

"Action - Invasion - Assassination!"

2 Kings Chapters 23 - 25

Chronological Table of the Kings of the Divided Kingdom:

> Judah (Southern Kingdom, 2 tribes)

> Israel (Northern Kingdom, 10 tribes)

| <u>King</u> | <u>Reign BC</u> | <u>Character</u> | <u>King</u> | <u>Reign BC</u> | <u>Character</u> |
|---|-----------------|------------------|--|-----------------|------------------|
| 1. Rehoboam | 931-914 | Bad | 1. Jeroboam I | 931-910 | Bad |
| 2. Abijah | 914-911 | Bad | . | . | . |
| 3. Asa | 911-870 | Good | 2. Nadab | 910-909 | Bad |
| . | . | . | 3. Baasha | 909-886 | Bad |
| . | . | . | 4. Elah | 886-885 | Bad |
| . | . | . | 5. Zimri | 885 (7 days) | Bad |
| . | . | . | 6. Tibni | 885-880 | Bad |
| . | . | . | 7. Omri | 885-874* | Bad |
| 4. Jehoshaphat | 871-846* | Good | 8. Ahab | 874-853 | Bad |
| 5. Jehoram | 854-842* | Bad | 9. Ahaziah | 854-853 | Bad |
| 6. Ahaziah | 842-841 | Bad | 10. Joram | 853-841 | Bad |
| 7. Athaliah | 841-835 | Bad | 11. Jehu | 841-813 | Bad |
| 8. Joash | 835-795 | Good | 12. Jehoahaz | 813-796 | Bad |
| 9. Amaziah | 796-767* | Good | 13. Jehoash | 798-782 | Bad |
| 10. Azariah | 789-737* | Good | 14. Jeroboam II | 792-751* | Bad |
| . | . | . | . | . | . |
| . | . | . | 15. Zechariah | 751-750 (6 mo.) | Bad |
| . | . | . | 16. Shallum | 750 (1 mo.) | Bad |
| . | . | . | 17. Menahem | 750-740 | Bad |
| . | . | . | 18. Pekahiah | 740-738 | Bad |
| 11. Jotham | 738-718* | Good | 19. Pekah | 738-718 | Bad |
| 12. Ahaz | 730-714* | Bad | 20. Hoshea | 718-709 | Bad |
| 13. Hezekiah | 715-686 | Good | > <i>Capture of Samaria and captivity of Israel.</i> | | |
| 14. Manasseh | 697-642 | Bad | . | . | . |
| 15. Amon | 642-640 | Bad | . | . | . |
| 16. Josiah*** | 640-609 | Good | . | . | . |
| 17. Jehoahaz | 609(3 mo.) | Bad | . | . | . |
| 18. Jehoiakim | 609-598 | Bad | . | . | . |
| 19. Jehoiachin | 608-597* | Bad | . | . | . |
| 20. Zedekiah | 597-587 | Bad | . | . | . |
| > <i>Destruction of Jerusalem and captivity of Judah.</i> | | | *Co-regency. | | |

Chapter 23- "King Josiah a Man of Action!"

> **Key character traits of Josiah: (1) Tender heart; (2) Humble heart; (3) Repentant heart.** (JOSIAH - The 16th king of Judah, the son of AMON, and the grandson of Manasseh (2 Kings 21:23-23:30). The three decades of Josiah's reign were characterized by peace, prosperity, and reform. Hence, they were among the happiest years experienced by Judah. King Josiah devoted himself to pleasing God and reinstating Israel's observance of the Mosaic Law. That a wicked king like Amon could have such a godly son and successor is a tribute to the grace of God. The Bible focuses almost exclusively on Josiah's spiritual reform, which climaxed in the 18th year of his reign with the discovery of the Book of the Law. Josiah's reform actually occurred in three stages. Ascending to the throne at age eight, he apparently was blessed with God-fearing advisors who resisted the idolatrous influence of his father. More importantly, however, at the age of 16 (stage one), Josiah personally "began to seek the God of his father David" (2 Chronicles 34:3). At the age of 20 (stage two), Josiah began to cleanse Jerusalem and the land of Judah of idolatrous objects (2 Chronicles 34:3-7). His reform was even more extensive than that of his

predecessor, HEZEKIAH (2 Kings 18:4; 2 Chronicles 29:3-36). Josiah extended his cleansing of the land into the territory of fallen Israel; at the time Israel was nominally controlled by Assyria. Josiah personally supervised the destruction of the altars of the Baals, the incense altars, the wooden images, the carved images, and the molded images as far north as the cities of Naphtali. Josiah's efforts were aided by the death of the great Assyrian king, Ashurbanipal, which brought about a serious decline in Assyria's power and allowed Josiah freedom to pursue his reforms. At the age of 26 (stage three), Josiah ordered that the Temple be repaired under the supervision of Hilkiah, the high priest. In the process, a copy of the Book of the Law was discovered (2 Chronicles 34:14-15). When it was read to Josiah, he was horrified to learn how far Judah had departed from the law of God. This discovery provided a new momentum for the reformation that was already in progress. In 609 B.C. Josiah attempted to block Pharaoh Necho II of Egypt as he marched north to assist Assyria in her fight with Babylon for world supremacy. Despite the Pharaoh's assurance to the contrary, Josiah saw Necho's northern campaign as a threat to Judah's security. When he engaged Necho in battle at Megiddo, Josiah was seriously injured. He was returned to Jerusalem, where he died after reigning 31 years. His death was followed by widespread lamentation (2 Chronicles 35:20-27). In the New Testament, Josiah is referred to as Josias (Matthew 1:10, KJV). (from Nelson's Illustrated Bible Dictionary)

(v1-2) King Josiah proclaims the Word of God

(v3) King Josiah a man of example (6 keys):

Key #1 - Josiah the promise keeper!

Key #2 - Josiah the LORD follower!

Key #3 - Josiah all heart and soul for God's commandments, testimonies & statutes!

Key #4 - Josiah to perform all that is written!

Key #5 - Josiah's the example for others to follow!

(v4-28) King Josiah reforms Judah.

(v29-30) King Josiah dies in battle.

(v31-37) Jehoahaz & Jehoiakim next evil Kings of Judah.

Chapter 24 - "That Which God's Prophets had Spoken"

(v1-4) Invasion and destruction of Judah.

(v5-16) Judah's P.O.W.'s

(v17-20) Zedekiah a new king in Judah.

Chapter 25 - "Babylon Destroys Jerusalem"

(v1-7) Babylon crushes Jerusalem & King Zedekiah is taken captive.

(v8-21) House of the LORD is burned / City burned & plundered.

(v22-26) Governor Gedaliah assigned & assassinated.

(v27-30) Jehoiachin, king of Judah, released from prison.

> **ZEDEKIAH** (zed-e-ki'a; "Jehovah is just or righteous") - The last king of Judah. Zedekiah was the son of Josiah by his wife Hamutal, and therefore a brother of Jehoahaz (2 Kings 24:18; cf. 23:31; 3:15). His original name of Mattaniah was changed to Zedekiah by Nebuchadnezzar when he carried off his nephew Jehoiachin to Babylon and left him on the throne at Jerusalem.

Zedekiah was twenty-one years of age when he was made king (2 Kings 24:17-18; 2 Chronicles 36:11), 597 B.C. The earlier portion of his reign was marked by agitation throughout the whole of Syria against the Babylonian yoke. In this movement Jerusalem seems to have taken the lead, since in the fourth year of Zedekiah's reign ambassadors from all the neighboring kingdoms-Tyre, Sidon, Edom, and Moab-were at his court to consult regarding steps to be taken. This happened either during the king's absence or immediately after his return from Babylon, where he went, perhaps, to deceive Nebuchadnezzar about his contemplated revolt (Jeremiah 51:59). The first act of overt rebellion of which any record survives was the formation of an alliance with Egypt, of itself equivalent to a declaration of enmity with Babylon. As a natural consequence it

brought on Jerusalem an immediate invasion of the Chaldeans. The mention of this event in the Bible is slight, occurring only in Jeremiah 37:5-11; 34:21; and Ezekiel 17:15-20. But Josephus (*Ant.* **10.7.3**) relates it more fully and gives the date of its occurrence, namely, the eighth year of Zedekiah. Nebuchadnezzar, aware of Zedekiah's defection, sent an army and reduced the whole country of Judea, except for Jerusalem, Lachish, and Azekah (Jeremiah 34:7). Pharaoh marched to the assistance of Zedekiah, and the Chaldeans at once raised the siege and advanced to meet him. The nobles seized this opportunity to reenslave those whom they had so recently freed (chap. **34**). Shortly after this, Jeremiah was put in prison and would probably have lost his life but for the interference of Zedekiah (37:15-21). On the tenth day of the tenth month of Zedekiah's ninth year the Chaldeans were again before the walls (52:4). From this time forward the siege progressed slowly but surely to its consummation, accompanied by both famine and pestilence. Zedekiah again interfered to preserve the life of Jeremiah from the vengeance of the officials (38:7-13). While the king was hesitating, the end was rapidly coming nearer. The city was indeed reduced to the last extremity. The fire of the besiegers had been destructive throughout the siege, but it was now aided by severe famine. The bread had long since been consumed (38:9), and all the terrible expedients had been tried to which the wretched inhabitants of a besieged town are forced to resort in such cases. At last, after sixteen dreadful months, the catastrophe occurred. It was on the ninth day of the fourth month, about the middle of July, at midnight, as Josephus writes with careful minuteness, (*Ant.* **10.8.2**) that the breach was made in those stout and venerable walls. Entering through the breach, the Chaldeans made their way, as their custom was, to the center of the city, and for the first time the Temple was entered by a hostile force. Zedekiah fled but was betrayed by some Jews who had deserted to the enemy. After his capture he and his sons were sent to Nebuchadnezzar at Riblah, while his daughters were kept at Jerusalem. Nebuchadnezzar reproached Zedekiah for breaking his oath of allegiance. He ordered his sons to be slain before him and then his own eyes to be put out. He was loaded with chains and taken to Babylon, where he died.

At first sight there seems a discrepancy between Jeremiah 34:3; 2 Kings 25:7; and Ezekiel 12:13. The first passage, however, does not assert that he should see the king and go there. The above facts verify the predictions. Zedekiah saw the *king* of Babylon but not the *city* itself, having lost his sight before being taken there. (from The New Unger's Bible Dictionary. Originally published by Moody Press of Chicago, Illinois. Copyright © 1988.)

MAP OF BABYLONIAN EMPIRE (625 – 539 B.C.)

