounded him. But the people fled to their tents. So Edom has been in rebellion against the rule of Judah until this day. Libnah rebelled at the same time.*

In the fifth year of Joram the son of Ahab, king of Israel, Jehoram the son of Jehoshaphat, king of Judah, became king. He was thirty-two years old when he became king, and he reigned eight years in Jerusalem. He walked in the way of the kings of Israel, just as the house of Ahab had done, for the daughter of Ahab was his wife. He did evil in the sight of the LORD. Yet the LORD was not willing to destroy

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Now Jehoram was thirty-two years old when he began as king, and he reigned eight years in Jerusalem. And he walked in the ways of the kings of Israel as those from the house of Ahab did, for the daughter of Ahab was the wife of Jehoram. And he did evil in the eyes of the LORD. But the LORD was not willing to destroy the house of David because of the covenant that He made with David, and because He said that He would give a lamp to David and his sons for all days.

We pause from the stories of the kings to revisit the life of Elijah and Elisha at this time...



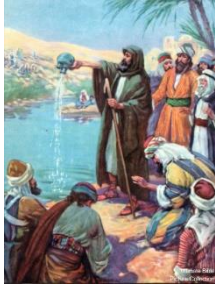
When the LORD was about to take Elijah up to heaven by a whirlwind, Elijah went with Elisha from Gilgal. Elijah said to Elisha, "Tarry here, I ask you, for the LORD has sent me to Bethel." But Elisha said to him, "As the LORD lives, and as you live, I will not leave you." So they went down to Bethel. The sons of the prophets who were at Bethel came out to Elisha and said to him, "Do you know that today the LORD is taking away your master from you?" And he said, "Yes, I know. Keep silent." Elijah said to him, "Elisha, stay here, for the LORD has sent me to Jericho." And he said, "As the LORD lives, and as you live, I will not leave you." So they entered Jericho. The sons of the prophets who were at Jericho approached Elisha and said to him, "Do you know that today the LORD is taking away your master from you?" And he said, "Yes, I know. Keep silent." Then Elijah said to him, "Stay here, for the LORD has sent me to the Jordan." And he said, "As the LORD lives, and as you live, I will not leave you." And the two of them went on.

Fifty men of the sons of the prophets went and stood at a distance, and the two of them stood by the Jordan. Then Elijah took his robe and rolled it up and struck the water, and it was divided from one side to the other. Then the two of them crossed on dry ground. And as they were crossing, Elijah said to Elisha, "Ask for something, and I will do it for you before I am taken away from you." And Elisha said, "Let a double portion of your spirit be upon me." He said, "You have asked for a difficult thing, but if you see me when I am taken from you, it will happen to you. If not, it will not."

As they continued walking and talking, a chariot of fire and horses of fire separated the two of them, and Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven. Elisha was watching and crying, "My father, my father, the chariot of Israel and its horsemen!" And he did not see him again. Then he grabbed his own clothes and tore them in two pieces. He picked up the robe of Elijah that fell from him, and he returned and stood on the bank of the Jordan. And he took the robe of Elijah that fell from him, and struck the water, and said, "Where is the LORD, God of Elijah?" When he had struck the water, it parted from one side to the other, and Elisha crossed over.

When the sons of the prophets who were at Jericho saw him from far off, they said, "The spirit of Elijah rests on Elisha." And they came to meet him and bowed down to the ground before him. They said to him, "Look now, there are fifty strong men with your servants. Let them go and look for your master. Perhaps the Spirit of the LORD has lifted him up and thrown him on some mountain or into some valley." He said, "Do not send them." When they urged him until he was ashamed, he said, "Send them." So, they sent fifty men, and they searched for three days but did not find him. When they returned to him (for he had stayed at Jericho), he said to them, "Did I not say to you, do not go?"

Elisha Performs Many Wonders...



Now the men of the city said to Elisha, "The location of this city is good, as my lord sees, but the water is bad, and the land is unfruitful." He said, "Bring me a new bowl and put salt in it." So they brought it to him. He went out to the spring of water and threw the salt into it and said, "Thus says the LORD: I have healed this water. No more death or unfruitfulness will come from it." So the waters have been healthy until this day, according to the word that Elisha spoke.

He went up from there to Bethel, and going up on the way, little boys came out of the city and made fun of him and said to him, "Go up, you bald head! Go up, you bald head!" He turned around, saw them, and cursed them in the name of the LORD. Then two she-bears came out of the woods and ripped open forty-two of the boys. He went from there to Mount Carmel, and from there he returned to Samaria.



Now one of the wives of the sons of the prophets cried to Elisha, "Your servant my husband is dead, and you know that your servant feared the LORD, but a creditor has come to take my two sons as slaves." Elisha said to her, "What shall I do for you? Tell me, what do you have in the house?" She said, "Your servant has nothing in the house except a jar of oil." Then he said, "Go, ask for vessels from all your neighbors, empty vessels and not just a few. Then go in, shut the door behind you and your sons, and pour the oil into all these vessels. When each is full, set it aside." So she left him and shut the door behind her and her sons, and they kept bringing vessels to her, and she kept pouring. When the vessels were full, she said to her son, "Bring me another vessel." But he said to her, "There is not another vessel." And the oil ceased. Then she went and told the man of God. And he said, "Go, sell the oil, and pay your debt, and you and your children can live on the rest."



One day Elisha passed through Shunem, and a noble woman was there who urged him to eat a meal. So whenever he passed through, he stopped there to eat a meal. And she said to her husband, "I know that he is a holy man of God regularly passing through near us. Let us make a little walled upper room and put for him there a bed, a table, a chair, and a lamp, so when he comes to us he can stay there." One day he came by there, and he turned aside to the upper room and lay down. He said to Gehazi his servant, "Call this Shunammite woman." So he called her and she stood before him. He said to him, "Say to her, Look, you have gone to all this trouble for us. What may be done for you? Would you have a word spoken on your behalf to the king, or to the captain of the army?" And she answered, "I am living among my people." He said, "What may be done for her?" And Gehazi said, "Actually, she has no son, and her husband is old." He said, "Call her." When he had called her, she stood in the entrance. He said, "At this season, when it is time, you will embrace a son." And she said, "No, my lord, man of God, do not lie to your servant." But the woman conceived and bore a son at that season, at the time that Elisha had told her.

When the child was older, he went out one day to his father with the reapers. He said to his father, "My head, my head!" And he said to a servant, "Carry him to his mother." When he had taken him and brought him to his mother, the boy sat on her knees until noon, and died. She went up and laid him down on the bed of the man of God, shut the door on him, and went out. Then she called to her husband, "Send me one of the servants and one of the donkeys, so that I may run to the man of God and return." He said, "Why are you going to him today? It is neither New Moon nor Sabbath." She said, "It will be all right."

Then she saddled the donkey and said to her servant, "Lead on, and do not hold back for me unless I tell you." So she went and came to the man of God at Mount Carmel. And when the man of God saw her far off, he said to Gehazi his servant, "Look, over there is the Shunammite woman. Now run to meet her, and say to her, Are you all right? Is your husband all right? Is the child all right?" And she said, "It is all right." When she came to the man of God at the mountain, she grabbed his feet. Gehazi approached to push her away. But the man of God said, "Let her alone, for she is in bitter distress, and the LORD has hidden it from me and has not told me."

Then she said, "Did I ask for a son from my lord? Did I not say, Do not give me false hope?" Then he said to Gehazi, "Prepare yourself, take my staff in your hand, and go. If you find anyone, do not greet him, and if anyone greets you, do not answer him, and lay my staff on the face of the boy." Then the boy's mother said, "As the LORD lives, and as you live, I will not leave without you." And he got up and followed her.

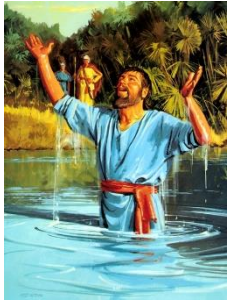
Gehazi passed through ahead of them and laid the staff on the face of the boy, but there was no sound or response. So he returned to meet him and told him, "The boy is not awake." When Elisha came into the house, he saw that the boy was dead, lying on his bed. So he went in, and shut the door on the two of them, and prayed to the LORD. He went up and lay on the child, put his face on his face, and his eyes on his eyes, and his hands on his hands. Then he bent over the child, and the child's flesh warmed. Then he got down, walked once back and forth in the house, and went up, and bent over him; the boy sneezed seven times, and the boy opened his eyes.

Then Elisha called Gehazi and said, "Call the Shunammite woman." So he called her, and she came to him. Then he said, "Pick up your son." Then she came in, fell at his feet, and bowed down to the ground. Then she picked up her son and went out.



When Elisha returned to Gilgal, there was a famine in the land. The sons of the prophets were sitting before him, and he said to his servant, "Put on the big cooking pot, and boil some stew for the sons of the prophets." One went out into the field to gather herbs. He found a wild vine and gathered from it wild gourds, filling his clothes, and came and split them into the pot of stew, but they did not recognize them. So they poured it out for the men to eat. But as they were eating the stew, they cried out, "Man of God, there is death in the pot." They could not eat it. But he said, "Then bring flour." He threw it into the pot and said, "Pour it for the people and let them eat." And there was nothing bad in the pot.

A man came from Baal Shalishah, and he brought the man of God food from the first fruits—twenty loaves of barley and fresh ears of grain—in his sack. And Elisha said, “Give it to the people and let them eat.” But his servant said, “How can I set this before a hundred men?” He said, “Give it to the people and let them eat, for thus says the LORD, ‘They will eat and have some left.’” So, he set it before them, they ate, and some was left over, according to the word of the LORD.



Now Naaman, captain of the army of the king of Aram, was a great man before his master and held favor because by him the LORD had given deliverance to Aram. He was also a mighty warrior, but he had leprosy. The Arameans had gone out raiding and had taken captive a little girl from the land of Israel, and she waited on the wife of Naaman. She said to her mistress, “If only my lord were before the prophet who is in Samaria! Then he would take away his leprosy from him.”

So Naaman went in and told his lord, “Thus and so spoke the girl from the land of Israel.” The king of Aram said, “Go, and I will send a letter to the king of Israel.” So he went and took with him ten talents^d of silver, six thousand shekels of gold, and ten sets of clothes. ⁶ He brought the letter to the king of Israel, which read, “Now when this letter comes to you, know that I have sent Naaman my servant to you, that you may take away from him his leprosy.”

When the king of Israel had read the letter, he tore his clothes and said, “Am I God, to kill and to give life, that this man sends a man to me to take away his leprosy? But consider and see how he is seeking a quarrel with me.” But when Elisha the man of God heard that the king of Israel had torn his clothes, he sent word to the king, saying, “Why have you torn your clothes? Let him come to me, and he will know that there is a prophet in Israel.” So Naaman came with his horses and chariot and stood at the entrance to the house of Elisha. Elisha sent a messenger to him, saying, “Go and wash seven times in the Jordan, and your flesh will be returned and cleansed.”

But Naaman became angry and went away and said to himself, “Surely he could have come out, and stood and called on the name of the LORD his God, and waved his hand over the infected area, and taken away the leprosy. Are not Abana and Pharpar, rivers of Damascus, better than all the waters of Israel? Could I not wash in them and be clean?” So he turned and went away in a rage.

But his servants approached and spoke to him, “My father, if the prophet had told you to do some great thing, would you not have done it? How much more when he said to you, ‘Wash and be clean’?” So he went down and dipped himself in the Jordan seven times, according to the word of the man of God, and his flesh returned like the flesh of a little boy, and he was clean.

Then he returned to the man of God, he and all his company. He came and stood before him, and he said, “Now I know that there is no God in all the land, except in Israel. Now take a gift from your servant.” But he said, “As the LORD lives, before whom I stand, I will take no gift.” He urged him to take it, but he refused.

Then Naaman said, “If not, let two mule loads of dirt be given to your servant, for your servant will no longer offer a burnt offering or sacrifice to any god, except the LORD. But may the LORD pardon your servant on one account: When my master enters the house of Rimmon to worship, and he leans on my hand, and I bow down in the house of Rimmon, when I do bow down in the house of Rimmon, may the LORD pardon your servant on this one account.” He said to him, “Go in peace.” So he departed from him a short distance.

Then Gehazi the servant of Elisha the man of God said, "My master has spared Naaman the Aramean by not taking from his hands what he brought. As the LORD lives, I will run after him and take something from him." So Gehazi pursued Naaman. Then Naaman saw him running after him, jumped down from the chariot to meet him, and said, "Is everything all right?" And he said, "Everything is all right. My master has sent me and says, 'Even now two servants from Ephraim, from the sons of the prophets, have come to me. Give them a talent of silver and two changes of clothes.'" Naaman said, "Please, take two talents." He urged him and tied up two talents of silver in two bags with two changes of clothes and gave them to two of his servants, who carried them before Gehazi. When he came to Ophel, he took them from their hand and put them away in the house. Then he sent the men away, and they departed. Then he entered and stood before his master. And Elisha said to him, "Where have you come from, Gehazi?" And he said, "Your servant went here and there." He said to him, "Did my heart not go with you when the man turned from his chariot to meet you? Is it a time to take money, and to take garments, olives and vineyards, sheep and oxen, male and female servants? The leprosy of Naaman will cling to you and to your descendants forever." So he went out from his presence, leprous like snow.



Now the sons of the prophets said to Elisha, "Look, the place where we are living with you is too small for us. Let us go to the Jordan and take from there one beam per man, and let us make for ourselves a place to live there." And Elisha said, "Go." Then one of them said, "Please come with your servants." And he said, "I will come." So he went with them. And they came to the Jordan and cut down trees. But as one was cutting down a tree, the axe head fell into the water. He cried, "Ah, master! It was borrowed." Then the man of God said, "Where did it fall?" When he showed him the place, he cut off a stick, and threw it in there, and he made the iron float. So Elisha said, "Pick it up." And he reached out his hand and took it.



Then the king of Aram was fighting against Israel, and he took counsel with his servants, saying, "At such and such a place will be my camp." But the man of God sent word to the king of Israel, saying, "Take care not to pass through this place, for the Arameans are marching down there." The king of Israel sent word to the place of which the man of God spoke. He warned him and was on his guard there more than once. The mind of the king of Aram was troubled by this, so he called his servants and said to them, "Will you not tell me who among us sides with the king of Israel?"

Then one of his servants said, "No one, my lord, O king. Elisha, the prophet who is in Israel, tells the king of Israel the words that you speak in your bedroom." He said, "Go and see where he is, so that I may send for him and take him." And it was told to him, "He is in Dothan." So he sent horses, chariots, and a great army there. They came by night and surrounded the city.

When a servant of the man of God rose early in the morning and went out, a force surrounded the city both with horses and chariots. And his servant said to him, "Alas, my master! What will we do?" And he said, "Do not be afraid, for there are more with us than with them." Then Elisha prayed, "LORD, open his eyes and let him see." So the LORD opened the eyes of the young man, and he saw that the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire surrounding Elisha.

When they came down to him, Elisha prayed to the LORD, "Strike this people with blindness." And He struck them with blindness according to the word of Elisha. Elisha said to them, "This is not the way, and this is not the city. Follow me and let me bring you to the man whom you seek." But he led them to Samaria. When they entered Samaria, Elisha said, "LORD, open the eyes of these men and let them see." And the LORD opened their eyes, and they saw that they were in the middle of Samaria. The king of Israel said to Elisha when he saw them, "My father, shall I kill them? Shall I kill them?" And he said, "You shall not kill them. Did you capture with your sword and with your bow those whom you want to kill? Set bread and water before them and let them eat and drink and then go to their master." So he prepared for them a great banquet. When they had eaten and had drunk, he sent them away, and they went to their master. So the Aramean raiders did not enter into the land of Israel again.

Israel under siege...

After this, Ben-Hadad king of Aram gathered all his army, went up, and besieged Samaria (the capital of Israel). There was a great famine in Samaria, and they besieged it until a donkey's head was sold for eighty shekels of silver, and one-fourth of a kab of dove droppings for five shekels^l of silver.

As the king of Israel was walking across the city wall, a woman cried out to him, "Help, my lord king." He said, "If the LORD will not help you, how can I help you? From the threshing floor or from the winepress?" And the king said to her, "What is wrong with you?" And she said, "This woman said to me, 'Give your son and let us eat him today, and we will eat my son tomorrow.' So we boiled my son and ate him. The next day I said to her, 'Give your son, that we may eat him.' But she has hidden her son."

When the king heard the words of the woman, he tore his clothes. And since he was walking across the city wall, the people saw that he had sackcloth on his body underneath. Then he said, "So may God do to me, and even more, if the head of Elisha the son of Shaphat stands on his shoulders after today."

Now Elisha was sitting in his house, and the elders were sitting with him. The king sent a messenger, but before the messenger came to him, Elisha said to the elders, "Are you aware that this son of a murderer has sent a man to take off my head? When the messenger enters, shut the door and hold it against him. Is not the sound of his master's feet behind him?" And while he was speaking with them, the messenger came down to him, and then the king said, "This calamity is of the LORD! Why should I hope in the LORD any longer?"

Then Elisha said, "Hear the word of the LORD: Thus says the LORD: Tomorrow about this time a measure of fine flour will be sold for a shekel, and two measures of barley for a shekel, at the gate of Samaria." Then an officer on whose hand the king leaned answered the man of God, "If the LORD were to make windows in heaven, could this thing happen?" And he said, "You will see it with your eyes, but you will not eat from it."

Israel rescued...

There were four leprous men at the entry of the gate, and they said to one another, "Why are we sitting here until we die? If we say, 'Let us enter the city,' the famine is in the city, and we shall die there. But if we sit here, we die also. Now come, let us fall into the camp of the Arameans. If they spare our lives, we will live, and if they kill us, we will die."

So they rose at twilight to enter the camp of the Arameans. When they came to the edge of the camp of the Arameans, there was no one there. For the Lord had caused the Aramean camp to hear the sound of

chariots, horses, even the sound of a large army, so that they said to one another, "Listen, the king of Israel has hired the kings of the Hittites and the kings of the Egyptians to come against us." So they got up and ran away in the twilight and abandoned their tents, their horses, and their donkeys. The camp remained just as it was, and they ran for their lives.

When these leprous men came to the edge of the camp, they went into one tent. They ate and drank, carried off silver, gold, and clothes, and went and hid them. Then they went back, entered another tent, and carried off things from there and went and hid them. Then they said to one another, "We are not doing right today. This is a day of good news. If we are silent and wait until the morning light, we will be found guilty. Let us go now and enter the city and tell the king's household." So they went and called to the gatekeepers of the city, and they told them, "We came to the camp of the Arameans, and there was no one there. There was no sound of a man's voice, only horses tied, donkeys tied, and the tents as they were." Then the gatekeepers called out and told the king's household inside.

The king got up in the night and said to his servants, "I will show you what the Arameans have done to us. They know that we are starving, so they left the camp to hide themselves in the field, saying, 'When they come out of the city, we will capture them alive and get into the city.'" One of his servants answered, "Let some men take five of the remaining horses, since those remaining will suffer the fate of the whole multitude of Israel that have perished already; so let us send them and see." So they took two chariots with horses, and the king sent them after the army of the Arameans, saying, "Go and see." So they went after them to the Jordan, and the whole way was full of clothes and vessels, which the Arameans had thrown away in their haste. Then the messengers returned and told the king. Then the people went out and looted the camp of the Arameans. So a measure of fine flour was sold for a shekel, and two measures of barley for a shekel, according to the word of the LORD.

The king had appointed the officer on whose hand he leaned to have charge over the gate, and the people trampled him in the gate, and he died, just as the man of God had said when the king came down to him. Then the man of God had spoken to the king, saying, "Two seahs of barley shall be sold for a shekel, and a seah of fine flour for a shekel, about this time tomorrow at the gate of Samaria."

The officer had answered the man of God, "If the LORD should make windows in heaven, could such a thing happen?" And he had said, "You shall see it with your own eyes, but you shall not eat of it." So it happened to him, for the people trampled him in the gate, and he died.

Then Elisha spoke to the woman whose son he had restored to life, "Get up and go, you and your household, and sojourn wherever you can, for the LORD has called for a famine, and it will come on the land for seven years." So the woman got up and did according to the word of the man of God. She went with her household and sojourned in the land of the Philistines for seven years. At the end of seven years, the woman returned from the land of the Philistines, and she went forth to appeal to the king for her house and her field. Now the king was talking with Gehazi the servant of the man of God, saying, "Tell me all the great things that Elisha has done." As he was telling the king how he had restored a dead body to life, the woman whose son he had restored to life started appealing to the king for her house and her land. Gehazi said, "My lord king, this is the woman, and this is her son whom Elisha restored to life." When the king questioned the woman, she told him. So the king appointed to her an official, saying, "Restore all that was hers and all the proceeds of the field from the day that she abandoned the land until now."

Then Elisha came to Damascus while Ben-Hadad the king of Aram was ill, and he was told, "The man of God has come here." The king said to Hazael, "Take a present with you and go to meet the man of God. Inquire of the LORD through him, saying, 'Will I recover from this illness?'"

So Hazael went to meet him and took a present with him, all sorts of good things from Damascus, forty camel loads. He came and stood before him and said, "Your son Ben-Hadad king of Aram has sent me to you, asking, 'Will I recover from this illness?'" And Elisha said to him, "Go, say to him, 'You will certainly recover,' but the LORD has shown me that he will certainly die." Hazael stared at him until he was ashamed. Then the man of God wept. Hazael said, "Why are you weeping, my lord?" He said, "Because I know the evil that you will do to the children of Israel. You will set their fortresses on fire. You will kill their young men with the sword. You will smash their children and rip open their pregnant women." Hazael said, "What? Is your servant a dog that he should do this great thing?" And Elisha said, "The LORD has shown me that you will be king over Aram."

Then he left Elisha and went to his master, who said to him, "What did Elisha say to you?" And he said, "He told me that you would surely recover." But the next day he took a blanket, dipped it in water, and spread it on his face, so that he died. And Hazael reigned in his place.

Back to events in the Kingdom of Judah...

In the days of Jehoram, Edom revolted from being under the hand of Judah, and they set a king for themselves. So Jehoram passed over to the Edomite territory with his commanders and all his chariots, and it happened that he rose up at night and struck the Edomites, who had surrounded him and his chariot commanders. So Edom revolted from being under the hand of Judah until this day. At that time Libnah also revolted from being under their rule, because Jehoram had abandoned the LORD God of his fathers. He even made high places in the hill country of Judah and caused those in Jerusalem to be like prostitutes, and he led Judah astray.

And a letter came to Jehoram, King of Judah, from Elijah the prophet, saying, "Thus says the LORD God of David your father: Because you have not walked in the ways of Jehoshaphat your father, or in the ways of Asa king of Judah, but have walked in the way of the kings of Israel, and have led Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem into whoredom, as the house of Ahab led Israel into whoredom, and also have killed your brothers, those of your father's house, who were better than you, the LORD will bring a great plague on your people, your children, your wives, and all your possessions; and you will have great sickness with a disease of your intestines, until your intestines come out because of the disease, day by day." Then the LORD stirred up the spirit of the Philistines against Jehoram and also the Arabians who were near the Cushites. And they went up against Judah and broke through, and they took every possession found in the palace of the king, even his sons and wives, so that no son was left with him except his youngest *Ahaziah*.

And after all this, the LORD struck him in his entrails with an incurable disease. And it happened after many days, at the end of two years, his entrails came out due to his disease, so he died by a despicable disease. And his people did not make for him a *memorial* fire like the fire for his fathers. Jehoram was thirty-two when he began to reign, and he reigned eight years in Jerusalem. And he departed with no one's regret. They buried him in the City of David, but not in the tombs of the kings.

The rest of the deeds of Jehoram and all that he did, are they not written in the book of the annals of the kings of Judah? So Jehoram slept with his fathers and was buried with his fathers in the City of David. Ahaziah his son reigned in his place.

Then those in Jerusalem made Ahaziah, the youngest son of Jehoram, king in his place because the raiding party, those coming with the Arabians to the camp, killed all the older sons. So Ahaziah the son of Jehoram reigned in Jerusalem. The name of his mother was Athaliah, a granddaughter of Omri. And he also walked in the ways of the house of Ahab because his mother was the one counseling him to do evil. And he also did what was evil in the eyes of the LORD, like the house of Ahab, for they served as his counselors after his father *Jehoram* died, which *led* to his destruction.

Now Ahaziah was forty-two years old when he began to reign, but he only reigned one year in Jerusalem.

In the twelfth year of Joram the son of Ahab, king of Israel, Ahaziah the son of Jehoram, king of Judah, became king. Ahaziah was twenty-two years old when he became king. He reigned one year in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Athaliah, the daughter of Omri, king of Israel. He walked in the way of the house of Ahab and did evil in the sight of the LORD, as the house of Ahab did, for he was the son-in-law of the house of Ahab.

Then those in Jerusalem made Ahaziah, the youngest son of Jehoram, king in his place because the raiding party, those coming with the Arabians to the camp, killed all the older sons. So Ahaziah the son of Jehoram reigned in Jerusalem. Now Ahaziah was twenty-two years old when he began to reign, but he only reigned one year in Jerusalem. The name of his mother was Athaliah, a granddaughter of Omri. And he also walked in the ways of the house of Ahab because his mother was the one counseling him to do evil. And he also did what was evil in the eyes of the LORD, like the house of Ahab, for they served as his counselors after his father *Jehoram* died, which *led* to his destruction.

Ahaziah walked in their counsel and went with Jehoram the son of Ahab king of Israel to war against Hazael king of Aram at Ramoth Gilead. And the Arameans wounded Jehoram, and the king returned to Jezreel to heal from the wounds that he sustained in Ramah where he fought against Hazael king of Aram. Then Ahaziah the son of Jehoram king of Judah went down to see Joram the son of Ahab in Jezreel because he was wounded.

Ahaziah went with Jehoram the son of Ahab (king of Israel) to the war against Hazael king of Aram at Ramoth Gilead, and the Arameans struck Jehoram. King Jehoram returned to be healed in Jezreel of the wounds which the Arameans had inflicted on him at Ramah when he fought against Hazael king of Aram. And Ahaziah the son of Jehoram, king of Judah, went down to see Jehoram the son of Ahab in Jezreel because he was ill.

And it was from God that a downfall would happen to Ahaziah in regard to his visit with Jehoram. When he arrived, he went out with Jehoram to see Jehu the son of Nimshi, whom the LORD anointed to cut off the house of Ahab.

Then Elisha the prophet called one of the sons of the prophets, "Prepare yourself. Take this flask of oil in your hand, and go to Ramoth Gilead. When you get there, look for Jehu the son of Jehoshaphat, the son of Nimshi. Go in and make him rise from among his brothers, and bring him into an inner chamber. Then take the flask of oil, pour it on his head, and say, 'Thus says the LORD: I have anointed you king over Israel.' Then open the door and flee. Do not wait."

So the young man, the prophet, went to Ramoth Gilead. When he arrived, the commanders of the army were sitting, and he said, "I have a word for you, Commander." Jehu said, "Which one of us?" And he said, "For you, Commander." So he arose, went into the house, poured the oil on his head, and said to him, "Thus says the LORD, God of Israel: I am anointing you king over the people of the LORD, over Israel. You will strike the house of Ahab your master, and I will avenge the blood of my servants the prophets and the blood of all the servants of the LORD from the hand of Jezebel. The whole house of Ahab will perish, and I will cut off from Ahab all the males in Israel, both imprisoned and free. I will make the house of Ahab like the house of Jeroboam son of Nebat and like the house of Baasha the son of Ahijah. Dogs will eat Jezebel in the territory of Jezreel, and no one will bury her." Then he opened the door and fled.

When Jehu had returned to his master's servants, one said to him, "Is all well? Why did this madman come to you?" And he said to them, "You know this man and his babble." They said, "A lie! Tell us." Then he said, "Thus and thus he spoke to me, saying, 'Thus says the LORD: I am anointing you king over Israel.'" Then they hurried. Each took his clothes, put them under him on the bare stairs, and blew a horn, saying, "Jehu is king."

(So God has had Elisha anoint Jehu to be King of Israel- but the problem is that Jehoram is still King of Israel)

So Jehu the son of Jehoshaphat, the son of Nimshi, conspired against Jehoram. Jehoram had been guarding Ramoth Gilead, he and all Israel, because of Hazael king of Aram. But King Jehoram had returned to be healed in Jezreel from the wounds with which the Arameans had stricken him when he fought with Hazael king of Aram. So Jehu said, "If this be your minds, let no fugitive exit the city to go tell Jezreel." Then Jehu rode in a chariot and went to Jezreel, for Jehoram lay there. Ahaziah king of Judah had come down to see Jehoram.

A watchman was standing on the tower in Jezreel, and he saw the company of Jehu as he was coming and said, "I see a company." And Jehoram said, "Take a horseman and send him to meet them, and let him say, 'Is it peace?'" So the horseman went to meet him and said, "Thus says the king, 'Is it peace?'" But Jehu said, "What have you to do with peace? Circle in behind me." So the watchman reported, "The messenger came to them, but he is not returning." Then he sent out a second horseman, who came to them and said, "Thus says the king, 'Is it peace?'" Again, Jehu said, "What have you to do with peace? Circle in behind me." The watchman reported, "He came to them, but he is not returning. The driving is like the driving of Jehu the son of Nimshi, for he drives furiously."

Then Jehoram said, "Hitch my chariot." So his chariot was hitched, and Joram king of Israel and Ahaziah king of Judah (remember Ahaziah was there visiting Jehoram) went out, each in his chariot. They went out to meet Jehu and found him on the property of Naboth the Jezreelite. When Jehoram saw Jehu he said, "Is it peace, Jehu?" And he said, "What peace, so long as the harlotries of your mother Jezebel and her sorceries are so many?"

Then Jehoram turned the reins, fled, and said to Ahaziah, "There is treachery, Ahaziah." Jehu drew a bow with his full strength and shot Jehoram between his shoulder blades. The arrow went out at his heart, and he kneeled down in his chariot. Then Jehu said to Bidkar his officer, "Lift him up and throw him on the property of the field of Naboth the Jezreelite. Remember when you and I were riding together after Ahab his father and the LORD pronounced this oracle about him: 'Surely I have seen yesterday the blood of Naboth and his sons, declares the LORD, and I will pay you back on this property, declares the LORD.' Now lift him up and throw him onto the property, according to the word of the LORD."

But when Ahaziah the king of Judah saw this, he fled on the path to the garden house. Jehu chased after him and said, "Shoot him too." So they shot him on the ascent to Gur, which is by Ibleam. And he fled to Megiddo and died there. His servants carried him in a chariot to Jerusalem and buried him in his tomb with his fathers in the City of David. In the eleventh year of Jehoram the son of Ahab, Ahaziah became king over Judah.

When Jehu came to Jezreel, Jezebel heard about it. She put black paint on her eyes, adorned her head, and looked down through the window. As Jehu entered in at the gate, she said, "Is everything all right, Zimri, murderer of his master?" And he lifted up his face toward the window and said, "Who is on my side? Who?" And two or three eunuchs looked down to him. He said, "Drop her down." So they dropped her down and some of her blood splattered on the wall and on the horses. Then he trampled her. Then he entered, ate and drank, and said, "Attend to that cursed woman and bury her, for she is a king's daughter." So they went to bury her, but they found nothing of her except a skull, the feet, and the palms of her hands. They returned and told Jehu, and he said, "This is the word of the LORD, which He spoke by His servant Elijah the Tishbite, saying, 'On the property of Jezreel dogs will eat the flesh of Jezebel. The corpse of Jezebel will be like dung in the field on the property of Jezreel, so that they cannot say, This is Jezebel.'"

Now Ahab had seventy sons in Samaria. So Jehu wrote letters and sent them to Samaria to the captains of Jezreel, to the elders, and to the guardians of the sons of Ahab, saying, "Now as soon as this letter comes to you—since you are with your master's sons, chariots, horses, a fortified city, and weapons—select the best and most fitting of your master's sons, put him on his father's throne, and fight for your master's house." But they were extremely afraid and said, "Two kings could not stand before him. How can we stand?" So he who was over the house, and he who was over the city, the elders, and the guardians sent word to Jehu, saying, "We are your servants, and everything you say to us we will do. We will not appoint a man king. Do what is good in your eyes."

Then he wrote a second letter to them, saying, "If you belong to me and will obey me, take the heads of your master's sons and come to me at Jezreel at this time tomorrow." Now the king's sons, seventy men, were with the great men of the city who brought them up. When the letter came to them, they took the king's sons, slaughtered all seventy, put their heads in baskets, and sent them to him in Jezreel. So the messenger came and told him, saying, "They have brought the heads of the king's sons." Then he said, "Put them in two heaps at the entry of the gate until morning."

When morning came, he went out and stood and said to all the people, "You are innocent. I conspired against my master and killed him, but who struck all these? Know then that the words of the LORD which He spoke about the house of Ahab will not fall to the ground. The LORD has done that which He spoke by His servant Elijah." So Jehu struck all that remained of the house of Ahab in Jezreel and all his great men, his confidants, and his priests, until he left him no survivor.

Then he got up and went to Samaria. When he was at Beth Eked of the Shepherds on the way, Jehu found the brothers of Ahaziah king of Judah and said, "Who are you?" And they said, "We are brothers of Ahaziah, and we have come down to visit the sons of the king and the sons of the queen mother." He said, "Capture them alive." So they took them alive and slaughtered them at the pit of Beth Eked, forty-two men. Not a man of them remained.

Then he left there and found Jehonadab son of Rekab coming to meet him. He greeted him and said to him, "Is your heart right with me, as my heart is with yours?" And Jehonadab said, "It is." "If it is, give me your hand." So he gave him his hand, and he pulled him up to him into the chariot. He said, "Come with me, and see my zeal for the LORD." So he made him ride in his chariot. Then he came to Samaria and

struck all that remained to Ahab in Samaria until he exterminated them, according to the word of the LORD which He spoke to Elijah.

And it happened that when Jehu was acting in judgment with the house of Ahab that he found the rulers of Judah and the sons of the brothers of Ahaziah, who were serving Ahaziah, and Jehu killed them. He sought out Ahaziah, and they captured him while he hid in Samaria, and they brought him to Jehu, and they put him to death. And they buried him because they said, "He is the grandson of Jehoshaphat who sought the LORD with all his heart." And there was no one from the house of Ahaziah strong enough to retain the kingdom.

Then Jehu gathered all the people and said to them, "Ahab served Baal a little, but Jehu will serve him much. Now call to me all the prophets of Baal, all his worshippers, and all his priests. Let none go unaccounted for, because I have a great sacrifice for Baal. All who are not accounted for will not live." But Jehu did it with cunning in order to destroy the servants of Baal.

Jehu said, "Sanctify a festive assembly for Baal." So they proclaimed it. Jehu sent word through all Israel, and all the worshippers of Baal came. Not a man remained who did not come. They came into the house of Baal, and the house of Baal was full from one end to the other. He said to the one in charge of the wardrobe, "Bring out garments for all the worshippers of Baal." So he brought them garments. Then Jehu and Jehonadab the son of Rekeb went into the house of Baal and said to the worshippers of Baal, "Search and see that there are no worshippers of the LORD here with you and only worshippers of Baal." Then they went to offer sacrifices and burnt offerings, but Jehu put eighty men outside and said, "If any of the men whom I have brought into your hands escapes, the one who lets him go will die in his place."

As soon as he had finished making the burnt offering, Jehu said to the guards and the officers, "Go in. Kill them. No one comes out." So they struck them with the edge of the sword. The guards and the officers threw them out and went to the city of the house of Baal. They brought out the sacred pillar from the house of Baal and burned it. They broke down the sacred pillar of Baal and tore down the house of Baal and made it a latrine to this day. So Jehu exterminated Baal from Israel. But from the sins of Jeroboam son of Nebat, who caused Israel to sin, Jehu did not turn aside (that is, the golden calves that were in Bethel and Dan).

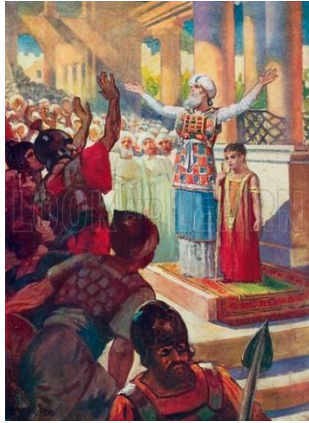
And the LORD said to Jehu, "Because you have done well by doing what is right in My sight, and have done to the house of Ahab all that was in My heart, four generations of your sons will sit on the throne of Israel." But Jehu was not careful to walk in the law of the LORD God of Israel with all his heart. He did not turn aside from the sins of Jeroboam, who caused Israel to sin.

So, at Jehu's hand- Jehoram, King of Israel and all his family dynasty and Ahaziah, King of Judah, and all his sons- have been killed. Jehu has taken over the kingship of Israel. Now Judah is in need of a new ruler.

Now when Athaliah the mother of Ahaziah saw that her son was dead, she rose up and destroyed all the royal descendants. But Jehosheba, the daughter of King Jehoram, sister of Ahaziah, took Joash the son of Ahaziah, and stole him away from among the king's sons who were being murdered; and they hid him and his nurse in the bedroom, from Athaliah, so that he was not killed. He was with her, hidden in the house of the LORD for six years, while Athaliah reigned over the land.

When Athaliah the mother of Ahaziah saw that her son was dead, she rose up and mounted a campaign to destroy all the royal offspring of the house of Judah. But Jehoshabeath, the daughter of the king, took Joash the son of Ahaziah and stole him away from the king's sons who were going to be put to death, and she placed him and his nurse in a bed chamber. So Jehoshabeath, the daughter of King Jehoram and wife of Jehoiada the priest (since she was a sister of Ahaziah), hid Joash from Athaliah. And she did not put the royal child to death. And he was hidden away with them in the house of God for six years. And Athaliah ruled over the land.

So Ahaziah's mother made herself queen, thinking she had killed all of Ahaziah's sons, unaware that one son of Ahaziah, Joash, was hidden away...



But in the seventh year Jehoiada sent word and took the captains of hundreds from the Carites and the guards and brought them to him in the house of the LORD. He made a covenant with them, put them under oath in the house of the LORD, and then showed them the king's son. He commanded them, saying, "This is the thing that you shall do: One-third of your unit, those who come on duty on the Sabbath, will guard the king's house. One-third will be at the gate of Sur, and one-third will be at the gate behind the guards. You will take turns guarding the house. Two of your companies from all who go out on the Sabbath will keep watch over the house of the LORD for the king. You will encircle the king, each man with his weapons in his hand, and the one that comes within the ranks must be killed. They must be with the king when he goes out and comes in."

The captains of hundreds did according to everything that Jehoiada the priest commanded. Each took his men, those who came on duty on the Sabbath, with those that went off duty on the Sabbath, and came to Jehoiada the priest. And the priest gave to the captains of hundreds spears and shields which belonged to King David that were in the house of the LORD. The guards stood, each with his weapons in his hand, from the south side of the house to the north side of the house, along the altar and the house, surrounding the king. Then he brought out the king's son and put the crown on him and gave him the testimony. They made him king and anointed him. Then they clapped their hands and said, "Live, O king!"

Then in the seventh year Jehoiada strengthened himself and made a covenant with the commanders over hundreds: Azariah the son of Jeroham, Ishmael the son of Jehohanan, Azariah the son of Obed, Maaseiah the son of Adaiah, and Elishaphat the son of Zikri. And they went throughout Judah and gathered the Levites from all the cities of Judah and even the heads of the fathers' houses in Israel. Then they all came to Jerusalem. So the whole assembly made a covenant with the king in the house of God, and *Jehoiada* said to them, "The king's son will reign, as the LORD has said of the sons of David. And this is the thing that you all will do: A third of you all from the priests and Levites who come on the Sabbath will be gatekeepers, one-third will be at the palace of the king and another third at the Foundation Gate. And all the people will be in the courts of the house of the LORD. And may no one enter the house of the LORD except the priests and those Levites who are serving. Those can enter because they are holy, but all the people will keep their assigned duty of the LORD. Then the Levites will surround the king, each man with his weapon in his hand, and whoever enters the house will be put to death. They will be with the king when he enters and leaves."

The Levites and all Judah did everything that Jehoiada the priest commanded. Each brought his men, who were to come on duty on the Sabbath, with those who were to go off duty on the Sabbath, because Jehoiada the priest did not dismiss the divisions. Then Jehoiada the priest gave to the commanders of

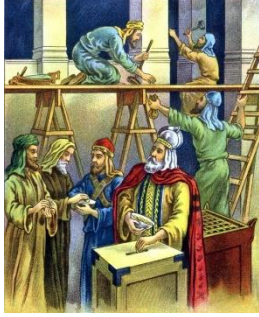
hundreds the spears and the large and small shields which had been King David's, which were in the house of God. Then he set all the people around the king, each man with his weapon in hand, from the south side to the north side of the temple, from the altar to the temple. Then they brought out the son of the king and set on him the crown and the testimony and they proclaimed him as king. So Jehoiada and his sons anointed him and said, "Long live the king!"

Then Athaliah heard the sound of the guards and the people, so she came to the people in the house of the LORD. Then she looked, and the king was standing by a pillar according to custom, the captains and the trumpeters by the king, and all the people of the land were rejoicing and blowing trumpets. So Athaliah tore her clothes and cried, "Conspiracy, conspiracy!" But Jehoiada the priest commanded the captains of hundreds, those appointed over the forces, "Bring her out of the house to the ranks, and kill with the sword whoever follows her." For the priest had said, "Let her not be killed in the house of the LORD." So they laid hands on her, and she came through the horses' entrance into the king's house. Then she was put to death there.

And when Athaliah heard the sound of the people running and praising the king, she went toward the people in the temple of the LORD. And she saw the king standing by the pillar at the entrance with the officials and trumpeters next to the king, and all of the people of the land were rejoicing and blowing trumpets, and singers with their instruments with songs were offering up praise. Then Athaliah tore her garments and yelled, "Treachery! Treachery!" Then Jehoiada the priest brought out the commanders over hundreds, those entrusted over the army, and said to them, "Bring her out between the ranks, and let whoever follows her be killed with the sword." For the priest said, "Do not put her to death in the house of the LORD." So they seized her, and she went to the entrance of the Horse Gate of the king's palace, and they put her to death there.

*Jehoiada made a covenant between the LORD and the king and the people, that they should be the people of the LORD, and also between the king and the people. Then all the people of the land entered the house of Baal and broke down its altars. His images they thoroughly broke in pieces, and they killed Mattan the priest of Baal before the altars. The priest put appointees over the house of the LORD. He took the captains of hundreds, the Carites, the guards, and all the people of the land. Then they brought down the king from the house of the LORD and marched through the gate of the guards to the king's house. Then he sat on the throne of the kings. All the people of the land rejoiced, and the city was quiet. They had killed Athaliah with the sword at the king's house. Joash (**also sometimes referred to as Jehoash**) was seven years old when he became king of Judah.*

And Jehoiada made a covenant between himself, the people, and the king that they would be a people *dedicated* to the LORD. Then all the people went to the temple of Baal, and they tore it down along with its altars, and they shattered its images. And Mattan the priest of Baal, they killed before the altars. Then Jehoiada placed guards at the house of the LORD, under the supervision of the priests, the Levites whom David allotted for the house of the LORD to make burnt offerings to the LORD as is written in the Law of Moses, with rejoicing and music, according to the direction of David. And he set the gatekeepers at the gates of the house of the LORD so that no one might enter who was in any manner unclean. Then he took the commanders over hundreds, the nobles, those in authority over the people, and all the people of the land, and they brought down the king from the house of the LORD. And they went through the Upper Gate of the palace of the king, and they brought the king to sit on the royal throne. And all the people of the land rejoiced. And the city had peace when they put Athaliah to death with the sword.



In the seventh year of Jehu, Jehoash (Joash) became king. He reigned forty years in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Zibiah of Beersheba. Jehoash did what was right in the sight of the LORD all his days because Jehoiada the priest instructed him. However, the high places were not taken away. The people still sacrificed and made offerings in the high places. Now Jehoash said to the priests, "All the consecrated money that is brought into the house of the LORD, the money for which each man is currently assessed, and all the money that is brought voluntarily to the house of the LORD, let the priests receive it, each from his donor, and repair the damages to the house wherever damages are found."

But in the twenty-third year of King Jehoash the priests had not repaired the damages to the house. Then King Jehoash called for Jehoiada the priest and the other priests and said to them, "Why have you not repaired the damages to the house? So now money will no longer be taken from your donors. You will give it over for the damages to the house." The priests agreed that they should take no more money from the people, nor repair the damages of the house.

So Jehoiada the priest took a chest, made a hole in its lid, and set it beside the altar on the right side as one enters the house of the LORD. The priests guarding the threshold put there all the money that was brought into the house of the LORD. Whenever they saw that there was much money in the chest, the king's scribe and the high priest went up, emptied it, and counted the money that was found in the house of the LORD. They gave the money that was weighed out into the hands of the workers who were appointed to the house of the LORD. Then they paid it out to the carpenters and builders working on the house of the LORD, to the masons and stonecutters, and to buy timber and cut stone to repair the damages to the house of the LORD, that is, whatever went out for repairs to the house.

But for the house of the LORD silver bowls, snuffers, sprinkling basins, trumpets, and all the gold and silver vessels were not made with any of the money that was brought into the house of the LORD, for they gave it to the workmen, and they repaired the house of the LORD with it. They did not settle accounts with the men in whose hand they gave the money to give to the workmen, for they dealt faithfully. The money from the guilt offerings and the money from the sin offerings were not brought into the house of the LORD. It belonged to the priests.

Now Joash was seven years old when he started his reign, and he was king in Jerusalem for forty years. The name of his mother was Zibiah of Beersheba. Joash did what was correct in the eyes of the LORD all the days of Jehoiada the priest. And Jehoiada gave *Joash* two wives, and he had sons and daughters.

And it happened after this that it was in the heart of Joash to restore the house of the LORD. So he assembled the priests and Levites to speak with them, "Go out to the cities of Judah and collect money from all Israel to fortify the house of your God, what is necessary each year. Now hurry with this matter." But the Levites delayed. So the king called Jehoiada, who was head over this, and said to him, "Why have you not required from the Levites that they bring in from Judah and Jerusalem the tax levied by Moses, the servant of the LORD, for the congregation of Israel for the tent of the testimony?" For the sons of Athaliah, the wicked woman, had broken into the house of God and even used all the holy items of the house of the LORD for *Baal worship*. Then the king spoke, and they made a chest, and put it outside the gate of the house of the LORD. And they gave a report in Judah and Jerusalem to bring in to the LORD a tax levied by Moses the servant of God on Israel in the wilderness. So all the officials and people rejoiced, and they brought in *the money* and cast it into the chest until it was full. And it happened that at the time the Levites brought the chest to the guards of the king that there was a large amount of money. So the king's scribe and head priest's commissioner would bring it and empty the chest and then take it and return it to its place. They continued to do this every day and collected a

great amount of money. So the king and Jehoiada gave it to those doing a work of labor on the house of the LORD. And they hired masons and craftsmen to repair the house of the LORD, and even metal workers in iron and bronze to fortify the house of the LORD.

So the workmen worked, and the work was completed by them. They restored the house of God to its specifications and strengthened it. When they had finished, they brought the rest of the money before the king and Jehoiada, who made vessels for the house of the LORD, vessels for serving and for making burnt offerings, spoons and vessels of gold and silver. They continually offered burnt offerings in the house of the LORD all the days of Jehoiada. Then Jehoiada became old and full of days and died. He was one hundred and thirty years old when he died. So they buried him in the City of David with the kings, because he had done good in Israel, both toward God and His house.

Joash had done well as King, but when Jehoiada died he did not have that spiritual direction, and he began to be influenced by others...

After the death of Jehoiada the officials of Judah came and paid homage to the king. At that time the king listened to them. Then they abandoned the house of the LORD and God of their fathers, and they served the Asherah poles and idols. And *divine* wrath was on Judah and Jerusalem because of this guilt. And *God* sent prophets to return them to the LORD. These warned the *people*, but they would not listen. Then the Spirit of God clothed Zechariah the son of Jehoiada the priest, and he stood above the people saying, "Thus says God: Why are you transgressing the commandments of the LORD so that you all will not be successful? Because you all have abandoned the LORD, He has abandoned you." But they plotted against him, and at the command of the king they all stoned him in the court of the house of the LORD. And Joash the king did not remember the kindness that Jehoiada the father of Zechariah had shown him but killed his son. As he was dying, he said, "May the LORD see and avenge!"

Back to the Kingdom of Israel and what was happening there...

In those days the LORD began to trim off parts of Israel, and Hazael struck them in all the territory of Israel: from the Jordan eastward, all the land of Gilead, the Gadites, the Reubenites, the Manassites from Aroer, which is by the River Arnon, even Gilead and Bashan.

Now the rest of the deeds of Jehu, all he did and all his power, are they not written in the book of the annals of the kings of Israel? So Jehu slept with his fathers, and they buried him in Samaria. Jehoahaz his son became king in his place. The days that Jehu reigned over Israel in Samaria were twenty-eight years.

(So now Israel has a new king, Jehoahaz)

In the twenty-third year of Joash the son of Ahaziah, king of Judah, Jehoahaz the son of Jehu reigned over Israel in Samaria for seventeen years. He did evil in the sight of the Lord and followed the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who caused Israel to sin. He did not turn aside from them. The anger of the Lord was kindled against Israel, so He gave them into the hand of Hazael king of Aram and into the hand of Ben-Hadad the son of Hazael all their days.

But Jehoahaz appeased the Lord, and the Lord listened to him. For He saw the oppression of Israel, because the king of Aram oppressed them. So the Lord gave Israel a savior, so that they got out from under the hand of Aram. Then the children of Israel dwelt in their tents as before. Nevertheless, they did not turn aside from the sins of the house of Jeroboam, who caused Israel to sin, but walked in them. The

Asherah pole also stood in Samaria. So Jehoahaz had only fifty horsemen, ten chariots, and ten thousand footmen left, for the king of Aram had destroyed them and made them like the dust at threshing. Now the rest of the deeds of Jehoahaz, all that he did and his power, are they not written in the book of the annals of the kings of Israel? And Jehoahaz slept with his fathers, and they buried him in Samaria. Joash his son reigned in his place.

(And now Israel has another king, Jehoash)

In the thirty-seventh year of Joash king of Judah, Jehoash the son of Jehoahaz reigned over Israel in Samaria for sixteen years. He did evil in the sight of the Lord. He did not turn aside from all the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who caused Israel to sin, but he walked in them.

And back to Judah...

Then Hazael king of Aram went up, fought against Gath (the Philistines), and seized it. Then Hazael set his face to go up to Jerusalem (Judah). So Jehoash (Joash) king of Judah took all the consecrated things that Jehoshaphat, Jehoram, and Ahaziah, his fathers, kings of Judah, had dedicated and his own consecrated things, all the gold that was found in the treasures of the house of the LORD and in the king's house, and sent it to Hazael king of Aram. Then Hazael went away from Jerusalem.

Now the rest of the deeds of Joash, and all that he did, are they not written in the book of the annals of the kings of Judah? His servants rose up, made a conspiracy, and struck Joash in the house of Millo, which goes down to Silla. Jozabad the son of Shimeath and Jehozabad the son of Shomer, his servants, struck him, and he died. They buried him with his fathers in the City of David. Then Amaziah his son reigned in his place.

And it happened that at the turn of the year the army of Aram came up against Joash. They came to Judah and Jerusalem and destroyed all the officials of the people, and they sent all their plunder to the king of Damascus. Though the Aramean army came with a few men, the Lord delivered into their hand a very great Judean army because they abandoned the Lord God of their fathers. So they enacted judgment on Joash. When they left him (for they abandoned him with severe wounds) his own servants plotted against him because of the blood of the son of Jehoiada the priest. So they killed him on his bed. So he died, and they buried him in the City of David, but they did not bury him in the tombs of the kings. And those who conspired against him were Zabad the son of Shimeath the Ammonite and Jehozabad the son of Shimrith the Moabite. Accounts of his sons and of the many oracles against him and of the rebuilding of the house of God are written in the annals of the kings. And Amaziah his son ruled in his place.

Back to the life of Elisha at this time in history and what was happening in Israel...

Now Elisha had become sick with the illness of which he would die. So Jehoash the king of Israel went down to him and wept before him, and said, "My father, my father, the chariot of Israel and its horsemen." Elisha said to him, "Take a bow and arrows." So he took a bow and arrows. Then he said to the king of Israel, "Draw the bow." So he drew it. Elisha put his hands on the king's hands. Then he said, "Open the east window." So he opened it. Then Elisha said, "Shoot." So he shot. Then he said, "The arrow

of the deliverance of the LORD, and the arrow of deliverance from Aram; for you must strike Aram in Aphek until you have destroyed them.”

Then he said, “Take the arrows.” So he took them. Then he said to the king of Israel, “Strike the ground.” So he struck it three times and stood there. Then the man of God was angry with him and said, “You should have struck it five or six times. Then you would have stricken Aram until you had finished them. Now you will strike Aram just three times.”

So Elisha died, and they buried him.

Now Moabite raiders would enter the land in the spring. As they were burying a man, they saw raiders. So they threw the man into the tomb of Elisha. When the man touched the bones of Elisha, he came to life and stood on his feet.

Now Hazael king of Aram oppressed Israel all the days of Jehoahaz. But the LORD was gracious to them and had compassion on them. He turned toward them because of His covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and would not yet destroy them or cast them from His presence. Then Hazael king of Aram died and Ben-Hadad his son reigned in his place. And Jehoash the son of Jehoahaz took back the cities from Ben-Hadad the son of Hazael that had been taken from Jehoahaz his father in war. Three times Joash struck him and recovered the cities of Israel.

And back to Judah- after the death of Joash, Amaziah, his son, becomes king...

In the second year of Joash son of Jehoahaz, king of Israel, Amaziah the son of Joash, king of Judah, became king. He was twenty-five years old when he became king and reigned twenty-nine years in Jerusalem. His mother’s name was Jehoaddan from Jerusalem. He did what was right in the sight of the LORD, only not like David his father. He did everything that Joash his father did. But he did not remove the high places. Still the people sacrificed and made offerings on the high places.

As soon as he seized the kingdom, he killed his servants who had killed his father, the king. But he did not kill the children of the murderers, according to what is written in the Book of the Law of Moses, in which the LORD commanded, “Fathers must not be put to death for the children, nor the children be put to death for the fathers. Rather, a man should be put to death for his own sin.” He struck ten thousand Edomites in the Valley of Salt and captured Sela in battle. He called it Joktheel, as it is to this day.

Then Amaziah sent messengers to Jehoash son of Jehoahaz, son of Jehu, king of Israel, saying, “Come, let us look one another in the face.” (a way of saying, let’s battle...)

Then Jehoash the king of Israel sent word to Amaziah king of Judah, saying, “The thorn bush in Lebanon sent to the cedar in Lebanon, saying, ‘Give your daughter to my son for a wife.’ But a wild animal passed through in Lebanon and trampled the thorn bush. You have indeed struck Edom, and your heart has lifted you up. Enjoy respect and sit at home. Why stir up trouble and fall, you and Judah with you?”

But Amaziah would not listen. So Jehoash king of Israel went up, and he and Amaziah king of Judah looked one another in the face at Beth Shemesh, which belongs to Judah. Judah was beaten before Israel, and every man fled to his tent. Jehoash king of Israel captured Amaziah king of Judah, the son of Jehoash, the son of Ahaziah, at Beth Shemesh. Then he came to Jerusalem and breached the wall of Jerusalem from the Gate of Ephraim to the Corner Gate, four hundred cubits. He took all the gold and silver, all the vessels found in the house of the LORD and in the treasuries of the king’s house, and hostages, and then returned to Samaria.

Amaziah was twenty-five years old when he was king, and he reigned twenty-nine years in Jerusalem. The name of his mother was Jehoaddan from Jerusalem. He did what was correct in the eyes of the Lord, only not with a complete heart. And it happened that when the kingdom was firmly his that he killed his servants, those who struck down his father King Joash. But he did not put to death their children because, as it is written in the Law in the Book of Moses, as the Lord commanded, "You will not put to death the fathers for their children's actions nor the children will you put to death for their fathers' actions, for every man will be put to death for his own sin."

Then Amaziah assembled Judah and set over them according to the house of the fathers commanders of thousands and hundreds in all Judah and Benjamin, and he appointed men who were twenty years old and above. And they found three hundred thousand choice men fit for war and able to use a long spear and large shield. And he hired out from Israel one hundred thousand mighty men of war for one hundred talents of silver. Then a man of God came to him saying, "O king, do not let the army of Israel come with you because the Lord is not with Israel or with any of the sons of Ephraim. But if you go, do it. Be strong for the battle. Yet God shall make you fall before the enemy, for God has power to help and to bring down." Then Amaziah said to the man of God, "So what should I do about the one hundred talents of silver that I gave to the military party from Israel?" And the man of God responded, "The Lord has more to give to you than this." So Amaziah dismissed the military party that came to him from Ephraim to return to their place. And they were very angry with Judah and returned to their place in a great rage. But Amaziah strengthened himself and led his people, and he journeyed to the Valley of Salt and struck down ten thousand of the people of Seir. And the people of Judah took captive another ten thousand alive and brought them to the top of a cliff and threw them from the top of the rock so that they were all dashed to pieces. But the men of the military party that Amaziah turned back from going with him in battle raided the cities of Judah from Samaria to Beth Horon. They struck down three thousand Judeans and took a great amount of plunder.

And it happened after Amaziah came back from striking down the Edomites, he brought back the gods of the people from Seir and set them up as gods for himself. He worshipped them and gave them sacrifices. So the Lord was greatly angry with Amaziah, and He sent a prophet to the king. And he said, "Why do you seek from the gods of the people who were not even able to deliver the people from your hand?" But while the prophet was speaking, the king said, "Have we made you a counselor to the king? Stop! Why should you be struck down?" The prophet refrained, but he said, "I know that God has determined to destroy you because you have done this and not heeded my advice."

Then Amaziah king of Judah received advice and sent for Jehoash the son of Jehoahaz, the son of Jehu king of Israel, saying, "Come, let us meet together." So Jehoash king of Israel sent a message for Amaziah king of Judah saying, "A thistle in Lebanon sent for a cedar in Lebanon stating, 'Give your daughter to my son as a wife.' Then an animal of the field in Lebanon passed by and trampled the thistle. You say that you have struck down Edom, and your heart lifts you up in arrogance. Now remain in your palace. Why do you provoke disaster so that you fall, you and Judah with you?"

But Amaziah would not listen because this was from God so that He might give them into the hand of Jehoash because Amaziah had sought after the gods of Edom. So Jehoash king of Israel went up, and they faced each other, he and Amaziah king of Judah, at Beth Shemesh, which is in Judah. And Judah was struck down by Israel, and each man fled to his home. So at Beth Shemesh, Jehoash king of Israel seized Amaziah king of Judah the son of Joash, the son of Ahaziah. And they brought him to Jerusalem and broke through the walls of the city from the Ephraim Gate to the Corner Gate, a section of four hundred cubits. And Jehoash took all the gold and silver and all the vessels that were found in the house

of God with Obed-Edom, even the treasures of the palace of the king and hostages. Then he returned to Samaria.

The Death of Jehoash (Joash), king of Israel- Jeroboam II takes the throne

The rest of the deeds of Joash, all that he did and his power with which he fought against Amaziah king of Judah, are they not written in the book of the annals of the kings of Israel? So Joash slept with his fathers, and Jeroboam sat on his throne. Joash was buried in Samaria with the kings of Israel.

Now the rest of the deeds Jehoash did, his power and how he fought with Amaziah king of Judah, are they not written in the book of the annals of the kings of Israel? So Jehoash slept with his fathers and was buried in Samaria with the kings of Israel. Jeroboam his son reigned in his place.

In the fifteenth year of Amaziah the son of Joash, king of Judah, Jeroboam the son of Joash, king of Israel, became king in Samaria for forty-one years. He did evil in the sight of the LORD. He did not turn aside from all the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who caused Israel to sin. He restored the border of Israel from the entrance of Lebo Hamath to the Sea of the Arabah, according to the word of the LORD God of Israel, which He spoke by His servant Jonah the son of Amittai, the prophet, who was from Gath Hopher. For the LORD saw the very bitter affliction of Israel. There was no one left, imprisoned or free, and no helper for Israel. The LORD had not said that He would wipe out the name of Israel from under heaven, so He saved them by the hand of Jeroboam son of Joash.

The Death of Amaziah, king of Judah- his son, Azariah, takes the throne- and then his son, Jotham after him...

And Amaziah, the son of Joash king of Judah, lived fifteen years more after the death of Jehoash, the son of Jehoahaz king of Israel. Now the rest of the acts of Amaziah, from first to last, are they not written in the book of the kings of Judah and Israel? From the time when Amaziah turned aside from the LORD, they plotted a conspiracy against him in Jerusalem, and he fled to Lachish. Then they sent for him and put him to death in Lachish. They brought him on horses and buried him with his fathers in the City of David in Judah.

Amaziah the son of Joash king of Judah lived fifteen years after the death of Jehoash son of Jehoahaz, king of Israel. And the rest of the deeds of Amaziah, are they not written in the book of the annals of the kings of Judah? They made a conspiracy against him in Jerusalem, and he fled to Lachish. But they sent after him to Lachish, and killed him there. They carried him on horses, and he was buried in Jerusalem with his fathers in the City of David.

The Death of Jeroboam II of Israel- his son, Zechariah takes the throne (for a very short time)...

In the thirty-eighth year of Azariah king of Judah, Zechariah the son of Jeroboam became king of Israel in Samaria for six months. He did evil in the sight of the LORD, as his fathers had done. He did not turn aside from the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who caused Israel to sin. Shallum the son of Jabesh conspired against him, struck him at Ibleam, and killed him. Then Shallum reigned in his place. Now the

rest of the deeds of Zechariah are written in the book of the annals of the kings of Israel. This was the word of the LORD which He spoke to Jehu, "Your sons will sit on the throne of Israel to the fourth generation." And it was so.

And now Shallum reigns in Israel- but only for a month!

Shallum son of Jabesh became king in the thirty-ninth year of Uzziah king of Judah. He reigned for a month in Samaria. Then Menahem son of Gadi went up from Tirzah, entered Samaria, and struck Shallum son of Jabesh in Samaria and killed him. Then Menahem reigned in his place. Now the rest of the deeds of Shallum and the conspiracy he made are written in the book of the annals of the kings of Israel.

Back to Judah- after the death of Amaziah...

All the people of Judah took Azariah (also called Uzziah), who was sixteen years old, and made him king instead of his father Amaziah. He built Elath and restored it to Judah after the king slept with his fathers.

In the twenty-seventh year of Jeroboam king of Israel, Azariah (Uzziah) son of Amaziah, king of Judah, became king. He was sixteen years old when he became king, and he reigned fifty-two years in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Jekoliah from Jerusalem. He did what was right in the sight of the LORD, according to all that his father Amaziah had done. But the high places were not removed. The people continued sacrificing and making offerings on the high places.

And all the people of Judah took Uzziah and made him king in the place of his father Amaziah when he was sixteen years old. He built Elath and restored it to Judah after *Amaziah* the king slept with his fathers.

Uzziah was sixteen years old when he began to reign, and he was king in Jerusalem for fifty-two years. The name of his mother was Jekoliah from Jerusalem. And he did what was correct in the eyes of the LORD as everything his father Amaziah had done. And he sought after God in the days of Zechariah, the one who instructed him in the fear of the LORD. And in the days that he sought after the LORD, God caused him to succeed.

He went out to make war with the Philistines, and he broke through the walls at Gath and Jabneh and Ashdod. Then he built cities in Ashdod and among the Philistines. And God brought him aid against the Philistines and Arabians, those living in Gur Baal, and the Meunites. And the Ammonites gave a gift to Uzziah, and his name spread even to the border of Egypt because he became quite powerful. Uzziah built towers in Jerusalem at the Corner Gate, at the Valley Gate, and at the corner buttress; and he fortified them. And he built towers in the wilderness, and he dug out many cisterns because he had a large amount of livestock, both in the lowland Shephelah and in the plain. He also had workers in the fields and vineyards in the hills and fertile orchards, for he loved agriculture.

And Uzziah had an army prepared for battle, those who went out for war as companies in the number of their divisions by the appointment of Jeiel the scribe, and Maaseiah the officer, and Hananiah a commander of the king. The total number of chief officers of the mighty men of valor was two thousand six hundred. And under their hand was a mighty army of three hundred and seven thousand five hundred who were able to go to battle as a strong army and to help the king against his enemies. And Uzziah prepared for the entire army shields, long spears, helmets, scale armor, bows, and slings for stones. In Jerusalem he made war machines by skilled men to be placed on towers and corners to shoot

arrows and large stones. And his name went out for a great distance. He received great help until he was even more powerful.

And as he grew strong, his heart grew more proud, leading to his destruction. Then he acted unfaithfully against the LORD his God, for he entered the temple main hall of the LORD to burn incense on the altar. But Azariah the priest entered in after him, and with him were eighty priests of the LORD—men of valor. And they stood against King Uzziah and said to him, “It is not for you, Uzziah, to burn incense to the LORD for it is for the priests, the sons of Aaron, who are consecrated to burn incense. Leave from the sanctuary because you have been unfaithful, and there will be no honor for you from the LORD God.” Then Uzziah was enraged, and in his hand was a censer for incense. And when he became angry with the priests, leprosy appeared on his forehead in front of the priests in the house of the LORD, near the altar of incense. Then Azariah the head priest and all the priests turned to him, and he had leprosy on his forehead; and they hastened to remove him from there, and he also hurried to leave because the LORD had struck him.

So King Uzziah had leprosy until the day of his death. He dwelt in a separate house with his *unclean* disease because he was cut off from the house of the LORD. Then Jotham his son was over the house of the king, and he governed the people of the land.

The LORD afflicted the king, and he was leprous until the day of his death. He lived in a separate house. Jotham the king’s son was in charge of the house, judging the people of the land. Now the rest of the deeds of Azariah (Uzziah), and all that he did, are they not written in the book of the annals of the kings of Judah? So Azariah (Uzziah) slept with his fathers, and they buried him with his fathers in the City of David. Jotham his son reigned in his place.

It is about this time in the history of Israel and Judah that the story of Jonah takes place...



Now the word of the LORD came to Jonah son of Amittai, saying, “Get up, go to Nineveh, the great city, and cry out against it, because their wickedness has come up before Me.” But Jonah got up to flee to Tarshish from the presence of the LORD.

He went down to Joppa and found there a ship going to Tarshish. He paid its fare and went down into it to go with them to Tarshish from the presence of the LORD. But the LORD hurled a great wind upon the sea, and a mighty storm came upon the sea, so that the ship was in danger of breaking up. Then the sailors were afraid, and each cried to his god. They tossed the ship’s cargo into the sea in order to lighten the load.

But Jonah had gone down into the hold of the ship, had lain down, and was fast asleep. The captain came to him and said, “What are you doing asleep? Get up, call to your god! Perhaps *your* god will consider us, so that we will not perish.”

The sailors said to one another, “Come, let us cast lots that we may know on whose account this disaster has come upon us.” So they cast lots, and the lot fell on Jonah. Then the sailors said to Jonah, “Tell us why this disaster has come upon us. What is your occupation? Where do you come from? What is your country? And from what people are you?” Jonah replied, “I am a Hebrew, and I fear the LORD, the God of heaven, who made the sea and the dry land.”

Then the men were very afraid and said to him, "What is this you have done?" For the men knew that he was fleeing from the presence of the LORD because he had told them. Then they said to Jonah, "What shall we do to you, so that the sea may quiet down for us?" For the sea was growing stormier. So Jonah said to them, "Pick me up and toss me into the sea. Then the sea will quiet down for you. For I know that it is on my account this great storm has come upon you."

Nevertheless, the men rowed hard to bring the ship to land, but they could not do it, for the sea grew more tempestuous against them. Then they cried to the LORD and said, "Please, LORD, do not let us perish for this man's life, and do not make us guilty for innocent blood, for You, LORD, have done as it pleased You." ¹So they picked up Jonah and tossed him into the sea. Then the sea ceased from its raging. Therefore the men were very afraid of the LORD, and they offered a sacrifice to the LORD and made vows.



Now the LORD appointed a great fish to swallow Jonah. And Jonah was in the belly of the fish three days and three nights.

Then Jonah prayed to the LORD his God from the belly of the fish. He said: "I called to the LORD out of my distress, and He answered me. Out of the belly of Sheol I cried, and You heard my voice. You cast me into the deep, into the heart of the seas, and the flood surrounded me. All Your billows and Your waves passed over me. Then I said, 'I am cast away from Your sight; yet

I will look again to Your holy temple.' The waters encompassed me; even to my soul the deep surrounded me; weeds were wrapped around my head. I went down to the foundations of the mountains; the earth with its bars was around me forever; yet You have brought up my life from the pit, O LORD my God. When my life was ebbing away, I remembered the LORD; and my prayer came to You, into Your holy temple. Those who follow vain idols forsake their true loyalty. But I will sacrifice to You with the voice of thanksgiving; I will pay what I have vowed. Salvation is of the LORD!"

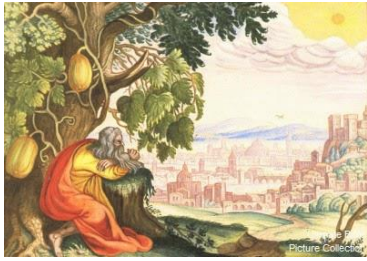
Then the LORD spoke to the fish, and it vomited Jonah out upon dry land.



The word of the LORD came to Jonah a second time, saying, "Get up, go to Nineveh, the great city, and proclaim to it the message that I tell you." So Jonah got up and went to Nineveh, according to the word of the LORD. Now Nineveh was an exceedingly large city, a three-day journey across. Jonah began to enter the city, going a day's walk. And he cried out, "In forty days' time, Nineveh will be

overthrown!" So the people of Nineveh believed God, and proclaimed a fast. And everyone, great and small, put on sackcloth. When the news reached the king of Nineveh, he arose from his throne, removed his robe, covered himself in sackcloth, and sat in ashes. Then he made a proclamation in Nineveh: "By decree of the king and his nobles: No man or animal, no herd or flock, shall taste anything. They shall not eat or drink water. Both man and animals shall cover themselves with sackcloth and cry mightily to God. All shall turn from their evil ways and from the violence that is in their hands. Who knows? God may relent and change His mind. He may turn from His fierce anger, so that we will not perish." When God saw their

actions, that they turned from their evil ways, He changed His mind about the disaster that He had said He would bring upon them, and He did not do it.



Now this greatly displeased Jonah, and he became angry. He prayed to the LORD and said, "O LORD! Is this not what I said while I was still in my own land? This is the reason that I fled before to Tarshish, because I knew that You are a gracious God and merciful, slow to anger, abundant in faithfulness, and ready to relent from punishment. Therefore, LORD, take my life from me, for it is better for me to die than to live."

Then the LORD said, "Is it right for you to be angry?"

So Jonah went out of the city and sat down east of the city and made for himself a booth there. He sat under it in the shade, waiting to see what would happen to the city. Then the LORD God appointed a plant, and it grew up over Jonah to provide shade over his head, to provide comfort from his grief. And Jonah was very happy about the plant. But at dawn the next day, God appointed a worm to attack the plant so that it withered. When the sun rose, God appointed a scorching east wind, and the sun beat upon the head of Jonah so that he became faint and asked that he might die. He said, "It is better for me to die than to live."

Then God said to Jonah, "Is it right for you to be angry about the plant?"

And Jonah replied, "It is right for me to be angry, even to death."

The LORD said, "You are troubled about the plant for which you did not labor and did not grow. It came up in a night and perished in a night. Should I not, therefore, be concerned about Nineveh, that great city, in which there are more than a hundred and twenty thousand people, who do not know their right hand from their left, and also many animals?"